The Metropolitan Museum Journal is issued annually by The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Its purpose is to publish original research on works in the Museum’s collections and the areas of investigation they represent. Contributions, by members of the Museum staff and by other art historians and specialists, vary in length from monographic studies to brief notes. The wealth of the Museum’s collections and the scope of these essays make the Journal essential reading for all scholars and amateurs of the fine arts.

Volume 32 opens with a thorough publication of a recently acquired, exceptionally important bronze statuette of Thutmose III. Three articles are devoted to late Roman glass and personal ornament, while others present significant groups of pieces ranging from the remains of a Byzantine gold hoard from Kiev to Flemish harpsichords and virginals and Russian table snuffboxes. Two essays identify the subjects of a portrait by Martin van Meytens the Younger and of a portrait bust by Ippolito Buzio. New research is presented on the Museum’s popular seventeenth-century reception room from Damascus, as well as a terracotta model for a royal high altar at Versailles. Scientific scrutiny of the methods and materials used to make the famous Fonthill Ewer reveals not only the likely origins of the piece, once attributed to Cellini, but also colorful aspects of nineteenth-century fakery. Two notes elucidate the iconography of a French royal partizan and a Russian commemorative medal.

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STUDIES ON RECENT ACCESSIONS

Chinese Shells, French Prints, and Russian Goldsmithing: A Curious Group of Eighteenth-Century Russian Table Snuffboxes

WOLFRAM KOEPE

A Medal for the Czar, 1888

MARINA NUDEL

ABBREVIATIONS

MMA–The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MMAB–The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin
MMJ–Metropolitan Museum Journal

Height precedes width in dimensions cited.
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The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
A Bronze Statuette of Thutmose III

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With a technical overview by
DEBORAH SCHORSCH
Associate Conservator, Sherman Fairchild Center for Objects Conservation, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Egyptian Art Department of the Metropolitan Museum has recently acquired a small, beautifully poised bronze statuette of a king. It is stylistically datable to mid-Dynasty 18 and has on its belt traces of one of the names—Menkheperra—of Thutmose III, one of the greatest of Egypt’s kings, renowned for his territorial and intellectual reach (Figure 1). The statuette, the earliest known New Kingdom example of an important series of royal bronze statuettes in kneeling position, would have been used in a grouping with the image of a deity, possibly on a divine bark (a boat-shaped shrine carried by priests when the god made excursions outside the temple). The figure stands at the emergence of two important trends in Egyptian art and culture: the development of a clear bronze statuary tradition and an emphasis on the processional and public aspects of Egyptian religion.

Description and Stylistic Indications

The statuette is a solid cast “black bronze”—that is, a bronze intentionally darkened to heighten the luster of precious-metal details. In this case, the left eye socket, the cosmetic lines extending from both sockets, the right eyebrow, and the nipples retain the original gold lining or inlay. The gold in the right eye socket is a modern addition. Missing inlays in the brows and eyes might also have included stone, gold, and silver; and the uraeus might well have been gilded. The silvery-gray sheen to the statuette’s dark color is associated with certain archaeological environments.

The kneeling king rests his weight on his knees and toes. The left arm is missing, while the right arm is held forward from the elbow. The cupped hand holds the small round nsw pot associated with offerings of milk or wine. The mechanical joining of the arm to the dowel extending from the body has loosened, and the arm now swings downward and rests on his lap. When the edges of the arm and shoulder join are aligned, it can be seen that originally this arm was held up and forward, so that the pot was extended in front of the king’s chest. For display purposes, a small insert has been placed in the dowel hole to hold the arm in approximately its proper position (Figure 2). The left arm would have held the same position.

The figure wears the royal khat headdress (a smooth kerchief whose ends were drawn together and hung down behind the neck) and shemdyt kilt (a finely pleated garment with a long front panel). Around his hips is a belt, somewhat wider in back than in front, with a pattern of horizontal zigzags. A rectangle at the front of the belt just below the navel contains traces of three hieroglyphic signs. Previously, these signs had been considered unresolved and the statuette assigned to the Third Intermediate Period (ca. 1070–712 B.C.) because the quality and the black-bronze alloy were still thought unusual before that era. Alternatively, the signs had been interpreted as mn-hprw, the prenomen of Thutmose IV (r. ca. 1401–1391 B.C.), whose kneeling bronze statuette in the British Museum was then the earliest known New Kingdom instance of the genre. But examination of the evidence with a binocular microscope reveals the following signs: . These hieroglyphs form the name mn-hprw, though the signs are written in an unexpected order. The inscription will be discussed further below. Stylistic analysis indicates the figure should be identified as Thutmose III (ca. 1479–1425 B.C.), whose prenomen is mn-hprw, and precludes attribution to the Third Intermediate Period or in particular to the Theban High Priest of the same name in that era.

Elegance and grace, always inherent in the Egyptian
Figure 1. Statuette of Thutmose III. Bronze, H. 13.6 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Edith Perry Chapman Fund and Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation Inc. Gift, 1995, 1995.21
kneeling pose, are fully expressed in this small bronze. The king has an athletic torso, as is generally favored by the kings of mid-Dynasty 18 (Figures 1, 2). The shoulders are emphasized and the limbs elongated to a greater degree than usual in stone statuary, following a tendency of bronze statuary to an attenuation of forms and to an emphasis on contours. The chest shows defined clavicles, low and broadly spaced nipples, and a hint of bipartition; it passes smoothly into the abdomen with its round navel in a faint teardrop-shaped depression above the tapering belt. These features are in notable contrast to most Third Intermediate Period statuary, which is distinguished by the segmentation of the torso into upper chest, rounded and independent belly with a simple round navel depression, and lower torso. The hips of the Museum’s statuette are broad and, from the back, long and well shaped (Figure 3). A particularly good parallel for all these features is offered by the headless statuette of Thutmose III from the Luxor cachette, since that statuette originally wore an upright crown and thus the modeling of shoulders and chest is not obscured by lappets.

The king’s khat headdress swells in broad heavy curves where it is supported on either side on his shoulders (Figure 4). In Eighteenth-Dynasty statuary the khat enjoyed great popularity with Hatshepsut (ca. 1473–1458 B.C.); it was less favored by her co-ruler and successor Thutmose III and his son Amenhotep II, and its popularity reached a low point in the reigns of Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III, before a
Figure 5. Khat headdress on head of an over-lifesize sandstone sphinx of Hatshepsut excavated at Deir el Bahri. Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE 56269 (photo: Egyptian Expedition)

resurgence in the Amarna Period. Though two previously known sculptural representations of Thutmose III in the khat are each in its way problematic, the headdress worn by our king is nearest, in shape and in the proportion between the wings of the headdress and the face, to the somewhat variable but always voluminous and heavy examples of the headdress worn by Hatshepsut (Figure 5). The one assured instance of Amenhotep II wearing the khat shows a headdress resembling that of the bronze statuette, though already slightly narrower and smaller in proportion to the face. A shawabti (funerary statuette) from the reign of Thutmose IV shows the narrower side flaps now accentuated by the heightened dome of the headdress. By the time of the late Eighteenth Dynasty, the side flaps no longer rest their weight on the shoulders and sometimes fall in a long semi-elliptical shape; the headdress in the later New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period follows this pattern (Figure 6).

From the lower edge of the frontlet springs the

Figure 6. Statuette of Osorkon I, Dynasty 22 (ca. 924–889 B.C.) Bronze, H. 14 cm. The Brooklyn Museum of Art, 57.92 (photo: courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum of Art)
Amenhotep, a position that is most typical in mid-Dynasty 18, though slightly higher positions are occasionally found. During the Third Intermediate Period, by contrast, uraei appear above the upper edge of a frontlet that can be rather wide (Figure 6). The cobra’s head and hood are badly abraded. Its body is disposed in two asymmetric curves and then runs directly over the top of the king’s head to the rear.

The king’s face is broad at the cheeks and jaw, giving it a square or round appearance, not dissimilar to that of its nearest contemporary in bronze, the British Museum’s statuette of Thutmose IV, whose jaw, however, is narrower (Figure 7). The earlobes are not pierced for earrings; such piercings are not found in royal statuary until the time of Akhenaten. The eye sockets are quite level, although the effect of the gold lining in the absence of the eye inlays is to diminish their size. The brows follow a high arc from inner to outer edge of the eye, as is well attested for the period of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. By contrast, the brows of the British Museum bronze assume a straight line near the nose and curve only past the center of the eye as they move toward the outer edge of the face. In royal representations the flatter brow appears in the reign of Thutmose III, becomes very frequent with Amenhotep II, and is the only type seen in the rather sparse representations of Thutmose IV—with the well-known exception of Cairo Egyptian Museum JE 43611, which displays the slanted eye and off-center arched brow foreshadowing that of Amenhotep III.

The Metropolitan Museum’s statuette is worn across the nose and mouth, but, while the original profile of the nose is not discernible, the contours of the mouth remain apparent. The visible features indicate well-balanced upper and lower lips rather than the slightly prominent upper lip known for Thutmose IV and visible in the British Museum bronze of that king (Figure 7). Interestingly, the throat swells ever so slightly in the area of the Adam’s apple (Figure 8), a feature occasionally found but especially strongly marked in the famous striding statue of Thutmose III wearing the Upper Egyptian crown.

**Inscription**

The signs inscribed in the belt rectangle were not enclosed in a cartouche and are only faintly preserved. Difficulties in resolving traces of the inscription, compounded with what turns out to be an atypical order of signs, had previously caused the signs to be conjecturally read as *mn-hprw-r*. Once the piece...
The use of the variant writing $mn-r^\prime-hpr$ is in itself interesting. The writing of Thutmose III’s throne name with the $r^\prime$-sign in the upper center is found occasionally on scarabs, and a group of these are datable to the Eighteenth Dynasty. In the case of the statuette, however, the placement of the disk in the center might well be an example of honorific transposition to place the god’s name in the center, reflecting the kneeling king’s position directly opposite the god Amun-Ra.

**Bronze Royal Statuary**

A number of recent review articles and studies have variously approached the problem of establishing a continuous history of copper-alloy and bronze statuary. The Museum’s statuette is an object of very high quality, datable early in the New Kingdom, when the paucity of known bronze statuettes has made it particularly difficult to explain the transition from the regular, if poorly studied, occurrence of copper-alloy statuary in the Middle Kingdom to the well-established bronze statuary tradition of the Third Intermediate Period and later. Placed in sequence with other known or recently firmly dated royal New Kingdom examples, the Museum’s statuette can eventually help to identify other more or less contemporaneous bronzes. Moreover, because of its type and clear position early in the New Kingdom, it helps to bracket rather closely the period when important royal and temple roles for bronze statuary emerge—the late Middle Kingdom/early New Kingdom—and will aid us in refining our understanding of this development.

Kneeling figures belong to one of the few clearly interactive types found in Egyptian statuary. The royal kneeling pose expresses the respectful yet dignified role of the king, himself a god, in ensuring the continual worship of the gods. By its nature such statuary implies the presence of a juxtaposed god—whether or not the god is actually shown—and belongs quintessentially to temple contexts.

Kneeling royal offering statuary is an established though relatively rare type, beginning with Dynasty 4. Its real popularity, however, seems to begin with
Hatshepsut and continues with fluctuations thereafter. Large examples held either *nw* pots or a variety of other offerings for a god. They may have lined courts and processional ways, as they seem to have done at Deir el Bahri, or might even have been fixed in modular groupings with the statue of a god, such as the Eighteenth-Dynasty examples discovered in the Luxor cachette. Also in the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, royal kneeling statuettes, a type which seems to be first depicted in an isolated instance during the late Middle Kingdom on what may be a divine bark, are shown as integral new elements of the bark processions of the god Amun, which are given a great new emphasis by these pharaohs (Figure 10). The statuettes, presumably of metal or gilded wood, hold *nw* pots toward the enshrined, shrouded image of the god; others, with outstretched hands, support the poles of the baldachin that shelters him. Thereafter, representations of such small statuettes are found regularly on the Theban barks; at Seti I’s temple at Abydos they are also shown on the Osiris barks; and in the same period they occur with other kinds of apparently portable cult emblems. Our evidence about other New Kingdom portable barks and their appearance is limited, but they may well have incorporated similar groupings.

Given the new interest in the type, the historically specific elaboration of bark representations that establish an entirely apt ritual context for this piece, and the apparent novelty and rarity of the small bronze specimens, it is appealing to think that the Museum’s statuette might actually have belonged to a great divine bark. Only more evidence and a better understanding of the evolution of practices and of their association with certain statuary types and materials can eventually further clarify the role of the bronze king.

Leaving aside these speculations, it remains highly interesting that the Museum’s beautiful and rare statuette was made at a time of new emphasis on the king’s role as intermediary and a new level of interest in the theatrics of religion. With its rich play of gold against black depths, this small bronze would have
been a strong visual presence in a cult composition rich in lustrous metallic and mineral hues.

A Technical Overview

The body of this figure is solid cast, as is the one surviving arm. There are three royal statuettes of comparable size and pose known from the New Kingdom: Thutmose IV in the British Museum (see Figure 7), the figure believed to be Tutankhamen in the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and one of Ramesses II in a private collection. Each of these three figures is a hollow cast, but in the case of the Thutmose IV, the casting cavity is very small and does not conform to the contours of the sculpture. The arms of the Metropolitan Museum’s figure were attached to the body with square-section tenons extending from the shoulders (Figures 1–3); the ends of the tangs and the edges of the arms and shoulders were smeared by hammering in order to interlock the components. This mechanical joining method is frequently observed on Egyptian figural bronzes. The statuette originally was set into a base using the four tangs extending from the knees and feet (Figure 11). These were bent in ancient times. In “mass-produced” bronzes of the Late Period, nearly all tangs used for this purpose are rectangular and of similar proportions; the very long, roundish tangs on the figure of Thutmose III reflect the less routine production of bronzes in the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period.

The eyes (and the nipples) of the figure have been highlighted with gold (Figure 4). The proper left eye socket is lined with gold sheet but only the outlines of the eyes would have appeared golden when the sockets were inlaid with stone or another material. Gold inlay survives in the proper right eyebrow, in the cosmetic lines where they extend from the eyes, and in both nipples. The gold in the proper right eye is a modern addition. No traces of inlay or of a bedding material survive in the eye sockets.

The body of the figure was analyzed using energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS) and found to be a low-tin bronze with a substantial amount of gold and small amounts of silver and arsenic. A small amount of arsenic is often detected in New Kingdom bronzes, although by this time copper-arsenic alloys were seldom produced intentionally. Few securely dated figural New Kingdom bronzes are known, and most have not been analyzed; the available evidence suggests that the absence of lead may be typical of those datable to the New Kingdom. Overall, the alloy is similar to alloys of Eighteenth Dynasty and later New Kingdom “black bronzes,” such as the Tutankhamen in the University Museum, and a shallow dish with inlaid Nilotic motifs in the Metropolitan Museum. Typically the alloy was used to create bronzes whose matte black surfaces would contrast with the colors and sheen of inlays of other metals: gold, silver, electrum, copper, and inpatinated bronze. This was first recognized by John Cooney, who identified hnty-km, known from hieroglyphic texts of the early New Kingdom, as the Egyptian term for inlaid black-patinated bronzes.

Black bronzes contain a small but essential amount of gold, and often silver, which allows the metal to develop a black cuprite layer when it is chemically treated. Cuprite is a copper oxide [Cu₂O] familiar to many as the red corrosion product almost invariably present on archaeological copper-alloy artifacts. It has been proposed that the alteration of the color from red to black is caused by gold particles in the cuprite layer. Gold does not occur naturally in copper or tin ores, and its presence in copper alloys represents an intentional addition. In nontechnical literature surfaces of black bronzes have long been mistakenly described as “nielloed.” Niello is a black, artificially produced sulfide used to inlay metal surfaces. Its earliest uncontested occurrence is known from the Roman period.
It is possible that the technique of alloying copper with gold to produce black bronzes came into use in Egypt and other regions of the Mediterranean as early as the first half of the second millennium B.C. Two of the copper-alloy figures from a group said to be from the Faiyum may be the earliest examples of Egyptian black bronzes. The first is a late Middle Kingdom kneeling royal figure in the Ortiz collection, often identified as Amenemhat III. The figure, which has a black surface that was partly overlaid with gold and silver sheet, was recently analyzed and its black color established as intentional and due to the presence of gold in the alloy. The alloy of the second piece, an inlaid black-bronze crocodile in the Staatliche Ägyptische Sammlung in Munich, was analyzed by Josef Riederer some years ago, but gold was not among the elements routinely quantified in his studies; it was recently reanalyzed and found to contain gold.

There are scattered examples of possible black bronzes dated to the earlier New Kingdom. From the burial of Ahhotep, of the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, there are several inlaid cupreous objects with dark surface patinations that could well have been artificially produced through the chemical treatment of an alloy containing a small amount of gold, but in these cases neither the surfaces nor the alloys have been investigated. The Metropolitan Museum’s figure of Thutmose III represents the earliest securely dated New Kingdom occurrence of this process confirmed by scientific study.

Overall the figure of Thutmose III is in good condition. It has suffered abrasion to the face and the uraeus (Figure 4), and the linear details on the belt rectangle and the belt itself are poorly preserved (Figure 9a). In modern times a blunt instrument penetrated the figure’s back in several places (Figure 3). The existing arm is loose on its tenon, and a wedge has been added to hold it in its original position.

The figure has been cleaned but still retains a fair amount of its archaeological corrosion. Burial accretions can be observed on the underside between the legs. The corrosion crust is heterogeneous, containing typical archaeological copper corrosion products such as malachite ([Cu₂(CO₃)₂], atacamite ([Cu₂(OH)₃]Cl) and cuprite, as well as less common compounds such as chalcocite ([CuS] and tenorite ([CuO]). The corrosion products observed on the surface include those associated with both anaerobic and aerobic conditions, and with saline and nonsaline conditions. It is the presence of chalcocite that lends the figure its distinctive silvery surface. When the surface cleaned of its massive corrosion is viewed under magnification, one observes casting dendrites delineated in black and silver.

As a rule, archaeological sulfide corrosion products are not common on cuprous artifacts. In cases where copper sulfides such as chalcocite have been identified, the artifacts had been recovered from wet anaerobic environments. Generally the chalcocite is observed directly on the surface of the metal, and carbonates, oxides, and chlorides are not present. Tenorite, which usually results from the oxidation of copper at elevated temperatures, has not frequently been reported as a massive corrosion product on archaeological copper alloys, but it has been detected on artificially patinated black bronzes on several occasions. It is not clear if the formation of this complex assortment of corrosion products relates to the presence of the artificially induced black corrosion film on the surface of the bronze before it entered its burial environment or if it is the result of changing conditions in the environment or environments in which the figure was preserved during the more than three thousand years that have passed since the time of its manufacture.

NOTES

1. MMA, acc. no. 1995.21; Purchase, Edith Perry Chapman Fund and Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation Inc. Gift, 1995; H. 13.6 cm, excluding deformed tangs, which add ca. 3.5 cm maximum; published in MMAB 53/2 (Fall 1995) p. 6. I would like to thank Dorothea Arnold and James Allen of the Department of Egyptian Art and Deborah Schorsch of the Sherman Fairchild Center for Objects Conservation for very helpful discussions regarding this object and this article. For Thutmose III, see Donald B. Redford, Thutmose III, in Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto, eds., Lexikon der Ägyptologie (hereafter LA) 6, cols. 539-548 (Wiesbaden, 1972–86).

2. See the technical appendix by Deborah Schorsch regarding black bronzes generally and the silvery patina of this statuette in particular.

3. Stone statues rest the offering pots on their knees. The raised position with level forearms is also seen in the Thutmose IV bronze illustrated here (Figure 7). Kushite bronze kings seem to hold the pots even higher, at breast height (Paris, Louvre, E25276; Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 605; Sotheby’s, New York, sale Dec. 9, 1991, lot 116), and offering bronzes with the names of Necho II (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1970.637) and Amasis (New York, MMA, acc. no. 35.9.3) hold the forearms parallel to though not touching the thighs, and therefore the pots are quite low, similar to those seen in stone statuary.

4. With respect to the width of the upper arms, the shoulder dowels required to affix the separately cast arms may be a factor. The attenuation is similar to that of wood statuary.


8. In fact, by far the largest number of examples listed by Eaton-Krauss, "The Khât," before the Amarna Period show Hatshepsut. She lists (p. 36) one example inscribed for Thutmose III (Warsaw, 1412-27), a sphinx with the heavy, wide headdress thrown back over its shoulders. Another example, assigned simply to a Thutmose pharaoh (Naples 1972), wears a long, apparently heavy, but unfortunately damaged khât, the statue probably represents Thutmose III to judge from the roundness of the face and the working of the throat area and Adam's apple (H. W. Müller photos in the Egyptian Department archives).

9. Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 42077; The resulting higher center of gravity is particularly clear in Edward B. Terrace and Henery G. Fischer, *Treasures from the Cairo Museum* (London, 1970) colorpl. v. A partial head (Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Museum 1951-5467; well illustrated in Cyril Aldred, "The Statue Head of a Thutmose Pharaoh," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 35 (1969) pp. 48-49), which may well be Amenhotep II, is damaged in the area of the headdress, although it seems to have been rather full but again with a higher center of gravity.


11. In late Dynasty 18 the khât narrows and rises, echoing the oval contours of the face (numerous examples are cited by Eaton-Krauss, "The Khât"; Geoffrey Martin, *The Royal Tomb at el-Amarna* [London, 1974] p. 39, presents a large group of Akhenaten's shawabtis wearing the khât). This shape continues in Dynasty 19 (see, for example, Tom Phillips, ed., *Africa: The Art of a Continent* [New York, 1996] p. 88, no. 1.50, the guardian figure of Ramesses I). The narrow shape is retained through the Third Intermediate Period (Osorkon I, The Brooklyn Museum, 57.92; see Figure 6 here), with occasional shorter versions (Osorkon II, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 42197; well illustrated in Edna R. Russmann, *Egyptian Sculpture: Cairo and Luxor* [Austin, 1989] p. 156) or somewhat more weighted versions (the bronze statuette of Ramesses II referred to in note 27 below). A stone statuette attributed to Psammit II in a New York private collection wears a khât of narrow, long conformation.

12. For a good range of examples from mid-Dynasty 18, see the articles cited in notes 14-16 regarding individual kings. For uraei in the Third Intermediate Period, see Figure 6 here or Philadelphia, University Museum, E 16199, in Bernard V. Bothmer, "Membra dispersa III: The Philadelphia-Cairo Statue of Osorkon II," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 46 (1960) pl. 3.

13. See, however, the bronze head possibly representing Amenhotep III referred to in note 27 below. Earring holes are very often shown on statuary through the Third Intermediate Period, and then not thereafter; there are, however, representations of Kushite kings wearing ear ornaments (Edna R. Russmann, *The Representation of the King in the Egyptian XXVIII Dynasty* [Brooklyn, 1974] pp. 25-26).


15. A brow of this type may be seen in the white limestone face of Thutmose III (Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE 90237; well illustrated in Faye, "Tuthmoside Studies," pl. 9c and discussed p. 19) and, alongside slightly curved versions, appears regularly with Amenhotep II (see Hourig Sourouzian, "A Bust of Amenhotep II at the Kimbell Art Museum," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 28 (1991) p. 65 and passim).

16. Betsy M. Bryan, "Portrait Sculpture of Thutmose IV." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 24 (1987) pp. 3-20. It may be that the brow of Louvre E 13889 curve downward ever so slightly near the bridge of the nose.

17. Ibid., p. 20.

18. Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 42053; the feature is visible in Russmann, *Egyptian Sculpture*, p. 90.

19. The British Museum bronze of Thutmose IV (see Figure 7 here) likewise shows name signs enclosed only by the rectangle, with no encircling cartouche. Bertrand Jaeger has shown that even in mid-Dynasty 18 scarabs are quite frequently inscribed with unenclosed royal names (Essai de classification et datation des scarabées Menkhîprê [Göttingen, 1982] p. 40).

20. This reading was established by James Allen.


22. See Jaeger, *Essai*, chart of writing variants, p. 29, nos. 9, 10, and 13, for variants with the disk centrally located; especially those in group 10 aredatable to the 18th Dynasty and his no. 864a (see ill. 480 on p. 166), for example, is even more closely datable as a joint issue of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II.

23. Henry G. Fischer, "Hieroglyphen," in *À 3*, cols. 1190-1191, discusses honorific transposition; he has not noted a case such as this, but its occurrence does not at all surprise him (personal communication). The transposition seen here fits the tendency of this time to a special emphasis on the god Amun, manifested, for example, in cryptographic elaborations (see Jaeger, *Essai*, p. 94).

24. Copper alloy is the proper term for the group of cuprous alloy statuary as a whole or for statues whose exact alloy is unknown. Bronze, an alloy of copper and tin, is used conventionally for the New Kingdom and later periods when that alloy predominates. Historical reviews are given by Christiane Ziegler, "Les arts de métal à la Troisième Période Intermédiaire," pp. 85-101, in *Tanis: L'or des pharaons*, exh. cat., Grand Palais (Paris, 1987); idem, "Jaïlons pour une histoire de l’art égyptien: La statuaire de métal au Musée du Louvre," *Revue du Louvre* 1996-1, pp. 29-38; Robert S. Bianchi, "Egyptian Metal Statuary of the Third Intermediate Period (Circa 1700-656 B.C.)," from Its Egyptian Antecedents to Its Samian Examples," pp. 61-84, in *Small Bronze Sculpture from the Ancient World* (Malibu, 1990); Eleni Vassilika, "Egyptian Bronze Sculpture Before the Late Period," in *Chief of Seers: Egyptian Studies in Memory of Cyril Aldred* (London, forthcoming). An important listing of Middle Kingdom copper-alloy statuettes is given by James Romano, "A Statuette of a Royal Mother and Child in the Brooklyn Museum,"
Ballas: resembles the First the Berlin hammered New ence and Rekhmire, Moss, been cult (Romano, Agptisches 26. 25.
Romano, “A Statuette”). A nursing woman and child (Berlin, 14078) may belong to the same period and may actually be an early bronze of a deity (see Romano, “A Statuette,” pp. 138–142). The startling group of large copper alloy/bronze statues of important courtiers and royalty, including the first kneeling copper-alloy (in fact, black bronze; see the discussion in the technical overview here) statuette of a king, considerably larger than the statuette of Thutmose III, are, of course, the major examples. The largest part of the group is illustrated as nos. 33–37 in George Ortiz, In Pursuit of the Absolute: Art of the Ancient World. The George Ortiz Collection, rev. ed. (London, 1996). The other associated bronze/copper-alloy statues are a striking kind, an official, and a crocodile in the Staatsliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst München, an official in the Musée du Louvre, and a queen’s wig in a private collection in Geneva; see Ortiz, In Pursuit, n. 6 on unnumbered page preceding no. 33 for references.

27. Besides this piece: a sphinx of Menkhpeerra in the Louvre (E 10857) may belong to this king (Ziegler, “Jalons,” pp. 31–32 and n. 28, refers to the stylistic ambiguity of this piece and announces technical studies that may help to clarify its position); kneeling Thutmose IV (Figure 7), British Museum 64564 (see Bryan, “Portrait Sculpture,” p. 20, for references); head possibly of Amenhotep III, Fitzwilliam E.G.A. 4504.1943 (Eleni Vassilika, Egyptian Art [Cambridge, 1995] p. 54); kneeling “Tutanhamun,” The University Museum, Philadelphia, E14955 (Bernard Fishman and Stewart J. Fleming, “A Bronze Figure of Tutankhamun: Technical Studies,” Archaeometry 22/1 [1980] pp. 81–86; for a brief updated consideration of this piece, see Marsha Hill, catalogue entry in Searching for Ancient Egypt: Art, Architecture, and Artifacts from the University of Pennsylvania Museum, forthcoming); kneeling Ramesses II in a private collection in New York (not the same as the piece on the art market referred to by Ziegler, “Jalons,” p. 29); torso of Ramesses V, Fitzwilliam 213.1954 (Vassilika, “Egyptian Bronze Sculpture,” p. 6). The upper part of a sometimes cited Ramesses IV (as in H. Garland and C. O. Bannister, Ancient Egyptian Metalurgy [London, 1927] figs. 2, 16; also the same piece labeled as Ramesses VI was noted by Nicholas Reeves in New York, Parke-Bernet, April 15, 1942, lot 251) is actually Osorkon II (Jean Yoyotte, Kemi 11 [1971] pp. 47–48). A variously cited Ramesses IX/X/XI from the Michailidis Collection may not be correct (see Ziegler, “Jalons,” comments on p. 29 and n. 16). I am not including bronze shawabitis, which seem to me to form a separate category.

28. While not completely exhaustive or up-to-date, Hartwig Altenmüller, “Könipplastik,” LA 3, cols. 508–580, provides a useful overview. After very rare examples in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period, kneeling statues holding nu pots are known for most of the Dynasty 12 kings, for instance. But Hatsepsut probably had at least eight colossal examples at Deir el Bahri, which could have stood in the peristyle court outside the sanctuary. Moreover, she begins the proliferation of types of offerings by creating at least twelve smaller examples holding a single round libation vessel with a djed symbol (Department of Egyptian Art archives: Herbert E. Winlock, Egyptian Expedition Theban Excavation Notebook 8: Temple Sculpture, pp. 160, 205). Interestingly, kneeling private statuaries proffering emblems or other items has its origins also in the early 18th Dynasty, as pointed out by Edna R. Russmann, “The Statue of Amenemope-em-hat,” MMF 8 (1973) p. 38 and n. 16.
29. See the example of Horemhab, M. el-Saghir, Das Statuenversteck, pp. 35–40.

30. The king wears the khat and seems to support a baldachin (?) pole on a curved deck (W. M. F. Petrie et al., The Labyrinth, Gerzeh and Masqanah [London, 1912] p. 32 and pl. 29 upper right), noted in Marianne Eaton-Krauss, “Stattendarstellung,” LÄ 5, col. 1263 and n. 19).

31. Egyptian gods had traveled on important journeys by river bark since very early, and portable barks for land travel were a metaphorical extension from rather early on (see Kenneth Kitchen, “Barke,” LÄ 1, cols. 619–625). The portable bark and therefore processional aspects of the Amun cult at Karnak seem to be attested from the time of Senwosret I by the existence of a bark station of that king bearing perhaps a ruined representation of the bark it sheltered (Claude Traunecker, “Rapport préliminaire sur la chapelle de Sesostris Ier découverte dans le IXe pylône,” in Karnak VII [Paris, 1982] pp. 121–126). However, a survey of the development of the Amun bark in representations (pp. 77–85 and plates of Claude Traunecker et al., La Chapelle d’Achrîs à Karnak II [Paris, 1981]; now supplemented by a detailed study by Christina Karlhausen, “L’Évolution de la barque processionnelle d’Amon à la 18e Dynastie,” Revue d’Égyptologie 46 [1995] pp. 129–137, which contains important insights) shows that at the beginning of the New Kingdom in the bark station of Amenhotep I, the Amun bark is depicted as extremely simple and without the complement of royal figurines except for the striding sphinx standard, but with Hatshepsut and Thutmose III a change occurs. These pharaohs, who built temples and refurbished cults throughout the country, began a new era of Theban cult elaboration. They emphasized the processional route from Karnak to Deir el Bahri with bark stations between and bark shrines within the temples (excavations of the Thutmose III temple site have yielded many fragments of relief depicting barks, see Hubert J. Görski, “La Barque d’Amon dans la décoration du temple de Thoutmosis III à Deir el-Bahari,” Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Kairo 46 [1990] pp. 99–112; and the Polish Mission, reported in Egyptian Archaeology 7 [1995] p. 12, has determined that the temple incorporated a bark shrine). And in depictions from the time of Hatshepsut the bridge of the bark begins to be peopled, with kneeling kings holding now pots and sphinxes with libation vessels in the first grouping introduced (Traunecker, La Chapelle, p. 77, has misunderstood as standing the royal figurine whose lower part is blocked by a sphinx; its proportions make this impossible; see Karlhausen, ibid., p. 121, for a possible earlier example). It is quite difficult to judge from published photos, and the degree of correlation between actuality and representation is problematic in any case, but it seems that, while usually the nemes is shown, in at least two instances these earliest small kneeling offering kings may have worn the khat headdress; see Görski, “La Barque,” fig. 1, where the king’s headdress was apparently understood by restorers as monochrome like the khat and painted yellow, unless paint is simply missing as in fig. 2, and in the same article the Clandebyoe Hall block, pl. 29d (photo actually switched with 29c), where the tail of the headdress is the tail of the khat and not the nemes. Pictorial evidence regarding the barks of the Abydene gods is available from the time of Seti I, but, so far, not before (Amice M. Calverley and Myrtle Broome, The Temple of King Setnos I at Abydos [London/Chicago, 1933–58]).

32. Stone and faience, the former heavy and both brittle, seem dubious candidates. Wood would be suitable, was probably used, and has not survived. There is a tradition of rich metallic and col- oristic decoration on barks; see, for example, the description of the Osiris bark in the Ikhnomfret stela (Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, 1204). Because bronze royal figurines could be associated with what is thought to have been the remains of a ritual bark of Amun from Dynasty 25 at Kawa (F. Laming Macadam, The Temples of Kawa II [London, 1955] pp. 243–244), and because bronze striding sphinxes on standards—a type rather specifically associated with barks— are dated to Dynasty 19 (Brooklyn Museum of Art, 61.20; Richard Fazzini, Images for Eternity [Brooklyn, 1975] p. 92) and known from Dynasty 25 (e.g., Louvre E. 3916 of Tahaqq), it is reasonable to assume that some of the bark statuary of Dynasty 18 might be of bronze. There is no representation of the bark with color before the time of Horemhab’s refurbishment of Thutmose III’s Deir el Bahri temple (see Görski, “La Barque,” figs. 1, 2), and in those of Seti I at Abydos yellow and white are the colors of the statuary (Calverley and Broome, The Temple; in fact, both groupings on the bark [e.g., fig. 1, pl. 7] and about the Osiris emblem [pl. 11] are shown); gold and silver, and possibly bronze, but not black bronze, seem to be implied.

33. H. E. Winlock, Bas-Reliefs from the Temple of Rameses I at Abydos (New York, 1921) pls. ii, iii; Calverley and Broome, The Temple I, pl. 11, for example.

34. See note 30 and general references in note 31; also see Christina Karlhausen, “Une Barque d’Ahmès-Néfertari à Louxor?” Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur 23 (1996) pp. 217–225 and n. 3.

35. The suggestivity of these coincidental factors is enhanced by the fact that ideas of fairly specific, if perhaps rather labored, translation between relief, statuary and actual ritual seem to be abroad in the 18th and early 19th Dynasties, even if their degree is difficult to gauge. The phenomenon could, of course, go back further and we simply have no evidence; it could also be related to the building of large stone temples and general elaboration of state cults in the New Kingdom. Hourig Sourouzian, writing chiefly in regard to large stone or wood cult statuary during this period, has carefully laid out the question of correlations between actual statuary and relief depictions of rituals, enumerating all the factors that bring the suspicion of correlations to mind and, likewise, those that make it so difficult to feel one’s way toward any satisfying answer (“Statues et représentations de statues royales sous Séthi I,” Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Kairo 49 [1993] pp. 239–257). The same question can be posed for bronze royal statuary, in particular with regard to the kneeling type.

36. For museological and bibliographical references for these figures, see note 25. My thanks go to James H. Frantz, Richard E. Stone, Dorothy Arnold, Marsha Hill, Lawrence Becker, and Mark T. Wypski for their generous contributions to this study.

37. I am grateful to Michael Cowell of the Department of Scientific Research, The British Museum, for showing me the radiographs of Thutmose IV. High-quality, large, hollow-cast bronzes, such as those in the famed group said to be from the Fayyum, were already produced in Egypt in the late 12th Dynasty.

38. Elemental analysis was carried out on a sample removed from one of the tangs using a Keve Delta IV energy-dispersive X-ray spectrometer coupled to a modified Amray 1100 scanning electron microscope. The data were quantified using MAGIC IV ZAF corrections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wt %</th>
<th>Cu</th>
<th>Sn</th>
<th>As</th>
<th>Au</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Fe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39. Kneeling figure of Tutankhamen (U.M. E 14295) wt %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wt %</th>
<th>Cu</th>
<th>Sn</th>
<th>As</th>
<th>Au</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Fe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figure was analyzed using proton-activated X-ray fluorescence (PIXE). Trace amounts of lead, antimony, zinc, and mercury were also detected (Fishman and Fleming, "A Bronze Figure of Tutankhamen," p. 82). At the time of that publication the relationship between the gold content of a copper alloy and its artificial black patination had not yet been recognized.

40. Shallow dish with Nilotic motifs (MMA, acc. no. 1989.281.99) wt %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wt %</th>
<th>Cu</th>
<th>Sn</th>
<th>As</th>
<th>Au</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Fe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unpublished EDS analysis of a polished section cut out in the Sherman Fairchild Center for Objects Conservation in 1992. The dish was formerly in the Norbert Schimmel collection and is illustrated in Jürgen Settgast, Von Troja bis Amarna (Mainz, 1978) cat. no. 249.


42. Our understanding of ancient bronze bronzes is based in part on technical studies of copper alloys, such as shakudo, that have been used in Japan for at least 600 years to create artificially patinated metal works of art. Shakudo typically contains 1–5 percent gold and small amounts of silver. According to Gowland, a 19th-century observer, the black color develops when the metal is boiled in a solution of blue vitriol (copper sulfate) and verdigris (copper acetate). Prior to this treatment the objects are immersed in a boiling lye solution, polished with charcoal, and rinsed in a saline plum-vinegar bath; cited in Michael R. Notis, "The Japanese Alloy Shakudo: Its History and Its Patination," in The Beginning of the Use of Metals and Alloys, Robert Maddin, ed. (Cambridge, 1988) pp. 316–327.


45. There are several inlaid copper-alloy objects with black surfaces from royal tomb 2 in Byblos that also have not received scientific examination. Pierre Montet, Byblos et L'Égypte: quatre campagnes de fouilles à Gebel, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 2 vols. (Paris, 1928–29) I, pp. 172, 174–177, 180, II, pls. 98–100, 102. Tomb 2 contained a chest with the name of Amenemhat IV as well as a stone jar inscribed with a name used by seven different kings of the 12th and 19th Dynasties. The dating of the tomb remains a source of dispute; Christine Lilyquist, "Granulation and Glass: Chronological and Stylistic Investigations at Selected Sites, ca. 2500–1400 B.C.E., BASOR 290–291 (1993) pp. 29–94, esp. 41–44.

46. See note 24 above.

47. Alessandra Giulmia-Mair, "Das Krokodil und Amenemhat III. aus el-Faiyum," Antike Welt 27 (1996) pp. 313–321, esp. 315; the tin content, erroneously printed as 9.00 percent, is actually 3.00 percent. My thanks to Alessandra Giulmia-Mair for sharing her results before the publication of her article.

48. Dietrich Wildung, "Berichte der Staatlichen Kunst-

54. Tenorite has been found in the patinas of three other New Kingdom “black bronze” objects examined in The Metropolitan Museum of Art: an unpublished New Kingdom figure of a dog (MMA, acc. no. 47.58.1), a shallow bowl with Nilotic inlays (MMA, acc. no. 1989.281.99) mentioned earlier, and a second inlaid bowl (MMA, acc. no. 1989.281.100), also formerly in the Norbert Schimmel collection; the latter bowl is illustrated in Settgast, *Von Troja bis Amarna*, cat. no. 250. Massive tenorite has been detected on the surface of an ancient Egyptian bronze cat head believed to have been reheated in modern times; Deborah Schorsch, “Technical Examinations of Ancient Egyptian Theriomorphic Hollow Cast Bronzes—Some Case Studies,” in *Conservation of Ancient Egyptian Materials*, Sarah C. Watkins and Carol E. Brown, eds. (London, 1988) pp. 41–50, esp. 49.
Roman Figure-Engraved Glass in The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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The figure-engraved glasses described in this catalogue were acquired between 1881 and 1959. Three of them (cat. nos. 1, 6, 13) came from the Jules Charvet collection, purchased and presented to the Metropolitan Museum in 1881 by the then trustee H. G. Marquand. Six others (cat. nos. 4, 5, 7, 9, 14) were part of the Julien Gréau collection, purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan and later lent to the Museum in 1910 and then bequeathed to it in 1917. This gave the Metropolitan the largest holding of ancient glass in the United States at the time.

Many pieces in the Gréau collection, including engraved ones, were sold in 1928. This sale, or “de-accessioning” in museum parlance, very controversial at the time, was meant to “dispose of surplus material.” It also unfortunately deprived the Museum of many engraved fragments which, in the light of later discoveries, would be quite interesting today. It is difficult to know what exactly were the criteria of which to keep and which to sell; the state of preservation of the vases more than the interest of the iconography seems to have been the guiding principle.

The other glasses (cat. nos. 2, 3, 8, 10, 11) were acquired from dealers, directly or through agents; one was discovered during the Museum’s excavations in Egypt (cat. no. 12).

Of all these, only one (cat. no. 8) comes from a known findspot, and a poorly documented one at that, a grave in Sicily. The other objects discovered with it are now lost; some were not even inventoried. It will therefore be important to find comparanda so as to gather more information on the dating and the probable origin of each glass.

Molded and polished glass decorated with lathe-cut grooves appeared in the third century B.C.; glass adorned with engraved figures is attested only much later, from the first century A.D. onward, first in the eastern provinces of the Roman world. This production—which must be distinguished from relief-cut glass, that is, glassware adorned with carving in relief, such as cameo glass—is at first modest. The origin of this craft is probably a belated application of the already ancient art of the gem cutter. The oldest known figure-engraved vases, dating from the first to the early second century A.D., are generally molded and polished and then figure-engraved. The ornamentation of these early pieces is usually simple.

It is pertinent to mention here vases of obsidian, engraved and then inlaid with glass. Obsidian (a natural volcanic glass) had been used for tools and jewelry since Paleolithic times, and it was always the object of a brisk trade. But glass-inlaid obsidian vases in shapes reminiscent of early engraved glass—skyphoi, shallow bowls, and plates (Figure 1)—appeared only between the first century B.C. and the first century A.D. Indeed, the oldest figure-engraved glass we know of (Figure 2) is a translucent green handled bowl with inlaid engraving; it would therefore seem that the early engraved-glass industry was at first a derivative or an imitation of costlier obsidian vases; but this fact should not be stretched too far, since none of the other early engraved glasses I know of were inlaid and green-colored. The obsidian industry could be of Egyptian origin, just as the early engraved glasses were.

Production of engraved glass apparently increased in the third and fourth centuries A.D.; most of it seems by then concentrated in the western provinces, especially the Rhine area, Great Britain, and Italy. It is possible to classify most of these finds by “workshops.” A workshop, in this context and throughout this study, is a group of vases of contemporaneous shape and exhibiting the same engraving techniques and a similar composition of the design. The simplicity of the tools used by the engravers allowed them to travel from one center to another in search of patrons, which explains in part the wide distribution of several workshops. The notes for this article begin on page 46.
The method used by the engravers was probably, as we have seen, akin to the craft of the gem cutter. R. J. Charleston has gathered what little data there is pertaining to this question; he pointed out that no engraving tool has ever been discovered (or identified as such) so far. These tools were probably lathes powered by means of a bow to which an assortment of bronze wheels and points could be fitted. They were very likely used in conjunction with an abrasive, such as sand mixed with water. Depending on the width and diameter of the wheel and the pressure applied to the glass, the artist could trace a mere abrasion on the surface of the vase or leave a relatively deep cut in a certain shape. It is possible that superficial detail may have been added by hand. The one capital archaeological document is the representation of a lathe on a gem cutter’s headstone (Figure 3). Nothing of importance can be added to Charleston’s conclusions.

This is a technically simple method, but it demands great patience and skill. The finest pieces probably took weeks to finish, and one understands the despair of the artisan who lost a vase trying to do too much.

The mention of glassware is common enough in ancient literature, but its description is often vague and misleading. It is usually difficult (if not impossible) to know with certainty whether one deals with lathe-cut, figure-engraved, mold-blown, or cameo glass, or even cut rock crystal or obsidian for that matter. Here is a quick overview of the texts that may or may not have a connection to engraved glass.

An excerpt of Pliny the Elder (A.D. 23–79), “Some are wheel-made, others wrought as silver vases,” probably applies to molded and lathe-polished vases, still popular in Pliny’s time; our catalogue number 1 would be a good example of this kind of ware. And the vases destroyed by the overeager engraver mentioned earlier are possibly, in Martial’s mind, relief-cut or cameo vases. When he emphasizes elsewhere the low mercantile value of wrought glasses, these are certainly mold-blown vases, which were by then mass produced. A poem of the Greek Anthology describing a “wrought crystal” likely refers to an engraved glass, according to Trowbridge; but in this particular case her solution would be anachronistic because the poem is probably too early. A papyrus of early Christian date mentions the use of goat’s blood to soften crystal and glass; but the purpose of this operation is not known, nor whether the glass was then engraved.

The “glass that has been mined” mentioned by the novelist Achilles Tatius could have been engraved,
but the expression used to describe it is more reminiscent of openwork cage-cups, which were quite literally excavated in a very thick blank.

Dom Leclercq\textsuperscript{26} believed that two passages in Tertullian (ca. 160–ca. 240) described glass cups engraved with the figure of Christ; but Tertullian never actually mentioned what these vases were made of; they might have been of clay, metal, or wood, for all we know. Besides, if the use of glass objects in the liturgy is known from the third century onward, it is never said that such objects are engraved or in any way adorned; the use of glass patens during the pontificate of Zephyrinus (199–217), for instance, is alluded to in the\textit{ Liber pontificalis},\textsuperscript{27} and Jerome (ca. 347–420)\textsuperscript{28} praises the simplicity of the use of the glass chalice. But, again, nothing in these texts (or their contexts) allows one to see in them ornate, expensive objects. The only exception I know of is a “chalice of crystal of admirable beauty” mentioned by Gregory of Tours (ca. 538–ca. 594),\textsuperscript{29} and then it was quite possibly made of rock crystal. Finally, the following statement in Quintilian (ca. 35–ca. 95), “The art of engraving includes wood, ivory, marble, glass, precious stones,”\textsuperscript{30} very likely applies to sculpture in relief. There is not much to draw from it.

As far as I know, there are only four passages in classical literature describing what is almost certainly engraved glass. The first appears in the\textit{ Digest}:\textsuperscript{31} “If you gave a vase to be cut, and if it breaks because of the engraver’s carelessness, the latter is responsible; but if it breaks not because of carelessness but because of defective workmanship, he is not responsible.”

The legislator uses the word\textit{ diatremum}, “engraved,” hence\textit{ diatretarius}, which means “engraver,” of intaglio, relief, or open-work glass; the same law expounded here probably applied to every kind of wrought glass. One can always argue that natural rock crystal (or obsidian) rather than glass is meant here, but it is hardly possible to argue that obsidian or rock crystal can have “defective workmanship” (\textit{rimas vitiosas}), whereas artificial glass can.

This text (which is included in a legal code because the case certainly reappeared in court a number of times) is interesting. We can see that, in this case, the customer could himself supply the glass to be engraved. On the other hand, the engraver could commission the\textit{ vitriarius} (glassmaker) to supply him with a number of unadorned glasses, of a convenient shape and thickness. Be that as it may, we understand here that the glassblower is independent of the engraver. There probably was not too close a collaboration between engraver and glassblower.\textsuperscript{32}

Claudian (ca. 365–408) three times\textsuperscript{33} mentions glass globes upon which stars and constellations are pictured. These are not natural rock crystal globes filled with water, as Trowbridge rightly noticed;\textsuperscript{34} it was technically much easier for the glassworkers to “fire-close” a small aperture in the wall of a glass globe after filling it with water.\textsuperscript{35} As far as I know, no object of this kind has yet been discovered, but colorless, glassy-looking globes symbolizing the universe do appear in Roman art.\textsuperscript{36}

Much importance has been given to the literary sources describing Alexandria as an important glassworks center.\textsuperscript{37} It was, at a given point in time, but most of these references are anterior to the apogee of the figure-engraved glass industry in the third and fourth centuries. Engravers certainly did work in Alexandria, but there is no evidence that it remained a major center of this particular trade in late antiquity.

The subjects on engraved glass are indifferently pagan or Christian. Many of these are repetitive and betray the influence of sketchbooks that patrons might have consulted before commissioning an engraved vase. The accompanying inscriptions show that they were sometimes meant as gifts. They were sometimes commissioned by very wealthy patrons, or by some imperial administration, in order to commemorate an important celebration, such as the\textit{ vicennalia} (twenty years of rule) of an emperor or the nomination to office of a high-ranking civil servant. Some of the finest pieces were obviously distributed as gifts (\textit{missor}
\textit{nia}) by the grantees of these offices, often members of the highest families of the empire, during such a celebration. In these cases, the influence of official and monumental art (ivory diptychs, silverware, mosaics, sarcophagi) is sometimes visible in the composition.

Figure 4. Bottle. Algiers, Musée des Antiquités nationales (drawing from\textit{ Libyca} [1959])

21
As we saw earlier, according to the surviving literature, very poor Christian communities used glass vases, most probably unadorned, because they could hardly afford the service of a *diatretarius*. But was engraved glass ever used by some communities, as several archaeologists have suggested? As far as I know, only one such glass has been found within the ruins of a church, a tall bottle (Figure 4), which could hardly have been used in the liturgy and was already broken when interred in the grave, as its fragmentary state shows. Besides, it is difficult to explain why any liturgical vase would end up in a grave. So while engraved-glass vases with Christian motifs were indeed commissioned by Christian patrons, there is no compelling reason to suppose that the same vases were used for the liturgy.

CATALOGUE

*Editor's note: All dates, unless specified, are A.D.; all vases are described from the outside; all dimensions are given in centimeters. H.=height, L.=length, W.=width, Diam.=diameter*

**Cat. no. 1** (Figures 5–7). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 81.10.237. Ex coll. Charvet; gift of H. G. Marquand. Cast and polished, colorless, hexagonal bowl with a hexagonal base and long, wide, flat handles, pierced near the rim; two joined fragments; part of wall and rim missing; rim chipped in places. Purchased in Italy. L. 14.3; W. 8.1; H. 2.7.

Twin buds at the end of a single stem on the flat handles and a vine scroll on the rim. On the interior of the center of the vase, a lozenge with buds at the angles and a cross inscribed within a circle in its center. The engraving, except for the inner lozenge, is clean, wide, and shallow.

**DATE:** ca. 100–150.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Froehner, *Collection Charvet*, p. 95 n. 1 and fig. on p. 107.

Cast and polished glass vases of this shape, usually unadorned, have been found in Germany and Gaul, northern Italy, the Iberian Peninsula, and Mauretania Tingitana. But the best parallel remains a small fragment of unknown origin in the Toledo Museum of Art. They obviously imitate metallic models, a large number of which still exist. The exact origin of the shape is uncertain. Alarcão believed that Cologne could have been a center of fabrication, and that is a possibility; but this Germanic production itself could also originate from Italy. The method of manufacture makes them early pieces.

**Cat. no. 2** (Figures 8–12). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 59.11.14. Ex coll. R. W. Smith; Fletcher Fund, 1959. Free-blown colorless beaker, rounded rim; twelve joined fragments; part of the body missing. H. 10.8; Diam. 9.9.
Figures 8–11. Beaker (cat. no. 2), early 2nd–4th century. H. 10.8 cm, Diam. 9.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1959, 59.11.14

Figure 12. Drawing of cat. no. 2 (Elizabeth Wahle)
In the middle of the body, a quadriga is pictured very schematically on a lathe-cut ground line underlined by hatching; the chariot is depicted as a simple obtuse angle perched on a wheel with uneven spokes. The charioteer also is sketchily rendered, kneeling on the chariot and holding the reins with one hand and (apparently) a whip with the other, outstretched hand. His head is a simple, squarish silhouette. The horses are better executed; the first one is rendered in three-quarter view, its forelegs extended forward. A plume is visible between its ears. The three other horses are identical protomes sketched one in front of the other. Six crude hind legs are pictured underneath the first horse.

Behind the quadriga stands a small, latticed, triple-gabled structure (a spina?) with a palm next to it; in front of the quadriga remain the upper parts of two squarish figures between palm branches. The first one holds in his outstretched hand an unidentified object. Their features are barely visible. Widely spaced hatching appears on the lower part of the body. Under the rim, between two lathe-cut fillets, an inscription reads:

EITYXJEIEJHCAPETHOYCIMOCNILOC
PIYPIIINOYC

(EUTUKI...EIEI...ESARETHOUSIMOSNIOS
PURIPNOUS)

This would be the name of the charioteer, followed by the names of the four horses. I do not know why the third letter of the second word is not on the same line as the others. The motive is merely abraded.

**DATE:** The shape of the vase and the shape of the letters place it between the early second and the fourth century.\(^6\)


The findspot is unknown and the provenance uncertain; the Greek inscription is not in itself a safe indication of eastern workmanship.

The transcription of the inscription was apparently problematic for some and read differently. Smith and Shelton saw APEΘΟΥYC (C) and CIMOC as two separate names. R. Zahn\(^6\) reconstituted EITYXIIΔης (or EITYXIIΔης) N(E)ΙΑΟC ΠΙΥΠΙΙΙΝΟΥYC ΑΡΗ(ι)ΘΥC. EITYXIIΔης is the likelier supposition, because of the available space on the glass. Christine Alexander\(^6\) read APEΘΟΥYCΙOC. She apparently believed that the μu was crossed off.

**Cat. no. 3** (Figures 13, 14). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 26.60.96. Fletcher Fund. Body of bowl, slightly greenish glass, free-blown fragment. 8.3 x 3.7; reconstructed Diam. ca. 9.

A deer pictured (on the bottom of the vase?) in profile to the right is inscribed in a circle. This circle is itself inscribed in a larger one, the space between the two being filled by a row of rosettes. Another quadruped inscribed in a circle is also visible. In the field, to the right, three stars within circles are placed around a lozenge with palm motives.

The engraving of the rump, back, and neck of the animal is quite clean, wide, and shallow. The legs, head, and antlers are cut with a finer wheel, and the hooves with an even finer one. The circles are rendered by a succession of short, cut lines. The front part

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*Figure 13. Bowl (cat. no. 3), probably 4th century. 8.3 x 3.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1926, 26.60.96*

*Figure 14. Drawing of cat. no. 3 (Elizabeth Wahle)*
of the animal is artfully represented in three quarters, while the back and the head are seen in profile; this gives the deer a graceful twisting movement.

**DATE:** probably fourth century, from the shape of the vases listed in the comparanda.

**UNPUBLISHED.**

This fragment belongs to a group of vases that are probably of Roman origin. Harden\(^1\) sees here the production of one workshop; as far as I know, twelve vases belong to the same “workshop.”

**COMPARANDA:**


12. Another unpublished fragment is in the Toledo Museum of Art, no. 80.1189.

**Cat. no. 4** (Figures 15–20). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 17.194,318. Ex colls. Disch, Gréau; gift of J. Pierpoint Morgan. Colorless free-blown glass bowl, three joined fragments; a fragment of the body is missing. Found in Cologne. H. 6; Diam. 9.5.

Four circles at right angles to each other on the body; within each of these, a bust facing front with the head to the left. The engraving of the medallions, each with two concentric circles, must have been done with a lathe, since there is no variation in the groove. The engraver must have first traced two opposing medallions, then the two others, because they intersect in places. The groove under the lip was then traced, also with a lathe, overlapping the medallions at one point. On the bottom, an abraded rosette with eight petals and a dot in each of the spandrels.

For the busts themselves the engraver used a wider wheel, because the tunic and the face are simply abraded. The nose, the eyes, the mouth, and the hair are rendered by narrow incisions, made with a fine wheel. In the spandrels, abraded edicules and stars appear. Within the concentric circles of each medallion are forty or so abraded tongues.

**DATE:** fourth century, from the context of comparandum no. 1.


This vase belongs to a group well represented in the Rhineland. Three out of the four known vases come from Cologne or the area.

**COMPARANDA:**


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Figure 20. Drawing of cat. no. 4 (Elizabeth Wahle)


Cat. no. 5 (Figures 21–26). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 17.194.319. Ex coll. Gréau; gift of J. Pierpont Morgan. Colorless hemispherical free-blown bowl with polished rim, two joined fragments; partly covered with incrustation; a fragment of the rim is missing. H. 4.6; Diam. 11.2.

On the bottom, a rosette with twelve petals is framed within a herringbone pattern and a broken line. In the middle of the body, two garlands intersect to form six medallions. Within them, one sees two latticed lozenges, two rosettes with eight petals, one with thirteen petals,
and one with sixteen. Stars or rosettes dot the span-
drels formed by the medallions. On the upper part of
the body, two parallel registers of superimposed Xs
and herringbone pattern. The engraving is clean, 
deep, and narrow. The line separating the different
motifs was traced with a lathe.

**Figure 26. Drawing of cat. no. 5 (Elizabeth Wahle)**

**DATE:** probably fourth century, by the style of the
heads of comparandum no. 1.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Froehner, *Collection Gréau*, pl. 184.3,
no. 1083; Richter, "Room of Ancient Glass," p. 23, fig.
29; Eisen, *Glass*, p. 553, pl. 136.

This vase, though it does not feature human or animal
figures, is reminiscent of a bowl now in Corning, for-
merly in the Sangiorgi collection (comparandum no. 1).

**COMPARANDA:**

1. Bowl, found in Rome. H. 6; Diam. 10. Corning Museum
of Glass, no. 66.1.33, ex coll. Sangiorgi. Line of heads and
geometrical motifs. G. Sangiorgi, *Collezioni di vetri antichi
dalle origini al V. sec. d.C.* (Rome, 1914) pp. 43–44, no. 143,
pl. 28.
2. Bowl, found in northern France. H. 5; Diam. 21.5. Musée
de’Evreux, no. 5996. Geometrical motifs. G. Sennequier,
"Verrerie d’époque romaine retrouvé en Haute-Normandie"
(doctoral diss., Université de Tours, March 1993) pl. 15, no.
16 (Figure 27).

**Cat. no. 6** (Figures 28–33). Dept. of Greek and
Roman Art, 81.10.240. Ex coll. Charvet; gift of H.G.
Marquand. Colorless free-blown hemispherical bowl
with polished rim; complete, incrustation in places.
Found in Mainz. H. 5.4; Diam. 8.9.

The lip is underlined by three parallel grooves. On
the body, four columns alternate with four figures, fac-
ing front with the head to the left. They wear long
tunics and hold a bunch of grapes in each hand. The
columns are simply rendered by three long vertical
lines between two short ones, which represent the base
and capital. The engraving of the columns, clothes, and
limbs is crude, merely abraded with a wide wheel. The
hair, eyes, nose, and mouth, as well as the vine branch,
are traced with a finer wheel. On the bottom is an
abraded rosette with eight petals.

**DATE:** fourth century.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Froehner, *Collection Charvet*, p. 94;
Fremersdorf, *Scliff*, p. 182, pl. 254; Haberey, "Delphin-
schale," p. 32, no. 8.

I know of thirteen comparable objects; the vase com-
parandum no. 8 was found in a grave with a coin of
Anastasius I (491–518), but the style of engraving,
especially the treatment of the head, and the shape of
the vase preclude a late date. By the sixth century, it
was already an heirloom. Its findspot, like those of
most of the comparanda, indicates that it was made in
Germany.

**COMPARANDA:**

1. Bowl, found in Brumath-Stephansfeld (near Strasbourg).
Figures 28–32. Bowl (cat. no. 6), fourth century. H. 5.4 cm, Diam. 8.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1881, 81.10.240

Figure 33. Drawing of cat. no. 6 (Elizabeth Wahle)


Cat. no. 7 (Figures 34–37). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 17.194.324 and 1992.61. Ex coll. Gréau, gift of J. Pierpoint Morgan; and ex coll. Higgins Armory, Worcester, Mass. Greenish free-blown hemispherical bowl with polished lip; six joined fragments; part of the body is missing; what is left is pitted in places. H. 8.76; Diam. 18.6.

At the bottom of the bowl, inscribed in a wide, sketchily abraded circle, stands a man facing left. He is wearing a toga and extends his right arm in front of him. A long staff with a rounded end is still visible under his right arm; it is important to note that he does not hold it. His head and left arm are almost erased because of the deterioration of the glass. The “floating staff” is not a mere walking stick but identifies him, I believe, as Moses or Aaron; the rod turned into a snake (Exodus 4:3, 7:9–12) is pictured here. There is no other interpretation that would explain the importance given to this object, combined with the central position of the figure in the composition and the fact that he is wearing a toga, which seems to identify him as a prophet, as we will see later. We do not have here the scene of the actual metamorphosis of the rod, quite rare in Christian iconography.

Around the wall of the bowl, some scenes are still discernible. The torsos of three figures wearing short tunics, facing front with their heads turned to the left and their arms outstretched, are emerging from a structure made of five courses of squarish blocks with three openings; the Three Youths in the Furnace are obviously pictured here (Daniel 3:13–25). This scene, very common in Christian iconography, appears almost the same way on contemporaneous Roman sarcophagi (Figure 38). To the right of this structure, a little higher in the field, the base of a column, on top

Figure 37. Drawing of cat. no. 7 (Elizabeth Wahle)

of which the bust of Nebuchadnezzar was probably pictured, is still visible as are the legs of a figure (a servant of the king?). On the left, the lower part of a man dressed in a pallium (a royal functionary?) is turned toward the furnace and also belongs to this scene.

Behind him, the lower halves of two figures are visible, one on each side of a menhir-shaped rock from which flows a spring depicted as four curved lines; one of the figures wears a short tunic and the other a toga. This scene represents Moses (in a toga) and another Israelite and the miracle of the rock in Horeb (Exodus 17:6–7; Numbers 20:3–11), from which the spring flows as Moses strikes it with his rod. It is one of the more common scenes in early Christian art; the symbol of life-giving water is often expounded in the Scriptures and by the church fathers.  

The engraving is clean and narrow. The incisions are never really long (1 cm at most), save for the lathe-cut groove under the lip. Only the lower part of the legs, the feet, and the face are etched less deeply with a wider wheel. Of the features of the face, the lozenge-shaped eye, the mouth, the nose, and the hair rendered with short parallel lines were engraved later.

**DATE**: 330–380 (see cat. no. 8).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**: Froehner, *Collection Gréau*, pl. 186.1–2.

This glass belongs to a large group of vases, already identified by Fremersdorf (including the next one, cat. no. 8) as originating from Cologne, some of which were found in graves dated by coins to the middle of the fourth century. The main characteristics are the profile of the head, the schematic drawing of the legs, the hieratic aspect of the figures, and the multiplication of fillers in the field: edicules, trees, hatching, volutes, dots. (See Figure 4 and comparandum no. 1.)

After a close study of the vases of the same group, one notices that the figures in togas are almost always to be identified as prophets: Christ, Abraham, Aaron, or Moses (an Old Testament prefiguration of Christ). The shapes of the vases of this group (beakers and bowls) are also typically found in the fourth century. This vase and the following, catalogue number 8, are stylistically close to catalogue number 4 and catalogue number 6.

**COMPARANDA**:


29. Fragment, found in Gorsium (Hungary). 2.8 x 2.7. Museum of Székesfehérvár, no. 75.251.1. Head with a halo facing right. J. Fitz, "Forschungen in Gorsium," Alba Regia 13 (1972) p. 259, no. 353, pl. 5, fig. 2.
32. Bowl, two joined rim fragments, found in Gorsium (Hungary). 11.5 x 6.3. Museum of Székesfehérvár, no. 72.83.2. Indistinct motive. Fitz, "Gorsium," p. 240, no. 6.
34. Fragment, found in Trier. 3.5 x 4.4. Trier, Landesmuseum, no. 19, 262. Winged man, column. Goethert-Polaschek, Katalog, p. 60, no. 227.
35. Fragment of bowl, found in Trier. 7.4 x 8.8. Trier, Landesmuseum, no. 98,126. Bust on the bottom, hunting scene around. Goethert-Polaschek, Katalog, p. 32, no. 84.
37. Fragment, found in Rome. 4.5 x 4.2. Whereabouts unknown.


In a central medallion, one sees on a ground line a standing man with a halo, facing left and wearing a toga. He holds in his outstretched right hand a long rod. To the left, in front of him, a slightly smaller figure stands stiffly facing front, wrapped in a shroud. The Raising of Lazarus is pictured here. In the field appear two rolled manuscripts, usually associated with Christ in early Christian iconography, a long palm, a lozenge, and hatching. Below the ground line is a latticed motif.

The medallion is framed by a vine-and-grape motif between double lines; around the rim is a picket border underlined by a wide fillet. These are reminiscent of the framing motifs of the Toledo Museum of Art beaker. 58

The engraving is very much akin to that of the preceding glass, and both indeed belong to the same workshop. A laboratory analysis has shown that there are no traces of gilding, as Le Blant assumed; 59 he was probably led to believe so by the iridescence of the glass.

Date: Found in a “Christian” sarcophagus containing, with our cup, “Several fragments of engraved glass which were destroyed . . . ” and coins dated between 350 and 360.


This vase belongs with the preceding group. The scene is commonplace in early Christian art and is seen for instance on many sarcophagi and catacomb paintings.

Cat. no. 9 (Figures 42–50). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 17.194.328. Ex coll. Gréau; Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan. Slightly greenish free-blown glass bowl, nine joined fragments; parts of the rim, body, and bottom missing; iridescent and pitted in places. H. 7.7; Diam. 18.

Three grooves underline the rim, and a fourth one sets the ground line for the scenes. On the body, seven people and four animals are divided into two scenes by clumps of trees. The first scene shows a hunter facing right, clad in a pallium, half leaning on a spear and collapsing into the arms of a comrade dressed in a short tunic and leggings. In front of them, a woman runs in their direction with outstretched arms, a long veil flowing from her elbows; behind them, a thick fillet indicates the entrance of a lair into which runs the boar that gored the wounded hunter pursued by a hunting dog. In front of the animal another hunter stands with his left leg raised, as if to avoid the charge of the boar, and thrusts at it with his now-invisible spear. He wears a Phrygian cap and a pallium, and carries a shield in his right hand. Only the back of the boar is visible, etched with a triple line of ovolos and bristly hair. Its lair is partly hidden behind a tree trunk formed by a row of ovolos and wide palm leaves. The 1903 drawing shows him as part of the second scene.

The latter scene, behind the woman, shows another lair, similarly marked by foliage, out of which charges a boar attacked by two dogs. In front of them, a hunter rushes forward facing left, a spear firmly held with both hands. His left shoulder is covered by a pallium. Behind him, two archers take aim at the animal, their hands held up, as if they had just shot at their target. The first archer, a woman, is dressed in a short tunic with a single strap, and the other wears a pallium around his shoulders. The first scene represents the death of Adonis, and the other Meleager and the Hunt for the Calydonian Boar.

The engraving, very wide, deep, and clean, is characteristic of the group to which it belongs. The figures are stiff, the torsos twisted unnaturally (the thorax seen frontally and the abdomen in three-quarter view), the hands large and the fingers very long. The head, seen in profile, shows a long nose, large almond-shaped eyes, and hair and beard formed by rows of small ovolos; shown frontally, the cheeks are round, the nose long and narrow, the mouth small, the eyes still almond shaped. The folds of the clothing are wide and stiff.

Date: Second half of the fourth–early fifth century.

Bibliography: Froehner, Collection Gréau, no. 1092, pls. 187.1, 2; Ginsburg, Hunting Scenes, p. 21, fig. 10, p. 29 n. 47; B. Caron, “A Figure-Engraved Glass Bowl,” MMJ 28 (1993) pp. 47–55.
This remarkable vase is part of a very large group which was centered essentially in Rome and Northern Italy—Aquileia and Ravenna—and was dubbed the group of the Master of the Cup of Daniel by R. Barovier-Mentasti, who dated it to the middle of the fourth century. I initially agreed with her conclusions, but after closer study of the internal and external criteria of some of the sixty or so vases of this group (at last count, that is), I now believe that the *floruit* of this workshop can be pushed to the second half of the fourth century and the early fifth. This new chronological frame rests on eight particular vases.

The first is the celebrated fragment of the Antiquarium Comunale (Figure 51; see comparandum no. 2). Since its discovery, because of its inscription celebrating an emperor's *vicennalia*, it was successively identified with Diocletian, Constantine, Constantius II, and finally Honorius. Thus, despite the inscription, its exact date is still discussed, although, as we will see later, Constantius's era is likely.

The second vase, formerly in the Figdor collection, pictures Cybele and Attis. The worship of these oriental gods enjoyed a short revival in Italy during the rule of Eugenius (A.D. 392–394); this object could be a relic of this revival.

A small fragment in the Campo Santo in Rome (Figure 52; see comparandum no. 6) features a palm tree and a halo near the rim; the palm tree is identical to the one pictured on one of the more important vases of the group, a plate from Ostia (see Figure 55). The Campo Santo fragment looks quite insignificant at first, but in the context of fourth-century Christian iconography in Western art, an important observation can be made about it. Taking into account its diameter and that of the halo still visible behind the tree, it allows only enough room for a very simple composition of three standing figures framed by palm trees (see reconstruction).

Such a composition can be linked only to a number of monuments (found mainly in Rome) displaying the same composition and representing Christ standing on a mountain with the four rivers of Paradise (Genesis 2:10–14) and giving the Law—a volume inscribed *Lex Domini*—to Peter on his left while Paul stands on his right; palm trees always frame this scene, the *Traditio Legis*, or Transmission of the Law. It first
Figures 42–49. Bowl (cat. no. 9), second half of 4th–early 5th century. H. 7.7 cm, Diam. 18 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.194.328
Figure 50. Drawing of cat. no. 9 (Elizabeth Wahle)

Figure 51. Julian the Apostate, A.D. 357. Rome, Antiquarium Comunale, inv. no. 7233 (from Antieke Beschaving [1973])

Figure 52. Fragment and reconstruction. The shape of the vase might have been circular. Campo Santo (from Römische Quartalschrift [1892])

Figure 53. Reconstruction of the apse of St. Peter’s (from Cahiers archéologiques [1959])

appeared, according to T. Buddensieg, on the mosaic of the apse of St. Peter’s in Rome that was put up in the second half of the fourth century (Figure 53). Most of the objects displaying this scene (sarcophagi, paintings, reliefs) also date from the second half of the fourth century. Another glass fragment from the Vatican (Figure 54; see comparandum no. 37) features the center of the same composition; the palm tree is still faintly visible behind Peter. The symbolism of this image, the exhortation and the life-giving flowing water, appears explicitly in a text of St. Hippolytus (ca. 170–235): “A perennial stream is flowing. Four rivers are flowing from it, watering the earth. It is the same with the church: Christ, who is the river, is announced to the world by the four gospels. He waters all the earth and sanctifies everyone who believes in him, according to the prophet: ‘Rivers will flow from his body.’”

The fifth vase, the aforementioned plate from Ostia (Figure 55; see comparandum no. 4), representing Christ holding a long cross on his left shoulder, is
almost identical to the well-known St. Lawrence mosaic from the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna (Figure 56). The latter is dated, and there seems to be a consensus among specialists, to 425-450. The glass is unlikely to be the inspiration for the (very) official iconography of the mausoleum; and if the reverse is true, the glass would also be dated to 425-450. But a mosaic of the church of San Pietro Crisologo in Ravenna shows a Christus militans with exactly the same gesture. This mosaic, as we know from Agnellus, was made in the late fourth or early fifth century, before being remade in the mid-fifth century. This remake, as is often the case, could very well have reproduced the earlier composition.

The sixth vase, a lost plate known from two seventeenth-century drawings, pictures an aristocrat, the prefect of the annona; this kind of glass was usually made to celebrate the nomination of a civil servant to a higher office by picturing the grantee in his new functions. So since the prefect of the annona became an important personage and acceded to senatorial rank only after 326, we can assume that this date is a terminus a quo for the lost plate.78

Another official commission, represented today by a small fragment with the head of Rome (or Constantinople) Nicephore found in Rome (comparandum no. 15), can be reconstructed to a certain degree. The large size of the original plate, 35 centimeters in diameter according to Paribeni, and the squeezed impression made by the surviving figure would leave room for one oversize or two smaller central figures flanked by personifications of both capitals, as Paribeni noticed; more precision would in this case be mere speculation. The fact, however, that Rome and Constantinople appear side by side on coinage from 343 on79 would tend to place this fragment in the second half of the century.

And finally, a tiny fragment was discovered in Carthage in a cistern sealed about 425 by the construction of the Theodosian wall.76

These vases therefore provide us with circumstantial evidence (if nothing else) that indicate a floruit stretching between 326 and 425, more likely between the middle of the fourth and the early fifth century.

This conclusion also favors a late dating of the aforementioned Antiquarium Comunale fragment (see comparandum no. 2). Indeed, a way to tentatively date this scene is to do so by linking it with a securely dated group. In the light of the chronology we propose, the earlier candidates, Diocletian and Constantine, can be ruled out. Constantius's late vicennalia of 357,77 Valens, Gratianus, Valentinianus, Theodosius, and Honorius would still be acceptable.78

Only one solution, however, would explain the vicennalia inscription, the name Severus written over a secondary figure, and the lack of a crown on the head of the main figure. The latter could be Julian the Apostate, Caesar of Constantius II from 355 to 360; his coinage prior to his accession to the throne shows him undiademed,77 and his magister equitum in 357/358 was named Severus.78 We may suppose that the Antiquarium Comunale bowl is one of a pair of identical vases, one of which showed Constantius and

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*Figure 54. Fragment. Vatican Museum, inv. no. 313 (photo: Vatican Museum)*

*Figure 55. Christ. Museo Ostiense, inv. no. 5201 (from Bollettino d'arte [1952])*
the other Julian, each surrounded by his respective retinue. We have to realize that officially commis-
ioned glassware, just like silverware, could form a set of several pieces.

We will make a final remark. Several vases of this group (comparanda nos. 2, 3, 12, 15, 18, 22, 23, 33, 35, 41) show a sitting or standing figure where the vertical axis of the composition is obvious; furthermore, they sometime display an architectonic background, otherwise rare in the production of the Master of the Cup of Daniel. These details are reminiscent of the ivory diptychs and sumptuous silverware, such as the missorium of Theodosius, which were gifts distributed by the emperor and new grantees of high office. The outlandish expenditures lavished on such occasions forced Theodosius to introduce legislation to limit them; newly appointed magistrates then replaced ivory and silver with glass.

**Comparanda:**


3. Plate, five fragments, of which two are joined, found in Ravenna. Reconstructed Diam. 24. Ravenna, Soprintendenza ai Beni Ambientali Architettonici, no. RA 6529. Seated high


5. Fragment of bowl and plate, findspot unknown. Sarasota, Ringling Museum of Art. Christ as the Good Shepherd. Froehner, *Collection Gériaux,* no. 1098, pl. 188.4.


11. Fragment of plate, found in Porto. 13.2 x 5.5. Museo Sacro Vaticano, no. 298. Figure in a shroud, and putto. Floriani-Squarciapino, “Vetri incisi portuensi,” pp. 260–262, fig. 5; Fremersdorf, *Antikes Glas,* p. 90, no. 843, pls. 55, 57; Caron, “Un Verre gravé,” p. 173, fig. 5.


18. Plate fragment, found in Rome. 8 x 7.7. Whereabouts unknown. Head of Rome facing front. Sagui, “Verreries de l’antiquité tardive,” pp. 192–193, fig. 4.36; idem, “Produzione vetrarie,” p. 124, fig. 8.68.1


22. Plate, four fragments, three of which are joined, findspot unknown. Collection of the Campo Santo. Two registers of standing figures. Armellini, “I vetri cristiani,” p. 54, pl. 3.1; Caron, “Note sur deux dessins,” p. 364, pl. vi.2.

dessins," pp. 349-358, pls. 1, II.


37. Plate fragment, found in Porto (Figure 55). H. 7.8; L. 11. Museo Sacro Vaticano, inv. 313. Transmission of the Law and inscription: LEX DOMINI. De Rossi, "Utensili cristiani," pl. 1.3; Garrucci, Storia dell'arte 6, p. 98, pl. 454, no. 4; DACL VI, 2, col. 1577, fig. 5408; Floriani-Squarciapino, "Coppa cristiana," no. 209, fig. 8; idem, "Vetri incisi portuensi," p. 250, fig. 3; Fremersdorf, Antikes Glas, p. 91, no. 846, pl. 55.


42. Plate, rim fragment, findspot unknown. Sarasota, Ringling Museum of Art. Feminine headdress. Froehner, Collection Gréau, pl. 190.6, no. 1103.


48. Fragment of hemispherical cup, findspot unknown. 5 x 6.1. Museo Nazionale Romano, no. 380800. Man in Eastern dress; inscription on the rim: LET ... De Tommaso, "Vetri incisi," p. 102, fig. 4.


50. Fragment of plate, found in Rome. 8.9 x 4.2. Whereabouts unknown. Lyre. Sagui, "Produzione vetrarie," p. 124, fig. 8.64.


We could mention six unpublished fragments in the Corning Museum of Glass: 66.1.143; 66.1.146; 66.1.145; 66.1.141; 72.1.18, plus the following vase, catalogue number 10, and at least one unpublished plate from the antiquities market.

Cat. no. 10 (Figures 57, 58). Dept. of Medieval Art, 18.145-4. Formerly in the Valicella Library, Rome. Free-blown rim fragment, slightly greenish. L. 8.9; H. 4.5.

The rounded rim is marked by three grooves. On the body is an edicule with a rounded roof, two elongated acroteria, and open double doors. On the inner side of the doors, a lozenge is inscribed within two rectangles. Inside the edicule, the upper part of a body in a shroud and facing right is visible. On the right, the upper part of the body of a man, holding a staff and with a haloed head, faces left. A retrograde inscription (meant to be read from the inside and reading ... LBAT IN LAIAVRS) identifies the scene: the Raising of Lazarus.

The engraving is wide, clean, rather deep. The features and the hair are finely rendered.

date: second half of fourth–early fifth century.

bibliography: F. Buonarrotti, Osservazioni sullicuni frammenti di vasi (Florence, 1716) p. 60; Garrucci, Storia dell'arte 6, p. 91, pl. 462, no. 11; Mowat, "Exemples de gravure antique," p. 297, no. 15; DACL VI, 2, col. 1578, no. 9.

Buonarrotti read the inscription LIAT IN LAIAVRS; Garrucci, Leclercq, and Mowat, LIATA LAIAVRS. This vase, because of the treatment of the features of the head and the stiffness of the folds, probably belongs to the preceding group.

Cat. no. 11 (Figures 59–62). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 15.198-5. Pale blue free-blowen conical vase, polished rim, a button under the body; intact. Found near Hama (Syria), according to the dealer. H. 14.9; Diam. 6.9.

In the middle of the body, on opposite sides, two bunches of six grapes are pictured; in between is an eight-branched star. Over the grapes, between two fillets, a Greek inscription reads, IIIE ZHCHC (phonetically spelled for the correct IIE ZHCHC, "Drink so that you may live!") and diagonal hatching. This expression has sometimes been used in a religious context, since it can be construed as being linked to
the celebration of the Eucharist and the consecration of the wine; but in this particular case it has no cryptographic religious meaning whatsoever. This simple drinking expression is met time and time again on vases, written phonetically in the Greek or Latin alphabet (or even a mixture of both), in a number of ways, by people who had only a passing acquaintance with Greek, but knew its meaning: “Cheers!” Under the grapes is hatching between two fillets. The motifs are rendered by abrasion.

DATE: fourth–fifth century.


This group was first identified by Harden. The decoration is only abraded and quite simple: star, rosette, animal, grapes in bunches. A Latin or Greek inscription usually appears around the rim. None of the dozen or so vases of the group comes from a dated context; but from the study of the shapes, Harden could nevertheless date it to about the end of the fourth and the early fifth centuries. The dispersed findspots (Great Britain, Spain, Italy, Syria, Egypt) suggest the work of an itinerant workshop, although Harden narrows the area of fabrication to Syria or Egypt: “All in all, I would prefer to count it as Egyptian; that is, no doubt, an Alexandrian piece.” An Eastern origin is possible, but there is no overriding reason to place it in Alexandria. As we mentioned earlier, the temptation to label as Alexandrian every Eastern glass product is an unfortunate reflex, based partly on literary sources and their overenthusiastic interpretation; but most of them predate the floruit of figure-engraved glass in the Roman world. There is little or no archaeological evidence of engraved glass production in Alexandria in late antiquity.
COMPARANDA:

1. Bottle, neck cracked, found in Highdown Hill, Sussex. H. 20.3; Diam. of the mouth 6. Worthing Museum, no. 3500. Hares, dogs, and inscription (Figure 63). Harden, "Highdown Hill," p. 3, fig. 1; Weinberg, "A Parallel to the Highdown Hill," p. 26, figs. 4, 6.


Cat. no. 12 (Figures 64, 65). Dept. of Egyptian Art, o8.268h. Rogers Fund. Free-blown colorless bowl, polished rim; four joined fragments of rim and body. Found in Hibris, Khargah Oasis, Egypt. H. 4; Diam. 18.5.

Bust of a man, facing front, head to the right, holding a bow with his right hand. In the field are lines and hatching. The engraving of the body is crudely delineated by deep rough cuts; the features of the face and the curly hair are marked by a line of points joined with a scratched line. The bow and a few hatchings are abraded. There was room enough on the other side for at least one figure, perhaps Artemis or Actaeon.

DATE: fifth century.

UNPUBLISHED.

The findspots of the vases of the same group
We from by facing iridescent; Marquand.

Roman Tongues.

Kisa, incision and found Nazionale, p. 324, pl.

Harden,8 according to Harden,9 and dates from the third century. There are now reasons to believe that a good part of this group's production was made in the Rhine area, but itinerant it probably was.

Be that as it may, the relation here with the Lyceus group is superficial. None of the vases of the group comes from a known context; the Italian one, however, features a Christian scene that would be unusual for the third century, and is too much out of step with the compositions usually seen on the vases of the Lyceus group. The rendering of the body, with more squarish lines, is not at all akin with this group. The late date proposed by Bertacchi is probably justified.

**Comparanda:**

1. Plate, fourteen joined fragments, found near Aquileia. H. 2.3; W. 18.5; reconstructed Diam. 28. Aquileia, Museo Nazionale, no. 533/28. Christ and apostles. L. Bertacchi, "Deux nouveaux verres," pp. 112-115; Philippe, Monde byzantin, p. 86, fig. 45; Milano, Capitale, p. 222, nos. 35/5c.


We can also mention unpublished fragments from the Toledo Museum of Art, nos. 358.853 and 80.1128, and the Corning Museum of Glass, nos. 72.1.15, 76.1.140, 79.1.295, and 64.1.52. None of them comes from a known context.

**Cat. no. 13** (Figures 66, 67). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 81.10.258. Ex coll. Charvet; gift of H.G. Marquand. Molded flat plate with a footring, colorless; iridescent; part of the footring missing. H. 1.3; Diam. 10.7; footring Diam. 5.1.

On the outside, within the footring, head with wings facing frontally. Around the ring are thirty-five tongues. The engraving is clean enough; around the incision delineating the head, the cheeks are marked by a shallow depression.

**Date:** nineteenth-century forgery.

**Bibliography:** Frohner, Collection Charvet, p. 70; Kisa, Glas, p. 666, fig. 254.

The cutting is not "right" for a Roman piece, and the figure is crammed on the underside, a spot where no Roman engraver would have put it when the entire flat surface of the vase was still completely blank. This surface was also artificially aged with acid. Such a composition is found, however, on genuine Roman glass.86

**Cat. no. 14** (Figure 68). Dept. of Greek and Roman Art, 17.194.916. Ex coll. Gréau; Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan. Two joined free-blown fragments of an unevenly flattened rim and body of a bowl(?); greenish glass. 6.2 x 7.7.

Figure 66. Plate (cat. no. 13), 19th century. H. 1.3 cm, Diam. 10.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1881, 81.10.258

Figure 67. Drawing of cat. no. 13 (Elizabeth Wahle)
Palms and vegetal motifs around an inscription framed by two lines, which reads: VIPSANIA MANSANI / MVS AEIT HALASSA / SIDI ET / HCLAVDIO AVG LEPICLE / TO.

date: forgery.

unpublished.

The grooves around the rim are very sloppily traced; on all other vases, they are always lathe-cut in a clear manner; the engraving of branches flanking the inscription are not ancient-looking. The inscription, finally, does not make any sense and is (strangely!) intact.° The cutting is clean and deep.

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abbreviations

AIHV = Association internationale pour l’histoire du verre
BJ = Bonner Jahrbücher
DACL = Dom Leclercq in Dictionnaire de l’archéologie chrétienne et liturgique
JGS = Journal of Glass Studies
KJFVG = Kölner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte
MMAB = Bulletin of The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MMJ = Metropolitan Museum Journal

notes


12. Corning Museum of Glass, no. 66.1.827; Goldstein, Pre-Roman, p. 151, no. 920, underlines the relation with obsidian vases. This reminds us that glassworkers could imitate many precious stones; Trowbridge, Philological Studies in Ancient Glass (Urbana, 1930) pp. 144–147, to which we can add Musonius, 20.4. I have made extensive use of this rich study for its philological research. Pliny does mention glass dishes imitating obsidian: Natural History, 36.198: “Fit et tincturae obsianum genere ad escaria varia [Tableware of (imitation) obsidian is made by means of coloration].”

13. Haevernick, “Beiträge zur Geschichte,” pp. 127, 130. The famous Sabian skyphoi are a clue to this. Grose, Early Ancient Glass, p. 342, favors an Italian, probably Roman, origin. This is also a possibility, when one considers the wave of Egyptianism that swept Italy in the first century.

15. This concept is based on Harden’s principles, according to which groups are to be divided by “shapes, design and techniques”; D. Harden, “The Wint Hill Hunting Bowl and Related Glasses,” JGS 2 (1960) p. 49; F. Fremersdorf, Die römische Gläser mit Schilf, Denkmäler des römischen Köln 8 (Cologne, 1967) pp. 20–21, identifies each group strictly by the technique of cutting. It is impossible to know whether one or more engravers worked within a “workshop”; they may have worked alone or with apprentices who carried out the sketch they outlined.

16. Charleston, “Wheel-Engraving,” pp. 86–87; Harden, “Ancient Glass,” p. 54. L. Sagui, “Produzione vetrarie a Roma tra tardo-antico e alto mediev.” in Paroli and Delogu, La storia economica di Roma p. 124, suggested that the cutting was done in two operations: first, the surface of the picture was merely abraded, delimiting its contour, and then a deeper incision could be made. M. Pelliot, “Verres gravés au diamant,” Gazette des Beaux-Arts 2 (1930) pp. 302–308, does not think that diamond was used in antiquity, contra Leclercq, DACL VI, 2, col. 1576, who quotes Pliny but in a context which has nothing to do with glass; A. Oliver, Rock-Crystal Vessels in Antiquity,” Muse 7 (1973) p. 32, does not exclude the use of diamond for carving rock crystal. But rock crystal is mostly sculpted in the round and there is very little similarity between the working of glass and of rock crystal. G.D. Scott, “A Study of the Lycurgus Cup,” JGS 37 (1995) pp. 60–61, fig. 23, provides a remarkable reconstruction of a workbench used for the carving of cage-cups; but such a tool, which allows for the simultaneous use of two drills, is uselessly complex for engraved glass.


18. Martialis, Epigrams, 14.115, “Calices vitrei. Aspicis ingenium Nili: quibus addere plura dum cupit, al quotiens perdedit auctor opus. [Glass vases. See the skill of the Egyptians: when he tried to adorn even more the (glass) vase, oh! how often did the craftsman lose it;]”; in the same manner, in an excerpt in Clement of Alexandria, Paedagogia 23.35: τοιχίσμων περίεργων ψυχρά, "superfluity of ornamentation on glass,” probably refers to another relief-cut glass. Froehner, Collection Charvet, p. 94, n. 4, saw a carved glass in Greek Anthology 16.89, but nothing in the poem indicates the material it is made of: Πεν', λέγει το τέρμα: "Drink" says the carving . . .

19. W. Thorpe, “The Prelude to European Cut Glass,” Journal of the Society of Glass Technology 22 (1938) p. 17, quotes Martialis, 14.102: “Accipe . . . calices . . . surrentinae leue toreuma rotae [Accept . . . cups . . . worked smoothly by a Sorrentine wheel],” and believes faceted cups are described here; but it could also be wheel-polished cast glass, as the adjective leue, “smooth, polished,” might imply; and on p. 15, referring to Martialis, 12.70: “O quantum diatreta valent . . . [Oh! how much can ‘diatreta’ do . . .]” he believes diatreta to be glass vessels; but they could also be of metal. As for rock crystal, Pliny does mention that colorless glass (in his lifetime) is very popular because of its resemblance to rock crystal (36.199: Maximus tamen honos in candido tralucensib, quam proxima crystalli simulitudine [The greatest popularity is for colorless glass, the most like rock crystal]) and it would be tempting to associate glass engraving with rock crystal cutting; but there is hardly any resemblance between carved rock crystal and contemporary engraved glassware. On rock crystal vases, see H. P. Bühler, Antike Gefässe aus Chaledonem (Stuttgart, 1966); idem, Antike Gefässe aus Edelsteinen (Mainz, 1973); and C. Gasparri, “A proposito di un recente studio sui vasi antichi in pietra dura,” Archeologia classica 27 (1975) pp. 350ff.

20. Pliny, Natural History 36.193: “Aliud torno teritur, aliud modo argentoe caelatur.”

21. Martialis, 12.74.5 and 14.94.1. He lived from ca. 40 to ca. 104. “Nullum sollicitant haes [vitrea popula] toreumata furem [these wrought-glass cups tempt no thief]; and “Plebeia toreumata vitri [plebian wrought glass].”

22. Greek Anthology, 9.776; see Trowbridge, Philological Studies, p. 54. The poet says εν δὲ με μικρή κριστάλλῳ τὸ καλὸν διαδόλου Ἀρησίνη γραψά τοῦ ἔφορον Σατυρίδος. “Satyrios wrought me on a little crystal and gave the pretty object to Arisnome.”

23. Without dwelling on this problem, painted or engraved glass
did not yet exist when the poem was written, probably in the middle of the 1st century B.C.; it therefore makes reference to another kind of glass or crystal object.


25. Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe et Clitophon*, 2.3: ὑφέλους μὲν τὸ πατὸς ἐργον ὄφρωμένη translated as “The material of it was wrought rock-crystal” by S. Gaselee (Loeb ed.). Both Trowbridge, *Philological Studies*, p. 26, and Gaselee see here a rock crystal object; but the term αὐτὸ by the time of Achilles Tatius (ca. 300) had the more narrow meaning of “glass.” C. Kondoleon, “An Openwork Gold Cup,” *JGS* 21 (1979) pp. 49-50, was right to make the connection between this text and the cage-cups. Contra M. Vickers, “Rock Crystal: The Key to Cut Glass and Diatreta,” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996) p. 51 n. 30, who thinks this was a rock crystal vase.

26. DACL, XV, 2, col. 2975: Tertullian, *De Pudicitia*, 7.1: “Procedant ipsae picturae calicum vestrorum [The same pictures are visible on your cups],” and 10.1: “Pastor quem in calice depingis [the Shepherd, whom you picture in the cup].”

27. *Liber pontificialis*, 16.2: “Et [Zepherinus] fecit constitutum de ecclesia, et patenas vitaeae ante sacerdotes in ecclesia, et ministros supportantes, donec episcopus missas celebratet, ante se sacerdotes adstantes, sic missae celebrantur . . . [Zepherinus] did (establish the custom of holding) glass patens in front of the priests, in church, and (to have them held) by assistants, who hold them while the bishop says the mass, the priests standing in front of him. This is how mass should be celebrated!” trans. from L. Duchesne, *Liber pontificialis* (Paris, 1955). This text has sometimes been construed (H. d’Escurac-Doisy, “La Verrerie chrétienne découverte à Timгад,” *Libya* 7 [1959] p. 59) to mean that Zephyrinus allowed the use of glass vessels for the liturgy; the text describes only the introduction of the use of patens, which happen to be of glass. Objects described in the many lists of donations by emperors are usually said to be of gold and silver, never of glass: Duchesne, *Liber pontificialis*, I, pp. cxlili-cxiv.


31. Digest (Roman code of law) pp. 9, 2, 27, 29: “Si calicem diatrem faciendum dedisti, si quidem imperitia fregit, damni inuria tenebitur: si vero non imperitia fregit, sed rimas habebat vitiosas, potest esse excusatus,” quoted in Trowbridge, *Philological Studies*, p. 110 and n. 27. This law was written in the early 3rd century. Vickers, “Rock Crystal,” p. 59, assumes it refers to “cage-cups,” but there is no reason to believe the law does not extend to glass engraving.

32. Contra Thorpe, “The Prelude,” p. 19. In the excavations of a glass kiln at Jalame in Palestine, G. Davidson-Weinberg discovered in the refuse pit a few engraved fragments. She supposed that these sherds were not engraved on the spot but were collected as cullets, used as a melting agent in the initial process of glassmaking. Their presence in the refuse merely means that they were rejected by the glassworkers during the sorting out of the glass fragments, collected to be remelted. See *Excavations at Jalame* (Columbia, 1988) pp. 87-102. Martial (10.3-4-1 and 1.43-5) and Statius (*Silvae* 1.6.73-74) mention the trade of petty peddlers involved in this business. Salvage and recycling were nothing new in the Roman world!

33. *Greek Anthology*, 9.753: Χλοιη κρυσταλλος υπ’ άνεροι ασκηηδεια / δεξιεν ακηραυο παναλολον εικόνα κόσμου, / σφαναν γήςας έχοντα βαρύκτυνον έυβοθα πόστων “(On a crystal having water inside) The snow-white crystal, fashioned by the hand of man, showed the variegated image of the perfect universe, the heaven, claspings in it the deep-voiced sea” (trans. by Paton, Loeb ed., 1948); *Epigrams*, 51.1: “Jupiter in parvo cum cernetet aethera uitro, risit . . . [Jupiter, when he saw the cosmos (pictured) on a small glass, laughed . . .].” 431: “Fallaces uitreo stellas componere mundo . . . [Uranus could] place deceitful stars on a glassy globe . . .].”


35. For instance, small globular bottles were left with a small neck opening through which the contents, usually perfume, were poured, and then the opening was fire-closed; C. Isings, *Roman Glass from Dated Sites* (Groningen, 1957) pp. 25-26, shape 10. A hollow ball of thick glass of early medieval date from the Newark Museum also gives a good idea of such a globe; S. Auth, *Ancient Glass in the Newark Museum* (Newark, 1976) p. 177, no. 247.

36. O. Brendel, *Symbolism of the Sphere* (Leiden, 1977), pl. 7 (Villa Albani Mosaic), pl. 9 (Urania), and pl. 17 (Apollo Kosmokrator); K. Lehmann, “The Dome of Heaven,” *Art Bulletin* 27, 1 (1945) p. 25, fig. 67; these illustrations show translucent globes with parallel lines and the line of the zodiac. They remind one of the globe set on a stand pictured on a late gold glass in the Vatican Library: C. Morey, *The Gold Glass Collection of the Vatican Library* (Vatican City, 1959) p. 5, no. 13, pl. 2, 13.

37. For instance, the author of the notice in Harden, *Glass of the Caesars*, p. 224, no. 124, citing Fremersdorf, still hesitates between Rome and Alexandria as the place of production of an obviously Italian, probably Roman, glass, the comparandum no. 2 of our cat. no. 9. The references on Alexandrian glassworks have been gathered by Trowbridge, *Philological studies*, pp. 128-130.

38. D’Escurac-Doisy, “La Verrerie chrétienne,” p. 59. wrote that “glass acquired its letters patent of nobility and Christians sought it for its own value.” In reality, glass itself was not valuable in the Roman world; its artistic treatment gave it value.

39. For instance, M. Yacoub, “Les Verres romains des Musées de Sfax, Sousse et du Bardo,” *Bulletin de l’AIHV* 6 (1971-72) pp. 68, suggested that the engraved cup found in the Antonine baths in Carthage was “used to carry the bread that recently baptized neophytes are given on Easter morning”; this is mere speculation. In fact, for all we know, even the Dumbarton Oaks cup and its coun-
terpart from Gerasa (cf. V. Elber, Berliner Museen 4 [1964] pp. 17–41), with all their religious elements related to Palestinian sites, could be, rather than true chalices, expensive souvenirs, several notches above the mold-blown glass, Menas flasks, and lead gourds mass produced for pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land. J. Engemann, “Spätantike Geräte des Alltagslebens,” Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum 15 (1972) pp. 161–164, also concludes that Roman engraved glassware was not necessarily used for the Eucharist.

40. Isings, Roman Glass, p. 117, shape 97c, cites a few examples from Gaul and Germany.


42. P. Marconi, “Vetri romani nel Museo,” Bollettino d’arte 26 (1932) p. 34, fig. 2.


44. Musée Archéologique de Rabat, handle fragment found in Thamusida. Unpublished.


46. A. Radnoti, “Eine ovale Bronzeplatte aus Regensburg,” Bayerische Vorgeschichtsbilder 90 (1965) pp. 188–244, who lists 52 such plates; quoted by S. Tassinari, La Vasselle de bronze romaine et provinciale au Musée des antiquités nationales, 29e supplément de Gallia (1975) p. 51, nos. 103, 104, popular from the 2nd to the 4th century; the older ones are in silver.

47. Alarcão, Roman Glass, p. 106.

48. The square sigma is rare before the 2nd century A.D. W. Larfeld, Handbuch der griechischen Epigraphik (Leipzig, 1903) pp. 490–503. The letters seem to be dated to his periods XVIII and XVIII.

49. Archives of the MMA.

50. Ibid.


52. Augustine, to make a point in a sermon, mentions such long-lived glasses, Sermones 17.7: “Et invenis calices [viti] ab auis et proauis . . . in quibus bibunt nepotes et proproetopes . . . [And you find [glass] cups of grandfathers and great-grandfathers of which drink grandsons and great-grandsons].”

53. I know of only one representation of this particular episode: R. Delbrück, “Notes on the Wooden Doors of Santa Sabina,” Art Bulletin 34 (1952) pp. 139–140. A panel shows the Exodus out of Egypt, the drowning of pharaoh’s army, and Aaron’s snake eating an Egyptian’s snake; all the scenes are related to the Moses cycle and so make the identification certain.


56. On the area of Cologne as origin, see Fremersdorf, Schläf, p. 31; for a 4th-century context, beside cat. no. 8, add comparanda nos. 1, 24, 26, 31, 33.

57. Comparanda nos. 1, 9, 10, 27. The only exceptions are the figures I identified as Cain and Abel (comparandum no. 1); they are wearing togas because they are (like Abraham) about to make a sacrifice (Genesis 43:4). The tree behind Abraham clearly separates the two scenes, and the sheaf (Cain’s offering) is too peculiar an object to be seen as a background filler. In front of the first figure, whatever is left could be identified as a small animal, the offering of Abel. Both offerings in the field are there to identify the figures next to them; they certainly are not the servants d’Escurac-Doisy believed them to be.

58. Cf. cat. no. 7, comparandum no. 6. The same picket border is seen on a silver plate from Cesena; see J. Salomonson, “Kunstgeschichtliche und ikonographische Untersuchungen zu einem Tonfragment in der Sammlung Benaki zu Athen,” Bulletin Antike Beschauung 48 (1973) p. 34, fig. 24b.


60. R. Barovier-Mentasti, “La coppa incisa con ‘Daniele nella fossa dei leoni’ al Museo Nazionale Cordesio,” Aquilia Nostra 57 (1983) pp. 157–172; see comparandum no. 1. Fremersdorf, Figürlich geschiene Gläser einer kühler Weltzeit des 3. Jahrhunderts, Römisch-germanische Forschungen 19 (1951) p. 24, supposed this group could be from Alexandria; this has no basis. The contention in Harden, Glass of the Caesars, p. 224, that “there is so little material that it is difficult to make a serious suggestion about the place of production” is not borne out by the fact that many comparanda consistently show Rome and northern Italy as the areas where they were found.


65. A. Rieg, Die spätromische Kunstindustrie (Vienna, 1901) pp. 171, pls. 23–1–2. See comparandum no. 9.

66. J. Matthews, Western Aristocracies and Imperial Courts, 364–425 (Oxford, 1975) p. 242 with bibl.; there are also in Rome and Ostia a number of inscriptions of the late 4th century mentioning aristocrats who were priests of oriental cults; M. Vermaseren, Corpus
76. Several emperors ruling after Constantine celebrated their vicennalia on their coinage, but among them only Constantius and Honorius actually ruled more than 20 years; Brands, "Ein Glaschalenfragment," p. 124 n. 117c.

77. For instance, Sutherland and Carson, Roman Imperial Coinage, p. 222, no. 248. In fact, he wore the diadem for the first time in 360 (ibid., p. 16 n. 112). Tedeschi, "Il vetro di 'vicennalia,'" p. 45, n. 110, considered this solution but rejected it. She noticed that the main figure is bearded, but we know that Julian was already sporting a beard before he became a Caesar; see his Missopogon, 351A.

78. A. Jones and J. R. Martindale, Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire I (Cambridge, 1971) p. 892, no. 8, a fact also noticed by Salomonson, "Kunstgeschichtliche," p. 56 n. 191, and Brands, "Ein Glasschalenfragment," p. 125 n. 121; but Brands does not choose Julian over Constantius, if I read him correctly. During his Caesarship, the name of Julian was routinely associated with Constantius's in decrees, coinage, etc. His power was at first only nominal: J. Bidez, La Vie de l'empereur Julien (Paris, 1930) p. 141.


80. On these sumptuary laws of 984, see A. Chastagnol, La Préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire (Paris, 1965) pp. 278-279, and K. Painter, "A Fragment of a Glass Dish," p. 96. It is worth noting that one will find glasses which are obviously largiones mainly in the group of the Master of the Cup of Daniel; but this engraver was probably not attached exclusively to the emperor's service; his production is too varied. See R. MacMullen, "The Emperor's Largesses, " Latomus 21 (1962) pp. 165-166, on artisans attached to the service of the comes sacrarum largitionum. See also R. Delmas, "Les Largesses impériales et l'émission d'argenterie du IVe au VIe siècle," in Argenterie romaine et byzantine (Paris, 1988) p. 116.

81. This composition, a bust facing frontally, is reminiscent of the composition on a bronze plate with the head of Oceanos in the middle and marine life surrounding it; cf. Salomonson, "Kunstgeschichtliche," p. 80, fig. 62.

82. DACL, XIV, 1, cols. 1025-1027, usually in connection with longer inscriptions.

83. DACL, XIV, 1, col. 1027, believed that IIIE was a transcription of PIE, "pioiusly" in Latin. But a simple phonetic rendition is more probable.


85. Ibid., p. 19.

86. See note 37.

87. Fremersdorf, Figúrliche, pp. 22ff., and idem, Antikes Glas, pp. 16-17.

88. Harden, Journal of Roman Studies 42 (1952) pp. 200-201. The discussion on the date and origin of this group sparked a long and lively debate among archaeologists; it was perhaps not recognized right away that engravers were itinerant artists.

89. From Xanten, B. Dollman-Schulz, Römische Gläser pp. 71-72, no. 46; from Trier, Goethert-Polaschek, Katalog p. 263, no. 1503, fig. 66.

90. I know of no inscription or inscriptions from which the forger might have drawn his inspiration.
Provincial Roman Objects in The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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About ten years ago, Michel Feugère expressed three reasons why bronze fibulae of Roman times provide a particularly interesting field for investigation: their abundance, their widespread locations, and types diversified enough to allow rigorous classification. In this paper, which is based on my participation in a symposium entitled "Migration Period Art in The Metropolitan Museum of Art," which took place in May 1995, I have chosen to discuss the provincial Roman fibulae in the Museum's collection, to establish a brief catalogue, and to open up for discussion issues of historiography and problems relating to this type of object.

It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the first important typological study of these objects was published. Oscar Almgren, its author, emphasized that the same models had circulated in geographical areas far away from one another, and he implicitly postulated the existence of centers specializing in the production and export of various types of fibulae. Not much later, Morin-Jean proposed a more complete classification, which was applicable to most of the fibulae from Roman Gaul; he also tried to establish a relative chronology based on an "evolutionary" scheme.

In spite of their imperfections, these pioneer approaches provided a chronological and typological framework for archaeologists of the first half of the twentieth century, as their own material occurred in the context of different regions—such as Pannonia, dealt with by Ilona Kovrig, Ilóya Selley, and Erzsébet von Patek, and the Rhineland, dealt with by Kurt Exner. A further stage was reached in 1956-57 with the publication by Lucien Lerat of the fibulae belonging to the Besançon and Montbéliard museums: Morin-Jean's previous typology was then much improved and applied to a broader base of documentation, which allowed for clearer chronological data. The important study of fibulae from Haute-Normandie (the region around Rouen) by Marc-Adrien Dollfus in the 1970s and several shorter catalogues were to follow the line of thought found in Lerat's publications. But meanwhile, with her study of fibulae from Switzerland, Elisabeth Ettlinger broke new ground: she chose to ignore ancient geographical denominations that seemed not to correspond with true centers of production but designated types simply by a number so that they could be evaluated in the most objective way.

A few years later, in their publication of material from Argentonagus (Argenton-sur-Creuse, in central France), Raymond Albert and Isabelle Fauduet added to the definition of types: they drew attention to the fact that the means of attaching the pin (variable in some models) could not in itself constitute a criterion for classification. At this point Feugère's contribution, mentioned above, was published. We are indebted to him for establishing the new typology, which is the primary one used today. As with Ettlinger, the classification is based on numbering types and subtypes in sequence—allowing, of course, for certain overlaps—as closely as possible to the chronological sequence; for that, the more frequently recorded associations with dated layers and grave goods are especially useful. Indeed, the breadth of the geographical area covered by Feugère—the whole of southern Gaul, including most of the principal types from anywhere in the Roman world—justifies our use of this typology in the present study.

Early imperial times are the best represented in the Metropolitan's collection, with nine or ten pieces in an eleven-piece gathering. The fibula in Figure 1 (66.152.4) belongs to the group whose pin attachments—the one shown here is broken—consist of a hinge (and no longer by a spring, as was the case with earlier types), and whose bow was replaced by a broader piece (crescent-shaped as in the Greco-Roman pelta ornament, provided with several protuberances, and including a circle). These fibulae were found in many parts of the Roman Empire; northern Gaul and Britain seem to have been the regions where relatively
Figure 1. Fibula. Champlevé enamel on bronze, H. 4.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Klejman, 1966, 66.152.4

Figure 2. Pair of fibulae. Champlevé enamel on bronze, H. 7 cm and 6.6 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum Accession, X.298.1, 2

Figure 3. Fibula. Bronze, H. 3.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1955, 55.140

Figure 4. Pair of fibulae. Champlevé enamel on bronze, eyes studded with gold, L. 4.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.147, 8

Figure 5. Fibula. Bronze, formerly inlaid with enamel, L. 5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.11

Figure 6. Fibula. Champlevé enamel on bronze, L. 4.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.194.1912
sophisticated shapes occurred (as can be seen in the Museum's example). Archaeological contexts of finds in Gaul, German Switzerland (Augst), and Britain (Camulodunum, i.e., Colchester) enable us to date the production of these items to between A.D. 30/40 and 60/70; their use, however, may have been extended to the end of the first century or even to the beginning of the second, as is suggested here by the heavy use of enameling, which is characteristic of later models.

For the two fibulae seen in Figure 2 (X.298.1, 2), the convex bow explains the conventional reference to "turtle" fibulae; the head and foot, which in other variants may be treated as reptilian masks, are indicated here simply by moldings. Otherwise, it really belongs to the diversified group of nondiscoid geometric fibulae. Here the enameled ornamentation consists of triangles and wavy lines on a partly silvered bow. The geographic range of this model was very broad: examples have also been found in Britain as well as in Gaul and also in present-day Germany, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Turkey; others have been noted at Doura-Europos in Syria and in the former Soviet Union. Archaeological contexts in German Switzerland (in Augst) suggest a date as early as the third quarter of the first century, and, in spite of some finds in later contexts, production probably ended at the beginning of the second century.

Number 55.140 (Figure 3) belongs to a general type whose production seems to have extended over a rather long period; early variants appear during the reign of Tiberius (14–37); the reign of Claudius (41–54) coincides with the apogee of the type; and evolution continues during the second half of the first century and into the second, with shapes becoming progressively more sophisticated. The bows of these fibulae, often divided in two or three segments, present an increasing number of moldings and spread outward to a greater or lesser degree. Enameling is found on the two main sections of the bow in the Museum's fibula, which is not so complex as on variants with lateral protuberances; thus, the Metropolitan's fibula might belong to the second half of the first century or to the beginning of the second. The diffusion of this type seems to have occurred in areas whose southern border corresponds with present-day Switzerland and central France.

The pair seen in Figure 4 (17.192.147, 8) correspond to one of the variants, also very prevalent, of another type. Two main subgroups should be distinguished: the bow may have a simple zoomorphic subject, or, as in the present case, a complex one, such as fighting or pursuing animals. These figures, usually flat and stylized, may sometimes be treated with greater plasticity, which is the case for one of the other Museum fibulae (see Figure 9; 47.100.18). Here in Figure 4 we have to deal with a boar followed by a dog. In spite of the fact that this constitutes a complex subject, the treatment of the boar exactly fits one of the classifications of Feugère's variants, where the animal appears alone: the outline is identical, as are parallel incisions on the neck. These characteristics seem to imply the production of a single workshop, but its location cannot be pinpointed because of the lack (at least thus far) of finds concentrated in a particular region. These objects should probably be dated between the Flavian period (the last decades of the first century) and the middle of the second century; the use of enameling is generally much less restrained in later fibulae.

Number 17.192.11 (Figure 5) belongs to a group characterized by two or three different segmented shapes. The finds of examples of this kind are also numerous and occur in a very broad geographic area. In the present case, the restrained use of enameling may again imply a rather early date—the beginning of the second century, as suggested by Ettlinger's dating of rather similar specimens found in Switzerland.

Number 17.194.1912 (Figure 6) corresponds exactly to Feugère's type 26, variant c 3 a. Within the very diversified group of geometric enameled fibulae, a particularly homogeneous series, characterized by a circular central part that has an ornament in the round (usually a fish, whose previous attachment is now marked by a hole in the Museum's example) and is flanked by two symmetrical crescents. Its spread is very broad again, from Britain and the present-day Netherlands to central Europe (Hungary); isolated finds have also been noted in Italy and Morocco. The distribution map published by Feugère, however, shows a strong concentration in the Rhineland, around Mainz: the existence of a workshop in this area is suggested, but other regions have also revealed many fibulae of this kind. For dating, one should refer again to the general evolution of the use of enameling: polychrome partitions of this kind seem to belong to the second century.

The type corresponding to number 19.192.14 (Figure 7) seems to have been rather uncommon; at any rate, it belongs to the bulk of geometric fibulae, and a late-first- or second-century date appears plausible—without being able to be precise.

Number 17.194.1917 (Figures 8a, 8b, closed and open) is not a fibula but actually a small box; however, both the format and similarity of the enameling justify discussing it here. It corresponds to a model that is known in the Rhineland, Normandy, and central
Gaul.20 Again, an approximate late-first- or second-century date is most likely.

Number 47.100.18 (Figure 9) is exceptional because of its highly plastic treatment and naturalistic rendering: combined with the expressive face of the panther, the inlaid niello spots surrounded by silver on the body lend it a truly lifelike appearance. But otherwise, the attitude recalls what is seen on much flatter and more stylized fibulae, especially from Hungary21 and Switzerland.22 An approximate attribution to the second century, for lack of examples close to this one in well-dated contexts, might again be proposed.

Number 17.192.19 (Figure 10) corresponds to a type23 that includes discoid fibulae having a figurative ornament in the round: on this example, as in most cases, the ornament is in the shape of a fish. The area of find distribution here again is very broad. In relation to the preceding models, a somewhat later date might be suggested (the second half of the second century or the beginning of the third) because on this fibula the enameling now extends to the major surface of the disk.

Number 66.16 (Figure 11) can be ascribed to the same general type as the fibula in Figure 10,24 but it does not have an ornament in the round. The piece is distinguished by its enameling, which, in addition to two concentric stripes with stars, has a central disk with a chessboard design whose every square is treated in the millefiori technique. For Switzerland, especially, Ettlinger25 mentioned the find of a fibula of this type in association with coins of the period of Emperor Commodus; it is then possible to propose an attribution to the end of the second century or to the third century if the possibility of a sufficiently long period of production is taken into account. Millefiori ornamentation otherwise constitutes, also as noted by Feugère,26 the latest stage in the use of enameling for these pieces.

In spite of its few examples, the Museum's collection seems to encompass, as has been said above, most of the period of production and use of these fibulae. Very important phases are illustrated in the collection, such as the general usage of a hinge to attach the pin, the introduction of champluvé enamel ornamentation, and its zenith represented by the millefiori technique. (I shall return to these last points below.)
The presence of some examples (see Figures 1, 2)—numbers 66.152.4 (pelta fibula) and X.298.1, 2 (turtle fibulae)—underlines the improbable character of an earlier hypothesis, which proposed that Insular Bretons, who thus would have been the only ones to practice the art continuously since the Iron Age, transmitted an enameling technique to Continental populations. The Metropolitan fibulae we have discussed might well date from the second third or the second half of the first century, and similar objects are well attested on the Continent, while other enameled models of British origin did not reach there until about the year 100.

It is also necessary to take into account the discovery of an enameling workshop from the later LaTène period (first century B.C.) at Mont Beuvray, in central Gaul. This discovery makes it possible to concede that this type of ornamentation, with Celtic roots, had progressively been diffused in the Roman world throughout the first century A.D. And it would be later, as Sabina Rieckhoff has proposed, with the arrival in the West of glassmakers from eastern Mediterranean countries, that the millesfiori technique would develop. This last supposition, however, still appears to be conjectural.

The "provincial" character of this craft can be referred, as several scholars have done, to Philostратos. At the beginning of the third century, he mentioned the use of items with a rich polychrome ornamentation—evidently enameled—by the "barbarians who were living near the Ocean." The people of western Gaul and Britain appear to be the ones he meant, but these restricted locations should not be taken literally. In fact, centers of production for most of the enameled fibulae cannot yet be localized: only for some types (see Figure 6) may the numerous finds within a restricted area suggest, hypothetically, the existence of a workshop. Extreme caution is nevertheless necessary, since it should be recalled that a localization near Namur (Belgium) finally had to be given up in spite of a concentration of noteworthy finds.

The Metropolitan Museum's collection otherwise appears to be representative enough of an increasingly marked taste for sophisticated ornamentation throughout the first three centuries, as examples reveal. We have seen that enameling plays a major part, but these fibulae have also undergone modifications in shape so as to resemble jewels rather than plain, utilitarian pieces, as illustrated in Figure 9. This special interest in adornment is also underlined by the wearing of different types of fibulae, possibly in pairs, at the shoulder and at the neckline; this is clearly shown in the figures of women that appear on sepulchral stele.

Figure 10. Fibula. Champlevé enamel on bronze. H. 9.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.194.19

from Noricum and Pannonia in central Europe. It is also important to call attention to the fact that on these monuments the dead are always represented wearing native dress, never genuine Roman attire.

Ettlinger has also suggested that these fibulae might have been invested with a prophylactic function. This use, as well as a votive one, seems to be corroborated by Dollfus's observations in Normandy and Albert and

Figure 11. Fibula disk. Millesfiori enamel on bronze, Diam. 4.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1966, 66.16
Fauduet's in central Gaul. Indeed, numerous examples in central Gaul come from sanctuaries, where they appear to have been deposited as offerings. Many other fibulae from cremation burials also bear witness to this, as their perfect preservation implies that they were not burned with the body but were later placed in an urn along with the ashes. These considerations, beyond raising typological and chronological problems, now introduce us to the complex field of social and religious contexts, which should be explored in a future study of these fascinating objects.

NOTES


2. I am grateful to Katharine R. Brown, organizer of the Museum's symposium, for asking me to participate in the symposium and encouraging me to publish this paper in the MMJ.


13. Ibid., pp. 331–335 (type 23).


15. Ibid., pp. 357–368 (type 26, subgroup e).


17. Feugère, *Les fibules en Gaule*, pp. 357–368 passim (type 26, variant c 3 a) and p. 361, fig. 55, for the distribution map.


24. Ibid., pp. 368–372 (type 27).


27. Ibid., p. 363.


30. Philostratos, *Imagines* I, 28; it should also be noted that the author mentions harness pieces and not fibulae.


33. For this fact, see also Astrid Böhme, "Tracht und Schmuck der Römerzeit," in *Die Römer in Schwaben*, exh. cat. (Augsburg, 1985) p. 117.


Ten Rings from the Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan

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My aim here is to discuss ten rings that were given to the Metropolitan Museum with a large number of objects from the collection of the late J. Pierpont Morgan. Each ring is made of metal, in different shapes and from different periods but with one point in common: the settings contain a gemstone or piece of molten glass that has been engraved as an intaglio or carved in a cameo. These pieces have suffered the same fate as many other jewels acquired for rich private collections about the turn of the century: archaeological details are scarce, and their geographical provenance—“the north of France”—is given as merely “possible.” Still, most of these rings are comparable to the type found in Frankish burial grounds. Important archaeological excavations in tombs from that period (fifth to seventh century) were undertaken toward the end of the nineteenth century in the Roman province of Belgica (now northern France and Belgium), bringing numerous and varied objects to light. The dead were usually buried with common ceramics and bits of finery—some modest, such as glass-bead necklaces or bronze buckles, and others more luxurious. The tombs of chiefs could be identified by the presence of weapons and valuable jewelry, like gold or silver buckles or gold rings. While some of these exhumed objects were placed in museums, many others were put on the antiques market to be bought by such wealthy collectors as Morgan—all the more so in that the frequently ornate settings, fashioned by talented Frankish goldsmiths, and the use of engraved stones from the Roman period made them very attractive in their own right. The disparate materials studied here will allow us to highlight one of the more interesting aspects of Roman glyptic: the way that goldsmiths responded to the increased demand for engraved stones.

The first of the ten rings I shall discuss is made of silver (Figure 1) and is flat under the finger. It widens only toward the bezel to form a large, narrow, oval surface that runs parallel to the finger. From the front, the shape of this ring is similar to rings dating from the end of the Hellenistic period and worn in the Roman world during the first century B.C. But the shape of the bezel and especially the way in which it was made rule out such an early date; in fact, a soldering line runs along the bezel on either side of the setting. The ring may possibly have been made in the nineteenth century, even though one finds similar “seams” on English rings made in Suffolk or Kent in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The ring is embellished with a flat red jasper that is engraved in intaglio. It is a Roman intaglio that has been reused; a reddish material, most likely sealing wax, fills the space between the gem and the metal oval, as the stone is too small to fit exactly. The engraving depicts a horse lying on its back, its four legs folded, its head and neck in profile, and its halter lying beside it. This motif is known in the glyptic of ancient Italy; indeed, it appears on several gems from the third and second centuries B.C. and was still employed in the first century B.C. Since jasper was often used in imperial times, this intaglio is datable to the first century A.D. The artisan who mounted the ring may have wanted to harmonize the motif of the gem with the form of the mount in which it would originally have been set.

The second ring (Figure 2) is a rich, heavily ornamented piece of gold jewelry. The inner surface, which is ribbonlike under the finger, divides into two parts and bears a large oval capsule that runs parallel to the finger. The two parts of the ring and the ribbon bear geometric designs in filigree: a series of arches under the finger, on either side of a central axis, and an assemblage of double volutes on the shoulders. This is not true filigree made with twisted wire but most likely a modern casting. The capsule is decorated from the base upward with beaded wire, a rope, and prongs bent inward to hold the gem, elements seldom used for this purpose in antiquity. The very rich design of this piece calls to mind rings ornamented with addorsed spirals in filigree, which were especially prized at the end of the Roman era, particularly among barbarian populations.

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The notes for this article begin on page 62.
The engraved gem, a carnelian, depicts Jupiter sitting on a stool (one of its feet is clearly visible). The god is in profile, his half-nude torso in three-quarter view, his left arm raised with hand resting on a patera, his right hand outstretched and holding a crook; at his feet is an eagle. The composition is very familiar in Roman glyptic. The style is classical, the god's body fluidly executed. His profile is regular and his hair, indicated by a few strokes on the top of the head, forms a scroll around his face. Only his left hand is out of proportion. The intaglio dates from the first to second century A.D.

The shape of the bronze ring shown in Figure 3 is comparable to that of Roman examples that were fashionable in the first and second centuries. Narrow under the finger, the hoop widens progressively to form a slightly elongated oval bezel into which an oval stone is set. The area around the gem is higher than the rest of the ring and is shot through with cracks, suggesting that the bezel has been reworked. The gem is a banded agate in gray, white, and brown; it depicts, in intaglio, a bird with a small round head, a full round breast, and a long tail similar to that of a parrot—or is it a sparrow or a bullfinch? The engraving is at once very deep, for the body, and shallow, for the tail and especially the claws, which are not connected to the body. Despite the roundness of the forms, the work does not seem to have been carved with an engraver's point, as one would expect on a banded stone such as this and for a design of this type. Even though the shape of the setting is compatible with the stone (material and motif), it is difficult to date this ring.

The silver ring in Figure 4 is composed of a hoop in the form of a ribbon that widens slightly at the shoulders; the circle supports a large oval bezel that runs parallel to the finger. This bezel comprises a capsule encircled by a wire rope and contains an agate. Under the bezel, the two ends of the ribbon do not meet. This type of setting appears very rarely in ancient jewelry or in tombs of the late period. The setting is most likely not of Roman date.

The banded agate is in three colors—red, translucent white, and orange—and is not a type commonly used by Roman artisans. It bears the figure, engraved in intaglio, of a standing man, nude and frontal, with his head in profile. In his raised left hand he holds a long staff, perhaps a scepter or a spear; in his right he presents an object that looks like a bow but with several strings. At his feet there is an oblique line incised in the ground; there are three small slanted grooves to either side of this line that may be the feathers of an arrow. The engraver most likely copied an image that he did not understand: the bow and arrow suggest Apollo, but in Roman gem-engraving he does not hold a scepter or spear. The figure may be Jupiter holding a scepter or spear and a thunderbolt and accompanied by the eagle at his feet. The general development of Roman glyptic does indicate, in the most recent popular works, a trend toward reducing objects and body structure into a series of barely coherent lines. This may explain the evolution we see here from a recognizable pattern to a geometric design, which has been reconstituted with errors. The style itself is surprising: the awkward silhouette, overly large head, and stiff legs are reminiscent of the engraving on fourth-century glass. It is difficult to establish a date for the engraving of this gem; it does not resemble pieces engraved in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, yet a date in the fourth or fifth century is not certain either.

The ring in Figure 5 is made of gold and is composed of a narrow polygonal hoop that widens slightly near the bezel. The edge of the oval mount is folded inward around the gem, which is a white-and-orange sardonyx cut into a truncated cone and rising significantly above the gold mount. This is a familiar form, but examples of it do not come from stratigraphic excavations; nonetheless, polygonal shapes and the use of a sardonyx cut in this way were fashionable in the third century. On the small oval that forms the top of the gem a rabbit appears in intaglio. Rabbits were not usually depicted alone but rather facing a bunch of grapes, a motif that was popular in the third century.

The gold ring in Figure 6 has a rather wide hoop under the finger, which widens and thickens as it curves upward, ending in a rectangular surface with the small sides rounded. The area around the gem forms a small, flat surface. The shape, typical of the second century and the beginning of the third, was widespread throughout the Roman Empire, particularly in Gaul.

The stone is a nicolo (blue onyx) cut into a flattened cone that protrudes above the surface of the ring. The top of the stone, which is light blue in color, bears an intaglio of a sea horse in classical style and is somewhat flaccid in form. The carving is also datable to the second to third century.

The shape of the gold ring in Figure 7 was fashionable in the first century B.C. The ring, which is fairly narrow under the finger, widens slightly as it curves upward in an almost straight line. The shoulders curve inward slightly, and the density of the bezel (3.5 mm)
Figure 1. Silver ring. Outer diam. 19.5 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.202

Figure 2. Gold ring. Outer diam. 19.75 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.210

Figure 3. Bronze ring. Outer diam. 26 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.200

Figure 4. Silver ring. Outer diam. 22.2 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.209

Figure 5. Gold ring. Outer diam. 23 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.196

Figure 6. Gold ring. Outer diam. 20.4 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.198

Figure 7. Gold ring. Outer diam. 20.1 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.211

Figure 8. Gold ring. Outer diam. 18.2 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.199

Figure 9. Gold ring. Outer diam. 19 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.207

Figure 10. Gilded bronze ring. Outer diam. 30.5 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.192.208
is not too thick for this type of ring. The bezel is flat and entirely filled by the gem. If the ring is indeed ancient, it dates to the first century B.C. 23

The stone, a sardonyx worked as a cameo, is a little smaller than the opening and has been cemented in with an unknown substance. The slightly torn metal edge has been clumsily folded over the stone. The sardonyx is in three layers: the bottom is white, the bodies of the figures are white, and an orange zone between the two white layers emphasizes the volumes. The cameo depicts Eros standing in a chariot pulled by two roosters; he holds the reins and wields a small whip. The motif of Eros as a charioteer was very popular in Roman art, whether in painting—and one thinks of the charming vignettes in the House of the Vettii in Pompeii—or in sculpture and especially on engraved gems. On the last, the animals pulling the chariot are exceptionally varied. 24 The cameo is perhaps not ancient: the way the colored strata of the stone are used rarely occurs in Roman works, and the awkwardness in the rendering of the chariot does not match Roman engraving techniques.

The gold ring in Figure 8 is composed of a thin metal ribbon, wide under the finger and wider still on the bezel, on which an oval gem is held by a damaged strip that is folded over. An irregular line of globules encircles and emphasizes the collet and carries over onto the shoulders with two fat clusters of globules arranged in triangles; on the edges of the flat bezel, at the four “corners,” is a rosette of six globules. This granulation technique was almost never used in Roman jewelry; very few examples of it are known, and seldom through archaeological excavations. 25 The taste for globules in the form of triangles or rosettes is attributable to the Roman East, 26 where such decoration appears often, particularly on pendant earrings. 27 This kind of decoration seems to have been applied to rings only at the end of the fourth century. 28

The gem is a carnelian, with an intaglio depicting a male torso in profile. The round head, classical face, and hair represented by three layers of short, regular lines are reminiscent of faces from the Augustan period. 29 The upper body is in profile and covered by a chlamys, with a fibula embellishing the rounded shoulder. Behind the head, a caduceus at an oblique angle suggests that the figure may be Mercury. 30 The engraving technique is classical, but one notices a small error, a small hollow (was it made with an engraver’s point?) that normally marks the earlobe but here figures above the lobe.

The gold ring in Figure 9 is broken on one side where the hoop joins the bezel. Narrow at first, the ring widens only slightly and bulges a little at the top to form two serpentine heads that frame the bezel, which consists of a circular capsule. A slight depression made by this circular capsule marks the area leading toward the collet, and its upper edge is bent at a right angle to secure the convex gem, an amethyst. The shape of this ring is commonly found in Roman jewelry, where the serpentine heads are rendered with varying degrees of realism. It can be dated to the third century. 33

The amethyst features an intaglio of a head in profile, with short hair and a crown. The hair is striped on the back of the skull; around the face it forms a beaded contour. The engraver also used a fine point to make the eye, the tip of the nose, the lips, and the chin; the neck ends in an inverted Gothic V. This style of beaded engraving was in fashion in the second and first centuries B.C., 34 and the use of a rounded stone is well suited to it. The head is that of a young man; because of the crown, we may—without being absolutely sure—identify him as Apollo. 35

The gilded bronze ring in Figure 10 is thin under the finger but widens and thickens on the shoulders. The circumference is polygonal, and the very slanted shoulders widen into a platform that supports the capsule containing the gem. Three broad striations, containing a few remaining traces of gilding, highlight the width of the setting; small notches border the bezel. This type of ring is well known in Roman jewelry. Archaeological excavations where it is found indicate a third-century date, as heavy rings in gold or silver are found in treasures from that period. 37

The bezel contains an orange-colored glass-paste gem meant to imitate a carnelian, on which is engraved Eros in a chariot pulled by four racehorses with raised forelegs. As mentioned above, the motif of Eros as charioteer was well known in Roman art. When he has an “ordinary” team of horses, Eros usually drives a biga rather than a quadriga on sarcophagi or engraved gems. 38 The style of this glass paste corresponds to the engraving on the stone of the Augustan period from which the image was taken. 39

We find ourselves in a difficult position, especially because the geographical origin given for these pieces of jewelry (possibly northern France) is too vague. The conclusions of this study are therefore based solely on criteria of style, shape, or technique. We can nonetheless propose a chronological order for the various pieces, sometimes by maintaining a distinction between the gem and its setting.

Certain settings are most probably not ancient, such as on the rings in Figures 1 and 2. The ring in Figure 3 may owe the oddities of its shape to a subsequent
The ring shown in Figure 4 may be ancient, but it cannot be classified as Roman. The setting in Figure 7 is surely ancient, but the features of the cameo do not seem to correspond to those of a Roman piece; we cannot explain its presence on a ring of that shape and date, as cameos were more generally used during the Empire. The other settings (see Figures 5, 6, 8–10) have shapes that are fairly typical of Roman jewelry in the third and fourth centuries.

Among these ten rings the mount and the gem itself do not always correspond. Intaglios found in Figures 1 and 2 are from the beginning of the Empire; the intaglios in Figures 3 and 4 may be later in date, from a time when glyptic studios were disappearing except near centers of power, which is to say, in the fourth and fifth centuries. The settings and intaglios in Figures 5 and 6 are of the same time, but in the settings of Figures 8–10 the intaglios are older than the mounts by two or three centuries. These last three rings are the most interesting, as they highlight the importance of reusing engraved stones, a practice that prevailed in the Roman Empire beginning in the late second century.

Indeed, as of the first century we begin to see the vogue of engraved gemstones spreading rapidly throughout the Empire. The demand for intaglios expanded geographically as this fashion spread into regions—such as Gaul, then to Britain in the middle of the first century, as well as to areas along the Danube—where the use of seals was not yet common. Before the Roman conquest, engraved gems were a rare luxury item in these regions. After the conquest, they became not only personal objects but also elements that marked adaptation to a new way of life—integration into Roman society. Engraved gems, which in the time of the Republic and the beginnings of the Empire were available only to an elite and were used primarily as seals, became more easily accessible, thereby losing their value as unique objects used for the identification of goods or possessions. At the same time, the protective properties long attributed to precious stones now became primary: an increasing number of intaglios depict figures of protective deities, such as Mercury, Fortuna, or Bonus Eventus, or animals or symbols said to bring good luck. Various circumstances favored the wider use of engraved stones: the Pax Romana increased the affluence of new social classes, and made raw materials easier to obtain. Actually, most gems, particularly the prized carnelian, came from India, although some of it was also mined in the province of Noricum. These prosperous times lasted for as long as Roman peace and power were stable enough to maintain channels of communication with the East.

By the second half of the second century, the demand was still strong—indeed, in a troubled world in which religiosity was strongly imbued with superstition, it had perhaps grown even stronger. The art of gem engraving became a standardized craft, except in the workshops that provided jewelry to the court; as time went on, materials grew increasingly difficult to obtain. Those who wanted elegant jewelry had to resort to using antique intaglios. So it is that in the tombs of the wealthy, such as the one of a woman from Annecy, France, dating to the first half of the third century, or in treasures from the middle of the third century, such as the one in Eauze, France, we find not only gems that had been engraved ten or fifteen years earlier but also some that were already one or two centuries old. These treasures provide evidence of the need people felt to hoard ancient engraved stones: unmounted gems were found in the Eauze treasure, four of them ancient.

In the fourth century the art of stone engraving was maintained in court circles and in a few large cities, perhaps Trier or Cologne in the West. Gems now arrived rarely from the East. Certainly, demand must have dropped, but there was still a wealthy clientele. Moreover, a new clientele was appearing: barbarian chieftains who had come into contact with Roman civilization—usually by meeting officers in the Roman army—soon came to see intaglios or cameos as potential marks of distinction. Treasures from the end of the fourth century, such as the one in Thetford, England, have revealed ancient intaglios remounted into contemporary rings; sometimes these stones were even recut, without regard for the ancient engraving. And barbarian tombs in northeastern Gaul, also from the fourth century, reveal the use of older intaglios on large, ostentatious rings. This custom continued into the fifth and sixth centuries and thereafter. Along with such reuse, it is possible that in cities such as Trier, a major center in the fourth century, or Cologne, known for the outstanding craftsmanship of its glass, engravers also made original creations: the intaglio of the man with the bow (?) in Figure 4 may well be an example.

It has not always been possible to retrace the history of these rings. Those in which gem and setting match can be given their appropriate place in the history of jewelry, at least for the western part of the Roman Empire. They may have been found on third-century sites or in barbarian tombs in northern France. This is, in any case, the "imaginary life" that I would propose, with reasonable certainty, for the last of these pieces, the massive bronze ring of Figure 10.


5. Patricia F. Davidson and Andrew Oliver Jr., *Ancient Greek and Roman Gold Jewelry in the Brooklyn Museum* (New York, 1984) no. 207: prongs around a carnelian decorate the clasp of a bracelet from Egypt, 3rd century; D. Schaadt et al., *Le Trésor d’Eauze: Bijoux et monnaies du IIIe siècle après J.-C.* (Toulouse, 1992) (medallions 7 and 8). On the reverse there are prongs to hold the coin, 3rd century; this kind of border was used mainly for ornaments, whether gems or coins, with relatively large surfaces.


10. For the overall shape, with no discussion of the area around the setting, see Frederick Henkel, *Die römischen Fingerringe des Rheinland und der benachbarten Gebiete* (Berlin, 1913) nos. 150ff., and Guirraud, *Intailles et camées*, pl. 67, nos. 325, 559, 713, and 826.


12. Ring, MMA acc. no. 17.192.209: Ricci, *Catalogue of Merovingian Antiquities*, pl. 16, no. 209. The outer diameter is 22.2 mm.


15. Donald B. Harden, *Glass of the Caesars*, exh. cat. (Milan, 1987) no. 127: glass from the middle of the 4th century, depicting Apollo and Diana; the awkward rendering of the bows and arrows likens it to the ones visible here.


22. Ring, MMA acc. no. 17.192.211: Ricci, *Catalogue of Merovingian Antiquities*, pl. 16, no. 211. The outer diameter is 20.1 mm.

23. Henkel, *Die römischen Fingerringe*, no. 124 from Strasbourg, no. 132 from Cologne; these rings are rare in Gaul, since they were current in the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C., and since Roman fashion spread slowly, first in the south, around Narbonne, and along the Rhine, in the 1st century B.C.

the House of the Vettii showing Eros on a chariot pulled by stags or dolphins. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Die antike Gemmen*, I, no. 442: sard, 1st century, chariot pulled by two goats.

25. Ring, MMA acc. no. 17.192.199; Ricci, *Catalogue of Merovingian Antiquities*, pl. 16, no. 199. The outer diameter is 18.2 mm.

26. Henkel, *Die römischen Fingerringe*, no. 204 from Bonn; nos. 267, 268 from Wiesbaden and Nancy: beading around the bezel and on the shoulders; no. 1820 from Coben, found with glass of the 4th century.

27. Ibid., p. 204: the author sees this as an import from the East; ibid., p. 39, fig. 18: ring from Smyrna; Marshall, *Catalogue of the Jewellery*, no. 850 from Tarsus, Turkey.


32. Ring, MMA acc. no. 19.192.207; Ricci, *Catalogue of Merovingian Antiquities*, pl. 16, no. 207. The outer diameter is 19 mm.


36. Ring, MMA acc. no. 17.192.208; Ricci, *Catalogue of Merovingian Antiquities*, pl. 16, no. 208. The outer diameter is 30.5 mm.


40. Guiraud, *Intailles et camées*, no. 279 (also Henkel, *Die römischen Fingerringe*, no. 2277): burial of the first third of the 3rd century (coin of Orbiana, wife of Alexander Severus); on a ring whose shape is typical of the 3rd century in an Augustan intaglio; on a second ring of the same shape is a medio-clone glass paste of the 3rd century.

41. Schaad et al., *Le Trésor d’Eauze*, intaglios 1, 2, 5, and 6, and cameo 7, p. 55 nn. 118-120.

42. Antje Krug, "Antike Gemmen und das Zeitalter Bernwardas," in *Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen*, exh. cat., Hildesheim Museum (Mainz, 1995) p. 162, fig. 44: ring from a tomb of the 6th century (because of its shape, the ring can be likened to the ring in Figure 2, older intaglio); fig. 45: fibula of the 7th century decorated with an ancient cameo.

43. Johns and Potter, *The Thetford Treasure*, inset intaglios or cameos: nos. 4 (1st century), 16 (2nd–3rd century), 39 (damaged and remounted as a pendant), and 41 (already recut and ready to be remounted). In the Cresconii treasure in Carthage, at the end of the 4th century, silver and assorted jewelry of the 4th century, along with two intaglios and a cameo that are older: O. M. Dalton, *British Museum. Catalogue of Early Christian Antiquities* (London, 1901) nos. 342ff.

44. Pilloy, *Études sur d’anciens liens*, pl. v (4): ring with a heavy octagonal bezel containing an engraved nicolo (a satyr) of the 2nd century; in a tomb from the end of the 4th century; pl. v (7): gold ring embellished with an engraved chalcedony (a lion) of the 2nd century; in a woman's tomb of the late 4th to early 5th century; in both cases, they are from rich tombs in Abbeville-Homblières, France.


46. Harden, *Glass of the Caesars*, nos. 117-133; the engraving technique is different, but the kind of workmanship is fairly similar: many parallel lines mark the hair and clothing; the silhouettes have greater volume, but they are often deformed, as on intaglios from the 3rd century.
Treasures from Ancient Kiev in The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Dumbarton Oaks

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The nineteenth century was the age of great inventions and discoveries, not only in the sciences but also in the humanities. In Russia the period witnessed a sudden rise of public interest in the history and archaeology of those southern territories that in the tenth to thirteenth century formed a large and powerful Slav state, Kievian Rus’ (present-day Ukraine). It was in the nineteenth century that the majority of medieval hoards known today were discovered in Kiev, the capital. The period was also marked by a passion for antiquities and unofficial excavations, which uncovered gold and silver jewelry decorated with enamel and pearls that attracted enormous interest from collectors, art lovers, and jewelers. As a result, the objects tended to disappear from their findspots. They were often sold to private collectors or reduced to bullion, and that is why the fate of many objects from Kievian Rus’ dating from the tenth to the thirteenth century remains unknown. Fortunately, some pieces entered museum collections, where they can now be studied.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has a collection of Kievan-Ukrainian treasures of great interest; comparable collections are to be found in only a few European institutions, such as the British Museum, the National Museum of Ukraine and the Museum of Historical Treasures of Ukraine in Kiev, and the Historical Museum and the Armory Museum in Moscow. The Metropolitan’s holdings contain two different groups of gold and enamel jewelry from the J. Pierpont Morgan collection, and they date from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Both groups were found in Kiev, one in 1842, the other in 1906. They were found along with other objects and were parts of larger hoards. (Some articles that were part of the 1906 hoard—for instance, the nielloed silver jewelry—entered the British Museum as a gift of J. Pierpont Morgan.) Those objects in the Metropolitan Museum are known from publications by Ormond M. Dalton, Katharine R. Brown, William D. Wixom, and Patricia S. Griffin. However, because the Museum’s collection is geographically separated from the others and because not all the relevant documentation has been discovered, neither of the two original hoards has ever been fully described in an art-historical context.

A three-month Whitney Fellowship from The Metropolitan Museum of Art recently allowed me to study works from the Pierpont Morgan collection. A comprehensive description of the collection would require the coordinated efforts of researchers examining related materials in many different institutions in both Europe and America. In this essay I offer a preliminary description of one group of Morgan pieces, one that belongs to the hoard found in the apse of Desiatynna Church in Kiev in 1842. Although this hoard was the largest and most valuable of those discovered in that city, there is little published information about it, and its history is still obscure. Nevertheless, some facts about the history of the hoard are known, and my research in American archives has revealed new information. Also, new evidence has been found that some pieces in another American museum, Dumbarton Oaks, may also belong to the same Kievian hoard. This new information is important for understanding both the cultural and the art-historical significance of the 1842 hoard.

Desiatynna Church: A Hiding Place for Kievan Treasures

The 1842 hoard was significant not only because of its art-historical and metallurgical values but also because of its findspot: the treasure had been hidden in
Desiatynna Church, the first Christian church in Kievan Rus'. The original stone structure had been built over one thousand years earlier by Prince Vladimir (979–1015), who named it the Dormition of the Mother of God. This church was meant to replace the main pagan place of worship, the Perun sanctuary on Starokiesvka Hill, and to mark the successful conversion of Rus’ to Christianity, as well as its recognition by the Christian world. To commemorate its consecration Prince Vladimir organized a great celebration and announced his wish to donate ten percent of his annual income to the church’s support, hence the unofficial name Desiatynna. Situated close to the residence of the Kievan princes, the building served as their burial place and housed the state’s important Christian relics. The interior was decorated with frescoes and mosaics and contained the essential liturgical objects for church services, such as icons, crosses, plate, and jewelry. Prince Vladimir had brought some of these items from Kherson, where, according to ancient chronicles, he had been baptized. Even after the foundation of other churches and monasteries in Kiev, Desiatynna Church remained the most significant Christian monument in the Kievan state. It embodied stability and gave the impression that it was sacrosanct. This was probably the reason why most of the known Kievan treasure—eighteen hoards, found at different times and consisting of different numbers of objects—was buried in or near the original Desiatynna Church building. All of the objects were pieces of gold and silver jewelry and were apparently hidden by local residents during turbulent periods, when this city was invaded by nomads or when it suffered domestic disturbances, especially during the final decline of Kievan Rus’ in the mid-thirteenth century.

A tragic fate awaited Desiatynna Church: it did not survive the last fight between the defenders of Kiev and the Mongol-Tatar invaders who devastated Slavic lands and besieged the city in 1240. The siege lasted more than ten weeks, and on December 6, 1240, the church collapsed, burying both the people and the treasures that were hidden there. After the city was taken, fire broke out and destroyed churches and monasteries (including their books, manuscripts, and art treasures), princely palaces, dwellings, and workshops, as well as other monuments created during the life of the Kievan state (10th–mid-13th century). Desiatynna Church lay in ruins for over four centuries. Finally interest in it reemerged, and in 1635 Petro Mohyla, the metropolitan of Kiev (head of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine), built a wooden structure, which was named Mykola Desiatynny, on the ruins of the southwestern part of Desiatynna Church.

In 1758 this building was restored by Nectaria Dolgorukova (born Countess N. B. Sheremet’eva), a nun living in the Frolovsky convent. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the possibility was raised of building yet another stone church on the ancient foundations.

ANNENKOV, THE FIRST OWNER OF THE 1842 HOARD

In the 1820s Alexander Semenovich Annenkov, a wealthy landowner in the Kursk and Orel provinces of Russia, moved to Kiev. According to a local historian, Nikolai Zakrevski, the sad remains of a decayed and abandoned church standing on the site of the first Christian place of worship in Rus’ prompted Annenkov to rebuild Desiatynna Church at his own expense. On August 2, 1828, the ancient stone foundations were blessed, inaugurating the construction of a new church of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

Annenkov not only provided financial support for building a new stone church, but he also became a supervisor of the construction and purchased a mansion nearby and the land under it; thus, one can only speculate that he expected to uncover artifacts in this historic place. He tried to prevent any official archaeological excavations on his new property and appealed to D. G. Bibikov, the governor-general of Kiev, arguing that he had personally conducted searches on the property and had not found anything other than some stones and a bell.

After fourteen years the building was finally completed (Figure 1). The new stone church was slightly smaller than its predecessor, and the altar area of the original stone structure remained standing outside the walls of the new building. Just a few days before its dedication, when some final landscaping was being carried out, a small cavity was discovered in the apse of the original Desiatynna Church. In the cavity workers unexpectedly found a huge treasure from the period of the Great Princes (10th–mid-13th century). It was made up of gold and cloisonné jewelry and gold plate. According to one of Annenkov’s servants, the find was not looted by the workers on site, as often happened with similar finds, because Annenkov had carefully placed the objects in two large sacks, which he hid in his mansion. He did not report the remarkable find to the Committee for the Research of Antiquities in Kiev, although he was one of its members. On July 19, 1842, the newly built Desiatynna Church was solemnly hailed by Filaret (1821–1867), a metropolitan of
Moscow, who had great influence on social, political, religious, and state affairs, and by his clergy in the presence of many military and civil functionaries. After the ceremony everyone was invited to a special dinner for Annenkov, who was awarded the Order of Saint Vladimir.

Not only was there no official report on the large treasure that had been found shortly before the opening of the new church, but during the second half of the nineteenth century it was not even mentioned in scientific literature describing Kievian church buildings and their antiquities—except for a very brief report by F. A. Zhil' (see below). All this suggests that Annenkov kept his secret, hoping to sell the hoard profitably in small lots. Shortly after the find, Annenkov transferred the treasure from his Kiev mansion to his newly purchased estate in Dymny, near the Slenoroda River in the Lubny district of Poltava Province. In the late 1840s he began to sell the treasure piece by piece. Although the Museum of Antiquities at Saint Vladimir University in Kiev was very interested in acquiring local antiquities, Annenkov sold small packets containing from three to eight pieces of jewelry to private collections and museums in Moscow. These included the collections of Count A. S. Uvarov, the Armory Museum, and the Chamber of Fine Arts at Moscow University. Annenkov also tried to conceal the actual date of the discovery of these pieces. Among the gold pieces bought for Count Uvarov there were two temple pendants (kolts) and one medallion necklace decorated with enamel; these were identified as finds, made between 1837 and 1840, from the burial ground near Desiatynna Church. However, the identifications seem suspect: a single gold medallion necklace would not be found in a burial because such medallions were worn in pairs. Furthermore, such a decoration was never reported as being found in any excavation of the burial place in Kiev, which is why its function has never been clarified. On the other hand, gold-medallion necklaces have never been chance
finds, as they have always been found in hoards—and exclusively in Kievan hoards. But Annenkov could not have known all these details. Besides, in his note (dated 1845) to Bibikov, the governor-general of Kiev, he declared that no finds were made on his land. Annenkov was clearly afraid that his treasure might have become known, so he started selling it farther away from Kiev and concealed the real date of the find.

Only eight years after the discovery of the "Annenkov Treasure," a brief report appeared in the archaeological literature. In December 1850, at a meeting of the Imperial Archaeological Society, F. A. Zhil' reported on the treasure Annenkov had found on his land near Desiatynna Church in Kiev, supposedly in 1847. However, he mentioned only a small group of pieces—gold and cloisonné temple pendants and a Kievan monetary ingot (grivina). This group was later presented by Annenkov to the heir to the Russian throne, later Alexander II. In May 1851 Zhil' reported on the drawings of these pieces and their supposed history at a meeting of the Section for Russian and Slavic Archaeology of the Imperial Archaeological Society, placing special emphasis on the remarkably worked Byzantine gold and cloisonné temple pendants. It was decided at the meeting to publish the drawings and their history in a volume to be entitled "A Collection of Ancient Russian Monuments." For unknown reasons, however, this volume containing drawings of the "hoard of 1847" appears never to have been published. Moreover, the group itself went to the Museum of Antiquities at Saint Vladimir University in Kiev.

What kind of person was Annenkov? According to some reports, he was a patriot who restored Desiatynna Church and cared about Christian holy treasures. But we do not know his exact motivation. What is known is that in 1850 Annenkov came under criminal investigation and was accused of counterfeiting money. While under investigation he died. His purchase of the Dymny estate was not officially approved, and so all of his belongings, including the carefully hidden treasure, went to the new estate owners.

Annenkov's heirs sued the new estate owners for the return of his property. The legal process was lengthy and cost both sides a great deal of money. The new Dymny owners profited from selling part of the treasure he had so unexpectedly acquired, mostly by gradually and secretly selling the massive gold vessels to be melted down. These vessels brought them a huge sum of money, probably several thousand rubles.

Since no depiction or description of the large golden dishes was made before they were sold, it is difficult to imagine what they were like. But, taking into account that the very presence of this gold plate in a Kievan hoard was unique, and also that the treasure was found in the first stone-built Christian church in Rus', one speculates that some of it was sacred church plate brought from Byzantium in the tenth century to decorate the church, which symbolized the new state religion. These remarkable church vessels were meant to make a strong impression on the newly converted Kievan citizens and to demonstrate the splendor of the Christian ritual.

The smaller pieces of jewelry contained much less precious metal. Also, because of their surface appearance the owners erroneously believed they were made of base gold, which is why these small objects were not melted down. When the Dymny estate owners, who were in litigation with Annenkov's heirs, also died, the property went to his relatives. These were illiterate Cossacks, who did not pay much attention to the pieces kept in sacks, assuming them to be some sort of decorations for horse harnesses. According to witnesses, most of the objects were lunate in shape. Many of them bore enameled depictions of saints, and it was proposed that they be hung on icons. However, as one of the new owner-relatives explained, "The objects had darkened, and the depictions of the saints were not clearly visible, so I was afraid that it might be the wrong gods, not ours, and I did not wish to hang them on the icons."

When V. Khvoika, a famous Kievan archaeologist, visited the Dymny estate in the 1890s, a new Cossack owner made a drawing from memory of six of these pieces in Khvoika's notebook. The Cossack also said that at the time the estate residents did not realize the significance of the pieces: the children, of whom the Cossack was one, played with them, threw them into the kitchen garden and wells, and used them to make collars for their dogs, which then lost them. Thus, a significant part of the hoard was destroyed. What the estate owners did with the remaining jewelry is unknown, but some pieces of the treasure mysteriously entered private collections. One of the persons involved is known: G. S. Kir'iatov, an art lover and collector, formerly a judge in Lubny, noted that local children were playing with some art objects and asked them to exchange their "toys" for sweets. This is how he acquired seven gold kolts—all that remained after the children's games. Later he presented some of them to the Lubny high school and some to Aaron Zvenigorodski (also known as Alexander Zvenigorodski), a collector. According to Zvenigorodski, he purchased from S. Kir'iatov two kolts and one medalion necklace.
LATER OWNERS OF PARTS OF THE TREASURE

Aaron Zvenigorodski

This wealthy collector owned one of the most famous collections of ancient enamels, which contained forty-three pieces and was unique for its variety of outstanding examples of early Byzantine, Georgian, and Kievan objects. Some jewelry from the “Annenkov Treasure” formed part of the Zvenigorodski collection, but the entire collection should be investigated because the available information regarding its history and sale is incomplete and contradictory.

Zvenigorodski developed a general interest in medieval art after a visit to Spain in 1864. Afterward he became a very successful amateur collector, and in 1886 the Museum of Baron Steiglitz in Saint Petersburg purchased his objects for 135,000 rubles. Meanwhile, Zvenigorodski continued acquiring Byzantine and Georgian enamels, and this part of his collection was described by N. P. Kondakov in 1892. After the death of Alexander Czar III in 1894, Zvenigorodski offered the Imperial Archaeological Commission the opportunity to purchase his collection, but the offer was declined. Many years later, according to the Archaeological Chronicles for 1911, the Council of Ministers of Russia was considering the purchase of the pieces that had previously belonged to Zvenigorodski and was being offered by its then owner, N. V. Miasoedova-Ivanova, a state councillor’s wife. The purchase was discussed and approved by a special commission of experts on Byzantine enamels. The Zvenigorodski collection was so outstanding that J. P. Morgan, one of the wealthiest collectors in America, became interested in it. Jacques Seligmann, his chief art adviser, wrote to him in January 1910:

In Petersburg with the Swenegorodskoy collection I have not succeeded at all; there is an unknown force which keeps the proprietor back from selling the collection at a reasonable price. My aim would have been to get this collection for you at 150 to 200,000 Roubles, which is about between 80 to 100,000$. If I say that there is an unknown force I mean that somebody must have promised to sell you the collection for this very high price and I therefore really believe, that you ought to refuse the purchase of the collection, because I have the conviction that sooner or later you will get it for about the prices I have mentioned to you.

The present proprietor always says the same thing as the old gentleman said before, that the government will buy the collection, but I am pretty sure that there are people who have opposite interests and that the government will never buy it, as the man who is the head of the government and who has to give his final consent for the purchase told me that the collection is much too dear and they have got no money to buy such expensive things.

Thus, the fate of Zvenigorodski’s collection was in limbo: it was acquired not by the state but by M. P. Botkin, another wealthy Russian collector of Byzantine enamels and other art objects. However, the core of Botkin’s collection was formed by the forty-three pieces from the former Zvenigorodski collection. Jacques Seligmann knew Botkin very well and had already explored the possibility of purchasing the collection for Morgan, but he had decided not to enter the negotiations himself, as the mere appearance of his name would have implied that Morgan was involved and might raise the purchase price enormously. Therefore, in 1910, Seligmann sent his son Germain, incognito, to Saint Petersburg so that he could discuss with a Russian aristocrat, a close friend of Botkin’s, what should be done to secure a firm price for the collection. When the price was determined, Jacques Seligmann himself went to Saint Petersburg and completed the purchase at 296,000 rubles, and the sale was registered in his name. This happened toward the end of December 1910. Thus, this most valuable collection of early Byzantine, Georgian, and Kievan enamels was acquired by Morgan, who presented two of the forty-three pieces to the Louvre, for which he was awarded the Legion of Honor.

In late December 1912, in an interview printed in the New York Herald, Seligmann said: “Nobody can imagine the beauty and rarity of Mr. Morgan’s collection. I, who have had every article in my hand, cannot find words to express its marvelous beauty and quality. No museum can compete with him. He has gathered a number of unsurpassed translucent enamels.”

Four years after Morgan’s death in 1913, his only son presented the main part of his father’s collection to the Metropolitan Museum, where it has remained ever since. It contains the former Zvenigorodski collection with its gold and enameled jewelry originating from the “Annenkov Treasure” of 1842 (Figures 2–9). Although a gold temple pendant (kolt) shown in Figures 2 and 3 is usually considered as part of the hoard of 1842, according to Zvenigorodski himself it was found in a hoard on the private estate near Desiatynna Church in 1876. One more piece in J. P. Morgan’s enamel collection is a gold medallion with the enameled depiction and initials of Christ; probably from the same hoard, it entered his collection before 1912 (Figure 10). No further details about
the place and circumstances of the original find are known, but it can be ascertained that there was a medallion in the 1842 hoard with a border of repoussé bosses around the depiction and initials of Christ. A drawing of it was in the Khvoika notebook, and its depiction was similar to that of the medallion in the Morgan collection, although the drawing is probably
not very accurate, as it was made from memory decades later. On the other hand, the medallion in the Morgan collection was identified on arrival in New York as one of the types worn by the Rus’ princes in the eleventh to twelfth century.30 This interpretation was obviously not arbitrary but was probably based on both the old Slavonic letter Ą in the initials and the findspot. Taking this into account as well as the similarity of the piece to the surviving description of the medallion from the 1842 hoard, and the similarity of its technical and stylistic features to other pieces in the treasure, one can suggest that it too originated from the same complex.

B. K. Zhuk

The name of this collector has never been mentioned in the archaeological literature or in papers concerning the applied art of ancient Rus’, but an important group of pieces from the 1842 treasure was associated with him. While living in Kiev and interacting with the archaeological world for over fifty years, Zhuk31 man-
aged to form his own collection, which included many ancient Rus' antiquities found in Kiev and its outskirts. He took the pieces with him when, in the late 1940s, he immigrated first to Austria, then to Germany.

As he was in financial straits, Zhuk hoped to sell his collection—through his friend Professor V. A. Shugaevsky—to Dumbarton Oaks in Washington.39 As the museum was interested in buying only outstanding individual pieces of Byzantine art, Zhuk submitted a pair of gold kolts, with the enameled depiction of Christ. One kolt was not in good condition and the museum wanted to purchase only the better one, but Zhuk refused to break up the pair. A private collector in London expressed an interest in buying the objects, but Zhuk decided that there they would be unavailable to the public and offered them, as a pair and at an even lower price, to Dumbarton Oaks.39 A long correspondence between Zhuk and Dumbarton director J. S. Thacher concluded in the purchase of the pair of kolts by the museum in 1950. However, the findspot was indicated incorrectly by the owner. He gave the location as Streletskaia Street, in the old part of Kiev, and the dates as about 1904-6; they were published with their erroneous dates and place (Figures 11, 12).39

Two years later Zhuk wrote again to Dumbarton

Oaks, offering some more pieces from his collection. In his letter to the director he stated: "I wanted to ask you whether your Museum would be interested in purchasing from me... a lady's gold finger ring, Byzantine in origin, with an almandine, cut in the form of a six-arm cross of beautiful artistic work. Found on the territory of Desiatynna Church (built in the 10th century) in Kiev, in a very rich treasure, where the kols were found, with the depiction of Christ, which you purchased from me..." 86

Such a finger ring and kols were not present in any of the other hoards known to have been found near Desiatynna Church. Thus, they could belong only to the lost hoard, and the hint from the then owner, Zhuk ("very rich treasure"), indicates that it might be the treasure found in 1842. One more piece of evidence can be obtained from an investigation of the kols themselves. The depictions of Christ on them are unprecedented, and there are no analogues to them in any other hoards found in Kiev. Further, this pair is unique for its color scheme. The Cossack who had drawn a few pieces of the treasure from memory in the 1890s discussed the color scheme and also pointed out that the enamel on the saint's faces "was of some dark, dark-brown color." 87 This seems to provide one more piece of evidence to place these objects as belonging to this treasure.

Thus, in the Zhuk collection there were three pieces from the 1842 treasure, of which two kols are now in Dumbarton Oaks. The third piece, the lady's gold finger ring, which had a bezel set with an almandine and its red surface cut in the shape of a cross with six arms, might have been of Byzantine manufacture. According to Zhuk it was "extraordinarily beautiful, a fine work." He suggested that the finger ring had been a gift from the patriarch or the emperor of Byzantium and belonged to the family of the ruler of Kiev. Unfortunately, the ring was not purchased by Dumbarton Oaks, and its whereabouts remain unknown.

Thus, for the first time, some connection has been established between two groups of objects that are related to the same Kievan treasure and are now in two different museums in America. These pieces of jewelry, a gold medallion necklace and the kols, are executed in a classic ancient Kievan style, characterized by the great number of birds, branches, trees, and foliate ornament in panels arranged in a geometric pattern. Some of these depictions are unique in Kievan art: for example, the scene with two birds on either side of a tree, as well as the enamel krin-shaped foliate ornaments. The krin has the shape of a lily and symbolizes natural beauty and the idea of growth and life. It is not a white garden lily, but a wild lily, which has a red bud between two leaves. The wild lily was familiar in Greek art and literature, and it was this image that became the basis of the medieval heraldic lily called the fleur-de-lis. 87 Kols with depictions of sirens (creatures with the face of a woman and the body of a bird) are very rare. The appearance of ancient Rus' sirens in a Christian context distinguishes them from both the oriental and the Greek forms. 88 The first surviving depictions of sirens produced in ancient Rus' appear on kols from the Kievan treasure of 1842 preserved in the Metropolitan Museum (see Figure 5) and in the Museum of Historical Ukrainian Treasures in Kiev (DM-6481). Only fourteen of them were found in Kiev or in the Kiev region. 89 The sirens are depicted in pairs, with a strict and handsome type of face, curls of dark hair on both sides of the head, and a symbolic crown with a colored gem in the middle. The feathers are very motley and rich. In the center of the medallion, between the sirens, there is usually a symbolic Tree of Life. The depictions of sirens vary only in the details of their headgear and the shape of the tail feathers.

This type of jewelry is often called Russo-Byzantine, but as used here the term "Byzantine" characterizes the type and quality of art, not its place of manufacture. Byzantine influence on the artistic culture of Kievan Rus' was different at different periods, and although the two cultures were closely connected, the development of art in Rus' was a result of its own background and culture. Byzantium supplied the craftsmen of ancient Rus' with Christian iconography and favored development of the art of the miniature, especially the enameled-gold technique. The second iconographic source providing an abundant scope for fantasy in ancient Rus' art was the East, which supplied Rus' with various objects of oriental culture, such as silver, tapestries, rugs, ceramics, and metal, along the trade routes, via western Asia and the Caucasus.

Since the eleventh century, local architects, painters, and goldsmiths had prospered in Kiev. The numerous treasures of medieval Kiev hidden in the ground indicate through the shape of their jewelry, style, and subjects that Kiev developed its own goldsmiths' workshops and traditions out of its Byzantine heritage. The remains of jewelry workshops, with tools and bits of enamel, were found on the grounds of the princely palace in Kiev. 90 Among the items found was an iron form that was used to make each half of a kolt's convex section and a bronze pattern with a cutout openwork depiction of two birds flanking a tree that was used as a model in preparing the gold sheet (Figure 4). 91 This matrix fits the depiction on one of the kols from the Museum (Figure 2). An analogous
pair of kots was found near Desiatynna Church in 1876 and then entered the private collection of B. Khanenko. The findplace supports the belief that kots of this type were manufactured in a goldsmith's workshop belonging to the princely court of ancient Kiev.

No exact copy of a Byzantine object has been located in the Kievan jewelry that has been found. Furthermore, no hoard of this period has been discovered in Constantinople containing pieces manufactured in local workshops. Unlike Kievan jewelry, the Byzantine pieces of the same period (including earrings, rings, crosses, cameos, steatite icons) are not clearly tied to any particular center of manufacture. One can discern a difference only in the quality of manufacture among groups of gold jewelry with enamel, pearls, and gems. Nevertheless, Byzantium played an important role in the art of ancient Rus'.

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NOTES


3. Vladimir the Great, or Saint Vladimir, introduced Christianity and Byzantine culture into Kievan Rus', built the first stone Christian church (Desiatynna), and organized the first schools in Kiev.

4. In Slavonic languages the term desiatynna derives from the word desiat/desiatina, i.e., ten/one-tenth. The practice of tithing for church needs was a Christian tradition: it is mentioned in the Old Testament, among other customs and laws (see Genesis 14:20; 28:22; Numbers 18:21, 25; 28:21; Deuteronomey 12:6, 17; 14:22, 28; 26:12; Nehemiah 12:44).

5. Petro Mohyla was an outstanding religious, political, and cultural activist of Ukraine during the first half of the 17th century. In 1627 he was elected metropolitan, or head of the Orthodox Church, in Ukraine.

6. In the 1820s, on the initiative of E. Bolkhovitinov, the Kievan metropolitan, work began on clearing the ancient foundations that led to their investigation.


8. Opyt Moskovskoi Orazheinoi Palaty (Moscow, 1884) pp. 156, 157, nos. 3385, 3386, p. 78, figs. 9, 10; "Rossiiskii Istoriicheskii Muzei," Ukazatel' Pamiatnikov (Moscow, 1893) p. 532; Katalog Sobraniia Drevesstoi Grifi A.S. Uvarova (Moscow, 1907) parts IV–VI, pp. 181, 182, ill.

9. Gold-medallion necklaces were found in seven hoards from Kiev, but not all of them were complete pairs (Korzukhina, "Russkie Klady," hoard nos. 65, 88, 99, 95, 102, 108 [all found in Kiev] and 127 [found near Kiev]).

10. List of meetings of the Imperial Archaeological Society in 1850 (Saint Petersburg, 1852) p. 133 (10th meeting on Dec. 11), in Zapiski Imperatorskogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva III (Saint Petersburg, 1851).

11. List of meetings of the Section of Russian and Slavonic Archaeology, VIII, p. 33 (May 18, 1851), in Zapiski odseleminia Russkoi i Slavianskoi Arkeologii Imperatorskogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva I (Saint Petersburg, 1851).


15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p. 94.


18. Kondakov, Geschichte und Denkmäler.

19. MMA, acc. no. 17.190.670–678; correspondence in file marked Edward D. Adams on the Swenigorodskoi enamels in the archive of the Department of Medieval Art.

20. The commission included academician in painting M. P. Botkin; a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, N. P. Kondakov; the director of the Saint Petersburg Archaeological Institute, N. V. Pokrovski; the keeper of the Imperial Hermitage, Ia.
I. Smirnov, a member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, B. V. Farmakovski; an ex-officio member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission and State Council, B. I. Khanenko (Arkheologicheskaiia khronika 39 (Saint Petersburg, 1911) p. 169).


22. Collection M. P. Botkine (Saint Petersburg, 1911).


25. Seligman, Merchants of Art, p. 72; pls. 8a–8d.


27. Ibid., "Introduction."

28. MMA, acc. no. 17-190.2098, Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters.


31. Borys Kas'ianovych Zhuk, born in Kiev in 1878, graduated from the Peter Academy and the Archaeological Institute in Saint Petersburg. In 1921, as an expert, he worked in the Kiev Archaeological Museum and gave a course on applied art in the Archaeological Institute in Kiev. In 1937 he worked on museum reserve collections not only in Kiev museums but also in the museums of Vinnytsia, Berdyichiv, Maryupil', Poltava, etc. He also directed the investigation and withdrawal of items that had museum value, from closed prayer houses in Poltava Province, before they were transferred to the museum in Vinnytsia. From 1938 to 1943 he directed the scientific work at the Museum of Ukrainian Folk Art (Kiev) and was a scientific consultant for estimating the scientific and art historical significance of the reserves of the State Cultural-Historical Reservation.


37. Nikodim P. Kondakov, Ocherki i zametki po istorii srednevekovogo iskusstva i kul'tury (Prague, 1929) pp. 127, 324, 339.


39. Korzukhina, Russkie kldy, hoard nos. 65, 67, 90, 98, 102 found in Kiev; Kievski kolt no. DM-7070 now in the Museum of Historical Treasures of Ukraine; hoard no. 127 found in Kiev region, and hoard no. 137 found at Myropol', Zhitomir Province, Ukraine.

40. Viokolla V. Khvoika, Drevnie obitately Srednego Pridniepr'ya i ikh kul'tura v doistoricheske vremena (Kiev, 1913) pp. 71–75; Mikhail K. Karger, Drevni Kiev (Moscow/Leningrad, 1958) I, p. 295.


ROMAN SCULPTURE of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the time between the death of Michelangelo in 1564 and the rise of Bernini about 1618, has been largely neglected by art historians. Rudolf Wittkower’s famous and often-quoted statement that “sculpture in Rome had reached a low-water mark during the period under review” can be considered one of the reasons why artists of the so-called transitional period and their oeuvre have fallen into oblivion.

This fate befall a very fine marble bust of a veiled woman that is on display in the Kravis Wing of the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 1-3, 6, 15). It is the portrait of a woman in her late fifties or early sixties, captured in a serious and pensive mood. The slightly bowed head, with the artistically draped veil and mantle, suggests a mood of calm and controlled sorrow—a characteristic demeanor for a woman of noble birth. This representation of inner feelings is mastered by the artist through his technical virtuosity, especially evident in the delicate modulation of the face. His portrayal of varying textures, such as the contrast between the rough fabric of the veil and the smooth skin, shows a high level of talent (Figures 2, 6).

The woman’s costume immediately calls to mind Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s (1598-1680) portrait bust of Donna Camilla Barberini, the mother of Pope Urban VIII Barberini (r. 1623-44), today in the Statens Museum in Copenhagen (Figure 4), as well as that of Olimpia Maidalchini by Alessandro Algardi (1598-1654) in the Palazzo Doria Pamphilj in Rome (Figure 5). Although the New York bust belongs to the same tradition, it is clearly not a work by either of these two major Baroque artists. The formal and stylistic representation of female beauty is instead comparable to the work of Ippolito Buzio (1562-1644), a sculptor who belongs to the large group of little-studied artists active in Rome about 1600.

The earliest source for Buzio’s life and work is Giovanni Baglione’s Vita of 1643. Baglione’s account was recently augmented by Sylvia Pressouyre in several comprehensive studies. Buzio was born in 1562 in the small Lombard town of Viggìu, near Lake Como. The date of his arrival in Rome is unknown, but it was most likely in the early 1590s. Buzio’s first documented assignment was the travertine figures of Peter and Paul for the facade of San Paolo alle Tre Fontane. The sculptures were commissioned by Pietro Aldobrandini, a nephew of Pope Clement VIII (r. 1592-1605), in 1599. Two years later Buzio carved a statue of Saint James for the Salvati Chapel in San Giacomo degli Incurabili. Over the next few years, he again worked for the Aldobrandini family, but now mainly for Pope Clement VIII, who engaged Buzio to work on the transept of San Giovanni in Laterano, as well as on the Aldobrandini Chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. After the death of Clement VIII, Buzio received commissions from his successor, Pope Paul V Borghese (r. 1605-21). Between 1610 and 1616, Buzio finished two narrative reliefs for the tombs of Paul V and Clement VIII in the Cappella Paolina in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. One relief depicts Pope Clement VIII negotiating a peace treaty between Philip II of Spain and Henry IV of France; the other represents the coronation of Paul V, for which Buzio also executed the flanking caryatids (Figure 8).

The caryatids in the Pope Paul V tomb share the same round facial features with the bust belonging to the Metropolitan Museum (see Figures 1, 6). Similarly, the statue of Prudence (Figures 7, 9, 14) in the Aldobrandini Chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva has the same sensitively modulated skin, and the linear shape of the lips and eyes is identical. The virtuoso treatment of textiles can be observed again in the robe of Pope Clement VIII in the Aldobrandini Chapel (Figure 10). The realistic representation of converging folds of material in the Metropolitan bust is also present in the masterly depiction above the pope’s right knee. This comparison between the bust and those works executed by Buzio in Rome seems to leave no doubt that the New York portrait was made by the same artist.

Having resolved the question of the bust’s authorship, we may now attempt to determine the woman’s identity. We have already seen that Buzio received his
Figure 1. Ippolito Buzio (1562–1634). Portrait bust of Luisa Dei, 1604. Marble, H. 60 cm (without base), W. 52 cm, D. 23 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Arnold Seligmann, Rey and Co., 1921, 21.59
Figure 2. Detail of bust in Figure 1

Figure 3. Alternative view of bust in Figure 1


Figure 5. Alessandro Algardi (1598–1654). Portrait bust of Olimpia Maidalchini, ca. 1647–50. Marble, H. 70 cm. Rome, Palazzo Doria Pamphilij (photo: ICCD)
Figure 6. Detail of bust in Figure 1

Figure 7. Detail of figure of Prudence in Figure 9

Figure 8. Ippolito Buzio. Relief of the coronation of Paul V flanked by caryatids, 1612–15. Marble. Rome, Santa Maria Maggiore, Pauline Chapel (photo: ICCD)
most important commissions from the Aldobrandini family. It therefore seems quite possible that the sculptor also made portraits of family members. The mother of Pope Clement VIII, Luisa Deti, who died in 1557, seems to be the most probable candidate. This hypothesis is confirmed by a document of September 10, 1604, concerning the Aldobrandini Chapel, that Sylvia Pressouyre published in 1971: “... et un retratto della bona memoria dell’Illustissima Signora Lesa Deti madre della Santità di Nostro Signore di marmo novo fatta da mastro Hipolito Butio, et il sudetto ritratto hoggi si ritrova in casa del sudetto mastro Hipolito, ...”

This passage suggests that the posthumous portrait of Luisa Deti was meant to be installed in the Aldobrandini Chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The reason why the bust was never installed in the chapel can be explained only by changes in the plans. Today the two tombs of Pope Clement VIII's parents are the main elements of the lateral sides of the Aldobrandini Chapel. On the right side of the entrance is the reclining figure of the pope's father, Silvestro Aldobrandini (1499-1558), which was carved by Nicolas Cordier (Figure 14); on the left is the recumbent figure of Clement's mother, Luisa Deti, by the same artist (Figures 11, 12). In available documents we find that the preliminary plans for the tombs differ distinctly from their actual appearance.

In 1587 Cardinal Camillo Aldobrandini, who became Pope Clement VIII, purchased the chapel from the Orsini family. The renovation and decoration began thirteen years later, in 1600, under the direction of Giacomo della Porta (ca. 1540-1602) and continued after his death by Carlo Maderno (1556-1629). The splendid sculptural decoration was executed by artists who had already worked for the pope at San Giovanni in Laterano. Aside from the two monumental tombs with the reclining figures and pairs of allegorical statues, there are four statues in the corners of the back and side walls. Federico Barocci's altar painting of the Last Supper is flanked by Camillo Mariani's (1556-1611) apostles Peter and Paul. On the left side wall is Buzio's statue of Pope Clement VIII (Figure 10); on the right side wall is a statue of Saint Sebastian by Nicolas Cordier (Figure 13). Under these statues are four round niches that were reserved for busts of family members. In 1604 most of the sculptural decoration was finished and in place. On August 5 of the same year, Clement VIII visited the chapel and decided that the recumbent figure of his brother Cardinal Giovanni should be replaced by one of his mother, and the commission was given to Nicolas Cordier. It is therefore evident that the change of...
plans took place in August 1604. The statue of Giovanni Aldobrandini by Ambrogio Buonvicino (1552–1622) was removed in 1604 and is now lost.19

It seems clear that after the decision was made to use a monumental figure of the pope’s mother, the preliminary plan to install her bust became superfluous and was therefore rescinded in August 1604. As the Aldobrandini family had no further use for this bust, it languished in Buzio’s workshop.20

Although the portrait was never installed in the chapel, it is today still possible to identify the intended niche for this bust. Aside from the two monumental tombs for his parents, Clement VIII decided to immortalize four other family members by placing portrait busts in the round niches under the statues in the corners of the back and side walls.21

The round contour of the frontal view of Luisa Deti’s bust (Figure 1) and the convex form of the profile view (Figure 15) indicate that the portrait would fit perfectly into one of these niches (Figure 13).22 After the pope rejected the reclining statue of his brother, Cardinal Giovanni’s portrait bust was installed in the niche—under the statue of Saint Paul—originally intended for that of his mother. The porphyry torso of Cardinal Giovanni visibly differs from the marble versions of his brothers (Figure 13),23 while the Metropolitan Museum’s marble bust of Luisa Deti matches perfectly those of her sons in the Aldobrandini Chapel in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome.

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NOTES


5. Along with Ippolito Buzio, the most important artist during this period are Ambrogio Buonvicino (1552–1622), Nicolas Cordier (1567–1612), Stefano Maderno (1576–1636), Camillo Mariano (1556–1611), and Giovanni Antonio Paracca da Valsoldo (act. 1572–1628).


Figure 15. Side view of bust in Figure 1

8. Baglione, Le vite, p. 341; Pressouyre, Nicolas Cordier, II, pp. 438–439, cat. no. 61, figs. 309–311; Fruhan, Trends, p. 159.

9. Baglione, Le vite, p. 341; Pressouyre, Nicolas Cordier, II, fig. 318; Fruhan, Trends, pp. 159–162.

10. Baglione, Le vite, p. 341; Pressouyre, Nicolas Cordier, II, fig. 306; Fruhan, Trends, p. 159.


13. "... and one portrait for the dear memory of the most honored Signora Lea Deti, mother of the Holiness of Our Father, made of new marble by master Hipolito Buzio, and this above-mentioned portrait is now in the house of the above-mentioned master Hipolito," Archivio Aldobrandini, Cappelian, 10. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, fol. 52r. See Pressouyre, "Actes relatifs," p. 201; idem, Nicolas Cordier, I, p. 248.


18. "Roma 7 Agosto 1604. Nella Minerva quando vi fu l'altro hieri Nostro Signore diele ordine che dalla sua capella si levasse la statua del Cardinal Giovanni posta incontro a quella del Signor Silvestro suo padre, et che si metta quella della Signora Lisa Deti sua madre, et che si rafficino meglio le statue di San Pietro, et di San Paolo per le mani di quello scultore Lorenese, che andò Sua Santità à veder più giorni sono fin à casa" (In the Minerva, where He had been the day before yesterday, Our Father gave the order to remove the statue of Cardinal Giovanni from his chapel, which is located on the opposite side of [the tomb of] Signor Silvestro, his father, and there should be installed the one [figure] of Signora Lisa Deti, his mother, and that the statues of Saint Peter and Saint Paul should be improved by the Lorenese sculptor [Cordier], whom the Holy Father visited a few days ago in his house). Biblioteca Vaticana, Urb. lat. 1072, Avvisi sacri 1604, fol. 408r. This document was previously published by Ermete Rossi, "Roma ignotata," in Roma: Rivista di studi e di vita romana 13 (1935) pp. 35–36, and by Pressouyre, Nicolas Cordier, I, p. 247, doc. no. 49.


21. See note 23.

22. The diameter of the niche is 66 cm and its depth is about 20 cm. The comparison with the measurements of the bust also confirms that it was the intended place for the marble portrait of Luisa Deti.

23. It has not been possible to identify the other three brothers as only Giovanni's bust has an inscription. See Pressouyre, Nicolas Cordier, II, pp. 453–455, cat. no. 78, figs. 316, 317; for Cardinal Giovanni, see August Griesebach, "Römische Porträtausflagen der Gegenreformation," in Römische Forschungen der Bibliotheca Hertziana XIII (Leipzig, 1936) pp. 118–119; see also Pompeo Litta, Aldobrandini, in Famiglie celebri d'Italia VII (Milan, 1838) pl. 11.
Flemish Harpsichords and Virginals in The Metropolitan Museum of Art: An Analysis of Early Alterations and Restorations

STEWART POLLENS

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s collection of Flemish harpsichords and virginals includes a double virginal by Hans Ruckers dated 1581 (Figures 1–3, 6, 7), a virginal of 1622 by Ioannes Ruckers (Figures 8–16), a two-manual harpsichord (converted from one manual) by Ioannes or Ioseph Ioannes Couchet dating from about 1670 (Figures 17–22), and a double virginal by Lodewijck Grouwels dated 1600 (Figures 26–31). Since 1985 the Museum has had on loan from the collection of Hugh Gough a two-manual harpsichord (originally a transposing double, later converted to an “expressive” double) by Ioannes Ruckers, dated 1642 (Figures 23–25). The repairs and alterations on these instruments reflect changing musical requirements, such as the need for wider keyboard compasses and rising pitch. A number of analytical techniques have enabled the author to reconstruct lost parts, to determine where certain restoration work was undertaken, and to attempt to resolve issues regarding compass, scaling, and disposition that have been the subject of debate for the past twenty years.

1581 Double Virginal by Hans Ruckers

This virginal (Figure 1) is one of the earliest known Flemish keyboard instruments and the earliest surviving instrument by the Ruckers family. Made only two years after Hans Ruckers the Elder (ca. 1533/35–1598) officially entered the Guild of Saint Luke, Antwerp’s guild of artists and artisans, this virginal was an ambitious early undertaking, for it is an instrument of unusually complex construction. It consists of a six-voet virginal in muselar form (that is, with jacks plucking close to the midpoint of the string rather than at an end point, as in the spinett virginal by Grouwels in Figure 26) coupled with an independent octave virginal, termed scherpen (a compromise between muselar and spinett forms), which is stored in a compartment to the left of the main instrument’s keyboard. The letters M and K, sometimes found on various case parts of respective component instruments, confirm the early designations of moeder (mother) and kind (child); the instrument in its entirety being called de moeder met het kind (the mother with the child). The octave virginal could be played as a completely separate instrument, either by removing it from its compartment or by withdrawing it slightly and playing it in situ; additionally, the jack rail of the mother could be removed and the octave virginal placed above the main keyboard. In this configuration, the jacks of the mother instrument are oriented beneath a slot in the octave’s bottom board, and when the keys of the mother are played, its jacks then operate the octave virginal’s key levers, providing the main instrument (sounding at eight-foot pitch) with a harmonically enriching four-foot choir of strings. Conventional muselars and spinetts lack strings at four-foot pitch, so the double virginal has the capability of producing the richer timbre of a harpsichord fitted with eight- and four-foot strings. With the octave virginal located above, the instrument could also have been used as an “expressive” double, a rare configuration in Flemish instruments through the seventeenth century, as double-manual harpsichords made in that region and at that time were more generally fitted with transposing keyboards oriented a fourth apart. Thus, Flemish two-manual transposing harpsichords were really two independent, single-manual instruments of limited expressive capacity (each keyboard having one eight-foot and one four-foot set of strings as well as single registers of jacks for each choir). Almost all of these early transposing instruments were later converted into “expressive” doubles, relinquishing the transposing feature and being refitted with aligned keyboards, an additional choir of eight-foot strings, and other features that provided a greater variety of timbres and contrasting effects on different manuals.

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The notes for this article begin on page 109.
Figure 1. Hans Ruckers the Elder (Flemish, ca. 1535/35-1598). Double virginal in *muselar* form, 1581. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of B. H. Homan, 1929, 29.90

Figure 2. Detail of soundboard in Figure 1, showing the *arpichordium* battens

Figure 3. Detail of key front in Figure 1, showing Hebrew lettering
The 1581 virginal is fitted with a divided arpi-chordium stop consisting of two battens, positioned against the right bridge, which have a series of brays, or hooks, that can be brought into position against the strings (Figure 2) to produce buzzing sounds when the strings are plucked (a tonal characteristic especially enjoyed in the Renaissance). These hooks had to be of a soft, nonspringy material so that they could be carefully regulated to produce the desired effect. Energy-dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (EDS) indicates that these hooks are mainly of lead, with a small amount of tin (98.5 percent lead to 1.5 percent tin by weight).

In addition to the virginal's special musical features, its case decoration is notable in that the finely wrought arabesques and geometric strapwork are entirely hand-painted, whereas most of the later Ruckers and other Flemish instruments are decorated with block-printed papers (the double virginal by Lodewijck Grouwels is another exception; see below). Even the rosettes are of hand-cut parchment, while later Ruckers instruments typically have gilt, cast-lead rosettes (analysis of the metal of one of these rosettes is given below). The natural key fronts are decorated with embossed leather. Where the leather has been abraded or fallen off, one can see a parchment backing, originally dyed red (now faded), with Hebrew writing showing through (Figure 3). Similar backing can be found in some other early Ruckers instruments, as well as in the late-sixteenth-century virginal by Martin Van der Biest, now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. The significance of this is not known; however, as of 1584 the Ruckers workshop was located on the Jodenstraat (or Jodestrate), and it is possible that discarded Hebrew manuscripts were the source of the material. On the nameboard can be found gilded plaster casts of medals of Philip II of Spain and Anne of Austria; that of Anne (Figure 4) was cast from a medal designed in 1570 by Gianpaolo Poggini (1518-1582), while that of Philip (Figure 5) is a casting made from a medal struck by Poggini in 1559. These medallions may signify that the 1581 double virginal was a presentation piece from the king of Spain (at the time the Ruckers instrument was made, Flanders was under Spanish rule, and in 1557 Philip II engaged Poggini to redesign the Flemish coinage). Surrounding the medallions are decorative painted borders with a green glaze of copper resinate.

Thus, the 1581 instrument is notable for a number of reasons: it is the earliest known work of the most famous family of Flemish harpsichord and virginal makers; it is of unusually complex mechanical design; and its intricate decoration is uncharacteristically hand-painted. Furthermore, the instrument has escaped major alterations, procedures that typically obscure original features of an instrument and even cause the loss of original material, especially the ephemeral parts (such as wire, quill, keycloths, action cloths, dampers, and so on), which are so vital to our
understanding of how an instrument was intended to sound and be played. In addition to having its original compass and scaling essentially intact, this double virginal has, for example, a number of dampers that may be original, and they are quite unusual in that they are of soft leather rather than of cloth (Figure 6).

When the instrument entered the Metropolitan Museum, two of the short-octave notes were fitted with strings of twisted design. No samples of such strings have survived from this early period, and the possibility that they may have been old or reconstructed after original ones raises new questions about early keyboard stringing practices. Unfortunately, these strings were removed and discarded shortly after the instrument arrived at the Museum. It is fortuitous that photographs of the soundboard were made prior to the removal of the strings, because they have permitted the reconstruction of diameters and twist rates, discussed in detail below.

Early accounts of the discovery of the 1581 double virginal provide valuable information regarding the condition of the instrument when it was found and are of some assistance in determining the age of some of its parts. In 1916 a correspondent from Peru published a notice in The Connoisseur, stating:

... a Peruvian friend of mine has discovered in this country an old Flemish spinet or harpsichord of absolutely unique interest, as far as he has been able to discover. I have got from him a photo of it, as I think it will be of great interest to readers of The Connoisseur and to everybody interested in the history of musical instruments. This spinet is signed "Hans Ruckers me fecit 1581." Now, according to Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (Macmillan, 1908), the oldest of the twenty existing instruments by this famous Antwerp maker, Hans Ruckers the Elder, in the Musée du Conservatoire, Paris, bears the date 1590, so this spinet is the most ancient Ruckers instrument in the world by nine years. It is in a very good state of preservation, and its tone is perfectly preserved. It bears, just over the keyboard, as can be seen in the photo, plaster portrait medallions of Philip II and his fourth wife, Doña Ana de Austria. Of its authenticity there can be no doubt. It was found in the chapel of the hacienda (country estate near Cuzco), which belonged in the colonial days to the Marquises of Oropesa, descendants of the Incas. The case, which is a very plain one outside, had evidently not been open for years, as the sacristan believed it to be an old empty candle-case. On the interior of the lid, as can be seen in the photo, is painted a sort of fête champêtre, in sixteenth-century costumes, on an arboured terrace near a castle: but this painting, which, as far as can be judged by the photo, is
somewhat stiff, is not signed. There are also paintings of flowers on the soundboard of the spinet, as was usually the case with these instruments.

Regarding the soundboard painting, identification of the pigments by polarizing light microscopy and EDS elemental analysis yielded the following results: the red flowers are vermilion mixed with a lake, possibly madder; the yellow flowers are orpiment; green stems and leaves are small mixed with lead-tin yellow and a small amount of malachite; the blue border is smalt.

Thirteen years later, this instrument was acquired by the Museum and was the subject of an article by James J. Rorimer, then curator of medieval art, published in Metropolitan Museum Studies. In the article, Rorimer indicates that when the Ruckers double virginal was received at the Museum it was in poor condition. Much of the wood had been destroyed by borers. The lid was so honeycombed that it was hardly more than a shell. But fortunately, as most of the damage was internal, the painting and the mechanism were largely undamaged. One serious difficulty was encountered—it was impossible to tell whether the action of the borers was continuing. The virginal was kept under observation for several months while it was undergoing general restorations. Crude hooks which had been driven through the painting had to be replaced and the cavities caused by the borers filled with plastic wood. After a thorough fumigating of the virginal with carbon disulfide gas (the virginal was placed in an air-tight container and exposed to these poisonous fumes for two weeks) to destroy the borers, which were found to be still active, the work of restoration was completed. It might appear from the foregoing indications that the Ruckers double virginal of 1581 was in an inordinately bad condition. A comparison with the other three specimens [of double virginals], however, would show this to be an erroneous conception. Actually, the instrument was received in a comparatively good state, from the museum point of view, since it had never been subjected to serious restoration. The Crosby Brown instrument [by Lodewijck Grouwels, dated 1600; see discussion below] has an entirely new ottavina, which was made in 1896 by Arnold Dolmetsch of London, and in addition has undergone other considerable reconditionings, including a repainting of the ornament and a late varnishing which has darkened with time. The paintings on the Skinner double virginal [by Hans Ruckers, dated 1591] are of a later date than the instrument itself. On the Ruckers instrument of 1581, the jack rail for the main spinet is the only part which has had to be replaced, and this was copied from the original one belonging to the ottavina.

The actual condition of the Ruckers double virginal can be seen from the illustrations. The case when closed is a simple oblong pine box six feet long, nineteen and one-half inches wide, and eleven inches high. With the exception of the original ornamental wrought iron hinges, of which several are still in place, there seems to have been no exterior decoration except a covering of dark paint. On the other hand, the interior is as elaborate as the exterior is simple. The cover (now split in two places) was made of a single thin pine board and was decorated in bright tempera colors with scenes of a garden party. The drop board, as was customary, bears a Latin inscription: MUSICA. DVLCE. LABORVM. LEVAMEN ("Sweet music eases work"). The sound board is sparsely painted with occasional flowers, pea pods, fruits, and a bird. On the sound board are two gilded roses of geometric type. They are surrounded first by a border of red, and then by a large circular band of ornament in grisaille like that which is used on other parts of the sound board. The string box, as shown in the illustration, bears the initials of Hans Ruckers and his cipher in an escutcheon. Usually his initials are introduced in the rose ornament. Ornamentation of a type characteristic of Ruckers's instruments is freely painted in yellows and white on a black background. In the Ruckers double virginal of 1581 the ottavina is at the left of the main keyboard. The Skinner specimen also has the left ottavina. The two other double virginals have their removable spinets at the right. Both the large virginal and the removable virginal of the museum's new accession have the original white naturals and black sharps, giving three octaves and a fifth. There are also a few old strings, and most of the original jacks are still in place.

This last sentence leads us back to the illustrations accompanying the Rorimer article. Figure 6 (here Figure 7) in the 1929 article clearly shows two strings that are twisted; the lowest string of the main instrument (corresponding to C/E) has a high twist rate, and another (corresponding to E/G#) has a less extreme twist rate. As stated earlier, the twisted wires observed in the photographs made that year have not been preserved, but the Metropolitan Museum's Photograph Studio still possesses the original 8-by-10-inch black-and-white negatives made at the time Rorimer's article was written. One negative, a detail of the soundboard of the main instrument (Figure 7), was used to make a life-size enlargement, using the actual dimensions of the rosette as a guide in scaling up the negative. String diameters were measured directly from this enlargement using a microscope (40X) fitted with a stage micrometer graduated in hundredths of a millimeter. An eyepiece with a crosshair was used to index the wire relative to the micrometer. A separate optical comparator with a protractor reticule was used to estimate the twist angles.
(which were also mathematically derived from the twist rates). See the Appendix for calculations of string diameters, twist rates, and breaking frequencies.

What would have been the advantage of using twisted strings? Djilda Abbott and Ephraim Segerman have pointed out that twisted strings have lower elastic moduli than untwisted ones, thus enabling them to vibrate more freely at lower pitches. This would provide some advantage to the more highly foreshortened strings of the short-octave notes, which might otherwise exhibit some timbral deficiency due to their reduced tension. These authors have speculated that the invention of high-twist gut strings in the sixteenth century enabled makers of a variety of plucked and bowed instruments to extend the bass range of these instruments. If the twisted strings seen in the old photographs of the 1581 double virginal were old or facsimiles of early strings, then this early technological development was applied to keyboard instruments as well.

How old were the strings seen in the 1929 photograph? This is a difficult, if not impossible, question to answer. It is likely that they were made of red brass (see below), a ductile alloy consisting of approximately 85 percent brass and 15 percent zinc that would have been quite resistant to corrosion and season cracking. Because of these qualities, the twisted strings might have outlived more perishable strings made of yellow brass and iron. The author of the Connoisseur article stated in 1916 that the Ruckers virginal was then "in a very good state of preservation, and its tone is perfectly preserved." This may not have meant that the instrument was then in playing condition, but rather that if a few strings were plucked they produced a pleasant sound. Certainly, the extensive woodworm damage (observed when the instrument first arrived at the Metropolitan) would have rendered the instrument unplayable and virtually unrestorable in 1916. Furthermore, the disarray observed in the old Museum photograph (many strings are missing and a number of the jack tongues are swiveled out of position) indicates that the instrument had not undergone any recent conservation work (as the Connoisseur article might suggest), again raising the possibility that the twisted strings were of some antiquity. It is not known whether the photograph was made before or after the "general restorations" indicated in Rorimer's article. In any case, the general restorations conducted at the Museum could not have referred to restoration of playability (this, again, would have been impossible, considering the woodworm damage), but rather to the repair of the cracked lid, the making of the missing jack rail, and fumigation. Thus, the twisted strings may have survived this initial intervention and may not have been removed until the late 1930s or early 1940s (when considerable restoration work was undertaken in the musical instruments collection), or perhaps as late as 1970, when the instrument was prepared for display in the new André Mertens Galleries.

It is clear that the instrument has never been "restored," but it shows evidence of the types of repairs made to keep an instrument in use. There are numerous relocations of bridge pins and hitch pins in the bass (some of this repinning is crudely executed), and this causes one to ask whether the twisted strings are original. It is notable that the lower jack guide and a number of jack tongues are constructed of "Spanish" cedar (Cedrela odorata; determined through microscopic examination of a sample). Though New World woods, such as Spanish cedar, were introduced to Europe at about the time the virginal was made (coincidentally, one of the first uses of New World mahogany was for the interior woodwork of the Escorial, constructed by Philip II between 1563 and 1593), it is unlikely that Hans Ruckers employed Spanish cedar in the construction of this instrument. If he had, it would be a unique case, as this wood has not been observed in any other Ruckers or Flemish instruments. It is more likely that the lower jack guide (probably originally of spruce) was replaced while the instrument was in Peru. This part requires considerable skill to fabricate, as it is necessary to position and cut the mortises accurately. In fact, the jacks must fit these mortises with an accuracy of a few tenths of a millimeter; otherwise they will rattle or stick with changes in humidity. The Spanish-cedar lower guide, now fragmented, shows evidence of fine craftsmanship: score lines were used to lay out the mortises, and these were confidently cut with the type of precision seen in the work of a trained keyboard-instrument maker. As such skilled work appears to have been done locally, the twisted strings may have been made in Peru, perhaps in the style of the originals.

The use of twisted bass strings in early keyboard instruments is not reported in any organological literature up to 1929, and only a few examples of such strings are known to the author. These include bass strings in a late-eighteenth- or early-nineteenth-century Spanish clavichord (now in the Marlow Sigal collection) and recently fitted bass strings in a short-cased fortepiano by Carl Lemme of Braunschweig (in the collection of Mrs. Seward Johnson; restored in Berlin in the 1970s by Horst Rase, who fabricated strings that presumably replicated the originals). The virtual absence of examples or mention of this type of string precludes its adoption from other sources and sug-
Figure 8. Ioannes Ruckers (Flemish, 1501–1578). Virginal in muselar form, 1622. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Bernardus Boekelman, 1911, 11.176.1

Figure 9. Detail of Figure 8, showing gilded cast-lead rosette

Figure 10. Verso of the rosette in Figure 8 showing the original canvas strips used to hold it in place. The ridges that radiate across the back are found on the virginal and muselar rosettes, but not on the harpsichord rosettes.
suggests that twisted bass or short-octave strings may have been originally fitted to the 1581 virginal.

This author attempted to reconstruct the twisted strings observed in the 1929 photograph: if a length of wire was doubled over a fixed hook and the end points fixed to another hook mounted on a small hand-operated drill, red brass or copper wire could be made easily and reliably with twist rates equivalent to those observed in the photographs. Hard-drawn yellow brass tended to crack. Klaas Douwes states (1699) that “red copper” (he terms yellow brass “yellow copper”) was used for the deepest basses—for the notes C, D, and E (the short-octave notes)—in early Flemish harpsichords. He also indicates that heavy-gauge annealed potter’s wire could be employed for the pedal register but does not indicate the material or whether it was plain or twisted. It seems likely that if the 1581 virginal originally employed twisted strings for the short-octave notes, they would have been made of red brass or annealed yellow brass.

Thus, the 1581 double virginal by Hans Ruckers has survived over four hundred years without undergoing any major alteration or rebuilding, and, because of this neglect, the instrument today serves as a rich document of sixteenth-century keyboard-making technique. The loss of the twisted strings is most regrettable, though the reconstruction of their diameters and twist rates may enable restorers and copyists to reconstruct such strings and test their acoustical properties.

1622 Virginal by Ioannes Ruckers

This virginal in muselar form (Figure 8) is inscribed IOANNES RUCKERS FECIT ANTWERPIAE on the jack rail. The date 1622 is painted in red beneath the IR gilded, cast-lead rosette (Figures 9, 10), and the Ruckers serial number 6/38 is found inked on the bottom (see discussion below) as well as on the keyframe and top and bottom original jacks (Figure 11). The motto OMNIS SPIRITUS. LAVDET. DOMINVM (“Let every spirit praise the Lord”) is painted on the block-printed paper lining the inside of the lid. The characteristic sea-horse-patterned block-printed paper is found on the front of the case and keywell (see below); geometric- and foliate-patterned papers are used on the inside of the front flap and inside edge of the case. Dendrochronology of the soundboard carried out in 1996 by Dr. Peter Klein of the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, Universität Hamburg, indicates that the youngest growth ring dates from 1612. Considering the amount of planing required to join long planks of wood to form a soundboard, it would appear that the wood was seasoned no more than a few years before it was used.

Unlike the 1581 double virginal, this instrument underwent a compass enlargement that was fairly typical of mid- to late-eighteenth-century ravalements (a French term suggesting scraping and rejoining, which is indicative of the work involved in enlarging the cases or keywells of harpsichords and virginals). The original compass was C/E–cV (45 notes) and subsequently enlarged to C–fV (54 notes). One of several later inscriptions that can be seen on the soundboard suggests a possible date for the enlargement: at the left of the bass jack-rail support, in ink, is marked: LOOSEN, anno 1789. (The name “Loosen” is also found in ink in front of the bass jack-rail support; the name Van Lippe or Van Lippen is found on the soundboard to the right of the keywell.) By 1789 the pianoforte had largely usurped the role of the harpsichord as the principal stringed-keyboard instrument, and ravalements were growing rare. In Paris, for example, where such work on early Flemish harpsichords was undertaken by the most prominent harpsichord makers, the enlarging of such instruments with outmoded compasses seems to have waned by about 1780. Nevertheless, 1789 is not an impossible date for such work, especially if it was done outside of a major musical capital such as Paris. The six jacks added in the bass during the compass enlargement are marked eersten, tweeden, [missing], vierden, vijfden, sesden (Figure 11), so it would appear that the work was done in the Low Countries and is consistent with the name “Loosen,” who may have been the rebuilders (though this name does not appear in any of the major indexes of keyboard-instrument makers).

To enlarge the compass from its original C/E–cV (45-note) range, the keywell was widened by cutting back the left and right sides of the case front (the original channels in the poplar belly rail for the left and right keywell members were filled with walnut splines) and installing new key cheeks. The original keyframe was widened by adding sections of wood on either side of the frame and extending the front, back, pin rack, and balance rails to accommodate four new keys in the bass and six in the treble. The newer balance pins are 1.8 millimeters in diameter, while the old pins (still preserved) are 1.6 millimeters. A new dip rail was added, and it extends the full length of the extended frame. Though the underlying dark brown keycloth found on the jack rail has been thought to be original, this is unlikely to be the case, as the cloth is identical to that found in the present dip rail, and that
Figure 11. Detail of Figure 8. The nine jacks forming the middle group are original and exhibit elongated holes for mouse-ear dampers. Note the Ruckers serial number 6/38 on two of these jacks. The jacks on either side of the original ones were added when the compass was extended, and they have sawed damper slots.

The nine jacks forming the middle group are original and exhibit elongated holes for mouse-ear dampers. Note the Ruckers serial number 6/38 on two of these jacks. The jacks on either side of the original ones were added when the compass was extended, and they have sawed damper slots.

Figure 12. Detail of Figure 8, right bridge showing alterations, loss of painted decoration, and absence of *arpichordium* stop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>Gauge</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C#</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D#</td>
<td>No. 2</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>No. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>d1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a#</td>
<td>No. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g2</td>
<td>No. 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tuning pins from the original compass may be original and are graded from 3.4 to 4.1 millimeters in diameter. The pins for the added notes are 4.6 millimeters in diameter.
The long section of the left bridge was shifted to the right to accommodate the new top notes and was also repinned. The original pinholes were carefully plugged with wood pegs. The hooked section at the bass end, carrying eleven pins, is an obvious addition (the long section was trimmed somewhat to make a neat butt-joint with the hooked section). The right bridge is in two sections, both of which exhibit some repinning. It is possible that the bass section of this bridge is old, but whether or not either section is original, it is clear that the entire right bridge has been moved slightly to the left. In repositioning the right bridge, the painted rinceau was obliterated, as was evidence of an arpicordium stop (Figure 12); the painted decoration was also washed away around much of the upper-jack guide, whose leather facing has been replaced. Additional slots were cut in the soundboard, to accommodate six jacks in the bass and three in the treble, and the spruce lower guide was lengthened at the bass end. In the lower guide, slots were placed in the bass extension and added to the original batten in the treble.

In repositioning the enlarged keyboard in the instrument, it would appear that the original keys were shifted downward by two semitones. The right bridge may have been shifted somewhat to the left to compensate for the keyboard transposition, but if that was the rationale, it was not entirely successful, as the scalings of the 1622 virginal are longer by almost two semitones throughout much of the instrument's range than original scalings for other six-voet virginals of the period. Table 2 in the Appendix gives the present string lengths of the instrument.

In 1996 the author discovered that the poplar bot-
tom was loosely held in place by just a few trenails (woodworm had eaten away most of the others). These trenails were easily coaxed out and the bottom taken off (Figures 13, 14). Upon close examination, the author discovered a series of regularly spaced, plugged holes running along the lower edge of the case sides that did not have corresponding holes in the bottom, indicating that another (earlier) bottom had been tre nailed to the case. This was most unexpected, as the bottom now with the instrument appeared to be original to all previous investigators (the Ruckers serial number 6/38 is clearly marked in ink on the upper surface of the bottom, just as one finds in original bottoms). The present bottom also shows clear evidence that it predates the compass enlargement, because there are scribe marks and plugged trenail holes for the original key cheeks. Cross sections were made of the painted surface of the instrument’s case sides and the exposed edge of the bottom. Under the microscope, these showed that the case sides had three paint layers over a white ground. The lowest layer was grayish in color, the next green, and the top layer black. The edge of the bottom had only two layers, green and black, but no white ground and grayish layer. Thus it would appear that after the new bottom was fitted and the compass changed, the instrument was given a fresh coat of green paint. The green paint can be seen smeared on the non-original key cheeks and on the bottom, in the vicinity of the cheeks.

Internally, the 1622 virginal is essentially unaltered. Two soundboard ribs at the bass end of the soundboard are later additions, presumably glued in place when the bottom was replaced and general repairs were made in the eighteenth century. The parchment strips used to reinforce the joints in the soundboard can be seen in precisely the same position in other muselars by Ioannes Ruckers, as well as in those of Ioannes Couchet. Details such as these reveal how standardized production was on these instruments. During the compass enlargement, the nameboard was widened by about 72 millimeters and re-covered with a replica of the block-printed paper. A replica of the paper was also used to cover the left and right sides of the keywell and to repair a section of the inside of the case front (Figures 15, 16). Note that the narrow twist patterns in the borders of the original and replica papers are mirror images of each other.

The muselan is a typical six-voet virginal of its period. By the mid-eighteenth century, as the restricted keyboard compass evidently proved to be a limitation, its range was increased. Many Ruckers virginals were subjected to the same treatment, and it is rare to find such an instrument with its original compass. It would be unfair to say that the instrument was repainted to suit later tastes: in all likelihood, the original marbleized surface was damaged and innocuous coatings of green, followed by black paint, were applied to hide the losses that are implied by the many bruises to the case. This was not such a great catastrophe for a vir ginal, as the case sides and lid top are not generally seen, and when positioned against a wall with its lid open and the front flap down (keyboard exposed and ready to play), the block-printed papers, Latin motto, and soundboard painting present the most important decorative aspects of the instrument, and in this respect, the original appearance has remained pretty much unaltered.

Harpsichord, ca. 1650–75, by Ioannes or Joseph Ioannes Couchet

This instrument (Figure 17) was the subject of a detailed study in 1969 by the late Edwin M. Ripin. However, a number of points made in his article have been challenged in recent years, the most notable
being the possibility that the instrument was not made about 1650 by Ioannes Couchet (the grandson of Hans Ruckers and apprentice to Ioannes Ruckers), but perhaps twenty to thirty years later by his son, Ioseph Ioannes. This theory is based upon the gold8 (rather than polychrome) soundboard decoration, the lack of a toolbox in the spine, and other structural details, which are also traits of the 1679 harpsichord signed Iosephus Ioannes Couchet (on loan to the American Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.) and one dated 1680 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). The case geometry of the Metropolitan’s Couchet is quite different from that of the Smithsonian’s, however. The width, depth, and length (in its original single-manual configuration) are greater than the Smithsonian’s. Furthermore, the bridge is situated closer to the bentside, and the curves of the bridges and bentsides differ as well. We know that Ioannes Couchet died in 1655, after which his son evidently continued to make use of his father’s gilt-lead soundboard rosette (Figure 18).19 Unfortunately, the date of the Metropolitan Museum’s example (normally integrated into the soundboard decoration in the vicinity of the bass end of the four-foot bridge) has been obliterated, and dendrochronology conducted by Dr. Peter Klein in 1996 failed to resolve the issue: the last datable ring in the spruce soundboard grew in the year 1640, so either of
The proposed dates and makers is possible based upon this dating technique. The Couchet serial number St/34 can be found on the batten that fits behind the upper keyboard (Figure 19). There are, however, insufficient numbered and dated Couchet instruments to assign dates on the basis of the serial numbers.

The Couchet harpsichord was originally made as a one-manual instrument with one choir of eight-foot and one choir of four-foot strings. This becomes evident when one observes the extension to the case spine, cheekpiece, stand, and the three score marks on the case bottom that mark the position of the two original jack slides. Ripin states that the cheekpiece was a replacement; this is essentially true, although a pared-down section of the original cheekpiece supporting the wrestplank and belly rail survives in place and is glued to the outer laminate.

The present compass is FF–c⁰ with FF# deleted (55 keys). Ripin wrote that the original compass of the harpsichord was GG–c⁰ (54 keys), dismissing the evidence provided by inked note designations on the wrestplank behind the original set of eight-foot tuning pins, which indicate that the lowest three notes were FF, GG, and AA.⁹ His justification for rejecting the FF–c⁰ compass with FF# and GG# deleted (54 keys) was that it would have required the sharp cranking to the left of the bottom three key levers. This objection notwithstanding, additional evidence for the FF–c⁰ compass rests in the width between the original key-blocks (these are still glued within the instrument; see Figures 24, 25), 794 millimeters, which would have accommodated 33 natural key heads (approximately 784 mm in width), the number of naturals required of an FF–c⁰ compass; the GG compass would have utilized only 32 naturals.²¹ Both of the keyboards in the instrument show identical workmanship, and neither one is original to the instrument. The word Boven (above) is written in white chalk on the underside of the upper-manual keyframe, and the words link (left), onder (under), and rec[h]t (right) are found on the later key-blocks.

In the instrument’s original configuration, the eight-foot jacks were probably oriented closest to the nut and plucked to the right, with the four-foot jacks behind and plucking to the left. When the harpsichord was converted to two manuals, an extra choir of eight-foot strings was added (both sets of eight-foot strings were mounted on new nut and bridge pins), and the original row of tuning pins (closest to the nameboard) was then used to support the strings plucked by a new register of jacks farthest from the nut, and plucking to the left. The original nut and bridge pins were plugged. Because an extra accidental key was added (GG#), the bottom two notes (FF and FF#) were repositioned downward. When one examines the bass section of the eight-foot nut and wrestplank, one can see that the lowest original nut pin corresponds to what is presently the third tuning pin, which is marked with the note designation F. Why are there two additional tuning pins if only one key was added? This seeming discrepancy can be explained by the addition of one pin for the new GG# and the addition of a second pin to accommodate the change in plucking direction for strings now fixed to the back row of tuning pins. Because the new choir of strings was mounted considerably to the left of the original eight-foot choir, and the original choir was repinned.
slightly to the left of its original position, it would appear that the scaling of the instrument has been lengthened slightly.

Grant O'Brien's statement that "the c pitch string was originally played by the b-flat key" is misleading, though the original and present scalings (c1 = 31.3 cm and 33.1/31.6 cm) do confirm his contention that the instrument was originally designed to stand two semitones higher in pitch than Ruckers' harpsichords that are scaled at c1 = 358 centimeters.22 In this harpsichord, if one counts down thirteen original bridge pins, one encounters the maker's bridge-positioning pinholes for c1 (these bridge-positioning holes are typically found at all c's and f#’s throughout the compass of Couchet's harpsichords). From the old inked note designations positioned next to the original set of eight-foot tuning pins, it is clear that the top key was originally c1 and that the c keys originally activated the c strings, as determined by the bridge-positioning pins. This correspondence between bridge- and nutpin positions and their respective keys was not altered to any significant degree by the compass enlargement

until descends to the added note (GG#). Thus, the discrepancy in scaling between the Metropolitan’s Couchet and most other Ruckers/Couchet harpsichords did not evolve from a keyboard transposition resulting from the addition of one key in the bass; it was a feature designed into the instrument.23 Indeed, Ioannes Couchet mentioned in a letter to Constantijn Huygens that he had “made one [harpsichord] with the octave [four-foot strings], and the same keyboard [range], but a tone higher.”24 The present and reconstructed scalings are presented in Table 3 (see Appendix). Repinning of the four-foot strings resulted in negligible changes in scaling, and their original lengths are thus not tabulated here.

In addition to widening the gap to accommodate the second row of eight-foot jacks, the wrestplank was cut apart on a diagonal and a lute register added (Figure 20; the original buff stop, indicated by the presence of plugged holes used in positioning the buff batten, was removed). The spruce upper laminate on the section of the wrestplank farthest from the nameboard is a replacement (it does not have the gold dec-
oration, and the grain pattern is not continuous with the original section). All four ranks of jacks exhibit identical workmanship, and thus none is original. They are constructed of quartered beech in the Flemish style with blind damper holes. The disposition of the instrument is as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Keyboard</th>
<th>Length</th>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Remnants of the original case painting (black scrolls on a gold band set against a black background) can be observed on the interior case walls bordering the soundboard and on the old keyblocks (Figure 21; these are now used as supports for the upper manual and are thus hidden from view). Ripin noted that the exterior painting on the new cheekpiece and bentside are not by the same artist, citing a different hue in the gray background and a different pattern of scoring under the gilded areas. This suggested to him that when the second keyboard was added, the new, longer cheekpiece was decorated in the style of the existing case painting. The difference in hue between the cheekpiece and bentside is in fact very slight, and what Ripin thought was scoring under the gilded areas actually appears to be brushstrokes in a lead white ground that extends well beyond the gilded areas. The cheekpiece has been subjected to considerable wear and retouching, in part due to manipulation of the stop knobs that project from it as well as from handling in transporting the instrument, which might explain the observed differences between the two sections of the case. Nevertheless, the case painting was reexamined in 1996 by the author and members of the Museum’s Paintings Conservation Department, and further discrepancies in the application of the gold size and the rendering of gilt areas on the cheekpiece and the bentside decoration were noted. Thus, it does appear that the two sections of the case were painted by different hands (and hence at different times). Furthermore, the bentside and spine show evidence of a reddish-orange layer of paint below the gray layer that forms the ground for the present decoration. This reddish-orange layer is not found on the cheekpiece and may be evidence of an original marbleized decoration that is often found on Ruckers/Couchet instruments.

The stand, which is not original and was presumably fabricated when the case was repainted, presented a problem in that the upper frame showed clear evidence of having been extended at the spine and cheek to support the extended case, whereas the lower stretcher showed no obvious sign of having been extended where it joins the two front legs. After removal of the upper carved plate, the underlying structure was x-rayed, and this revealed that a rectangular plank of wood separates the front and back stretchers (Figure 22). The width of this plank is roughly the same as the amount added to the case and upper parts of the stand to accommodate the added keyboard, and this suggests that the lower part of the stretcher was extended as well. Prior to enlargement, the front connecting boss would have been considerably smaller and of lenticular shape rather than round. Upon closer examination, the style of carving observed in the present carved plate differs from that of the smaller, original boss used to connect stretchers farther down the stand; thus, the large carved boss is clearly a later addition. The case lid is also not original, as it does not show impressions of the original hinges that are visible under the paint on the case spine, and it differs in structural detail from other Ruckers/Couchet lids. The front board, which now slides into grooves in the spine and cheekpiece, does

Figure 22. X ray of front stretcher of stand of Figure 17 showing the rectangular board used as a spacer between the front and back stretchers
show evidence under X-ray examination of the forked hinges that were used to support the original lid. Marks of these forked hinges can be readily seen on the old bottom board. Stylistically, the exterior case painting and stand appear to date from the eighteenth century; however, a cursory identification of some of the pigments did not reveal anything that might help date the present outer decoration. Greens, for example, contained the blue pigment azurite; had they contained Prussian blue, for example, that would indicate that the decoration was applied after about 1704. The bole underlying the original gilded areas (the interior surfaces of the case sides above the soundboard) is dark gray; later gilding (external surfaces and the interior surfaces of the spine extension and cheek), is done over yellow bole. The addition of a second keyboard required careful matching of the new cheekpiece with the existing decoration, the lengthening of the upper frame of the stand, as well as the extension of the lower stretcher.

The Couchet harpsichord thus underwent a major musical alteration, very likely in the early eighteenth century, which transformed it from an instrument of modest musical capabilities to one of great versatility. By virtue of its two keyboards, dogleg jacks, lute stop, and two divided registers, the available permutations and combinations offered a musician considerable means of varying the timbre and creating interesting contrasts not only between manuals but also between treble and bass.

1642 Harpsichord by Ioannes Ruckers

This instrument (Figure 23), on loan to the Museum from the Gough collection, was originally built as a transposing two-manual harpsichord (with the upper manual a fourth higher than the lower) and was later converted to an “expressive” double by fitting two new keyboards in “aligned” configuration. On the backs of the original battens positioned behind the keyboards is the Ruckers serial number St/24 (Figure 24). The original compass was likely C/E–f\(^3\) on the lower manual and C/E–c\(^3\) for the upper. There are plugged pins on the four- and eight-foot bridges as well as three plugged tuning pins for the additional e-flat/g\(^\#\) strings (required for proper mean tone tuning of keyboards a fourth apart). There is no evidence that metal transposing plates were ever mounted on the nuts, which means that the nuts are replacements. In recent years, the four-foot nut was again replaced by Hugh Gough, with one made somewhat higher to enable the four-foot strings to clear a bulge in the soundboard. During the early compass enlargement the four-foot bridge was extended to support an extra

note, though the eight-foot bridge was not extended.\textsuperscript{38} The present compass, GG/BB–d’, involved the addition of seven keys (five in the bass and two in the treble), or the width of four natural key fronts, without widening the case. To help accomplish this, the three-octave span had to be reduced somewhat from approximately 500 to 487 millimeters. Due to the compass enlargement and the change in string spacing, the scaling has been altered from the original design (see Table 4 in the Appendix for present string lengths). Through much of the compass, the original plugged pins stand to the right of the shorter string of the present string pairs, thus the scaling has been lengthened somewhat. The original length of $c^4$ measured from the original plugged pin was approximately 343 millimeters.

The original disposition was quite simple: there was one set of eight-foot and one set of four-foot strings, and both manuals had two registers of jacks, one for each choir of strings. All of the beech jacks presently in the instrument date from the compass enlargement and keyboard alignment, as do the jack slides. The keyboards (spruce levers) date from the alignment, though the keycloths and leathers are recent. An inscription on the underside of the lower keyframe reads “Cornelis Winkelhaar, Koog aan de Zaan, organist in de Rooms Catholike Kerk te Zaandam, 24 Junii 1832, behoort dit Clavier.” As the 1642 harpsichord was owned and used by a Dutch organist in the early nineteenth century, it is likely that the keyboard alignment was undertaken in the Low Countries, presumably well before 1832. In this way, the harpsichord remained a vital musical tool probably well into the nineteenth century.

By the end of the nineteenth century the revival in interest in the harpsichord and early music again brought the instrument to the fore. It was restored by Arnold Dolmetsch in 1896 and by the Dolmetsch firm again in 1946. The backs of the keysips are each inscribed by Arnold Dolmetsch, Cécile Dolmetsch, and Leslie Ward (husband of Cécile and associate of Arnold). The central inscription states: “Restored by Arnold Dolmetsch / at 6 Keppel Street London WS / November 1896.” To the left of this is written, “Cécile Dolmetsch Ward” and “Leslie Ward 1946 / At Jesses, / Haslemere, / Surrey.”

Describing the harpsichord’s use and musical capabilities to its owner, Lady Dudley, Arnold Dolmetsch wrote:

Stop I is an octave of reedy quality. It acts on the upper keyboard only. It is put on by pulling (arrow pointing to the left).

Stop II is a unison acting upon both keyboards. It is put on by pulling out (arrow pointing to the right).

Stop III is the 2d unison acting upon the lower keyboard only. It is put on by pushing in (arrow pointing to left).

Stop IV is an octave like Stop I, but of softer quality. It acts upon the lower keyboard only, put on by pushing in (arrow to left).

Stop I and IV must never be on at the same time. To get all the power of the instrument put out I (arrow to right): put in II (arrow to right) and III IV (arrow to left).

The lower keyboard will then be loud and the upper soft.
A softer combination, good as accompaniment to the voice is:

I and IV out (arrow to right)
II in (arrow to right), and III in (arrow to left)
The lower keyboard will sound mellow and full, the upper softer.

A beautiful effect on the upper keyboard can be produced by II in (arrow to left), III in (arrow to left), IV out (arrow to right) and I in (arrow to left).
The lowest note, which seems to be B sounds G.
All chords should be played in arpeggio, that is the notes one after another.
The keys must be pressed down, not struck like a piano, otherwise the tone will be bad, and the quills soon broken.

Never allow anybody to try and tune it.29

These instructions give some sense of the tonal variety and musical capacity of the instrument in its modified state. The case decoration and stand are not original. The lid painting is attributed to the school of Liège (circle of Flemal and de Lairesse), ca. 1670 or slightly later. Original block-printed papers are visible behind the upper-manual keyblocks (Figure 25).30

**Double Virginal by Lodewijck Grouwels**

This instrument (Figure 26), with a present compass of GG–BB–c3 (50 keys), is inscribed on the mother instrument’s jack rail “Lodvicvs Grouvelvs Me Fecit 1600.” The soundboard rosette consists of a gilt papier-mâché rosette of Pan playing a panpipe (Figures 27, 28). Lodewijck may have been the son of Johannes, or Hans, Grouwels, who entered the Guild of Saint Luke in Antwerp in 1579 and became a citizen of Middelburg (the Netherlands) in 1593. Lodewijck himself is believed to have worked in Middelburg from about 1593, the year he bought a house in that city.31 Only one instrument by Johannes has survived (Musée Instrumental de Bruxelles) and one by Lodewijck (The Metropolitan Museum of Art). Alan Curtis was the first to speculate

---

Figure 26. Lodewijck Grouwels, (Dutch, fl. 1593–1600). Double virginal in spinett form, 1600. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments, 1889, 89.4.1196.
that the virginalist Peter Philips composed his “Pavana Dolorosa” while imprisoned for treason in 1593, shortly after his visit to Middelburg and “with the memory of a particular Grouwels virginal still fresh in his mind.” As this piece of music required a low G#, it has been assumed that Philips intended it to be played on an instrument with a split G# key, thus permitting E to be played on one half of the split key and the G# on the other. Unfortunately, the eagerness to connect this historical event and an anomalous piece of music to our Grouwels virginal led at least one visiting researcher to misinterpret or misread physical evidence. John Koster concluded that the instrument originally had 50 notes from C/E–c with split notes throughout the compass. Grant O’Brien arrived at a compass of 47 notes, C/E–c with two split keys in the broken octave. In 1979 X rays were made at the author’s request in the Objects Conservation laboratory of the Metropolitan Museum in an attempt to reconcile the disparate conclusions formulated by Koster (published in a 1977 article) and those that emerged during O’Brien’s initial visit to the Museum in 1979 (later published in a book on Ruckers). The X rays showed evidence of the rusty remains of the original balance pins that had penetrated the action frame below the original balance-rail cap (this cap had been replaced during the compass enlargement). Interpretations of the balance-rail X ray nonetheless vary, though they demonstrate clearly that Koster’s original analysis was incorrect. Koster retracted his initial published conclusions regarding the original 50-note keyboard in an addendum to his 1992 review of O’Brien’s book on Ruckers and challenged O’Brien’s claim of a 47-note compass with two split keys in the bass, stating that after reexamining the instrument, he now felt that it originally had 45 notes and no split sharps. This opinion (45 notes and no split sharps) had been reached somewhat earlier by Douglas Maple, a 1986–87 Clawson Mills Fellow in the Department of Musical Instruments, Metropolitan Museum (unpublished notes, 1986–87, in department files; unpublished revision, 1996, in department files). O’Brien reexamined the X rays during a second visit to the Museum in 1996 and reconfirmed, in his own mind, that the X rays were inconclusive with respect to the use of split keys in the bass, but that his initial analysis was still valid.

In evaluating these three conflicting theories, this author started afresh by noting the scribe lines on the top surface of the soundboard. In the treble, a pair of scribe lines indicates the positions of the original top pair of strings; in the bass, a single scribe line indicates the position of the lowest original mortise. By examining the bottom of the soundboard, one can see that the original mortises were extended to alter the positions of jacks at the extreme ends of the compass (the later leather guide glued to the top surface of the soundboard conceals the original positions of the mortises). As the workmanship is not especially clean, it is not immediately clear which of the mortises is new, particularly in the treble. By aligning the scribe marks on the top surface with the mortise positions on the bottom, it appears, however, that there were originally 45 notes, and therefore C / E–c (with no split sharps) is the most probable original compass. From the original balance-pin positions visible in the X ray, it would have been necessary for the keyboard end blocks to have been wider, and the original end blocks presently
fixed to the keyframe conceivably could have been cut down. Regarding the X-ray photograph, a note of uncertainty does remain because of the inexplicable absence of the low F balance pin and the displacement to the left by about one centimeter of the C# balance pin. Nevertheless, no balance-pin marks consistent with split keys can be detected in the X-ray photograph, and one must hold that those pins did not penetrate the lower section of the frame if one maintains that split sharps were originally employed in the bass. Curiously, two of the accidentals (presently C# and D#) are joined out of two pieces below the decorative facing. The accidentals are approximately 73 millimeters long, and are made up of front sections 50 millimeters in length and back sections 23 millimeters long. It may be that these segments were salvaged and joined up from a keyboard of smaller dimensions—perhaps the keyboard of the original octave virginal—when extending the compass to GG/BB−c′ (which required the addition of two accidental keys). It is unlikely that they represent evidence of split sharps in the base, as such an unequal division in length would be very unusual.

The mother instrument of the Lodewijck Grouwels double virginal is in spinett form, that is, with the keyboard at the left and having jacks that pluck the strings close to the end point. The octave virginal (a replacement for the lost original made by Arnold Dolmetsch, who restored the instrument in 1896; the jack rail is inscribed “Arnold Dolmetsch Londini Fecit MDCCCXCVI”) is enclosed in a compartment to the right of the keyboard of the main instrument. The nameboard of the mother instrument is fixed, though the upper molding of the nameboard is removable and presumably had to be lifted off when the octave virginal was positioned above. The present octave virginal lacks a slot in the bottom, which would permit the jacks of the mother instrument to engage its keys. It is unclear how the original octave virginal would have been positioned on top of the case of the mother instrument, as the mother virginal lacks wood blocks mounted along the spine (like those found in the 1581 double virginal) that are needed to support the back of the octave instrument. At present, the octave instrument hangs over the back of its mother and sits much too high for the mother’s jacks to have engaged its key levers. It would appear that Dolmetsch’s octave virginal is not an accurate reconstruction of the lost original.

After the 1896 restoration by Arnold Dolmetsch, further restoration was carried out at the Metropolitan between December 13, 1938, and March 28, 1939, and through the early 1940s. Very little documentation survives of this work, and in some cases the documentation does not tally with what one observes. For example, departmental records indicate that in 1938–39 both bridges were replaced. Though it is conceivable that the right bridge is a replacement, the left bridge shows evidence of having been repinned (throughout the present compass) and recapped in the bass (the cap carries nine strings with backpinning); this amount of reworking is inconsistent with a newly constructed bridge. Records also indicate that a new bottom was made and installed; however, bottoms fitted to keyboard instruments restored at the Museum at that time were typically made of plywood, and the bottom of the Grouwels mother virginal is made of solid stock. This is more consistent with work done by Dolmetsch, and it is likely that he replaced the bottom when he restored the instrument in 1896. Additionally, the 1938–39 restoration was said to have involved repair of the soundboard, reinforcement of all ribs, new strings, new pin block, new brace under the bridge, regulation of the keys, and the making of a new cover for the toolbox (now missing) at the left side of the soundboard. The octave spinet also had

Figure 29. Plan view of Figure 26
its soundboard reinforced, new strings added, new
damper “felts” in jacks, keys regulated, and case re-
paired. Records of restoration between 1942 and
1944 indicate that relatively little was done during
those years: on October 2, 1942, a jack, broken acci-
dentially, was repaired; on October 6, 1944, the lid
painting was cleaned with water; the next day, the
molding on the left part of the lid was reglued.

The present bottom is screwed in place, and upon
removing it, a number of new parts were apparent
(Figures 29, 30). The wrestplank is an obvious replace-
ment, as is the hitch-pin rail. The soundboard is also
heavily cleated on the underside, and there are new
sections of soundboard pieced in along the spine
(behind the jack rail), behind the toolbox, and at the
right side close to the front (a large triangular section
over the pinblock). The original case walls and brac-
ing are of pine.

One of the most troublesome aspects of the
Grouwels virginal is the soundboard ribbing; it does
not resemble original ribbing observed in any other
Flemish virginals. Visual examination by ultraviolet
fluorescence and with an infrared viewer failed to
reveal any traces of a more conventional ribbing sys-
tem. In the repetitive rebuildings that the instrument
has suffered in the last one hundred years, it is more
than likely that the soundboard has been scrupulously
cleaned, perhaps even scraped down, and this may be
the reason why a previous system of ribbing is not
apparent. Scribe marks can be found in the vicinity of
several of the long diagonal ribs, but whoever
enlarged the compass of the instrument made prolific
use of the scribe in marking out the position of the
new mortises on the bottom of the soundboard (the
scribe marks for fifty soundboard mortises may have
misled Koster in his first encounter with the instru-
ment). Thus, the presence of scribe marks in the vicin-
ity of a rib is not an indication that it represents an
original rib placement (all but one of the ten ribs
appear to be fairly new and probably date from the
Dolmetsch restoration). The determination of which,
if any, of the ribs’ positions are original is a matter of
speculation. Douglas Maple concluded that the four
long diagonal ribs running under the left bridge may
conform positionally to original ribs. Three have
scribe marks running in close proximity, and these
scribe marks are correctly positioned to clear the origi-
nal mortises. The two diagonal braces under the right
bridge may represent original rib positions, though
there is no trace of old score marks.
The present scaling of the Grouwels mother virginal is given in Table 5 in the Appendix. The scalings do not represent the original string lengths. Though the top note has remained c', three mortises were added in the treble and the top string length is thus shorter. That is not to say that there has been a simple transposition of the keyboard upward by three semitones. It must be remembered that the compass extension was accomplished by adding five notes into a barely widened string band. This was accomplished by variably lengthening the treble mortises to the left (Figure 31) and the bass mortises to the right. The unused part of the mortise was covered by the leather strip glued to the top of the soundboard, and a new set of individual mortises for each jack cut in this strip. The addition of the forty-seventh jack mortise also altered the plucking direction of the jack that had been mounted in the mortise for the original c'. As a result of the shifting of jack slots and the addition of new ones, what was originally the mortise for c' is now very nearly the mortise for a#3. In addition to compressing the register, the scaling was modified in the following way: when the compass was altered, a new, longer left bridge was made and repositioned by pivoting the bass end approximately 16 millimeters toward the player. (The scribe mark for the back edge of the original left bridge is clearly visible.) Pivoting the bridge widened the string band to help admit the new notes, though it also shortened the scaling progressively toward the bass. The right bridge (which was replaced during the 1938–39 restoration) occupies the position of the bridge fitted when the compass was extended. From scratch marks in the soundboard, which indicate the end points of the original (pre-compass enlargement) bridge, it is clear that the present bridge projects 35 millimeters beyond the original end point in the treble and about 90 millimeters in the bass, thus accommodating the new notes.

As there are uncertainties regarding the original positions of the jacks and the positions and pinning of the bridges, the reconstruction of the original scaling is rather difficult. Nevertheless, by counting down one octave of bridge pins that align best with the original top jack mortise, and compensating for the forward positioning of the bridge, it would appear that c' was originally about 400 millimeters in length.38

boards, and rescalings of the Flemish instruments represented in the Museum's collection appear to have been done in the Low Countries, contrary to the perception that this type of work was more typically undertaken in France. Another point not generally acknowledged is that whenever an instrument has had its compass enlarged or its disposition altered, there is a resulting compass shift. Whether this was intentional or not must be considered on an individual basis. Certainly, an instrument such as the Grouwels double virginal would have been unusable at a later period with a scaling of 400 millimeters for c', and the reduction of its string lengths was undoubtedly intentional. In other cases, such alterations were most likely inadvertent or unavoidable (as when a second set of eight-foot strings was added). Another point involves the interpretation of physical evidence. In the case of the Grouwels, three experienced scholars of Flemish harpsichord building examined the instrument and arrived at different solutions to the problem of the split sharps. This suggests that it is best to exhibit caution in undertaking the restoration of instruments that have undergone extensive or multiple modifications, as it may be difficult or impossible to reconstruct their original state. Furthermore, the undoing of early alterations will destroy or disturb evidence, thereby confounding future researchers.

**Appendix**

### Part I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Dimensions</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1581 H. Ruckers virginal</td>
<td>1788</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1581 H. Ruckers kind</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1622 I. Ruckers virginal</td>
<td>1706</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1642 I. Ruckers harpsichord</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>2238</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1670 Couchet harpsichord</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>2290</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600 Grouwels virginal</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All measurements are given in millimeters. Measurements exclude moldings and lid but include bottom board.

### Part II

The following is a calculation of diameters, twist rates, and breaking pitches for the twisted strings in the 1581 Ruckers virginal:

**Conclusion**

One of the interesting facts that emerged is that all of the compass enlargements, added or replaced key-
As the strings are suspended by the bridge approximately 11 mm above the soundboard, they are slightly enlarged with reference to the rosette. To calculate the true diameter of the strings, the following optical equations were used to establish a correction factor:

\[
\frac{M}{SS} = \frac{SD}{FL} = \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{M}}
\]

Where:
- \(M\) = Magnification
- \(IS\) = Image Size
- \(SS\) = Subject Size
- \(FL\) = Focal Length
- \(SD\) = Subject-to-Lens Distance

The likely focal length (FL) of the lens used to make the 8-by-10-inch photograph is 14 inches (355 mm), and though it is possible that a 17-inch (430 mm) lens was used, the calculations provided here assume a focal length of 14 inches (355 mm). The overall length of the image on the negative (IS), 230 mm, corresponds to a subject size (SS) of 513 mm. Thus, the magnification of the original negative is .448. The subject-to-lens distance (SD) is calculated as 1147 mm and the string-to-lens distance as 1136 mm. From diagram 1, one can calculate the true dimensions of the strings. Using the subject-to-lens distance, the string height, and the apparent string diameter read off the stage micrometer, the measured string diameter is calculated as being about 1 percent larger than the true diameter (with a 17-inch focal-length lens or longer, this factor would be somewhat less).

The measured overall diameter of C/E was approximately 1.13 mm; that of E/G# was approximately .96 mm. Thus, the component strands were approximately .56 mm and .48 mm, respectively. Taking the 1 percent correction factor into account, the total diameters were thus approximately 1.12 (C/E) and .95 mm (E/G#), while the component strands were approximately .55 mm and .47 mm, respectively. Considering the poor image quality when the life-size enlargement was viewed at 40x and the impossibility of indexing the edge of the wire with great precision, there is some uncertainty in these figures, and they should be considered as approximate values. The twist periods observed in the photograph vary somewhat over the length of the string; however, they averaged (over a 100-mm length) about 4.2 mm for the C/E string and 7.4 mm for the E/G# string. The twist period is defined as the length of one full rotation of an individual strand. This corresponds to twist angles of approximately 22° and 11°, respectively, as calculated from the following formula:

\[
U = \frac{\Pi}{2 \times \text{Twist Ratio}}
\]

Where \(U\) = Tangent of the Twist Angle

Twist Ratio = Twist Period / Total String Diameter

The breaking stress for twisted wire is lower than for untwisted wire, and as the twist rate increases, the breaking stress is further reduced. To calculate the breaking frequency of the twisted strings, the following equations were used:

\[
\frac{E_s}{E_w} = \frac{1}{(1+U^2)^{1/2}} + \frac{4U}{\sqrt{1+U^2}(1+\sigma)(13(1+U^2)-5)+16)}
\]

Where \(E_s\) = Elastic modulus of the twisted string
\(E_w\) = Elastic modulus of component wires
\(U\) = Tangent of the angle the component wires make with string axis
\(\sigma\) = Poisson's ratio (.17 for iron; .3 for copper alloys)

\[
\frac{f_s}{f_t} = \sqrt{\frac{E_s}{E_w}}
\]

Where \(f_s\) = Lowest pitch of twisted string
\(f_t\) = Lowest pitch of untwisted wire

For C/E the pitch-reduction factor is .8987; for E/G# it is .9659.

Table 1 gives the calculated breaking frequencies of each of the 1581 virginal's strings (the figures in parentheses are for twisted strings). These frequencies were calculated using Marin Mersenne's measurements (ca. 1636) of the tensile strength of iron wire, 19 livres (821 Mpa), and of brass, 18½ livres (801 Mpa), and densities measured from eighteenth-century wire taken from a harpsichord by Antoine Vater (Paris, 1732), 7.69 Mg/m³ for iron, 8.24 Mg/m³ for brass, and 8.68 Mg/m³ for red brass), employing the following formula:

\[
F = \frac{1}{2L} \sqrt{\frac{S}{\rho}}
\]
Where  \( F = \) Breaking Frequency  
\( L = \) String Length  
\( S = \) Breaking Stress  
\( \rho = \) Metal Density

Using the twist rates observed in the two twisted strings in the 1929 photograph, calculations demonstrate that although these strings would have been brought closer to their breaking points than untwisted strings, their breaking frequencies would not have been reduced to the point that would have imposed a lower overall pitch on the instrument than that established by the section of the compass exhibiting Pythagorean scaling (that is, string lengths doubling or halving on the octave). For C / E, the breaking frequency would have been reduced from 99.1 Hz (for untwisted red brass wire) to 83.1 Hz, while E / G# would have been reduced from 112.9 Hz to 109.0 Hz.

**Table 1** String Lengths and Breaking Frequencies of the 1581 H. Ruckers Muselar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>String Length</th>
<th>Breaking Freq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C/E</td>
<td>1532</td>
<td>99 (83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1454</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/F#</td>
<td>1444</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>1370</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E/G#</td>
<td>1345</td>
<td>113 (109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1282</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A#</td>
<td>1260</td>
<td>124</td>
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<td>1201</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
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<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>g#</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a#</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c1</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c#1</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d1</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d#1</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

String lengths are given in millimeters, frequencies in hertz. Figures in parentheses are breaking frequencies of twisted strings.

**Table 2** String Lengths and Plucking Points of the 1622 Ruckers Muselar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>String Length</th>
<th>Plucking Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1474</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C#</td>
<td>1457</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1454</td>
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<tr>
<td>D#</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>637</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1415</td>
<td>642</td>
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<tr>
<td>F#</td>
<td>1412</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>1391</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G#</td>
<td>1385</td>
<td>667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1357</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A#</td>
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<td>668</td>
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<td>1295</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>1282</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c#</td>
<td>1205</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>1195</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d#</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>531</td>
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</table>
Table 3 String Lengths of the Couchet Harpsichord

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present 8' String Pairs</th>
<th>Original 8'</th>
<th>Present 4'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FF 1693 / 1677</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 1493 / 1438</td>
<td>1451</td>
<td>781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 1299 / 1271</td>
<td>1266</td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c 1033 / 1004</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f 858 / 829</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All measurements are in millimeters.

Table 4 String Lengths of the 1642 Ioannes Ruckers Harpsichord

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8' String Lengths</th>
<th>4' String Lengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Longer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shorter</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GG/BB</td>
<td>1682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>1218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c^1</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f^1</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c^2</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f^2</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c^3</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d^3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All measurements are in millimeters.

Table 5 String Lengths and Plucking Points of Grouwels Virginal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>String Length</th>
<th>Plucking Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GG / BB</td>
<td>1653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1591</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1387</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c^1</td>
<td>588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f^1</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c^2</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f^2</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c^3</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All measurements are in millimeters.

NOTES


2. Voet is Flemish for "foot," the equivalent of ca. 285 mm.

4. I would like to thank Mark T. Wypyski of the Sherman Fairchild Center for Objects Conservation, MMA, for analyzing this material.


6. This pigment was identified using light microscopy. I would like to thank Christopher McGlinchey of the Paintings Conservation Department, MMA, for analyzing this sample.


8. I would like to thank Christopher McGlinchey and Mark T. Wypyski for analyzing this material.


10. Djilida Abbott and Ephraim Segerman, "Strings in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *The Galpin Society Journal* **27** (1974) pp. 48–73; idem., "Correction: Strings in the 16th and 17th centuries (GSJ XXVII)," *The Galpin Society Journal* **28** (1975) p. 134. I would like to thank Ephraim Segerman for reviewing my calculations. He suggested that Mersenne's wire might not have been optimally drawn and that the tensile strengths may have been greater for the finest gauges used in the treble. The breaking pitches of the upper notes in Table 1 might therefore have been higher than given here.


13. EDS elemental analysis indicates that the alloy is 84.5 percent lead, 15.5 percent tin by weight. I would like to thank Mark T. Wypyski for analyzing this material.


15. Ibid., p. 63.

16. Though the straight sections of both the left and right bridges appear to be older than the abutting curved sections, the straight sections are of fruitwood, possibly cherry. This material is commonly seen in Ruckers harpsichords, but his virginals usually employ beech for the bridges. See O'Brien, *Ruckers*, p. 76. It is therefore possible that all four sections of bridge are not original.


18. EDS elemental analysis and scanning electron microscopy conducted on a sample indicated that the soundboard decoration consisted of an alloy of gold, 97.5 percent gold, 1.0 percent silver, and 1.5 percent copper by weight. The gold was in the form of a powder (shell gold), rather than gold leaf. I would like to thank Mark T. Wypyski for analyzing this material.


20. This was noted by O'Brien, *Ruckers*, pp. 272–273.


23. Ibid., p. 175. O'Brien's "49 cm rule" states that the bridge pin for c3 is always 49 cm from the rear surface of the nameboard in Ruckers/Couchet harpsichords. This is not the case for the MMA Couchet harpsichord, which was made for a higher pitch. In this instrument, the c3 bridge pin is located 46 cm from the back of the nameboard. The 49-cm rule is apparently not relevant for instruments built for a non-standard pitch.


25. I would like to thank Hubert von Sonnenburg and Dorothy Mahon, Department of Paintings Conservation, MMA, for examining the painted surface.

26. Pigment analysis by Christopher McGlinchey; X ray of stretcher by Deborah Schorsch of Objects Conservation; X ray of front board by Christopher McGlinchey.

27. O'Brien, *Ruckers*, p. 254. O'Brien states that "this is a very fine example of a Ruckers aligned double-manual harpsichord," an ambiguous description that might lead one to believe that the instrument was originally constructed with keyboards in aligned orientation.


29. These handwritten instructions are in the possession of Hugh Gough.

30. I would like to thank Walter Liedtke, curator, Department of European Paintings, MMA, for examining the lid painting.


35. Ibid.


37. This confirms Douglas Maple's 1886–87 analysis (see Musical Instruments Department files, MMA).

38. This also confirms Douglas Maple's independent and more elaborate analysis based on his redrawing of the original plan of the instrument (unpublished paper, 1996; Musical Instruments Department files).

A Room of “Splendor and Generosity” from Ottoman Damascus

ANNIE-CHRISTINE DASKALAKIS MATHEWS
Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

Incredible as it may seem, the biggest single attraction of the Metropolitan Museum’s permanent collection of Islamic art is a largely unstudied and underestimated treasure. Although the so-called Nūr al-Din Room has raised many questions in the minds of its visitors, its study has been conspicuously neglected in scholarly literature.

The Museum’s room is a complete environment comprising a marble inlaid floor, decorated wood paneling, and matching carved and painted ceilings (Figure 1). Over time, the meaning of this eloquent interior has been obscured and must be rediscovered through the systematic study of its decorative vocabulary and its inscriptions.

The Metropolitan’s room and another, similar interior were brought from Damascus to the United States in the 1930s by the late Hagop Kevorkian, a well-known collector, art dealer, and benefactor. After being stored for several decades, the two period rooms were donated in 1970 by the Hagop Kevorkian Foundation to the Metropolitan Museum and to New York University’s Kevorkian Center of Near Eastern Studies. The Museum’s room bears the date 1119 A.H./A.D. 1707 (see Figure 36), while the one belonging to the university is dated 1797. Both interiors came from affluent homes: the one at the university was taken from a house owned by the well-known Quwawli family; but the Museum’s room had no settled provenance, so it was named the “Nūr al-Din Room,” perhaps referring to a neighborhood of Damascus rather than to the famed twelfth-century conqueror himself. We may call it more simply the Damascus Room. The recent discovery that it is the earliest surviving nearly complete Damascene interior makes it a document of unique importance.

Setting and General Characteristics

In Syrian houses, perhaps more than in any other Islamic country, the central courtyard is the pivot of interior organization. The house is closed off to the outside world and its rooms are open to the inner courtyard. More affluent households may have had two courtyards, one for the men’s quarters (salāmīh) and one for the women’s (harāmīh). Some aristocratic families maintained three courtyards, one for formal male receptions, one for everyday family life, and one for servants. Only rarely do we find houses with four courtyards, where the salāmīh and harāmīh each had its own service courtyard.

Traditional Damascus houses had no external windows on the ground floor; only the entrance doorway interrupted the anonymous uniformity of their walls. The upper floors sometimes had many large windows, which, despite their elevation, were screened off by lattices of turned wood that preserved the family’s privacy. In contrast to traditional Cairo houses, the street entrance would have no decoration to indicate the degree of luxury inside. The wooden doorway, usually of two leaves, would give access to a corridor (dihlīz) leading to the inner courtyard. The dihlīz might have a second door at its other end to control access to the inner sanctum and to ensure that no indiscreet glances could penetrate from the street. For additional privacy, in some houses the dihlīz would be angled in the customary Islamic manner of corridors connecting the outside world with the private domain indoors.

The courtyard is intended to strike the visitor’s eye immediately. Having stepped in from the bustling street and gone through the dim passage, one would be pleasantly greeted once again by daylight. In the courtyard the light would be at its most beautiful, filtered through the leaves of trees, refracted through the prisms of the fountain’s water jets, or gently kept at bay within the shaded areas of the portico and its open halls. The floor of this courtyard was paved with flagstones of black basalt and rose limestone in geometric patterns resembling a labyrinth or a checkerboard. The courtyard played an important role in Damascus houses in terms of circulation because one had to pass through it in order to reach most of the rooms that were disposed around it. Furthermore,
light and air could reach the various rooms only from the courtyard. The climate of Damascus is pleasant from the last winter rains until the fall, so the lush vegetation of the courtyard and the attractive decoration of its facades would offer a welcoming milieu for all kinds of activities.

Damascene houses had two basic types of principal reception rooms. One type was the qā’a (pl. qā’āt); the other was the liwān (pl. liwānāt) or liwān. A large house might have a number of such rooms, resembling one another in plan and general function. Broadly, the qā’a was a kind of living room, or salon; in traditional Islamic houses most spaces were not confined to a single use but could harbor various daily activities, such as eating, sleeping, receiving guests, or entertaining. Depending on the size of the house, however, one or more qā’āt would be distinguished from the others by having grander dimensions and decoration and might be reserved more for formal male entertaining than anything else. On the northern side of the courtyard, for example, would be located the great winter parlor, which benefited from its southern exposure.¹¹ On the opposite side of the yard, open to the cool northerly breezes, would be the impressive summer hall, the liwān.¹²

Except for its wooden ceiling, the liwān’s decoration was of stone, marble, and brick, materials that maintained the hall’s coolness in summer.¹³ In some of the older houses the floor of the liwān was elevated from that of the courtyard by one step, and all around its three walls would run a low, built-in bench (mastaba). In later examples, a marble-paved floor would be flush with the courtyard. The liwān was frequently connected with one or two lateral qā’āt, which could be used when the weather was not ideally suited for the liwān.¹⁴ Thus, the great winter qā’a, featuring elaborately decorated wood paneling and ceilings as well as glass-paned windows, constituted the seasonal counterpart of the summer liwān.¹⁵

Both winter and summer formal reception areas were given special attention in their lavish decor, for it was through these rooms that the family could demonstrate wealth and good taste. If a residence had more than one of these luxurious salons, it was the most formal qā’a, a kind of salle d’apparat, which would be the showpiece of the house, displaying the finest workmanship and most prized possessions.¹⁶ And, as movable furnishings were few in the traditional Islamic household, it was principally the walls, ceiling, and floors of such rooms that served to convey social prestige.¹⁷

In addition to being adaptable to season and time of day, the flexible utilization of space in the Syrian house also served to emphasize the importance of the guests being received. Thus, the grandest qā’a would be used for the more prominent visitors, whereas people of a more intimate acquaintance might be received in a smaller one. In summer, the high-ceilinged open liwān would be sought out. In spring or fall, the adjoining qā’āt could better respond to changing weather conditions. In winter, rooms with glass-paned windows and wood paneling would offer warmth through the aid of portable braziers, as there were no fireplaces in Damascus homes.¹⁸ Upon entering the Museum’s room, we are ushered into such an elegant qā’a of a wealthy, albeit unknown household.

The qā’a is distinguished by two well-differentiated zones, and all rooms of this type, even the simpler ones, retain this dual partition of space. The first zone, known as the ‘ataba (pl. ‘atabāt), is a sort of antechamber, or circulation area, where visitors were received, where one would deposit one’s shoes, where domestics stood to prepare coffee, water pipes, ewers for ablutions, and braziers.¹⁹ Generally, the floor of the ‘ataba is on the same level as the courtyard, and it occupies between a quarter and a half of the total surface of the room.²⁰ The ‘ataba of the Museum’s room assumes approximately one-third of the entire space of the interior (Figure 2). The second zone, called ṭazar (pl. ṭazarāt), is the reception area proper.²¹ Higher than the ‘ataba, it is attained by a high riser.²² In a sense the ‘ataba-ṭazar arrangement is a repetition of the courtyard-liwān pairing, with the ‘ataba taking on the function of a covered courtyard.²³

Domestic space was described with a graphic vocabulary in which the house was compared to the human body. The facade, for instance, was the “face” (wajh); the noblest space of the ṭazar was the “bosom or chest” (sadr); the most honored place of the ṣadr was the “head” of the room (rā’s al-makān); finally, the decorative long spandrels that connect the ceiling to the

Figure 2. Floor plan (drawing: Department of Islamic Art, MMA)
room below were referred to by the picturesque term "neck" (ragba). The gradation within a given room began with its entrance, continued to its 'ataba, and ended in the innermost part of the elevated tazar—that is, the sadr (Figure 3). The degree of a guest's prestige was established by his social rank, age, and relationship to the owner, and this determined the place he would occupy in the sadr.24 Furthermore, seats could be classed by their height, height being achieved through the relative thickness of the cushions on which people sat. Thus, the most important seat of the sadr would also be the highest.25 This "geometry of the body" likewise defined spatial relations in terms of a person's movement upon entering the room and of his line of vision. In a large qa'a such as the Museum's, the presence of a fountain in the 'ataba indicates that this lower space was displayed to those who took their place in the sadr and who then faced out toward the 'ataba, with its focal point being the marble fountain (jisqiyya, salsabil, baḥra) (Figure 4), just as the liwān opening to the actual courtyard of the house looked out on a fountain placed on its axis.26

The richness and profusion of decorative details could not have failed to impress the visitor. Wherever the eye came to rest, it would find images of infinite detail and great beauty to contemplate. This sheath of architectural decoration—calligraphy, geometric and abstract floral patterns—spreading over floor, walls, and ceiling like a tapestry, would evoke thoughts of the infinite nature of God, the eternal pattern of creation, and the rhythmical processes of growth and decline of this transient world. Endlessly repeated ornamental compositions enveloped the room and endowed it with a timeless dimension, reflecting the divine origin of creation.27 Appealing equally to the senses and to the intellect, an interior such as this would achieve an unbroken symmetrical articulation of wall decoration when its shutters and doors were closed; the outer world was then completely excluded from this colorful interior universe.28
The Metropolitan room's general decorative scheme stresses the horizontal axis, a consequence perhaps of the fact that most activities in the traditional Islamic house took place while sitting, reclining, or kneeling on the floor. This horizontality is organized in four distinct planes: floor, lower walls, upper walls, and ceiling. The lower wall zone of both 'ataba and ʿtazar comprises the elaborately decorated wainscoting, with doors, windows, cupboards, and niches all starting at approximately the same level and maintaining a consistent height. This uniformity, together with the various clearly separated zones of the room (walls, cornices, ceilings), accentuates the overall sense of horizontality. The upper wall zone is left undecorated, having the effect of a clear demarcation between the two most heavily embellished parts of the room, the paneling and the ceiling. For the sake of clarity, we will follow this four-part spatial division as we examine the most significant features of the Museum's room in some detail.

The Floor

The ground cover of Syrian houses always had stone decoration. Like the floor of the great liwān, the floor of the 'ataba would be entirely paved in polychrome marble inlay, marble mosaic, and large marble plaques disposed according to an orthogonal grid pattern comprising square, rectangular, and round compartments. The floor of the ʿtazar, on the other hand, was most often paved not with marble but with limestone, as it would be covered with carpets. All around the ʿtazar's three walls were low cushions upon which rich textiles could be laid.

The floor design of the Museum's 'ataba consists of a grid pattern enclosing large rectangles decorated in opus-sectile geometric designs in white, brown, and black marble. Similarly, the floor of the ʿtazar is laid out as a grid enclosing large square panels of white and brown opus sectile. The square and rectangular panels of both 'ataba and ʿtazar (see Figure 1) are surrounded by plain white marble plaques, which are modern, as is the white marble dado all along the lower walls. According to Museum records, the opus-sectile sections and large geometric panels of the ʿtazar and its riser came from the courtyard of New York University's 1797 Quwwatli house. It is possible that the original plain flagstones of the room's ʿtazar were not considered interesting enough to be included in the ensemble that was saved. Or perhaps the flooring of the 'ataba had suffered extensive damage, which would have led to its abandonment. The reconstruction of the 'ataba's floor respects some principles of authenticity, but the absence of carpets covering the floor of the ʿtazar greatly diminishes what must have been the room's splendid overall effect.

The floor of the 'ataba is dominated by the fountain, an indispensable feature contributing to the freshness and sensuousness of the hall's atmosphere (Figure 5). The shape of eighteenth-century Damascene fountains was most often octagonal, and the exterior paneled sides of their basins rose considerably above the floor. The form of the Museum's fountain, however, is significantly different. In keeping with other examples from Damascus, its outer shape is octagonal, but it does not have a high freestanding basin as was customary in the eighteenth century. According to a photograph, of uncertain date and provenance, of the fountain taken before its installation in the Museum (Figure 6), its basin was designed to be sunk into the floor, a feature that is mostly associated with the

Figure 5. The fountain

Figure 6. The fountain, date of photograph unknown (photo: Department of Islamic Art, MMA)
Mamluk period. In Damascus the Mamluk style of fountain seems to have persisted all through the seventeenth century, as a fountain at the Victoria and Albert Museum and one in the "Red Salon" of the H. Pharaon collection indicate. As currently reconstructed, the fountain of the Museum's room has an outer octagonal border composed of joggled patterns in marble and stone of white, black, green, yellow, and red. This border is not present in the photograph; it rises above floor level approximately 12.5 centimeters and conforms in terms of design with the outer borders of the two older fountains mentioned above. Although it is in keeping with contemporary practices, it is not clear why, or when, the addition of such a border was deemed necessary.

Within the border is a series of eight large lobes evoking an arcade that has been laid flat. Such lobes are present in the above two seventeenth-century fountains as well as in the Mamluk precedents. All these lobed designs create a similar impression, but the ones from the Syrian fountains clearly belong to the same subgroup, influenced by, but distinct from, the Mamluk prototypes. Actually, the "arches" of the Museum's fountain and those of the other Damascene examples have very similar polychrome "voissoirs," which resemble arrows pointing outward. A further common feature of the Syrian fountains are dots at the intersections of their "arches."

The central well of these Syrian fountains is circular. The nucleus of the Metropolitan's fountain is a white marble finial in the shape of an open flower. It is a copy after the now-lost finial seen in the photograph. In the Museum's fountain the background surface between and beyond the "arcades" is covered with minute repeating star and polygon patterns. The area in the central well has an overall strapwork design of larger triangles enclosing smaller triangles. At the points of the larger triangles are small hexagons. Both of these patterns are present in the two seventeenth-century fountains.

As regards materials, three types of stone were employed in the decoration of Damascus qa'a: marble, limestone, and basalt. Basalt, which came from the region of the Hauran, south of the city, was chiefly used for the paving of the ṭazar. Limestone was also used for the ṭazar flooring, often in alternation with basalt. It came from nearby quarries. One can distinguish a number of marble types, such as a softer black marble which originated in the region of Nabak, a red marble from the Zabdani-Tal area northwest of Damascus, and various harder polychrome marbles that were imported from different places. In local nomenclature Syrian marble is usually referred to as rukhām; imported marbles, mostly from Turkey (e.g., rose-colored), Lebanon (several light colors), and Italy (especially white), were differentiated by the word marmar. The older parts of the Museum room's mineral decoration also seem to incorporate these three materials.

Techniques of decoration combined local marble inlay work (similar to fine marquetry), marble and stone opus sectile, and marble and stone mosaic. Inlaying, the finest and oldest stone technique practiced in Syria, is not present in any of the original sections of stonework that came with the Museum's room. (This does not mean, however, that it was not used in sections that have perished.) In the reconstruction of the floor and fountain of the Museum's room both opus-sectile and mosaic techniques have been employed. The former would indeed have been used in Damascus interior decoration, especially in order to bring out the beauty of the central ornamental compositions of inlay work or mosaic. We also find opus-sectile work in parts of the original section of the room's fountain, in the arrowlike "voissoirs" of the "arcade." The rest of the original segments of the fountain are decorated in mosaic. This method, used to cover fountains and parts of floors and to line the casings of certain ṭatabāt, involved cutting tiny polychrome pieces in a specific shape and assembling them into geometric configurations, bound by mortar. Both opus sectile and mosaic were very old Syrian crafts.

Thus, in its overall form, in its decoration and materials this fountain—the principal part of the original floor decoration remaining—conforms closely to an earlier, seventeenth-century Damascene style inspired to a large degree by Mamluk fountains.

**The Lower Walls**

While stone ornament in Syrian homes remained quite unchanged for centuries, the decoration done in wood was modified substantially in eighteenth-century houses when traditional geometric and arabesque motifs were combined with newer floral compositions, and when landscape views came into vogue in eighteenth-century Turkey. The lower walls of a great qa'a were clad in an ensemble of wood paneling (ḥalqa, pl. ḥalaqāt), which would have endowed it with a warm atmosphere. This painted and gilded woodwork was rich in floral and geometric designs, as well as in cartouches containing inscriptions placed in panels over the various arched openings and on the cornice that encircled the entire qa'a.
Niches incorporated in the wainscoting of the țazar were frequently fitted with built-in shelves for exhibiting small objects of value (rafraf) and books (kutbiyya).\textsuperscript{49} Other sections of the paneling featured large cupboards with double doors (khazâna or dülbâb), while still other alcoves (yûk) concealed their contents with curtains. Yûk would have held bedding, additional cushions, and carpets, whereas khazâna and dülbâb might have been "treasure" cabinets containing precious objects—especially a type called samandara, with elaborately decorated doors.\textsuperscript{50} Appropriately, then, the kutbiyya and rafraf of the Museum’s room contain lavishly bound tomes and objets d’art of the period while the closed doors of its khazâna leave one to imagine the stacks of textiles and cushions that might be arranged within.

Another important feature of a great qâ a was the mašab (pl. mašabât), a large and highly ornamented niche, located usually in the ataba, designed to hold an object of value: a flower vase, a water jar, an ornate water pipe, or coffee and sherbet cups.\textsuperscript{51} Some mašabât, such as the two in the qâ a of Jamîl Mardam Bek in the Damascus National Museum, were made entirely of marble and stone and functioned as wall fountains connected with the ataba’s floor fountain. The arch of the mašab might have had a small vault from which cascaded a succession of miniature niches, or muqarnas. Below, the entire mašab would be lavishly decorated with marble and mother-of-pearl mosaic or, occasionally, with ceramic tiles.\textsuperscript{52}

The room arrived disassembled in hundreds of pieces and was installed in 1972 with the aid of little more than a few old photographs since lost.\textsuperscript{53} Its various original wooden components are suspended from a modern wooden armature at a distance from the Museum’s actual floor, walls, and ceiling, and new frames have been introduced to hold the wall panels (Figure 7). A closer examination of the four walls of the Damascus Room should begin with the right-hand wall as one enters today, which will be called Wall No. 1 (see Figure 4). This wall, as will be explained, would originally have been the first one seen by the visitor, and it is here that the beginning of the poem inscribed on the wainscoting is to be found. On the ataba level, the Ӌalqa features a double-door dülbâb or khazâna with an arched top, and each door is divided into three sections—the upper and lower square, the middle rectangular. This type of opening, with the same divisions but variations of decorative motifs, is found in two cupboards of equal size on the same wall, as well as on the four windows on the opposite wall.

Next to the dülbâb is the mašab, which is a pastiche of original and other elements of the period (Figure 8). Its original upper part has a wooden trilobed vault filled with muqarnas. Below is a Syrian tile panel from the Museum’s collection that is typical of the kind of revetment such a niche may have had in the first half of the eighteenth century. (The Museum owns two other comparable tile panels, both of which schematically represent a mosque with three domes topped by finials.\textsuperscript{54}) The arches circumscribed beneath have alternately colored voussoirs, and below them are hanging mosque lamps, cypress and palm trees, and either a large ablutions ewer or, as in the panel of the Museum’s mašab, two-handled vases out of which carnations and other flowers grow. All these panels have similar color schemes—mainly turquoise and cobalt blue, green, and aubergine—and they all feature inscriptions with the names of Allah, Muḥammad, and the four Orthodox caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. The Museum’s panel has a central cartouche inscribed “Trust in God!” (tawakkal alá Allâh). The two side walls of the niche have three floral tiles in complementary colors also from the period. Below is a marble-clad compartment with a diamond pattern, which likewise is not original to the room.
Figure 8. The decorative niche known as the *masab*, Wall No. 1 (photo: author)

Figure 9. Elevation of Wall No. 1, 1972 (drawing: Department of Islamic Art, MMA)

Figure 10. Right-hand panel of the largest closet (*saman-dara*) in Wall No. 1 (photo: author)
There seem to be two anomalies in the present form of the maṣab. First, as installed, it looks as if it is missing its topmost ornamental panel; second, it is the sole niche in the room that springs from floor level (Figure 9). In fact, it should start at the same height as all the other niches and its upper limit should be where the inscription panel is now. The inscription panel in turn should be where the blank modern panel was inserted. (There is no wall text missing, as will be discussed below.) Thus arranged, the line of the room’s ḫalqa would remain unbroken.

Finally, the ṭasar segment of Wall No. 1 features an imposing closet, or samandara, also with an arched profile (see Figure 1). Every such room would have at least one cabinet bigger than the rest. Each of its elaborately decorated doors (Figure 10) has a prominent, centrally placed circular naskhi inscription. It is entirely gilded and surrounds a central star motif. It reads “Oh, Glorious!” (yā jalīl) eight times.” Proceeding from right to left, the direction of the
Figure 13. Elevation of Wall No. 3, 1972 (drawing: Department of Islamic Art, MMA)

Figure 14. Elevation of Wall No. 4, 1972 (drawing: Department of Islamic Art, MMA)

Figure 15. Cornice crowning the paneling and windows set with colored glass in the upper wall zone (photo: author)
Arabic script we find that the wall facing the present entrance, Wall No. 2 (see Figure 3), is articulated by three symmetrical ṭafīr or kutbīyya, appropriately used for displaying precious pottery, metalwork, and leather-bound tomes from the collections of the Museum’s Islamic Department.

The windowed wall to the left of the present entrance, Wall No. 3, would have originally faced the courtyard. On the ṭazār level (Figure 12) two of the windows, with grilles and shutters, flank a large samandara; two more windows of equal size are now found on the ‘atba section (Figure 11). Originally, however, the window nearest to the dividing arch on the ‘atba level was the actual entrance to the room from the courtyard outside. This is clearly documented in the architectural plans and elevations that accompanied the installation of the Museum’s room (see Figures 2, 13, and 14). The room’s entrance was switched from Wall No. 3 to Wall No. 4 in order to conform to the shape of the gallery space. This involved relocating the entire door assembly and its overdoor panel. Thus the door that originally communicated with the courtyard was where a window is at present. When the door was reinstalled in its current location, it was reversed in order to show its finished face toward the Museum’s gallery. This side of the doors, carved and inlaid with an eight-pointed star design in mother-of-pearl, would originally have faced inward, complementing the other lavish materials of the wall paneling (see Figure 14). The present entrance wall, Wall No. 4, once included two open display niches with shelves and a central opening whose precise function remains uncertain. Three possibilities are suggested, however, by existing Damascene houses: a cabinet, a window, or a door to an adjacent liwān, or, less likely, a door to an interior smaller room.

The paneling culminates in a concave cornice (ṭanaf, pl. atnaf) that runs all around the room (Figure 15). At regular intervals it features inscription cartouches alternating with gold medallions and gilded muqarnas. The style of this cornice is common to a number of Damascene rooms, in which the paneling terminates with some kind of ornamental cornice.

The Upper Walls

This section is like a white border framing the dark and rich wainscoting below and setting it apart from the equally sumptuous ceiling. Yet it is not totally blank: several jewel-like stucco windows inlaid with colored glass punctuate its whiteness (see Figure 15). Light entering at different times of the day through these high, multicolored skylights (qamarīyya) must have created a kaleidoscopic effect in the room below. From the early centuries of Islam, glass had been used as decoration or set in carved and pierced window frames. Lead was never used, as it was in Western stained glass; instead, colored or clear glass pieces were inserted within a stucco trellis, a practice that continues to the present time. Most surviving antique examples date from the Ottoman period. These upper lights, which are more ornate than the lower, functional windows with clear panes, are one of the most attractive elements of wealthier Turkish houses. They are placed above reach, in a zone that emphasizes the height of the room, adds color and light to it, and accentuates the ceiling’s impact.

The two long upper walls of the Museum’s room each have a single oculus with geometric floral patterns over the ‘atba as well as a pair of joint rectangular lobed windows bearing geometric designs, including stars over the ṭazār. The two other walls also have one oculus each, both of which feature a highly stylized cypress tree within a geometric network, the cypress being a favorite motif of the Ottoman period. This upper wall area, painted white and containing only windows set with colored glass, is a distinctive feature of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ottoman houses in Anatolia.

The Ceilings

The intricately decorated wooden ceilings (ṣaqf) of Syrian houses were beamed or coffered or a combination of the two, as is the case with the Museum’s room (Figure 16). As was customary, the beamed ceiling of the ‘atba is separated from the coffered ceiling of the ṭazār by a lofty wooden arch (Figure 17), and the ceilings of the two spaces have different schemes of decoration. Around the ‘atba ceiling runs a magnificent muqarnas cornice (Figure 18), whereas the ṭazār ceiling is framed by a concave cornice exactly like the one over the wainscoting below (see Figure 16). Curved muqarnas spandrels, the so-called raqba (sing. raqba), reach down from the four corners of each ceiling (Figure 19).

The beamed ‘atba ceiling has two projecting timbers spanning the entire width of the room. Each beam is divided into three sections, the outer ones flat and edged, the central one rounded. These sections employ muqarnas for their transitional elements. The
Figure 16. The two ceilings

Figure 17. Elevation of the arch looking into the fzar, 1972 (drawing: Department of Islamic Art, MMA)

Figure 18. Muqarnas cornice circumscribing the ʿataba ceiling (photo: author)

Figure 19. The ceilings' curved muqarnas spandrels (photo: author)
to evoke a carpet or textile canopy, with the wide outer border enclosing several framing boards resembling guard bands and the central square taking the place of the rug’s “field.” The corner muqarnas pendentives, tapering downward so as to resemble gathered curtains, further accentuated the textile analogy. It appears that the decorative patterns of such ceilings were perceived as echoing those on Persian carpets. Closer examination of the general layout of ceilings such as the Museum’s, however, reveals stronger affinities with the astral and geometric designs of Mamluk carpets and “compartment” rugs attributed to seventeenth-century Damascus (Figure 20), rather than with the medallion floral examples of Persian Safavid production, which, if anything, may have influenced only late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ceilings. The square format, the eight-pointed stars, the hexagons, the grid of squares on the diagonal, the multiparted rosettes enclosed in, or enclosing, stars, and the borders of ribbonlike bands and alternating oblong hexagonal cartouches with hexagonal medallions containing floral motifs—all these features are characteristic of the geometry favored by Egyptian and Syrian rugs between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. This archaism may also be indicative of the room’s early date, like its fountain, which looks back to the Mamluk tradition. On the other hand, the small octagonal mirror set in the central square of the tazar ceiling seems to be a feature that anticipates the mirror-encrusted interiors of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Techniques and Materials of the Wainscoting and Ceilings

Discussions of the types of wood and the techniques employed for the construction and decoration of the woodwork of Damascene rooms have been infrequent and brief. Available references mention local poplar as the wood most commonly used both for construction and for the decorative and structural parts of ceilings. Local walnut, a resistant and uniform type of wood, seems to have been put to all kinds of uses, such as paneling, doors, and even beams. Elsewhere, poplar beams and panels of cedar and terebinth are mentioned as having been employed for beamed ceilings, cedar for coffered ceilings, terebinth, cedar, and poplar for muqarnas cornices, zedrach for the framing boards, and cedar or terebinth for the painted panels of the wainscoting. Although the woodwork of the Museum’s room has not been ana-
alyzed, it is reasonable to assume it was made according to standard practice and available materials.

In terms of construction, an infrastructure of large beams is hidden by decorations of worked wood that can be divided into four basic types: visible beams, hidden or dressed beams, decorated ceiling, and canvas-lined ceiling.76 The 'atapa usually involved the first method, which was the most popular. In this, the infrastructure, or support, beams were left visible and received painted decoration. The tazar ceilings were made by the second method, whereby large tree trunks were covered by a framework of wood forming smaller beams and crossbars, between which the panels of the coffers were installed.77 The Museum's ceilings seem to follow these two techniques, the first for the 'atapa and the second for the tazar.

The wood paneling, on the other hand, involved a tongue-and-groove construction.78 The Museum's room shows this technique on shutters and doors, whereas the various panels of decoration are fastened by nails through a lip onto the modern wooden mounting, and this seems to have been the manner by which they would have been attached to their original backing.

The decoration was executed in various special techniques.79 As the Museum's room has not been scientifically analyzed, we can only assume that its relief or flat painted areas were executed according to methods generally employed in Damascus houses. For example, a sense of textures in relief would be achieved by adding small wood fillets to form the frames and the panels. On the ceiling, this relief effect would be attained by juxtaposing and superimposing cut wooden elements glued or nailed on the main background. The woodwork, whether on the walls or the ceiling, then received a coat of gesso, which in some places was executed in relief. It was this gesso that served as the actual base for the polychrome decoration.80 Decoration involved painting with animal glue, painting with "lacquer" (actually a mixture of pigments with oil and a hard vegetal resin), and painting with wax.81

Two distinct methods were employed in the application of these three types of painting. The first technique involved raised motif painting, which resembled stone relief carving. In this mode, wood would be covered by a primer of carbonate of calcium paste, which would form small protruding fillets that determined the desired motif. Glue or wax-based paint would then be used. The second method would be flat painting. In that case, the layer of paint would be directly applied to the wood or on a primer covering the entire supporting surface.82 Moreover, painting in either fine leaves of gold or tinfoil was employed. Gold would be applied on an ocher-colored ground; tinfoil would be made to adhere to an intermediary preparation of glued lead white.83 The decorative patterns were transferred using perforated paper bearing the desired designs that acted as stencils.

Decorative Motifs of the Woodwork

The Museum's room sought to reveal to cultivated and erudite guests the status, taste, and sensibilities of its owner. We are fortunate that by analyzing the room's rich decoration and interpreting its eloquent inscriptions we can discern that original intent. Moreover, we can consider the delicate tensions brought about between the two, as well as between traditional and innovative, local and foreign elements. From traditional and/or local sources stem the spatial divisions and function of the room, the materials and techniques of its construction and decoration, and the practice of inscribing eulogistic poetry to the Prophet on the woodwork of a grand qa'a. On the other hand, the room contains certain rather striking imported motifs that serve as novelty "punctuation marks." This dual heritage, in which Syrian/Arab features outweigh Turkish/European ones, makes the Metropolitan's room a very important stepping-stone for our understanding of Syrian domestic architecture of the Ottoman period.

The wooden ceilings, walls, window shutters, and soffits of our room are embellished with painted and gilded decoration, which was frequently executed in bas-relief. The various motifs, disposed on panels, vertical bands, or cartouches resembling golden bookcover medallions, are set against a background of dark, murky green. A small area that has recently been cleaned revealed that the present dull background was in fact light green, a color that seems to have been common in Damascus interiors of the period,84 possibly because it helped to transform an enclosed salon into a kind of garden pavilion.

Traditionally, the most common Damascus terms used to refer to painted woodwork of this kind were 'ajami (i.e., Persian) and istân'bâli (i.e., from Istanbul).85 Although nowadays the term 'ajami is still used to refer to this style of early woodwork in general, in the past the term may have denoted a type of ornament that was not specifically Persian, but rather more conventionally Islamic, such as the arabesque and various small geometric and stylized floral designs that evolved over the centuries. All these could be found in any older Syrian decorative ensemble. Clearly, this
issue requires further study and clarification. *İstânbülü,* on the other hand, signified the new repertoire of ornamental compositions from the so-called Turkish rococo, which filtered into the Arab provinces from the Ottoman capital. Thus, in the Museum’s room, in counterpoint to the backdrop of conventional forms and patterns, are prominent images of naturalistic flowers, bowls with lush fruit, cornucopias, and architectural vignettes—all elements that undeniably connect this room with foreign tastes.

Specifically, the room’s flowers are depicted emerging from typical Turkish water bottles (*sürahi*) (Figure 21), and they clearly belong to the popular Ottoman typology codified as “quatre fleurs,” open and closed tulips (Figures 22, 23), carnations (Figure 24), wild roses (Figure 25), and hyacinths (Figure 26). All these are very similar to the flowers that can be seen on objects throughout the Ottoman world. Furthermore, the bowls are golden Ottoman tazze (*ayaklı, tabak, tas*), where are filled with piles of assorted fruit (Figure 28), in the tradition of miniature paintings depicting royal banquets. (In European interior decoration too, flowers and fruit were often combined in different ways to celebrate the domestic arts of the table.) The series of cornucopias in the Museum’s room (Figure 27) is another foreign element that emphasizes the suggestion of abundance and well-being.

Architectural scenes also may be considered within the category of foreign ornament. The *samandara* of Wall No. 1 has four atmospheric scenes set in undulating festoons that emerge from two lateral cornucopias (Figure 29). As these paintings are very faint and considerably damaged, all one can determine is that the buildings depicted—religious, secular, or both—are set in a landscape with trees. Finally, the rectangular arched overdoor panel also features architecture, trees, and a tazza with fruit (Figure 30). The scene represented here is unusual in that it combines two near mirror images of the two halves of a mosque fronted by trees with a disproportionately oversize central fruit bowl.

**Observations on the Motifs of the Woodwork**

With the exception of generic Islamic motifs such as arabesques and small floral and geometric designs, the woodwork of the Museum’s room displays a certain originality of design that places it in the vanguard of its surviving contemporaries. Its influences from

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Figure 21. *Surnameh* of Ahmed III, the guilds of florists and fruit sellers, 1720. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, H. 1344 (photo: Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library)

Figure 22. Detail of open tulips from a window-shutter panel (photo: author)

Figure 23. Detail of closed tulips in a vase from a long vertical panel in Wall No. 1 (photo: author)
abroad make themselves felt discreetly, yet pervasively, like a haunting musical leitmotiv. There is nothing uncommon about these designs in Syrian domestic interiors beginning with the second decade of the eighteenth century, and especially after midcentury. Surviving examples abound, either from intact rooms (Figure 31) or important fragments.91 The 1707 date

of the Museum’s qā’a, however, documents not only the fact that “Turkish rococo” had reached the Syrian province of the Ottoman Empire by the first decade of the eighteenth century, but also that a mature and sophisticated synthesis of indigenous and imported elements had already been achieved by that time.

Indeed, these motifs may have been employed in Syria much earlier, in Aleppo, as the room from about 1602 in the Berlin Staatlichen Museum demonstrates; but pre-eighteenth-century evidence is much too scarce to allow a definitive conclusion.92 From Damascus surviving evidence is totally lacking earlier than the Metropolitan’s room, although there is indication that rooms with similar decoration did exist such as the now-lost interiors, dated 1589–1639 and 1689 respectively, that were in the London galleries of Vincent Robinson about 1913,93 and the presumed late-seventeenth-century Damascene salon of Eustache de Lorey in Paris, at present unaccounted for.94 Hence the added importance of the Museum’s qā’a, which may well be not only an early instance of this fashion in Damascus but also the only one to survive.

Both Aleppo and Damascus were international com-

Figure 24. Detail of carnations from a window soffit (photo: author)

Figure 25. Detail of wild roses in a vase from a long vertical panel in Wall No. 2 (photo: author)

Figure 26. Detail of hyacinths in a vase from a long vertical panel in Wall No. 1 (photo: author)

Figure 27. Long vertical panel with cornucopias in Wall No. 2 (photo: author)
Figure 28. Long vertical panel with fruit bowls in Wall No. 3 (photo: author)

Figure 29. One of the architectural vignettes on the left door of the large closet (samandara) in Wall No. 1 (photo: author)

Figure 30. The overdoor panel (photo: author)
mercial centers, and their leading citizens were cognizant of and receptive to artistic influences from the East and the West. As the Berlin room suggests, the trade of textiles and silks between Europe and the Near East played a prominent role in the changes of styles and tastes. Where architecture in Syria is concerned, Sultan Selim’s conquest of 1516 eventually launched two architectural trends, one purely Ottoman and one combining Syrian Mamluk with Turkish elements. Specifically, the decoration featuring bouquets in vases and fruit bowls was at this time a kind of revival and reinterpretation of motifs traditionally employed in Islamic art that developed in Turkey and Persia in the period between the late sixteenth century and the middle of the seventeenth. In Syria, this new naturalism was more directly linked with the art of Ottoman Turkey than with Safavid Iran.

Ottoman taste was further marked by a fascination with things French (a penchant, incidentally, that was reciprocated by the numerous manifestations of turqueries in France). Scrolls, pieces of mirror, painted landscapes, flowers, fretted and curved glittering decoration of all kinds were manifestations of the rococo adapted to Turkish interiors. According to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, wife of the English ambassador to the Porte about 1717, rooms everywhere in Turkey seemed partly Rococo, partly oriental. While exhibiting the new French vogue, Istanbul homes also held on to traditional Eastern elements: amassing Persian, Turkish, Indian, and even European rugs and textiles with naturalistic sprays of flowers on raised divans; covering walls with painted and gilt wood paneling that incorporated many cupboards; and placing fountains on the floor. It becomes evident, then, that Syrian rooms of the period, such as the Museum’s, reflected several trends prevalent in the Ottoman capital, especially the practice of linking European and Near Eastern elements of decoration.

Perhaps more than anything else, the so-called lâle devri, or “Tulip Era,” of the Ottoman sultan Ahmed III

Figure 31. Detail with fruit bowls and flower vases from the paneling dated 1749 in the “Salle de la mariée” of the ‘Azm Palace in Damascus (photo: author)

Figure 32. The ceiling of Sultan Ahmed III’s library in the Topkapi Palace, dated 1720 (photo: author)
(r. 1703–30) was responsible for codifying the new love of flower vases and fruit bowls. The sultan ushered in an epoch of extravagance and rarefied pleasures whose emblem became the tulip. Among his numerous construction projects, his “Fruit Room” (Yemiş Odası)100 and his library101 (Figure 32) from the Topkapi Palace best exemplify early Turkish rococo interior decoration. The former, featuring a variety of flowers and fruit in enfilades of vases and bowls painted on different registers, was a cabinet-type small room, entered through the library of Ahmed I, made as a sort of retreat for the sultan’s relaxation; the latter, a light-filled, freestanding building resembling a garden kiosk, is crowned by a ceiling repeating the remarkable flower vases of the “Fruit Room.” Both of these fascinating spaces were made between 1705 and 1720 and must have played a key role in setting the trend for fruit bowls and flower vases.102 In fact, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s firsthand accounts mention such exuberant images everywhere, as, for instance, on the walls of the yali of the grand vizier on the Bosporus. Its galleries were decorated, in her words, with “Jars of Flowers and Porcellane dishes of Fruit of all sorts so well done in Plaister and colour’d in so lively a manner that it has an enchanting Effect.”103

A slightly earlier example (1697–1702), the famous Kuprulu Yali of Hussein Pasha, the grand vizier of Mustafa II, also fits this description: a frieze of large-scale porcelain vases holding a symmetrically arranged profusion of flowers dominates the paneled zone above the windows, while smaller flower vases and even simple wildflower bouquets tied by ribbons echo the larger motifs in other sections of the paneling.104 The close association of flower vases and fruit bowls is perhaps best encapsulated in a painting by Levni in Vehbi’s Surnameh of Ahmed III (Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, H. 1344) that depicts the guilds of florists and fruit sellers parading together in front of the sultan in 1720 (see Figure 21). Examination of the painting reveals a striking resemblance of execution between the wares on parade and the ones on display in the Ottoman interiors of the period.

From the second half of the sixteenth century onward we also find that shared motifs between portable arts, manuscript painting, and architectural ornamentation became more prominent than before,105 both in Syria and in Turkey. As many similarly decorated objects were used in a home, it seems natural that they would have been coordinated with interior decoration as much as possible. To this effect, the Museum’s room may be considered a typical example: on its woodwork we find all the motifs from the Ottoman ornamental vocabulary mentioned above (vases with naturalistic flowers, fruit bowls, and architectural scenes) as well as countless pointed and serrated saz leaves106 (either alone or embracing rosettes or isolated blooms).

The room’s cornucopias may denote a distinctly European import because they became popular only much later in Ottoman interiors. Also of European inspiration are the architectural scenes. These paintings belong to the same genre that in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was featured in Ottoman interior domestic decoration107 and that was influenced by the vedute of European interiors, by Turkish miniature painting,108 and by engravings of Istanbul and its environs done by Western artists working there.109

On the other hand, the curious iconography of the overdoor panel calls for separate consideration. In a general way, the two mirror-image halves of a mosque recall both topographical miniatures,110 and the paintings of certain ceramics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries done in a schematic linear style and often employing the convention of showing buildings from the side with lamps hanging within (Figure 33).111 The mosque in question on the Museum’s panel resembles the type built in Damascus during the Ottoman period, combining Turkish domes with Syrian arches of alternating polychrome voussoirs.112 The two leaning trees on the panel act as dividers between the mosque halves and the giant fruit bowl, following in the tradition of those on the mosaics of the Great Mosque of Damascus, or the mosaic frieze of Sultan Baybars’s mausoleum (1277–81). In the latter, flat mirror images of buildings are divided by trees (Figure 34); acanthus scrolls emerge from cornucopias (Figure 35); and fruit bowls figure between buildings or with scrolls (Figure 35). Thus, the overall style of the overdoor’s paintings may suggest an earlier date than the rest of the woodwork, or a provenance from another decorative scheme.113 Its iconography is, at any rate, unusual for domestic paneling.

The Inscriptions

Distributed in lobed cartouches on three registers—wainscoting, tazar ceiling cornice, and upper wall cornice—the Arabic inscriptions of the Museum’s room are a significant body of evidence. All are written in gold against a black background strewn with delicate wildflowers. The wall paneling contains thirteen pairs of superimposed rectangular panels, plus one single panel. The tazar ceiling cornice has a series of twenty-
four panels, whereas the wall cornice inscriptions unfold in a continuous frieze of twenty-eight cartouches.

Only two previous attempts have been made to translate parts of the room’s inscriptions. Therefore, all the legible inscriptions are translated here for the first time, although the identity of the poet is still unknown. This situation is, however, not unique to this room; late madh al-nabi poems composed by local Damascene poets are known to be problematic. Perhaps this accounts for the conspicuously incomplete treatment of the inscriptions in other published Damascene interiors and significant fragments. From the scant information available and the author’s recent research in situ, it can be established that a large number of Damascene grand qā’āt bore inscriptions eulogizing the Prophet and were frequently taken from the Hamziyya, an expanded version of the famous “Ode on the Prophet’s Mantle,” or Qaṣīda al-Burda, by Muhammad ibn Sa’īd al-Būṣīrī (d. 1694). Preoccupation with the Burda was by no means exclusive to Damascus; it could be found all the way from Cairene rooms to the “Fruit Room” of Ahmed III. In the latter, golden inscriptions appear on black cartouches resembling those of the Damascus Room.

The poetry of the Museum’s wall paneling is written in thuluth/jali script and is cast in the kāmil meter rhyming in the letter dāl (dāliyya). It has thirteen lines, each consisting of two hemistichs. The two hemistichs of each line are placed within individual cartouches on separate panels. The first hemistich of every line is superimposed over the second, and the poem follows a counter-clockwise direction. Between the third and fourth lines is an independent couplet. Unlike the main poem, its two lines are arranged on only two panels, one line (not hemistich) per panel. The couplet is in the same meter (shortened by omitting its last syllable) as the main poem. It rhymes in qāf (qāfiyya). It is prominently situated in the center of Wall No. 2, in other words, on the sādr wall of the tazar. As the couplet is not part of the poem, its placement seems significant and must have been intentional: making reference to the Prophet, it crowns the most important seat of the room reserved either for the noblest guest or for the master himself.

The poem begins to the left of the lofty arch dividing ḍataba from tazar; that is, its starting point coincides with the beginning of the tazar’s elevated area. As had been customary even since the Mamluk period, the date appears after the end of the poem. In this case, the last line of the poem, which bears the room’s date, is inscribed on a single panel by itself (see Figure 36), located over the maṣāḥ, to the right of the dividing arch, so that it directly precedes the first line of the poem on the other side of the arch. The identical formulaic phrase “Entrust in God” appears twice at the spring line of the arch, at the points where it connects to the cornice. The same exhortation also occurs at similar points in other known rooms.

Figure 33. Ceramic bowl, ca. 1718. Underglaze painted “By the Painter T’oros.” Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 7649 (photo: Benaki Museum)

Figure 34. Detail of fruit trees dividing buildings from the mosaics in the mausoleum of Sultan Baybars, 1277–81, Damascus (photo: author)
Figure 35. Detail of a fruit bowl and an acanthus scroll emerging from cornucopias from the mosaics of the mausoleum of Sultan Baybars (photo: author)

Following is a translation of the wall text, which, except for the couplet, extols the virtues of house and owner and invokes good wishes upon them. Words marked with an asterisk are Noble Names of the Prophet.

Couplet:
1a. O Muṣṭafā* [Chosen One], (who was) before Adam was created,
1b. And before the mysteries of the universe were revealed,
2a. How is it possible for any creature to praise you,
2b. After the Creator has lavished praise on your virtues?

Poem
1a. House of praises, glorious deeds and magnanimity,
1b. (May) feasts of rejoicing remain with you eternally.
2a. Noble hands erected you in highest dignity;
2b. Those seeking refuge from destruction have an abode which protects them.
3a. The turtledoves sing delightedly,
3b. The rewarded Dāʾī* [Caller] sings [lit., twitters] wishes upon you.
4a. I rejoice in your loftiness,
4b. For the one who built you is the one who surpasses the stars in sovereignty.
5a. He assigns comfort to every difficulty;
5b. The ferocious lions come and prostrate themselves before him.
6a. A family branch which traces its root to the most distinguished group (of men),
6b. They [i.e., the group] derive significance from high-born glory.
7a. A hand that assists with means of subsistence those who implore,
7b. As the sea yields when it froths.
8a. They have made ministry and the ṣadara/ṣidara [office of the ṣadr] a servant,
8b. And (made) time content, and feats subservient.
9a. Remain in happiness, O unique one of your time,
9b. And enjoy what was erected with such care for you.
10a. (And may you remain) one of those who wear nobility as a cloak,
10b. And be clothed with all splendor among mankind.
11a. Living all your life luxuriously,
11b. Achieve what you wish in spite of your enemies.
12a. What has come down to us is the date of its building [lit., official decree of its building];
12b. (It is) a house that all minds cry out that verses be recited to.
13a. In its towers are assembled splendor and generosity;
13b. It is strengthened by Muḥammad,* the abode [lit., quarters] of noble qualities.

(In the) year [A.H.] 1119 [A.D. 1707]

Certain textual observations may be instructive at this point. First, the two hemistichs of line 5 are reversed on the wall, probably an oversight at the time of installation. The rhyme should appear on the second hemistich. As inscribed on the walls, the poem has several such errors, which may be ascribed to the poet or the calligrapher. Second, letters are often missing as, for example, the letter ʾay of the word ʾādī in line 2, the letter ʾay of the word al-darārī in line 4, the hamza of the verb jāʾānā in line 12, and the letter waw of the verb awṣṭādā in line 13. Third, the end of the first hemistich of line 11, arghādā, should end with a long vowel ā; otherwise the meter is broken. Fourth, in the couplet, the end of its first hemistich should, once again, end in a long vowel (adama) to avoid breaking the meter. In the first hemistich of its second line the word thanāʿuka, here in the nominative, should be in the accusative (thanāʿaka) because it is the direct object of the verb yarām. Also, its hamza should sit on the line, not on the letter waw. Finally, throughout the poem sets of two dots are used where not required. Puzzling as these errors may be, they are by no means unique to the Museum’s room; Dorothea Duda, for example, also noticed considerable grammatical or linguistic license in the inscriptions of the Pharaon collection woodwork which originated in a number of houses.

The second poem is in the same script as the paneling poem; its meter is ṭawil and it rhymes in mim
(mīniyya). This poem begins with the cartouche on the right-hand corner of the tazar ceiling cornice.124 After circumscribing the ceiling cornice, the poem continues below on the cornice, of the wall paneling, picking up with the line that is just to the left of the dividing arch (thereby aligning with the beginning of the wainscoting poem). The two sections of the second poem, written on the two cornices, are unified further by the repetition of the first hemistich of the first line on the final cartouche located on the wall cornice, just to the right of the dividing arch, exactly above the last panel of the wainscoting poem, the one with the date that is in turn above the maṣāb.125 A few parts of the ceiling cornice still present some problems of legibility and one hemistich is damaged. This section describes daybreak and morning rain in a flower garden, an appropriate introductory topic for a poem. It may be translated as follows:

The Tazar Ceiling Cornice

1a. The lightning saw the frowning of the darkness and smiled;
1b. It grazed over the flowers of an elevated place and (then) it puffed [i.e., a gentle breeze resulted].
2a. The forehead of the dawn began to shine in the forelock of the darkness
2b. And it pierced the whiteness of the teeth within the fruit of the (lips?).
3a. The lightning’s flag flared when the winds played
3b. Horse races in the racing ring of the sky.
4a. The Bowman of the sky strung the bow of a cloud,
4b. And sent down to earth arrows consisting of the (rain’s) downpour.
5a. Tears of a rain cloud had moistened the soil’s sleeves.
5b. (Pearl-like tears) were scattered on their [i.e., the sleeves’] threads and were restrung.
6a. They [i.e., the tears of rain] dragged over the head of the elevated place the train of their garment,
6b. And then they adorned the clothes of the area and the lot.
7a. And the silver of the shadow mixed with the gold of the lightning,
7b. And they covered the flowers of the spring and made them round like a silver dirham coin.
8a. And the hand of the garden gathered up the sleeves of its blooms,
8b. And it adorned the sides of the branches and wrapped them in a turban.
9a. The mouth of the flowers kissed the cheek of its rose.
9b. What a most beautiful cheek and what a most lovely mouth!
10a. [ILLEGIBLE] . . .
10b. Just as the (water’s) waviness [or curliness] put bracelets on [or enclosed] the river’s wrist.
11a. [ILLEGIBLE] . . . the energy (?) of the willow tree [or ben tree] dancing.
11b. Because of lightning that had become visible, or doves that were warbling.
12a. It embraced a cloak made of the green branches of the arak tree,
12b. And it kissed a mouth [lit., smiling place] made of the white flowers of the chamomile [or daisy].

The Wall Cornice

This section concludes the garden metaphor begun above, then proceeds to praise the Prophet and finally to supplicate God. Once again, an asterisk denotes Noble Names of the Prophet.

13a. And wrote gilded lines on the air’s sheet of paper,
13b. And the clouds ornamented [the gilded lines] with silver drops and put on the diacritical marks [i.e., of Arabic letters],
14a. And kohl-rimmed with sapphire an eyelid and an eye
14b. And daubed with henna a hand and a wrist.
15a. There is no need for the soul but to praise him,
15b. Abu’l-Qāsim* [Father of al-Qāsim], the Hādī [One Who Guides Right],* the exalted Prophet.
16a. Bashīr* [Bringer of Good Tidings], Nadhīr* [The One Who Warns of the Horrors of the Hereafter], Śādiq* [Sincere] in his words, Peace be upon him,
16b. Habīb* [Beloved, i.e., of God], Khalīl* [Good Friend], Ḥāshimi* [from the family of Hāshim], preferred by all, including God.
17a. A pure, a pious one, Abṭaḥi* [Belonging to al-Baṭha, an area around Mecca], a revered one,
17b. Shining Sirāj* [Lamp], (one of the well) of Zamzam, Mukarram* [Honored].
18a. A prophet who dons glory and power as finery,
18b. [Finery that is] white-striped where beauty is embodied.
19a. A prophet of right guidance—if it were not for him, the dark would not be illuminated,
19b. And the dark would not abstain [?], and the hot place would not bring forth greenery.
20a. He is the Mujtabā* [Elect] sent to the people (in) mercy;
20b. For by God! How many are the lives (he has given), how (great) is his revelation [?], and how merciful (is he)!
21a. He is the highest summit that cannot become higher,
21b. He is the firm bond that never breaks.
22a. O, Khātim* [Seal, i.e., the last prophet] of those sent, O, Fāṭih* [Opener, Conqueror] of sublime things [i.e., heaven],
22b. Have mercy for I have come to thy door as a sinner.
23a. And, O our Lord God, be for me and not against me,
23b. The world [lit., open space] has become narrow and dark
24a. I ask thee, by the Hādi * [One Who Guides Right],
answer my prayer and be generous,
24b. With that (which) is hoped for, O Master of the earth and the sky,
25a. Be tolerant and favorable and He who conceals (sins);
25b. O God, do not burn Muslims in the (hell) fire.
26a. Bless the one who prostrates himself and his companions
26b. Whenever lightning sees the frowning of the darkness and smiles.

Some textual errors exist in this poem as well: in the first hemistich of line 23 the nonclassical Arabic yā Allahu is used; in the first hemistich of line 15 the pronoun of imtīdāhā should be the masculine imtīdāḥahu, and in the first hemistich of line 18 the word taraddā is misspelled without the yā.126

These poems that adorn the Museum's room are fairly conventional, particularly in their many references to the Prophet. Still, that does not mean that the poet did not attempt something a bit clever. A possible play on words may underlie the appearance of the Prophet's name Muḥammad, reinforced by the inclusion of several of his Noble Names and his kunya Abu'l-Qāsim (Father of al-Qāsim). As the last line of the wall poem praises the house's towers wherein "splendor and generosity" dwell and refers to the Prophet Muḥammad as "the abode, or quarters of noble qualities," it might also have been alluding to the owner and his qualities, if his name were also Muḥammad. Or his name may have been Muṣṭafā, the name appearing in the exhortatory couplet prominently placed over the ṣadr, or Muṣṭafā b. Muḥammad. In any case, the Prophet's proper name at the end may call upon him to bless his namesake and his house. Moreover, the multiple mentions of the Prophet may indicate that the owner claimed actual kinship with his family. As is intimated by line 6 of the cornice poem, the owner of the room belonged to "a family branch which traces its root to the most distinguished group of men, who derive significance from high-born glory." Many such families of ashrāf, that is, who claimed descent from the Prophet, had established themselves over the centuries in Damascus.127

It was likewise conventional to build, or decorate anew, a reception hall on the occasion of some auspicious event such as a wedding or circumcision. Such rooms would then feature inscriptions making allusions to these festivities, or eulogizing the room and/or the whole house, and its owners.128 Following this tradition, too, the wall poem begins with the wish that "celebration remain" with the house forever and

Figure 36. The wall panel bearing lines 13a and 13b of the poem, as well as the room's date
proceeds to shower praise and invoke blessings upon the "noble hands" that built it.

As to the identity of the poet, one can only hypothesize at this point. Perhaps a local poet was called upon to write verses for this new room, someone known in the vicinity. The patron desiring an original work rather than a popular classic may have requested poetry in the manner of Busīrī, in keeping either with the tradition of tashīrī, the expanded later versions of the Burda, or with the practice of composing imitations of that powerful work. Assuming the grammatical errors are not the poet's but those of the calligrapher who copied his manuscript, it may be said that the poet worked within the well-established conventions of his period and had no special talent. A second hypothesis suggests that the owner may have been an amateur versifier who enjoyed seeing his rhymes on the walls of his new grand qa'a. This would also explain the linguistic problems, including the grammatical ones, especially if this gentleman-poet was not a native Arabic speaker.

It is unfortunate that the owner's name still eludes us. Informed speculation can be our only recourse at present. Perhaps he was an important religious or secular dignitary, as the words wizāra and sadāra imply, possibly a prominent Turk, as the foreign ornament and the textual flaws intimate. Or he may have been a wealthy merchant, either a Syrian or a Turk, whose contacts with the East and the West inspired the novel decorative motifs of his qa'a. What may be inferred with some certainty is that he belonged to an eminent family.

The early date of the room's decorative ensemble suggests a house of considerable age that may therefore be presumed to have stood in the environs of the Great Mosque, where the nucleus of the old intra-muros city is. This area (which contains such monuments as the twelfth-century hospital and madrasa of Nūr al-Dīn), along with the extra-muros zone just to its west, including the quarter of Qanawāt (where in the sixteenth century many Ottoman officials erected their residences), suffered vast destruction in October of 1925 during a three-day-long French bombardment. In these districts, often still referred to as harīqa, or "fire," at least 250 houses were lost and many others endured major damage. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, much of the remaining woodwork from partly destroyed houses was easily dismantled and taken to Europe, where it appeared either in the market or in private houses like Eustache de Lorey's. By the time Hagop Kevorkian acquired the room in the 1930s, the interior must have lost its identity—but may have retained an echo of having come from the vicinity of Nūr al-Dīn’s monuments.

Despite its uncertain provenance, the room that has come down to us through the centuries endures as a space of "splendor and generosity" that can still make any visitor "rejoice." Perhaps its special magic lies in its balanced dialogue between innovation and tradition. Whoever the family may have been, we can imagine that they were cultivated and cosmopolitan people who took pleasure in decorating their reception rooms in an eclectic and personal style.

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NOTES

1. MMA, acc. no. 1970.170. H. 67.1.6 cm, W. 509.2 cm, D. from inside front entrance to back wall 804.2 cm.

2. There are no records of the location of the house in which this room originated. Though the 12th-century monuments associated with Nūr al-Dīn survived the bombardment of 1925, a very large number of ancient houses in the immediate vicinity were destroyed or greatly damaged, and this room may have been in one of those residences.


5. The arrangement of an empty central space surrounded by living quarters was by no means unique to the Islamic world. It was early on adopted around the Mediterranean; the same disposition can be found in the Roman house with its atrium and the Hellenistic house with peristyle (see Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., Georges Marçais, "Dūr," and Kassem Twiarr, "Die Malereien des Aleppo-Zimmers im islamischen Museum zu Berlin," Kunst des
Jahrbuch cerning breezes the XVIIIe technique
Private Saracenic III, from en-Provence,
(The Orient's Ush, Roman 17.
This notion is based on a practice that seems to persist even today (see Jean-Charles Depaule, "À propos de l'habitat ancien aujourd'hui au Caire, à Damas et à Alep," in L'habitat traditionnel III: Variations et mutations [Aix-en-Provence, 1991] p. 861 and n. 1; Wultzinger and Watzinger, Damascus, p. 20; Reuther, "Die Qä'a," p. 207).


21. Qasar is a non-Arabic word denoting the higher part of the qä'a (see Abū al-Faraj al-'Ush, "Old Private Houses," p. 53 n. 1).

22. Ibid., p. 51.


24. See Depaule, "À propos de l'habitat ancien," p. 861, referring to the pioneering work of Russel in the 18th century and Lane in the 19th; they based their work on the study of original Arabic sources (E. W. Lane, Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians [rev. ed. London/ Cairo, 1878]), and A. Russel, The Natural History of Aleppo [London, 1794]).


30. Ibid., p. 36.


33. The tazar's dado is modern stucco.

34. See, for example, the qä'a of the Dār al-Balāūd (illustrated in Abū al-Faraj al-'Ush, "Old Private Houses," p. 51); the 1737 qä'a from the house of Jamīl Mardam Bek, now in the western wing of the Damascus National Museum (illus. in "al-Qä'a al-Shamiyya [The Syrian Qä'a]," pamphlet no. 4 of a series published by the Damascus

35. Two well-known 14th-century examples are in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (illus. in The Museum of Islamic Art, A Short Guide [Cairo, 1955] p. 26, fig. 15) and in the Louvre (illus. in Gaston Migeon, Musée du Louvre: L’Orient musulman [Paris, 1922] pl. 4, fig. 11). A 15th-century Mamluk fountain said to have come from a palace in Cairo was published in the Sotheby New York’s catalogue Islamic Works of Art (April 29, 1993) p. 61, lot 111.


37. Illus. in Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 63–65, pl. 75.

38. This photograph is in fact somewhat of a mystery. On the one hand, it is a modern print depicting the fountain against a totally blank background, as any work of art might appear in a dealer’s presentation photograph. On the other hand, the fountain seems to have been installed into a floor and operating with water when the photograph was taken. Since there are no written indications, it is still unknown where the photograph was taken and why all evidence of the fountain’s surroundings was carefully masked out. Unlike the room that belongs to New York University, which has photographs in its original domestic setting, the Museum’s room was accompanied by no such valuable documentation.

39. These arrowlike “voussoirs” can also be found in the Mamluk fountain offered by Sotheby New York in 1993.

40. Similar to the Mamluk fountain in the Louvre.

41. From Jdeyle, Seidnaya, or Qasiyin (see Rouanet and Piponnier, “Étude iconographique,” p. 147).

42. See Ibid., p. 147, and Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 130–131.


44. Inlaying of this local type involved first incision and then incrustation, where the shapes of small stylized floral or geometric motifs were carved away from the background material (usually marble, but also stone) and the resulting cavity was filled by polychrome marbles or colored stones, using a black paste of powdered basalt and glue as mortar. Besides fountains, inlay would be used in combination with large marble plaques to cover the floor of the ʿataba and the back walls of the masāb (see Maury, “La Maison damascène,” pp. 39–40, and Rouanet and Piponnier, “Étude iconographique,” p. 148).


47. Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 26–27.


50. See, for example, Reuther, “Die Qāʾa,” p. 203, pl. 110; Wultzinger and Watzinger, Damascus, p. 20, pl. 45 a. c; Pascual, “Du notaire au propriétaire,” p. 396 n. 3. Multifunctional rooms couldn’t be turned into sleeping quarters at night, and in the morning, the bedclothes and mattresses hidden from view in the khazana and yūk could be once again be ready for daily activities.

51. See Pascual, “Du notaire au propriétaire,” pp. 396 and 400, and Reuther, “Die Qāʾa,” p. 207. A similar decorative element, the suffa, was employed in Cairene reception rooms. Consisting of a marble or stone shelf supported by one or more arches faced with marble or tiles, it was located opposite the entrance and served the same function as the Syrian masāb (see Lane, p. 23).


54. MMA, 06.1237, dated 1150 A.H. (A.D. 1737/8), and MMA, 15.763. A very similar panel was placed in the wall fountain of the salon called the “Vieux Sérail” in the Parisian house of Henry-René d’Allemagne (see D’Allemagne, La Maison d’un vieux collectionneur [Paris, 1948] pls. 181, 185); another was for sale as lot 168 on Oct. 21, 1993, at Sotheby’s London.

55. Similarly executed inscriptions were placed on the largest cupboard of “Room U” in the “Yellow Salon” of the Pharaon collection, dated between 1775 and 1789 by Dorothea Duda (see Innenarchitektur, pls. 7a and 57, pp. 118–121 and 161).

56. Only one is the original metal grille, located in the third window counting from left to right. The rest are painted wooden copies. All the window soffits and shutters are original.

57. According to the Museum installation architect’s notations, new doorjams were employed with the original soffit. The switch was possible because the measurements of these openings match exactly: both are 92 cm wide, and the distance from the crown of the window’s arch, as well as from the center of the overdoor panel’s arch, to the floor is 264.5 cm. In addition, both the width of the overdoor panel and that of the narrow arched decorative panel over the window are also the same, 95.5 cm, which indicates that the overdoor panel could have fitted perfectly under the narrow arched panel.

58. The height of the window now in place of the original entrance is 185 cm, a measurement that would be appropriate for any of the three types of opening. For example, see Maury, “La Maison damascène,” pp. 10–11, 20–21, and Rouanet and Piponnier, “Étude iconographique,” p. 133.


60. The white, plastered upper walls are new, but the windows are original.

61. See Marilyn Jenkins, “Islamic Glass,” MMA (Fall 1986) pp. 54–55; illus. title page and back cover. For the technique in Damascus, see Abu al-Faraj al-ʿUsh, “Reconstruction,” pp. 125–160, pl. 2, fig. 3.

62. Onder Kucukerman, Turkish House: In Search of Spatial Identity.
65. Abū al-Faraj al-’Ush, “Old Private Houses,” p. 52. According to Dorothea Duda and information she received from Creswell, the earliest example of similar curved counterfillings reaching downward into the room are from the Mamluk period, from the 1218-69 Madrasa of Umm as-Sultan Ša’ban in Cairo (see Duda, “Painted and Lacquered Woodwork in Arab Houses of Damascus and Aleppo,” in Lacquerwork in Asia and Beyond, W. Watson, ed. [London, 1982] p. 259 and pl. 44).

64. For similar adawāh, see the ceiling of the qa‘a of Sayyid Ahmad al-Sibā‘i, illus. in Abū al-Faraj al-’Ush, “Old Private Houses,” p. 53; the ceiling of “Room H” of the “Golden Salon,” dated 1775, in the Pharaoh collection in Duda, Innenarchitektur, pl. 37; the ceilings of the Bayt Khalid ‘Azm (now the Museum of Damascus) and the Qasr ‘Azm (now the Museum of Popular Arts and Tradition), illustrated in Musselmani, Damascene Homes, pp. 53, 141; and the 1782 ceiling of the “Syria-Lebanon Room” in the “Cathedral of Learning” at the University of Pittsburgh.


66. For comparative examples, see a 1739-43 Damascene ceiling in the Great Serail at Dair al-Qamar, Lebanon, in Duda, “Lacquered Woodwork,” pl. 5c; a 1749-50 ceiling in “Room F” of the Pharaoh collection, Beirut, in Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 100-102, pl. 52; a mid-18th-century ceiling in “Room F” of the “Red Salon” in the same collection, ibid., pp. 65-66, pl. 33; and yet another ceiling from the end of the 18th century in the same collection, in the “South-East Bedroom,” which additionally features a ribbonlike undulating motif very similar to the one on the ceiling of the Museum’s room, ibid., pp. 121-122, pl. 67; the ceilings dating from the mid-18th century to ca. 1800 from two different houses (Abū ‘Arif al-Mohaini and Shaykh Ahmad al-Bisti‘āni), in Wultzinger and Watzinger, Damaskus, pl. 48; two ceilings of the ‘Azm family, one in the 1749 Qasr al-‘Azm and the other in the Bayt Khalid ‘Azm, both illus. in Musselmani, Damascene Homes, pp. 53, 141; and the ceiling of Sayyid Ahmad al-Sibā‘i, illus. in Abū al-Faraj al-’Ush, “Old Private Houses,” pp. 53-55.


69. Abū al-Faraj al-’Ush, “Old Private Houses,” p. 54. In these later period houses, mirrors were mostly inserted in the center of the largest closets (sandalāra or khāšāna). For some illustrated examples, see two closets in the Ḥafīz Bey al-Qādim house, dated 1776-77, in Wultzinger and Watzinger, Damaskus, pls. 45a, c; and a closet in “Room 4,” the so-called rococo of the Bayt Nizām in Rouanet and Piponnier, “Étude iconographique,” p. 141, pl. X. 4.

New York University’s room from the 1797 Quwātī house also has similar mirror inserts. As for mirrors on ceilings, they seem to have been much rarer. One example is the ceiling from an 1800-1801 room that came up for sale as lot 115 at Sotheby’s London on Oct. 20, 1994. This ceiling is in fact set with six oval mirrors, and more mirror inlay has been placed on its surrounding borders.

70. For example, a brief paragraph is devoted to the subject in Duda, Innenarchitektur, p. 130. However, Denis Piponnier has recently published a technical manual on the conservation and restoration of this type of woodwork (see La Conservation-Restauration des bois polychromes [Damascus, 1989]).


73. Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 77-78.

74. Ibid., pp. 45-49, 55.

75. Ibid., pp. 50-53, 118-121, 122-123.


77. Ibid. The other two methods were primarily employed in the 19th century. In the first a boarding of wood strips was nailed on the support beams to hide them completely, and then the strips were painted. Later in the century this type of woodwork would also have stucco, openwork, mirrors, and gilded decoration. The second method, also popular in the 19th century, involved stretching a thin fabric and nailing it on the wooden cornice all around the room in order to hide the poplar beams. This fabric then received lacquer painting (see Thomas Tunsch, “Eine syrische Innenraumdekoration,” in Völkultur und Volkskunst im Orient: Stadtpunkte, Vorarbeiten, Diskussionsbeitrage, B. Brenches and M. Mode, eds. [Halle, 1986] p. 137).

78. Ibid.

79. On the technology of woodwork decoration and its terminology, see Pascual, “Du notaire au propriétaire,” p. 397 and n. 2, where the terms mqsī and skandārūni are given as appearing in a 1700 document, although the precise meanings of the terms remain uncertain; they may designate either a technique of fabrication or a type of decoration, or both.


81. See Rouanet and Piponnier, “Étude iconographique,” pp. 149-150. Painting with animal glue could be applied either directly on the wood, or on a coating of carbonate of calcium; “lacquer” painting might also be used for repainting and for such pigments as chrome green and copper blue; wax painting included various pigments. Only scientific analysis can pinpoint the substances used in the Museum’s room.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid., p. 150.

84. For examples, see the Damascus ‘Azm Palace, 1749; three panels from Damascus dated 1754-65 offered by Sotheby’s London (lot 176, April 29, 1993); many of the principal panels of the 1790-91 Damascus room offered by Sotheby’s London (lot 127, April 26, 1982); several panels from the now-lost late-16th- or early-17th-century larger Damascus room last published in 1913 as being in the London galleries of Messrs. Vincent Robinson (“A Room from the Street Called Straight,” Connaissance 36 [1913] pp. 132-135); several panels from the Damascus room installed in the Paris house of Eustache de Lorey, said to be from the end of the 17th century (“Une salle d’un palais de Damas dans un hôtel parisien—chez Mr. E. de Lorey,” Art et Industrie [May 1933] pp. 21-25); the “Syria-Lebanon Room” in the “Cathedral of Learning” at the University of Pittsburgh, dated 1782; and the “Damascus Room” of the Cincinnati Art Museum, dated 1711-12.


86. See, for example, the shapes of ceramic tall-necked bottles in Nurhan Atasoy, İZNIK: the Pottery of Ottoman Turkey (London, 1989) p. 47, fig. 33.


88. Ibid., p. 45, fig. 28.

89. As, for instance, in Ottoman painting, the table set with metal and ceramic vessels placed in front of Sultan Murad IV, from an album page of ca. 1619 (Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, inv. no. H.2148, fol. 11b), detail illustrated in ibid., fig. 14.

90. Unlike the European convention for decorative cornucopias, which usually overflow with flowers, fruit, and corn, the Museum room's golden "horns" put forth flowers or architectural vignettes.

91. From Damascus, see the "Damascus Room" at the Cincinnati Art Museum, dated 1711-12, with many fruit bowls and flower vases; the "Syria-Lebanon Room" in the "Cathedral of Learning" at the University of Pittsburgh, dated 1782, with flower vases and some fruit bowls; the now-lost room of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, dated 1789-90, with flower vases and fruit bowls; the "Syrian Qa'a" from the house of Jamil Mardam Bek in the Damascus National Museum, dated 1737, with bouquets, fruit bowls, etc.; a room offered by Sotheby's London (lot 127, April 26, 1982), dated 1790-91; rooms 4, 7, and 8 of the Museum of Popular Arts and Tradition, all from the former Azm Palace, dated 1749, with striking amphora-like flower vases; and from the H. Pharaoh collection, Beirut: wall paneling and curved cornice in the "Green Salon," dated 1778, with architectural scenes and fruit bowls; wall paneling in the "Blue Salon," dated 1785-86, with fruit bowls, flower vases, and architectural views; wall paneling in the "Golden Salon," dated 1775, with flat architectural views, like architectural sketches, and with amphora-like vases; and the wall panels in "Room R" from Damascus and Aleppo, dated ca. 1740-50, with golden flower vases in cartouches. Other notable examples are from Aleppo: the wall paneling in "Room V," the "South-East Bedroom" of the Pharaoh house, dated 1740, with flower vases and fruit bowls set in cartouches, and from Hama: the 1740 'Azm Palace, with more fruit bowls and flower vases.

92. According to Dorothea Duda, *Innenarchitektur*, pp. 69, 119-115, the high point of these decorative art forms was reached in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th centuries (see, for example, the 1601-5 room in the Berlin Museum and ca. 1600 panels of "Room S." and the "Balakhchin Bedroom," of the H. Pharaoh collection).


97. In Iran, at the time of Shah Abbas (1587-1629), European floral motifs enriched the decorative repertoire and, in the 17th century, connections between rugs, textiles, bookbindings, illumination, and wall paintings became even closer than before (see Twair, "Aleppo-Zimmer," pp. 25-26). In Turkey, surviving interiors with naturalistic floral decoration even date from the late 16th or early 17th century (see, for instance, a house in the Shaykh Hamit district of Bursa, in Sedad Eldem, *Türk Evi* [Turkish Houses] [Istanbul, 1984] I, pp. 113-117). The number of important examples from the late 17th to early 18th century is larger still (see, for example, the mansion of Tahir Pasha in Mudanya, in ibid., II, pp. 47-49). Specifically, the decorative theme of a bouquet emerging from a vase is repeatedly encountered in ceramic revetments and windows of the late 17th century, such as in the Blue Mosque, the "çifte Kasılar," and the imperial mahfil of the Yeni Valide at the Topkapi Palace.

98. See, for example, the former Semaki family house, now a museum, in Yenisehir, near Bursa, or the 18th-century house of Çakır Ağa, a notable of the small town of Birgi in the Aegean hinterland, in Stephane Yerasimos, *Turkish Style* (New York, 1992) pp. 148-155.


102. Ibid., pp. 112-117.


104. M. H. Saladin and René Mesquich, *Le Val Ros De Kenprali à Anatol-Hassar*, preface by Pierre Loti (Paris, 1915). This yali was first published with Fossati drawings, but in this lavish volume the illustrations are by M. H. Saladin.

105. Models (numune) were made available from the court studios to artists (see Soustiel, *La Céramique islamique*, p. 336).

106. Similar to, for instance, an Iznik bowl and tile (mid-16th century) in ibid., pp. 133-135, figs. 221, 226.

107. See, for example, Günsel Renda, "Wall Paintings in Turkish Houses," in *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art*, G. Fehér, ed. (Budapest, 1978) fig. 13.

108. Ibid., figs. 25, 29.

109. See, for example, Gulru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: the Topkapi Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York, 1991) figs. 114a, 135, and pl. 27. See also Renda, "Wall Paintings in Turkish Houses," pp. 711, 718-719. According to Renda, landscapes were actually first depicted on writing boxes, embroideries, ceramics, mirrors, belts, etc., and then in architectural decoration.

110. Such as the famous ones by Matrakçi Nasuh, as, for example, the Topkapi Palace buildings represented in the miniature of Istanbul (J.II, T 5664, fol. 8v.) in Huseyn G. Yurdadyn, Nasuhî's Silâhi (Matrakçi), *Boyan-i Menâzîl-i Serifâ* îrânî-i Sultan Süleyman Khân (The Description of the Stages of Sultan Süleyman Khân's Campaign in the two Iranks) (facs. ed., Ankara, 1976).


112. See, for example, the single-dome square chamber of the mosque in the Tekke of Suleyman, dated 1550-60.

113. It could, for example, be from the same room at an earlier stage, or an older room, or another, earlier house of the owner. As
surviving buildings indicate, a house might well contain rooms that were decorated in different periods, as, for example, the Nizām House whose decoration spans the 19th century (see Irène Labeyrie, “Quelques Réflexions à propos de la maison Nizām à Damas,” in L' Habitat traditionnel, III, p. 845).

114. First, by Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, who read most of the inscriptions on the wall cornice, though with some difficulty because of their high location and insufficient lighting; her translations remain on file at the Museum. And, second, by Dr. Wen-chin Ouyang, who, as a graduate student at Columbia University, translated those of the wall paneling. I thank Dr. Ouyang for placing this material at my disposal.

115. I am very grateful to Dr. Ouyang, currently assistant professor of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Virginia, and Professor Wolfhart Heinrichs of Harvard University's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations for their invaluable assistance with some of the difficult passages.

116. The room's poems are not, for example, included in Yusuf Nabhānī’s four-volume compendium of eulogistic poetry to the Prophet (madh al-nabī) Al-majma‘ al-nabhāniyya fi-madd‘ah al-nabawiy, nor were they recognized by experts in the field as being by any known poet.

117. The only works that in any way address inscriptions are the following: Duda transcribed and, where possible, identified the texts from which some inscriptions in the H. Pharaon collection came, but she did not translate any of them (see Innenarchitektur, pp. 134–163); Tunsch transcribed and translated those parts he felt certain about from the Syrian room in the former villa of Herbert M. Gutman in Potsdam (see “Eine syrische Innenraumdekoration,” pp. 141, 147); Abū al-Faraj al-‘Ush transcribed the poem on the 1737 qā‘a of Jamil Mardam Bek, now in the Damascus National Museum, and identified it as being from Būṣīrī’s Hameṣṣa (see “Reconstruction,” pp. 138–139); Rouanet and Pipponier transcribed the passage inscribed on the east wall of the summer qā‘a in the Nizām House, but did not translate it, mentioning only that it has a votive character, (see “Étude iconographique,” p. 136).

118. See, for instance, Abū al-Faraj al-‘Ush, “The Syrian Qā‘a,” p. 7; Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 134–135, and, more specifically, in the “Green Salon” paneling dated 1778 with verses 1–3 and 5 (p. 137, pl. 45), in the anteroom of the “Golden Salon” a ceiling with verses 1, 2, 4–9, 10, 11 (pp. 141–142, pl. 26), and in the “Golden Salon” paneling dated 1775 with verses 1, 2, 3a, 4, 5, 8a (pp. 142–143, pls. 38–41); and lot 127, a room dated 1790–91 that came up for sale at Sotheby’s, London, on April 14, 1982, with verses 1–7.

119. For other Damascene rooms where the date appears at the end of the inscribed poem, see, for example, the “summer qā‘a” of the Nizām House (Rouanet and Pipponier, “Étude iconographique,” p. 136) and the “Golden Salon” of the Pharaon collection (Duda, Innenarchitektur, pp. 142–143).

120. See, for instance, in the “summer qā‘a” of the Nizām House (Rouanet and Pipponier, “Étude iconographique,” p. 143) and in the entrance room “A” of the Pharaon collection (Duda, Innenarchitektur, p. 136, pl. 17).

121. As expounded in the Encyclopædia of Islam (2nd edition, pp. 748–752), “from the expression șadr al-majlis, the upper or front part of the assembly, i.e., ‘the place/seat of honour,’ the term șadr for an outstanding person is synecdochically derived.” In post-Mongol Iran the terms șadr and șadr al-šūdār were employed for the head of the religious administration, whereas the term șadr-i ‘asam referred to the grand vizier in the Ottoman Empire. By extension, șadr “denotes an eminent or superior person or primus inter pares, whence its use for a chief, president, or minister. The title was especially used in the Persian world for a high religious dignitary whose function, the šādārat or šīdārat, was concerned with the administration of religious affairs.” In the early Ottoman Empire (14th century) șadr referred to the highest religious officials of the ‘ulema’, who could be promoted to viziers. Later (15th century), as viziers came to be appointed from the ranks of military commanders, the term șadr continued to be employed in its original general sense of “prominent, high ‘ulema‘ dignitary.”

122. The majority of these remarks should be credited to Dr. Ouyang’s earlier work on this poem.


124. Because the two hemistichs of line 1 rhyme with two rhyme consonants (ṣīn and mīm) in the luṣūm mā lī yakṣam fashion, i.e., the poem’s words wa tabassamā and fa-ṭanassamā.

125. Once again I have greatly benefited from Dr. Ouyang’s suggestions.

126. These textual errors were pointed out by Professor Heinrichs.

127. As, for example, the ‘Abīd family of Syrian bedouins whose recorded ancestor Muḥammad settled in the Damascus Maydan in 1701–2, or the Bakri family, a branch of which settled in the city in the 14th century, or the Muradi family of Kurdish origin whose ancestor Muḥammad Murad came to Damascus in 1685–86 (see Linda Schatskowski Schilcher, Families in Politics: Damascus Families and Estates of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (Wiesbaden, 1985) pp. 153–165).


129. Regarding the room’s identity, the only record in the files of the Museum’s Department of Islamic Art is a single unsubstantiated phrase to the effect that, in 1977, Afif Bahnashi, then director of the Damascus National Museum, believed it came from the Nizām House. My research has thus far yielded two Nizām houses. One of the two was purchased by a certain Muḥammad Haṣan Nizām only in 1928–29 (see Duda, Innenarchitektur, p. 133). Two publications deal with a second Nizām house of the 1760s to 1770s, but neither specifies the given name of the proprietor (see Rouanet and Pipponier, “Étude iconographique,” and Labeyrie, “Quelques Réflexions”). Both publications agree that the oldest surviving decorative elements of this house are from the early 19th century. It seems unlikely that the Museum’s interior came from either of those houses.

130. Among the houses destroyed by the fire were the governor’s ‘Aṣm palace, the beautiful Quwwatī residence and all its neighboring houses, and that of the former prime minister Jamil Mardam Bek, whose mansion was abandoned after the fire—the surviving parts of its great qā‘a were given to the National Museum. On the fire and the historical events surrounding it, see Gérard Degeorge, Damas: des Ottomans à nos jours (Paris, 1994) pp. 164–165 and Alice Pouleau, À Damas sous les bombes, Journal d’une Française pendant la révolution syrienne (1924–1926) (Yvetot, 1925).
A State Partizan by Jean Bérain for a Royal Wedding

A. V. B. NORMAN

The description of the marriage of Marie-Louise d’Orléans in 1679, given in the *Mercure galant* for October of that year, includes the information that the “Hoquetons” of the Brigadiers and Sous-brigadiers of the Garde du Corps du Roy and their partizans were specially designed for the ceremony by “Mr. Berrin.” Given his position as principal designer to the king, it is hardly surprising that Jean Bérain (1640–1711) was entrusted with redesigning the State Dress surcoats and the ceremonial spears of the Royal Guard for such an important occasion. These partizans would have been carried by the Garde de la Manche, the guard closest to the French kings. It consisted of about twenty men chosen from the First Company of the Gardes du Corps, originally raised as a bodyguard of archers by Charles VII of France in 1445, long known as the Garde Écossais, was for many years recruited only from Scotsmen (Figure 1).

What is perhaps much more surprising is that the design for these partizans is actually reproduced as a gatefold plate in the *Mercure galant* and is fully described in its text (Figure 2). This fact was first pointed out by Roger-Armand Weigart, the cataloguer of Bérain’s engraved works, although he did not reproduce the plate. The main part of the design consists of a young hero seated in a chariot drawn by four horses in front of a trophy of arms and flags. One might expect the charioteer to be the Sun God, Apollo, patron of the *Roi Soleil*, but in the text he is specifically called Mars. Above his head flies a winged figure, symbolizing Fame, who is crowning him with a laurel wreath. The two horses at the right are trampling a fallen lion, and the two at the left are trampling an eagle. Above all this, within an oval cartouche flanked by sprays of laurels, is the Sun in Splendor, the personal device of Louis XIV. On top of this cartouche is a scroll inscribed *NEC PLVRIBVS IMPAR*, the motto adopted by Louis. The motto was first recorded on a medal of the king dated 1662, which was illustrated by Claude-François Menestrier in *La devise du Roy justifiée* (Paris, 1679, p. 30). No actual medal of this type and date appears to have survived, but a medal of the same design in the British Museum is dated 1663 and others are known dated 1664. The blade of the partizan springs from a spherical knob representing, according to the *Mercure galant*, the world, over which the chariot of Mars is flying. The image of the world is charged with the fleur-de-lis of France, and its lower half is clasped by a calyx of lily petals. Although it is nowhere stated, Mars surely must represent Louis himself dominating the world in his chariot and overthrowing his mortal enemies, England and Austria, represented respectively by the lion and the eagle.

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Figure 1. An engraving after *Le Sacre de Louis XV...* (Paris, 1722), showing the costume of the Garde de la Manche and their partizans
Among the many surviving richly decorated partizans bearing French royal devices, two patterns stand out particularly, because of the complexity of their designs and because they are pierced and chiseled in relief and encrusted with gold instead of being merely engraved, heat-blued, and fire-gilded. In one type, represented by an example in the Wallace Collection, London (Figure 3), the centerpiece of the design is the figure of Hercules with a pair of captives at his feet. This design has been attributed to Jean le
that this partizan must have been made before the new badge was adopted. Judging from what is said in the *Mercure galant* about the ancient designs of both the *hoquetons* and the partizans being changed for the Spanish wedding, it is just possible that this was the occasion on which the new badge of the corps was adopted.

The second type of pattern is that for which the design was illustrated in the *Mercure galant*. In 1937 Weigart was able to point out two surviving examples: one in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris, and another then in the church of Saint-Vigor at Marly-le-Roi. The second is now in the Musée Promenade in Marly. Three other examples are now known: one formerly in the church of Notre-Dame at Versailles is now in the Musée Lamberin in the same town, another from the Czartoryski collection is in the National Museum, Cracow, and the last, the subject of this note (Figure 4), is in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1834 what was probably a partizan of this type was sold with the collection of Bernard Brocas of Wokefield Park, Berkshire, England, but it is not known whether it is the one now in the Metropolitan Museum.

The main part of the design of these weapons follows very closely the engraving in the *Mercure galant*. It is only above the figure symbolizing Fame that any major differences are to be seen. The Sun in Splendor has its rays pierced, rather than simply engraved, and is within a kidney-shaped compartment surrounded by a border inscribed with the royal motto. From the lower edge of this compartment hang two swags of fruit and foliage, and above it is a trifoliate ornament shaped like a calyx. The central rib of the blade above this point is wavy. The outline of the blade is identical to that shown in the engraving except near the point, where the edges are convex instead of concave. The Metropolitan’s partizan differs from the other examples in having its edges encrusted with gold fleurs-de-lis and laurel branches.

In spite of Bérian’s fame, only a very few objects survive today that can be identified with certainty as having been designed by him. The *Mercure galant* says that these parade partizans “passent tous les Ouvrages que ont esté travailler en acier.”

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude to his old friends and colleagues the late Colonel Marcel Dugué MacCarthy and Stuart Pyhrr for their help in preparing this note.
NOTES


5. Sir Guy F. Laking, A Record of European Armour and Arms Through Seven Centuries (London, 1921) IV, pp. 344-345, fig. 1414.

6. Ariès, Armes blanches, X, caption for pl. x.

7. Mariaux, Le Musée de l'Armée: Armes et armures anciennes et souvenirs historiques les plus précieux (Paris 1927) II, cat. no. K.496; pl. LXVI; ill. in Ariès, Armes blanches, II, figs. 2a, 2b.


9. Ibid.

10. Inv. no. XIV-362; see Zdzislaw Zygułski, Stara Broń w Polskich Zbiurach (Warsaw, 1982) p. 169, no. 172.

11. Acc. no. 14.25.454; I am very grateful to Stuart Pyrh, curator of the Department of Arms and Armor, MMA, for pointing out that this example was formerly in the collection of the Parisian dealer Frédéric Spitzer and is illustrated in vol. VI in the catalogue of his collection by E. Mollinier (Paris 1892) cat. no. 258, pl. XLI). It was bought by William H. Riggs at the Spitzer sale, held by Petit in Paris on June 10–14, 1895, lot 125, ill., and passed to the MMA with his collection in 1913.

12. The sale was held by George Robins at the Queen's Bazaar, Oxford Street, London, beginning March 19, 1834, lot 162.
A Terracotta Model for the Royal High Altar at Versailles

BRUNO PONS

Editor's note: Bruno Pons, one of the most gifted scholars of his generation, died on June 7, 1995, at the age of forty. Among the manuscripts nearing completion at the time of his death was this one, in which he uses as his starting point the description of a model and then places the work in a broader art-historical and religious context that few if any but himself would be equipped to provide. It is typical of the generosity of his scholarship that in the process he mentions every model of the sort known to him from documents. His friends, especially Brigitte Gournay, have provided most helpful ministrations to the text and photographs; Mark Polizzotti is responsible for the translation. JDD

The sculpture collections of the Metropolitan Museum contain a rare small-scale preparatory model (Figures 1–4) in terracotta of an altar composed of the three traditional parts: the tomb, the gradine (or steps leading to it), and the tabernacle on top. The sarcophagus is scrolled on all sides and is unusually elegant in composition. The model, most likely a proposal submitted before the project could be approved, offers two different options. Offering the patron a choice was a time-honored practice in presentation models. Figures 2–4 show how this viability affected the appearance of the model’s two sides and even its top, which has become accordingly asymmetrical. The console on the front left-hand corner of the tomb ends in a winged cherub’s head, while the console on the right is purely ornamental. The frontal is embellished with a cartouche in strongly marked relief: two garlands of roses on the upper part spill over onto the palms that support the cartouche itself in the lower part, while the proposal represented by the right-hand side seems to include a spray of lilies, indicating a dedication to the Virgin.

The altar gradine also indicates two possible proposals for an ornamental frieze, incised directly into the clay and executed with great verve. Since both the right and the left extremities of the gradine have been damaged, it is hard to tell whether they were perhaps even more richly decorated than they now appear: obviously, attached or protruding objects on this kind of model would suffer most from the passage of time.

Of the tabernacle’s alternative designs, a more ornate solution (albeit slightly damaged) is seen on the left, in keeping with the design of the tomb, and a less ornate one is given on the right. The tabernacle door also features the lively carving of a “Jehovah” (symbolizing the ancient alliance) and of a mystic lamb with seven seals (symbolizing the Savior’s sacrifice, as the seven seals mark the chapters of the Apocalypse). Above, on the entablature of the tabernacle, rests the crucifix stand decorated with two figures of angels. Only the base of the cross remains; the crucifix itself has broken off.

As we examine this model, we are struck first and foremost by the quality of the overall structure, the perfect skill with which the curves and reverse curves have been handled, especially on the sarcophagus, regardless of whether they are viewed from above or from the side. The consoles of the tomb in particular are placed so that they interact with those on the back of the altar—a play of space that is dynamic and vibrant from any angle.

Although it is impossible to know what materials were to be used in constructing this altar (wood, marble, bronze, precious metals), it is clear that the use of more than one was intended. Because of the tradition of architectural models with opulent ornamentation on the part of Italian artists—going back to Michelangelo—the present work has been said to come from Italy, at the end of the seventeenth century or the beginning of the eighteenth. One might think of Genoa, for example, by analogy with the beautiful high altar by Pierre Puget (1620–1694) in San Siro; for even though its tomb of San Siro is much more ornate and favors figurative sculpture, it is definitely ornamental.

However, the model is not Italian but French—the only extant one, to my knowledge—and should be counted among the works of the royal building

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authority, the Agence des Bâtiments du Roi, at the
time of the architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart and his
brother-in-law and successor, Robert de Cotte—that is
to say, during the first third of the eighteenth century.
I shall first compare this altar with various docu-
mented projects for church decorations, particularly
in Paris; then I shall give some examples of the exis-
tence of wax, plaster, and terracotta models in France;
finally I shall place the work in the more general con-
text of the decoration of ecclesiastical architecture in
France from 1700 to 1790.

I. COMPARISONS WITH PROJECTS BY ROBERT
DE COTTE

The Projects for Saint-Roch

The tomb is similar to a preliminary sketch found
among the papers of the architect Robert de Cotte
(1656–1735), which is a plan for the new high altar in
the church of Saint-Roch (Figure 5). This plan shows
two consoles decorated with cherubs' heads at the cor-
ners of the frontal. In comparing the drawing with the
model, one is especially struck by the likeness between
the central cartouches on the altar tombs. In the altar
in Saint-Roch, as expected, the central medallion con-
tains a scene from the life of Saint Roch; but the
arrangement of garlands and palms supporting the
cartouche is precisely the same as in the terracotta
model. The design of the tabernacle in the sketch is
similar to that of the model without being entirely
identical. The consoles with their cherubs' heads are
more supple in the drawing than they are in the
sculpted version. The principal difference resides in
the importance given the crucifix stand, which is set to
the rear of the altar and which in Saint-Roch is made
larger and more ornate to match the larger dimen-
sions of the sanctuary.

The construction of the church of Saint-Roch
extended over many years. Jules Hardouin-Mansart
(1646–1708) was commissioned to design a new
chapel dedicated to the Virgin; the project was then
taken over by Robert de Cotte, whose son ultimately
completed the facade. Robert de Cotte's papers
(which also include many of Mansart's drawings) con-
tain several projects for the high altar, probably from
different dates. The drawing that interests us here is
his last one (see Figure 5). We can relate it to plans to
remodel the church's main choir, which owed its fund-
ing to the generosity of John Law, founder of the
French royal bank. We know that the remodeling took
place between 1720 and 1725.3

We can give a precise date for the actual remodel-
ing, at least with regard to the sculptures intended for
the cupola of the transept crossing, because in 1723,
soon after the death of the sculptor René Charpentier
(1680–1723), the duc d'Antin, superintendent of the
Bâtiments du Roi, announced that the sculptures

Figure 5. Agence des Bâtiments du Roi (Robert de Cotte,
French, 1656–1735). Plan for a high altar for the church of
de France (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

Figure 6. Drawing showing the former state of the altar of the
chapel of Saint-Thomas du Louvre in Paris, before 1726. Paris,
Bibliothèque Nationale de France (photo: Bibliothèque
Nationale de France)
would be carved according to drawings that Charpentier had handed over shortly before.2 Stylistically, the design of the high altar is perfectly compatible with these dates. I am tempted, moreover, to attribute the drawing to Charpentier himself.3 One might also think of François-Antoine Vassé (1681–1736), who created the ornamental designs for the new choir of Notre-Dame in Paris, but the drawing technique seems less brilliant than that in Vassé’s sketches for Notre-Dame.

The Projects for Saint-Thomas du Louvre

Another set of drawings, also among the Robert de Cotte papers, provides a further basis for study: a project for the chapel of Saint-Thomas du Louvre. This small chapel was located near the Louvre, between the present Cour Carrée and the Arc du Carrousel. Many artists and craftsmen employed by the Bâtiments du Roi worked here and were lodged either in the Louvre itself or nearby, in the small houses and buildings coveted by artists who wanted to set up their studios in the neighborhood. Some of these artists worshiped at Saint-Thomas. In 1712 de Cotte’s son and his wife, the daughter of the goldsmith Delaunay, were granted a pew in the church. Less commonly, but in the same period, the goldsmith Claude Ballin received authorization to set up his furnaces and forges in part of the cloister of Saint-Thomas. (This curious arrangement was facilitated by the fact that a member of his family, Antoine-Claude Ballin, was first a priest and then canon of Saint-Thomas du Louvre.) In 1715, after Delaunay endowed the chapter with a gift of gold jewelry, he was given a pew in his family’s name as a token of gratitude.

The Robert de Cotte papers also contain a drawing showing the former state of the altar in this modest church (Figure 6), in a neighborhood where there were many such churches. The retable, a simple panel with a large molded frame boasting no particular richness to speak of, stood behind a very plain altar and a tabernacle shaped like a columned temple. Set above the entablature were the reliquary shrines, which were quite visible.4

Two other drawings show a project for a new high altar (Figures 7, 8). The aim was to highlight the three reliquaries (above the entablature of the retable), whose function was to inspire the adoration of the faithful. If the choice of paneling differs rather significantly in the two drawings, the design of the high altar and that of the tabernacle are rather similar. As with the terracotta model at the Metropolitan, the altar’s large tomb features two different corner consoles, one with and one without the head of a winged cherub. On the other hand, the central cartouche is different from that of the terracotta model—it has wings—but is nonetheless characteristic of the art produced at the Bâtiments du Roi after 1709, under the leadership of Robert de Cotte.
These drawings\(^5\) become more interesting still when we study the model of the tabernacle and the proposed means of exhibiting the monstrance. Here again there is an obvious similarity of style between the drawings and the model, even leaving aside the fact that the tabernacle door is decorated (as it is on the model) with a figure of Jehovah and a mystic lamb. We should note as well that the first drawing (R. de Cotte, 1742, Figure 7) sketchily indicates an ornamental frieze on the gradine and resembles the one on the terracotta model.

Perhaps an examination of these drawings as an ensemble, this time widening the scope of our study to include the decor of the paneling, would give us a more precise idea of when the model was made. With respect to the shape of the frames, the first drawing repeats solutions already used in sketches issued by Mansart's office and by its first designer, Pierre Lepautre; some of the drawings date from 1698, others from 1705. The large oval frame surrounded by heavy drapery is almost Romanesque in feeling, a surprising approach for the end of the eighteenth century.

The second drawing (Figure 8), on the other hand, shows two proposals: a large oval frame and a frame with handles, exactly like the ones built for the stalls of Notre-Dame in Paris (1710–14). At the same time, the large frame placed above the high altar, scrolled in its upper portion, is noticeably similar to the decorative pieces commissioned by de Cotte after 1715 for works of civil architecture, such as the Hôtel de Toulouse in Paris (1715–17) and the Hôtel du Grand Maître in Versailles (1724).

The few preserved archival documents related to the chapter of Saint-Thomas mention the need for significant restorations to the chapel of the Virgin in the church.\(^6\) The need quickened in 1717,\(^7\) as the charitable brotherhoods of the Holy Virgin, Saint Roch, and Saint Sébastien, which met at the Quinze-Vingts Hospital, began holding their assemblies at Saint-Thomas du Louvre. Gilles-Marie Oppenordt, the regent's architect, was asked for a permit on December 1, 1719.\(^8\) The drawings in the de Cotte papers are perfectly consistent with this date, although we do not know which project, Oppenordt's or de Cotte's, finally went to construction. In any case, restoration work, including the installation of new wainscoting, was under way in May 1720—placing an added burden on the chapel's impertinent chapter, which had already had the nave and the chapel of the Virgin retiled in December 1718.

Without our being able to state categorically that the terracotta model in the Metropolitan Museum was created for this project, the circumstances nonetheless confirm the relationship between the model and Robert de Cotte's drawing, and it can be dated to about 1720–25.

II. EARTHENWARE AND PLASTER MODELS COMMISSIONED BY ROBERT DE COTTE

Although the practice of using plaster, wax, or terracotta models in the preparation of large pieces of decorative sculpture is little known in France, it can be firmly established by existing documents, even when the works themselves have been destroyed. The practice was, of course, customary for studios that produced statuary sculpture, whether marble or bronze groups or complex projects for tombs. In these domains, models are hardly a novelty. But in the late seventeenth century, notably under the influence of the work of François Girardon (1678–1715) on the Chapelle Royale des Invalides, the stress placed on

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*Figure 9. Agence des Bâtiments du Roi. First proposal for the choir of the Chapelle Royale at Versailles, showing two angels carrying the monstrance between the statues of Saint Louis and Charlemagne, ca. 1709. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France)*
ornamentation, and the need to use extremely varied materials and techniques, would have required the talents of numerous craftsmen. It therefore became necessary to widen the practice of offering models, especially as a means of judging the relations between different parts of projects that called for many elements to work in concert, rather than to stand on their own as individual entities.

Robert de Cotte’s correspondence in 1716 with Joseph Clemens, the elector of Cologne, mentions the model of a four-sided altar for the chapel in Poppelsdorf Castle, near Bonn, meant to be built in stucco. Sent from Paris, the wax model, having been mishandled during shipment, “est arrivé tout dérangé.”

For the decoration of the Chapelle Royale at Versailles numerous projects were elaborated between 1700 and 1710, the year the work was completed (Figure 9). Under de Cotte’s stewardship, the ornaments were executed with particular care, and in many ways this chapel marks the triumphant alliance of sculpture with architecture. Many large- and small-scale preparatory models were made, often more than once. In 1710 the sculptors Lepautre, René Chaveau, and Offement, under de Cotte’s guidance, furnished several such works: “le modèle général en petit” of the altar for the chapel of the Saint-Sacrement, as well as several studies of details (in wax and terracotta) and a large-scale terracotta model of the gloriette for the same chapel. Even the mosaic panel of the tabernacle was first modeled in terracotta and plaster. And for the chapel of Sainte-Thérèse the sculptors produced a small-scale model of the entire altar, along with several sketches. Corneille Van Clève created models for the high altar, notably of elements to be cast in bronze, in 1709–10. His models, which represent several proposals and variants, required sixty days of work. The stud-
ies of the cherubs' heads, so important to the decor of the chapel in that they depict the vision of Ezekiel, were routinely made of terracotta, while the models of the tabernacle bronzes were made of wax on a wooden backing.

Certain sculptors even made models of works that would ultimately be assigned to other sculptors, depending on their respective occupations and the decisions of the architectural agency. On the other hand, in 1711, François-Antoine Vassé handled not only the preparatory sketches and models but also the final execution of the large bronze ornamental sections of the high altar and the large Ferial altar in Notre-Dame de Paris. At the same time, Philippe Bertrand (1663–1724) provided wax models for the pulpit of Notre-Dame, the execution of which was then assigned to other sculptors. Such models were not strictly limited to large works of religious decoration. In 1712, for example, Vassé provided the old Louvre with a terracotta model of a console for a library.

Another source of information affords a more precise idea of these practices: the posthumous inventories of certain of the sculptors who worked with Robert de Cotte, which list examples of such models that remained in the studio—models we wish we could find today.

The inventory of Vassé's effects was published by Mireille Rambaud. Besides studies for the statuary sculpture that we would expect to see listed, we also find models for many of the artist's religious and architectural ideas: a wooden model for the pulpit of the Invalides, a terracotta model of the fireplace for the gallery of the Hôtel de Toulouse (which was built in marble and gilt bronze), a plaster model of the cartouche on the tomb of the altar of the Virgin in Notre-Dame, studies of angels' heads in gilded cardboard, the model for Sainte-Croix d'Orléans (1729), plaster models for bas-reliefs to be cast in gilt bronze, the model in wax and plaster of the tabernacle for the parish of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, and another for the parish of Saint-Leu, which was probably never built.

Corneille Van Clève also created numerous models, mainly for works that he was then commissioned to execute. Otherwise, it is as if for any given project a hierarchy existed between the different sculptors: those who made the models and those who executed the work itself. Still others who worked with de Cotte are known for the models they provided: Claude-Augustin Cayot (1677–1722) made plaster models of bas-reliefs for Versailles, as well as models of adoring angels for the high altar of Notre-Dame de Paris, not to mention bas-reliefs and cartouches.

Philippe Bertrand, steadily engaged by de Cotte to prepare models, created the terracotta models of the organ for the Chapelle Royale at Versailles, a true work of sculpture; the organ was constantly being modified, even while it was under construction by the studios of Jules Degoulons. Bertrand also furnished the models for the pulpits of the Chapelle Royale at Versailles (in wax, 1709) and of Notre-Dame (1710–11). Remarkably, Versailles still owns his little lead model of the gilded baldachin (ca. 1705) for the Bosquet des Dômes in the park.

Another sign of de Cotte's particular confidence in Bertrand is the fact that he entrusted him with making the model of a celebrated piece of jewelry (now lost) that included both ornamental and figurative sculptures—the model was 67 centimeters high and weighed 500 pounds. Canon Delaporte, who helped finance the remodeling of the choir of Notre-Dame, decided to augment his largesse by giving the cathedral a sun (soleil). This piece, usually housed with the other treasures of Notre-Dame, was produced by the goldsmith Ballin fils. One can see it on the high altar of the cathedral as depicted in Jean Jouvenet's La Messe du chanoine de la Porte (Musée du Louvre; Figure 10). Up until the end of the eighteenth century, common wisdom held that Ballin's piece had been made from a model by Bertrand. But the agreement for this sun clearly stipulates that Bertrand was to work from drawings made by de Cotte himself. Thus the architect left nothing to chance in the fine-tuning of his masterpiece, the choir of Notre-Dame: from paintings to trophies, from the choice of marble to the Savonnerie carpets, not to mention the crucifixes, rails, and stalls. In all likelihood it was the same for the altar candelabra—although this time it was Van Clève who provided the model.

We have proof of de Cotte's personal interest in these decorative sections and in their scrolled contours, thanks to a 1709 memoir by a sculptor named Hardy. Hardy speaks of a fireplace for which he had to provide numerous models in plaster and terracotta, "fait et refait jusqu'à ce que M. de Cotte soit content"—which seems to have been no easy task. The sculptors had already been put sorely to the test in 1699, when they made models for the apartments of the dauphin and others for Monsieur, the king's brother, at Saint-Cloud.

Indeed, we should not see these preparatory models as mere devices used to study the arrangement of ornaments or decorative details. Rather, we should note that they had by now become quite necessary, if not indeed indispensable. By this time, simple geo-
metric forms having been abandoned for more elaborate scroll-cut forms, the whole aesthetic conception had changed. The upheaval was almost as great as that witnessed by Rome in Bernini's day. It was no coincidence but rather an effect that had been deliberately sought, one that took root with greater or lesser degrees of success. Even for works as complex as the great altars of Notre-Dame or of the Chapelle Royale at Versailles, the contours were not so complicated and sculpture predominated. And yet the architects' drawings show what care they lavished on the top and side projections.

One of the assets of the Metropolitan's model is, as we have said, the perfection of the curves of the tomb when seen from above (Figure 4). We can thus compare it with the sketch of a project for the high altar of Notre-Dame (R. de Cotte, 1860; Figures 11, 12), on which plans for the gradine and the tabernacle are superimposed onto those for the tomb. Thanks to this example of a church altar, and also to examples of new fireplace designs (some of which also called for bronze decorations), it becomes especially clear that the main concern was the workmanship of the marble. Its importance is further demonstrated in the stylistic evolution of the fireplace à la Royale. Before Jean Bérain (1639–1711) and Daniel Marot (1660–1712)—to name but two of the better-known artists—the true craft of marble fireplaces was shown in the cutaway drawings and orthogonal projections; the main difference lay in a new sense of movement given to the upper mantelpieces and jambs. All that changed about 1708, with respect to both the marble worker's craft and the fireplaces themselves: designers began to play with the design of the mantel shelf and the curvature of the side jambs, in order to integrate as many different shapes as possible into these new forms of decoration. In broader terms, as the fireplace stopped being a three-sided form and became a five-
sided one, it could no longer be represented simply by a frontal elevation and a cutaway.

The problem is exactly the same for high altars: the design of an altar in Notre-Dame, or of the altars in the great provincial cathedrals during the Rococo period, was no longer a parallelepiped. The drawings in the de Cotte papers include a frontal elevation, plans for the placement of the sculptures, and another plan for the placement of the ornaments that largely and efficaciously allows the cherubim to show through the sides. This graphic representation should have served as a sufficient guide to the assisting artists. Nonetheless, the Hermitage possesses a superb wash drawing in which we can easily recognize a study, or rather a quick sketch, for the corner bronzes for the tomb of the high altar of Notre-Dame (Figure 13). Could it be a sketch by the bronze founder to explain the installation, or rather the integration, of the bronze ornaments in this marvelous altar? Whatever the case, it is clear that a plan of the four sides, or one elevation and a cutaway view, was no longer sufficient. From this point on, the building of a “Romanesque” altar required plans for all six sides so that the marble mason, the goldsmith, the bronze founder, and even the painter would understand what they needed to do. And if the problem was less critical than for a Romanesque altar, choir altars posed the same types of problems, as the Metropolitan’s model now proves with its dual proposals of corner consoles and winged cherubs’ heads.

III. Small- and Large-Scale Models

When it came to drawings and plans (Figures 14, 15), the royal commissions for Poissy, Paris, Versailles, Meudon, and other châteaux posed no difficulties for an architectural office that was used to such preparations—this was, after all, its function. Also, the cost of producing models and making further modifications during construction caused no serious problems. But it was another matter when a church had to renovate its choir or part of the building, for this was done under the auspices of a building committee and the clergy (sometimes the bishop). In any case, funds were limited and watched over by the parishioners.

In the context of the small model under consideration, we might now turn to models on a larger scale. For Notre-Dame de Paris, the king himself came to see the wooden model at the end of 1698. He was not pleased, and the model remained in place for three years while new options were explored.

François Souchal has shown that the new altar of the
church of Saint-Merri in Paris was first cast as a large plaster model, which was long exhibited in situ in the choir so that the parishioners could see how it would look as well as to forestall later criticisms—it was a period when harsh artistic judgments proliferated. In other cases, models of pulpits or glorioles were proposed. In fact, the incontrovertible success of the new, “modern” choir in Notre-Dame (set against the cathedral’s Gothic architecture), as well as the new decorations for Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie and Saint-Germain-des-Prés (both older churches with late-medieval or Renaissance architecture), made people aware of how timeworn the “antique” choirs looked, built as they were in the bygone style of Paris churches and provincial cathedrals, and of how obsolete the stalls and their awful sculptures appeared—in short, how utterly inadequate all this was to the post-Tridentine, Italianate spirit of glorifying God and propagating the faith. At the time, any traveler who had been to Italy would have been dazzled by the modern churches of Italian parishes or religious congregations, regardless of whether he or she belonged to the triumphant or the militant faith.

Another example is furnished by the high altar of the cathedral of Orléans (1721–29), which according to a bon mot was the “last Gothic cathedral completed by the Bourbons in the eighteenth century.” Little by little, the construction of this cathedral came to an end: the new choir, new stalls, and new chapels coincided with the end of Louis XIV’s reign and marked the last stages of the interior decoration, before the “neo-Gothic Louis XV facade” was completed.

The final details of the interior were overseen by the duc d’Antin himself, superintendent of the Bâtiments du Roi, who, moreover, as governor of Orléans wanted to give it a Romanesque altar, which would be located in the rotunda of the transept and readily visible to all. He agreed to pay for this altar out of his personal funds (even though it was later said to have been a gift from Louis XV; see Figure 16).

The altar, once again decorated with bronzes by Vassé, was 5 meters long and 1.8 meters high, on a platform of pink Languedoc marble measuring 6 by 3.8 meters. The marble of the tomb (still preserved) was veined green Campanian, with pedestals and tables of sarrancolin and gradine of griotte. The frontal was a mosaic of Campanian and Carrara marbles. Unfortunately, the collapse of the sanctuary vault on the night of September 8, 1904, demolished everything. The catastrophe nonetheless had its compensations. Inside the dislocated marble tomb were found pieces of the old altar of 1621–42, along with some curious chunks of plaster. Some of the latter were painted in faux marbre, others were simply painted or
gilded, and some bare plaster cherubs’ heads: they turned out to be crushed fragments of the large-scale model of the cathedral’s high altar, which had been put on view for the faithful in 1721.22

Work on the choir renovations had begun in 1705, with the execution of the superb sculpted stalls overseen by Jules Hardouin-Mansart’s office. The next stage of the renovations strictly followed the governing spirit behind the new choir of Notre-Dame de Paris (1699–1721): the main altar (dedicated to Saint Mamert) was placed completely at the rear of the church, behind the choir, and another, a Romanesque altar, was placed farther forward. The drawings for this second altar were handled by de Cotte himself.23

Monsieur le duc d’Antin, gouverneur de cette province, nous ayant tesmoigné que son intention étoit de faire faire à ses frais et despens un maistre autel a lad. église à la moderne, enrichy de colonnes et autres ornemens de marbre, à la place de celuy qui y estoit, et afin qu’il souhaittoit en faire un modéle en plâtre, ce qui auroit été fai, mais comme la chapelle de Saint Mamert serviat d’ornement à l’ancien maistre autel, qui estoit beaucoup plus hault que le modéle qui est faict à présent, ce qui aurait causé une difformité considérable, c’est pourquoi nous avons cru qu’il estoit indispensabile de faire démolir lad. chapelle Saint Mamert, pour ensuite la faire refaire bien plus basse afin de servir d’ornement au nouvel autel.24

IV. ROMANESQUE ALTAR VERSUS BALDACCHIN

In fact, this small modification, which one might see as deriving from a simple desire for artistic or aesthetic innovation, has a much deeper and probably theological significance. It conveys the simultaneous cultivation of fidelity to Rome, always respecting the independence on the part of the Gallican church, amid debates over whether to accept the Bull of Unigenitus after the painful business of Jansenism—all in a country that generally disliked change and that still admired Italy to the point of fascination, even as it had sought, for reasons of spite or of envy, to distance itself from Italian influence since the end of the seventeenth century.

Without a doubt, the most revolutionary concept of the high altar belonged to Bernini’s Saint Peter’s. It combined a magnified version of the ancient ciborium amplified by twisted Salomonic columns (1624–33) with references—which were often reiterated in the great Baroque cathedrals—to the catafalques that heightened the worship of the faithful. Not infrequently, the placement of the high altar itself would cover an underground chapel for the veneration of a saint’s relics and, in the back, another altar; the architect’s talent could often be measured by his skill in making that second altar visible behind the high altar (as with Saint Peter’s throne, 1657–66). The play of one object against another, rather than the independence of two single objects (to paraphrase Irving Lavin),25 was a common technique in Rome; we shall see it more modestly applied by other means in France. The other important element that allows us to see things differently a posteriori is the importance of color.

For his baldachin, Bernini had commissioned a number of preparatory sketches. This brilliant work has enjoyed lasting admiration, and it would be pointless to try to say more about it here. Let us nonetheless recall that in Genoa, in his plan for a baldachin for the church of Santa Maria Assunta in Carignano, Pierre Puget was also commissioned to make preparatory color sketches.

Val-de-Grâce owned the most famous baldachin in the style of Saint Peter’s to be built in France, which, following Louis XIII’s wishes, was also the most faithful to its model. Bernini had been asked to do it, as had Pierre Mignard, but its paternity was soon claimed, or rather “annexed,” by Mansart. It, too, was depicted in a number of preparatory sketches (probably in pen and ink) as well as in a scrupulously colored drawing, but none of them was destined to find favor. It was, moreover, very much in the same spirit that Mansart conceived his first project for Notre-Dame in 1699: a large baldachin with twisted columns. The formula also allowed him to place the pulpit very high, leaving it visible above the rood screen.

Compromises between these two elements—on the one hand the newness of columned baldachins that eventually left behind the idea of the ancient ciborium, on the other a more Gallican concept that we shall return to later—were often found in France: in the grand altar of the Chapelle Royale of the Invalides (ca. 1702–6), in Tarbes (1717; sculpted by Marc Arcis [1655–1739]), in Toulouse for the high altar of Saint-Sernin (1720–21),26 and in the cathedral of Narbonne (1694; sculpted by Jean Cornu [1650–1710]).27 Meanwhile, in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Oppenordt adapted a throne of Saint Peter to an altar under a baldachin, changing Saint Peter’s pulpit and its brilliant scrolled form into a reliquary.

The altar, for which Oppenordt had to choose between more classical formulas, was noticed immedi-
faithful very members, tions Louis Gloriette reassembled lately. Although the original no longer exists, a near- faithful copy was built by the father of La Tremblaye in 1707 for the church of La Trinité in Caen. It was reassembled for the church of Notre-Dame de la Gloriette in the same city. At the end of the seventeenth century, a religious order often counted architects, decorators, painters, and sculptors among its members, such as Frères Romain, André, and Bourgeois (whose creative impulses were reined in by suggestions to adapt earlier drawings).

At this time in France, there were several coexisting concepts of how a high altar should be decorated. The most common, particularly during the reigns of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria, favored paintings in the grand style, which were at once very elegant and very expensive. The favored ultramarine blue on the large retable was meant to draw the visitor’s gaze from the moment he or she entered, as in Dutch or Flemish temples or Italian churches. The high altar was divided into several layers that were separated by black (or perhaps gilded white) woodwork (this in itself would warrant an entire study).

But another trend took shape around the work of Charles Le Brun (1619–1690), a trend that is less known and seems to have lacked the strength to impose itself or resist being overshadowed by the magnificence of the Chapelle Royale of the Invalides. It gave primacy to sculpture and, as I see it, expressed a certain rivalry with François Girardon, who liked change simply for the sake of change.

Moreover, from the viewpoint of art history, it seems that what made the grand altar of the Invalides so innovative was not so much the baldachin (the model for which dated from 1691–92) as it was the concept of the praying angels. These angels might have been derived from Michel Anguier’s Nativity group in the Val-de-Grâce, but in their arrangement and design, fundamentally more decorative than sculptural, they exerted an influence on a number of important drawings and structures, such as the funeral arch of the tomb of Condé in the church of Saint-Paul–Saint-Louis, the praying angels on the altar of Notre-Dame, and the gilt-metal angels in the chapel of Versailles.

In 1675–78, for the Grands-Augustins (an important building, as the knights of the Order of the Holy Spirit met there), Le Brun had sketched a large marble baldachin, a “colonnade” arranged in a circular arch supporting a sculpted half-dome that depicted an Eternal Father in Glory (and not a Jehovah). On either side were two columns on the same level, and behind the altar were four more columns. A statue of Saint Monica stood on one side and one of Saint Augustine on the other. We should note, however, that the emphasis was placed on the overall balance of the composition; the design of the high altar itself remained rather pedestrian.

During the same period, the brilliant Pierre Bullet (ca. 1639–1716) designed for Saint-Germain-des-Prés a columnated side altar dedicated to Saint Margaret in 1675 (sculpted by Laurent Magnier, 1677–79); its pendant, the altar of Saint-Casimir, was built in 1682, still following the same principles. In this instance, the pride of place was given to the sculpted depiction of Saint Margaret. Since this altar still exists, we can judge how Bullet, using fairly simple architectural effects, managed to reach virtual perfection.20

There was a further reason for this infatuation with columns: the opportunity of acquiring extremely beautiful column shafts, the well-known antique porphyries from Leptis Magna (Tripolitania, Libya),

which immediately called to mind the great Vitruvius and the splendors of the (now sanctified) Roman Empire. In 1684, Le Brun, with funding from the Grande Mademoiselle, the king's niece, continued in this style with the altar of Saint-Sévérin. That same year, he was asked to provide drawings for the high altar of the Dominican novitiate (Saint Thomas Aquinas), in which two groups of four columns and a gilt-wood soffit support a Resurrection figure. One could also contrast this approach with that of Jean Lepautre, as reproduced in a series of engravings entitled *Nouveaux Dessins d'autels à la romaine*. In his examples, which did not have a very large impact on French churches, the altar and altarpiece sculptures are highlighted at the expense of the architecture surrounding them. A tremendous amount of work went into the design of the tomb, the tabernacle, and the area around the crucifix. Painting was done away with, but not so the iconography, which is devoted less to the adoration of the Holy Sacrament than to the Resurrection, the world (the globe was a frequent theme in the years around 1680), the assembly of the faithful, the Redemption, saints triumphing over the forces of evil, the Savior, and in general those who have shown the way rather than those who invite others to find it for themselves.

Without entirely realizing it, the architectural office of the Bâtiments du Roi would soon become involved in the big business of religious architecture. It would be an exaggeration to say that this came as a complete surprise; but the preceding years, for economic reasons— and even during a reign as long as that of Louis XIV— had generally been good to a society that had seen the birth and development of financial egotism and royal power struggles. These elements cannot easily be disentangled from one another, all the more so in that the system applied not only to the royal court but had spread throughout the provinces as well.

The great religious construction projects from the end of the reign of Louis XIV, which were influenced by the monarch's advanced age (although not all of them were carried out at the same time or planned in concert), sometimes overlap in their dates of completion or execution. There had been no chapel worthy of the name in Versailles. Visitors and the court found it inappropriate for a palace to use small, successively built chapels—especially since this was the court of France, the Church's "eldest daughter," whose king was related to another Catholic monarch in Spain. The matter had been under consideration for a long time, and at first (probably as of 1680) people mainly inclined toward what they saw as the most favorable option: a large chapel with a gallery and tiers covered in precious marble. This handsome architectural project might bespeak a lack of decorative innovation, but it was later taken up at Caserta—"les habits sont donc italiens"—and it cannot be considered a French invention. According to Dangeau's *Journal*, replacing marble revetments with those sculpted in white stone dates from December 22, 1698 (and is surely not due to the impression of cold that marble gives). The project for Orléans was taken on by Mansart's office and construction began as of 1705, even as the office put its entire weight into blocking local projects. The stalls were assigned to the same sculptors and draftsmen who would be used for Notre-Dame. Finally, in 1699, Louis XIII's famous wish was fulfilled.

Anne of Austria had pledged to renovate the old choir if she bore a male heir. She kept her promise for the Val-de-Grâce, but it was her son who kept it for Notre-Dame (Figure 17). The choir was without a doubt de Cotte's masterpiece, more than Mansart's, even if the oft-mentioned projects took shape again

beginning in 1699. We should probably also credit his office with the Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis.

The decorative portions of Mansart’s large-scale construction projects, which date from the beginning of 1700, can be securely attributed to de Cotte himself. Mansart’s name appears most often in Notre-Dame, but the attribution is purely academic, for at the beginning of the year Mansart had become saddled with administrative chores: he was superintendent of construction (minister, in fact) in addition to his functions as first architect. But he had certainly known since the creation of the Trianon that he could rely on his brother-in-law Robert de Cotte, an architect of true genius though one sadly neglected by modern historiography.

However, for the year 1700, we are fortunate enough to know de Cotte’s own thoughts regarding the arrangement and decoration of the main altar for a church choir that he designed and that was of an architectural work of the first importance (Figure 18). I refer to his project for the church of Saint-Jean-en-Grève, in the place Saint-Gervais, rue du Martroi (which would later become much more famous for its Communion Chapel, built from drawings by Jean-François Blondel of a group featuring Saint John the Baptist by Lemoyne; the project was engraved by Mariette). The caption on one of the two drawings is as precise as it is rare: “L’autel qui prend tout le fond du chœur, donne de l’importance à un retable peint; la conception architecturale est bien celle à la Le Brun ou, je préfèrerais dire à la Bullet. C’est le parti de l’autel de Sainte-Marguerite de Saint-Germain-des-Prés et non celui d’Oppenordt.” But de Cotte retained Bullet’s approach, adding more decorative elements to certain passages, as would Oppenordt three years later. We note the purely ornamental half-dome, as well as the praying angels on the superstructures. On the other hand, we cannot help observing the absence of any attempt to embellish the tabernacle and the lack of innovation in the high altar, which is the same parallelepiped found elsewhere, notably in the various plans for Versailles and Notre-Dame, as if only the superstructures were considered important, even in churches that had no rood screen. Oddly, the elevation of the side facade has been given more thought. With its composite colored-marble columns and imposing cartouche with coat of arms, it remains one of de Cotte’s most striking successes. It also gives us a precise idea of one of the architect’s designs for a relatively simple altar.

Such was not to be the case for Notre-Dame, where it was decided to furnish the choir with not one high altar but two: the Feria altar under the choir’s rear archway for ordinary days, embellished with an image of the Virgin, eyes turned heavenward and holding her son in her arms (Nicolas Coustou, 1715), in the style beloved by Louis XIII and Louis XIV; and farther forward, more visible despite the fact that the rood screen and rail separate the choir from the rest of the nave, a high altar for holy days of obligation, which was then embellished with the richest gold and silver objects in the cathedral treasury and the most beautiful sacerdotal ornaments. From this came the need to invent a large altar tomb, visible from all angles—the kind we have called “six-sided.” In this instance it was made of Egyptian marble on a magnificent compartmented marble base, further enriched on holy days by a Savonnerie carpet. Thus, once again, we find the invention of new forms as well as an intensive investigation into the interaction of
those forms, how their angles interplay, and how they work in conjunction with the wall decoration as a whole (large paintings above alternating with gilt-bronze trophies). May we not see in this an echo of Bernini’s spatial (not to say dynamic) vision, even though it was a vision that de Cotte did not overly appreciate?

Thus we have seen how the new concept of the revived Romanesque altar in France, which brought the main altar forward to the crossing of the transept, or at least significantly moved it away from the back of the church, gained in importance. It was still a matter of debate in the 1730s—as was certainly the case for Saint-Sulpice—but it has generally been forgotten that de Cotte had often had occasion to plan such altars, even if he did not always see them executed. The type was almost always his choice for chapels in the palaces of princes abroad (often at their request), for example at Poppelsdorf. It was his choice for Buen Retiro in Madrid, which should have been his masterpiece, as well as for the cathedral of Saint-Louis in Versailles; and he would have liked to use it for Saint-Roch in Paris, for Saint-Étienne in Châlons (Figure 19) (under the auspices of a member of the Noailles family, already his patron in Paris), for Saint-Jean-Baptiste in Dijon,37 and for the cathedral of Rouen (Figures 20, 21). Only the Paris and Orléans projects came to be realized, however, and both of those have since been destroyed. But the idea was pursued and developed. Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier provided a sublime example of it in Saint-Sulpice, taking it further still. His high altar actually becomes transparent, making the rear of the choir visible through a group of adoring angels carrying the Ark of the Covenant. Gilles-Marie Oppenordt had similar ideas, but it was Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni who forcefully imposed de Cotte’s concept by reintroducing the baldachin at Sens Cathedral (1742) and at Les Chartreux in Lyons.
NOTES


7. The central cartouche on the altar of Robert de Cotte's project no. 1342 shows the monogram AM, indicating a dedication to the Virgin.

8. Archives nationales, LL 445, fol. 101r.


10. Archives nationales, O1 1784.


12. Ibid., col. 510.

13. Ibid., col. 609.


18. Archives nationales, O1 1762 B.

19. I have especially tried to show this evolution with regard to the fireplace in the gallery of the new apartment in Meudon in 1709 (decorated with bronzes by Van Céle) by stressing the parallel that can be drawn with the Bouille chests of drawers delivered to the Trianon during the same period.


22. *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Orléanais* XX (1924) pp. 184-185. These fragments have not been preserved. The marble has been stored under the porch, awaiting reconstruction.

23. A deliberation of Oct. 4, 1720 (A. D. 45, C 391), specified that "the company has decided to carry out the work contained in the drawing by Monsieur de Coste, architect of the Bâtiments du Roi, which has been initiated by his Lordship [the duc d'Antin] and filed at the office of records" (document destroyed).


27. Ibid., pp. 120-21.


33. Another example is furnished by the altar of Les Carmes, or rather of the Dominican novitiate (Dezallier d'Argenville, *Voyage pittoresque de Paris*, p. 373): "The grand altar, designed by J.-H. Mansart, was built under de Cotte's direction. It was formed by four Corinthian columns made of green Campanian marble, whose capitals and bases are in white marble. The altar is embellished with marble figures of St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier, sculpted by [Guillaume] Coustou." (On the retable was the famous painting by Poussin, *St. François Xavier*. For the sculptures, see Souchal, *French Sculptors*, I, p. 140; one of them dates from 1722.) In any case, this description does not correspond to the project for the tabernacle, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Va 268 (microfilm H 47821).

34. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Est, Va 249 g (microfilm H 31338, H 31339).


36. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Est, Va 249 g (microfilm H 31339).

37. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Est, Va 269, VA 21 T. IV (microfilm H 117310). The transformation of the altar of the Gothic choir of Saint-Jean alludes to a possible transformation with an altar with a four-columned baldachin. The inscription continued by stating that certain older portions—notably the silver tabernacle —were to be preserved, modified, or reused. The statue of the Virgin and the two gilt-bronze praying angels were "newly made."
I cacciatori amanti: The Portrait of Count Giacomo Durazzo and His Wife by Martin van Meytens the Younger

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There recently went on display in the Harry Payne Bingham Galleries at The Metropolitan Museum of Art a large, unsigned double portrait of an eighteenth-century nobleman and his wife (Figure 1). The painting is attributed—correctly, as we shall see—to Martin van Meytens the Younger (1695–1770), but until recently the sitters had been identified only as A Huntsman and His Wife. The canvas makes an imposing impression, not least on account of the woman’s voluminous white satin skirt, her self-assured gaze, and her superior position with respect to the man (echoed by that of the spaniel over the dead game birds). Despite his hunting garb and accoutrements, the nobleman is shown as subservient in love, thanks to the presence of a small lap-dog, whose finely braided leash is held by his wife—a touchingly prosaic laccio d’amore.

The original donors of the work to the Museum (in 1950), Mr. and Mrs. Nate B. Spingold of New York, had thought it to be a work by Nicolas Desportes (1718–1787). That was a reasonable surmise, as Desportes (a student of Hyacinthe Rigaud) had specialized in still lifes with hunting themes; he was recent at the French Académie Royale in 1757 with a self-portrait in hunting costume with game and dogs. But the Museum’s curators were able to reattribute this painting to Meytens with some confidence, for the artist’s mature style is strongly distinctive—as he himself recognized. According to an anonymous 1755 biographical sketch, for which Meytens apparently furnished many details, “He only very rarely put his name on his paintings or portraits, when it was absolutely required of him.” This assertion is paraphrased in an extended obituary notice (in which the 1755 sketch is attributed to a certain Dünant or Dunant) that appeared in the Kunsterichten Akademie zu Augsburg shortly after Meytens’s death in Vienna in 1770, with the additional remark, “Man wird ihn aber doch kennen”—in essence, “one will know him by his manner.” The sitters in the Metropolitan portrait remained unknown, however, for four and a half decades after its acquisition. But once the painting went on display, the situation could be rectified, and it was not long before the present author, on a visit to the Museum, recognized that the face of the male figure is the same as that in a 1765 engraving portrait of “Le C[omte] Jacques Durazzo / Ambassadeur Imperial / a [sic] Venise en MDCCLXV / Peint par Meytens / Commencé a Vienne par Schmutzer / Achevé a Venise par Wagner” (Figure 2). Despite the elimination of the female figure and the change of setting from a forest to a study, it seems clear that the Metropolitan’s portrait served as the model for the engraving (which, somewhat unusually, is not reversed in direction). The count’s face, body, and clothing (above the waist) are essentially the same; the left arm has been rotated upward, pointing to books and papers instead of a hunting dog, but the arrangement of the fingers is little changed. The curious description of the two engravers’ work, in different cities, reflects the count’s precipitate departure from Vienna, where during the previous decade (1754–64) he had headed the imperial theaters, and his subsequent appointment—thanks to the intervention of Chancellor Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz, according to one courtier’s account—as ambassador to the Venetian Republic. Judging from the Metropolitan’s portrait, it is easy to believe this same courtier when he says that Durazzo’s bride, Ernestine Aloisia, née Ungnad von Weissenwolf, was “of exceptional beauty . . . and even passes for the most beautiful woman here . . . .”

The identification of the couple in the Museum’s portrait lends the work additional interest on several counts. The 1765 engraving and its inscription confirm the attribution of the painting to Meytens and set a terminus ad quem for its execution. The new information also adds to our knowledge of Meytens’s Viennese clientele and suggests an interesting, multi-layered biographical program for the painting. The
Figure 1. Martin van Meytens the Younger (Swedish, 1695–1770). *Count Giacomo Durazzo [1717–1794] in the Guise of a Huntsman with His Wife, Ernestine [1732–1794]*. Oil on canvas, 228.9 x 190.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Nate B. Spingold, 1950, 50.50
Museum’s Meytens portrait is the best surviving likeness of both Durazzos, each of whom—and the count most particularly—was a patron of the arts. As director of Vienna’s court theaters and sponsor of the composer Christoph Gluck, Giacomo Durazzo (1717–1794) helped initiate a major reform of both opera and ballet, one that drew equally on French and Italian traditions. Later, as his adoptive country’s ambassador to Venice, he helped recruit several of the singers for whom Mozart would write his operatic masterpieces Le nozze di Figaro and Così fan tutte. And it was his herculean collecting endeavors in the area of graphic arts, on behalf of Albert, duke of Sachsen-Teschen, that laid the foundation for the modern Albertina.

Durazzo’s relations with Kaunitz dated back to the very start of his residence in Vienna; in 1754 the French ambassador reported to his government that Monsieur Durazzo is extremely attached to Count Kaunitz. He owes him all the favors he has obtained from the empress, which consist of a pension of four thousand livres, an apartment at court, and a position as state councillor. In a word, it is Count Kaunitz who arranged his marriage and who established him in this country. They pass their lives together and almost never part from one another.8

Kaunitz, who as Austria’s ambassador to France in the early 1750s helped bring about a renversement des alliances, would have recognized in Durazzo an ardent francophile like himself and a man with major cultural aspirations. (The count, in collaboration with his fellow Genoese Agostino Lomellino, had already begun work on an Italian adaptation of Quinault and Lully’s celebrated opera Armide; the work was eventually performed, with music by Tommaso Traetta, in Vienna in 1761.) As one of Genoa’s richest and most prominent families, which included several doges (among them Giacomo’s brother Marcello), the Durazzos had a long history of commercial and political dealings with France; an Ippolito Durazzo had even had his portrait painted by Rigaud.9 But as a younger son, Giacomo had limited possibilities within his homeland, and so sought a career elsewhere.10

Like Durazzo, Martin van Meytens had come to Vienna as a visitor and stayed on in the service of the court. His first sojourn in the Hapsburg capital in 1721 resulted in a request from Emperor Charles VI that he settle there permanently. “But Mr. de Meytens, not believing himself sufficiently skilled, implored His Imperial Majesty . . . to allow him to go work for some years in Italy, in order to make himself more worthy of this honor . . . ,” reported the artist’s anonymous biographer of 1755.11 (The year of Meytens’s probable return, 1730, was also that of the arrival in Vienna of the newly appointed court poet Pietro Metastasio, whose model of Italian serious opera Count Durazzo would later help to dethrone.) Birgitta Lisholm, the author of the sole monograph on Meytens, calls attention to the artist’s ability to assimilate himself to his new homeland, but it was just as much his cosmopolitanism—he spoke and wrote comfortably in six languages, according to his obituary12—and a usefulness to his sovereigns that gained him an unusual degree of independence, including, for instance, the privilege of retaining his Protestant religion. Meytens’s large state portraits of Empress Maria Theresia played a not insignificant role in securing the loyalty of her subjects during the embattled early years of her reign.13 And it was not just the court that bought such pictures; nobles, too, ordered portraits of the imperial family, as well as individual and group portraits of themselves. Meytens’s sociability, much mentioned in biographical sources, and his talents with regard to languages, music, and dance no doubt helped smooth the way.
with his noble patrons. Yet there is a note of tension with his clientele in a posthumous report of 1774 by Franz Christoph von Scheyb (paraphrasing a second, published biographical account from 1755), to the effect that “the brilliance, majesty, and splendor of the garments were mostly in accordance with the taste of the court and the high nobility, which did not always correspond to that of the artist.”

Virtuosic depiction of brocade, lace, and various other fabrics and materials is indeed conspicuous in the Durazzo portrait, reflecting a taste for luxury that is amply documented in the count’s correspondence with his Parisian theatrical agent, the playwright Charles-Simon Favart. Durazzo’s dealings with Favart and with his wife, Marie-Justine (whom he had first encountered in the theatrical troupe of the Maréchal de Saxe in Flanders, in 1748), were decisive for his management of Vienna’s theaters: Favart kept Durazzo up-to-date on Parisian spectacles and on developments in literature and the arts in general; Madame Favart served as a paragon in Durazzo’s efforts to recruit actresses for Vienna’s French troupe.

Meytens’s group portraits in particular seem to have impressed his contemporaries, and it is as one of these that the Metropolitan’s picture is mentioned in early accounts of the painter’s work. But in order to evaluate references to this portrait, one must also sort out the biographical notices themselves, which stand in a complicated relationship one to another. A fundamental source for Meytens’s biography is an anonymous manuscript entitled “La Vie de Mr de Meytens à Vienne communiquée par lui-même. Fait [sic] à Vienne 1 juillet 1755.” Although this is sometimes referred to as an “autobiography,” Lisholm rightly observes that the word “communiquée” implies no more than that Meytens was the source of the information; as we have seen, this account had already been attributed to a writer named Dunant several decades before it was published in 1797 (see note 3). Another Swedish art historian, Axel Gauflin, had surmised in 1920 that the “Vie” was prepared in connection with Hagedorn’s Lettres à un amateur de peinture... Ouvrage entremêlé de digressions sur la vie de plusieurs peintres modernes, published in Dresden in 1755. But the 1755 “Vie” is quite dissimilar to the much briefer treatment in Hagedorn’s Lettres of 1755, where Meytens’s biography (pp. 264–268) is appended to that of the Hungarian portraitist Adám Mányoki, along with that of Meytens’s cousin Georg De Marées, who was a fellow student of Meytens the Elder. There is little in the wording or content of Hagedorn’s biographical sketch to make one think that it derives from Dunant’s 1755 “Vie”; even Meytens’s birth year is different in the two sources. The Durazzo portrait is not discussed in either account, though each does mention works of the same type. Hagedorn says of Meytens (p. 267) that “he is currently busy painting two large pictures, one of which represents the entire imperial family, and the other that of the Prince of Liechtenstein,” while in his “Vie de Mr de Meytens” Dunant lists (in addition to imperial family portraits) “a picture that contains the entire family of the Princes of Liechtenstein in 15 figures, each larger than lifesize,” “one of Count Palfi, containing six figures,” and “another of the family of Count Kuffstein in five figures.” The silence on the Durazzo portrait does not exclude its having been completed by 1755, but a slightly later date would be more consistent with the chronology of Durazzo’s rising status at court and international renown.

A “Leben Herrn Martin von Meytens ...,” which appeared in the 1768 volume of the Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste, derives in large part from Dunant’s “Vie,” which apparently had circulated in manuscript. This new biography mentions several further group portraits, including “a family group for the widowed Princess von Lobkowitz, lifesize, in 5 figures,” and “a family group of Count Buratro, lifesize.” That the latter is a garbled reference to the Durazzo portrait is confirmed by a footnote in the 1770 obituary, which again is based in part on Dunant’s “Vie” of 1755:

Thus [“Durazzo”] this count is called, who is named “Buratro” in the Biblioth[ek] der S[chönen] W[issenschaften] u[nnd] fr[eyen] K[ünste]. Someone may have given the writers a not too faithful copy of the original of Herr Dünant; one must therefore excuse them. The copyist may not have understood French. ... In any case our biography is by no means a translation of Herr Dünant’s original, which served us only as a sketch, if I may speak in artistic terms.19

But as the Durazzo painting is not mentioned in Dunant’s 1755 biography, the reference in the 1768 article must have been added independently of that source. The author of the obituary singles out our portrait (along with that of Princess Lobkowitz and family) for special praise, saying, “One will always pay a silent tribute to the great Swedish portrait painter, if one has the luck to see his family groups, of which one, of five persons, lifesize, was done for the dowager Princess Lobkowitz, and the other for Count Durazzo.” Nothing is said concerning the painting’s whereabouts at that date—whether it stayed behind in Vienna or traveled with Durazzo to Venice—but the
author does write as if the two masterpieces were still accessible.

There is scarcely a trace of the Durazzo double portrait in the time between these brief notices and the painting's acquisition by the Metropolitan in 1950. It is not likely to have remained in Durazzo's official Venetian residence, the Palazzo Loredan (called "dell' Ambasciatore"), because that building was occupied first by Durazzo's successors and then in the nineteenth century by a series of new owners. (In an 1824 guidebook by Antonio Quadri, Otto gior ni a Venezia, not a single artwork in the Palazzo Loredan is said to merit the visitor's particular attention.) Nor is there any mention in the guidebooks consulted of Durazzo's works remaining in Padua, the city of his death, in 1794. Durazzo's entire estate was inherited by his nephew Gerolamo (1739–1809), who in turn bequeathed his possessions to his nephew Marcello (1777–1826). The count's library and print collection (the latter valued at "100,000 pezzi [di] Spagna") were still intact in 1818, when an anonymous writer drew up detailed inventories of the family's residences, as well as those of other Genoese patricians. Among the Durazzos' vast collections of paintings in the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini a strada Balbi some family portraits are mentioned, but none of Giacomo and his wife; the holdings of the family's smaller dwellings and villas are not itemized. It is possible that the Metropolitan's portrait had already been sold after 1809, when the death of Gerolamo Durazzo extinguished that branch of the family; the sale of the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini a strada Balbi to the house of Savoy in 1824 might equally well have occasioned the sale of this or similar heirlooms. Giacomo Durazzo's magnificent collection of prints was finally sold at auction in 1872–73 by Marcello's son Giuseppe Maria (1805–1893), whose two sons Flavio Ignazio (1849–1925) and Marcello (1842–1922) later divided Giacomo's library between themselves. The latter donated the portion to the Collegio Salesiano San Carlo di Borgo San Martino, which in 1927 sold the musical items to the National Library of Turin. If Marcello had indeed inherited the Meytens portrait, it might well have entered the antiquarian market about this time, being of little interest to institutions such as these. (By this period the attribution of the unsigned portrait, and perhaps even the identities of the sitters, might easily have been forgotten.) Flavio Ignazio's portion of the inheritance passed to his son Giuseppe Maria, who lived until 1960; the remaining Durazzos have not welcomed the inquiries of scholars. The main collecting activity of the donors of the painting to the Metropolitan Museum, the Spingolds, took place during the 1940s and 1950s, though they were selling some works as early as 1927; no record of the transaction by which they acquired the Meytens painting is known at present.26

The Metropolitan's portrait of the Durazzos is perhaps best described in tandem with the very similar painting by Meytens of Nikolaus, Count Pálffy von Erdőd, and his family, painted in 1755, and now in the Österreichische Galerie, Vienna (Figure 3). Not only are the two canvases alike in their hunting theme, with the subjects placed in a forest clearing, but Count Pálffy was also a first cousin of Ernestine Durazzo; the family connection may well explain the commission of the Durazzo portrait.26 Pálffy shared the Durazzos' passion for music; in this he was like that other great Hungarian magnate and long-term employer of Joseph Haydn, Nikolaus, Prince Esterházy—whose wife Elisabeth, née Weissenwolf, was another first cousin of Ernestine Durazzo's. (Nikolaus Esterházy succeeded his brother Paul Anton as prince in 1762.) As director of the imperial theaters, Durazzo had followed another Esterházy, Count Franz, known as "Quinquin"—the model for the like-named character in Hofmannsthall and Strauss's opera Der Rosenkavalier. Pálffy's more numerous family, compared to that of the Durazzos (who would remain childless), dictated a different relationship of figures to landscape, but the similarities in the two paintings are many, nonetheless. The sandy soil, "interesting" trees, and framing intrusion of foliage into the picture are common to both canvases. (Whereas a mansion is barely visible in the far distance in the Pálffy portrait, Meytens's depiction of the Durazzos includes no habitation, probably because the couple resided in Vienna.) Count Pálffy points at his dogs—as if to caution the viewer not to awaken the one that is sleeping—while Durazzo gestures toward his hunting dog and the birds felled that day. (The presence of the latter in the picture is probably intended to show that Countess Durazzo was not squeamish about the carnage of hunting.) In both pictures one sees Meytens's pride in the depiction of interesting or difficult hand gestures (note particularly the tender manner in which Durazzo's fingers caress the dog's ear—a gesture of conjugal affection by proxy), as well as the artist's "typical rendering with strongly tapering fingertips and an elegant gesture of the little finger."27 The burlwood gun and high boots—the latter elegantly presented—of the eldest Pálffy son, Carl (or Károly), both have counterparts in the Durazzo portrait. Meytens took particular care in highlighting the glass buttons on Durazzo's boots, by means of diagonal cross-hatching in gray and white with dots of white, blue, and red. In both paintings the same minute attention—"conspicuous to the point of
disgust," in Lisholm's words— is lavished on the various fabrics. The materials are all carefully differentiated as regards sheen, texture, and the fall of light across the surfaces, and in the gold brocade and white (or pink) lace one can even discern individual threads and knots. Such meticulousness in the finish of his paintings was reflected in the high prices that Meytens charged his clients.

In the handling of color, too, there are correspondences: Durazzo's flowing red coat occupies nearly as much of the picture space as does the bright red baldachin in the Pálffy portrait, and the light shades of the women's dresses are much the same in both paintings. The more diffuse light in the Metropolitan portrait helps create an atmosphere of greater intimacy, appropriate in the depiction of a couple. The choice of flowers and their colors in the picture are not likely to have been a matter of indifference. Most of the species depicted (e.g., the orange primulas at Count Durazzo's feet) are spring-blooming, that season being symbolic of youth and also that during which the Hapsburg court habitually went on hunting parties at Laxenburg, south of Vienna. (The running stream in the foreground is likewise suggestive of the early part of the year.) There are several different types of flowers in Countess Durazzo's hair, but three small white lilies call attention to themselves by their number and position; these Meytens likely included on account of the three fleurs-de-lis (representing the three branches of the Durazzo family then in existence) in Giacomo Durazzo's coat of arms (see Figures 2 and 5).
That the Metropolitan’s picture was produced not long after the Pálffy family group is suggested by the paintings’ stylistic similarities and by the apparent ages of the sitters (Ernestine von Weissenwolf was eighteen when she married Count Durazzo on March 17, 1750; he was thirty-three). Further evidence is to be found in a pair of anonymous individual portraits of the Durazzos, of less fine workmanship, that were painted in 1756. Though these were badly damaged by fire during World War II, one can still see that the Durazzos are depicted at roughly the same age as in Meytens’s double portrait, with similar attitudes of head and body. Insofar as one can tell, their dress is likewise much the same; the count wears an identical collar band (solitaire), and the countess is coiffed as in the Metropolitan portrait, with a small bunch of flowers in her hair, and wears a dark cloak loosely around her shoulders. If, as seems possible, these bust-length portraits were “excerpted” from the larger painting, rather than painted from life, then the correspondences are not surprising. But such a procedure is likely to have been employed while the likenesses in the double portrait were still relatively up-to-date.

An interest in hunting was nothing out of the ordinary for members of the Austro-Hungarian high nobility, or for resident foreigners of a certain distinction. But the hunting theme in Martin van Meytens’s portrait of Count and Countess Durazzo had additional resonances with their lives and accomplishments. First of all, of the two Durazzos, it was the countess, rather than her husband, whose superior skills in shooting drew the praise of several of her contemporaries. In the summer of 1754, Johann Joseph von Khevenhüller-Metsch described an elaborate archery contest at the Esterházy estate at Kittsee (Köpczen), near Pressburg (present-day Bratislava), in which Countess Durazzo took part:

... and after we had strolled a while in the lower garden, we returned to Kittsee, where the prince had prepared for their highnesses and the more distinguished ladies a nighttime shooting contest with crossbows, with very delightful prizes. The only one[s] to hit the bull’s-eye [were] Countess Durazzo, and Prince von Auersperg, hence the skyrockets and little cannons that were thereby set off did not make especially much noise.

The illumination resulting from the skyrockets was evidently the reason for holding the contest at night. Countess Durazzo’s archery skills also figure in a fine late portrait of her (ca. 1775–80), where her attributes include a bow, and arrows in a quiver (Figure 4). Ernestine Durazzo was also proficient with a rifle, at least by 1761. On June 28 of that year, during a visit by the Durazzos and others to the primary estate of Paul Anton, Prince Esterházy, at Eisenstadt (Kismartón), Count Carl von Zinzendorf noted in his diary: “In the afternoon we went to shoot with dummy bullets; Madame Durazzo shot well, but the princess exploded the target four times.” Two days later he remarked, “In the evening Madame Durazzo showed off her long brown hair, which reaches to her knees; she looked charming like that, without a bonnet.” (During this stay at Eisenstadt, Count Durazzo was acting as a paid consultant to the prince on operatic preparations there, having temporarily resigned from his theatrical post at court because of disputes with Kapellmeister Georg von Reutter the Younger.) A much earlier shooting contest, held at Schönbrunn Palace in 1716, and wittily described by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, gives some idea of the tradition from which Countess Durazzo’s skills as a marksman probably emerged. The contestants on that occasion were “two parties of [the empress’s] ladies of honour with other young ladies of quality, headed by the two young archduchesses, all dressed with their hair full of jewels,

with fine light guns in their hands; they shot at painted allegorical targets, for prizes both rich and trifling. “This is the favourite pleasure of the emperor,” Lady Mary reported, “and there is rarely a week without some feast of this kind, which makes the young ladies skilful enough to defend a fort, and they laughed very much to see me afraid to handle a gun.” Whether or not Countess Durazzo actually felled game herself (and in the Meytens portrait she is certainly not in hunting attire), she was frequently present for Beizte, or hawking, on the grounds of the court’s summer retreat at Laxenburg.7

Even aside from his wife’s shooting skills, huntresses were topical for Count Durazzo about the time Meytens likely painted his double portrait, for the count was the author of the libretto of a festa teatrale per musica called Le cacciatrici amanti (the amorous huntresses; Figure 5)—one of his several literary efforts in these years; the musical setting was by Christoph Georg Wagensen. The work was first performed at Laxenburg on June 25, 1755, and later also in Vienna’s court theater. Le cacciatrici amanti was wryly dismissed by the court poet Metastasio, who noted that “the versification is sufficiently facile, and appropriate to the music, which would have made for a reasonable enough composition, if the writer had set himself something to represent.” The poet admitted that “the lack of a subject is disguised somewhat by the frequency of the arias, the gracefulness of the dances, and by the magnificence of a successfully designed [stage] machinery.” The action in Le cacciatrici amanti is indeed slight: Dafne, “D’ogni altra cacciatrica / Maestra, e conduttrice [mistress and leader of every other huntress],” agonizes over her love for the shepherd Elpino, which Diana’s laws forbid; her companions seduce a band of shepherds in a central pantomime ballet, and at the end Diana relents, decreeing that henceforth Cupid will share in her rule over the forests. But in writing the work Durazzo was more interested in genre than plot; the heavy reliance in Le cacciatrici amanti on dance, chorus, and spectacle was in imitation of French opéras-ballets (such as he had witnessed during several visits to Paris), and an implicit criticism, as well, of the type of opera cultivated by Metastasio. In any case, it is tempting to think that the female courtiers who attended performances of Le cacciatrici amanti saw in the huntresses a reflection of their own traditional prowess at arms. It is likely that within the Durazzos’ circle of intimates the hunting portrait by Meytens was seen as alluding to the count’s authorship of the work—particularly as his feet are shown in a perfect fifth position (according to eighteenth-century ballet practice). Accustomed as he was, during his tenure as theater director, to providing scenarios for ballets, it is not difficult to imagine him offering suggestions to Meytens with regard to the program for the depiction of him and his wife on canvas.40

A dog as an emblem of fidelity prototypically appears in depictions of conjugal pairs such as Meytens’s of the Durazzos. It is ironic, then, that Giacomo Durazzo’s ouster in 1764 from his position as “Directeur des plaisirs” at court was largely due to his alleged involvement in an amorous affair with a star ballet dancer and singer, Louise Joffroy Bodin. Durazzo had already been chastised for holding rehearsals in the quarters of female singers, and at least one rehearsal “chez la Dlle [J]offroi” is recorded. In telling of Durazzo’s dismissal, Kehvenhüller-Metsch refers to an “anecdote très particulièr,” “that cannot be entrusted to the pen,” and also to the intervention of Chancellor Kaunitz, in order to procure for Durazzo—“zur Indemnisation”—the position of ambassador to Venice. According to later reports by the Venetian inquisitor, “Durazzo [has made] himself known by his amorous relations with beautiful ballerinas or actresses and not only in Vienna, but also later in Venice”; his wife, too, was
said to have entertained a lover at the Palazzo Loredan.44

Whatever the causes of Durazzo’s disgrace, his change of occupation and departure from the capital directly affected the later history of the Meytens double portrait. Durazzo’s decision to commission a print of it very quickly—minus his wife’s image, and altered to reflect his new position45—was possibly an attempt to reassert his prestige, but it was also a chance to demonstrate his already well-developed interest in the art of engraving. Right from the start of his correspondence with Favart, Durazzo had evinced an interest in engraving, instructing his agent to send not only theater pieces, but also “all brochures that concern the fine arts, which I cultivate for pleasure and for my utility—such as painting, engraving, architecture and music &c.”46 Thus, for instance, Favart informed the count of “a superb Italian/French edition of the tales of Boccaccio, in Massieu’s translation, in ten volumes in-8°, on Dutch paper only; this work is enriched by 370 plates, vignettes and tailpieces, perfectly engraved after the drawings of Boucher and Cochin. . . . There are twenty-four prints that will be sold on the sly, because they are of a more-than-cynical licentiousness.”47

Durazzo quickly added his name to the list of subscribers, remarking, “Of course, I will take all the prints, even those that will not be sold publicly.”48 In subsequent letters Favart informed him that Gravelot himself would select the proofs, and that the seizure of the engravers by the police would prevent neither their work on the project nor delivery of the prints.49 That Durazzo’s interest in the graphic arts at this early date was more than merely prurient is demonstrated by the wide variety of subjects and genres among the drawings, paintings, and prints that he received or discussed, and by his long exchanges with Favart concerning the engraved frontispiece for the Paris edition of Gluck’s Orfeo ed Euridice.50 The enormous size of Durazzo’s collection of prints (mostly amassed after his presentation of an earlier collection to Albert of Sachsen-Teschen in 1776) likewise demonstrates his passion for this artistic medium. But in Count Bartolommeo Benincasa’s published description, the collection’s principal utility is said to be as a sort of “storia universale della Pittura, e dei Pittori [universal history of painting, and of painters]”; Benincasa goes so far as to say that those who collect according to engraver rather than painter go against proper method.51 This method of organization (according to engraver) was found necessary, however, when Durazzo’s collection was auctioned off.

Whether or not the count foresaw that work on his engraved portrait could not be completed before his departure from Vienna, the choice of the engraver Jakob Schmutzer (1733–1811) had much to recommend it. One of Meytens’s self-portraits was engraved by Schmutzer in 1756,52 and Schmutzer had also studied at the Akademie headed (after 1759) by Meytens. About 1760 he engraved a portrait of the dancer Joffroy Bodin, a project of which one can be sure Count Durazzo was aware. In February of 1762 Schmutzer went to Paris for four years of advanced study with the expatriate German artist Johann Georg Wille (during which he also directed Wille’s “Teutsche Zeichnungschule”),53 thanks to the patronage of Durazzo’s protector, Chancellor Kaunitz. Upon his return in 1766 he founded a “k. k. Kupferstecher-Akademie” (later absorbed into the Akademie der bildenden Künste).54 The phrase “Commencé a Vienne par Schmutzer” in the finished engraving of Durazzo is problematic, as Schmutzer was still in Paris in 1764. On March 2 of that year Wille recorded in his journal that “Count Durazzo, director of the imperial court’s spectacles, having arrived in this city, came to see me,”55 but he makes no mention of discussions between Durazzo and Schmutzer on that occasion. Thus one must suppose that the two preliminary versions of Durazzo’s head and bust (Figures 6, 7) pre-dated Schmutzer’s Parisian sojourn; one wonders whether the count planned at that point to have Schmutzer engrave the entire painting. In any case, the similar depictions of the count’s left hand in both painting and engraving argue in favor of Schmutzer’s (or Wagner’s) having had direct access to the double portrait. The head itself is very finely done, accurately capturing the count’s physiognomy, with an only slightly less serene expression than in the painting.

It was likewise to be expected that once in Venice, Durazzo would turn to that city’s foremost engraver, the German-born Joseph Wagner (1706–1786). Having studied the engraver’s art under Laurent Cars in Paris, Wagner brought the technique of acquaforte to Venice, where (in applying for a privilege from the authorities) he claimed to have found engraving in a decadent state.56 Wagner’s skills are deployed to good effect in the portrait of Durazzo as imperial ambassador. The count’s coat is augmented by a rather amorphous cape, the better to exhibit Wagner’s talent for depicting drapery. The picture is filled out by an elaborate frame in imitation of carved stone and by the accoutrements of Durazzo’s office: books (untitled), writing implements, bundled dispatches, and a large portfolio of papers, all in an elegantly furnished interior. But there was a kind of empty show in all this, for the activities of ambassadors in Venice were severely circumscribed by a law forbidding local
nobles, "under pain of death, to have dealings with foreign envoys or their staffs." This policy was quite strictly enforced even as Durazzo was taking up his post.57 The count performed his duties conscientiously, but his artistic pursuits claimed increasing amounts of his time and attention. Though he complained loudly to Favart that Venice was "a country from which one is unable to write anything interesting,"58 he found at least some cultural occupation locally. He was helpful to the Mozarts (whom he had met in Vienna years earlier) when they came through Venice in March of 1771, dining with them and helping to arrange a concert of Wolfgang's music. Both Durazzos were active on the Venetian operatic scene. Ernestine had numerous opera librettos, both comic and serious, dedicated to her and apparently employed or patronized at least one singer;59 as mentioned above, her husband was able, through his contacts, to supply the Viennese court with the better part of an opera-buffa company in 1783. Well before that time he had been restored to imperial favor, thanks mainly to his services to Duke Albert, whose wife, Marie Christine, was the empress's favorite daughter. Durazzo ceased his diplomatic activities in 1783, the same year in which he was awarded the Order of Saint Stephen; Durazzo promptly incorporated its ceremonial chain into his family crest (see the library stamp on his copy of Le cacciatrici amanti; Figure 5).

In a late portrait of Giacomo Durazzo by Giovanni David (engraved by Giovanni Vitalba), which served as the frontispiece for Benincasa's Descrizione della raccolta di stampe di S. E. il Sig. Conte Jacopo Durazzo of 1784 (Figure 8), all the attributes now represent Durazzo's artistic and literary (as opposed to diplomatic) activities: a lyre and a sheet of music, a portfolio of prints, a pen and a book, a pair of calipers, and a palette with brushes. The inclusion of this last is more comprehensible now that we know that his involvement with painting was not limited to a "storia universale della Pittura" through the medium of prints or to the support of some "young protégés" during his time in Venice (see note 45), but that it also included the commissioning of a superb double portrait by the Viennese court painter Martin van Meytens. This is a
particularly fitting restoration to the artist's oeuvre, as Meytens's reputation has suffered because of the mannered figures in the crowd scenes of the large ceremonial paintings—many of which represent entertainments produced under Durazzo—that were executed principally by his assistants. At the Metropolitan Museum one can once again "pay a silent tribute" to Meytens's superb portrait and to the legendary beauty of Ernesteine von Weissenwolf and also admire (in the next gallery) a 1757 portrait by François-Hubert Drouais, said to depict one of Durazzo’s other muses, the actress Madame Favart.

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NOTES

1. Earlier members of this Dutch artistic dynasty, and also our artist’s father, Martin the Elder (established in Sweden since 1677), signed themselves "van Mytens" or "van Mijten"; "van Meytens" was Martin the Younger’s preferred spelling, which he adopted after his move to Vienna. See Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn, Lettres à un amateur de la peinture avec des éclaircissements historiques sur un cabinet et les auteurs des tableaux qui le composent. Ouvrage entremêlé de digressions sur la vie de plusieurs peintres modernes (Dresden, 1755; facs. repr. Geneva, 1972) p. 265.


3. "Il n'a mis son nom sur les Tableaux ou Portraits que fort rarement lorsque on l'a absolument exige"; "La Vie de Mr de Meytens à Vienne communiquée par lui-même. Fait [sic] à Vienne 1 juillet 1755," from Briefe über die Kunst von und an Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn, Torkel Baden, ed. (Leipzig, 1797); quoted in Birgitta Lisholm, Martin van Meytens d.y.: Hans liv och hans verk (Malmö, 1974) p. 131.

4. The spelling "Dünnant" is probably an attempt to render in German the pronunciation of the French name "Dunant."

5. "Leben Herrn Martin von Meytens dessen Tod wir im 16ten Stück der Zeitung angezeigt haben," Kunstszitung der Kaiserlichen Akademie zu Augsburg (1770); quoted in Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 120.

6. By Aug. 7, 1764, some three months after his resignation in Frankfurt (to which he had traveled for the coronation of Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans), Durazzo had already sold his garden villa in the Viennese Landstrasse. The imperial family quickly arranged to have themselves invited there by its new owner, the marchese Francesco di Montecuccoli, having heard much of its "galant and delightful decoration and furnishings [. . . von der galant- und hertzigen Zier und Einrichtung dises Gartens . . .]"; but they apparently had never sought such a visit while Durazzo occupied the property. See Rudolf, Graf Khevenhüller-Metsch, and Hanns Schlitter, eds., Aus der Zeit Maria Theresias: Tagebuch des Fürsten Johann Joseph Khevenhüller-Metsch, kaiserlichen Obersthofmeisters 1742–1776, 7 vols. (Vienna/Leipzig/Berlin, 1907–25) VI, p. 89, On Kaunitz’s intervention, see the entry for April 30, 1764 (VI, p. 29).


Figure 8. Giovanni David and Giovanni Vitalba. Count Giacomo Durazzo, ca. 1775–80. Engraving and aquatint. Los Angeles, Special Collections Library of the University of California, *Z 233 B6 B435 (photo: OID-Photographic Services, UCLA)
les grâces qu’il a obtenues de l’Impératrice, qui consistent en quatre mille livres de pension, un logement de cour, et une place de conseiller d’Etat. En un mot c’est M. le Comte de Kaunitz qui l’a marié et qui l’a fixé dans ce pays-ci. Ils passent leur vie ensemble et ne se quittent presque jamais.” Another bond between Durazzo and Kaunitz—and also with Albert of Sachsen-Teschen—was their membership in the Masonic lodge “Zur wahren Eintracht” (True Concord); see Walter Koschatzky, Giacomo Conte Durazzo, 1717-1794, zum Jubiläum des Wiener Burgtheaters 1776-1976 (Vienna, 1976) p. 11.


10. Though Giacomo Durazzo was officially inscribed into the Genoese nobility in 1744, at the age of 27, and was referred to in government documents as “il magnifico Giacomo Durazzo” (see Ivaldi, Giacomo Durazzo da Genova a Vienna, pp. 13 and 37), his specific title of count seems first to have been used in the safe-conduct pass sent to Durazzo and his retinue by Emperor Francis Stephen in 1749 upon his appointment as “invitato straordinario” to the Hapsburg court. The title apparently was not attached to any particular territory but was meant to confer greater dignity on Durazzo as envoy. (Personal communication from A. Fabio Ivaldi, Nov. 11, 1996.)

11. “Mais Mr. de Meytens ne se croit pas encore assez fort, supplia sa Maj. Imperiale . . . d’agréer qu’il allat travailler quelques années en Italie, pour s’y rendre plus digne de cette grace . . .”; [Dunant], “La Vie de Mr de Meytens,” in Baden, ed., Briefe über die Kunst, p. 216; quoted by Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 22.

12. Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, pp. 88 and 123 (quoting the “Leben Herrn Martin von Meytens”).

13. Ibid., p. 134.

14. Franz Christoph von Scheyb, Von den drei Künstlern der Zeitgenossen (Vienna, 1774) p. 43: “Glanz, Majestät und Pracht in Kleidungen richteten sich meistens nach dem Geschmack des Hofs und hohen Adels, welcher nicht jederzeit mit der Gesinnung der Künstler übereinstimmt,” quoted in Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 87; in the earlier source (Hagedorn, Lettres a un amateur, p. 266) one reads: “Un peu moins d’éclat & de richesse prodiguées dans les vêtements, dont le choix n’est cependant pas toujours celui du Peintre, n’allégerait que mieux quelques uns de ces beaux Portraits à ceux du siècle de van Dyck.”

15. In describing the goddess Aretea in Metastasio and Hasse’s festa teatrale Alcide al bivio—a work in which he seems to have had a major creative role—Durazzo noted that this character “doit . . . en imposer la volupté, la Galanterie jointes à la richesse et même au Luxe doivent paröître dans l’habit dela Deese des plaisirs,” adding, “Peut-être je me determinerai à faire travailler les habits à Paris . . .” (letter of March 8, 1760; Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Opéra, Fonds Favart, Carton I, A, II).

16. Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 9. Gauffin’s opinion is to be found in his study “Martin van Meytens d. y. och hans nyforvärade arbeten i Statens konstsamlingar,” in the Nationalmuseums årsbok (1920).


21. See Poleggi, ed., Descrizione della città di Genova, p. 77. No portrait that can be identified as that by Meytens is mentioned in the descriptions of the Durazzo family’s properties in Federigo Alizeri’s Guida artistica per la città di Genova (Genoa, 1846-47) or Guida illustrativa del cittadino e del forestiero per la città di Genova (Genoa, 1875). But in the later edition Alizeri notes (p. 415) that the Durazzo-Pallavicini collection included paintings “of more than ordinary beauty,” secreted away in private rooms, that were not listed in the gallery’s published catalogue.

22. Personal communication from A. Fabio Ivaldi, Sept. 12, 1996.

23. I am grateful to Prof. Mercedes Viale Ferrero for much of this information; see also Alberto Basso, “I codici vivaldiani di Torino, overo fatti e misfatti, avventure e disavventure del collezionismo musicale,” Chigiana 41, n.s. 21 (1989) pp. 161-84.

24. Information on the Spinogolds was kindly provided by Dr. Burton B. Fredericksen of the Art History Information Program, J. Paul Getty Center, Malibu (personal communication, Dec. 9, 1995).

25. Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 64, dates the picture according to the ages of the children depicted, one of whom died later that year. The Palfy portrait is reproduced in color in Walter Koschatzky, ed., Maria Theresa und ihre Zeit (Salzburg / Vienna, 1979) p. 286.

26. Palfy had become a privy councillor in 1745 and would be named Hungarian palatin, or court chancellor, in 1758; see Constant von Wurzbach, Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Österreich, 60 vols. (Vienna, 1856-91) XXI, p. 215. Ernestine’s mother, Maria Anna, a Palfy von Erdöd by birth, was Nikolaus’s aunt; see
ibid. (unpaginated genealogical table of the Pálffy dynasty). Ernestine’s father, Joseph Anton Ungnad von Weissenwolf, was president of the Upper Austrian Landtag.

27. See Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, pp. 53-54.

28. Ibid., p. 87.

29. I am grateful to Prof. Eric Haskell of Scripps College, Claremont, for much of the following information.

30. On the symbolism of the three heraldic fleurs-de-lis, see A. Fabio Ivaldi’s description of the funerary catafalque (1667) of Stefano Durazzo in Studi di Storia delle Arti 4 (1981/82) pp. 141-171, figs. 84, 85.

31. Shortly after her wedding, on May 3, 1750, Countess Durazzo was named to the Sternkruz-Orden; see Robert Haas, Gluck und Durazzo im Burgtheater (Vienna/Leipzig, 1925) p. 7.

32. The paintings, which were “formerly in the possession of the Weissenwolf family,” are reproduced pls. 23 and 24 in vol. I of H. C. Robbins Landon, Haydn: Chronicle and Works, 5 vols. (Bloomington, Ind., 1976-80). They are currently at Schloss Steyregg, Upper Austria.


34. “Aprèmesdi on alla tirer [à] feu blanc, M de Durazzo tira bien, mais la Princesse fit sauter 4 fois la baumbe.”

35. Zinzendorf, entry for June 28, 1761, quoted in Landon, Haydn, I, p. 359. “Le soir la Durazzo montra ses brus cheveux longs, qui lui sont jusqu’aux genoux, elle étoit charmante dans cette figure, sans coiffe.” The “Princesse” was Paul Anton Esterházy’s wife, Maria Anna, née Lunati-Visconti. On first meeting “M. de Durazzo Consellier privat et Directeur des plaisirs et M son Eponge,” at a soiree at the residence of Chancellor Kaunitz, Zinzendorf had noted, “Son Eponge, née Weissenwolf est grande et belle” (entry for Feb. 12, 1761).

36. Letter of Sept. 14, 1716 (O.S.), to Frances, Countess of Mar, in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Letters, Ernsts Rhys, ed., with an introduction by Clare Brant (New York, 1992) pp. 70-71. The empress herself, Elisabeth Christine, was a superb shot; one of the “two young archducesses” mentioned here was Maria Theresa, whose children all received a thorough training in hunting. See Wilhelm Schlagen, “Jagdweisen,” and idem, “Jagdbilder der Kaiserfamilie,” in Koschatzky, Maria Theresia und ihre Zeit, pp. 549-555. esp. p. 550, and 572-573. Lady Mary later befriended Durazzo’s sister Clelia, conversing frequently “in many parties we had together”; see her letter from Turin of Oct. 2, 1741 (O.S.) to Henrietta Fermor, Countess of Pomfret (Letters, p. 317).

37. Khevenhüller-Metsch, Aus der Zeit, reports escorting her on May 22, 1756 (IV, p. 22), and May 20, 1759 (IV, p. 120), for instance.


39. Ibid., p. 1036: “Nulla di meno la mancanza di soggetto si nasconde tanto quanto nella frequenza delle arie, nella leggiadria de’ balli e nella magnificenza d’una macchina felicemente eseguita.” Metastasio was careful to disclaim paternity for the anonymously published work, saying that he had done no more than refashion a few disheveled verses (“... non ho altra parte che l’avere raffazzonato qualche verso scarmigliato”).


41. Other factors, as well, entered into Durazzo’s dismissal, including a scheme concocted by Favart and a playwright friend he had placed in Vienna; see Brown, Gluck and the French Theatre, pp. 425-428.

42. Khevenhüller-Metsch, Aus der Zeit, entries for April 30 and Feb. 6, 1765 (VI, p. 83, and VI, p. 29, respectively).

43. Marina Varagnolo, “Giacomo Durazzo” (diss., University of Padua, 1964-65) n. 19; cited in Koschatzky, Giacomo Conte Durazzo, p. 15: “Anche il Durazzo spesso si farà notare per le sue relazioni amorose con belle ballerine o attrici di prosa e non solo a Vienna, ma anche poi a Venezia.”

44. Koschatzky, Giacomo Conte Durazzo, pp. 28-29, citing Pompeo Molmenti, La storia di Venezia nella vita privata (Bergamo, 1928) III, pp. 493ff.

45. This was not the only time that Durazzo would arrange for the alteration of an existing portrait. In a letter of Oct. 26, 1773, Christoph Gluck told Padre Giovanni Battista Martini in Bologna of Durazzo’s having procured a copy of a portrait of Gluck painted in 1756 in Rome and of his having it altered, “by one of his young protégés,” so as to show the composer’s current physiognomy; see Patricia Howard, Gluck: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait in Letters and Documents (Oxford, 1995) p. 107.

46. Unpublished letter of July 9, 1760, in Fonds Favart, Carton I, A, II: “toutes les Brochures qui traitent des beaux arts, que je cultive par goût, et pour mon utilité, tels sont la peinture, la gravure, l’architecture et la Musique &c.”

47. Letter of May 1, 1761, in Favart, Mémoires et correspondances littéraires, dramatiques et anecdotiques, A-P.C. Favart, ed., 3 vols. (Paris, 1808) I, pp. 149-150: “une superbe édition italienne et française des Contes de Boccace, traduction de Massieu, en dix volumes in-8°, sur papier de Hollande simplement; cet ouvrage est enrichi de 370 figures, vignettes et culs-de-lampe parfaitement gravés d'après les dessins de Boucher et de Cochin ... Il y a vingt-quatre estampes qui se distribueront sous le manteau, parce qu'elles sont d’une liberté plus que cynique.”

48. Letter of May 14, 1760, in Fonds Favart, Carton I, A, I: “... bien entendu, que j’aurai toutes les estampes, même celles, qu’on ne vendra pas publiquement.”

49. Letters of June 20, 1761, and May 7, 1762, respectively, in Favart, Mémoires et correspondances, I, p. 157, and II, p. 271.


51. See Benincasa, Descrizione della raccolta di stampe di S. E. il Sig. Conte Jacopo Durazzo esposta in una dissertazione sull’arte dell’intaglio a stampa (Parma, 1784) pp. 8 and 24.
52. The engraving of the self-portrait (after the original in the Akademie der bildende Künste, Vienna) is no. 208 in Lisholm’s catalogue; see Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 128.


54. See Peter Pötschner, Wien und die Wiener Landschaft: Spätbarocke und beiderlebnerische Landschaftskunst in Wien (Salzburg, 1978) pp. 21 and 302. In Durazzo’s collection of graphic arts there were a dozen engravings by Schmutzer, including two portraits of Kaunitz and one of his chalk drawings; see the Catalog der kostbaren und altberühmten Kupferstich-Sammlung des Marchese Jacopo Durazzo . . ., 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1872–73) I, p. 375, and II, p. 239.

55. Mémoires et journal de J.-G. Wille, Graveur du Roi, 2 vols. (Paris, 1857) I, p. 249: "M. le comte de Durazzo, directeur des spectacles de la cour impériale, étant arrivé en cette ville, m’est venu voir." From this source (I, p. 117) one also learns that Kaunitz (through his secretary, Wächter) had inquired as early as 1759 regarding the possibility of sending Schmutzer to work in Wille’s studio.


58. Letter of Dec. 9, 1767; Favart, Mémoires et correspondances, II, p. 233: “un pays d’où on ne saurait rien écrire d’intéressant.”

59. This is implied in a letter of April 8, 1779, from Joseph II to his brother Leopold, in which mention is made of “a better soprano from Venice [named Romani], who is now in the house of la Durazzo” (personal communication from Prof. John A. Rice).

60. The engraving was likely produced ca. 1775–80, during which time David was working in Venice under the patronage of Count Durazzo, with some of the remaining copies later being used as frontispieces in Benincasa’s Descrizione; see Ivaldi, “Genova e il teatro, fra Seicento e primo Ottocento,” in Ida Maria Botto, ed., Il Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova: Storia e progetti (Genoa, 1986) pp. 7–46, esp. p. 28.

61. See Lisholm, Martin van Meytens, p. 87.

62. MMA, Gift of Isaac D. Fletcher, 1917 (17.120.210). The painting is reproduced in MMAB 30 (Aug. 1971) p. 28.
A Noble Imposture: The Fonthill Ewer and Early-Nineteenth-Century Fakery

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In 1819 William Beckford (1760–1844), "England’s wealthiest son," purchased a magnificent jewel, a ewer of smoky quartz with massive gold mounts decorated with rich enameling and numerous diamonds (Figures 1–3), and which he believed to be by Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1571). It was to become part of the decoration of Fonthill Abbey, the astonishing re-creation of a medieval monastery that Beckford had built to be his hermitage.

Beckford was vindictively ostracized, early in what would have been a brilliant social career, after the public exposure of his homosexuality. He is still remembered as the author of the gothic novel Vathek, but he lived a lonely, misanthropic, yet splendid life accumulating one of the most broadly discerning art collections of his day.

When the Fonthill ewer came to the Metropolitan Museum, through the collection of Jack and Belle Linsky, examination revealed that it was certainly not a production of the Renaissance. As Clare Vincent has shown, it was a clever marriage of a representative quartz ewer from the Ferdinand Miseroni workshop in Prague, dating from about 1680, to gold mounts that could not have greatly antedated Beckford’s 1819 purchase. The object of this essay is not only to explain the nature of the technical evidence, which originally led us to believe that the gold mounts were of the nineteenth century, but also to present additional evidence, both technical and art historical, that pinpoints where and when the ewer was remounted and suggests for whom it was intended.

It was the new gold mounts that turned the stripped, but innocent, seventeenth-century ewer into the quite enticing but insidiously misleading object it now is. There can be little doubt that it was planned to deceive, but not merely from the absence of the usual marks on patently nineteenth-century gold work. Such a luxurious and expensive item could have had very few potential customers in the economically stressful times following the fall of Napoleon; furthermore, the striking combination of styles is so idiosyncratic, yet so carefully thought out, as to strongly suggest that, like all really successful fakes, the ewer was designed to gratify the tastes of a specific collector. Whoever the originally intended purchaser was, it was not William Beckford, as we shall see, although it certainly was much to his liking.

We all naturally deprecate fakes, an inevitable consequence of the artistic shabbiness of most of them, as well as the moral shabbiness of a premeditated swindle. Here the premeditation was extreme—the deceivers did their homework—but the artistic result is not shabby in the least. The Fonthill ewer is an exciting and successful work of art. It is a good fake, with full appreciation of the ambiguity of the word "good," and we should not let squeamishness prevent us from enjoying it.

There are unfortunately few published descriptions of the construction of Renaissance goldsmiths’ work, genuine or not, which is not surprising, since any thorough description requires either disassembly or radiography, preferably both. In reality, it is common to find evidence that disassembly has taken place, but probably done during the course of cleaning and restoration; until very recently, these operations were seldom witnessed by persons capable of drawing any historical inferences. Even now, there is a great but understandable reluctance to permit outside scholars, no matter how qualified, to disassemble works of art. This has greatly hampered the study of goldsmiths’ work, especially large and complex pieces like the Fonthill ewer. Technical examination of this object began with its disassembly, which proved to be surprisingly easy, even disturbingly so.

The Fonthill ewer has two major gold assemblies: the dragon handle and the foot. Our first surprise occurred when we removed the handle. It is in the form of a winged dragon, the fore claws of which simply hook over the lip of the ewer’s mouth (Figures 4, 5). The rear legs of the beast are decidedly serpentine and loop into the mouth of a grotesque fanged mask, also somewhat reptilian in appearance (Figures 6, 7). This striking mask forms the cover of a rectangular

Figure 2. Ewer in Figure 1

Figure 3. Ewer in Figure 1
Figure 4. Forearm of dragon handle with grasping claw

Figure 5. Claws of dragon handle

Figure 6. Grotesque mask on handle of ewer, seen in profile, showing distortion of holes from screws

Figure 7. Grotesque mask, full face
of the vessel, in this case rectangular but more frequently elliptical or circular. As can be seen in Figure 9, the lug here has had a deep groove cut around its sides, as seems to be the case in virtually all other examples. The socket, or bezel, is always made to fit the lug quite snugly, and the actual joining is performed by burnishing the metal into the undercut groove. The procedure is identical in essentials to setting an intaglio or a cameo into the bezel of a ring. This method of attachment has many advantages. The heavily cold-worked bezel is quite strong, and, provided the metal is carefully fitted to the crystal, no bedding agent or adhesive is needed. The join is thus secure, neat, and inconspicuous, and there is no hardware or adhesive to be seen from the interior of the vessel through the transparent crystal wall.

Other methods were in fact used during the Renaissance. Sometimes the bezel was cut into a series of small tabs or decorative scallops. This made the fitting of the metal collar to the lug far easier, but the results were by no means as strong or as smoothly elegant. On other occasions, especially when mounting preformed natural objects such as nautilus shells, a hinged cage or girth of metal straps was used, and for opaque materials even pins or rods were employed.

None of the above methods prepared us for what we found on the Fonthill ewer. The socket of the handle is attached to the lug with six tiny set-screws! On each of three sides of the socket—all except the topmost—a pair of holes has been drilled and threaded to take a pair of tiny gold screws with neatly domed and slotted heads. These screws engage into the groove cut around the lug and were intended to fasten the handle to the ewer. However, as can be seen in Figure 6, the weight of the cup bearing on the screws in a lever-like fashion has so distorted the screw-holes in the soft gold walls of the socket that most of the screws no longer fasten anything. (The screws are now held in place with modern wax.) They are a most unsuitable and inadequate arrangement for fastening the handle, but, as there is not the slightest sign of any earlier means of attachment, they are unquestionably original to the handle, no matter how inappropriate to the quartz lug. Even if we imagine the socket plastered in place as well as screwed down, the design of the dragon’s fore claws (Figure 5), with merely four tiny talons engaging the rim, would ensure that the handle would break away, possibly the first time someone tried using it to lift the ewer. One knows that genuine Renaissance vessels of this type were really intended only for display, but their handles are all mechanically more secure than that of the Fonthill ewer.

The inadequate design of the dragon handle, with
its preposterous set-screws for attachment, shakes one's faith in the mechanical integrity of the object. The means by which the foot was fastened to the cup is equally disillusioning, but for the opposite reason. The means of attachment, while quite effective, is extravagantly complex. On the underside of the ewer there is another integral lug similar to the one fitting into the dragon handle, but in this case circular. Again one would expect an exposed, simple, and bezellike fastening of the base to the quartz projection.

The actual means of attachment to the lug is a cylindrical cup of gold with a neatly threaded rod soldered to its underside (Figures 10, 11). The cylindrical quartz lug fits into the cup and rests on its bottom. Instead of merely working the mouth of the cup into the groove around the neck of the lug, a far more

Figure 10. Cylindrical gold cup with central screw for attaching foot

Figure 11. Cylindrical cup: with scribed lines, exposed ends of brass pins and assembly mark labeled "NB"

Figure 12. Underside of cup, with projections for ensuring the proper orientation of the foot to the quartz ewer

Figure 13. Cylindrical cup (drawing: author)
Figure 14. Detached dragon's wings, exterior surfaces

Figure 15. Dragon's wings, interior surfaces

Figure 16. Torus from ewer's foot

Figure 17. Lion masks on knop

Figure 18. Diamond barrette on knop, with three threaded lugs visible below for fastening knop to base
mechanically elegant, if no more efficient, solution was designed. A split metal ring was carefully turned on a lathe with a small internal lip designed to fit into the undercut of the lug. The two halves of the split ring were then assembled around the lug, and the whole assembly was inserted, telescope fashion, into the gold cup. The split ring itself was secured into the cup with radial brass pins. There are several demonstrations of mechanical finesse. The two halves of the split ring have carefully scarfed joints, while the exposed upper edge of the ring has a minute, but carefully turned, decorative profile. In addition, three positioning tabs (Figure 12) have been soldered to the underside of the cup to mate into notches cut into the underlying element of the foot. These prevent the slightest chance of accidental misalignment or rotation.4 The drawing (Figure 13) will perhaps make the whole fastening assembly easier to understand.

A seventeenth-century clockmaker might have designed such a device, but a goldsmith? It is even a trifle recherché for the end of the eighteenth century. The present piece of hidden gold hardware, with its elaborate ingenuity, reminded me of the work of certain advanced eighteenth-century instrument makers, such as the English Jesse Ramsden (1735–1800). However, as we shall see, Jacques de Vaucanson (1709–1782) might have been more appropriate, being French. With the discovery of these seemingly gross anachronisms, we were sure that the gold mounts are not original. In addition, I noticed a curious relationship between the style of the mounts and the decoration of the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, of which more will be said below.

A subsequent examination of the ewer provided additional evidence of great interest, unavailable when the ewer was first published by the Museum. A preliminary summary of findings is a useful way of introducing this new evidence. Radiography showed
that all the visible parts of the mounts are cast. There is not a single decorative element in repoussé, not even the delicate festoons on the base, although certain hidden mechanical elements, especially the previously mentioned socket for the foot, are worked up out of sheet gold and soldered. The castings are all surprisingly heavy, even though the dragon handle, as well as the three smaller dragons on the foot, were cast hollow.5

While the dragon handle is cast in one piece, with the exception of the separately cast wings (Figures 14, 15), the foot is quite another matter (Figure 3). It is a masterful assembly of cast parts that form a spatially complex, richly decorative whole. The foot is composed of three separate units: the laurel-wreathed torus at the top, the three-sided knop decorated with lion heads beneath the torus, and a three-sided pyramidal base at the bottom (Figures 16–18). The torus and the knop are individual, integral castings. The base, however, is a demonstration of how it is possible to assemble an extraordinary simulacrum of traditional goldsmiths' work in repoussé by the use of molded elements, made in identical sets of three (Figures 19–21). The precision with which the complex parts have been formed and joined together is admirable. With the exception of the soldered elements mentioned above, every single joint in the mounts is fastened with nuts and bolts. Even the cast wings of the dragon handle are fastened on with decorative nuts on threaded studs. Although each
mounted diamond decorating the dragon’s spine and head is merely pegged into a drilled hole, a very unusual procedure (Figures 22, 23), every other major stone is bolted in place by a threaded stud soldered onto the reverse of its setting (Figure 24). The gold mounts are enameled, mostly in champlevé, and jeweled with a striking number of diamonds—202—all in the archaic table cut. There was obviously no stinting. To recapitulate, the mounts of the Fonthill ewer are made entirely of cast parts, fastened together with nuts and bolts, and with quite atypical means of joining the gold mounts to the ewer.

The major surprise of the reexamination came when measurements were made of the “mechanical,” as opposed to the design, elements of the ewer. All the dimensions are metric. (I must stress that this is no mere coincidence, as this study is based on numerous measurements with a vernier caliper.) For example, all the holes drilled to receive bolts have the following precise diameters: 1.5, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0 millimeters. There are other clearly metric dimensions, but I will point out only one other set, the scribed layout lines running around the cylindrical socket fastening the foot to the ewer. Figure 25 shows the exterior of the socket with an adjacent millimeter scale. Note the scribed lines that divide the 13.0-millimeter height of the cylinder’s external surface into bands of 2.0, 2.0, 6.0, and 3.0 millimeters. The drawing in Figure 13 shows these dimensions and their relationship to the socket’s design.

The metric system, a product of the French Revolution, was first proposed in 1791 but not officially promulgated until 1799. Therefore, we can say with assurance that the mounts for the Fonthill ewer were executed, in the first approximation, between 1799 and 1819, the year Beckford purchased it in London, and that it was not made there. It is impossible to imagine that any goldsmith in England, even a French refugee, would have adopted the metric standard. The British quite successfully resisted metrification until our own day, and we resist it still.

Let us now assume that the mounts were made in Paris. Both the date and the place of their manufacture, however, raise striking stylistic problems, as they are not in Empire style, and it is very difficult to imagine any Parisian goldsmith of the period breaking entirely free of its influence. In France the style lasted with perfect serenity from the late 1790s into the Bourbon restoration. While there were major stirrings in the other arts, the Parisian goldsmiths remained faithful to it. Things were certainly more complicated in England, even if Neoclassicism had a pretty firm grip there.

Stylistic questions aside, there seems to have been quite a strong convergence of technical methods between goldsmiths in Paris and London in the early nineteenth century, but only at the highest level of their craft. In England the successors of the silversmith Hester Bateman (d. 1794) were stamping out—quite literally—silver for the burgeoning middle classes using the industrial methods she had pioneered, but this was a new and different world. Work for the gratin still appears to have been done with methods that were the culmination of traditions that went back to the Renaissance, albeit with certain innovations.

We loosely talk of “goldsmiths,” but even the great firms, whether Biennais, Odiot, or Rundell, worked primarily in silver, albeit frequently gilded. Objects in solid gold, other than jewelry, appear to have been rare. For instance, the royal goldsmiths, Rundell, Bridge, and Rundell, are documented as producing only six solid-gold objects other than snuffboxes. This fact is of considerable importance, because artists accustomed to working in a less precious medium develop less thrifty habits with their materials. It explains why the ewer mounts, despite being entirely in gold, were nevertheless cast. Gold, as well as silver, can always be worked thinner than it can be cast, and, for the same thickness, cold-worked metal is always stronger. For these reasons the casting of precious metals was generally avoided, at least until the end of the Middle Ages. Cellini describes the making of large wrought vessels, with repoussé decoration, but with certain details such as handles being cast, and this became the norm.

While the ability to execute brilliant repoussé work remained the touchstone of a goldsmith’s skill, there was nevertheless a constant temptation to resort to the use of more casting, which had certain inherent advantages. Above all, it was easier. A sculptor, who need not have had any experience working metal, could create complex figures and decoration in a more tractable medium, such as clay or wax, which could then be cast in any number of replicas. When many identical elements were required—for example, for large table services with numerous vessels—it could even make economic sense, especially when the price of precious metal fell relative to wages.

In the eighteenth century the Rococo style, with its spatially complex vessels elaborated with dense and intricately textured decoration, offered numerous opportunities for the display of the goldsmith’s traditional skills in the cold working of metal. The arrival of Neoclassicism, and especially of the Empire style, changed that. Forms because architectonic, with vessel
shapes severely geometricized combinations of the hemisphere, cylinder, prism, and ellipsoid. Much of the surface of vessels was kept undecorated, with as crisp as possible a contrast between the decoration and the ground, appliqué as opposed to repoussé. Decoration was frequently isolated into bands and cartouches, or limited to feet, handles, or crowning sculptural groups. No style could have been more conducive to the casting of all the decorative elements. Goldsmiths consequently began to cast decoration as an almost universal practice, the stylistic revolution leading to a concomitant technical one.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the triumph of a stricter version of Neoclassicism seems to have introduced similar technical changes in England, just as in France, despite the almost continuous state of war between the two nations. Unfortunately, the documentation from both, while not scanty, is scattered and uncoordinated. To understand the technological milieu in which the Fonthill ewer was created, one must make a little more sense of the technical evidence.

The parallel changes in form and technology require that we discuss casting as practiced in the early nineteenth century, especially the so-called method of sand casting, which was used to cast the gold mounts of the Fonthill ewer. There are two rather different traditional methods for casting metal. One of them, the lost-wax technique, is well known from the Italian Renaissance. The other method, called sand or loam casting, is far less familiar. That method never had its Cellini, and, furthermore, it is capable of many variations, which make generalization about the technique difficult. Industrially, at least from the time the casting of iron became common, sand casting has been the predominant technique. In fact, by the nineteenth century it had totally supplanted the lost-wax method in England, even for statuary, at least until the 1880s, when the method was reintroduced by the sculptor Alfred Gilbert.

The major difference between the lost-wax process and sand casting is in the nature of the molding material. In the lost-wax technique softened clay or liquid plaster of Paris is applied to a rather fragile wax model. With sand casting, a barely damp mixture of sand and clay is pressed, or even rammed, around a model, which perforce must be more durable than wax. Some of the materials traditionally used for models have been wood, stone, terracotta, plaster, and
metal. Since none of these will easily burn off or vaporize, as wax will, the mold must be made in sections to allow for the removal of the model. Spatially complex models require molds in many pieces since the molding material is not only rigid but also rather fragile. For the same reasons, deep undercuts in the model that would interlock with the surface of the mold are avoided as much as possible. There are, however, specialized techniques for dealing with undercuts of lesser spatial complexity. The various sections of the mold are disassembled to remove the model, then reassembled to permit the molten metal to be cast directly into the now-empty mold. Because sand casting is intrinsically a direct-casting technique, any necessary core is always preformed, and the piece mold is assembled around it prior to casting. As is typical with preformed cores, the fit of the core into the mold is not very precise, and the walls of the finished casting vary greatly in thickness. In other words, the inner and outer surfaces of the hollow casting are not conformal. It was the schematization of the core shape and the lack of conformality of the walls of the casting—both of which were visible in the radiographs, as well as to the naked eye on the front and the usually hidden rear of the handle’s grotesque mask (see Figures 7, 8)—that allowed me to conclude the Fonthill ewer mounts were sand cast.

There were many reasons for the popularity of sand casting, but the most important for us to consider is that it allowed for the use of detailed durable models, which could be used over and over again to make an essentially unlimited number of castings. Another, less obvious, reason was that it permitted the use of wood models, which were quite important for sculpture, especially in Renaissance Germany. Wood cannot be subjected to soaking without warping and cracking; the mixtures used for sand casting were used barely damp, with just enough water to permit them to cohere under pressure. The molds could be immediately removed, still damp, from a wood model. The mixture could also be made to be quite nonadhesive, even on wood, especially fine-grained ones, such as boxwood.

The limitations of sand casting for reproducing the complex, undercut forms that prevailed were countered by the judicious simplification of sculptural forms. Consider, for example, the underside of the forearms of the dragon on the Fonthill ewer’s handle (Figure 26). The negative space left between the two limbs was carefully considered, and the model was designed so that the resulting mold surface would be as simple and sturdy as possible. It is a simple triangular prism with a blunted apex, the ideal shape for removal from the model. Also notice that the underside of the forearms and the claws are flat and featureless; the hooked talons were no doubt bent into shape after casting. Another method for dealing with complex forms was to make the models in pieces, just as the molds were made. The use of models with removable parts greatly simplifies the molding of objects with undercuts and interlocks, since part of the model can be removed to permit the extraction of an otherwise entrapped section of the mold. Yet another method is to mold and cast the parts of the model separately and to join the castings subsequently, either mechanically or by soldering.

Numerous bronze models for the casting of silver survive from the workshop of Jean-Baptiste-Claude Odiot (1765–1850), one of the most important Parisian goldsmiths of the period. We are especially fortunate that a whole group of models survives from his shop, an almost unheard-of occurrence. It is obvious that the bronze models, some with separable parts, were designed for sand casting. For information regarding the steps by which the models themselves were created, or how the lost models for the Fonthill ewer were made, we must return to London, and thence to the Vulliamy family.

Benjamin Lewis Vulliamy (1780–1854) was a member of a family of clockmakers who had held the royal warrant since the 1740s. Upon the death of his father in 1810, Benjamin Lewis inherited the direction of the Vulliamy firm and, in consequence, the office of clockmaker to the British royal family. "Clockmaker" scarcely does justice to the breadth of Vulliamy’s activities. He was a member of the fortunate circle of purveyors engaged to satisfy George IV’s seemingly insatiable appetite for luxury goods. Besides his horological services, he supplied George with furniture, ormolu, and a great deal else. Vulliamy also had extremely close relations with suppliers in France, even at the height of the Napoleonic Wars. Our interest in Vulliamy is due to the happy accident of the preservation, in the Public Record Office, London, of much of his firm’s business records from the beginning of the nineteenth century to about 1815, and sometimes even later. Of special interest are the records pertaining to objects in silver, which permit the precise reconstruction of the steps in their manufacture, information otherwise seemingly unobtainable from any other source.

In twenty-four pages of entries, the Vulliamy "Silver Book" lists objects made for various patrons from September 1809 to July 1817. For each object it records the names of workers employed, their tasks, and the amounts paid for labor and material. Vulliamy
admitted himself as a supplier of "Ornamental Plate, & Plate for table uses . . . after antique models." He obviously contracted out most of the steps in the manufacturing process, but he does seem to have functioned extensively as designer, as no records of payments for design drawings survive. Also, Vulliamy had an extensive library of books on architecture and design as well as on horology. The following is the record of one of a series of pieces executed for a Lord Anson:\n
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>Jacot</td>
<td>Turning patera for Hesse</td>
<td>6 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Carving Patera</td>
<td>1 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>Boy's time modelling</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brownly</td>
<td>Wood for patera</td>
<td>3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>Wax model of Foot</td>
<td>1 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barnett</td>
<td>Casting</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dq 2#9 oz. @ [ . . . ]</td>
<td>9 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Caung</td>
<td>Riffling Dq</td>
<td>8 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
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<td>0 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£4 16 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooke &amp; Spratty</td>
<td>Steady Pins for Figures &amp; nut for Patera</td>
<td>5 -</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 oz. Silver @ 6/4</td>
<td>19 -</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1oz. 10 Silver @ 6/4</td>
<td>9 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>July 22</td>
<td>Caung Riffling 4 feet</td>
<td>2 .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 4</td>
<td>Barker</td>
<td>Chasing Dq for the Patera</td>
<td>12 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Cooke &amp; Spratty</td>
<td>Casting 4 feet and mounting Silver Plates on them;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52/ea.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65 oz. 14 dwt.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.16.4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Casting the Patera</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14 oz. Silver</td>
<td>4.10.3</td>
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<td>Making a hollow Plate to cover the wooden</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Core 41 oz. @ 1/2 face</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40.13 @ 6/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>Aug. 28</td>
<td>Brownly altering the wooden core</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td>Hughes</td>
<td>Turning and altering the mould</td>
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The object referred to in this document is described as a "Piece of Plate." From the document itself we can surmise that it was a "patera" decorated with a flower with "seeds" in the center, and with four clawed feet to which "silver plates" were somehow attached. There were also "figures" of unknown subject, number, or origin. In addition, we know there was a glass element because gauges—presumably wooden templates—were made to turn the mold. The mold was probably made of clay or some other refractory, and the glass was certainly blown into it, not cast.

There is also a wood "core," which was covered with a "hollow Plate," presumably made of base metal, as it cost only one shilling an ounce rather than the minimum six shillings for silver. The core probably fitted into the underside of the silver patera as a stiffening element, hidden by a dished metal plate, to prevent either its distortion or the splaying of the feet. In any case, the necessity for stiffening supports the idea that the patera was a broad and shallow dish or disk, as the name implies, although it is still difficult to imagine...
precisely how the entire “Piece of Plate” looked when assembled.

Jacot, whose name appears frequently in the documents as a turner, turned a wooden patera for Hesse (likewise familiar from the documents) to decorate by carving. An apprentice sketch-modeled claws in clay for his master, Smith, who used them to model a foot in wax. The wax was then cast in metal by Barnett. The metal was certainly lead, as it cost about three pence an ounce, a quarter of the cost of the metal for the cover plate, presumably copper or its alloy. Couling then gave the lead foot a final finish by “riffling,” that is, working with specially curved files to smooth and shape the surface.

Four feet were then cast in silver from the single lead model, by Cooke & Spratty, along with the patera from the wood model. Couling, a month after he had rifled the lead foot, rifled the four silver replicas. The final chasing of the silver feet, and then of the silver patera, was then done by Barker. Although there are entries of the purchase of silver “Steady Pins,” as well as silver wire for screws, there is no mention of the person who finally assembled the parts. The most likely explanation is that this was done within the Vulliamy firm, without any out-of-house expenses. As eight individual workers, besides Cooke & Spratty, received payments, it was a wise bit of economy.

We may conclude from the use of only durable models, wood and lead, that sand casting was employed, as we originally supposed. In general, the Vulliamy documents show that the wood models—beech for turned objects, limewood for those carved
freehand—were used directly as fashioned for mold making, while those in metal seem to have undergone a certain degree of additional finishing, or rifling, before being employed. Actual chasing of the metal models is never mentioned, although it certainly could have been done. In fact, the use of metal models had a very special advantage in that much of the chasing could have actually been done on them rather than on the final silver castings. This seems to be the major reason, other than durability, for models in metal such as the bronze used by Odiot.

Bronze can be chased almost as well as silver, and with careful casting much of the chased detail from a bronze model may be preserved in the silver version. There is still, however, the need for further chasing—as well as the polishing—of the cast-silver surface, but it can be limited to the finishing touches. There is in the Odiot collection, Paris, a bronze model of a monopod sphinx,\(^2\) which was used repeatedly for casting in the Odiot shop. Four of its gilt-silver replicas form the feet of a cruet by Odiot now in the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 27, 28). The feet show the distinction between the state of the surface on the bronze model and chasing on the silver, especially in the wings of the four sphinxes. Only the underside of the wings can be seen when the feet are attached to the cruet, and they are fully chased (Figure 29). Their backs were never intended to be seen when the cruet was assembled, but there is still a considerable amount of detail on their surfaces. We know the silver was never chased after casting, as these rear surfaces still have the original casting flaws (Figure 30). Thus the detail we see was cast directly from the bronze model.

Why did Vulliamy use lead instead of bronze? Probably because only shops as large as that of Odiot had the volume of production necessary to make the more expensive bronze models profitable. Silver was only a sideline with Vulliamy.\(^2\) As most of his silver

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\(^2\) Odiot, the most famous French silversmith, was known for his exquisite work in silver, often using bronze models for inspiration. His shop was located in Paris and was active from the late 18th century. Vulliamy, on the other hand, was noted for his work in lead, which was cheaper and easier to work with than bronze. His shop was also located in Paris and was known for its silverwork.
pieces would appear to have been one-of-a-kind examples, chased-bronze models would not have made economic sense for small numbers of replicas, as for instance the four silver feet of Lord Anson’s piece. On the other hand, Odiot’s monopod sphinx was cast a great many times.

What were the models for the Fonthill ewer made of? It is the models for the foot that we can be most secure about. The laurel-wreath torus was obviously turned out of wood. The lion-masked knop is ambiguous, but there can be little doubt about the triangular base. The parts are too delicate and complicated for brittle plaster or terracotta, while wood, if a possibility, is improbable. All three materials share the same disadvantage: they cannot be easily bent. In order to adjust the final shape of the models so that parts that were supposed to mate actually did, workers needed a material that could be bent. Metal would be the only answer, and lead, not bronze. As the Fonthill ewer was, without a doubt, always intended to be unique, bronze would have made no economic sense. If further proof is needed, look at the underside of the corner dragons. While the chasing of the scaly bellies (Figure 31) is quite vigorous and attractive, there is no trace of underlying chasing cast in from the model. Even soft lead would have been quite sufficient. As we have stated, the Fonthill ewer is assembled almost entirely with screws.25 What are the parallels for this procedure? Clare Le Corbeiller has shown, using the aforementioned cruet as one of her examples, that Odiot assembled his silver pieces almost entirely with screws (Figure 32).26 Even low-relief decorations were cast separately, provided with threaded lugs on their backs, and bolted to smooth surfaces. But Odiot was not the only goldsmith to use screws; Biennais also used them.

Martin-Guillaume Biennais (1764–1843), who described himself as “Biennais O.f.re de S. M.té L’Empereur et Roi à Paris,”27 was not trained as a goldsmith. In fact, he was not even trained in any metalworking craft, but as a tabletier—a turner of gaming pieces and such. Although he registered a master’s mark in 1801, it is quite unlikely that he ever sat at a goldsmith’s bench. He was an entrepreneur who hired the talent he needed to run an exceedingly productive business manufacturing silver in the Empire style, which he, like Odiot, had pioneered. One of the products of Biennais’s shop was the enormous Borghese table service. A gilt-silver tureen now in the Metropolitan Museum was part of that service (Figure 33).27 Like the Odiot cruet, and this should not be a surprise, it is assembled entirely with screws (Figures 34–39) in an essentially identical fashion. Both Biennais and Odiot worked on the similarly enormous dual table services, in silver and vermeil, for the king of Westphalia, Jérôme Bonaparte.28 The inevitable shifting back and forth of personnel between the two most important goldsmiths in Paris would have made the transfer of the technology inevitable, even had the principals never met.

While screws were easy and convenient to use, especially during the period of intense production when Napoleon was at his apogee, there was an equally important reason for their popularity in the early nineteenth century. Before the advent of the gas torch, the assembly of large silver pieces by soldering was always rather risky. If overheated only slightly, the object would melt and be ruined. As has been observed, the use of screws for the general assembly of silver barely survived Odiot, probably because of the continuing evolution of more controllable heating devices.

One advantage of screw assembly would have been lost on Odiot and Biennais, as they used enamel with the greatest reluctance; it was very much out of fashion. Enameling must be done after soldering because if enamel is reheated it will probably shatter. Had the base of the Fonthill ewer been assembled entirely by soldering, and then enameled, the enameler would have had a rather complex job. Instead, screws permitted all the small gold parts to be enameled separately, then joined safely without heating. Goldsmiths in the Renaissance, who used enamel extensively, also used screws for the assembly of enameled parts, but in far more modest numbers.

Screws also have some major disadvantages. They
Figure 34. Disassembled finial of lid of tureen in Figure 33

Figure 35. Handle of tureen in Figure 33, with adjacent bands of applied decoration

Figure 36. Back of unbolted handle of tureen in Figure 33

Figure 37. Shell of tureen in Figure 33 with inner liner removed, revealing numerous threaded studs and nuts for attaching decoration
are usually unsightly and must be hidden. Just as bad, they permit leakage. The Borghese tureen has a double-wall construction; a massive liner hides the screws and bolts, as well as serving the essential purpose of actually containing the soup. While screws have been used as part of the construction process by goldsmiths from the sixteenth century until today, the age of total screw construction, in the manner of Odior and Biennais, was, by necessity, a short one, approximately the first two decades of the nineteenth century. The construction of the Fonthill ewer must be dated from that period but before 1819, and somewhere within the orbit of Odior and Biennais.

Having placed the creation of the Fonthill ewer in Paris during the height of the Empire style, and of Odior and Biennais, on technical grounds alone, we are brought back to the more intractable problems. Who in Paris would have desired so conspicuous and imposing an object in a fashion so antithetical to the dominant taste, and why? “Why” in this case means “for whom,” for I find it impossible to believe that anything so idiosyncratic and costly could ever have been produced as a mere speculation, even by dedicated fakers.

It would be convenient to suppose that the object of this deception was William Beckford himself. He was certainly a suitable candidate. Michael Snodin and Malcolm Baker, in their study of Beckford’s collection of silver, conclude that during the period of the decoration of Fonthill Abbey he had a constant interest in historicism, “beginning with copies and concluding with an imaginative use of renaissance and mannerist forms and ornament unparalleled until the middle of the century.” Beckford had commissioned works in the style of the Renaissance as early as 1812, and he continued to do so. While his acquisition of the ewer seems inevitable, once it was offered, there are strong objections to supposing the object was actually made for him. These objections depend on the testimony of Kensington Lewis.

Kensington Lewis (ca. 1790–1854) was a dealer in silver. He was an inveterate self-advertiser who has been succinctly described as “calculating and foolhardy, [as well as] pragmatic but presumptuous.” His occasionally successful career ended in bankruptcy. Despite his somewhat unprepossessing character as a witness, he supplies information that would otherwise be unknown to us, as an indirect consequence of William Beckford’s financial distress. In 1822 Beckford’s accumulated debts and the continuously falling income from his sugar plantations in Jamaica forced him to sell Fonthill Abbey for the sum of £500,000. On the day of sale Beckford wrote, with unfeigned relief, “Fonthill is sold very advantageously. I am rid of the Holy Sepulchre. . . .” And the collection was to be sold too, by Christie’s. The catalogue ebulliently described the ewer as “perfectly unique, [indeed!] formed of the LARGEST KNOWN BLOCK OF HUNGARIAN TOPAZ . . . The whole of the UNDOUBTED EXECUTION OF BENVENUTO CELLINI, and made by him for a Marriage Present to CATHERINE CORNARO. . . .” (It would seem that this bit of puffery ultimately came from James Baldock, Beckford’s supplier.) This first auction failed, and it was not until the following year, 1823, that the collection was offered again, this time under the auspices of Harry Phillips.

There was dampening news at the auction. When the ewer came up for sale, the bumpitious Kensington Lewis announced that, rather than topaz, it was merely crystal. There was a predictable reaction from the auctioneer—wrath. Even after the object had been sold for six hundred guineas, mutual recriminations con-
continued in the press. The naive, but inescapable, attribution to Cellini, not to mention the historical improbability of the supposed recipient—Catherine Cornaro died in 1510, when Cellini was only ten years old—apparently went unremarked.

In answer to the charge that his skepticism about the “topaz” had merely been a ploy to drive down the price of the ewer, Lewis implied that if it had been a stratagem it had obviously not succeeded. He claimed that the ewer had originally been in the possession of Mr. Stanley of Bond Street. Stanley, according to Lewis, offered it twice for sale by auction for about 300£, but was unable to obtain that bidding, and ultimately sold it for considerably less. I have Mr. Stanley’s authority for stating, that the vase was in his possession for a year and a half at that price: and during that time he repeatedly offered it to the trade, including Mr. Farmer of Tavistock-Street, and Mr. Foster, who are well known dealers in [objets de] vertu, without being able to obtain a purchaser. It ultimately got into the hands of Mr. Baldock, of Hanway-Street, who sold it to Mr. Beckford for less than 300£.6

Edward Holmes Baldock seems to have dealt mostly in china37 and, in fact, received only £285 from Beckford for the ewer.68 Mr. Foster may possibly be identifiable,39 while the others are not.

We have two reasons to believe Kensington Lewis,
besides the obvious fact that he was correct about the “topaz”: first, the information he gives was sufficiently substantive to have been easily contradicted if it was mere fabrication; second, it is a quite convincing picture of a “burned” art object making its troubled way through a dubious market. The second reason is especially cogent when you know, on other grounds, that the object was made during the life of our informant.

Kensington Lewis may have had doubts about the object, other than mineralogical, for he probably possessed more than casual knowledge of Renaissance metalwork. He was one of the first people to capitalize on the newly fashionable interest in collecting antique silver, and at one time he had the Aldobrandini tazzze in his possession.\(^4\) Furthermore, Lewis eventually was the retail distributor for Edward Farrell (ca. 1781–1850), perhaps the first silversmith to make a specialty of creating works in the Renaissance style. The arrangement was certainly in place by 1825,\(^5\) but they may have known each other much earlier. Farrell’s “renais-sance” works have considerable brio (Figure 40) but lack a certain delicacy, although he certainly looked closely at Renaissance models.\(^6\) Lewis and Farrell were both especially well placed to have known something about the history of such objects as the Beckford ewer.

I personally find Kensington Lewis’s testimony quite plausible. As Beckford bought the ewer from Baldock in 1819, it must have been in Stanley’s hands scarcely later than 1817. The real question is, Where did Stanley get it? Stanley’s otherwise unrecorded career on Bond Street makes him seem too insignificant to have been the original dealer for the people in Paris. He surely did not stumble upon it in a country house.

If at least some contemporaries thought that even £600 was below its fair price,\(^7\) £900 was quite a bargain. What did Stanley pay for it? Whatever he paid in about 1817, he presumably got the object from someone anxious to get rid of it, quietly, and for whatever it
would bring. However, the ewer could have been made much earlier, for we do not know the route it followed from Paris to Mr. Stanley. However, there does seem to be a way of establishing the earliest possible date for its conception, via its probable Renaissance models in the Louvre and the Prado.

Daniel Alcouffe has reconstructed the oeuvre of the Parisian goldsmith Pierre Delabarre, the "maître aux dragons" (active by 1625 and still working in 1643), from works in the Galerie d’Apollon of the Louvre and from others in Madrid." Delabarre specialized in the mounting of hardstone vessels in gold, heavily encrusted with brilliantly colored enamel, as well as precious stones. The style of his work, opulent without restraint, extravagantly colored, and ingenious to the point of shock, is in strong contrast to Empire understatement and reserve.

Every mounted vessel that Alcouffe has attributed to Delabarre is equipped with at least one exuberant and grotesque dragon, and these appear to be the rather calculated inspiration for those on the Fonthill ewer. On several of Delabarre’s objects, the dragons are perched so as to grasp the rims with their claws; their

Figure 45. Anonymous (Paris, 17th century). Cup, formerly ewer. Chalcedony with enameled gold mounts, condition before 1918. Madrid, Museo del Prado (photo: from Angulo Iñiguez, Catálogo de las Alhajas del Delfín, p. 86)

Figure 46. Anonymous (Paris, 17th century). Cup, formerly ewer. Chalcedony with enameled gold mounts. Condition before 1918. Madrid, Museo del Prado (photo: from Angulo Iñiguez, Catálogo de las Alhajas del Delfín, p. 87)

Figure 47. Handle of ewer in Figure 1, with wings removed from dragon
heads are turned upward on deeply curved necks, as if they had just drunk and were now attempting to swallow through their serpentine gullets (Figures 41, 43, 44). The similarity of the motif of these dragon handles to the handle of the Fonthill ewer is both striking and convincing, as is the unrestrained use of enamel, otherwise quite unusual for the early nineteenth century.

There would be no problem for a Parisian goldsmith to see the Delabarre pieces in the Louvre at any time, and indeed one of the Louvre pieces is a sardonyx cup with a dragon perched on the rim in the fashion of its relative on the Fonthill ewer.

We must also, however, consider the Madrid group in the Prado. In 1712 the Grand Dauphin, heir to the throne of Louis XIV, predeceased his father. Louis permitted his son's extensive and magnificent collection of hardstone vessels to be shipped to Spain because Philip V of Spain was the dauphin's son.7 There they were eventually housed, as mineralogical specimens, in the Gabinete de Historia Natural in Madrid. They would have played no part in this story had not the French, sometime after the flight of the Bourbon monarchy from Spain in 1808, brought the collection to Paris, where it remained until it was returned, no earlier than December 1815.8 The collection had to endure yet another indignity: it was stolen in 1918. It was then recovered in 1919, but not before many pieces had been lost or mutilated. The only light in this dark story is that all the pieces had been photographed, intact, in 1890.9 Thus from no earlier than 1808, until 1815, the dauphin's cups, including those by Delabarre, were apparently accessible to our unnamed Parisian goldsmith.

The Delabarre ewer in the Prado (Figures 41, 42) has a dragon handle essentially identical in design to the ewer in the Louvre (Figure 44). There is also an extraordinary lapis-lazuli tazza in the Prado (Figure 43),10 which before the theft had a pair of dragon handles with similar design, but without the loops in the tails of the two aforementioned dragons and the Fonthill one.11 Despite these other parallel examples, we can demonstrate that the creator of the Fonthill ewer saw the dauphin's collection while it was in Paris, as well as the Delabarres in the Louvre. There is proof that the Fonthill goldsmith saw the Prado group, if we can depend on pre-mutilation photographs of two pieces in the Prado.

There are two stem cups in the Prado collection (Figures 45, 46) having almost identical mounts with eagle heads and, before 1918, also having dragon handles.12 They are only generically similar to Delabarre's dragons, but they share with the Fonthill ewer a peculiar decorative feature not found in Delabarre's work, rows of jeweled studs, or buttons, running down their
spines. (The Prado ones have studs on the belly as well.) All three dragons also have lobulated foliation paralleling the studs, as well as simple batlike wings quite unlike the shaggy, almost plumed, ones on all of Delabarre's creations. This suite of decorative features, especially the quite unusual jeweled studs,\textsuperscript{52} leads us to the conclusion that the creator of the Fonthill ewer saw not only the dragons in the Louvre but the Grand Dauphin's collection as well. Once we accept this, the time interval for the creation of the Fonthill ewer can be narrowed to a period of less than ten years— from no earlier than 1808 to scarcely later than 1817.

Our study gradually accounts for all the major stylistic elements of the ewer except one, the Chinese. The Far Eastern element can be found most strongly in the handle, with the dragon and the mask. Dragons seem to be found in all of Eurasia, but the Chinese species has a stricter morphological canon. Chinese dragons of the Qing dynasty invariably have four limbs, although sometimes with fins rather than claws. Despite their four limbs they are serpentine, or at least subtly lacertile, in appearance. They never have bulky torsos, and certainly not potbellies. A row of sharp spines decorates their backs and tails, and the entire surface of their bodies is covered with reptilian scales. They have whiskers, tufts, feelers, and sometimes horns on their heads, but never massive, shaggy manes like those of lions.\textsuperscript{53} To judge by external appearances, they have the gender of angels. By these standards no dragon that we have suggested as a model for the pose of the Fonthill dragon has an immediate Chinese ancestry. The French dragons are invariably conspicuously winged, unlike Chinese dragons, which fly but very rarely need wings to do so. The Prado and Louvre dragons lack most of the elaborate head appendages, have clearly swollen torsos, and, above all, have only two legs. To be precise, in the heraldic sense they are not dragons at all, but wyverns, two-legged winged serpents.\textsuperscript{54}

If we look at the handle of the Fonthill ewer (Figure 1), especially if we unscrew the masking wings (Figure 47), its Chinese aspect becomes apparent. Its head (Figures 48, 49) has a broad, rather equine muzzle with prominent, flaring nostrils as in Chinese examples, rather than the more typically reptilian French ones. The excrescences on the head are much closer to the spiky tufts and antennae of Chinese dragon heads. The torso is a simple cylinder, thus snakelike, without corrugations or a paunch. It must also be admitted that it sports a single pair of breasts (Figure 4) in the human location, a feature alien to any Chinese examples of dragons, not to mention the general Chinese sense of decorum. Breasts are, however,
common on Western examples, as we shall see below.

Finally, our dragon does have four limbs, but the rear pair is quite unusual. To take up an equine analogy again, each rear limb has a stifte and a hock, but beneath the hock there is no more leg, but a long snaky tail instead. It is an ingenious compromise between East and West. At first glance, in profile, the Fonthill dragon has no rear limbs, but a looped single tail in the manner of some of Delabarre’s beasts. Look again, in three-quarter view, and it has no tail at all but two articulated rear limbs with taillike extensions (Figure 50). It is a true hybrid form, and not quite like anything else.

One may make similar comments about the monster that is devouring the “tails” of the dragon. Consider the more conventional, even anemic, foliated lion masks on the knop (Figure 17). They weakly echo the mask designed by the Ferdinand Miseroni shop in Prague to be the spout of the ewer itself (Figure 2). The monster on the handle is certainly not anemic or derivative in feeling, but a work of real sculptural vigor. However, it too must have its sources. Again, we can turn to the Renaissance models we know to have been accessible to its creator, for instance, the startling pale-faced mask under the spout of the Louvre sardonix cup, but something much more Chinese is surely the critical source.

While it is impossible to say precisely which works of Chinese art the designer of the Fonthill ewer looked at, it is possible to make some observations on what sorts of models were most likely available, and how they were used. One preliminary conclusion is obvious: the Chinese models had been imported into Europe. The freshness and directness of the Chinese influence makes the use of prints and drawings by European artists unlikely, even though the employment of secondary, or even more remote, sources remained common. The murals in gold and red in the music room at Brighton were executed by the otherwise unknown Lambelet under the supervision of Frederick Crace. These murals, while essentially within the tradition of Western “autonomous” chinoiserie, are in part taken from the plates in William Alexander’s book The Costume of China (1805).55 Alexander had apparently accompanied the Macartney embassy to China.

Lord Macartney’s embassy to the Qianlong emperor in 1792–93 was a frankly commercial, though not entirely self-serving, attempt on the part of Britain to introduce China to the comity of nations. One must consider, however, just how remote everything really Chinese was from Whitehall. In preparing for the embassy, it was discovered that there was no one in England who spoke Mandarin Chinese!66 A sea captain had spoken it but, unfortunately, he had recently died. Consequently, French missionaries who had returned from China were asked to join the embassy, but they bluntly refused to go back; finally, native speakers, Chinese seminarians in Naples, agreed to participate. As the seminarians spoke no English, and Macartney no Italian, they had to make do with Latin.57 And this comedy was played out in Britain, the country that was importing the bulk of Chinese goods into Europe. Although the embassy returned from China frustrated and not a little humiliated by the emperor’s disdain—Macartney’s group had staunchly refused the obligatory kowtow—just being officially received in Beijing was a diplomatic tour de force, considering the general level of misunderstanding. This misunderstanding extended from the political to the artistic, underscoring the notion that the immediacy of Chinese influence on the Fonthill ewer demanded the direct experience of Chinese art.

The Chinese during the Ming and Qing dynasties had their own tradition of beautifully enameled metal objects—the most ostentatious yet technically ingenious were produced during Qianlong’s long reign. A great many examples came to Europe. An excellent example of a type that must have been known in the West from a very early date is an enameled Ming dynasty (1668–1644) incense burner with paired dragon handles, now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei (Figure 51).58 This bowl, with its “naturalistic” confronted dragons clutching—this time with only a single claw each—the vessel’s rim, is a comparatively recent example of an ancient type of animal-handled vessel. The type influenced not only the Fonthill ewer directly but also its Renaissance models, such as the Delabarre lapis-lazuli cup with two dragon handles in the Prado.

Even closer to the Fonthill ewer, chronologically as well as stylistically, is an eighteenth-century Qing cloisonné-enamel and gilt-bronze incense burner, recently on the market (Figure 52).59 Here we are interested only in its legs (Figures 53, 54) rather than its archaizing fang ding body and pierced lid. The motif of dragons—or similar ferocious beasts—devouring lengthy elements (cabriole legs in this case, but on a far different scale, the ends of ridgepoles on palaces and temples) is a mainstay of Ming and Qing art. In this example each leg protrudes from a monster’s head, which has jutting ornamentalized brows, popping eyes, a conspicuous nose with flaring nostrils, and a gaping, fanged mouth. The parallels to the monster on the handle of the Fonthill ewer devouring the dragon’s tails are surprisingly direct. Another compar-
ison is to the decoration on the back of the Fonthill dragon, where the legs of the incense burner have really quite similar decorative motifs, foliage, and swirls.60 Unquestionably, the designer of the Fonthill ewer had seen Qing enameled vessels very much like this one.

Before we leave Chinese sources, the question of general taste, as opposed to the searching out of individual motifs, remains to be considered. When the Macartney embassy was searching for gifts sufficiently lavish to mollify an emperor, the Chinese interpreters mentioned his taste for “extraordinary pieces of ingenious and complicated mechanisms, studded with jewels....”61 They settled on astronomical instruments, including an orrery. Among the long list of British objects intended for the emperor was a “globe representing the heavenly firmament.... The stars are of gold and silver, in different tints, and of different mag-
nitudes, according to the size of which they appear from the earth. . . ." However, I do not wish to discuss an English globe bound for China, but a Chinese celestial globe, of the same period and not inconceivably related, in the Palace Museum, Beijing (Figure 55). This globe of the heavens is supported on opposed hemispheres of gold dragons swarming on meridian quadrants. The hemispheres in turn are supported by a base, a discoidal element with enameled walls that sit on four scowling animal masks that serve as feet. The whole top surface of the base is a circular sea, all in gold, with waves as agitated as the writhing, insectlike dragons above it. At a first and superficial glance they can be dismissed as yet another example of the bad taste of the Manchus, but the object is too exciting and dynamic to be dealt with so cavalierly. If, for a moment, one can suppress all the jarring details, it is possible to see a real community of taste between the celestial globe and the Beckford ewer. They are both mounts that overwhelm the objects they support with the shapes of tormented but energetic dragons, all gaudy with gold, enamel, and an irresistible desire to astound.

The globe belongs to a group of objects, all festooned with similar dragons, that seem peculiar to the major Qing palaces, both in Beijing and Shenyang. There is some evidence that Frederick Crace, if not others, had seen examples of this style (Figure 56).

The Fonthill ewer is a genuine cultural Mischwesen and rather different from our usual notions of chinoiserie. In the standard chinoiserie tradition, what were originally genuine Chinese motifs are taken out of context and arbitrarily transformed and reinterpreted to suit Western notions and intentions. At one extreme, the transformation and reinterpretation are the result of the ignorant misuse of an alien culture by an artist made desperate by poverty of invention. Contrarily, in a more creative fashion, an artist freely draws motifs from Chinese art, and possibly from elsewhere, to create a deliberately remote and charming fantasy of the exotic. It may be considered "Chinese" fantasy to a Westerner, but it is simply fantasy to a Chinese. I am thinking especially of someone like Johann Melchior Dinglinger (1664–1731), of whom only a curmudgeon would complain that his chinoiserie is not exactly archaeological authenticity. The Dresden master’s intricately textured and eclectic opulence is a fascinating parallel but probably not a direct source for the Fonthill ewer’s style.

With regard to the ewer, while the Chinese element is obvious, "chinoiserie" is a somewhat inappropriate term. Unlike Dinglinger, the Chinese and the late Renaissance motifs are treated with greater parity and more intrinsic respect, possibly because both styles were equally alien to the artist who employed them. Why a gifted artist would arrange such a marriage of two styles so far from the reigning Empire is the final question we must answer.

The Revolution swept away so much in France; it is sometimes difficult to remember just how broad the interdict was on so many aspects of the ancien régime, especially anything as frivolous as a taste for chinoiserie. Chinoiserie was in serious disfavor, which seems to have increased after Napoleon’s ascent to power. Exactly how profound that disfavor was is best illustrated by the story of the empress Josephine’s Chinese garden. There is a landscape model, possibly intended for Josephine, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, consisting of a mountain of painted wood decorated with all the apparatus of the traditional Chinese landscape—pavilions, figures, plants, and animals—executed in precious materials such as ivory, mother-of-pearl, and even kingfisher feathers. It
formed part of a cargo of gifts sent by the emperor of China, Jiaqing (r. 1796–1820), to the French court in 1801–2 but intercepted by the British in the course of hostilities. Immediately afterward, during the brief peace of the Treaty of Amiens, the British courteously offered to return the gifts to France. They were refused.\(^7\)

As one might suspect, attitudes were different in England. The Prince of Wales had included in Carlton House a Chinese drawing room, an unconscious dress rehearsal for Brighton Pavilion. The room was originally (ca. 1790) furnished with some genuine Chinese art but much more that was not; it was French art based upon Chinese motifs. While figures of Chinese people were omnipresent, Geoffrey De Bellaigue has concluded that

Another motif almost equally popular was that of the female[!] dragon. It forms the finial to each of the six candelabra. On the pier-table between the windows a pair of these monsters in patinated bronze clutch in their beaks the drapery which adorns the central opening. The chimney-breast is mounted in gilt bronze with a spider’s web motif flanked by confronted female dragons. This same arrangement is repeated on the pier-table which originally stood opposite the fire-place.\(^6\)

All of the dragons that Sir Geoffrey mentions are of the wyvern type, winged and bipedal.

The prince continued to purchase further chinoisserie for Carlton House. Some of it was indeed French, such as the pair of Sèvres potpourri vases glazed in black with platinum and gold decoration, of a type produced in the 1790s with chinoisserie decoration. These black Sèvres pieces are an important exception to the general rule about the rarity of objects in the goût chinois after the Revolution (Figure 57). Ironically, the Carlton House examples may be a pair seized from the homes of émigrés as early as 1793, although they did not get to Carlton House until 1815.\(^8\) The mounts of these vases each have a pair of crouching wyvern/dragons quite similar to those mentioned by De Bellaigue.

Another striking addition to the Chinese drawing room were two genuine Chinese vases mounted as a pair in 1807 by the Vulliamy firm (Figure 58).\(^7\) These have wyvern/dragons in gilt bronze made from carved models supplied, as usual, by the London sculptor James Smith (1772–1815).\(^9\) The pair is a most valiant and attractive attempt at chinoisserie for a sculptor who, although trained by John Flaxman (1776–1819), England’s most prominent Neoclassical sculptor and designer, could whimsically invert the dragon mounts on one of the vases in the pursuit of “oriental” color.

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Figure 56. Two miniature pavilions, Chinese, Qing dynasty, late 18th century. Gilt-bronze. Shenyang, Imperial Palace Museum (photo: from Tie Yu-chin, ed., The Gathering of Select Gems from the Shenyang Imperial Palace Museum Collection, p. 45)

Figure 57. Potpourri vase, French, ca. 1789–92. Sèvres porcelain with gilt-bronze mounts. London, The Royal Collection, Buckingham Palace (photo: from Carlton House: The Past Glories of George IV’s Palace, pl. viii)
The vases are also an object lesson in the difficulties the average classicizing sculptor had in designing in a style that was even remotely a reflection of anything genuinely Chinese.

In 1815 John Nash became the new architect at Brighton Pavilion, and, as John Morley says, "Regent and architect went hand in hand into the realms of unabashed fantasy." Until the advent of Nash, the decoration of the interior of the pavilion had ambled along under the Crace firm, in a chinoiserie style that was, by and large, a polite imitation and rearrangement of the motifs from the Chinese art that seemed to flow regularly into England. Despite China's categorical, rather superior, and even petulant refusal in 1793 of a treaty of trade and mutual recognition with the British, there seems to have been no lack of Chinese material to draw on for inspiration.

The appearance of the enigmatic Robert Jones—who otherwise remains little more than a name—as designer of the pavilion's banqueting room, soon after the arrival of Nash, changed the whole tone of the decor. The literal, stuffy imitation of Chinese models, enlivened only by the inevitable misunderstandings, was transformed by Jones into something profoundly exciting, a gorgeous room even if verging on the absurd. Chinese motifs were liberated to create a stage for Prinnie (also known as His Royal Highness) to act out his notorious love of self, and of the table, in the company of a necessarily tolerant court. It is more than fitting that George's most original project should be a dining room and its adjacent kitchen. They are the most perfect accompaniment imaginable to the deliciously extravagant mock-Mughal exterior of the pavilion, as redesigned by Nash.

In the banqueting room, even more than anything at Carlton House, the dragon seems to have become George IV's totemic animal. Dragons sprawled on the eight monumental blue Spode lamps, formed consoles for the legs of pier tables, made handsome andirons, and were the informing motif of the great chandelier—just to mention those in sculptural media. The chandelier, the artistic and literal centerpiece of the room, hangs from the dome. Above it flies the great carved dragon, painted and silvered, and, of course, really a wyvern, even to its barbed tail. The six


Figures 59, 60. Details of dining-room chandelier, Royal Pavilion, Brighton (photos: Andrew Barlow)
gilded bronze dragons of the chandelier itself (Figures 59, 60) expose only their foreparts but are still the most exquisitely detailed of those designed by Robert Jones. Their heads are thrown back to support glass lights in the form of lotuses, and the claws of their deeply flexed legs clutch at perches shaped very much like those in ordinary birdcages, but elaborately disguised by ornament. Their long curved necks and what can be seen of their bodies are especially serpentine, and they have fretted bats’ wings of an especially elaborate pattern. These six royal dragons remind me most strikingly of the Fonthill ewer itself, with their perched poses and goldsmithlike elaboration of surface pattern and detail. The banqueting room was substantially finished by 1818. Consequently the design would date from slightly earlier, about 1817. We seem to have uncovered an interesting coincidence of dates, for by 1817 the Fonthill ewer was probably already in the hands of Mr. Stanley of Bond Street.

Let us now consider a hypothesis. Could the originally intended recipient for the Fonthill ewer have been the Prince Regent? In terms of providing the invisible connection between numerous disparate facts, it is certainly plausible. In terms of the existing evidence, a substantial if circumstantial case can be made.

The ewer was executed in Paris by an unknown person (or persons) working for Odiot or Biennais. It was not designed before 1808, for the designer—who very well may not have been the goldsmith—had seen the dauphin’s collection while it was in Paris, not in Madrid. The ewer had probably reached England by 1817, and certainly by 1819.

It is most likely that the ewer left France during a period of peace, either during the first Bourbon restoration, 1814–15, or after Waterloo in 1815. The general conditions for the goldsmith’s trade had probably begun deteriorating by 1812 and were certainly worse by 1815. In any case, the years following the final fall of Napoleon must have been lean ones for Parisian goldsmiths, even with the resumption of Bourbon patronage.

As we have seen, the improbable style of the Beckford ewer—Chinese/late Renaissance—as well as the date of production, make it very unlikely for the object to have been made for sale in France. Besides, we hear nothing of its existence before its arrival in England, where it was finally sold. While chinoiserie was dead as a high style in France, in England it was merely moribund. There, the Prince Regent was its champion, perhaps its only champion, but his patronage was more than sufficient to keep the style alive.

While the prince had long had a special fascination for things Chinese, the arrival of Nash and subsequently Jones at Brighton marks a new departure for the style. We may regard the Royal Pavilion as chinoiserie’s last great filing, or as an early monument of Romanticism. However, it is clearly the work of Robert Jones in the banqueting room and in the music room (primarily designed by the young Frederick Crace) that marks the arrival of something new. The features of the Fonthill ewer most reminiscent of Brighton Pavilion also belong to the Nash/Jones epoch rather than earlier. While Nash arrived in 1815, we know nothing definite about the arrival of Jones, except that it had to be between 1815 and 1817, just at the most likely period for the creation of the ewer.

There are only two possibilities for the creation of the ewer: the initiative came either from Paris or from someone in England. A Parisian would have to know a great deal about what was going on at Brighton, and about the general taste of the Prince Regent, to have designed the ewer without any assistance from abroad. More than likely, someone in the circle of the prince went to Paris with a lucrative proposition about selling to a certain spendthrift, avid, and rather indiscriminate English collector, an object created precisely to fit his somewhat out-of-style tastes.

There was nothing unusual about such trans-Channel business arrangements even during the war. The ubiquitous Vulliamys had supplied copies of objects in the French style for patrons deprived by war of French originals. For instance, in 1807 they sold the Prince of Wales a “very Magnificent Octagon Metal Lanthorn in the Chinese Taste to match an old French Lanthorn.” They also managed to import actual French work into England and to engage in complex business arrangements with French suppliers. In December 1814 the Prince Regent purchased a pair of candelabra from Vulliamy. They had been cast and chased in France by an eminent family of bronze workers, the Delafontaines, and were imported (in pieces, not surprisingly) into England in 1807. There the pieces were assembled, mounted on stone plinths, and gilded in what must have been a very leisurely fashion, as they were not completed until 1812. The Vulliamys kept up an intricate collaborative arrangement with the Delafontaines for at least three years, 1806 to 1809, using the porcelain dealer Robert Fogg as an intermediary.

The wartime trade also went the other way. In 1804 Rundell, Bridge, and Rundell, the royal goldsmiths, had sent their chief diamond setter and designer, the Belgian émigré Philippe Liebart, to France with the extraordinary Pigot diamond and a collection of jewelry sewn into his clothes. These were then offered,
through French agents, to none other than Napoleon. The emperor apparently discovered their real source and Liebart was forced to flee, minus the gems. The most interesting fact for us is that while the whole story must have been known to everybody by 1805—when the Rundell firm was sued in open court by other participants in the affair—it seems to have had no embarrassing political repercussions in England, for Rundell or anyone else. The degree of tolerance for such behavior, in light of present-day standards, is startling.

If there was such busy traffic during the war, peace must have made it all the more intense. Peace offered richer opportunities for collaboration, especially when Paris, still the paradigm of everything fashionable, could once again openly receive the British.

Assume that the year is 1816, the most likely year for the creation of the Fonthill ewer, and suppose that an English entrepreneur, knowledgeable in the ways of the prince, is searching about Paris for a talented accomplice. Our British searcher is unlikely to be an actual goldsmith. A goldsmith could just as well have worked in London, and would probably have used quite different Renaissance models, certainly not ones in the Louvre. Who could be a likely suspect? There are simply too many suspects, and without further evidence the trail goes cold.

If the Prince Regent was indeed to be the dupe, he was not deceived. No doubt, when the prince was shown the ewer, it was accompanied by at least as artful a tale as the one Baldock told Beckford in 1819, but still with a price fit for a genuine Cellini. The prince remained unmoved. Perhaps, after all the effort put into the deception, the price asked was more than even a prince could consider with equanimity. Had the prince any sense, a faculty that he exercised only intermittently, he would at least have shown the ewer to the royal goldsmiths. Any one of the partners of Rundell, Bridge, and Rundell could have turned the piece over and proclaimed with assurance that it was modern French work. We have no knowledge of how the ewer was brought to the prince’s attention, or by whom. Neither do we know precisely how it got into the hands of Mr. Stanley of Bond Street, but it was certainly taken to him on account of his obscurity. If the prince had refused the ewer, it was indeed a “burned” piece. There were no secrets in the gossipy and scandal-ridden court, and thus no other prospective purchaser among any of the prince’s familiars. Ironically, William Beckford might have been a prominent member of the prince’s circle had he not been disgraced on the very verge of being ennobled. His banishment from polite society might not have been eternal if his deeply injured pride had not driven him to Fonthill Abbey in the company of only a small coterie of admirers, a place of exile almost as inaccessible as Saint Helena. He thus made the perfect purchaser for the ewer.

Secrecy is the watchword of fakers, and the commercial habits of the early nineteenth century made it very easy to accomplish. The production of an individual work in precious metal needed the services of a long series of specialized workers. The Fonthill ewer required the following people: designer, modeler, carver, model maker, founder, goldsmith, enameler, jeweler, as well as those who did the final fitting and assembly, and even whoever made the screws and nuts. There could certainly have been some overlapping of roles, but as we know from the Vulliamy records, some filed while others planned. What we also know from these records is that there was no necessity at all for these activities to take place under one roof, nor did they. Such physical dispersal of workers produces secrecy almost without trying, like a project for producing a secret weapon, each shop knowing its own job well, without knowing what any other shop was doing, or even what the project ultimately was.

Perhaps in the future we will find other “Renaissance” goldsmiths’ works made entirely of cast parts fastened together only with screws—assuming the Fonthill ewer, an economic fiasco despite skillful planning, design, and execution of the fraud, did not totally discourage the fakers from launching any other ventures.

Barring any new information, such as a hitherto unexplained passage in a Regency diary, we will probably never know for certain whether the Prince Regent was offered the Fonthill ewer. Nevertheless, it was made to be offered to someone with the same taste, the same means, and at the same time. Is there a better candidate for the attempted deception?

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I wish to thank all the people who expended their time and patience in helping me with this study. There are, however, a few who deserve to be thanked individually: Andrew Barlow of the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, my guide to that profoundly amusing building; Roger Smith, who introduced me to the study of the Vulliamy documents; and Clare Le Corbeiller of the Metropolitan Museum, who was unfailingly helpful to a rash interloper into her scholarly domain. Above all, I must thank Clare Vincent, also of the Museum, who started me working on the Fonthill ewer and whose advice and encouragement kept me at it.
NOTES

1. Boyd Alexander, *England's Wealthiest Son: A Study of William Beckford* (London, 1962), offers a balanced introduction to Beckford, but unfortunately only parenthetically as a collector. The epitaph is quoted by Alexander from Byron's *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage.* “There thou too Vathek! England’s wealthiest son;/ Once form’d thy Paradise ... / But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,/ Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!” (I, xxii, 275ff).


3. However, the quartz lug is grooved on all four sides.

4. Thus the oddly asymmetrical orientation of the triangular base under the bilaterally symmetrical ewer is unquestionably deliberate. Triangular bases are unusual under genuine Renaissance objects, unless whatever is above them has radial symmetry, like a cup or a candlestick. This is especially true when the base is so oriented as to produce a quite different appearance from the right and left sides of the object, as the Fonthill ewer does.

5. The handle has had its original core removed and replaced with a mixture of beeswax and powdered calcium carbonate.

6. In fact, the metric system did not become obligatory in France until 1840.

7. The works of Odiot and Biennais (to be discussed below) are in metric measure, as one would certainly expect of Parisian goldsmiths working for Napoleon.


11. Both terms are used rather loosely but depend on the amount of clay in the molding mixture. Sand casting employs a minimum amount of clay, which produces a rather fragile mold but one quite porous to gases. Consequently, the mold can be cast while still damp without exploding from the pressure of the steam produced by the molten metal hitting the damp sand, so-called green sand casting. Loam molds, with more clay mixed with the sand, are much stronger but less porous; they are only used dry.

12. The mold is made within a pair of matched boxes called a “flask.” The flask contains the damp sand while it is being rammed around the model and subsequently through casting.

13. For the distinction between direct and indirect casting, see Richard E. Stone, “Antico and the Development of Bronze Casting in Italy at the End of the Quattrocento,” *MMF* 16 (1981) p. 89.


15. See note 21 below.


18. Ibid.


20. See note 71 below.


22. Gold—as opposed to gilded—objects do not seem to be mentioned at all in the surviving Vulliamy documents.

23. The hidden soldered elements in the foot for the mounting of the quartz bowl have been mentioned above. There are also soldered-on tabs for screw attachment, again all hidden. The vertical mounts en barrette for the diamonds between the lion masks on the knop, as well as some other minor elements of decoration, are probably separate castings soldered in position.


25. See engraving on the soup tureen discussed below.


29. It was also used by Jacques-Henri Fauconnier (1776–1839)—who had previously worked for Odiot—for at least one major commission in the period 1830–35. See Le Corbeiller, "Construction," p. 198.


31. John Culme, "Kensington Lewis, a Nineteenth-Century Business Man," *Connoisseur* 190 (1975) pp. 26–41. (This is the essential article on both Kensington Lewis and Edward Farrell.)


38. Ibid., p. 323, n. 3.


41. Ibid., p. 27.

42. Farrell produced a pair of gilded silver ewers and basins in a
style that is an uninhibited recapitulation of the previous 250 years of goldsmithing. The ewers have dragons on their bases that are of the same ethos as those on the Fonthill ewer. Considering their date, 1824, and his relation to Lewis, Farrell must have been aware of the Fonthill piece. Michael Clayton, The Collector's Dictionary of the Silver and Gold of Great Britain and North America (New York, 1971) p. 133, fig. 280. Roger Smith generously drew my attention to these objects.


47. Ibid., p. 2.

48. Ibid., pp. 26–27, no. 3.

49. Ibid., pp. 24–25, no. 2.

50. The gold stem of the Prado tazza has interesting analogies with the lowermost section of the foot of the Fonthill ewer, although with the comparable elements in the Prado piece rearranged and edited. For instance, the Fonthill ewer replaces the four dolphin butresses of the Prado foot with three comparable dragons, but keeps the fan motif between them, even if the motif is inverted. There are also similar festoons. The parallels, however, are more suggestive than compelling; the Fonthill foot is far more closed in composition and more decorous than the brash Delabarre, which has rather garishly colored enamel.

51. Angulo Iñiguez, Catálogo, p. 86, no. 45; p. 87, no. 44.

52. If we could only know whether the Prado studs were also only pegged in like those on the Fonthill ewer!

53. Many of the dragons at Brighton Pavilion, especially in the banqueting room designed by Robert Jones, have hirsute "chest." See the discussion of the Brighton Pavilion dragons below.

54. The Oxford English Dictionary describes the wyvern as "a chimera animal imagined as a winged dragon with two feet like those of an eagle, and a serpent-like barbed tail."


56. Sir George Staunton, An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China . . . (London, 1797) I, p. 35. While there must have been English merchants who could stumble along in Cantonese, Mandarin was a different issue.

57. Sir William Hamilton had discovered the Chinese seminarians. Staunton, Authentic Account, p. 41.


60. It is very easy to consider the decoration on the back of the Fonthill dragon as a straightforward amalgamation of the legs of the incense burner and the lost handles of the Prado eagle cups. The Prado handles, unlike the other two, had recognizable classical acanthus leaves.

61. Staunton, Authentic Account, p. 42.

62. Ibid., p. 494.


64. The most common type are hexagonal miniature pavilions in gilded bronze with dragon-wreathed columns and with dragon antefixes on the roof beam ends. They are described in one case as "pine-nut containers." See Tie Yuchin, ed., The Gathering of Select Gems from the Shenyang Imperial Palace Museum Collection (Shenyang, 1991) p. 45 (illus.). Four are also displayed in front of the throne in the Qian Qing Hall of the Forbidden City; see Beijing Relics, p. 99, pl. 145.

65. There is a drawing in the Victoria and Albert Museum of a pavilion with dragon antefixes that seems to be for the music room of Brighton Pavilion. While the four edicules around the doors in the room now have a tentlike appearance, they still have dragon antefixes (Dinkel, Royal Pavilion, p. 10, fig. at right), the drawing (John Morley, The Making of the Royal Pavilion, Brighton: Designs and Drawings [New York, 1984] p. 208, fig. 247) seems to record a design stage between the present edicules with two columns each and the six-columned pine-nut containers. See note 64 above.


67. Considering how assiduously the British themselves had tried to woo Qianlong, Jiaqing’s predecessor, in the preceding decade, they no doubt were amazed that the gifts "intended as a present to the Chief Consul of the French Republic or rather the Empress Josephine" (ibid., p. 350) were simply turned down by the intended recipients. I have been unable to trace the Chinese reaction to this eloquent expression of French appreciation for their culture, but the British were the only fortunate party in this transaction. They kept the gifts.


69. The Queen’s Gallery, Carlton House, p. 74, no. 24.

70. Ibid., p. 96, no. 48, pl. facing p. 96.

71. James Smith supplied models to the Vulliamy firm until his death. He appears as “Smith” in the Vulliamy records.


74. The banqueting room is not mentioned in surviving documents from the Crace firm; Jones was firmly in charge as the decorator. Morley, The Making of the Royal Pavilion, p. 194.

75. Lang, “Chinoiserie,” p. 50.

76. Morley, The Making of the Royal Pavilion, p. 194. There were banquets being held at the pavilion, on a grand scale, as early as Jan. 15, 1817, but we do not know in which room. See the menu by Carême for that date in Jessica M. F. Rutherford, The Royal Pavilion: Palace of George IV (Brighton, [1995]) p. 34.

77. There is no doubt that the innovations of Robert Jones profoundly influenced Frederick Crace’s style in the music room.
There is really nothing earlier in the Craces’ work at Brighton that would lead one to expect such novelty.

79. Ibid., pp. 48–49.
81. It should also be remembered that George IV’s interest in the “antiquarian”—here meaning anything from the late Gothic to the early 17th century—seems to have really blossomed only after his accession to the throne in 1820, and his concomitant refurbishment of Windsor Castle. It is with the Coronation Cup, 1826–27, an enameled, jeweled, and exceedingly elaborate antiquarian reverie almost certainly designed by Augustus W. N. Pugin (1812–1852)—the precocious champion of the Gothic Revival in England—that we reach the degree of stylistic freedom seen in the Beckford ewer. For the ultima maniera of George IV as a patron and collector, see Shirley Bury, Alexandra Wedgwood, and Michael Snodin, “The Antiquarian Plate of George IV: A Gloss on E. A. Jones,” Burlington Magazine 121 (1979) pp. 343–353.
Chinese Shells, French Prints, and Russian Goldsmithing: A Curious Group of Eighteenth-Century Russian Table Snuffboxes

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SINCE ANTIQUITY the mounting of exotic shells with precious materials has been part of a very interesting tradition throughout Europe. Pliny the Elder is one of the first recorded collectors of bizarrely formed shells. Numerous shells littered the shores of the Mediterranean and some were imported from faraway ocean beds. The important role of exotic shells in feudal luxury displays can be documented in northern Europe as early as the eleventh century, although the citations are not specific enough to identify particular shell species.¹

The focus of this essay is on just one of those numerous fantastic creatures: the green turban snail, or Turbo marmoratus Linne, the largest species of the family Turbinidae living in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The common name is derived from its not-so-fanciful resemblance to a turban. When the brownish incrustation and greenish outer layer have been removed, the much-appreciated iridescent nacreous surface is revealed (Figure 1).² In contrast to the more popular Nautilus pompilius (Figure 2), with which the Turbo shell is often confused, the shell of the latter has a rounded aperture and one-sided body whorl.

The allegorical imagery of Vanity in Renaissance humanism associated the shell’s spiral development with the element of growth in nature and the dimension of time. Placed under the motto Sic transit gloria mundi, this physically superb living organism was but an empty shell after death, as its spirit had crossed into another world. The emblematic interpretation characterized the creature as a pitiful animal that was unable to leave its shell and compared it with human servdom or slavery, disregarding the protective natural purpose of the shell. Pierro Valeriano wrote in his Hieroglyphica of 1567: “Snail means the soul, caught in the passion and the animalistic lust of this world. Hesiod explained this slavery to worldly behavior as some-

The notes for this article begin on page 213.
Figure 1. Shell of green turban snail (*Turbo marmoratus* Linné), before and after polishing. Frankfurt, Senckenbergische Naturforschende Gesellschaft, Naturkundemuseum (photo: Naturkundemuseum)

Figure 2. Nautilus cup. Unidentified maker, Dutch (Utrecht, 1602). Gilded silver with the polished shell of *Nautilus pompilius*, H. 27.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, 17.190.04

Figure 3. Turban shell cup in the form of an ostrich. Gilded silver with polished green turban snail shell, H. 40 cm. Maker: Georg Hoffmann, German (Breslau, ca. 1600). Cracow, Museum Narodowe (photo: Museum Narodowe)
frames the composition. The larger lid closes over an undulating inner rim and is engraved on the inside with the monogram DW, which most likely refers to an unidentified former owner (Figure 6). The style and execution of the niello are characteristic of Russian goldsmiths' work of the eighteenth century, but the precious object is puzzling otherwise: Where did the shell come from? Was the
surface polished in Russia, Central Europe, or somewhere near its origin, the Indian or the Pacific Ocean? The polishing and decoration of exotic shells are documented from the fifteenth century in Nuremberg and the Netherlands, both important centers for the decorative use of mother-of-pearl. The decoration of some shells is clearly Far Eastern in style and can be attributed to Chinese craftsmen, possibly working in one of the larger seaports in southern China. The key to these puzzling questions is a related snuffbox in a private collection (Figure 7). The gilded mounts are similar in form but, instead of niello, they are decorated with a rare engraved variation of Russian chinoiserie showing stylized flowers and leaves, possibly inspired by blue-and-white Chinese porcelain. The partly polished surface is inscribed on the front, below the lip, with Chinese characters (Figure 8) and engraved with stylized lotus leaves. The inscription reads: 足下一杯酒 Zhu xia yi bei jiu.” An almost exact translation would be: “Your honorable, a cup of wine.” These words clearly identify the object as originally a
drinking vessel for ceremonial use, a purpose also suggested by the natural shape of the shell, which can be held like a tumbler. A recent examination of another example in the Hillwood Museum, Washington, D.C. (Figure 11, on the right), resulted in the detection of a similar Chinese inscription, "Your honor, wine in your cup," which has almost the same meaning.

From time immemorial, Russia maintained modest trading links with China through the Silk Route. Moscow’s princes grew powerful owing to their respectful relations with the Mongols, whose empire spread from China to the Danube in the first half of the thirteenth century. Later Peter the Great (r. 1682–1725) strengthened those connections with mutual ambassadorial visits. Rare shells, enhanced in value by Chinese decoration and easy to pack, thanks to their size, could have been introduced to Russia in such circumstances. A powder flask in the Kremlin Museum, Moscow, combines a green turban snail shell with seventeenth-century silver mounts and is an example of the early use of such shells in Russian goldsmithing. It is interesting to note that their earlier use as wine cups was ignored in eighteenth-century Russia. Chinese characters were interpreted as part of the exotic decoration, and the hollow body on three steady feet was adapted to serve as a container for another exotic invention: snuff.

The large size and the feet that give the boxes a secure base, although the shells themselves have a rather unsteady-looking appearance, classify the objects as table snuffboxes, a rare variant of the more common portable snuffbox. Besides the examples already mentioned, only a few comparable pieces of this important snail-shell snuffbox type are known: two are in the collection of the Hillwood Museum, and one, in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (Figure 9), bears the 1768 town hallmark of Velikij Ustug. Four other boxes are in private collections. The smaller Hillwood box (Figure 11) bears a partly legible mark, possibly that of Aleksei Ignatiev Moshnin (b. 1721), a goldsmith of Velikij Ustug. This town, in the cultural heartland of Russia, was a center of niello production in the eighteenth century, and the mounts of most of the niello boxes were most likely made there. It may be interesting to note that Moscow and especially the Kremlin Armory, as well as other Russian towns, also favored and perfected the technique of niello in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The extremely high quality and lack of any marks on the Metropolitan’s box may indicate an imperial commission. A goldsmith working for the court was exempt from having the silver’s purity tested by the assay office, a procedure normally resulting in applied hallmarks. An imperial order, which in many cases was accompanied by detailed instructions on design and execution, could also explain the use of the expensive green turban snail shells and the sophisticated theatrical and graphic sources for some of the depictions on the boxes illustrated here: these scenes are distinctly French.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Westernization of the czarist empire began to move at an astonishing pace under Peter the Great. The dynamic ruler forced the Russians to adopt Western European ways. W. Bruce Lincoln has written: “Their attempt to come to grips with a culture that they did
not understand produced an imitation of Western life and culture, that, at times, seemed more like a caricature than a genuine copy. In Saint Petersburg, men and women lived in the capital of Russia, a copy of the Dutch city of Amsterdam, that was beginning to take on northern Italian overtones. There, they wandered through formal gardens built on lands recently reclaimed from swamps, sat in Chinese pagodas in the midst of Russian birch groves, and danced the minuet in tropical indoor gardens in the dead of the northern winter. Peter's daughter Empress Elizabeth I (r. 1741–62) inherited her father's passion for the West. This imperial obsession would culminate under Catherine the Great (r. 1762–96), the German-born Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, who was devoted to French culture and kept up an extensive correspondence with Voltaire (1694–1778). This relationship may well have influenced the niello depiction on the Hermitage box (Figure 9), whose three lids illustrate scenes from Voltaire's tale "Jeannot et Colin" of 1764.

The inspiration for the scenes on the Metropolitan Museum's box (Figure 10) and of the two in the
Hillwood Museum (Figures 12, 13) was a French print entitled Naufrage (shipwreck) by Jacques de Lajoüe (1687–1761). Published in Paris in 1736 as part of the Livre Nouveau de Douze Morceaux de Fantaisie utile à divers usages, this series documents a tour de force of French ornamental inventions (Figure 14). With this book Lajoüe established himself as a master of “l’art rocaille” at the first peak of the Rococo style in the third decade of the eighteenth century.17 The artist’s graphic oeuvre was highly influential, well regarded by his contemporaries, and also widely copied. Therefore it does not come as a surprise that his prints were used by craftsmen of various professions, literally throughout Europe, as proven by the print’s adaptation in Russian niello in the East and in Iberian cabinetmaking in the West, where the central scene of a triton on a hippocamp accompanied by a nereid was used to embellish one drawer of a polychrome japanned commode of about 1740.18

In an early edition of the Douze Morceaux preserved in the Print Department of the Metropolitan Museum the tall rectangular prints are bound together with their reverses to form almost square-shaped images. Still dominated by the strong symmetric orientation of the late Baroque period, this grotesque marriage of image and mirror reflection contradicts the leading principle of total asymmetry so characteristic of the Rococo. On the other hand, this presentation offered a welcome choice for practical use in the applied arts. The craftsman could select from a double variety of details, as shown here (Figures 10, 12, and 13), where single sections of the reverse print were rearranged to form new images. Noteworthy is the choice of the shipwreck subject with exuberant, undulating, asymmetrical recaille formations referring to the origin of the bizarre and itself asymmetrically formed green turban snail from faraway oceans. The varying quality of the niello work, all surely by different hands, serves to underscore the prestigiosity of our recently acquired example as being the most refined of all: it is a document par excellence of the highest level of Russian Rococo niello and of the early use of French ornamental inventions in eighteenth-century Russian goldsmith work.

In sum, this picturesque group of table snuffboxes unites several quite different areas of interest in a surprising conception. It documents the polishing of green turban snail shells and their use as wine cups in China; their export to and appreciation in Western culture; the eighteenth-century Russian love for exotic collectibles, chinoiserie, and French culture, and all is framed in the precious sheen of gilded-silver mounts and dark niello. The group seems a veritable melting pot of international influences, reflecting in the decorative arts the struggle and aspirations of eighteenth-century Russian society.

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NOTES

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10. I thank Anita Siu, Department of Asian Art, MMA, for the translation.


A Medal for the Czar, 1888

MARINA NUDEL

Throughout his reign (1881–95), Emperor Alexander III, a gentle giant who resembled a bogatyr—a Russian folk hero of gigantic proportions—lived in fear of assassination. This was hardly surprising thanks to the fact that on March 1, 1881, his father, Alexander II, the czar-liberator of the Russian serfs, was mortally wounded by a fanatic terrorist. In 1887 Alexander III himself barely escaped a group of assassins. The closest that he came to death, however, was not the result of a terrorist’s bomb or bullet but of a train accident. On October 17, 1888 (Old Style), Alexander and the imperial family were aboard a train that derailed and then crashed near the station of Barki on the Jursk-Kharkov-Azov line. Among the passengers there were many casualties, but no member of the czar’s family was hurt. The country was jubilant, and Russian poets and composers penned sonnets and cantatas glorifying the czar, his family, and their miraculous rescue. 1 Newspapers and magazines were filled with detailed accounts of the event, such as one from the October edition of the Russkii Vostnik: “In spite of the dreadful weather, piercing rain, and mud, His Majesty helped, supervising and commanding the rescue operations; and he would not leave the scene of the accident until all the dead and wounded were removed from the train and sent to a nearby town.” 2

Niva, another popular magazine, not only published an article written in enthusiastic and elevated prose about the czar’s heroic conduct but also presented a series of photographs from the scene of the catastrophe (Figure 1). 3 It is very likely that the creator of a fine die-struck medal, an example of which was recently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum, found the source of inspiration for the design in the articles and photographs that thus reached the public. The reverse of the medal shows, literally crammed into the exergue, an account of the accident that has an almost eyewitness quality of conviction (Figure 2). 4 The upper zone is imbued with a joyous feeling of gratitude for the imperial family’s rescue, reinforced by a quotation in Old Slavonic from Luke 4:10: “He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee….” The exalted image of a kneeling woman with long braided hair, in the traditional Russian cloak, personifies Mother Russia. Next to her, in calm solemnity, stands an angel with outstretched wings in a gesture of blessing. The Russian imperial regalia is seen at the angel’s right. The overall spirit is perfectly in tune with the Slavophile and nationalistic sentiment that dominated Russian art during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. 5

The meticulously rendered scene in the exergue borrows from the photograph reproduced in the form of a wood engraving in Niva magazine, with the addition of the stout, looming figure of the czar just to the right of center in the midst of a group of wounded and killed, his attitude suggesting that he is directing rescue operations (Figure 4). The obverse of the medal (Figure 3) again evokes the new medium of photography. We see the imperial family as it was portrayed in well-known photographs of the day. 6 Family members featured on the medal are: Alexander III, his wife, Maria Feodorovna; Grand Duke Nicholas, the future Nicholas II; Grand Duke Gregory; Grand Duchess Xenia; Grand Duke Michael; and Grand Duchess Olga. The inscription in the exergue reads in transla-

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Figure 2. Avenir Crigorievich Griliches (Russian, 1849–1905). Reverse of a medal commemorating the miraculous rescue of Alexander III and the imperial family, 1888. Bronze, Diam. 89 mm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Friends of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Gifts, 1995, 1995.424

Figure 3. Obverse of medal
tion: To the memory of the miraculous survival of the czar’s family. October 17, 1888.

The medal is signed on both sides in classic medallic style, on a bar at the exergue; Гrlчннсъ сынъ (Griliches son).7 Zel’man Avner Girshovich was born in Vilna in April 1882, the son of an engraver.8 By the 1870s he had moved to Saint Petersburg, and in spite of the fact that he was a self-taught artist, he was employed by the imperial mint on February 15, 1871. He was soon entrusted with the execution of the state seals of Alexander III and Nicholas II. In 1886 Alexander III wished to change the design of Russian coinage, and the task was given to Griliches; the format he created lasted until the 1917 Revolution. By the time of his death in 1905 Griliches had achieved the position of senior engraver at the imperial mint and had been awarded the title of court counselor and the order of Saint Stanislas, Second Class.

Our acquisition belongs to a widespread type of commemorative medal in relatively high relief, die-struck and patinated rich red-brown. This style first appeared in Napoleonic France, flourished in Victorian England, and by the late nineteenth century spread to every court of Europe. Griliches demonstrates considerable ability in following these technical conventions while modeling human figures in ingenious and surprising combinations. Although he is perfectly aware of the basics of medallic art, as practiced for example by the Wyons in England, he also shows a charming naïveté and bravado in going so far as to combine the chaotic train crash with the allegorical imagery more common to medallic usage. In language that is simultaneously precise and sublime, his medal has the voice of a popular anthem or ballad.

NOTES

4. V. P. Smirnov, Description of Russian Medals (Saint Petersburg, 1908) pp. 481–482, no. 958.
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A Medal for the Czar, 1888
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