

Volume 3 / 1970

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METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM  
JOURNAL

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Editors' Note: This third volume of the *Journal*, honoring the Museum's Centennial Year, is devoted to articles written by scholars who were chosen by the curators of the various departments. It is consequently much larger than the previous volumes and gives an appropriately wide view of the Museum's first hundred years of collecting. The editors are grateful to the authors for their contributions and to the curators who for this issue acted in an editorial capacity themselves.

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The *Metropolitan Museum Journal* is published annually by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue and 82nd Street, New York, New York 10028. The price is \$10.00 per issue. Correspondence regarding manuscripts should be directed to the Editorial Board.

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 68-28799

Designed by Peter Oldenburg. Composition by  
Press of A. Colish, Inc.; printed by The Meriden Gravure  
Company; bound by Tapley-Rutter Company, Inc.

# Contents

A Proto-Elamite Silver Figurine in The Metropolitan Museum of Art DONALD HANSEN	5
Some Royal Portraits of the Middle Kingdom in Ancient Egypt CYRIL ALDRED	27
The Tuan Fang Altar Set Reexamined LI CHI	51
The Department of Greek and Roman Art: Triumphs and Tribulations GISELA M. A. RICHTER	73
Prolegomena to a Study of the Cyprus Plates KURT WEITZMANN	97
The Flowering of Seljuq Art RICHARD ETTINGHAUSEN	113
The Altman Madonna by Antonio Rossellino SIR JOHN POPE-HENNESSY	133
A Royal Swordsmith and Damascener: Diego de Çaias CLAUDE BLAIR	149
The Kimberley Gown ADOLPH S. CAVALLO	199
Those American Things MARSHALL B. DAVIDSON	219
The Biron Collection of Eighteenth-Century Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum J. BYAM SHAW	235

The Benjamin Altman Bequest FRANCIS HASKELL	259
The Monets in the Metropolitan Museum DOUGLAS COOPER	281
The First Score for American Paintings and Sculpture, 1870-1890 WENDELL D. GARRETT	307
The Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments: Its Origin and Development EMANUEL WINTERNITZ	337
Prints and People A. HYATT MAYOR	357
The Alfred Stieglitz Collection GEORGE HEARD HAMILTON	371

# A Proto-Elamite Silver Figurine in The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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SINCE OUR KNOWLEDGE of the history of art in the ancient Near East is still in a rudimentary stage, it is frequently the case that a newly found single object without provenance and from an unknown archaeological context can help to enlarge our ideas of a given period. Such is the case with a remarkable silver sculpture of a bovine animal said to have come from north-west Iran and recently acquired by The Metropolitan Museum of Art.<sup>1</sup>

Being such a successful blend of part human and part animal characteristics, the piece is difficult to describe with ease. The animal is shown in a human attitude with legs tucked up beneath the body and with outstretched arms or forelegs holding a tall, spouted vessel (Figure 1). Large horns springing forward and upward from the poll encircle the cranium of the finely modeled head. The lozenge-shaped eyes, which may once have been inlaid, are placed near the projecting ears and are deeply inset in the inside corner. They are, perhaps, more human than animal and are surmounted high on the cranium by curved brows formed by incised lines. The depressions for the nostrils are sharp and deep and are joined by a deep groove running across the muzzle, which is well formed with a suggestion of fullness to the lips.

1. Acc. no. 66.173. I should like to express my gratitude to Dr. Vaughn E. Crawford, Curator of the Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art, for allowing me to publish this figurine.

The head is set into a relatively large and powerful curved neck, narrow in the front and broad in the back. Massive shoulders are suggested on the back of the figurine, and from the rear these also appear more human than animal (Figure 2). On each side a depression divides the shoulder into two muscles. When the shoulders and legs of the animal are viewed as "arms" holding the vessel, the shoulder of the bovine figure becomes the upper arm in human terms, and the forearm is formed by the animal's upper and twisted lower leg. In relation to the upper leg, the lower leg is greatly shortened and the hoof is enlarged. The hooves are thin in section, flattened to suggest "hands." Their internal spurs are emphasized and serve as thumbs for the "hands," which hold the lower part of the vessel.

The shoulders and chest with a sharply defined brisket remain uncovered while the lower part of the body is wrapped in a long garment. An edge of the garment passes diagonally across the front of the figure from the animal's left to the lower right, where it is decorated with a tassel on the side of the knee (Figure 3). All upper edges of the garment have finely tooled parallel lines, although they are no longer visible on the upper back beneath the shoulders. The garment is decorated with alternating plain and patterned stripes.

The legs, which are also covered by the garment, are folded up beneath the figure. They receive little emphasis in relation to the large knees and buttocks, and the predominant impression is of a fully kneeling figure.



**FIGURE 1**  
Three-quarter view of a silver animal figurine.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase,  
Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 66.173



**FIGURE 2**  
Rear view of the Metropolitan Museum's silver animal figurine



**FIGURE 3**  
Side view of the figurine

The rear hooves, though somewhat flattened, are curved on their tops so that the figure is unstable and could never have stood on a hard surface without some type of support.

The tall silver vessel with a very long spout has two incised lines at the base and three lines beneath the rim.

When acquired, the kneeling animal was covered with a layer of corrosion products, which obscured many of the fine details. Preserved in the incrustation were traces of fabric, indicating that the figure had been wrapped in cloth.<sup>2</sup> Before the figure was cleaned, it was thought that the vessel, which hides the face when the animal is viewed from the front, would drop down to a lower position once the incrustation had been removed. This turned out to be a false assumption; the present position of the vessel is the one origi-

nally intended. Compositionally the front view is the least successful. The figure is most effective when seen in a three-quarter or a side view. The fact that the figurine was not conceived as a frontal image is strange and rare in ancient Near Eastern art, where frontality in sculpture in the round was normally the rule.

Both artistically and technically the kneeling animal is a superior example of ancient Near Eastern art. It is a surprising work that was most probably made in Elam and must date from as early as the Proto-Elamite period, equivalent to the Jamdat Nasr period of Mesopotamia, roughly 3000 B.C. in terms of an absolute

2. See below the section on the technical examination by Kate C. Lefferts.



FIGURE 4  
Kneeling female worshiper, from Susa. Musée du Louvre, SB 69

FIGURE 5  
Kneeling female worshiper, from Susa. Musée du Louvre, SB 70 (3032)



chronology.<sup>3</sup> This date and provenance for the silver animal can be determined by comparisons with a group of small stone figurines and clay seal impressions of Elamite origin.

Most of the stone figurines were found in two hoards or deposits on the acropolis of Susa and have been assigned to Susa Cc (Jamdat Nasr period) by L. Le Breton in his reconstruction of the early excavations of Susa.<sup>4</sup> Kneeling and crouching figures of humans and of animals in human attitudes seem to have been very popular in Elam during this period, but not in Mesopotamia.<sup>5</sup> The human figures include several kneeling, worshiping females with their hands clasped before them (Figures 4, 5).<sup>6</sup> Only the head is carved in some detail. The lower part of the body is suggested by a simple rounded form with no indication of legs, although in one case a small foot is visible (Figure 5). A similar treatment is seen in the lower part of the silver animal. A male (?) figure of a worshiper, also conceived in highly simplified forms, is shown seated with knees drawn up close to the body (Figure 6).<sup>7</sup> Like the silver animal, he holds a vessel in his outstretched arms. The hoards also included several animals, monkeys, and perhaps a bear,

3. For convenience and so as not to make the issue overly complex, the Jamdat Nasr period is equated with the Proto-Elamite period. It may well be, however, that the Proto-Elamite period lasted longer and was partially contemporary with Early Dynastic I. On the chronology of Mesopotamia and Iran for this period see: R. H. Dyson, "Problems in the Relative Chronology of Iran, 6000–2000 B.C.," in *Chronologies in Old World Archaeology*, ed. R. W. Ehrich (Chicago, 1965) pp. 224 ff.; and in the same volume, E. Porada, "The Relative Chronology of Mesopotamia, Part I, Seals and Trade (6000–1600 B.C.)," pp. 156 ff. The Proto-Elamite period is termed *Paleo-Elamite* by P. Amiet in *Elam* (Auvers-sur-Oise, 1966), hereafter abbreviated as Amiet, *Elam*.

4. L. Le Breton, "The Early Periods at Susa," *Iraq* 19 (1957) pp. 109, 111, fig. 32, hereafter abbreviated as Le Breton, "Susa." For the bibliography on each of the figurines see Amiet, *Elam*, pp. 109 ff.

5. In Mesopotamia only the so-called "Pig-tail" ladies were generally shown seated or kneeling on the seals of the Uruk and Jamdat Nasr periods: P. Amiet, *La Glyptique mésopotamienne archaïque* (Paris, 1961) pls. 19 ff., hereafter abbreviated as Amiet, *Glyptique*. There are other occasional kneeling or crouching humans and animals from the Uruk and Jamdat Nasr periods, e.g., Amiet, *Glyptique*, pl. 47: 667, 669; pl. 48: 679; the Blau monuments, pl. 48 bis, C, D; or several amulets and seals from Brak, M. E. L. Mallowan, "Excavations at Brak and Chagar Bazar," *Iraq* 9 (1947) pl. VII: 6–8; pl. XI: 1, 2. In Iran the kneeling figure was introduced early on stamp seals from Susa, Susa B, Uruk period, Amiet, *Glyptique*, pl. 6: 119 B, 122, and was used frequently in later Iranian art, e.g., in





**FIGURE 6**  
Worshiper holding a vessel, from Susa. Musée du Louvre, SB 71



**FIGURE 7**  
Drinking bear, from Susa. Musée du Louvre, SB 2984

seated in the fashion of the male figurine. One of the animals holds his hands to his face as if drinking in a human fashion (Figure 7).<sup>8</sup> Although none of these stone figures is stylistically very similar to our silver animal, viewed as a group they suggest a date and general provenance for the newly acquired figurine.

One other interesting aspect of the Susa deposits

the Early Dynastic period on seal impressions from Susa, E. Porada, *The Art of Ancient Iran* (New York, 1965) p. 38, fig. 13, hereafter abbreviated as Porada, *Iran*; or on a steatite vase in The British Museum, probably Elamite, E. Strommenger, *Fünf Jahrtausende Mesopotamien* (Munich, 1962) pl. 38, hereafter abbreviated as Strommenger, *Mesopotamien*.

6. Le Breton, "Susa," p. 111, fig. 32: 11, 24, 25; Amiet, *Elam*, p. 128, fig. 91; p. 129, fig. 92; Strommenger, *Mesopotamien*, pl. 36.

7. Le Breton, "Susa," p. 111, fig. 32: 26; Amiet, *Elam*, p. 131, fig. 94.

8. Le Breton, "Susa," p. 111, fig. 32: 7, 21, 22, 27. The drinking

needs to be mentioned. The closest parallel for the tall vessel with the incised lines beneath the rim held by the silver animal is a stone vessel from the first of the two deposits; however, it lacks the grooving on the base and also the long spout of the silver vase.<sup>9</sup>

Although there are only general similarities between the silver figurine and the stone objects of the Susa

bear of Figure 7, though not from one of the deposits, certainly belongs with this group. Amiet, *Elam*, p. 114, fig. 72; p. 115, fig. 73; p. 116, fig. 74.

9. Le Breton, "Susa," fig. 32: 1. Long-spouted vessels of other shapes are known from the Uruk and Jamdat Nasr periods. Le Breton, "Susa," p. 109, fig. 27: 3; p. 110, fig. 28: 9. R. Ghirshman, *Fouilles de Sialk, I* (Paris, 1938) pl. xxvi, figs. 2, 3 (Sialk IV). There is an interesting long-spouted vase in silver from a hoard at Warka: E. Heinrich, *Kleinfunde aus den archaischen Tempelschichten in Uruk; Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka, I* (Leipzig, 1936) pl. 29, W 15260.

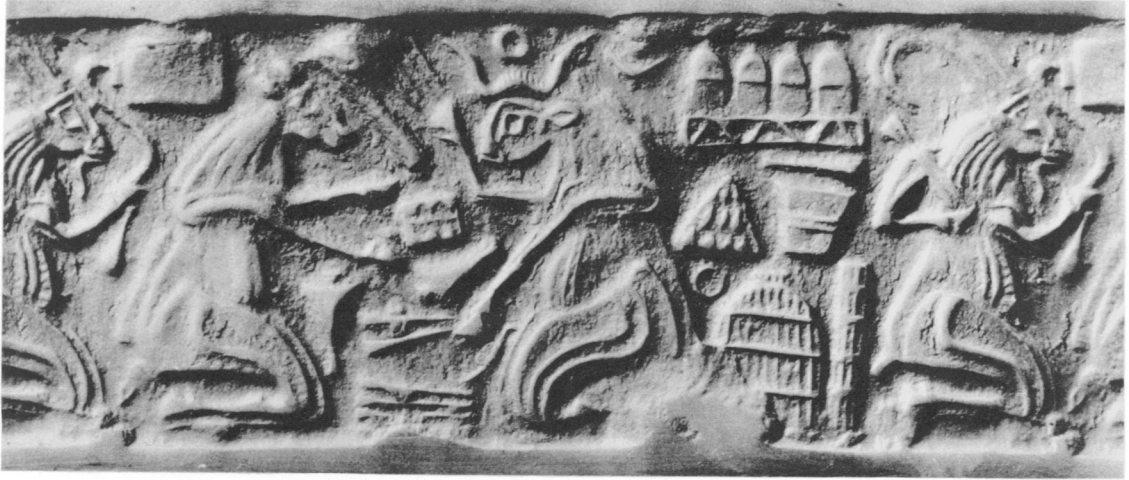


FIGURE 8  
Proto-Elamite cylinder-seal impression. Berlin Museum, VA 10347. After P. Amiet, *Elam* (Auvers-sur-Oise, 1966) p. 100, fig. 54

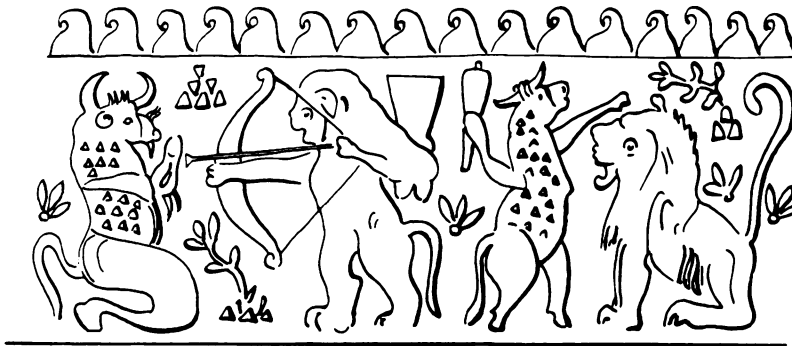


FIGURE 9  
Proto-Elamite seal impression, from Susa. After P. Amiet, *La Glyptique mésopotamienne archaïque* (Paris, 1961) pl. 38: 591

deposits, the designs of the Proto-Elamite cylinder seals show many animals in human attitudes.<sup>10</sup> On a seal in Berlin, for example, three animals, including a bull, or perhaps in this case a buffalo, are depicted kneeling (Figure 8). A goat holds a bow and arrows while an ass and the bull are perhaps collecting arrows. The field is filled with objects and structures of daily life. The large curved neck and the outline of the lower part of the body of the bull are quite similar to the neck and body of the silver animal. It is not clear whether the curving lines on the animals' lower bodies were meant to suggest that the humanized animals are clothed,<sup>11</sup> for there is a definite trend in the Proto-Elamite glyptic

style to segment the animals' bodies and to fill the areas with a variety of patterns.<sup>12</sup> This may account for the triangles on the kneeling and standing bulls in an amusing scene depicted on a sealing from Susa where a kneeling bull is attacked by a standing lion armed with a bow and arrow (Figure 9). On the right side of the

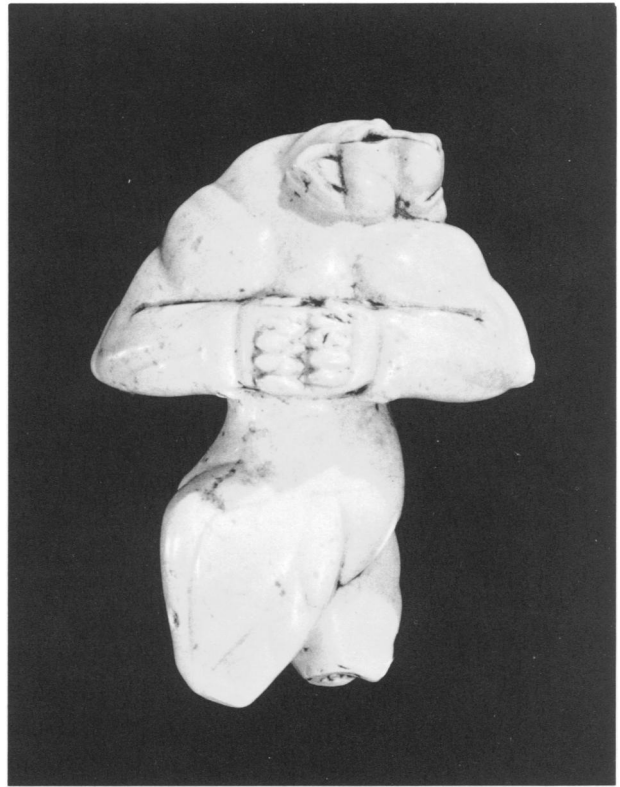
10. On the date of the Proto-Elamite seals see Amiet, *Glyptique*, pp. 40 ff.; and Le Breton, "Susa," p. 108, where it is suggested that the animals with human postures belong to a late stage of development.

11. Amiet, *Glyptique*, pl. 36: 559; pl. 38 bis, D.

12. Amiet, *Glyptique*, pl. 32; pl. 34: 534, 539.

impression a seated lion seems to receive his just due from an attacking bull, brandishing a club. Coupled with the Susa deposits, these few sealings should be sufficient to date the silver bovine figure to the Proto-Elamite period.

The Proto-Elamite sealings have also provided the attribution of a small sculpture of a leonine figure in the Guennol Collection to the same period (Figures 10, 11).<sup>13</sup> The figure stands erect with paws clenched at the breast and the head turned to the side. There is a tremendous sense of power suggested by the massive shoulders, the clenched paws, the heavy abdomen, and the strong haunches. In spite of its small size, the figure is truly monumental. Edith Porada was able to date and place the figurine by comparisons with depictions of leonine figures in a similar attitude on the same group of Proto-Elamite sealings.<sup>14</sup> She also pointed to a relationship between the figure and a contemporary stone sculpture of a bull from Warka that has a similar general sculptural treatment.<sup>15</sup> The bull has legs of silver, and the leonine figure was undoubtedly provided with legs of a precious metal or of copper. Interestingly enough, this figure is also nonfrontal. Certainly the seal impressions link our silver bovine figure and the stone



13. E. Porada, "A Leonine Figure of the Protoliterate Period of Mesopotamia," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 70 (1950) pp. 223 ff., hereafter abbreviated as Porada, "Leonine Figure"; Porada, *Iran*, pp. 35 ff.

14. Porada, "Leonine Figure," fig. 6 (opposite p. 225) A, F, G.

15. The bull is published in *Vorläufiger Bericht über die von der Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft in Uruk-Warka unternommenen Ausgrabungen* 7 (1935) pl. 24, b.

FIGURE 10

Front view of a leonine figure. The Guennol Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Alastair Bradley Martin (Photo: The Brooklyn Museum)

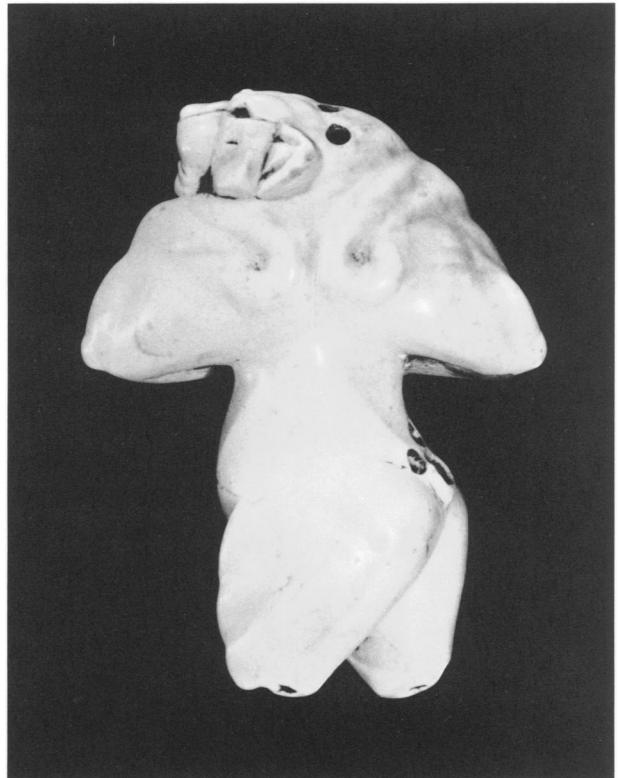


FIGURE 11

Rear view of the object in Figure 10 (Photo: The Brooklyn Museum)

leonine figure. The naturalistic treatment of the head of the silver animal may compare well with the head of the Warka bull, but the published photographs of the Warka piece are views from one direction and are not clear enough for a precise comparison.

There is some question as to the sex of the leonine figure. Porada has considered it to be a lioness since there is no indication of sex and the forms of the lower part of the body are feminine.<sup>16</sup> The same problems exist for the silver figurine. It is not possible to decide whether the animal is a bull or a cow. When the figurine is viewed in human terms from the back, the outline of the lower part of the body is extremely feminine in spite of the massive shoulders. On the Proto-Elamite seal impressions where bulls are depicted, the sex is frequently shown (Figure 12),<sup>17</sup> but on those impressions where the animals assume human attitudes, there is rarely a suggestion of the sex.

On the leonine figure two curls emerge from the shoulders and fall down the back in the form of a double spiral thought by some to have been a female symbol in the ancient Near East. Porada points out that here the curls may suggest woman's hair and notes the

rendering of such curls on a bovine figure with encircling horns depicted on a Susa sealing (Figure 13).<sup>18</sup> It is difficult to know whether the curls are meant to indicate that this kneeling bovine is female. The bovine animal on the right side of the impression does not have such curls, yet the horns extend outward and are precisely the same type as those shown on cows in a kneeling frontal position, giving birth, on other impressions.<sup>19</sup> The significance of the various representations is decidedly complex.

As has been pointed out by Porada, the bulls and lions on one Susa impression must represent a kind of "balance of power" or an equalization of forces (Figure 14).<sup>20</sup> Both Porada and P. Amiet have studied the problem, and the latter suggests that the animals rep-

16. Porada, "Leonine Figure," p. 223, note 1.

17. Amiet, *Glyptique*, pl. 32: 514-517.

18. Porada, "Leonine Figure," p. 224.

19. Amiet, *Glyptique*, p. 108, pl. 38: 581, 582. The head of 581 is reconstructed on the basis of 582.

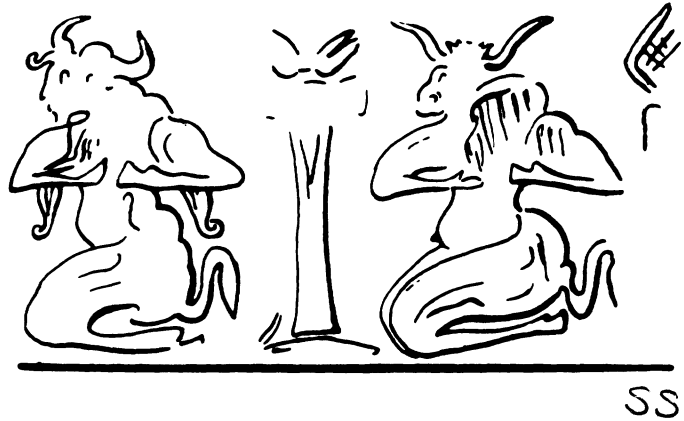
20. Porada, "Leonine Figure," p. 225.



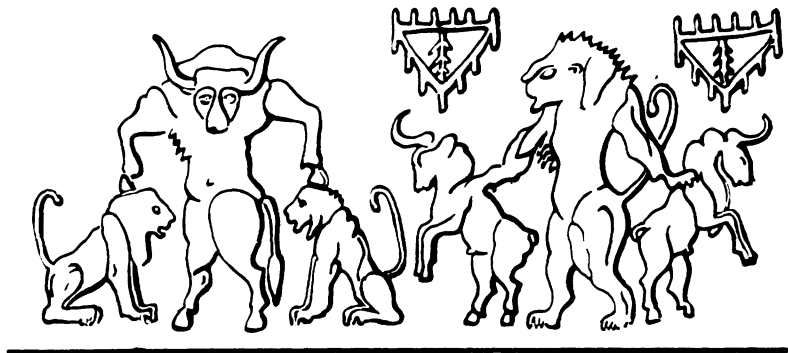
FIGURE 12

Proto-Elamite cylinder-seal impression. Musée du Louvre, SB 1484

FIGURE 13  
Proto-Elamite seal impression, from Susa. After P. Amiet, *La Glyptique mésopotamienne archaïque* (Paris, 1961) pl. 38: 587



SS



SS

FIGURE 14  
Proto-Elamite seal impression, from Susa. After P. Amiet, *La Glyptique mésopotamienne archaïque* (Paris, 1961) p. 38: 585

resent the personification of cosmic forces.<sup>21</sup> Undoubtedly there is some cyclical concept behind the composition, but we shall probably never know the true significance.

The meaning of our silver animal is not to be found among the special group of lion-bull seal impressions, but more probably in those impressions that show, sometimes humorously, animals either in scenes of daily life, playing games, or hunting. Ancient literature offers little help in trying to understand these scenes. The question has often been posed as to whether we

are dealing with early myths or animal fables, the most likely assumption. These scenes, so popular in the Proto-Elamite period, appear only occasionally in later Near Eastern art, as, for example, on the lyre front from the Royal Cemetery of Ur and on an orthostat from Tell Halaf, but were never as common as they were in Egypt.<sup>22</sup> The artist of the silver figurine may well have drawn on some kind of fable in creating the object, but it is entirely possible that this offering figure was simply the personification of a deity.

Although there are known cases in later Mesopota-

21. Amiet, *Glyptique*, p. 109.

22. C. L. Woolley, *The Royal Cemetery; Ur Excavations*, II (London, 1934) pl. 105; M. F. von Oppenheim, *Tell Halaf*, III (Berlin, 1955) pl. 100. The Egyptian material has been fully studied in sev-

eral works of E. Brunner-Traut, the latest, *Altägyptische Märchen* (Düsseldorf and Cologne, 1963). See her remarks on Babylonia in "Altägyptische Tiergeschichte und Fabel; Gestalt und Strahlkraft," *Saeculum* 10 (1959) pp. 162 ff.

mian art of human figures dressed in animal skins,<sup>23</sup> it is the opinion of the present writer that the kneeling bovine figure as well as the animals on the seal impressions were not intended to be representations of humans dressed as animals participating in some religious ritual.<sup>24</sup>

The fact that the figurine was wrapped in cloth would suggest that the object was intentionally buried in antiquity. This was frequently the case with foundation figurines,<sup>25</sup> although objects not intended for foundation deposits have been found with traces of cloth adhering to the corrosion.<sup>26</sup> The figurine may have been used in a fashion similar to the contemporary seated worshiper holding a vessel from the Susa deposit (Figure 6). The Susa deposits were probably not foundation deposits but may well have been groups of votive objects originally placed in a temple and later buried beneath the floor of the building, a practice common in Mesopotamia.<sup>27</sup>

The silver figurine was said to have come from northwest Iran by the dealer from whom it was acquired. This may or may not be the case. It is currently fashionable to suggest this area as a source for many of the ob-

jects from Iran that appear on today's market. Even if the piece was found in northwest Iran, the suggested attribution of the figure as Elamite is not objectionable. Elamite contacts with the north were certainly prevalent in later periods, and there is no reason not to assume that they existed in the earliest periods.<sup>28</sup>

The leonine figure and the silver bovine figure were undoubtedly made in Elam. Miss Porada originally suggested that the stone leonine figure was the work of a foreign artist because of the relationship of the figure to the Warka bull.<sup>29</sup> The recent discovery of the silver animal also related to the Proto-Elamite seals makes this attribution less likely. However, there is no question but that art produced in Elam during the Proto-Elamite or Jamdat Nasr period was closely related to the classic Sumerian art of southern Mesopotamia proper. Although the silver bovine animal is only a small figurine, its addition to the corpus of relatively few sculptures of high artistic quality preserved for us helps to suggest that the Jamdat Nasr period in Elam and probably also in Mesopotamia was an era of great artistic creativity, a continuation of the achievements of the preceding Uruk period.

23. On a relief of Ashurnasirpal: R. D. Barnett, *Assyrian Palace Reliefs* (London, n.d.) pl. 21.

24. G. Offner expressed a similar opinion in *Revue d'Assyriologie* 41 (1947) p. 117. Her view has been questioned by Porada, "Leonine Figure," p. 226, note 29.

25. The foundation figurines from Nippur of Urnammu (Ekur) and Shulgi (Inanna Temple) were wrapped in cloth. R. C. Haines, *Illustrated London News*, August 18, 1956, pp. 266 ff. In the winter of 1968, during the excavations of the Wolfe Expedition of The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, seven foundation figurines of Enannatum of Lagash (Early Dynastic III B) were found. Several of these showed traces of having been wrapped in cloth.

26. The ninth-century silver beaker from Hasanlu was apparently wrapped in material. Porada, *Iran*, pp. 113 ff. Miss Porada suggests that in this case the beaker was wrapped with a bundle of loot ready to be taken from the destroyed building.

27. Amiet, *Elam*, p. 92.

28. Elamite stylistic elements are common in many Luristan bronzes, and another acquisition of the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 63.74) supposedly from the Savid River region, a bronze helmet decorated with figures of gold and silver foil, is basically Elamite in style and iconography. C. K. Wilkinson, "Art of the Marlik Culture," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 24 (1965-1966) p. 107, fig. 9.

29. Porada, "Leonine Figure," p. 225.

# Technical Examination

KATE C. LEFFERTS

*Conservator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

THE FIGURINE stands 15.9 cm. high, and with the vase in position the overall height is 16.4 cm. The position of the vase is determined by the small spots of original solder that remain on the sides of the vase and on the inside of the hooves on the animal's forelegs. These held the vase in place.

During removal of the silver corrosion products from the surface, it became possible to detach the head so that the body and the head could be studied from the inside as well as the outside to ascertain more completely the method of manufacture. Preliminary radiographs had already given us considerable information about the technique employed, including the fact that the head was a separate piece inserted into the neck of the animal to a distance of 6 to 8 mm. (Figure 15).

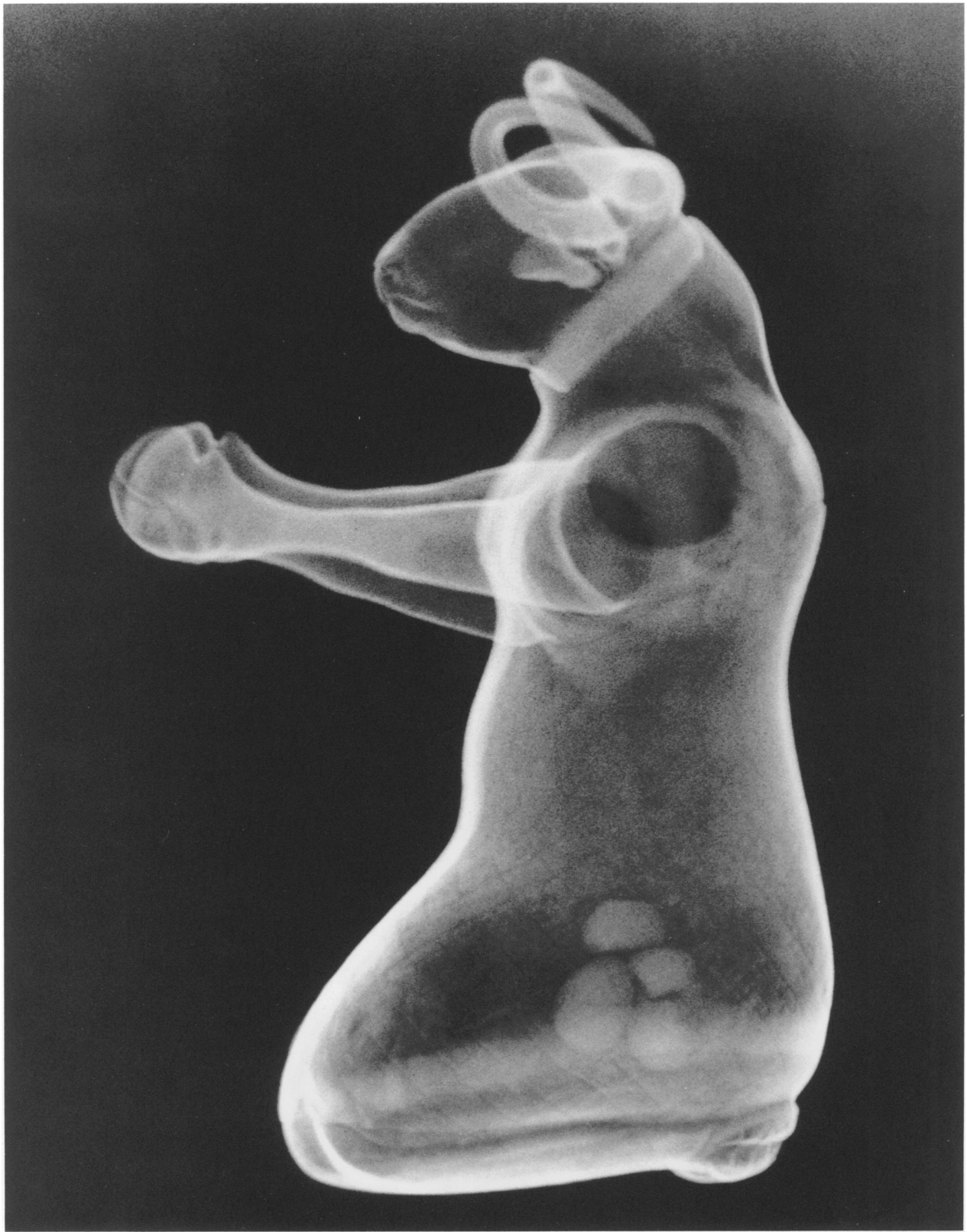
The hollow figurine is made up of fifteen, and possibly seventeen, pieces of flat silver that were rolled into the approximate rounded shapes, scarf joined by overlapping the metal, and then soldered along the lap. The solder is a good quality hard silver solder that has neither changed color nor become more deeply corroded than the silver itself.

The solder that joined the head to the body was analyzed by thermal neutron activation by Dr. Pieter Meyers; the results are given in the table on p. 23. Presumably the next to last soldering operation would have been the soldering of head to body. We were able to take a sample, since the solder did not run as freely in this area, possibly because the craftsman was fearful of spoiling his earlier joins in reheating the silver. Dr. Meyers also analyzed a specimen of the solder on the proper left side of the vase (see table). The solder on the vase would have been of lower melting point so that the earlier joins would not fail. Attaching the vase would have been the last operation.

Though the general shape was not executed by raising, there are tool marks inside the body and the head. They occur in areas where the modeling is carried out in greatest detail and are found not only on the single sheet of metal, but also on top of the overlapped soldered areas. Presumably after the general shape had been executed by rolling and soldering the metal, the finer modeling, particularly where there is an abrupt change of plane, was executed from the inside with a small blunt tool. Any indication of modeling on the outside surface would now be lost. The final design elements were executed on the surface by chasing.

So much of the original surface was corroded and the present surface is so pitted that the chased design is not as sharp as it would have originally appeared. However, the cleaning brought to light many further details of the design and the splendid modeling of the head originally much obscured by the layer of corrosion products (Figure 17). In a few areas tool marks can be studied. The vertical lines of the pattern on the animal's garment were made by a rectangular tool 3.5 mm. in length. The tool marks run lengthwise with the line. They show most clearly behind the proper right shoulder (Figure 18). The geometric pattern between these lines was made with a smaller tool, about 2.5 mm. in length and oval-ended. Each line, at right angles to the next, was made with one strike. There is variation in the depth of the grooves and in the angle at which the tool was worked (Figure 19). A small triangular tool less than 1 mm. in length was used to create the fringe along the edges of the garment.

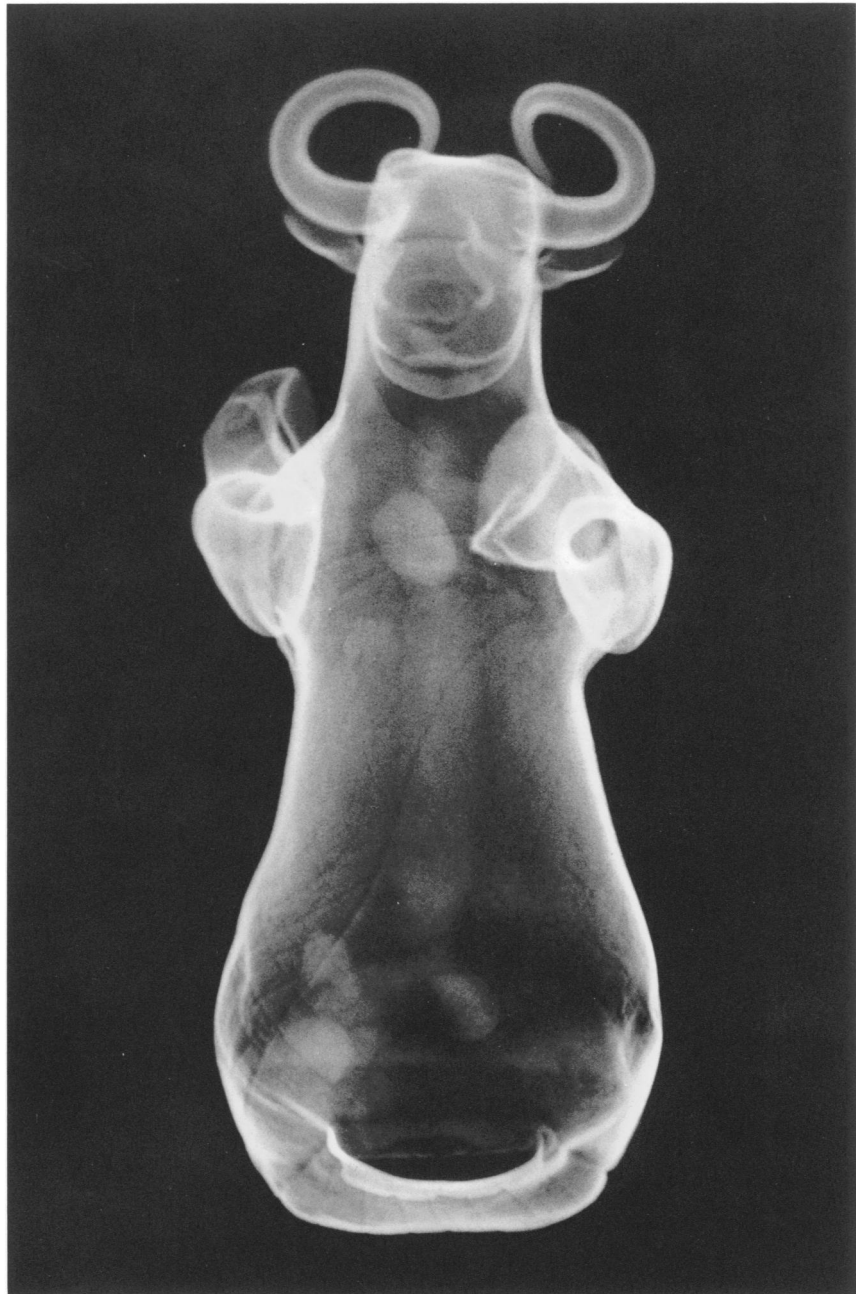
The body of the animal was made in three pieces. One piece includes the bottom and the sides to the widest section of the haunch. At a height of 2 to 2.5 cm. the upper edge of the horizontal 7-mm.-wide lap is





FIGURES 15, 16

Radiographs of the Metropolitan Museum's silver animal figurine. The profile view shows how the hollow horns and ears pierce the head. The overlap at the neck, solder at the join of the forelegs and the shoulder openings, the horizontal overlapped join of the two pieces of the body, and four pebbles are clearly seen. The frontal view shows the vertical overlap down the center of the body as well as the overlap across the haunch. Radiographs by Conam Inspection Co., 1968. Source: iridium 192; distance 21 in., Kodak M film, 2 ½ minutes





**FIGURE 17**  
The Museum's figurine before treatment

**FIGURE 18**  
Detail of the garment behind the proper right shoulder.  
In the middle of the top groove the craftsman's strike can  
be seen to be slightly out of line





**FIGURE 19**  
Detail of the garment. In the top element the craftsman started at the right, as can be seen from the slightly overlapping grooves

visible on the outside surface (Figure 20). The rest of the body is in one piece except for a section approximately 3.5 cm. by 4 cm. wide that forms the top of the neck at the back. Though the joins are visible intermittently on the outside surface, the solder can only be seen in the radiograph and on the inside surface. A paillon that did not run is visible on the inside surface at the proper right of the neck where the separate piece butt joins the body (Figure 21). Because it did not run, the join at this point is not perfect and a groove 0.5 mm. in length can be detected on the outside. The join in the main body piece, lapped about 7 to 10 mm., runs vertically, but not completely straight, down the front slightly to the proper right of center. It can be seen on the radiograph and from the inside (Figure 16). There is a suggestion of a scarf join at the proper left knee on the inside, but it is difficult to be certain. It might have been necessary to cut and lap the metal at this point to round it sufficiently.

The forelegs are separate hollow pieces soldered in place, as can be seen on the radiograph. The join lines

at the shoulders are visible on the surface, as is the outline of an ancient rectangular patch, measuring about 2.5 cm. by 1 cm., behind the join of the proper left foreleg to the shoulder (Figure 20). Join lines are also visible around the small round pieceset in each forehoof. Some of these have ruptured (Figure 22); possibly the join was never strong because of reheating during the soldering of the vase. At the elbows of the forelegs there is an extra density in the radiograph that suggests a join across the leg at this point, but there is no indication of this on the surface. If each foreleg is made in two pieces, it would bring the total number of pieces to seventeen. The longitudinal join was not found, as the foreleg could not be studied from the inside.

The head is also made from a flat piece of silver cut at front and back, rolled into the general shape and soldered along the cuts. Join lines can be seen inside at the back of the neck from the edge upward for about 1.6 cm. and at the front of the neck from the edge to the lower jaw, 2 cm.; the front lap is faintly visible on the outside surface as well. The detailed modeling of



**FIGURE 20**

Profile view of the figurine showing the join line across the haunch and the patch behind the left shoulder



**FIGURE 21**

The right side of the butt join between the back of the neck and the body. The paillon of solder that did not run is visible in the center

**FIGURE 22**

Forehoof of the figurine





FIGURE 23

The head of the animal, looking into the interior. The metal at the sides of the head was roughly punched inward to make holes for the ears and horns, which extend into the head. The ends are soldered to the punctured metal, which surrounds them. The round convex shape below the ear is the reverse of the eye

the head was worked with a small blunt tool, the marks of which can be seen on the inside. Ears and horns are separate hollow pieces inserted into the head and soldered in place (Figure 23).

A vertical join line can be seen on the interior of the vase below the spout, which is also a separate piece soldered in place (Figure 24). The round bottom of the vase is a separate piece as well, as there are indications of solder on the outside. The surface of the vase inside and out is deeply scratched, and on the proper left side below the three incised lines at the top there are a series of parallel curved scratches.

The metal would have had to be firmly supported during the soldering operation in order not to collapse inward when heated and would also have had to be backed during the chasing of the design. Inside the animal we found 16.5 grams of a black, porous, sandy substance and five limestone pebbles (microscopic spot test, Mohs scale hardness  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ) from 1 to 1.5 cm. in diameter, weighing in all 6.3 grams. Four of the pebbles show on the radiograph. A thin layer of the black substance was also firmly attached to the inside surfaces. Most of the backing material, except where firmly at-

tached to the surface, had presumably been withdrawn from the body before the head was soldered on; but where it was inaccessible, as in the forelegs, some had remained and eventually shaken loose from the crevices. An x-ray diffraction powder pattern analysis of the backing material was made by the National Spectrographic Laboratories. It showed that calcite ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ) and alpha quartz ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ) are present as major components. Present in minor amounts are  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ , and  $\text{Ca}_2\text{Al}_2\text{SiO}_7$ .

Micrometer readings of the thickness of the metal were taken where possible. The head at the back of the neck measures 0.9 mm. The upper edge of the vase varies from 0.65 to 0.75 mm., the spout from 0.6 to 0.95 mm. The body at the back of the neck is 1 to 1.15 mm., at the front and sides, 0.85 to 1 mm.

Though the present surface of the metal is generally pitted and eroded because of the thick crust of cerargyrite that formed by the action of chloride salts on the silver, the metal itself is strong and quite ductile. Thermal neutron activation analyses of the metal from uncorroded areas, specimens SB 1 and SB 2, were made by Dr. E. V. Sayre of Brookhaven National Labora-

tory and the New York University Institute of Fine Arts, Conservation Center, before removal of the horn silver; and by Dr. Pieter Meyers, formerly attached to Brookhaven and now at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, after treatment (see table).

The silver is surprisingly pure, but it is not very different in composition from some of the silver objects from Ur. In 1935 H. J. Plenderleith published an analysis of a silver rein-ring from Ur: silver 93.5%, copper

6.10%, gold 0.08%, zinc 0.15%.<sup>1</sup> From the text it appears that this specimen was assayed by Messrs. Johnson, Matthey and Co. Plenderleith also states that the objects he examined were generally of good quality silver.

1. C. L. Woolley, *The Royal Cemetery; Ur Excavations*, II (London, 1934) p. 293.

FIGURE 24  
Interior of the vase

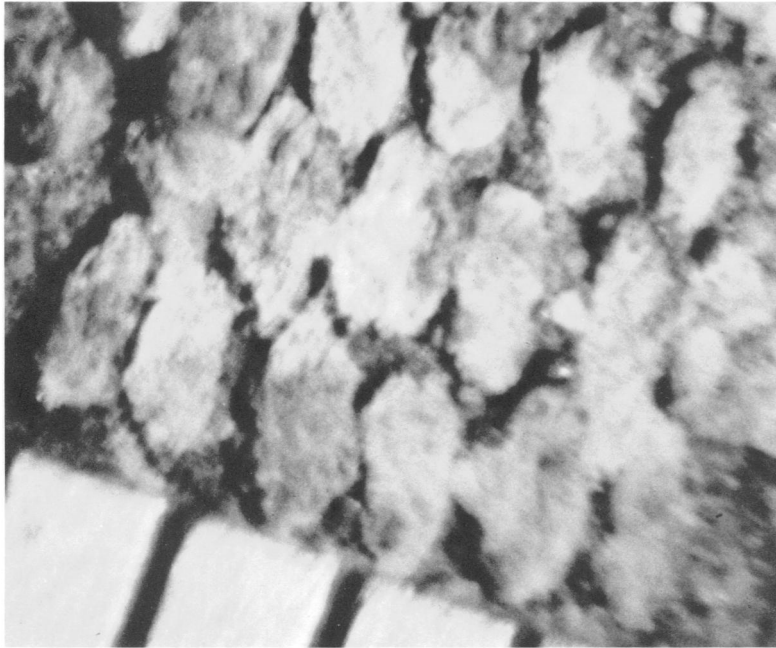


TABLE  
Thermal Neutron Activation Analysis<sup>1</sup>

Specimen No.	Description	Composition Weight Percent <sup>2</sup>		
		Silver	Copper	Gold
<b>Composition of silver animal figurine</b>				
U1	solder, proper right side of neck, about middle, on overlap	95.3	4.6	0.1
U4	solder, on vase, near base on proper left side (with spout as front)	86.7	13.3	0.004
SB1	proper left hoof	99.4	0.6	0.008
SB2	proper left haunch	98.3	1.7	0.01
U2	back of head between horns	99.1	0.9	0.006
U6	proper left haunch below join	99.3	0.7	0.03
U8	across edge of sternum	98.6	1.4	0.04
U9	vase at 2.5 cm. down from rim, 1.5 cm. to proper left of spout (contains some black corrosion material)	96.8	3.2	0.01
<b>Composition of silver pin with lapis head</b>				
U3	drilling in silver, using 62 drill at 10.2 cm. from tip (black surface material discarded)	95.5	4.4	0.07

<sup>1</sup> Samples of approximately 100 µg. on a 1 cm<sup>2</sup> quartz plate were obtained by rubbing the quartz plate along the cleaned surface. A detailed description will be published shortly by E. V. Sayre.

<sup>2</sup> Approximate composition calculated upon the assumption that silver, copper, and gold are the only components in significant concentrations.



**FIGURE 25**  
The textile pattern in the calcite layer (Photo: S. M. Alexander)

For the purpose of comparison with specimens from the silver animal figure, Dr. Meyers also analyzed a specimen of the Metropolitan Museum's silver pin with lapis head from Ur, acc. no. 33.35.44. The Ur analysis is quite consistent with those of the figurine (see table).

Spectrographic analysis was performed by Dr. Meyers on a sample of silver from the head of the figurine, cross section at the proper left side of neck below ear, part of overlap, weight 1.21 mg., and on a sample of solder from the small lump at the proper left side of the vase, weight 3.02 mg. The emission spectrum shows that the silver sample contains the following elements: Ag (XO.O), Cu (X.O), Pb (.X), Sn (.OX), and Au, Ni, Fe, Al, Mn, Sb, Ca, Cr, and Mg (trace amounts). Not detected: Zn, As, Co, Bi, Ti, V, and Ba. The analysis of the solder sample shows Ag (XO.O), Cu (10-20%), Pb

(X.O-.X), Sn (.X-.OX), Mg (greater than trace), and Au, Ni, Fe, Al, Mn, Sb, As, Bi, Ca, Cr, V, Ba (trace amounts). Not detected: Zn, Co, and Ti.

Figure 17 shows the appearance of the corrosion products and the accretion described and analyzed by S. M. Alexander (see below), and Figure 25 is a detailed view of the fiber pattern in the calcite layer. Under microscopic examination it was possible for Nobuko Kajitani of the Metropolitan Museum Conservation Department and L. J. Majewski, Head of the Conversation Center at New York University Institute of Fine Arts, to determine that the fiber, because of the scaly pattern left in the calcite, had come from an animal. The yarn was 2 Z spun yarns plied into an S yarn. The fabric was plain weave, warp-faced or weft-faced, and the count 22 to 30 yarns per cm. in one direction and 10 yarns per cm. in the other direction.



# X-ray Diffraction Analysis of the Corrosion Products

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## 1. *Surface appearance*

Before the cleaning undertaken by the Metropolitan Museum, the surface of the figurine was covered with a fairly uniform layer of corrosion. A small area of the surface, on the back legs and the thighs, had received a preliminary cleaning before the arrival of the object at the Museum, to reveal metallic silver beneath the mineralization.

## 2. *The corrosion products*

- a. The outermost layer, covering the whole animal, was off-white in color, powdery in texture, and easily removable by light scraping. Several parts of this layer showed the pattern of woven material, whose individual fibers had been completely mineralized while retaining their original position on the object. This type of mineralization was particularly thick around the head, a fact that may be due to nothing more than a first rough brushing at the time of finding. Apparently each of the forelimbs, the head with the horns, and the vessel between the forelegs, had been wrapped separately with the fabric. The interior of the vessel also contained a moderately thick deposit of this substance.
- b. On the horns and the face of the animal, and on the upper section of the vessel, this whitish mineralization was in places of light green color.
- c. Beneath the outermost layer was a tough uniform purplish covering of corrosion, deposited directly on the surface of the metal, and adhering closely to it. Its texture was lumpy, even to the unaided eye, with shiny gray nodules irregularly dispersed over the surface.

d. Several areas of layer c were covered with what appeared to be redeposited silver, which gave a metallic luster by reflected light.

e. Small clusters of dark gray black crystals had formed on those parts of the animal that had received the preliminary cleaning.

## 3. *The analyses*

The x-ray diffraction analyses were carried out on a Norelco X-ray diffractometer, with standard 114.2 mm. diameter Debye-Scherrer powder diffraction camera. Radiation was the K alpha wavelengths of copper, with nickel filter.

The samples were mounted individually on glass rods that had previously been covered lightly with petroleum jelly, and exposed for 10 hours at 30 kv., 15 ma.

Several samples of the petroleum jelly were run separately under conditions identical with those used for running the samples from the figurine; the d-values from the jelly are duly noted.

The results of the analyses were as follows:

- a. Mineralized fiber from the right thigh: pure calcite  $\text{CaCO}_3$ .
- b. Green corrosion from right side of face: readings only for calcite, as above. It seems likely that the green color was due to contact with an object containing copper whose corrosion had mingled with that of the figurine, but in insufficient amount to give a definite reading on the x-ray film.
- c. The tough purplish layer: pure silver chloride  $\text{AgCl}$ .
- d. "Redeposited silver" from right arm: silver. Because the x-ray diffraction patterns for silver and gold

are similar, the sample that had been first used for the x-ray diffraction analysis was then used for spectrographic analysis. This confirmed the material as silver; no gold at all was present.

e. The crystals described under point e above were too small and of insufficient quantity for an adequate sample to be run.

*X-ray diffraction readings:*

a. mineralized fiber  
from right thigh

<i>d-values in angstrom units</i>	<i>intensity of line</i>	<i>ASTM standard</i>
4.13	medium	(petroleum jelly)
3.75	medium/weak	3.84 (60) calcite
3.36	weak	(petroleum jelly)
3.02	very strong	3.02 (100) calcite
2.49	weak/medium	2.49 (60) calcite
2.27	medium	2.28 (70) calcite
1.91	medium	1.92 (90) calcite
1.87	medium	1.87 (80) calcite
1.60	weak	1.60 (50) calcite
1.51	weak	1.52 (60) calcite

c. tough  
purplish layer

4.13	weak	(petroleum jelly)
3.75	very weak	3.86 (12) calcite (?)
3.22	very strong	3.20 (49) silver chloride
3.06	weak	3.04 (100) calcite (?)
2.58	very strong	2.77 (100) silver chloride
1.97	very strong	1.96 (50) silver chloride
1.68	medium	1.67 (15) silver chloride
1.60	medium	1.60 (15) silver chloride
1.39	weak	1.39 (6) silver chloride
1.28	very weak	1.28 (3) silver chloride
1.24	medium	1.24 (11) silver chloride
1.13	medium/strong	1.13 (7) silver chloride

d. "redeposited silver"  
from right arm

4.11	weak	(petroleum jelly)
3.36	very weak	(petroleum jelly)
2.35	very strong	2.37 (100) silver
2.05	very strong	2.05 (80) silver
1.45	medium/strong	1.44 (80) silver
1.23	medium/strong	1.23 (90) silver
1.18	medium/weak	1.18 (50) silver

# Some Royal Portraits of the Middle Kingdom in Ancient Egypt

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IN MEMORIAM

William Christopher Hayes,  
1903–1963

AMONG THE GLORIES of Egyptian art are the royal sculptures of the Middle Kingdom “that record with searching accuracy not only the facial characteristics of each king, seen at a specific moment of his life’s span, but also something of his mood and underlying character.”<sup>1</sup> Thanks to the acumen of its curators, the skill and industry of its archaeologists, and the unstinted support of its patrons, The Metropolitan Museum of Art now enjoys the prerogative of housing the finest and most comprehensive collection of these sculptures outside Cairo. Nowhere is it possible to study this particular art in more sympathetic surroundings than in the galleries of the Museum, where a splendid collection of masterpieces ranges over the field of royal portraiture during the greater part of the XIth and XIIth Dynasties.

The astonishing realism of these portraits of Egyptian kings and queens is unique in the art of the ancient world, and was a phenomenon of relatively brief duration. While some eleven hundred years later it provided fresh inspiration and a point of departure for eclectic Egyptian sculptors who sought to recapture an antiquarian remembrance of things past, it remained outside the mainstream of pharaonic art. Some incidental words will be required, therefore, to explain the milieu in which it arose and had meaning.

The royal statues of the Old Kingdom are somewhat rare and mostly fragmentary. With a few exceptions they have been recovered from the great pyramid complexes of the age and reflect an exclusively mortuary art. Only a small number of these sculptures have been found in circumstances which suggest that their purpose was not funerary, such as the ivory statuette of Cheops excavated from the levels of an early temple at Abydos,<sup>2</sup> and the dyad of Saḥu-rē<sup>6</sup> from Koptos, in the Metropolitan Museum;<sup>3</sup> but what has survived is sufficient to suggest that those statues which represented the king as intermediary between gods and men in the shrine of the local deity did not differ in form and feeling from the statues destined for the mortuary chapels. All alike express the character of the ruler as a god incarnate, calm, dignified, aloof from human cares.

Conversely, the statues of Middle Kingdom pharaohs have been found mostly on the sites of temples

1. W. C. Hayes, “Royal Portraits of the Twelfth Dynasty,” *BMMA* n.s. 5 (1946–1947) p. 119.

2. W. M. F. Petrie, *Abydos*, II (London, 1903) pls. XIII, XIV.

3. W. C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt*, I (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1953) p. 71. Also the head from the sun temple of Weser-kaf at Abusir: H. Ricke, “Dritter Grabungsbericht über das Sonnenheiligtum des Königs Userkaf bei Abusir,” *ASAE* 55 (1958) pp. 73–75, pl. III.

that were raised to local gods all over Egypt. In such widespread building the pharaohs appear to have been more active than their Old Kingdom predecessors, though the almost complete denudation of the older levels has bequeathed us a very incomplete picture of the true achievement of earlier kings. The relatively few examples of statuary that have been recovered from the pyramid temples of the Middle Kingdom, on the other hand, show that the funerary art of the time differs in mood from the contemporary "official" sculpture and has a character all its own.

Perhaps the uniformity of Old Kingdom sculpture was achieved by strong traditions of craftsmanship handed down by one generation of artists to the next, all working under the auspices of the creator god Ptah of Memphis, whose high priests were the master artists and designers. This religious and court art was penetrated toward the end of the period by new tendencies that find their consummation in the Middle Kingdom. The decay of the central authority and the rapid growth of feudalism in the Vth and VIth Dynasties promoted the rise of a number of provincial towns to greater importance. The regional governors now occupied offices that were hereditary. They no longer sought burial around the pyramid of their lord but hewed their rock tombs in the vicinity of their residence cities. A widespread demand was thus created for the funerary arts, including sculpture, which had developed in Memphis during the early Old Kingdom in the service of the pharaoh and his intimates. It can safely be assumed that the provincial art centers would have been founded or greatly influenced by Memphite craftsmen attracted by the opportunities offered by a new class of patron. They would have trained in their turn local workmen to carry on the traditions they had transplanted, but the chief court artists would hardly have been allowed to relinquish their studios at Memphis, even if they had felt so inclined. Much provincial art in the VIth Dynasty bears the stamp of the uninspired journeyman content to copy old formulae to extinction; and where a piece of more than average quality has survived,<sup>4</sup> it is to be suspected that it is an import from the capital.

These tendencies were intensified during the First Intermediate Period when the Heracleopolitans fell

4. E.g., the statues of Nen-kheft-ka (late Vth Dynasty) from Dishasha, and a statue of Kar (VIth Dynasty) from Edfu; see also The Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 62.200, from Gebelaw: *BMAA* n.s. 22 (1963-1964) p. 65.

heir to the Memphis workshops and their trained personnel, while rivals such as the princes of Thinis, Dendera, Moalla, Asyut, and Thebes developed their own distinctive versions of the Memphite style in splendid isolation. When, however, the various warring states were pacified under the sovereignty of the Theban Mentu-hotpes of the XIth Dynasty, the old influences once more reasserted themselves as the new rulers took over all the traditional trappings of pharaonic power, and their artists refreshed themselves at the fountainhead of pharaonic art—the monuments and traditions of Memphis, the chief cultural and administrative center since the time of the first pharaoh.

We shall have more to say on these stylistic influences later; here we must emphasize the considerable shift in political power that characterized the First Intermediate Period, and the change in outlook that it effected. In place of the lonely god incarnate, there was now a multiplicity of petty monarchs ruling independent districts, who emphasized their divine right to govern less than their ability to keep their provinces orderly and prosperous through their temporal might and public works. This form of benevolent despotism was carried over into the principles of government during the Middle Kingdom when the pharaoh promoted wide-scale economic development by irrigation works, land reclamation, the establishment of trading posts in the Sudan, and the exploitation of mines and quarries for the benefit of the entire nation. The motive force that had built the mighty pyramid complexes of the IIIrd and IVth Dynasties had been the desire of the populace to secure their own welfare by the preservation of their greatest divinity, their pharaoh. In the XIIth Dynasty, however, the wheel had turned a half circle, and it was the concern of the pharaoh to preserve his people by his mighty works. Ammenemes I declared that none was hungry in his time and no one was thirsty; men dwelt in peace through what he said and wrought.<sup>5</sup> His son, Sesostris I, announced that God had made him the Herdsman of the land of Egypt for He knew he would keep it in good order for Him.<sup>6</sup> In such boasts the pharaoh was doing no more than repeating the claims of the many provincial governors during the First Intermediate Period that they had saved their people by

5. A. Erman, *Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, trans. A. M. Blackman (London, 1927) p. 74.

6. Erman, *Literature*, p. 50.

their successful armed forays and by their measures against civil disorder and local economic distress caused by famine, the inevitable concomitant of anarchy in Egypt. The pharaohs of the XIIth Dynasty up to the last three kings were little more than first among equals, their founder, Ammenemes I, having apparently usurped supreme power with the support of the feudal nobility, whose former possessions and offices were restored to them.<sup>7</sup> The pharaohs now had to share their authority with provincial governors who dated events to their own years of rule, maintained their own armed forces and fleets of ships, and quarried stone for their own monuments, some of which were of considerable size.<sup>8</sup> Under Sesostris III, however, there was a further change in the political scene. The series of tombs hewn by the provincial lords near their seats of government came to an abrupt halt, and the feudal rule of the great landowners was replaced by a bureaucracy of modest state officials serving in various departments of the central palace administration, a system that was to be developed during the ensuing years of the Second Intermediate Period and the New Kingdom.<sup>9</sup>

These various factors—the changes in political power and ideas of government, as well as the rise and fall of provincial towns as centers of culture—had their impact on the character of the art of the period and determined its distinctive features, as we shall remark in passing.

The last great monument of the Old Kingdom was the pyramid complex of Phiops II at Saqqarah, which seems to have been specially hallowed in afteryears as the final utterance of the legendary pharaohs of a classical age.<sup>10</sup> Not only did Sesostris I in the Middle Kingdom copy its plan and decoration for his mortuary temple at Lisht,<sup>11</sup> but Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri and Amenophis II at Karnak also returned to its reliefs for

fresh inspiration in the New Kingdom.<sup>12</sup> The influence of the Phiops monument on Middle Kingdom art was profound, in both an unconscious and a deliberate fashion. By the end of the Old Kingdom a certain style characteristic of Memphite art was disseminated among the other provincial centers of Egypt. Its features can be seen in reliefs from the Phiops monument where a sharp ridge is often used to define the edges of the lips, and the muscles at the wings of the nose are carefully delineated.<sup>13</sup> Such details are particularly evident in the work of lesser sculptors and became exaggerated into a distinctive mannerism by copyists in the provincial centers. The reliefs produced at Thebes, for instance, during the early years of the XIth Dynasty, emphasize not only these idiosyncrasies but also the long lobes of the ears, so characteristic of some of the Phiops reliefs,<sup>14</sup> albeit the attenuated proportions are in the tradition of the First Intermediate Period at Thebes and Asyut.

The contemporary royal statuary of the late Old Kingdom is practically nonexistent, the surviving statuettes of Phiops I and II being on too small a scale to furnish fully reliable data. Nevertheless, the kneeling statuette of Phiops I at Brooklyn<sup>15</sup> and the squatting statuette of Phiops II at Cairo<sup>16</sup> show significant features in the ears placed high, the shallow crown of the head, the large wide eyes with pronounced inner canthi, the eyebrows worked in relief as distinct appliquéés, the fleshy lips defined by a sharp line or edge, and the muscles emphasized around the corners of the mouth and nose (Figure 1). These peculiarities, distorted to a formula, are reflected in the contemporary statues of private persons such as that of Idy (Figure 2)<sup>17</sup> in the Metropolitan's collection or those of Nekhebu at Boston.<sup>18</sup> Such a mannerism inspired local schools of artists at Asyut and Thebes, which developed along

7. W. C. Hayes, "The Middle Kingdom in Egypt," *Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed., I, chap. 20 (London, 1961) p. 35.

8. E.g., the alabaster colossus, over 20 feet high, erected by Djehuti-hotpe in the reign of Sesostris II; P. Newberry, *El Bersheh*, I (London, 1895) pp. 23–24.

9. Hayes, "Middle Kingdom," pp. 44–45.

10. In Middle Kingdom literature the reign of Snefru of the IVth Dynasty was regarded as a golden age; see B. Gunn, "Notes on Two Egyptian Kings," *JEA* 12 (1926) pp. 250–251.

11. Hayes, *Scepter*, I, p. 183.

12. G. Jéquier, *Le Monument Funéraire de Pepi II*, II (Cairo, 1936–1940) pp. 26–27; W. S. Smith, *Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt* (Harmondsworth, 1958) p. 134.

13. Jéquier, *Monument Funéraire*, II, pl. 40.

14. E.g., Jéquier, *Monument Funéraire*, II, pl. 49; A. M. Blackman, "The Stele of Thethi, Brit. Mus. no. 614," *JEA* 17 (1931) pl. viii.

15. C. Aldred, *Old Kingdom Art* (London, 1949) nos. 60, 61.

16. G. Jéquier, "Rapport préliminaire sur les Fouilles exécutées en 1925–1926 dans la Partie Méridionale de la Nécropole Memphite," *ASAE* 26 (1926) pl. v.

17. Acc. no. 37.2.2, limestone, height 38 cm., provenance unknown. William C. Hayes, "Two Egyptian Statues," *BMMA* 33 (1938) pp. 107–108.

18. W. S. Smith, *Egyptian Sculpture and Painting* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1946) pl. 26 a, b.

independent lines during the First Intermediate Period.

The first examples of royal statuary in this provincial version of the late Old Kingdom style are the sandstone statues that Mentu-hotpe Neb-hepet-rē<sup>6</sup> erected in the forecourt of his mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri, a complete seated example of which, carefully bandaged like a corpse, was found by Howard Carter in the Bab el-Hosan under its pyramid.<sup>19</sup> These statues are probably little older than the earliest parts of the monument, such as the reliefs from the chapels of the princesses and those from the sides of their sarcophagi.<sup>20</sup> The Museum is fortunate in possessing the head of a standing statue from this group of sculptures found by its Egyptian expedition in 1921–1922 in the forecourt of the king's temple at Deir el-Bahri (Figures 3, 4).<sup>21</sup> The importance of this head excavated in an unambiguous context hardly needs to be stressed since it is the means of placing in the period of the XIth Dynasty a number of heads that otherwise might have been dated to the latter half of the VIth Dynasty.<sup>22</sup> It infuses the mannerisms of the Phiops II style with a primitive brutal force that in effect creates a new archaism and makes the head a point of departure rather than a late variation on an earlier theme.

The stylistic features are clear for all to see. The wide staring eyes with their long inner canthi and pro-

nounced paint stripe, the eyebrows in relief, the thick lips with their edges defined by ridges and pursed up at the corners into a grimace, and the muscles at the wings of the nose are all present, if less emphasized, in the kneeling statuette of Phiops I at Brooklyn (Figure 1). The same elongated canthi are seen in the reliefs of Neb-hepet-rē<sup>6</sup> in the Hathor shrine from Denderah, where the earlobes are also fleshy and prolonged.<sup>23</sup>

During his reign, Neb-hepet-rē<sup>6</sup> overthrew the Her-

19. H. Carter, "Report on the tomb of Mentuhotep Ist, at Deir el-Bahari, Known as Bab el Hoçan," *ASAE* 2 (1901) pp. 201–205; K. Lange and M. Hirmer, *Egypt*, 4th ed. (London, 1968) pls. 80, 81.

20. E. Naville, *The XIth Dynasty Temple at Deir el-Bahari* (London, 1907–1913) I, pls. xvii–xix, II, pls. xi–xx. The costume worn by the king in these statues does not necessarily mean that he had already celebrated a jubilee. It is probable, however, that one of the statues was improvised as a substitute for the corpse of the king and buried in the Bab el-Hosan as part of the jubilee rites concerning the death and resurrection of the pharaoh.

21. Acc. no. 26.3.29, height 2.03 m.; H. E. Winlock, "Egyptian Expedition, 1925–1927: The Museum's Excavations at Thebes," *BMMA* 23 (1928) part II, p. 24, fig. 25. It should be noted that this head has been joined to a headless statue of the same king, which it happily completes although it evidently came from another statue in the same series.

22. E.g., Louvre, no. E.10299; Vandier, *Manuel*, p. 37, note 1.

23. G. Daressy, "Chapelle de Mentuhotep III à Dendérah," *ASAE* 17 (1917) pp. 226 ff., pl. 3.

FIGURE 1

Head of kneeling statue of Phiops I. The Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 39.121

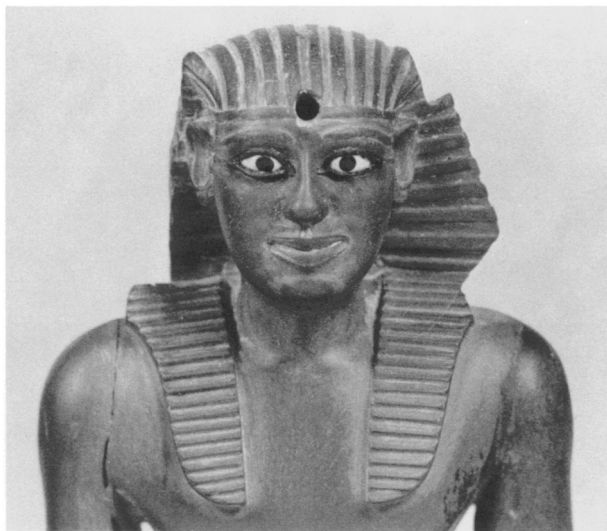
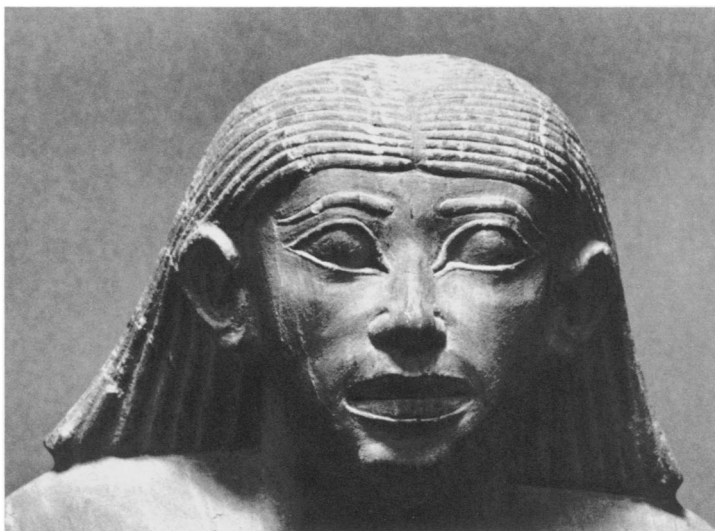
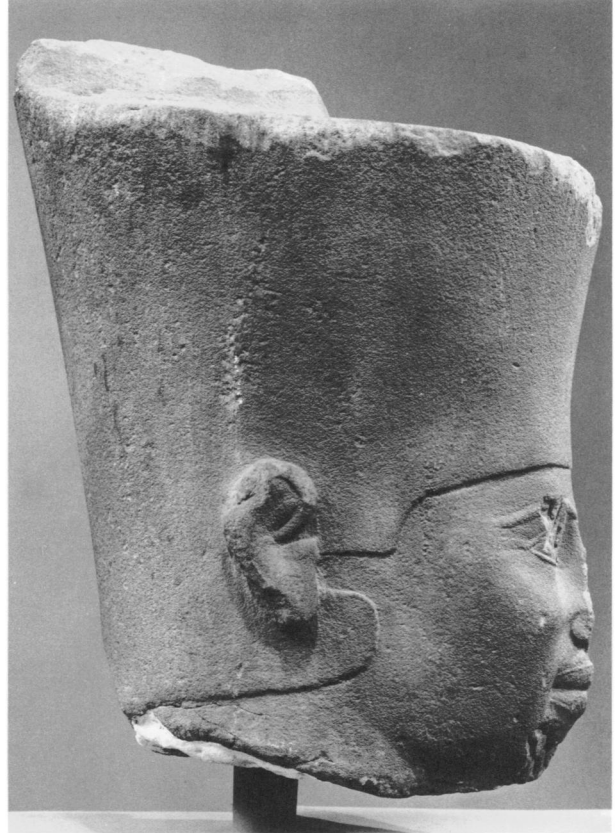


FIGURE 2

Head of seated statue of Idy. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.2.2





FIGURES 3, 4

Head of Mentu-hotpe Neb-hepet-re'. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum excavations, 1921-22, 26.3.29

acleopolitan power and united the Two Lands under the rule of a sole pharaoh. It may be surmised that this great victory brought the Thebans into sustained contact with the culture of Memphis and its skilled craftsmen and officials. Indeed, Inyotef-nakhte, the chief sculptor of Neb-hepet-re', had evidently served under the last of the Heracleopolitan kings.<sup>24</sup> A more sophisticated influence is apparent in the later work of the reign, as may be seen in some of the reliefs from Deir el-Bahri<sup>25</sup> and particularly from Tôd,<sup>26</sup> where an elegance of proportions and a more assured handling of the material reveal that the traditions of pharaonic art were being revived, though infused with a new dynamism.

This progression steadily continued under the successors of Neb-hepet-re', the reliefs of Mentu-hotpe Se'ankh-ka-re' from Tôd showing a decided refinement

over those of his predecessor, though preserving all their essential features.<sup>27</sup> The influence of the Phiops II monument is seen, for example, in the relief from Armant in Brooklyn,<sup>28</sup> with its return to more classical proportions and elegance in its drawing. Such idiosyncrasies as the *nemes* headcloth with a long, narrow-pleated lap-pet and the striped wig-cover without a frontlet, as

24. Hayes, "Middle Kingdom," p. 23.

25. E.g., Naville, *XIth Dynasty Temple*, II, pls. v c, vi a, b, d; see also H. G. Fischer, "An Example of Memphite Influence in a Theban Stela of the Eleventh Dynasty," *Artibus Asiae* 22 (1959) pp. 240-252.

26. F. Bisson de la Roque, *Tôd, Fouilles*, *Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 17 (1934-1936) pl. xviii.

27. Bisson de la Roque, *Tôd*, pl. xx1.

28. R. Mond and O. H. Myers, *Temples of Armant* (London, 1937) pl. xcvi, 1.



**FIGURE 5**  
Head of Mentu-hotpe Se'ankh-  
ka-rē' (?). Cairo Museum, J.  
d'Entrée 67345



**FIGURE 6**  
Head of Mentu-hotpe Neb-  
hepet-rē' (?). Edinburgh, Royal  
Scottish Museum, 1965.2





FIGURES 7, 8

Head of Mentu-ḥotpe Neb-ḥepet-rē' (?). Bristol Museum, H 5038

well as the loving delineation of the muscles at the wings of the nose, suggest direct copying.<sup>29</sup>

To this period must be dated a number of fragmentary statues that have been considered to represent various kings. The upper part of a gray granite seated statue from Tôd (Figure 5) has been identified as of King Achoris of the XXIXth Dynasty,<sup>30</sup> but obviously belongs to this group. It bears a generic resemblance to the quartzite heads in Bristol and Edinburgh (Figures 6–8)<sup>31</sup> and the gray green arkose head at Basel (Figure 9).<sup>32</sup> All are characterized by their thick everted

FIGURE 9

Head of Middle Kingdom ruler, XIth or XIIth Dynasty. Basel, Kunsthalle, III, 8397



29. Jéquier, *Monument Funéraire*, II, pls. 63, 64.

30. Cairo, J. d'Entrée no. 67345, height 65 cm.; *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 50 (1952) pl. II; F. Bisson de la Roque, "Tôd, Fouilles antérieures à 1938," *Revue d'Égyptologie* 4 (1940) p. 73; see note 32 below. Part of a statue of a king seated beside a queen or divinity. I identify the king as Sēankh-ka-rē', the work appearing a little too sophisticated for the major part of the reign of Neb-ḥepet-rē'. The monuments of both kings are common at Tôd. There is no trace of the work of Achoris on the same site.

31. Royal Scottish Museum, acc. no. 1965.2, height 12.5 cm., provenance unknown; Bristol Museum, acc. no. H5038, height 11 cm., provenance unknown. These heads are so alike in material, size, and style that they form a pair, or two in a larger series.

32. Basel, Kunsthalle, acc. no. III, 8397, height 15 cm. This head was dated by Ursula Schweitzer, "Ein Spätzeitlicher Königs-

FIGURES 10–12

Head of Ammenemes I (?). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund and gift of Dr. and Mrs. Edmundo Lassalle through the Guide Foundation, 66.99.3

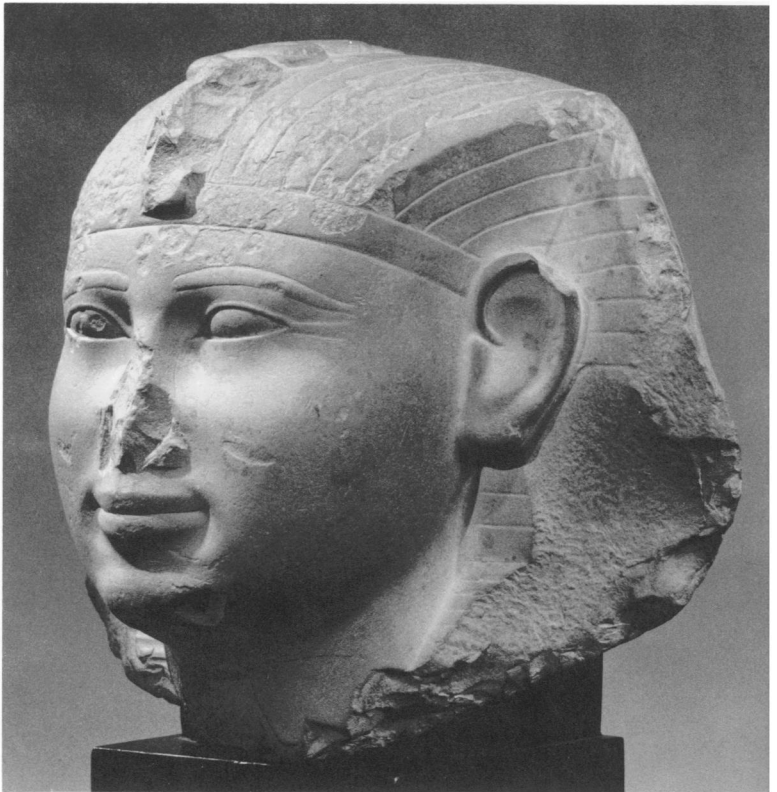
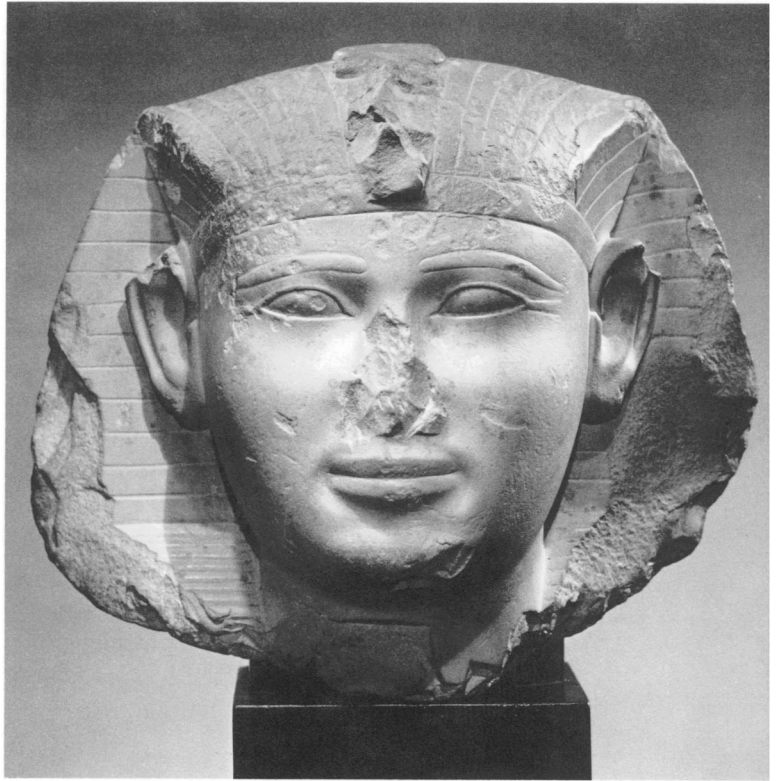
lips, eyebrows in relief, wide staring eyes, fleshy-lobed ears set high, rather flat-topped headcloths with wide single stripes and tall lozenge-shaped uraei-hoods springing from the base of the frontlet with seven or more windings to the body and a tail that extends almost to the back pillar or to the pigtail of the *nemes*. They seem to represent a development in the portrait sculpture of the period, with the Bristol and Edinburgh heads at the beginning and the Basel head at the end of the series.<sup>33</sup> This last specimen marks the transition to the more sophisticated work of the successors of Neb-ḥepet-rē<sup>c</sup>. Related to it is the head in hard yellow limestone from the Gallatin Collection in the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 10–12),<sup>34</sup> which J. D. Cooney has dated to the later years of the XIth Dynasty and has considered most probably to represent Se'ankh-ka-rē<sup>c</sup>.<sup>35</sup> The muscles around the corners of the mouth and nose have the emphatic quality of the work of this period, as Cooney remarks; other features such as the uraeus with its seven loops and the wide-striped headcloth with narrow-pleated lappets are in the style of the dynasty, but the more naturalistic treatment of the eyes and mouth betrays the hand of a craftsman who

kopf in Basel," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 50 (1952) pp. 119–132, to the Late Period by comparison with royal heads in Turin, Berlin, and Vienna (no. 37: see note 76 below). I am unable to follow her arguments; to my mind her study is a travesty of stylistic analysis. She has failed to appreciate the entirely different handling of the Basel head, the radically different treatment of eyes (with a cosmetic line in the case of the Basel specimen), eyebrows, uraei, mouth, ears, chin, and *nemes*, and the different proportions of the various elements in the heads under discussion. It is equally disturbing to note that she has also lumped Cairo J. d'Entrée 67345 with the Basel head in the work of the Late Period.

33. Probably the Louvre head (E.10299) mentioned in note 22 above should precede the Edinburgh head in this grouping. The eyebrows of this specimen, however, are not in relief but inlaid, though of the same form; the uraeus does not spring from the base of the frontlet but from a little above; the headcloth is not flat-topped in profile but describes a complete arc, as is seen in the wig of Neb-ḥepet-rē<sup>c</sup> on the Denderah shrine.

34. Acc. no. 66.99.3, height 18.1 cm.

35. J. D. Cooney, "Egyptian Art in the Collection of Albert Gallatin," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12 (1953) pp. 3–4, no. 7.





has left behind him the archaisms of an artistic revival. A stylistic feature that relates it to the Basel head and some others of this period (see below) is the lack of tabs on the frontlet before the ears, but it differs from the Basel head in the vertical fall of the wings of the headcloth when seen in a side view.

In the absence of comparable material identified by unimpeachable inscriptions, it would be rash to insist that the king represented in the Gallatin head is Se'ankh-ka-rē' in preference to the last Mentu-ḥotpe of the dynasty or to the latter's successor, Ammenemes I. It does bear a resemblance to two of the heads of the Osiride statues excavated by the Egypt Exploration Society at Armant.<sup>36</sup> Though restored by Mineptah, they are generally recognized as originally of a Mentu-ḥotpe of the XIth Dynasty, most probably Se'ankh-ka-rē', who was particularly active at Armant.<sup>37</sup> The specimens at Boston<sup>38</sup> and Cairo<sup>39</sup> show a close likeness in the treatment of the muscles at the corners of the mouth, the slightly smiling lips, the sharp inner canthi of the eyes, and the rather bulbous chin. Se'ankh-ka-rē' had a brief reign, and much of his work may have been left unfinished; the Osiride statues, for instance, ap-

pear to have lain uninscribed for about six centuries before Mineptah reused them. The summary treatment of the ears of the Gallatin head may therefore be an indication that the statue lacks the final touches, and is a further argument for its identification as Se'ankh-ka-rē'.

Whoever it represents, however, the Gallatin head bridges the work of Neb-ḥepet-rē' and that of the early XIIth Dynasty. Its stylistic features resemble those of the red granite colossus of Ammenemes I from Tanis,<sup>40</sup>

36. Mond and Myers, *Temples of Armant*, pl. xvi, nos. S.102, S.435.

37. B. Porter and R. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography*, V (Oxford, 1937) pp. 157, 160; Mond and Myers, *Temples of Armant*, pp. 166-168.

38. Museum of Fine Arts, acc. no. 38.1395; W. S. Smith, *Ancient Egypt as Represented in the Museum of Fine Arts*, 3rd ed. (Boston, 1952) p. 79.

39. Cairo Museum, J. d'Entrée no. 67378.

40. Cairo Museum, J. d'Entrée no. 37470; Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 15-17.

FIGURE 13

Head of seated statue of Ammenemes I. Cairo Museum, J. d'Entrée 60520



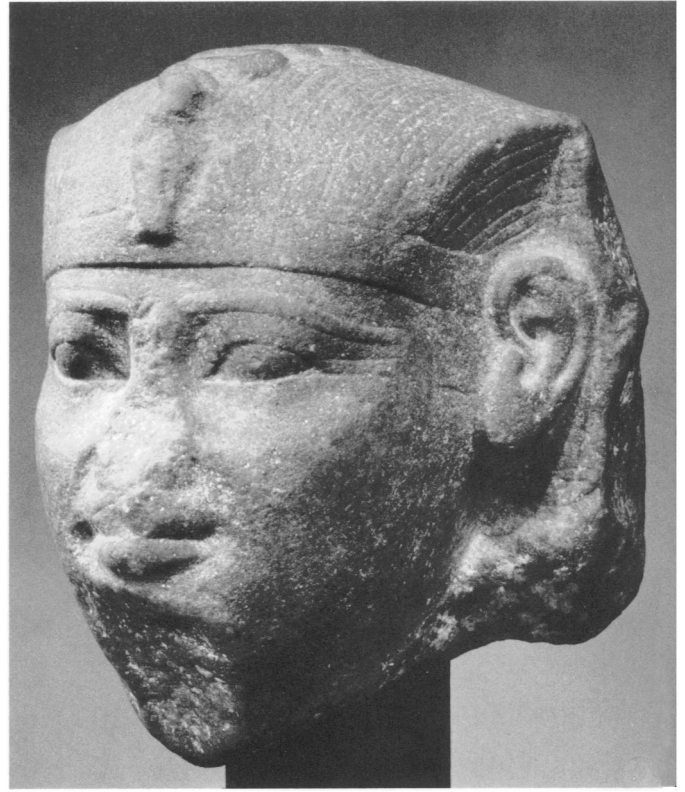


FIGURE 14-16

Head of a sphinx (?), early XIIth Dynasty. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund and gift of Dr. and Mrs. Edmundo Lassalle through the Guide Foundation, 66.99.4

with its round face, prominent chin and cheekbones, and faintly smiling lips. The red granite statue of the same king from Faqus (Figure 13)<sup>41</sup> displays a closely similar treatment of the muscles at the corners of the mouth with the same fold of flesh running in an arc toward the chin. The ears, too, lie at the same angle to the cheek; the wig-cover has a closely similar profile, and the root of the pigtail slopes with the same inclination. The frontlet also lacks tabs before the ears and carries its uraeus at the same distance from its lower edge. It differs only in that the frontlet lies directly horizontal above the ears, a reversion to the convention seen in the Brooklyn statue of Phiops I. This anomaly cannot, however, rule out the distinct possibility that the Gallatin statue represents Ammenemes I, whose monuments, though scanty despite his thirty years of

rule, may be expected to have survived in greater quantity than those of Se'ankh-ka-rē' and the latter's ephemeral successor, Neb-towy-rē'.

To this same period is to be attributed another head in the Gallatin Collection (Figures 14-16), which is reputed to have been fished from the seabed off Tyre and is carved from green dolomitic marble, a rare stone for statuary in Egypt, though other examples in marble from the XIIth Dynasty have survived.<sup>42</sup> The great length of the head from back to front, and the high placing of the shoulders, indicated by the springing of the lappets from the side wings of the headcloth, suggest that this fragment may have come from a sphinx. The stylistic features approach those of the larger Gallatin head. The lozenge-shaped uraeus hood with eight

41. H. Gauthier, "Une Nouvelle Statue d'Amen-em-hêt I<sup>er</sup>," *Mémoires de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 66, part 1 (1934) pp. 43-53.

42. Acc. no. 66.99.4, height 16.4 cm. Other examples in marble in the Metropolitan Museum are acc. no. 29.100.150 (Figure 29 below) and acc. no. 22.1.1638 (H. G. Fischer, "Two Royal Monuments of the Middle Kingdom Restored," *BMAA* n.s. 22 [1963-1964] p. 235).



loops to the body emerges from the same point on the frontlet. The wig-cover has a low crown and a similar profile. The eyes are treated as flat planes defined by pronounced paint stripes and inner canthi. The eyebrows are in low relief as appliqué. The ear lies at a similar angle in the corner formed by the cheek and wing of the headcloth and has a thick lobe. The frontlet carries no tabs before the ears. The thick lips are nearer to those of the Bristol, Edinburgh, and Basel heads, but the damage that this head has suffered makes a complete appraisal difficult; nevertheless, the muscles at the wings of the nose are visible. A date in the early XIIth Dynasty, more specifically, in the reign of Ammenemes I, seems probable. It might be objected that the triple-stripe wig-cover is a datum that places this head in the reign of a later king, since such a pattern of *nemes* was not revived before the reign of Ammenemes II.<sup>43</sup> In Egyptian art, however, we must always be prepared for stylistic “sports” that anticipate the conventions of later reigns.<sup>44</sup> The triple-stripe wig-cover already appears on the colossus from Alexandria, identified by H. Evers as of Sesostrius I;<sup>45</sup> and since this

king had a ten years’ co-regency with his father, it is not outside the bounds of possibility that the Alexandrian bust was contemporary with Ammenemes I, if it is not actually of that king. One factor that militates against dating the Gallatin head as late as the reign of Sesostrius I is the size, shape, and position of the ear. In the reign of that monarch such features tended to be large and to project from the side of the head in a manner that became a convention for statues of kings wearing the *nemes* during the rest of the XIIth Dynasty.

Large projecting ears resting flat against the wings of the headcloth are seen, for instance, in the head of a gray granite sphinx of Sesostrius I excavated by Georges Legrain at Karnak in 1903 (Figure 17).<sup>46</sup> Other features, such as the wide-open eyes with their pronounced inner canthi, the broad, thick mouth, the edges of which are defined by sharp ridges, and the ears placed high, indicate that in a particular regional studio the conventions of the XIth Dynasty style could persist, and raise the vexing question of whether several independent schools of sculptors operated during the Middle Kingdom. Some Egyptologists have sought to define stylistic features which suggest that different traditions were followed by sculptors working at a few main art centers. So acute an observer as J. Vandier,<sup>47</sup> for instance, has claimed to recognize four schools, at Memphis, at Thebes, in the Delta, and in the Faiyum. Such identifications are apparently based upon the finding of statuary on or near different sites—a somewhat arbitrary classification and one that has been properly abandoned in the case of Tanis: no one now speaks of a Tanite school of sculpture since it has become clear that statues of different periods were moved from sites in the Delta to this town in Ramesside or post-Ramesside times.<sup>48</sup>

That there were local groups of sculptors serving the

43. Evers, *Staat*, II, sec. 60.

44. E.g., the statue of Tuthmosis III in the Metropolitan with the seam on the inner edges of the lappets of the *nemes* (Nora Scott, *Egyptian Statuettes* [New York, 1946] no. 17), which anticipated the later XVIIIth Dynasty convention by two or three generations.

45. Evers, *Staat*, I, pl. 36, II, sec. 59.

46. Evers, *Staat*, I, pl. 33.

47. Vandier, *Manuel*, pp. 173–178.

48. W. C. Hayes, “Egypt from the death of Ammenemes III to Seqenenre II,” *Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed., II, chap. 2 (London, 1962) p. 11, with note 8; H. Kees, *Ancient Egypt, A Cultural Topography* (London, 1961) pp. 198–199; L. Habachi, “Khatá(na)-Qantír: Importance,” *ASAE* 52 (1952) pp. 443–559.



FIGURE 17  
Head of a sphinx of Sesostri I. Cairo Museum,  
Cat. Gén. 42007

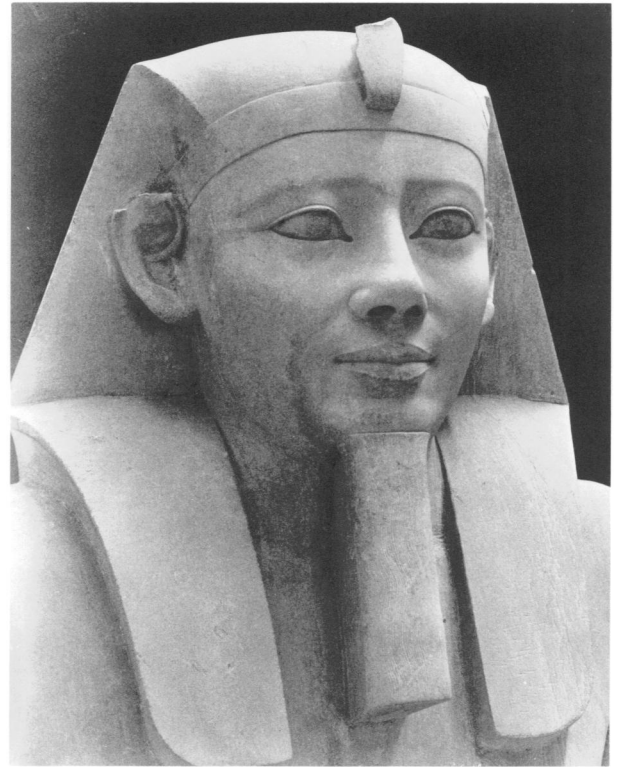


FIGURE 18  
Head of seated statue of Sesostri I. Cairo Mu-  
seum, Cat. Gén. 415

needs of such centers as Abydos and Elephantine as well as the residence cities of the feudal governors during the greater part of the Middle Kingdom is reasonably certain; but that there were regional schools of sculpture directly patronized by the court is open to serious doubt. The Mentu-hotpes were Upper Egyptian princes, who, even when they had reunited the Two Lands, appear to have retained Thebes as their main residence and the site of their tombs and mortuary temples. The kings of the XIIth Dynasty, however, despite their Southern ancestry, found that a capital city in the North was administratively more convenient. They established their residence near the modern Lisht, not far from Memphis, the traditional pharaonic seat, which also continued in their favor. In this they may have been forestalled by the last king of the XIth Dynasty. They would almost certainly have attracted to their patronage the most skilled sculptors in the land, who would have abandoned local studios, whether at Thebes or elsewhere, to settle at the court. The king's chief sculptor would have been the sole designer of statuary destined for the monuments of the king, whether they were made in soft or hard stones; and if they be-

tray a variety of styles and feeling, this may well be due to factors other than regional art traditions.

In the first place, the earlier kings of the XIIth Dynasty enlisted the aid of publicists to strengthen their claims to the throne vis-à-vis their feudal rivals, and in contemporary literary works they are represented on a heroic scale as powerful terrestrial rulers as well as beneficent gods.<sup>49</sup> It seems to the writer that the skill of the sculptor was also enlisted to serve the same ends of propaganda, so that in the local shrine, the statue of the pharaoh as intermediary between man and the god would express a latent energy and a formidable brooding power that would overawe all who beheld it. The traditions of the Theban sculptors who had infused the earlier statuary of Mentu-hotpe Neb-hepet-rē' with a primitive force were well adapted to serve such needs. The granite statues of Ammenemes I and his son Sesostri I found on Delta sites<sup>50</sup> impress not only by their size but by their brutal appearance, the simplified planes and masses expressing the concept of the king

49. G. Posener, *Littérature et politique dans l'Égypte* (Paris, 1956) esp. pp. 19-20, 60, 86, 115, 140-144.

50. Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 36-41.

as ruthless overlord. This tendency, springing from the stylistic peculiarities of the Theban style, and carried on by its own momentum once it was established, gave a distinctive realistic character to Middle Kingdom portraiture.

Another factor that has to be considered is the generally long and stable reigns of these XIIth Dynasty monarchs, most of whom celebrated jubilees in their thirtieth regnal years.<sup>51</sup> It is almost certain that they outlived many of their chief craftsmen and that fresh influences were brought to bear on the production of works of art during a long reign. There are also reasons for believing that deliberate changes in portraiture were introduced during the reign of a particular king. The writer has elsewhere<sup>52</sup> sought to show that at a king's advent, a coronation series of statues was produced for him which fixed the official portrait and stylistic features for most of his reign. If, however, he celebrated a jubilee, a new series of statues was produced, often showing changes in his appearance as well as in the contemporary art style. The phenomenon can most readily be demonstrated in the New Kingdom, particularly in the XVIIIth Dynasty, but there is nothing to show that the same practice was not followed in the XIIth Dynasty. Several scholars, for instance, have distinguished portraits of Sesostrius III as a youth and as an aged king.<sup>53</sup> For the many temples erected on various sites during this period, both within the borders of Egypt and elsewhere, large quantities of royal statues would have been required for installation in the sanctuaries; and some idea of the activity of the studios can be gleaned from the account of an expedition of over 17,000 men to the Wady Hammamat in the thirty-eighth regnal year of Sesostrius I, to cut stone for sixty sphinxes and one hundred twenty statues.<sup>54</sup> More than one master sculptor would be required to carve such a wealth of statuary, and the opportunity for different interpretations and emphases would arise, though all the artists would have to copy more or less faithfully the officially approved portrait modeled by the king's chief sculptor and reproduced by plaster casting, according to a practice that is known for a later period from the studios at Amarna.<sup>55</sup>

Such statuary may be described as "official," and the new uses to which it might be put are seen in the statue that Sesostrius III set up on his southern frontier at Semna in the Second Cataract,<sup>56</sup> and also in the

seated colossi of Ammenemes III erected on podiums at Biahmu in the Faiyum.<sup>57</sup> It should be distinguished in purpose and feeling from the sculpture that was produced for the contemporary mortuary temples. When the kings of the XIIth Dynasty abandoned the rock-hewn tomb of their Theban predecessors as the basis for the design of their last resting-places and reverted to the Old Kingdom idea of a royal pyramid built on the desert verges, they also took over the Old Kingdom style of mortuary art. We have already mentioned that Sesostrius I copied the plan and decoration of the funerary monument of Phiope II; and the same Memphite tradition is found in the statuary with which these complexes were furnished (Figure 18).<sup>58</sup> The king is represented in the idealistic manner of Old Kingdom art as an immortal. In some statues he is shown as Osiris, the personification of kingship, and two such examples from the covered causeway to the mortuary temple of Sesostrius I at Lisht, recovered by the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian expedition, are exhibited in the galleries. "The faces," wrote William C. Hayes, "though unquestionably inspired by the royal physiognomy, lay no claim to being realistic portraits of the King."<sup>59</sup> All such statues, whether of the ruler in the costume of the living or as Osiris, are carved in limestone, though only examples from the funerary monuments of Sesos-

51. W. K. Simpson, "The Single-Dated Monuments of Sesostrius I: An Aspect in the Institution of Coregency in the Twelfth Dynasty," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 15 (1956) pp. 214-219; C. Vandersleyen, "Un titre du Viceroy Mérimose à Silsila," *Chronique d'Égypte* 43 (1968) pp. 249-250.

52. C. Aldred, "The 'New Year' Gifts to the Pharaoh," *JEA* 55 (1969) pp. 78-79.

53. E.g., Vandier, *Manuel*, pp. 185, 186.

54. G. Goyon, *Nouvelles Inscriptions Rupestres* (Paris, 1957) no. 61.

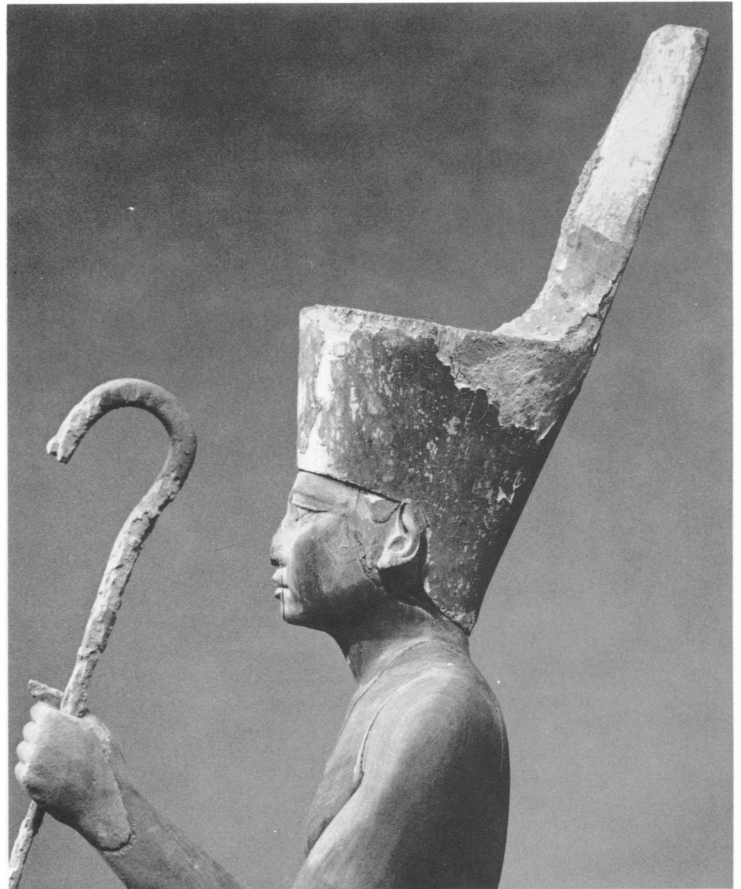
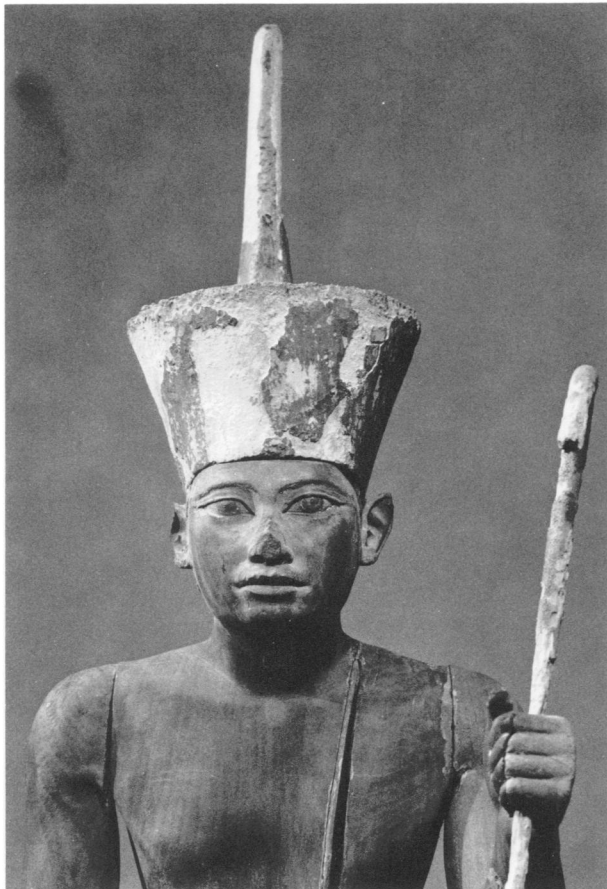
55. G. Roeder, "Lebensgrosse Tonmodelle aus einer alt-ägyptischen Bildhauerwerkstatt," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 62 (1941) pp. 145-170; I. E. S. Edwards, "An Egyptian Plaster Cast," *British Museum Quarterly* 22 (1960) pp. 27-29.

56. J. M. A. Janssen, "The Stela (Khartoum Museum No. 3) from Uronarti," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12 (1953) pp. 51-55. P. Kaplony, "Das Vorbild des Königs unter Sesostrius III," *Orientalia* 35 (1966) pp. 403 ff., challenges the view that the text refers to the erection of a statue, but despite his ingenious arguments, I am not wholly convinced that he has presented a watertight case.

57. W. M. F. Petrie, *Hawara, Biahmu and Arsinoe* (London, 1889) pp. 54-55.

58. Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 26-29.

59. Hayes, *Scepter*, I, p. 185; for acc. no. 08.200.1 see *BMMA* 3 (1908) p. 171 and fig. 3; for acc. no. 09.180.529 see *BMMA* 4 (1909) p. 120. See also Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 31-32.



FIGURES 19, 20

Upper part of statuette of Sesostri I. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum excavations, 1913-14, with contribution of Edward S. Harkness, 14.3.17

trist I and Ammenemes III have survived. The softer stone encouraged a less bold handling on the part of the sculptor in order to achieve the required degree of idealization. As far as the portraiture and stylistic details are concerned, these are nearer to the official style than is sometimes recognized.<sup>60</sup> It is due to the accidents of time that hardly any funerary statuary from this period has survived, while statues in the official style from various sites in Egypt are well represented.

A statue that appears to be in the funerary tradition, since its purpose was apparently to serve as a cult object in the burial ceremonies of the high priest Im-hotpe, is the painted cedarwood statue of a king wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt and carrying a long *hekat*-scepter (Figures 19, 20).<sup>61</sup> Together with a companion statue wearing the White Crown, now in Cairo, it was

found by the Museum's expedition buried in a chamber in the enclosure wall of Im-hotpe's mastaba-tomb adjoining the pyramid of Sesostri I at Lisht. For this reason the two statues have generally been identified as representing that king, though they are uninscribed. The modeling of the body is accomplished with a bold assurance, and the articulation of the limbs is far removed from that unhappy paralysis which so often characterizes the wooden sculpture of the First Intermediate Period and sometimes that of the Old Kingdom. While this statue is a masterpiece in the Memphite

60. Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 29, 44.

61. Acc. no. 14.3.17, wood, traces of pink flesh colors, garments coated with gesso and painted, height 58 cm.; A. M. Lythgoe, "Egyptian Expedition, II: Excavations at the South Pyramid of Lisht, 1914," *BMMA* 10 (1914) supplement, pp. 16-17.



style, the portrait, with its round wide face, prominent cheekbones, large flat eyes with pronounced canthi, and eyebrows in relief, owes much to the Theban traditions of the XIth Dynasty. The docility of the medium has allowed the sculptor to achieve a greater subtlety in the carving of the corners of the mouth and in the convolutions of the ear, which is correctly placed. The ear also attains something of the enlargement that is characteristic of most portraits of the remaining reigns of the XIIth Dynasty, and as in these cases, it also projects sharply outward.

Statues of Ammenemes II and Sesostris II are rare anywhere, and there are no examples in the Museum's collection,<sup>62</sup> but those of their successors are well represented and show the development of the art of royal portraiture during the heyday of the Middle Kingdom. The first in the series is a limestone head found by the Museum's expedition in the filling of a tomb shaft adjacent to the causeway of the pyramid temple of Ammenemes I at Lisht (Figures 21, 22), and as a consequence identified as from a statue of that king.<sup>63</sup> It bears little resemblance either in portraiture or stylistic

details to the statues of Ammenemes I, however, and there is little doubt that it represents Sesostris III as a young king. What it was doing at Lisht is something of a mystery, but it may have come from a statue dedicated to Ammenemes I by Sesostris III<sup>64</sup> in the mortuary temple of the earlier king. Its characteristic features are sufficient to distinguish it quite clearly from the work of the first half of the dynasty. The *nemes* wig-cover is of unequivocal triple-stripe pattern, a fashion that became general with Sesostris II,<sup>65</sup> and its frontlet

62. The only example in America known to me is the diorite bust of a king in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (acc. no. 22.351), which I identify as of Sesostris II; see G. Steindorff, *Egyptian Sculpture* (Baltimore, 1946) no. 98, pl. vii.

63. Acc. no. 08.200.2, height 14 cm.; Arthur C. Mace, "Egyptian Expedition: Pyramid of Amenemhet," *BMMA* 3 (1908) pp. 186, 187, 220, fig. 4.

64. Similar statues made in a contemporary style but dedicated to earlier kings are found throughout the dynasty, e.g., Cairo Museum, no. 42.004, in the style of Sesostris I for Saḥu-rē; Royal Scottish Museum, no. 1905.284.2, in the style of Ammenemes III for Snefru. D. Wildung, *Die Rolle Ägyptischer Könige*, München Ägyptologische Studien, no. 17 (Munich, 1969) p. 135.

65. Evers, *Staat*, II, sec. 60.

FIGURES 21, 22

Head of Sesostris III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum excavations, 1908, 08.200.2





FIGURES 23, 24

Head of Sesostris III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund and gift of Dr. and Mrs. Edmundo Lassalle through the Guide Foundation, 66.99.5



carries tabs before the ears. The uraeus emerges higher up the frontlet, and its body has only three windings. Though the ears have become much larger and project like wings, their lobes are smaller, and they are placed at a natural height. The damage to the chin and the abrasions to mouth and nose have upset the proportions of the face by overemphasizing the muscular nexus around the mouth, which is clearly turned down along its medial line, a characteristic of several portraits of Sesostris III.<sup>66</sup> The eyebrows are no longer defined by arcs carved in raised relief but follow the natural line of the brow. The most striking features, however, are the large, somewhat bulging eyes, with the lids indicated by incised lines, and the inner and outer canthi of similar shape and lacking any exaggeration. These are quite different in their heavy-lidded effect from the flat treatment of the eyes in the portraits of earlier kings. The Lisht head is a somewhat restrained

66. E.g., British Museum, 160 (686); Cairo Museum, no. 42011, 486; Kansas City, William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, 62.11.

version, perhaps because it is carved in the idealistic mortuary tradition, of the characteristic physiognomy of Sesostri III as a young man. As his reign wore on, his portraits developed a realism and an exploration of the underlying structure of the face that can only be the result of the appointment as his master sculptor of an unknown artist of genius.

The evolution of this style can be seen in the black gabbro head in the Gallatin Collection (Figures 23, 24),<sup>67</sup> where the eyes have been treated as orbs lying within their sockets and have lost the last vestiges of the earlier flat treatment. The folds of flesh from the inner corners of the eyes, indicated in the Lisht head by incised lines, hint at the developing pouchiness of the king's later years. The head, however, is in the official style and represents Sesostri III as a man in the full vigor of life. It bears a resemblance to the statue of the same king, said to be from Medamūd, in The Brooklyn Museum,<sup>68</sup> which, however, has been carved with a

less adventurous chisel and probably belongs to a "coronation series."<sup>69</sup>

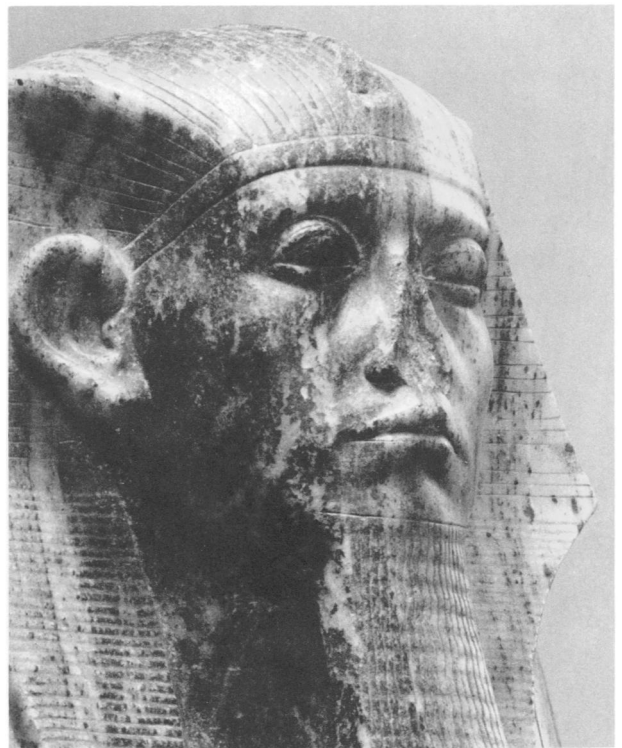
A further stage in the development of the portraiture of the reign is evident in the head of the sphinx (Figures 25, 26),<sup>70</sup> carved in gem-hard gneissic diorite,

67. Acc. no. 66.99.5, height 13.5 cm., provenance unknown; Cooney, "Collection of Albert Gallatin," p. 5, no. 11. Correctly identified by Cooney as of Sesostri III as against my tentative attribution to Ammenemes III (C. Aldred, *Middle Kingdom Art* [London, 1950] no. 70). The form of the loop in the body of the uraeus, however, is not exclusive to Sesostri III, as Cooney maintains, since a statue of Ammenemes III from Karnak in the Cairo Museum has an uraeus with similar convolutions. Enough of the damaged nose remains to suggest that in profile it was probably of aquiline form (cf. the obsidian head in the Gulbenkian Collection), as compared with the more snub shape of Ammenemes III. The *nemes* with its uniform broad bands anticipates the fashion of the succeeding reign.

68. J. D. Cooney, *Five Years of Collecting* (New York, 1956) no. 3.

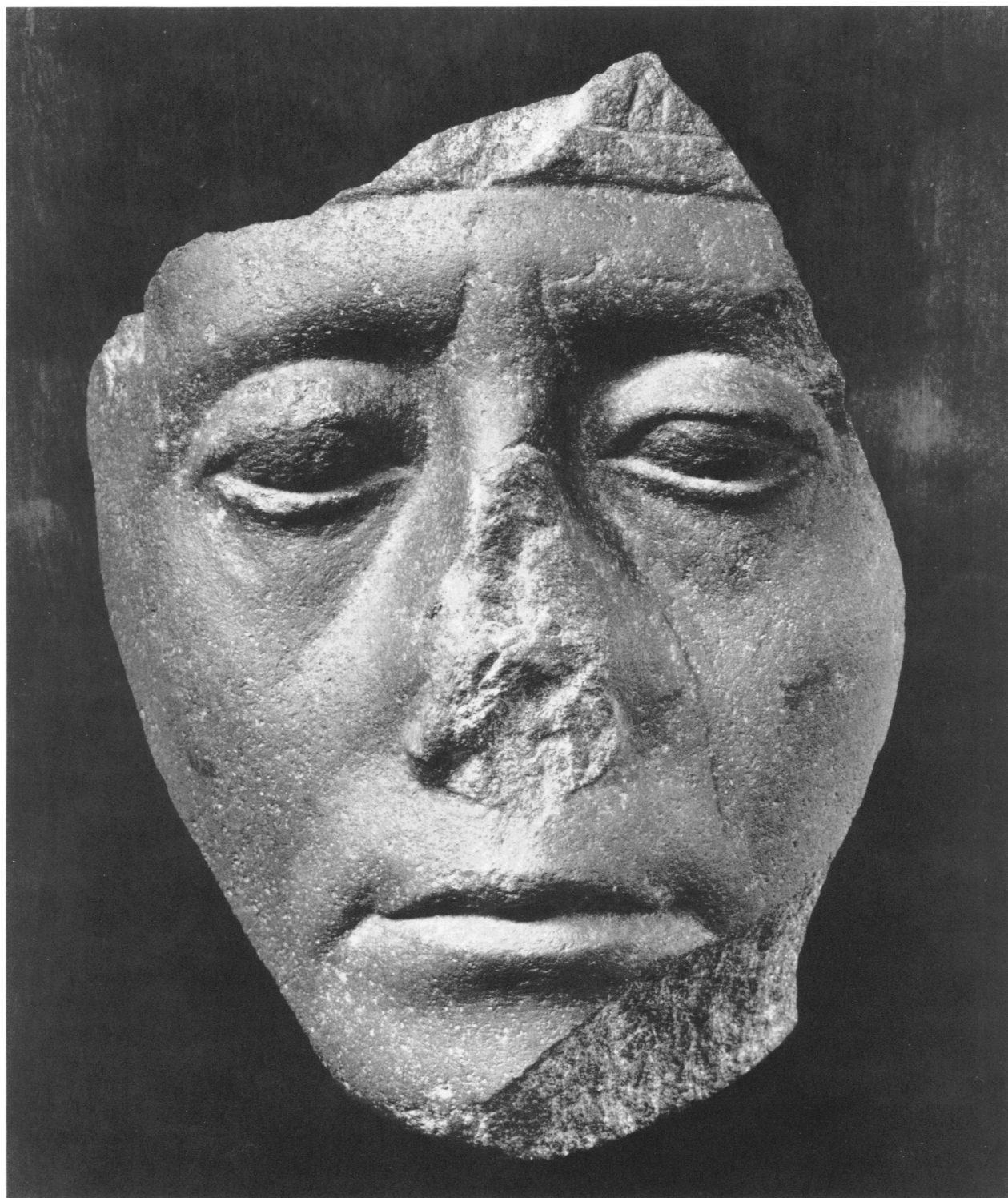
69. See note 52 above.

70. Acc. no. 17.9.2, height 42.5 cm., provenance unknown; "The Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition," *BMMA* 15 (1920) p. 129.



FIGURES 25, 26

Head of sphinx of Sesostri III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Edward S. Harkness, 17.9.2



**FIGURE 27**  
Head of Sesostri III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Carnarvon Collection, gift of Edward S. Harkness,  
1926, 26.7.1394

where the dynamism of the earlier years is replaced by a grimmer expression on the face of a king who not only so reorganized the Egyptian possessions in Nubia and the Sudan that he was afterward worshiped there as a protector of the region, but also broke completely the power of the landed nobility at home, reducing the nomarchs to the status of crown servants. The burden of authority that such measures must have placed upon the pharaoh appears in the brooding latent power of this crouching sphinx with its haunting portrait of an autocrat. With the head shown in Figure 3, it is the only Middle Kingdom royal statue in the Museum's collection that may be identified by an inscription naming the king whom it represents, and therefore making recognition possible on grounds other than those of style and physiognomy. It is one of the few of the reign showing the king wearing the royal beard. The eyeballs within their sockets are carved in the realistic mode of the mature years. The musculature of the face has achieved a little of the flaccidity of advancing years, a transformation that is complete in the magnificent quartzite fragment, one of the world's masterpieces, that was formerly in the Carnarvon Collection and is now in the Metropolitan (Figure 27).<sup>71</sup> Here the grimness of the earlier portraits has been replaced by something less harsh, achieved by the consummate modeling of the very hard stone. The powerful superman, all passion spent, has become the careworn shepherd of his people.

During the long reign of Ammenemes III, the last great king of the XIIth Dynasty, a slight but appreciable modification in the realism of the sculpture of Sesostri III is detectable, and the conventions of the XIIIth Dynasty style are already adumbrated in such features as the summary modeling of the torso with the pectoral muscles joined together, the navel placed at the base of a deep ventral furrow, the disappearance of the sternal notch, and the rise of the corners of the *nemes* headcloth to prominent peaks. Such formulae are a sure indication of the proliferation of lesser studios with sculptors content to copy in isolation. By the reign of Ammenemes III a change had come over the social structure of Egypt, foreshadowing the conditions that were to prevail during the New Kingdom. The pharaoh had secured once more a lonely eminence. The estates of the former provincial barons must have been parceled out among the temples of the chief gods as well as the de-



FIGURE 28  
Head of seated statue of Ammenemes III. Cairo Museum, Cat. Gén. 385

partments of the palace administration, and their expert staffs, including sculptors, had doubtless been absorbed by the new state machinery. Though the Middle Kingdom temple of Amūn is in too ruined a condition for much evidence to have survived, it was clearly wealthy and patronized extensively by the pharaohs of the Middle Kingdom, particularly by the last two rulers of the XIIth Dynasty. It would appear that the workshops of Amūn would already have been established and accepted responsibility for carving statues of the pharaoh, as was the practice in the New Kingdom. It was such temple ateliers that were called into requisition whenever a massive supply of statuary was suddenly required, as for a new building or at the beginning of a reign or for a jubilee. Such a supplementation of the royal studios in the now centralized state of the late Middle Kingdom probably accounts for the varied styles of portraiture that are characteristic of the period, and makes the identification of statues as representations of Ammenemes III an often hazardous undertaking.<sup>72</sup>

71. Acc. no. 26.7.1394, height 16.5 cm., provenance unknown; Hayes, "Royal Portraits," pp. 119-124.

72. Hence the sphinxes and twin Niles from Tanis, and the bust from Mit Faris, as well as the Copenhagen head (Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 111, 112, 120-125, 127-129), have been identified with kings other than Ammenemes III.



FIGURES 29–31

Head of Ammenemes III, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.150

A limestone seated statue of the king found near the ruins of the great labyrinthine funerary temple adjoining his pyramid at Hawara (Figure 28)<sup>73</sup> evidently represents the Memphite mortuary style in its latest manifestations. The portrait is idealistically treated, the eyes achieving a flatter effect than was the fashion in his father's reign, and the lips, though unsmiling, having lost the severe cast of the mouth of Sesostriis III. Complete monumentality is attained by resting the palms of both hands flat upon the upper thighs, a convention that now entered the repertoire and became almost obligatory for seated pharaohs in this costume.

This idealistic style is seen in a number of portraits

73. Cairo Museum, Cat. Gén. no. 385; Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 102–104.

of the king, all probably of Memphite inspiration, such as the alabaster head of a sphinx in the Louvre,<sup>74</sup> the head of a king wearing the White Crown in Copenhagen,<sup>75</sup> and possibly the head of an unidentified pharaoh in Vienna.<sup>76</sup> The Metropolitan has an outstanding example in this tradition in the head in mottled gray marble from the Havemeyer Collection (Figures 29–31),<sup>77</sup> which is exceptional for the complete state of the

74. Louvre, no. E.10938; P. Krieger, "Un Portrait d'Amenemhat III," *Revue d'Égyptologie* 11 (1957) pp. 73–75.

75. Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 111, 112.

76. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. 37. This head is rather an enigma although B. V. Bothmer is not prepared to date it to the Late Period (cf. Schweitzer, note 32 above). The large ears, lappets without seams, single broad-stripe *nemes* without frontlet (see Louvre sphinx, no. A.23, of Ammenemes II), profile rising to an apogee above the occiput, and uraeus with compressed S-loop high on brow suggest the Middle Kingdom. The portraiture, despite damage, resembles that of Ammenemes III at the Hermitage in Leningrad (no. 729). The natural line of the eyebrows, the flat treatment of the eyes, the profile of the chin, and the pronounced cheeks belong to his reign. Only the mouth worked into an emphatic smile is uncharacteristic of the period, although

face, the nose having the same slightly arched form with a blunt tip seen in the serpentine head in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and in the statues in the Louvre and the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow,<sup>78</sup> while the eyes are rendered in the characteristic flat relief of the reign. The mouth has that furrow in the middle of its lower lip which is seen in other portraits of the king.<sup>79</sup>

incipient smiles are found on some statues of the reign (e.g., Leningrad, Hermitage, no. 729, and Cairo Museum, no. 383). There are a sufficient number of individual works from this reign for such an idiosyncrasy to be tolerated. Vienna no. 37 could be an idealistic portrait by the same studio that produced the more realistic or mature version in Copenhagen, no. AEIN 924.

77. Acc. no. 29.100.150, height 9 cm.; "The Exhibition of The H. O. Havemeyer Collection," *BMMA* 25 (1930) p. 75.

78. C. Ricketts, "Head of Amenemmes III in Obsidian, from the Collection of the Rev. W. Macgregor, Tamworth," *JEA* 4 (1917) pp. 211–212 (Cambridge); Vandier, *Manuel*, p. 202, no. 2 (Louvre and Moscow).

79. E.g., the Fitzwilliam head (see preceding note); the Bubastis Colossus (Evers, *Staat*, I, pl. 114); the Louvre statuette N.465 (O. Rayet, *Monuments de l'Art Antique*, I [Paris, 1884] pl. 9).

FIGURES 32, 33

Bust of Ammenemes III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 45.2.6



Many of the features of the statuary of Sesostri III, however, were a point of departure for the official style in the reign of Ammenemes III, who was co-regent during his father's last regnal year at least. The two vertical furrows in the brow of the later Sesostri III, for instance, are present in the Louvre statuette,<sup>80</sup> though this represents Ammenemes in his youth, and are also seen in the upper part of a black granite statue in the Metropolitan (Figures 32, 33).<sup>81</sup> Despite the battering that this bust has suffered, the resemblance to a series of granite statues of the king found at Karnak,<sup>82</sup> as well as a head in the Aegyptisches Museum in Berlin,<sup>83</sup> is striking. The wig-cover reverts to the single broad-stripe pattern of the earlier years of the dynasty, but

80. Louvre, no. N.465, see preceding note; cf. Metropolitan Museum, acc. no. 26.7.1394 (Figure 27) and Evers, *Staat*, I, pls. 83, 88.

81. Acc. no. 45.2.6, height 20 cm., provenance unknown; Hayes, "Royal Portraits," p. 122.

82. G. Legrain, *Statues et Statuettes*, I, *Musée du Caire, Catalogue Générale*, XXX (Cairo, 1906) nos. 42014-42016, 42018, 42020.

83. Evers, *Staat*, I, pl. 133.

FIGURE 34

Head of Ammenemes III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Foulds, 24.7.1



FIGURES 35, 36

Head of Ammenemes III. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 12.183.6

the peaks at the upper corners are more pronounced; at the same time the lappets lack the seam to their inner edges, so common in the work of the succeeding reigns.<sup>84</sup> The bossy cheeks and large ears are characteristic of the portraits of Sesostri III and persisted as a convention, together with a prominent chin, in the work of his son, possibly because both kings inherited a similar physiognomy. The eyes, bulging less from their sockets, and the design of the single compressed S-coil of the uraeus, which now springs from above the frontlet, put this bust firmly in the reign of Ammenemes III. The damage to the face is to be deplored the more because, while this fragment appears to be the work of a Theban studio, presumably sited in the workshops attached to the temple of Amün, the portrait seems more

84. Evers, *Staat*, II, sec. 70.





accomplished than that of its congeners in this group.

Another head of official type in the Museum collection shows the king with the marks of old age in the sagging of his facial muscles (Figure 34).<sup>85</sup> Here, although the eyes are sunk more within their sockets, they are not carved as independent orbs. The uraeus, with its single compressed S-coil placed behind the hood, is a critical dating factor. A similar head, also wearing the Double Crown, seen some years ago in the art market, and a head of Amūn with the features of the king, now in Cairo,<sup>86</sup> suggest a Theban provenance for this piece. The expert carving of the eyes and ears and the subtlety of the modeling of the face, which eludes all but the most favorable lighting, show that this is the work of a very accomplished sculptor, whose skill is not entirely obscured by the damage the head has sustained.

The last work to be considered is a quartzite head (Figures 35, 36)<sup>87</sup> that has been accredited to earlier kings, but which in the writer's opinion must be dated to the reign of Ammenemes III. It is in the idealistic style of the studios of Memphis, in the proximity of which its honey brown quartzite was doubtless quar-

ried. The stylistic features are uncompromisingly of the reign of Ammenemes III. The uraeus, springing from above the frontlet, with a compressed S-turn set high on the brow, the upper curve of the *nemes* rising to a peak at each corner, and its crown reaching an apogee near the back of the head before descending rapidly to the root of the pigtail are in the fashion of this period, as is the single-stripe headcloth with its unseamed, narrow-pleated lappets. So are the prominent cheekbones and the everted lips with the double curve on their medial join. The philtrum, however, which is less pronounced than usual, and the relaxed mouth with its incipient smile, are in marked contrast to the tensions represented in the two foregoing heads. Nevertheless, they are found on one of the two colossal heads excavated by E. Naville at Bubastis in Lower Egypt and generally identified as of Ammenemes III on inscrip-

85. Acc. no. 24.7.1, height 42 cm., provenance unknown; Hayes, "Royal Portraits," pp. 123-124.

86. Vandier, *Manuel*, p. 201, pl. LXVII, 2.

87. Acc. no. 12.183.6, height 18.3 cm., provenance unknown; Hayes, "Royal Portraits," pp. 122-123.

FIGURE 37

Head of Ammenemes III. British Museum, 1063



tional grounds (Figure 37).<sup>88</sup> The only exceptional features are the peculiar eyes with their elongation toward the inner canthi. Each is carved, however, in the flattish relief of the reign, and the idiosyncrasy of their unusual shape is not critical enough to deny that they depict Ammenemes III, particularly in view of the variation in the representation of the eye on statues inscribed with his name.<sup>89</sup> Similar eye shapes occur elsewhere on portraits from the dynasty, as on the Gallatin head of Sesostris III (Figure 23). Despite the almost complete loss of the chin and the difference of scale, the quartzite head bears a striking resemblance, particularly in profile, to the colossus from Bubastis in the British Museum.<sup>90</sup>

The portraits we have considered here are not the only examples of royal sculpture of the Middle Kingdom in the Metropolitan Museum, but they form a broad conspectus of the subject, showing the development of an art form that can scarcely be studied more conveniently anywhere else. If, to the eye of the layman,

some of the visages may appear brutally shattered, they are still impressive in the melancholy ruin that the hands of time and men have brought upon them. At least half a dozen (Figures 10, 19, 23, 25, 27, 29) are among the supreme masterpieces of their kind, of which any great collection would count itself privileged to display but one example. That the Metropolitan Museum can muster so many among such a comprehensive range of royal portraits must be accounted its good fortune and its sober pride.

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88. Evers, *Staat*, I, pl. 115.

89. E.g., Cairo Museum, nos. 385, 42014, 42020; Leningrad, Hermitage, no. 729.

90. Evers, *Staat*, I, pl. 116.

# The Tuan Fang Altar Set Reexamined

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I HAVE BEEN requested to reevaluate the Tuan Fang ritual wine set in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in the light of my recent studies of excavated Anyang bronzes. The latter may give us some new ideas on the dates and significance of the Metropolitan Museum set.

## THE COMPOSITION OF THE SET AND ITS DISCOVERY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The group made its first appearance in the contemporary world in 1901, at Tou Chi T'ai, in the province of Shensi. Tuan Fang was viceroy of Shensi province in the last days of the Manchu dynasty, and he acquired this set for his own collection. Hence this group of bronzes is known as the Tuan Fang altar set. The Metropolitan Museum purchased it from Tuan Fang's heirs in 1924.

There are several illustrations indicating the composition of this set—that is, the actual number of pieces belonging to it. Three of the illustrations seem to be authentic: the line drawings lithographically reproduced in Tuan Fang's catalogue, *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu*;<sup>1</sup> the Metropolitan Museum photograph (Figure 1); the Umehara photographs.<sup>2</sup>

The line drawings of *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu* present twelve ritual bronzes on the altar—altogether thirteen objects in the drawing. In addition to these articles, a wine ladle is shown in the Metropolitan Museum

photograph; it was found inside the smaller *yu*.<sup>3</sup> The ladle does not appear in the complete drawing in the *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu*, but it does turn up on page 4 of this catalogue. It therefore seems to be part of the original set. Consequently, the set consisted, as far as we know, of fourteen objects.

In Umehara's monographs, there are twenty articles included in the various photographic reproductions of the group. The six additional components are all spoons, or *shao*, which according to John Ferguson (who negotiated the sale of the set to the Metropolitan Museum) came from a "second assignment" delivered to Tuan Fang by the dealer from whom he acquired the first group. The spoons are shown in a bundle vertically placed in the *tsun* vase; only the tops of the handles are visible in the picture. It is not possible to check the exact number of spoon handles as shown in the different photographs, but according to the description in Umehara's text, there are six. These spoons are also in the Metropolitan Museum's collection.<sup>4</sup>

The actual excavation of this bronze group is undocumented. In 1928, i.e., before the Anyang excava-

1. *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu*, catalogue of the Tuan Fang Collection, I (Peking, 1908) p. 1.

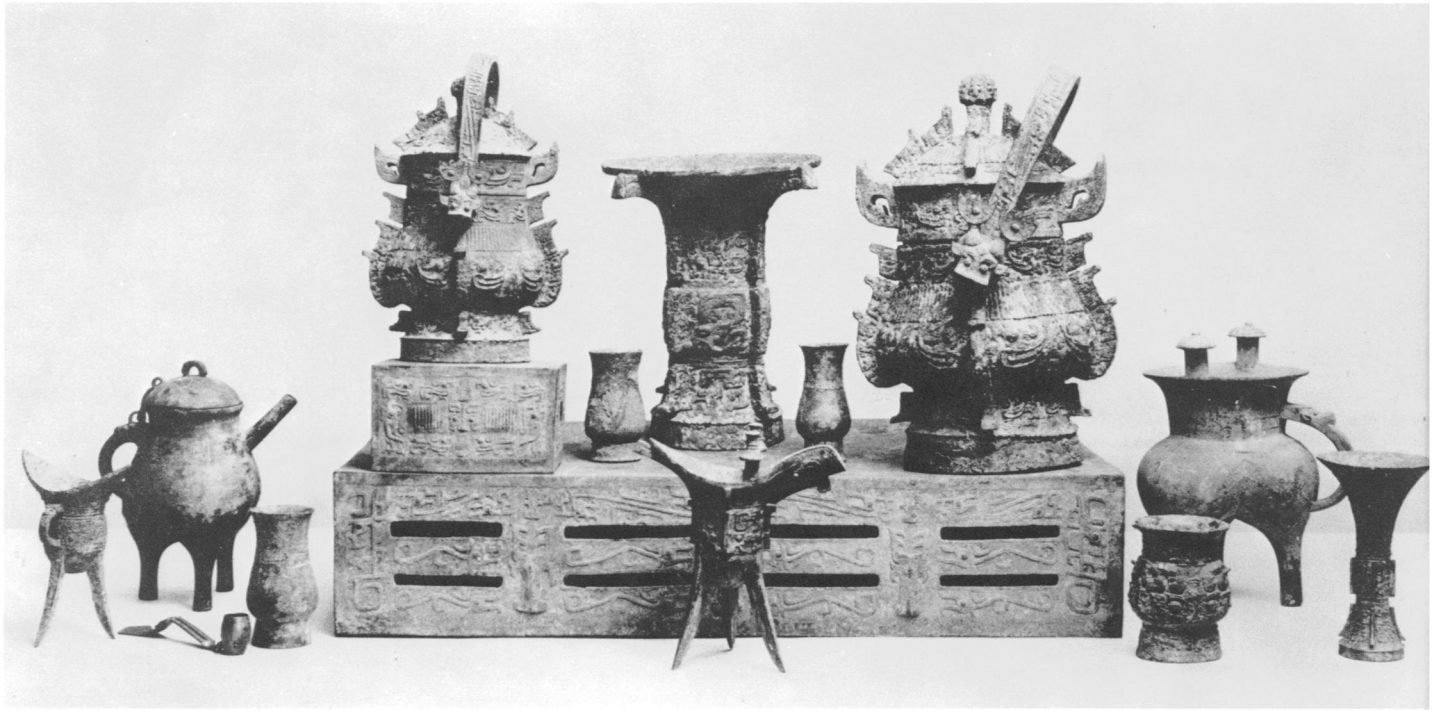
2. Sueji Umehara, *Etude archéologique sur le Pien-chin, ou série de bronzes avec une table pour l'usage rituel dans la Chine antique*, Memoire de Tôhō-bunka-gakuin, Kyoto Kenkyusho, 2 (Kyoto, 1933).

3. S. C. Bosch-Reitz, "The Tuang Fang Sacrificial Table," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 19 (1924) pp. 141-144.

4. Acc. nos. 24.72.15-20.

FIGURE 1

Tuan Fang altar set, from Tou Chi T'ai, Paochi Hsien. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Munsey Fund, 24.72.1-14



tions, Osvald Sirén published an interesting account of the "mound" at Tou Chi T'ai in which the altar set was supposed to have been found.<sup>5</sup> In 1959, on the basis of the Anyang excavation results, Umehara suggested that this version of the discovery referred not to the Tuan Fang altar set, but to a second group of bronzes.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, we must consider the actual excavation of the group under discussion here as still unknown.

#### THE FORM AND STYLE OF THE TUAN FANG SET AND SOME ANYANG BRONZES

Since we have no excavation data to help us in dating, we have to depend upon a study of the actual

5. Osvald Sirén, *A History of Early Chinese Art—the Prehistoric and Pre-Han Periods* (London, 1929) p. 24.

6. Sueji Umehara, "The Second Set of Ritual Vessels, Penchin, from Pao-chi-hsien, Shen-hsi Province," *Monumenta Orientalia* 1 (Tenri, Japan, 1959) p. 272.

artifacts for a more definite understanding of this well-known set of bronzes. In view of our increased knowledge of the burial customs of China's bronze age, we may start our reexamination by comparing the Tuan Fang altar set found at Tou Chi T'ai, and now in the Metropolitan Museum, with the bronze furniture discovered in Anyang by the Academia Sinica.

In the table below I have itemized the contents of eight burials from the tombs opened during the Anyang excavations of the mid-1930s; each of these burials had remained intact and included at least eight bronze ritual vessels. Tombs with fewer than eight pieces of this type of bronze furniture are not listed in the table. Six of the tombs chosen in the comparative table were excavated at Hsiao T'un, the other two at Hou Chia Chuang. Most of these tombs are probably of a sacrificial nature—the number of skeletons found in these eight tombs varies from one to as many as eight. It is interesting to note that HPKM1022 of Hou Chia Chuang locality is the only one-skeleton burial (Figure 2) among the eight Anyang tombs compared in the

SITES	<i>Paochi, Shensi</i>	<i>Anyang, Honan</i>								
		LOCATIONS	Tou Chi T'ai	<i>Hsiao T'un</i>					<i>Hou Chia Chuang</i>	
				M 188	M 232	M 238	M 331	M 333	M 388	HPKM 1005
<b>RITUAL BRONZES</b>										
<i>chih</i> 觶形器	4						1		2	
<i>tsun</i> 尊形器	1				2					
<i>yu</i> 卣形器	2			1	1				1	
<i>ku</i> 觚形器	1	1	2	3	3	2	2		1	
<i>chüeh</i> 爵形器	1	1	2	3	3	2	2		2	
<i>chih</i> 角形器	1									
<i>ho</i> 盃形器	1				1					
<i>chia</i> 斝形器	1	2	2	1	3	2	2		2	
<i>fang-i</i> 方彝形器				2					1	
<i>p'ien</i> 鬲形器		1								
<i>p'ou</i> 甗形器		1	2		1	2	2			
<i>ting</i> 鼎形器		1	1		2	2	1			
<i>yen</i> 鬲形器		1			1					
<i>lei</i> 斝形器				1						
<i>tou</i> 斗形器	1				1					
<i>kuo</i> 鍋形器					1					
<i>p'an</i> 盤形器			1							
<i>ch'an</i> 簠形器								4		
<i>kun</i> 棍形器								6		
<i>yii</i> 盂形器								3		
<i>hu</i> 壺形器				1				3		
<i>horn-shaped vessel</i> 象形角器									1	
<i>chin</i> 禁形器	1									
<b>TOTAL</b> 合計	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	

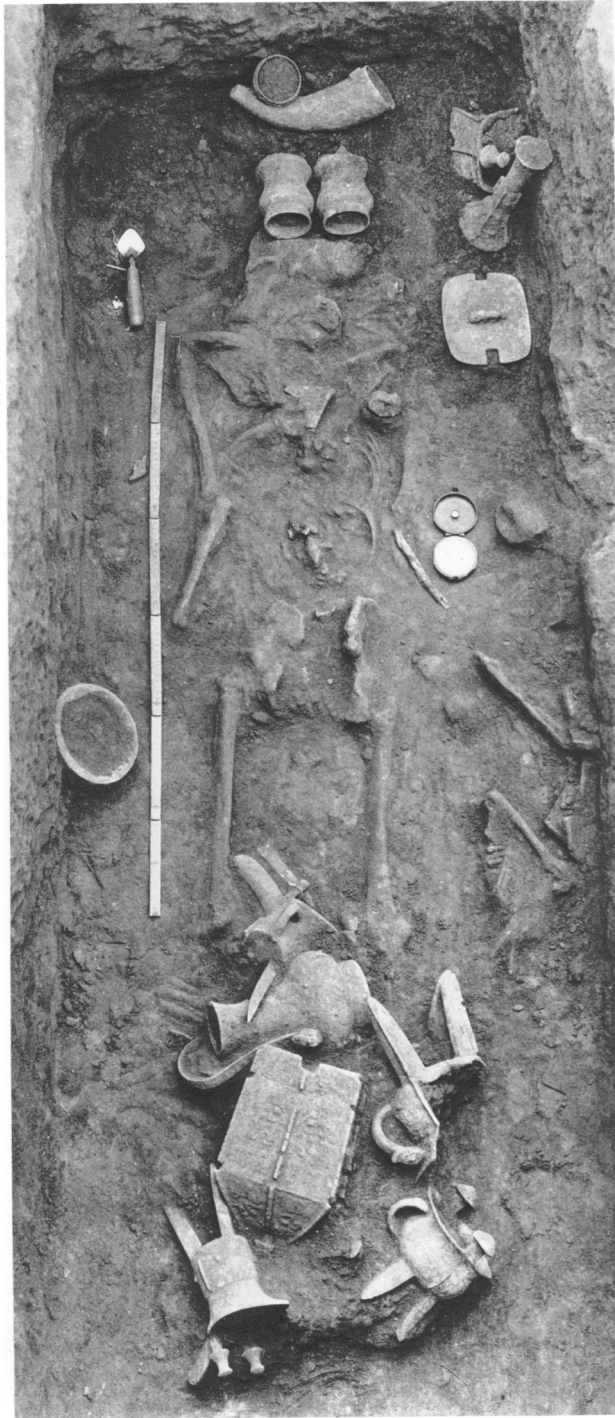


FIGURE 2  
HPKM1022, excavated at Hou Chia Chuang,  
Anyang Hsien. Academia Sinica, Nankang.  
Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology

table. The bronze furniture of this tomb, as compared with the contents of the other seven, most closely resembles the Tuan Fang altar set in composition. The bronzes of the other seven tombs from Anyang all include some food vessels, such as *ting*, *p'ou*, *hsien*, which are found neither in the Tuan Fang altar set nor in HPKM1022 of the Anyang group.

It is interesting to compare in some detail the ritual bronzes excavated from HPKM1022 with the Tuan Fang altar set. Let us see to what extent these two sets of bronzes resemble each other and to what extent they differ. The component members of the HPKM1022 bronze furniture are: two *chih*, one *yu*, one *ku*, two *chüeh*, two *chia*, one *fang-i*, and one horn-shaped vessel (Figure 3); while those of the Tuan Fang altar set are: four *chih*, one *tsun*, two *yu*, one *ku*, one *chüeh*, one *ho*, one *chia*, one *chih*, one ladle (*tou*), and one altar table (*chin*) (Figure 1). There are no *fang-i* or horn-shaped vessels in the Tuan Fang set. On the other hand, no *tsun*, *chih*, or *ho* were found in HPKM1022, which lacked also an altar table and a ladle.

The resemblances as well as the differences of these two sets may be due to a variety of reasons. Before going into further detailed discussion of these problems, it might be more profitable to examine individually the homologous ritual vessels that are found in both sets. This group consists of the following types: *chih*, *yu*, *ku*, *chüeh*, and *chia*. The last three types of bronzes from Anyang have already been studied in great detail, and the results have been published in monographs in the new series of *Archaeologia Sinica*.<sup>7</sup> So we may start our comparison with these three better-known types.

#### *Ku* and *Chüeh* (Figures 4–8)

There are thirty-nine examples of *ku* from the Anyang tombs photographically reproduced in *Archaeologia Sinica*.<sup>8</sup> The one from HPKM1022 of Hou Chia Chuang (Figure 5)<sup>9</sup> is the best example among the *ku* series of the Anyang collection and possesses the unique feature of being partly cast from a deeply incised mother model by way of a negative clay mold. The

7. Li Chi and Wan Chia-pao, "Studies of the Bronze Ku-beaker," *Archaeologia Sinica* n.s. 1 (1964); "Studies of the Bronze Chüeh-cup," *Archaeologia Sinica* n.s. 2 (1966); "Studies of the Bronze Chia-vessel," *Archaeologia Sinica* n.s. 3 (1968).

8. Li Chi and Wan Chia-pao, "Ku-beaker."

9. Li Chi and Wan Chia-pao, "Ku-beaker," pl. xxiv.



FIGURE 3  
Ritual bronzes, found in HPKM1022, Hou Chia Chuang. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the  
Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 4  
*Ku*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
 H. 8¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
 Munsey Fund, 24.72.10



FIGURE 5  
*Ku*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022,  
 R1029, H. 11 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang.  
 Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 6  
*Chieh*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
 H. 9¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
 Munsey Fund, 24.72.9



decoration of the foot section is beautifully done in fretwork.

The *ku* from the Tuan Fang set is similar to the Hou Chia Chuang specimen in the following respects: it is decorated on all three sections; the lower and middle sections are both divided into four parts by projecting flanges; both the upper section and the lower section have border designs. But there are also important differences in the ornamental details. The following differences deserve special mention. On the Tuan Fang *ku*: there is no *yünleiwén* (cloud and thunder design) filling-in, and the animal designs are executed by simple broad lines; there is no fretwork; the flanges on the lower section are not cast in full length; the border designs are composed of animal figures instead of spiral-filled bands.

The similarities between these two homologous vessels are, however, more striking than the differences. The general outline, the proportions of the different

parts, and the curvature of the lines bear a resemblance that makes the differences in ornamental details somewhat insignificant.

There are two *chüeh* in HPKM1022 of Hou Chia Chuang. Only one is found in the Tuan Fang set. The latter possesses a round bottom (Figure 6), while both examples from the Hou Chia Chuang tomb are flat based (Figures 7, 8). In ornamentation these three vessels bear a general resemblance, but the two specimens of Hou Chia Chuang differ from each other in certain respects: R1051 (Figure 8) is fully flanged on the body, with the main ornamentation divided into four sections, while R1050 (Figure 7) has no flanges, except for the well-developed nasal ridge. In addition, R1050 has no inscription, while R1051 carries a monoglyphic inscription 𠄎 (Figure 391) consisting of a vertical stroke passing through a small circle and bands flowing from the upper and lower parts of the vertical. This is the ancient form of the modern character 中 (*chung*, mean-

FIGURE 7

*Chüeh*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022, R1050, H. 8½ in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 8

*Chüeh*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022, R1051, H. 8 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



ing middle). This inscription is located beneath the bow-shaped handle. The uprights on the rim of both of the Hou Chia Chuang *chüeh* cups are located near the turning point of the spout.

In addition to having a round bottom, the Tuan Fang *chüeh* possesses a fully developed flange that extends along the bottom of the tail (opposite the pouring spout) and reaches beyond the tail by nearly one centimeter. A similar flange appears underneath the spout, terminating about two centimeters short of its lip. On the top of the ox-headed handle there is a short flange bent below the rim, very much like a beam under a Chinese roof. The decoration of the Tuan Fang *chüeh* is in high relief against a *yünleiwên* background, in contrast to the Hou Chia Chuang examples, whose ornamentation is in low relief, with richer details of *yünleiwên*. The bulging eyeballs of the animal face are more prominent in the Hou Chia Chuang pieces. The location of the uprights is further from the spout junction in the Tuan Fang specimen than in the Hou Chia Chuang *chüeh* cups; this structural feature, which recalls the Chün Hsien specimen (M60)<sup>10</sup> of the Western Chou period, seems to be very common among the bronze *chüeh* specimens of Shensi origin. Unlike the Hou Chia Chuang examples, the Tuan Fang *chüeh* cup has fine decoration covering the outer surface of the three legs.

There are, however, points of resemblance between the Hou Chia Chuang *chüeh* and the Tuan Fang piece: all three legs on each piece are triangular in cross section, with elongated depressions on the two lateral sides; uprights are all capped by top-hat-shaped ornament; both the Tuan Fang *chüeh* and R 1051 from Hou Chia Chuang have inscriptions under their bow-shaped handles.

#### *Chia* (Figures 9–11)

There are two tetrapod *chia* specimens from HPKM 1022 and one tripod *chia* from the Tuan Fang set. The three vessels in this group are functionally analogous, so they are all classified within the category *chia*. But structurally, with the exception of the similar arrangements of the two uprights on the rim and the handle at the side, they have very different appearances. The

10. Chün Hsien Hsin Tsun, Institute of Archaeology, Academia Sinica (Peiping, 1964).



FIGURE 9  
*Chia*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set, H. 10 3/8 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Munsey Fund, 24.72.7

FIGURE 10  
*Chia*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022, H. 7 1/2 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology





FIGURE 11  
*Chia*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022, H.  
 12 3/8 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of  
 the Institute of History and Philology

main features of their bodily structure are traceable to different prototypes; their analogous ritual functions may be totally unrelated to their bodily construction.

It must be pointed out that tripod *chia* are comparatively rare.<sup>11</sup> What seems to be particularly significant is that the thirteen complete examples of tripod *chia* from Anyang are typologically uniform. All possess three independent legs of the *ting* type, while the Tuan Fang tripod *chia* possesses *li*-model legs united at the upper part exactly like a *li* tripod. After an intensive search, it may be definitely stated that tripod *chia* with *li*-model feet, so far as scientifically excavated specimens are concerned, have not been found in the Anyang area and its immediate neighborhood.

### *Yu* (Figures 12–21)

The two *yu* flasks from the Tuan Fang set have been graphically written about by Osvald Sirén. He called them “Urns or Cans,” and described them in the following terms:

... with lids and arched handles, intended for the keeping and transport of the sacrificial wine. They are practically of the same type, although one is somewhat smaller and is placed on a square plinth. Both the urn and the lid are divided by four fantastically profiled ridges, which curve like the stem of a boat over the swelling urn and stick out like pointed ears from the lid. This zoomorphic hint is emphasized by the animal heads on the handles which are crowned with ears resembling elk-horns. The decorative motive is otherwise ornithomorphic in character. Heraldically posed birds, with large round eyes, long hooked beaks and flame-like wings occur here in five borders, varying somewhat in size and shape, but all fantastically wild and bold. . . .<sup>12</sup>

There are four *yu* flasks excavated by Academia Sinica archaeologists from the Anyang area (Figures 13–16). One of the four, registered as R1071 (Figures 13, 17–20), was found in Tomb HPKM1022. It is the most elegantly shaped specimen of this class of bronze vessels. It consists of three parts: the main body of the flask covered by double lids. The middle section forms a long neck in outside appearance and is made in the shape of a beaker. This separate element constitutes the actual cover immediately above the liquid container, but in practice it also served the purpose of a beaker. When in place on the *yu*, the beaker is inverted and surmounted by a lid linked to the arched handle by a looped device. The entire vessel, including the handle, the cover, and the ring foot, is fully decorated with beautifully composed ornamentation. The body and elongated neck are covered by eight horizontal bands of different design and varied decorative elements. The animal shapes, wherever they occur, are highly metamorphosed. Whether or not they were of ornithomorphic origin is difficult to say. The harmony of this

11. A statistical counting of 130 *chia* vessels of all shapes in various illustrated catalogues shows only 10 examples of tetrapod type, less than eight percent of the total number. From the Anyang area of the Shang-Yin period the total number of *chia* vessels is 16, of which 13 are tripod and 3 are tetrapod (a much larger percentage than average). See Li Chi and Wan Chia-pao, “Chia-vessel,” p. 62.

12. Sirén, *Early Chinese Art*, p. 34.



FIGURE 12  
*Yu*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set, H. 18 1/4 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Munsey Fund, 24.72.3 a, b



FIGURE 13  
*Yu*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022, R1071, H. 10 3/4 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology

vessel's shape and decoration is an accomplishment of supreme skill by a master hand.

Another *yu* flask (R2065), discovered at Hsiao T'un M238 (Figure 15), while similar in shape to R1071, possesses no middle cover; it is a high-necked bottle, pure and simple; at the top, it is covered by a single lid, originally linked to the curved handle, very much as in R1071. The decorative motifs are, however, far less distorted; the animal heads that appear in the horizontal bands, arranged as on the preceding vessel, are definitely derived from some horned animals.

The third example of a *yu* flask (R2753) (Figure 16)

was found in M331; it is similar to the two already mentioned (R1071, R2065) in that it also has a high neck, immovable like that of R2065. But the main body is of square shape with beautifully designed spiral-horned animal heads facing outward at the four corners. The tips of all the spiral horns of the animal heads protrude freely out of the background; this method of executing the ornamental design is also used in the decoration of one of the *chih* cups from the Tuan Fang set (Figure 26). There is a steplike molding around the shoulder of the body of the square *yu* flask at the lower part of the high neck and, as in the two round *yu* flasks



FIGURE 14  
*Yu*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM2046,  
 R1072, H. 8 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang.  
 Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 15  
*Yu*, from Hsiao T'un, M238, R2065, H. 12 in.  
 Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the  
 Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 16  
*Yu*, from Hsiao T'un, M331, R2753, H. 11 7/8 in.  
 Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the  
 Institute of History and Philology

described above, the neck part is fully covered by ornaments in low relief. In addition, there are animal heads on different parts of the body.

The most interesting specimen of an Anyang *yu* flask is R1072 (Figures 14, 21), from Tomb HPKM2046. It is the only one that may be classified as a squat type. The main body is like a gourd truncated at the waist; the lid actually covers the rim of the vessel, extending down to the shoulder of the body. Unlike the high-necked flask, the knob of the cover is not linked to the swinging handle, nor was it ever meant to be.

This particular specimen is also unique among the

Anyang group in that it is decorated only by a frieze circumscribing the top part of the body. The frieze consists of a series of realistic bird forms against a *yünleiwén* background, with two animal heads in relief placed near the middle between the two terminals of the movable handle. This is cast in imitation of twisted rope, ending in rings passing through two loop handles attached to the body; the loop handles and the animal heads are equidistant on the frieze. The top of the cover is similarly decorated by a circular band with birds as the main motif; the band is placed near the margin of the lid.



FIGURE 17  
Lateral view of *yu*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022, R1071 (Figure 13). Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 18  
*Yu*, R1071, without middle section. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology

FIGURE 19  
Detail of *yu*, R1071, showing loop-joining device. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 20  
The beaker-shaped middle section of R1071. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology





FIGURE 21  
Lateral view of *yu*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM2046, R1072 (Figure 14). Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology

What is particularly interesting, in terms of structure, is the method of the joining of the curved handle with the loops on the body (Figure 22a). This method is practically the same as that observed on the two *yu* flasks of the Tuan Fang set, although, in the latter case, the loop rings of the handle are externally expanded to an elklike animal head (Figure 22c). On the other hand, in the case of the three high-necked *yu* flasks of the Anyang specimens, the terminal parts of the swinging handle are all cast in the form of an animal head with a crossbeam at its back, which passes through the loop handles on the flask body (Figure 22b)—a method of joining obviously quite different from the interlocked loop type commonly found in all the normal *yu* flasks without a tall neck.

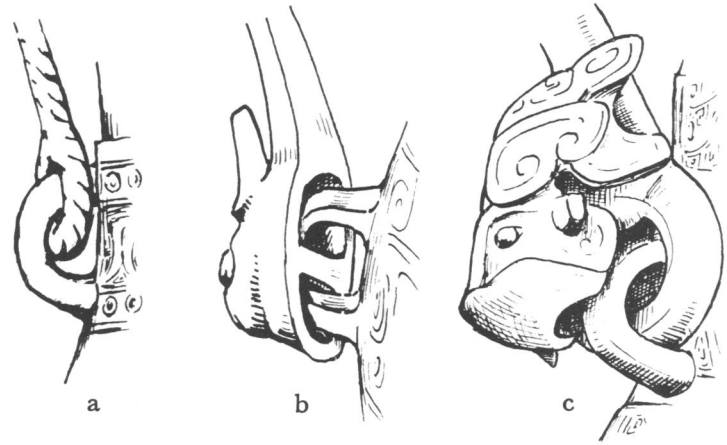


FIGURE 22  
Three methods of loop-joining found in the bronze *yu* flasks of Hou Chia Chuang and Tou Chi T'ai

#### *Chih* (Figures 23–28)

There are four *chih* goblets from the Tuan Fang altar set; one of the four, which Umehara named *tsun* (Figure 26), is fully covered with animal ornamentation, while the other three (Figures 23–25), comparatively thinner and taller in appearance, are all collared by a narrow horizontal band of *yünleiwên* design. On one of these the band is bordered on both sides by serially arranged small circles within bow strings. Two of the goblets are similarly decorated on the ring foot and the third has a plain foot rim.

From HPKM1022, two *chih* goblets are available for comparative study (Figures 27, 28). Both are covered by full ornamentation. The decoration of Figure 27 (R1075) is composed of animal masks and birds and is divided into horizontal bands of varying widths, while Figure 28 (R1076) is decorated with round and square spirals covering the entire surface—a perfect example of *yünleiwên* design. Both Anyang goblets have a dome-shaped cover with an umbrella-shaped button at the top of the cap, supported by a short stem. In general appearance, these two goblets are less bulbous than the animal goblet in the Tuan Fang group, but not as slender and tall as the other three of the set. It is a matter of common knowledge that the slender type of *chih* goblet became the fashion in the later period.

FIGURE 23  
*Chih*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
H. 5¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Munsey Fund, 24.72.11

FIGURE 24  
*Chih*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
H. 5¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Munsey Fund, 24.72.12

FIGURE 25  
*Chih*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
H. 5 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Mun-  
sey Fund, 24.72.14







FIGURE 26  
*Chih*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
 H. 5¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
 Munsey Fund, 24.72.6

FIGURE 27  
*Chih*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022,  
 R1075, H. 6¾ in. Academia Sinica, Nankang.  
 Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology

FIGURE 28  
*Chih*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022,  
 R1076, H. 6¾ in. Academia Sinica, Nankang.  
 Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 29  
*Ho*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
 H. 5¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
 Munsey Fund, 24.72.5 a, b

FIGURE 30  
*Ho*, from Hsiao T'un, M331, R2072, H. 8¾ in.  
 Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the  
 Institute of History and Philology

#### Nonhomologous Specimens (Figures 29–38)

As noted in the beginning of this article, there are a number of objects in the sets chosen for these comparative notes that find no counterpart in the other set. In HPKM1022 from Hou Chia Chuang, there are two such objects. One is the horn-shaped vessel (Figure 36), cast in exactly the same shape as the horn of an ox, with a cover at the larger end; the pointed tip is truncated. The other is the *fang-i* (Figure 38), a rather common type in most museum collections.

FIGURE 31

*Tou*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set, L. 8 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Munsey Fund, 24.72.8

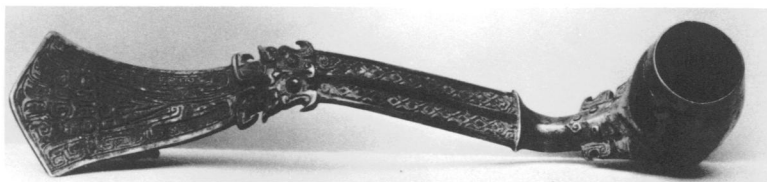


FIGURE 32

*Tou*, from Hou Chia Chuang, L. 5 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology

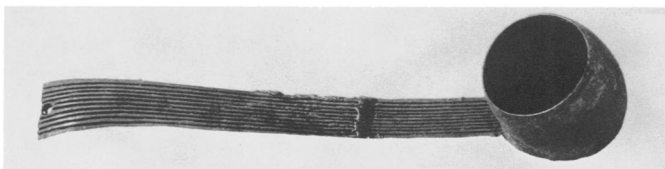


FIGURE 33

*Tou*, from Hou Chia Chuang, L. 12 1/4 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



FIGURE 34

*Tou*, from Hsiao T'un, M331, L. 9 1/2 in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and Philology



Ritual bronzes from the Tuan Fang altar set that could not be paired in HPKM1022 are more numerous. First, there is the huge *tsun* vase, nearly 35 cm. (13 3/4 in.) tall (Figure 37), one of the three giant bronzes on the altar table. It is to be observed that this type of *tsun* is absent not only in the HPKM1022 tomb; what is particularly worthy of attention is the fact that it was never found in any of the more than a thousand opened Anyang tombs investigated by archaeologists. Even among the broken bronze fragments, scattered in different parts of the tomb area as well as the dwelling site, there is no indication that this type of bronze vessel was ever discovered.

The word *tsun* in bronze inscriptions was usually used as a general term denoting ritual bronzes of many different varieties, and it is the Sung antiquarians who first confined this term's usage to a particular group of the Shang and Chou bronzes. Jung Kêng followed the Sung tradition and started giving this term an even more specific definition, limiting its usage to those bronzes similar to *ku* and *chih* in shape, but larger in

size.<sup>13</sup> Within this category, he was able to assemble no less than sixty-three examples.<sup>14</sup> Typologically speaking, it is obvious that this term as defined by Jung Kêng is still generic in nature, judging from the illustrations given by him as examples. In another part of the same work,<sup>15</sup> Jung Kêng defines two other types of bronzes in terms of *tsun*, as follows:

*tsun*: round, columnlike body, with flaring mouth and foot

*ku*: similar to *tsun* in shape, but smaller

*chih*: similar to *tsun* but shorter

The *tsun* in the Tuan Fang set may be taken as a typical example, by Jung Kêng's definition. But Jung Kêng's compendium also includes a number of vessels with a wide, angular shoulder below the top section. His normal type of *tsun*, like the one in the Tuan Fang

13. Jung Kêng, *The Bronzes of Shang and Chou*, *Yenching Journal of Chinese Studies*, Monograph Series, no. 17 (Peiping, 1941) I, p. 391.

14. Jung Kêng, "Bronzes," II, pls. 493-556.

15. Jung Kêng, "Bronzes," I, p. 22.



FIGURE 35  
*Chihh*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
 H. 5 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Mun-  
 sey Fund, 24.72.13

FIGURE 36  
 Horn-shaped *chihh*, from Hou Chia Chuang,  
 HPKM1022, L. 11 ¼ in. Academia Sinica, Nan-  
 kang. Courtesy of the Institute of History and  
 Philology

FIGURE 37  
*Tsun*, from Tou Chi T'ai, Tuan Fang altar set,  
 H. 13 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
 Munsey Fund, 24.72.4

FIGURE 38  
*Fang-i*, from Hou Chia Chuang, HPKM1022,  
 H. 10 ⅞ in. Academia Sinica, Nankang. Courtesy  
 of the Institute of History and Philology



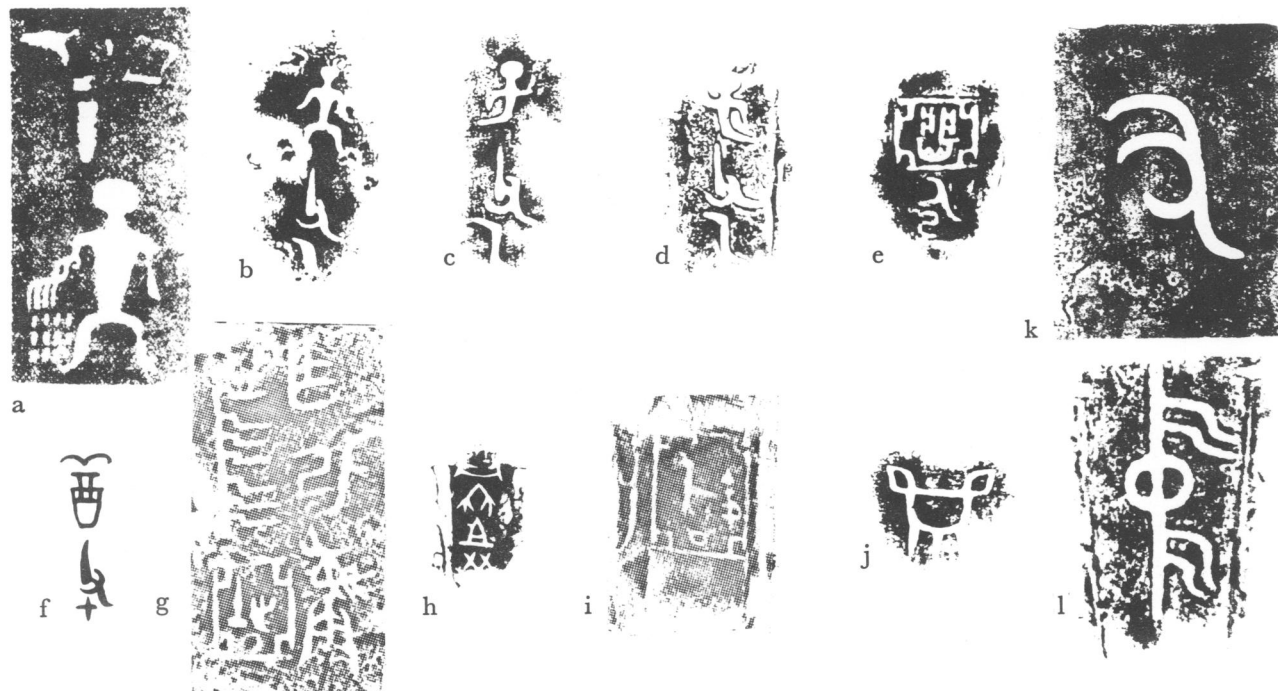


FIGURE 39  
Inscriptions from the bronzes of Tou Chi T'ai  
(a-j) and Hou Chia Chuang (k, l)

- a. *Chia* (Figure 9)
- b. *Chih* (Figure 26)
- c, d. *Ho* (Figure 29)
- e. *Ku* (Figure 4)
- f. *Chih* (Figure 24)
- g. *Chih* (Figure 25)
- h. *Chioh* (Figure 35)
- i. *Chüeh* (Figure 6)
- j. *Yu* (Figure 12)
- k. *Fang-i* (Figure 38)
- l. *Chüeh* (Figure 8)

altar set, was never found in the Anyang excavation; the shouldered type, however, appeared several times in the Anyang tomb of the Shang-Yin period. It is rather doubtful that these two varieties of Jung Kêng's defined category can be traced to the same origin.

If we confine our attention to Jung Kêng's normal type of *tsun*, that is, the expanded *ku* as shown in the Tuan Fang group, no example could be cited from Anyang by field archaeologists of the Academia Sinica. But if the shouldered example of Jung Kêng's *tsun* is

used, scientific archaeology can give several examples of *tsun* from the Anyang tombs of the Shang-Yin age. Yet, historically speaking, neither the columnlike *tsun* nor the shouldered type from Anyang could reflect the original shape of the vessel by this name, the origin of which may go back to neolithic pottery. If the primitive pictorial representation of this article (Figure 39f) is analyzed, the *tsun* in its original form apparently had a rounded bottom. In later usage, the meaning of the term *tsun* was gradually enlarged to cover a variety of beaker-shaped bronzes that had something to do with wine drinking.<sup>16</sup>

To continue our comparison of Anyang vessels with the Tuan Fang set, the tripod *ho* pot (Figure 29) and the long-handled *tou* ladle (Figure 31) included in the Tuan Fang altar set, but absent in HPKM1022, might be compared with counterparts in other Anyang tombs (Figures 30, 32-34). The *ho* pot (R2072) from the Anyang area, like the *chia* vessel from Anyang, possesses three independent feet at the bottom. The *ho*

16. It is a constant source of confusion for students of Chinese bronzes to assume an infallible identification of types of artifacts and their names in current usage (that were created mainly by Sung antiquarians). The group of bronzes named *tsun* may serve as an example to illustrate this confusion.

from the Tuan Fang set, however, is footed like a *li*. There are other important differences between these two homologous articles: the *ho* of the Tuan Fang group has a spout near the rim and a handle to which the lid is chained, while the Anyang specimen possesses two loops on the body but does not have a handle, and has a very short spout, with the lip of its mouth falling much below the level of the rim of the pot.

Another type of tripod beaker, also classified as belonging to the wine-service set, is similar to the tripod *chüeh* beaker in every respect below the rim, but the mouth of the vessel is shaped quite differently (Figure 35). There is no upright or spout. It resembles an elongated boat with two tails pointing upward and arranged symmetrically. Antiquarians call this type of beaker *chih* 角, to differentiate it from the more regular type of wine beaker called *chüeh* 爵.

In the second volume of Jung Kêng's compendium of the Shang and Chou bronzes, thirty-seven *chüeh* and *chih* beakers are illustrated. A careful examination of these specimens shows at least four different varieties of the beaker-shaped drinking vessels cast in the bronze age. They are:

1. the regular type, with spout, tail, and uprights on the rim:
  - a. without cover: twenty-two specimens
  - b. with cover: one specimen
2. *chüeh* with two spouts having elongated rims, uprights, and a cover: two specimens
3. *chüeh* without uprights:
  - a. with cover: two specimens
  - b. without cover: one specimen
4. *chih* with two taillike endings but no spout or uprights:
  - a. with cover: four specimens
  - b. without cover: five specimens

The thirty-nine *chüeh* beakers excavated from Anyang, like the one in the Tuan Fang altar set, belong to the standard type: Jung Kêng's type 1. The rim is composed of a spout and a tail, with one or two uprights on the rim. But in addition, the Tuan Fang set includes an example of type 4 (*chih*) as listed in the above classification; it is without a cover. The decoration of the Tuan Fang *chih* is executed in raised lines; at the top of the bow-shaped handle, there is an animal head. This bronze is without a counterpart from HPKM1022 or from any of the other Shang-Yin tombs

excavated in the Anyang area. But, as already mentioned above, HPKM1022 possesses the unique, truly ox-horn-shaped bronze drinking vessel, to which antiquarians also have given the name *chih* 角. This vessel is a likeness of the projections from the bovine animal's frontal bone, i.e., his fighting organ, which in vernacular language is called a *chih* 角. Its imitation in bronze may be the earliest *chih* type among the drinking vessels.

There are two other points to discuss in regard to the relationship between the bronzes of the Tuan Fang set and those found at Anyang, namely, the shape of the flanges and the inscriptions.

In "Studies of the Bronze Ku-beaker," the following concluding observations were made:

As the flanged specimens are found only in the E-area, [the eastern part of the Hou Chia Chuang cemetery site] there is no doubt some particular reason for this distinction. . . . The flanges are not a feature peculiar to *ku* among the early bronzes, so their development on *ku* was perhaps partly inspired by flanges first developed on other types of bronze. . . . The history of ornament, insofar as the *ku* type is concerned . . . started a new era after the flange appeared.<sup>17</sup>

Hence, the development of flanges on *ku* came late among the Anyang bronzes of the Shang-Yin period; whatever its origin, the above conclusion seems to hold true as far as archaeological evidence goes. HPKM1022 is located in the E-area of Hou Chia Chuang; of the ten bronze ritual vessels found in this burial, no less than four (one *fang-i*, one *chüeh*, one *ku*, and one *chia*) have flanges. But when they are compared with the Tuan Fang bronzes, they certainly look somewhat underdeveloped. The three giant bronzes of the Tuan Fang altar set all possess excessively developed flanges with spikes dividing each of them into a number of sections. The same is true of the flanges of the *ku* and *chüeh*, which are also much more prominently developed than any of those of Hou Chia Chuang origin.

The exaggerated development of the flanges on the Tuan Fang vessels may be considered as a continuing evolutionary feature, whose origin may be traced to the Shang-Yin period. This statement is also partly based on the close typological similarities of the general

17. Li Chi and Wan Chia-pao, "Ku-beaker," pp. 127-128.

shapes among the homologous bronzes like the *ku*, the *chüeh*, the *yu*, and the *chih*.

I should like to comment on our present knowledge of the bronze inscriptions. It is a well-known theory, advanced by my esteemed friend Bernard Karlgren,<sup>18</sup> that there are three symbols inscribed on ancient Chinese bronzes that could be relied upon as a guide to define the Yin bronzes: they are what Karlgren called *Ya-hing*, *Si ts'i sun*, and *Kü*. It is a rather curious fact that these symbols have been found in each instance only once on the inscribed bronzes in the excavated tombs of Anyang. It would certainly be remarkable if nearly all these "Yin" bronzes with the Karlgren symbols from the Anyang area should have been plundered before scientific digging started in 1928!

On the other hand, the bronzes of the Tuan Fang set from Tou Chi T'ai are almost all inscribed with some glyphic symbols. Three of the particular bronzes that carry such symbols are the *ku*, the *chüeh*, and one *chih*, all of which, however, typologically do not represent the standard type of testified Anyang finds of the Shang-Yin period. The other two symbols, namely *Si ts'i sun* and *Kü*, were not found in either of the two groups of bronzes compared above.

## GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL FACTORS

Geographical and historical factors may have played an important role in the divergent evolution and type differentiations of early Chinese bronzes. Although a number of writers in the past did call attention to geographical factors, nobody seems to have realized that local divergences of the bronze types may have existed as early as the Shang-Yin period.<sup>19</sup>

During the time when the bronze industry was highly developed in the Anyang area, there was a parallel development in the Sian Fu area, in the northwest, where the capital of the Chou state was located. While there might have been a great deal of trade and interchange of cultural objects between these two areas,

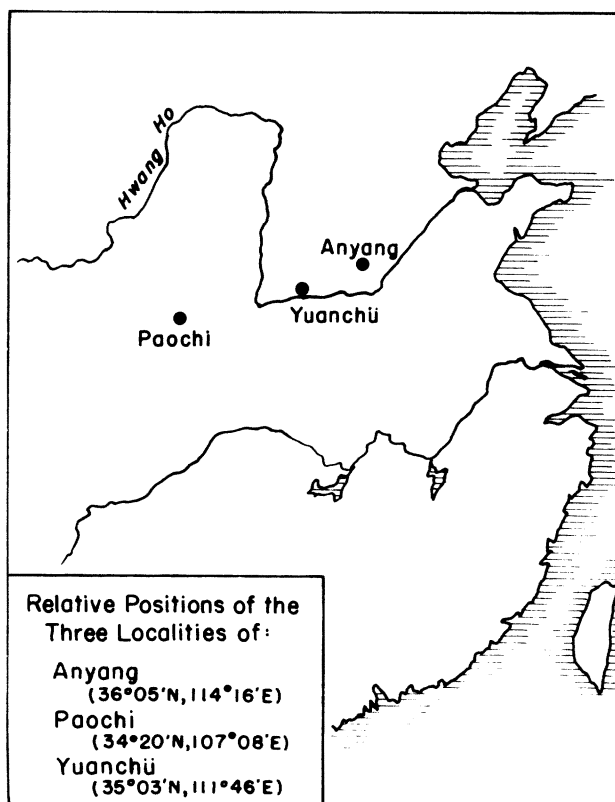
18. Bernard Karlgren, "Yin and Chou in Chinese Bronzes," *Bulletin of The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 8 (Stockholm, 1936) p. 21.

19. Recent researches have brought forth the information that there existed earlier Shang bronzes, which were more primitive than the finds in the Anyang area and were produced in western Honan, near the modern city of Lo Yang.

there must also have been local products peculiar to each region. What I am particularly concerned with is the development of the bronze industry. We know that certain types of artifacts were made only in a certain locality. Such local specializations have been found to occur in the case of pottery and stone tools. It should not be surprising if this was also true of the bronze industry.

Two examples of this are the *chia* and the *ho* pot. In these cases, although functionally they are analogous, the structural differences between the Tuan Fang and the Anyang examples are more than apparent. This point needs some careful consideration. We may begin with the *chia* vessel first. It has been pointed out already that all the Anyang specimens of *chia* of the Shang-Yin period from excavations possess *ting*-type feet, but that the *chia* from the altar set, on the other hand, has the feet of a *li*. Similarly the *ho* pot possesses a *li*-type foot in the Tuan Fang specimen, but a *ting*-type foot in the Anyang specimen. These two cases show that there

Sketch map showing the locations of three *hsien* (districts): Anyang, Paochi, and Yuanchü



might be local distinctions that should be independently analyzed in order to avoid chronological confusions.

There are, of course, other instances of such parochial differences of style; for example, the absence of the *fang-i* and horn-shaped vessel in the altar set, and the unique altar table and the so-called *tsun* in the Tuan Fang group, for which we find no parallels in the Anyang excavations.

The fact that the Tuan Fang set has vessels dating from Shang and Chou should not startle us in view of the fact that Shang and Chou coexisted for many generations—a historical fact now fully confirmed by modern archaeological investigations. Just as there existed a predynastic Yin culture in the Anyang area, similarly there was a long period of predynastic Chou culture, part of which was contemporaneous with the dynastic Shang-Yin era. It is historically known that Chou was a vassal state in the service of the Yin court and the royal house of the Yin intermarried with the feudal lords of the Chou. Recent excavations along the Wei River valley also proved the existence of a long predynastic culture dating back to the neolithic period before the Chou developed into a power strong enough to overthrow the ruling dynasty.

In the consideration of such ritual vessels as those in the Tuan Fang set, the source of supply of the metals used in casting is a matter of some interest. This question has been recently investigated by both geologists and students of history. It has been determined that while tin was found in ingot shape in Anyang, indicating it was probably imported from a long distance, copper ore was definitely smelted *in situ*, as testified by its remains in many lumps and fragments of malachite. Consequently, in our opinion, the source of these minerals containing copper must be located not too far from Anyang.<sup>20</sup>

Geologists can testify to the existence of a number of copper mines within a distance of 300 km. from Anyang.<sup>21</sup> Those located in southern Shansi are of special interest in the present discussion. The six mines of

Yüan Chü district, on the northern bank of the Yellow River in southern Shansi province, occupy a position almost halfway between Anyang and the Wei River valley. If the Shang-Yin industrialists could make use of the copper ore from Yüan Chü, the Chou people of Shensi could also have transported these ores to the Wei River valley. I have mentioned the Yüan Chü copper deposit in particular because it is one of the best known in northern China and is still being mined. The Northern Sung dynasty had one of its official mints located in this district.

## CONCLUSIONS

We now can make an attempt to answer the queries that led to this discussion. Let me take them up according to the order in which they were made.

The question about the composition of the Tuan Fang altar set implied in the beginning of this article may be summed up as follows: Is this set now as it was found in the original burial? My answer is: It is possible. In the past, different dates have been given to different items. The *chioh* was labeled as Early Shang, the *ku* and *chih* as Shang, the *tsun*, *ho*, *chia*, and *yu* as Early Chou. As the entire group presumably was buried in an Early Chou tomb, it is not surprising to find a few articles older than Chou included in the sacrificial offerings. This was really an old practice, encountered repeatedly in tombs of the Shang-Yin dynasty.

I agree, therefore, in general with the idea that the individual articles in the Tuan Fang altar set were cast in different periods. However, the various dates originally assigned by the Metropolitan Museum may be given a reappraisal in the light of present knowledge. In view of the recent discoveries near Chêng-chou and Lo Yang, the term "Early Shang" now bears a quite different meaning. The *chioh* of the Tuan Fang altar set could hardly be that early, if it were Shang at all. But the dwarfed *tsun* (Figure 26) (called *tsun* by Umehara, and reclassified here as *chih*), which has been dated as Early Chou, might be a local product of the Shang-Yin period, from Shensi province. It is not necessary for me to repeat what has already been said in the individual comparisons. If we bear in mind that local styles already existed as early as the time of predynastic Chou in Shensi, we might avoid errors originating from periodization on the basis of a single

20. Motonosuke Amano, "Mining and Agriculture in the Yin Dynasty," *Journal of Oriental Studies (Toho Gakuho)* 23 (Kyoto, 1953) pp. 231-258.

21. Shih Chang-ju, "Bronze Casting in the Shang Dynasty," *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology* 26 (Academia Sinica, 1955) pp. 95-139.

criterion—whether the criterion be stratigraphical, ornamental, structural, or epigraphical. I have pointed out on other occasions that there are six different aspects of ancient Chinese bronze studies,<sup>22</sup> which, while closely related to one another, should nevertheless be pursued individually and independently in the detailed analyses. These six aspects are: casting method, shapes, ornaments, inscriptions, nomenclature, and functions. Analyses of the first four may be based on direct observations of the actual artifacts. The last two groups of data are mainly documentary in nature; they concern both the historical records and the meaning of early script and language.

The precedent for the Tuan Fang altar set is found in the set HPKM1022, whose ritual bronzes, although slightly different in composition from the Tuan Fang group, were also all designed for the wine service.

In the classic *Shoo King, or The Book of Historical Documents*, there is a chapter “The Announcement About Drunkenness,” considered to be an authentic Early Chou document, in which the founder of the Chou dynasty cautioned “the princes of the various states, all the high officers, with their assistants and the managers of affairs”<sup>23</sup> about the ruinous consequences of indulgence in the use of spirits. But throughout this announcement, which incidentally reads very much like a preamble to the Eighteenth Amendment to the American Constitution, one exception is always made: that is, their use in “the great sacrifice.” It is evidently the belief of the time that the offering of intoxicating liquids was to be limited to the dedication to Heaven and the worship of the dead, and wine consumption should be limited exclusively to those occasions. If any living people should be tempted to this habit, they are doomed.

It is important to bear in mind that in Early Chou it was the belief of the founder of the dynasty that:

When Heaven has sent down its terrors and our people have . . . lost their virtue, this might also be invariably

traced to their indulgence in spirits, yea, the ruin of states, small and great, by these terrors, may be also traced invariably to their crime in the use of spirits.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, according to the State Announcement, “Spirits were used only in the great sacrifices”<sup>25</sup> in the beginning of the new dynasty.

But in the preceding Shang-Yin period, especially when the last ruler, King Chou, was in power, he built a subterranean tank to store wines in order to indulge to the utmost in the delight of a drinking spree. The royal addiction to wine drinking naturally encouraged general lay consumption, especially among the privileged and the rich.

I believe it is for these reasons that the luxurious wine set cast in bronze in the Shang-Yin period, as represented by the HPKM1022 group, shows so much grace, delicacy, and superb taste, in beautifully preserved examples such as the *ku* beaker, the *chiieh* cups, the *chih* goblets, and above all the *yu* flask. In contrast to this group, most of the individual articles of the Tuan Fang altar set from Tou Chi T'ai look not only unworldly but almost otherworldly in appearance; the spiky flanges and the powerful shapes of most bronzes from this set give one an awesome impression. They were perhaps loftier in conception and more sacred in purpose. But they were hardly fitting for the daily use of living people, even in the remote Chou period; they are certainly less human in taste. Their awesomeness, however, must have suited the occasions when “the great sacrifices” were to be performed!

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22. Li Chi, “How to Study Chinese Bronzes,” *The National Palace Museum Quarterly* 1 (1966).

23. James Legge, trans., *The Shoo King, or The Book of Historical Documents*, The Chinese Classics, III (Shanghai, 1935) p. 399.

24. Legge, *Shoo King*, p. 401.

25. Legge, *Shoo King*, pp. 399-401.



# The Department of Greek and Roman Art: Triumphs and Tribulations

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THE YEAR 1906 marked the beginning of a new era for the Department of Greek and Roman Art in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Before then the collection consisted principally of the large assembly of Cypriot antiquities acquired by General L. P. di Cesnola in 1865–1876, while he was the American consul in Cyprus, the first installment of which was transferred in 1873 to the Metropolitan Museum—of which Cesnola became first the secretary and then the director (1879–1904). Though formed at a time when collecting rather than scientific excavation was the norm, this collection of Cypriot art—especially strong in sculpture and pottery—is still the largest and most important of its kind outside Cyprus.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the Museum possessed a few outstanding objects, such as the Etruscan chariot from Monteleone, acquired in 1903 (Figure 1);<sup>2</sup> the frescoes from a villa at Boscoreale, also acquired in 1903 (Figure 2);<sup>3</sup> the bronze statue perhaps representing the emperor Trebonianus Gallus, acquired in 1905 (Figure 3);<sup>4</sup> the Ward collection of Greek coins presented by J. Pierpont Morgan in 1905;<sup>5</sup> and the Charvet Collection of ancient glass given by Henry G. Marquand in 1881.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, an extensive collection of architectural and sculptural casts had been added in the period from 1883 to 1895 through the interest of several donors who realized their importance for the study of Greek and Roman art.

Late in 1905 Edward Robinson, previously director of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, was appointed assistant director of the Metropolitan Museum, under Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke. Mr. Robinson was an archae-

ologist of high standing and was therefore equipped to build up the Greek and Roman collection in New York. During the next decades, this modest collection was in fact transformed into one of the most representative and artistically most important in Europe or America.

It is instructive to recall the steps that resulted in such an achievement. One of the principal early factors

1. See L. P. di Cesnola, *A Descriptive Atlas of the Cesnola Collection of Cypriote Antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 3 vols. (New York, 1885–1903); J. L. Myres, *Handbook of the Cesnola Collection of Antiquities from Cyprus* (New York, 1914).

2. Acc. no. 03.23.1. A. Furtwängler, “Bronzewagen von Monteleone,” in H. Brunn and F. Bruckmann, *Denkmäler griechischer und römischer Skulptur* (Munich, 1897) pls. 586, 587, reprinted in *Kleine Schriften*, II (Munich, 1913) pp. 314 ff.; A. Furtwängler, *Neue Denkmäler antiker Kunst*, III (Munich, 1905) p. 262, reprinted in *Kleine Schriften*, II (Munich, 1913) p. 501; E. Robinson, “The Bronze Chariot,” *BMMA* 1 (1906) pp. 82 ff.; G. H. Chase, “Three Bronze Tripods belonging to James Loeb, Esq.,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 12 (1908) pp. 287 ff., esp. pp. 312 ff.; Richter, *Bronzes*, no. 40; G. M. A. Richter, *Handbook of the Etruscan Collection* (New York, 1940) pp. 26 ff.

3. Acc. nos. 03.14.1–13. Richter, *Classical Handbook* (1930) pp. 218 ff.; B. F. Cook, “The Boscoreale Cubiculum: A New Installation,” *BMMA* n.s. 22 (1963–1964) pp. 166–183, figs. 1–26.

4. Acc. no. 05.30. Richter, *Bronzes*, no. 350 (where its curious history is given, namely, that it is said to have been found early in the nineteenth century near the Lateran, later taken to Russia, and then sold to Rollin and Feuardent in Paris, where it was repaired by M. André).

5. Acc. nos. 05.44.1–936. G. F. Hill, *Greek Coins and their Parent Cities* (London, 1902).

6. W. Froehner, *La Verrerie antique, Description de la Collection Charvet* (Le Pecq, 1879).



**FIGURE 1**  
Bronze chariot from Monteleone, Italy. Etruscan. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 03.23.1



**FIGURE 2**  
Wall painting from Boscoreale, woman with a kithara. Roman. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 03.14.5

was the appointment of John Marshall as European purchasing agent—with a generous sum allocated by the trustees for acquisitions. Mr. Marshall, an Englishman of vast experience in the field of Greek and Roman art, had been the purchasing agent for the Boston Museum, and it was partly due to him that Boston had built up an outstanding collection. He was, moreover, a close friend of the famous collector Mr. Edward P. Warren<sup>7</sup> (brother of the president of the Boston Museum) and so was constantly in touch with important new material.

The plan for the building up of the collection of Greek and Roman art in New York was, in the words of Edward Robinson, “to develop it along systematic lines, strengthening it where it was weak, rounding it out as a whole, and maintaining a high standard of artistic excellence.”<sup>8</sup> Each year, therefore, during the next two decades, there arrived at the Museum a consignment of a variety of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman antiquities, purchased all over Europe. Sometimes the emphasis was on marbles and bronzes, at other times on terracottas, pottery, and jewelry; and so gradually, year by year, the collection was “systematically” enriched. Moreover, the time was favorable for the acquisition of such works of art, because the available supply was larger than it was to be at a later date.

7. J. D. Beazley, “Warren as Collector,” chap. 16 in O. Burdett and E. H. Goddard, *Edward Perry Warren* (London, 1941) pp. 331 ff.

8. E. Robinson, “New Greek and Roman Acquisitions,” *BMMA* 2 (1907) p. 5.

9. Acc. no. 11.185. E. Robinson, “An Archaic Greek Grave Monument,” *BMMA* 8 (1913) pp. 94 ff.; Richter, *Greek Sculptures*, no. 15; G. M. A. Richter, *The Archaic Gravestones of Attica* (London, 1961) p. 27, no. 37, figs. 96–109, 190, 204.

10. Acc. no. 25.78.56. G. M. A. Richter, “A Statue of the Diadoumenos,” *BMMA* 28 (1933) pp. 214 ff.; Richter, *Greek Sculptures*, no. 38; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 137 ff.

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13. Acc. no. 09.39. E. Robinson, “The Old Market Woman,” *BMMA* 4 (1909) pp. 201, 204 ff.; Richter, *Greek Sculptures*, no. 211; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 143 ff.

14. Acc. no. 07.286.87. E. Robinson, “The Diskos Thrower,” *BMMA* 3 (1908) pp. 31 ff.; Richter, *Bronzes*, no. 78; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) p. 66.

15. Acc. nos. 14.130.14, 15. G. M. A. Richter, “Geometric

The present writer well remembers when these precious consignments of European purchases arrived at the Museum and the excitement aroused by some of the masterpieces they contained—for instance, the archaic “Megakles” stele (Figure 4),<sup>9</sup> the head and other fragments of a Roman copy of the Diadoumenos by Polykleitos (Figure 5),<sup>10</sup> the Greek fourth-century lion (Figure 6),<sup>11</sup> the portrait of Epikouros (Figure 7),<sup>12</sup> the Hellenistic old market woman (Figure 8),<sup>13</sup> the bronze statuette of a discus thrower (Figure 9),<sup>14</sup> the colossal geometric vases (Figure 10),<sup>15</sup> the white-ground pyxis with the judgment of Paris (Figure 11),<sup>16</sup> the white-ground bobbin with a rare representation of Zephyros and Hyakinthos, and Nike and a boy victor (Figure 12),<sup>17</sup> and the two large red-figured Athenian kraters (Figure 13),<sup>18</sup> as well as a number of specially fine Roman portraits—ranging from the Republican to the Constantinian period<sup>19</sup>—and several Roman sarcophagi, including one with a representation of the musical contest between Sirens and Muses (Figure 14),<sup>20</sup> the most complete example with this subject extant, and another specially fine one, with the story of Endymion (Figure 15).<sup>21</sup> The coming of each of these newcomers was an unforgettable experience.

After their arrival, the objects had to be accessioned (also a newly introduced practice), repaired when nec-

Vases,” *BMMA* 10 (1915) pp. 70 ff.; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) p. 24.

16. Acc. no. 07.286.36. G. M. A. Richter, “White Athenian Pyxis,” *BMMA* 3 (1908) pp. 154 ff.; G. M. A. Richter and L. F. Hall, *Red-figured Athenian Vases in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New Haven, 1936) no. 73; Beazley, *ARV<sup>2</sup>*, p. 890, no. 173; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 84 ff.

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19. Richter, *Classical Handbook* (1930) pp. 288–306; G. M. A. Richter, *Roman Portraits* (New York, 1948).

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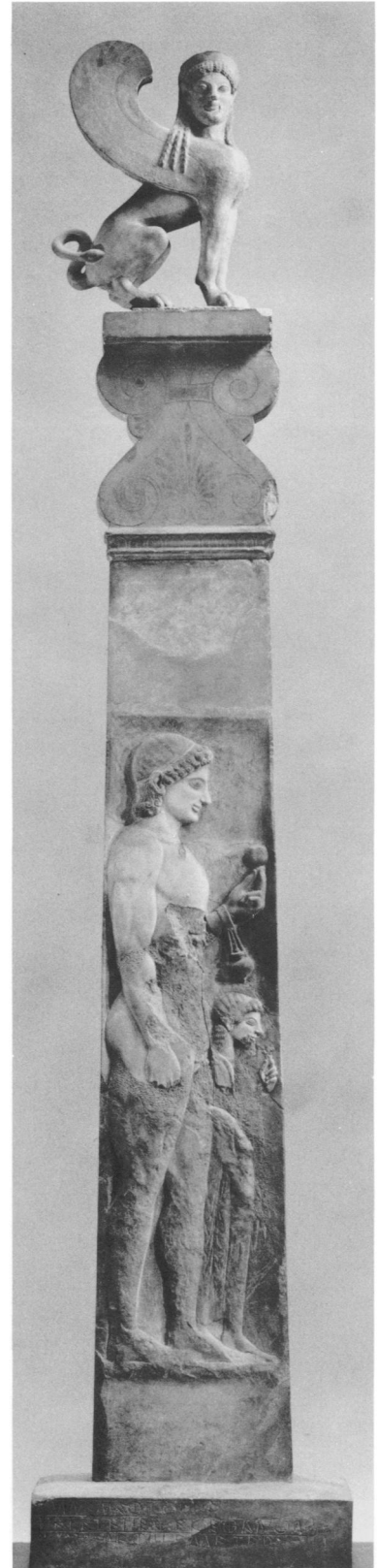
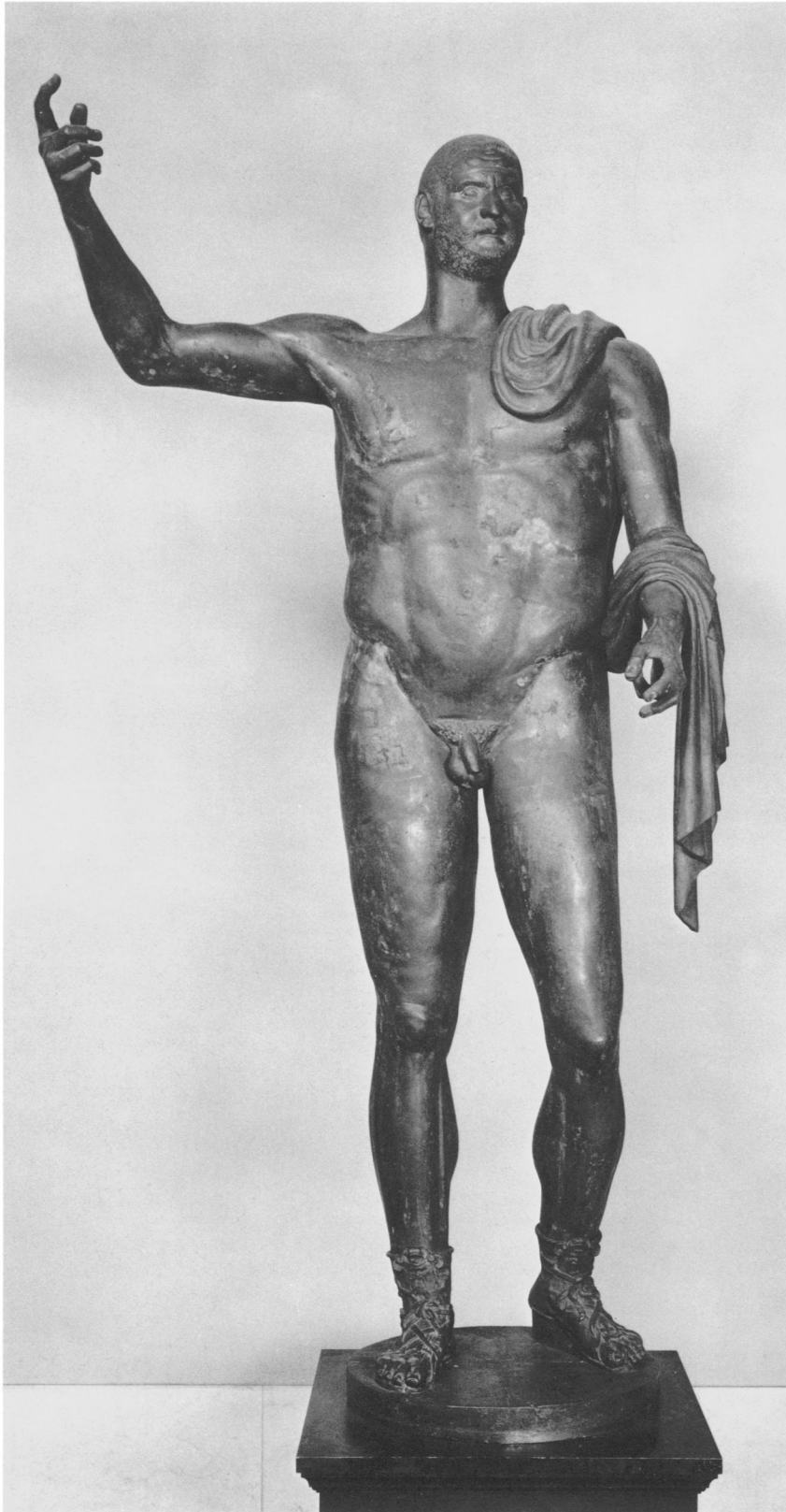


FIGURE 3

Bronze statue, perhaps of the emperor Trebonianus Gallus. Roman. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 05.30

FIGURE 4

Marble grave stele. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Frederick C. Hewitt Fund, 11.185

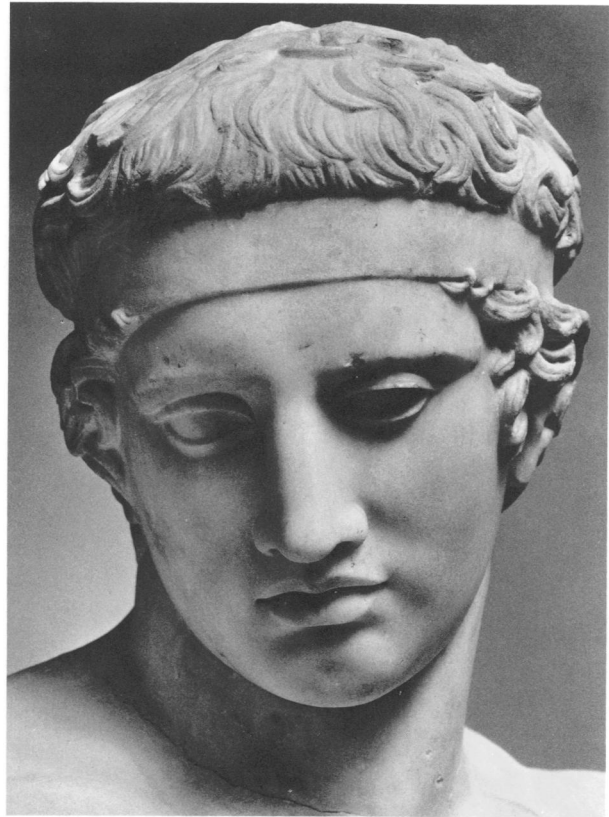
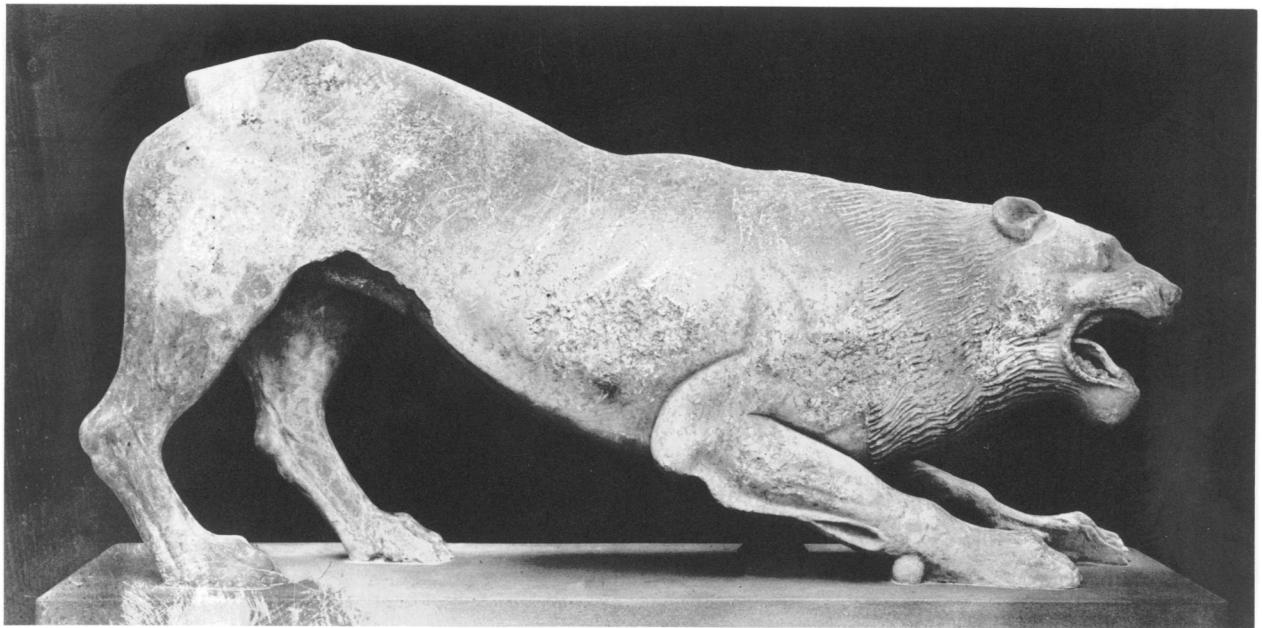


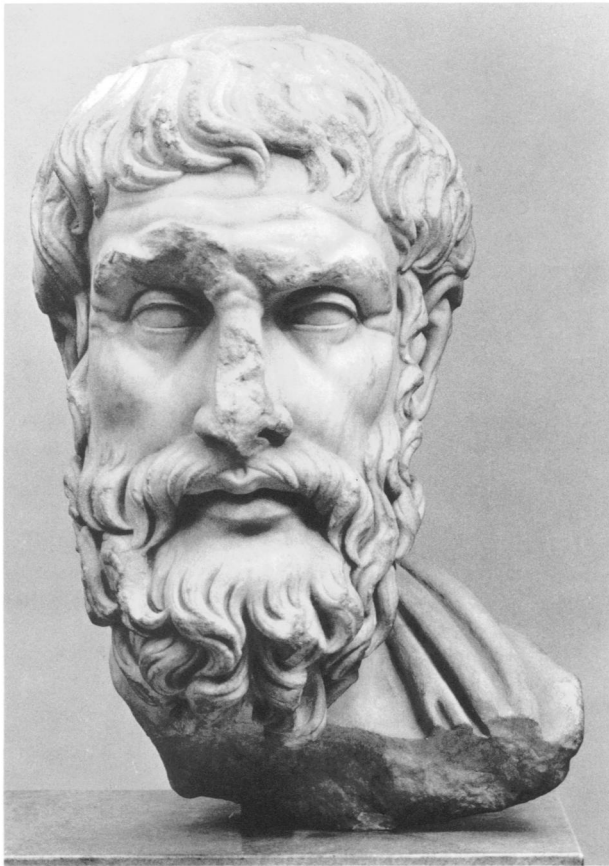
FIGURE 5

Head of a marble statue of the Diadoumenos. Roman copy after a Greek original by Polykleitos. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 25.78.56

FIGURE 6

Marble statue of a lion. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund and Funds from Various Donors, 09.221.3





**FIGURE 7**  
Marble portrait of Epikouros. Roman copy after  
a Greek original. The Metropolitan Museum of  
Art, Rogers Fund, 11.90



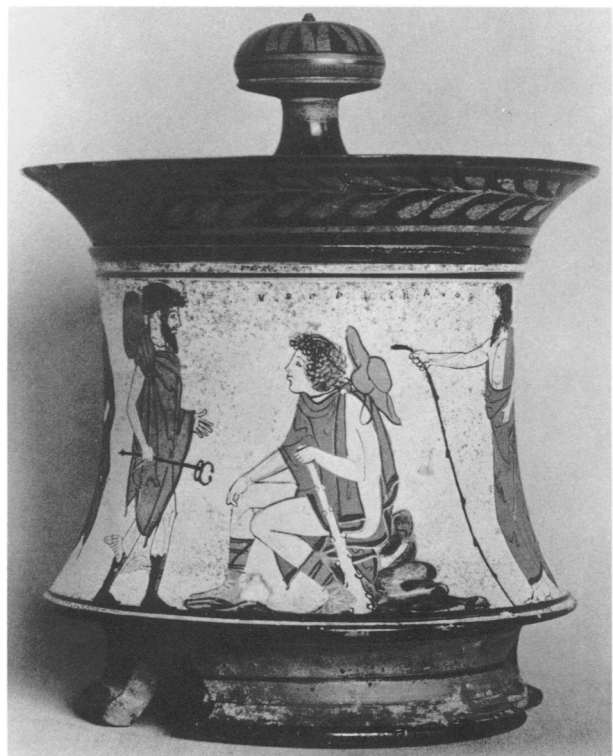
**FIGURE 8**  
Marble statue of an old market woman. Greek.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund,  
09.39



**FIGURE 9**  
Bronze statue of a discus thrower. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 07.286.87



**FIGURE 10**  
Terracotta vase. Greek, Geometric period. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 14.130.14



**FIGURE 11**  
Terracotta pyxis (box), judgment of Paris. Attic, attributed to the Penthesileia Painter. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 07.286.36

FIGURE 12

Terracotta bobbin, Nike crowning a youth. Attic, attributed to the Penthesileia Painter. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 28.167



essary, photographed, mounted, and installed; in addition, each object had not only to be labeled, but published as rapidly as possible in the *Museum Bulletin* (started in 1905) and in the handbooks of the collection, in order to make information about them available to the interested public and to archaeologists; and ultimately, they had to be published at greater length in catalogues and various periodicals. So each new acquisition kept everybody busy.

The installation of the various objects went through several phases. First the newcomers were shown in the "Room of Recent Accessions," then in the rapidly growing Museum galleries. The arrangement in these galleries was at first according to materials; later the plan to exhibit them chronologically was initiated, in order to show the development of Greek art, an arrangement now current in many museums. These Greek galleries occupied the whole of wing J (the galleries to either side of the hall leading from the Great Hall to the area currently occupied by the restaurant). The Roman collection was then shown in the newly built wing K, south of wing J, with its "Roman Court" built in



FIGURE 13

Red-figured calyx-krater (bowl for mixing wine and water), amazonomachy. Attic. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 07.286.86

FIGURE 14

Marble sarcophagus showing a musical contest between Sirens and Muses. Roman. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 10.104

FIGURE 15

Marble sarcophagus showing the myth of Endymion. Roman. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 24.97.13

imitation of a Roman peristyle surrounding a garden with a fountain (Figure 16). The setting, with its colored architecture, trees and growing plants, and splashing water, was meant to convey the general atmosphere in which antiquities were seen in Roman times, when much of the art was made for the adornment of private





**FIGURE 16**  
The “Roman Court”  
in the south wing of the  
Museum as it was in  
1926



FIGURE 17

Marble statue of a kouros (youth). Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 32.11.1

houses. In the large galleries to the east and south of this Roman court were exhibited the Cypriot and Etruscan collections.

After the death of Mr. Marshall in 1928 and of Mr. Robinson in 1931, the responsibility for the development of the department fell first to myself (up to 1948), then to my successors Christine Alexander (July 1948 to June 1959) and Dietrich von Bothmer (July 1959 to the present time). Instead of a European purchasing agent, the curator became responsible for new acquisitions, which were mostly acquired singly as opportunity arose.

A few of the most important of these acquisitions may here be specifically mentioned: the archaic statue of a kouros (Figure 17);<sup>22</sup> the sphinx crowning the "Megakles" stele (Figure 18);<sup>23</sup> the lion attacking a bull (Figure 19);<sup>24</sup> the statue of an Amazon from the Lansdowne Collection (Figure 20);<sup>25</sup> the portrait of Caracalla (Figure 21);<sup>26</sup> the gold plate of a sword sheath (Figure 22);<sup>27</sup> the set of gold jewelry including earrings with Ganymede and the eagle (Figure 23);<sup>28</sup> the terracotta stand signed by Kleitias and Ergotimos (Figure 24),<sup>29</sup> the

22. Acc. no. 32.11.1. G. M. A. Richter, "An Archaic Greek Statue," *BMMA* 27 (1932) pp. 218 ff.; Richter, *Greek Sculptures*, no. 1; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 47 ff.

23. Richter, *Archaic Gravestones*, no. 37, pp. 27 ff. and pp. 159 ff. (on the inscription, by M. Guarducci).

24. Acc. no. 42.11.35. G. M. A. Richter, "An Archaic Greek Animal Group," *BMMA* n.s. 4 (1945-1946) pp. 93 ff.; Richter, *Greek Sculptures*, no. 7; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 135 ff.

25. Acc. no. 32.11.4. G. M. A. Richter, "The Lansdowne Amazon," *BMMA* 28 (1933) pp. 2 ff.; G. M. A. Richter, "Changes in the Restoration of the Lansdowne Amazon," *BMMA* 30 (1935) pp. 66 ff.; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 91 ff.

26. Acc. no. 40.11.1. G. M. A. Richter, "A Portrait of Caracalla," *BMMA* 35 (1940) pp. 139 ff.; Richter, *Roman Portraits*, no. 107.

27. Acc. no. 30.11.12. G. M. A. Richter, "A Greek Sword Sheath from South Russia," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* 4 (1932-1933) pp. 109 ff.; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) p. 97.

28. Acc. nos. 37.11.8-17. G. M. A. Richter, "The Ganymede Jewelry," *BMMA* 32 (1937) pp. 290-295, figs. 1-7; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 156 ff.

29. Acc. no. 31.11.4. G. M. A. Richter, "A Stand by Kleitias and an Athenian Jug," *BMMA* 26 (1931) pp. 289 ff.; G. M. A. Richter and M. J. Milne, *Shapes and Names of Athenian Vases* (New York, 1935) p. 31, fig. 189; Beazley, *ABV*, p. 78, no. 12.



FIGURE 18  
Marble sphinx and acroterion, the top member of the grave stele shown in Figure 4

FIGURE 19  
Marble group showing a lion attacking a bull. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 42.11.35



same painter and potter who signed the famous François vase in Florence; the large black-figured krater by Lydos (Figure 25);<sup>30</sup> the engraved gem with an archer testing his arrow, from the Southesk Collection (Figure 26);<sup>31</sup> the bronze statuette of Athena from the Elgin Collection (Figure 27);<sup>32</sup> a vase with a representation of an artist painting a statue, important for our understanding of the polychromy of Greek sculpture (Figure 28);<sup>33</sup> a lekythos with a wedding procession by the

30. Acc. no. 31.11.11. G. M. A. Richter, "A Black-figured Vase Attributed to Lydos," *BMMA* 27 (1932) pp. 74 ff.; J. D. Beazley, "Groups of Mid-Sixth-Century Black-figure," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931-1932) p. 18 and p. 108, no. 1; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) p. 58 ff.

31. Acc. no. 31.11.5. G. M. A. Richter, "A Greek Gem from the Southesk Collection," *BMMA* 26 (1931) pp. 267 ff.; Richter, *Gems*, no. 42; J. Boardman, *Archaic Greek Gems* (London, 1968) p. 93, no. 248, pl. xvi.

32. Acc. no. 50.11.1. C. Alexander, "A Marble Lekythos and the Elgin Athena," *BMMA* n.s. 9 (1950-1951) p. 59.

33. Acc. no. 50.11.4. D. von Bothmer, "Enkaustes Agalmaton," *BMMA* n.s. 9 (1950-1951) pp. 156 ff.; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 116 ff.

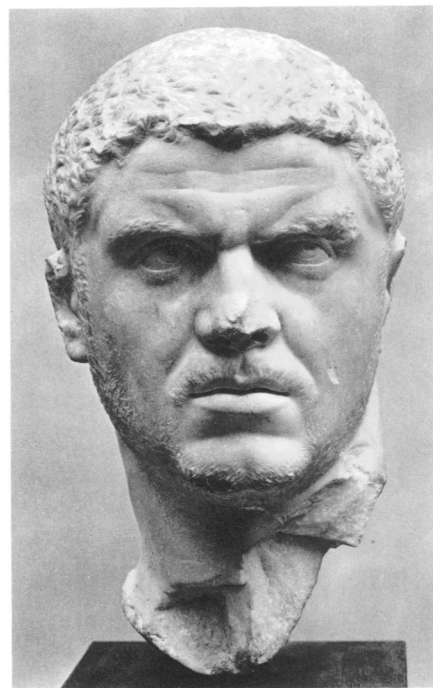


FIGURE 20

Marble statue of an Amazon. Roman copy after a Greek original. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 32.11.4

FIGURE 21

Marble portrait of the emperor Caracalla. Roman. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Samuel D. Lee Fund, 40.11.1



Amasis Painter, acquired in 1956 (Figure 29),<sup>34</sup> a companion piece to a lekythos acquired in 1931 showing women working wool: weighing it, carding it, spinning, weaving, and folding the finished piece (Figure 30).<sup>35</sup> The collection of Greek vases has in recent years been further enriched, for instance, by the acquisition in

34. Acc. no. 56.11.1. *BMA* n.s. 15 (1956–1957) p. 54, ill. D. von Bothmer, "New Vases by the Amasis Painter," *Antike Kunst* 3 (1960) pp. 73 ff.

35. Acc. no. 31.11.10. Richter, "A Stand by Kleitias and an Athenian Jug," *BMA* 26 (1931) pp. 291 ff.; Richter and Milne, *Shapes and Names*, fig. 93, p. 15; M. Bieber, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der griechischen Tracht*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1967) pl. 1; Beazley, *ABV*, p. 154, no. 37.



FIGURE 22

Gold covering from a sword sheath. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 30.11.12

1956 of sixty-five examples from the collection of William Randolph Hearst, including the famous amphora with a youth playing a kithara by the Berlin Painter (Figure 31),<sup>36</sup> and by the purchase of a superb amphora signed by Andokides, one of the initiators of the red-figured technique (Figure 32).<sup>37</sup>

36. Acc. no. 56.171.38. D. von Bothmer, "Greek Vases from the Hearst Collection," *BMAA* n.s. 15 (1956-1957) pp. 165 ff.; Beazley, *ARV*<sup>2</sup>, p. 197, no. 3.

37. Acc. no. 63.11.6. D. von Bothmer, "Andokides the Potter and the Andokides Painter," *BMAA* n.s. 24 (1965-1966) pp. 201 ff.

I recall the exciting circumstances connected with some of these purchases, particularly that of the archaic kouros (Figure 17)<sup>22</sup>—so well preserved that it seemed almost too good to be true, and accordingly suspected of not being authentic. Among the skeptics, the most formidable was the Englishman Humfry Payne, since he was not only an outstanding archaeologist but especially well informed in the field of archaic Greek sculpture. When Mr. Payne came to New York, however, shortly after the kouros was purchased, and had the opportunity of looking closely at the statue (by then

FIGURE 23

Pair of gold earrings, Ganymede and the eagle of Zeus. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.11.9, 10

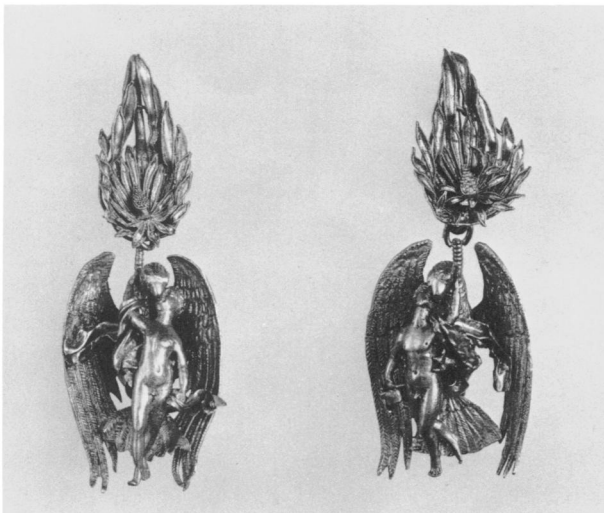


FIGURE 24

Terracotta stand signed by Kleitias and Ergotimos. Attic. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 31.11.4





**FIGURE 25**  
 Terracotta column-krater (bowl for mixing wine and water). Attic, attributed to Lydos. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 31.11.11



**FIGURE 26**  
 Impression of an engraved gem showing an archer testing his arrow. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 31.11.5

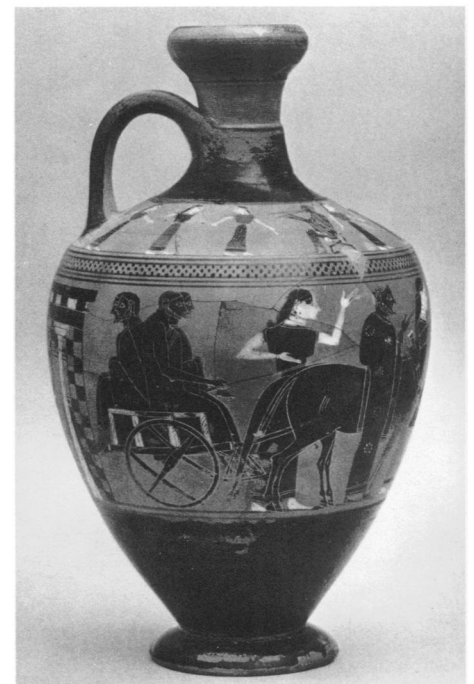




FIGURE 27

Bronze statuette of Athena flying her owl. Greek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 50.11.1

FIGURE 28

Terracotta column-krater (bowl for mixing wine and water), a man painting a statue. Apulian. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 50.11.4

FIGURE 29

Terracotta lekythos (oil jug), wedding procession. Attic, attributed to the Amasis Painter. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, Walter C. Baker Gift, 56.11.1

FIGURE 30

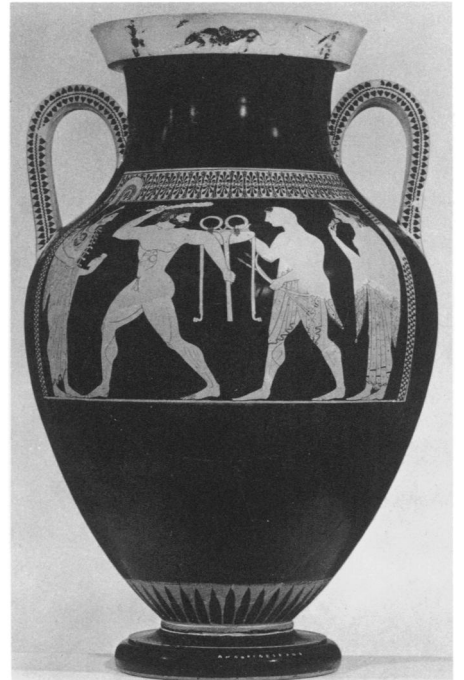
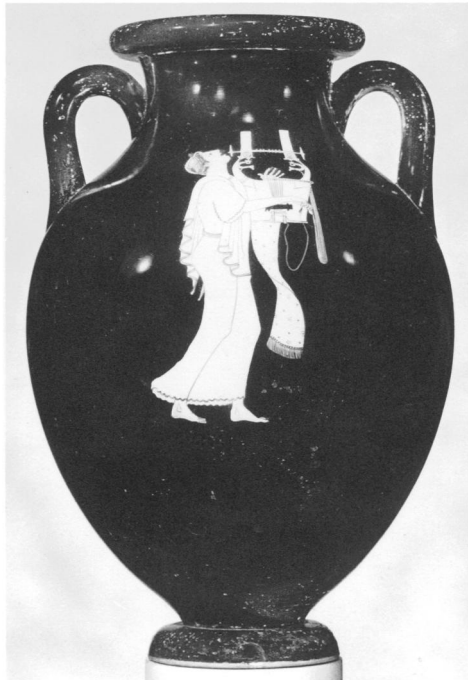
Terracotta lekythos (oil jug), women working wool. Attic, attributed to the Amasis Painter. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 31.11.10

FIGURE 31

Terracotta amphora, youth singing and playing a kithara. Attic, attributed to the Berlin Painter. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 56.171.38

FIGURE 32

Terracotta amphora signed by Andokides, struggle between Herakles and Apollo for the Delphic tripod. Attic. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 63.11.6



exhibited in the sculpture hall of the Greek and Roman Department in a good light), he turned to me and said: "Of course, when one *sees* the statue, all doubts vanish." The arguments that had been advanced against the authenticity of this kouros by several archaeologists were instructive: namely, that it differed in certain particulars from the known Greek archaic works—e.g., that the head was too large for the body and the neck too long, that the forearms were turned forward in an unnatural manner, and that the scheme of grooves and ridges indicating the anatomical construction of the legs was peculiar and had no parallel in extant archaic sculpture. On examination it was found that these strictures, though they applied to *later* archaic sculptures, had parallels in, and were indeed typical of, the few *early* archaic examples that have survived. The result of this experience, as far as I was concerned, was the writing of my book on kouroi.<sup>38</sup> A nice little bit of confirmation of the authenticity of the statue came presently by way of the discovery of several fragments belonging to the legs of the Sounion group of kouroi in Athens, which showed the same anatomical markings as those on the New York kouros. As these fragments were not known when the New York kouros was purchased, they could not have been utilized by a forger!

In 1930 a gold plate from a sword sheath of Scythian form, but with a Greek representation of a battle between Greeks and barbarians (Figure 22),<sup>27</sup> was offered to the Museum from the Bachstitz collection. It belonged to a class of Greek antiquities that have been exclusively found in southern Russia and were evidently made by Greek artists for Scythian chieftains. All these pieces were in the Hermitage in Leningrad. To examine material comparable to the gold plate offered for sale to the Museum therefore necessitated a trip to Russia, which was a memorable experience and naturally included a study of the rich collection contained in the Hermitage, in large part begun by Empress Catherine the Great of Russia.

Another memorable experience was the acquisition of the large black-figured column-krater with a lively scene of the return of Hephaistos to Olympus escorted by Dionysos and a gay band of satyrs and maenads (Figure 25).<sup>30</sup> Not only was the vase in exceptionally

38. G. M. A. Richter, *Kouroi* (New York, 1942); 2nd ed. (London, 1960); 3rd ed. (London, 1970).



FIGURE 33

A plaster cast of the Metropolitan Museum's marble group of a lion attacking a bull shown together with a plaster cast of the joining half in the National Museum, Athens (compare Figure 19)

FIGURE 34

Shaft of the marble grave stele shown in Figure 4 with the addition of a plaster cast of fragments in the National Museum, Athens

good condition, but it was possible to attribute the painting to the outstanding artist Lydos, an attribution afterward confirmed by J. D. Beazley.<sup>39</sup> The attribution of Athenian vase-paintings to their artists, of which the recent scientific study is largely due to Beazley and his followers, has raised the interest of this branch of Greek art to the level of that of Renaissance paintings—though of course we have no Vasari to tell us about their lives.

A responsible decision was the purchase of the engraved gem with the archer from the Southesk collection (Figure 26).<sup>31</sup> This collection was for sale in London during the summer of 1931, where I was able to examine it—and to select this one piece and pay for it with the "Curator's Fund." It seemed to be *the* outstanding engraved gem in that collection, and indeed, one of the finest of its period in existence. And since our collection had become rich and important, it seemed best to enrich

39. Beazley, "Mid-Sixth-Century Black-figure," *BSA* 32 (1931-1932) p. 18.





it with a masterpiece rather than with several less significant examples.

The acquisition of the famous statue of the Amazon from the Lansdowne collection (Figure 20),<sup>25</sup> which was sold at auction in London in 1930, presented difficulties; for the Museum had just spent a goodly sum for the purchase of the archaic kouros, and now other departments had claims. And yet the addition of the Amazon to our collection seemed important since it is one of the two best surviving Roman copies of a famous Greek original by an outstanding sculptor of the fifth century B.C. This difficulty was resolved when John D. Rockefeller acquired the statue and subsequently gave it to the Museum. As a result of this generous gift, the public has been enabled to visualize one of the most rhythmical compositions in Greek sculpture.

The marble group of a lion attacking a bull (Figure 19)<sup>24</sup> was offered for sale to the Museum in New York in 1942, and since it was a fine example of Greek animal sculpture datable to the late archaic period, it seemed an eminently desirable acquisition. Its interest was further increased by the possibility—first pointed out to me by Dietrich von Bothmer—that it was once joined to a similar group in Athens, as illustrated only in an old Greek archaeological journal.<sup>40</sup> This suggestion was happily confirmed on my next visit to Athens when—with the help of Christos and Semni Karouzou and Nicholas Yalouris—the corresponding group was found in an outlying storeroom in the National Museum, and an examination showed that the two fractures fitted. (I had brought with me a cast of the fracture in the New York piece.) Now this important pedimental composition, comparable to some of those found on the Athenian Acropolis, is exhibited in the archaic gallery of the National Museum in Athens, augmented by a cast of the New York group, and a photograph of the whole group is shown on the label in New York (Figure 33).

An interesting experience was connected with some fragments (ten in all) acquired in 1914, which evidently belonged to a Roman copy of the well-known Greek relief from Eleusis representing Demeter, Persephone, and perhaps Triptolemos.<sup>41</sup> As there are few instances

40. *Ephemeris Archaologike* (1862) pl. 1.

41. Acc. no. 14.130.9. G. M. A. Richter, "A Roman Copy of the Eleusinian Relief," *BMAA* 30 (1935) pp. 216 ff.; Richter, *Greek Sculptures*, no. 34; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 136 ff.

of the survival of a Greek original and its Roman copy, it seemed desirable to reconstruct the fragments for comparison with a cast of the original. This work took considerable time but was finally completed in 1935. The result was important. The accuracy of the copy was indicated by the fact that the marble and plaster parts exactly fitted, not only in size and depth of relief, but in practically every detail, furrow for furrow, and ridge for ridge, conclusively showing that the copy could only have been made by the mechanical process of the pointing machine. Equally enlightening, however, was the contrast in the execution of the two versions—the delicacy and subtlety of the modeling in the Greek original and the comparative hardness in the Roman copy.

I also recall a happening that stands out in my memory as a pleasant surprise. As I said (see p. 75), Mr. Marshall had acquired for the Museum in 1911 the “Megakles” stele—a tall marble archaic gravestone decorated with a relief of a youth and a girl (part of the latter is in Berlin), together with its inscribed base and akroterion (see Figure 4). On the upper face of the akroterion there were still visible three entire paws and part of a fourth, evidently of a finial in the form of a lion or sphinx. Almost twenty years later a photograph of a sphinx was shown me by a New York art dealer, who said it was for sale in England. I was interested and asked to have the sphinx sent us for inspection. In the meantime, in studying the photograph, I noticed that the style of the face and hair resembled that of the youth and girl in our stele, and also that three paws and part of a fourth were missing. Could it be that this sphinx was the crowning feature of our monument? I had casts made of the paws on the akroterion so that on arrival of the sphinx we could immediately see whether the fractures fitted. When the great moment came, the fit was found to be perfect (see Figure 18). There could be no doubt that the sphinx belonged to our stele. As reconstructed, the monument stands over thirteen feet high. Quite recently, several pieces belonging to the youth’s body were found in the study collection of the National Museum of Athens; they were identified by Semni Karouzou in 1966 and G. Despinis in 1967. All in all, the “Megakles” stele has become the most remarkable example of its kind that has survived to our day (see Figure 34).

Now and then we were enabled to purchase a whole

collection, formed by the owner during many years. Such an opportunity was presented in 1941 by the offer of the collection of Albert Gallatin,<sup>42</sup> consisting of over 250 Greek vases, ranging in date from the seventh to the third century B.C., the fruit of thirty years of collecting by an experienced, discriminating connoisseur. Another exceptional opportunity came in 1942 when we were able to purchase a selection of thirty-eight engraved gems from the collection of Sir Arthur Evans—each a little masterpiece.<sup>43</sup>

The majority of these acquisitions made throughout the years came from art dealers in New York, Paris, London, and Switzerland. Those purchased in Italy were exported with a permit from the Italian government on the payment of a reasonable tax—an excellent arrangement, also scrupulously observed by John Marshall. (I make a special point of mentioning this to avoid misconceptions.)

Naturally, all these purchases would not have been possible without the generosity and public spirit of American donors, principally those of the Rogers, Fletcher, and other large funds, parts of which were allocated by the trustees to the Greek and Roman Department.

From time to time, gifts and bequests greatly contributed to the wealth and importance of our collection. Outstanding among these was the bequest of Richard B. Seager in 1926 of objects from Crete, datable to the

42. G. M. A. Richter, “The Gallatin Collection of Greek Vases,” *BMMA* 37 (1942) pp. 51 ff.

43. G. M. A. Richter, *Ancient Gems from the Evans and Beatty Collections* (New York, 1942); Richter, *Gems*.

FIGURE 35

Bronze dagger blade showing a man attacking a boar. Minoan. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Richard B. Seager, 26.31.499



Early, Middle, and Late Minoan periods.<sup>44</sup> A large part had already been on loan to the Museum and had enabled us to augment our display of Minoan and Mycenaean reproductions. Especially important among these Cretan originals was a collection of 339 sealstones, many engraved with inscriptions, important for our knowledge of the development of the Cretan script; likewise welcome were a number of fine, hand-carved stone bowls (about 2500–2000 B.C.) comparable to Egyptian products, as well as a dagger blade with an incised representation of a man attacking a boar (Figure 35),<sup>45</sup> a precursor of many later similar scenes. As one of the first great excavators and experts in the Cretan field, Mr. Seager naturally had rare opportunities of acquiring genuine products of that early period.

Another important bequest came to the Museum in 1941 from W. G. Beatty, who donated his entire collection of over 500 engraved gems,<sup>43</sup> leaving the Museum free to decide the disposition of it. Included among the gems were a number of high quality and many of interest for their subjects. Thereby our collection—started, so to speak, with the gems from Cyprus in the Cesnola Collection<sup>1</sup> and the gift in 1881 by John Taylor Johnston of the King Collection (formed by the Reverend C. W. King of Trinity College, Cambridge)<sup>46</sup>—now moved into the first rank, equal in richness and importance to those in London, Berlin, and Paris.

Our collection of ancient glass—again initiated by the contingent in the Cesnola Collection, as well as by the gift of the Charvet Collection in 1881<sup>6</sup>—was further enriched by the important specimens included in the Gréau Collection of glass, presented to the Museum by J. Pierpont Morgan in 1917.<sup>47</sup>

A magnificent gift came to the Museum in 1926, in the form of antiquities from Sardis in Lydia, discovered by Howard Crosby Butler and his associates.<sup>48</sup> They were presented by the Turkish government to the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis in recognition of Mr. Butler's work and then by that society to the Metropolitan Museum. Included were important examples of pottery in typical Lydian technique, four coins of the time of King Croesus (560–546 B.C.), and a marble statue of a seated lion of about 500 B.C. The most significant piece was an Ionic capital, with part of the column, from the temple of Artemis, dating from the middle of the fourth century B.C. (Figure 36).

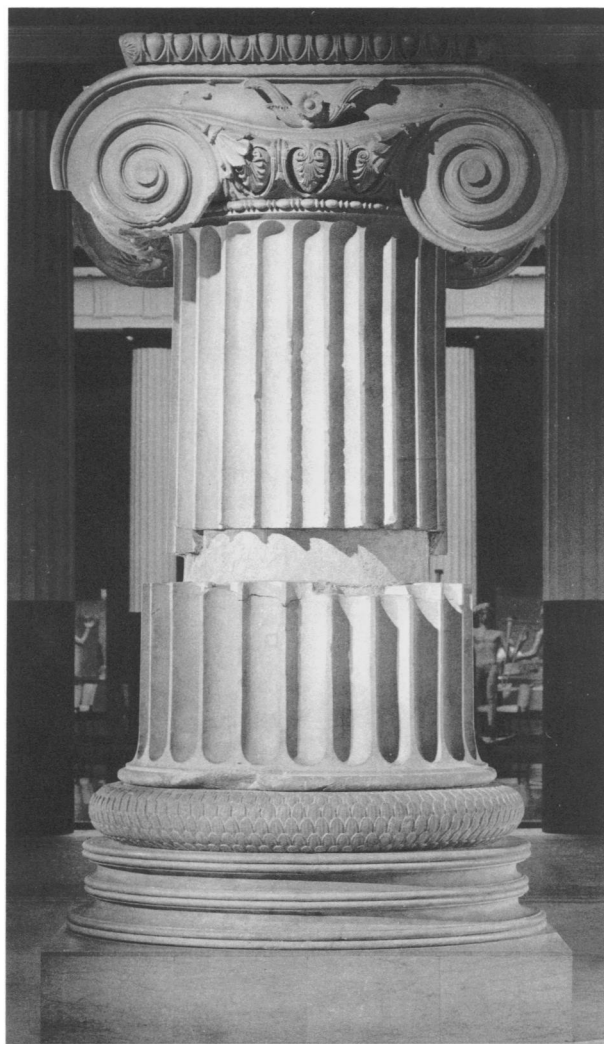


FIGURE 36

Capital and part of a column from the temple of Artemis at Sardis. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the American Society for the Excavation of Sardis, 26.59.1

44. H. B. Wehle, "The Seager Bequest," *BMA* 21 (1926) pp. 72 ff.; V. E. G. Kenna, "Richard Berry Seager, American Archaeologist, 1882–1925," *Archaeology* 23 (October, 1970).

45. Acc. no. 26.31.499. Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) p. 17; Arthur Evans, *Palace of Minos*, I (London, 1921) pl. 718, fig. 541.

46. C. W. King, *Antique Gems and Rings* (London, 1872); Richter, *Gems*.

47. W. Froehner, *Collection Julien Gréau, Verrerie Antique* (Paris, 1903).

48. G. M. A. Richter, "The Department of Classical Antiquities: Extension and Rearrangement," *BMA* 28 (1933) pp. 29 ff.; Richter, *Classical Handbook* (1930) pp. 321 ff.

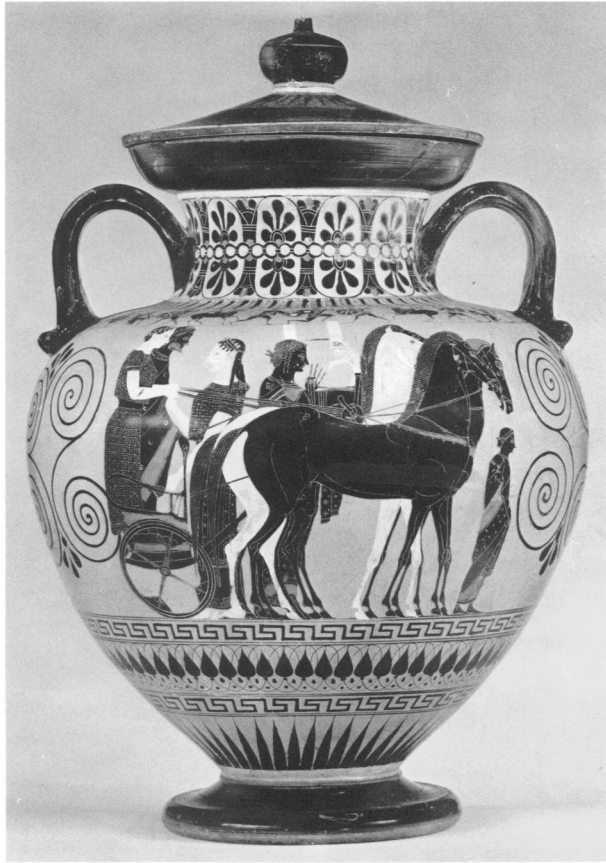


FIGURE 37  
Terracotta amphora attributed to Exekias. Attic.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund,  
17.230.14

It ranks as one of the finest extant examples of Greek architectural carving, comparable to the capitals from the Erechtheion in Athens in freshness and precision.

A gift of smaller dimensions but also particularly welcome came in 1928 from J. D. Beazley, a long-standing friend of the Metropolitan Museum. It consisted of the knob belonging to the lid of one of our finest black-figured amphorae (Figure 37).<sup>49</sup> He had found the little piece in “a box of rubbish,” which he had bought at the Hope Sale—from which our amphora also came—and had recognized it as probably belonging to our vase. On arrival it was found to fit

49. Acc. no. 17.230.14. G. M. A. Richter, “The Lid of an Amphora,” *BMAA* 23 (1928) p. 28.

exactly, and appreciably added to the design of the whole. Since few lids of Greek vases have been preserved, this addition has given us the opportunity of enjoying the composition of a Greek vase in its entirety—equal to an architectural design.

It may be opportune to cite here what seemed a wise decision made by the trustees in 1928, namely, to auction off “duplicate” material that had accumulated during the years, much of it from the Cesnola Collection. The following is a quotation from a letter by Robert W. de Forest to Mitchell Kennerly of the Anderson Galleries of New York:

Rather than continue to hold these objects in storage where they perform no useful service, the Trustees have determined to dispose of them by auction sale in March and April so that other Museums and private collectors can obtain them and enjoy their possession. They deem it a duty to the appreciation of art that all these objects should be put to use. They earlier considered distributing them among other American museums, but to attempt to do so would have involved questions of discrimination and would have delayed vacating space for which the Museum has urgent and immediate need. It is the hope of the Trustees that by distributing these objects among a large number of people the interest in classical antiquities will be increased. The decorative value of this kind of material is only gradually being recognized. There is no better way of stimulating its appreciation than by placing such objects of art in as many museums, colleges, libraries, and private houses as possible.<sup>50</sup>

And now a few words about the trials and tribulations that beset the acquisition of antiquities for a museum. As everybody with experience knows, one of the great dangers is the excellence of the forgeries that now and then come into the market. So when an outstanding and perhaps unusual piece is acquired, its authenticity is immediately questioned. This was the case with the seated goddess in Berlin, with the standing goddess in Berlin, and with our kouros. All these statues were, however, later recognized as undoubtedly ancient. The reverse also happens. Specially remarkable was the case of the three terracotta Etruscan warriors, bought in 1915, 1916, and 1921, put on exhibition in 1933, after a laborious reconstruction from their

50. “Auction Sales of Classical Antiquities,” *BMAA* 23 (1928) p. 98.

many fragments,<sup>51</sup> and immediately accepted by most archaeologists as remarkable Etruscan achievements. A few stylistic peculiarities, such as the thickset body of the larger of the two complete warriors, could be explained by the fact that the figures were not Greek but Etruscan. On the technical side modern potters assured us that the ability to fire such large statues was no longer current and that they must therefore be ancient. Furthermore, Mr. Marshall, who always tried when possible to investigate the circumstances of discovery, had been satisfied of the genuineness of the figures by the following incident: When he went to the place near Orvieto where the owners had told him that the fragments of the statues had been found, he was confronted by a policeman who forbade him to go further. This he naturally interpreted as showing that the place was being guarded to prevent further private digging. Long afterward, when the modern origin of the statues was definitely established, it was discovered that the policeman had been a fake, dressed up for the part.

As for the firing, the explanation is that the statues were made entire and then broken up into fragments to be fired, and that subsequently the surfaces of the fractures were artificially weathered. To such lengths will deception sometimes go!

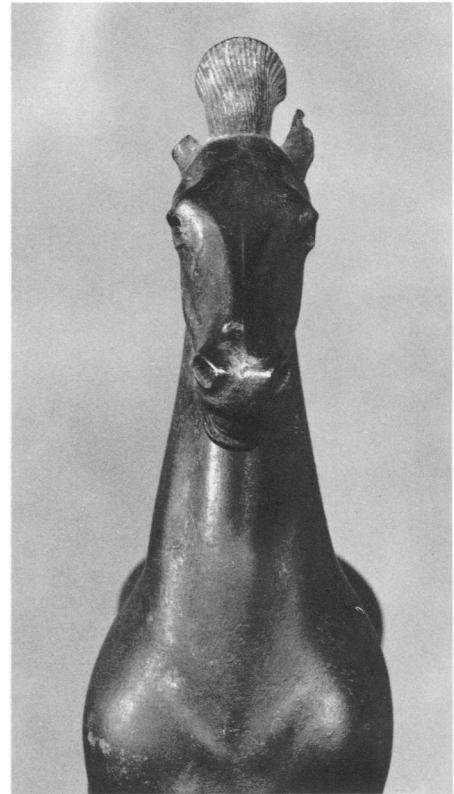
The large statuette of a bronze horse (Figures 38, 39),<sup>52</sup> acquired in Paris in 1923 from Rollin and Feu-

51. Richter, "The Department of Classical Antiquities," *BMMA* 28 (1933); G. M. A. Richter, *Etruscan Terracotta Warriors in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Metropolitan Museum Papers, no. 6 (New York, 1937); Richter, *Handbook of the Etruscan Collection*, pp. 19 ff.; D. von Bothmer and J. V. Noble, *An Inquiry into the Forgery of the Etruscan Terracotta Warriors in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Metropolitan Museum Papers, no. 11 (New York, 1961).

52. Acc. no. 23.69. G. M. A. Richter, "A Greek Bronze Horse," *BMMA* 18 (1923) pp. 89 ff.; Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 65 ff. On the controversy see *The New York Times*, December 7, 1967, p. 1, and Joseph V. Noble "The Forgery of Our Greek Bronze Horse," *BMMA* n.s. 27 (1968-1969) pp. 253 ff. (against the authenticity); C. Blümel, *Weltkunst* 38 (1968) pp. 568 ff., and "Zur Echtheitfrage des antiken Bronzepferdes in Metropolitan Museum in New York," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 84 (1969) pp. 208 ff. (for the authenticity).

FIGURES 38, 39

Bronze horse. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 23.69



ardent, the well-known dealers, was universally acclaimed as one of the finest late archaic animal studies, and was published as such again and again in our archaeological literature. Only recently was its authenticity questioned by some, reendorsed by others. The question is still open, and we await further findings.

Then there is the case of the so-called Boston Throne, a three-sided relief in the Boston Museum that is a counterpart of the Ludovisi Throne in the Terme Museum. A long controversy has raged concerning it. Immediately after its acquisition it was accepted as ancient by many and suspected as modern by others, and it has recently been "reinstated" by an archaeologist and a technician.<sup>53</sup>

Perhaps the most memorable episode in the field of forgeries that happened in our midst concerns two large marble statues, made by the Italian sculptor Alceo Dossena, one a striding Athena, the other a group of a youth carrying off a woman<sup>54</sup> (similar to the famous group of Eretria). The two statues had been sent to the Museum from Switzerland for inspection by a well-known and experienced dealer, and naturally high hopes of an important acquisition were entertained. Several days of close study, however, convinced us that the statues were not ancient, but exceptionally successful forgeries. Since they had been sponsored by prominent European archaeologists, and were still for sale, we could not, according to professional etiquette, mention the real reason for declining them. At that very moment, in fact, a lawsuit was being threatened by a New York dealer because the attribution of a painting he had sold as by Leonardo da Vinci was being questioned by some expert. And that explains why we could not warn another American museum against the acquisition of the Athena. In the summer of 1927, however, it emerged that we had refused the two large "pedimental" figures as suspect. Then followed a long investigation in which many prominent archaeologists took part, some agreeing that the sculptures were modern, others (backed by chemists and mineralogists) believing them to be ancient. Now, however, after the lapse of forty years, there is no doubt left. The sculptures were made by Dossena, who incidentally claimed that he had made them as fresh creations, not as forgeries. The whole incident was an enlightening experience from which all of us—both archaeologists and the general public—

have learned much; for it has made us realize what a subtle thing is connoisseurship, the fruit of long experience and training, and that the greatest art expert will always remain—like every scientist—a student.

Much progress has recently been made in the detection of forgeries by chemical and other technical tests. I have learned from my own experience that an examination of a marble sculpture under ultraviolet rays can be especially helpful;<sup>55</sup> if a marble is examined under ultraviolet light, a surface that has been exposed for a long period of time will fluoresce white, whereas a fresh marble surface will appear to be violet in color. But even the use of this technical aid requires experience, for any incrustation on the marble will confuse the picture. Thus, a famous archaic statue, now one of the great attractions in the National Museum of Athens, was refused as a fake by a European museum, on the ground that an examination under the ultraviolet lamp had shown it to be modern.

A favorite field for forgeries is terracotta statuettes. Those made in the late nineteenth century were easily distinguishable from the ancient ones by their modern expressions and gestures. Nowadays, however, the forgeries are often made from molds taken from ancient statuettes, and are then not so easily detected. In the Metropolitan Museum we tried to show the difference between ancient and modern by including a case full of forgeries in the same gallery as the Greek originals—for useful comparison.<sup>56</sup> There is indeed no better way to appreciate the simple beauty of the Greek statuettes than to compare them with these modern creations.

In addition to the dangers presented by forgeries, there is also that of acquiring an object which later proves to have been stolen from some museum—in which case it has by law to be returned. I recall the incident in which a little Greek terracotta portrait head was presented to the Metropolitan Museum by a donor

53. B. Ashmole, "The Three-Sided Relief in Boston," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* 63 (1965) p. 59; W. J. Young and B. Ashmole, "The Boston Relief and the Ludovisi Throne," *BMFA* 66 (1968) pp. 124 ff.

54. G. M. A. Richter, "Forgeries of Greek Sculpture," *BMMA* 24 (1929) pp. 3 ff.; B. Ashmole, "An Alleged Archaic Group," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 50 (1930) pp. 99 ff.

55. James J. Rorimer installed an ultraviolet lamp near his office in the Metropolitan Museum, and I learned much by being able to examine our marbles with him. See J. J. Rorimer, "Marble Sculpture and the Ultra-Violet Ray," *BMMA* 24 (1929) pp. 185 ff.

56. Richter, *Classical Handbook* (1930) pp. 182 ff., fig. 123.

who had acquired it in Egypt.<sup>57</sup> When it turned out, however, that the head had been removed from the Kerameikos Museum in Athens, the Metropolitan immediately returned it to the Greek government—which then generously gave in recompense some duplicate pottery from Carl Blegen's dig at Zygouries.<sup>58</sup>

This short sketch may perhaps give an idea of the interest, excitement, and instruction that fill the life of a curator of Greek and Roman art in a large museum. But it would not be complete without a few more words about the variety of instruction that has come to me personally from different quarters, aside from that furnished through the detailed study of the acquisitions. First of all, from the very beginning of my service on the staff of the Metropolitan, I was allowed three months' "holiday," chiefly spent in traveling and studying in the museums of Europe, which gave me the possibility of seeing more and more material in my field, and which brought me into contact with my European colleagues for stimulating exchanges of opinions. I also had the opportunity of giving courses of lectures both in the Metropolitan Museum and elsewhere, which helped to put my thoughts into consecutive order. Furthermore, day by day there came to the Museum private individuals bringing objects for inspection; for in a *public* museum, a prime duty is to give information to the *public*. Such objects are often of a sort that have not been published and so cannot be found in books. They therefore present a challenge to the curator and furnish a valuable education. Then there was the experience afforded by the constant contact with the "repair department" staffed by experienced men with a practiced

eye. Personally I may say that I have learned much from them. Finally, there was the advantage of the opportunity to discuss problems with the curators of the other departments—Egyptian, Near East, Far East, Paintings, Decorative Arts, and Arms and Armor—all of whom have problems similar to one's own, and this makes for a widening of one's horizon. And this manifold experience serves the curator also during retirement, when he—or she—can utilize the accumulated knowledge.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks are due to Dietrich von Bothmer and Andrew Oliver, Jr., for help with the footnotes and illustrations.

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58. Richter, *Greek Handbook* (1953) pp. 13 ff.

# Prolegomena to a Study of the Cyprus Plates

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FOUND IN 1902 at Lambousa on Cyprus was a set of silver plates with the exploits of the youthful David, which has since then been repeatedly published in its entirety.<sup>1</sup> It was suggested on the basis of the hallmarks on their backs that the plates themselves could be dated in the sixth or seventh century A.D. until some of these hallmarks in the form of monograms and imperial busts were identified as those of the emperor Heraclius (610–641). More recently the date could be limited still further to the years 613–629 or 630, i.e., a period which had produced on the coins a special type of that emperor which agrees with that of the hallmarks.<sup>2</sup>

The importance of the find for the history of Early Byzantine art in general has been recognized from the very beginning. Every handbook on this subject reproduces one or two of the plates, including almost always the great plate with the fight against Goliath (Figure 1), and a few remarks on their style and their place in the development have usually been added. Very little, however, has been written so far about the iconography of the David cycle and its source, although Dalton in his article in the *Burlington Magazine*<sup>3</sup> clearly pointed the way for further investigation when he stated: "The real importance of the series lies in its relation to the illuminated Byzantine psalters. . . . For the scenes represented upon the dishes have an obvious relation to those found in the most famous psalters now preserved, for instance, no. 139 in the Bibliothèque Nationale and the well-known psalter of Basil II in the library of St. Mark at Venice, both of which belong to

what is known as the 'aristocratic' group. . . ." Dalton made these penetrating remarks without going into detailed comparisons between the plates and the corresponding miniatures and without having even discussed the great David and Goliath plate, which at that time was known, but not accessible to him.

Yet it is this very plate that establishes the closest connection with a miniature of the Paris Psalter (Figure 2), as has repeatedly been pointed out by Buchthal,<sup>4</sup> Morey,<sup>5</sup> myself,<sup>6</sup> and other scholars who have

1. O. M. Dalton, "A Second Silver Treasure from the District of Kyrenia, Cyprus," *Archaeologia* 57 (1900) pp. 159 ff.; O. M. Dalton, "Byzantine Plate and Jewellery from Cyprus in Mr. Morgan's Collection," *Burlington Magazine* 10 (1906–1907) pp. 355 ff.; A. Sambon, "Trésor d'orfèvrerie et d'argenterie trouvé à Chypre et faisant partie de la Collection de M. J. Pierpont Morgan," *Le Musée* 3 (1906) pp. 121 ff.; C. H. Smith, *Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan. Bronzes: Antique Greek, Roman, etc., Including Some Antique Objects in Gold and Silver* (Paris, 1913) pp. 44 ff., pls. LXIII–LXVI; M. Rosenberg, *Der Goldschmiede Merkzeichen*, IV (Berlin and Leipzig, 1928) pp. 636 ff., nos. 9647–9716; E. Cruikshank Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, no. 7 (Washington, 1961); A. and J. Stylianou, *The Treasures of Lambousa* (in Greek) (Nicosia, 1969) pp. 17 ff.

2. Cruikshank Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, p. 10.

3. Dalton, "Byzantine Plate and Jewellery," p. 361–362.

4. H. Buchthal, *The Miniatures of the Paris Psalter* (London, 1938) pp. 21 ff., pls. IV, 4, XXI, 44.

5. C. R. Morey, *Early Christian Art*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, 1953) p. 97, figs. 64, 94.

6. K. Weitzmann, "The Psalter Vatopedi 761. Its place in the aristocratic Psalter Rescension," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 10 (1947) p. 39, fig. 24. Cf. K. Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex, A Study of the Origin and Method of Text illustration*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, 1970) p. 32.





FIGURE 1  
Silver plate with David and Goliath. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.396

approached the problem more from the point of view of book illumination than of the silver plates. If, indeed, silver plate and miniature are so closely related to each other that both depend on a common archetype—and no one seems to have contested this—then each silver plate should be investigated from the point of view of a possible parallel in the aristocratic Psalter recension. The Paris Psalter is incomplete, but there exists a considerable number of aristocratic Psalters with additional miniatures that either were lost or never did exist in the Paris copy. Consequently additional Psalter manuscripts must be examined in an attempt to find parallels to some of the events that are not depicted in the Paris manuscript.

The distribution of narrative scenes over a series of individual silver plates is highly unusual and actually without a parallel in the history of Byzantine silverwork, while this kind of storytelling in narrative cyclic form is most typical of book illumination. Thus there can be little doubt, as Dalton realized, that the archetype on which both monuments are dependent was indeed an illustrated manuscript produced prior to the seventh century, the date of the plates.

One of the aims of this study is to demonstrate that the silversmiths did not in each case slavishly copy their miniature models, but that they only adjusted them compositionally to a design suited for a silver plate. Since silver plates are more self-contained than miniatures in a book, especially in the case of a narrative cycle, the silversmith in some instances preferred a more centralized composition. He also had to adjust a square miniature to the round plate, a process that left the empty segment at the bottom, the exergue, to be decorated with motifs that in most cases did not exist in the miniature model. The degree to which the silversmith either depended on the miniature model or followed the tradition of his own workshop varies greatly with each plate. In order to demonstrate the principles involved, I have for this preliminary study<sup>7</sup> selected two examples that constitute a polarity: the plate with the fight of David and Goliath in three consecutive phases (Figure 1), for its close association with the manuscript tradition, and the plate with David before Saul (Figure 10), for its preservation of estab-

7. A more comprehensive study on all the plates by the author is in preparation.

lished formulae current in the workshop of the silversmiths.

The key to the understanding of the close relationship between the David and Goliath plate and the corresponding miniature in the tenth-century Paris Psalter cod. gr. 139 (Figure 2)<sup>8</sup> is the central group consisting of David, who is about to throw the stone held in the sling and ready to defend himself with his raised arm wrapped in his chlamys, and of Goliath, who is advancing impetuously and attacking with a lance. There is only the slight difference that in the plate Goliath still holds the lance in his raised hand, while in the minia-

8. H. Omont, *Facsimilés des Miniatures des plus anciens Manuscrits Grecs*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1929) pl. rv; Buchthal, *Paris Psalter*, pp. 21 ff. and pl. rv. The attempt of C. R. Morey ("Notes on East Christian Miniatures," *Art Bulletin* 11 [1929] pp. 21 ff.) to date the Paris Psalter at the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century has not found wide acceptance.

FIGURE 2  
David and Goliath. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, cod. gr. 139, fol. 4 v.





FIGURE 3  
David and Goliath (detail). Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, cod. gr. 17, fol. 13 v.

ture he has already released it. The agreement of the poses in general and of some details like the wrapping of David's left arm in the mantle excludes the possibility of two independent inventions and, therefore, makes the assumption of a common archetype necessary.

Yet in two points the two monuments show essential disagreement, which must be explained in relation to the common archetype. In both instances David and Goliath are flanked by a group of soldiers, the Israelites at the left and the Philistines at the right. But whereas on the plate these soldiers are grouped on the same level, they are in the Paris Psalter placed further below; yet they reach into the upper zone so that it becomes somewhat ambiguous whether they belong to the combat proper or the decapitation of Goliath below. Buchthal argued that the original place of these soldier groups is in the decapitation scene because an Early Christian fresco in Bawit has two groups of figures associated with the killing,<sup>9</sup> while the arrangement in the silver plate he considered to be varied "because the combat scene as the compositional centre had to be accentuated by these accompanying figures."

9. Buchthal, *Paris Psalter*, p. 22 and fig. 31.

However, the soldiers are in each case so differently conceived that it seems in my opinion unlikely that they can derive from each other. In the miniature they stand at ease, apparently watching intently and awaiting the outcome of the battle, while in the plate the Israelites are about to move forward to attack the Philistines who have already turned to flee. Thus we deal here with two successive phases of behavior: the watching soldiers are more appropriate for the combat scene in which the outcome is still in the balance, whereas the attacking and fleeing soldiers are only meaningful after the defeat of Goliath and therefore more fitting for the decapitation scene. If this premise

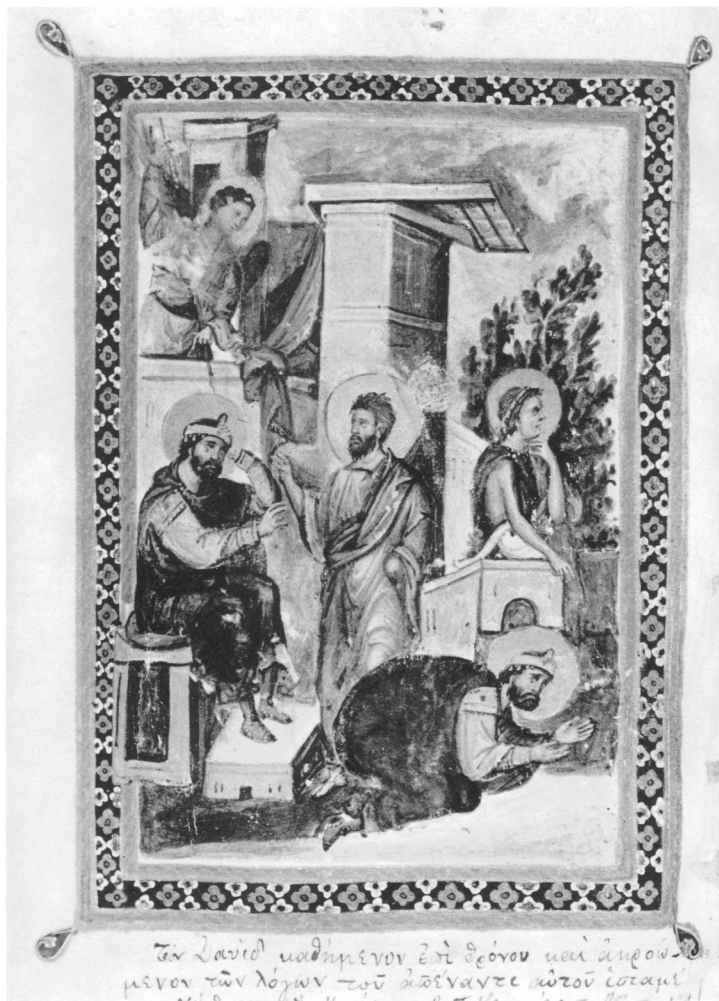
FIGURE 4  
David and Goliath. Public Library, Leningrad, cod. gr. 274



is accepted, it must then be assumed that in each case the original position had been changed, apparently for formal reasons: in the Psalter miniature the soldiers have been transferred to the lower level because their original place behind the fighting David and Goliath has been assumed by personifications, and in the plate the attacking and fleeing soldiers have been moved upward because the limited space in the exergue forced the silversmith to confine himself to the decapitation proper.

Thus we assume that the archetype had for each of the two scenes an appropriate group of soldiers. For this assumption evidence can be adduced from miniatures

FIGURE 5  
Penitence of David. Patriarchal Library, Jerusalem, cod. Taphou 51, fol. 108 v.



of other manuscripts of the aristocratic Psalter recension. In a miniature of a Psalter manuscript in Venice, Marciana cod. gr. 17, made for Basil II (Figure 3),<sup>10</sup> there is among the six scenes that are combined on one page a representation of the confrontation of David with Goliath, and behind the attacking David, who is depicted in precisely the same pose as in the plate and the Paris Psalter, there is, partly hidden behind a mountain, a group of soldiers in a quiet pose with their lances grounded, i.e., the very group that is appropriate for this context. A miniature of an aristocratic Psalter is a better witness than the fresco of Bawit, which, moreover, has in the upper corner only heads of figures who are not necessarily soldiers.

Furthermore, my contention that the groups of advancing and fleeing soldiers originally belonged to the decapitation is likewise supported by a miniature of the aristocratic Psalter recension. There is in the Public Library of Leningrad, among the single leaves cut out by Porphyrius Uspenskij, one with the signature gr. 274, which has a miniature on either side. On one side is depicted the fight of David and Goliath (Figure 4),<sup>11</sup> obviously in the same tradition as the silver plate and the Paris Psalter. Although the miniature is very flaked, one can recognize at the lower left a group of Israelite soldiers who are just about to move and lower their lances, and at the lower right a group of receding Philistines similar to the corresponding soldiers in the silver plate. In addition, the group of Israelites has a leader who is singled out and attacks with a drawn sword. These armies are on a slightly higher level than the decapitation proper but nevertheless are meant to be placed on the same ground. The dense and spatially conceived groups hark back to a tradition that is grounded in the Greco-Roman past, and in this respect they reflect the painted archetype more closely than the silver plate, in which the artist confines himself to fewer

10. K. Weitzmann, *Die Byzantinische Buchmalerei des 9. und 10. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1935) p. 29 (here further bibliography) and pl. XL, 219–220. Buchthal, *Paris Psalter*, pl. xvii, 26.

11. Unpublished. The miniature is very damaged. The photograph requested after I had seen the leaf in 1966 is even less satisfactory than an older one from the Princeton collection here reproduced. The other side has a dedication miniature with a kneeling donor, almost completely rubbed off, before a standing figure in imperial robes whose head is completely gone, and in the upper left corner there is a bust of the Virgin. This dedicatory miniature may have been painted somewhat later on an originally empty recto.



FIGURE 6  
Decapitation of Goliath. Vatopedi, Mt. Athos,  
cod. 761, fol. 13 r.

and more clearly defined individual figures, standing side by side.

Benešević in his catalogue of the Leningrad manuscripts stated that he believed this miniature to be cut out of the Psalter cod. 38 in the Sinai monastery,<sup>12</sup> though he was not absolutely certain. His identification, however, is not correct, because I have elsewhere published four cutout miniatures, also in the Public Library of Leningrad, which are the very ones cut out of this Sinai Psalter,<sup>13</sup> and they are quite different in style. In my opinion the single leaf under consideration originally belonged to a Psalter in the Patriarchal Library in Jerusalem, cod. Taphou 51, in which today only one miniature is preserved, the Penitence of David preceding Psalm 50 (Figure 5).<sup>14</sup> Not only is the rather soft brush technique the same, but in such details as the frame with a similarly rough and simplified ornament and the identical drops at the corners, suggesting turned leaves, the same hand is revealed.<sup>15</sup>

The miniature with the Penitence is in every detail so close to the corresponding one in the Paris Psalter,<sup>16</sup>

including the personification of prayer who appears behind the priedieu-like altar, that it must be considered a direct descendant of an aristocratic Psalter of the tenth century, i.e., a manuscript contemporary with the Paris cod. gr. 139. Stylistically the Leningrad and Jerusalem miniatures must be ascribed to the thirteenth century, i.e., a period from which we possess more faithful copies of tenth-century models than from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>17</sup> However, in the David and Goliath miniature the artist did not follow the version of the Paris Psalter, but one that had a better preserved earlier tradition, as evidenced by the groups of attacking and fleeing soldiers. This conclusion has wide-reaching consequences because it proves that the Paris Psalter does not in every detail reflect the archetype most faithfully, but shows omissions, changes, and, as we shall see, even additions, which were apparently made in the Middle Byzantine period.<sup>18</sup> I have repeatedly tried to provide evidence that the personifications of Dynamis and Alazoneia in the Paris Psalter miniature are additions of the Macedonian Renaissance, and that not only the Cyprus plate, the earliest witness of this recension, but several Psalters of the aristocratic group do not have them.<sup>19</sup> The Leningrad miniature now joins the group of Psalters that reflect the more original state of the archetype.

12. V. Benešević, *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum Graecorum qui in monasterio Sanctae Catharinae in Monte Sina asservantur*, I (St. Petersburg, 1911) p. 611.

13. K. Weitzmann, "Eine Pariser-Psalter-Kopie des 13. Jahrhunderts auf dem Sinai," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 6 (1957) pp. 125 ff.

14. A. Baumstark, "Ein rudimentäres Exemplar der griechischen Psalterillustration durch Ganzseitenbilder," *Oriens Christianus* n.s. 2 (1912) pp. 107 ff. and pl. III; Weitzmann, "Pariser-Psalter-Kopie," p. 136 and fig. 7.

15. The Leningrad leaf measures 18.1 × 12.6 cm., whereas the Jerusalem manuscript is slightly larger and measures 19.5 × 14 cm. The difference is easily explained by the trimming of the margins.

16. Omont, *Facsimilés des Miniatures*, pl. VIII; Buchthal, *Paris Psalter*, pl. VIII.

17. Weitzmann, "Pariser-Psalter-Kopie," p. 137.

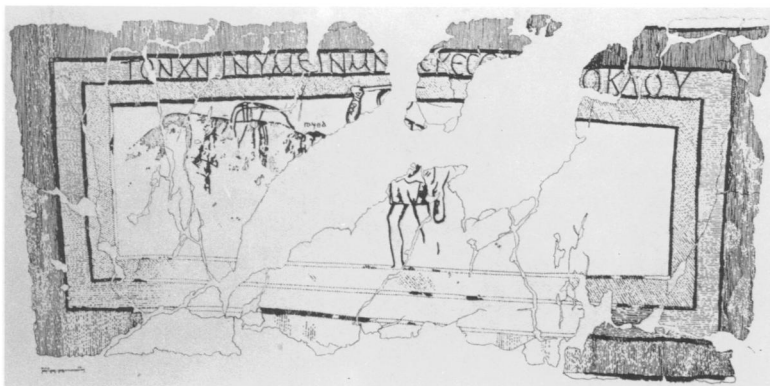
18. Cf. the author's remarks in: "The Psalter Vatopedi 761," pp. 48 ff.

19. K. Weitzmann, "Der Pariser Psalter ms. grec. 139 und die mittelbyzantinische Renaissance," *Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1929) pp. 180 ff.; K. Weitzmann, "Geistige Grundlagen und Wesen der Makedonischen Renaissance," *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen*, fasc. 107 (Cologne, 1963) pp. 12 ff.

The attacking and fleeing soldiers and the absence of the personifications are not the only features that make the Leningrad miniature a witness of primary importance for the reconstruction of the Psalter archetype. The decapitation of Goliath is rendered in the silver plate in a rather unusual and dramatic manner: Goliath has fallen on his back, and at that moment David approaches his victim from behind, severing the head. This action is quite different from that in the miniature of the Paris Psalter, where Goliath has sunk onto his knees and confronts David. Once more the Leningrad miniature agrees with the plate. Though the lower part of the miniature is very badly flaked, the position of Goliath lying on his back is still discernible as well as that of David bending over to sever the head. The only difference is the position of the legs of Goliath, which in the plate are raised from the ground in order to fit the *exergue* and in the miniature are turned down to suggest that a moment earlier the giant was still standing up. In this point the miniature suggests the more original rendering.

Among the aristocratic Psalters the Leningrad miniature does not stand alone in this very specific rendering of the killing of Goliath, but has a parallel in the tiny, pocket-sized Psalter in the Athos monastery Vatopedi, cod. 761 (Figure 6). In a previous discussion of this miniature<sup>20</sup> I had left undecided which of the two schemes of the decapitation is closer to the archetype, but now with the strong support of the Leningrad miniature,

FIGURE 7  
Decapitation of Goliath. Fresco of the Christian Building of Dura. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven



which had proved to be so reliable in the soldier groups, one is inclined to give preference to the version represented here and on the silver plate. It can even be shown that this version is considerably older than the silver plates. In what remains of the very damaged fresco of the Christian Building in Dura (Figure 7),<sup>21</sup> dating to the third century A.D., Goliath is lying on his back and David comes from behind with the sword raised in his hand in order to sever the giant's head. Although this seems to have been the traditional iconography, it was at some time changed by substituting a different type of Goliath, i.e., the kneeling one which more closely resembles that of a conventional decapitation common in illustrations of the killing of a Christian martyr. It seems by no means improbable that some such model, perhaps a miniature from an illustrated Life of a Saint, caused the change.

At the top of the silver plate there is a third scene, which in the sequence of events precedes the other two: the mutual challenge (1 Kings 17:43-47). Goliath raises his hand in a gesture of speech, hurling invectives against David, and the latter, with a corresponding gesture, answers him with an equally boastful tirade. Goliath, fully armed, steps forward, and the lowering of his lance suggests that his attack is imminent, while David, clad in tunic and mantle, stands at ease and leans on a staff, which according to the text (verse 40) should be a shepherd's staff (= βακτηρία), but in reality is a scepter. In an anticipatory manner the silversmith bestowed one of the royal insignia upon David. Moreover, in conformity with his desire to give to David an elated appearance he represented him even slightly larger than the giant Goliath. A blessing hand of God reaching out of the star-studded sky is directed at David as a sign of assurance that his prayer for victory has found acceptance. Between the two opponents a river god reclines leisurely, leaning on a water urn and holding a reed. He has, I believe, correctly been identified as a personification of the valley of Elah (verse 2), just as the two flanking walled cities can be understood as the cities of Shochoh and Azekah (verse 1).

20. Weitzmann, "The Psalter Vatopedi 761," pp. 24, 41, and fig. 7.

21. P. V. C. Baur, *The excavations of Dura-Europos. Preliminary Report of Fifth Season* (New Haven, 1934) p. 275 and pl. XLVIII, 2; C. H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building, The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report, VIII, part 2* (New Haven, 1967) pp. 69 ff. and pl. XL, 2.

Our main problem is whether this scene was ever represented in an aristocratic Psalter. As a scene in itself it does not exist in any extant copy, but there are, nevertheless, indications that it had existed in the archetype. The miniature of the Psalter in Venice (Figure 3) shows an obvious incongruity: whereas David in the receding pose, about to throw the stone with the sling, agrees with the fighting David in the silver plate (Figure 1) and the Paris Psalter miniature (Figure 2), Goliath, standing at ease and leaning on his spear and shield, must be considered a replacement of the one who is hurling his lance as in the two monuments just mentioned. Although he does not raise his hand in a gesture of speech, he is, nevertheless, to be interpreted as Goliath who is challenging David before he moves into battle. This, then, would suggest that the model *did* have the scene of the challenge and that the copyist, eager to condense a rich cycle, conflated two successive scenes in such a way that he took Goliath from a scene of the challenge and combined him with David of the fight proper. This is not the only example of such a conflation, as it occurs a second time in the Leningrad miniature (Figure 4), and here the challenging Goliath is even closer to the one in the silver plate: he is stepping forward and is just about to lower his lance, holding it at the same angle. The only change is once more in the omission of the gesture of speech and the addition of the shield, a change that seems sensible in view of the confrontation with the attacking rather than the speaking David.

Assuming, thus, a miniature of the challenge for the archetype, it must, however, remain an open question whether it included the personification of Elah. On the one hand the archetype did apparently possess a few personifications of localities, i.e., that type of personification which is self-centered and passive, whereas the majority of the personifications one finds in the Paris Psalter, actively interfering with the biblical narrative, I believe to be additions of the Macedonian Renaissance.<sup>22</sup> Leisurely reclining personifications are part of the repertory of silversmiths to fill an exergue, for which the Terra in the Theodosius missorium (Figure 12) is a striking example. It will be noticed that the personification of the David and Goliath plate is very competently designed in a three-quarter view, which is

22. Weitzmann, "Pariser-Psalter-Kopie," pp. 190 ff.



FIGURE 8  
David and Goliath. Bodleian Library, Oxford,  
cod. Barocci 15, fol. 343 r.

rather unique in the set of David plates, where the artist adheres consistently to frontal and side views. This then could suggest that the artist in this case had followed an older model within the workshop tradition. A similar uncertainty prevails with regard to the two walled cities, which are explained but not necessarily required by the biblical text.

With regard to the formal aspect of the silver plate it will be noticed that the three phases of the narration of the Goliath episode are separated from each other by horizontal groundlines, so that each phase becomes a self-contained unit. In contrast, there is no dividing line in the miniature of the Paris Psalter since the soldiers reach into the upper zone, thus creating a unified receding plane and thereby a spatial effect that is

totally lacking in the silver plate. The question must be raised as to which of the two compositional principles is to be associated with the archetype. Through an examination of the great mass of aristocratic Psalters from this point of view, it will become obvious that the compositional layout of the Paris miniature is rather the exception and that the majority of copies have a clear separation of the battle and the decapitation scene. In one case, the Psalter Oxford, Bodleian Library, cod. Barocci 15, from about A.D. 1105 (Figure 8),<sup>23</sup> a mere line separates the two scenes; in another copy, a Psalter of the Christian Archaeological Seminary in Berlin of about the same date,<sup>24</sup> the division is more ostentatiously marked by an ornamental border; and in a third copy, a Psalter formerly in the Athos monastery of Pantocratoros, cod. 49, and now in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection in Washington,<sup>25</sup> from around 1084, the green ground of the upper scene is sufficiently set apart from the gold ground of the lower scene. But even where a clear line does not separate the scenes, as, for example, in a miniature of the eleventh-twelfth-century Psalter in the Athos monastery Vatopedi, cod. 760 (Figure 9),<sup>26</sup> the underlying compositional arrangement is that of clearly distinguished upper and lower zones. For Goliath a groundline is suggested by the leveling of a mountain, while David is suspended and seems to float on the gold ground. One has clearly the impression of an omitted frame line rather than of a setting in receding space.

But plurality alone cannot decide the issue of the original layout in favor of separated strips. This



FIGURE 9  
David and Goliath. Vatopedi, Mt. Athos, cod. 760, fol. 264 r.

23. H. O. Coxe, *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae*, I, *Codices Graeci* (Oxford, 1853) p. 23; E. T. DeWald, "A fragment of a tenth-century Byzantine Psalter in the Vatican Library," *Mediaeval Studies in memory of A. Kingsley Porter* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1939) p. 148 and fig. 13.

24. G. Stuhlfauth, "A Greek Psalter with Byzantine Miniatures," *Art Bulletin* 15 (1933) p. 325 and fig. 13; DeWald, "Byzantine Psalter," p. 148 and fig. 12; Weitzmann, "Geistige Grundlagen," p. 13 and fig. 5.

25. O. M. Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, 1911) fig. 277; S. Der Nersessian, "A Psalter and New Testament Manuscript at Dumbarton Oaks," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 19 (1965) pp. 157, 168, fig. 8.

26. Unpublished. For other miniatures of this Psalter see N. P. Kondakov, *Monuments of Christian Art on Athos* (in Russian) (St. Petersburg, 1902) p. 286 and fig. 99; G. Millet and S. Der Nersessian, "Le Psautier Armenien illustré," *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes* 9 (1929) p. 165 and pls. XIII-XIV; Buchthal, *Paris Psalter*, pl. xxvi, 80-81; Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, pp. 131, 148, 186, 190, figs. 113, 139.

problem is linked with that of the origin of the David cycle at large. It is important to realize that with the one exception of the title miniature, depicting David as the author of the Psalms—in the Paris Psalter<sup>27</sup> he stands between the two personifications of Sophia and Prophetia and in others he stands alone<sup>28</sup>—no scene of the aristocratic recension was invented for the Psalter. The source for the narrative cycle of the Life of David is unquestionably an illustrated Books of Kings<sup>29</sup> like

27. Omont, *Facsimilés des Miniatures*, pl. vii; Buchthal, *Paris Psalter*, pl. vii.

28. E.g., Oxford, Bodleian Library, cod. Auct. D. IV. 1, fol. 15v. Weitzmann, *Die Byzantinische Buchmalerei*, p. 63 and pl. LXVIII, 405.

29. Weitzmann, "The Psalter Vatopedi 761," pp. 32 ff.



that of the Vaticanus gr. 333 from the eleventh century.<sup>30</sup> In cases where the same scenes occur, as fortunately happens with the two depicting the fight against and the killing of Goliath, Psalter and Books of Kings agree iconographically so thoroughly that beyond a doubt we deal with the same recension.<sup>31</sup> It will be noticed in the Vatican codex that not only are the two scenes under consideration separate entities, but that such separation is the basic principle of the entire extensive cycle. In this point the Books of Kings agrees with all illustrated books of the Septuagint that possess large narrative cycles, such as the Octateuchs, to name only the most striking example.<sup>32</sup> It is only logical and self-evident that for the illustration of vast cycles the strip composition should be used to allow for a horizontal extension of complex narrative scenes, and at the same time it is the most economical system of intercalating a great mass of pictures into text columns. In manuscripts with full-page miniatures the number of iconographical entities decreases to the extent that individual pictures become more sumptuous; moreover, the change from the smaller to the larger picture format coincides with the change from the historical to the liturgical book. Consequently the full-page miniatures in aristocratic Psalters evolved out of strip-like smaller pictures in the Books of Kings, which therefore represent the older principle. The fact that so many of the aristocratic Psalters continued to have the strip picture definitely indicates that the transformation took place only gradually within the Psalter recension and that the Paris Psalter represents not the original but an advanced stage of this development. Thus it follows that the silver plate with its striplike compositions reflects the older principle, and this raises another problem: whether one can be certain that the silversmiths had, indeed, an aristocratic Psalter available in their workshop, or a Books of Kings. An answer to this question will have to be postponed until all the silver plates have been discussed.

The second plate to be analyzed (Figure 10) depicts David standing before Saul, who sits in the center, enthroned in frontal position and dressed like a Byzantine emperor. David, in a short tunic and mantle, approaching from the left, is counterbalanced by a bearded man, dressed in a long tunic with long sleeves and a mantle. Each is flanked by a bodyguard of Saul,

leaning on a shield as he holds a spear. According to the Bible text David was twice led before Saul. The first meeting (1 Kings 16:21) occurred when David was called to play the harp before him: "And David came to Saul, and stood before him; and he loved him greatly; and he became his armour bearer"; and the second (1 Kings 17:31-33) when he argued before Saul that he be sent into battle against Goliath: ". . . and he [Saul] sent for him. And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him. . . . And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him. . . ." Whereas most scholars believe it is the first passage that is depicted in the plate,<sup>33</sup> I believe that the artist intended to illustrate the second passage, because a noticeable emphasis was placed in the case of all three central figures on the raised hands that are characteristic of gestures of speech. The passages quoted above indicate that words were not exchanged at the first meeting, but at the second a lengthy conversation went on between David and Saul until it was agreed to let David go into battle against Goliath.

Unfortunately the episode under consideration exists neither in the Vatican Books of Kings cod. 333, nor in any aristocratic Psalter. Yet this does not mean that it never did exist before in the archetypes of either, because it can be demonstrated that the Vatican codex has an abridged picture cycle,<sup>34</sup> and as far as the Psalters are concerned, it is quite evident that the extant copies do not have the full cycle of the archetype preserved. Moreover, there are indications that the scene under consideration actually did exist in richly illustrated Books of Kings. There is a twelve-sided ivory box in the Cathedral treasure of Sens belonging to the eleventh or twelfth century that has the early life of

30. J. Lassus, "Les Miniatures Byzantines du Livre des Rois," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* 45 (1928) pp. 38 ff. and figs. 6, 7.

31. Weitzmann, "Geistige Grundlagen," p. 13 and figs. 4, 5.

32. E.g., the Octateuch in Istanbul, Seraglio, cod. 8 (T. Ouspensky, *L'octateuque de la Bibliothèque du Sérail à Constantinople* [Sofia, 1907]), and the Octateuch formerly in Smyrna and now destroyed (D. C. Hesseling, *Miniatures de l'octateuque grec de Smyrne, Codices Graeci e Latini photographice depicti*, suppl. VI [Leiden, 1909]).

33. Smith, *Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan*, p. 45; Cruikshank Dodd, *Silver Stamps*, p. 182; Rosenberg, *Goldschmiede Merkmzeichen*, p. 647; Stylianou, *Treasures of Lambousa*, p. 25.

34. K. Weitzmann, "Die Illustration der Septuaginta," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 3-4 (1952-1953) pp. 105 ff.



**FIGURE 10**  
Silver plate with David before Saul. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.397



FIGURE 11  
David before Saul. Detail from an ivory box.  
Cathedral treasure, Sens

David depicted in great detail, and among its scenes of purely narrative character is also the episode of David being brought before Saul (Figure 11).<sup>35</sup> There can be little doubt that such an elaborate cycle harks back to a miniature model, which in this case was more likely a Books of Kings than a Psalter because it ends with illustrations of the adventure in the cave of Engedi, told in chapter 24, which one has no reason to assume ever existed in an aristocratic Psalter. Here David is led to Saul by an old man whose identity as the Prophet Samuel is assured by the inscription Ο CAMΟΥΗΛ ΦΕΡΟΝ [Δαβι:]Δ ΠΡ[ὸς] CAΟΥΑ ΒΑC[ιλέα]. In contrast to the silver plate, we deal here, I believe, with the first and not the second appearance of David before Saul, because there is no indication of any dispute going on between the two, and furthermore, there is a little kid in front of Samuel that is explicitly mentioned in verse 20 of chapter 16 as one of the gifts that Jesse had given to David to be presented to Saul. Originally both visits may have existed in a very richly illustrated narrative cycle and may have looked much alike, since we know that illustrators of early biblical copies did not shrink from repetition.<sup>36</sup>

In the Bible, Samuel is not mentioned in either one of the two episodes. Yet to the carver, as well as to the illustrator of his model, Samuel played an important

role in the whole episode, since he is depicted also in the preceding scene, where he replaces Saul's messenger or Jesse, ordering David the shepherd boy to meet Saul.<sup>37</sup> In analogy to these ivories it seems reasonable to assume that the supernumerary figure in the silver plate, the dignified bearded man in long robes, is also none other than Samuel, as Smith already proposed;<sup>38</sup> most scholars left him unnamed while Stylianou suggested one of Saul's sons.<sup>39</sup> The addition of the prophet, contrary to the text, is unlikely to have been made twice independently and suggests that there ultimately exists a common source for both monuments even though the compositional layouts are totally different. Contrary to the silver plate, the arrangement of figures in the ivory adheres to the principle, normal for narrative illustrations, of having the action move in one direction, which usually is from left to right. Saul sits at the right under a baldachin, being approached by Samuel, who is followed by David; both have just entered, as it were, the palace chamber from the left. By comparison, the composition of the silver plate is static, laid out in a carefully balanced symmetry that stresses its ceremonial character. Clearly the differences cannot be explained by an evolutionary process, but must be understood as a substitution of a layout that the silversmith adapted from a different kind of model, which can be determined.

Dalton,<sup>40</sup> without going into details, had already recognized the similarity with the missorium of Theodosius I in the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid (Figure 12), which was made in A.D. 388, either in Salonika, as Delbrueck believes,<sup>41</sup> or, as I believe to be more likely, in Constantinople. The similarity between the two silver plates lies not only in the general

35. A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.-XIII. Jh.*, I (Berlin, 1930) pp. 64 ff. and pl. LXXII, 124 ff.

36. In the Cotton Genesis, for example, the genealogical chapter 5 was illustrated by a whole series of monotonous birth scenes. Weitzmann, "Illustration der Septuaginta," p. 101.

37. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, pl. LXXII, 124e.

38. Smith, *Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan*, p. 45.

39. Stylianou, *Treasures of Lambousa*, p. 27.

40. O. M. Dalton, "A Second Silver Treasure from Cyprus," *Archaeologia* 60 (1907) p. 6 and fig. 2.

41. R. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929) pp. 235 ff., pl. 62.



FIGURE 12  
Missorium of Theodosius I. Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid

arrangement of the figures but extends to a great number of details. Saul sits on the cushioned throne, clad in an embroidered tunic and a chlamys with an ornate tablion, which according to the fashion of the day is attached to its upper part rather than further down over the knees as in the chlamys of Theodosius. The diadem with the double row of pearls is reduced to a single row of pearls, which are indicated merely by dots. Like Theodosius, Saul wears a nimbus, but this attribute need not be derived from the silver plate, because in the Vatican Books of Kings Saul has a nimbus throughout, as a sign of dignity rather than of sanctity, as may be seen in the miniature (Figure 13) in which David discards the coat of mail before going into battle against Goliath (1 Kings 17:37–39). David in the Cyprus plate has assumed the place of the official who in the Madrid plate receives the codicilli, whereas the figure of Samuel, having no equivalent in the missorium, has most likely been taken over, as mentioned above, from

FIGURE 13  
David discarding Saul's coat of mail. Biblioteca Vaticana, cod. gr. 333, fol. 23 r.



the miniature model and, for reasons of symmetry, made to flank Saul from the other side. In thorough agreement is the placing of the bodyguards at the outer flanks, though they are reduced to two in the David plate. There are modifications in the armor and differences in the way the shields are held, but what is remarkable is the similarity of the youthful heads with curled, bobbed hair. This hair fashion characterizes them as the Germanic bodyguard of the Byzantine emperor.

Most striking is the similarity of the architectural setting, which in the Madrid plate suggests the imperial palace and most likely the tribunal in which the awarding of the codicilli took place. In the David plate this tetrastyle structure has lost its pediment, and the four columns, instead of being placed upon a plinth course, rest on a groundstrip, the one on which the biblical figures had been moving in the miniature. The central intercolumnar space has been broadened, the arch has taken the form of a horseshoe, and the architrave is filled in a decorative manner with a garland. But in spite of these losses of structural conciseness compared with the Theodosius plate, there are nevertheless a few details that point to a very close dependence not necessarily on the Madrid plate directly, but more likely on a silver plate similar to it. Dalton noted that “the lateral architraves are made to project beyond the outside columns in a manner which no

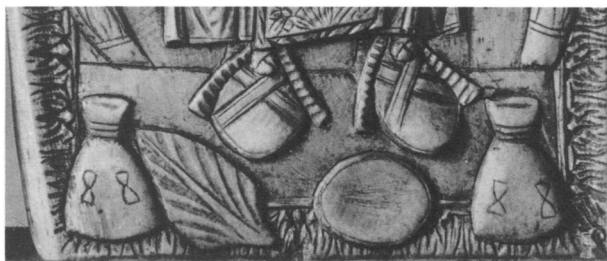


FIGURE 14  
Detail of the ivory diptych of Boethius. Museo Civico, Brescia

artist of a good period would have tolerated.”<sup>42</sup> But precisely these projections, though not as strongly marked, occur also in the Madrid plate, as Delbrueck had observed.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, it will be noticed that the four columns, two of which have the vertical fluting replaced by a spiral one, bear capitals that are constructed according to an identical pattern: a low acanthus at the bottom and double helices above.

These comparisons seem to indicate that the artist of the David plate had used as a model a silver plate like the Madrid missorium, which is the single remainder of what must once have been widely distributed imperial gifts. This, however, does not mean that all the imperial aspects of the David scene were due to the impact of a silver plate. Also in the miniature model Saul was depicted as a crowned emperor, accompanied by bodyguards and seated in front of the palace. But, as the miniature in the Vatican Books of Kings indicates (Figure 13), he was in all probability seated at the right, the bodyguards stood in one solid group behind him, and the architecture in the right half of the composition enclosed only Saul and the soldiers. Therefore, it seems more than likely that all the ingredients of the composition existed in the miniature, but that the silversmith rearranged them according to the tradition of the silver plates like the one in Madrid.

Moreover, there is a section of the silver plate where the artist had to rely on the workshop tradition, namely the exergue, which is here not big enough to be filled with a scene as in the David and Goliath plate. He thus resorted to the rendering of a few scattered objects.

42. Dalton, “Byzantine Plate and Jewellery,” p. 356.  
43. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, p. 238.

Smith explained the two bags as wineskins and thought that the basket was probably filled with corn, alluding to the gifts of the “bread and a bottle of wine” that Jesse had sent with the kid (see Figure 11) to be delivered by David as gifts to Saul (1 Kings 17:20). It may very well be that the silversmith had in mind this biblical association when he filled the exergue with these objects, but their origin is not to be sought in the miniature model. Such bags are a common feature in the consular diptychs, where they are placed under the feet of the consuls, i.e., in the spot that corresponds to the exergue of a silver plate. In the diptych of the consul Boethius in Brescia (Figure 14)<sup>44</sup> two such bags are lying on the ground, arranged symmetrically as on the David plate, together with other objects distributed to the victors such as palm leaves, a crown, and a plate. The bags contain the money to be distributed in the ceremony called the *sparsio*.<sup>45</sup> More often two slave boys are represented pouring the coins from the bags they carry over their shoulders, sometimes spilling them on the ground as in the diptych of Clementius in Liverpool or the diptych of Orestes in London;<sup>46</sup> or collecting them in barrel-like containers as in the diptych of Justinus in Berlin (Figure 15).<sup>47</sup> Thus I believe that the

44. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, pp. 103 ff. and pl. 7.  
45. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, pp. 68 ff.  
46. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, p. 117 and pl. 16, p. 148 and pl. 32.  
47. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, p. 151 and pl. 34.

FIGURE 15  
Detail of the ivory diptych of Justinus. Staatliche Museen, Berlin



vessel between the two bags in the David plate, although its shape is somewhat different, is meant to hold the coins of the *sparsio*—an explanation supported by the content of the vessel, which indeed resembles a mass of coins more than anything else.

The aim of this study has been to gain insight into the working process of a seventh-century Byzantine silversmith. Apparently he was faced with the unusual commission to represent the story of David's early exploits on a series of silver plates. There is no way of knowing whether the nine plates form a complete set or whether there were others now lost. The first step, which would have been taken by artists in other media as well, i.e., by artists working in other metals, marble, or ivory, was to get hold of a model that had an extensive narrative cycle of the desired story, and the obvious place to look for it was a library with illustrated manuscripts. At the present time it must remain an open question whether it was a Books of Kings or a Psalter of the aristocratic group. In either case it must have been a manuscript whose miniatures were clearly separated entities. This principle of illustration could best be adapted in the large plate (Figure 1) since here the exergue and the corresponding segment at the top permitted the artist also to fill these two spaces with scenes, making some adjustments that do not affect the narrative character very much, except that the size of the figures had to be reduced for obvious reasons. The soldier groups of the bottom scenes were moved up to the central scene, which originally had its own soldier groups of a different type. On the other hand, there is the possibility that in the upper strip the personification of the valley of Elah was an addition of the silversmith, borrowed from the exergue of another plate. The close dependence of this plate on miniatures not only explains every detail of its iconography but casts, vice versa, light on the pre-iconoclastic manuscript model,

since the earliest Psalter does not date before the tenth century and the earliest Books of Kings not before the eleventh century.

In the second plate (Figure 10) the silversmith had likewise consulted a miniature, but he was only interested in its content and not in its composition or the outlines of its figures. The atelier in which he worked must have produced plates similar to the Madrid misorium, and he saw a chance to make use of its compositional scheme and its figure types, thereby increasing the stateliness and the imperial connotation of the David scene.

Thus drawing on two sources of fundamentally different character, the artist of the David plates could exercise a considerable amount of artistic freedom by deciding in each individual case how much he wanted to incorporate from one or the other source. The creativeness of the medieval artist is by and large not to be measured by the invention of new subject matters or new compositional principles—which does take place though extremely seldom—but by the manner in which established iconography and established compositional principles are adapted, transformed, or recast. In the present case I have tried to demonstrate that medieval artists are not slavish copyists but operate within a wide framework of possible changes of their models. If they are gifted like the silversmith of the David plates, the result will not be pasticcios, but coherent reinterpretations of a given theme. In most cases the process of reinterpretation can no longer be comprehended because the immediate models are lost. They are also lost in the present cases, but in a rare instance like ours they can, with the help of later miniature copies and an earlier silver plate, be reconstructed to such an extent that the process of transformation can be followed, if not in all details, at least in its essential features, and the personal contribution of the silversmith can be assessed.

# The Flowering of Seljuq Art

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WHEN ONE EXAMINES the holdings of Islamic art in the Metropolitan Museum and in other major collections, one soon becomes aware of the fact that the various periods and regions appear in an uneven measure. Such an “unbalanced” representation is to be expected—just as it is found in the exhibits of the arts of virtually all countries. It is also clear that this variation in the number and quality of objects is not primarily the result of the vagaries of taste among curators and collectors or in the art market; rather, it is due to specific conditions in some countries during certain periods. The understanding of this basic though little-investigated phenomenon will help us to grasp the reasons for the productivity, or the lack of it, at a given time.

Of all the periods in Iranian art, that of the Seljuqs, roughly between 1050 and 1225, and particularly the second half from about 1150 to 1225, is the richest, in that most artistic media are extensively represented, in particular, ceramic wares and tiles, stone and stucco carvings, metalwork, jewelry, glass, and textiles (Figures 1–15); even figural painting (Figure 16) and figural objects and sculptures, either in the round or in the form of reliefs (Figures 17–23), are not missing. Furthermore, the objects are of excellent artistic quality and often of high technical perfection. This period has quite rightly been referred to as a time of “artistic explosion.”<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the wide range of first-rate

objects distinguishes it even from the preceding Samanid-Ghaznevid-Buyid period of Iran and Central Asia, which also was very productive. The same can be said in even stronger terms with regard to the contemporary output of Iraq, Anatolia, North Africa, India, and even Egypt. What is it that caused artistic creativity to reach a peak in Iran in the rather short span of about seventy-five years? (It is, of course, necessary to remember that the termination of this astonishing epoch was brought about by the destructive force of the various Mongol invasions.)

It has been recognized that one basic factor involved in this age of high artistic productivity was the urbanization of Muslim society. Hence, it has been said that “it is the urban bourgeoisie of Iran which was the primary sponsor and inspirer of the astonishing development given to the beautiful objects in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.”<sup>2</sup> However, while this fact is incontrovertible, urbanization and the accompanying production of goods for the middle classes in the various towns cannot be regarded as the cause as such or, at least, as the sole cause. First of all, at that time, urbanization was found all over the Islamic world and was not a specific Seljuq Iranian phenomenon. Yet Iran and her bordering regions to the east stand out by the profusion and versatility of their mercantile and artistic production. In addition, there are other points to be

1. Oleg Grabar, “The Visual Arts, 1050–1350,” *The Cambridge History of Iran*, V, *The Seljuq and Mongol Periods* (Cambridge, 1968) p. 626.

2. Grabar, “Arts, 1050–1350,” p. 648; see also L. T. Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan [pencase] 542/1148 from the Hermitage Collection (1936–1965),” *Ars Orientalis* 7 (1968) p. 95.

considered that force us to take into account various factors besides urbanization and middle-class proclivities. For instance, the Metropolitan Museum's excavations at the site of the huge ancient city of Nishāpūr and later clandestine diggings there have produced some outstanding large objects as well as vast quantities of small pottery bowls with rather unpretentious, though attractive, decorations, which on no account can be called objects of the highest aesthetic appeal, let alone luxury wares. They can be explained only as having been made for the impecunious lower middle class of Nishāpūr in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Moreover, in spite of urbanization and the production of objects for the urban bourgeoisie, the local artistic performance, as well as that of the whole province of Khorasan, was more limited than the Seljuq one, being restricted for the most part to pottery and glass, and on the whole not as technically varied and artistically brilliant. Nor was the local pottery endowed with as rich a figural imagery. On the other hand, there was a decline of production in the vast urban conglomerate of Cairo from the second half of the fourteenth century, and this showed itself in quantity and quality and even in the range of media.

It seems obvious that what created the propitious conditions for such outstanding artistic production

FIGURE 1

Mortar with bovine-headed loops to hold rings. Cast and chased bronze. Persia, Seljuq period, XII–XIII century. Height 6½ in. (16.51 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 12.33.4



FIGURE 2

Ewer with Kūfic inscription in relief on the nearly spherical body. Cast and chased bronze inlaid with silver. Persia, Seljuq period, XII century. Greatest height 11 5/8 in. (29.51 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Frederick P. Huntley, 59.53

must have been something very special, or what is more likely, a combination of contributing factors. Let us then look at what might have been the causes and, in doing so, proceed from the general to the more specific.

There was, first of all, a very advantageous ambiance created by the long duration of Seljuq rule—a favorable condition that bears out the historical principle established by Ibn Khaldūn:

If a dynasty is of short duration, life in the town will stop at the end of the dynasty. Its civilization will recede, and the town will fall into ruins. On the other hand, if the dynasty is of long duration and lasts a long time, new constructions will always go up in the town,



FIGURE 3

Footed hemispherical cup with an anthropomorphic Naskhī inscription, the signs of the zodiac, and arabesque scrolls. Bronze, engraved and inlaid with silver. Persia, Seljuq period, early XIII century. Height 4½ in. (11.43 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Edward C. Moore, Edward C. Moore Collection, 91.1.543



the number of large mansions will increase and the walls [or markets] of the town will extend farther and farther.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, there had developed a climate highly conducive to lucrative commercial activities of every sort, and these were widely endowed with an Islamic ethos. Thus, a handbook on commerce entitled “The Beauties of Trade,” probably written in the eleventh century in the Fāṭimid-Ayyūbid realm by a well-traveled importer-exporter named Shaykh Abu’l -Fadl Ja’far b. ‘Ali ad-Dimishqī, states:

Trade is the best of all gainful employments and the one which is most conducive to happiness. The merchant can achieve easy circumstances, he has knightly per-

fection (*lahu muruwwa*), and while he may possess many thousands, he is not demeaned by a simple garment. Because he who has dealings with princes may not be able to afford the expenses this involves, yet he still has to appear in a shiny garment and turban and has to keep beautiful horses with clean harnesses, saddles and reins and slaves as well. And he who belongs to the military has to eat coarser food, his life is more limited and he is counted as a tyrant; even when he acts justly he is hated. . . . It was the Prophet who said first: How beautiful is an honest merchant!<sup>4</sup>

Even such a high-minded philosopher and theologian as al-Ghazālī, with all his concern about the next world and the preparatory work for it, has this to say:

The markets are God’s tables and whoever visits them will receive from them . . . the honest merchant is more dear to me than one who keeps himself free for all sorts of divine worship . . . he is involved in a Holy War (*jihād*) because Satan meets him by way of measures and weighing and in the direction of giving and taking and so he is involved with a Holy War with him. . . . [Also:] . . . to provide for one’s family so that they may not need anything from the community and to provide for them by lawful trade is [to be reckoned as] a form of *jihād*.<sup>5</sup>

Even royalty joined in the acclaiming chorus, as a remark in the *Qābūs-nāmeḥ* (1082) of the Ziyārid prince of Gurgān, Kai Kā’ūs b. Iskandar, indicates. Here, however, it is intrepidity rather than ethical considerations that gives the merchant his outstanding position:

Clever men say that the root of commerce is established in venturesomeness and its branches in deliberateness, or, as the Arabs express it, “Were it not for venturesome men, mankind would perish.” What is meant by these words is that merchants, in their eagerness for gain, bring goods from the east to the west, exposing their lives to peril on mountains and seas, careless of robbers and highwaymen and without fear either of living the life of brutal people or of the insecurity of the roads. To benefit the inhabitants of the west they import the wealth of the east and for those of the east the wealth of the west, and by doing so become the instrument of the world’s civilization. None of this could be brought

3. Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah, An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, II (New York, 1958) p. 235.

4. The Arabic title is *Kūtāb al-Ishāra ilā Maḥāsin at-Tijāra*; for discussion see Hellmut Ritter, “Ein arabisches Handbuch der Handelswissenschaft,” *Der Islam* 7 (1917) especially pp. 65–66; for the date and locale of the author see Claude Cahen, “A propos et autour d’*Ein arabisches Handbuch der Handelswissenschaft*,” *Oriens* 15

(1962) pp. 160–162. See also G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam, A Study in Cultural Orientation*, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London, A Phoenix Book, 1966) pp. 215–216.

5. Ritter, “Ein arabisches Handbuch der Handelswissenschaft,” p. 32; see also A. K. S. Lambton, “The Merchant in Medieval Islam,” *A Locust’s Leg, Studies in Honor of S. H. Taqizadeh* (London, 1962) p. 124.



FIGURE 4  
Inkwell with the signs of the zodiac in the main register, friezes of animals in the other bands, and arabesque scrolls on the domed cover. Cast bronze inlaid with silver. Persia, Seljuq period, first half of the XIII century. Height 5 3/4 in. (14.60 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 59.69.2 a, b

about except by commerce, and such hazardous tasks would not be undertaken except by men the eyes of whose prudence are stitched up.<sup>6</sup>

Yet it should be stressed that the moral premise for the encomium bestowed by high and low on the merchants was that they were honest in the many aspects of their trade activities. The fact that the issue of reliability and fairness is constantly raised indicates that conditions were often far from ideal, but this does not seem to have lowered the general esteem in which this social class was held. Indeed there appears to have been

6. Kai Ka'us ibn Iskandar, *A Mirror for Princes, The Qabus-nameh*, trans. Reuben Levy (New York, 1951) p. 156.

a social corrective that tended to improve the ethical behavior of the urban bourgeoisie. This was due to the fact that in the twelfth century the *fityān* ("young people") adopted the chivalrous codes held earlier by the higher circles of originally Iranian knightly organizations.<sup>7</sup>

To facilitate the mercantile conditions and, in particular, the exigencies of worldwide trade, the urban society provided services specially tailored to various needs. The law books written between the second half of the eleventh and the early thirteenth century, especially those whose authors were of Iranian origin, show that the contemporary mercantile law was based not on an artificial and doctrinaire canon but on the social realities and business practices of the time and region. Significantly, they fully appreciated the profit motive as the chief purpose of credit transactions, partnerships, and the special arrangement called "commenda." They even provided legal devices (*hiyal*) to circumvent

7. Franz Taeschner, "Futuwwa, eine gemeinschaftsbildende Idee im mittelalterlichen Orient und ihre verschiedenen Erscheinungsformen," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde* 56 (Basel, 1956) pp. 122-158 (where all the earlier literature is given).

FIGURE 5  
Earthenware bowl with an incised arabesque scroll under a white glaze. Persia, Seljuq period, XII century. Diameter 7 3/4 in. (19.68 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 63.159.2

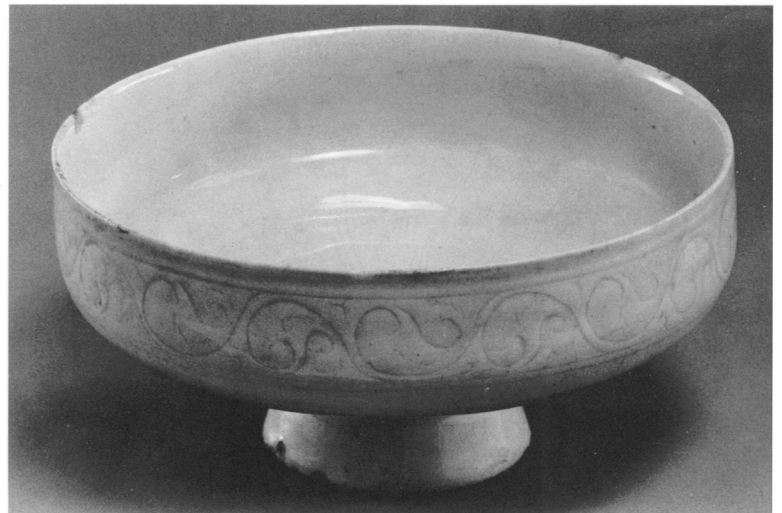




FIGURE 6  
Large earthenware vase with molded decorations in three registers under a turquoise glaze. Persia, Seljuq period, early XIII century. Height 33 in. (83.82 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 39.189

the more rigid laws, while formally following them so as to avoid burdensome restrictions and to reap the full benefit of the investments.<sup>8</sup> In addition, there were specific institutions to assist the merchant and the artisan. Thus, in spite of the Koranic interdiction against interest and usury, moneylenders and moneychangers played an important role. Nāṣir-e Khosrow tells us that

in 1052 there were two hundred moneychangers in Isfahan.<sup>9</sup> In addition there was the institution of the *jahbadha*, “who were, on the one hand, bankers of a sort and on the other official moneychangers cum sureties, who verified and standardized by exchange the different types of currency, good and bad, paid by the taxpayers in return for a small percentage collected as a supplementary tax from the latter.”<sup>10</sup> Then there was the institution of the *bayyā’*. These were

persons enjoying a high and wide confidence who were brought in for appraisal, for estimating quality and for trading all the goods belonging to the ruler’s court. Specifically, for instance, it was told of them that they packed products in bales and that strangers came and bought the goods in that form, without opening them since they relied on the *bayyā’*. And in every town when they would deliver the goods they would present the marks [*khatt*] of the *bayyā’* and sell them for profit without opening them.<sup>11</sup>

Besides these generally accommodating conditions, there is no doubt that a “bullish” economic situation in towns and cities leading to high levels of production and a proclivity to purchase manufactured goods was the primary cause of the artistic developments. There must have been a highly favorable milieu of urban wealth, with an active demand for goods, especially luxury goods, to bring about such propitious market condi-

8. “The commenda was an arrangement in which an investor entrusted his capital to another party to trade with it and then return to the investor the principal and a previously agreed upon share of the profit. The trading partner did not normally contribute to the investment, but as a reward of his labor received the remaining share of the profits. . . . Any loss resulting from the perils of travel or from an unsuccessful business venture was to be borne exclusively by the investor; the agent was in no way liable for a loss of this nature, losing only his invested time and effort.” Abraham L. Udovitch, “The ‘Law Merchant’ of the Medieval Islamic World,” in *Logic in Classical Islamic Culture*, ed. G. E. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden, 1970) pp. 113–130, especially p. 115; Abraham L. Udovitch, *Partnership and Profit in Medieval Islam* (Princeton, 1970) pp. 170–172. As can be readily seen, the very common arrangement of the commenda was a special challenge to the enterprising merchant lacking capital or goods and by its complete freedom fostered the intrepid long-distance trade of the type praised by the Ziyārid ruler Kai Kā’ūs b. Iskandar (see above pp. 115–116). But as the quoted incidents show, the commenda had also extensive repercussions for the craft production, in particular when it came to the selling of the manufactured objects.

9. Charles Schefer, ed., *Safar-nameh* (Paris, 1881) p. 92; quoted in Lambton, “The Merchant,” p. 129.

10. Lambton, “The Merchant,” pp. 128–129.

11. Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan,” pp. 100–101.

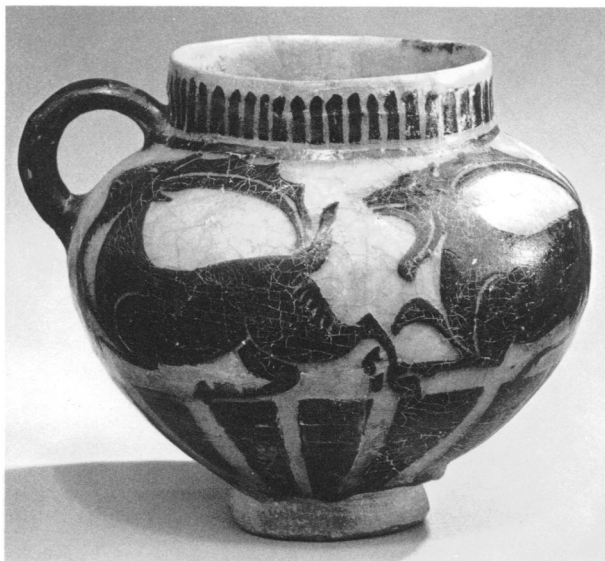
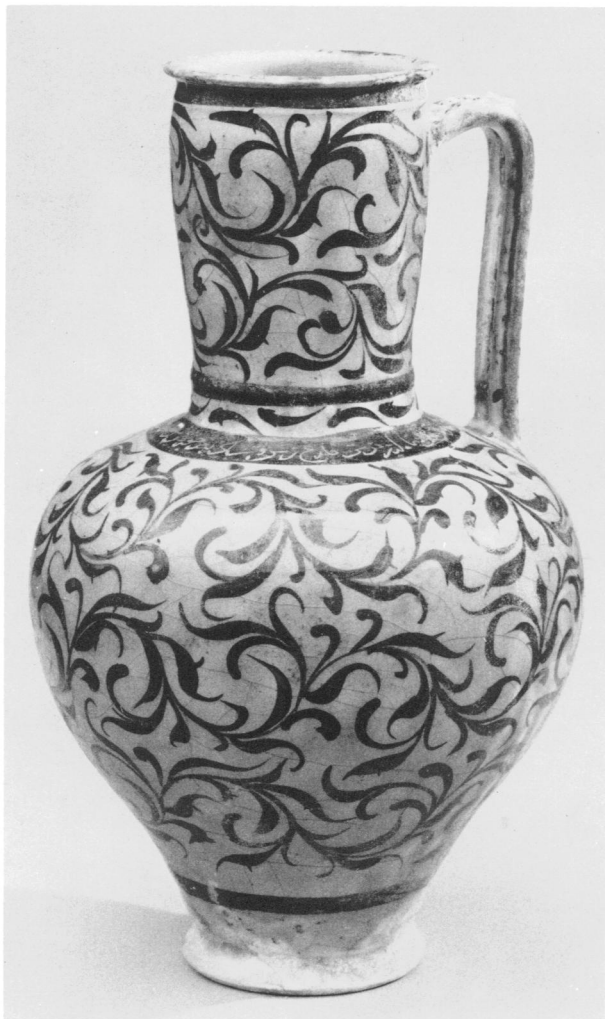


FIGURE 7

Earthenware jug with black slip decoration of running goats under a turquoise glaze. Persia, Rayy, Seljuq period, XII century. Height 5 in. (12.70 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 67.104



tions. Unfortunately, little research has been done on the effect of the economy on artistic production and the response of the buying public. It is even doubtful whether there exist in Iran and elsewhere (with the possible exception of Egypt) detailed records covering long periods of time, which would allow us to follow the ups and downs of these developments. What we do sometimes find are references to conditions that must have had adverse influence on production, such as the levying of vexatious taxes or the mistreatment and cruel exploitation of workers. The tax that all but eradicated the textile workshops of Tinnīs in the Nile Delta about A.D. 975 is one example,<sup>12</sup> as is the imposition in 999 of a tithe on all silk and cotton manufactured in Baghdad. The latter caused severe street riots and was later rescinded, at least for cotton goods.<sup>13</sup>

The basic economic circumstances so far enumerated were operative in the first half of the Seljuq period (if not slightly earlier), though they apparently took some time to become effective in the art field. It was not until the second half of the Seljuq period that the latent conditions of the economy, along with changing cultural and psychological attitudes, brought about a new flourishing of the arts. Having inquired into the economic factors, we should now consider the new, more personal attitudes and their effect on the production of art objects.

The revival of the Persian language allowed artisans to employ their native tongue in a workaday fashion on

12. R. B. Serjeant, "Material for a History of Islamic Textiles up to the Mongol Conquest," *Ars Islamica* 13/14 (1948) p. 94.

13. Serjeant, "Material for a History of Islamic Textiles," *Ars Islamica* 9 (1942) p. 82.

FIGURE 8

Earthenware ewer with a black painted design of leafy foliage under a turquoise glaze. Persia, Kāshān, Seljuq period, early XIII century. Height 13 in. (33.02 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 66.175.4

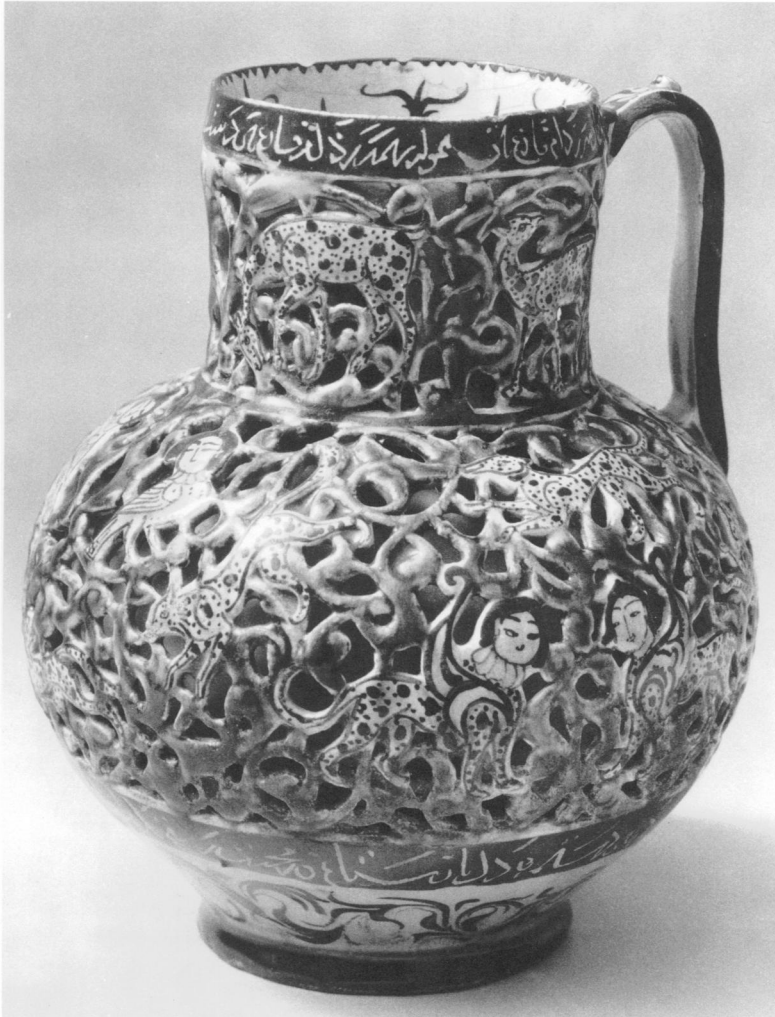


FIGURE 9

Earthenware reticulated jug with animal designs on an arabesque ground. Blue and black underglaze painted beneath a turquoise glaze. Persia, Kāshān, Seljuq period, dated A.H. 612/A.D. 1215–1216. Height 8 in. (20.32 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 32.52.1

the use of Persian, we now find that the texts are given in poetical form, which, as a means of expression, was (and is) more congenial and creatively potent to the Iranian mind. One of the favorite poetic forms used on Seljuq objects was the quatrain (*rubāʿī*), which lends itself readily to the pithy rendering of a short-thought sequence. Furthermore, the themes of the inscriptions became more personal in nature than they had been previously, with the favorite subjects being unrequited love and religion;<sup>16</sup> in other cases, these themes are of a folkloristic character, depicting popular versions of the high literature;<sup>17</sup> or, finally, they established direct personal connections between the object and maker, and the patron.<sup>18</sup>

In this manner a personal involvement was established with the objects, which at the same time became allied with literature, so that in a direct though humble fashion the artisans participated in the country's main cultural expression.

The Persian texts were no longer written in the hieratic Kūfic writing, but in a more common, cursive

objects of every conceivable shape and function. The earliest inscription within the Seljuq context, though from a region not yet identified with certainty, is to be found on a cloisonné enamel bowl made for Dāʿūd b. Suqmān b. Artuq between 1114 and 1144.<sup>14</sup> The earliest such text on an object definitely from Iran occurs on a bronze pincase of 1148, inlaid with silver and copper.<sup>15</sup> These dates are significant since they coincide with the beginning of the period of rapid growth of a more sophisticated metal production and the growth of other media as well. The use of Persian persisted throughout the Seljuq period, and on many ceramic vessels and tiles of the thirteenth century it is used exclusively.

Persian replaced an Arabic that was primarily employed for impersonal, eulogistic formulae, or formalistic historical inscriptions given in prose. Along with

14. Max van Berchem and Josef Strzygowski, *Amida* (Heidelberg, 1910) pp. 120–125.

15. Giuzalian, "The Bronze Qalamdan," pp. 95–119; L. T. Giuzalian, "The Bronze Qalamdan of 1148" (in Russian), *Pamiatniki Epokhi Rustaveli* (Leningrad, 1938) pp. 217–226.

16. Mehdi Bahrami, "Le Problème des ateliers d'étoiles de faïence lustrée," *La Revue des Arts Asiatiques* 10 (1936) pp. 182–185, 188–190; Mehdi Bahrami, *Les Recherches sur les carreaux de revêtement lustré dans la céramique persane du XIII<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1937) pp. 65–69, 91, 95–115; Mehdi Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences* (Cairo, 1949) pp. 116–121, 127.

17. L. T. Giuzalian, "A Fragment of the *Shah-nameh* on Pottery Tiles of the Thirteenth–Fourteenth Centuries" (in Russian), *Epigrafiika Vostoka* 4 (1951) pp. 35–50; L. T. Giuzalian, "Two Fragments of Nizami on Tiles of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries" (in Russian), *Epigrafiika Vostoka* 7 (1953) pp. 17–25; both articles reviewed and paraphrased in Oleg Grabar, in his review of *Epigrafiika Vostoka* 1–8, *Ars Orientalis* 2 (1957) p. 551.

18. This occurs on the qalamdan of 1148; see Giuzalian, "The Bronze Qalamdan," pp. 108, 115–117.

Naskhī script, which had been used in Iran since the middle of the eleventh century, although its more monumental expression in historical texts did not occur until the middle of the twelfth century.<sup>19</sup> The large number of inscriptions that were applied to pottery vessels and tiles is indeed striking, as are their subjective and emotional content and, even more, their informal, nonchalantly cursive character. There is nothing academic or standardized about them. Rather, they seem to have the intention of giving the objects a more personal quality.

The literary aspect of the objects also poses the question whether this part of their decoration (and, on more ambitious pieces, possibly even the ornamentation as a whole) was done by a different artisan, that is, by a more educated person who was collaborating with the simple craftsman who created the shape, just as signatures on metal objects indicate a division of labor between bronzesmith and inlay worker.<sup>20</sup> In any case, the writing testifies to a fairly large body of educated artists whose work must have appealed to a responsive clientele of at least equal literary training.

All these factors—the use of the Persian language, of poetry, and of cursive, everyday writing on the objects—allowed an immediate response by the customer, who could readily identify with the sentiments expressed on the object. It spoke his language in every respect, and even when the phrases were hackneyed, they still reflected the general mood of the people. In addition, we have evidence that the inscriptions and designs were more than cliché-like “decorative features” to which little attention would be paid. Some of the represented objects, which were more difficult to identify, had label-like designations allowing the viewer to understand what he saw readily and to respond fully.<sup>21</sup> The artisans went even one step further: instead of just creating objects for ordinary use and amused contemplation, they regarded them as means to a happier life and

one of spiritual enrichment. This intent is expressed, for instance, by an inscription on two Seljuq objects:

May thy fortune be always increasing,  
Your good luck be out of all bounds,  
So that whatever reaches thy palate from this  
plate [*tabaq*, or bowl (*kāseh*)]  
O Master of the world, be an addition to thy soul.<sup>22</sup>

Naturally such direct appeal could be effective only if the artist put his heart fully into the work so as to guarantee the success of his product, both aesthetically and psychologically. This participatory exigency increased the pride of the artisan in his creation, which in turn must have influenced the quality, and even the quantity, of the objects. The self-esteem of the artist is

FIGURE 10

Bowl with “a musical entertainment.” Luster-painted earthenware. Persia, Rayy, Seljuq period, late XII century. Diameter 8¾ in. (21.26 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 56.185.13



19. See Epigraphical Note by Ernst Herzfeld in Myron Bement Smith, “Imām Zāde Karrār at Buzūn,” *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 7 (1935) pp. 73–81.

20. Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan,” pp. 95, 105.

21. D. S. Rice, *Le Baptistère de Saint Louis* (Paris, 1951) p. 21, figs. 10, 20–21. (“Des inscriptions ‘explicatives’ de ce genre ne sont pas rares sur les ‘cuivres’ incrustés du treizième siècle.”)

22. Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences*, p. 121, no. 13; Grace D. Guest and Richard Ettinghausen, “The Iconography of a Kāshān Luster Plate,” *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961) p. 29.



FIGURE 11

Earthenware bowl, luster-painted with musicians playing the lute and castanets in the center, surrounded by inscription bands. Persia, Kāshān, Seljuq period, mid-xiii century. Diameter 19 $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (49.83 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 32.52.2



FIGURE 12

Minai bowl, with the master shot of the Sasanian king Bahrām Gūr, and the death of his mistress Azādeh. Polychrome-painted and gilt-decorated earthenware. Persia, Seljuq period, late XII century. Diameter 8 ½ in. (21.59 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the Schiff Foundation, 57.36.13



clearly, even effusively, expressed in some inscriptions, such as this poetical Persian text on an inlaid bronze ewer, dated 1182, now in the Historical Museum of Tbilisi:

My ewer is good, nice and refined.  
 Who in the world has a similar one?  
 Everybody who saw it said "It is beautiful!"  
 Nobody found a mate to it  
 Because there is no similar one.  
 Look at the ewer!  
 It is spirited.  
 It is living water which comes out of it.  
 Each stream flowing out of it on our hands,  
 Gives us every time new delight.  
 Look at the ewer! Everybody praises it.  
 It is worthy of serving one as distinguished as  
 you. . . .<sup>23</sup>

23. L. T. Giuzalian, "A Bronze Ewer of the Year 1182" (in Russian), *Pamiatniki Epokhi Rustaveli* (Leningrad, 1938) pp. 230-231.

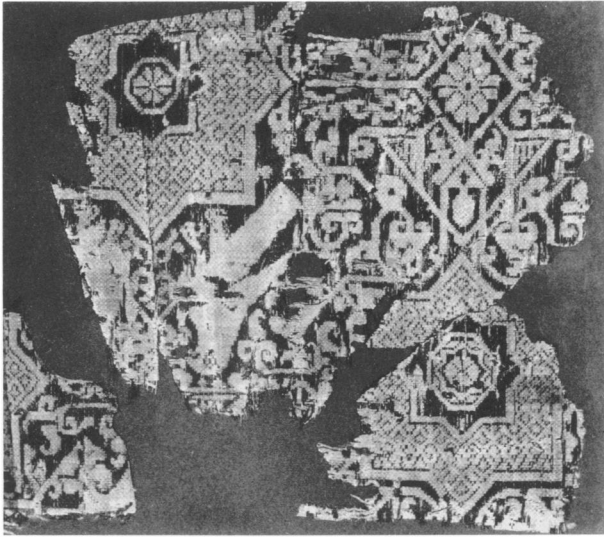
FIGURE 13

Minai tile, with Kūfic writing in relief in overglaze painting and human figures and a bird in the arabesque scrolls of the background. Molded, glazed, and painted earthenware. Persia, Seljuq period, XII-XIII century. Height 9 in. (22.86 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, J. Lionberger Davis Gift, 67.5



FIGURE 14

Bottle with dark blue threads circling the neck. Molded clear, yellowish glass with applied thread decoration. Persia, Seljuq period, XII century. Height 10 ½ in. (26.67 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 64.255



**FIGURE 15**  
Silk textile with a star design, confronted birds, and arabesques in yellow on a dark blue ground. Persia, Seljuq period, XI–XII century. Greatest height 5 in. (12.70 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 46.156.11 a

**FIGURE 16**  
Wall painting, the upper register showing six standing and kneeling figures, the lower showing two horsemen killing a snake, set against a red background. Persia, Seljuq period, early XIII century. Greatest width 23 ¾ in. (60.32 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 52.20.1



Another object to be considered in this context, the pencease of 1148, carries this proud, assured self-estimate in Persian verse: “God regarded me with favor while I lived, He will favor me in the future until I die.”<sup>24</sup>

Even as unlikely an object as a textile can carry an expression of the artist’s high regard for his own work. A Naskhī inscription forming the border of an animal design on a fabric in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts formulates the thought in this manner:

[As beautifully set forth as] a feast and [as] graceful  
as a glade, I am.  
The adorned sun in the new-born spring [seen]  
from the garden, I am.  
For this reason I become a good portent to  
everyone.  
That from the workshop of Amirak, the dyer,  
I am.<sup>25</sup>

Taking this attitude into account, it is not difficult to understand why artisans signed their pieces several times upon occasion.<sup>26</sup> It is more difficult to establish the reasons for the artisans’ strong feelings of self-importance and pride. It may very well have been

related to their awareness of technical excellence, inasmuch as the older pottery and metal techniques had become more refined and new ones had developed. This is supported by the self-laudatory inscription preserved in what is now the earliest complete wall covering in faience mosaic, a technique that had been slowly and systematically developed in Iran; in the Sırçalı Medrese of 1242 in Konya, the artisan (from Tūs in eastern Iran) adds this Persian distich after his signature:

24. Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan,” pp. 115–116.

25. Mojtaba Minovi, “A Persian Quatrain on a Dyed Silk,” *Bulletin of the American Institute of Iranian Art and Archaeology* 5 (December 1937) p. 171, fig. on p. 170.

26. Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan,” p. 115.

I have made this decoration the like of which occurs nowhere else in the world.

I do not last, but it remains, a memento of myself.<sup>27</sup>

This form of self-praise naturally led to factual exaggeration. Thus the artisan Maḥmūd b. Muhammad, who, in 1182, applied the decoration to the ewer now in the Tbilisi Museum, says toward the end of the inscription quoted above:

Seven celestial lights proud as they are protect the one who worked in this perfect way.

May He bless the one who makes such a ewer, who spends gold and silver and adorns it thus.

In spite of what the artist said of the gold and silver he employed on the ewer, the piece, according to the observations of L. T. Giuzalian, shows only copper and silver inlays.<sup>28</sup>

The presence of an east Persian tileworker in Konya was most likely the result of the Mongol invasion of Iran, which brought this artist, like many others, to one of the western regions. Involuntary as this migration might have been, it too contributed to the increased productivity of the period. There is a good deal of evidence documenting this migration. For instance, there is the inscription on a piece that proves the presence of a potter from Nishāpūr working in Kāshān (“Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Nishāpūrī, dwelling in Kāshān”) early in the thirteenth century.<sup>29</sup> What makes this inscription even more instructive is the fact that the piece of pottery on which it was written was excavated in Gurgān in northeastern Iran, which also bespeaks a transit trade in art goods. The migration of artisans is a question about which further discoveries of pertinent inscriptions will be most helpful. As to the transshipment of finished products, we can definitely assume its existence, judging from Kāshān miḥrābs and wall tiles found in Dāmghān, Mashhad, Verāmīn, Qumm, Bākū, Mashhad-e Miṣriyān, and other places. These specialty products, which were created in Kāshān, must have

27. Friedrich Sarre, *Konia. Seldschukische Baudenkmäler, Denkmäler persischer Baukunst*, I (Berlin, n.d.) p. 10.

28. Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan,” p. 109; Giuzalian, “The Bronze Qalamdan of 1148,” p. 229. One could, of course, assume that the inscription was originally composed for and applied to an object with both gold and silver inlays and that such a



FIGURE 17  
Incense burner in the form of a feline. Bronze with engraved and openwork decoration. Persia, Seljuq period, XII century. Height 6¾ in. (17.14 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.47

been supplied, therefore, to a large intra-Iranian market that extended into the Caucasus and Central Asia. In this context, it should be mentioned that luster pottery made in Rayy has been found by Sir Aurel Stein in the provinces of Kirmān and Makrān,<sup>30</sup> and by Alessio Bombaci and Umberto Scerrato at Ghazneh in modern Afghanistan, where Kāshān luster pottery was

text was then applied to another vessel where it did not fit. This seems, however, unlikely, as gold inlays first appeared several decades after 1182, the date of the ewer in question.

29. Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences*, pp. 126–127, nos. 1, 3, pls. 48, 49.

30. Sir Aurel Stein, *Archaeological Reconnaissances in North-western India and South-eastern Iran* (London, 1937) pp. 245–246, pl. xxxi.

FIGURE 18

Ceramic figurine of a camel carrying a litter, covered with a turquoise glaze. Persia, Seljuq period, XII century. Height 8 in. (20.32 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 64.59



also excavated.<sup>31</sup> The latter has also been discovered as far west as Qaṣr al-Ḥayr ash-Sharqī in Syria.<sup>32</sup>

The character of artistic production and consumption can be further demonstrated by a comparative examination of the use of inscriptions on art objects, particularly works in metal, during the later Seljuq period in Iran, on the one hand, and in Egypt and Syria during the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk periods, on the other. Last-

31. Benjamin Rowland, Jr., *Ancient Art from Afghanistan. Treasures of the Kabul Museum*, catalogue, Asia House (New York, 1966) p. 138, nos. 101, 102, fig. on p. 132; Giorgio Bullini, *L'Afghanistan della preistoria all'Islam. Capolavori del Museo di Kabul*, catalogue (Torino, 1961) no. 177; S. Mizuno and others, *Ancient Art of Afghanistan* (Tokyo, 1964) nos. 196–199.

32. This information was kindly furnished me by Dr. William Trousdale and Mrs. Renata Holod-Tretiak.

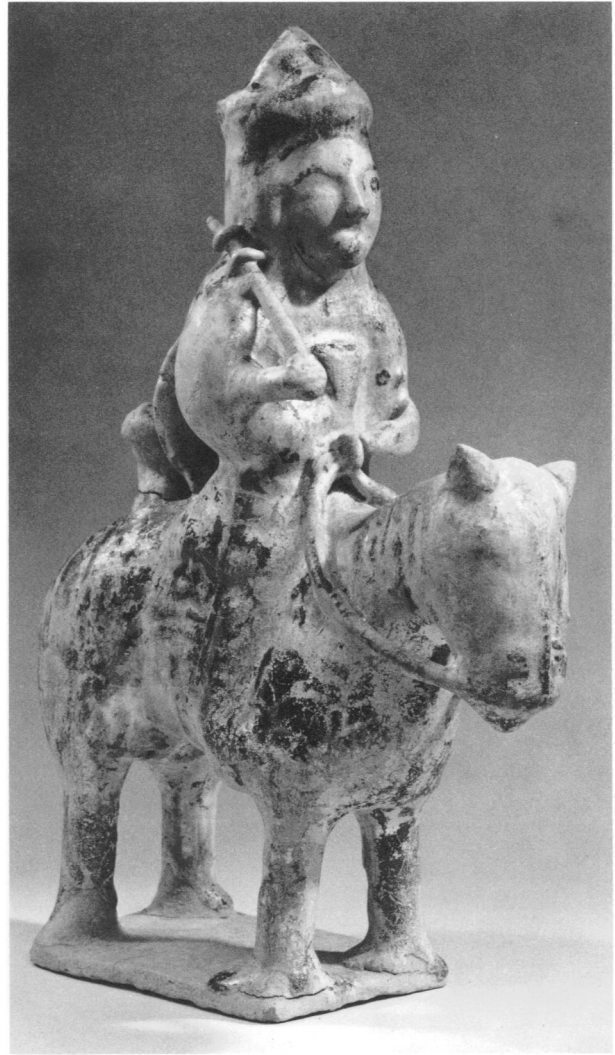


FIGURE 19

Ceramic figurine of a horseman armed with a mace and with a cheetah seated on the mount's croup. Molded, dark blue painting under a turquoise glaze. Persia, Kāshān, Seljuq period, XIII century. Height 10 7/8 in. (27.60 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 66.23

ing from 1171 to about 1250, the Ayyūbid era is roughly contemporary with the second half of the Seljuq period, while the Mamlūk directly follows the Ayyūbid and lasts till 1517. During the Ayyūbid period we find that in nearly all cases metal objects bore the names, in the form of inscriptions, of the sultans and emirs for whom

they were made, and this practice became even more widespread during the time of the Mamlūks. Because the inscriptions giving the name of a court, sultan, prince, or dignitary were large and conspicuously placed, these objects can be considered to be of a personalized nature and custom-made. This naturally limited their resale value.

By contrast, the Iranian pieces were only rarely made specifically for a prince or member of the aristocracy. Even when they were, the inscriptions were not as large or as demonstrative as were those found on Syrian and Egyptian pieces,<sup>33</sup> and the decoration was of a more general character. The few pieces whose inscribed texts associate them with rulers and their courts are in no way artistically or technically superior to the objects not dedicated to rulers or aristocracy and, perhaps, are actually inferior.

A number of artistically outstanding Iranian objects with a royal iconography are epigraphically anonymous and therefore lack any definite connection with a certain prince or member of the aristocracy.<sup>34</sup> In addition, artisans creating certain pieces designated for the mercantile class utilized an aristocratic iconography, which provided an additional snob appeal to the merchandise.<sup>35</sup> In all these cases, the general character of the decoration is about the same, so that it is only the inscription that designates the recipient's rank. This makes it clear that the Seljuq production in Iran was, on the whole, of a unified, anonymous character and was made to appeal to the large middle-class clientele of the bazaars, but was also acceptable to the aristocracy and even the courts and hardly ever created a resale problem. Technically, too, the artistic output was geared to a general market and to mass production with an effort, however, to preserve, and even increase, the quality of the objects. As L. T. Giuzalian has pointed out, this was achieved by the standardization of shapes produced by the artisans, while—at least in the metal and tile production—there was a division of labor. In metalwork there was the artist who fashioned the object and another who applied the inlay

work; in the case of mihrāb tiles, one craftsman was the ceramist, with the artfully refined and complex decoration and its epigraphy being entrusted to a separate decorator (*naqqāsh*) or scribe.<sup>36</sup>

The artistically favorable climate of Seljuq Iran becomes even more evident when compared with that of Fāṭimid Egypt, where we find a system of production whose character was substantially different from that of Iran. Such a comparison is particularly appropriate

36. Giuzalian, "The Bronze Qalamdan," pp. 105–106; F. Sarre in H. Ritter, J. Ruska, F. Sarre, and R. Winderlich, *Orientalische Steinbücher und persische Fayencetechnik* (Istanbul, 1935) p. 67 (this refers to a mihrāb of 1305, but it may be assumed that the practice existed earlier).

FIGURE 20

Figurine of a harpy. Molded and luster-painted earthenware. Persia, Rayy, Seljuq period, late XII century. Height 25 ¼ in. (64.13 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 57.51.1



33. Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences*, pp. 120–121, 134, no. 13, pl. 52; Guest and Ettinghausen, "Kāshān Luster Plate," p. 28, pl. 1.

34. Bahrami, *Gurgan Faïences*, pls. 16, 17.

35. Richard Ettinghausen, "The Bobrinski 'Kettle,' Patron and Style of an Islamic Bronze," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 85 (1943) pp. 193–208.



FIGURE 21

Tympanum with an armed horseman within an arabesque frame. Relief-carved stone. Caucasus, Kubatchi, Seljuq period, late XII or early XIII century. Greatest width 51 in. (129.54 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 38.96

since Egypt was, at this time, just as highly urbanized as Iran and very active in commerce and industry, with the result that here, too, a great range of decorative arts, some of them of the highest quality, was produced. Many of these objects, however, such as those made of rock crystal, ivory, or cut glass, were luxury goods created for the court; others, such as carved and inlaid doors, shutters, and prayer niches, were for important mosques. Both represent special categories of production and should not be regarded as objects made for the common urban market. Apart from pottery, the main medium that served a wider clientele was textiles, which constituted *the* most important native industry, supplying not only the clothing, but also all the items regarded as furniture and home fittings (carpets, mats, couches, cushions, canopies, draperies, and tents).<sup>37</sup> Textiles are, therefore, a very appropriate category to investigate in this connection.

Many of the workers in Egypt, especially in the textile-producing town of Tinnis and Damietta, were Copts, which meant that they were discriminated against on two counts: first, because they belonged to a non-Muslim minority, and second, because they were engaged in the lowly trade of the weaver.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, their living and working conditions were of the poorest. The following are the thoughts of the patriarch Dionysus after a visit to Egypt in 815:

Although Tinnis has a considerable population and numerous churches, we have never witnessed greater distress than that of its inhabitants. When we enquired into the cause of it, they replied: "Our town is encompassed by water. We can neither look forward to a

37. S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society . . .*, I, *Economic Foundations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967) p. 101.

38. Ignaz Goldziher, "Die Handwerke bei den Arabern," *Globus* 66 (1894) pp. 204–205.

harvest nor can we maintain a flock. Our drinking water comes from afar and costs us four dirhams a pitcher. Our work is in the manufacture of linen which our women spin and weave. We get from the dealers half a dirham per day. Although our earning is not sufficient for the bread of our mouths we are taxed for tribute and pay five dinars a head in taxes. They beat us, imprison us, and compel us to give our sons and daughters as securities. For every dinar they have to work two years as slaves.”<sup>39</sup>

This report of miserable living and working conditions in early ninth-century Egypt is corroborated by Yāqūt, the twelfth-century Muslim geographer, who writes of the weavers:

... al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Muḥallabī said: “One of the curious things about Damietta and Tinnis is that the weavers in them who make these fine garments are Copts of the lowest, humblest, and meanest of the people as regards food and drink. For the larger part of their diet consists of fresh salt fish, or evil-smell-

39. Serjeant, “Islamic Textiles” (1948) p. 91.

FIGURE 22

Medallion with a falconer on horseback. Molded and carved stucco. Persia, Seljuq period, late XII century. Diameter 7¼ in. (18.41 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.55



FIGURE 23

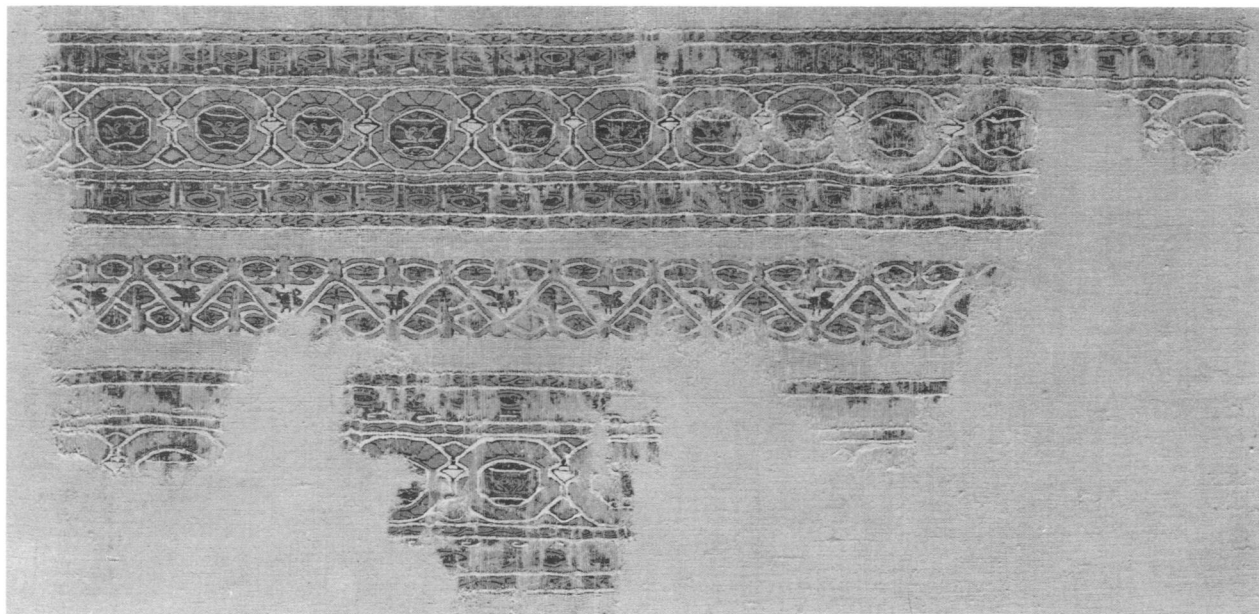
Head of a prince. Molded and carved stucco. Persia, Rayy, Seljuq period, XII-XIII century. Height 10 in. (25.40 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 33.111

ing Ṣīr fish, and most of them eat without washing their hands [afterward], then return to those valuable and highly esteemed garments and set to work at weaving them.”<sup>40</sup>

These accounts are also confirmed by a recently deciphered petition that was (ultimately) directed to the Fāṭimid caliph in Cairo (sometime before 1048), asking for release from work done under duress. The petitioner, a Karaite Jewish weaver, speaks of having been forced by the supervisor of the imperial workshops to work in Damascus for the preceding two years, during which time he could not participate in the affairs of the community nor move to another locality.<sup>41</sup>

40. Serjeant, “Islamic Textiles” (1948) p. 98.

41. S. D. Goitein, “Petitions to Fatimid Caliphs from the Cairo Geniza,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 45 (1954) pp. 32–38.



**FIGURE 24**

Textile with tapestry-woven bands of circles with confronted birds in the main band and single birds in the secondary band. Silk and linen. Egypt, Fāṭimid period, XI century. Width 18 in. (45.72 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles K. Wilkinson, 64.303.4

**FIGURE 25**

Linen textile with three painted decorative bands in brown, tan, and black. Egypt, Fāṭimid period, XI century. Greatest width 7½ in. (18.72 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of George D. Pratt, 31.106.16





Bureaucratic procedures as well as the constant application of heavy dues further limited the work of the craftsmen, as shown in an account of al-Maqdisi from about 985:

Now, concerning the Shaṭawī cloth, it is impossible for a Copt to weave any unless the stamp of the sultan has been placed upon it. Nor can it be sold except through the intermediary of brokers who have been entrusted with this function, and the sultan's officer writes down what has been sold in his notebook. Then it is taken to someone to wrap it up, then to another to be tied up in wrappings (*qishr*), then to another to be packed in chests (*safat*), then to another to rope it, each of these men having a due to take. Then at the harbour gates a certain sum is taken. Each one writes his mark on the chest, and then the vessels are inspected at the time of sailing.<sup>42</sup>

Other sources describing conditions in Cairo indicate that the weavers derived no financial benefit from the excellence of their workmanship and were even required to pay a fine if the eventual income from their product was less than the expenditures.<sup>43</sup> There are other reports that are less bleak and even speak of proper remuneration, but the picture as a whole reflects an inequitable situation and an almost complete state monopoly.

When examining Fāṭimid textiles, one is often struck by their untidy workmanship, which is evident in the careless designs and unsightliness of the non-official inscriptions (Figures 24, 25). Indeed, compared to Persian artifacts, with their very elaborate inscriptions, the Egyptian art objects show a great paucity of writings (apart from the ṭirāz textiles and a few de luxe pottery pieces), most of which do not rise above the level of clichés. Unlike the metal objects in Iran, the work of these artisans in Fāṭimid Egypt reflects no pride, self-esteem, or personal involvement. There was no attempt to appeal to the feelings of the customer or to attract him by being pleasant. Moreover, demand in Egypt

was further limited by conditions that made the formation of an extensive, well-to-do bourgeoisie impossible.

There is one other civilization that offers a revealing contrast to the Seljuq—the vast caliphate of the Almoḥads, which comprised all of western North Africa, from Morocco to Tunisia, as well as Spain. Although the major cities of this empire were endowed with splendid mosques and fortifications built by order of the court—such as the Kutubiyya in Marrakesh, the Great Mosque of Seville (now almost entirely destroyed) and its famous minaret, the Giralda, the Hassan Mosque in Rabāṭ, and the Mosque of the Andalusians in Fez, as well as the walls of Tāzā and the Gates of Rabāṭ—a large, representative body of analogous minor works of art does not exist, especially in North Africa. We can explain this by noting the composition of the population, the majority of whom were uneducated Berbers of tribal origin; there was only a small educated Arabic-speaking elite and no culturally demanding and articulate middle class to sponsor a vast array of objects.<sup>44</sup>

These comparisons with Egypt and North Africa demonstrate the unique character of the psychological and cultural factors stimulating artistic production in the Seljuq period. By implication they also point to seemingly favorable working conditions in the main centers of Iran, combined with extensive facilities for a far-ranging trade. The result was a unique flowering of the arts in Iran between 1150 and 1225, a great deal of which, happily, has been preserved and is now shown in our Museum.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank Professor A. L. Udovitch of Princeton University for the discussions he has had with him on the economy of the Seljuq period, and Mrs. Salomea Fajans for translating the Russian articles referred to in notes 15 and 23.

42. Serjeant, "Islamic Textiles" (1948) p. 95.

43. Serjeant, "Islamic Textiles" (1948) p. 104.

44. R. Le Tourneau, *The Almohad Movement in North Africa in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Princeton, 1969) pp. 107–108.

# The Altman Madonna by Antonio Rossellino

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PERHAPS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL mid-fifteenth century Florentine marble relief in the United States is the Altman Madonna of Antonio Rossellino (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> Not only has it the distinction of being perfectly preserved—in this it differs, for example, from the better-known Foulc Madonna of Desiderio da Settignano at Philadelphia, where the surface has been impaired<sup>2</sup>—

1. Dimensions: 74 x 55 cm. According to W. von Bode, *Die Sammlung Oscar Hainauer* (Berlin, 1897) pp. 9, 61, no. 6, illustration on p. 8, the relief was bought by Hainauer from Conte Cosimo Alessandri, Palazzo Alessandri, Florence, in 1877. In 1906 it was sold by Frau Julie Hainauer, with other sculptures in the Hainauer collection, to Duveen Bros., from whom it was purchased in 1909 by Benjamin Altman. The attribution to Antonio Rossellino is due to Bode, and is accepted by all later authorities save A. Venturi, *Storia dell' Arte Italiana*, VI (Milan, 1908) p. 626, note 1, who lists it, along with the marble relief in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, among works wrongly ascribed to Rossellino.

2. The authenticity of the Foulc Madonna is wrongly questioned by A. Markham in a review of I. Cardellini's monograph on Desiderio da Settignano (*Art Bulletin* 46 [1964] p. 246): "I should like to eliminate the Foulc Madonna from the oeuvre of Desiderio. The face of the Madonna is as saccharine as that of the Madonna in Turin and the device of the open mouth has been carried to a ludicrous extreme." U. Schlegel, "Zu Donatello und Desiderio da Settignano. Beobachtungen zur physiognomischen Gestaltung im Quattrocento," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 9 (1967) p. 40, note, tentatively subscribes to the same view. I see no reason to question the conventional view (1) that the Philadelphia relief is an autograph work by Desiderio, (2) that it is the direct source of a version of the composition in pigmented stucco in Berlin, and (3) that the Berlin relief probably corresponds with a gesso Madonna after Desiderio mentioned in the diary of the painter Neri di Bicci in 1464.

but it represents, in its fluent yet sophisticated composition, its superlative technical control, and the restrained emotionalism of its imagery, one of the peaks of quattrocento sculpture.

In paintings the scene that is depicted is generally self-evident, but marble reliefs are more elusive, partly because the differentiation of texture is less precise and partly because they are in monochrome. For this reason we must begin by looking afresh at the content of the Altman carving. In the center is the Virgin turned three-quarters to the left. She sits on a carved seat of which a volute on the corner of the back and the corresponding forward support are shown on the right of the relief. In two places the receding chair arm is covered by her cloak, the folds of which are so disposed that the molded edge beneath them is legible. Her cloak covers her head, and beneath it is a diaphanous veil, whose substance is distinguished both from the heavy material of the cloak and from the dress (Figure 2). The cloak is tied across her throat and the ends of the veil cover her chest. Beneath the breasts her high-waisted dress is bound by a wide girdle twisted in diagonal folds, and on it, as on the edging of the cloak, the sleeve, and the buttoned cuff, are traces of gilt decoration, which is carried through into the halo behind the head. Her hair is dressed with a braid above the forehead and one tress pulled back over the left ear, and her eyes, which are pigmented, look meditatively downward to the left, directed either to the Child, who sits on the further arm





**FIGURE 1**  
Madonna and Child with Angels, by Antonio  
Rossellino. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of  
Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.675

**FIGURE 2**  
The Virgin in the Altman relief. Detail of Figure 1

FIGURE 3

The Christ Child in the Altman relief. Detail of Figure 1

of the seat, or to the spectator, on whom the Child's gaze is turned.

The posture of the Child is of extraordinary complexity (Figure 3). One leg, his right, is set frontally, while the other is turned almost in profile in opposition to the rest of the design. The lower half of the long torso that is habitual in the children of Antonio Rossellino has the same frontal accent as the right leg and the Virgin's containing hand, but the upper half is twisted to the left, with the right shoulder drawn back and the left advanced, while the right forearm is raised in a gesture midway between benediction and surprise. The head, with chin drawn in, corresponds with the Virgin's in that it is directed three-quarters to the left. The Child has a swaddling band pulled tight across his chest, and over it, suspended from both shoulders, is a transparent smock, through which the surface of the body can be seen.

The depth of the relief is naturally greatest in those parts notionally nearest to the eye, that is, at the base, where the left hand of the Virgin is superimposed on the right leg of the Child, with the thumb and forefinger fully undercut (Figure 4). The front of the seat likewise projects from the main plane of the relief, which is established by a flat rim running along the top and the two sides. Within the rim the background is slightly excavated. Up to the level of the chair back the surface behind the figures is void, but from that point to the top of the relief it is broken by horizontal lines of cloud, from which emerge four six-winged cherub heads (Figures 5, 6). The two beneath are turned inward to right and left and posed as though their nonexistent bodies were set on the same vertical axis as the Virgin and the Child. The two above are set on two diagonals protracted from the upper corners of the relief, one of them slightly and the other emphatically foreshortened so that they appear to be on a more distant plane than the heads below them. If the relief is studied in detail in this way, it is impossible not to be impressed by the clarity and confidence with which each visual point is made.

Before we go on to consider the class of carving to which the Altman Madonna belongs, it is necessary to



establish, in however approximate a fashion, the date when it was carved. Antonio Rossellino's chronology centers on one major work, the tomb of the cardinal of Portugal at San Miniato al Monte, which was begun in 1461, when the sculptor was thirty-three, and was completed in 1466.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter his development can be traced with a fair measure of confidence through dated or datable works, the much damaged bust of Matteo Palmieri in the Bargello (dated 1468), the reliefs of the pulpit in Prato Cathedral (payment of 1473), and the figure of the Young Baptist from the Opera di

San Giovanni, now in the Bargello (payment of 1477). Round them we can assemble a number of undated carvings, which are likely to have been produced in the same term of years. Before the commencement of work at San Miniato al Monte, however, we have only one dated sculpture, the bust of the doctor Giovanni Chellini of 1456 in London.<sup>4</sup> It is carved in a blotchy, brownish marble, and is technically one of the most careful and precocious works Rossellino produced. With it must be grouped a figure that is frequently assigned to a far later time, the statue of St. Sebastian at Empoli

3. For the tomb of the cardinal of Portugal see particularly F. Hartt, G. Corti, and C. Kennedy, *The Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal, 1434-1459, at San Miniato in Florence* (Philadelphia, 1964).

4. For the Chellini bust see J. Pope-Hennessy and R. Lightbown, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum, I* (London, 1964) no. 103, pp. 124-126.

FIGURE 4

The left hand of the Virgin in the Altman relief. Detail of Figure 1





**FIGURE 5**  
Cherub heads on the left side of the Altman relief.  
Detail of Figure 1



**FIGURE 6**  
Cherub heads on the right side of the Altman relief.  
Detail of Figure 1

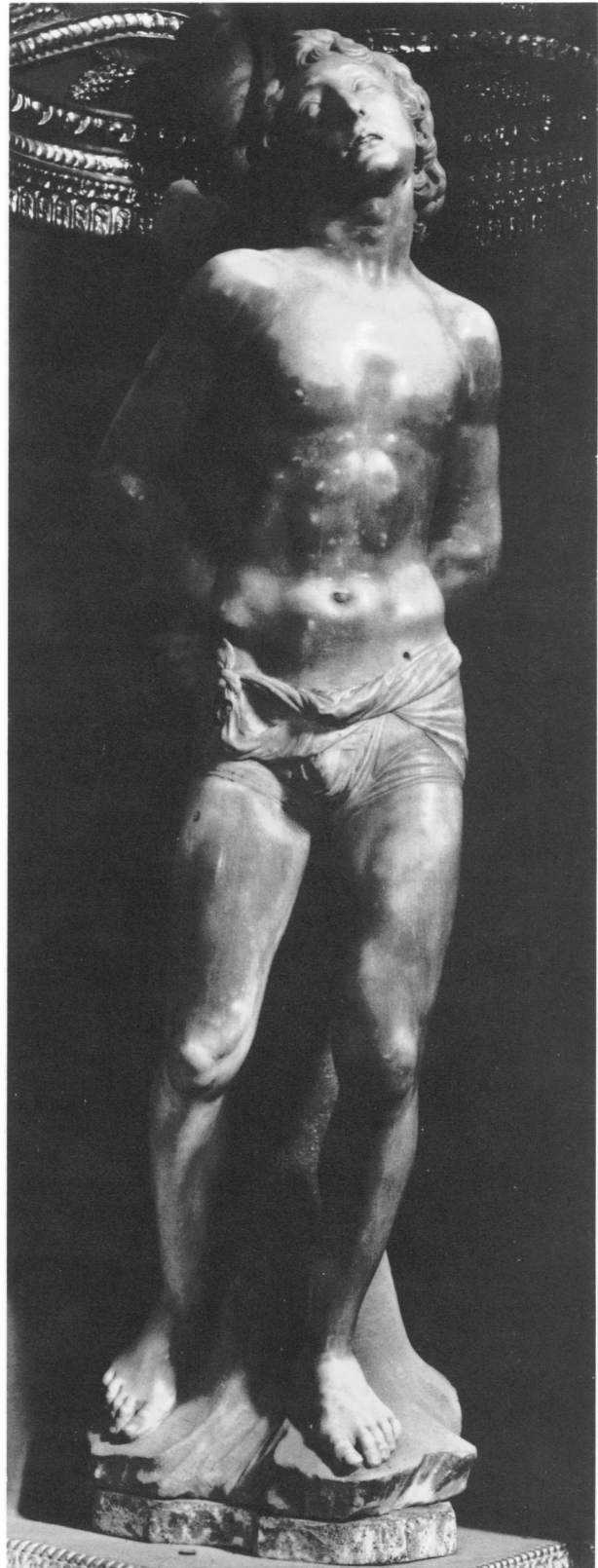
FIGURE 7

St. Sebastian, by Antonio Rossellino. Marble. Museum of the Collegiata, Empoli (photo: Alinari)

(Figure 7),<sup>5</sup> not simply because it is carved from the same type of marble, which does not recur at San Miniato or in any later work before the Baptist in the Bargello, but because the handling is so closely similar to that of the Chellini bust. On the plane of style the meticulous treatment of the anatomy has the same relationship to Hellenistic models that the Chellini portrait has to Roman busts, while on that of technique it seems likely that the folds of the loincloth of the statue and the veins on the temple of the bust were carved in close proximity. While the documentary grounds for dating the statue to 1457 are certainly fallacious, the stylistic arguments in favor of a dating about 1460 are very strong. The fact that it was installed, at a much later date, in a painted altarpiece by Botticini, and that two little angels from the complex for which it was originally designed were perched precariously at the top on the corners of the frame, has no relevance to the date when it was carved.

The Altman Madonna must have been produced in close association with these works. There are three reasons for making this connection. The first is that the relief is carved from the same marble as the statue and the bust. This is not, of course, a compelling argument,

5. It is stated by J. Gaye, *Carteggio inedito d'artisti dei secoli XIV. XV. XVI*, I (Florence, 1839) p. 188, note, that a small payment listed in a *Denunzia de' beni* of Bernardo Rossellino of 1457 relates to the Empoli statue. For this reason the St. Sebastian was regarded as a work of 1457 by W. von Bode, *Denkmäler der Renaissance-Sculptur Toscanas* (Munich, 1892-1905) p. 100, and P. Schubring, *Die Italienische Plastik des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 1919). M. Reymond, *La Sculpture Florentine*, III (Florence, 1899) pp. 86-87, related the date 1457 to the two angels, not to the St. Sebastian. O. Giglioli, *Empoli artistica* (Florence, 1906) pp. 46-50, demonstrated that this reference is to the Empoli Annunciation of Bernardo Rossellino, and thereafter the St. Sebastian has been commonly assigned to a considerably later date. A dating c. 1470 was proposed by H. Gottschalk, *Antonio Rossellino* (Liegnitz, 1930) pp. 67-72, on the grounds (1) of a supposititious connection with the Pollaiuolo Martyrdom of St. Sebastian in the National Gallery, London, and (2) of a conjectural dating in the 1470s advanced by E. Kühnel, *Francesco Botticini* (Strassburg, 1906) p. 40, for the wings by Botticini, and by L. Planiscig, *Bernardo und Antonio Rossellino* (Vienna, 1942) p. 56, "kurz nach 1470." A dating c. 1460 was advanced by M. Weinberger and U. Middeldorf, "Unbeachtete Werke der Brüder Rossellino," in *Münchener Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst*, n.f. 5 (1928) p. 99, and is likely to be correct.







**FIGURE 8**  
Virgin and Child, by Antonio Rossellino. Marble. The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

since the sculptor might have returned to a slab from the same vein or quarry at a much later time, but the impact of all three sculptures is bound up with the material from which they are carved, and one might guess that its use was a matter less of expediency than of aesthetic choice. The second reason is that the technique of the relief closely recalls that of the Chellini bust. In both, the living texture of the flesh is rendered with singular success, and the hair of the Child in the relief and that in the portrait are treated in a very similar way. The third reason is the element of ambiguity that is common to the stance of the St. Sebastian and to the pose of the Child in the relief; in both, the frontal position of the leg is contradicted by the movement of the torso above, and the opposition is resolved by the setting of the head. In the absence of documents, therefore, it would seem probable that the relief was carved after the Chellini bust and before the monument of the cardinal of Portugal, that is between 1457 and 1461.<sup>6</sup>

There is nothing in the style of the Altman Madonna that directly recalls the work of Donatello, yet thematically Donatello is the source of most of the motifs employed in the relief. It was Donatello who first experimented with the seated Madonna in half-length, notably in a beautiful pigmented terracotta relief in the Louvre, where the end of the seat is shown on the relief plane. In the Virgin and Child with Angels in the Victoria and Albert Museum, carved in Donatello's workshop probably in the 1450s, the seat is represented endwise in the same way, while in a school work, the so-called Pietra Piana Madonna in Florence, it is set diagonally in a manner which anticipates the practice of Antonio Rossellino. The alignment of the heads of the Virgin and Child is also found in the Louvre Madonna, and the cherub heads in the background are anticipated in another work by Donatello, the ruined terracotta Madonna formerly in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum and now in the Bode-Museum in Berlin. Moreover, it was Donatello who first studied the illusionistic potentialities of low relief in marble in the cloud-covered sky of the Ascension in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Assumption on the Brancacci

6. An early dating for the relief is accepted by Bode, *Denkmäler*, p. 103, who considered it prior to the Madonna in Berlin, by Planiscig, *Rossellino*, pp. 52–53, who adopted the same view, and by Gottschalk, *Rossellino*, p. 42, who regarded the Berlin Madonna as the earlier work.



FIGURE 9  
Virgin and Child, after Antonio Rossellino.  
Marble. Victoria and Albert Museum, London

monument in Naples, and who later in the Quincy Adams Shaw Madonna in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts transferred the technique he had developed to a Madonna relief. Not for nothing was the Altman Madonna, when it first came to light in Florence in 1877, sold by its owner Conte Cosimo Alessandri to the Berlin collector Oscar Hainauer as a work by Donatello.

Antonio Rossellino's formal training is likely to have taken place in the family workshop under his brothers Bernardo (born 1409) and Giovanni (born 1417), but after 1453, when Donatello returned from Padua, and before 1457, when he left Florence for Siena, Rossellino and the great sculptor must have been in regular contact, and may indeed have frequented the same humanist circle of which Chellini (who was the doctor of Donatello), Neri Capponi (whose tomb chest was carved before 1457 in the Rossellino studio), and Matteo Palmieri (who was portrayed by Rossellino in a bust) formed part. Still closer contacts must have obtained between Antonio Rossellino and his younger contemporary Desiderio da Settignano, with whom he is brack-

eted in a document of 1452. Even if we discount the claim that Desiderio was himself trained in the studio of Bernardo Rossellino, the parallelism with Antonio Rossellino is remarkable.<sup>7</sup> Like Rossellino, Desiderio in the Foulc Madonna adapted Donatello's illusionism to a Madonna relief; and like Rossellino, in the Panciatichi Madonna in the Bargello he showed the Virgin on a seat set at an angle to the relief plane. Neither of these reliefs is dated or datable, but the Foulc Madonna may conjecturally have been carved in the late 1450s concurrently with the Madonna relief on the Marsupini monument in Santa Croce, and the Panciatichi Madonna may have been produced between 1461 and 1464. There is no evidence of the influence of one artist on the other, but taken together the reliefs establish very clearly the distinctive features of Desiderio's temperament: the figures are more animated, the designs more linear, and the volumes less pronounced. It is often wrongly claimed that Rossellino was, as an artist, Desiderio's inferior. Though his later works show a progressive decline from the summit of the 1460s, his sculptures before that time are fully commensurate in quality with those of the younger sculptor.

By some odd coincidence the relief by Rossellino that stands closest to the Altman Madonna is also in New York, in the Morgan Library (Figure 8). It is a little taller and far less well preserved, and is likely, in view of its manifest connection with Desiderio, to be rather earlier in date.<sup>8</sup> As in the Foulc Madonna, the whole background is filled with cloud, and the faces of the angels, three in number, are set asymmetrically at the sides. The drapery is more cursive—in this too it resembles the Foulc Madonna—and the factor of recession



FIGURE 10  
Virgin and Child, after Antonio Rossellino.  
Stucco. Victoria and Albert Museum, London

7. The relationship is wisely defined by Weinberger and Middeldorf, "Unbeachtete Werke," p. 99, as "eine gewisse Ähnlichkeit mit Desiderio . . . nur im Sinne einer zeitlichen Parallele." The stylistic affinities between Desiderio and Antonio Rossellino are not such as to compel us to postulate a period of training in a common studio. It is, however, argued by A. Markham, "Desiderio da Settignano and the Workshop of Bernardo Rossellino," *Art Bulletin* 45 (1963) pp. 35-45, in my view mistakenly, that Desiderio was trained in the shop of Bernardo Rossellino, and was responsible for the face of the Virgin in the Madonna and Child of the Bruni monument in S. Croce and for the effigy in the tomb of the Beata Villana in S. Maria Novella.

8. Dimensions: 79.5 x 36 cm. Coll.: Cockerell, J. Pierpont Morgan. The relief is generally accepted as an early work of Antonio Rossellino's but is apparently dated by Gottschalk, *Rossellino*, p. 42, and Planiscig, *Rossellino*, p. 54, after the Altman Madonna.

is less pronounced. If, for example, we compare the exposed hands of the Virgin in the two reliefs, we shall find that the hand in the Morgan relief is the flatter of the two. The felicity of the design is seen as soon as the relief is juxtaposed with a crude marble copy in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 9),<sup>9</sup> probably dating from the fifteenth century and probably copied not from the original, but from a stucco squeeze, in which the figure of the Virgin is extended at the base and superimposed on a molded rectangular frame.

9. Pope-Hennessy and Lightbown, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture*, I, no. 108, pp. 130-131.

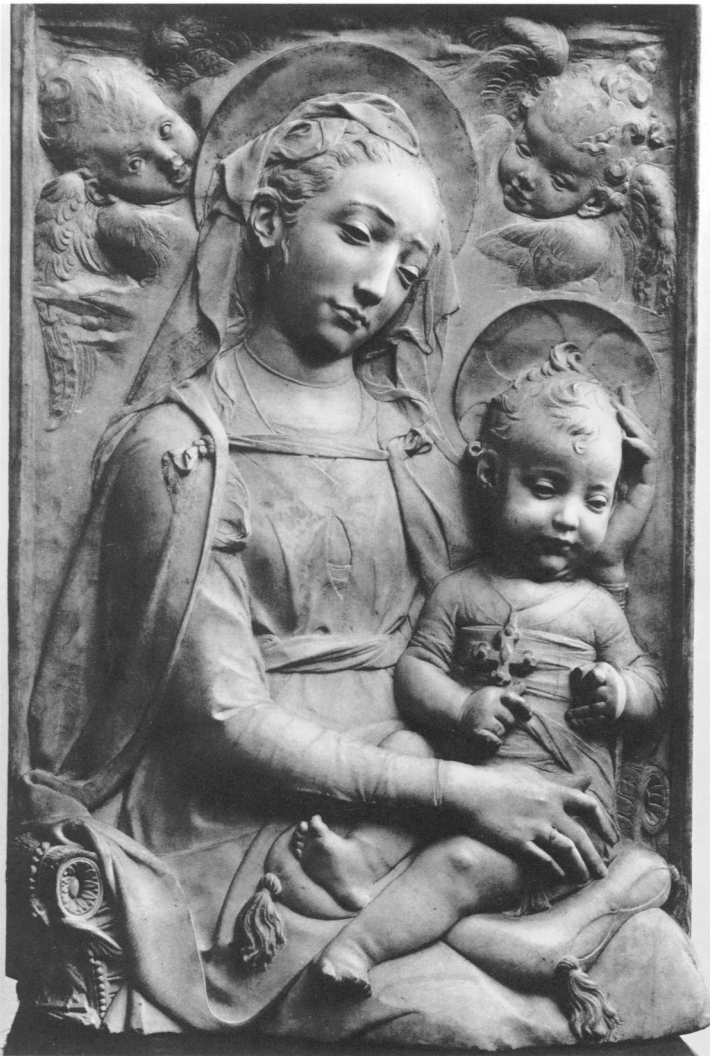


FIGURE 11  
Virgin and Child, by Antonio Rossellino. Marble. Formerly in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin (photo: Staatliche Museum, Berlin)

Two other reliefs are patently connected with this work. One, probably contemporary with the Altman Madonna, is the Madonna of the Candelabra, known through a number of replicas in stucco and terracotta, which seem to depend from a lost marble original (Figure 10).<sup>10</sup> The Virgin faces to the right, and her right

10. See A. Marquand, "Antonio Rossellino's Madonna of the Candelabra," *Art in America* 7 (1918-1919) pp. 198-206, and Pope-Hennessy and Lightbown, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture*, I, no. 110, pp. 132-133. The relief is ignored by Planiscig.

arm runs diagonally down the lower part of the relief; in both respects, as well as in the angle of the head, the figure is an inversion of that in the Altman relief. The edge of the seat appears in the lower left corner, and the Child, seated on a cushion on the chair arm opposite, faces inward and clasps a bird with both hands. At the back are two candelabra with a garland forming two diagonals between them. This last motif, as Marquand observed, recurs on the pilasters flanking the lower part of the tomb of the cardinal of Portugal.

The other related work is a marble relief formerly in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin (Figure 11).<sup>11</sup> Since it has been destroyed and the only photographs that are available are overlit, it is difficult to speak of it with any confidence. It could be judged in reproduction to be rather less sensitive than the Altman Madonna—this seems indeed to have been recognized by Bode—but there is no reason for supposing that it is anything but autograph. The posture of the Virgin is connected with that of the Madonna of the Candelabra, though her forearm is held horizontally, almost parallel with the base of the relief, and more of the outer and part of the inner arms of the seat are shown. But the head of the Child is turned outward to the right, so that the compositional pattern repeats in reverse that of the Altman relief. A feature which has no equivalent in this series of reliefs is the foreshortened left hand of the Child, where the protruding knuckle of the forefinger repeats a similar motif in the Foulc Madonna of Desiderio. The linear properties of the design are less pronounced than in the two New York reliefs, and the recession in the foreground is more abrupt. This and a new insistence on naturalistic detail (in the Child's tunic, for example, as well as in the cross worn round his neck, and in the Lippi-like veil piled up on the Virgin's head) may be among the factors which led Bode to conclude, almost certainly correctly, that it was of somewhat later date.<sup>12</sup> This view seems to be confirmed by the hair of the Child, which no longer adheres to the cranium, but is swept up in animated curls, one of which falls over the forehead. In the Virgin and Child on the tomb of the

11. Dimensions: 75 x 50.5 cm. F. Schottmüller, *Die italienischen und spanischen Bildwerke der Renaissance und des Barock*, I, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1933) pp. 46, 47, no. 1709. In contradistinction to Gottschalk, Planiscig (*Rossellino*, p. 54) regards the relief as the latest in date of Rossellino's early Madonnas.

12. Bode, *Denkmäler*, p. 103.

cardinal of Portugal the Virgin's robe is portrayed in the same fashion, and the hair of the Child is, on its larger scale, treated like that in the relief.

In the course of a recent analysis based by Clarence Kennedy on stylistic inference and by Frederick Hartt on unpublished documents, it was established that certain parts of the monument at San Miniato commonly given to Antonio Rossellino were in fact executed by his elder brother Bernardo; one of these, in which Bernardo seems to have worked from a model by Antonio, is the angel holding a crown posed on the left above the bier, and another, also from a model by Antonio, is the flying angel in the upper register on the right. It has, moreover, been demonstrated that members of the workshop of Bernardo Rossellino were also involved in the execution of the tomb. The practice of collaborative execution in the Rossellino shop has a long history. As early as 1444, in the Annunciation commissioned from Bernardo Rossellino for Empoli, we find two different hands at work, one, responsible for the Virgin, that of Bernardo, and the other, the artist of the Annunciatory Angel, perhaps that of Giovanni Rossellino. In the late 1440s the same phenomenon occurs again in the Bruni monument in Santa Croce, where the two angels beside the Virgin and Child in the lunette are once again by different hands, neither of which is Bernardo Rossellino's. Similarly in the Tomb of the Beata Villana in Santa Maria Novella, of 1451–1452, the curtain at the back is supported by two angels so different from one another that the one on the right has mistakenly been given to Desiderio da Settignano. In this case the juxtaposition seems to be that of Bernardo and Antonio Rossellino, as it is once more in the Annunciation which crowns the sarcophagus of the Beato Marco'ino at Forlì, where the Virgin is a typical work of Bernardo Rossellino, while the head of the Annunciatory Angel is not far removed from the head of the lower angel on the left-hand side of the Altman Madonna.

Antitheses like these do no more than scratch the surface of a far more intricate problem, that of the models by Bernardo and Antonio Rossellino which were realized by assistants in their shop. This issue is posed by the last of the marble reliefs looked on by Planiscig as early works by Antonio Rossellino, a marble Madonna in the Gulbenkian Foundation at Lisbon (Figure 12).<sup>13</sup> A clue to the date of the carving is

provided by the garland and bull's head on the chair end in the lower left corner, which are associable with the classical ornament on the base of the monument of the cardinal of Portugal. If proof be needed that the relief was not carved by Antonio Rossellino, it is provided by the clumsy disposition of the cherub heads

13. Dimensions: 94 x 62 cm. It was bought by Gulbenkian from the Palazzo Guicciardini, Florence, through Dr. Jakob Hirsch. The relief is dated by Planiscig, *Rossellino*, p. 53, before 1461. I have not studied it in the original.

FIGURE 12

Virgin and Child, adapted from a design or model by Antonio Rossellino. Marble. The Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon (photo: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian Museu)



and by the sky, where the clouds are portrayed as little humps rising from a flat base, and are not treated impressionistically with irregular horizontal strokes, as they are in the Altman and Morgan reliefs. The features of the Virgin are inexpressive, and the front of her dress is treated schematically with no regard to the volume of the forms beneath. The Child likewise reads in a highly artificial way, with awkwardly articulated limbs, and hair which is rendered as a decorative pattern on the surface of the marble slab. At a time when

FIGURE 13  
Virgin and Child, by Antonio Rossellino. Marble. National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection, A. 31



it is fashionable to father on Bernardo Rossellino sculptures for which he cannot possibly have been responsible, it might seem inevitable that he should be credited with this relief. But though there is some morphological resemblance between the head of the Virgin and his genuine works, such an attribution would be unsound, and it is likely that the relief was adapted from a design or model of Antonio Rossellino's by a member of his brother's shop.

The later vicissitudes of Rossellino's style are illustrated by the only other relief by him in the United States, a Madonna in the Kress Collection in the National Gallery of Art (Figure 13).<sup>14</sup> In its own fashion it is a highly accomplished work. The Virgin, almost in full face, is seen in three-quarter length behind a ledge, and the Child stands on a cushion at the right. This formula does not occur in any previous relief by Rossellino but is found regularly in Verrocchio, both in an autograph work, the terracotta Madonna from Santa Maria Nuova in the Bargello, where the Child also stands on the right side of the ledge, in the so-called Dibblee Madonna, a stucco squeeze from a lost marble, where the Child stands on the opposite side, and in a related marble Madonna from Verrocchio's workshop in the Bargello. Just as the protruding knuckle of the Child in the Berlin Madonna can be traced back to Desiderio da Settignano, so the clenched right fist, which is one of the least attractive features of the Child in Washington, seems to depend from the Dibblee Madonna and its derivatives. The right hand of the Virgin, as we might expect, continues the tendency toward deeper cutting that is apparent in the Berlin relief, and by comparison with the Altman Madonna her head is rounder, more placid, and more inert. The first step toward this change of type seems to be represented by the Nori tomb in Santa Croce, where against a marble curtain we see a mandorla containing a Madonna and

14. Dimensions: 84 x 56 cm. Coll.: Granby; Clarence Mackay, New York; Kress (1939). The attribution to Rossellino is due to W. R. Valentiner, *The Clarence H. Mackay Collection* (New York, 1926) no. 12, and is accepted by Planiscig, *Rossellino*, p. 59, and others, but is questioned in the 1941 *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture in the National Gallery of Art*, p. 234, where it is stated that "although there are considerable elements of Rossellino's style and technique evident in this relief, the composition is more monumental and less curvilinear than that generally to be found in his work." The relief is variously dated c. 1475 (on account of its relationship to the Naples Adoration of the Shepherds) and c. 1477 (on account of its relationship to the Young Baptist in the Bargello).



FIGURE 14  
Detail of one of the angels in the Barbadori altarpiece, by Fra Filippo Lippi. Panel. Musée du Louvre, Paris (photo: Archives Photographiques)

Child based on the Virgin in the monument at San Miniato. In books on Rossellino the Nori Madonna is usually presented as one of his last works, but it has recently been argued that it dates from before 1461 since “it is hard to believe that an artist of Rossellino’s temperament could, after realizing such an accomplished group as the Madonna and Child on the Cardinal’s tomb, have returned to this simpler frontal pose and to forms so much more congenial to an earlier stage of the development of Quattrocento sculpture.”<sup>15</sup> Hard it may be to believe, but it is nonetheless all but a fact that the Nori Madonna was carved after the tomb, and probably dates from about 1470. Morphologically it marks a median point between the monument and such debased works of the seventies as the Naples Adoration of the Shepherds and the large tondo of the Nativity in the Bargello. The Washington relief is closer to the Nori Madonna than to the later works—it has the same rubbery drapery folds—and must have been produced in the same bracket of time.

The epithet commonly applied to Rossellino’s relief style is “pictorial,” but this term can mean many different things, and a true understanding of the carvings can be obtained only if it is defined. When the Altman Madonna is compared with paintings of the Virgin and Child produced in the 1450s and 1460s, the results are negative. Neither the Berenson and Washington Madonnas of Domenico Veneziano, nor the Louvre and Jacquemart-André Madonnas of Baldovinetti, nor the half-length Madonnas of Filippo Lippi in the Uffizi and the Palazzo Medici, nor the Esztergom Madonna of Pesellino, nor works of secondary artists like Zanobi Machiavelli and Neri di Bicci and the Castello Master, provide satisfactory analogies for the style of this or the cognate reliefs. On the contrary, they serve to confirm that the types and compositions of these early carvings are personal to Rossellino. Yet the idiom of the reliefs, and especially the handling of the drapery, reads unmistakably as though it were a sculptural adaptation from a painted source. And so it is, though the parallel occurs in painting of an earlier time. If we compare the

15. Hartt, Corti, and Kennedy, *The Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal*, pp. 79–80, where it is correctly argued that the death of Francesco Nori in 1478 has no relevance to the dating of the monument or the relief. The contrary view, that the relief was executed shortly before the death of Nori and is therefore Antonio Rossellino’s last work, is adopted by Gottschalk, *Rossellino*, p. 85, and Planiscig, *Rossellino*, p. 60.



FIGURE 15  
Virgin and Child, by Fra Filippo Lippi. Panel.  
Palazzo Pitti, Florence (photo: Alinari)

robe and sleeve of the Virgin in the Altman Madonna with those of the standing angels to the right and left in Fra Filippo Lippi's Barbadori altarpiece of 1437 (Figure 14) or with the similar figures beneath the corners of the central platform in the Sant'Ambrogio Coronation of the Virgin of the early 1440s, it becomes evident that these great public paintings of fifteen or twenty years before were the source by which Antonio Rossellino was inspired. There is abundant proof of the retarded influence of Fra Filippo Lippi on his later works. Thus, the Naples Adoration of the Shepherds of about 1475 undoubtedly sprang from the stimulus of Lippi's altarpieces of the Adoration of the Magi at Annalena (soon after 1453) and Camaldoli (probably 1463), and the circular Nativity in the Bargello of about 1470 must have been conceived as a sculptural counter-



FIGURE 16  
Virgin and Child, after Antonio Rossellino.  
Polychromed stucco. Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London

part for Lippi's great tondo of the Virgin and Child in the Palazzo Pitti of about 1452. Lest it seem tendentious to postulate so close a relationship between two works of different subjects which share no iconographical motif, it may be noted that a group of reliefs of the Virgin and Child made by Rossellino in the late 1460s seems to have been touched off by the pyramidal Virgin in the foreground of the Pitti Tondo (Figure 15). The most notable of these reliefs is a composition of which a version in stucco without a background is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 16).<sup>16</sup>

In Florence in the 1450s and 1460s the personality of Lippi bulked considerably larger than it does in the

16. For the relief see Pope-Hennessy and Lightbown, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture*, I, no. 112, p. 134.





FIGURE 17

Virgin and Child, after the Morgan Madonna by Antonio Rossellino. Polychromed stucco. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of George Blumenthal, 41.190.40

minds of art historians today, and there are indications of the interest of sculptors other than Rossellino in his work. One of them is Luca della Robbia, one of whose bronze putti in the Musée Jacquemart-André from the Cantoria in the cathedral closely recalls the type of the Child in Lippi's Madonna of 1437 in the Palazzo Barberini, and whose Genoa and Bliss Madonnas reflect two different aspects of the composition of Lippi's half-length Madonna in the Palazzo Medici. Another is Desiderio da Settignano, whose St. Jerome in Washington and whose Dead Christ with the Virgin and St. John in San Lorenzo are both generically Lippesque.

Antonio Rossellino is, however, the only sculptor who made a continuing effort to provide a sculptural equivalent for Lippi's style. The sculptures that resulted are of unequal merit, and the latest of them, carved after the deaths of Desiderio and Bernardo Ros-

sellino, when control of a productive workshop seems to have precluded the close cogitation and technical refinement of the carvings of his earlier years, are little but transcriptions in three dimensions of motifs from Lippi's paintings. But the earlier reliefs, judged by the criteria of invention and expressiveness, are some of the most elegant and resourceful quattrocento sculptures. It was claimed by Leonardo that those reliefs which depend for their effect on the creation of a space illusion should be looked upon as paintings, and though the Altman Madonna was never, so far as we can tell, transformed into a painting, as was the Morgan Madonna—of which derivatives in pigmented stucco exist, one of them in the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 17)—the aspirations revealed in the smooth transitions of its shallow planes and in the illusory mobility of its forms partake of the nature of both arts.

# A Royal Swordsmith and Damascener: Diego de Çaias

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THE WORK OF the sixteenth-century Spanish swordsmith and damascener Diego de Çaias is represented in the Metropolitan Museum's Department of Arms and Armor by two of the three recorded pieces bearing his signature. His name has been known to students since 1879, when Baron Charles Davillier drew attention to one of these pieces—a mace then in the Spitzer Collection and now in the Museum—in his pioneer study of Spanish goldsmiths' work.<sup>1</sup> Since then de Çaias has been mentioned in several general books on arms and armor, and has also been the subject of brief, rather uninformative, entries in Boenheim's *Meister der Waffenschmiedekunst* and *Thieme-Becker*, and of a very short article by Mr. Stephen V. Grancsay in the Museum's *Bulletin* for August 1940.<sup>2</sup> This last gives the best account of de Çaias so far published, but it does not pretend to be anything more than a summary of the little information about him that was then available. The purpose of the present article is to discuss in more detail the material already noted by Mr. Grancsay, and also to add to it a certain amount of new information.

Diego de Çaias's precise origins are unknown. It was suggested by Davillier<sup>3</sup> that his surname, of which the initial letter is phonetically the same as *ç* in Spanish, indicates that he came from Zayas, a village near Soria

in Old Castille, and this has been accepted by most subsequent writers. It seems a reasonable enough derivation for the name, and no doubt the de Çaias family were originally from Zayas, but no evidence has ever been adduced to show that Diego himself came from there.<sup>4</sup> Nothing is, in fact, known of his early life or of where he got his training, and the further suggestion made by Davillier that he probably worked in Valladolid or Toledo is mere speculation. The first definite record of his existence is contained in a list of wages

1. Le Baron Charles Davillier, *Recherches sur l'orfèvrerie en Espagne au moyen âge et à la renaissance* (Paris, 1879) pp. 199–200.

2. Wendelin Boenheim, *Meister der Waffenschmiedekunst vom XIV. bis ins XVIII. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1897) p. 26; U. Thieme and F. Becker, *Allgemeines Lexicon der Bildenden Kunst*, V (Leipzig, 1911) p. 358; Stephen V. Grancsay, "A Damascened Eared Dagger by Diego de Çaias," *Bulletin of The Metropolitan Museum of Art* 25 (1940) pp. 160–161.

3. Davillier, *Recherches sur l'orfèvrerie*, p. 200, note 1.

4. A family named de Çaias was of some importance in the town of Écija, Andalucía, from the fifteenth century onward. Señor Don Fernando Caldero Martin of the Archivo Municipal, Écija, has very kindly informed me that goldsmithing and other metalworking crafts were of importance in the town's economy at an early date but that he has no record of Diego de Çaias or any other swordsmiths working there. I am indebted to M. François Buttin for drawing my attention to the account of the de Çaias family of Écija in the *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo-Americana*, X (Barcelona, n.d.) p. 429.

payable to members of the household of the sons of Francis I of France in 1535, drawn up in March of the same year, in which he appears as “Diego de Cayas, faiseur d’espées,” at a salary of 180 livres.<sup>5</sup> It will be recalled that the dauphin Francis and his brother Henry (later King Henry II) spent the period 1526–1530 in Spain as hostages of Emperor Charles V,<sup>6</sup> and de Çaias may have entered the service of one or other of them as a result. But this again is a matter for speculation only.

One other entry relating to de Çaias has been noted in a French document. It occurs in an acquittance roll of the French royal treasury, undated but datable to August 1538: “A Diego de Caya [*sic*], pour son paiement d’un pongnard ayant le manche et fourreau d’acier ouvré à la damasquyne, et le dit ouvrage remply d’or que le dit Seigneur a prins et achacté de luy et retenu pour son service à prendre comme dessus cxiii<sup>l</sup> x<sup>s</sup>.”<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, the dagger, if it survives, can no longer be identified.

The two extracts quoted above, and two splendid maces made for Henry II, to be discussed later (pp. 156–165 below), provide the only definite evidence so far discovered of Diego’s activities in France. He almost certainly stayed there, however, until forced to leave as a result of a royal decree of 1542 ordering the expulsion of all aliens because of the outbreak of war between France and the Holy Roman Empire,<sup>8</sup> for he is next recorded in England early in the following year.

5. Quoted by J. B. Giraud on p. LXXIV of his introduction to vol. VI of *La Collection Spitzer* (Paris, 1892). He states that the complete document has been published by M. Th. Lhuillier, but I have been unable to trace this publication.

6. See H. N. Williams, *Henri II: His Court and Times* (London, 1910) pp. 32, 51–60.

7. Le Marquis Léon de Laborde, *Les comptes des bâtiments du roi (1528–1571)*, II (Paris, 1880) pp. 251, 423. Laborde dates the payment to September 4, 1538, but I am informed by M. F. Dousset of the Archives de France that the roll (J 962<sup>14</sup>, no. 47) is actually undated. The authors of the *Catalogue des Actes de François Ier.* (Paris, 1887, etc.) VIII, no. 31906, ascribe it to August 1538. M. Dousset has very kindly made a search for other references to de Çaias in the Archives de France but without success.

8. I am indebted to Mlle F. Baron of the Département des Sculptures at the Louvre for the information that the date and wording of this decree are not now known. That it was promulgated is, however, established by the existence of a letter of Francis I, dated July 29, 1542, exempting Benvenuto Cellini and his armorer Benedict Clesze from its terms (*Archives de l’Art français. Documents*, 2<sup>e</sup> série, II [Paris, 1862] pp. 5–8). On September 4, 1543, a further

On March 12, 1542/3, under a Privy Seal warrant dated March 6, King Henry VIII delivered Letters Patent to “Diego de Cayas Hispanus” granting him, during the king’s pleasure, an annuity of £30 sterling to be paid from October 1 following.<sup>9</sup> No indication is given of what Diego was to do in return, and the wording of the grant merely follows the standard form in such cases, which is to the effect that it was for services rendered and to be rendered. There can be no doubt, however, that it was simply a salary for working at his craft for the king, and henceforth his name appeared regularly among recipients of quarterly wages in the account books of the royal Chamber (*Books of King’s Payments*) as—with minor variations of spelling—“Diago de Cayos Spaynard.”<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, the fact that Diego was a salaried member of the household means that no record of his official work appears in the books of payments, as would have been the case had he been paid for each individual order. His materials would have been supplied to him, probably by the Master of the Armouries, but I have been unable to trace any accounts in which they are mentioned. Nevertheless, some idea of the nature of his work for the king can be obtained from the following entries in the great inventory of Henry’s possessions made in 1547 after his death:

Item a Tocke<sup>11</sup> the pomell crosse and chape of Damaske worke of Dego his makinge the skaberde & handle

royal decree was issued “portant que les Espagnols et autres étrangers, sujet de l’empereur, ayant obtenu des lettres de naturalité à condition de se marier en France, seront expulsés du royaume, s’ils n’ont point rempli cette condition dans les deux mois” (*Catalogue des Actes de François Ier.*, IV, no. 13321; cf. no. 13346).

9. Public Record Office, London, *Patent Roll 34 Henry VIII*, part 7 (C.66/716) membrane 5. See also J. Gairdner and H. Brodie, *The Letters and Papers of King Henry VIII*, XVIII, part I, (London, 1901) p. 195.

10. I have been unable to trace any *Books of King’s Payments* for Henry VIII’s reign later than one in the British Museum (Stowe Ms. 554) that ends in September 1542. The regular payment of de Çaias’s wages can, however, be deduced from the record of them in a list of quarterly wages paid from the Chamber account at Christmas 1545 in the British Museum (Add. Ms. 27,404, fol. 23) and in the *Books of King’s Payments* for the first two and a half years of Edward VI’s reign (P.R.O., London, E. 101/426/5 and 6).

11. *Tocke* or *tuck*, the English form of the French word *estoc*, referring to a type of sword with a stiff blade, usually of triangular section, designed exclusively for thrusting.

thereof of purple vellut whipped w<sup>t</sup> venice silver.

Item iij Rapeires of sondrie sortes the pomelles hiltes and chapes of Dego his makinge with skaborde of vellut.

Item iij longe woodknives viz ij of them of Dego his makinge and the other garnished and guilte euerie of them havinge skaberde of vellut knives and Bodkin.

Item iij arming swourdes thone of Dego his makinge bounde about thande w<sup>t</sup> a passemaine of Silver the skaberde of vellut whipped w<sup>t</sup> venice silver thother ij the crosses & chapes guilte w<sup>t</sup> blacke vellut skaberdes.

Item iij Daggers of Dego his makinge.<sup>12</sup>

As we have seen, Diego entered the English king's employ probably in March 1543, and certainly by October of the same year, and he was still in royal service when Henry died on January 28, 1547. It seems unlikely that during this period of nearly four years he would have produced for his master only the ten weapons listed above, however elaborate they may have been.<sup>13</sup> We may probably assume, therefore, that the inventory contains other pieces by him that were not identified by its compilers. Some of his products may also have been used for presentation by the king and so have left the royal collection before the inventory was prepared.

As a royal servant Diego was in a good position to obtain privileges, and he appears to have taken the opportunity this gave him to supplement his salary. On

12. British Museum, Harl. Ms. 1419 B, fols. 410 v., 412 v., 413, 413 v. The arms were in the royal Wardrobe and not in one of the various armories covered in a separate volume of the inventory now belonging to the Society of Antiquaries of London. They were not included in Viscount Dillon's study of Henry VIII's armory, "Arms and Armour at Westminster, the Tower and Greenwich, 1547," (*Archaeologia* 51 [1888] pp. 219-280), which was based entirely on this volume.

13. It is worth noting, however, that when in March 1595 the distinguished steel chiseler Othmar Wetter appealed to his employer the Elector of Saxony for money to enable him to carry on with his work, he mentioned that for twelve blades given to him to mount in 1591 he had completed only three gilt hilts and one black one, decorated with chiseling, while four others were half ready. See Georg Petzsch, "Othmar Wetter Messerschmied," *Zeitschrift für historische Waffenkunde* 1 (Dresden, 1897-1899) pp. 89-90.

14. P.R.O., London, *Patent Roll 34 Henry VIII*, part 17 (C. 66/738) membrane 23. Under Privy Seal warrant of October 9. See also *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, XVIII, part II, p. 280.

15. P.R.O., London, *Patent Roll 37 Henry VIII*, part 18 (C.

December 4, 1543, he was granted Letters Patent, in which he is described as the king's "Welbelouyd seruaunt Diego de Cayas borne vndre the demynyon of the Emperor," authorizing him to "conveye out of this our Realme of Englonde the nombre and quantitee of Six hundreth dickers of lether in any Shippe or Shippes vessell or vesselles that shall lyke hym beyng in leage and amyte with vs into any outwarde partes of beyonde the sees there to vtter and sell the same to his most profytte and aduantage."<sup>14</sup> Again, on October 24, 1545, he received similar license to export 500 woolen cloths "not barbed not rowed not shorne."<sup>15</sup>

After Henry VIII's death Diego remained in the service of the new king, Edward VI. The payment of his salary continues to be recorded every quarter, still at the same rate of £7 10s. od., until Michaelmas (September 29) 1549, when a break in the series of books of payment occurs.<sup>16</sup> The next relevant document available is a list of people paid from the Chamber account, dated November 20, 1552, in which de Çaias's name does not appear.<sup>17</sup> He must, therefore, have left the royal service between September 1549 and November 1552.<sup>18</sup>

No further documents relating to de Çaias have been traced, which may perhaps indicate that his disappearance from the English royal accounts was the result of his death.<sup>19</sup> It is more likely, however, that he returned to the Continent to continue working there, for a number of pieces decorated in his highly distinctive

66/785) membrane 43. Under Privy Seal warrant of October 18. See also *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, XX, part II, p. 327.

This same grant is noted in a roll of documents signed with the king's privy stamp (P.R.O., S.P.4/1) where it mentions that it is "At the Suyte of Mr. Sharyngton." This was probably William Sharyngton or Sherington (1495?-1553), Page of the King's Robes, an account of whose career will be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, XVII (London, 1909) pp. 1337-1338. See also *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, XX, part II, p. 320.

16. See Note 10 above. The last payment is recorded on fol. 77 of E.101/426/6 in the Public Record Office.

17. P.R.O., London, *The boke of the Copies of the Certifycat made to the kinges Mats. Counsell* (E.101/424/9) pp. 153-164.

18. It is just conceivable, though very improbable, that his wage payments were transferred to another account.

19. I have been unable to trace any records of his death or burial or of his will. He did not take out letters of denization or naturalization, nor does his name appear either in the *Returns of Aliens in the City and Suburbs of London, 1523-1571*, published by the Huguenot Society (London, 1900), or in the surviving *Lay Subsidy Rolls* for the royal household (P.R.O., E.179/69).

FIGURE 1

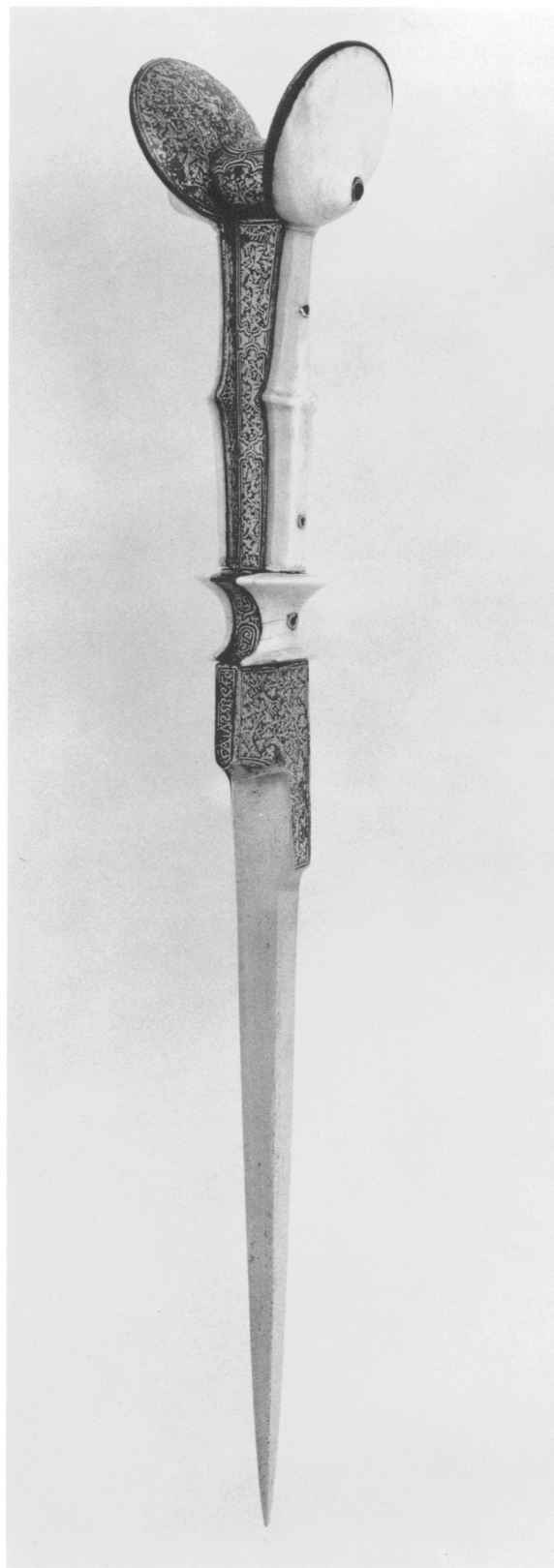
Ear dagger, signed by Diego de Çaias, about 1530. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 39.159.1

manner that clearly date from after the period when he is last recorded in England are in existence. Unfortunately, as will be shown later (pp. 177–182 below), it is by no means certain that these are not the work of another artist, probably a pupil, working in an identical style, so they cannot be accepted as definite evidence of Diego's continued existence. His ultimate fate must, therefore, remain a mystery for the time being.

The description of de Çaias as "faisseur d'espées" in the first document cited above suggests that he was a fully fledged master sword cutler, and not merely a decorator of arms. It is, however, his ability in the art of damascening iron and steel with designs, and especially figure designs, in gold and silver that makes his work so distinctive, not to say distinguished. This decorative technique, though known in Europe at an early date, seems to have survived during the Middle Ages only in the East.<sup>20</sup> In the early sixteenth century it was apparently reintroduced into the West, where it became extremely fashionable from about 1540 onward, especially for the decoration of arms and armor.<sup>21</sup> The origins of this revival have still to be studied, but de

20. See Henri Lavoix, "Les azziministes," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 12 (1862) pp. 64–74; Victor Gay, *Glossaire Archéologique*, I (Paris, 1887) pp. 538–539; T. H. Hendley, *Damascening on Steel or Iron as Practised in India* (London, 1892); A. Rieth, "Anfänge und Entwicklung der Tauschiertechnik," *Eurasia Septentrionalis Antiqua*, X (Helsinki, 1936) pp. 186–198; A. U. Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art*, III (Oxford, 1939) pp. 2466–2529, 2555–2585; W. Holmqvist, *Tauschierte Metallarbeiten des Nordens aus Römerzeit und Völkerwanderung* (Stockholm, 1951); E. Salin, *La Civilisation Mérovingienne. Troisième Partie. Les Techniques* (Paris, 1957) pp. 166–210; B. Thomas and O. Gamber, "L'Arte Milanese dell' Armatura," *Storia di Milano*, XI (Milan, 1958) p. 778.

21. The earliest examples of European armor decorated with damascening known to me are the parade pieces made by the Negrolis of Milan in the period round about 1540, among them being a signed helmet dated 1543 in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 17.190.1720). See Thomas and Gamber, "L'Arte Milanese," p. 765 and figs. on pp. 783, 785, 787. Special mention should be made of the "Armure aux Lions" of Francis I and the armor made for Henry II as dauphin, both in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (nos. G. 50 and G. 118), which have been attributed to the Negrolis by Thomas and Gamber ("L'Arte Milanese," pp. 769, 773–774). Mr. Grancsay has suggested that the damascening on the second of these may have been executed by de Çaias (Stephen V. Grancsay, "Royal Armorers: Antwerp or Paris?," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 18 [1959–1960] p. 4).



Çaias's career suggests that one of its sources was Spain, where the art of damascening was practiced by the Moors,<sup>22</sup> from whom it must have been acquired by their Christian conquerors. Whether this is so or not, Diego was certainly well in the van of the fashion, for his work provides some of the earliest known examples of the use of damascening to decorate iron and steel during the Renaissance.<sup>23</sup>

Before I go on to discuss de Çaias's work, a brief account of the actual techniques employed in damascening must be given, and for this I can do no better than quote the article on the subject, written when they were still widely practiced, that appeared in 1788 in Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*:

DAMASKEENING. . . There are two ways of *damaskeening*: in the first, which is the most beautiful, the artists cut into the metal with a graver, and other tools proper for engraving on steel; and afterwards fill up the incisions, or notches, with a pretty thick silver or gold wire. In the other, which is only superficial, they content themselves only to make hatches, or strokes, across the iron, &c. with a cutting-knife, such as is used in the making of small files. As to the first, it is necessary the gravings, or incisions, be made in the dove-tail form; that the gold or silver wire, which is thrust forcibly into them, may adhere the more strongly. As to the second, which is the more usual, the method is thus: having heated the steel till it changes to a violet, or blue colour,

they hatch it over and across with the knife; then draw the design, or ornament, intended, on this hatching, with a fine brass point, or bodkin. This done, they take fine gold wire, and conducting or chasing it according to the figure already designed, they sink it carefully into the hatches of the metal with a copper tool.<sup>24</sup>

The second technique is the one that was used for all de Çaias's known work, as indeed it was for most damascening produced in the West. All his designs are executed in fine gold and silver wire applied to a hatched surface, the broader areas being covered with threads laid so closely together that they form what at first sight appear to be pieces of foil. The method was less durable than the first one described above, but it permitted a great deal more flexibility in the treatment of designs and was probably less time-consuming, though no doubt laborious enough. The final effect, even on pieces dulled by time, is one of great richness: when the steel still retained its brilliant blue color, and the

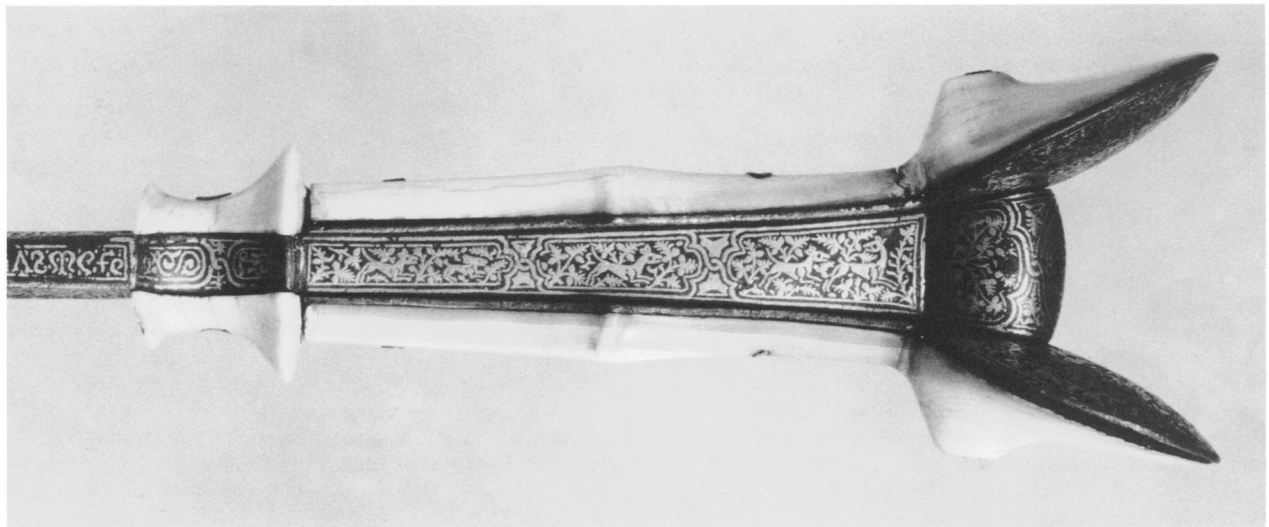
22. Some of the typical Hispano-Moresque swords and daggers of the fifteenth century are decorated with damascening. See the publications listed in note 26 below and also the following: Francisco Fernández y González, "Espadas Hispano-Árabes," *Museo Español de Antigüedades*, I (Madrid, 1872) pp. 573-590, II (Madrid, 1875) pp. 389-400; J. Ferrandis Torres, "Espadas Granadinas de la Jineta," *Archivo Español de Arte*, XV (Madrid, 1943) pp. 142-166.

23. Cf. note 21 above.

24. E. Chambers, *Cyclopaedia or, an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, II (London, 1788). Mr. A. V. B. Norman has drawn my attention to a similar entry in Dennis de Coetlogon's *An Universal History of Arts and Sciences*, II (London, 1754) p. 864. See also the article "Damasquiner" in Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, IV (Paris, 1754) pp. 617-618.

FIGURE 2

Detail of the grip of the dagger illustrated in Figure 1



gold and silver their original burnish, it must have been magnificent.

The earliest of de Çaias's recorded works appears to be the dagger in the Museum's collection (Figures 1, 2, 6–8).<sup>25</sup> This is of the distinctively Spanish type, almost certainly Moorish in origin, known to modern students as an *eared* or *ear dagger* because of the two characteristic "ears" that project at an angle from either side of the top of the grip in place of a pommel. The Museum's dagger is a classic example of the type and need not, therefore, be described in detail.<sup>26</sup> It is sufficient to say that the tang, which is in one piece with the blade, is sandwiched between a pair of slightly wider iron shims, extended to form the ears and covered on the outer sides by ivory scales forming the grip; below is a rudimentary guard made of two spool-shaped pieces of ivory. All are secured by tubular brass rivets that pass right through the tang. On one face of the blade is an unidentified maker's mark, a small orb and cross inlaid in copper.

The ricasso, the exposed edges of the tang, and the insides of the ears are damascened in gold with designs consisting chiefly of branches with spiky, Christmas-tree-like foliage (gorse?) involving scenes of the chase. Those on the tang are contained in linked cartouches formed by two continuous bands of strapwork that merge and cross over between each, and show hounds pursuing a hare, a stag, and a boar (Figure 2). The top cartouche, between the ears, contains the figure of a Centaur archer (Figure 6), perhaps the zodiac sign Sagittarius,<sup>27</sup> against a ground sown with fleur-de-lis-like plants, while the cartouches at the sides of the guard contain decorative Kufic characters and scrollwork. The insides of the ears and the faces of the ricasso show boar-, bear-, and deer-hunting scenes involving hounds and men armed with spears and, in one instance, a crossbow (Figures 7, 8). Foxes and a rabbit occur in

25. Formerly in the Max Dreger and Clarence H. Mackay collections. Its previous history is unknown. See Grancsay, "A Damascened Eared Dagger," and M. Dreger, *Waffensammlung Dreger* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1926) p. 106.

26. For accounts of daggers of this type see the following: Sir Guy F. Laking, *A Record of European Armour and Arms*, III (London, 1920) pp. 48–56; Bashford Dean, *Catalogue of European Daggers* (New York, 1929) pp. 65–75; Pilar Fernández Vega, "Dagas granadinas," *Anuario del Cuerpo Facultativo de Archiveros, Bibliotecarios y Arqueólogos* 3 (Madrid, 1935) pp. 359–379; J. J. Rodríguez Lorente, "The XVth Century Ear Dagger. Its Hispano-Moresque Or-

#### FIGURES 3, 4

Ear dagger, possibly by Diego de Çaias, about 1530. Museo Nazionale, Bargello, Florence

the backgrounds of some of the scenes. All the men depicted wear hose, tight-fitting, short-skirted doublets, small caps, and swords; the animals mostly have strongly marked rib cages and narrow stomachs. The longer edge of the ricasso bears a design of scrollwork and a now illegible scene, and the shorter edge the signature (also damascened) *ÇAIAS Me fe* in a curious mixture of Roman and debased Lombardic characters against a dotted background (Figure 64).

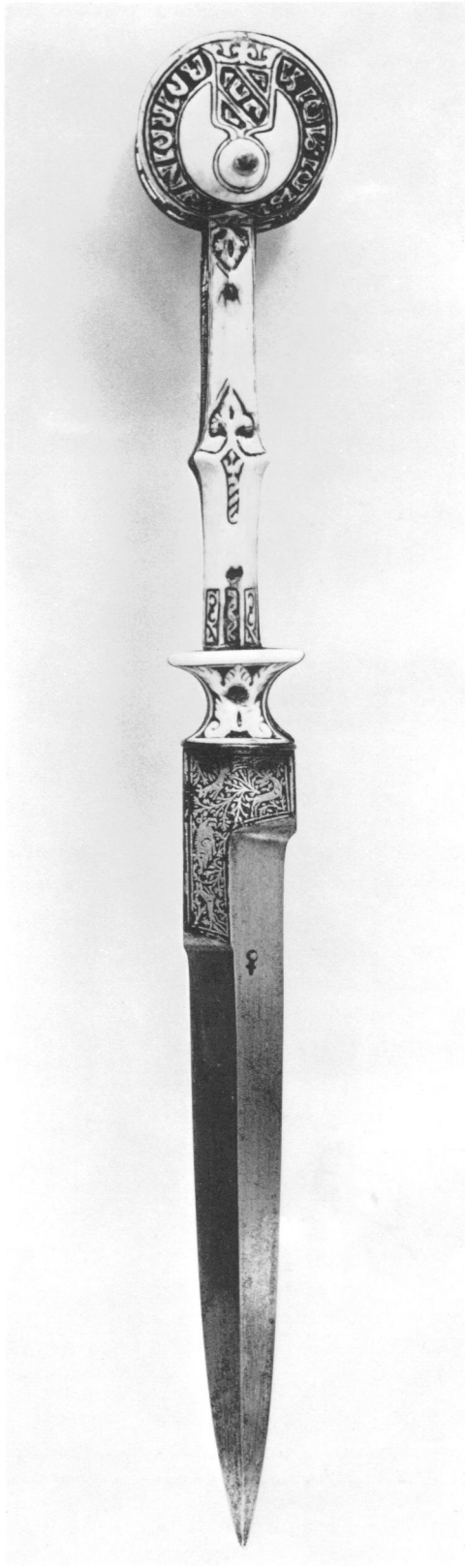
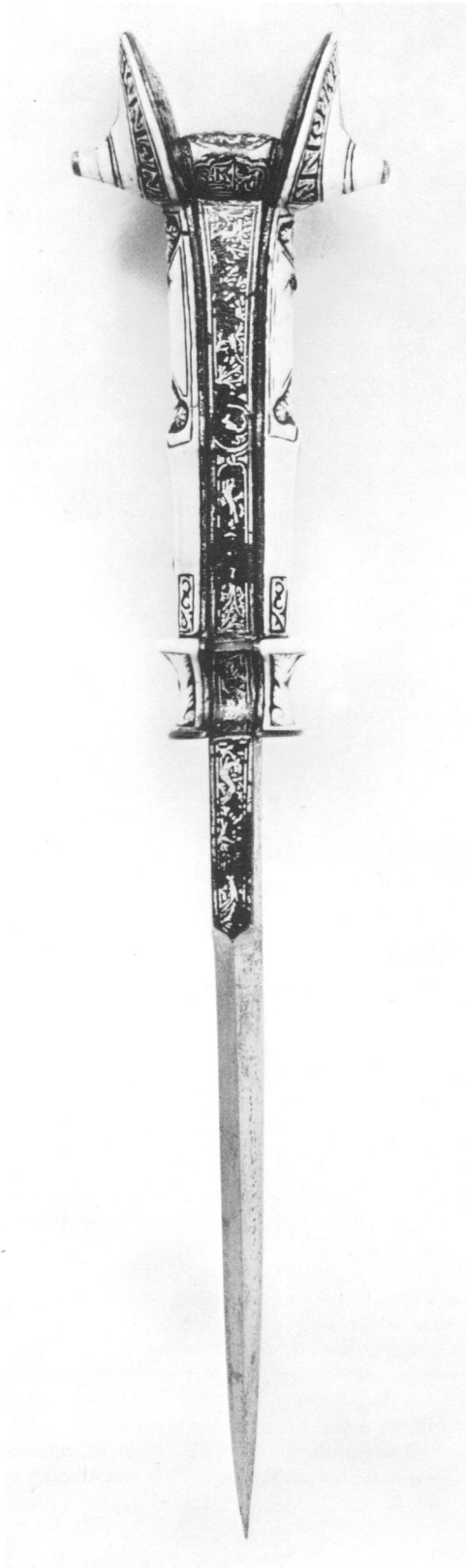
No means of dating the dagger on typological grounds is available, but the details of the decoration suggest that it was made early in de Çaias's career. The figures, especially the human ones, are executed in a somewhat sketchy manner and are rather stiff and wooden, while all have circular eyes that give them a curious staring expression. They are in every way much less naturalistic and more naïve than the similar figures on the two other recorded works signed by Diego, the mace of Henry II in the Metropolitan Museum and a dagger at Dresden (pp. 174–177 below), of which the former must date from the period when the artist is known to have been in France, that is, from before 1535 to 1542, while the latter is probably even later. The signatures on both of these are executed in well-formed Roman capitals that contrast markedly with the clumsy characters of the signature on the dagger (Figures 64–67).<sup>28</sup> There can be little doubt, therefore, that the latter is the earliest of the three weapons, and it can probably be dated to about 1530 or a little before.

Four other ear daggers damascened in a manner similar to the one just described, except that they show no human figures, are in the Bargello, Florence (two, of which one is illustrated in Figures 3, 4), the Musée de

igin," *Gladius* 3 (Madrid, 1964) pp. 67–87. All these authorities state that the ear dagger was developed in Venice as well as in Spain, and that it was known there as *daga alla Levantina* or *alla stradiotta*. I have been unable to discover any evidence in support of either statement.

27. None of de Çaias's known patrons was a Sagittarian.

28. Similar characters occur on some late medieval Spanish ceramics. See, for example, the flask in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 431-1889) illustrated as fig. 366 in volume I of Manuel González Martí's *Cerámica del Levante Español. Siglos Medievales*, (Barcelona, 1944).





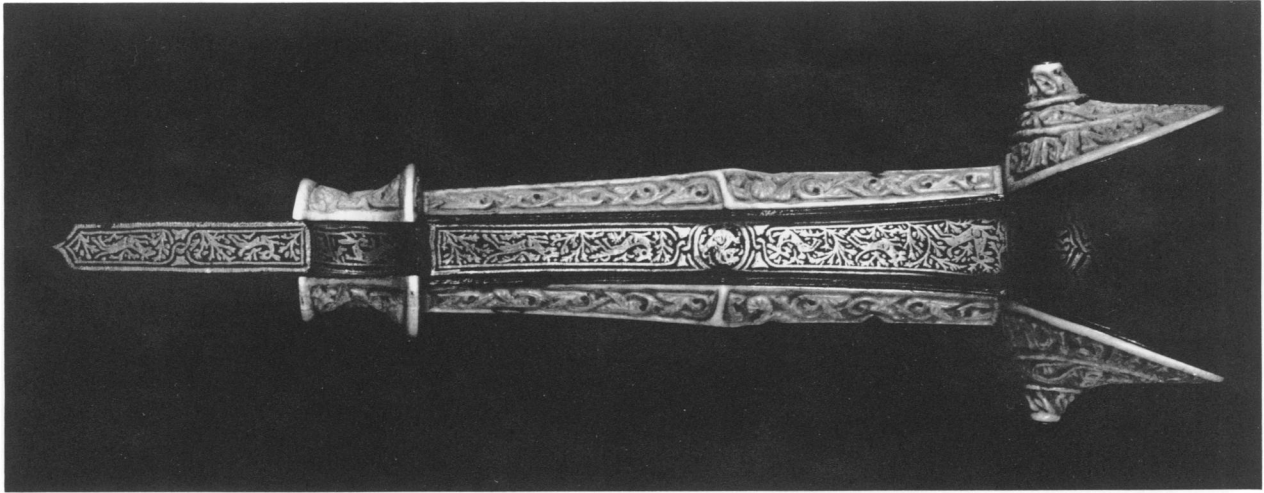


FIGURE 5  
Detail of the grip of an ear dagger, possibly by Diego de Çaias, about 1530. Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan

l'Armée, Paris, and the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan (Figure 5).<sup>29</sup> None is signed—though all except the Paris one have variants of the orb-and-cross mark on their blades—but they have such strong stylistic affinities with the Museum's dagger that it is tempting to attribute them all to the same hand. This would, however, be unwise in the present inadequate state of our knowledge of the early history of damascening in Spain, for the style of ornament they bear may be a traditional rather than an individual one. The sources of the style are to be sought in Hispano-Moresque art and through it in Islamic art in general. Similar running animals set against a ground of foliage were widely used on Islamic ceramics and engraved and damascened metalwork from an early date, for example, on the well-known gold- and silver-damascened brass vessels produced in Iraq and Persia.<sup>30</sup> Likewise, purely decorative Kufic inscriptions and series of linked cartouches formed of two bands of interlacing strapwork are among the commonest of Islamic ornamental motifs.<sup>31</sup> All these features occur in Hispano-Moresque art<sup>32</sup> and, with the exception of the linked cartouches, are found in particular abundance on medieval Spanish pottery and tiles.<sup>33</sup> The treatment of the animals on these last is often very close to that of the animals on the daggers, even to the circular staring eyes, while a few examples include men not

unlike those on the de Çaias dagger.<sup>34</sup> Ceramics bearing designs of this kind were produced in a number of different places in Spain over a long period:<sup>35</sup> it is not unlikely, therefore, that this was the case also with the daggers, the decoration of which so clearly belongs to the same artistic tradition. In view of this, and in the complete absence of firm evidence about their origins, the unsigned examples can be attributed only very tentatively to de Çaias.

We come now to the most splendid of de Çaias's surviving works, the signed mace in the Museum's col-

29. All except the Paris dagger illustrated in the publications by Laking (figs. 828, 834) and Fernández Vega (pls. III, IV) referred to in note 26 above. Rodríguez Lorente ("XVth Century Ear Dagger," p. 68) states incorrectly that the Ambrosiana dagger was destroyed in World War II.

30. Pope, *Persian Art*, II, pp. 1770–1784; III, pp. 2713–2714, 2729–2730, 2742–2753; V and VI, passim.

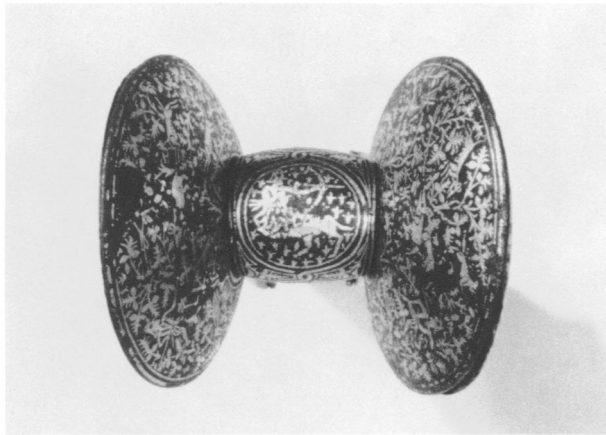
31. Pope, *Persian Art*, III, pp. 2707 ff.

32. See *Ars Hispaniae. Historia Universal del Arte Hispánico*, III and IV (Madrid, 1951 and 1949) passim; Henri Terrasse, *Islam d'Espagne* (Paris, 1958) passim.

33. See M. González Martí, *Cerámica del Levante Español. Siglos Medievales*, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1944–1952) passim.

34. Martí, *Cerámica del Levante Español*, I, pp. 220, 392, 627; II, pp. 468–469, 482, 545; III, pp. 298, 368, 391, 395, 418, 447, 522, 641.

35. Martí, *Cerámica del Levante Español*, passim.



FIGURES 6–8  
Details of the decoration on the dagger illustrated  
in Figure 1

lection (Figure 9),<sup>36</sup> already mentioned, and another mace in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (Figure 10),<sup>37</sup> which, though unsigned, is so similar that it can be attributed firmly to the same artist. Each is of normal sixteenth-century type, made entirely of iron and comprising a haft with six cusped and pointed flanges attached at the top, probably by brazing, to form the head. The haft is divided by raised moldings into three parts, the center one of octagonal section, and the others, of which the bottom one forms the grip, of circular section. At the top is a small spike, and at the bottom a knob. All surfaces are covered with gold and silver damascening against a ground that is now russet, but which must originally have been blued. It consists, for the most part, of arabesques, running foliage of various kinds, including a spiral vine pattern round the grip, and purely decorative Kufic inscriptions, of which one on the Paris mace forms a bend on a shield.<sup>38</sup> In addition, one face of each flange bears a scene, and some faces of the haft where it is of octagonal section bear Latin inscriptions.

On both weapons the top of the haft, between the flanges, is decorated with bands of arabesques and running foliage. On the Museum's mace one of these bands incorporates an elongated cartouche containing the signature DIDACVS DE ÇAIAS FACIEBAD in Roman capitals (Figure 65), while the portion of the haft immediately below the head, which on the Paris mace bears two spiral bands containing respectively arabesques and Kufic lettering, is here encircled by a landscape scene.

The majority of the scenes are landscapes containing plants and trees, sometimes including palms, with birds

36. Acc. no. 04.3.59. Formerly in the Dino, Spitzer, and Argaiz collections. It is said to have been found "dans une maison de campagne du nord de l'Espagne, chez un ami de chasse" by José de Argaiz. See J. C. Robinson, *Catalogue of the Special Loan Exhibition of Spanish and Portuguese Ornamental Art*, S. Kensington Museum, London, 1881, no. 396; *La Collection Spitzer*, VI, pp. xxxix, 61; catalogue of the Spitzer Sale, Paris, June 10–14, 1895, Lot 151 (sold for 10,000 frs.); Le Baron de Cosson, *Le Cabinet d'Armes de Maurice Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino* (Paris, 1901) no. H. 42.

37. No. K. 50. Transferred from the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, in 1848. See Général Mariaux, *Le Musée de l'Armée. Armes et Armures Anciennes*, II (Paris, 1927) pl. LVI.

38. The arms of the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada. See L. A. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry* (Oxford, 1933) p. 34. The arms continued to be used decoratively in Spain long after the fall of Granada in 1492.

FIGURE 9

Mace of Henry II of France, signed by Diego de Çaias, probably 1536–1542. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 04.3.59

FIGURE 10

Mace of Henry II of France, by Diego de Çaias, probably 1536–1542. Musée de l'Armée, Paris, K. 50

and animals,<sup>39</sup> human figures, walled towns, and other buildings. Some of the towns are semi-Oriental in character, with minarets and onion spires, while others are entirely Western. Similarly, the human figures represent both Orientals, probably Moors, and Westerners. The former wear long caftans and, usually, small plumed hats (turbans?) and curved swords; the latter, doublets with short skirts, hose, and, usually, small caps and straight swords. The plants are all of the same basic type, a bushy spray of long radiating leaves, like a small Christmas tree, sometimes surmounted by a vertical stem bearing a bullrushlike head or rather indeterminate flowers. On the Paris mace, where the plants are rendered with more definition, some look like holly-hocks (Figure 23).

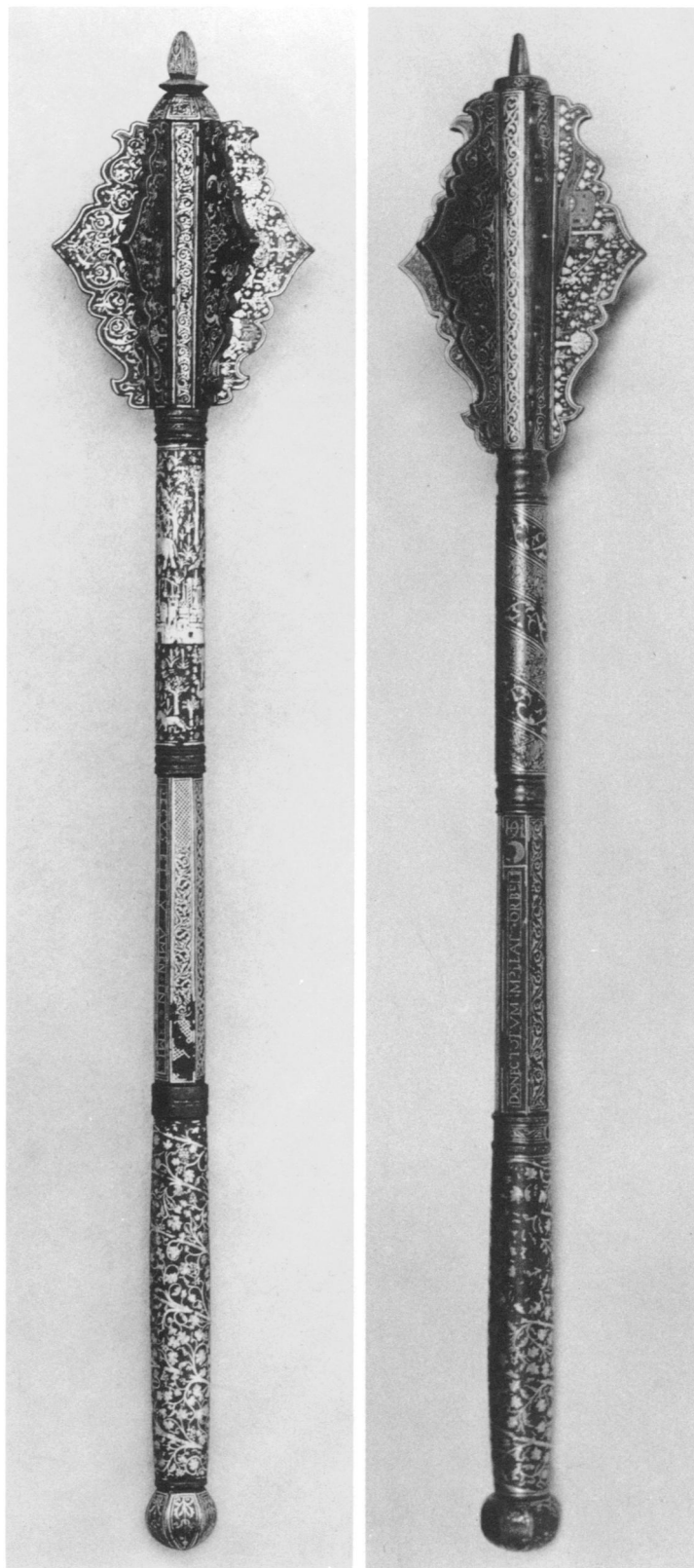
The scene on the haft of the Museum's mace (Figures 11–14) centers on a fortified semi-Oriental city with one of its towers surmounted by a flag bearing a saltire and with a shadoof near its further side. In the foreground and background are sparse forests sown with plants, the nearer one containing a lion, an ostrich, and a camel, and the further one a winged wyvernlike dragon and two large birds sitting in the trees. Immediately behind the city a horse (?) is driven toward a spring, gushing out of a large rock, by a man in a castlelike howdah on the back of an elephant.

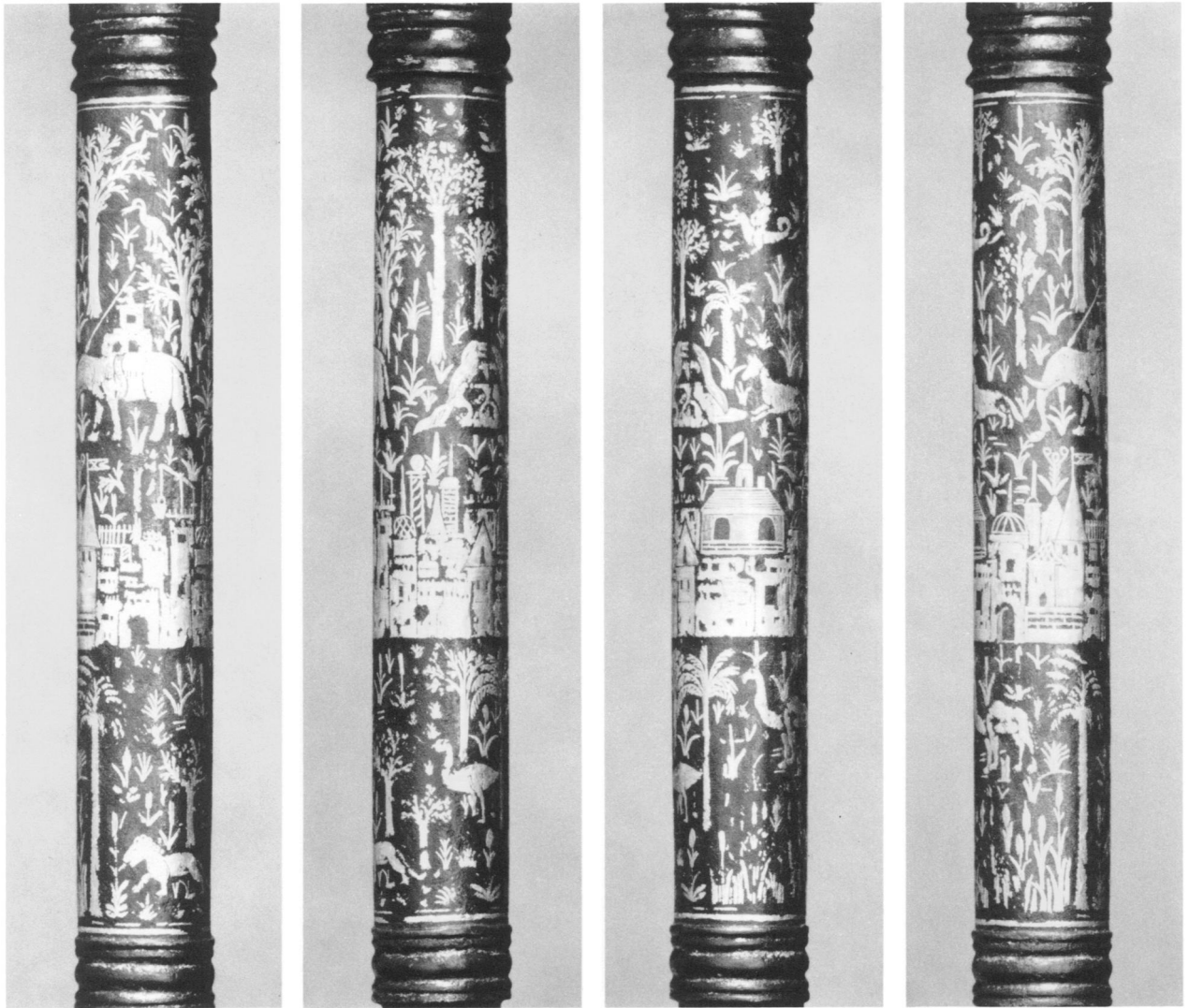
The scenes on the flanges of the same mace are as follows:

1. The vision of St. Hubert,<sup>40</sup> patron of hunters. The nimbed saint, with his horse standing behind him,

39. I am grateful to the staff of the Natural History Museum, London, for attempting to identify the less obvious of these animals and birds. Unfortunately, the details are not clear enough to enable them to do so.

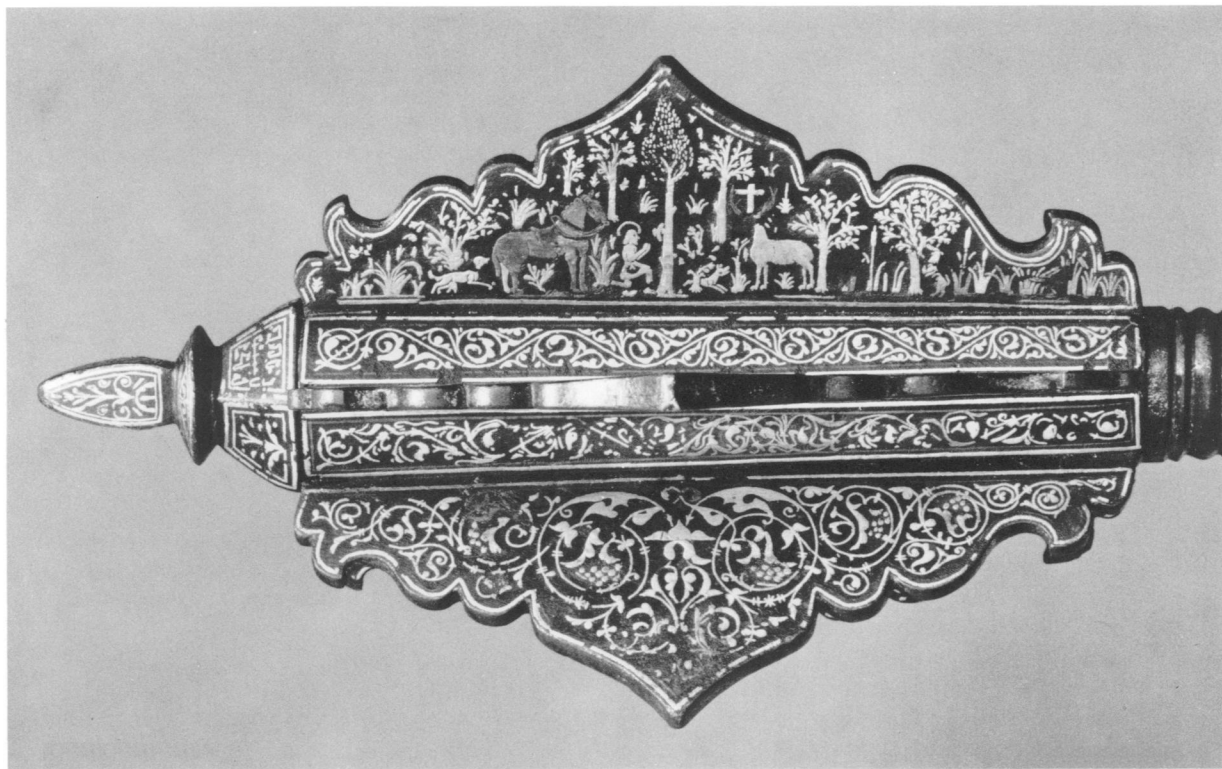
40. Or perhaps St. Eustace, who had a similar vision of a stag with a crucifix between its antlers. St. Hubert seems more likely, however, because of the many hunting scenes included in the decoration of the mace.





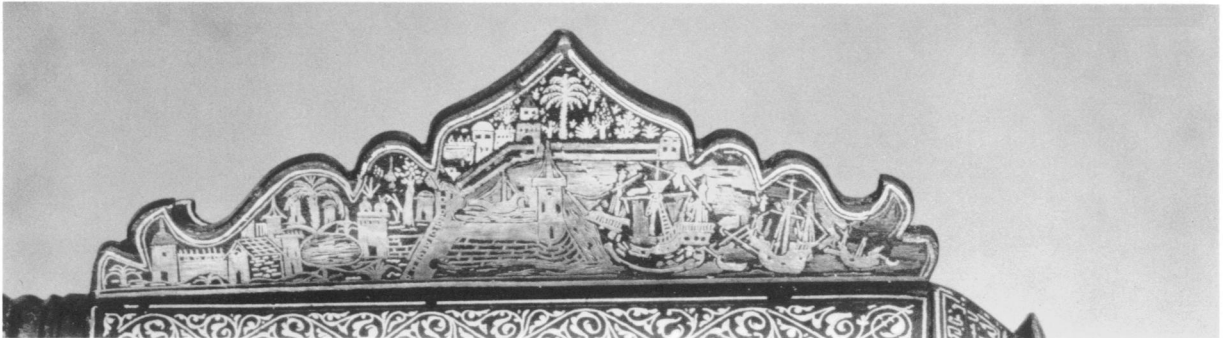
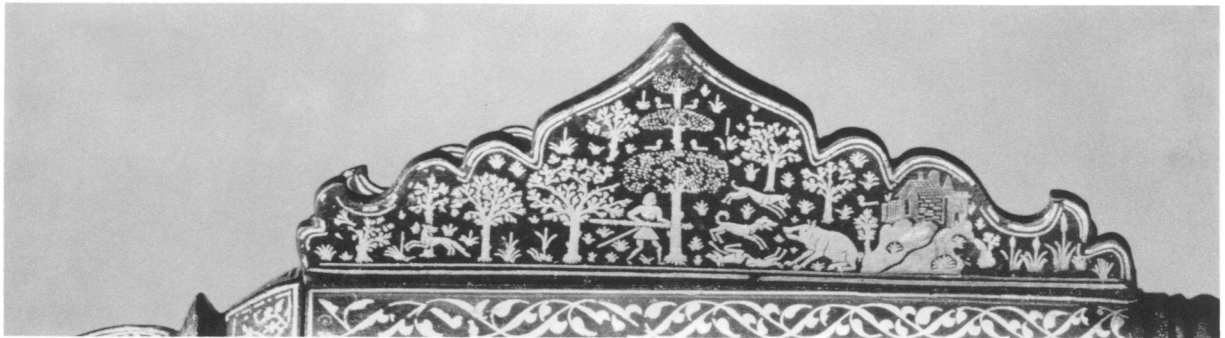
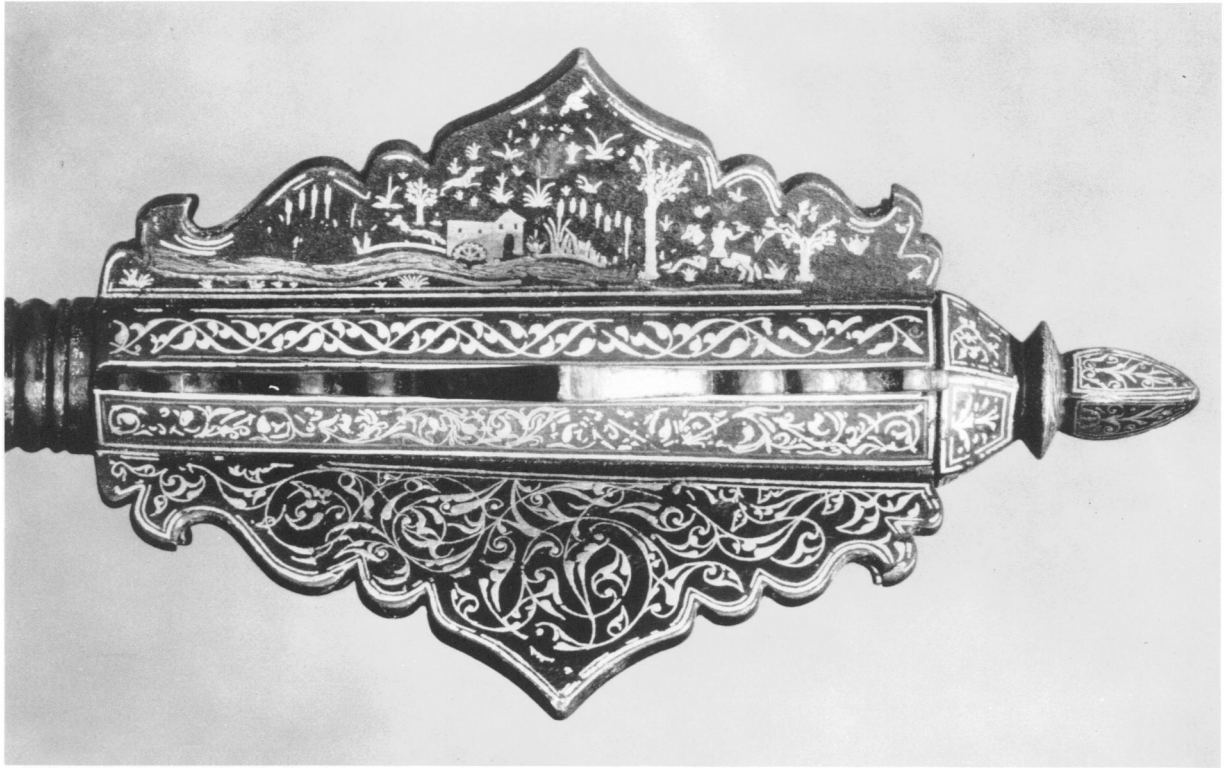
FIGURES 11-14  
Details of the decoration on the  
haft of the mace illustrated  
in Figure 9

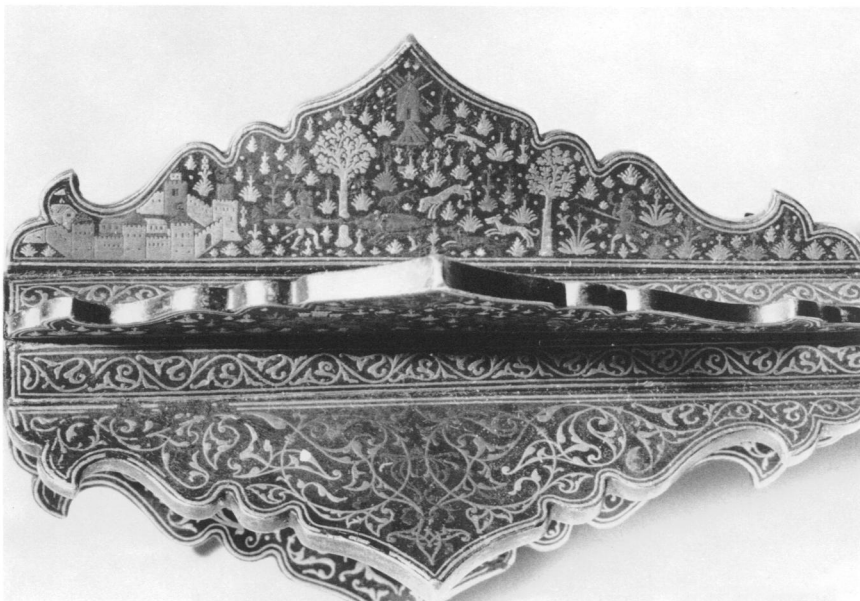
FIGURES 15, 16  
Inscriptions on the haft of the  
mace shown in Figure 9



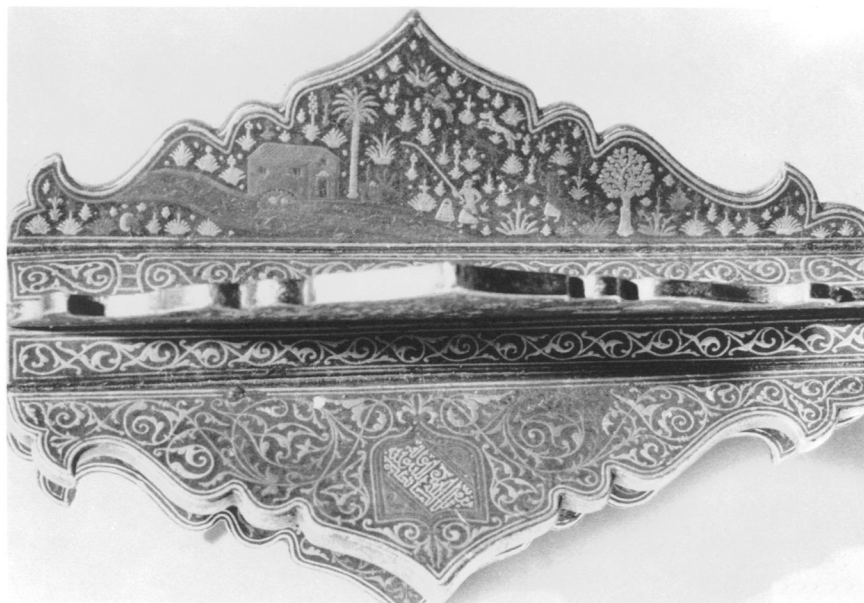
FIGURES 17-22

Details of the decoration on the head of the mace illustrated in Figure 9





FIGURES 23–28  
Details of the decoration  
on the head of the  
mace illustrated in  
Figure 10





kneels in prayer before a stag with a cross between its antlers. He wears a knee-length doublet and hose, and a purse hangs at his waist. Two of his hounds are near him, while a third attempts to climb a tree behind the stag (Figure 17).

2. A semi-Oriental, fortified, and moated city with a flag charged with a crescent on one tower.<sup>41</sup> In the center a drawbridge leading to an arch in which stands a guardian armed with a club. Trees and plants grow round about. In the foreground a hound pursuing a fox followed by an Oriental leading a camel (Figure 18).

3. A landscape. On the right a man with a crossbow crouches behind a rock looking toward a fox that runs, looking backward, to the left. In front of the fox crouches a large, ratlike animal toward which runs a man in Western dress armed with a spear (Figure 19).

4. A landscape with a stream, containing fish, running across the foreground. In the center a watermill with a fox standing nearby and a hound in the background. To the right a horseman with a hawk on his wrist. At the top a hawk striking downward (Figure 20).

5. A landscape with a boar hunt. The boar is seated at bay with its back against a hill surmounted by a fortified house. Two hounds attack him from the front while a third lies on its back, wounded or dead. In the center a huntsman in Western dress stands behind a tree with leveled spear.<sup>42</sup> A fox, looking backward, runs off to the left (Figure 21).

6. A semi-Oriental port and harbor. The latter includes a breakwater ending in a lighthouse and a number of sailing ships of Western type, some containing men (Figure 22).

The corresponding scenes on the Paris mace are similar in character though they differ in detail. They are as follows:

1. A landscape. In the background a pond with swimming birds toward which a horse runs. In the foreground two Orientals leading respectively an ele-

41. Presumably the crescent of Islam. For a discussion of scenes showing flags bearing crescents on French armor see Helmut Nickel, "The Battle of the Crescent," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 24 (1965-1966) pp. 111-127.

42. It would seem to be an obvious safety precaution to stand behind a tree when receiving a charging boar on a spear, but representations of hunters doing so do not seem to be particularly common other than on the group of objects discussed in this article.

phant and a camel to the left. The elephant wears a castle howdah with a flag charged with a crescent, the camel a pack on which stands what appears to be a foal. An ostrich stands on the right (Figure 23).

2. A landscape. In the center foreground a boar is attacked from the rear by hounds and from the front, across a tree, by a spearman in Western dress. On the left a fortified Western town, and on the right another huntsman blowing a horn. In the background a fox, looking backward, runs toward a post windmill (Figure 24).


3. A large, basilicalike building, surmounted by a flag, in a landscape. On the right a stag attacked by hounds followed by a huntsman in Western dress. On the left a hound pursues a fox, which looks backward as it runs (Figure 25).

4. A landscape in which a fortified Western town, on the right, is besieged by an Oriental army. On the towers of the town are a cross and three flags, of which one is also surmounted by a cross, while inside can be seen the helmeted heads of the defenders. In the center foreground an Oriental is about to ignite one of three large field guns with a linstock; to his rear are powder barrels and cannon balls. Behind the cannons stands another soldier holding a linstock (?) under one arm and a recurved bow in his other hand. A horseman with erect lance gallops toward him from the left. In the background is a procession of Oriental handgunners(?) and spearmen with a standard-bearer in their midst, his standard charged with a crescent. In the left foreground the tents of the besiegers (Figure 26).

5. A landscape with a stream, containing fish, running across the left foreground. On its far bank a watermill, to the right of which stands an Oriental fisherman, his creel on the ground beside him. To his right another Oriental, carrying a spear and blowing a horn, walks toward the center background where a hare, looking backward, is pursued by a hound. In the left foreground a burrow with the hindquarters of a rabbit projecting from it (Figure 27).

6. A port, labeled MARSELLA, with warehouses along its front, viewed from across a harbor. On one of its towers is a flag charged with a cross. In the harbor are galleons, galleys, and rowboats containing men (Figure 28).

On each mace the part of the haft that is of octagonal section bears on two of its faces respectively the mottoes

DECVS ET TVTAMEN IN ARMIS (“A glory and defense in arms”)<sup>43</sup> and DONEC TOTVM IMPLEAT ORBEM (“Until it [he?] fills the whole globe”) executed in Roman capitals (Figures 15, 16). On the Paris mace the second motto is followed by the device of a crescent and the  cipher of Henry II of France. The same mace also bears on a third face of the haft the motto NON HINC LEVIA AVT LVDICRA PETVNTVR PREMIA (“Not hence are light or frivolous prizes sought”).

The presence of the motto “Donec totum impleat orbem” on the maces, to say nothing of the cipher and crescent on the Paris one, establishes beyond question that both belonged originally to Henry II of France.<sup>44</sup> The absence of a crown over the cipher indicates a date prior to his accession to the throne in 1547, and there can, in fact, be little doubt that they were made by de Çaias during his French period, that is, from before 1535 to 1542. What, at first sight, appears to be a clue to a more precise dating of the Paris mace is provided by the label MARSELLA (the Spanish name for Marseille) on the scene showing a port. This is the only scene singled out in this way in all de Çaias’s known work, and it is thus likely to have some special significance. The only important connection between Henry II and Marseille that I can discover is that he was married there to Catherine de Médicis on October 28, 1533, and it would therefore be tempting to suggest that the mace was made at the time of this event<sup>45</sup> if it were not for the presence of the crescent-moon device and the motto “Donec totum impleat orbem.” Ac-

43. Virgil *Aenid* 5. 262.

44. See Mrs. Bury Palliser, *Historic Devices, Badges and War-Cries* (London, 1870) pp. 117–119; also notes 46, 47 below.

45. It included the usual processions and celebrations, in any of which maces of this kind might have been carried. See Williams, *Henri II*, pp. 77–87.

46. Paolo Giovio, *Dialogo dell’Imprese Militari et Amoroze* (Lyons, 1559) p. 24.

47. He is the only known commentator on Henry II’s devices who was the king’s contemporary, and he was in touch with the French ambassador in Rome (Giovio, *Dialogo dell’Imprese*, p. 25). He ought, therefore, to have been in a good position to obtain accurate information on the subject. Later writers have, however, put forward other interpretations of the devices, the best known being that the crescent moon, the symbol of the goddess Diana, was adopted by the king in compliment to his mistress Diane de Poitiers, with whom he began to associate late in 1536. It is also widely believed that the monogram found on the Paris mace, which can be read as H.C. or H.D., had the same source. I have been unable to discover any firm evidence in support of the view that the devices had any connection with Diane originally, though they

according to Paolo Giovio, writing in 1559,<sup>46</sup> these were both adopted by Henry after he became dauphin in August 1536 in order to indicate that “until he had inherited the throne he would not be able to show his full brilliance; just as the moon is not able to show her full brilliance until she has attained her maximum size.” If Giovio’s statement is correct<sup>47</sup>—and no means of checking it seem to be available—the maces cannot have been made before August 1536. They would thus date from the period 1536–1542.

As already noted, the style of decoration on the maces is more sophisticated than that on the de Çaias ear dagger. The treatment of the figures, in particular, is much surer and shows a better understanding of movement, though they still remain a little naïve. The subsidiary decoration and most of the animals stem from the same roots as those on the dagger and call for no additional comment. The scenes, however, represent a new departure for which I have been unable to trace any obvious sources or parallels, outside the group of objects discussed here. A possible source is suggested by the superficial resemblance some of the more pastoral ones bear to Islamic miniatures in the general treatment of their subjects,<sup>48</sup> but I have been unable to discover any evidence to show that Diego copied, or was even directly influenced by, paintings of this kind. For the time being, therefore, he must be regarded as the originator of this particular aspect of his own style.

The two maces are the only known examples of de Çaias’s work that can be dated with certainty to his

may well have come to be associated with her later. Where the monogram is concerned, there is definite evidence to show that, initially at least, it represented the letters H.C. (for Henry and Catherine), since Queen Catherine herself used it on her jewelry, clothing, and bookbindings. This being so, the most likely time for its adoption would obviously be at the time of, or shortly after, the royal marriage. On this subject see C. Davenport, “The Book Cyphers of Henri II,” *The Burlington Magazine* 2 (1907) pp. 243–244; Williams, *Henri II*, pp. 123–125; Françoise Bardou, *Diane de Poitiers et le Mythe de Diane* (Paris, 1963) pp. 43–45; Marie Hay, *Madame Dame Dianne de Poitiers, Duchesse de Valentinois* (London, 1900) pp. 13–14; G. D. Hobson, *Les Reliures à la Fanfare* (London, 1935) pp. 11 ff.; G. Renault, “La reliure à la fanfare aux armes de Catherine de Médicis de la Bibliothèque Municipale de Fougères,” *Bulletin et mémoires de la Société Archéologique de l’arrondissement de Fougères* 3 (1959) pp. 35–47; E. Moreau-Nélaton, *Les Clouets et leurs émules*, II (Paris, 1924) figs. 427, 435, 447.

48. For example, Pope, *Persian Art*, V, pls. 856, 863, 894; Ernst J. Grube, *The Classical Style in Persian Painting* (Venice, 1968) pls. 83.1 and 2.

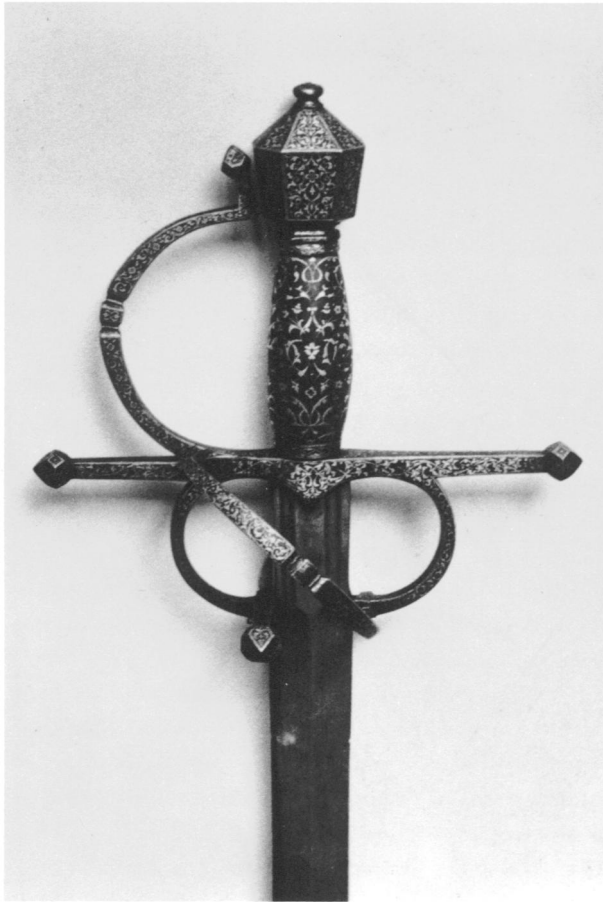


FIGURE 29  
Rapier, possibly by Diego de Çaias, about 1540.  
Musée de l'Armée, Paris, J. 70

French period.<sup>49</sup> But one other piece that may have been made by him at this time is a rapier with an early form of complex guard, datable to about 1540, in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (Figure 29).<sup>50</sup> The whole hilt, including the grip, is of iron damascened in gold with arabesques and decorative Kufic inscriptions against a ground that is now russet. No figures occur, and the arabesques, though similar to those found on the maces, represent a motif used too widely to provide evidence for a definite attribution to de Çaias. Nevertheless, the appearance of Kufic inscriptions on a weapon of Western type of this period does point very strongly to a Spanish origin, while the fact that the sword is in a collection that incorporates much of the old French royal armory<sup>51</sup> suggests a possible connection with the

FIGURES 30, 31

Woodknife of Henry VIII of England, by Diego de Çaias, 1544. Collection of Her Majesty The Queen, Windsor Castle. Copyright reserved

court of Francis I. There is thus a distinct probability that it was made by de Çaias for Francis himself or for Henry II as dauphin.

Of the work produced by de Çaias in England only one surviving piece can be identified with certainty,<sup>52</sup> a hunting hanger or woodknife now in the royal collection at Windsor Castle (Figures 30–34). It is not signed, but it can be attributed to Diego on both stylistic and historical grounds. The hilt is of iron, except for the grip, and comprises the following: flat pommel, rounded on top, where there is a button, and with a small beak on one side where it touches the knuckle guard; quillon block made in one with the arched quillons and a knuckle guard that curves up to touch the pommel, these last being of flat section with spatulate, rounded tips, each terminating in a small inturned beak. The wooden grip, which appears to be an eighteenth-century replacement, is of rectangular section, swelling in the middle, and bound with iron wire. The flat, slightly curved blade is single edged to about 6 in. from the point, where it becomes double edged. It has lost about 1/8 in. from the tip and is now 19 3/4 in. long and 1 3/8 in. across the base.

The sword is fitted with an eighteenth-century wooden scabbard, covered with black leather decorated with crisscross tooling, to which are attached the iron mounts from the original scabbard. These consist of a simple chape, terminating in a rounded point, and a rectangular mouth locket with an iron suspension ring on each side and, on its outer face, a subsidiary

49. As already noted, the dagger mentioned in the account quoted on p. 150 above cannot be traced. Three ear daggers, "façon d'Espagne," that may have been the work of de Çaias are recorded as belonging to Francis II of France at his death in 1560 (Fernández Vega, "Dagas granadinas," pp. 363–364).

50. See Mariaux, *Armes et Armuriers Anciennes*, pl. III, no. J. 70, and B. Thomas, O. Gamber, and H. Schedelmann, *Arms and Armour* (London, 1964) pl. 23.

51. The earliest catalogues of the Musée de l'Armée collection are too vague in their treatment of all but the most important pieces for any reference to the rapier to be identified in them. It is first definitely recorded in that of 1845 (Mariaux, *Armes et Armuriers Anciennes*, pl. III).

52. But see the account of the dagger at Dresden on pp. 176–177.



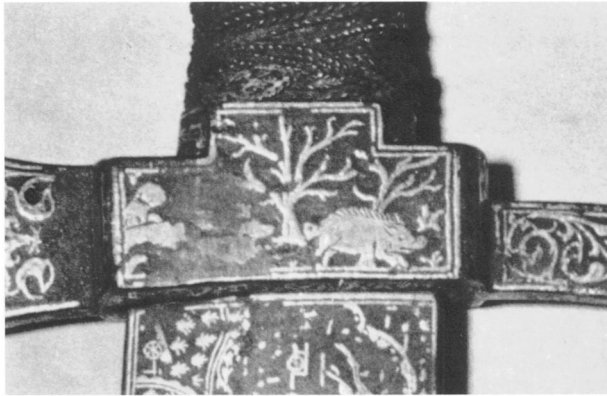


FIGURE 32  
Detail of the decoration on the right face of the quillon block of the sword illustrated in Figure 30. Copyright reserved



FIGURE 33  
Detail of the decoration on the left face of the quillon block of the sword illustrated in Figure 30. Copyright reserved

locket covering the mouth of a side pocket for a by-knife. This last, which is 12 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. long, resembles a rather narrow modern table knife and has a single-edged, bluntly pointed blade made in one with a flat handle. It is shaped at the top to the same profile as the ends of the quillons and knuckle guard on the sword.

The hilt of the sword, the top 6 in. of its blade, the scabbard mounts, and the handle of the by-knife are entirely covered with gold damascening against a ground that is now russet, but which must once have

been blued, as with most of the other pieces discussed here. Except on the sides of the quillon block and on the blade, the decoration consists of fine arabesques on the broader surfaces and either cabling or a repeated motif like a letter *S* placed on its side along the edges. On the right face of the quillon block (Figure 32) a boar is shown pursued by three hounds against a background containing three leafless trees. On the other face (Figure 33) a man, wearing a short-skirted doublet, hose, and a small, pointed cap, stands holding a boar at bay with a spear from behind a small, leafless tree, while two hounds attack it from the rear. In the background are two other trees, one with a few leaves, while near the huntsman are several small bushy plants.

On the left face of the blade (Figure 31) is a Latin elegiac inscription in Roman capitals—designed to be read when the point is upward—with panels of arabesque ornament above and below. In the following transcription a few letters that are now illegible are indicated by square brackets,<sup>53</sup> and the original arrangement of the lines by diagonals:

HENRICI OCTAVI / LETARE BOLONIA / DVCTV  
PVRPVREIS / TVRRES CONSPICIE / NDA ROSIS  
IAM / TRACTA IACEN (*sic*) / MALE OLENTIA / LILIA  
PVLSVS  
G / ALLVS ET INV[*C*]TA / REGNAT IN ARCE / LEO  
SIC TIBI NEC / VIRT[*V*]S DEERIT / NE[*C* GR]ATIA  
FOR / MAE  
[*CV*]M LEO / TVTELA CVM / ROSA [S]IT DECORI

This can be translated as follows:

Rejoice Boulogne in the rule of the eighth Henry.  
Thy towers are now seen to be adorned with crimson roses,  
now are the ill-scented lilies uprooted and prostrate, the  
cock<sup>54</sup> is expelled, and the lion reigns in the invincible<sup>55</sup> citadel.

53. The sense of the inscription makes the identification of the missing letters clear. The transcription has, however, been checked against that given by F. W. Fairholt in *Miscellanea Graphica* (London, 1857) pl. xxvii, and against the translation in the *Catalogue of a Museum . . . collected by the late Mr. Wallis . . . in Hull* (Hull, 1833) p. 18. The inscription was probably less worn when these were made.

54. The original Latin makes a play on the fact that *gallus* means both “cock” and “Gaul.”

55. It seems odd that a citadel that had just been captured (see

Thus neither valor nor grace of beauty will fail  
thee, since the  
lion is thy protection and the rose thy ornament.

On the right face of the blade, arranged so that it is viewed correctly when the sword is held horizontally edge downward, is a scene showing the siege of a large walled city of Western type, built on an eminence (Figure 34). It is surrounded by lines of trenches, and by groups of cannons of similar form to those in scene 4 on the Paris mace, many protected by fascines. To the left is a large artificial mound, faced with fascines, on which other cannons are set, while in the foreground below this are the besiegers' wagons. In the center foreground a horseman, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and preceded by two men on foot, all very much rubbed, rides toward a rectangular command post linked to one of the trenches. These are the only figures, animal or human, now visible. The spaces between the equipment of the besieging army and round the city are liberally sown with small bushy plants of the kind that occur so frequently in the work of Diego de Çaias, while on the extreme right is a single leafless tree.

The inscription on the other face of the blade, transcribed above, identifies the scene as a representation of the besieging of Boulogne in 1544 by King Henry VIII. The reasons for this siege and the details of its operation need not concern us here, but a very brief account of its main stages is necessary for the proper understanding of the scene on the sword.<sup>56</sup> It was begun by the English, under the command of the Duke of Suffolk, on July 19, 1544, the king himself arriving on July 26. The lower town, along the harbor, was captured with ease on July 21, but the high-lying and strongly fortified upper town to the east proved much more difficult and did not finally surrender until September 14. The assault was largely confined to the northeastern front of the town, which is the view shown on the sword, and involved the digging of trenches and

the setting up of batteries, while, in the words of the chronicler Holinshed,<sup>57</sup> "Beside the trenches which were cast, and brought in maner round about the town, there was a mount raised vpon the east side, and diuerse peeces of artillerie planted aloft on the same, the which together with the mortar peeces, sore annoied them within, & battered downe the steeple of our ladies church." It is this mount, faced with fascines, that is shown to the left (east) of the town in our scene.

That the scene on the blade is, within the limits of its small size (6 × 1 3/8 in.), a remarkably accurate representation of the closing stages of the siege of Boulogne is shown by a comparison with the large wall painting of the same event that existed in the dining chamber of Cowdray House, Sussex, until destroyed by fire in 1793.<sup>58</sup> Executed for the owner of the house, Sir Anthony Browne (1500–1548), who had taken part in the siege, it is now known only from a drawing of it by Joseph Grimm, published as an engraving by the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1788 (Figure 35), and from a description written by Sir Joseph Ayloffe in 1773.<sup>59</sup> The drawing shows that the painting was made from a viewpoint further over to the right than the one used for the sword, while, as might be expected from its enormously larger size, it contains a great deal more detail, including Lower Boulogne and its harbor on the right, and the English tents in the left foreground. Otherwise the two scenes are remarkably similar. The mound with its fascines appears in both, as do the three major buildings in the city, the castle on the extreme left, the church of Notre-Dame further over to the right, and the main fortified gateway to the extreme right. The shape and arrangement of the trenches and the positions of the batteries, both with and without fascines, are also closely similar, even to the command post in the foreground. In the painting, this last is shown occupied by King Henry, wearing armor and a broad-brimmed hat, accompanied by his officers, from which we may reasonably conclude that

below) should be described as invincible. There is no doubt, however, about the reading *invicta*, agreeing with *arce*, though *invictus*, agreeing with *leo*, would appear to be more appropriate. Perhaps a reference is intended to the fact that the garrison of Boulogne surrendered before the city could be taken by force and was allowed to march out with full military honors.

56. For good accounts of the siege see R. Holinshed, *Chronicles*, rev. ed., II (London, 1586) pp. 964–965; Sir Charles Oman, *A*

*History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1937) pp. 342–345.

57. *Chronicles*, p. 964.

58. For a history of the house and its paintings see Sir William H. St. John Hope, *Cowdray and Easebourne Priory* (London, 1919).

59. Sir Joseph Ayloffe, "An Account of some ancient English Historical Paintings at Cowdry, in Sussex," *Archaeologia* 3 (London, 1786) pp. 251–261.

FIGURE 34

Scene showing the Siege of Boulogne of 1544 damascened on the right face of the blade of the sword illustrated in Figure 30. Copyright reserved

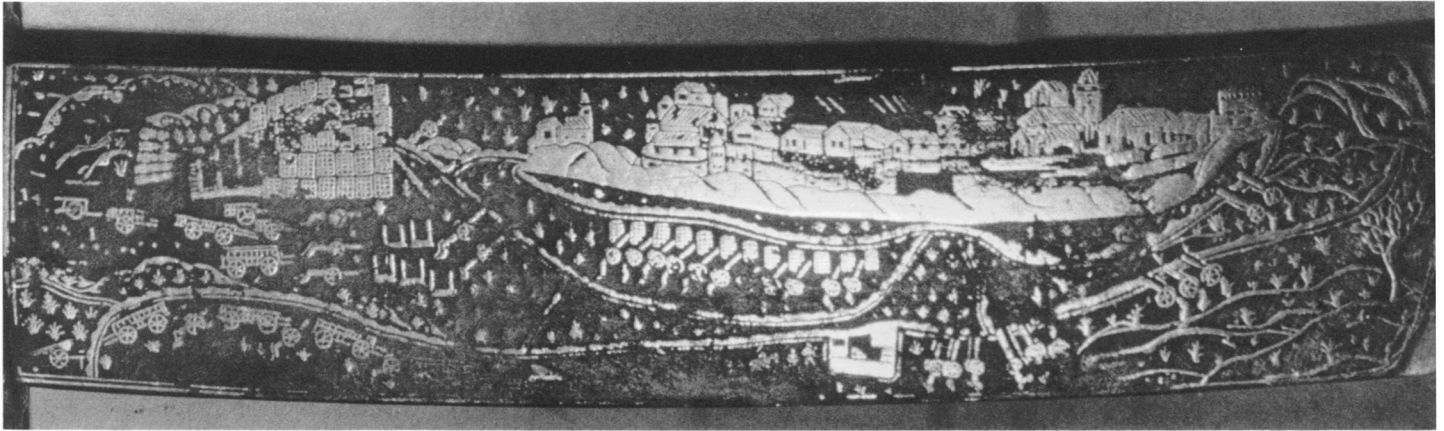
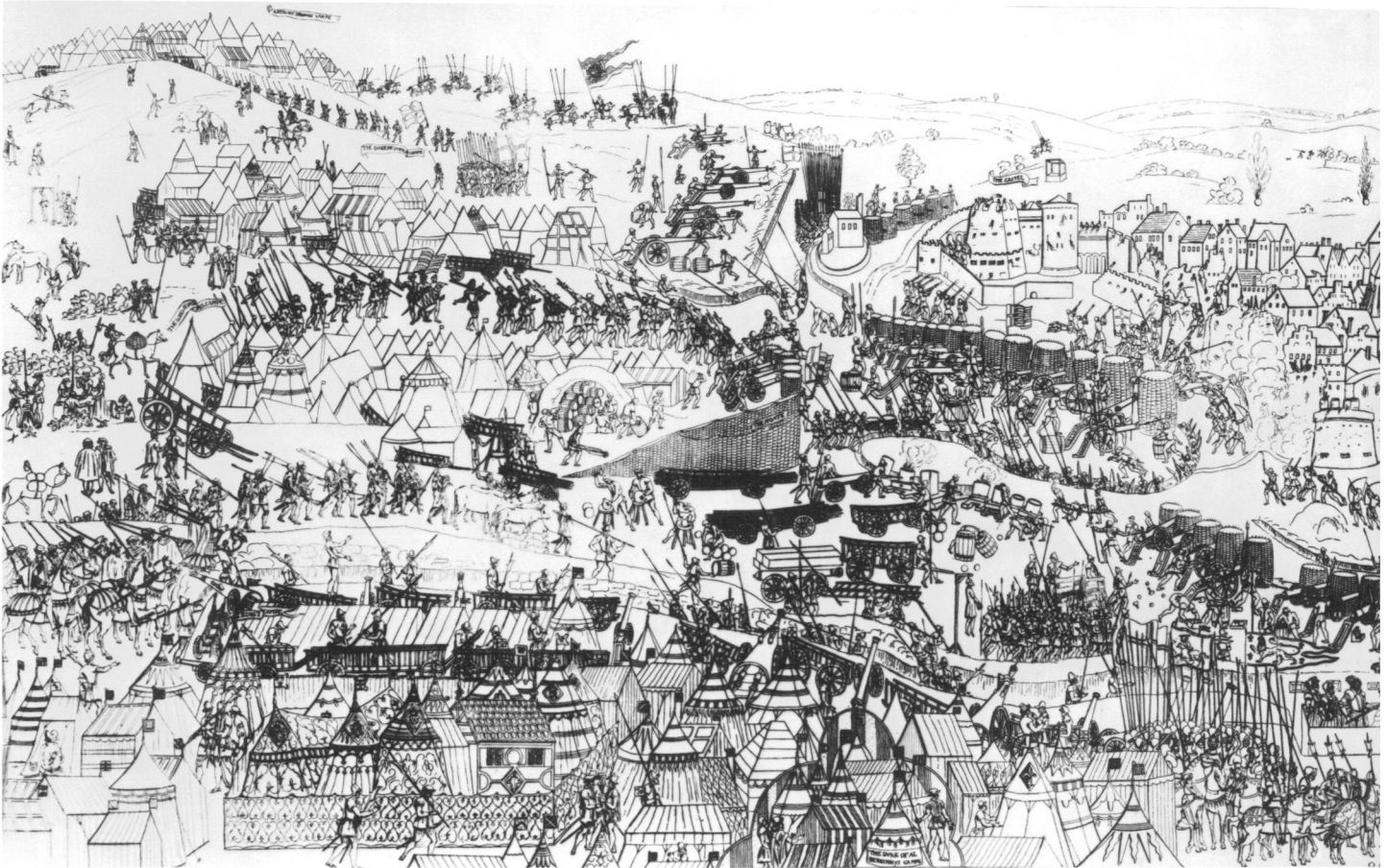


FIGURE 35

The Siege of Boulogne, engraving of a wall painting formerly at Cowdray, Sussex. Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1788



the figures shown approaching the post on the sword are the same, the king presumably being the one on horseback.

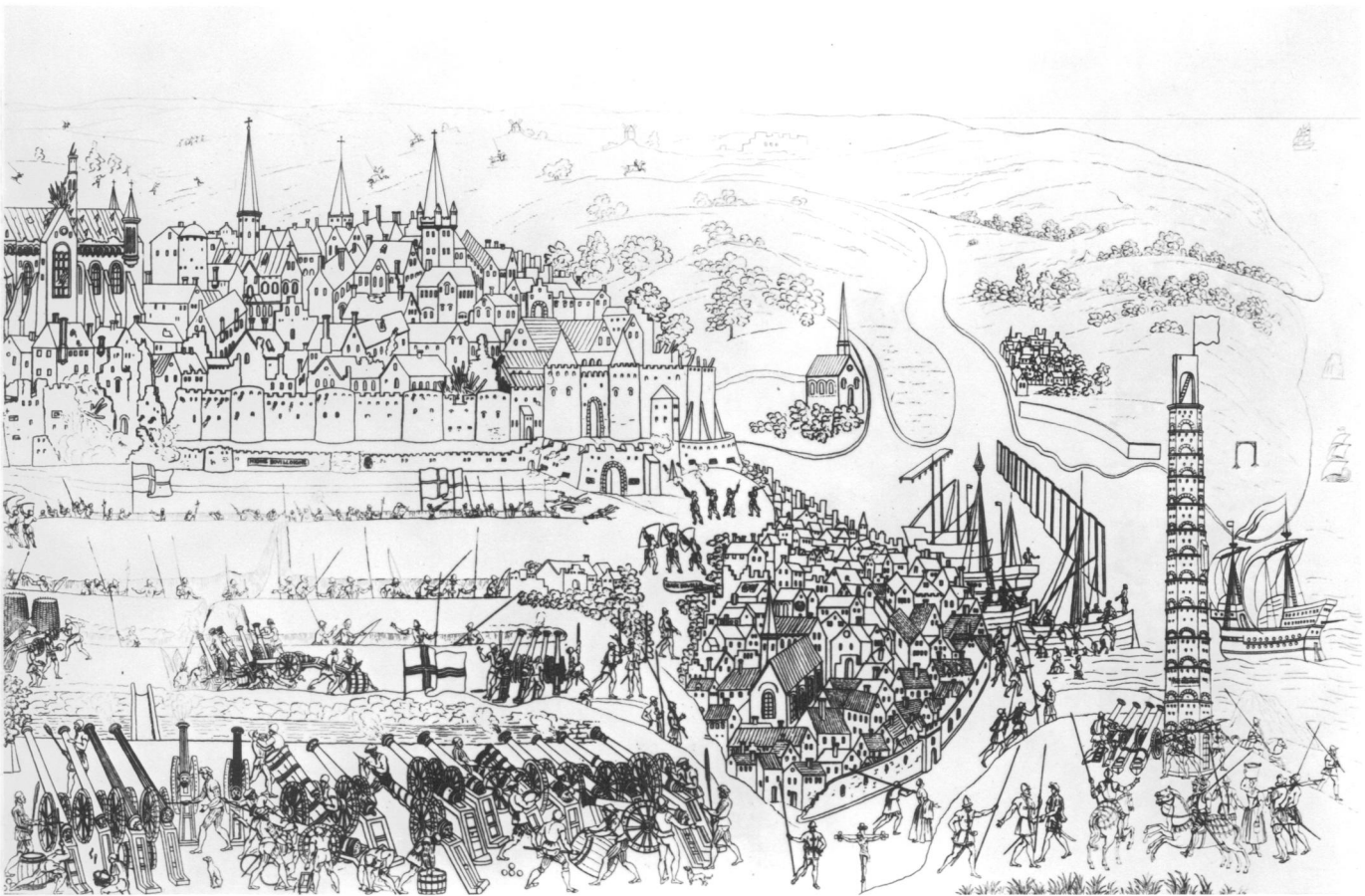
When I first examined the sword, the top face of the quillon block, behind the grip, bore traces of what may have been an inscription that included the letters c . . . A in Roman capitals. It was too faint for definite identification, and is now no longer visible, but there is clearly a possibility that it was de Çaias's signature. Even without this evidence, however, a comparison of the damascened decoration on the two maces previously described with that on the sword leaves little doubt that all are from the same hand. Apart from the combination of arabesque ornament and small scenes, obvious similarities are to be found in the treatment of the trees, of the buildings, with their roofs covered with close-set wires, and, above all, in the frequent appearance of small bushy plants of the type described on p. 158 above. In addition, the boar-hunting scene with a

hunter on the sword has many points of resemblance with those in scene 5 on the Museum's mace and scene 2 on the Paris one, though its treatment of the man and the animals is perhaps more developed, the dogs, in particular, being less gaunt.<sup>60</sup> Similar dogs do, however, appear on the signed dagger at Dresden discussed below (p. 176), together with men wearing pointed caps like that worn by the huntsman on the sword.

The subject of the scene on the blade and the wording of the accompanying inscription<sup>61</sup> show clearly that the sword must have been made very shortly after the capitulation of Boulogne on September 14, 1544. They also suggest very strongly, as does the attribution to de

60. Fairholt, *Miscellanea Graphica*, pl. xxvii, says that the dogs are "the old English Talbots."

61. I am indebted to my colleague Mr. R. W. Lightbown for the suggestion that its style perhaps indicates that it is the work of an official court poet.





Çaias, that it was one of King Henry's personal arms.<sup>62</sup> It is a type of sword that was known as a woodknife at the time when it was in use,<sup>63</sup> and it can therefore probably be identified with one of the two "longe woodknives . . . of De go his makinge . . . euerie of them havinge skaberde of vellut knives and Bodkin" listed in the 1547 inventory.<sup>64</sup> It may also have been the "longe wood knyfe guilte sometyme Kynge Henrys theighte" that Richard Wilbraham of Woodhey in Cheshire, Master of the Jewel House and of the Revels to Queen Mary, bequeathed to his son in 1558, together with a pair of andirons, to "remene as heire lomes at the house of Woodhey."<sup>65</sup> No further reference to this bequest has been traced in the surviving records of the Wilbraham family,<sup>66</sup> which died out in the male line in 1692, so it cannot be linked definitely with the sword now at Windsor. The first certain notice of the latter that I can trace dates from 1798, when it was in the private museum formed by the gunmaker-antiquary George Wallis (1731–1803) in Hull, Yorkshire,<sup>67</sup> a county that borders on Cheshire, where the Wil-

brahams lived. From the Wallis Museum the sword passed successively to the Londesborough, Spitzer, and Odiscalchi collections, from the last of which it was acquired a few years ago for the royal armory at Windsor.<sup>68</sup>

Though Henry VIII's woodknife is the only actual example of de Çaias's English work known to survive, except, possibly, for the Dresden dagger discussed later, another piece can almost certainly be identified on the well-known portrait of Prince Edward, later King Edward VI, at Windsor Castle. This was painted by an unknown artist, apparently shortly before the prince's accession to the throne in 1547,<sup>69</sup> and shows Edward wearing civilian clothes with an ear dagger attached by cords to his girdle and also gripped with his right hand round the top of the scabbard (Figure 36). It is similar in form and construction to the Museum's de Çaias dagger, except that the rivets holding the grip scales and ears in position have foliated washers under their heads. The scabbard has a metal chape, terminating in a button and a little chiseled acanthus foliage,

62. It has been known as Henry VIII's sword throughout its recorded history, which starts in the late eighteenth century. See below.

63. It was one of the types of weapon for which the generic name was *hanger*, a term that denoted a short sword or large dagger with a straight or curved blade and, usually, a single edge. The following extracts from sixteenth-century documents confirm this:

July 2, 1518: "I gyve to Christofer Boryng my hanger or woodknyf." Will of William Wolstoncrofte of London (I. Darlington, *London Consistory Court Wills, 1492–1547* [London Record Society, 1967] p. 39).

1557:

hangers

ij woodknyffes with vellet shethes, one long, other short

oone hanger with many tooles, was my fathers

one hanger with knyff, pen, bodkyn, compass and hammer

Inventory of the armory of William Cecil at Burleigh House. British Museum: Lansdowne Ms. 118, fol. 54 v. All contractions have been expanded in this extract.

A woodknife very similar in form to the Henry VIII one, except that it has no knuckle guard, is shown on the effigy of the forester Jenkin Wyrall (died 1457) in Newland church, Gloucestershire. See Ida M. Roper, *The Monumental Effigies of Gloucestershire and Bristol* (Gloucester, 1931) pl. 27.

64. See p. 151 above.

65. Rev. G. J. Piccope, *Lancashire and Cheshire Wills and Inventories from the Ecclesiastical Court, Chester*, The Chetham Society, XXXIII (Manchester, 1857) p. 88.

66. I am extremely grateful to Major F. G. C. Rowe, County

Archivist of Cheshire, for making a search in the Wilbraham documents under his care. A summary of the documents consulted is given in a notice asking for information about the woodknife inserted by Major Rowe in the local-history feature "The Cheshire Sheaf," published in *The Cheshire Observer* for May 7, 1960 (no. 10,610). The notice produced no reply.

67. See J. Tickell, *The History of the Town and County of Kingston upon Hull* (Hull, 1798) p. 842, note; also *Catalogue of a Museum . . . collected by the late Mr. Wallis . . . in Hull* (Hull, 1833) p. 18.

68. Fairholt, *Miscellanea Graphica*, pl. xxvii; catalogue of the sale of Lord Londesborough's arms and armor, Christie's, London, July 4, etc., 1888, Lot 172 (bought by Bourgeois for £131 5s. od.); E. B., "Les Collections de M. Spitzer. Notes sur quelques acquisitions récentes," *La Chronique des Arts et de la curiosité* (1899) pp. 14–15; *La Collection Spitzer*, VI, p. 28; catalogue of the Spitzer sale, Paris, June 10–14, 1895, Lot 212 (sold for 7,100 frs.).

The sword was bought at the Spitzer sale for Prince Ladislao Odiscalchi of Rome (1846–1917), though this does not seem to have been generally known, and it was long regarded as lost by students of English arms and armor. In 1957, however, Dr. Bruno Thomas, Direktor of the Vienna Waffensammlung, visited the Odiscalchi collection and, knowing of my interest in the sword, kindly drew my attention to the fact that it was there. The collection was acquired by the Italian state in 1959, but, thanks largely to the efforts of the late Sir James Mann, the Italian authorities generously agreed to transfer the sword to the British royal armory in exchange for an Italian wheel-lock gun.

69. For an account of the picture see Oliver Millar, *The Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen: The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures*, I (London, 1963) pp. 64–65.



**FIGURE 36**

Ear dagger shown on a portrait by an unknown artist of King Edward VI as Prince of Wales, about 1546. Collection of Her Majesty The Queen, Windsor Castle. Copyright reserved

and a mouth locket to which a large, hanging tassel is attached.<sup>70</sup> Just above the prince's forefinger is what appears to be the top of a by-knife projecting from a side pocket. The insides of the ears, the edges of the grip, and the scabbard mounts are painted with what is obviously a representation of damascened strapwork and running foliage, while the locket, which is partly concealed by the prince's hand, appears to be decorated also with a series of circular plaques.<sup>71</sup>

The artist's portrayal of the decoration on the dagger does not include anything that can be linked definitely with the work of de Çaias. Nevertheless, the appearance of a dagger so distinctively Spanish in type on an English royal portrait painted at a time when a craftsman known to have made such weapons was working

for the court can hardly be a coincidence. The prince's dagger can therefore be attributed to de Çaias with some confidence.

70. A similar tassel survives on the ear dagger of Boabdil, last king of Granada, now in the Real Armería, Madrid. An account of this dagger with an excellent colored illustration is given by Fernández y González in the second part of his study "Espadas Hispano Árabes," mentioned in note 22 above. See also Rodríguez Lorente, "XVth Century Ear Dagger," fig. 1.

71. The plaques are slightly clearer on the full-length version of the picture at Petworth House, Sussex, which is dated 1547 on the back and was apparently produced shortly after the king's accession. One appears to be charged with a crowned rampant lion. Plaques of similar design, some decorated with enamel, occur on the scabbard of the Boabdil dagger mentioned in the preceding note.

Only one other piece firmly attributable to de Çaias remains to be discussed, a quillon dagger in the Historisches Museum, Dresden (Figures 37–39, 44).<sup>72</sup> This has a hilt made entirely of iron, including the grip, and comprising the following: fig-shaped pommel with prominent button rising from the center of a multi-petaled flower chiseled in low relief; grip of oval section, swelling in the middle and chiseled in low relief at the top and bottom with bands formed of elongated petals; oblong quillon block and short, straight quillons of circular section, thickening toward the rounded ends, which terminate in buttons and chiseling *en suite* with the pommel. The straight, sharply pointed blade is of flattened diamond section and has a rectangular ricasso.

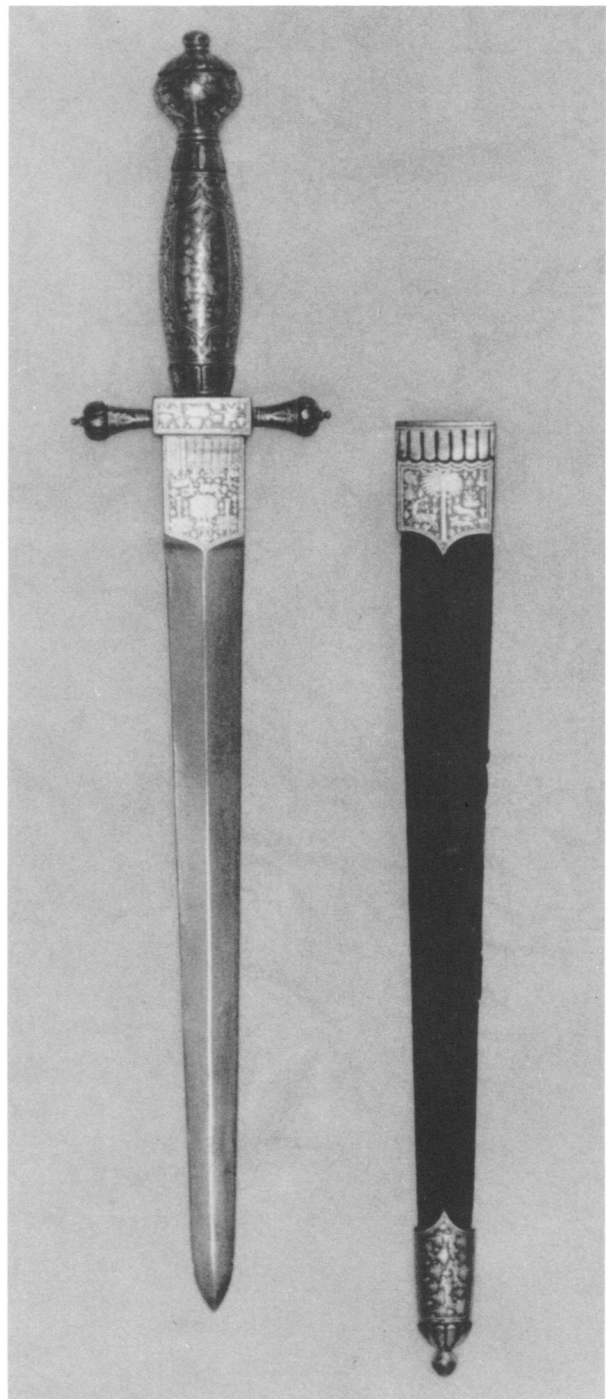
The scabbard is of wood covered with worn black velvet and is fitted with a mouth locket and chape of iron. The former is rectangular, except at the front where the lower edge curves down to a central point, and is decorated along the top with a band of chiseled petals as on the grip of the dagger; at the back is a horizontal staple for attachment to a belt. The chape terminates in a rounded point and a button encircled by petals as on the pommel and quillons; the upper edge at the front curves up to a central point.

The hilt, the ricasso, and the scabbard mounts—except for the chiseled petals, which are gilt—are covered with gold and silver damascening involving panels framing landscape scenes, containing typical de Çaias trees and plants, on some of which birds are perched. Those on the pommel and locket are designed to be viewed when the dagger is point downward, those on the grip and chape when it is sideways, and the remainder when it is point upward. They are as follows:

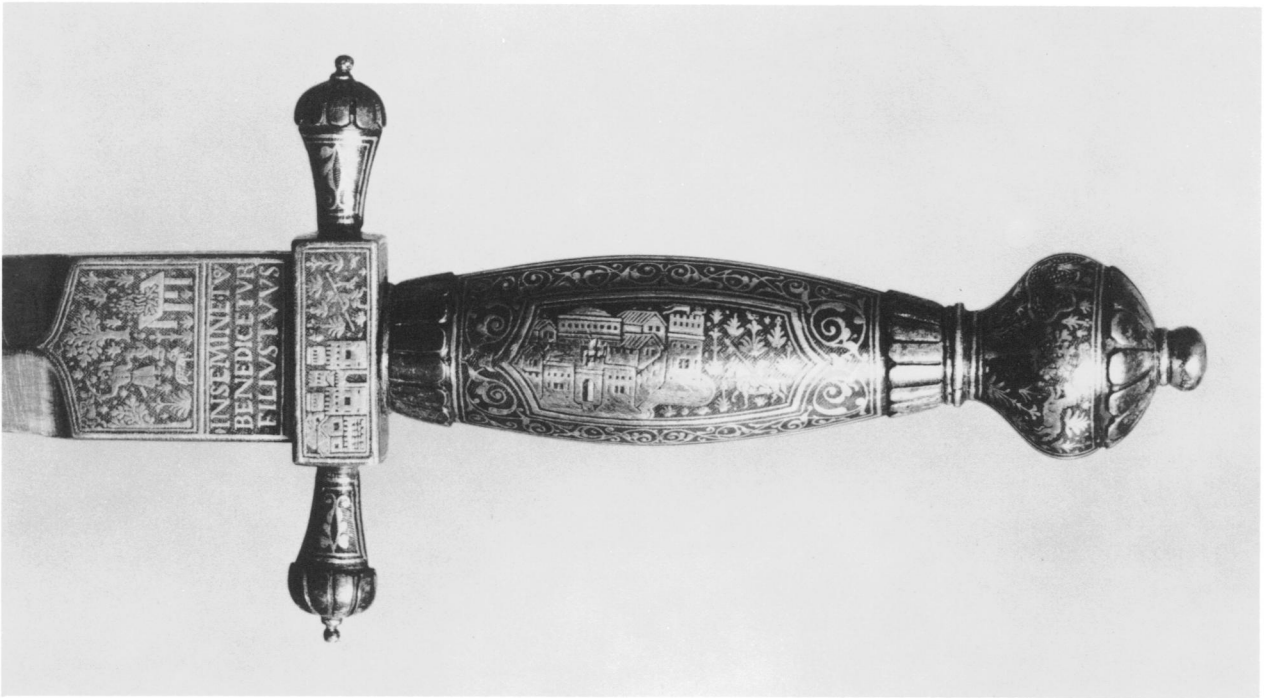
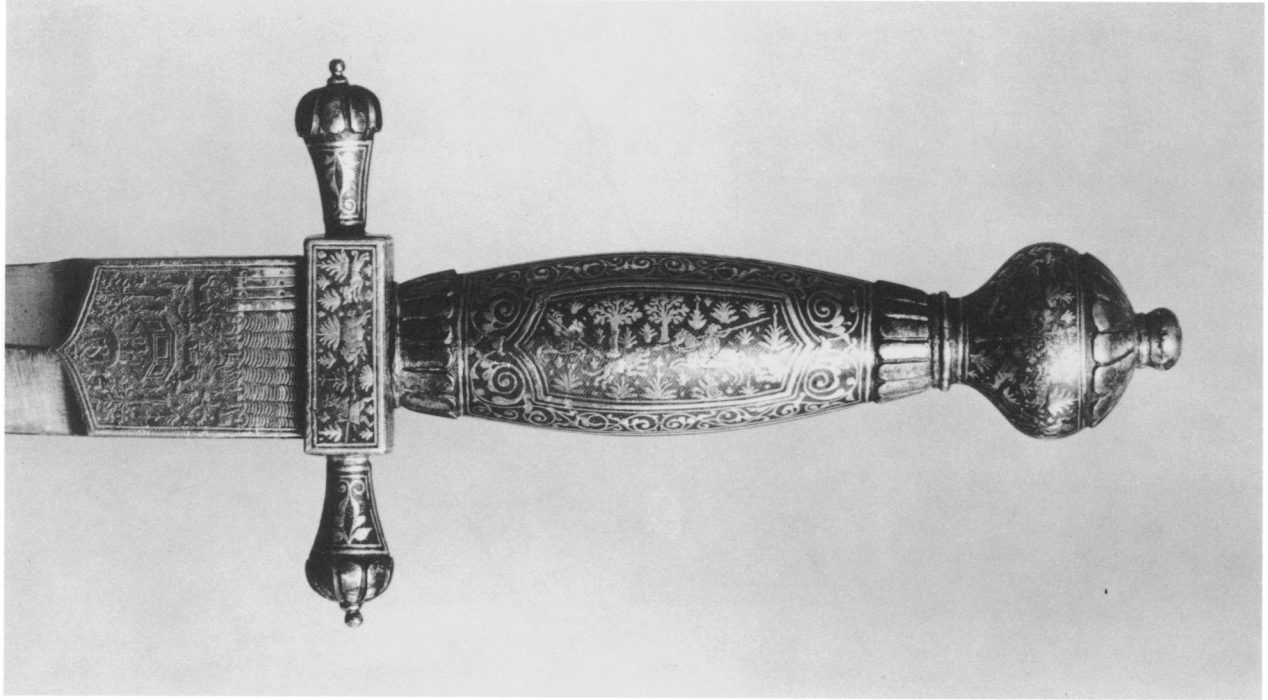
*Pommel.* On one face a horse gallops toward a pond with swimming birds, very much as in scene 1 on the Paris mace (p. 164 above). On the other face a stag is pursued by three hounds followed by a huntsman on foot. He is bearded, wears the usual short-skirted doublet, hose, cap, and sword, and holds a horn aloft in his right hand.

*Grip.* On one face two bearded Oriental horsemen attack a lion with long spears. Both wear caftans and

<sup>72</sup> M. v. Ehrenthal, *Führer durch das Königliche Historische Museum zu Dresden* (Dresden, 1899) p. 67.



FIGURES 37–39  
Quillon dagger, signed by Diego de Çaias, mid-  
xvi century. Historisches Museum, Dresden,  
E. 85



pointed hats, while the one on the right is girded with a curved sword and carries a bilobate shield of the typically Spanish form called *adarga*.<sup>73</sup> The forequarters of two other lions can be seen entering the scene on the extreme right and in the right foreground. On the other face a dwarflike bearded horseman, dressed like the huntsmen in the last scene, wearing a curved sword and carrying a lance with a small pennon, rides toward a fortified and moated town of Western type. On one of the towers is a banner with an indecipherable device. The spaces around the scenes are covered with typical arabesque ornament.

*Quillon block.* On one face a hound drives a boar toward a huntsman in Western dress who stands with leveled spear. On the other face a man in Western dress, carrying over his shoulder a pole from which a rabbit hangs, walks toward a fortified town of Western type.

*Quillons.* Each face bears a panel framing a lyre-shaped spray of foliage.

*Ricasso.* On one face (Figures 38, 44) a deer park with a wickerwork fence containing a gate formed of palings running across the foreground. Inside the park are trees and shrubs and, in the foreground, two stags, a doe, and a grasshopper. In the background is a fountain with an octagonal lower basin surmounted by a circular basin supported on a central column, and itself surmounted by an arch formed of two intertwined snakes from the mouths of which jets of water fall downward into the basins.

On the other face (Figure 39) a scene showing the sacrifice of Isaac and, below, the following inscription executed in Roman capitals:

IN SEMINE TV<sup>o</sup>  
BENEDICITVR  
FILIVS TVVS

(Thy son is blessed in thy seed)

Isaac, who wears a short-skirted doublet and hose, kneels in prayer in the center. Abraham stands to the left, holding his son by the hair with his left hand and looking up at an angel who has seized the blade of the curved sword he holds aloft in his right hand. He wears a long caftan, shoes with upturned points, and a small turban, and is girded with the scabbard of the sword.

The sword itself has long quillons, of which the front one is turned up at right angles to form a knuckle guard. In the right foreground is a tablelike altar with four legs, on which a fire burns. In the center foreground is a ram, presumably the “ram caught in a thicket” of the Bible story,<sup>74</sup> though it stands quite free. The remaining spaces in the scene are filled with the usual trees and plants.

The edges of the ricasso bear respectively the signature DIEGO DE ÇAIAS and FACIEBAT in Roman capitals (Figures 66, 67).

*Locket.* On the front two hounds pursuing a stag and a rabbit entering its burrow as in scene 5 on the Paris mace. On the sides and back arabesque ornament, accompanied on the latter by a trellis design.

*Chape.* On the front two hounds pursuing a rabbit and a fox, of which the latter looks backward over his shoulder. On the back arabesque ornament.

The precise date of this dagger is difficult to determine. Its form is one that could have been produced at any time during the period around 1540–1560, and, unfortunately, no information about its origins can be found in the few records of the Saxon armory remaining at Dresden.<sup>75</sup> Many details of the damascened scenes, for example, the horse and pond on the pommel, are very close to those on the maces, but the more naturalistic treatment of the animals on the dagger suggests that it is rather later in date. This view is supported by the fact that some of the hounds in the hunting scenes have the thick, heavy appearance of those on Henry VIII’s woodknife—though the more emaciated breed found on the maces also appears—while the huntsmen wear pointed caps like that worn by the hunter on the woodknife. There is thus some slight evidence for ascribing the dagger to de Çaias’s English period, which suggests further that it may have been made originally for Henry VIII or Edward VI. The choice of the sacri-

73. See François Buttin, “Les adargues de Fès,” *Hespéris Tamuda*, I, part III (Rabat, 1960) pp. 409–455.

74. Gen. 22:3.

75. I am indebted to Herr J. Schöbel, Director of the Historisches Museum, Dresden, and his staff for the information that the dagger cannot be identified in any of the early inventories of the collection. W. von Seidlitz (*Die Kunst in Dresden*, II [Dresden, 1920] p. 283) lists it among objects made for the Elector August (1553–1586) but gives no evidence.

fice of Isaac as a subject for the decoration and the inscription "Thy son is blessed in thy seed"<sup>76</sup> would seem to be particularly appropriate to King Henry, whose hopes for the future of his dynasty were concentrated entirely in his only son.<sup>77</sup>

The arms discussed so far are the only known ones to which the name of Diego de Çaias can be attached with certainty. There are, however, others in existence, bearing closely similar damascened decoration, that would be ascribed unhesitatingly to him if it were not for the unfortunate fact that one of them is signed by another artist. This is a rapier with an early form of complex guard dating from about 1550, formerly in the old Austrian Imperial armory, and now in the Waffensammlung of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Figures 40-43, 45-49).<sup>78</sup> The hilt is made entirely of iron, including the grip, and both it and the ricasso of the blade are damascened in gold and silver with arabesque ornament and small scenes in the manner of Diego de Çaias. These last consist, for the most part, of hunting scenes of the type described more than once in this article and of siege and battle scenes. In addition, the following appear, mostly in landscapes with trees and plants:

*Pommel.*

1. Hercules, with a club over his shoulder, leading the three-headed dog Cerberus (Figure 42).
2. In the center a fountain, with snakes, of identical form to that shown on the ricasso of the Dresden dagger (compare Figures 43, 44) but without the jets of water. To the right a lion. To the left a man falling out of a tree.
3. A fortified city of Western type surrounded by a moat in which swans and ducks swim.
4. A troop of Oriental horsemen armed with lances

76. The exact words of the inscription do not occur in either the Vulgate or Authorized versions of the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. They are, nevertheless, obviously derived from Gen. 22:17-18.

77. It is worth noting that a sword said to have belonged to either Henry VIII or Edward VI was once at Dresden (Ehrental, *Königliche Historische Museum*, pp. 162-163). It cannot now be traced.

78. See Quirin Leitner, *Die Waffensammlung des österreichischen Kaiserhauses in K.K. Artillerie-Arsenal-Museum in Wien* (Vienna, 1866-1870) pl. xxiv; Wendelin Boheim, *Album hervorragender Gegenstände aus der Waffensammlung des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, I (Vienna, 1894) pl. xx, 2.

and *adargas* followed by an elephant wearing a castle-like howdah.

*Grip.*

1. In the center an armored knight kneeling before an unidentified object upon which rays descend from the sky. His plumed close helmet rests on the ground by him, while behind him is a troop of infantry wearing burgonets and carrying spears (Figure 45). I am greatly indebted to Dr. Helmut Nickel for the suggestion that this depicts the story of Gideon and his fleece (Judges 6:36-40).

2. A lion and stags (Figure 46).

*Quillon block.* A fortified and moated city toward which an Oriental horseman armed with a lance is riding (Figure 47).

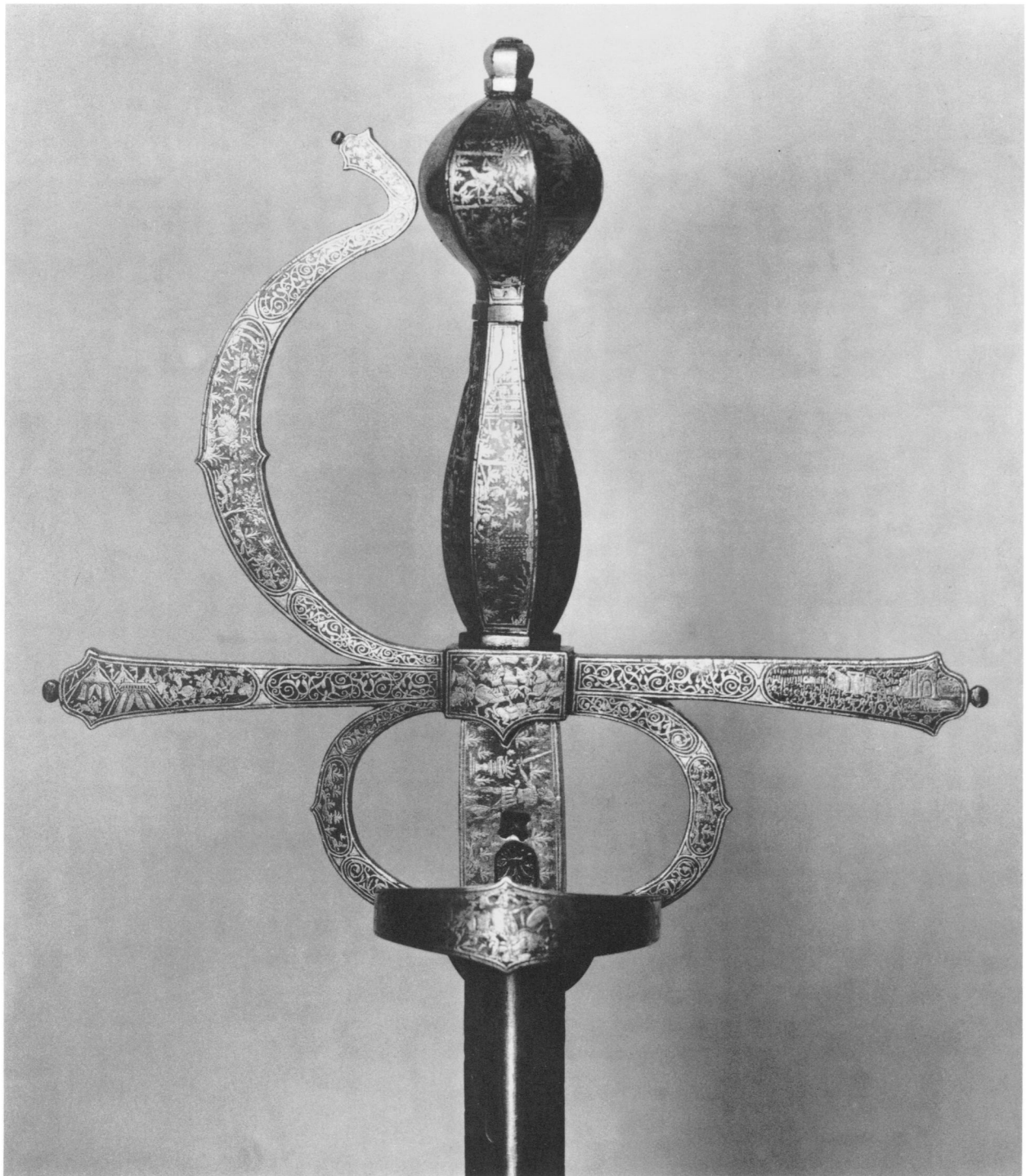
*Ricasso.* A figure in classical armor, with plumed helmet, stands holding a sword over a brazier in his outstretched right hand. This probably represents the story of Mucius Scaevola (Figure 48).

The edges of the ricasso are damascened respectively with the signature DAMIANVS + DE + NERVĒ and ME + FECIT in Roman capitals (Figures 68, 69). In addition, each face is stamped with two unidentified marks, a garb (?) in a shield and a small cross.<sup>79</sup>

The only known evidence of the existence of Damianus de Nerve is provided by this rapier, for all efforts to discover something about his career and place of work have so far proved unsuccessful.<sup>80</sup> Much of the damascened decoration on the rapier is, however, indistinguishable in both treatment and style from that on the signed works of Diego de Çaias. To detail all the points of similarity would be tedious, but the following are particularly striking: the treatment of the

79. Reproduced by Boheim, *Album*, pl. xx, 2.

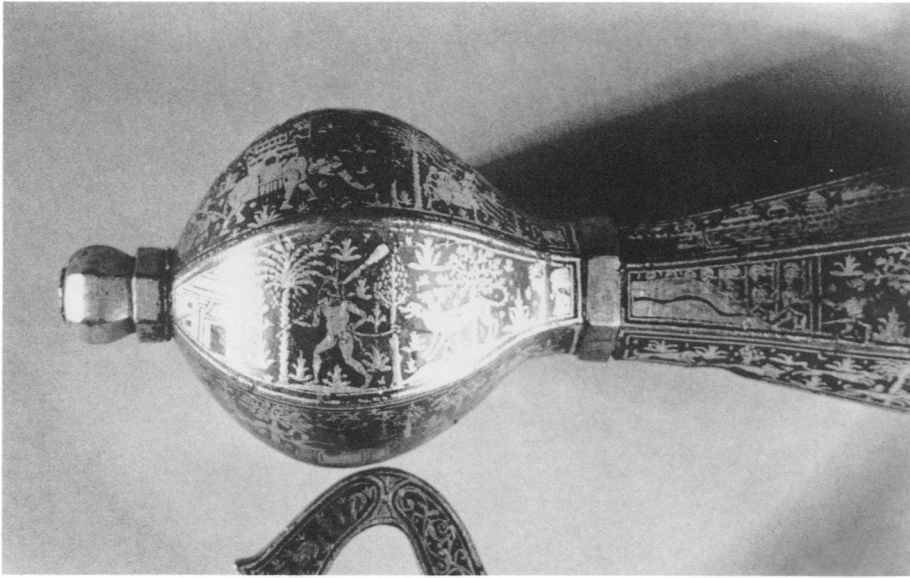
80. The line over the last letter of *Nerve* is a suspension mark that usually indicates the omission of an *N* or *M*. As will be seen from note 90 below, *Nerven* is a likely reading, but, as the rules of contraction and suspension were frequently ignored, it is impossible to be certain that it is the correct one. Boheim's suggestion that the signature is a contraction of *Damianus de Neron Venetia* or *Venetus* can hardly be taken seriously. See Boheim, *Album*, pl. xx, 2, and "Werke Mailänder Waffenschmiede in den Kaiserlichen Sammlungen," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 9 (Vienna, 1889) p. 398, note 1. Also the note on *Nerve* by Hans Stöcklein in *Thieme-Becker*, XXV, p. 392.



FIGURES 40, 41  
Rapier signed by Damianus de Nerve, mid-xvi century. Waffensammlung of the Kunsthistorisches Museum,  
Vienna, A. 586







FIGURES 42, 43  
Details of the decoration on  
the rapier illustrated in  
Figure 40

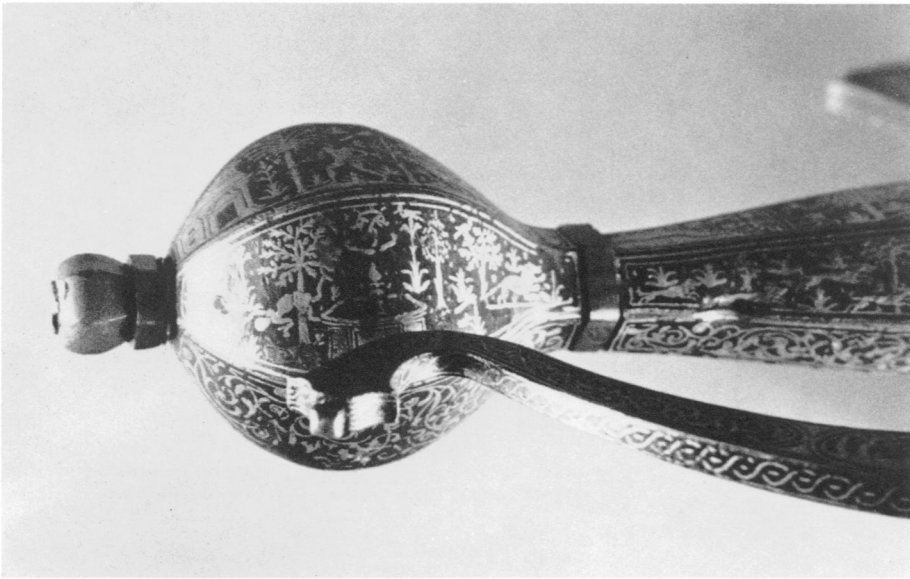
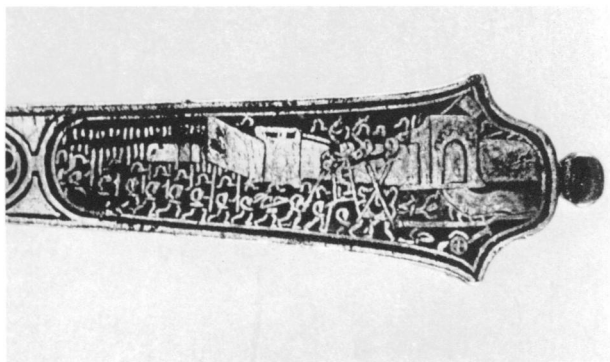
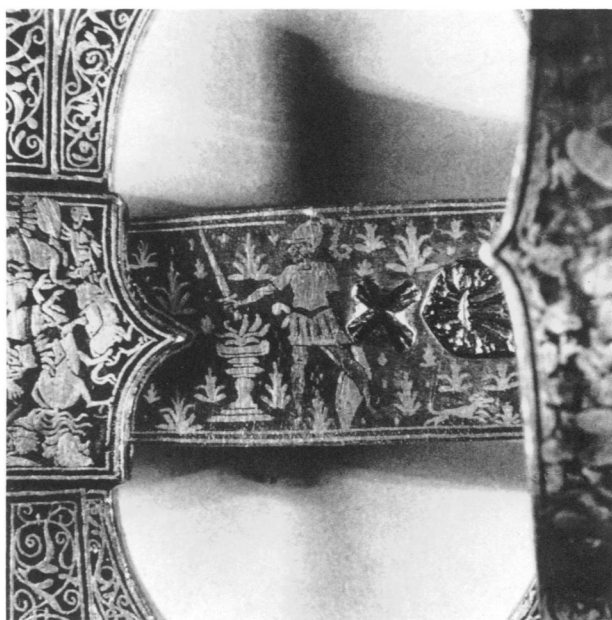
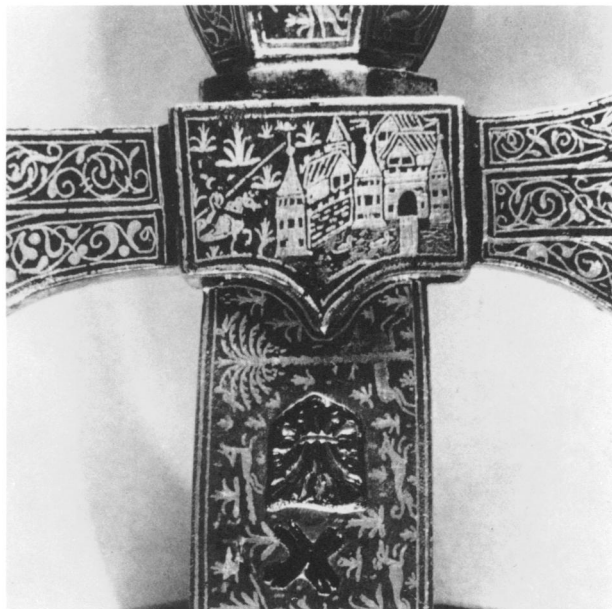


FIGURE 44  
Detail of the decoration on  
the ricasso of the dagger  
illustrated in Figure 37



FIGURES 45-49  
Details of the decoration on the hilt of the rapier  
illustrated in Figure 40

trees, including palms, and the profuse use of plants of the highly distinctive type described on p. 158 above; the birds perched in some of the trees and plants; the composition of the hunting scenes and the treatment of the huntsmen and animals that appear in them; the presence in the scenes of foxes and hares that look backward as they run, and of lions and elephants with castle howdahs; the Oriental horsemen carrying shields (*adargas*) of specifically Spanish form;<sup>81</sup> the type of fortified and moated city, including one toward which an Oriental horseman bearing a lance is riding. The most striking of all is the representation on both the ricasso of the Dresden dagger and the pommel of the Vienna rapier of the same fountain surmounted by spouts formed as two intertwined snakes (Figures 43, 44).

In light of the foregoing it cannot be doubted that there was an extremely close connection between de Çaias and de Nerve. Its precise nature can only be conjectured until definite evidence on the subject is discovered, but the most obvious explanation of the similarity between the work of the two artists is that they were master and pupil. In any event, it seems to be virtually certain that de Çaias was the senior of the two and the originator of their style.

Though most of the decoration on the rapier is so close to that on the de Çaias pieces, it differs in that it includes figures wearing burgonetlike helmets, in some cases with classical armor, in the battle and siege scenes and in the one showing Mucius Scaevola (Figure 48). Most of these figures are rendered with more detail and naturalism, and are much closer in style to the mainstream of European Renaissance art, than anything noticed so far in the course of this article; others are little more than matchstick men with their helmeted heads indicated by a single line shaped like a croquet hoop with upturned ends (Figure 49). It would be very satisfactory if the absence or presence of classical figures in damascened decoration of the type under discussion could be regarded as distinguishing the hand of de Çaias from that of de Nerve: unfortunately, there is not a shred of evidence to show that de Nerve always included such figures or that de Çaias never adopted them. None of the remaining pieces known to bear

decoration of this kind is either signed or accompanied by documentary evidence that makes a firm attribution to one or the other artist possible, so all must be ascribed, for the time being at least, to a theoretical Çaias/Nerve workshop. They can be divided, for convenience, into three main groups, of which the first two comprise objects decorated in the manner already discussed here in detail, classified according to whether they do (Group II) or do not (Group I) include the new elements noticed on the de Nerve rapier. The third group contains pieces damascened in a style that may reasonably be regarded as having developed from these new elements.

All the pieces known to me that have some claim to being attributed to the Çaias/Nerve workshop are listed in the appendix to this article, and no detailed discussion of them is needed here. A few do, however, supply a little more evidence about the history of the workshop, which must be considered briefly. The relevant details of these are as follows:

#### *Group I*

1. Sword in the Museum für deutsche Geschichte, Berlin (Figure 50), equipped with a magnificent blade etched with figures representing the Planets and Virtues and signed by Hans Collaert the Elder of Antwerp (about 1540–1581).<sup>82</sup>

2. The barrel and lock of a gun with an ivory-covered stock, bearing the arms of Philippe de Croy, Duke of Aerschot and Prince of Chimay (1521–1595) in the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 51, 52). The absence of the collar of the Golden Fleece from round the coat-of-arms indicates that it must date from before 1556, when de Croy became a member of the Order, while it is also likely to have been made after 1551, when he succeeded to the family titles. This date agrees very well with that of a closely similar gun, damascened with foliage only, in the Waffensammlung of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (no. D. 71), which bears the arms used by Emperor Maximilian II between 1549 and 1562. The carved decoration on the stocks of the guns is in the Flemish mannerist style of the mid-sixteenth century, and both may, therefore, have

81. See note 73 above.

82. For an account of the blade of the sword see Hermann Warner Williams, Jr., "An Unrecorded Masterpiece by Hans

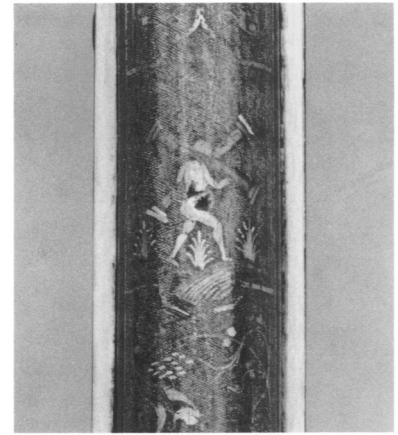
Collaert the Elder," *The Burlington Magazine* 70 (1937) pp. 82–87. It was formerly in the collection formed in the nineteenth century by Prince Carl of Prussia.



FIGURE 50  
Sword, mid-xvi century. Museum für deutsche Geschichte, Berlin, W. 564

FIGURES 51, 52

Details of the decoration on the barrel of a wheel-lock gun bearing the arms of Philippe de Croy, about 1551–1556. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, 29.151.1



been produced in the Netherlands, perhaps in Antwerp.<sup>83</sup>

#### Group II

1. Rapier, dated 1556, in the Historisches Museum, Dresden (Figures 53–57).<sup>84</sup> The only detail of the decoration that justifies the placing of this sword in Group II rather than Group I is a figure of Judith with the head of Holofernes on the pommel (Figure 55). Underneath is the name *rwd/ich*, a phonetic spelling that suggests a German or Flemish origin.

2. Rapier, dated 1556, in the Waffensammlung of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Figure 58).<sup>85</sup>

3. Iron purse frame in The Cleveland Museum of Art (Figure 59).<sup>86</sup> This is decorated on one face with gold damascening, now so much rubbed that many details are lost. At bottom center are the arms of Este incorporating the device of the Papal gonfalonier.<sup>87</sup> On either side are tents, mounted armored knights with lances, and foot soldiers wearing burgonets. Above

these are buildings, trees, and animals. The suspension swivel bears the name *ALFONSVS/ESTENSIS*. The combination of the name with the device of gonfalonier in the arms indicates that the frame must have been made for Alfonso II d'Este (1533–1597) after he became Duke of Ferrara in 1559.<sup>88</sup> The decoration on this piece does not so obviously belong to the Çaias/Nerve group as those previously discussed. The mounted knights are, however, paralleled on a smaller scale by some on the grip of the Dresden rapier, no. 1 above, and the foot soldiers, with their distinctive burgonets, are like those on the signed de Nerve one. Furthermore, the buildings and trees and the boar that appears at top left are all very similar in treatment to those found in the signed works of de Çaias and de Nerve.

It can be seen from the above that the Çaias/Nerve workshop must have continued to operate until about 1560 or later, and that it was patronized on at least one occasion by the Duke of Ferrara. No record of either

83. For accounts of the guns see C. O. von Kienbusch and S. V. Grancsay, *The Bashford Dean Collection of Arms and Armor* (Portland, Maine, 1933) pp. 230–233; Thomas, Gamber, and Schedelmann, *Arms and Armour*, pl. 38; J. F. Hayward, *The Art of the Gunmaker*, I (London, 1965) pp. 85, 135–136.

84. Erich Haenel, *Kostbare Waffen aus der Dresdner Rüstkammer* (Leipzig, 1923) pl. 54, b. Haenel fails to note the date and gives the inscription on the pommel incorrectly.

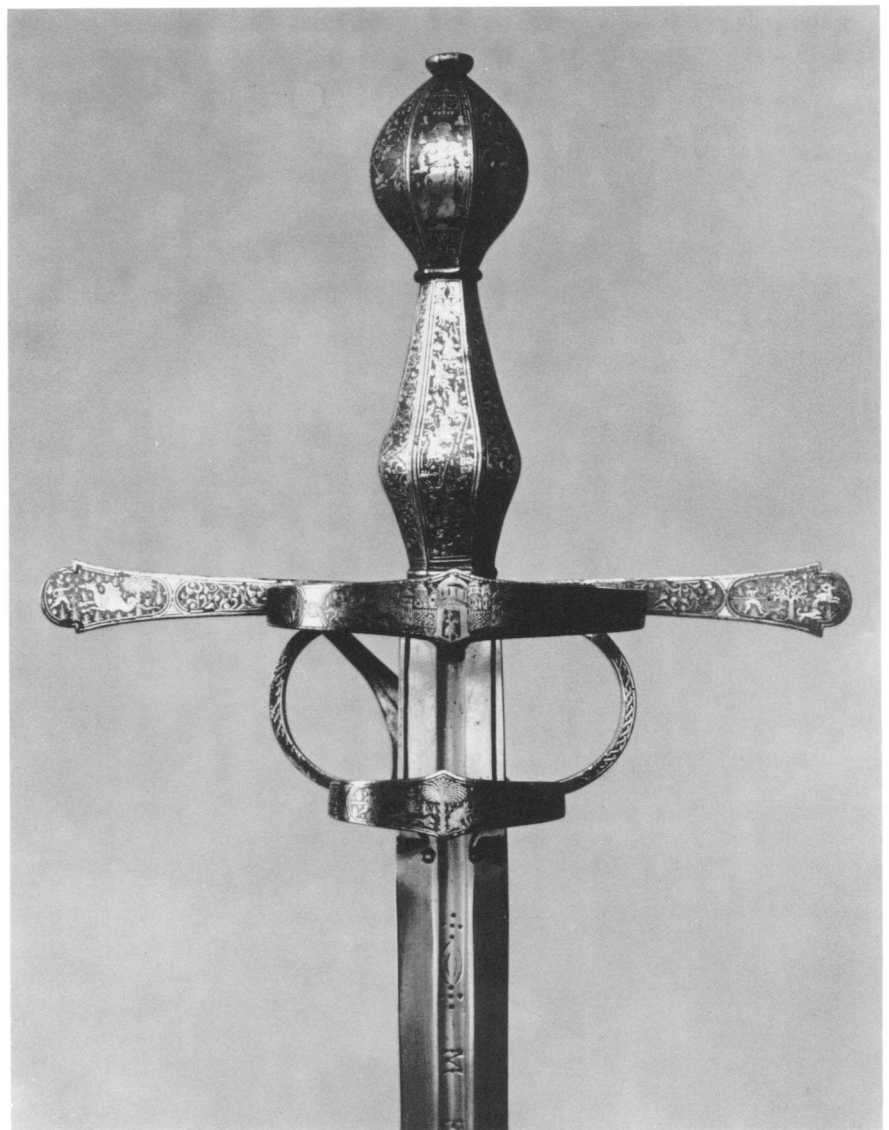
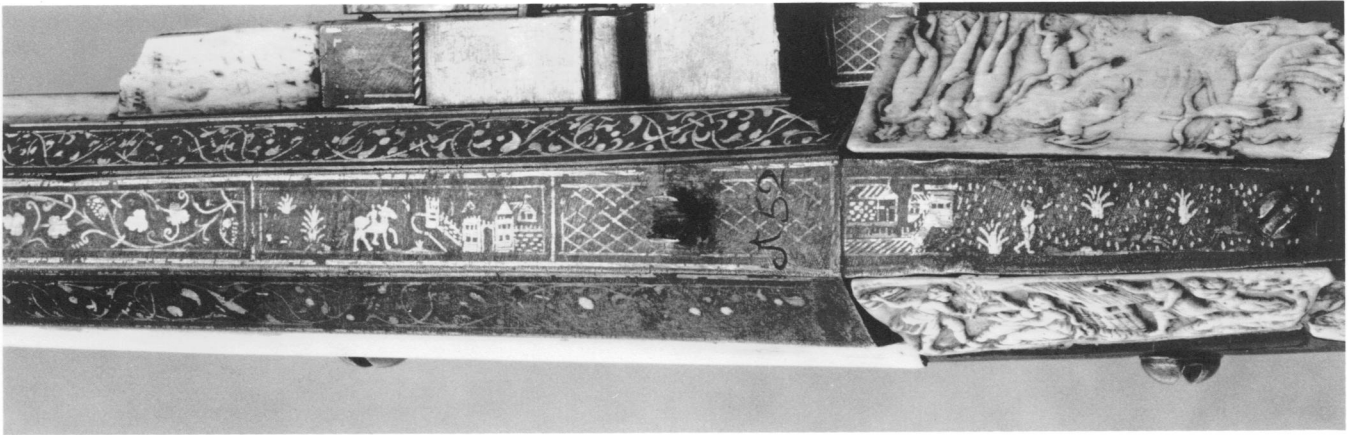
85. The authenticity of this sword has been doubted, but, so far as I can see from a very careful examination, it has no features that are inconsistent with the date on it. Formerly in the Vienna Rothschild collection, it was before that in the possession of the French Comte d'Armaillé. In a note on it by Édouard de Beaumont published in Edouard Lièvre's *Les collections célèbres d'oeuvres d'art* (Paris, 1866) pl. 95, it is stated that the sword "a été rapportée

quelques années, d'Allemagne, où elle passait pour avoir, avant 1809, époque du passage des Français à Vienne, appartenu à l'Arsenal de cette ville." Curiously enough, though the engraving accompanying the note shows the sword as it is now, another engraving published in *L'Art pour Tous*, 6e. année (Paris, 1866–1867), no. 178, shows it with a wooden, wire-bound grip.

86. Helen Ives Gilchrist, *A Catalogue of the Collection of Arms and Armor presented to the Cleveland Museum of Art by Mr. and Mrs. John Long Severance* (Cleveland, 1924) p. 259, no. M. 14.

87. This device was used only by the head of the family. See Pompeo Litta, *Famiglie Celebri Italiane*, II (Milan, 1825); also *Enciclopedia Italiana*, XIV (Milan, 1932) pp. 395–398.

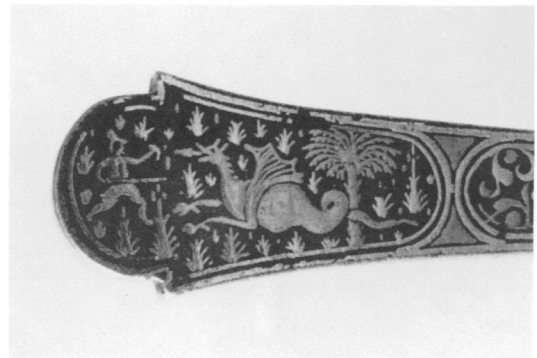
88. The style of decoration is too late for it to have belonged to Alfonso I d'Este (1505–1534).



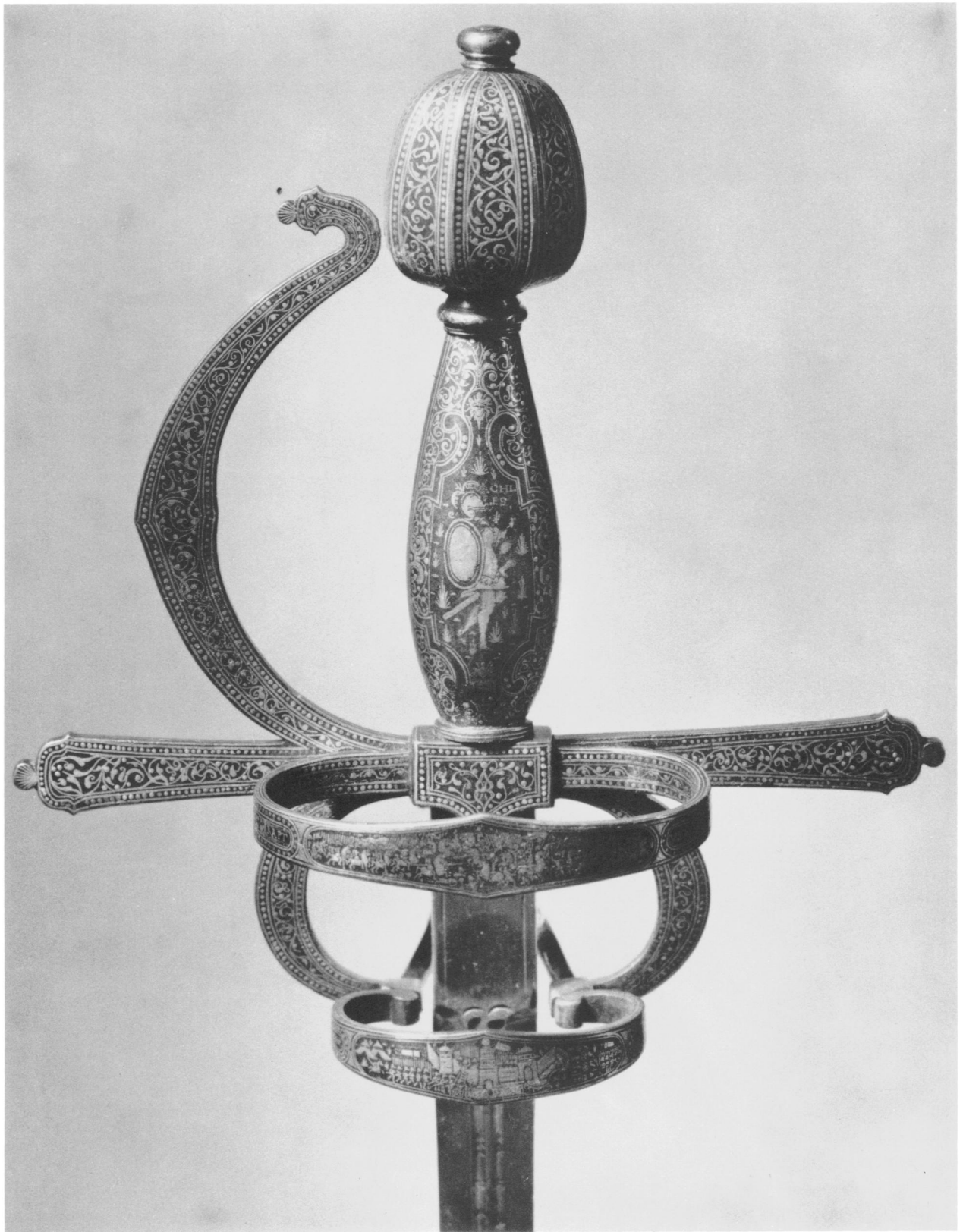
**FIGURE 53**  
Rapier, dated 1556. Historisches Museum, Dresden, E. 58



FIGURE 58 (opposite)  
 Rapier, dated 1556. Waffensammlung  
 of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vi-  
 enna, A. 2778



FIGURES 54-57  
 Details of the decoration on the hilt of the rapier  
 illustrated in Figure 53



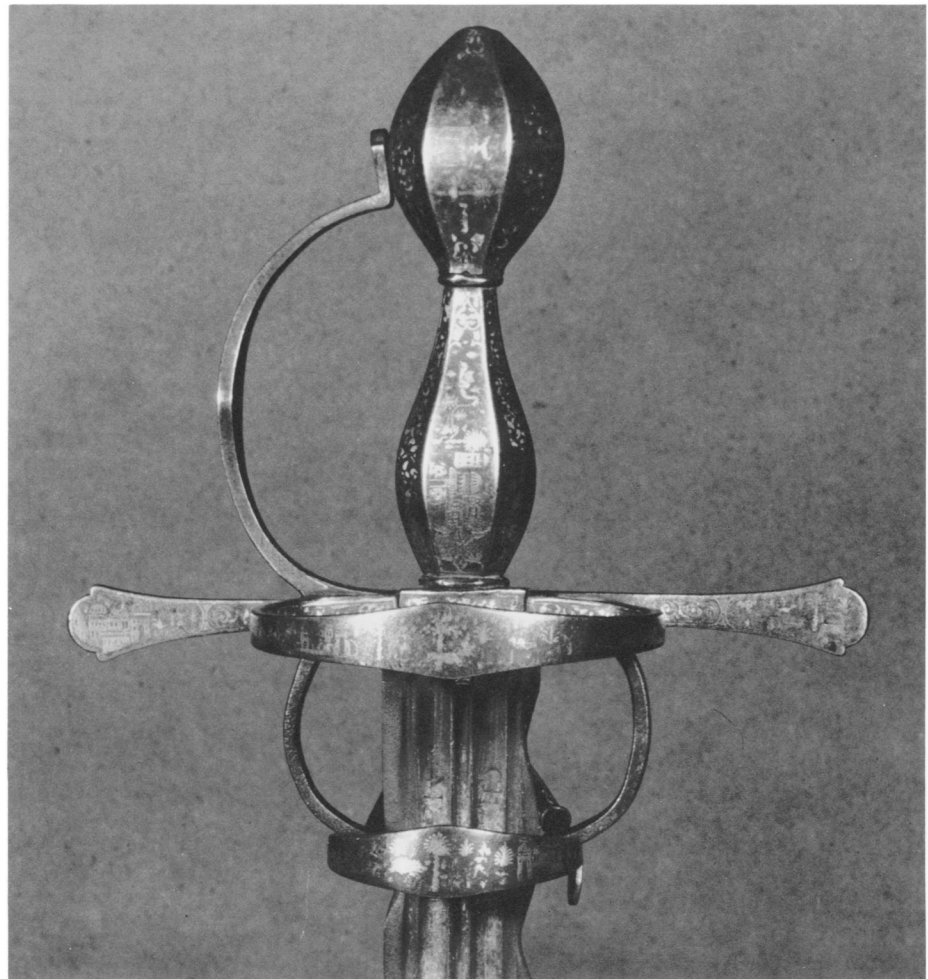




**FIGURE 59**  
Purse frame of Alfonso II d'Este, about 1560. The Cleveland Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Severance, 16.1550

de Çaias or de Nerve has been traced in the Este archives,<sup>89</sup> which are very full, so it is reasonably safe to assume that neither of them was employed at the Ferrarese court. The only clue to the location of the workshop would seem to be the very slender one provided by the Berlin sword and the Museum's gun with the arms of de Croy. Both, as already noted, have possible Antwerp connections, though the decoration pointing to these could obviously have been produced by artists trained in Antwerp but working elsewhere. There seems, however, to be at least a possibility that de Çaias or de Nerve, or both, may have operated in Antwerp in the 1550s. Neither of them can be traced in the

89. They are not mentioned by G. Campori in *Gli Artisti Italiani e Stranieri negli Stati Estensi* (Modena, 1855), while a search kindly made in the Archivio di Stato di Modena by the Director, Prof. Dr. Filippo Valenti, has produced no information either about them or about the acquisition of the purse frame by Alfonso II.



**FIGURE 60**  
Rapier, mid-xvi century. City Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow, '11-29 ed

city records,<sup>90</sup> but as these are very incomplete for the sixteenth century, this need not be significant.

We come finally to the third group of objects that can be attributed to the Çaias/Nerve workshop. At present it comprises only two pieces, of which the key one is another rapier in the Historisches Museum, Dresden (Figure 61).<sup>91</sup> The hilt, which is made entirely of iron, is closely similar in basic form to those of all the rapiers discussed in this article, except the Paris one of about 1540, while its pommel, grip, quillons, and side ring are virtually identical in shape to those on the signed de Nerve rapier. The hilt differs chiefly from the one on this last in having a number of additional guards, of which the most prominent are two diagonal bars, one running from the top of the knuckle guard to the base of the rear quillon, and the other from the base of the front quillon to the tip of the rear arm of the hilt. The inclusion of these bars has necessitated placing the knuckle guard and arms of the hilt with their broader faces at right angles to the plane of the blade, instead

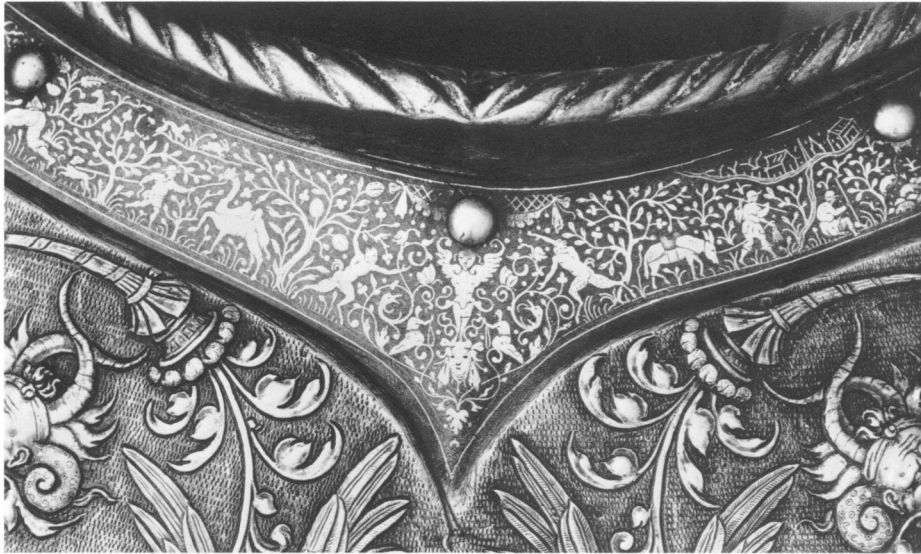
90. I am greatly indebted to Dr. J. Van Roey, City Archivist of Antwerp, for searching the records on my behalf. Though he was unable to discover any reference to either de Çaias or de Nerve, he did produce one piece of interesting information, related to me in a letter of March 9, 1965: "It could be however that the second one, de Nerven, is of Antwerp extraction as we found a Paulus van Nerven, an apprentice-sculptor in the list of members of the St. Luke's guild in 1497 ('Liggeren . . . der Antwerpsche Sint Lucasgilde,' ed. by Ph. Rombouts and Th. van Lerius, I, Antwerp, 1872, p. 53)."

Dr. Helmut Nickel has suggested that DAMIANVS DE NERVE could be interpreted as the perfectly acceptable Flemish name D. van Neerveen. He points out that the elements *neer* and *veen* mean respectively "low" and "fen or marshy field" in Flemish and are found in a number of place names in the Low Countries. I am greatly indebted to M. Claude Gaier of Liège for the information that a small hamlet called Neerven forms part of the village of Wortel in the canton of Hoogstraten (arrondissement of Turnhout, province of Antwerp) some 40 kilometers northeast of Antwerp. This does not, of course, provide evidence for anything more than the possible origin of the name Nerven. It should perhaps be mentioned that *Thieme-Becker* records (XXV, pp. 393-394) a painter named Cornelius Nerven (died Amsterdam, 1663) and an architect and sculptor named Cornelius van Nerven (recorded Brussels 1696-1717).

91. Haenel, *Kostbare Waffen*, pl. 44, a.



FIGURE 61  
Rapier, about 1560.  
Historisches Museum,  
Dresden, E. 612



**FIGURES 62, 63**  
 Details of the damascened decoration on the parade armor of Emperor Maximilian II, Paris or Antwerp, 1555–1559. Waffensammlung of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, A. 1400

**FIGURE 64**  
 Signature on the ear dagger illustrated in Figure 1





FIGURE 65  
Signature on the mace illustrated in Figure 9



FIGURES 66, 67  
Signature on the dagger illustrated in Figure 37



FIGURES 68, 69  
Signature on the rapier illustrated in Figure 40

of in the same plane as on most of the other swords—an arrangement also found, but without the diagonal bars, on a rapier in the City Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow, which bears typical Çaias/Nerve decoration (Figure 60).<sup>92</sup>

The hilt of the Dresden rapier is damascened in gold and silver with an overall design of vine tendrils inhabited by beasts of the chase pursued by huntsmen dressed, in the normal European fashion of about 1560, in doublets, trunk hose, and flat caps. In some places appear lion masks, dolphins, and pairs of birds, resembling bustards, standing face to face. All the decoration is rendered with a naturalism, with an attention to detail, and with a sophistication quite unlike anything on the pieces discussed here so far. Nevertheless, the main overall design and the figures of huntsmen and their quarry are basically similar in character to those found on the work of de Çaias and de Nerve, and their appearance of greater sophistication derives largely from the fact that they are executed with greater technical skill. This, taken with the evidence of the form of the hilt discussed above, would seem to justify the attribution of the rapier to the Çaias/Nerve workshop. The difference in the quality and feeling of the decoration from that found on the earlier pieces could be the result either of natural stylistic development or of the employment of an assistant who had been trained in a more sophisticated school than either de Çaias or de Nerve.

If the attribution of the Dresden rapier is accepted, it would seem to provide evidence in support of a suggestion made a few years ago by Mr. Stephen V. Grancsay that the damascening on the important “Louvre School” embossed armor of Emperor Maximilian II at Vienna might be the work of Diego de Çaias,<sup>93</sup> or rather of his workshop. This damascening is confined chiefly to the sunken borders of the armor and consists partly of running foliage, including vine tendrils, and partly of close-set leafy trees, all involving grotesques, satyrs, birds and animals of many kinds,

and human figures (Figures 62, 63). This decoration, though more elaborate than that on the sword, is extremely close to it in character and treatment, and includes very similar animals and the same type of male figure clad in trunk hose, doublet, and flat cap. It also includes a man fighting a lion with a spear and another man leading a camel, two subjects that, as we have seen, occur frequently in decoration that can be attributed firmly to de Çaias and de Nerve. The armor dates from the period 1555–1559, so that its damascening cannot be ascribed, as suggested by Mr. Grancsay, unequivocally to Diego de Çaias, but it must be accepted in light of the foregoing that there is a very strong probability that it was executed by him or de Nerve or by their workshop. It can therefore be placed tentatively in our third group.

This is not the place to enter into the controversial problem of the origin of the Maximilian II armor. It is sufficient merely to say that most students are agreed that it was produced either in Paris or in Antwerp.<sup>94</sup> An attribution to the latter place would, of course, agree very well with the suggestion made above that the Çaias/Nerve workshop was situated there.

92. The sword was bought by the Glasgow Museum with the Charles C. S. Parsons collection in 1911, it having previously been illustrated by Parsons in an article “The Hilt of the Rapier and its Successors,” *Transactions of the Glasgow Archaeological Society*, n.s. 6, part 1, (1910) pl. II, 3. I am informed by Mr. J. G. Scott, Curator of the Department of Archaeology, Ethnography and History at the Glasgow Museum, that Parsons records that he bought the sword from Robert Forrester of Glasgow and that it was “formerly in the Collection of Baron Hieswick, Et Horn, Holland.” This last collection has proved untraceable, and one wonders if Parsons did not really mean that the sword had come from the famous Château de Heeswijk sale held at Bois-le-Duc on July 3 and the following days, 1899. I have not, however, been able to identify it in the catalogue of the sale.

93. Grancsay, “Royal Armorers,” p. 4.

94. Grancsay, “Royal Armorers,” passim, and B. Thomas, “Die Münchner Harnischvorzeichnungen mit Rankendekor des Étienne Delaune,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 61 (Vienna, 1965) p. 76.

# Appendix

## List of Objects by, or decorated in the manner of, Diego de Çaias and Damianus de Nerve

(Unaccompanied page numbers refer to this article.)

### A. *By Diego de Çaias*

1. Ear dagger. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (p. 154).
2. Mace of Henry II of France. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (p. 156).
3. Mace of Henry II of France. Musée de l'Armée, Paris (p. 157).
4. Woodknife of Henry VIII of England. Windsor Castle (p. 166).
5. Ear dagger shown on portrait of Edward VI of England. Windsor Castle (p. 172).
6. Quillon dagger. Historisches Museum, Dresden (p. 174).

### B. *Possibly by Diego de Çaias*

- 7, 8. Two ear daggers. Museo Nazionale, Bargello, Florence (p. 154).
9. Ear dagger. Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan (p. 156).
10. Ear dagger. Musée de l'Armée, Paris, no. P.O. 1037. From the Georges Pauilhac Collection (p. 156).
11. Rapier. Musée de l'Armée, Paris (p. 166).
12. Quillon dagger of Henry VIII of England. Formerly at Hardres Court, Kent. This dagger was said to have been left at Hardres Court by Henry VIII after the siege of Boulogne, together with the gates of the town and his portrait. It cannot now be traced, but a very poor sketch of it in one of the notebooks of the eighteenth-century artist George Vertue shows it to have been of almost identical form to no. 18 below. It is possible, therefore, that it was made by de Çaias. Vertue describes it as being set with hardstones in gold

and inscribed AUXILIUM A SUPERIS and AUDACES FORTUNA JUVAT. See *The Vertue Notebooks*, V (Walpole Society, London, 1937–1938) p. 9. In a note published in *Archaeologia Cantiana* 4 (1861) p. 49, when it was in the possession of a Mrs. Taylor of Bifrons, it is described as “of Damascus steel, the handle being of *niello*, incrustated with jasper, bearing on one side the motto, ‘*Fortuna audaces juvat*’ and on the other, a similar and equally appropriate legend.”

### C. *By Damianus de Nerve*

13. Rapier. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (p. 177).

### D. *By the Çaias/Nerve Workshop*

#### GROUP I

14. Sword. Museum für deutsche Geschichte, Berlin (p. 182).
15. Rapier. City Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow (p. 192).
16. Barrel (and lock?) of wheel-lock gun. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (p. 182).
17. Barrel of Pistol. Wallace Collection, London (Figure 70). This forms part of a pistol put together, and partly decorated, in the nineteenth century. In addition to bearing characteristic gold and silver damascening, the barrel is chiseled with acanthus foliage and has an applied lion mask of gilt brass. On the underside is stamped an unidentified mark in the form of a double cross.
18. Quillon dagger. Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Berkshire (Figure 71). This retains its

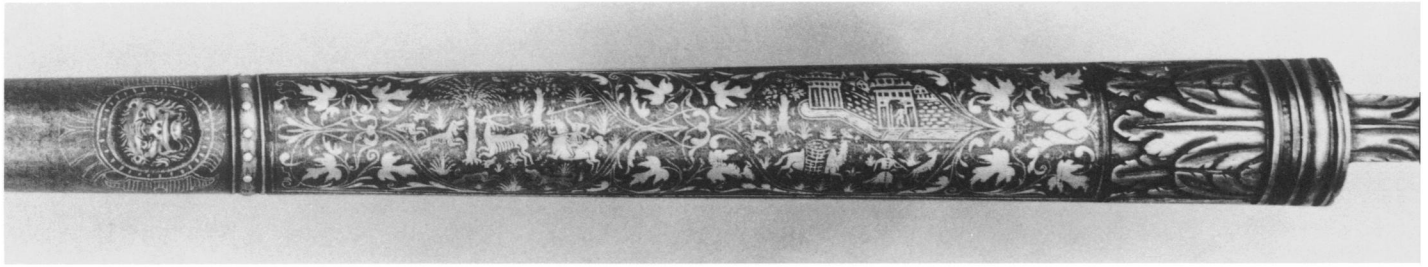


FIGURE 70

Pistol barrel, mid-xvi century. Wallace Collection, London, A. 1150. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the Wallace Collection

sheath and by-knife and, in addition to characteristic gold and silver damascened decoration, has a mask chiseled in the center of the side ring and another on the corresponding face of the pommel. See *La Collection Spitzer*, VI, p. 52, no. 222.

19. Short sword. Kungl. Livrustkammaren, Stockholm, no. 5787:24.

GROUP II

20. Rapier. Historisches Museum, Dresden (p. 184).

21. Rapier. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (p. 184).

22. Purse frame. The Cleveland Museum of Art (p. 184).

23. Quillon dagger. Musée de l'Armée, Paris, no. P. O. 1052. From the Georges Pauilhac collection. Very similar to no. 6 above, but including classical figures in the decoration. Some of the costume depicted appears to be more in keeping with a nineteenth-century date rather than a sixteenth-century one. See Robert-Jean Charles, *La Collection Georges Pauilhac au Musée de l'Armée* (Paris, 1965) p. 8.

24. Sword stick. Museo Nazionale, Bargello, Florence (Figure 72). A wooden cane, inlaid with staghorn, containing a rapier. The handle is of steel and has the unusual feature of containing a left-hand dagger with folding quillons. The metal parts are damascened in gold and silver with arabesques, while the handle of the stick also bears classical female figures, labeled respectively *SPES* and *FIDES*, very similar to those on nos. 13 and 20 above.

GROUP III

25. Rapier. Historisches Museum, Dresden (p. 189).

26. Parade armor of Emperor Maximilian II. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (p. 192).

E. *Possibly by the Çaiias/Nerve workshop*

27. Wheel-lock gun. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (p. 182). This is not included in Group I because, despite its close resemblance to no. 16 above, the damascened decoration consists only of foliage.

28. Mace. Wallace Collection, London, no. A. 980. Damascened in a manner similar to the last.

29. Rapier and dagger. Zeughaus, Schwarzburg (now in the Rudolstadt Museum), nos. 312–3. I know these only from the small illustrations published in the *Zeitschrift für historische Waffenkunde* 4 (1906–1908) p. 344, figs. 312–313, and from the description in C. A. Ossbahr's *Das Fürstliche Zeughaus in Schwarzburg* (Rudolstadt, 1895) pp. 15–16. The former show the rapier to have a hilt of almost identical shape to no. 20 above, while Ossbahr states that the hilts of both the rapier and the dagger are covered with damascened arabesques. All letters to the museum at Rudolstadt asking for photographs of, and information about, these pieces have remained unanswered.

30. Casket. The British Museum, Waddesdon Bequest (Figure 73). A small domed casket of iron damascened in gold and silver with landscapes containing figures, in a style reminiscent of the Çaiias/Nerve Group

FIGURE 71

Dagger, mid-xvi century. Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor, Berkshire, W1/102/2. By courtesy of the National Trust.

FIGURE 72

Sword stick with left-hand dagger, mid-xvi century. Museo Nazionale, Bargello, Florence





II pieces, though on a larger scale than the decoration found on the swords.

31. Casket. Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, Milan (Figures 74–76). Almost exactly the same as the last.

32. Casket. Musée Cluny, Paris, no. 14397. Very similar to the last two, but bearing the defaced inscription [J]ESV MARIA . . . P.

33. Casket similar to the last, but decorated entirely with hunting scenes. Formerly in the collection of Charles Butler. Its present whereabouts are unknown, but it is described and illustrated in the catalogue of the Burlington Fine Arts Club *Exhibition of Chased and Embossed Steel and Iron Work of European Origin* (London, 1900) p. 27, no. 9, and pl. xxiv, fig. 3.

34. Rapier. Musée de l'Armée, Paris, no. J. 84. This rapier has a form of hilt that suggests a date of about 1570. It is entirely damascened in gold and silver with strapwork, quatrefoils, and scrolling foliage, inhabited by animals and horsemen that are not far removed in style from those on de Çaias's earliest work. The treatment of the figures is so naïve, however, that it would be unwise, especially in view of the late date of the piece, to attribute it firmly to the Çaias/Nerve workshop.

35. Rapier. Formerly in the Zschille collection. I know this only from the description and illustrations in R. Forrer's *Die Waffensammlung des Herrn Stadtrath Rich. Zschille in Grossenhain (Sachsen)* (Berlin, n.d. [1894]) no. 342, pls. 127, 136. It appears to be contemporary with no. 34 above and to have similar damascened decoration, though the hilt form is different.

36. Parade shield. Collection of Mr. Joe Kindig, Jr., York, Pennsylvania. A circular iron shield, dating from the third quarter of the sixteenth century, damascened in gold and silver with strapwork and foliage inhabited by grotesque birds, framing panels of arabesque scrollwork, trophies of arms, griffinlike monsters, and scenes with buildings. In a few instances these last include figures—classical horsemen, hounds, stags, and a wyvern—that appear to have stylistic affinities with those found on pieces listed under D, Group II above. The shield was formerly in the Zschille collection and is described and illustrated by Forrer, *Waffensammlung des Herrn Stadtrath Rich. Zschille*, no. 681, pl. 177.

37. Comb-morion. Musée Cluny, Paris. Decorated in a manner similar to the last. Each face of the comb is taken up with a landscape scene containing animals of the same type.

The following pieces have also been ascribed to either de Çaias or de Nerve, but, in my opinion, they are unlikely to have any connection with either:

1. Rapier bearing on the hilt monograms alleged to be formed of the letters *D.C.* (for Diego de Çaias) in the Historisches Museum, Dresden. Haenel, *Kostbare Waffen*, pl. 55, b.

2. Ear dagger. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 32.75.99.

3. Sword. Musée de l'Armée, Paris, no. J. 883.

I was unable to identify a sword in the Hermitage, Leningrad, mentioned by Stöcklein (*Thieme-Becker*, XXV, p. 392) when I visited the collection a few years ago.

FIGURE 73

Casket, mid-xvi century. The British Museum, Waddesdon Bequest, 17. By courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum





FIGURES 74-76  
Casket, mid-xvi century. Museo Poldi-  
Pezzoli, Milan, 557



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks are due first and foremost to Her Majesty The Queen for permission to study and publish King Henry VIII's woodknife, and to the curators of the museums and collections mentioned in this article for similar permission in respect of objects under their care, and also for providing information and photographs. Among these last I am especially grateful to the following: Dr. Helmut Nickel, Curator of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan Museum, and his staff; Mr. Stephen V. Grancsay, Curator Emeritus of Arms and Armor in the same institution; Dr. Bruno Thomas and Dr. Ortwin Gamber, respectively Director and Curator of the Waffensammlung of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; Herr J. Schöbel, Director of the Historisches Museum, Dresden, and his staff.

I am particularly indebted to Mr. A. V. B. Norman of the Wallace Collection, London, for much help and advice during the preparation of the article. He has also very kindly read it through in manuscript and made many useful comments, as have my colleagues Mrs. Shirley J. Bury and Mr. R. W. Lightbown. Additional thanks are due to Mr. Lightbown for revising my translations of the inscriptions on Henry II's maces and Henry VIII's woodknife.

In addition to the above and the people to whom acknowledgment is made in the text and notes, my grateful thanks are due to the following for help of various kinds: Señor D. Angulo-Iñiguez, Director of the Instituto "Diego Velazquez," Madrid; General d'Avout d'Auerstaedt and Colonel

J. Wemaere of the Musée de l'Armée, Paris; Mr. H. L. Blackmore and Mr. W. Reid of the Tower of London Armouries; Dr. Bruno Boni of Milan; Dr. Nolfo di Carpegna, Director of the Collezione Odescalchi, Rome; Mr. R. F. Drewery, Chief Librarian of Kingston upon Hull; Mr. John H. Harvey; Mr. J. F. Hayward; Dr. Brynolf Hellner, formerly Director of the Kungl. Livrustkammaren, Stockholm; Mr. N. Higson, County Archivist of the East Riding of Yorkshire; Dr. Arne Hoff, Director of the Tøjhusmuseum, Copenhagen; M. Bertrand Jestaz of the Musée du Louvre, Paris; Mr. J. D. Lavin; Dr. H. Müller of the Museum für deutsche Geschichte, Berlin; The Rev. Canon Maurice H. Ridgway; Mr. B. W. Robinson, Keeper of Metalwork at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Signor Filippo Rossi of the Soprintendenza alle Gallerie, Florence; M. F. Salet of the Musée Cluny, Paris; Mr. J. G. Scott, Curator of Archaeology, Ethnography and History at the City Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow; Señor Emilio Sobejano R. Rubi of Madrid; Señor L. Torres Balbas of the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, Madrid; Mr. J. B. Ward Perkins, Director of the British School at Rome; Mr. F. J. B. Watson, Director of the Wallace Collection, London, and Surveyor of the Queen's Works of Art, and Mr. Geoffrey de Bellaigue, Deputy Surveyor of the Queen's Works of Art; Mr. William D. Wixom, Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Decorative Arts at The Cleveland Museum of Art.

# The Kimberley Gown

ADOLPH S. CAVALLO

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VISITORS to The Metropolitan Museum of Art have known the Costume Institute's collections since 1946 when that institution was first housed in the Museum. Before that, the Museum's own Department of Renaissance and Modern Art had been collecting costume material in the Textile Study Room. The two collections existed side by side. Then in 1960 the Costume Institute became a regular department of the Museum, and plans were made to house it in new, more spacious quarters and to turn over to the Costume Institute the apparel kept in the Textile Study Room. The new installation and the transfer of holdings were planned for 1970 when the Museum would celebrate its Centennial year. Those plans have now come to fruition. What was already a great collection in the Costume Institute has now been graced by the addition of a second distinguished costume collection whose chief ornament is a masterpiece of the tailor's art. It is the late seventeenth-century English gown (Figures 1–3) that serves as the subject of this essay.<sup>1</sup>

\* Originally written when the author was Curator of Textiles, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

1. Acc. no. 33.54a,b.

2. In chronological order: *Art Treasures Exhibition 1932*, exhibition catalogue, auspices of the British Antique Dealers Association, at Christie's, London, October 12–November 5, 1932, p. 8, not illustrated; Andrew Carfax, "The Elizabethan Relics of Kimberley," *Apollo* 16 (1932–1933) p. 164 (and 163 also?), ill. on p. 163; A. F. Kendrick, "III—Textiles and Furniture" in "Art Treasures Exhibition," *The Burlington Magazine* 61 (1932) p. 172, fig. B on p. 173; "A dress that ranks as an art treasure . . .," *The Illustrated London News*, January 28, 1933, ill. and caption on p. 121; John Goldsmith Phillips, "An English Dress of about 1690," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 28 (1933) pp. 123, 124, fig. 1 on p. 123; Doris Edson, with text by Lucy Barton,

The gown has already been published a number of times.<sup>2</sup> It is curious that these authors—some of whom had the opportunity to study the gown at first hand—described it so inadequately. Their words leave the reader with the impression that the gown is important but rather dreary. The truth is that the Kimberley gown is elegant and beautiful, and it is also an immensely important monument in the history of costume. But to find this out, one must pause, look, and discover that truth. Blanche Payne, one of the four writers who took patterns of the gown, knew the correct approach: "One must see it to appreciate it, and the more closely it is examined, the greater the admiration and respect it arouses."<sup>3</sup>

Here is how these writers described the ground fabric: "beige coloured cloth with narrow stripes of dull orange-red and peacock blue"; "drab woollen cloth with narrow parallel stripes in blue and brown"; "brownish wool with orange and blue stripes"; "light taupe woollen goods (like a light broadcloth) with or-

*Period Patterns . . .*, a supplement to *Historic Costume for the Stage* (Boston, 1942) pp. 34–37, fig. 10 on pl. 11, pattern no. 10; Preston Remington, *English Domestic Needlework . . .* (New York, 1945) p. 4 and captions to pls. 4, 5 (detail of wide embroidered band on petticoat); Millia Davenport, *The Book of Costume* (New York, 1948) II, p. 599, figs. 1585, 1586 on p. 599; Barbara Snook, *English Historical Embroidery* (London, 1960) pp. 104, 105, line drawing as fig. 68 on p. 105; François Boucher, *Histoire du Costume en Occident de l'Antiquité à nos Jours* (Paris, 1965) p. 263, fig. 588; Blanche Payne, *History of Costume . . .* (New York, 1965) pp. 377, 378, 414, fig. 405 on p. 377, pattern drafts 13a–c on pp. 553–555; Norah Waugh, *The Cut of Women's Clothes, 1600–1930*, with line diagrams by Margaret Woodward (New York, 1968) p. 304, fig. 18 opp. p. 112, diagram IX (pattern and drawings).

3. Payne, *History of Costume*, p. 378.



FIGURE 1

Gown with matching petticoat, made of striped woolen fabric and embroidered with silver-gilt yarns, English, from Kimberley Hall, Norfolk, about 1690–1695 (shown as restored in 1970). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 33.54a,b

FIGURE 2

Detail of the gown shown in Figure 1, the front of the bodice



FIGURE 3

Detail of the gown shown in Figure 1, the back of the bodice



ange and blue stripes”; “gray wool with brown and blue stripes edged in red”; “gray wool, striped in indigo blue and henna”; “dark grey woollen fabric with narrow woven stripes alternately brown and blue, edged with red” or “grey wool with brown and blue stripes”; “warm gray broadcloth, striped predominantly in royal blue and dull gold” or “grayed-tan wool with stripes of blue bordered with orange-red and dull gold bordered with rust” (which is almost right); “lainage bleu et argent”; “grey wool, striped in indigo blue and henna.”<sup>4</sup>

Now it is perfectly obvious that no one textile, no matter how deceptive its pattern, could possibly answer all those descriptions. To set the record straight, let it be said here that the fabric is not broadcloth but

4. The color notes appear, in the order of their quotation, in the following publications: *Art Treasures* catalogue, p. 8; Kendrick, “Textiles and Furniture,” p. 172; Phillips, “English Dress,” p. 123; Edson, *Period Patterns*, p. 34; Remington, *Domestic Needlework*, caption to pl. 4; Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, p. 599; Snook, *Historical Embroidery*, p. 104, caption to fig. 68 on p. 105; Payne, *History of Costume*, p. 377, draft 13b on p. 554; Boucher, *Historie du Costume*, p. 263; Waugh, *Women’s Clothes*, p. 304.

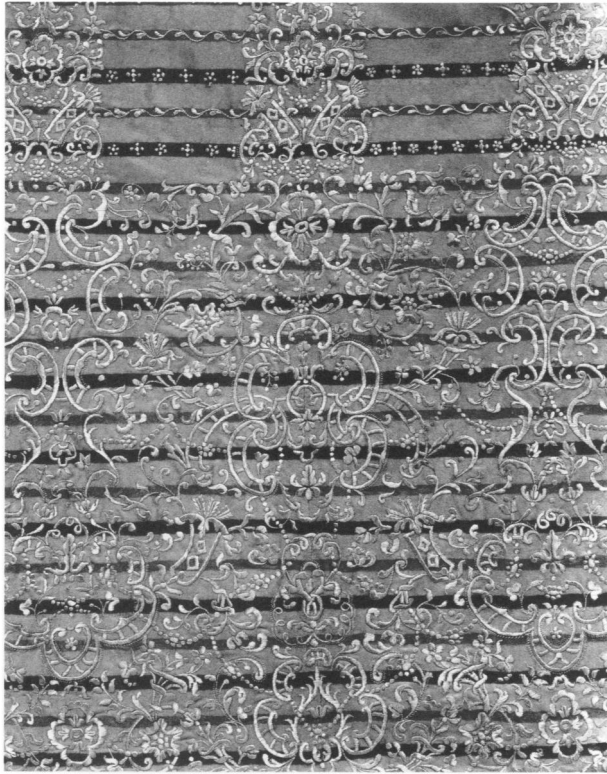


FIGURE 4  
Detail of the gown shown in Figure 1, the lower part of the embroidery decorating the petticoat

a soft, fine, tabby-woven (over one, under one) woolen fabric that has been given a napped surface though not the dense, felted finish characteristic of broadcloth. Its color is not gray, beige, or blue (or blue and silver) although “brownish” and “warm gray” may be admitted. There is more hue in the tone than these terms suggest. The fabric shows an orange yellow tone about two steps above middle in value and neutralized a bit more than three-quarters of its full intensity. It is a rich, creamy earth color incorporating both brown and green. The stripes, which run parallel to the weft, are much more colorful than the descriptions indicate, except for the third from last. The stripes appear in a regular sequence: an ultramarine stripe some  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inches wide bordered by vibrant terracotta (“henna” will do) stripes about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch wide; then a stripe of the ground color, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch wide; then a stripe of dark mustard yellow about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch wide bordered

by a pair of magenta stripes each about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch wide. Therefore, four tones define the stripes, and the ground of the fabric shows a fifth tone. In addition to this, there are leafy vine and blossom patterns embroidered with silver-gilt yarns over the stripes (Figure 4), a detail that several other authors have mentioned.<sup>5</sup> The blossoms (four- and five-petaled, alternating) have been worked on the blue stripes, the leafy vines on the mustard stripes.

So much for the color. Since none of these authors set out to treat the subject exhaustively, it is not surprising that their appraisals of the gown’s rarity fail to stir the reader. Certain writers have already said, directly or by implication, that the gown is indeed rare: “The richly designed gown and petticoat en suite are unusually complete and well preserved.” “This dress has been pronounced by M. Maurice Leloir, of the Société de l’Histoire du Costume, to be without doubt the finest example of its date in existence.” “So few of them have been preserved that [this] dress . . . is quite exceptional,” or “few English costumes of this type have survived.”<sup>6</sup>

The costume is not only rare. It appears at present to be unique. Having made an intensive search through the pertinent literature, and having conducted correspondence with specialists in England and France as well as in this country, the present writer can state with some degree of confidence that if another civilian gown of this period exists in Europe or in this country it is lying away quietly, unknown to costume historians. Only one more or less contemporaneous English costume came to notice. It is the set of coronation robes belonging to Frances Theresa Stuart, the Duchess of Richmond and Lennox. Her effigy in Westminster Abbey wears them. This costume has not been, or cannot be, firmly dated; but it is said that the duchess wore the robes at the coronation of Queen Anne in 1702.<sup>7</sup>

5. Phillips, “English Dress,” p. 124; Snook, *Historical Embroidery*, p. 104; *Art Treasures* catalogue, p. 8; Kendrick, “Textiles and Furniture,” p. 172.

6. In the order of their quotation: *Art Treasures* catalogue, p. 8; Carfax, “Elizabethan Relics,” p. 164; Remington, *Domestic Needlework*, p. 4 and caption to pl. 4. Phillips, “English Dress,” p. 123, qualifies Leloir’s opinion with a “perhaps” and also observes that “complete European costumes of the seventeenth century are exceedingly rare.”

7. L. E. Tanner and J. L. Nevinson, “On Some Later Funeral Effigies in Westminster Abbey,” *Archaeologia* 85 (1936) pp. 176–179, pl. LVII, figs. 1, 2.

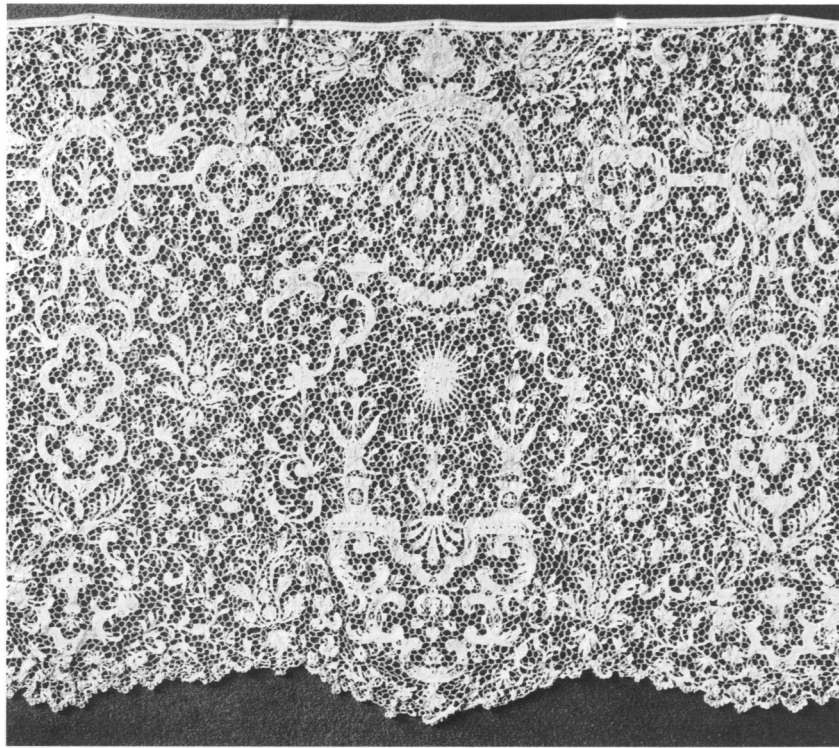


FIGURE 5  
Detail of a flounce of needlepoint lace, French, last quarter of the xvii century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. Edward S. Harkness, 24.163

Although these robes reflect contemporary taste in civilian fashion, they nevertheless constitute a ceremonial costume and remain in a different category from the Kimberley gown.

A gown dated in the catalogue as “vers 1685” figured in the exhibition “Costumes d’Autrefois, XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe Siècles,” held at the Musée Galliera, Paris, April to October 1938.<sup>8</sup> Some of the costumes in that group were reconstructions made with genuine fabrics and also some genuine parts of costumes or accessories. It seems that the “vers 1685” gown was one

of the reconstructed examples, possibly with a genuine stomacher.<sup>9</sup>

Two specialists who know the Kimberley gown particularly well from having taken patterns of it suggested that a brocaded silk gown, preserved in the National Museum at Copenhagen and dated around 1710, is related to the English costume. Illustrations of this silk gown indicate that its cut shows one of the early stages in the eighteenth century’s process of transforming the late seventeenth century’s silhouette into its own terms.<sup>10</sup> Certainly it is related to the Kimberley gown,

8. The exhibition catalogue, which was issued by the sponsoring body, the Société de l’Histoire du Costume de la Ville de Paris, gave the following brief description of this costume, no. 16, on p. 16: “Sur mannequin: Coiffeuse, jupe soie rose, robe soie noire brochée et fontange, vers 1685.”

9. Madeleine Delpierre, Conservateur, Musée du Costume de la Ville de Paris, reported in a letter to the present author (unpublished) that since the costume in question had not been photographed and since the description in the catalogue is so vague, it was not possible to identify the costume in the collections of the Société de l’Histoire du Costume, and that the costume placed on exhibition in 1938 as no. 16 was surely one of the group of costumes that were part genuine and part reconstructed. In Maurice Leloir, *Histoire du Costume de l’Antiquité à 1914* (Paris, 1935) X, p. 5, right

half, there are front and back views of a gown that shows the features listed in the 1938 catalogue for no. 16, and this gown appears to be a reconstruction except for the stomacher, which looks genuine, if somewhat later than 1685. If this is not the same gown as that exhibited in 1938, and possibly photographed in some context outside the scope of the records now available concerning this collection, it is nevertheless still of interest and can serve to suggest how the gown that was exhibited might have looked.

10. Blanche Payne and Janet Arnold noted in letters to the present author (unpublished) the relationship between the two gowns. For the silk gown, see Payne, *History of Costume*, pp. 414, 415, fig. 434 on p. 413 (photograph of front), fig. 435 on p. 414 (drawing of back).





**FIGURE 6**  
Portrait of Queen Mary II. Mezzotint by John Smith after the portrait by Jan van der vaart, about 1689–1694. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Crown copyright

but the brocaded silk gown does not reflect the same fashion.

The date proposed here for the Kimberley gown—that is, about 1690–1695—is offered as a tentative suggestion based on the present writer’s interpretation of material relating to the history of fashion in costume at this period. Maurice Leloir dated the gown around 1690 when he saw it in the autumn of 1932, but we do not know on what considerations he based that date. Subsequent writers, with two exceptions, have adhered to this dating, which scarcely can be improved upon. Barbara Snook, who published the gown in her book on the history of English embroidery, dated it “at the very end of the 17th or the beginning of the 18th century,” possibly because of her observation that “the

rococo C curl dominates the design,” and that the embroidery on the petticoat shows “a light rococo design reflecting French taste.”<sup>11</sup> But the disposition of elements in the needlework pattern is strictly symmetrical, and the C scrolls turn inward, moving in exuberant but closed paths rather than the open, centrifugal paths taken by rococo ornaments, including C scrolls (Figure 4). The late Norah Waugh dated the gown around 1700, but there is no explanation given for that date in her book.<sup>12</sup>

It has not been possible to locate original documents that might contain the name of the gown’s owner or information on which to base a date. Without this, dated or datable pictorial sources offer the most promising avenue of research. Curiously, there are very few portraits of English women wearing gowns at this period. It seems to have been a fashion among painters or sitters to have the latter wear something less constricting. With a few exceptions, portraits of the last quarter of the seventeenth century show women wearing loose robes cut or tied around the torso to show the fashionable long-waisted, flat-bosomed line. One of the exceptions is a half-length portrait of Queen Mary (Figure 6). It may be dated between 1689, when she and William III were crowned, and the end of 1694, when she died. The queen wears a gown with sleeves rather like those of the Kimberley gown, and possibly also with bodice revers shaped like those of the Kimberley example, but so much of the bodice is covered by the lace lappets of the headdress that firm comparisons are impossible to make. We have to turn to contemporary French prints with fashion interest in order to find enough material to set up criteria to use in dating the Kimberley gown. These prints demonstrate quite clearly the fact that the silhouette represented by this gown—with certain variations from time to time—enjoyed favor in fashionable circles throughout the last quarter of the seventeenth century. To refine the date within this period, one must evaluate evidence gathered by studying the silhouette, the fabric, the embroidery, and any other details that seem significant in this context.

The silhouette of all fashionable gowns of this period (1675–1700) showed a relatively long-waisted bodice

11. Snook, *Historical Embroidery*, pp. 104, 105.

12. Waugh, *Women’s Clothes*, p. 304.

and an overskirt pulled back, or up and back, to expose part of the petticoat. The two front edges of the overskirt could be pulled around the body and caught together at the back, at waist height or lower. At the sides, the two parts of the skirt described two graceful arcs passing at a level somewhere between the hips and knees if the skirt draped low.<sup>13</sup> If it was pulled up high as well as back, the skirt bunched up over the hips (Figures 7–9) and gave the silhouette a bustle effect at the back of the waist and a pannier effect at the sides, the latter emphasizing the width of hips that—judging from the cut of the Kimberley gown—had already been extended slightly.<sup>14</sup> When the skirt draped low, only a wedge-shaped portion of the petticoat showed in front and just a bit of its lower part appeared at the sides. In most cases, whether early or late in the quarter-century, but mostly late, the overskirt rode well up on the hips, exposing all of the front, and most of the sides, of the petticoat (Figures 7, 9).

Judging from the available evidence, it appears that low draping was fashionable in the earlier part of the period, around 1675–1680, and passed out of favor soon afterward, and that high draping appeared as early as around 1680 but did not become usual until after 1685. The Kimberley gown has no original skirt fastenings to show how the skirt was meant to be draped, but there is other internal evidence to show that the overskirt was worn high on the hips. First, the wide vertical bands of embroidery have been worked all around the petticoat except at the very back. The mass of the gathered overskirt, with its train, would have covered the back of the petticoat in any case (Figure 7), so the absence of needlework in that place is not in itself remarkable. But what is significant is the fact that the vertical parts of the ornament, which decorate only the upper half of the petticoat, continue as far toward the back

as they do. This shows quite clearly that most of the upper part of the petticoat was meant to be seen and consequently that the overskirt would have draped high. The silver-gilt embroidery yarns were surely expensive, and it seems unlikely that they would have been lavished on ornaments that were not going to be visible. Second, the plain seams running down the sides of the overskirt are constructed in such a way that the face of a seam shows on the outside of the skirt from the waist to a point about 9 inches away; and there the seam abruptly reverses itself, the face switching to the underside of the skirt while the raw edges appear on the outside. The tailor had to reverse the seams in this way because there was no lining fabric to mask the

FIGURE 7

L'Escarpolette, published by I. Danckerts, copied from a design by Nicolas Arnoult, French, probably last decade of the xvii century. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whittelsey Fund, 49.95.244



13. Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, figs. 1409, 1410 on p. 536, 1411 on p. 537; André Blum, *Les Modes au XVIIe et au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris, 1928) ill. on pp. 22, 46 (lower left); Boucher, *Histoire du Costume*, fig. 577 on p. 260.

14. Camille Piton, *Le Costume Civil en France du XIIIe au XIXe Siècle* (Paris, n.d.) ill. on p. 224; Payne, *History of Costume*, fig. 406 on p. 378; Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, fig. 1428 on p. 548, figs. 1454–1456 on p. 554 (these show the pannier effect particularly well); Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pls. 9A, 9C, 10 (lower right), all three particularly for the pannier effect. Payne, *History of Costume*, p. 377, had already pointed out that the side seams of the Kimberley gown had been cut “to accommodate some sort of padding.”

underside of the skirt when it was partly turned over in the draped position (Figure 7). The faces of the side seams would show properly, and none of the raw edges would show, if the skirt were draped in such a way as to make its two front edges, or some folds of its mass, rest high enough on the hips to mask the turn of the seams, or no more than about 9 inches from the waist. These inches are not to be calculated entirely in the vertical direction since the seams move outward from the waist as well as downward. Had the skirt been meant to drape low, with just its two front edges masking the turning points of the seams, and the rest draping

low, there would have been no point in placing the turning point of the seam so high in the first place.

Striped textiles have often been in and out of fashion, and I do not know any way of dating them in their own right. In the dated fashion prints of this period striped fabrics appear most frequently between 1684 and 1688.<sup>15</sup> This is not to say by any means that stripes went

15. In addition to Figures 8, 9, and 11 in this article, dated 1687 and 1688, see the following prints of which examples are in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum: J. D. de St. Jean, *Femme de qualité en deshabilité d'Esté*, 1684; Gerard Jollain, *Damoiselle en Robe de Chambre à la Siamoise*, 1688; Gerard Jollain, *Fille de qualité en habit d'Esté à la Chinoise*, 1688.

FIGURE 8

*Fille de qualité, en d'Eshabillé d'Esté*, by Nicolas Arnoult, French, dated 1687. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whittelsey Fund, 57.559.5, leaf 3



FIGURE 9

*Femme de qualité en habit D'esté*, by Nicolas Arnoult, French, dated 1687. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whittelsey Fund, 57.559.5, leaf 7



out of favor in women's gowns immediately after 1688 nor that they were not being used before 1684; indeed there are a number of examples in prints datable as early as around 1680 and as late as 1697.<sup>16</sup>

What evidence the pattern of the needlework on the Kimberley gown can contribute points again, and only in a general way, to the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Although the pattern has been called "Renaissance" and "rococo," it is entirely typical of its period, as certain writers have already pointed out.<sup>17</sup> There is a close relationship between this brilliant pattern (Figure 4) and the patterns of certain French laces of the last quarter of the seventeenth century (Figure 5).

Summing up the evidence presented so far, we can say that the Kimberley gown was cut to show the fashionable silhouette of approximately 1685–1700. Neither the ground fabric nor the embroidery pattern can help refine that date. Any refinements will have to be made through external evidence: specifically, more or less datable points of fashion.

For reasons that will be made clear presently, it is safe to assume that fashionable English women followed French fashions very closely and with very little time lag. Therefore, it is probably significant that certain French prints of the late 1680s and the 1690s show details that relate to corresponding features in the Kimberley gown. For example, some of the prints in this group show robings that make a right-angle turn at the hemline and continue around the edge of the train.<sup>18</sup> The Kimberley gown shows the same disposition of robing-like ornaments, but in this case they are worked in the ground fabric rather than being made separately and applied, as they appear to be in some of the gowns shown in the prints.

It seems that during the 1690s the sleeves of French gowns became longer and fuller than they were during the previous decade.<sup>19</sup> This appeared to have been a consistently expressed change, unlike the fashion for a certain degree of variety of form and length of sleeve in the preceding decade (Figures 9–11). The sleeves of the Kimberley gown are closer to those that were fashionable in the later decade.

A different detail relates the gown to the end of the earlier decade. There are a few prints dated 1688 or 1689 showing gowns trimmed with strips of galloon arranged to form a wedge-shaped unit at the back of



FIGURE 10

Dames de qualité en conversation dans les Thuilleries, by Nicolas Arnould, French, probably last decade of the xvii century. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whittelsey Fund, 54.5.10.7

the bodice and bands around the cuffs of the sleeves and down the edges of the overskirt (Figure 11) as well as (in one case only) on the surface of the skirt and

16. Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, fig. 1410 on p. 536 (dated variously, 1675–1680 approximately); fig. 1465 on p. 558 (1697); Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 11D (dated as 1690–1695), pl. 27 (lower right, dated as 1695–1700); and Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 231 (upper left, undated, but apparently in the 1690s).

17. *Art Treasures* catalogue, p. 8; *London News*, p. 121; Snook, *Historical Embroidery*, p. 104; Remington, *Domestic Needlework*, caption to pl. 5; Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, p. 599.

18. Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, fig. 1455 on p. 554; Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 231 (upper left); Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 27 (upper right).

19. Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, compare figs. 1585 and 1586 (the Kimberley gown) with fig. 1428 on p. 548 and figs. 1454 and 1456 on p. 554; also with Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 15 (upper right).



FIGURE 11  
Femme de qualite Jouant du Clav'esin, by Nicolas Arnoult, French, dated 1688. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whittelsey Fund. 48.90.1

petticoat.<sup>20</sup> The Kimberley gown shows a similar disposition of ornaments on the bodice, sleeve cuffs, and skirt edges, although the ornament itself is of a very different sort. Two of these prints show a curious detail near the back of the neckline that perhaps represents a point of fashion.<sup>21</sup> The facings of the revers on the front of the bodice do not seem to continue intact to

meet the facings decorating the back of the neckline; instead, the rear portions of the main facings have been gathered slightly some 2 inches from the ends, making it appear that separate short pieces of facing have been inserted. These apparent lines of joining, as well as the center and ends of the facing covering the back of the neckline, are covered with bits of galloon or jewels of some sort (Figure 11). The Kimberley gown shows neckline facings arranged in precisely this way (Figure 3).

If these points of fashion—the robings, sleeves, ornament placement, neckline facings—can be dated on the basis of the relatively few prints that show them, then the Kimberley gown can be dated around 1690 to 1695. But we face here the perennial question: do these small details concern matters of date, or do they only reflect individual preferences selected from a great variety of details that were available to clients at any one time?

We know nothing certain about the gown's history from the time it was made until 1932 when the firm of Acton, Surgey, Ltd., exhibited it at London in the *Art Treasures Exhibition* held at Christie, Manson and Woods from October 12 to November 5. On that occasion the same exhibitor also showed a late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century embroidered sleeved waistcoat and (together with Mallet & Son, Ltd.) an embroidered velvet throne (or hangings from a bed and throne, set up as a throne?), both of which were described in the catalogue as having come from Kimberley.<sup>22</sup> Although the catalogue entry for the embroidered wool gown does not specify that it came from Kimberley, the exhibitor gave this as its provenance when describing it in a letter a few months later.<sup>23</sup> We have some nineteenth-century references to textile treasures belonging to the Wodehouse family of Kimberley Hall, which stands in Wymondham, some nine miles southwest of Norwich, in Norfolk. One of these references certainly is to the throne, one surely to the waistcoat, and one possibly to the woolen gown. Francis

20. In addition to Figure 11 in this article, see Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 226 (upper left) and Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 11c.

21. See Figure 11 in this article and also Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 226 (upper left).

22. *Art Treasures* catalogue, pp. 7, 8. For the definitive statement on the throne, see William G. Wells, "Heraldic Relics from Kimberley," *The Scottish Art Review* 8, no. 4 (1962) pp. 17–21, 31. Mr.

Wells suggests several interpretations of the throne, one of which is (p. 18): "It is possible, however, that the 'throne' is a mixture of bed hangings and throne."

23. In a letter addressed to Joseph Breck at the Metropolitan Museum by G. M. Adams-Acton, dated January 24, 1933, the writer refers to the gown as "the magnificent late 17th-century robe which we possessed from the Kimberley Collection." The letter is preserved in the Museum's archives.

Blomefield, writing about Kimberley and the Wodehouse family, mentioned the throne as early as 1805.<sup>24</sup> About fifty years later, John Bernard Burke wrote about an important costume preserved in the house in this way: "There are, however, still visible some remains of this old house, which was visited by Queen Elizabeth in one of her progresses. She spent the night there, and the dress that she wore upon that occasion, is yet in the possession of the family."<sup>25</sup> A pity that the term *dress* is seems vague one. Does it refer in this case to "the bodice and sleeves of the Queen's dress, embroidered in gold spangles, left as a compliment to the lady of the house . . . still preserved at Kimberley House" mentioned by the Earl of Kimberley in his history of the family, printed in 1887?<sup>26</sup> The gilt and silver embroidered bodice, or sleeved waistcoat, to which this notice undoubtedly refers, together with a matching coif and so-called forehead cloth, as well as two pairs of embroidered leather gloves said to be part of the same royal gift, are all in the Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.<sup>27</sup> Or, returning to the 1854 reference, was Burke speaking instead of what Andrew Carfax called in 1932 "the Robe of Estate and skirt, which, from its regal character, suggests that it was worn by the Queen herself"?<sup>28</sup> As Carfax's description continues, it sounds more and more like the Kimberley gown: "The Robe and skirt are of striped cloth heavily embroidered with gold bullion in Renaissance arabesque ornament, and, like all the other articles, in perfect condition."<sup>29</sup> Still later in the same publication, he described what is almost certainly the same costume, the Kimberley gown, and it is hard to

draw any conclusion but that somehow he wrote twice about the same object: "Not the least remarkable of these relics is the complete dress of a lady of about 1690 (William and Mary). The dress, which hooks behind the waist, leaving the front open to show the underskirt, is embroidered in gold stripes on both sides of the cloth, and ends in a long train. The bodice is of the straight-fronted stiff type of the period, low in front, and the whole equipment is very weighty."<sup>30</sup> If there were two such gowns in the 1932 exhibition answering such similar descriptions, then one of them has managed to disappear quite successfully.

The Kimberley gown continued to evoke interest after the *Art Treasures Exhibition* closed. *The Illustrated London News* devoted a full page to it, with a large color illustration and a long caption, in its issue for January 28, 1933.<sup>31</sup> Letters in the Archives of The Metropolitan Museum of Art show that the Museum had already expressed interest in the gown and that negotiations for its purchase continued during the winter. The Museum bought the gown, with income from the Rogers Fund, from the firm of Acton, Surgey, Ltd., in April 1933. In 1934 and again in 1936 the Museum bought other textiles from the Kimberley Hall group: a late seventeenth-century embroidered linen coverlet and three matching cushions; a silk gown of the third quarter of the eighteenth century; an eighteenth-century embroidered linen apron; and a late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century embroidered linen coif, unfinished and not made up.<sup>32</sup> The Kimberley gown is of course the most important of the five purchases. A detailed description of its materials and construction is in order.

24. Francis Blomefield, *An Essay toward a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* . . . (London, 1805) II, p. 552, note 6.

25. John Bernard Burke, *A Visitation of the Seats and Arms of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of Great Britain and Ireland*, 2nd ser. (London, 1854) I, p. 107.

26. John, Earl of Kimberley, K. G., *The Wodehouses of Kimberley* (privately printed, 1887) p. 39. The present writer did not have access to the original text and gives it as quoted in *Art Treasures* catalogue, p. 8.

27. Acc. nos. 43.243 (bodice or sleeved waistcoat), 43.244a,b (coif and triangular "forehead cloth"), all embroidered with silver and silver-gilt yarns and gilt spangles, on linen; and 43.246a,b and 43.247a,b, two pairs of leather gloves with embroidered cuffs. See Gertrude Townsend, "Notes on Elizabethan Embroidery," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 40 (April, 1942) pp. 25-27, 34, 35, including illustrations. In 1963, after John Nevins pointed out that the bodice or waistcoat had been remodeled about 1630, the museum staff restored it as much as possible to its original con-

dition (see *She Walks in Splendor*, exhibition catalogue, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, October 3-December 1, 1963, coif and waistcoat illustrated on frontispiece, and entries for these pieces, pp. 69, 73).

28. Carfax, "Elizabethan Relics," p. 163.

29. Carfax, "Elizabethan Relics," p. 163.

30. Carfax, "Elizabethan Relics," p. 164.

31. *London News*, p. 121.

32. The four purchases are recorded as follows: coverlet and cushions, acc. nos. 34.104.1-4 (Frances Little, "Two Early English Embroideries," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 29 [1934] pp. 188-190, fig. 2); gown, acc. no. 34.108 (Frances Little, "Two Costumes of the Eighteenth Century," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 30 [1935] pp. 40-42, ill. on p. 41); apron, acc. no. 36.128.1 (Frances Little, "Costumes, Accessories, and Textiles" *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 32 [1937] p. 34, not illustrated); coif, acc. no. 36.128.2 (Little, "Costumes, Accessories," pp. 35, 36, not illustrated).

The verbal description that follows ought to do for most purposes. For those whose interests concern the matter of reconstructing costumes of the past, it should be said that three scale patterns of the gown have already been published and that a fourth is being prepared for publication.<sup>33</sup>

The textile used for the gown was woven of woolen yarns. These yarns are thin and fine, and they have been closely interwoven in tabby binding. The fabric was napped to the point where its surface became frothy, so that it is very difficult to distinguish the individual yarns. At the time it was woven, the fabric must have had a special name, like the “Cloth of all kinds, Sarges, Stuffs, Bays, Kerseys, Sayes, Perristones, Perpetuanhs” mentioned by John Haynes in his account of the woolen trade in England in or around 1706,<sup>34</sup> or the shalloons, russells, tammies, camblets, crapes, and others recorded by historians of the trade.<sup>35</sup> Today we do not know precisely what each of these terms signified. Generically, the textile of the Kimberley gown probably belonged to the class of *stuff* rather than *cloth*. These were the two main headings under which woolen fabrics were grouped. Although nearly contemporary definitions do not state the matter in these terms, it seems that the term *stuff* included any relatively light fabric of wool that did not have the densely napped surface—almost like felt—of *cloth*. To us it seems an unnecessary distinction to have drawn, but apparently the distinction was significant around the time of the Kimberley gown. Edmund Verney, writing from Oxford to his father at home at East Claydon, on May 29, 1688, “believes that ‘stuff will be more modish than cloth this summer, and that most people will wear it. But however seeing you have Bought cloth already I am very well contented with a cloth sute.’”<sup>36</sup>

The fabric of the Kimberley gown shows intersecting yarns that appear—as far as one can distinguish them through the nap—to be identical; and there is no way to tell the warp from the weft. No selvage has survived to settle the matter, but a peculiarity in the construction of the gown suggests that the wefts run vertically

along with the stripes. This is not a warp-striped fabric, then, as a recent publication implied.<sup>37</sup> There are three butted seams on the body of the gown that could not be explained if the stripes ran with the warp. Two butted seams run across the bodice, one on each side, just below the line of the breasts; and the third seam runs entirely across the lower part of the back panel of the skirt, just before it meets the floor to become a train. The distance from each of the bodice seams to the hemline in front is 61½ inches, and from the shoulder seam to the butted seam below, in back, it is again 61½ inches. There would have been no point in making these butted seams (which were so masterfully executed that they are almost invisible) if the fabric had been used with the warp running in the vertical direction. In that case, the tailor need only have cut the three sections in single lengths, the front panels only some 13½ inches longer than they now are and the back panel some 32½ inches longer. The reasonable conclusion to draw from this evidence is that the fabric from which the gown was cut showed weft stripes, that it was at least 62 inches wide, and that it was used on its side, that is, with the warp running horizontally (vertically on the petticoat). Why was this done—was it a matter of economy? It is hard to imagine why the tailor could cut the gown more economically from a wide, expensive fabric, using little of it, rather than from a narrow, less expensive fabric, using more. The back part of the petticoat (and the right shoulder of the gown, where there is a butted patch) suggests that economy was not entirely forgotten as a consideration in confecting the gown. There is one more plain seam near the back of the petticoat than is necessary, another butted seam (running from waistband to hemline), and a narrow vertical panel at the very back that was made up of small rectangular pieces of the woolen fabric held together with butted seams. Since the petticoat measures 111 inches in circumference, and since the stripes run horizontally on this part of the costume, the tailor could have made the petticoat with only two pieces of the 62-plus-inch-wide fabric, each piece as long as the pet-

33. Edson, *Period Patterns*, diagram no. 10 (two plates); Payne, *History of Costume*, drafts 13a-c; Waugh, *Women's Clothes*, diagram ix. Janet Arnold has taken a pattern of the Kimberley gown with a view to publication at a future time.

34. John Haynes, *A View of the Present State of the Clothing Trade in England* . . . (London, 1706) p. 3.

35. John James, *History of the Worsted Manufacture in England* . . . (London, 1857) pp. 173, 197.

36. Margaret M. Verney (Frances Parthenope [Nightingale], Lady Verney), *Memoirs of the Verney Family* . . . , IV (London, 1899) p. 406.

37. Payne, *History of Costume*, drafts 13b, c on pp. 554, 555.

ticoat is high at its maximum, or 48 inches; and two plain seams would have sufficed. But instead of that, he made the petticoat from what seem to be pieces and scraps of fabric that were left over when he had finished cutting the gown.

We have no other gown to compare with this in terms of construction and orientation of the fabric, but we have quantities of French prints showing women wearing gowns with vertical stripes throughout (Figure 8), vertical stripes on the gown and horizontal on the petticoat (Figure 9), vertical on the gown and diagonal on the petticoat, or vertical on the gown with vertical and horizontal combined on the petticoat in a kind of chevron pattern.<sup>38</sup> Some prints show gowns of plain fabrics worn with petticoats made of striped fabrics, or plain fabrics trimmed with applied materials arranged in stripes, the stripes running horizontally. But none of these illustrations shows a gown with horizontal stripes. Therefore, it seems likely that the key to the puzzle of fabric orientation in the Kimberley gown is to be found in the realm of fashion. If the lady who ordered the gown had this fabric on hand and liked it particularly, or if she bought it because it had a special attraction for her, or if she was unable to find a warp-striped textile she liked, then the tailor would have had to use this wide, weft-striped fabric on its side in order to make the stripes run in the fashionable direction, or vertically. We know that warp-striped woollens of some sort were made in England during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and probably both earlier and later as well; but perhaps they were not suitable for this use: “to make the same [a *buffyn*, a worsted fabric] a pearl of beauty, is to make it striped, by colours in the warp, and tufted in the striken.”<sup>39</sup>

The business of patches and extra seams in the petticoat has nothing to do with the condition of the gown as we understand “condition” in reference to works of

art. In those terms, the woolen fabric and the silver-gilt yarns have survived very well, notwithstanding the presence of a few small holes in the former. But most specialists have agreed that the gown has undergone some changes in form, and there are differing opinions concerning the extent of the alterations and restorations. My own examination of the costume, executed with the great advantages of unlimited access and time, and conferences with colleagues, has enabled me to make the following observations and to draw the conclusions that seemed to follow naturally from them.

The petticoat has a cut edge along the bottom, an edge that during an alteration program had been turned up with some other materials to make a false hem. There is no way of determining whether the present edge was turned to make a hem originally nor whether any of the woolen fabric was cut off along this edge. At present the cut edge follows the lower contour of the wide band of needlework more or less closely, dipping with it toward the back where the petticoat drops to form a slight train. On the other hand, it is certain that the top of the petticoat is gathered on a modern band and that some of the fabric has been cut away. There are indications that the petticoat’s fullness might originally have been controlled by a drawstring; if that is true, possibly the fabric forming the heading for the string was cut away together with enough of the fabric below it to make the dipping V-shaped contour now present at the front of the waist. This alteration appears to have been made concurrently with others that enabled a woman taller than the original owner to wear the petticoat. To effect the desired changes, the converter made up a circular band of the same woolen fabric, relatively fresh and unembroidered, measuring 4 to 5½ inches in height, and sewed it along the bottom edge of the petticoat. The seam—and possibly the entire band—might then have

38. See the following examples: Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 227, two vertical-stripe gowns, one petticoat with horizontal stripes, the other with vertical stripes meeting horizontal stripes near the bottom in the center at mitered corners; ill. on p. 231 (upper left), vertical-stripe gown with petticoat covered with flounces (base fabric not clearly visible); ill. on p. 242 (right), vertical-stripe gown and petticoat (possibly not matching). Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 11D, vertical-stripe gown and petticoat. Blum, *Les Modes*, ill. on p. 48 (lower left), vertical-stripe gown, petticoat with vertical stripes meeting horizontal stripes near bottom in center at mitered corners. Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II,

fig. 1410 on p. 536, vertical-stripe gown, petticoat with vertical stripes meeting horizontal stripes near bottom in center at mitered corners. Also, in the Print Department, Metropolitan Museum, a print by Gerard Jollain, *Fille de qualité en habit d’Esté à la Chinoise*, showing gown with vertical stripes, petticoat with diagonal stripes.

39. James, *Worsted Manufacture*, p. 144. This statement is taken from a document prepared by the worsted weavers of Norwich sometime around “the close of the reign of James I” (see pp. 139 ff.), and therefore it antedates the Kimberley gown by some seventy years.



been covered with galloon, lace, fringe, or some other material to mask the awkward join where neither the stripes nor the seams in the extra band corresponded to those in the petticoat. Then the worker lined the lower half of the petticoat, including the extra band, with a neutral ocher-colored silk taffeta; cut a pocket slit at each side above; sewed one or two small rectangles of fresh, unembroidered wool into a 4½-inch-high void at the top edge of the garment, in back—a void easily explained if one postulates the presence of a drawstring to gather the fullness, a string whose abrasive action and frequent knotting in this place eventually wore out the wool—and finally cut a placket at the center back, through the newly applied pieces of wool and down into the original fabric, to enable the wearer to enter the petticoat that now had a restricting waistband. All of these alterations, except the gathering on the waistband, show stitches made with a plied, ocher-colored sewing silk. None of this thread appears in the three plain seams and one butted seam that extend from the top to the bottom of the petticoat. These seams show what appear to be original sewing silks, one pale beige, not plied, the other dark brown and plied. The condition of the needlework adjacent to these seams proves that they have not been altered. First, the plain seams show on their inner faces narrow edges of woolen fabric that were left unembroidered, obviously prepared by the needleworker for seaming in just these places. Second, the embroiderer went over the plain seams after the tailor had joined up the preembroidered pieces of the petticoat and completed along the seam line certain small details that he had not been able to make whole when the separate parts of the petticoat carried separate parts of the pattern. These secondary stitches have survived intact, as have the primary stitches that form the pattern spanning the butted seam running down the front of the petticoat. Clearly, the petticoat has suffered no loss from its circumference except for the portions at top and possibly at bottom that have already been discussed. In its converted form, the petticoat was worn a long enough time for the silk lining to have accumulated a concentration of soil and wear at the center back, near the hemline, from contact with shoes. Later, someone cut the lining all around approximately an inch above the dropped hemline (where a silk tape had been sewn as a finish, inside), turned the extra band up to form a false hem inside,

and then stitched the lining down against the back of the new hemline.

Possibly at the time of one of these alterations the gown's sleeves were shortened or otherwise reshaped by cutting. Either then or in more recent times the cuffs were restitched to make them narrower. It was in recent times that the main sleeve seams were taken in from 1 to 2 inches and that the side seams of the bodice, running from under the arms to the waist, were also taken in about 2 inches. The two pleats at the front of the bodice, and the pleats at the back, have been altered. It seems likely that the back showed only two pleats originally rather than four.<sup>40</sup> The stitches holding the sleeves to the bodice, and those holding the facings to the bodice and neckline revers, appear not to be original, and most of the facings have been turned under at the edges more than they were designed to be. It is impossible to make an exact evaluation of the integrity of these areas since the construction of the costume shows certain inconsistencies of method and since there are no other gowns of this sort to compare it with. Happily, except for some relatively minor repair stitches in the upper parts of the side seams, all the seams of the gown's skirt appear to have survived intact. They show fine running stitches executed with plied dark brown sewing silk. The edges of the skirt, from the waist down and around the train and back again, are cut rather than hemmed. Since the tight, napped finish enables the cut yarns to resist raveling, it seems possible that these edges were never hemmed. On the other hand, the outer edge of the embroidered border is very close to the edge of the fabric, and here and there groups of gilt embroidery yarns pass right over the edge as they define a motif adjacent to and parallel to this edge. Although this detail may be taken as evidence that the edge was not cut after it was embroidered, it is equally valid to argue that someone cut away some of the edge—whether originally finished with a hem or not—so carefully that groups of stitches like these were

40. Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 28 (lower right); Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on pp. 217, 236 (center figure only), 242 (left). All show backs of gown bodices rendered in such a way as to suggest the possibility that the garment had pairs of pleats flanking the central section. By contrast, Figure 11 in the present article and Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 226 (upper left), show quite clearly that the gowns represented there have only one pleat on each side of the central section.

left intact and firm thanks to the rigidity of the yarn. Also, in certain places in the body of the gown, the sharp edges of the flat wire forming the skin of the gilt yarn have cut through the woolen fabric forming miniature whipped-over cut edges in those places where, as at the outer edges, a group of yarns are massed together to form a long, relatively straight contour.

The gown might have been made with a partial lining. The overskirt clearly was never meant to be lined, since the needlework decorating it shows stitches finished equally well on both sides. The underside of the same fabric was meant to be seen when the skirt was gathered up and partly turned over (Figure 9). When an overskirt was made of a nonreversible fabric, like brocaded silk or wool, then presumably it had to be lined to mask the wrong side of the textile (Figure 7, figure at right). It seems likely that in some cases linings were used only or primarily in order to bring a different color or texture to that part of the costume. These observations would apply also to the “manto” or mantle that turns up in contemporary literary sources. That garment was a separate overskirt worn with a bodice and petticoat, the whole costume resembling a gown in all but a few details. We know that mantos were lined too: “We went in a hakeny cotch to Mr. Cops, and I bought a black manto of a waved silk and lined it with black velvet, and black velvet bodys and petcot to it, and black fringes round the petcot.”<sup>41</sup> The bodice of the Kimberley gown has no lining, but on the inside, at the back, the silver-gilt embroidery yarns pass through a layer of dark chocolate-colored silk taffeta that has deteriorated and is falling away. Possibly the entire bodice once showed such a lining; on the other hand, it may well be that the embroiderer needed the silk behind the more loosely woven woolen fabric to help anchor the heavy stitches. These stitches—that is, the ones decorating the triangular space at the back of the bodice—are not neatly finished on the back since that part of the gown would not be worn reversed. The areas of needlework on the petticoat show the same treatment inside the garment. Here lightweight silk taffetas of two colors answer the same purpose: some silver-gilt stitches pass through dark chocolate-colored silk; others penetrate silk of a warm, dark khaki shade. The small motifs worked in the horizontal stripes pass through the wool alone, suggesting that the purpose of the taffeta was indeed to help anchor the metallic yarns

in places where the pattern required that the yarns be used densely. Yet a third taffeta, neutral ocher in tone, lines the lower half of the petticoat. As noted above, this lining is not original, at least in its present place and form. We know that some petticoats had linings: “Sister Noel has bought a very fine manto of Mr. Sharod; it cost her 3 pound a yard; her petcot is of the same and lined with black saten.”<sup>42</sup>

The matter of linings raises the question of whether this gown was intended specifically for winter wear. John Goldsmith Phillips observed that the fabric is heavy enough to serve as protection against damp, cold weather.<sup>43</sup> Indeed this is so, and perhaps it would have been even more so if the bodice and petticoat had been lined with closely woven silk. But it seems that in the past woolen garments were worn in summer in England, even though there were some who objected. Sir Edmund Verney, having sent a cloth suit to his son at Oxford, wrote to the young man on June 30, 1688, “I perceive you Think yr new Cloathes too warm for Summer, But I Do not, if it Bee a ffault, I am sure it is a good one.”<sup>44</sup> The French regarded ermine or velvet as one fashionable answer to discomfort from cold. Two prints from around 1680 show women in formal and informal winter costumes, and they specify the names of the materials being worn.<sup>45</sup> The formal costume includes a black velvet gown, a marten capelet, a petticoat made of strips of ermine applied to a black fabric of unspecified weave and fiber, and a number of accessories. The informal costume includes a mantle of brocade with gold figures lined with fire-colored plush, an outer petticoat of matching plush and an inner one of brocade with silver figures and bordered with ermine, some accessories, and presumably a bodice, whose material is not noted. Until we find evidence that woolen gowns were worn characteristically in one season or another in England, the matter rests unresolved.

Illustrations of the Kimberley gown show the details of its construction quite clearly (Figures 1–3). The bodice and skirt were constructed as one garment. The

41. Historical Manuscripts Commission, Twelfth Report, Appendix, part V, *The Manuscripts of his Grace the Duke of Rutland, K.G., preserved at Belvoir Castle*, II (London, 1889) p. 97.

42. *Manuscripts*, p. 101.

43. Phillips, “English Dress,” p. 124.

44. Verney, *Memoirs*, p. 407.

45. Piton, *Costume Civil*, ill. on p. 206.

wide pleats starting at the waistline in front pass up to the shoulder seams where they meet corresponding pleats that pass down to the waist in back and finally lose themselves in the folds of the skirt (Figures 2, 3, 10, 11). The skirt is so long in front that if allowed to hang free about 17 inches of it would rest on the floor. What appear to be robings bordering the front edges of the skirt and the opening of the bodice are in fact composite units. From the hemline to the waist they are borders of embroidery worked directly in the ground fabric; and from the waist upward they are separately cut facings sewn to the revers of the bodice. The facings continue over the shoulders and become the sides of the square neckline; at the back they meet another facing that completes the neckline. The triangular shape and large scale of the facings at the front of the bodice, and their elaborate needlework ornamentation, might indicate that the gown was meant to be worn without a stomacher. Certain prints show that some gowns were worn without stomachers about this time (Figures 8, 10), and some of them have faced revers or robings of this sort.<sup>46</sup> But in some cases gowns with the same construction at the bodice opening were worn with stomachers (Figure 7). The stomachers shown with the Kimberley gown in photographs published earlier than the ones reproduced in this article were not originally associated with this gown but were made from pieces of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century needlework or bits of metallic galloon and lace.

In buying or commissioning an embroidered costume, the lady who wore the Kimberley gown followed a tradition long observed in England. Portraits of English men and women dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often show the subjects dressed in embroidered garments or accessories.<sup>47</sup> The embroiderer who worked this gown used only two stitches, satin stitch and stem stitch, and two kinds of yarn, both of silver gilt. The narrower yarn shows a bright yellow

silk core with a tight Z twist, wrapped spirally and very closely with flat silver-gilt wire in the S direction. Similar yarns, plied in three, make up the slightly thicker yarn. Where the needlework pattern decorates a surface whose shape changes in its course, as the facings on the revers of the bodice and the shaped facings on the neckline do, the pattern expands or contracts to accommodate the shape. Possibly the original needlework pattern took these subtle variations into account; possibly the embroiderer adapted the ornaments to the requirements of this gown. A whitish substance shows at the edges of certain motifs here and there over the surface of the gown. This must be the material the embroiderer used—a paste or paint?—to fix the pattern on the fabric after it had been transferred to the surface, probably by pouncing. Perhaps the embroiderer made the necessary scale and shape changes at this stage of the work.

The petticoat's knee-high border of silver-gilt needlework is the chief decoration on the costume. It is probably not fortuitous that it resembles a flounce of gold lace. Single or multiple lace flounces, whether of linen or metallic yarns, often served similar functions in French costumes at this time. There is some evidence that lace was used in this way in England too, but perhaps needlework took its place occasionally, as appears to have happened with the Kimberley gown.<sup>48</sup> Certainly fringes served as petticoat flounces in England:

M<sup>is</sup> Botts rett to know which way thay lays the petcots, but as yet I cannot give you an account, for I am told the las is not yused, and in ded I have [not] seen any petcots but what has been ermen, and mad up just like you one ermen petcot. Three frenges is very mutch yused, but they are not sett upon the peteot strat, but in waves; it does not luke well, and the fringes that is yused in that fashion is the plane twested fring not very deep. I hear of som that has nine frenges sett in this fashion.<sup>49</sup>

46. Leloir, *Histoire du Costume*, pl. 11E; also apparently (the representation is less explicit) the following: Boucher, *Histoire du Costume*, fig. 586 on p. 263; Blum, *Les Modes*, ill. on p. 46 (lower left and lower right).

47. For the sixteenth century, see C. Willett and Phillis Cunningham, *Handbook of English Costume in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1954) figs. 2 on p. 20, 9 on p. 36, 23 on p. 65, and 57 on p. 151; also, Davenport, *Book of Costume*, I, figs. 1185 and 1186 on p. 444, 1192 and 1193 on p. 447. For the seventeenth century, see C. Willett and Phillis Cunningham, *Handbook of English Costume in the*

*Seventeenth Century* (London, 1955) figs. 16 on p. 44, 34 on p. 90; also, Davenport, *Book of Costume*, II, figs. 1469 on p. 561, 1474 on p. 564, 1502 on p. 571, 1519 on p. 578.

48. John or Mary Evelyn, *Mundus Muliebris: or, the Ladies Dressing-Room Unlock'd* . . . (London, 1690) pp. 2–3: "Short under Petticoats pure fine, / Some of *Japan* Stuff, some of *Chine*, / With Knee-high Galoon bottomed, / Another quilted White and Red; / With a broad *Flanders* Lace below." This is part of a satirical poem listing the clothes a lady of fashion must have.

49. *Manuscripts*, p. 99, a letter written in December 1685.

This observation of Bridget Noel's, one of Lord Campden's daughters, shows that England was not without her fashion-conscious citizens. According to one statement, published in 1694:

after the Restauration of King *Charles* the Second, *England* never saw, for matter of wearing Apparel, less Prodigality, and more Modesty in Clothes, more Plainness and Comeliness than amongst her Nobility, Gentry and Superior Clergy; only the Citizens, the Country-People, and the Servants, appeared clothed, for the most part above and beyond their Qualities, Estates or Conditions, and far more gay than that sort of People was wont to be in former times. The Men at present are not much guilty of Extravagancy in Attire, but the Women are in nothing so fantastical as to their Dresses (Commodities as they call 'em) for the Head; and indeed in all their Apparel, from the Lady to the Servant-Maid, they are too Expensive and Whimsical.<sup>50</sup>

This is not a very explicit picture of the conditions under scrutiny, but there is no doubt that even this very conservative observer noticed the women's head-dresses. As for the attire of English men, it may not have been *very* extravagant, but some men chose things that would not have gone down very well with a partisan of sumptuary laws. In 1688, Sir Miles Stapleton, Bart., of Yorkshire, a man of refined tastes who often visited London, bought "3-½ yds. of rich flowred velvet at 13s. a yard for a pr. of britches for myself."<sup>51</sup> In the same year, when Edmund Verney's father sent him those heavy clothes at Oxford, Sir Edmund wrote to him on May 26 and assured him in regard to the tailor, "I Gave Him great Charge to make yr Cloathes Gentill and Modish as can Bee."<sup>52</sup> The younger man was certainly fashion conscious, as part of his reply shows: "I hope you will consider to buy me some good shirts or elce some sort of wastcoat sutable for Summer ffor it is not fashionable for any Gentleman to go Buttened up either summer or winter but especially summer. I shall likewise want new stockings and lased ruffles to weare with my new clothes."<sup>53</sup> A month or so later he asked that he might have a pair of breeches made of

silk as his next ones "for variety's sake." His father acted on this request by ordering for his son "a pair 'of Damask Silk Breeches, as Gentile as any Body weares Them . . . in a little Deale Box with a payre of modishe shoes Buckles.'"<sup>54</sup>

Like these men, certain English women were very much aware of the demands of fashion. John Evelyn or his daughter Mary wrote a satirical booklet published at London in 1690, *Mundus Muliebris: or, the Ladies Dressing-Room Unlock'd*. . . . It contains a poem listing the clothing a lady of fashion ought to have by her. The list is long. The publication also contains *The Fop Dictionary*, where there are definitions of fashion terms. Such terms are certainly spelled better here than in Bridget Noel's letters, but they do not come to life as they do when they clatter off her deliciously gossipy pen. Bridget lived in the midlands, but now and then she got up to London. Whether she picked up the fashion news there or on home ground is not clear; but it is sure that she drank it all in and retailed it in her letters. She had firm opinions about fashion and design in clothing. In a letter of May or June 1686, she tells her sister, the Countess of Rutland, "My Lady Gansbourn meet us at Burley, but in sutch a dres as I never saw without disput. Her iengan [Indian?] manto is the worst of the kind, it is purpel, and a great dell of green, and a letel Gould, and great flours, ther is som red with the green, and noe lining, which luks most a bomenable."<sup>55</sup> Nor did she like the costume that the same lady—another sister—wore on a different occasion: "My sister Gansbor was in her frittful red manto and petcot, and all the rest of the ladys was very fine, but of ther clos you shall have an account in my next."<sup>56</sup> And she was proud of her original fashion ideas—or perhaps amused by her mistakes: "I am wonderd at for bying a black petcot, for they say black mantos is worn, but colerd petcots with the mantos."<sup>57</sup>

"My sister Gansbor's" red manto and petticoat presumably matched. That perhaps suggests that she too followed a fashion other than the one that decreed that colored petticoats must be worn with black mantles or

50. Edward Chamberlayne, *Angliae Notitia: or, the Present State of England: With Divers Remarks upon The Ancient State thereof* (London, 1694) p. 462.

51. J. Charles Cox, "The Household Books of Sir Miles Stapleton, Bart., 1656–1705 [Continued]," *The Ancestor*, no. 3 (October 1902) p. 156.

52. Verney, *Memoirs*, p. 405.

53. Verney, *Memoirs*, p. 406.

54. Verney, *Memoirs*, p. 408.

55. *Manuscripts*, p. 109.

56. *Manuscripts*, p. 108.

57. *Manuscripts*, p. 98.

that “One black Gown of Rich Silk, which odd is / Without one Colour’d Embroider’d *Bodice*.”<sup>58</sup> The owner of the Kimberley gown also followed the fashion for matching parts of a costume. But she preferred relatively neutral tones to the brilliant colors commented upon in Bridget Noel’s letters. In addition to the colors already mentioned, she speaks of “a carlet [scarlet] and silver petcot . . . a night gown and petcot of a very pritty silk of black and gould, and carelet.”<sup>59</sup>

The happy hedonism behind all this also finds expression in the article “Apparel, or the Ladies Dressing-Room” in *The Ladies Dictionary*, published at London in 1694: “Apparel and Ornaments are not only for shrouding Nakedness, and *screening the pinching Cold*, but for setting out the shape and proportion of the Body, and rendering the Fabrik of Mortality more *Airy and Charming*.”<sup>60</sup> Then the author observes that “the *French* for the most part have given them Names, as well as communicated the *Fashions* to us.”<sup>61</sup> The French certainly created the terms and the fashions, and they communicated them across the Channel in at least three ways. The first was the medium of prints showing people fashionably dressed. This would have been the easiest means of disseminating fashion news, the prints either loose or bound into a periodical like the *Mercurie Galant*. Second, illustrations of fashions in three dimensions, with real materials, went to England in the form of fashion “babies” or dolls. The literature of fashion history often refers to such traffic, but specific instances of it before the middle of the eighteenth century are hard to find. Possibly it is safe to take as fact “Mr. Spectator’s” editorial comment published on January 17, 1711/1712, even though the two letters it prepares for are too good to be true:

I presume I need not inform the polite part of my readers, that before our correspondence with France was unhappily interrupted by the war, our ladies had all their fashions from thence; which the milliners took care to furnish them with by means of a jointed baby, that came regularly over once a month, habited after the manner of the most eminent toasts in Paris.<sup>62</sup>

58. Evelyn, *Mundus Muliebris*, p. 2.

59. *Manuscripts*, p. 98.

60. *The Ladies Dictionary; Being a General Entertainment For the fair-Sex* . . . (London, 1694) p. 10.

61. *Ladies Dictionary*, p. 10.

62. See *The Spectator* . . . , I (Philadelphia, 1829) p. 360, no. 277.

Finally, we know of one French milliner who crossed the Channel to practice her trade in England, and it seems reasonable to think that others would have done the same. In his diary entry for March 1, 1671, John Evelyn mentions “a French pedling woman, one *Madame de boord*, that used to bring peticoates & fanns & baubles out of France to the Ladys.”<sup>63</sup> An editor’s note published with that entry explains that the reference is to Madame Henriette de Bordes d’Assigny, who is mentioned in state documents between 1670 and 1683, at the earlier date as one of the queen’s dressers.

Perhaps these migrant milliners helped to spread from France to England the craze for extremely tall headdresses. Women could wear their head ornaments supported on a silk-covered wire frame, or *commode*, and make an even taller coiffure *à la Fontanges* by adding a tapered, pleated muslin or lace extension (the “top-knot”) at the top (see Figure 1 for a reconstructed example). To us, the *commode* and *Fontange* are distant and romantic things. We can with equanimity regard them as charming or ridiculous. But to people living at the time the Kimberley gown was worn, when the fashion was new, towering headdresses seemed delightfully or hideously outrageous. They made a natural target for satirical comment. The ballad of which the following stanza is a part was sung at Bartholomew Fair and published in 1691:

There’s many short women that could not be  
match’d,  
Until the *top-knot* came in fashion;  
Tho’ they wore their shoes high, both painted  
and patch’d,  
And humour’d the tricks of love’s passion:  
But now by the help of our rousing *commodes*,  
They wheedle young men to come nigher;  
For a wench that is short, in bed, can make sport,  
As well as one twenty yards higher.<sup>64</sup>

A tall headdress suitably finished off the long, elegant silhouette of the gowns or bodice-and-mantle costumes that fashionable women wore at this time. But whereas the headdress went completely out of fashion

63. E. S. de Beer, ed., *The Diary of John Evelyn*, III (Oxford, 1955) p. 572.

64. Frederick W. Fairholt, ed., *Satirical Songs and Poems on Costume: from the 13th to the 19th century*, vol. XXVII of the Percy Society’s *Early English Poetry, Ballads, and Popular Literature* . . . (London, 1849) p. 198.

early in the eighteenth century, the basic concept of the gown continued, with changes in detail, until almost the end of that century, to be revived (superficially imitated rather than developed), from around 1870 to 1890. To the best of our knowledge, the Kimberley gown is the only surviving civilian costume that embodies that archetypal concept.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I should like to thank the following people, who answered inquiries or helped me to find or interpret the material presented in this article: in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the staff of the Costume Institute, particularly Polaire Weiss-

man, Executive Director, Stella Blum, Mavis Dalton, and Andrea von Gronicka; the staff of the Print Room, especially Janet Byrne; the staff of the Textile Study Room, especially Jean Mailey and Madeline Hart; and John Goldsmith Phillips; in London, Janet Arnold, Madeleine Ginsburg, Zillah Halls, F. L. Egerton, and John L. Nevinson; in Manchester, Anne Buck; in Norwich, Pamela Clabburn, J. M. Kennedy, and R. C. Frostick; in Paris, Madeleine Delpierre; in Seattle, Blanche Payne; and in Waltham, Maureen Heneghan. In addition to the generous help I received directly from all these people, there is an indirect debt to be acknowledged to the authors of a number of publications in which I found references to seventeenth-century sources, as well as later ones, that I did not previously know and on which I drew extensively; these authors are Gertrude Townsend, Charles Bastide, C. Willett and Phillis Cunnington, Godfrey Davis, Thomas Longueville, and William G. Wells.

# Those American Things

MARSHALL B. DAVIDSON

SINCE THE FORMAL opening of the Metropolitan Museum's American Wing in 1924 (Figure 1), its displays, grown larger and more varied over the years, have represented an unquestionable standard and have exerted a widening influence in many directions. Indeed, the Wing has served its essential purposes so long and so well that the concepts upon which it was founded are taken quite for granted. Actually, these concepts were an outgrowth of varied interests and attitudes that were developing and working, sometimes at cross-purposes, over a half century or more preceding the opening. A review of that interplay brings to mind various aspects of this country's social and cultural development during those years that should be more closely related than they generally are in the separate studies of American art and history.

That period—extending, very roughly, from the prelude to the Civil War through the immediate aftermath of World War I—was a time of rapid and very often violent changes in American life. It was during those years that America felt the full, unsettling impact of the Industrial Revolution; that the modern city evolved in all its growing complexity and diversity and with all its grave and nettlesome human problems; and that the nation absorbed some twenty-five million immigrants, many of them from distant places whose very names strained the imagination of “native” Americans—that is, of the people who had come here earlier, largely from the British Isles and the western perimeter of northern Europe.

Among other changes, in the mid years of the last century the self-employed craftsman was rapidly disappearing from the American scene, to be replaced by

manufacturing companies that relied increasingly upon skilled mechanics and power-driven aids to production. As early as 1848, for example, the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce boasted that “every description of furniture, almost from the common bedstead to the most costly articles,” was made in the numerous steam-powered factories of that city.<sup>1</sup> To lend prestige to their mechanically contrived products, many early manufacturers went to great pains and expense to make them recall in design and ornament traditional handmade articles. And to further that end, they appropriated the styles of the more or less distant past and of different lands, interpreting them without restraint and often without discrimination. The relative ease and speed with which the new machinery could perform certain operations invited excessive elaboration. “We are no longer contented with the plainness that was once satisfactory,” observed Benjamin Silliman, the distinguished Yale professor, in 1854. “A demand for decoration has arisen in every branch of manufactures; and although ornament has been used to excess, and inappropriately, it is still a movement in the right direction.”<sup>2</sup> Here Silliman spoke not as an eminent scientist, which he was, but as a man of typical Victorian tastes.

In any event, the riot of historical revivals that raged through the third quarter of the last century resulted in a bewildering mixture of forms and motifs. The la-

1. Celia Jackson Otto, *American Furniture of the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1965) p. 122.

2. Benjamin Silliman, Jr., and Charles R. Goodrich, *The World of Science, Art, and Industry* (New York, 1854) p. 12.



T. M. CLELAND

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART  
*American Wing*



FIGURE 1

A poster commissioned by H. W. Kent and designed by Thomas Cleland to celebrate the opening of the American Wing in 1924. The façade of the United States Assay Office, shown in the background, was built on Wall Street in 1823. When that building was demolished, it was salvaged and given to the Museum by Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. de Forest to serve as the courtyard facing of the Wing

bels by which the passing styles were known—Gothic, renaissance, Louis XVI, modern, among numerous others—were at best only loosely defined; they were often more or less interchangeable, depending upon personal preference for one or another of the evocative terms. “It would be extremely difficult, and in some cases impossible,” reported a contemporary periodical, “to give a name to the principles and precedents of art recognized by most of the American manufacturers.”<sup>3</sup> In all this colorful *mélange*, however, there was no recall of the styles that had prevailed in colonial America. But that was shortly to come.

Americans were slow to realize the interest and importance of their colonial heritage. For several generations following the conclusion of the Revolutionary War they were preoccupied with the growing pains of their new nationhood, the implications of a booming democratic spirit, and the advancing conflict of interests and feelings that led to the Civil War. The lure of the West and the promise of a rapidly expanding economy also led them to look more intently to the present and the future than to the past. During those years, to be sure, numerous nostalgic gestures were made to colonial achievements. In the early days of the nation’s independence John Trumbull glorified the heroes of the Revolution in a series of epic paintings. Parson Weems mythicized George Washington in his famous biography of the Father of His Country. In the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, Longfellow paid homage to the exploits of Paul Revere, indirectly calling fresh attention to examples of his silverwork. And there were a number of early efforts at historical preservation, notably those of the ladies who eventually succeeded in restoring Mount Vernon as a national shrine. But those and similar endeavors were more or less isolated acts of venera-

tion and did not represent a popular revival, and they had little to do with the arts of the country’s past.

As the nation paused to observe the centennial of its independence, however, there emerged a new and poignant longing to restore a clearer and more intimate image of the colonial past that had been generally neglected for so long. “As the one hundredth anniversary of our national independence draws near,” reported *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* in 1874, “the thoughts of our people are eagerly turned . . . to a more familiar observation of the men and women who were actors in that great event . . . to take note of their appearance, manners, and customs; to cross their thresholds and see . . . what entered into their domestic appointments and belongings.”<sup>4</sup> To illustrate the point, that article reproduced a variety of colonial furniture and other “domestic appointments.” At the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition two years later a “New England Kitchen of 1776” was exhibited, complete with beamed ceiling, leaded casement windows, and early furnishings to match, including “a few wrinkled pictures and relics.” Lady attendants were garbed in colonial costumes. A trilingual sign, posted over the entrance, identified the building housing the exhibit as “Ye Olden Time; Die Alten Zeiten; Les Vieux Temps; Welcome to All.” It seemed very quaint and picturesque; the crowds that visited the fair were enchanted; and a quest for early American antiques acquired a momentum that grew steadily over the decades to come.

Many of the contemporary periodicals took note of the phenomenon. “As our readers know,” wrote the prominent art critic and journalist Clarence Chatham Cook in *Scribner’s Monthly* shortly after the centennial celebrations were concluded, “old furniture is ‘the fashion’ in some parts of our country. In Boston a polite internecine warfare has for some time raged between rival searchers after ‘old pieces,’ and the back country is scoured by young couples in chaises on the trail of old sideboards and brass andirons.”<sup>5</sup> This newborn enthusiasm held an important promise for the future American Wing.

3. *The American Architect and Building News*, December 23, 1876, p. 412.

4. Charles D. Deshler, “A Glimpse of ‘Seventy-Six,’” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 49 (1874) p. 230.

5. Clarence Cook, *The House Beautiful* (New York, 1881) p. 161. This book was a reprinting of articles that had earlier appeared in *Scribner’s Monthly*. Incidentally, Cook was the critic who made

One young matron who at that time took to a hired buggy in search of such “loot,” as she called it in a memoir,<sup>6</sup> was Mrs. Robert W. de Forest, née Emily Johnston, daughter of the first president of the Metropolitan Museum, John Taylor Johnston, and wife of the third, who with her husband was to provide the funds with which the American Wing was built and installed almost fifty years later. It was a period of financial depression and Mrs. de Forest’s resources were then relatively limited, but she persisted. In time she graduated from a hired horse and buggy to her own automobile, and her chauffeur, Barbier, “caught the fever” and served as an ally in her search through the attics and barns, and in the shops that were springing up about the countryside. In later years she was occasionally accompanied by members of the Museum staff, and some of the findings from these excursions made their way into the American Wing, notably a fine collection of Pennsylvania German furnishings, which was acquired with the needs of the American Wing specifically in mind. This material came to the Museum as a gift in 1933, adding a new dimension to its holdings.

There were others, starting in the late 1870s, who took to the byways in horse and carriage with the same inquiring and acquisitive spirit that charged Mrs. de Forest, and whose findings in time contributed substantially to the development of the American Wing. Notable among those pioneers were Irving Whitall Lyon, a Hartford doctor, Walter Hosmer, a cabinetmaker in the same city, H. Eugene Bolles, a Boston lawyer, and George Shepard Palmer, a manufacturer of Norwich and New London. With a number of other early and earnest enthusiasts, they were associated by their common interests in a very loose fraternity out of whose shared experiences and searching inquiries emerged the first solid literature on the subject of the American decorative arts. Dr. Lyon initiated this program with his *Colonial Furniture in New England*, which was published in 1891 and which, because of its empirical approach to the subject, after almost eighty years, still remains a book of helpful reference.

These men and women were obviously amateurs in

the true sense of the word, exploring areas that were considered too obscure and humble for professional students of art and history. (Even today the opportunities for academic training in such matters is extremely limited.) However, while they diligently worked at their avocations, architects were pursuing related studies on a professional level. It was in 1877 that Charles Follen McKim, William Rutherford Mead, and Stanford White took what Mead later called their “celebrated” trip through New England to make sketches and measured drawings of important surviving colonial houses for future reference in their architectural practice. For their purpose they visited Marblehead, Salem, Newburyport, and Portsmouth, towns that *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* had several years before noted for their interesting architectural relics of the colonial period. In the years following the Civil War, such old and relatively unspoiled seaside communities, along with Newport, Bar Harbor, and others, had become increasingly popular as summer resorts, providing at once a welcome retreat from the hurly-burly of growing cities and a picturesque reminder of the almost forgotten charm of colonial architecture and its natural setting. In such places as Nantucket, even before the excitement stirred by the centennial, one could attend auctions that “furnished recreation . . . to summer visitors,” who could there purchase “curious old furniture, old china, old table gear. . . .”<sup>7</sup> One of the first scholarly monographs concerning colonial architecture, *Early Rhode Island Houses*, was published in 1895 by Norman Morrison Isham (with Albert F. Brown), whose expert advice was later very helpful in the installations of the American Wing. McKim, Mead, and White had been offered the commission to construct the Wing itself but declined, and Grosvenor Atterbury accepted the assignment.

While these interested, earnest, and for the most part wealthy men and women were pursuing their individual ends and forming collections that would provide staple items for the displays of the Metropolitan and other museums in years to come, the revived interest in colonial furniture and furnishings was spreading outward toward a larger public. “All this resuscitation

the most vindictive attacks on General Luigi Palma di Cesnola, the Metropolitan Museum’s first director, over the authenticity of his collection of Cypriot antiquities, which he had sold to the Museum.

6. A copy of Mrs. de Forest’s memoir is in the Museum’s archives.

7. Charles Nordhoff, “Cape Cod, Nantucket, and the Vineyard,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 51 (1875) p. 65.

of 'old furniture' and revival of old simplicity," wrote Clarence Cook, ". . . is in reality much more sensible than it seems to be to those who look upon it as only another phase of the 'centennial' mania. It is a fashion that has been . . . working its way down from a circle of rich, cultivated people, to a wider circle of people who are educated, who have natural good taste, but who have not so much money as they could wish."<sup>8</sup> That the wealthy should set standards and serve as guardians of taste was neither a novel nor a passing point of view. Some years later, in *The Decoration of Houses*, Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman, Jr., reminded their readers that "when the rich man demands good architecture his neighbors will get it too. . . . Once the right precedent is established, it costs less to follow than oppose it." A few years later, however, in a series of articles, the magazine *The House Beautiful* complained that the wealthy were betraying their trust. Citing an example of one home that was filled with costly European furnishings, the magazine termed it "a monument to ugliness and the poor taste of the rich."

On the other hand, it seemed increasingly apparent that in matters of taste our colonial forefathers could not err. For all its sparseness and formality, reported the *American Architect and Building News*, colonial architecture was, "on the whole, decidedly superior in style and good breeding, if we may say so, to most that has followed it." And, in much the same vein, Cook wrote that "the furniture of the Revolutionary period is evidently the outcome of a refined and cultured time. . . . There was a 'style' in those days." An association of those merits with the Founding Fathers added a patriotic note to aesthetic appreciation.

The growing regard for American antiques, both as relics and as models for emulation, had a number of other, different aspects. Antiquarianism pure and simple obviously played a basic role in this revival of interest, as did the irrepressible and instinctive urge of the collector. Aside from that and the association of antiques with "good breeding," after the passage of several generations the colonial period was sufficiently distant to excite the same romantic sensibilities that had found expression earlier in the revival of alien and more remote styles—"the French and German miracles of ugliness," as Cook described them, "that have been our only wear of late years."

These were years of reform in the arts as well—years when such zealous advocates as John Ruskin and William Morris in England were attempting to curb and rectify the vulgarities and thoughtless exuberance of mechanical production that had accompanied the spread of the Industrial Revolution. Both these men considered the advancing technology a dehumanizing agent and recommended a return to handicraft traditions. There were others, just as earnest, who believed the machine could and should be tamed to serve human ends in a decent and acceptable fashion. In either case, they stressed the need for returning to first principles in matters of design and construction. Looking back through the mists of history, Ruskin, Morris, and their followers on both sides of the Atlantic thought they discerned those principles in products of medieval craftsmanship. Such work, they believed, reflected the freedom and inspiration of the individual artisan, in a time before the workman had become an impersonal thrall of the machine.

To such true believers design was a moral act. It involved not so much the matter of style as the application of sound principles to manufacture, whether an object was made by hand or by machine. The voices of those reformers were heard and heeded in this country. In the spirit of their preachments one American author wrote that the revival of medieval principles in furniture making must be regarded as the most significant incident in the history of that craft; "not," he added, "because the principles are mediaeval, but because they are principles."<sup>9</sup> In 1877 another writer advised his compatriots, in selecting furniture, to consider more than just comfort, taste, and cost; they must consider "certain higher duties," first of all "the principles of truth of construction." In the eyes of such critics it was another of the merits of early American furniture that its sound, honest, and skilled craftsmanship represented those principles—principles that, with all its speed, power, and repetitive clichés, the machine had betrayed.

There were some enthusiasts who attempted to emulate those principles in the work of their own hands. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, following English precedents, dozens of organizations devoted

8. Cook, *House Beautiful*, pp. 187 ff.

9. *The American Architect and Building News*, May 26, 1877, p. 164.

*Furniture of our Forefathers.*

The most complete line of thoroughly correct

**Colonial Reproductions**

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN

**CHAIRS**

IS MADE BY THE

**Barnard & Simonds Company**

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

Shown during January and July at GRAND RAPIDS,  
5th Floor, Furniture Exhibition Bldg.

200 Patterns of Dining Chairs in Oak and Mahogany.  
150 Pieces for the Parlor, Library and Hall.

FIGURE 2

An advertisement for colonial revival furniture, from the *Grand Rapids Furniture Record*, 1902

to the revival of the spirit of the earlier arts and crafts were turning out pottery, furniture, silverware, and other artifacts in communities scattered over the entire country. Their members, reported one journal in 1894 with moral fervor, were “toiling in the noblest cause that ever inspired human endeavor—the triumph of Love over selfish Greed.”<sup>10</sup> Compared to factory work their output was very small, but by challenging popular values and shoddy performances of the day those arts and crafts groups helped prepare the ground for more realistic advances.

Late in the century, the visiting French poet, novelist, and critic, Charles Joseph Paul Bourget, spoke of the almost pathetic eagerness of Americans to surround themselves with objects that conveyed an idea of time and stability. “In this country, where everything is of yesterday,” he wrote, “they hunger and thirst for the

long ago. . . .”<sup>11</sup> He referred particularly to the homes of the very wealthy of that day (the kind of home deplored by *The House Beautiful*), which bulged with costly plunder gathered from art and antique markets throughout the Western world. But his observation had a broader application. Some years earlier, in 1878, *Godey’s Lady’s Book* had pointed out that one curious feature of the “latest mania among fashionable people” for collecting old furniture was the aid it afforded them to lay claim to a respectable ancestry. And for those whose budget was limited and whose discernment was less refined, factory-made reproductions “in the colonial style” served much the same purpose (Figure 2).

The fact that before the end of the century a substan-

10. *The Decorator and Furnisher* 23 (1894) p. 204.

11. Paul C. J. Bourget, *Outre-Mer: Impressions of America* (New York, 1895) p. 53.

tial part of the population had come to America in cramped steamers, centuries after the *Mayflower*, and owned ancestors who probably had never heard of Bunker's Hill or Saratoga, was not very important in all this—although it disturbed some of older American stock. During the 1880s alone, one observer noted with a sense of shock, America had “suffered a peaceful invasion by an army four times as vast as the estimated numbers of Goths and Vandals that swept over Europe and overwhelmed Rome.”<sup>12</sup> Henry James, himself an expatriate revisiting Boston, referred to such newcomers as “gross little foreigners.” However, as Margaret Mead has remarked, in this land there was an odd blending of the future and the past in which another man's great-grandfather became the symbol of one's grandson's future. And immigrants from the most outlandish places, with a touching desire to identify with American traditions, soon learned to venerate the deeds of adopted ancestors, to sing of this “land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride.”

With such various thoughts in mind, around the turn of the century the editors of *The House Beautiful* thought it advisable to warn its large audience against carrying an enthusiasm for colonial styles to excess. “Let it be admitted at the outset,” the magazine stated,

that the furniture of our forefathers has certain undeniable qualities. . . . Those of us whose Connemara grandfathers kept the pig in the parlor, or whose German parents reached these shores in an emigrant-ship thirty years ago, set an even higher value on everything that speaks of deep-rooted Americanism. And this is most praiseworthy.

But, the article continued, the fashion was becoming so common it was getting monotonous.<sup>13</sup>

It seems clear enough that such remarks referred to factory-made reproductions “in the colonial style.” As early as 1884 it was reported that to satisfy the growing interest in such things the manufacture of “antiques” had become a thriving modern industry. Actually, beyond a limited circle of connoisseurs and some other serious students (including an expanding group of dealers), there were few who had any clear understanding of the progression of early American

styles or the refinements of form and detail by which they could be identified. In an effort to clarify the matter somewhat for its readers, *The Decorator and Furnisher* for March 1894, for instance, explained that “the Colonial is a distinctive style, that stands midway between the Empire on the one hand and the Chippendale on the other. . . .” The magazine also reported a statement that gave credit for the design of the Windsor chair to “one Windsor in Philadelphia in the seventeenth century.” Before there was an available body of reliable, illustrated literature on the subject, such confusion was pardonable. In the meantime, what was made in the name of “early American” apparently varied widely, from facsimiles well enough conceived and constructed to fool the unwary collector of today (Figure 3) to highly whimsical productions that bore only a tenuous resemblance to any early forms.

FIGURE 3  
A colonial revival armchair in the Chippendale style. The Newark Museum



12. These remarks, made by Josiah Strong, a prominent clergyman, are quoted in Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Paths to the Present* (New York, 1949) p. 64.

13. *The House Beautiful*, March 1902, p. 230.



FIGURE 4  
Henry Watson Kent

There was no museum in the land to which the public or the manufacturer could turn for guidance in such matters. For more than a generation after its founding in 1870 the Metropolitan was itself completely lacking in concern for the early American crafts. The first two directors of the Museum, General Luigi Palma di Cesnola and Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, were foreigners who may well have considered American artifacts as provincial derivatives of the high styles of England and the Continent. However, in 1905, with the appointment of Henry Watson Kent (Figure 4) to the staff as secretary to Robert W. de Forest, then secretary of the Museum, a seed was sown that within less than a score of years came to full bloom in the creation of the American Wing. As a young man of Yankee stock, Kent had spent twelve years in the old colonial town of Norwich, Connecticut, serving both as curator of the Slater Memorial Museum and librarian of the Peck Library. (Subsequently, for five years, he was assistant librarian and librarian of the Grolier Club in New York.) He had a consuming interest in the history of that area of old

New England and a rich appreciation of its surviving relics and traditions. A number of those early collectors who have already been mentioned, and others, sought his advice and direction. Thus, he brought to his new post a background of understanding and of friendships that would richly benefit the Museum in certain directions of its future growth.<sup>14</sup>

From the beginning Kent enjoyed a very sympathetic and helpful relationship with de Forest. They lived catty-corner from one another on Washington Square—Kent at the Benedick, New York's first bachelor's apartment house, designed by McKim, Mead, and White and otherwise celebrated as the setting for the opening scene of Edith Wharton's *House of Mirth*; de Forest at number 7, one of the Greek revival town houses on the north side of the square. Mrs. de Forest had been born in this house, and her father deeded it to her as a Christmas present in 1879 when he inherited it from his mother. Much of the original furnishings, including "pillows, blankets and counterpanes," according to Mrs. de Forest, and "a semi-circular STAIRCASE, with a handrail, all built of beautiful mahogany" for the library, had apparently been supplied for it by the celebrated New York cabinetmaker Duncan Phyfe during her grandfather's lifetime. The staircase, on rollers, was later given to the New York Public Library "as a kind of relic."<sup>15</sup> On his way to work Kent would frequently stop in while de Forest was breakfasting to discuss Museum problems (and no doubt to admire the antiques that the de Forests had collected over the years). It may have been on such an occasion, when the Museum was planning its part of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909, that Kent recommended a display of American decorative arts of Fulton's period to complement an exhibition of Dutch paintings of Hudson's time. The Hudson-Fulton Celebration was a city-wide affair, plans for which had been started in 1905. Naval vessels from eight nations attended and, illuminated at night, extended up the Hudson River in a long armada from Forty-second Street to Spuyten

14. In his autobiography, entitled *What I Am Pleased to Call My Education* (New York, 1949), Kent referred to these and other aspects of his career that are mentioned later. I had numerous conversations with Kent about these matters.

15. Emily J. de Forest, memoir.

Duyvil. De Forest was receptive to Kent's suggestion, and since he was chairman of the art committee for the celebration, such a showing was arranged at the Museum.

As de Forest later observed, that exhibition was planned "to test out the question whether American domestic art was worthy of a place in an art museum." In other words, did such native artifacts more properly represent ethnography or art? English museums had earlier pondered the problem of where to draw the thin line separating those two fields. "Broadly speaking," wrote Lord Balcarres, who was among other things trustee of the National Portrait Gallery and vice-chairman of the National Trust, "objects must be classified according to the quality (apart from their nature) for which they are most remarkable."<sup>16</sup> Thus, an inlaid and highly decorated musket would go into the art section; a common or plain weapon into the ethnographic section. Meanwhile, however, such borderline distinctions seemed not to concern other departments of the Metropolitan. The Egyptian Depart-

ment, for example, apparently felt no compunction in showing chipped flints and similar Paleolithic material along with its sculptures and wall paintings.

De Forest and others thought the Hudson-Fulton demonstration was completely affirmative. "Those American arts," wrote Kent, had been raised "to a position of acknowledged dignity; and it marked the first recognition by the museum of the right of such objects to be included among its collection." However, even some years later, according to Kent, when the American Wing was being planned, the Museum's director, Edward Robinson, a classicist and earlier director of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, still felt that "these American things" were not worthy of the institution. (He had consulted friends at the Boston Museum who confirmed his views.)<sup>17</sup>

In arranging such an exhibition, the Museum had had virtually nothing of its own to display, and Kent

16. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., s.v. "Museum of Art."

17. Kent, *My Education*, p. 162.



FIGURE 5  
A late xvii century carved oak chest made in the Connecticut Valley, from the Bolles collection. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 10.125.689



FIGURE 6  
Carved bust from the pediment of the so-called Pompadour highboy, made in Philadelphia about 1765, from the Palmer collection. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Kennedy Fund, 18.110.4

had turned to the private collections of his old friends and acquaintances—including those of Bolles and Palmer. These two men were cousins whose collections complemented one another; Bolles concentrated on material of the earlier colonial period, whereas Palmer confined his acquisitions to examples from the later colonial years. Before the Hudson-Fulton exhibition was held, Bolles had incorporated into his holdings substantial elements from those of Hosmer (sharing some of this with his cousin) and Irving Lyon, thus bringing together well over four hundred items representing the findings of three of the earliest, best informed, and most successful collectors in the country. When, shortly after the exhibition closed, Bolles told Kent of his wish to sell his collection, Kent promptly

reported this to de Forest and then, to dramatize the importance of this opportunity, took the de Forests and Richard Townley Haines Halsey, later to be made a trustee of the Museum, on a brief tour of the Boston area where they met other prominent collectors and visited a number of historic houses, sites, and monuments. They noted with special interest the period rooms that George Francis Dow had installed a few years earlier in the Essex Institute at Salem. This type of installation, in which a sense of historical reality was achieved by showing objects in a contemporary architectural setting, was somewhat revolutionary in this country, although there were a number of acknowledged European precedents. Upon their return from this pilgrimage and with their consequent report, the trustees forthwith accepted the collection as the gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, a public-spirited client of de Forest's who provided the funds for its purchase. The nucleus of the American Wing had been formed (Figure 5).

A word must here be said about Halsey, much better and fondly known as "R. T." to almost all his large circle of friends and associates, for he was to be the principal guiding spirit in the formation of the American Wing. He had been a member of the Board of Governors of the New York Stock Exchange since 1899, but his avocational interest in early American art and history was deep and demanding. He had started writing on such subjects the year of his election to the Board of Governors and continued to do so for the next thirty-odd years. In 1906 he wrote an authoritative introduction to the catalogue of a pioneering exhibition of early American silver held at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. He had also contributed from his own collection to the Hudson-Fulton exhibition and participated in the preparations for it. In passing, it is worth noting that he had been an intercollegiate tennis champion at Princeton in the 1880s, and at the time of his tragic death in 1942—he was struck and killed by an automobile—he was the last surviving member of the generation of players that had introduced that "elegant and pleasant" pastime into the United States.<sup>18</sup>

18. The 7th ed. (1942) of *A Handbook of the American Wing*, by R. T. H. Halsey and Charles O. Cornelius, contains an appreciation of Halsey by William T. Ivins, Jr. Also, I was privileged to know and work with Halsey and had many conversations with him.





FIGURE 7

Mahogany secretary, made in Philadelphia about 1760–1775, from the Palmer collection. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Kennedy Fund, 18.110.1

Kent took the occasion of closing the deal with Bolles in Boston, over a bottle of champagne, to propose the organization of a small society of prominent collectors, to be called the Walpole Society, who would meet on occasion to enjoy discussing their common interests and to learn from one another. The formation of this group had some important consequences, not least the fact that the collections of its members consistently found their way into public institutions. Palmer was one of the founders of the society, and his remarkable eighteenth-century furniture came to the Metropolitan by purchase in 1918. As earlier indicated, it was a perfect complement to the Bolles collection. If sold at public auction today, either the celebrated Pompadour highboy or the Cadwallader table—just two of the forty-odd pieces that were thus acquired—would no doubt command a sum considerably larger than that paid by the Museum for the entire collection. Palmer was an utterly indefatigable collector, and armed with very substantial resources, he usually acquired what he went after. He followed the Pompadour pair (highboy and associated lowboy) through three successive owners before finally adding it to his other treasures. On one occasion, when he went to St. Louis to see the highboy, he admired the central finial (Figure 6) so much that the elderly lady who then owned the piece took the carved bust off the pediment and tried to insist that Palmer take and keep it—which he scrupulously refused to do. Another outstanding case piece, a magnificent secretary (Figure 7), had been offered by a dealer named William Meggat of Wethersfield, Connecticut, for seventy-five dollars before Palmer purchased it for an undisclosed price, and then paid six hundred dollars to have one “Patrick Stevens of Robbins” restore it.<sup>19</sup>

19. This information was included in a letter written in 1934 by Henry Wood Erving, another notable early collector, and printed in the *Walpole Society Notebook* of that year on the occasion of Palmer's death. Erving further noted that when he first saw the highboy, the carved finial was not in place. In the same publication



FIGURE 8

A miscellany of contemporary clippings reporting the opening of the American Wing

Patrick Stevens was a highly respected craftsman who later was employed at the studio of Louis Comfort Tiffany. Robbins Brothers, later Robbins and Winship, had been in business in Hartford since the early nineteenth century, and the brothers had known craftsmen who had worked in the eighteenth century. At one time the firm had a partner who was “a true son of the Revolution.” One early collector remarked that to do business with such men “was like shaking hands with a man who had met Washington.”

Aside from Meggat, among the early antiques dealers were the Prior brothers of Cromwell, one or the other of whom apparently made some creditable “an-

Kent observed that some of the most important of Palmer’s pieces “came from the homesteads of the Huntington, Carpenter and Beckers families [of Norwich], famous people in colonial days.” Copies of the society’s publications are not easily available in public repositories. I am indebted to Walter Muir Whitehill for these references from a volume in the Library of the Boston Athenaeum.

20. This information was published in the issue of the *Walpole Society Notebook* last cited and in the one issued a year later on the occasion of the society’s twenty-fifth anniversary meeting. With characteristic thoughtfulness Kent presented me with a copy of the latter issue in 1941.

tiques,” although he remained the while a highly successful provider of excellent and genuine antique furniture for the early collecting fraternity. Another source of supply for this group was the upstairs “rookery” of the dealers Sam Winick and Morris Schwartz in Hartford.<sup>20</sup>

In 1913 de Forest became president and Kent, secretary of the Metropolitan Museum. The next year Halsey became almost simultaneously a member of the Walpole Society and a trustee of the Museum, where he was immediately appointed chairman of the Committee on American Decorative Art. When, in 1922, the de Forests announced their gift of an American Wing to the Museum, Halsey for all practical purposes assumed the functions of a curator, and the following year he sold his seat in the stock exchange in order to devote more time to those functions. It is doubtful that the Museum has ever had a more active and dedicated trustee. Over the years following his election to the Board of Trustees, with the help of younger staff members, he led a tireless search throughout the Atlantic seaboard states for the best and most representative architectural interiors that could be

found for ultimate installation in the Museum, as well as for furnishings that would be most widely representative of early American achievement. This persistent effort to acquire the finest examples from all sections of the colonial and early republican area occasionally aroused the ire of local preservation groups, especially in New England, who felt that such material should at all costs remain where it was. But in the end the Museum's accomplishment was applauded by even the most rabid among the opposition.

The actual opening of the Wing in the autumn of 1924 was the realization of a dream that had grown both more vivid and more plausible since the Hudson-Fulton exhibition and the acquisition of the Bolles collection fifteen years before. For those who had persevered over that period it gave cause for self-congratulation, for it was immediately apparent that this new departure of the Museum was a remarkable popular success. As we have often been reminded since, this was the first time a museum had given place to a systematic display of the American domestic arts. A major art museum had given those "things" its benediction, put them prominently under the same roof with treasures from ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and with works of art from other cultures of the East and West. Why, reported one newspaper with pleased astonishment and in bold headlines, "AMERICAN ART REALLY EXISTS," which, as the subhead added, refuted those critics who complained that this nation had no culture comparable to those of Old World countries (Figure 8). "It is not merely an exhibition of art," wrote Lewis Mumford in *The New Republic* for December 31, 1924; "it is a pageant of American history. . . . nothing so complete and so tactful has ever been accomplished before by an American museum."

That in view of its sponsors the new exhibition represented something more than the vindication of American art as such was clearly apparent in the addresses given at the opening ceremonies. Most of the sentiments and some of the sentimentality that had earlier characterized the recognition of a neglected past were reviewed for the occasion—the note of patriotism, the appeal of nostalgia, the veneration of the Founding Fathers and earlier generations of colonists for their sterling characters as well as their good taste, the desire to resuscitate the permanent and stable values of their traditions, and the rest. The Museum was sounding a

patriotic note, de Forest remarked from the chair: "We are honoring our fathers and our mothers, our grandfathers and our grandmothers, that their art may live long in the land which the Lord hath given us." In his following remarks Halsey pointed out that

traditions are one of the integral assets of a country. . . . Many of our people are not cognizant of our traditions and the principles for which our fathers struggled and died. The tremendous changes in the character of our nation and the influx of foreign ideas utterly at variance with those held by the men who gave us the Republic threaten, and unless checked may shake, the foundations of our Republic.

(These fears were real at the time. The Sacco-Vanzetti case was then awaiting a decision. The Immigration Act enacted by Congress in 1924 drastically reduced the torrent of immigration and closed a momentous chapter in American history.) The American Wing would provide "a setting for the traditions so dear to us and invaluable in the Americanization of many of our people to whom much of our history has been hidden in a fog of unenlightenment." These period rooms, with their furnishings and with the history that might be associated with them (in some cases by a stretch of the imagination), were "anchorage for our cherished traditions." Atterbury, the architect, observed that nothing would please him more than if a visitor were to run into John Alden kissing Priscilla on the top floor. "If, in passing by some night," he added,

returning, perhaps, at crack of dawn from one of our marble-lined, electrified, steam-heated, "jazz-racked" hotel ballrooms, I chance to see through the windows of the old Gadsby's Tavern room, the flickering light of tallow candles and hear the faint sound of a spinet marking the stately measure of a minuet. . . . I shall know that we have really made a success of the American Wing.

In a final statement, the Honorable Elihu Root, first vice-president of the Museum, pointed out that the de Forests, Halsey, Kent, Atterbury, and the rest who had made the Wing possible "formed an old-fashioned American community, and in their spirit was born again that atmosphere that produced whatever was fine and warming and delightful in old American

life.”<sup>21</sup> In the evening, following the ceremonies, the trustees of the Museum gave a festive dinner at the University Club. The menu, exquisitely designed by Kent and meticulously printed at the Museum Press under his direction (Figure 9), listed choice and abundant fare, as befitted an important occasion for celebration.<sup>22</sup>

Although Lewis Mumford had warm and kind words to say of the Museum’s accomplishment, as already quoted, he also had critical reservations. Mumford was then a young man, still in his twenties, and had just published his *Sticks and Stones*, a study of American

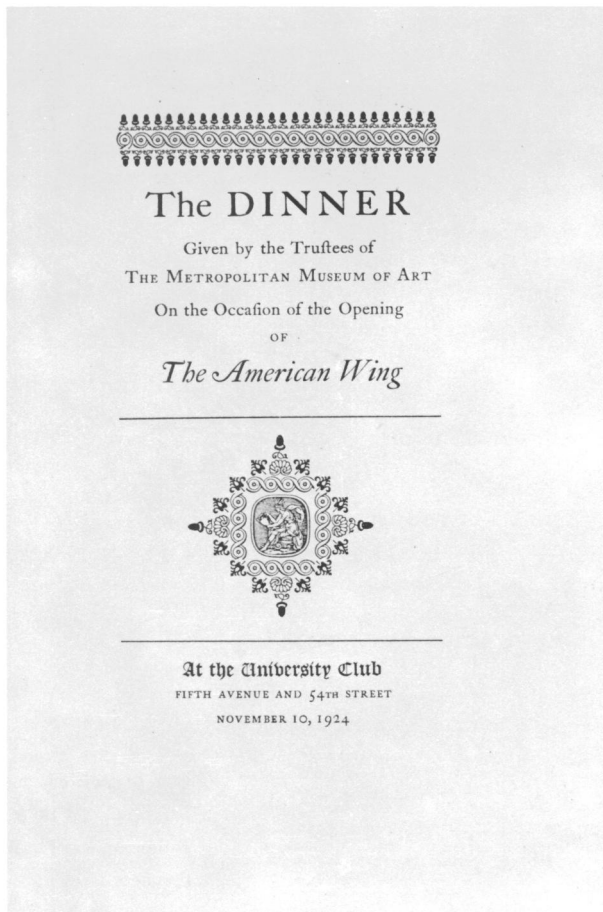
architecture and civilization that was meeting with wide acclaim. Among other things, he had forebodings that the very success of the Wing might lead to “a sickly desire to counterfeit the past” with machine-made reproductions of such treasures as were displayed there. His doubts were justified to a degree. Only shortly thereafter the *D.A.R. Magazine* suggested that “patriotic Americans who treasure the memory of our forefathers can do no better than to reproduce in their homes the furniture and decoration which have been so well preserved and arranged by the builders of the American Wing.”

“How can we turn this spinsterly desire for ancestors,” Mumford asked, “into a virile effort to beget a new issue? . . . An exhibition of historical art is justified when it gives us courage to make our own history. . . . To go forward, we must draw back again to fundamentals.” Like the Ruskinians and other reformers of the last century, he saw that point of return in medieval practices—or, rather, in those seventeenth-century American forms that preserved the lingering traditions of the Middle Ages. But as Ruskin and some of the others could not, Mumford saw in the simplicity and austerity of such models qualities similar to those that modern machine design could most appropriately emulate in its own terms.

The Museum was, of course, committed by the terms of its Charter to encourage “the application of arts to manufactures and practical life” (following the highly successful precedent of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London). That, in its early years, it did not move very far in such a direction was partly because of the apathy of the industry itself.<sup>23</sup> However, when American manufacturers were cut off from their European sources of design during the First World War, their interest in the Museum’s resources was aroused,

FIGURE 9

Cover from the menu of the trustees’ dinner on the night of the opening of the American Wing, designed by H. W. Kent and printed under his supervision by the Museum Press



21. *Addresses on the Occasion of the Opening of the American Wing*, New York, 1925 (printed by D. B. Updike at the Merrymount Press, Boston).

22. During the thirty years of Kent’s management of it, the Museum Press was celebrated for the quality of its productions. In 1939 the Pierpont Morgan Library held a special exhibition of the Museum’s printing, honoring Kent. On that occasion it was fairly said that “thanks to Mr. Kent the printing of the Metropolitan has been carried to a greater diversity of uses and a higher perfection of utility than that of any other art museum in this country and probably in the world.”

23. Kent, *My Education*, pp. 153 ff.

and the Museum responded. Once again, it was Kent's informed interest and understanding that put a spur to this new program. With advice and encouragement from members of the Arts-in-Trades Club, a New York group whose purpose was the study of art principles in their application to trades connected with the decoration and furnishing of buildings, a series of industrial exhibitions was inaugurated in 1917, continuing over the years. Kent's hand in such endeavors had been greatly strengthened in 1918 by the appointment of Richard F. Bach, Curator of the School of Architecture of Columbia University, as Associate in Industrial Arts. As R. L. Duffus wrote some years later, with special reference to Kent and with mention of the American Wing, the Museum "was putting its collections to work. It was making people see what the past has to do with the present."

With the passage of time since the American Wing's opening, our understanding of what the past has to do with the present has inevitably gained new perspectives. Scholarship in the field of the decorative arts—and in the fine arts to be sure—has provided an immense amount of information that was not available to earlier generations; information that has added fresh and rich interest to the story of colonial craftsmen and their achievements. Not only have once unknown or obscure artisans emerged as influential contributors to

the development of our regional and national traditions in such matters, but new knowledge of methods of workmanship, sources of materials and designs, relationships between producer and consumer—all these and more—have thrown revealing light on our social history.

Beyond that, the passage of time has led to a more sympathetic appraisal of the accomplishments of the later nineteenth century, years excluded from the original scheme of the American Wing, than was easily possible forty-five years ago. As becomes increasingly clear, that part of the past has quite as much to do with the present as the earlier periods. In its current emphasis on this point, the Museum rebalances the scales of history, as must continually be done if we are to profit from the records that have come down to us. In the end, every effort to interpret the arts of the past from the changing point of view of the present enlarges and deepens their significance.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With exceptional generosity Linda Hyman, Centennial Researcher at the Metropolitan Museum, turned over to me the results of her research in the Museum's archives and other records, which I have used to great advantage. I am also indebted to Anne Palmbaum for tracing other sources that I have relied upon.

# The Biron Collection of Venetian Eighteenth-Century Drawings at the Metropolitan Museum

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IN AN ESSAY entitled *The Classics*, privately printed for Messrs. Knoedler in 1938 and not as well known as it should be, Campbell Dodgson recalled that he bought for the British Museum in 1907, from a well-known London bookseller, the 1775 edition of the *oeuvre gravé* of the Tiepolo family for £5— more than one hundred prints, including the original etching of *The Adoration of the Magi* by Giovanni Battista (an impression of which fetched over £4,000 at Sotheby's in 1968), as well as those of his sons, original or reproductive, in a contemporary folio binding, and in perfect condition. Dodgson (so he told me himself) was careful to conclude his purchase at the price before asking the bookseller why it was so cheap, to which the bookseller answered: "Well you see, Sir, it was a bad period."

Nothing seems to be reckoned a "bad period" now; the wheel of fashion spins more and more rapidly, and every style in the history of art takes a turn on it. But it is evident that in England at least, under Ruskin's influence, the distaste for Italian baroque and *settecento* art that was apparent throughout the second half of the nineteenth century continued into the twentieth. Two volumes from the Cheney sale, containing three hundred twenty-six Tiepolo drawings, mostly by Giambattista, many of them of great beauty and considerable size, cost the Victoria and Albert Museum

£111 in 1885; and all nine volumes in lot 1024 of that sale, to which those now in the Victoria and Albert belonged, cost the buyer £15.<sup>1</sup> A decade or so later, Herbert Horne bought in London, for an unrecorded but certainly trifling sum, the volume containing the beautiful series of forty-eight drawings by Giambattista that is now in the Museo Horne in Florence.<sup>2</sup> By July 1914, three further volumes of the same sort containing three hundred Tiepolo drawings were bought at Christie's by Messrs. E. Parsons for £120; but even then they were sold without the artist's name. It was only after the First World War that appreciation of one of

1. On the volumes of Tiepolo drawings from the collection of Edward Cheney of Badger Hall, Shropshire, England, sold at Sotheby's on April 29, 1885, see George Knox, *Catalogue of the Tiepolo Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1960) pp. 3-9. To Mr. Knox is due the important discovery that lot 1024 contained *nine* volumes, not *two* as printed in Sotheby's catalogue. It seems likely that the lot was bought at the sale by the London dealers Messrs. E. Parsons, who sold the two volumes to the Victoria and Albert Museum two months later; also that the three volumes sold at Christie's in July 1914 came from the same lot, and were recognized and repurchased by Messrs. Parsons on that occasion.

2. The late Gustavus Mayer, afterward of Colnaghi's, remembered meeting Horne in the King's Road, Chelsea, one night (probably on his way from Parsons' shop) with the parcel under his arm. He was much excited, and invited Mayer to dine with him and examine his bargain.

the greatest Italian draftsmen became general in England. The taste of Edward Cheney, from whose collection all those albums almost certainly came, and who bought these and many other Venetian treasures in the middle of the nineteenth century, was exceptional for an Englishman.

It was a little more characteristic, perhaps, in the second half of that century, of private collectors in France. Even there, recognition was not, so to speak, official: it is remarkable that until a few years ago the Cabinet de Dessins in the Louvre contained only four drawings attributed to Giambattista Tiepolo by Mariette—none of them by the master—and only one drawing by him from another source, classified until recently under the Tiepolo School.<sup>3</sup> Mariette, admittedly, was no great admirer of Tiepolo. The fact is, as Mr. George Knox has recently pointed out, that until the rich contents of the Cheney albums came onto the market, much less was known of the elder Tiepolo as a draftsman; and as late as 1898, Henry de Chennevières, writing the first substantial account of Tiepolo's art, saw fit to say: "Les dessins de Giambattista Tiepolo n'abondent ni dans les musées ni dans les cartons d'amateurs."<sup>4</sup> Certain French connoisseurs, however—to whom, I suppose, the rococo style had always seemed more acceptable than it was to their English counterparts—had already been delighted by the then more accessible drawings of Giambattista's son Domenico: M. Fayet had acquired in Venice in 1833 the great *Recueil* of one hundred thirty-eight large biblical subjects by him, which he bequeathed to the Louvre in 1889 (representing thereby the essential "Tiepolo style"); M. Cormier of Tours had acquired eighty-two more, which were sold in 1921. Of Giambattista himself some fine occasional examples had found their way into the collections of Beurdeley, Rodrigues, and others, probably before the end of the nineteenth century.

The taste for the drawings of Tiepolo's younger contemporary and brother-in-law, Francesco Guardi, followed essentially the same course, with one difference: that drawings by Guardi had been acquired by Eng-

lishmen during his lifetime or soon afterward, and many of them had remained in England until the revival of his reputation in the present century. And for this the reason was to some extent accidental: English collectors had bought them, as they bought his paintings, as the next best thing to their favorite, Canaletto, even supposing them to be by Canaletto himself—or in any case evocative souvenirs of Venice.

By the beginning of the present century, fine collections of Venetian eighteenth-century drawings—which means, of course, principally of Tiepolo and Guardi—had become very much the mode in France. The collection of Tiepolo drawings belonging to the Russian Prince Alexandre Orloff was sold in Paris on April 30, 1920. According to the catalogue it had been preserved in an album until shortly before that date, perhaps in one of those albums that came from lot 1024 in the Cheney sale some thirty-five years earlier. Mme Doucet, Marius Paulme, Vicomte Bernard d'Hendecourt, and among the international dealers especially Messrs. Knoedler, paid what were then high prices, two or three hundred pounds sometimes for a single splendid example. Never, certainly, so much as a thousand; but yet, I suppose, it was the turning point in the market for Tiepolo's drawings.

At what precise moment in this history the Marquis de Biron began to collect oil sketches and drawings by Tiepolo, and drawings by Guardi, as well as some fine examples of the French *dix-huitième*, can no longer be determined. Very few who knew him in his collecting days are still alive. M. Jacques Mathey remembers seeing him before 1914 in Paris, in the studio of his father, Paul Mathey, a distinguished artist and himself a discriminating collector of drawings; and Biron certainly bought drawings from him. M. Frits Lugt tells me that he visited Biron in January 1934, after he had removed from Paris to Geneva, where he died. He was, says M. Lugt, "just the type for a portrait by Boldini, whom he greatly admired, and by whose hand I saw some clever sketches, some of Biron himself." This was at 2, rue des Granges, "a big old house where the

3. Inv. no. 5471, St. Jerome. This situation at the Louvre will be amply rectified if the acquisition is confirmed of the fine collection of Venetian eighteenth-century drawings formed by the late Duc de Talleyrand, the catalogue of which was published by Antonio Morassi (*Dessins vénitiens du dix-huitième siècle de la collection du Duc de Talleyrand* [Milan, 1958]).

4. Henry de Chennevières, *Les Tiepolo* (Paris, 1898) p. 149. And yet Chennevières seems to have known of the existence of the Algarotti-Corniani collection, from which the Victoria and Albert volumes came; for he says on the same page, speaking of Domenico Tiepolo's drawings: "La plupart des dessins de Domenico ont été en la possession du Comte Cornignani Algarotti."

shutters were always closed to protect his Guardi and Tiepolo drawings hung all around.”<sup>5</sup> In 1937 Biron was already in his eighties, and he had by then decided to negotiate the sale of his collection. In the summer of that year George Blumenthal, then president of the Metropolitan Museum (who had already in 1935 been largely responsible for obtaining for the Museum a fine album of Goya drawings), was traveling in France. Biron’s intention was brought to his notice; and the story of the acquisition for the Metropolitan of this magnificent group of Venetian drawings, at a time when money was short and decisions involving large sums were not to be taken in a hurry, provides a remarkable example of public-spirited enterprise and enlightened trusteeship. On July 8 Blumenthal wrote about it to the director, Herbert E. Winlock; he wrote again on the following day and then cabled on July 26, suggesting that he should be empowered to act on the Museum’s behalf in concluding the purchase if he thought it desirable after examining the material. Four days later, having had no definite reply from the Museum, he cabled Winlock again, to say that he had seen the collection, thought it outstanding, and intended to buy it in its entirety on his own responsibility, but offering to the Museum the right to take over from him as much as was thought important. Winlock replied on the following day that he and his other trustees had full confidence in Blumenthal’s judgment and would willingly share responsibility. On August 2 arrangements were made for payment, and the purchase was concluded on Blumenthal’s terms.

At a meeting of the Committee on Purchases on October 18 of the same year, the president, now returned to New York, formally reported his purchase of one hundred seventy-six drawings and nine paintings “by various Italian and French artists” from the Marquis de Biron, on the understanding that the Museum could retain what it needed and the rest could be sold. Harry Wehle, curator of paintings, whose office was then also responsible for the collection of drawings, submitted a list of his choices: only sixteen of the seventy drawings by Giambattista Tiepolo, five of twenty-two by Domenico Tiepolo, eleven of thirty-four by Francesco Guardi, seven of twenty-three by Constantin Guys, and ten of twenty-seven by various other French and Italian artists, besides four of the nine Tiepolo paintings. In the event, it is to the credit of the subcommittee of three trustees,<sup>6</sup> appointed on that occasion

to examine the material and make their own recommendation, that what was retained went far beyond Wehle’s modest list, since they unanimously proposed (after further consultation with the staff) that the Museum should keep one hundred five drawings in all, as well as the four oil sketches that Wehle had already preferred. So it was decided; and the remainder of the collection—five paintings and twenty drawings by or attributed to G. B. Tiepolo, seven drawings by Domenico Tiepolo, thirteen drawings by F. Guardi, thirteen by Guys, and eighteen other drawings—were taken over at an agreed price by Messrs. Seligmann, Rey and Co., who had already been concerned as intermediaries in the transaction.

It would serve no purpose—it might even in some instances lead to recrimination—to attempt to trace the fish that escaped the net, or rather that were thrown back into the sea, on the occasion of this fine haul. Indeed it is impossible to identify most of the rejected drawings from the summary lists in the Museum file.<sup>7</sup> Of the five rejected oil sketches, four have been almost certainly identified, and there it is safe to say that these would have added little to the Metropolitan collection and that the four selected were unquestionably the best. It will be more useful to concentrate attention upon these, and on the superb series of drawings by Tiepolo and Guardi, which so vastly enriched the Museum holdings in Venetian art of the period. It is probably fair to say that the total price then paid for the four oil sketches and one hundred five drawings would be insufficient to buy one—the least valuable one—of the oil sketches today.

Of these four oil paintings—which, whether correctly described as models or sketches, are all of rela-

5. In a recent letter M. Lugt has been kind enough to give me some further reminiscences and information. M. Lachenal of Geneva, the son of Biron’s lawyer, says that the marquis used to visit his father every Sunday morning at ten o’clock, driving up in a calèche. Apparently he had left Paris because of some fiscal trouble—possibly, adds M. Lugt, connected with the sale of the fine Gothic sculptures from the Château de Gonthaud-Biron in the Dordogne. These sculptures were presented to the Metropolitan Museum by J. P. Morgan in 1916.

6. Stephen C. Clark, Maitland Griggs, and R. T. Halsey.

7. Some, possibly a good many, were afterward the property of Biron’s nephew, the Duc de Talleyrand: Morassi, *Collection du Duc de Talleyrand*, nos. 44 and 45, a Leopard and a Camel by Domenico Tiepolo, can be certainly identified; possibly also some Tiepolo head studies and several of the Guardis.





FIGURE 1  
St. Thecla Interceding for the Plague-Stricken of Este, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Oil on canvas. 32 × 17 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.2

tively small dimensions but of large and decorative design—the St. Thecla Interceding for the Plague-Stricken of Este (acc. no. 37.165.2, Figure 1) is surely the most beautiful; indeed, since such free sketches in oil were hardly produced before the seventeenth century in Flanders or the eighteenth century in France and Italy, and since Giambattista Tiepolo is second to

none in this genre, I should say (not forgetting Rubens and Van Dyck and Boucher) that it is one of the most beautiful sketches ever painted. It is a preliminary for the great altarpiece in the Chiesa delle Grazie at Este that was unveiled at Christmas 1759—probably a sketch rather than the final *modello*, for the variations from the finished work are considerable. Mr. Michael Levey tells me that in his view the altarpiece itself was largely executed by Domenico Tiepolo, and that he came to this conclusion by studying the Biron sketch in the Metropolitan Museum not long after a visit to Este, when he convinced himself of the superiority in quality, and more particularly in color, of the small canvas. I confess that on my own visit to Este some years ago, when I saw for the first and only time that vast, splendid painting (mounted on a slightly concave surface in the apse of the church), such a thought did not cross my mind; and I suppose it is not uncommon even for the greatest artists to reveal their highest qualities as executants on a small scale. Nevertheless, in one of the most strikingly successful systems of family collaboration in the whole history of art, this was the moment when Domenico was closest to his father—in the few years before the Tiepolos departed for Spain—and it would indeed be natural to suppose that he had a considerable part in so large an undertaking. Both Giambattista and Domenico were busy at Udine until the middle of the year in which the Este altarpiece was completed; time was therefore short, and Mr. Levey has some documentary evidence that Giambattista at that very time was suffering much from the gout. I am always respectful of Mr. Levey's opinions; and whatever the truth of this may be, his reaction was a just compliment and appreciation of the supreme quality and exquisite color harmony of the sketch.

The other three small canvases<sup>8</sup>—a rectangular Adoration of the Magi (acc. no. 37.165.1), an oval ceiling design with The Apotheosis of the Spanish Monarchy (acc. no. 37.165.3), and a roundel, again for a ceiling, with Neptune and the Winds (acc. no. 37.165.4)—are also all of masterly quality and all apparently well preserved. The Adoration is sometimes described as a sketch for the large altarpiece, now in the Munich

8. Antonio Morassi, *G. B. Tiepolo, His Life and Work* (London, 1955) fig. 40; Antonio Morassi, *A Complete Catalogue of the Paintings of G. B. Tiepolo* (London, 1962) figs. 320, 255.

Gallery, painted by Giambattista for the abbey of Schwarzach in Bavaria in 1752, when the Tiepolos were at Würzburg. From the style I should guess it to be later, perhaps by as much as a decade; it is very different in shape from the Bavarian altarpiece, simpler and to my mind more effective in composition, with more classical architecture and less of the ruined rustic buildings. One of the two ceiling designs is for the Saleta in the royal palace at Madrid, painted in 1764–1766, for which Mr. Charles Wrightsman has another brilliant oil sketch.<sup>9</sup> In the latter the noble figure of Apollo is introduced as he appears in the finished work; but in other respects, especially in the lower half of the composition, the Metropolitan sketch was followed more closely. Thus it is difficult to decide which of the two sketches preceded the other.

But my concern here is more properly with the drawings, which are now incorporated into what is still a relatively new department of the Museum, and no longer within the province of the curator of paintings as they were when the Biron collection was acquired. Of one hundred five that then entered the Metropolitan, fifty were attributed to Giambattista Tiepolo, and of these one was afterward recognized as a fine example of Domenico adapting a composition of his father's,<sup>10</sup> while another is in my opinion no more than a "family copy" of a lost original.<sup>11</sup> The remaining forty-eight are all of indisputable authenticity, for the most part in brilliant condition, and of the highest quality. With the splendid group of Tiepolo drawings at the Morgan

Library, those in the collection of the late Robert Lehman, and those now in the private collection of Dr. Rudolf Heinemann, they make New York an irresistible, indeed indispensable, field of research for any student of this great draftsman; together with these, and those at Princeton, and in a few European collections (strangely enough, not in the principal museums of the great European capitals), the Biron drawings must rank among the finest Tiepolo material in the world.<sup>12</sup>

It has been suggested by Mr. George Knox<sup>13</sup> that the Biron Tiepolo drawings once formed part of one of the Cheney albums sold at Sotheby's in 1885, to which I have already referred—more particularly of the same album that contained the forty-eight sheets now in the Museo Horne in Florence. It may well be that Biron bought many of his Tiepolos directly or indirectly from this source; indeed I should say that some thirty-six or thirty-seven of the fifty drawings acquired by the Metropolitan in 1937 as by Giambattista have all the appearance of having once belonged to an album of the Cheney sort. The corners show paste marks, as is generally the case with drawings that have been preserved in albums; and the drawings are so fresh that one would suppose they had not been framed and long exposed to the light.<sup>14</sup> That is as much as one can say with confidence; and it would certainly be a mistake to simplify the provenance too far by adding the number of Biron Tiepolos (fifty) to those now in the Museo Horne (forty-eight) and supposing that these once con-

9. The two sketches are juxtaposed in reproduction in Morassi, *Paintings of G. B. Tiepolo*, figs. 320, 321. The ceiling fresco is Morassi, *Tiepolo, His Life and Work*, fig. 59.

10. Acc. no. 37.165.5, reproduced in my book *The Drawings of Domenico Tiepolo* (London, 1962) pl. 12. The early original by Giambattista is at Bassano (L. Magagnato, *I Disegni del Museo Civico di Bassano* [1956] no. 53). A later drawing by Giambattista of similar composition is in the Morgan Library (*J. Pierpont Morgan Collection of Drawings by the Old Masters*, IV [London, 1912] pl. 133).

11. Acc. no. 37.165.8, called *The Elderly Couple*. I understand that Mr. Knox shares my view. The reproduction in Otto Benesch, *Venetian Drawings of the Eighteenth Century in America* (New York, 1947) pl. 39, is flattering. The wash lacks the transparency of Giambattista's, and the penwork is scratchy and of indifferent quality. I suspect this may be a copy by Lorenzo Tiepolo, though the version in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Knox, *Tiepolo Drawings*, no. 311) is certainly inferior. The same two figures were repeated by Domenico in one of the famous *Punchinello* series, no. 93, now the property of Mr. George Cheston in Philadelphia.

12. Apart from the Biron drawings, the Metropolitan had only one by Giambattista Tiepolo acquired earlier (from the large gift of Cornelius Vanderbilt in 1880) and two others acquired since (in 1959 and 1964), before the very recent bequest of Robert Lehman. The department also held on long-term loan from Mrs. George Blumenthal a fine, early, pictorially finished *St. Jerome and the Angels*, which, as Linda Boyer Gillies was the first to point out, is the original of a copy in the Correr Museum, Venice, published by George Knox, "A Group of Tiepolo Drawings Owned and Engraved by Pietro Monaco," *Master Drawings* 3, no. 4 (1965) pl. 29.

13. Knox, *Tiepolo Drawings*, p. 5.

14. Many of the familiar caricature drawings by Giambattista, which Mr. George Knox suggests may also have formed one or more of the Cheney albums, have the corners cut—no doubt to eliminate the paste marks when they were detached. The most recent large batch of drawings from the Cheney albums to appear again on the market came from the private collection of Richard Owen after his death in Paris in 1951. A few of these were superb



**FIGURE 2**  
Chronos and a Child, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 10 × 12 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.7

stituted a single volume of ninety-eight drawings, comparable to the volume of one hundred eight now in the Morgan Library, or the two volumes of two hundred thirty-seven and eighty-nine respectively in the Victoria and Albert Museum, of which the original bindings survive. The fact is that though thirty-six or thirty-seven, as I say, probably did come from one or other of the Cheney albums, and some or even all of these may have come from the same album as those

acquired by Herbert Horne, we have no means of establishing this with certainty. And the remaining thirteen or fourteen are of various sorts, not commonly found in the former Cheney collections, nor does their present appearance suggest that they were preserved in the same way. Let me refer to some specific examples. More than twenty of the Biron drawings have been connected with the ceiling of the Palazzo Clerici in Milan (1740); two of several Allegories of Time (acc.

nos. 37.165.7, Figure 2, and 37.165.9) are perhaps the outstanding examples.<sup>15</sup> All these, to judge by their appearance and condition, might well have come from one of the Cheney albums, and the same is true of a considerable number of others in the same technique—a technique in which the delicate pen line, scarcely heeding the preliminaries in black or red chalk, skims like a skater's trace over the sized surface of the paper,

examples from the Orloff sale of 1920, but the majority came from an album that was broken up for sale at the Savile Gallery, London, in 1928, containing Cheney's bookplate and note of provenance from Tiepolo's time to his. According to the note, this and other volumes were presented to the Sommaschi Monastery of S. Maria della Salute by Giambattista and his son (probably his eldest son Vincenzo, who was a priest at that monastery) before the three painter members of the family left for Spain in 1762. The Owen drawings were sold through Arthur Tooth and Sons, London; some to the late Tomas Harris (whose fine collection of Tiepolo now belongs to Dr. Rudolf Heinemann in New York),

enhanced by the lightest and most transparent golden brown wash, and finally accented with a full brush, applied here and there, with perfect judgment, before the light wash was quite dry. These are nearly all allegorical figures: Chronos, Prudence, Truth, represented in the clouds; Apollo, River Gods, Zephyrus and Flora, Satyrs and Nymphs (Figures 3–7); but they include also three figure-groups in the manner of the Scherzi

that passed through Colnaghi's. I can vouch for the fact that the drawings that passed through Colnaghi's hands were pasted down at the corners in the same way as is suggested by the present appearance of those here referred to in the Biron collection at the Metropolitan; only in that case the original eighteenth-century album sheets, on which the drawings were pasted, were preserved, whereas in the Metropolitan they have been replaced by modern paper.

15. Closely related to a drawing for the same project in the Morgan Library (*Morgan Collection of Drawings by the Old Masters*, IV, pl. 125).

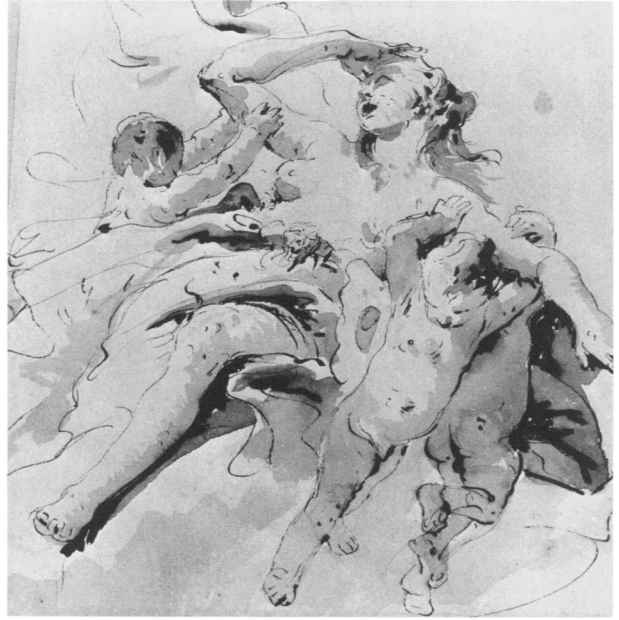


**FIGURE 3**  
 Venus Entrusting an Infant in Swaddling Clothes to Time, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 12 × 10 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.11



**FIGURE 4**  
Apollo in his Chariot, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 9½ × 9½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.35

**FIGURE 5**  
Allegorical Figure Supported by Putti, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $8\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.20



**FIGURE 6**  
Nobility and Virtue, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $10\frac{3}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.29



**FIGURE 7**  
A Satyr, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.38

di Fantasia (acc. nos. 37.165.13, 17, 18, Figure 8).<sup>16</sup> All must be of the early 1740s. On the other hand, two very large and splendid scenes of martyrdom, called *The Martyrdom of St. Nazarius and St. Celsus* (acc. no. 37.165.14)<sup>17</sup> and *The Martyrdom of St. Cyprian and St. Justina of Antioch* (acc. no. 37.165.15, Figure 9), are of a different type altogether, unrepresented in any of the known Cheney collections—carefully finished in pictorial fashion with the brush over prelimi-

16. Of these, 37.165.17 is recorded as having come to Biron from the Rodrigues Collection. It is identical in style with 37.165.18, but much less fresh in condition. It is possible that Eugène Rodrigues (born 1853) bought this drawing from one of the Cheney albums that were broken up, and had it mounted and framed, and that its freshness was spoiled by exposure to light. Two others, 37.165.12 (called *Time, Present and Future*) and 37.165.45 (*Prudence, with a Putto*) are known to have come from the Ro-

nary drawing in black chalk and pen outline, like the early drawings, at Bassano and elsewhere, that belonged to and were engraved by Pietro Monaco.<sup>18</sup> *The Virgin Enthroned with St. Sebastian and a Franciscan Saint*, a beautifully balanced, sculpturally compact composition in chiaroscuro technique on thick greenish paper (acc. no. 37.165.6), though smaller than these, is in the same early style, perhaps of the middle 1730s, and again is unlike the typical Cheney drawings. A fine

drigues Collection.

17. An old copy of this drawing was exhibited at the Galerie Cailleux exhibition *Tiepolo et Guardi*, Paris, 1952, cat. 1.

18. For this type of drawing, see George Knox in *Master Drawings* 3, no. 4, noted above. Mrs. Larissa Salmina-Haskell has published a red chalk tracing in the Hermitage of Metropolitan 37.165.14, no doubt done for the engraver, but apparently not engraved by Monaco or anyone else.

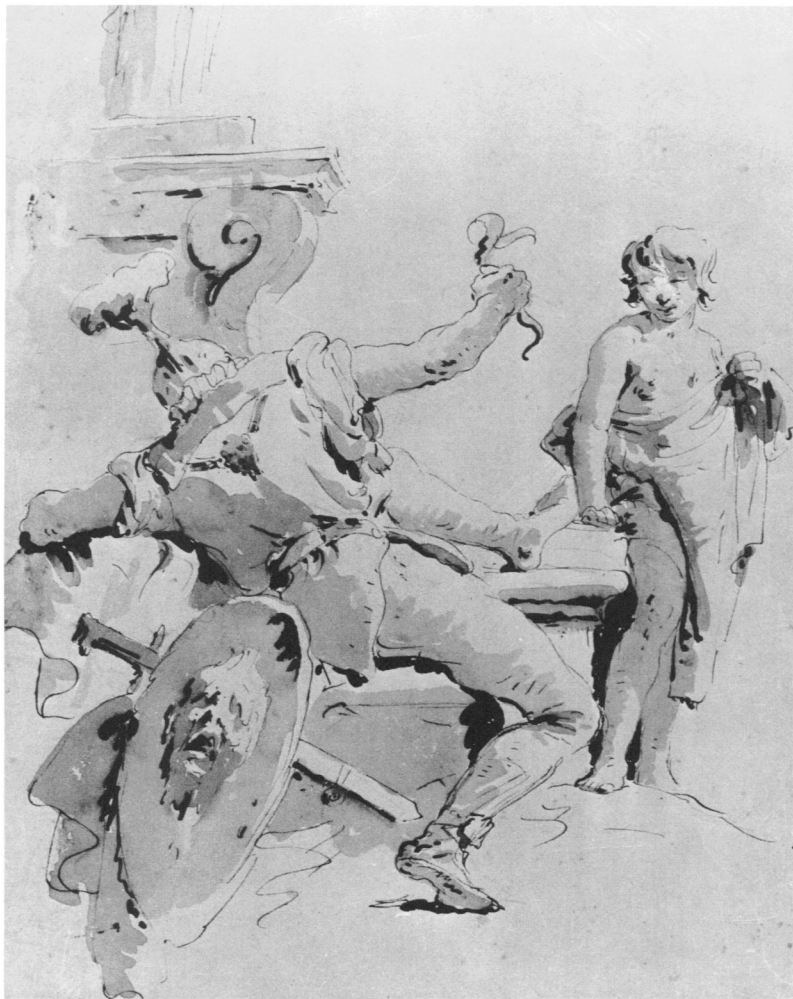


FIGURE 8  
*Warrior and Boy*, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 13  $\frac{3}{4}$   $\times$  10  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.18

FIGURE 9  
*The Martyrdom of St. Cyprian and St. Justina of Antioch(?)*, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, heightened with white. 19  $\frac{5}{8}$   $\times$  14  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.15







FIGURE 10  
Studies of a Spaniel, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Black chalk, heightened with white, on blue paper. 13 × 9 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.53

Adoration of the Magi,<sup>19</sup> drawn mainly with the brush, is larger than most of the album drawings. Finally, it is certain that the two drawings in black and white chalks on blue paper—the studies of a Spaniel (acc. no. 37.165.53, Figure 10), derived from a painting by Veronese, and the study of an Eagle (37.165.109)—came to Biron from the Wendland Collection; they once belonged to a large assembly of chalk studies owned by the de'Bossi-Beyerlen family in Stuttgart, of which part went to the Stuttgart Printroom in 1882 and part (at a much later date, via the bookseller Baer in Frankfurt) to Hans Wendland at Lugano. Both these Biron drawings have the familiar “Stuttgart numbering” on the back.<sup>20</sup>

Of Giambattista’s gifted son and faithful assistant,

Giandomenico Tiepolo, the Metropolitan acquired with the Biron drawings sixteen particularly choice examples. Besides the adaptation of his father’s composition of Abraham and the Angels, bought as Giambattista, to which I have already referred, there is another pictorially and gracefully composed religious subject, The Holy Family with Two Female Saints (Figure 11), which is a record of one of his own altar paintings;<sup>21</sup> and there is perhaps the largest and most impressive of the series of the Assumption of the Virgin.<sup>22</sup> Further: an amusing Oriental Lancer on the Outskirts of an Italian Town (acc. no. 37.165.67, Figure 12), in which the lancer is a repetition of the single figure in one of the three drawings by Domenico that were previously in the Museum collection;<sup>23</sup> a fine sheet of Caricatures and Character Heads (acc. no. 37.165.68), which is important (since it bears the familiar signature) for the difficult distinction between Domenico’s caricatures and those of his father;<sup>24</sup> and no fewer than eleven examples of one of the most delightful and imaginative of his series, the Satyrs and Centaurs (acc. nos. 37.165.54–64), which echo the little grisaille paintings once in the Tiepolo villa at Zianigo and now in the Palazzo Rezzonico in Venice. With the notable exception of the Punchinellos, not represented in the Metropolitan before the recent announcement

19. Acc. no. 37.165.16, reproduced in Mr. Jacob Bean’s selection, *100 European Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum* (New York, 1964) pl. 41.

20. On this “Stuttgart” collection, see my book *Drawings of Domenico Tiepolo*, p. 19, note 2. Since then, in 1967, Dr. Werner Deusch of Stuttgart has discovered a copy of the sale catalogue of 1882 (by Gutekunst of Stuttgart) in the possession of Messrs. Gutekunst & Klipstein (now Kornfeld & Klipstein) of Berne.

21. Acc. no. 37.165.66, from the Rodrigues Collection. I am indebted to Mr. George Knox for pointing out to me that the altarpiece is that now in S. Nicolò at Padua (formerly in S. Agnese), signed and dated 1777; and that the Metropolitan drawing shows the original composition, to which, in the painting, a third saint has been added at the lower left by another hand (see *Inventario della Provincia di Padova*, 1936, p. 9).

22. Acc. no. 37.165.65. Byam Shaw, *Drawings of Domenico Tiepolo*, pl. 24.

23. Acc. no. 35.42.1. The other two were A Turkish Pasha Resting (Byam Shaw, *Drawings of Domenico Tiepolo*, pl. 42) and a Baptism of Christ. Since 1937, four more have been added: two of the charming series of Pagan Gods and Goddesses in 1941, an Elephant in 1960, and in 1968 one of Domenico’s masterpieces of c. 1791, The Acrobats.

24. Byam Shaw, *Drawings of Domenico Tiepolo*, pl. 78; Bean, *100 European Drawings*, pl. 49.

FIGURE 11

The Holy Family with Two Female Saints, by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $13\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.66

of the forthcoming gift to the Museum of the Robert Lehman collection, the Museum collection thus included nearly all the best-known categories of drawings by that “bavard du dessin, le plus séduisant et le plus intarissable des bavards,”<sup>25</sup> in specimens of the first order.

The representation of Guardi's drawings at the Metropolitan before the acquisition of the Biron Collection in 1937 was a little better than that of G. B. Tiepolo, but not much. It included a spirited Bull-Baiting sketch (acc. no. 11.66.12) of c. 1782;<sup>26</sup> a very large, early, Canalettesque view of The Grand Canal from the Fabrice Nuove del Rialto to Palazzo Pesaro (acc. no. 12.56.14), which, though it has been doubted in the past, is certainly authentic, indeed of great importance for the problem of Francesco as a “history” painter, since it has figure studies on the back;<sup>27</sup> and a fine free sketch, with a touch of color, of the doge's state barge, The Bucintoro, Rowing towards the Left (acc. no. 19.151.2).<sup>28</sup> Four others are relatively unimportant;<sup>29</sup> and no one would have pretended that this was a really representative group. With the acquisition of twenty-one unimpeachable examples from Biron, the Museum could boast a collection of Francesco Guardi that is, in point of quality and variety, second to none.

Two of the Biron drawings are of exceptional size and brilliance: The Fire at S. Marcuola, of 1789 (acc. no. 37.165.74, Figure 13), and the Villa Loredan near Treviso (acc. no. 37.165.69, Figure 14), which is prob-



ably of 1778. The first is perhaps, of all drawings by Guardi, the one that most clearly illustrates his peculiar genius—his flair for recording, with the utmost economy of means, the instantaneous impression of a startling event or a great occasion. It is greatly superior to the drawing of the same subject in the Museo Correr in Venice, which in my opinion was originally no more than a study of the crowd of spectators, to which Francesco's son Giacomo later added the background and the inscription, no doubt in the hope, after his father's

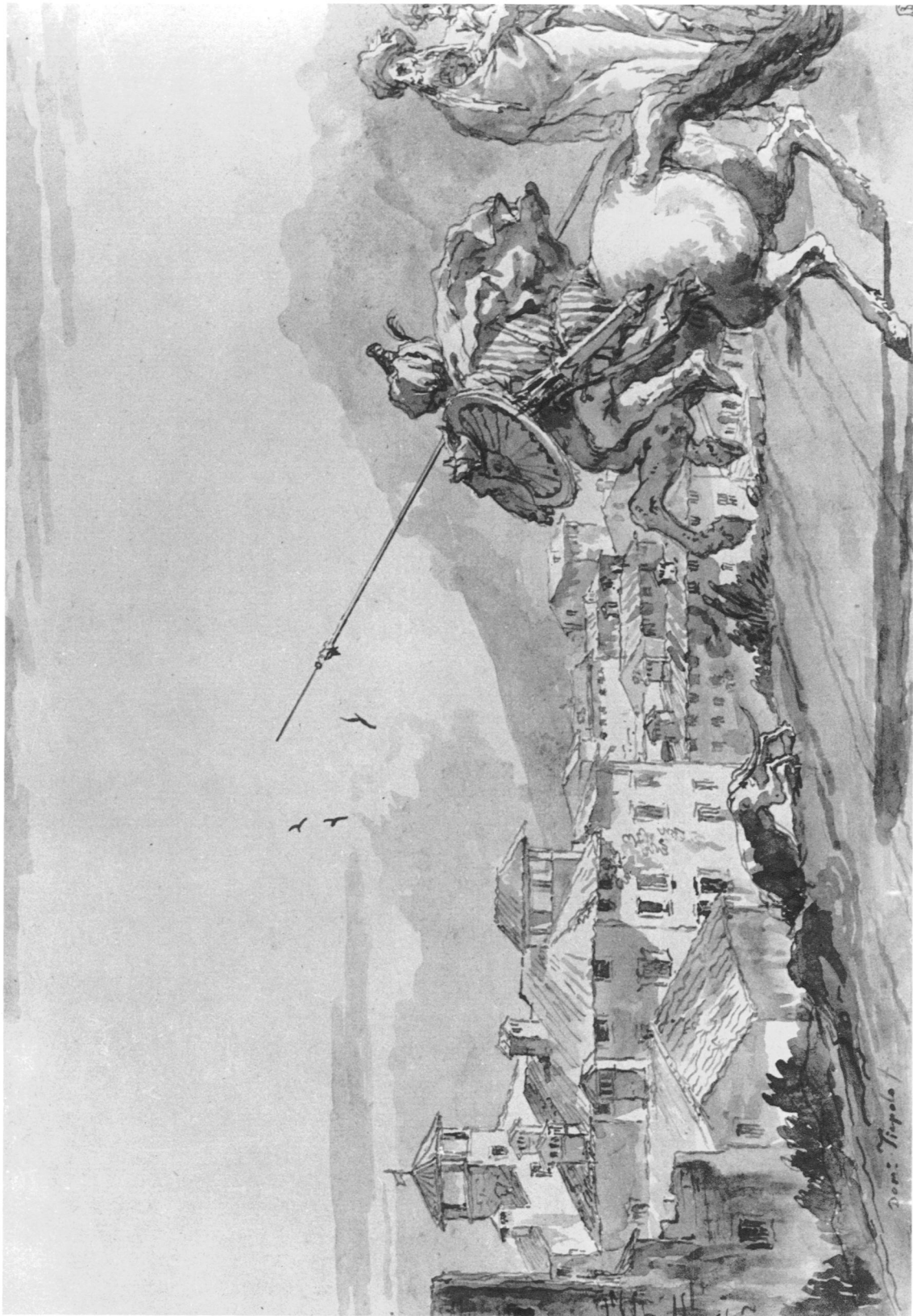
25. Chennevières, *Les Tiepolo*, p. 149.

26. Another of exactly the same type belongs to Count Antoine Seilern in London: see J. Byam Shaw, “Unpublished Guardi Drawings,” *Art Quarterly* 17 (1954) p. 217, fig. 3.

27. J. Byam Shaw, *The Drawings of Francesco Guardi* (London, 1951) pls. 9, 10.

28. Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, pl. 52. On the back is another sketch of the Bucintoro, Rowing towards the Right, surrounded by gondolas (Benesch, *Venetian Drawings*, pl. 67). Benesch is surely mistaken in saying that the color on the recto is not original.

29. The Capriccio with an Obelisk is good but faded. For other versions of this, see Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, p. 69. The Kramarsky drawing is the best.

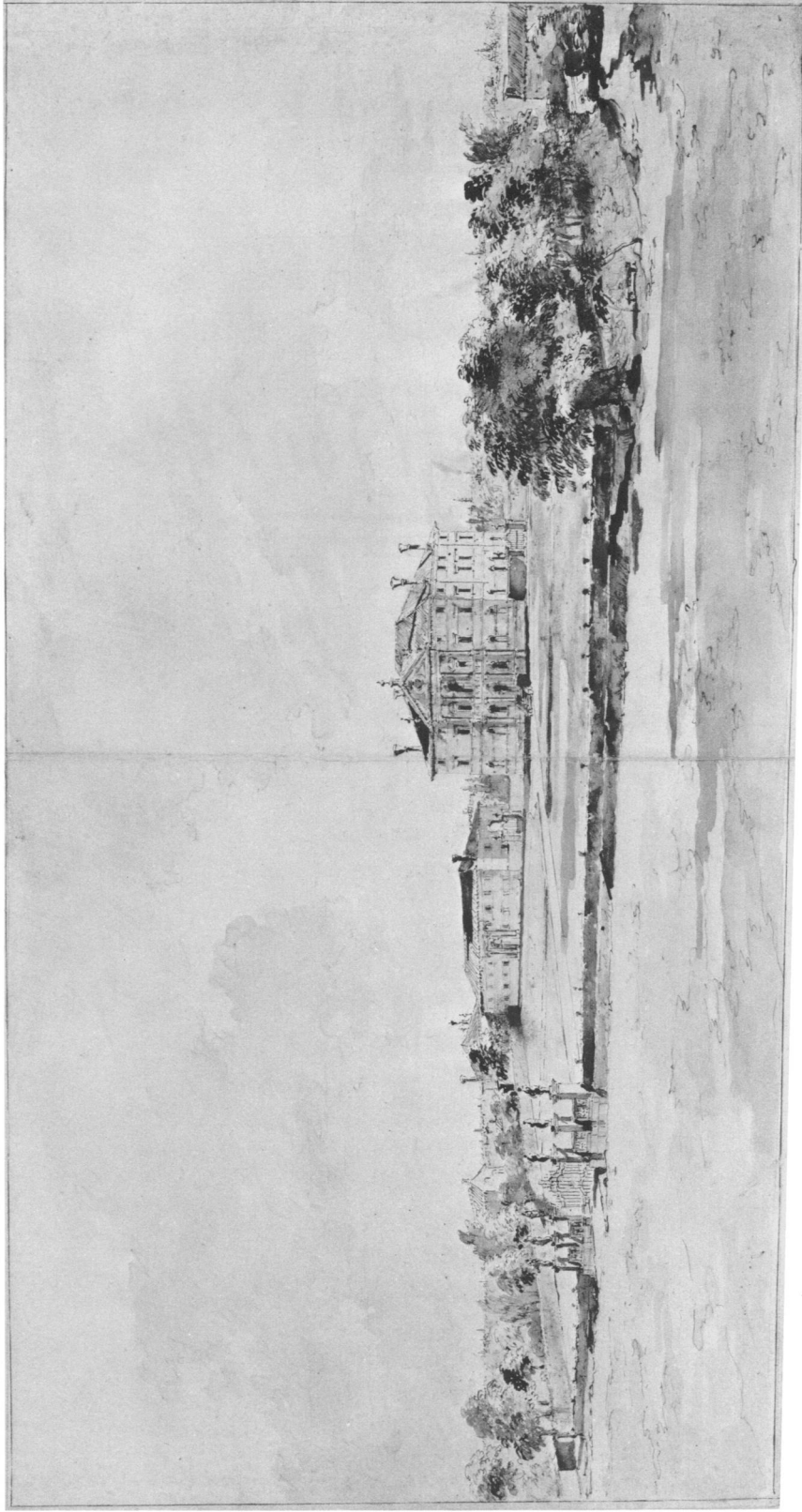


**FIGURE 12**  
Oriental Lancer on the Outskirts of an Italian Town, by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 11 ¼ x 16 ⅞ in.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.67

FIGURE 13

The Fire at S. Marcuola, by Francesco Guardi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 17 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.74





**FIGURE 14**  
Villa Loredan near Treviso, by Francesco Guardi.  
Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $15\frac{3}{4} \times 30$  in. The  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund,  
37.165.69

**FIGURE 15**  
The Island of Anconetta, by Francesco Guardi.  
Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over red chalk.  
 $4\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Rogers Fund, 37.165.84



death, of making it more saleable to some foreign visitor.<sup>30</sup> The view of the Villa Loredan<sup>31</sup> I was able to identify many years ago from a corresponding view in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, which is inscribed below the margin in the handwriting of John Strange, British Resident in Venice from 1773 to 1790: "View of the Seat of S. E. Loredano at Paese near Treviso, at present in the possession of John Strange Esq<sup>r</sup>. N.B. grass ground within the Fence; without, the post road from Treviso to Bassano." This must have been the road that Francesco Guardi took when he made his last journey to the Guardi property in the Val di Sole, beyond Trento, in 1778;<sup>32</sup> he made several other large drawings on the way,<sup>33</sup> and there are no fewer than two paintings and five drawings of the Villa Loredan,<sup>34</sup> some of them no doubt done for Strange (either on the outward or the return journey), as well as others done in the neighborhood. One of the paintings seems to have been done directly from the present drawing, with the figures added; whereas a smaller, freer drawing of the same composition, which Mrs. Murray Danforth presented to the Rhode Island Museum some years ago, was probably a preliminary, and the Ashmolean drawing to which I have referred was perhaps made by Guardi himself as a record of the painting. Of this considerable group of drawings, inspired by that journey on the Venetian mainland in 1778, the Biron-Metropolitan view of the Villa Loredan is surely the most important.

Besides these, six other of the Biron Guardis are real views (*vedute prese dai luoghi*, in Canaletto's phrase), though in some of them, as often with Guardi, the topography is erratic. There is a view of the Piazzetta towards S. Giorgio (acc. no. 37.165.78), with the Cam-

30. See Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, pp. 68-69, pls. 40-41.

31. Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, pl. 30; Bean, *100 European Drawings*, pl. 46.

32. Not 1782, as supposed by George Simonson (*Francesco Guardi* [London, 1904]) and repeated by myself (*Guardi Drawings*). The proper date of the journey was established by Fernanda de'Maffei, *Gianantonio Guardi* (Verona, 1951) p. 42.

33. See Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, pp. 65-66.

34. One of the paintings is now in the collection of Mr. Charles Wrightsman. It belongs to a set of four once in the possession of the first Lord Rothermere, and originally in that of John Strange. Strange probably owned at least some of the drawings too; but the many Guardi drawings in the Strange Sale in London of 1799 are not individually described in the catalogue.

panile on the right running up out of the composition—in this respect recalling a favorite device of Carlevarijs sixty or seventy years before, though the drawing is clearly very late, scribbly, and impressionistic; there is also a view of the Fenice Theatre (acc. no. 37.165.73), which may be later still, since the theatre was opened only in 1792, less than a year before Guardi's death.<sup>35</sup> The others are: a very pretty little sketch of the lagoon Island of Anconetta (acc. no. 37.165.84, Figure 15), in pen over red chalk; a brilliant but capricious rendering of the Scala dei Giganti in the Doges' Palace, with the giants replaced by more elegant sculptured figures (37.165.85);<sup>36</sup> an unusual glimpse, over the wall of a small *campo*, of the side of the great Basilica of SS. Giovanni e Paolo (acc. no. 37.165.70, Figure 16);<sup>37</sup> and a view of the gardens with the cut hedges and ornamental architecture of the Villa Correr at Fiesso d'Artico, near Strà, on the mainland of Venice (acc. no. 37.165.77).<sup>38</sup> This last, though rather scratchy in the penwork and not of the highest quality, must certainly be by Francesco, but the inscription *Guardi f.* below the margin line is in Giacomo's hand. On the back are an interesting figure study in black chalk of a female saint (St. Teresa?) and a study of praying hands,<sup>39</sup> presumably by Francesco also, perhaps copied from some composition of his brother-in-law G. B. Tiepolo.

Twelve of the remaining drawings are *capricci*, imaginary views or *vedute ideate* (as Canaletto called them on the frontispiece of his etchings); and of these only one belongs to the category that I have called Romantic *Capricci*, or idyllic landscapes, imaginary scenes set by the still, shallow waters of the Venetian lagoon.<sup>40</sup> But it is a particularly good and characteristic example (acc. no. 37.165.75, Figure 17), the best I know, among drawings, of a composition that Guardi repeated sev-

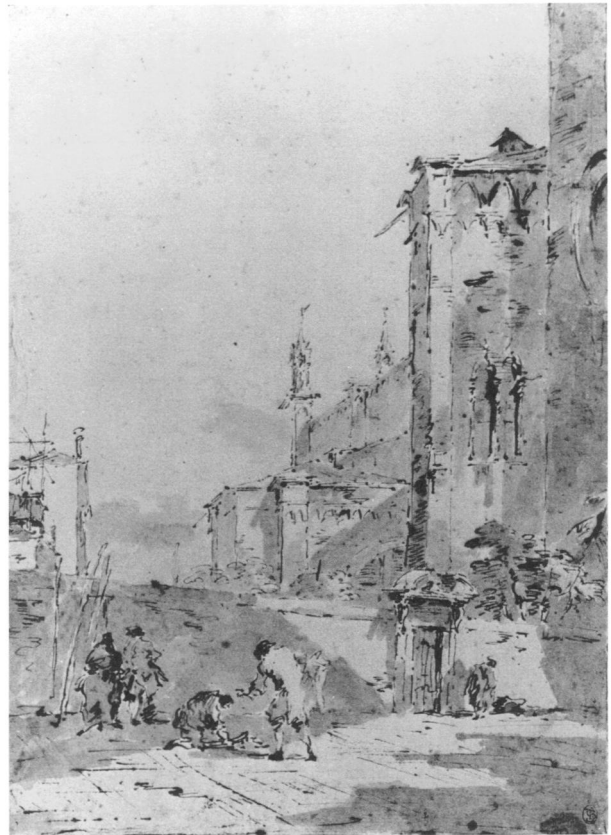


FIGURE 16

The Side of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, by Francesco Guardi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash. 14¾ × 10½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.70

eral times, and of which the best painting, perhaps, is one that belonged to the late Francis Stonor.<sup>41</sup> The other eleven form an incomparable group of what I call Architectural or Venetian *Capricci*, consisting of the combination of motives from existing Venetian

35. The Metropolitan drawing is reproduced by Max Goering, *Francesco Guardi* (Vienna, 1944) fig. 151; the other of the same subject, in the Correr Museum, Venice, is R. Pallucchini, *Die Zeichnungen des Francesco Guardi im Museum Correr zu Venedig* (Florence, 1943) 87. This is the second case in which New York and Venice each have a version of an unusual subject (see above, The Fire at S. Marcuola); but in this case I prefer the drawing in Venice and suspect that Giacomo Guardi may have done a little touching-up in India ink (contrasting in quality with the clear bister wash on the figures) on his father's drawing now in New York. There is an architectural fragment on the verso that is certainly by Giacomo.

36. Bean, 100 *European Drawings*, pl. 48.

37. Mr. Leslie Parris drew attention to a corresponding painting in the Loyd Collection at Lockinge Park, Berkshire, England (catalogue [London, 1967] no. 29).

38. Another view of the Correr gardens is in the Correr Museum, Venice (Pallucchini 93).

39. For the verso, see M. Muraro, "An Altar-piece and other Figure Paintings by Francesco Guardi," *Burlington Magazine* 100 (1958) p. 8.

40. Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, pp. 31–32.

41. Other versions are reproduced in Goering, *Guardi*, figs. 64, 65.

architecture, some of which recur with variations again and again. Several, of courtyards or staircases, seem to be reminiscences of the Doges' Palace (acc. nos. 37.165.71, 72, 80, 82, 86); others combine with unreal surroundings a reminiscence of the Clock-Tower Arch (acc. no. 37.165.79) or the Colonnade of the Libreria (acc. no. 37.165.88). One (acc. no. 37.165.76, Figure 18) is particularly interesting as a derivation from Canaletto's Diploma work, the painting that Canaletto presented to the Venetian Academy on his election, so

42. Several of these fine architectural *capricci* in New York are reproduced in Goering, *Guardi*; and two more by myself, *Guardi Drawings*, pls. 59, 64.

43. One characteristic type of drawing, not included in the Biron series, has been supplied since by the acquisition in 1940 of two excellent sheets of *macchiette*, or small independent figure

long delayed, to that institution in 1765—not, significantly enough, one of his familiar views of Venice but an architectural *capriccio*. All these exhibit Guardi's strange but characteristic disregard of the function of the architecture that he depicts and of the spatial relationship of one part to another.<sup>42</sup>

Thus the Biron Guardi drawings now in the Metropolitan Museum exemplify nearly all the familiar categories that I attempted to distinguish in my book of 1951,<sup>43</sup> and at the same time illustrate several other

sketches, from the Hochschild Collection, (one reproduced in Bean, *100 European Drawings*, pl. 47). Such sketches were used piecemeal in innumerable paintings; see Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, pls. 50–51, where both New York examples are reproduced. The Metropolitan also acquired by bequest in 1958 six typical small views of Venice by Francesco's son Giacomo, all in pen and

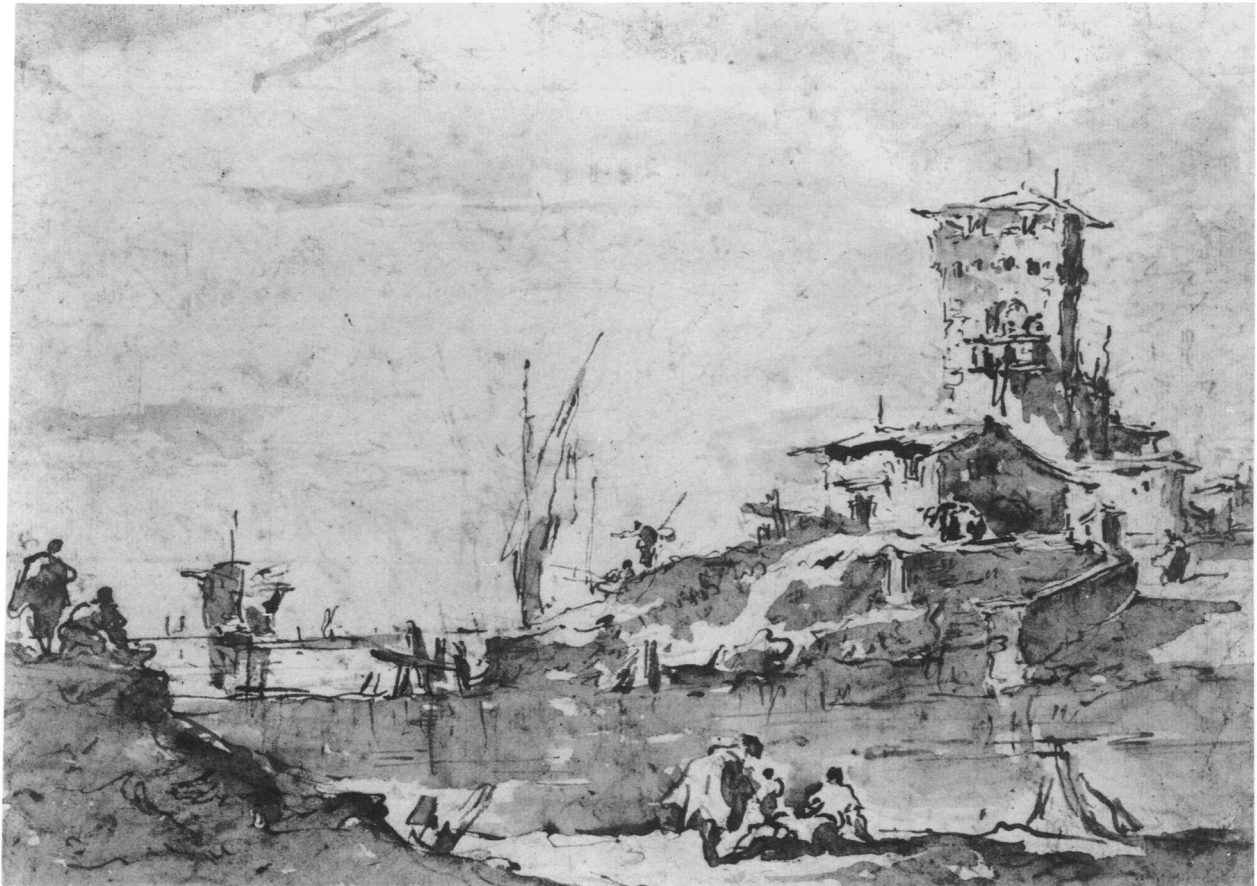


FIGURE 17

Lagoon Capriccio, by Francesco Guardi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $7\frac{7}{16} \times 10\frac{5}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.75



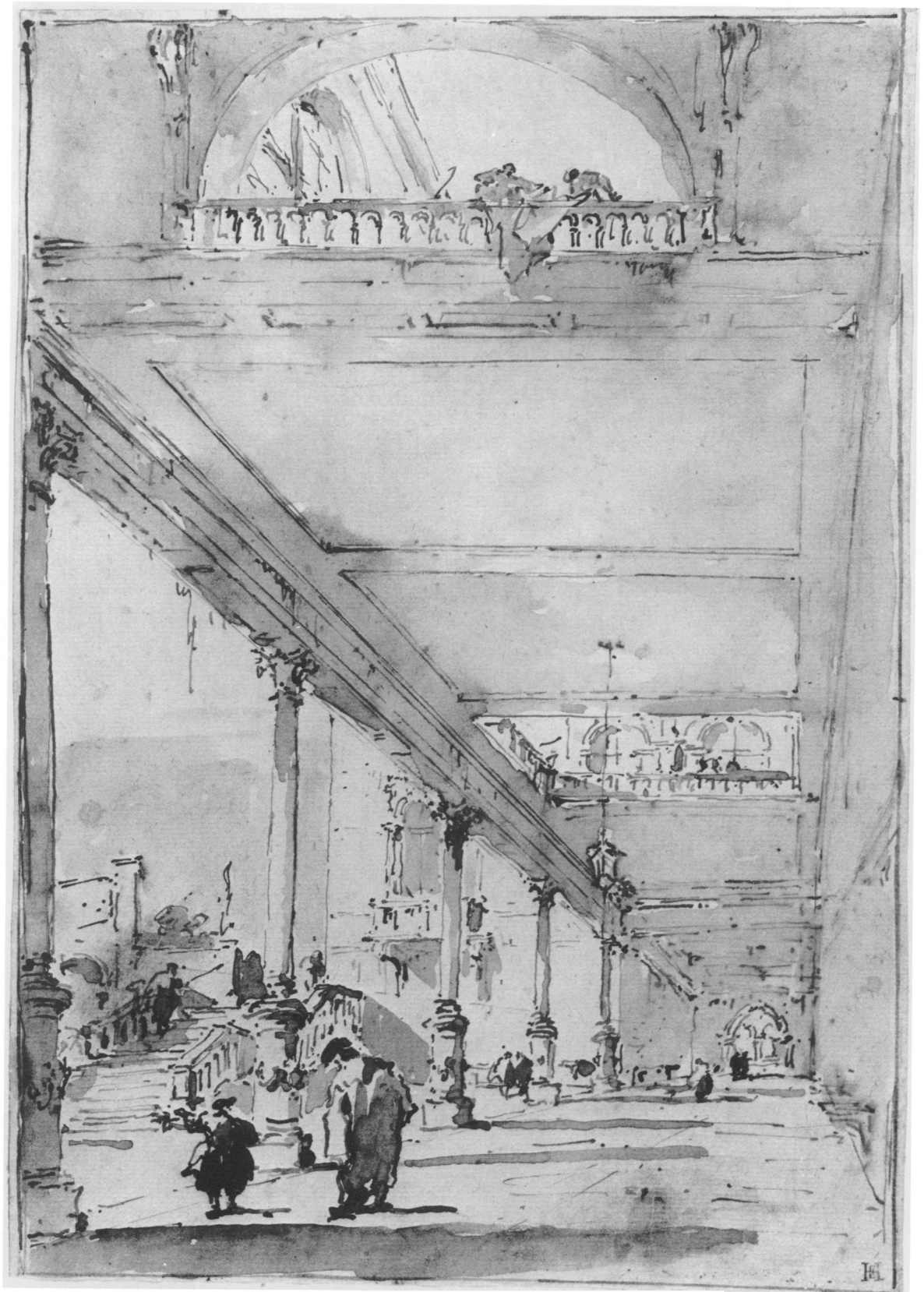


FIGURE 18

Capriccio Based on a Painting by Canaletto, by Francesco Guardi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $10\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.76

points of interest to which I drew attention there: his economy, for instance, in the use of paper, and the frequent employment by his son Giacomo of the backs of his father's drawings. Two of the courtyard *capricci* (37.165.71, 72) are drawn on the backs of old letters, one including the date 1761, though the drawing must be many years later than that. Three drawings, the Fenice Theatre, the Island of Anconetta, and one of the best of the *capricci*, the Garden Entrance to a Palace (acc. no. 37.165.81, Figure 19), have crude studies on the backs that are evidently by Giacomo;<sup>44</sup> and in the last case it appears that it was Giacomo who used the sheet first and that Francesco cut up his son's childish effort for his own purpose. Three others have sketches on the back by Francesco himself: one (acc. no. 37.165.77), to which I have already referred, has the figure of a female saint and a pair of hands; one (acc. no. 37.165.80) has a slight black-chalk sketch after an oval painting by Tiepolo;<sup>45</sup> and the third, The Fire at S. Marcuola, has a delicate study of Roman ruins, used in more than one of Guardi's paintings.<sup>46</sup> Finally I must mention an authentic Guardi drawing of an unusual sort that was rightly attributed to Francesco when the Biron collection was acquired, but was subsequently relegated to the anonymous Italians—a large unfinished design in pen and watercolor for an Ornamental Frame (acc. no. 37.165.101, Figure 20),<sup>47</sup> a fine piece of Venetian rococo, evidently intended for a looking glass. A smaller but more elaborate design for a similar purpose is on the back of one of the Guardi drawings from the Koenigs Collection (no. 344) in the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen at Rotterdam.

gray wash and all signed and inscribed on the back in his familiar way (though without the usual address in the Calle del Parruchier). To complete the representation of the Guardi family, a figure subject by the newly rehabilitated Gianantonio has lately been acquired.

44. For other examples of this combination, at Rotterdam, Oxford, Vienna, and in the Morgan Library, see Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, note to pl. 63.

45. S. Luigi Gonzaga, Half-length, Holding a Crucifix. The original painting was at Colnaghi's in London in 1968.

FIGURE 19

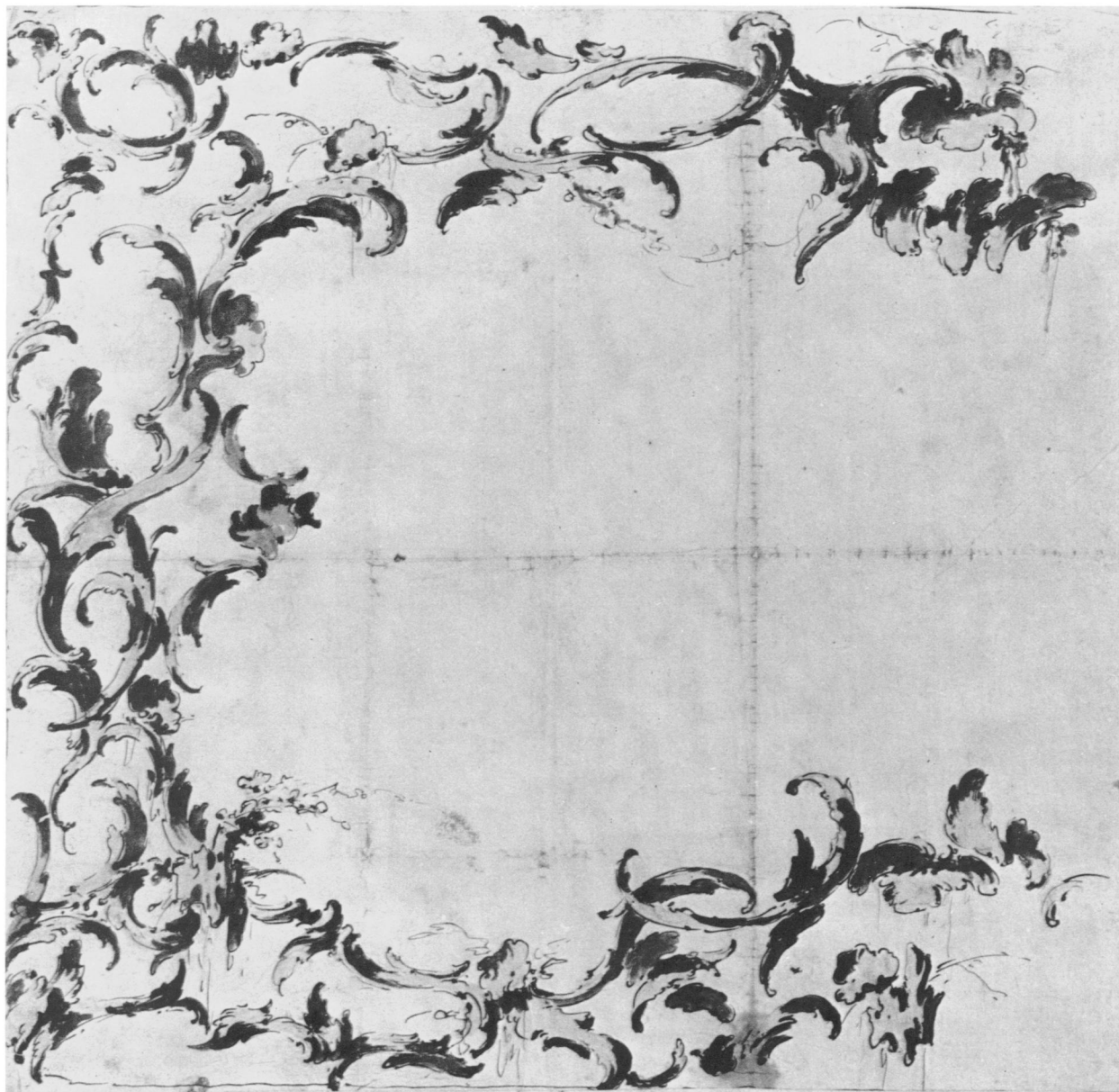
Garden Entrance to a Palace, by Francesco Guardi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash.  $7\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 37.165.81



The number of Guardis acquired from Biron in 1937 is therefore twenty-one. It is a group of drawings worthy of a great museum, chosen with characteristic French connoisseurship, carefully preserved, and (like most of

46. The verso is reproduced in Goering, *Guardi*, fig. 143. For a related drawing and the paintings, see Byam Shaw, *Guardi Drawings*, note to pl. 40.

47. Mrs. Larissa Salmina-Haskell recognized this when she was exploring the anonymous Italian drawings in the department in January 1969 and kindly drew my attention to it. It has a contemporary mat, with lines and dark coffee-colored wash, of exactly the same type as pls. 5, 7, 60, and 61 of my book on Guardi's drawings, and must have been once in the same collection.



**FIGURE 20**  
Ornamental Frame, by Francesco Guardi. Pen  
and brown ink, green wash. 17×16¼ in. The  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund,  
37.165.101



FIGURE 21  
Head of Mezzetin, by Antoine  
Watteau. Red and black chalk.  $5\frac{7}{8}$   
 $\times 5\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Mu-  
seum of Art, Rogers Fund,  
37.165.107

the Tiepolos from the same collection) in brilliant condition. They were bought by Biron from various well-known sources—Paul Mathey, Beurdeley, Habich, Gasc, Warneck, and the Earl of Warwick. Perhaps the finest, *The Fire at S. Marcuola*, once belonged to Miss Lucy Cohen, who with her sister owned many beautiful *settecento* paintings, some of which are now in the National Gallery in London.<sup>48</sup>

I have confined my attention in detail to the Venetians, but I must refer briefly to the remaining nineteen drawings acquired with the Biron purchase. The pair of large landscapes attributed to Guercino are now recognized as no more than school copies; the remainder are French, seven of them of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century and ten by Constantin Guys. Of the earlier group, the exquisite *Head of Mezzetin* by Watteau (acc. no. 37.165.107, Figure 21) is outstanding and has been more than once reproduced.<sup>49</sup> An

ornamental design signed by Augustin Pajou, from the celebrated *Goncourt Collection* (acc. no. 37.165.104),<sup>50</sup> an *Assumption of the Virgin* by Prud'hon for the altarpiece of the chapel of the Tuileries, finished in 1819 (acc. no. 37.165.105),<sup>51</sup> and a late drapery study by Ingres (acc. no. 37.165.100) are the best of the others. Guys in his time was perhaps better known in England

48. The late Duc de Talleyrand told me that Miss Lucy Cohen sold twenty-five sheets from her album of one hundred Guardi drawings, to which Simonson refers, after the appearance of the Simonson monograph in 1904. Eleven of these were bought by Seligmann, who sold them to the Marquis de Biron, Talleyrand's uncle, in 1909. Four of them were given by Biron to Talleyrand.

49. K. T. Parker and J. Mathey, *Catalogue de l'oeuvre dessiné d'Antoine Watteau, II* (Paris, 1957) no. 726; Bean, *100 European Drawings*, pl. 56.

50. Bean, *100 European Drawings*, pl. 60.

51. Bean, *100 European Drawings*, pl. 63.

than in France, as a draftsman for the *Illustrated London News* and as drawing master in the family of Dr. Thomas Girtin, the son of the famous watercolor artist; and it is from these two sources that a large number of Guys' drawings have lately come to the public notice.<sup>52</sup> Many more were on the market in Paris in Biron's time. As spontaneous records of high life in London and of gay (and low) life in Paris in the second half of the nineteenth century, they have gradually gained a reputation that some may think out of proportion to their merit as works of art. But Biron chose well, and the group acquired by the Metropolitan in 1937 represents the draftsman at his best and most entertaining.

It was always the hope of James Rorimer, whose directorship ended so sadly with his death in 1966, that a separate Department of Drawings should be established in the Metropolitan Museum; and in his time that hope was realized. In December 1960 Mr. Jacob Bean was appointed to take charge of the collection, and since then a new and commodious *cabinet de dessins* has been built. Mr. Blumenthal's great coup of 1937, which I have recounted here (to say nothing of the acquisition, two years earlier, of an album of fifty splendid drawings by Goya), might suggest to the uninitiated that the old system was satisfactory enough. The Museum had been fortunate in having trustees who were specifically interested in drawings; and it is so still—I am thinking for instance of Mr. Walter Baker among the trustees today. But those who are familiar both with the machinery of a great museum and the present condition of the art market know that nowadays such a system is not the best. Apart from the problem of accommodation (which in itself was no doubt overriding in this case) there are two compelling arguments. First, it is impossible for a curator who is chiefly concerned with paintings to keep a sufficient eye on the future possibilities, or the actual demands for action, in the present extravagant market for old-master drawings—to study the private collections that

might one day be available, to read the sale catalogues that so urgently present themselves, and to do the necessary research that is involved. And second, it is imperative in forming a great national collection of drawings to obtain not only masterpieces of the most famous artists, but also an adequate representation of their entourage, as an historical background and an aesthetic foil. When Campbell Dodgson was asked by a visitor to the British Museum Printroom what prints he bought for the museum, he replied that he bought, within the funds available, any print that was not already in the collection. With drawings no one would suggest that the case is quite as simple as that, but for a truly metropolitan collection something of the same principle applies: such a collection should be, so far as possible, historically representative of the practice of drawing in all schools. Since December 1960 over seven hundred drawings have been added to the New York collection, more than five hundred by purchase. There are among them masterpieces of famous artists; there are fine examples of artists who, as the wheel of fashion turns, may be famous (and more expensive) tomorrow; and there are those of the sort, invaluable to the historian of art, that in Cassio's phrase "fills up the cry." At this late season, when so much that is desirable is no longer available, the business of acquisition is a difficult and highly specialized assignment; and the acquisitions of the last decade in the new Department of Drawings at the Metropolitan Museum are surely a sufficient justification of its separate establishment.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must thank the following friends for help they have given me on various points: Mr. Jacob Bean; Mrs. Linda Boyer Gillies; M. Frits Lugt; M. Jacques Mathey (through Sir Karl Parker); Mr. Michael Levey; Mr. George Knox; and Mrs. Larissa Salmina-Haskell.

52. The *Illustrated London News* drawings came into the possession of the late Sir Bruce Ingram, son of the founder of that periodical and its editor for more than sixty years, and were dispersed after his death. The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, acquired by gift a large group from a member of the Girtin family.

# The Benjamin Altman Bequest

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WHEN BENJAMIN ALTMAN (Figure 1), founder of the New York department store that still bears his name, died on October 7, 1913, leaving some \$35 million to philanthropic institutions in the city and to the Metropolitan Museum the greatest bequest it had ever received, the *New York Times* commented that “he was probably the most retiring man in New York. Avoidance of personal notice of any kind was almost an obsession with him. . . . Could there be better evidence of the privacy with which he surrounded himself than the fact that no newspaper has been able to procure and publish a portrait of Mr. Altman?”<sup>1</sup> It is therefore hardly surprising that his personality has been so little studied in the now flourishing literature, both scholarly and popular, that has been devoted to the formation of the major American collections.<sup>2</sup> Wherever we look,

1. *New York Times*, October 8 and 9, 1913.

2. René Brimo, *L'Evolution du goût aux Etats-Unis* (Paris, 1938); S. N. Behrman, *Duween* (New York, 1951); Aline B. Saarinen, *The Proud Possessors* (New York, 1958); W. G. Constable, *Art Collecting in the United States of America* (London, 1964); and many specialized articles on individual collectors. The only works dealing with Altman himself are “The Benjamin Altman Bequest,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 8 (1913) pp. 226–241, various editions of the *Handbook of the Benjamin Altman Collection*, published by the Metropolitan Museum, which first appeared in 1914 (I have used the 1928 edition and refer to it hereafter as *Handbook*), and three articles by François Monod, “La Galerie Altman au Metropolitan Museum de New York,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 5th ser. 8 (1923) pp. 179–198, 297–312, 367–377.



FIGURE 1  
Benjamin Altman, by Ellen Emmet Rand, American, dated 1914. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Estate of Benjamin Altman, 14.122

we find indications of his reticence. If too much publicity were likely to follow his purchase of a Velázquez or a Rembrandt, he warned Henry Duveen, he would prefer to give up the picture altogether.<sup>3</sup> When negotiating with the Museum about his bequest, he complained with indignation that rumors of his intention had already begun to circulate.<sup>4</sup>

On one occasion Altman gave a rational explanation for the secrecy that he was so concerned to maintain about his collecting: “people, learning of the great amount of money involved in the two transactions, are given to idle talk to the effect that the money must be obtained, and that the prices of goods in the store will be advanced, or as customers have previously expressed themselves: ‘Mr. Altman, I see, has just bought a new picture; I suppose that is the reason things are so high.’”<sup>5</sup> After his death, on the other hand, his bewildering attitude was attributed by those who knew him to “a desire to avoid even the appearance of using his devotion to art as an advertisement of his business.”<sup>6</sup> There is a direct conflict of evidence here, but both explanations are in any case too superficial. Whatever the reasons—and we do not even know enough about these to speculate—discretion was too deeply ingrained in his character to be accounted for purely by business preoccupations. It finds expression even in his use of language. On one occasion he received a cable from Henry Duveen: “Rug I purchased yesterday is greatest finest have ever seen. Will give me greatest pleasure submit it to you on my arrival.”<sup>7</sup> Five days later Altman wrote him a brief letter that, after disposing of various matters, ended: “Your cable regarding the rug has been received for which I thank you. It evidently is a very fine rug.”<sup>8</sup>

This same tone is revealed in the nature of most (though not all) of his collection of paintings. While other millionaires of his day were amassing glamorized portraits of the English aristocracy, Altman concentrated boldly on the severe, tight-lipped bankers and merchants of the Low Countries and Germany. It is

3. See his letter to Henry Duveen of September 6, 1912, and his cable of June 6, 1913. This correspondence is kept in two files in the Department of European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum. The files contain letters and cables between Altman and Duveen’s from March 1912 until his death. I will refer to them hereafter as Duveen File.

4. Letter from Altman to Edward Robinson, May 17, 1909,

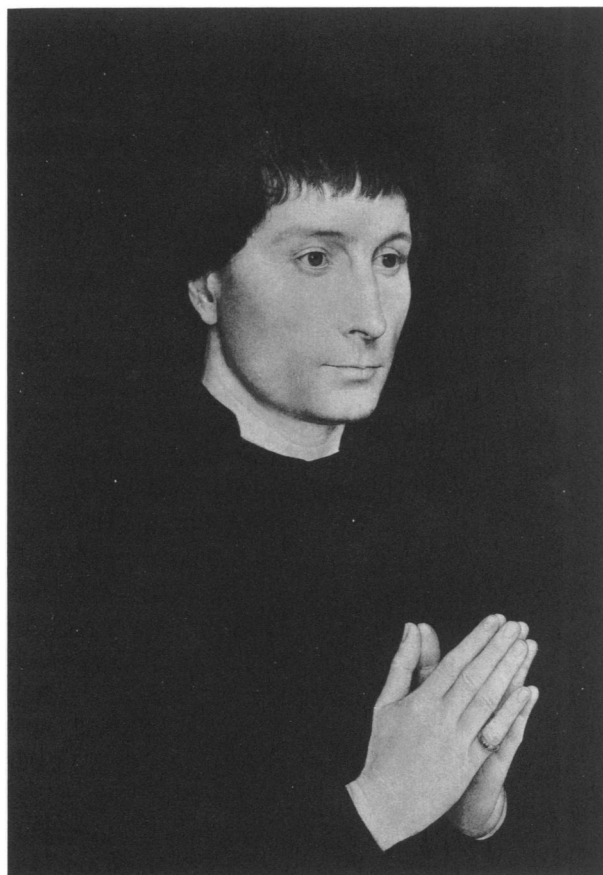


FIGURE 2  
Tommaso Portinari, by Hans Memling. Tempera and oil on wood. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.626

when looking at Memling’s Tommaso Portinari (Figure 2) and Portrait of an Old Man, Dieric Bouts’s Portrait of a Man, and, above all, Hans Maler zu Schwaz’s Ulrich Fugger of Augsburg (Figure 3) (for can one think of any reason apart from spiritual kinship for the purchase of this bleak, almost abstract, portrait?) that we seem to come closest to the inner core of Benjamin

in the Archives of the Metropolitan Museum (Altman Bequest), henceforth referred to as Archives.

5. Duveen File, letter of June 11, 1913.

6. *New York Times*, October 8, 1913.

7. Duveen File, cable of July 11, 1912.

8. Duveen File, cable of July 16, 1912.

Altman. Here is the gallery of ancestors that *he* built up for himself.

Altman was, in fact, the son of Bavarian Jews who had come to New York in about 1835.<sup>9</sup> He was born in 1840, and, in the words of a rather condescending writer in the *Times* (of London), “it will always remain a mystery to those who met him in his later years how this mild-mannered little man could have built up so vast a business as that which bears his name.” *Little* is not the adjective that springs to mind when one looks at the benign but rather austere features that are so striking in the few surviving photographs, but mild-mannered he certainly was toward the end of his life; it remains, however, truer than ever that his early activities are shrouded in mystery. His father ran a small dry-goods store, and Altman’s education was brief—to the end of his life his grammar and spelling were inclined to be erratic. We know that he helped his father in the store and that in about 1863 he and his brother Morris set up business in partnership. Together they made something of a success, though the scale was still modest. Morris, apparently, campaigned to shorten the working hours of clerks in the dry-goods business, and in later years, when he himself was prosperous, Benjamin was among the first to provide luncheon, rest, and medical services for his employees. It is not quite clear how long the association between the two brothers continued, but in 1876, when Morris died, Benjamin took over his interests and moved from Third Avenue to Sixth Avenue between Eighteenth and Nineteenth streets. It was then that his enterprise began to develop with very great rapidity. He was obviously an extremely thorough worker, and, as will be seen from our examination of his activities as a collector, he would fully master every aspect of anything that interested him. All the same, the attribution of his fantastic success merely to “hard work” must leave open a number of questions that as yet remain without an answer. After thirty years he established his store, by then vastly expanded, in its present location on

9. The following facts about Altman’s life are taken from three obituaries that appeared immediately after his death (*New York Times*, October 8, 1913; *Chicago Examiner*, October 8, 1913; *Times* [London] October 9, 1913) and from the *Dictionary of American Biography* (1928). These sources are not always in agreement.

Fifth Avenue at Thirty-fourth Street, thus pioneering the move of big business uptown. He never married, and although he expressed warm appreciation of his associates and employees, very little is known of any close friends. He died of kidney disease at the age of seventy-three.

No one can now say what first moved Altman to collect works of art. Was he merely following a fashion that was already current among the rich businessmen of his day? If so, he was unique in that, far from using his collection as a tool for rising higher in the social scale, he did everything possible to avoid drawing attention to it. Was he already—for there can be no doubt about his later feelings—moved by an insatiable love of the beautiful? If so, it is strange that he scarcely ever visited Europe and showed little, if any, interest in the museums of his own town. These questions must remain unanswered. What seems certain is that in

FIGURE 3  
Ulrich Fugger of Augsburg, by Hans Maler zu Schwaz. Tempera and oil on wood. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.630





1882 he visited a small exhibition of Chinese art that had been arranged by the young Dutchman Henry Duveen, who had settled in America five years earlier, and bought from him a pair of Chinese enamel vases.<sup>10</sup> From then until the very end of his life Chinese ceramics of all kinds remained one of his keenest interests, culminating in a collection of exceptional quality and importance.

In 1889 and again in 1890 he at last traveled extensively in Europe (and elsewhere in the world), but thereafter he only once left the United States. We know very little indeed of his other purchases during these first two decades of activity beyond the fact that they included a number of American paintings (which he later disposed of) and some good Barbizon pictures (several of which came to the Metropolitan Museum) as well as a number of very fine rock crystals and other examples of "applied art."<sup>11</sup> None of this distinguishes him much from many other collectors of his time.

With the beginning of the new century we first begin to hear of his interest in the old masters. It is true that after thinking over the matter for some time he turned down Hoppner's portrait of Lady Louisa Manners, for which Duveen paid a record price at auction in 1901,<sup>12</sup> and that two years later he rejected a Hobbema that Agnew's sent him on approval from London;<sup>13</sup> but (although it is likely that he already owned some Dutch pictures, which he subsequently got rid of) in 1905 he acquired, through Gimpel and Wildenstein, the first two of his pictures which still remain in his collection, the Man with a Steel Gorget (attributed to Rembrandt) and Hals's so-called Yonker Ramp and his Sweetheart.<sup>14</sup> In this same year he moved into a large new residence at 626 Fifth Avenue, which he began to fill with Oriental rugs, eighteenth-century furniture, and other sumptuous adornments.<sup>15</sup>

10. *Handbook*, and the (oral) recollections of Edward Fowles, to whom I am much indebted for this and for other information concerning the relationship between Duveen and Altman.

11. *Handbook*. See also Germain Seligman, *Merchants of Art* (New York, 1961) p. 19. The rock crystals came from the Spitzer collection.

12. (Oral) recollections of Edward Fowles.

13. Agnew's, "London Day Book," no. 21, June 4, 1903, p. 125. I am most grateful to Geoffrey Agnew for making these records available to me.

14. René Gimpel, *Diary of an Art Dealer* (London, 1966) pp. 298–299, claims that it was his father who in 1905 first interested

The great majority of his pictures were to be Dutch, and though the gross exuberance of the Hals strikes a surprising note among his generally somber paintings, we shall see later that, in sculpture at least, Altman was not wholly averse to gaiety and riotous living. The following two years saw the purchase of two more paintings by Hals and another Rembrandt, as well as the first (and until 1910 the only) Italian picture in his collection—Montagna's *A Lady of Rank as St. Justina of Padua*.

This was a reasonably distinguished opening, but in retrospect it seems scarcely more than a rehearsal for the truly spectacular year of 1908, on the second day of which he bought nine major pictures, all of them of the Dutch seventeenth century, with the exception of Van Dyck's beautiful portrait of the Marchesa Durazzo. The group included Vermeer's *Girl Asleep*, three paintings attributed to Rembrandt, and one each to Maes, de Hooch, Hobbema, and Cuyp. All these pictures came from the collection of Rodolphe Kann in Paris, and as they and four pictures subsequently bought from the estate of Rodolphe's brother Maurice constitute the biggest single group from one source in Altman's collection (and in certain other American collections), it is worth discussing briefly the nature of that source.<sup>16</sup>

Rodolphe Kann, a bachelor who died in 1905 without having made a will, was in many respects so similar in background to Altman himself that one cannot help feeling that, along with his pictures, the American acquired something of his spirit. It is true that Kann's raffish features, as recorded for us by Boldini, have nothing in common with Altman's sober, dignified appearance, but in other respects the two men are comparable. The Kann brothers had been born in Hamburg and had then prospered as bankers in Paris, but

Altman in old masters, but the previous note shows that this is not strictly accurate.

15. Rugs, tapestries, and, above all, Oriental porcelain were always to remain as important for Altman as his pictures. If I have concentrated primarily on the latter, it is both because the documentation is much richer and because it is only in regard to his pictures that I feel qualified to write in any detail.

16. See two articles by Emile Michel, "La Galerie de M. Rodolphe Kann," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 3rd ser. 8 (1901); also the *Times* (London) of August 7, 1907, and the *Daily Telegraph* of the same date.

they owed their vast fortunes to the diamond and gold mines of South Africa. They had begun to acquire pictures only in 1880, at very much the same moment as Altman, and in the course of twenty-five years had built up what were looked upon as the finest private galleries in Paris, and among the finest in Europe. Rodolphe Kann belonged to the "forceful type [of new collector] and he set about the formation of a collection that should be of the rarest and best. He obtained the assistance of the most scientific connoisseurs. He backed their opinion with adequate resources." In 1900 Wilhelm Bode published a massive, extensively illustrated volume on Kann's pictures, and it was doubtless from this and the even more lavishly produced catalogue in four volumes that appeared in 1907 that Altman made his choice. That choice was highly significant, for Kann's pictures (most of which were bought in England) ranged widely in period and country—from Northern and Italian "primitives" to Gainsborough, Watteau, Fragonard, and Tiepolo. The acquisition of the whole collection by Duveen's (in association with Gimpel) was one of the great coups of the Edwardian era, and it was from them that Altman bought his carefully selected pictures and a few pieces of sculpture. He entirely ignored the somewhat over-rich "decadent" side to Kann's taste and concentrated almost exclusively on the Dutch seventeenth century. He missed what was the greatest masterpiece of all, Rembrandt's Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer, which went to Mrs. Collis P. Huntington, but he did nevertheless boldly buy what were (or, in some cases, what were thought to be) those other late works by Rembrandt that constituted the special glory of Kann's collection: Pilate Washing His Hands, the Old Woman Cutting Her Nails, and the portrait of The Artist's Son, Titus.

Although (with the relatively small exception of a Terborch) Altman now waited for more than a year before buying additional pictures, his acquisition of the cream of the Kann gallery had already established him as one of the most important of all New York collectors. And the consequences of his purchase were, in fact, decisive for his own future, and hence for that of the Metropolitan. At the time, one cannot help feeling, the most surprising result was his giving of a reception for "friends, art lovers and patrons. . . ." <sup>17</sup>

In 1909 it was planned to hold in the Metropolitan

Museum two concurrent exhibitions—one of Dutch seventeenth-century paintings and one of American art—in order to celebrate "the tercentenary of the discovery of the Hudson river by Henry Hudson in the year 1609, and the centenary of the first use of steam in the navigation of said river by Robert Fulton in the year 1807." <sup>18</sup> The Dutch section of the exhibition was to be organized by the recently arrived W. R. Valentiner, curator of decorative arts, and on February 10 the director of the Metropolitan, Edward Robinson, called on Altman to ask for the loan of some of his pictures. <sup>19</sup> It comes as no surprise to learn from the correspondence that followed this visit that Altman was extremely reluctant to make any such gesture to publicity; but any disappointment that this refusal may have caused Robinson was more than offset by the fact that he "spoke to me at some length in regard to the disposal of his collection upon his death. He said that he had considered leaving his entire collection of works of art of all kinds to the Metropolitan Museum. . . ."

Although as early as 1892 Altman had given the sum of \$1,000 to help subsidize free Sunday openings of the Museum, <sup>20</sup> his relations with it had not hitherto been very close. Five years later he had refused to contribute to the purchase of a statue, <sup>21</sup> and, as we learn from the obituaries that only a very few people were ever privileged to see his pictures during his lifetime, it is not even certain that he had agreed to a request made to him in May 1907 that officials of the Museum should be allowed to look at the beautiful things in his house <sup>22</sup>—certainly there is no surviving letter to this effect in the archives.

The news, therefore, that he was thinking of leaving his collection to the Museum must have come as a wonderful surprise. There was, however, a serious

17. "Mr. Altman's Reception," *American Art News*, March 14, 1908, p. 1.

18. For full details see the catalogue of the exhibition, *The Hudson-Fulton Celebration*, New York, September–November 1909, 2 vols.

19. See Archives, letter of February 11, 1909, from Edward Robinson to J. Pierpont Morgan.

20. Archives, minute book, vol. 3, report of November 9, 1892, p. 135. I am very grateful to John Buchanan for drawing my attention to this.

21. Archives, letter of April 21, 1897.

22. Archives, letter from Robinson of May 2, 1907.



**FIGURE 4**  
 Lucas van Uffel, by Anthony Van Dyck. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.619

drawback: Altman explained that he was deterred from taking any definite steps by his fears that the Museum might not accept his condition that the whole collection should be kept together as a separate entity. In conversation with Robinson he now insisted that, although he was prepared to make an exception for his rugs and tapestries, he would not accept for himself the terms that the trustees imposed on other benefactors. Some indication of the extent of the collection by this time can be gauged from the fact that Robinson was reluctantly forced to agree that “it was of such exceptional value and importance to the Museum, that if he insisted on his condition, rather than lose the collection I would favor the acceptance of his terms.” Altman did so insist, and at his request Robinson agreed to write to J. Pierpont Morgan, the president of the Museum, who was then in Egypt, asking him to use his influence to persuade his fellow trustees accordingly. Three weeks later he received a cabled reply from

Cairo: “. . . my desire is great to meet his views and I will do whatever I can to accomplish it if requirements not too minute. . . .”<sup>23</sup> To all intents and purposes this settled the matter, though there were many more discussions over detail (and the usual anxieties caused by Altman’s dread of publicity) before Robinson was able, on June 21, 1909, to cable Morgan, who was now in Milan: “. . . The will was signed Friday in our favor.”<sup>24</sup>

As eventually modified not long before his death, Altman’s will<sup>25</sup> obliged the Museum to exhibit permanently in at least two rooms, not less in floor space than those that had been devoted to the purpose in his private galleries at 626 Fifth Avenue, the entire bequest—and only that bequest. Moreover, “notices of a proper size shall be placed and maintained in such room or rooms so as to indicate clearly that the collections therein contained were bequeathed to the Museum by me. . . .” It must be admitted that such hankering for posthumous publicity comes strangely from a man who was so secretive in his lifetime, and (though sympathizing with his dilemma) the outside observer can only share the regret expressed by Robinson at the nature of Altman’s terms—terms that, as in the case of similar bequests in Europe and America, have not helped the cause of art and learning as fully as was evidently intended by public-spirited benefactors. Be that as it may, it is of the utmost importance to realize that already by May 1909, more than four years before his death, Altman knew that his collections were to be bequeathed to the Museum. This knowledge unquestionably influenced the nature of all his remaining purchases and of many other steps that he now took.

The first of these was a compromise with the Museum authorities as regards the Hudson-Fulton exhibition. This opened in September 1909, and Valentiner explained in an addendum that “the following works, generously lent by Mr. B. Altman, New York, were received too late to be included in the body of the catalogue.” The six of his pictures shown included some new purchases of exceptional quality and importance from the Maurice Kann collection in Paris;<sup>26</sup> he

23. Archives, cable from Morgan of March 1, 1909.

24. Archives.

25. See “Altman Bequest,” *Bulletin*, pp. 226–228.

26. He had also bought in the meantime Van Dyck’s Lucas van Uffel (Figure 4) and three more paintings by Rembrandt.

himself visited that city for the occasion and traveled also to Holland and Germany—the last time that he was to set foot in Europe.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Altman made special efforts to ensure that the pictures reached New

York before the exhibition opened, and the public was thus, for the first time, able to see Vermeer's *Girl Asleep* and Hals's *Merry Company*, as well as Ruisdael's superb *Wheatfields* (Figure 5) and three mag-

27. Our information about this trip is unfortunately sparse. In an article in the *Vossische Zeitung* of January 18, 1914, Bode recalls Altman's visiting him in the Berlin Museum and telling him "that he had just come from Paris—a visit to the Louvre had given him extraordinary pleasure, for previously he had only once seen the

Louvre, in fact with a Cook's party." Edward Fowles has kindly shown me some letters from Henry to Joseph Duveen in his possession dating from the summer of 1909; it is from one of these (August 8) that we know that he visited Holland.



FIGURE 5  
*Wheatfields*, by Jacob Isaacksz. van Ruisdael. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.623

FIGURE 6  
Man with a Magnifying Glass, by  
Rembrandt. Oil on canvas. The  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, be-  
quest of Benjamin Altman,  
14.40.621



nificent Rembrandts, all just acquired: the so-called Auctioneer, or Portrait of a Young Man, the Man with a Magnifying Glass (Figure 6), and the Lady with a Pink (Figure 7). No better choice from his pictures could possibly have been made, and it would be interesting to know who was responsible for it: Robinson, Valentiner, or—the most likely—Altman himself.

The second consequence of his (still secret) bequest to the Museum was his decision to have a special gallery built behind his house on Fifth Avenue (Figures 8–10).<sup>28</sup> Though the photographs that we have of this gallery date from after his death, when the final ac-

quisitions had been made, it is likely that the principles governing its arrangement were established from the first, and it is of interest to examine them. The most striking feature (though it is one that Rodolphe Kann had also adopted) is the rigid separation of “high art”—pictures and sculpture—from the decorative and applied arts that Altman was continuing to buy on a very extensive scale throughout all these years. The well-lit picture gallery was an austere place with no trace of the rich furniture, tapestries, rugs, and so on that were, presumably, used to adorn the living rooms of the house itself. Thus Altman did not eat or sleep or work surrounded by his great masterpieces, as other collectors have often liked to do, and even the Chinese porcelain was kept severely isolated in glass cabinets in a second gallery. A further foretaste of the public museum was his grouping of the pictures (with a very

<sup>28</sup>. See “Art Gallery for Mr. Altman,” *American Art News*, October 23, 1909, p. 1.



FIGURE 7  
Lady with a Pink, by Rembrandt.  
Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin  
Altman, 14.40.622

few exceptions) into national schools and periods. Thus that same didactic purpose that he had ensured could not be theirs once the pictures became the property of the Museum was paradoxically insisted on by him in his own house.

Both the Rodolphe and the Maurice Kann pictures had been bought by Altman from the firm of Duveen Brothers, and although it is not true to claim (as has sometimes been done) that it was to them that he owed his entire collection, it is certainly the case that with no other dealers was his association so intimate. Although much must have been settled by word of mouth, enough of his correspondence with Henry Duveen (who spent some months each year in London and Paris) has survived for us to be able to gain some clear indication of his tastes and personality.

It has already been pointed out that Altman had

made his first acquisitions of Chinese porcelain from Henry Duveen, and a close relationship between the two men continued for more than thirty years. Indeed, it seems more than likely that when Henry Duveen was in trouble with the law for infringing customs regulations, Altman was one of those who came forward to help him.<sup>29</sup> Though evidently marked by much friend-

29. For a discussion of the case, see S. N. Behrman, who, however, does not refer to Altman's intervention. I have deduced this from a letter of his in the Duveen File, dated April 22, 1913: ". . . I stood by you in your hour of trouble, alone! and unselfishly!! interviewing newspaper men, and stopping certain insinuating remarks made by private parties, as well as dealers, and emphasizing to everybody my high opinion of you and your firm, knowing as I did these expressions would reach the government's ears, either directly or indirectly.— Do I not *desire* [*sic*] some consideration for all this?—"



FIGURE 8  
Altman's gallery at his home on Fifth Avenue

ship, the letters between them remain formal in tone to the very end. "My dear Mr. Altman" and "My dear Mr. Duveen" they almost invariably begin, but very occasionally one or the other will interrupt a sentence with a "Dear Friend" or "Friend Duveen." On one occasion at least the more spontaneous Duveen made a passionate plea that Altman should look after his health, to which came the rather frigid answer that "your suggestions regarding taking care of myself are perfectly acceptable, and it is a fact that both of us should give attention to this. I am glad to know you are feeling so much better. . . ." <sup>30</sup> Only very rarely do the letters ever touch on anything other than business affairs, and it must be admitted that when they do so, they are not of great interest: "I presume that the people of both London and Paris, are terribly shocked as we all are here, at the appalling disaster which has just occurred at sea, and we all do hope that the proper

measures will be taken to prevent a similar occurrence" is Altman's comment on the sinking of the *Titanic*. <sup>31</sup>

The friendship between Duveen and Altman was, however, exposed to constant risk by the directly opposing interests of the two men in two special fields. The first of these conflicts of interest is probably inherent in the relationship between client and dealer: Altman thought that Duveen charged him too much for works of art; Duveen thought that Altman was too slow in paying his bills. Both had some justification for the complaints that occasionally flared up between them. The second conflict of interest, however, was

30. Duveen File, letter of July 22, 1912. It is true that on other occasions Altman could be more forthcoming, and Mr. Behrman has kindly let me know that he has information about the very warm relationship that existed between them on a more informal level.

31. Duveen File, letter of April 23, 1912.

peculiar to the particular men concerned: Henry Duveen (and especially his nephew Joseph, who was taking an increasing interest in the business) was as anxious for publicity as Altman was for discretion. Again and again storms would rage over this crucial matter. Altman would be “*terribly annoyed*,” would find that Duveen’s conduct “amounts to a scandal and is outrageous and *inexcusable* and I can never forget it.”<sup>32</sup> Then the explanations and apologies would come pouring in, and everything would be resumed much as before.

Sometimes we can find a hint in these letters of that shrewd business sense and overpowering energy of will that had made—and was continuing to make—Altman so prosperous. He took the keenest interest in the new premises that Duveen’s were having constructed in New York during the summer of 1912 (“our building” he once called it),<sup>33</sup> and when Henry was in London and

Paris, he would receive long letters from Altman about the unreliability of the architect and the negligence of the builders: “You can never depend upon their statements, nor even their judgement,” he said, and to Henry’s nephew Benjamin he wrote that builders and architects must be pushed the whole time, as he himself had had to do. “*Pushing means* that you want a knowledge of what is to be done and to see in *advance* they are *preparing for* it and will do it.”<sup>34</sup>

No one could read through this correspondence and believe that Duveen’s were in a position to impose their own choice of pictures on a docile Altman. Though both Henry and Joseph recognized that he was “a

32. Duveen File, letters of April 23 and June 28, 1912. Many similar examples could be quoted.

33. Duveen File, letters of July 3 and September 6, 1912.

34. Duveen File, letters of August 19 and 23, 1912.

FIGURE 9  
Another view of Altman’s gallery





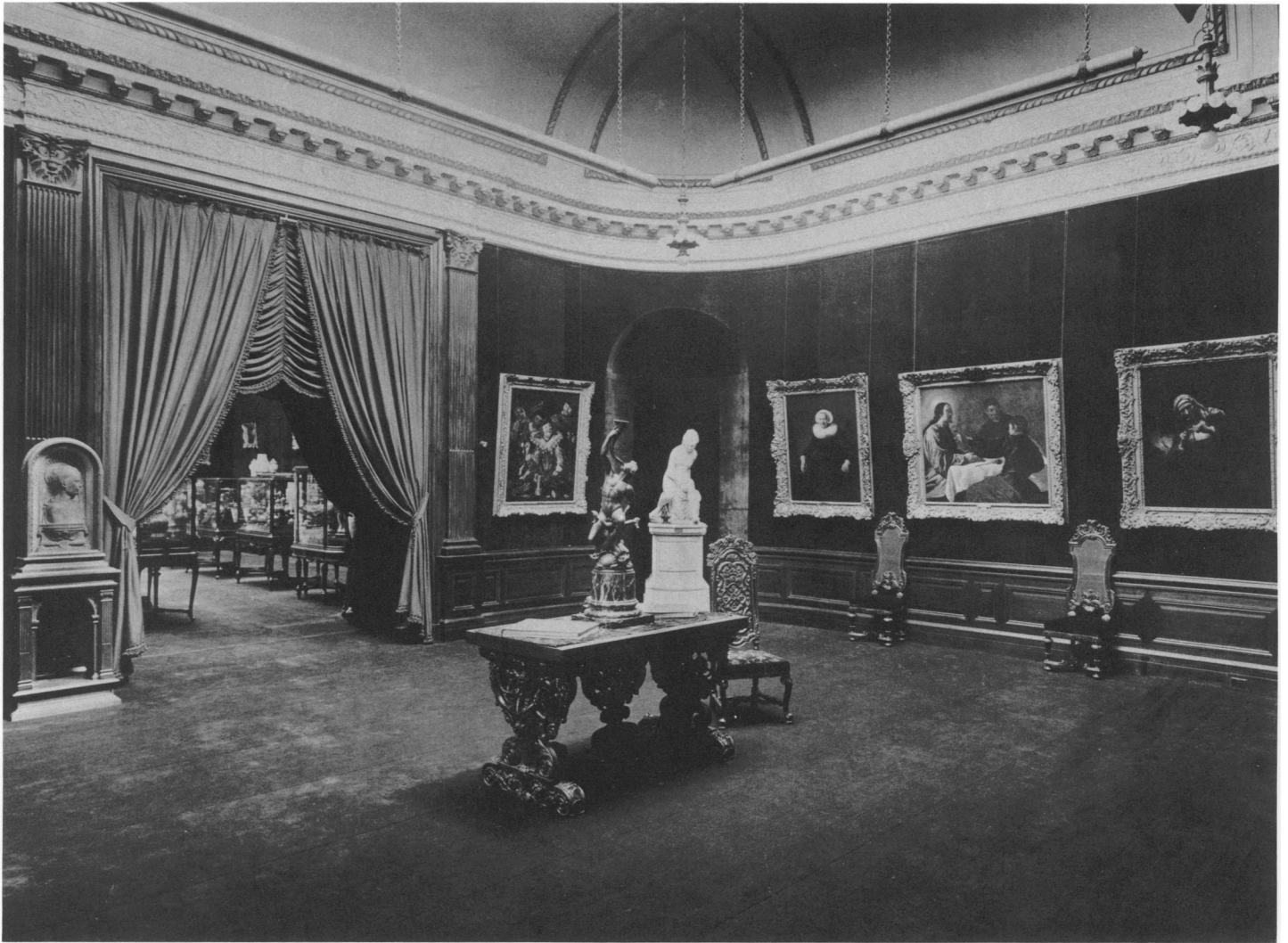


FIGURE 10  
Altman's gallery at his home on Fifth Avenue

great friend and client of the house," they also felt that his independence of judgment and willingness on occasion to turn to other dealers made him "slippery," and they had to devise careful tactics for dealing with him. "I should like him to feel that he gets a bargain now and then, when we are able to take this course, having bought reasonably," writes Henry to Joseph, or "I think you are making a grave mistake in showing Mr. A. too many things. . . . Let him be hungry and enquire for beautiful things, and he appreciates our things because we only show him the very finest."<sup>35</sup>

But, however "particular" and "slippery" Altman

might be, the very conditions of travel and the art market inevitably forced him to rely heavily on the judgment of his dealers. Well-illustrated books and sale catalogues were still comparatively rare, and crossing the Atlantic took time. Consequently, the vast majority of pictures that Altman acquired were bought for him by Henry Duveen in Europe before he had actually had the chance to see them himself. Competition for

35. Letters from Henry to Joseph Duveen of August 8, 1909, and April 3 and 8, 1913, kindly shown to me by Edward Fowles.

great old masters was very keen, and quick decisions were essential. Moreover, for all their panache, neither Duveen's nor any other dealer had enough capital reserves to be able to make a habit of buying very expensive pictures without having definite clients in mind.

It was, therefore, Henry Duveen's business to bring to the attention of his demanding patron the sort of pictures he thought he would like and warn him off others about which Altman, who kept in the closest touch possible with all the available literature, would make inquiries. At the Doucet sale, for instance, "a great number of things were only fit for French taste, being all of a class which we call 'finicky' and effeminate, so much sought after by French people."<sup>36</sup> At the Taylor sale, "the Bronzino is a very fine and striking picture, but after all it is Bronzino and therefore decadent. . . . Bronzino as you know is rather late as far as 'great art' is concerned, and he is not an artist whom we should consider of any very great degree of importance."<sup>37</sup> Another problem was that of "unpleasant subjects," and Henry Duveen's category embraced a

very wide range. While one can understand that Rembrandt's St. Bartholomew ("an ugly man with a knife in his hand")<sup>38</sup> may merit the description, it comes as something of a surprise to learn that the same can be said of "an interior with a woman nursing a child" by the same artist. Both Judith and Dido may perhaps be "objectionable," but it is surely a strange taste that finds that the majority of Fra Angelico's pictures have "disagreeable subjects."<sup>39</sup>

It is not certain whether Altman ever actually told Duveen of the ultimate destination he had in mind for his pictures, but it was clearly understood by everyone that he was only interested in "great art": more than once Duveen had to remind him that "we can only approach you when we have something really and utterly GREAT."<sup>40</sup> As far as this was concerned, how-

36. Duveen File, letter of June 14, 1912.

37. Duveen File, letter of June 28, 1912.

38. Duveen File, letter of June 26, 1912.

39. Duveen File, letters of July 11, June 14, and May 31, 1912, respectively.

40. Duveen File, letter of June 26, 1912.



**FIGURE 11**  
Christ and the Pilgrims of Emmaus, by Velázquez. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.631

ever, his own taste was often more adventurous than that of his dealers. It was he who, toward the end of his life, was pressing again and again for a landscape by Rembrandt (he was probably influenced in this by P. A. B. Widener's famous purchase of Lord Lansdowne's Mill), whereas Henry Duveen would point out that "I told you that we ourselves did not care overmuch for genre or landscape Rembrandts, but preferred portraits by that master, [which are] . . . more saleable and more understandable."<sup>41</sup>

As Altman's collection grew better known—in July 1912 Joseph Duveen wrote to him from Paris that "the fame of your collection is becoming more and more pronounced in Europe. . . . Every French person who comes into our place seems to have heard of your Collection and is generally enthusiastic about it"<sup>42</sup>—he would sometimes get letters from perfect strangers offering him a strange assortment of pictures for sale. Thus, as early as May 1909 he heard from a man in Málaga who was to insist that "I am not a dealer, but a retired merchant, and a lover of Art," which began bluntly "I have an authentic picture for sale by the great Master Velázquez. . . ." This, in fact, proved to be the early Christ and the Pilgrims of Emmaus (Figure 11), which, after some examination of photographs and expertise by Beruete (who, however, would not consent—as he had been asked to do—to call it a work "of the first magnitude"), was acquired from Gimpel and Wildenstein before the end of 1910.<sup>43</sup> But not all the offers were so appealing.<sup>44</sup>

Altman's most spectacular venture into the field of Spanish art was also the purchase that caused him the

most distress. In 1911 Agnew's acquired two full-length portraits by Velázquez of Philip IV and his minister Olivares from the Villahermosa Palace in Madrid, as well as receipts signed by the artist for payment he had received for these pictures. They were published in a very imposing brochure by the firm, and then bought by Duveen's, who sold them to Altman. The price of more than a million dollars was, however, leaked to the press, and the resulting publicity induced him, after much brooding and many bitter complaints, to sell back the Olivares.<sup>45</sup>

These examples will have shown that during his later years he was widening the range of pictures represented in his collection, in which the concentration had hitherto been almost entirely on northern painters. He continued to buy works by these masters, but from 1910 he turned also to Italian art, and it was now that the character of his collection—like those of so many other American millionaires—began to reflect the taste and skill of Bernard Berenson, who for the previous two years had been working for Duveen's. Altman always relied scrupulously on the opinion of experts—Bode and Friedlaender for his northern pictures, Beruete for his Spanish ones—but his reactions to the views of Berenson show that he was never prepared to accept their advice without question.

The first Italian picture to gain a permanent place in his collection since the Montagna, which he had acquired in 1907, was Fra Angelico's Crucifixion, which he bought in March 1910.<sup>46</sup> This was followed by Mainardi's rather tame tondo of the Madonna and Child with Angels and, in February 1912, by Francia's

41. Duveen File, letter of May 23, 1913.

42. Duveen File, letter of July 9, 1912.

43. The letters from Warren C. Bevan bringing the picture to Altman's notice are dated May 17, June 3, June 17, August 11, and October 13, 1909. He mentions the authentication by Beruete and says that Roger Fry had tried to buy the picture for the Metropolitan. It actually belonged to a Mr. De Soto of Zurich. Beruete's opinion is given in letters from him and from his son, dated November 7, 1910, and January (misdated December) 7, 1911. All this correspondence is kept with the picture's file in the Department of European Paintings. Gimpel (*Diary*, p. 303) has some interesting details on Altman's enthusiasm for this picture.

44. In 1913, for instance, a "Country Court Bailiff" in Northallerton, Yorkshire, wrote directly to Altman: "I have in my possession a fine old painting by Titian, the subject being 'Venus Reposing'. I wish to dispose of the same and shall be pleased to

hear from you if interested in Old Master Paintings" (Duveen File, July 24, 1913).

45. There is a great deal of correspondence about this in the Duveen File. At one stage (October 12, 1912) Altman actually decided to get rid of both the portraits. The Olivares is now in the Museu de Arte, São Paulo, Brazil.

46. About this picture Berenson wrote to Gimpel, from whom Altman acquired it: ". . . it was painted entirely by his own hand and not as was so often the case in pictures by old masters with the assistance of pupils" (letter of April 21, 1910, kept with the file on the picture in the Department of European Paintings). At that time the background of the painting consisted of a landscape with palm trees, "low hills and a wide expanse of twilight sky, much in the spirit of the painting of the last century" (*Handbook*, p. 42). A cleaning in 1951 revealed the original gold ground.

FIGURE 12

Federigo Gonzaga, by Francesco Francia. Tempera on canvas transferred from wood. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.638

ravishing portrait of the ten-year-old Federigo Gonzaga (Figure 12), painted for his mother, Isabella d'Este. It was in April of this year that there came his way the dream of every private collector in the world—a painting authoritatively attributed to “the rarest, most wonderful, most fascinating and perhaps most discussed artist of the whole Renaissance—Giorgione!”<sup>47</sup>

Or was it? In 1895 Berenson had seen this Portrait of a Man (Figure 13) at the famous loan exhibition of Venetian art at the New Gallery in London. It then belonged to A. H. Savage Landor, a descendant of the poet in whose house in Florence the picture had been kept. Berenson acknowledged its “exquisite quality” but thought that it was “a work by the young Titian, or else only a copy after such a work, the copy by Polidoro Lanzani.” Very pertinently he also pointed out its “deplorably bad preservation.”<sup>48</sup> In 1912 it was acquired by Duveen, and in a rapturous private letter to Joseph Duveen, Berenson wrote: “. . . you may ask how I know it is Giorgione's—this head. To make a very long story short, I know it quite as well, and am quite as ready to prove it as that I know I am ready to prove that you are Joe Duveen. . . . I am ready to stake all my reputation on its being by Giorgione. . . .” In a more official letter to Messrs. Duveen, two months later, Berenson elaborated:

I would go further and challenge a comparison of your portrait [in his first letter he had written “ours, as I

47. Letter from Berenson to Duveen's of March 11, 1912, kept with the file on the picture.

48. Berenson's article “Venetian Painting, Chiefly before Titian (At the Exhibition of Venetian Art, New Gallery, 1895)” is reprinted in *The Study and Criticism of Italian Art*, I (London, 1901) p. 145.

FIGURE 13

Portrait of a Man, by Titian. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.640





FIGURE 14  
The Last Communion of St. Jerome, by Botticelli.  
Tempera on wood. The Metropolitan Museum of  
Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.642

already venture to speak of it”] with any of those that have ever been ascribed to Giorgione, and with any of those done by great pupils and rivals of his, like Palma or Titian. I am convinced that yours would come out triumphant as the unattainable model which they all had in mind from which they drew their inspiration. . . .

There is nothing remotely surprising in the spectacle of a Giorgione scholar changing his mind when confronted by the insuperably difficult problems posed by that artist’s work. More curious, however, is the manner in which, during the seventeen years since Berenson had seen it, the portrait had changed from being in “deplorably bad preservation” to a “miraculously fine state.”<sup>49</sup> Visitors to the Metropolitan who ponder over this problem as they gaze at this sad, but still moving, ghost of a picture may be interested to know

that Altman himself was not too happy about it. In May 1912 he wrote to Henry Duveen that

the Giorgione has been placed in my gallery. I have given it the greatest consideration and have tried to study it with much interest as it is undoubtedly the work of a great master. I must confess, however, that I don’t fully understand it, which has to be deeply studied. Up to now it has not impressed me as much as I should like, but I believe and hope it will grow upon me. . . .<sup>50</sup>

It may have been this uneasiness that caused him to react firmly, only a month later, when he began to have some doubts about Botticelli’s Last Communion of St. Jerome (Figure 14), which he had just acquired, and this episode should dispose finally of any idea that Altman had no perception of his own. “To my surprise,” he wrote to Henry Duveen on June 12, 1912,

upon examination and comparison of the Botticelli painting with the illustration in H. P. Horne’s book I find that the Cardinal’s hat has evidently been tampered with in some way, the hat in the painting has the positive appearance of having been repainted. Did you know of this, if so will you kindly let me know why it was done. I have sent you under separate cover a photograph which clearly shows a portion of the bed to be entirely obscured by the cardinal’s hat while [in] the illustration in Horne’s book the bed is seen through the hat.

Berenson was called in and was able to reassure everyone that

the reproduction in Horne’s book was taken from a photo made at least 15 years ago, as I happen to know perfectly well, when the process of photography was nothing like so perfect as it is now; and that all the difference which Mr. Altman may perceive is entirely due to that. Also that when the photo was first made, the picture was very slightly soiled by age, which soiling has since been cleaned away. I guarantee that the hat is precisely as Botticelli painted it at the time.<sup>51</sup>

49. Berenson’s two letters, the first to Joseph Duveen, dated January 14, 1912, and the second to Messrs. Duveen, dated March 11, 1912, are kept with the file on the picture. In the first of these he referred to the article cited in the previous note but did not mention the fact that he had discussed this particular picture before. He did say specifically, however, that it was he who was bringing the picture to Duveen’s notice.

50. Duveen File, letter of May 17, 1912.

51. The correspondence is to be found in the Duveen File, letters of June 12 and 26, 1912. Berenson’s letter of November 14,

Altman was not very happy about some of the other Italian pictures that Duveen's acquired for him—"I must tell you frankly," he wrote on July 3, 1912,<sup>52</sup> "that neither of them [the Mainardi and the Filippino Lippi] have made the impression upon me which I think they should, and I am inclined to think I don't care for them"—and while this may have been caused by his far greater sympathy with northern art, the unprejudiced observer will probably agree with Altman that his Italian pictures do not on the whole constitute a very exciting group. If only, one sometimes feels when reading through his letters, he had trusted his own judgment more than the opinions of Duveen and Berenson. . . . It is true, however, that, as Duveen insisted on several occasions, "fine Italian pictures generally . . . are very scarce indeed, much more so than you can imagine . . .,"<sup>53</sup> and after the very battered Antonello da Messina, and the distinguished (but not, surely, GREAT) Mantegna and Verrocchio, one can easily understand the enthusiasm that he expressed toward the end of his life for Titian's fine portrait of Filippo Archinto, Archbishop of Milan.<sup>54</sup>

Fortunately, Altman had developed a taste for early Flemish and German art at much the same time as he was buying Italian pictures, and here, with the purchase of distinguished works by Holbein, Dürer, Gerard David, and Van Orley, as well as the beautiful series of portraits by Memling and Bouts—most of these bought from Kleinberger on the advice of Bode and Friedlaender—he not only acquired paintings whose grave austerity seems to have been most in tune with his own taste, but also added to his collection works that hold their own with his great seventeenth-century masterpieces.

He was also on the lookout for sculpture, which alone among all his variegated treasures he kept with his paintings in his picture gallery. Beginning somewhat modestly with Venetian andirons of the late Renaissance,

he became much more ambitious after 1909, and in the course of the next four years he was able to acquire a few very fine pieces, though it must be admitted that some of his choices have about them an element of paradox. We can see the appeal for him of Luca della Robbia's tender, but very grand, Madonna and Child in enameled terracotta (Figure 15), and a number of other busts and religious groups that were bought, on the authority of Bode and Berenson, as by Donatello, Mino da Fiesole, and other great names of the Tuscan quattrocento, though the majority of them today would more likely be regarded as distinguished school pieces;<sup>55</sup> it is more difficult to visualize his relishing the entrancingly sensuous terracottas by Clodion (Figure 16) or Houdon's graceful Bather, part of a group designed for the duc de Chartres in 1782. The superb quality of these works is beyond doubt, but it

FIGURE 15

Madonna and Child with scroll, by Luca della Robbia. Enameled terracotta. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.685



1912, confirming his conversation with Joseph Duveen in response to Altman's query, is with the file on the picture, as is an earlier letter by him of March 12.

52. Duveen File.

53. See letters of June 14 and 19, 1912, in the Duveen File.

54. Duveen File, letter of April 22, 1913. The other outstanding Italian picture is Tura's Portrait of a Member of the Este Family.

55. Altman's finest piece of sculpture, Rossellino's marble relief of the Virgin and Child with Angels, came from the Hainauer Collection, which Bode had hoped to buy for the Berlin Museum.

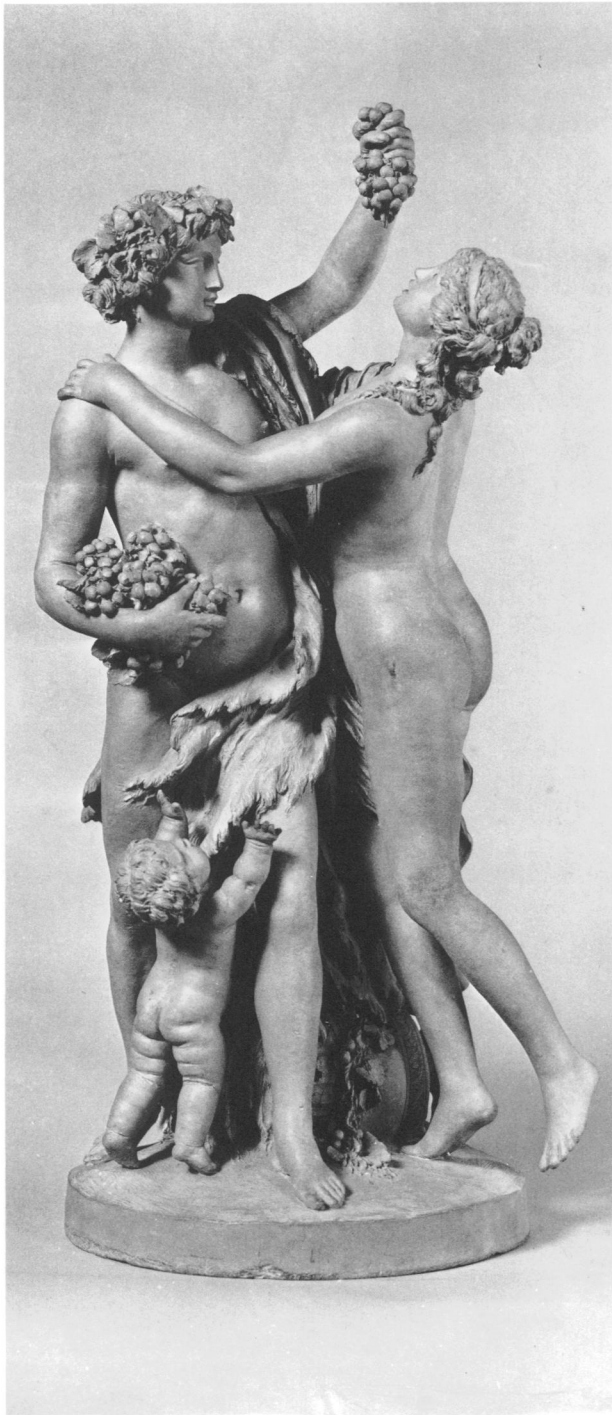


FIGURE 16  
Bacchus and a Nymph, with Cupid, by Clodion.  
Terracotta. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.679

is not easy to reconcile them with the concept of “great art” as formulated for Altman by Henry Duveen.<sup>56</sup>

Of all the sculptured works in his collection, however, the one that attracted the most attention was a cup of gold and enamel bought from the Rospigliosi family (Figure 17). Sumptuous yet refined pieces of this kind—and the Altman cup is of excellent quality—had an irresistible fascination for the contemporaries of Fabergé and were at that time invariably attributed to Benvenuto Cellini. Altman followed their appearance on the market with the greatest interest and was reassured when Henry Duveen was able to inform him in 1912 that the one that Pierpont Morgan had just bought was “very small, half the size of yours.”<sup>57</sup>

The last picture to find a permanent place in Altman’s collection was, like the first, a Rembrandt; and for no work of art had he ever fought with greater passion.

In the spring of 1912 Baron Steengracht died, childless, in The Hague, and speculation at once began about the future of the famous art collection that he had inherited from his grandfather.<sup>58</sup> For many years it had been one of the chief sights of Holland, and foreign visitors had come to look upon it so much as a public institution that they were disconcerted to find it suddenly closed. Most of the pictures had been acquired in the 1830s when Baron Steengracht was director of the Mauritshuis, and though not very great in number, they included a few of exceptional fame, which had been repeatedly published—Metsu’s *The Sick Child*, Steen’s *The Merry Company*, Brouwer’s *The Smokers*, and, above all, Rembrandt’s *Toilet of Bathsheba*, signed and dated 1643 (Figure 18). It was on this latter picture that interest was mainly concentrated during the year that followed its owner’s death. After some months of rumor it was confirmed that all the paintings were to be auctioned in Paris, and eventually in the middle of May 1913, a handsome catalogue was issued.

56. Among his other eighteenth-century sculptures reference should be made to Pigalle’s excellent *Mercury* (terracotta) and Houdon’s bust of his daughter *Sabine*. On June 14, 1912 (Duveen File), Duveen wrote to Altman of the bust, calling it “as great as anything that was ever executed by Donatello.”

57. Duveen File, September 6, 1912.

58. See the sale catalogue of this collection, and also the *Times* (London) of June 1 and October 16, 1912, and March 17, May 17, and June 10, 1913.

FIGURE 17

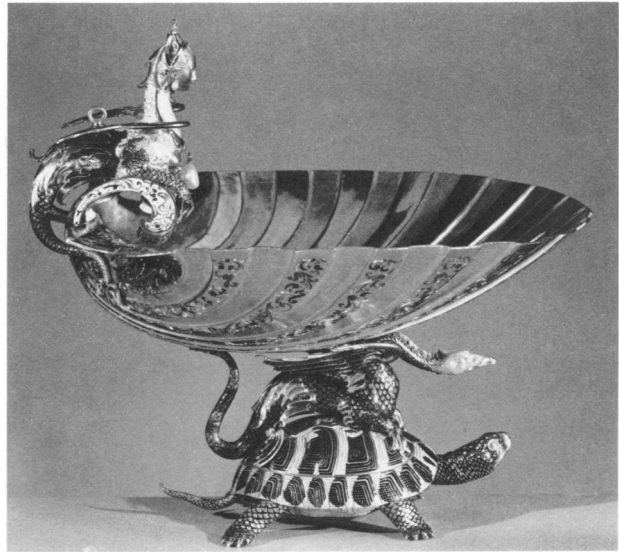
The Rospigliosi Cup, Italian (Florentine), about 1585. Gold, enamel, and pearls. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.667

Duveen's had already been interested in securing the Rembrandt for Altman, and, after getting confirmation from Bode that it was "really an *exceptionally fine* picture . . . in excellent state,"<sup>59</sup> they remained in

59. Duveen File, May 14 and 23, 1913.

FIGURE 18

The Toilet of Bathsheba, by Rembrandt. Oil on wood. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Benjamin Altman, 14.40.651





the closest, almost daily, touch with him about it. Altman made no attempt to conceal his enthusiasm, and the underlinings in his letters as well as repeated cables to and fro across the Atlantic convey something of the excitement that he felt: “*Now I should like to have that picture, especially if my information so far received is correct, it being I understand well worthy of my collection.*”<sup>60</sup> But there were problems: it was known that the bidding would be very keen, and Altman was most anxious that Duveen’s themselves should not act for him, but should instead employ someone not known to be working on their behalf, as he was all too aware of the fondness of the firm for making a splash. Such a proposal was completely unacceptable to Duveen. “Our very absence from such a very important sale would provoke comment creating suspicion,” they insisted in a series of coded cables that surrounded the deal with an atmosphere of melodrama.<sup>61</sup> Altman, however, was not so much worried about the price—though Duveen’s had suggested that he would have to pay £30,000 for it, he himself said that he was ready to go at least £10,000 higher—as about the publicity, and this time Henry Duveen was careful to warn him in advance that, whatever precautions they might take, some leakage to the press was inevitable.<sup>62</sup> And there were further complications: Altman knew that the Metropolitan Museum was interested in the Metsu (“a dreadful subject,” as Henry Duveen characteristically described it), the Steen (“fine quality but much too large vulgar picture”), and the Brouwer, and he naturally did not want Duveen’s to bid for him against the Museum.<sup>63</sup> Finally, there was the fear that Kleinberger, who had acted for him on many occasions, would be offended by his desertion this time and would deliberately bid against him. As far as this was concerned, Duveen was able to reassure him not only that “German collectors

are very cautious prices they pay,” but that in any case a conciliatory cable would do the trick—as it did.<sup>64</sup>

At last on June 9 the sale took place. Newspapers all over the world were able to announce that a new record (£40,000) had been established in the auction rooms, and Duveen cabled Altman that the picture was his, adding later in a letter that “your ‘lucky star’ has followed you, for had it not been for the tremendous drop on the Stock Exchange last Saturday and on the day of the Sale, I am *positive* that the price would have gone fully to your limit, if not over.” Altman’s cable in reply to the news that the picture belonged to him will seem laconic only to those who have not studied his correspondence in detail: “Many Thanks Very Happy Kindest Regards To All Altman.”<sup>65</sup>

Benjamin Altman was now aged seventy-three. His health was failing, and in April he had been saddened by the death of Morgan<sup>66</sup>—a rival collector but the man who had ensured that his bequest would be accepted by the Metropolitan. He was moreover very heavily involved in the extensive rebuilding of his store.<sup>67</sup> His intentions were still ambitious in the extreme: only two days after the acquisition of the Rembrandt, he wrote to Duveen of a rumor that Lord Radnor might be willing to sell his pictures: “The pictures which particularly impressed me are the following:—Pierre Gilles ‘Quentin Matseys’. Erasmus ‘Holbein’. Children of Christian II, King of Denmark, also Mother and Child ‘Mabuse’. The Velasquez ‘Juan de Pareja’ did not strike me hard.”<sup>68</sup> And he showed interest both when Duveen’s announced that they had bought “a very fine Bellini . . . quite a ‘corker’” and when, even more dramatically, they referred to the possibility that the duke of Devonshire might be ready to sell his entire collection.<sup>69</sup> Time was pressing. Already Duveen’s had warned him that the English were

60. Duveen File, letters of May 20 and 23, 1913.

61. Duveen File, letter of May 30, 1913, and cable of June 4, 1913. As an illustration of the code, I quote from a cable regarding an earlier purchase (Duveen File, June 29, 1912): “Agvapyafap/inekiiwion/ubusodoud/memling” (“Have seen Altman very good humor will answer in re Memling”).

62. Duveen File, cable of June 6, 1913: “. . . you must not be angry if later some newspapers suggest that picture may be going to you or Frick or Widener, because the fame of your collection is so great here that some enterprising journal may hazard guess and couple your name with the other two.”

63. Duveen File, letters and cable of May 20, 23, and 30, 1913. The Brouwer was later presented to the Museum by Altman’s closest associate and successor in his business enterprise, Michael Friedsam.

64. Duveen File, cables of June 6 and 7, 1913, and letter of June 12: “Of course your cable to Mr. K. certainly did good in one way but it was unfortunate that you had to expose your hand to him. I think he acted most loyally in the affair.” See also the letter from Altman of June 26, 1913.

65. Duveen File, cables and letter of June 9, 10, and 12, 1913. Altman had been prepared to go very much higher for the picture.

66. Duveen File, letter of April 22, 1913. Morgan had died on March 31.

67. Duveen File, letter and cable of July 18 and September 22, 1913.

68. Duveen File, letters of June 11 and July 1, 1913.

69. Duveen File, letters of July 1 and 18, 1913.

becoming alarmed at the number of pictures leaving the country and were thinking of legislation to prevent this; now they wrote that the American government might be on the verge of reintroducing import duties on works of art.<sup>70</sup> But it was too late. Money matters were difficult, and Altman warned Duveen not only that during 1914 he could buy nothing more but that he was even thinking of selling Holbein's *Lady Rich*, which they had acquired for him some months earlier.<sup>71</sup> On October 7 he died. A few days later it became officially known that he had left his collection to the Metropolitan.

Benjamin Altman only started seriously collecting old-master painting and sculpture when he was aged sixty-five, and from the first he must have realized that time was short. He once claimed that he always made up his mind quickly, and, given the scale on which he was buying, this is true enough.<sup>72</sup> Fifty-one pictures were included in his bequest, but he certainly owned many more at different moments, for we know from a number of sources that he was constantly weeding out works that no longer appealed to him or that no longer seemed sufficiently important.<sup>73</sup> Indeed he spent almost as much energy on trying to get rid of a Turner as he did on trying to acquire a Rembrandt.<sup>74</sup> Like all collectors at all times he responded to fashion, and he could on occasion desire a picture just because it was celebrated and apparently unattainable (he once toyed with the idea of trying to buy Gainsborough's *Blue Boy*)<sup>75</sup> or because some other collector had just bought one like it (he seems to have acquired Holbein's *Lady Rich* partly because Frick had bought the *Thomas More*).<sup>76</sup> Indeed, living as he did in one of the great epochs of art collecting, he was constantly observing the activities of his rivals—just as they kept an eye on him.<sup>77</sup> He certainly liked his pictures to be famous as well as beautiful and would worry if his Van

Dycks were not to be found recorded in Bryan or his Dürer in the *Klassiker der Kunst*.<sup>78</sup> But he also had strong views of his own. He did not like majolica or ivories or drawings—even drawings by Rembrandt;<sup>79</sup> and although, like most collectors at the turn of the century, he accumulated rugs and tapestries, crystals and enamels, jewelry and Oriental porcelain, he always showed himself far more keen on quality than on quantity. When he died, this was the point that was most strongly emphasized by many of those who were best aware of his tastes, such as Wilhelm Bode, Edward Robinson, and Henry Duveen. How far, then, was he successful in his aim of building up a collection of masterpieces?

Surely no one can walk through the Altman rooms in the Metropolitan without being struck by a number of exceedingly beautiful paintings, sculptures, and objets d'art. Tastes will obviously vary, but it seems likely that some of these would be included in most people's lists of treasures in the Museum: Van Dyck's superbly aristocratic portrait of Lucas van Uffel (Figure 4), for instance, with its surprising combination of the instantaneous and the pensive; Rembrandt's *Man with a Magnifying Glass* (Figure 6) and *Lady with a Pink* (Figure 7); Francia's tender little *Federigo Gonzaga* (Figure 12); one of the finest of all Ruisdael's landscapes (Figure 5); the beautiful *Young Girl Peeling Apples* by Maes, to which one can turn with pleasure again and again even after gazing at Vermeer's *Girl Asleep* opposite; the Memling portraits (Figure 2). Many more could be added, for this selection makes no pretense to be other than a personal one, and it is easy enough to visualize what a dramatic difference this magnificent bequest made to the Museum in 1913. Nevertheless, even in the issue of a *Journal* designed to celebrate the centenary of that Museum, it may perhaps be permissible to try and probe a little further and, considering the collection as a whole, to ask whether it entirely fulfills the ambitions of its creator.

70. Duveen File, letters of June 19, 1912, and July 1, 1913.

71. Duveen File, letters of September 18, 19, and 22, 1913. Altman also thought of getting rid of the "Rembrandt" portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels (now tentatively attributed to Barent Fabritius).

72. Duveen File, letter of September 6, 1912.

73. It is, of course, not easy to track these down. We hear on several occasions of his rejecting pictures that were offered to him—a Jacopo da Sellajo, a Pintoricchio Madonna and Child "as fine as Raphael," two portraits by Mainardi, and so on.

74. Gimpel sold Altman a Turner in 1907, but according to

the dealer's son (Gimpel, *Diary*, p. 300) Altman returned it in 1908. If that is correct, it must have been another picture by that artist that he was still trying to dispose of in July 1913 (Duveen File, July 18) and that, in fact, was still with his estate after his death (Duveen File, December 17, 1913).

75. Duveen File, June 19, 1912.

76. Duveen File, letters of June 12 and 26, 1912.

77. For the comments of John G. Johnson on Altman see Saarinen, *Proud Possessors*, pp. 108–109.

78. Duveen File, letters of June 12 and July 5, 1912.

79. Duveen File, letters of June 12 and 14 and July 5, 1912.

The question should perhaps be put in another way. To what extent was it possible in the early years of the twentieth century for an American to build up a collection of “great art” on the lines envisaged by Altman? The concept of “great art” is central to the question, for by this term was clearly meant painting of a kind that had already been sanctified by the taste of half a century and that had earlier been collected with such conspicuous success by an institution such as The National Gallery in London: that is to say, works of the Flemish and Italian masters of the early Renaissance, the Venetian High Renaissance, the Dutch seventeenth century, and Van Dyck (but not Rubens—and not, more surprisingly, Claude and Poussin). Looking at the history of American collections in general, it will at once become clear that with the notable exception of Hals, Rembrandt, and Van Dyck few acquisitions of really outstanding importance were made in these fields before the death of Altman. Isabella Stewart Gardner’s collection in Boston, so wonderfully built up by Berenson, is the one outstanding exception, but elsewhere one may be reminded of those English aristocratic collections that attracted such vast attention all over Europe in the eighteenth century but that, in fact, acquired most of the more important of their treasures in the nineteenth. Similarly, if one again excludes the Gardner Museum and the special cases of Hals, Rembrandt, and Van Dyck, one soon becomes aware that most of the really “great art” in America (as both Duveen and modern taste would agree on the term) entered the country after 1914: the Frick and Washington Bellinis (1915); the Raphael Small Cowper Madonna (Duveen, 1913; Widener, 1917; Washington, 1942); the Titian Venus and the Lute Player (Metropolitan, 1936)—and this list could obviously be very much extended. Indeed, the richest single supply of “great art” in this traditional sense was not available until the 1930s, when Mellon was able to buy some of the treasures of the Hermitage. Altman’s collection must therefore be gauged not against the Platonic idea of some sublime “museum without walls” but against the possibilities that were open to him—against, for instance, the Frick as it was in 1913; or against the purchases made by the Berlin Museum in the early years of the century, for we know from frequent complaints by Bode that Altman’s resources were much greater than those of that institution. When looked at in that

way it remains a great collection, but it cannot be denied that it suffers from the comparisons.

The real drawback, however (and it must be emphasized once again that drawback is a strictly relative term in this context), lies in the concept of “great art,” and here it is necessary to take another vantage point and give up trying to look, as we have until now, at Altman’s pictures through his own eyes, but gauge them instead against a wholly different criterion, though it is one that is historically valid. If we now abandon the special meaning that Duveen attached to the term and broaden it so as to include such artists as El Greco and Goya, Fragonard and Tiepolo, Delacroix and Degas, we can see at once how great were the possibilities open to American collectors—and with what intelligence and discrimination many were able to take advantage of them.<sup>80</sup> For though the English, and The National Gallery itself, had excelled in accumulating the sort of pictures that Altman was later to search for, when faced with these less traditionally accepted masters, they suffered a complete failure of nerve—and it was lack of nerve rather than of finance that was responsible for their pitiful omissions. The lack in Altman’s gallery of works by any of these masters, some of whom were superbly represented in other American collections of his day, must be noted by the historian of taste, but to insist upon it would lead to a total misunderstanding of his aims and achievement. Better by far to return once again to the Van Dycks, the Rembrandts, the Ruisdael, and the Vermeer that this strange, silent man bequeathed “to the benefit of mankind.”

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply grateful to the Altman Foundation and the Metropolitan Museum, which made possible my visit to the United States to collect the material for this article. I am also most grateful to Elizabeth Gardner, Claus Virch, and everyone else in the Museum’s Department of European Paintings, who gave me unrestricted access to all the relevant archives. I express these thanks with the greater feeling as I am aware that they may disagree with some of what I have written. Finally, I wish to thank Baron Cecil Anrep, who has kindly permitted me to quote from several of Bernard Berenson’s letters.

80. One might also include Vermeer in this category. Though he was “discovered” in the 1860s, European collectors were to show far less interest in him than were the Americans.

# The Monets in the Metropolitan Museum

DOUGLAS COOPER

THE GROUP OF PAINTINGS by Claude Monet belonging to the Metropolitan Museum—thirty-five in all—is not only its largest holding of a single Impressionist painter, but also the largest group of works by this artist in any American museum. Those which come next to it in importance are the thirty-three works in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the twenty-nine works in The Art Institute of Chicago, and the thirteen works in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. But though each of these other groups contains some major examples, none can be said to have the range or masterly distinction of the group owned by the Metropolitan.

For the sake of clarity, and because four additional paintings by Monet have come into the Metropolitan's possession since the publication in 1967 of *French Paintings, A Catalogue of the Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, III, XIX–XX Centuries*, by Charles Sterling and Margareta M. Salinger, I have included an up-to-date checklist of the Metropolitan's Monets as an appendix to my article. This list reveals at once where the strength of the Metropolitan's collection of Monets lies, just as it allows us to discover its weaknesses, and I propose to discuss it first of all on this basis.

The first decade of Monet's career (1860–1870) is, for example, represented by six works, four of them of outstanding importance, but unfortunately there is not one of the great figure compositions of the period. Such

figures as appear in the early works here are always of secondary importance in relation to the painting of landscape and sky. The earliest, the portrait of Leclenché (Figure 1), a friend of the artist and his doctor, is an interesting and charming small work painted at the end of what we may call Monet's years of apprenticeship. It is sensitive, is thoughtfully composed, and has the charm of informality, but it is more of a snapshot than a character study and reveals the awkwardness of a young man's work. Nevertheless, it is interesting because it shows Monet feeling his way, with the help of photographs by Nadar and a recently kindled enthusiasm for the painting of Manet, toward naturalism, a credible handling of light, and a loose type of brushwork. However, this painting is of minor significance in comparison with the four bigger and truly spectacular canvases of these years which the Metropolitan owns, namely, *The Bodmer Oak*, *Terrace at Sainte-Adresse*, *The Beach at Sainte-Adresse*, and *La Grenouillère*. These land- and waterscapes are not merely milestones along the path of Monet's rapid artistic development between the ages of twenty-five and thirty; they also reveal how easily this virtually self-taught artist mastered the technique of brushwork and how brilliantly he could handle paint. All are works of such importance that no student of early Monet can afford to overlook them, and except for the *Beach* they are in their several ways unique. Through-

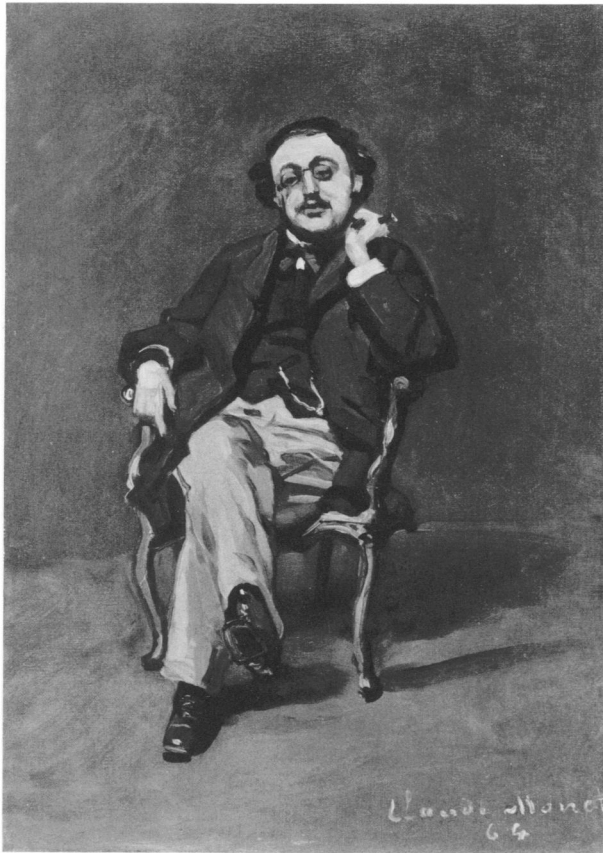


FIGURE 1  
Dr. Leclenché, by Claude Monet, dated 1864.  
18 × 12¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
gift of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin C. Vogel, 51.32

out his life Monet, who grew up beside the sea on the Normandy coast, was to be a great painter of watery subjects. It is fascinating, therefore, to discover that in this group of early paintings one can observe his rapid progress from the labored handling of a rough sea, which evokes primarily a physical sensation, in *The Green Wave* of 1865 (Figure 2), still much indebted to Manet, to the brilliant visual evocation of a watery surface with its ripples and reflections in the three later works, ending with *La Grenouillère* of 1869.

The earliest of the major works of this first group is a sparkling, sun-dappled woodland scene painted in the heart of the forest of Fontainebleau, probably in 1865–1866, and hitherto bearing the somewhat in-

appropriate title, since no road is visible, of *The Chailly Road* (Figure 3). Another and certainly earlier painting which bears this same title is in the Ordrupgaard Collection in Denmark, yet there is no similarity between the two motifs; moreover, this latter painting shows a view which is almost identical with the motif entitled *The Bas-Bréau Road* (1865) in the Louvre.

These titles seem to have become confused through a misreading of the Durand-Ruel archives.<sup>1</sup> Mr. C. M. Mount in *Monet: A Biography* (New York, 1966, p. 226) published a list of seventeen paintings said to have been bought from Monet by Durand-Ruel in March 1873. At the head of this list figured:

Le Bodenier [*sic*], Arbre de la Forêt de Fontainebleau  
600 frs.  
Pavé de Chailly 700 frs.

Since the word *Bodenier* does not exist in French, Mlle Marie-Thérèse de Forges, a curator in the Department of Paintings in the Louvre, put forward the clever and intelligent suggestion that it was a misreading of Bodmer and offered a logical explanation for the use of this title. Emile Michel in his volume *La Forêt de Fontainebleau* (Paris, 1929, pp. 220 ff.) writes that the artist Karl Bodmer (1809–1893), famous for his engravings and paintings of the forest of Fontainebleau, had a favorite tree in the Bas-Bréau section which he painted and drew so often that it came to be generally referred to as “the Bodmer oak.” Inspired by Bodmer, many other young artists working in Fontainebleau, as well as Corot, used this tree as a motif. A recent examination of the Durand-Ruel stock books confirms Mlle de Forges’s conjecture; an entry there reveals that on March 1, 1873, Durand-Ruel bought from Monet “Le Bodemer (arbre de la Forêt de Fontainebleau) Frs. 600.” Indeed, comparison of the tree which appears in Bodmer’s engravings, and especially in his then famous *La Forêt en Hiver*, with the large oak which dominates Monet’s painting in the Metropolitan reveals that it is almost certainly the same tree. I propose, therefore, with the concurrence of the curatorial staff of the Metropolitan Museum’s European Paintings Department, to change the title of Monet’s big painting back

1. The information that follows is the result of research and enquiry by Margaretta Salinger and myself, and I wish to record my gratitude to her for allowing it to be published here.

FIGURE 2

The Green Wave, by Claude Monet, dated 1865. 19 1/8 x 25 1/2 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.111

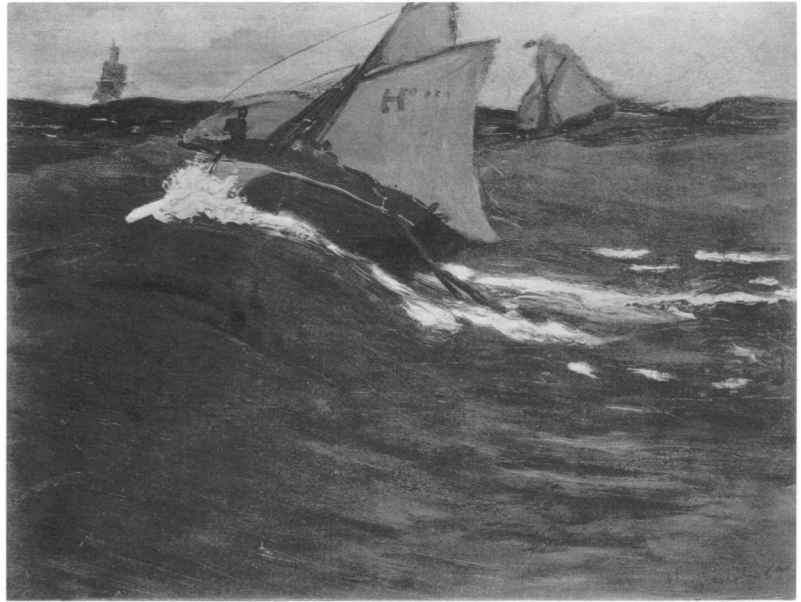


FIGURE 3

The Bodmer Oak, Fontainebleau Forest (formerly called The Chailly Road), by Claude Monet, 1865-1866. 37 7/8 x 50 7/8 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Julia W. Emmons and gift of Sam Salz, 64.210

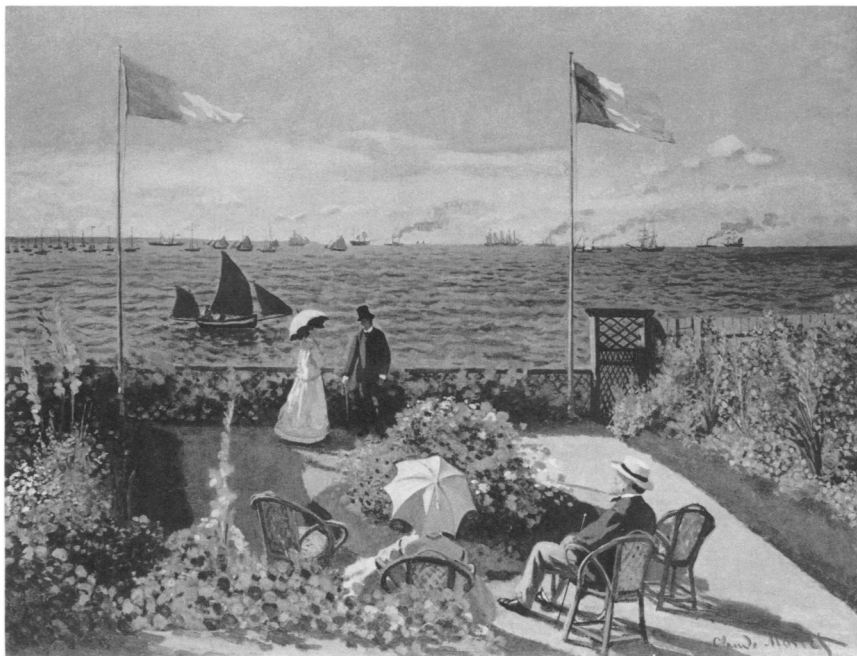


to its original form and call it *The Bodmer Oak*, Fontainebleau Forest, instead of *The Chailly Road*. And this change of title makes it possible to identify the Metropolitan's painting with the canvas referred to by Arsène Alexandre, a good friend of the artist, in his book *Claude Monet* (Paris, 1921, pp. 51–52) as “Un Chêne au Bas-Bréau.” Alexandre asserts that this was one of the canvases lacerated by Monet in despair in 1866, and in fact a recent examination of *The Bodmer Oak* in the Metropolitan has brought to light a long vertical cut on the left side of the canvas, which has been repaired.

The Metropolitan's *Bodmer Oak* is one of five or six undated but related works in which Monet's debt to landscape painters of the preceding generation, in particular, Millet, Théodore Rousseau, Corot, and Courbet, is unmistakable. They may all be described as open-air studies of light, shadow, and foliage which accompanied his work on, and served Monet as preparation for, his first great outdoor figure composition, *Un Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1865–1866). However, the Metropolitan's painting looks as though it were the latest, for by comparison with the others it is more loosely painted in a much lighter palette of pinks, greens, and blues, and comes close in many ways to the airy setting and daring tonalities of the great woodland

*Picnic* (Pouchkine Museum, Moscow; fragments surviving from the large final canvas in the Louvre and coll. Eknayan, Paris).

The next three paintings in this first group show Monet asserting himself as a daring, individualistic artist and as a master with a new vision and a new method of evoking light through color, which a few years later came to be called Impressionism. Between 1863 and 1865 Monet lived and worked in close association with his friends Renoir, Bazille, and Sisley, whom he had just met in Gleyre's studio and with whom he shared many ideas about a new style of open-air painting. But by 1866 Monet was already outstripping the others by the brilliance of his execution and had begun to dominate his friends by his example. This vital moment in Monet's evolution toward Impressionism is gloriously documented in the Metropolitan. First of all we have—it is the Museum's most recent purchase—the palpitating, colorful, and lively, yet serene, *Terrace at Sainte-Adresse* (Figure 4), painted in the fall of 1866 at a seaside village on the outskirts of Le Havre. Monet himself, showing a photograph of the painting to René Gimpel and Georges Bernheim in October 1920, told the two dealers how much he loved it and added that he would be very happy to buy it back from Durand-Ruel, in whose hands it then was.



**FIGURE 4**  
*Terrace at Sainte-Adresse*, by Claude Monet, 1866. 38  $\frac{3}{8}$  × 51  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchased with special contributions and purchase funds given or bequeathed by friends of the Museum, 67.241

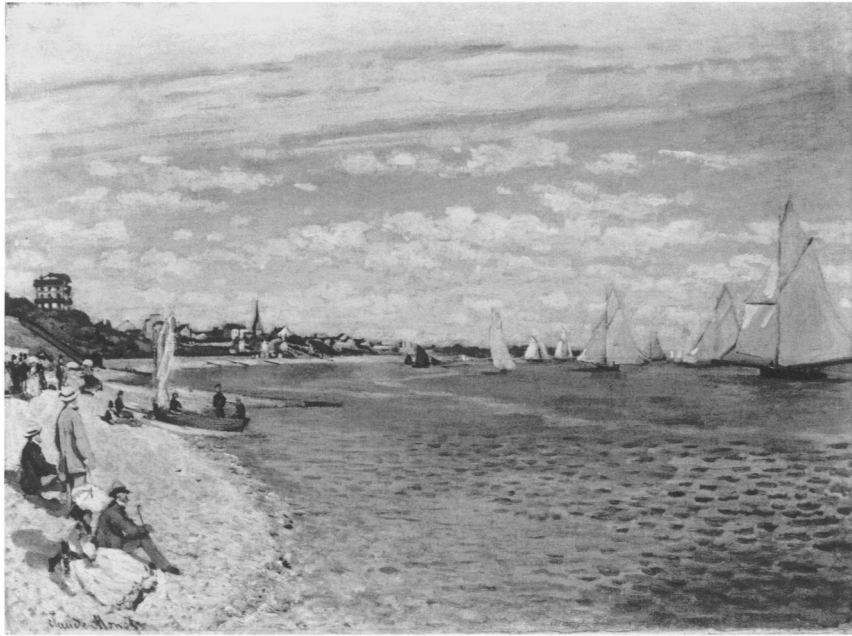
Then, pointing out the poles with flags on either side of the composition, Monet remarked that he was “very fond of flags” and that at the time he painted it “this composition was considered very daring.” But it is not only the composition that deserves to be called daring, for its effect of atmospheric freshness and the frank rendering of sunlight, obtained through high-keyed tonalities and broken brushwork, are two boldly new factors with which Monet and his friends were to be increasingly preoccupied from now on. This is not yet a truly Impressionist work, for the shadows are still treated as masses and not broken down into their component hues. But in the generalization of forms and the dabs of bright red, yellow, and white, which evoke both vibrations of light and variations of texture, we see Monet moving away from Manet and Courbet toward his mature idiom.

The subject matter of this picture, too, has a special interest, not only for what it tells us in the most unaffected way about life in those days, but more particularly because it gives us almost the only insight in Monet’s whole work into his family background. Monet’s parents, who were relatively well-to-do bourgeois, had moved in 1845 from Paris to Le Havre to go into partnership with their brother-in-law, M. Lecadre, in a successful business as ship chandlers. Monet *père*, seated in the right foreground of this picture with his back turned, was by now a prosperous *commerçant*, an autocrat in the home and a man as conventional in his principles as any other self-made bourgeois. He therefore expected his younger son Claude to “follow a good road” and “arrive at a result that is honorable and advantageous in every respect,” as he wrote in a letter of 1866 to Bazille. Monet *père* would allow Claude to be a painter if that was really his bent, and was willing to provide financial support while his son was establishing his reputation. But the “good road” that he expected Claude to follow inevitably involved conscientious study at the Beaux-Arts, yearly success at the Salon, a steady income from sales, and a progressive rise in status within the artistic hierarchy. The fact that young Monet—who once said to Gustave Geffroy, “I paint as a bird sings”—failed to follow this pattern and insisted on studying and working in his own way soon led to trouble with his father, who repeatedly tried to oblige his son to “march down the path of hard work and methodical application” by reducing or cutting off his

financial support. In the spring of 1866, two paintings by Monet—A Road in Fontainebleau Forest and Woman in a Green Dress—had been accepted at the Salon, where they received very favorable notices from Zola and other critics. As a result he had sold a picture, and this had given his father such satisfaction that he had restored the allowance which he had reduced only a few months previously. But during the summer, Monet ran heavily into debt, could not pay his rent, slashed and abandoned a number of finished canvases, fled from his creditors, and, penniless, found himself obliged in the early fall to seek refuge at his father’s house in Le Havre. It was at this moment of private humiliation that he painted the radiant Terrace at Sainte-Adresse. Surely it cannot have been without a certain irony that young Claude Monet excelled himself in this painting, which shows a seemingly carefree family group exuding an air of wealth, ease, and self-satisfaction, although his father turns his back on the artist, who has shamelessly indulged, with luscious paint and bright colors, his own visual delight in the spectacle.

The second canvas, The Beach at Sainte-Adresse (Figure 5), was painted rather less than a year later in the summer of 1867. Yet while the Terrace was colorful and serene, the Beach is somber and melancholy. In the interval Monet had suffered further misfortunes: he had left Le Havre to try and escape from frustration, his big new figure composition Women in a Garden had been refused for the Salon, he had sold nothing, his mistress (about whom his father had been kept in ignorance) had become pregnant, he was again penniless and, seeing no way out, had once more to throw himself on his father’s mercy. The outcome of this second surrender was a temporary separation of Monet from his mistress, who in his absence gave birth to a son in Paris in August 1867, and a family arrangement by which Monet was provided with food, a bed, and just enough money to live on each day in the house of his father’s sister, Mme Lecadre, at Sainte-Adresse. Mme Lecadre had some understanding of art and had already helped and encouraged her nephew in the past. But we can imagine the strain under which he must have been working now from the tone of his father’s letter to Bazille, in which he wrote: “. . . it will be for him a good place of refuge, but he must understand that he must do serious and sustained work while





**FIGURE 5**  
 The Beach at Sainte-Adresse,  
 by Claude Monet, 1867. 29 5/8 x  
 40 in. The Metropolitan Mu-  
 seum of Art, bequest of  
 William Church Osborn,  
 51.30.4

there, as much to advance on the path of progress as to produce pecuniary results, to which he has not up to the present paid enough attention, although he knows full well the importance and usefulness of money.” The Metropolitan’s *Beach at Sainte-Adresse* is one of a considerable group of similar paintings done by Monet during this summer of 1867, which bear witness to his seriousness of purpose as well as to his continued progress in his own naturalistic manner of painting. Tonally, nature is rendered in this picture almost with the exactitude of a photograph. But it was not the sort of painting which found favor with the jury of the Salon or with amateurs, and another year was to go by before Monet made a sale. Then it was Louis Gaudibert, a shipowner of Le Havre (and no doubt a friend of his father’s), who came to his rescue.

Gaudibert was Monet’s first real patron, and it was as a result of money coming in from his purchases of paintings in 1868–1869 that Monet was able to escape from the clutches of his father and his aunt and create his own family life with his mistress and baby son. He was still drawn, above all, to working on the Normandy coast which he knew so well (Fécamp, Etretat). But now he started to paint more frequently on the banks of the Seine near Paris, where he hoped to find a market

for his canvases; in 1868 he stayed at Bonnières and in 1869, with money provided by Gaudibert, he was installed at Saint-Michel near Bougival. Renoir, no less impoverished, was living nearby, and in August–September 1869, the two young artists worked for a while together at Bougival making paintings of the bathing establishment La Grenouillère, run by Père Fournaise.

There is reason to think, if we interpret correctly a passage in a letter written in late September to Bazille, where Monet says that he has already done “some bad sketches” and goes on to mention another picture which is still “a dream,” that he may have envisaged working up a more finished composition, like *Women in a Garden*, from the scene. Supporting evidence for this idea could perhaps be adduced from the fact that when the Metropolitan’s painting (Figure 6) is brought together with another in an English private collection they add up to the more panoramic view of the establishment which occurs in a third (formerly in a German private collection); furthermore, since all three are executed in the same type of broad, brilliantly evocative brushwork, none is more obviously definitive than the others. But can the Metropolitan’s *La Grenouillère*, with its virtuoso painting, really be one

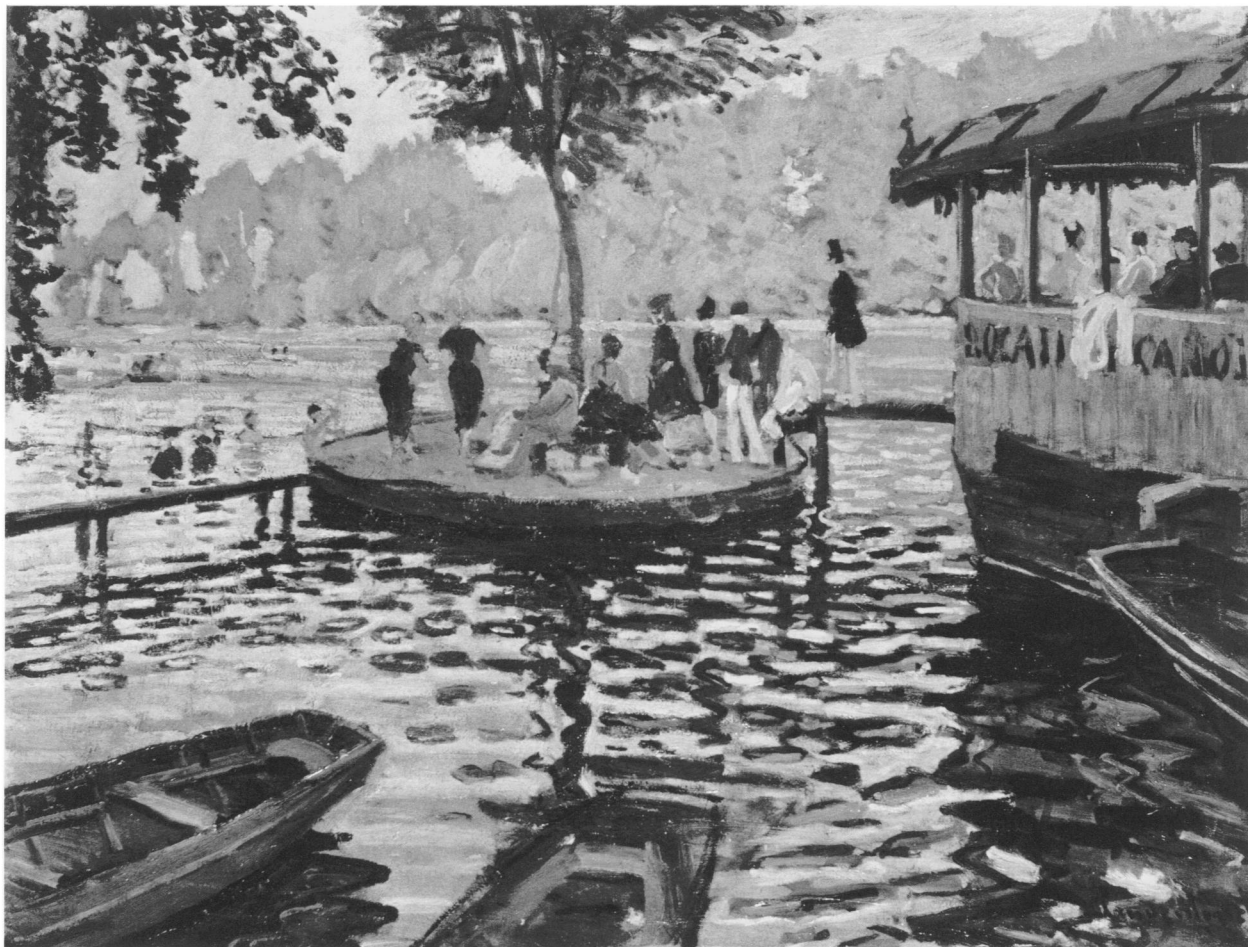
of the “bad sketches?” Here at last, with his masterly handling of the play of light on the surface of the water, his use of broken colors, his ability to simplify and generalize forms to a degree that his friends had still to learn, and above all his capacity for creating an overall effect without sacrificing veracity, Monet reached the starting point from which Impressionism proper was to be developed during the 1870s.

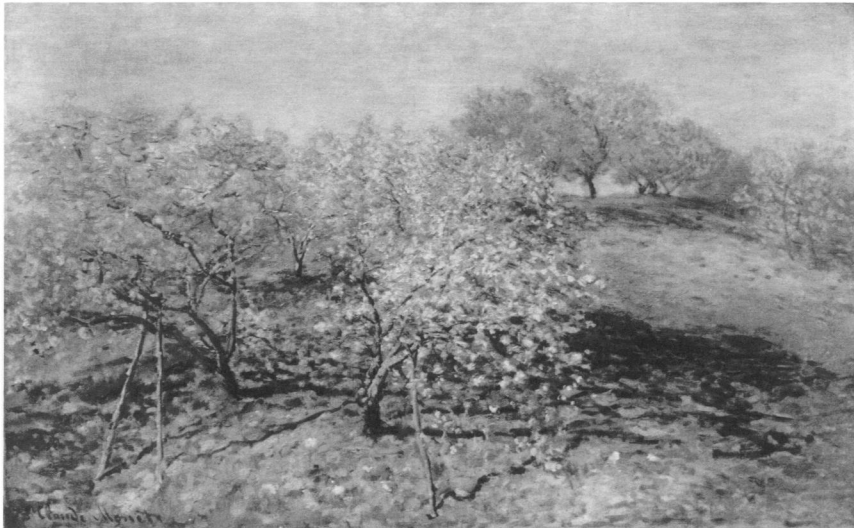
There is a considerable gap in the Metropolitan’s collection during this next spectacular phase of Monet’s artistic development. The Museum owns no paintings of English or Dutch subjects (1870–1872), nor any of his breathtaking snow scenes, nor those Im-

pressionist river paintings done at Argenteuil (1872–1876) which constitute one of the summits of his art. Indeed the only record here of these immensely fruitful years is the orchard motif painted in the spring of 1873, *Apple Trees in Bloom* (Figure 7), which is fresh, airy, and charming but in no sense a major or characteristically personal work. At best it may be said to illustrate the much shorter brushstroke that Monet came to use after *La Grenouillère* and to typify his unsophisticated delight in any natural scene. It is, however, worth pointing out additionally the parallel between this unusual picture and the series of *Orchards in Bloom* painted by Van Gogh soon after his arrival in

FIGURE 6

*La Grenouillère*, by Claude Monet, 1869. 29  $\frac{3}{8}$   $\times$  39  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.112





**FIGURE 7**  
**Apple Trees in Bloom**, by  
 Claude Monet, dated 1873.  
 24½ × 39 ⅝ in. The Metropolitan  
 Museum of Art, bequest of  
 Mary Livingston Willard,  
 26.186.1



**FIGURE 8**  
**The Parc Monceau, Paris**, by  
 Claude Monet, dated 1876.  
 23½ × 32½ in. The Metropolitan  
 Museum of Art, bequest of  
 Loula D. Lasker, New York,  
 59.206

the *midi* in March-April 1888, for in a letter (August 15, 1888) he speaks of being deeply touched by Monet's landscapes, which he calls rich and daring "à la Guy de Maupassant." This single canvas is complemented by two slightly later works which are more elaborately Impressionist in handling: the scintillating study of light, flowering shrubs, and foliage entitled *The Parc Monceau, Paris* (Figure 8), painted in 1876, and the richer, more striking genre scene *Parisians Enjoying*

*the Parc Monceau* (Figure 9), of two years later. In the latter, both the general conception and the bold dappled sunlight effects are reminiscent of numerous outdoor scenes painted by Renoir between 1876 and 1879 (e.g., *The Swing*, in the Louvre). Thus, in addition to having a special beauty as a painting, it stands as a reminder of the continual fraternal interchange of subjects and ways of rendering them that occurred during these years between the close-knit fellowship of



major Impressionist painters. Yet particularly in this picture one is reminded of how each managed to preserve his separate personality by his way of seeing and his choice of paintable subjects. For where Renoir always liked to focus on a delectable human situation, Monet saw people as an additional colorful element amid the profusion of growth and light effects which made up the natural scene. And he did not hesitate to treat both with a comparable degree of generalization. No one would deny that each of these three paintings by Monet is worthy of a place in the Metropolitan, but it would be exaggerated to claim either that they represent the best of which he was capable during the great years of Impressionism, or that they rank beside his greatest and most personal achievements of the period (e.g., *Le Déjeuner* [1873], the decorative panels for *Hoschédé* [1877], the *Gare St. Lazare* [1877–1878]).

After 1878, Monet's approach to painting nature underwent a subtle modification, and for the next twelve years he was involved in what we may call an exploratory post-Impressionist phase. During these years he traveled extensively, was attracted by many new kinds of subjects, and was continually varying and simplifying his technique. Monet obviously sensed—he was the first to do so—that the naturalistic Impressionism of the 1870s had been carried to a point at which it threatened to become a commonplace. For over ten years his eye had served him like a marvelous photographic lens through which were transmitted effects of light and color sensations; now he was ready to let the creative artist within himself play a greater part and exercise a certain pictorial control. His eye was alert to the slightest variations in tone or hue, and he knew exactly how to translate them onto canvas. But he could not help asking himself where the significance as art, as painting even, lay in what he was doing. Manet and Renoir, who were not in the same degree pure nature painters, probably carried on untroubled because they were more concerned with human beings. Even Pissarro had a Millet-like penchant for the life of the peasantry. Yet a few years later all of them were to have the same kind of doubts as Monet.

Monet, never a calculating or intellectual artist, was throughout his life to remain true to his own vision; he looked only to sources within himself for guidance and, unlike Renoir and Pissarro, always relied on

intuition to lead him to the best solution of his own problems. Thus, when he sensed that he had to discipline his complex color sensations and organize them otherwise within a meaningful pictorial design, he came to accept, for the first time, the need to take liberties with natural appearances. From that moment on—and the process was progressive—Monet allowed his inventive faculty to play an increasing role in the conception of every picture.

This change of emphasis in Monet's work began after his move to Vétheuil, northwest of Paris on the banks of the Seine, in the spring of 1878. And he was able to carry it through without any noticeable break in his work, partly perhaps because at the same time as he felt impelled to change and expand, he was fortunately able at last to put financial worries behind him and begin to reap the benefits of growing prosperity and fame.

What were the new characteristics of Monet's handling? He painted more broadly and with more deliberate variations of texture, indulged in freer generalizations of forms, increased our awareness that his moment of vision was transient, and yet did nothing to conceal an element of conscious artistic arrangement. Between 1878 and 1890 Monet was more knowingly painting pictures: not, as before, pictures of different motifs, but pictures in which the essential subject now became light, which the magic of his brush revealed as infinitely variable. During this great exploratory phase, Monet traveled the length and breadth of France—up and down the Seine valley, to the coasts of Normandy and Brittany, to the Mediterranean seaboard, to the Creuse valley, and again to Holland to paint the tulip fields—in search of new and more challenging experiences to sharpen his visual understanding and revivify his powers as a painter and artist. He was fearless in his pursuit, often enduring physical discomfort and suffering in order to capture a specific effect. Monet would rise before dawn, sit and wait in his floating studio-boat for the sun to rise over the water, set up his easel on the ice, or work in a snow-storm or a gale, all, as he told Octave Mirbeau, in order to catch “something which I had not done before; a sensation which my painting had not yet given.” Yet despite this obsession with light—and by means of color alone Monet could capture with infinite subtlety the exact differences in tone between morning, noon, and evening, between the light of the north and that of the

south, between different types of weather and the different seasons—we must not overlook his unique ability to capture also the essence of the *genius loci*. There is no mistaking a Vétheuil for a Giverny motif, an Antibes for a Pourville. Indeed, one of the extraordinary qualities of Monet's painting is that he could evoke the mood of a place and pin down its individuality without recourse to dramatic effects or precise definition. Monet's secret seems to have resided in his genius for daring simplifications—he had begun his career making caricatures—so that almost instinctively he was able to extract from the dominant elements of a scene some characterizing pattern or rhythm around which he could weave a tissue of colors. Typical examples of this procedure can be found in the rhythmic lines of the cliffs in the Pourville and Varengeville views (cf. Renoir's less meaningful treatment in Pourville: The Cliffs, of 1879), in the fantastic rock structures of the Etretat and the Belle-Isle views, and in the formal

variations of the Poplars of 1891. This type of simplification, which he practiced so brilliantly, was Monet's personal invention—it was subsequently taken over and stylized by Seurat, Gauguin, the Nabis, and art nouveau—but it led to his work's being scornfully underrated by an old friend and highly intelligent artist like Degas, who remarked that it was no better than the art of a "very skillful but short-lived decorator."

Two further points need to be made, I think, in connection with Monet's exploratory post-Impressionist phase. Monet was the first painter who was really successful in conveying a sensation of flux—the flow of water, the undulation of weeds beneath its surface, the perpetual surge of the sea, the fluctuations of light, the passage of a breeze or a gust of wind over grasses or through the branches of trees, even the passage of time. We can only measure the difficulties he must have had to overcome by the frequent references in his letters to the impossibility of going on working because nature

FIGURE 10

Vétheuil in Summer, by Claude Monet, dated 1880. 23  $\frac{5}{8}$  × 39  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of William Church Osborn, 51.30.3



itself has changed in front of his eyes. As a result, he came to work less and less in later years in front of the motif. Indeed, after 1880 he was so sure of his eye and hand that he could carry on working in the studio on pictures of a motif which might be hundreds of miles away. And still these paintings are as fresh and convincing as if they had been painted *in situ*. Therein lies another of the mysteries of Monet's infinitely subtle art.

One would not expect this many-sided evolution in Monet's art to be completely represented in the Metropolitan's collection, but in fact the splendid (and numerically largest) group of fourteen works dating between 1880 and 1890 that the Museum owns goes a long way toward illustrating most of the points I have been trying to make. After 1870, up to which time Monet had been inclined to think and work in the spirit of a Salon aspirant, it is difficult to single out individual works as masterpieces—except of course *Le Déjeuner* (1873) and *La Japonaise* (1876, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts)—if one understands by “masterpiece” a picture which is a summing-up of what has preceded it, a painting which by its excellence and completeness surpasses all the others around it. Monet gave up working in that way: for him, a moment in time, a type of weather, a motif, a season, the next canvas, was different but of equal value with any other. So his masterpieces are groups like the *Hoschédé* decorations, the *Gare St. Lazare*, *Rouen Cathedral*, or the *Water Lilies* in the *Orangerie* considered collectively. Of course, each of us inevitably feels (as did Monet) that within any group or series some individual works are finer and more successful than others, but this we can best indicate by referring to them as “first class,” “exceptional,” or “outstanding.” Considered in this way, and bearing in mind the fact that unlike the Louvre, which owns five versions of *Rouen Cathedral*, or The Art Institute of Chicago, which owns three versions of *Haystacks*, the Metropolitan has no group of works of any one subject, we can unhesitatingly single out *Vétheuil in Summer* (Figure 10), *The Ile aux Fleurs* (Figure 11), *The Petite Creuse at Fresselines* (Figure 12), and *Sunflowers* (Figure 13) as first-class examples, while noting the really exceptional quality of the two contrasting versions of *The Manneporte, Etretat* (Figures 14, 15). All of these canvases represent the work of the mature Monet at its finest and most exemplary. But they do not represent

FIGURE 11

*The Ile aux Fleurs*, by Claude Monet, 1880. 26 × 32 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Julia W. Emmons, 56.135.5

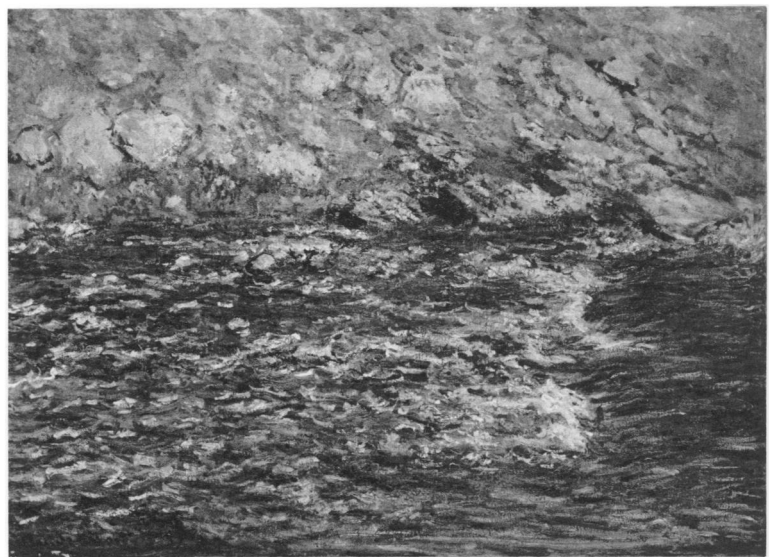
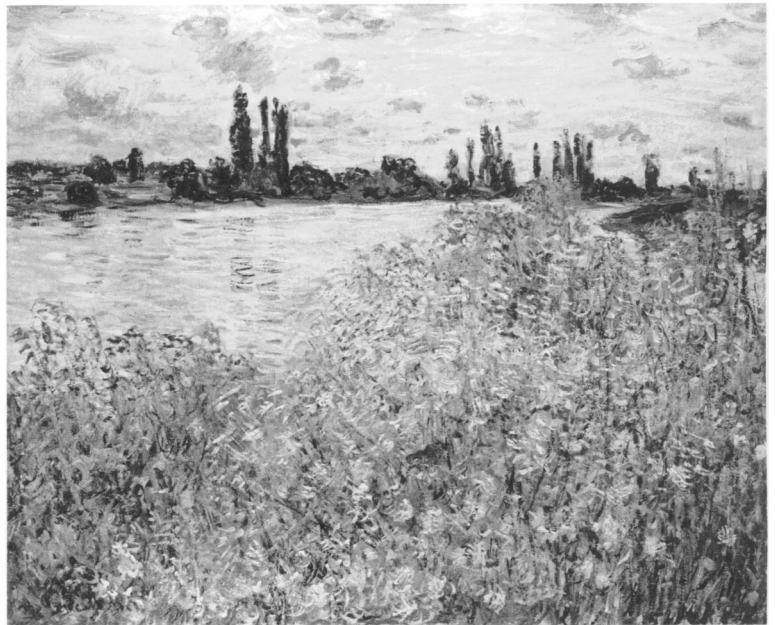


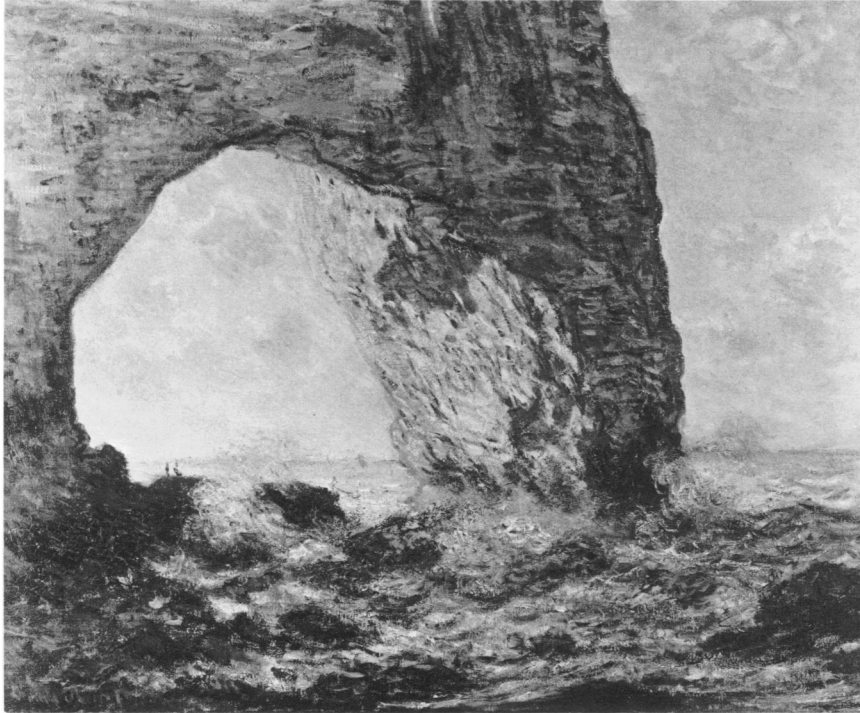
FIGURE 12

*The Petite Creuse at Fresselines*, by Claude Monet, dated 1889. 25 3/4 × 36 1/2 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), 67.187.188

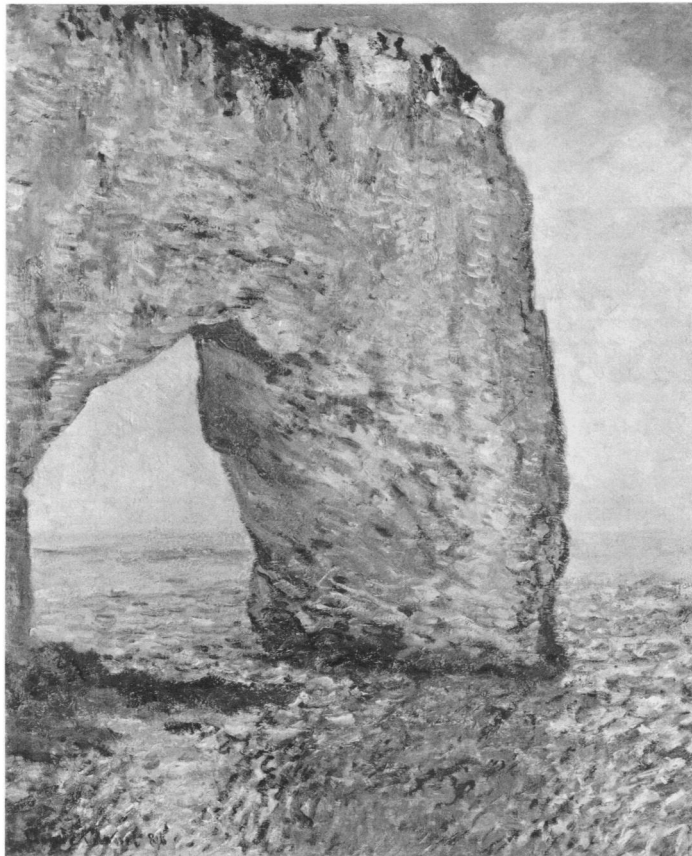


**FIGURE 13**  
Sunflowers, by Claude Monet, dated 1881. 39 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 32 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.107





**FIGURE 14**  
The Manneporte, Etretat, I,  
by Claude Monet, dated 1883.  
25  $\frac{3}{4}$   $\times$  32 in. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, bequest of  
William Church Osborn,  
51.30.5



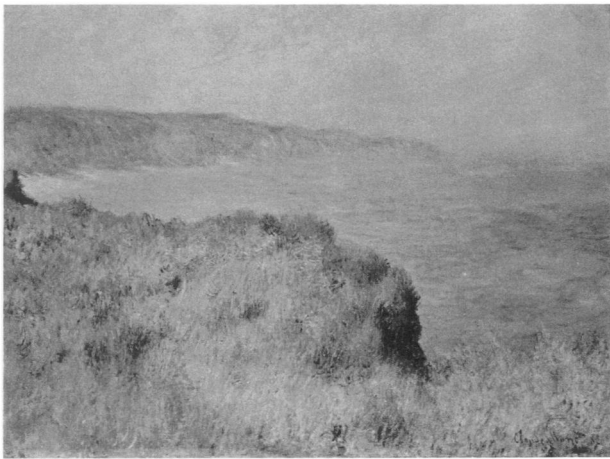
**FIGURE 17 (right)**  
The Sea at Pourville, by  
Claude Monet, dated 1882.  
23  $\frac{3}{4}$   $\times$  32 in. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, bequest of  
Julia W. Emmons, 56.135.2

**FIGURE 15**  
The Manneporte, Etretat, II,  
by Claude Monet, dated 1886.  
32  $\times$  25  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, bequest of  
Lizzie P. Bliss, 31.67.11



**FIGURE 16**

The Thaw (formerly called The Ice Floe), by Claude Monet, dated 1893. 26 × 39 ½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.108



**FIGURE 18**

The Cabin of the Customs Watch, Varengeville, by Claude Monet, dated 1882. 23 × 27 ½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. McVeigh, subject to a life estate in the donors, 59.188.2

the full extent of his range. The Metropolitan has no example of Monet's most personal and extraordinary achievements in painting during the period, for instance, the melancholy and biting chill wintry landscapes and ice-floe scenes painted around Vétheuil in 1879–1881—The Thaw (Figure 16), painted nostalgically at Giverny in 1893, is no substitute because it is much less crisp—the weird rock formations and wild sea of Belle-Isle (1866), the colorful springtime confrontation of sun, lushness, aridity, and snow-capped mountains beside the Mediterranean painted around Cap Martin and Antibes in 1884 and 1888, or the placidly aqueous boating scene on the Epte (1887–1888). As a whole, the fourteen paintings in the Metropolitan show nature in a calm and radiant mood, whereas in much of Monet's post-Impressionist work it appears boisterous and unfriendly. However, it is instructive to compare them with equivalent land-

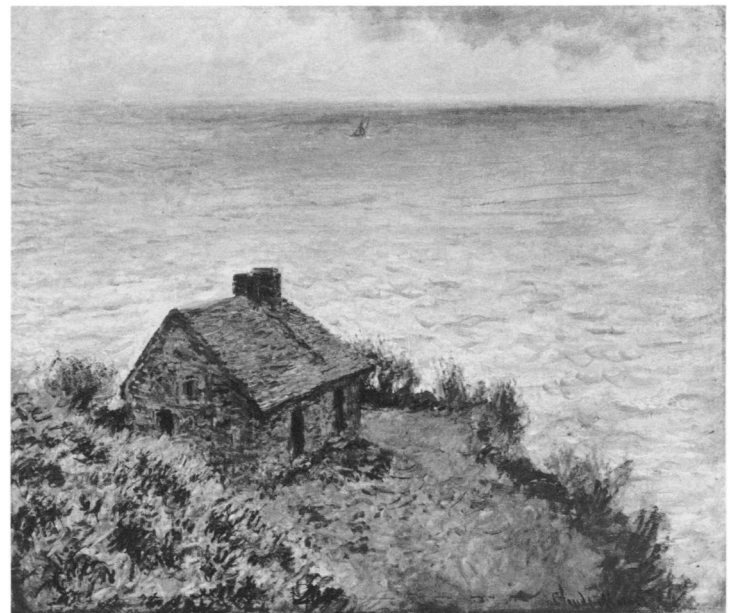




FIGURE 19  
The Cliffs at Pourville, I, by Claude Monet, dated 1896.  $25\frac{3}{4} \times 39\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. McVeigh, subject to a life estate in the donors, 61.250

cuted in 1882, with reprises of these motifs done from a slightly different viewpoint in 1896 (Figures 19–21), where the scene is softened and generalized to a point at which it appears otherworldly. A further interesting feature about the group of 1880–1890 paintings is the inclusion of three remarkable still-life subjects, painted in 1880, 1881, and 1882 (Figures 22, 13, 23), for still life occupies only a tiny place in the voluminous catalogue of Monet's oeuvre. Monet, essentially an outdoor man, really only enjoyed feasting his eyes on such fortuitous groupings as he came across in fields

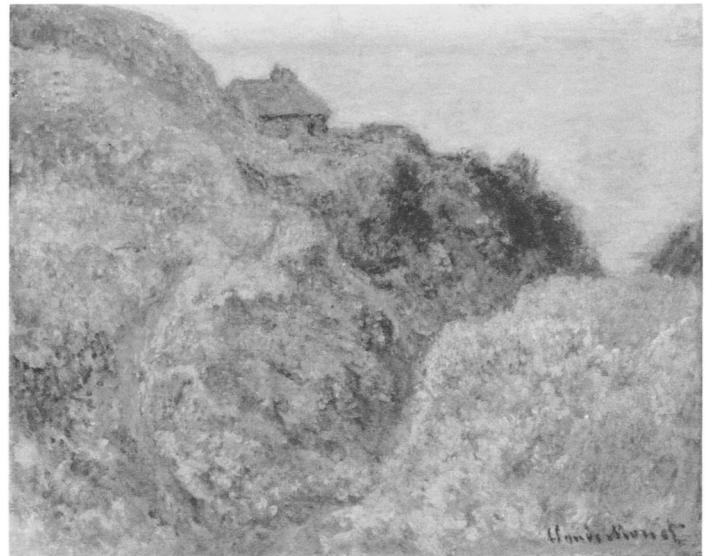


FIGURE 20  
The Cliffs at Pourville, II, by Claude Monet, dated 1896.  $25\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{3}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mary V. T. Eberstadt, subject to a life estate in the donor, 64.149.1

FIGURE 21  
The Cabin of the Customs Watch, Varengeville, by Claude Monet, 1896.  $25\frac{3}{4} \times 32$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rodgers, 65.21



and gardens. He had an instinctive dislike of going against nature by composing arrangements of cut flowers, dead birds, or fruit in order to keep himself busy painting in his studio when he could not go out. True, he had painted an occasional still life in the 1860s and was to paint a very few more in 1885, 1890, and 1896. But between 1880 and 1882, he suddenly developed a considerable interest in still life, the reasons for which are unknown, unless we like to attribute it either to a

FIGURE 22

Apples and Grapes, by Claude Monet, 1880.  
26  $\frac{3}{8}$  × 35  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
gift of Henry R. Luce, 57.183

desire to experiment, or to commercial considerations, or perhaps to the example of his close friend Renoir, who also painted many at this same time. At all events, the three examples in the Metropolitan show how in this field, too, Monet could vary his handling to suit the subject, going from the more tactile and texturally differentiated handling of the fruits to the luminous, feathery, and virile handling of the flowers. Moreover, the glowing golden orange Sunflowers, which anticipates by seven years and opens the door to Van Gogh, stands out both as one of his major achievements in the genre and as one of the most spectacular Monets in the Metropolitan's collection.

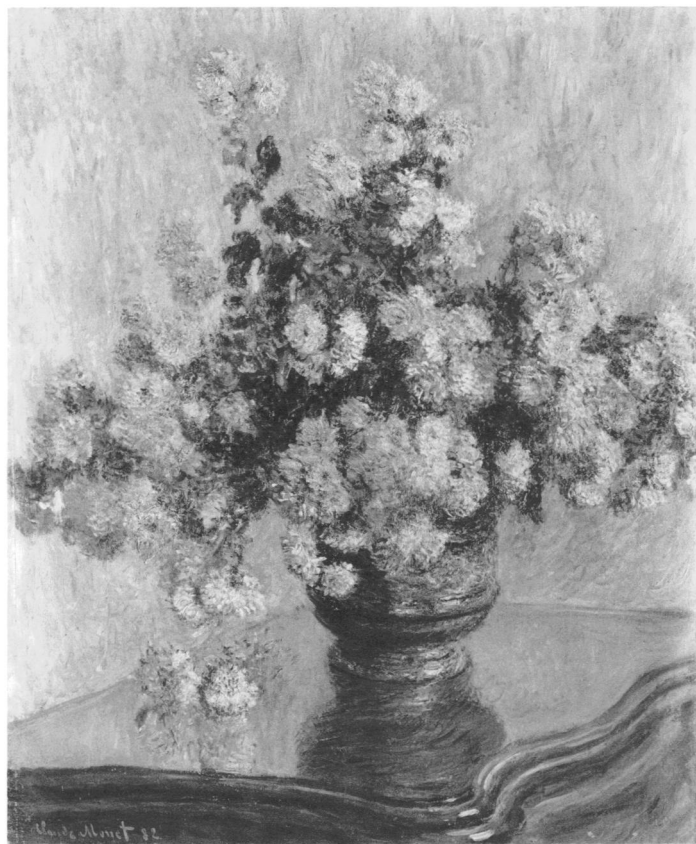
After 1890, with the series of Poplars, Rouen Cathedral, Mount Kolsaas in Norway, Mornings on the Seine, The Japanese Bridge, and London and Venice views, and the long succession of flower-garden motifs and Water Lilies, we enter an increasingly poetic and esoteric phase of Monet's post-Impressionism. During the last thirty-five years of his life (1891–1926), Monet not only envisaged but painted things which no earlier artist had attempted. He judged correctly that his eye, his hand, and his imagination were at last sufficiently attuned to work together in unison and braced himself to put them to a supreme test. That is to say, he began to apply himself in all simplicity "to catching the greatest number of appearances, in close correlation with unknown realities," as he told Clemenceau. From then on his vision became progressively more profound as it became more questioning. Where is reality and of what does it consist? Where does illusion begin? What do we actually see? Such were the thoughts that inspired him. And as he pushed on with his discovery of "unknown realities," Monet ac-



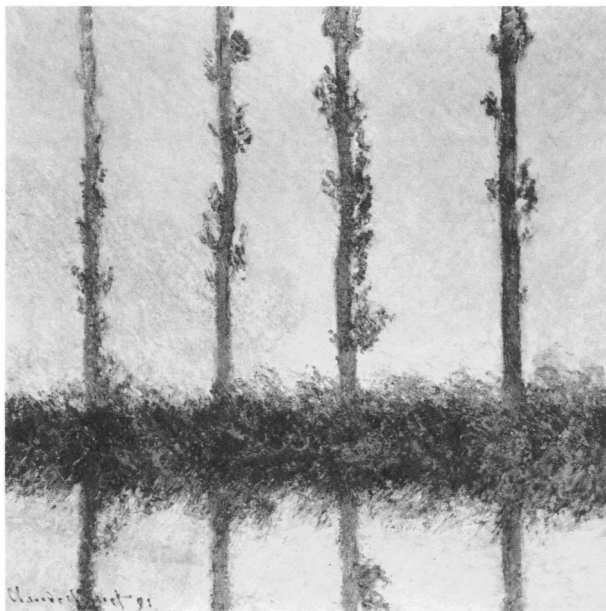
commodated himself to accepting a smaller number of motifs, so that he could get to know each more intimately. Thus he made more than twenty paintings of the poplar trees, about twenty of the façade of Rouen

FIGURE 23

Chrysanthemums, by Claude Monet, dated 1882.  
39  $\frac{1}{2}$  × 32  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of  
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.106



Cathedral and of Mornings on the Seine, some sixty-five in the three series of London views, another thirty of Venice, and at least one hundred of his water-lily pool. Working in this manner, Monet was constantly faced with the challenge of having to find a new set of tonal nuances corresponding to the moment, so that each canvas became subtly distinguishable from all the others. But this was not the only form of variation that Monet allowed himself in his painting. For, characteristically, his choice fell upon motifs wholly different from one another in their physical nature and distinctive light: tall poplars rising in dead-straight lines and spreading their springtime foliage in subtly undulating curves against a blue sky with scudding clouds; haystacks standing in a summery landscape, or enveloped in mist, or covered with snow; the ornate architecture, stone tracery, and hollowing out of the façade of a great Gothic cathedral observed in the varying light of all times of the day; bridges over the Thames as well as the Palace of Westminster in London shrouded in mist or fog, their blurred forms becoming dimly apparent in the rays of a watery, wintry sun; the elaborate palaces and churches of Venice bathed in a multi-colored light, which gives them an otherworldly appearance as they float on the waters of the lagoon; and finally the floral profusion and watery expanses of his own man-made garden.



With the series of Poplars, Haystacks, Rouen Cathedral, and their successors, Monet consciously attempted to create through the medium of oil paint an equivalent of our highly complex visual and temporal sensations by recording the same motif in different lights and weathers at different times of the day and year. However, he was to go on pursuing this philosophico-visual line of post-Impressionist development until his sight—and hence his precise perception of tonalities—ultimately failed him.

Throughout this late phase the “artist” in Monet appears to predominate over the “eye.” But in fact his “eye” remained to the end the ultimate arbiter of success or failure and caused Monet to destroy a great many canvases with which he was dissatisfied. In these astonishing and glorious late works, Monet was pitting himself against fate. He knew that perhaps he was attempting more than painting can give, more than his eyesight would allow, more than he had strength to achieve. Yet the demon in him demanded to be satisfied, and the measure of his incomparable success is now no longer open to question.

The unending sequence of water-garden motifs on which Monet worked for over twenty years in a succession of related series, beginning with that of *The Japanese Bridge* in 1899–1900, was the greatest test of all. He had started to move toward these in the hazy, soundless, contemplative *Mornings on the Seine* (1897), where reality and its reflection are rhythmically interlocked and compounded in the placid surface of a sluggish arm of the great river. But in the later water-garden paintings, Monet was to dispense with direct light and look down from above into the watery mirror of the pool, whose tranquil surface was broken here and there only by groups of flowering water lilies or an occasional ripple. Day after day he would watch the patterns of light and color created around and enveloping the elements of reality which floated there amid reflections of sunlight, the sky and clouds, and the

FIGURE 24  
 Poplars (*The Four Trees*), by Claude Monet, dated 1891.  $32\frac{1}{4} \times 32\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.110



**FIGURE 25**

*Haystacks in the Snow*, by Claude Monet, dated 1891. 25 ¼ × 36 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.109

The group of twelve paintings in the Metropolitan belonging to this late phase of Monet's work includes six works of outstanding quality, each of which represents magnificently one of the famous series: *Poplars*, *Haystacks in the Snow*, *Rouen Cathedral*, *Morning on the Seine, near Giverny*, *The Japanese Bridge*, and *The Houses of Parliament* (Figures 24–29). All are

colorful, luxuriant foliage surrounding and overhanging the waters of the pool. And as he strained his eyes to meditate on the constant changes of appearance in this small corner of nature in a garden, a private microcosm was transformed into a symbol of the universe, with growth and decay, spring, summer, and autumn, calm and commotion, and reality and reverie all in turns inspiring his rhapsodic outpouring of color. Monet put into these paintings the accumulated experience and understanding of a lifetime, and I know no better summary of what he sought to do than his own words in a letter to Geffroy of 1912: "All I know is that I do as I think I should to express what I experience in front of nature, and that more often than not I can only render what I feel by completely forgetting about the most elementary rules of painting. . . . In short, pinning down my sensations obliges me to leave many an error unconcealed." To the end, therefore, Monet was struggling to satisfy his "eye" and maintain the link with tangible reality. And it is for this reason that we have come to regard him today as the most original, most creative, and most insatiable of all the Impressionists.

**FIGURE 26**

*Rouen Cathedral*, by Claude Monet, dated 1894. 39 ¼ × 25 ¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Theodore M. Davis Collection, bequest of Theodore M. Davis, 30.95.250





FIGURE 27

Morning on the Seine, near Giverny, by Claude Monet, dated 1897.  $32\frac{1}{8} \times 36\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Julia W. Emmons, 56.135.4

strong and wholly characteristic canvases—their like cannot be seen in any other American museum—which as a group carry on the pictorial story in noble style from the sequence of outstanding works of the 1880s while providing an excellent balance to the four outstanding works of the 1860s with which the collection begins. The other paintings dating from the 1890s are not, on the other hand, comparable either in importance or in quality. Equally, *The Doge's Palace* (Figure 30), it seems to me, is one of the least successful canvases of the very uneven Venetian series, with which Monet himself was dissatisfied because he did not work there long enough, could not go back, and found himself left with a series of sketches that he was obliged to elaborate on “from memory” in his studio at Giverny. *The Doge's Palace* of 1908 is the latest painting in date by which Monet is represented in the Metropolitan. It is to be hoped that before long this very remarkable and broadly representative collection

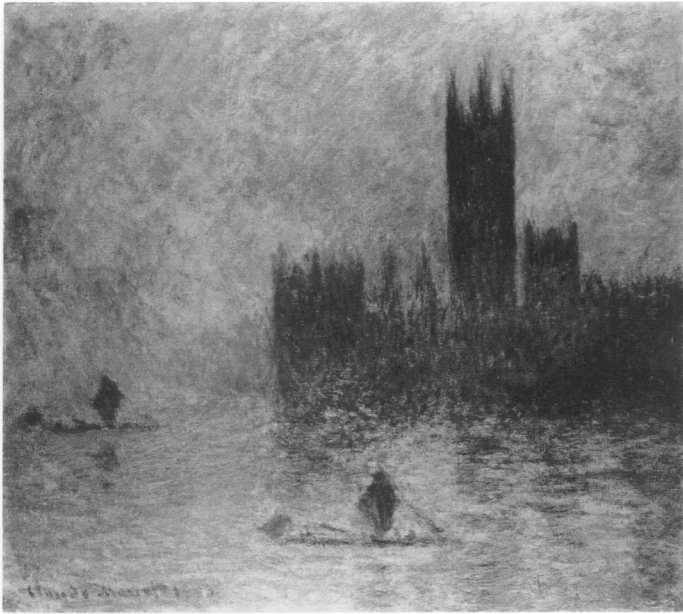
of Monets will be handsomely rounded off with fine examples of the flower-garden and water-lily series, because these series constitute Monet's crowning achievement.

The story of the growth of the Metropolitan's collection of paintings by Monet—the number of which has more than doubled since the publication of *A Concise Catalogue of the European Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* in 1954—is no less fascinating than is the study of the paintings themselves. With two exceptions, *Terrace at Sainte-Adresse* and *Parisians Enjoying the Parc Monceau*, both purchased with the help of specially donated funds, all have come to the Museum by private gift or bequest, which is a remarkable memorial to the generosity of its benefactors.

FIGURE 28

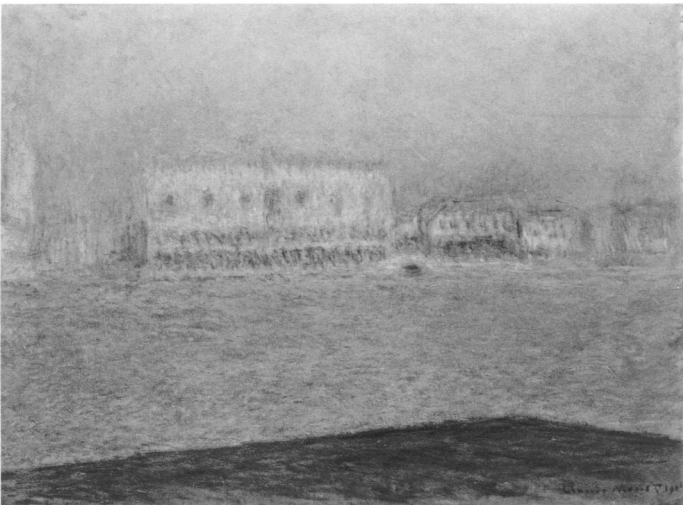
*A Bridge over a Pool of Water Lilies, or The Japanese Bridge*, dated 1899.  $36\frac{1}{2} \times 29$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.100.113



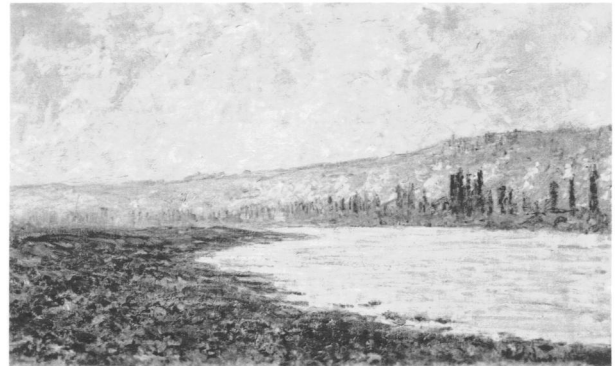


**FIGURE 29**  
 The Houses of Parliament, London, by Claude Monet, dated 1903. 32 × 36 $\frac{3}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Julia W. Emmons, 56.135.6

**FIGURE 30**  
 The Doge's Palace, Venice, Seen from San Giorgio Maggiore, by Claude Monet, dated 1908. 25 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 36 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. McVeigh, 59.188.1



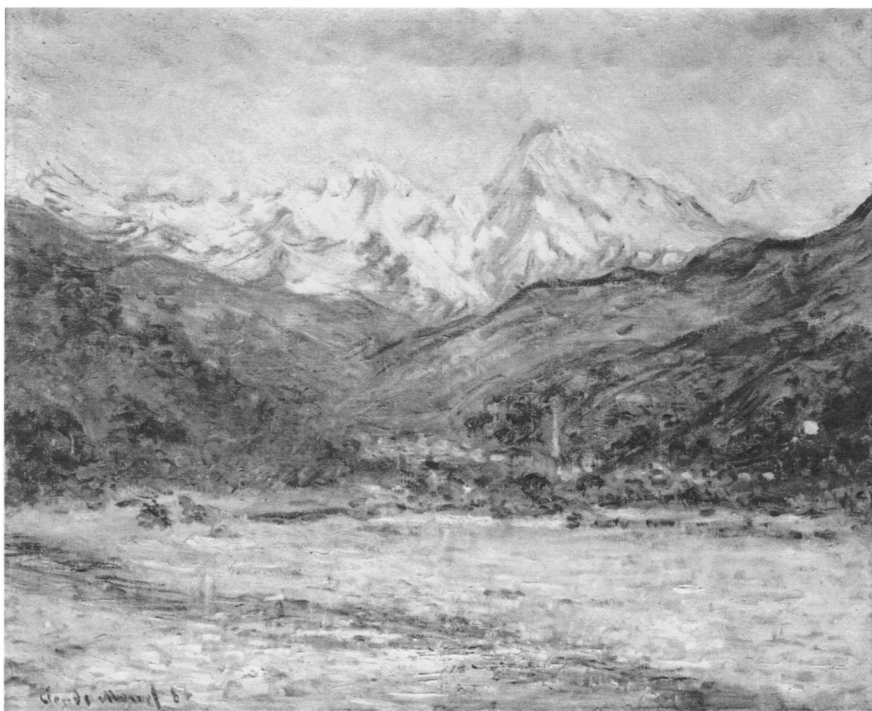
The first paintings by Monet to be acquired by the Metropolitan were the three works bequeathed by Theodore M. Davis in 1915: *The Seine at Vétheuil* (Figure 31), *The Valley of the Nervia* (Figure 32), and *Rouen Cathedral* (Figure 26). At this time hardly any Monets were owned by museums in America: three had been bequeathed to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in 1906 by Denman Ross, but the earliest acquisition by the Philadelphia Museum dates from 1921, when three paintings were purchased for the Wilstach Collection, while it was not until 1922 that the six paintings from the Potter Palmer Collection entered The Art Institute of Chicago. Monet was not, however, the first of the great French painters of the second half of the nineteenth century to find a place in the Metropolitan's collection, for the Museum had received two great



**FIGURE 31**  
 The Seine at Vétheuil, by Claude Monet, dated 1880. 23 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 39 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Theodore M. Davis Collection, bequest of Theodore M. Davis, 30.95.271

Manets from Erwin Davis in 1889 and had purchased Renoir's *Madame Charpentier and her Children* (1878) in 1907 and Cézanne's *La Colline des Pauvres* (c. 1895) at the Armory Show in 1913. Nor, on the other hand, was Monet the last. The first Degas only came to the Museum in 1929, when the Havemeyer Bequest brought fourteen examples, along with the first Pissarro; the first Gauguin came as a gift in 1939; the first Van Gogh came by purchase in 1949; and the first Sisley as a gift only in 1964.





**FIGURE 32**  
The Valley of the Nervia, by  
Claude Monet, dated 1884.  
26 × 32 in. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, The Theo-  
dore M. Davis Collection,  
bequest of Theodore M.  
Davis, 30.95.251

In 1926, Monet's *Apple Trees in Bloom* passed to the Metropolitan following the death of Mary Livingston Willard. But the great enrichment of the collection occurred when eight Monets were included in the munificent Havemeyer Bequest of 1929, because in this way the Metropolitan acquired such exceptional canvases as *La Grenouillère*, *Sunflowers*, *Poplars*, *Haystacks in the Snow*, and *The Japanese Bridge*. Two years after this the later version of *The Manneporte* came to the Museum through the bequest of Lizzie P. Bliss. But then twenty years were to pass before any further Monets were added to the Metropolitan's collection, that is to say, until in 1951 it acquired, through the bequest of William Church Osborn, *The Beach at Sainte-Adresse*, *Vétheuil in Summer*, and the earlier version of *The Manneporte*. Then in 1956, with the bequest of Julia W. Emmons, it received five more splendid paintings of the years 1882–1903. Thus, so far as acquiring Monets was concerned, the Metropolitan seems to have played a waiting game—obviously knowing the wealth of fine examples which had entered American private collections before 1930—instead of

spending its funds on purchases, even at a time when great paintings by Monet could be had at very reasonable prices. But during the past ten years the European Paintings Department has shown a new awareness that this earlier policy had resulted in some regrettable omissions and weaknesses in the collection, for by securing *The Bodmer Oak and Terrace at Sainte-Adresse* it extended the range and gave much greater importance to the group of early works by Monet, while with the accession of *Bordighera* (Figure 33) and *The Petite Creuse at Fresselines*, bequeathed by Adelaide Milton de Groot in 1967, it has enlarged and given added interest to the group of works of the 1880s. However, it would be foolish to pretend that the collection is now as balanced or representative as it might be, so the Department must face the inexorable task of attracting and acquiring in the future just those few paintings of the highest quality which are still lacking.

It is now time to say something about the provenance and early history of some of the Monets in the Metropolitan. Certain paintings may have been included in

one or other of the Impressionist Exhibitions, as the following checklist, whose titles might correspond, will indicate:

- 1876 Second Exhibition  
     Les Bains de la Grenouillère  
     La Plage, Sainte-Adresse Coll. M. Faure
- 1877 Third Exhibition  
     Le Parc Monceau Coll. M. de Bellio
- 1879 Fourth Exhibition  
     Le Parc Monceau Coll. M. de Bellio
- 1882 Seventh Exhibition  
     Chrysanthèmes<sup>2</sup> Coll. M. C.  
     Bouquet de Soleils  
     Sentier dans l'Île St. Martin

In the absence of more conclusive evidence it is not possible to make any definitive identifications, except for Bouquet de Soleils, of which the canvas in the Metropolitan is the only example, and the 1876 canvas of Le Parc Monceau, which is known to have been acquired at the Third Impressionist Exhibition by Dr. Georges de Bellio, a Roumanian homeopathic doctor who bought actively from the Impressionists at this time and was for a few years (1876–1880) one of Monet's most appreciative patrons (thirty-five to forty works in all). Had he not disliked Monet's post-Impressionist stylistic development, de Bellio would no doubt have gone on buying his works. Most probably this painting of Le Parc Monceau of 1876 was exhibited a second time in 1879, for there is no trace of de Bellio's having owned a later one. We know that his brother-in-law, Jean Campineano, who lived in Bucharest, acted on de Bellio's advice and bought in Paris in 1878 a different view of the park dated 1875, and the family inventory made by his son-in-law, Donop de Monchy in the mid-1890s (where no second Parc Monceau is listed) shows that de Bellio seems eventually to have given or willed his painting of 1876 to his nephew Alexandre Bellio (also resident in Bucharest), for it must be identical with the entry that reads: "Un Coin du Parc Monceau avec Pelouse et Arbres Fleuris (1876)."<sup>3</sup> Another early exhibition at which some of the Metropolitan's paintings may have been shown is

that of the Société des XX in Brussels in 1886, because among the paintings, which Monet himself chose to send there, we find the following titles: La Manneporte, Chrysanthèmes, Soleils, and Sur la Falaise à Pourville. Apart from these few interesting facts, it should be noted that Apples and Grapes was in the collection of Victor Chocquet from the time it was painted until the sale after his death in 1899.

It would be unfair not to pay tribute here also to those pioneer American collectors, and their immediate successors, who by their original ownership first established in an American home many of the Monets which today hang in the Metropolitan. The earliest of these purchases (I am referring only to paintings which eventually went to the Metropolitan Museum) date back to 1891, when P. A. B. Widener of Philadelphia acquired The Beach at Sainte-Adresse, W. H. Fuller of New York acquired Apple Trees in Bloom and The Sea at Pourville (which he lent that same year to an exhibition at the Union League Club, New York), Potter Palmer of Chicago acquired Haystacks in the Snow, which had been painted that very year, and Henry Sayles of Boston acquired The Cabin of the Customs Watch, Varengeville (1882), from an exhibi-

FIGURE 33

Bordighera, by Claude Monet, dated 1884. 25 ½ × 32 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), 67.187.87



2. Chrysanthemums exists in two versions, one in the Metropolitan, the other in the Courtauld Institute Collection, London.

3. See Remus Niculescu, "Georges de Bellio, L'Ami des Impressionnistes," in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art* 1 (1964) pp. 209–278.

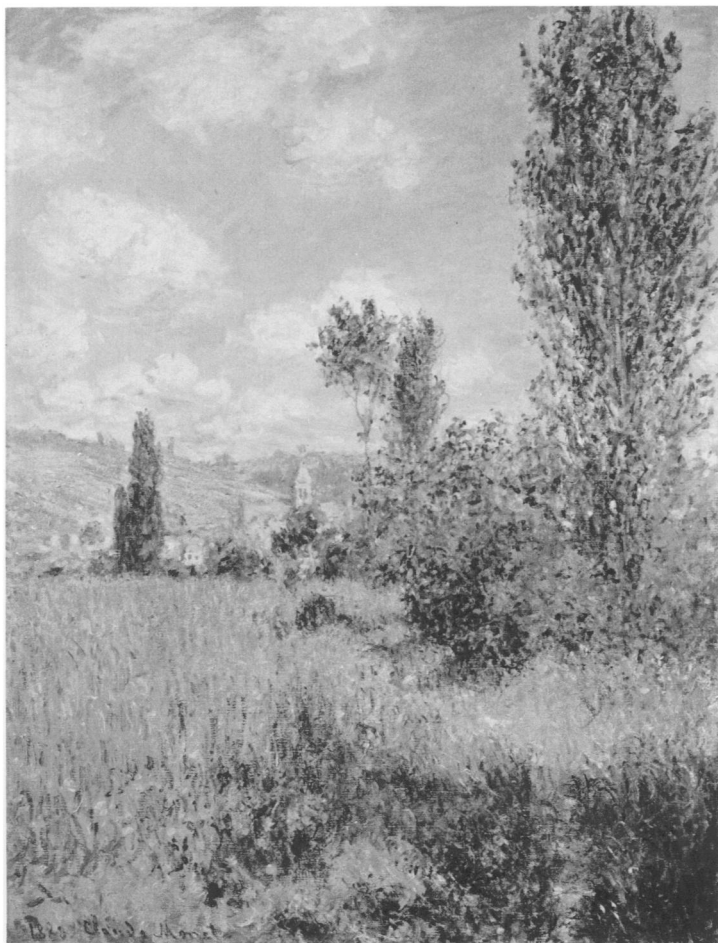


FIGURE 34

A Path in the Ile Saint-Martin, Vétheuil, by Claude Monet, dated 1880.  $31\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Julia W. Emmons, 56.135.1

bition at Chase's Gallery in Boston (lent by Durand-Ruel). In 1892 Potter Palmer purchased the 1886 version of *The Manneporte*, which he was to sell back a year later to Durand-Ruel, from whom it was subsequently (1909) acquired by Cornelius Bliss of New York. In 1893 Potter Palmer also returned *Haystacks in the Snow* to Durand-Ruel, who sold it again the next year to Henry Havemeyer. The other seven paintings by Monet which were included in this famous bequest were acquired by the Havemeyers in the following years: in 1895 *Poplars*, in 1897 *La Grenouillère* and *The Thaw*, perhaps also *The Green Wave*, in 1899 *Chrysanthemums*, and in 1901 *The*

*Japanese Bridge* of 1899. Theodore Davis of New York acquired the following three paintings in 1895: *The Seine at Vétheuil*, *The Valley of the Nervia*, and *Rouen Cathedral*, which had been painted in the previous year. The next purchases were all made after the turn of the century, William Church Osborn of New York buying the 1883 version of *The Manneporte* in 1903, and *Vétheuil in Summer* in 1912, while Arthur Emmons, also of New York, purchased *The Ile aux Fleurs* in 1906, *Morning on the Seine* in 1907, *The Houses of Parliament* in 1911, and *A Path in the Ile Saint-Martin* (Figure 34) in 1912. To these must be added the purchase of *Cliffs at Pourville* (1896) by Elizabeth Perkins of Boston in 1904.

Thus the collection of Monets in the Metropolitan is not merely remarkable for its excellence but has great documentary value as a reflection (in many of its finest canvases) of a past era of American taste. One interesting feature that emerges is the frequency with which these American collectors bought paintings which had only been painted a few years previously, and sometimes even within a few months of their having left Monet's studio. For this reason it is important to bear in mind when considering the historic core of the Metropolitan's collection—in the last paragraph I recorded the purchase of twenty-two out of its thirty-five examples—that these purchases were virtually all made before the great *Water Lily Pond* series came on the market. But in recent years a very large number of Monet's late canvases, as well as some of the choicest of his works of the 1870s, have crossed the Atlantic to become the property of a new generation of American collectors. So perhaps we may hope to see some much-wanted additions to the collection of Monets in the Metropolitan coming as a celebratory tribute on the occasion of its hundredth anniversary.

## Appendix: Paintings by Claude Monet in The Metropolitan Museum of Art

- |           |   |      |  |
|-----------|---|------|--|
| 1864      | Dr. Leclenché (Figure 1)  | 1889 | The Petite Creuse at Fresselines (Figure 12)   |
| 1865      | The Green Wave (Figure 2)   | 1891 | Poplars (The Four Trees) (Figure 24)<br>Haystacks in the Snow (Figure 25)  |
| 1865–1866 | The Bodmer Oak, Fontainebleau Forest<br>(formerly called The Chailly Road) (Figure 3)   | 1893 | The Thaw (formerly called The Ice Floe)<br>(Figure 16)   |
| 1866      | Terrace at Sainte-Adresse (Figure 4)  | 1894 | Rouen Cathedral (Figure 26)  |
| 1867      | The Beach at Sainte-Adresse (Figure 5)  | 1896 | The Cliffs at Pourville, I (Figure 19)<br>The Cliffs at Pourville, II (Figure 20)<br>The Cabin of the Customs Watch, Varengeville<br>(Figure 21) |
| 1869      | La Grenouillère (Figure 6)  | 1897 | Ile aux Orties, near Vernon (Figure 35)<br>Morning on the Seine, near Giverny<br>(Figure 27)   |
| 1873      | Apple Trees in Bloom (Figure 7)   | 1899 | A Bridge over a Pool of Water Lilies, or<br>The Japanese Bridge (Figure 28)  |
| 1876      | The Parc Monceau, Paris (Figure 8)  | 1903 | The Houses of Parliament, London (Figure 29)   |
| 1878      | Parisians Enjoying the Parc Monceau<br>(Figure 9)   | 1908 | The Doge's Palace, Venice,<br>Seen from San Giorgio Maggiore (Figure 30)   |
| 1880      | Apples and Grapes (Figure 22)<br>Vétheuil in Summer (Figure 10)<br>The Ile aux Fleurs (Figure 11)<br>The Seine at Vétheuil (Figure 31)<br>A Path in the Ile Saint-Martin, Vétheuil<br>(Figure 34) |      |  |
| 1881      | Sunflowers (Figure 13)  |      |  |
| 1882      | Chrysanthemums (Figure 23)<br>The Cabin of the Customs Watch, Varengeville<br>(Figure 18)<br>The Sea at Pourville (Figure 17)   |      |  |
| 1883      | The Manneporte, Etretat, I (Figure 14)  |      |  |
| 1884      | The Valley of the Nervia (Figure 32)<br>Bordighera (Figure 33)  |      |  |
| 1886      | The Manneporte, Etretat, II (Figure 15)   |      |  |

**FIGURE 35**

The Ile aux Orties, near Vernon, by Claude Monet, dated 1897. 28 7/8 × 36 1/2 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. McVeigh, subject to a life estate in the donors, 60.154



# The First Score for American Paintings and Sculpture, 1870–1890

WENDELL D. GARRETT

*Managing Editor, Antiques*

In the year 1776 this nation declared her political independence of Europe. The provincial relation was then severed as regards politics; may we not now begin institutions that by the year 1876 shall sever the provincial relation of America to Europe in respect to Art? (George Fiske Comfort, “Address” at a meeting recommending *A Metropolitan Art-Museum in the City of New York*, November 23, 1869).

THE FOUNDING of The Metropolitan Museum of Art by the cultural and economic leaders of New York during the passionate interlude of Radical Reconstruction following the Civil War was a gesture of faith—faith in the need for both a trained school of indigenous artists and an educated class of citizens in the arts. The United States was emerging as the leading industrial and agricultural producer of the world. Americans were in both an exuberant and an uncertain mood. Amid the turbulence of historic changes, the idea of progress exercised an almost compulsive attraction for Americans as a rationalization of those changes—a pious conviction that human conditions could be improved if reason was applied in good faith to the problems of the country. In this era the business classes wrested control of the political institutions from the agrarian majority and executed an economic revolution that was to change profoundly the character of representative government and popular culture in the United States. The most significant consequence of

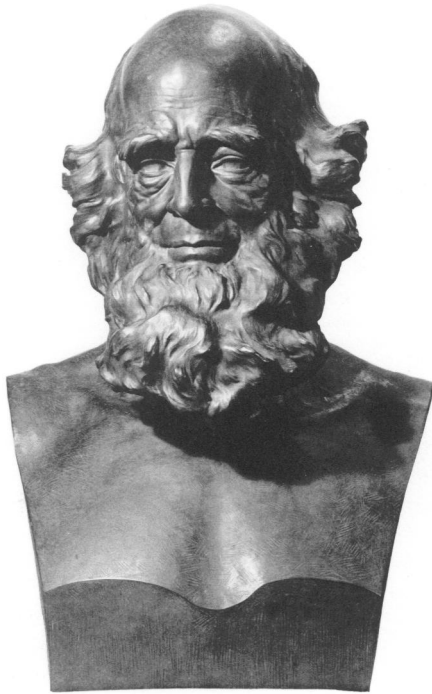
this revolution was the creation of modern America, of a powerful productive economy that, notwithstanding its limitations of vision and conscience, provided an increasingly rich material life for a majority of its citizens. In spite of the depressions of 1873 and 1893, industrialization capriciously heaped great wealth in the hands of a few individuals, while laborers, including children, bore the heaviest share of the costs of that industrialization. As E. P. Richardson has noted:

A new period of urban life began and brought, among other things, new civic institutions, new ideals and amenities, as well as grave new problems. The public gallery of art, toward which American artists and art-loving citizens had been making a variety of efforts for three quarters of a century, at last emerged as an institution apart from the Academy, the Athenaeum, or the Art School.<sup>1</sup>

1. E. P. Richardson, *Painting in America: The Story of 450 Years* (London, 1956) p. 263.

FIGURE 1

William Cullen Bryant (1794–1878), by Launt Thompson (1833–1894). This monumental bronze portrait of Bryant, who presided over the Union League Club meeting that initiated the founding of the Metropolitan and who served as a vice-president of the Museum from 1870 to 1874, was cast in 1867. Intended for a monument in Bryant Park, it has been on deposit in the Museum since 1896. H. 46½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, deposited in the Museum by the New York City Department of Public Parks, O.L. 88. IV (Photo: Taylor and Dull, Inc.)



“Some three hundred gentlemen,” according to one newspaper account, met at the Union League Club on November 23, 1869, to consider “measures for the foundation of a permanent national gallery of art and museum of historical relics, in which works of high character in painting and sculpture and valuable historical memorials might be collected, properly displayed, and safely preserved for the benefit of the people at large.”<sup>2</sup> William Cullen Bryant (Figure 1), the popular poet and editor of the *Evening Post*, was chosen president of the meeting and delivered the major address.<sup>3</sup> In it he emphasized the importance and

relevance of contemporary or modern American art in this nascent museum:

Moreover, we require an extensive public gallery to contain the greater works of our painters and sculptors. The American soil is prolific of artists. The fine arts blossom not only in the populous regions of our country, but even in its solitary places. Go where you will, into whatever museum of art in the old world, you find there artists from the new, contemplating or copying the master-pieces of art which they contain. Our artists swarm in Italy. . . . But there are beginners among us who have not the means of resorting to distant countries for that instruction in art which is derived from carefully studying works of acknowledged excellence.<sup>4</sup>

This was a period in which painting was in every sense a popular art; “the country came not only to accept but to be proud of its artists and to lavish fame and approval on them.”<sup>5</sup>

A popular faith in progress, a widely professed optimistic mood in a generally acquisitive age, and a comfortable belief in a benevolent evolutionary process appear on the surface to have been satisfying to most Americans, to whom these attitudes were borne out by the abundant evidence of material growth, the scientific and industrial advances, the democratization of their republican institutions, and the vitality of their Christian religion. But these shared beliefs reveal only one side of the coin. By 1870 a growing number of Americans were beginning to entertain grave misgivings about rapid and uncontrolled industrialization: many viewed with alarm the social, the human costs; cities, where millions lived amid squalor and misery, were growing too fast; the shift from subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture was creating the farm problem; unrestrained exploitation of the immigrants in factories and cities was creating the urban problem. Many people began to show a preference for

2. Quoted in Winifred E. Howe, *A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art with a Chapter on the Early Institutions of Art in New York*, I (New York, 1913) p. 103.

3. “Report of the Art Committee of the Union League Club,” *A Metropolitan Art-Museum in the City of New York. Proceedings of a Meeting Held at the Theatre of the Union League Club, Tuesday Evening, November 23, 1869* (New York, 1869) p. 3.

4. “Mr. Bryant’s Address,” in *Metropolitan Art-Museum . . . Proceedings, 1869*, p. 10.

5. Richardson, *Painting in America*, p. 266.

stability, to remain where they stood and keep old, familiar ways; others began to feel a nostalgia or cultural homesickness, to flee the present and the future into a golden, secluded yesteryear. Thus both the hopeful vision of progress and the withdrawal impulse of nostalgia influenced the founders of the Museum to make an accommodation for historical as well as modern American painting and sculpture in 1870. Both attitudes powerfully suggest the instability and fluidity within the field of American art and in the bifarious nature of American society. Bryant reminded the Museum's founders that they lived in an acquisitive age in which the revivals of Romanesque solidity and Gothic spirituality only betrayed the pretensions of an era of transparency and greed, an age bent on the pitiless extinction of the past, and a city caught up in the fierce struggle for wealth and power:

Our city is the third great city of the civilized world. Our republic . . . is the richest nation in the world, if paying off an enormous national debt with a rapidity unexampled in history be any proof of riches; the richest in the world, if contented submission to heavy taxation be a sign of wealth; the richest in the world, if quietly to allow itself to be annually plundered of immense sums by men who seek public stations for their individual profit be a token of public prosperity. My friends, if a tenth part of what is every year stolen from us in this way, in the city where we live, under pretence of the public service, and poured profusely into the coffers of political rogues, were expended on a Museum of Art, we might have, reposed in spacious and stately buildings, collections formed of works left by the world's greatest artists, which would be the pride of our country. . . . But what have we done—numerous as our people are, and so rich as to be contentedly cheated and plundered, what have we done toward founding such a repository? We have hardly made a step toward it.<sup>6</sup>

The Museum "should be based on the idea of a more or less complete collection of objects illustrative of the History of Art, from the earliest beginnings to the present time."<sup>7</sup> But it also could be a bold setting for American artists, both teaching them and commissioning them to nobler works. Bryant declared this purpose in his remarks:

It is unfortunate for our artists, our painters especially, that they too often find their genius cramped by the narrow space in which it is constrained to exert

itself. It is like a bird in a cage which can only take short flights from one perch to another and longs to stretch its wings in an ampler atmosphere. Producing works for private dwellings, our painters are for the most part obliged to confine themselves to cabinet pictures, and have little opportunity for that larger treatment of important subjects which a greater breadth of canvas would allow them, and by which the higher and nobler triumphs of their art have been achieved.<sup>8</sup>

These hopes of the founders for the future were to be realized against their cherished backgrounds of the simple, agrarian past of the old republic. The present and future of American painting were important, but so also was its past. Because of the misgivings about the course of events that underlay the optimism of the era, it was with a slight sense of irony that the founders brought up the subject of early American historical paintings for discussion—or what they called a "collection of antiquities and works of art in this country."<sup>9</sup> William J. Hoppin of the New-York Historical Society strongly urged the new Museum to establish two departments of American painting:

In the first place, we should try to procure a complete series of specimens of the works of our American artists—of all those who have been noticed by our friend Tuckerman [Henry Theodore Tuckerman author of *Book of the Artists: American Artist Life*, New York, 1867]. At present, I know of no such collection; but its importance to art-students and its interest to general observers are too obvious to need to be dwelt upon here.

In the next place, we ought to have a great National Portrait Gallery—authentic likenesses of all those who have been in any way distinguished in the history of the nation, or of the States, and of the State of New York in particular. One of the most delightful places of resort in London is the National Portrait Gallery, which, although founded as late as 1858, contains already more than two hundred works of the greatest interest and value.<sup>10</sup>

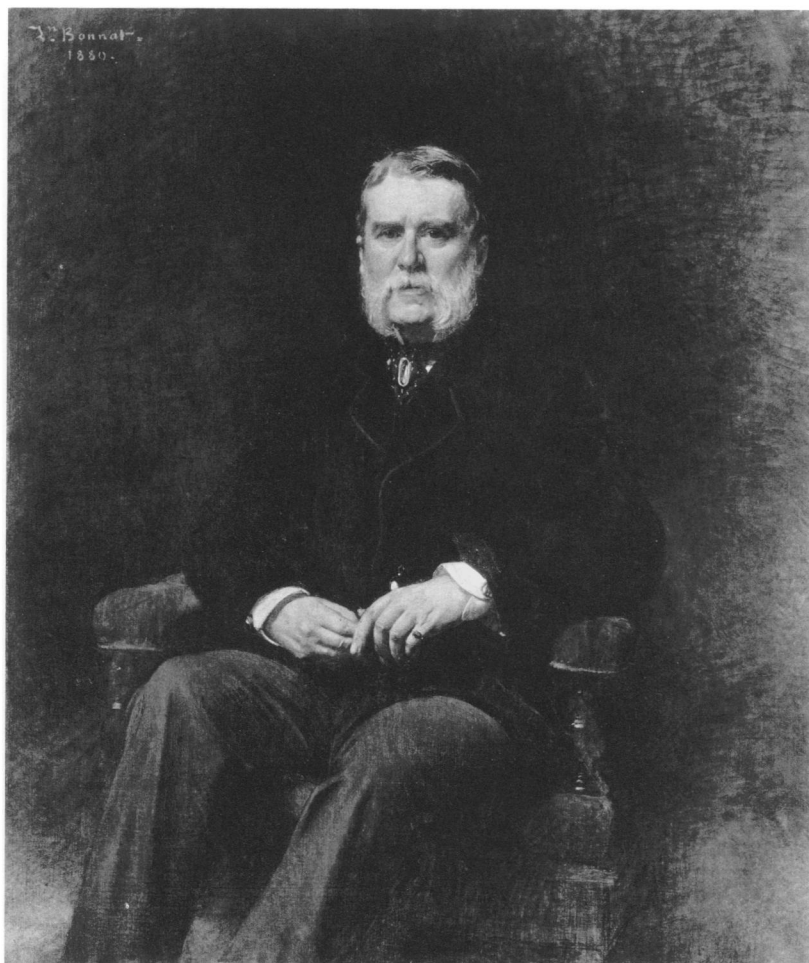
6. "Bryant's Address," *Metropolitan Art-Museum . . . Proceedings*, 1869, pp. 8–9.

7. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Annual Report*, 1881, p. 215 (from copy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Annual Reports*, 1871–1902, bound in one volume with continuous pagination, in the Museum Archives).

8. "Bryant's Address," *Metropolitan Art-Museum . . . Proceedings*, 1869, p. 10.

9. William J. Hoppin, in *Metropolitan Art-Museum . . . Proceedings*, 1869, p. 25.

10. Hoppin, in *Metropolitan Art-Museum . . . Proceedings*, 1869, p. 29.



**FIGURE 2**  
John Taylor Johnston (1820–1893),  
by Léon Bonnat (1833–1922).  
This portrait, painted in Paris in  
1880, was commissioned by the  
trustees for presentation to the  
Museum on the tenth anniversary  
of Johnston’s election as its first  
president. Oil on canvas. 52 ¼ ×  
44 in. The Metropolitan Museum  
of Art, gift of the Trustees, 80.8

This acute awareness of the past was strong enough in the early years of the Museum to prompt John Taylor Johnston (Figure 2), the Museum’s first president, to say in response to the receipt of a gift from Henry Gurdon Marquand (Figure 3) of “ancient American Vases” from the graves of Missouri mound builders that “such relics are very important to the Museum, as in the future one of its features should be a collection of the ancient arts of America.”<sup>11</sup> Yet historical American painting could not be taken very seriously by a generation strongly attracted to the extraordinarily rich, profuse painting of Europe, by a generation whose national culture was fragmented in the closing phase of romanticism, by a restless generation in revolt and reaction against the romantic movement. There was even a question in some minds as to whether the Museum should acquire American paintings by either

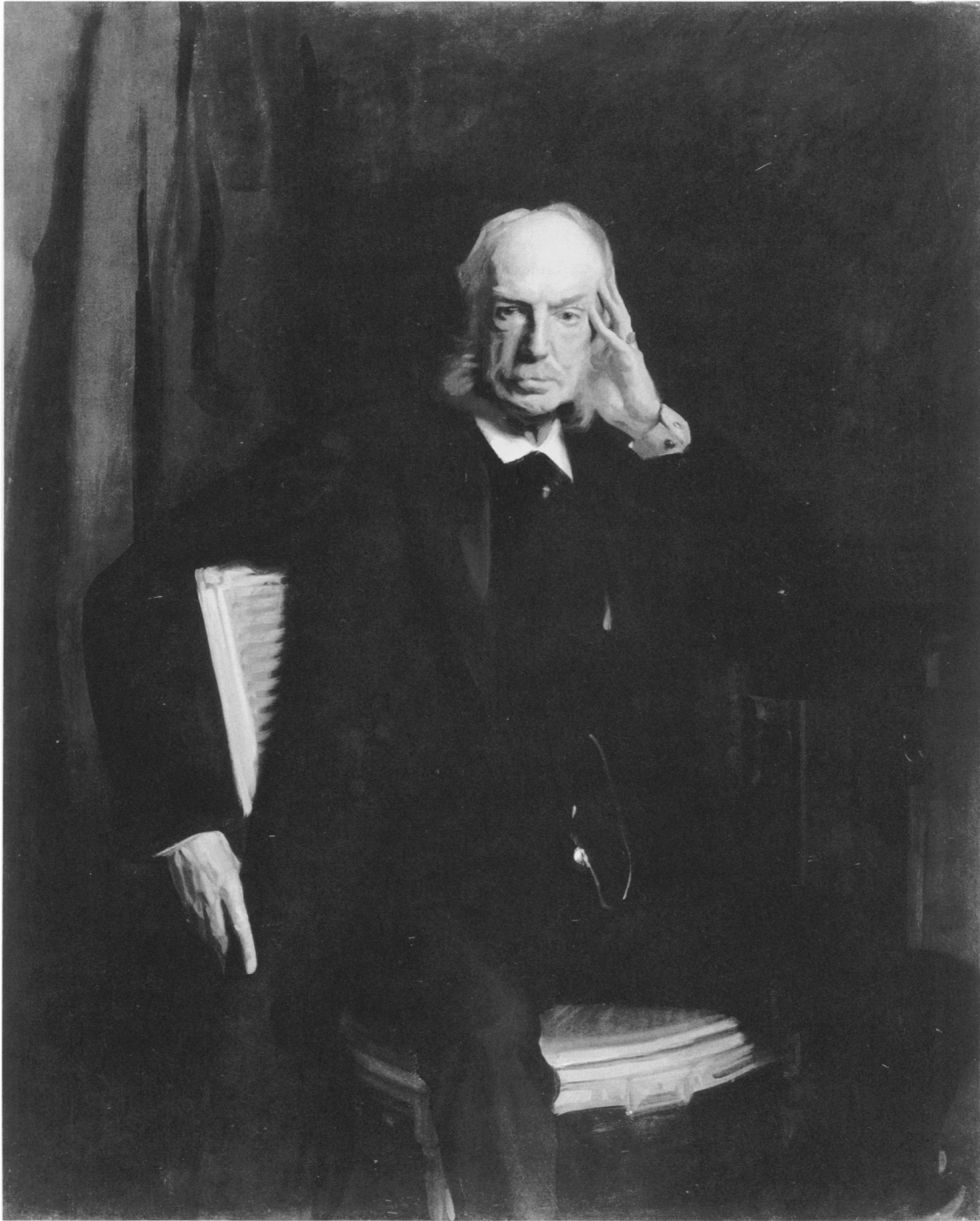
purchase or gift, because “pictures illustrating the early period of American painting exist in neighboring cities and towns, and may be borrowed though their importance in the history of art is not very great.”<sup>12</sup>

This was the voice of authority from “the custodians of culture,” to borrow Van Wyck Brooks’s phrase. Their point of view was, in a way, one that might be expected from a generation that had been born in the late national period and reached maturity before the historically conscious Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia. For many of them, it was hard to consider the family portraits they had known as children to be of artistic and historical importance in a museum sense. Their national past was too recent to be of any artistic

11. *Annual Report, 1880*, p. 166.

12. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Board of Trustees minutes, vol. 1, March 28, 1870, p. 89 (Museum Archives).





**FIGURE 3**

Henry Gurdon Marquand (1819–1902), by John Singer Sargent (1856–1925). Marquand, one of the Museum's most active and generous supporters, succeeded John Taylor Johnston as president in 1889 and served until his death in 1902. This portrait was painted in 1897. Oil on canvas. 52 × 41 ¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the Trustees, 97.43

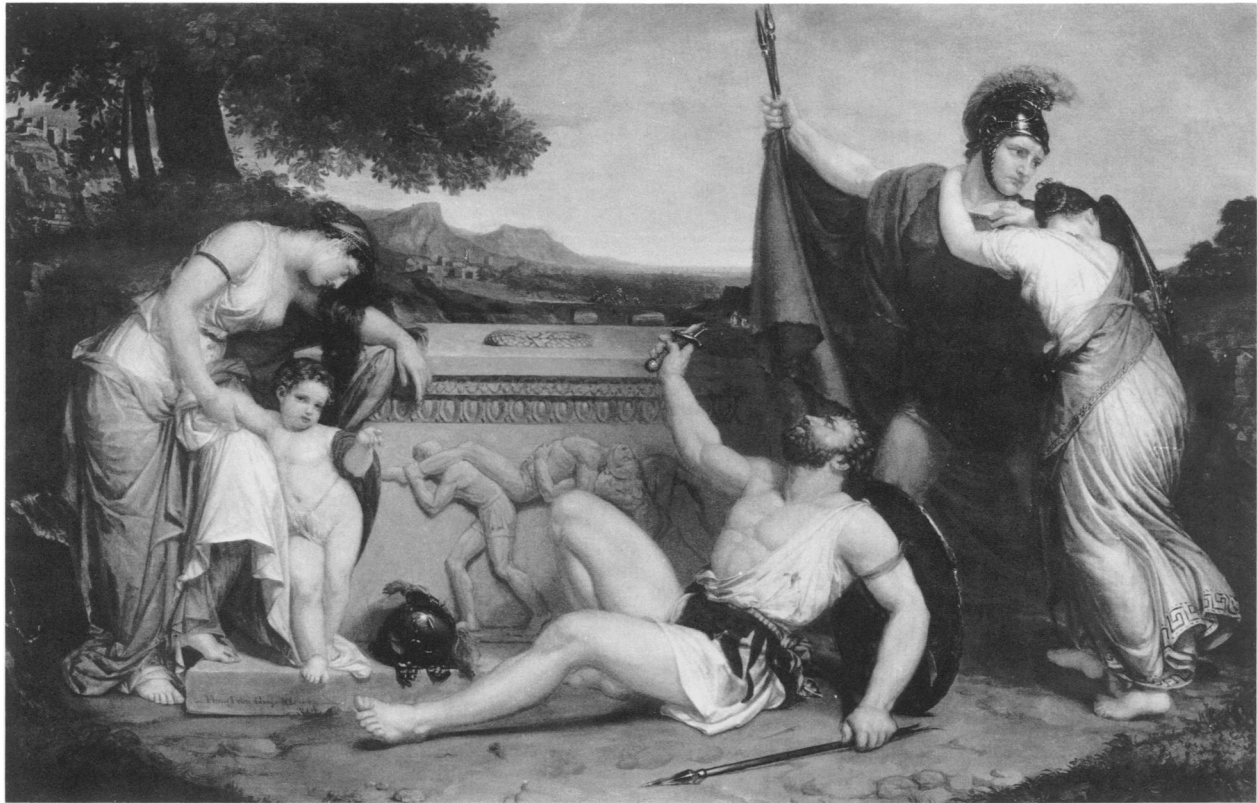


FIGURE 4

*The Wages of War*, by Henry Peters Gray (1819–1877). This work of 1848, the first painting by an American artist acquired by the Museum, appears above the doorframe in one of Frank Waller’s views of the Museum’s galleries in the Cruger Mansion (see Figure 7). Gray was one of the artists attending the Union League Club meeting in 1869 and served as president of the National Academy of Design from 1870 to 1871. Oil on canvas. 48 ¼ × 76 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Several Gentlemen, 73.5

relevance. At the same time, if incompetence and a general lack of artistic training were characteristic of early American artists and their work, they realized that they were living during an era when good and bad painting flourished and that they, as trustees, must exercise and demonstrate critical judgment:

Pictures. No subject presents greater difficulties; it calls for a degree of skill and experience, and a distinct Knowledge of the object of every acquisition, that can only be gradually acquired, either by an individual or an association. The principle should be to keep in view the historical aim of the collection, and to admit no work but those of an acknowledged and representative value. The value and use of a collection of Pictures depends absolutely on quality, and not on quantity.<sup>13</sup>

These early trustees assumed an extraordinarily enlightened intellectual stance on their dual role as preservationists and critics of American art, not only for their own but for future generations. After the first ten years of the Museum’s existence they felt “that we have been not infrequently admonished that we are working for the generations to come after us, and that those who have accomplished what has hitherto been done, must hand over the work of continuation to successors.”<sup>14</sup> In 1883 this philosophy of building the Museum’s collection was extended in a statement by the president, John Taylor Johnston:

13. Trustees minutes, vol. 1, March 28, 1870, p. 70.

14. *Annual Report, 1881*, p. 218.

A museum would be of small use if we gathered in it only what we, with peculiar tastes and special education of our own times and surroundings, regarded as models of fine arts, to be admired, and accepted as instructors. If we should select from the art works of our own period for preservation only such examples as agree with some peculiar standard of present taste and judgment, or even with the several and diverse standards of various minds of educated and cultivated lovers of art, we should deliver to posterity no proper or adequate illustration of the arts of our own day. . . . This important consideration applies to the whole principle of a Museum of Art. Its purposes should be, not to teach what its founders think ought to be admired, but to teach what men and women, under the varied circumstances of age, country, education, religion, have admired and have utilized. The object is not to illustrate artists or producers of art work, but to illustrate the human mind, its wants, tastes, judgments, even its desires and imaginations.<sup>15</sup>

It was in this milieu of abstract thought and artistic sensitivity that the collection of American paintings and sculpture came into existence.<sup>16</sup>

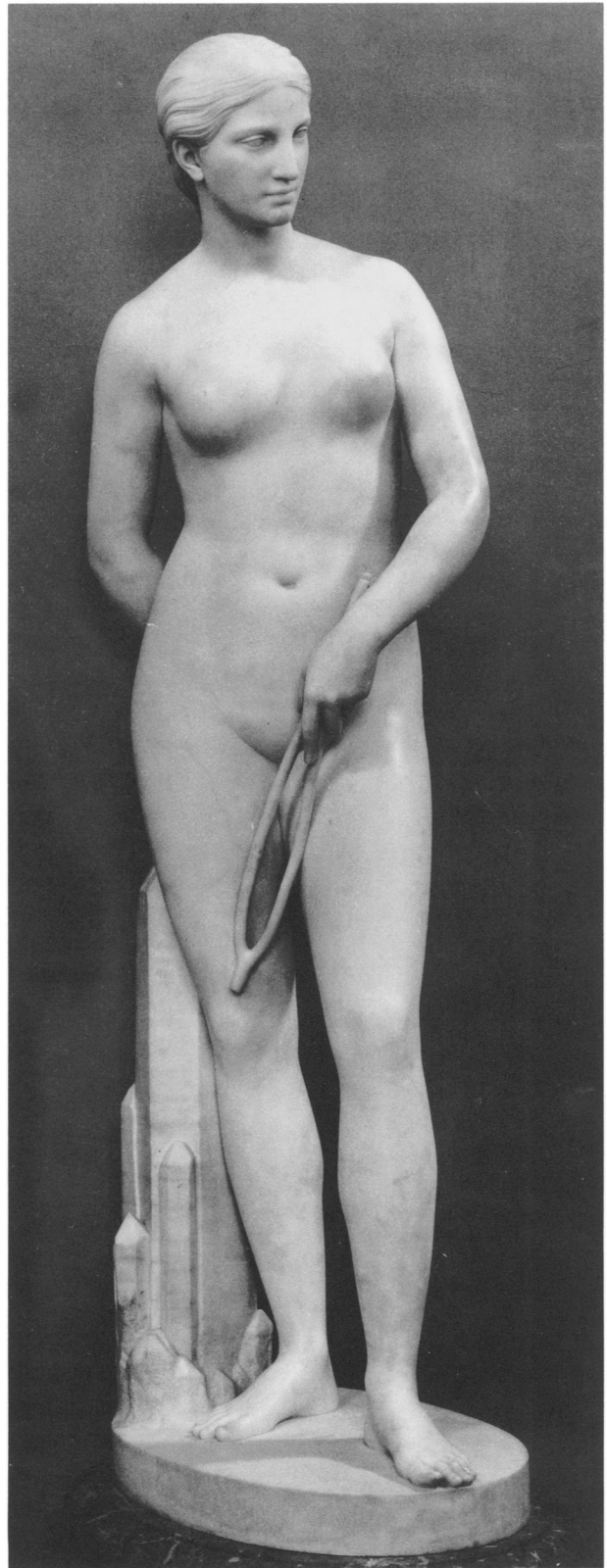
The first painting by an American artist came to the Museum in the middle of 1872, the "Gift of Several Gentlemen" (actually, purchased and presented by several trustees); it was *The Wages of War* by Henry Peters Gray, painted in 1848 (Figure 4). This was very

15. *Annual Report, 1883*, p. 259.

16. The historical record of this department and its collections has been documented fully in several recent books and articles, notably by the late Albert TenEyck Gardner: Albert TenEyck Gardner, "The First Thirty Years," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 23 (1964-1965) pp. 265-274; Albert TenEyck Gardner and Stuart P. Feld, *American Paintings, A Catalogue of the Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, I, Painters born by 1815* (New York, 1965); Albert TenEyck Gardner, *American Sculpture, A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1965). See also David C. Preyer, *The Art of the Metropolitan Museum of New York* (Boston, 1909) pp. 282-306.

FIGURE 5

*California*, by Hiram Powers (1805-1873). This was the first piece of American sculpture and one of the first works by an American artist to be acquired by the Museum. It was originally designed in 1850 in Florence and completed in 1858. Marble. H. 71 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of William Backhouse Astor, 72.3



early in the Museum's history: the first "meeting of gentlemen" to consider "the subject of forming a Museum of Art" had been held on November 23, 1869, the Museum had been incorporated on April 13, 1870, and finally a constitution had been adopted and officers elected on May 14, 1870; but it was not until February 21, 1872, that the Museum opened with its first exhibition.<sup>17</sup> The Executive Committee minutes for June 10, 1872, recorded: "The Superintendent submitted a letter from Mr. H. P. Gray Jr. received with a picture by Mr. H. P. Gray, entitled the 'Wages of War,' now presented to the Museum of Art by Messrs. William Cullen Bryant, Jonathan Sturges and others."<sup>18</sup> On July 10 the matter was referred to the committee on gifts "with a list of the Subscribers who had purchased the picture for \$5,000 for presentation to the Museum."<sup>19</sup> In 1909 one art critic dismissed this and several other paintings by Gray at the Metropolitan: even though he "painted genre in a foreign way . . . the stories he tells are not impressive, notwithstanding the appealing titles" of his works.<sup>20</sup> Albert TenEyck Gardner has placed the painting in better perspective: "In buying the picture and presenting it to the Museum the donors were honoring the artist not so much for his art as for his extraordinary success in managing a fund-raising campaign in 1865 that resulted in putting the National Academy of Design on a sound financial basis."<sup>21</sup>

In the field of American sculpture two important gifts were made to the Museum in 1872. The first was the allegorical statue of California by Hiram Powers (Figure 5), finished in 1858 for William Backhouse Astor, who in turn presented it to the Museum's Executive Committee in March 1872; the next month the trustees thanked "Mr. Astor for this valuable and interesting addition to the Collections."<sup>22</sup> The second gift of sculpture in 1872, though not by an American artist, was, nevertheless, of an important American subject: Benjamin Franklin, by Jean Antoine Houdon (Figure 6), executed in marble in 1778 and given to the Museum by John Bard "together with an Autograph letter from Franklin to Mr. Bard's father."<sup>23</sup> According to Charles Coleman Sellers, "the bust is the first piece of sculpture acquired by the Metropolitan Museum," and though it was long thought to have belonged to Franklin's close friend Dr. John Bard, it "actually had been inherited by Mrs. William Bard,

mother of the donor, from her father, Nicholas Cruger."<sup>24</sup> The accession by gift of these two superb examples of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sculpture by Houdon and Powers in the earliest years of the Museum's existence established a standard of historical and artistic excellence that was rarely matched by additions to the collections over the next two decades.

The expansion of the Museum's collection of American painting and sculpture through the remainder of the 1870s was severely crippled by the depression of 1873, which lasted for six years. In an economy in which expansion had become dependent upon speculative capital, many investors and speculators became overextended. In September 1873 when Jay Cooke, unofficial banker for the federal government, and his firm failed, panic deepened into a depression that paralyzed the country. It was a crippling depression of the worst sort: confidence dwindled, security prices dropped, failures multiplied, factories cut their production, unemployment grew and consumer purchasing power declined, people began to hoard cash, and credit contracted further. From 1873 until recovery came in 1879, the country knew the full meaning of depression. Since most of the original \$250,000 raised at the founding had been spent for the purchase of art works by 1873, the lean years during the first decade of the Museum's existence were met with all sorts of expedients: admission fees were charged, new classes of membership formed, gifts from private collections solicited, loan exhibitions advocated, and the state legislature memorialized to provide maintenance funds through the Park Department.<sup>25</sup>

17. *Annual Report, 1881*, pp. 214–215.

18. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, June 10, 1872, p. 184 (Museum Archives).

19. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, July 10, 1872, p. 196.

20. Preyer, *Art of the Metropolitan*, p. 295.

21. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," pp. 265, 269.

22. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, March 6, 1872, p. 154; Trustees minutes, vol. 1, April 1, 1872, p. 296; Gardner, *American Sculpture*, pp. 5–6.

23. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, September 23, 1872, p. 199, November 11, 1872, p. 208; Trustees minutes, vol. 1, May 13, 1872, p. 327; *Annual Report, 1873*, pp. 39–40.

24. Charles Coleman Sellers, *Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture* (New Haven and London, 1962) pp. 309–310.

25. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 162.

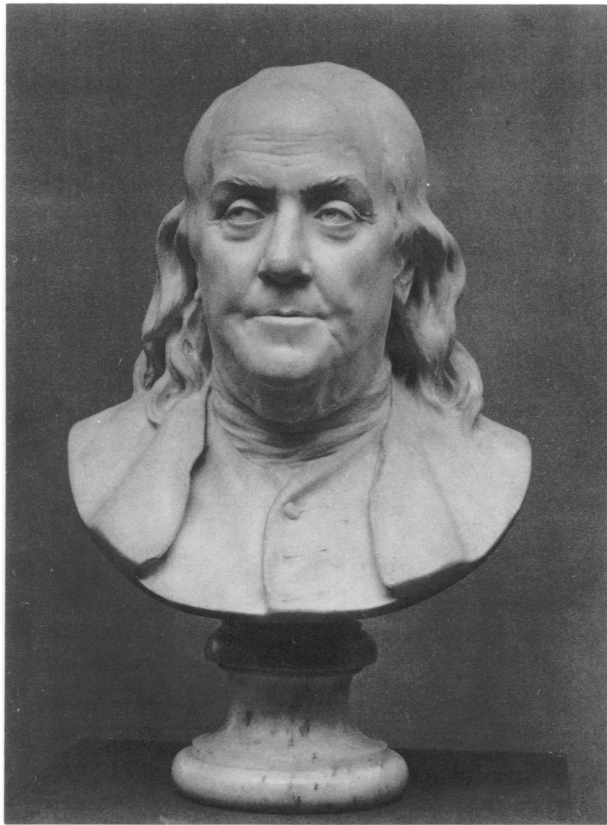


FIGURE 6

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), by Jean Antoine Houdon (1741–1828), dated 1778. Marble. H. (with base) 22½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of John Bard, 72.6

FIGURE 7

In the Metropolitan Museum, Cruger Mansion, by Frank Waller (1842–1923). The Douglas Mansion at 128 West Fourteenth Street, the property of Mrs. Douglas Cruger, served as the second home of the Museum, from 1873 to 1879. Using sketches made in 1879, Waller executed this painting of two of the Museum galleries in the Cruger Mansion in 1881. Henry Peters Gray's *The Wages of War* (see Figure 4) can be recognized above the doorframe. Oil on canvas. 24 × 20¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, 95.29

Early in 1873 the collections were moved from the Dodworth Building, the Museum's first home at 681 Fifth Avenue, to the Douglas Mansion at 128 West Fourteenth Street (Figure 7). There a loan exhibition was opened in the fall; its catalogue, containing 112 entries, was issued in September 1873 and shows "only a scattering representation of American artists."<sup>26</sup> According to Winifred Howe, "Another of these early loan exhibits recalls the days of the New York Gallery of Fine Arts, for it was a collection wholly American in character, a memorial exhibition of 38 paintings by John F. Kensett, his last summer's work, and the three paintings, *The Cross and the World*, by Thomas Cole."<sup>27</sup> Kensett had been a trustee before his death on December 14, 1872; soon after his death the pictures and studies in his studio were sold for \$136,312,

26. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 165.

27. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 166.





FIGURE 8

Passing Off of the Storm, by John Frederick Kensett (1816–1872). Kensett was a member of the organizing committee of the Metropolitan Museum and a trustee of the Museum from 1870 to his death. This painting is one of thirty-eight pictures known as *The Last Summer's Work*, presented to the Museum in 1874 by the artist's brother, Thomas Kensett. Oil on canvas. 11  $\frac{3}{8}$  × 24  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Thomas Kensett, 74.27

but thirty-eight of his works (Figure 8), painted at Darien, Connecticut, and some of them unfinished, were presented to the Museum by his brother, Thomas Kensett.<sup>28</sup> These thirty-eight paintings (given a value of \$20,000 in the *Annual Report*) represented the major portion of the total of fifty-three American paintings acquired by gift in the decade of the seventies.<sup>29</sup> Among the remaining group of fifteen paintings were nine by Joseph Fagnani known as *American Beauty Personified* as the *Nine Muses* (Figure 9), valued at \$4,500.<sup>30</sup> This quaint suite of portraits of contemporary belles was described in the *Annual Report*:

The *Nine Muses*, a series of nine paintings, by the late Joseph Fagnani, presented by friends of the artist who purchased them from his estate, are valuable as specimens of the work of that artist and as illustrations of our own times. Each of the muses is a portrait of a lady of this country and period, and the faces will always be regarded with interest as types of American beauty in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>31</sup>

In 1909 David C. Preyer expressed his view that these “portraits of society women” were representative examples of “the stagnation of artistic feeling, and the stiltedness of its expression, so manifest in the landscapes of the time.”<sup>32</sup> Gardner quoted one of the misses as saying later, “I think they all look like ladies on prune boxes.”<sup>33</sup> A gift in 1875 from W. E. Dodge of “six copper plates (engravings executed for Audubon’s *Work on the Birds of America*)” added a new dimension to the growing collection.<sup>34</sup>

At this moment, when the Museum was expressing an active interest in collecting and exhibiting Ameri-

28. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, March 23, 1874, pp. 285–286.

29. Gardner, “First Thirty Years,” p. 269; *Annual Report, 1874*, p. 55.

30. *Annual Report, 1874*, p. 55.

31. *Annual Report, 1874*, p. 51.

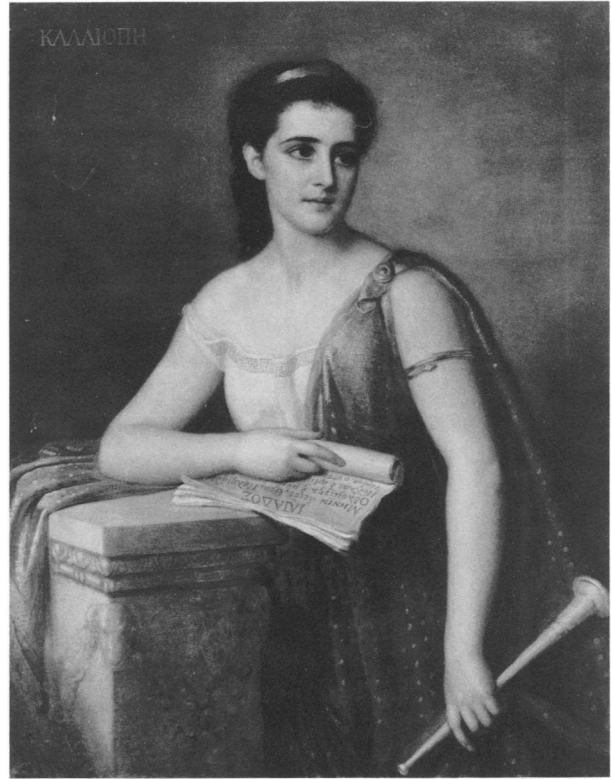
32. Preyer, *Art of the Metropolitan*, pp. 291–292.

33. Gardner, “First Thirty Years,” p. 269.

34. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, May 3, 1875, p. 335.

FIGURE 9

American Beauty Personified as the Nine Muses: Calliope, by Joseph Fagnani (1819–1873). The series of nine pictures to which this one belongs was completed by the Italian-born portraitist in 1869. Calliope, representing epic poetry, is shown with the *Iliad* and a trumpet and is identified as Miss Lizzie Wadsworth. Oil on canvas. 43½ × 33½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of an Association of Gentlemen, 74.43



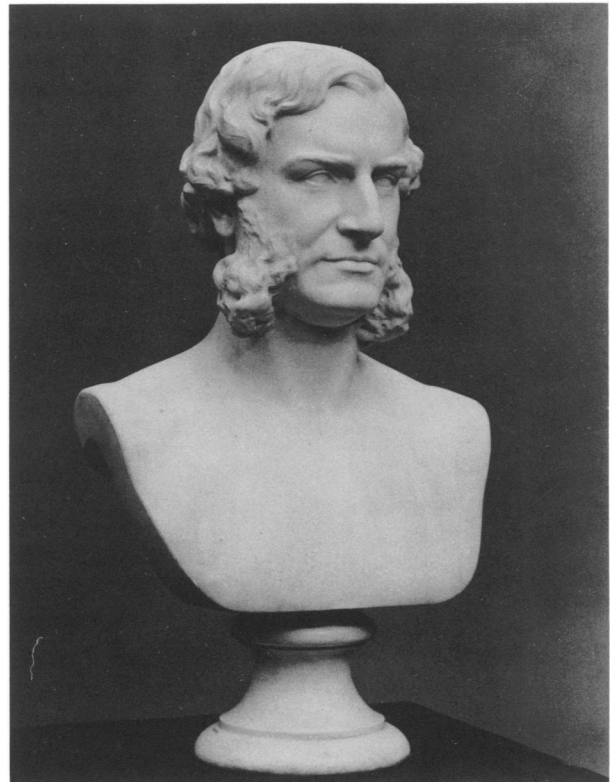
can art of the nineteenth century, it lost through death on November 4, 1875, a vice-president, William Tilden Blodgett (Figure 10), one of its most loyal supporters of “the cause of American Art.”

He bought among other valuable Works, Church’s “Heart of the Andes,” and he exercised that cordial and elegant hospitality towards Artists—the most obscure and struggling as well as the most eminent, which is sometimes as strong a stimulus to effort as the purchase of their works. . . . With this knowledge and unaffected love of the fine Arts, Mr. Blodgett had a thorough conviction of the importance of cultivating them at home, and seeing that Justice should be done to our own school in the eyes of the world. He was a diligent worker in the Committee which selected the American Collection for the French Exhibition of 1867, and was also a member of the advisory body which is performing a similar service for the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.<sup>35</sup>

35. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, November 15, 1875, pp. 65–66.

FIGURE 10

William Tilden Blodgett (1823–1875), by John Quincy Adams Ward (1830–1910). Blodgett was a founder, trustee, vice-president, and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Metropolitan Museum, and Ward was one of several artists on the original Board of Trustees of the Museum at its founding in 1870. Marble. H. 26 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. John Quincy Adams Ward, 10.200



The loss of Kensett and Blodgett within the first five years of the Museum's life was felt keenly and regretted, as the trustees' minutes recorded, by "the friends of American Art."<sup>36</sup> In these years before 1879—when General Luigi Palma di Cesnola was appointed the Museum's first director—the president and his trustees, particularly the Executive Committee, directed the collecting and exhibition policies through their own art-history interests and personal preferences. From the founding in 1870 it had been the portrait painters Daniel Huntington and Eastman Johnson, the sculptor John Q. A. Ward, and the New York art dealer Samuel P. Avery, in addition to Kensett and Blodgett, who as board members and as "professionals naturally oriented the institution to the acquisition and display of the work of American artists, and of study materials for the instruction and inspiration of American art students."<sup>37</sup>

As attention focused on the approaching Centennial Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia, there was a heightened awareness throughout the country, and particularly among the Museum's board, of the history, accomplishments, and promise of American art. Late in 1875 the board resolved in response to an inquiry from Philadelphia:

That the President be requested to express to the officers of the Centennial Exhibition the sympathy of the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the endeavor of the former to secure an adequate representation of American Art with a pledge of the cooperation of the Institution in every possible way.<sup>38</sup>

The following April the Exhibition Committee reported that H. P. Gray's *The Wages of War* had been delivered in Philadelphia for exhibition.<sup>39</sup> With a "growing appreciation of art over the entire country," during the summer of 1876 the Metropolitan Museum and the National Academy of Design sponsored joint exhibitions of art from private collections in New York "on the principle that New York ought to furnish to the many visitors of the centennial year more than its ordinary sources of entertainment. . . . In both exhibitions, only about one-fourth of the paintings were the work of American artists and the remaining three-fourths were by modern European artists."<sup>40</sup> The spirit of the Centennial Exhibition was only in part retrospection and restoration; the primary and over-

riding conception behind each exhibition was to demonstrate progress and the high level of prosperity achieved as a result of the machine and the Industrial Revolution. The relatively few examples of American paintings and furniture shown, indeed even the "New England Log Cabin" ("a quaint structure of that style of architecture which characterized the backwoodsman's cot in Vermont or Connecticut one hundred years ago," according to Leslie's official *Historical Register of the Centennial Exhibition*), were actually only historical props to satisfy the firm American belief in the idea of progress. Cheek by jowl with the New England Log Cabin, for example, was a New England Modern Kitchen for comparison. Here was visual demonstration of historical change through some sort of benevolent evolutionary process. Here was an exhibition of the best efforts of artists and manufacturers produced with skill and confidence. The Executive Committee of the Museum looked upon the event in Philadelphia as a unique opportunity and asked in May 1876 that a special committee "be appointed for the purpose of inquiry with a view to the acquisition of Works of Art from Exhibitors on the close of the Centennial Exhibition."<sup>41</sup> Henry G. Marquand reported the following November on behalf of the special committee "that no successful attempt in that direction could be made."<sup>42</sup>

Between the 1876 centennial and 1879—the year when the Douglas Mansion was closed (January 11) in preparation for the Museum's move to its new building in Central Park and when General Cesnola was appointed director (May 19)—a small number of notable gifts and loans of American paintings and sculpture was accepted.<sup>43</sup> The offer of a loan of Randolph Roger's *Indian and Squaw* from a "Mrs. Montgomery of Washington" was accepted in 1877.<sup>44</sup> Through a

36. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, January 4, 1873, p. 2.

37. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 266.

38. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, November 15, 1875, p. 67.

39. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, April 3, 1876, p. 372.

40. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, pp. 170–171.

41. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, May 15, 1876, p. 3.

42. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, November 6, 1876, p. 12.

43. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, pp. 180–184; Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, December 16, 1878, p. 118, May 19, 1879, p. 143.

44. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, January 15, 1877, p. 34.





**FIGURE 11**  
 High Point: Shandaken Mountains, by Asher Brown Durand (1796–1886). This painting was done for the New York collector Nicholas Ludlum. Oil on canvas. 32 ¼ × 48 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Sarah Ann Ludlum, 77.3.1

bequest in the same year Mrs. Sarah Ann Ludlum gave “six Pictures by Durand, Cropsey, Chapman & Louis Lang with two by unknown Masters.” These included Asher B. Durand’s *High Point: Shandaken Mountains* (Figure 11) and Lang’s *The Basketmaker* (Figure 12), both dating from 1853.<sup>45</sup> Also in 1877 a Colonel Lee loaned “a Marble Medallion of Genl. Lee” by William Henry Rinehart; Theodore Roosevelt gave a bronze medallion of Washington; *The Antiquary*, a painting by Edwin White, was given by his widow; and the marble group *Thetis and Achilles* (Figure 13), executed in 1874 by Pierce Francis Connelly, was donated by Mrs. A. E. Schermerhorn.<sup>46</sup> In 1878 a miniature portrait of Washington, a marble bust of General Edwin Vose Sumner, and a marble statue of Polyxena by William Wetmore Story were loaned by W. H. Huntington, George W. Curtis, and Robert F. Bixby, respectively.<sup>47</sup> And even though the Museum was closed for over a year from January 1879 until March 30, 1880, as preparations were made for the move to the new building, Reverend E. L. Magoon of Philadelphia, “on a visit to the Museum while as yet unopened, very generously presented to it, as a special gift to the people, a valuable collection of eighty-five water-color paintings by the eminent artist Mr. William T[rost] Richards; and . . . proposes to increase the number to one hundred specimens” (Figure 14).<sup>48</sup>

As the decade of the seventies drew to a close, it was

abundantly clear to those intimately engaged in the Museum’s affairs that, because of the strangulating effects of the depressed economy on purchasing funds, the growth of the American collection was exceedingly random and chaotic, and at times embarrassingly uneven. Rarely were the works of incompetent artists and the portraits of inconsequential subjects rejected as gifts; loans were always accepted, with the sole restriction in sculpture being that it be “delivered at the Museum at the owner’s cost.”<sup>49</sup> The paintings collection was indeed so thin that about a month before the new Central Park building opened, early in 1880, a report to the trustees said with some alarm, “The picture galleries on the West side of the Museum are almost without Paintings.”<sup>50</sup>

45. *Annual Report, 1877*, p. 106; Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, March 19, 1877, p. 45; Gardner and Feld, *American Paintings*, pp. 212–213, 274–275.

46. *Annual Report, 1877*, p. 106; *Annual Report, 1878*, p. 131; Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, June 21, 1877, pp. 60–61, March 18, 1878, p. 95.

47. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, February 4, 1878, p. 81, October 22, 1878, p. 111.

48. *Annual Report, 1880*, p. 166; Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, February 23, 1880, p. 209.

49. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, October 22, 1878, p. 111.

50. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, February 16, 1880, p. 165.



FIGURE 12  
The Basketmaker, by Louis Lang (1814–1893). The German-born artist painted this picture in 1853. Oil on canvas. 27 ¼ × 34 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Sarah Ann Ludlum, 77.3.4

FIGURE 13  
Thetis and Achilles, by Pierce Francis Connelly (1841–after 1902). This sculptural group, executed in 1874, was enthusiastically received at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. Connelly was a pupil of Hiram Powers (see Figure 5). Marble. H. 56 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. A. E. Schermerhorn, 77.2 (Photo: Taylor and Dull, Inc.)

After ten years of what one writer has called a “nomadic existence” for the young Museum and its collections, the new building opened on March 30, 1880.<sup>51</sup> The president of the United States, Rutherford B. Hayes, was invited to the formal exercises marking the opening; he “declared the institution to be open for the purposes of ‘free, popular art education’ ” in “modest, simple, and yet sufficient words.”<sup>52</sup> This ceremony, almost a decade after the founding of the Museum,

51. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 189.

52. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, March 8, 1880, p. 215; Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 196.

reflected in numerous ways a new maturity and stability. Virtually simultaneous with the opening of the new building, the Museum announced the establishment and opening of an Industrial Art School at Union Square, the beginnings of a museum library and the appointment of a librarian, the founding of a collection of architectural casts, and in 1882 the division of the Museum into three departments with the appointment of Professor William Henry Goodyear as curator of the Department of Paintings, “to embrace all the paintings, drawings, etchings, water-colors, engravings, prints, textile fabrics, photographs, and books for ex-

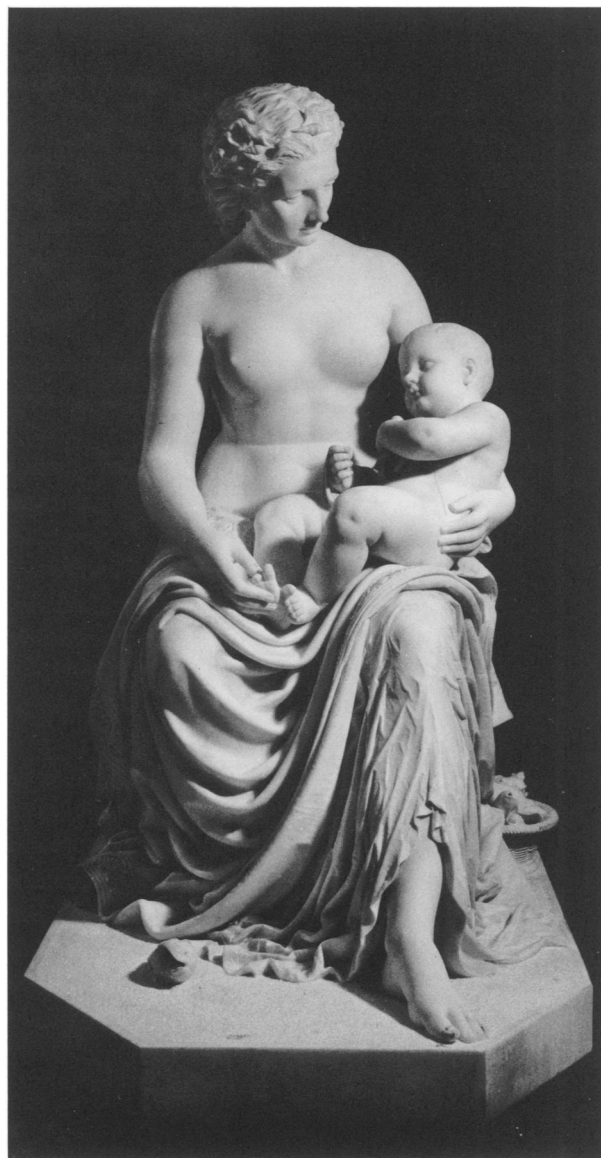




FIGURE 14

Moonlight on Mount Lafayette, New Hampshire, by William Trost Richards (1833–1905). This is one of a group of eighty-five watercolors by Richards that Reverend Elias L. Magoon presented to the Museum in 1880. The gift served as a cornerstone of the collection of American drawings and watercolors.  $8\frac{1}{4} \times 13\frac{3}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the Reverend Elias L. Magoon, 80.1.2

hibition (exclusive of the Museum Library).”<sup>53</sup> There were significant developments at the same time within the Museum, particularly in the thinking of the director and trustees, that would affect the collecting of American art through the eighties. Soon after his appointment as director, General Cesnola “suggested in 1879 that the Museum should collect pictures by early American painters, a suggestion conscientiously pursued during his long directorate (1879–1904).”<sup>54</sup> It was, however, at the opening of the new building that a trustee, Joseph H. Choate, in an address entitled “The History and Future Plans of the Museum,” made a bold, imaginative statement on the status and promise of contemporary American art:

Whoever labors for the growth of American art must look for his reward not to this age only, but largely to

the distant future. And who shall dare to set limits to the possibilities that await the energies of this vast people in any department of human effort? It is not fifty years since the possibility of an American literature was scouted and sneered at by the scholars of England; and already the proud Court of St. James’s has welcomed an American historian to whom the world of letters paid homage, and an American poet of whom the English speaking race is proud, as the fitly designated representatives of the young Republic; and who, in the light of her experience, shall dare to despise or doubt the prophecy that in the fulness of time, American architects and painters and sculptors may be held in equal honor?<sup>55</sup>

53. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 219.

54. Gardner, “First Thirty Years,” pp. 269–270.

55. *Annual Report, 1880*, p. 178.

There runs through the official minutes and records of the Museum in the two-year period 1880 to 1882 a double strain of thought: one is an acute historical sense of having reached a turning point, a watershed in the institution's existence; the other is a curious counterpoint in which statements of Museum philosophy revealing lofty aspirations stand alongside accounts of the mundane problems of workaday operation. The Metropolitan had come of age in March 1880, but attending that growth came new responsibilities and complexities. After "ten brief years of hearty, united efforts," the Museum's members were congratulated that "they may content themselves with the familiar epitaph of a great architect, resting in the cathedral he constructed, '*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*'" "Brief as have been the ten years since the opening of our first exhibition," the trustees reported on February 13, 1882, "the Members of this Museum have been not infrequently admonished that we are working for the generations to come after us, and that those who have accomplished what has been done, must hand over the work of continuation to successors."<sup>56</sup> Facing overwhelming problems of expansion, the trustees enunciated their genuine concern with the forces of continuity and change, a sense of the past wedded to a sense of the future.

The decade of the eighties witnessed significant growth in the field of American art: "twenty-nine American pictures were added to the collection, and in general their quality and interest show a decided improvement over the pictures received in the previous decade."<sup>57</sup> There was an increasing awareness of the historical importance of adding early American paintings to the collections. In 1880 a significant beginning was made in this area when a collection of nine Benjamin West paintings (Figure 15) was offered through O. B. Smith, attorney for Mrs. Anne Seguin, on loan "for an indefinite term of years," although "he thought that once so deposited they would never be removed from the Museum." The pictures were received in December 1880 and "remained as a loan from her

FIGURE 15

Hagar and Ishmael, by Benjamin West (1738–1820), painted in 1776 and reworked in 1803. Oil on canvas. 76 × 54½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Maria Dewitt Jesup Fund, 1923, 95.22.8

heirs until 1923, when they were purchased for a modest sum to settle the estate of her daughter-in-law."<sup>58</sup> Even though this was an extremely important collection, including three works painted by West to hang in his own studio, it was not universally appreciated after it came to the Museum; one critic said that the paintings were "in the pure French academic style, which leaves us cold no matter how ardent the subject."<sup>59</sup> In 1881 Henry G. Marquand gave a portrait of Alexander Hamilton, painted early in the nineteenth century by John Trumbull (Figure 16); in June of the same year "An association of gentlemen having subscribed a certain sum" purchased the portrait of

56. *Annual Report, 1881*, pp. 215, 218.

57. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 270.

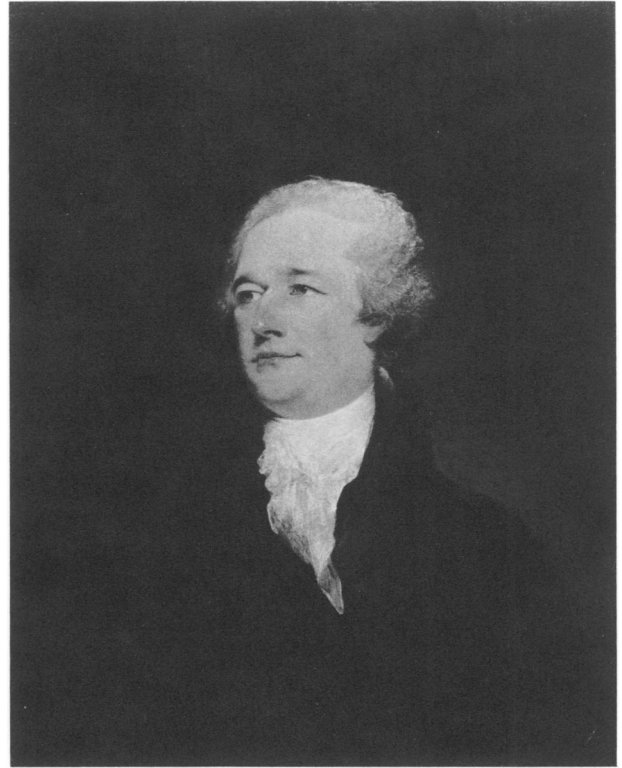
58. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, November 29, 1880, p. 282, December 20, 1880, p. 295, March 7, 1881, p. 328; Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 270.

59. Preyer, *Art of the Metropolitan*, p. 284.



FIGURE 16

Alexander Hamilton (1757–1804), by John Trumbull (1756–1843). This portrait, painted in the early years of the nineteenth century, is one of six recorded replicas of Trumbull's portrait of Hamilton executed in 1792 for John Jay. Oil on canvas.  $30\frac{3}{4} \times 24\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Henry G. Marquand, 81.11



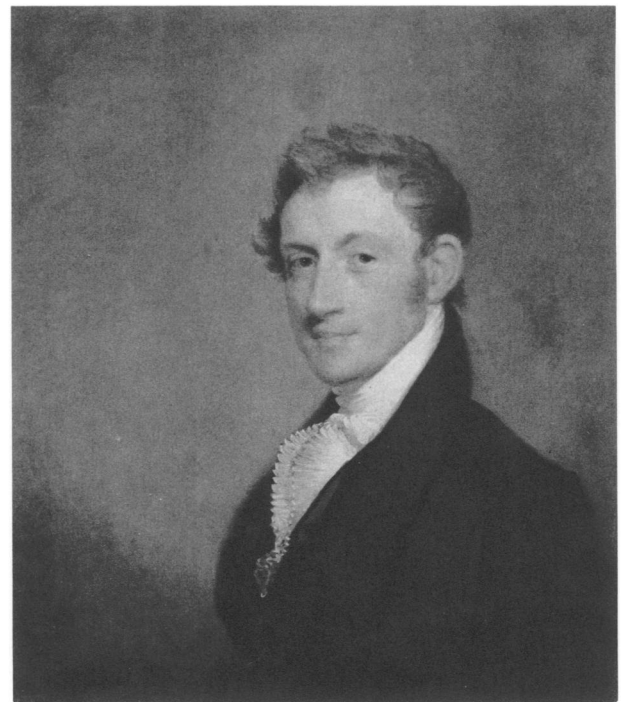
David Sears, Jr., by Gilbert Stuart for presentation to the Museum (Figure 17); and in November Robert Hoe made a gift of the portrait of Alexander Anderson, the wood engraver, painted in 1815 by John Wesley Jarvis (Figure 18).<sup>60</sup> At the same time the trustees became more discriminating in their acquisitions: they rejected the offer of H. H. Winant of "his own portrait painted in oil as a gift to the Museum" and declined the offer of E. C. Lewis of Hoboken, New Jersey, to sell "the marble group of Latona by Rinehart for \$10,000—which is on Exhibition at the Museum" (Figure 19).<sup>61</sup> In 1887 the trustees adopted a resolution stating that it was "the Sentiment of this Board that the Standard of the Collection of this Museum should be raised to a higher degree of excellence by the . . . withdrawal from exhibition [of] all works of art . . . that do not reach the desired Standard"; the Committee on Paintings and Sculpture was instructed to make a selection of objects it considered of "insufficient merit

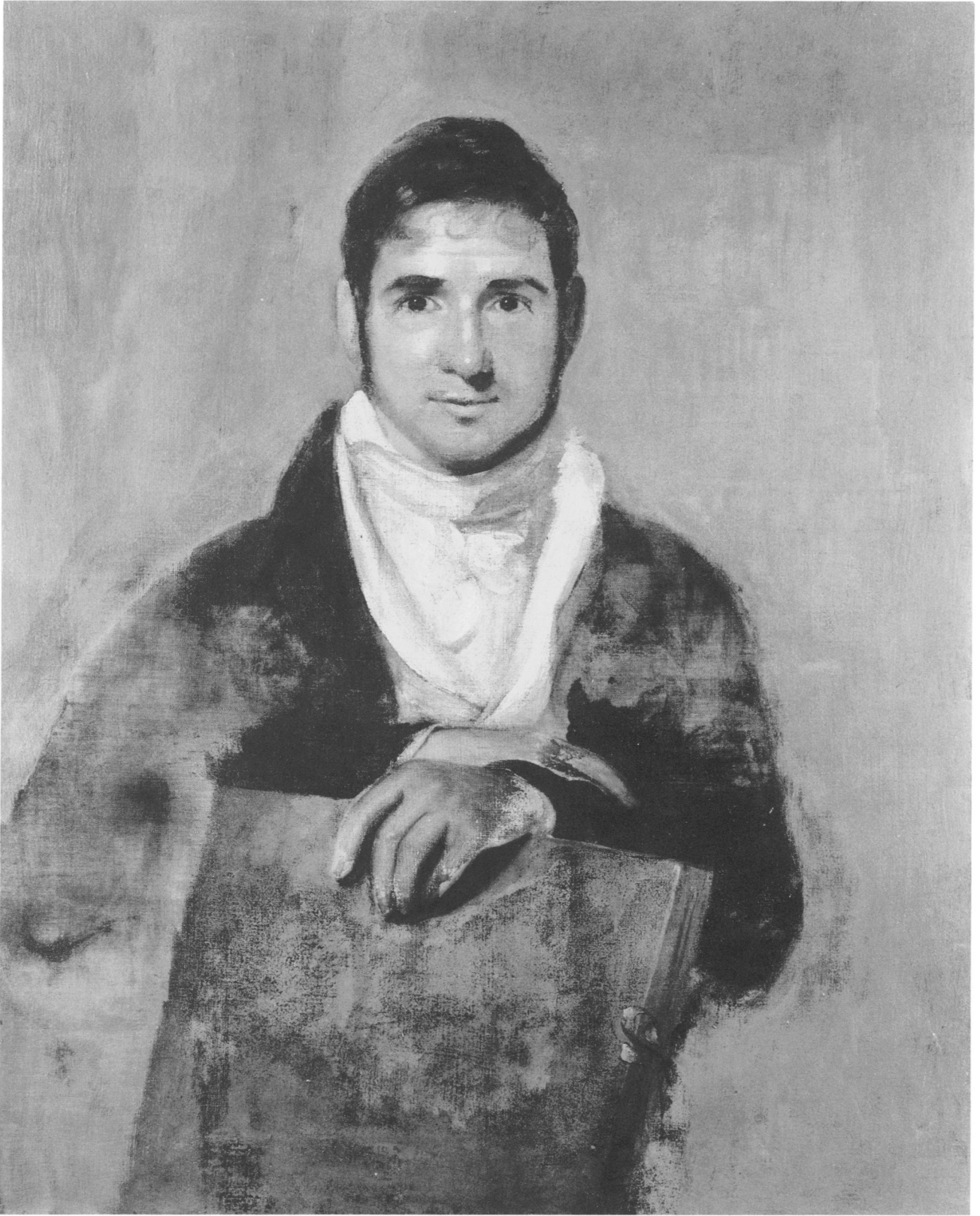
60. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 270; Gardner and Feld, *American Paintings*, pp. 95–96, 105–106, 146; Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, June 24, 1881, pp. 350–351, vol. 3, November 27, 1881, pp. 3–4; Trustees minutes, vol. 3, January 27, 1889, p. 9.

61. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, January 24, 1881, p. 310, vol. 3, November 27, 1881, p. 4.

FIGURE 17

David Sears, Jr. (1787–1871), by Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828). This portrait, painted in Boston about 1815, is one of several that Stuart did of Sears, the Bostonian statesman and philanthropist. It was acquired from Sears's daughter for presentation to the Museum. Oil on canvas.  $27\frac{1}{4} \times 23\frac{1}{2}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Several Gentlemen, 81.12





**FIGURE 18**

Alexander Anderson (1775–1870), by John Wesley Jarvis (1780–1840). Robert Hoe, who served on the provisional committee for the establishment of the Museum and the first Executive Committee and who was chairman of the Committee on Art Schools, presented this portrait to the Museum in 1881. The portrait of Anderson, who was known as the Father of American Wood Engraving in the 1880s, was accompanied by a certificate from a descendant of the sitter dating the painting to 1815. The removal of overpainting in the early 1950s revealed the spontaneity of Jarvis's original work. Oil on canvas. 34 × 27 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Robert Hoe, 81.16

**FIGURE 19**

Latona and Her Children Apollo and Diana, by William Henry Rinehart (1825–1874). This work, completed in 1874 after the artist's death, was purchased by the Museum in 1905. It had previously been declined when offered for sale by E. C. Lewis, who had commissioned it from the artist in 1871. Marble. H. 46 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 05.12



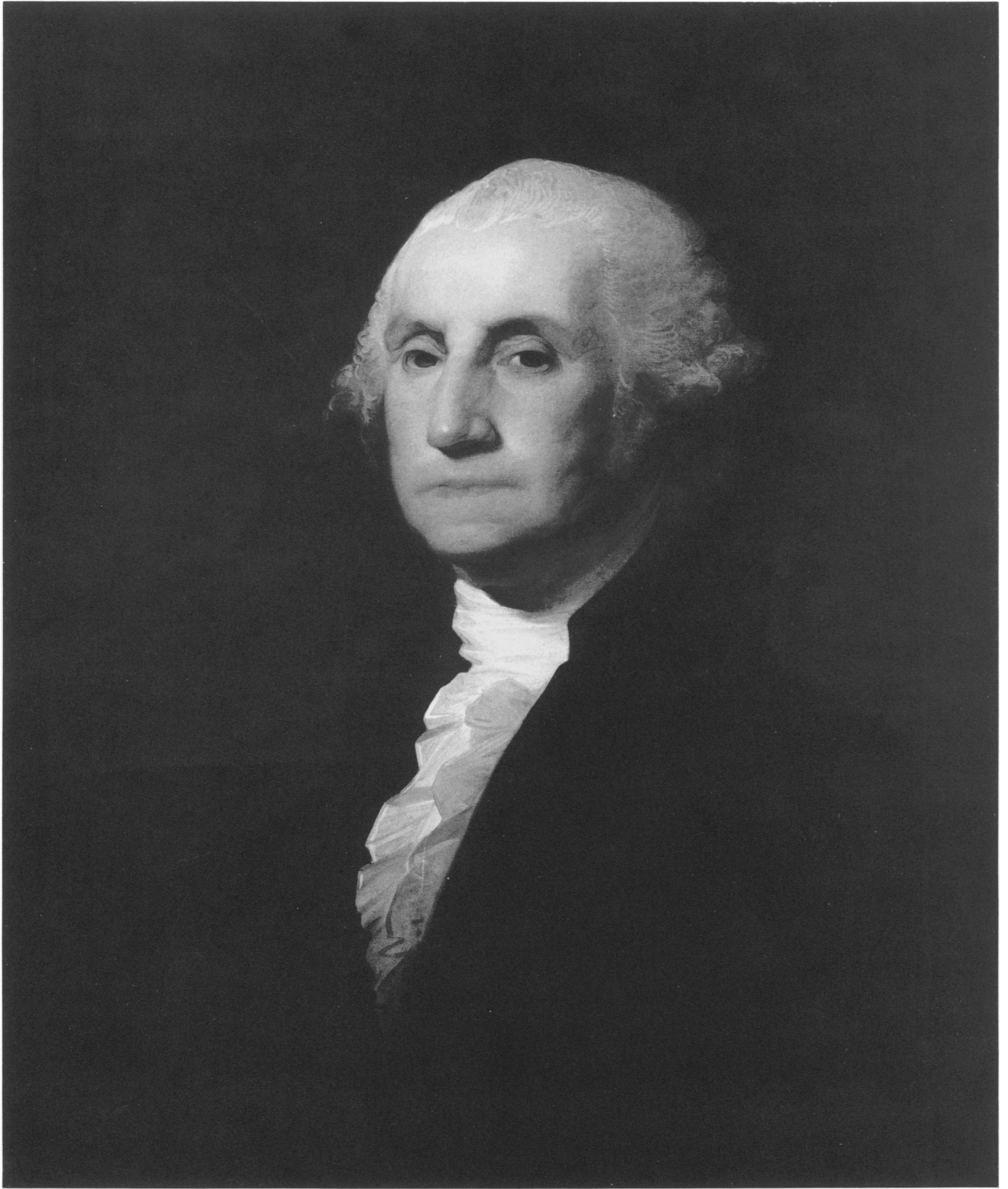




FIGURE 20

George Washington (1732–1799), by Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828). This portrait, of the Athenaeum type, is known as the “Carroll Washington” since it was once in the possession of Daniel Carroll in Washington, D.C. The long and generous support of the Museum by the Havemeyer family was to culminate in 1929 with the munificent bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer. Oil on canvas. 29 1/8 × 24 1/8 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Henry O. Havemeyer, 88.18

for the Museum,” and the Executive Committee directed “to dispose of such objects as they may deem expedient.”<sup>62</sup>

As the centennial of George Washington’s inauguration approached in 1889, the patriotism and filial piety generated were even stronger than in 1876 and expressed themselves in a growing interest in the iconography, and in some cases the relics, of the first president and the other founding fathers. When the “Art Committee of the Washington Centennial Celebration” asked for the loan of Trumbull’s Alexander Hamilton, it also “requested to be informed if there be other portraits or relics in the Museum of prominent men of the Inauguration period in order that the Committee may secure them for their loan Exhibition.”<sup>63</sup> Beginning at the time the Museum was founded, when William J. Hoppin had urged close cooperation with the New-York Historical Society, there had been an increasing confusion regarding the overlapping spheres of the two institutions’ collecting interest in the field of historical Americana.<sup>64</sup> During 1874 the Museum went so far as to accept as a donation “parts of a watch found in a revolutionary burying ground on the Banks of the East River, at Ravenswood, Long Island.”<sup>65</sup> This trend culminated in the gift in 1883 of the Huntington collection, consisting of all sorts of material relating to the founding fathers, principally Franklin:

An exceedingly interesting addition to the Museum has been made by the gift of Mr. William H. Hunting-

ton. During his long residence in Europe, Mr. Huntington has made a very large and valuable collection of works of art which have special reference to Washington, Franklin, and Lafayette. This collection, which has been made with great care and judgment, includes several hundred objects, statuettes and busts in bronze, pottery, porcelain and other materials, paintings, about 3000 prints and engravings, medallions and medals in various metal and other substances. It forms as a whole a remarkable illustration of the tributes of art, other than great monuments, to the characters of the men whose memory America cherishes.<sup>66</sup>

Huntington had been a correspondent for the *New York Tribune* for a number of years in Paris and became an inveterate collector. His close friend John Bigelow, the Franklin editor and former minister to France, was a Museum trustee and came into possession of many imprints from the collection, and in 1885 he presented “about 660 Books and pamphlets . . . with the condition that the books should be kept apart by themselves and known as the Huntington Collection.”<sup>67</sup> A marble bust of Washington was presented by a Mrs. Falconer in 1884, and in 1885 C. L. Hogeboom gave “Two Plaster Casts by him of Franklin and Jefferson.”<sup>68</sup> Of more importance was the gift of one of Gilbert Stuart’s portraits of George Washington (Figure 20), known as the “Carroll Washington,” in May 1888 by H. O. Havemeyer—the first of what were to be many important gifts from him.<sup>69</sup> The interest in Washington was to continue unabated: the James Peale Washington at Yorktown from the Huntington collection was also received in the eighties (Figure 21); then in 1890 the “Misses Emma and Harriet White of Newport” presented “A plate with Washington on horse-back painted on it”; Samuel P. Avery made a gift of “2 Copperplates of Washington, with their im-

62. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, May 16, 1887, p. 333.

63. Trustees minutes, vol. 3, February 18, 1889, p. 25.

64. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 115.

65. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 1, December 21, 1874, p. 312.

66. *Annual Report, 1883*, p. 267.

67. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, October 28, 1885, p. 144.

68. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, April 28, 1884, p. 110; *Annual Report, 1884*, p. 297; *Annual Report, 1885*, p. 329.

69. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, May 21, 1888, pp. 348–349.

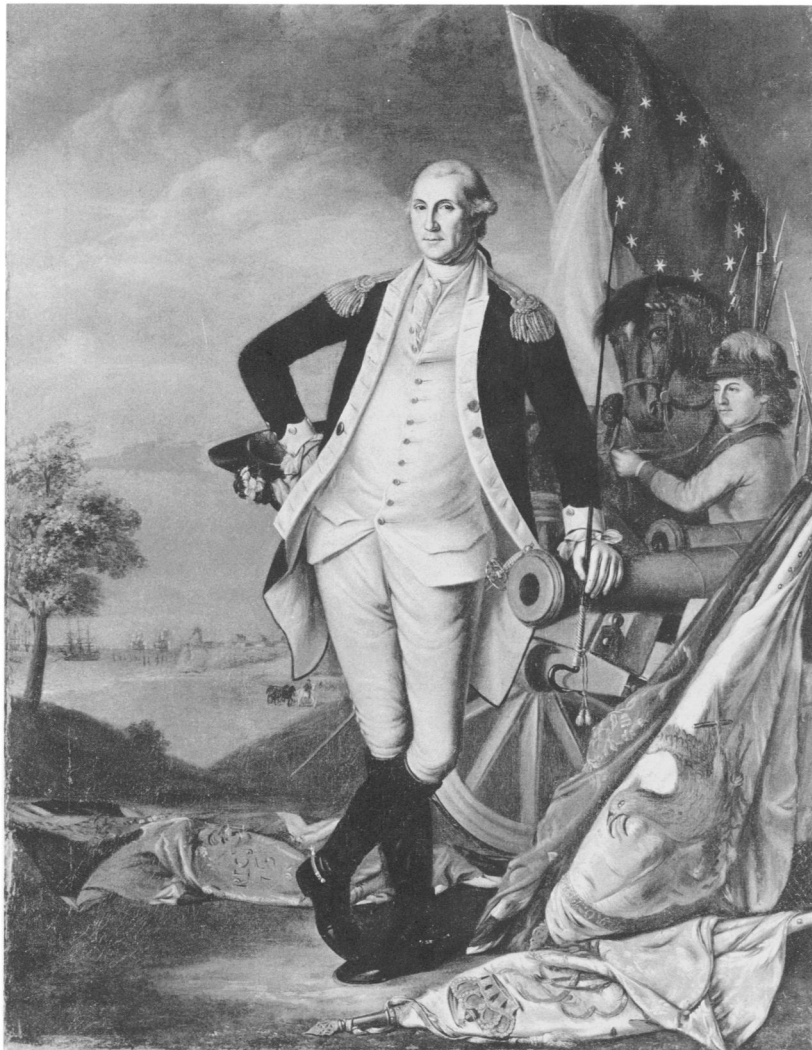


FIGURE 21  
George Washington at Yorktown,  
by James Peale (1749–1831). Oil  
on canvas. 36 × 27 in. The Metro-  
politan Museum of Art, bequest of  
William H. Huntington, 85.1

pressions”; and in 1891 John Crosby Brown donated “A chair formerly belonging to Washington.”<sup>70</sup>

The accessions in sculpture during the eighties were remarkable in some instances but on the whole were characterized by a general unevenness. This, of course, reflected the severely restricted purchase funds during these years; twenty years after the Museum’s founding the trustees stated with pride that “Not one Dollar of the public Money has ever been received or employed for the acquisition of works of Art.”<sup>71</sup> But the fact remains that the Museum was too bound by the tastes

of its donors. From the estate of a Mrs. Andrews it acquired a “marble group . . . known as The Flight from Pompeii,” and from Morris K. Jesup “a Marble Statue with Marble pedestal the title of which is ‘I am the rose of Sharon.’”<sup>72</sup> In 1885 Charles Calverley presented his “Model in plaster of his Colossal Bust of Elias Howe with its pedestal,” and the following year Benjamin Hazard Field gave Wilson MacDonald’s bronze bust of Brigadier General Winfield Scott Hancock, which had been made around 1880.<sup>73</sup> But the real prize among the accessions of the eighties in sculp-

70. Gardner, “First Thirty Years,” p. 270; Trustees minutes, vol. 3, February 17, 1890, p. 40, November 16, 1891, p. 106.

71. Trustees minutes, vol. 3, May 18, 1891, p. 63.

72. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, April 28, 1884, p.

109; Trustees minutes, vol. 2, November 1, 1886, p. 373.

73. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, October 28, 1885, p. 145; Trustees minutes, vol. 2, November 1, 1886, p. 372; Gardner, *American Sculpture*, p. 23.

ture was John Taylor Johnston's gift in 1888 of Cleopatra by William Wetmore Story, "one of the most famous and popular works by any American sculptor of the mid-nineteenth century" (Figure 22).<sup>74</sup> This version (the sculptor made several copies) is dated 1869 and had been on exhibition as a loan since 1878.

As the Museum became in the eighties more discriminating, more departmental, more professional, and more historically minded in its collecting, the work of, and indeed the presence of, contemporary American artists within the institution were clearly less enthusiastically tolerated than they had been in the seventies. At the moment when the Museum was moving into a new building, consolidating under its first director, and regrouping in departments under the administration of professional curators, it is a significant indication of change that Daniel Huntington, the painter, was replaced as chairman of the powerful Committee on Painting and Sculpture by Rutherford Stuyvesant.<sup>75</sup> Through the early 1880s there were subtle indications of a growing estrangement between the director, Cesnola, and an officious and meddlesome clique of American artists on the Board of Trustees and affiliated with the Museum in other less formal ways, who had used loan exhibitions for promotional purposes. The exhibition held by the Society of American Artists in 1886, for example, "was entirely different from any other exhibition in the Museum before or since in two respects: namely, the pictures were understood to be for sale and prizes were awarded for the best paintings."<sup>76</sup> It was, seemingly, a proposal from "Mr. Mansfield, an artist in this City about the desirability of having a Loan Exhibition at the Museum of Copies of Old Masters made by living artists for their own study" early in 1883 that stirred the wrath of Cesnola; the following November was selected as an appropriate time for the exhibition and "the Director was requested to carry out this plan."<sup>77</sup> Mansfield was confident that "some 200 such Copies might be obtained from the New York artists alone." The president appointed a committee from the trustees—Samuel P. Avery as chairman, Robert Gordon, D. O. Mills, William L. Andrews, Heber R. Bishop, Frederic E. Church, and H. G. Marquand—to which were added representatives of the local community of artists—Henry A. Loop, George Henry Yewell, J. Carroll Beckwith, George Henry Story, and Walter Shirlaw.<sup>78</sup> The year 1883 was a



FIGURE 22  
Cleopatra, by William Wetmore Story (1819–1895). Marble. H. 54½ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of John Taylor Johnston, 88.5

difficult one for Cesnola (among other things the manager of the Museum's art school had to be discharged "for having embezzled funds intrusted to him"<sup>79</sup>), and one can only surmise as to the circumstances that triggered the director's scathing blast at modern American artists. The minutes do record that he won the Executive Committee's approval in February 1884 on a

74. Trustees minutes, vol. 2, December 27, 1888, pp. 359–360; Gardner, *American Sculpture*, p. 19.

75. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, April 26, 1880, p. 234.

76. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, p. 216.

77. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, January 8, 1883, p. 67, January 26, 1883, p. 70.

78. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, March 12, 1883, pp. 76–77.

79. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, May 14, 1883, p. 89.

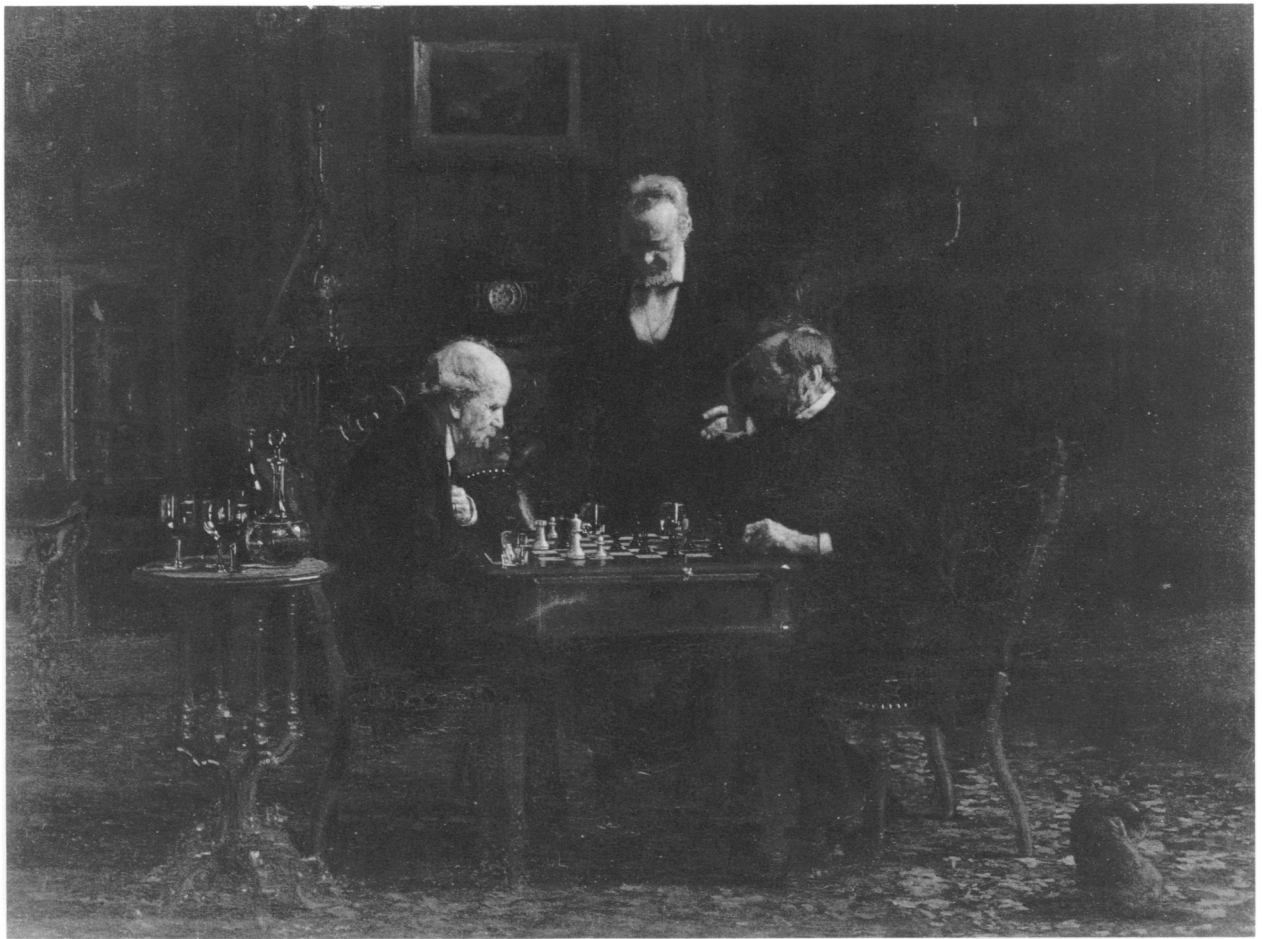


FIGURE 23

The Chess Players, by Thomas Eakins (1844–1916). The artist’s father, Benjamin Eakins, appears as the standing observer in a chess game between the French teacher Mr. Gardel and the painter and teacher George W. Holmes. In 1942 the Museum purchased a perspective drawing for the painting with monies from the Fletcher Fund. Oil on panel. 11 ¾ × 16 ¾ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the Artist, 81.14

new policy “that the modern pictures which are the property of the Museum be permanently hung in the smallest of the western galleries”—that is, where loan exhibitions had previously been held.<sup>80</sup> As the permanent collections grew, the amount of space that could be given to such loan exhibitions was diminishing, particularly space for the work of dabblers whose talent Cesnola seriously questioned. In April 1884 he ex-

80. Executive Committee minutes, vol. 3, February 6, 1884, p. 104.

ploded in a letter to his friend General George B. McClellan, of Civil War fame:

You asked me in the Circuit Court, why I did not like our American Artists, in general, and those of New York, in particular. . . . I will tell you *why* . . . “BECAUSE THEY ARE HUMBUGS.” American Artists, especially those of this City, or at least the mass of them (as there are some noble exceptions) is not at all Convinced that long and hard Study is absolutely *necessary*, to become *real* Artists and not mere *Manufacturers* of paintings as they are. They imagine, and probably believe,

that it is possible to use the brush before they have learned how to use the *pencil*. They are too much in haste to succeed, and to be known, and talked about in the newspapers; hence they cultivate the friendship of such asinine Art Critics as Clarence Cook, Richard Gilder, John Foord and so on.

The American Artists have a morbid and immoderate desire to be thought *great Artists*, to be talked about in the newspapers, as “Representative American Artists”! They need to be better educated but they do *not* want to be; in fact they consider themselves too highly educated already! Messrs. Willet, St. Gaudens, Olin Warner, Hopkinson Smith, Chase, and others who call themselves, and among the ignorant public of New York, are known as “Artists of the *new School*,” indeed they are in earnest. Their works (*in their own estimation*) are either too good, or not properly appreciated by the “Vulgar rich”! All of them are thinking how great they are, and are thirsting for fame and still more for *Sales*. They are bristling with a sense of their unrecog-

nized importance and genius! Yet there is absolutely nothing in them; they are only rich in pretension and *impudence*. Their productions are monstrosities—toadstools. They see everything with diseased eyesight, and want you, me, and the general public to see as they do. No thanks!

The New York Manufacturers of painting know what is my opinion of them and they hate me consequently. Their hate honors me indeed. Some of these unrecognized *geniuses* tried very hard to use the Director of the Art Museum of this City as their tool. They offered him large and liberal Commissions if he would use his influence with the Trustees and make them purchase their Monstrosities for “chefs d’œuvre” to be presented to the Museum. But the Director said most emphatically, no. . . . The American Artist in general is vain. Vanity means emptiness which craves to be filled with praise.<sup>81</sup>

81. Cesnola to McClellan, New York, April 17, 1884 (Museum Archives).

FIGURE 24

Near the Coast, by Robert Swain Gifford (1840–1905). This was one of four pictures awarded a prize at the Prize Fund Exhibition of 1885, assembled by the American Art Association. Oil on canvas. 31 ¼ × 51 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of an Association of Gentlemen, 85.7



In spite of this blast by the director, a respectable number of significant modern pictures came to the Museum during the eighties. The decade opened with a memorial exhibition of works by Sanford Robinson Gifford, who died in August 1880.<sup>82</sup> In 1881 Thomas Eakins presented his *The Chess Players* (Figure 23), painted in 1876.<sup>83</sup> Out of the 1885 Prize Fund Exhibition of the American Art Association, Robert Swain Gifford's *Near the Coast* (Figure 24) came to the Museum, and from the 1886 Prize Fund Exhibition, Charles F. Ulrich's *The Glass Blowers of Murano* (Figure 25) was acquired.<sup>84</sup> The following year a group

FIGURE 25

*The Glass Blowers of Murano*, by Charles Frederick Ulrich (1858–1908). Painted in Venice in 1886, this was one of four pictures awarded a prize at the Second Prize Fund Exhibition, assembled by the American Art Association in 1886. Oil on panel. 26 1/8 x 21 1/8 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Several Gentlemen, 86.13



of paintings by George Fuller and George Inness was presented by George I. Seney.<sup>85</sup> Of the greatest interest then, and certainly most important, was the gift of William Dannat's *The Spanish Quartette* (Figure 26) by his mother in 1887. This "huge tour de force," Gardner has noted, "established the reputation of the painter when it was exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1884. . . . In the Paris Exposition of 1889 this picture occupied the place of honor in the American section. Today it stands as a monument to the French academic influence that had such a profound effect on American painting of the time."<sup>86</sup> These acquisitions represented a trend that would be amplified in the nineties when "over thirty contemporary American pictures were added to the collection."<sup>87</sup>

The decade of the 1890s, and particularly the period around 1890, can be distinguished more as a watershed than as a time of historical continuity. The period was marked by abrupt, and sometimes jarring, changes: in December 1888 the first wing to be added to the Central Park building was opened to the public; due to declining health, John Taylor Johnston, the Museum's first president, was made honorary president in 1889, and Henry G. Marquand was elected president; then in 1891 William C. Prime (Figure 27), a vice-president since 1874, resigned both as vice-president and trustee in protest over the decision to open on Sundays "because of his principles on Sunday observance."<sup>88</sup> This was a period of introspection and self-examination as an institution:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art was incorporated about twenty years ago, the only property it then possessed being the small amount of money individually subscribed by the Trustees. Its present collections of works of Art, amounting in value to Millions of Dollars,

82. *Annual Report, 1881*, p. 196; Executive Committee minutes, vol. 2, September 3, 1880, p. 252.

83. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," pp. 271–272.

84. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Loan Collection of Paintings and Sculpture*, November 1886–April 1887, p. 12, no. 82, p. 20; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Collection of Paintings and Sculpture*, November 1887–April 1888, p. 19, no. 102, p. 29.

85. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 272.

86. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 272.

87. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," p. 273.

88. Howe, *History of the Metropolitan*, I, pp. 231, 233–234, 236–247; Trustees minutes, vol. 3, November 16, 1891, pp. 95–98, 103–104.



**FIGURE 26**

The Spanish Quartette, by William Turner Dannat (1853–1929), painted in 1884. Oil on canvas. 94  $\frac{3}{4}$   $\times$  91  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. William H. Dannat, 87.26

are exclusively the gifts of the Trustees, their friends and the friends of the Museum. . . . Our entire income has been required to meet our running expenses, so that we have had no funds to devote to the enrichment of the Museum. . . . We have been wholly dependent upon the generosity of individuals and friends for every increase of our collections. . . . The city has not contributed one dollar towards the increase of said collections.<sup>89</sup>

While restricted support for the purchase and endowment funds would obtain for some years to come, through the nineties there was clearly more money for buying works of art, including American examples. The following entry from the trustees' minutes of February 1899 indicates the extent of change in the fiscal and operational orientation of the Museum in the acquisition of American art after three decades:

The President [Marquand] informed the Board that he had authorized and directed the Curator of the Department of Paintings, Mr. George N. Story, to go to the auction sale of Mr. Thomas B. Clarke's pictures

and secure, if possible, for the Museum one or two paintings representative of American Art; that Mr. Story had purchased two paintings, one by Pearce, and the other by Inness [Figure 28] for the aggregate sum of \$8,610 which he considered a good acquisition for the Museum.<sup>90</sup>

Here were all the elements of a twentieth-century museum at work: the selection and purchase of works of art by curators subject to the approval of a board of trustees with purchase funds at their disposal. The impact of this change in the late nineties is evident in the succession of major accessions in American art recorded by Gardner.<sup>91</sup> The child had come of age. It was William C. Prime who best expressed with simple eloquence the process of a museum growing up in a letter written in December 1891 after his resignation to Marquand:

89. Trustees minutes, vol. 3, May 18, 1891, p. 63, November 9, 1892, p. 132.

90. Trustees minutes, vol. 3, February 20, 1899, pp. 260–261.

91. Gardner, "First Thirty Years," pp. 272–274.

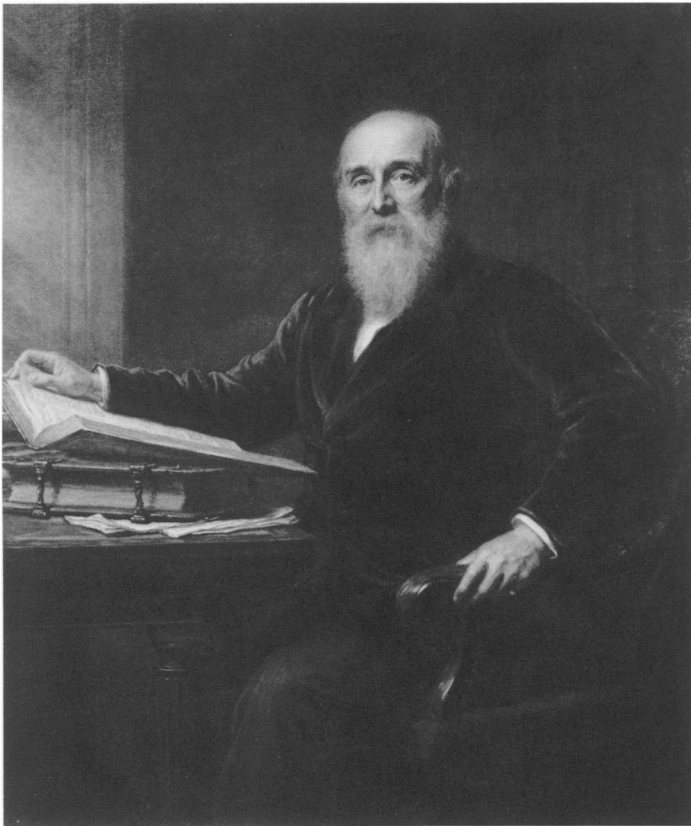


FIGURE 27

William C. Prime (1825–1905), by Daniel Huntington (1816–1906). Journalist, author, and a vice-president of the Museum from 1874 to 1891, Prime resigned his Museum post following the passing of a resolution by the Board of Trustees to open the Museum on Sundays. His colleagues were unsuccessful in their attempt to dissuade him but to show their appreciation of his work asked him to sit for a portrait by Huntington, a vice-president of the Museum from 1871 to 1874 and 1876 to 1903. The portrait was completed in 1892 and presented to the Museum the same year. Oil on canvas. 54 ¼ × 44 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of the Trustees, 92.17



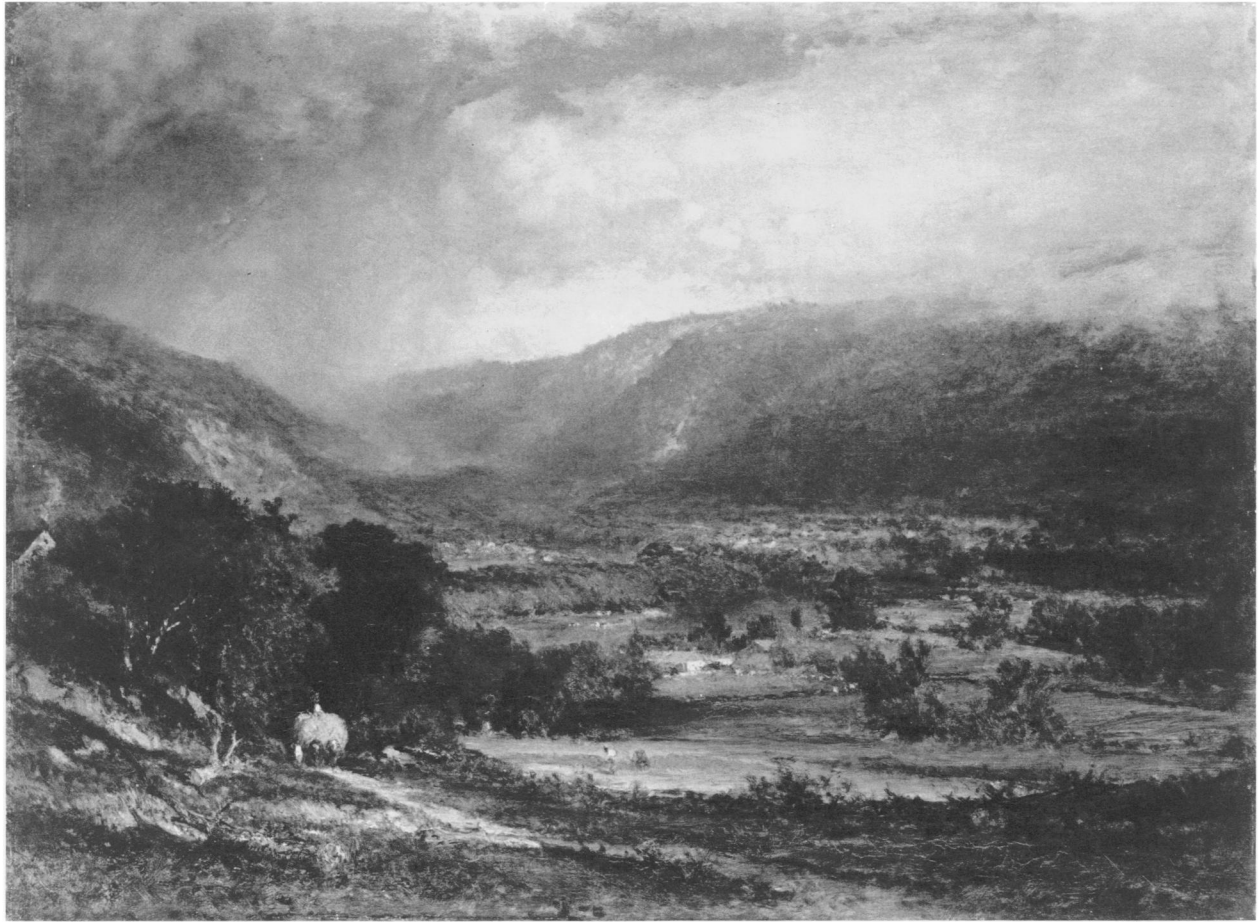


FIGURE 28

The Delaware Valley, by George Inness (1825–1894), painted in 1865. Oil on canvas. 22 × 30 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Several Gentlemen, 99.27

I trust I may not be supposed to abate in any degree my affection for or interest in the Museum, or my desire, in every possible way, to render it service, that would not be possible for any of us who with all the anxiety of parents, have brought it up to its present stature and strength. It is still young, but its bones and blood and soul are good for centuries to look forward, as we have looked since its infancy, to its vigorous maturity in that far future, when it will be gathering the works of our artists and artisans as illustrations of ancient art in America.<sup>92</sup>

92. Trustees minutes, vol. 3, February 15, 1892, pp. 114–115.

# The Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments: Its Origin and Development

EMANUEL WINTERNITZ

*Curator of Musical Instruments, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

IN THE 1870s Mrs. John Crosby Brown fell in love with a little lutelike Italian instrument made of ivory, a pandurina. This started an infatuation that led in time to the formation of one of the richest and most systematic collections of musical instruments in the world, the Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments of All Nations. Now in the Metropolitan Museum, it comprises today about 4,000 objects, and has to be regarded as a monument of early American collecting.

Mrs. Brown was an extraordinary person in many respects. She must have combined a clear vision and directness of decision with unusual sensitivity. Her oldest son, William Adams Brown, discusses her vividly and tenderly in his book *A Teacher and His Times* (New York, 1940):

Four characteristics remain indelibly impressed upon my memory; her commanding presence, her passionate nature, her unquestioning faith, her indomitable will. . . . Never having been to college, she lacked the discipline that college life gives, but she made up for the lack by the persistence of her application to whatever it was to which she had set her hand. The range of her interests was wide and where she could not follow them out herself she found ways of setting others to work. More than one volume owes its existence to her initiative. The most impressive was my father's book on merchant banking, but there were others of her own: *An Anthology of Dedications*; the story of the *St. Cloud Church*; a genealogical study of the Brown family (*Alexander Brown and His Descendants, 1764-1916*); the



FIGURE I  
Mrs. John Crosby Brown, by Anders Zorn, Paris, about 1900. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Eliza Coe Moore, 60.85

biography of her grandfather, *John Adams*; an illustrated catalogue of her musical collection (*Musical Instruments and Their Homes*, 1888).

Mrs. Brown's regular features appear in the portrait, now in the Museum's possession, that Anders Zorn painted of her in Paris about 1900 (Figure 1). She was the mother of six children, of whom four became excellent musicians. William Adams Brown played the flute, his brother James Crosby Brown the violin. Two daughters studied piano with Leschetizky in Vienna; one of them, Mrs. Eliza Coe Moore, played chamber music with a number of the distinguished quartets of her day, and the other, Mrs. Amy B. deForest, was also an accomplished pianist.

Mrs. Brown combined her duties as wife and mother with many other activities. Her writings and the creation of her large collection seem still the more admirable when one learns that she suffered from rheumatism a large part of her life and spent much time in her later years in bed.

The collection grew rapidly. In 1884 she obtained four instruments from a friend in Italy to decorate the music room of her country home, Brighthurst, on Orange Mountain, New Jersey: an eighteenth-century Savoyard harp, a seventeenth-century Paduan ivory mandolin, an eighteenth-century Viennese piano made by Anton Vatter, and an eighteenth-century Italian serpent. By 1889 she had amassed 276 objects, chiefly of "oriental nations, and savage tribes," as she informed the Museum, which at that time possessed only forty-four instruments, largely European and all of them gifts of Joseph Drexel. Since Mrs. Brown could hardly accommodate these instruments any longer in her town and country houses, she decided to make them available to the public. In her letter to the trustees of February 16, 1889, she wrote:

The Collection is the result of the work and study of a number of years. The instruments have all been carefully catalogued, and accurate pen and ink drawings, inscriptions and measurements have been prepared by my son, Wm. Adams Brown. You can judge somewhat of the character and value of the collection by reference to the Volume recently published by Dodd Mead & Co., "Musical Instruments and Their Homes", a copy of which I sent you for examination, and as a gift to the Library of the Museum. While it is my intention to make the collection over absolutely to the Museum I should like during my lifetime, and that of my son

Wm. Adams Brown, to retain such limited control over it, as would enable me, subject to the Direction of the Superintendent of the Museum, and with his, or your consent, to have access to the instruments for purposes of study, and also the privilege as opportunity offers, to improve the collection by substituting superior for inferior instruments of the same kind. The collection even in regard to instruments of oriental nations, and savage tribes, is as yet in some important respects incomplete. I hope however to continue my work, and to add to it from time to time and it is for that reason I ask for this limited privilege of control and oversight. The intrinsic value of many of the individual instruments is not very great, but the collection is of value as a whole, as illustrating the musical habits and tastes of different peoples. It will become more valuable every year, as many of the instruments of savage tribes now in the collection are rapidly disappearing, and even now some of them cannot be replaced.

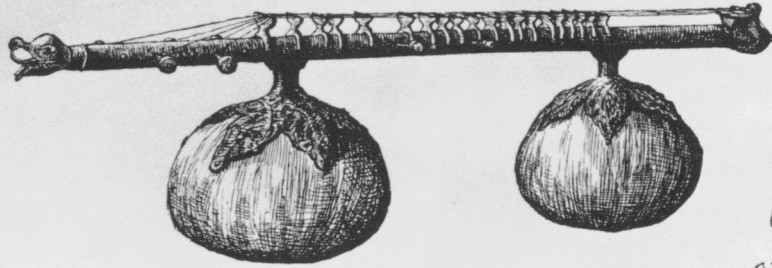
The book written by her and her son, mentioned in her letter and today a collector's item, abounds in precise pen and ink drawings of instruments and imaginative vignettes suggesting the exotic atmosphere of foreign cultures (Figures 2, 3).

As planned, the work continued. By 1893 the collection had grown to 700 objects, by 1896 to 2,000, and eight years later to no fewer than 3,390. The new acquisitions were presented to the Museum periodically and exhibited in galleries prepared for that purpose. The Metropolitan is fortunate in possessing Mrs. Brown's voluminous correspondence with musicians, collectors, dealers, agents, advisers, and museum officials. These letters are eloquent documents of her non-nonsense intelligence and her purposeful, indefatigable activity in securing interesting and authentic specimens. Her determined character is revealed in her beautiful, large handwriting (Figure 4). In building her collection she ingeniously utilized the services of foreign correspondents of her husband's bank, Brown Brothers & Co., United States consular representatives abroad, and, most significantly, missionaries. From a historical point of view, it appears that her methods of

FIGURE 2

Page with drawings of instruments from India by William Adams Brown, from *Musical Instruments and Their Homes*, by Mary E. Brown (Mrs. John Crosby Brown) and William Adams Brown, New York, 1888

13. Vina. A bar of hollow bamboo, to which are fastened two empty gourds. Strung with 8 wire strings of which 5 pass over a series of movable frets.



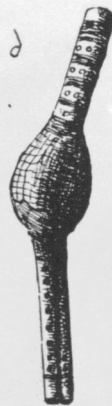
22 in  
number,  
upon the  
top of the  
bar. The  
other 3

pass over single fixed bridges, 2 on one side and one on the other. In playing, held diagonally across the breast, with the upper gourd over the left shoulder, and the lower under the right arm. The first and



third fingers of the hand with little plectra. L. 56 in.

14. Drum. Wood, bound with  
Painted with bands of  
D.  $7\frac{1}{2}$  in.



are furnished  
H. 14 in. Calcutta.  
strips of skin.  
bright color. H. 10 in

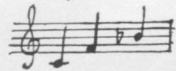
15. Ponggi (or Magoudi.) A  
end of which is pierced  
piece, and in which are  
tubes. Used by the snake-charmers. 20 in. x 4. Calcutta.

gourd, the small  
to make a mouth-  
inserted 2 bamboo

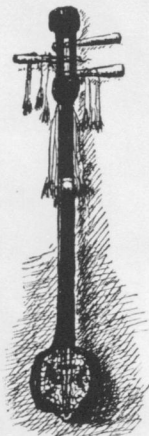


# China

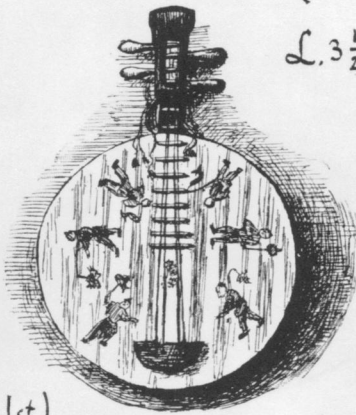
1. San-Heen (San-Hsien) - or three stringed guitar.  
The head covered with snake skin on both sides. Tuned in two fourths.



L. 3½ ft; Diam. 6 in.



2. Yue-Kin  
or "Moon  
four strings  
pairs at  
fifth



(Yueh-ch'in)-  
Guitar". The  
are tuned in  
the interval of a  
L. 24 in; Diam. 14 in.

3. Sona (van Aalst)

A favorite  
people -  
tainments  
exceptionally  
Following  
L. 13 in.



or Heang-Teik (Engel)  
instrument among the common  
especially at marriage enter-  
and funerals Has an  
shrill and piercing sound  
is its scale

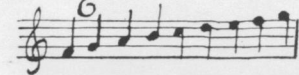


FIGURE 3  
Opening of the chapter on Chinese instruments,  
from *Musical Instruments and Their Homes*

collecting information about musical instruments and securing the instruments themselves parallel those of the founders of the first large collection of musical instruments in Rome, assembled in the middle of the seventeenth century. At that time the learned Jesuit fathers, especially the great polyhistor Athanasius Kircher, sifted and collected interesting objects and the information about them as they streamed in from missionaries in the Near and Far East and in Africa. As a result of this, Father Kircher established the first large museum that included art objects from oriental civilizations and tools from so-called primitive cultures. This museum, the Museo Kircheriano, formed a part of the famous Jesuit educational institute, the Collegio Romano. We know of its contents from many important publications by Kircher and his pupils. The two-volume treatise *Gabinetto armonico pieno d'instromenti sonori indi-*

FIGURE 4  
Letter from Mrs. Brown to F. Edwin Elwell,  
Curator of Sculpture, 1904

any hope of that being done before Monday-afternoon, when there is a quarterly directors meeting. - Of course I should like the harp Richard to show to the very best advantage then. Thanking you again, I remain  
Yours sincerely,  
Mrs. E. Brown

36, East Thirty Seventh St.  
New York. Feb 11 1904

Dear Mr. Elwell  
I want to thank you for your kind interest in the harp Richard, & all the help you have given. I am glad to hear it has been placed & am anxious to see it, but am sorry to say I am in bed with a cold. When are the other two figures to be placed? & is there

*cati* (Rome, 1722), by Kircher's pupil Padre Filippo Bonanni, contains many large engravings of instruments in the Museo Kircheriano.<sup>1</sup> Not until our century were the objects of this museum divided among various specialized museums in Rome: the Etruscan collection in the Villa Giulia, the epigraphic collection of the Vatican, the ethnographical Museo Pigorini, and others.

The correspondents of Brown Brothers, consular representatives, and missionaries were not the only aids of Mrs. Brown. They were chiefly helpful in acquisition, but what became necessary in time was expert guidance about the basic planning of a comprehensive and systematic collection. In this matter Mrs. Brown had the good sense to seek the advice of scholars. One of these was Rajah Sourindro Mohun Tagore of Calcutta, a distinguished musicologist and president of the Conservatory of Calcutta, whose generosity is reflected in a beautiful group of Indian instruments in the collection. The other scholars were Englishmen—in fact the only outstanding connoisseurs of musical instruments in England at that time. One was Alfred James Hipkins, a professional; the other was Francis William Galpin, a dilettante in the best sense of the word.

Hipkins worked throughout his life in the famous piano factory of John Broadwood & Sons in London. A proficient pianist and organist, he was also an expert tuner, and at one time he tuned Chopin's instruments. He also wrote and lectured on problems of pitch, acoustics, obsolete and rare instruments, and early keyboard instruments. He bequeathed many of his own precious instruments to the Royal College of Music. In 1901 he wrote the introduction to the catalogue of keyboard instruments (clavichords, harpsichords, pianofortes, organs, harmoniums) in the Crosby Brown Collection.

The closest associate and adviser of Mrs. Brown was the Reverend Francis William Galpin. A parish clergyman with profound interests in botany and archaeology as well as music, he brought together in his country vicarage, Hatfield Regis, a remarkable collection of European instruments. Well known in England, the collection was constantly used by scholars and friends of music, who knew the owner as "Canon Galpin." Galpin's many writings cover numerous aspects of musical instruments from the Stone Age and Sumer to the "electroponic" age. Characteristic of his scholarly zeal was his reconstruction of the hydraulic organ of

the ancients, also his investigation of the nyasteranga, an Indian wind instrument containing in its mouth cup a certain kind of spider web. This web was set into vibration when the singing or humming player pressed the instrument to his throat. Galpin collected a number of nyasterangas and trained his Sunday-school children to play them for a public concert. Galpin's collection of European instruments went in 1917 to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where it was named the Lesley-Lindsey-Mason Collection of Musical Instruments; it was masterfully catalogued in the 1930s by Nicholas Bessaraboff. Galpin's cooperation with Mrs. Brown continued for many years. He not only gave valuable aid in acquiring missing specimens but played a leading role in establishing sound principles in cataloguing, especially a consistent terminology.

The catalogue of the Crosby Brown Collection, published between 1903 and 1914, was prepared under the direction of the donor by Miss Frances Morris. Its volumes covered Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Oceania, historical groups, and keyboard instruments. Today the publication is outdated in many respects, especially in its datings and attributions, occasionally also in its technical descriptions. One has to keep in mind, however, that it was compiled before the appearance of the standard works of our century that set a new pattern for classification and terminology: Curt Sachs's *Real-Lexikon der Musikinstrumente* (1913), Georg Kinsky's catalogue of the Musikhistorisches Museum von Wilhelm Heyer in Cologne (1910–1912), and Julius Schlosser's catalogue of the collection at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (1920). The chief model for our catalogue was Victor-Charles Mahillon's monumental *Catalogue descriptif et analytique* of the Musée Instrumental at Brussels (1880).

One of the most admirable principles guiding the formation of the Crosby Brown Collection was its aim to represent all parts of the world as completely as possible. Of course some civilizations, such as those of ancient Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Rome, could not be represented completely, since only a comparatively

1. See also Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia Universalis* (Rome, 1650); E. Winternitz, *Musical Instruments of the Western World* (New York, 1967) p. 36; Winternitz's introduction to Curt Sachs's *Real-Lexikon der Musikinstrumente* (reprint, New York, 1964) p. viii.



FIGURE 5  
Family of viols. Vitrine in  
exhibition of European  
instruments, Morgan Wing,  
1943

small number of their instruments have been preserved. In such cases reproductions were obtained of the best-preserved specimens. The richness of available material from more recent civilizations rendered reproductions unnecessary. In the words of the introduction to the catalogue:

No typical specimen which it was possible to obtain has been refused admission. . . . In the choice of individual specimens the educational purpose has been paramount. Though containing many examples of rare artistic merit, no instrument has been chosen for its beauty alone, nor has historical association been a determining consideration. In each case the specimen has won its right to a place because illustrating some step in the development of music. No special effort has been made to secure the works of famous masters. The collector has no sympathy with the practice of locking up in museums instruments noted for rare beauty of tone. In a few cases, indeed, it may be important to secure

single specimens in order to illustrate some principle in the history of art. . . . Special efforts have been made to secure the complete representation of families where such are known to exist.

The latter point was of great importance to the educational purpose of the collection and to its aim of representing past periods of music as faithfully as possible. In the Renaissance, for instance, many instruments were built in large families, from the high treble down to double-bass size, matching, as it were, the various pitch levels of the vocal chorus (Figure 5). Only the connoisseur can appreciate how much patience and energy were needed to collect all of the members of these families of instruments. The following families are represented in their entirety: viola da braccio and viola da gamba, balalaika, transverse flute (with and without keys), recorder of the Renaissance and of the Baroque, galoubet, ocarina, clarinet, saxophone, sarrusophone,



cromorne, oboe and its ancestor the shawm, bassoon, cornet à bouquin, Russian horn, trombone, helicon, brass saxhorn (with rotary valves, and with piston valves), and saxhorn with bell over shoulder.

To economize on space, a policy of avoiding duplicates was adopted. Inspecting the collection today, some eighty years after its formation, one is astonished to see how successfully this principle was adhered to. Seeming exceptions have always had their good reasons. Of the several Burmese shoulder harps, for example, some are luxurious, highly decorated specimens for special use, others are primitive folk instruments. There are several Roman Baroque harpsichords of identical mechanism and similar tone, but they are entirely different from each other because of their outstanding painted and carved decoration. Many tribal instruments of apparently similar shape differ greatly in their methods of stringing and tuning, and in their tone. Certain Hindu instruments of similar shape again cannot be regarded as duplicates because of the religious symbolism inherent in their painted decoration. One could easily cite further examples.

Another basic problem facing the collection, and later the Museum, was the spatial arrangement within the exhibit area and the classification of the major sections. Here the great question, of course, was whether to classify geographically or historically. The reasons for choosing the geographical arrangement are stated in the general introduction to the catalogue, which refers to this form of display as follows:

This has not been due to any lack of interest in the principle of development, but solely to the belief that by the geographical arrangement it is possible to illustrate certain facts of interest in musical history which a purely developmental classification would obscure. The river has its rapids and its eddies, as well as its deep, quiet pools. So, in the development of music, each civilization molds the common musical material in fashions of its own. Progress is now rapid, now slow, and often we note what seems a retrogression. A geographical arrangement brings out the distinctive features of the different civilizations and enables one to see at a glance what each has contributed to the development of the art as a whole.

The Reverend William Adams Brown (Figure 6), a professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York, remained interested in the collection to the end of his life. When, in 1943, I installed my first exhibition in

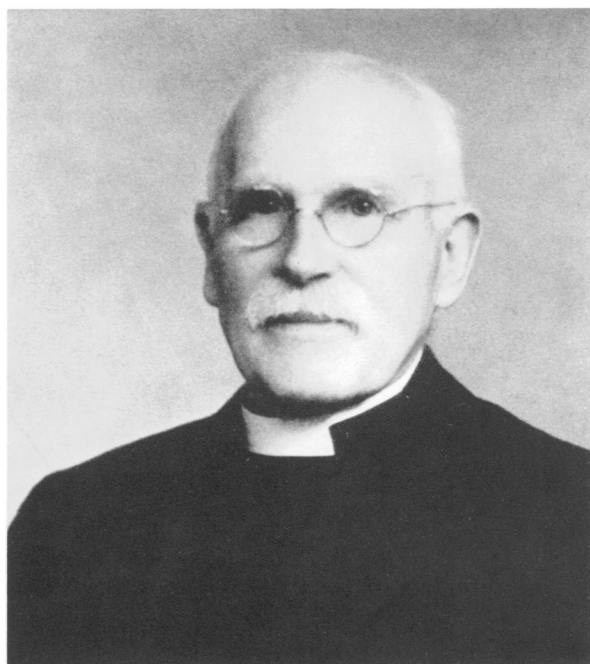


FIGURE 6  
William Adams Brown

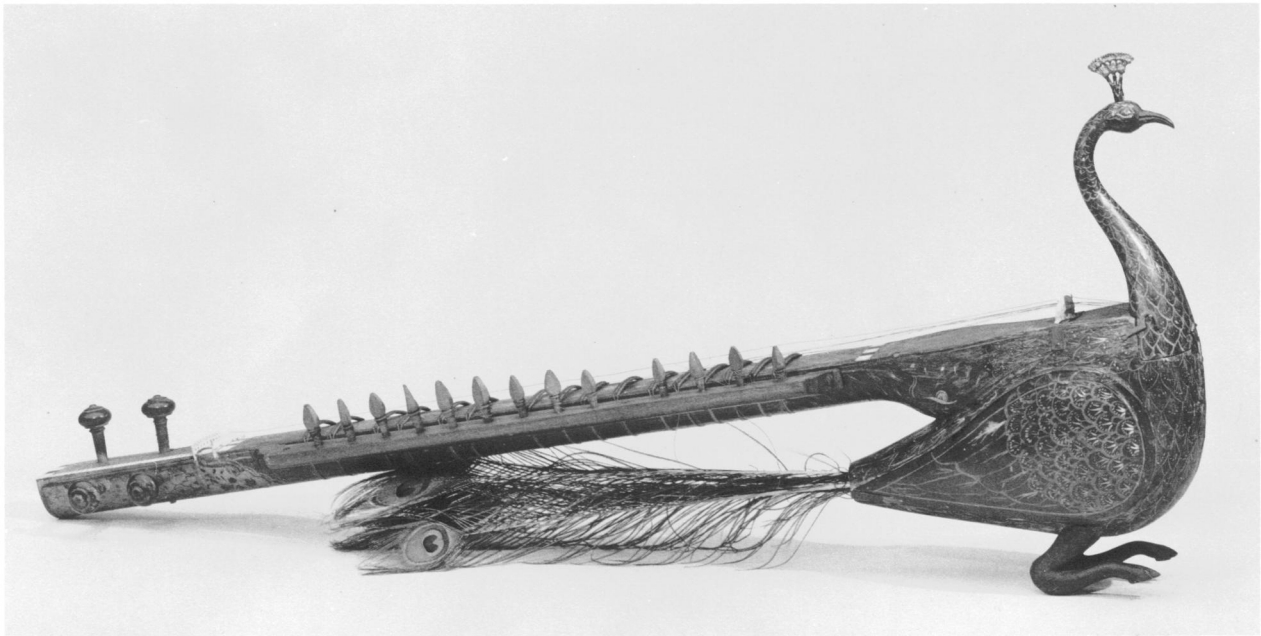
the Morgan Wing (Figures 7, 8), interspersing the instruments with visual material such as paintings, prints, and tapestries, and in the vitrines, reproductions of old scores and tablatures and pictures of musicians playing the very instruments exhibited, Dr. Brown thanked me with tears in his eyes, exclaiming: "What would my mother have said of this day and of this exhibition?" This started a cordial relationship between us; he came from time to time to the Museum to look at our new acquisitions and exhibitions, and we had many talks about instruments, outstanding performances in the past, and music in Vienna, where he had taken flute lessons and where his father had studied organ with no less a master than Anton Bruckner. Once, he made me a precious gift out of the rich storehouse of his musical memories. A passionate Brucknerite, I had heard as a youngster many performances conducted by friends and pupils of Bruckner, among them Franz Schalk and Ferdinand Löwe. Recalling this, I also told Dr. Brown that an uncle of mine had studied harmony with Bruckner, who as an old man was a lector at the University of Vienna, but that I could never get hold



**FIGURE 7**  
Clavicytherium and  
lutes, exhibition in  
Morgan Wing, 1943



**FIGURE 8**  
Keyboard instruments  
and poyettes, exhibition  
in Morgan Wing, 1943



of a precise technical description of Bruckner's legendary improvisations on the organ. Dr. Brown was delighted to fill the gap. He had heard Bruckner improvise and, to my great joy, he gave me an expert's recollection of the event.

To judge the achievement of Mrs. Brown's creation in historical perspective, one has to compare it with other outstanding collections of musical instruments, especially those in museums and conservatories. Apart from some small collections founded before 1900, such as those in the South Kensington Museum (established 1857, catalogued 1870), Copenhagen, Stockholm, Berlin, Bologna, Florence, and Milan, one finds only one large collection established and organized earlier than the Crosby Brown. This was the Musée Instrumental du Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Brussels, which originated in 1872 with the acquisition by the Conservatoire of the small private collection of the Belgian musicologist François Joseph Fétis. It was enlarged in 1876 with a group of Indian instruments donated by Rajah Sourindro Mohun Tagore, already mentioned as a benefactor of the Crosby Brown Collection, and later by a large part of the famous Venetian collection, Contarini-Correr.

The Crosby Brown Collection was enthusiastically welcomed in the Museum among its many collections. Perhaps the memory of Thomas Jefferson was still fresh

FIGURE 9  
Peacock lute. India. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Crosby Brown Collection, 89.4.163





**FIGURE 11**  
Whistling jar. Peru. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Crosby Brown Collection, 89.4.689



**FIGURE 12**  
Bull-roarer. New Guinea. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Crosby Brown Collection, 89.4.3625

**FIGURE 10**  
Ceremonial rattle. Haida or Tsimshian tribe, British Columbia. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Crosby Brown Collection, 89.4.1963

in 1889, for Jefferson was deeply interested in architecture and music as indispensable elements of a comprehensive aesthetic culture. But later the collection and its status as part of an art museum occasionally encountered prejudice. Why, it was sometimes asked, should musical instruments be included in a museum of the visual arts? Were they not machines, mechanical contrivances serving the ear rather than the eye? How could they belong with stained glass, medieval sculpture, Titians and Rembrandts? Lutes and harpsichords belonged in conservatories of music, while Hindu peacock lutes, Northwest American Indian rattles, Peruvian whistling jars, Australian bull-roarers (Figures 9, 10, 11, 12) belonged in ethnographical museums or museums of natural history. Narrow and amateurish as these opinions were, they often carried weight in the inevitable rivalry among the many Museum departments for appropriate or at least proportionate exhibition and storage space. Of course the curator brought forth his arguments: Were not many objects in other departments, such as mummies, toys for Egyptian chil-

dren, Cretan potsherds, medieval saddles, fragments of Coptic textiles—all cultural relics and documents of earlier civilizations—also products of a craft rather than an art, and often lacking in elegance and “beauty”? And should it be held against the instruments that, besides being shaped by master craftsmen for the eye, they served at the same time another art, music (Figure 13)? In fact, did not musical instruments play an outstanding role in the prototypes of our modern museums, the *Kunst und Wunderkammern* of the Habsburgs, Medicis, and Fuggers, where they were kept “to delight ear and eye alike”? Furthermore, in view of the Museum’s magnificent collections of art of the Near and Far East, why should equal status be denied the elegant and colorful musical instruments from these regions (Figures 14, 15, 16), quite apart from their significance as tools of the sacred art, music?

Today, for several reasons, the battle seems won in favor of the instruments. The aesthetic values of so-called primitive art have at last been discovered by the art public. Furthermore, the taste of our musical public has grown much more catholic, capable of appreciating the subtleties not only of early periods of music but also of so-called primitive cultures—or what Mrs. Brown, following the fashion of her time, still called “savage music” (Figure 17).

Looking back today at its origin a century ago, one appreciates the Crosby Brown Collection as a triumph of foresight. At that time, few students played the recorder, few concertgoers knew the exact differences in tone and mechanics between clavichord, harpsichord, and pianoforte. Few listeners could distinguish between a violoncello and a viola da gamba, and few had ever heard a zinken or serpent. No concerts with Indian or Japanese instruments were given in public auditoriums. Ethnomusicology, represented today by a large and rapidly growing organization, the Society for Ethnomusicology, was in its infancy, and no professor would have dared, as the writer of this article recently did, to announce graduate courses in the iconography and iconology of music. Today we are seeing a veritable renaissance of interest in instruments of the past. Even the baryton, so dear to Haydn, has recently been revived, and “Mozart pianos” are constructed or reconstructed for use in concerts and recordings. Performances on Eastern instruments are no longer rare on European concert or theater stages. Indian, Javanese, Chinese, and Japanese instruments can be heard as a matter of course, while performances of Bach and Mozart are regular parts of concert programs in the Far East.

The Crosby Brown Collection eventually became the

FIGURE 13

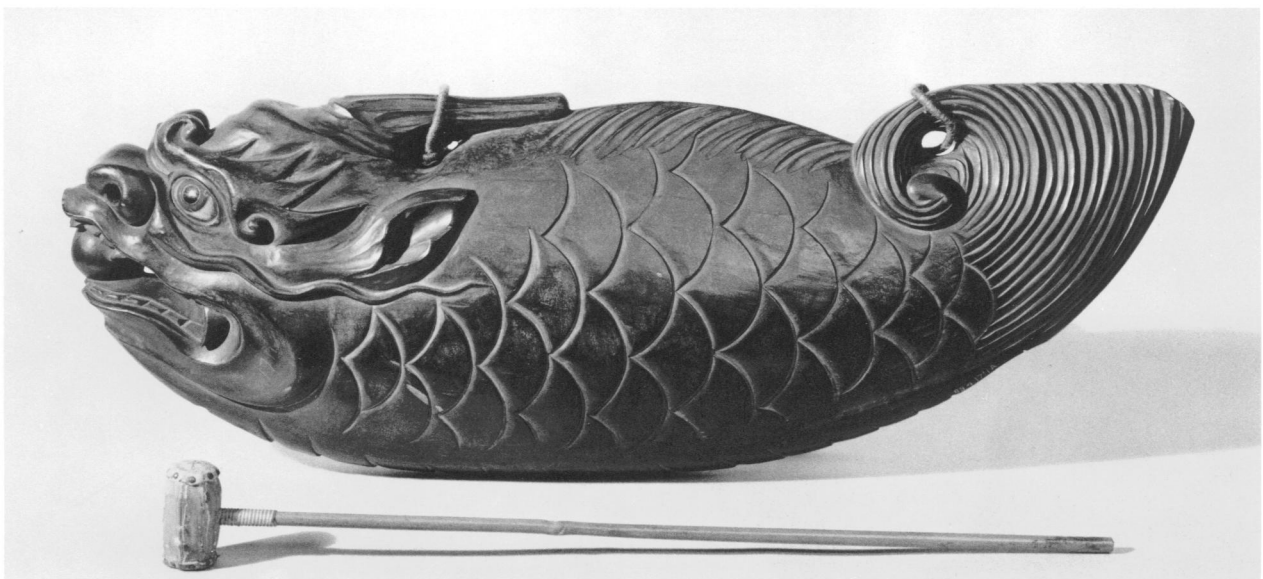
Allegorical harpsichord with flanking figures of Polyphemus and Galatea. Rome, xvii century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Crosby Brown Collection, 89.4.2929 (Photo: Lilly Stunzi, Zurich/New York, from Emanuel Winternitz, *Die schönsten Musikinstrumente des Abendlandes*, Munich, Keyserische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966)





**FIGURE 14**  
P'ip'a with ivory back. Chinese, Ming Dynasty  
(1368–1644). The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
bequest of Mary Stillman Harkness, 50.145.74

**FIGURE 15**  
Yü pang, slit drum in form of a fish. Chinese. The  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Crosby Brown  
Collection, 89.4.1711





basis of several far-reaching developments in the Museum. One was the introduction of early music in 1941 as a regular feature of Museum life. Strangely enough, this was brought about by the war. The Museum decided to send most of its art treasures into hiding, away from New York. The curator of objects as fragile as musical instruments was naturally worried about the impact of a different and drier climate on the collection, which also would be out of his hands for an unpredictable length of time. Moreover, he did not believe that New York would be bombed and therefore pleaded that the Crosby Brown Collection be retained in the Museum. Thus, there were thousands of instruments in a virtually empty, monumental building. This inevitably suggested the idea of organizing concerts—performing old masterworks, many of them using the old instruments. These concerts, free for Museum members, were given in the Morgan Wing, the Armor Hall, the Medieval Sculpture Hall, and the Great Hall. Most of these locations had to be acoustically adapted by stretching wires, hanging tapestries, and so forth. In the Great Hall music of an intimate character, such as madrigals, lieder, and string quartets could not be performed, so

FIGURE 16

Gallery in temporary exhibition, *Musical Instruments of Five Continents*, 1961; Chinese instruments in foreground

here the programs focused on larger choral or orchestral pieces, such as Giovanni Gabrielli's antiphonal music, written for San Marco in Venice, Heinrich Schütz's oratorios, and Handel's *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*.

The idea immediately became so popular that many of the concerts had to be repeated, and the number given grew from year to year. One of the most popular series, which ran for years, was called "Music Forgotten and Remembered." From their inception these concerts commanded the services of such distinguished performers as Adolf Busch, Elizabeth Schumann, Alexander Kipnis, Wanda Landowska, Joseph Fuchs, George Szell, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Mieczyslaw Horszowski, and Rudolf Serkin.

Long-range, systematic planning suggested itself. What was to be the musical role of an art museum in a city like New York, humming the year round with mu-

sic of all kinds? Evidently our programs could not and should not compete with the midtown activities, and since the concerts were free to members, the Museum offered something like an experimental stage upon which unknown or little-known music could be performed, without consideration of the box office. Free from commercial limitations, we could break the vicious circle of "the fifty pieces" that are performed on the commercial stage over and over, on the unproven assumption that people want only to hear what they know.

There was also another difference: tapestries, statues, and other works of art contemporary with the music created a congenial and thought-provoking environment (Figure 18); a spark, at least, could be kindled there to illuminate the eternal intertwining of the arts throughout their history and their crystallization in national realms. Finally, the collection of musical instruments itself provided a stimulus, if not an obligation, to rediscover forgotten instrumental masterpieces.

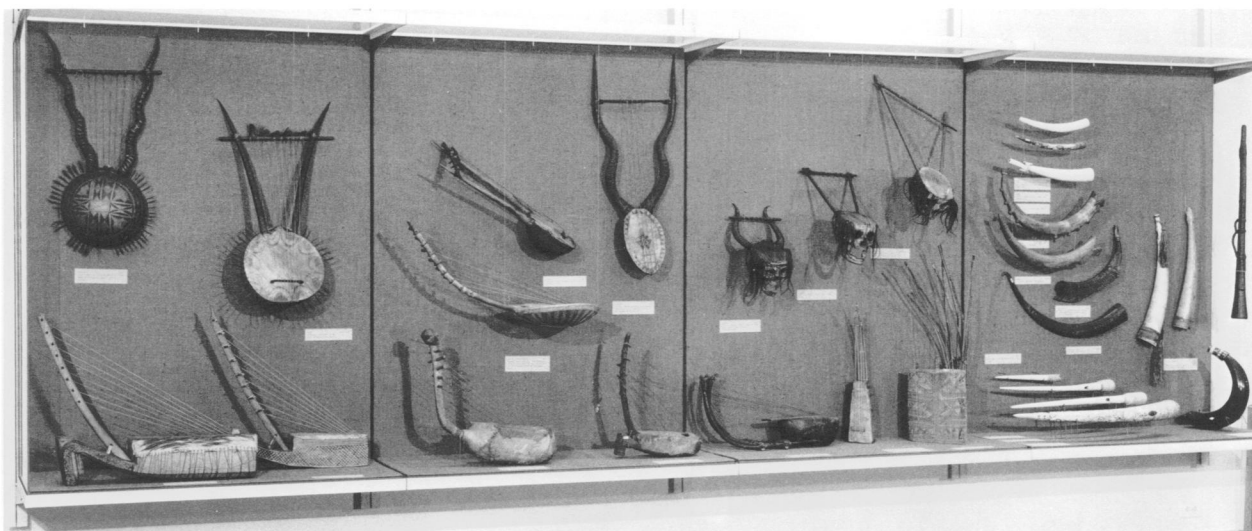
The attendance figures in the annual reports confirm the success of the concerts. Looking back at many rich years of unconventional programs, it is not easy to single out a few for mention here. Medieval music by Perotin and Machaut was performed by the Dessoff Choir under Paul Boepple, who also presented many fifteenth- and sixteenth-century composers, including

Dufay, Binchois, Lantins, Brumel, Mouton, Josquin des Pres, Jannequin, Senfl, Palestrina, Lassus, Gallus, and Claude le Jeune. Other rarely heard Renaissance and Baroque music, including works by Pierre de la Rue, Andrea and Giovanni Gabrielli, Phillip de Monte, Gesualdo, Weelkes, and Monteverdi, was presented by the Yale University Collegium Musicum under Paul Hindemith (Figure 19). Other choral concerts included Carissimi's *Jephtah* and polychoral music in the Venetian style. The Cantata Singers, under Arthur Mendl, presented *The Christmas Story* by Heinrich Schütz, the *Dettingen Te Deum* by Handel, and rarely heard cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach. Under the direction of Alfred Mann, they presented Handel's *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, and his *Jubilate* for the peace of Utrecht. Many smaller instrumental works by Alessandro Scarlatti, Geminiani, Telemann, Rameau, Domenico Scarlatti, Couperin, Quantz, and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach were played by various performers.

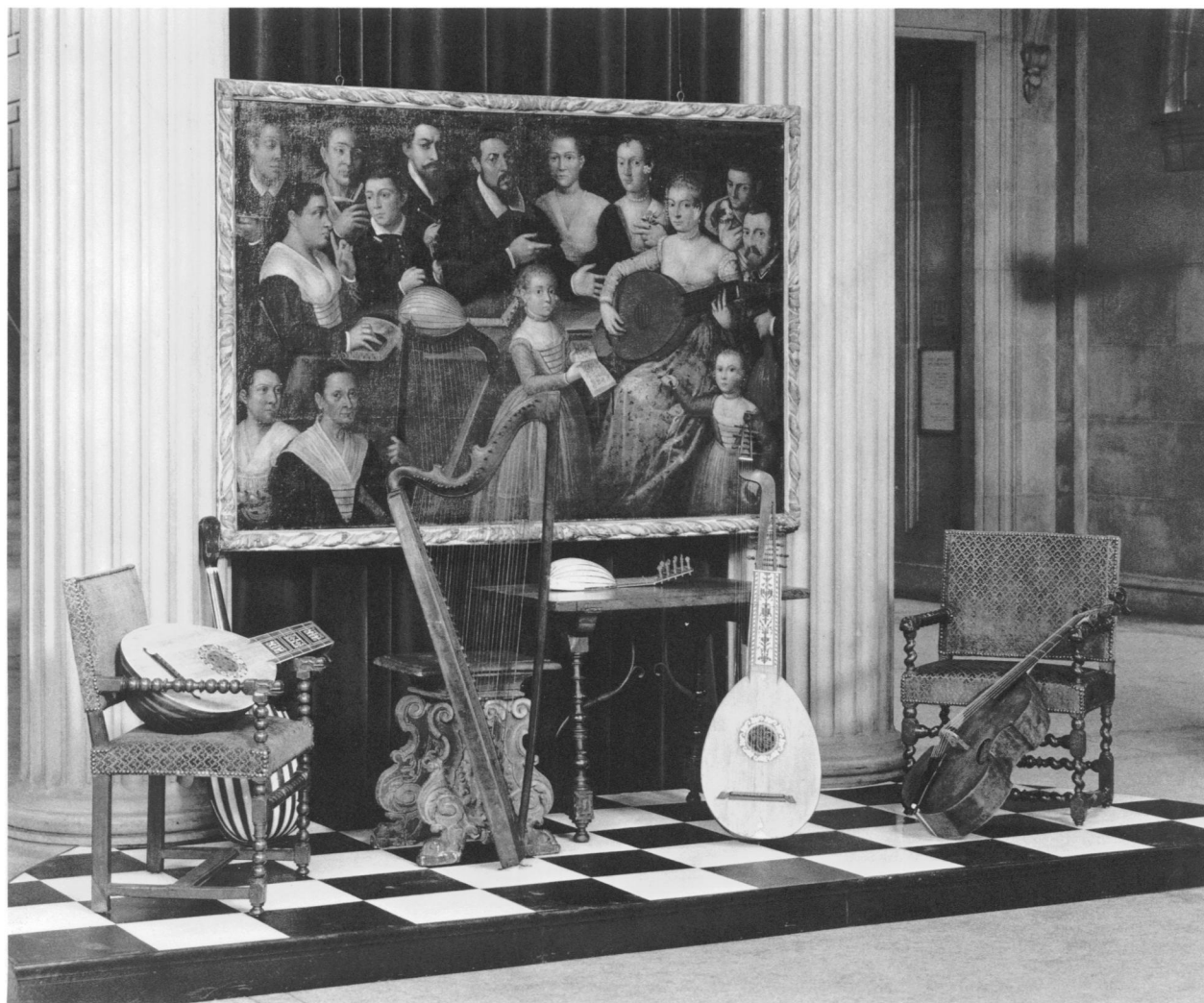
Of Joseph Haydn's music we heard, among other pieces, his *Double Variations in F Minor*, played by Mieczyslaw Horszowski, and the original string quartet version of *The Seven Last Words of the Savior on the Cross*, presented by the Busch Quartet. The neglected oeuvre of the inexhaustible Mozart was represented by many of his smaller divertimenti for winds; his great serenade for thirteen players—one of his most imaginative and

FIGURE 17

Vitrines with African instruments, Musical Instruments of Five Continents, 1961







**FIGURE 18**  
Musical instruments and stylistically related  
furniture, small exhibit in Great Hall, 1941

**FIGURE 19**  
Paul Hindemith conducting a rehearsal in the  
Armor Hall, May 1948, using ancient instru-  
ments from the Museum's collection



original wind scores—conducted by George Szell; some of his early symphonies; many of his *a capella* canons; some of his undeservedly neglected pianoforte variations; and his arrangements of fugues by Johann Sebastian Bach and Wilhelm Friedemann Bach for string quartet and string trio.

Many little-known lieder by Schubert and Hugo Wolf were sung by Elizabeth Schumann and Alexander Kipnis, and a long list of compositions for piano four hands by Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, and Reger recaptured the spirit of house-music. And these are only a few pearls from a long string. It is perhaps not without interest that through their Museum performances many of these works found their way into the midtown repertoire and into commercial recordings—sometimes even into new editions.

Through the preparation of these memorable concerts, the curator of musical instruments learned a great deal about the practice of performance in various periods of music. So did the performers, exposed to the difficult old instruments. The tone colors of the early

compositions can be produced only by the ancient instruments themselves. No modern violin with metal strings, designed to fill Carnegie Hall, can reproduce adequately the fine, silvery timbre of a consort of viols, no pianoforte the sharp bleating of a pair of regals, and no metallic orchestral flute the mellow wooden sound of a recorder. And if the occasion of a museum concert suggests a comparison of music with the visual arts, we must remember how much more critically today's art connoisseur views the tone values of old paintings than the modern listener considers instrumental timbre in old music. In many instances, modern methods in the restoration of painting have recaptured the original intensity of color. Not so in music; in most public performances of music written before Johann Sebastian Bach's time, modern instruments are still substituted for the original ones, falsifying the tonal values.

If old instruments in playing condition to provide the true timbre are rare, so are players for them. Professional players of modern string and wind instruments, soloists as well as members of orchestras, are naturally

**FIGURE 20**  
The curator demonstrating a hurdy-gurdy to visitors, 1942



reluctant to abandon their accustomed tools. As a rule, they have crowded schedules that allow them little time for experiments, and they tend to be a bit impatient with instruments that have been replaced by “better” ones, easier for lip and fingers and more pleasing to the modern ear. Also, if they adapt themselves thoroughly to the embouchure and fingerholes, the softer bows and thinner strings and flatter bridges of the old instruments, they endanger their “modern” technique. It was on this basis that a most rewarding cooperation between the Yale Collegium Musicum and the Museum developed. Out of its rich collections of ancient instruments, the Museum provided the ones needed, repairing and preparing them for rehearsal and performance. The student members of the Collegium devoted themselves to learning the blowing and fingering methods of bygone days. And if occasionally an old, unwieldy cornetto was a little out of pitch, it at least gave the right timbre. This role of our collection as a gold mine of information for student performers of old music was, of course, precisely in the spirit in which Mrs. Brown had created it.

Some of these concerts employed Renaissance and Baroque ensembles of as many as twenty-five instruments; unforgettable was the hypnotic combination of heterogeneous sounds produced from the small plucked harps, vielles, and rebecs, from the majestic trombone, the mellow cornetto, the reedy shawm, cromorne, and regals. Even the tromba marina was used. Besides conducting, Paul Hindemith, a noted viola player, bowed, plucked, or blew many instruments in the small ensembles that regularly formed part of these concerts.

Many of these performances were recorded on discs or tape for educational use in the Museum and as a cornerstone for a future *musée du timbre*, in which our instruments would be supplemented by samples of their true voices.

Still another example of reconstruction of timbre should be mentioned. One of the priceless treasures of the Crosby Brown Collection, the *gravicembalo col piano e forte* built in 1721 in Florence by Bartolomeo Cristofori, the inventor of the pianoforte, was brought into playing condition. When fitted with the appropriate thin harpsichord strings, this first pianoforte developed a surprising tone, warm like a violoncello in the bass region and silvery in the higher ranges. Sonatas by Lodovico Giustini di Pistoia, in all probability the first

compositions expressly written for the pianoforte, were played on it by Mieczyslaw Horszowski. It may be regarded as a worthy homage to the ingenious inventor of this instrument that its reborn voice came home again to Florence, across the Atlantic, when a tape recording of the Museum’s performance was broadcast by the Terzo Programma of the Radio Italiano to many places in Europe.

To explain the rare and early music performed, evening lectures preceding the performances were given by the curator, who also wrote extensive program notes for each concert. Among the gratifying results of these concerts were a rapid increase in Museum membership and a decision to replace the old lecture hall with a modern and acoustically superior concert hall, the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium.

Apart from the concerts, the Department of Musical Instruments has provided, since the early 1940s, instruction in the history of instruments on all levels, through formal evening lectures and through guided tours and demonstrations for children (Figure 20), casual visitors, and specialized groups such as war veterans and blind people. This last group proved particularly sensitive to the sound of the instruments, which they were permitted to touch in order to ascertain shape and function.

Time has indeed worked for our collection. Mrs. Crosby Brown would be gratified if she could watch the ever growing public that not only draws information and pleasure from her instruments and admires the countless colorful shapes of these tools of music of the past and from far lands, but also learns to listen to their voices. For it is their specific sounds that transport us into past periods of sacred and secular music. In all of these regards, the Crosby Brown Collection fulfills today its educational mission, contributing its share as an important part of a temple of the arts and as an indispensable complement to the Museum’s manifold treasures in the visual arts.

The crowning climax has now been provided by the assignment of new galleries in the Morgan Wing. This development was made possible through a generous grant from Clara Mertens, in memory of her husband, André Mertens. These galleries will accommodate the most important instruments from the Crosby Brown Collection and other more recent donations, with three galleries devoted to European objects and three to

those of other continents. This will be the first time in many years that the beautiful American Indian instruments, and others from India and Oceania, will be accessible to visitors. Audio equipment will enable the visitor to hear the voices of instruments that have been

silent for generations. Thus, the great exhibitions of art treasures during the Museum's centennial year will be appropriately supplemented by the long-awaited permanent display of a large part of the Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments of All Nations.

# Prints and People\*

A. HYATT MAYOR

*Curator Emeritus, Department of Prints, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

## PRINTERS' SHORTCUTS

The sainted queen of Hungary is smuggling scraps from the royal table. They will miraculously become roses when the stingy king uncovers her bowl to accuse her of squandering on the poor. Her head, her bowl, and her name, *elspett*, are all cut on a removable plug, the join showing in a white line. The canny manufacturer who signed this cut *wolfgang* must have inserted many plugs into this all-purpose body to print dozens of different female saints in thousands of impressions, of which this one alone escaped destruction by being pasted into the cover of a folio Augsburg Bible of 1477.

About 1500 a Venetian composite cut helped to sell an unillustrated Florentine book then some fifteen years old. The remaindered Florentine edition was apparently bought up by a Venetian bookseller who smart-

\* Editors' note: These essays have been selected from Mr. Mayor's book *Prints and People: A Social History of Picture Printing*, soon to be published by the Museum. All of the prints illustrated are in the collection of the Department of Prints and Photographs.

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, hand-colored south German woodcut, 1470s. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 30.51.2



ened it with a leaf on which the book's title is printed in red Venetian type, sometimes above the picture, sometimes below. Like the Saint Elizabeth, this Saint Gregory has not survived with any other head or attribute.

At Bamberg about 1460, some of the first woodcuts printed with type started a custom that entirely shaped the Strassburg edition of Terence's *Comedies*. There each character is represented on a little cut like a slug of type, to be grouped with other cuts for spelling out pictorially who is on stage in each of 660 scenes. The most recent arrival appears in the center. Each play begins with a full-page curtain call for all its characters, with long hyphens uniting the pairs of lovers.

As printers accumulated working capital and realized the capabilities of the press, they stopped economizing on blocks by combining them, and economizing on paper by imitating the old scribes' shorthand signs, retaining only the contraction of *et* into &.



Saint Gregory, Venetian woodcut, about 1500. Added to Saint Gregory, *Moralia in Job*, Florence, 1486. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 53.629.1(1-2)





Nude Man Reclining, etching by Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn (1606–1669), Dutch, 1646. Gift of Henry Walters, 23.51.4

### REMBRANDT'S FIGURES

No matter how many kinds of things Rembrandt drew, he never deserted that pivot of Western art, the human being. Unlike Michelangelo, who was obsessed by the muscular young man, Rembrandt, being an endless person, studied all ages and all conditions. As he developed, he saw people as he saw everything else, in ever more subtle and complex relationships. Before he combined figures effectively, he etched small heads, then small single figures in simple poses. Whereas most painters learn when young by drawing nudes, he etched almost all of his when he was forty to fifty-five. His male models were certainly apprentices, who were everywhere expected to pose on warm days if they stripped passably. Although Rembrandt painted two anatomical demonstrations, no drawings of dissections by him now survive. The engineering of bone and muscle (Leonardo's passion) probably interested him as little as the

Woodcut illustration from Terence's *Comedies*, Strassburg, 1499. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 26.100.2





The Bathers, etching by Rembrandt, 1651. Gift of Henry Walters, 17.37.6

engineering of buildings. Provided a gesture or a vault looked convincing, it did not bother him if the arm was too short or the dome would collapse if built. The optical age of the baroque had no more optical painter than Rembrandt.

While he was etching his last great landscapes, he took a copperplate to a swimming hole to sketch the bathers in the open air. He saw them like Cézanne, as bodies fractured in dappled shade or obliterated in sunlight. No such etching occurs again until the 1880s in France. From this noonday observation, Rembrandt could plunge deep into Giorgione's half-light for the so-called *Negress Lying Down*, in a Venetian twilight compacted to a dusk as thick as aspic with a skill that no other etcher has commanded. It is hard enough to draw a thing to look round, but next to impossible to embed it in a shallow yet palpable deposit of air. To print the magic of such a drypoint, Rembrandt wiped the copperplate with a touch almost as rare as the etching itself, and printed on oriental papers that absorbed

all the warm ink into their creamy softness. The woman lies in counterswings of hip and shoulder like the *Venus* that Velázquez was then painting in Madrid, also under Venetian influence.

Italian prints showed Rembrandt how to entwine Abraham, Isaac, and the angel in a human column as inextricably linked as Giovanni Bologna's marble *Rape of the Sabines*, three views of which were published in 1584 through woodcuts. Rembrandt's expressive invention was to cover the boy's face so that the shivering of his ribs makes us also suffer the gooseflesh of martyrdom. Thus a veteran actor conveys the pang of a crisis by turning his back on the audience.

Rembrandt's mastery of figure drawing appears most vividly in enlargements of details so tiny that he must have drawn them under a magnifying glass. This painter of wall-size dramas could also work like a gem engraver on heads that would not cover your thumb nail. On any scale, it would be hard to find a face more expressive than old Simeon's at the temple when he



Negress Lying Down, etching by Rembrandt, 1658. The H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 29.107.28



Abraham Sacrificing Isaac, etching by Rembrandt, 1655. Bequest of Ida Kammerer in memory of her husband Frederic Kammerer, M.D., 33.79.13

Simeon and the Christ Child, enlarged detail from *The Presentation in the Temple*, etching by Rembrandt, 1654. Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 41.1.16



holds the Christ child in his arms and says: "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen my salvation." When Rembrandt scratched hairlines through the etching ground, he had to calculate on their expanding through the ragged, thick bite of the acid. He shaded behind these two heads with the tapering straight lines of the graver. The next year he achieved equal character in as small a head that he incised into the hard metal itself with the jerky, slipping, stiff dry-point needle. Arresting as these details are when enlarged and isolated, they act even more remarkably in their setting. They never call attention to themselves, unlike Dürer's insistent particularities, but blend like musicians in an orchestra pulling together for an overmastering effect.

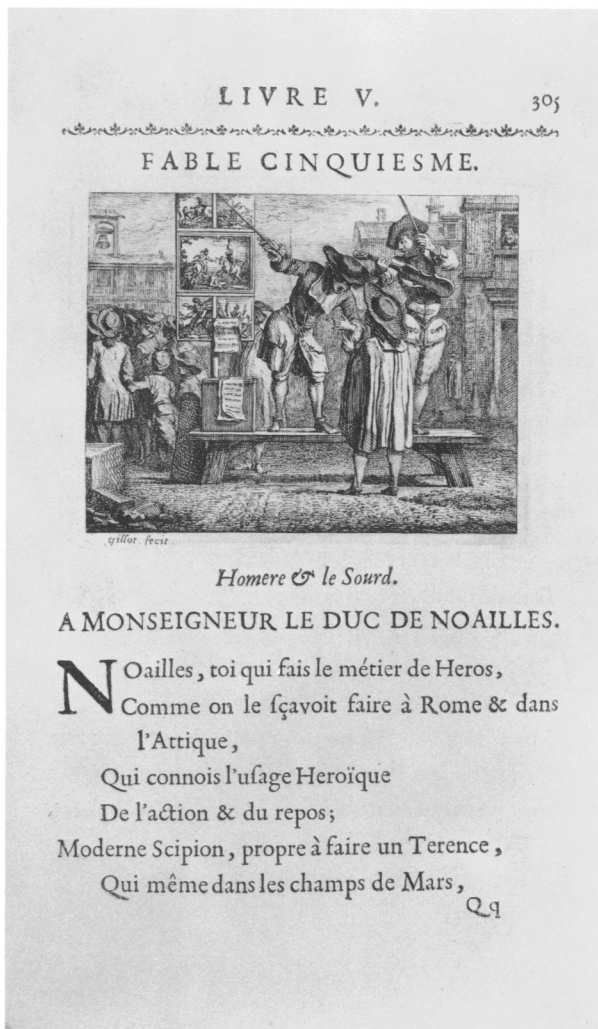
Head of Barrabas, enlarged detail from *Christ Presented to the People*, etching by Rembrandt, 1655. Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 41.1.34



## EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BOOKS

The eighteenth century perfected a fresh, seductive format for books subsidized by wealthy patrons for wealthy bibliophiles. Not meant to be read, these books were designed to be admired two facing pages at a time. In 1719 Claude Gillot, Watteau's teacher, diminished Louis XIV's royal folio pages into a neat block of type and picture. Gillot was the next French printmaker after Callot to see wit and grace in the everyday, and to keep pace with comedians.

The Venetian invention of the rococo book completed four centuries of collaboration between artists and publishers in Venice. Borders as elaborate as those in old Parisian prayer books surrounded gratulatory odes in



Etching by Claude Gillot (1673–1722), French, in La Motte, *Fables Nouvelles*, Paris, 1719. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 34.15



Etching by Francesco Bartolozzi (1728–1813), Italian, 1763.  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 35.81.1



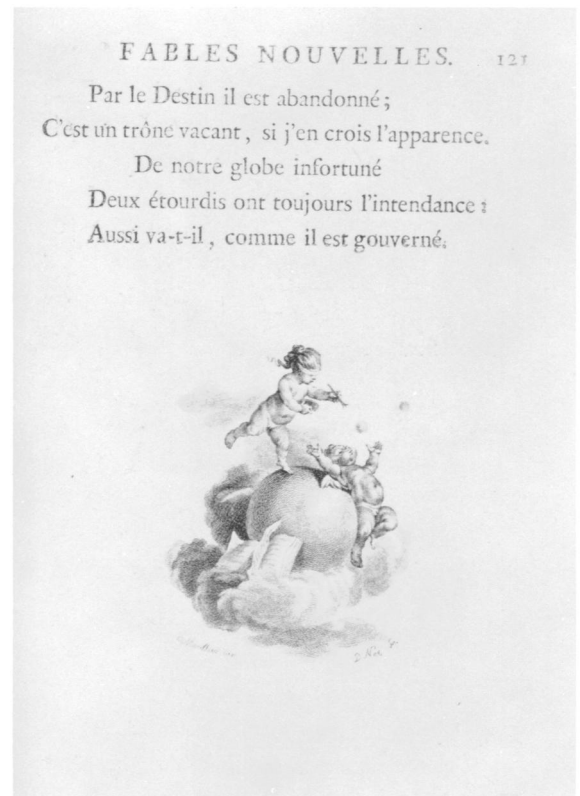
Etching after Giambattista Piazzetta (1682–1754), Italian, in Tasso, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Venice, 1745. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.36.1

Etching after Clément-Pierre Marillier (1740–1808), French, in Dorat, *Fables Nouvelles*, Paris, 1773. Gift of Philip Hofer, 33.77.2

the souvenir pamphlets that Venetian grandees gave to guests at family ceremonies.

The last of many Venetian books to be imitated outside Venice was a massive folio of Tasso that took years to prepare. Though each canto begins with the old baroque full-page copperplate, they end with a new kind of vignette of figures sporting on an airy island.

But since Piazzetta's witty vignettes were dwarfed by a monumental page, about fifteen years later the French scaled down the Venetian scheme to cupids lolling on capriciously evaporating cloudlets, harmonizing picture, type, and paper with a delicacy better calculated to amuse the exacting idlers of the age. The paper, "singing" through the ink, sets the brilliant key. C. N. Cochin noted that "vignettes must be etched, not engraved, to keep the spontaneity of a sketch, which engraved finishing destroys." Though some Parisian book illustrators specialized in designing, and others in etching, each could do the other's work well enough for any number to collaborate as one. This unity of effort so impressed alert amateurs that they began to bind preliminary drawings with the engravings to make up de luxe copies.



## DEGAS AND CASSATT

Degas learned from quattrocento Tuscans to color lucidly and draw clearly, from Japanese woodcuts to spot pictures in patterns never imagined by Giotto or Raphael, from Ingres to control distortions of line, and from Daumier to spy from ambush for the gesture that sparks drama into somebody crossing a street, listening to music, or ironing a shirt. Degas explored more media than any artist between Dürer and Picasso. With intelligence and passion he investigated painting, pastel, sculpture, and all the varieties of drawing and printmaking, including photography, which he started when his eyes were dimming at the end. A beginner, but not an amateur photographer, he took advantage of the latest lenses and emulsions to master a medium that,

like the piano, any child can use to some effect, but only the strong can bend to their will. He was the first photographer to see that multiple exposures might serve picture making as usefully as reflections in plate glass.

Most of his photographs seem to have disappeared when his heirs cleaned out his studio for auctioning. His other prints are also rare, since he pulled only enough impressions to check his progress through as many as twenty retouches on the copperplate. He combined etching with an aquatint of grains as sparkling as Goya's to flatten the world like Japanese prints.

He concentrated his printmaking from 1874 to 1893 on over four hundred monotypes, creating more than anybody since Castiglione, the inventor of the process.

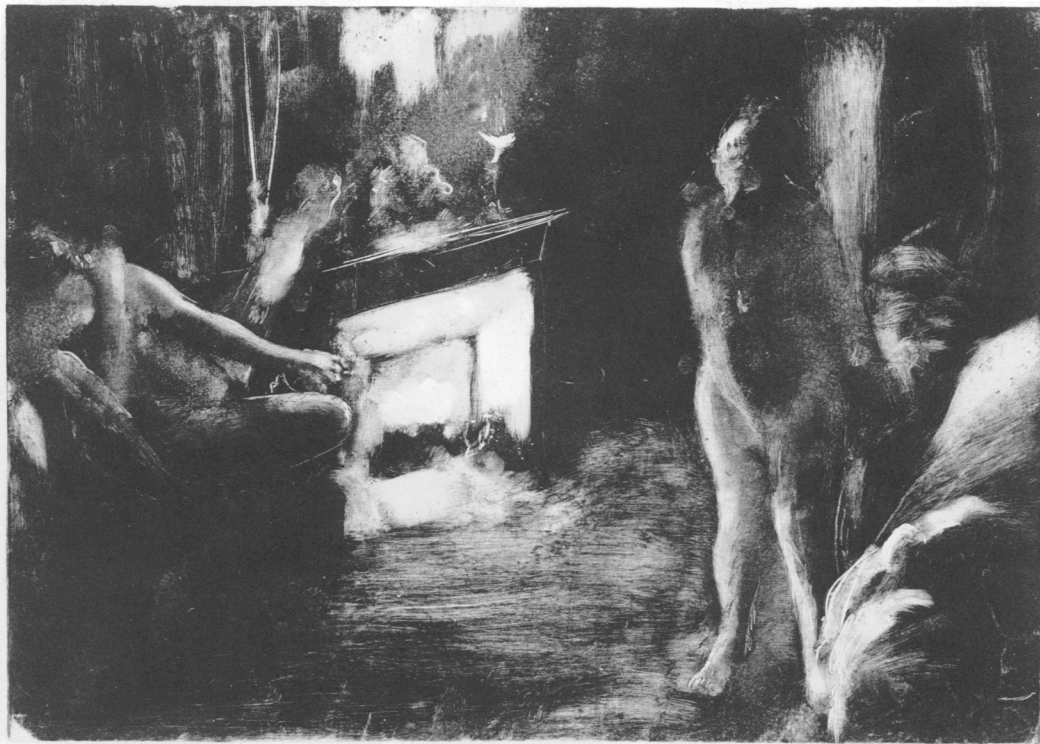
The Halévy Family, multiple exposure photograph by Hilaire Germain Edgar Degas (1834–1917), French. Gift of Mrs. Henry T. Curtiss, 64.673.17





Mary Cassatt in the Louvre, aquatint by Degas, about 1880. Rogers Fund, 19.29.2

In the Firelight, monotype by Degas. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, and Douglas Dillon gift, 68.670

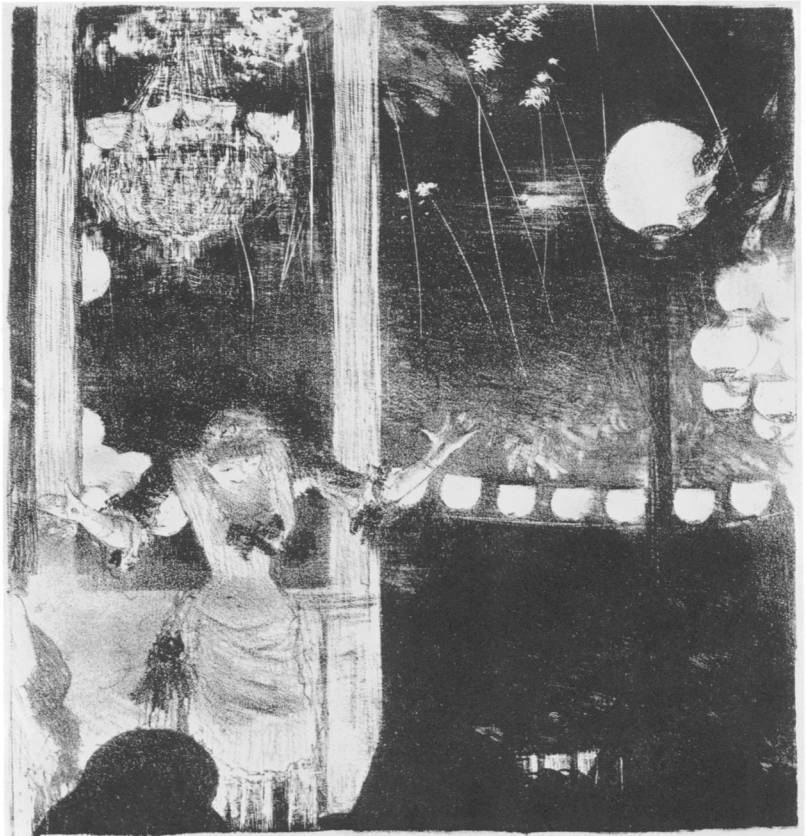




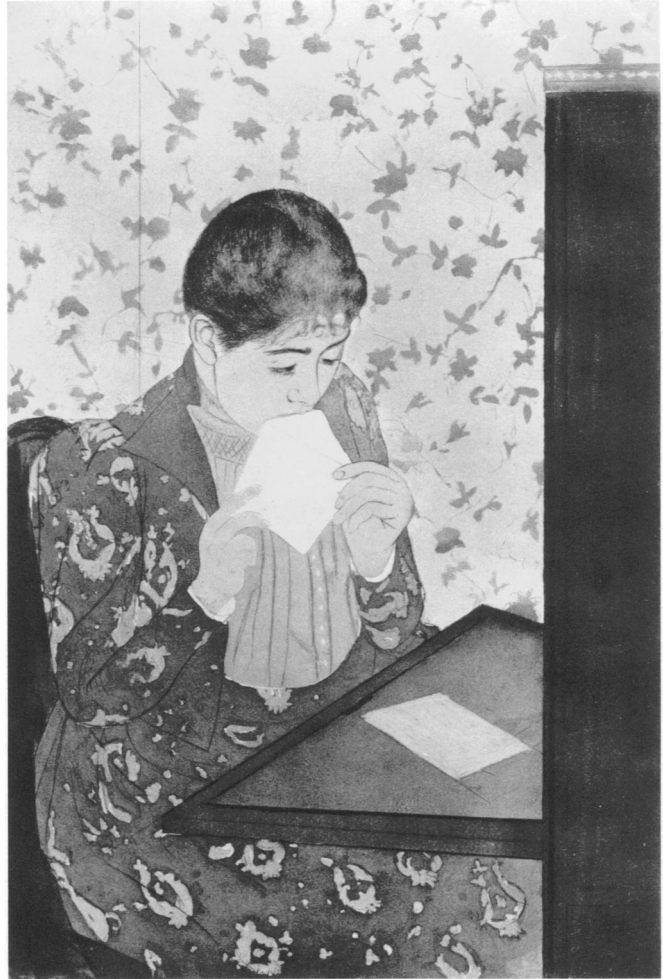


The Jet Earring, monotype by Degas.  
Anonymous gift in memory of Francis  
Henry Taylor, 59.961

Mademoiselle Bécot Singing  
at Les Ambassadeurs,  
lithograph by Degas, about  
1875. Rogers Fund, 19.29.3



The Letter, color aquatint by Mary Cassatt (1845–1926), American, 1891.  
Gift of Paul J. Sachs, 16.2.9



Though he painted a few exquisitely finished pictures on the copper, he more often mopped smudges of tone that anticipate the distortions of the German expressionists. When he massed these suggestive monotypes still more broadly, he colored the printed paper with lines that blend his precise draftsmanship into the broad effects of the impressionists, who rarely or never drew.

He applied his monotype technique to the stone of his lithograph of the Ambassadeurs nightclub, darkening it all over and then scraping out the grays and the highlights, as Goya had done for his big bullfights. His gaslight globes might have been suggested by Harunobu's *Girl with a Lantern* in one of these rare instances where a specific Japanese print can perhaps be linked to a specific work by one of the many Western painters inspired by a general Japanese way of seeing.

Degas shared his admiration for Japanese prints with his only outstanding disciple, Mary Cassatt. This Phila-

delphian from a family as conservative as his own had spent her girlhood in France, where she settled permanently when she was twenty-one. After mastering the academic discipline of painting, she broke away from it so effectively when she was thirty-three that Degas invited her to show with the impressionists. In 1891, after she and Degas had gone together to an exhibition of Japanese prints, she consciously applied the elegance of Utamaro to the intimacies of her dressing room, her writing desk, her tea table, and the nursery of her baby nieces. Through these color aquatints, as well as her etchings and drypoints, Mary Cassatt became one of the very few women to discover a new vision in the abstract medium of printmaking. Her originality lay in seeing women and children as only a woman—indeed a lady—can see them, and in drawing her delicate insight with a supple strength that Degas thought possible only in a man.

# The Alfred Stieglitz Collection

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THE COLLECTION of paintings, drawings, prints, a few sculptures, and many photographs that the Metropolitan Museum received in 1949 from the estate of Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946) constitutes an exceptionally interesting document for the study of the relations between American art and the international modern movement in the first decades of the twentieth century. But the Stieglitz Collection is more than that—for those influences could be demonstrated, even today, by the conscientious acquisition of a series of relevant examples. It exists as tangible and visual evidence not only of the taste and activity of a remarkable individual—Alfred Stieglitz—but also of his faith in American art, in its ability to absorb the new developments from abroad while responding to contemporary American sensibilities and retaining its inherent American character. The collection also witnesses to Stieglitz's continual search for the sources of creative activity and for their emergent expression in works of art of high quality.

Of Alfred Stieglitz himself much has been said but little written. We still wait for a full-length biography, supported by searching studies of those aspects of his personality and achievement, especially as a photographer, that affected the development of American art. Such studies are essential, not only to set the record straight, but to deliver Stieglitz from his friends almost as much as from his enemies. Perhaps he never did want us to see him plain, but by now, more than twenty years after his death, we need no longer bother about the conversational mystifications with which he en-

trapped the unwary, embarrassed the ignorantly eager, and shamed the rich for their neglect of American art. Until we have such studies, the Stieglitz Collection, divided as it is, must serve as an image of the man, his taste, and his times.

Of Stieglitz the photographer we know a good bit, principally through his own superb photographs, which have been exhibited and admired for over sixty years. In them we can see his greatest creative accomplishment, the liberation of the photograph from the limitations of documentary recording and from archaic pictorial conventions, thereby revealing the existence of a photographic aesthetic independent of both science and the established “arts of design.” The consideration of Stieglitz as an artist is, however, the privilege of those whose competence is the history and evaluation of creative photography.

Our concern is with Stieglitz as the primary sponsor in this country of the modern movement in art. For such of his peers as John Quinn, Walter Conrad Arensberg, and Katherine S. Dreier, the transcendent revelation of modernism came only with the Armory Show of 1913, but Stieglitz had been exhibiting the works of certain prominent European artists and a number of unknown Americans since 1908. It is true that his friend and fellow photographer Edward Steichen may have first turned his attention to contemporary art, and certainly Steichen helped in the selection of the early exhibitions of Rodin, Matisse, and Picasso. Yet Stieglitz, to his everlasting credit, not only exhibited the new art at a time when to do so was to incur severe

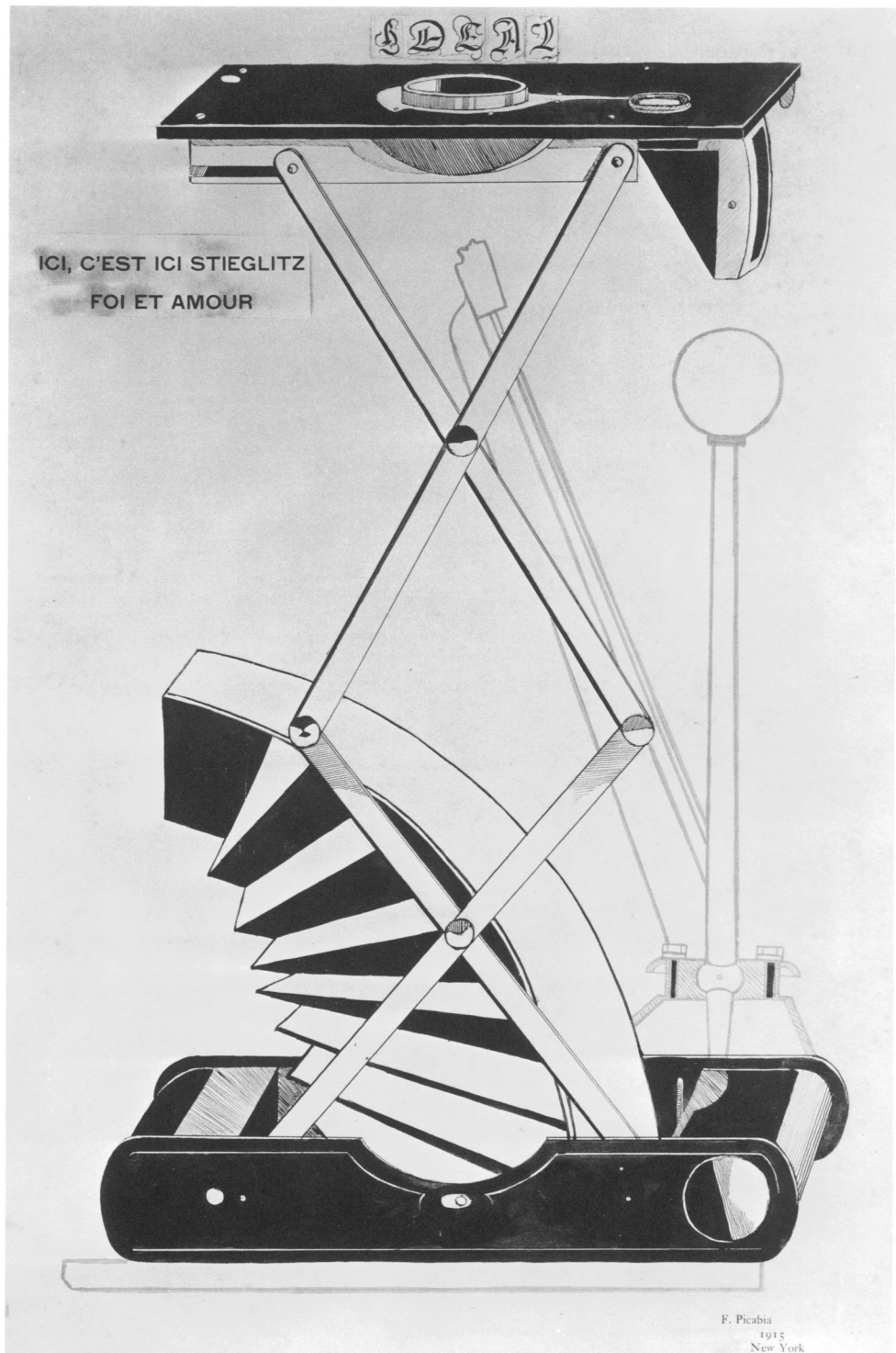
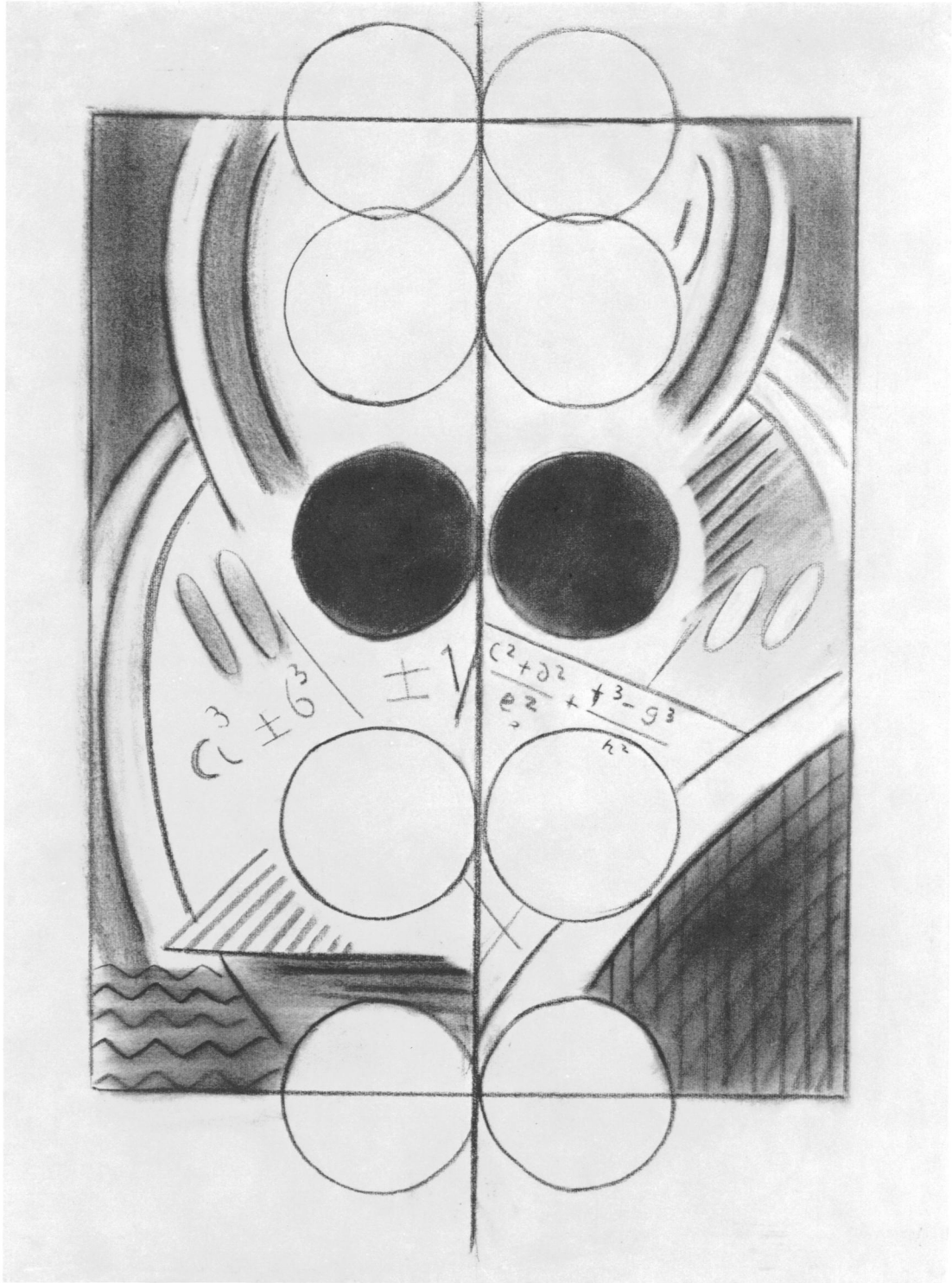


FIGURE 1

Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz, by Francis Picabia, 1915. Pen and red and black ink. 29 7/8 x 20 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.14



**FIGURE 2**  
Abstract Caricature of Alfred Stieglitz, by Marius de Zayas, about 1913. Charcoal.  $24\frac{1}{4} \times 18\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.184

critical and popular disapprobation, to put it mildly, but also encouraged and exhibited certain younger American artists for the first time on equal terms with their more controversial European contemporaries.

The Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession, where his exhibitions were held, actually consisted of two small rooms on the top floor of a converted brownstone at 291 Fifth Avenue, between Thirtieth and Thirty-first streets. Stieglitz had established his Photo-Secession at that address in 1905 as a center where creative photographers could meet and where their photographs could be seen both on request and in changing temporary exhibitions. The first exhibition, held November 24, 1905, through January 4, 1906, consisted of 100 photographs by members of the Photo-Secession. The next year six exhibitions were held, including work by French, German, and Austrian photographers, and one-man showings by such prominent Americans as Gertrude Käsebier, Clarence White, and Steichen. Stieglitz's aesthetic bias was already apparent; works by those whom he considered the best Americans were to be seen in conjunction and in comparison with the best European productions.

The term Photo-Secession had an intentionally rebellious ring, with overtones of the younger Central European artists' rejection of academic authority in Munich, Vienna, and Berlin in the years between 1890 and 1900, when the European secessions were founded as free, juryless exhibiting societies. The phrase Little Galleries, on the other hand, has now, and may have had then, perhaps too little flavor. At any rate the exhibition space, which Marsden Hartley later described as "probably the largest small room of its kind in the world," soon became affectionately known as 291. This was to be the best-known address in the annals of American art.

The walls of these two rooms, each of which was approximately fifteen feet square, were divided into plain vertical panels covered with fabric above a continuous counter whose shelves, holding boxes of prints and photographs, were concealed by curtains of dark green burlap. A dropped translucent cloth panel concealed the skylight; artificial light was provided by incandescent bulbs suspended from the ceiling and shielded by ordinary metal shades. In the center of the first room a square pedestal, also draped with burlap, supported a large brass bowl filled with an armful of

autumn leaves or spring flowers, when it wasn't needed for sculpture.

Today we can identify the sources of Stieglitz's taste in interior design, so different from the conventional dealer's preference for heavy draperies and ornate gold frames. In the exhibitions he had arranged for the Society of British Artists in the late 1880s, Whistler had been the first to insist on pictures simply framed and generously spaced on plain fabric-covered walls. The emphatic rectilinearity of the Little Galleries is also reminiscent of the Viennese version of *Jugendstil* strongly influenced by Mackintosh's Scottish work. There was also a measure of English "arts and craftsiness" as reinterpreted farther west in the style generically dismissed as California mission. Such were the Little Galleries at 291 Fifth Avenue: simple, clean, and direct, with a faint flavor of internationalism, an appropriate place for the excitements they were to hold.

The first nonphotographic exhibition, and the only one that year, was held during the second season of the Photo-Secession, in January 1907, when Stieglitz presented drawings by an unknown young woman, Pamela Colman Smith. She was described in *Camera Work* (July 1909) by Benjamin de Cassères as "a blender of visions, a mystic, a symbolist, one who transforms the world she lives in by the overwhelming simplicity of her imagination," and indeed at this distance her work does seem slightly overwrought. She was given to interpreting musical compositions, sketching her inspiration at concerts and the opera, and on the occasion of a second exhibition at 291 she recited West Indian nursery tales and chanted ballads by William Butler Yeats. Since her work has left so small a mark on modern art history, one may suspect that Stieglitz, who gave her three exhibitions in all, was impressed by her personality. Something of such an attitude can be read between the lines of his statement published in his quarterly *Camera Work* (July 1907), in which he explained that her drawings may have been "a departure from the intentions of the Photo-Secession," but a welcome opportunity to manifest its aim of presenting "honesty of self-expression, honesty of revolt against the autocracy of convention." Impressive she must have been, brooding, in Marius de Zayas's amusing caricature, like Wagner's Erda over the mysteries of her art (Figure 14). Although there are no examples of her work in the collection at the Metropolitan, eleven

drawings may be seen in the Alfred Stieglitz Collection in the Yale University Library.

During the following season, 1907–1908, there were three art exhibitions alternating with three of photography. In January Stieglitz presented drawings by Auguste Rodin, which Steichen, who was in Paris, had brought to his attention the previous fall. In February there was a show consisting of drawings by Miss Smith and of prints by Donald Shaw MacLaughlan, an American etcher, and Willie Geiger. The latter, the only German artist ever so featured by Stieglitz, was to have a long career as a teacher in Munich and Leipzig. The absence of German artists at 291, apart from the photographers whose work was seen in group shows, is the more curious in that Stieglitz had spent the years 1881–1890 in Europe, principally in Berlin. Then and on succeeding visits up to the last in 1911 he might have been thought to have become aware of contemporary developments in German and Austrian painting. Finally, on April 6 Stieglitz opened the exhibition that was to establish his reputation as one who had dared more than most for modern art. This was a show of drawings, lithographs, and watercolors by Henri Matisse, which Steichen had brought from Paris. In January some visitors had of course been dismayed by Rodin's unconventional treatment of the nude, but still and all he had to be acknowledged as the leading sculptor of the age. Matisse was quite another matter. He had been unknown in America except by hearsay as one of the "wild beasts" of contemporary French painting, and his powerful and elliptical draftsmanship infuriated many of the four thousand visitors who came to the tiny rooms, especially those who wrote for the press.

Before such a storm of disapproval and dislike another man might have retreated to the safety of photography, but Stieglitz pursued a different course. After 1907–1908 the balance between exhibitions of photography and the other arts was not to recur. The following season the art exhibitions outnumbered those of photography by six to four, and even among the latter, one was of exceptional artistic, and not purely photographic, interest. This was a showing of eight photographs by Steichen of Rodin's Balzac, certainly among the most sensitive ever of a work of sculpture, which had been taken outdoors at Meudon during the full moon of October 1907. The art exhibitions that season

included, in addition to the third and last showing of drawings by Pamela Colman Smith, caricatures by the gifted Spaniard Marius de Zayas, oils by Alfred Maurer, watercolors by John Marin, and paintings by Marsden Hartley, all first exhibitions for those artists, and Japanese prints from the collection of F. W. Hunter. This was a program of which a more seasoned exhibitor could well be proud.

In 1909–1910 Steichen's color photographs accounted for the only photographic exhibition. Otherwise there were a second exhibition of drawings by Rodin and Matisse, new work by Marin and de Zayas, and in March an exhibition of work by younger American painters, including Hartley, Marin, Maurer, and among the newcomers Arthur B. Carles, Arthur G. Dove, and Max Weber. The critics thought of these new painters as Matisse's "supposed American disciples," but actually, and despite the still tentative character of their work, most of the artists Stieglitz had selected were to become the principal members of the first generation of American modernists.

Steichen also showed his paintings on that occasion—flat in pattern and color, with a strong art-nouveau flavor—and the association of the cosmopolitan photographer with the younger painters suggests what these artists had in common: they had all spent some time in Europe in the earliest years of the new century and had seen at first hand what was happening in Paris. However much Stieglitz would later insist on the specifically American strength of American art, it is worth noting that from the first he saw, even if with Steichen's help, that the best American art would develop best when fortified by the developments abroad.

By 1910 the Little Galleries had become so thoroughly identified with the modern movement in painting that Stieglitz could redefine the intentions of his Photo-Secession. In the April issue of *Camera Work* he wrote that

the exhibitions which have been held during the past years, and those which are announced for the season of 1910–11 show the logical evolution of the work of the Association. Its name, while still explanatory of its purpose, has taken a somewhat different meaning. The Photo-Secession stood first for a secession from the then accepted standards of photography and started out to prove that photography was entitled to an equal footing among the arts with the production of painters whose attitude was photographic. Having proved con-

clusively that along certain lines, preeminently in portraiture, the camera had the advantage over the best trained eye and hand, the logical deduction was that the other arts could only prove themselves superior to photography by making their aim dependent on other qualities than accurate reproduction. The works shown at the Galleries in painting, drawing and other graphic arts have all been non-photographic in their attitude, and the Photo-Secession can be said now to stand for those artists who secede from the photographic attitude toward representation of form.

The list of exhibitions held at 291 between 1907 and 1917 is too long to describe in detail, but one cannot ignore the fact that it contained an extraordinary number of "firsts." In addition to those already mentioned, Stieglitz in 1910 showed the first works by Cézanne to be seen in the United States (the two lithographs of *The Bathers* now in the Stieglitz Collection at Fisk University in Nashville), and simultaneously he held the first American exhibition of paintings and drawings by Henri Rousseau *Le Douanier*, lent by Max Weber, who had just returned from Paris. In 1911 came the first American exhibitions of Cézanne's watercolors and of Picasso's work from the Blue Period through early cubism. In 1912 Stieglitz held the first exhibition here or abroad of Matisse's sculpture, selected by the artist with Steichen's assistance, and in 1913 he arranged Picabia's first American exhibition. In 1914 there were Brancusi's first one-man exhibition anywhere, drawings and paintings by Picasso and Braque, and the first American exhibition of African Negro sculpture; in 1917, the first American one-man show for Severini. In 1912 and again in 1914 and 1915 he presented exhibitions of work by children—in the first show the exhibitors ranged in age from two and one-half to twelve years. If these exhibitions were not the very first of their kind, at least they followed closely upon the children's work seen at the *Mostra d'Arte Libera* in Milan in 1911 and the publication of children's drawings by Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky in the *Blaue Reiter* almanac in Munich in 1912. A final indication of his continuing interest in the early sources of creativity was the showing in 1916 of watercolors and drawings by Georgia S. Engelhard, a ten-year-old New Yorker, "unguided, untaught." In addition to Marin, Maurer, and Hartley, Stieglitz presented one-man exhibitions for the first time in the United States or any-

where else of the American artists Dove, Carles, Weber, Abraham Walkowitz, Stanton Macdonald-Wright, and Georgia O'Keeffe. This surely was a record difficult if not impossible to match in Paris, London, the German and Austrian capitals, and New York, even if notice is taken of the pioneering support of modern art in the latter city by the Montross and Daniel Galleries and by Stephan Bourgeois in the years immediately following Stieglitz's first efforts.

Merely to list the hits, however, would be to give a false impression of infallibility, for there were also a number of misses, in the sense that certain artists in whom Stieglitz was at one time interested did not, for one reason or another, continue to elicit his support. Some are those he included only in two-man or group exhibitions. Such were MacLaughlan, D. Putnam Brinley, the mural painter, Lawrence Fellowes, Katharine N. Rhodes, Marion Beckett, Charles Duncan, and René Lafferty. A second group consisted of those who received only a single one-man exhibition: Allen Lewis, a graphic artist, Eugene Higgins, Gelett Burgess, Albert J. Frueh, the caricaturist, and Frank Burty (Haviland), a friend of Picasso and the brother of the critic and coeditor of *Camera Work* Paul Haviland.

However estimable these artists were—and some among them, Burgess and Higgins for example, have their modest place in the history of American art—their work on the whole differed from those whose names are better known to the degree that they may be said to have remained for the rest of their lives more or less at the stage they had reached when Stieglitz met them. They were tied to conventions of their own devising, whereas those to whom Stieglitz later committed himself were to change and grow, to develop into artists quite other than what they were when he first showed them. Stieglitz's taste, therefore, may seem inseparable from the evolutionary concept of human progress, which has shaped so much of both our Western philosophy of history and our history of art. Perhaps we do such so-called minor artists a great wrong when we accuse them of having failed to evolve, but the fact remains that Stieglitz lost interest in them. Except for Pamela Colman Smith no artist in either of the two categories seems ever to have been shown a second time at 291.

The Photo-Secession and the Little Galleries were disbanded at the end of the 1916–1917 season. The



immediate cause was the fact that the building had been sold and was soon to be demolished. By that time there had been in all some fifty-eight art exhibitions as against fifteen of photography. But these statistics, while indicating Stieglitz's increasing interest in modern art and his determination to lead America toward an understanding of the modern movement, are deceptive to the extent that his own concern with creative photography never faltered. Photographs were always available and often on view at 291, and at his later galleries, and although *Camera Work*, his sumptuous quarterly, contained more and more pages on art, he continued to publish it as a journal of fine photography until the end of the Photo-Secession.

Such are some of the historical facts of Alfred Stieglitz's achievement between 1907 and 1917. His later activities are quickly noted. After the First World War he arranged exhibitions for Marin at the Montross and Daniel Galleries and for O'Keeffe at the Anderson Galleries. In 1925, at the invitation of Mitchell Kennerley, the president of the Anderson Galleries, he created his Intimate Gallery in Room 303 of the building at the northeast corner of Park Avenue and Fifty-ninth Street. Here through 1929 he presented nineteen exhibitions, all of American artists with the exception of Picabia in 1928. Also, aside from Charles Demuth, Gaston Lachaise, and Peggy Bacon, they were familiars from 291. In order of frequency, O'Keeffe was shown four times, Dove and Marin three times, and the following once each: Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and Paul Strand, who was the first of the younger photographers to have been shown at 291.

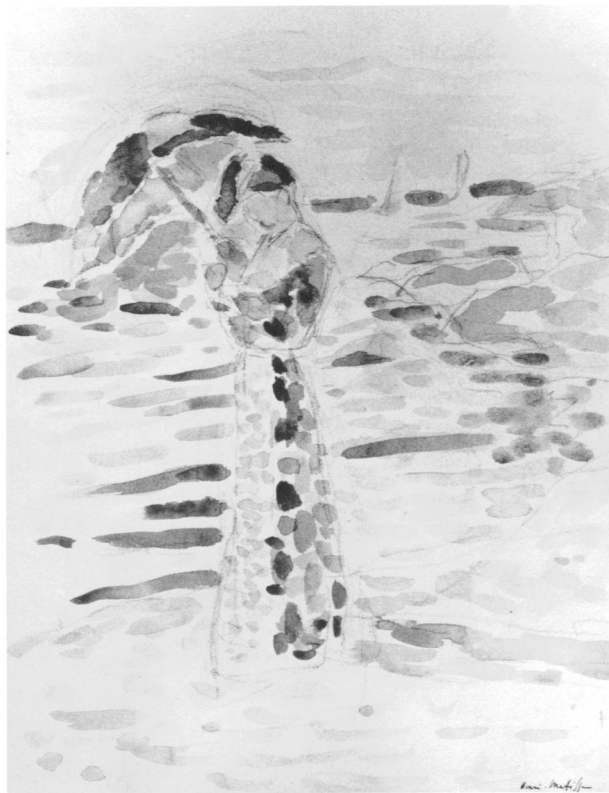
In 1929 Stieglitz moved to the seventeenth floor of the office building at 509 Madison Avenue. In this gallery, which he called An American Place, he continued, until the end of his life, to present regularly each year new work by Marin, Dove, and Georgia O'Keeffe, who had become his wife. There were also occasional exhibitions of Demuth, Hartley, and Strand, and his own photographs could always be seen. But there were no surprises, as there had been at 291, only the ripening maturity of the painters who for Stieglitz represented the best of the American tradition. In the midst of the pure white walls on which the paintings of his favorite artists were carefully spaced, Stieglitz practiced for hours on end another art of which he is said to have been a master, that of conversation, un-

fortunately one of the most ephemeral forms of human expression. Nevertheless, in the memories and published recollections of those who frequented it, An American Place came to have a very special meaning within the complexity of American art. Here was indeed a new tradition, nurtured in cubism and the early forms of European abstraction, but which in the hands of Hartley, Marin, Demuth, Dove, and O'Keeffe had proved capable of creating authentically artistic statements of American experience.

The historical record of Stieglitz's activities, however unusual, would be little more than a statistical account if we did not have access to the works produced by the artists named therein. Happily his collection survives, even though in several different places, to give visual substance to the historical account. According to his will, his collection of works of art and photographs was to be divided by Georgia O'Keeffe among American museums. In addition to the objects received by the Metropolitan Museum, smaller collections were given to the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Gallery of Art and the Library of Congress in Washington, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Fisk University in Nashville. His own photographs were distributed among eleven institutions, notably the National Gallery of Art, the Library of Congress, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, in addition to the Metropolitan. The Yale University Library received the literary archives and a few other pieces, including a number of children's drawings.

Of the portion that the Metropolitan received, the photographs, supplementing Stieglitz's gift of a large selection of his own work in 1933, confirm the earlier and essentially photographic activities of the Photo-Secession.

For Stieglitz, who painstakingly printed his own photographs and had, after his return from Germany in 1890, managed his own printing company, the graphic arts held a special interest. The exhibition of Toulouse-Lautrec's lithographs at 291 in 1909, one of the first extensive showings of the artist's work in this country, is perpetuated in the Metropolitan Museum by thirty-four prints, including a fine example of the portfolio *Elles*. Recalling other events at 291, there are also scattered prints by Eugene Higgins, MacLaugh-



**FIGURE 3**  
 Woman by the Seashore, by Henri Matisse, about 1904. Watercolor and pencil. 10  $\frac{5}{8}$   $\times$  8  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.6

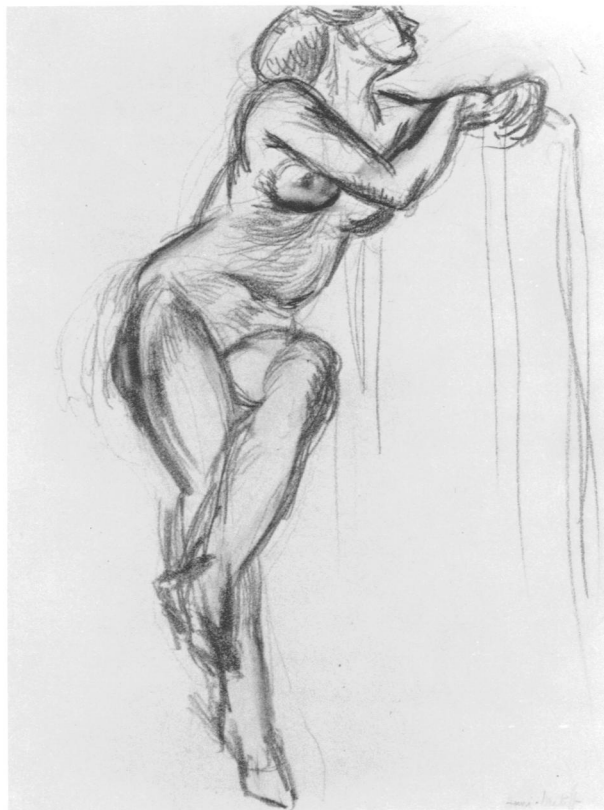
lan, and Geiger, and portfolios by Frueh and by Gordon Craig, whose first American exhibition was held at 291 in 1910.

The paintings, watercolors, drawings, and sculptures in the collection vary in quality as well as interest. For this reason, on at least one occasion—when selections from the entire collection were exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1947—many objects were dismissed by one critic as leftovers, the unsalable or unsold works that a dealer inevitably accumulates. Such a description is not strictly accurate. Certain objects—the small watercolor by Henri Cross, the cubist painting by Diego Rivera—are known to have been acquired by Stieglitz independently of his activities at 291. Similarly, the paintings he owned by Alfred Maurer appear to date from the 1920s, some time after Stieglitz ceased to show Maurer's work. But a more important con-

sideration is the fact that Stieglitz did not profess to be a dealer in the strict sense of the word. Having a private income, he did not depend upon his galleries to show a profit, nor did he, in the usual manner, claim a stipulated commission for each work sold. Rather he acted more as an agent for his artists, as their private banker, finding sympathetic patrons, often arranging that the price to be paid should suit the patron's purse—provided always that the latter seemed truly to understand and want the work in question—and then holding the funds received until the artist needed them. Therefore it would seem proper to consider the works remaining in Stieglitz's possession as objects that he kept from preference, not from necessity.

Of the works that recall the earlier activities at 291, the most memorable are the groups of drawings by Matisse and Picasso. From the first Matisse exhibition of 1908 two small watercolors survive, a study of the

**FIGURE 4**  
 Nude, by Henri Matisse, 1910. Pencil. 12  $\times$  9 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.8



nude, sketchy but executed in brilliant fauve colors, and the even earlier *Woman by the Seashore* (Figure 3), painted in broad neo-impressionist blocks of color. In technique as well as subject it belongs with the pivotal paintings of 1904–1905, of which the best known is *Luxe, Calme et Volupté* (Paris, private collection). Among the other five Matisse drawings, which are probably related to the second exhibition of 1910, perhaps the finest is the study of the posed model (Figure 4). This was one of the two (the other is a reclining nude, seen from the rear) that Stieglitz himself admired enough to reproduce in *Camera Work* in October 1910. The fact that the first Mrs. George Blumenthal bought two drawings from this same exhibition and presented them to the Metropolitan would seem to give the lie to the thought that drawings as superb as those that Stieglitz kept were entirely unsalable, even in 1910.

Stieglitz stated of his first Picasso exhibition, held in April 1911, that it represented the artist's complete evolution through cubism, but in the absence of any catalogue or checklist we can only assume that the works in the Metropolitan's collection do, to some extent, represent the character of that first exhibition. Although the exhibition itself, according to the remarks published in *Camera Work*, seems to have been limited to drawings, there is in the collection a small oil, *Girl Ironing*, and a study of a harlequin in pen and ink that represent the Blue and Circus Periods. The latter work is of some historical interest, for on the reverse in Picasso's handwriting is a list of addresses including the name of his lifelong friend Julio González. More commanding are seven drawings of 1909 and 1910, which include the majestic *Nude* of 1910 (Figure 5), surely one of the finest of all Picasso's cubist works, the female body seeming to turn inside out before one's eyes to become a still life, or an architectural vista, and in the crisp definition of the planes prophetic of the process whereby Mondrian within three years transformed such structures still based on empirical vision into the architecture of invented abstraction. Stieglitz admired the drawing enough to reproduce it twice in *Camera Work*. By so doing, he not only established the drawing within modern art history, but began, for America at least, the history of Picasso as a modern master.

Of almost equal interest for the development of Picasso's cubist aesthetic is the male *Head No. 1* of 1909,

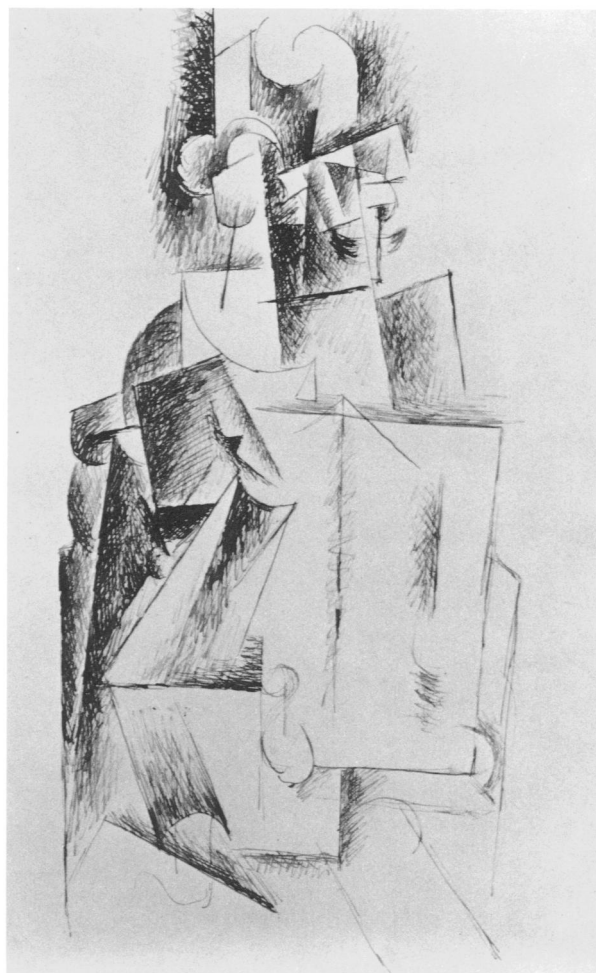


FIGURE 5  
Nude, by Pablo Picasso, 1910. Charcoal. 19 × 12 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.27

in brush and ink (Figure 6). The division of the physical mass by heavily accentuated planes intersecting at sharp angles on the one hand derives from Picasso's interest in African sculpture in the years after 1906 and on the other leads directly into the famous bronze *Head* of 1909. A similar proto-cubist study is the female *Head No. 2*, also in brush and ink and only slightly less powerful than the man's.

The later development of such cubist studies appears in two large drawings of 1912–1913. The earlier, a *Head of a Man* in charcoal, is typical of the more loosely as well as more abstractly analytical works of

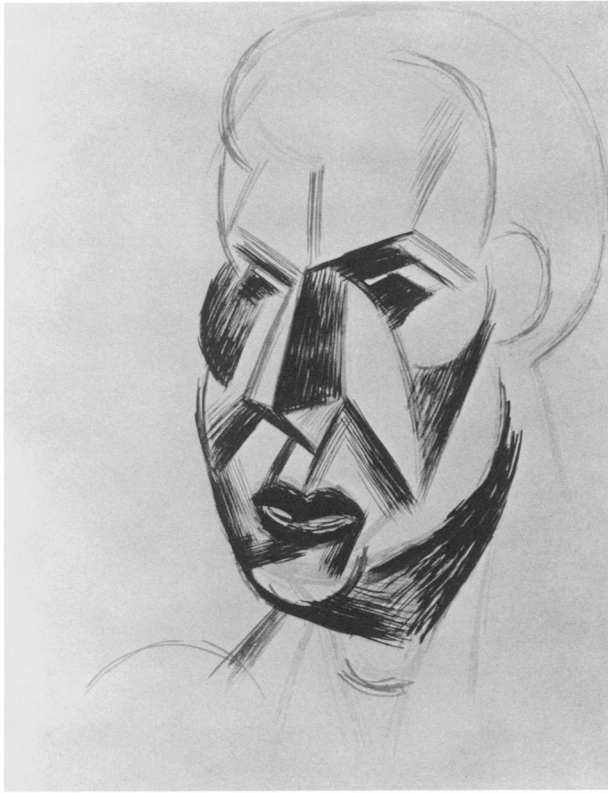
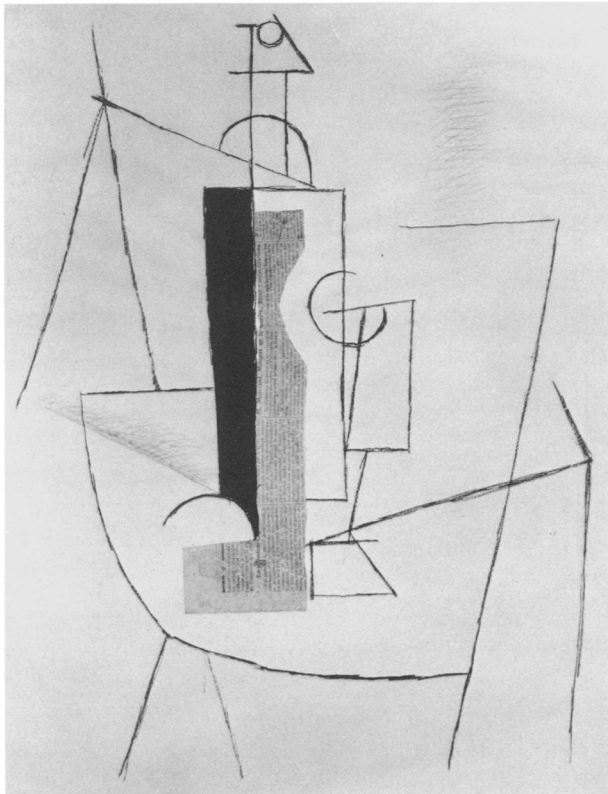


FIGURE 6

Head No. 1, by Pablo Picasso, 1909. Brush and ink.  $23\frac{3}{4} \times 18\frac{7}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.35



1912. The other drawing, a Still Life in charcoal and pasted paper (Figure 7), can be seen hanging on the rear wall of the Little Galleries in a photograph<sup>1</sup> of the exhibition of December 1914 (to the right hung a Gabun ancestral figure, which had undoubtedly been included in the exhibition of African sculpture held the previous month; a very similar one is now, with four other carvings, at Fisk University). For those curious enough to read the texts of the newspaper cuttings that Picasso incorporated in his cubist *papiers collés*, this Still Life has a certain poignancy. The newsprint that represents part of the body and the label of the wine bottle (or siphon) carries the headline "M. Millerand, Ministre de la Guerre, flétrit l'antimilitarisme." At the time of the work's exhibition at 291 the First Great War was already in its fifth month.

Of the other important exhibitions of European artists at 291 not so much remains. The Picabia exhibition of January 1915 may have included the water-color *Danseuse étoile et son école de danse* (The Star Dancer and her Dance School) (Figure 8), which must have been the result of Picabia's infatuation with a dancer, Mlle Napierkowska, whom he had seen on shipboard on his way to the United States two years before. The flattened, abstracted cubist planes closely relate it to the important oils of that period, such as *I See Again in Memory My Dear Udnie*, of about 1914 (New York, Museum of Modern Art). Of more historical interest is the pen-and-ink drawing *Fille née sans mère* (Girl Born Without a Mother), of about 1915, a first study for one of the early "machine" paintings of the same title, now in the collection of Mr. and

1. Reproduced as pl. XIII in Waldo Frank et al., eds., *America and Alfred Stieglitz, A Collective Portrait* (New York, 1934).

FIGURE 7

Still Life, by Pablo Picasso, 1912–1913. Charcoal and pasted newspaper.  $24\frac{1}{2} \times 18\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.33

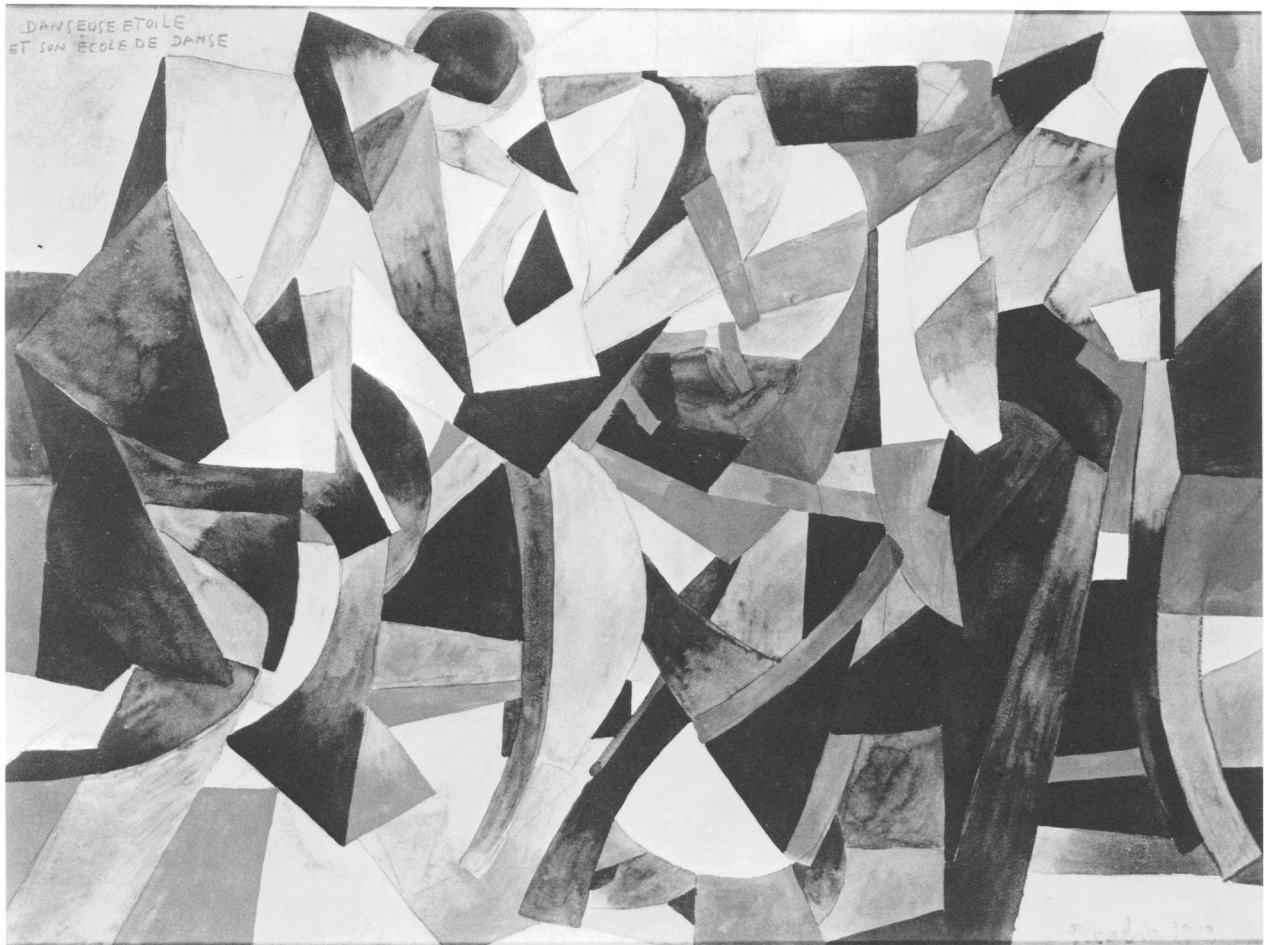
Mrs. Arthur A. Cohen of New York. Stieglitz's exhibitions of Picabia in 1913 and 1915 put 291 in the very forefront of the modern movement, because Picabia, through his close association with Marcel Duchamp, was one of the principal generators in New York of the antiartistic current that in Zurich in 1916 became known as Dada. Picabia's *Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz* (Here, This is Stieglitz Here) (Figure 1), a symbolic portrait of Stieglitz as a broken camera, signifying Stieglitz's thought of closing 291 after the Armory Show in the belief that his work had been accomplished, is a purely Dadaist design. It was first published on the cover of the July–August 1915 issue of *291*, the satirical journal edited by Stieglitz and de Zayas in 1915–1916.

The proof that Stieglitz was impressed by the Armory Show can still be seen in the magnificent Kandinsky, *Improvisation 27 (Garden of Love)* of 1912 (Figure 9), which was exhibited there and which he acquired at that time. This was a daring purchase in a day when Kandinsky's work was even less familiar in America than that of Matisse and Picasso.

The final exhibition of a European artist, held in March 1917, was devoted to the work of Gino Severini. The choice of an Italian futurist may seem eccentric today, but one should remember that a group of futurist paintings created something of a sensation at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. Presumably from the Severini exhibition are a typical

FIGURE 8

*Danseuse étoile et son école de danse*, by Francis Picabia, 1913. Watercolor. 22 × 30 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.12



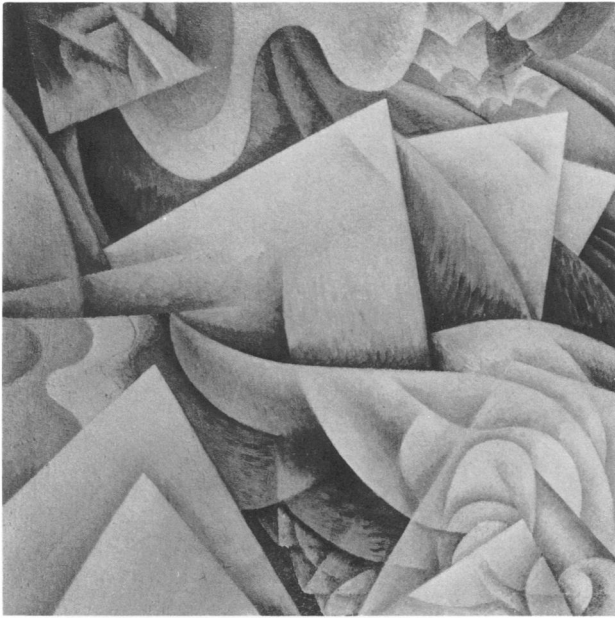


**FIGURE 9**  
 Improvisation 27 (Garden of Love), by Wassily Kandinsky, 1912. Oil on canvas. 47 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 55 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.1

oil, *Danseuse-Hélice-Mer* (Dancer-Propeller-Sea) of 1915 (Figure 10), and four drawings, among which a *Still Life* in charcoal and pasted paper (Figure 11) is an excellent example of Severini's more strictly cubist work, while *Le Train dans la Ville* and *En Volant sur Reims* project the futurists' obsession with the dynamic *velocità* of contemporary life.

Earlier, in March 1914, Brancusi's first one-man show anywhere had been held at 291. It consisted of eight sculptures, among them, apparently, bronze and marble versions of *Mlle Pogany*, of which an example

in plaster had been one of the superior irritants at the Armory Show the year before. There was also *The First Step*, an important wood sculpture, primitivistic in technique and design, and one of the earliest indications of Brancusi's interest in African sculpture, which has since been destroyed (only the head survives, in the Musée de l'Art Moderne in Paris). The collection contains a version of the *Sleeping Muse* in bronze from the exhibition, and a large drawing in blue crayon, *Torso* (Figure 12), in which we can see Brancusi's hand groping for the ultimate reductive form.

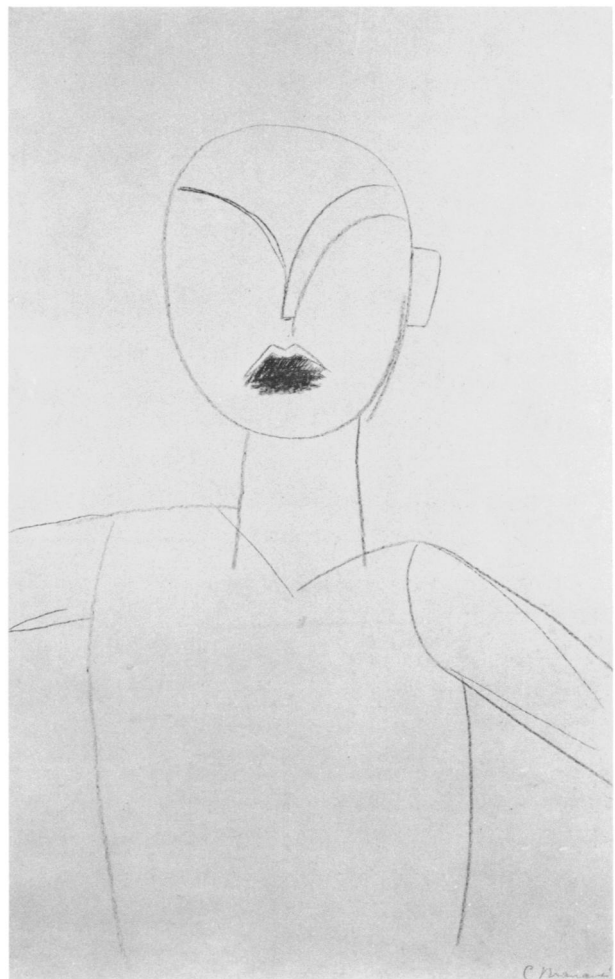


**FIGURE 10**  
 Danseuse-Hélice-Mer, by Gino Severini, 1915.  
 Oil on canvas. 41 ½ × 43 in. The Metropolitan  
 Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection,  
 49.70.3



**FIGURE 11**  
 Still Life (Bottle, Vase, and Newspaper on a Ta-  
 ble), by Gino Severini, 1914. Charcoal and pasted  
 newspaper. 22 ¼ × 18 ¾ in. The Metropolitan  
 Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection,  
 49.70.20

**FIGURE 12**  
 Torso, by Constantin Brancusi, before 1914. Blue  
 crayon. 20 × 12 ¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum  
 of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.25



The next to the last exhibition at 291 was devoted to paintings and sculpture by Stanton Macdonald-Wright, who with Morgan Russell had created in Paris the movement they called synchromy, based upon Delaunay's coloristic mutation of cubism, and the proposition that color could be the principal means of creating form, light, and space. Wright's *Aeroplane Synchromy in Yellow and Orange* (Figure 13) dates from 1920, so it could not have been seen in the 1917 exhibition; but it is a worthy example of this short-lived experiment, the machine forms of the plane simultaneously dissolving into and being formed from the luminously colored atmosphere.

Two artists whom Stieglitz showed three times each at 291, surely a token of his continuing interest in them, have had little place left for them in recent histories of modern art, but at 291 between 1909 and 1917 they had at least a local habitation and a name. The drawings of the Spanish caricaturist Marius de Zayas bring vividly to life after more than half a century the people

FIGURE 13

*Aeroplane Synchromy in Yellow and Orange*, by Stanton Macdonald-Wright, 1920. Oil on canvas. 24 ¼ × 24 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.52



FIGURE 14

*Pamela Colman Smith*, by Marius de Zayas. Charcoal. 21 ⅞ × 16 ⅞ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.221

and personalities who surrounded Alfred Stieglitz. We have already noticed his amusing caricature of Pamela Colman Smith (Figure 14), which may just possibly tell us more about her work than the work itself does.

The second exhibition of de Zayas's work in 1910 must have been unusually sprightly. According to one of the critical accounts reprinted in the issue of *Camera Work* for July of that year,

On a stage built for the purpose nine feet wide and fifteen feet long, well known New York characters from the theatrical world and the world of art and letters and prominent people from the social world were represented in silhouettes cut out of thick cardboard, disporting themselves up and down Fifth Avenue on foot, in hansoms, taxicabs, private carriages, or public buses.

In his *Abstract Caricature of Stieglitz* (Figure 2), first reproduced in *Camera Work* in 1913, de Zayas factored out the details of his subject's physiognomy



until all that was left was a hint of the hypnotic expression of Stieglitz's eyes in the midst of arcane algebraic equations. The latter recall the times as much as the man, for this was the period when Picabia's mathematical symbols had already been adopted by a young American painter, John Covert, a cousin of Walter Conrad Arensberg, whose nightly receptions during the first years of the war were a ribald counterattraction to the serious conversations on lower Fifth Avenue.

For many years before his death in 1965 Abraham Walkowitz was better known as an indefatigable gallerygoer than as the artist he had been a half-century before. Like those to whom Stieglitz would finally and exclusively commit himself, Walkowitz had been in Europe early on, and when he returned to New York,

FIGURE 15

The Kiss, by Abraham Walkowitz, 1906. Pencil.  $9\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.179



he brought with him proofs of the new spirit abroad in Paris. His talent was perhaps fatally superficial, because he never succeeded in driving his pictorial ideas to a secure conclusion, but that Stieglitz recognized in his work something as yet not found in American painting we can perhaps still see in the pencil drawing of *The Kiss*, done in Paris in 1906 (Figure 15). The influence of Maillol is overwhelming, and of Maurice Denis as well, but the feeling for enlarged simple masses also predates Brancusi's first ovoid simplifications. On the basis of such a drawing one could have predicted further adventurous formal explorations, but Walkowitz settled for an easier direction. The lax lines and unsettled spotting of color, which are characteristic of his later watercolors, are like parodies of Rodin's disciplined example. Nonetheless, his thousand or so Rodinesque drawings of Isadora Duncan (of which there are seven in the collection) have considerable historic interest. So closely do they conform to the existing written descriptions of Isadora dancing that one wonders whether it might not be possible, by photographing them in sequence (there is another series in the Collection of the Société Anonyme at Yale), to achieve some sort of cinematic recreation of the great dancer in motion.

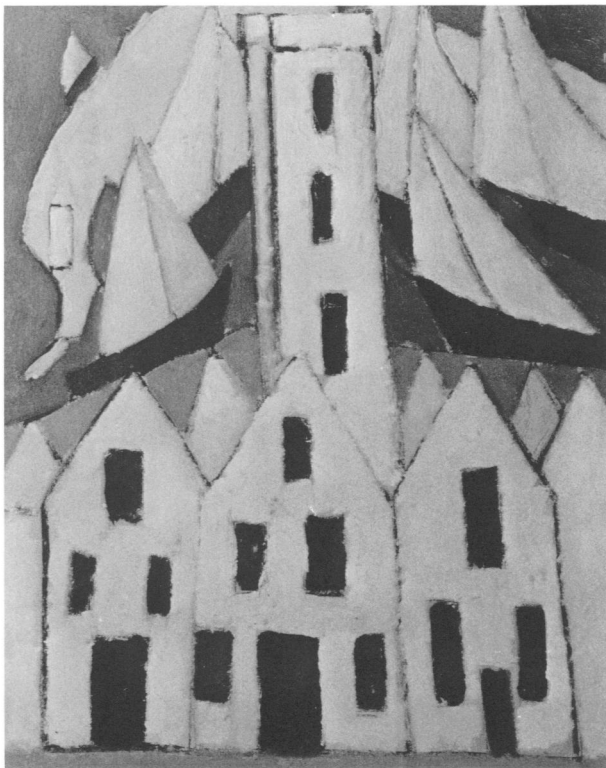
After these glimpses of the activities at 291 the perspective shifts, and the climax of the collection, so to speak, is reached with the groups of works by the five artists who claimed Stieglitz's attention in his later years. Stieglitz gave Marsden Hartley five one-man exhibitions at 291, only one less than Marin, and he showed him also, although less often, at the Intimate Gallery and An American Place. Of the five oils and two pastels by Hartley in the collection, the early *Portrait of a German Officer*, painted in Berlin in 1914, is one of his most famous works, an abstractly symbolic statement of German militarism executed with a powerful brush in the harsh colors of the imperial German flag. But the beginnings of Hartley's expressionism lay further back than his sojourn of 1914 in Berlin. As early as 1909, under the influence of Albert Pinkham Ryder, he had painted *Dark Mountain No. 1* (Figure 16), which carries on the reverse of the composition board the revealing inscription by Stieglitz: "In Mr. Hartley's opinion the finest, most expressive example of his work that year. Never exhibited." By 1916 Hartley was back in America and at Provincetown where he



**FIGURE 16**  
 Dark Mountain No. 1, by Marsden Hartley,  
 1909. Oil on composition board. 13  $\frac{7}{8}$   $\times$  11  $\frac{1}{8}$  in.  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz  
 Collection, 49.70.47

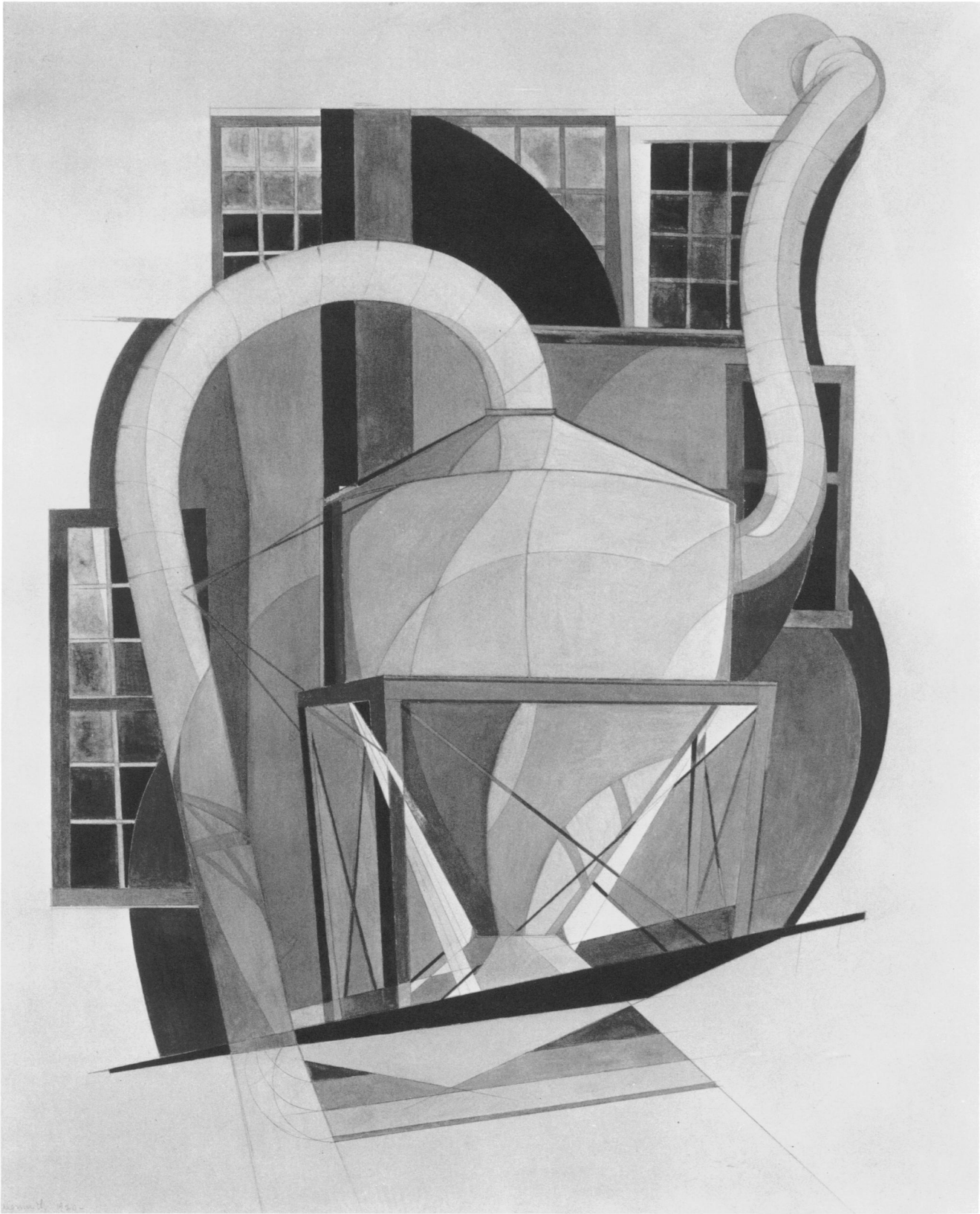
Painted Movement No. 5, Provincetown Houses (Figure 17). The prim colonial cottages of that old American seaside town have a strongly Hanseatic look, reminiscent of Feininger, who had chosen to remain in Germany, but for all this, in his passionate acceptance of the New England landscape Hartley had found the subject matter that from then on formed the basis for his remarkably personal yet unmistakably American brand of expressionism.

Charles Demuth first appeared in an exhibition Stieglitz arranged at the Anderson Galleries in 1925 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of 291 (the others included Marin, O’Keeffe, Dove, Hartley, and Strand), and he was given two one-man exhibitions at the Intimate Gallery, in 1926 and 1929. By then Demuth was master of his own crisp brand of Americanized cubism, in which he executed his immaculate but bleak cityscapes of the decaying industrial architecture and machinery of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Machinery of 1920 (Figure 18) is not only a characteristic but also an eminently successful example of Demuth’s ability to equate accurate—in this connection one wants to say “photographic”—observation with an abstract design that has its own independent power. The Metropolitan’s collection, which includes seventeen of his watercolors, also contains one of Demuth’s best-known oils, “I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold” of 1928, based on a poem by William Carlos Williams



**FIGURE 17**  
 Movement No. 5, Provincetown Houses, by  
 Marsden Hartley, 1916. Oil on composition  
 board. 20  $\times$  16 in. The Metropolitan Museum of  
 Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.43

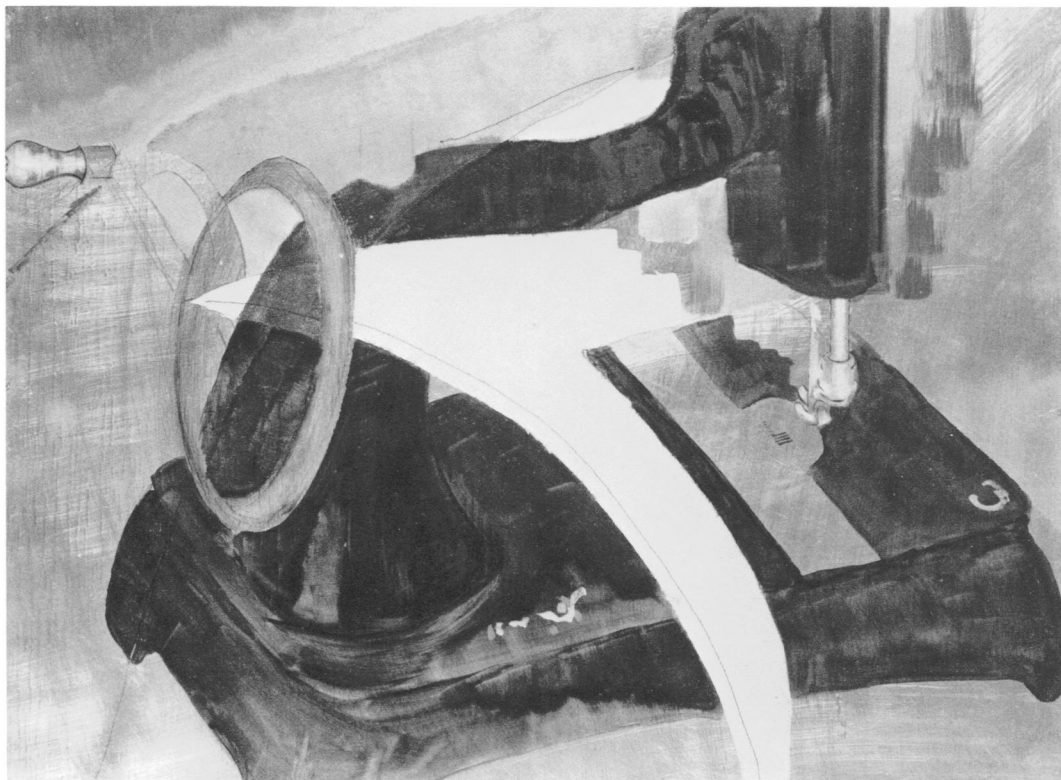
**FIGURE 18**  
 Machinery, by Charles Demuth, 1920. Tempera  
 and pencil on cardboard. 24  $\times$  19  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. The Metropo-  
 litan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Col-  
 lection, 49.59.2



**FIGURE 19**  
Red Cabbages,  
Rhubarb, and  
Orange, by  
Charles Demuth,  
1929. Water-  
color.  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{3}{8}$   
in. The Metro-  
politan Museum  
of Art, Alfred  
Stieglitz Collec-  
tion, 49.70.57



**FIGURE 20**  
Hand Sewing  
Machine, by  
Arthur G. Dove,  
1927. Oil on  
metal with ap-  
plied cloth.  $14\frac{7}{8}$   
 $\times 19\frac{3}{4}$  in. The  
Metropolitan  
Museum of Art,  
Alfred Stieglitz  
Collection,  
49.92.2



and intended as a tribute to the poet in the form of a "poster portrait." A contrasting aspect of Demuth's talent appears in the watercolor *Red Cabbages, Rhubarb, and Orange* of 1929 (Figure 19). It may not be the most complex of Demuth's impeccably ordered still lifes of fruit and flowers, but in its simplicity and clarity it has its own perfection, suggesting the similar qualities that Stieglitz admired so much in the work of Georgia O'Keeffe.

The interest in machinery, and in the invention of machinelike forms, which we can trace from Picabia through Macdonald-Wright to Demuth, appears again in Arthur G. Dove's curious collage in cloth and paint on metal, *Hand Sewing Machine* of 1927 (Figure 20), where the sweep of the design, and the equivocal treatment of the separate shapes, which vacillate between abstract and representational, are unmistakably Dove's. The much earlier *Pagan Philosophy* (Figure 21), a pastel of 1913, reminds us that Dove had been one of the first American painters to conceive of a completely abstract or nonobjective design, based upon the experience of nature, but a nature purged of natural appearances. Such is the important *Nature Symbolized, No. 2*, of 1911, which is now in the Stieglitz Collection in the Art Institute of Chicago, one of the first total abstractions painted by an American, and within less than a year of Kandinsky's breakthrough of 1910. The collection also includes, among thirty-two paintings, watercolors, and drawings by Dove, the *Portrait of Ralph Dusenberry*, one of Dove's humorous collages, in this instance constructed of bits of wood and paint, the whole framed by a carpenter's folding rule.

John Marin commanded Stieglitz's affection and esteem longer than any other artist, in fact from 1909, when he first showed his work at 291, until his death in 1946. It seems proper then that the group of Marin's works should be the largest in the collection, fifty-nine in all, including representative examples of every period, from a watercolor of a London omnibus of 1908 to the watercolor of *Bathers, Addison, Maine*, of 1941. To this list may be added the seventy-four etchings and five paintings, two in oil, from 1929 to 1942, which Marin presented to the collection in exchange for works he considered too tentative to be retained permanently. Among the early New York paintings is an interesting association item, a watercolor of 1911 of the view looking down Fifth Avenue from 291, executed



FIGURE 21  
*Pagan Philosophy*, by Arthur G. Dove, 1913.  
Pastel.  $21\frac{1}{2} \times 17\frac{7}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum  
of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.74

in Marin's earlier impressionist manner. More characteristic of the modern note that Marin introduced at 291 is the 1914 watercolor of St. Paul's (Figure 22), in which the dynamics of cubist disintegration that Marin had seen in Delaunay's views of the Eiffel Tower have been used to interpret the peaks of Manhattan.

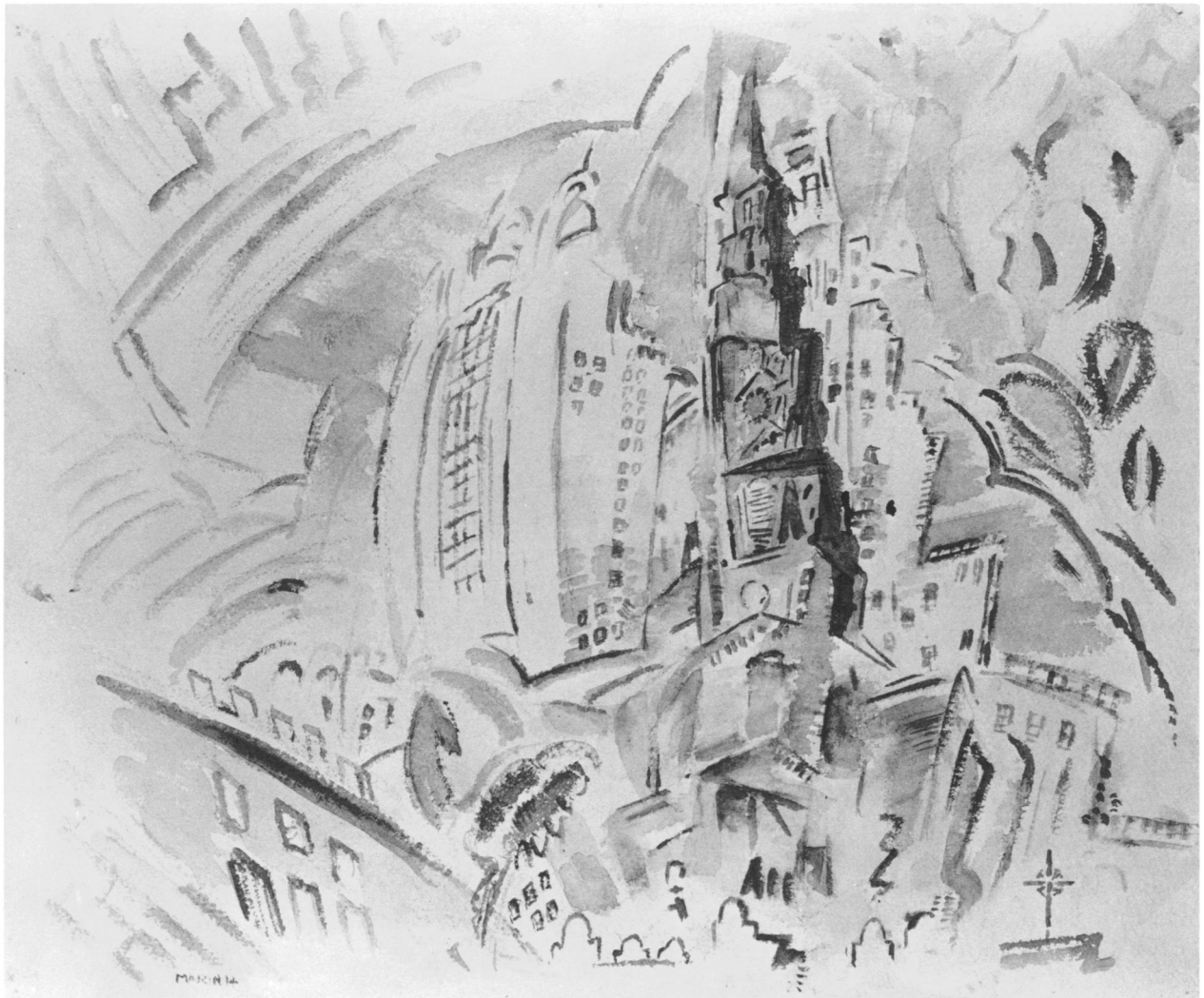
Among the noble watercolors of the 1920s and 1930s the *Two-Master Becalmed* of 1923 (Figure 23) reveals Marin's mature control both of the watercolor medium and of the architecture of design. There are suggestions here of Cézanne, rather than of Delaunay, in the balance between abstract and representational forms, be-

tween color and space, so that the often feverish restlessness of the New York views is replaced by the monumental dignity of a unified image. The same effect prevails in *White Mountains, Autumn*, of 1927 (Figure 24), so opposite in its effect of sweeping objectivity to Hartley's much earlier *Dark Mountain No. 1* (Figure 16), with its aggressive and gloomy introspection.

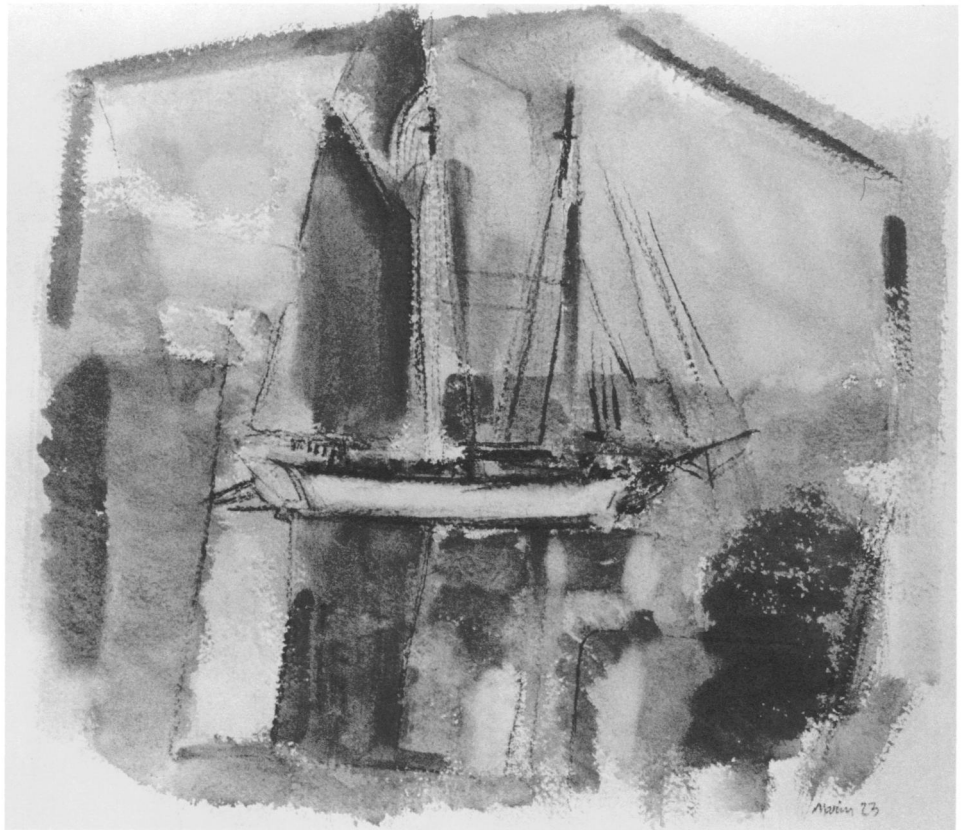
The fourteen paintings and drawings by Georgia O'Keeffe were selected by Miss O'Keeffe herself to become a part of the Stieglitz Collection. There are three early abstract drawings of 1915, from the period

FIGURE 22

St. Paul's, Manhattan, by John Marin, 1914. Watercolor.  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 18\frac{7}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.70.110



**FIGURE 23**  
Two-Master Becalmed,  
Maine, by John Marin,  
1923. Watercolor.  $16\frac{3}{8} \times$   
 $19\frac{3}{4}$  in. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, Alfred  
Stieglitz Collection,  
49.70.128



**FIGURE 24**  
White Mountains, Au-  
tumn, by John Marin,  
1927. Watercolor.  $19\frac{1}{4} \times$   
 $24\frac{1}{8}$  in. The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, Alfred  
Stieglitz Collection,  
49.70.136

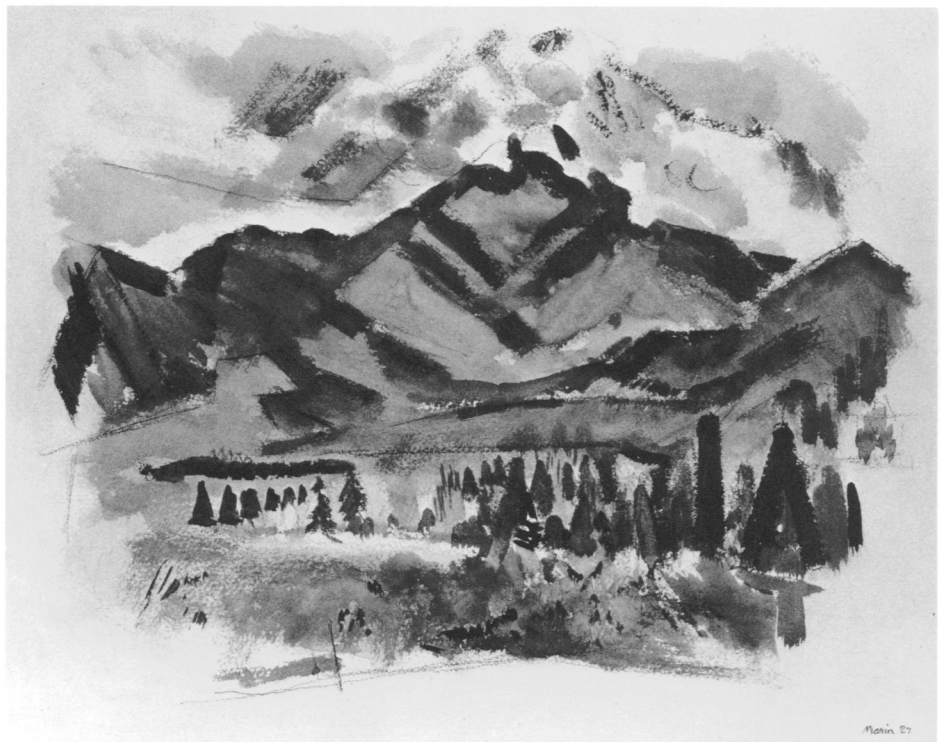




FIGURE 25  
Deer's Horn, near Cameron (From *The Faraway Nearby*), by Georgia O'Keeffe, 1938. Oil on canvas. 36 × 40 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 49.37.11

when her work first came to Stieglitz's attention, and just before he included her drawings in a group show of 1916 and her first one-man exhibition the following year. Among the oils, which date from 1924 to 1944, are such familiar and important paintings as *Black Iris* of 1926, *Black Abstraction* of 1927, *Ranchos Church* of 1930, and *White Canadian Barn No. 2* of 1932. These are deservedly well known as masterpieces of structural clarity, comparable in their own way to the achievements of Stieglitz himself in his photographs of trees and clouds taken during his summers at Lake George. *Deer's Horn, near Cameron* (Figure 25) of 1938 may be taken as a paradigm of O'Keeffe's style in those years when *An American Place* harbored that special tradition of American painting between the wars. The subtitle of the painting, *From the Faraway Nearby*, communicates that mystical quality in O'Keeffe's vision, enhanced by the clarity of the New Mexican atmosphere, where objects far away, in this instance the

barren butte in the distance, impinge upon the nearer vision.

Before Alfred Stieglitz died in 1946, the activities of 291 had already become part of our country's historical past, and the tradition that he had fostered at *An American Place* was being eclipsed by the ruthless power and massive scale of American abstract expressionism. More recently it has seemed as if the values that Stieglitz upheld have also gone the way of history, but to say that Stieglitz's efforts were of only historical importance would be to claim too little, as well as to becloud the issue. American art must constantly reappraise American sensibilities, and for the 1940s and 1950s there had to be a new kind of painting. Stieglitz's accomplishment was to help us to discover what American painting could be in a period when few collectors, critics, or curators had confidence in the validity of strictly American forms of expression. That he created this confidence and by so doing helped his chosen painters to create their best work can never go unrecognized.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

For assistance in the preparation of this article the author is deeply grateful to Donald C. Gallup of Yale University, Peter C. Bunnell of the Museum of Modern Art, and Fiona Morgan of the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute. Robert Doty's *Photo Secession, Photography as a Fine Art* (Rochester, 1960) contains a helpful chapter on the Little Galleries, a selected bibliography, and a checklist of the exhibitions at 291. Doty (p.70) quotes the description from *Camera Work* of the Little Galleries as they appeared in 1905. In 1906 Stieglitz was obliged to move to two even smaller rooms across the hall. The description in this text is based on photographs of exhibitions in the new rooms. *America and Alfred Stieglitz, A Collective Portrait* (New York, 1934), edited by Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford, Dorothy Norman, Paul Rosenfeld, and Harold Rugg, contains important tributes to Stieglitz published during his lifetime, a bibliography, and an incomplete list of exhibitions at his three galleries. Stieglitz's conversations at *An American Place* have been reported by Herbert J. Seligmann in *Alfred Stieglitz Talking* (New Haven, 1966). For Picabia, de Zayas, and John Covert see G. H. Hamilton, "John Covert, Early American Modern," *College Art Journal* 12 (1952-1953) pp. 37-42. There is as yet no published checklist of the complete collection before or since its dispersal, but there is a *Catalogue of the Alfred Stieglitz Collection for Fisk University* (Nashville, 1949). Selections from the entire collection were exhibited at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1944 and at the Museum of Modern Art in 1947.