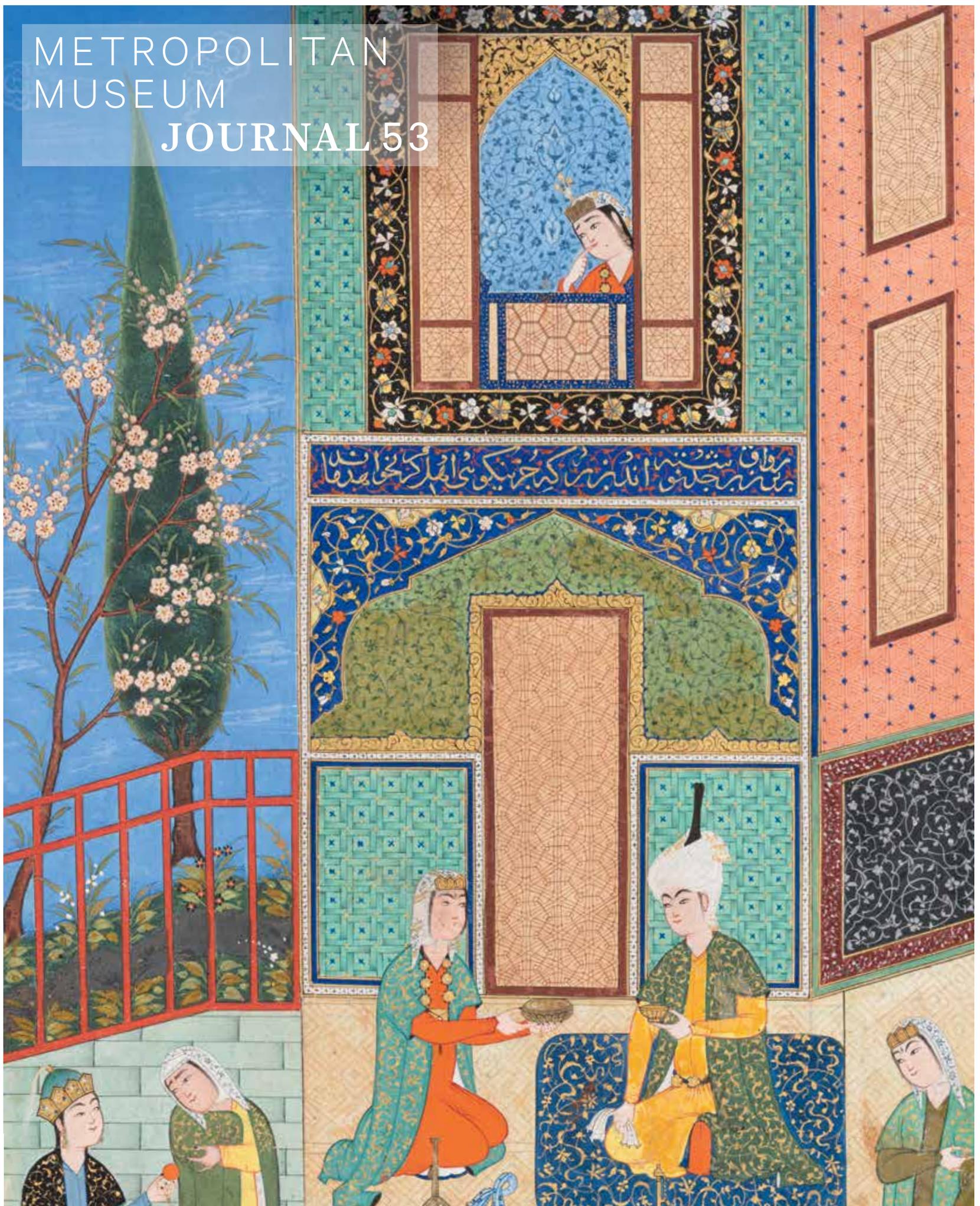


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Opposite: Attic red-figure bell-krater attributed to the Persephone Painter. Greek, ca. 440 B.C. Terracotta, H. 16½ in. (41 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1928 (28.57.23)

For Joan Mertens

IN HONOR OF HER YEARS OF DEDICATION TO THIS PUBLICATION
AND HER EXEMPLARY ERUDITION, GENEROSITY, AND WIT



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ABBREVIATIONS

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MMAB *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*

MMJ *Metropolitan Museum Journal*

Height precedes width and then depth in dimensions cited.

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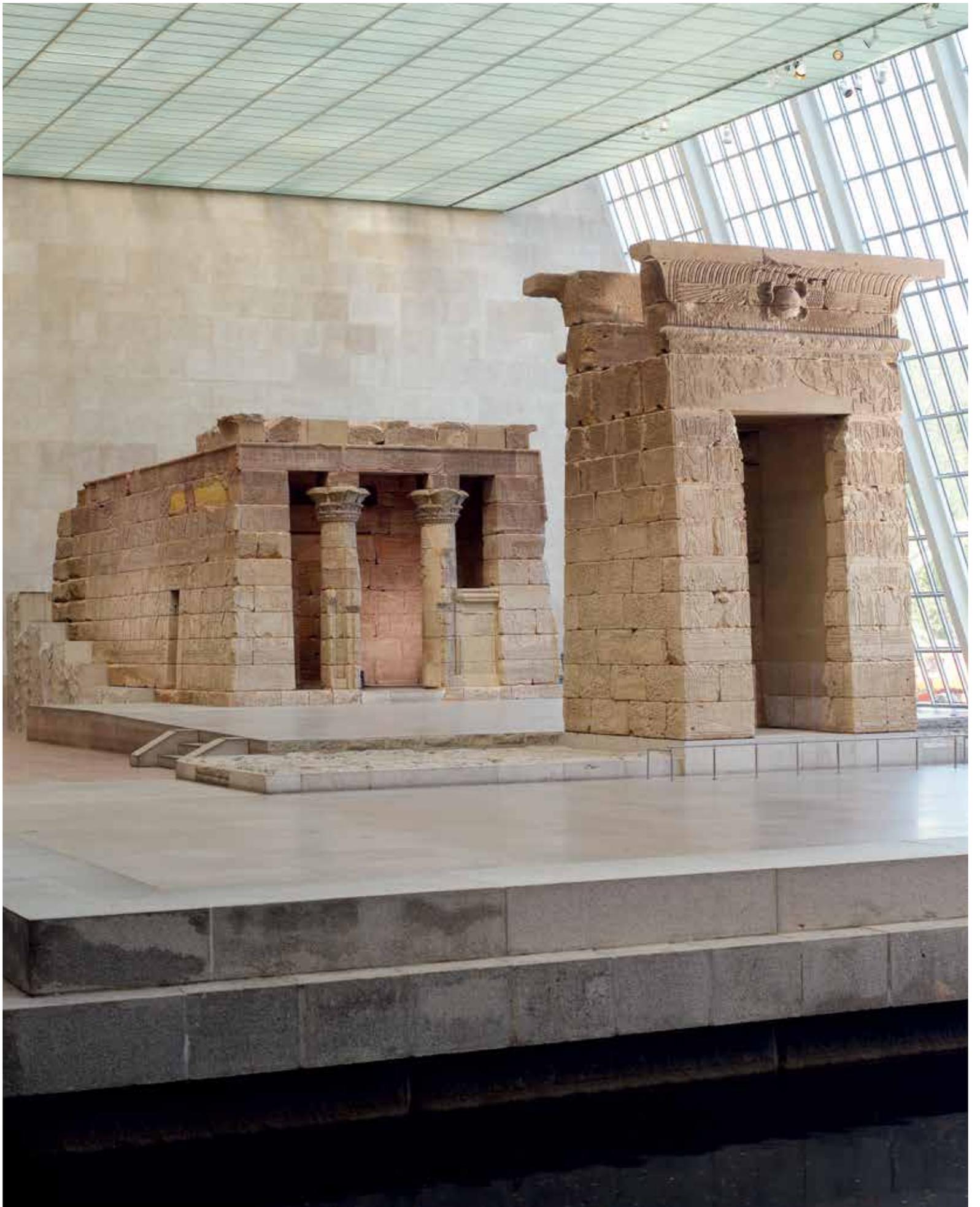
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ERIN A. PETERS

Coloring the Temple of Dendur

Although modern visitors to the Temple of Dendur at The Metropolitan Museum of Art may be struck by the austere majesty of its bright sandstone, ancient visitors would have seen its surface gleaming with brilliant paint (fig. 1). Dendur, like most temples in Egypt and the rest of the ancient world, would have been lavishly painted. Efforts to restore the polychrome splendor of ancient art have come to the forefront in the last decade with a number of popular exhibitions, international academic conferences and publications, and conservation and digital restoration projects.¹ These recent studies have demonstrated that color was an important indicator of value and meaning—a generalization that holds true for sculpture and architecture in Egypt throughout the Roman period (30 B.C.–A.D. 330).

Vibrant polychromy was essential to art and architecture throughout the history of Egypt from the Early

fig. 1 Temple of Dendur. Roman period, reign of Augustus (27 B.C.–A.D. 14), completed by 10 B.C. From Egypt, Nubia, Dendur. Aeolian sandstone, Temple proper H. 21 ft. (6.4 m); W. 21 ft. (6.4 m); L. 41 ft. (12.5 m). Given to the United States by Egypt in 1965, awarded to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1967, and installed in The Sackler Wing in 1978 (68.154)

Dynastic period through the Roman period. Beyond its visual effect, color contributed to a temple's function as a microcosm of the universe and ideal dwelling place for a deity. Polychromy in temples had a highly symbolic role that was distinctive to its environment and differed from that of funerary and other contexts. In the painted surface of the temple, particular colors stood for certain precious stones and minerals, which held a variety of associations.² In addition, the minerals used in the pigments themselves evoked the specific material, as did the pigments' richness and luminosity, enhanced by gum binders that gave them greater depth.³

Dendur is one of many temples built or expanded under Octavian, who annexed Egypt as a Roman province in 30 B.C. and became the first Roman emperor after accepting the title of "Augustus" from the Senate in 27 B.C. The temple complex was built before 10 B.C. at the ancient site of Tutziz, located approximately fifty miles south of Aswan.⁴ Dendur and its local cult—which focused on two enigmatic figures, Pedesi and Pihor, who may have been the deified sons of a local Nubian chieftain—were essential to establishing a regional cultic identity centered on the goddess Isis and her powerful Temple at Philae, north of Aswan, in the border region between southern Egypt and northern Nubia. Pedesi and Pihor's relationship with Isis, a chief deity in both the Nubian and Egyptian pantheons, is a major theme in the reliefs at Dendur, where Isis was worshipped as patroness of the region.⁵

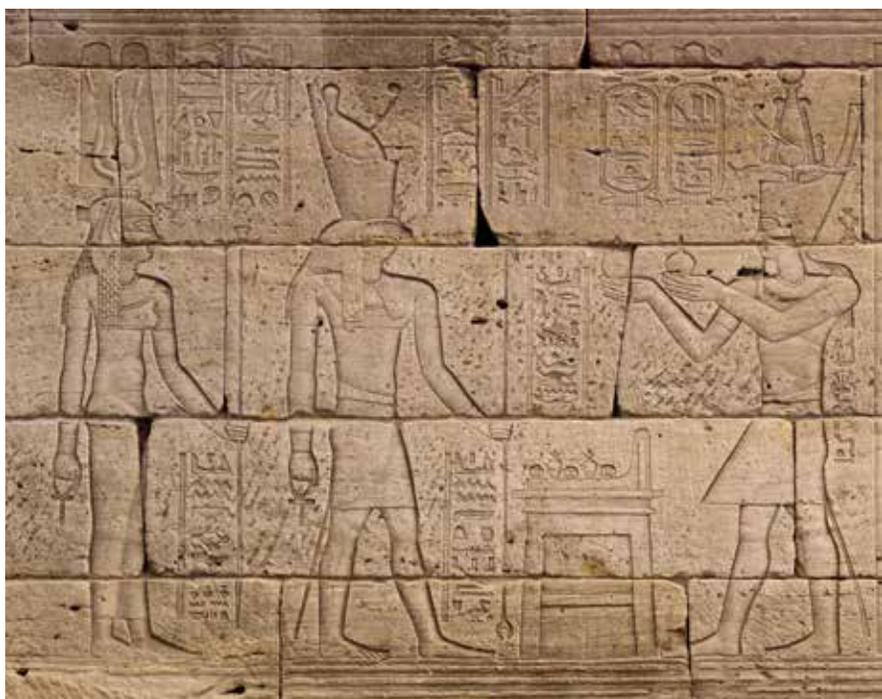
One of the reliefs was recently the focus of a project undertaken to evoke the Temple of Dendur's original polychromy and illuminate more of its ancient context for Museum visitors. In 2013 the Department of Egyptian Art and the Digital Department embarked on a collaboration to research and create a virtual reconstruction of the scene depicted on the relief for projection onto the temple. Located on the southern exterior wall, the scene highlights Dendur's importance in the region, showing Augustus as pharaoh in traditional kingly garb, including the crown of Lower Egypt surmounted by the atef crown with horns and a short, starched triangular kilt (fig. 2). Augustus's Egyptian praenomen *nswt biti* (or "Autocrator," Greek for "emperor") and nomen *sa Ra* (or "Kaisaros," Greek for the Roman title "Caesar") are enclosed in cartouches above his head. He extends both arms, bearing jars of wine, over a throne-shaped offering table stacked with cakes and jars. The god Horus (in his form of Harendotes) and the goddess Hathor stand to the left and receive the offerings. They appear in local forms associated with the specific geographic region of which

Dendur was a part, as indicated by their hieroglyphic epithets: "Horus (Harendotes, he who protects his father), son of Isis, son of Osiris, Lord of the Abaton and Philae," and "Hathor, great one, mistress of Biga, Eye (and Daughter) of Ra, Lady of Heaven, Mistress of all Gods." The hieroglyphic references to the regional sites of the Abaton and Biga underscore Dendur's ritual connection to Philae.

To begin research for the projection, the temple was examined for any pigment visible to the naked eye. None was found, largely owing to the temple's flooding during the various raisings of the Aswan Dam, from 1899 until completion of the Aswan High Dam in 1970. Technical imaging was then carried out to determine if any pigment could be detected outside the visible light range. Museum conservators utilized visible-induced infrared luminescence (VIL) imaging to identify the presence of Egyptian blue, which has a characteristic luminescence in the infrared range that can appear even when minute traces of the pigment remain. Testing began with VIL imaging because Egyptian blue is a hardy pigment and remains on surfaces even when others do not, making it a good baseline. No remaining Egyptian blue was detected in the initial examination. Conditions were less than ideal because of the in-gallery setting and the amount of natural light that filters through the northern glass wall, and at the time conservators were unable to access the temple's higher areas, where pigments were more likely to have survived partial flooding. A second examination was conducted in 2017, during cleaning in preparation for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the awarding of the temple to the Museum.⁶ All surfaces were visually inspected for remaining pigment and VIL imaging was again carried out, but as in the first testing, no pigment was found.

Because no verifiable pigment data emerged from these conservation analyses, it was determined that the reconstruction could only be hypothetical, presenting an example of how Roman-period temple painting in Egypt might have looked. This article documents the research undertaken to inform the digital re-creation.

A general survey of studies dealing with polychromy in Egypt revealed that most do not concentrate on Dendur's specific context and time period. The research team therefore turned to data from records of paint remaining at Dendur in 1911, from extant Roman-period temples in Egypt, and from objects associated with temple environments in museum collections. Their investigation revealed a number of elements that are specific to temple painting in the Roman period,



differing from those of earlier periods and non-temple contexts. These elements relate to general color palette and coloration of figures; color symbolism; patterns and complexity of regalia and crowns; technical execution of these patterns; use of a white gesso ground; and coloration and state of preservation of hieroglyphs.

Based on the new evidence and interpretation from this research, a digital color version of the scene's decoration was created and projected onto the temple through projection mapping technology, giving a vivid sense of Dendur's painted appearance in antiquity. The project demonstrated the flexibility and nimbleness of digital productions, which can be easily updated. Ultimately, the projection enhanced the visitor's experience of the temple by evoking the essential role of color for ancient art and architecture.

POLYCHROMY IN EGYPT

Although the scholarly study of polychromy in Egypt has produced a wealth of knowledge and literature, the majority of studies do not focus on temple contexts that date to the Roman period. Rather, most center on painting in pharaonic-period papyri, mummy cases, royal and nonroyal domestic architecture, and tombs. Some of the best-preserved examples of polychromy in Egypt come from tombs—especially those dating to the New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1070 B.C.), because of the abundance of remaining evidence—and tomb painting has often been used as the standard measure of polychromy for Egyptian objects.⁷ Preferred research topics

in studies of Egyptian polychromy have been the use of materials, such as pigments and binders, and symbolism in relation to color, image, and language.⁸

Examination of pigments in Egyptian art and architecture has yielded technical data about the color palettes employed in specific periods, as well as information about changes in pigments' physical makeup and appearance over time. Pigment analysis has suggested that the main color palette for painting in Egypt did not change much until the Roman period, about the first century A.D.⁹ Until then, the palette included black, brown, blue, white, orange, gray, yellow, red, pink, and green.¹⁰ Although the color pink is generally thought to be a Ptolemaic (332–30 B.C.) development,¹¹ it was used as early as Dynasty 19 (ca. 1295–1186 B.C.), in the mortuary Temple of Sety I at Abydos.¹² Analysis initially indicated that vermilion, red lead, and green earth were introduced in the Roman period, causing a change of variation of hues in the color palette.¹³ However, it is possible that these pigments also existed in earlier periods but were used more exclusively in the Roman period.¹⁴ In addition to variations of color palettes over time, pigments and binders could degrade and change physical makeup and appearance.¹⁵ Paint surviving today may look different from how it appeared in antiquity. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that the primary color palette in the pharaonic period included black, blue, white, yellow, red, and green, and that a larger variety of pigments to create these colors was used in the Roman period.

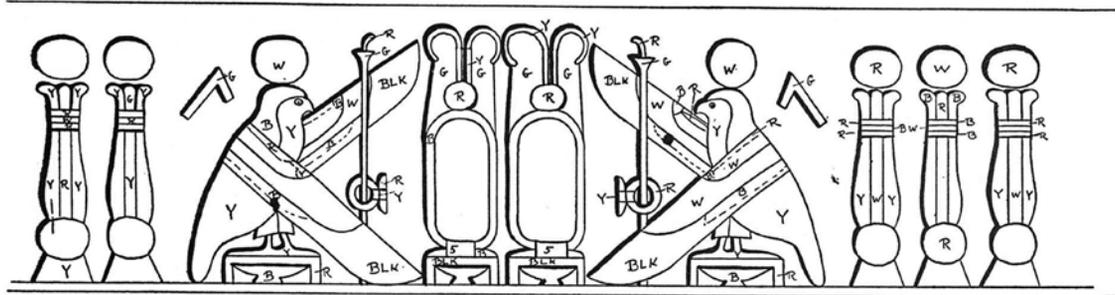
Wolfgang Schenkel and John Baines have proposed that in the ancient Egyptian language, at least from the Old Kingdom (ca. 2649–2150 B.C.) into the Roman period, the primary color palette was grouped in four basic color categories: *km(m)*, or black colors; *bd*, or white; *dšr*, or red; and *w3d*, or Grue (green/blue). In addition to these basic categories, the word *s3b* could mean variegated, multicolored, or textured when used in reference to animal or reptile skins, or birds' plumage.¹⁶ These terms did not necessarily refer to the actual appearance of the colors but might instead imply their symbolic category. For instance, the word *w3d* had particularly strong symbolic associations with freshness, vigor, papyrus, growth, and the resurrection of Osiris,¹⁷ and there are examples of non-naturalistic uses of green/blue in deities' skin and the White Crown of Upper Egypt in Middle Kingdom (ca. 2030–1640 B.C.) coffin texts, to reference freshness or vitality.¹⁸ Additionally, the four basic color categories had a range of meanings that could change when combined with other colors, or when used to refer to a secret or

fig. 2 Relief carving of Augustus offering to Harendotes and Hathor. Temple of Dendur, lower register of exterior southern wall

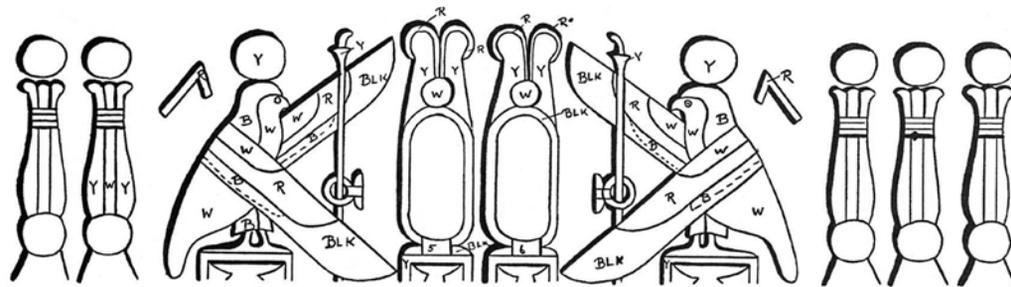
negative nature of the object colored, as was frequently the case with *dšr*, or red.¹⁹ The symbolic use of colors, and the words and phrases used to denote or invoke them, was particularly salient and strategic in temple painting, as distinguished from painting in other media and in tombs or other locations.²⁰

Nevertheless, painting has received little attention in scholarship on Ptolemaic- and Roman-period temples, which has focused more on architectural form, style of reliefs, and language and texts.²¹ In the primary studies of architecture in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, color and painting are briefly mentioned, with general notations about the more “pastel” palette of the Ptolemaic period, as compared to the earlier

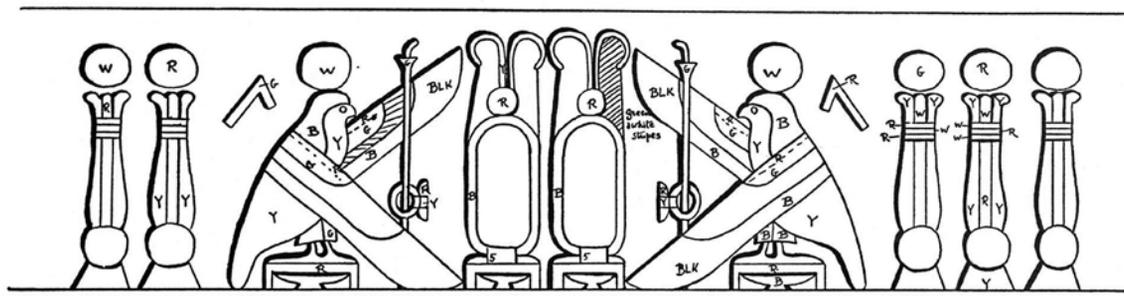
pharaonic periods.²² In one recent detailed study of Ptolemaic- and Roman-period painting, Dieter Kessler also makes the overarching statement that the color palette became more pastel.²³ Working from this premise, Kessler’s objective in his documentation of Ptolemaic painting at the animal cemetery at Tuna el-Gebel is to “demonstrate that the traditional Egyptian canonic colour system begins to recede in the time of the new Greek Ptolemaic rulers.”²⁴ His specific evidence of the canonical color system receding toward a generally more pastel palette is that the White Crown of Upper Egypt worn by Ptolemy I (304–284 B.C.) is painted yellow throughout an ibis tomb at the cemetery.²⁵ This choice of color is a



East Wall. A. (North Section.)



East Wall. B. (Central Section.)



East Wall. C. (South Section.)

fig. 3 Color notations and drawing of the frieze decoration in the pronaos of the Temple of Dendur. From Blackman 1911, pl. 120



fig. 4 The central axis in the pronaos at the Temple of Hathor, Dendera, Egypt, showing extant polychromy

significant departure from the pharaonic period, when the White Crown was so called because one of its names was the ancient Egyptian word for the color white, *ḥd*.²⁶ After proposing a number of possible explanations, Kessler argues that the change in canonical color scheme caused a general loss of color symbolism, and can be credited to the painters' lack of understanding or proper training.²⁷

However, changes in the canonical color scheme have been identified as far back as the pharaonic period, and with a range of deeper explanations. As mentioned above, as early as the Middle Kingdom, the White Crown was called *w3d*, the word for the color green/

blue, to reference its fresh and vital nature rather than its actual appearance. There are examples of blue-painted White and Red Crowns in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods,²⁸ and it is possible that the color blue symbolized scarcity, or value. Almost all deities' wigs are painted blue—rather than black, as is more usual in tomb contexts—and are commonly shown with blue or green skin.²⁹ Additionally, at the Dynasty 19 mortuary Temple of Sety I at Abydos, the king is at times shown with a *khat* headdress that is painted yellow rather than the traditional white. It is plausible that this color change was intended to draw attention to the specific temple context and distinguish it from usual depictions.³⁰ These interpretations allow for a complex and nuanced color symbolism throughout Egypt's history. To re-create the color of the Dendur scene, then, it was essential to examine temple painting in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt afresh to find resources specific to Dendur's time period and context.

COLOR AT DENDUR

The most complete survey of Dendur before the flooding of the Aswan Dam was conducted by Aylward Blackman and published in 1911.³¹ In his notations of remaining paint, Blackman recorded only the polychromy in the interior spaces of the temple proper, especially the front room, or pronaos. The interior walls of the pronaos are completely decorated with relief carving and were extensively painted, as was probably the case with all the relief carving at the temple complex. The ceiling is decorated with a central panel, depicting six vultures with alternating vulture and uraeus heads, which was bordered on either side with columns of elaborately colored patterns.³² The remainder of the ceiling was painted blue with gold stars, which in temple decoration symbolized the night sky above the mound of the first creation.³³ The decoration of the southern, western, and northern walls is organized in two registers, which are bordered by a base of Nile gods processing offerings and a running frieze of alternating vultures and *kheker*-pattern (rows of knotted bunches of reeds or grass) with significant remaining polychromy below the ceiling illustrated by Blackman's letter codes (fig. 3). He described some remaining paint in all scenes in the pronaos, as on the ceiling and the frieze.³⁴ The amount of extant paint recorded by Blackman in the twentieth century indicated that the temple complex was originally vibrantly painted, leading the research team to investigate remaining evidence at Roman-period temples and objects in museum collections to inform the Dendur re-creation.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER TEMPLES AND MUSEUM OBJECTS

A number of Roman-period temples in Egypt have recently been cleaned, providing valuable data about their original painted surfaces. In the pronaos of the Temple of Hathor at Dendera, the removal of layers of soot and grime accumulated over millennia revealed brilliant polychromy of blue, green, yellow, red, and white pigments, all against a white ground, completely covering areas on column shafts and capitals, walls,

and ceiling (fig. 4). The small Temple of Isis at Deir Shelwit—probably begun in the Augustan period, with construction and decoration continuing into the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81–96)³⁵—was also cleaned and opened by the American Research Center in Egypt by 2014 within the Metropolitan Museum’s concession for the Joint Expedition to Malqata (JEM). Its interior is entirely covered with painted relief scenes. At the Temple of Khnum at Esna, cleaning of the interior of the pronaos, which dates to the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41–54),

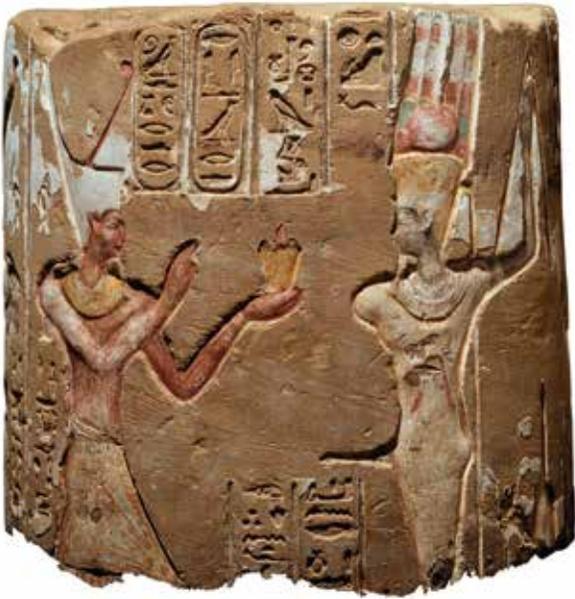


fig. 5 Detail of extant paint on Augustan column drum. Roman period, reign of Augustus (27 B.C.–A.D. 14). From Koptos. Sandstone with paint and traces of gold leaf, overall 26 × 21¼ in. (66 × 54 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Harvard University—Boston Museum of Fine Arts Expedition (24.1808)

fig. 6 Detail of extant paint in a side chamber at the Temple of Hathor, Dendera, showing the royal kilt with two uraei

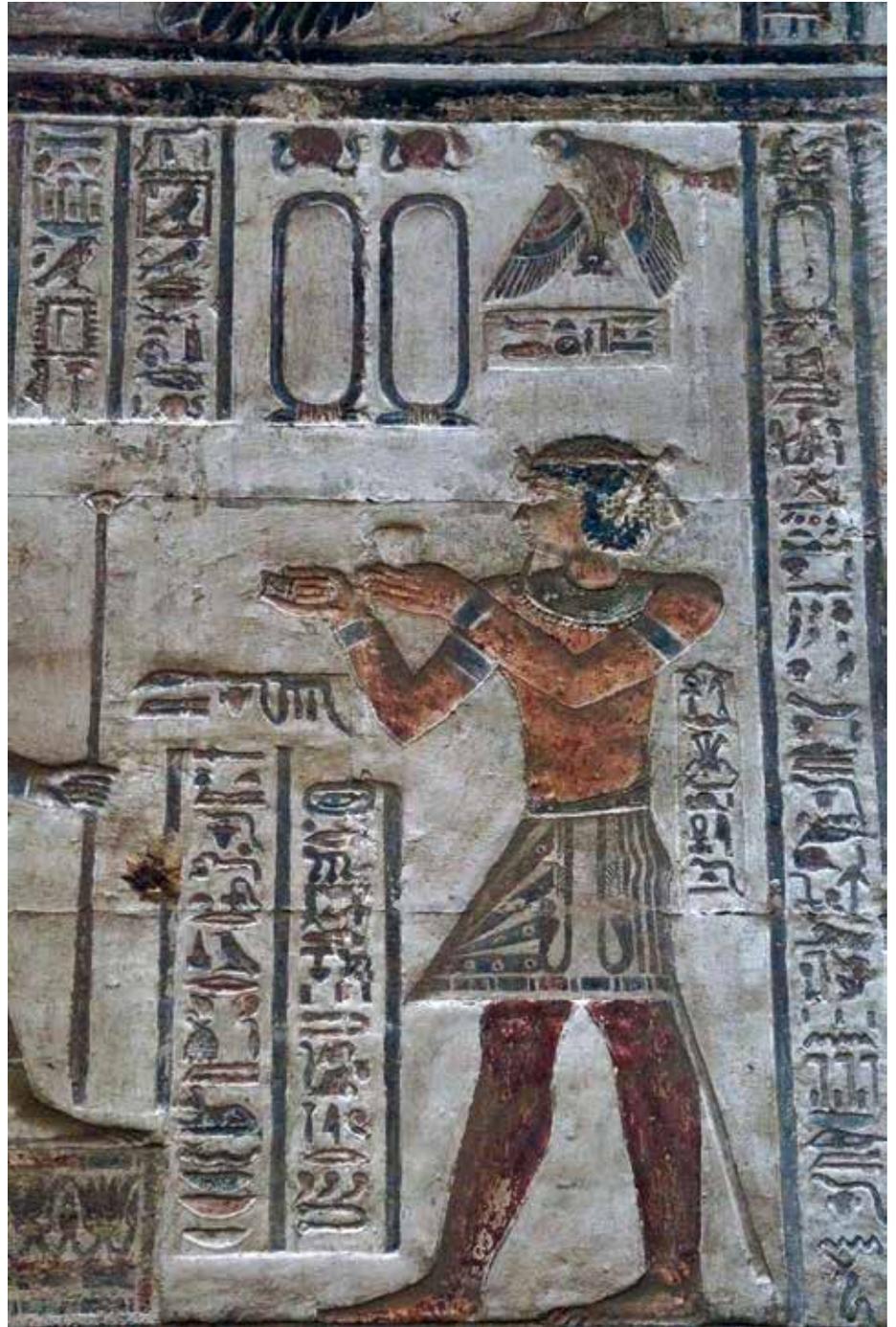


fig. 7 Detail of extant paint on the Augustan column drum from Koptos (fig. 5)

fig. 8 Detail of extant paint in a side chamber, Temple of Hathor, Dendera

revealed a painted surface as extensive as that at Dendera. Paint survives on many objects in museum collections, as well. A column drum from Koptos that dates precisely to the Augustan period, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, was particularly helpful for this study (fig. 5).³⁶ In tandem with Blackman's records of paint at Dendur, surviving evidence from both Roman-period temple contexts and museum objects enabled the team to develop and investigate a number of research topics essential for the digital re-creation. These topics and the team's findings are surveyed below.

General Palette and Coloration of Figures

The color palette specific to the later periods of Egyptian history, as seen at Dendera, includes red, yellow, light blue, darker blue, two greens, black, and white; gold leaf was used to emphasize some areas of yellow, as on the column drum from Koptos. Regarding skin color, Blackman noted that Augustus's skin was painted red and the details of his eye and beard were picked out in white and black in the upper register on the western wall of the interior of the pronaos at Dendur.³⁷ Similarly, on the column drum from Koptos, Augustus's skin is painted the traditional reddish-brown used for male humans throughout Egypt's history. The same skin color is seen at Dendera, in the figure of a pharaoh who wears a short, starched kilt, armlets, and a neck collar (fig. 6). Human skin color was differentiated from that of deities; Blackman noted that Pedesi and Pihor are frequently shown with blue or green skin at Dendera. The god Osiris is painted green on the drum

from Koptos (fig. 7), and two seated deities are also painted with blue skin at Dendera, where blue is indeed the color used most for deities' skin (fig. 8). These examples demonstrate that male deities' skin continued to be painted blue or green in the Augustan period, while male human figures were usually depicted with reddish-brown skin.

Color of Crowns

Blackman noted several instances in which crowns at Dendur were not painted according to the canonical color scheme of earlier periods. In images of Augustus alone, Blackman recorded six cases where the double crown, or the combined crown of Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt (traditionally painted white and red, respectively), had remains of green and yellow paint.³⁸ Noncanonical use of color can also be observed at Deir Shelwit. The newly cleaned reliefs in the interior of the small temple show that Osiris's atef crown is painted yellow with red plumes (fig. 9). The unusual choice of yellow for crowns has been documented with frequency from the reign of Ptolemy I, as discussed above, and this crown is similar to the crown of Upper Egypt in another scene from Deir Shelwit. On the column drum from Koptos, the god Osiris wears an atef crown resembling the one he wears at Deir Shelwit (see fig. 7). Integrating the information for colors of both crowns and figures' skin, the Museum's Digital Department created an initial digital version of the scene at Dendur, in which Horus's double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt is green and yellow, his skin is blue, and Augustus's skin is reddish-brown (fig. 10).





Decoration and Composition of Crowns and Regalia

The extensive patterning of both the polychromy documented in Blackman's records at Dendur and the extant paint at Dendera is consistent with research indicating increasingly complex designs on crowns and garments in Ptolemaic- and Roman-period temple reliefs, including those at the Temple of Isis at Philae.³⁹ For instance, Blackman recorded that Pedesi's kilt was painted with vertical stripes of red and blue at Dendur. Horus's kilt has the same pattern and colors at Dendera (see fig. 8), where patterned garments and headgear are worn by both deities and the pharaoh, whose kilt is painted with intricate designs culminating in two pendant rearing uraei in the center of the apron (see fig. 6).

Painted clothing and crowns at Deir Shelwit also display detailed patterns, as in the figure of Osiris,



fig. 9 Detail of extant paint in the interior of the Temple of Isis, Deir Shelwit, Egypt

fig. 10 Adobe Illustrator image for the projection of recoloration for the Temple of Dendur, October 2013

fig. 11 Detail of extant paint on the Augustan column drum from Koptos (fig. 5)

fig. 12 Cleaning in progress in 2014 of the pronaos of the Temple of Khnum, Esna, Egypt



who wears an overlay with striking diamond motifs on top of a white shroud (see fig. 9). The garment is echoed on the column drum from Koptos, where Osiris is clothed in a red shroud with white crisscrossing diamonds that represent an elaborately colored overlay with accents in green/blue and yellow (see fig. 7). On the opposite side of the drum, Augustus's kilt also shows detailed patterns executed in yellow, red, blue, and green (see fig. 5). Painted patterning on the column drum continues in the vulture dress and headdress worn by the goddess Isis (fig. 11). Her dress is comparable to that of a goddess, probably Hathor, who stands behind the seated god Khnum in a scene at the Temple of Khnum at Esna (fig. 12). In each example, the goddess's close-fitting sheath dress is delicately encircled by wings of alternating swaths of red, blue, green, and white feathers that correspond to the vulture wings of her headdress.

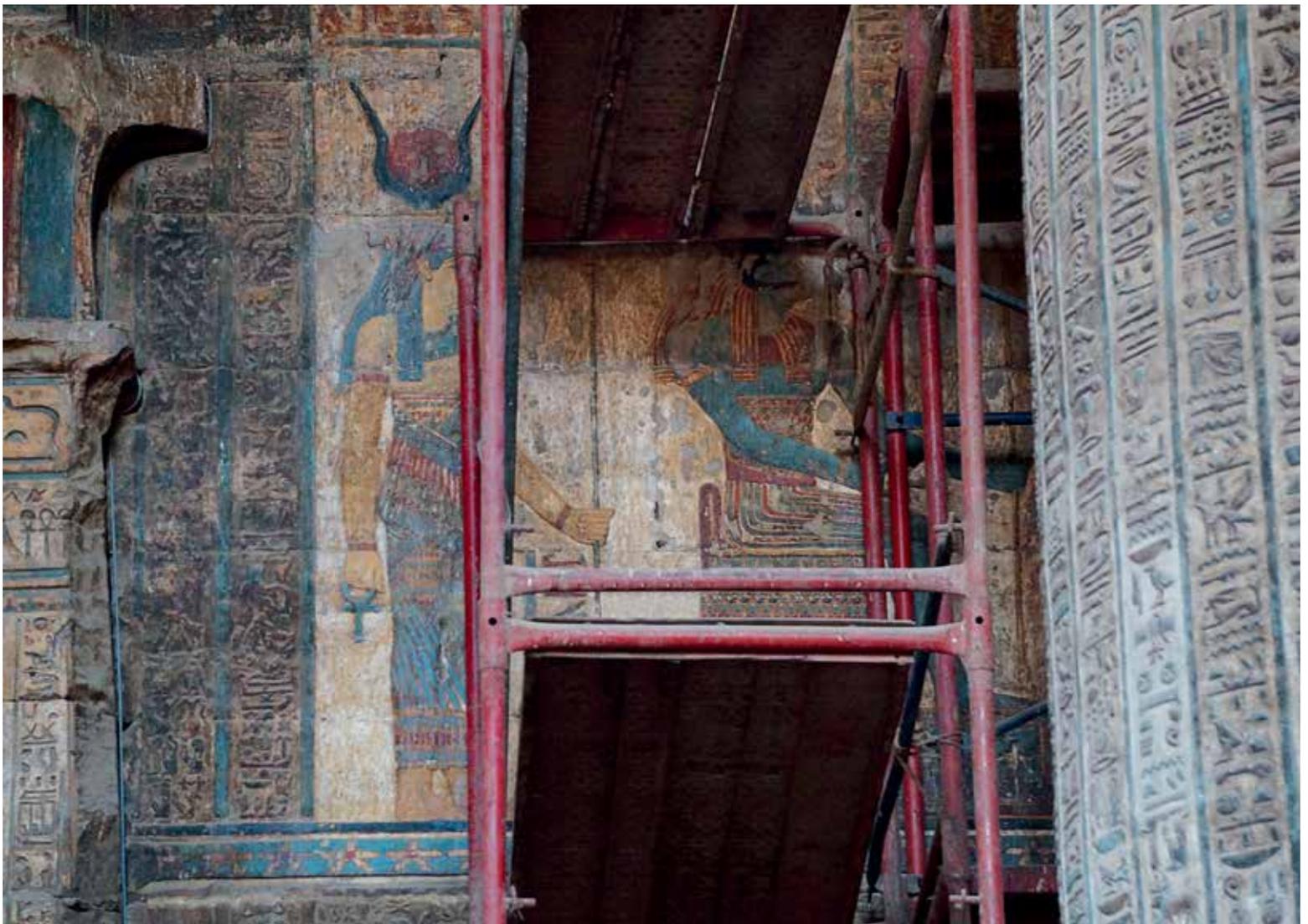




fig. 13 Relief carving on the exterior of the pronaos at Temple of Khnum, Esna

Technical Execution of Patterned Decoration

Comparative evidence was examined to assess whether patterns were always carved into the relief as well as painted, or if they were sometimes executed solely in paint. Both paint and carving were found in a monumental scene at the Temple of Khnum at Esna. There, on the northeastern wall of the exterior of the pronaos, Khnum is represented extending his right arm over a multitude of captives, indicated by their upraised hands (fig. 13). Close examination revealed that Khnum's patterned vest and kilt are visibly articulated in the relief carving and still bear vestiges of remaining paint.

The vest shows remnants of green/blue, red, and yellow paint, and the kilt has remains of yellow paint in the vertical stripes executed in the relief. A similar correlation of pattern and relief carving is evident in an exterior scene at the Temple of Mandulis at Kalabsha, where the goddess Isis's vulture headdress and winged dress are eloquently carved into the western exterior wall.

At the dual Temple of Haroeris (Horus, the Elder) and Sobek at Kom Ombo, however, remaining paint shows that some patterns were represented in paint alone, but others were both painted and carved. In a scene depicting the crocodile god Sobek seated before the falcon god Haroeris, the relief carving of both gods' kilts shows vertical lines of patterned garments, although no remaining paint is visible in either kilt. Paint is visible in the patterns of both gods' thrones; in the case of the chairs and bases of the thrones, patterns are visible as executed in paint only, and not in carved details of the relief (fig. 14).⁴⁰ Analysis of the garments worn by all the figures at Deir Shelwit revealed that their brightly painted and detailed patterns (see fig. 9) are only painted, and not carved. Again, on the column drum from Koptos, Osiris's shroud is executed only in paint.

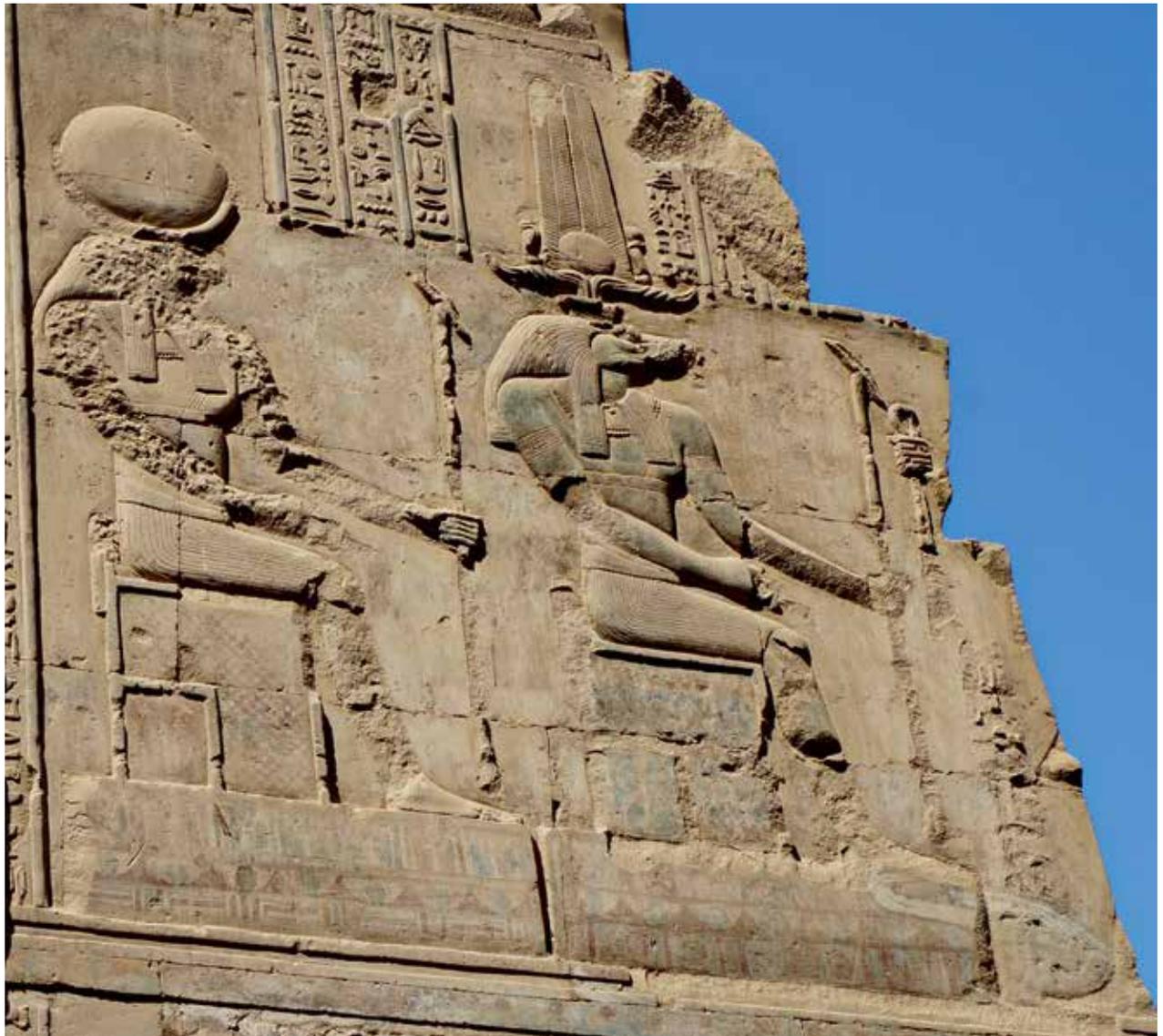
Material and Color of Painted Ground

The majority of polychromy at later-period temples, including Dendur, appears to have been painted on top of a ground of gesso (white gypsum plaster). The extant evidence at Dendera shows that polychromy was painted over a white ground, similar to that surviving on a Persian-period column capital from the Temple of Amun at Hibis in the Museum's collection.⁴¹ The scenes at Deir Shelwit reveal that the ground is a bright white. Although the paint on the Koptos column drum survives only fragmentarily, a white gesso ground is visible in several small patches around its figures and hieroglyphs (see figs. 5, 7, 11).

Coloration and Condition of Hieroglyphs

Blackman noted that Augustus's epithets were painted in vibrant polychromy, with a blue surrounding cartouche and the individual hieroglyphs in yellow, red, green, blue, and black.⁴² This scheme corresponds to a facsimile in the Museum's collection of a Late Period (ca. 712–332 B.C.) painted relief from the Temple of Amun at Hibis that shows the god Seth slaying a serpent.⁴³ The facsimile was created in 1929 as part of the Museum's Egyptian Expedition by Charles Wilkinson, who documented the temple by painting facsimiles of its reliefs dating to the reign of Darius I (521–486 B.C.).

fig. 14 Detail of relief at the Temple of Haroeris and Sobek, Kom Ombo, Egypt, with patterns that are only painted, not carved



When line drawings through vector images were created in Adobe Illustrator for Dendur's projection, the extent of erosion that weathered away original lines for the hieroglyphs and figures became apparent. In order to re-create details, the team compared line drawings and previously published versions of the hieroglyphs and figures with the actual surface of the temple. Combining all this information, the Digital Department created a final digital rendering (fig. 15).⁴⁴

Summary of Findings

Through research for the digital image, it came to light that the polychromy at Dendur, and other temples that date to the Roman period in Egypt, differed from that of earlier periods in complex ways deserving of serious scholarly attention. The color palette, specific to later periods of Egyptian history, included red, yellow, light blue, darker blue, two greens, black, and white; gold

leaf was used to emphasize some areas of yellow. Color symbolism diverged from that of earlier periods as well. In the pharaonic period, for example, the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt were white and red, respectively, whereas in the Roman period, they were frequently painted yellow and green (and thus cannot accurately be called the White and Red Crowns in Roman-period contexts). The variety of colors and patterns for crowns was paralleled in the increased complexity of figures' clothing and regalia, which were decorated with intricate patterns that were sometimes painted and sometimes carved as well as painted. Hieroglyphs could also be painted a variety of colors. All of this brilliant polychromy contrasted with a white gesso ground.

Future investigation may shed light on the reasons for placement of colors and use of pigments, whether these relate to changes in meaning and symbolism,



practical concerns, availability of painting materials, or other causes. Further work may also illuminate how pigments change chemically and visually over time, and how certain colors may not appear today as they were intended to be seen in antiquity. More collaborative research like that undertaken for the Dendur project may yield additional detailed information about Roman-period temple painting and how to re-create the lost polychromy of other monuments.

A VIRTUAL RE-CREATION OF DENDUR'S COLOR

Once projected onto the temple's stone, the digital image dramatically evoked the brilliance and luminosity of the ancient painted surface, with its jewel-like colored patterns on a bright white ground and its hieroglyphs in a variety of hues (fig. 16). Projection mapping technology allowed the image to conform precisely to the relief carving of the temple, giving a naturalistic three-dimensional quality.

To attain this re-creation, members of the Museum's Digital Department creatively employed digital tools. Working with high-resolution photographs, the team translated the three-dimensional scene into a computer file that could be utilized in multiple software programs by vectorizing the image in Adobe Illustrator. The vectorized lines of the digital drawing were brought into openFrameworks in order to perfect the outline and create the color palette and placement. MadMapper was used to project this optimized and colored digital file onto the temple, so that the file could be edited in real time and manipulated to conform to the precise engraving in the stone.

Building on the success of the polychromatic projection, the team developed a series of animations for the purpose of storytelling. In order to emphasize interaction between figures, an animation that highlighted the dialogue (as carved in hieroglyphs) was created with Adobe After Effects. Additionally, an

fig. 15 Adobe Illustrator image for the projection of recoloration for the Temple of Dendur, December 2013

animation was designed to explain how three-dimensional figures in Egyptian art were translated onto a two-dimensional surface. Composite profile view is the standard technique for ancient Egyptian drawing, painting, and relief carving, and digital technology has a unique malleability to help demonstrate composite profile view in a vivid three-dimensional way. In one animation, Horus and Hathor were shown side by side in the projected image (as opposed to being in a line with Horus standing in front of Hathor) to emulate how the two-dimensional relief would morph into three-dimensional space.

The project evoked Dendur's lost polychromy as an essential element in ancient art and architecture. The temple was alight with color for selected hours from January to April 2016 in a popular installation called "Color the Temple" that visitors felt brought them closer to the temple's creators.⁴⁵ The projection was again on view in April 2017 as part of the fifty-year celebration of the presidential award of the temple to the Museum.⁴⁶ Through "coloring the temple," new scholarly research on Roman-period temple painting

in Egypt was made accessible through digital technologies, and an icon of the Museum's collection was brought to life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank the Museum's Art History Fellowship Program for a 2013–14 Chester Dale Fellowship, during which the majority of the research for this project was carried out. I worked closely with the Departments of Egyptian Art and Object Conservation, and the Digital Department. I owe special gratitude to Diana Craig Patch, Don Undeen, Marco Castro Cosio, and especially Maria Paula Saba and Matt Felsen, who helped translate the research into its digital form. I am also grateful to Caroline Roberts, Dawn Lohnas Kriss, and Anna Serotta, who conducted conservation research and technical imaging.

ERIN A. PETERS

Joint Lecturer of Curatorial Studies, Department of History of Art and Architecture, University of Pittsburgh, and Assistant Curator of Science and Research, Carnegie Museum of Natural History



fig. 16 Projection of the December 2013 version of the recoloration for the Temple of Dendur

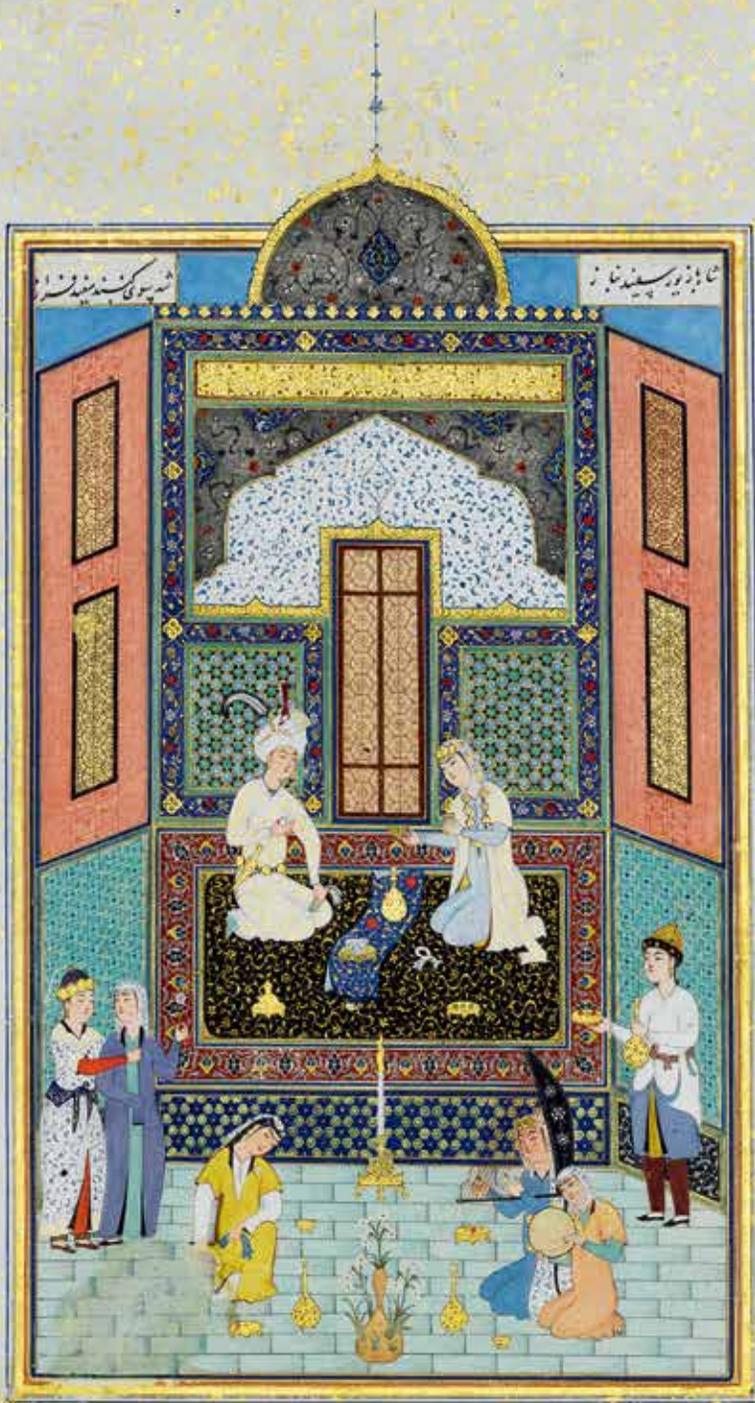
NOTES

- 1 Scholarly interest in ancient polychromy was stimulated by the discovery of the famous statue of Augustus with traces of polychromy at Prima Porta in 1863, and the topic continually resurfaces in modern art historical scholarship. For recent publications, see Tiverios and Tsiaphake 2002; Brinkmann, Wünsche, and Wurnig 2004; Cleland, Stears, and Davies 2004; Brinkmann et al. 2007; and Panzanelli, Schmidt, and Lapatin 2008. For digital resources, see the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's Tracking Colour project: <http://www.trackingcolour.com/about>; the University of Georgia's Ancient Polychromy Network: <http://www.ancientpolychromynetwork.com/>; the Digital Archaic Heraion Project at Mon Repos, Corfu: <https://cdrhsites.unl.edu/monrepos/>; a color reconstruction of the Temple of Kalabsha in Sundstedt, Chalmers, and Martinez 2004; the British Museum's Ancient Polychromy Project in Dyer, O'Connell, and Simpson 2014; and the Visual Computing Lab ISTI-CNR's digital reconstruction of Ulpia Domnina's sarcophagus in the Museo Nazionale Romano-Terme di Diocleziano in Rome in Siotto et al. 2015.
- 2 Aufrère 2001, pp. 158–60.
- 3 Le Fur 1994, p. 92. Anna Serotta pointed out that there are also possible practical reasons that gum binder would be utilized, because it improved ease of use with a variety of materials; personal communication, June 28, 2015.
- 4 A demotic graffito dated to 11/10 B.C. was carved in the pronaos, thereby offering a terminus ante quem for the building of Dendur (Griffith 1935–37, vol. 1, Dend. 1).
- 5 Peters 2015, pp. 260–63.
- 6 Serotta 2017.
- 7 Tomb painting is the center of Arpag Mekhitarian's 1954 monograph on Egyptian painting, Francesco Tiradritti's 2008 monograph on Egyptian wall painting, and Tiradritti's 2015 essay on painting in the Wiley-Blackwell handbook on Egyptian art.
- 8 On pigments, see Green 1995, Berry 1999, Lee and Quirke 2000, Green 2001, and Scott 2016. On symbolism, see Kees 1943; Schenkel 1963, pp. 131–36; Aufrère 2001; Pinch 2001; and Baines 2007.
- 9 Green 2001, p. 44.
- 10 Scott 2016, pp. 187–97.
- 11 Arnold 1999, p. 148.
- 12 Baines 2001, p. 148.
- 13 Lorna Green (2001, p. 44) has written on vermilion and red lead. Joanne Dyer, Elisabeth O'Connell, and Antony Simpson (2014, p. 93) have written on green earth.
- 14 Scott 2016, pp. 193, 196.
- 15 Green 2001, p. 43.
- 16 Schenkel 1963, pp. 131–36; Baines 2007, pp. 242, 246–47.
- 17 Pinch 2001, p. 183; Baines 2007, p. 242.
- 18 Baines 2007, pp. 243, 245.
- 19 Pinch 2001, pp. 183–84.
- 20 Baines 2001, p. 145.
- 21 Dieter Arnold (1999, pp. 277–304) most eloquently discusses these forms, including the *wabet*, pronaos, entrance porches and kiosks, birth house, cult terrace, composite column capitals, screen walls, and broken-door lintel.
- 22 Baines 1997, p. 230; Arnold 1999, p. 148; Baines 2007, p. 252; McKenzie 2007, p. 136.
- 23 Kessler 2009, p. 354.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid., p. 357.
- 26 I am grateful to Caroline Roberts for drawing my attention to the process in which coated white paint can appear yellow if the coating darkens, or if a yellow coating (like pistacia resin) is intentionally applied.
- 27 Kessler 2009, pp. 359–62.
- 28 Baines 2007, p. 252.
- 29 Baines 2001, p. 149.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Blackman 1911.
- 32 Ibid., p. 27, pl. 111, 1.
- 33 Ibid., p. 27, and also noted by Cyril Aldred (1978, p. 37).
- 34 Blackman 1911, pp. 33–36.
- 35 Klotz 2012, p. 321.
- 36 This column drum is one of five Augustan examples at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from Koptos with remaining paint. Henri Gauthier (1911–27, vols. 3 and 4) recorded significant paint remaining at the Augustan Temple at Kalabsha and produced a number of color plates; however, flooding of the temple also removed remnants of paint, as at Dendur.
- 37 Blackman 1911, p. 32.
- 38 Ibid., pp. 31–35.
- 39 Vassilika 1989, pp. 83–124.
- 40 Dyer, O'Connell, and Simpson's study (2014, p. 96) also revealed the presence of patterns in the throne of the three-dimensional Roman-period Horus that were singularly painted and not carved.
- 41 MMA 10.177.2. Michelle Berry (1999, pp. 1–2) also found polychromy over a ground of white gesso at a second-century A.D. shrine in the Dahkla Oasis.
- 42 Blackman 1911, p. 32, pl. 117, fig. 5.
- 43 MMA 48.105.5.
- 44 Aly, Hamid, and Leblanc 1979, pl. 44.
- 45 Barone 2016.
- 46 <https://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-met/curatorial-departments/egyptian-art/temple-of-dendur-50>.

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BARRY WOOD

Inscriptions on Architecture in Early Safavid Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum

Figures 1–7 are folios from a *Khamsa* (Quintet) of Nizami. Nizami (Ilyas Abu Muhammad Nizam al-Din of Ganja) (probably 1141–1217) (author). Shaikh Zada (painter), A.H. 931/ A.D. 1524–25. Made in Herat (present-day Afghanistan). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913. The calligraphers for figures 1–7 are Sultan Muhammad Nur (ca. 1472–ca. 1536) and Mahmud Muzahhib (fl. ca. 1500–1560).

fig. 1 Bahram Gur in the White Palace on Friday. Folio 235b. Opaque water-color, ink and gold on paper, painting $8\frac{13}{16} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ in. (22.4 × 11.4 cm); page $12\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ in. (32.1 × 22.2 cm). (13.228.7.14)

Of the many details the viewer is invited to scrutinize in a Persian painting, among the most compelling and evocative are the textual inscriptions occasionally found adorning the buildings the painter has depicted. Some are just a couple of words over a doorway, while others form a lengthy frieze running along the walls of a sizable structure like a fortress. Texts like these, with their introduction of explicit verbal meaning into the painting's finely tuned array of visual details, raise questions about aesthetic reception and readership. The use of image-internal inscriptions in the Persian painting tradition waxed and waned over the years, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art holds paintings from two manuscripts made at a point when the practice was at its peak. The Museum's copy of the *Khamsa* (Quintet) of Nizami of 1524–25, and its collection of pages from the now-dispersed *Shahnama* (Book of Kings) of Shah Tahmasp

offer a window into a little-studied aspect of the Persian art of the book at a time when it was flourishing.

The use of calligraphic inscriptions on buildings in book illustrations extends back to the fourteenth century, with the genesis of the classical Persian style at the court of the Jalayirids.¹ The tendency to adorn buildings with texts continued at various levels of intensity and sophistication throughout the fifteenth century. Manuscripts made for Baysunghur in the early decades include some beautifully fluid and occasionally lengthy textual insertions,² whereas the mid-century *Shahnama* of Muhammad Juki has but a few simple panels.³ Later in the century, the so-called Big Head *Shahnama* contains illustrations that are vigorously inventive, but devoid of architectural inscriptions.⁴ The inclination to place texts on buildings proliferated in the sophisticated court milieu of the Timurid prince Sultan Husayn Bayqara in Herat in the last decades of the century, when literary culture flourished so greatly.⁵ The renowned manuscript of Sa'di's *Bustan* now in Cairo, with its paintings attributed to Bihzad, is perhaps the best-known instance,⁶ but other important works from the period exist, including a manuscript of the poetic *Divan* of Sultan Husayn Bayqara as well as the *Khamisa* of his vizier 'Ali Shir Nava'i.⁷ When the Safavids took over Herat at the dawn of the sixteenth century, they also assumed the ateliers and standards of the city, with important consequences for the emerging painterly style of the dynasty. Notably, for all the florescence of literary culture and sophisticated painting in late fifteenth-century Herat, two poems conspicuous for their lack of illustration are the *Shahnama* and the *Khamisa* of Nizami.⁸ The two manuscripts under consideration here thus represent the earliest application of the fully developed repertoire of miniature painting to the greatest monuments of Persian literature—including the use of inscriptions on architecture.

It is true that architectural inscriptions in Persian painting are often, as Oleg Grabar noted, "pious banalities or praises of a princely patron."⁹ However, some inscriptions, especially those that include poetic verses, offer us a deeper appreciation of the aesthetic of the paintings, the way they were "consumed" by their contemporaries. This article investigates what kinds of texts get written on the buildings of the painted world, and for whom they are intended—either for the figures in the scene, or for the reader of the manuscript—and what messages they convey. It further questions the role that the inscriptions play in the activity of reception, the processes of perception, comprehension, recognition, and appreciation undertaken by beholders in the period

and the present day. The study of text-image relations in Persian miniature painting is still in its early stages, and texts within paintings raise a number of their own fascinating issues.¹⁰ In recent years, Marianna Shreve Simpson in particular has provided valuable analyses, especially in her short book on the famous copy of the *Haft awrang* (Seven Thrones) by the poet Jami now in the Freer|Sackler in Washington.¹¹ In that book, she provides translations of painting-internal inscriptions and offers ideas on how to interpret them in relation to the imagery. The present study continues this line of inquiry. In addition to providing translations and interpretative suggestions, this article corrects some long-standing errors, points out new finds, and calls attention to the inscriptions in the paintings as clues to the kind of thinking that went into the creation and appreciation of these magnificent art objects.

THE 1524–25 KHAMISA OF NIZAMI

The *Khamisa* is the magnum opus of the twelfth-century poet Nizami, and it influenced countless poets after him. In this quintet of poems (*khamisa* means "five"), Nizami treats subjects ranging from divine love to astrology, in language as poetically masterful as it is philosophically erudite. Several of the poems deal with figures well known in the Islamic world, such as the tragic lovers Layli and Majnun or the world-conquering, wisdom-seeking Iskandar (Alexander the Great). This particular manuscript of Nizami's opus, which came to the Museum in 1913, has rightly been called "one of the most sumptuous manuscripts ever produced in Persia."¹² It was penned and illustrated in the city of Herat in 1524–25 and is testimony to the superbly high standards of bookmaking achieved at the late fifteenth-century Timurid court there and carried over after the city fell to the ascendant Safavid dynasty in 1506.¹³

The manuscript contains an unusually large number of paintings that include inscriptions on architecture. The emphasis on such inscriptions is apparent from a consideration of the illustrative program. The five poems of Nizami's quintet are illustrated as follows:¹⁴

Makhzan al-Asrar: 1 painting, no inscriptions

Khusraw u Shirin: 4 paintings (originally 5), 1 with architectural inscription

Layli u Majnun: 1 painting with architectural inscription

Haft Paykar: 7 paintings, 6 with architectural inscriptions

Iskandarnama: 2 paintings, no inscriptions

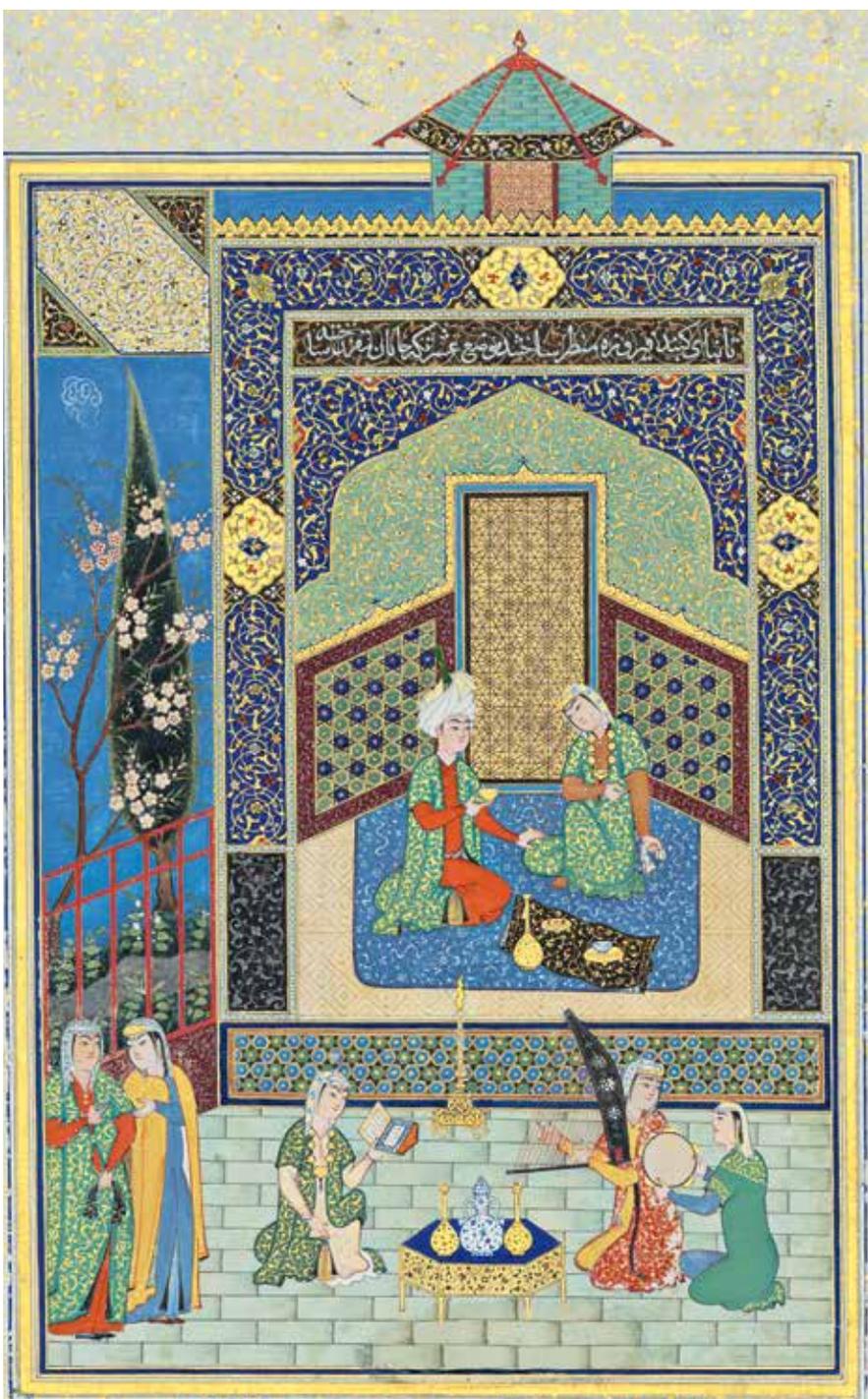


fig. 2 Bahram Gur in the Turquoise Palace on Wednesday. Detail of folio 216b. Ink, opaque watercolor, silver, and gold on paper, painting $7\frac{7}{8} \times 4\frac{7}{8}$ in. (20×12.4 cm); page $12\frac{1}{16} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ in. (32.2×22.2 cm). (13.228.7.10)

The first and last poems are illustrated sparingly and do not depict architecture. Of the remaining three poems, *Khusraw u Shirin* is relatively densely illustrated, originally with five paintings, one of which has a building with an inscription. Given that the now-missing painting probably depicted Khusraw going to Shirin's palace,¹⁵ it would likely have included a textual frieze. It is suggestive as well that although the section relating the story of Layli and Majnun has only one painting, the scene that was selected for illustration was one that

included the school where the two ill-starred lovers met, and an inscription is prominent, as will be discussed below.

The manuscript's emphasis on *Haft Paykar*, the story of Bahram Gur and the Seven Princesses, stands out most strongly. In this tale, the quasi-legendary Iranian monarch Bahram Gur spends seven consecutive nights in seven palaces, each a different color and each housing a princess from a different clime who regales him with a wisdom-imparting story.¹⁶ Rather than simply including one painting of a colored pavilion to stand for the whole story, as was the usual practice, here the designer has allotted each of the seven nights a full-page illustration. All but two of the seven pavilions are adorned with a prominent inscription in verse; the exceptions are the Red Palace (fol. 220a), which bears merely the stock phrase "O opener of doors" over a doorway, and the Sandal Palace (fol. 230b), which does not have inscriptions. All five inscriptions on the remaining palaces reveal a poetic reference (direct or indirect) to the color of the respective buildings. Notably, the poetry is never that of Nizami, but of other poets, a choice reflecting the aesthetic of literary connoisseurship and recognition that characterized late Timurid and early Safavid bibliophile culture.

Two of the inscriptions appear to be by anonymous poets. The first is in the painting on folio 235b (fig. 1), *Bahram Gur in the White Palace on Friday*.¹⁷ The rear wall of the palace is white with blue arabesques, forming a striking contrast to the arch and dome that surmount it, which have decorative motifs on a black background. In keeping with Nizami's story, the characters' clothes, from Bahram Gur to the attendants, are color-coordinated with the palace. The inscription is written in white calligraphy on a gold background in a rectangular panel just below the dome. It reads:

چشم من اندک سودای داشت آن نیز گریه شست
ساختم این خانه را بهر تو سراسر سفید

This may be translated as "My eye had a little bit of melancholy, and even that I have cried away. Because of you, I have made this house white from top to bottom"—that is, "I have washed it clean with my tears."¹⁸

The second anonymous verse appears in folio 216b (fig. 2), *Bahram Gur in the Turquoise Palace on Wednesday*.¹⁹ Here the painter has depicted Bahram Gur and the princess of the Maghrib in a pavilion whose walls and cupola are turquoise with gold decorative

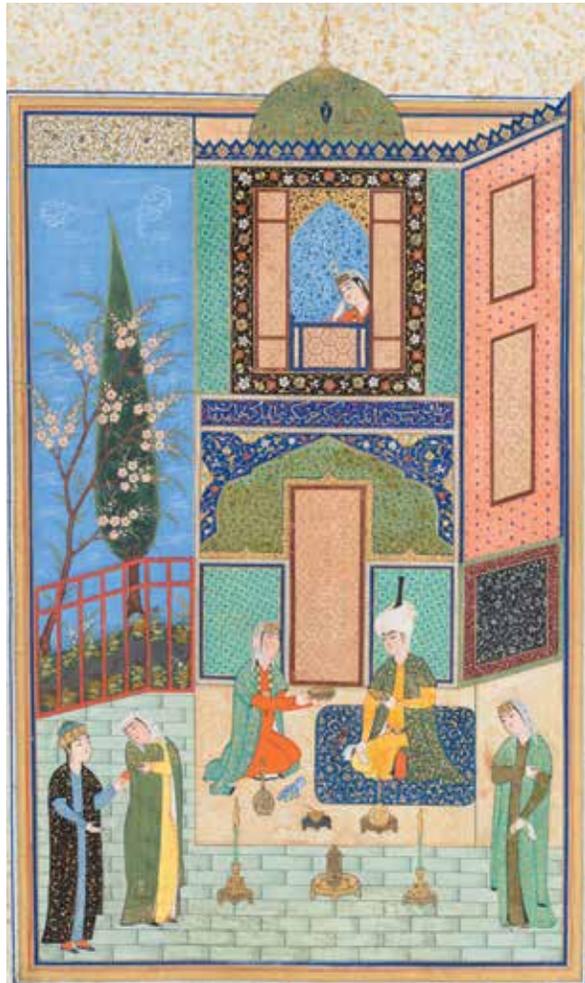


fig. 3 *Bahram Gur in the Green Palace on Monday.* Detail of folio 224b. Ink, opaque watercolor, silver, and gold on paper, painting 7 1/4 × 5 in. (18.4 × 12.7 cm); page 12 3/4 × 8 3/8 in. (32.4 × 21.9 cm). (13.228.7.12)

fig. 4 *Bahram Gur in the Dark Palace on Saturday.* Detail of folio 207a. Ink, opaque watercolor, silver, and gold on paper, painting 8 × 4 1/2 in. (20.3 × 11.4 cm); page 12 1/2 × 8 3/8 in. (31.9 × 22.2 cm). (13.228.7.8)

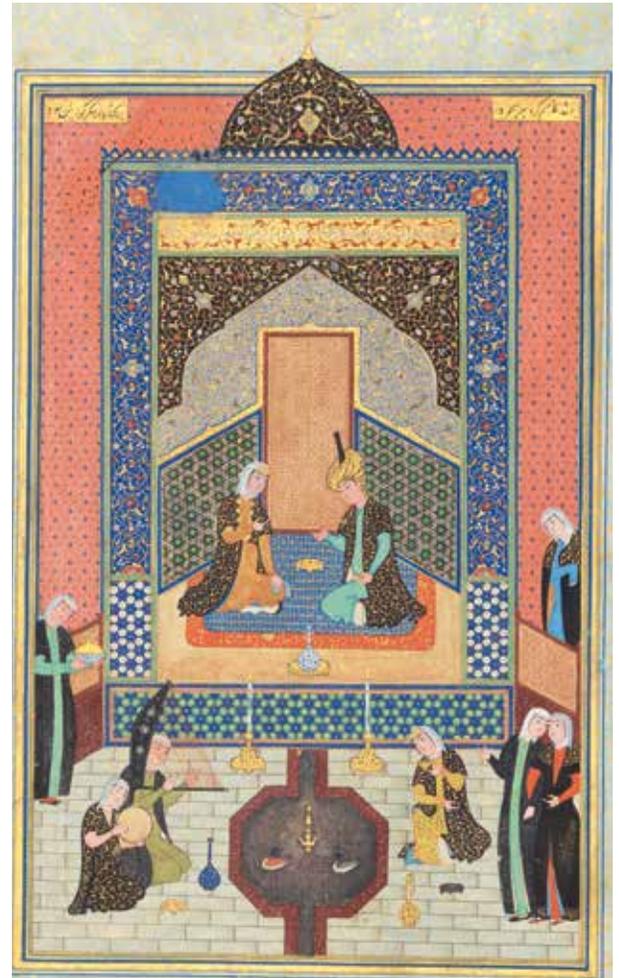
patterns. These are made to stand out by the juxtaposition of deep blue and black panels of arabesque decoration punctuated with gold cartouches. The panel above Bahram Gur and his companion reads:

تا بنای گنبد فیروزه منظر ساختند
موضع عشرتگه جانان مقرر ساختند

When they made this turquoise dome, they created a pleasure-house for lovers.²⁰

The line would seem to have been selected for its inclusion of the color word that matches the key color in the scene. Verses like this one and that in figure 1, which has obscure origins, may have been written to order by a local poet; poets were not in short supply in Iran at the turn of the sixteenth century.

Other inscriptions in this manuscript are attributable to known authors, in fact to the most famous Persian poets. A third episode from the Bahram Gur storyline is illustrated on folio 224b (fig. 3), which shows the prince in the Green Palace on Monday.²¹ As previously,



the artist has rendered key elements of the composition in the appropriate color, here jade-green. The calligraphy in the space between the palace's balcony and its main arch is a verse that can be identified. It is a line from the fourteenth-century master poet Hafiz of Shiraz; it comes from his ghazal no. 179.²² In Persian, it reads:

برین رواق زبرجد نوشته‌اند به زر
که جز نیکویی اهل کرم نخواهد ماند

On this emerald portico they have written in gold:
"Nothing shall abide but the goodness of
generous people."²³

The placement of the verse, clearly chosen for its use of the word *zabarjad* (emerald), makes a visual link not only to Nizami's subject matter, the Green Palace, but also to the use of green in the painting. The point about the goodness of generous people may be a more abstract compliment paid to Bahram Gur, but seems more likely to be a general ethical observation the reader would recognize.

Hafiz is not the only Persian poet quoted on buildings in the paintings of the manuscript. The fifteenth-century poet Jami is cited on folio 207a (fig. 4), which depicts a painting of Bahram Gur in the first pavilion he visits in the story, the Dark (or Black) Palace.²⁴ In keeping with the subject matter, the painter has rendered key elements of the composition in black, including the background color of the dome and the spandrels of the arch underneath it, the outer garments worn by the figures, and even the sounding board of the *chang* (harp) played by one of the palace's attendants. The inscription, written in white on a gold ground among red arabesques in a panel above the arch, reads:

فرخ آن محفل که شاهی را بود در وی نشست
روشن آن منزل که ماهی را بود در وی گذار

Happy is that assembly where the royal seat is placed.
And bright is that mansion over which the moon
is passing.²⁵

Perhaps curiously, the poem does not use any of the color words associated with this palace in the poetic tradition, such as “black” (*siyah*) or even “dark” (*muskhin*); the associations of nighttime evoked by the reference to the moon may have been deemed sufficiently appropriate to the Dark Palace.

A verse by Jami is also found on folio 129a (fig. 5), in the single illustration of Nizami's poem *Layli u Majnun*. The painting is a depiction of the star-crossed lovers Layli and Majnun at a school that is depicted as a mosque; a muezzin performs the call to prayer atop the building, where he is surrounded by Nizami's verses.²⁶ Next to him is a turquoise dome sitting atop an arch densely decorated with flowering arabesques on a dark blue ground. Underneath is a white-bearded teacher who appears to be quizzing a young boy about his studies, and at the ready should the student's performance (or attitude) need adjustment. Most of the school's students are engaged in reading or writing, although one has dozed off and one is chasing a schoolmate and threatening him with what appears to be a rock. It is difficult to determine just which two are Layli and Majnun, a diffusion of focus typical in Persian painting. Priscilla Soucek suggested that they are probably “the girl in brown and blue and the boy in blue [*sic*] seated opposite each other on the Persian carpet,” in part because “Layli” has a golden headdress like those worn by court attendants in Iran in this era.²⁷ It is also tempting to identify Layli as the girl in dark blue on the patio pointing to a friend's book, and Majnun as the boy in

lighter blue seated between two schoolmates and seeming to reach toward Layli, at whom he is clearly depicted as looking. His gesture of reaching toward her, restrained by his friend in a black baton-cap, may be the painter's way of indicating that he has fallen in love at first sight.

The inscription above the arch, in an elegant white script on a black background with coiling orange arabesques, reads:

معلم گو مده تعلیم بیداد آن پری رورا
که جز خوی نیکو لایق نباشد روی نیکورا

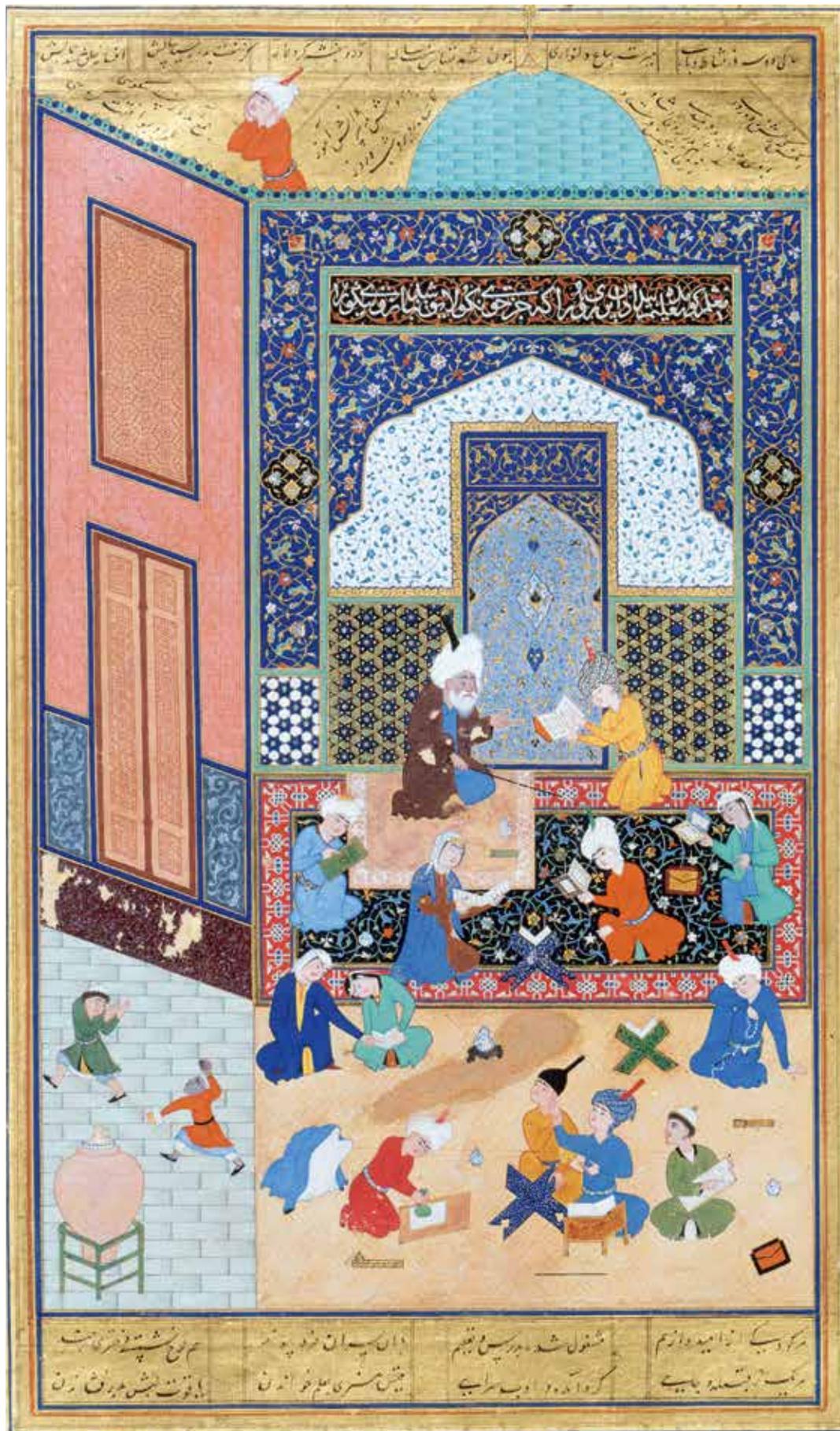
This has been translated as “O teacher, give no instruction of an unjust kind to that fairy-faced girl / Nor anything but good; for nothing else is worthy of that beautiful face.”²⁸ Interestingly, although Jami wrote his own version of the Layli and Majnun story, this line is not taken from that work. Rather, it is the first verse of an unrelated ghazal.²⁹ The reference to a teacher, however, makes it appropriate for inclusion in this scene.³⁰

A final architectural inscription in the manuscript requires closer scrutiny because its text has given rise to some mistaken interpretations. It appears in the painting on folio 213a (fig. 6), which depicts Bahram Gur in the Yellow Palace on Sunday.³¹ In white letters among gold arabesques on a blue background, the calligrapher has written:

شنیده‌ام که در این طارم زراندود است
خطی که عاقبت کار جمله محمود است

This verse has proved nettlesome for scholars working on this painting, a problem due in no small part to the prominence of the word *mahmud* in the inscription. When the manuscript was donated to the Museum, the catalogue of the bequest included this translation: “The command regarding this gold-encrusted dome has been obeyed, and the inscription, which is added, is altogether the work of Mahmud.”³² This reading, however, is not feasible. Aside from the absence in the original Persian of anything about a “command,” the more problematic point is the reading of the last word, *mahmud*. While it is a common Muslim name, it is not meant as such here; the meter and syntax of the verse make it impossible for *mahmud* to be a proper name. It should be read instead with its literal meaning of “praiseworthy” or “laudable.”³³ Further, no artist's signature would ever be this prominent; painters in the Persian tradition, when they signed a painting at all, did

fig. 5 Layli and Majnun at School. Detail of folio 129a. Ink, opaque watercolor, and gold on paper, painting 7½ × 4½ in. (19.1 × 11.4 cm); page 12½ × 8¾ in. (32.1 × 22.2 cm). (13.228.7.7)



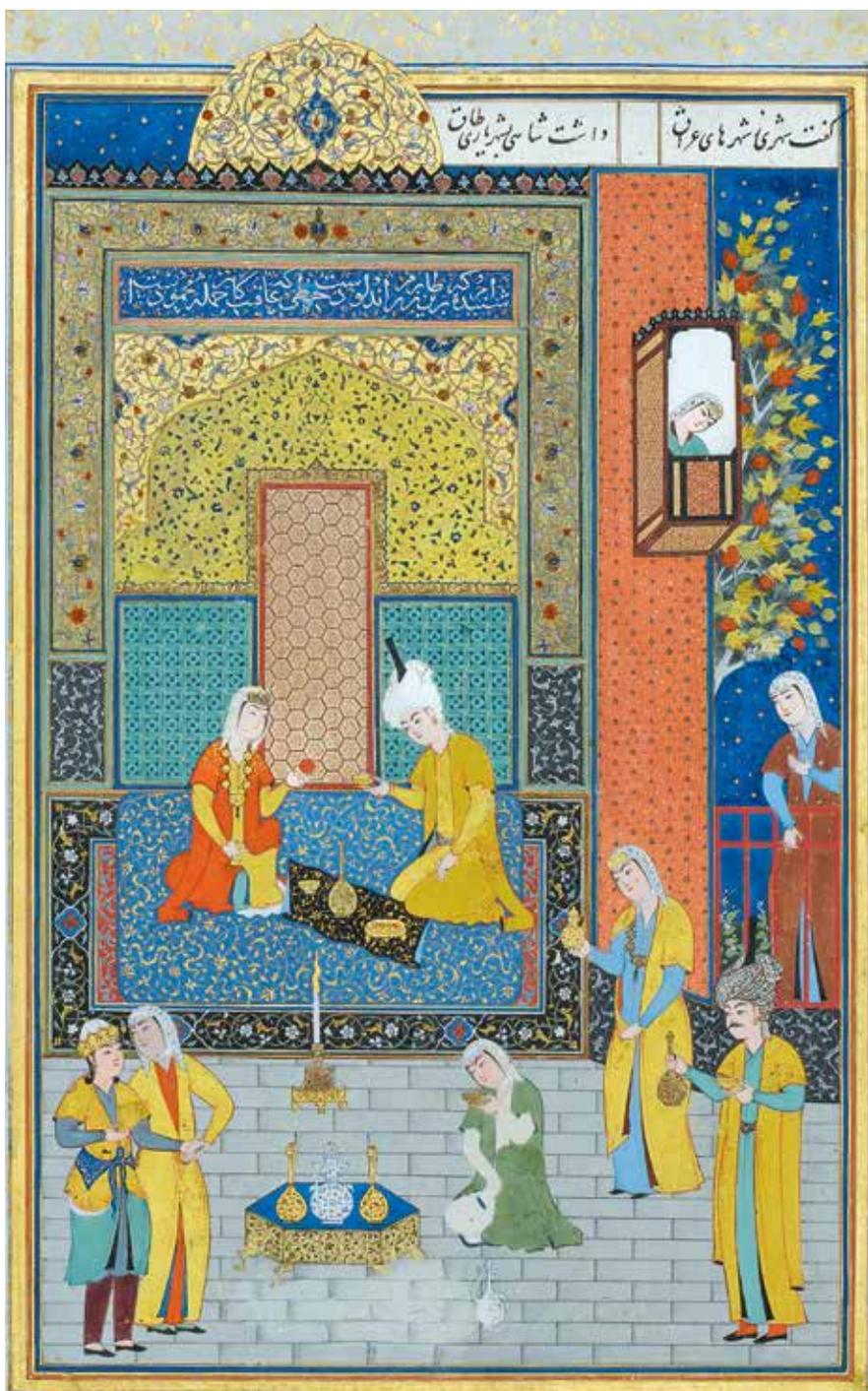


fig. 6 Bahram Gur in the Yellow Palace on Sunday. Detail of folio 213a. Ink, opaque watercolor, silver, and gold on paper, painting 7½ × 4½ in. (19.1 × 11.4 cm); page 12¾ × 8¾ in. (32.1 × 22.2 cm). (13.228.7.9)

so in highly discreet, often hard-to-find places—certainly not in a bold inscription near the center of the reader’s attention.

Priscilla Soucek, apparently aware of the impossibility of this being a signature, but continuing to read the word *mahmud* as a reference to a person, posited that the “enigmatic” inscription was meant to refer to the originator of the particular style of calligraphic script being used. Using the translation “I have heard that on this golden pavilion, there is a script which

ultimately belongs to Mahmud,” she followed the purported implication and found one Mahmud Harawi, a calligrapher mentioned in the late fifteenth-century biographical dictionary compiled by the Timurid courtier and intellectual ‘Ali Shir Nava’i.³⁴ While an improvement on the previous interpretation, the reading is still ultimately vitiated by a mistaken understanding of the Persian verse.

Taking the term *mahmud* to be an adjective and not a name, the verse may be properly translated: “I have heard that underneath this gilded dome there is writing that is ultimately altogether praiseworthy.”³⁵ As with the other inscriptions discussed thus far, it seems clear that the verse was selected for its use of an opposite word, here *zar-andud*, “gilded.” This is an apt word for the painting, as the dome of the Yellow Palace has been rendered in a brilliant gold against the dark blue background of a starry night sky. The spandrels of the arch below are gold as well, with the back wall of the palace’s interior and the figures’ clothes rendered in more or less muted shades of yellow.

The use of this line in another early Safavid painting may explain its appeal to the illuminators of the day. Folio 77b of the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp is now separated from the others (including those at The Met), and was sold at a Christie’s London auction in 1988.³⁶ The subject of the painting is “Mihrab Hears of Rudabeh’s Folly.” The page is unusually rich with architectural inscriptions, and one of them, at the top left above a gossiping woman in a window, is this same verse about praiseworthy (*mahmud*) writing.³⁷ Two of the other inscriptions praise the page itself. One is placed quite centrally, over the three chambers of the upper gallery of Mihrab’s palace. It claims that this page (*in safha*) is the envy of the fairy-house of China, that Mani himself never painted a better picture, and that the lines (*khatt*) therein remind one of the beautifully adorned faces of the fairies.³⁸ Another inscription, in the main palace chamber above Mihrab and his wife, claims that the page is the envy of the beauties of Taraz and a veritable gateway to paradise open before the reader.³⁹ The inclusion of verses like these in the painting is a form of boasting on the part of the artist(s), and it may well have been so in the *Khamsa* painting of the Yellow Palace as well. In this period, it would seem, an actual signature was frowned upon, but pride in one’s work was not, and a painter or calligrapher might cleverly insert some self-praise via poetic inscriptions.

As it happens, the “mahmud” verse can be traced to a known poet, albeit not a very famous one. The author is Kamal al-Din Isma’il Isfahani, a

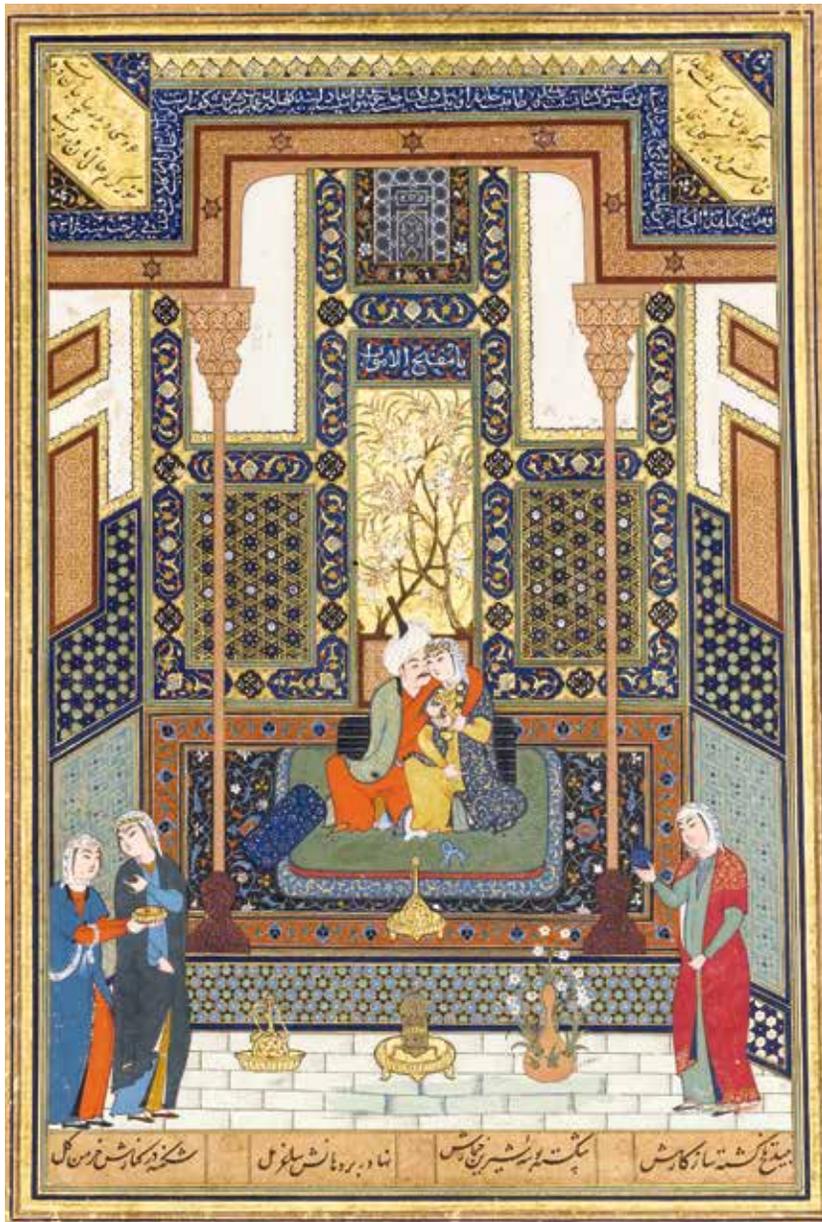


fig. 7 The Marriage of Khusraw and Shirin. Folio 104b. Ink, opaque water-color, and gold on paper, painting 7 × 4 3/4 in. (17.8 × 12.1 cm); page 12 1/2 × 8 3/4 in. (32.1 × 22.2 cm). (13.228.76)

thirteenth-century Iranian panegyrist and mystic nicknamed the “Maker of Meanings.”⁴⁰ The poem itself is unremarkable, a short meditation on the theme of generosity, both man’s and God’s. One term for generosity in Persian is *jud*, and Kamal al-Din Isma‘il wove several rhymes on it into his poem, with *zar-andud* being the one that seems to have caught the eye of whoever planned this painting.

A final, almost equally problematic inscription in the *Khamasa* manuscript is in the painting on folio 104b (fig. 7), which depicts the marriage of the historical Iranian king Khusraw II Parviz and his beloved Shirin after a long and eventful courtship.⁴¹ The two lovers are shown seated in a tender embrace inside a pavilion exquisitely decorated with geometric panels and

arabesque coils; the painter has even ventured into more verisimilitude than is usual for this period, in that he has depicted wooden pillars with elaborate capitals holding up the roof, similar to those on the portico of the seventeenth-century ‘Ali Qapu in Isfahan. A long inscription runs the length of the page from right to left, zigzagging to follow the right angles of the arch over Khusraw and Shirin. It is actually two inscriptions; the short horizontal segments at right and left form a continuous phrase in Arabic that gives the date Rajab 931 (April–May 1525).⁴² The rest of the inscription is a poem in Persian. The author appears to be unknown. The poem reads:

این طاق جانفزای فرحبخش دلپسند
نی تنگ و نی گشاده نه پستست و نی بلند
طاقیست جانفزا و بنائیست دلگشا
جانیست خوش هوا و مقامیست دلپسند
کلهها درین عمارت شیرین شکفته است
گویا که آب و خاک ویست از گلاب و قند

The verses were originally translated as: “This soul-refreshing, delightful, and most perfect vaulted recess is neither small nor large, but it is a lofty chamber of nuptial bliss, a soul-inspiring recess, a heart-entrancing mansion, a place of delightful air, a most perfect abode; the roses in this palace have blossomed out as Shirin; the mole on her cheek is like rosewater and sugar.”⁴³ This translation has formed the basis for interpretations of the painting for years.⁴⁴ However, it is faulty and requires emendation.

First, there is no mention in the poem of “a lofty chamber of nuptial bliss”; the hemistich in question reads literally, “[This arch] is neither narrow nor expansive, neither low nor high,” thus expressing the building’s perfection in terms of its correct proportionality. Secondly, the roses have not blossomed “as Shirin”; they have blossomed sweetly (*shirin* means “sweet” in Persian). And finally, what is being compared to rosewater and sugar are the water and earth (*ab u khak*) of the building itself; the word *khak* (meaning “earth”) was apparently misread as *khal* (“mole, beauty spot”). Far from being a paean to Shirin or the wedding, as some have suggested, the inscription is simply praise of the building, no doubt selected for this particular scene because it has the term *shirin* in it. Moreover, it was not necessarily written to commemorate a particular building, as the inscription is not original. This is indicated by the fact that the second verse (beginning with “soul-inspiring recess”) can also be found, with its adjectives rearranged, in an earlier copy of the

Figures 8–14, 16 are folios from the *Shahnama* (Book of Kings) of Shah Tahmasp, ca. 1535. Abu'l Qasim Firdausi (935–1020) (author). Made in Tabriz, Iran. Opaque watercolor, ink, silver, and gold on paper. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Arthur A. Houghton Jr., 1970

fig. 8 The Assassination of Khusraw Parviz. Detail of folio 742b. Attributed to 'Abd al-Samad (Iranian, ca. 1505/15–ca. 1600) (painter). Painting 11³/₁₆ × 10³/₁₆ in. (28.4 × 27.3 cm); page 18¹/₂ × 12¹/₂ in. (47 × 31.8 cm). (1970.301.75)



Khamsa of Nizami, this one dated 1494–95 and containing paintings attributed to the great artist Bihzad; the verse is written atop a building from which a man is peeking out at women frolicking in a pool.⁴⁵ It would seem that these verses in praise of a generic building were on file, so to speak, in the atelier in Herat, and were chosen for use in both of these manuscripts.

The inscriptions found in the architecture in the exquisite *Khamsa* of 1524–25 contribute to the aesthetic of connoisseurial recognition that was the pride of the cultured elite of late Timurid and early Safavid Iran. A facility for citing apt verses was prized in these circles, and the designer of the book’s paintings appears to have been playing to that taste with no small amount of his own ingenuity. In examining these pages, then, we are granted a kind of entrée, albeit at a distance, into a world of witty and clever referentiality that provides

a broader intellectual context in which to understand the exquisite painting and calligraphy they offer the eye.

In the years when this manuscript was being created, an even greater one was coming into being at the other end of the Safavid realm, and in that work we may observe a similar play with poetic references. This was the *Shahnama* made for the second monarch of the Safavid dynasty, Tahmasp (r. 1524–76).

THE SHAHNAME OF SHAH TAHMASP

This manuscript, also known as the *Shahnama-yi Shahi* or “Royal *Shahnama*,” is thought to have been commissioned in 1522 by the founder of the Safavid dynasty, Shah Isma‘il I, for his young son Tahmasp upon the latter’s return to Tabriz after several years of upbringing in Herat.⁴⁶ Although Shah Isma‘il did not live to see the



fig. 9 Parable of the Ship of Shi'ism. Detail of folio 18b. Attributed to Mirza 'Ali (act. ca. 1525–1575) (painter). Painting 12½ × 8¹⁵/₁₆ in. (31.7 × 22.7 cm); page 18½ × 12½ in. (47 × 31.8 cm). (1970.301.1)

book's completion, young Tahmasp was an avid devotee of the arts, including painting, and under his continuing patronage the book was finished over the course of at least a decade, probably more. It stands as the greatest copy of the Iranian national epic ever made, and one of the supreme works of the bookmaker's art anywhere in the world.⁴⁷

Shah Tahmasp's *Shahnama*, when complete, had 258 paintings. When the codex was broken up in the 1970s, 78 of those paintings came to the Museum.⁴⁸ The following analyses may thus be taken as a selection of a representative sample, providing an idea of the nature and quality of the now-dispersed corpus. The discussion is limited to illustrative examples from The Met's collection, with some references to paintings from the manuscript now held in other collections.

Architectural inscriptions seem to have been viewed as an important element of the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp, at least during the planning phase. Analysis of 78 paintings from this manuscript in the Museum reveals that more than a quarter of them (21) feature architecture; of these, only three of the buildings depicted have neither inscriptions nor any blank spaces left for them.⁴⁹ Folios that have spaces left blank for inscriptions that were never written include *The Wedding of Siyavush and Farangis* (fol. 185b) and *Rustam Blames Kai Kavus for the Death of Siyavush* (fol. 202b). One of the very last paintings in the manuscript, *The Assassination of Khusraw Parviz* (fol. 742b; fig. 8), has a total of seven eye-catching empty blue cartouches. Given that this painting was presumably executed late in the life of the manuscript, a process that is assumed to have taken a decade or more, one wonders whether there was a growing sense of the need to finish the book, which made touches like adding poetic inscriptions seem inessential.⁵⁰ That so many architectural inscriptions were planned in advance, though, speaks to their importance in the minds of the designers of these exquisite pages.

One is on a painting that appears early in the manuscript, on folio 18b (fig. 9), the so-called Parable of the Ship of Shi'ism. The painting illustrates a story told in the beginning verses of the *Shahnama*, in which Firdausi, by way of declaring his loyalty to the Prophet and his House, tells how God launched seventy ships (representing the various sects into which humankind would be divided) onto a wind-blown sea. The wisest choice, the poet says, is to ride in the ship "adorned like the eye of a rooster," in which Muhammad and 'Ali are to be found, and which will be saved from the storm.⁵¹

The painting depicts an imaginative rendering of three ships at sea. The main vessel, which takes up most of the scene, is indeed richly adorned, although the prow resembles a goose more than a rooster. Various figures are busily sailing the ship, climbing the mast, maneuvering with oars and poles, and so on. The ship has a prominent forecastle in the form of a pavilion in which two large figures with flaming halos, their faces veiled, sit facing each other. Two similarly veiled figures stand behind them. These four must be identified as Muhammad, 'Ali, Hasan, and Husayn, the primary holy figures of Shi'i Islam. The pavilion bears an inscription in white calligraphy on a red background:

چه غم دیوار امترا که دارد چون تو پشتیبان
چه باک از موج بحر آنرا که باشد نوح کشتیان

fig. 10 *The Iranians Mourn Farud and Jarira*. Detail of folio 236a; Mirza Muhammad Qabihat (artist); attributed to 'Abd al-'Aziz (act. first half of the 16th century) (painter). Painting 11¼ × 7⅝ in. (28.6 × 18.6 cm); page 18¾ × 12½ in. (47.3 × 31.8 cm). (1970.301.35)

The verse is widely recognized as having been taken from the prologue to the *Gulistan* of Sa'di, one of the most beloved of Persian poets. Wheeler Thackston translated the line as, "What worry can the wall of the community have when it has one like you [Muhammad] as a supporter? What fear of the waves of the sea harbors he who has Noah as his captain?"⁵² Some scholars read the text in a political light, with the reference to the ship's captain forming an implied parallel to the captain of the ship of (the Safavid) state, namely the shah.⁵³ In the absence of evidence that the metaphor of the state

as a ship, with the ruler as its captain, was in use in early sixteenth-century Iran, such claims must be viewed with skepticism. It is safer to conclude that the obvious applicability of this verse to a painting featuring a ship is logically prior to any alleged political or religious symbolism. Noah, it may be noted, is nowhere to be seen.

The ship's forecabin has no walls, but it does have a door-like entrance, above which is a panel with a mosaic pattern spelling out a second inscription arranged in square Kufic script. It may be deciphered as

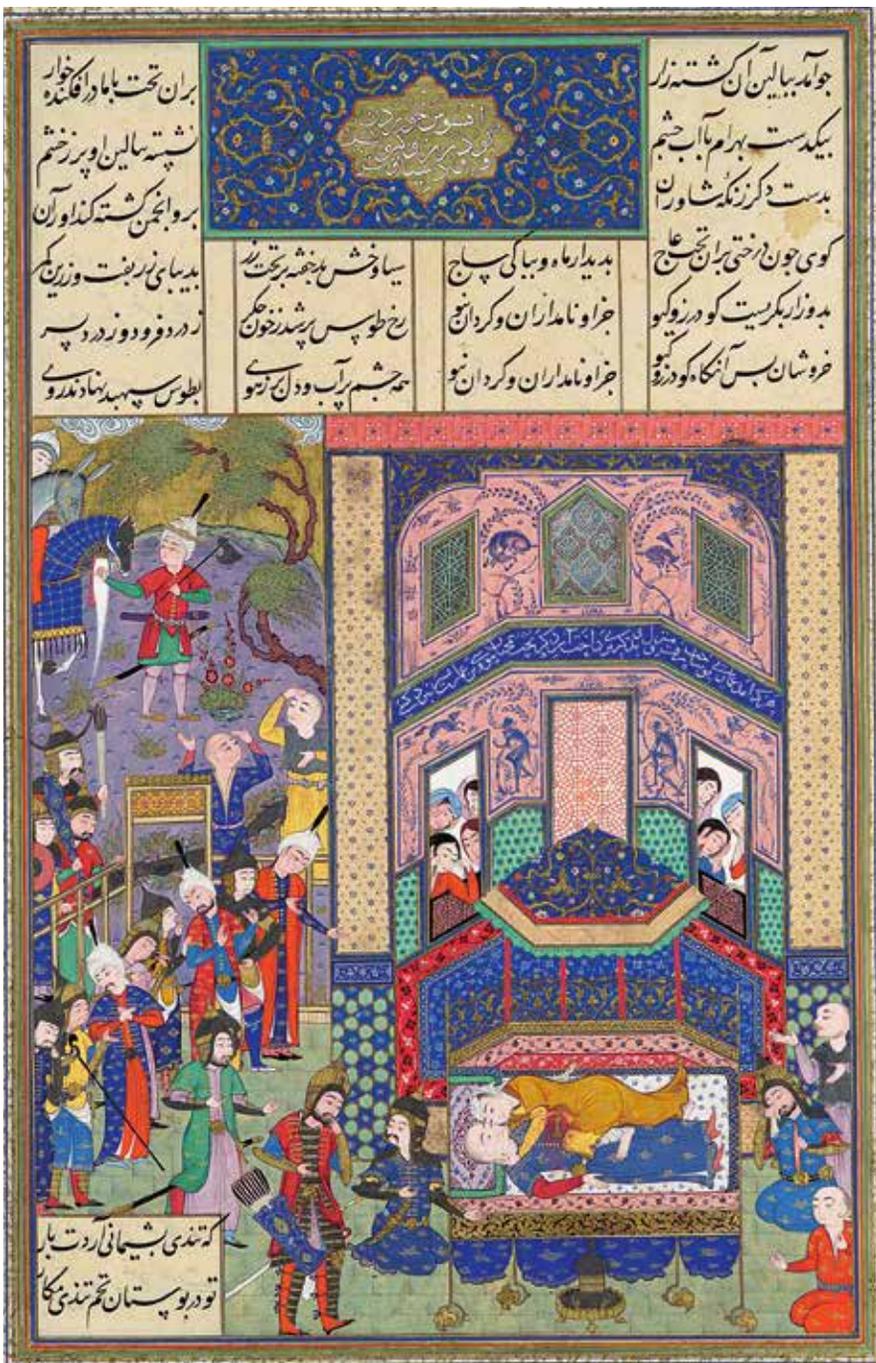
گشاده باد بدولت همیشه این درگاه

The hemistich means, "May this doorway ever be open to good fortune." It was long popular as an apotropaic inscription placed over doorways in the Persian-speaking world, both real and pictorial. It is found, for example, in other paintings in this manuscript, such as *Rudaba's Maids Return to the Palace* (fol. 71b) and *Sindukht Comes to Sam Bearing Gifts* (fol. 84b).⁵⁴ It also appears as far abroad as the Ottoman lands, including at the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul, where, among other places, it is written in gold over the entrance to the *Sünnet Odası* (Circumcision Chamber). The appearance of this inscription on the door of the "Ship of Shi'ism" is a testament to its popularity as well as to the predilection of Persian painters for placing scene-relevant texts in their paintings.

Sa'di's poetry also found its way into an inscription on folio 236a of Tahmasp's manuscript (fig. 10), *The Iranians Mourn Farud and Jarira*. Again, the citation is from the prologue to the *Gulistan*.⁵⁵ Written in a somewhat expansive hand, the white letters tumble across the blue panel inside the building where Farud and Jarira lie. The verse reads:

هر که آمد عمارتی نو ساخت
رفت و منزل بدگری پرداخت
آن دگر پخت همچنان هوسی
وین عمارت بسر نبرد کسی

Thackston translates the lines as: "Everyone who has come here has built a new structure; each departed, turning his dwelling over to another; / And that one also had desires and whims, but no one has completed this structure."⁵⁶ As a meditation on the transitoriness of life, the verse's appropriateness to a painting of a funerary gathering in a building is clear, and its well-turned philosophical expression gives deeper meaning to the anguished faces and gestures of those gathered to mourn the doomed couple.



Sa'di's poetic corpus was not the only one tapped for use in the inscriptions in this manuscript. The architecture in the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp also features verses taken from the poetry of Hafiz. The verse about the "emerald portico" and the goodness of the generous, found in the Green Palace of the 1524–25 *Khamsa* (fig. 3), seems to have been popular in early Safavid Iran, or at least in the royal atelier, as it also appears in several places in the Tahmasp *Shahnama*. Curiously, perhaps, none of these paintings contains elements resembling emerald porticos. The verse is found, for instance, in the painting on folio 183b (fig. 11), *Siyavush and Jarira Wedded*, on a panel spanning the interior of the pavilion in which Siyavush and Jarira sit.⁵⁷ The same verse is used again on the painting *Nushirvan Greets the Khaqan's Daughter*, on folio 633b (fig. 12). Here,

Hafiz's verse appears in a panel above Nushirvan's head. With its bold and sharp-edged white calligraphy, two letters high, on a black background with green arabesque tendrils and naturalistically colored flowers, the panel is visually striking in its architectural setting, the palette of which is mainly lapis blue and light brown or salmon pink (making the red of the two doors stand out strongly). Contrary to the wording of the verse, there is no emerald green on this portico, other than the border of the inscription panel. Perhaps the verse was merely intended as a reference to the generosity expected of rulers, including those in the story.

Hafiz's line appears once more on folio 83b (fig. 13), *Mihrab Vents His Anger upon Sindukht*, where it is displayed on the horizontal panel atop the palace in which a cross-looking Mihrab addresses Sindukht.

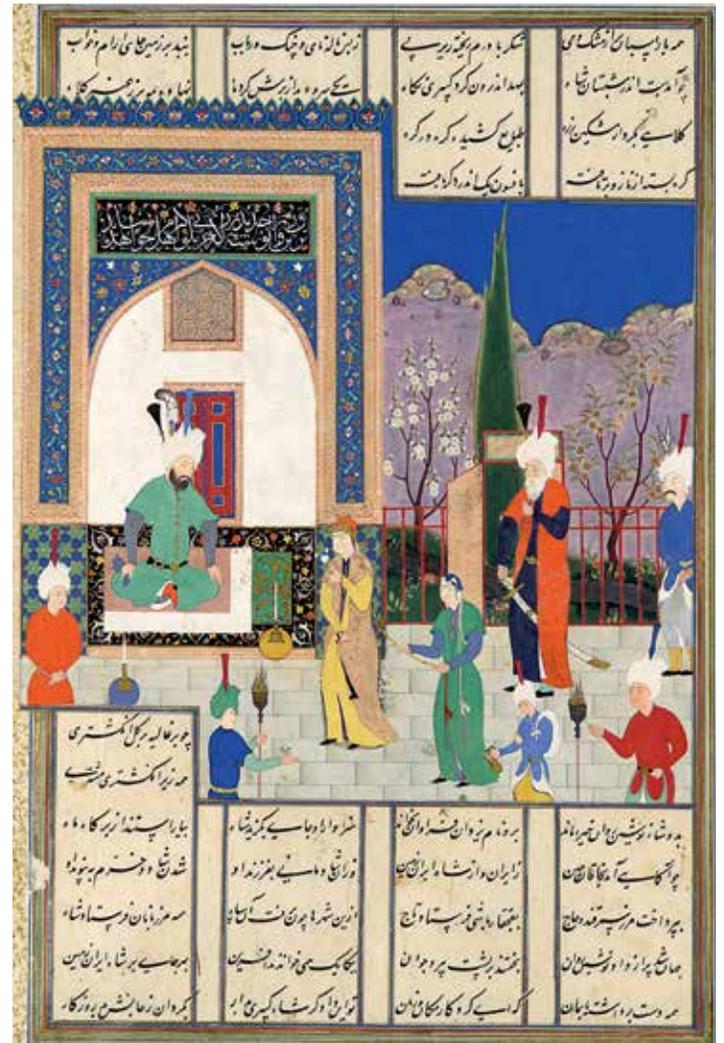


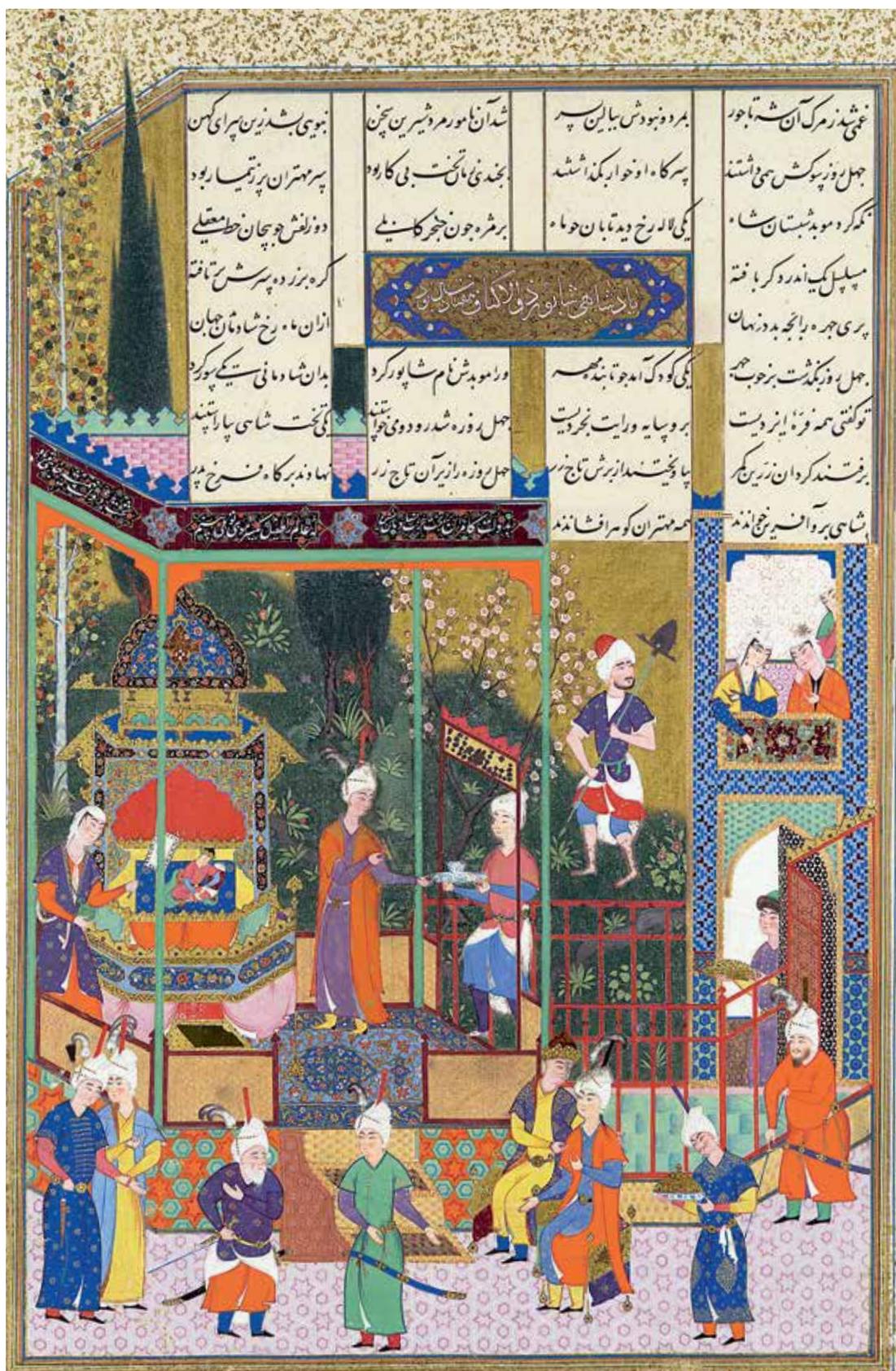
fig. 11 *Siyavush and Jarira Wedded*. Detail of folio 183b; attributed to 'Abd al-Vahhab (painter); Mir Musavvir (act. 1525–1560) (workshop director). Painting 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 8 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (28.3 × 21.7 cm); page 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 12 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (47.3 × 32.1 cm). (1970.301.27)

fig. 12 *Nushirvan Greets the Khaqan's Daughter*. Detail of folio 633b; attributed to Dust Muhammad (ca. 1490–ca. 1565) (artist). Painting 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 7 in. (18.7 × 17.8 cm); page 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 12 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (47.3 × 31.6 cm). (1970.301.70)

fig. 13 *Mihrab Vents His Anger upon Sindukht*. Detail of folio 83b; attributed to Qadimi (act. ca. 1525–1565) and attributed to 'Abd al-Vahhab (painters). Painting 10¹⁵/₁₆ × 7⁷/₈ in. (27.8 × 18.1 cm); page 18¹/₂ × 12⁷/₈ in. (47 × 31.6 cm). (1970.301.11)



fig. 14 Coronation of the Infant Shapur II. Detail of folio 538a; attributed to Muzaffar 'Ali (act. late 1520s–1570s; d. ca. 1576) (painter). Painting 13¼ × 8⅞ in. (33.7 × 22.1 cm); page 18⅞ × 12½ in. (47.1 × 31.8 cm). (1970.301.59)



In addition to this verse, the painting has a second Hafiz verse, in the palace's inner chamber. The verse comes from ghazal number 411:⁵⁸

شاه‌نشین چشم من تکیه‌گه خیال توست
جای دعاست شاه من بی تو مباد جای تو

My eye's royal seat is the resting-place of your image; /
It is a place of prayer—O my king, let not your place
be empty!

The relevance of the verse to its pictorial context is easier to discern, placed as it is in the building where the king is, in fact, seated.⁵⁹

Two verses of Hafiz are also found on the now-dispersed folio 89b of this manuscript, *Sam and Zal Welcomed into Kabul*.⁶⁰ The painting depicts the two men, accompanied by a host of horsemen dressed in typical Safavid garb, approaching a city, where they are welcomed by locals bearing gifts. A large inscription directly above the city's arched entrance has the first line of Hafiz's ghazal no. 397:⁶¹

ز در در آ و شبستان ما منور کن
هوای مجلس روحانیان معطر کن

Come in the door, and make our bed-chamber bright;
perfume the air of the assembly of lovers.

Above it, a panel over a window next to a balcony displays in smaller script the first line of ghazal no. 34:⁶²

رواق منظر چشم من آشیانه توست
کرم نما و فرود آ که خانه خانه توست

The portico of my eye's pupil is your dwelling place;
be generous and dismount, for my house is your house.⁶³

Both of these verses contain words appropriate to the scene, such as “door,” “portico,” and “dismount”—the last being the most clever inclusion, since Sam and Zal are shown on horseback.

It is possible to conclude, then, that Sa'di and Hafiz were valued as sources for the inscriptions on buildings in the *Shahnama* made for Shah Tahmasp. Notably, in contrast to the *Khamsa* of 1524–25 examined above, no verses by Jami are found in this manuscript. This is likely due to the fact that both Shah Isma'il and, after him, Shah Tahmasp were said to feel a strong antipathy toward Jami—Isma'il supposedly ordered Jami's tomb

razed, and Jami's nephew, the poet Hatifi, complained that Shah Isma'il had people go through manuscripts of poetry and change the dot in Jami's name wherever it occurred, so that instead of جامی (Jami) it read خامی (Khami), meaning “raw” or “immature.”⁶⁴ Tahmasp, for his part, reportedly banned the reading of Jami's poetry on pain of death, and was talked out of burning the poet's bones only at the last minute.⁶⁵ Both monarchs were apparently under the impression that Jami had written anti-Shi'ite verses. Jami, then, seems to have been persona non grata in Tabriz. In Herat, though, where he had been a figure of major importance,⁶⁶ he retained enough of his reputation that his verses were inserted in the paintings of a volume of Nizami.

One of the painting-internal inscriptions in the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp seems particularly mysterious at first. The painting on folio 538a (fig. 14) depicts the coronation of the Iranian king Shapur II, who took the throne as a mere infant upon the death of his father. True to the story, the painter has depicted the new shah as a tiny figure wearing a miniature crown. He sits on an elaborately decorated, multitiered, bejeweled throne on a hexagonal base. Some courtiers mill about as others come to bring gifts; meanwhile, the infant king's nurse waves a fan to keep him comfortable. The throne area is sheltered by a four-posted pavilion, the crenellated roof of which carries three inscription panels with white letters on a black background with flowering arabesques. Two of these panels bear generic expressions of good wishes for the new shah. The rightmost inscription reads:

بدولت کامران تخت عزت شادمان نشین

It may be translated as “Successful in your fortune, sit happily on the throne of glory!” The pendant to this inscription, in the leftmost panel, reads:

تخت دولت همیشه جای تو باد

May the throne of state [or: fortune] ever be yours!

While these two panels are germane to a coronation scene, it is the curious central panel that is of particular interest. The hemistich reads:

که عالم‌را طفیل یکسر موی تو می‌بینم

By itself, this means, “[For] I see that the world [is but] a speck, upon one strand of your hair.”⁶⁷ At first glance, this hemistich seems out of place: it is clearly the second half of a verse, but the panel to its right does not

contain the first half, nor are the other two inscriptions even recognizable as poetry, as distinct from simple good wishes. The meaning of the central hemistich, too, is difficult to understand, in the sense that the verse is an expression of mystical devotion, a meaning not appropriate to the infant in the painting. The logic of the inscription's presence becomes less mysterious when we consider that the third word in the hemistich, *tufayl*, can also be read as the Arabic diminutive form for the noun *tifl*, "child." A "little child" is exactly what Shapur is in this scene. Notably, this is not what the word means in its poetic context; the reader would likely be expected to see it in proximity to the infant king and, prompted by the visual context, make the connection himself. It appears that the designer of the page selected this verse for the punning visual link between an element of the iconography and the calligraphic decoration of the scene, adding an enjoyable jolt of recognition for those who noticed it.

This particular verse seems to have been known to royal artisans in Safavid times. Evidence comes

from a series of metal lamp stands of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The presence of this verse (with more of its original context) on Safavid metalwork was pointed out by A. S. Melikian-Chirvani in an early article, as well as in his seminal book on Iranian metalwork.⁶⁸ Melikian-Chirvani identified the author of this hemistich as the relatively obscure eastern Iranian poet Ahli Turshizi, who died in 1528.⁶⁹ The full poem reads:

چراغ اهل دل را روشن از روی تو می بینم
همه صاحبان را روی دل سوی تو می بینم
توئی سلطان عالم کم مبادا از سرت موئی
که عالم را طفیل یکسر موی تو می بینم

I see the lamp of the true believers is illuminated by your presence; / All the true believers, I see them turn their hearts toward you; / You, O Sultan of the World, may not even a single hair fall from your head; / [For] I see that the world [is but] a speck, upon one strand of your hair.⁷⁰

fig. 15a Engraved lamp stand with chevron pattern, dated A.H. 986/A.D. 1578–79. Attributed to Iran. Brass; cast, engraved, and inlaid with black and red pigment, H. 13¼ in. (33.7 cm); Diam. (base) 6⅝ in. (16.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1929 (29.53)

fig. 15b Engraved lamp stand with interlocking circles, probably 16th century. Attributed to Iran. Brass; cast, engraved, and inlaid with black compound, H. 11⅞ in. (30.1 cm); Diam. (base) 7¼ in. (18.4 cm); Diam. (rim) 4 in. (10.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Joseph W. Drexel, 1889 (89.2.197)



The lamp imagery Ahli Turshizi invokes is common in Sufi poetry, indeed in Islamic mysticism generally, but this particular poem, for reasons that remain unclear, became fashionable in the ornamentation of Safavid metalwork. It is found on a new type of metalwork that appeared during the mid-sixteenth century, the “pillar” candlestick or torch stand (*mash'al*), a tall cylindrical lamp with a spreading foot. The earliest dated example of such a torch stand, on which is engraved (among others) this verse from Ahli Turshizi, is a large (90 cm high) one in Mashhad dated 1539.⁷¹ The type, often adorned with Ahli Turshizi’s verse among others, remained popular in Safavid metalwork through the seventeenth century. The Museum holds three such examples; two are shown in figures 15a, b.⁷²

In addition to metalwork, Ahli Turshizi’s poetry found its way into other Safavid works of art. Two paintings from the sixteenth century, one in Los Angeles and the other in London, feature figures sitting on carpets on which a verse by Ahli Turshizi is legible—though in these instances the verse speaks, appropriately enough, of a carpet (*farsh*), not a lamp (*chiragh*).⁷³ Ahli Turshizi evidently held the respect of the principals in the workshops and ateliers of Safavid Iran, or at least enough to prompt the inclusion of his verses in objects that survive to this day.

The poetical quotation over the infant Shapur’s throne in the Tahmasp *Shahnama* (fig. 14), then, affords a glimpse into the world of early Safavid art and artists, linking poets, painters, and metalworkers. We can even appreciate the fortunes of a specific individual. Ahli Turshizi was from Khurasan, in eastern Iran, and spent the early part of his career in Herat at the court of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. After that prince’s death, the poet moved west to Tabriz and ingratiated himself at the court of the newly established Safavid dynasty—a journey also made by numerous painters who joined the Herati style of painting to that of Tabriz.⁷⁴ If he died in 1528, and the Tahmasp *Shahnama* was begun in 1522 or 1524, Ahli Turshizi may well have lived to see a fragment of his writing included in the greatest illuminated manuscript project ever undertaken in Iran. Moreover, his verse lived on for many decades in the decoration of engraved brass candlesticks.

Thus far the poetic verses placed in these paintings may be seen as part of the aesthetic of connoisseurship and appreciative examination that prevailed in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries at the courts of Timurid and Safavid Iran. The inscriptions seem to have been inserted as details that linked them to a broader

sphere of culture with which the consumers of the manuscripts would be expected to be familiar, including the works of great Persian poets and more recent figures like Ahli Turshizi. The domain of references inhabited by these inscriptions was well established and circumscribed. One last painting, though, may go beyond the boundaries of literary recognition and touch on current events. This is folio 80b of the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp (fig. 16).

The subject is “Manuchihr Welcomes Sam but Orders War upon Mihrab.” Manuchihr, the ruler of Iran, and the paladin Sam sit conversing and enjoying wine and music in a palace with four prominent text panels. The largest of these is the frieze at the top. It includes two inscriptions, one in large white letters and a smaller one in gold letters woven into the verticals of the former. The gold letters are in Arabic, and are excerpted from the Qur’an, verse 2:127:⁷⁵ “And remember Abraham and Isma’il raised the foundations of the House (with this prayer): ‘[Our Lord!] Accept (this service) from us: For Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-knowing.’”⁷⁶ The white letters among which the Qur’an verse is nestled are also in Arabic and read:

تَيْمَنًا بِاسْمِ الْمَلِكِ الْعَلِيِّ الْأَعْلَى الْعَالِيِّ الْمُتَعَالَى

Auspiciously in the name of the supernal, the supreme, the sublime, the superlatively divine king.⁷⁷

The inscription is remarkable not merely for the cascade of fulsome adjectives, but for the fact that all four of them are based on the Arabic root ‘-l-y, from which is derived the name ‘Ali, First Imam of Shi‘i Islam and the figure to whom the early Safavids, Shah Isma‘il in particular, were passionately devoted. The play on the letters ‘-l-y would have been immediately apparent to a contemporary Safavid reader and undoubtedly interpreted as an expression of Shi‘i piety.

Strikingly, however, it can be shown that this formula was known to and used by Sunnis as well, in fact long before the Safavid dynasty even existed. It is found atop the mihrab of the Green Mosque in Iznik, Turkey, albeit in slightly truncated form (the term “auspiciously” and one of the adjectives have been left out). The Green Mosque bears a plaque stating that it was built in A.H. 780–794 (A.D. 1378–1392). The founder was Hayreddin Pasha, also known as Çandarlı Kara Halil, grand vizier to the Ottoman sultan Murad I; when Hayreddin Pasha died in 1387, his son finished the mosque.⁷⁸ The Ottomans, famously, were staunch

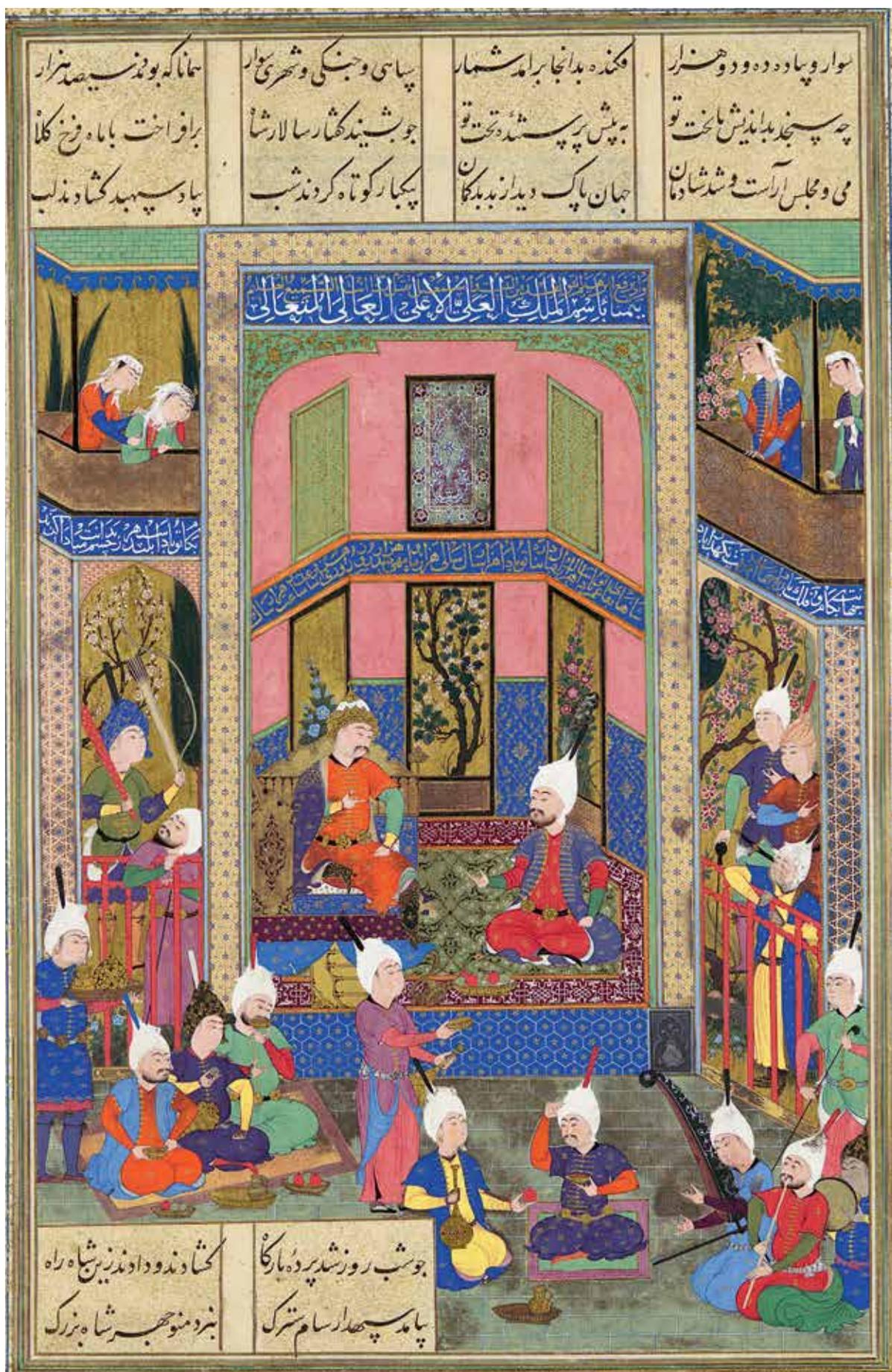


fig. 16 Manuchihr
Welcomes Sam but Orders
War upon Mihrab. Detail
of folio 80b. Attributed to
'Abd al-'Aziz (act. first half of
the 16th century) (painter).
Painting 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ × 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (28.1 ×
18.4 cm); 18 $\frac{9}{16}$ × 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(47.1 × 31.8 cm)

Sunnis, to whom excessive devotion to ‘Ali was anathema; it was one of the official grounds on which they later excoriated the Safavids and justified their wars with them, not to mention their oppression of the Safavids’ supporters and coreligionists in Anatolia. Nor, of course, is ‘Ali the one to whom any inscription over a mihrab would be devoted. To the Sunni Ottomans, it seems, the supernal king invoked by this formula was God. The specifics of Hayreddin Pasha, his own ideological context, and his patronage of this mosque require further investigation.

Returning to the painting in the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp, the juxtaposition of the name Isma‘il in one inscription with the multiple plays on the name ‘Ali in its pair quite possibly indicates a connection to the original patron of the manuscript.⁷⁹ As mentioned above, it is thought that this *Shahnama* was commissioned in 1522 by Shah Isma‘il I as a lavish gift for young Prince Tahmasp. If so, Isma‘il was at once the founder of the “house” of the Safavid dynasty as well as the one responsible for the existence of Manuchihr’s “house” on this painted page. His affinity for, indeed self-identification with, the Imam ‘Ali⁸⁰ makes the juxtaposition of the two inscriptions even more resonant.

The other inscriptions in Manuchihr’s palace are united around the theme of good wishes for the king. Along the wall of central space where Sam and Manuchihr sit is an inscription in gold on blue that reads:

شاهای بقای عمر تو بادا هزار سال و اقبال در پناه تو بادا هزار سال
سالی هزار ماه و مهی صد هزار روز و روزی هزار ساعت و ساعت هزار سال

O king, may your life last a thousand years, and may you spend those thousand years as the shelter of good fortune; may every year last a thousand months, and every month a hundred thousand days, and every day a thousand hours, and every hour a thousand years!

At right, three attendants wearing Safavid baton-turbans look through a gated arch. The panel above it contains the following couplet:

جهانت بکام و فلک یار باد
جهان آفرینت نگهدار باد

May the world be as you desire, and the heavens your friend; may the Creator of the world preserve you!⁸¹

Finally, at left, an archer and his companion stand within a doorway topped by a panel with another couplet:

بکام تو بادا سپهر بلند
ز چشم بدانت میادا گزند

May the celestial sphere be as you desire; may the evil eye cause you no harm!

Unlike most of the other inscriptions considered here, these three do not appear to have been chosen for the clever juxtaposition of a single word with a clearly discernible referent in the painting. The panels instead possess a thematic unity unusual in groups of image-internal texts: they are all good wishes directed at the king. It is conceivable that all the inscriptions are intended to be read as existing in the world of the painting, where the king Manuchihr sits surrounded by texts inviting the beneficence of God and Fate. Alternatively, however, and more in keeping with the evidence from other paintings, these inscriptions may be intended for the reader, and their consistent message of wishing auspicious fortune may be meant for the benefit of the beholder.

Who might this have been? Given the purported chronology of the manuscript, the painting may have been under way in 1524, when Shah Isma‘il died and Tahmasp ascended the throne. As noted by Eleanor Sims,⁸² the only dated painting in this *Shahnama* is found well into the manuscript, on folio 516b, where an inscription mentioning the year A.H. 934/(A.D. 1527–28) appears above the arch over the lovemaking couple in *Ardashir and the Slave Girl Gulnar*.⁸³ The prominent placement of Isma‘il’s name on folio 80b (fig. 16), in context of having “raised ‘the House,’” might then mark the passing of the dynastic founder and originator of the manuscript itself, while the good wishes to the shah in the other inscriptions would be for the benefit of the newly installed young Tahmasp, a known bibliophile and, at least while he was young, enthusiastic patron of his court atelier. The inscriptions would then not be aimed at a generic or anonymous reader, but at the actual boy-king who frequented the workshop (in fact, a mobile studio in a tent) where his masterpiece was taking shape under the hands of his artists.⁸⁴ A nearby page in the manuscript (the aforementioned folio 77b) similarly features the Qur’an citation with Isma‘il’s name. Might these two pages mark the point at which the throne passed from the original patron of the manuscript to his bibliophile son?

CONCLUSION

Classical Persian manuscript painting was, at root, an art for aristocrats. Those who moved in princely circles were expected to develop skills of observation, recognition, and connoisseurship to go along with the privilege they enjoyed of viewing these exquisite and inherently private objects. Paintings made in a context of such expectations are, first and foremost, demonstrations of virtuoso skill, made for people who could appreciate details like the inclusion of an apposite verse.

The assumption of such connoisseurial appreciation may even have formed the basis for a kind of in-group amusement. Simpson, in her discussion of a minuscule signature she discovered in a later manuscript, hypothesizes that in hiding his signature, the artist was playing a game with his patron, possibly anticipating that he would “let out a great eureka of astonishment” when he discovered the inscription.⁸⁵ Those contemporaries who were lucky enough to turn the pages of the 1524–25 *Khamsa* of Nizami or the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp may or may not have cried “Eureka,” but it is surely plausible to think that a smile of recognition crossed their faces when they noticed, embedded in a painted building, a line from a poem they knew, beautifully written and judiciously chosen for the scene in which it was found.

This play with texts within images is on full display in the peak flowering of the classical style of Persian painting under the late Timurids and early Safavids, and the two manuscripts examined here contain many of the finest examples. The tendency continued for a while under Shah Tahmasp, as can be seen in manuscripts like the Freer Jami and the *Khamsa* made for Tahmasp in 1539–43. After that ruler’s “repentance” and concomitant rejection of the arts, the conditions under which such exercises could flourish were lost as artists left his court and went to work for patrons with different sets of standards and expectations. As the decades passed, the particular combination of literary sophistication and painterly skill that gave rise to the interweaving of poetry and painting, the play with expectation and recognition, faded. Architectural inscriptions continued to appear for a while in Bukharan painting, but they never became part of Mughal or Ottoman painting, while Safavid painting of the seventeenth century developed in different directions as well. Manuscripts like the *Khamsa* of Nizami and the *Shahnama* of Shah Tahmasp examined here are thus left to us as traces of an especially rich period in Islamic art history.

BARRY WOOD

Assistant Professor, Dixie State University, St. George, Utah

NOTES

- 1 For example, the painting dubbed the *Wedding Night of Humay and Humayun* from the *Khamsa* of Khwaju Kirmani made in Baghdad in 1396 includes an inscription in Arabic praising the building, another inscription in Persian, and a signature by the artist; see Grabar 2009, pl. 32, and Sims 2002, pl. 114.
- 2 For example, see the inscription atop a building in a manuscript of the *Gulistan* of Sa'di now in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Sims 2002, pl. 52), or the inscription running along the length of the fortress walls in the painting *Isfandiyar Slays Arjasp in the Brazen Hold* in the Baysunghur *Shahnama* (Gulistan Palace Museum, Tehran, MS 716; *ibid.*, pl. 90); for more on this understudied manuscript, see Hillenbrand 2010.
- 3 See the reproductions on the University of Cambridge Shahnama Project website, <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:179045746>, or on the University of Cambridge Digital Library, <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-RAS-00239-00001/1>.
- 4 The manuscript is dispersed, but images from the first half may be seen on the University of Cambridge Shahnama Project website, <http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:996690996>.
- 5 Sims 2002, p. 57.
- 6 See, for example, the double-page frontispiece reproduced in Grabar 2009, pls. 24, 25.
- 7 See Roxburgh 2005, no. 201 (a double-page painting from the *Divan* of Sultan Husayn Bayqara including a lengthy inscription beginning on a pavilion and continued on a tent on the following page) and no. 205 (a painting from the *Khamsa* of 'Ali Shir Nava'i depicting a learned gathering, with a couplet from Hafiz over the arch of the building in the garden in which the men sit).
- 8 As noted in Sims 2002, p. 57.
- 9 Grabar 2000, p. 136.
- 10 See Wood 2002, pp. 165–92, especially pp. 187ff.
- 11 Simpson 1998b. See Simpson 1998a, especially p. 108, where she briefly discusses the architectural inscriptions in a Freer Jami painting (Freer | Sackler, 46.12, fol. 120a).
- 12 Richard Ettinghausen in Chelkowski 1975, p. viii.
- 13 A detailed description of the entire manuscript may be found in Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, pp. 58–67.
- 14 This information is taken from *ibid.*, pp. 64–67.
- 15 As suggested in *ibid.*, p. 65.
- 16 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 69ff.
- 17 See *ibid.*, pp. 106–9.
- 18 My translation makes slight corrections to that given in Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, p. 66: “My eye had slight ambition and even that has been washed away by tears. I have therefore made this house for thee plain white throughout.” The word for “melancholy” is the same as the word for “black” (*sawda*), which may also be a play on how much black the painter includes in the “White” Palace.
- 19 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 95–100.
- 20 My translation improves slightly upon that given in Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, p. 66: “The foundation of this turquoise dome they have laid and have made a place to entertain the lovers together.”
- 21 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 83–88.
- 22 This is the number under which it is listed in Hafiz Shirazi 2013, as well as at <http://ganjoor.net/Hafiz/ghazal/sh179>.
- 23 In some versions this verse begins *darin* rather than *barin*; the variation (“in this” versus “on this”) makes no difference to the meaning. My translation slightly alters the one in Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, p. 66. Dick Davis translates the line much more elegantly (2013, p. 113): “In words of gold they’ve written / on the emerald sky, / ‘Only compassion does not die / but stays like this.’”
- 24 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 73–79.
- 25 Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, pp. 65–66. This line is cited as an example of the poetic use of the word *manzil* in Dehkhoda’s great Persian dictionary; see <http://www.parsi.wiki/fa/wiki/topicdetail/251f2c686759460284a73c8735a8313b>.
- 26 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 49–65.
- 27 Soucek 1975, p. 18.
- 28 Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, p. 65.
- 29 Afsahzad 1999, vol. 1, p. 213 (Jami’s *Fatiha al-Shabab*, ghazal no. 44).
- 30 Soucek (1975, p. 18) notes that the verse’s theme is unrelated to Nizami’s text and “appears rather to be a commentary on the painting itself,” a judgment with which I concur.
- 31 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 79–83.
- 32 Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, p. 66.
- 33 “Praised” and “laudable” are, indeed, the first two meanings listed under this word in Steingass’s definitive dictionary of Persian, only then followed by “a proper name” (Steingass 1930, p. 1190).
- 34 Soucek 1975, p. 19.
- 35 I am indebted to Wheeler Thackston for his help with this line.
- 36 Christie’s London 1988, pp. 26–27, lot 8.
- 37 The first word has been changed from “[I have] heard” to “[It is] written.” This appears to create a metrical problem, which the scribe may not have realized.
- 38 Mani, the historical founder of the Manichean religion in the third century A.D., was famous in Islamic lore for his extraordinary skill as a painter. This verse also appears on the base of Faridun’s throne on the now-dispersed folio 35a of the same *Shahnama* (Falk 1979, pp. 16–17, no. 3).
- 39 According to Steingass 1930, p. 811, Taraz is the “name of a city on the confines of China, celebrated for the comeliness of its inhabitants and the excellence of its musk.”
- 40 For the verse, see <http://www.nosokhan.com/library/Topic/1MNP>, accessed October 1, 2017, part of an online edition of the *Kashkul* of Shaykh Baha’i, a seventeenth-century compendium of anecdotes and verses. For background on Kamal al-Din Isma’il Isfahani, including extensive references, see Durand-Guédy 2010.
- 41 See Chelkowski 1975, pp. 21–45.
- 42 وقد واقع كتابة هذه الكتابة في رجب سنة ٩٣١
- 43 Williams Jackson and Yohannon 1914, p. 65.
- 44 See, for example, Soucek’s entry in Ekhtiar et al. 2011, p. 198.
- 45 British Library, Or. 6810, fol. 190a; reproduced in Grabar 2000, p. 106, fig. 55, and, on a larger scale, in Grabar 2009, p. 111. The scene is taken from the tale of the princess in the White Palace; see Chelkowski 1975, p. 108.
- 46 This is the prevailing theory, first expressed in Welch 1976 and, in greater detail, in Dickson and Welch 1981. Sheila Canby suggests (in Ekhtiar et al. 2011, p. 203) that Shah Isma’il, whose descent into the alcoholism that killed him was terminal by 1522, would not have ordered a manuscript like this *Shahnama*, and that the book was instead commissioned by Tahmasp upon his accession to the throne in 1524, perhaps at the urging of his painting teacher, Sultan Muhammad.
- 47 See Dickson and Welch 1981. See also Canby 2011, a deluxe facsimile produced by The Met to commemorate the epic’s

- millennial anniversary; a smaller version was published as well (Canby 2014).
- 48 Thompson and Canby 2003, p. 84.
- 49 The three are folios 174a (*Kai Kavus Upbraids Siyavush in a Letter*, MMA 1970.301.25), 535a (*Hurmuzd I's Last Testament to Prince Bahram I*, MMA 1970.301.58), and 602b (*Nushirvan Promulgates His Reforms*, MMA 1970.301.68). Some of the most ambitious renderings of architectural structures in the manuscript, such as the city of Kirman in the painting *Haftvad and the Worm* (now in the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto) and the tyrant's palace in *The Nightmare of Zahhak* (now in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha), also have no spaces left for any text.
- 50 Eleanor Sims also observes the effect of a hectic production schedule, noticing that "Towards the middle of the volume the need to produce many illustrations at great speed appears to have dictated a pictorial formula," resulting in some "compositionally banal, even boring" paintings. Sims 2002, p. 64.
- 51 For a detailed analysis of this painting and of others depicting the same subject, see Shani 2006.
- 52 Thackston 2008, p. 2.
- 53 Shani 2006, pp. 28–29.
- 54 For the former, see <https://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/452115>; for the latter, see Christie's London 1988, p. 20, lot 5.
- 55 See <https://ganjoor.net/saadi/golestan/dibache/>.
- 56 Thackston 2008, p. 5.
- 57 A second prominent inscription, over a doorway right of center, reads simply, "Happiness and health to its owner."
- 58 See <https://ganjoor.net/Hafiz/ghazal/sh411/>.
- 59 There are two more smaller inscriptions at the right, forming sections of the decorated area above the door in which a bearded guard is standing. They read:
- در خزانه رحمة بقفل حكمة بود
زمان دولت ما درسيد در واشد
- The door of the treasury of mercy was padlocked with wisdom. / The time of our good fortune arrived, and the door was opened.
- (I thank Wheeler Thackston for untangling this inscription for me.) The verses are not by Hafiz, and seem to be anonymous. They were likely chosen for their reference to a door, and perhaps as well for the satisfaction they offered to the reader who could decipher these difficult inscriptions.
- 60 The painting is now in a private collection, but was reproduced on the cover of Falk 1979.
- 61 See <https://ganjoor.net/hafez/ghazal/sh397/>.
- 62 See <https://ganjoor.net/hafez/ghazal/sh34/>.
- 63 This last line also appears in another classic early Safavid manuscript, the *Divan* of Hafiz in the Harvard Art Museums (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, 1999.300.2), where it is used to illustrate a painting featuring an "Incident in a Mosque."
- 64 Jamali 1997, p. 72.
- 65 Dickson 1958, p. 190.
- 66 Jami enjoyed tremendous prestige and influence in the last decades of his life, becoming virtual ruler (as part of a "triumvirate" including also Sultan Husayn Bayqara and 'Ali Shir Nava'i) of Khurasan; see Losensky 2008.
- 67 Translation given by Denise-Marie Teece in Ekhtiar et al. 2011, p. 237, no. 163.
- 68 Melikian-Chirvani 1974, especially p. 557; Melikian-Chirvani 1982, pp. 326–27, no. 148.
- 69 For a brief entry on Ahli Turshizi, see Browne 1924, pp. 233–34. There is a short mention of the poet, with sample verses, in the early Safavid anthology compiled by Shah Tahmasp's brother Sam Mirza; see Dastgirdi 1935, pp. 107–9.
- 70 Translation given by Teece in Ekhtiar et al. 2011, p. 237, no. 163.
- 71 Melikian-Chirvani 1982, p. 263.
- 72 The third object is MMA 91.1.573.
- 73 A painting attributed to the painter Mir Sayyid 'Ali, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (M.90.141.1). *Barbad Playing before Khusraw*, in the *Khamsa* of Nizami made for Shah Tahmasp in 1539–43, The British Library, London (Or. 2265, fol. 77b); Soudavar 2008, pp. 265–66. Sam Mirza's entry on Ahli Khurasani, as he calls the poet, includes this verse among the examples provided (in Dastgirdi 1935, pp. 107–9).
- 74 As argued in Welch 1976 and Dickson and Welch 1981.
- 75 I have used the Yusuf Ali translation. The inscription actually omits the word "Our Lord!" (*rabbana*), for which reason I have put it in square brackets. The inscription also omits the particle *'innaka*. Neither of these omissions materially affects the meaning.
- 76 The same Qur'anic verse appears in folio 77b, *Mihrab Hears of Rudabeh's Folly*, cited above; on folio 77b it is fairly prominent, being the topmost inscription on the page, but it is not intertwined with any other inscription.
- 77 I thank Wheeler Thackston for help with the beginning of this inscription. The rest of it is taken from the translation provided in Dickson and Welch 1981 (accompanying vol. 2, pl. 66). See Wood 2002, p. 216.
- 78 See "Yesil Cami, Iznik, Turkey," Archnet.org, accessed October 1, 2017, <https://archnet.org/sites/2039>.
- 79 See Wood 2002, p. 200.
- 80 For Isma'il's self-identification with 'Ali and the ways in which Tahmasp dealt with his messianic inheritance, see Babayan 2002, especially chap. 9.
- 81 The same couplet appears on folio 86b, *The Shah's Wise Men Approve of Zal's Marriage*, on the king's throne.
- 82 Sims 2002, p. 63.
- 83 The painting, now in the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art (MSS 1030.8, fol. 516b), is reproduced in Thompson and Canby 2003, p. 102, no. 4.18.
- 84 *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.
- 85 Simpson 1998a, p. 113. She also aptly notes that the artist may have been "indulging in one-upmanship" with another artist, exactly the kind of in-group self-referentiality characteristic of this kind of aesthetic.

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QUINCY NGAN

The Significance of Azurite Blue in Two Ming Dynasty Birthday Portraits

A pair of seated portraits from the late Ming dynasty (1368–1644) in The Metropolitan Museum of Art depicts an elderly husband and wife wearing similar garments rendered in layers of azurite blue (figs. 1, 2). An inscription on the male portrait identifies the artist as Ruan Zude, the sitter's great-grandnephew, and asserts that the work was created for the subject's eighty-fifth birthday in either 1561 or 1621.¹ The robes in both paintings resemble those seen in contemporaneous portraits of Ming dynasty officials and match descriptions of the garments such officials were legally compelled to wear during their leisure time.² Ruan's use of azurite to depict his relatives' robes not only offers a glimpse into the materiality of this natural mineral pigment but also prompts an investigation into a trend then current among ordinary Chinese citizens for adopting the sartorial styles of ranked officials. To decipher the relationship

fig. 1 Ruan Zude (Chinese, 16th or early 17th century). Ming dynasty (1368–1644). *Portrait of the Artist's Great-Granduncle Yizhai at the Age of Eighty-Five*, 1561 or 1621. Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk, image 61¾ × 37¾ in. (156.8 × 96.2 cm). Inscribed at upper left are the title, date (*xinyou* [1561 or 1621]), and artist's seal. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Seymour Fund, 1959 (59.49.1)

fig. 2 Ruan Zude. *Portrait of an Old Lady*, 1561 or 1621. Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk, image 61¼ × 37½ in. (156.8 × 96.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Seymour Fund, 1959 (59.49.2)





GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS' ROBES IN THE LATE MING DYNASTY

The couple portrayed in the Metropolitan Museum's paintings wear robes resembling *zhong jing fu* (the robe of loyalty and [self-reflection] in quietude), a garment that government officials were required to wear during their leisure time (fig. 3). In the portraits, ink-rendered cloud patterns can be seen through the azurite pigment. A badge with crane patterns adorns the woman's robe, signifying a government position of the first and highest rank.⁵ The man's waist is encircled by a blue belt, its two hanging ends nearly reaching the hem of his robe. According to an imperial edict issued in 1527 and recorded in *Da Ming hui dian* (The collected statutes of the Ming dynasty) in 1587, government officials were to wear casual attire made of

deep blue (*shenqing*) gauze woven from ramie threads. The robes of officials in the first to the third ranks should have cloud patterns. The robes of other officials should have no pattern at all and should be trimmed in a deeper blue. Both the front and back of the robes should carry a badge with an animal motif indicating the official's rank. The inner garment should be jade-colored. Following ancient custom, the belt has no pattern; its exterior should be blue, and its trim, green. Blue shoes with blue-green ropes and white socks should be worn.⁶

between azurite and clothing in the Museum's two portraits, this article explores the production and consumption of government officials' robes in the Ming era. The portraits' celebratory function occasions a consideration of birthday paintings, a distinct genre in Chinese art comprising works customarily given as gifts to the elderly on their birthdays. In addition, an examination of the symbolism of azurite, one of the most expensive and versatile pigments in traditional China, deepens our understanding of one of the least studied subjects in Chinese painting: color.³

While the present study relies heavily on visual evidence from paintings and artifacts, a wide range of textual material helps to explain the complex relationships of azurite, birthday paintings, and the robes of government officials. Sumptuary laws of the late Ming dynasty are one such resource. *Jin Ping Mei* (*The Plum in the Golden Vase*), an early seventeenth-century novel famous for its explicit eroticism and detailed descriptions of material culture—notably, clothing—in the late Ming dynasty, is another.⁴ Finally, contemporaneous writings about the birthday-painting genre, together with Ming records reflecting the prized status of azurite, have proved invaluable.

During the Ming dynasty, men and women of all classes—aristocrats and eunuchs to ordinary citizens—were known to wear garments unsuited to their rank and social status.⁷ *Zhong jing fu* was intended to counter this practice, specifically among government officials who dressed in expensive, ostentatious clothing during their free time, competing with one another and dishonoring their respected offices.⁸ Issued to government officials, the edict requiring the wearing of *zhong jing fu*, which was modeled on ancient ceremonial attire, criticizes the absence of rules regulating the casual dress of government officials.⁹ It reads, in part: "Early emperors of the Ming dynasty designated different court and ritual robes to register different ranks of government officials. . . . Lately, clothing is becoming strange. There is no distinction between high and low. How can this stabilize the heart of people under heaven?"¹⁰ The decree was clearly intended to differentiate government officials from civilians and to identify their ranks at a time when people of all classes were eagerly following the latest fashions, often overstepping social boundaries in the process.¹¹

The design of the new robe soon became known to the public. Eight months after the edict was issued,

fig. 3 Illustration showing robe known as *zhong jing fu*. From Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian* (1964 ed., p. 1065)

fig. 4 Illustration showing kerchief worn by Ming dynasty scholars (1368–1644). From Wang Qi, *Sancai tuhui* (1988 ed., p. 1502)



Prince Zhu Chongrang submitted a proposed amendment to Emperor Jiajing (1507–1567; r. 1521–67), twelfth emperor of the Ming dynasty, requesting that the decree be amended. The prince observed that Jiajing had awarded certain members of the royal family the right to wear *zhong jing fu*, and he pointed out that royal family members were not government officials.¹² He asked that more royals be allowed to wear the robe and suggested that ornaments be added to their hats to distinguish them. The emperor acceded, and Zhu's suggestions became law. In addition, and more importantly, Jiajing authorized generals and teachers of Confucian doctrine to wear the robe, effectively exposing not only the elite but a large portion of the population to the new design.¹³ Clearly, the emperor did not foresee the adverse repercussions these

new measures would have. By authorizing several segments of the population to wear *zhong jing fu* and disseminating the garment's design, the emperor was in fact introducing a new mark of social status. This aspect of *zhong jing fu* was likely what made the robe most appealing to Ruan Zude and his elderly sitters.

Tellingly, not all the sartorial elements in the Museum's birthday portraits conform to the regulated design of the attire. The man's robe, for example, lacks a rank badge, and his shoes are red, not blue. Furthermore, his hat—a black kerchief with back flap—is of the informal sort worn by commoners and scholars (fig. 4).¹⁴ Finally, neither his nor his wife's robe is trimmed at the sleeves.

Although women were barred from holding government positions, the chief wife (*mingfu*) of a government official was authorized to wear the robe and badge associated with her husband's rank. In the early Hongwu era (1368–98), state law required the ceremonial robe of a *mingfu* to be red and embroidered with a double-pheasant pattern. Beginning in the twenty-fourth year of the Hongwu era (1391), the formal robes of a *mingfu* were either blue or red and embroidered with a bird pattern that was associated with her husband's rank.¹⁵ The official daily attire (*changfu*) of a *mingfu* corresponded to the design of her husband's robe, the color of which was determined by rank.¹⁶ Since the robe in the woman's portrait is blue and features a cloud pattern, it is *zhong jing fu*. However, her belt, worn below the badge, is mismatched: it was a component of an official's working garb (*gongfu*).¹⁷ The couples' eclectic attire and its nonconformity with state law make it clear that the sitters are not a government official and a *mingfu*.

The trend for wearing *zhong jing fu* is captured by the poet, scholar, and politician Wang Shizhen (1526–1590) in *Gu bu gu lu* (*About a Goblet Not Being a Goblet*), a treatise critical of mores that were perceived to be disrupting social norms:¹⁸

Those rich families who use money to buy government positions—their children do not know a thing. They speak like babies. They often wear the purple-yang kerchief and the robe of government officials' casual attire (*Zhong jing fu*). They walk carrying scrolls inscribed with poems and letters under their arms. All call themselves "Yulin" (Li Panlong, 1514–1570) and "Boyu" (Wang Daokun, 1525–1593). And when one asks for more details, it turns out that they have never met Li or Wang.¹⁹

Zhong jing fu was worn, then, not just by government officials and authorized others but by young men whose wealthy fathers had bought government



fig. 5 *Ximen Foolishly Presents His New Wife, Mistress Ping, to His Worthless and Bibulous Guests* from the album of illustrations to *Jin Ping Mei* (*The Plum in the Golden Vase*), late 17th century. Chinese, Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Album leaf; ink and color on silk, 15% × 12% in. (39 × 31.4 cm). Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Purchase, the Mrs. Kenneth A. Spencer Fund (F80-10/4)

positions for themselves.²⁰ They wore the robe with ill-assorted garments, such as the purple-*yang* kerchief, recalling the husband's head covering in the Museum's portrait. It is reported in *Ming shilu* (Veritable records of the Ming dynasty) that military officials under the emperor Yingzong (1427–1464; r. 1435–49, 1457–64), sixth and eighth emperor of the Ming dynasty, failed to follow the rules governing their attire; they wore garments with patterns (*huayang*) unsuited to their rank and adopted sleeve and headgear designs from foreigners.²¹ The 1527 edict announcing the design of *zhongjing fu* decried the fact that the python-dragon (*manglong*) pattern, which the emperor Jiajing had awarded to government officials who had made exceptional contributions to the state, was seen on women's robes.²² Examples such as this compare to the hybrid assortment of official garments in the Museum's birthday portraits. Judging from the elderly couple's clothing, the sitters shared their contemporaries' taste for luxury.

Late Ming texts reveal that women of lower status, such as prostitutes and wives of officials' retainers, were among those who wore badges on their robes.²³ The scholar Zhang Jinlan points out that this violation of protocol is parodied several times in the novel *The Plum in the Golden Vase*. In one instance, a wife of the main character desires a robe adorned with a badge showing the mythical creature Qilin even though the motif is reserved for princes and sons-in-law of the emperor.²⁴ A seventeenth-century illustrator of *The Plum in the Golden Vase* heightened the book's satirical edge by departing slightly from the description of a wedding scene in which the bride of the vain, boorish protagonist is said to wear "a full-sleeved robe of scarlet variegated silk."²⁵ Rather than adhering strictly to the text, the illustration shows the bride dressed in a government official's red robe, complete with a badge (fig. 5). This intentional visual discrepancy serves to underscore the class tension parodied in the novel and spotlights women's role in provoking it.²⁶ As noted by the late Ming author Ye Mengzhu, clothing worn by women in the private inner chambers of their households could not be regulated by law.²⁷ This might explain why women who were not authorized to wear robes with badges were more likely than their male counterparts to do so and why, in the Museum's birthday portraits, the wife's robe, but not the husband's, is adorned with a badge.

While it was technically illegal to wear robes unsuited to one's status, in reality, the sumptuary laws were toothless. Recurring criticism by literati and government officials indicates that the practice was pervasive.²⁸ In the late Ming period, the scholar and critic Shen Defu (1578–1642) reported that relatives of the emperor, eunuchs, and wives and daughters of the educated dressed in a manner inconsistent with their social positions when traveling and meeting with others. Senior government officials were often indifferent to such behavior.²⁹ Customs that defied sumptuary laws were widespread at the time and thus invited little opposition. Wedding ceremonies of ordinary civilians, for example, were modeled on those of government officials. According to the *Ming shi* (History of the Ming dynasty), composed in the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), grooms were permitted to wear garments resembling the robes of government officials of the ninth rank. They could also choose to wear the daily attire (*changfu*) worn by all officials.³⁰ It is certainly conceivable that ordinary men and women who married during the late Ming dynasty might have worn robes similar to those of government officials

fig. 6 Imperial Court overvest, 1595. Chinese, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), reign of Emperor Wanli (1572–1620). Silk satin embroidered in canvas stitch and satin stitch, and overembroidered in silver and gold couching. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Museum purchase, City Arts Trust Fund (1990.214)

on other celebratory occasions—such as birthdays—as well.

The seventeenth-century scholar Ye Mengzhu observed that magnates “took pride in wearing clothing designed to resemble the garb of government officials. Those who could not afford to do so were ashamed of themselves. Even the moderately rich would spend most of the wealth they had accumulated during the year on such clothing.”³¹ Ye adds that by the Chongzhen period (1611–44), the taste for extravagance had become ubiquitous.³² Magnates would have found *zhong jing fu* particularly appealing: the robe not only suggested the prestige of high office but also advertised the wearer’s ability to afford the luxurious, elegant fabric from which it was made.

Weaving ramie threads, a material often used in the clothes of government officials and the imperial

family, into gauze was a complicated, labor-intensive process.³³ According to *Tian gong kai wu* (The exploitation of the works of nature), gauze could be woven only on a treadle loom.³⁴ To produce gauze with patterns, one worker was needed to operate the figure tower at the top of the loom while another attended to the drawer board and rigid rods. Frequent mention is made in *Da Ming hui dian* of gauze woven from ramie threads. These garments were costly, as the Ming official Wang Qiao informed his son, who had just assumed a government post. The elder Wang advised the younger to reuse the robes woven of red ramie threads that he himself had worn.³⁵

Through the ages, delicate ramie fabric has stirred the imagination of poets. A poem in *Gu Yuefu* (Six Dynasties poems) declares plain white ramie to be as precious as the moon and as light as a silver-colored cloud.³⁶ The Song poet Dai Fugu (1167–1248) compares the textile’s weft and warp to clouds and jade, respectively. For Dai, the fabric is as clear as ice.³⁷ It is easy to imagine how pleased the sitters in the Museum’s birthday portraits would have been to see themselves depicted wearing this marvelous material. Their robes, however, were an emblem of the social tensions that roiled the late Ming dynasty. As the upstanding civil servant Lü Kun (1536–1618) lamented, “Nowadays, merchants, laborers, and farmers all dress like the royal family, eunuchs, and government officials.”³⁸

PORTRAITS AS BIRTHDAY GIFTS

In Ruan Zude’s day, gifts of clothing figured prominently in birthday celebrations. A garment made in 1595, probably for the fiftieth birthday of Empress Dowager Li (1544–1614), is an opulent example (fig. 6).³⁹ Another is described in *Sui shi yi wen* (The lost text from the history of the Sui dynasty), a late Ming picaresque novel by Yuan Yuling.⁴⁰ In the narrative, the protagonist is instructed by his master to send numerous birthday gifts to the duke of Yue. Among them, ten garments of the highest quality, in five colors and with gold threads, must be made to order—a task that requires considerable time. Nonetheless, the master insists that the rest of the gifts, including a birthday scroll painting, not be sent without these custom-made articles of clothing, indicating their importance. Clothing and paintings were quintessential birthday gifts for the rich and powerful; that such presents were among those chosen for the duke is not surprising.⁴¹ The Museum’s portraits, showing the sitters in costly robes, are thus indexical of not one but two kinds of birthday gifts that were popular at the time.





fig. 7 Detail of Portrait of the Artist's Great-Granduncle Yizhai at the Age of Eighty-Five (fig. 1) showing swastika pattern incorporated into an interlocking H pattern on the sleeve of the sitter's inner garment



fig. 8 Line drawing of imperial ceremonial robe (detail). Chinese, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), reign of Emperor Wanli (1572–1620). Gold threads, peacock feathers, overall 53 1/8 × 92 1/8 in. (135 × 234 cm). Dingling Museum, Beijing

fig. 9a, b Textile patterns of peonies and chrysanthemums depicted in (a) Portrait of the Artist's Great-Granduncle Yizhai at the Age of Eighty-Five (fig. 1) and (b) Portrait of an Old Lady (fig. 2)



The term *shòutu* (birthday painting), which appears in Ruan's inscription on the husband's portrait, denotes a time-honored painting category with a great variety of themes.⁴² Birthday paintings recorded in *Xuanhe huapu* (Xuanhe painting catalogue), the twelfth-century inventory of the painting collection of Emperor Huizong (1082–1135; r. 1100–26), the eighth emperor of the Song dynasty, include hanging scrolls inscribed with auspicious characters—*shòu* (longevity), *fu* (blessing)—and phrases. The inventory also lists textiles embroidered with cypress trees (evergreens, symbols of longevity) and figures representing the eight immortals in Chinese folklore, the King Father of the East, and the Queen Mother of the West.⁴³ Paintings with titles similar to those recorded in the Xuanhe catalogue appear in the sixteenth-century *Tianshui bingshan lu* (Record of heavenly water and ice mountains), an inventory of the confiscated property of the government official Yan Song.⁴⁴

Although the Museum's portraits do not contain such easily recognizable symbols of longevity, subtle pictorial elements show that they are birthday gifts. The left sleeve of the husband's robe falls back to reveal an inner garment with a whirling swastika pattern incorporated into an interlocking H pattern (fig. 7).⁴⁵ *Wan*, the Chinese word for "swastika," is a homophone of "ten thousand." A ceremonial robe from the tomb of Emperor Wanli features vertical columns of repeat-pattern embroidery in which swastikas appear above the character *shòu* (fig. 8). This pairing,

which also occurs in the husband's portrait, forms a rebus denoting the greeting *wanshou* ("ten thousand [years of] longevity").⁴⁶ Next to the patterned inner garment, the sitter's hand emerges to grasp the belt. "Hand" in Chinese is *shǒu*, which sounds similar to "longevity" (*shòu*). Thus, it would seem that Ruan Zude used the pattern on the inner garment to imply "ten thousand [years of] longevity," indicating that the portrait is a birthday painting.

Other patterns, too, hint at the paintings' auspicious function. For instance, the couple sit on chairs covered with a textile patterned with blossoming peonies against a background of meandering vines (fig. 9a, b). In Chinese culture, peonies symbolize nobility and wealth.⁴⁷ Chrysanthemums, long-lasting flowers often paired with peonies in Ming textiles, also appear in the design.⁴⁸ *Ju*, the Chinese character for chrysanthemum, is pronounced like *zhu*, meaning "to express good wishes"; thus, the pairing of chrysanthemums and peonies may have an auspicious meaning that resonates with the themes of wealth and birthday celebration.⁴⁹

The Immortal Zhang Guolao, a fifteenth-century painting with motifs related to longevity and birthdays, features a deity in a blue robe colored with azurite, like the robes in the Museum's portraits (fig. 10). Now in the National Palace Museum in Taipei, the work features the immortal Zhang under a robust tree that has sprung from a mountain cliff.⁵⁰ More than a dozen peaches, symbols of immortality, hang from the branches that

fig. 10 Chinese, Ming dynasty (1368–1644). *The Immortal Zhang Guolao*, 15th century. Hanging scroll; ink and colors on silk, 72¾ × 41 in. (183.8 × 104.1 cm). The Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei



bend down toward the immortal. Interestingly, Zhang's right hand is disproportionately large. This motif reinforces the painting's subject matter: the Chinese word for *hand*, as mentioned above, sounds similar to the word for *longevity*. A crane, a bird often associated with immortals in traditional Chinese culture, is depicted amid the bamboo stalks, its head turned to the right, toward the deity.⁵¹ The trim of Zhang's outer garment is patterned with cranes and clouds. Importantly, the badge on the wife's robe in the Metropolitan Museum's portrait also bears a crane motif (see fig. 2). While such a badge is properly associated with government officials of the first rank, the crane is also associated with immortals and is therefore an auspicious motif for a birthday painting, as demonstrated in *The Immortal Zhang Guolao*.⁵² Thus, the crane in the wife's portrait can be understood as an allusion to her birthday.

Few inscribed birthday portraits have come down to us from the Ming dynasty, making the Museum's

male portrait exceptionally rare. However, many of the texts (sometimes known as "prefaces") inscribed on those portraits were collected and published in their day and have survived to provide important insights into the Museum's paintings. Although the published inscriptions were written by literati, and although Ruan Zude and his sitters apparently were not members of the elite class, there are good reasons for relating the published prefaces to the Museum's portraits. Modern scholars agree that during the second half of the Ming dynasty, social boundaries eroded to such an extent that people of lower social standing could well have adopted the gift-giving etiquette of the upper class.⁵³

The Museum's portraits belong to the tradition in which an elderly woman's birthday was celebrated together with her husband's. In Ruan's time, prefaces to *shuang shou tu* (double birthday paintings) were composed and inscribed by members of the learned elite on the front of paintings. Subsequently published in anthologies, the texts were a literary genre unto themselves. The prefaces indicate that most double birthday paintings were portraits. A richly informative example is the politician and scholar Qiu Jun's preface to a series of poems inscribed on a pair of birthday paintings for a Mr. Wang, from Lujiang. Qiu reports that Wang is eighty years old and that his wife is sixty.⁵⁴ The husband's birthday was on the twenty-seventh day of the sixth month, whereas his wife's was in the twelfth month. Although their birthdays were six months apart, the wife's portrait was made when their son commissioned a portrait for his father's birthday. Qiu observes that it was rare for a son to be able to celebrate the birthdays of his elderly parents together, and that it was a priceless occasion in this case because of the couple's long shared experience. Before being presented to the son's parents, the portraits were circulated among his friends, who inscribed poems dedicated to each recipient on the front of the paintings. Qiu anticipates that Wang will feel comforted when he sees the magnificent paintings, with their elegant, caring poems, and when he senses the filial piety of his son.⁵⁵ In another preface, this one for a double birthday painting, the government official Wang Shunmin (d. 1507) advises an elderly couple to "play" (*wan*) with their portrait and have a singer chant the poems inscribed on the work.⁵⁶

Descriptions of clothing worn by sitters in double birthday paintings have not come down to us, yet the celebratory nature of the genre suggests that couples would have been depicted in their finest garments. Descriptions of birthday portraits with a single sitter



have survived, however, and may be presumed to shed light on the genre as a whole. One such description was left by Ni Qian, a government official, who was asked to write a preface on a birthday painting portraying their mutual friend Zhang Yiyun. When shown Zhang's portrait, Ni saw that the subject was clearly a man of virtue: he was depicted wearing a tall hat and ample robe, seated in a grove of bamboo, reading the classics.⁵⁷ Zhang's birthday portrait, like others we know only through written descriptions, presented an idealized image of its subject. It would seem reasonable, therefore, for Ruan Zude to have idealized the appearance of his great-granduncle and his wife, depicting them dressed in luxurious *zhong jing fu*. The couple may even have owned such robes and worn them at their birthday celebration.

THE SYMBOLISM OF AZURITE IN THE TWO PORTRAITS

Although the Museum's portraits have not been analyzed scientifically, it is probable that the blue pigment present in the two birthday portraits is azurite (*shiqing*—literally, “stone blue”). The material is unevenly applied. Particles of the pigment, both fine and coarse and with no obvious amalgamation of other colors, are dispersed across the robes. This granular substance could not be the plant dye indigo, which would have been absorbed more evenly and deeply into the silk support.⁵⁸ Scientific analyses have revealed that the blue pigments used in ancient Chinese murals, such as

those found in the Mogao Caves, were azurite, lapis lazuli, and atacamite.⁵⁹ Atacamite, which is greenish-blue, cannot have produced the true blue in the Museum's portraits. The pigment used was most likely azurite.⁶⁰ In the painting treatises of Ruan's time, azurite, rather than lapis lazuli, was cited as the source of the color blue.⁶¹

To Ruan Zude and his contemporaries, azurite would have seemed the best choice for rendering the splendid blue of *zhong jing fu*. The hue of the actual garment was achieved by soaking its fabric in an indigo infusion mixed with lime.⁶² In the portraits, the robes' sensuous shine is imparted by the opaque and slightly iridescent azurite particles that accumulate on the painting's surface.⁶³ Indigo dye, which was frequently used in Chinese scroll painting, produces a comparatively uniform surface effect.⁶⁴

Azurite, a copper carbonate, is a unique mineral in the traditional Chinese worldview. According to Li Shizhen's sixteenth-century pharmaceutical manual *Bencao gangmu* (Compendium of materia medica), copper, after absorbing *qi*, the energy of the universe, evolves into various forms of *qing* (blue rock) that differ in shape and geographic origin but not in substance. It was recognized, for example, that *kongqing* (empty blue), a form of azurite usually composed of hollow, circular agglomerations, was considered to be the same mineral as *cengqing* (layered blue), which is flat and layered.⁶⁵

fig. 11 Qiu Ying (Chinese, 1494–1552). Ming dynasty (1368–1644). *Lady on Riverbank*, ca. 1500–22. Fan; ink and colors on gold-flecked paper, overall 12¼ × 24¼ in. (31.1 × 61.2 cm). Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Docent Council Subscription Fund (B81D38)

fig. 12 Zhou Lun (Chinese, late Ming dynasty). Ming dynasty (1368–1644). *Rabbit under the Moon*. Hanging scroll; ink and colors on silk, 63 × 34 3/4 in. (159.9 × 87.2 cm). Seikado Bunko Art Museum, Tokyo



Azurite is closely associated with longevity and immortality. The term *xian* refers to a stage of being in which aging is halted—the ultimate goal in the cult of immortality.⁶⁶ The alchemist Tao Hongjing (456–536) asserted that *kongqing* was the most effective medicine for curing eye and kidney diseases and a key substance for refining age-defying elixirs.⁶⁷ Tao's theory was still current one thousand years later, when it was published by Li Shizhen in *Bencao gangmu* (Compendium of materia medica).

Ruan Zude's artistic contemporaries were clearly aware of azurite's symbolic meaning and used the mineral, as both a pigment and a depicted object, to convey concepts such as lastingness, transcendence, and immortality. In the sixteenth-century master Qiu Ying's *Lady on Riverbank*, now in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco (fig. 11), a huge rock, its blue color provided by a thin wash of azurite, stands beside an elegant

female figure. Qiu portrays the painting's intended recipient, who is identified in the work's Chinese title as the "Transcendent woman of the sweet olive grove." Several pictorial motifs invoking this epithet make the work a *biehao tu*, or sobriquet painting, a popular genre in the Ming dynasty.⁶⁸ The sweet olive grove is depicted in recognizable fashion. The gender of the recipient and her high social status are represented by the exquisitely dressed court lady and the architectural features visible beyond the river. The largest element in the composition, however, is the azurite rock, which partly overlaps the sweet olive tree and, by its prominent size and placement, indicates the recipient's transcendence.

Shiqing azurite was also employed in *Rabbit under the Moon*, by the late Ming painter Zhou Lun (fig. 12).⁶⁹ The image shows a rabbit in a landscape filled with boulders colored by thin washes of azurite and malachite. Perched on the largest boulder, the rabbit gazes attentively at the moon. Above the rabbit, flowers and a sweet olive branch extend from the left side of the composition. These pictorial elements allude to a legend of a rabbit who prepares an elixir of immortality on the moon in the presence of a sweet olive tree. The tale was widely disseminated in late Ming popular culture and must have been known by Zhou Lun and his contemporaries. The sixteenth-century writer Wu Cheng'en, for example, was surely familiar with it. In his novel *Journey to the West*, Wu mentions the Moon Rabbit and a woman named Chang'e who, after ingesting an elixir, ascended to the moon and became a goddess.⁷⁰ In a poem, Wu describes a rabbit turning in circles when it finds a mortar and pestle used for making medicine. Wu's narratives clearly draw strong connections between the rabbit and elixirs.⁷¹ Ming dynasty viewers acquainted with folklore would have recognized in *Rabbit under the Moon* the medicinal powers attributed to azurite as well as its symbolic associations with lastingness, transcendence, and immortality.

Lady on Riverbank, *Rabbit under the Moon*, and the Museum's two portraits exemplify the use of azurite in Ming dynasty painting. The imposing rock beside the female figure, the boulder on which the rabbit sits, and the robes of the two sitters are all colored with this mineral pigment. Each of these motifs enjoys a dominant position in the composition.⁷² Ruan Zude's portraits, their compositions nearly engulfed by the subjects' blue robes, rely heavily on the communicative power of azurite and take full advantage of its symbolic value to indicate lastingness and immortality. The azurite on the robes channels good fortune and attests to the function and meaning of the portraits as birthday gifts.

Beyond azurite's aesthetic qualities and symbolic charge lay connotations of luxury. Ruan's contemporaries would have appreciated the extravagance of the color's use in the portraits. Li Shizhen's *Bencao gangmu* (Compendium of materia medica), one of their sources on the subject, quoted Tao Hongjing's sixth-century *Mingyi biele* (Additional notes of renowned medical men): "Azurite is the most expensive among all the medicines in the stone category. Medical recipes thus rarely use it. But very often, it is appropriated as a color for painting. This is exceptionally pitiful!"⁷³ By selecting this passage, Li Shizhen, too, seems to show disapproval of the mineral's use as a pigment. Yet the high cost of azurite was precisely what enabled the material to function so effectively as a communicative conduit in the Museum's birthday portraits. Not only did the presence of azurite appear to bestow longevity on the sitters and buoy their prestige by conveying the diaphanous quality of their elite robes, it also signaled their considerable wealth.

The imperial court was the principal consumer of azurite, using it mainly as a pigment for decorating architectural interiors: timber work, ceilings, and pillars. The court placed a high premium on the mineral and obtained it through three channels: direct taxation of civilians; purchases from provincial markets; and state-run mining.⁷⁴ Official records reveal that the excavation of azurite was a major enterprise. During the reign of the Hongwu emperor (1328–1398; r. 1368–98), the founder of the Ming dynasty, the mining of azurite was carried out by military personnel. The process was thoroughly planned, and elaborate maps were drawn up. The record states that the "resources invested were huge, while the [amount of azurite] excavated was small."⁷⁵ The emperor established a department of coloring materials (*Yanliao ju*) to oversee the grinding and filtration of azurite and malachite, which was also collected as a tax.⁷⁶ He also warned government tax collectors against cheating civilians and outlined the punishment for such offenses.⁷⁷

Azurite took a toll on the state's budget, as corrupt officials were entrusted with meeting the emperor's demand for this coveted colorant. After a fire destroyed Fengtian Palace in 1421, a report on the matter was submitted to Emperor Yongle by Zou Jian, a lecturer in the imperial academy.⁷⁸ Zou asserted that central government officials responsible for acquiring azurite and malachite were imposing random quotas on local governments that could not possibly meet them because they were located in regions where the minerals did not

naturally occur. Since paper currency was popular at that time, these officials used state funds to purchase azurite from elsewhere. As a result, the cost of one *jin* (290 to 296.8 g) of *daging* (high-quality azurite with large granules) soared to 16,000 *guan*.⁷⁹ At the time, one *guan* was worth one *liang* (36.25 to 37.1 g) of silver; thus, as Zou wrote, one *jin* of azurite cost 16,000 *liang* (580 to 593.6 kg) of silver in places where azurite did not naturally occur.⁸⁰ This astronomical price was a measure, Zou implied, of the greed of corrupt officials who were benefiting from the reconstruction of the imperial palace. He also alleged that artisans employed in the rebuilding project were siphoning off azurite pigment for personal gain, and thus profiting from the suffering of civilians.⁸¹

Continuing his argument in favor of reducing the costs of rebuilding Fengtian Palace, Zou stated that most of the azurite pigment submitted to the emperor was rejected because of its poor quality. One *jin* of usable azurite ended up costing 20,000 *guan*. Such a small amount of pigment, Zou emphasized, was not enough to color a single pillar or beam. In 1424, Emperor Yongle, probably alarmed by Zou Jian's report, addressed the problem. He canceled the collection of azurite as a tax and authorized local officials, rather than officials of the central government, to purchase the mineral.⁸² In a report written seventy-one years later, the government official He Mengchun stated that one *jin* of a mixture of coarse azurite and malachite cost only a few *liang* of silver.⁸³ This dramatic decrease in price reflected the fact that local officials were acquiring the minerals only in places where they occurred naturally.

The collection of azurite as a tax resumed in the eleventh year (1446) of the Zhenlong period.⁸⁴ The *Ming shilu* (Veritable records of the Ming dynasty) shows that emperors occasionally forgave civilians' debts, including taxes owed in the form of azurite, as a gesture of benevolence. However, the obligation to pay such taxes, though suspended for twenty-two years, was never canceled permanently. Azurite, a scarce material in high demand by the court, continued to be obtained largely through the hard labor of civilians. Its use as a pigment was associated with the government officials who collected it, the emperorship, and imperial palaces; as a symbol, it carried connotations of longevity and immortality. The Museum's portraits, colored with lavish amounts of this precious substance, would have impressed Ming viewers through their sumptuous materiality and as emblems of the prosperous long lives of the subjects they celebrated.

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The two portraits probably would have been displayed in the central hall of the couple's house. Jin Zhijun (1593–1670), a government official in both the Ming and Qing dynasties, composed a poem about a double birthday painting located at the center of such a hall. The poem mentions that wine cups, filled and ready to be enjoyed, were set out in the hall, signaling the presence of other guests and family members who would also view the painting.⁸⁵ It is not known whether birthday paintings were typically placed on permanent display or were hung only on special occasions. The seventeenth-century essayist Li Yu advised his readers to hang different paintings in their central halls in different seasons.⁸⁶ Modern scholars explain that Qing dynasty ancestral portraits were used in rituals that took place at the end of the year and during the new year festival, shedding light on the possible timing of the display of double birthday paintings.⁸⁷

Rangliguan guoyan lu (Records of paintings seen at the hall of abundant pears), a painting catalogue written in the late nineteenth century, suggests the way in which the Museum's portraits may have been valued by succeeding generations. One of the works included, a birthday portrait of the great sixteenth-century connoisseur and collector Xiang Yuanbian (1525–1590), was inscribed with poems by Wen Jia (1501–1583), Huangfu

Fang (1497–1582), and other of Xiang's contemporaries.⁸⁸ The fact that the painting, now lost, was preserved for at least three hundred years indicates that birthday portraits—at least those depicting famous people and inscribed by literati—were treasured. While the lives of Ruan Zude, his great-granduncle, and his great-granduncle's wife are unrecorded, it is certain that the artist and his two sitters would have been delighted by the paintings' auspicious message. The motif of *zhong jing fu* and the material presence of azurite together bestowed well wishes and helped the couple win the admiration of their contemporaries and, very probably, their descendants.

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QUINCY NGAN

Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Iowa

NOTES

- Hearn 2008, pp. 130–31. The inscription reads: "Birthday painting [made for] great-granduncle Yizhai at the age of eighty-five. [I], Zude, respectfully painted in the fifth month in the summer of the year *xinyou* [1561 or 1621]." Premodern Chinese used a calendar based on astronomical tables: dates were numbered with a combination of one of the twelve "heavenly branches" (*tiangan*) and one of the ten "earthly stems" (*dizhi*). *Xinyou* is one such combination. As there are sixty possible combinations, the cycle repeats every sixty years. The second portrait bears no inscription; the relationship of the two sitters is discussed below.
- Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian*, fasc. 60 (1964 ed., pp. 1064–65).
- Lapis lazuli was more costly than azurite. It may be hoped that the research presented here will lead to comparative studies of the use of these precious blue pigments in traditional Chinese and Italian Renaissance painting. See Baxandall 1988, p. 11.
- Hay 2010, p. 23. For an authoritative translation of the novel, see Roy 1993–2016.
- For the ranking system of government officials in imperial China, see Wilkinson 2000, p. 530.
- Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian*, fasc. 60 (1964 ed., pp. 1064–65).
- Lin 2002, pp. 467–509; Wu 2007, pp. 119–76. Lin Liyue and Wu Renshu contrast clothing descriptions found in state law and sumptuary law with those that appeared in literati's critiques of popular fashion trends.
- Xu Xueju, *Guochao dianhui*, fasc. 111 (1965 ed., p. 1377). This document is from an edition of the edict published during the Tianqi period (1621–27). It gives background information on the measure and who was behind it. Part of the edict—the design of *zhong jing fu*—is recorded in Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian*, fasc. 60.
- Emperor Jiajing was persuaded of the need for *zhong jing fu* by one of the grand secretaries, Zhang Cong (1475–1539). For a discussion of the Bureau of the Grand Secretary, the highest government institution in Ming China, see Twitchett and Mote 1998, pp. 78–79, and Dardess 2013, p. vii.
- Xu Xueju, *Guochao dianhui*, fasc. 111 (1965 ed., p. 1377).
- Lin 2002 provides an overview of the changing attitude toward clothing in the Ming dynasty, from the first emperor's requirement that fashion reflect social standing to the gradual, popular overturning of that principle. Wu 2007 focuses on the development of popular culture and the trend for wearing fashionable clothing in the late Ming. Styles previously reserved for

- government officials, members of the royal family, and one gender or the other were worn indiscriminately, disrupting social stability and drawing the ire of the literati. In response, sumptuary laws were issued.
- 12 The emperor probably granted this right to close male family members because the name of the robe, *zhong jing fu*, alludes to loyalty and reflection, as was noted in the original edict of 1527.
 - 13 Tan Qian, *Guo que*, fasc. 49.
 - 14 For images of scholars' head kerchiefs, see the section on mankind (*renwu*) in Wang Qi, *Sancai tuhui* (1988 ed., p. 1502). Such kerchiefs were also worn by commoners; see Gao 1997, p. 145.
 - 15 Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian* (1964 ed., pp. 1067–68).
 - 16 A government official wore *changfu* when he met with the emperor and discussed issues at the imperial court; *ibid.*, pp. 1058 and 1069. The state law did not dictate the casual attire of officials' wives, for women's activities customarily took place in the inner chambers of their households.
 - 17 Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian* (1964 ed., p. 1057). Government officials wore *gongfu* in the imperial and local courts. Many belts of this kind, notable for their valuable carved jade pendants, were among the confiscated possessions of the prodigal politician Yan Song (1480–1567). See *Tianshui bingshan lu* (1964 ed., pp. 3747–49).
 - 18 Goodrich and Fang 1976, p. 1402. One of the Seven Later Masters of Literature (*hou qi zi*), Wang Shizhen was a disciple of the leading scholar Li Panlong. Wang's treatise criticizes offensive manners and disruptive social behavior. The title, *About a Goblet Not Being a Goblet*, alludes to a complaint made by Confucius (551–479 B.C.) about a change in the size and design of the ritual wine cup, a change he regarded, among others of its kind, as subversive of social stability.
 - 19 Wang Shizhen, *Gu bu gu lu*.
 - 20 The enduring practice of selling government positions began after the financially draining Tumu crisis of 1449. See Yu Yingshi 1987, pp. 31–32.
 - 21 Chen Wen, *Ming Yingzong shilu* (1962 ed., p. 3371); also cited in Zhang 2001, p. 254.
 - 22 Tan Qian, *Guo que*, fasc. 49. For a discussion of the python robe as a sign of prestige in *Jin Ping Mei*, see Volpp 2005.
 - 23 Chen Xunrang and Ni Shimeng, eds., *Wujiang xianzhi*, fasc. 38. Shen Defu, *Wanli yehuo bian*, fasc. 5; cited in Wu 2007, pp. 135–36, and Lin 2002, p. 479.
 - 24 Zhang 2001, pp. 255–56.
 - 25 See Roy 1993–2016, vol. 1 (1997), p. 415. The tastes of the novel's protagonist are indicated by the objects he possesses or desires. For a detailed discussion of this point, see Clunas 1994–97.
 - 26 Citing the novel's original preface, David T. Roy asserts that *Jin Ping Mei* was intended as a critique of prevailing customs (*shisu*) and adds that “the degree of intertextuality between the preface and the novel . . . is striking.” Roy maintains that the author, identified as the Scoffing Scholar of Lanling, alludes to Xunzi, who “scoffed contemptuously at the amoral status-seekers of his day, and who was motivated by his hatred of what they stood for.” See Roy 1993–2016, vol. 1 (1997), pp. xxii–xxiv.
 - 27 Ye Mengzhu, *Yueshi pian*, fasc. 8 (1981 ed., p. 6a); also cited in Lin 2002, p. 484.
 - 28 See Lin 2002 and Wu 2007.
 - 29 Shen Defu, *Wanli yehuo bian*, fasc. 5; also cited in Wu 2007, p. 136.
 - 30 Zhang Tingyu, *Ming shi*, fasc. 55. All officials wore *changfu* of the same design; their ranks were distinguishable by the badges that were affixed to their robes.
 - 31 Lin 2002, p. 484.
 - 32 Ye Mengzhu, *Yueshi pian*, fasc. 8 (1981 ed., pp. 6a–6b); also cited in Lin 2002, p. 484.
 - 33 Ramie grows easily and produces delicate threads, but obtaining them is not simple. According to Li Shizhen (*Bencao gangmu* [2010 ed., p. 803]), the bark of the plant must be removed and the thick, underlying fiber scraped with bamboo until it falls apart, revealing the tendon-like inner strands, which are then boiled.
 - 34 Song Yingxing, *Tiangong kaiwu* (1966 ed., pp. 55–56). For the impact of the drawloom with figure tower on the Ming dynasty's textile-weaving industry, see Kuhn 2012, pp. 372–74.
 - 35 Wang Qiao, *Fanglu ji*, fasc. 9.
 - 36 Chen Menglei et al., *Gujin tushu jicheng*, book 701 (1934 ed., p. 3a).
 - 37 *Ibid.*
 - 38 Lü Kun, *Xinwu Lü xianshen shizheng lu*, fasc. 3, in *Lüzi yishu* (1827 ed., vol. 13, p. 27a). This nineteenth-century version is kept in the Joseph Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago. Throughout his life, Lü Kun consistently maintained the Confucian ideals. He was candid and law-abiding, upholding the highest moral standards. The above-cited quotation comes from one of the exhortations (*yue*) that he issued to his subordinates; Goodrich and Fang 1976, p. 1007.
 - 39 Clunas 2007, pp. 195, 197. The vest is one of the oldest and most exquisite surviving garments produced in the imperial court for birthday celebrations. The motifs appear on other birthday apparel found in the mausoleum of Emperor Wanli, son of Empress Dowager Li. See Wang Yan 1995, p. 82.
 - 40 Yuan Yuling, *Suishi yiwen*, chap. 17 (1990 ed., pp. 443–44). For a discussion of the novel and its author, see Hegel 1973, pp. 38–42.
 - 41 Silbergeld 1987; Clunas 2007.
 - 42 Silbergeld 1987.
 - 43 *Xuanhe huapu*, fasc. 2, 4, 11, 16, and 17 (2007 ed.).
 - 44 *Tianshui bingshan lu* (1964 ed.).
 - 45 The swastika motif, a symbol of meandering water, appeared on tombs and silks beginning in the Yuan dynasty. A Ming satin damask with the same pattern plus cloud motifs is in the collection of the Beijing Art Museum at Wanshou Temple. See Kuhn 2012, pp. 364–65, 441, and 456.
 - 46 Rebuses were often used in Chinese art; see Bai 1999.
 - 47 Kuhn 2012, pp. 318, 380, 424.
 - 48 *Ibid.*, pp. 379–80.
 - 49 *Ibid.*, p. 424.
 - 50 Little and Eichman 2000, pp. 328–29, no. 123.
 - 51 Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan 1996, pp. 34, 36, 48.
 - 52 For further information on the crane as a birthday motif, see Silbergeld 1987, p. 109.
 - 53 With the rise of the merchant class and the growth of the printing industry, many people, regardless of their social standing, learned to paint, write, compose poetry, and appreciate art, intellectual activities that had long been reserved for the elite. See Clunas 1991, Wu 2007, and Park 2012.
 - 54 Qiu Jun, *Zhongbian Qiongtai gao*, fasc. 15 (1983–86 ed., vol. 1248, p. 307). This anthology was compiled by Qiu's descendants during the Tianqi period (1621–27). For a discussion of the life of Qiu Jun (1421–1495), chancellor and author of *The Veritable Records (shilu)* of Emperor Xianzong, see Goodrich and Fang 1976, pp. 249–50.
 - 55 Qiu Jun, *Zhongbian Qiongtai gao* (1983–86 ed., vol. 1248, p. 307).
 - 56 Wang Shunmin, *Shuang shoutu shi xu*, in *Jingxun xiansheng wenji*, fasc. 7. According to Wang's preface, the painting was commissioned by the couple's son, who became a government

- official shortly before his parents' birthday celebration. For information on Wang, see Zhang Tingyu, *Ming shi*, fasc. 180 (1974 ed., p. 4782).
- 57 Ni Qian, *Ni Wenxi ji*, fasc. 20.
- 58 Indigo is not a lake pigment. It must be diluted with water before being applied to the painting surface. See Yu Feian 1988, pp. 59–61.
- 59 Winter 2008, pp. 28, 30; Li Zuixiong 2010.
- 60 Winter 2008, pp. 28, 30; Li Zuixiong 2010.
- 61 Zou Dezhong, *Huishi zhimeng* (1959 ed., fol. 5a); Tang Yin, *Liuru huapu*, fasc. 3 (1846 ed., fol. 3b).
- 62 For the dyeing of gauze made from ramie threads, see Yu Minzhong et al., *Qinding Rixia jiuwen kao*, fasc. 39 (1968 ed., p. 4a).
- 63 Azurite is slightly iridescent under certain lighting if crystalline particles are present.
- 64 When indigotin, the molecule of indigo, suffuses into ramie fiber, the color is much brighter than on silk or paper. The quality of the silk and paper also affects the appearance of the indigo. I am grateful to the scientists at the Metropolitan Museum for making these observations.
- 65 A ninth-century (Tang dynasty) painting treatise identifies *kongqing*, *cengqing*, and *pianqing* (flat blue, a variant of *kongqing*) as painting pigments. See Zhang Yanyuan, *Lidai minghua ji* (2007 ed., p. 49).
- 66 For the distinction between *xian* transcendence and *xian* immortality, see Campany 2002, pp. 4–5, and Campany 2009, pp. 33–34.
- 67 Li Shizhen, *Bencao gangmu* (2010 ed., p. 476).
- 68 Sobriquet paintings are discussed in Chou 1997, Liu 2007, and Clapp 2012.
- 69 See Seikadō Bunko Bijutsukan 2005, p. 115.
- 70 Wu wrote: “[The wind] blew till Chang’e tightly hugged the *sha-lo* tree, the jade hare spinning in search of its dish of herbs.” Wu Cheng’en, *Xi you ji*, fasc. 81, translation adapted from Anthony Yu (2012, p. 88). Yu identifies the *sha-lo* tree as *Cunninghamia lanceolata*.
- 71 Further evidence that the rabbit and moon were well-known symbols of immortality and the cessation of aging is provided by an allusion to the moon and Chang’e in the poem inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Lady on Riverbank*.
- 72 Li Shizhen, *Bencao gangmu* (2010 ed., p. 476). The painters of *Lady on Riverbank*, *Rabbit under the Moon*, and the Museum’s two portraits were apparently aware that azurite was considered to be more potent than malachite, its green counterpart. As mentioned in Li Shizhen’s *Bencao gangmu* (Compendium of materia medica), the forms of azurite known as *kongqing* and *cengqing* evolved from *shilü* (literally, “stone green,” or malachite) after absorbing male energy from the universe.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian* (1964 ed., p. 2644). Mandatory tax payments in the form of azurite were introduced during the Hongwu period (1368–98). Other commodities, too, were demanded as taxes; azurite constituted only a portion of a civilian’s entire tax debt. See Tang Wenji 1991, p. 58.
- 75 *Ming shilu*, fasc. 230 (1966 ed., p. 2143). Nearly two hundred years after this record was compiled in the late fourteenth century, the situation appears to have remained unchanged. See Zhu Guozhen, *Yongchuang xiaopin* (1959 ed., p. 344).
- 76 Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian* (1964 ed., p. 2643). The department was tasked with extracting and grinding *shiqing*

- azurite and *shilü* malachite from ore based on monthly demands and with sorting the pigments into different grades. Court employees then prepared the pigments for use in the building and renovation of palaces and mansions for officials.
- 77 Zou Jian, *Fengtian dian zai shu*, in *Huang Ming jingshi wenpian*, fasc. 21.
- 78 See Zhang Tingyu, *Ming shi*, fasc. 164 (1974 ed., pp. 4435–38).
- 79 Zou Jian, *Fengtian dian zai shu*, in *Huang Ming jingshi wenpian*, fasc. 21.
- 80 For the silver value of the *guan* as set by Ming law, see Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian*, fasc. 31 (1964 ed., p. 581). The conversion of *jin* and *liang* to metric units is based on bronze weights of the Ming dynasty. See Guojia Jiliang Zongju 1981, figs. 231–33.
- 81 Zou Jian, *Fengtian dian zai shu*, in *Huang Ming jingshi wenpian*, fasc. 21.
- 82 Li Dongyang et al., *Da Ming huidian*, fasc. 195 (1964 ed., p. 2644).
- 83 He Wenjian, *Sheng yingshan yi guangzhi dao shu*, in *Huang Ming jingshi wenpian*, fasc. 127. The price mentioned in He’s report pertains to a mixture of azurite and malachite, whereas Zou’s pertains only to azurite, which was scarcer in nature. See Winter 2008, p. 26.
- 84 Pan Huang, *Pan Jianxiao Gong zuoshu er*, in *Huang Ming jingshi wenpian*, fasc. 198.
- 85 Jin Zhijun, *Jin Wentong Gong ji*, fasc. 18.
- 86 Li Yu, *Xianqing ouji*, fasc. 15.
- 87 Stuart and Rawski 2001, p. 47.
- 88 Lu Xinyuan, *Rangliguan guoyan lu*, fasc. 20.

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Manet's Boucher

“It seems I must do a nude,” the young Edouard Manet remarks in Antonin Proust’s “Souvenirs”: “The nude seems to be the first and last word in art.”¹ The female nude held pride of place in the works of Manet’s early maturity—from the voluptuous *Nymphe surprise*² to the series of red chalk drawings,³ to the heroic *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* and *Olympia*.⁴ “Faire un nu,” of course, would place Manet in the company of Titian and Rubens, masters whose female nudes the young artist studied and plainly measured his own work against.⁵ But neither of them was necessarily the painter most closely associated with the bare female form in mid-nineteenth-century Paris; for as the brothers Goncourt would ask in their 1862 study of François Boucher, “Who has undressed a woman better than he?”⁶ At the time the most readily available and widely celebrated of Boucher’s *femmes déshabillées* would have been *Diane sortant du bain* (fig. 1), painted



fig. 1 François Boucher (French, 1703–1770). *Diane sortant du bain (Diana Leaving Her Bath)*, 1742. Oil on canvas, 22 × 28¾ in. (56 × 73 cm). Musée du Louvre, Département des Peintures, Paris (2712)

in 1742 and acquired by the Musée Impérial in February 1852.⁷ It was the first picture by Boucher ever purchased for the Musée du Louvre, Paris, and its acquisition reflected a change in the critical fortunes of eighteenth-century French painting already well under way.⁸ Owing to Theodore Reff's survey of Second Empire copyists at the Louvre, it has long been widely known that Manet copied *Diane sortant du bain* almost immediately after its acquisition by the museum.⁹ Indeed, this is the earliest of the copies the young artist painted at the Louvre for which any documentation survives: having registered as a student copyist on January 29, 1850, Manet set to work after Boucher's picture on February 25, 1852.¹⁰ Although the resulting copy is lost,

the tender, plein-air sensuality of Boucher's *Diana* finds an echo in Manet's *Nymphe surprise* (fig. 2), first exhibited in 1861.¹¹ This article, however, proposes that Boucher's picture served as a still more literal source for another large-scale female nude, perhaps Manet's first essay at the genre, abandoned incomplete sometime before 1862 and today concealed beneath a painting in The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Manet's *Mademoiselle V. en costume d'espada* (*Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*; fig. 3) is signed and dated 1862; an etching of the same composition was published in October of that year.¹² An X-radiograph of the painting reveals an upside-down seated nude painted under the female



fig. 2 Edouard Manet (French, 1832–1883). *La Nymphe surprise* (*The Surprised Nymph*), by 1861. Oil on canvas, 56 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 44 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (144.5 × 112.5 cm). Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires



fig. 3 Edouard Manet. *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, 1862. Oil on canvas, 65 × 50 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (165.1 × 127.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.53)

fig. 4 X-radiograph of *Mademoiselle V... in the Costume of an Espada* (fig. 3). The canvas appears upside down in the X-radiograph.





5



6



7

bullfighter (fig. 4).¹³ Juliet Wilson-Bareau has pointed out a close relationship between this overpainted figure and the nude depicted in a reversed engraving of David and Bathsheba by Jean-Baptiste Corneille (fig. 5) after a fresco by Giulio Romano in the loggia of the Palazzo del Te, Mantua (fig. 6).¹⁴ Manet copied the print in a swift pencil sketch, today in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris (fig. 7).¹⁵ The presence of a fountain at lower left in the X-radiograph of *Mademoiselle V.* seems to confirm this connection; though absent from Manet's pencil drawing, a similar fountain appears in Giulio Romano's composition and in Corneille's subsequent engraving.¹⁶ The Romano/Corneille Bathsheba, however, does not fully account for the pose of the nude hidden beneath the Metropolitan Museum painting. Unlike the tense and active Bathsheba, who turns sharply, casting an anxious glance over her shoulder, Manet's figure directs her attention downward and to the left, imparting a

fig. 5 Jean-Baptiste Corneille (1649–1695), after Giulio Romano (Italian, 1499?–1546). *Bathsheba*. Etching. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Estampes et de la Photographie, Paris

fig. 6 Giulio Romano. *Bathsheba*, ca. 1530. Fresco. Palazzo del Te, Mantua

fig. 7 Edouard Manet, after Corneille. *Seated Nude*, ca. 1850s. Graphite, 7¼ × 5¼ in. (18 × 13.4 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris (RF 11970 recto)

fig. 8 Titian (Italian, 1485/90?–1576). *Venus of Urbino*, 1538. Oil on canvas, 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 65 in. (119 × 165 cm). Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

fig. 9 Edouard Manet. *Olympia*, 1865. Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 74 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (130.5 × 190 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris (RF 644)

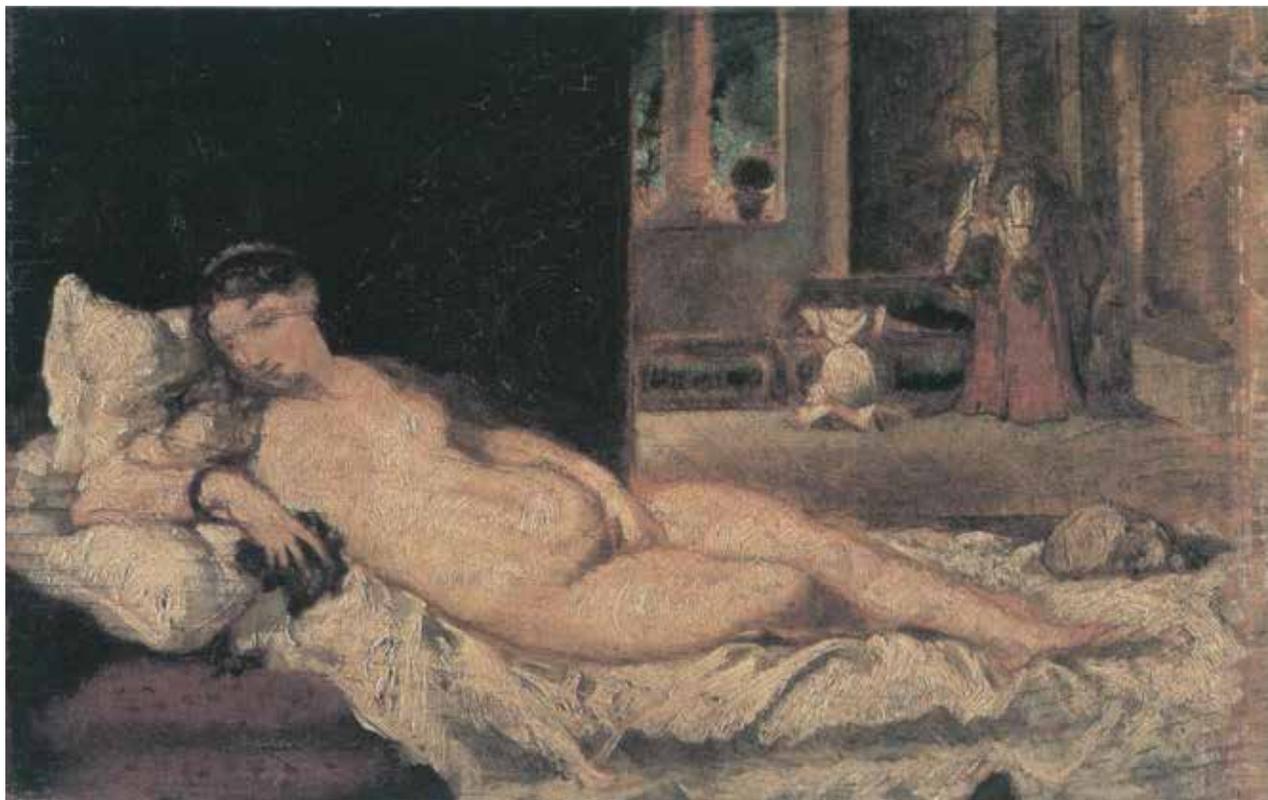
comparatively serene bearing to her whole form. In other words, although the fountain confirms Manet's engagement with the seventeenth-century print after the Renaissance fresco, certain particulars of his concealed figure's pose may point to a quite different source. The curvature of the woman's neck and proper left shoulder, the placement of her ear: these details seem to correspond more closely to the pose of Boucher's bathing Diana. Manet's copy after *Diane sortant du bain* is lost, but this overpainted figure may point to the crucial role played by the eighteenth-century master in the young artist's first experiments with the monumental female figure, his early imagining of what it might mean to "faire un nu."



The nude now submerged beneath *Mademoiselle V.* should not be mistaken for the missing copy or a fragment thereof. Painted at lifesize, the figure is substantially larger than Boucher's Diana.¹⁷ Although sizable copies painted in situ at the Louvre were not unheard of in the period,¹⁸ no copy of comparable scale by Manet is known.¹⁹ There is, moreover, no evidence to suggest that he ever intended to include in his composition the attendant who appears at left in Boucher's picture or that the Metropolitan Museum canvas was cut down along that edge.²⁰ Finally, although such details are difficult to parse in the X-radiograph, the naturalistic treatment of this figure's proper left breast and of the tendon that stands out from her neck suggests that she was painted directly from a model rather than from an old master source. Manet would follow a similar procedure for his monumental nudes of the late 1850s and early 1860s, posing Suzanne Leenhoff as Rubens's Susanna for the picture that eventually became *La Nymphe surprise*,²¹ Victorine Meurent as Raphael's naiad for the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, and the same model as Titian's Venus (fig. 8) for *Olympia* (fig. 9).²² *Olympia* is of particular interest here, since a small copy in oils (fig. 10), made in the galleries of the Uffizi in the mid-1850s,²³ interceded between Titian's original and Manet's restaging and reworking of it with a flesh-and-blood model—an approach Manet may already have taken when he copied Boucher's composition.

But while Manet's recourse to Titian for the *Olympia* is well known, celebrated even, his seeming recourse to Boucher in this earlier case has gone unremarked. Indeed, the modern art historian most attentive to eighteenth-century references in Manet's work has passed over the one eighteenth-century French picture we know for certain that the artist copied from the original. In his groundbreaking reassessment of Manet's pictorial sources, Michael Fried placed particular emphasis on the French eighteenth century but, for reasons that will emerge below, privileged a proto-Realist current in art of this period, scouring the oeuvres of Watteau and Chardin for potential inspiration while virtually excluding Boucher.²⁴ Of course, Fried is not the only scholar to have shown this inclination. While most art historians today are comfortable considering Watteau's *Gilles* as a source for the melancholy boy in white in Manet's *Vieux musicien*,²⁵ Chardin's work as a basis for Manet's still lifes of fruit and dead game,²⁶ and indeed even Fragonard's *portraits de fantaisie* as the inspiration for late works like the airy, luminous *Liseuse*,²⁷ we are less comfortable on the whole imagining Boucher's unabashedly sweet, sensuous Diana as a

fig. 10 Edouard Manet, after Titian. *Venus of Urbino*, probably 1857. Oil on panel, 9½ × 14¾ in. (24 × 37 cm). Private collection



way station on the road to the two most challenging nudes of the nineteenth century: the *Déjeuner* and the *Olympia*.²⁸

Of course, as the generic similarities between Boucher's *Diana* and Giulio Romano's *Bathsheba* attest, the figure of the cross-legged bather—a “female Spinario”²⁹—was not Boucher's invention. Boucher, who studied in Italy from 1728 to 1731, may well have adapted the pose of his *Diana* from the Palazzo del Te fresco or from a print, like Corneille's, that reversed its composition. Moreover, similarly cross-legged nudes appear in paintings by Watteau and Charles Joseph Natoire,³⁰ though none of them offers as close a match for the nude in the X-radiograph of *Mademoiselle V.* as does Boucher's *Diana*. Boucher seems to have devised his particular variation on the theme in a red-and-white chalk *académie* (fig. 11), today also in the Metropolitan Museum.³¹ The sheet belongs to the portion of Boucher's graphic oeuvre—idealized red-chalk female nudes—that was most fervently appreciated in the mid-nineteenth century. “How his chalk curves along the fold of the hip!” exclaimed the brothers Goncourt, who owned several drawings of this type. “What happy emphases of sanguine lend his shadows the glow of blood beneath skin!”³² “In his sanguine and *trois-crayons* drawings, Boucher had no rival among his contemporaries,” Théophile Thoré asserted in 1860. “His chalk is so supple and abundant, [applied with] such

skill and grace, such a true feeling for the form and curves of women.”³³ Here it is worth recalling that Manet produced his own group of sanguine drawings about 1860 (see, for example, fig. 12),³⁴ turning to a then rather unusual medium to trace the curves of nude female models.³⁵ As Louis-Antoine Prat has explained, the young artist's interest in sanguine seems to date from his travels in the mid-1850s to Italy, where he copied various sixteenth-century works in red chalk, a medium he may then have associated with Andrea del Sarto.³⁶ But as Manet returned to Paris and moved on to other media, he came back to red chalk again and again for the specific purpose of drawing the female nude. Sanguine's unique ability to capture “the glow of blood beneath skin” may have informed this choice, but Manet also must have been aware of Boucher's great achievement in the medium. With their heavy reliance on contour and their light, judicious use of hatching, Manet's red chalks seem to invite comparison to those of Boucher. Like the figure in the X-radiograph, Manet's red-chalk nudes may offer a glimpse of the eighteenth-century master through mid-nineteenth-century eyes.

A NEW BOUCHER

Manet was not alone in his attraction to Boucher or to the Louvre's newly acquired example of his work: other progressive artists of the period admired *Diane sortant du bain*. Henri Fantin-Latour painted a copy of it,³⁷



fig. 11 François Boucher, *Seated Female Nude*, ca. 1742. Red chalk, heightened with white on beige paper, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (31.5 × 26.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Walter C. Baker, 1971 (1972.118.197)

fig. 12 Edouard Manet, *Study of a Seated Female Nude* (known as *La Toilette*), ca. 1860. Red chalk, 11 × 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (28 × 20 cm). Art Institute of Chicago, Restricted Gift of the Joseph and Helen Regenstein Foundation (1967.30)

and Paul Cézanne owned a photograph of it.³⁸ James McNeill Whistler copied it for an American collector (fig. 13),³⁹ and Auguste Renoir adapted it for a decorative motif on a dessert service.⁴⁰ As Renoir's monumental *Diane* of 1867 (fig. 14) and *Grandes baigneuses* of 1884–87 (fig. 15) attest, Boucher's picture would exercise a particular fascination over him throughout his career.⁴¹ Indeed, near the end of his life, Renoir confided to the dealer Ambroise Vollard:

I will say, more specifically, that Boucher's *Diana at Her Bath* was the first picture that grabbed me, and I've continued to love it all my life, as we do our first loves. . . . Boucher remains one of the painters who understood a woman's body best. . . . Someone may say to you, "I like a Titian better than a Boucher!" Egad, me too! But, in the end, Boucher made his little women quite pretty! A painter, you see, who has a feeling for bosoms and bottoms is a man saved.⁴²

Coming from Renoir, the Impressionist circle's most devoted painter of the female nude, these (rather

vulgar) sentiments may not surprise us; his interest in Boucher's pictures was unabashedly carnal. Although, like Manet's copy after *Diane sortant du bain*, Renoir's has disappeared, we have less trouble imagining him painting it than we might have imagining Manet painting his.⁴³ Why this is so has much to do with Boucher's modern reputation for frivolity and sensuality. These "feminine" qualities are apparently at odds with our understanding of Manet as the painter of heroic Salon pictures, the interrogator of European tradition, the herald of Modernism. But in the 1850s, when Manet made his copy after Boucher—and, most likely, his abortive scaled-up exploration of Diana's pose—the eighteenth-century master's modern reputation was still in flux. As a lately "rediscovered" painter of the female nude, Boucher offered a fresh alternative to Titian and Rubens. *Diane sortant du bain* might have been more than a century old, but, as the first example of its author's work to hang in the Grande Galerie, it would have seemed to Manet and his friends quite new.

Their enthusiasm for the picture at the time of its acquisition predicted a broader popular success, which

fig. 13 James McNeill Whistler (American, 1834–1903), after Boucher. *Bath of Diana*, 1857. Oil on canvas. Location unknown



fig. 14 Auguste Renoir (French, 1841–1919). *Diane*, 1867. Oil on canvas, 78⁷/₁₆ × 51 in. (199.5 × 129.5 cm). National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Chester Dale Collection (1963.10.205)



would prove a mixed blessing for Boucher’s art historical fortunes. By 1859, *Diane sortant du bain* was one of the most-copied French paintings in the Louvre, second only to Jean-Baptiste Greuze’s sentimental *Cruche cassée*.⁴⁴ Such copies, most often executed by modestly paid (and today wholly forgotten) female artists, did not add luster to Boucher’s reputation, contributing instead to an association with superficiality, commercialism, and femininity.⁴⁵ In their 1867 art-world novel *Manette Salomon*, the Goncourt brothers described their protagonist—the young painter Anatole Bazoche, a character partly based on Manet—observing female copyists at the Louvre:

He slaked his malice on these living ironies, tossed before masterpieces by hunger, destitution, need, or stubborn persistence in a false vocation. . . . Old ladies, with gray ringlets, stooped over their pink, nude copies after Boucher, with the look of Electo illuminating Anacreon. . . .⁴⁶

What could be further from our heroic vision of Manet, squaring off against Titian and Rubens, than these pitiful creatures, hunched over their copies after Boucher?

A PAINTER OF WOMEN

By the time Manet, Fantin-Latour, Renoir, and other members of the Realist vanguard flocked to the Louvre to copy *Diane sortant du bain*, critics—both progressive and conservative—had already begun to cast its author as, at best, a minor character in the story of French painting and, at worst, a kind of art historical deviant. In an important series of articles on the French eighteenth century published in 1844, Arsène Houssaye offered what would become a commonplace assessment of Boucher: “Painters of women are liars . . . [and Boucher is] the liar par excellence, the most faithful portrait of his time.”⁴⁷ Here the artist was made to stand for those aspects of an imagined eighteenth century that Houssaye and his contemporaries found at once most titillating and most morally objectionable. Even as he lamented the absence of a single Boucher from the Grande Galerie—*Diane sortant du bain* would not arrive there for another eight years—Houssaye breathed new life into the Diderotian stereotype of this painter as trivial, mendacious, quintessentially feminine.⁴⁸

In an influential review of the 1847 Salon, Paul Mantz advanced a similar view. Whereas, he believed, “a few exceptional artists” (notably Watteau and Chardin) had “resisted the evil influences of their time” and persevered in portraying “truth,” Boucher and



fig. 15 Auguste Renoir, *Grandes baigneuses* (*The Large Bathers*), 1884–87. Oil on canvas, 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 67 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (117.8 × 170.8 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Mr. and Mrs. Carroll S. Tyson, Jr., Collection (1963-116-13)

Carle Vanloo belonged to a degenerate school; they were the painters of “lies.”⁴⁹ Mantz went on to excoriate the contemporary artist Thomas Couture as the leader of a group of supposed “disciples of Vanloo and Boucher,” who shared “[a] common fault. They wish to please, no matter by what means, they chase after seduction.”⁵⁰ Couture’s portrayals in subsequent years of Pierrot, Harlequin, and other characters from the *commedia dell’arte* would deepen his association with the eighteenth century,⁵¹ but the specific picture Mantz invoked in his 1847 review was the *Romains de la décadence*, the giant canvas, now in the Musée d’Orsay, that was the talk of that year’s Salon. As the Couture scholar Albert Boime pointed out, this picture’s orgiastic subject alone may have sufficed to invite comparison to Boucher.⁵² A supposed penchant for “seduction” and eagerness to please, inherited from Boucher, are hardly qualities we associate with Manet, the famous *refusé* and teller of hard truths. But here it is surely worth noting that Manet was still the pupil of Couture—Mantz’s modern Boucher—when he painted his copy of *Diane sortant du bain* in 1852, and conceivably still when he embarked on the seated nude today concealed beneath *Mademoiselle V*.⁵³ Did Couture, an artist closely associated with the Rococo revival, encourage his pupil to copy this picture?

Both Houssaye and Mantz were, in their different ways, proponents of the Rococo revival, champions of once-forgotten eighteenth-century artists. But their selective taste in eighteenth-century art helped set the precedent for Boucher’s ultimate exclusion from the Modernist canon. Their writings rehearse a now familiar distinction between the good and truthful

eighteenth century—that of Watteau and Chardin—and the bad, deceitful eighteenth century—that of Boucher.⁵⁴ It is a distinction deeply inflected with gender, of course, but it was also one soon invested with republican politics: progressive critics lighted upon this distinction as a way to segregate Watteau and Chardin from the supposed aesthetic and political decadence of their contemporaries. Thus, in 1860, when the Galerie Martinet (which would host Manet’s first monographic show three years later) mounted an epochal exhibition of French masters,⁵⁵ the ardent republican Théophile Thoré remarked: “Boucher wasn’t much good at the masculine—but his little girls, more or less divine, are delightful. . . . If in the end he is no more than a secondary painter, that is also somewhat the fault of his time. Not everyone, amidst the wild dissolution of the eighteenth century, could have the placid humor and the solid simplicity of Chardin.”⁵⁶

Poor Boucher, it seems, was more to be pitied than censured. Born into an age of “wild dissolution,” what could he do but paint naked “little girls”? A future proponent of Manet’s work (and the key figure for Fried’s stylistic genealogy), Thoré extended special status to Boucher’s sanguine drawings and to his early works, singling out *Diane sortant du bain* in particular as painted from nature and therefore exempt from the frivolity of its maker’s mature oeuvre.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, by the early 1860s, Boucher’s reputation for vacuous, feminine sensuality was already congealing into the stereotype immortalized by the Goncourt brothers in their 1862 monograph: “*Le joli*: in that lighthearted hour of history, this was the sign & the seduction of France; the essence & formula of her genius; the tone of her morals; the school of her fashions. *Le joli*: this was the soul of the time—& the genius of Boucher.”⁵⁸ Even to these writers—his most ardent nineteenth-century admirers—Boucher was merely the genius of the *joli*, a painter of fashion and female flesh.

A SOURCE CONCEALED?

Manet was aware of the Goncourts; he almost certainly visited their collection,⁵⁹ and by the end of his life he was in possession of their *L’art du dix-huitième siècle*.⁶⁰ He would surely have seen the 1860 exhibition at the Galerie Martinet, in any case, and could well have read Thoré’s review. But at what point might Manet have realized that Boucher’s lately reborn star was already in critical decline? Could the eighteenth-century master’s curdling reputation about 1860 explain the young artist’s decision to paint over the monumental nude? Of course, we do not know precisely when Manet

began, abandoned, or painted out the figure under *Mademoiselle V.*, though he surely made his lost copy after Boucher first (in February 1852) and then scrapped the whole project before embarking on the bullfighting scene (signed and dated 1862). Several important events took place in the intervening decade of the artist's life; among them were at least two trips to Italy, where he saw and copied Titian's *Venus of Urbino*.⁶¹ The role of that composition in the development of the *Olympia* suggests that, by the early 1860s, Titian had edged out Boucher as the dominant painter of the nude in Manet's estimation.⁶² Another key event in these years, however, was Manet's falling-out with his teacher, Couture, so closely associated with Boucher in particular and with the Rococo revival more generally. Manet left Couture's studio in February 1856—not on the friendliest of terms. If Couture had, in fact, encouraged his pupil to copy *Diane sortant du bain*, then effacing a nude borrowed from that picture could have been a gesture of renunciation.⁶³

Finally, the painting out of the Boucherian nude might also reveal Manet's early attentiveness to his own place in the story of art; a desire to disassociate himself from the lady copyists of the Louvre and their minor eighteenth-century master; and a determination to establish a nobler pedigree for his own work. Perhaps he had come to recognize that it would no longer do for his explorations of the monumental nude to have begun with Boucher, and, so, while preserving his copy after the *Venus of Urbino* and enshrining his competitive admiration for Titian in the *Olympia*, he effectively buried his adaptation of *Diane sortant du bain* under an emphatically different painting. *Mademoiselle V.*, of course, orients its author's practice toward another eighteenth-century artist altogether. Chasing the success that his Hispanophile *Chanteur espagnol* had achieved at the Salon of 1861,⁶⁴ Manet portrayed Victorine Meurent in the costume of a bullfighter, a choice that points straight to Goya. The subject of bullfighting was, in itself, already intimately linked to the Spanish master, and Manet's various sources for the Metropolitan Museum composition include plate 5 from Goya's celebrated series of etchings the *Tauromaquia*, copied verbatim into the right background of the painting.⁶⁵

It was, however, above all Manet's manner of applying paint to this canvas that invited critics to regard him as Goya reborn. In a review of the 1863 Salon des Refusés—where Manet's *Mademoiselle V.* and *Majo*⁶⁶ flanked the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*—Thoré asserted, "M. Manet loves Spain, and his favorite master seems

to be Goya, whose lively, strident colors, and whose free, spirited touch he imitates."⁶⁷ We cannot know, of course, how the handling and surface of the suppressed nude originally appeared. As models for paint application, however, two hands more different than those of Boucher and Goya can hardly be imagined. Boucher (most especially in early works such as *Diane sortant du bain*) built up glowing flesh tones with patiently applied glazes; Goya relied more heavily on opaque color, often broadly applied. It was no accident that the nineteenth century's great Boucher *amateur* Edmond de Goncourt identified Manet's new manner, "borrowed from Goya," of "opaque painting, matte painting, plastery painting" with "the end of oil painting" itself.⁶⁸ What might Goncourt have made of the *femme déshabillée* lurking beneath the opaque surface of the Metropolitan Museum picture?

As an act of art historical camouflage—if it was so intended—Manet's painting out of this nude would prove extraordinarily successful. *Mademoiselle V.* is quite obviously a picture about disguise, a scene in which a female model poses *en travestie* as a male bullfighter. But the canvas itself on which this scene appears may likewise be in some crucial sense *en travestie*, its sensuous female nude disguised beneath a boldly painted transvestite performer: Diana dressed up as Victorine. Boucher dressed up as Goya. When we see the canvas hanging in the Metropolitan Museum, we think of the virile painterly lineage that Manet plainly wanted us to remember (Titian, Rubens, Velázquez, Goya), not the feminine Rococo one that he may have hoped we would forget.

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EMILY A. BEENY

Associate Curator of Drawings, J. Paul Getty Museum,
Los Angeles

NOTES

- 1 "Il paraît, . . . qu'il faut que je fasse un nu." Proust 1897, p. 171. "Le nu est, paraît-il, le premier et le dernier mot de l'art." Ibid., p. 126.
- 2 Rouart and Wildenstein 1975 (hereafter RW), I 40.
- 3 RW II 360, 361, 363, 376, and 377.
- 4 RW I 67 and 69. On the sequence of Manet's early nudes and their place in his career, see "Bathers and Picnics—The Early Nudes," in Wilson-Bareau 1986, pp. 26–47. Wilson-Bareau's use of X-radiographs to trace the development of Manet's compositions provides the basis for all subsequent study of this material. My understanding of the artist's early interest in the nude is also indebted to the work of Beatrice Farwell (1975 and 1981).
- 5 Proust (1897, p. 171) also indicates that Manet made a copy after Giorgione's *Concert champêtre*.
- 6 "Qui a déshabillé la femme mieux que lui?" Goncourt and Goncourt 1862, p. 9. As discussed below, Manet eventually owned a copy of the Goncourts' collected essays on eighteenth-century French artists (most likely Goncourt and Goncourt 1873–74, vol. 1, p. 210). See Manet to Georges Charpentier, summer 1880, and Manet to Isabelle Lemonnier, July or August 1880; both letters are in Wilson-Bareau 1991, p. 253.
- 7 I have used the title assigned by the Louvre to this picture, which, in fact, seems to portray the virgin goddess just about to enter, rather than leave, her bath. See Bailey et al. 1992, pp. 390–95, no. 45 (entry by Bailey), and Rosenberg et al. 1986, pp. 197–99, no. 39 (entry by Laing).
- 8 Scholarship on the early stages of the Rococo revival has proliferated in recent years. See, for example, essays in Vogtherr, Preti, and Faroult 2014; Faroult 2007a; and Ireland 2006. The foundational study for any understanding of the Rococo revival is Haskell 1976, pp. 71–95.
- 9 Reff 1964, p. 556.
- 10 See *ibid.*, p. 556nn53–54. Manet would most likely have begun copying works in the Louvre's collection immediately after he registered in early 1850, but surviving records of specific French and Flemish pictures copied cover only the years 1851 to 1871, and those of specific Italian and Spanish pictures copied cover only the years 1851 to 1859. On the fragmentary nature of these archives, see Reff 1964 and Dupuy 1993, pp. 46–47 and 51n37.
- 11 On this picture's relationship to Boucher and its early exhibition history, see Barskaya 1961; Farwell 1975; and Farwell 1981, pp. 29–30, 245–46. As Charles Sterling first demonstrated (1932), this nude's more explicit point of reference was an etching by Lucas Vorsterman of Susanna and the Elders, after Rubens. Juliet Wilson-Bareau has proposed (1986, p. 30) a further relationship between *La Nympe surprise* and an engraving by Jean-Baptiste Corneille of Bathsheba at her toilette, after Giulio Romano. Wilson-Bareau also provides a more synthetic study of the metamorphoses of this canvas, which began as a depiction of the Finding of Moses and, after having been cut down, for many years included a rather Rococo peeping faun, at right.
- 12 The painting is RW I 58. The print figured as no. 4 in the portfolio *Huit gravures à l'eau forte par Manet*, published by Cadart in October 1862. See Harris 1990, no. 35.
- 13 Cachin, Moffett, and Melot 1983, p. 113, fig. c, under no. 33 (entry by Moffett). A more complete photograph of the X-radiograph appears in Wilson-Bareau 1986, p. 31, fig. 31.
- 14 Wilson-Bareau 1986, p. 30.
- 15 RW II 71. Wilson-Bareau 1986, p. 30.
- 16 I thank Charlotte Hale for pointing out this feature in the X-radiograph.
- 17 Boucher's original is just 57 centimeters high (and the figure of Diana a little more than half as tall); the canvas for *Mademoiselle V.* is 165 centimeters high (with the overpainted nude, again, slightly more than half as tall).
- 18 Consider, for example, Edgar Degas's copy (ca. 1862) after Nicolas Poussin's *Rape of the Sabines*, famously painted in the Grande Galerie over the course of a year. See Kendall 2009, no. 1.
- 19 His copy (RW I 9) of Titian's *Jupiter and Antiope*, for example, reduces the composition from 196 × 385 cm to 47 × 85 cm, and that (RW I 7) of the *Venus of Urbino* reduces its proportions from 119 × 166 cm to 24 × 37 cm. More faithful to the scale of their originals are the copy (RW I 21; 46 × 76 cm) of the so-called *Petits cavaliers* (47 × 77 cm), at that time attributed to Velázquez, and the copy (RW I 6; 61 × 51 cm) of Tintoretto's *Self-Portrait* (63 × 52 cm).
- 20 I thank Charlotte Hale for clarifying this point.
- 21 Sterling 1932. On the sources and evolution of this picture, see also note 11, above.
- 22 As Anne Coffin Hanson (1977, p. 59) explained, "In all these instances Manet has apparently been inspired by a pictorial source and then posed a model following the motif in order to make that motif truly modern."
- 23 RW I 7. Manet made at least two journeys to Italy between 1853 and 1857. See Meller 2002, especially p. 69.
- 24 Fried 1969; see also Theodore Reff's 1969 response. Fried's thoughts on the subject are explored at greater length in Fried 1996. Boucher's name figures once in this book-length study, mistakenly grouped, in an account of Paul Mantz's 1847 Salon review, with those eighteenth-century artists the July Monarchy critic admired for their fidelity to "truth." Fried 1996, p. 72.
- 25 RW I 52. Fried discusses this connection (1969, pp. 29–37), but I do not share his certainty about various other relationships between Watteau's pictures and those of Manet—for example, *L'Indifférent* (Louvre, MI 1122) and the *Buveur d'absinthe* (RW I 19).
- 26 On Manet's interest in Chardin, see Shackelford 2001 and Stevenson 2007. Foundational work on the subject appears in McCoubrey 1964.
- 27 RW I 313. On this picture and its ties to Fragonard, see my entry in Groom and Westerby 2017– , no. 19 (forthcoming); see also Cuzin and Salmon 2007, p. 139.
- 28 Daniel Catton Rich (1932, p. 27) presents an interesting exception to this rule: "Manet—though he learned from other sources—must have respected [Boucher's] memory when he painted the 'Olympia,' for like Boucher's goddesses, she is distinguished by a fine linear sense."
- 29 To borrow Alastair Laing's turn of phrase (in Rosenberg et al. 1986, p. 199, no. 39, and p. 224, under no. 50).
- 30 As Colin Bailey has pointed out (in Bailey et al. 1992, p. 391), Watteau's *Diane au bain* (ca. 1715; Louvre) and Natoire's *Dorothee surprise au bain* (ca. 1735; Palais de Compiègne) feature related bathers.
- 31 The drawing's whereabouts in the nineteenth century are unknown; it first surfaced in the collection of Maurice Delacre (see Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts de Belgique 1925, no. 104; see also Rosenberg et al. 1986, p. 199, under no. 39 [entry by Laing]).
- 32 "Quoi de plus charmant que ces académies de femmes de Boucher! [E]lles amusent, elles provoquent, elles chatouillent le regard. Comme le crayon tourne au pli d'une hanche! Quelles heureuses accentuations de sanguine mettant dans les ombres le reflet du sang sous la peau!" Goncourt and Goncourt 1862, p. 13. Jules de Goncourt made etchings after two such drawings

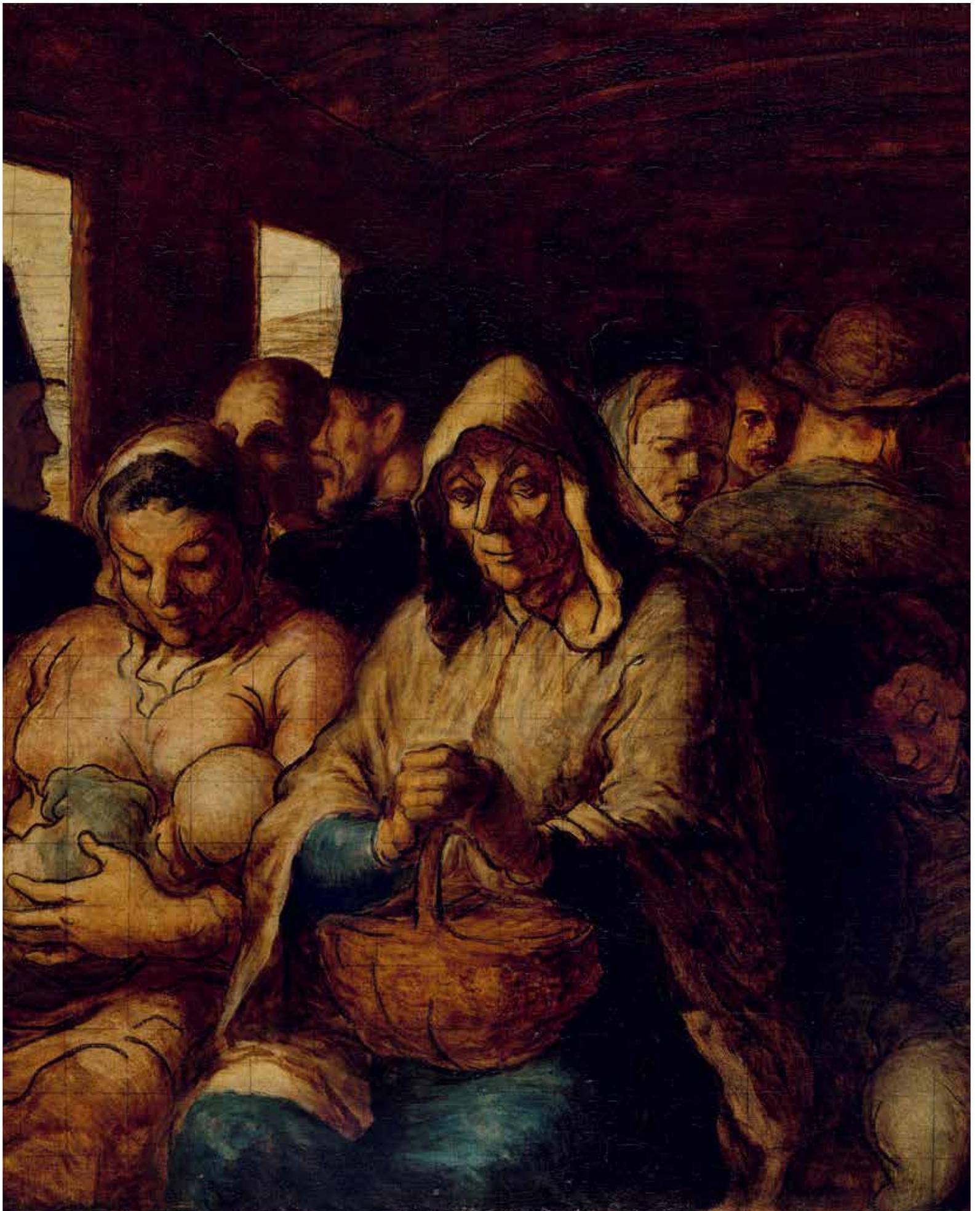
- from the collection he shared with his brother, and one of the drawings was exhibited at the Galerie Martinet in 1860 (see Burty 1860, no. 278: “Femme nue debout, vue de dos tenant une draperie”). See also Launay 1991, especially pp. 232–36, nos. 23–26.
- 33 “Dans les dessins à la sanguine ou aux trois crayons, Boucher n’a point de rival parmi ses contemporains. . . . Il a le crayon si abondant et si leste, tant de science et tant de grâce, un sentiment si juste de la forme et de la tournure des femmes.” Thoré 1860, p. 346.
- 34 RW II 363. Groom and Westerby 2017–, forthcoming entry.
- 35 Self-consciously rejected by most Neoclassical draftsmen, sanguine crept back into favor in France in the mid-nineteenth century, when Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, notably, made use of it in preparations for his large-scale decorative schemes.
- 36 See Prat 2011, especially pp. 97–99.
- 37 Reff 1964, p. 555.
- 38 See Reff 1960, p. 304, no. 13.
- 39 Whistler applied for permission to copy in 1857; a photograph of his copy after Boucher’s *Diana at Her Bath* appears in Pennell and Pennell 1908, vol. 1, facing p. 72.
- 40 On Renoir’s early career as a decorator of porcelain, see Patry 2012.
- 41 On Renoir’s early and enduring admiration for Boucher and his contemporaries, see Pullins 2012.
- 42 “Je dirai, avec plus de précision, que la *Diane au Bain* de Boucher est le premier tableau qui m’ait empoigné, et j’ai continué toute ma vie à l’aimer, comme on aime ses premières amours. . . . Boucher est encore l’un des peintres qui ont le mieux compris le corps de la femme. . . . On vous dit: ‘J’aime mieux un Titien qu’un Boucher!’ Parbleu, moi aussi! Mais, enfin, Boucher a fait des petites femmes bien jolies! Un peintre, voyez-vous, qui a le sentiment des tétons et des fesses, est un homme sauvé.” Renoir quoted in Vollard 1920, p. 19.
- 43 Bailey has addressed these copies after Boucher as an unexpected point of commonality between Manet and Renoir; see Bailey 2012, especially p. 61.
- 44 See Marc-Bayeux 1859–60.
- 45 On the phenomenon of female copyists at the Louvre, see Dupuy 1993.
- 46 “Il régalaient ses malices de toutes ces ironies vivantes jetées au bas des chefs-d’œuvre par la faim, la misère, le besoin, l’acharnement de la fausse vocation. . . . Les vieilles femmes, aux anglaises grises, penchées sur des copies de Boucher roses et nues, avec un air d’Electo enluminant Anacréon.” Goncourt and Goncourt 1867, vol. 1, p. 67. Therese Dolan has pointed to this passage as evidence of the Goncourts’ dislike—based on their own attachment to Boucher—for Manet’s treatment of the nude in pictures like the *Olympia*; see Dolan 1989–90. On Manet and the Goncourt brothers more broadly, see Armstrong 2002.
- 47 “Les peintres menteurs sont les peintres des femmes. . . . [Boucher est] le menteur par excellence, le portrait le plus fidèle de son temps.” Houssaye 1844, p. 130.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 177. Diderot’s complete *Salons* were first published in 1845, though partial editions had been in circulation since the late eighteenth century. Houssaye quoted Diderot’s *Salon of 1765* liberally in his assessment of Boucher; see Houssaye 1844, p. 179. According to Proust (1897, p. 125), the *Salons* of Diderot were assigned reading at the Collège Rollin, and they provoked a strong reaction from the teenage Manet.
- 49 “Au XVIII^e siècle, ils représentent pour nous—le mensonge. . . . quelques artistes exceptionnels. . . . ont résisté aux mauvaises influences de leur temps: Watteau, Chardin, Joseph Vernet. Ils représentent à nos yeux—la vérité.” Mantz 1847, p. 38.
- 50 “Les disciples des Vanloo et des Boucher. . . . ont un commun caractère, un commun défaut. Ils veulent plaire, et le moyen leur importe peu, ils courent après la séduction.” *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.
- 51 Georges Jeanniot would later insist that Couture was directly descended from Boucher (if Couture’s master was Gros, then Gros’s master was David, and David’s, Boucher); see Jeanniot 1907, p. 855. The Goncourts, fittingly, admired Couture, though they often lamented his failure to live up to his potential; see Goncourt and Goncourt (1852) 1893, p. 15, where they describe his *Bohémienne* as “la plus belle chose du Salon.”
- 52 Boime 1980, pp. 145–46.
- 53 Manet had entered Couture’s studio by late January 1850, when he registered to copy at the Louvre as a pupil of Couture. He parted ways with his teacher in February 1856.
- 54 In his 1854 *Les peintres des fêtes galantes*, Charles Blanc furnished more fodder, retelling a salacious biography of Boucher as a serial womanizer and popularizing Diderot’s witticism, “‘Cet homme ne prend le pinceau que pour me montrer des nudités’” (emphasis original. “This man only takes up his brush to show me nudities.”). Diderot, “Salon de 1765,” cited in Blanc 1854, p. 72.
- 55 The exhibition included two hundred paintings and nearly one hundred drawings, among them seventeen pictures and five drawings by Boucher. See Burty 1860, nos. 2–3, 75–86, 277–79, and 290. See also Faroult 2007b and Prévost-Marcilhacy 2014.
- 56 “Boucher n’était pas fort sur le masculin—mais les fillettes plus ou moins divines sont délicieuses. . . . S’il n’est en définitive qu’un peintre secondaire, ce fut aussi un peu la faute de son temps. Tout le monde n’avait pas, au milieu de la folle dissolution du XVIII^e siècle, l’humeur placide et la solide bonhomie de Chardin.” Thoré 1860, p. 344.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 345.
- 58 “*Le joli*,—voilà, à ces heures d’histoire légère, le signe & la séduction de la France. Le joli est l’essence & la formule de son génie. Le joli est le ton de ses moeurs. Le joli est l’école de ses modes. Le joli, c’est l’âme du temps,—& c’est le génie de Boucher.” Goncourt and Goncourt 1862, p. 2.
- 59 In an October 20, 1880, letter to Félix Bracquemond, Manet made arrangements for a joint visit to Edmond de Goncourt (Wilson-Bareau 1991, p. 257), but Manet and Goncourt had known each other for many years, and the painter had most likely visited the collection before, perhaps as early as the 1860s. A copy of Manet’s address book preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale lists both brothers at their original address in the rue Saint-Georges (“Edm. Et Jules de Goncourt 43 rue St. Georges”); the brothers moved to a different house, at Auteuil, in 1868, and Jules died in 1870. “Copie faite pour E. Moreau-Nélaton de documents sur Manet appartenant à Léon Leenhoff vers 1910,” Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Estampes et de la Photographie, RESERVE 8-YB3-2401, p. 137.
- 60 Wilson-Bareau 1991, p. 253; see note 6, above.
- 61 See Meller 2002, pp. 78–79.
- 62 One may think here of Renoir’s subsequent remark, “On vous dit: ‘J’aime mieux un Titien qu’un Boucher!’ Parbleu, moi aussi!” Quoted in Vollard 1920, p. 19.
- 63 Here it is worth noting that, when warned by Couture that he would never amount to more than the Daumier of his time, Manet reportedly muttered, “Le Daumier de mon temps, après tout, cela vaut bien d’en être le Coytel,” possibly referring to Charles

- Antoine Coypel, the Rococo history painter and virtuoso pastelist; quoted in Proust 1897, p. 128.
- 64 RW I 32, *The Spanish Singer*, MMA 49.58.2.
- 65 On the picture's various sources, see Farwell 1969. See also Tinterow et al. 2003, p. 491, no. 139 (entry by Wilson-Bareau); and Cachin, Moffett, and Melot 1983, pp. 110–13, no. 33 (entry by Moffett).
- 66 RW I 70. *Young Man in the Costume of a Majo*, MMA, 29.100.3.
- 67 "M. Manet adore l'Espagne, et son maître d'affection paraît être Goya, dont il imite les tons vifs et heurtés, la touche libre et fougueuse." Théophile Thoré, "Le Salon de 1863 à Paris" (Originally published in *L'indépendance belge*, June 11, 1863), in Thoré 1870, vol. 1, p. 424. Just how many of Goya's pictures Manet could have seen at this point, two years before his first voyage to Spain, has formed the subject of some debate. In a June 20, 1864, letter to Thoré, for example, Charles Baudelaire famously defended Manet from the charge of having pastiched Goya, insisting, "M. Manet n'a jamais vu de Goya [. . .]." See Baudelaire 1973, vol. 2, p. 386.
- 68 "Avec Manet, dont les procédés sont empruntés à Goya, avec Manet et les peintres à sa suite, est morte la peinture à l'huile. . . . C'est maintenant de la peinture opaque, de la peinture matte, de la peinture plâtreuse, de la peinture ayant tous les caractères de la peinture à la colle." Goncourt, *Journal*, May 18, 1889 (see Ricatte 1956–58, vol. 14, p. 7). Although Goncourt published these lines in 1889 (six years after Manet's death), they seem to refer to the artist's Goyesque output from the 1860s, which formed the key point of departure for still more literally matte and opaque pictures painted in the 1870s and 1880s by Manet's admirers in the Impressionist cohort.

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GEORGE D. SUSSMAN

The Wet Nurse in Daumier's *Third-Class Carriage*

Honoré Daumier's *The Third-Class Carriage* depicts the interior of an early railway car. In the foreground is a group of four people seated on a wooden bench. Viewed from left to right, they are: a plainly dressed young woman with a brimless bonnet tied under her chin; a baby who lies crosswise in her lap with its head pressed against the young woman's breast; an older woman wearing a hooded overgarment and holding a basket on her lap; and a young boy, apparently asleep, leaning against the older woman's shoulder. Visible in the background are other passengers, who occupy benches behind the primary group. The men wear top hats and, in one instance, a bowler; a couple of women wear head scarves. In short, these individuals constitute a somewhat better-dressed group than the four main figures (see fig. 1).

Art historians have generally considered the four figures in the foreground to be a humble family group.



fig. 1 Honoré Daumier
(French, 1808–1879).
The Third-Class Carriage,
ca. 1862–64. Oil on canvas,
25¾ × 35½ in. (65.4 ×
90.2 cm). The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, H. O.
Havemeyer Collection,
Bequest of Mrs. H. O.
Havemeyer, 1929
(29.100.129) (DR 7165)

fig. 2 Honoré Daumier.
The Third-Class Carriage,
1864. Watercolor, ink wash,
and charcoal on slightly
textured, moderately thick,
cream laid paper, sheet 8 ×
11½ in. (20.3 × 29.5 cm).
The Walters Art Museum,
Baltimore (37.1226)
(DR 10298)



This article argues that *The Third-Class Carriage* does not represent a peasant family but instead belongs to the set of Daumier's paintings depicting working-class occupations—in this instance, the then commonplace occupation of wet-nursing, which tended to the needs of more than half the babies born in Paris each year. It demonstrates that Daumier's lithographs and engravings show a sustained interest in both the new experience of railway travel, which developed over his career, and the widespread practice of wet-nursing, which was still a major component of exchanges between Paris and the surrounding country in the 1860s before the appearance of pasteurized milk and infant-feeding bottles with vulcanized rubber nipples. In addition, the artist must have been aware of common references in literature and illustration to the obtrusive presence of wet nurses, with their sometimes raucous and foul-smelling charges, in railway cars traveling in and out of Paris. Indeed, he had likely witnessed these scenes himself. In *The Third-Class Carriage*, Daumier depicted the reality of traveling wet nurses and of the older women who served as intermediaries between rural wet nurses and urban parents in the same sympathetic manner that he lavished on other working-class occupations in his paintings.

The central group—the young woman with the baby, the older woman, and the sleeping boy—is consistent, with minor differences, across three versions of *The Third-Class Carriage*: a smaller (20.3 × 29.5 cm) drawing on paper with watercolor washes at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (fig. 2) and two larger (65.4 × 90.2 cm) oil paintings on canvas, one at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa (fig. 3), the most fully colored in, and another, somewhat less finished, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 1).¹ In addition, there are at least four lesser-known versions of the work with the same basic composition but different groups of figures in the foreground: two oil paintings on canvas and two drawings on paper with watercolor washes.² This article is concerned with the central group depicted in the three better-known compositions.

THE COMPOSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMISSION OF *THE THIRD-CLASS CARRIAGE*

In his own time, as today, Honoré Daumier was far more widely recognized for his lithographs, most of which appeared in the satirical daily *Le charivari*, than for his paintings. Indeed, he barely began painting before the late 1850s, when he was nearly fifty years old, and then the paintings were hardly known beyond a small circle of



fig. 3 Honoré Daumier.
The Third-Class Carriage,
ca. 1863–65. Oil on canvas,
25¾ × 35½ in. (65.4 ×
90.2 cm). National Gallery
of Canada, Ottawa (4633)
(DR 7166)

fig. 4 Honoré Daumier. *Voilà déjà plus de huit jours qu'il n'est pas arrivé d'accident sur cette ligne . . . ça ne peut pas durer longtemps comme ça . . . je suis fâché d'avoir pris ce train de plaisir! . . .* From "Impressions de Voyage en Chemin de Fer," published in *Le charivari*, November 9, 1855. Lithograph, sheet 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (26.3 × 35.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.61.84) (DR 2640)



friends and patrons. A large but little-noted retrospective exhibition of his work in various media at the Galerie Durand-Ruel from April to June 1878, less than a year before his death, provided an essential catalogue for later art historians but did little to expand his reputation as a painter among his contemporaries.³

While Daumier's lithographs and woodcut engravings are generally satirical in content, the paintings are not. His paintings of third-class railway carriages are consistent with this pattern, as they are not satirical, but they are unusual among his paintings in that their format derives directly from earlier lithographs. According to Louis Provost's "thematic guide" to Daumier's oeuvre, the artist produced some 130 lithographs and five wood engravings on the topic of railroads, beginning in the 1840s.⁴ Two lithographs published in *Le charivari*—on November 9, 1855 (fig. 4), and December 25, 1856—show that Daumier had already developed the basic format of *The Third-Class Carriage* nearly a decade before he completed the paintings.⁵ In both lithographs the viewer is placed inside the railway car, looking down its length. Facing the viewer in the foreground is a wooden bench with several figures on it; behind that bench, additional figures occupy parallel benches that face one another. Unlike the accommodations in first- and second-class carriages, these benches have not been upholstered, and no walls separate the car into compartments with two facing benches in each compartment.⁶ At the time, trains did not have a central or side aisle that led to

doors at the ends of the car; rather, side doors were used to enter and leave the train for each pair of benches.⁷ The interior walls of the third-class wagon were bare, whereas those in the first- and second-class carriages sported striped wall covering.⁸

Daumier's paintings of *The Third-Class Carriage* are usually traced back to a commission from the wealthy American expatriate William Walters in the spring of 1864. Walters was a civil engineer from Baltimore who built several successful transportation companies, including an omnibus line, a steamship line, and railroads. He and his family moved to Paris during the American Civil War. Either he or his agent, George A. Lucas, noticed a satirical woodcut engraving by Daumier of passengers in an omnibus published in *Le monde illustré* on January 30, 1864, and asked Daumier to produce a watercolor of the scene for 100 francs.⁹ Walters or Lucas also may have noticed a wood engraving published in the same periodical on January 18, 1862, captioned "Holiday Train, 10 degrees of boredom and bad mood."¹⁰ The engraving depicts four figures seated in a railway compartment, bundled up against the cold. On April 29, 1864, Lucas noted in his diary that he had ordered two watercolors, "1st and 2nd Class," from Daumier; on June 6 he picked up the two watercolors and paid the artist 200 francs. Daumier noted in his accounts for 1864 that he had received payments totaling 400 francs from Lucas for four drawings, first for one drawing (presumably of the omnibus interior), then later for three others.

Thus, *The Third-Class Carriage* now in the Walters Art Museum must have been completed in spring 1864 about the same time as the watercolor drawings of the first- and second-class railway carriages in the same collection.¹¹

Scholars disagree on the sequence in the preparation of the Baltimore watercolor and the New York and Ottawa oil paintings of *The Third-Class Carriage*. Most believe that the smaller watercolor was prepared first, in response to Walters's commission, and the oil paintings were developed afterward based on a tracing of the watercolor made by Daumier. The grid lines visible in the unfinished portion of the New York painting point to a transfer of some sort, although they do not indicate the direction of that transfer. Based on X-radiography showing various changes made in the Ottawa composition compared to the Baltimore composition, Bruce Laughton argues that the Ottawa version was begun in 1864 from a tracing of the watercolor, while the New York painting was begun in 1865 or 1866.¹² Michael Pantazzi notes in this regard Daumier's common practice of developing a single composition on several canvases at once.¹³ Pantazzi believes, however, that Daumier began to work on at least one of the oil paintings of *The Third-Class Carriage* before receiving the commission for a watercolor drawing from Lucas and Walters. In support of this position Pantazzi cites a letter that the art dealer Arthur Stevens wrote from Belgium to Daumier on September 26, 1864, inquiring about a painting of "a third-class journey" that the poet Charles Baudelaire claimed to have seen in Daumier's studio sometime before he left Paris on April 24, 1864, fleeing his creditors, five days prior to the Lucas commission.¹⁴

If Daumier did begin *The Third-Class Carriage* before receiving the commission from Walters to depict all three classes of railway carriages, then his purpose in this painting was not to contrast the drabness of the setting and the humble status of the occupants with what was found in the first- and second-class carriages. His primary focus was on the central group of figures in the painting, rather than on the theme of travel status or of strangers randomly thrown together in a modern conveyance. Daumier was, after all, a figure painter. It is unlikely that he selected the central figures of *The Third-Class Carriage*, who are clearly linked to one another and differentiated from the other passengers, merely to fill up a railway carriage. By contrast, there are no groups (or any children) in the Walters Art Museum drawings of first- and second-class carriages, conceived primarily to fulfill a commission.

MOTHER OR WET NURSE?

The group of four central figures in the paintings of *The Third-Class Carriage* belongs to a category of heroic working-class figures especially common in Daumier's paintings. They stand in sharp contrast to the figures of the Parisian bourgeoisie in his satirical lithographs and woodcut engravings. The robust, dignified younger woman tenderly cradling a baby calls to mind another painting by Daumier in the Metropolitan Museum of a laundress and child (see fig. 10).¹⁵ Many other instances could be cited of Daumier's respectful idealization of the urban working class, including the famous lithograph of 1834 of a defiant printer standing up for freedom of the press against the censorship of Louis-Philippe, or later paintings of a butcher, a water carrier, two woodcutters, and a towman.¹⁶ Art historians have seen in Daumier's heroic workers the urban equivalent of his close friend Jean-François Millet's classic figures of sowers, reapers, winnowers, shepherdesses, and other rural laborers.¹⁷

The nearly universal assumption of those who have studied Daumier's *Third-Class Carriage* is that the group in the foreground represents a peasant family. Various scholars and museum websites refer to the figures' "familial bond," "the family [or family group] in the foreground," "the *mother's* hands," and, with a hint of skepticism, "three generations of an apparently fatherless family."¹⁸ Where, indeed, are the adult males in this family group?

Asher Miller asks, in addition, the purpose of their journey, "whether they are setting out or concluding it, and their final destination (city or country?)."¹⁹ These questions are more easily answered for the petty-bourgeois passengers sitting behind the bench in the foreground: they are likely traveling salesmen or Parisian couples en route to or from their native villages on a visit. But why would two poor peasant women, at least a generation apart, be traveling with a baby and a young boy but no husband on a railway car? Daumier suggests an answer to this question in the figure of the young woman in the third-class carriage. Perhaps her most prominent features are her full round breasts, their shape echoed by the bald head of the baby nestled in a nursing position against one of them. Because this breast appears to be covered by her blouse, the baby is most likely asleep rather than nursing, but the infant is similarly sized and occupies a position comparable to that of the nurslings whom Daumier depicted in two drawings of the 1850s or 1860s: *The Soup* in the Musée du Louvre and *The Family* in the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C.²⁰ How does this suggestion of a



nursing position explain the presence of peasant mother and baby in a railway car? Perhaps the woman was not the baby's mother, but its wet nurse.

Rural wet-nursing for the infants of preindustrial cities was a widespread practice in France from at least the early eighteenth century to the First World War.²¹ It was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that bottle-feeding became a safe alternative to breastfeeding with the development of the germ theory of disease, the sterilization and refrigeration of cow's milk delivered to cities, and the perfection of infant feeding bottles and rubber nipples. Throughout the nineteenth century most urban wives still worked alongside their husbands in artisan and retail trades, while the number of children born out of wedlock mounted rapidly. In these circumstances, urban parents and founding institutions in France found it convenient and economical to place newborns in the country to be nursed for approximately a year by poor peasant women who had recently weaned or lost their own babies. This trade was organized by the administration of public assistance for abandoned children or, for the others, by private or municipal placement bureaus in the cities, where fathers or other relatives of newborns contracted with peasant women who had come to the city seeking infants to nurse. Self-employed male or female rural intermediaries known as *meneurs* or *meneuses* ("leaders" or "guides") escorted the prospective nurses to the city by wagon and later by rail; collected monthly wages and supplies (baby clothing,

soap, etc.) from the parents of children already placed; delivered messages about the babies' welfare (oral reports or notes written by the village priest or teacher); and then conducted wet nurses with their new charges back to the country and delivered wages (net of their own fee) and supplies to established nurses in their territory.

At least half of the 55,000 to 60,000 infants born each year in the department of the Seine (Paris and immediate suburbs) during the 1850s and 1860s were commercially nursed in this manner. This total included abandoned children placed by the administration of public assistance with wet nurses in the country (about 5 percent of newborns); babies placed with rural wet nurses by their parents through the auspices of municipal and private placement bureaus and supervised by the municipal authorities (approximately 25 percent); and an unknown number estimated by contemporary authorities at 11 percent to 17 percent of newborns placed directly by the parents with rural wet nurses. Not included in this total—already 41 percent to 47 percent of newborns—was an unknown number of babies from well-to-do families who were nursed in their parents' homes in the city by live-in wet nurses (*nourrices sur lieu*) who had been imported individually from the country or procured from private placement bureaus.²² Thus the resort to wet nurses via one source or another was characteristic of all social classes in mid-nineteenth-century Paris, from destitute single mothers to the *haute bourgeoisie*. The majority of customers, given the demographic makeup of the capital, were the shopkeepers and artisans of this still largely preindustrial city where wives worked in small family enterprises that had no place for newborns.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the area of recruitment for wet nurses serving Parisian babies extended farther and farther from the capital as a result of mounting demand from a rapidly growing city, the improvement of roads, and the construction of railroads. By the mid-1860s, when Daumier painted *The Third-Class Carriage*, an increasing proportion of the women who served Paris both as rural and as live-in wet nurses hailed from a poor mountainous region of Burgundy known as the Morvan, located more than 250 kilometers southeast of the capital. In 1909 the trip by rail from Paris to Avalon, a town on the edge of the Morvan in the department of the Yonne, took some five hours.²³ Dr. Charles Monot, a local physician in the Morvan, wrote in 1866 that two-thirds of the new mothers in his canton between 1858 and 1864 departed for

fig. 5 Albert Edelfelt (Finnish, 1854–1905). *The Luxembourg Gardens, Paris*, 1887. Oil on canvas, 55¾ × 73½ in. (141.5 × 186.5 cm). Finnish National Gallery / Ateneum Art Museum (A II 835)

the capital shortly after giving birth to seek positions as live-in nurses. Each woman took her baby with her to Paris as evidence of her capacity to nurse and was accompanied on the journey by a *meneuse*. An important task of the *meneuse* was to bring the nurse's baby back to the country to be nursed or bottle-fed by another woman after the mother was hired. The *meneuses* also trafficked in private placements of Parisian infants whom they brought back from Paris.²⁴ In addition, the city's administration of public assistance sent hundreds of abandoned "Petits-Paris" every year to be nursed in the Morvan, despite the depletion of its population of lactating women by the mass exodus of new mothers to the capital to become live-in nurses.²⁵ According to Dr. Monot, every village had three or four *meneuses*. The prefecture of police of Paris, which regulated the wet-nursing business under a national law adopted in 1874, counted sixty *meneuses* who specialized in recruiting live-in nurses in two of the four departments of the Morvan in 1884. Each *meneuse* would come to Paris five or six times a year, each time with one nurse.²⁶ A Parisian obstetrician who visited the region in 1881 claimed that virtually all the women of the Morvan made two or three stints in Paris as live-in nurses before retiring on their earnings in the country or migrating permanently to Paris with their families.²⁷

REPRESENTATIONS OF WET NURSES

The wet nurse was a stock figure of nineteenth-century painting and caricature in Paris. Typically, she was rendered as plump, wearing a servant's apron and a brimless cloth bonnet, and carrying a baby in her arms. Parisian painters mostly depicted the live-in nurses they encountered in parks and gardens; such live-in wet nurses were further marked by two long ribbons that hung down their backs from their bonnets. *The Luxembourg Gardens, Paris* (fig. 5) by the Finnish artist Albert Edelfelt depicts many live-in nurses with their charges; in the middle ground on the right, the red ribbons of one nurse are fully visible. Mary Cassatt's *Children in the Garden* (1878; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston) shows a nurse sitting in what appears to be a private garden with a baby sleeping in a carriage and a toddler playing beside her. José Frappa, a French Salon artist, painted a scene in a placement bureau for wet nurses: a top-hatted father negotiates with one prospective nurse while others look on (fig. 6).

According to Provost's thematic guide to Daumier's work, the artist executed thirteen lithographs and five wood engravings on the topic of wet nurses.²⁸ A particularly fine, late lithograph of 1871 shows Adolphe Thiers, the leader of the majority in the newly installed government, in the garb of a wet nurse, cradling the newborn



fig. 6 José Frappa (French, 1854–1904). *Un bureau de nourrice*, late 19th century. Painting, 52 × 62 in. (129.5 × 157.5 cm). Musée de l'Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris (AP 210)

fig. 7 Honoré Daumier.
 “Ah! monsieur . . . faut pas
 lui rire comme ça, vous allez
 l’faire pleurer!” from LES
 PAPAS, published in *Le
 charivari*, February 12, 1848.
 Lithograph, 9¾ × 8½ in.
 (24.5 × 21.6 cm). Noack
 Collection, Ascona,
 Switzerland (DR 1587)

Third Republic. A street entertainer (*saltimbanque*), clearly intended to represent the artist, leans over and delicately lifts a blanket to view the baby. “Be careful, Madame Majority,” he warns. “It’s devilishly difficult to raise such children.”²⁹

Most of Daumier’s prints depicting wet nurses date from the late 1830s and 1840s, and these works have a more generic, satirical message. One lithograph from 1843 is critical of the practice of rural wet-nursing itself.³⁰ It depicts a bawling baby wrapped in a bag, which is suspended from a peg in a cottage. Through the open top of a Dutch door we see the nurse dancing with a man outside. On the floor below the suspended baby are a jug and spoon, suggesting that the wet nurse, in addition to neglecting her charge, is not even breast-feeding him. While this print represents a hostile strain of educated, upper-class opinion with regard to the largely unsupervised practice of rural wet-nursing, the target of the satire in most of Daumier’s depictions of wet nurses is the Parisian fathers. In a lithograph from 1848 (fig. 7), a rural wet nurse in bonnet, apron, and

wooden clogs holds up a baby to a visiting father—top-hatted, potbellied, and grinning—while cautioning that his expression will make his infant cry.³¹ Another shows a prosperous-looking father holding up his baby in the nursery and declaring how the “little cherub” resembles “papa”; a live-in wet nurse, marked by her rimless bonnet and servant’s attire, stands beside a bassinet in the background.³²

Two of Daumier’s prints of wet nurses evince a deeper knowledge of and interest in the wet nurses themselves and particularly in their movement between city and country. A wood engraving of 1841 shows “wet nurses in a water coach,” a kind of river or canal barge, with the heads of three bonneted women and one baby appearing in the side windows and luggage resting on the open deck above.³³ This mode of transportation could have been used to carry wet nurses to and from Normandy before the railroad became an affordable alternative.³⁴ Eleven years later Daumier published a lithograph titled *Railroad to Lyon . . . Special Platform for Wet Nurses from Burgundy* (fig. 8). In this scene of a railroad waiting room, four rural wet nurses in bonnets and clogs, each holding or tending to a baby (one is wiping her charge’s bottom), sit or stand before a wood gate that separates them from the rest of the crowd awaiting the train. The wet nurses do not appear to be in the bloom of youth: one is missing several teeth; another has a pudgy neck and cheeks and a grim expression on her face. Nearby a top-hatted older man speaks with a stooped older woman wearing a top hat over her bonnet, whose back is turned to the viewer. Could she be the *meneuse*? The older nurses pictured here are certainly not the young mothers of the Morvan coming to Paris to become live-in nurses. Instead, they may have been hired by the administration of public assistance (perhaps represented here by the older man) to nurse or bottle-feed the abandoned infants in its care.

Wet nurses were a common sight in third-class carriages along the rail lines radiating out of Paris in the 1860s. Writers and other artists in addition to Daumier represented these women, with their bawling and incontinent charges, as one of the unpleasantries of third-class travel—along with unheated cars, unupholstered and crowded benches, and drunken and rowdy fellow travelers. In *Le petit chose* (“The Little Thing”), an autobiographical novel of 1868, Alphonse Daudet described an unforgettable voyage on a third-class railway coach: “It was the end of February; it was very cold. . . . Inside were drunken sailors singing, fat peasants sleeping with their mouths open like



fig. 8 Honoré Daumier. *Le chemin der fer de Lyon . . . Embarcadère spécial des nourrices de Bourgogne*, from “Physionomies des Chemins de Fer,” published in *Le charivari*, March 23, 1852. Lithograph, 8 1/8 × 10 3/4 in. (20.5 × 27.2 cm). Noack Collection, Ascona, Switzerland (DR 2279)



fig. 9 Horace Castell (French, 1825–1889). “*Ne nous ennuyez pas avec votre poupon*,” in Ségur 1923, p. 41.



dead fish, old women with their sacks, children, fleas, wet nurses, all the gear of a wagon full of the poor with its smell of pipes, brandy, garlic sausages and moldy straw.”³⁵

In *Les deux nigauds* (“The Two Fools”), a young person’s novel published in 1863, the Comtesse de Ségur describes a provincial twelve-year-old named Simplicie, her younger sister Innocent, and their servant-chaperone Prudence packed into a third-class carriage on their first trip to Paris:

The wagon was full; there were three wet nurses, with two nurslings each, a drunkard and a large Englishman with long teeth.

The babies cried, sometimes one after another, sometimes all together. The nurses fed one, changed and rocked the other; the soiled diapers lay on the floor to dry out and to lose their repulsive odor. Simplicie struggled with one wet nurse who placed one of her nurslings in her arms. The nurse would not be discouraged and renewed her attempts ceaselessly.³⁶



fig. 10 Honoré Daumier.
The Laundress, 1863(?). Oil
 on wood, 19¼ × 13 in. (48.9 ×
 33 cm). The Metropolitan
 Museum of Art, Bequest of
 Lillie P. Bliss, 1931 (47.122)
 (DR 7159)

An illustration of this scene by Horace Castelli (fig. 9) shows five figures crammed together on a bench: from left to right, an indignant *Simplicie* recoils from a wet nurse wearing an elaborate provincial bonnet; she faces *Simplicie* while holding the soiled diaper of the baby she is wiping. Another wet nurse is breastfeeding her charge, a man in a cap holds his nose, and another in a battered top hat looks on stoically.³⁷

Daumier's *Third-Class Carriage* treats the subject of the wet nurse on a train very differently. Here the nurse is young and healthy. Neither she nor the older woman,

clearly the *meneuse*, is a comic figure. This could be a painting of a young mother traveling to Paris to find a placement as a live-in nurse. She brings her own baby along with her to demonstrate to prospective employers her capacity as a nurse and caregiver. Once she is placed, the *meneuse* will bring the baby back to the country to be nursed or bottle-fed by another woman. Another possibility is that *The Third-Class Carriage* depicts a rural wet nurse returning to the country with her new charge and a *meneuse*. The nurse's own baby, the one who induced her lactation, may have died or may have been left in the country with another woman. Police regulations for the protection of newborns required a new nurse to show that her own baby had died, had been placed with another nurse, or had passed six months of age, at which time it was considered safe to wean the child.³⁸ Regardless of whether we imagine the group in *The Third-Class Carriage* as journeying to or returning from Paris, the presence of these peasant women in a railway car with a baby but no men fits into the model of the wet-nursing business better than into any other explanation. If Daumier had intended to represent a peasant family, why would he have failed to include the father?

That said, the fourth figure in the foreground group of Daumier's painting, the sleeping boy, may seem problematic. Most likely another child of the wet nurse, he appears too old to be the nursling's *frère de lait*—that is, the nurse's baby weaned to make way for his Parisian “milk brother” or “sister.” Thus, the boy has no direct role in the wet-nursing relationship. Still, he does play a part in the larger story of working women, as highlighted also in Daumier's painting *The Laundress*. In that painting, of which three versions exist—at the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 10), at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, and at the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo³⁹—a woman ascends the stairs from a laundry barge on the Seine to the quay; she carries a bundle of wash in one hand and tenderly holds by the other hand a child who appears to be a girl. The child grips her mother's washing paddle in the other hand. This scene, which Daumier could have witnessed from his apartment on the quai d'Anjou on the Île Saint-Jacques, illustrates how working women were also primary caregivers to their children and had to combine these two roles when alternative child-care arrangements were unaffordable or unavailable. Similarly, the sleeping boy in *The Third-Class Carriage* could be simply an older child of the wet nurse who was brought along on her journey to Paris because there was no one at the moment to look after him in the country. Daumier, who was not a



fig. 11 Gédéon Baril (French, 1832–1906). “Fallait prévenir bourgeois; on y aurait mis du musc!!” in Gédéon [1866], pl. 3

long-distance traveler, could have witnessed this scene on his frequent trips to visit Millet and other artist friends in nearby Fontainebleau, a stop on the way to the wet-nursing region of Burgundy.⁴⁰

One more piece of evidence bolsters this interpretation of the principal group in *The Third-Class Carriage*. Two years after Daumier’s Baltimore watercolor was completed and delivered to William Walters, Gédéon Baril, a French caricaturist, published a collection of fourteen lithographs entitled *Les nourrices* (*The Wet Nurses*). A native of Amiens, Gédéon (as he signed all his work) was living in Paris before 1870 and publishing his work in various periodicals.⁴¹ One print from *Les nourrices* (fig. 11) presents the inside of a cheap railway coach (wooden benches and sides, no compartments) from nearly the same perspective as Daumier’s paintings of *The Third-Class Carriage*. On the front bench, facing the viewer, sit two wet nurses with baskets at

their feet. One holds a bawling baby while the other wipes a baby’s behind. Between them sits a man in top hat, a newspaper spread across his lap; he presses one hand against his ear to shut out the one baby’s cries and holds with his other hand a handkerchief to his nose to defend against the smell of the other infant. The woman changing her baby says to her companion on the opposite side of the bench, “We should have warned the gentleman that we would use musk.” In the rows behind this group at least five similarly dressed wet nurses are visible standing or seated. The two standing nurses hold babies; the seated nurses may also hold babies, but the bench blocks the view. An older woman, who could be a *meneuse*, is visible in the middle ground on the left.

Gédéon’s print testifies to the ubiquity of the scene of wet nurses and babies traveling in cheap railway cars around Paris during the 1860s. It is possible that Gédéon had visited Daumier in his studio and seen the painting of *The Third-Class Carriage* before making his own print, although there is no evidence that the two men were even acquainted. More likely, both artists were inspired by similar scenes of everyday life in the Second Empire: one explored the comic possibilities of the scene, while the other—Daumier this time—presented the dignity of poor peasant women engaged in an essential occupation.

The Third-Class Carriage is, then, primarily a painting of wet-nursing, depicting a common occupation in nineteenth-century Paris and environs. Outside of rural cottages or Parisian apartments, urban artists would have been most likely to encounter this activity in public spaces like the parks where live-in nurses brought their charges, the placement bureaus where rural women and urban parents met to match nurses with babies, and the public transit connecting Paris and the countryside, where the wet nurses came from. Daumier’s painting is not so much a comment on a new form of transportation and the intrusion of class distinctions into railroad travel, but one of the artist’s celebrations of the occupations of the working class and of working women—like his painting of *The Laundress*, which hangs near *The Third-Class Carriage* in the Metropolitan Museum.

GEORGE D. SUSSMAN

Professor Emeritus, Fiorella H. LaGuardia Community College, The City University of New York

NOTES

- 1 Works by Daumier are identified by their numbers in the Daumier Register (www.daumier-register.org), a website maintained by Dieter and Lilian Noack. Readers may view and obtain information on each work discussed in this article by going to this online catalogue and entering the DR number. The three versions of *The Third-Class Carriage* referred to in this paragraph are DR 10298 (Baltimore), DR 7166 (Ottawa), and DR 7165 (New York).
- 2 DR 7109 (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), DR 7178 (Manchester Art Gallery, England), DR 10301 (Galerie Nathan, Zürich, Switzerland), and DR 10303 (Reinhart Collection, Winterthur, Switzerland).
- 3 The most important works in recent decades on Daumier are Laughton 1996 and Loyrette et al. 1999. For details on the Durand-Ruel exhibition, see Loyrette 1999, especially pp. 12–14.
- 4 Provost 1989, p. 108.
- 5 The first (DR 2640) pokes fun at the frequency of accidents on the railroad, while the second (DR 2824) satirizes the extreme cold in the unheated third-class carriages in winter.
- 6 For Daumier's depiction of first- and second-class carriages, see DR 10296 and 10297, respectively, both now in the Walters Art Museum.
- 7 French engineers referred to interior corridors running the length of railway carriages as the "American system" and rejected it out of a preference for shorter cars; Caron 1997, pp. 310–11. See DR 2730 and 2732 for Daumier's depictions of the side doors from the station platform.
- 8 François Caron, a historian of French railroads, argues that the railroad companies deliberately exacerbated the austerity of third-class carriages to discourage travelers who could afford better from choosing the cheapest option. In 1868, 65 percent of passengers traveled via third class, 17 percent via second class, and 18 percent via first class. Caron 1997, pp. 370–71.
- 9 DR 6022 (woodcut engraving) and DR 10294 (watercolor, now in the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore).
- 10 "Train de Plaisir, 10 degrés d'ennui et de mauvais humeur"; translation from DR 5998. Both third- and second-class carriages were still unheated in the 1860s. Caron 1997, p. 372.
- 11 For Lucas's diary entries and descriptions of his dealings with William Walters, see Lucas 1979, vol. 2, pp. 174, 177–79, and passim; Laughton 1996, pp. 109–11; Pantazzi 1999a, pp. 377–79; Pantazzi 1999b, p. 423.
- 12 Laughton 1996, pp. 113–14.
- 13 Pantazzi 1999c, p. 24.
- 14 Pantazzi 1999b, pp. 427–28.
- 15 Two other versions of this painting may be found at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (DR 7084) and the Musée d'Orsay, Paris (DR 7160).
- 16 DR 133 (printer), DR 10264 (butcher), DR 8049 (water carrier), DR 9075 (woodcutters), and DR 7028 (towman).
- 17 See Laughton 1991, especially chaps. 6 and 7.
- 18 Miller 2016; National Gallery of Canada 2016; Laughton 1996; Faison [1946], p. 4 (emphasis mine); Finocchio 2004.
- 19 Miller 2016.
- 20 DR 10698 (*The Soup*) and DR 10699 (*The Family*).
- 21 The following discussion of wet-nursing in France is drawn from my 1982 book on that subject.
- 22 Sussman 1982, pp. 111–12.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 153, 158.
- 24 Monot 1867.
- 25 Levainville 1909, pp. 280–81; Dupoux 1958, pp. 272–75.
- 26 Préfecture de Police, Paris, 1884, pp. 83–85.
- 27 Bailly 1882, pp. 36–37, 90.
- 28 Provost 1989, p. 89.
- 29 "Prenez garde, madame la Majorité! C'est délicat en diable à élever ces enfans-là!" The lithograph is DR 3893.
- 30 DR 1006.
- 31 DR 1587.
- 32 DR 1581.
- 33 DR 5646.
- 34 See Sussman 1982, pp. 137–51, on wet-nursing in the department of the Eure in Normandy in the early nineteenth century.
- 35 "C'était dans les derniers jours de février; il faisait encore très-froid. . . . Au dedans, des matelots ivres qui chantaient, de gros paysans qui dormaient la bouche ouverte comme des poissons morts, de petites vieilles avec leur cabas, des enfants, des puces, des nourrices, tout l'attrail du wagon des pauvres avec son odeur de pipe, d'eau-de-vie, de saucisses à l'ail et de paille moisie." Daudet 1868, pp. 157–58.
- 36 ". . . le wagon était plein, il y avait trois nourrices munies de deux nourrissons chacune, un homme ivre et un grand Anglais à longues dents. . . . les poupons criaient tantôt un à un, tantôt tous ensemble. Les nourrices faisaient boire l'un, changeaient, secouaient l'autre; les couches salies restaient sur le plancher pour sécher et pour perdre leur odeur repoussante. Simplicie était en lutte avec une nourrice qui lui déposait un de ses nourrissons sur le bras. La nourrice ne se décourageait pas et recommençait sans cesse des tentatives." Ségur 1923, pp. 40, 43.
- 37 The French illustrator Horace Castelli (1825–1889) specialized in wood engravings for young people's books and periodicals. See "Castelli, Horace," in *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*; *Oxford Art Online*, updated October 31, 2011, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/benezit/view/10.1093/benz/9780199773787.001.0001/acref-9780199773787-e-00033564>.
- 38 Sussman 1982, pp. 40–41, 52–53.
- 39 DR 7159 (MMA), DR 7160 (Musée d'Orsay), and DR 7084 (Albright-Knox).
- 40 Laughton 1991, p. 8.
- 41 Gédéon [1866]; Grand-Carteret 1888, p. 644. The date of Gédéon's collection is cited in Grand-Carteret's notice and is also confirmed by an author's inscription dated 1866 in the copy at the University of Toronto Library.

ABBREVIATION

DR Daumier Register (<http://www.daumier-register.org>)

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GINA KONSTANTOPOULOS

Inscribed Kassite Cylinder Seals in the Metropolitan Museum

The Kassite dynasty ruled Babylonia, in the south of Mesopotamia, or modern-day Iraq, for nearly four centuries, beginning after 1595 B.C. and collapsing finally in 1155 B.C. The Kassites were not themselves native to the region but may have come from the east, near the region of the Zagros Mountains.¹ They quickly adopted the native Mesopotamian culture of their new home, which qualities are reflected in their art, including cylinder seals. This article is concerned with the sixteen Kassite-period cylinder seals in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. These seals, cylindrical beads that were carved in intaglio with images and text, were rolled across damp clay to create a raised impression. They served as administrative tools in the ancient Near East, used to mark clay cuneiform tablets to provide verification of the content of the text or to invoke the seal owner's presence. They were also personal

fig. 1 Cylinder seal of Lamassani, with modern impression and line drawing. Carnelian, H. $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (2.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947 (47.115.3)

fig. 2 Cylinder seal of Kunnaiatum with modern impression and line drawing. Jasper, H. $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. (3.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985 (1985.357.25)

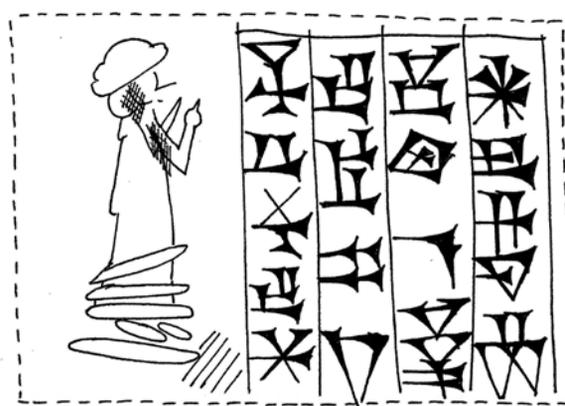
ornaments and talismans, the inscriptions of which provide an invaluable source of personal names and information about family relationships in that period.

The Kassite seals in the Museum are carved in valuable stones that were imported into Babylonia.² They are inscribed with their owners' names, familial relationships, and the gods to whom they were devoted. It is notable that four of the sixteen seals belonged to women. Throughout the history of the ancient Near East, including the Kassite period, most seals were owned by men. Many also bear inscriptions that do not identify the owner's gender. The Museum's group of four Kassite women's seals represents a significant sample, constituting nearly a quarter of all women-owned seals from this period.³ Including these four, we know of seventeen seals that belonged to women out of the entire Kassite-period glyptic corpus. The Museum's four seals may therefore be treated as useful examples rather than as potential outliers. This article investigates the seals for insights that can be gained by examining the text together with the image on each seal. The article is thus a departure from previous analyses of the material, for those usually focus on either the text or the image over the other.

Cylinder seals from the Kassite period are inscribed in the cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, script that was used to write both the Sumerian and the Akkadian languages. Sumerian, the oldest written language, is a linguistic isolate unconnected to any other language, and by the mid-second millennium B.C., it was purely a written language. At that time, the lingua franca of Babylonia was Akkadian, a Semitic language related to such later languages as Arabic and Hebrew. The Kassites took their own language with them into Mesopotamia, but it is undocumented except for personal names and a disparate assortment of words.⁴ The majority of the inscriptions on the Museum's Kassite seals are written in Akkadian and feature a heavy use of Sumerograms, or cuneiform signs carrying logographic, rather than syllabic, readings. Determinatives are signs that are not vocalized but which provide information on the category of the word to which they are connected. For example, the divine determinative *DIĜIR*, written in transliteration as *d*, indicates that the word immediately following it is the name of a deity. The inscriptions on the four seals of Kassite women in the Museum's collection identify their owners' gender by marking their



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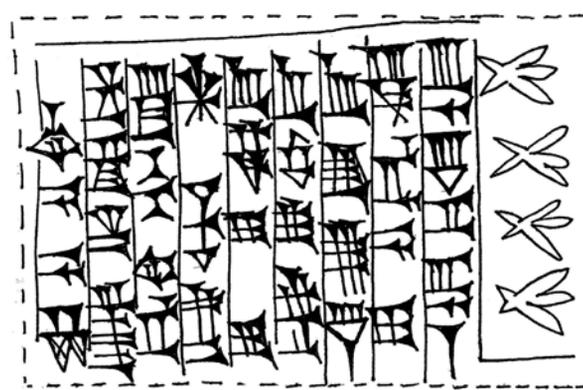


fig. 3 Cylinder seal of Naramtum with modern impression and line drawing. Carnelian, H. 1 in. (2.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985 (1985.357.44)

fig. 4 Cylinder seal of Manbaši with modern impression and line drawing. Agate, H. 7/8 in. (2.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999 (1999.325.61)

names with either the determinative *munus*, used exclusively for women, before their name, or by the word for female servant, *GEME*.⁵ The names of the four women are Lamassani, servant of an unnamed deity (fig. 1); Kunnaiatum, whose seal is dedicated to the goddess Gula (fig. 2); Naramtum, servant of the divine couple Nergal and Mamitum (fig. 3); and Manbaši, servant of the divine couple Marduk and Šarpanitum (fig. 4). The inscriptions on these four seals vary in length and format. These seals, along with the rest of the group of sixteen at the Museum, are catalogued in the Appendix; the entries include their material, a transliteration and translation of their inscriptions, and a brief description of the image on each seal.

The Museum's sixteen seals are all stylistically representative of the First Kassite Style. Kassite glyptic art is traditionally separated into three categories: First, Second, and Third Style. First Style, the earliest, is often indistinguishable from the glyptic style of the Old Babylonian period, which preceded the Kassite.⁶ This style is easily identifiable, featuring one or more figures, most often human worshippers or divine figures, set beside an inscription presented in clearly divided

vertical registers, both figure and inscription occupying the full height of the seal. Divine beings may be recognized by their typical horned headgear, and they are often larger and grander in physical stature than mortal figures depicted on the seals. The inscription is the clearest marker of the First Kassite Style. By far the most prevalent among the three seal types, we see nearly three times as many seals attributed to the First Style as to either the Second or the Third Style.

The four women-owned seals, while united in style, have fundamental differences, including the stone used for each, which provides information on the social status of the seal owners. The stones are carnelian (figs. 1, 3), jasper (fig. 2), and agate (fig. 4), semi-precious stones that had to be imported into Babylonia from elsewhere, often through the Persian Gulf. Furthermore, the seals of Lamassani and Naramtum (figs. 1, 3) are the only carnelian seals from the Kassite period in the Museum's collection. Carnelian, the product of long-distance trade with the Indus region, was especially prized in the ancient Near East, and carnelian ornaments are well represented among the grave goods of the so-called royal tombs of Ur dating to approximately 2600–2500 B.C.⁷



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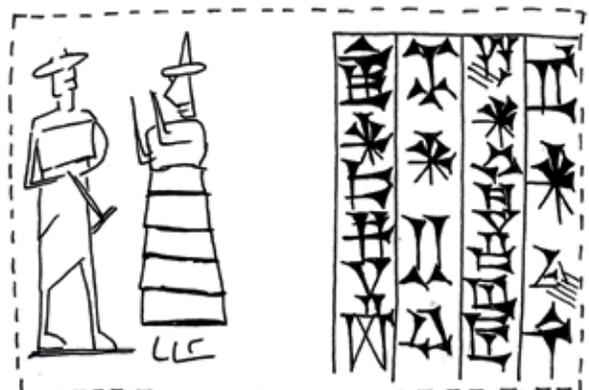


fig. 5 Cylinder seal of Tunamisaḥ with modern impression and line drawing. Chalcedony, H. 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (4.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cesnola Collection, Purchased by subscription, 1874–76 (74.51.4301)

fig. 6 Cylinder seal of Parga with modern impression and line drawing. Banded brown and white agate, H. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (2.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947 (47.115.1)

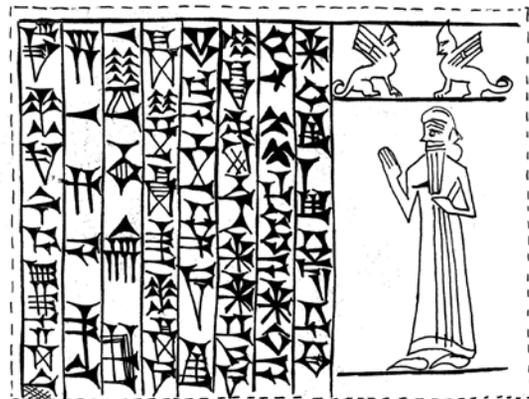
All the Kassite seals at the Museum with inscriptions that remain legible refer to deities of the Babylonian pantheon to whom the seal owner offered prayers and devotion. It is notable that all four of the women's seals are inscribed with the names of female deities. Two of the four are dedicated to divine couples: Nergal and his spouse Mamitum (fig. 3), and Marduk and his spouse Šarpanitum (fig. 4). In these instances, the male deity is by far the better known of the two. Nergal, who represented death and, more specifically, plague and pestilence, was invoked as protection against those ailments, and was usually represented as a striding male figure, often holding a mace.⁸ Regarding his consort Mamitum, we know little about the goddess save her connection to fate or oaths, indicated in the similar meaning of her name—the Akkadian word *māmītu* being translated as an oath or a vow—as she is seldom found independently of her spouse. Marduk, linked strongly with Babylon, his cult city, was a complicated deity who rose to power during the later second millennium B.C. and, in the first millennium B.C., headed the Mesopotamian pantheon. He was the central figure in several literary texts from Mesopotamia, including the Akkadian creation epic *Enūma Eliš* (When on High), which describes his defeat of the deified

ocean, Tiamat, to establish the world and the ordered workings of the universe. The identity of his consort Šarpanitum is also closely tied to her far more famous spouse, and she had few independent appearances. References to her separately from Marduk indicate the specific importance put on the goddess in those instances. Although independent references to her are rarely seen in the Kassite period, in the first millennium B.C. she acquired greater independence. She had a shrine of her own at this time, located within Marduk's Esagil temple complex in Babylon, and the name of a processional way within the city invoked her name as the one who "made firm the base" of the king's throne.⁹

On the two women-owned seals that list only a female deity in their inscriptions, Šarpanitum appears without reference to Marduk on figure 1, and the goddess Gula appears on figure 2. Gula, the goddess of healing, is attested as early as the mid-third millennium B.C., gaining prominence from the Old Babylonian period onward. Linked to several male consorts, Gula was a prominent figure in incantations and was invoked for her abilities as a healer.¹⁰ Her symbolic animal was the dog, a connection that was cited in textual and artistic sources from the second



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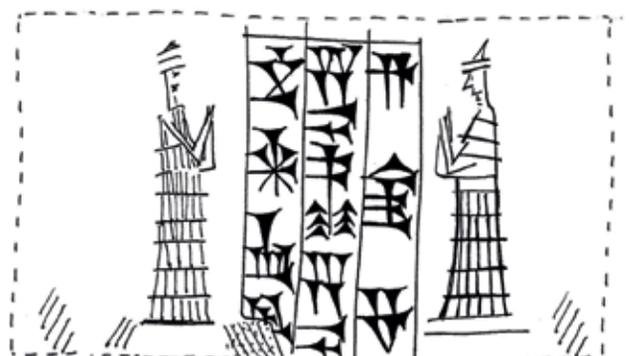


fig. 7 Cylinder seal of Nabû with modern impression and line drawing. Banded brown and white agate, H. ⅜ in. (2.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947 (47.115.2)

fig. 8 Cylinder seal of Adad-gamil with modern impression and line drawing. Feldspar, H. ⅜ in. (2.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947 (47.115.4)

millennium B.C. onward.¹¹ Although she also had a violent and destructive side, her most common titles focus instead on her healing qualities, and an early second millennium B.C. hymn to the goddess extols her soothing hands and her ability to heal wounds.¹² These qualities are attributed to Gula in the Museum’s seal’s inscription (fig. 2), where she is described as “sparing,” “merciful,” and “preserving.” With the goddess Gula very much the focus of the inscription, the name of the seal’s owner, Kunnaiatum, seems nearly an afterthought on the seal. In fact, Kunnaiatum’s name was fragmented, with the signs split into the last two lines of the inscription, suggesting that it is of less importance than the other text on the seal.

Neither Mamitum nor Šarpanitum shared the popularity of Gula, who was a well-known and widely represented deity. That Šarpanitum appears twice within this group of four seals, once with Marduk and once as an independent figure, suggests that she had a particular significance for women that seems at odds with her relatively infrequent depiction in other areas of Kassite art. The inscriptions of the four Kassite seals owned by women give clear emphasis to the power of

female deities. In contrast, none of the seals in this group either owned by men or whose owner is unknown refers to divine couples. The divine pair of Šamaš and his consort Aya, for example, is represented on cylinder seals in the Museum’s collection,¹³ but the Museum has none from the Kassite period. As with other divine pairs mentioned here, Šamaš, the sun god linked to justice and divination, was far more famous than Aya, but the goddess does have her own independent identity.¹⁴ As these two deities are attested on cylinder seals in periods that both precede and follow the Kassite, their absence within this group may be due only to chance.

There is also a pairing of two male deities on a Kassite seal at the Museum. In the inscription on the seal of Adad-gamil (fig. 8)—“Adad-gamil, Son of Raimkiti, Servant of Šin and Amurru”—are the moon god Šin and the god of the west, Amurru. Amurru’s epithets often connect him to mountains, and the deity was both linked to and worshipped in particular by the Amorites, for whom Šin was also an important deity, a fact that may explain the association of the two deities.¹⁵ Šin is by far the more prominent and widely represented of the two deities, who are often seen together



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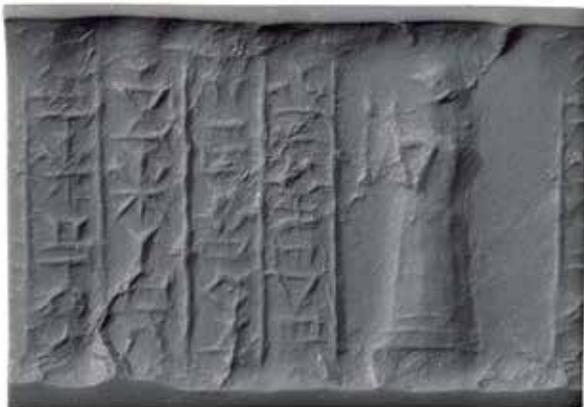


fig. 9 Cylinder seal with modern impression and line drawing. Faience, H. $\frac{7}{16}$ in. (1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1956 (56.81.24)

fig. 10 Cylinder seal with modern impression and line drawing. Jasper breccia, H. $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. (3.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Martin and Sarah Cherkasky, 1984 (1984.383.14)

and even sometimes appear conflated, sharing iconographic attributes such as a curved staff or shepherd's crook (*gamlu*).¹⁶ The deities are also together on cylinder seals in the earlier Old Babylonian period, and the connection continues into the first millennium B.C., with the two invoked as a connected figure in a major incantation series against witchcraft.¹⁷ The appearance of the two deities together in the inscription on the seal of Adad-gamil is thus in keeping with what is, by the Kassite period, fairly well established practice.

Among the twelve Kassite seals at the Museum that were owned by men or whose owner's gender is unknown, only one (fig. 11) names a female deity, Inanna, a goddess who crossed boundaries and was undoubtedly the most powerful female deity in Mesopotamia: "O Inanna of Agade, / The lady who embraces the rites of heaven and earth, / Your *speech*, your lordly gaze, / [On] Nur-Šamaš, your servant, / Look truly, look favorably [upon him]. / May he acquire wealth, may he acquire abundance. / May *those* days be bright. / May *those* joyful thoughts be established."

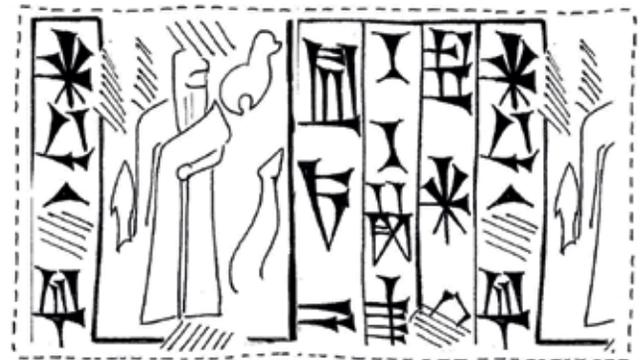
This long inscription is a prayer for Inanna's favor and extols her virtues and powers, asking her to secure the good fortune of Nur-Šamaš, the seal's owner.

Though Nur-Šamaš's name is more carefully integrated into the prayer than is Kunnaiatum's on her seal (fig. 2), the text of both seals demonstrates the same essential intent. Both seal owners lavishly praise a goddess, hoping to ensure her benevolent attention through the means of dedicating an important, precious personal object to her. Inanna was one of the most prominent Babylonian deities, making her worthy of Nur-Šamaš's prayers. The goddesses that appear on the other seals owned by men within the Museum's Kassite group do not receive such detail. We cannot say whether this is because of a perceived affinity between goddesses and their female worshippers that did not extend to male worshippers, or whether it is a result of lower esteem for female deities among men in Kassite Babylonia, or other possible reasons.

The imagery on several of the cylinder seals complicates the picture of direct female identification between the seal owner and the deity named in the inscription. Although the four seals belonging to women all refer to female divine figures in their inscriptions, only one depicts exclusively female imagery, the seal of Lamassani (fig. 1), dedicated to Šarpanitum. On this seal, a supplicant figure with upraised hands,



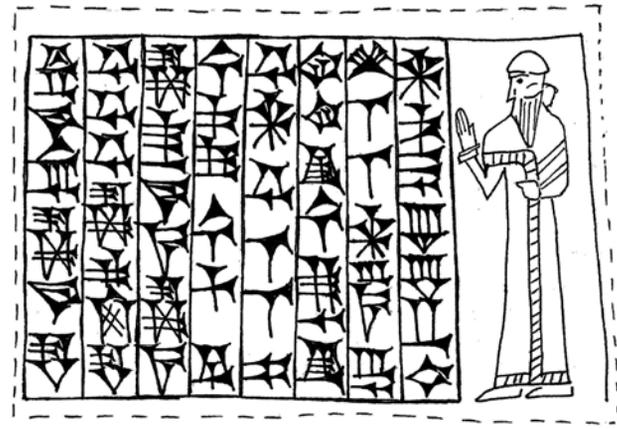
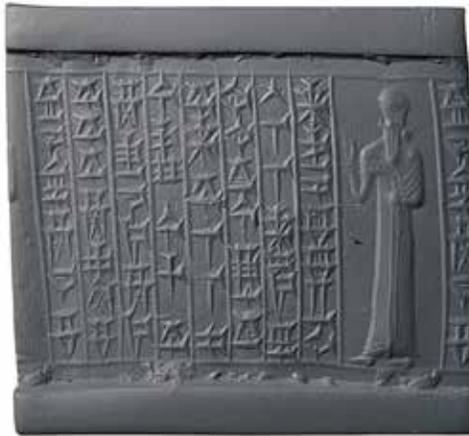
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fig. 11 Cylinder seal of Nūr-Šamaš with modern impression and line drawing. Milky chalcedony, H. 1 1/8 in. (3.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985 (1985.357.29)

fig. 12 Cylinder seal with modern impression and line drawing. Hematite, H. 1 in. (2.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999 (1999.325.56)

wearing a long robe with an elaborate hem, is shown in profile. She wears a headdress and her hair is gathered in a round mass at the nape of her neck. The image of the supplicant goddess, or protective Lama figure, appears frequently in the Kassite period. A stele from Uruk dating to this period, also in the Museum's collection (fig. 15), depicts a supplicant goddess in profile, hands upraised, with divine headdress and long robe. The stele's inscription on her tiered robe reinforces her role as a protective figure, indicating it was dedicated for the life of the Kassite ruler Nazi-Maruttaš.¹⁸

The seal of Kunnaiatum (fig. 2), dedicated to Gula, features imagery that is not distinguishable as either male or female. Instead, we see the nine lines of the seal's inscription bordered by a column of four fly-like objects. From the early second millennium B.C. onward, flies are represented on cylinder seals as simply a pair of crossed wedges; earlier seals also depict them, though more rarely, as fully detailed and truer to life.¹⁹ In addition, flies are represented in texts with connections to the gods. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, arguably Mesopotamia's most famous literary text, the mother goddess Bēlēt-ilī clutches a necklace of flies, swearing

that she will never forget the flood that the gods inflicted upon mankind.²⁰ There are also necklaces from the Royal Tombs of Ur that were strung with fly pendants among their gold, lapis lazuli, and carnelian beads, in an earlier echo of this literary motif.²¹

On the seal of Manbaši (fig. 4), dedicated to Marduk and Šarpanitum, there is prominent masculine imagery. One of the figures, clearly male, bears a weapon, most likely a mace. The figure of a man holding a mace is well represented on cylinder seals from earlier periods, particularly in the Old Babylonian period, and it was often accompanied by a supplicant Lama figure. While the male figure may occasionally be identified as a deity, he most often lacks visible markers of divinity such as a horned headdress. Instead, he is usually presented as a king, a position that is either inferred from the visual iconography in his representation or revealed directly in the seal's inscription when there is one. In seals from the Old Babylonian period, the figure of a "king with a mace" appears particularly on ones that belonged to individuals who had significant social or bureaucratic standing.²²

The seal of Naramtum (fig. 3) illustrates another level of complexity in which specific deities' names

fig. 13 Cylinder seal with modern impression and line drawing. Rock crystal, H. $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (2.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999 (1999.325.58)

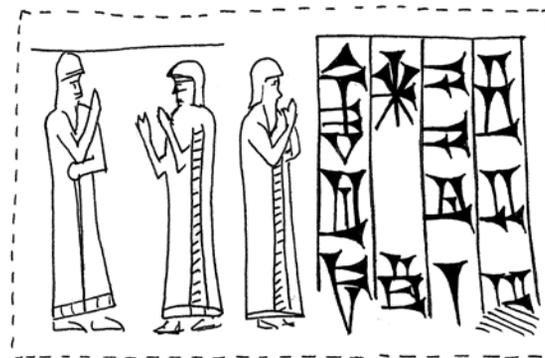
fig. 14 Cylinder seal of Šumanum with modern impression and line drawing. Hematite, H. $1\frac{1}{16}$ in. (2.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999 (1999.325.58)

are juxtaposed with imagery associated with other deities. The inscription on the seal of Naramtum names the gods Nergal and Mamitum, yet the image shows a male worshipper in profile behind a seated dog, the animal closely affiliated with the healing goddess Gula. The polelike element rising from the dog's head indicates that it is not a living creature but is instead a divine manifestation or a piece of temple statuary, such as the guardian lions paired in front of many Babylonian temples. Although Nergal was the god of plague and pestilence, he also protected against these ailments, and his appearance in the seal's inscription could be considered to be reinforced by the presence of Gula. The composition is deliberate, with text and image intended as a coherent whole, for none of the seals in this group of sixteen shows evidence that inscriptions were added after the seal's initial carving or that images were recarved at a later date. It is difficult now to see how Nergal and Mamitum, their female devotee Naramtum, and a male worshipper approaching a dog of Gula were connected, but the entire composition undoubtedly communicated important aspects of the owner's family and religious affiliations.

The inscriptions on the four seals owned by women are among the most elaborate of those on the Museum's group of sixteen Kassite seals and are here considered alongside the detailed imagery also present on the seals. The inscriptions focus on divine figures and the lineage of the female owners rather than providing information about these women as individuals, but the extensive length and complexity of the inscriptions indicate that the owners occupied an elite position in the society of Kassite Babylonia. It is not known whether these seal owners actually used their seals as administrative tools or whether the seals were intended primarily as personal ornaments. Women did not, by and large, occupy the economic and legal roles that would require them to impress their own personal seals on such documents, a common use of cylinder seals that belonged to men.²³ In order to begin to contribute to our understanding of aspects of this important but little-documented period in Babylonian history, we must consider the texts and images on these seals as part of a coherent whole, as did the artisans who made them and the Kassite women for whom they were made. Though we do not know to what extent the owners of the seals specified materials, inscriptions, and



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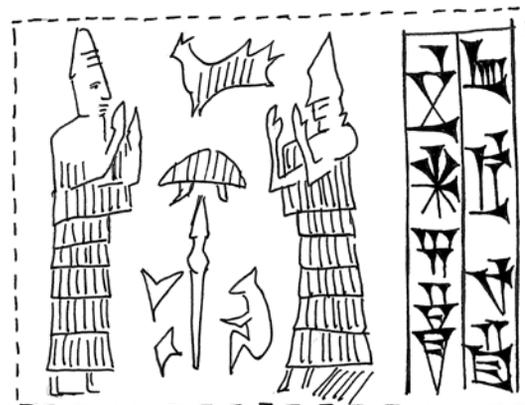


fig. 15 Stele of the protective goddess Lama. Kassite period, ca. 1307–1282 B.C., southern Mesopotamia, Uruk. Gypsum alabaster; 33 × 12 × 8 in. (83.8 × 30.5 × 20.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of E. S. David, 1961 (61.12)



imagery, both the textual and the visual elements of each seal were selected deliberately and thoughtfully with the intent that they work together to convey meanings of individual significance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I completed the initial catalogue and drawings of the Kassite cylinder seals during my time as a fellow in the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum. I am grateful for assistance from

members of the department on both the catalogue and the early drafts of this article, particularly Sarah Graff and Elizabeth Knott, and to the department as a whole for giving me access to the files on these seals, which include important notes and comments by Edith Porada.

GINA KONSTANTOPOULOS

*Postdoctoral Researcher, Faculty of Theology,
University of Helsinki*

APPENDIX

Catalogue of the Inscribed Kassite Cylinder Seals in The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Beyond the broad identification of the Kassite period and First Kassite Style to which these sixteen cylinder seals all belong, no specific date can be attributed to any one. For several seals, particularly MMA 47.115.1-4, the style blurs with that of the late Old Babylonian, and thus even this dating is not absolute. The seals are listed in order of their date of accession; MMA 47.115.1-4 represent the only clearly connected group of seals in the catalogue.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLITERATION OF INSCRIPTIONS

The cuneiform inscriptions on these seals were inscribed vertically within clearly defined registers over the full height of the seal. When the seals were rolled onto damp clay, the text they inscribed was read from top to bottom and from right to left. The majority of the inscriptions are written in Akkadian and feature the heavy use of Sumerograms, or cuneiform signs carrying logographic, not syllabic, meanings that align to Sumerian words. The few inscriptions that are entirely in Sumerian are transliterated in expanded spacing, as seen in the first lines of MMA 74.51.4301 (fig. 5), for example, to differentiate the language employed, according to standard Assyriological practices. Generally, Akkadian is transliterated or transcribed in italics, while Sumerograms within an Akkadian text appear in small caps. Regarding other conventions of transliteration, superscript is generally used to indicate determinatives, signs that are not vocalized but provide information on the category of the word to which they are connected. On the seals here, the divine determinative *DIĜIR* is most often seen written simply as *d*. Other common determinatives and their meanings include *mmunus* before a female name; *dis* before a male name; *na⁴* to indicate stone; and *ki*, which follows a word, to indicate a location or place.

Cuneiform signs have phonetic as well as logographic readings, and, particularly when a line is fragmentary, signs may be read as phonetic values without their meanings being able to be understood or interpreted. Since most cuneiform languages, including Sumerian and Akkadian, are polysemic, with a particular sign having several possible phonetic readings, the correct reading is tied closely to the meaning of the sign in its particular context. Thus it is difficult to write an accurate transliteration in either Sumerian or Akkadian when the translation is unclear. In these circumstances, the most common phonetic value of the sign is written in lowercase without alterations, to indicate the sign that is present but that its meaning could not be accurately determined (as in MMA 47.115.2, MMA 47.115.3, MMA 1999.325.58). If the sign is entirely unclear and cannot be read at all, an x is used to indicate the presence of a sign that cannot be deciphered.

MMA 74.51.4301 (fig. 5)

The seal image shows, in fine detail, a standing bearded male supplicant figure wearing a fringed robe. He faces the eight-line inscription with his right hand raised. Above him, in a register set off by a dividing line, two sphinxes crouch facing each other. Chalcedony, H. 1¹¹/₁₆ in. (4.3 cm)

The Cesnola Collection, Purchased by subscription, 1874-76
Inscription:

^dša₃-zu en alim u₄-ki
di^l-ku₆ kur-kur si-sa₂-sa₂-a an-ki-a
si₃-ga nam-til diĝir-diĝir ĝidru niĝ₂-tuku
dim₄ diri arad ni₂-tuku-zu
he₂-li he₂-nun mu he₂-tuku
^{dis}tu-na-mi-saĥ
dumu ^{dis}pa-a-ri
lu₂ mu-ni-pa₃-da^l he₂-^lti^l

Marduk, the lord, the bull, the light of the land
The judge of all the lands,
[who] sets right [all] in
heaven and earth,
Giver of life [to] the gods,
[who] holds the scepter,
Exceedingly great,
your reverent servant,
May he be lustrous, may he
be princely, may [his] name
endure.
Tunamisah,
Son of Pāri,
The one called forth by
name; may he prosper!

Comment: The use of the epithet of ^dša₃-zu, “knows the heart,” for Marduk is later seen in the fifty names of Marduk listed in *Enūma Eliš* VII:35 and is repeated in several other cylinder seal inscriptions as well as within larger texts.²⁴ The fine detail in carving is observed in all aspects of the seal—the bearded figure, the two sphinxes, and the inscription itself—and sets it apart from MMA 47.115.1-4.

This cylinder seal entered the Museum’s collection in 1874, well before the other seals discussed here, giving it the oldest publication history of the group.
Publications: Sayce 1877, pp. 441-43; Ward 1895, nos. 391-96; Price 1908, no. 6; Ward 1910, pp. 185-86; Limet 1971, no. 6.3; Imai 1983, no. 132; Paulus 2014, p. 182n331

MMA 41.160.314 (not illustrated)

On this badly worn seal, a figure wearing a long fringed robe faces a seven-column inscription that is illegible except for various signs.

Chalcedony, H. 1¹/₈ in. (2.8 cm)

Bequest of W. Gedney Beatty, 1941

Comment: The seal is First Kassite Style, with a single figure facing the inscription in a manner similar to MMA 1985.357.29. It is worn and broken along the top edge of the seal; the upper torso, shoulders, and head of the figure are missing.

MMA 47.115.1 (fig. 6)

Two supplicant figures stand with hands raised; they wear horned headdresses and flounced robes. The figures flank a three-column inscription with their hands raised toward it, as if praising both the inscription and the individual it names.

Banded brown and white agate; H. 1½ in. (2.8 cm)

Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947

Inscription:

pa-ar-ga[?]

DUMU a-ge-ya

ARAD ^dEN.ZU

Parga,

Son of Ageya,

Servant of Sin

Comment: The names of the two individuals on this seal, Parga and Ageya, are attested in sources from the period, although both, particularly the former, are uncommon personal names. Parga is also attested in the corpus of Akkadian letters found at Ras Shamra as a topographical name that is clearly unconnected to the individual who appears in this inscription.²⁵ The second name, Ageya, is attested more frequently than Parga, most often appearing as a patronymic.²⁶

Publication: Lilyquist 1994, pp. 16–18, 35–36

MMA 47.115.2 (fig. 7)

A supplicant figure with raised hands, wearing headdress and tiered robe, stands facing the initial line of a four-line inscription. Behind the figure is the symbol of the storm god Adad/Iškur, a lightning fork on the back of a standing bull.

Banded brown and white agate; H. 7⁄8 in. (2.2 cm)

Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947

Inscription:

na-bi-um

[DUMU][?].SAĜ BI.ĜAL₂

TUKU.NIR di še

ME AB.TUKU.TUKU

Nabû,

... The foremost son,

Authoritative ...

Possessing all the rites.

Comment: Although the signs on this seal are clear, the meaning of the middle two lines is uncertain. The initial sign in the second line is only partially preserved, and although traces of a vertical may be interpreted, the reading of DUMU.SAĜ, or “firstborn or foremost son, the eldest,” is more intelligible than “PA SAĜ,” the other possible reading of the initial two signs in that line.²⁷ The use of DUMU.SAĜ on seals is relatively infrequent, however, and is very rarely seen in texts as a whole after the Old Babylonian period, which may push the dating on this seal earlier into the transitional and early periods most often represented in seals of the First Kassite Style.²⁸

Publication: Lilyquist 1994, pp. 16–18, 35–36

MMA 47.115.3 (fig. 1)

A supplicant figure with raised hands, wearing a headdress and long robe, stands and faces the closing line of a four-line inscription. The robe ends at the hem in a distinctive wide double border.

Carnelian, H. 7⁄8 in. (2.2 cm)

Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947

Inscription:

šar-pa-ni-tum

NIN SA₃ LA₂.SU₃

la-ma-sà-ni

GEME₂ uh[?] la an

Šarpanitum,

Merciful lady,

Lamassani,

Female servant of ...

Comment: Lamassani is a name seen primarily in the context of *naditu* women from Sippar in the Old Babylonian period, a context that lists six different women with this name.²⁹ Šarpanitum, consort of the god Marduk, is a far less-well-known deity than her more famous spouse, and she rarely appears independently of him. The final line of this seal is problematic: the middle sign is partially obscured and may be traces of an “uh” sign, though this does not resolve into any common name. Other potential reconstructions of the sign are similarly unhelpful. Lacking other possibilities or options, I follow W. G. Lambert’s initial comment that “the title is a mystery,” and may well be an illegible royal name, in lieu of an illegible divine one.³⁰

Publication: Lilyquist 1994, pp. 16–18, 35–36

MMA 47.115.4 (fig. 8)

A supplicant figure wearing a robe, bordered near the bottom edge, stands with hands raised, facing a four-line inscription. The inscription and the figure are both badly worn.

Feldspar, H. 7⁄8 in. (2.2 cm)

Gift of Georg Hahn, 1947

Inscription:

[i]M ga-mi[]

DUMU ra[?]-im-ki-ti

ARAD ^dEN.ZU

†U[?] ^dMAR.TU

Adad-gamil,

Son of Raimkiti,

Servant of Sin

And Amurru.

Comment: The name of this individual, Adad-gamil, is clear despite the somewhat obscured signs, though the most prominent other attestation of this name is found in agricultural texts from Mari dated to the reign of Zimri-Lim.³¹ His father’s name, though more unusual, is attested from the Temple Archives at Nippur.³²

Publication: Lilyquist 1994, pp. 16–18, 35–36

MMA 56.81.24 (fig. 9)

The male figure wears a long robe and holds a scimitar; there is a fish behind him. In front of the figure’s lower body is a rearing animal, with another animal crouching at the height of his head. The figure faces toward the final line of a four-column inscription.

Faience, H. 7⁄16 in. (1 cm)

Rogers Fund, 1956

Inscription:

ᵈutu [umun]-gal
 saġ an [ki]
 bad-bad he₂-nun
 arhuš tuku-a

[The god] Šamaš, the great lord,
 Foremost [in] heaven and earth,
 Revealing plenty,
 [The one] who is compassionate.

Comment: Although many of the Kassite seals are written in Sumerogram-heavy Akkadian (with often only the inclusion of personal possessive markers in phonetic Akkadian), this seal is entirely in Sumerian, without even the personal name of the owner. Instead it is focused upon and dedicated entirely to the invoked deity. The seal's inscription is fairly straightforward, with the exception of the third sign in the first line: the traces clearly suggest a large *winkelhaken*, or single hook-shaped sign, as the only sign present. The only possible reading of “u” here would be umun, the Emesal reading for en, or lord. In Kassite seals, the equation of “u” for “umun” is also well attested. The presence of Emesal, a dialect of Sumerian most often used in ritual texts, in cylinder seal inscriptions is not unattested, and we see similar readings of umun elsewhere, from locations both inside and outside Mesopotamia.³³

Publication: Herzfeld 1923–46, no. 2893

MMA 1984.383.14 (fig. 10)

A supplicant female figure with hands raised and another female figure flank a three-line inscription; the space around each of the figures is otherwise undecorated. Part of a gold mount is lodged in the hole of the cylinder seal.

Jasper breccia, H. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm)

Gift of Martin and Sarah Cherkasky, 1984

Inscription:

ᵈim ur-saġ-gal
 en a-a saġ-gig₂-ga
 saġ-ni ezen[?] saġ-ni

Adad, the great warrior,
 The lord, the father of the black-headed people,
 His servant . . . his servant

Comment: The term “black-headed people” (saġ-gig₂-ga) is used to refer to the inhabitants of Mesopotamia as late as the Neo-Assyrian period. It does not appear to be linked to an ethnic group or a particular subset of people within Mesopotamia, but is instead used without distinction for those within the borders of Mesopotamia.³⁴ Lacking a personal name, this cylinder seal falls into the same group as the previous cylinder seal in that its focus is exclusively on the deity, in this case the storm god Adad/Iškur.
 Publication: Pittman and Aruz 1987, no. 36

MMA 1985.357.25 (fig. 2)

Four fly-like objects lie in a row next to nine lines of inscription.

Jasper, H. 1½ in. (3.9 cm)

Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985**Inscription:**

e-ṭê-e-rum
 ga-ma-a-lu
 šu-zu-ú-bu
 šu-ul-lu-mu
 šu-uk²-lu-lu
 ᵈgu-la
 ša ti-di-ma
^{NA4}KIŠIB ^{MUNUS}ku-un-
 na-a-a-tum

Sparing,
 Merciful,
 Preserving,
 Completing,
 Perfecting,
 Gula,
 [All] that you know;
 The seal of Kunnaiatum.

Comment: The most minimalistic of the Kassite seals, MMA 1985.357.25 is the only seal in this group without a figural drawing in addition to its inscription, and the only seal that is predominantly in Akkadian, with just the exception of the Sumerograms in the penultimate line. In regard to the fly-like objects that accompany the seal's inscriptions, we can compare them to similar flies on Kassite seals at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, and the Morgan Library and Museum, New York.³⁵ The long Akkadian inscription on this seal features the unusual sectioning of the owner's name, Kunnaiatum, in its two final lines. Given the vertical arrangement of the seal's composition, along with the length of Kunnaiatum's name, this seems a planned layout—corroborated by the indentation of the final line of the inscription.

Publications: Eisen 1940, no. 70; Metropolitan Museum 1985, p. 16

MMA 1985.357.26 (not illustrated)

Two male figures on this seal face a five-line inscription that is no longer legible. Both figures wear caps and long, fringed robes and hold staves or crooks in their right hand, with their left arm bent across their chest. A vertical arrangement of three reclining animals, likely ibex, separates the two figures.

Microline feldspar, H. 1⅜ in. (3.5 cm)

Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985

Comment: This seal displays all the hallmarks of the First Kassite Style. The figures holding a staff or crook in their hands are similar to representations of the god Ninšubur that are seen in this period.³⁶

Publications: Eisen 1940, no. 69; Metropolitan Museum 1985, p. 16

MMA 1985.357.29 (fig. 11)

A solitary male bearded figure in a long fringed robe stands with right hand raised, facing an eight-line inscription in even registers.

Milky chalcedony, H. 1⅜ in. (3.4 cm)

Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985

Inscription:

^dinanna a-ga-de₃^{ki}
gašan me-me an-<ki-a> ur₄-e
di-di-zu igi nir-zu
ud-^dutu me-me-za
igi-zi igi-bar-ba
he₂-nun niĝ₂-tuku he₂-tuku
u₄ dadag he₂-nam-bi?
inim-ĝar hul₂ he₂-ĝar-bi?

O Inanna of Agade,
The lady who embraces the rites of heaven and earth,
Your *speech*, your lordly gaze,
[On] Nūr-Šamaš, your servant,
Look truly, look favorably [upon him].
May he acquire wealth, may he acquire abundance.
May *those* days be bright.
May *those* joyful thoughts be established.

Comment: The goddess referred to in the opening lines of this inscription is the particular representation of Inanna linked to the ruling kings of the Sargonic period (ca. 2234–2113 B.C.) and their capital city of Agade.³⁷ As a personal name, Nūr-Šamaš is attested multiple times in the Kassite period.³⁸ The third line of this seal is unquestionably the most difficult to interpret, but the Sumerian di-di has lexical equivalents with the Akkadian words *dabābu* and *atmū*, both of which may be translated as speech or utterance. Publications: Eisen 1940, no. 68; Limet 1971, no. 6.13; Metropolitan Museum 1985, p. 16

MMA 1985.357.44 (fig. 3)

A male worshipper wearing a round cap faces the closing line of a five-line inscription. In front of the figure is a seated dog surmounted by a standard, a common motif of the goddess Gula. Carnelian, H. 1 in. (2.5 cm)
Gift of The Right Reverend Paul Moore Jr., 1985

Inscription:

na-ra-am-tum
DUMU.MUNUS a-hu-ni
DUMU ^dda-gan-ma-lik
GEME₂ ^dNE₃.IRI₁₁.GAL
^dma-mi-tum

Naramtum,
The daughter of Ahuni,
Son of Dagan-Malik,
Servant of [the god] Nergal
[and the goddess] Mamitum

Comment: Ahuni was a popular name, with notable individuals having held it, including a cupbearer of the Ur III ruler Šu-Sîn.³⁹ It appears linked to less renowned individuals on other cylinder seals and is widely attested during the Kassite period.⁴⁰ Mamitum is rarely attested except when she is paired with her spouse, the god Nergal, deity of plague, pestilence, and warfare.⁴¹ Publication: Metropolitan Museum 1985, p. 16

MMA 1999.325.56 (fig. 12)

A male figure, possibly divine, wearing a round cap and a short fringed garment, stands holding a mace (or short staff) at his waist. Facing him is a figure wearing a long fringed robe and pointed cap; he has both hands raised in supplication. A monkey surmounted by a standard crouches behind the second figure. To the right of the monkey is a two-column inscription. Hematite, H. 1 in. (2.4 cm)
Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999

Inscription:

^dnin-šubur
sukkal zi-an-na

Ninšubur,
True vizier of An.

Comment: We see this inscription repeated in the first two lines of a late Old Babylonian/Early Kassite seal at the Morgan Library and Museum.⁴² The two-line inscription is repeated exactly on a worn seal of similar style, also at the Morgan Library and Museum.⁴³ By the Kassite period, Ninšubur has merged with the figure of Papsukkal, and absorbed the latter's close connections with Anu, as opposed to his role and connection to the goddess Inanna. Given Ninšubur's recognizable iconography as a god bearing a staff, the figure bearing a weapon, which is either a mace or short staff, on the present cylinder seal may represent this deity. Publication: Metropolitan Museum 1999

MMA 1999.325.58 (fig. 13)

A bearded male worshipper and a non-bearded worshipper face each other, both wearing caps and long fringed robes. The figure with the beard raises his right hand and the other raises both his hands. Another bearded worshipper stands to the right, facing the closing line of the four-line inscription, his right hand raised. Rock crystal, H. 7/8 in. (2.3 cm)
Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999

Inscription:

ab ud ma
a-a-ba-aš
^dmes
igi-<tab>-a-ni arhuš tuku

...
Abaš,
Marduk,
His gaze bears mercy.

Comment: This inscription's poorly preserved initial line is difficult to read and translate. Publication: Metropolitan Museum 1999

MMA 1999.325.60 (fig. 14)

Two figures, possibly divine, stand with both hands raised in supplication. They flank a staff (or spear), which is surmounted by a hedgehog. A goatfish is above the hedgehog, and a fly, a fish,

and a monkey are arrayed beside the staff. There is a two-line inscription.

Hematite, H. $1\frac{1}{16}$ in. (2.7 cm)

Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999

Inscription:

šU-ma-nu-um

ARAD ^di-šum

Šumanum,

Servant of Išum.

Comment: Though little attested during the Kassite period, the name Šumanum does appear in earlier economic records, dating to the reign of Ur III ruler Amar-Sîn, in texts from the administrative center of Puzrish-Dagan. In these texts, Šumanum is referred to as one of a number of Amorite individuals (identified by the formula of personal name [PN] *mar-tu*) who appear in the texts. Though entirely distinct from the Kassites, the Amorites were similarly foreign to Mesopotamia.⁴⁴

Publication: Metropolitan Museum 1999

MMA 1999.325.61 (fig. 4)

A male royal or divine figure wearing a short kilt and a headdress stands holding a mace and with a line drawn beneath him. Facing him, and away from the four-line inscription, is a suppliant figure wearing a fringed robe.

Agate, H. $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (2.3 cm)

Gift of Nanette B. Kelekian, in memory of Charles Dikran and Beatrice Kelekian, 1999

Inscription:

ma-an-^lba¹-ši

DUMU.MUNUS ^dUTU-^{bi}2-^{ra}2-^{qù}-ur

GEME₂ ^dAMAR.UTU

U₃ ^dšar^l-pa-ni-tum

Manbaši,

Daughter of Šamaš. . .

Female servant of [the god] Marduk

And [the goddess] Šarpanitum

Comment: Little can be said with certainty about the name Manbaši. It is most likely a Kassite name rather than an Akkadian one since it more closely matches the general format of Kassite names.⁴⁵ The name of Manbaši's father, on the other hand, conforms more properly to Akkadian standards, and it begins with the name of the god Šamaš, though the latter half of the name is not clear. Manbaši states that she is the servant of the god Marduk and his consort Šarpanitum, who appears on her own in the inscription on MMA 47.115.3 (fig. 1).⁴⁶

Publication: Metropolitan Museum 1999

NOTES

- 1 On the Kassites and their rule in Babylonia, see Brinkman 1976, which remains a major compilation of the published cuneiform texts relating to the Kassite period. On the ruling monarchy, particularly its foreign nature, see Brinkman 1974 and Malko 2014.
- 2 The single example that is not stone is MMA 56.81.24 (fig. 9), which was carved in faience. For a discussion of that material, see Riccardelli 2017.
- 3 Serdar Yalçın (2016, p. 130) reports that within the Kassite-period corpus just fourteen seals can be “securely attributed” to women. Of the seals belonging to the Metropolitan Museum, he cites only MMA 1985.357.44 (fig. 3), omitting the other three. In the case of MMA 47.115.3 (fig. 1), this exclusion is based on the difficulty in identifying the seal definitively as late Old Babylonian or early Kassite.
- 4 On the Kassite language, see Ancillotti 1981.
- 5 Here the term “servant” is primarily metaphorical, indicating a connection and devotion to a particular deity rather than a particular religious or social position. For information on transliteration conventions and determinatives in Sumerian and Akkadian, see “A Note on the Transliteration of Inscriptions” in the Appendix of this article.
- 6 Styles of Kassite glyptic art were laid out first, with just two styles, in Van Buren 1954; then expanded in Beran 1957–58; and presented most recently in Collon 2007. They are described in depth in Matthews 1990, p. 55. Donald Matthews also identifies a fourth, pseudo-Kassite, style derived from First Kassite style.
- 7 Carnelian cylinder seals from other periods are present in the Museum's collection; see, for example, MMA 41.160.317 and MMA 1999.325.71, both from the first millennium B.C. On the grave goods at Ur, see Reade 2001, pp. 23–26.
- 8 A general overview of Nergal may be found in Wiggermann 1998–2001.
- 9 Šarpanitum's shrine and her association with a processional way are both later attestations, but they may point to her developing significance as a deity independent of her spouse Marduk. See George 1992, pp. 414–15.
- 10 For an overview of Gula, see Böck 2014, pp. 7–44.
- 11 On Gula and her connection to dogs, see Ornan 2004.
- 12 Römer 1969; note that this text refers to Gula by the Sumerian name Ninisina.
- 13 For earlier cylinder seals with representations of Šamaš and Aya, see MMA 41.160.329 and MMA 1999.325.13.
- 14 For example, in the Akkadian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Ninsun, the mother of the text's titular hero, appeals directly to Aya to protect her son on his adventures, asking her to ensure that her husband Šamaš will protect him.
- 15 For an overall comprehensive look at Amurru, see Kupper 1961 and Beaulieu 2005.
- 16 Regarding the curved staff associated with a number of deities, including Amurru, see Ambos and Krauskopf 2010.
- 17 As seen in the incantation series *Maqlû* Tablet VI:4, in which a number of deities are invoked in reference to the protection of specific body parts: “My arms are the crook (*gamlu*) of Sin and Amurru!” See Abusch 2016, p. 339.
- 18 On this stele and its inscription, see Becker 1993, p. 59, no. 791.
- 19 Perhaps the best example of a more lifelike image of a fly on a cylinder seal is found at the British Museum, BM 128843, an early third millennium B.C. cylinder seal that is uninscribed but is carved with images of two ibex and a recumbent gazelle, with a precisely detailed fly above it.

- 20 See George 2003, vol. 1, pp. 712–15. This passage appears on Tablet XI, lines 161–71.
- 21 See, for example, Pittman 1998.
- 22 See a listing of such seals in Tanret 2010, p. 220.
- 23 Although we see that this is true for most periods in Mesopotamian history, there are several periods during which we see women participate in economic activity, such as the long-distance trading networks between Mesopotamia and Anatolia of the early second millennium B.C.
- 24 See Hurowitz 2010, p. 91. The use of ^dša₃.zu for Marduk also appears on a seal inscription found in Megiddo: ^oša₃-zu / [b]é-li-i / ARHUŠ TUKU.HA; Šazu (=Marduk), my lord, have mercy (on me); see Oshima 2014, pp. 40–41. This inscription is repeated on an early Kassite seal in the Morgan Library and Museum; see Porada and Buchanan 1948, no. 576.
- 25 Huehnergard 1999, p. 375.
- 26 In particular, we see a listing for four attestations of Ageya (read as *a-gi-ia/a-qi-ia*) even within Albert T. Clay's collection of Kassite-period personal names: a ruler; the father of one Enmaštu-nādin-šum; the father of one Mindi-iballu; and appearing once in texts from Amarna. See Clay 1912, p. 50, and Hölscher 1996, p. 22.
- 27 The reading is suggested in Lilyquist 1994, p. 36.
- 28 The First Kassite Style is defined in Van Buren 1954, p. 4.
- 29 On the Sippar cloister, or *Gagûm*, and the women who lived there, see Richardson 2010, p. 340.
- 30 Lilyquist 1994, p. 36. We see attestations of a female name, Lammassûtu, in Kassite personal names from Nippur; see Hölscher 1996, p. 130.
- 31 Gentili 1996, pp. 100–103.
- 32 Clay 1912, p. 120.
- 33 In particular, J. A. Brinkman presents the use of Emesal on one of a group of seals found at Thebes, with the use of *umun = en* and *i-bi₂* as the Emesal for *igi* and *e-re* as Emesal for *ar ad*. See Brinkman 1981–82, p. 76, no. 34. The use of *umun-gal* is attested several times on Kassite cylinder seal inscriptions; see the Kassite seal inscription beginning ^dEN.ZU UMUN.GAL (Porada and Buchanan 1948, no. 579, and *ibid.*, nos. 584, 585, which also begin ^dUTU UMUN-GAL).
- 34 See Bahrani 2006, p. 54.
- 35 Delaporte 1920, no. 22. See also Morgan Library and Museum seal no. 121, <http://corsair.themorgan.org/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=83743>.
- 36 Wiggermann 1985–86, pp. 3–7, 14.
- 37 Wall-Romana 1990.
- 38 This name is more frequently written *zala₂-^dutu* in Sumerian, rather than *ud-^dutu*, as seen here; Hölscher 1996, p. 162.
- 39 Regarding this seal of Ahuni as the cupbearer of Šu-Sîn, see Fischer 2008, pp. 72–73.
- 40 We see, for example, “Ahuni, son of Šamaš-rabi, servant of Šamaš” (*a-^hu-ni / DUMU ^dUTU-ra-bi / ARAD ^dUTU*) on an Old Babylonian seal in the Morgan Library and Museum (Porada and Buchanan 1948, no. 315), and other attestations in Hölscher 1996, p. 25.
- 41 There is little information specifically about Mamitum, who decided the fates of those entering the netherworld. See Lambert 1973.
- 42 Porada and Buchanan 1948, no. 429.
- 43 *Ibid.*, no. 527.
- 44 Liu 2015, pp. 94–97. Concerning this and other Amorite personal names during this period, see Buccellati 1966, p. 182, and Owen

1995. Šumanum in particular was awarded three sheep, and was thus integrated into Ur III bureaucracy despite his foreign origin.

- 45 Among the Kassite names found inscribed on objects in the collection of the Museum, we see most prominently the king Nazi-Maruttaš on an inscribed stele of a protective Lama goddess (fig. 15).
- 46 The pairing of Marduk and Šarpanitum is far more common in cylinder seal inscriptions than Šarpanitum's appearing alone as she does in figure 1. I am grateful to Piotr Michalowski for his help with this seal's inscription.

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The Silver Stag Vessel: A Royal Gift

One of the most elegant and elaborate pieces of Hittite art known is the silver cup in the form of the forepart of a stag at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (figs. 1, 4).¹ The Hittites ruled over most of Anatolia, or modern-day Turkey, during the Late Bronze Age, from about 1650 to 1200 B.C. In this period they were one of the main powers in the ancient Near East, together with Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and the Hurrian state of Mittani, in Mesopotamia, and the Mycenaean kingdoms, in Greece. The economy of the Hittite state was based on the accumulation and control of wealth, and luxury objects such as the silver stag vessel played an important role. Bestowing them on temples and shrines throughout the central kingdom was a way of displaying and maintaining royal power.

The Hittites left behind more than thirty thousand clay tablets and fragments of tablets written in cuneiform

fig. 1 Stag vessel. Anatolia, Hittite Empire, ca. 14th–13th century B.C. Silver, gold inlay, H. 7½ in. (18 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Norbert Schimmel Trust, 1989 (1989.281.10)

fig. 2 Photomosaic of the frieze on the stag vessel, as proposed by Muscarella 1974

fig. 3 Drawing of the frieze on the stag vessel, as proposed by Güterbock 1989b

script. Most of them were found at the capital Hattusa (now Boğazköy, Turkey), in central Anatolia, some ninety miles east of Ankara. Imported from Syria in the seventeenth century B.C., cuneiform was the official script of the royal administration, accessible only to a small group within the ruling Hittite elite. In addition, they developed a second script, called Anatolian hieroglyphs, based on an indigenous repertoire of mostly pictographic symbols that may originally have been used for socioeconomic and administrative purposes. When Hittite kings addressed a larger audience and when members of the ruling elite wanted to display their names in an aesthetically pleasing way (usually on their seals), this was their script of choice. Some of these Anatolian hieroglyphs appear in two gold inlays on the silver cup, and they immediately prompt the question, to what extent do the gold epigraphs, as they are called, contribute to an understanding of the object and its original context? This question is all the more important since, unfortunately, the stag vessel lacks a documented archaeological context, though it may originally have belonged to a small group of objects in the Metropolitan's collection.² So far the two epigraphs have resisted convincing

readings. A new interpretation, proposed here, offers a glimpse of the context in which the cup may have functioned.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL AND THE SCENE ON THE FRIEZE

The cup was found in several pieces that were fit together to form the current object.³ Kneeling on its forelegs, the restored stag is almost perfectly preserved, with only parts of its antlers missing. According to Kurt Bittel, the longtime chief excavator of Hattusa, "rumors" put the original findspot for the vessel, and the other objects in the group at the Metropolitan Museum, in northern Cappadocia, the Hittite heartland in central Anatolia.⁴ However, even if the cup is of unknown provenance, its iconography and style, as well as the Anatolian hieroglyphs in its oval gold epigraphs, are unmistakably Hittite.⁵ Around its body it carries a frieze with two deities at the left facing three worshippers (figs. 2, 3). The two figures at the left can be interpreted as deities because the three others bring them offerings.

The deity at the far left sits on a cross-legged chair in front of an altar of some kind and faces the viewer's

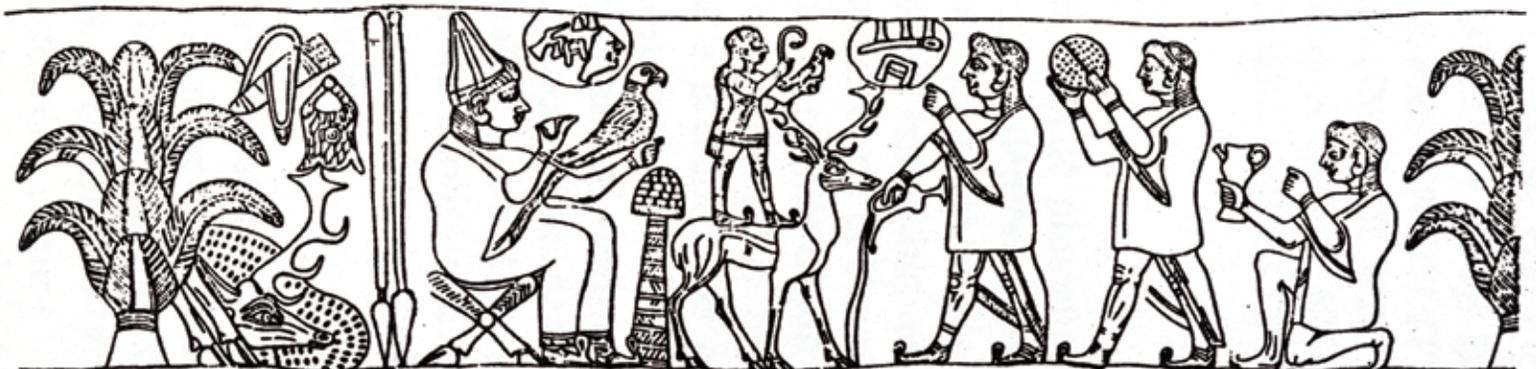


fig. 4 Detail of the stag vessel



right. Initially, scholars expressed doubts about the deity's gender—the headdress is generally considered typical of kings, while the sitting posture with the cup in the right hand is characteristic of goddesses—but more recently there has been consensus that she is a goddess.⁶ She holds a falcon or hawk perched on her left fist and a cup in her right hand. Given the general hunting context of the scene, the bird is probably a goshawk, which, as Jeanny Canby has pointed out, “[kills its] prey by impaling it with powerful claws. A goshawk can take birds up to the size of an Arabian bustard, as well as hares, and it will attack larger animals.”⁷ The legs of the chair on which the goddess sits are shaped as hooves, matching those of the silver stag itself and the two deer depicted on the frieze. Before her and likewise facing right, a so-called tutelary, or protective, deity stands on a stag, which is identical to the one that gives the cup its form. With his short kilt and ponytail, this small figure corresponds to descriptions of similar statues of such deities in Hittite texts:

Tutelary Deity of the Countrys[ide: the divine image is] one figurine of gold, (representing) a man, [sta]nding, wearing a helmet; in his right hand he holds a golden b[ow], in his lef[t hand] he holds a golden hawk and a golden hare; on him are a dagger of gold and fruit of gold; he stands on a deer of gold (which itself) stands on all fours.⁸

It is true that the god on the silver cup shoulders no bow, his cap is not a helmet,⁹ and no dagger or dead hare is visible. But like the goddess behind him, he has a falcon or hawk on his left fist, and he is standing on a deer. In his right hand he holds a curved stick, or *lituus*, originally a throwing stick used in hunting with falcons and hawks.¹⁰ Such sticks were “probably thrown to flush game that the falcon then chased, brought down, or killed.”¹¹

Facing the deities are three worshippers, two standing and one kneeling. The first pours a libation from a vase, the second holds a round bread, and the

third bears a pitcher with a spout.¹² The kneeling posture of the third figure is well known from texts detailing Hittite cultic celebrations in which a “man-of-kneeling” hands the king (or the king and queen) cups and beverages that he then uses to toast a deity.¹³ Although the two worshippers in front of the kneeling cupbearer have none of the regalia to positively identify either of them as a king or a queen, the scene as a whole is reminiscent of Hittite cultic practices, where the royal couple usually plays a prominent role.¹⁴

At the far right (fig. 2) stands a plant or tree of some sort, with a dead stag lying below it. To its right are a quiver filled with arrows (above) and a hunting bag (below), with two spears stuck into the ground beside them. The overall scene suggests that the worshippers are hunters who have laid down their weapons, deposited their hunting trophy, and come to thank the deities for a successful hunt. One could read the narrative sequence from right to left, starting with the tree and the dead deer, marking the end of the hunt, and then proceeding to the hunters giving thanks to the deities. This is indeed the way the original publication in 1974 by Oscar Muscarella presented the scene in a photomosaic (fig. 2).¹⁵ However, Hittitologist Hans Güterbock, comparing parallel depictions on several seals, convincingly showed that the killed animal, together with the tree, the spears, the quiver, and the bag, forms a unit with the goddess (see fig. 3).¹⁶ As visual epithets, all these combined elements probably served as iconographic clues to identify the female deity as an Anatolian Artemis, or Diana—a goddess of hunting responsible for the hunters’ success. Finally, the fact that the cup’s handle is attached over the tree (instead of, for example, over the spears) supports this interpretation.¹⁷

PAST READINGS OF THE GOLD EPIGRAPHS

What do the two epigraphs (figs. 5–9) add to the information provided by the cup’s specific shape and iconography? First, let us look at how these very small roundels, measuring “at their widest points 13 mm across and 9 mm from the bottom to where they are cropped by the ring at the lip of the vessel,”¹⁸ have been read to date. Muscarella reported on two different readings, one by an anonymous scholar, and the other by Franz Steinherr, who never published his reading and reportedly died not long after putting it forward.¹⁹ For the epigraph on the left with its four signs, the only reading generally agreed upon is for the profile or face at the far right (𐎗; but facing the other way²⁰). It has the sound value /a/ (transliterated *á*) and the logographic value FRONS (“face, forehead > first, foremost,

former”).²¹ Steinherr took the two shapes (𐎗𐎗) on top as having been connected in an arch hidden under the rim of the cup, together forming the sign read as *sa* (𐎗𐎗). The hand-sign at the far left Steinherr read as *pi*, the “giving hand” (DARE). In its proper form, this sign would be turned ninety degrees to the left, however, and a reading as *pi* also ignores the clearly visible vertical extension below the hand. Further, Steinherr read the sign (𐎗) as “ta₈??,” for reasons that are not clear, but possibly because it resulted in the reading “á-s(a)-ta₈??-pi,” the name of the deity Astapi, or Astabi, a war god of probably West Semitic origin.²² As far as the two signs in the right epigraph, Güterbock stated that Steinherr identified the upper one as a stylized form of antlers, the symbol of the tutelary deity, which would fit very well with the deity standing on the stag.²³

Although the Turkish scholars Sedat Alp and Ali Dinçol concurred with the reading of “Astabi,”²⁴ Bittel, consulting Güterbock in 1976, considered it “very problematic.”²⁵ Güterbock himself accepted only the *á* of the profile face and read the open hand as “daughter” (FILIA, in current transcription convention).²⁶ He described the sign read by Steinherr as *sa* only as “an incomplete sign partly covered by the rim.”²⁷ Güterbock further suggested that the sitting goddess might be Ala, because in the Hittite text quoted above she is mentioned as a deity of the same city as the Tutelary Deity of the Countryside. Following Güterbock in reading *á* and “daughter” and calling the sign on top “unidentified,” David Hawkins has tried to support the identification with Ala. Assuming that the two inscriptions are captions labeling the deities, he argues that the sign common to both inscriptions—(𐎗)—is “otherwise unknown but here must surely represent ‘god’ in place of the usual DEUS” sign (𐎗𐎗).²⁸ This reasoning results in a proposed reading, *á*-x-DEUS_x-FILIA, which may be compared to *á*(FEMINA.DEUS).461, which is attested for Ala.²⁹ Given that the (𐎗)-sign is so different from the usual DEUS-sign and the fact that the two sequences share only the *á*, there is insufficient evidence for a firm identification. An added complication is that the position of the same DEUS_x in the epigraph on the right (in Hawkins’s reading DEUS_x.CERVUS_x) would be unusual. Normally, these god-signs appear before—or, in a vertically arranged sequence of signs, on top of—a name, but not below, as would be the case in the right epigraph. Thus, both the position of the sign and, as Hawkins admits, its dissimilarity from the usual DEUS-sign render his identification and interpretation doubtful.

Finally, and most recently, Natalia Bolatti Guzzo and Massimiliano Marazzi have taken the possible

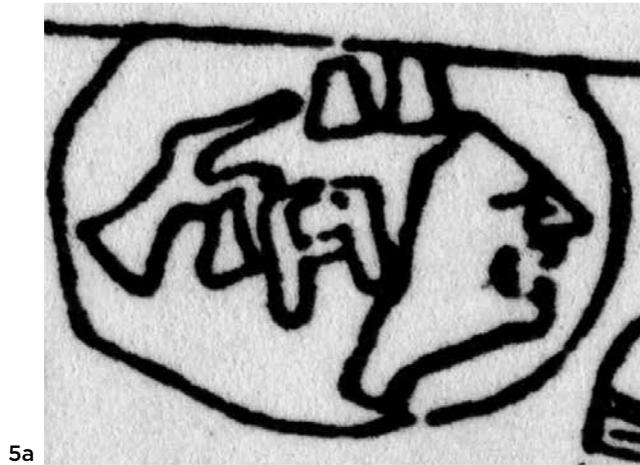
fig. 5a, b Drawing of the epigraphs on the stag vessel

fig. 6 Detail showing the left epigraph on the stag vessel

fig. 7 X-radiograph of the left epigraph on the stag vessel

fig. 8 Detail showing the right epigraph on the stag vessel

fig. 9 X-radiograph of the right epigraph on the stag vessel



5a



5b



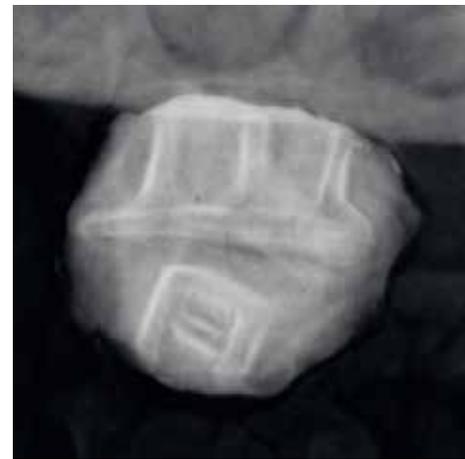
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7



8



9

association of the left-hand inscription with Ala one step further, proposing that the two shapes on top (𐎠𐎠) are the base of the hieroglyphic sign known by its number 461, as can be seen in the reconstruction in figure 10.³⁰ There is no known instance, however, of the sign 461 with its base split into two “legs” in this way.³¹ Also, an X-radiograph (fig. 7) not only reveals that there is inadequate space for the top half of the sign under the rim but also shows no linking of the two “legs” in an arch, as suggested by Bolatti Guzzo and Marazzi. Consequently, both Steinherr’s reading of *sa* and Bolatti Guzzo and Marazzi’s interpretation are unlikely.

A NEW PROPOSAL

As is clear from the preceding history, we can hardly speak of a consensus among scholars regarding the epigraphs, and most of their proposed readings encounter serious objections. The one point of agreement, without exception, is that the hieroglyphs in the epigraphs are captions identifying the two deities.³² Indeed, given their placement near the two gods, it is reasonable to think that the roundels would contain their names or specify what kind of deity each one is. Such a use of captions can be seen, for instance, in the open-air rock sanctuary known as Yazılıkaya, just outside Hattusa.³³ Eighty gods and goddesses are carved in the rock there, and some thirty-six have a caption with their name invariably preceded by the DEUS-sign. As a general rule,

whenever gods are depicted and their names are given in hieroglyphs, they are identified by the DEUS-sign. They are thus immediately recognized as deities, just as they were, in all likelihood, by the ancient viewer. However, the deities at Yazılıkaya are—especially on the eastern side where the goddesses are—represented in such a stereotypical fashion that the captions may have been necessary in order to distinguish them. Notably, this is not true of the two deities on the silver stag vessel. Because of the various iconographic clues, the god standing on the stag was instantly recognizable as the Tutelary Deity of the Countryside. Although we may not know her name, the goddess on the cross-legged chair with the hawk and the cup in her hands—with the tree, the dead deer, and the hunting tools behind her—likewise had sufficient distinguishing features.

In light of the weaknesses in reading the 𐎠-sign (DEUS,) as standing in for the usual DEUS, it is reasonable to explore other options. One possibility is that the inscriptions identify not the deities, but the person(s) dedicating or owning the cup. A silver cup at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in the shape of a clenched fist, also with probable hunting references, offers a good parallel (figs. 11, 12).³⁴ Like the Metropolitan Museum’s silver stag vessel, it has an unknown provenance.³⁵ The storm god at the far left holding the reins of the Bull of Heaven is, and was, readily identified. The person shown pouring a libation in front of an altar to the storm



fig. 10 Reconstructive drawing of the hidden part of the left epigraph on the stag vessel, as proposed by Bolatti Guzzo and Marazzi 2010



fig. 11 Fist-shaped vessel. Anatolia, Hittite Empire, 14th–13th century B.C. Silver, H. 6½ in. (15.5 cm); W. 4 in. (10 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Landon T. and Lavinia Clay in honor of Malcolm Rogers (2004.2230)

god is also clearly marked as a Hittite king by his downward-curved staff and long robe. Nevertheless, his name, “Great King Tuthaliya,” has been added in hieroglyphs between his head and the altar, perhaps to clarify the stereotyped royal image.³⁶ The hieroglyphs serve as a caption and identify Tuthaliya as the one honoring the god. Depending on the cup’s original context (now lost)—for instance, if the vessel came from a temple—the caption might identify him as the person bestowing the cup. Directly behind him can be seen, as in the stag vessel, although in reversed order, a kneeling cupbearer (largely broken away) and a man holding up a bread. Two lyre players, a man with cymbals, and a man with a staff (possibly a herald) follow. A mountain or

vegetation deity closes the scene. Circles and elements suggesting vegetation fill out the empty spaces between the figures.

Another Hittite silver vessel, a bowl found near the Turkish village of Kınık, north of Kastamonu (now in the Kastamonu Museum), carries an explicit written dedication but no pictorial representation of the dedicant.³⁷ The bowl displays a long frieze with hunting scenes including three anonymous hunters. Between the frieze and the rim the short inscription says: “Taprammi, the eunuch(?), deposited this bowl for the God NN.”³⁸

Hittite texts offer further evidence of objects that display just the name but no depiction of the dedicating

person. Among the so-called Hittite cult inventory texts there is a description of a silver cup dedicated to the storm god of the towns Lihzina and Tiliura stating that a King Mursili had given it.³⁹ The inventory's authors probably knew this information because his name was on the cup. The same text explicitly says that the king's name was engraved on a statue of a god shaped as "one figurine of wood, plated with silver, of a man. . . . The name of the king and animals of the field are engraved."⁴⁰ Some other descriptions of human or animal representations on gifts likewise mention the written names of kings (but no iconographic representations) on them. All these parallels support the alternative possibility that the ovals identify the individual(s) dedicating the silver stag.

Key to such an interpretation is the combination in the left oval of the two slightly trapezoidal shapes on top (𐎎𐎎) and the "daughter"-sign (FILIA) with its open hand. As has been mentioned, neither oval insert is completely visible. As described by Muscarella, the two "oval sections . . . were inserted into prepared hollows."⁴¹ Alp wrote that the (𐎎𐎎) sign "could have lost some of its upper part," and Güterbock described it as "partly covered by the rim."⁴² Bittel found the ovals to have been "quite carelessly" cut to fit the recessed spaces, where they were then slipped partly under the folded-over rim.⁴³ He even went so far as to assume that these ovals were not the original ones but replaced earlier signs that had been cut out. It is true that the edges of the right epigraph appear somewhat rough and jagged, more than those of the oval on the left, but after close examination, I concur with Güterbock⁴⁴ and see no reason to presume that the ovals are not original. It is clear only that the two uppermost signs in the ovals had their tops cropped, so that they are obscured under the rim.

As is evident in all drawings, the two shapes 𐎎𐎎 at the top of the left roundel taper upward. The radiograph (fig. 7) reveals that the tapering continues so that they become a pair of triangles;⁴⁵ only their very tips seem to have been covered by the rim. The triangles form the sign for "country, region," or REGIO (𐎎𐎎) in Latin transcription. This sign, in combination with the FILIA ("daughter")-sign at the left, finds an exact parallel in another hieroglyphic inscription known as FRAKTIN, after its findspot in southern Anatolia (fig. 13).⁴⁶

The FRAKTIN rock relief portrays the Hittite royal couple Hattusili III (r. ca. 1267–1240 B.C.) and his queen Puduhepa offering libations to their favorite deities, in parallel male and female scenes. All four figures have corresponding Anatolian hieroglyphs, and those for both deities include the DEUS-sign. On the male side, a god stands at the far left in front of an altar. On the other side of the altar and facing the god stands Hattusili, dressed just like the deity. No sign is visible beneath DEUS to identify the god.⁴⁷ In the right-hand, female scene, the goddess Hebat sits before another altar, holding a cup in one of her hands and wearing the same headdress as the seated goddess on the stag vessel. In contrast to the male side, here the figures of both women seem to be only outlined, with no internal details visible. It is possible that the original relief included painted details, but the contrast between the two scenes nevertheless remains. Güterbock has convincingly identified the carving at the far right (fig. 14) as an addition to the image and to the name of Queen Puduhepa that reads, from left to right, "daughter of the country of Kizzuwatna(?), beloved of the god."⁴⁸ The two triangles for "country," followed by the "daughter"-sign, are easily recognized.

Fraktin lies in the region that was known as Kizzuwatna in Hittite times, and it was here that

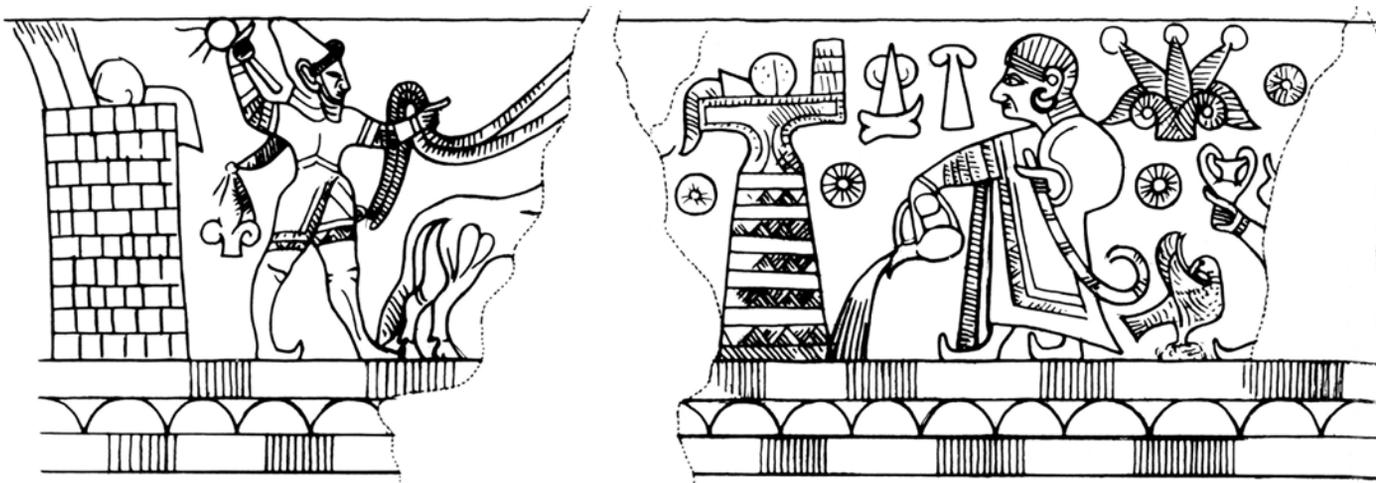


fig. 12 Drawing of the relief around the rim of the fist-shaped vessel (fig. 11)

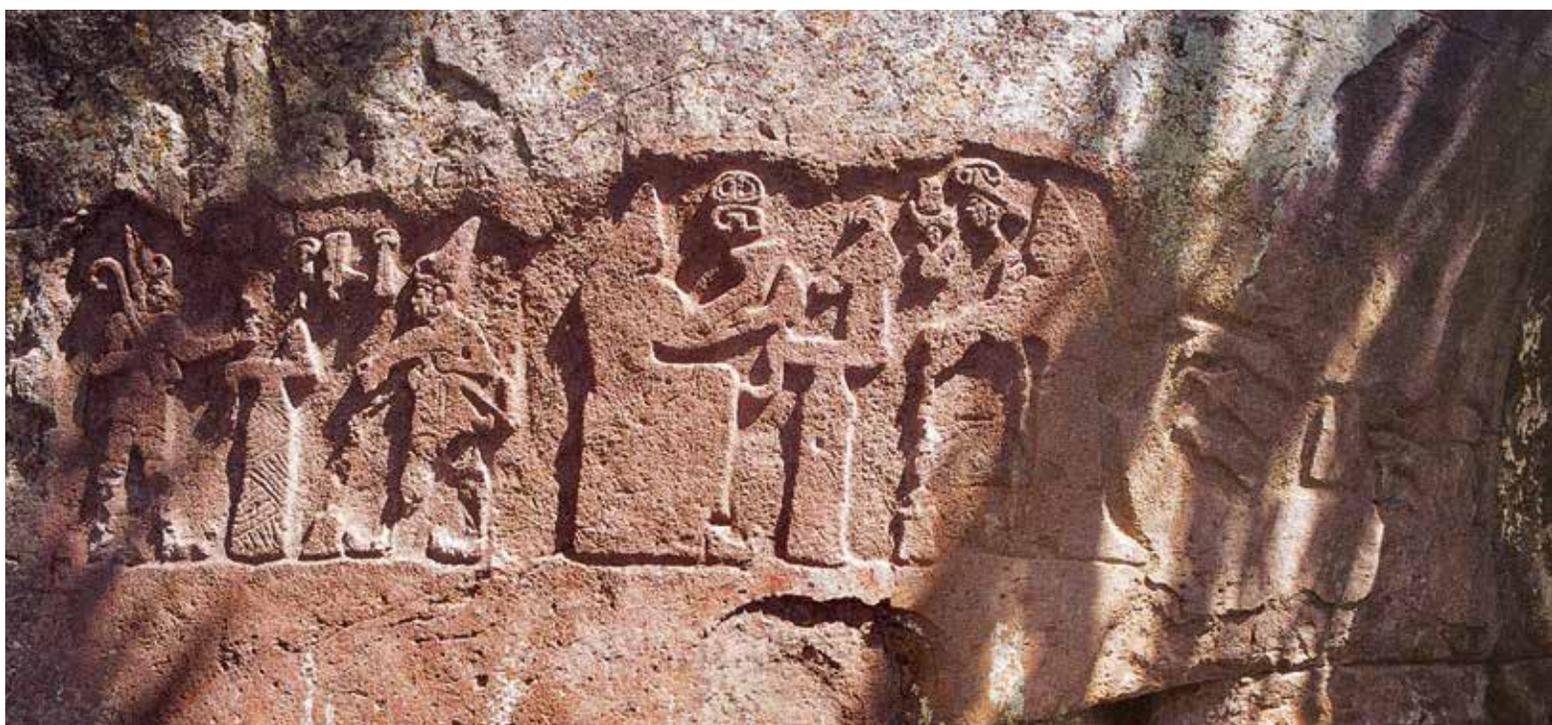


fig. 13 Rock relief with hieroglyphic inscription known as FRAKTIN. Fraktin, Turkey. Hittite Empire, ca. 1267–1240 B.C.

Hattusili stopped on his way back from Egypt about 1275 B.C. and married Puduhepa, the daughter of a local priest. It has been suggested he commissioned the FRAKTIN relief to commemorate this happy occasion. Güterbock linked the combination of the two signs “daughter (of the) country” to a description of Puduhepa as “daughter of Kizzuwatna” in a seal on the 1259 B.C. peace treaty between Hattusili III and Ramesses II of Egypt (r. ca. 1279–1213 B.C.).⁴⁹ This reading has since been confirmed by cuneiform material from Hattusa that refers to Puduhepa as “daughter of Kummanni” (DUMU.MUNUS^{URU} Kummanni), one of the most important cult centers in Kizzuwatna.⁵⁰ In her correspondence with Ramesses II, Puduhepa herself refers to princesses of other royal houses as “daughters of

Babylon, Zulabi, and Assur” and to her own daughter as “the daughter of heaven and earth.”⁵¹

The presence on the stag cup of the same two signs seen in FRAKTIN —FILIA and REGIO—implies that the á or face-sign and the unidentified sign (𐎠) together constitute a geographic name analogous to “Kizzuwatna” in FRAKTIN.⁵² The text of the left epigraph can thus be read:

á-x(REGIO) FILIA “daughter of the country á-x” (lit. “(of) á-x country daughter”).⁵³

Goddesses are sometimes described as “daughters”—but always as *someone’s* daughters, not as an indication of geographic origin, as seen here.⁵⁴ Moreover, Hittite

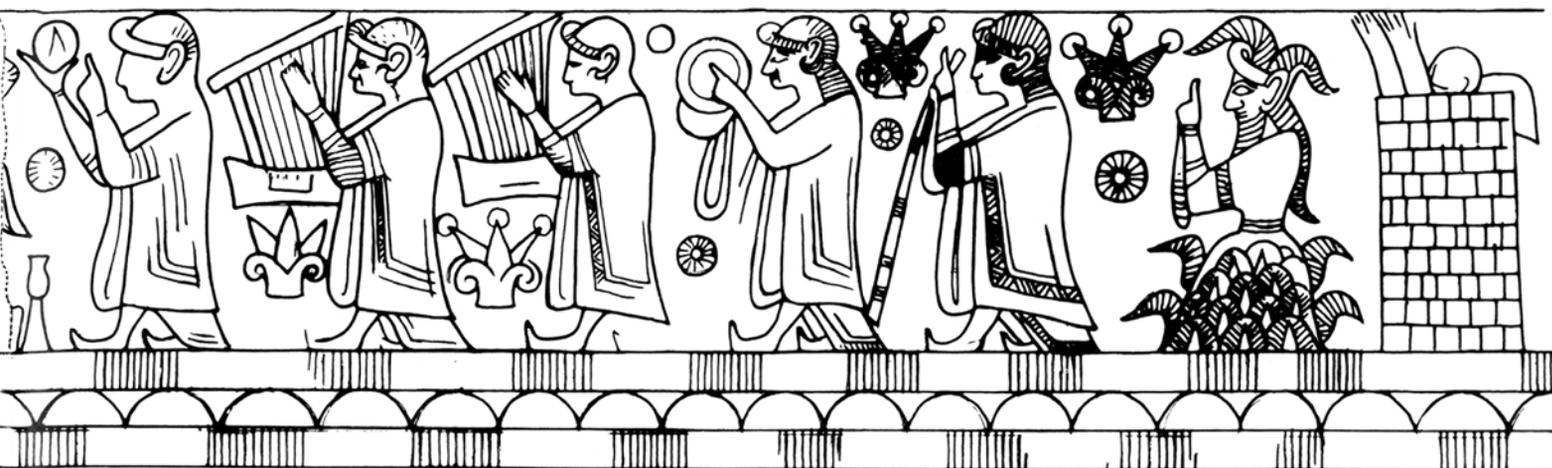
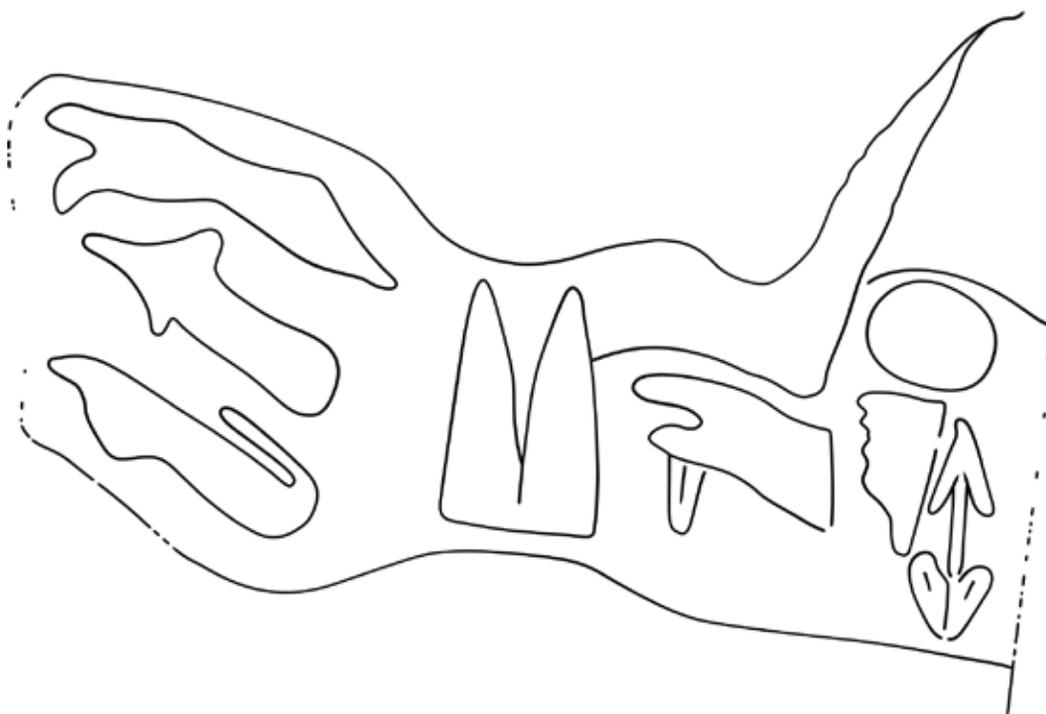


fig. 14 Drawing of the inscription at FRAKTIN (fig. 13)



cuneiform texts linked to Queen Puduhepa attest that this combination of “daughter of + geographic name” refers only to female royal persons, not to goddesses. The epigraph on the left of the stag cup can therefore be seen as being in apposition to the one on the right, which might have contained the woman’s name: “[right epigraph] Ms. So-and-so, [left epigraph] daughter of the country so-and-so.” The examples of the expression “daughter of the country” in the cuneiform sources just quoted indicate that the woman was either a princess or a queen. It follows that this female royal probably once dedicated the cup to the sitting goddess or to both of the deities depicted. (It is unlikely that some other, non-royal person dedicated the vessel to the princess or queen, given that there are no known examples of similar luxury objects in a Hittite context dedicated to non-divine individuals.)

Several questions remain: What country did the woman come from? What were her name and the name of the country? When was the cup made? If the epigraphs indeed identify the royal woman who dedicated the cup, why then are they positioned where they are on the frieze? The first three questions must remain subjects for future scholarship, but the last one, concerning the placement of the ovals, can be addressed here. In terms of available space, both epigraphs could have easily fit above the kneeling cupbearer. However, that section is clearly not the focus of the offering scene, the action of which takes place between the hunters and the deities. As stated earlier, the ancient viewer of the

cup, whether literate or not, had sufficient visual cues to recognize the two deities. A literate viewer could read the inscription, while an illiterate one would have recognized the deities anyway. Furthermore, it might have been confusing if the roundels had been placed over the cupbearer, giving the false impression that they referred to the hunters. Instead, by having her name and origin engraved near the gods, the woman identified in the epigraphs made herself part of the offering action and was thus immediately associated with it. The epigraph on the right is slightly closer to the first worshipper than to the tutelary deity standing on the stag: Does this indicate that she was the dedicant? The proximity of the other, left epigraph to the goddess may have been intended as a general expression of the dedicant’s closeness to the goddess.

Further study of the stag vessel and the related objects at the Metropolitan Museum—a bull vessel, a pendant of a seated goddess, a bracelet, two spherical headed pins, and two ingots⁵⁵—may provide answers to remaining questions and shed light on the works’ Hittite context. If all the objects are probably from the same findspot, this hoard might come from a temple or shrine of some kind. In the Hittite wealth economy, members of the ruling elite filled local temples with their gifts and thus showed and reinforced their position of power.⁵⁶ Hittite texts mention booty being used to adorn temples. We know that objects of precious metals, captured or otherwise acquired, were melted down for the manufacture of luxury objects. Queen

Puduhepa, in particular, is amply attested as promising and giving all kinds of gifts in gold and silver to gods in return for divine favors. The so-called cult and palace inventories mention hundreds of objects made of metal and precious stones as well as textiles. These extraordinary Hittite objects in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum may help us visualize what such temple inventories comprised.

Dedicated to Ben van Gessel, Master of the
Thousand Gods

NOTES

- 1 The object is sometimes also less appropriately called a rhyton, which is a cup with a hole at the bottom serving as a spout for pouring a libation or drink. Such a hole is absent in the stag vessel discussed here; see Muscarella 1974, no. 123.
- 2 For a detailed description, see *ibid.* When it was found is unknown, but the collection, of which the stag vessel is part, was acquired by Norbert and Evelyn Schimmel in 1964 (see Muscarella's note at the end of his description). The vessel was displayed at the Metropolitan Museum with the other objects in the group as a loan in 1983 and was acquired in 1989.
- 3 For a description of what the vessel looked like when it was found, see Bittel 1976, p. 9n8. Photographs at the Metropolitan Museum show the stag without its antlers and ears and with a significant hole on the right side of its body below the frieze and part of the rim missing where the handle had been. X-radiographs reveal numerous pins now holding the parts together.
- 4 Bittel 1976, pp. 8–9.
- 5 For parallels with Anatolian and Hittite objects, and early literature, see Muscarella 1974, no. 123.
- 6 Muscarella (1974) took her to be a woman, and Bittel (1976, pp. 15–16) and Alp (1983, p. 96) a man; Güterbock (1989a, p. 115) was noncommittal. For more recent views, see Hawkins 2006 and Bolatti Guzzo and Marazzi 2010. Usually, in Hittite visual representations women seem to be distinguished from men mainly by their full-body-length gowns, as opposed to the short kilts that men wear. Kings can be pictured wearing a long robe as well, but it is often depicted as a long mantle, open in front with the short kilt underneath. For the headdress compare the goddess Hebat in the FRAKTIN relief (fig. 13), explicitly identified by the accompanying hieroglyphs.
- 7 Canby 2002, p. 163, and, for more on the goshawk, pp. 163–66.
- 8 *KUB* 38.1 ii 1–6; see Cammarosano 2018 (forthcoming).
- 9 Alp (1983, p. 95) thinks he has no headdress at all.
- 10 For a description of falconry as practiced by the Hittites, see Canby 2002.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 170–71.
- 12 Muscarella (1974) and Bittel (1976, p. 13) preferred to see the middle individual as holding a tambourine instead of a bread; Alp (1983, p. 97) identified it as a bread, while Güterbock (1989b, p. 2) called it “an unclear object.” However, Güterbock elsewhere spoke out in favor of a bread (1989a, p. 114).
- 13 Close examination unambiguously shows that, counter to what some drawings suggest (see fig. 3), the kneeling figure does not have shoes with upturned toes like those of the two other worshippers and the two deities. This detail is more difficult to discern in the arched foot of the kneeling leg, but it is clearly apparent in the forward foot that is flat on the ground.
- 14 Alp 1983, pp. 97–98.
- 15 In the secondary literature, there exist at least two basic line drawings of the frieze as a whole. The earliest is probably that of Neriman Tezcan in Alp 1983, fig. 6h, which was made after the photographs provided in Muscarella 1974. This version correctly shows the shoes of the “man-of-kneeling” without the upturned toes. The second drawing, by C. Koken, was published in Boehmer 1983, p. 59, fig. 49. Although perhaps generally more faithful than the former, it suggests that the forward foot originally had an upturned toe. Rearranged, as in figure 3, this drawing was used by Güterbock 1989b, p. 5, and was then reprinted in Özgüç 2002, p. 119, fig. 2, this time, however, with a clear upturned toe on the forward foot. The original drawing by Tezcan was then once again slightly changed and likewise rearranged by Alp 1988, p. 20, fig. 2. A drawing of just the two epigraphs can be found in Muscarella 1974. Among the various drawings, the rendering of the hieroglyphic signs differs in small but not highly relevant details; the facial profile in the left epigraph, especially, shows some notable deviations.
- 16 Güterbock 1989b. On the two spears specifically, see Taracha 1996.
- 17 The handle does not run “exactly over the tree” (*ibid.*, p. 3) but is slightly off to the right, in between the stem of the tree and the dead deer.
- 18 Jean-François de Lapérouse, email message to author, December 11, 2017.
- 19 Bittel 1976, p. 17.
- 20 The Anatolian hieroglyphs can be written and read in either direction.
- 21 In studies on Anatolian hieroglyphs, so-called word signs, or logograms, are transcribed with capitalized Latin words.
- 22 Muscarella inexplicably added “LUGAL?KÖNIG” to Steinherr's reading, but because of a possible typographic error (? instead of /),

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply grateful to the staff of the Metropolitan Museum, especially Jean-François de Lapérouse and Daira Szostak, for giving me the opportunity to examine the silver stag vessel up close on December 7, 2017.

THEO VAN DEN HOUT

*Arthur and Joann Rasmussen Professor of Hittite and
Anatolian Languages, University of Chicago*

- he probably misunderstood Steinherr. A sign for LUGAL (“king”) is clearly not present, but Steinherr had in all likelihood compared the deity’s name with the personal name Astabi-LUGAL; see Dinçol 1983, pp. 221–22n3. The anonymous scholar mentioned by Muscarella read “a-x-tá-s.” It is not made clear in what order he or she read the signs but this person probably took the hand as /ta/ (“tá”), guessing it might have been Anitta, the earliest Hittite king known, from about 1750 B.C.
- 23 Güterbock 1989a, p. 115. According to Muscarella, however, Steinherr’s reading was “KAR-ta₈??.” What the KAR is based on is unclear to me.
- 24 Alp (1983, pp. 95–98) read the right oval as containing the same name but with a shortened spelling (“Hirschgeweih -bi”), on which see also Dinçol 1983, pp. 221–22n3.
- 25 Bittel 1976, p. 17 (“sehr problematisch”). Güterbock (1989a, p. 115n9) simply says that he “cannot accept the readings of Alp [1983].”
- 26 Güterbock 1983, p. 208n32.
- 27 Güterbock 1989a, p. 115.
- 28 Hawkins 2006, p. 52.
- 29 In á-x-DEUS_x-FILIA, the first x marks the sign as illegible because of damage and therefore without a reading, and the second x, following DEUS, indicates that it would be a hitherto unknown variant of the regular DEUS sign. Signs for which no reading is known are usually cited by their number in the sign list of Laroche 1960.
- 30 Bolatti Guzzo and Marazzi 2010, pp. 14–21 (drawing on p. 21).
- 31 See Hawkins 2004.
- 32 Thus Muscarella 1974; Bittel 1976, pp. 16–18; Alp 1983, pp. 94, 96; and Hawkins 2006, p. 52.
- 33 See Bittel, Boessneck, and Damm 1975.
- 34 Although the hunting theme is not directly evident in the frieze around the fist’s wrist (but note the falcon or hawk behind the king), engravings on the outside of the fist and the fingers, initially taken as musculature, likely indicate a typical falconer’s glove; see Canby 2002, pp. 169–70.
- 35 Güterbock and Kendall 1995, p. 45.
- 36 The custom of Hittite kings not to number themselves (e.g., Tudhaliya I, II, etc.) and to use filiations only in specific circumstances still renders the dating of the fist uncertain; see Güterbock and Kendall 1995, pp. 56–57.
- 37 Hawkins 2006, pp. 50 (with literature) and 67, fig. 1.
- 38 Hawkins 1993.
- 39 Burgin and Van den Hout 2016, p. 33.
- 40 KUB 38.3 ii 7–9.
- 41 Muscarella 1974, no. 123; similarly Alp 1983, p. 94.
- 42 Alp 1983, p. 95 (“Das Goldplättchen könnte beim Einsetzen und Befestigen etwas vom oberen Teil dieses Zeichens eingebüsst haben”); Güterbock 1989a, p. 115; similarly Hawkins 2006, p. 52.
- 43 Bittel 1976, p. 16. Compare Muscarella’s description (1974, no. 123): “A narrow strip of silver with square cut-outs above oval ones was *added* to the outside of the lip of the cup” (emphasis mine); see also Güterbock 1989a, p. 114.
- 44 Güterbock 1989a, pp. 114–15.
- 45 See Alp (1983, p. 95), who already described the sign as “zwei vertikale Striche . . . , deren untere Teile dicker erscheinen.”
- 46 Hieroglyphic inscriptions are usually named after their findspot, and the names are capitalized.
- 47 Güterbock 1978, p. 129.
- 48 *ká-zu(wa)?-na*(REGIO) FILIA DEUS *á-za/i-mi*, lit. “(of) Kizzuwatna daughter, beloved of the deity,” Payne 2015, p. 77; see also Güterbock 1978, p. 130.
- 49 Güterbock 1978, pp. 130–31. The seal itself has not been preserved, but the description has.
- 50 See Suzanne Herboldt and Daliah Bawanyeck in Herboldt, Bawanyeck, and Hawkins 2011, pp. 81, 183.
- 51 For both, see KUB 21.38 obv. 12–13, and Edel 1994, pp. 216–17; for a daughter of Babylon, see also the oracle texts KBo 41.159 + KUB 6.5 rev. 27–33. The only possible reference to a divine “daughter of GN” might be ^dŠišummiš DUMU.MUNUS^{URU}x[. . .] “Sisummi, daughter (of the town) of . . . ” KBo 48.10:5.
- 52 The unidentified sign present in both epigraphs is likely the depiction of a seat or throne, symbolizing affiliation with a royal house or ruling dynasty. This seat is identical in shape to the one on which the goddess sits on the gold pendant that is part of the same collection at the Metropolitan Museum; my book on writing and reading in Hittite Anatolia is forthcoming (Van den Hout n.d.).
- 53 REGIO is a so-called postposed determinative, a sign to mark a word as belonging to a particular class, as here a geographic name. In transliteration these are always put in parentheses.
- 54 See Van Gessel 2001, p. 97.
- 55 Muscarella 1974, no. 123 (note at end of description).
- 56 On the Hittite economy, see Burgin 2016.

ABBREVIATIONS

- KBo* *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*. 70 vols. to date. Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1916–.
- KUB* *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*. 60 vols. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1921–90.

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KRISZTINA ILKO

An Illuminated Fragment of the *Postil on the Lenten Gospels* by Albert of Padua

A fragment of a fourteenth-century illuminated manuscript in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art for more than a century is here published for the first time (fig. 1). It consists of two bifolios. The first leaf is decorated with a finely executed large figural initial depicting a preaching friar. The provenance of the fragment can be traced only from the late nineteenth century, when it arrived at the Museum as a gift to the Library from “prominent yachtsman” Louis L. Lorillard in 1896.¹ In 1984 it was transferred from the Thomas J. Watson Library to the Department of Medieval Art, and on that occasion librarian William B. Walker and curator William D. Wixom catalogued it as “Two Bifolia, one with historiated initial with a Benedictine preaching.”² Notes relating to that transfer include opinions from some decades earlier of Meta Harrsen from the Pierpont Morgan Library and art historian Richard Offner, both suggesting that the



fig. 1 Manuscript leaf from a fragment of the *Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia* by Albert of Padua with an illumination in the initial I. Northern Italy, ca. 1370–90. Tempera, ink, and gold on parchment; 11 1/8 x 8 in. (29.7 x 20.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Louis L. Lorillard, 1896, transferred from the Library (96.32.1a)

fig. 2 Lorenzo Veneziano (Italian, act. 1356–1372). Detail of the lower right corner of *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Two Donors*, ca. 1360–65. Tempera on wood, gold ground; 42 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (108.3 × 65.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.78)



manuscript was from Bologna, about 1350, which indeed seems plausible.³

The present research note posits that the preacher in the illumination can be identified as an Augustinian friar instead of a Benedictine monk. The figure is garbed in a black habit girdled with a brown belt, a distinctive attribute of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine (OSA). The Augustinians were founded in 1256 by decree of Pope Alexander IV in his *Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae*, which unified different eremitical groups in central Italy.⁴ While these groups wore a variety of habits, the papal bull prescribed for the new mendicant order a black habit fastened with a leather belt.⁵ By the fourteenth century this garment had become the Augustinians' main attribute, used as a powerful visual tool to promote their order.⁶ In an apsidal fresco by Guariento di Arpo (1310–1370) in the church of the Eremitani in Padua, Saint Augustine is depicted being invested with the Augustinian habit.⁷ The same habit is worn by the Augustinian donor who kneels to the left of the enthroned Madonna with Child (ca. 1360–65) painted by Lorenzo Veneziano, now at the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 2).⁸

The illuminated initial I in the Museum's fragment introduces a Latin text, written in two columns, which

can be identified as a portion of the *Postil on the Lenten Gospels* (*Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia*), also called the *Quadragesimalia*, by Albert of Padua (ca. 1265–ca. 1328).⁹ Despite references to Albert of Padua as one of the greatest theologians of the Augustinian Order during the fourteenth century, we have only a limited knowledge of his life.¹⁰ He lived through a transformative period for the Augustinian Order, an amalgamation of diverse groups of simple, mostly illiterate hermits. In the later thirteenth century the order began to produce a scholarly elite, of which Albert became an important member. He commenced his studies in the order's *studium generale* in Padua, and in the early fourteenth century he attended the University of Paris, where he became a doctor of theology.¹¹ While many of his works, including his *Sententiae*, have been lost, two of his extensive Gospel commentaries survive.¹² Both of them are so-called *postillae*, a form of biblical commentary that emerged in the early thirteenth century as a sort of intensification of interlinear gloss, expanding the meaning of words and short citations from the Bible.¹³ The more prominent of them seems to be the *Postil on the Dominical Gospels* (*Postilla super Evangelia Dominicalia*).¹⁴ Of the *Postil on the Lenten Gospels*, there are sixteen medieval manuscript copies known; the attribution of the Museum's fragment expands this corpus.¹⁵ The earliest known reference to the *Quadragesimalia* appears in the 1317 inventory of the library of the convent of Santi Pietro e Agostino in Massa Marittima, and in the absence of earlier references, this offers a *terminus ante quem* for the work.¹⁶ Albert of Padua's work was highly appreciated by his contemporaries and was praised in Jordan of Saxony's *Liber Vitasfratrum*, the most extensive fourteenth-century account of the Augustinian Order.¹⁷ The *Quadragesimalia* remained popular through the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, as is shown by the several printed editions from the sixteenth century.¹⁸ These versions are also significant since no critical—or, indeed, modern—edition of the text has been published. Albert of Padua has mostly been discussed in art historical scholarship as a possible influence on the program for the fresco cycle by Giotto in the Arena Chapel in Padua.¹⁹

The illumination on the first leaf of the Museum's fragment depicts a friar, presumably Albert of Padua himself, preaching from a pulpit. This might seem odd since *postillae* and similar biblical commentaries that were intended for scholars and disciples were seldom given figural decoration, a possible reason why these manuscripts have received limited attention in art



historical scholarship. Further, illuminated examples, such as the copy of the *Postil on the Whole Bible* by Nicholas of Lyra (ca. 1270–1349) that originated in the convent of San Francesco in Pesaro before 1402, usually represent the author as a seated, writing friar.²⁰

The Museum's fragment of the *Quadragesimalia* contains the preface and three subsequent sections, followed by a sermon introduced by a note written in red.²¹ The sermon is missing from the printed version of the text from 1544 that the present author consulted.²² A manuscript of the *Postil on the Dominical Gospels* of Albert of Padua from 1470, probably originating in northern Italy or perhaps Austria, however, follows the same pattern, presenting the exegetical commentary on the Gospels followed by two or three sermons.²³

The stylistic features of the illumination in the Museum's fragment place the origins of the manuscript in the second half of the fourteenth century in northern Italy. The execution of the habit and the head of the friar, painted in a rudimentary but expressive manner, resembles Bolognese illuminations from the mid- and later trecento, while close parallels with the gilded foliate ornamentation can be seen, for instance, in contemporary Venetian manuscript art.²⁴ Although it will take further research to pinpoint the origins of the Museum's

fig. 3 Nicolò di Giacomo da Bologna (Italian, act. 1349–1403). Illumination in an initial I for *In dedicatione templi* (Consecration of the Church) in *Antifonario dei Santi*, ca. 1389–98. Tempera and gold on parchment, illumination 8 × 5¼ in. (20.4 × 13.3 cm). Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna, MS 603, fol. 159r

fragment, Bologna seems a convincing possibility. The convent of San Giacomo Maggiore was one of the largest and most significant Augustinian houses during the fourteenth century, and its extensively decorated choir books are prominent examples of Augustinian manuscript patronage.²⁵ A feature of the Museum's illumination that seems characteristically Bolognese is the thick white undergarment visible around the neck of the figure's black habit. The same detail can be seen on Augustinian friars depicted by Nicolò di Giacomo da Bologna (act. 1349–1403) in a miniature representing a church consecration in a choir book in the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna (fig. 3).²⁶ Another parallel is offered by an illumination in an antiphonary from the 1360s that shows two Augustinian friars singing; visible around their necks is the white of the garments beneath their habits.²⁷ Also notable in this illumination is the fine white linear decoration in the blue background, which is similar to that in the Museum's illumination. Another illumination by Nicolò di Giacomo, in a copy of the *Decretals of Gratian*, depicts a preacher, a confessor, and penitents (fig. 4). It enables us to compare the figure of Albert of Padua with that of the preaching bishop. While the pulpit in the *Decretals* was depicted as more elaborately carved than that in the *Quadragesimalia*, the three-dimensional wooden pulpits and the posture of the preachers raising their right hands while resting their left on the edge of the pulpit are similar. The more rounded eyes and the modeling of the head in the Museum's illumination are somewhat different from the elaborate examples by Nicolò di Giacomo. The preaching gesture and the execution of the profile of the friar are perhaps closer to a cutting depicting Saint Augustine from another Bolognese choir book attributed to Nicolò di Giacomo.²⁸ Bologna is not the only possible place of origin for the Museum's fragment, however: Nicolò di Giacomo and trecento Bolognese illumination art were influential in such other contemporary northern Italian schools as Padua and the Veneto.²⁹ The vivid style of the illumination of the Museum's fragment also resembles, for example, the work of the Master of the Brussels Initials (act. ca. 1390–ca. 1420), who was trained in Bologna but then worked in Padua.³⁰

Two rounded holes were cut from the top of each of the four leaves of the Museum's bifolios. The shape and position of the holes suggest that they may be the result of an effort to eliminate traces of ownership. Coats of arms and donor portraits, usually on the lower edges of folios, are present on numerous contemporary Bolognese manuscripts.³¹ When these have been cut

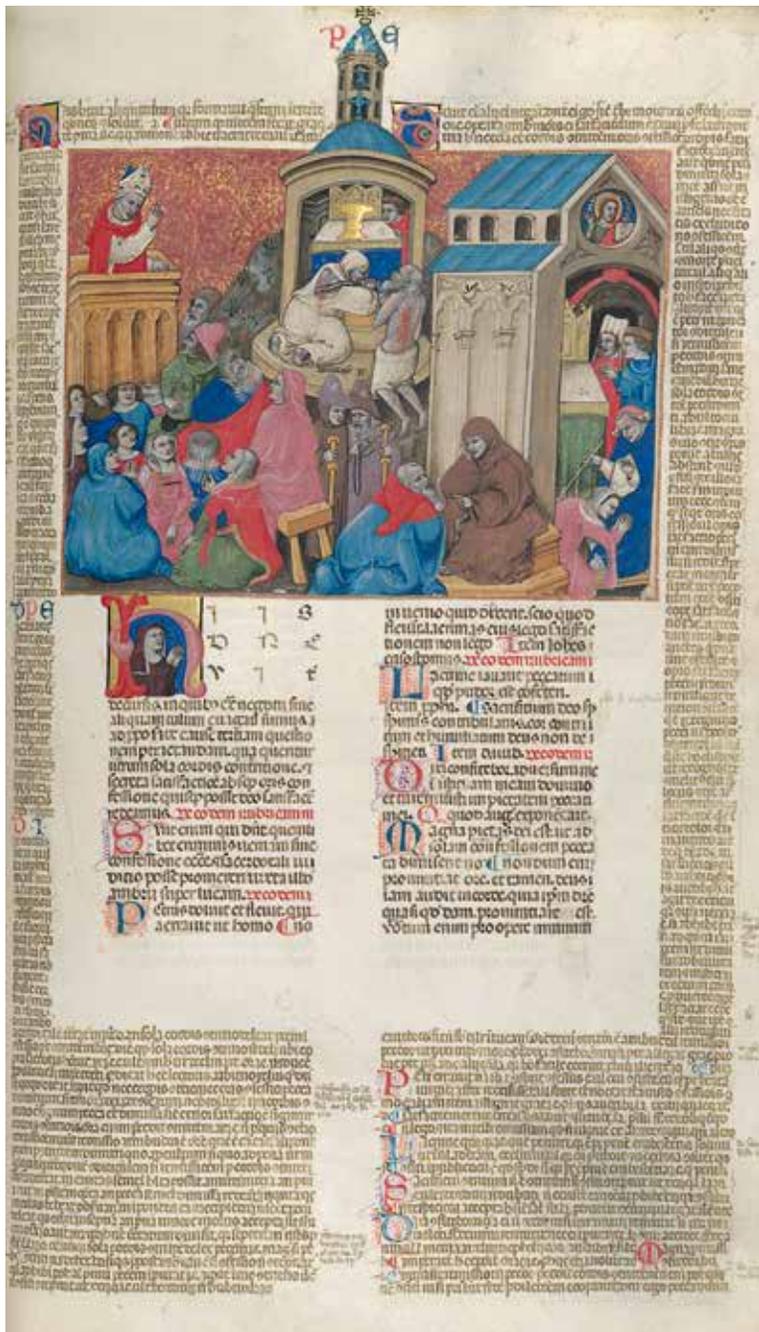


fig. 4 Nicolò di Giacomo da Bologna. Scene with a Preacher, a Confessor, and Penitents, illumination in the Decretals of Gratian, third quarter of the 14th century. Tempera and gold on parchment, illumination 7¼ × 7⅝ in. (19.8 × 19.3 cm). Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Jena, MS El. f. 51C, fol. 271r

out, tracing the patronage of the manuscripts becomes more difficult. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the *Quadragesimalia* would have been produced for a learned readership.

Bologna, along with Padua, Florence, and Naples, as well as the Roman Curia, was the location of one of the earliest Italian *studia generalia* of the Augustinian friars; the school was mentioned in the order's chapter acts from 1287.³² Benedict Hackett has suggested that Albert left Padua after 1316 and spent time lecturing in the school in Bologna before moving to Paris.³³ Albert's text was specifically intended for scholars and students,

making it likely that the manuscript from which the Museum's fragment originates was created for an elaborate convent library or a learned friar. There are numerous notes and the main text is underlined at some places, showing that it was studied intensely. We must also acknowledge the possibility of a commission from outside the Augustinian Order. There were copies of Albert's *Quadragesimalia* in the libraries of other mendicant orders, such as the Sacro Convento of Saint Francis in Assisi, where it appears in a 1381 inventory of the library.³⁴ The more likely scenario, however, is that the manuscript was intended for, or at least later obtained by, an Augustinian convent, for an eighteenth-century note in the margin at the bottom of the first folio attests to further interest in Augustinian theology by reminding the reader of the Gospel commentary by Simone Fidati (1295–1347), an Augustinian friar from Cascia.³⁵ In this respect, the Museum's fragment could shed light on a new segment of Augustinian manuscript patronage. While antiphonaries and graduals from Augustinian convents were often decorated with friars singing or writing—in some cases even preparing the parchment for manuscripts—the Museum's illumination offers one of the earliest depictions of an Augustinian friar preaching and a rare example of figural decoration in an Augustinian Gospel commentary.³⁶

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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KRISZTINA ILKO

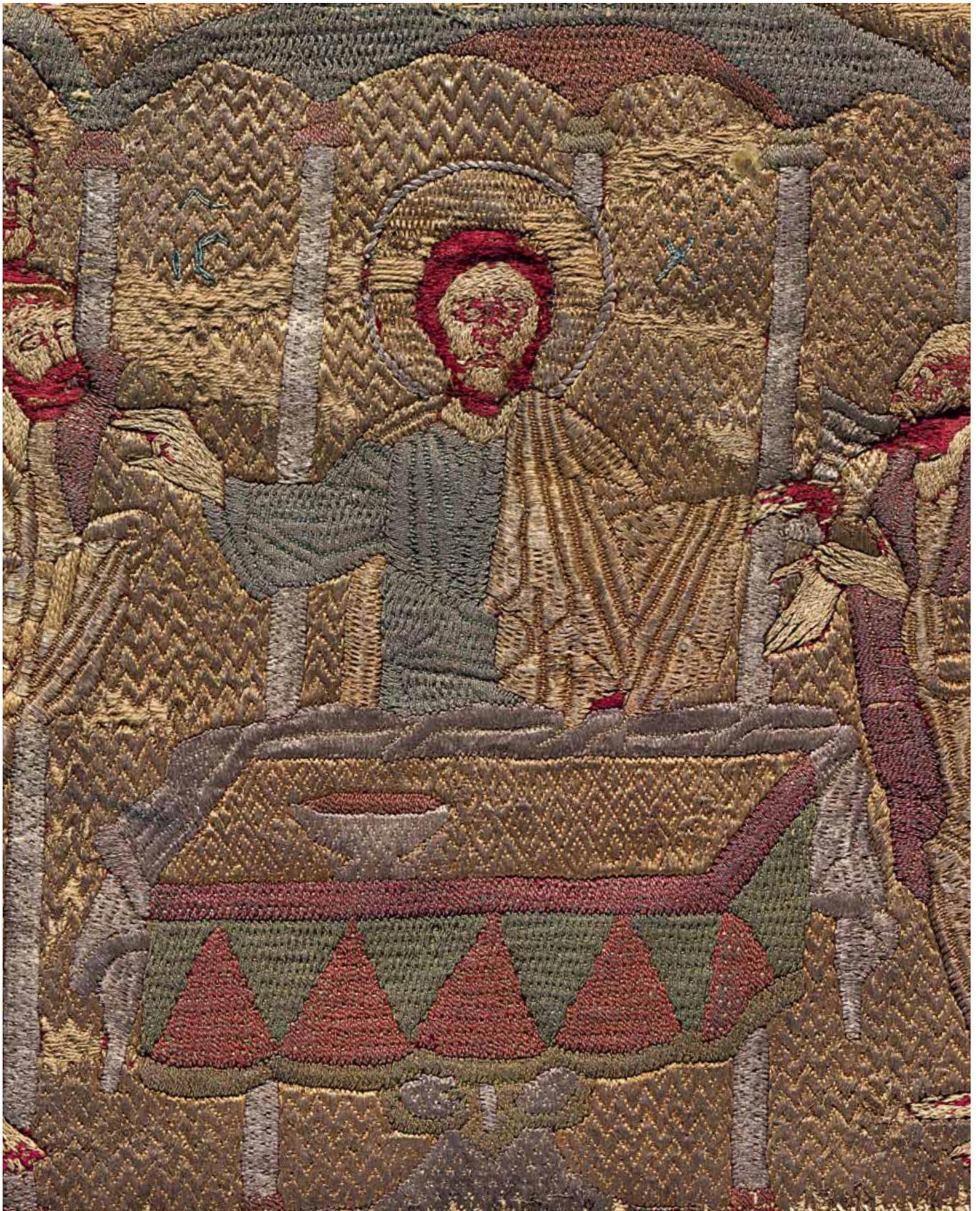
PhD candidate, Pembroke College, University of Cambridge / Hanns Swarzenski and Brigitte Horney Swarzenski Fellow, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

NOTES

- 1 Obituary for Louis L. Lorillard, *New York Times*, October 23, 1910.
- 2 Interdepartmental memorandum to Registrar from William B. Walker and William D. Wixom, January 4, 1984. Object file for MMA 96.32.1-16 in the Department of Medieval Art.
- 3 *Ibid.*, sheet for MMA 96.32.1a-d.
- 4 For an introduction to the history of the Augustinian Order, see Grossi, Marín, and Ciolini 1993. On the artistic patronage of the Augustinians, see Bourdua and Dunlop 2007.
- 5 Van Lwijk 1964, pp. 128-29.
- 6 Warr 2007.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.
- 8 Guarnieri 2006, p. 136, pl. XXV, pp. 189-90, no. 19.
- 9 The illumination is at the beginning of the preface (*praefatio*) of the *Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia*: "In Christi nomine. Quod dudum michi propositum fuerat vosque pluries excitastit ut facerem, quadragessimalium evangeliorum, cum his quoque, quem de passione domini in maiori, et ipsius resurrectionem in paschalis [s is crossed out] septimanis leguntur." The *Quadragesimalia* consists of five sermons commenting on the Lenten Gospel, John 13:1-3, which is included in the liturgy on Holy Thursday. On the works of Albert of Padua, see Schneyer 1969, pp. 124-50, especially pp. 130-46; see also Zumkeller 1966, pp. 50-52, especially p. 51; and Ossinger 1768, pp. 668-70. On his *Postilla super Evangelia Quadragesimalia*, see Delcorno 1997, pp. 92-94.
- 10 In addition to Augustinian scholarship, literature on theology and on sermons in general notes Albert's significance; see, for example, Delcorno 1974, p. 45. For the most recent and thorough account of Albert's life, see Bottin 2014.
- 11 Albert is first mentioned in notarial acts and testaments dated 1299 and 1300 as *frater*, then in 1316 as *lectore*, and in 1320 as *baccalaureus*; documents published in Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 193-201. He was probably deceased by 1328, and he is remembered in the conventual obituary as a "most worthy professor of holy writ" ("Alberti de Padua sacre pagine dignissimi professoris"); Pisani 2008, pp. 204-5, 340n25.
- 12 Saak 2012, p. 220.
- 13 Roest 2011, pp. 181, 199-200n7.
- 14 Schneyer 1969, pp. 124-30.
- 15 The manuscript copies are listed in *ibid.*, p. 146; and Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 191-92. They are Staatsbibliothek, Bamberg, MS Theol. 1 (Q. II. 25) (15th century); Cathedral Library, Burgo de Osmá, MS Cod. 36 (15th century); Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Cracow, MS 151; Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Darmstadt, MS 1448 (last third of the 14th century); Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, F. 4; Biblioteka Gdanska Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Gdańsk, MS 2032 (15th century, fragmentary); Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe, MS 374 (15th century); Bibliothèque Municipale, Laon, MS 590; Stadtbibliothek, Mainz, MS I 31; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, CLM 26858, 26916; Biblioteca Comunale Forteguerriana, Pistoia, MS 205 (D 307) (15th century); Ústřední knihovna, Prague, I. C. 14, and Kap. A. LXXIX 3; Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ross. 521; Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, MS NB 4889 (15th century).
- 16 Gutiérrez 1954, p. 213.
- 17 "Item magister Albertum de Padua, qui edidit postillas bonas super Evangelia dominicalia et quadragesimalia"; Jordan of Saxony 1943, p. 240.
- 18 According to Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 189-90, the early printed editions are *Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium* (Venice: Jacobum Pentium de Leucho, 1523); *Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium* (Venice: Nicolaum Zopinum de Aristotile de Ferrara, 1525); *Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium* (N.p.: in aedibus Petri Pauli Porri Chalcotypi Taurini, 1527); *Expositio evangeliorum quadragesimalium* (Paris: per Ambrosium Girault, 1543); *Sermones quadragesimales* (Venice: apud Marcum Antonium Zalterium et Michaellem Zanettum, 1584). In addition, I stumbled on an edition from 1544 in the University Library in Cambridge: Albert of Padua, *In evangelia quadragesimalia utilissimae conciones* (Paris: apud Audoenum Petit, 1544); Cambridge University Library, G*.6.13-(E).
- 19 Pisani 2008, pp. 202-9; Bonato and Bottin 2014, pp. 177-81; Pisani 2014.
- 20 This copy of the *Postil on the Whole Bible* by Nicholas of Lyra is in the University of Manchester Library, Latin MS 29, 30, 31; see James 1921, vol. 1, pp. 81-87. The illumination is on MS 29, fol. 1r, described in *ibid.*, p. 83.
- 21 Fol. 1r: "Praefatio: *In Christi nomine*. Quod . . . qui das in munere linguas." Fols. 1r-v, first section: "*Cum jejunatis . . . ostentatione bonorum*." Fols. 1v-2v, second section: "*Exterminant enim facies suas . . . sed evanescit*." Fols. 2v-3v, third section: "*Secundo cum dicit . . . commendat humilitas*." Fols. 3v-4v, fourth section, with red note titling the text as "quartus sermo": "Tertio cum dicit. . ."
- 22 Albert of Padua, *In evangelia quadragesimalia utilissimae conciones* (Paris: apud Audoenum Petit, 1544); Cambridge University Library, G*.6.13-(E).
- 23 The manuscript, dated 1470 in the colophon, is with the gallery Les Enluminures, website accessed October 13, 2017, <http://www.textmanuscripts.com/medieval/albertus-padua-60845>.
- 24 An example of similar foliate decoration connected to a nonfigural initial can be seen on fol. 5v of *Statuti e lege di Venezia* (Venice, 1346-52), Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 7463; Binski and Zutshi 2011, pp. 408-10, no. 427.
- 25 See Benevolo and Medica 2003, pp. 231-84, nos. 11-25, for descriptions of the surviving choir books.
- 26 Medica 2003a, p. 62; Medica 2003b.
- 27 Nicolò di Giacomo, illumination in an initial A (*Alleluia*) depicting two Augustinians singing, in *Antifonario del tempo*, Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna, MS 600, fol. 40r; Benevolo 2003, p. 19, and Benevolo and Medica 2003, p. 258.
- 28 Benevolo 2003, p. 13.
- 29 For codex illumination in Padua and the Veneto, see Mariani Canova 1992.
- 30 Medica 2004.
- 31 One example is fol. 3v of *Antifonario dei Santi*, MS 603, Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna, along the bottom of which two coats of arms, a saint, and two donors are depicted. Next to the donors an illumination was cut out from the folio. Medica 2003b, p. 278.
- 32 Gutiérrez 1984, p. 143.
- 33 Hackett 1992. Later literature takes this suggestion as a fact; see, for example, Saak 2002, p. 244.
- 34 Alessandri 1906, p. 148; Cenci 1981, vol. 2, p. 472, cod. 857.
- 35 The inscription reads, "Videtur opus, cui titulus Expositio super Evangelia Quadragesimalia, B. Simonis de Cascia, de quo Gandolphus P[illegible] in Linguam Italicam tradidit, olim Bononius" (See the work, titled Exposition on the Lenten Gospels, by the Blessed Simone de Cascia, which Gandolphus P[illegible] translated into the Italian Language, once [published by] Bononius). On Simone Fidati de Cascia, see Oser-Grote and Eckermann 2008. The mention of the Italian translator, Domenico Antonio Gandolfo (1653-1707), another Augustinian friar and prior of the convent in Ventimiglia, offers a terminus post quem for the inscription. Crispi 1721, pp. 153-55.
- 36 Another early parallel to an Augustinian preacher, also represented standing in a wooden pulpit, can be seen in the wall painting depicting the preaching of Fra Reginaldo attributed to the workshop of Pietro da Rimini in the Cappellone di San Nicola in Tolentino. Benati 2005, pp. 118-19.

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ALICE ISABELLA SULLIVAN

Two Embroideries Used as Liturgical Cuffs

Two small trapezoidal embroideries in The Metropolitan Museum of Art displaying the Communion of the Apostles were repurposed sometime after their creation in the Byzantine-Slavic cultural sphere in the sixteenth century (figs. 1, 2).¹ The rough edges suggest that they were trimmed from their original rectangular formats in order to function as a pair, measuring now approximately 17.2 × 28.6 centimeters. Set on a foundation of silk satin and cotton plain weave, the pieces, used as liturgical cuffs, or epimanikia, were executed with silk and metal thread. Their similar materials, weave-work, and color palettes dominated by gold, silver, blues, greens, and purples, may have contributed to the decision to reuse and pair them, as did their shared images and compositions. The present study closely considers the iconography of these richly executed liturgical textiles and suggests possibilities for their original forms and functions.

fig. 1 Textile re-formed into a liturgical cuff. Bulgarian or Moldavian workshop, 16th century. Silk and metal thread embroidery on a foundation of silk satin and cotton plain weave, 6¾ × 11¼ in. (17.2 × 28.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910 (10.168.1)



fig. 2 Textile re-formed into a liturgical cuff. Bulgarian or Moldavian workshop, 16th century. Silk and metal thread embroidery on a foundation of silk satin and cotton plain weave, 6¾ × 11¼ in. (17.2 × 28.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1910 (10.168.2)



fig. 3 Epimanikia (liturgical cuffs). Wallachian workshop, ca. 1500. Gilded silver thread on silk, 14¾ × 9⅝ in. (37.5 × 24.5 cm). Vintilă-Vodă Monastery, Wallachia, Romania



The theme of the Communion of the Apostles is common to Byzantine and Slavic manuscript illuminations, icons, textiles, liturgical objects, and mural cycles.² Presenting liturgical interpretations of the Last Supper, the scenes frequently show Christ standing behind a draped altar, often under a ciborium, distributing the Eucharistic bread and wine to the twelve apostles arranged in various configurations on either side of the central composition.³ The Met embroideries display this iconography, although with some divergences across the pair. On one of the textiles (fig. 1), Christ extends his arms to both sides, offering the Eucharistic bread to the apostles clustered to his right, and the communion wine to those gathered to his left. Only the paten remains on the altar. In the other (fig. 2), Christ administers only the Eucharistic bread to the apostles on his right side, while those on his left side await communion with the wine. The chalice rests on the altar alongside the paten. Christ's left arm is shown raised to his chest.

In their current form, the textiles function as epimanikia. Orthodox priests, bishops, and deacons wear such embroidered cuffs as part of their liturgical vestments. Whereas deacons wear the cuffs underneath the elaborate, broad sleeves of their sticharia, priests and bishops lace them over the sleeves of this garment.⁴ It is likely that the more visually rich cuffs, like the two in the Metropolitan Museum, belonged to the priest's liturgical ensemble, whereas plainer cuffs (some without any visual or narrative imagery) were part of the deacon's sartorial repertoire.

The scene of the Annunciation appears to have been most common on liturgical cuffs produced in the Slavic and Byzantine context, with the angel Gabriel on one of the pieces and the Virgin on the other, and with the mystery of the Incarnation occurring in the empty space between them.⁵ However, in the fourteenth century, the Communion of the Apostles also appears on epimanikia.⁶ The usual configuration shows six of the

apostles receiving the communion with the bread on one of the cuffs, and the other six apostles receiving the wine on the other (fig. 3a, b).⁷ The compositions depict Christ either in the center, behind the altar with the apostles grouped in threes to either side of the central scene, or standing beside the altar with a group of six apostles approaching from one side. As such, six apostles in various arrangements appear on each of the cuffs, signaling that the objects are part of a pair that form a unified image when worn together.

Only in the context of Orthodox liturgical rituals, particularly during the Divine Liturgy, and with the aid of the celebrant activating the images, would the complementary scenes of the Communion appear as a single compositional field.⁸ When the priest brings his wrists together during the Eucharistic celebrations, the cuffs would display a double figure of Christ at the altar with all twelve apostles around him. At the center of the ceremony the priest assumes the role of Christ in the distribution of the Eucharist, thus reenacting the activities taking place at the altar in the cuffs' representation.⁹ Further, such composite images would place an emphasis on the space before and between the visual fields—a space characterized by a “tension” and an “air of expectancy,” per Otto Demus's characterization of the “spatial icon,” that necessitates the participation of both the priest and the beholders.¹⁰

The iconographic differences between the two Met embroideries—particularly in the structure of the ciborium, the design of the altars and the rendering of their accoutrements, and the positioning of the figures—suggest that the two were not conceived from the outset as a pair. Moreover, the lack of corresponding iconographies or a unified composition suggests that neither was meant to have a complement. As stated above, one of the embroideries shows the communion with both bread and wine concurrently, whereas the other displays only the communion with the bread. Moreover, the groups of apostles in each of the embroideries are



fig. 4 *Aēr* (liturgical veil), late 14th–early 15th century. Gold and silver thread on silk, 19½ × 23¾ in. (49.5 × 60 cm). Hilandar Monastery, Mount Athos

fairly large, indicating that in the original format, twelve figures were shown in each of the compositions. No pair of embroidered liturgical cuffs from the sixteenth century or earlier shows twelve apostles on each of the cuffs.

Following Byzantine conventions of representing the Communion of the Apostles, the two Met embroideries in their original form would have displayed the full figures of the twelve apostles, arranged in two compact groups of six on either side of the altar, as well as a continuous architectural backdrop with a central ciborium.¹¹ When the textiles were trimmed to their current trapezoidal shape—to function as a pair of liturgical cuffs—some of the structures in the upper sections of the compositions and some of the figures were also removed. Both pieces display only nine apostles with fragments of a tenth. The compositions also would have been surrounded by a wide border carrying either decorative motifs or an inscription likely written in Church Slavonic given the eastern European provenance of the objects. They were probably produced in a Bulgarian or Moldavian workshop, although their exact location of manufacture remains to be determined.¹²

Single compositions of the Communion theme with two groups of six apostles framing a central figure of Christ are found on larger liturgical veils, or *aēres*,

such as the one now preserved in the collection of Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos (fig. 4). The arrangement of the figures and Christ's gestures are similar to those on one of the Met embroideries (fig. 1). Such large-scale veils would have been used in Eastern Orthodox Eucharistic ceremonies to cover the paten and chalice on the altar table.¹³ Other liturgical textiles with variants of this iconography, and slightly smaller in scale, functioned as *kalymma*, or covers, either for the chalice or for the paten, or possibly for both. *Poterokalymma* would have been used to cover the chalice, and *diskokalymma* would have been intended for the paten.¹⁴ It is possible that the Met embroidery showing the simultaneous communion with the bread and the wine (fig. 1) could have been laid across both the paten and chalice at the same time, or used separately on one or the other vessel. The other embroidery (fig. 2), emphasizing the moment of the communion with the bread, likely functioned mainly as a paten cover, although it is possible that it served to cover both the paten and the chalice at certain times.

The similar, but noncomplementary, iconographies of the Met embroideries suggest that they were likely produced in the same workshop, or possibly belonged to the same church but served different functions. Further study is required to determine the provenance and original context of these textiles, but it is now certain that the two liturgical veils were paired sometime between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries in large part due to their shared pictorial themes, materials, and colors in shades of gold, silver, blue, green, and purple on a red ground. The decision to trim and repurpose these objects to serve as liturgical cuffs overlooked the details of their distinct iconographies and the additional meanings that those convey about the original forms and functions of the textiles.

ALICE ISABELLA SULLIVAN

Lecturer, Department of History of Art,
University of Michigan

NOTES

- 1 The textiles were included in the Metropolitan Museum's exhibition "Liturgical Textiles of the Post-Byzantine World" (August 3–November 1, 2015). The embroideries figure into the present author's research on the mimetic and temporal aspects of the Communion of the Apostles scenes, and the iconographic variants of this image type in the Byzantine and Slavic cultural spheres from the fourteenth through the sixteenth century.
- 2 See Loerke 1975, pp. 61–97, figs. 12–23, for examples in various media. See also Dobbert 1891; Dobbert 1892; Aurenhammer 1959; Wessell 1963; and Wessel 1964.
- 3 This biblical event is recounted in the New Testament in Matthew 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:19–20; and I Corinthians 11:23–26. The symmetrical scheme of images of the Communion of the Apostles is noted by Kazhdan and Cutler 1991, p. 1989. Branislav Cvetković examined the intentional asymmetry sometimes found in images of this type as a response to the great eleventh-century schism between the eastern and western Church; Cvetković 2006, especially pp. 74–84. On the Schism of 1054 and the changes that followed in Byzantine monumental church painting, see Lidov 1998. On the ciborium, see Bogdanović 2017, pp. 21–28.
- 4 Woodfin 2012, pp. 5–20, especially pp. 8–9, 16–17; Papas 1993, p. 752.
- 5 For examples from two monasteries on Mount Athos, see Millet and Ylouses 1939–47, vol. 1, pp. 58–61, pls. CXVIII.2 and CXIX.2 (Stavronikita liturgical cuffs), pls. CXX.2 and CXXI.2 (Ivion liturgical cuffs).
- 6 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 58–61; Woodfin 2012, p. 81.
- 7 Woodfin 2012, p. 273, no. 2.
- 8 The action would be similar to how the images of the Communion would appear on the so-called Thessaloniki Epitaphios (ca. 1300, Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki) when in use, as Roland Betancourt argues (2015, pp. 502–3).
- 9 Woodfin 2012, pp. 101–2.
- 10 Demus 1976, pp. 13–14, 79–85.
- 11 See Loerke 1975 for examples.
- 12 See, for example, Millet and Ylouses 1939–47, vol. 1, p. 62, pl. CXXIII, and pp. 82–84, pl. CLXIX. Between the fourteenth and the seventeenth centuries, Church Slavonic (in various recensions) was regularly used in church and administrative documents, as well as in inscriptions on objects and buildings in regions of the Balkan Peninsula and the Carpathian Mountains, such as Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Romanian principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania.
- 13 Woodfin 2012, pp. 123–25, and n.67.
- 14 Betancourt 2015, pp. 493–94.

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CATHERINE PHILLIPS

Scenes from the Life of Jean de La Barrière by Matthieu Elias

In 1992, The Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired ten drawings by Matthieu Elias (1658–1741), with all but one signed and dated 1706 or 1707.¹ Particular emphasis was placed on their provenance from the collection of Marquis Charles-Philippe de Chennevières-Pointel. Thanks to Chennevières’s writings and to notes on the mats, the drawings were identified as scenes from the life of Jean de La Barrière (1544–1600), an influential sixteenth-century cleric.² Though Chennevières mentioned eleven drawings in the series, and eleven featured in his sale in 1900, the whereabouts of the eleventh drawing is unknown.³ At the Museum, the ten drawings were arranged in arbitrary order and described as scenes “from the Life of the Reverend Jean de La Barrière.” They were not published in-depth and remained largely unknown until the collection was made accessible online in 2010. Thus, when the Musée du Louvre held an



fig. 1 Because of the tales of miracles performed at the Holy Abbot's tomb, Pope Clement VIII goes to the Monastery of St. Bernard to commence his beatification; the monks, in a sentiment of humility, beg him humbly to suspend the process. Albertina, Vienna (Appendix no. 8)

fig. 2 Jean de La Barrière pronouncing the funeral oration for Henry III in the Basilica of Saint-Denis(?). Albertina, Vienna (Appendix no. 10)

fig. 3 The Blessed Jean de la Barrière is in Rome in 1590, where he receives all possible marks of consideration from Pope Clement VIII, the cardinals and the most important people of the city. State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (Appendix no. 3)

exhibition devoted to the Chennevières collection in 2007, the authors of the catalogue were unaware of their location.⁴

Two more drawings from the same series have been identified at the Albertina in Vienna (figs. 1, 2) and another drawing at the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (fig. 3), can now be added to this group, making a total of thirteen.⁵ The Hermitage drawing was purchased in 1768 by Empress Catherine the Great of Russia from Count Charles Cobenzl.⁶ Cobenzl (minister of Maria Theresa of Austria in the Southern Netherlands) had bought the drawing in February 1765 from the Paris dealer Pierre François Basan.⁷ Basan, usually so well-informed about works in his hands, named the artist but neglected to identify the subject of the drawing. Yet mid-eighteenth-century guides to Paris repeatedly mentioned the impressive series of windows painted by “Sempi & Michu” after drawings by “Elie” or “Elye” in the cloister of the Couvent des Feuillants (Feuillants Monastery) on the rue Saint-Honoré, near the Tuileries. Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville described the windows in 1757 as painted “with much finesse,”⁸ and Jean-Baptiste Descamps



made particular mention of them in his 1760 biography of Elias, a Flemish artist who had a successful career in Paris.⁹ With the total loss of the glass from the Feuillants Monastery, the thirteen drawings are today the best source of information as to the appearance of the painted-glass windows.

JEAN DE LA BARRIÈRE AND THE ORDER OF FEUILLANTS

Jean de La Barrière was commendatory abbot of the Order of Feuillants, near Toulouse; initially part of the Cistercian Order, his house later became independent.¹⁰ Adopting the strict rule of Saint Bernard, the order demanded extreme mortification of the flesh—not least, monks were not permitted to wear shoes or cover their heads, and they ate a severely restricted diet. De La Barrière might have remained a relatively minor figure in French clerical history were it not for his stance of tolerance in a period of violence, the thirty years of religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants (Huguenots) known as the French Wars of Religion. A man of extreme piety, de La Barrière opposed the persecution of Protestants. Indeed, he



matthias Eljas Delgado
Ely. Pint. el año 1746



seems to have become a monk partly in response to the horrors of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of Huguenots in August 1572, choosing to oppose "heresy" through peaceful means.¹¹

In 1576, the already heightened religious tension was aggravated when Henry I, duke of Guise (1550–1588), set up the Catholic League, opposing the conciliatory attitude to the Huguenots of the reigning king, the childless Henry III (r. 1574–89), and particularly aimed at preventing the succession of the heir presumptive, the Huguenot Henry of Navarre. Even when the latter gave up his Protestant faith in order to become king of France as Henry IV (r. 1589–1610), famously declaring, "Paris is worth a Mass," the league continued its opposition to him.

Throughout this period, de La Barrière remained firmly loyal to the reigning monarchs, preaching their policy of religious coexistence. As a prominent monk of unquestioned piety, whose Catholicism could not be doubted, he was a thorn in the flesh of the league. Some of the monks of his order, perhaps disagreeing with his tolerance but also unhappy at the strict mortification of the flesh he demanded (which apparently led to a high mortality rate among the malnourished brothers), took advantage of the situation by declaring themselves unable to serve under a near heretic. De La Barrière's insubordination before the league and his support of the king were presented as betrayals of the Catholic faith. As the order he had created split in two, de La Barrière was forced to flee the house in Paris, suffering arrest and persecution and later removal from office. Nonetheless, he lived to see the eventual collapse of the Catholic League in the 1590s, dying in 1600, the year that Henry IV passed the Edict of Nantes granting religious toleration. While the religious wars had shaken royal powers, those powers were eventually reasserted. More particularly, de la Barrière supported the new reigning house, the Bourbons, and this was not forgotten.

PAINTED GLASS IN THE CLOISTER OF THE COUVENT DES FEUILLANTS

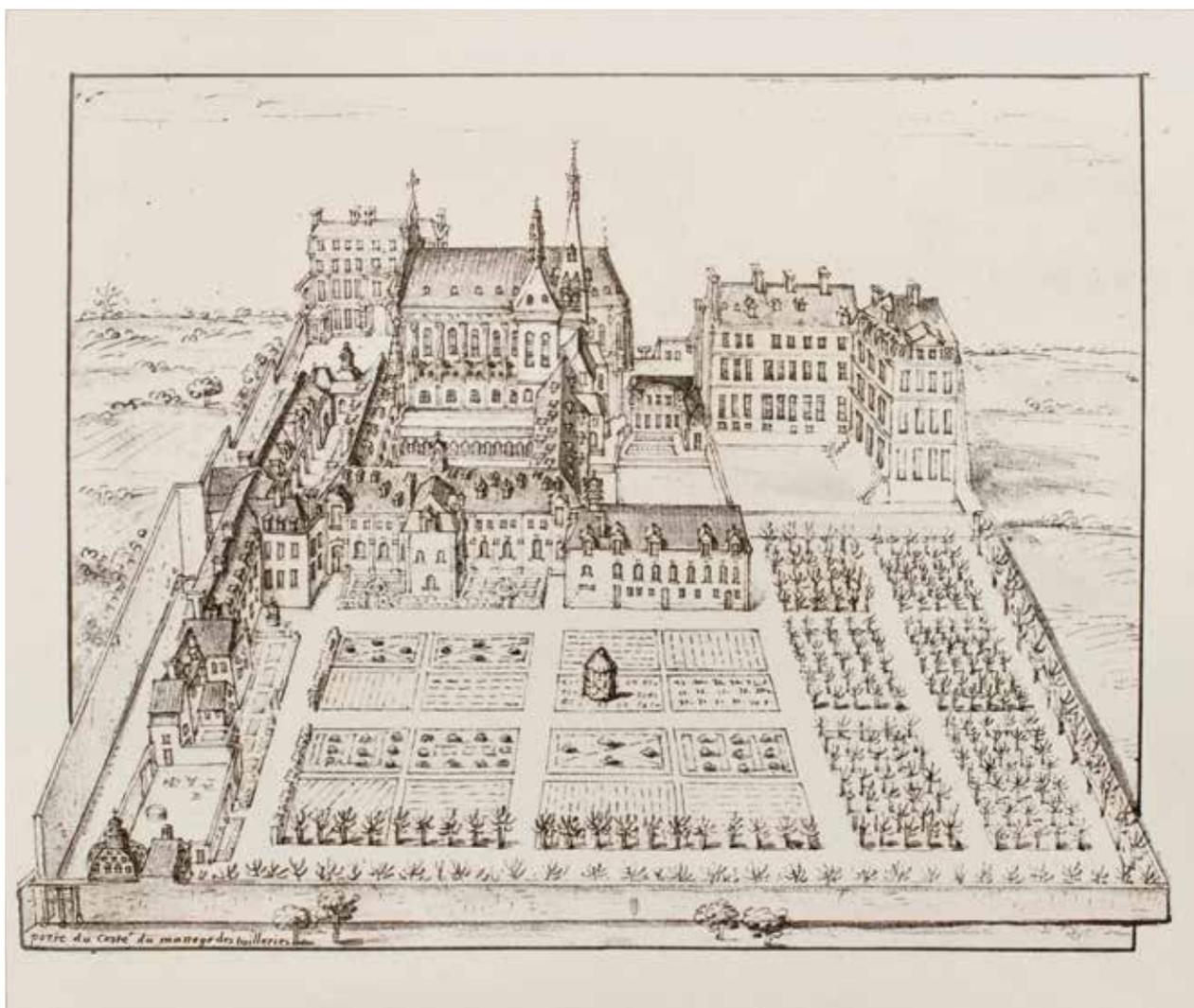
Royal gratitude found physical expression in rich gifts to the order that de La Barrière established. Henry III, last monarch of the house of Valois, had founded the royal monastery known as the Couvent des Feuillants in Paris in 1587.¹² The church's foundation stone was laid by Henry IV. It was consecrated in 1608 and dedicated to Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. Marie de Medici, consort of Henry IV, made generous donations, including the main altarpiece. The facade was built in 1624 by

François Mansart, and the cloisters, visible in a drawing of 1707 (fig. 4), were painted with frescoes showing the life of Saint Bernard by Aubin Vouet.¹³ At this time, an unidentified glass painter also produced about twenty glass panels illustrating the life of Jean de La Barrière for the cloister, but work broke off, leaving almost as many windows empty. Thereafter, there was further, if sporadic, royal support for the monastery. In 1676–77, a large entrance gateway was built, with a bas-relief showing Henry IV presenting the monks with plans of the church. The first life of the Reverend Jean de La Barrière, published by Jean-Baptiste de Sainte-Anne Pradillon in 1699,¹⁴ seems to have prompted the completion of the painted-glass scenes from his life in the cloister.

Renaissance architecture generally called for large, light windows, and by the early seventeenth century colored glass had fallen out of fashion in France. There were relatively few commissions for it, and the number of craftsmen declined. Because the rare examples of seventeenth-century glass recalled oil painting, emphasis was placed on the painter-designer and not the craftsman, hence the involvement of Aubin Vouet in the 1620s and, nearly a century later, of the Flemish painter of altarpieces Matthieu Elias.

The main source of biographical information on Elias is Descamps's biography, which provides key details, such as his birthplace and training in Dunkirk under the landscape painter Philippe de Borbehem, as well as the heartwarming if semi-apocryphal tale of the son of an impoverished widow who entertained himself creating figures and pictures while out minding the family cow at pasture and was noticed by a passing artist, who then took him on as a pupil. Elias is recorded in Paris in 1684. In 1709, he became head of the Académie de Saint-Luc. Nonetheless, most of the work described by Descamps was done in his native region (northern France/Flanders), which is where his paintings are largely found today, in the churches of Dunkirk, Menin, and Ypres.¹⁵ Elias worked in what was already an old-fashioned style, his figures somewhat reminiscent of those of his compatriot Philippe de Champaigne, as in the latter's cycle of scenes from the life of Saint Benedict of Nursia of the 1650s.¹⁶ Just why or how Matthieu Elias was chosen to paint the glass for the Feuillants remains unclear, although the most likely reason was his renowned piety, stressed repeatedly by Descamps and illustrated by the predominance of religious commissions in his career. He may well have been recommended by a cleric at one of the institutions he worked for in northern France.

fig. 4 After Louis Bourdan,
 Veüe du couvent des
 R. Peres Feuillens de la rüe
 St Honoré a Paris, 1707.
 Reproduced in Raunié 1914

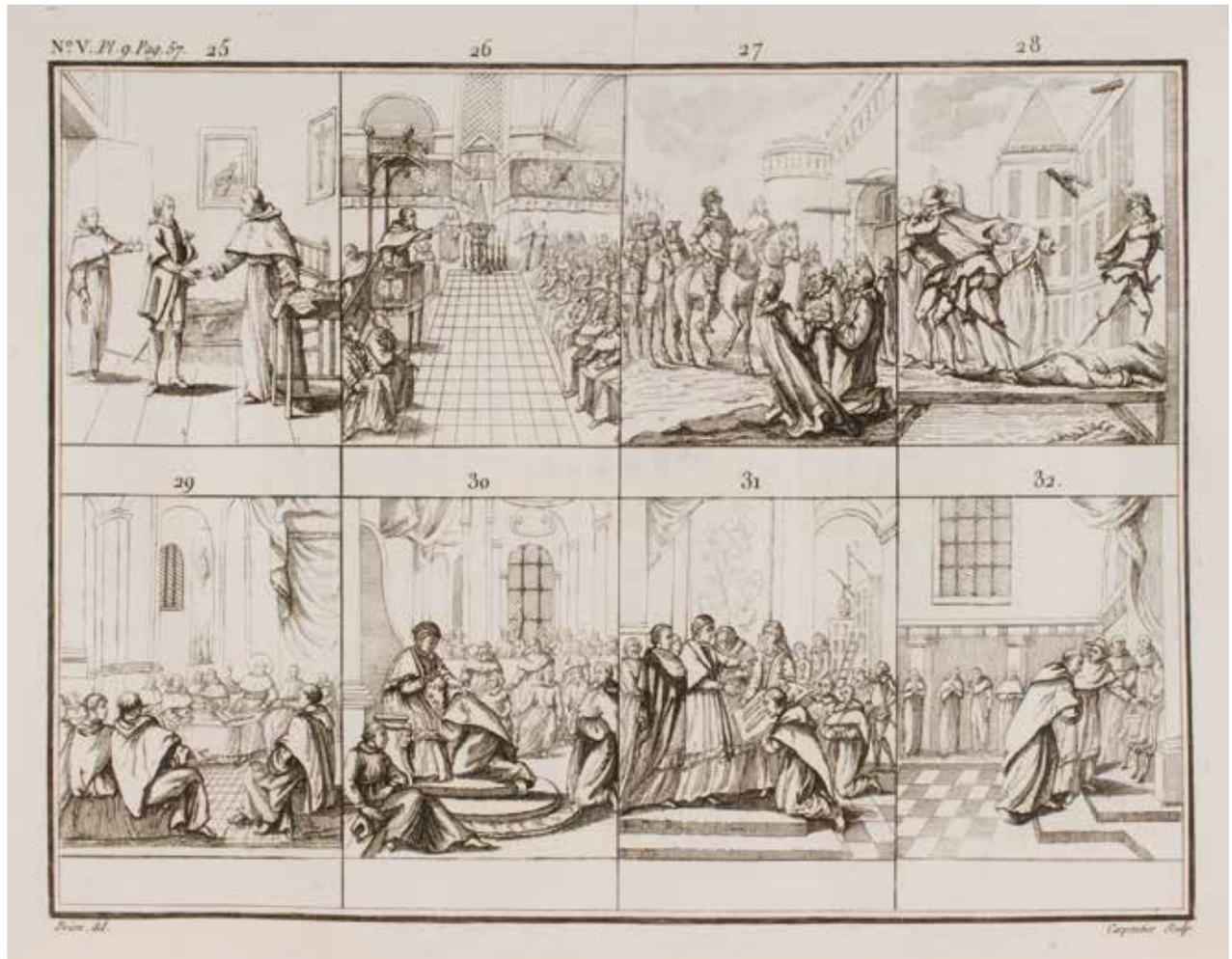


Although Dezallier d'Argenville, Descamps, and others noted the quality of the glass, the first detailed information about it was provided by the glassmaker and historiographer Pierre Le Vieil in *L'art de la peinture sur verre et de la vitrerie*, a book published posthumously in 1774. Le Vieil's biography of French glass painter Benoît Michu, who became master glass painter in Paris in 1677 and who died in 1730, praises the artist's skill and describes the layout of the glass in the cloister, with its hagiographical scenes, friezes, and coats of arms.¹⁷ Importantly, Le Vieil interpreted the inscriptions and chronological marks to establish that the glass was made in two campaigns, the first the work of an unknown glass painter between 1624 and 1628, the second between 1701 and 1709, when the glass was painted by Michu and P. A. Sempi, a Flemish glass painter, after Matthieu Elias's drawings. The original glass does not seem to have been of particular note: Germain Brice's *Description nouvelle . . . de Paris*

of 1687 makes no mention of the glass in the cloisters at all, only of Vouet's paintings,¹⁸ and eighteenth-century writers mention only Michu, Sempi, and Elias. A guide to Paris of 1785 referred to Vouet's paintings in passing, asserting that "one looks with greater pleasure on the paintings of the glass windows, which represent the life and miracles of the founder, Dom Jean de La Barrière."¹⁹

According to Le Vieil, at the start of the eighteenth century, nineteen scenes had still to be produced, the marks he read indicating that Michu painted eleven of them (as well as the friezes and coats of arms of nine), with Sempi responsible for the rest. He proclaimed the superiority of Michu's paintings over those of Sempi.²⁰ Le Vieil does not seem to be infallible and some later sources provide contradictory information, but it must be borne in mind that Le Vieil was the son of Michu's contemporary and collaborator Guillaume Le Vieil and should probably be seen as more reliable.²¹

fig. 5 Eight scenes from the Life of Jean de La Barrière, plate in Millin 1790 [1799]



**THE GLASS RESCUED: ALEXANDRE LENOIR'S
MUSÉE DES MONUMENTS FRANÇAIS**

In the wake of the French Revolution, the glass was among many works cited by those concerned for the fate of Paris's cultural monuments. By this time, Aubin Vouet's paintings had been almost entirely destroyed, but when the antiquarian Aubin Louis Millin saw the monastery in 1790, he reported: "The windows in this cloister are famous and worthy of interest from art lovers" and went on to provide a detailed description.²² There had been forty glass panels on small squared pieces of glass, each set into a larger piece of plain glass with an inscription below, inscriptions he scrupulously recorded. The remaining monks claimed to have been offered 90,000 livres for the glass.²³

If damage to the glass meant that Millin could see and record only thirty-six subjects out of forty (reproduced by him in five plates; see one in fig. 5),²⁴ there was good reason to fear further losses. Secularized in 1790, the monastery was taken over by soldiers. It was in the nave of the church that Jacques Louis David worked on

his celebrated painting *The Tennis Court Oath* of 1791,²⁵ and it was here that the political moderates who came together in the wake of the Revolution as the Société des Amis de la Constitution gathered, becoming known as the Club des Feuillants. The monastery was partly demolished between 1801 and 1804 to make way for the rue de Rivoli, although witnesses recorded seeing some parts, including the cloister, still standing in 1830.²⁶ But by this time the glass had been removed and taken to the Musée des Monuments Français, set up in 1795 by Alexandre Lenoir.²⁷ It featured in the second edition of the museum catalogue, in which he stated that the scenes by Michu were of interest, while the others were "as mediocre in execution as in invention."²⁸ The third edition, meanwhile, describes three of the scenes and explains that they were displayed in the seventeenth-century room.²⁹

In 1802, Lenoir reported to the Minister of the Interior that the glass had been restored by a master glazier, one "citoyen Tailleur." The same document reports that the museum had thirty pieces of glass

fig. 6 *Feuillant monks carry the bier with the body of Jean de la Barrière*. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Appendix no. 13)

from the Feuillants monastery.³⁰ We learn that the scenes each measured “2 *pieds* × 20 *pouces*” (65 × 54 cm). Lenoir praised Michu’s achievements in a history of painting on glass in 1803,³¹ but was somewhat disparaging in a more extensive text of 1809: “those by Benoît Michu after Elye (the Belgian) are interesting; yet some are but the exact imitation of a drawing in brown wash and I see in the others nothing but a tasteless copy of a Flemish gouache.”³² Charles Paul Landon reproduced three scenes in different volumes of his *Annales du Musée* in 1807.³³ Although he stated that there were only fourteen glass scenes in the museum, we should probably give greater credence to Lenoir’s reference to thirty.

THE GLASS MISLAID

The last description of the Musée des Monuments Français appeared in 1816, and it too mentioned the glass from the Feuillants monastery, but Lenoir’s museum was to close that same year. A recent research

project devoted to the Musée led by the Institut National de l’Histoire de l’Art in Paris has shown that some of the glass disappeared when the museum was broken up, while some was sold through the Dutch art market and apparently made its way to Britain. None of the Feuillants glass has been located.³⁴ Thus, it is the drawings in the Metropolitan Museum, the Albertina, and the Hermitage that allow us to judge the lost glass. We cannot see the color so admired by authors from *Le Vieil* to Landon, but with the help of Millin’s plates we can identify the subjects and arrange the scenes in correct order.

THE DRAWINGS

If nineteen scenes were missing from the first campaign, we would expect nineteen drawings by Elias. At present, we know of thirteen, all relating to the later part of Jean de La Barrière’s life. Executed in a similar technique, with red chalk, red or reddish-brown wash, heightened with white, they each measure about 53 × 44 centimeters. Since each scene was set into a larger panel of plain glass and the full panels in the Musée des Monuments Français measured 65 × 54 centimeters, we can hypothesize that the drawings were full-size models for the painted section.

Although we cannot compare Elias’s drawings with the finished glass, there is further reason to think that the glass copied the models closely. Comparison between Millin’s prints and nine of the surviving drawings reveals only small differences in most scenes, which can largely be explained by the small scale and summary nature of Millin’s reproductions. This is confirmed in two instances where we have not only Millin’s sketch and Elias’s drawing but also the outline print made for Landon, revealing the latter to be far closer to the drawings than to Millin.

Four drawings, however, are not the same as any of the scenes depicted by Millin. One may perhaps be a (rejected?) variation of a recorded scene, while three have no parallel whatsoever. A drawing in the Albertina (see fig. 2) is similar in spirit but not in detail to Millin’s scene 26, *The Blessed Jean de La Barrière pronounces the funeral oration for Henry III before the parliament of Bordeaux*. It may well be that the secular figures seated in the church in the drawing are the members of the Bordeaux parliament, but the building shown seems very like the Basilica of Saint-Denis, on the edge of Paris, where the kings of France were traditionally buried. Yet it was only in 1610, a decade after the death of de La Barrière, that the remains of Henry III were buried in Saint-Denis. It is



fig. 7 *The arrest of Jean de La Barrière by the League at Lombez. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Appendix no. 11)*



possible, therefore, that this drawing was a preliminary version that was rejected because it was not historically accurate.

The three drawings of scenes for which nothing similar is found in Millin's prints, all in the Metropolitan Museum, may relate to lost scenes, but only four lost pieces of glass are mentioned, of which two (between Millin's 17 and 18, and 19 and 20) depict events early in Jean de La Barrière's life, the inscription beneath the second precluding identification with any of the drawings.³⁵ Another missing piece fell between Millin's scenes 34 and 35, and this might be a logical place for the scene showing monks carrying the bier with Jean de La Barrière's body from a church into a side chapel or cloister (fig. 6). Millin does not say where the last missing scene should have been. Thus, for the two other drawings, showing the arrest of Jean de La Barrière under the league (fig. 7) and (apparently) an emaciated

Jean de La Barrière blessing a cardinal (fig. 8), no place can be identified in Millin's program.

Two points should be noted. First, the drawing of monks carrying the bier is less finished than the rest and the signature seems to be a rather formal imitation of Elias's signatures on his other drawings (not only those in this series). Secondly, the dated drawings are signed 1706 or 1707, whereas Le Vieil tells us that the dates on the glass indicate that the panels of the second campaign were executed in 1701-9. Although Chennevières said that his drawings were dated 1704-7, none of the known sheets bears the date 1704 (it may appear on the missing eleventh Chennevières drawing). It is possible that the drawings for other scenes in the series were produced earlier, but we can be sure that Elias did not execute the drawings in chronological order, since some of the scenes in de La Barrière's later life are dated 1706, while earlier scenes are dated 1707.



fig. 8 Jean de La Barrière blessing a cardinal. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Appendix no. 12)

All this gives rise to questions about the precise purpose of these highly finished drawings. They are in remarkably good condition for working drawings, and we must ask if they were indeed the sheets provided to the glass painters—despite the oxidization of the white heightening, they do not look as if they lingered in a workshop. Since the glass aroused interest from the very start, we cannot exclude the possibility that Elias produced finished drawings based on his originals, perhaps for a collector. Nonetheless, the presence of scenes not included in the final glass supports the idea that they were produced for approval by the monastery administration, after which they would have been given to the glass painters.³⁶

Elias's drawings for the life of Jean de La Barrière contrast strongly with his only other known drawings. The misleadingly titled "Album Elye" in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, takes its name from just two signed

drawings by Elias out of a total of seventy-eight, of which perhaps eight may in fact be his work.³⁷ But any dissimilarity in style and manner can be explained by the very different purposes of the drawings: those in the Louvre were designs for prints for Jean Mariette, which dictated the linear manner, the use of pen and ink with flat applications of gray wash, in contrast to the painterly effect of the red chalk and red wash drawings produced as models for painted glass.

One more drawing has been tentatively but mistakenly attributed to Matthieu Elias. While *King Henry III showing Jean de La Barrière the plan of the Monastery being built for him in Paris* (Appendix no. R1) is the same size as the drawings described here, its use of angular lines in pen and brown ink, tinted with brown and colored washes, has no parallel in technique or style among Elias's known drawings.³⁸ It relates to an early period in de La Barrière's life and we know that Elias designed later subjects. Nor does the iconography coincide with Millin's print after the glass (Millin scene 20); rather, it represents a combination between that scene and the bas-relief on the monastery gates (reproduced by Millin at the end of the thirty-six glass scenes). Its function and authorship thus remain uncertain.

Whether Elias's drawings are those created for use by Michu and Sempi or finished presentation sheets made in the wake of the glass's success, they are undoubtedly the best record we have today of the lost painted glass of the Couvent des Feuillants in Paris.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CATHERINE PHILLIPS
Independent Scholar

APPENDIX

Drawings by Matthieu Elias for the Life of the Reverend Jean de La Barrière

Note to the Reader: The drawings are ordered here according to the chronology of the life of Jean de La Barrière. Their descriptive titles are translated from the original inscriptions beneath the painted-glass scenes, as recorded in a volume of 1790 by antiquarian Aubin Louis Millin. The “scene numbers” reflect the order of the painted-glass scenes in the cloister. The “R” in “R1” stands for “rejected,” indicating that the work is not accepted as by Matthieu Elias. The drawings listed below that are in the Metropolitan Museum may be viewed at www.metmuseum.org/art/collection.

For all drawings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art:
By Matthieu Elias (born Flanders, 1658–1741)
Red chalk, heightened with white, pen and black ink, with red and orange washes, each about 21 × 17½ in. (53.3 × 44.5 cm)
Provenance: Collection Marquis Charles-Philippe de Chennevières-Pointel; 1992 with H-M Oeuvres d’Art, Paris; 1992 purchased by The Metropolitan Museum of Art from W. M. Brady & Co., Inc., New York
Credit line: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harry G. Sperling Fund, 1992
Publication: Metropolitan Museum 1992, p. 30

1. Scene 25. *Fatally wounded, King Henry III informs the Blessed Abbot of his condition and recommends himself to his prayers*
Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas Belgo vulgo Elye inv. et fecit 1707*[?]
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.10)

2. Scene 28. *The Blessed Abbot having retired to the Château de Montaigu, soldiers of the league arrive to capture him as he leaves. A piece of wood falls from on high and scatters the soldiers and wounds the Holy Abbot, whom they leave for dead; he is miraculously cured and escapes*
Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas Belga vulgo Elye. In et fecit 1706*
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.6)

3. Scene 30. *The Blessed Jean de la Barrière is in Rome in 1590, where he receives all possible marks of consideration from Pope Clement VIII, the cardinals and the most important people of the city*
Red chalk, pen and brown ink, orange and reddish-brown wash, heightened with white, over graphite, 20⅞ × 17¼ in. (52.9 × 43.8 cm)
State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (OR 3028)
Provenance: Pierre-François Basan, Paris; 1765 acquired from him for 18 florins de change by Count Charles Cobenzl, Brussels; 1768 purchased with the Cobenzl collection by Catherine the Great
Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas Belga vulgo Elye inven. et fecit 1706*
Publication: Dobroklonsky 1955, no. 790

4. Scene 31. *Foundation of a second Feuillant monastery in Rome, dedicated to St. Bernard, in 1594, thanks to the generosity of Caterina de’ Nobili, niece of Pope Julius III and widow of Count Sforza Sforza di Santa Fiora*
Signature in gray ink: *Matthias Elyas Vulgo Elye . . . [worn] 1706*
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.7)

5. Scene 32. *Supporters of the league pursue the Blessed Abbot to Rome; despite their calumnies his innocence is recognized by the pope himself, who orders Cardinal Bellarmine to restore all his posts and honors*
Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas. Belga vulgo Elye In et fecit 1707*
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.2)

6. Scene 33: *The Blessed Abbot, near death, receives the blessing of the pope, who sends for this purpose Cardinal d’Ossat, a close friend of the saint, whose teacher he had been; he dies in the odor of sanctity*
25 April 1600
Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas Belga vulgo Elye Inve. et fecit 1706*
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.8)

7. Scene 34. *To satisfy the devotion of the people, they are forced to leave the Blessed Abbot’s body on display for three days; many miracles are performed*
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.4)

8. Scene 35: *Because of the tales of miracles performed at the Holy Abbot’s tomb, Pope Clement VIII goes to the Monastery of St. Bernard to commence his beatification; the monks, in a sentiment of humility, beg him humbly to suspend the process*
Red chalk, brown wash, heightened with white, over graphite, on yellow-tinted paper, 21 × 17¼ in. (53.4 × 43.9 cm)
Albertina, Vienna (15161)
Provenance: Gottfried Winckler, Leipzig; Albert, duke of Sachsen-Teschen, Vienna

9. Scene 36: *Reception of the heart and head of the Blessed Father Dom Jean de la Barrière, brought from Rome to his Abbey of Feuillants in 1626, where they are carefully preserved along with other relics of the Holy Abbot*
Signature in gray ink: *Matthieu Elyas Belga vulgo Elyse [?] et fecit*
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.3)

10. *Jean de La Barrière pronouncing the funeral oration for Henry III in the Basilica of Saint-Denis(?)*
Red chalk, brown wash, heightened with white, over graphite, on yellow-tinted paper, 21 × 17½ in. (53.3 × 44.5 cm)
Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas Belga vulgo Elye Inue. et fecit 1707*
Albertina, Vienna (15160)
Provenance: Gottfried Winckler, Leipzig; Albert, duke of Sachsen-Teschen, Vienna
Possibly a rejected version of scene 26, in which “The Blessed Jean de La Barrière pronounces the funeral oration for Henry III

before the parliament of Bordeaux.” The body of Henry III was moved to Saint-Denis only in 1610.

11. *The arrest of Jean de La Barrière by the League at Lombez*

Signature in gray ink: . . . *Elye . . . in. et fecit*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.1)

According to biographies of Jean de La Barrière, this event took place shortly before the accident at the Château de Montaigne (scene 28).

12. *Jean de La Barrière blessing a cardinal*

Signature in gray ink: *Matheus Elyas Belgo vulgo Elye inve. et fecit 1706*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.9)

Possibly, bearing in mind de La Barrière’s physical state and the weeping of the onlookers, Cardinal Ossat being received on the eve of the abbot’s death, throwing himself at his feet to receive his blessing.

13. *Feuillant monks carry the bier with the body of Jean de la Barrière*

Signature (probably not original), in gray ink: *M. Elye. Inve. et fecit*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1992.246.5)

Perhaps the missing scene mentioned by Millin between scenes 34 and 35.

R1. Unknown French(?) artist

King Henry III showing Jean de La Barrière the plan of the monastery being built for him in Paris

Pen and brown ink, gray and colored washes, 21 × 17¼ in.

(53.3 × 43.7 cm)

Musée Carnavalet, Paris (D.6205)

Provenance: Galerie Paul Prouté, purchased for the Musée Carnavalet, 1944

NOTES

- 1 Metropolitan Museum 1992, p. 30.
- 2 Chennevières 1896, p. 32.
- 3 Chennevières sale 1900, lot 15. Described simply as “Sujets religieux,” the eleven drawings sold for 17 francs. It has mistakenly been said that all eleven drawings are in the Metropolitan Museum; Brejon de Lavergnée and Cugy 2013, n. 76. According to information from W. M. Brady, only ten drawings surfaced in Paris with H–M Oeuvres d’Art in 1992.
- 4 Prat and Lhinares 2007, no. C. 709.
- 5 The Hermitage drawing is published in Dobroklonsky 1955, no. 790. Dobroklonsky mentioned the link with a drawing in the Albertina, although he was unaware of the subject.
- 6 On the Cobenzl collection, see Kuznetsov 1969 and Phillips 2010. A forthcoming exhibition at the Hermitage in 2019 will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the foundation of the drawings department.
- 7 Archives Générales du Royaume et Archives de l’Etat, Brussels, papers of the Secrétariat de l’Etat et de la Guerre, 1067, list of drawings from Basan, February 1765, f.7bis sheet 1r: “Bistre ou un moine recoit les Ordres par Elyas. 18 fl de change.”
- 8 Dezallier d’Argenville 1757, p. 155. Summary information also appeared in other publications, such as Hébert 1766, vol. 1, p. 186.
- 9 Descamps 1753–63, vol. 3, pp. 377–82.
- 10 On de La Barrière and the Feuillants, see Pierre 2006.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- 12 On the history of the Couvent des Feuillants complex, see Ciprut 1957.
- 13 See Picart 1982, pp. 47–48.
- 14 Pradillon 1699.
- 15 A small exhibition devoted to his paintings was held in the town of Bergues in 1982; see Guillemin 1982.
- 16 Brême 2007.
- 17 *Le Vieil* 1774, p. 76.
- 18 Brice 1687, pp. 66–67.
- 19 “On regarde avec plus de plaisir les peintures des vitres, qui représentent la vie & les miracles du fondateur Dom Jean de La Barrière.” Dulaure 1785, vol. 1, p. 231.
- 20 *Le Vieil* 1774, p. 76.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 76–79.
- 22 “Les vitraux de ce cloître sont célèbres, et dignes de la curiosité des amateurs des arts.” Millin 1790 [1799], p. 82, quotation on p. 46. On Millin’s project, see Hurley 2013. Millin contradicts *Le Vieil*, stating that those by “Pempi [sic]” are greatest in number and far superior to the others. Comparison with other sources makes clear that *Le Vieil* is the more reliable on this point.
- 23 Millin 1790 [1799], p. 63.
- 24 Millin listed thirty-six and specifically mentioned three damaged pieces (one of them with its inscription intact, the others totally destroyed). No mention is made of the fortieth piece.
- 25 Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.67.
- 26 The scene of the demolition was captured in a number of drawings and paintings, such as a picture of 1806–7 by Hubert Robert (Musée Carnavalet, Paris, P.364). M. F. de Guilhermy (in Guilhermy and Fichot 1855, p. 251) recalled seeing some remaining parts of the monastery in 1830.
- 27 “Rapport d’Alexandre Lenoir au Comité de l’instruction publique tendant à la création du Musée des Monuments français au Dépôt des Petits-Augustins,” in Lenoir (Albert) 1883–97, vol. 1, p. 23, doc. XXV. On Alexandre Lenoir, see Bresc-Bautier and Chancel-Bardelot 2016.
- 28 “Les autres son médiocres; tant pour l’exécution que pour leur invention.” Lenoir (Alex.) [1795–96], pp. 109–10.

- 29 “No. 12. Dom Jean de la Barrière, fondateur du couvent des Feuillans, rue Saint-Honoré, tenant chapitre; par Sempy, d’après Elye. No. 13 . . . L’exposition d’une Relique aux fidèles; par les mêmes. No. 14 . . . L’emprisonnement de dom Jean de la Barrière; par les mêmes.” Lenoir (Alex.) [1797], pp. 217, 237. It is interesting that despite Alexandre Lenoir’s praise for Michu, the author of the three scenes on display was given as Sempy.
- 30 “Restauration des vitraux recueillis au Musée des Monuments français,” February 18, 1802, in Lenoir (Albert) 1883–97, vol. 1, p. 275, doc. CCXLIV.
- 31 Lenoir (Alex.) 1803, p. 51, in which he seems largely to have been reprising *Le Vieil*.
- 32 “celles de Benoît Michu, d’après Elye (le belge), sont d’un effet piquant; mais les unes ne sont que l’imitation exacte d’un dessin au bistre, et ne je vois dans les autres que la copie sans goût d’une gouache flamande.” Lenoir (Alex.) 1809, p. 24.
- 33 Landon 1801–, vol. 14 (1807), pp. 27–28 and pl. 10, “Jean de La Barrière recevant une lettre d’Henri III”; vol. 15 (1807), p. 41 and pl. 23, “La mort de Don Jean de la Barrière”; vol. 16 (1808), p. 71 and pl. 34, “l’arrestation de l’abbé Jean de la Barrière.”
- 34 Béatrice de Chancel-Bardelot, email message to author, September 6, 2017. The program ran from 2010 to 2015 and culminated in an exhibition in 2016; see Bresc-Bautier and Chancel-Bardelot 2016.
- 35 The inscription reads: “Le 3 juillet 1587 le roi Henri III, accompagné du légat et de toute sa cour, reçoit le bienheureux dom Jean de la Barrière et ses religieux en son château de Vincennes, où il leur donne un appartement en attendant que le monastère qu’il leur faisait bâtir à Paris fût en état de les recevoir.”
- 36 Although the darker ink of the signatures on the drawings might be seen as indicating that the inscriptions were added later, when the drawings were no longer needed for the making of the painted glass, it must be stressed that other drawings by Elias show similar signatures in ink that contrast with the technique of the drawing. See, e.g., Louvre, 26540.
- 37 Brejon de Lavergnée and Cugy 2013.
- 38 The note on the back of the drawing includes several errors, suggesting it is Jean de La Barrière presenting the plans to the monarch and identifying the monarch as Charles IX. Musée Carnavalet, Paris, D.6205.

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MAX BRYANT

Eighteenth-Century Ironwork from Great George Street, London

In the summer of 1931, Joseph Breck, then acting director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, conducted a purchasing trip to Britain. The excursion is best remembered for resulting in the major acquisition of the dining room from Lansdowne House (1766–69), designed by the architect Robert Adam. While in London, however, Breck also visited the architectural salvage company T. Crowther and Son to acquire examples of eighteenth-century ironwork. On August 8, he bought thirty-seven staircase balusters and three decorative panels.

Research has revealed some items in this group to be of particular interest. T. Crowther and Son's laconic notes on provenance, written on catalogue cards by an unknown hand, constitute the only clues to the balusters' origins. The firm has been described as "notorious for forgetting or even inventing provenances," so the notes must be treated with caution.¹ Some accurate provenances,

fig. 1 Unidentified smith.
Baluster, ca. 1756. Wrought
iron, 33 × 10½ in. (83.8 ×
26.7 cm). The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, Rogers
Fund, 1931 (31.92.22)



fig. 2 Photograph of Great George Street (detail), 1910. The carriage is directly below nos. 29–32; the pedimented facade belongs to no. 29. London Metropolitan Archives



fig. 3 Photograph of staircase of 29 Great George Street, Westminster, 1910. London Metropolitan Archives



however, can be established by cross-referencing the notes with photographic records of buildings in London that were demolished in the 1920s.

One baluster may be definitively attributed (fig. 1). The catalogue card records it as having been taken from “Great George Street,” surely identified now as the street in Westminster that leads from the southeast corner of St. James’s Park toward Westminster Bridge. Before they were razed, some of the houses on the street were photographed (fig. 2). A cluster east of the corner with Delahay Street includes the same baluster design: numbers 29–31 on the north side of the street (fig. 3), as well as numbers 6 and 8–10 on the south side (7 was not photographed). The houses with this baluster are recorded in the *Survey of London* as constructed in 1756.²

A signature of London town houses of the late eighteenth century is the top-lit cantilevered staircase with a balustrade of repeating units of wrought-iron ornament. British architects had experimented with cantilevering consistently since the time of Inigo Jones, creating staircases with no visible means of support, but only in elite locations. In the 1740s, when technology allowed for glazed roof lights, and consequently the creation of bright open-well staircases, architects began to apply cantilevering techniques in London town houses. For their balustrades, iron was used because the steps were

made of stone and the balusters had to be fixed into them with molten lead. The motifs of the balustrades were derived from seventeenth-century ironwork, such as that by Jean Tijou for the great stairs at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire (ca. 1689–93). Typically these forms comprised an abstracted urn shape rendered in elegant lines and embellished with water-leaf additions. Designers of the mid-eighteenth century eliminated the continuous composition and upward tilt of the seventeenth-century source material, creating a new and distinctly English decorative element. By 1756, the untilted style of the ironwork at Great George Street had been employed for only a little more than a decade. The balustrades would not have seemed old-fashioned, then, despite being indebted to old motifs.

A house closer to the corner of Delahay Street, 32 Great George Street, departed from the others with interior decoration in a new style associated with Robert Adam. A plan of the house in the *Survey of London* shows that it was architecturally almost identical to those next door at numbers 29–31, indicating that the decoration of the house was executed at a later date.³ The lease of the house had been granted at the same time as the other houses, in November 1755, but it went unoccupied for nearly three decades. In 1781, its owner, the banker Henry Drummond, invited Adam to

fig. 4 Photograph of staircase of 32 Great George Street, Westminster, 1910. London Metropolitan Archives



produce designs for a new house on the site. Adam's new style drew on motifs from antiquity to create a vocabulary distinctly different from that of the 1750s, and five plans and an elevation for Drummond survive at Sir John Soane's Museum. They were not executed, but it may be inferred that instead of producing an entire Adam house, Drummond chose to hire Adam's craftsmen to simply replace the old fittings, about 1782–84. In 1785 it was recorded as being occupied, suggesting that Drummond had succeeded in making the old house fashionable.

Photographs show that one aspect of the redecoration scheme was the iron balusters, which are characteristic of Adam's craftsmen (*fig. 4*). The stair steps in the photographs show lines separating two individual stone blocks, close to the outer ends. These lines indicate that sometime after the initial construction of the staircase, the stone was cut and the outer end of the

step replaced with new stone. The motivation was evidently to install new iron balusters that were permanently fixed into the stone on the outer ends of the steps. Part of the redecoration of the house, then, was to replace the original ironwork of 1756 with designs in the new style of the 1780s. It was done by cutting out the edges of the stone steps, replacing them, and installing new iron balusters into the new stone.

Two balusters identical to those in the photographs were purchased by Breck and must have been among those added to 32 Great George Street (*fig. 5*). The catalogue card note identifies them as from Portland Place, but no corresponding designs appear in any photographs of that development, and it seems likely that Crowther simply named a large Adam project to identify the designer. The houses on the north side of Great George Street were all demolished together, and the balusters probably entered Crowther's collection at the

fig. 5 Unidentified smith associated with the office of Robert Adam. Pair of identical balusters, ca. 1782–84. Wrought iron, brass, each $35\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$ in. (90.2 × 17.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1931 (31.92.1, .2)



same time. The original balusters removed from number 32 would have been in the same style as those of other houses built in 1756 (see fig. 1). Breck's purchase is particularly illuminating for the study of eighteenth-century stylistic development because it includes a pair of balusters in a design that was the direct replacement for another in the collection.

MAX BRYANT

Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow, Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

NOTES

- 1 John Harris, *Moving Rooms: The Trade in Architectural Salvages* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2007), p. 218.
- 2 "Great George Street," in *Survey of London*, vol. 10, *The Parish of St. Margaret, Westminster, Part I: Queen Anne's Gate Area*, ed. Montagu H. Cox (London: Survey of London Publishing, 1926), pp. 7-14.
- 3 "Plate 14: Nos. 28 to 32 Great George Street, ground and first-floor plans," in *Survey of London*, vol. 10, p. 14.



**NORA W. KENNEDY
LOUISA SMIESKA
SILVIA A. CENTENO
MARINA RUIZ MOLINA**

A Hidden Photograph by Julia Margaret Cameron

In the mid-nineteenth century, Julia Margaret Cameron used the relatively new medium of photography in technically singular ways. While other practitioners engaged in narrative photography with parallels to painting, she placed her camera close to the subject, thereby filling the frame. And rather than try to obtain a precise focus, Cameron purposely extended exposure times, allowing a softening of image that resulted from slight movements. She fervently campaigned for her work to be accepted as “high art” in an era when photography was viewed as too reliant on mechanical, optical, and chemical phenomena to be considered so. Cameron achieved a certain celebrity during her lifetime, participating from 1864 onward in one to three exhibitions per year, and winning multiple honors.¹ The Metropolitan Museum of Art has appreciated her work since the first acquisition in 1933, but only recently discovered and then sought to

fig. 1 Julia Margaret Cameron (British [born India], 1815–1879). *Beatrice*, 1866. Albumen silver print from glass negative, 14½ × 11¼ in. (36.8 × 29 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1969 (69.6079)

uncover what promised to be a previously unknown Cameron photograph hidden for 151 years underneath *Beatrice*, an albumen silver photograph from 1866.

Photography in the nineteenth century was a time-consuming, painstaking process undertaken only by dedicated professionals and committed laypersons. Living on the Isle of Wight in England in the 1860s, and along with her husband, Charles, a member of a circle of intellectuals, Cameron was a mother of six and a grandmother. At age forty-eight she received a large-format camera as a gift from her daughter and son-in-law, meant as a form of distraction. Instead, the camera became Cameron's central preoccupation for the ensuing eleven years and resulted in an extraordinary body of work. In late 1875 she and her husband moved to Ceylon, where she continued to photograph, but was not nearly as prolific as during the preceding decade. The camera would have been a large and heavy piece of equipment, crafted of wood, leather, metal, and glass. In 1863, control of the camera bellows, the choice of lenses, and focusing on the ground-glass backing prior to inserting the glass plate negative were just a few of the skills required to create an image. Negatives were hand-coated by the photographer onto large glass plates using liquid collodion—a heady mixture of gun cotton (cellulose nitrate) with alcohol and ether. Salt mixed in with the collodion combined with silver from a silver nitrate solution the plates were dipped into, forming the light-sensitive silver salts needed to create the photographic image. While still damp, the “collodion wet-plate” was inserted into a large-format camera and exposed to light. The silver salts could capture an exposure in as little as twenty seconds, but Cameron was known to have her sitters endure long exposures of between three to eight minutes.² She did not use a posing stand to keep the sitter motionless and eschewed the final focus adjustments necessitated by the wet collodion process. Slight movements resulted in a blur that critics disliked, but gave her portraits the breath of life.

By placing the camera close to her subjects so that they filled the frame, Cameron recorded “faithfully the greatness of the inner as well as the features of the outer man.”³ After the glass plate negative was removed from the camera, processed, and dried, it would have been printed onto an albumen (egg white)-coated sheet of thin paper that also had been rendered light-sensitive with silver salts. The desired size of the albumen print would have dictated the size of the negative used, as the glass negative would have been placed in direct contact with the light-sensitive paper, and the two laid out in the sun until the image appeared. After full

“printing out,” the negative was removed, and the albumen print bathed and “fixed” in chemical solutions to remove the unexposed light-sensitive silver salts. The resulting silver image was finely detailed, capable of depicting the lightest to darkest tones and all shades in between. At this time, albumen prints were generally treated with a solution containing gold in a process known as toning, not only to increase their long-term stability but also to adjust the image tonality of a reddish-brown to an aubergine-brown color. Cameron mounted her finished artworks onto thin matboard supports, often adding a decorative gilded rectangle to enclose the image. She generally signed the mounted photographs in iron gall ink, and sometimes added a title or caption, along with the words “From Life not enlarged.”⁴ Cameron was committed to capturing the spirit or soul of her intended subject on the glass plate, but seems to have taken less care in the darkroom, as there can be occasional stains or defects in her albumen prints, some of which doubtless became apparent only over time. The portrait of *Beatrice*, however, shows no such imperfections and is an example of Cameron's most accomplished work.

The subject of *Beatrice* (fig. 1) is based on Beatrice Cenci, a sixteenth-century Italian noblewoman who, in partnership with her stepmother and siblings, had her father murdered for his violent nature and incestuous behavior. The crime was discovered, and after a lengthy trial, Beatrice was condemned to death in 1599.⁵ Though not well known today, this dramatic story of injustice and retribution struck a chord in Victorian England, where death and tragedy were common occurrences at every level of society.⁶ Cameron may have looked to a painting then attributed to the Italian Baroque artist Guido Reni, *Portrait of Beatrice Cenci* (1599; Palazzo Barberini, Rome),⁷ and would have known Percy Bysshe Shelley's play *The Cenci* from 1819, which was published in numerous editions in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although The Met's portrait is called simply *Beatrice*, variants from 1870 with the same sitter are titled *A Study of the Cenci*,⁸ indicating that Cameron had been continuously engaged with the tragic tale and knew it would resonate with her audience.

The sitter is identified as Mary Emily (May) Prinsep (1853–1931), who was orphaned as a child and adopted by Cameron's sister and her husband, Sarah and Thoby Prinsep, in 1864. Although the family was based in London, May Prinsep spent some holidays with her aunt in Freshwater on the Isle of Wight. In 1866, she posed as *Beatrice*, as well as for *The Neopolitan*, and the *Head of St. John*.⁹ The Met's *Beatrice* is an albumen print

fig. 2 Detail of upper left corner of fig. 1. Note the darker image edge protruding along the left side and the shadow of the photograph underneath the portrait of Beatrice.



mounted overall to a paper mount. Cameron outlined the print with a single gilded line, and inscribed below it “From Life not enlarged Julia Margaret Cameron / Beatrice.” In 2013 while preparing a group of masterpieces for the Cameron exhibition at the Museum, photograph conservator Nora Kennedy noted, along the upper left of the portrait, a tiny protruding edge of what

appeared to be another photograph underneath *Beatrice* (fig. 2). Next to the powerful image of Beatrice, this sliver is barely visible and had not been remarked upon in the decades since the photograph was acquired. Although curious about what image Cameron may have concealed, removing the upper portrait through an unmounting treatment would likely have involved full immersion of the mounted photographs in a water bath, an invasive procedure to be avoided in part because of the potential risks involved. In addition, the artist’s intent should be respected, and it seems clear that Cameron chose to cover over the underlying photograph, though her reasons for doing so may never be known. Noninvasive techniques are always desirable where possible.

TECHNICAL EXAMINATION

X-ray Fluorescence Mapping

X-ray fluorescence (XRF) is a noninvasive technique that allows the user to identify which chemical elements are present at one spot in an object.¹⁰ The tool is particularly useful in the study of photographs as it can identify the presence of silver, gold, platinum, and other elements that may compose the images, allowing for a differentiation between a silver print and a platinum print, for example. In XRF mapping or macro-X-ray-fluorescence (MA-XRF), an array of measurements is made in a grid across an object, yielding images that illustrate the distribution of each element.¹¹ The acquisition of MA-XRF equipment by the Museum in recent years triggered the

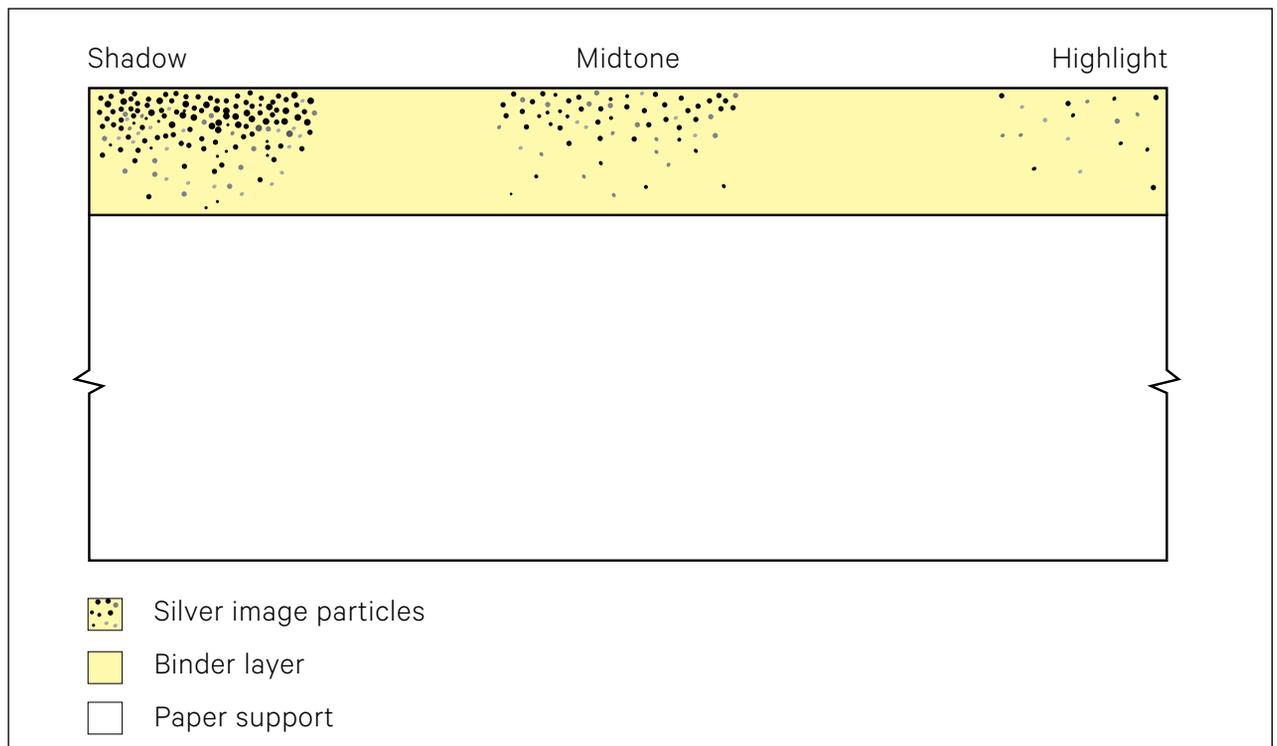


fig. 3 Schematic diagram showing the layers of an albumen silver photograph

decision to reopen the investigation of the hidden Cameron portrait. MA-XRF confirmed that *Beatrice* is a silver-based image, consistent with photographs by Cameron, while visual examination strongly indicated that this finely divided silver image is suspended within a thin albumen binder layer coating the paper substrate. As illustrated in the schematic in figure 3, the darker the image feature, the more silver is present. Similarly, the lighter the feature, the less silver is present and the more the underlying paper shows through.¹²

MA-XRF showed that the buried image is also silver-based and provided information on the distribution of the silver image particles. Since X-rays can penetrate through low-density materials like paper and thin image layers in photographs, the measurements simultaneously recorded signals from both the upper and lower photographs at once.¹³ When mapping measurements were performed across the front of the image, the XRF signals from the upper, visible photograph were stronger than those from the buried photograph since it was closer to the detector on the scanning head. In the silver L-line map made from the front of the image, only the signal from the visible photograph was detected (fig. 4, left).¹⁴ However, the silver distribution mapped using the K-line shows some highlight features (lack of silver) that do not match the *Beatrice* portrait (fig. 4, center).

To improve the detection of the buried photograph versus the *Beatrice* portrait, we performed an XRF mapping measurement from the back of the object.¹⁵ The scan picked up a silver K-line signal that gave a distribution of the element that is different from the visible image. When looking at the silver K-line distribution measured from the back of the object, it became clear that the highlights (defined by a lack of silver) did not match the highlights in the *Beatrice* image. This is illustrated here flipped left-to-right to match the orientation of the object when viewed from the front. These

measurements appear to have clarified the highlights that were weakly detected in the silver K-line map from the front (fig. 4, right).

The detection of highlight regions with distinctly different shapes from the visible image suggested that the underlying photograph was a different print from the *Beatrice* portrait. The overall shape of the buried highlights are consistent with a portrait where the head is tilted to the opposite side, with the lower half more brightly lit.

Infrared Reflectography and Transmitted Infrared Photography

Seeking more details to confidently identify the buried photograph from among the many known Cameron portraits, infrared reflectograms and infrared photographs were taken. In silver-based photographs, infrared light is absorbed by the silver image particles but does not strongly interact with the paper support covered by few or no image particles. This phenomenon provides infrared images of relatively good contrast.¹⁶ Viewing *Beatrice* with infrared reflectography (IRR) revealed dark, silver-rich features in the underlying photograph (fig. 5). Details from the hidden image were primarily visible in regions where the upper print does not contain much silver, particularly in *Beatrice*'s face. The IRR examination confirmed that the second photograph is indeed another portrait, with the head tilted to the opposite side, as the MA-XRF maps suggested. Although IRR did not reveal the full silhouette of the sitter in the underlying portrait, the high level of detail visible in the second face was extremely valuable for comparison with Cameron's other known works.

Given the translucent nature of the paper support, transmitted infrared photography (IRT) was subsequently used to examine *Beatrice*.¹⁷ By varying the camera aperture and exposure time, it was possible to obtain images that more clearly displayed the concealed

fig. 4 Left: Silver distribution map acquired using the L-line emission, measured from the front of the photograph. The silver distribution and highlights (lack of silver) match the visible *Beatrice* photograph. Center: Silver distribution acquired using the K-line emission, measured from the front of the photograph. The highlights (lack of silver, see arrow) do not exactly match the *Beatrice* image. Right: Silver distribution, K-line emission, measured from the back of the photograph and flipped left-to-right to match the orientation of the visible photograph. The highlights (lack of silver) do not match the highlights of the *Beatrice* photograph.

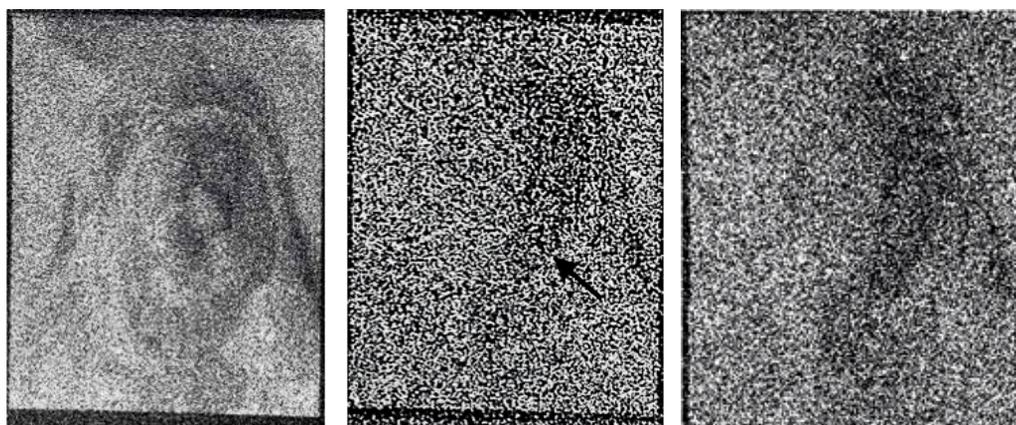


fig. 5 Infrared reflectogram (IRR) of *Beatrice*, detail, showing that another face is present in the buried photograph.

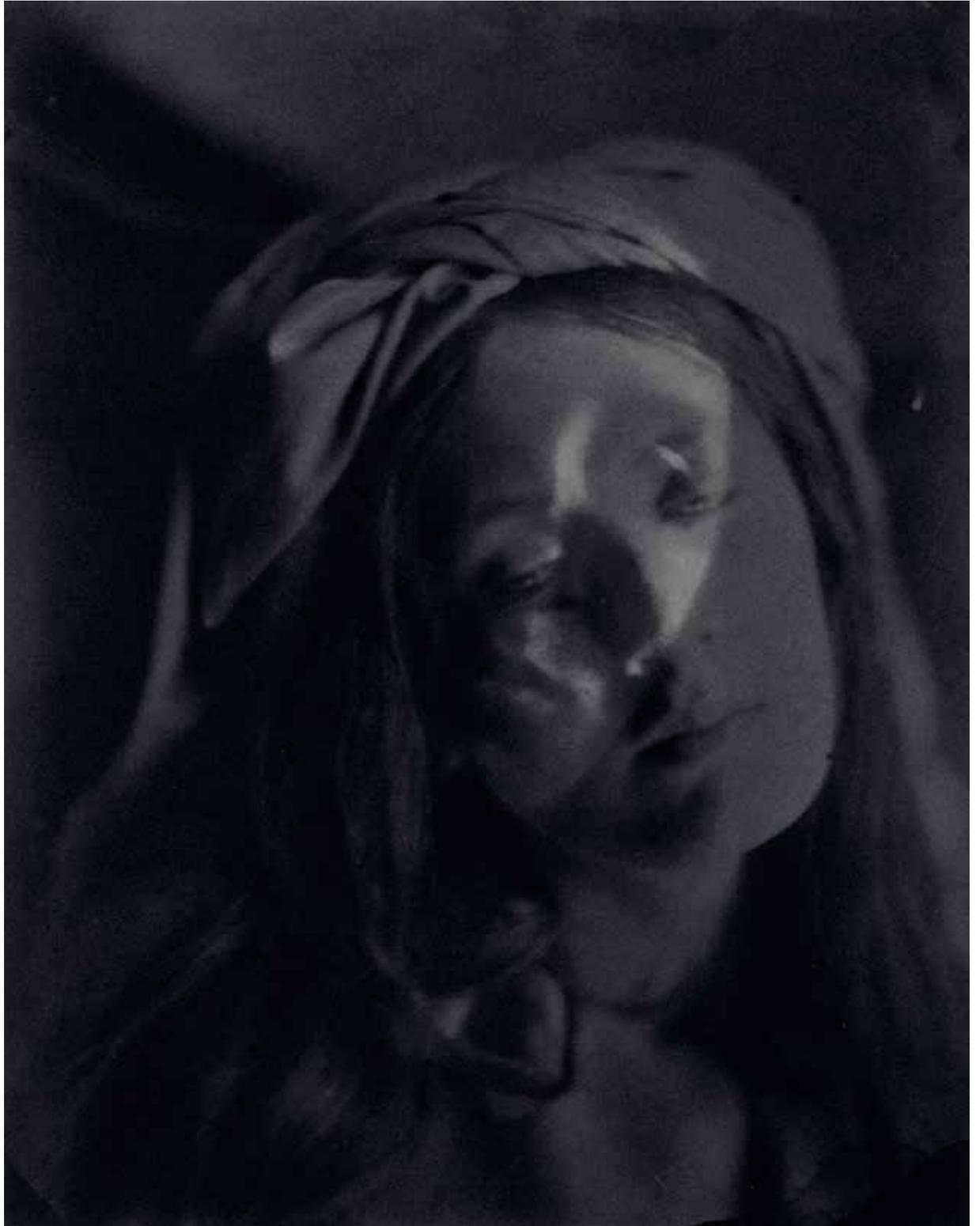


fig. 6 Detail of transmitted infrared photograph of *Beatrice*, inverted left to right. The buried portrait is much more clear here than in the image obtained by IRR, although traces of the headdress in the top photograph are visible in the sitter's forehead.



fig. 7 Julia Margaret Cameron. *Head of St. John*, March 1866. Albumen silver print from wet collodion glass negative, 14 × 11³/₁₆ in. (35.5 × 28.5 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London (938-1913)



image (fig. 6). An improved differentiation between the two portraits was obtained by placing the mounted photographs face-down and using transmitted infrared-rich illumination. Traces of Beatrice's headdress are still visible in these images, but the second face is much more prominent.

Identification of the Buried Photograph

Technical examination of *Beatrice* by MA-XRF showed that the buried photograph is silver-based and suggested a portrait where the head is tilted to the opposite side of the top photograph, while IRR and IRT provided details of this hidden portrait. When viewing *Beatrice* alongside the buried portrait, similarities between their features may be observed, particularly in the sitter's mouth and chin. Prinsep sat frequently for Cameron, sometimes in historical or allegorical costume. A photograph with Prinsep, described by the Victoria and Albert Museum as showing the head of Saint John (fig. 7), bears a striking resemblance to both the silhouette and features of the buried portrait, as revealed by MA-XRF and infrared photography. Cameron sometimes disregarded gender in her model selections, later employing Florence Fisher as a young girl for her *Study of St. John the Baptist* (1872; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles).¹⁸

The technical examination has not only confirmed that a full silver-based photograph lies beneath *Beatrice* but also has brought this image to light without disturbing the integrity of the work of art. Cameron's single inscription on the mount identifying the subject as Beatrice shows no signs of alteration. So although the original photograph must have been considered finished and worthy of being mounted to a card, for an unknown reason, the artist mounted the *Beatrice* portrait over it and then added or completed the

inscription. The findings raise questions about why and how often the artist reused mounting cards and the criteria that figured into Cameron's image-selection process, as it is not known why she preferred *Beatrice* in this case, or how many other Cameron photographs may hide other images beneath.

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NORA W. KENNEDY

*Sherman Fairchild Conservator in Charge,
Department of Photograph Conservation,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

LOUISA SMIESKA

*Staff Scientist, Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source,
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York*

SILVIA A. CENTENO

*Research Scientist, Department of Scientific Research,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

MARINA RUIZ MOLINA

*Associate Conservator, Department of Paper Conservation,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

NOTES

- 1 Cameron (1874) 1984, p. 155; Cox and Ford 2003, pp. 538–39.
- 2 Wolf 1998, p. 215. See Scully & Osterman Studio, "What Is Collodion," accessed December 23, 2017, <http://www.collodion.org/q&a.html>.
- 3 Cameron (1874) 1984, p. 157.
- 4 Cox and Ford 2003, p. 245.
- 5 Wolf 1998, p. 229.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 7 Weaver 1984, p. 59.
- 8 Cox and Ford 2003, pp. 246–47.
- 9 Wolf 1998, p. 225.

- 10 XRF works by illuminating a spot with X-rays, which prompts the materials in the object to emit secondary X-rays that have specific energies corresponding directly to the elements from which they came.
- 11 Alfeld et al. 2013. XRF mapping is rapidly being adopted in the study of paintings (Noble et al. 2012; Centeno et al. 2017; Hale and Centeno 2017; Mahon and Centeno 2017), but it has been used to study photographs only in a few cases (Čechák et al. 2015; Davis and Vicenzi 2016; Kozachuk et al. 2018).
- 12 Lavédrine 2009.

- 13 There are several challenges in studying silver-based photographs by MA-XRF. First, photographic image layers contain very little material, so the XRF signals are weak to begin with. Secondly, silver is particularly challenging to detect with the XRF mapping system because its signals are close in energy to strong background signals. Silver has two characteristic X-ray emissions, one at low energy and one at a higher energy. The low-energy silver signal, called the L-line emission, overlaps with a background signal from argon in the air; the higher-energy signal, called the K-line emission, is very close to the signal for rhodium, which is detected in every spectrum because rhodium is present in the X-ray source.
- 14 The higher the energy of an X-ray, the more layers it can pass through. This means we expect the low-energy L-line emission to be more surface-sensitive, and the higher-energy K-line emission to be more sensitive to buried material.
- 15 In this case, the buried photograph was closer to the scanning head than the visible photograph, but the thicker mounting matboard was between the photographs and the detector. We made longer measurements at each point in the scan to make up for the decrease in signal through the mount. The longer measurement time also meant we had to break up the scan into three parts that have been stitched together in the final image. The XRF mapping measurement in this configuration did not detect a strong silver L-line signal, presumably due to attenuation by the mounting board. However, this scan did pick up a silver K-line signal, the distribution of which is different from the visible image.
- 16 The recent use of infrared reflectography (IRR) to visualize silver-based photographs concealed beneath layers of paint and transparent paper in a design drawing by the Tiffany Studios pointed toward its potential utility in this case. See Ruiz Molina, Jampolsky, and Smieska 2017.
- 17 In transmitted infrared photography (IRT), the setup is identical to that used for infrared photography with a modified DSLR camera, bandpass filters, and infrared radiation-emitting light source, except that the light source faces one side of the object while the camera focuses on the other.
- 18 Cox and Ford 2003, p. 77.

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**NOBUKO SHIBAYAMA
DOROTHY MAHON
SILVIA A. CENTENO
FEDERICO CARÒ**

John Singer Sargent's *Mrs. Hugh Hammersley*: Colorants and Technical Choices to Depict an Evening Gown

The possibility of analyzing an artist's painting technique while comparing it to the actual fabric depicted in a particular work of art is exceedingly rare. The present research note focuses on John Singer Sargent's technical choices for depicting the vivid pink silk-velvet evening gown that Mrs. Hugh Hammersley (née Mary Frances Grant, 1863–1911) wore when she sat to Sargent in 1892 (fig. 1), as well as the identification of the historic dye used to create the controversial color of the gown. By the end of the nineteenth century, the growth of the chemical and manufacturing industries had resulted in a significant increase in the range of colorants available, not only to the artist's palette but also to many aspects of daily life and fashion. It is not surprising that the appearance of these shockingly bright hues inspired a prolific and critical literary response.¹ Access to a fragment of the velvet gown afforded the opportunity of analyzing the special

fig. 1 John Singer Sargent (American, 1856–1925). *Mrs. Hugh Hammersley*, 1892. Oil on canvas, 81 × 45½ in. (205.7 × 115.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Douglass Campbell, in memory of Mrs. Richard E. Danielson, 1998 (1998.365)

dyes used to color the fabric, and analysis of paint samples from the portrait revealed the pigments the artist chose to imitate a sumptuous and quite modern fabric. The identification of the new materials used to color the velvet and paint the portrait highlights just one specific example of the expansion of color during this period.

The portrait remained with the Hammersley family until 1923, when it was sold to Charles Deering, a distinguished Chicago businessman, art patron, and friend of the artist, and then passed by descent to Douglass Campbell and his wife, Marian Danielson Campbell, who gave it to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1998. Accompanying this generous gift was a box of correspondence, archival material, and ephemera collected over the years by the Hammersleys and the Campbells. Included in the archive is a note by Mrs. Hammersley's sister, presumably after Mrs. Hammersley's death in 1911 because it is written on black-rimmed paper characteristic of mourning stationery, accompanying a fragment of Mrs. Hammersley's gown that was carefully folded and wrapped, thus protected from exposure to light.²

Mrs. Hammersley, the wife of a British banker and a well-known London hostess, revealed a keenly confident personality when choosing to be depicted in a vibrantly colored gown. Despite the fact that contemporary critics derided her choice of such a trendy color, it is likely that she retained the gown until her death, not only as a keepsake but also as proof of her willingness to be depicted accurately by Sargent while making a daring fashion statement. A critic writing in *Land and Water* about an 1893 exhibition that included Sargent's painting said, "You will see that the colour is of the hour, one of the true decadent tints."³ A critic writing of the same exhibition for the *London Times* associated Sargent's boldness as a painter with the vibrancy of tone: "But it is in his dashing and masterly painting of the dress that Mr. Sargent has proved himself most audacious. It is . . . a red mauve, only one shade removed from something aniline and terrible, but that shade all-important. If he had wished to conciliate the multitude, . . . the painter would have chosen a quieter hue; but whatever else Mr. Sargent's art may be, it is not conciliatory."⁴

Pigments used for painting as well as colorants used for dyeing fabric may be obtained from natural or from manufactured sources. The processes used to dye a fabric are completely different from those used by an artist to capture, in two dimensions, the specific color and textural effects of a particular fabric. Exacting chemical procedures, frequently mixing different colorants, are used to dye already woven fabrics as well as individual threads before the weaving process. By contrast, imitating a

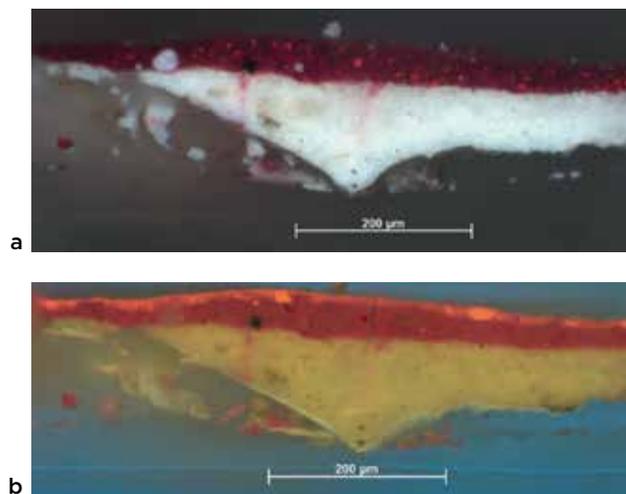
colored fabric in paint begins with the artist preparing a canvas with a suitable ground. This provides an optical foundation for a range of colors that may include both transparent and opaque ground pigments, which, in the case of Mrs. Hammersley's portrait, are bound in an oil medium. The mixing and layering of different colors bound by oil that takes place when preparing a medium to depict a physical material may seem parallel to the mixing of dyes to produce a nuanced fabric of a particular color and texture. However, the two processes are entirely different and in each case require not only different materials but also very specific and unique skills.

It is apparent when looking at Sargent's depiction of Mrs. Hammersley that he chose a red lake pigment to capture the essence of her bright pink velvet gown. Whether natural or synthetic, dyestuffs are cast onto inorganic compounds, commonly referred to as substrates, such as alumina, to produce lake pigments that are beautifully transparent when bound in oil. Red lake pigments vary from red-orange to purplish hues, and the characteristic transparency of these colors when bound in oil renders these pigments visually unmistakable in comparison to opaque red pigments such as red earths and vermilion. Although lake pigments have been manufactured since ancient times from dyestuffs extracted from plants, such as madder, and from scale insects, such as cochineal, kermes, and lac, by the late nineteenth century there were also a number of newly synthesized red lake pigments available to artists. These synthetic lakes were based on a number of synthetic dyes that were being introduced at the time. It is not surprising that Sargent chose a red lake pigment to imitate both the brilliant saturated color of the dyed fabric and the shimmering quality of its weave.

THE RED LAKE PIGMENT

Four microscopic samples of paint were removed from Mrs. Hammersley's gown at the lower left of the canvas in an area covered by the frame: two from the left side of the bottom edge (sample nos. 1 and 2) and two from the lower left edge (sample nos. 3 and 4). Analysis of a portion of sample no. 4 revealed that Sargent used a lake pigment derived from madder.⁵ Madder lakes are prepared by precipitating an extract of the roots from various plants of the Rubiaceae family, notably *Rubia tinctorum* L., as well as other species, onto an inorganic substrate. The color of madder lakes varies greatly depending on the proportions of the different colorants, which are determined in part by the method used to extract the dye from its natural source, and on the composition of the inorganic substrate.⁶ Depending on the

fig. 2 Photomicrographs of a cross section of sample no. 4 removed from the lower left edge of the painting in fig. 1 taken with (a) visible and (b) UV illumination. Original magnification 200x



preparation, madders can vary from orange red to purplish red in color.

High performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) analysis showed that the main colorants in the madder lake that Sargent used are purpurin and pseudopurpurin, along with relatively smaller amounts of alizarin.⁷ The presence of purpurin and pseudopurpurin as the main components indicates that the pigment was most likely made by a method of preparing madder that was devised in 1861 by the French chemist Emile Kopp that results in a colorant known as Kopp's purpurin.⁸ The manufacture of Kopp's purpurin involves treating madder with sulfuric acid, a procedure that was a technological breakthrough as it results in a colorant that has about fifty times the tinting strength of madder prepared in the conventional manner. This process of extracting the dyestuffs from the madder plant produced a beautiful and intense color that was highly esteemed.⁹

The analysis as well as the examination with polarizing light microscopy of a portion of paint sample no. 4, mounted as a cross section (fig. 2), shows that Sargent took advantage of the brilliant transparent quality of a red lake pigment by applying it directly over a light gray ground preparation composed mainly of lead white mixed with some calcite and a little carbon-based black.¹⁰ To establish the essence of the modeling and the variations in hue, Sargent strategically applied, beneath passages of pure red lake, toning layers composed of mixtures containing a bit of the opaque red vermilion adjusted with warm yellow ochers, neutralized with particles of green.¹¹ Judicious admixtures of black and final scumbles of lead white were all it took for Sargent to skillfully achieve the unmistakable appearance of fine velvet pile catching the light.

When the red paint layer visible in the photomicrograph of sample no. 4 taken with visible illumination

(fig. 2a) is viewed with ultraviolet (UV) illumination, it appears to consist of two layers (fig. 2b). However, analysis of this sample cross section by scanning electron microscopy–energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry (SEM-EDS) showed that the entire paint layer has a similar texture and elemental composition that comprises abundant aluminum, phosphorous, lead, and relatively minor amounts of sulfur.¹² These elements are components of the inorganic substrate onto which the dyestuff extracted from madder was precipitated to make the red lake pigment.¹³

While the organic dyestuffs in the red lake cannot be detected by SEM-EDS, the inorganic substrate onto which these are precipitated may be characterized by this technique, as mentioned above. Given the similar elemental composition of the two portions of the red paint layer visible in figure 2b, it is possible to suggest that what appears in UV light as two layers is in fact one layer, and that the difference in fluorescence observed is due to a change in the organic components caused by the fading of the Kopp's purpurin-based lake toward the surface of the painting.¹⁴

It must be emphasized that all red lakes are to varying degrees sensitive to fading from exposure to light, although, in general, lake pigments containing alizarin and pseudopurpurin are considered essentially lightfast, while purpurin lakes have been deemed non-lightfast.¹⁵ The possible fading observed in the microscopic sample removed from the painting is not apparent when the painting is viewed with the naked eye, as the color appears to be preserved and shows no difference in saturation even along the perimeter where it has been protected from light by the frame.

THE VELVET FABRIC

Keeping in mind Sargent's use of a natural red madder lake pigment when painting Mrs. Hammersley's vivid pink velvet gown, we will now focus on the analysis of the silk velvet fabric fragment (fig. 3).¹⁶ Velvet is a luxury fabric esteemed for its lushly dense pile surface. The foundation of all woven fabrics consists of a warp and a weft, with variations of these used to create



fig. 3 Fragment of the silk velvet from which Mrs. Hammersley's gown was made, 16 × 5½ in. (40.6 × 15 cm). Campbell Archive, The American Wing, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

fig. 4 Samples of silk dyed with cochineal (a), showing the range of colors that are produced using different dyeing processes, and (b) a piece of silk dyed with mauveine that was supplied to Queen Victoria, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ in. (23.5 × 11.5 cm). Science Museum, London (1947-117)

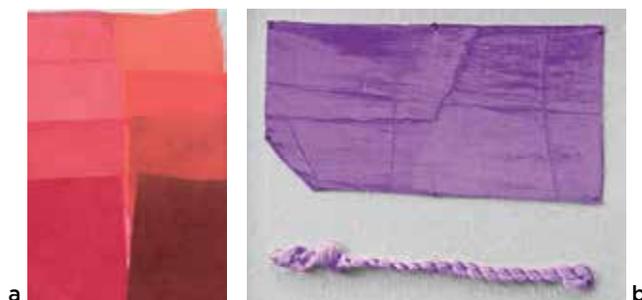


fig. 5 John Phillip (British, 1817–1867). Detail of *The Marriage of Victoria, Princess Royal, 25 January 1858, 1860*. Oil on canvas, $40\frac{5}{8} \times 72\frac{1}{2}$ in. (103.2 × 184 cm). Royal Collection Trust (RCIN 406819)

different patterns and textures. For a velvet fabric, the pile is woven as supplemental warp on the foundation, creating loops that are usually cut after weaving, resulting in the raised surface pile. The color of a velvet fabric is established by the pile yarns, so a higher-quality and more valuable dyestuff is customarily used for the pile, and a less valuable or secondary-quality dyestuff is used for the less visible warp and weft foundation yarns.¹⁷

Analysis of minute fibers of the pile, the warp, and the weft yarns removed from the fragment identified a

mixture of the early and historically important synthetic dye mauveine and the natural dye cochineal.¹⁸ It is significant and not surprising that the ratio of mauveine to cochineal observed appeared to be higher in the pile than in the warp and weft samples for the reason described above. Safranin O and another early synthetic colorant, possibly an acid azo dye, were detected in the warp sample along with mauveine and cochineal.¹⁹ In addition, yet another violet dye, possibly an early synthetic colorant or a degradation product, was detected in the warp and the weft. These results strongly suggest that the dyeing was done before weaving and that it was planned specifically for each type of yarn. The early synthetic dyes, including mauveine, Safranin O, and acid azo dyes, are within a category of dyes referred to as aniline dyes, and the color of a mauveine dye is also referred to as mauve. The description by the critic for the *London Times* was remarkably accurate, as he described the color of the gown, essentially a mixture of the synthetic dye mauveine and the more natural dye cochineal as “a red mauve, only one shade removed from something aniline.”

Cochineal is a natural colorant principally derived from various species of the scale insect *Coccoidea*.²⁰ Cochineal, which had been used for dyeing in Mexico and South America as early as the second century B.C., was introduced in Europe by the mid-sixteenth century following the Spanish conquest, and it quickly became one of the most popular natural red dyes.²¹ Cochineal can produce hues ranging from pink to deep crimson depending on modifications used during the dyeing process (fig. 4a).²²

Of the synthetic dyes detected, mauveine is the most interesting and historically significant. Mauveine was serendipitously discovered by William H. Perkin in 1856, when he was a student of August von Hoffman at the Royal College of Chemistry in London. The eighteen-year-old Perkin was trying to synthesize quinine, the only antimalarial medication available at the time, which Hoffman had theorized could be obtained from coal tar. The new dye was a huge success and is historically important not only because it was an unusual and brilliant purple hue, but also because it was possible for the first time to dye silk this particular color (fig. 4b). This advance stimulated other chemists to carry out similar experiments, which led to the birth of the synthetic colorant industry. Safranin O, also known as C.I. Basic Red 2, is a bright purplish-pink color that was discovered in 1859. It is among the early synthetic dyes that followed the introduction of mauveine, as are the azo dyes, which were first manufactured in 1861.²³



fig. 6 Fragment of fabric from fig. 3 in front of Sargent's painting (fig. 1) showing how closely the colors match



It has been reported that immediately following the discovery of mauveine, clothing made of fabric dyed with it became very fashionable. Queen Victoria wore a mauve dress to the wedding of her eldest daughter, Victoria, Princess Royal in 1858 (fig. 5).²⁴ Despite this reputed fame, only a handful of historic textiles dyed with mauveine have been confirmed through analysis.²⁵ The silk velvet of Mrs. Hammersley's gown is also a rather unusual purplish-pink color, and judging from the complex dyeing, a significant amount of technological consideration went into producing this exceptional fabric. No doubt Mrs. Hammersley understood that the fabric used for her gown was special, and perhaps very expensive, which is another reason why ultimately a piece of the gown was passed down with the portrait.

Comparing the velvet fabric fragment with the painting demonstrates that the colors are remarkably similar (fig. 6). That the fabric fragment has been kept protected from exposure to light is fortuitous because basic dyes such as mauveine and Safranin O are reportedly unstable and fade significantly when exposed to light,²⁶ while cochineal is known to be relatively stable.²⁷

This technical study of a painting and a fabric in parallel provides a glimpse into the significant role of late nineteenth-century developments in science and

industry on the expansion of color in the arts and fashion. Sargent reached into his paint box and selected a tube of madder lake, a pigment used since ancient times that had been created by a modern process, to depict a sumptuous fabric colored with a combination of traditional and newly created dyes. Although this choice may have been to a degree intuitive, Sargent's unabashedly modern portrayal of the daring and stylish Mrs. Hammersley is a superb demonstration of the artist's confidence and skill as well that of his sitter.

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NOBUKO SHIBAYAMA

*Research Scientist, Department of Scientific Research,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

DOROTHY MAHON

*Conservator, Department of Paintings Conservation,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

SILVIA A. CENTENO

*Research Scientist, Department of Scientific Research,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

FEDERICO CARÒ

*Research Scientist, Department of Scientific Research,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

NOTES

- 1 For discourse on the literary response to color in the late nineteenth century, see Ribeyrol 2016 and Ribeyrol 2018.
- 2 Campbell Archive, The American Wing, MMA.
- 3 Fragment of an article from *Land and Water*, May 27, 1893, Campbell Archive, MMA.
- 4 "The New Gallery," *London Times*, May 1, 1893, Campbell Archive, MMA.
- 5 A few particles of paint sample no. 4 were studied by surface enhanced Raman scattering (SERS), and another portion of the same sample was analyzed by high performance liquid chromatography-photo diode array detection (HPLC-PDA). For the SERS measurements, an Ag colloid prepared according to the Lee-Meisel procedure by the reduction of silver nitrate with trisodium citrate dihydrate was used (Lee and Meisel 1982). A pretreatment of the sample was performed by placing it on a polyethylene sample holder in a microchamber filled with HF vapors for 5 min. This step is often necessary to hydrolyze natural dye-based lakes and make the free dyes available for adsorption on the nanoparticles, as previously demonstrated (Pozzi et al. 2012). Once the sample holder was removed from the chamber, 2 μ L of silver colloid were placed directly on the sample. For the SERS measurements, the same spectrometer described below for the normal Raman analysis of the sample cross section was used (see note 10). The SERS spectra acquired are consistent with a lake pigment derived from madder. HPLC analysis gave a more detailed composition of this lake pigment.
- 6 Schweppe and Winter 1997; Eastaugh et al. 2004, pp. 244–45.
- 7 For the HPLC analysis, the colorants in the red organic lake pigment were first extracted using a mild procedure involving oxalic acid. Colorants were detected after this extraction, but since the red pigment still retained some of its color after the mild extraction, and in order to confirm the results, further extractions were performed. The remaining sample was divided in two. One part was extracted with 6M hydrochloric acid (HCl) and the other with a boron trifluoride-methanol (BF₃-methanol) solution. Mainly purpurin, pseudopurpurin, and a relatively small amount of alizarin were detected from the extract obtained using oxalic acid. Purpurin was detected from the HCl extract. Mainly purpurin and methylated pseudopurpurin were observed in the BF₃-methanol extract (Kirby, Spring, and Higgitt 2007). The oxalic acid extraction was performed following the procedure described by Chika Mouri and Richard Laursen (2011); the HCl extraction was done according to Jan Wouters's method (1985); and for the BF₃-methanol extraction, Jo Kirby and Raymond White's protocol was used (1996). The HPLC analytical system used consisted of a 1525 μ binary HPLC pump, 2996 PDA detector, 1500 series column heater, in-line degasser and a Rheodyne 7725i manual injector with 20 μ L loop (Waters Corporation, Milford, Mass.), an XBridge BEH Shield RP18 (3.5 μ m-particle, 2.1 mm I.D. \times 150.0 mm) reverse-phase column was used with a guard column (XBridge BEH Shield RP18 3.5 μ m-particle, 2.1 mm I.D. \times 5.0 mm) (Waters Corporation) with a flow rate of 0.2 ml/min. The column prefilter (Upchurch ultra-low Volume precolumn filter with 0.5 μ m stainless steel frit, Sigma-Aldrich, Saint Louis) was attached in front of the guard column. The column temperature was 40°C. The mobile phase was eluted in a gradient mode of 1% formic acid in high-purity water (v/v) (A) and a mixture of methanol and acetonitrile (1/1, v/v) (B). The gradient system was 90% (A) for 3 min. \rightarrow to 60% (A) in 7 min. in a linear slope \rightarrow to 0% (A) in 24 min. in a linear slope, and then to 90% (A) in 1 min. and held at 90% (A) for 10 min. The operation and data processing software was Empower Pro (2002). High purity water and analytical grade reagents were used.
- 8 Schweppe and Winter 1997, pp. 122–23.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Analyses of the materials of paint sample no. 4 in the cross section were performed by normal Raman spectroscopy. These measurements were carried out using a Renishaw System 1000 coupled to a Leica DM LM microscope. All the spectra were acquired using a 785 nm laser excitation focused on the sample using a 50x objective lens, with integration times between 10 and 120 s. A 1200 lines/mm grating and a thermoelectrically cooled CCD detector were used. Powers at the sample were set between 0.5 and 5 mW using neutral density filters.
- 11 Sample no. 3, removed from the lower left edge, contained a toning layer.
- 12 The cross section of paint sample no. 4 was carbon coated prior to SEM-EDS analyses. Analyses were performed with a FE-SEM Zeiss Sigma HD, equipped with an Oxford Instrument X-MaxN 90 SDD detector. Backscattered electron (BSE) images, energy-dispersive spectrometry (EDS) analysis, and X-ray mapping were carried out with an accelerating voltage of 20 kV in high vacuum.
- 13 In addition, SEM-EDS showed the presence of a few particles of vermilion and of an iron earth pigment in the bottom portion of the red paint, and of traces of lead toward the top of the sample. The presence of these components may be due to contamination from the artist's brush or palette. It is also possible that the opaque red pigments were added as extenders to the red lake in the commercial paint (Kirby, Spring, and Higgitt 2007, p. 72).
- 14 Pigment particles of the red lake that fluoresced under UV illumination were separated under high magnification from the particles that did not fluoresce and were analyzed by HPLC using the protocol described in note 7, above. The analysis showed that the main components of the fluorescent particles are also purpurin and pseudopurpurin. These results point out that no other major colorant is present in the fluorescent red lake layer. Deterioration products may not be detected by HPLC with the experimental conditions used.
- 15 Schweppe and Winter 1997, p. 114.
- 16 Silk was identified by light microscopy.
- 17 Phipps 2011, pp. 80–81.
- 18 A few threads, each approximately 1 cm long, were removed from the pile, weft, and warp of the velvet fabric fragment, and from each sample, the colorants were extracted using 40 μ L of a mixture of 0.01 M aqueous oxalic acid, pyridine, and methanol (3/3/4, v/v/v) in a small test tube (Mouri and Laursen 2011). The thread sample was left for a half hour at room temperature (RT), subsequently heated at 60°C \pm 5°C for 20 min., and the extract was removed to an insert. 80 μ L of a new mixture with the same composition mentioned above was added to the test tube and heated at 95°C \pm 5°C for 10 min., and the extract was moved to the same insert. The tube was rinsed with 20 μ L of methanol twice, and the rinsing solution was also added to the insert. The extract in the insert was dried in a vacuum desiccator using an aspirator. The residue was mixed with 8 μ L of methanol and 8 μ L of 1% aqueous formic acid (v/v). The solution was centrifuged for 10 min. at 3500 g; the supernatant was injected into the HPLC system. The HPLC system and parameters were the same as the ones described above (see note 7, above) for the analysis of the paint sample.
- 19 In the UV spectrum of the azo dye detected in the warp sample by HPLC, the absorption maximum is at 515 nm, so the colorant could be characterized as red or red-purple.

- 20 Eastaugh et al. 2004, pp. 118–19.
 21 Cardon 2007, pp. 629–31; Phipps 2010, pp. 26–27.
 22 Cardon 2007, pp. 629–31; Phipps 2010, p. 10.
 23 *Colour Index* 2002; Zollinger 2003, pp. 4–6.
 24 Garfield 2000, pp. 60–61; Vettese Forster and Christie 2013.
 25 Historic textiles in which the signature bright violet color of mauveine dye has been identified are located in the Science Museum, London; the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia; and the Bridgewater Museum, Somerset, United Kingdom (Sousa et al. 2008; Woodhead, Cosgrove, and Church 2016; Serafini et al. 2017). It has long been assumed that the production of mauveine declined by the mid-1860s, ceased altogether by the 1870s, and was revived in 1891. The assumption of the resurgent use of mauveine is based on a mention in Knecht, Rawson, and Loewenthal 1893, pp. 489–99.
 26 Barnett 2007; *Colour Index* 2002.
 27 Padfield and Landi 1966.

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