

FORGERY  
REPLICA  
FICTION

Temporalities of German Renaissance Art

CHRISTOPHER S. WOOD

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TO ROMY

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and Studies, vol. 40, 1998), 225–44; “Remarks on the Portrait of Otto I at Innichen,” in *Michael Pacher und sein Kreis*, Proceedings of Symposium, Brunico 1998 (Bolzano: Athesia, 1999), 105–12; “Print Technology and the Brixen Globes,” *Kunsthistoriker: Mitteilungen des österreichischen Kunsthistorikerverbandes* 15/16 (1999/2000): 15–20; “Notation of Visual Information in the Earliest Archeological Scholarship,” *Word and Image* 17 (2001): 94–118; “Maximilian I as Archeologist,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 58 (2005): 1128–74; “The Credulity Problem,” in *The Age of the Antiquaries in Europe and China, 1400–1800*, ed. Peter N. Miller and François Louis (New Haven: Yale University Press, forthcoming).

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# Abbreviations

- Bartsch Adam Bartsch, *Le peintre graveur*, 21 vols. Leipzig, 1818–76.
- CIL *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 17 vols. Berlin, 1863–.
- Hollstein F. W. H. Hollstein, *German Engravings, Etchings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1400–1700*, 68 vols. Amsterdam: Hertzberger, 1954–2006.
- Schreiber W. L. Schreiber, *Handbuch der Holz- und Metallschnitte des XV. Jahrhunderts*, 8 vols. Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1926–30.
- Strauss Walter L. Strauss, *The Complete Drawings of Albrecht Dürer*, 6 vols. New York: Abaris, 1974.
- Winkler Friedrich Winkler, *Die Zeichnungen Albrecht Dürers*, 4 vols. Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1936–37.

# 1

# CREDULITY

## Druid portraits

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This project was set in motion by an intractable puzzle: the discovery, by a German scholar traveling in the wooded hill country north of Regensburg in the early 1490s, of sculpted portraits of ancient druid priests. The scholar published an eyewitness account of those portraits. Yet no such images can ever have existed, for the druids, a pagan priestly fraternity who had played a major role in ancient Celtic societies, left no material relics. The Roman conquerors of Gaul and Britain outlawed the druids in the first century A.D., and only fragments of their oral learning survived in the Irish and Welsh bardic and vatic traditions. What is more, as Julius Caesar himself explicitly said, the druids had never been in Germany at all.<sup>1</sup>

The imaginative wanderer who fell upon these impossible portraits was Conrad Celtis (1459–1508), poet laureate of the German Empire, professor of rhetoric and poetry at the University of Ingolstadt, philologist, antiquarian, and scholarly impresario. He reported the discovery of the druid portraits in his *Norimberga*, a historical and topographical treatise on the city of Nuremberg.<sup>2</sup> Here Celtis described the Hercynian forest, invoking

1. Caesar, *Commentaries on the Gallic War* 6.21. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II) quoted the passage in his treatise on Germany (1458), widely read and discussed north of the Alps in the last decades of the fifteenth century, published as *De situ, ritu, moribus et conditionibus Teutoniae descriptio* (Leipzig, 1496); *Deutschland, der Brieftraktat an Martin Mayer und Jakob Wimpfeling's Antworten und Einwendungen*, ed. Adolf Schmidt (Cologne: Böhlau, 1962), 3.7, pp. 131–32.

2. *De situ et moribus Norimbergae*, in Celtis, *Quattuor libri amorum* (Nuremberg, 1502), m3r–p6r. Albert Werminghoff, *Conrad Celtis und sein Buch über Nürnberg* (Freiburg: Boltze, 1921). Milestones in the modern study of the geographical preoccupations of German humanists are Paul

the classical term for the vast uncharted mountainous and forested country north and east of the Roman provinces of Raetia and Noricum, beyond the *limes* or frontier of the ancient empire.<sup>3</sup> On his earlier travels, he said, he had found the German forest teeming with the traces of prehistoric religious practice. Along the Rhine he had seen the groves sacred to the peoples of ancient Germany and Sarmatia. He had found the place of the Tribochi, a tribe mentioned by Tacitus, and supposed that they were called after three oaks consecrated by ancient religion to the nymphs.<sup>4</sup> But “nothing in this forest,” Celtis wrote, “is more famous than the monasteries of the druids.” The druids, he explained, “were a race of philosophers living in Gaul in the Greek fashion, who were named *apo druos*, that is, after the oaks. Because in ancient times it was believed that prophecies poured forth from those trees, as the oaks in Abraham and Gideon testify,<sup>5</sup> interpreters of prophecies and oracular responses and the lightning bolts to which that tree is subject, convened among those oaks. Such interpreters we have recently seen when Johannes Tolhopf, a man of the highest erudition and genius, led us into his country at the foot of the *Fichtelgebirge*.”<sup>6</sup> Celtis’s friend Tolhopf was a cathedral canon in Regensburg, a doctor of law, an astronomer and astrologist, and a poet.<sup>7</sup> Deep in the forest, Celtis reported, the two travelers had come across what appeared to be evidence of an ancient druid presence: “Here as we were wandering randomly about the monastery, we caught sight of six stone images, of the very oldest stone, inserted in the wall of the portal of the temple: each was

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Joachimsmen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtsschreibung in Deutschland unter dem Einfluss des Humanismus* (Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner, 1910); Gerald Strauss, *Sixteenth-Century Germany: Its Topography and Topographers* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959); and Gernot Michael Müller, *Die “Germania generalis” des Conrad Celtis: Studien mit Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001); see 294–99 on the *Norimberga*.

3. Kaspar Zeuss, *Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme* (Munich, 1837), 2–4.

4. Celtis, *Quattuor libri amorum*, m7r; *Norimberga*, ed. Werminghoff, 113–14, 119.

5. Gen. 18:8, Judges 6:19.

6. “Sed nihil in hac silva Druidum coenobiis illustrius est. Genus illud philosophorum apud Gallos Graecanice viventium erat, quos apo tou drus druos, id est a quercubus, nominavere, inter quas, ut ab illis antiquitus ut Abrahe et Gideonis quercus testis est, oracula effundi credebantur, ita illi veluti oraculorum et sortium fulminumque, quorum illa arbor obnoxia, interpretes tales consedebant, quales nudiud vidimus, dum Johannes Theophilus [Tolhopf], vir summum eruditione et ingenio, nos in patriam suam ad radices Piniferi secum adduceret.” Celtis, *Quattuor libri amorum*, m8r; *Norimberga*, ed. Werminghoff, 122.

7. See Johannes Trithemius’s comments on Tolhopf in his literary history (1494), quoted *in extenso* by Klaus Arnold, “Vates Hercules: Beiträge zur Biographie des Humanisten Janus Tolophus,” in *Poesis et Pictura*, ed. Stephan Füssel and Joachim Knappe, Festschrift Dieter Wuttke (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1989), 133. See also Anton Maria Kobolt, *Lexikon Baierischer Gelehrten und Schriftsteller* (Landshut, 1795), 693. Engelbert Klüpfel, *De vita et scripti Conradi Celtis Protucii*, 2 vols. (Freiburg, 1813–1827), 1: 105–6, 109.

seven feet tall, with bare feet, uncovered head, a Greek robe and hood, and a little satchel, a beard reaching all the way down to the waist and bifurcated around the nostrils, in the hands a book and a Diogenes-staff, with severe brow and solemn eyebrows, with head bent forward, eyes fixed on the ground.”<sup>8</sup>

It sounds very much like Celtis was describing jamb figures, three on each side of a portal, of the sort found on some German churches of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>9</sup> The jamb figures on the *Adamspforte* at the cathedral of Bamberg, for example, modeled roughly on Reims and dating from around 1235, represented St. Peter, Adam and Eve, the Emperor Heinrich and Empress Cunigunde, and St. Stephen (fig. 1).<sup>10</sup> The books and the bare feet that Celtis describes suggest that he was looking at images of apostles or prophets rather than kings or princes.<sup>11</sup> Bare feet were initially an attribute of apostles, but by Chartres at the latest were extended to prophets. Although prophets as jamb figures were not so common in Germany, the emphasis on the long beards and severe expressions points to prophets rather than apostles.<sup>12</sup> Many of the fourteen prophets

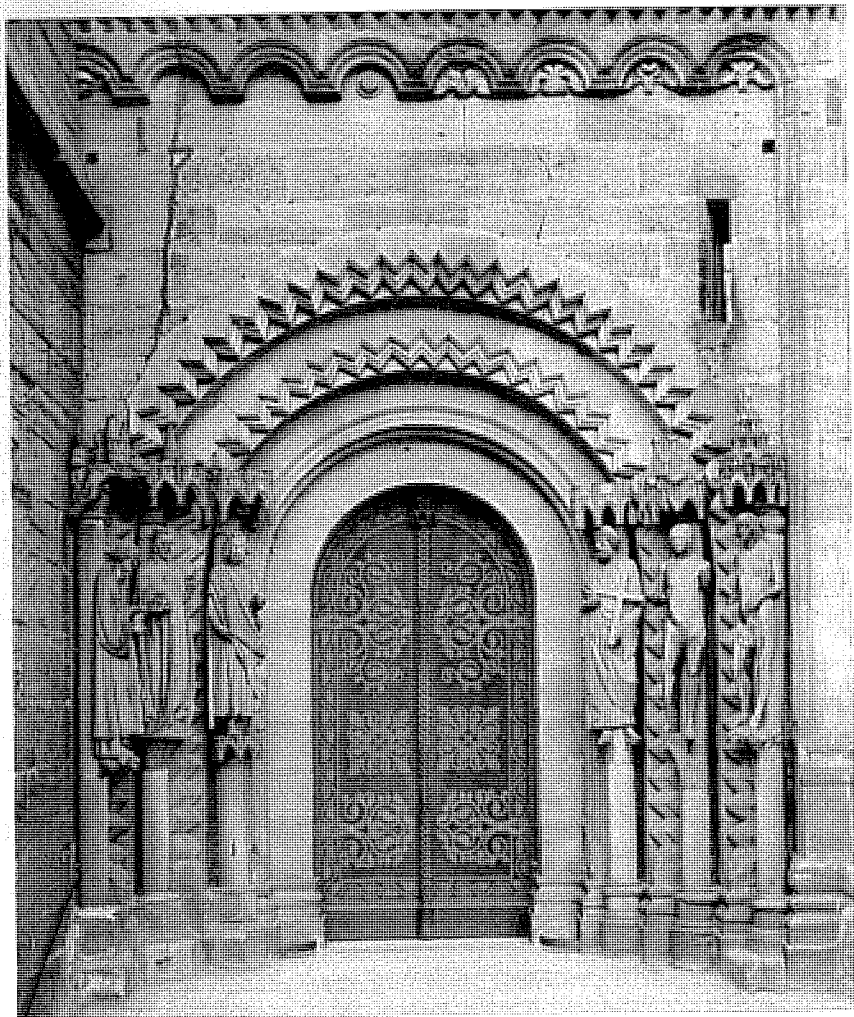
8. “Hic dum forte in coenobium divertissemus, imagines lapideas sex vetustissimo saxo ad fores templi parieti insertas conspeximus: septem pedum singulae, nudis pedibus, capita intecti, Graecanico pallio et cucullato perulaque et barba ad inguina usque promissa et circa naris fistulas bifurcata, in manibus liber et baculus Diogenicus, severa fronte et tristi supercilio, obstipo capite, figentes lumina terris.” Celtis, *Quattuor libri amorum*, m8r; *Narimberga*, ed. Werminghoff, 123–24.

9. Portals with any sculpture at all are rare in this part of Germany. Among churches built before 1350, in all of Upper Bavaria, Lower Bavaria, and the Upper Palatinate, only the cathedral at Regensburg has a portal with figural sculpture. Many thirteenth-century churches in that region have recessed portals with unadorned flanking columns, for example, Biburg, a Benedictine monastery, or Mallersdorf. However, many portals no longer survive. It is estimated that 200 portals were built in Germany between 1200 and 1250, and another 120 between 1250 and 1350. Gernot Fischer, *Figurenportale in Deutschland, 1350–1530* (PhD diss., University of Tübingen, 1987) (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989), 78, 104.

10. The sculpted figures of the *Adamspforte* are now in the Diocesan Museum, Bamberg. The oldest surviving jamb figures in the German-speaking realm are the apostles on the *Galluspforte* of the Münster in Basel, from the third quarter of the twelfth century. The *Fürstentor* at Bamberg has small apostles standing on the shoulders of prophets. The only other surviving jamb figures from before 1350 are the Wise and Foolish Virgins on the northeast portal of St. Sebald in Nuremberg. There are many more examples of jamb figures from after 1350. See Fischer, *Figurenportale in Deutschland*, 40–41. The very first jamb figures on columns were on the three portals at St. Denis begun in 1135, perhaps inspired by Moissac. Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle en France*, 3rd ed. (Paris: A. Colin, 1928), 391–92.

11. According to Celtis the figures were carrying *libri*, which can mean either books, appropriate to apostles, or scrolls, appropriate to prophets. On prophets, see Karl Künstle, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 2 vols. (Freiburg: Herder, 1926–28), 1: 303–8.

12. Gernot Fischer, *Figurenportale in Deutschland*, lists nineteen examples of prophet cycles on portals, all with at least six figures. But all of them except one are seated figures in the archivolts. The only exceptions are the animated, twisting prophets from Hl. Kreuz at Schwäbisch



1. Bamberg,  
Cathedral, east side,  
*Adamsporte*, c. 1235.  
Photo:Foto Marburg/  
Art Resource, NY.

on the middle portal at the cathedral of Strasbourg, though shod and all but one with covered head, wear the mustaches Celtis thought so notable (fig. 2).<sup>13</sup> Celtis also said that they were holding a kind of staff, *baculus Diogenicus*. The contemporary German translator of the *Norimberga*, Georg Alt, offered a parenthetical explanation: *Als der philosophicus Diogenes drug* (“like what the philosopher Diogenes used to carry”).<sup>14</sup> Presumably this

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Gmünd, work of the Parler shop from the middle of the fourteenth century. These figures—only two survive—stood under baldachins. *Die Parler und der schöne Stil 1350–1400: europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern* (Cologne: Museen der Stadt Köln, 1978–1980), 1: 321–24.

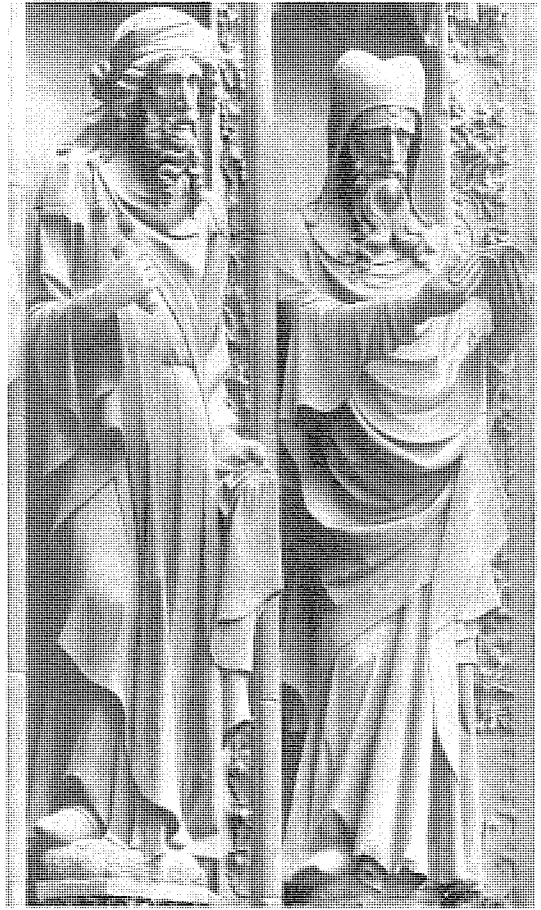
13. These figures date from the last quarter of the thirteenth century. Although Celtis had never been to Strasbourg or to France, such works may have been reflected in lesser, now vanished, German churches.

14. Texts of Alt’s translation are in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 951, fol. 55–116 (1497–99, copy by Hartmann Schedel); and Cgm 4995, fol. 2–76 (sixteenth-century copy).

was a way of distinguishing whatever the pagan druids were holding from a Christian crosier or pastoral staff.

How is it possible that Celtis, learned and well traveled, could have believed that he was looking not at images of biblical personages, but at historical portraits of druid priests? This is the only account of a German archeological expedition from this period, the spare northern counterpart to Felice Feliciano's famous narrative of the antiquarian excursion around the Lago di Garda undertaken in 1464 together with Giovanni Marcanova, Samuele da Tradante, and Andrea Mantegna.<sup>15</sup> And yet Celtis's strange narrative has never been addressed by art historical scholarship.<sup>16</sup>

Celtis's identification is wildly improbable, but it was cited by other historians of the time as if reliable. Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514), the Nuremberg physician and antiquarian scholar, copied Celtis's report directly into his own manuscript anthology of inscriptions and texts in 1504. The Bavarian court historian Johannes Aventinus, Celtis's most distinguished pupil, reported in his *Bavarian Chronicle* that "Conrad Celtis says he saw images of the druids carved in stone at a monastery in Bavaria, not far from the *Fichtelgebirge*."<sup>17</sup> Possibly Aventinus de-



2. Strasbourg, Cathedral, west façade, middle portal, right side, late thirteenth century.

15. For a summary of recent scholarship on the excursion and the *lublatio*, the text that records the adventure, see Rino Avesani, "Felicianerie," in *L'antiquario Felice Feliciano Veronese*, ed. Agostino Contò and Leonardo Quaquarelli, Atti del Convegno di Studi Verona 1993 (Padua: Antenore, 1995), 10–12.

16. Celtis's early nineteenth-century biographer Klüpfel quoted the mysterious passage and asked parenthetically, after the word "monastery" (*coenobium*) in the first line: "Quale?," that is, which monastery? Klüpfel, *De vita et scripti Conradi Celtis*, 2: 38. The passage is also cited by Jacques Ridé, *L'image du germain dans la pensée et la littérature allemandes de la redécouverte de Tacite à la fin du XVIIe siècle* (Lille: Atelier Reproduction des Thèses, Université de Lille III; Paris: Champion, 1977), 1: 239, who seems to dismiss it as a fantasy, and by Müller, "*Germania generatis*," 420, without comment. The only scholar who tried to answer the question is the historian Klaus Arnold in an article of 1989 on Johannes Tolhopf. Arnold proposed the Benedictine foundation Reichenbach as the site of the discovery; as secondary possibilities he named Ensdorf, Kastl, and Michelfeldt. Arnold, "Vates Hercules," 131–32 and n. 6.

17. Aventinus, *Bayerische Chronik*, chap. 26, in Aventinus, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 6 vols. (Munich: Kaiser, 1880–1908), 4:106. Aventinus also says that he and Celtis went looking for antiquities

clined to question the veracity of the report out of respect for his teacher, although he had been dead for years. In his incomplete *Germania illustrata* of 1531, Aventinus quoted Celtis's passage about the discovery of the druid monastery, at length and verbatim.<sup>18</sup>

One aspect of the puzzle has proved easy to solve: the actual site where Celtis saw the statues. In the text of the *Norimberga* he did not name the monastery. But Hartmann Schedel revealed the location in the margin of his antiquarian manuscript: the Premonstratensian monastery of Speinshart.<sup>19</sup> Speinshart is located near the town of Eschenbach in a sparsely settled region of the Upper Palatinate north of Amberg and southeast of Bayreuth.<sup>20</sup> By tradition the monastery was founded in 1145 by a local nobleman, Adelfolk von Reiffenberg, and settled by eleven Premonstratensian monks from Wilten near Innsbruck. Hartmann Schedel probably learned the location directly from the two explorers, Celtis and Tolhopf. He almost surely knew the monastery itself because he worked for several years as city physician in Amberg and during those years was actively hunting for old inscriptions. Speinshart was a functioning monastery in Celtis's day, indeed it was thriving under Abbot Georg Ochs (Taurus) von Guntzendorf (1420?–1503, abbot from 1457).<sup>21</sup> The medieval church at Speinshart,

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together in Regensburg in 1502, surely not their only joint expedition. Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtsschreibung*, 160n20, and generally 110–12, 155–62, on Celtis. Aventinus first had contact with Celtis as a student in Ingolstadt in 1496 and then followed him to Vienna in 1497. Gerald Strauss, *Historian in an Age of Crisis: The Life and Work of Johannes Aventinus, 1477–1534* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 23–24.

18. Aventinus, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 6:156–57. He also copied the passage another time. It must be noted that the humanist scholar Willibald Pirckheimer, who must have read about the discovery and ought to have taken an interest, was silent on the subject.

19. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 716. On the bottom of fol. 298r appears the heading *In Monasterio Speynsshart ordinis premanstrentensis*. At the top of the next page, 298v, begins the transcription of Celtis's passage on the druid sculptures, beginning with the phrase *imagines lapideas sex* and continuing for more than a hundred words. Schedel also wrote in the margin: "DRUIDES philosophi apud Gallos graece viventes" (druids, philosophers living in Gaul in the Greek manner). Schedel did not attribute the passage or the discovery to Celtis; nor was it obligatory to do so in such an anthology.

Klaus Arnold and I noted the connection to Speinshart independently in 1995. Much earlier the historian of the Premonstratensian order Norbert Backmund had cited the page in Schedel on Speinshart but did not comment on the supposed portraits; *Die Charherrenarden und ihre Stifte in Bayern* (Passau: Neue Presse, 1966), 193.

20. Speinshart is about thirty miles' journey beyond Amberg, which is itself forty miles east of Nuremberg and forty miles north of Regensburg. On the monastery, see Hermann and Anna Bauer, *Klöster in Bayern* (Munich: Beck, 1985), 270–73.

21. Speinshart had been elevated from status of priory to abbey in 1459, under Ochs. A. Eder, "Geschichte des Klosters Speinshart," *Verhandlungen des Historischen Vereins für Oberpfalz und Regensburg* 25 (1868): 34–36, 43–44. Ochs was visitor of Premonstratensian monasteries in Bavaria, Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary. He wrote a history of the abbey which is unfortunately lost; Peter Seyl, "850 Jahre Kloster Speinshart," in *850 Jahre Prämonstratenserabtei Speinshart 1145–1995* (Pressath: Bodner, 1995), 12.

together with its portal, was completely destroyed in the seventeenth century in favor of a modern church, and all we know today about the portal and its jamb figures is in the end what Celtis tells us about them.<sup>22</sup>

Schedel and Aventinus knew exactly where Celtis had seen the images. If they copied and cited the passage, they must have found the iconographical label plausible. The fact that Celtis suppressed the name of the monastery in his published account does not mean that it was all a ruse and that he hoped no one would expose it. For Celtis habitually shrouded his discoveries in mystery. In the preface to his edition of the plays of Hrosvita, a tenth-century nun, Celtis says he found the manuscript at “a Benedictine monastery,” without telling which monastery, although of course it would have been of interest to readers. This seems a violation of one of the basic principles of scholarship. The reaction of Celtis’s own loyal pupil Aventinus proves that such an expectation is not anachronistic. In a text published in 1518, ten years after Celtis’s death, Aventinus pointed out that Celtis had found the Hrosvita manuscript at St. Emmeram in Regensburg, and then said: “But that he was silent about this matter, I cannot marvel enough.”<sup>23</sup>

Celtis did not always quite play by the rules, even the rules of his own time. He had a gift for irritating his colleagues. At Ingolstadt he abandoned his lectures before the semester was out and was suspected by the theology professors of irreligion.<sup>24</sup> He habitually failed to return the codexes he had borrowed, including the Hrosvita manuscript and the *Ligurinus*, a much-prized and only recently discovered history of the reign of Emperor Frederick I. This was a serious offense. Lorenz Beheim, the Nuremberg antiquarian, wrote to Pirckheimer around 1506: “He does well in undertaking the publication of *Ligurinus*, for he thereby will turn his thievery to the public good. For I know someone who was with him when he received that book from the monastery of Ebrach. Although it was only lent to him, he has not returned it to this day.”<sup>25</sup> Celtis’s mentor Johannes von Dalberg once lent a Cicero manuscript to the printer Jakob Köbel, who then rashly passed it

22. The church Celtis and Tolhopf toured was presumably begun in the twelfth century, although there is no proof of this. Construction at Speinshart even if launched in the twelfth century very likely extended into the next. The period of most intense building activity in Bavaria was 1200 to 1250, with particular impetus from Lombard sculptors. Hans Karlinger, *Die romanische Steinplastik in Altbayern und Salzburg 1050–1260* (Augsburg: Filser, 1924). A window dated 1333, preserved by a seventeenth-century watercolor, gives us some idea of the splendors of the medieval structure; Gabriela Fritzsche, “Das Speinsharter Wurzel-Jesse Fenster,” *Pantheon* 43 (1985): 5–14.

23. Aventinus, *Henrici IV. vita* (Augsburg, 1518), dedicatory preface, quoted in Karl Schottenloher, *Die Widmungsvorrede im Buch des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1953), 17n17: “Quam ob rem autem id obticuerit, satis mirari non possum.”

24. Lewis Spitz, *Conrad Celtis: The German Arch-humanist* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), 21, 33.

25. Pirckheimer, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Emil Reicke (Munich: Beck, 1940), no. 146, p. 485, cited and translated in Spitz, *Conrad Celtis*, 98.



3. (Facing) Ancient gem or cameo (?) found near Olmütz, Moravia. Woodcut in Petrus Apianus and Bartholomeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 451. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

on to Celtis. Dalberg actually sued Köbel for the manuscript but eventually succeeded in getting it from Celtis.<sup>26</sup> Johannes Eck, the antagonist of Luther and professor at Ingolstadt from 1510, accused him posthumously of having stolen the *Tabula Peutingeriana* as well, the famous medieval copy of a fourth-century Roman map.<sup>27</sup>

In 1504 Celtis wrote to the Venetian publisher Aldus Manutius claiming that he had discovered the lost books of Ovid's *Fasti*, covering the months July to December, in a Swabian monastery. Many believed that the books had been destroyed by the church in the Middle Ages for their idolatrous treatment of the Caesars.<sup>28</sup> It is no wonder that the famous literary enigma appealed to Celtis. In his letter to Aldus Manutius, Celtis said that he had seen and transcribed the opening verses of book 7. Aldus, despite his often-professed admiration for the German scholars, was apparently not taken in and asked to see the rest before sending him a contract.<sup>29</sup> In fact the new verses had been composed by an eleventh-century monk. Celtis had come across them in a manuscript; who is to say whether he suspected the truth about them. Many scholars even into the seventeenth century were taken in by the verses and by joking rumors spread by humanists about the existence of the missing books.<sup>30</sup> Still, it is hard to imagine what Celtis had in mind when he promised Aldus that he would deliver the missing six books.

Celtis's approach to antiquarian scholarship was active and participatory. His interventions and interpretations were instantly taken up into the early archeological record, false trails for future scholars. In their sylloge or anthology of ancient European inscriptions and other antiquities, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (1534), the Ingolstadt scholars Petrus Apianus and Bartholomeus Amantius published a mysterious *trouaille* from the province of Moravia, an "inscription found by Conrad Celtis in July 1504 on a seal embedded in a gold cross in the monastery at Ritisch [Hradisch] near Olmütz [Olomouc]" (fig. 3).<sup>31</sup> The names Venus and Iocus (god of jests) are hardly perfect matches with the figures. The seated, winged figure must be a Muse rather than Venus. The putto hoisting a mask with long braids is reminiscent of the Cupid who sports with a Silenus mask, familiar from

26. Celtis, *Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, ed. Hans Rupprich (Munich: Beck, 1934), nos. 229–30.

27. Spitz, *Conrad Celtis*, 99.

28. Angela Fritsen, *Renaissance Commentaries on Ovid's Fasti* (PhD diss., Yale University, 1995), 8–14.

29. Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, no. 315, September 3, 1504. On Aldus's relations with Celtis and other German scholars, see Martin Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979), 199–201, 264–78.

30. Fritsen, *Renaissance Commentaries on Ovid's Fasti*.

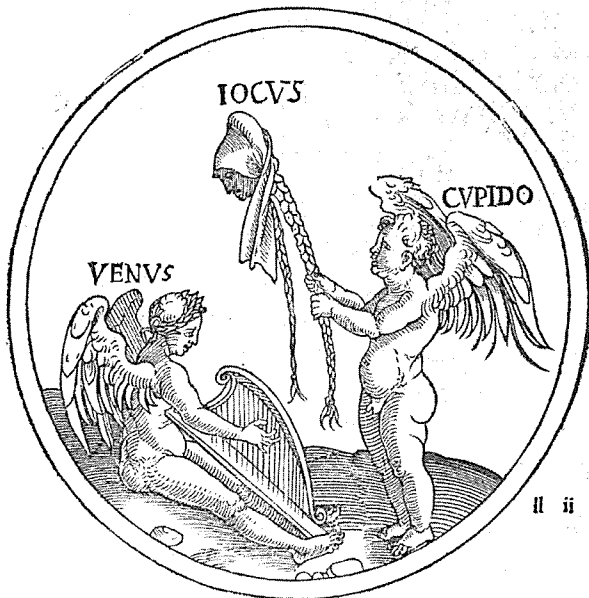
31. Apianus and Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 451. The term *epigramma* could refer to an incised image as much as to a textual inscription.

¶ In oppido Vvels in muro ecclesie parochialis

T· FL· CAMPESTRINVS VET· ET IVL  
EXORATA IVL EXORAT· LIB·  
COS FIL OB· AN· XX ET SECVN·  
DINO CANDIBIANO BE· COS·  
GENERO VIVI FECERVNT·

MORAVIAE PROVIN·  
CIAE GERMANIAE MAG

Epigramma repertum a CONRADO  
CBL TE in Gemma Signatoria, aureo  
cruci insitū in monasterio RI TISCH  
iuxta Olmuntz. Mense Iulio  
Anno Domini M. D. I III.



ancient art.<sup>32</sup> Celtis was in Olmütz between July and September of 1504 working on a description of the city for his *Germania illustrata*.<sup>33</sup> A letter to Celtis written just after his departure by Martin Sinapinus, cathedral canon and member of the humanistic circle in Olmütz, the Sodalitas Maiorhoviana, describes several antique gems of the sort that Celtis and his colleagues must have been collecting and admiring during the three-month stay, allowing that Celtis had provoked him to search for antiquities in Moravia.<sup>34</sup> Celtis also received a postdeparture letter from Georgius Boorius Caetianus, another member of the circle in Olmütz, recounting a conversation with the bishop of Olmütz in which the “Marcomannic” antiquities of Hradisch were discussed. Caetianus’s letter implies that Celtis had not himself visited Hradisch, however. He says that the bishop expressed his regret that Celtis was not there to interpret some gems he had found.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps one of these colleagues sent Celtis a drawing of this gem or cameo, evidently preserved as a spolium in a liturgical cross. Harder to explain is the apparent fact that the figure of the winged, harp-playing “Venus” had already appeared as the Muse Thalia in a woodcut illustration in Celtis’s *Quattuor libri amorum*, published in Nuremberg in 1502.<sup>36</sup>

Celtis was enchanted by the idea of the druids. He saw them as the sponsors of a native Germanic religion, a monotheistic nature cult with roots in ancient Greece.<sup>37</sup> For Celtis and many of his humanist colleagues

32. Hermann Maué, “Antikenrezeption oder Erfindung der italienischen Renaissance? Die Medaille des Matthes Gebel auf den Tod des George Ploed aus dem Jahre 1532,” in *Mousikos Aner*, Festschrift Max Wegner, ed. Oliver Brehm and Sascha Klie (Bonn: Habelt, 1992), 287. Peter Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet: Die unvollendete Werkausgabe des Conrad Celtis und ihre Holzschnitte* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2001), 331n25, connects Celtis’s interpretation of the composition to lines in Horace, *Odes* 1, 2, 31f., here following Konrad Bursian, “Die Antikensammlung Raimund Fuggers,” *Sitzungsberichte der philologische und historische Classe der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München* 4, vol. 1 (1874): 159–60, who believed the image must have been copied from an antique gem.

33. Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, 574n4. On Celtis’s visit to Olmütz, see Franz Machilek, “Der Olmützer Humanistenkreis,” in *Der polnische Humanismus und die europäischen Sodalitäten*, ed. Stephan Füssel and Jan Pirożyński (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 111–35.

34. Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, no. 319; see also no. 333.

35. Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, no. 322.

36. Celtis, *Quattuor libri amorum*, a7r. This was noted by Erwin Panofsky, “Albrecht Dürer and Classical Antiquity, With an Excursus on the Illustrations of Apianus: ‘Inscriptiones’ in Relation to Dürer” (1921/22), *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1955), 290.

37. On the authority of Julius Caesar, Celtis believed that the druids had originated in Greece. Caesar had described them as primitive natural philosophers who preserved their religion orally and used writing—in Greek characters—only for business. He mistakenly connected them with Greek inscriptions he was shown; *Commentaries on the Gallic War*, 13–14. See most recently Jörg Robert, *Konrad Celtis und das Projekt der deutschen Dichtung: Studien zur humanistischen Konstitution von Poetik, Philosophie, Nation und Ich* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003), 378–94.

the historical fable of the druids stood as a patriotic bulwark against the modern Roman church, increasingly mistrusted in these years by Germans.<sup>38</sup> In the *Norimberga* Celtis laments that monasteries of his own day have abandoned their former austerity—“shaken off the severe yoke of religion and the lowly cowl”—and instead live in wealth and even wield political power “not less than our kings and princes.”<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the isolated forest monastery Speinshart seemed to Celtis to have preserved some of the original flavor of druid religion. His druids were Greeks who had come back to haunt Rome.

To a modern, scholarly way of thinking, Celtis was holding in his mind two incompatible convictions. He must have recognized the jamb figures as apostles or prophets. The learned abbot of Speinshart could have told him when the monastery had been founded and even when the church had been built and could have assured him that the portal figures were not druid priests. Celtis knew that the figures represented apostles and yet at the same time, somehow, believed that they represented druids.

One could easily set aside this riddle by construing Celtis’s misidentification of the Speinshart jamb figures as a literary and patriotic conceit, a deliberate temporal confusion for rhetorical effect. Perhaps his discovery was a literary flourish designed to dramatize a textual account in the manner of the classical *enargeia*, a vivid actualization.<sup>40</sup> The high style of Feliciano’s written account of the adventure on Lago di Garda, the *Iubilatio*, has led some scholars to doubt the reality of even this expedition.<sup>41</sup>

But what if one were to choose instead to take Celtis’s discovery of druid statues at a Franconian monastery at face value? Many well-informed observers in this period had difficulty dating and identifying old portraits, statues, reliefs, tombs, and buildings. Scholars and local historians propounded their bad identifications not only within propagandistic or literary contexts, but routinely. Churches that dated from the relatively recent history of their cities were commonly described as refurbished ancient temples; or painted icons of Christ or the Virgin Mary judged to be much older than they possibly could be. Celtis’s druid fable certainly had a liter-

38. A good account of Celtis’s anticlericalism and taste for archaic simplicity is Ludwig Krapf, *Germanenmythus und Reichsideologie: frühhumanistische Rezeptionsweisen der taciteischen Germania* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1979), 68–99.

39. Celtis, *Norimberga*, ed. Werminghoff, 125.

40. This hypothesis is strengthened by the Senecan echoes in the phrase that Celtis used to describe the druid physiognomies, *severa fronte et tristi supercilio*; cf. *Phaedra*, 1.799, and *Ad Lucilium epistulae* 123.11.4. I owe this to a suggestion by Andrew Stewart. On *enargeia*, see Carlo Ginzburg, “Montrer et citer: La vérité de l’histoire,” *Le Débat* 56 (1989): 43–54.

41. Myriam Billanovich, “Intorno alla ‘Iubilatio’ di Felice Feliciano,” *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 32 (1989): 351–58. Charles Mitchell suggested that a letter by Ciriaco d’Ancona served as the model; see Avesani, “Felicianerie,” 10–12.

ary dimension. And yet such a solution to the puzzle of the misidentified jamb figures would be incomplete. Celtis's creative labeling of the barefoot and bearded sages on the portal at Speinshart falls into a vaster, richer pattern of counterfactual interpretation of historical artifacts.

Renaissance scholars often display the same combination of severity and suggestibility that we find two centuries later in Giambattista Vico, who derided the "unclear, frivolous, inept, conceited, and ridiculous" opinions of other scholars on the origins of languages, and then went on to assert that the most ancient peoples had spoken a natural, nonarbitrary language and that this was the language of Atlantis, just as Plato had said; or who dismissed as "groundless, inappropriate, or simply false" the views of other authorities on the reasons for the monstrous stature of ancient giants, but was himself completely confident of the historical reality of giants.<sup>42</sup>

The interest of this book is to understand forgeries, counterfeits, relics, spolia, and pictorial prophecies, all sites of great chronological density, not as aberrations but as moments where the deep structure of thinking about artifacts and time are revealed.

At the same time, the book tracks an epochal shift in thinking about the relationship between artifacts and time. That shift was driven by print technology. For a long time, artifacts were taken as good evidence of the most remote origins of cults, nations, institutions, even families. The statue or painting documented sacred history or the mythical eras peopled by giants or heroic founders by folding time over on itself, by physically superimposing the past on the present. Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the emergent discipline of archeology began to parcel and collate historical time. Archeology did not aim to drain the artifact of its referential force; on the contrary. The archeologist or antiquarian was, still is, precisely the scholar who appreciates the documentary value of the material artifact.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, archeological scholarship began to exploit the replication technologies, movable type and woodcut. Print technology systematized scholarship and accelerated its dissemination. The woodcut captured the image itself, so opening for the first time an effective two-way path between scholar and artifact. Print promised to extend, with great efficiency, the relays of substitutions and replication that delivered authoritative contents to a public. The woodcut was ostensibly a literalization of the basic mythology of an automatic, impersonal handing down of meaning from work to work, artifact to artifact. Print

42. Giambattista Vico, *Scienza Nuova* (1725), §§ 430–31, 170; *New Science*, transl. David Marsh (London: Penguin, 1999), 171–72, 86.

would seem to represent an extension of the never-explained mechanisms that guaranteed the referential authority of relic or cult image. But in reality, print had a dynamic and unpredictable effect on the substitutional myth. For print shifted attention to the mediality of the transmission process, that is, to the dependence of the process on artifice, craft, materials, intention, possibly even authorship. Together print and scholarship stripped the artifact of its magical authority.

Mechanized replication created the distinction, fundamental to modern culture, between rational and irrational thinking about time. The time-bending referential rhetoric of the image was from this point on quarantined inside a new institution, the work of art. The artwork, the merely fictional image, became the new natural habitat of anachronistic thinking. Outside such fictions, the once-universal temporal confusion was carefully untangled, redistributed into the poor binarism of error and truth. Under the new regime of print, the substitution was criminalized as a forgery. Anachronism became the attribute of bad scholarship and good art.

Celtis was coming up with incorrect answers to the sorts of questions that modern scholarship asks of historical artifacts. He himself was not asking modern scholarly questions. He was asking questions grounded in completely different presuppositions about how such artifacts came to be, how they lived in time, and what they had to say in the present tense.

### How to relax the paradox

As cultures recede into the past, historical behavior appears to splinter into inexplicable, irreconcilable fragments. To relax the paradoxes, historical scholarship tries to recover lost structures of thought, the deepest, often unarticulated premises. Once sorted into new cognitive paradigms, apparent incompatibilities of behavior and belief find a new logic. The cruelty and arbitrariness of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century witch hunt, to take an example, strain all modern efforts of comprehension. Tens of thousands of innocents were singled out and judged, without evidence, by a magistrature and a complicit populace, not in one place but all over Europe and on the far side of the Atlantic, over a period of several hundred years, a prosecutorial project that seemed only to increase in intensity as religion and cosmology were progressively rationalized. Some of the most convincing recent interpretations of the witch hunt interpret the violence as a symptom of profound anxiety provoked by the Protestant attack on sacramental representation.<sup>43</sup> Disoriented after the sudden loss of direct

43. Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), esp. 171–98. Other recent and noteworthy

reference to the Godhead, people hoped to reaffirm the efficacy of an alternative mode of reference, not eucharistic communion but demonic manipulation. At this deepest level, the level of shared presuppositions about the possibility of access to the invisible and to the sources of power, the witch hunt begins to yield its fearsome logic. With such a key one may even hope to decode the otherwise baffling pattern of cooperation between the prosecutors and prosecuted.

Another example: the learned of Europe pursued their studies in astrology deep into early modern times. The power of the stars over human destiny was rarely questioned. The appeal of astrology to the learned has defied modern scholarly explanation.<sup>44</sup> Jacob Burckhardt was appalled by the “perilous” persistence of ancient astrological superstition in the Renaissance, “a miserable feature in the life of that time.”<sup>45</sup> To a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century mind, however, astrology could seem consistent both with cosmology and with natural philosophy. The predictions of earthly events generated by the study of heavenly bodies were not always reliable, but then nor were the healing effects expected from herbs or the medical prognoses generated by examination of the body. Faith in astrological analysis served psychological and emotional purposes, just as did faith in predestination or salvation. The participation of pragmatic Florentine businessmen in popular religious cults in the fifteenth century poses a comparable puzzle. What could a businessman expect from a painted icon of the Madonna credited with miraculous powers? Did he imagine that a procession and a public performance of ritual devotions could protect his investments? Richard Trexler was dissatisfied with the cynical and rationalist explanation of the businessman’s behavior—the Machiavellian explanation, in fact—namely, that the practical citizen observed the customs in a perfunctory, hollow way just to preserve his position within local power structures. Instead, Trexler argued that the devotions to the icons were an aspect of a manipulative, interventionist approach to religion that was completely consistent with the merchant’s developing confidence in his capacity to control his own destiny; the ritual activation of the icon as a

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contributions to the immense historical literature are Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) and Walter Stephens, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

44. The literature on astrology in the Renaissance is also beyond summary, but a useful recent starting point is William R. Newman and Anthony Grafton, eds., *Secrets of Nature: Astrology and Alchemy in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).

45. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (London: Penguin, 1990), 323, 325.

rehearsal, as it were, for the full-dress mobilization of modern instrumental reason, a rehearsal for a Weberian future.<sup>46</sup>

To recover the questions to which the witch hunt, astrology, and the cult of wonder-working images were answers, historians have had to infer backward from those answers, reading between the lines of texts, parsing decisions and decisions not taken. The questions that the modern historian tries to answer were rarely ever articulated as questions by the historical actors. To account for behavior—to save the appearances—the historian builds a hypothesis about the cognitive structures that lie behind the behavior. The hypothesis is an invented model, even a historiographical fiction, whose virtue lies in its ability to account for the unaccountable. One will need a model with comparable explanatory power to make sense of Celtis's forest discovery.

### Strange temporalities of the artifact

The hypothesis developed in this book is that the reception of historical artifacts in premodern culture was shaped by a powerful presumption in favor of their mutual substitutability. One artifact was as good as another, at least within classes of artifacts that shared a purpose and pointed to a common referent. Images and buildings were understood not as the products of singular historical performances, but rather as links to an originary reference point. An artifact took its meaning from its membership within a chain of referential artifacts stretching back in time to a hidden origin, but not from its absolute place within that chain. Artifacts within such a chain could be substituted for one another without impairment of reference. Knowledge that one happened to possess about the particular or local circumstances of an artifact's fabrication, or its absolute position within a chain, was not allowed to interfere with the referential linkage or the presumption of substitutability. This, at least, was the model that guided the use and interpretation of things.

Modern, that is, post-Renaissance culture, by contrast, is always a little short on confidence in the whereabouts or even the reality of such ultimate origin points as gods, heroes, or nature. Modernity cultivates an interest in local, proximate, palpable origin points. The modern beholder is ready to assign the artifact no origin other than the moment of its own making. Such an artifact is the trace of a lifeworld, of a momentary constellation of circumstances, perhaps even of an author, an individual held responsible

46. Richard Trexler, "Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image," *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 7–41.



for design or execution. The notions of physical tracing and nonfungibility clustered around the newly articulated concept of the artwork. The work of art was a new category of relic, for what is a relic other than an absolutely nonfungible sample of a once concrete but now vanished reality.

The artwork, in addition to doing whatever it is that an artwork is meant to do, is therefore also a historical document. The etiology of the artwork implies from the start the possibility of the historical study of art. The artwork is an event that intervenes between an artistic past and an artistic future. An artifact is activated as art when it is assigned a place within some imagined succession of comparable events.<sup>47</sup> The artwork's historicity, its plotting within linear time, is the only originality it has left. Bereft of a more remote origin point, the artwork becomes an auto-original. The work of art cannot be replicated. The copied artwork, no matter how faithful, can never substitute for the original. A work of art replicated is the same but not the same, and for no other reason than that it was fabricated at a later point in the sequence.

The work of art in modern culture is both an affirmation of the surprising hypothesis of autopoiesis—creation out of nothing—and a place where the loss of the traditional, more remote, differently mysterious origins is assessed. Art in modernity exemplifies a new principle of nonsubstitutability but is never allowed to forget the lost paradigm of perfect substitutability. The perfect exchangeability of the edition, the print run, or the broadcast is the concrete image of the abstract model that had once governed all production and reception. Since the fifteenth century, the refinement and perfection of the replication technologies have proceeded strictly in tandem with the theorization of the autonomous artwork. The dialectical interplay between the handmade and the mechanically made image is the basic though usually disguised plot-structure of European art. Around 1500, engravings and woodcuts first advertised the idea of artistic authorship, associating signatures with styles. The reliability of mechanical copying, paradoxically, allowed the conception of a unique, noninterchangeable style to take hold. But at the same time, print offered itself as a literalized version, a kind of successor to, the substitutional model of production. The authored, event-like artwork could now define itself clearly against the background of the print. The concept of the original comes into

47. In Niklas Luhmann's terms, "The actions that produce the work must succeed one another in time and orient themselves recursively in relation to what has already been decided and to the possibilities opened up or eliminated by those decisions." The beholder recreates those decisions and "the perception of art gains access to its object in temporal terms . . . by actualizing step by step the work's references within a context of distinctions that shift from moment to moment." Luhmann, *Art as a Social System* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2000), 20–21.

focus only through the lens of its opposite, the perfect replica. The painting needs the print (later, the photograph).

The binarism of original and replica is the concealed spring inside every modern artwork. The revolutions in the technologies of recording, copying, projection, and broadcasting of sound and images in the early twentieth century provoked both Walter Benjamin's prediction that the mass media would break down the bourgeois cult of art and, in virtually the same year, its theoretical antithesis, Martin Heidegger's defense of the work of art as an irreplaceable access point to Being itself. "Aura," according to Bernhard Siegert, "discloses itself as the origin of the work of art only in the age of mechanical reproduction."<sup>48</sup> In the twentieth century, the replica became the form of art as well as its content, in the readymades of Marcel Duchamp, in the Pop art of the late 1950s and 1960s, in the Appropriation art of the 1980s, or indeed in the infinity of citations and samplings of consumer, "popular," or television culture in even more recent art. The most original works pretend to be copies.

The subtle duplicity of the copy was noted and even commended by Theodor Adorno, not usually classed as a friend to mechanical replication or to art that takes industrial production as its theme. Adorno observed in his *Aesthetic Theory* (1970) that many modern artworks deal in repetition. Such art appeared to raise again—so Adorno might have been expected to argue—the Benjaminian spectre of an art of replication that ends the Renaissance dialectic by discrediting once and for all the handmade artwork. Instead, Adorno dismissed the threat of mechanization, conceding it no real intellectual force. He was much more worried about the "dictatorship of the subject" which "casts a spell of self-identity" on the work. Under this scenario, the receptive individual beholder commandeers art and renders one work substitutable by another. The beholder makes him- or herself into the criterion of art, the *point* of art. In effect, Adorno was saying that the modern subject had established itself as an origin point no less mythical than the divine or heroic origin point that had dominated the premodern artifact. Like the distant but unknowable origin point of the icon or statue, the modern subject controlled a whole population of disparate artifacts. Artifacts whether ancient or modern were expected to orient themselves to origin points, in referential arrays. Under the old substitutional paradigm, one artifact had stood in for another over a given function. Under the new regime of the receptive subject, one artwork completes the subject as well as another. Adorno's model is an exact reversal of the substitutional model: "man" instead of "god" is the origin, and the artifact is asked merely

48. Siegert, "There Are No Mass Media," in *Mapping Benjamin: The Work of Art in the Digital Age*, ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and Michael Marrinan (Stanford University Press, 2003), 30.

to point in the right direction. Adorno's antidote to the philistine tyranny of the subject was a countermove by the artwork: maintenance of radical nonsubstitutability through "sensual existence," the work's assertion of its own "here and now" quality. The modern work that deals in repetition reasserts its own sensual existence by resisting subjectivism. Adorno concedes that replication is the content of many modern artworks, but allows that this must not always amount to an "accommodation to the archaic compulsion toward repetition." On the contrary, by posing as repetition, the artwork "absorbs" its "most fatal enemy—fungibility."<sup>49</sup>

Adorno was right that twentieth-century thematizations of the lost substitutional paradigm were always played out within a deeper, enveloping horror of the ersatz, the routine, the standardized. No work by Duchamp or Andy Warhol threatened even minimally the basic axiom of originality that still governs the idea of art in the modern West. The artwork that takes up banality and interchangeability as subject matter does not want to *be* banal and interchangeable. To represent the copy is to reassert the distinction between copy and original. The auto-original work affects insouciance about copies and substitutes. Art that stages the condition of the copy poses no real threat to the dialectics of copy and original that drives modern art production. Modern art's insistence on originality is not to be confused with insistence on the authority of the individual artist. The originality, or auto-originality, of the modern artwork is simply the principle of its noncontinuity with everything around it (the normal, the real, the functional, etc.). There may be an author behind the work; authoredness may be part of the content of the work; or not. The distinction that art insists on is the distinction between art and nonart—and never more so than when the erasure of that distinction is taken up as a theme or as a desideratum. The feedback loops may be more tangled, the ironies nested ever more deeply within ironies, the replication technologies themselves more sophisticated. But structurally little has changed since the sixteenth century. "Art" still names the protected realm where culture stages the bitter contest between original and copy, but always with the same outcome.

In the fifteenth century, by contrast, on the far horizon of the modern paradigm, things that are today considered works of art and therefore nonsubstitutable, like statues and paintings, were still constantly standing in for one another. Copying was the normal way to make new things. When approaching an artifact, fifteenth-century observers looked for its referential target, not for an origin point within its production history. They

49. Theodor Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), 203–4; *Aesthetic Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 135.

understood the meaning of an artifact as a fixed referential quantum preserved across a chain of mutually substitutable artifacts, rather than as a dynamic, open-ended process originating in the artifact itself. Artifacts were able to imply, with great force, a prior chain of artifacts that linked up with a distant point of origin, a historical figure, perhaps, or a moment of founding. So deeply rooted in this period was the premise of the impossibility of novelty that practically every signifying artifact, every monument, was presumed to have an ultimate source in a remote and primordial reality, even if that source was in practical terms unknowable.<sup>50</sup>

The portrait, the tomb, the image of the god or the king succeeded in concretizing a past that was otherwise ghostly and obscure. Reference, once recognized, appeared ancient, inevitable, incontrovertible, in much the same way that texts in this period took on authority and closed off questions about real origins, simply by existing. Texts took on even more authority when they were published. It was the same with images. Once an image was *made public* by any of several means—mechanical replication, dissemination across time and space, public display—its authority was formidable. A monumental shaping of the past, no matter how spurious, had a powerful placebo effect on the imagination of the beholder.

All reception of artifacts was “poetic” in the original sense of “making” or “shaping.” The recipient participated in the activation of the artifact by completing it and then assigning it a place in a structure. When Celtis wrapped his discovery of the druid statues in a poetic discourse, he was just redoubling the already poetic character of his historical thinking. He was poeticizing the poetry, just as would the illustrated fantastic novel *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, published by Aldus Manutius in Venice only a few years later. As culture was rationalized, a separate space had to be cleared out for the poetic imagination. The placebo effect of the substitutional artifact was transferred to the painted or the sculpted artwork.

Imaginative approaches to the puzzle of archeological credulity avoid simple condemnation. One of these approaches might be called the “romantic” model, following the lead of Charles Mitchell, who in a well-

50. Cf. the model developed by Amy Powell, “‘A Point Ceaselessly Pushed Back’: The Origin of Early Netherlandish Painting,” *Art Bulletin* 88 (2006): 540–62. Powell points out that most fifteenth-century paintings did not derive their authority from singular, prestigious prototypes, for instance, a famous icon. Instead modern paintings were constantly referring to one another, weaving a self-sustaining web of citation and commentary. This is a sophisticated model, complementary, I would like to think, to the model developed here, because it accounts for the emergence of art within a system that downplayed the authority of the individual artist, whereas this book describes a system that cultivated the idea of the artist as author. I would add only that it was the very intangibility and remoteness of the painting’s referential origin point (divinity) that allowed for the proliferation of a new set of multiple and proximate origin points (other paintings).

known essay of 1960 brought out the fanciful, enthusiastic dimension of fifteenth-century erudition, showing for example how readily the Italian traveler and antiquarian Cyriacus of Ancona fell into a fervent, “goliardic”—that is, ludic and festive—worship of Mercury; or with what ingenuity the antiquarian Feliciano invented monumental frames for the inscriptions he discovered.<sup>51</sup> Scholarship, according to Mitchell, was a matter of filling out the bare skeleton of antique remains. Imagination was inextricable from scholarship. Mitchell’s approach unfolds into the recent and even more sophisticated analyses of Leonard Barkan, who in his book *Unearthing the Past: Archeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* shows how Renaissance archeology became a framework for poetic storytelling about objects and origins, dovetailing in the first decades of the sixteenth century with the emergence of a culture of art.<sup>52</sup>

The apparent credulity of the scholar was simply a hesitation about the true nature of the image or effigy. Works of art such as paintings or statues were frequently expected in late medieval and Renaissance culture to double as documents, to bear witness, for instance, to sacred truths or dynastic facts. The two identities of the image, documentary and aesthetic, clashed. From this point of view, the errors of the antiquaries were not errors at all, but rather points of friction between two models of the artifact’s temporality. By contrast, the reader of a textual artwork, a poem, was less likely to hesitate. The poem is fundamentally a time-bending machine, as Thomas Greene’s profound study of Renaissance intertextuality showed.<sup>53</sup> The poets worked with and not against anachronism—learned to make a virtue out of the condition of intertextuality, or the simple fact that every linguistic text is woven with threads ripped from other texts. The poem was seldom mistaken for a document.

Another recent approach treats scholarly error in the context of mythic thought. Credulity, in this paradigm, is an effect generated by a mismatch between scholarly and mythical thinking. Myth is a narrative coding of a

51. Charles Mitchell, “Archaeology and Romance in Renaissance Italy,” in *Italian Renaissance Studies*, ed. E. F. Jacob (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), 455–83. On invented frames, see Mitchell, “Felice Feliciano Antiquarius,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 47 (1961): 197–221, esp. 216–17, and Annegrit Schmitt, “Antikenkopien und künstlerische Selbstverwirklichung in der Frührenaissance,” in *Antikenzeichnung und Antikenstudien in Renaissance und Frühbarock*, ed. Richard Harprath and Henning Wrede (Mainz: Zabern, 1989), 1–20 (on the interplay of accuracy and freedom in the antiquarian drawings of Jacopo Bellini and Marco Zoppo).

52. Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

53. Thomas Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). On the self-emancipation of Renaissance poetry from referential responsibility toward origins, see David Quint, *Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature: Versions of the Source* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

culture's cosmology and first principles. The historian Paul Veyne in *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths?* sketched out an ancient intellectual world of "plural truths," an open competition of myths that made perfect sense according to its own internal rules and even made room for what Veyne called the scholarly practice of "critical credulity."<sup>54</sup> Veyne's model is adaptable to Renaissance culture. As Frank Borchardt demonstrated in his book *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*, the critical historiography of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was often just a matter of one myth replacing another. Although Renaissance scholars were quick to condemn the errors of their predecessors, they were apt to replace those errors with more errors. Borchardt assigned to the rhetorical maneuver of switching one story for another the forgotten rhetorical term *anasceva* (from the word meaning "break camp" or "dismantle").<sup>55</sup> He argued that scholars were reluctant to dismantle a tradition and leave nothing in its place. That is, they were neither satisfied with Veyne's "plural truths," nor willing to face a past completely unstructured by myth.<sup>56</sup>

Because myth and written history share the same narrative structure, they are easily knitted together into a common fabric. In chronicles or histories of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, cosmogonies or myths of national origins frequently survived as conventional preludes to the narration of more recent, better documented events. The initiated could easily detect the seam between myth and history, perhaps tacitly sanctioning the mythic prologue through a euhemeristic assumption, that is, the idea that heroic or fabulous narratives were rooted in real but forgotten events. Other readers allowed myth and history to flow into one another. "Credulity" was a way of reading.

Antiquarianism, as Ingo Herklotz points out, is curiosity about every aspect of ancient life *except* events.<sup>57</sup> Antiquarianism, therefore, is by its nature out of rhythm with both myth and history. Its findings, which never quite settle into their own narrative patterns, can be used either to support or to disrupt existing narratives. Objects and artifacts connect to one

54. Paul Veyne, *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 54.

55. Frank L. Borchardt, "The Topos of Critical Rejection in the Renaissance," *Modern Language Notes* 81 (1966): 476–88; and *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971).

56. Riccardo Fubini, even while warning against a vogueish modern "complaisance" or even "connivance" with myth, argues that the forger Annio of Viterbo was an authentic mythmaker, capable of expressing cultural crisis and malaise by symbolic means; "Annio da Viterbo nella tradizione erudita toscana" (1981) in Fubini, *Storiografia dell'Umanesimo in Italia da Leonardo Bruni ad Annio da Viterbo* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2003), 335–42, esp. 341.

57. Herklotz, *Cassiano dal Pozzo und die Archäologie des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Hirmer, 1999), 9.

another across invisible webs, generating mysterious effects of survival, revival, and anachronism, as the imaginative early twentieth-century art historian Aby Warburg recognized.<sup>58</sup> Antiquarianism opens more readily onto stories about art than onto narrative historiography guided by historical reason.

Cultures deprived of the framework of meaning provided by, at one end, etiological myths and, at the other, prophecy—that is, devices that unlock the cardinal mysteries of beginnings and endings—must be prepared to take seriously the mere events of human history. Such cultures develop literature and art, fictional re-enactments of life, as compensations for the loss of its cosmogonies and eschatologies.<sup>59</sup> Poetry, mistaken for myth, becomes the recourse of those who are unconvinced that linear sequences of documents or artifacts can tell the whole story, or of those unwilling to adapt their existence to a historical narrative reduced to mere events. In modernity, the concept of myth names a flight from the rule of fact. The credulous early modern scholar, then, is that seeker of origins who is already beyond myth but not yet ready to surrender to art. Vico, who grasped the power of “poetic wisdom,” found himself in just that predicament, protesting the dogma of fact established by the empiricists and biblical scholars of the seventeenth century. But this also made him the first to anticipate the modern rebellion, initiated by Friedrich Nietzsche, against historical reason.

Each of these accounts of early modern credulity identifies a mixing of categories that in modernity are notionally kept distinct: in the first instance, historical scholarship is compromised by the poetical or aesthetic imagination, in the second by mythic thinking.

In presenting this thesis about the European Renaissance to various audiences, I have been struck by how often specialists in the art and architecture of other continents and periods saw parallels in the cultures they know. A wooden temple in southern India, it was explained to me, is very likely to be described by a local authority as ancient even when that same describer is well aware that the actual timbers and carvings at hand were cut and carved and assembled only recently, in living memory. The current mode of being of the building, as it were, substitutes for a predecessor structure on the same spot, which itself in turn is presumed to have substituted for a still earlier structure, and so forth. The building retains its antiquity, indeed its immemorial prestige, even if every timber is at one time

58. On Warburg and anachronism, see Georges Didi-Huberman, *L'image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg* (Paris: Minuit, 2002).

59. See Wolfgang Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology* (original German edition, 1991) [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993], 298.

or another replaced. Such parallels across cultures are risky and I will not pursue them. Still, they suggest that modern, that is, post-Renaissance, Western culture is peculiar in its insistence on the tight causal link between the physical artifact and the lifeworld—the constellation of circumstances—that generated it. The modern West is equally peculiar in its habit of investing that historically anchored artifact with an integrity and a principle of difference.

Once Celtis's face-to-face encounter with the druids is understood as a sample and not as a curiosity, a startling apparition emerges: a visual environment stocked with round-arched and centrally planned churches, sculptured reliefs and ornamental friezes, majuscule inscriptions and minuscule book hands, inscriptions and images painted and carved on church walls, all tranquilly taken for relics of the most distant antiquity.

The book tells of excavations, compilations, interpretations, and restorations of images and buildings, medieval and ancient, but equally of the modern monuments and other archeologically oriented projects—the tombs and epitaphs, portraits and medals, propaganda prints, even sacred architecture—undertaken by German cities, monastic communities, princes, councilors, scholars, and artists between the 1480s and the 1530s. People were trying to make sense of the old buildings and images they came across and they were fashioning artifacts that they hoped would help them find their own way back into history. Although the story here is exclusively a German one, the premise is that all European art at this moment was subtended by the same structures of reception and production. The German story may even bring out aspects of the relation between archeology and art in Renaissance Italy, aspects by now impossible to grasp through the dense thicket of prior scholarship on that topic. Despite the disparity in quantity and quality of relics at hand, and despite the asymmetry between province and center, the reception of old artifacts in cultures north and south of the Alps shared the same basic structure.

Portraits, effigies, tombs, and epigraphic monuments are often marginalized in conventional art historical accounts, for they cannot be located within the dominant historiographical model of the period, namely, the transformation of the Christian devotional image into the secular work of art. Tombs and inscriptions are not always easily connected to an artist. They offer the eye little delight and the mind few ideas. And yet tombs were central to the imagination of the period. Potentates and scholars and indeed everyone else approached them with awe, as does anyone who cares to pause before the certain prospect of death and the vulnerability of *fama*, reputation. The monument tries to channel and immobilize the future's retrospective gaze. The mechanisms of historical reference



underlying such nonauthored monuments are easily underrated by a history of art. The concept of substitutional credulity, or systematic misdating on the basis of a referential model of representation, reveals that there was no stranger and more complex version of temporality than that proposed by inscription, tomb, and portrait.

# 2

# REFERENCE BY ARTIFACT

## Relics of earliest Europe

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The chronological sorting of the stones of Europe—the walls, towers, temples, palaces, fortresses; the effigies, inscriptions, tombs, and all the rest of the bric-a-brac—got underway only slowly and did not really find its rhythm until the eighteenth century. Until then, old buildings and images were routinely misdated. Even the most assiduous students of the past held only cloudy notions of art historical chronology. Nearly the entirety of the material remains of pagan antiquity had been destroyed, lost, or buried. Many architectural fragments and bits of sculpture had been blended or crammed into later buildings. Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century scholars and travelers described medieval buildings as ancient Roman, and then assigned the remains of real Roman buildings to even more distant pasts. Local antiquaries tried to name the sculpted images of gods or heroes they came across, but had no notion of how to date such artifacts. It sometimes seems that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries everything that was not patently contemporary was simply considered “old,” and potentially “very old.”

Little developed was the capacity to date artifacts on the basis of internal, physical criteria. Beyond a certain point—what we might call a “threshold of living memory,” perhaps 150 or 200 years—the historicity of artifacts was swallowed up into a temporal abyss. People knew what their grandparents had told them about the construction of a local church or palace, perhaps, or stray facts embalmed in local lore. Beyond that threshold lay mostly perplexity. As time went on more and more artifacts tumbled into chronological freefall. People could see with their own eyes, all around

them, how sculptures or churches were actually made. Everyone knew that the material origins of an old statue, the original context of its making and consecration, could have been lowly or ambiguous, or estranged from the sources of power and meaning by uncountable increments of replication and reinterpretation. They knew all that, and yet forgot the real circumstances of fabrication. And to compound that mnemonic economy, they decided to forget that the real circumstances had been forgotten.

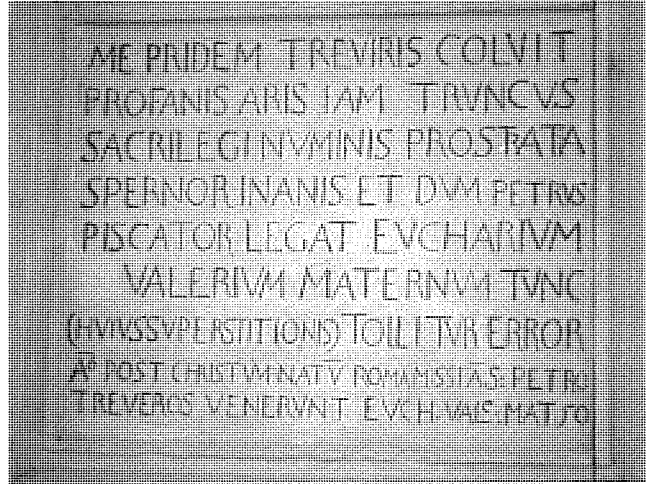
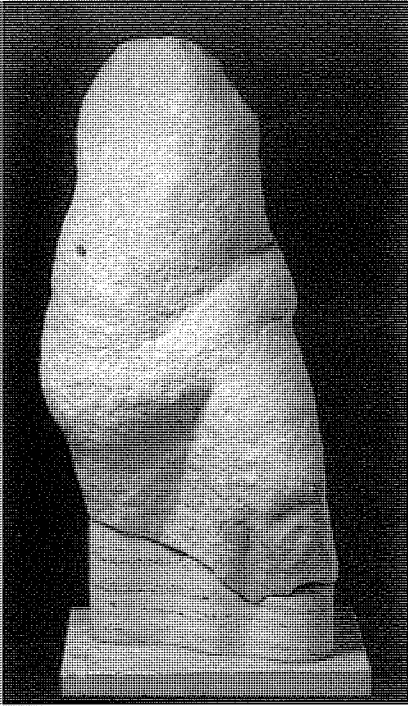
Buildings, artifacts, and images invited a kind of “double-think.”<sup>1</sup> Celtis knew his statues were not druids, but at the same time he believed that they were. It is not a matter of folk wisdom versus learned opinion. All judgments about monuments, tutored and untutored, shared the same basic structure.

Some few spectacular ancient relics remained above ground and on display, held as hostages. These were the *mirabilia*, the wonders, a handful of Roman arches and tombs left intact and a small battered corpus of statues.<sup>2</sup> Pagan artifacts carried the charisma of their challenge to Christian iconographical taboos, of their technical mastery, sometimes simply of their size. In the early Middle Ages the *mirabilia* were sorted out and given labels. In Italy, potentates and communes salvaged and protected the wonders and displayed them as tokens of political legitimacy or as civic palladia. The *mirabilia* were usually misnamed. Erratic identifications of buildings and statues were trusted and repeated not just by tourists and pilgrims, but also by chroniclers and antiquarian scholars. The northern European *mirabilia* were less numerous than the meridional, but the pattern of reception was identical, a combination of wariness, protectiveness, and iconographic confusion. In Trier, the Roman colonial capital in the Mosel valley, a mutilated ancient marble was for centuries displayed publicly in chains (fig. 4).<sup>3</sup> An accompanying inscription described it as a

1. Richard Krautheimer introduced this phrase in a postscript to his seminal article of 1942, “Introduction to an ‘Iconography of Medieval Architecture,’” in Krautheimer, *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval, and Renaissance Art* (New York: New York University Press; London: University of London Press, 1969), 149–50.

2. Friedrich von Bezold, *Das Fortleben der antiken Götter im mittelalterlichen Humanismus* (Bonn and Leipzig, 1922), 28–42; Chiara Frugoni, “L’antichità: Dai *Mirabilia* alla propaganda politica,” in Salvatore Settis, ed., *Memoria dell’antico nell’arte italiana*, 3 vols. (Torino: Einaudi, 1984–86), 1: 5–72; Michael Greenhalgh, *The Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages* (London: Duckworth, 1989), esp. chap. 10; Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 77–87; and Norberto Gramaccini, *Mirabilia: Das Nachleben antiker Statuen vor der Renaissance* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1996). Lukas Clemens, *Tempore Romanorum constructa* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2003).

3. Trier, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, inv. no. G. 44d. Height, 98 cm. Wolfgang Binsfeld, Karin Goethert-Polaschek, and Lothar Schwinder, *Katalog der römischen Steindenkmäler des Rheinischen Landesmuseums Trier, 1. Götter- und Weihedenkmäler (Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland IV, 3)* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1988), no. 333.



justly punished statue of Venus and a figure of mockery (fig. 5).<sup>4</sup> This Venus had been found at the monastery of St. Matthias and had allegedly been toppled and broken in the second century by St. Eucharius, first bishop of Trier.<sup>5</sup> There is no telling what the statue really once was. In Trier it served as a compact and compelling history lesson, demonstrating the risks of sensual idolatrous cults but also revealing that people had once lived differently.

The few surviving ancient Roman buildings north of the Alps were always misdated and misidentified, their functions forgotten. Every German town, it seems, had a mysterious dilapidated tower or burial ground to which the label “heathen” was attached. Many churches were imagined to have been built on the sites of pagan temples.<sup>6</sup> In Augsburg, once an important Roman colony, the small church of St. Gallus just north of the cathedral supplanted, according to medieval historians, the cult site of the mys-

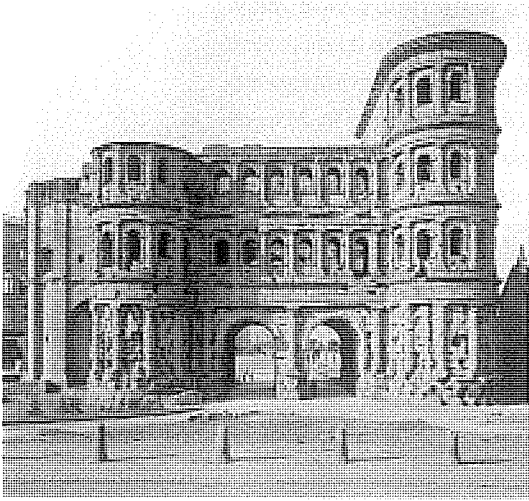
4. So-called *Venus*, third century (?). Trier, Rheinisches Landesmuseum.

5. Inscription accompanying *Venus*, sixteenth century. Trier, Rheinisches Landesmuseum. Photo: author.

4. The Latin version of the inscription is also preserved in the Rheinisches Landesmuseum.

5. Wolfgang Binsfeld, “Triers Altertümer und die Humanisten,” *Landeskundliche Vierteljahrsblätter (Trier)* 14 (1968): 69, citing Caspar Bruschi, *Monasteriorum Germaniae praecipuorum chronologia* (Ingolstadt, 1551).

6. For examples, see Greenhalgh, *Survival of Roman Antiquities in the Middle Ages*, 91–97; and Jean Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l’art du Moyen Âge français*, Studies of the Warburg Institute, 7 (London: Warburg Institute, 1939), 61–64. On the superimposition of sacred structures as an elemental pattern, see David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London and New York: Phaidon, 2003), 120–22.



6. Porta Nigra, Trier, fourth century. Photo: Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY.

terious primordial goddess Cisa.<sup>7</sup> But no city offered as many charismatic piles as Trier, described by German chroniclers and scholars as the oldest city in Europe. Hartmann Schedel in his *World Chronicle*, published in Nuremberg in 1493, reported that “Trier is a city so old that it was founded 1947 years before the birth of Christ, in the time of Abraham, by Trebeta the brother of King Ninus, who had been driven by Queen Semiramis out of Assyria.”<sup>8</sup> The city’s spectacular Roman ruins were the basis for such fancies. The buildings of Trier were in fact not quite so old. They dated from the fourth century

when Trier was the official capital of the western Caesar and the residence of Constantine the Great. The ruins of the Imperial and so-called Barbara Baths were simply too vast and complicated for any Renaissance scholar to make sense of them. The Imperial Baths were thought to be a palace dating from the most ancient origins of the city in the time of the biblical patriarchs. Historians of ancient Germany tended to rely on literary sources. In his discussion of the monuments of Trier, the Alsatian humanist Beatus Rhenanus (1485–1547) was so vague that it is not even clear whether he was talking about the baths or about Constantine’s Aula, the so-called Basilica, the largest of all surviving and intact Roman buildings other than the Pantheon itself.<sup>9</sup> Puzzling to all observers was the Porta Nigra, the largest surviving city gate in the entire Roman empire (fig. 6). Between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries this massive pile was continually improved by columns, stairs, towers, bridges, vaults, indeed an entire church, St. Simeon. All this was stripped away in modern times. But for late medieval and even sixteenth-century observers, the seams between the fourth-century gate and the later additions were invisible. Some wondered if the Porta Nigra had not also been a kind of temple dedicated to Mars.<sup>10</sup>

In his description of Basel in his *World Chronicle* of 1493, Hartmann Schedel commented: “But although in this praiseworthy and ancient city many traces and relics of very old buildings appear, it happens that because

7. R. Kohl, “Die Augsburgische Cisa: Eine germanische Göttin?” *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 33 (1936): 34. St. Gallus is an eleventh-century church resting on the foundations of an early Christian basilica.

8. Schedel, *Weltchronik* (Nuremberg, 1493), fol. 23r. See Celtis on Trier, *Odes* 3.26.

9. Beatus Rhenanus, *Rerum germanicarum* (Basel, 1531), book 3. See Binsfeld, “Triers Altertümer und die Humanisten,” 68.

10. Erich Gose, ed., *Die Porta Nigra in Trier*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Mann, [1969]), 9–11, 109–10.

of dismantling as well as earthquakes and simply age one cannot tell what the forms and the functions of these structures once were."<sup>11</sup>

Artifacts that bore inscriptions and figural sculpture were not necessarily any easier to identify. A twenty-three-meter-high tomb monument in Igel, a village near Trier, survived the Middle Ages by a false identification (fig. 7).<sup>12</sup> Local experts, misreading the scene on the main sculpted relief, believed that the monument commemorated the marriage of the parents of Constantine, Helena and Constantius Chlorus. The scene actually shows a pair of brothers named Secundinius, cloth merchants in Trier in the middle of the third century, with a smaller figure between them, the son of Secundinius Securus, bidding his father eternal farewell with a handshake. The error was first pointed out by the patrician scholar Willibald Pirckheimer (1470–1530), philologist, imperial advisor, and friend of Albrecht Dürer. In 1512 Pirckheimer took the trouble to read and translate the inscription at Igel, which states clearly that the stele was erected as a funerary monument to the brothers and the handshaking son and several other relatives by their survivors.<sup>13</sup> Philology demystified and brought chronological order.

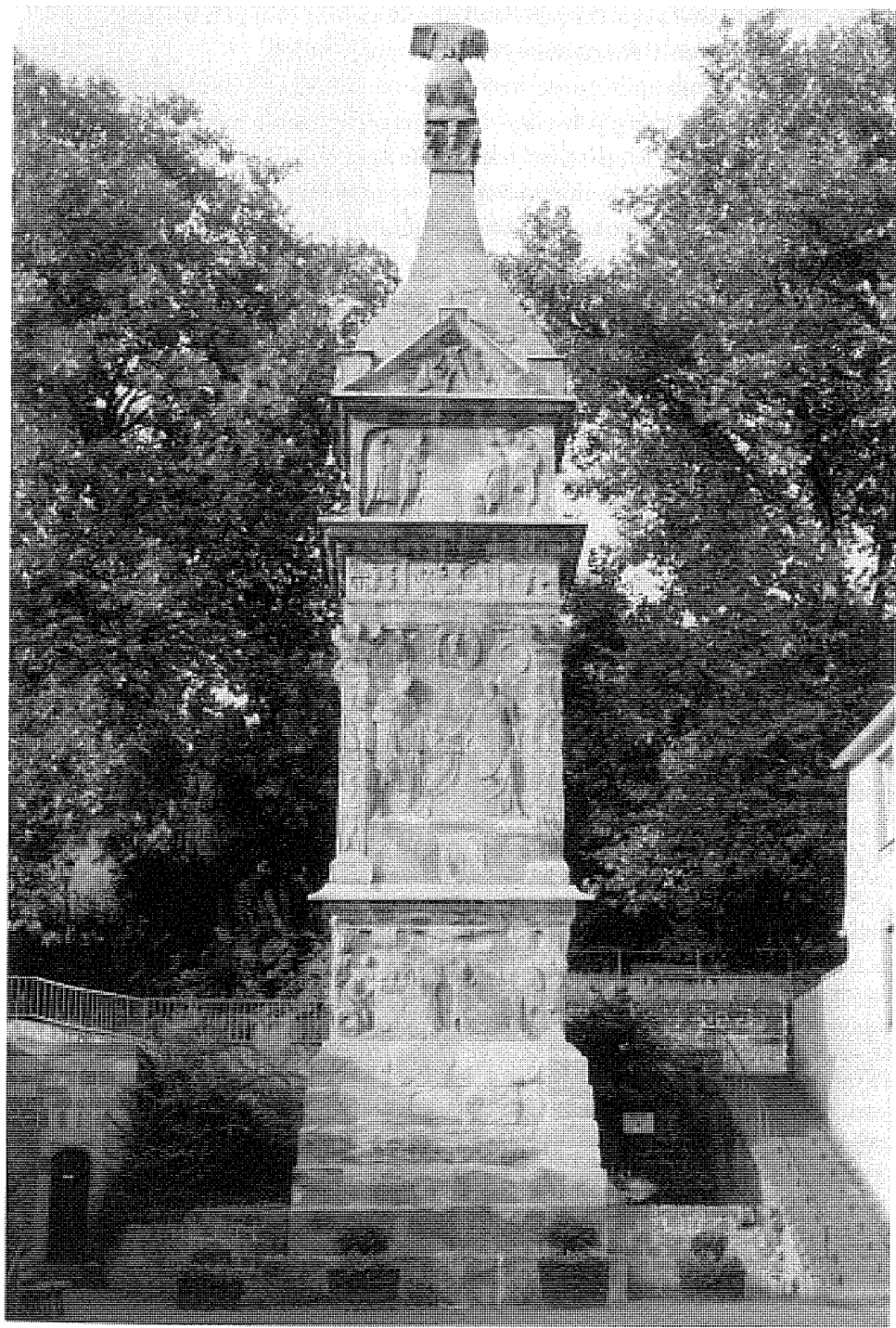
Collective memory was not always foolish. In the Middle Ages, the hideous *Eichelstein* in Mainz, misshapen and indestructible, was stripped of its ashlar blocks until nothing remained but an overgrown core of rubble, 22 meters in height, here rendered in woodcut in Apianus and Amantius's edition of the European antiquities (fig. 8).<sup>14</sup> It still looks more or less like

11. Schedel, *Weltchronik*, 243v: "Aber wiwol in diser löblichen und alten statt vil anzaigung und uberbleibung ser alter gepew erscheinen so sind doch dieselben auß pawselligkeit erpidedem auch auß alter also entsteht das man nicht erkennen kan was gestaltus und zu welchem geprauch dieselben gepewe gemacht gewesen seyen."

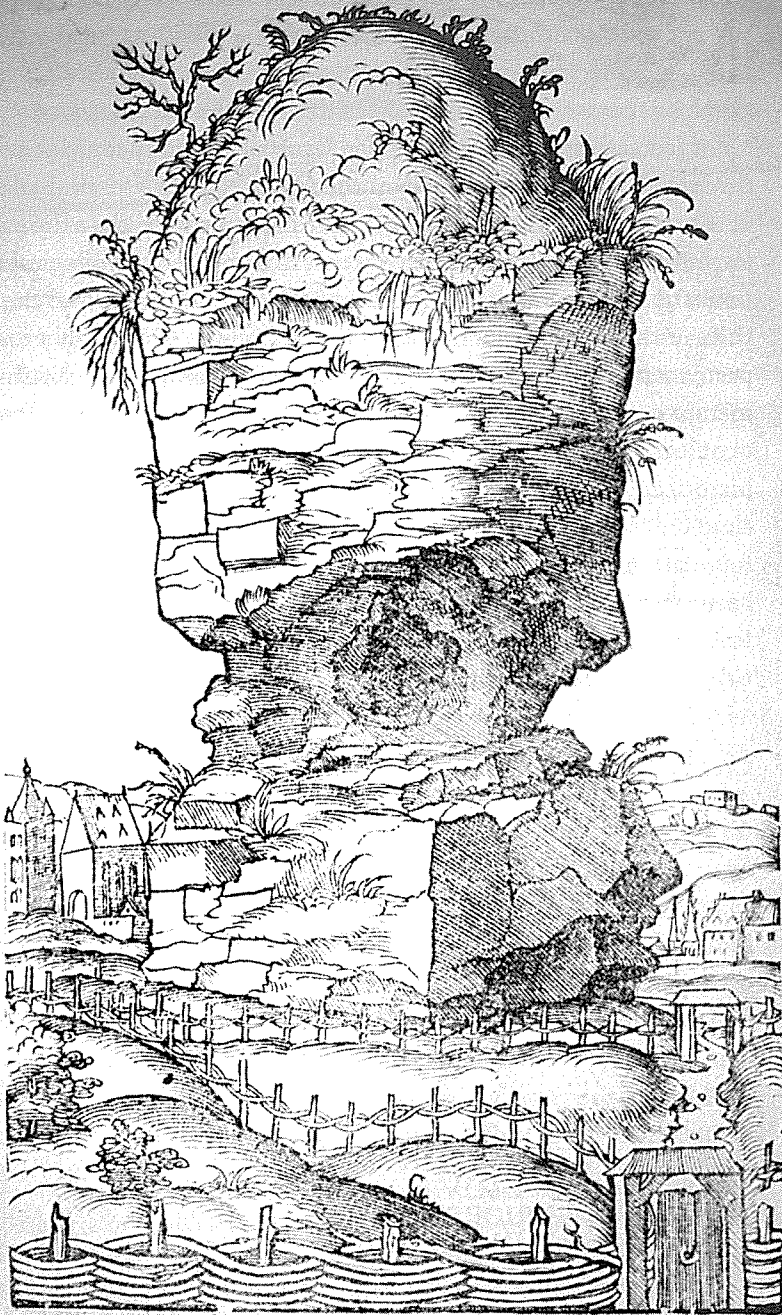
12. Eberhard Zahn, *Der Igeler Säule bei Trier* (Cologne-Deutz: Rheinischer Verein für Denkmalpflege und Heimatschutz, 1968); Joachim von Elbe, *Roman Germany: A Guide to Sites and Museums* (Mainz: Philip von Zabern, 1977), 155–60.

13. Wolfgang Binsfeld, "Epigraphica Trevirensia: Zur Deutung antiker Inschriften im Mittelalter," in *Ars et Ecclesia*, ed. Hans Walter Stork et al., Festschrift Franz J. Ronig (Trier: Paulinus, 1989), 41. For a compact and up-to-date account of antiquarian scholarship in the immediate orbit of Dürer, see Thomas Schauerte, ed., *Albrecht Dürer: Das grosse Glück: Kunst im Zeichen des geistigen Aufbruchs*, exhibition catalogue, Kulturgeschichtliches Museum, Osnabrück (Bramsche: Rasch, 2003), 101–7.

14. Heinrich Schrohe, "Aus der Frühzeit der römischen Altertumswissenschaft in Mainz," in *Festschrift Karl Schuhmacher* (Mainz: Wilckens, 1930), 8; Walburg Boppert, ed., *Militärische Grabdenkmäler aus Mainz und Umgebung (Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland II, 5)* (Mainz: Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, 1992), 65–66; Heinz Cüppers, ed., *Die Römer in Rheinland-Pfalz* (Stuttgart: Theiss, 1990), 170, 462–63; and Gustav Behrens, "Verschwundene Mainzer Römerbauten," *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 48/49 (1953/54): 86. The ruins of the Drusus stone appear in the woodcut introducing book 3 of Celtis's geographical love poem, the *Amores*; Celtis mentioned the monument not only at *Amores* 3.13 but also *Odes* 1.1 and 3.9 and *Epigrams* 2.56.



7. Monument of Secundinius family  
["Igelsäule"], third century. Igel (Trier).  
Photo: author.



8. So-called *Eichelstein* [cenotaph of Drusus], first century. Mainz. Woodcut in Petrus Apianus and Bartholomeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 474. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.



this today. *Eichelstein* or “acorn-stone” was a popular vulgar reference to its phallic shape. Medieval historians such as Otto von Freising, piecing together the brief accounts in ancient literary sources, believed that Drusus, stepson of Augustus and brother of Tiberius, who had led the Elbe campaign and died in Germany in 9 B.C., was buried under the *Eichelstein*, or that his ashes were contained within it.<sup>15</sup> And the *Eichelstein* was, as a matter of fact, a monument to the fallen Drusus, an empty tomb or cenotaph; the largest funerary ruin north of the Alps.

Christian buildings and images were more plentiful than the pagan relics, but if anything even more resistant to absolute chronological sequentialization. The pictorial narrations of the biblical stories and the lives of the saints, the portraits of the divinities and the Christian heroes, were permanently valid. Churches, unless they had been dedicated within living memory, as were many of the mendicant foundations, were all thought—or at least said—to be very old. Even churches associated with a particular historical patron, perhaps a bishop or local nobleman, were at the same time tacitly understood to have been constructed on still more ancient foundations. Neither buildings nor figural artifacts could be dated on the basis of the comparative assessment of construction techniques or formal features. Iconography, materials, forms were not seen as reflective of particular historical moments except in the roughest of terms.

### Creative archeology

All these temporal misunderstandings have in turn been misunderstood by modern scholarship. In today’s scholarly literature they figure simply as errors, and as a foil for the emergence of modern archeological studies in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Archeology, the study of the past on the basis of its material relics, is a success story, an irreversible and still dynamic project.<sup>16</sup> Modernity defines itself against an image of the past

15. Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars* (Claudius, 1) clearly says that the body was taken back to Rome, however.

16. Excellent overviews of the early history of archeology are Roberto Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988; orig. 1969); and Alain Schnapp, *Discovery of the Past: The Origins of Archaeology* (London: British Museum Press, 1996; orig. French ed., 1993). Landmarks in the history of antiquarian scholarship are Arnaldo Momigliano, “Ancient History and the Antiquarian,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 13 (1950): 285–315, reprinted in Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), 1–39; many essays in Salvatore Settis, ed., *Memoria dell’antico nell’arte italiana*, 3 vols. (Torino: Einaudi, 1984–1986); Francis Haskell, *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); and Herklotz, *Cassiano dal Pozzo und die Archäologie des 17. Jahrhunderts*. A notable recent perspective on the evolving place of antiquarianism within historical scholarship is Ingrid D. Rowland, “Antiquarianism as Battle Cry,”

grounded in the findings of scholarly archeology. Once the archeological enterprise was set in motion in the fifteenth century, it often seems, it was just a matter of time and hard work. As archeological scholarship honed its methods over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, chronological confusion was dispelled and the misdatings one by one corrected. There is some legitimacy to this account, for at one level the problem was simply quantitative. In the Middle Ages, before the data began to be published, there was too little evidence about the material origins of artifacts to place anything on a chronological gamut. Archeology is a practice of systematic comparison with previous findings, notated according to agreed-upon conventions. This comparative system is activated only when a certain critical quantity of data has been accumulated, notated, and disseminated. Not until then could scholars begin to make judgments about the dates of buildings, pictures, weapons, costumes, vessels, and tools.

Yet the quantitative, progressive model of the emergence of archeological method is misleading because archeology is something other than a merely corrective and inductive procedure, a matter of getting the measurements right and accumulating data. Archeology also implies a *theory* of artifact production. The new premise of the new discipline was that material artifacts were the products of unique conjunctions of circumstances. Archeology learned to read the physical features of an artifact as the traces of a moment of fabrication. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this approach to artifacts clashed with the prevailing practical approach, still basically concerned with the use, meaning, and ultimate reference of a building or an image and not with the peculiar historical circumstances of its fabrication. So archeology was not simply a matter of setting things straight; rather, it brought one theory of production into conflict with another. And the older theory, the one that generated all the misdatings and misidentifications, had its own internal logic, its truth—the truth of error, one might say.

That older theory had understood the artifact not as a singular historical event, but as a link to an origin. The imagined capacity of the building or image to connect to a remote point of origin admitted it into a much more capacious class of testimonies about origins. Civic founding legends, saints' lives, lore about local heroes, dynastic chronicles, ecclesiastical histories, buildings and portraits, tombs and inscriptions amounted to a single tangled network of witnessings. All the various reports on ori-

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in *The Italian Renaissance in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Allen J. Grieco et al., Acts of an International Conference, Florence, Villa I Tatti, 1999 (Florence: Olschki, 2002), 401–11. For an idea of what the discipline of archeology has become, see Robert W. Preucel and Ian Hodder, eds., *Contemporary Archaeology in Theory: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

gins, written and oral, linguistic and material, carried great authority. The testimonies themselves compensated for the remoteness and elusiveness of those origins. "In myth," according to Wolfgang Iser, "no distinction is made between the contingency of the beginning and its mastery through the stories narrating its origin. . . . Etiological myths *are* the beginning, and prophecies *are* the end."<sup>17</sup> The early history of Europe was not forgotten. It survived for centuries in this vivid welter of contradictory testimonies. The historical imagination was a kaleidoscope of shifting, overlapping, animated shadows, crowded by a fabulous pagan and prehistoric past that seemed to have left the most tangible of traces, the exotic, glinting names, for example, fossilized in historical texts. German scholars of the Renaissance, desperate for a glimpse of European life beyond the threshold of prehistory, extracted a lexicon of tribal identities from late antique historians and later chronicles, constantly cross-checking them with the enigmatic mentions of the barbarian tribes in Tacitus: Osians, Araviscans, Nervians, Vangiones, Tribocians, Nemetes, Ubians, Cattans, Mattiacians, Batavians, Usipians, Tencterians, Bructerians, Dulgibinians, and so on.<sup>18</sup>

At first, the critical disciplines of philology and archeology did not so much quash as stimulate creativity. Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries misdating became more confident and adventurous than ever. As the new historiography pried open the tradition, there was more room, not less, for monuments and evidence to work their magic. Misdating came to install itself at the very core of the Renaissance achievement. Frank Borchardt, Walter Stephens, Anthony Grafton, Ingrid Rowland, and others have revealed the vitality and persistence of the old ideas, into the sixteenth century and beyond, about races of giants locked in combat with Egyptian gods in the valleys of ancient Europe.<sup>19</sup> Scholarly confusion about the origins of Europe cannot be dismissed as epidemic incompetence or a persistence of popular delusions; on the contrary, it stood

17. Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, 298 (see chap. 1, n. 59).

18. These names are taken from Thomas Gordon's eighteenth-century translation of Tacitus's *Germania*.

19. Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (see chap. 1, n. 55); Walter Stephens, *Berosus Chaldeus: Counterfeit and Fictive Editors of the Early Sixteenth Century* (PhD diss., Cornell University, 1979), and *Giants in Those Doys: Folklore, Ancient History, and Nationalism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), and *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991); and Ingrid Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance: Ancients and Moderns in Sixteenth-Century Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), and *The Scarith of Scornello: A Tale of Renaissance Forgery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

close to learnedness. The confusion is an aspect of erudition that later erudition wanted to forget.

The real source of the creativity was uncertainty about when and where to apply skeptical pressure on a transmission process. Texts tended to receive the benefit of the doubt. One author stood in—synechdocally, in Umberto Eco's terms—for the whole chain behind him.<sup>20</sup> Any knowledge that readers happened to possess about the transcription they held in their hands, about the scribe or the scriptorium, for instance, or the publisher, was simply factored out as accidental. No one was so naïve as to confuse vehicle and text, and so for example to try to date a linguistic text—that is, fix the historical moment of its genesis—by assigning a date to a parchment, a script, or a typeface.<sup>21</sup> Linguistic texts were assemblages of information that, ever since the invention of the alphabet, could be transferred from one material vehicle to another with relative ease and minimal distortion. Readers were all too prepared to assign authoritative origins to insecurely labeled texts. The case of a fourteenth-century English grammarian misattributing a thirteenth-century text to Boethius, and that of the twelfth-century book by Walter Map whose modern authorship was actually doubted by contemporaries—both examples adduced by Alastair Minnis in his standard study of medieval authorship—are typical.<sup>22</sup> To the reader, it was content that mattered, overwhelmingly, and so the friction of transmission processes was underrated. In the event, texts were exceptionally vulnerable to corruption and mischief. The habit of receiving them in good faith was a necessary self-deception if the overall system of textual knowledge was to survive at all.

The aim of this book is to bring out the peculiar patterns of faith and skepticism generated by the material artifact. There is no link to the past more powerful than a physical relic, but also no link harder to prove. Unlike the text, the artifact was expected to deliver good testimony; the artifact had a real chance of being a relic, that is, a nonsubstitutable fragment, a sample, of a vanished lifeworld. Expectations were high, the payoff was considerable, and accordingly skepticism was relaxed. The transmission processes that delivered the artifact tended to be poorly understood. The

20. Eco, "Tipologia della falsificazione," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, 5 vols. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica, *Schriften*, vol. 33) (Hannover: Hahn, 1988), 1: 69–82.

21. The historian Sigismund Meisterlin did express regret, however, that so many old volumes at the library of Sts. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg, including "original" manuscripts by Eusebius and others, had gone astray. Meisterlin, *Nuremberg Chronicle, Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, vol. 3 (Leipzig, 1864), pt. 1, chap. 2, p. 43.

22. A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980), 9, 11–12.

discipline of archeology, after some centuries, would develop into a reflexive skepticism about the origins of artifacts and agnosticism about the representational capacities of artifacts. But in its early phases, archeology was often driven by quite the opposite state of mind, namely, enthusiasm about the testimonial force of artifacts. The proximity of learning to credulity in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and even seventeenth centuries followed from a fascination with the referential magic of the monument.

The modern, metascholarly question, Why were so many monuments misdated by Renaissance scholars? is therefore a badly posed question. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, few scholars were trying to date artifacts. More likely they were trying to *identify* them on the basis of an inferred reference either to a prestigious source of power and meaning—a divine personage, a founder—or to other artifacts, perhaps a notional original artifact. The principal riddle was always iconography, in its oldest sense: the identification of the portrayed individual.

### Replica chains

This study tries to isolate artifacts like buildings and images out of the more general category of mythic-historical testimony and explain the distinctive, nontextual ways that they linked people to origins. Artifacts in premodern cultures—so the argument will run—were basically thought of as members of classes of artifacts connected to a common source or to one another by referential links. These classes were structured as chains of artifacts succeeding and standing in for one another across time. The chain of exchanges or substitutions stretching out behind any given artifact was, in practice, invisible and unreconstructible. Whether production really, factually, historically happened this way is irrelevant. The point is that substitution was the theory of production that steered the perception, interpretation, and use of artifacts. The chain of substitutions was the structural form that the transmission of authority took. Societies coped with a deficit of authority by inventing chains that ran backward to a remote origin.

The institution of the artwork emerged in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a social shelter for a kind of artifact that was deliberately evasive about its own origins. The modern work of art defined itself against the artifact embedded in a substitutional chain. The artwork threw out a whole range of theories of its own origins other than the traditional origin of tradition itself. Examples of those alternative theories of origins were mathematics, Platonic idealism, and the unique insight of the individual artist. But before the institution and theory of the artwork were in place, it was mainly the substitutional model of production that legitimated artifacts.

The idea of the chain as the basic structure of artifact production was introduced to the discipline of art history by George Kubler in his theoretical sketch *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (1962).<sup>23</sup> Kubler was a specialist in ancient Mesoamerican art and architecture struck by the poor fit between the material he dealt with and the existing explanatory structures of European art history. He was trying to make sense of terra-cotta pots and votive statues that existed in multiples and were ungrounded in any notion of authorship.<sup>24</sup> Kubler developed a concept of a form-class comprising “prime objects” and their countless replicas. His book was in part a reaction against the proliferation of iconographic studies and the bias in favor of European art that prevailed in mid-twentieth-century American academic art history. Kubler wondered whether all artifacts could be expected to yield meanings in the same ways that Renaissance and Baroque paintings did. Many artifacts, he argued, did not mean anything but simply existed. Here he was not pleading for a merely functionalist or materialist approach to the Mesoamerican relics. Rather, he was proposing a radically formalist approach that refused to seek meaning outside the artifact itself, or outside the family of objects, the morphological system, it belonged to. Kubler, the pupil of the French formalist Henri Focillon, saw form living a life of its own within the vertically structured replica chains.<sup>25</sup> Focillon himself had been influenced by the vitalist thought of Henri Bergson and thus belonged to a tradition of antirationalist, nonempiricist thinking about the temporality of matter that stretched back to Goethe’s morphology of plants and embraced, arguably, Aby Warburg’s theory of the dynamic *Nachleben* or survival of archaic energies in figuration.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Warburg and Focillon were only trying, in their own ways, to theorize the substitutional model of artifact production that had preceded the artwork. For our purposes, the hidden vitalist core of Kubler’s essay might as well remain hidden. There is no need either to

23. George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

24. In the 1960s Maya script had not yet been deciphered, so Kubler did not fully understand the prestigious role of the painter-scribe, part priest, part artist, in Maya culture; see Michael D. Coe and Justin Kerr, *The Art of the Maya Scribe* (New York: Abrams, 1998), 89–110. But Kubler’s point about the substitutional structure of Mesoamerican artifact production survives the many adjustments to our pictures of the Maya and Aztec cultures in the last decades.

25. Henri Focillon, *Vie des formes* (Paris: Ernst Leroux, 1934), transl. by Kubler and Charles Beecher Hogan as *The Life of Forms in Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942; New York: Zone Books, 1989).

26. The recent literature on Warburg is extensive. An excellent but frequently underrated foundation is Ernst Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1970). The author who takes Warburg’s often fantastical models most seriously is Didi-Huberman, in *L’image survivante* (see chap. 1, n. 58).

endorse or to refute it. What Kubler did offer was the model of a work-to-work production process guided by a virtual originary point.

Kubler did not address the problem of reference. He tended to set aside issues of signification, which he saw dominated by linguistic models. Kubler's chains were just sequences of mute objects. It will be argued here, by contrast, that the substitutional hypothesis that governed pre-modern European thinking about artifacts was fundamentally *referential*; that is, the chains that trailed behind artifacts were also paths back to origin points and to stable meaning. Reference, the strong link to the origin, is not achieved by the mechanisms of textual signification, that is, by manipulation of conventionalized codes. The artifact refers by positing some direct connection, if not to the referent itself, then to another artifact that is presumed to be in contact either with the referent or with yet another referential artifact; and so on. Reference is satisfied to postpone, if necessary, the puzzle of the final link to reality by referring instead to another link in a causal chain. The referential mechanism is completely compatible with the metaphors developed by Kubler. In this way Kubler, although he himself never offered a theory of reference, invites us to discern catenated structures of production behind not only pots and votive figurines, but behind all artifacts that carry reference: monuments, inscriptions, diagrams, maps, histories and prophecies, and above all the general class of portraits or icons, the class that most sacred images belong to.

The Christian icon is the portrait of a holy personage. Its authority is grounded in a premise of reliable preservation of reference across a lengthy sequence of substitutions. Reference is secured by a system of identity markers, such as features of physiognomy or physiology, costume, labels. The actual manual copying from picture to picture, the transmission process, is effectively taken on faith.<sup>27</sup> In the Middle Ages, legends clustered around a small corpus of ancient, authoritative portraits of Christ and the Virgin made not by human hands, but by direct imprinting or by divine guidance. In principle, every later portrait of Christ or the Virgin with any

27. Ernst von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder: Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende* (Leipzig, 1899). The sacred portrait was steered back to the center of the study of medieval and Renaissance art by Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich: Beck, 1990), trans. Edmund Jephcott as *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); and by Gerhard Wolf, *Salus populi romani: Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter* (Weinheim: VCH Acta Humaniora, 1990), and *Schleier und Spiegel: Traditionen des Christusbildes und die Bildkonzepte der Renaissance* (Munich: Fink, 2002). See also Giovanni Morello and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *Il Volto di Cristo*, exhibition catalogue, Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni (Milan: Electa, 2000); and Herbert L. Kessler and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation*, Papers from a colloquium held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996 (Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1998).

claims to authenticity was understood, with more or less literalness, as a reliable copy of one of these primordial portraits. Such families of icons were structured in vertical chains. Portraits of Christ descended from the legendary impressions of the Savior's features on cloth: the *Mandylion*, a portrait sent by Christ himself to the pagan King Abgar of Edessa, and the *Veronica* or *sudarium*.<sup>28</sup> The authoritative portrait of the Virgin Mary was meant to have been painted by St. Luke, from the life. Although no one was quite sure which surviving painting was the original, or even whether the original portrait had survived, there were many candidates. Meaning was preserved from copy to copy as long as the key features of the iconographical type were preserved. They were all painted by St. Luke. Formal schemas and strict canons factored out variable painterly skill.

The chain model was a response to theological doubts about the image. Since Christ and the Virgin were portrayed already in their lifetimes, the argument went, then there must be a loophole in the Second Commandment's prohibition of images. These portraits were not the inventions of the creative imagination, but had been made by reliable processes such as direct imprinting. There could be no danger in worshiping such images. Theological debate, liturgical reform, and popular devotion all clustered around these most prestigious classes of artifacts. Western Europe fell upon the Byzantine icon tradition when the Fourth Crusade conquered Constantinople in 1204, mistaking icons for direct survivors of the lost and most ancient Christian cult.<sup>29</sup> The Byzantine icon itself responded over the next centuries to this misconception, styling itself ever more self-consciously in the mirror of Western nostalgia. The West, meanwhile, rediscovered its own internal iconic tradition. New cult images with local appeal emerged with increasing frequency beginning in the fourteenth century and in many parts of Europe not abating before the eighteenth. They were copied or restored, even repainted, when necessary.<sup>30</sup> The copying process was only

28. On the Abgar portrait, see the exhibition catalogue *Mandylion: Intorno al Sacro Volto, da Bisanzio a Genova*, ed. Gerhard Wolf et al. (Milan: Skira, 2004). On the Veronica, see Ewa Kuryluk, *Veronica and Her Cloth: History, Symbolism, and Structure of a "True" Image* (Cambridge, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 317–82; and Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel*, 111–45.

29. For basic orientation on the Western response to the Eastern cult image, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*; and Maryan W. Ainsworth, "À la façon grèce: The Encounter of Northern Renaissance Artists with Byzantine Icons," in the exhibition catalogue *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 545–55 and cat. nos. 329–55.

30. Cathleen Hoeniger, *The Renovation of Paintings in Tuscany, 1250–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Research on the comparable northern European story has not yet been synthesized.



accelerated by the advent of replication technologies, especially the mechanical transfer of inked designs from block or plate to paper. Substitution is a kind of magic, in that one object takes the place of another and denies difference, creating an effect of identity. This is the effect that replication technologies tried to exploit, not only ink on paper but also the copying of three-dimensional form in clay or bronze, involving casting from molds by complex procedures repeatable in principle though not always in practice. When a sign is indexical to *something*, as an engraving is indexical to a copperplate, the human recipient of the sign will tend to transfer the indexical relationship, not necessarily legitimately, to some preferable object, a point of origin more interesting than the mere copperplate. Indexicality itself, the very possibility that a mechanical process might eliminate human error and bias, is impressive. The mechanical transfer of information converts representation into an engineering problem. The index collapses time and space, the intervals where error occurs. Suddenly there is no longer any need for a substitutional hypothesis, which was after all nothing other than a refusal to worry about the gaps between original and copy, between copy and copy. Confidence in an indexical link *somewhere* in the process floods the *entire* process, filling any gaps in credibility. It is the exact reverse of the rationalist maxim that a chain is only as good as its weakest link. The substitutional paradigm is basically the belief that a chain is as good as its strongest link. This psychological effect could not be more familiar, for it is the basis for all the automatic and specious authority of the printed newspaper and the television broadcast in the modern world (the Internet is another matter, or so it would seem at this early stage).

The printed image in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the woodcut or engraving, although strictly speaking indexical only to its wooden block or copperplate, was readily taken for an authoritative index of something in the world, a geographic fact, a species of plant or animal, a wonder or prodigy, the forms of the pagan gods.<sup>31</sup> The print was a *counterfeit*, believable because “made from” its object.<sup>32</sup> The phenomenon of “reassignable indexicality” earned spurious authority for printed images throughout the whole early modern period.

31. See the remarks on the connotations of physical contact in early printmaking by Charles Talbot, “Prints and the Definitive Image,” in *Print and Culture in the Renaissance*, ed. Gerald P. Tyson and Sylvia S. Wagonheim (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986), 189–205, esp. 200. See also Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 66–69 and *passim*.

32. Peter Parshall, “Imago contrafacta: Images and Facts in the Northern Renaissance,” *Art History* 16 (1993): 554–79, argues that the print medium generated its own rhetoric of reliability. See the interesting discussion of the ambiguity of the term *counterfeit* in the early sixteenth century in the dissertation by Ashley West, *Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473–1531) and the Visualization of Knowledge* (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, forthcoming), chap. 2.

The model of the substitutional chain provided a kind of working answer to the theological riddle of image worship. The substitution chain deferred the problem of the representation of the divine, and the problem of the legitimacy of the cult image, by sending it down the line. Ordinary judgments about artifacts worked with a referential rather than a representational model of meaning: the image was firmly linked to the next image in the chain, and that was good enough. In practice, all questions about origins were answered by the chain structure.<sup>33</sup>

If the transmission process—the system of workshop training, the practices of copying, the limits imposed by teachers on their pupils, ultimately the printing press—could be trusted, then one could believe that St. Luke's original portrait of the Virgin, painted with divinely controlled precision, had been transmitted reliably. One could believe that human error, the vagaries of memory, and the creative imagination had all been excluded. The entire European network of cult images was sustained by a collective agreement not to ask questions about when a panel was painted, how it was obtained, or when it might have been restored.

The model of the substitutional chain remained intact even when the chain was collapsed onto a single place. Every painted icon had either to be repainted or to be replaced at some point. A sequence of icons could build up vertically, on the same panel, creating an icon-palimpsest, each layer substituting for the layer below without loss of reference. Many surviving paintings replaced earlier panels whose existence has now been completely forgotten. In some cases the works were differentially restored. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the faces of Marian statues were often updated to match shifting standards of beauty, at great expense and trouble, while the physical core of the statue, and so its identity, was preserved.<sup>34</sup> Portions, but only portions, of two thirteenth-century Siennese *Madonnas* were repainted in the fourteenth century.<sup>35</sup>

33. A brief word on the concept of "substitution" in Summers, *Real Spaces*, 257. In Summers's complex theorization of the evolution of world art, most cultures before the European Renaissance have, under certain circumstances, permitted one artifact to stand in for another. He calls this relation "real metaphor," thus bringing it into closer alignment with—perhaps allowing it to anticipate—a representational model of what artifacts do. The "real metaphor" is a representation of what it substitutes, not a weak, conventional representation but an exceptionally strong one.

34. Robert Suckale and Stefan Rolle, "Mittelalterliche Veränderungen älterer Marienstatuen und ihre Erklärung: Reparatur? Verschönerung? Umdeutung?" in *Unter der Lupe: Neue Forschungen zu Skulptur und Malerei des Hoch- und Spätmittelalters*, ed. Anna Moraht-Fromm and Gerhard Weilandt (Stuttgart: Thorbecke; Ulm: Süddeutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), 39–50.

35. Michael Viktor Schwarz, "Übermalungen und Remakes: Stil als Medium," in *Stilfragen zur Kunst des Mittelalters*, ed. Bruno Klein and Bruno Boerner (Berlin: Reimer, 2006), 197, argues that the Madonna di Bordone and the Dominican Madonna were deliberately left half-restored to highlight the panels' age.

Buildings, too, were substitution chains collapsed onto themselves. Buildings were rebuilt and modified again and again over time. The most complex edifices, the oldest churches, were nothing other than diachronic substitution chains built up cumulatively over centuries but on a single spot. Sacred sites were occupied by sequences of buildings, each improving upon the last, perhaps maintaining the same dedication throughout, perhaps shifting the reference. A church dedicated to the Virgin, for instance, recently elevated to the status of cathedral but founded by a local nobleman in early medieval times, was believed—let us say—to stand on the site of a pagan temple dedicated to a local harvest deity. It was desirable to build on sacred sites, for the numen or *genius loci* carried over. The reference of the building could easily be shifted to the right divinity. Almost any building was thus the end product of a long history of destruction, repair, replacement, adjustment. The building stood at the end of a series of spoliations, alterations, and relabelings stretching backward into the past, the whole lot of it unknowable, untraceable. Everyone knew this about buildings, even before anyone was capable of discerning the threads of such histories in the fabric of buildings. The absolute chronology of the building history did not matter; what did was the sequence of buildings with their changing references. The antiquarian scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries still shared this basic premise. They often insisted on the existence of an ancient predecessor building even when there was no evidence for it.

The built and shaped environment looked very different to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century eyes than it does to modern travelers with their topographical handbooks backed by whole libraries of art historical scholarship. Even the most sophisticated observers saw buildings and statues and wall paintings collapsed upon one another in a severe temporal compression. People looked at their crumpled and faceted surroundings of granite and bronze and wood and saw not a historical layering, but rather arrays of building types, ritual focal points, *lieux de mémoire*, and portraits of divine and human personages. What would it have meant, at the time, to assign a “date” to a building? A building was precisely a point where history caved in upon itself, where recorded event, personality, and sacred precinct were all folded one upon the other. A building was an entity that lived through and with history; like a city, in fact. Like a city, a complex building had no vanishing point, no single moment of origin.<sup>36</sup>

36. Such a conception of building is not so different from the “Ovidian” or metamorphic conception of architectural time described by Marvin Trachtenberg, “Building outside Time in Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria*,” *RES* 48 (Autumn 2005): 123–34. In Trachtenberg’s account, the model of organic and identity-preserving growth is the foil to Alberti’s conception of an idealizing architecture guided by an authorial intelligence. Albert advised the architect faced with an incomplete structure to attempt to recover the building’s most perfect state as expressed in its design.

## Reference by typology

What held the substitution chain together? What does it mean to say that one artifact stood in for another? Artifact  $x$  can be said to stand in for artifact  $y$  if  $x$ , for a given user or community of users, successfully fulfills one of  $y$ 's functions. For a different user, or for a different function, the one artifact may no longer stand in for the other. Fungibility—exchange-value on the basis of function—is perceivable only from the receiving end, only from a certain point of view. So, for example, an icon of the Virgin in one town is interchangeable with an icon in a nearby town insofar as they are both authentic portraits of the Virgin. At the same time, the first icon may serve as a focal point for local self-awareness and self-celebration, or as a kind of local protective device, a palladium. On that score the two icons no longer substitute for one another.

The function dealt with in this book is mainly reference, that is, pointing, isolating, selecting. Substitutability within the context of reference means that there is no loss of reference from one link in the chain, or one element in the class, to the next. The cultural value of the premise of substitutability within a functional context of reference was obvious: continuity and stability of collective memory. Fungibility was a fixed ground against which other things alarmingly shifted or drifted. By the same token, innovation—the insistence on nonsubstitutability—could be performed only against a background of substitutability. Historically, the idea that the artist might also be a kind of author emerged against the idea that pictures and statues were mainly good for making substitutional references.

In a substitutional system,  $x$  and  $y$  are both governed by a missing prime object, a *type* of which both  $x$  and  $y$  are instances or *tokens*. An artifact is considered a token of an original type when it is considered, by some community of recipients, to have preserved the constitutive or identifying features of the type. Such a token is permitted to dispense with nonessential, contingent features, such features as the material the type was made of or the quantity and relative elaborateness of the ornamentation. A token might preserve internal scale and proportion of the type, but in a new size. A token might preserve plan but not elevation; it might preserve the number of arched windows in a façade but be indifferent to whether they are round or pointed, or vice versa.

The set of features that count can be thought of as a program. In a substitutional system, there is in fact no literal program, no physical plan or script that subsequent makers can consult. Nor was there ever necessarily an actual type that exemplified the program. The program—the repertoire of essential features—is not pre-existent but actually created by the reception. Beholders isolate forms, create provisional token classes based on the artifacts they know, assemble them into a usable program,

and so retroactively invent a virtual type or prime object. Those components which are isolated in reception and reassembled as a program reveal to modern observers which aspects of building a historical culture considered most important. Since there is no actual type to which all beholders have equal access, production will never in practice unfold in a consistent, logical manner. If one beholder should draw a distinction between one token and another on the basis of material features not covered by another beholder's conception of the program, or not covered by any program, the principle of substitutability will break down. The replica chain will meander and will soon be impossible to recognize as a chain. A simple example is the early Christian basilica, which differentiated itself from pagan structures by renouncing vaulting and even arches, for the most part, and instead employing flat roofs and trabeated colonnades. Eventually the Christian church found its way back to the vault and the arch, and the distinction was lost. A later beholder who decided that the true program was not the roofing system but, say, the basilical plan would be able to connect the vaulted and the unvaulted churches and embrace them within a single replica chain. Another beholder, meanwhile, might decide that vaulting was the crucial criterion while the unvaulted system had been only a sidetrack, and so construct a different chain linking the vaulted churches directly to the pagan structures and excluding the unvaulted churches entirely. Without a precise chronology—and until modern times no one had anything like a chronology to work with—there would be no basis for choosing, at least no archeological basis, between one version of the chain and the other.

Ritualized activity such as liturgy or ceremony was another rhetoric of notational continuity. Ritual was behavior abstracted and therefore repeatable, even notatable. Every present-day ritual carried the premise of its own great antiquity. Ritual, like architecture, was its own archive, for there was no independent storage and retrieval system that notated the origins and early history of rituals.<sup>37</sup> Rarely was a present-tense ritual underwritten by a historical textual account, for example, the custom of the Palm Sunday processions involving a wooden model of Christ seated on an ass and dragged on a wheeled platform through city streets. In this case, a tenth-century life of St. Ulrich, the early medieval bishop of Augsburg and the first saint ever to be canonized by a pope, described just such a procession and machine. The fifteenth-century ritual was both the record of and the successor to the tenth-century ritual.<sup>38</sup>

37. This is not strictly true, because prescriptive handbooks to liturgy and iconography such as the *Rationale divinarum officiorum* (before 1286) of the canonist William Durandus also have descriptive value.

38. Eduard Wiepen, *Palmsonntagsprozession und Palmesel* (Bonn, 1903), 8; Johannes Tripps, *Handelnde Bildwerke in der Gotik: Forschungen zu den Bedeutungsschichten und der Funktion*

The concept of the type is best developed in the field of architectural history. Type is relatively legible in architecture because architectural form is so often articulated into repeatable modules. Buildings could be understood as collapsed chains of substitutions grounded in the sacrality of a site. Architectural substitution also operated across space, unmoored from sacred sites. Mutually referential links could exist at the same time in different places, forming a synchronic web of interchangeable artifacts. Buildings referred to one another. Similarities between one building and another were understood not only as reflections of custom, that is, the practical handing down from craftsman to craftsman of models and techniques. A class of buildings could also be understood as a family of tokens derived from a single type.

It did not matter how elaborate the program was that linked token to type, or how closely it was respected, so long as the resulting building was sufficiently differentiated from another building that belonged to a different token family, or to no token family. This principle of negative differentiation from surrounding context explains the strong local flavor of so many of the medieval European replicas of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, for example.<sup>39</sup> A replica of the Holy Sepulchre in one German town might look very different from a replica in another town. It mattered more that the replica looked different from all the run-of-the-mill basilical churches in its own proximity, than that it looked like other replicas of the Holy Sepulchre, or even like the Holy Sepulchre itself.

The principle of negative differentiation is the basis of the alphabet. The letter *A* written on a page may look very different from another *A* found in a different book, or inscribed on a stone in some other place altogether, as long as that letter *A* is sufficiently differentiated from *B*, *C*, and *D* appearing on the same surface. Reference is secured by differentiation within a local field. If a building is perceived to differ essentially from other nearby, familiar buildings on the basis of conformity to some set of instructions, then it was seen to have referentiality.

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*des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Hoch- und Spätgotik* (Berlin: Mann, 1998), 89–113.

**39.** For orientation in the vast topic of Holy Sepulchre replicas, see Gustav Dalman, *Das Grab Christi in Deutschland* (Leipzig: Dietrich, 1922); Damiano Neri, *Il Santo Sepolcro riprodotto in Occidente* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1971); Geneviève Bresc-Bautier, "Les imitations du Saint-Sépulchre de Jérusalem (IXe–XVe siècles): Archéologie d'une dévotion," *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité* 50 (1974): 319–42; Adolf Reinle, *Zeichensprache der Architektur* (Zurich and Munich: Artemis, 1976), 127–31; Paul Naredi-Rainer, *Salomos Tempel und das Abendland: Monumentale Folgen historischer Irrtümer* (Cologne: DuMont, 1994), 90–102; Robert Ousterhout, "Flexible Geography and Transportable Topography," in *The Real and the Ideal Jerusalem in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Thought*, ed. Bianca Kühnel, special issue of *Jewish Art* 23–24 (1997–98): 393–404; and Annabel Jane Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 49–96.

Membership of a given medieval building in an architectural token class can be hard to recognize today because the original criteria of difference might have been very crude, falling below some minimal quantity of criteria that today's eyes and minds expect in order to perceive resemblance. And yet in their time those criteria sufficed to secure reference, at least for some beholders. Criteria of difference, and the ability to draw distinctions, did differ within historical populations depending on training and travel experience. Trans-spatial reference on the basis of such distinctions gathered the huge scattered family of Christian sacred buildings into groups, connecting the stray buildings to the sacred sites and replacing a single pilgrimage destination—Jerusalem—with myriad lesser but yet supraregional destinations, and with still other merely regional destinations, mapping a web of potential journeys from one end of Europe to the other.

The simplest differential criterion was ground plan. The central plan was the most direct form of reference because of its difference from the normal basilical plan. The reference of the central plan was vague. It was associated with martyria, baptisteries, cult sites, and generally with very ancient origins.<sup>40</sup> There is no single reason why this was so, but memories of the Pantheon and of the centrally planned structures of the East—the Rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre, the Dome of the Rock, Hagia Sophia—played a role. A central plan was enough to push a building's origins back several centuries in the eyes of its beholders. The most famous example is the Baptistry in Florence, an eleventh-century structure described repeatedly in the later Middle Ages and throughout the sixteenth century as a converted ancient temple.<sup>41</sup> Jean Adhémar gives examples of Romanesque baptisteries in southern France that were taken for pagan temples until the eighteenth or even early nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup> It was a Europe-

40. On centrally planned buildings, see Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 1–33; André Grabar, *Martyrium: Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Collège de France, 1946); Wolfgang Götz, *Zentralbau und Zentralbautendenz in der gotischen Architektur* (Berlin: Mann, 1968); and Matthias Untermann, *Der Zentralbau im Mittelalter: Form, Funktion, Verbreitung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989).

41. Walter Horn, "Das Florentiner Baptisterium," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 5 (1938): 99–151. For the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century sources describing the Baptistry as a Temple of Mars (Filippo Villani, Coluccio Salutati, Giovanni da Prato), see Ernst H. Gombrich, "From the Revival of Letters to the Reform of the Arts" (1967), in Gombrich, *The Heritage of Apelles: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1976), 104–5. Giorgio Vasari in 1550 referred to the Baptistry as *antichissimo tempio* and *tempio antico*; see *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1878–85), 1: 236–37, 332–32. See most recently the discussion in Robert Williams, "Vincenzo Borghini and Vasari's Lives" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1988), chap. 5, esp. 206 and n. 324.

42. Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l'art du Moyen Âge français*, xix.

wide phenomenon. The *Nibelungenlied*, in the classic redaction of the Hohenstaufen period, identified the burial site of the hero Siegfried as the cemetery of the cathedral in Worms, for no better reason apparently than the presence of an octagonal pre-Gothic, that is, undatable, baptistery.<sup>43</sup> It was as if the central-plan structure had to represent *something*. The round chapel at Altenfurt just southeast of Nuremberg, a twelfth-century building, was built by Charlemagne to replace a temporary tent under which he had performed a sacrament; so averred Sigismund Meisterlin.<sup>44</sup> The referential vectors thrown out by these buildings were not always so tightly targeted. Art historians often ask for too much precision of reference from artifacts, just as they tend to overrate the attentiveness of historical viewers.<sup>45</sup> Loose as they were, these references sufficed to lend the buildings an identity that transcended their present-tense function in the life of town or community. The links were fictional but strong. The central plan was understood as more than merely some later builder's symbolic invocation of an ancient building type; rather, it was understood as evidence of some real connection to the past.

Many medieval buildings referred to the Constantinian Holy Sepulchre, either the Edicule housing the tomb itself or the great Rotunda or Anastasis that covered both tomb and Edicule. The reference was secured by a relatively simple but constantly shifting set of instructions that involved minimally the idea of roundness and maximally conformity to the precise proportions or even dimensions of the original. The purpose of the reference was to connect present-tense sacred structures and patterns of worship to a notional zero point of Christian architecture. The Christian temple, according to the theory implied by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, was associated from the beginning with tombs. This reference fundamentally differentiated Christian from pagan worship. The reference to the tomb was then repeated inside the Christian temple, where every altar mensa typologically modeled the tomb of Christ.<sup>46</sup>

43. Eugen Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, ed. Friedrich M. Illert (Worms: Stadtbibliothek Worms, 1930), 91–93.

44. August Gebessler, *Landkreis Nürnberg* (= *Bayerische Kunstdenkmale*, vol. 11) (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1961), 23–24. Sigismund Meisterlin, *Nuremberg Chronicle*, pt. 1, chap. 8, in *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte 3, Nürnberg* (Leipzig, 1864), 60 (German text), 196 (Latin text). Ernst Mummenhof, *Nürnberg's Ursprung und Alter* (Nuremberg: Schrag, 1908), 14–15. In fact the chapel is mentioned in no document earlier than 1225.

45. See Paul Veyne, perverse and polemical, on the unreadability of Trajan's Column, an artwork "functioning at only five percent of its capacity"; "Propagande expression roi, image idole oracle," *L'Homme* 114 (1990): 7–26.

46. This pattern of reference was extended to still smaller nested levels of microarchitectural meaning, for example, ciboria, reliquaries, or niches. See Naredi-Rainer, *Salomos Tempel und das Abendland*, 90–102.



Yet little was known in the medieval West about the original tomb of Christ. The Edicule, with a ring of columns and a small cupola, and the Rotunda had been built by Constantine after 326. Both structures were destroyed by the Fatimid caliph Hakim in 1009. The church that the Crusaders found in 1099 was the reconstruction of the Rotunda carried out by the Byzantine emperors.<sup>47</sup> It is difficult enough in 2008 to piece together the building history of the Edicule and the Rotunda. In the later Middle Ages no one could do it. The roundness and one or two other salient features of Edicule and Rotunda were enough to connect them to antiquity.

The Holy Sepulchre replica family was initiated when patrons and builders wanted to introduce some refinements to the simple *round = antique* referential equation. The Crusaders had brought home with them verbal descriptions and measurements of the Sepulchre, and communities began building replicas, sometimes to scale and sometimes in true scale, of both the Rotunda and the tomb at its center. The liturgical and psychological functions of the Western medieval replicas of the Holy Sepulchre are in most cases no longer reconstructible. It was important to replicate the central plan of the chapel and a few other features, but not important to match for example the original size. The essence of the sacred building was its plan, and that essential identity flowed evenly through all the various performances all over Europe in various media and sizes, with varying ornamental garments.

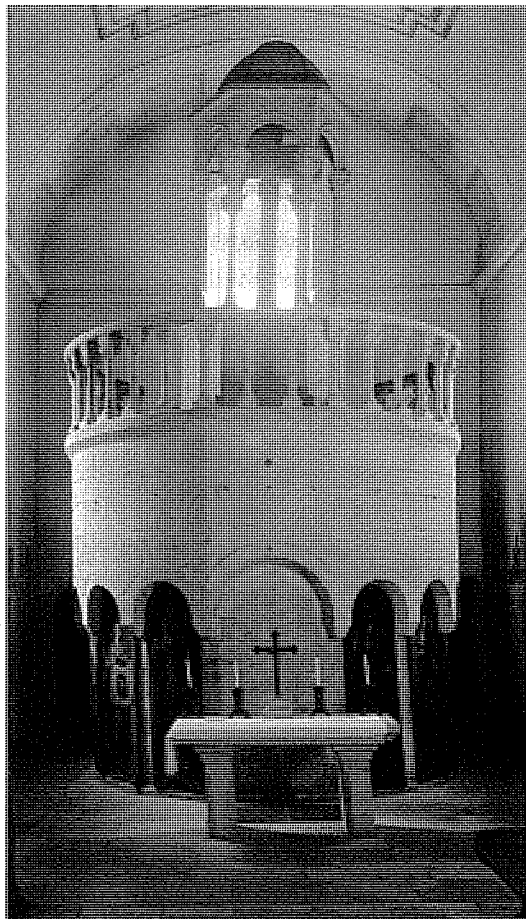
Replicas constructed before the Crusades—in Fulda, Constance, Magdeburg, and Paderborn, among other German sites—were necessarily vague. Later on there were better measurements. One such replica was the chapel on the Weinmarkt in Augsburg commissioned by the citizenry and consecrated in 1128, evidently rebuilt in 1236.<sup>48</sup> The aspect of that structure survives on sixteenth-century maps and views and in a drawing made at the time of its destruction in 1611. It was a round building about eighteen meters in diameter with a pointed tower on the cupola, presumably based on a description of the Holy Sepulchre as a tower-like structure nested inside a round chapel. Thus it misguidedly combined features of the Edicule and the Rotunda. Another medieval German example was the oval-plan Capuchin church of the Holy Cross at Eichstätt, founded by a twelfth-century cathedral prior on his return from the Holy Land (fig. 9). When the pil-

47. Martin Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ* (Phoenix Mill, UK: Sutton, 1999), 54–81, is an excellent, scrupulous account of this complex history. See also Robert Ousterhout, "Architecture as Relic and the Construction of Sanctity: The Stones of the Holy Sepulchre," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62 (2003): 7, with reference to previous literature, including his own important study.

48. Dalman, *Das Grab Christi in Deutschland*, 44–56; Untermann, *Der Zentralbau im Mittelalter*, 72.

grims Sebastian Rieter and Hans Tucher of Nuremberg visited the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in 1479, they could report with satisfaction that it was “equal in height and width” to the structure they knew in Eichstätt, and that therefore the Eichstätt chapel was shown to be “a congruent image and symbol” (*ein gleichformig pildung und bezeichnung*) of the original.<sup>49</sup> There were no such replicas built in Germany in the fourteenth century, but a whole series in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, apparently to keep pace with tides of returning and would-be pilgrims. The typological formula was available whenever a community wished to reactivate its architecture. A central-plan structure, or even a building with centralizing “tendencies,” focused attention on, for instance, Eucharistic miracles associated with sites near or under the building, providing an automatic overlay of association with the Holy Sepulchre just when it was most needed—that is, when miracles were most dubious and political motives for the ignition of new local cults most suspect.<sup>50</sup>

The differential model of architectural reference, fundamental to the history of European architecture, was reidentified in the mid-twentieth century under the rubric of the “iconography” of architecture.<sup>51</sup> This model was developed at roughly the same time as Kubler’s model of the replica chain. Richard Krautheimer in his article “Introduction to an ‘Iconography of Medieval Architecture’” showed that the key to the function and meaning of many medieval buildings was the shape or plan. Krautheimer



9. Eichstätt, Church of Holy Cross, Holy Sepulchre Chapel, twelfth century. Photo: Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY.

49. Dalman, *Das Grab Christi in Deutschland*, 56–57. See also Randall Herz, *Die 'Reise ins Gelobte Land' Hans Tuchers des Älteren (1479–1480): Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung und kritische Edition eines spätmittelalterlichen Reiseberichts* (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2002), 392–93, 402, where Tucher describes “ein weite runde kirchen gleich die groß und weit, alß zu Eystet.”

50. Mitchell B. Merback, “Channels of Grace: Pilgrimage Architecture, Eucharistic Imagery, and Visions of Purgatory at the Host-Miracle Churches of Late Medieval Germany,” in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, ed. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 612–16.

51. For an overview, see Paul Crossley, “Medieval Architecture and Meaning: The Limits of Iconography,” *Burlington Magazine* 130 (1988): 116–21.

focused mainly on round and polygonal-plan buildings. His first example was the St. Michael chapel at Fulda of about 820, where a round ambulatory surrounded a tumulus-like edicule. According to Krautheimer, medieval buildings tended to be classified and interpreted on the basis of their shape, and not so much on features like absolute size, materials, or details. In his book *Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger*, meanwhile, Günter Bandmann revealed a web of historical citations among the imperial cathedrals of the German Middle Ages.<sup>52</sup> The emperors used antique building elements, Bandmann argued, to assert a political continuity with the past. Bandmann offered his evidence as a corrective to what he saw as the two prevalent “genetic” approaches to medieval architectural history: on the one hand, an evolutionary and “form-immanent” model that interpreted the sequence of buildings as an internally driven morphology, and on the other, a sociological model of historical change as the slowly mutating transmission of conventions. On the face of it, Bandmann’s alternative model of architectural citations was itself basically structuralist and formalist: he seems to offer architectural history as a matter of manipulations of a stylistic repertoire, choices made within a closed differential field. In fact, Bandmann was equally interested in the symbolic power of architecture. In his model, architecture moves freely across a wide band of relative symbolic strength, from primitive identity at one end to sophisticated allegory at the other. Bandmann wisely declined to commit himself to an overall theory of the architectural symbol, but he did invoke recent scholarship on prehistoric art to suggest the transhistorical possibility of strong symbolism; that is, the symbol as an attempt to “capture” or “enchant” (*bannen*) the absent and unknown in the present.<sup>53</sup> Bandmann thus left open the global possibility, without trying to demonstrate it empirically case by case, that medieval architectural citations were understood by historical beholders not only as citations, but also as avatars and living survivals of the old ways of building. The citations retrospectively constructed a more closely meshed tradition than actually existed. For later beholders, the Romanesque buildings were linked to antiquity in more than a merely symbolic sense. The historical fact of imperial patronage left no doubt about the dates of the foundations of Speyer and the other Rhenish cathedrals. Nor was there any reason to believe in an unbroken craft tradition that linked Speyer to antique building practices. And still the medieval buildings approached the status of effective substitutes.

52. Günter Bandmann, *Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger* (Berlin: Mann, 1951).

53. Bandmann, *Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger*, 12.

## Resemblance as an emergent property

The question, Did the buildings or the portraits in a chain “look” alike? is the wrong question. Resemblance is not an intrinsic property of things, but a perspectival effect. One viewer or community of viewers may perceive resemblance, another not at all. Nothing resembles anything else absolutely, only with respect to one or another feature. The physical attributes of a building or a portrait that secured reference—plan, a kind of material, costume, shape of eyes, an attribute held in the hands—were not necessarily “concerted” by the gaze into a whole. Visual resemblance emerges when new criteria for successful substitution are sought at every link in the replication chain.<sup>54</sup> Pressure is brought to bear on substitutions as the need for recognition becomes more urgent, as audiences become more widespread and anonymous, and as central authority loses control over the mechanisms of labeling. As expectations of resemblance increase, the visual apprehension of the artifact is knit together until it is seen as an integral whole, a unity tuned to the same stylistic key.

Mario Carpo, in an inspired study of the published architectural treatise in the sixteenth century, has shown how print technology introduced the “iconic” mode of reception of the building.<sup>55</sup> The printed treatise with its woodcut or engraved reproductions taught European architects how to see a building as a whole. This brought the typological approach to an end. Replication technology introduced the possibility of precise notations of form, both modular or discontinuous form and analogic or continuous form. Substitutions eventually were reduced to the status of mere repetitions, and so architectural history entered into a long slow incline toward the “mere” historicism of the nineteenth century.

Print pressured artifacts into relationships of resemblance. The artifact asked to resemble another artifact became for the first time an *image*, a coherent target of visual attention. The earliest reasonably accurate published pictorial descriptions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Tomb itself were the woodcut illustrations that accompanied the

54. For a version of this argument, see Whitney Davis, “Replication and Depiction in Paleolithic Art,” in *Replications: Archaeology, Art History, Psychoanalysis* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 66–94. Davis drove this anthropological approach still further, arguing that style is a concept that emerges out of replication chains; “Style and History in Art History,” in *Replications*, 171–98.

55. Mario Carpo, *Architecture in the Age of Printing: Orality, Writing, Typography, and Printed Images in the History of Architectural Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001). Carpo’s thesis is related to the famous model of Marshall McLuhan; see his *Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962).

pilgrimage report of the Mainz canon Bernhard von Breydenbach (1486) (fig. 10).<sup>56</sup> Breydenbach had traveled with a skilled artist, Erhard Reuwich of Utrecht.<sup>57</sup> After 1486 builders of Holy Sepulchre replicas could consult these portraits.<sup>58</sup> The Holy Sepulchre chapel constructed in Görlitz (Saxony) around 1500 is a slavish copy of Reuwich's woodcut, even to the point of misinterpreting the balustrade on the façade as a pair of tablets with urns.<sup>59</sup> Görlitz was a kind of substitutional landscape, an aggregation of structures corresponding to the sacred sites in Jerusalem. In Augsburg in 1508 Georg Regel and Barbara Lauinger commissioned an oval sepulchre, like the one at Eichstätt, for a small chapel in the church of St. Anna, the first private funerary chapel in Augsburg, predating the more famous Fugger Chapel just beside it (fig. 11). The fanciful structure, representing "die begrebnuss unsers lieben Herrn Ihesu Christ in mass und form, wie es in Iherusalem sein solle," is based on Breydenbach's illustration but also on the accurate written account of the Nuremberg patricians Rieter and Tucher.<sup>60</sup> From then on, the tradition of imitations of the Holy Sepulchre winds down.

After print and especially after photography, media that permit side-by-side comparison of artifacts as images and without dependence on memory, it is hard to recover the typological, noncontinuous way of seeing. Typology controlled all premodern engagement with the mass of artifacts. All thinking—whether enthusiastic or prudent—about the historicity of

56. Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), image of the Holy Sepulchre, verso of the Jerusalem foldout.

57. On the illustrations, see H. W. Davies, *Bernhard von Breydenbach and His Journey to the Holy Land, 1483–4, A Bibliography* (London: Leighton, 1911); and Elizabeth Ross, *Picturing Knowledge and Experience in the Early Printed Book: Reuwich's Illustrations for Breydenbach's Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam (1486)* (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2004). The first to identify Reuwich with the author of the Wolfegg "Housebook" and the prints by the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet was Ernstotto Graf zu Solms-Laubach, "Der Hausbuchmeister," *Städel-Jahrbuch* 9 (1935/36): 13–96, esp. 70–93. On this question, see Jane Hutchison, "Ex ungue leonem: The History of the 'Hausbuchmeisterfrage,'" in *Livelier than Life: The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet, or, The Housebook Master, ca. 1470–1500*, ed. J. P. Filedt Kok (Amsterdam: Rijksprentenkabinet, 1985), 51–53. Reuwich is referred to twice in Breydenbach's book, the first time the illustrator of a printed book was ever mentioned inside the book.

58. Reuwich's woodcuts were taken as reliable sources of information by many artists who little admired their beauty. See Michael Vickers, "The Sources of Invidia in Mantegna's *Battle of the Sea Gods*," *Apollo* 106 (1977): 270–73, on the impression they made on Carpaccio and Mantegna.

59. Dalman, *Grab Christi*, 83; Michael Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia: Historizität in der Architektur Süddeutschlands, Österreichs und Böhmens vom 14. bis 17. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Schnell und Steiner, 1999), 139; Ernst-Heinz Lemper, *Görlitz: Eine historische Topographie* (Görlitz-Zittau: Oettel, 2001), 57–63.

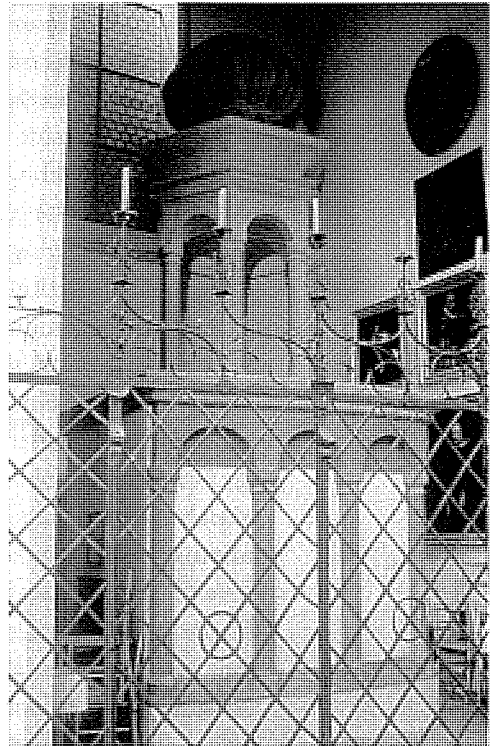
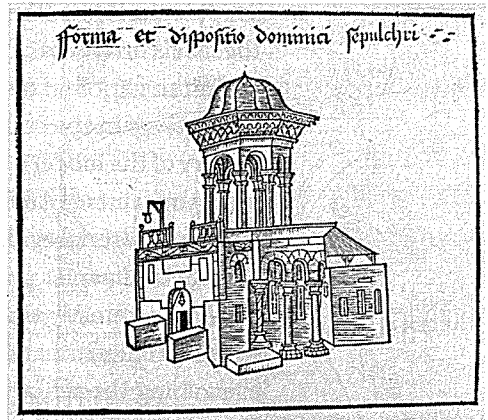
60. Dalman, *Grab Christi*, 96–102, and Bruno Bushart, *Die Fuggerkapelle bei St. Anna in Augsburg* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1994), 331–33, ill. 206.

all artifacts—whether symbolic or useful—was subtended by the same basic assumptions about production, transmission, and reference. For historical recipients, typology and the chain structure were premises that made it possible to confront the disorder of actual making processes, where any number of unreconstructible contingencies clash and where the flow of fabrication is constantly being interrupted. The extrapolation of such a governing “design principle” served to stabilize the reception of the artifact world and to control extension of the artifact class into the future. And from the point of view of those assumptions, it can be said that premodern observers, like Conrad Celtis at Speinshart or Beatus Rhenanus at Trier, never really made dating mistakes.

### Relics dependent on labels

The typological or substitutional model was a hypothesis, a fiction, about the prehistory of an artifact that permitted beholders to posit links back to a prestigious origin. Substitution chains or classes fell apart if the recipient failed to see connections, or if the elements in the class were not held together by resemblance. In practical terms, the individual beholder was often not able to see more than one token in a class at a time. The reference of artifacts was not intrinsically guaranteed. Buildings referred by shape and size, and pictures referred by iconography, but there were limits to the efficacy and the universal legibility of such references. Substitutional chains, therefore, needed to be corrected with labels. Labeling was a practice of baptism, or rebaptism, in order to secure reference to the desired origin.

Labeling developed first where the pressure was greatest, that is, where the substitutional hypothesis was challenged by skepticism. In the Middle Ages, the point of maximum pressure was the relic cult. The substitution of a saint’s bone by a similar-looking bone was precisely what everybody was worrying about. The label had to name the relic with precision and thus permanently stabilize it, fix its value, and not merely admit the object into



10. Erhard Reuwich, *Holy Sepulchre*, woodcut. Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), verso of Jerusalem foldout.

11. Augsburg, St. Anna, Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, 1508. Photo: author.

a typological class. The label on the relic was performing the same task that the labels on works of art in modern museums or collections perform.

In the very first sentence of his multivolume history of archeological excavations in the city of Rome, Rodolfo Lanciani remarked that the pre-history of the modern scholarly dig was the medieval quest for corporal relics of the saints.<sup>61</sup> Archeology begins when someone actively, interestedly, looks for material evidence. The pioneers, the first with a strong incentive, were not humanist philologists or court historians but clerics. For a long time it was mostly the monastic foundations and the cathedral chapters, in search of legitimating pasts, that were puzzling out old inscriptions and even doing the actual digging. Already in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, clerics realized that the most persuasive arguments for the antiquity of a local cult or foundation were relics, tombs, inscriptions, signed and sealed documents, not to mention miracles. The church struggled with the temptation of material evidence for centuries. Material evidence has the power to sweep aside a textual tradition, but is at the same time heavily dependent on labeling and thus easily manipulated. Clerics realized that the most effective arguments for the antiquity of a cult or a religious foundation were satisfyingly labeled bodies and body parts or, failing that, the tombs and inscriptions that attested to the identity of bodies. These were material proofs, evidence for the eye that had a chance of persuading ordinary churchgoers, who were not necessarily more credulous than the library-bound scholar.

To find such evidence, the church sponsored a kind of early paleontology. It was the relic industry that first established the protocols of digging and labeling. First came the excavation, or *inventio*; then the public presentation, or *ostentatio*; finally the ceremonial reburial, the *translatio*.<sup>62</sup> By the eleventh century most of the more desirable relics had been found, and for the next few centuries they would now and then be rediscovered, repackaged, and reburied.

Because bones look alike, the entire connection to the past rested on trust in the labeling process. A bone is nothing without a label. The twelfth- or thirteenth-century excavator hoped to find a slip of paper called an *authenticum* attached to the bones with string, or a bronze plate with an inscription lying alongside the corpse or inside the skull.<sup>63</sup> Discovery reports

61. Rodolfo Lanciani, *Storia degli scavi di Roma e notizie intorno le collezioni romane di antichità*, vol. 1 (Rome: Loescher, 1902), 15. A concise overview of the origins of modern archeology in medieval relic-hunting is Schnapp, *Discovery of the Past*, 55–88.

62. Scholarship on the relic cult was recently synthesized by Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien* (Munich: Beck, 1994); Anton Legner, *Reliquien in Kunst und Kult: Zwischen Antike und Aufklärung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995); and Henk van Os, *The Way to Heaven: Relic Veneration in the Middle Ages* (Baarn: de Prom, 2000).

63. On *authentica* and inscriptions, see H. Leclercq, "Reliques et Reliquaires," *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris: Letouzey, 1948), vol. 14/2, cols. 2338–46.

from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries placed special emphasis on such labels; bishops and popes guaranteed their authenticity. Modern scholarship, however, considers most such “found” labels to be forgeries, in the sense that they postdate the death of the saint or holy personage by many centuries.

By the fifteenth century, the “translations” or ceremonial displacements of relics were being carried out under an awareness that all the important discoveries of bones had already been made. Every burial was a reburial. At that point it became a matter of publicizing the documentary evidence, securing the evidence against theft or neglect that might weaken the link to the past, and sorting out rival claims to authenticity. Formal inscriptions, epigraphic tablets giving the date of death and sometimes the date of the discovery and the names of those responsible, were displayed on or near the new tomb. The tomb itself, indeed even the carved and painted altarpiece mounted above ground and near the tomb, can be thought of as a kind of extended relic label.<sup>64</sup>

The late fifteenth century looked back to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and sometimes earlier, as the heroic epoch of relic archeology. The early episodes of evidence-collecting and labeling provided an imaginative framework for the sadly belated research of the fifteenth century. Old translation reports were put into print. Manuscript illuminations depicted famous excavations.<sup>65</sup> The bodies were divided into ever smaller parts. The very possibility of freely circulating smaller parts meant more spurious bits of bone. The protoarcheology conducted by monasteries and cathedral chapters degenerated into obsessive private collecting. Relic fanatics like Florian Waldauf, Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg, and Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony amassed tens of thousands of bones. These caches were precursors of the great collections of old master drawings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For relics, like drawings, were small, easily stored objects that looked much alike, awaited labeling, and had little value to the nonbeliever. Outright theft of relics was rare. One of the last sensational cases was the head of St. Anne stolen from the church of St. Stephen in Mainz in 1500 and spirited away to the town of Düren in the duchy of Jülich, near Aachen.<sup>66</sup> The stonemason Leonhard, according to the Düren chroniclers, uncovered a wall niche behind the high altar at St. Stephen containing a fragment of skull. Compensating himself for unpaid wages, Leonhard stole the neglected relic and presented it to the church in his hometown, high-mindedly leaving the costly reliquary behind. The

64. Martin Heinzelmann, *Translationsberichte und andere Quellen des Reliquienkultes* [= *Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, fasc. 33] (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979), 83–88.

65. See the examples reproduced in Schnapp, *Discovery of the Past*, 86–87, 95–97.

66. Erwin Gatz, “Die Dürener Annaverehrung bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts,” in *St. Anna in Düren*, ed. Gatz (Mönchengladbach: B. Kühlen, 1972), 162–69.



Mainzers protested that they had by no means forgotten about their relic, a gift of the thirteenth century, and indeed an existent local cult and confraternity of St. Anne suggests as much. The communities disputed bitterly for years. In a bull of 1506 Pope Julius II, perhaps influenced by Emperor Maximilian, finally decided in favor of Düren, delicately attributing Leonhard's action to "divine inspiration."<sup>67</sup> The usual mode of conflict by this period, however, was no longer sacred thefts, *furta sacra*, but talk and print.<sup>68</sup> Jurists and historians debated claims of originality exactly as in the case of the Elgin Marbles today. French and German scholars wrangled about the remains of St. Denis for seven or eight centuries.

The label was one of the templates for the modern artwork. Although the label—graphic mark, effigy, picture—was asked to perform a strictly referential function, the figural quality of the label inevitably interfered with reference. The spatialization of the referential message, and the difficult claim to analogicity or a resemblant relation with an original, alienated the label from its referent and pulled it toward its own peculiar, uncontrollable sort of truth. The differential relations among labels produced meanings that quickly fell out of phase with the original referential pretext for the image. Relic hunting was an enterprise. Relics were not found, but made, framed for use by creative labeling. Archeology, even before it was called archeology, emerged as simultaneously retrospective and prospective. Archeology was a way of organizing time through and with artifacts.

### Onomastic magic

The substitutional model of production was sustained by an overriding trust in labels that can only be explained as the effect of a naming magic. The proper name succeeded in short-circuiting the coils of representation and the tortuous, obscure, unreconstructible processes of transmission. Proper names are dense points within language and have special properties. They are the points of closest contact between language and reality, for the link forged by a proper name cannot be weakened or shifted by the evolution of conventional codes, by grammatical or syntactic function, or even by translation into other languages. John, Johann, and Giovanni all refer to the same person. Many people share that name or some form of it, and nevertheless each usage of the proper name remains strictly attached to an individual. The name has only one origin—baptism or its equivalent—and

67. Albrecht Dürer paid his respects to the Düren relic on 26 October 1520. Hans Rupprich, ed., *Dürer, Schriftlicher Nachlass*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1956), 160.

68. On sacred thefts, see Patrick J. Geary, *Furta sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978).

no subsequent utterance is privileged over any other. Because of their exemption from grammar and the ordinary processes of semiotic drift, and because of their powerful pointing operation, names are crucial instruments in rituals, consecrations, invocations, and imprecations. Baptism or the assigning of a name is itself ritualized. Names in some societies are the keys to the manipulation of cosmic forces. The concept of divinity itself—so the famous argument of Hermann Usener which impressed Aby Warburg among so many others—may have originated in the projection of names onto the environment and in the idea that names are capable of generating their own references.<sup>69</sup> The referential power of the name has been systematically invoked in our own time by the analytic theory of naming devised by Saul Kripke as a way of circumventing the skepticism about linguistic reference shared by both logical positivism and Saussurean semiotics.<sup>70</sup> According to Kripke, a name is not a description of something but a “rigid designator” that points to its referent by virtue of an initial baptism. Baptism is an act of ostension or simple showing, a primitive but effective form of reference.<sup>71</sup> Although subsequent users of the word do not remember the baptism, the reference “holds” across a chain of usages. Such a “tradition” of use, maintained “link by link,” preserves reference in any possible world, even a counterfactual one.<sup>72</sup> Kripke’s theory is not so much a revival of “Cratylean” thinking, after the interlocutor of Socrates who believed that all things had been correctly named, as a practical model of language use that explains how words succeed after all in pointing to things in the world.<sup>73</sup> Initial baptism and preservation of reference across a causal chain are elements of a hypothesis about names that language users, according to Kripke, really do work with.

Etymology was the art of reading words backward to their original and natural meanings. Few medieval thinkers could resist an etymological hypothesis. Etymology was a theory of linguistic drift that tried to compen-

69. Hermann Usener, *Götternamen: Versuch einer Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung* (Bonn: F. Cohen, 1896); Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth* (New York: Harper, 1946; orig. 1925), 17–23; see Gombrich, *Aby Warburg*, 29–30.

70. Saul A. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980). Similar arguments were developed by Hilary Putnam and Keith Donnellan around the same time; see the essays in Stephen P. Schwartz, ed., *Naming, Necessity, and Natural Kinds* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977). For Putnam, natural kind words are indexical to their referents; for Donnellan, names refer independently of any identifying descriptions. See also Davis, “Replication and Depiction in Paleolithic Art,” 77.

71. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, 97.

72. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, 91, 96, 106.

73. That names are rigid designators is a “natural intuition”; Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, 5. On the adventures of Cratyleanism, see Gérard Genette, *Mimologics* (original French edition, 1976) (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1995).

sate for historical changes in signifiers and the threat to stable meaning represented by such changes. An etymological analysis of a word was the construction of a virtual chain of usages leading back to an initial baptism, a primordial affixing of meaning to word.<sup>74</sup> To the desk-bound premodern scholar, starved for historical sources, words themselves served as compact archives of the most distant past. Medieval etymology, like Kripke's theory, treated every word as if it were a proper name, so overcoming the alienation of word from thing.

The pioneering historiography of Conrad Celtis and his contemporaries was animated by constant recourse to etymological explanation. Sigismund Meisterlin averred that the Swabians were *sevi*, brutal, sharp, and gruesome. Behind Nuremberg, according to Hartmann Schedel, must stand the emperor Nero, whose name meant "strong." The brother of Nero, Granus, by the lights of Conrad Peutinger, must have given his name to Aachen, or Aquis Granum.<sup>75</sup>

Etymology was a medieval "category of thought" underwriting a wide range of institutions and systems.<sup>76</sup> Howard Bloch has brought out the deep structural homology, for example, between etymology and genealogy, the system of patronymics, primogeniture, heraldry, and genealogical narrative that sustained the fiction of aristocracy.<sup>77</sup> Genealogy was a fiction designed to mask the incomprehensible realities of genetic dispersal and recombination and instead construct clean paths to the right ancestors. Genealogy was a theory of genetics propped up by naming magic. The persistence of the name through the male line, the various systems governing the transmission of aristocratic titles, the inalienability of prop-

**74.** Alastair Minnis, *Magister amoris: The Roman de la rose and Vernacular Hermeneutics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 141–43, esp. 142n57, strikes a note of caution, contending that nominalistic or conventionalist theories of meaning, "disruptive of any naturalized attachment of word to physical property," were associated with troubador lyrics and Old French romances, and that therefore medieval allegiance to an ideal Cratylean model of the origins of words is easily overrated (by Howard Bloch, for example). Bloch's claim, however, is only that early medieval "naturalist" etymology, rooted in Hebrew name mysticism, served as a kind of "theology of words" and therefore possessed a peculiar but not exclusive prestige. R. Howard Bloch, *Etymologies and Genealogies: A Literary Anthropology of the French Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 44.

**75.** These examples and others from Frank L. Borchardt, "Etymology in Tradition and in the Northern Renaissance," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29 (1968): 415–29, which also offers an elegant overview of etymological pursuits in the Middle Ages. An incisive account of the obsession with origins in Renaissance thought is Marian Rothstein, "Etymology, Genealogy, and the Immutability of Origins," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43 (1990): 332–47.

**76.** Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 495–500.

**77.** Bloch, *Etymologies and Genealogies*.

erty, the identification of family with a piece of land, and the possibility of advantageous renaming, perhaps through social elevation, at any point in the chain, were arbitrary conventions that needed all the magic they could get. In the eleventh century a “horizontal” and non-place-bound conception of clan gave way to the “vertical” model of dynasty. Bloch explains this shift by pointing to the common conceptual structure of genealogical and etymological thinking. Genealogy and etymology were designed to cut through the tangle of historical events and the sediment of accumulated linguistic usage and speed straight to primordial sources of meaning. Any theory of reference is shadowed by the threat of a faulty link between reality and the word. If the word does not fit the thing in the first place, all subsequent usages will be out of tune. Etymology and genealogy, the hypotheses of virtual but unprovable historical chains of language use and family continuity, were ways of deferring such doubts about the legitimacy of the link. The nobility of the family, or the word’s grasp of reality, were pushed back and back into an unknowable past, and the present-tense fact of the continuity of the chain was taken as sufficient evidence of the original link. The chain implied its own anchoring.

The dynasty sustained by genealogical fiction does not look kindly on upstart families. Genealogy is not only a theory of history but a lock on the future. The “continued activity of the source” through name and label forced inventors, fabricators of the new in any field, to work within tight limits, “surpassing the past” at best by “using” it.<sup>78</sup>

The proper name, the name conferred by a baptism, is the strongest of links. The proper name asserts reference to the world by fiat, by an arbitrary act. No one can dispute the link between name and thing. Yet this manmade link can be unmade by man. A person can change his or her name, to escape justice or genealogical obscurity, and a church or an altar can be rededicated. Any label can be switched. The proper name is thus both the strongest and the weakest link. The labeling relationship is not even as strong as a coded relationship, of the sort that linguistic texts offer, for it is arbitrary without being conventional. The reference of a text can drift, but only through a process of shifting of conventions throughout a linguistic community, whereas a label can be switched at the will of a single authority. Monuments are much more vulnerable to relabeling than linguistic texts and other coded messages are to reinterpretation. Paradoxically, therefore, those artifacts claiming the strongest possible indexical relationships to their referents are in fact the weakest of all possible signposts.

78. The phrases are Rothstein’s, “Etymology, Genealogy, and the Immutability of Origins,” 343, 346.



# 3 GERMANY AND “RENAISSANCE”

## Destructive intimacy with the distant past

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Maximilian I of Hapsburg (1459–1519), German king from 1486 and Holy Roman Emperor from 1493, took a personal interest in the collecting and display of old artifacts, not only documents from the German imperial past, but also provincial Roman inscriptions and statuary. He introduced the material fragments of the past into a complex monumental program, his guiding obsession, designed to legitimate his own dynastic lineage and personal reign. Maximilian’s attitude toward the past was not passive and equitable but highly participatory, his piety for antiquities unevenly distributed. In 1512 he was in Trier for the Reichstag or Imperial Diet. The emperor, an artillery enthusiast, climbed a tower and inspected one of the city’s big guns. The scene was described by the local chronicler Johannes Enen: “Close by this tower was another, just as solid but not as beautiful,” Enen wrote. “Against this one the most brilliant and supreme emperor Maximilian . . . aimed a few shots with a large cannon belonging to the city, only slightly damaging the tower.”<sup>1</sup> This seems a cavalier attitude toward the most impressive Roman ruins in northern Europe.

Maximilian’s sally repeated, remotely and weakly, the epochal decision taken by his rival Pope Julius II (1443–1513), bravest of time-warriors, to

1. “Und fast nach bey dem selben stade des selben thurns noch einer auch fast starck aber nit also hubsche. Wider den selben hat der allerdurchleuchstigster und überwintlicher keyser Maximilianus ytzund im jare do man geschriben hat daussent funff hundert und zwolff uffdem reychs tage zu Tryer ettliche schüs thet mit einen grossen hauptstück der stat von Tryer welchs dem thurn gar ein klein erschreckung gab.” Johannes Enen, *Epitome, alias Medulla Gestorum Treverensium* (Metz, 1517), 5r–5v. The original Latin edition of 1514 tells the same story, b3v.

demolish the Vatican basilica, St. Peter's itself, and raise a new and still vaster church in its place.<sup>2</sup> The prestigious early Christian basilicas of Rome had been many times repaired and restored, but no medieval pope had ever dared to tear one down. St. Peter's, a five-aisled barn with nearly four hundred feet of interior length, had been constructed by Emperor Constantine himself in the 320s. Julius was taking literally, indeed enforcing, a substitutional conception of the building. The new would supplant the old without loss of identity. Many cardinals were appalled by Julius's murderous ambition, which at one point was tempted by the architect Donato Bramante's proposal to rotate the plan of the basilica by ninety degrees such that the (putative) tomb of the apostle in the apse would have to move with it.<sup>3</sup> Although Julius would dare no such outrage, the walls of a new basilica did begin to rise in 1506 even before the old had been removed, and by the pope's death in 1513 the destruction of the twelve-hundred-year-old nave was underway. Though the whole process would finally exhaust many decades and almost as many architects, Julius's sacrificial intentions carried. His architectural imagination was the hidden complement to the fervid antiquarian pursuits of contemporary scholars, directed one moment at the historical real, the next at the timeless ideal, the true, the classical. Old St. Peter's was genuine, but it sadly failed to conform to ideal principles. The new structure would realign Christian building with the best building.

Maximilian was on equally intimate terms with the past. The impulsive cannon shot in Trier was no thoughtless blasphemy, no vandalism. The narrator Enen remarked with satisfaction that Maximilian's target, one of Trier's ancient towers, absorbed the imperial cannon shot with minimal damage (*gar ein klein erschreckung*). This suggests that the context for the imperial volley was the legend, recorded by the Lutheran theologian Sebastian Franck, of a marvelous and extremely ancient palace in Trier whose walls could not be destroyed.<sup>4</sup> That "palace" was probably the Imperial Baths, the largest baths in the entire empire after those of Diocletian and Caracalla in Rome, indeed three-quarters of the size of the Baths of Caracalla. Maximilian with his volley was not trying to demolish the antiquities of Trier so much as to contribute to the legend of the indestructible palace

2. Horst Bredekamp, *Sankt Peter in Rom und das Prinzip der produktiven Zerstörung: Bau und Abbau von Bramante bis Bernini* (Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 2000), esp. 121–22 on destruction as the price of renewal.

3. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "St. Peter's: The Early History," in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture*, ed. Henry A. Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 401. See Bredekamp, *Sankt Peter in Rom*, 49–50, on the critique of Julius; and 45–46 on Michelangelo's condemnation of Bramante for having destroyed the columns of the old basilica.

4. Sebastian Franck, *Geschichtsbibell* (Ulm, 1536), 16.

by bouncing a cannonball off it. The palace was admired, not because it was ancient but because it was ancient and well-constructed. Not before modern, post-Romantic times was the old artifact revered simply for being old, for its "age-value," in Alois Riegl's terms.<sup>5</sup> Maximilian knew no better way to integrate himself into the past than to compete with it on its own terms and in that way, paradoxically, guarantee himself a future. The future was Maximilian's real concern, as it was for Julius. Just below the surface of the rhetoric of reverence for the forefathers lay a rivalrous challenge to the past, even a touch of contempt.

### No German "Middle Ages"

The story of the reception of ancient artifacts in Germany differs in structure from the Italian story. The Italians in the fifteenth century interpreted the dynamism of their own cultural present tense as a repetition of classical antiquity. Repetition entails an interval, a discontinuity. In the Italian view, nothing but fragmentation and strife had succeeded the sack of Rome in 410, centuries of humiliating foreign invasions, the shadow or even the bullying presence of the German emperors in the peninsula, German meddling in papal politics, and the material disintegration of Rome. The Roman past on the peninsula had been devastated by foreign invasion and bad taste, a "dark" interlude that cut the present off from its own best past, an age best thought of as a "middle" age preparatory to a new beginning. This sense of woundedness was the precondition for the Italian sense of historical distance from antiquity.<sup>6</sup> Italian humanist scholarship, an optimistic and present-oriented cultural project, defined itself from the start against an unhappy Middle Ages. Petrarch used the term *media aetas* already in 1373, Coluccio Salutati in 1395, Flavio Biondo in 1443.

No German author of the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries used the term. The earliest comparable German usages were the phrases *media antiquitas*, *media aetas*, and *mittel alters*, which appear respectively in commentaries by Beatus Rhenanus (1519), Joachim Vadianus (1522), and Gilg Tschudi (1538), terms referring to the period of the monkish authors, especially Carolingian and earlier authors. None of these usages reveals

5. Riegl, "Der moderne Denkmalkultus, sein Wesen und seine Entstehung" (1903), in Riegl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Augsburg: Filser, 1928), 144–193; translated as "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," *Oppositions* 25 (1982): 21–51.

6. For the thesis that the Italian sense of historical distance was the essential criterion of the cultural project of the Renaissance, see Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksels, Gebers Forlag, 1960). On the unwillingness or inability of pre-Renaissance historians to see the differentness of the past, see the remarks of Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (New York: St. Martin's, 1970), 1–6.



a developed concept of the “Middle Ages” as a discrete historical period.<sup>7</sup> Not before the eighteenth century did any German writer express disapproval of medieval architecture.<sup>8</sup> The Germans of Celtis’s generation did not recognize a Middle Ages. In the world histories written by German scholars, biblical times had been succeeded by an “antiquity,” an age of great civilizations. That antiquity, however, was identified with the Roman emperors whose successors were the mighty German emperors of the Carolingian, Hohenstaufen, and now Hapsburg lines, and so in some meaningful sense had never come to a close. Germans took seriously the *topos* of the *translatio* or “translation” of the Roman Empire to Germany in the year 800.<sup>9</sup> It was all antiquity, running continuously from the most distant past up to at least the Ottonian period. A comment by Beatus Rhenanus in 1531 gives us a sense of the cutoff point: Beatus reports that Maximilian used to reward scholars for discoveries of “treatises or documents” written “more than five hundred years earlier.”<sup>10</sup> Modern times, times within living memory, had the imperial past to live up to, but were not hopelessly alienated from that past. The chain of German emperors had after all never been broken.<sup>11</sup> To the German vision of an unbroken bond between antiquity and modernity corresponds the fascination with imperial genealogy, which the Italians did not share.<sup>12</sup>

As the power and glamor of the modern Italian city-states, courts, and universities waxed, the Germans simmered with resentment. Whereas Italians in the fifteenth century took for granted their proprietorship of Roman antiquity—Rome was everywhere on the ground, in pieces—the Germans had to insist on their continuity with antiquity. Historians

7. The three passages are analyzed by Peter Schaeffer, “The Emergence of the Concept ‘Medieval’ in Central European Humanism,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 7 (1976): 21–30. See also the survey of texts by Uwe Neddermayer, *Das Mittelalter in der deutschen Historiographie vom 15. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1988), 18–19, 276–77.

8. Hermann Hipp, *Studien zur ‘Nachgotik’ des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland, Böhmen, Österreich und der Schweiz* (PhD diss., University of Tübingen, 1979), 594.

9. Werner Goetz, *Translatio imperii* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1958), esp. 237–57, differentiating between fifteenth-century Italian and German thinking on the topic.

10. Rhenanus, *Rerum germanicarum* 2: 107–8: “solebat olim Maximilianus Caesar proposita mercede suos provocare ad quaerenda vel diplomata quae ante quingentos essent annos conscripta.”

11. Dieter Mertens, “Mittelalterbilder in der frühen Neuzeit,” in *Die Deutschen und ihr Mittelalter*, ed. Gerd Althoff (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992), 29–54. Two outstanding studies of the architectural paradoxes generated by the peculiar German perspective on the Middle Ages are Hipp, *Studien zur ‘Nachgotik’ des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, which deals mainly with the post-1550 material; and Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia* (see chap. 2, n. 59).

12. Peter Hutter, *Germanische Stammväter und römisch-deutsches Kaisertum* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2000), 26.

and topographers touted the urbanistic, architectural, and technological achievements of the imperial centuries. Germans, the true heirs to ancient Roman technical ingenuity, had invented gunpowder and above all the arts of printing, the new medium of textual knowledge and the basis for Albrecht Dürer's European fame as an artist. In these verses from the *Amores*, Celtis placed the Germans at the end of a long medial chain:

The Greeks call me *Sophia* and the Romans *Sapientia*;  
The Egyptians and Chaldeans discovered me, the Greeks wrote me,  
the Romans translated me, and the Germans amplified me.

(*Sophiam me Greci vocant Latini Sapientiam  
Egipcii et Chaldei me inuenere Greci scripsere  
Latini transtulere Germani ampliavere.*)

In his elegant *Sermones convivales* (1506), learned table talk committed to print, Conrad Peutinger rebutted his own teacher Pomponio Leto's curious claim that the Italians had invented printing, pointing out that Pomponio's example may have involved stamping of coins, but no more, and citing a few more verses of Celtis on the subject of the German *ars nova*, as if they amounted to proof.<sup>13</sup> In his topographical treatise *Brevis Germanie descriptio* (1512), the humanist and anti-Lutheran polemicist Johannes Cochlaeus (1479–1552) cited the invention of printing—"no mortal had ever invented anything more useful"—alongside the invention of the cannon.<sup>14</sup> German cities, meanwhile, were distinguished by stout walls bristling with artillery, elaborate waterworks, capacious cathedrals, and tall towers.<sup>15</sup> Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius II, made a sensation by writing a treatise on the Germans (1458, published 1496) praising the erstwhile barbarians for their smooth adoption of Christian ways and staging invidious comparisons between medieval Italian architecture and the mighty cathedrals of Strasbourg and Vienna.<sup>16</sup> Aeneas Silvius so admired the German hall church, involving elevated side aisles, plenty

13. Peutinger, *Sermones convivales*, c1r. Note that the Italian historian Polydore Vergil, *On Discovery* (1499), 2.7.8–9, 3.18.9, ed. Brian P. Copenhaver (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 244–47, 490–91, discusses the "new kind of writing," "a recent product of godlike genius" which provoked "the general amazement of humanity," but points out that its inventor Gutenberg is already almost forgotten and predicts that "the future will gradually hold [the invention] cheaper."

14. Cochlaeus, *Brevis Germanie descriptio* (1512), ed. Karl Langosch (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960), 62–65.

15. Cochlaeus, *Brevis Germanie descriptio*, 76–81.

16. Piccolomini, *Deutschland* [see chap. 1, n. 1]; Paul Frankl, *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 244–48; Müller, "Germania generalis" [see chap. 2, n. 2], 250–63.

of light, and a dynamic disarticulation of interior space, that he had one built in his own model city, Pienza. In his own treatise on the achievements of the Germans, *Epithoma rerum Germanicarum* (1505), Jakob Wimpfeling (1450–1528) noted Aeneas Silvius's admiration for German churches and compared Strasbourg Cathedral to the world wonders, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus and the Pyramids.<sup>17</sup>

Since the Germans did not view the breakup of the old Roman Empire and the translation of the imperial crown across the Alps as catastrophes, there was no need for a "renaissance." Nor could they see clearly what was to be reborn, since they did not privilege the early empire, the first and second centuries, as the Italians did. The Italians were mesmerized by the stupendous standing ruins of Rome, the Pantheon, the triumphal arches, the standing vaults of the mighty basilica on the edge of the Roman Forum (at that point thought to be a temple and not yet attributed to either Maxentius or Constantine) and by the writings of the first-century architect Vitruvius, not to mention Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tacitus, Livy, and so forth. The German scholars did not focus so exclusively on the earliest centuries of the Roman empire. In his *World Chronicle* (1493) Hartmann Schedel tells the story of the city of Augsburg from its twilight origins in the time of Japheth, son of Noah, all the way to Emperor Otto the Great and the Battle of Lechfeld in 955. In Schedel's account the city's life as a Roman colony, Augusta Vindelicorum, is no more than an episode within this vast sweep.<sup>18</sup>

The Italians organized their picture of decline and their dream of recovery around arts and letters. In rhetoric, poetry, and the fine arts, the Middle Ages had made a poor showing, whereas the achievements of the ancients in these domains were well worth emulating. In other fields, arguably, the Middle Ages were not so incompetent: architecture, engineering, philosophy, theology. The Germans' best case was to stress the might of the emperors, the cathedrals, technology.

Nevertheless, in the first decade of the sixteenth century, encouraged by the achievements of the German humanist scholars, the international fame of the printmaker Dürer, and the extravagant patriotic boasts of Conrad Celtis, some Germans began to speak of a *translatio artium* to cap the *translatio imperii*, an epochal transfer of artistic leadership across the Alps.<sup>19</sup> The Venetian publisher Aldus Manutius sketched out a plan for

17. Frankl, *The Gothic*, app. 15a, pp. 856–57.

18. Schedel, *World Chronicle* (Nuremberg, 1493), fol. 91v–92r. Here Schedel follows Meisterlin, who had rejected the Trojan myth and instead placed Japheth at the head of the Swabians; Borchartd, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*, 60, 84–85.

19. On the medieval background, see Franz Josef Worstbrock, "Translatio artium: Über die Herkunft und Entwicklung einer kulturhistorischen Theorie," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 47 (1965): 1–22. Goez, *Translatio imperii*, 117–18, associates the notion of a *translatio sapientiae* or

founding an academy in Germany under the aegis of Emperor Maximilian, promising Celtis in a letter of 1503 that "Germany could become a new Athens."<sup>20</sup> Aldus seems to have intended to emigrate and run the academy himself. Meanwhile, German chroniclers and topographers began tentatively to praise Dürer and a few other notable artists. Jakob Wimpfeling named Dürer incorrectly as a pupil of Martin Schongauer and asserted that his *imagines absolutissimae*—his prints, transported to Italy "by merchants"—were esteemed by painters there no less than the paintings of Parrhasius or Apelles.<sup>21</sup> Dürer himself was well aware of the Italian art-centered approach to the problem of modernity—in the draft preface to his *Four Books on Human Proportion* he even spoke of the recent *wiedererwaxung* or "rising again" of art<sup>22</sup>—but was seemingly content to contribute to the overall project without insisting on national competition. Other Germans spoke as if with their wealth and their literate urban populations they were on the point of assuming the modern cultural leadership of Europe. The political complement to this vision was Maximilian's plot to succeed Julius II as pope and unite the empire and the Holy See. Already in 1507, Maximilian had considered the possibility of marching to Rome, overthrowing the pope, and assuming the office. Then in 1511 Julius II fell ill, and Louis XII of France had the notion of calling a council and removing the pope from the throne.<sup>23</sup> Maximilian again imagined that he

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migration of wisdom or science from east to west, a kind of cultural supplement to the transfer of power, with the twelfth-century historian Otto von Freising. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (see chap. 2, n. 76), 28–29, traces the idea of a translation of studies back to Horace; its earliest medieval usage dates to the ninth century. On the dreams of Celtis and his contemporaries of a cultural *translatio*, see Krapf, *Germanenmythus und Reichsideologie* (see chap. 1, n. 38), 99–109; and Müller, "Germania generalis," 213–17, 430–36.

20. Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, no. 296. On Aldus's scheme, see Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius*, 199–201, 264–68; and Henri D. Saffrey, "Albrecht Dürer, Jean Cuno, O.P., et la confrérie du Rosaire à Venise," in Dieter Harlfinger, ed., *Philiphronema*, Festschrift Martin Sichert (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1990), 268–70.

21. *Epithoma rerum Germanicarum*, complete in manuscript already in 1502; see Frankl, *The Gothic*, app. 15b, p. 857. Wimpfeling also mentions the artists Israhel von Meckenem and Johannes Hirtz of Strasbourg. Cochlaeus, *Brevis Germanie descriptio*, 88–91, repeats Wimpfeling's comments on Dürer.

22. London, British Museum, Ms. 5230, fol. 48a; Rupprich, ed., *Dürer, Schriftlicher Nachlass*, 2:144; Albrecht Dürer, *Schriften und Briefe* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1978), 221. See the discussion of this and other passages in Dürer's writings in Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences*, 30.

23. Robert W. Scheller, "Kaiser Maximilian und die Päpste seiner Zeit," in *Hochrenaissance im Vatikan: Kunst und Kultur im Rom der Päpste 1503–1534*, exhibition catalogue, Bonn, Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje, 1998), n.p. On the German cultural rivalry with the Vatican, see Dieter Wuttke, "Humanismus als Integrative Kraft: Die Philosophia des deutschen 'Erzhumanisten' Conrad Celtis," *Renaissance-Vorträge*, Stadt Nürnberg Stadtgeschichtliche Museen, no. 8 (1985), 43. On Maximilian's artistic patronage in Rome, see Barbara Baumüller, *Santa Mario dell' Anima in Rom: Ein Kirchenbau im politischen Spannungsfeld der Zeit um 1500* (Berlin: Mann, 2000).

might take over the papacy, perhaps abdicating as emperor, perhaps not. From the point of view of the mid-sixteenth century, as Vasari was writing his history of Italian art, as the popes were building their domains and their art collections, and as the Germans were only just beginning to sort things out politically and culturally after the chaos of the first generation of the Protestant Reformation, the boasts and schemes of Celtis and Maximilian look hollow indeed. Germans were simply underestimating the gap between the two artistic cultures. Few German artists around 1500 had traveled to Italy, and even those who had, stayed mainly in northern Italy and had little notion of just how many extraordinary paintings had been painted in Florence, for example, over the course of the century. Would not a German painter have been discouraged to see the fresco cycles of Fra Angelico at S. Marco and of Ghirlandaio at S. Trinità and S. Maria Novella, the profane compositions of Botticelli hanging in the private rooms of the Medici, or the murals by Pinturicchio in the papal apartments in Rome? Still, one needs to take German cultural aspirations at face value and try to grasp how these aspirations affected their understanding of the material past. For the Germans with their patriotic delusions, the Roman relics did not generate poetical melancholy or dreams of revival; rather the relics blended back into a broad, imagined past that stretched without a catastrophic break back to the very beginnings of Europe.

Some Germans accepted the myth of their own cultural inferiority, or clumsiness, and even made a virtue of it. One of the topoi of national comparison that emerged in the fifteenth century was the idea of Germans as coarse barbarians insensitive to the finer arts. The French scholar Jodocus Badius Ascensius wondered playfully, in a poem lauding a poem by Wimpfeling, how such a poem could have emanated from warlike Germany?<sup>24</sup> The “Aretino” character in the eponymous dialogue on painting by the Venetian Ludovico Dolce (1557), by way of letting Dürer’s achievement stand out in relief, pointed out that in Germany “in the case of both literature and arts of different kinds, noble intellects have flourished at various periods; whereas painting never once attained perfection there.”<sup>25</sup> German scholars were expected to show a streak of puritanical ambivalence about material splendor. Wimpfeling, in the dedicatory letter of his own *Laudes ecclesiae spirensis* (1486), addressed to the bishop of Speyer Johann Ludwig von Helmstadt, after praising the splendor of the massive cathedral, immediately retreated by pointing out that neither statues carved in marble

24. Jakob Wimpfeling, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Otto Herding and Dieter Mertens (Munich: Fink, 1990), vol. 1, no. 44, p. 228.

25. Dolce’s *Aretino and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento*, ed. Mark W. Roskill ([New York]: College Art Association of America; New York University Press, 1968), 120–21.

or ivory nor images in bronze please and conciliate God, but rather only the sacred songs and rituals.<sup>26</sup> That coarseness was the complement to and condition for—so the cliché—the superior virtuousness and military prowess of the Germans. This judgment was rooted in Tacitus's text *Germania*, rediscovered and edited in the fifteenth century, the model for the treatise of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini. Tacitus's ironic portrait of rude but pious Teutons has been foundational for the modern European mythology of internal national difference. Some protested bravely. The traveler Felix Fabri in his *History of Swabia* (an addendum to his pilgrimage account) asserted that "all manner of sciences and eloquence have been revived in *Germanie*, and consequently all kinde of wittie Arts as *Painting* and *Carving*: for these Arts do love one another wonderfull well."<sup>27</sup> But many German scholars accepted the Tacitean bargain. Dietrich Gresemund, to take another example from the correspondence of Wimpfeling, the most prominent of German scholars in the 1490s, wrote of his visit to Padua, where he inspected, among other monuments, the tomb of Livy. The Italians, he reports, criticized his pronunciation of Latin. "I envy their literary glories," he admitted, "while they envy our virtues."<sup>28</sup> Such topoi were self-fulfilling prophecies of national identity, the basic fabric of the myth of Europe.

Few Germans of Celtis's and Dürer's time were inclined to assign the arts a leading role within overall national and societal ambitions. Celtis and Dürer themselves were practically the only ones to say anything like this. The friendship between these two men was commemorated in the side-by-side portrait and self-portrait in Dürer's painting *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand Christians* for Frederick the Wise (1508).<sup>29</sup>

The concession of cultural inferiority could also serve as a mask for freedom and experimentation. German scholars and artists of the Renaissance were in many ways liberated by their own provinciality, just as were the sculptors at Bamberg, Naumburg, and Magdeburg in the far eastern frontiers of civilization who in the thirteenth century undertook formal experiments unimaginable in the Île-de-France. German artists of Dürer's generation were quicker to sign and date their drawings and prints than their Italian contemporaries. They developed a more advanced, one

26. Wimpfeling, *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, no. 5, pp. 239–40.

27. Cited by Franciscus Junius in his treatise *De pictura veterum* (1637), book 2, chap. 4; in the edition of Keith Aldrich, Philipp Fehl, and Raina Fehl, *The Literature of Classical Art/Franciscus Junius*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 104.

28. "Invideo glorie litterarie illorum, quia hii virtuti nostri invident." Wimpfeling, *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, no. 54, p. 123.

29. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. Erwin Panofsky, "Conrad Celtis and Kunz von der Rosen: Two Problems in Portrait Identification," *Art Bulletin* 24 (1942): 39–41.

might almost say premature, culture of artistic authorship. The many German scholars who had been to Italy knew the compilations and paper reconstructions of the Italian antiquarians and had a firsthand sense of the quantity of archeological material in Italy, immensely more complex and charismatic than their own sorry samples. But the German antiquarians, less tangled in tradition and scholarly politics, sometimes moved more nimbly and took better advantage of the visual evidence than the Italians. Germans were quicker than Italians to exploit replication technology and publish their findings. The Augsburg humanist Conrad Peutinger, for example, was the very first antiquarian to publish a sylloge based on original research. Moreover, in his edition of the Augsburg inscriptions, the *Romanaevetustatis fragmenta* of 1505, Peutinger insisted on giving the correct lineation of the inscriptions, not a requirement in the Italian manuscript syllogai. Together with the local printer Erhard Ratdolt, the most technically innovative printer in Europe, who designed a new and exceptionally large majuscule font for that book, Peutinger produced not merely a textual edition of the inscriptions, but graphic facsimiles of the surfaces of the stones.<sup>30</sup>

The German scholars and artists were liberated also in the sense that their image of antiquity was drier and less voluptuous than the image emerging in Rome around 1500. Since scholars and artists were more likely to travel to Padua, Bologna, and Venice than to Rome, the cruelly diminished and still half-pastoral metropolis, they did not succumb to a melancholy pathos of ruins. The colonial Roman artifacts that stood close at hand, meanwhile, did not pose such dramatic challenges to tradition or theology. The German antiquarian felt little compulsion to “save” heathen antiquity through poetical or allegorical suspension. The theological taboos surrounding pagan statuary were rarely tested. Conrad Peutinger and other German antiquarians did not seem troubled by the paradoxes of the recovery of a pagan culture. Artifacts were just referential traces and could be used without guilt.

Here again the German scholars were living up to a paradigm. Antique letters had identified cultures that preferred archeology to aesthetics. In the dialogue *Hippias Major*, Plato reported that although the Lacedaemonians took no interest in astronomy, geometry, philosophy, or least of all

30. Robert Diehl, *Erhard Ratdolt: Ein Meisterdrucker des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Reichner, 1933); Gilbert R. Redgrave, *Erhard Ratdolt and His Work at Venice* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1894); Paul Geissler, “Erhard Ratdolt,” in Wolfgang Zorn, ed., *Lebensbilder aus dem Bayerischen Schwaben*, vol. 9 (Munich: Hueber, 1966), 97–153; and Martin Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums: Der Umgang mit der römischen Vergangenheit Süddeutschlands im 16. Jahrhundert* (Kallmünz: Lassleben, 2002), 100–4; also 131–63 on Italian and German conceptions of the sylloge.

"the value of letters and syllables and rhythms and harmonies," they were "very fond of hearing about the genealogies of heroes and men . . . and the foundations of cities in ancient times and, in short, about antiquity in general" (285d).<sup>31</sup>

### Modernity as disenchantment

"Antiquity" for Germans was not a reliably mapped place. Antiquity drifted in and out of focus, sometimes surfacing in an image. A comment written on a pen drawing by Dürer links a dashing soldier to an unexpected past (fig. 12).<sup>32</sup> The drawing represents a striding *lansquenet*, flamboyantly caped and feathered, his right hand on the pommel of a sword and a lance or banner slung over the left shoulder. His raked hat and slit breeches mark him as a modern military dandy, a type known to all through prints and doubtless experience as well.<sup>33</sup> His brothers also appear in historical paintings, narratives of the Passion or the early martyrdoms, as Roman soldiers.<sup>34</sup> Modern scholarship understands such painted costumes as anachronisms, careless or fanciful impositions of present custom on a narrated past. The inscription in the upper right of this drawing, not by Dürer but in a sixteenth-century hand, suggests just the opposite: *Dz ist ein rechter alter Teutscher den Aventinus beschreibt* (this is a proper ancient German as described by Aventinus), that is, an ancient warrior, an autochthonous Bavarian, no doubt, brave contestant of Roman superiority. If this is how a contemporary of Dürer—a scholar, a collector of curious drawings?—imagined the primordial Germans, then it was no anachronism for a painter to dress his historical soldiers in such a way. When Emperor Maximilian donned an extravagantly fluted and chased suit of armor, he was dressing like a historical soldier. The modern warrior imagined himself an ancient, the ancients were imagined as moderns, and there is no hope of a disentanglement, no telling in which direction the coding is moving, whether the past is providing the code for the present or vice versa. Dürer has simply drawn a soldier, leaving the figure's historicity completely open, undecidable.

31. Patrick Doorly, "Dürer's *Melencolia I*: Plato's Abandoned Search for the Beautiful," *Art Bulletin* 86 (2004): 255–76, argues that Dürer knew the *Hippias Major*.

32. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. 5122v. Pen and ink, 20.7 × 24.0 cm. The monogram is not by Dürer's hand. Winkler 254 (as Dürer). Strauss XW.254 (perhaps a copy by Hans Schäuffelein after Dürer). A copy in Berlin is dated 1513. The drawing on the other side of the sheet is generally attributed to Dürer.

33. J. R. Hale, *Artists and Warfare in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 42–72.

34. See, for example, the fancy dress, including feathers, of the executioners in Lucas Cranach's *Martyrdom of St. Catherine* in Dresden, fig. 108, below.





The "Aventinus" soldier belongs to a family of strutting, caparisoned halberdiers by Dürer's pupil Hans Schäuffelein, two pen drawings and a woodcut, with abundant whiskers, plumed caps, slit leggings, and capes with knotted corners.<sup>35</sup> Schäuffelein's woodcut found an afterlife in the grid of historiography when a copy of it served as an illustration to a German-language edition (1540) of Livy's history of the Punic wars.<sup>36</sup> A completely different historiographical grid, of course, for now the soldier-dandy is envisioned as an ancient Mediterranean—presumably a Carthaginian, as if the fashionable garb were the eternal marker of enmity toward Rome.

To participate in modernity means nothing other than to live under rationalized time. Modernity, if it is to stand out in relief as experience, requires a stable and completed past to measure itself against. Modern time is time corralled into a linear flow with a fixed directional arrow. Such a model of history permits the fiction of a simple passage from ignorance to knowledge, from the imperfect to the perfect. The forward linear movement is temporarily disrupted, but only to be extended, by such exceptional events as "revolution," a rotation of history back upon itself, or "reform," a recovery of a lost order.

The modern world dates its origins in the Renaissance but has long since distanced itself from the Renaissance's self-deprecating self-description as a mere doubling of antiquity. The Renaissance described by Jules Michelet and Jacob Burckhardt was vital, dynamic, original, a decisive break with the medieval past.<sup>37</sup> And even after 150 years, despite wave after wave of scholarly revision of Burckhardt's thesis, despite the painful dissipation of the optimisms of Victorian England, the Third Republic, or the *Gründerzeit*, the Renaissance is today still more likely to be described as a novelty than as a repetition. From a modern point of view, convinced of the modernity of the Renaissance, the myth of rebirth propagated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries looks very much like a cover for the difficult realities of forward movement and invention of the truly new. Maximilian's and Julius's destructive impulses register respect for the reality of progress. New St. Peter's was really new; there was no building like it in antiquity; no imperial Roman architect would have piled the Pantheon on

35. Friedrich Winkler, *Die Zeichnungen Hans Süß von Kulmbach und Hans Leonhard Schäuffelein* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1942), nos. 22, 52; Hollstein 63; Hale, *Artists and Warfare*, 53 and ill. 83.

36. Livy, *Zwei schöne auch lustige Historien und Geschichtsbücher, der Römer krieg, wider die Chartaginenser* (Augsburg: Steiner, 1540).

37. Well worth reading is Lucien Febvre, "How Jules Michelet invented the Renaissance" (1950), in Febvre, *A New Kind of History*, ed. Peter Burke (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), 258–67. The essential philosophical defense of the modernity of the modern age is Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983).

top of the Basilica of Maxentius, as was said of Bramante's confection.<sup>38</sup> Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* resembled no ancient poem, and the metalanguage that would name its true novelty had not yet been devised. Modern technology was a permanent fabrication of the new, underivable from preconditions. The Germans with their pride in the technology of church-building, civil engineering, and the printing press were offering a truer picture of their own modernity than the Italians, who even as they rationalized government and finance, and adopted the printing press with lightning speed, were constantly stressing the themes of repetition and indebtedness to the past.

In reality, the efflorescence of the fine arts in Renaissance Italy was only partially indebted to ancient Roman models. The quantity of visible ancient art was relatively small and limited to a few media. Although samples of ancient painting were completely unknown, it was painting that emerged, precisely in the first decades of the sixteenth century and amidst all the excitement about the discoveries of Roman statuary, as the most eloquent and ambitious modern art form. The appetite for ancient art was largely an appetite for the ideal, *an* ideal, rather than a neutral interest in the past for its own sake. There was plenty of ancient poetry, but modern literature had a momentum of its own that exceeded simple repetition of the early Imperial models. The so-called neo-Latin poetry of the Renaissance was a dead end, at most providing a spur for vernacular writing.

And yet, for all that, the arts played a crucial role within the Italian self-description. The metaphor of cultural rebirth resonated with the excavations of ancient sculpture, resurrections of beautiful stone cadavers. The arts offered themselves as a protected space within a rationalizing society where time could remain folded, coiled. The arts placed the idea of repetition on display, a brilliant decoy to divert attention from the reality of modernization. To assign a symbolic historical role to poetry or sculpture, as did those Italians or Germans who described their own achievement as primarily a matter of emulating Roman poems or statues, was already to extract those arts from their more local functions and instead gather them together into a collectivity of practices known, as they were not in antiquity, as "the arts." If the arts were expected to serve as society's overall standard or banner, then they would require a degree of freedom from traditional or parochial assignments. Any strong referential claims made by verse or effigy, possible basis for a collusion between art and magic, would have to be suspended. The disenchantment of art was written into modern European society's basic understanding of itself as modern.

38. Franz Graf Wolff Metternich, *Die frühen St.-Peter-Entwürfe, 1505–1514*, ed. Christof Thoenes (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1987), 82n135.

Whenever the history of Renaissance art is told as a story, with a momentum and a trajectory, then the plotline is usually the disenchantment of the cult image. The modern work of art figures as the disenchanted successor to the medieval devotional image. The outlines of this historical narrative are as follows: the habit of private, subjective worship that sacred images increasingly invited in the late Middle Ages evolved into the modern habit of dialogic exchange with complex, self-contained artworks. The subjectivization of religious experience within late medieval Christianity increasingly stood out in relief against a background of traditional exchanges and communally sanctioned ritual patterns. The presence of the divine was now controlled by a psychological transaction, not by a priesthood or other suprapersonal mechanisms.<sup>39</sup> The value of the new-style images quickly transcended their efficacy within a cultic context, even if they remained physically embedded within that context. Many artifacts that closely resembled cult images were extracted from that context and transferred to private spaces, or were even designed expressly for those spaces. The patterns of attending to and talking about images cultivated in the private sphere fed back into church-controlled spaces and affected the way cult images were received. The gifted individuals who crafted the most eloquent artifacts were accorded special privileges in society that in the past the makers of even the finest cult images had seldom enjoyed. The painted or sculpted artwork learned how to activate a beholding subject, constituting itself for the first time as a pictorial "text," in the sense of a bounded, internally coordinated collection of signs that is grasped by a reader-like beholder as the starting point for a process of meaning-making.<sup>40</sup> The text and the reader begin to make meaning together. The late medieval devotional image, insofar as it anticipated the modern artwork, is understood within this paradigm to have already initiated in the beholder processes of cognitive response, testing, and completion analogous to the processes of literary reception theorized as the "act of reading."<sup>41</sup> Semanticization, the beholder's open-ended production of meaning, is understood as a subjective contribution to the image that unfolds in the present tense and is reinitiated every time the beholder, any beholder, encounters the work. This "textual" nature of the painting or sculpture, with its implicit comparison to the prestigious cultural form of poetry, was

39. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproduction," in Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York, Schocken, 1969), 224–25.

40. See the interesting remarks by Claude Lévi-Strauss on the individualization of the "clientele" as the essential criterion of European Renaissance art; Georges Charbonnier, *Entretiens avec Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Paris: Plon, 1961), 69–74.

41. Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978; orig. German ed., 1976).

a precondition for the modern social institution of art with all the protections and guarantees it brought for artists and works.

This is the story narrated in different ways by many of the most important modern art historical projects. At the turn of the twentieth century, Aby Warburg described the Renaissance as the clearing out of a “space for reflection” (*Denkraum*) between subject and object, a process tracked in the visual arts by the historical tendency of medieval models of pictorial meaning governed by the psychological effect of sympathetic magic to give way to allegorical models of meaning involving distance and comparison.<sup>42</sup> In the 1920s, Erwin Panofsky identified the pictorial construction of virtual space through the application of geometrical algorithms, namely, the device of linear perspective as developed in Florence in the 1420s, as a precondition for the characteristically modern European reinvention of mystical or spiritual experience as a subjective phenomenon.<sup>43</sup> Architecture, as Günter Bandmann pointed out, was the domain most resistant to subjectivization and most hospitable to an alternative, typological framework for meaning. But even architecture, Bandmann conceded, was eventually emptied out, submitted to the *saeculum*, the time of this world.<sup>44</sup> A more bitter tone of resignation was struck by the thoroughgoing antiseccularist Hans Sedlmayr, who in *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale* (1950) told much the same story, observing regretfully that the Gothic cathedral was “classic” but not in the sense of providing a model; the cathedral “cannot be repeated, cannot be re-collected (*wieder-geholt*).”<sup>45</sup>

Hans Belting’s study *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages* (1981) revealed a rhetoric of interaction that tied the beholder to the late medieval cult image.<sup>46</sup> The beholder’s potential response was anticipated and built into the painted works, creating a circular, self-referential structure which would eventually convince society that external reference is not what artworks are best at and that some class of pictures might well be relieved of their referential obligations, just as a class of literary texts already had been. Belting’s later, more broadly conceived history of the sacred portrait, *Likeness and Presence* (1990), explicitly revitalized the idealist secularization model. At the end of this ample biography of the medieval sacred portrait, Belting characterized the entry of the modern artwork into a new

42. Aby Warburg, “The Art of Portraiture and the Florentine Bourgeoisie” (1902) and “Italian Art and International Astrology in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara” (1912) in Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999), 185–221, 563–92.

43. Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (1924) (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 72.

44. Bandmann, *Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger* [see chap. 2, n. 52], 255–56.

45. Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale* (1950) (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), 507.

46. Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter: Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin: Mann, 1981); translated by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer as *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Caratzas, 1990).

world of private, profane settings and semantic freedom as an emancipation of the image from the repressive strictures of theologians.<sup>47</sup> The secularization paradigm is the latent conceptual structure of countless other more specialized studies.

The drawing of the soldier linked by gloss to the historian Aventinus completely evades this paradigm. The drawing, temporally ambiguous, is not an "artwork"; indeed it is barely even a "work"; it predicts no response. Many images and artifacts produced in the medieval and early modern periods do not fall anywhere on a secularization axis. Portraits, medals, coins, statues, tombs, epitaphs, inscribed tablets, alphabets, maps, diagrams, and other information-bearing or didactic images, objects that invited neither devotional nor protoaesthetic attention, were in this historical period hardly marginal artifacts. They were the artifacts entrusted with the charge of collective memory. They dealt with the real, not the imaginary. Their reluctance to accord the beholder any interpretive room was the measure of their cultural importance. Few at the time questioned their efficacy or their value. Written and circumstantial evidence suggests that a figure like Conrad Peutinger, for example, historian, antiquarian, scholar, and imperial advisor, spent relatively little time worrying about the theology of the altarpiece or about the formal and doctrinal links between modern icons of the Madonna and their Byzantine originals. Nor did Peutinger display the least interest in images that generated private delight. Yet he was thinking constantly about coins, medals, portraits, tombs, inscriptions, and didactic and emblematic prints, images that archived information and shaped beliefs about the historical past and the historical future.<sup>48</sup>

Art history's secularization narrative is a local subroutine of the larger model of the disenchantment of the premodern cosmos described repeatedly by nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship across a wide range of disciplines. Modern art, according to this narrative, was a by-product of the failure of religion to deliver the divine presence it promised. In modernity, supposedly, presence was revealed to be a mere psychological effect. This demystification of the concept of presence followed from a more general social reflection on social role-playing and social fictions. To a modern way of thinking, the only real presence is the one that persons offer to one another.<sup>49</sup> Social power is just a matter of manipulating that effect. How well Renaissance culture already understood this truth. Philip Sidney's

47. Belting, *Likeness and Presence* (see chap. 2, n. 27).

48. Admittedly, he commissioned a major altarpiece from Burgkmair. Freya Strecker and Helmut Zäh, "Hans Burgkmairs Kreuzigungsaltar und die Peutinger," in *Hans Holbein und der Wandel in der Kunst der frühen 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Bodo Brinkmann and Wolfgang Schmid (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 161–80.

49. See Bruno Latour, "How to Be Iconophilic in Art, Science, and Religion," in *Picturing Science, Producing Art*, ed. Caroline A. Jones and Peter Galison (New York: Routledge, 1998), 428–29.

character Pamela “kept her accustomed majesty, being absent where she was, and present where she was not.”<sup>50</sup> Modern presence is only a seeming. Once that became clear, or once it was openly said, the cult image was weakened and the artistic image enhanced. For it was undeniable that the artistic image was no more capable of summoning a transcendent referent than a person was. But by the same token it was clear that the image was doing *no less* than that social person. The myth of presence was dispersed through enlightenment, one of whose instruments and perquisites is fictional art. Enlightenment carefully reserves a place for art. “Art,” for Adorno, “is magic delivered of the lie of truth.”<sup>51</sup> Modernity protects art’s freedom to tell lies.

This free or self-governing status of art has been one of the criteria of modern European life, indeed one of the bases for a post-Christian idea of Europe. In the nineteenth century, just as art was definitively being backed into an ornamental, supplementary role in public life, traditional historiography was inverted and art was granted a prestigious, guiding role within the narrative. Art, not dynasties or doctrines, became the key to a general account of early modern European history. The term “Renaissance,” which once referred exclusively to the second coming of ancient arts and letters, was converted in the nineteenth century into an overall period concept. Burckhardt’s *Civilization of the Renaissance (Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien, 1860)* permanently installed this culture-oriented version of European history. Burckhardt, as just noted, stressed the dynamic modernity of Renaissance arts and letters and not their backward-looking, revivalist aspect. In his account artworks first take on their function of symbolizing modern society to itself. Burckhardt reveals the cultic altarpiece as a preformation of the collectible painting, or cabinet piece. The portrait, meanwhile, dramatizes in the profane realm the virtual intersubjectivity achieved by the late medieval cult image.<sup>52</sup>

Within this historiographical paradigm, Italy wins a heavy nationalist advantage, for in letters and in the plastic arts the Italian achievements of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were dominant, and to many eyes appear so even to this day. This discrepancy between Italy and the rest of Europe has never quite been resolved in historical accounts of the period.

50. Sidney, *Arcadia*, 624f., cited in Wolfgang Iser, “Fingieren als anthropologische Dimension der Literatur,” in *Positionen der Kulturanthropologie*, ed. Aleida Assmann et al. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2004), 29.

51. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben* (1951) (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1997), p. 298, §143.

52. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Peter Humfrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and “Die Anfänge der modernen Porträtmalerei,” in Burckhardt, *Die Kunst der Betrachtung* (Cologne: DuMont, 1984), 318–34.

Because the transformation of the cult image into an artwork is allowed to play such a conspicuous role in the standard narrative, the nature of non-Italian participation in the modernity-building project is never clear. It is not obvious that Germany ever had a "culture of the Renaissance." Nevertheless, Germany made a distinctive contribution to the secularization of art. The Protestant Reformation with its iconophobic critique of the religious image amounted to a violent, accelerated secularization in that it proposed the palace and the home as more proper settings for works of art than churches; forced painters and sculptors into either unemployment or precarious dependency on court patronage; and encouraged the cultivation of theologically noncontroversial subject matter such as scenes of ordinary life, landscapes, and recondite allegories. The discrediting of the traditional cult image was an essential, not an accidental, component of Protestantism.<sup>53</sup> The influential nineteenth- and twentieth-century narrations of the history of Renaissance art were penned by German-speaking art historians or by other historians working within Germanic disciplinary paradigms, and in any case were carried out within an intellectual framework defined by a German tradition of thought intensely concerned to legitimate secular modernity, from Hegel to Burckhardt, from Weber to Adorno. The powerful narrative of Italian Renaissance art as a process of disenchantment first came into focus when German art historians imposed a model derived from the Protestant Reformation onto the Italian material. A myth of Germany is implicated within the historiographical myth of the Italian Renaissance. Even "German art" is inscribed within "Italian art," to the extent that the national "schools" of painting created each other in the early modern period through processes of mutual self-differentiation and exclusion.

### A different way to describe modernization

All disenchantment-based accounts differentiate modernity from what came before. They leave the judgment on modernity open, however. The disenchantment model invites a normative verdict on modernity, and not always a positive one. For one might well see the uncoupling of the artwork from a supernatural referent (divinity) as the first stage of a process of abstraction that ultimately converts the artwork into an indispensable heuristic and critical tool. One might just as well see it as a disastrous empty-

53. On the interplay between the arts and iconophobic theology, see Carlos Eire, *War against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Sergiusz Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); and Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).



ing out of the image, leaving the beholder bereft of orientation and leading toward modern forms of art that justify their own prestige in society with ever more absurd theoretical contrivances. Art may no longer exploit popular credulity, as it once did in the Christian Middle Ages—so this latter argument might go—but in modern times it runs the opposite risk of total disengagement from the concerns of most members of society.

Some significant recent studies of medieval and Renaissance art evaluate the results of the secularization process negatively or at least mistrustfully. David Freedberg in his influential book *The Power of Images* (1989) protested that the artwork is an idealist construction that inadequately accounts for the real psychic and somatic effects that images continue to work on beholders. The secularization model, for Freedberg, imposes a false historical dynamic onto our life with pictures.<sup>54</sup> The symptom for the poor fit between the theory of aesthetic reception and the true nature of the image's hold over the imagination, according to Freedberg, is the otherwise puzzling phenomenon of modern iconoclasm. At the very moment when the image was supposedly neutralized by the Reformation theology and by the bourgeois ideology of the aesthetic, people began smashing images. Jeffrey Hamburger, meanwhile, in his *The Visual and the Visionary* (1998) vitiated the secularization paradigm by bringing out somatic and mimetic dimensions of the experience of the late medieval cult image.<sup>55</sup> If the image functioned by imprinting its meaning directly on the body, the book implicitly asks, what sort of an aesthetic experience could that lead to? Hamburger, like many medievalists, prefers not to address directly the philosophical and anthropological problem of the aesthetic, instead treating modern art by implication as an institutional contrivance with no deep roots in medieval culture. According to this argument, the secularization process—and again this is more implicit than explicit in Hamburger as well as in the work of many other students of late medieval devotional culture—badly underestimated the somatic and experiential components of cultic exchanges and so has to be reckoned a failure or a miscalculation.

Such approaches to the problem do not fundamentally challenge the overall model of modernity as disenchantment. Instead they point to loopholes in the model. They argue either that people are psychologically vulnerable creatures independent of ideology and so remain eminently enchantable in all times and places, or that disenchantment happened rather

54. David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

55. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998).

later than we once thought it did. The medievalist is typically ready to concede that disenchantment happened, but not on his or her watch.

The disenchantment paradigm allows for commensurable historical interpretations of cult image and artwork by conceiving of them both as "representations." A representation is reality offered up for the second time, with all possible attendant risks of loss, distortion, and misunderstanding. To describe an image as a representation is to dismiss its referential claims as doomed or dishonest, as empty promises. The representational reading dismisses reference as a transparent, disingenuous device and instead insists that the monument is always representing. Representationalism, resigned to the failure of reference, converts the necessity of fictionality into a virtue. This commitment to representationalism would seem to clash with the aims of a historical study of art. As noted earlier, a history of art wants to grasp the artwork as the trace of a lifeworld. But a sophisticated art history can easily adapt to representationalism by construing the relation of work to world not as a simple indexical relation but as a complex and dynamic representational relation. Historical interpretation under the banner of secularized modernity privileges semantically open-ended pictorial texts, activated by cognition (and pleasure, when monitored and framed by cognition). Under this paradigm, every artifact, icon and artwork alike, is a complex sign. Representation is held to be the only possible relation between a sign in the present and an absent other. The monument, it is argued, was always subject to these conditions and could only have been hiding behind its referential claims. The historical recipient of the monument, even its first recipient, had to interpret the monument no less than we do today. The representationalist reading strategy makes no distinction between images that were intended to be focal points for devotion, images intended to be works of art, and images intended to be referential monuments. Such a collapsing of all possible pictorial operations into the concept of representation converts every artifact, regardless of its original intention, into something like a work of art, albeit one whose criterion is not necessarily beauty, disinterestedness, lofty and ennobling content, or lack of a concept, but rather open-endedness, subversiveness, or reflexivity. The strong representationalist reading strategy is one way to relativize the liberatory metaphor of the threshold. Representationalism smooths out the gradient between "Middle Ages" and "Renaissance" that the secularization model created. The family of text-like pictures constitutes the central chord of the historical process, linking but at the same time differentiating the Middle Ages from Renaissance, pre-modernity from modernity. Representationalism, or the view that every artifact can be read as a text—the basic premise of the traditional, philo-

sophically oriented historical study of art, what the Germans call *Kunstwissenschaft*, as much as it is of “visual culture studies”—threatens the secularization model, easily identifying a common denominator between cult image and artwork.

The concept of the referential image makes a poor fit with all these models. The referential image refers in a straightforward way—not to its own historical context, which is what an art history might prefer, but to a truer, more distant origin. The label points you to that origin. Semanticization is limited. Such artifacts do not depend on actively interpreting beholders but rather fulfill their intended purpose through the mere fact of their existence. Such is the theory of artifact-reading propounded by the monumental artifact itself—tomb, portrait, medal—eager as it is to preserve, maintain, connect. If a modern art history were simply to read referential artifacts straightforwardly, limiting itself to identifying the referents, it would be perpetuating the lie of the label. Instead, sophisticated modern art historical scholarship, which sees itself as more than a taxonomic and custodial operation, tends not to take seriously the monument’s own voice, the voice of the label. The monument asks from its recipients a passivity unacceptable to the modern exegete. In defiance of this expectation, art history reads the labeled monument as if it were a representation, even as if it were a kind of artwork. That is, it reads the monument against itself and treats it as a complex visual text whose relationship to any event, fact, individual, or historical discourse is never intrinsic but can only be constructed backward, inauthentically, by an interpreter. The interpreter learns to read through the explicit message of the artifact, ignoring any inscriptional or context-independent ambitions that the artifact might harbor. When an artifact claims for itself the status of an inscription, it is hoping precisely not to be interpreted, but rather to say or propose something timeless, and on its own terms. The monument—the tomb or the map—does this by superimposing a literal inscription on its own representing body.

One way to disrupt the metaphors of the secularization model is to release the image from the doomed ambition of transcendental reference and instead to focus on the image’s referential function within secular time, its capacity to gather the past and predict the future. For secular reference, as we have seen, is itself a complex, often mysterious operation, relying on the charisma of names and on myths of typological orderliness. Under secular reference, the religious question, the question of reliable reference to something beyond experience, is postponed. The work refers to a previous work, which in turn refers to a previous work, and so forth. On the artwork descended from that tradition of reference falls no shadow of religious inauthenticity.

The hypothesis of a typological or replication-based model of artifact production and reception is meant to counteract any modern temptation to impose an anachronistic representationalism onto the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and to bring out aspects of the culture of images not covered by the secularization paradigm. The possibility of escape from the secularization model is the hypothesis that images and artifacts, to the extent that they made referential claims, worked not by semiosis but by the mechanisms of labeling and through the myth of a replica chain structured on type-token ratios. The substitutional hypothesis offers an alternative model of how images meant and what their anthropological function might have been.

Admittedly, the substitutional model invites the danger that traditional periodization will be reinforced. Substitution with its irrational and nonlinear conception of time is easily construed as a mythic mode, just as the performative or author-based model of production that succeeded and vanquished it is easily construed as an enlightened, disenchanting mode. To distinguish sharply between a premodern participatory culture that was incapable of opening up psychic distance from the chronologically distant past, and a modern culture that constituted itself precisely by creating just that distance would only reinforce the metaphor of the Renaissance as threshold between Middle Ages and modernity. This is essentially Panofsky's influential thesis, developed over several decades in the middle of the last century, according to which the criterion of the authentic Renaissance, the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was the capacity to perceive ancient forms as permanently remote and therefore once and for all to coordinate those forms with their proper ancient contents.<sup>56</sup> Modern culture, according to this model, is founded on a project of forensic reconstruction carried out with clinical detachment. Myth-critique is often depressingly clinical. The German-speaking lands are destined to play a negative role in this story, since distance is associated with the philological achievements of the Italian scholars and with the antiquarian-flavored art emanating from ex-Roman cities and princely collections of marbles. In this model, "Europe" is defined from Florence and Rome outward. Venice, not a Roman colony, is so remote from this paradigm that it is allowed by scholarship to develop its own peculiar participatory and fictionalizing approach to the past.<sup>57</sup> No doubt the next step will be to permit Florence and Rome, too, to discover their inner Germany.

56. The most complete statement of the thesis is Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*.

57. Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

The operations of notation and typological reference created those very patterns of reliance on imaged knowledge which disenchant culture designates as credulous. An image that manipulates its own reception in this way is exactly what is meant by the magical image. The cult image was also a referential image; it, too, relied on naming magic, causal chains, and typology. The secularization model is fixated on the cult image's ambitions of making referential contact with a transcendent signified and of converting that mere signified into a real referent. Those ambitions are never realized, obviously, and so the cult image is shadowed by failure. The true strangeness of transcendental reference never comes into focus because that reference never happens. The more modest sort of reference attempted by the artifacts dealt with in this book, however, interesting to people living in time but not to theology, is successfully realized. The index points, the label names, and the strangeness cannot be concealed.

Every model currently at our disposal considers the premodern magical image to be either a psychological effect (an illusion) or a failed reference to a transcendental object (a theological fable). This book says something a little different. It concedes that a referential theory of meaning sustained by a substitutional myth of production is magical in the sense that it submits artifacts and images to a strong theory of causality, too strong for modern rationalist tastes. Magic is nothing other than the hypothesis of a strong connection between words and things. Magical reference of this sort, however, cannot so easily be dismissed as unreal. Reference is like a stopped clock, wrong almost all the time except twice a day when it is absolutely accurate; whereas mere representation is like the working clock, which always delivers something like the right time but never the metaphysically perfect time. If the referential artifact is sometimes perfectly accurate as representation can never be, then who can question its usefulness? Reference is a way of living with artifacts. There is nothing to disenchant. Disenchantment of the referential artifact makes as much sense as trying to disenchant the proper name, a label connected to its object by an act meaningless, fictional, absolutely binding, and, let us agree, practically indispensable.

### The German career of the heathen forms

Aby Warburg stressed the "contribution" that fifteenth-century German prints made to the Renaissance in "channeling" the forms of the ancient pagan gods and adhering to the tradition.<sup>58</sup> Up to then, the forms had been transmitted by manual copying. German prints, Warburg implies, stabi-

58. Warburg, "Italian Art and International Astrology in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara," 564; see also his "Pagan-Antique Prophecy in Words and Images" (1920), in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, 632-34.

lized the forms, readying them for creative elaboration in the hands of the major artists of the early sixteenth century. Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl developed Warburg's hint in their essay on the medieval transmission of astronomical manuscripts, pressing the paradox that German draughtsmen and printmakers of the fifteenth century, by cleaving so closely to Carolingian manuscripts, often captured the correct ancient type more successfully than did their Italian counterparts.<sup>59</sup> Here, as in Warburg's account, print played a simultaneously accelerating and stabilizing role. The fifteenth-century woodcut was a kind of "last mile" technology delivering the ancient content safely to the doorstep of modernity.

Striking about this episode is the relative sterility of the German engagement with the ancient material. Attentive as they were to their models, German artists rarely knew how to convert the unfamiliar material into modern art. A good example is the early sixteenth-century copy of the personifications of the months found in a calendrical manuscript written by the Roman calligrapher Filocalus and dated 354. That manuscript, now lost but known through several copies, is the oldest securely dated illustrated manuscript. In the first years of the sixteenth century Johannes Fuchsmagen, the Viennese antiquarian and imperial advisor, commissioned a copy from Lucas Cranach (fig. 13.)<sup>60</sup> The calendar images, inscrutable icons speaking an erudite pagan idiom, were samples of ancient painting, as valuable as any Byzantine icon. Cranach preserves the information, as comparison with a seventeenth-century copy of the ancient manuscript reveals, picking up where the transmission left off and extending the chain. His approach is only loosely archeological, for he does not replicate the purely diagrammatic placement of the attributes on the page in the original manuscript, instead naturalizing them by respecting the ground line and situating them in a fictive space, thus integrating the symbolic *membra disjecta* into a unified picture homologous to a late medieval picture of a saint with attributes. Cranach is still thinking substitutionally

59. Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, "Classical Mythology in Medieval Art," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* 4 (1932-33): 228-80.

60. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3416, c. 1503, twelve drawings in pen and ink with gray wash. On the transmission and contents of the manuscript, see Michele Renee Salzman, *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). See also Panofsky and Saxl, "Classical Mythology in Medieval Art," 242, 247-48. The attribution to Cranach by Friedrich Winkler, "Die Bilder des Wiener Filocalus," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 57 (1936): 141-55, has been generally accepted. Dieter Koepplin and Tilman Falk, *Lukas Cranach: Gemälde, Zeichnungen, Druckgraphik*, exhibition catalogue, Kunstmuseum Basel [Basel: Birkhäuser, 1974], no. 69, pp. 130-31, 173; *Kunst der Donauschule: 1490-1540*, exhibition catalogue, Stift St. Florian and Schlossmuseum Linz [Linz: Oberösterreichischer Landesverlag, 1965], no. 416. Salzman, however, noting as did an earlier cataloguer that several motifs in the Vienna copies reappear in the shrine of St. Sebald in Nuremberg, prefers an attribution to Peter Vischer; 260-61.

here, not yet as an antiquarian. He also enlivens the figures, endowing his "April," a burly castanet-wielding dancer, with a spring and natural attitude that clashes with the relatively abstract assemblage of attributes, the wreathed altar with a nude statue, the candelabra, the slatted percussion instrument on the ground.<sup>61</sup> But his small improvements on the ancient model have no particular meaning. This is still copying under the old system. The patron Fuchsmagen, an antiquarian, was little interested in print technology. He wanted copies of the images and probably had scant conception of where the images might lead, what further figurations they might generate. Print plays a hidden role in the sense that Cranach learned generally how to animate the human figure by studying Italian prints of pagan subject matter. Print had disseminated the Italian artists' study of antiquity across the Alps to Vienna and allowed Cranach to feed the results back into the antiquarian task of copying. But Cranach's copies do not punctuate the transmission. The relation to print is not part of the content of the images. Cranach is not "publishing" the forms, he is just handing them on.<sup>62</sup>

Another artistic dead end was the German engagement with the *Youth of Magdalensberg*, the life-size bronze nude discovered near the ancient settlement of Virunum, modern Maria Saal, in Carinthia in 1502 (fig. 14).<sup>63</sup> Already in the time of Maximilian's father Emperor Frederick III, according to Aeneas Silvius, the site was yielding "old monuments . . . inscribed with old letters" attesting to the civilization of the ancient Liburnians.<sup>64</sup> The statue was excavated by a peasant. The governor of Carinthia, Ulrich von Weispriach, brought the news to the emperor in Innsbruck together with a sample, an accompanying shield with an inscription, pictured in the

61. On the subject of this scene and the enigmatic objects, see Salzman, *On Roman Time*, 83–91. "April" is preserved in no other copy of the manuscript.

62. The copying of ancient illuminations for their informational or iconographic value was nothing new. In 1436 the bishop of Padua, Pietro Donato, borrowed from the cathedral chapter at Speyer a ninth- or tenth-century copy of a fifth-century illuminated manuscript, an administrative text, and hired a French illuminator to make a copy. Another Italian cardinal had made a copy in 1427. Jonathan J. G. Alexander, "Facsimiles, Copies, and Variations: The Relationship to the Model in Medieval and Renaissance European Illuminated Manuscripts," in *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions* (= *Studies in the History of Art* 20) (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1989), 65–66.

63. The location is also known as Helenenberg. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. no. VI 1. *CIL* III, 4815. Apianus and Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis*, 397 (text) and 414 (woodcut); *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Österreich*, II, 1, *Die Rundskulpturen des Stadtgebietes von Virunum*, ed. Gernot Piccottini (Vienna: Böhlau, 1968), no. 3; Robert von Schneider, "Die Erzstatue vom Helenenberge," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen* 15 (1894): 103–23.

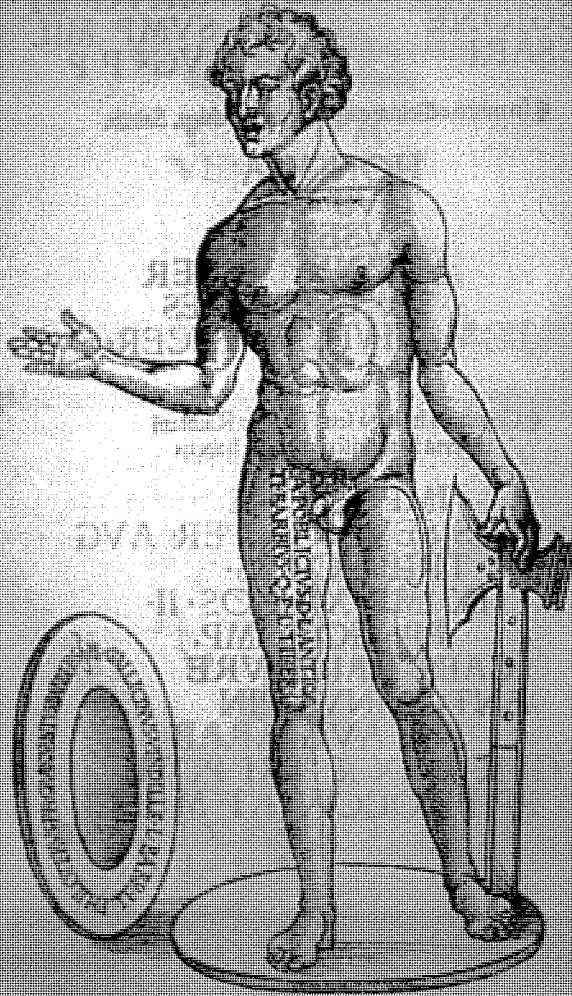
64. Aeneas Silvius, *Historia Friderici III Imperatoris*, cited by Schneider, "Die Erzstatue vom Helenenberge," 104n4.



13. Lucas Cranach, copy of Calendar of 354,  
*April*, c. 1503, pen and ink with wash. Vienna,  
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. ÖNB  
Bildarchiv, Wien: cod. 3416, fol. 5v.



¶ Hic homo alicuius aetatis in Carinthia obertam esse intelleximus. quoniam in eadem ubi relictus in. Antiquitatibus Carinthianis. Verum editio tradidit tametsi Sabaudigeni transito a iudice Reuerendi. Cardinalis Mathaei Archiepiscopi Sabaudigeni, nam quod multi. annis constat antiquitatem summas cultor & admirator. vobis in factis. circa M. C. C. C. C. Maximus fuit. ob id & ad monumenta factis gentis adpropinquare habitam est. & ne quid desideretur. addidimus etiam interpretationem praemissam. in quo iudicium vniuersaliter expectamus. in hoc hoc sacrum. quod exemplaria distulimus. nam in vno deprehendimus longioris fuisse. AN. pedum in alio vero. VI. pedum geometricorum tantum a quatuor partibus.



14. So-called *Youth of Magdalensberg*, first century (?), bronze, found in Carinthia, 1502. Woodcut in Petrus Apianus and Bartholomeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 414. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

woodcut published by Apianus and Amantius but now lost. The scholar Petrus Bonomus, advisor to the emperor and bishop of Trieste, wrote a letter to Maximilian discussing this inscription and a second inscription on the leg. But if Maximilian had an option on the find, he declined it. The elegant figure was acquired instead by Matthias Lang, at that point Maximilian's secretary and bishop-administrator of Gurk in Carinthia. Lang brought the statue to Salzburg when he became archbishop in 1519 and installed it in the castle.<sup>65</sup>

The figure has long been considered a Roman work based on an earlier Greek model or models, perhaps in the vicinity of the early fourth-century master Naukydes. The inscription on the hip names two freedmen who worked for a trading firm active in nearby Aquileia from the middle of the first century B.C. The work, most likely representing Mercury, was a dedicatory gift, imported by the two tradesman from Italy, for a local temple.<sup>66</sup> The decline of Magdalensberg as a trading center in the first third of the first century A.D. provides a probable terminus ante quem for the statue.

Although some antiquarians puzzled over the identity of the statue—as well they might—artists failed, it would seem, to respond to the statue's form. One might imagine that a German artist would imitate the pose or modeling of the *Youth's* torso. But echoes of the figure are scarce, possibly nonexistent, in art of the time.<sup>67</sup> A drawing in Oxford of a Zodiacal Man with outstretched arm and standing on a pedestal may reflect German knowledge of the *Youth*.<sup>68</sup> The German artist had never experienced anything comparable to the nude *Youth's* supple modeling, balanced pose, and tranquil, empty expression. The German sculptor had never cast a life-size bronze, with or without clothes. The figure was too unexpected and

65. Manfred Alois Niegl, *Die archäologische Erforschung der Römerzeit in Österreich* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980), 37–38. Johann Sallaberger, *Kardinal Matthäus Lang von Wellenburg (1468–1540)* (Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1997), 468, 470. On Lang's historical and antiquarian interests, see Conradin Bonorand, *Joachim Vadian und der Humanismus im Bereich des Erzbistums Salzburg* (St. Gallen: Verlag der Fehr'schen Buchhandlung, 1980), 68–69.

66. The best recent discussion of the date, attribution, and iconography is Wolfgang Wohlmayer, "Der Jüngling vom Magdalensberg: Versuch einer stilistischen Neubestimmung," *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Salzburger Landeskunde* 131 (1991): 7–44. For the true identity of the figure in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, see below, 309–10.

67. Fedja Anzelewsky, *Dürer-Studien* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1983), 170–77, proposed that Dürer saw the statue in Carinthia in 1505, en route to Venice, and that several of his drawings reflect the contact (Winkler 263, 261, 412, 332, 333), but the comparisons are not decisive. The tight, curly cap of hair on Altdorfer's London *Wild Man* drawing (1508) possibly imitates the bronze *Youth's* "Polycleitan" hair; Franz Winzinger, *Albrecht Altdorfer: Zeichnungen* (Munich: Piper, 1952), no. 6.

68. Artur Rosenauer, "Zu einer frühen Zeichnung nach dem Jüngling von Helenenberg," *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 22 (1969): 169–74, attributed the drawing to Cranach.

too sensuous to be easily absorbed into the consciousness of contemporary artists. This is equally true of the *Mercury* of Augsburg, a limestone relief a meter and a half tall excavated at Sts. Ulrich and Afra around 1500 (fig. 15).<sup>69</sup> Mercury with his attributes captured the imagination of Conrad Peutinger and other scholars but not of artists. No contemporary small-scale bronze copies of the *Youth of Magdalensberg* are known, of the sort made for example in Italy after the *Apollo Belvedere* or the *Spinario*. Until 1534 no engraving or woodcut was published to advertise the discovery. As a result, Italian scholars and artists, who had never seen a life-size antique bronze and would have leapt at the chance, were unaware of the tramontane statue's existence.

The contrast with the flurry of attention and analysis surrounding the recent discoveries in Rome—the *Apollo Belvedere* in the late 1490s, the *Laocoön* in 1506—is sharp. A “culture of art” emerged in Italy when ideas about the functions and mechanisms of poetry, drawn from the self-theorization of ancient Roman poetry, were transferred over to modern painting or sculpture. The pagan statuary unearthed in Rome around 1500 was swept into a whirlpool of fanciful ekphrasis.<sup>70</sup> The new statues fed an idea of art that had been emerging since the experiments of Donatello in Florence in the 1420s and 1430s.<sup>71</sup> The Italian conversation on art left multiple traces, in texts and in the artworks themselves. In Germany, no such literary culture enveloped the plastic arts, nor did a communicating tribe of connoisseurs share a language and a set of expectations from art. Albrecht Dürer was almost alone in trying to make sense of the Italian conversation, which he overheard only in fragments. Some of the scholars he had contact with, Peutinger for instance, may well have missed these conversations altogether during their Italian sojourns. Celtis, however, did not, and his project of supplementing his own published works with emblematic illustrations suggests that no German scholar of his generation had a better developed sense of the legitimacy of the visual arts and their potential to work side by side with the textual arts,<sup>72</sup> even if the woodcuts he commissioned (and presumably helped design) are poor stuff in comparison

69. Height 154 cm, width 61 cm. Augsburg, Römisches Museum, Lap. 13. *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani, Deutschland I, 1, Raetia und Noricum*, ed. Friedrich Wagner (Bonn: Habelt, 1973), no. 88. Max Hauttmann, “Dürer und der Augsburger Antikenbesitz,” *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 42 (1921): 43–50; Panofsky, “Albrecht Dürer and Classical Antiquity” (see chap. 1, n. 36), 251, 273–76; Lothar Bakker, “Die Verehrung Merkurs in Augusta Vindelicorum,” in *Die Römer in Schwaben*, exhibition catalogue (Munich: Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 1985), 112–14.

70. Barkan, *Unearthing the Past* (see chap. 1, n. 52).

71. On the theoretical and cultural implications of Donatello's project, see most recently Ulrich Pfisterer, *Donatello und die Entdeckung der Stile 1430–1445* (Munich: Hirmer, 2002).

72. This is the argument of the excellent monograph by Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet* (see chap. 1, n. 32).



15. *Mercury*, second century, stone relief found at Sts. Ulrich and Afra, Augsburg, c. 1500. Augsburg, Römisches Museum.



16. *Calliope*, from so-called *Tarocchi di Mantegna*, Ferrarese, 1460s, engraving. Image © 2007 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection.

17. Michael Wolgemut, *Calliope*, mid-1490s, woodcut. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/ Art Resource, NY.

to the sleek, erudite engravings produced in those very years by Andrea Mantegna, Marcantonio Raimondi, and others.

The bronze *Youth* and the Augsburg *Mercury* were, in principle, perfect substitutional vehicles. They transmitted forms and types. But the transmission chains broke off when the figures resurfaced after their 1,500-year-long sleep. The gap of comprehension was too great.

The situation was completely different when print was involved. As soon as an ancient type was adapted to the medium of engraving, it became available to the modern artist. Michael Wolgemut, Dürer's teacher, made drawn copies in the mid-1490s of the engravings that used to be known as the *Tarocchi of Mantegna*, a set of fifty images of the Conditions of Man, the Muses, the Liberal Arts, the Virtues, and the Planets—not tarot cards at all—designed in Ferrara in the 1460s for purposes never fully understood (fig. 16).<sup>73</sup> Wolgemut's drawings were transferred to the

73. On the *Tarocchi*, see Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods* (New York: Pantheon, 1953), 137–40; Jay A. Levenson, Konrad Oberhuber, and Jacquelyn L. Sheehan, *Early Italian Engravings* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1973), 81–157; and "*Tarocchi*": *Menschenwelt und Kosmos*, exhibition catalogue (Cologne: Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1988), 39–65.

medium of woodcut in preparation for an elaborate illustrated compendium of knowledge about the pagan world, the *Archetypus triumphantis Romae*, one of many antiquarian projects of this period that never saw the light of day (fig. 17).<sup>74</sup> Wolgemut had no particular interest in reproducing the "look" of his Italian sources. He understood the *Tarocchi* engravings as notations of information about the pagan gods and allegorical personifications and their attributes.

Like his teacher, the young Dürer grasped the Ferrarese engravings not as modern works of art but as reliable stand-ins for antique works. Around the same time he made twenty pen-and-ink copies of the prints (fig. 18).<sup>75</sup> Just as Cranach was to do a few years later in his copies of the calendrical manuscript, Dürer animated the figures with his pen. Whereas Wolgemut's copies flatten out the Italian models, Dürer's copies stress the flexible curve of body and the lively movement of the ribbons, improving on the Italian prints.<sup>76</sup>

Prints deflected the transmission of pagan material, just as did the printed editions of the classics that began to alter the history of scholarship and of thought itself in these same decades. Prints and typeset books were quicker and (usually) more reliable, but they were still basically substitutional mechanisms. They delivered the real, and the metadata that accompanied the delivery—information about where the information came from, how it was presented, the names and addresses of artists and publishers—was not supposed to interfere with the transmission or compete for attention. But Dürer's divergences from the model were licensed by his own strong sense that the prints he was working from were themselves interpretations and not merely mechanical, reliable surrogates for their own



18. Albrecht Dürer, *Calliope*, mid-1490s, pen and ink. Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo: Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.

74. Rainer Schoch, "Archetypus triumphantis Romae": Zu einem gescheiterten Buchprojekt des Nürnberger Frühhumanismus," in *50 Jahre Sammler und Mäzen*, Festschrift Otto Schäfer, ed. Uwe Müller, Georg Drescher, Ernst Petersen (Schweinfurt: Historischer Verein Schweinfurt, 2001), 261–98. The book was written by Peter Danhauser, a disciple of Celtis. 336 woodblocks were cut of which only 36 survive.

75. Winkler 122–41; Strauss 1494/20–29, 1495/54–64. *Albrecht Dürer, 1471–1971*, exhibition catalogue, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (Munich: Prestel, 1971), nos. 176–80; "Tarocchi": *Menschenwelt und Kosmos*, 65–74.

76. Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943), 31.

absent models. He was copying prints from the point of view of someone who had grasped print as a medium for publication of his own artistic ideas and not only as a more efficient form of hand-copying. The artifactual past came into focus because it had been restaged by print. This is the (slight) difference between Wolgemut's and Dürer's engagements with the *Tarocchi*. The older artist was basically a painter who had moved into book illustration as an extension of his entrepreneurial activity, whereas print for Dürer was a lens that allowed him to see the style of the Italian works as a style, to pry the style apart from the informational content of the image. According to Panofsky's analysis of Dürer's confrontation with the Italian Renaissance, offered in an essay that develops ideas broached by Warburg in an essay on the same topic, the German artist "saw" antiquity for the first time when he saw it mediated by a modern Italian approach to style.<sup>77</sup> This proposition we can now emend thus: Dürer not only saw antiquity as mediated by sophisticated modern Italian artists, but he also simply saw it *mediated*. Mediatedness, availability for copying, and involvement in a system of copying and publication were all part of the content of the engraving, part of what the engraving was saying alongside its subject matter, whereas mediality was not automatically part of the content of, say, a stone relief or an oil painting. (Mediality was often strongly associated with bronze, though in the case of the *Youth of Magdalensberg* not strongly enough, at least not at the beginning of its German career.)

Dürer was constantly thinking ahead to the next print. Dürer's copies of Italian engravings were extensions of the substitutional chain, and at the same time authorial interventions that interrupted the chain, making a completely new starting point. He did not develop his drawings after the *Tarocchi* into prints, but one can see how he might have. In many ways the *Tarocchi* live on in his later engravings. Dürer began to see antiquity when he set out to print it. This is the difference between Dürer's drawings after the *Tarocchi* and Cranach's copies of the calendar. Cranach had no intention (as far as we know) of making prints after the calendar. He was still thinking, in effect, like an ancient or medieval artist, moving the information one step further forward and then counting on the next copyist; hoping that his drawings would find another copyist. After Dürer, the substitutional mechanism was basically taken over by print. Information

<sup>77</sup> Panofsky, "Albrecht Dürer and Classical Antiquity"; Warburg, "Dürer and Italian Antiquity" (1905), in Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999), 553–58. The older literature often focused on the question, Which antiquities did Dürer see? Franz Wickhoff, "Dürers Studium nach der Antike," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 1 (1880): 413–29; Hauttmann, "Dürer und der Augsbürger Antikenbesitz." The inquiry becomes more interesting when the *Tarocchi* and the Byzantine Madonnas, for example, are included in the category "antiquities."

moved from print to print. Any handmade object, painting, or drawing, now took on a new meaning, for such an artifact, set off in relief against the mechanically replicated chain, was now decisively nonsubstitutional. Its handmadeness became part of its meaning.

### Disruption of the substitutional chain by print

The printed image, designed to extend substitutional chains, ended up breaking them. The woodcut or engraving was a literalization of substitution's core idea of a mechanical, impersonal transmission of meaning from work to work. The print made visible the replica that had been the conceptual module of the substitution system. It ended up explaining too much about the process, dragging the whole mysterious business of substitution and labeling into the open.

A pair of printed images, forced into analogy, illustrates this self-undermining aspect of the medium: a woodcut reproduction of a panel painting of the Madonna and Child of an archaic type, printed in Pforzheim near the Black Forest in 1500,<sup>78</sup> and a woodcut bust portrait of Conrad Celtis, hands folded on his own books, above an inscription calling on all "pious poets" to lament his death, initialed by Hans Burgkmair and dated, in its first and second states, 1507, the year preceding Celtis's death (figs. 19 and 20).<sup>79</sup> Each figure clutches its priceless products, the woman her divine child, the man the books he has authored, poor surrogates for children (Celtis's coat of arms lies below, broken in two because he left no heirs). Each figure is cut off at the waist in classical fashion, in contempt for the lower body. Each is bracketed and supported from below by inscribed texts. Each wears conventionalized apparel and insignia: the Holy Mother her *maphorion* or veil with fringe, star on the shoulder, and pseudo-Hebrew lettering; the scholar his doctoral beret ringed by a laurel wreath with the emblem of the Collegium Poetarum et Mathematicarum, the humanities faculty inaugurated by Emperor Maximilian at the University of Vienna in 1502 (the wreath is doubled on the arch above Celtis's head.) Divinity is not quite banished from Celtis's world, for Apollo and Mercury, sponsors of poetical and mathematical wisdom, mourn from the spandrels above.

These images are juxtaposed not to suggest that one is the secularized version of the other, but rather to bring out the parallelism of their backward-pointing references. In each case, the reintroduction of the archaic format, the half-length portrait of Madonna and Child and the bust

78. Schreiber 1033, 20 × 15.5 cm, printed by Thomas Anshelm, Pforzheim. The impression reproduced, from the Graphische Sammlung, Munich, is the second state.

79. Hollstein 308, 22 × 14.4 cm.



Das ist das bild der allerheiligsten ungsfrawen marie in den kleidern

omay und hat sie also gemalt der ewangelist S. luyt vrelch heilig gemald ist zu nom



und gegreiden mit walden sie gegreiet was an den hochzeitlichen feste als sie besuchte

aus dem vordern theil der kirche zu speier

Diese ysbensdünige grüßung sol g than haben der heilig sanct Bernhart vor dem bild der heilige iugfrawe marie inn der kirchen zu speier.  
 O ir aller heiligsten füeß/die da tragen den künig dieser welt. Ave maria. O du gewychter leib/indem beslossen was gott/und ir seligen brüß/die gesogen hat des vatters wyßheit. Ave maria. O ir seligen arm gott umfahend/und ir seligen leffzen/gott küßend. Ave maria. O du aller heiligste schoß/in die du empfangen hast gottes sün. Ave maria. O du iungfrewliche heere/ender dem gerast hat gottes sün Ave maria.  
 O ir seligen augen/die da ansehen das annit des herren. Ave maria. O du ganz aller heiligste halff uns armen sündern. Ave maria.

Pforzheim 1500

19. Madonna Hodegetria, 1500, woodcut.  
 Printed by Thomas Anshelm, Pforzheim.  
 Munich, Graphische Sammlung.



20. Hans Burgkmair, *Epitaph of Conrad Celtis*, 1507, woodcut. Image © 2006 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection.

portrait of the deceased under an edicule, abrupt breaches with prevailing custom, is prepared by explanatory inscriptions. The framing text on the portrait of the Madonna and Child reads, “This is the image [*bild*] of the most holy Virgin Mary in the clothes and adornments with which she was adorned on the high holiday as she visited the holy Temple in Jerusalem; as the worthy Bede described her in a homily; and as she was painted by the Evangelist St. Luke, which painting is found in Rome.” The letters D.M.S. below the portrait of Celtis, the abbreviation *Dis Manibus Sacrum*, standard formula on Roman tombstones, as well as the reference to the Roman goddess of death Libitina on the right-hand scroll, secure the link to the nearly forgotten conventions of pagan obsequy. The re-entries of these two archaic portrait formats into European public life are prepared by the inscriptional metadata. The woodcut, which embraces lettering and image in an easy, unforced relation, was thus the ideal medium for the re-entry.

Both prints extended ancient publication systems. The portrait of the Madonna and Child had been transmitted across a network of painted copies. The open-air display of effigy-like sculpted portraits of the dead, staving off the dispersal of the individual into oblivion, was a principal mode of publication in imperial Rome and its colonies. Both systems, icon and tomb, were coming into ever sharper focus at this moment. Scholars were seeking out and even rescuing samples of the pagan monuments, making drawings and deciphering their texts.<sup>80</sup> Fifteenth-century Netherlandish, German, and Bohemian painters were copying the old Greek pictures, or Italian copies after Greek pictures, that had found their way to Western Europe after the Crusaders opened up Constantinople in 1204.<sup>81</sup>

Under an ideally functioning substitutional paradigm, each iteration of the icon, each instance of a tomb portrait, presents itself straightforwardly,

**80.** See Sixten Ringbom, “Nuptial Symbolism in Some Fifteenth-Century Reflections of Roman Sepulchral Portraiture,” *Temenos* 2 (1966): 68–96, on the relation between Roman tombstones and Jan van Eyck’s portraits.

**81.** Hans Aurenhammer, “Marienikone und Marienandachtsbild: Die Entstehung des halbfigurigen Marienbildes nördlich der Alpen,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 4 (1955): 135–49. Noteworthy are the long years of nonreception of the Italo-Byzantine Marian icon in the Alte Kapelle in Regensburg. According to legend the panel was a gift of Pope Benedict VIII to Emperor Henry II in 1014. Modern scholarship dates the painting, a cousin not of the Hodegetria but of the icon at S. Francesca Romana in Rome, to the early to mid-thirteenth century. The mysterious panel is mentioned in no document before 1451 and had no clear impact on German art until the initiation of the Regensburg pilgrimage to the Beautiful Virgin in 1519. See the essays by Cornelia Ringer, Holger Klein, Thomas Hensel, and others in *Die Alte Kapelle in Regensburg* (= *Arbeitshefte des Bayerischen Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege*, vol. 114) (Munich: Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 2001); and Achim Hubel, “Das Gnadenbild der Alten Kapelle,” in Werner Scheidermair, ed., *Die Alte Kapelle in Regensburg* (Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2002), 219–44.

without recourse to apologetic or didactic framing devices. The icon is like all the others, effectively identical to the others. The tomb portrait works as well as anyone else's. When the substitutional chain made the shift into print, however, a layer of framing and explanation was added that threatened the effectiveness of the substitution. Woodcut risked the reference by trespassing beyond stone or panel and onto paper.

About a dozen surviving German woodcuts from the end of the fifteenth century reproduce the Luke *Madonna*. In each case the portrait is framed by textual explanation.<sup>82</sup> If the portrait painted by Luke had any special virtue or force, then it ought to "work" whether or not the beholder knows anything about the provenance. The inscriptions on the woodcuts, aimed not at antiquarian scholars but at a wider public, suggest rather that the authenticity of the images needed to be activated by knowledge. Once upon a time, the metadata was oral, tied to place and situation. A local sage or cicerone, a voluble cleric, explained the picture. Now that images "fly" on sheets of paper, the metadata flies with them.

The merit of a substitutional theory of transmission was that it kept the magical idea of real identity in play. Substitution held the place of a rigorous but practically impossible model of true identity between token and type, forestalling the surrender to the easier but less dramatic model of a merely representational relation between an object and its rendering. Substitution did not quite deliver a true identity, which would amount to something like: this picture *is* the Madonna; a red rag to iconophobic theologians. Instead, substitution offered this: this picture delivers the true image of the Madonna as it was archived in an authoritative type. This all breaks down when the woodcut begins to justify itself with inscriptions. The inscriptions now insist that what you see is not just a copy of a painting, but the "true image" of the Madonna "as she really looked on that day in the temple" *and* as she looked when St. Luke portrayed her. The hesitation unmasks the deception. Will the inscription have us believe that someone recorded her aspect when she entered the temple on the high holiday? Or that she donned the festive robe once more when she sat for Luke? The substitutional spell is broken.

Because the previous chain of replicas had been intramedial, painting-to-painting, every copy could "pass for" the original icon, the one Luke

82. Schreiber 1031–38. For reproductions see the *Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 164 (Supplement), ed. Richard S. Field, *German Single-Leaf Woodcuts before 1500* (Anon. Artists: .997–.1383) [= *Illustrated Schreiber*], nos. .1031–.1038–1, pp. 52–58. See Magdalena Bushart, *Sehen und Erkennen: Albrecht Altdorfers religiöse Bilder* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2004), 74. On Netherlandish prints after local painted icons that deliver Roman types, see Ainsworth, "À la façon grèce," 548.

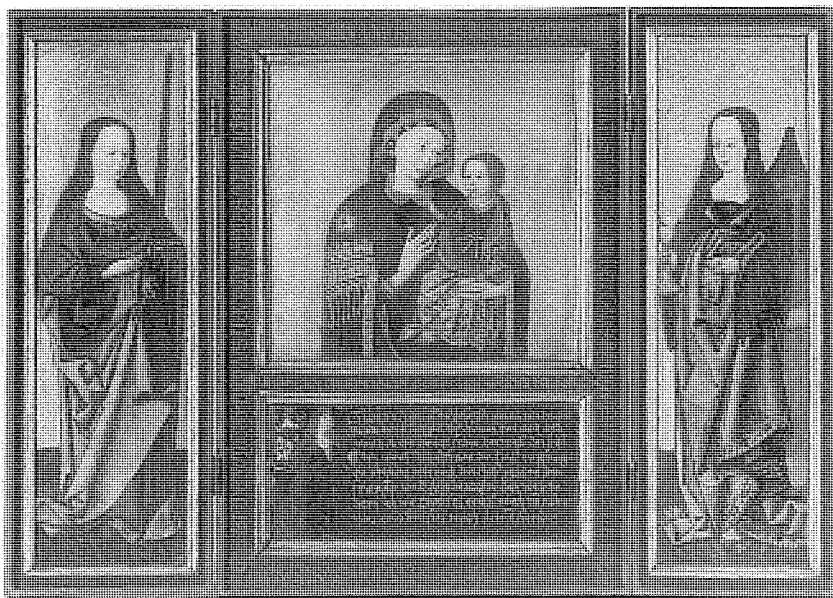
painted. The substitutional paradigm licensed the beholder to act as if the copy were the icon. By couching the portrait in texts, the printmaker in effect concedes that print no longer has this power. The woodcut can no longer be treated as if it were the Luke icon. Luke was not a printmaker. The woodcut is willing to admit that the real icon was in Rome (which one of the pretenders? there was much dispute). The print can now only be *about* the substitution process. The woodcut does not reproduce any particular panel, not even one in Rome; it is not a report on a relic. Rather, it delivers the ideal type of which every painted copy—so the theory—was a satisfactory token. The woodcut itself does not quite dare to offer itself as such a token. Rogier van der Weyden's painting *St. Luke Drawing the Virgin* (c. 1435–1440) anticipates the turn-of-the-century woodcuts in the sense that it represents representation itself, adding a relay station. For Rogier's Luke does not paint the Virgin directly, but rather draws her features with a silverpoint stylus on a prepared tablet.<sup>83</sup> Luke will have to return to his workshop and transfer the drawing to a panel.

By reframing the icon, the print recreated the Hodegetria Madonna, an iconographical formula that had emerged in Constantinople by the ninth century, as a historical document. This is just what did not happen to the *Youth of Magdalensberg* or the *Augsburg Mercury*.

The medium of print brings about an anamnesis of the archaic Madonna. The sequence of panels had pretended that no such recollection was necessary. The cascade of painted copies was memory itself. Print converted devotion into an antiquarian project. Instead of leaving the authenticity of the icon shrouded in mystery, as an earlier medieval image might have done, the woodcut explains everything. Whereas the earlier beholder would have taken an image of the Madonna on trust, the new beholder, reader of inscriptions, is a potential doubter. The inscription creates the devout beholder for the first time as a skeptic. The pedantic, circumstantial explanation runs the risk of revealing the Hodegetria type as a mere convention—which it is, of course: the Hodegetria has no Lucan pedigree, nor any ancient roots at all. The elaborate framing device of printed frame, double inscription, and signature and date is meant to point out the Madonna-type's historicity and at the same time cancel it. The framing device is supposed to render her, once again and forever, timeless and "classical," and not merely ancient.

The scholarly reframing of the Hodegetria Madonna was undertaken more or less simultaneously in painting and print. In 1493 Hans Holbein the Elder (1465–1524), the leading painter in Augsburg, painted a copy

**83.** Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. See most recently *Rogier van der Weyden, St. Luke Drawing the Virgin: Selected Essays in Context*, ed. Carol J. Purtle (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997).



21. *Madonna and Child with Sts. Catherine and Barbara*, late fifteenth century, oil on panel. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

of the thirteenth-century icon at S. Maria del Popolo in Rome.<sup>84</sup> A panel by Holbein, destroyed in 1947, reproduced the mosaic *Man of Sorrows* in S. Croce in Gerusalemme, also in Rome.<sup>85</sup> The Rhenish printmaker Israhel van Meckenem reproduced the S. Croce mosaic icon as an engraving around the same time.<sup>86</sup> A small triptych of the same years, the 1490s or a little later, painted in Augsburg but unattributable, renders the Hodegetria Madonna much as she appears in the Pforzheim woodcut (fig. 21).<sup>87</sup> Here the image is flanked by folding wings representing Sts. Catherine and Barbara.

84. Peter Striedter, "Hans Holbein der Ältere und die deutschen Wiederholungen des Gnadenbildes von S. Maria del Popolo," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 22 (1959): 252–67; Norbert Lieb and Alfred Stange, *Hans Holbein der Ältere* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1960), no. 6; Bruno Bushart, *Hans Holbein der Ältere* (Augsburg: Hofmann, 1987), 66; Katharina Krause, *Hans Holbein der Ältere* (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2002), 305, ill. 68. See also Regine Dölling, "Byzantinische Elemente in der Kunst des 16. Jahrhunderts," in *Aus der Arbeit der DDR*, ed. Johannes Ermscher (Berlin: Akademie, 1957), 2: 148–86.

85. It has been argued that the lost panel formed a diptych with the archaizing *Madonna* in Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 2001, although many doubt this. Lieb and Stange, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, nos 9–10; *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik*, exhibition catalogue (Augsburg: Himmer, 1965), no. 13; Krause, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, 305, ill. 67.

86. Parshall, "Imago contrafacta" (see chap. 2, n. 32), 554–79; Evans, ed., *Byzantium*, no. 329; and Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel*, 163–66.

87. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. 510. 40.6 × 59 cm (open). The text of the indulgence is on the outside of the wings. Striedter, "Hans Holbein der Ältere und die deutschen Wiederholungen des Gnadenbildes," 258–59; *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, exhibition catalogue, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Frankfurt: Insel, 1983), no. 48. A still closer model than the Pforzheim woodcut is Schreiber 1032, printed by "Michel Schorpp Maler zu Ulm" and dated 1496 and including the indulgence and prayer.

The text about the temple and St. Luke is painted on the frame enclosing the *Madonna*. The separate field below contains the text of a prayer which, according to a further text on the exterior of the triptych, and by decree of Sixtus IV, will buy 11,000 years' indulgence. The triptych, leaving nothing to chance, a well-oiled devotional machine, is already under the spell of the prints, and in fact very likely translates a print back into paint. The concept of the print, and not only the contents of prints, has now looped back and re-entered the chain of paintings.

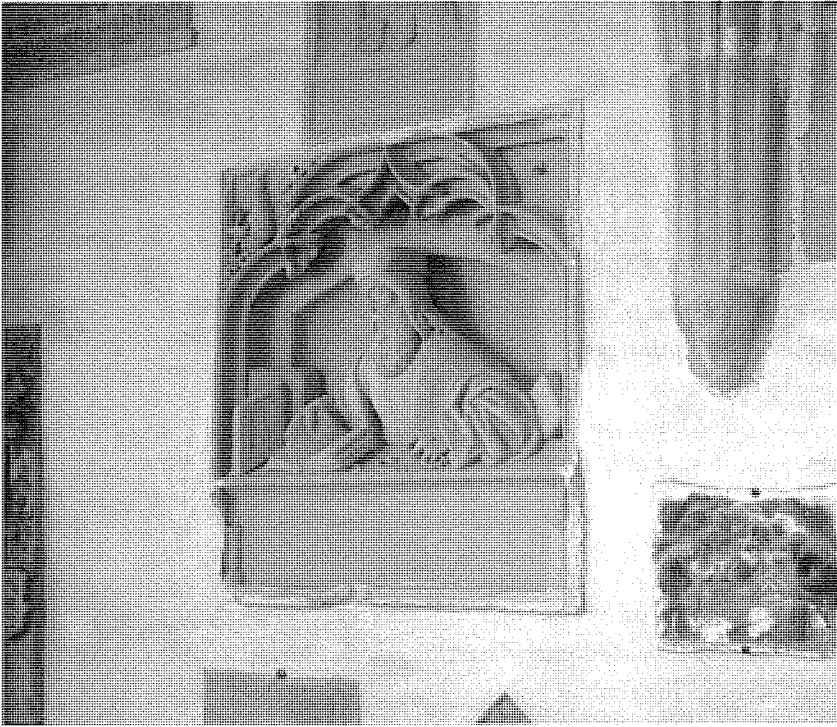
The printed epitaph of Conrad Celtis designed by Burgkmair represents the poet in an arched aperture, eyes lowered, arms folded over his four principal works, the *Amores* (*Quattuor libri amorum*), the *Epigrams*, the *Odes*, and the *Germania illustrata*, the historical and topographical survey of the German lands and cities to which the *Norimberga* belonged but which Celtis never completed. In fact only the first of these four books, the *Amores*, was published in Celtis's lifetime. Celtis was gravely ill in 1507 and predicted his own death. He had Hans Burgkmair design the woodcut epitaph and, with morbid wit, sent it to his friends, including Hartmann Schedel.<sup>88</sup> In February 1508 Celtis did die, and on the third state of the block the date is altered. Celtis wears a fur-lined cloak over an embroidered robe.<sup>89</sup>

Celtis's epitaph exchanges a Christian conception of funerary iconography for a pagan one, but breaks with the ancient Roman conception of publication as a writing in stone. The context for this experiment was the researches into Roman epigraphy and iconography undertaken by Conrad Peutinger and other scholars, above all in Burgkmair's Augsburg. Peutinger collected stones and displayed several in the courtyard of his home where they can still be seen today. Celtis was a frequent guest in Peutinger's home. In a letter he encouraged Peutinger to publish his epigraphic findings.<sup>90</sup> The models for Celtis's tomb monument were reliefs such as the memorial to Julia, wife of Aelius Crispinus, with bust portraits of the couple

88. Panofsky, "Conrad Celtis and Kunz von der Rosen," 42–43; Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture* (New York: Abrams, 1992), 69; Tilman Falk, *Hans Burgkmair: Studien zu Leben und Werke des Augsburger Malers* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1968), 50–51; *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, exhibition catalogue (Augsburg: Städtische Kunstsammlungen, 1973), no. 19. See the extensive analysis of the woodcut in Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet*, 282–312. Luh argues persuasively but inconclusively that the woodcut was already designed in 1503/4 as a book illustration in the projected edition of his complete works. On the epitaph in the context of Celtis's self-understanding as a poet, see Jörg Robert, *Konrad Celtis und das Projekt der deutschen Dichtung: Studien zur humanistischen Konstitution von Poetik, Philosophie, Nation und Ich* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003), 482–85, 497–509.

89. The monogram on the shoulder has never been deciphered.

90. Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, no. 329.



22. Epitaph of Adolf Occo, 1503, stone relief. Augsburg, Cathedral, cloister. Photo: author.

above the incomplete inscription.<sup>91</sup> In his 1505 publication of the Augsburg inscriptions, *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta*, Peutingger reported that the stone was located in the home of Georg Müllich in Augsburg.<sup>92</sup>

Such a stone was already part of the background of the memorial relief of the physician Adolf Occo in the Augsburg Cathedral (1503) (fig. 22). Occo came from Friesland and had worked in Heidelberg where he had contact with Bishop Johannes von Dalberg, an ardent antiquarian. Later he was physician to the cathedral chapter in Augsburg and was involved with the virtual literary and philological society *Sodalitas litteraria Augustana*, a company of scholars who met on the printed page, under the loose leadership of Peutingger and with Celtis's blessing.<sup>93</sup> The bust portrait of Occo

91. Augsburg, Römisches Museum, Lap. 3; *CIL* III, 5836; Friedrich Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivariae romanae* (Munich, 1915), no. 148. *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I, 1, Raetia und Noricum* (Bonn: Habelt, 1973), no. 5. This was the only funerary stone in Augsburg with a portrait; there were more examples in Mainz and Cologne.

92. Peutingger, *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta*, 5r. The relief was moved at some point after 1505 to the home of Simon Imhof and by 1511 was in Peutingger's own home where it eventually ended up in the kitchen. In 1833 it was transferred to the antiquarian museum in Augsburg.

93. See Jan-Dirk Müller, "Konrad Peutingger und die Sodalitas Peutinggeriana," in *Der polnische Humanismus und die europäischen Sodalitäten* [= *Pirckheimer-Jahrbuch für Renaissance- und Humanismusforschung* 12], ed. Stephan Füßel and Jan Pirozyński (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 167–86.



in sandstone, attributed to the Augsburg sculptor Gregor Erhart, involves like Celtis's printed epitaph an arched aperture and books.<sup>94</sup> There were precedents in local tradition for sculpted bust portraits in arched frames, for example, the portraits of craftsmen in Munich and Nördlingen or the whimsical self-portrait of Anton Pilgram in St. Stephen's in Vienna. Still, the Occo monument has a strong pagan flavor. Although the inscription below is in Gothic minuscules, Occo's tomb slab itself, only a few feet away in the cathedral cloister, was in Roman majuscules.<sup>95</sup> On the sixteen monuments mounted in the cloister between 1500 and 1519, the rather vain-glorious inscription below Occo's portrait is the only one making no reference to Christian iconography.<sup>96</sup>

Celtis also had a carved epitaph, not in Augsburg but in Vienna, where he was professor at the university. The gray sandstone slab was mounted on the outside of the north tower of St. Stephen's cathedral; it was moved indoors in 1948, but is by now almost illegible, the paint layer reduced to traces; figure 23 is a woodcut rendering of the epitaph from an eighteenth-century publication.<sup>97</sup> Here Celtis was represented in bust format with books above a *tabula ansata*, that is, an inscribed tablet with notched edges as found on many Roman memorial reliefs. Below is a laurel wreath encircling a cross and the letters VIVO;<sup>98</sup> more books; an oil lamp and a sacrificial vessel (ancient implements associated with death); and another *tabula ansata*.

Celtis and Burgkmair had the inspired idea of transferring the Roman relief format to the medium of woodcut, the more modern mode of publication. That woodcut dared to do what the carved epitaph in Vienna had not, namely, inscribe the letters D M S at the top of the inscription below

94. Augsburg, Cathedral, Cloister, 109 × 102 cm. Karl Kosel, *Der Augsburger Domkreuzgang und seine Denkmäler* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1991), no. 62; Gertrud Otto, *Gregor Erhart* (Berlin: von Holtten, 1943), 44, 88, ill. 87. On his tomb at S. Croce by Bernardo Rossellino (late 1440s), Leonardo Bruni was represented with his *History of Florence* in his hands.

95. Kosel, *Der Augsburger Domkreuzgang*, no. 68.

96. Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet*, 305n111. Occo is holding a rosary in his left hand, however.

97. Franciscus Christophorus de Scheyb, *Peutingeriana tabula itineraria* (Vienna, 1753), 34. The original stone is reproduced in Heinz Otto Bürger, *Renaissance, Humanismus, Reformation: Deutsche Literatur in europäischem Kontext* (Bad Homburg, Berlin, Zurich: Gehlen, 1969), 347. See Dieter Wuttke, "Dürer und Celtis: von der Bedeutung des Jahres 1500 für den deutschen Humanismus" (1980), in Wuttke, *Dazwischen: Kulturwissenschaft auf Warburgs Spuren* (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1996), 1:374–75.

98. The formula VIVO abbreviates *vivus vivo*, "the living [made it] for the living"; Nancy Thomas de Grummond, "V and Related Inscriptions in Giorgione, Titian, and Dürer," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 346–56. Bürger, *Renaissance, Humanismus, Reformation*, gave as the source for the VIVO the tomb of the Roman scholar Pomponio Leto in S. Salvatore in Lauro, but no one can find the monument.



23. Epitaph of Conrad Celtis, 1508, Cathedral of St. Stephen, Vienna. Woodcut in Franciscus Christophorus de Scheyb, *Peutingeriana tabula itineraria* (Vienna, 1753), 34. Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.

the portrait. In pagan Roman usage those letters, in practice often abbreviated to *DM*, stood for *Dis manibus sacrum*, "dedicated to the sacred spirits of the departed." Archeologically-minded clerics, especially in Augsburg, were well aware that these initials had a pagan content, and already in the Middle Ages they developed a variation on them that preserved a Roman flavor but switched the reference from the soul of the dead to the one God: *DOM*, *Deo optimo maximo*. This was the formula used on Celtis's carved epitaph in Vienna. Celtis assisted his colleague Johannes Fuchsmagen, the imperial advisor who commissioned the copy of the Filocalus calendar, in designing his own epitaph. Celtis's draft used the pagan *DM S*. Fuchsmagen's actual tombstone, which survives only in transcriptions, altered this to *DOM*.

The first way to read the woodcut was as a rendering of the stone epitaph in Vienna. The idea of an independent printed epitaph was so unexpected—as much so as Maximilian's printed triumphal arch—that any beholder must have assumed that the print copied and publicized a solid artifact elsewhere, even though the inscriptions on the print said no such thing. Relatively few beholders would see Celtis's actual epitaph in Vienna

and so realize that the print was not a report on the carved relief. The print piled on inscriptions with funerary content precisely in order to signal to beholders that this *was* a funerary portrait, a true surrogate for the experience of visiting a tomb. The inscriptions justify the very existence of the print, for in fact the printed portrait, in later decades and centuries such a familiar phenomenon, was in 1507 a brand new idea. The Celtis epitaph essentially initiated the printed portrait.<sup>99</sup>

Just as with the Marian icons, the print, soon known to every German scholar, was folded back into the permanent media. Burgkmair's and Celtis's idea recurred, for example, in the form of the funerary portrait in relief of Johannes Cuspinian in Vienna.<sup>100</sup> Celtis's schema provided the scaffolding for the engraved portraits by Albrecht Dürer of the notables Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg (1523) and Elector Frederick the Wise (1524) and the scholars Willibald Pirckheimer (1524), Philipp Melancthon (1526), and Erasmus (1526). Although these images did not postdate the deaths of their subjects, they employed the ancient publication device of the bust-length tomb portrait coupled with the pseudo-epigraphic majuscule inscription on a tablet.<sup>101</sup>

All referential testimonies, linguistic and figural, were at the same time *representations*: they imagined and figured their referents, beautified and versified, systematized and simplified, molded the real to the conventions of biography, epic, portraiture. One testimony might veer off in the direction of poetry, another in the direction of theology. Such swerves threatened the metaphor of the chain. Identity across a chain of copies is harder to preserve when time plots difference. Print itself came to symbolize the representational supplement that created difference. Print literalized the mechanical or acheiropoetic (without hands) ideal of production, staged the idea of artistic authorship, framed its object with explanatory inscrip-

99. Panofsky, "Conrad Celtis and Kunz von der Rosen," 51–53; and Larry Silver, "The Face Is Familiar: German Renaissance Portrait Multiples in Prints and Medals," *Word and Image* 19 (2003): 9. Among the very few printed portraits that predate Celtis's are the Italian engraving *Gran Turco*, an imaginary portrait of the Sultan; the engraved portrait of Frederick III; and Israhel van Meckenem's engraved portrait of himself and his wife.

100. Ilse Friesen, "Die Humanisten-Epitaphien im Dom von St. Stephan und die Anfänge der Renaissance-Skulptur in Wien," *Wiener Geschichtsblätter* 44 (1989): 53–77; and Ute Versteegen, "Die Grabdenkmäler der humanistischen Gelehrten—Antikenrezeption im Norden," in Nussbaum et al., eds., *Wege zur Renaissance*, 287–91. The austere scholars Johannes Reuchlin and Peutinger refused the iconic supplement for their own monuments; for Reuchlin's, see figure 94, below; Peutinger's thirteen-line epitaph, a square tablet in Solnhofener stone, is in the Römisches Museum, Augsburg.

101. Bartsch 103–7. Rainer Schoch et al., *Albrecht Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk* (Munich: Prestel, 2001), vol. 1, nos. 97–101. Andrée Hayum, "Dürer's Portrait of Erasmus and the Ars Typographorum," *Renaissance Quarterly* 38 (1985): 650–87, interprets the Erasmus engraving as a concerted reflection on the cultural impact of print technology.

tions, and made it more difficult to locate the path leading backward from the artifact to its remotest origin in truth. Print fell like a firewall between origin and beholder.

Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries substitution (which is basically a system of forgery without criminality) was replaced by fictionality (which is basically a system of lying without dishonesty). Logically and structurally the two systems, before and after, are homologous. It might appear, especially from a vantage point inside a modern society that has politically institutionalized the idea of secularism, that the cult image, a strong symbol securely linked to reality, gave way to the artwork, a mere ornament to rationalized life. But from another point of view, one set of magical effects was simply exchanged for another. It was not intersubjectivity that was carried over the threshold from Middle Ages to Renaissance, as in the standard secularization model employed by art history, but rather the time-bending mechanism. The substitutional and the artistic artifact both bend time. Referential cult images are already artworks and artworks are still magical in the sense that they are all forcing an impossible contemporaneity of logically independent time frames.

This dialectical version of the threshold model, in contrast to the theological version which still dominates modern historiography, involves no debilitating attrition of content. All that changes is that the remote origin point of meaning is pulled ever closer, from a point beyond human experience into lived life, until finally the mystery of the origin comes all the way home to take up residence in the individual.<sup>102</sup> The artwork that print brings into being discloses reference as a magical operation, but one that operates without all the uncertainty about whether the referent even exists, the uncertainty that generates the iconoclastic desire to debunk reference itself.

The model proposed here is not enlightenment, but feedback. To redescribe the Renaissance as an effect of print technology is to reveal Renaissance art as a doubling or reenactment of the image-production system; and the social institutionalization of art (collecting, treatises on art theory, artists' biographies, and so forth) as merely the outer forms of that doubling. Print reflected an image-production system back to society, recreating image-production as "culture." Print delivered "art" as a conceptual instrument in the simultaneous creation and destruction of the myth of the substitution chain. The Renaissance devised the model of the replica chain in the very moment that it invented the myth of the breaking of that chain.

102. This is no more than what Panofsky said on the last page of *Perspective as Symbolic Form*.



# 4

# FORGERY

## The fabrication of facts

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This book is both about fictions of artifact chains stretching backward into time and about the active enterprise of extending those chains into the future. Substitution was a general theory of the historicity of form, providing the framework for the production of new artifacts as much as for the reception of old ones. The production of the new was a matter of extending substitution chains. Because virtually any new monument with an old referent would be taken seriously, the temptation to generate new substitutions was too great to resist. Even a modern, freshly made monument could quickly acquire an unverifiable pedigree and retrospective force. Within the substitution model, all times were always present. The structures of prophecy and forgery were intertwined. The invention of the past was also a form of prophecy and the modern production of artifacts and images was a form of historiography.<sup>1</sup>

In the twelfth century, a period of monastic reform and self-promotion, historians began piecing together foundation narratives and identifying founders. They built a past out of texts but also, protoarcheologically,

1. Klaus Graf, "Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst vom 14. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert: Kritische Überlegungen aus der Perspektive des Historikers," in *Mundus in imagine: Bildsprache und Lebenswelten im Mittelalter: Festgabe für Klaus Schreiner*, ed. Andreas Lothe et al. (Munich: Fink, 1996), 413–14, invoking the concept of *Erinnerungskultur* developed by Jan Assmann, stresses this double-faced quality of memory. See also Graf, "Stil als Erinnerung: Retrospektive Tendenzen in der deutschen Kunst um 1500," in *Wege zur Renaissance: Beobachtungen zu den Anfängen neuzeitlicher Kunstauffassung im Rheinland und den Nachbargebieten um 1500*, ed. Norbert Nussbaum, Claudia Euskirchen, and Stephan Hoppe (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2003), 19–29.

out of things: physical samples or relics of the founders; and tombs, which were basically relic containers with permanently attached labels, verbal or iconic. Not all portraits of founders were attached to tombs. Founders were also portrayed in illustrated manuscripts known in Germany as *Traditionsbücher*. Here the painted image of a founder, sometimes juxtaposed to the text of the founding charter, served to fix or even seal the grant.<sup>2</sup> In a letter of 1464 the historian Sigismund Meisterlin reported on a pair of twelfth-century tapestries with portraits of the founders and various kings and princes at the abbey of Murbach.<sup>3</sup> Founders also appeared in painted altarpieces, attendant to holy personages, and in storied windows.

Not all founders were saints or even clerics. Secular founders, protagonists of local myths about the origins of dynasties or communes, were not only entombed inside churches, but also represented in sculpture on façades or even inside the church spaces. There were many such founder figures in or on German cathedrals, especially in the eastern lands where the emperors and local princes had played such an important role in church politics, for example, the life-size statues in the west choir at Naumburg, thirteenth-century portraits of the early eleventh-century founders.<sup>4</sup> Other thirteenth-century portraits of still earlier imperial and noble founders were erected at Bamberg, Magdeburg, and Meissen. The depictions of secular founders sometimes complied with the conventions for representation of sacred personages. This created confusion, and the dates of execution of the portraits, and even sometimes the identities of the figures, were easily forgotten. For example, modern scholarship considers the enthroned and crowned male and female figures at Magdeburg, carved in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, to be images of Christ and his symbolic bride Ecclesia. A late sixteenth-century chronicler, however,

2. A good example is the depiction of Abbot Wilhelm of Hirsau (d. 1091), in the mid-twelfth-century *Traditionsbuch* of Reichenbach; see Christine Sauer, *Fundatio et Memoria: Stifter und Klostergründer im Bild 1100 bis 1350* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1993), 84, ill. 19. See also Otto Gerhard Oexele, "Memoria und Memorialbild," in *Memoria: der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, ed. Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch (Munich: Fink, 1984), 384–440.

3. Paul Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtsschreibung in Deutschland*, pt. 1, *Die Anfänge: Sigismund Meisterlin* (1895); reprinted in Joachimsen, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. Notker Hammerstein (Aalen: Scientia, 1983), 2: 231–39. On the Murbach tapestries, and comparable examples in Trier, Worms, Mainz, and Maria Laach known from later inventories and chronicles, see Betty Kurth, *Die deutschen Bildteppiche des Mittelalters* (Vienna: Schroll, 1926), 1: 31–33, 281; and Oexele, "Memoria und Memorialbild," 401–6.

4. Willibald Sauerländer, "Die Naumburger Stifterfiguren," in *Die Zeit der Stauer*, exhibition catalogue (Stuttgart: Württembergisches Landesmuseum, 1977), 5: 169–245, esp. 216–22, drawing an interesting comparison to the founder-tapestries at Murbach and Maria Laach.

identified them as Emperor Otto I and his wife Edith, who in 937 had founded the institution that preceded the cathedral and who are buried in the cathedral. Willibald Sauerländer has wondered whether the chronicler might not have been right.<sup>5</sup> The conventions of portraying founders, divine personages, and allegorical figures had flowed into one another, making it difficult for later generations to recover the reference of non-textual labels.<sup>6</sup>

This is the sort of image that Conrad Celtis saw at Speinshart, or thought he was seeing. He saw no barriers to interpreting apostle-like figures as founders. In their sculptural portraits, clerical founders often held pastoral staffs and books of rules, just as the Speinshart figures held staffs and scrolls. Examples are the portraits of Abbot Wirnto (d. 1127) of Vornbach (Inn) on a tomb slab from the fourteenth century; Bishops Ulrich von Dürrmenz and Günther von Speyer at Maulbronn, who both died in the 1160s and whose tombs date from the third quarter of the thirteenth century; Archbishop Brun (d. 965) in the tympanon in the portal of the north transept at St. Pantaleon in Cologne, from the third quarter of the twelfth century; and Bertha von Biburg, who was involved in the founding of the monastery in 1130, on a tomb slab from later in the century, holding a book and wearing a pleated robe with a hood, perhaps like the one described by Celtis.<sup>7</sup>

All the founder portraits just listed, as well as the portraits at Bamberg, Naumburg, and Magdeburg, were created many years and in some cases two or three centuries after the lifetimes of their subjects. They are anachronistic or retrospective portraits. Already the earliest figural tombs, dating from the late eleventh century, monumentalized individuals from

5. *Die Zeit der Stauer*, 1: 340–42, no. 460. The shoes and belt interfere with the Christological reading. The old source was J. Pomarius, *Chronica der Sachsen* (1589).

6. Elsewhere Sauerländer stresses the need to interpret portal sculpture more on the basis of local context and rituals, and less on the basis of universal iconographies. He implies that the scholarly correction to the enthusiasm of the eighteenth-century antiquarian Bernard de Montfaucon (or Celtis, for that matter) for founder figures may have gone too far. Sauerländer, "Reliquien, Altäre und Portale," in *Kunst und Liturgie im Mittelalter, Akten des Internationalen Kongresses der Bibliotheca Hertziana und des Nederlands Instituut te Rome*, ed. Nicolas Bock et al., 1997 = *Römische Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana, Beiheft*, 33 (1999/2000): 121–34, esp. 134.

7. Sauer, *Fundatio et Memoria*, 84, 141–47, 128–30, 188–92; ill. 19, 12, 25, 26, 41, 42. The Maulbronn tombs have actually been suspected of being sixteenth-century forgeries; the hypothesis was rejected by the epigrapher Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, "Maulbronner Stifterfiguren," *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte* 37 (1978): 27–45; see also *Die deutschen Inschriften* 22 (Enzkreis), nos. 9, 11. Admittedly, all these figures, like the enthroned figures at Magdeburg but unlike the druids that Celtis saw, are wearing shoes. Celtis was identifying a special primitive class of barefoot founders.



still earlier epochs.<sup>8</sup> The enthroned portraits of the early kings of France at Reims date from the third quarter of the twelfth century. Saint Louis reburied and commissioned tombs for sixteen Carolingian and Capetian kings at St. Denis in the 1260s.<sup>9</sup> There are many German examples. The tombs of the Carolingian and Ottonian notables at St. Emmeram in Regensburg, where Celtis had found the manuscript of Hrosvita in 1493, were all created in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup> The retrospective tomb portrait was not an eccentric phenomenon, but rather was basic to the whole tradition of medieval tombs. All such tombs bore the date of death, but not the date of the execution of the tomb.<sup>11</sup>

The retrospective tomb is not such a simple or obvious idea. It is not the same as erecting a monument to a hero from the past in the fashion of the nineteenth or twentieth century. Such modern monuments glorify their own modern sponsors for their perspicacity and intimacy with the past as much as they glorify the past, whereas in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, the tombs and portraits of long-dead founders were created as real evidence in fierce local and regional political disputes. Later, many statues or tomb slabs were taken for objects executed at the time of the subject's death, that is, at the date given on the monument. The "forgery" of a founder's tomb was easy to rationalize, but hard to see through.

8. Sauer, *Fundatio et Memoria*, 89–213; Harald Keller, "Denkmal," *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 3 (Stuttgart: Druckenmüller, 1954), cols. 1271–83; Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 51–63, on three-dimensional sculpted tombs from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. On the precedents for the retrospective founder portraits at Naumburg, see Willibald Sauerländer and Joachim Wollasch, "Stiftergedenken und Stifterfiguren in Naumburg," in Wollasch and Karl Schmid, eds., *Memoria*, 372–73.

9. Kurt Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild: Figürliche Grabmäler des 11. bis 15. Jahrhunderts in Europa* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), 40–41, 68–77.

10. Alois Schmid, "Die Herrschergräber in St. Emmeram zu Regensburg," *Deutsches Archiv* 32 (1976): 333–69.

11. There is no synthetic treatment of the phenomenon of the retrospective tomb, but see Harald Keller, "Die Entstehung des Bildnisses am Ende des Hochmittelalters," *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 3 (1939): 253–54, plus appendix with list of retrospective tombs, fourteen German examples and nine French, dating from 1250 to 1350, p. 356; and Keller, "Das Geschichtsbewusstsein des deutschen Humanismus und die bildende Kunst," *Historisches Jahrbuch der Görres-Gesellschaft* 60 (1940): 664–84. Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild*, lists many examples. See also Jacob Burckhardt, "Die Anfänge der neueren Porträtmalerei" (1885), in Burckhardt, *Die Kunst der Betrachtung: Aufsätze und Vorträge zur bildenden Kunst* (Cologne: DuMont, 1984), 320–21. Good discussions of the phenomenon are Robert Suckale, "Die Grabfiguren des hl. Otto auf dem Michelsberg in Bamberg," in *Bischof Otto I. von Bamberg: Reformator—Apostel der Pommern—Heiliger = Historischer Verein für die Pflege der Geschichte des ehemaligen Fürstbistums Bamberg* 125 (1989): 499–537, esp. 501, 511–13, and nn. 7–9; Sauer, *Fundatio et Memoria*, 130, 141ff.; and M. Borgolte, "Fiktive Gräber," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* [see chap. 2, n. 20], 1: 205–40, esp. 235.

The founder did in fact exist, after all, and the sculptural tomb was simply a way of publishing the link between present and past. The label did the work of installing the truth in the right place.

### Document forgery as paradigm

Retroactive monuments are best understood in the context of medieval document forgery, a comparatively well-researched and well-understood category.<sup>12</sup> Medieval historians and clerks generated an enormous quantity of forged documents that came to carry real legal force.<sup>13</sup> It has been estimated that 50 percent of all Merovingian documents, 15 percent of the documents of the first four Carolingians, and 10 percent of the documents of the early Saxon rulers are forgeries of the later Middle Ages.<sup>14</sup> With documents, the intent to deceive outright is difficult to disentangle from the desire to publicize historical or legal precedents that were simply *known* to have been real even if the original material indexes of those precedents had gone astray.

The document was a kind of relic, for it was a material link, in principle, to the original event. Early contracts on tablets or parchment were sometimes split in two so that each party could take away a token of the event that, unlike a memory or the spoken word, was physically continuous with the other party's token. Wax seals, difficult to copy, were affixed to documents in order to convince later users of the document's originality. In practice, however, there was plenty of copying, or substitution, for a complex society could not function on the basis of torn paper. More and more, everything came to rest on consensual faith in the probity and consistency of the copying process. That process could not be policed, but rather was guaranteed by convention and by the aura that surrounded documents and scribes and notarization. A concept of "style" as those features of a document directly continuous with the scribe's stylus emerged in medieval

12. See the symposium proceedings *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*; and the exhibition catalogue *Fälschungen und Fiktionen* (Munich: Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, 1986). An excellent recent survey and analysis of the problem is Alfred Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (London: British Library; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 1–21.

13. Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 59–62, argues interestingly that the "high art" of forgery was created by literacy, as property claims increasingly came to be understood as relationships between words and things rather than between people.

14. See P. Herde and A. Gawlik, "Fälschungen," *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 4 (Munich and Zurich: Artemis, 1988), col. 246ff.

jurisprudence.<sup>15</sup> The signature of the scribe took on an exaggerated calligraphic quality to distinguish it from ordinary, nonperformative script, and as if to symbolize with its irregularity and unrepeatability the torn edge of the paper.<sup>16</sup> But the opportunity to fabricate copies for which no original existed was ever-present. Medieval document forgery can be understood as an adaptation of substitutional modes of thinking to a class of materials that were originally treated like relics, that is, as nonsubstitutable.

The study of medieval document forgery has revolved around the question of the historical relativity of rationalist criteria of authenticity. Some scholars have argued that concepts of the authenticity or spuriousness of a document, of right or wrong practice, are historically relative, and that forgers were simply complying with the expectations of their own time. It is argued, for example, that the overriding framework of salvational justification legitimated the forged document as a “pious fraud” (*pia fraus*); or it is argued that such deceits were justified by a traditional, popular sense of fairness (*aequitas*) which transcended any simple binary opposition between the true and the false document. The other, nonrelativist camp argues that medieval scholars and jurists were quite capable of applying rationalist criteria in assessing evidence, and that to maintain a distinction within modern scholarship between licit and illicit commerce with documents is not an anachronistic imposition on the period. Forgers fabricated documents, it is argued, because everyone else was doing it and it was easy to get away with it.<sup>17</sup>

An attitude of rational skepticism toward the truth claims of a document or a relic was an option already in premodern times. The very availability of the concepts of “pious fraud” and *aequitas* as mitigating mechanisms implied the alternative possibility that forgery was simply a crime. With-

15. Hans-Wolfgang Strätz, “Notizen zu Stil und Recht,” in *Stil: Funktionen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Diskurselements*, ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and K. Ludwig Pfeiffer (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 53–67.

16. The paraph or *seing manuel* was applied to documents by scribes from the tenth century on and was replaced by signatures only in the sixteenth century. See A. de Bouard, *Manuel de diplomatique française et pontificale* (Paris: Picard, 1929), 330–33; Friedrich Leist, *Die Notariats-Signete* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1897); and Béatrice Fraenkel, *Signature: Genèse d'un signe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 41–43.

17. For positions on both sides of the debate about the historicity of rationalist skepticism, see Giles Constable, “Forgery and Plagiarism in the Middle Ages,” *Archiv für Diplomatik* 29 (1983): 1–41 (relativist); Horst Fuhrmann, “Die Fälschungen im Mittelalter,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 197 (1963): 529–54 (relativist); the reply by H. Patze in the same number (nonrelativist); Elizabeth A. R. Brown, “‘Falsitas pia sive reprehensibilis’: Medieval Forgers and Their Intentions,” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* 1: 101–19 (nonrelativist); and Horst Fuhrmann, “‘Mundus vult decepti’: Über den Wunsch des Menschen, betrogen zu werden,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 241 (1985): 529–42 (still relativist).

ering doubt and answering protestations of truthfulness are heard from the very beginning of the relic cult.<sup>18</sup> Scripture itself warned against hasty allegiances of faith: *qui cito credit, levis est corde* (Sirach 19: 4).<sup>19</sup> Deceit, one was constantly told, was a real possibility that had to be smoked out and combatted. Nobody described himself as credulous. The cult of relics came under heavy, constant attack. Johann Hus, challenging the popular cult at Wilsnack in Brandenburg, denied the possibility of a bleeding Host.<sup>20</sup> The fifteenth-century Viennese historian Thomas Ebendorfer mounted a series of arguments against the pious legend of the discovery in 1301 of the tomb of the third-century St. Maximilian in Celeia in Styria.<sup>21</sup> In Italy, too, there was growing skepticism, and in the heart of the church. Pope Alexander VI canceled a pilgrimage in 1494 when he was assured by a Dutch monk that the alleged Purgatory Cave in Ireland was a fiction.<sup>22</sup> The Dominican cleric and pilgrim Felix Fabri in his travel writings assesses miracle and relic claims case by case, carefully. He “can well believe” that iron rings driven into Tyrolean mountainsides attest to the lofty level of the ancient sea. The holy water Fabri saw at SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, touched by the relics of St. Peter, is “believed to be of value as well for the body as for the soul”; mariners know from their own experience, Fabri reports, that a few drops of the liquid do effectively preserve fresh water. Some of his credulous traveling companions, however, hold jewels entrusted to them by friends at home up against relics “that they may perchance derive some sanctity from the touch.”<sup>23</sup> Emperor Maximilian’s genealogists Ladislaus Suntheim and Jakob Menzel often filled in missing links in the chain with fictional ancestors. Johannes Trithemius invented an entire source, Hunibald, to prove the genealogical connection between the Trojans and the Franks.<sup>24</sup> Other scholars, such as Johannes Stabius and Heinrich Bebel, were appalled by all

18. On medieval skepticism about relics, see Wolfgang Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum* (Munich: Beck, 1971), 4–5.

19. See also Deut. 13:1, Matt. 24:24, Rom. 3:4.

20. František Graus, “Fälschungen im Gewand der Frömmigkeit,” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* 5: 269–70. On fifteenth-century worries about Eucharistic frauds, see Merback, “Channels of Grace” (see chap. 2, n. 50), 625–28. On Wilsnack, see Caroline Walker Bynum, “The Blood of Christ in the Later Middle Ages,” *Church History* 71/4 (2002): 685–714, esp. 693–99.

21. Paul Uiblein, “Die Anfänge der Erforschung Carnuntums,” *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung* 59 (1951): 97–99.

22. Klaus Schreiner, “‘Discrimen veri ac falsi’: Ansätze und Formen der Kritik in der Heiligen- und Reliquienverehrung des Mittelalters,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 48 (1966): 33n164.

23. *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, Palestine Pilgrims’ Text Society, vol. 7 (London, 1887), 68, 84, 93.

24. Klaus Arnold, *Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516)*, 2nd ed. (Würzburg: Schöningh, 1991), 167–79; Nikolaus Staubach, “Auf der Suche nach der verlorenen Zeit: Die historiographischen Fiktionen des Johannes Trithemius im Lichte seines wissenschaftlichen Selbstverständnisses,” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* 1: 263–316.

the maneuvering and dismissed it as storytelling or worse. Meanwhile, the dull-witted but creative Mennel was pioneering the use of documents and inscriptions as good evidence.<sup>25</sup> Peutinger, for his part, responded guardedly to Maximilian's genealogical enthusiasm. A coin representing Hercules and inscribed Erakleous Soterios Thasion was excavated on Austrian territory. Maximilian hoped that the coin represented the avatar of the hero known as Hercules Aegypticus, whose son Osiris belonged to the Hapsburg family tree. Peutinger deflected this reading, enlisting the local cleric and scholar Veit Bild to (mis)translate the inscription as "Hercules savior of the Thasiers."<sup>26</sup>

There was no clear opposition between the fantastical and the archaeological methods. The crisis of confidence in relics that broke out into the political sphere in the 1520s in Germany had a long buildup. Clerical contempt for the lying legends of the pagans was commonplace, after all, so the transfer of attitude to targets closer to home wanted no great cognitive shift.

The forger thought "doubly." He was rational and irrational at the same time. Forgers seem to have maintained a basic faith that the equivalent of the fabricated document must have once existed and that to fabricate a document was just to complete a paper record that was incomplete only by accident, unfairly. If a tradition was old enough—custom beyond memory—then there was an almost irresistible tendency to believe it. A call for a document to confirm a tradition would have appeared to many a pedantic annoyance and the fabrication of such a corroborating artifact a routine bureaucratic procedure.

Things began to change when the pace and density of conflict accelerated. The network of ecclesiastical foundations and the multiple ties to secular power became ever more complex. As the voices multiplied, written tradition took on ever greater authority. The temptation to fabricate written evidence increased even as the possibilities for refutation through comparison and public denunciation increased. One was more likely than before to run up against skeptical attitudes.<sup>27</sup> With the accumulation of refutations and the growing corpus of agreed-upon facts, the rational

25. Paul Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtsschreibung* (see chap. 1, n. 2), 200.

26. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Erich König (Munich: Beck, 1923), nos. 144–45; Karl Giehlow, "Dürers Stich 'Melencolia I' und der maximilianische Humanistenkreis," *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst* 26 (1903), 29–30; Schauerer, ed., *Albrecht Dürer* (see chap. 2, n. 13), no. 96a. The true meaning of the inscription is "Hercules the Savior, [a coin of] the Thasiers."

27. Graus, "Fälschungen im Gewand der Frömmigkeit," 261–82. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, "Invented Identities: Credulity in the Age of Prophecy and Exploration," *Journal of Early Modern History* 3 (1999): 203–9, argues, ingeniously, the opposite: that credulity proliferated as knowledge exploded in the first decades of the sixteenth century.

attitude assumed greater force. Renaissance humanists were able to make better and more critical judgments in part simply because they knew more. One could argue, in other words, that the philological revolution of the Renaissance was quantitative and not qualitative.

One way of suspending the historiographical dispute about medieval document forgery is to agree that rational skepticism toward evidence is more or less permanently available as a way of approaching the world. The rational attitude is neither culture- nor class-bound. *Rationalism*, however, or the systematic application of rational criteria, is a peculiarly modern approach. The rational attitude assumes real social force when it is combined with information. Access to disqualifying, negating knowledge gives skepticism its clout, and such access is heavily determined by education and class. Print technology altered the patterns of access by introducing completely new modes of archiving and retrieval of information, pictorial as well as textual. Print invited new substitutional ingenuity. Forgery was dialectically stimulated by printed philological and diplomatic scholarship, which in effect “asked for” the forgeries.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, print enabled fine comparisons of competing claims across time and space. Modern rationalism emerged out of the technological revolution as a new means, easily learnable, of adjudicating rival claims of authenticity. The pace and intensity of criticism increased over the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and in the end rationality emerged not just as an attitude but as an overall approach to the world.

Medieval or preprint document forgery was not a suspension of reason, but rather a practice rational in its own terms. The forged document filled in a lost tradition. It was a creative, anticipatory approach to historiography. This paradigm is easily expanded to other artifacts beyond written documents. Yet the systematic extension of the category “forgery,” well-established in medieval historiography, to figural artifacts has never been attempted. There was not a single contribution dealing with sculpture or painting in the five volumes of proceedings of the symposium on medieval forgery sponsored by the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* and published in 1988.<sup>29</sup> The concept of the label can be extended beyond slips of paper

28. This is the argument of Grafton, *Forgers and Critics*; and Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries*, esp. 156–74.

29. *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*. See, however, the interesting remarks on two twelfth-century French tombs, one a reworked ancient sarcophagus and the other apparently a simulated antiquity, by Madeline Harrison Caviness, “De convenientia et cohaerentia antiqui et novi operis”: Medieval Conservation, Restoration, Pastiche, and Forgery,” in *Intuition und Kunstwissenschaft*, Festschrift Hanns Swarzenski (Berlin: Mann, 1973), 213–18; by P. Lindley, “Retrospective Effigies: The Past and Lies,” in *Medieval Art, Architecture, and Archeology at Hereford*, ed. David Whitehead (Leeds: Maney, 1995), 111–21; and by Lawrence Nees on a group of thirteenth-century Italian episcopal thrones which simulate earlier styles, “Forging

or inscriptions to embrace the containers and framing devices for relics as well. The reliquary was a label, and so was the tomb, the altar, the shrine, the altarpiece. The label is a category that cuts across traditional art historical taxonomies. To think of the painted and sculpted altarpiece as a label is to subordinate its representational character—its attempt to depict something in the world by simulating the results of perception—to its referential character. Figured artifacts can be considered superlabels and thus accessories to the relic business. They fixed reference. Once in place, the temporality of the superlabel was forgotten and only the temporality of the relic, the dead personage, or the distant event mattered. In this way, artifacts “became” forgeries. Their status as forgeries was situational.

### Retrospective tombs

Retrospective tombs can be thought of as applications of what were believed to be accurate labels, whose truth once in place justified retroactively the means of getting them there. The practice of backdating or forging monuments to founders, clerical and noble, persisted deep into the fifteenth and even sixteenth centuries. The tomb of Abbot Udalschalk (d. 1102) in the north aisle of the abbey church at Tegernsee is a red marble slab with a full-figure portrait. The inscription, including the old date, is in Gothic majuscules characteristic of the second half of the fourteenth century. The abbot’s crozier resembles a crozier on a nearby fifteenth-century tomb. On stylistic grounds the tomb sculpture can be dated to the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>30</sup> The tomb of Bishop Konrad of Hildesheim at Kloster Schönau, northeast of Heidelberg, is a sandstone slab with a fifteenth-century inscription around the edge dated 1248.<sup>31</sup> At the Benedictine abbey of Murrhardt, the cenotaph of the ninth-century founders was done in the late fifteenth century.<sup>32</sup> The tomb in the cathedral at Magdeburg for Edith (d. 947) was commissioned around 1500 by Archbishop Ernst. The epitaph of three fourteenth-century members of the Gossembrot family in the cathedral cloister at Augsburg was made around 1480 (two of them died on

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Monumental Memories in the Early Twelfth Century,” *Memory and Oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art, Amsterdam 1996*, ed. Wessel Reinink and Jeroen Stempel (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999), 773–82, esp. 774. See also Julie Harris, “Redating the Arca Santa of Oviedo,” *Art Bulletin* 77 (1995): 82–93; and Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries*, on the fifteenth-century statues on the west façade of Crowland Abbey in Lincolnshire, “documentation” of Richard II’s support of the abbey, 46 and fig. 6.

30. Volker Liedke, *Die Haldner und das Kaisergrabmal in der Frauenkirche zu München* (= *Ars Bavarica* 2) (1974), 46–47, ill. 28.

31. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt und Kreis Heidelberg* (*Die deutschen Inschriften* 12) (Stuttgart: Druckenmüller, 1970), no. 9.

32. Keller, “Geschichtsbewusstsein des deutschen Humanismus und die bildende Kunst,” 674, with literature.

the same day in 1348, according to the stone; in fact one of them died in 1384: the documents had been misinterpreted by the late fifteenth-century fabricators!).<sup>33</sup> Count Heinrich I of Lechsgemünd founded the Cistercian monastery of Kaisheim near Donauwörth, in Swabia, in 1134. His painted sandstone tomb in the nave of the church, however, was carved in 1434 (fig. 24). The sculpted effigy makes no gestures to obsolete styles; it was simply done in the manner of the time. Tomb sculpture of this sort was designed to function as an eloquent superlabel. The carved body acted both as the iconic sign of a corpse and as a support for identifying attributes—garments, headgear, equipment—that assigned the corpse a gender and an office, partially distinguishing it from other corpses. Such attributes reinforced the verbal inscription that finally affixed a name to the corpse.



24. Tomb of Heinrich von Lechsgemünd, 1434, Kaisheim, Monastery, Church. Photo: author.

Doubt about the documentary validity of tombs is seldom expressed in historical sources. Such doubt can only be read negatively in the defensive comments of those justifying the reference. In the face of the Protestant reformation and skepticism about the popular cult of the saints, for instance, the Catholic apologist Hieronymus Emser (1478–1527) compared the images of saints to the carved figures on tombs, contending that “if one may put up the figure and image of someone on his grave or elsewhere as a memorial to that person’s virtue and charity, why should we not permit the images of our beloved saints to stand before us as reminders of their blessed lives?”<sup>34</sup>

It was in Emser’s interest to underplay the boundary between images of saints and images of more recent and tangible historical people. It could not have escaped the attention of Protestant and other scholars, however, that an entire class of retrospective monuments was dedicated not only to canonized saints, but also to obscure, semimythical local folk heroes and holy men and women.<sup>35</sup> The monuments were meant to pull such figures

33. Kosel, *Der Augsburger Domkreuzgang* (see chap. 3, n. 94), no. 91.

34. Emser, “That One Should Not Remove Images of the Saints from the Churches,” in Bryan D. Mangrum and Giuseppe Scavizzi, eds, *Reformation Debate: Karlstadt, Emser, and Eck an Sacred Images* (Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions; Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Victoria University, 1991), 51.

35. An early example: in the parish church in Heppenheim near Worms, an early medieval sarcophagus was inscribed with a text connecting it to St. Bilidrudā: “Hoc nobile sepulcrum





25. Tomb of "Ruopertus," c. 1470, stone relief. Zurich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum.

out of a merely mythic existence and into historicity. At Lauffen im Neckar, for example, there is a sarcophagus with an inscription dated 1227 identifying the occupant as St. Regiswinde, a local martyr: "Anno domini millesimo ducentesimo vicesimo septima fuit canonisata et translata virgo et martir sancta Regiswindis et fundata ecclesia."<sup>36</sup> But the Gothic script on the tomb has been dated on style not to the thirteenth but to the sixteenth century.<sup>37</sup> In Steinmaur in the Canton of Zurich, meanwhile, a sandstone slab commemorated a certain "Ruopertus," a bearded, pastoral character who loomed in local legend but was attested in no documents (fig. 25).<sup>38</sup> The tomb is dated 1183 but uses a minuscule script unknown in the twelfth century. The relief carving and circumferal inscription are likely to have been executed around the time of the rebuilding of the church in 1470. This monument, more than two meters in height, put flesh and

bones on the phantom of local oral culture. Another legendary Swiss figure, St. Idda, is memorialized by a stone sarcophagus dated 1496 in the monastic church at Fischingen. Idda's cult blossomed in the fifteenth century and her death date 1226 was simply invented in the eighteenth century.<sup>39</sup> The monument to the *Three Virgins*, Embede, Warbede, and Wilbede, in the cathedral of Worms, from the monastery St. Andreas, invokes an old

tenet ossa Bilidrudae virginis." The inscription is possibly datable to the eleventh century. Presumably it once had the effect of converting the sarcophagus into a document and thereby shoring up local claims about the authenticity of the relics. Rüdiger Fuchs, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms (Die deutschen Inschriften 29)* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1991), no. 12. See also the fourteenth-century tomb of Haymon, a semilegendary early medieval count, in the Carolingian capital Corbeil, south of Paris; Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du moyen-âge* (Paris: Colin, 1922), 397.

36. *Die Kunst- und Altertumsdenkmale in Kg. Württemberg, Neckarkreis* (1889), 81–82.

37. Hansmartin Schwarzmaier, "Die Regiswindis-Tradition von Lauffen," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 131 (1983): 190 and n. 128 (following Neumüllers-Klauser); Neumüllers-Klauser, "Zur Problematik epigraphischer Fälschungen," in *Ex Ipsis Rerum Documentis, Festschrift Harald Zimmermann*, ed. Klaus Herbers et al. (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1991), 173–93.

38. Adolf Reintle, "Figürliche Heiligengräber der deutschen Schweiz," in *Kunst als Bedeutungsträger*, Festschrift Günter Bandmann (Berlin: Mann, 1978), 186–88, ill. 1.

39. Reintle, "Figürliche Heiligengräber der deutschen Schweiz," 190–91, ill. 3.

vernacular tradition going back perhaps to a Celtic cult. The monument is inscribed in Gothic minuscules and dates probably from the 1420s.<sup>40</sup> It is possibly related to another fanciful monument, the lost tomb of the local fifth-century saints Vitalius and Placida at St. Andreas, known through an old drawing, with an inscription in Gothic majuscules and dating perhaps from the fourteenth century. Whereas the Catholic apologist Emser stressed the continuity between tombs of saints and tombs of real, historical founders, his Protestant antagonists might well have argued for the continuity between the canonical saints and the elusive local heroes.<sup>41</sup>

There was a long tradition, then, of retroactive tombs. Such tombs were active agents in the fixing of story, preparing the role of print. Print technology encouraged scribes to record testimony of miracles and healings immediately, on site, for rapid dissemination in pamphlet form.<sup>42</sup> The impulse of the later fifteenth century to record and publish, to fix myths as historical fact, was even greater and more widespread than in the twelfth century.

Some of these backward-looking superlabels were substitutions for earlier artifacts in hard materials that had become illegible or unpresentable. Inscriptions and inscribed tombs frequently rematerialized textual statements that were found elsewhere on less durable vehicles, such as mural painting, or less public vehicles, such as manuscripts. Sometimes the stone monument simply published a fact found in an old chronicle. Sometimes it recorded a putative inscription or set of inscribed verses of the sort that the chronicles were always offering as proofs of their historical claims.

An earlier medieval example of an inscription that replaced and at the same time misinterpreted an older artifact was the tomb monument to the fifth-century consul Elius Constantius, for centuries displayed in the church of St. Paulinus in Trier and rediscovered in the nineteenth century. The inscription is apparently a fabrication of the late eleventh century on the basis of a lost ivory diptych. At that time the text seems to have been associated with Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine and husband of Helena, supposedly a native daughter of Trier.<sup>43</sup> A later example

40. Fuchs, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms*, no. 22, ill. 54. Johann Friedrich Schannat in the eighteenth century described the tomb and its inscription ambiguously as *Gothico opere elaborata*; *Historio episcopatus Wormatiensis*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt, 1734), 161.

41. On statues of heroes and poets, see Keller, "Die Entstehung des Bildnisses am Ende des Hochmittelalters," 253–56.

42. On the new "recording impulse," see Philip Soergel, "Miracle, Magic, and Disenchantment in Early-Modern Germany," in *Envisioning Magic*, ed. Peter Schaefer and Hans G. Kippenberger (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 223–24.

43. Trier, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, inv. no. P. M. 24. *CIL* XIII, 3674. Binsfeld, "Epigraphica Trevirensia (see chap. 2, n. 13), 41; Rüdiger Fuchs, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Trier (Die deutschen Inschriften, 70)* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2006), no. 111.

of invented documents is the set of inscriptions at the monastery of St. Cyriacus in Worms-Neuhausen recording the ninth-century foundation; they no longer exist today but according to old descriptions seem to have been painted around 1479.<sup>44</sup>

Many such copied inscriptions were thoroughly spurious, that is, there were no “good” stone sources behind them. An example is the text of the tomb inscription of the legendary founder of Trier, Trebeta, which emerged in manuscripts around 1000.<sup>45</sup> Pseudepigraphic inscriptions of this sort were staples of the mainstream Italian antiquarian tradition. There are even instances in the antiquarian tradition of textually transmitted inscriptions that were then copied on stone to lend them an added legitimacy.<sup>46</sup>

Not only inscriptions, but also figurative monuments were substituted. Altarpieces and frescoes were frequently replaced—architectural sculpture, too, if long exposed to bad weather. If a tomb on the floor, trod on for three centuries, were fitted with a fresh slab, that slab was not in principle less legitimate nor in practice less effective as a label than the original. In one case the substitution of a high medieval tomb by a modern copy was actually recorded in a document. In 1528 the inscription on the tomb of Palatine Count Siegfried von Orlamünde (d. 1124) in the monastic church of Herrenbreitungen, presumably a twelfth- or thirteenth-century artifact, was “carved on a new stone and together with the image placed on a stone pedestal.”<sup>47</sup>

In some cases, the retrospective tomb replaced not a time-worn predecessor, but rather a serviceable and yet for some reason no longer sufficient existing tomb. An example is the tomb of Bishop Otto I at St. Michael in Bamberg. Otto died in 1139 and was named a saint in 1189. It is not known what sort of a tomb he had at first. A century after the canoniza-

44. Fuchs, *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms*, nos. 282–84. See Fuchs’s general discussion of retrospective inscriptions used for documentary purposes, CIV–CVII; and the synthetic treatment by Neumüllers-Klauser, “Zur Problematik epigraphischer Fälschungen.”

45. Binsfeld, “Epigraphica Trevirensia,” 41–42. Cf. the ninth-century inscription to Drusus and Minerva in Mainz, Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, inv. no. S515.

46. Maria Pia Billanovich, “Falsi epigrafici,” *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 10 (1967): 25–110; *CIL* XI, 6218–19.

47. “. . . gihauen auff eynen neuen steyn sampt dem Bylde an eyne steynere seull geligt.” Ernst Badstübner, *Die romanischen Bauten in Breitungen an der Werra* [= *Corpus der romanischen Kunst im sächsisch-thüringischen Gebiet*, Reihe A, 3] (Berlin: Akademie, 1972), 19–20, ill. 3. The only trace of the original tomb is a low wooden relief now at the Löwenburg in Kassel-Wilhelmshöhe. This strange object seems to have been fashioned in the early nineteenth century and preserves the iconographical features of the medieval monument, as filtered through the 1528 copy in stone, which is also lost.



26. Tomb of Bishop Otto, mid-fifteenth century, Bamberg, St. Michael. Photo: author.

tion, around 1290, a full-length tomb portrait in high relief with a strikingly alert physiognomy was carved.<sup>48</sup> Then in the middle of the fifteenth century this tomb was replaced by a high *tumba* with a new portrait in low relief on the top in an up-to-date style and scenic figural reliefs on the sides (fig. 26). The upper face of the tomb is visible through an aperture in the floor of the choir. The late thirteenth-century predecessor statue was not discarded but mounted on a column near the tomb, as if it were a cult image.<sup>49</sup>

The retrospective tomb was corroborated by documents and the documents were in turn corroborated by the tomb. Caught in such a closed circle of proof was the pair of tombs to bishops Günther and Ulrich, who

48. Suckale, "Die Grabfiguren des hl. Otto auf dem Michelsberg in Bamberg," 504–11, for the dating.

49. An early eighteenth-century print is the evidence for this display. Suckale, "Die Grabfiguren des hl. Otto auf dem Michelsberg in Bamberg," 502, 516–17, relates the fifteenth-century remounting of the statue to the revival of archaic cult practices; cf. the *Beautiful Madonna* known as "Maria Säul" in St. Peter, Salzburg, c. 1420; *Schöne Madonnen 1350–1450*, exhibition catalogue, Salzburg (Salzburg: Domkapitel, 1965), no. 29.

died in 1161 and 1163 respectively, at the abbey of Maulbronn. In the third quarter of the thirteenth century the abbey wanted to assert an episcopal foundation to mask the true (and actually prior) foundation by a nobleman. A document was forged to reflect the new fact, and a tomb to Ulrich fashioned which read *Ulricus positus spirensis episcopus hic est*. Günther was already memorialized by an apparently older inscribed tablet. Later a tomb for Günther was made on the model of Ulrich's. Finally, in the late fifteenth century, Günther's tablet was restored and its inscription renewed, and a comparable tablet was made for Ulrich.<sup>50</sup>

When texts inscribed on old stones were copied, or when monuments to long-dead individuals were erected, no effort was made, usually, to imitate an anachronistic script. The new inscription was designed in the customary script of the moment, the one working stonemasons were familiar with and had ready stencils for. Two examples already mentioned are the fifteenth-century tomb of Bishop Konrad of Hildesheim at Kloster Schönau, with an inscription that did perhaps respect some thirteenth-century source, but was written in Gothic minuscules and with the date 1248 in arabic numerals, which in fact are never found in any inscriptions at all before the fifteenth century;<sup>51</sup> and the *Three Virgins* monument at Worms, also with an inscription in Gothic minuscules.<sup>52</sup> Still, it was easier to simulate the form of lettering than the human figure. The capacity for stylistic anachronism developed first in the context of epigraphic back-dating.

50. Sauer, *Fundatio et Memoria*, 128–30, ill. 25; Neumüllers-Klauser, "Maulbronner Stifterfiguren." Another interesting episode is the "restoration" of a monument to eight early Christian martyrs at Verdun in northeastern France in 1463. The inscription in hexameters indicates that the restoration was following guidelines laid out in the *Vita* of Richard, abbot of St.-Vanne in the early eleventh century, which tells of Richard's discovery of the graves of the martyrs. The martyrs gave a sign that they did not want to be disturbed, so Richard had the tombs closed and erected a monument, or *analogium*. But the *Vita* itself only dated from around 1130, and there is no earlier or independent source for the legend of the discovery of the martyrs' graves. Thus it is possible that the legend was invented after Richard's death and that the fifteenth-century clerics who erected the modern *analogium* may not have even been working with a prior monument. Certainly there is no trace of an eleventh-century monument. Hubert Dauphin, *Le Bienheureux Richard: Abbé de Saint-Vanne de Verdun, † 1046* [= *Bibliothèque de la Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, fasc. 24] (Louvain and Paris, 1946), 113–14.

51. Albert Topitz, "Alte Ziffer-Jahreszahlen—richtig lesen, zeitrichtig restaurieren," *Oberösterreichische Heimatblätter* 36 (1982): 138–53.

52. A third example: Adam, a Parisian canon and poet, composed his own epitaph in distichs in the late twelfth century. The original stone—if one ever existed—is lost but the text was copied in the late fifteenth century onto a copper tablet, now in the Bibliothèque Mazarine, in Gothic letters. Ferdinand de Guilhermy, *Inscriptions de la France du Ve siècle au XVIIIe*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1873), 355–57, no. CCX.

Sometimes the retrospective monument did try to match the old letterforms. It was easier, after all, to simulate an obsolete alphabet than an obsolete figure style. The visible corpus of square or “Roman” majuscules, carved and painted, was much larger than it is today, so the stonemasons had abundant models. One might almost say that the capacity for stylistic anachronism developed first in the context of epigraphic backdating.<sup>53</sup> An astonishingly early example of sensitivity to epigraphic form is the clay tablets attesting to the discovery of the relics of St. Denis in Regensburg. In the early sixteenth century, the scholars Trithemius, Peutingering, and Aventinus all believed that the relics of Dionysius the Areopagite, the first-century bishop of Athens, had been acquired by Bishop Tuto of Regensburg in the early tenth century.<sup>54</sup> At this point and in fact for a long time afterward Dionysius was confused by everyone with St. Denis, the third-century bishop of Paris who had been martyred at Montmartre. So French clerics and scholars contested the claims of the Regensburgers. The German antiquarians derided the French for their chauvinistic denial of the plain facts.<sup>55</sup> The basis for their confidence was three tablets made of baked clay and engraved with Carolingian majuscules on scored lines.<sup>56</sup> The inscriptions on the tablets say that the bones of St. Denis were stolen from the abbey outside Paris by a certain Gisalpert in the late ninth century and

**53.** In central Italy there are several curious examples of fourteenth-century tomb inscriptions that seem to have been “renewed” with antique lettering in the second half of the fifteenth century. In each case there is no trace of any earlier inscription that the new text replaced. In the Camposanto in Pisa the inscription in Roman letters on the tomb of emperor Henry VII, who died in 1313, is actually dated 1494; Gert Kreytenberg, “Das Grabmal von Kaiser Heinrich VII,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 28 (1984): 33–64. The inscription on the Florentine tomb of Pietro da Imola, who died in 1330, is in excellent square majuscules, probably from the 1460s; Siegrid Düll, “Das Grabmal des Johanniters Pietro da Imola in S. Jacopo in Campo Corbolini in Florenz,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 34 (1990): 101–22. With all the attention paid to the epigraphic capital in Florence since the 1420s, resulting in a gradual purification of the Romanesque majuscule and convergence on the rationally constructed Trajanic canon, it is astonishing that these separate stonemasons, presumably following the instructions of patrons, could have chosen these very scripts when renewing Trecento inscriptions. It is as if the Roman majuscule had already lost all chronological associations and had come to stand generally for the old and good style, the style of a prior epoch beyond living memory.

**54.** Andreas Kraus, “Saint-Denis und Regensburg: Zu den Motiven und zur Wirkung hochmittelalterlicher Fälschungen,” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* 3: 535–49.

**55.** Peutingering, *Sermones convivales*; Aventinus, *Annales Ducum Boiariae* (c. 1520), *Sämmtliche Werke*, 2:630–33. As late as 1750, the local antiquarian Johann Baptist Kraus still defended the St. Denis relics.

**56.** Regensburg, Diözesanmuseum, inv. no. L 1982/18 a, b, c. *Ratisbona Sacra: Das Bistum Regensburg im Mittelalter*, exhibition catalogue, Diözesanmuseum Obermünster (Munich: Schnell & Steiner, 1989), no. 66.

brought some years later to Regensburg. As it happens, the tablets were fabricated only in the eleventh century, either by Bishop Tuto himself, the recipient of the relics, or some decades later, at midcentury, at the time of the “rediscovery” of the relics. The propagandizing monks, remarkably, made an effort to emulate an obsolete alphabet. The letters are all capitals, without any of the uncial forms that would normally be found on a mid-eleventh-century inscription.<sup>57</sup> They are meant to look Carolingian. The mid-eleventh-century report by the monk, that is, contemporary to the forgery, obligingly pointed out that the script looked antiquated (“furthermore the writing on all those stones was of such an age that it seemed to have been made without doubt many years earlier, as can be demonstrated”). Naturally there were skeptics among the *vicini litterati*: the early report conceded that “some say that the described stones are not thus as they are now said to be, discovered, but fabricated by us.”<sup>58</sup> Once out of living memory of the ruse, the Regensburg inscriptions began working.<sup>59</sup>

An example of sensitivity to majuscule letterforms on a retrospective tomb is the sandstone tomb of Bishop Aurelius now in the Lady’s Chapel at the monastery of Hirsau in Württemberg, executed not long after 1498 (fig. 27).<sup>60</sup> St. Aurelius’s original grave was opened by Abbot Blasius Schelltrub and the relics elevated in 1488. Ten years later the relics were ceremonially transferred to a new tomb behind the high altar of Sts. Peter and Paul (not the current church of this name). The report comes to us from Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim and the historian of Hirsau. Since the new tomb does not bear the date of execution but rather the date 830, it bids

57. There are serifs on every letter and variable stress on the curves. They do not resemble any other surviving eleventh-century Regensburg inscriptions. See the examples listed by Franz Fuchs, “Die Regensburger Dionysiussteine vom Jahre 1049,” in *Vom Quellenwert der Inschriften: Fachtagung Esslingen 1990*, ed. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser [= *Supplemente zu den Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse*, 1992, vol. 7] (Heidelberg: Winter, 1992), 150n24.

58. “Porro tantae vetustatis erat omnium eorundem lapidum scriptura, ut absque dubio ante annorum multorum curricula, ut adhuc probari potest, videatur facta”; “dicentes lapides descriptos non ita, ut iam dictum est, inventos, sed a nobis ficte effectos.” *Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores*, vol. 30, pt. 2 (Leipzig: n.p., 1934) (reprint: Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1976), p. 832.

59. Equally remarkable is the full relief, one-meter tall statue of St. Denis mounted in a niche above the north portal of the cathedral of Regensburg just after the discovery of the relics. This is the oldest stone sculpture of St. Denis anywhere, and the very oldest surviving stone sculpture of any subject in southern Germany. Stone sculpture was a powerful medium of publication. *Ratisbona Sacra*, no. 67; and Hermann Beenken, *Romanische Skulptur in Deutschland [11. und 12. Jahrhundert]* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1924), 26–29, no. 14.

60. Neumüllers-Klauser, *Die Inschriften des Landkreises Calw* [= *Die deutschen Inschriften* 30] (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1992), no. 160, ill. 42.

to become a monument that was never made—neither in the ninth century when the relics were brought from Italy, nor in the late eleventh century when they were allegedly transferred to Sts. Peter and Paul. The inscription around the edge of the post-1498 tomb slab records not Aurelius's death but the original transfer from Milan: "Anno benignitatis octingentesimo tricesimo / almi p(rae)svl(i)s Aurelii / venera(n)do corpore de ytaliam t(ra)nsolato est eide(m) hirsavgia sv/scipie(n)do fvndata." The letters are spindly but admirable Roman capitals, designed in defiance of the prevailing Gothic minuscule. Both letterforms and language seem to have been modeled on twelfth-century inscriptions. Like other monasteries committed to the project of institutional reform in the late fifteenth century, Hirsau was intensely focused on its own past.<sup>61</sup> Trithemius, who had plenty of contact with the abbot Schelltrub, was a student of writing and indeed may have designed the letters on the Aurelius slab. There is also a scrap of evidence that suggests the existence of some sort of high medieval memorial tablet: a tombstone transferred *allein von Alters wegen* from the church of St. Aurelius to Sts. Peter and Paul in 1584. This rescued stone cannot have been the figural tomb slab fabricated after 1498, since the latter would never have been remounted behind the high altar of a Protestant church. The text of this putative predecessor tablet may have simply been adopted for the figural slab.

Eventually the archaizing impulse pushed beyond lettering to figural form, no simple ambition. The tomb of Gerhard III of Gelder and his wife Margaret of Brabant in the Liebfrauenkirche in Roermond (Maas) was long considered an original from the early thirteenth century.<sup>62</sup> Eventually the clothing and the jewelry gave away the true, much later date of execution. The tomb cannot have been carved earlier than the sixteenth century, perhaps on the basis of an earlier tomb. The figures have consoles below their feet as if they were copied from standing figures. Obsolete forms are attentively imitated. The sarcophagus, for example, has Romanesque columns and blind arcades.



27. Tomb of Bishop Aurelius, c. 1498. Sandstone. Hirsau, Monastery. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, *Die Inschriften des Landkreises Calw* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1992), ill. 42.

61. An overview of the role of formal retrospective in the context of monastic reform is Graf, "Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst," 390–93.

62. Adalbert Schippers, "Das Stiftergrab der Liebfrauenkirche in Roermond," *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 59 (1925–26): 288–93.



### The translation of St. Simpertus

The stylistically backdated monument is an invisible category of late medieval and early modern art industry. It is hard to recognize the formal anachronisms contrived by an earlier culture because the temporal associations of form go easily astray. Moreover, modern vision is supported by readily accessible comparative material, illustrations in various media. The modern eye holds claims of resemblance to high standards. And yet behind many ordinary-looking monuments hides the intention to backdate.

An especially elaborate, deceptive example is the tomb of St. Simpertus made for Sts. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg, now in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich (figs. 28 and 29).<sup>63</sup> The tomb slab, although never securely attributed, is a major work of late medieval stone sculpture. The portrayed individual had been dead for nearly seven hundred years. Simpertus was bishop of Augsburg between 801 and his death in 807.<sup>64</sup> His bones were excavated at the Benedictine church of Sts. Ulrich and Afra in 1491 and reinterred the following year in a new container, with much ceremony. The tomb slab must have been carved shortly afterward, although there is no documentation.<sup>65</sup> It is not completely clear that the bones found in 1491 really belonged to St. Simpertus. The monks found a Roman sarcophagus with bones inside and a mostly effaced inscription. But they knew what they were digging for and this made the identification easier.

Simpertus was a major source of publicity and revenue for Sts. Ulrich and Afra long before the excavation of 1491. His cult was launched by Bishop Ulrich in the tenth century. Among the many miracles attributed to Simpertus was the story of his success in convincing a wolf to return a child to its mother. Simpertus's body was originally buried in the choir of the St. Afra church. When the church was rebuilt in 1064 under Bishop Embriko the body was dug up and moved. It had to be translated again for the new construction of 1187. Although already in the Middle Ages he was known locally as "Saint" Simpertus, not until 1468, after Cardinal Peter von Schaumberg had made a special appeal in Rome, was Simpertus

63. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MA 944, 195 × 80 cm. Theodor Müller, *Die Bildwerke in Holz, Ton und Stein: von der Mitte des XV. bis gegen Mitte des XVI. Jahrhunderts, Kataloge des Bayerischen Nationalmuseums*, vol. 13, pt. 2 (Augsburg: Filser, 1959), no. 94.

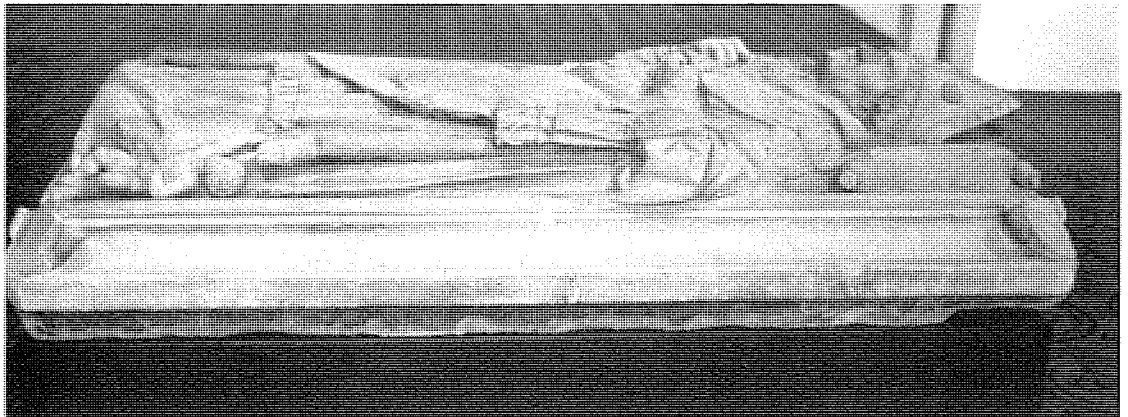
64. Andreas Bigelmair, "Der hl. Sintpert," *Lebensbilder aus dem Bayerischen Schwaben*, vol. 3 (Munich: Hueber, 1954), 1–36.

65. The monk Wilhelm Wittwer, the main contemporary source, never mentions any sculpture commissioned for the Simpertus tomb, and his account extends as far as 1497; *Catalogus abbatum monasterii SS. Udalrici et Aefrae Augustensis*, in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Bistums Augsburg*, ed. Anton Steichele (Augsburg, 1860), 3: 234. In 1762 the whole tomb was replaced by a Baroque ensemble by Placidus Verhelst. In 1882 the late fifteenth-century slab was transferred to the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich.



28. Tomb of St. Sim-  
pertus, 1490s. Munich,  
Bayerisches National-  
museum.

29. Tomb of St.  
Simpertus, 1490s.  
Munich, Bayerisches  
Nationalmuseum.  
Photo: author.



actually canonized. In 1479 the abbot of Sts. Ulrich and Afra established a mass, and in the same year the monastery began planning a Simpertus chapel.<sup>66</sup>

The next abbot, Johannes von Giltlingen, together with Konrad Mörlin, later prior and abbot, were fervent promoters of the Simpertus cult and knew all about the translation of 1064 under Bishop Embriko, but they were not sure what had become of Simpertus's remains. It would make things easier to have a body. According to the *Vita* of Simpertus published in 1516, written possibly by Veit Bild, a cleric at Sts. Ulrich and Afra, the abbot and the Bishop Friedrich von Zollern decided in 1491 to dig for the relics.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps they were seizing an opportunity provided by the rebuilding of the choir.

On an evening in the fall of 1491, at eleven o'clock, the shovels of the clerics hit the lid of a sarcophagus.<sup>68</sup> There was much joy as the archeologists peered into the box through a crack and saw the bones. But they closed the lid tightly and waited until St. Andrew's Day, November 30, to ceremonially exhume the sarcophagus.<sup>69</sup> The bones were placed in a wooden box. Thus began a new round of Simpertus publicity and fund-raising. The new chapel in the south aisle would now be a true gravesite; an altarpiece was commissioned for it.<sup>70</sup>

What did the nocturnal gravediggers in fact find? Their shovels had scraped a Roman sarcophagus dating probably from the first third of the third century (fig. 30).<sup>71</sup> The sarcophagi of the pagans had originally stood outdoors, along roads beyond the city walls. In the fourth century, during the tumult of the Alemannic invasions, many of these tombs seem to have been illegally seized and carted back to town, to the cemetery on the present site of Sts. Ulrich and Afra, and reused as Christian coffins, buried below ground. At this point the Roman inscriptions were effaced, not only on account of the pagan content, but also because erasure of names headed off legal problems associated with the violation of Roman tombs.<sup>72</sup>

66. Wittwer, *Catalogus*, 3: 234.

67. *Gloriosorum christi confessorum Uldalrici et Symperti historiae* (Augsburg: S. Otmar for Sts. Ulrich and Afra, 1516), fol. i2r. See also the accounts of the events in Placidus Braun, *Geschichte der Bischöfe von Augsburg* (Augsburg, 1814), 3: 114–21.

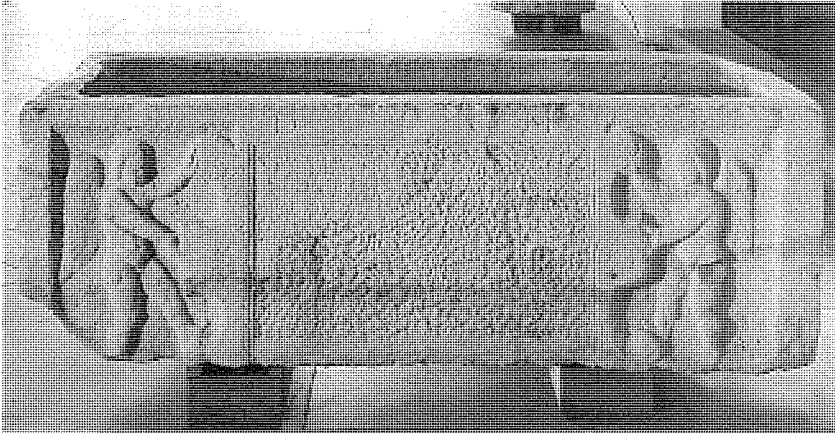
68. The *Vita* gives the year 1493 but this is a misprint. In the copy at the New York Public Library (Spencer Ger. 1516) the date is corrected to 1491 in an old hand.

69. See the official reports by Johannes Giltlingen and Friedrich von Zollern, *Monumenta Boica* 23 (Munich, 1815), 620–27.

70. *Gloriosorum christi confessorum Uldalrici et Symperti historiae*, fol. i3v.

71. Augsburg, Römisches Museum, Lap. 38, height 70 cm, length 210 cm. Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivariae romanae*, no. 170. *Corpus signorum imperii Ramani, Deutschland* 1, 1, *Raetia und Noricum* (Bonn: Habelt, 1973), no. 85.

72. Hans Ulrich Nuber, "Römische Steindenkmäler aus St. Ulrich und Afra," in *Die Ausgrabungen in St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg 1961–1968*, ed. Joachim Werner (Munich: Beck, 1977);



30. Sarcophagus, third century. Found at Sts. Ulrich and Afra, Augsburg, 1491. Augsburg, Römisches Museum.

These luxury coffins were rediscovered during the building campaigns of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and drafted into service, for example, as receptacles for the bones of St. Afra and St. Simpertus. Thus it is possible that the diggers of 1491 really did come across the bones of Simpertus. Since they found the box under the choir of the church, it is likely that they were dealing with a reburial of the eleventh or twelfth century and not one of the fourth-century Christian burials. Roman sarcophagi were not so plentiful; in the twelfth century only the bones of a distinguished, indeed revered individual would have been lowered into one of them.<sup>73</sup> But there was room for skepticism about the identity of the new relics. The author of the *Vita* of 1516 acknowledged the doubts by denying them on the very first page: “Licet eum de eius sarcophagi certitudine dubium fuerit nemini.”<sup>74</sup> The proof that the bones were in fact Simpertus’s, the author argues, was the miracles they immediately performed.

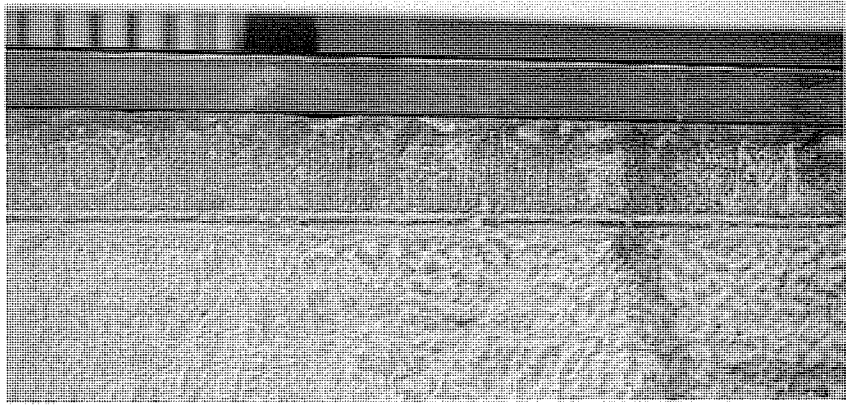
This sort of proof was required because a properly informative label was lacking. The Afra sarcophagus was equipped with a bronze tablet with her name, an *authenticum*, probably prepared at the time of the eleventh-century translation of her relics. The Simpertus sarcophagus contained no such tablet, and the label on the exterior was minimally informative: the letters D M, abbreviation for the funerary formula *Dis manibus sacrum*, carved above an effaced, only partially legible, inscription (fig. 31).<sup>75</sup> According to a later sixteenth-century account, the *Annales* of Achilles

Lothar Bakker, “Sarkophage im Gräberfeld von St. Ulrich und Afra,” in *Die Römer in Schwaben*, exhibition catalogue (Munich: Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 1985), 206–7, 227–38.

73. Only eight ancient sarcophagi survive in Augsburg, including the two belonging to Afra and Simpertus, and five discovered in the excavations of 1961–62. These eight plus another twelve in Regensburg make a total of twenty sarcophagi for the entire province of Raetia.

74. *Gloriosorum christi confessorum Uldarici et Symperti historiae*, fol. i1r.

75. *CIL* III, 5858.



31. Sarcophagus, third century, detail of inscription. Augsburg, Römisches Museum. Photo: author.

Gasser, antiquarian and city physician, the people at Sts. Ulrich and Afra interpreted the letters as an abbreviation for *Divi monumentum*, “monument of the god or saint.”<sup>76</sup>

At this moment a new personality entered the scene, a patrician youth, local, but rich in experience of learned Italy. Conrad Peutinger (1465–1547) had studied six years in Padua and Bologna. In the summer of 1491 the city of Augsburg sent him back across the Alps, as emissary to the Curia in Rome. Upon his return Peutinger intervened in the Simpertus business, offering a different interpretation of the letters. According to Gasser, Peutinger explained to the clerics that *DM* stood for *Dis manibus*. In other words, not only was St. Simpertus’s tomb a heathen artifact, but its inscription had been invoking the pagan gods all along. Peutinger, who believed in stones, was introducing the empirical principle.<sup>77</sup> When the clerics learned this, according to Gasser, they dropped any plans to rebury Simpertus in the same sarcophagus. They abandoned the useful object and it disappeared until the nineteenth century, when it was recognized embedded in the wall of the Lech Bridge. Today it supports a display of postcards in the Römisches Museum in Augsburg.

Can Gasser’s story be credited? It is hard to believe that the clerics at a large, urban Benedictine foundation like Sts. Ulrich and Afra could have misrecognized the initials *DM*, so common on Roman funerary monuments. But in fact there were not so many inscriptions in plain view, even in postcolonial Augsburg. Until Peutinger himself started to extract them from garden walls and the like in the decade after the St. Simpertus events,

**76.** A. P. Gassarus, *Annales rei publicae Augstburgensis*, in Johann Burckhard Mencken, *Scriptores rerum germanicarum* (Leipzig, 1728), vol. 1, col. 1703. Gasser’s account should be taken *cum grano salis*: the Augsburg clerics very likely knew how to expand the initials *DM* correctly.

**77.** On Peutinger’s preference for ocular over poetical evidence, see West, *Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473–1531) and the Visualization of Knowledge* (see chap. 2, n. 32), chap. 2.

many Roman stones were impossible to read or were turned face inward. Without guidance from Italy, many clerics were incapable of expanding the abbreviations. Inability to decipher classical abbreviations was a major barrier for medieval antiquarians, even in Italy.<sup>78</sup> The breakthrough was the publication in 1486 of a list of epigraphic abbreviations based on a juridical handbook by Marcus Valerius Probus, a first-century philologist.<sup>79</sup>

The *Dis manibus* revelation gave the clerics a pretext to commission a new tomb for St. Simpertus. The documents speak of a bronze container ready in time for the festive *Translatio* of April 23, 1492. This event was one of the great public spectacles of Renaissance Augsburg, drawing King Maximilian himself and a throng of dignitaries.<sup>80</sup> In the procession Bishop Friedrich von Zollern himself carried the head in a new silver reliquary. The rest of the bones were deposited in the new sarcophagus near the altar in the Simpertus chapel. There were miracles: a small boy fell from a window while watching the procession but was soon healed. The documents unfortunately do not mention a sculpted lid for the new sarcophagus, though Bild says that not a little care was taken.<sup>81</sup> It is unlikely that the present slab was ready for the 1492 *Translatio* and could well also have been carved some years later.<sup>82</sup>

The tomb slab of St. Simpertus can only be understood as the last stage of an archeological dig, the sculpture with its inscribed nimbus functioning as the *authenticum* identifying the bones inside the sarcophagus. The portrait of Simpertus was a nonlinguistic label for the body inside the box. Tomb sculpture is a nonconventional, iconic system that guarantees legibility of at least a minimal message, namely, that there is a body of a holy man below. A more precise message, such as the name of the individual, would require conventional signs such as attributes or even words. Such a superlabel, combining analogic and conventional representational modes, was conceived from the start as a response to an archeological question. It anticipated a future scene when the bones would be permanently alienated from a lived life, a moment when the real connection had literally

78. Ida Calabi Limentani, "Sul non sapere leggere le epigrafi classiche nei secoli XII e XIII; sulla scoperta graduale delle abbreviazioni epigrafiche," *Acme* 23 (1970): 253–82.

79. Valerius Probus, *De interpretandis Romanorum literis* (Brescia: Michael Ferrarinus, 1486), and many subsequent editions.

80. For Maximilian's role see Luitpold Brunner, *Kaiser Maximilian I und die Reichsstadt Augsburg* (Augsburg, 1877), 17–19.

81. *Gloriosorum christi confessorum Uldalrici et Symperti historiae*, fol. i3r: *de egregia tumbae structura fuit cura non minima*.

82. The tomb was damaged in the iconoclasm of the 1530s. When a new stone sarcophagus was commissioned in 1579, parts of the sculpture on the old lid, which was retained, were restored: the nose, the fingers of the right hand, the tip of the mitre, the inscription, and a few other spots.

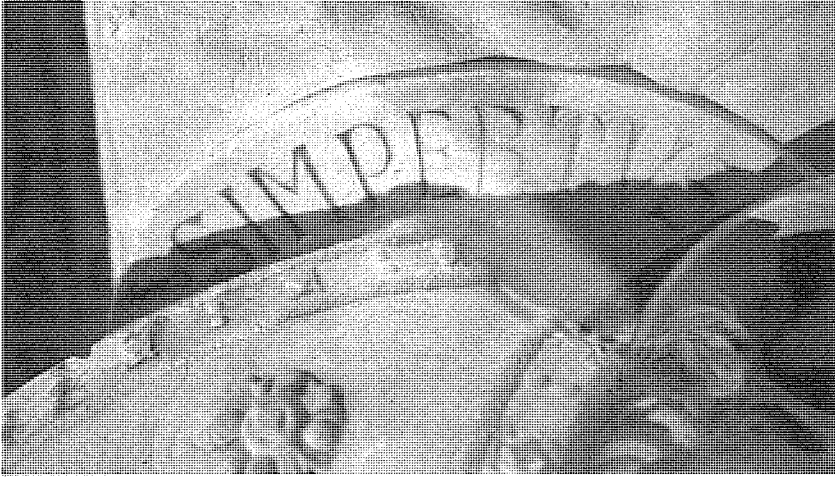
been forgotten. The labels answer the archeological question by providing a writerly link, a referential pointer designed to work beyond the scene of its first appearance, repeating information already known to its initial recipients but anticipating ignorant future readers.

The label-maker wins the confidence of those future readers by fashioning the mark in such a way as to suggest a causal, indexical link to an authentic scene of knowledge, that moment when the truth was still known firsthand. One way to do this is by a date. Christian tombs, unlike Roman funerary monuments, had inscribed dates. Although retroactive or forged tombs were often backdated, in this case a literal backdating was not attempted. The tomb slab gave only the name *Sanctus Simpertus*, inscribed on the nimbus, and representations of the attributes: the bishop's mitre, the robe, the wolf with the child.<sup>83</sup>

The lettering on the Simpertus nimbus is crucial to the hypothesis that the tomb is attempting to backdate itself by style (fig. 32).<sup>84</sup> The letters are so distinctive that they can be dated to the decade. They are Roman capitals, which in this period, even in Rome-oriented Augsburg, puts them in a minority of about 25 percent against the dominant Gothic minuscule. The letters belong to the family of late fifteenth-century alphabets that immediately precede the revival by humanist scholars of the classic epigraphic alphabet of the early second century C.E., with its swellings and serifs imitating calligraphy. There are only sixteen extant inscriptions in Augsburg that use this transitional alphabet, dated mostly between 1486 and 1500. The alphabet is characterized by tall and thin forms and the complete elimination of any uncial or other nonclassical elements. The letters on the Simpertus nimbus have wedge-shaped serifs like ancient Roman inscriptions. The P with open bowl suggests special attentiveness to Roman convention. The alphabet closely resembles the alphabets of the Florentine sculptors of the 1420s and 1430s. But like those pioneering square capitals of the Italian Renaissance, the Augsburg letters were grounded in close inspection not only of actual Roman inscriptions, but also of Carolingian, Ottonian, and Romanesque alphabets, handwritten and epigraphic. The lettering on the Simpertus tomb diverges from ancient Roman custom in, for instance, the drop in M that fails to reach the base line and the convex cauda of R. From the vantage point of the year 1500, anything earlier than the immediate Gothic past, beyond the reaches of living memory, was

**83.** The coats of arms on the slab belong to a sixteenth-century abbot who had the sculpture restored.

**84.** The inscription was reportedly retouched in the late sixteenth-century restoration, so it is unwise to draw too many detailed inferences from the form. This restoration, however, probably involved no more than the recutting of some of the grooves, perhaps deepening them. There is no reason to believe that the basic form of the letters was altered.



32. Tomb of St. Simpertus, 1490s, detail of nimbus. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Photo: author.

antiquity. It was practically impossible to draw sharp stylistic distinctions within that dark mass of time. Although today few pre-Gothic inscriptions survive in Augsburg, there must have been hundreds visible in 1500. For the general format of the letters and the wedge-shaped serifs on the tomb of Simpertus, inscriptions such as those on the tombs of the ninth-century bishops Uodalman and Witgar could have served as models for the stonemasons.<sup>85</sup> The context for the letters on the Simpertus nimbus was the active, creative cult of local antiquity in Augsburg and especially at Sts. Ulrich and Afra: a sense of a golden age that had begun in the times of the early empire and extended through the life of the martyr Afra (d. 304) to the Battle of the Lechfeld in 955, when Otto I decisively repulsed the Magyars, and on through the eleventh and twelfth centuries. More recent times surely seemed pale reflections of this grand, obscure era. “Romanity” was a concept and a style that Augsburgers felt entitled to perpetuate and to share with Italians.

### Likeness without reference

The clerical propagandists of the late Middle Ages so intensely wished to secure reference to their desired targets that they were ready to fabricate spurious likenesses. This is a practice described already by Pliny in his *Natural History* (35.2.9): “We must not pass over a novelty that has also been invented, in that likenesses made, if not of gold or silver, yet at all events of bronze, are set up in the libraries in honor of those whose immortal spirits speak to us in the same places, nay more, even imaginary likenesses are

<sup>85</sup>. These sarcophagi were excavated in the 1960s but may have been visible in the Renaissance.



modeled [*quae non sunt finguntur*], and our affection gives birth to countenances that have not been handed down to us, as occurs in the case of Homer.”<sup>86</sup>

The carved portrait of Simpertus, in the first instance, was designed to resemble in costume and attributes an ancient bishop like those seen on old images in Augsburg, for instance, St. Ulrich on the incised portrait on his twelfth-century tomb, which may have been visible in the Renaissance (Ulrich holds a book and a staff like Celtis’s druids).<sup>87</sup> Although the tomb effigy in high relief mounted on the lid of a sarcophagus was not actually an ancient pagan custom, it seemed old and prestigious in contrast to the low-relief supine figures on more modern floor slabs. The tomb of Virgil was imagined thus in the woodcut from Sebastian Brant’s edition published in Strasbourg in 1502 (fig. 65 below). The carved effigy of Simpertus, however, offers far more than this most abstract and schematic of anchorages. The way to fabricate likeness was to introduce information beyond any warrant. The work is distinguished by a density of portrait-like detail and an overall avoidance of pattern, order, and symmetry. Simpertus’s head is cocked to the side and his brow furrowed in a far-sighted and somewhat mournful expression (fig. 33). The skin of the face, a plausible face, is deeply wrinkled. The central folds of the drapery fall in a broken, random pattern without relying on elegant linear formulas like the loop, the hairpin, or the Y. The hands are at different levels and the body is bent in a slight but not uncomfortable S-curve. Simpertus grips his crosier casually between arm and body and holds his place in the book in his left hand with his finger. There is a strong impression of a real, living man.

The possibility of generating a productive confusion through introduction of inauthentic information is a possibility peculiar to iconic labels. The special condition of a pictorial forgery, as opposed to a textual forgery, is analogicity. An image of a vanished body or face has to offer some information about parts of the body or face for which no real information is available. It cannot simply omit to describe those parts. A verbal or literary description can offer a sparse, partial portrait of a person without necessarily producing a bland, generic effect. The syntactic density can be adjusted to match the low semantic density. A verbal portrait of Simpertus, for example, might simply describe him as robust but dignified without having to describe the cast of his brow or the shape of his nose. The iconic, analogic portrait, by contrast, will be forced to make some decisions about the hair

86. Pliny, *Natural History*, vol. 9, ed. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), 266–67. Polydore Vergil discusses this “invention” as well, *On Discovery* [see chap. 3, n. 13] 2.7.6, pp. 242–45.

87. The incised metal plate is now on the inside of the current tomb: Peter Dörfler, *St. Ulrich* (Augsburg: Winfried-Werk, 1955), 205.

and nose. The syntactic density is fixed and the semantic density, the density of information, will always lag behind.

A forged charter that simulates an obsolete historical script is nothing other than a verbal text that is asking to be treated like an icon, an analogic text. The creator of such a document is offering likeness without reference.

The portrait of a man dead for nearly seven hundred years was overcharged with realistic detail, none of it grounded in knowledge about Simpertus. A label needs to offer only enough information to insure the unequivocal reference. Reference is not a relative quantity, for reference is either established, or it is not. The depicted figure is either St. Simpertus, or it is not; there are no in-between states. Iconography was a minimal, stable repertoire of attributes sufficient to maintain identity. The information offered about the man, the predication of the proposition “This is Simpertus,” is excessive. Detailed information about the physical appearance of long-dead figures was ordinarily unavailable. When the authenticity of the label was felt to be at stake, and when the pictorial label was asked to serve as material evidence and even stand up to skeptical scrutiny, then the sculptor brought the mode of likeness into play rather than produce generalized, idealized, or homogenized features. This was the case already with the Naumburg founder figures. There, too, the sculptors added specificity in the form of plausible physiognomic structure, folds of skin, hints of emotions and a temporal existence. Thirteenth-century sculpture, not only in Germany but also in Italy, had been closely attentive to the Roman portrait bust with its repertoire of representational conventions generating effects of real physiognomy.<sup>88</sup> The rhetoric of realism learned from the portrait bust, however, did not so much provoke a rebirth of ancient Roman art as provide the tools for just the opposite, an unhinging of art from time. Neither the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century tomb portrait nor the drawn or painted portrait of the fifteenth century was meant to look archaic. Such likenesses were not supposed to summon up the memory of Roman portraits. Rather, they were meant to join a familiar company of memorable, pungently distinctive faces, of bishops, abbots, patricians, merchants, artists—stylistically timeless, precisely because their faces looked so real.<sup>89</sup> The whole roster of Augsburg’s notables sat for the sharp

88. Keller, “Die Entstehung des Bildnisses,” associated the retrospective tombs of the thirteenth century with the imitation of ancient art.

89. Burckhardt made this observation about the high medieval tomb portraits; “Die Anfänge der neueren Porträtmalerei,” 320. Even if the Naumburg figures were modeled (loosely) on late Roman statuary—the claim of Giuliana Calcani—there is no logical clash with the rhetoric of physiognomic specificity or “likeness.” *L’Antichità marginale: Continuità dell’ arte provinciale romana nel Rinascimento* (Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 1993), 130.

pen of Hans Holbein the Elder in the 1490s and 1500s, the very years of the Simpertus discovery and tomb.<sup>90</sup> In the drive to unhinge the physiognomy from time, from local representational conventions, the late medieval portraits exceeded the Roman models. Roman busts, like Greek portraits before them, had introduced signs of time and movement only to help mold an impression of character. The ancient portrait had been governed by strict typologies of character.<sup>91</sup> In the late medieval portrait, those same signs are turned to another end, the blind simulation of an indexical link to a real body. The desire for effective retrospective iconic labels was one of the factors of the revolutionary realism of German sculpture of the thirteenth century. Something comparable was happening in the Simpertus portrait. The implication of the realism and the unfastening of the work from the literal moment of its production was that the notation of physiognomic information was reliable and had somehow been transmitted by a chain of portraits extending back to antiquity. It was the very function of realism within the system of retroactive tomb sculpture to ensure the artifact's detachment from chronological coordination with the present.

The portrait is an *occasional* image in the sense that its origins in a specific model, a historical individual, remain an aspect of its intended meaning.<sup>92</sup> Other kinds of images also depend on models, but those origins are meant to disappear when the image enters into its public identity, for example, work of art, state propaganda, or commercial advertisement. In the European Middle Ages (not a fertile period for portraiture), format, conditions of display, and label were sufficient to secure the portrait's occasionality and so distinguish it from other images. In the fifteenth century, as portraits became more abundant, it was no longer enough for a portrait just to mark itself off as categorically different from other kinds of images; now the portrait had to be more portrait-like, more occasional. The rhetoric of likeness was enhanced in order to reinforce such simple external markers of occasionality as customized framing devices or inscriptions.

90. Lieb and Stange, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, 33–37, nos. 178–294; *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik*, nos. 78–79, 82–83, 88–89.

91. For a subtle breakdown of the representational system of the Roman portrait bust, stressing the interplay between typologies of character and the rhetoric of realism derived from wax funerary effigies, see Sheldon Nodelman, "How to Read a Roman Portrait," *Art in America* 63 (1975): 27–33. For comparably nuanced analyses of the Greek portrait, see Tonio Hölscher, *Ideal und Wirklichkeit in den Bildnissen Alexanders des Grossen* [= *Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse*, 1971, 2] (Heidelberg: Winter, 1971), on "realism" as a kind of ideality; and Paul Zanker, *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California, 1995).

92. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1975), 137–39; *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 127–29. See the commentary on this passage by Nicola Suthor and the introductory essay by Rudolf Preimesberger to Preimesberger, Suthor, and Hannah Baader, eds., *Porträt* (Berlin: Reimer, 1999), 13–69, 434–39.

The advent of a sculptural rhetoric of physiognomic likeness in the late Middle Ages marks no break with the traditional project of *memoria*. The memorial function was in fact the condition for the emergence of likeness.<sup>93</sup> The semblance of resemblance intensified the bond between living and dead subjects.

Likeness is an effect generated not by literal analogic correspondence to a real model, but by an excess of information with respect to the apparent function of the image. Whereas the modern eye taking in the Simpertus tomb extracts from the mass of data an integrated, overall configuration—a “look,” a period style, with luck an individual style—the eye of the period saw a cluster of referential indicators embedded within a dense description of face and fabric. The realism of fold and physiognomy was a nonstyle, neither conforming to a canon of beauty nor invoking a particular historical moment. The Simpertus tomb slab, at once of its time and not, has indeed found no comfortable niche within local stylistic tradition. The attribution that has most often been repeated is to the Ulm master Michael Erhart, but cases for several other masters can easily be made.<sup>94</sup>

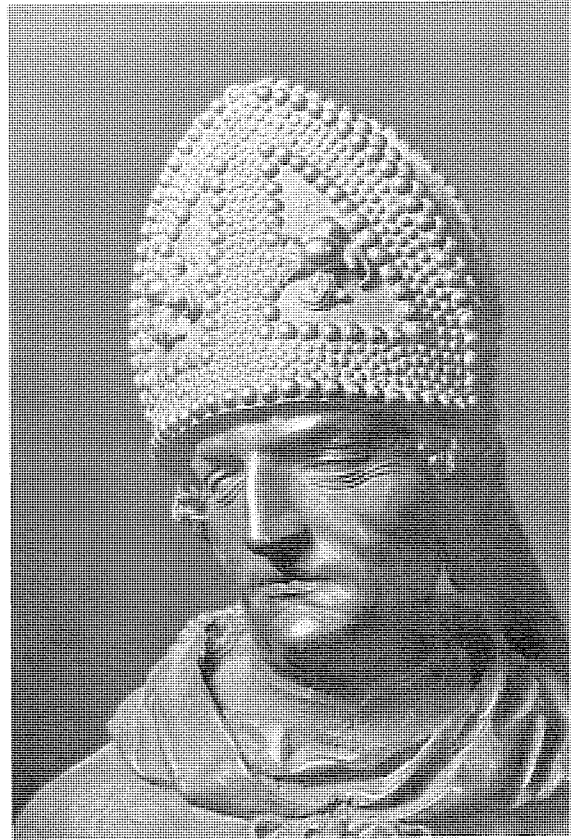
The new tomb in Augsburg, with its unexpectedly informative physiognomy, had immediate evidentiary force. In the first years of the sixteenth century Emperor Maximilian was planning his own elaborate tomb involving, among many other figures cast in bronze, one hundred half-life-size statues of the so-called Hapsburg saints, a tribe of holy personages with contrived ties to the imperial family. One of the twenty-three statues actually executed, and now mounted on the balcony of the Palace Chapel at Innsbruck, was St. Simpertus, who according to an old tradition reported by Prior Adilbert in his biography of 1230 had been the son of the sister of Charlemagne, and therefore arguably part of Maximilian’s family. Adilbert’s biography was translated into German in the fifteenth century and became the basis for the luxury manuscript *Vita sancti Simperti* possibly

93. Oexele, “Memoria und Memorialbild,” 437–38.

94. The attribution to Michael Erhart, which has no documentary basis, dates from Gertrud Otto, “Michael Erhart,” *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlung* 64 (1943): 31f.; and was accepted by Müller, *Die Bildwerke in Holz, Ton und Stein*, no. 94. Anja Broschek rejected the Simpertus attribution but offered nothing in exchange; *Michael Erhart: Ein Beitrag zur schwäbischen Plastik der Spätgotik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973), no. 83 (as “circle” of Erhart). The tomb does not much resemble Augsburg funerary sculpture of the 1480s or 1490s, for example, by Hans Beierlein, who carved the red marble tomb of Bishop Johann von Werdenberg in 1486. The possible relation to the epitaph of Konrad Mörlin (fig. 89 below), which was commissioned in 1497, suggests the involvement of the leading local sculptor, Adolf Daucher. Perhaps the proposal by Justus Bier in 1930 of the young Hans Backoffen as the author of the Simpertus tomb should be taken seriously again. Nothing resembles the Augsburg work so much as the Mainz tombs by Backoffen from the early years of the sixteenth century, often associated with Tilman Riemenschneider. Nothing is known about Backoffen’s early years, before 1500. The monk Wittwer, the main contemporary source, never mentions any sculpture commissioned for the Simpertus tomb, and his account extends as far as 1497.



33. Tomb of St. Simpertus, 1490s, detail of face. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Photo: author.



34. St. Simpertus, from tomb of Emperor Maximilian, c. 1515, bronze. Innsbruck, Hofkapelle. From Vinzenz Oberhammer, *Die Bronzestandbilder des Maximiliangrabmales in der Hofkirche zu Innsbruck* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1935), ill. 197.

painted by Hans Holbein the Elder for King Maximilian.<sup>95</sup> For the physiognomy of the bronze St. Simpertus for the tomb, Maximilian simply had his artists copy the sculpted effigy on the stone tomb at Sts. Ulrich and Afra, as if that portrait, which had been carved only a few years earlier, had some historical legitimacy and claim to serve as a model (fig. 34). Maximilian wanted ancestor portraits grounded in historical models. As a basis for a statue of his namesake St. Maximilian, the emperor commissioned a copy of a painting in the chapel of the castle of Thaur near Innsbruck, instructing the artist to attend in particular to the helmet with the visor. The source painting has not survived, but there is reason to believe that it was painted in 1499.<sup>96</sup> The historical model for the modern statue of St. Maximilian, in other words, was only about fifteen years old.

<sup>95</sup>. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 30044 [formerly Seilern collection]. Otto Pächt, *Vita sancti Simperti: Eine Handschrift für Maximilian I* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1964); Krause, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, 76–79.

<sup>96</sup>. The commission for the copy was published in the *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 1 (1883): LXV, Reg. 390, January 30, 1516. Vinzenz Oberhammer, *Die Bronzestandbilder des Maximiliangrabmales in der Hofkirche zu Innsbruck* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1935), 104n73. Erich Egg, *Die Hofkirche in Innsbruck* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1974), 51, believes that the model was the painting done by Hans Grasser at the castle in 1499.

### Some misidentified portraits

The thesis that realism or excess of predication gave the tomb of Simpertus spurious substitutional authority has to be tested on other works in apparently modern style but with retrospective reference. One record of an early response to a retrospective tomb is a comment on the tomb of Otto I in Bamberg by a late fifteenth-century cataloguing abbot. The text suggests, almost incredibly, that the cataloguer had understood the tomb to be the original tomb of the bishop saint (d. 1139). The tomb, as we have seen, was carved around 1440 in the style of the day (fig. 26). In his episcopal catalogue of 1487–94, Abbot Andreas Lang reported that Otto “had been buried in the monastery on the mountain [i.e., the Michelsberg] before the altar of the archangel St. Michael, and we see how very sumptuously,” as if the *tumba* of 1440, which was of course undated, were evidence for the original burial.<sup>97</sup> Lang’s knowledge that the present tomb had been created only half a century before his own time coexisted with his conviction that that modern tomb somehow transmitted an original state, and this despite the presence of the older, late thirteenth-century statue of Otto on a column right behind the tomb.

Another example is the account of a later chronicler mentioning the tomb of Emperor Heinrich II (972–1024) and Empress Cunigunde (c. 978–c. 1039) in the cathedral at Bamberg (fig. 35). The marble slab with *gisant* portraits of the pair and the relief scenes of their lives on the sides of the tomb was carved by the Würzburg master Tilman Riemenschneider between 1499 and 1513.<sup>98</sup> This tomb is undated and unsigned. Whereas in modern eyes the authorial identity of Riemenschneider dominates the monument, in the artist’s own time the tomb pointed backward with the same referential force that the tomb of Simpertus had. Around 1600, long after Riemenschneider’s death, and in an epoch when secure historical knowledge of earlier art and artists was scarce, the local annalist Martin Hoffmann reported that the relics of the imperial pair (Heinrich had been canonized in 1146, Cunigunde only in 1200) had been transferred in 1147 to a marble tomb. Hoffmann was referring to the present tomb; that is to say, he simply took Riemenschneider’s work to be a twelfth-century monument.<sup>99</sup>

97. “. . . sepelitusque est in cenobio montis monachorum ante altare Sancti Michaelis archangeli sepulcro ut adhuc cernimus permagnifico.” Suckale, “Die Grabfiguren des hl. Otto auf dem Michelsberg in Bamberg,” 517 and n. 2. Although the perfect participle *sepelitus* suggests that Lang was describing the burial, not the tomb, as sumptuous, Suckale also reads the passage as evidence of chronological confusion.

98. See most recently Iris Kalden-Rosenfeld, “Tilman Riemenschneider’s *Kaisergrab*: Type and Program,” in *Tilman Riemenschneider, c. 1460–1531*, ed. Julien Chapuis (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2004), 39–51.

99. Martin Hoffmann, *Bamberger Annalen*, published in Johann Peter von Ludewig, *Scriptores rerum episcopatus Bambergensis* (Frankfurt, 1718), col. 123, cited by Justus Bier,



35. Tilman Riemenschneider, Tomb of Emperor Heinrich II and Empress Cunigunde, finished 1513. Bamberg, Cathedral. Photo: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY.

was Emperor Otto who in the tenth century placed the monastery under the control of the bishops of Freising and thus guaranteed its immunity from the jurisdiction of the local counts. The connection to Freising was increasingly stressed in the later Middle Ages. St. Corbinian, the founder of Freising, was first identified as a patron at Innichen in the fifteenth

Another example of a well-informed but off-target response to an imperial portrait is the interpretation by Paracelsus (Theophrastus von Hohenheim, 1493–1541), the great physician and natural philosopher, of a mural over the south portal of the collegiate church at Innichen (S. Candido) in the Puster Valley in the South Tyrol (fig. 36).<sup>100</sup> The painting was executed by the leading local artist Michael Pacher, or someone close to him, probably around 1470.<sup>101</sup> The crowned figure in the center of the fresco is reasonably, though not decisively, identified as Emperor Otto I (912–973).<sup>102</sup> S. Candido was established by the duke of Bavaria Tassilo III in 769 as a Benedictine foundation. Bishop Otto of Freising transformed it into a collegiate church in the twelfth century. Already by the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, Emperor Otto I figures in the chronicles as the founder. Perhaps this confusion grew out of the memories of the role played by Bishop Otto. The legend did have some thin basis in history because it

<sup>96</sup> "Riemenschneider's Tomb of Emperor Henry and Empress Cunegund," *Art Bulletin* 29 (1947): 96. The error was repeated by C. G. von Murr, who reported in 1799 that the corpses had been transferred in 1147 to a tomb of Parian marble. In fact the bodies had rested in two separate sarcophagi, not of marble, until 1513.

<sup>100</sup> Nicolò Rasmus, *Die Stiftskirche zu Innichen* (Trent: Arti Grafiche Saturnia, 1969), ill. 23; Egon Kùhebacher, *Kirche und Museum des Stiftes Innichen* (Bozen: Athesia, 1993), 271–73, ill. 164–65; and Silvia Spada Pintarelli, *Affreschi in Alto Adige* (Venice: Arsenale, 1997), 192–97, with good illustrations.

<sup>101</sup> Rasmus, *Michael Pacher* (London: Phaidon, 1971), 233, ills. 153–58. *Michael Pacher und sein Kreis*, exhibition catalogue, Augustiner-Chorherrenstift Neustift (Bozen: Südtiroler Landesregierung, 1998), 298–99. There is no documentation of the commission.

<sup>102</sup> Otto Pächt called the figure simply "a prince"; *Österreichische Tafelmalerei der Gotik* (Augsburg: Filser, 1929), 79, with an attribution to the shop of Pacher around 1480.



century. From the time of a blood miracle in 1413 the church became a pilgrimage magnet, indeed for some centuries the most important in the entire eastern Alpine region.<sup>103</sup> St. Corbinian appears in the fresco to the right of the emperor, while the pendant figure on the left is St. Candidus himself. Behind the three figures there is a round-arched arcade. The two saints, busily writing, sit on benches that appear to rest on consoles. The emperor between and above them, sword in hands, is possibly to be understood as enthroned, although it is difficult to say, because the round arch of the real door below seems to cut through the body of the prince and with it the entire painted architecture.<sup>104</sup>

Like tomb portraits, the images of Otto and the two saints did not simply evoke institutional history from a safe distance, but rather functioned as something like documents with real connections to the historical personalities they notated. In order for the images to function as documents, contemporary beholders needed to assume an unreconstructible

36. Michael Pacher (?), fresco over south portal, c. 1470. S. Candido (Innichen). Photo: author.

103. Kühebacher, *Kirche und Museum des Stiftes Innichen*, 93, 98.

104. The building history itself is unusually complicated. The nave apparently dates from the thirteenth century, but the date of the vaulting is disputed. A fire in 1413 occasioned various improvements, possibly including the relocation of a small Romanesque porch from the south portal to the north side. The alleged removal of the porch liberated a patch of wall for the frescoes.



sequence of substituted images. The hypothesis of this pattern of reception is harder to accept at Innichen, where the frescoes are associated with a major master with a distinctive personal style, than at the tomb of Simpertus. Anyone in the region—Innichen is only twenty miles down the valley from Michael Pacher's base in Bruneck—would have known who did these paintings, and more or less when. Yet there are two curious circumstances at Innichen that place these portraits within a culture of “forged” pictorial documents.

First, the document that established the role of Emperor Otto in the history of the monastery is itself a forgery of the fifteenth century. That document was written in an obsolete pre-Gothic script, and almost surely composed, by the notary Peter Fritzlar in 1452. The document was accepted as authentic until the eighteenth century, when a local historian suggested that it was a copy by Fritzlar of the lost original.<sup>105</sup> Fritzlar had several good local models for the archaic script at his disposal, for example, a document of Otto III dated 993, itself a forgery or copy of a few centuries later. This in itself is not surprising. Paleographers have found many imitations of much earlier book hands by scribes working within reform-minded German monasteries in the fifteenth century. Prior Liebhardus, a Benedictine at Reichenbach in the Upper Palatinate, imitated a twelfth-century minuscule in a codex dated 1468, and even explained why: “Because I am now old, I must alter my hand and write like the ancients.”<sup>106</sup> The notary Fritzlar traveled from one Tyrolean monastery to another helping the clerics retrofit their archives. He was especially useful at Innichen, where much of the library had been destroyed in a fire of 1413, the occasion of the blood miracle. The historiographically self-conscious documentary experiments in the archive at Innichen in 1452 and the frescoes by Pacher only a few years later belonged to the same campaign.

**105.** A note written on the back of the document in an eighteenth-century hand says that the document on the front was written by Fritzlar in 1452. The local historian Resch noted a problem with the date 925 because Otto was only thirteen years old in that year. He explained the date as a *lapsus calami* for 965. Kühebacher, “Kaiser Otto I. und das Kollegiatstift Innichen,” *Der Schlern* 62 (1988): 188–200; *Kirche und Museum des Stiftes Innichen*, 129. Kühebacher accepts Resch's attribution to Fritzlar but persists in believing in a lost early medieval model because the seal is supposedly authentic.

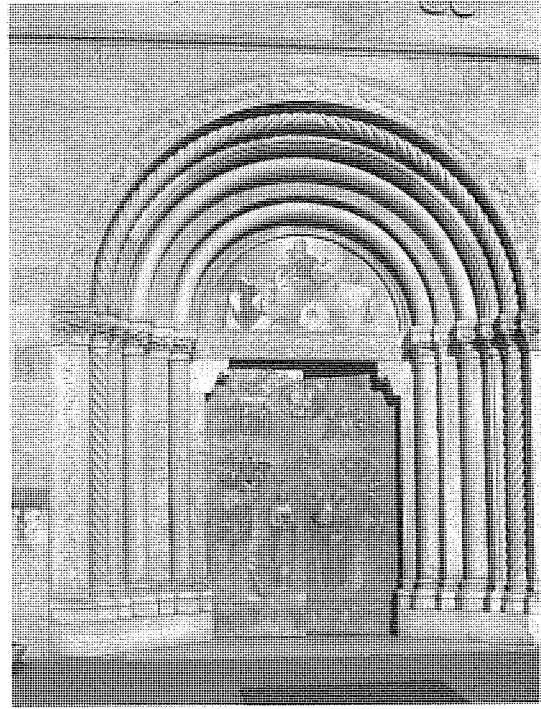
**106.** “Congruit ergo mihi presso gravitate senili, / Quod mutare manum nunc ad formam seniorum / Debeo scribendo.” Bernhard Bischoff, “Eine Reichenbacher Codex des XV. Jahrhunderts in imitierter romanischer Minuskel” [1938], in Bischoff, *Mittelalterliche Studien: Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1966), 1: 63–67. See also Martin Steinmann, “Von der Übernahme fremder Schriften im 15. Jahrhundert” [about ten examples] and J. P. Gumbert, “Italienische Schrift—humanistische Schrift—Humanistenschrift” (five examples), both in *Renaissance- und Humanistenhandschriften*, ed. Johanne Autenrieth (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1988), 51–62 and 63–70.

The second curious circumstance is the possibility that the entire south portal of the church, apparently Romanesque, is a montage of the fifteenth century. In an audacious and appealing hypothesis, Erika Doberer proposed that the rectangular *Maestas Domini* relief in the tympanum was not designed for this place, but was transferred from the Romanesque interior, perhaps borrowed from a dismantled chancel.<sup>107</sup> She then argued that the portal framing the relief, complete with pre-Gothic archivolt and door jambs with engaged columns and foliate capitals, was a stylistically anachronistic “forgery” of the fifteenth century, carried out in the wake of the fire of 1413 (fig. 37). Some of the capitals of the portal, according to Doberer, are *spolia*, others—the flat ones at the extreme right—imitations executed in an obsolete style, or “virtual *spolia*.”<sup>108</sup> In a series of highly imaginative articles Doberer has proposed a number of cases of the reuse of Romanesque sculpture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Galluspforte in Basel, the Riesentor at Vienna, and the Paradiesportal in Münster all re-emerge in Doberer’s analyses as Renaissance montages.<sup>109</sup> These radical redatings have met both opposition, often well-reasoned, and silence. They have also inspired other scholars to seek out forgotten

107. Erika Doberer, “Die Portalschauwand an der Südseite der Stiftskirche von Innichen,” *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 25 (1972): 177–86.

108. For this concept, see Richard Brilliant, “I piedistalli del Giardino di Boboli: *Spolia in se, spolia in re*,” *Prospettiva* 31 (1982): 2–17; and Dale Kinney, “*Spolia: Damnatio and renovatio memoriae*,” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 42 (1997): 117–48. The virtual *spolium* is a simulated material relic of a predecessor culture, an artifact or fragment that by form or framing deceives the already spoil-sensitive beholder into thinking he or she is seeing a relic.

109. Doberer, “Die ursprüngliche Bestimmung der Apostelsäulen im Dom zu Chur,” *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 19 (1959): 17–41; on Basel: “Verschwundene Merkmale der Basler Galluspforte,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 32 (1978): 87–94; “Die Apsisreliefs von Schöngrabern im Wandel der kunstgeschichtlichen Betrachtung,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 38 (1984): 158–72; and “Abendländische Skulpturen des Mittelalters und ihre metamorphen Veränderungen,” *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 46–47 (1993–94): 161–63 (summarizes earlier articles on works in Friuli, Innichen, Chur, and St. Gilles). Note that Doberer’s argument about the sculpture at Schöngrabern was rejected by consensus at a colloquium in 1985; the contribution by Bernd Euler-Rolle, however, “Historismus versus Archaismus—Schöngrabern und die romanisierende Kunst des 16. Jahrhunderts in Österreich,” in *Schöngrabern, Internationales Kolloquium 1985*, ed. Hermann Fillitz (Vienna: Österreichisches Nationalkomitee des CIHA, 1987), 45–55, was sympathetic. The historian Klaus Graf notes that art historians are sometimes too quick to embrace appealing hypotheses about such misrecognized archaisms, pointing to Doberer’s project as well as to the often-cited case of the tomb of Abbot Chunrad (d. 1145) at Mondsee, dated by a string of art historians since Keller, “Geschichtsbewusstsein des deutschen Humanismus und die bildende Kunst,” 669, to the last quarter of the fifteenth century, but possibly without warrant; Graf, “Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst,” 400.



37. S. Candido (Innichen), south portal, thirteenth and fifteenth centuries (?). Photo: author.

38. Sanzeno, church, portal, c. 1490. Photo: author.

and invisible Renaissance restorations. It now emerges that the Romanesque “Goldene Pforte” at St. Martin in Freiburg (Saxony), for instance, with its elaborate sculptural program, was removed and reinstalled, after a fire of 1484, from the west façade to the south transept, overlaying a less impressive portal.<sup>110</sup> The spectacular Romanesque portal wall on the north side of the Schottenkirche St. Jakob in Regensburg, meanwhile, may be a product of a much later, perhaps sixteenth-century, recombination involving the shifting of a portal from the west façade and the creative reinstallation of sculptural components.<sup>111</sup>

Doberer’s thesis is reinforced by the fact of the anachronistic work executed by the so-called *Maestri Comacini*, Lombard stonemasons, in the South Tyrol in the fifteenth century. The portal of Sanzeno in the Val di Non, securely dated to around 1490, has what a modern art history would call neo-Romanesque engaged columns in the jambs similar to those at Innichen (fig. 38).<sup>112</sup>

110. Heinrich Magirius, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege: Sachsen von der Anfängen bis zum Neubeginn 1945* (Berlin: VEB, 1989), 10–11.

111. Volkmar Greiselmayer, “Anmerkungen zum Nordportal der Schottenkirche St. Jakob in Regensburg,” *Das Münster* 48 (1995): 143–50.

112. Nicolò Rasmo, “Osservazioni sull’architettura trentina del rinascimento,” in *Arte e artisti dei laghi lombardi* vol. 1 (Como: Antonio Nosedà, 1959), 277; and Ernst Guldan, “Die Tätigkeit der *Maestri Comacini* in Italien und in Europa,” *Arte Lombarda* 5 (1960): 30. Rasmo later

Doberer's S. Candido case depends on a completely new building history. She argues that the side aisles were constructed only in the fifteenth century, together with the vaulting of the nave, which was worked on again in the early seventeenth century. Her hypothesis is hard to verify by inspection alone, for there is no unequivocal trace of the fifteenth century as there is at Sanzeno. Easier to accept is the concept of a renewed, refitted portal. One only has to imagine a somewhat worn Romanesque portal with an illegible relief or fresco in the tympanum. Around 1460 or later that portal gets a new tympanum relief, seized from the chancel or rood screen inside, and a fresco is painted above the portal. There were no craftsmen at hand who could manage a relief in stone, so the painting had to assume the role of architectural sculpture. The painted structure in the Otto fresco, it should be pointed out, could be thought of not as a row of niches within which the figures are meant to be sitting, but rather just as a painted arcade behind the figures. One sees similar arcades in Gothic frescoes in the region, for example, in the apse of the parish church at St. Peter in the Villnösser Tal or the later paintings at Gries near Bozen.

If Doberer is right, the fresco by Pacher above the portal was simply an extension of the forged architecture. The result was a new display wall which not only represented the great antiquity of the foundation but also attested to it.

A new fresco instantiates a prior but lost documentary portrait. The substitution model allows for replacements of old, worn-out referential images in any medium. An example from the orbit of Pacher was the fresco by Master Leonhard in the tower chapel at Neustift, which around 1465 replaced a wall painting of a Crucifixion from the early thirteenth century.<sup>113</sup> Wall painting in this region and in this period was seen not automatically as a distinctively modern medium, but rather as a medium without particular chronological associations. In Pacher's time one could see painted images from the fourteenth, thirteenth, even twelfth centuries on the walls of every church, none of them datable with much accuracy.

The incentive to fabricate an imperial document was all the greater since authentic portraits of Otto I were so rare, amounting to a handful of coins and seals which anyway the clerics at Innichen would not have known.<sup>114</sup> The now-famous retrospective portraits of Otto were all far to

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contested Doberer's thesis, however; see "Das Problem der Portalschauwand an der Südseite der Stiftskirche in Innichen" and Doberer's response, "Zum Lettnerproblem und zur Inschrift am Südportal von Innichen," *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 27 (1974): 177–87. Kühebacher did not adopt Doberer's thesis in his monograph on the church.

113. Rasmø, *Michael Pacher*, 27.

114. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Die deutschen Kaiser und Könige in Bildern ihrer Zeit 751–1190*, revised ed. by Florentine Mütterich (Munich: Prestel, 1983), 72–74, 186–92.

the north: the engraved image in the cathedral cloister at Magdeburg from the 1240s; the possible enthroned portraits of Otto and Edith in Magdeburg; the statues of Otto and Adelheid in the cathedral at Meissen from the late thirteenth century; and the equestrian statue at Magdeburg, also late thirteenth century.<sup>115</sup>

Here as at Sts. Ulrich and Afra the objection that the portrait does not adopt an archaic style can be met by the argument that realism was simply not taken to be a style at all. Successful renderings were seen primarily as escapes from local craft custom. It is also possible that Pacher thought he was painting in an archaic manner. Pacher knew something about ancient Roman forms from his travels in northern Italy, and he knew modern interpretations of the antique by Mantegna and others. He adopted some ancient elements but not others. The acanthus motifs in his gold grounds had a classical pedigree. The association of the beard with the emperor—at Innichen but also in his *Church Fathers* altarpiece (Munich, Alte Pinakothek), where Trajan appears bearded—is derived from representations of Constantine. In the *Presentation of the Virgin* in the St. Wolfgang altarpiece Pacher depicts ancient building elements such as marble pillars and a free-standing base, while in the *Stoning of the Woman Taken in Adultery* at St. Wolfgang the lower part of a tympanum is meant to look pre-Gothic.

The voice of the polymath and traveler Paracelsus lends plausibility to the referential reading of the Pacher fresco. Paracelsus described S. Candido in his *Carinthian Chronicle* of around 1538. He reported that the church was built by Emperor Frederick I in the twelfth century and that Barbarossa himself had adorned the building “with several images carved in stone” (*mit einigen in Stein gehauenen Bildern*).<sup>116</sup> One must conclude that Paracelsus was referring to the portraits above the portal, for it does not seem likely that he would have judged the animal and grotesque ornamental sculpture found in various places around the church to have been commissioned by Barbarossa. The painted portraits are the only images at the church that could possibly be associated with a patron. In that case, Paracelsus must have falsely remembered the Pacher frescoes as reliefs. Because stone sculpture was so often painted, memory easily exchanged a sculpted relief with a painting. Paracelsus must also have understood the image of the prince in the center of the lunette to be a portrait of Frederick Barbarossa. Even for a traveler in a position to gather intelligence from the local clerics, the portrait only two generations after its execution was already iconographically indeterminate and totally undatable. It is an exact

115. Karl Paulsiek, “Otto der Grosse in der bildenden Kunst,” *Festschrift zur 25 jährigen Jubel-Feier des Vereins für Geschichte und Altertumskunde des Herzogtums und Erzstiftes Magdeburg* (Magdeburg, 1891): 59–82.

116. Paracelsus, *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. J. Strebel, vol. 1 (St. Gall: Zollikofer, 1944), 245–46.

parallel to Conrad Celtis's experience at Speinshart. The key to credulity at S. Candido as at Speinshart was the relationship of the images to the building. There was a strong assumption in both cases that the buildings marked meaningful sites. Even if they had been rebuilt, they maintained a material link back to origins. The images won their authority through their association with the buildings.

### The true image of the emperor

In proximity to the idea of empire, the pressure on images was intense. Every German image of a medieval emperor, from Michael Pacher's fresco of Otto the Great in Innichen to Riemenschneider's tomb of Heinrich II at Bamberg, seemed to bear a troubled stylistic relationship to its own time. Portraits of the emperor were asked to stitch the political concept of the emperor to the physical person. By the late fifteenth century, the idea of the German empire was losing the clear profile it had during the centuries of binary opposition to the papacy. The incumbent, Maximilian, tried to reanimate a medieval—read ancient—imperial identity. By this time, however, the imperial image had to compete with a richer surrounding image world.

In the fifteenth century a late Byzantine double portrait of Constantine and Helena found its way, by way of Venice, to Nuremberg. The patrician Anton Tucher, believing the portraits to be painted from life (*in irem leben abcontrafett*) on the model of the Luke *Madonnas*, hired Veit Stoss in 1517 to install the panel in an altarpiece. Stoss flanked the icon with an Annunciation. This hybrid was still extant in the eighteenth century. The imperial portrait was treated as a relic. Tucher had it set off against the surrounding image world like a gemstone in its setting. The icon could not be allowed to vanish into the substitutional flow.<sup>117</sup>

Albrecht Dürer, confronted with the task of translating the old project of imperial portraiture into the rapidly modernizing medium of painting, elected to make iconic reference itself his theme. In 1510 the city of Nuremberg commissioned from him a pair of portraits of Emperor Charlemagne (742–814) and Emperor Sigismund (1368–1437; born in Nuremberg) (figs. 39 and 40).<sup>118</sup> The portraits possibly replaced a pair of older portraits dating from the 1430s that had served as covers of the cabinet that contained the collection of relics, sacred (the Holy Lance, a fragment of the True

117. Donat de Chapeaurouge, "Zum Historismus des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 19 (1965): 17–18. The Byzantine panel is preserved in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

118. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. nos. Gm 167–168. Fedja Anzelewsky, *Albrecht Dürer: Das materische Werk* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1991), nos. 123–24. Kurt Löcher, *Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg: Die Gemälde des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Gert Hatje, 1997), 203–10.



39. Albrecht Dürer, portrait of Emperor Charlemagne, 1510–11, oil on panel. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.



40. Albrecht Dürer, portrait of Emperor Sigismund, 1510–11, oil on panel. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

Cross, and so forth) and imperial (the crown of Otto I, the sword of St. Maurice); relics and regalia that symbolized and guaranteed the city's political privileges.<sup>119</sup> Emperor Sigismund had consigned these treasures to the keeping of the Nurembergers in 1423. Inscriptions on the frame and on the verso of Dürer's paintings refer to the imperial insignia and their annual public display.<sup>120</sup> Both portraits are three-quarter length, a highly unusual format that may have struck an archaic note.<sup>121</sup> Dürer's Charlemagne is an ideal portrait, Christ-like, frontally positioned and massively filling

119. Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Nuremberg, a Renaissance City, 1500–1618* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 28–30, gives a succinct account of the role the *Reichskleinodien* played in the life of the city.

120. The imperial insignia, like other relics, lost their meaning in the Protestant Reformation. The annual public displays in Nuremberg ended in 1523, and three years later Dürer's pictures were moved to the Rathaus. Already in 1532, however, a pair of copies was commissioned from Georg Pencz.

121. The only surviving old portrait in this format, though rather smaller, is Lysbeth van Duvenvoorde in The Hague, c. 1430; Albert Chatelet, *Early Dutch Painting* (Secaucus, NJ: Wellfleet, 1980), no. 36, ill. 167.

the frame, with clear expression and full, flowing hair and beard. This approach to physiognomy suggests that Charlemagne is more than a merely historical figure. Sigismund, a figure closer to home, is based on a real portrait.<sup>122</sup> With its oblique orientation within the frame, broken contour of the shoulder, peculiar beard and hair, and sharp gaze, the image remains in alignment with contemporary portraiture of living subjects and thus generates a rhetoric of likeness.<sup>123</sup> Dürer did not brand either panel with his customary monogram. By juxtaposing the two portrait modes, the painter registers a hesitation, as if it were not yet quite clear to him how the medieval brief of reproducing the imperial body was to fit within the new overall artistic project that Dürer and his contemporaries had initiated. In fashioning pendant portraits of the two emperors in two different modes, Dürer undermines each of the modes.

Dürer does not entirely maroon the Charlemagne portrait in timeless ideality, however, for the crown and insignia are designed directly after the real objects held in Nuremberg. He made drawings of the sword, orb, crown, and glove of Charlemagne. Dürer believed these objects were Charlemagne's own. As a matter of fact, the sword had been made in Palermo for Frederick II and the knob added by Charles IV, father of Sigismund. Because they were relics, Dürer wanted to record their true dimensions. On his drawing of the sword Dürer wrote: "Dz ist Keiser Karls schwert awcg dy recht gros und ist dy kling eben als lang als der strick do mit dz papir awssen punden ist" (This is Emperor Charles's sword, in the correct scale; the blade is as long as the piece of string that binds this sheet) (fig. 41).<sup>124</sup>

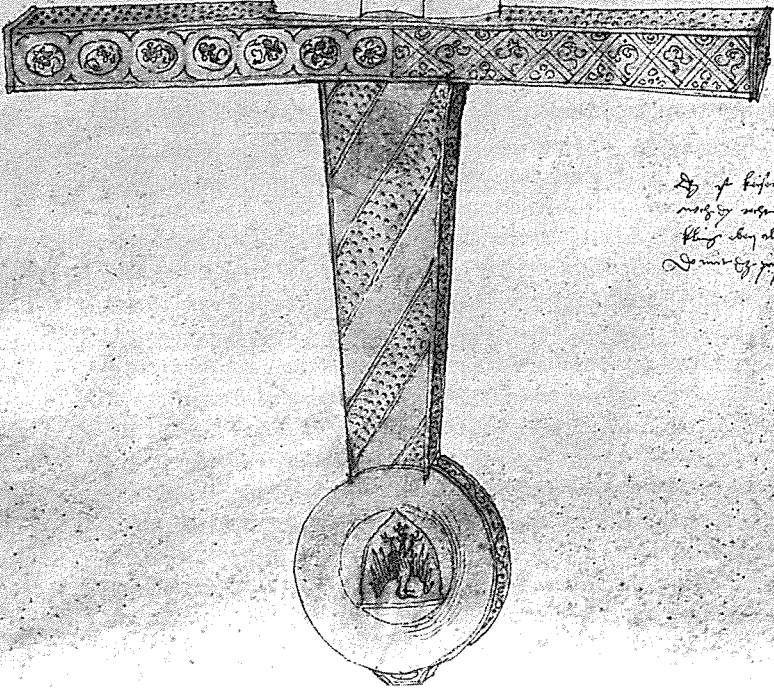
Dürer's drawing, by a kind of indexical trigonometry with the beholder's very body, measured the absent sword. The drawing in true dimensions allowed the modern hand to imagine wielding the sword, ultimately closing the gap between the modern subject and the vanished body of the

122. Presumably the portrait on the cabinet doors that Dürer's painting replaced. A miniature in a late sixteenth-century album in Vienna reflects the type. Günther Heinz, "Das Porträtbuch des Hieronymus Beck von Leopoldsdorf," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 71 (1975): no. 63, ill. 190. Burgkmair made a drawn copy, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, of a painting of Sigismund as the basis for a portrait on an altarpiece; Freya Strecker and Helmut Zäh, "Hans Burgkmairs Kreuzigungsaltar und die Peutinger," in Brinkmann and Schmid, eds., *Hans Holbein und der Wandel* (see chap. 3, n. 48), 161–80. Note also the copies of fourteenth-century family portraits made around 1500 by Jakob Elsner and another Nuremberg painter; Chapeaurouge, "Zum Historismus des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts," 18.

123. See as a comparison the portrait of the apothecary Hans Perckmeister (1496) by Dürer's teacher Wolgemut, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. 135. Ernst Buchner, *Das deutsche Bildnis der Spätgotik und der frühen Dürerzeit* (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1953), no. 141.

124. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Hs. 2575. Pen and ink with watercolor, 42.8 × 28.5 cm. Winkler 505, Strauss 1510/8. The drawing was copied at least twice by other artists. See also Winkler 504 and 506–7, and the copy of the drawing of the glove, Winkler, vol. 2, plate XXVI.





This is the hilt of the sword  
 which was used by the  
 King of the East Angles  
 in the year of our Lord  
 1000



emperor. It is the same mystique of true dimensions, and not only proportions, that shaped Jerusalem pilgrims' engagement with the Holy Sepulchre. Many travelers tried to record, by methods similar to Dürer's, the length and breadth of the Edicule that had housed Christ's body. Pilgrims to Rome could inspect the high stone table preserved in the cloister of S. Giovanni Laterano that supposedly marked the true height of Christ.<sup>125</sup> The problem was how to store the true dimensions. Standard rulers were scarce, and units of measurement varied locally. The safest way to preserve a dimension was by simple analog method, drawing a line or cutting a piece of string. Anyone who came across Dürer's drawing, as long as it was still bound by its string (it no longer is), knew the exact length of Charlemagne's sword.

The print promised to capture exactly this kind of fact and broadcast it outward without loss of confidence. True dimensions went astray in a chain of handmade analog representations; mechanical reproduction stabilized the dimensions. Early woodcuts put the true measurement into the hands of ordinary believers. A woodcut of the 1480s claimed to illustrate the almond-shaped wound of Christ in actual size: "This is the length and breadth of the wound," the text reads, "the little cross measured out 40 times equals the length of his body."<sup>126</sup> The woodcut, speaking with the authority of Pope Innocent VIII, promised an indulgence or relief from time in Purgatory in exchange for a certain formula of prayers involving kissing the image.

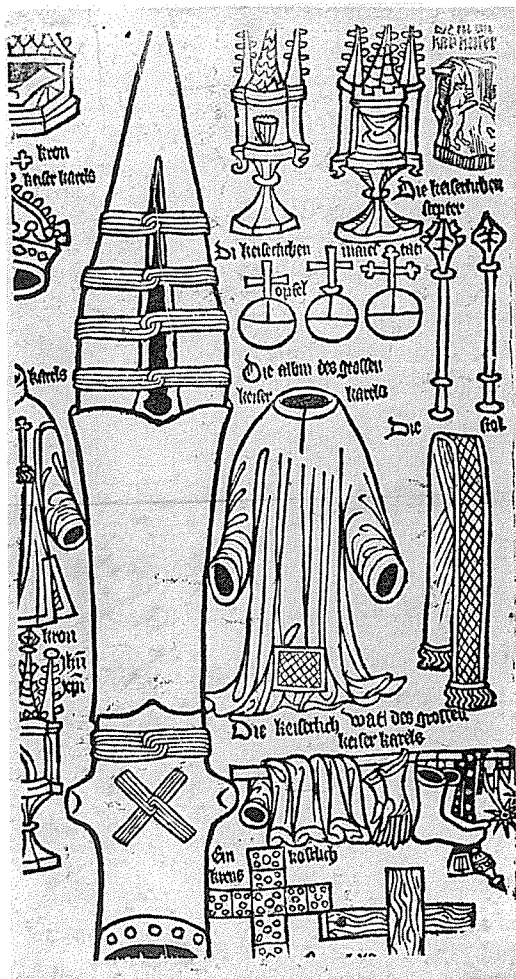
Complementary to the wound, male to its female, was the Holy Lance, the weapon that pierced Christ's side, which was supposedly owned by Constantine and came into the possession of the German emperors in the tenth century.<sup>127</sup> The Holy Lance was the most prestigious of the imperial relics preserved in Nuremberg. In fact the artifact in Nuremberg is a Carolingian-era weapon, an iron blade 50.5 cm in length, with a narrow slot or "window" along its length within which a nail from the Cross is held in place by silver wire and an iron sleeve. The Lance was reproduced in the *Pieta* of Schloss Trausnitz, a panel painting dated 1430–1450. The weapon appears at the right edge of the painting, floating on the gold ground below

41. [Facing] Albrecht Dürer, *Sword of Charlemagne*, c. 1510, pen and ink with watercolor. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

125. See Carlo Ginzburg, *The Enigma of Piero* (London: Verso, 2000), 68–70, with references.

126. Schreiber 1795. Impressions in Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art; and New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery. Richard S. Field, *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts and Metalcuts* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art: [1965]), no. 260; Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, eds., *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Art and Germanisches Nationalmuseum (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), no. 78. See also David S. Areford, "The Passion Measured: A Late-Medieval Diagram of the Body of Christ," in *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture*, ed. Alasdair A. MacDonald et al. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), 211–38.

127. Albert Bühler, "Die Heilige Lanze: Ein ikonographische Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Reichskleinodien," *Das Münster* 16 (1963): 85–116.



42. Holy Relics of Nuremberg, second quarter of fifteenth century, woodcut. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

the cross, an exact imitation in true scale of the Lance, complete with sleeve, nails, and wire binding.<sup>128</sup> A woodcut from around the same time, meanwhile, of which only half survives, published the Imperial Relics of Nuremberg (fig. 42).<sup>129</sup> Few saw the painting; many could hold the print in their own hands. Here the Lance looms larger than all the other relics, apparently out of scale until one realizes that it is in fact the only object *in* scale.

Replication technology catalyzed the overall project of the fabrication of likeness. Mechanically produced images were reliable images. But the printed image had an additional power. The print was not only an apparently authoritative rendering of its model, but also a member of a widely broadcast family of identical prints, consulted simultaneously by viewers many miles removed from one another. The print was a sample of an edition. The concept of the edition was now part of the meaning of each impression of the print. The edition allowed for a kind of communication across the community of its owners and viewers. A broadsheet woodcut printed in Munich in 1482 warned merchants and consumers of counterfeit coins, with woodcut reproductions of the false designs.<sup>130</sup> The woodcut was a kind of signal beacon overcoming temporal and spatial distance, the allies of the counterfeiter, and permitting ordinary citizens to differentiate true from false. The woodcut allowed the viewer to fix his or her own position vis-à-vis the nameless fabricators who were manufacturing authentic (the state) and inauthentic (the counterfeiters) coins. The print offered itself—here and inside the religious cult of images—as a metatechnology capable of critically comparing the products of such lesser technologies as coin minting and panel

128. Landshut, Schloss Trausnitz, chapel. The *Pieta*, measuring 112 × 105 cm, is the middle panel of a triptych. Bühler, "Die Heilige Lanze," 99.

129. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. HB 24755, 39.5 × 30.0 cm. Schreiber 1942. Bühler, "Die Heilige Lanze," 100–101; *Origins of European Printmaking*, no. 59. The version in the British Museum is colored, inv. no. 1933-1-2-1; Schreiber 1942a. Mark P. McDonald, *The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1539)* (London: British Museum, 2004), vol. 1, pl. 12; and vol. 2, no. 2959.

130. Schreiber 2045x; *Origins of European Printmaking*, no. 62.

painting. Prints, therefore, both participated in the proliferation of sacred tokens and began to apply critical pressure on that system.

### The iterable profile

Print technology permitted reliable iteration of nonmodular iconic information, traditionally difficult to copy. Irregular contours and complex notations of three-dimensional form, submitted to a chain of manual copies, easily drifted away from the source. The same forms could survive a mechanical transmission. But even print relied on reductive notation systems to govern the most intractable forms. The most sensitive bundle of plastic information that the referential image could hope to deliver was the human face. The complexity that distinguishes one face from another is easy to recognize in life—the brain is designed to do so—but hard to render. Within a referential project, and portraiture is a basic example of a referential project, any strategy that reduces the complexity of the face is desirable. The profile view of the face disciplines a profusion of visual information by reducing the complexity of the skull to a more easily remembered linear form. Profile, pure contour, was apprehensible, publishable; it was form as a kind of writing. Here it was worth trying to arrest the drift and generate pictorial statements as stable as verbal portraits but much more replete with information.

Profile re-entered European art with the medal, a replicable medium. The bronze medal, a permanent, pocket-sized portrait, was invented by Pisanello, essentially, and hundreds were produced in Italy in the fifteenth century.<sup>131</sup> The Italian painted portraits in profile of the early fifteenth century were often modeled on medals. Northern European painted portraits, which derived from donor portraits in painted altarpieces, that is, from figures positioned in fictive, narrative spaces, were always in three-quarter view rather than profile.<sup>132</sup> The influx of Italian medals to Germany began already in the mid-fifteenth century. In 1459 the Augsburg *Ulrich Gossembrot*, writing from Padua, sent medallic portraits of Guarino Guarini, Julius Caesar, and others home to his father Sigmund, asking that they be shown to a local painter, Mang Schnellaweg.<sup>133</sup> But not until 1510 did the medal emerge in German art.

131. For basic orientation in the literature on medals, see the exhibition catalogues *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance*, Frick Collection, ed. Stephen K. Scher (New York: Abrams, 1994); and *Pisanello: Painter to the Renaissance Court*, ed. Luke Syson and Dillian Gordon (London: National Gallery, 2001).

132. Buchner, *Das deutsche Bildnis der Spätgotik*, lists only three profile portraits, all of famous people, nos. 84, 100, 125.

133. Paul Joachimsen, *Hermann Schedels Briefwechsel (1452–1478)* (Tübingen, 1893), no. 23, p. 58.

At the same moment a profile portrait of Christ, backed by the powerful evidentiary authority of bronze medals, began circulating in German prints. Several versions of Christ's profile had been published by Italian medals in the fifteenth century. The version most frequently copied in other media featured a flat halo and distinctive fleshy profile based on the *Christ in the Incredulity of Thomas* group by Andrea del Verrocchio at Or San Michele (fig. 43).<sup>134</sup> Both the profile format and the replicable medium carried strong connotations of authenticity, proposing an authoritative set of features, not for a contemporary prince or merchant but for a holy man who had been dead for a millennium and a half.<sup>135</sup> On the reverse of one of the versions of the medal portrait of Christ is a fifteen-line inscription explaining that the portrait was based on an image engraved on an emerald sent by the Turkish Sultan Bajazet to Pope Innocent VIII in 1492.<sup>136</sup> This emerald is lost and may have been ancient or Byzantine. The Florentine medal offered to stand in for the emerald. The Italian medals generated copies in various media. A round papier-mâché relief apparently made by direct impression from the medal and hand-colored brown and blue was found at the convent of Wienhausen in a long-hidden stash of late medieval devotional images.<sup>137</sup> The Netherlandish Monogrammist A made an engraving around 1500 reproducing not just Christ's profile but also the medal itself, including the inscription.<sup>138</sup> A German woodcut, cut in the round to form a paper medal, diverges from the medal and appears to copy another print (fig. 44).<sup>139</sup> Copies on painted panel tended to abandon the

134. G. F. Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance*, 2 vols. (London: British Museum, 1930), nos. 898–901, 903. Luke Syson in conversation proposed Niccolò Fiorentino as the originator of this type. See also Georg Habich, "Zum Medaillen-Porträt Christi," *Archiv für Medaillen- und Plaketten-Kunde* 2 (1920–21): 69–78; Hill, *Medallic Portraits of Christ* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920); Haskell, *History and Its Images*, 30ff.; Philine Helas, "Lo 'smeraldo' smarrito, ossia il 'vero profilo,'" in Morello and Wolf, eds., *Il Valto di Cristo*, 215–26; Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel*, 298–302.

135. There are portraits of Christ on coins from the seventh century, but these had no influence on the Renaissance tradition; Hill, *Medallic Portraits of Christ*, 11.

136. Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals*, nos. 898–99.

137. The relief measures 9.8 cm in diameter. Horst Appuhn and Christian von Heusinger, "Der Fund kleiner Andachtsbilder des 13. bis 17. Jahrhunderts in Kloster Wienhausen," *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 4 (1965), no. 88, ill. 212.

138. Hollstein 3; Max Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, vol. 7 (Vienna: Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst, 1930), no. 3, 10.3 × 8.3 cm. G. F. Hill, "Renaissance Medals with the Head of Christ," *The Reliquary* 11 (1905): 242–43. A second inscription below the medal mentions the emerald, proving that the engraving followed one of the medals with the fifteen-line inscription on the reverse. For the translation of the medal portrait into prints see generally Hill, *Medallic Portraits of Christ*, 32–43.

139. Schreiber 757m. Diameter 20.4 cm. The impression in Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, is printed on paper with handwriting and is thus apparently a proof impression. Field, *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts in the National Gallery of Art*, no. 110.



43. Profile of Christ, Italian, late fifteenth century, bronze medal. Image © 2007 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



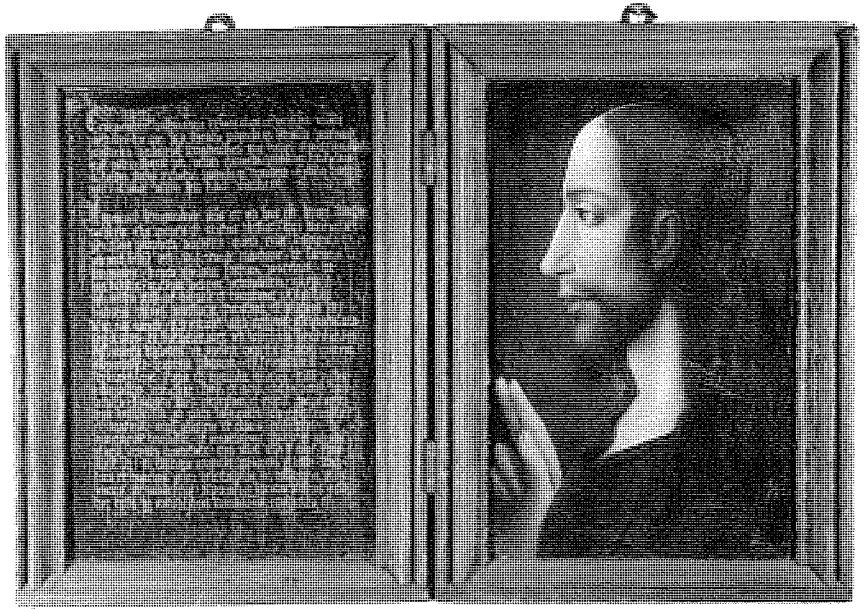
44. Head of Christ, c. 1500, woodcut. Image © 2006 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection.

conceit of the medal. A painted copy now in Berlin, a panel measuring 18 × 13 cm and attributed to the Bruges Master of 1499, augments the medal portrait into a bust and places it under the suggestion of an arch. The blessing hand of Christ, awkwardly joined to the body, appears cut off at the left edge.<sup>140</sup> On a diptych from the former Diocesan Museum at Roermond in Limburg, now in the Catherine Convent Museum in Utrecht, the blessing hand is again appended to a bust and profile transcribed either from the medal or from a print, drawing, or painting (fig. 45).<sup>141</sup>

In all these copies much effort was expended to preserve a particular roster of facial features, suggesting confidence in the transfer of data from emerald to medal and perhaps beyond, to print or drawing, not to mention

140. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 528A. Wilhelm von Bode, "Ein neu erworbenes Profilbild des Heilands von Jan van Eyck in der Berliner Galerie," *Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst* 1 (1888): cols. 344–52; Max J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, 14 vols. (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1967–), 4: 89, and Add. 147, plate 118; with the proposal that the panel is a fragment of a *Coronation of the Virgin*. Another version on panel, once in a private collection in Bonn and with an inscription in exotic capitals, was attributed by Ernst Buchner to Burgkmair, although not compellingly; "Der Meister des Seyfriedsberger Altar und Hans Burgkmair," *Zeitschrift für Kunstwissenschaft* 10 (1956), p. 46, ill. 9.

141. Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catharijnenconvent, inv. BMR s2, 36.7 × 26.9 cm. M. L. Caron, "Het beeld van Christus in de Vrouwenkloosters en bij de zusters van het Gemene Leven," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 59 (1985): 457–69, ill. 1. *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, exhibition catalogue (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2006), no. 29.



45. *Profile of Christ and Lentulus Letter*, c. 1500, oil on panel. Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catherijnenconvent.

confidence in the initial inscription of the face on the emerald. The copyists wanted to get every detail right, no matter how insignificant, including a fold in the garment at the neck which persists from copy to copy. Medieval emulations of obsolete and unfamiliar styles could be impressively sensitive when the target of imitation was close at hand. Madeline Caviness adduces several fine examples of pastiches dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, including the fourteenth-century completion of Nicholas of Verdun's twelfth-century altarpiece at Klosterneuburg.<sup>142</sup> The foliate motifs incised on the silver-gilt spandrels of the twelfth-century reliquary shrine of St. Victor in the cathedral of Xanten appear to be sensitive restorations dating to the late fifteenth century. The restorer mimicked the ornament on the shrine itself but at the same time may have consulted engravings by the Master E.S. or Schongauer.<sup>143</sup> The Xanten restoration throws a new light on these ornamental prints, which until now were not thought to possess a historicizing dimension. Replication technology, in bronze or ink, brought everything close to hand, gathering the far-flung corpus of artifacts together into a new, denser topology, any one piece now in virtual adjacency to any other.

The facing wing in the Utrecht diptych reproduced the text of the so-called Lentulus letter, an eyewitness report on Christ's person in the form

142. Caviness, "De convenientia et cohaerentia antiqui et novi operis."

143. Dietrich Kötsche, "Spätgotische Gravierungen am Viktorschrein in Xanten," in *Aus Albrecht Dürers Welt, Festschrift Fedja Anzelewsky*, ed. Bodo Brinkmann et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 17–24.

of a letter supposedly written to the senate by a Roman soldier.<sup>144</sup> The Lentulus letter described Christ's hazelnut-colored hair, straight to the ears and then curly, and his brown eyes. The Lentulus letter was composed in the thirteenth century and first published in the late fifteenth century. Now, for the first time, its contents are copied back into the rhetorical system of the portrait. A verbal description of Christ's appearance is perfectly adequate to itself; it conveys bits of plausible information about a face. But a verbal description is not sufficient to generate a complete analogic representation. Analogic descriptions are dense and continuous. Potentially the whole surface of a picture is meaningful, every line and shadow. Not even the longest verbal roster of facts about a referent will ever provide enough information to govern the whole continuity of a pictorial sign. Words tell only a few things about their referent. A picture corresponding to those words has to fill in the rest by its own devices. A literary description can offer a sparse and partial portrait of a person without necessarily producing a bland, generic effect. A verbal portrait of Christ can simply describe him as beautiful or with parted hair, without having to describe the shape of his nose or his chin. Language gives a discontinuous record of how he looked. By contrast, an image of Christ's body or a face, like the portrait of St. Simpertus, has to offer information about parts of the body or face for which no real information is available. Inevitably some good portion of the visual data will be unwarranted because it is not backed up by a real referent. In order to generate the modern profile portrait of Christ, the verbal description of the Lentulus letter had to be supplemented by the emerald. The authority of the emerald made the medal possible.

The beholders of handmade pictorial descriptions routinely make decisions about which parts of the descriptions are essential and which are mere filler, or are attributable to medium, local style, incompetence, and so forth. When it is a chain of copies, this triage between the essential and the merely context-reflexive is crucial, since handmade images are subject to corrupting drift. Without a transmission mechanism, the more distinctive facial features that generate the reality effect will mutate from copy to copy and the force of the tradition will be lost. To transmit physiognomic

144. Ernst von Dobschütz, "Zum Lentulus-Briefe," *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 42 (1899): 457–66; and Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, no. \*319. Cf. the panel in Columbus, Ohio, Museum of Art, inv. no. 48.3, attributed to Jean Clouet (c. 1520), which converts the profile into a three-quarter bust but reinstalls it in a fictional frame, with the text of the Lentulus letter below. Paul Wescher, "New Light on Jean Clouet as a Portrait Painter," *Apollo* 103, no. 167 (1976): 16–21. The connection between the profile transmitted by the medals and the Lentulus letter was first made by northerners, not Italians; see Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel*, 299–300. Excellent on the reception of the medals and generally on "Judaica" in German art is Krause, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, 299–307.



features one needs a finely tuned and tightly regulated mechanism, like the protocols and formulas that governed the copying of sacred icons within the Byzantine painting tradition. Otherwise a mechanical procedure will be required to take the transmission process out of human hands. Prints and medals put a halt to the drift.

At the same time, prints made it harder for the beholder to make decisions about which kind of information was essential and which accidental. Everything in a print was authoritative, in principle. The threat of confusion is illustrated by the career of the Christ profile type in a series of prints published in Augsburg.<sup>145</sup> Hans Burgkmair made three single-leaf woodcuts that combined the Lentulus description with the denser version offered by the medal. In a broadsheet published by Erhard Ratdolt in 1500, the letter is given in both Latin and German translation.<sup>146</sup> Here Burgkmair preserved the basic physiognomy of the medal portrait but attached it to a full-length figure. In a more elegant version, dating probably from around 1510, Burgkmair reproduced the Christ profile as a medal, offering in effect a facsimile of the medal, complete with the nimbus and inscription (fig. 46).<sup>147</sup> The printed medal is bracketed by texts, the Lentulus letter below and a text offering a different account of the image's provenance above. This new text explains that the woodcut reproduces a bronze image based on a portrait painted from life and brought back from Constantinople by a German pilgrim. In this text, the authenticating "emerald" has in effect slipped one step back in the chain of transmission and the new authority is the medal itself. But Burgkmair also offered the text of the Lentulus letter as a corroboration of the data on the medal. In the woodcut image Burgkmair exaggerates the facial peculiarities given by the Italian medalist. His Christ has a distinctive, irregular profile with thick lips and a sloping forehead. In the impersonal, decontextualizing reproductive medium of print, this excess of unmotivated specificity reads as the "characteristic," an excess that generates a reality effect. The excess of specificity at the same time pushes the face into a relation of resemblance with Burgkmair's ordinary, nondivine physiognomies. The profile of Christ complies, in other words, with the set of rules and habits that amount to Burgkmair's "personal style." Finally, in a single-sheet woodcut in a square frame, printed at least in one impression together with the Lentulus letter, Burgkmair altered the features of the medal completely, producing a Christ with a straight nose, thin lips, deep skull, and pointed,

145. Note that Hans Holbein the Elder made a drawing based on the medal; Vienna, Albertina. Krause, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, ill. 223.

146. Hollstein 55; *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, no. 8.

147. Bartsch 20; Hollstein 52. The woodcut image is 11 cm in diameter. *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, no. 71.





47. Hans Burgkmair, *Profile of Christ*, c. 1510–12, woodcut. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, NY.

protruding beard (fig. 47).<sup>148</sup> Here the profile is detached from a fictional medal but still circumscribed and superimposed on a square, frame-like support. One might well imagine that if the Lentulus letter and the provenance of the medal—its alleged derivation either from the sultan’s emerald or from the pilgrim’s portrait—were taken seriously, then the new physiognomy ought to have installed itself permanently in Christian iconography; but this did not happen.<sup>149</sup> The long-term interest of the medal portrait of Christ lay in the mere hypothesis, the abstract possibility, of dense physiognomic information, rather than in its claims to authenticity, which were weak. Particularity, the surplus of information, injected lifeblood into the image of the saint or divinity. One conservative German cleric noted the trend. In his *Narrenbeschwörung* of 1512, the Franciscan and anti-Lutheran satirist Thomas Murner criticized modern painters for using portraits of their family members to represent the physiognomies of the saints.<sup>150</sup> A woodcut image of the *Three Patron Saints of the City of Constance* by Hans Burgkmair was first published by Erhard Ratdolt as a title page to a breviary in 1499. Six years later the print reappeared in a missal, identical except for the face of St. Pelagius, which had been excised from the block and replaced with a more realistic visage (figs. 48 and 49).<sup>151</sup> Although it is possible that the block had been damaged and needed to be repaired, it seems more likely that Burgkmair was dissatisfied with the earlier, schematic face and wished to replace it with a more informative, portrait-like cluster of lines, just as the faces of sculpted or painted Madonnas were revised to keep pace with fashion.<sup>152</sup>

148. Bartsch 21; Hollstein 53, 23.0 × 22.9 cm. *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, no. 83.

149. Raphael did cite the profile in his Sistine tapestry of the *Miraculous Draft of Fishes*, as did Michelangelo in his *Resurrected Christ* at S. Maria sopra Minerva. Also note the use of the profile in Petrus Apianus, *Cosmographia*, as a generic example of a face. On the Lentulus letter and Dürer’s self-portrait of 1500, see Dieter Wuttke, “Dürer und Celtis: Von der Bedeutung des Jahres 1500 für den deutschen Humanismus” (1980), in Wuttke, *Dazwischen*, 1:350–54.

150. *Narrenbeschwörung*, XXIV, 26, cited by Joseph Meder, *Die Handzeichnung: ihre Technik und Entwicklung* (Vienna: Schroll, 1923), 383.

151. Hollstein 74. *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, no. 6. The impressions reproduced, Stuttgart, Graphische Sammlung, nos. A. 2443–2444, were printed as single sheets rather than as book illustrations. Note that Burgkmair also revised the portraits of Celtis and Maximilian in his woodcut for the title page of the *Quattuor libri amorum*; Tilman Falk, *Hans Burgkmair: Studien zu Leben und Werke des Augsburger Malers* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1968), 20n6.

152. See chapter 2, above, p. 41.



Conradus. 1499 S. Pelagius.



S. Conradus S. Pelagius

Mechanical notation reanimated the sacred portrait through arbitrary surpluses of information. But that project quickly overtook its own initial aims. The index, the afterimage of direct contact, makes the strongest possible claims to connect with true origins. In reality, however, the index is the most arbitrary of markers, established by fiat, basically, and usually unverifiable. The beholder of the image of Christ's wound or his profile was in the same situation as the pilgrim faced with a relic or other miraculous power source: total dependence on someone else's labeling. Replication technology, bronze medal and inked print alike, promised to clarify the problem of the pictorial notation of provenance; to help recipients, in other words, trust the information they wanted to trust. But print only created new problems. Dissemination of Burgkmair's highly characteristic Christ profile, with its bent nose, slanting eyes, and angled jaw, made it easier for beholders to connect the bundle of forms with Burgkmair himself. The printed Christ medals, initialed H. B., entered into a web of similarly author-anchored works. The "characteristic" in the portrait of Christ ended up pointing back not to Christ, the desired but truly inaccessible referent, but rather to Burgkmair himself. The referential project gives way

48. Hans Burgkmair, *Patron Saints of the City of Constance*, 1499, woodcut. Stuttgart, Graphische Sammlung.

49. Hans Burgkmair, *Patron Saints of the City of Constance*, 1505, woodcut. Stuttgart, Graphische Sammlung.

to its apparent opposite and enemy, the artistic and fictionalizing project.

Both the power and the danger of image replication follow from the lack of any internal criterion for the triage between statement and excess. No one is likely to misunderstand the perfect maintenance of script form from one copy of a printed book to the next as a commitment to that script form. The fixing of an image, by contrast, can easily be misunderstood. Christ's slightly bulbous forehead, bent nose, fleshy lips, and receding chin were transferred from medal to handmade copy with more consistency than was ever possible in the painted copy chains, of the *Veronica*, for instance. The beholder has no way of telling the difference between what is statement and what is excess. The theorist of print technology William Ivins pointed out that printed lines either represent "classes of lines" which provide "tolerances" of the sort a toolmaker uses in making diagrams of tools to be manufactured, or they denote particulars in their "this-and-no-otherness."<sup>153</sup> In any given print, however, these two kinds of lines appear side by side in the same image and can look very much alike. Either kind of line—the general class description or the particular description—makes for an exactly repeatable statement. But unless the beholder knows which kind of line it is, the content of that statement will be lost. Only contextual knowledge will reveal the nature of the line, that is, knowledge about the artist, the style, the circumstances of the initial eyewitness report, and so forth.

The sequence of printed Christ profiles points to an immediate breakdown, at the moment of its inception, of the institution of the mechanically produced image offering an indexical link to its referent.<sup>154</sup> The *imago contrafacta* had the paradoxical effect of transforming the referential label, the image that identified the relic or material sample of the holy, into something like an authored artwork.

### The colossus of Crete

Bernhard von Breydenbach, an aristocratic cathedral canon in Mainz, undertook with two friends a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1483. In the account of the journey he published three years later, Breydenbach related a story about a colossus that had once stood on Mount Ida in Crete (fig. 50).<sup>155</sup> He

153. William H. Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1953).

154. Parshall, "Imago contrafacta," 554–79.

155. Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), foldout view of Candia (modern Heraklion), two woodblocks, 79 × 25 cm. On this edition, see Davies, *Bernhard von Breydenbach and His Journey to the Holy Land, 1483–4* (see chap. 2, n. 57), 1–4.

reported that “according to the poets” (*nach sage der poeten*) Crete lay at the center of the world, precisely between Africa, Asia, and Europe. “For this reason the poets placed a great statue of an old man on the highest mountain of the island, called Ida. The head of the statue was gold, the chest and arms silver, the body and the loins bronze, the legs iron, and the feet clay. Asia, Africa, and Europa all gazed upon this statue.” Breydenbach then explained that the statue had “little slits and holes from which its tears flowed. These tears flowed together and tumbled down into the hollows of the earth into Hell and so formed the great river Acheron.”<sup>156</sup>

The report balances precariously within Breydenbach’s narrative. He brackets the colossus from the account of the pilgrimage by attributing it to the “poets”: it is they who “placed” the wondrous statue on the mountain. Breydenbach has not been able to confirm the reality of the Cretan colossus by autopsy; he is completely reliant, he concedes, on tradition. With the concept of “the poets” Breydenbach epistemologically suspends the story and in this way distinguishes it from the traditions that underwrite his own primary aim, the quest for clinching contact with the wonder-time of primordial Christianity and its marvelous physical remains. His own pilgrimage, focused on Jerusalem but sidetracked by sacred corpses in Venice and Mt. Sinai, or relics in Alexandria, was also guided by written and unwritten traditions, by absent and often unnamed authorities. In Jerusalem a few weeks later Breydenbach would drop his critical defenses and worship at the legendary sites of earliest Christendom. He would visit the Holy Sepulchre and Golgotha and retrace the route of Christ through the streets of Jerusalem. Some of these places were unmarked by manmade monuments. Other sites were themselves natural monuments: the shapeless rock that the Cross had stood on, the rock before the Tomb. This absence of the traces of mediation gave the sites authenticity. But this was deceptive, since the identification of the sites depended upon invisible, unreconstructible chains of transmission and good faith. In all these cases Breydenbach was prepared to forget the physical origins of the monuments and the sources of the site identifications and instead accept the referential claims. Eyewitnessing of the Christian relics is presented in Breyden-

156. “Uß disser ursach satzten die poeten eyn großbild eynes alten mans uff den hoechsten berg diser insel yda genant. Desselben bildes haupt was guldyn, die brust und arm sylberyn, der lyb und die lenden erin, die beyen eyssin, die füsse von gebacken erde. Zu dissem bild oder sulen hetten die land Asya Affrica und Europa eynen anblick. Dises bild hett kleyne speltlyn oder lochlyn, uß welchen syn zehern flossen, und dieselbigen versamelet zu eynder fliesen mit ungestümükeyt durch die erde huten in die helle, und machen das gross wasser und fluss Acharontis.” Breydenbach, *Die Reise ins Heilige Land* (Mainz: Schöffer, 1486), verso of fol. 23 (foldout view of Candia). The passage did not appear in the Latin edition of the book.



50. Erhard Reuwich, *View of Crete*, woodcut. Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), foldout. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

bach's account as if it amounted to a definitive ratification of tradition, whereas in fact the identities of those relics remain completely dependent on consensus about labeling. They have been labeled at some point in such and such a way, and Breydenbach travels across the Mediterranean, in effect, simply to read those labels. It is impossible to get behind the labels. His own project was therefore fundamentally vulnerable. In Breydenbach's account doubt lodges in close proximity to credulity.

In order to protect his project, Breydenbach performs throughout his narrative a series of delicate triages between fact and error. The Jews live in error, he reports, because they believe that Christ was born of Mary but also of Joseph. They also credit the foolish fables of the Talmud. The Greeks observe the same Sabbath as the Jews. A miraculous oven in Cairo is "a mendacious figure" (*ein lugerlich gestalt*), although it may after all be true. He handles with great caution some possibly dubious components of the Christian cult of authentic sites, for example, the prison cell of Christ in Jerusalem, which is not attested in Scripture.<sup>157</sup> Breydenbach's case-by-case approach matches that of the prodigious travel diarist Felix Fabri,

<sup>157</sup> For these passages and other examples of the errors of the various nations, see *Die Reise ins Heilige Land*, fol. 71v–102r, in particular fol. 85v–89r and 130v; for the prison of Christ, see fol. 27v.



who as a matter of fact was part of Breydenbach's traveling party in 1483. On Cyprus Fabri was shown the cross of Dysma, the right-hand thief, mounted without any visible fastening; he says he wanted to inspect more closely but refrained out of delicacy for the sensibilities of his companions. Yet some pages later Fabri affirms without demurral that merely by making contact with the Holy Land one receives a plenary indulgence.<sup>158</sup> The negative judgments reinforce a frontier drawn around the core corpus of legitimate sites and relics. Breydenbach's and Fabri's selective skepticism creates the effect that true relics are true because they have survived critical scrutiny. Skepticism is administered in doses, as a kind of homeopathic remedy against the total collapse of a home belief system, an edifice of investments in objects and places. The parsing of fact and legend in Breydenbach's account only points to the complete absence, anywhere in the narrative, of finally confirming authority.

Writing stabilizes myths and permits comparison; print does the same, only more intensively. The printed text was more than just the latest link in the substitution chain, for it was additionally expected to fix and uniformly disseminate the stories and in this way ratify a frontier between

158. *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, 197, 223.



good and bad tradition. The technology of print, no older than Breydenbach himself and a product of his own city, Mainz, put pressure on his narrative that earlier pilgrims did not feel. Print created the responsibility of discrimination.

Print also created self-consciousness about sources. Breydenbach speaks here of the “poets,” the only place in his book where they appear. His account of the Cretan colossus is in fact dependent on a single poet: Dante, in *Inferno* 14: 94–120:

*“In mezzo mar siede un paese guasto,  
diss’elli allora, “che s’appella Creta,  
sotto ’l cui rege fu già ’l mondo casto.  
Una montagna v’è che già fu lieta  
d’acqua e di fronde, che si chiamò Ida:  
or è diserta come cosa vieta.  
Rea la scelse già per cuna fida  
del suo figliuolo, e per celarlo meglio,  
quando piangea, vi facea far le grida.  
Dentro dal monte sta dritto un gran veglio,  
che tien volte le spalle inver’ Dammiata  
e Roma guarda come suo specchio.  
La sua testa è di fin oro formata,  
e puro argento son le braccia e ’l petto,  
poi è di rame infino a la forcata;  
da indi in giuso è tutto ferro eletto,  
salvo che ’l destro piede è terra cotta;  
e sta ’n su quel più che ’n su l’altro, eretto.  
Ciascuna parte, fuor che l’oro, è rotta  
d’una fessura che lagrime goccia,  
le quali, accolte, foran quella grotta.  
Lor corso in questa valle si diroccia:  
fanno Acheronte, Stige e Flegetonta;  
poi sen van giù per questa stretta doccia  
infin, là ove più non si dismonta  
fanno Cocito; e qual sia quello stagno  
tu lo vedrai, però qui non si conta.”*

“In the mid-sea there sits a wasted land,”  
Said he thereafterward, “whose name is Crete,  
Under whose king the world of old was chaste.  
There is a mountain there, that once was glad  
With waters and with leaves, which was called Ida;  
Now ’tis deserted, as a thing worn out.

Rhea once chose it for the faithful cradle  
 Of her own son; and to conceal him better,  
 Whene'er he cried, she there had clamours made.  
 A grand old man stands in the mount erect,  
 Who holds his shoulders turned tow'rds Damietta,  
 And looks at Rome as if it were his mirror.  
 His head is fashioned of refined gold,  
 And of pure silver are the arms and breast;  
 Then he is brass as far down as the fork.  
 From that point downward all is chosen iron,  
 Save that the right foot is of kiln-baked clay,  
 And more he stands on that than on the other.  
 Each part, except the gold, is by a fissure  
 Asunder cleft, that dripping is with tears,  
 Which gathered together perforate that cavern;  
 From rock to rock they fall into this valley;  
 Acheron, Styx, and Phlegethon they form;  
 Then downward go along this narrow sluice  
 Unto that point where is no more descending.  
 They form Cocytus; what that pool may be  
 Thou shalt behold, so here 'tis not narrated."<sup>159</sup>

Who was Dante for Breydenbach? He must have known, may have owned, one of the early editions of the *Divine Comedy*, perhaps the *editio princeps* published in Foligno in 1472 by Johann Neumeister, who returned to Mainz at the latest by 1479 and may well have brought copies of the book with him; perhaps the Florentine edition of 1481 with Cristoforo Landino's commentary. Breydenbach could equally have purchased the Venetian edition of Windelin of Speyer (1477), with the commentary of Jacopo della Lana, while en route. Dante had lived only a century and a half before Breydenbach's own time, but he had already receded into a dimly perceived, charmed time. He had the status of an *auctor*, not merely an inventor but also an authority. Yet the possibility that a Florentine poet created this story out of whole cloth would have struck Breydenbach as unlikely, even if Cristoforo Landino's commentary said exactly this: *con sua propria fictione*.<sup>160</sup> Dante's fable patently derived from the book of Daniel.<sup>161</sup>

159. Dante, *Inferno*, transl. Allen Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

160. Landino, *Comento sopra la Comedia*, ed. Paolo Procaccioli, vol. 2 (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2001), 676.

161. See John A. Scott, "Canto XIV: Capaneus and the Old Man of Crete," in *Lectura Dantis: Inferno*, ed. Allen Mandelbaum, Anthony Oldcorn, and Charles Ross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 185–96.

Daniel retells and then interprets the dream of Nebuchadnezzar of a colossal statue whose head “was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay” (2:31–35). Pliny, meanwhile, told of the body of a giant found on Mount Ida that measured forty-six cubits (*Natural History* 7.16.73).<sup>162</sup> Thus Breydenbach could attribute the colossus to a collectivity of poets. Dante for him was an enabler and gatherer of traditions, not an originator, and therefore he did not have to name him. The singular “poet” would have designated a point of interception and potential transformation along the substitution chain. With the plural “poets,” Breydenbach kept the flow moving.

Breydenbach does name one authority, and not a poet: he says that St. Jerome “mentioned” the fable in his writings (*diser fabel gedencket sant jeronimus in syn geschriefften*).<sup>163</sup> Jerome’s supposed mention is offered as evidence not of the colossus itself, but of the fable about it, and the extension of the fable beyond Dante’s formulation. In this way the story of the colossus retains some evidentiary status within the overall narrative. But evidence of what? The invocation of Jerome opens a window within Breydenbach’s text onto another concept of the truth value of poetic fables. It suggests that the story of the colossus originated from within a formidable alien belief system that is no longer active but which Jerome in the fourth century was still actively contesting. Although Breydenbach identifies the tears of the statue as elements of a dubious fable of geological origins, he could not afford to dismiss the wonder of a lachrymose statue altogether. The colossus functions within Breydenbach’s text as a *doppelgänger* of the Christian wonder-working icon. It serves both as a foil against which the icon’s powers appear credible, and as a potential leveler that reveals the fabulous dimension of the Christian belief system. The river Acheron and the underworld it irrigated had been rejected by Christianity, but not the idea of an underworld. It was understood that the pagan cosmology had borne some shadowy, still unformed relationship to the cosmos as it really was. The partial truth of the pagan worldview was the very content of Dante’s poem. Colossal statues were focal points for pagan belief, as Breydenbach knew. Their potential power to gather demonic energy was acknowledged by the Christian taboos on colossal statuary. The landscape-dominating colossus was a historical reality attested in Pliny.<sup>164</sup>

**162.** Behind all of these stood the myth of Talos, a colossal automaton constructed by Minos; see Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4; and Sarah P. Morris, *Daidalos and the Origins of Greek Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 226–27.

**163.** This is obscure. Jerome does not discuss any Cretan statues in his Daniel commentary, *Patrologia Latina* 25: 633–34.

**164.** *Natural History* 34.41, on the Colossus of Rhodes.

Once the category of the lie, the legend, or the foolish fable had been named in print, it became crucial to keep that category distinct both from one's own truth, the truth that the journey was meant to confirm, and from the category of merely pleasurable fiction, the play of imagination, which was one of the driving forces of travel.

Travel reports in the age of print evince an uneasiness about the frontier between legitimate and illegitimate belief. In Europe, rationalist skepticism about miracles and relics was encouraged by proliferating reports of healings and frenzied pilgrimages, amplified by print. The skeptical position in turn began to establish itself in print and so win legitimacy. Doubt about the Christian miracle curbed reflexive dismissal of the pagan wonder. Travelers found themselves forced into an illogical passivity in the face of the inexplicable. Felix Fabri, for instance, tells at one point of a haunted house that he heard about while traveling in Egypt. "Anyway, this is what the pagans tell us, and whether it is true or not is not important," Fabri avers, and then continues: the pagans "love the fantastic and practice much magic. In fact, many strange things really do happen in this city, but among us we just don't believe it and it doesn't matter."<sup>165</sup> It is doubtful that Augustine or Aquinas would have put it quite this way. For Fabri is saying that the pagan wonders are real but that Christians have simply decided collectively not to believe in them. This inside-out formulation identifies the psychological opportunism at the core of belief, revealing that the act of belief is not so much an epistemological judgment as a self-identification or self-characterization of the beholder. For if the strange things do happen and are real, why would Christians choose not to believe in them? How is it possible to say, We know it is true but elect not to believe? The only possible function left for the profession of belief, once it has been unhinged from the world-as-it-is, is the articulation of group identity. Fabri's formulation anticipates the well-known paradox attributed to the physicist Niels Bohr, who once asked a rural neighbor why he hung a horseshoe over his barn door. Surely, Bohr wondered, the neighbor did not credit country superstitions. The neighbor replied that of course he did not, but that he displayed the horseshoe anyway because the local farmers had assured him that it would bring good luck whether or not one believed in it. Like Fabri, Bohr's neighbor wanted to assert his membership in two communities at once: the local farmers, and the global fellowship of skeptics. The larger cosmological questions could wait.

The reference to transmission problems within Fabri's and Breydenbach's texts, which are themselves transmitters, is the sign that belief is

165. *Voyage en Egypte de Félix Fabri, 1483*, vol. 3 (Paris: Institut Français d'archéologie orientale, 1975), 924. On Fabri's attitudes toward superstition and the fantastic, see Herbert Feilke, *Felix Fabri's Evagatorium über seine Reise in das Heilige Land* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1976), 167ff.

now subject to writerly sorts of tests. Instead of just adding a link to the chain, Fabri and Breydenbach critically ponder the information they come across, speaking of their sources sometimes as poets or fables, distinguishing between what they have seen and what they have been told. They themselves are telling stories and are now implicitly subject to the same challenges. The report on the report stands in the nested relationship of *mise-en-abyme* to the overall text, repeating and thematizing the vulnerable narrative operation. The substitution chain has been drawn back into the story itself.

### Mirabilium

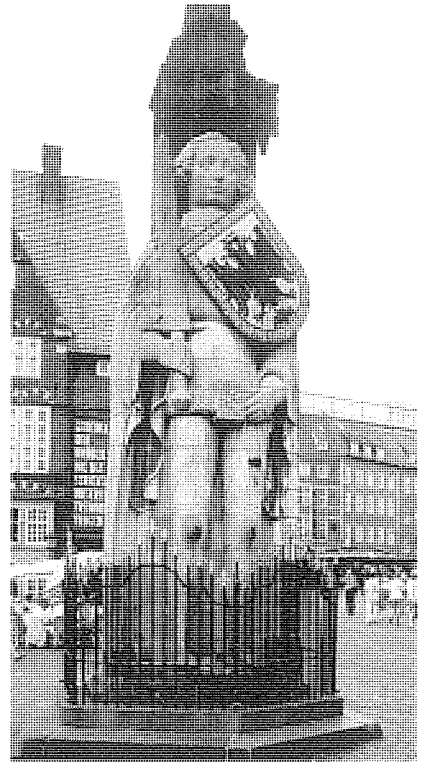
Breydenbach's cautious respect for the colossus mirrors the highly charged status of the few surviving relics of Roman statuary in medieval culture.<sup>166</sup> Access to the wonders or *mirabilia* was carefully monitored. Communes or potentates adopted pagan statues as symbols of their power to control chaotic political forces. The statue, an artifact that even more than a painting always implied its own replicability, was the publication, the corroborating condensation and display, of a tradition. In medieval perspective the particular traditions that the *mirabilia* published were often obscured. Instead, it was format, medium, strange form, nudity, colossal scale—the difference from Christian imagery—that governed reception. The change in scale, over-life-sizeness itself, compelled a response. The interpretation of colossal scale in the Middle Ages has two faces. First, excess in scale was taken as the very symbol of virtuality, poetic transfiguration, and theologically nonbinding status. The colossus was understood as the primordial false idol. Exaggeration of scale was the sign of human intervention. Christianity distinguished its image repertoire from the illegitimate pagan systems by insisting, more or less, on true scale. There were some over-life-size statues of Christ in the early Middle Ages, but they were rare. This disapproving and potentially poetical reading of the colossus coexisted with a literalist reading that saw the colossus as the faithful, true-scale effigy of a prehistoric giant. The Dioscuri in Rome, for example, were interpreted in the widely distributed guidebook for pilgrims, *Mirabilia urbis Romae*, as realistically scaled portraits of primeval heroes.<sup>167</sup> The wonder time that

166. See Gramaccini, *Mirabilia* (see chap. 2, n. 2).

167. Magister Gregorius, *Narracio de mirabilibus urbis rome*, ed. R. B. C. Huyghens (Leiden: Brill, 1970). The oldest manuscript dates from the late thirteenth century but was composed perhaps a century earlier. The catalogue of surviving medieval manuscripts of the *Mirabilia* or related texts by Nine Robijntje Miedema, "*Mirabilia Romae*": *Untersuchungen zu ihrer Überlieferung mit Edition der deutschen und niederländischen Texte* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996), 95–144, lists eighty German-language examples of which only nine give the text of the *Mirabilia* itself; Latin manuscripts were much more plentiful.

preceded human history, a time of outsized heroes and their monstrous enemies, was a topos of historiography that persisted deep into modern times.

The shift in scale to over-life-size removed the whole class of colossuses, real and reported, into a protected region on the edges of knowledge. The decision whether to believe or not could be safely deferred. As a result, the colossus could instantly switch from positive to negative valence, from benevolent to malevolent, from fearsome to comic. The giants and archaic heroes became the elemental building blocks of a transfigured poetic version of myths of origins. The colossus became a site of skepticism, where rhetoric was unmasked as rhetoric. The literary game of refusal of wonder was paralleled in the public, vernacular realm by the statues of mythical local heroes or founder figures. Between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries dozens of colossal statues of the hero Roland were erected in the cities of northern, non-Roman Germany.<sup>168</sup> The oldest surviving Roland is the stone figure in Bremen from 1404, which replaced a statue of 1366 (fig. 51). None of the wooden Rolands survives. These giants were connected to local cults, liturgically sanctioned, of Charlemagne.<sup>169</sup> They also seemed to have served as quasi-heathen protective “saints” or as symbols of civic or patrician autonomy against feudal power.<sup>170</sup> There was also a comic dimension to them, a cutting down to size by exaggeration of size. By appropriating a giant hero and controlling its representation and display, the community neutralized it. The figure was extracted from a substitution chain and reconstituted as a local product. It parodied the pagan idol known from reports and lore. Some giants dangerously relativized the Christian pantheon, for example, the figure of St. Christopher, patron of travelers, represented at three or four times life size on the north interior wall, just across from the main entrance, in hundreds of churches all over Europe.<sup>171</sup> Profane local heroes



51. Roland, Bremen, 1404. Photo: author.

**168.** Though their range was wider than this, extending to Verona in the south and Dôle in the west. Rita Lejeune and Jacques Stiennon, *The Legend of Roland in the Middle Ages* (New York: Phaidon, 1971), 357.

**169.** Emperor Charles IV also had a cult of Charlemagne and Roland; he purchased two ivory trumpets that belonged to Roland; Lejeune and Stiennon, *Legend of Roland*, 354.

**170.** Lejeune and Stiennon, *Legend of Roland*, 357–61. Wolfgang Grape, *Roland: Die ältesten Standbilder als Wegbereiter der Neuzeit* (Hürtgenwald: Pressler, 1990), with recent bibliography.

**171.** H.-Fr. Rosenfeld, *Der hl. Christophorus: Seine Verehrung und seine Legende* (Acta Academiae Aboensis—Humaniora 10, 1937) (Åbo: Akademi, 1937), 423–30, on the magical properties of the St. Christopher images.

were carved on cathedral façades or even as free-standing statues.<sup>172</sup> Archduke Sigismund of Austria erected a wooden statue of the giant Hoyme at the monastery of Wilten near Innsbruck. Hoyme was supposedly buried somewhere at Wilten. The tongue of the dragon killed by Hoyme was kept at Wilten; Felix Fabri saw it in 1484.<sup>173</sup> As a joke the antiquarian and imperial advisor Johannes Fuchsmagen sent a Hoyme tongue to the relic collector Florian Waldauf.<sup>174</sup> Cyriacus Spangenberg later reported that the statue, as large as “a stove,” portrayed Hoyme in armor and with pointed shoes and a long beard and hair, perhaps modeled on the Roland statues.<sup>175</sup> Such jests functioned as a safety valve for skepticism and provocations to the poetic imagination, protecting the legitimacy of the more important though equally dubious relics hidden within the church, namely, the body parts of the saints.

The dangerous possibility that all origin myths might need to be redeemed as mere poetry was crudely rehearsed as vernacular entertainment. The poetic was signaled by fantasy, exaggeration, and parodic, relativizing crisscrossing of modes. All this kept aesthetic play in its own special domain, preventing it from contaminating the dominant documentary culture. A colossus could not be blamed on an “artist,” for it was still potentially too serious an undertaking. Poets were often held responsible for untruth, but in the fifteenth century painters and sculptors did not yet play this role. They were often praised, but not for telling lies. Societies, not individuals, erected statues. The comic author was the community itself.

The portrait of the mythical hero became a matrix for aesthetic experimentation in the late fifteenth century. The representation of the archaic hero became a free zone where fictionalizing art could test its capacities, isolated from real-world concerns about origin myths or idolatry. An example is the group of drawings and prints of wild men and other primeval forest dwellers, a tribe that could even include St. Christopher, by the Regensburg painter Albrecht Altdorfer.<sup>176</sup> In the first years of the sixteenth

172. For Verona, Modena, Cremona, and Monza, see Adolf Reinle, *Zeichensprache der Architektur* (Zurich and Munich: Artemis, 1976), 281.

173. Othenio Abel, *Vorzeitliche Tierreste im deutschen Mythos, Brauchtum und Volksglauben* (Jena: Fischer, 1939), 179.

174. Fuchsmagen also sent two huge teeth, possibly from a mammoth, to Waldauf, telling him that they were relics of St. Christopher. Abel, *Vorzeitliche Tierreste*, 193–96, 113; Sebastian Ruf, “Dr. Johannes Fuchsmagen, 1469–1510,” *Zeitschrift des Ferdinandeums*, 3.21 (1877): 118. The Wilten tongue survives; it seems to be the beak of a Mediterranean swordfish.

175. Spangenberg, *Adelspiegel*, 275 v.

176. For example, Altdorfer, *Wild Man*, 1508, London, British Museum, inv. no. 1910-6-11-1; Christopher S. Wood, *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape* (London: Reaktion Books, 1993), p. 155, ill. 105.

century, Altdorfer repeatedly worked through the thematics of the colossal hero, converting him irreversibly into a screen for imaginative play. His drawings and prints performed the equivalent parodic operation, on an intimate scale, that the vernacular Roland statues had. Because the media of signed, collectible drawing and print were also arenas, since Dürer, for the idea of artistic authorship, Altdorfer was able to extend the process of localization begun by the Roland statues and finally fix the origin of the heroic figure in a single point, the artist himself. The Italian counterpart to this process of authorial colonization of the project of aesthetic play, more dramatic because played out in the public field of colossal statuary, was Michelangelo's *David*, which was carved from one of the blocks abandoned by Agostino di Duccio, who had failed to complete the commission in 1463 of a pair of giants for the tribune of the cathedral in Florence.<sup>177</sup>

By introducing into his text the possibility of poetic invention and a merely virtual status for monuments, Bernhard von Breydenbach opened a path toward a more anthropological understanding of belief. The meaning of the site or the monument will eventually be revealed as the sum of the repeated acts that it provokes. Its factual link to an origin will be acknowledged as unknowable, moot.

The referential assumption that guided travel, whereby every relic was linked to a stable origin and every monument treated as if it were a relic, builds to a fantastic vision of the past. Eyewitness reports and the repetition of lore, including poetic lore, are all crushed together. There seemed no way out of this closed system, for travel was directed by the very authoritative reports it was meant to test, and perceptions and descriptions were heavily preformed. Replication technology, including not only book and image printing but also the mechanical reproduction of statues and pictures, enhanced and intensified reference. At the same time, replication technology was starting to pull apart the imaginative compression, telescoping and overlapping. It opened the referential connections to public testing. The interference between the two approaches to evidence is legible in the historiography of the period. Sigismund Meisterlin, the Augsburg historian, took the supposed pagan sculptures outside the cathedral of Würzburg as evidence of worship of Mars and a temple of Diana or Vesta.<sup>178</sup> Conrad Celtis incorporated archeological inference into his

**177.** Virginia Bush, *Colossal Sculpture of the Cinquecento* (New York: Garland, 1976), xxix; Creighton Gilbert, "A New Sight in 1500: The Colossal," in *"All the World's a Stage . . .": Art and Pageantry in the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. Barbara Wisch and Susan Scott Munshower (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 397–403, reflects on the reemergence of the format.

**178.** Meisterlin, cited in Borchartd, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (see chap. 1, n. 55), 81. See also Schedel, *World Chronicle*, 160r.



poetry. In his travel poem *Amores*, he writes of Würzburg, the metropolis of his youth:

Tradition has it that when the Greeks were seeking the Gallic lands  
 They unloaded their rafts on the banks of the Rhine,  
 And from there spreading out through the Hercynian pastures and valleys  
 They constructed in this mild place a Greek city.  
 And since they sacrificed black sheep by the rite of Hades  
 And the druids taught in sacred temples,  
 They gave the city its Greek name after Hades,  
 And the people preserve the language of the Greeks to this day.  
 For they make sacrifices in the Greek language every year  
 And the whole temple resounds with Argive strains,  
 Before whose steps old sculptures,  
 Images of the old gods Athena and Mars, remain.

*(Fama est, dum Grai petiissent Gallica rura,  
 Ad Rheni ripas exonerasse rates,  
 Inde per Hercynios saltus vallesque patentes  
 Struxisse his placidis moenia Graia locis.  
 Cumque atras Diti litarent more bidentes  
 Et druides templis instituere sacris,  
 Hinc a Dite dabant urbi sua nomina Graeca,  
 Graecorum linguam gensque hodierna tenet.  
 Nam faciunt lingua Graecorum sacra quotannis  
 Et templum Argolicus personat omne modis,  
 Ante gradus cuius veterum simulacra deorum  
 Palladis et Martis signa vetusta manent.) (I.2)*

It was the confusion of the categories of poetry and topography that led to Celtis's druid-sighting in the forest.

Artifacts had a privileged relationship to origins; the published artifact was an artifact stripped of that privilege. Woodcut illustrations enveloped by printed text, like those in Breydenbach's book or in the *World Chronicle* of Hartmann Schedel published seven years later, exerted a peculiar new force. The woodcut images, employing a newly invented rhetoric of credibility, were presented as the record of eyewitnessing. Movable type converted the woodcut into an instrument of knowledge; the woodcut illustration in turn set ever higher standards for the text as a whole, hinting that the text itself now had to be interrogated for authenticity. The illustration drew a new frontier within the text between what could and could

not be trusted. Print installed an internal categorization grid where none had been necessary before. Writing itself had once been a stabilizer. Now print and archeology—the systematic labeling and publication of material evidence—emerged as potential metastabilizers, repairing but in the same gesture inducing a loss of confidence in mere, authored writing. The new historiography found itself unable to decide whether it was supposed to display the monument, or whether the monument itself was actually an unstable document and needed to be converted into writing. Cultural uneasiness about the power of print and replication to neutralize myth was acted out through archeology and the persistent cult of relics, including the quixotic quests to find the outsized bones of the epic heroes.

### The quest for the bones of Siegfried

Both Frederick III and his son Maximilian took an active interest in high medieval vernacular poetry, such as the courtly epics *Parsifal* and *Titarel* by Wolfram von Eschenbach or the anonymous *Nibelungenlied*. In 1502 Maximilian commissioned an illuminated compendium of heroic poems based on a manuscript containing parts of the *Nibelungenlied* and other poems.<sup>179</sup> He expected the old poems to do double duty, as poetry and as historical source material for his own genealogy. Maximilian tried to convert the vernacular heroic literature into good history by stripping the old stories down to a bare skeleton of names.<sup>180</sup> Transposed to genealogy, the heroic tales took on an aura of factuality. Stranger still, Maximilian tried to reinforce his picture of the heroic past with material evidence.

According to the Lutheran humanist Caspar Bruschius, Maximilian sponsored excavations in Worms in the year 1495 for the corpse of Siegfried, hero of the *Nibelungenlied*.<sup>181</sup> Several other sources speak of an earlier excavation conducted in 1488 by Frederick III.<sup>182</sup> The account closest to the event comes from the diary of the city secretary Adam von Schwenheim: “On that occasion the emperor summoned the head of the city trenchworks and arranged for an excavation, crosswise in the churchyard of St. Meinhard, to see if one could find the bones of the Hürnen Seyfrid;

179. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. ser. nov. 2663. Franz Unterkircher, ed., *Ambraser Heldenbuch*, facsimile and commentary (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1973).

180. Jan-Dirk Müller, *Gedechnus: Literatur und Hofgesellschaft um Maximilian I* (Munich: Fink, 1982), 87, 169–72, 191–97.

181. Bruschius, *Monasteriorum Germaniae praecipuorum chronologia* (see chap. 2, n. 5), 82r.

182. On Friederich III's interest in historical relics and forms, see Graf, “Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst,” 393.

they dug down to the water and found nothing but a head and a few bones, which were bigger than a normal head and bones."<sup>183</sup> A chronicle composed around 1501–3 by a monk at the Augustinian cloister of Kirschgarten at Worms, meanwhile, reports that “one heard about a famous tomb of a certain giant, said to be the Hürnen Siegfried, in the cemetery of St. Cecilia or St. Meinhard just outside the city in the direction of Speyer. This is held to be true by the stupidity of the rustics, because in that place there are signs placed. The emperor wanted to learn if this were true, upon which he called his stewards to him and gave them four or five florins, saying, ‘Go to the city council and tell them to dig in that cemetery in my name, in order to learn whether this report is true.’ Those accepting the money for digging gathered together and went to the aforementioned place, where they dug to the level of the water table and found no sign of a human body or bones. And thus the emperor’s messengers reported that it was all a fiction.”<sup>184</sup>

As capital of the Burgundian kingdom, Worms figured prominently in the legend of the Nibelungs.<sup>185</sup> In Worms, as in cities all over Europe, the prehistoric giants found a second life in processions and plays, as costumed characters on stilts, as ephemeral figures on painted canvas.<sup>186</sup> The tales of heroes and dragons may even have mingled in the minds of citizens with the story of the conflict with Julius Caesar. In 1493 the city had three inscriptions carved on the façade of the New Mint. The texts referred to the emperor Frederick; to the battle of the Vangiones, the ancient citi-

**183.** “Auff das male begert der keyser der stadt graben mecher und liesz graben kreutzwysse auff sant Meinharts kirchhoff, ob man gebeyne mocht fynden vom hornyn Sifridt; man grub bisz auff wasser und fand nichts dann einen kopff und etlich gebeyn, die waren grosser dann sust gemein dot menschen haupt und gebeyn.” Heinrich Boos, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Worms*, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1893), 563.

**184.** “Item audiens esse sepulchrum famosum cuiusdam gigantis in coemeterio beatae Ceciliae vel beati Meynardi, quod est in suburbio versus Spiram, qui gigas dicebatur Sifridus der Hörnen, tenuitque hoc rusticorum stoliditas, quia in loco illo etiam signa posita videbantur. Voluit imperator ipse hoc experiri, si verum esset, unde vocans ad se dispensatorum suum, quatuor vel quinque dedit florenos, dicens: ‘Ite ad consulatum et dicite, ut nomine meo faciant fodi in coemeterio illo, ut agnoscam, si vera sit fama illa.’ Qui accipientes pecuniam ad fodiendum conduxerunt, qui ad locum praefatum venientes usque ad ebullitionem aquae foderunt et nullem signum humani corporis vel ossium ibi invenerunt. Et sic renunciantes imperatori, fictitium illud fuisse narraverunt.” Boos, *Quellen*, 92. The abnormally large bones mentioned by Adam von Schwegenheim are absent from this account. The account of Friedrich Zorn from around 1570 follows the Kirschgarten chronicle; *Wormser Chronik von Friedrich Zorn*, ed. Wilhelm Arnold (Stuttgart, 1857), 196.

**185.** Helmut Berndt, *Das 40. Abenteuer: Auf den Spuren des Nibelungenliedes* (Oldenburg and Hamburg: Stalling, 1968), 123–28 generally, on Nibelung sites in Worms.

**186.** Bush, *The Colossal Sculpture of the Cinquecento*, 14–16. For the giants in the procession organized for Pope Paul II by the commune of Rome in 1466, see Philine Helas, *Lebende Bilder in der italienischen Festkultur des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Akademie, 1999), 105.

zens of Worms, against Julius Caesar; and to the historical freedoms of the city.<sup>187</sup> Above the inscriptions was a painted or carved image of an enthroned Friedrich.<sup>188</sup> In the same year the city had the local painter Nicolaus Nivergalt paint figures of the heroes Kriemhild, Günther, and Siegfried on the façade of the mint.<sup>189</sup> The arcades of the mint were festooned with colossal bones said to belong either to a dragon, to some hostile, vanquished giant, or even to Siegfried. In 1551 Bruschius mentioned that the lance of Siegfried was preserved in the cathedral.<sup>190</sup>

The relationship between colossal statues and the belief in prehistoric giants was cyclical. Paintings and statues seemed to confirm the historical reality of giants; the reality of giants justified the quest for bones and eventually the construction of new monuments, which would in turn confirm the historicity of the heroes.

Emperor Friedrich died in 1493, and already in the following year the new King Maximilian was to be found in Worms, at a ceremonial reception in front of the mint. The mayor Reinhard Noltz described the episode in his diary: "The King dismounted and had on his hat a wreath of white and red carnations made just like the painted wreath in the hand of the lady Kriemhilde on the mint."<sup>191</sup> In 1495 Maximilian resumed the archeological pursuit, at least in Bruschius's account. The Imperial Diet at Worms in that year was enlivened by neochivalric contests and festivities. Maximilian's chivalric autobiography *Theuerdank* (chap. 77) describes a victory in a hand-to-hand tournament against a rival. Bruschius noted that the Siegfried burial site lay between St. Meinhard and St. Cecilia and that "the mound is marked by two stones emerging from the earth, measured three times by me: it is forty-five feet long. . . . Emperor Maximilian, a prince most zealous for everything ancient, when he celebrated the Imperial Diet

187. The facts about the façade of the mint are summarized in Fuchs, *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms*, no. 333; for the cathedral inscriptions see no. 27.

188. Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage* [see chap. 2, n. 43], 165.

189. Drawings by the late seventeenth-century architects Peter and Johann Friedrich Hamman give us an idea of Nivergalt's façade paintings. Fritz Reuter, *Peter und Johann Friedrich Hamman, Handzeichnungen von Worms aus der Zeit vor und nach der Stadtzerstörung 1689 im 'Pfälzischen Erbfolgekrieg'* (Worms: Bessler, 1989), nos. 4, 25, pp. 61, 103. Only the Kriemhild identification can be confirmed by a contemporary source; see Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, 164–91. Zorn around 1570 referred to "the Emperor, heroes, and other dragons and images." The paintings were restored in 1592. Siegfried is not mentioned as a subject in any source before Quad von Kinkelbach in 1609. Johann Fischart, meanwhile, referred to a fresco of a chivalric figure on the Neuturm as Siegfried in 1594.

190. Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, 105–6, 93–94. Bruschius was cited by Adalbert Horawitz, *Caspar Bruschius: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Humanismus und der Refarmation* (Prague and Vienna, 1874), 154 n. 1 (from 1682 edition, p. 294).

191. Boos, *Quellen*, 379.

at Worms in 1495, had Siegfried's grave mound opened and excavated. But other than water nothing was found."<sup>192</sup>

The context for the Worms excavation, apparently credulous, was the habit of euhemeristic interpretation of the sagas. The preface of the *Heldenbuch* published in 1477, reading the epics as poetic reflections of distant historical truths, explained that "the giants were always emperors, kings, dukes, counts, and lords, vassals and knights, and were all noble people."<sup>193</sup> After all, there was a historical core to the legend of the Nibelungs. The hero Siegfried may well have lived near the end of the Burgundian dynasty in 443. Fragments of historical fact from the migration period were emerging with some clarity in late medieval chronicles. The *Kirschgarten Chronicle*, following the French historian Robert Gaguin, reported that the Visigothic queen Brunhilde restored the splendor of Worms after its destruction by Attila in 443.<sup>194</sup> And it was especially the death of Siegfried, recounted in the legend, that identified him as a historical being and not merely a mythological abstraction.<sup>195</sup>

A parallel to the quest for Siegfried is the cult of St. Sigismund promoted by Emperor Charles IV in the previous century.<sup>196</sup> Sigismund, king of Burgundy, converted to Christianity in 497. In 1365 Charles IV brought his head from St. Maurice in the Valais to Prague, established a cult, and gave his own son, the future emperor and subject of Dürer's Rathaus portrait, the name of the saint.

Such was the matrix for the later imperial quest for epic bones, a new weave of relic-piety and historical study. For even the most fanciful research programs were subject to critical checks. The oversized bones described by an optimistic Adam von Schwechenheim in his account of the 1488 excavation at Worms were rejected as evidence by later commentators. The excavations themselves were guided by local oral tradition apparently corroborated by the two stone markers and the tumulus (although the comment by Adam von Schwechenheim that Friedrich dug "cross-wise" suggests that the burial plot was not so clearly marked out). The site

192. "Tumulus duobus e terra prominentibus saxis notatus, ter a me dimensus, habet in longitudine pedes quadraginta quinque. . . . Maximilianus Imperator, antiquitatum omnium studiosissimus princeps, cum anno 1495 comitia Wormatiae celebraret, aperiri et effodi tumulum iussit, sed praeter aquas nihil in eo invenit." Bruschius, *Monasteriorum Germaniae praecipuorum chronologia*, 82a; and cited by Horawitz, *Caspar Bruschius*, 154 n. 1 (from 1682 edition, p. 294). It is of course possible that only Friedrich dug for Siegfried's bones and that Bruschius was misled.

193. *Heldenbuch*, cited by Müller, *Gedechnus*, p. 192: "Die rysen allwegen waren keiser, künig, herczogen, grafen und herren, diensteleüt ritter, und knecht, und waren alle edel leüt."

194. Boos, *Quellen*, 9.

195. Recall that the *Nibelungenlied* had identified the burial site of Siegfried as the cemetery of the cathedral of Worms.

196. Berndt, *Das 40. Abenteuer*, 86.

between the two small churches, near the convent of Maria Münster south of the city, was not far from the so-called heathen cemetery. Excavations at the site in the 1890s did indeed reveal traces of Roman and Frankish burial plots.<sup>197</sup>

The Worms excavations were also checked against a textual account of the epic events, the *Hürnen Seyfrid*, which had come to light around 1400 as a raw and vivid retelling of the Siegfried material.<sup>198</sup> (No one at the time was aware of the classic text of the *Nibelungenlied*, which clearly states that Siegfried was buried at the cathedral of Worms.)<sup>199</sup> Caspar Bruschius in 1551 says specifically that the giant sought in the churchyard near Maria Münster was the figure known as Corneus Sigfridus, “about whom there survives to this day a certain Germanic poem entitled *Der Hürnen Seyfrid*.”<sup>200</sup> The *Hürnen Seyfrid* adapted the epic material of the early and central Middle Ages for a new public and a new epoch. It did not so much extend the old oral tradition as initiate a new and relatively independent textual tradition.<sup>201</sup>

Around 1500 one might also have found testimony to the reality of the heroes in profane fresco painting. Siegfried belonged to one of the traditional three “triads” of heroes. Maximilian drew no fundamental distinction between these chivalric figures and the heroes of biblical or Roman antiquity.<sup>202</sup> At Castle Runkelstein near Bozen in the south Tyrol—possibly the very place where Maximilian was shown the *Heldenbuch* manuscript, basis for his own compilation—Siegfried had been portrayed as one of the “three best swordsmen,” alongside Dietrich of Bern and Dietleib of Steier

197. Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, 84.

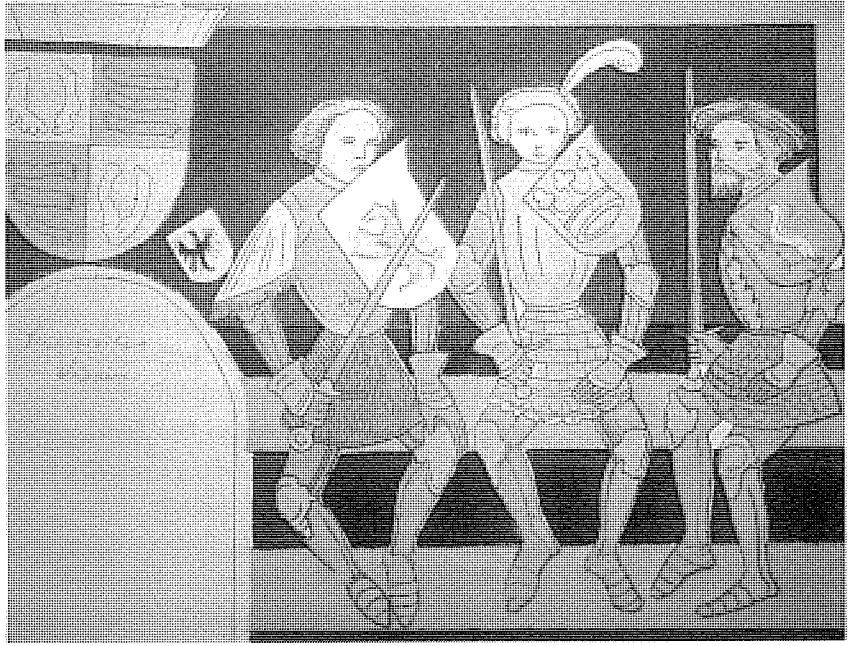
198. Volker-Jeske Kreyher, *Der Hürnen Seyfrid: Die Deutung der Siegfriedgestalt im Spätmittelalter* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1986). The text, for decades widely disseminated in manuscript, was published around 1530 in Nuremberg by Kunigund Hergotin and Georg Wachter with woodcut illustrations by Sebald Beham. Helmut Weinacht, “Das Motiv vom Hürnen Seyfrid im Nürnberg des 16. Jhs.,” in *Hans Sachs und Nürnberg: Bedingungen und Probleme reichsstädtischer Literatur (Nürnberger Forschungen, vol. 19)*, ed. Horst Brunner, Gerhard Hirschmann, and Fritz Schnelbögl (Nürnberg: Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 1976), 137–181. Parts of the story had already been published, for example, the fight between Seyfrid and Dietrich von Bern in the Rosengarten at Worms, represented in a woodcut in the 1509 Knoblauch edition of the *Heldenbuch. Das helden buch mit synen figuren* (Strasbourg: Johann Knoblauch, 1509), Gv v ff.

199. Even Friedrich Zorn in 1570 was still unaware of this. Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, 23–24.

200. “De quo extat hodie adhuc poema quoddam Germanicum ‘der hurnen Seyfrid’ in scriptum.” Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, 84.

201. H. W. J. Kroes, *Untersuchung über das Lied vom Hürnen Seyfrid* (Gouda: Van Goor Zonen, 1924), argued that the *Hürnen Seyfrid* was rooted in the High Middle Ages and stands alongside the *Nibelungenlied*, but this has not been generally accepted.

202. Müller, *Gedechtnus*, 169. See also Horst Schroeder, *Der Tapas der Nine Worthies in Literature und bildender Kunst* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971).



52. *Three Best Swordsmen*, c. 1400, fresco, Castle Runkelstein. Watercolor copy in Ignaz Vinzenz Zingerle, *Fresken-Cyklus des Schlosses Runkelstein bei Bozen* (Innsbruck, 1857), plate 1.

and holding his sword Balmung, here transmitted by a nineteenth-century watercolor copy (fig. 52).<sup>203</sup> Although these murals had been painted at the beginning of the fifteenth century, Maximilian's contemporaries possessed neither the capacity nor the will to date old paintings on the basis of style. For all anyone knew they were centuries old. In the first years of the sixteenth century, Maximilian arranged to have the Runkelstein paintings restored, "renewed," according to the document, "on account of the good old stories."<sup>204</sup>

It is hard to understand why historians kept their minds open to the possibility of giants. The many ancient sources that mentioned giants must have carried great authority.<sup>205</sup> Suetonius (*De vita Caesarum*, § 72) reported

203. Ignaz Vinzenz Zingerle, *Fresken-Cyklus des Schlosses Runkelstein bei Bozen* (Innsbruck, 1857), plate 1. Walter Haug et al., *Runkelstein: Die Wandmalereien des Sommerhauses Wiesbaden*: Reichert, 1982).

204. "Das schloss Runkelstain mit dem gemel lassen zu vernewen von wegen der gueten alten istory." See the account of this episode by Larry Silver, "'Die guten alten istory': Emperor Maximilian I, 'Theuerdank,' and the 'Heldenbuch' Tradition," *Jahrbuch des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte* 2 (1986): 71–106. The phrase "guten alten istory" appears in a document of 1502; Jörg Kölderer was sent to work at Runkelstein in 1503; further commissions went to Friedrich Pacher in 1504 and to Marx Reichlich in 1508; a last payment is recorded in 1511. See also the Laurin frescoes at Schloss Lichtenberg, Vintsgau, and the Iwein frescoes at Hesselhof in Schmalkalden.

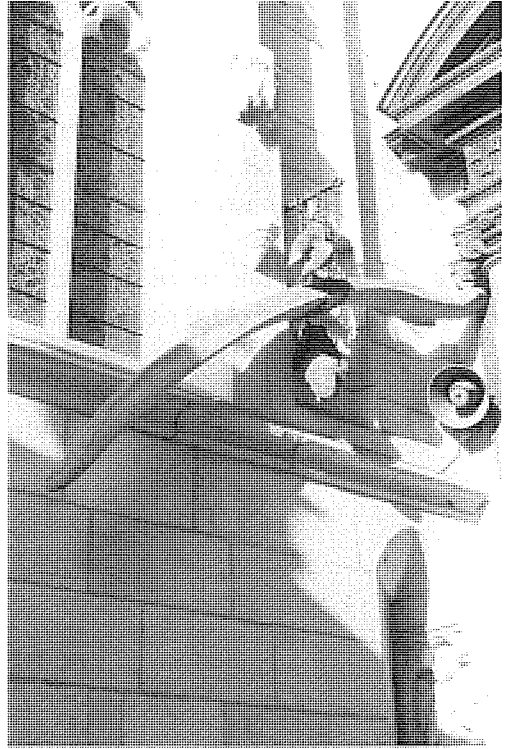
205. *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, ed. Georg Wissowa, 83 vols. (Stuttgart, 1893–1978), Supplementband 3 (1918), cols. 655–759; Paul Hans Stemmermann, *Die Anfänge der deutschen Vorgeschichtsforschung* (PhD diss., University of Heidelberg, 1934), 5. Abel, *Vorzeitliche Tierreste*, 97–114.

that Emperor Augustus had displayed the bones of primordial giants at his villa at Capri. Augustine (*City of God* 15.9) discussed the problem of giants and concluded that it must have been so. In the Middle Ages whale or mammoth bones were customarily interpreted as the relics of giants or dragons and exhibited on church portals like those still suspended above the gate of the Wawel Cathedral in Krakow (fig. 53).<sup>206</sup>

Many medieval discoveries of giant bones are recorded. Boccaccio described a giant cadaver discovered by peasants near Trapani in western Sicily that had unfortunately crumbled instantly, leaving only a leaden staff. Old buildings were attributed to giant architects, like the tower in Worms where Charlemagne was once trapped and which according to a thirteenth-century monk had been built “in old times by giants.”<sup>207</sup> Albrecht Dürer saw, and credited, the bones of a giant hero in Antwerp, reporting in his diary that the thigh bone alone measured five and half feet. The giant once “ruled in Antwerp and performed great deeds; the city fathers wrote much about him in an old book.”<sup>208</sup>

Many scholars clung to the topoi of giants, as if the antiquity and poetry of the tradition were too attractive to abandon.<sup>209</sup> Friedrich Zorn, the Worms chronicler of 1570, rejected much of the Siegfried fable and yet believed in giants, affirming that “although there may indeed have been giants in this region, what is told about the lance and the sword hilt of this Hürnen Seyfrid is a complete fiction.”<sup>210</sup>

King Francis I of France, Maximilian’s younger contemporary, once stopped at Blaye, near Bordeaux, in order to inspect the tomb of the hero Roland. He wanted to see for himself whether Roland had been a giant. The king had the body exhumed and found the armor rusted but intact. Francis was relieved to discover that Roland had in fact been a quite normal-sized



53. Bones of “dragon,”  
Krakow, Wawel.  
Photo: author.

206. Abel, *Vorzeitliche Tierreste*, 175–79.

207. Kranzbühler, *Worms und die Heldensage*, 7.

208. Dürer, *Diary of the Journey to the Netherlands*, 3 September 1520. Rupprich, ed., *Dürer Schriftlicher Nachlass*, 1: 158. The “old book” was apparently a manuscript in the Antwerp city archive describing the deeds of Brabo and other primeval giants.

209. Stephens, *Giants in Those Days* (see chap. 2, n. 19); and Jean Céard, “La querelle des géants et la jeunesse du monde,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 8 (1978): 37–76.

210. *Wormser Chronik von Friedrich Zorn*, 196: “Ob schon etwan riesen hierum gewohnet, ist doch lauter fabelwerk, was von diesem hörnin Siefrid seiner stangen und schwertskopf gedichtet wird.”



man.<sup>211</sup> The English, for their part, were preoccupied with the historical Arthur. Interest in Arthur waxed under the Tudors, precisely when skeptical historians were beginning to question his reality. The body had been found at Glastonbury in the twelfth century.<sup>212</sup> The printer William Caxton, in the preface to his edition of Malory's *Le morte d'Arthur* (1485), rebutted skeptics by listing the "many evydences to the contrarye," including the tomb of Arthur at Glastonbury, Gawain's skull at Dover, and the Round Table itself at Winchester.<sup>213</sup> Henry VIII seems to have kept an open mind about the question.<sup>214</sup>

Francis, Friedrich, possibly Maximilian as well wanted to rescue their heroes from legend and instead transport them to historical time. The discovery of a corpse, after all, was the traditional Christian way of transforming a myth into a historical fact.

211. Céard, "La querelle des géants et la jeunesse du monde," 45. But see also Lejeune and Stiennon, *The Legend of Roland in the Middle Ages*, 1: 394–99 on Francis's interest in Roland and on the tomb opening; a contemporary witness of the tomb's contents found in fact nothing but tiny fragments of bone.

212. Schnapp, *Discovery of the Past* (New York: Abrams, 1997), 97.

213. William Caxton, preface to Malory, *Le morte d'Arthur* (London, 1485), 2v.

214. T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London, 1950), 42, and generally on the cult of Arthur, 36–44, 87–98.

### Recovery of the round arch

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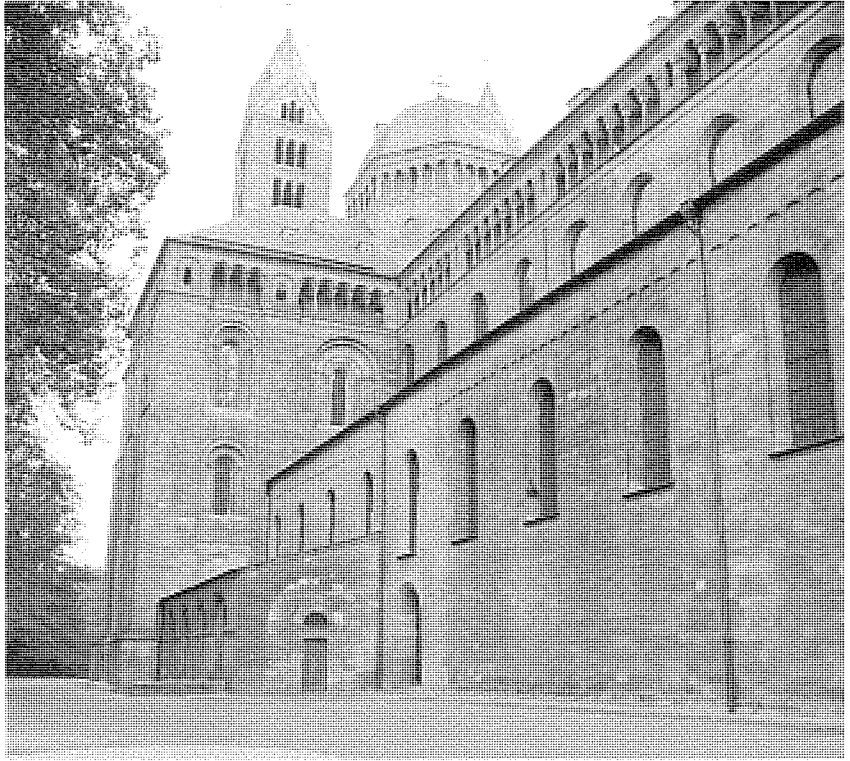
In a 322-line poem published in 1486 the Alsatian humanist Jakob Wimpfeling (1450–1528) expressed nationalist pride in the huge cathedral at Speyer, the burial site of eight German emperors and kings:

*Templum augustum ingens validis sublime columnis,  
 Illustre et plenum laudis et artis opus.  
 Tecti equidem rutilo fastigia lata metallo,  
 Et simili turres conditione nitent.*<sup>1</sup>

(Vast majestic temple aloft on strong columns  
 Work famous with praise and full of art.  
 Truly the broad sides of the roof shine with golden metal,  
 And likewise the towers.)

Wimpfeling's hexameters go on to describe the six mighty towers, the chapels, the choir, the crypt, and the silk tapestries that hang in the nave. The church was begun in 1030 under Emperor Konrad II and expanded later in the eleventh century under Heinrich IV. The cathedral rivaled Cluny as the largest church in Christendom. The building was 435 feet long, the vaults of the nave 107 feet above the ground, the crossing half again as high. The Basilica of Maxentius in Rome, in comparison, had a clear span of only 83 feet. The vaults of the nave at Cluny were 98 feet in height. Only the French Gothic cathedrals, two centuries later, would exceed the

1. Jakob Wimpfeling, *In laudem ecclesiae spirensis* (Basel: Jod. Gallus, 1486), reprinted in Wilhelm Eisengrein, *Chronologicalum rerum amplissimae clarissimaeque urbis Spirae . . . libri XVI* (Dillingen, 1564), 14r–19r. On the poem see Joseph Knepper, *Jakob Wimpfeling (1450–1528)* (Freiburg: Herder, 1902), 59–61.



54. Speyer Cathedral,  
eleventh century.

Photo: Foto Marburg/  
Art Resource, NY.

dimensions of Speyer.<sup>2</sup> With its round-arched arcade or dwarf gallery running all around the building, its massive piers with engaged semicircular shafts, its *all'antica* capitals, and above all its sublime proportions, Speyer seemed the match of the greatest ancient Roman structures (fig. 54). The Salian emperors asserted a political continuity with the past not only by rivaling Roman bulk, but also by adapting building elements found at the Roman imperial structures at Ravenna, Split, and Autun.<sup>3</sup> These connections were taken seriously by later German scholars like Wimpfeling, who lived in an age when the last great cathedral-building projects were running out of fuel. The cities of the fifteenth century built spacious barns for worship and mounted skyscraping church towers high into the sky. The tower of St. Stephen's in Vienna was completed in 1433, one tower of the cathedral of Strasbourg in 1439. Both buildings, as well as Speyer, which had burned in 1450 but was immediately rebuilt, were admired and praised by Aeneas Silvius in his book about Germany.<sup>4</sup> The roof of the church at Ulm covered thirty thousand people and its tower was projected to be the tallest in the world at 525 feet. But that tower was not completed until the late nineteenth century. The cathedral of Cologne stalled half-built.

2. Kenneth John Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture, 800–1200* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), 131–35.

3. Bandmann, *Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger* (see chap. 2, n. 52), 43.

4. Piccolomini, *Deutschland* (see chap. 1, n. 1), 2.7, 2.8, 2.11, pp. 94, 98.

Although by Wimpfeling's time the wealth of the German cities had been growing for a century, the undertaking of a new architectural project on the Babylonian scale of Speyer was unthinkable. Yet to Wimpfeling's eyes, the massive walls and vaults of Speyer seemed the most fitting of possible responses to Rome with its mighty Constantinian basilicas. Wimpfeling was not misdating the cathedral of Speyer, for the direct links to imperial patrons left little doubt about foundation dates. He knew the building history, more or less. But he understood Speyer's architectural references as reinstatements of the best, oldest building ways. Romanesque buildings in the eyes of the late fifteenth century were linked to antiquity in a more than merely formal sense, but also in a more than merely symbolic sense. The fifteenth century saw a more closely meshed tradition than may have actually existed, and in fact defined itself—defined the predicament of its own modernity—against the myth of such a tradition.

Jakob Wimpfeling's vision of German continuity with the Roman past complemented the contemporary lucubrations of Conrad Celtis on the modern fate of the prototype buildings in Rome itself. Celtis composed an ironic epigram in the voice of the famous embalmed girl, "Julia, daughter of Claudius," excavated in April 1485 on the Via Appia:

*Annos mille sub hoc tumulo conclusa jacebam;*

*Haec nunc Romanis extumulata loquar:*

*Non veteres video Romano more Quirites,*

*Justitia insignes nec pietate viros.*

*Sed tantum magnas tristi cum mente ruinas*

*Conspicio, veterum jam monumenta virum.*

*Si mihi post centum rursus revideberis annos,*

*Nomen Romanum vix superesse reor. (III, 40)*

(A thousand years I have lain immured beneath this stone; now, released from the grave I will give the Romans this message: I see no citizens now as the Romans were, outstanding in justice and sense of duty, but sad at heart I look upon ruins only, now but a memorial to the men of the past. And if after another hundred years I see you again, next to nothing will be left of the glory that was Rome.)<sup>5</sup>

Celtis predicted badly, for Rome by 1585 will have gone some ways toward recovering its ancient glory. In 1589 Sixtus V would raise a toppled Egyptian obelisk and mount it at the Flaminian Gate. Celtis knew only the Rome of Sixtus IV, when the rebuilding of St. Peter's was still only an idea and the obelisks still lay helpless on the ground. In 1485 it was still just possible to

5. Translation by Leonard Forster, *Selections from Conrad Celtis, 1459–1508* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 35. On the beautiful corpse of the Via Appia, see Fritz Saxl, "The Classical Inscription in Renaissance Art and Politics," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (1940/41): 26–27, 44–45.

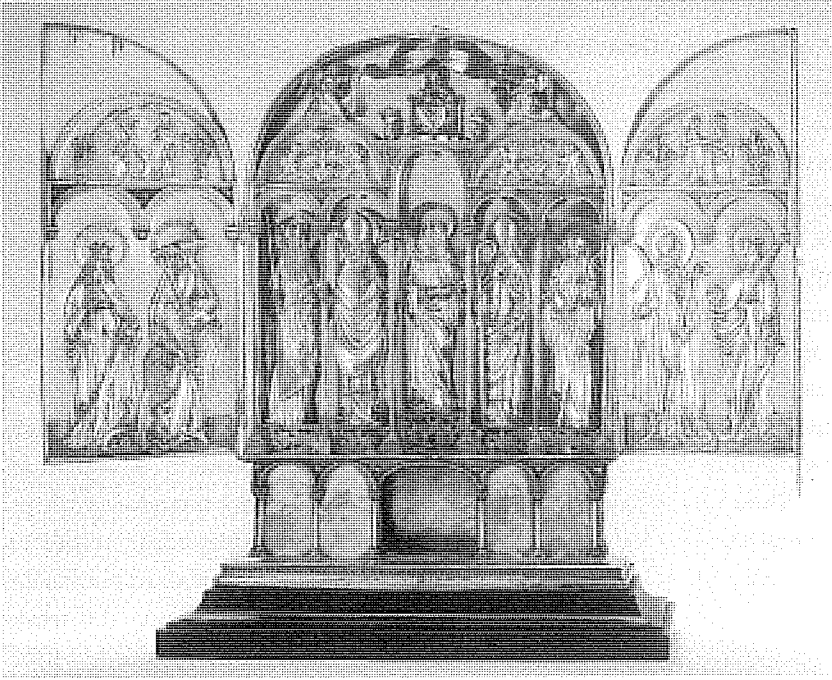
believe that Rome's long decline would continue unchecked. For a decade or two the German humanists could imagine that they were in a reasonable position to assume the cultural mantle of ancient Rome. All that German builders and artists needed to do was attend to the achievements, close to home, of the Frankish emperors, a native archive of Roman forms.

Because it was not so easy to build a second Speyer, a gargantuan cathedral, the Roman forms were more likely in Celtis and Wimpfeling's time to emerge on a microarchitectural scale. The Augsburg goldsmith Jörg Seld, for example, broke with the prevailing custom of pointed or Gothic forms by imitating obsolete constructive vocabularies, not only in the round arches of his reliquaries, sacrament houses, and altarpieces, forms that had not been used in local buildings for a century and a half or more, but also in the pre-Gothic alphabets of the inscriptions on those same objects. In the middle section of the small reliquary triptych commissioned from Seld by the Eichstätt canon Bernhard Adelman von Adelmansfelden in 1492, five saints stand under round arches supported on thin columns with Attic bases and basket capitals (fig. 55).<sup>6</sup> In the round gables above the niches are plants tended by spade-wielding putti, traces of pagan antiquity mediated by medieval book illumination and by modern Italian architecture and prints. All this amounted to a generalized antique manner offered as a decorous supplement to the subject matter of the engraved scenes on the exterior of the wings, from the life of St. Willibald, eighth-century bishop of Eichstätt. The inscription on the predella naming the patron is in Roman capitals. The engraved scenes, by contrast, are in the styleless style of Holbein the Elder, as are the draperies and poses of the diminutive sculpted figures in the shrine, making no more gestures to the Romanesque or ancient Roman form-worlds than did the exactly contemporaneous tomb of St. Simpertus. Seld was also employed to restore old ecclesiastical implements, for example, a Romanesque bishop's crosier at Sts. Ulrich and Afra.<sup>7</sup> According to an old inscription, Hans Burgkmair was paid to restore a Romanesque wooden *Crucifix*.<sup>8</sup> Such episodes of attentiveness prove that the

6. Munich, Wittelsbacher Ausgleichsfond, 46.5 × 35 cm, silver, partially gilded. Johann Michael Fritz, *Goldschmiedekunst der Gotik in Mitteleuropa* (Munich: Beck, 1982), ill. 735–36 and, generally on retrospective tendencies in goldsmith work in this period, 149–50; *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik* (see chap. 3, n. 85), no. 270; and Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia* (see chap. 2, n. 59), 142. On Seld see also Wolfgang Augustyn, "Das Ulrichskreuz und die Ulrichskreuze," in *Bischof Ulrich von Augsburg, 890–973*, ed. Manfred Weitrauf [= *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Augsburger Bistumsgeschichte*, 26–27 (1993)] (n.p.: Anton H. Konrad Verlag, 1993), 267–315.

7. *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik*, 196.

8. Augsburg, Maximiliansmuseum, on loan from the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MA 150. Renate Eikelmann, "Der heilige Alexius von Sebastian Löscher," in *Der Heilige Alexius im Augsburger Maximiliansmuseum* (Munich: Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 1994), 7.



55. Jörg Seld, reliquary altar of Bernhard Adelman, 1492, silver, partially gilded. Munich, Wittelsbacher Ausgleichsfond.

round arches in Seld's objects were not thoughtless survivals but deliberate restagings. Already at midcentury the Cologne painter Stefan Lochner was copying old metalwork into his *Three Kings* altarpiece at Cologne cathedral.<sup>9</sup> A jeweled cross on the breast of St. Gereon in the right wing of Lochner's retable must have been based on drawings after a tenth- or eleventh-century original. Lochner copies contemporary, old, and older pieces all in the same painting. It is impossible to identify the references of such artifacts because the range of pre-Gothic, round-arched source material was much vaster then than now. Roman and Romanesque blended together. Even today some surviving colonial Roman stelae, especially when weather-beaten, are virtually indistinguishable from Romanesque artifacts.<sup>10</sup>

A few passages in German sculpture and painting around 1500 seem guided by a reengagement with pre-Gothic form. Some of the retrospective tomb monuments discussed in the last chapter adopted an obsolete figure style, for example, in the tomb of Gerhard III of Gelder at Roermond. But such departures from custom and deliberate violations of the good rules of

9. Johann Michael Fritz, "Auf Gold gezeichnete und gemalte Goldschmiedearbeiten," in *Stefan Lochner: Meister zu Köln*, ed. Frank Günter Zehnder, exhibition catalogue (Cologne: Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1993), 137–38. On Lochner's interest in historical architecture, see Stephan Hoppe, "Architekturstil und Zeitbewusstsein in der Malerei Stefan Lochners: Verwendung und Vorbilder," in *Hörsaal, Amt und Marktplatz: Forschung und Denkmalpflege im Rheinland*, ed. Claudia Euskirchen et al., Festschrift Udo Mainzer (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2005), 57–70.

10. See for instance *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I, 1, Raetia und Noricum*, nos. 18, 21.

realism were not common. Bernhard Decker analyzed the *Coronation of the Virgin* at Bozen-Gries by Michael Pacher (1470s) as a deliberate alignment, on a deep-structural level, with sculptural groups of around 1400; and in a book on Hans Leinberger, Decker interpreted “forked” or “Y-shaped” drapery forms, in Leinberger but also in woodcuts and paintings by Cranach, as citations of Romanesque form.<sup>11</sup> Decker argued that such archaisms must be understood in the context of a crisis of the cult image widely perceived by contemporaries around 1500. Archaisms had the supplementary effect of calling attention to the mastery and historical vision of the artist. Retrospective was suited to be a signature style. Michael Baxandall gathered Leinberger’s archaizing citations of thirteenth-century German sculpture into his argument about the performative basis of the construction of artistic authorship in German Renaissance wood sculpture.<sup>12</sup>

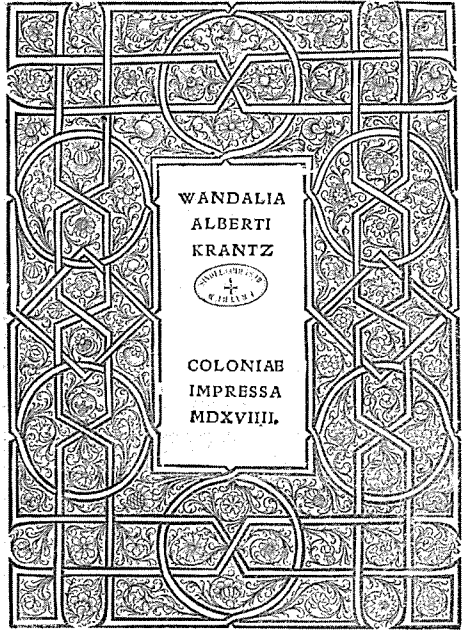
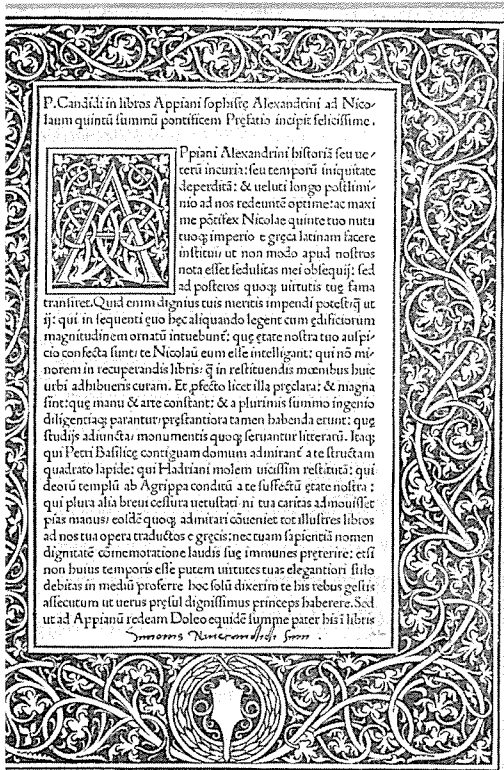
When fifteenth-century miniaturists and printers introduced white-vine ornament, for example, in the initial A and surrounding border on the first page of an edition of the second-century historian Appianus designed by the Augsburg printer Erhard Ratdolt while he was still working in Venice, they thought they were reviving an antique form (fig. 56).<sup>13</sup> Italian humanists had instructed painters to adorn the initial letters and page borders of their own books with crawling, interlocking growths of vine, curling white stems and shoots, much like those they had seen in the old books.<sup>14</sup> White-vine was a humanistic taste born of a chronological misconception, for the ancient models were not ancient at all, but twelfth-century Italian manuscripts which in turn transmitted interlaced forms developed in transalpine monasteries such as St. Gall between the ninth and eleventh centuries. There were no illuminated initials in ancient manuscripts, and indeed interlace is not imperial Roman but barbarian

11. Bernhard Decker, “Zur geschichtlichen Dimension in Michael Pachers Altären von Gries und St. Wolfgang,” *Städte-Jahrbuch*, N.F., 6 (1977): 293–318; *Das Ende des mittelalterlichen Kultbildes und die Plastik Hans Leinbergers* (Bamberg: Universität Bamberg, 1985).

12. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1980), 142. On this topic see the fundamental study of Theodor Müller, “Frühe Beispiele der Retrospektive in der deutschen Plastik,” *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte* 1961, Heft 1.

13. Appianus, *Historia romana* (Venice, 1477), fol. 1r.

14. Pächt, *Italian Illuminated Manuscripts*, exhibition catalogue (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1948), no. 1; Pächt, “Notes and Observations on the Origin of Humanistic Book Decoration,” in *Festschrift Fritz Saxl*, ed. D. J. Gordon (London and Edinburgh: Nelson, 1957), 184–94; and J. J. G. Alexander and A. C. de la Mare, *The Italian Manuscripts in the Library of Major J. R. Abbey* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), xxxiii–xxxiv. For still finer distinctions among different types of white-vine scroll, see Melania Ceccanti, “Proposte per la storia dei primi codici umanistici a bianchi girari,” *Miniatura* 5/6 (1993/96): 11–16, whose researches suggest that the imitations of medieval white-vine ornament improved in accuracy between 1400 and 1425; and Fabrizio Crivello, “‘Vetustioris literae maiestas’: un manoscritto di Sant’ Agostino del Petrarca, gli umanisti e qualche osservazione sulle iniziali a ‘bianchi girari,’” *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 44 (2003): 227–34.



or eastern.<sup>15</sup> White interlace, translated into a stiff woodcut idiom, reappeared in 1519 on the title page of a treatise on the region of the Wendish or Baltic Slavic people by Albert Krantz, rector of the University of Rostock (fig. 57).<sup>16</sup> The title is framed by thin white bands which attempt to simulate an archaic strapwork, looping and zigzagging against a background of foliate sprigs and blossoms.<sup>17</sup>

15. The white-vine anachronism parallels the more famous blunder that spawned the humanist minuscule, basis of modern typography. Early fifteenth-century Italian scribes developed a fluid and legible handwriting based on classical manuscripts they considered ancient, or at least substitutionally linked to ancient manuscripts. B. L. Ullmann, *The Origin and Development of Humanistic Script* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1960); James Wardrop, *The Script of Humanism: Some Aspects of Humanistic Script, 1460-1560* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963); Stanley Morison, *Politics and Script* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), chap. 6; Martin Steinmann, "Die humanistische Schrift und die Anfänge des Humanismus in Basel," *Archiv für Diplomatik* 22 (1976): 376-437. See especially the analysis of Gombrecht, "From the Revival of Letters to the Reform of the Arts" [see chap. 2, n. 41], 93-110.

16. *Wandalia* (Cologne: Joh. Soter, 1519), fol. a1r. See Tilman Falk, "Hans Burgkmair und einige Aspekte 'deutscher Renaissance,'" *Kunstchronik* 21 (1968): 411.

17. A German edition of Hrabanus Maurus, *De laudibus sancte Crucis*, published in Pforzheim in 1503 by Thomas Anshelm, the same who printed the Byzantine *Madonna* discussed in chapter 3 (fig. 19), reproduced the alphabetic grids with superimposed figures, a kind of Carolingian

56. Appianus, *Historia romana* (Venice: Ratdolt, 1477), fol. 1r. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

57. Albert Krantz, *Wandalia* (Cologne: Soter, 1519), fol. a1r. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.



Form was nowhere more easily perceived and named as a formal system, as the product of choices governed by a single, stable concept of form, than in the realm of architecture. Architectonic form is readily broken down into repeatable and measurable modules. The modules of architectonic form, building blocks for a whole range of design tasks, were described, named, codified, and eventually fixed and disseminated by print technology. The cultural project of neoclassical architecture throughout the sixteenth century and beyond was driven by the technology of illustrated architectural treatises. Woodcuts and engravings standardized architectural form. Mechanization converted imitation itself, once a creative act, into a matter of complying with rules. The neoclassical architectural orders (Doric, Ionic, and so forth), in Mario Carpo's view, were practically designed to be reproduced, "the result of a feedback loop between medium and message."<sup>18</sup> Because they were adaptable to print, architectural problems quickly entered into the mainstream of early modern intellectual culture, even into debates on public policy, in a way that painting and sculpture never could, except in the context of debates about the theological legitimacy of the cult image. The designer of a building, a reliquary, an alphabet, once function had been observed, had some liberty to pursue normative goals. Reason, a powerful alternative to custom, cleared paths leading out of the formlessness and irregularity that dominated figural representation.<sup>19</sup> Form governed by pure reason had a chance to achieve stability and binding force. Thinking in terms of regular building modules led to interest in ideal, dematerialized form and in formal grammars grounded in nature and reason, that is, in ideal proportions and timeless, nonhistorical form.

The twin pursuits of the Renaissance architect—the rational projection of ideal form and the search for samples of that form within a chronologically dispersed and disorganized archive of historical forms—were intertwined. The home ground of this paradox was Quattrocento Florence, where the progressive architects Alberti and Brunelleschi took Tuscan pre-Gothic churches to be samples of the ideal building manner of the ancient Romans. Brunelleschi's S. Lorenzo in Florence, for instance, was modeled on local Romanesque churches like SS. Apostoli. When Brunelleschi diverged from SS. Apostoli by imposing an entablature block between the arches and columns, he took as his model the Baptistery, an eleventh-century

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crossword puzzle, found in the manuscript source. Anshelm's grids are typographic, with the key words marked off by ruled lines and red typographic or xylographic letters.

18. Carpo, *Architecture in the Age of Printing* [see chap. 2, n. 55], 53.

19. A wide-ranging discussion of the resistance to custom as a cultural theme in early modern Europe is Lawrence Manley, *Convention, 1500–1750* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980)

building.<sup>20</sup> The Romanesque buildings were plundered for ideas as if they were antique buildings. They were taken as reliable reflections of antique buildings and building practices transmitted by an unbroken sequence of copying and replacing. The concept *all' antica* incorporated a wide range of late antique, early Christian, and later medieval architectural and figural styles.<sup>21</sup> Copying the wrong models preceded and prepared the copying of the right models, that is, more or less correctly dated models.

This pattern had its parallel in Renaissance Germany, here intensified by the positive cultural connotations of the medieval material, for as we have seen, Germans had little conception of a break between the architecture of ancient Rome and the building style of the German emperors. It was easier for Germans to confuse Roman and Romanesque architectures than it was for Italians, who had come to believe that a barbarian building manner had succeeded the antique, contaminating all medieval construction. The Romanesque building manner was plainly visible in most German towns, and was dominant in old imperial cities like Augsburg, Cologne, or Regensburg. When Germans took Romanesque buildings and artifacts as models for modern design, they were understanding them as substitutional and therefore authentic links to the Roman imperial past, a hypothesis trumping any knowledge about the real historical circumstances of production.<sup>22</sup>

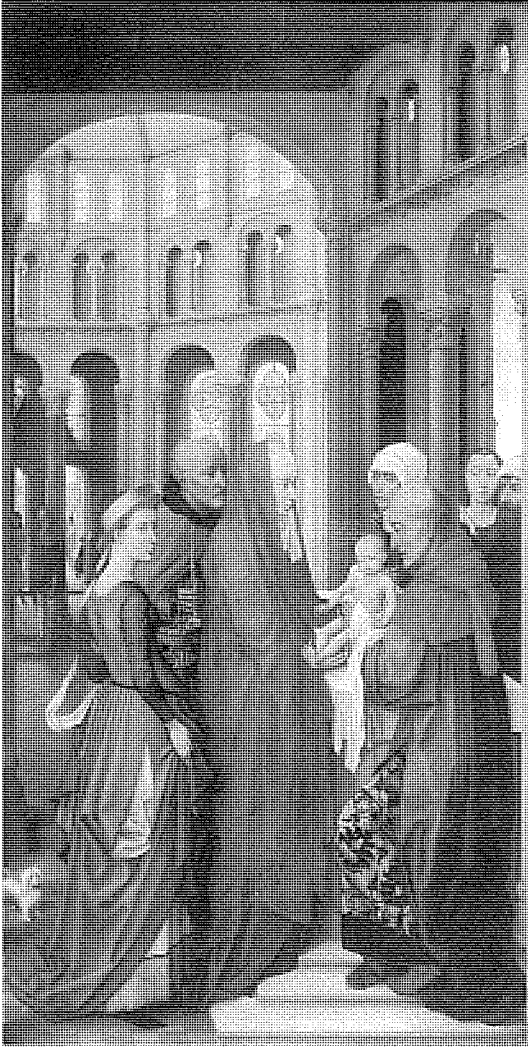
### The return of Romanesque, in two dimensions

*The Presentation of Christ in the Temple* on the wing of Rogier van der Weyden's *Adoration of the Magi* altarpiece (c. 1455) is staged in the choir of a magnificent three-storied, round-arched, round-columned church—the Temple of Roman Jerusalem—with an apparently polygonal, central-plan

20. See the general discussion in Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* [see chap. 3, n. 6], 20–23. There is a vast literature on Brunelleschi's and Alberti's reception of ancient and medieval architecture; see the recent survey by Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans de Yoldi, "Riflessioni sulla storiografia delle origini dell' architettura fiorentina e sullo svolgimento della fabbrica del Battistero," and "Il Brunelleschi e il Battistero," in *Santa Maria del Fiore*, II, *Piazza, Battistero, Campanile*, ed. Coopmans de Yoldi (Florence: 'Il Torchio,' 1996), 27–34, 64–65.

21. Maria Fabricius Hansen, "Representing the Past: The Concept and Study of Antique Architecture in 15th-century Italy," *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 23 (1996): 83–116.

22. See Hubertus Günther, "Die ersten Schritte in die Neuzeit: Gedanken zum Beginn der Renaissance nördlich der Alpen," in *Wege zur Renaissance: Beobachtungen zu den Anfängen neuzeitlicher Kunstauffassung im Rheinland und den Nachbargebieten um 1500*, ed. Norbert Nussbaum, Claudia Euskirchen, and Stephan Hoppe (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2003), 35–36, on French late Gothic churches that began already in the fourteenth century to comment on and sum up a heroic national building tradition. The multiple meanings of the Gothic in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century France are parsed by Henri Zerner, *Art de la Renaissance en France: L'invention du classicisme* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996); and Anne-Marie Sankovitch, "A



58. Rogier van der Weyden, *Presentation of Christ*, from Columba altarpiece, c. 1455, oil on panel. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. Photo: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung.

nave (fig. 58).<sup>23</sup> The altarpiece, now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, long stood in the church of St. Columba at Cologne and was for decades a cynosure for German painters traveling westward and northward in search of inspiration. Van der Weyden's interior catalyzed painterly reflections on the historicity of architecture across the whole landscape of Netherlandish and German painting.<sup>24</sup> Rogier's theory about the setting of the Presentation brought the architecture of the biblical stories into visual alignment with the Romanesque architecture of the immediate surroundings, the old churches of Cologne. The painting offered the Romanesque church as a bridge from the present to the most distant past.<sup>25</sup> Non-Gothic form signified historical form, old form, without any more specific chronological coordinates than that. There is no evidence that the fifteenth-century North had a *third* formal concept at their disposal that would correspond to the modern style category—a category unnamed before the nineteenth century—"Romanesque."<sup>26</sup>

The German architect's re-engagement with the round arch, whether intended as archaism, as an approach to the ideal or

Reconsideration of French Renaissance Church Architecture," in *L'église dans l'architecture de la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Guillaume (Paris: Picard, 1995), 161–80.

23. Munich, Alte Pinakothek, right wing of Columba altarpiece, inv. no. WAF 1191. 138 × 70 cm.

24. Hoppe, "Architekturstil und Zeitbewusstsein in der Malerei Stefan Lochners," 57–62, 70.

25. On the so-called Romanesque Renaissance in German architecture, see Vojtěch Birnbaum, *Románská Renesance koncem středověku* (Prague: Jan Štenc, 1924); Hans Tietze, "Romanische Kunst und Renaissance," *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg 1926–1927* (1930): 43–57; Werner Körte, *Die Wiederaufnahme romanischer Bauformen in der niederländischen und deutschen Malerei des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (PhD diss., University of Leipzig, 1929) (Wolfenbüttel: Heckner, 1930); Hipp, *Studien zur 'Nachgotik' des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (see chap. 3, n. 8) (mostly post-1550); Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 130–45; and Stephan Hoppe, "Romanik als Antike und die baulichen Folgen," in Nussbaum et al., eds., *Wege zur Renaissance*, 89–131.

26. This is the argument of Hoppe, "Romanik als Antike," 126n15. On the historiography of "Romanesque" see Tina Waldeier Bizzarro, *Romanesque Architectural Criticism: A Pre-history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

best manner, or as a duplicitous cover for invention, was driven by such representations of architecture in two-dimensional media. This was the first swerve in the history of architecture guided by the image. Images cast the substitutional mechanisms onto the plane surface, making them available for manipulation, adjustment, critique, abandonment. Whereas in fifteenth-century Italy the recovery of ancient building manners was driven by drawings of Roman buildings made on site by artists and protoarcheologists,<sup>27</sup> in the north this role was assumed by Netherlandish panel paintings and their many copies and imitations. The representations of historical architecture in Netherlandish art began with Jerusalem, the Temple, the Holy Sepulchre, the iconographic center that appeared in the background, as mere setting, of so many paintings.<sup>28</sup> The woodcuts of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Edicule in Breydenbach's travel book, which then in turn fed back into the imitations of the Holy Sepulchre, were prepared by such paintings. The sequence of Netherlandish painting was a slow-motion replication technology, less rule-bound, less reliable, and more reflexive but not in principle different from the production system that delivered Byzantine icons.

Melchior Broederlam, Robert Campin, Jan van Eyck, and other early fifteenth-century Netherlandish painters had represented central-plan and round-arched architecture in binary opposition to a basilical and pointed-arched modern architecture, bringing the system of Roman architecture into focus in the same decades that Alberti, Brunelleschi, and other Italian artists and scholars were beginning to measure the ruins of Rome and emulate the architectural relics of the Tuscan Romanesque. North and south found their way back to the ancients along different paths.<sup>29</sup> In the northern paintings, the round and pointed building manners diagrammed the theological and historical binarism of Old and New Dispensation.<sup>30</sup> The fictional anachronisms created by the art of painting—a church with

27. Hubertus Günther, *Das Studium der antiken Architektur in den Zeichnungen der Hochrenaissance* (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1988).

28. Carol Herselle Krinsky, "Representations of the Temple of Jerusalem before 1500," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 1–19; Reiner Hausherr, "Spätgotische Ansichten der Stadt Jerusalem (oder war der Hausbuchmeister in Jerusalem?)," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 29/30 (1987/88): 47–70.

29. Heinrich Klotz, *Der Stil des Neuen: Die Europäische Renaissance* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1997), 42–51, taking up an idea of Dagobert Frey, stresses the parallel modernities of mid-fifteenth-century Netherlandish painting and Italian architecture.

30. The classic discussion of this phenomenon is Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1953), 131–40. For more literature and comments on the use of architectural citation to symbolize salvational history, see Graf, "Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst," 398. See the subtle readings of the temporalities of early Netherlandish paintings by Wolfgang Kemp, under the rubric *chronotopos*, in *Die Räume der Maler: zur Bilderzählung seit Giotto* (Munich: Beck, 1996).

a round-arched triforium passage *above* a pointed-arched nave colonnade, for instance, as in van Eyck's Berlin *Virgin in the Church*—symbolized the time-folding power of the figural or typological version of salvational history. The Netherlandish painting's self-reflexive distancing from form converted form into an object of choice. The round/pointed binarism relativized both formal systems, Roman and Gothic, suggesting that builders were free to choose. The paintings made the simple point that the buildings would stand no matter which manner they were built in. In the Netherlandish system, the round-arched building manner is not privileged or held up as an ideal. It was simply the old, customary way of building that had to be overcome by choice.

Figure style, in van Eyck's system, remains exempt from this dilemma. For van Eyck's "own" style, the notional standpoint of his reflections on historical architectural form, pretended to be neutral and timeless. Van Eyck developed a way of painting that, even as it bore all the marks of strong authorship, paradoxically made an effect of objectivity. Painting—so van Eyck's paintings assert—can show things as they look and in that way win for itself the privilege of reflection and commentary. This timeless descriptive mode is the same that the carver of the Simpertus tomb in Augsburg was striving for. It was also the mode of representation, in principle, of the olden times, the best periods. Antique art, in the Eyckian imagination, was descriptive and timeless art—timeless *because* it was merely descriptive. This is demonstrated by the contrast in van Eyck's paintings between the representations of historical architecture and of sculpture. Van Eyck's painted round-arched architecture is closely attentive to real models, both Romanesque churches in northwest Europe and (possibly) ancient examples farther afield. In the van der Paele epitaph (1436) and Dresden triptych (1437) he depicted columns mounted on high prismatic bases, a form found on the Arch of Constantine and from some early Christian churches in Rome.<sup>31</sup> The fictive sculpture associated in van Eyck's paintings with this architecture, meanwhile, was not so historically attentive, resembling nothing so much as ordinary Burgundian sculpture of around 1400. It was difficult to imagine, it seems, what the equivalent to a round-arched building manner, a modular system, would be in the realm of the figure. To conceive of an ancient figure style *as* a style, that is, as an approach toward some ideal, was to concede its deficiency as an objective descriptive tool. It was easier, especially for an artist not confronted daily with prestigious examples of ancient art, to understand ancient art as above all an art that successfully rendered.

Rogier van der Weyden and Hans Memling reached even further back

31. Lotte Brand Philip, *The Ghent Altarpiece and the Art of Jan van Eyck* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 110; as well as 108–11 on the relation of the Ghent altarpiece to early Christian apse mosaics.

into architectural history, staging their St. Luke *Madonna* and Donne triptych, respectively, amidst archaic post-and-lintel constructions.<sup>32</sup> In other paintings Memling combined round arches with trabeation in historically unattested ways.<sup>33</sup> Netherlandish painters, and the many German painters dependent on them, worked with a simplified version of the Eyckian system, inserting passages of round-arched architecture in their narrative paintings to symbolize the world and the belief system overcome by Christianity. In the third quarter of the fifteenth century the Swabian painter Friedrich Herlin adapted the painted architecture of Rogier van der Weyden's Cologne *Presentation* to his own *Presentation* in the high altarpiece for St. Georg (1462) in Nördlingen (fig. 59).<sup>34</sup> Presumably he was consulting his own drawings made in front of the recent but authoritative work. Herlin grasped the anachronistic, historicizing import of Rogier's round-arched interior. Yet rather than replicate his model, he pulls back, inventing a hybrid architecture involving a trabeated triforium. Here Herlin drew on van Eyck's Washington *Annunciation*, itself apparently inspired by the late twelfth-century transept of Tournai cathedral.<sup>35</sup> Herlin felt no compulsion to equate antiquity with the round arch. He took Rogier van der Weyden not as an archeological authority but as a license to improvise on an archeological theme. Hans Burgkmair, by contrast, several decades later, approached Rogier almost as a scholar would, as if Rogier himself were source material. In a pen and wash drawing made probably around 1503 directly from the work in Cologne, Burgkmair, aged thirty at the time, rendered the whole scene just as he found it, with every arch and column in place, a precise memorandum complete with notes on color (fig. 60).<sup>36</sup> Burgkmair was capturing not only the painting at hand but with it the whole prior history of design as it had accumulated in Rogier's monument.

By the time of Martin Schongauer and Albrecht Dürer, in the last decades of the fifteenth and first of the sixteenth centuries, the round-arched

32. Hoppe, "Romanik als Antike," 97–100, noting as well the trabeated architecture in the painting *Sts. Catherine and Mary Magdalene* by Konrad Witz (1440) in Strasbourg.

33. Hoppe suggests that Memling was trying to render descriptions encountered in Vitruvius; "Romanik als Antike," 102–3.

34. Nördlingen, Stadtmuseum. Alfred Stange, *Deutsche Malerei der Gotik*, vol. 8, *Schwaben in der Zeit von 1450 bis 1500* (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1957), p. 89, ill. 184; Christof Metzger, "Neues vom Nördlinger Hochaltar," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 54/55 (2000–2001): 104–26.

35. On van Eyck and Tournai, a relation already noted by Panofsky, see Stephan Hoppe, "Die Antike des Jan van Eyck: Architektonische Fiktion und Empirie in Umkreis des burgundischen Hofes um 1435," in *Persistenz und Rezeption: Weiterverwendung, Wiederverwendung und Neuinterpretation antiker Werke im Mittelalter*, ed. Dietrich Boschung and Susanne Wittekind (forthcoming).

36. Pen and ink with gray wash, 26.2 × 17 cm, Stockholm, National Museum, inv. no. 85/1918. Falk, *Hans Burgkmair*, 35–36. Note that Holbein the Elder quoted, liberally, the woman on the left in Rogier's *Presentation* in his own *Basilica di S. Paolo fuori le mura* (1504).



59. Friedrich Herlin, *Presentation of Christ*, 1462, oil on panel. Nördlingen, Stadtmuseum.



60. Hans Burgkmair, copy of Rogier van der Weyden, c. 1503, pen and ink. Stockholm, National Museum. Photo: National Museum.

Temple of Jerusalem or the ruined round-arched palace of David, site of the Nativity shed, were commonplaces. And yet the equation of round with ancient was by no means a universal rule. Dürer's *Unterweysung der Messung* (1525) synthesized Vitruvius with the principles of Gothic building.<sup>37</sup> In his Vitruvius commentary *Unterrichtung zu rechtem Verstand der Lehr Vitruvii* (1547), the physician and minor humanist Walter Rivius or Ryff of Strasbourg offered the interior elevation of Milan Cathedral, a pointed-arch church built by Germans, as the principal modern exemplar of Vitruvian architecture.<sup>38</sup> Aeneas Silvius, after all, had admired the Gothic, not Romanesque, cathedrals of Germany. Wimpfeling, poet of Speyer Cathedral, also praised Strasbourg alongside the wonders of antiquity. Were there not plenty of reasons, as Willibald Sauerländer has wondered, "off the track,"

37. Günther, "Die ersten Schritte," 43–45.

38. Although it must be noted that here Rivius was only following the Vitruvius translation of the Lombard architect Cesare Cesariano, *De architectura libri dece* (Como, 1521), fol. b6r-b7v.

why the Gothic cathedral might have matched a certain Renaissance idea of ancient Roman architecture?<sup>39</sup> Cylindrical columns, façade citations of triumphal arches, and the sheer technological achievement—it is easy to see how the pre-Vasarian antiquarian eye might have cast an appreciative glance on the Gothic cathedral.

Reflections of the new cultural attentiveness to the distinction between round and pointed building manners in Germany are the careful emulations and preservations of pre-Gothic forms in architectural campaigns.<sup>40</sup> The last chapter considered several examples of Romanesque portals apparently dismantled and moved from one part of a building to another. Romanesque naves were rebuilt in the modern “hall” style while preserving older choirs or western towers, apparently out of veneration for their age or their status in local public life.<sup>41</sup> The old northwest tower of the cathedral of Worms, colossal rival to Speyer, was lost to a fire in 1429. The replacement, begun in 1470, imitates with its round-arched windows and blind arcades the lost tower. Pointed windows on the upper story were evidently no inconsistency.<sup>42</sup> At the Hansa city of Bremen in the north of Germany, the north aisle of the cathedral was torn down and rebuilt between 1502 and 1522 in order to raise it to the height of the nave. The reconstruction used spolia from the old aisle and imitated every detail of the thirteenth-century components of the building, including a round-arched frieze. The nave of the parish church at Feldkirch in the Vorarlberg, Gothic-arched, was completed in 1478. The choir, meanwhile, dating from a few decades later, simulates, with its arcades sitting on round pillars and round capitals with quadratic abacus, a Romanesque style (fig. 61).<sup>43</sup> The parish church

39. Willibald Sauerländer, “Abwegige Gedanken über frühgotische Architektur und ‘The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century,’” in *Études offertes à Louis Grodecki* (Paris: Ophrys, [1981]), 167–79, taking up a cue from Panofsky, and “‘Première architecture gothique’ or ‘Renaissance of the Twelfth Century’? Changing Perspectives in the Evaluation of Architectural History,” *Sewanee Mediaeval Colloquium Occasional Papers*, no. 2 (Sewanee, Tenn.: University Press, 1985). Anne-Marie Sankovitch extended this paradoxical argument to Vasari himself, arguing that Vasari considered all of medieval architecture, except for the bizarre and regrettable *maniera tedesca*, to be variations on classical architecture, sometimes more and sometimes less successful, but not easily to be dismissed; “The Myth of the ‘Myth of the Medieval’: Gothic Architecture in Vasari’s *Rinascita* and Panofsky’s Renaissance,” *Res* 40 (2001): 28–50.

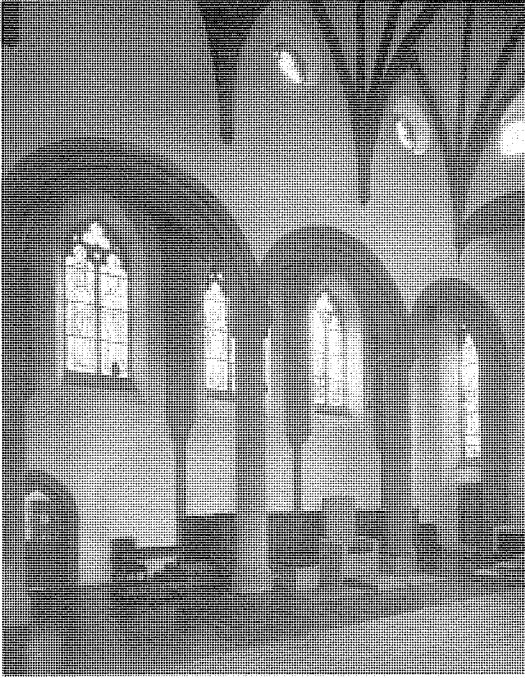
40. On “stylistic discrepancies” in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century German architecture, see Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 33–44. On architectural retrospective in the context of monastic reform, see Graf, “Retrospektive Tendenzen in der bildenden Kunst,” 391–92.

41. Magirius, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege* (see chap. 4, n. 110), 9–10.

42. Wolfgang Götz, “Zur Denkmalpflege des 16. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 13 (1959), 45–46.

43. Dagobert Frey, ed., *Die Kunstdenkmäler des politischen Bezirks Feldkirch = Österreichische Kunsttopographie*, vol. 32 (Vienna: Schroll, 1958), 134–39. Günter Brucher, *Gotische Baukunst in Österreich* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1990), 298.





61. Feldkirch, parish church, late fifteenth century. Photo: author.

62. "Engelsburg," Neustift, Brixen, thirteenth and fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. Photo: author.



of St. Peter's in Görlitz in Saxony, reflecting the substitutional prestige of the nearby Holy Sepulchre chapel, modeled on images of the real thing in Jerusalem and itself a celebrated pilgrimage destination, introduced in the 1490s round columns and cubic masses into its new porch. In this way the parish church could stand in for Pilate's judgment hall in festive reenactments of the Passion.<sup>44</sup> At the so-called Engelsburg (Castel Sant' Angelo) at the monastery of Neustift near Brixen in the South Tyrol a Romanesque drum is encased by a sixteen-sided shell with fanciful crenellations along the top edge (fig. 62). The crenellations clearly date to the late fifteenth or sixteenth century. Michael Schmidt now proposes that the entire enclosing wall, a massive and venerable fortress-like structure perforated by biforate round-arched windows, dates from the sixteenth century.<sup>45</sup>

Painting had made it possible to perceive buildings as continuous images, generating the desire to adjust and correct the building until it hung together stylistically. The disjunctions that the painters invented in their fantastic architectures were precisely not the real, accidental disjunctions

44. Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 139, ill. 83.

45. Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 138, ill. 80. Counterparts to these examples were the real, extant buildings in the pointed manner emended in representation in order to stress their antiquity. In the woodcuts by Erhard Reuwich accompanying Bernhard von Breydenbach's pilgrimage report, for example, the doge's palace in Venice is given round arches and the Campanile a row of dwarf columns; SS. Giovanni and Paolo a round-arched frieze and a Romanesque choir; and the church of the Frari a Romanesque tower. For further examples, including the illustrations in Schedel's *World Chronicle*, see Körte, *Die Wiederaufnahme romanischer Bauformen*.

that one found in any random building. The painted disjunctions had meaning only because they contrasted with a new concept of a stylistically unified building.

Comparable to these architectural adaptations are the cases of twelfth- or thirteenth-century white-vine initials, of the sort that Ratdolt's 1477 edition of Appianus imitated (fig. 56), protected by late fifteenth-century monastic scribes when they scraped down old manuscripts for reuse, in some cases carefully adapting their text in order to make use of the old initials.<sup>46</sup>

### Alphabetic archeology

The alphabet one is accustomed to is transparent; reading is basically a matter of looking through the matter of the letters to the words they notate. Alien and unfamiliar letterforms, therefore, will at first look excessively material, as if they were grossly introducing spatiality into a one-dimensional channel of thought. Because letterforms are arbitrary—because there is no reason why they should look one way rather than another—all that is necessary is that the letters within the alphabet are differentiated one from another. The only explanation for the different letterforms of a strange alphabet is that a different custom or usage is in effect. This sense is redoubled when the language notated by the letters is also strange. The spectacle of a totally illegible alphabet was a reminder of the conventionality of language in general. The recognition that letterforms are determined by mere custom opened up an intellectual distance not only from those forms but also from words, and opened a vista onto the possibility of choice and change.

Because there are few restraints external to the system, the alphabet, even more so than the building, is a laboratory for the study of the historicity of form. Letterforms glide freely on the ball bearings of convention, impelled only by a will to form. At the end of the nineteenth century, the art historians Heinrich Wölfflin and Alois Riegl looked to script as the unmediated registration of period style and therefore as a key to culture. Because architectural form cannot respond to every shift in mentality, Wölfflin wrote in 1886, “the pulse of the age” will have to be felt “elsewhere: in the minor or decorative arts, in the lines of ornament, of lettering, and so on. Here the sense of form satisfies itself in the purest way, and here also the birthplace of a new style has to be sought.”<sup>47</sup> Riegl, arguing that every

46. Hermann Knaus, “Gotische Handschriften mit romanischen Initialen,” *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 1972, 13–19.

47. Heinrich Wölfflin, “Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture,” in *Empathy, Form and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873–1893*, ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center, 1994), 185.

historical document was at the same time an artistic monument, pointed out that even a mere scrap of paper with an insignificant handwritten message had form and composition.<sup>48</sup>

Practically it was easier to experiment with lettering than with stones and bricks. Around 1480, convention in northern Europe strongly favored the Gothic minuscule on all carved monuments. The Gothic minuscule had emerged as an epigraphic script in the fourteenth century and was at first associated with inscriptions in the vernacular. Before it appeared on tombs, it appeared on building inscriptions and in artists' signatures.<sup>49</sup> By the beginning of the fifteenth century the Gothic minuscule had installed itself in northern Europe as the preferred modern epigraphic alphabet. The Cistercian abbey of Maulbronn is typical. Of the surviving fourteenth-century inscriptions at Maulbronn, twenty out of twenty-three are in Gothic majuscules, whereas seventy-six out of eighty-one fifteenth-century inscriptions are in Gothic minuscules.<sup>50</sup> An illustration of the force of this convention is the epitaph of the German cardinal Nicholas Cusanus in his chapel at Kues in the Mosel valley. Cusanus was buried in S. Pietro in Vincoli in Rome, his titular church, in 1465.<sup>51</sup> On the wall of the left aisle of the church in Rome he is depicted in a relief attributed to Andrea Bregno with an inscription on a *tabula ansata*; on the floor his recumbent figure is engraved on a marble slab. The hands are shown folded over a tablet resting on the lower part of the body, a northern convention that implies the involvement of a German artist. But the inscription on the tablet and around the edges of the slab is in thin, sans serif square majuscules similar to the letters on papal tombs since Martin V in 1431.<sup>52</sup> These letters are not as sure as the letters on the *tabula ansata* in the Bregno monument, however, and were likely done by the same northern sculptor who engraved the slab portrait. In 1488 the Roman tomb slab was reproduced in Kues, Cusanus's birthplace, in the chapel of the hospital he built as a legacy. The recumbent figure on the monument in Germany, engraved

48. Riegl, "Der moderne Denkmalkultus" (see chap. 3, n. 5), 145–46.

49. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, "Schrift- und Sprache in Bau und Künstlerinschriften," in *Deutsche Inschriften: Fachtagung für Mittelalterliche und Neuzeitliche Epigraphik, Lüneburg 1984*, ed. Karl Stackmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 62–81.

50. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, ed., *Die Inschriften des Enzkreis bis 1650* (= *Die deutschen Inschriften* 22) (Munich: Druckenmüller, 1983), XXXII.

51. Johannes Röhl, "Nordeuropäisch-spätgotische Motive in der römischen Sepulkralskulptur des 15. Jahrhunderts: Das Epitaph des Nikolaus von Kues in S. Pietro in Vincoli," in *Italienische Frührenaissance und nordeuropäisches Spätmittelalter*, ed. Joachim Poescke (Munich: Hirmer, 1993), 109–22.

52. Morison, *Politics and Script*, chap. 3. In Rome the square capitals caught on immediately and swept the Gothic majuscule aside. There are only three examples of Gothic inscriptions on Roman epitaphs after 1430. Iiro Kajanto, *Classical and Christian: Studies in the Latin Epitaphs of Medieval and Renaissance Rome* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1980), 11–14.

FASTRADANA PIA CAROLI CONIVNX VOCATA  
 CRISTO DILECTA VACET HOC SVB HARMOSE TECTA  
 ANNO SEPTINGENESI HONONAGESIMO QVARTO  
 QVÆ NVHERVM HETRO CLAVDESE HVSA NEGAT  
 REX PIE QVÆ GESSIT VRGO LICET HIC CINESSET  
 SPIRITVS HERES SIT PATRIE QVÆ TRISTIA NESCIT  
 Λ ϑ ρ

63. Tomb of Fastrada, c. 1490. Mainz, Cathedral. Fritz Viktor Arenz, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Mainz* (Stuttgart: Druckemüller, 1958), no. 1.

on five brass plates, replicates the figure on the original Roman tomb, a close though less refined copy.<sup>53</sup> The sculptor of the Kues monument must have worked from a good drawing of the tomb in Rome. The letters are set off against a hatchmarked background in imitation of the raised or incised letters customary on stone epitaphs. It appears that the carver wanted to imitate the look of the S. Pietro in Vincoli slab rather than simply adopt the customary local solution, namely, raised letters in some soft stone. The fact of the Kues slab's repetition of the Roman original would surely have been part of its reputation and meaning at least for a time, before the Mosel valley forgot about the Roman tomb. Significantly, however, the inscription in Kues was translated into a Gothic minuscule. It is impossible to say whether the copy of the original text that the carver had before him was written in square majuscules or in a Gothic or humanist minuscule hand. Whatever he had before him as a model, the German sculptor executed the lettering on the monument in the conventional local fashion, in a Gothic minuscule, using the only alphabetic template available to him.

Because the pointed style was simply the prevailing style, the choice to reject it automatically took on meaning. The German stonemason's conception of a pre-Gothic and obsolete script, however, could end up looking not very Roman at all. One of the most puzzling retrospective monuments of the period is the inscribed tablet in Mainz to Fastrada, wife of Charlemagne (fig. 63). The tablet measures 60 × 101 cm and is found in the wall of the south aisle of the cathedral.<sup>54</sup> The text translates as

Here lies Fastrada, the pious wife of Charlemagne, beloved of Christ, covered by marble; in the year seven hundred ninety-four, a number the Muse struggles to fit to the meter. Pious king, who (bore) the maiden/Virgin, even if she goes to ashes, let her spirit be given to the nation, that it does not know sadness.

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53. Hanns Vogts, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kreises Bernkastel* (*Die Kunstdenkmäler der Rheinprovinz, vol. 15, Abt. 1*) (Düsseldorf, 1935), 119.

54. Mainz, Cathedral, south aisle. Fritz Viktor Arenz, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Mainz* (= *Die deutschen Inschriften 2*) (Stuttgart: Druckemüller, 1958), no. 1. Until 1552 the tablet was at the

The language—the rhyme of the last two verses, for example—dictates a date no earlier than the twelfth century; indeed the text could have been composed quite some time later. The script itself, a highly stylized mélange of pre-Gothic letters, can only have been carved in the late fifteenth century. The letters are slenderer than Gothic majuscules and have varying stress and wedge-shaped serifs like some classical letters. But many of these letters are not in the least Roman, for example, *A* with top bar and broken crossbar; the so-called Byzantine *M* with vertical downstrokes; backward *R*; and *Q* with cauda inside the bowl. And unlike real Roman inscriptions—and the makers would have had plenty of examples to study in Mainz—it uses ligatures, enclaves, and so-called double-forms (two different *Es*, three different *As*, two different *Ms*, two different *Rs*). The inscription also uses arabic numerals, which as already mentioned are never found in any inscriptions at all before the fifteenth century.<sup>55</sup>

The monastery of St. Alban was rebuilt between 1486 and 1492, and this might be the best clue to the date of the tablet. Among the models for the tablet were the pre-Gothic inscriptions of Mainz, not many of which have survived to the present. The *Q* with its tail inside the bowl is the key, appearing as it does in some earlier medieval inscriptions in Mainz, for example, the memorial tablet to Propst Wignand in St. Stephan, dated 1048.<sup>56</sup> It is possible, then, that there was once a twelfth- or thirteenth-century tablet that pretended to be the original tomb inscription of Fastrada and that in the fifteenth century an entirely new stone was cut to replace it, translating the high medieval text from a Gothic minuscule but casting it into a non-Gothic, antiquated-looking alphabet. It is also possible that text and inscription alike were pure fabrications of the late fifteenth century. It is possible, finally, that the fifteenth-century tablet published for the first time—transferred from ink to stone, that is—an earlier, say, thirteenth-century, text found in a book. In such a case, the publishers of the text, the clerics of St. Alban, will have believed they were dealing with a Carolingian text.

The Munich court physician Sigmund Gotzkircher (c. 1410/15–1475), who studied medicine at Padua and served briefly as a clerk in the court of Emperor Sigismund in Rome in the 1430s, assembled a number of model alphabets for his own use, including Greek, Hebrew, Chaldean, Cyrillic,

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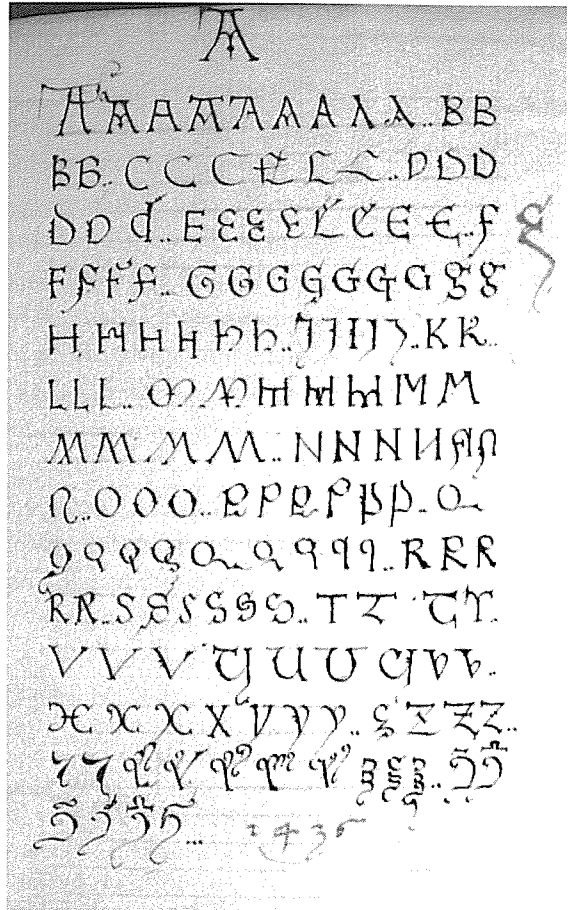
church of St. Alban in Mainz. It found its way to the cathedral in 1577 where the chapter had it mounted with an explanatory inscription.

55. Topitz, "Alte Ziffer-Jahreszahlen—richtig lesen, zeitrichtig restaurieren" (see chap. 4, n. 51), 138–53.

56. Arens, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Mainz*, no. 655. See Steinmann, "Von der Übernahme fremder Schriften im 15. Jahrhundert" (see chap. 4, n. 106), 56.

Glagolitic, and Egyptian; the “alphabets of various nations.”<sup>57</sup> He also wrote out Gothic minuscules and majuscules, an alphabet of Roman majuscules, imperfect, and an exotic mixed alphabet which he does not name or describe (fig. 64).<sup>58</sup> This latter alphabet is a menu of pre-Gothic letters—seven different *N*s, nine different *A*s, eleven different *M*s—from which he freely chose when composing texts, such as the biblical verse written below a similar alphabet a few pages later. The scribe’s interest in the plurality of alphabets carried over into printed books, for example, the compact household encyclopedia *Margarita philosophica* of Gregor Reisch.<sup>59</sup> Such samplers of alphabets were hypotheses of the world, a reduction and encompassing of a vast relativity of customs. The Fastrada inscription was pieced together from just such an alphabet.

It was no simple task in the late fifteenth century to match the scripts with the historical periods. As time went on, as research in monastic libraries proceeded, there were more pre-Gothic scripts to choose from. The chronology of these scripts was a complete jumble, as it still is, to an extent that comes as a surprise to any nonepigrapher or nonpaleographer. Paintings and some epigraphic texts, north and south of the Alps, often used the hybrid, fantastic majuscule alphabet assembled by Gotzkircher to connote the exotic and the archaic.<sup>60</sup> The alphabet was essentially Roman capitals



64. Sigmund Gotzkircher, model alphabet, 1436. Munich, University Library, 4 cod. ms. 810, fol. 49r.

57. Universitätsbibliothek München, 4 Cod. ms. 810. Marianne Reuter, *Die lateinischen mittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek München: Die Handschriften aus der Quartreihe* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000), 260–63.

58. Universitätsbibliothek München, 4 Cod. ms. 810, Fol. 49r, dated 1436.

59. The *Margarita philosophica*, an encyclopedia of knowledge, was composed by the Carthusian monk Reisch by 1496 and was published in many editions beginning in 1503.

60. This script has no satisfactory name. Although German epigraphers have agreed to call it the “early humanist” (*Frühhumanistische*) capital, this term is misleading because it implies that humanist scholars were responsible for or especially interested in the alphabet, which does not seem to have been the case. The best survey of this complicated episode is Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, “Epigraphische Schriften zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit,” in Koch,

with some twelfth- and thirteenth-century French and some Byzantine features and many fanciful or decorative embellishments. It involved double formations (letters given two different forms within the same inscription) and deliberate eccentricities, such as reversed *S* and *N*. The origins of this weird synthetic alphabet are unclear. It may have emerged out of the antiquarian pursuits at the Burgundian court around 1400, apparent source of the notorious Constantine and Heraclius medals, deceptive “re-makes” of nonexistent late antique medals, outfitted with an exotic majuscule alphabet.<sup>61</sup> Jan van Eyck, who surely knew the medals, introduced a restrained version of this alphabet into his paintings.<sup>62</sup> In the sixteenth century this alphabet was called *lettera francesca*.<sup>63</sup> But by then, from the far side of the successful emulation of the standard Roman epigraphic capital, such alphabets must have looked more like fanciful variations on Gothic scripts, majuscule and minuscule. To northern European eyes of van Eyck’s own time, accustomed to Gothic scripts, especially book hands, these weird capitals built from thin straight lines and simple curves looked precisely non-Gothic, that is, exotic and ancient.<sup>64</sup> They resembled ancient

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ed., *Epigraphik 1988*, 315–28; see also the contributions by Martin Steinmann, Rüdiger Fuchs, and Walter Koch in that volume. See also the remarks by Kloos, *Einführung in die Epigraphik des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980; 2nd ed. 1992), 153–56; and Armando Petrucci, *Public Lettering: Script, Power, and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), chap. 9, “Deviant Phenomena.”

61. Some sixteenth-century antiquarians still took them for antiquities. For orientation on the medals, see Scher, ed., *Currency of Fame* (see chap. 4, n. 131), 32–37. The lettering on the medals is a Roman majuscule with thickening toward the ends but without real serifs, and with anomalies like minuscule *D*, uncial *E*, top bars on *A*, and stem of *P* extending below the baseline. For a sophisticated emulation of obsolete form in late fourteenth-century Paris, see the nielloed silver book cover presented by Charles V in 1379 to the Sainte Chapelle, reproducing or simulating a page from an eleventh-century manuscript; H. Th. Bossert, *Geschichte des Kunstgewerbes*, vol. 5 (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1932), 392.

62. The heavenly capitals on the gold arches above the thrones of the Virgin, Christ, and the Baptist in van Eyck’s altarpiece of the *Adoration of the Lamb* in Ghent are majuscules with irregular double forms. These letters and the capitals carved in stone above the images of Adam and Eve contrast with the Gothic minuscules on the scrolls of the prophets. In the portrait of a man holding a scroll in London, National Gallery, inv. no. 290, like the Ghent altarpiece dated 1432, the simulated inscription *LEAL SOUVENIR* is carved in majuscules with curly serifs on the stone balustrade. The *A* with broken crossbar and top serif is identical to the *A*s of *ADAM* in the Ghent altarpiece.

63. Kloos, *Einführung in die Epigraphik*, 138.

64. Did van Eyck consider the letters antique? In the context of van Eyck’s engagement with the pictorial past, the question is too simplistically framed. Although he was interested in colonial Roman portraits (Ringbom, “Nuptial Symbolism in Some Fifteenth-Century Reflections of Roman Sepulchral Portraiture” [see chap. 3, n. 80], 68–96), and although he traveled beyond the Low Countries, van Eyck did not have everyday access to Roman monuments. He would not have seen a great number of inscriptions using the canonical Roman alphabet of the second century; nor would he necessarily have recognized it as the alphabet above all others to imitate.

Roman majuscules more than they did the traditional Gothic majuscule. There was every reason for a fifteenth-century observer to think of the pre-Gothic majuscule alphabet, visible in epigraphic texts in churches all over Europe, as substitutionally linked to ancient Roman writing.<sup>65</sup> Nonantique majuscules like *A* with top bar and bent cross stroke, or “Greek” *M*, could be found in many twelfth- and thirteenth-century inscriptions.

Weird, undatable alphabets appealed to fifteenth-century artists, Italian and German, who had a taste for novel and lively forms, flexible and unrestrained by standardized patterns.<sup>66</sup> German artists used the exoticized Roman alphabet when they wanted to represent ancient writing. Emperor Friedrich III, as attentive as his son would be to his classical pedigree, had his sculptors use this script for his own carved tomb (now in Vienna) as well as those of Beatrix Lopi and Empress Eleonora at Wiener Neustadt.

The inscription on the tomb of Virgil in a woodcut illustration to Sebastian Brant’s *Virgil* edition (1502) is similarly formed (fig. 65).<sup>67</sup> The scene illustrates an apocryphal poem by Emperor Augustus addressed to the poet.<sup>68</sup> The emperor mourns Virgil, dressed as Poet Laureate and supine on a slab raised on four columns, outside the gates of Naples. The majuscule inscription on the front edge of the tomb reads HIC MARO DOCTE IACES, “Here you lie, learned Marus.” *H* has the loop on the crossbar, just as in Gotzkircher’s alphabet except downward-pointing; the legs of *M* are vertical, which is not the classical way, and although there are unequal weights on the strokes of *M*, as there should be, they are wrongly distributed. The inscription on the tablet below the tomb is in a meaningless

65. For an overview of pre-Gothic epigraphic scripts in Germany see the tables in Karl Brandt, “Grundlegung einer deutschen Inschriftenkunde,” *Deutsches Archiv für Geschichte des Mittelalters* 1 (1937): 11–43.

66. Three Italian examples must stand in for a much larger corpus. Pisanello’s inscription for the Brenzoni family in Verona (1426) in tall, slender Roman capitals but with such idiosyncrasies as top serifs on *A* flying to the left, loops instead of bowls on *B*, conical *M* but with very short drop; Verona, Museo di Castelvecchio, inv. no. 4B 646; *Pisanello*, exhibition catalogue, Verona (Milan: Electa, 1996), no. 8. The portrait of Beato Jacopone da Todi in Prato, a detached fresco dating from around 1440 and sometimes attributed to Paolo Uccello, where in the lower inscription, *A* appears with a broken bar; *D* is squashed like a Gothic majuscule; and *B* is an uncial form; *L’età di Masaccio: Il primo quattrocento a Firenze*, exhibition catalogue, Florence (Milan: Electa, 1990), no. 79. Two drawings of classical capitals from the workshop of Benozzo Gozzoli, with inscriptions of eccentric and nonclassical form (c. 1460), are a fine example because of the contrast between the attentively described architecture and the noncanonical lettering; Bernhardt Degenhart and Annegritt Schmitt, *Corpus der italienischen Zeichnungen, 1300–1450*, pt. 1, vol. 2 (Berlin: Mann, 1968), nos. 434–35.

67. *Opera Vergilius*, ed. Sebastian Brant (Strasbourg: Grüniger, 1502), 33r, “Octavii Augusti pro Virgil. Aenide Carmen.” See E. P. Goldschmidt, *The Printed Book of the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), 49.

68. For the poem, see Aemilius Baehrens, *Paetae latini minores* (Leipzig, 1882), vol. 4, no. 183; or Alexander Riese, *Anthologia Latina* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1906), vol. 1, pt. 2, no. 672.



### Octauij Augusti Pro Virg. Seneide carm. f. xxxiii

Iemanus in gyrum: paulatim singula vires.  
 Dependit proprias: color est e pluribus vnus.  
 Nec tot<sup>9</sup> viridis: quia lactea frusta repugnāt.  
 Nec de lacte nitēs: quia tūc variat ab herbis.  
 Sæpe vidit nares acer iaculatur apertas  
 Spiritus: & fumo dānat sua prandia vultu.  
 Sæpe manu sūma lachrymātia lumina tergit.  
 Immeritoq; furēs dicit cōiuitia fumo.  
 Procebat opus: nō iā salebrofus vt ante:  
 Sed grauior lentos ibat pistillus in orbes.  
 Ergo palladij guttas infillat oliui

Exiitq; super vires in sua dit aceti:  
 Atq; iterū cōmiscet opus: mixtūq; retrahat.  
 Tum demū dignis montaria tota duobus  
 Circuit: inq; globū distantia cōtrahit vnū.  
 Cōstet vt effecti species: nomēq; morei.  
 Eximit in terra cybale quoq; sedula panem:  
 Quē recipit lotis manibus: pullosq; timore  
 Hinc famis: inq; diem securus Simulus illam.  
 At ubi erura ocreis paribus: tectulq; galero.  
 Sub iuga parentes cogit lorata iuuenos.  
 Atq; agit in legeres: & terra condit aratri.



Octauij Augusti p. Virgilij Aeneide Verſ.  
 Ergo ne ſupremis potuit vox improba verbis  
 Tam diu mandare nefas: ergo ibit in ignes:  
 Magnaq; doctiloqui mortē mſa maronis:  
 Ah ſcelus indignū ſoluetur littera diues:  
 Erpoterunt ſpectare oculi: nec parcere honori  
 Flāma ſuo: ductūq; operi ſeruabit honorem  
 Pulcher Apollo vera: Muſa: phibete latinē  
 Liber: et alma ceres ſuccurrite: veſter in armis  
 Miles erat: veſter docilis per rura colonus.  
 Nā docuit quid ver ageret: quid cogeret eſtas.  
 Quid parer autūm? qd bruma nouiſſa ferret.  
 Arbura formauit: ſociatit vitibus vltimos.  
 Curauit pecudes: p. iſibus ſua caſtra dicitur.  
 Hec dedit vt pererāt: iſſan ſi dicere fas eſt.  
 Sed legū eſt ſeruanda fides: ſuprema volūtas

Quod mādāt: fieriq; tubet: parere neceſſe eſt.  
 Frangāt potius legum veneranda poteſtas:  
 Quā tot cōgeſtos nocteſq; dieſq; labores  
 Hauſerit vna dies: ſupmaq; verba parentis  
 Amitāt vigilante ſuo: ſi forte ſuperbus  
 Errauit dolor in morte: & ſi lingua locura eſt  
 Neſcio quid tirabate anio: nō ſponte: ſed aliis  
 Expugnata malis: odio languoris iaiquū.  
 Si mens e: ca ſuit: iterū ſentire ruinas  
 Troia ſuras: iterū cogere reddere voos:  
 Ardēbit miſere: poſt vulnera vulnus Eluſſet:  
 Tam ſacrū ſolueſ opus: tot bella: tot enſes:  
 In cineres dabit hora no cens: & plūdis error:  
 Huc huc Pyreides date flumina cōſta forores:  
 Expirent ignes: vltū Maro dictus vbiq;  
 Ingratūſq; ſui ſtudioraq; inuidis erbi.

65. Tomb of Virgil, woodcut, from Virgil, *Opera* (Strasbourg, 1502), 33r. Photo: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

eastern-looking script. In the inscription in Michael Wolgemut's portrait of Hans Perckmeister (1496) the top serif on *A* shifts from side to side.<sup>69</sup> The bar of *A* is broken in one case but not in the other; *E* is an uncial form; the diagonals of *X* are curved; *M* appears once in the square Byzantine form and once (in the date) in Roman form, although the drop does not quite

69. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. 135.

reach the baseline as it should. The titles in Schedel's *World Chronicle* (1493) often use irregular capitals and double forms. Here the letters are square with small serifs but with delicate divergences from the epigraphic alphabet: uncial *B*, reversed *S*, uncial *Q*.

The key to these exotic alphabets was inconsistency. The *M*, the *A*, or the *E* could vary within the same inscription. This put them at odds both with the Gothic alphabets, majuscule and minuscule, and with the Roman epigraphic script. It is as if Gothic scripts and Gothic architecture had made consistency seem all too familiar and no great achievement. Friedrich Herlin in his painted adaptation of Rogier van der Weyden had also introduced inconsistency as if it were the very hallmark of the ancient. The stylized and exotic pseudoantique alphabet had limited success, and by 1510 or so it was completely out of fashion. The alphabet had appealed to artists because whimsical embellishments symbolized invention and performance. The ideal capital discovered and then re-engineered by the humanist scholars, by contrast, established a score so tight that it left no room at all for individual variation.

Both the development of the scribal humanist minuscule and of the so-called early humanist or exotic majuscule must be seen within a wider context of fascination for pre-Gothic scripts. Forgery-minded fifteenth-century German scribes were mimicking eleventh- and twelfth-century book hands. Even the Roman antiquarian Pomponio Leto introduced, at least at one point in his career, elements of late antique book hands into his normal script.<sup>70</sup> The humanists would have gone on experimenting with the scribal minuscule if the printing press had not standardized it. The majuscule, however, was relatively independent of the press with its economic pressures. The exotic repertoire of capitals flourished among the majuscule fonts of the so-called gothico-antiqua typeface, the dominant German type of the 1460s and 1470s.<sup>71</sup> Whereas a range of printers quickly stabilized typography in these decades in the lowercase, arriving at a synthesis of traditional Gothic and modern humanist minuscule hands, the uppercase remained unsettled because there was no obvious model. The majuscule fonts of the German gothico-antiqua fonts combined Gothic, Roman, uncial, and other forms difficult to categorize. They were drawn from pre-Gothic calligraphy and from epigraphy. Interestingly, the Italian scribes who developed the humanist minuscule were equally free with their majuscules, often displaying the same restlessness and inventiveness as the German printers.

70. Steinmann, "Von der Übernahme fremder Schriften," 53–54.

71. G. D. Hargreaves, "Some Characteristics and Antecedents of the Majuscules in Fifteenth-Century German Gothico-Antiqua Typography," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 1986, 162–76.

## Early experiments in epigraphic perfection

The first to focus on Roman epigraphic scripts were the Florentine sculptors and painters Lorenzo Ghiberti, Donatello, Masaccio, and Masolino.<sup>72</sup> Ghiberti (c. 1381–1455) described in the autobiographical section of his *Second Commentary* an inscription that he himself carved in *lettere antiche*.<sup>73</sup> All these artists were looking closely at old inscriptions and transporting the alphabets into their own works. Generally this Florentine letter—a good example is the inscription at the foot of Donatello's Pecci tomb in Siena Cathedral of 1426–28—is leaner, lighter, and less heavily serified than the Trajanic alphabet, soon to be adopted by moderns as the standard, epigraphic canon; or even entirely without serifs. The Florentines of this generation committed many antiquarian solecisms.<sup>74</sup> Until systematic handbooks of Roman epigraphy were prepared and disseminated, scholars had difficulty perceiving such blunders and inconsistencies.<sup>75</sup> The Quattrocento sculptors, like the scribes, were studying twelfth-century alphabets as much as ancient inscriptions. Moreover, they did not distinguish between Roman Republican inscriptions, which were lighter and less stressed, and early Imperial inscriptions. The sculptors' main concern was just to get back beyond the Gothic majuscule, the contemporary style in lettering characterized by uncial forms, curves, and a capricious approach to stress and serifs.

The key figures who initiated the shift to the stress and serif system and the more square proportions of the Imperial capital were Leon Battista Alberti and Andrea Mantegna. Alberti grasped the public scope of epigraphic capitals and integrated them into his buildings. The huge letters, 50 cm high, on the Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini, from the mid

72. Dario A. Covi, *The Inscription in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting* (New York: Garland, 1985).

73. The inscription, the name of Nero, surrounded an antique cornelian that Ghiberti had mounted; see Julius von Schlosser, *Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten* (Berlin: Bard, 1912), 2: 177.

74. Donatello uses an uncial *E*; the bowl of his *P* is closed instead of open; the tail of *R* is convex; the bowl of *D* bulges downward; the weight should be on the diagonal of *N* rather than the stems. The middle of Ghiberti's *M* only reaches to the middle of the line; *O* is stressed vertically, not on the diagonal; his interpuncts are dots rather than triangles. See Christine Sperling, *Artistic Lettering and the Progress of the Antique Revival in the Quattrocento* (PhD diss., Brown University, 1985), 48–74.

75. An illustration of the power of conviction to cast a veil over perception is the failure of anyone before Theodor Mommsen in 1892 to recognize that the inscription on the leg of the *Youth of Magdalensberg* is not ancient but was done in the sixteenth century (fig. 99). The inscription, a dedication by a pair of freedmen, has a closed *P* and *R* with a convex cauda. Even after Mommsen's observation, scholars did not guess that the statue was modern, but instead reasoned that the inscription must have been re-engraved in the sixteenth century. Schneider, "Die Erzstatue vom Helenenberge" (chap. 3, n. 63), 103–23.

1450s, were modeled directly on the bronze inscription on the Pantheon.<sup>76</sup> Mantegna began to experiment with an alphabet more Imperial in character than the Florentine letter in the 1450s, for example, on the cartellino in the painting of St. Euphemia (1454, Naples), perhaps inspired by contact with Jacopo Bellini.<sup>77</sup> Mantegna established his antique letter in a set of sixteen imitations of solid letters in painted initials for a Strabo manuscript in 1459.<sup>78</sup> In the second half of the century the development of the epigraphic majuscule was taken up mostly in Padua, Verona, and Venice.

Italian scholars began to absorb the practical knowledge of the sculptors and put it to use by commissioning inscriptions of their own, in a context of intellectual freedom and security, detached from the customary political functions of monumental writing. A conspicuous example is the inscription on the house in the Via della Porta d'Ottavia of Lorenzo Manilio, a scholar in the circle of Pomponio Leto. This inscription, datable to 1476, is 21 m long with letters measuring 30 cm in height.<sup>79</sup> A sculptor charged with such an inscription needed some sort of guide, prepared by a scholar, to the proper letterforms, and he needed models in an accustomed format, presumably some sort of drawn patterns. Most scholars, even if equipped with knowledge about letterforms, were themselves incapable of actually drawing such a model alphabet, with all the stresses and serifs in their proper places and all the strokes and curves pitched at the proper angles. Fra Giocondo, for example, hired a professional calligrapher, the Paduan Bartolomeo Sanvito, simply to write out his sylloges in good epigraphic capitals.

The earliest handbook to the construction of ideally proportioned alphabets was the treatise of the antiquarian Felice Feliciano, preserved in a Vatican manuscript from around 1460.<sup>80</sup> The basic idea of Feliciano's handbook was to construct all the letters, including serifs, with circle and

76. Giovanni Mardersteig, "Leon Battista Alberti e la rinascita del carattere lapidario romano nel Quattrocento," *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 2 (1959): 285–307. Millard Meiss, however, argues that Alberti's tall, elegant letters were meant to evoke the architectural idea of weight-bearing caryatids and were not as close to Imperial *scriptura monumentalis* as those of Mantegna: "Toward a More Comprehensive Renaissance Palaeography," *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960): 97–109.

77. Meiss, "Toward a More Comprehensive Renaissance Palaeography."

78. Meiss, *Andrea Mantegna as Illuminator* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 52–67; for many examples in subsequent decades of such isolated majuscules, see Jonathan J. G. Alexander, ed., *The Painted Page: Italian Renaissance Book Illumination*, exhibition catalogue, New York, Morgan Library (Munich and New York: Prestel, 1994).

79. Philip J. Jacks, *The Antiquarian and the Myth of Antiquity: The Origins of Rome in Renaissance Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 141–43 and figure 39; Pier Luigi Tucci, *Laurentius Manlius: La riscoperta dell'antica Roma; La nuova Roma di Sisto IV* (Rome: Quasar, 2001), chap. 8. Even this inscription commits two or three epigraphic solecisms.

80. Vatican Library, lat. 6852. Meiss believed that Feliciano might have been influenced by Mantegna's majuscules of the late 1450s.

square. Feliciano set the ratio of the width of the thick strokes to the side of the circumscribed square at 1:10. This was not a new script generated exclusively by geometry and number theory, but rather the early Imperial epigraphic alphabet with some minor divergences. Feliciano's construction system pretends to rationality, and yet it was clearly arrived at by empirical study of surviving Roman inscriptions. The theory was extrapolated from the stones.<sup>81</sup> The handbooks then fed back into the practice of sculptors, architects, and painters.<sup>82</sup>

Early uppercase typographic fonts imitated the Trajanic capital, as far as was possible on that tiny scale, and then only as a component of a standard dual-case font.<sup>83</sup> The printed capitals drew the attention of scholars all over Europe, and under their guidance local stone carvers, to the standard Roman epigraphic alphabet.

Square capitals were part of the repertoire of German scribes even if for a long time they had few opportunities to use them. The notebooks of Sigmund Gotzkircher had included, among the range of alphabets that he had collected in Italy, several examples of orthodox square capitals. But such alphabets needed to be activated by contact with Roman monuments and with the latest Italian epigraphic handbooks. A key handbook on lettering that may have found its way north of the Alps already in the late fifteenth century was the treatise by Luca Pacioli, eventually published in Venice in 1509.<sup>84</sup> Lettering handbooks for practical use rarely survive. In a handbook printed in Parma around 1480 by the calligrapher Damiano da Moille, the letters occupy only part of the page, suggesting that reader participation was invited. Even this printed version survives only in one copy.<sup>85</sup>

**81.** Feliciano assumed, without independent evidence, that he had arrived at the right theory, the same theory that the Imperial scribes had used to construct their letters. It is thus impossible to say whether Feliciano chose the ratio 1:10 because of Vitruvius or whether he had simply measured Augustan inscriptions, contemporaneous with Vitruvius, and found them to be 1:10. The rational alphabet bears the traces of its historical inscription on material surfaces. Serifs, for example, were originally the marks left by the brush as it lifted from the surface; they were translated into stone by ancient Roman stonemasons. These and many other features had installed themselves as conventions and were incorporated without hesitation into the modern ideal system.

**82.** Some features of ancient Roman *scriptura monumentalis*, interestingly, were *never* adopted even by the most archeologically sensitive patrons and artists: the short arms on *K*, for instance, or the middle arms of *E* and *F* of equal length with the other arms. The most important feature of ancient inscriptions ignored by the Renaissance was the absence of spacing between words; see Paul Saenger, *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 26–30, 271–72, with reference to a few exceptions in manuscripts.

**83.** Sperling, *Artistic Lettering and the Progress of the Antique Revival in the Quattrocento*.

**84.** Mardersteig, "Leon Battista Alberti e la rinascita del carattere lapidario romano nel Quattrocento," 306–7.

**85.** Stanley Morison, ed., *A Newly Discovered Treatise on Classical Letter Design Printed at Parma by Damianus Moyllus circa 1480* (Paris: At the Sign of the Pegasus, 1927).

One of the most important of all alphabetic handbooks from the second half of the century survives in a copy by Hartmann Schedel.<sup>86</sup> In Schedel's manuscript the handbook is preceded by the fragment of a text on the introduction of roman typefaces, copied from a letter by Johannes Lascaris to Piero de' Medici from Lascaris's edition of the Greek anthology published in Florence in 1494 (most of the pages of the letter were torn out). The text then gives the rules for the construction of capitals together with large drawings, followed by drawings of the Greek and Hebrew letters and various Gothic majuscules and minuscules. Schedel also pasted into the manuscript woodcuts of *Fraktur* or Gothic capitals, an engraving with three further alphabets, and an engraving by the Meister mit den Bandrollen with a figure alphabet. Schedel's manuscript, in other words, is a compilation of miscellaneous alphabetic material.<sup>87</sup>

The fact that each of the surviving alphabetic handbooks differs from the others implies that there were a good number of slightly different versions circulating by 1500. Many copies probably found their way into workshops and deteriorated with use. The Schedel text is the only one in Latin, suggesting that they were primarily meant not for scholars but for craftsmen.

### Career of the Trajanic majuscule in Germany

The square majuscule had a dual identity, historical and rationalist. The appeal and authority of the new alphabetic canon derived both from its associations with the Rome of Augustus or of Trajan and from its rationality and ideality. It was an alphabet designed to be noncontingent, not so much a breach of convention or a replacement of one convention with another, as an attempt to transcend convention altogether. This project introduced the very concept of convergence on a formal ideal into German culture. Perfection now seemed within reach, and sensitivity to design parameters

86. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 451. Georg Dehio, "Zur Geschichte der Buchstabenreform in der Renaissance," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 4 (1881): 269–79. Meiss thought the author of the copied treatise might have been Leonardo da Vinci; *Andrea Mantegna as Illuminator*, chap. 4. See also Clm 961 by Schedel, according to Sperling similar but not identical to the treatise of Damiano da Moille.

87. An important document only recently identified is the incomplete alphabetical handbook preserved in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek as part of a codex containing a translation of Vitruvius prepared for Raphael and a copy of Raphael's letter to Leo X. Lucia A. Ciapponi considers the treatise on lettering a holograph by Fra Giocondo: "A Fragmentary Treatise on Epigraphic Alphabets by Fra Giocondo da Verona," *Renaissance Quarterly* 32 (1979): 18–40. Part of the text and the marginalia are in Fra Giocondo's hand; the corrections seem to prove that he was the author as well. Although Sperling wondered whether this treatise was the basis for Dürer's discussion of the problem in the *Unterweysung der Messung* (1525), the Munich manuscript did not enter Germany until the nineteenth century.

was ratcheted up almost year by year. Close to the model was suddenly not close enough. If one script could be established as timeless and beyond conventionality, then it was crucial to get control over that script. An example of this is the dispute between the clerics at Strasbourg and the twenty-four-year-old Beatus Rhenanus about the epitaph of Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, the famous preacher who died in 1510. In his biography of Geiler, Beatus Rhenanus excoriates the narrow-minded priests who rejected the long Latin epitaph he had composed for his mentor and had wanted carved in Roman capitals.<sup>88</sup> Instead, the priests put a simple “Rest in Peace” on Geiler’s tomb, in Gothic lettering. On the printed page Beatus had it his way, with the full text of the epitaph in roman type set off from the rest of the biography. With its date *sexto idus Martias* and comparisons of Geiler to Pericles (he was more eloquent) and Socrates (more continent), Beatus’s epitaph associated Geiler with pagan antiquity. Beatus was trying to enshrine his tribute in a styleless, timeless alphabet. By the same token, the conservative clerics preferred Gothic script because up to that moment and for some time Gothic had been the styleless script. The Gothic alphabet had simply been the alphabet in use, and for the clerics it had no particular meaning. Conventionality in the matter of lettering meant exactly that people used the accustomed alphabet without thinking. Both parties wanted to use a transparent script. The difference is that Beatus was trying to take control of the situation by converting a thoughtless nonchoice into a choice. He wanted to make stylelessness into an option, a program.<sup>89</sup>

The story of the adoption of a historically correct Imperial *scriptura monumentalis* in Germany has never been told.<sup>90</sup> In the last decades of the fifteenth century, the finest square Roman capitals north of the Alps were carved in Hungary and Poland.<sup>91</sup> Humanistic studies had an early foothold

88. Jakob Wimpfeling and Beatus Rhenanus, *Das Leben des Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg*, ed. Otto Herding (Munich: Fink, 1970), 42–46; Beatus Rhenanus, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Adalbert Horowitz and Karl Hartfelder (Leipzig, 1886), no. 16.

89. By the same principle, Jakob Wimpfeling specifically asked Johann Amerbach of Basel to publish the modern Italian poet Mantuanus in a roman type, even while predicting that Mantuanus would finally supplant the lascivious heathen poets Martial, Ovid, and Tibullus. Wimpfeling, *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, no. 52.

90. The introduction of Trajanic majuscules in German inscriptions is briefly narrated in the introductions to some of the volumes of the *Deutsche Inschriften* project; exemplary is Fuchs, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms, LXV–LXVI*. See also Fuchs, “Zu Inschriften des Bistums Worms zur Zeit Bischof Johannes von Dalberg,” in *Der Wormser Bischof Johannes von Dalberg (1482–1503) und seine Zeit*, ed. Gerold Bönnen and Burkard Keilmann (Mainz: Gesellschaft für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte, 2005), 169–86, which reviews the material in this crucial region. Most welcome is the volume *Deutsche Inschriften: Terminologie zur Schriftbeschreibung* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999).

91. See Jan Biatostocki, *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe: Hungary, Bohemia, Poland* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976); and Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister,*

in Hungary under Johannes Vitéz, archbishop of Esztergom from 1465. A red marble socle from the ruined palace of Matthias Corvinus (1443–1490) at Buda has large letters on all four sides, MA/TH/IA/SR.<sup>92</sup> The surviving Hungarian architectural and funerary inscriptions are finely cut and must have been executed or supervised by an Italian sculptor, perhaps Giovanni Dalmata, who may have brought letter patterns with him.<sup>93</sup> The story in Krakow was similar. Here, too, where the Jagellonians assumed power in the 1490s, the epigraphic capital was developed in close rhythm with Italy and to a degree of refinement unknown in contemporary Germany. In the 1490s the Nuremberg sculptor Veit Stoss used decorative, elegant Roman capitals in two bronze epitaphs, one for Petrus of Bnin in the cathedral of Włocławek, commissioned by the Florentine humanist Callimachus, and another for Callimachus himself in Krakow.<sup>94</sup>

In Germany, direct participation of Italian craftsmen was rare. Few German courts sought out foreign talent as Budapest and Krakow had. Here the process was driven exclusively by humanist scholars interested in tombs and in epigraphic tablets. Major artists of these decades were only randomly involved in the scholarly project. Not that humanist scholars found it easy to carry out an epigraphic program. Short of taking up the stonemason's chisel with their own hands, their efficacy was limited. The scholars had to instruct stonemasons how to cut the new-style letters. A scholar might have pointed out to a sculptor the local Roman relics that he ought to take as his models. Then the sculptor could have made his own usable drawings directly after the stones. Nearly all the earliest examples of sensitive emulations of Roman capitals, dating before the turn of the century, come from southwestern Germany. Mainz, Worms, Maulbronn, Sponheim, Stuttgart, and Heidelberg lie in a corridor about ninety miles long, never

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*and City: The Art and Culture of Central Europe, 1450–1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 40–46, 52–58, on these two courts.

**92.** Budapest, Historisches Museum, inv. no. 620. *Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance in Ungarn, 1458–1541*, exhibition catalogue, Schallaburg (Vienna: Niederösterreichische Landesregierung, 1982), no. 176. The majuscule established itself on Hungarian tombs in the late 1480s. See Rósza Feuer-Tóth, *Art and Humanism in Hungary in the Age of Matthias Corvinus* (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1990). An inscription from the palace at Veszprém is dated 1467 but could be later; *Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance in Ungarn*, no. 628.

**93.** The tomb of Emerich Szapolyai, 1487, *Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance in Ungarn*, no. 836, seems to have established the fashion. There were also plenty of majuscules on portable artifacts such as manuscripts, medals, and small reliefs, some imported but many executed in Budapest.

**94.** The Olbracht tomb in the Wawel (1502) is clearly directly dependent on Italian expertise. Despite several irregularities (*M* is too wide; *R* has a convex cauda; small *O*s are used), the inscription is an accurate emulation of *scriptura monumentalis*. Renate Neumüllers-Klauser, "Denkmalschriften des Veit Stoss," in *Discernere vera ac falsa*, Festschrift Józef Szymański (= *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska*, sec. F, Historia, 45 [1990]), 245–55.



very far from the physical remains of the Roman colonial presence in Germany. Mainz and Worms had been major centers of the Roman occupation and were well stocked with funerary and military inscriptions.

The excellence of some of the modern inscriptions suggests that the sculptors had even more guidance than this. It would not have been easy to assemble a complete canonical alphabet from the various fragments, each in slightly varying styles, that happened to be lying about. Even in Augsburg or Mainz there were few Trajanic majuscules that lived up to the perfection of the Italian handbooks of alphabetic construction. If a sculptor used to carving Gothic minuscules were put before a Roman funerary tablet and told to copy its lettering, he would not have singled out those very features modern epigraphers recognize as characteristic and defining; would not have seen the distinction between a closed and open *P* as important, for instance, or the distinction between the thin and thick strokes in the *N*. He would have had no reason to regard the proportions of the Imperial letter (1:9 or 1:10) as authoritative. Instead he would have looked at the Roman letters through the lens of pre-Gothic inscriptions, which had little notion of rules and internal consistency. Before the proportional theory of letter construction, even antiquarian scholars were not necessarily capable of distinguishing one family of Roman scripts from another. It is doubtful that early fifteenth-century Italian epigraphers were aware of the distinctions, for example, between the Republican and the Imperial alphabets. Alberti, designing inscriptions apparently before the handbooks were in circulation, seems to have taken Republican letters as his models. Because there are no dates on Roman tombs, the inscriptions cannot be coordinated chronologically without independent evidence.

The earliest German experiments with quadratic majuscules on stone monuments were isolated from one another and had no repercussions. Decisively shorn of any of the decorative and exotic variations or Greek derivatives that characterize the “early humanist” capital are the square capitals of the two-line dedicatory inscription of Bishop Johannes von Dalberg beneath a stone relief of the Jesse tree in the cathedral of Worms, dated 1488.<sup>95</sup> Dalberg, who had studied law in Pavia and visited Rome, was an avid collector of antiquities.<sup>96</sup> The red sandstone tablet at the Cistercian

95. Fuchs, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms*, no. 316; Fuchs, “Zu Inschriften des Bistums Worms zur Zeit Bischof Johannes von Dalberg,” n. 63. The date 1488 is unreliable; the inscription may have been added at some later point before Dalberg’s death in 1503 and backdated. With few variations the letters cleave to the Imperial system. This is also possibly the earliest German example of a Roman date with a bar on top as was done in antiquity but not in the Middle Ages.

96. In 1484 Dalberg had three Roman inscriptions restored and mounted in the Bischofshof in Worms. He appended to them an inscription of his own registering the restoration, which survives only in transcription; very likely it too was executed in square capitals. Fuchs, ed., *Die Inschriften der Stadt Worms*, no. 300. *CIL* XIII, 6241. Apianus and Amantius, *Inscriptiones*

monastery of Maulbronn, on the outside of a spiral staircase in the Parlatorium, commemorates a restoration campaign completed in 1493 under Abbot Johannes Burrus.<sup>97</sup> Here, too, a scholar must have supervised the cutting and furnished the stonemason with patterns. Some of the new features—the *O* is perfectly round; the bowl of *P* is open; the bottom arm of *E* tilts slightly up—could be found in type. But these letters are thinner than uppercase type. The letters are internally consistent enough to suggest that the artisan was guided by formal patterns—an Italian handbook—and not the amateur lettering of a humanist scholar. This intermediary was probably Conrad Leontorius (Leonberg), a monk who had studied in Italy and France; correspondent of the leading humanists in western Germany, including Wimpfeling, Gresemund, Trithemius, and Johannes Reuchlin; tutor of the Basel lawyer and humanist Bonifacius Amerbach; and from 1495 to 1503 based in Maulbronn.<sup>98</sup>

The scholars promoting the new alphabet were often based in monasteries, relatively indifferent to new trends in the visual arts and not necessarily in close contact with ambitious artists. They were not content with typologically sound but formally approximate renditions of ancient epigraphic monuments; with mere substitutions, that is. The new inscriptions had to look right, as right as possible. The most extensive episode of epigraphic purism would unfold in the first years of the new century in a city that took seriously its colonial Roman past, Augsburg. And yet even here the imperial majuscule was to live a short life, as we will see.

### Publication of icons and relics

The earliest printed image was economically monopolized by popular religion. The first woodcuts were simply affordable surrogates for panel paintings. They were independent sheets, handcolored after printing, that narrated stories and reproduced the portraits of the saints or the elementary iconographic configurations familiar to any churchgoer, Annunciation, Nativity, Crucifix. The cult image, traditionally, could be copied by hand without loss of efficacy, so long as the public trusted the good faith and competence of the copying process. The earliest woodcuts were inexpensive

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*sacrosanctae vetustatis*, 484. On these inscriptions and generally on Dalberg as antiquarian, see Karl Morneweg, *Johann von Dalberg* (Heidelberg, 1887), 84–85, 122, 151n243, 155 and 155n255, 300–303.

97. The tablet measures 65 × 80 cm and the letters 4 cm. Neumüllers-Klausner, ed., *Inschriften des Enzkreis*, no. 122. As in a Roman inscription, words are suspended but not internally contracted. The language mimicks a Roman dedicatory inscription.

98. This puts the date 1493 in the inscription in doubt. In fact the letters could have been cut at any point up to 1503, when Leontorius left Maulbronn and Abbot Burrus's first administration ended, even if they referred to an event of 1493.

and barely adequate participants in this system. The woodcuts did not advertise their mechanical pedigree and indeed tried to conceal them with the handcoloring, borrowing some of the prestige of the handmade artifact. Whatever the message of an early woodcut was, mechanical fabrication was not part of its content. The early woodcuts were substitutional in the sense that they delivered the expected types of the Madonna or St. Sebastian despite the medial shifts from panel to paper and paint to ink.

After midcentury, the printed image began to turn its mechanical origins to rhetorical account, in two ways. On the one hand, print discovered its capacity to deliver information about real, knowable things in the world. The print became a powerful instrument of knowledge. On the other hand, the print began to participate in the revived system of display of relics, sacred portraits, and miraculous icons, offering itself as a uniquely reliable extension of the publication mechanisms that brought relics and icons to the eyes of ordinary beholders.

At the beginning, no one expected a print to deliver knowledge about the world. This expectation was first raised by typography. Many of the earliest books delivered facts. Public appetite for knowledge about current events, history, geography, astronomy, anatomy, or plants helped sustain the precarious book business, so dependent on heavy capital outlays before a single book had been sold and thus acutely sensitive to fluctuations in the reading public's tastes and interests. As early as 1460, in the very infancy of movable type, the woodcut was imported into the printed book as a substitute for expensive illuminations. From that point on, the typographic book, and the printed illustrations of typographic books, were automatically part of the content of every woodcut, even woodcuts that had nothing to do with books. The mechanical reproduction of handwriting was the technology that drove all the others. Movable type, itself a storage device for knowledge, compelled the woodcut to revise its relationship to knowledge. The printed book underwrote the medial authenticity of the printed image.<sup>99</sup> In its role as purveyor of knowledge, the printed image became for the first time a *medium*, a mediator, with all of the power and the limitations that such a function implies. This represented a break with the substitutional model of transmission, which always downplays the possibility of medial interference.

Before midcentury, the woodcut did not reproduce particular cult images or places associated with mass pilgrimages. The first prints to do so were not woodcuts at all but engravings: the three images of the chapel of St. Meinrad at Einsiedeln, a pilgrimage target in Switzerland, by Master

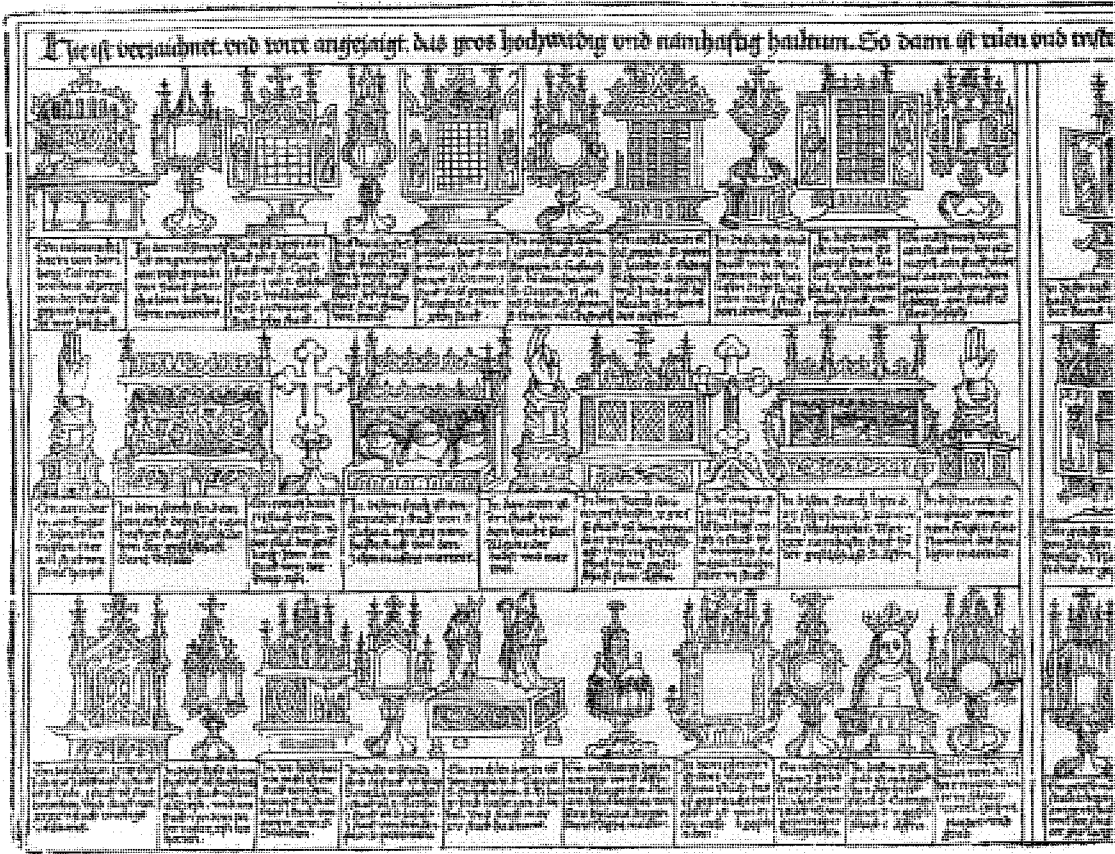
99. Friedrich Kittler made this simple point, following Marshall McLuhan, who said that the "content" of every medium is another medium, and the historian Elizabeth Eisenstein; Kittler, *Optische Medien: Berliner Vorlesung 1999* [Berlin: Merve, 2002], 77.

E.S., dated 1466.<sup>100</sup> Such prints stoked a popular fascination with pilgrimage culminating in the massive confluences of pilgrims to Wilsnack, Niklashausen, Regensburg, and other sites in the fifteenth century and up until the very crisis of the Reformation. It was one thing to hear about pilgrimages; it was another to hold in one's hands an image of the miraculous place with the name clearly spelled out, perhaps a souvenir brought back by another pilgrim. The printed image opened people's minds to the possibility of participation.<sup>101</sup>

Prints began around the same time to reproduce the sacred relics owned by monasteries or communities. One of the earliest was the array of imperial relics, including the Holy Lance in real size, on a midcentury Nuremberg woodcut (fig. 42, above). Such prints lured country folk to the city at the time of the annual relic displays. The ceremonial display of the relics, ensconced in their reliquaries, was a low-technology form of publication, effective but with limited spatial range. The adventure with the tomb of St. Simpertus in Augsburg began when the monks took advantage of a rebuilding campaign to look for relics in the ground. By digging, they hoped to repeat the archeological triumphs of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the age when so many valuable tombs and relics of founders were rediscovered. The difference this time was that the process took place in public and the results were more effectively publicized. Ecclesiastical excavations culminated in publication, whether by inscription or proclamation, by the erection of monuments, by the preparation of written accounts, or by printed broadsheets and books. Devotion in the late fifteenth century increasingly revolved around eyewitness or even physical contact with relics, miracle-working icons, or other nonsubstitutable objects. Worshipers were more likely to want to see the eucharistic wafer for themselves; a bell would alert passersby that communion was about to be performed inside the church and the wafer about to be raised. *Ex votos*, artifacts displayed at altars as expressions of gratitude for answered prayers, were also a form of publication. They proved powerful evidence even for the skeptical historian Sigismund Meisterlin. Some contemporaries doubted the supposed relics

**100.** Meister E.S.: *Ein oberrheinischer Kupferstecher der Spätgotik* (Munich: Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, 1987), nos. 31–33. On early prints as reproductions of particular images, see Peter Schmidt, "Die Anfänge des vervielfältigten Bildes im 15. Jahrhundert oder: Was eigentlich reproduziert das Reproduktionsmedium Druckgraphik?" in *Übertragungen: Formen und Konzepte von Reproduktion in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Britta Bussmann et al. (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2005), 129–56; and on the E.S. pilgrimage engravings, 137–39.

**101.** Harry Kühnel, "'Werbung,' Wunder und Wallfahrt," in *Wallfahrt und Alltag in Mittelalter und frühen Neuzeit* (= Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, vol. 592) (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), 95–113.



66. Reliquaries of Sts. Ulrich and Afra, 1494, woodcut; upper left-hand block. Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung.

of St. Simpertus found in Augsburg in 1491. Meisterlin rebutted doubts about the authenticity of the Simpertus gravesite by pointing out the quantity of wax *ex votos* hanging all around the tomb that testified to the saint's effectiveness as a generator of miracles.<sup>102</sup> The *ex votos* were evidence of belief, not of power, but as artifacts they sent mysterious waves of reinforcing energy all through the chain that linked Simpertus's day to the present day. Skepticism and credulity are never very far from one another. One lie might replace another. Felix Fabri was not taken in when shown the site of the captivity of Andromeda, together with her bones, for everyone knew that she had been taken far away by her rescuer Perseus.<sup>103</sup> Material evidence was persuasive and the impulse to abandon the text and trust the artifact could lead in either direction, toward sense or nonsense. The early historians often erred in accepting archeological evidence too eagerly.

To compensate those who missed the show, and to lure them the following year, collections of relics were published on printed broadsheets.

102. In a letter of 1469; cited by Paul Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland*, pt. 1, *Die Anfänge: Sigismund Meisterlin* (Bonn, 1895), 111; reprinted in Joachimsen, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. Notker Hammerstein (Aalen: Scientia, 1983), 2: 239.

103. *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri* [see chap. 4, n. 23], 205.

The monastery of Sts. Ulrich and Afra was not slow to recognize the potential of movable type and ran a small printing press for a few years in the 1470s.<sup>104</sup> A woodcut broadsheet of 1494 listed and illustrated all sixty-one of the reliquaries held at the monastery (fig. 66).<sup>105</sup> In the same year the monastery of Andechs fashioned an immobile version of such a pictorial inventory in the form of a painted panel.<sup>106</sup> The printed equivalent was published in 1496, and in the following year Duke Sigismund of Bavaria commissioned his own painted copy.<sup>107</sup> The authorities provided a dense overlay of alternative access routes to the relics.<sup>108</sup> Some published their relics in the form of books, descriptive inventories illustrated with woodcuts.<sup>109</sup> The relic books were the ecclesiastical and vernacular equivalent to the antiquarian publications. Whereas the humanist scholars approached the media of type and woodcut only tentatively, the church embraced them with enthusiasm. Sacred archeology was driven by the aim of publication. A lone woodcut reproducing a reliquary, an incongruous interloper in the published sylloge of classical inscriptions and monuments by Apianus and Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (1534), marks the intersection of the two archeologies, sacred and profane (fig. 67). The woodcut reproduces a square-shaped silver tabernacle mounted on a columnar pedestal and topped by a semi-circular gable with dolphins. The reliquary, which contained a fragment of the True Cross, belonged to the monastery of Lorch near Enns, in Upper Austria. It is not clear whether the compilers thought the silver reliquary



67. Reliquary at Lorch. Woodcut from Petrus Apianus and Bartholomeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 450.

104. Rolf Schmidt, "Die Klosterdruckerei von St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg [1472 bis kurz nach 1474]," in *Augsburger Buchdruck und Verlagswesen*, ed. Helmut Gier and Johannes Janota (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 141–52.

105. Schreiber 1936. Hartig, *Das Benediktiner-Reichsstift Sankt Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg (1013–1802)* [Augsburg: Filser, 1823], 86–87. The woodcut was printed from four blocks; reproduced here is the upper left-hand block; Graphische Sammlung, Munich, inv. no. 209989a. The entire print would measure 60.4 × 77.2 cm.

106. Suzanne Karr Schmidt, *Art: A User's Guide; Interactive and Sculptural Printmaking in the Renaissance* (PhD diss., Yale University, 2006), 46, describes it as a "meta-reliquary."

107. Schreiber 1936m. Note that there are only two other examples of printed reliquary collections beyond Augsburg and Andechs, those of Trier and of Aachen, Maastricht, and Kornelimünster; Schreiber 1937–1938. See Kühnel, "'Werbung,' Wunder und Wallfahrt," 102–3.

108. Sabine Griese, "Bild—Text—Betrachter: Kommunikationsmöglichkeiten von Einblatt-Druckgraphik im 15. Jahrhundert," in *Dialoge: Sprachliche Kommunikation in und zwischen Texten im deutschen Mittelalter*, ed. Nikolaus Henkel et al. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003), 315–17. Legner, *Reliquien in Kunst und Kult* [see chap. 2, n. 62], 89–119.

109. Hall, Vienna, Bamberg, Wittenberg, and Halle all published illustrated relic books.

was a reused pagan object, or whether they valued it as the reliable transmitter of two classical inscriptions, one in Greek and one in Latin.

In the town of Hall in the Tyrol in 1510 the relic collection of Florian Waldauf was publicly displayed in the presence of visiting dignitaries. Hans Burgkmair designed 151 woodcuts to illustrate a book recording the spectacle, mostly small generic images of reliquaries.<sup>110</sup> The text reports that at the relic showing the crowd was told that if they wanted to see all the relics they would need to buy the printed book in the marketplace or elsewhere. The implication is that the contemplation of the printed image would at least partially substitute for witnessing the real thing.

This episode points to an ambiguity in the theory of relic reproduction. Was the woodcut image of relic or singular icon (a relic in its own right) merely a report on its existence and form, or was the image offering itself as an effective surrogate for the singular object? This alternative corresponds to the two newly clarified functions of the printed image in the second half of the fifteenth century. Either the image describes an object of curiosity (planetary god, herb, city) which remains nevertheless remote and even possibly inaccessible, or the image assumes some aspect of an object's being and virtue and so becomes its efficacious stand-in, its substitute over one or another function. The difference is clear: a woodcut description of a city is obviously not the city itself, whereas a printed surrogate for a painted image of the Madonna and Child is still an image of the Madonna and Child. In both cases, the peculiar indexical rhetoric of mechanical reproduction is exploited. The two cases diverge, in opposite directions, from a traditional model of substitutional transmission. Substitution in its normal imperfect workings was a hopeful theory about the handing down of form or information that tried to compensate for incomplete knowledge about the transmission process. The printed image, since it made common cause with the typographic book, was innovatively candid about its mechanically guaranteed reliability. The rhetoric of indexical transmission (stamping, pressing, casting, inking) was pulled into the service both of description, that is, knowledge *about* things, and of delivery *of* the thing itself. Description, an instrumental and nonmystified model of knowledge, is not substitutional. Description depends on maintenance of a clear difference between the description and the described. Description creates a distinction between knowing about a thing and merely knowing how to use a thing.

The other possibility that the print offered—preservation of identity by virtue of indexical contact—represents a kind of ideal limit case of sub-

110. Although the text was never printed, the manuscript survives with proofs of the Burgkmair woodcuts. Josef Garber, "Das Haller Heiltumbuch mit den Unika-Holzschnitten Hans Burgkmair des Älteren," *Jahrbuch der kaiserlichen Sammlungen* 32 (1915): 1–CLXXVII.

stitution, for unlike the normal working substitutional paradigm, print does not ask the recipient to take anything on faith, but rather openly vaunts and opens for inspection the mechanical process.

These two functions, descriptive and identity-preserving, converged in images of relics or icons. The effect of mystical identity was strongest in hard media. The metal badges reproducing cult images and sold at pilgrimage sites, for instance, functioned as souvenirs but at the same time allowed the pilgrim to carry some quantum of the supernatural power of the cult image back home. That power was perfectly real, as real as any power in the world, for the metal badge was capable of persuading people back home to drop everything and head out on a pilgrimage of their own.

In the woodcut display of the imperial relics of Nuremberg, the two possibilities were held in equilibrium, side by side but clearly differentiated. Most of the relics were described; one relic, however, the Holy Lance, was reproduced in real scale, promising a more than merely heuristic access to its numen (fig. 42).

An ambiguous middle category of printed icon was the family of images of the *Veronica*, or Christ's countenance as captured by St. Veronica's sensitive cloth. Because the sacred portrait was preserved in the first place by an indexical transfer of information, and because manual image-copying processes in the Middle Ages were, notionally at least, reliable, indeed practically mechanical, any subsequent replica of the image could flirt with the idea of itself being a *Vera Ikon*. Such an ingenious fiction was hard to sustain in a panel painting, so obviously painted with a brush held in the hand. Print, however, gave the fiction a second life.<sup>111</sup> The engravers Master of the Playing Cards, Martin Schongauer, and Dürer, attentive to the paradoxes of authorship, converted the *Veronica* into a miniature stage for self-reflection. The thematics of figure and ground, in the phrase of Gerhard Wolf, were "adjusted" to fit the new medium. Some prints reproduced the cloth with its folds; others represented Veronica herself holding the cloth; still others simply delivered the face of Christ as if the paper had become the cloth.

Around 1500 Israhel van Meckenem, a printmaker of the lower Rhine, published an engraving reproducing a celebrated early Christian image in the basilica of S. Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome.<sup>112</sup> The half-length image of Christ with folded arms, in the medium of micromosaic, dates from around 1300. In the 1380s it came to Rome, advertised as the very image

111. Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel* (see chap. 2, n. 27), 317, makes the point that prints were practically "predestined" for an engagement with the thematics of the *Veronica*.

112. Parshall, "Imago contrafacta," 554–79; Evans, ed., *Byzantium* (see chap. 2, n. 29), no. 329; Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel*, 163–66; and Schmidt, "Die Anfänge des vervielfältigten Bildes im 15. Jahrhundert," 144–45.



commissioned in the sixth century by Pope Gregory the Great in commemoration of the miraculous appearance of Christ on the altar while Gregory performed the Mass. The artists' signatures on such engravings would appear to undermine the referential ambition of the prints. But the printed result, authoritatively fixed, obfuscated the principle of authorship, allowing other more desirable origins to assert themselves. Schongauer or Israel van Meckenem were understood not as the creators of the image but as publishers, enablers. The signature's punctuation of the transmission chain was met head on by the indexical rhetoric of the paper pressed into the inked grooves.<sup>113</sup>

Such prints provided plenty of circumstantial information, too much information, about the relic. In order to advertise effectively a pilgrimage or a relic collection, the print needed to provide framing information, a label, a place-name, perhaps a date. The woodcuts of the Hodegetria Madonnas or the Madonna of the Corn-Ears almost in every case came with explanatory inscriptions (fig. 19). Woodcuts by Hans Burgkmair and Peter Vischer represented the whole scenes of the relic showings in Hall and Nuremberg, respectively, the scaffolding and assembled dignitaries, the reliquaries, the crowd with upturned heads.<sup>114</sup> The engraving by E.S. marking the five hundredth anniversary of the miraculous angelic dedication of the chapel at Einsiedeln had represented not only the miracle itself, but also the cult image erected to mark the miracle, along with St. Benedict, who lived many centuries before the time of the miracle, and the modern pilgrims. In the relic images, print found its way to a new function: reflecting culture back onto itself. Print allowed people to see themselves seeing. The relic book from Hall, when it mentioned that pilgrims had been encouraged on-site to buy the book, was in effect telling readers why they had bought the book. Such woodcuts, as much as the illustrations to almanacs or herbals, were in the business of knowledge. In order to set people back on the path to the mysteries, the images had to show, explain, demystify. Too many layers of framing and explanation, too tight a fixing of time-space coordinates, dissipated the substitutional effect. Metadata, the internally inscribed framing information, punctuated the transmission process, articulating the flow of meaning into a series of localizable relay stations. The apologetic print was a divided message, pointing to more than one target

113. Note that Dürer made his European fame with woodcuts, apparently understood as direct facsimiles of his drawings. Engravings, even when signed, were not so closely associated with authorship. On such paradoxes see Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

114. Burgkmair, *Showing of Relics at Hall*, woodcut, for Haller Heiltumbuch, 1508/9; Falk, *Hans Burgkmair*, 63, ill. 38; *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, no. 37. For the earlier woodcut (1487) by Vischer—the publisher, not the sculptor of the same name—see Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Nuremberg, a Renaissance City, 1500–1618* (Austin: University of Texas Press), p. 28, ill. 24.

at once, not only to the prestigious origin point that motivated the message—god, event, or fact—but also to a publisher, to the heavy presses, to the artist's drawing on paper or woodblock, to the inked block itself. Print dismembered the transmission process and laid it out for public inspection. Substitution works only when the process of transmission is obscure or forgotten. Substitution was mobilized in the first place as a theory of transmission *because* the process was obscure, and was sustainable as a theory only so long as its workings remained obscure.

The earliest prints wanted to be like paintings. With paintings it was just the opposite. The cult painting wished that it were a print. The most sophisticated Netherlandish panels, echoed by German painters throughout much of the fifteenth century, thematized the icon-copying system by depicting St. Luke at work painting the Virgin or Veronica holding the Sudarium. Such paintings expounded a myth of primal indexicality that sustained the cultic copying system. The modern painting could never be indexical, but by taking indexicality as one of its subjects it could gesture in that direction.

### Maximilian amplified

Maximilian lamented that the German historians of yore had “so unskillfully described and corrupted the high, wise, and divinely sanctioned deeds of the princes.”<sup>115</sup> In the absence of good texts, artifacts took on added importance. Maximilian's enthusiasm was directed as much to early medieval German artifacts as to Roman ones. After conquering the castle of Kufstein in the Tyrol on 17 October 1504, the emperor wrote a letter, perhaps to Peutinger, describing “an inscription on a marble embedded above the arch of the main portal” (*inscriptionem quandam in crusto marmoreo super fornicem porte superioris oppidi*). Here “you will see that the Germans, too, were mindful of posterity even in the smallest things” (*in qua reperies apud Germanos quoque memoriam fuisse posteritatis in rebus etiam minimis*). Maximilian appended the text of this German-language inscription, which outlined the building campaign at Kufstein of Ludwig the Bearded of Bavaria in 1415.<sup>116</sup> Maximilian's comment suggests, first, that it was the Romans, not the Germans, who provided the model for self-memorialization through

115. Johannes Carion, citing an account by Johannes Stabius; cited by Neddermayer, *Das Mittelalter in der deutschen Historiographie*, 27. Neddermayer also quotes Sebastian Münster, Johannes Naucleus, Hartmann Schedel, Martin Luther, and Aventinus on the same topic, 26–29.

116. Oswald Redlich, “Zur Belagerung von Kufstein im Jahre 1504,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschungen* 9 (1888), 108, 112–13. The letter was found in the Staathalterei Innsbruck (Pestarchiv XXXV, Kufstein). Erich König did not publish it in Peutinger's correspondence, however, so it may have been addressed to another scholar or secretary.

inscriptions; and second, that Ludwig the Bearded after only ninety years had already receded into the past and was no longer thought of as a contemporary but as an example of old German customs.

The evidentiary rhetoric of replication was the motor of Emperor Maximilian's complex propaganda program. Maximilian never gathered the resources or the will to undertake a major building project. He planned a memorial chapel to himself at the Falkenstein near St. Wolfgang in the Salzkammergut and a monument to the German emperors at Speyer, but neither was ever completed. The emperor made a virtue out of a necessity and invested in replicable projects, books and prints but also bronzes. Maximilian had the epochal insight that paper would outlast stone. He also grasped that bronzes were the ideal indexical images, for they were often singular replicas, that is, replicas without originals, and replicas without multiplicity. Bronzes invoked the rhetoric of the imprint or the index even when proliferation through copies was impractical. The evidentiary force of physical monuments, their ability to construct traditions backward, was the crucial premise behind Maximilian's entire propaganda program. With his paper monuments, illustrated self-heroicizing tales, and dreams of bronze and stone ancestor galleries, Maximilian was trying to insert himself into historical chains by iconic force. One could say that archeology for Maximilian did not so much culminate in the publication and display of the results, so much as begin with the display. Maximilian had confidence that the past would fall into place, as it were, behind the monuments.

Maximilian was acutely conscious of the Italian dynasties and of antiquity-minded rival German princes like Frederick the Wise, Duke of Saxony, who commissioned a bronze bust portrait and a medal from the sculptor Adriano Fiorentino, resident in Dresden from 1495 to 1499. Maximilian paid the Mantuan Gian Marco Cavalli to direct coin production at his mint at Hall in the Tyrol.<sup>117</sup> His ambassador Hieronymus Cassola reminded him in 1508 that "princes and nobles eagerly and warmly request coins with Your Majesty's portrait."<sup>118</sup> For the Dreikönigstag or Vienna Congress of 1515 Maximilian commissioned a series of portrait medals.<sup>119</sup> The fashion

117. Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals* (see chap. 4, n. 134), 1: 61–62.

118. Erich Egg and Wolfgang Pfandler, *Kaiser Maximilian I und Tirol* (Innsbruck: Haymon, 1969), 100.

119. On the complicated origins of medal production in Germany, see Georg Habich, *Die deutschen Schaumünzen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. in 4 (Munich: Bruckmann, 1929–), vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. XLIV–XLVI, LXXIII–LXXV, including a discussion of the close ties to traditions of seal and coin production; and Jeffrey Chipps Smith, "A Creative Moment: Thoughts on the Genesis of the German Portrait Medal," in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen K. Scher (New York: Garland; American Numismatic Society, 2000), 177–200. Note that Burgkmair made a printed medal portrait of Celtis, Hollstein 310; Habich, *Die deutschen Schaumünzen*, vol. 1, pt. 1, no. 23; *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, no. 18.

took hold in Augsburg in 1518, the year of the Imperial Diet. Hans Schwarz designed a medal of Peutingger, as the owner of a magnificent collection of medals and coins—allegedly he owned all but one of eight hundred coins that Thomas More showed him in Antwerp—a deserving subject.<sup>120</sup> Maximilian commissioned bronze busts of himself and his mother Eleonora of Portugal from the sculptor Jörg Muscat of Augsburg.<sup>121</sup> In Innsbruck in 1499 Maximilian sheltered the uncle of his bride Bianca Maria, Ludovico Sforza, duke of Milan, who had been driven out of his city by the French. A decade and a half earlier Ludovico had commissioned from Leonardo da Vinci a gigantic equestrian statue of his father Francesco Sforza. After his conversations with Ludovico, Maximilian began planning a bronze equestrian statue of himself, the clearest possible imperial statement.<sup>122</sup> Maximilian did not look south for his models but to the German precedents, the unknown rider in Bamberg and the equestrian Otto I in Magdeburg, both with “closed” legs in contrast to the Italian examples.<sup>123</sup> Hans Burgkmair made a project drawing for the work<sup>124</sup> and the Augsburg sculptor Gregor Erhart began carving a sandstone block in 1509. The monument was never completed.<sup>125</sup> But Maximilian commissioned many other portraits and allegorical representations of himself in modern formats and media such as tapestry, painting, woodcut, wood relief, and façade sculpture.

The printed *Triumphal Procession* and *Triumphal Arch* were Maximilian’s most ingenious accommodations of ancient formats to modern technology and to his own financial limits. Teams of artists working over a period of a decade produced these huge syntheses of biographical, genealogical, heraldic, and mythographic material, according to programs devised by Maximilian’s historiographer Johannes Stabius. The *Triumphal Procession*, 148 woodcuts running to a length of 55 meters, was inspired

120. Peter Volz, *Conrad Peutingger und das Entstehen der deutschen Medaillensitte zu Augsburg 1518* (PhD diss., University of Heidelberg, 1972).

121. The bust of Maximilian is in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. no. 5486; *Hispania-Austria: Die Katholischen Könige, Maximilian I und die Anfänge der Casa de Austria in Spanien, Kunst um 1492*, exhibition catalogue, Innsbruck, Schloss Ambras (Milan: Electa, 1992), no. 167. See also the bust of Philip of Burgundy in Stuttgart.

122. See Falk, *Hans Burgkmair*, 71–73; Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *German Sculpture of the Later Renaissance, c. 1520–1580* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 11–12; and Franz Bischoff, *Burkhard Engelberg: “Der vilkunistreiche Architector und der Statt Augsburg Wercke Meister”* (Augsburg: Wissner, 1999), 253–61. Felix Fabri en route to Jerusalem in 1483 learned that “the Venetians, imitating the customs of the heathen nations, once determined to reward one of their captains” with an equestrian statue; *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, 95–96.

123. Falk, “Hans Burgkmair und einige Aspekte ‘deutscher Renaissance,’” 412.

124. Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, inv. no. 22.447, pen and brush, 43.1 × 28.4 cm. *Hispania-Austria*, no. 168.

125. The torso survived into the nineteenth century in the courtyard of Sts. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg.

by Mantegna's *Triumph of Caesar*.<sup>126</sup> Such archeological details as the triumphal wagons and the trophies were adapted from the woodcut illustrations to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice, 1499). The *Triumphal Arch*, which in sources was always referred to as the *Ehrenpforte* or Gate of Honor, was initially entrusted to Jörg Kölderer but from 1512 was in the hands of Albrecht Dürer. This stupendous woodcut comprises 192 blocks and covers an area of some seven square meters.<sup>127</sup> The arch's three openings and the pairs of columns suggest the Arch of Septimius Severus in Rome as a basic model. But the surface area has been augmented and filled to the brim with images of Maximilian and his family, portraits of ancestors and saints, battle scenes, coats of arms, and an infinity of architectural and archeological details, many of them designed by Dürer: entablatures, cornices, cupolas, columns, garlands; satyrs, dragons, mermaids, putti.<sup>128</sup> The *Triumphal Arch* was published in 1517–18 in an edition of seven hundred. Copies were presumably sent to the councils of the imperial cities and to various allied princes, although not a single impression from that first edition can be traced to its original owner.<sup>129</sup>

Maximilian's paper monuments were pictorial performances that referred to other pictorial performances. The *Procession* notated the *Triumph of Caesar* of Mantegna; the *Arch* notated the great carved retables in the southern German churches and the heraldic displays on the walls of castles, as well as the arches of Rome which were themselves, after all, mere symbols without structural or defensive function, indeed perhaps best thought of as representations of arches. Both the *Arch* and the *Procession* notated the elaborate processions and funerals that Maximilian had witnessed in Burgundy, where ephemeral pageant machinery in wood and painted cloth simulated the Roman triumphal apparatus.<sup>130</sup>

Monuments were meant to look like the destinations of continuous traditions, the passive, unavoidable summations of old truths. They were understood as the products of compilatory and notational activity, not the products of original composition. Maximilian had a "genealogical"

126. For Burgkmair's contributions, see Hollstein 552–618. *Hispania-Austria*, no. 136. On Maximilian and the woodcut generally, see Larry Silver, "Prints for a Prince: Maximilian, Nuremberg, and the Woodcut," in *New Perspectives on the Art of Renaissance Nuremberg*, ed. Jeffrey Chipps Smith (Austin: Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery, University of Texas, Austin, 1985), 7–22.

127. *Hispania-Austria*, no. 145; Thomas Ulrich Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I: Dürer und Altdorfer im Dienst des Herrschers* (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2001).

128. On the imperial woodcuts of Hans Burgkmair—the Reichsadler, the St. George—where the direct involvement of Maximilian is not clear, see *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, nos. 21–22, 42.

129. Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I*, 200.

130. Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I*, 49–64.

understanding of the monument. A tomb or a statue, even if it was fabricated yesterday and had strictly speaking zero value as indexical evidence, nevertheless brought order into the picture. The monument concretized a past that was otherwise ghostly. Iconography, once installed, appeared ancient, inevitable, incontrovertible.

### Replication of irregular information

Irregular, improbable information was the key to the rhetoric of the real. But not all improbable information was invented, as were the facial features of a dead saint or the flourishes of a scribe's signature. Print made it possible for the first time to reproduce not merely diagrams, but also complex analogical information about real things in the world: coastlines, plants, faces. Local topographical and historiographical projects seized the opportunity of print. Conrad Celtis planned a series of publications, involving both text and images, that would ratify his researches into early German history. The Augsburg jurist Conrad Peutinger was compiling his own history of the Roman emperors, intending to illustrate it with woodcuts based on coins from his own collection. The project was long in the works, frequently mentioned in his correspondence, but never completed.<sup>131</sup> Few such projects were completed. Publication was expensive; it required capital up front; and it was not easy to win the confidence of a printer. The woodcuts that Burgkmair designed were substitutes for the medals in the full, traditional sense. Peutinger may have owned the originals cast or stamped in metal, but the reader was to have all the necessary information from the woodcuts.

Publication was central to the neoclassical project, whose very aim was to isolate timeless form. Publishable form, either the linear contour or the nonmaterial, purely transitive form of letters, was precisely the form that would survive the corrosion of time. Both the profile and the linguistic label were easily replicated. Mechanical replication was the key to the humanist notion of a monumental form that would rise above the contingencies of handmade fabrication. The purpose of mechanical replication was to isolate what is permanent and fix it on a metal plate or a wax mold. Replication severed the pictorial statement from the context of its

131. See the fair copy of Peutinger's *Kaiserbuch* from 1504, Augsburg, Stadt- und Staatsbibliothek, 2 Cod. 26. An intensive analysis of the *Kaiserbuch* and the woodcuts prepared for it by Burgkmair is the dissertation by West, *Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473–1531) and the Visualization of Knowledge*, chap. 2. On Peutinger's collection of antiquities see Renate von Busch, *Studien zu deutschen Antikensammlungen des 16. Jhs.* (PhD diss., University of Tübingen, 1973), 11–16, 64–65. Scholarly interest in imperial iconography ran independent of Maximilian's projects. Beatus Rhenanus and Franciscus Irenicus were both hunting for portraits of the medieval emperors; Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtsschreibung* [see chap. 1, n. 2], 138, 177.

own origin, shaping reality into statements that had truth value persisting beyond the instant of their utterance. The antiquarian project was continuous with the impulse to replicate the wound of Christ on an indulgence woodcut. The devotional and antiquarian modes converge. Both share the impulse to repeat, publicize, and eventually publish true forms. Both are equally opposed to the affective, empathic mode that generates a beholder-subject.

The impact of woodcut and engraving on the transmission of pictorial information was much greater than the impact of movable type on the transmission of textual information. The problem of unintended gradual deviation, or drift, in the handing down of verbal messages was already largely solved by writing itself. The alphabetic system was designed expressly to absorb and neutralize variation in the form of written letters from one writer to the next. The alphabet is a differential system ensuring that individual written letters do not have to achieve exact matches with a perfect or ideal letter. Instead, a letter has only to differ from similarly shaped letters. *B* is *B* as long as it does not begin to resemble *R*. The consequence is that scribes have considerable stylistic latitude and margin for error. Letterforms can vary from copy to copy with little loss in intelligibility. One could fear the scribal error, but for that matter typographical errors in the early stages of printing were just as common. Book printing was mostly a matter of amplification, that is, of distributing quantities of copies to as many readers as possible, over great distances and as speedily as possible. The fixing of authoritative verbal texts, for example, of the classic authors, was accelerated by print, but did not depend on print conceptually. Philology could have proceeded, did proceed, through slow distribution of handmade copies through small circles of readers.<sup>132</sup>

Iconic messages, by contrast, are highly vulnerable to semantic drift. Within a chain of iterated iconic messages, divergence from the original model can proceed incrementally and smoothly from copy to copy. Small variations can accrue in the course of the chain of performances, and yet there may be no catastrophic point where the iconic message is suddenly no longer recognizable. The beholder will not realize that the chain of drawings has slipped into meaninglessness or error. Print technology promised to bring the slow drift of pictorial types, from copy to handmade copy, finally to an end, once and for all establishing agreed-upon pictorial “texts.” Mechanical replication fixed a potentially chaotic mass of information into discrete semantic units, pictorial “statements” which like linguistic statements are, finally, repeatable.<sup>133</sup>

**132.** On the long survival of author-controlled distribution of handmade copies of poetry, music, and topical political treatises, see Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

**133.** See Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication* (see chap. 4, n. 153).

Manual copying of images calls for interpretative decisions at every step, decisions that could not be avoided except by permanently excising some portion of the data. Just as the scholars were not the best draughtsmen, so were experienced draughtsmen rarely the most competent interpreters of iconographic features. The image copier frozen by incomprehension is nonetheless forced to make some decision. The merit of differential notation systems like the phonetic alphabet is that the copyist can easily postpone interpretation, in effect leaving the interpretation to the next reader.

“Drift” in a chain of copied images, even when recognized, is harder to reverse and repair than error in a chain of textual messages. Textual errors can often be emended by inference. A relatively small variation in the transcription of a text—a missing or misunderstood letter or badly misspelled word—can drastically alter the meaning. The textual error often results in nonsense that warns the recipient to seek an emended reading. Corrupted iconic messages cannot so easily be emended by common sense alone. Unintelligible features of culturally remote artifacts and iconographic types were often reconstructed anachronistically, on the basis of deceptive similarities with more recent forms.

Replication technology, once mobilized, not only stabilized authoritative iconic messages, but also created the very authority that was supposed to be stabilized. This was true even with referential images such as maps and globes, introduced early into print culture. A circular world map was printed in Venice in the late 1480s; another early Italian engraving reproduced a Ptolemaic world map; the German Ptolemy of 1482 included a woodcut map as frontispiece.<sup>134</sup> A map of central Europe was engraved at Eichstätt in 1491, an enterprise apparently initiated by Nicholas Cusanus and sustained, at a later stage, by Peutinger and Burgkmair.<sup>135</sup> Conrad Celtis planned a printed version of the so-called *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a twelfth- or thirteenth-century copy of a fourth-century Roman map of all the roads of the world, seven meters long, that he had found at—or stolen from—a monastic library, perhaps at Speyer.<sup>136</sup> An immense woodcut world map,

134. Tony Campbell, *The Earliest Printed Maps, 1472–1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 23–30, 122–38. See as well the woodcut *World Map* of c. 1480 [Schreiber 1950] and the woodcut *Map of Roads to Rome* by the Nuremberg cartographer Erhard Etzlaub, before 1499 [Schreiber 1951m]; *Origins of European Printmaking*, nos. 55–56.

135. Campbell, *Earliest Printed Maps*, 35–55; Falk, *Hans Burgkmair*, 80–81.

136. Celtis later willed the map to Peutinger on the condition that he publish it; Celtis, *Briefwechsel*, no. 336. Peutinger requested a privilege in 1511, projected an edition spanning eighteen folios, and had two proofs made. But the project was never completed. The map was first published by Marcus Welser in 1598. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, 461; Ekkehard Weber, ed., *Tabula Peutingeriana* (Graz, 1976); Francesco Prontera, *Tabula Peutingeriana: Le antiche vie del mondo* (Florence: Olschki, 2003); and the essay in Prontera’s volume by Patrick Gautier Dalché, “La trasmissione medievale e rinascimentale della *Tabula Peutingeriana*,” pp. 43–52.



printed from twelve blocks and measuring 120 × 240 cm, accompanied Martin Waldseemüller's *Cosmographiae introductio* (St.-Dié, 1507). The map was printed in an edition of one thousand, according to an inscription on Waldseemüller's own *Carta Marina* of 1516 (only a single impression survives today).<sup>137</sup> The Waldseemüller map fixed the contours of the continents, the very sort of information that was most vulnerable to error and drift when it was transmitted by a chain of handmade copies. In 1515 the Nuremberg mathematician Johannes Schöner, the most important globe manufacturer in Europe,<sup>138</sup> published woodcut segments for a terrestrial globe and a celestial pendant, and apparently attached them to wooden spheres that he had fashioned himself; two of the printed terrestrial globes survive. In the 1530s Schöner published and manufactured new editions of both globes.<sup>139</sup> Schöner printed globe segments or gores apparently for his own use, that is, in order to produce multiple, virtually identical copies of his own globes. But some early woodcut gores seem to have been intended for an open market. The purchaser could then fashion his own sphere and glue the segments to it. The 18-cm segments attributed to Martin Waldseemüller (apparently also published as a supplement to the *Cosmographiae introductio*) and the 16-cm segments attributed to Petrus Apianus (c. 1518), both for terrestrial globes, seem to belong to this category.<sup>140</sup>

In 1515 Cardinal Matthäus Lang paid for the publication of a pair of woodcuts of the north and south skies (fig. 68).<sup>141</sup> Coresponsible for the information were the Hapsburg court mathematician Johannes Stabius, the Nuremberg mathematician and astronomer Konrad Heinvoegel, and the artist Albrecht Dürer. The models for the woodcuts were a pair of sky charts of 1503, drawn by an unidentifiable artist or scholar in pen on parchment and heightened with silver and gold, archives of accumulated knowledge of the heavens and of the antique interpretation of constellations

137. That impression was purchased by the Library of Congress in 2001. *Focus Behaim-Globus*, exhibition catalogue (Nuremberg: Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 1992), no. 2.23.

138. The celestial globe that appears in Hans Holbein's *Ambassadors* (London, National Gallery, 1533) has been attributed to Schöner; the source of the terrestrial globe in the painting is less clear. Elly Dekker and Peter van der Krogt, *Globes from the Western World* (London: Zwemmer, 1993), 24.

139. *Focus Behaim-Globus*, no. 1.22a, is the copy in Weimar, dated 1534; E. L. Stevenson, *Terrestrial and Celestial Globes*, vol. 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 82–88.

140. Oswald Muris und Gert Saarman, *Der Globus im Wandel der Zeiten* (Berlin: Colombus, 1961), 76; and G. Engelmann, "Ingolstädter Globusstreifen," *Sammelblatt des Historischen Vereins Ingolstadt* 84 (1975): 123–27. The Apianus segments are reproduced by Stevenson, *Terrestrial and Celestial Globes*, ill. 39.

141. Bartsch 151–52, 43 × 43 cm; *Albrecht Dürer 1471–1971* (see chap. 3, n. 75), nos. 309–10; Schoch et al., *Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 2, nos. 243–44. *Focus Behaim-Globus*, nos. 1.20–1.21. Lang's coat of arms is visible on both hemispheres. The privilege of Emperor Maximilian appears in the lower right of the southern chart.

(fig. 69).<sup>142</sup> Allegorized portraits, coats of arms, or short poems of the humanist scholars Konrad Heinvoegel, Dietrich Ulsen, and Sebastian Sperantius, as well as a tribe of mythological figures, appear in the corners. The collaboration of Conrad Celtis himself is not documented on the charts but can be inferred. Celtis was already using globes as teaching devices in his lectures on mathematical geography at Vienna.<sup>143</sup> The Nuremberg charts were themselves closely modeled on the sky charts in a Viennese astronomical manuscript of the 1440s.<sup>144</sup> The 1515 woodcuts, following the 1503 drawings, notate information about the location and the magnitude of the stars, the forms of the constellations, and the pictures of heroes and animals devised by the ancients to organize the sky's chaos.

A few years later, Dürer's woodcut sky charts were taken as direct models for a handpainted globe given as a gift to the bishop of Brixen in 1522 (fig. 70). This globe and its pendant, a terrestrial globe, measure 36.8 cm in diameter and rest in bronze mounts from the period, presumably the original mounts.<sup>145</sup> Both globes translate printed information back into the more prestigious handmade medium, as was appropriate for a gift to a bishop. The terrestrial globe copies exactly, even to the inscriptions, the Waldseemüller world map of 1507. The Brixen celestial globe, meanwhile, achieves a degree of fidelity to the printed constellations that one might say exceeded philological necessity, given that the designer of the woodcut was not Ptolemy himself but, after all, only a living German artist. When copying images, it was hard to tell where the essential content ended and the inessential contribution of the artist began. The relationship of the Brixen celestial globe to its woodcut model exemplifies the exceptional and

142. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. Hz. 5576–5577. *Albrecht Dürer 1471–1971*, nos. 307–8. W. Voss, "Eine Himmelskarte vom Jahre 1503 mit dem Wahrzeichen des Wiener Poetenkollegiums als Vorlage Albrecht Dürers," *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 64 (1943): 89–150; and Fritz Zink, *Die deutschen Handzeichnungen* (Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 1968), nos. 99–100. The drawings were hidden in a Hamburg private collection for a long time, first published in 1943, and acquired by the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in 1965. See also Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet* (see chap. 1, n. 32), 331n22.

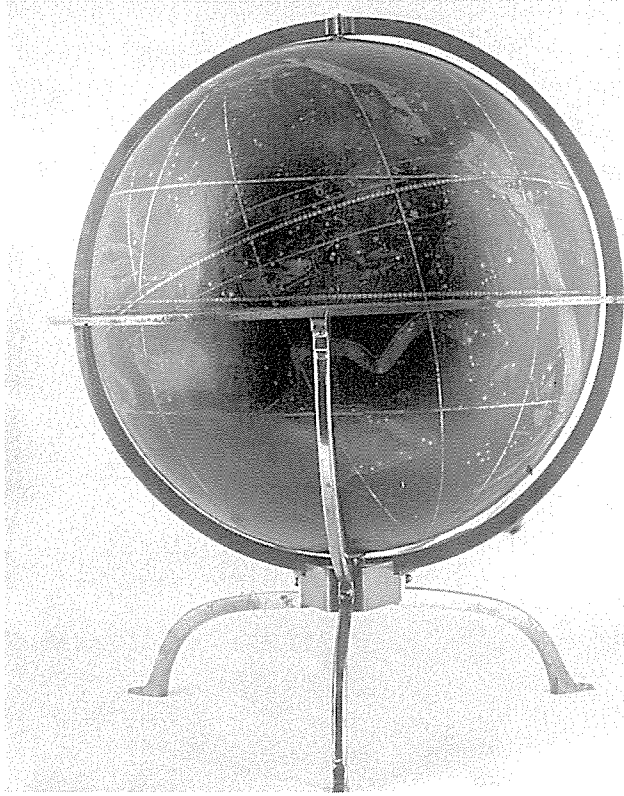
143. J. von Aschbach, *Geschichte der Wiener Universität* (Vienna, 1877), 2: 62.

144. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 5415. Fritz Saxl, *Verzeichnis astrologischer und mythologischer illustrierter Handschriften des lateinischen Mittelalters*, vol. 2, *Die Handschriften der National-Bibliothek in Wien* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1927), 25–40, 150–155; and Panofsky and Saxl, "Classical Mythology in Medieval Art" (see chap. 3, n. 59), 238–41. The positions of the stars in these charts apparently derive from the work of the Viennese astronomer Johannes von Gmunden; the constellations, meanwhile, are dependent on Arabic models. Either a copy of these charts, perhaps by the Franconian mathematician Johannes Regiomontanus, or the Viennese manuscript itself was available in Nuremberg in 1503.

145. Centre for British Art, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. See the exhibition catalogue *Circa 1500* (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, 2000), 237–39, 418–20.





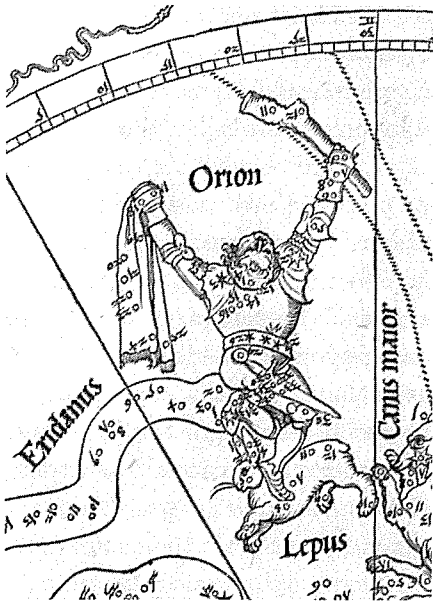


70. Celestial globe,  
Nuremberg [?], 1522.  
Centre for British Art,  
Yale University.

not always warranted authority that printed images enjoyed in the early decades of the sixteenth century.

The celestial globe was undoubtedly prepared under the close supervision of a scholarly advisor. On the woodcut models of 1515 the individual stars are not named, while on the globe they are. The painter of the globe also modified the constellations in various small ways. Dürer described the constellation Arrow (*telum*) as a quarrel or crossbow bolt, with a wide, forked tip. The painter of the globe reverted to a traditional arrow with a pointed tip; possibly the quarrel struck him as unantique. Most remarkable is the careful adjustment of Dürer's Orion (figs. 71 and 72). In his woodcut, Dürer gave Orion a cloth on the left hand. This cloth is unorthodox, for the usual attribute, and the one that Dürer had before him on the drawn chart of 1503, was an animal skin. It is possible that Dürer was looking at a prior model, for instance, the drawing in the Viennese astronomical manuscript of the 1440s, where one can barely make sense of the object. The painter of the globe decided to ignore Dürer and revert to the skin, in this case the skin of a bull, just as on the drawn chart of 1503. It was not in fact Dürer's cloth that was philologically correct, but the animal skin.<sup>146</sup>

146. See Georg Thiele, *Antike Himmelsbilder* (Berlin, 1898), 30, on Orion in Hipparchus and on the Farnese Atlas.



71. Albrecht Dürer,  
Southern Sky Chart,  
1515, woodcut, detail.

72. Celestial globe,  
Nuremberg [?], 1522,  
detail. Centre for Brit-  
ish Art, Yale University.

On the whole, Dürer's pictorial ideas carried considerable authority with the painter of the globe. The painter took the trouble to reproduce small, characteristic details of the printed constellations, including meaningless features that Dürer had superimposed on the pictorial tradition. The Altar (*ara*) and the Bowl (*krater*) in the Southern Hemisphere, for instance, are virtually identical to Dürer's, even to the rope handle on the Bowl. The complex rigging of the Boat (*Argonavis*) is reproduced almost exactly, with only one of the seven ropes omitted. The authority of the 1515 woodcuts, in other words, extended beyond astronomy and iconography and into the realm of style. Within a given constellation the distinction between the iconographic (or essential) and the stylistic (or accidental) features is hard to determine. This internal frontier was in doubt in this period, when the responsibility for the transmission of the astrological types was increasingly left to artists. The inscription on the printed Southern Hemisphere chart of 1515 describes the contributions of the three authors: Johannes Stabius *ordinavit* or "arranged" the charts; Konrad Heinvogel *stellas posuit*, or "placed the stars"; and Albrecht Dürer *imaginibus circumscrispsit*, "circumscribed" the stars "with images." The triple hierarchy corresponds exactly to the three stages of rhetorical composition: *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*. The entire task of drawing the constellations thus fell under the rubric *elocutio*, the stage of stylistic embellishment; whereas one might well think that the iconographic correctness of the figures belonged properly to one of the earlier stages. The three-stage program outlined by the inscription collapsed the iconographic and the stylistic shaping of the constellations into a single operation and then left it all to the artist. How was a copyist

to know, on the basis of internal evidence alone, whether in the wood-cut charts a given feature should be credited to the iconographic type, or to Dürer's artistic vision? Without an external guideline or authority one could not know. And that margin of ignorance was the basis for the rhetorical force of the printed image.

The Brixen celestial globe in some cases did rely too heavily on the printed models and ended up retaining many inessential, supplemental features. An example is the tail of the Centaur, which on the drawn sky chart of 1503 took the form of a Gothic trefoil. The tail was in effect a free zone for style, outside the regime of iconography. Dürer, too, worked freely with the tail of the Centaur. The Brixen globe, naturally, copies Dürer's tail. The authority of the printed model lent a whole stylistic world—the Italian Quattrocento as seen by Dürer—a kind of unearned gravity and then transferred this world intact to Brixen.

### Scholarly ambivalence about print

Given the powerful, persuasive rhetoric of print, and given the vulnerability of scholarship to manipulation, it is no wonder that many humanists around 1500 mistrusted the *ars impressoria*.<sup>147</sup> The philologist feared that printers would not attend to textual detail and that errors set in type would be rapidly and uncontrollably amplified and difficult to reverse. Print technology would replicate spurious texts like the letters of St. Paul, the correspondence between Christ and King Abgar, or the "Lentulus" letter describing Christ's appearance. Other scholars worried that printers would subordinate scholarly principles to matters of layout or, worse, to the pressures of economy and the market. Early printing was mostly about volume, and few humanist or antiquarian scholars were concerned about volume.

The concept of publication, involving the fixing and dissemination of texts and forms, was not a novelty introduced by the technologies of metal type and relief and intaglio printing. The advantages of publication were already widely recognized at the start of the fifteenth century. The congealing of humanist culture with a common script, the new pride and authority of the heads of major painting workshops, and the appetite on the part of scholars and artists for news from rival towns and courts were the conditions for the invention of print, not the consequences. Some have argued that the initial impact of printing on book collecting and scholarship

**147.** See the citations collected by Hans Widmann, "Die Wirkung des Buchdrucks auf die humanistischen Zeitgenossen und Nachfahren des Erfinders," in *Das Verhältnis der Humanisten zum Buch*, Kommission für Humanismusforschung, Mitteilung 4, ed. Fritz Krafft and Dieter Wuttke (Boppard: Boldt, 1977), 82–86; and by Curt F. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960), 50, 62.

was negligible and has been overrated by modern scholars.<sup>148</sup> It is easy to see how a mid-fifteenth-century scholar or artist could have failed to predict the technological revolution of metal type and engraving. Prints by Mantegna or Nicoletto da Modena might have looked like no more than Bellini-type modelbook drawings that had managed to win a somewhat wider audience for themselves.

Hartmann Schedel, the Nuremberg city physician and cousin of the pioneering Augsburg scholar Hermann Schedel, was acutely ambivalent about print technology. Schedel is better known for writing the *World Chronicle* published in Nuremberg in 1493 than for his manuscript compilation of antique inscriptions, the most impressive of its time north of the Alps—proof, if any is needed, of the superior publicity value of print over the old system of scribal copying. Yet Schedel himself, who had earned a medical degree in Padua and internalized the new Italian model of scholarship, considered his antiquarian omnibus, more than 330 folios, his most significant scholarly achievement. Schedel collected inscriptions over a period of many years. In 1504–5 Schedel wrote out a fair copy of his sylloge and had it bound.<sup>149</sup> This anthology was based upon the sylloges of Cyriacus of Ancona and Poggio Bracciolini and rivaled the collection of his contemporary Fra Giocondo. Schedel added to his sylloge until his death in 1514. To the texts of the ancient inscriptions in Rome and Greece Schedel added colonial Roman inscriptions found by other German scholars in cities like Augsburg and Trier. He included miscellaneous scholarly material like modern poems and epitaphs and bits of local historical and mythographic lore as well as drawings after Cyriacus of Ancona and other sources. Artifacts were nearly as important to him as texts. At the beginning of the section of the manuscript devoted to Germany, Schedel discusses the distant pagan past of his home town Nuremberg. The heading of this section reveals that his sylloge is a collection of things, not a history: “Imagines antique more idolorum que post variam cladem et exustionem remanserant” (Images of ancient idols that have survived the various destructions and conflagrations).

The printed *World Chronicle*, meanwhile, was the most copiously illustrated of all incunabula: 1,809 woodcuts printed from 645 different blocks

**148.** Paul Saenger, “The Impact of the Early Printed Page on the History of Reading,” *Bulletin du bibliophile* 2 (1996): 237–300. Saenger does go on to point to some limited effects of printing on modes of reading. The case for the continuity between handmade and printed books was also made by J. P. Gumbert, “‘Typography’ in the Manuscript Book,” *Journal of the Printing Historical Society* 22 (1993): 5–28.

**149.** Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 716. W. Wattenbach, “Hartmann Schedel als Humanist,” *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte* 11 (1871): 373–74. Béatrice Hernad, ed., *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, exhibition catalogue (Munich: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 1990), no. 92.



on more than 300 folios, in Latin- and German-language editions. Yet behind this paper monument the author Hartmann Schedel vanishes. On the colophon Schedel is absorbed into a collective authorship, as if the text had been received and not composed. The colophon reads: this history “was gathered with great diligence and judgment by highly learned men.” There is some truth to the idea of collective authorship, since Schedel simply transcribed much of the book from Giacomo Foresti and other already published sources. Yet the colophon is not reluctant to mention by name the translator Georg Alt, the printer Anton Koberger, the investors Sebald Schreyer and Sebastian Kammermeister, and even the artists Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff; but no word of Schedel. For a long time bibliographers thought the translator Alt was the author.<sup>150</sup>

Schedel may have accepted this arrangement because he felt that the printed *World Chronicle*, weighty as it was, did not represent his principal achievement as an antiquarian scholar. The manuscript sylloge, which only needed to be seen by a restricted club of specialists, mattered more to his scholarly reputation. Schedel seems to have made a historic miscalculation here in underestimating the impact of replication technology on scholarship. He did praise the invention of printing in the *Chronicle* (fol. 152v). He also owned at least 700 printed books, including a forty-two-line Gutenberg Bible. And yet Schedel himself never did publish a book other than the *Chronicle*. There is no evidence that Schedel ever made any effort to publish his sylloge (admittedly it is unlikely that any publisher would have taken it on.)<sup>151</sup> He generally seems to have thought of publishing as merely an efficient way of delivering texts to broader readerships. Like many scholars of his generation Schedel does not seem to have held any strong notion of the “edition,” that is, the idea that print technology could be used to freeze and standardize a text. He copied many printed books by hand throughout his entire life and freely redistributed bits of text among his own manuscripts.<sup>152</sup> In other words, he did not treat published texts any differently from manuscripts.

The replicated image, however, enjoyed considerable authority even in Schedel’s eyes. Schedel used to paste woodcuts and engravings into the books he owned, both published volumes and manuscripts, scrapbook

150. Adrian Wilson, *The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle* (Amsterdam: Nico Israel, 1976), 156–57.

151. The reasons for the demise of the *Archetypus triumphantis Romae*, the Nuremberg-based antiquarian project whose text and 336 woodblocks were ready to go by 1497, are unknown. Celtis had placed his follower Peter Danhauser at the helm of the project; Sebald Schreyer invested 334 florins; and still it never saw daylight. Schoch, “*Archetypus triumphantis Romae*” (see chap. 3, n. 74).

152. Richard Stauber, *Die Schedelsche Bibliothek* (Freiburg: Herder, 1908), esp. 90ff.

fashion.<sup>153</sup> In itself the practice of pasting woodcuts and engravings into manuscripts was nothing new. This was one of the basic applications of the early print and the reason for the physical survival of hundreds if not thousands of impressions.<sup>154</sup> Schedel's scholarship, couched in frequent expressions of piety, was consistent with contemporary devotional culture. Schedel pasted more than a dozen woodcuts into his personal copy of the *World Chronicle*, supplementing and reflecting on the intended function of the book's 1,809 woodcut illustrations. Among the interpolated prints were a broadsheet *Ode to St. Sebald*, patron saint of Nuremberg, illustrated with a woodcut by Wolgemut (fol. 335a), and an illustrated broadsheet by Sebastian Brant interpreting the birth of Siamese twin pigs in Landser in Alsace (fol. 335d).<sup>155</sup> Schedel seems to have seen these prints not as sops or tall tales for the credulous unlettered, but on the contrary as reliable hagiographic and cosmological reports, of use precisely to the skeptical scholar.

Schedel also pasted nine prints into his antiquarian sylloge, not too many pages after his transcript of Celtis's description of the druid portraits at Speinshart. That was not at all in line with Italian scholarly custom. Five of these were engravings by the Venetian artist (possibly of German origins) Jacopo de' Barbari: *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*; *Venus*, at the end of the section on Rome; a *Water-Jug Carrier* and *Woman with Distaff*; and *St. Catherine*.<sup>156</sup> The *Venus*—if she is Venus and not simply an allegory of vanity—was in fact the only pagan subject among the more than 300 prints known from Schedel's collection, except for a pair of rude German book illustrations representing Jupiter and Saturn,<sup>157</sup> remarkable because Schedel was interested in pagan antiquity and one imagines that he would have tried to acquire as many prints with antique subject mat-

153. Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*.

154. Peter Schmidt, *Gedruckte Bilder in handgeschriebenen Büchern: zum Gebrauch von Druckgraphik im 15. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003). See also Ursula Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region, ca. 1450–1500* (London: Harvey Miller, 2004).

155. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cim. 187 = Rar. 287. Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, nos. 51, 98.

156. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 716, fols. IVr, 25v, 78v–79r, 346v. Among the other inserted prints were a woodcut view of Nuremberg excised from the *World Chronicle*; a woodcut view of Rome; and a copy after the *Blessing Christ* by the German engraver Master E.S. Most of the prints in Clm 716 were removed in the early nineteenth century and replaced in the manuscript by facsimiles; the originals are kept in the Graphische Sammlung, Munich. See Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, nos. 3, 4, 103, 105, and fig. 23. Levenson, Oberhuber, and Sheehan, *Early Italian Engravings* (see chap. 3, n. 73), no. 142.

157. Hernad, *Die Graphiksammlung des Humanisten Hartmann Schedel*, nos. 78–79.

ter as possible. It suggests that in 1504 there were not so many prints with antique subject matter to choose from in Nuremberg.

Schedel's introduction of Jacopo's engravings into his antiquarian sylloge points toward a new way of thinking about the pagan image. Schedel saw Jacopo's engravings not as facsimiles of unique artifacts, nor as fictions or fancies on antique themes, but as notations of information about the way the gods looked and their attributes. Schedel knew that his own drawings, latest in a long chain of copies, were drifting further and further from the authoritative forms of the gods as they were preserved in antique statuary. Jacopo de' Barbari's engravings arrested the process of drift. They seemed to extract the relevant data about the represented personages from the manual transmission process and fix it. Schedel was capable of copying texts all by himself. But for images he was ready to put himself in the hands of professionals. Schedel's attempt in his antiquarian manuscript to combine the two notation systems, manual-differential and mechanical-analogical, discloses the real potential of printed images. Jacopo's engravings did not solve the problem of the transmission of iconic information by developing a better notation system, for instance, by stabilizing the syntax of lines and shading devices and by installing a canonical or formulaic system of physiognomic or body types, as later engravings would. Rather they simply abolished the problem of pictorial notation technologically, by brute force.

The engravings that Schedel pasted into his sylloge were artifacts whose real, material origins had been forgotten. Mechanical replication tended to make recipients neglect to ask critical questions about the drawing process behind the print. Schedel knew that the prints had been made by Jacopo de' Barbari, who was living in Nuremberg between 1500 and 1503. But he thought of Jacopo as a kind of enabler in the notation process, not as an author. Although Schedel did not think of printed texts as editions, he does seem to have understood printed images as "editions" of the forms of the gods, cartographic information, or sacred relics as the case may be.

In the manuscript sylloges of the Italian antiquarians, the principal data, the inscriptions, were often embedded in invented, fanciful frames and settings. Print upset the symbiosis of fact and fiction. The printed sylloge was understood as an edition of the epigraphic texts, and the "romantic" supplements were reassigned to an emerging class of fictional publications, including the collectors' prints by Andrea Mantegna or Marcantonio Raimondi and the famous quasi-archeological romance, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice, 1499). The illustrations in the manuscript sylloges, not only the fanciful scenes like those at the beginning of the Marcanova manuscript, but also the drawings of individual monuments in the sylloges

themselves, were important sources for the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.<sup>158</sup> Yet the frames, altars, and urns of the *Hypnerotomachia* did not represent specific monuments; they were not participating in a transmission process. Nor did the book provoke antiquarian scholars to rush into print. On the contrary, the success of the *Hypnerotomachia* must have encouraged the retreat of serious scholars back into pure text, that is, encouraged their sense that illustrations were interesting but not essential to the scholarly enterprise. Italian antiquarians increasingly disapproved of illustrations that were not strictly notational. Works by the most serious antiquarians, Flavio Biondo and Pomponio Leto, were published in luxury editions with beautiful roman fonts and generous margins, but unadorned by any illustrative material.<sup>159</sup> This severe approach must have impressed Conrad Peutinger, whose 1505 printed sylloge *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta* dispensed with visual material.

In 1501 Celtis found the text known as *Ligurinus*, an account of the reign of Frederick Barbarossa now attributed to the thirteenth-century author Gunther of Pairis, at the Cistercian monastery Ebrach, between Würzburg and Bamberg. The *Ligurinus* of Gunther belonged like the plays of Hrosvita to the humanists' patriotic publication program. Celtis saw it serving as a kind of nationalist textbook.<sup>160</sup> He entrusted it to Peutinger and the Sodalitas litteraria Augustana, who had it printed in Augsburg in 1507 by Erhard Oeglin. Celtis seems to have taken control of the project by inserting two woodcuts by Dürer that had been used in the 1502 publication of his own *Libri quattuor amorum*, the "Philosophia" and the "Apollo." These woodcuts have been removed from some ample proportion of the copies of the book. In each of these copies, moreover, one of the woodcuts is carefully replaced by a substitute sheet, with one side blank and with the text on the other side—a dedicatory letter by Peutinger—identical but typographically reset.<sup>161</sup> One can only hypothesize that Peutinger himself collected as many copies as he could and had the surgery performed, presumably after Celtis's death in 1508. Peutinger must have seen the woodcuts as an impertinent imposition on the text, just as an Italian humanist might have. His sense of the purity of the edition was stronger than Celtis's.

158. See Tamara Griggs, "Promoting the Past: The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as Antiquarian Enterprise," *Word and Image* 14 (1998): 17–39.

159. See, for example, Biondo, *Italia illustrata* (Rome, 1474) and *Roma instaurata* (Venice, 1503); and Leto, *Romanae historiae compendium* (Venice, 1499), with woodcut initials only.

160. Wuttke, "Humanismus als integrative Kraft" [see chap. 3, n. 23], 35–36.

161. See Erwin Assmann in his edition of the text for the *Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores*, vol. 63 (Hannover: Hahn, 1987), p. 19 and n. 68. Among forty copies of the book inspected by Assmann, only seven had the woodcuts.

Hartmann Schedel's scrapbook and Peutingner's scissor work illustrate the full explosive impact that replication technology had on the idea of the image. Mechanical replication drove a wedge between the referential and the representational aspects of the image, between the notation of information, on the one hand, and fiction and style on the other. Before the print, the two functions had intermingled and worked together in virtually every image. In the realm of texts, by contrast, the concept of fictionality was already established and institutionally protected, and more clearly distinguished from the concept of referential text, long before the advent of print technology. Printed images, notionally, were perfectly suited to the tasks of reference and notation. With the advent of print technology, as a result, the referential function was slowly pried apart from the representational and potentially fictionalizing function of the image. The result was that for the next two or three centuries, with few exceptions, prints were to serve as a mere foil for the idea of art. Some artists, Rembrandt for example, tried to recover an artistic function for prints from within this larger referential project. Mostly, prints referred. Often they notated works in more expensive media.

The purging of non-notational materiality from the most serious antiquarian scholarship represents a parting of the ways between the concerns of scholars and the concerns of artists. Both reactions to the problem of analogical information were symptoms of the same ambivalence about materiality. While the scholars suppressed the materiality of their sources in favor of an exclusive registration of linguistic content, the artists unhinged the material aspects of inscriptions such as supports and layout from reality altogether.

### Urban archeology

The archeological approach is triggered by an awareness of the transmission problems associated with textuality. Archeology attempts to circumvent textuality by identifying material evidence less vulnerable to physical corruption and human intervention. But the early archeologist often underrated the transmission problems peculiar to material evidence. Archeological thinking is in principle the opposite of substitutional thinking, for the archeologist is the one who refuses to accept passively the claim of the text to be the reliable endpoint of an invisible process of transmission. Substitution was a theory about production and transmission that allowed recipients to work with evidence under the tacit awareness that material vehicles did sometimes need to be replaced or repaired, that messages on material vehicles did sometimes need to be reinscribed or redrawn, or that messages could even be copied to a new vehicle altogether, just as texts

were copied from manuscript to manuscript. But in its eagerness to improve upon the poor evidence of texts, early archeology accepted bad material evidence and so ended up, paradoxically, repeating patterns of reception proper to the substitutional model. Archeology is thought of as the discipline that overcomes the layers of mediation that separate us from the past. But early archeology actually worked *with* mediation.

Material evidence is useless without protocols for evaluating its age and establishing its indexicality. When only rudimentary forensic techniques are available, indexical links have to be asserted circumstantially and hopefully. The ideal piece of evidence was a corpse, and the next best was something immobile, like a tomb or a building, some object that seemed unshakably attached to its origin in life. Tombs, large statues, and buildings with their sheer bulk and inertia had a brutal way of asserting links between place and past. They looked as if they had always been there. Large, authoritative monuments of this sort got the benefit of the doubt. Questions about their story, their historicity, their actual physical makeup, when they were physically made, whether they had been repaired or improved, whether they replaced earlier, similar artifacts—such questions were simply not asked. A pile of stones marked a place. People wanted to collapse as many of the dimensions of space-time as possible and corporeally, subjectively, occupy the place of past events and people. This irrational impulse is the basis for pilgrimages, relic cults, and tourism. It is not about seeing for oneself so much as simply being there.

Any stone monument, any inscription or image set in stone, was automatically favored. The process of transmission from stone to stone seemed less vulnerable to interference than textual transmission. Stone was more durable than parchment or paper, thus reducing the number of steps in the transmission of textual or iconic messages. In fact, the durability of stone is not infinite but only quantitatively superior to that of parchment or paper. Over a long period of time stones, too, need to be replaced; or they are replicated for the purposes of publication; or they are invented and then mistakenly taken for older than they are.

The sought-for origin point of early archeology was almost always a primordial cult. Even for the civilian scholars, who often worked in cities with rich, complex ecclesiastical pasts, sacred archeology was the framing project. Civic and church histories became harder to disentangle from one another as one moved farther back in time. Accidental digging uncovered bones, indecipherable inscriptions, and fragments of pagan sculpture. In Augsburg, the vernacular civic chronicler Burkhard Zink included reports of the latest triumphs of ecclesiastical archeology in his narrative. The church archeology dovetailed with the interests of the new secular archeologists, who were learning to wield material evidence against the

traditional authority of the written chronicles. From sacred archeology the historians learned about the force of demonstration and transferred their trust from texts to the palpable testimony of coins, carved inscriptions, painted and woven pictures, stone sculptures, and tombs. A historian could learn from an experienced traveler such as Felix Fabri with his cold glance on church-promoted relics and miracles and warm curiosity about the physical remains of ancient culture. In Jaffa, for instance, Fabri was impressed by stone altars attesting to antediluvian cults, evidence that struck him as accidental, not prepackaged as was so much else he was shown in the Holy Land.<sup>162</sup> The historians began to embed the testimony of artifacts in their written narratives. “Archeology” designates nothing more or less than an attitude of mistrust toward texts. The early archeologist was the scholar who recognized that the written word was asking its readers to believe in an invisible chain, too long, of copies and redactions.

An emblematic figure was Sigismund Meisterlin, the Benedictine cleric from Augsburg who studied in Padua in the 1450s. Meisterlin was the first German historian to break the chain of medieval chronicles by using inscriptions and other material artifacts as sources.<sup>163</sup> To write the history of the monastery of Murbach, Meisterlin transcribed old tombstones. In Nuremberg he found an incident of 1427, the ceding of the privileges of the Burggrafen, commemorated in an inscription on a wall in the market square. In 1487 Meisterlin used a small corpus of Roman coins to write a book on the Roman emperors. The coin collection had belonged to a Carthusian monastery in Mainz and had been acquired for the city of Nuremberg by Stephan Fridolin. While writing the history of the abbey of Sts. Ulrich and Afra, Meisterlin tried to read fading inscriptions that had been painted on the walls by a former abbot, Uodalscale. In the Domhof in Augsburg Meisterlin found a stone supposedly proving that there was a proconsul stationed in Augusta during Diocletian’s time. That inscription was lost by Peutinger’s time. Old stones easily went astray, especially *after* they were discovered. Meisterlin evidently hoped Abbot Johann Giltlingen would cooperate in collecting inscriptions. This may only have meant transcribing texts, for it is not clear that even Meisterlin insisted on protecting the stones themselves.<sup>164</sup> Peutinger was exceptional in his effort to gather

162. *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri* (see chap. 4, n. 23), 205.

163. Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland*, part 1, *Die Anfänge*. Note that even Meisterlin fell readily under the spell of the text. In monasteries in the Bohemian forest, he reports, he found plenty of old books, some more than eight hundred years old, by Eusebius and others, that mention Nuremberg, thus proving the antiquity of the city. *Nuremberg Chronicle*, in *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, vol. 3, *Nürnberg*, pt. 1, chap. 2, p. 43.

164. Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland*, part 1, *Die Anfänge*, 124–26, with many other examples.

Roman inscriptions and install them in the walls of the courtyard of his own home.<sup>165</sup> Here he was emulating the sophisticated Italian antiquarians he had met in Padua, Bologna, and Rome.<sup>166</sup> But generally the German humanist scholars were the last, not the first, to take an interest in salvaging and reframing old artifacts. Clerics rescued old sculptural reliefs, statues, or even entire portals, as we have seen, during building campaigns. Old cult images were embedded in modern altarpieces.<sup>167</sup> Scholars, book-oriented, were more likely to be content with a transcription of a Roman epigraphic text and less likely to take the trouble of protecting the stone.

Meisterlin's attentiveness to material evidence became a model for Hartmann Schedel and Johannes Aventinus. In his own manuscript copy of Meisterlin's *Nuremberg Chronicle*, Schedel inserted transcriptions of several medieval inscriptions from Nuremberg and nearby monasteries.<sup>168</sup> Some of them, at least, Schedel found on his own, and he asserts as much in titles giving the place and exact date of the transcription. Aventinus, for his part, introduced his *Bavarian Chronicle* with the impressive claim that he had

had day and night no rest, suffered much heat and cold, sweat and dust, rain and snow in winter and summer, ridden through all of Bavaria, visited every monastery and cloister, laboriously searched every library and cabinet, read and transcribed all sorts of manuscripts, privileges, donations, letters, chronicles, summons, rhymes, proverbs, songs, fables, sagas, prayer books, missals, revenue reports, calendars, death-notices, hagiographies; sought out and inspected reliquaries, monstrances, columns, portraits, crucifixes, old stones, old coins, tombs, paintings, vaults, floors, churches, and inscriptions; read and pondered canon and civil law, Latin, German, Greek, Slavic, Hungarian, Italian, French, Danish, and English history, leaving nothing useful untouched or unresearched; gone through all kinds of stories, testimonies, and documents, ransacking every corner; and where documents have not been available, pursued the opinion of the common man and common reports, excluding however those which seemed ungrounded folly, inventions, or fairy tales rather than established truth.<sup>169</sup>

165. On Peutingner's collection see von Busch, *Studien zu deutschen Antikensammlungen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 14–15; and Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums* (see chap. 3, n. 30), 92–93.

166. On early collections of inscriptions—the stones, not the texts—see Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity*, 160–61.

167. Chapeaurouge, "Zum Historismus des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts" [see chap. 4, n. 117], 20–21.

168. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 472.

169. Aventinus, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 4:6f., cf. 2: 3. Alois Schmid, "Johannes Aventinus und die Realienkunde," in *Neue Wege der Ideengeschichte*, Festschrift Kurt Kluxen, ed. Frank-Lothar Kroll (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1996), 88–89; and Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums*, 89–92, 98–100, on Aventinus and inscriptions.



traditional authority of the written chronicles. From sacred archeology the historians learned about the force of demonstration and transferred their trust from texts to the palpable testimony of coins, carved inscriptions, painted and woven pictures, stone sculptures, and tombs. A historian could learn from an experienced traveler such as Felix Fabri with his cold glance on church-promoted relics and miracles and warm curiosity about the physical remains of ancient culture. In Jaffa, for instance, Fabri was impressed by stone altars attesting to antediluvian cults, evidence that struck him as accidental, not prepackaged as was so much else he was shown in the Holy Land.<sup>162</sup> The historians began to embed the testimony of artifacts in their written narratives. “Archeology” designates nothing more or less than an attitude of mistrust toward texts. The early archeologist was the scholar who recognized that the written word was asking its readers to believe in an invisible chain, too long, of copies and redactions.

An emblematic figure was Sigismund Meisterlin, the Benedictine cleric from Augsburg who studied in Padua in the 1450s. Meisterlin was the first German historian to break the chain of medieval chronicles by using inscriptions and other material artifacts as sources.<sup>163</sup> To write the history of the monastery of Murbach, Meisterlin transcribed old tombstones. In Nuremberg he found an incident of 1427, the ceding of the privileges of the Burggrafen, commemorated in an inscription on a wall in the market square. In 1487 Meisterlin used a small corpus of Roman coins to write a book on the Roman emperors. The coin collection had belonged to a Carthusian monastery in Mainz and had been acquired for the city of Nuremberg by Stephan Fridolin. While writing the history of the abbey of Sts. Ulrich and Afra, Meisterlin tried to read fading inscriptions that had been painted on the walls by a former abbot, Uodalscale. In the Domhof in Augsburg Meisterlin found a stone supposedly proving that there was a proconsul stationed in Augusta during Diocletian’s time. That inscription was lost by Peutinger’s time. Old stones easily went astray, especially *after* they were discovered. Meisterlin evidently hoped Abbot Johann Giltlingen would cooperate in collecting inscriptions. This may only have meant transcribing texts, for it is not clear that even Meisterlin insisted on protecting the stones themselves.<sup>164</sup> Peutinger was exceptional in his effort to gather

162. *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri* (see chap. 4, n. 23), 205.

163. Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland*, part 1, *Die Anfänge*. Note that even Meisterlin fell readily under the spell of the text. In monasteries in the Bohemian forest, he reports, he found plenty of old books, some more than eight hundred years old, by Eusebius and others, that mention Nuremberg, thus proving the antiquity of the city. *Nuremberg Chronicle*, in *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, vol. 3, *Nürnberg*, pt. 1, chap. 2, p. 43.

164. Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland*, part 1, *Die Anfänge*, 124–26, with many other examples.

Roman inscriptions and install them in the walls of the courtyard of his own home.<sup>165</sup> Here he was emulating the sophisticated Italian antiquarians he had met in Padua, Bologna, and Rome.<sup>166</sup> But generally the German humanist scholars were the last, not the first, to take an interest in salvaging and reframing old artifacts. Clerics rescued old sculptural reliefs, statues, or even entire portals, as we have seen, during building campaigns. Old cult images were embedded in modern altarpieces.<sup>167</sup> Scholars, book-oriented, were more likely to be content with a transcription of a Roman epigraphic text and less likely to take the trouble of protecting the stone.

Meisterlin's attentiveness to material evidence became a model for Hartmann Schedel and Johannes Aventinus. In his own manuscript copy of Meisterlin's *Nuremberg Chronicle*, Schedel inserted transcriptions of several medieval inscriptions from Nuremberg and nearby monasteries.<sup>168</sup> Some of them, at least, Schedel found on his own, and he asserts as much in titles giving the place and exact date of the transcription. Aventinus, for his part, introduced his *Bavarian Chronicle* with the impressive claim that he had

had day and night no rest, suffered much heat and cold, sweat and dust, rain and snow in winter and summer, ridden through all of Bavaria, visited every monastery and cloister, laboriously searched every library and cabinet, read and transcribed all sorts of manuscripts, privileges, donations, letters, chronicles, summons, rhymes, proverbs, songs, fables, sagas, prayer books, missals, revenue reports, calendars, death-notices, hagiographies; sought out and inspected reliquaries, monstres, columns, portraits, crucifixes, old stones, old coins, tombs, paintings, vaults, floors, churches, and inscriptions; read and pondered canon and civil law, Latin, German, Greek, Slavic, Hungarian, Italian, French, Danish, and English history, leaving nothing useful untouched or unresearched; gone through all kinds of stories, testimonies, and documents, ransacking every corner; and where documents have not been available, pursued the opinion of the common man and common reports, excluding however those which seemed ungrounded folly, inventions, or fairy tales rather than established truth.<sup>169</sup>

165. On Peutinger's collection see von Busch, *Studien zu deutschen Antikensammlungen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 14–15; and Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums* [see chap. 3, n. 30], 92–93.

166. On early collections of inscriptions—the stones, not the texts—see Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity*, 160–61.

167. Chapeaurouge, "Zum Historismus des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts" (see chap. 4, n. 117), 20–21.

168. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 472.

169. Aventinus, *Sämtliche Werke*, 4:6f., cf. 2: 3. Alois Schmid, "Johannes Aventinus und die Realienkunde," in *Neue Wege der Ideengeschichte*, Festschrift Kurt Kluxen, ed. Frank-Lothar Kroll (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1996), 88–89; and Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums*, 89–92, 98–100, on Aventinus and inscriptions.

Few people knew what to make of an old inscription. The abyss of ignorance and indifference below the handful of specialists with Italian experience was vast. The chronicle in verse by KÜCHLIN (mid-fifteenth century) begins with the jocular comment that “paintings were found with words painted and written on them here and there, abbreviated by the ancients in such a way that the young [the moderns] were confused and thus incompletely instructed by them.”<sup>170</sup> The bourgeois scholar Sigmund Gossembrot turned to Meisterlin for help deciphering “some difficult heathen sentences” (*etlich haydnisch swär sprich*).<sup>171</sup>

The chronicler Burkhard Zink told of the discovery of a Roman funerary monument during the excavations at Sts. Ulrich and Afra in 1467: “Below, at ground level, was found a large square stone; on it was written the following text; it was a cornerstone” (Uden auf dem grund gleich dem ertrich da fand man ain grossen quadraten stain, darauf stuend die nachgeschriben geschrift; es was ain eggstain).<sup>172</sup> Zink then gave the text, in the same minuscule hand the rest of the chronicle is written in, headed by the title *Die schrift auf dem stain*. His transcription is nonsensical because he was not familiar with the conventional abbreviations and truncations of the Roman epitaph: “Perpetue mei securitatib: Cleuferas IIIIII uirgus neso tiat artis purpuriae,” etc. Zink’s handwriting was labored and cramped when he wrote out this imperfect text in his chronicle. The stone actually read: “PERPETVAE. ME(moriae). ET. SECVRIT(ati). TIB(erius). CL(audius). EVPHRAS. IIIIII. VIR. AVG(ustalis). NEGOTIAT(or). ARTIS. PURPURIAE,” etc., in other words, “Perpetual memory and security. Tiberius Claudius Euphras, *septemvir Augustalis*, merchant in the art of dyeing, etc.” Zink did not reproduce the lineation of the inscription or comment on the content of the text. The tombstone of Tiberius Claudius Euphras did not appear in Peutinger’s scrupulous sylloge of 1505 and therefore may have gone immediately astray, perhaps reused in a wall.<sup>173</sup> There was little sense except among a tiny handful of Italy voyagers that an inscription might have pure evidentiary value independent of its apparent contribution to an existing narrative. The excavations in the crossing of St. Ulrich and Afra in 1961–62 found Romanesque architectural fragments and bits

170. “Man fund gemeld und darzu wort / gemalt und geschriben hie und dort, / von den alten kurz abbreviert, / darinn die jungen wern verirrt / und würden des ungleich underwist.” *Die Reimchronik des KÜCHLIN*, in *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, vol. 4 (Augsburg and Leipzig, 1865), 343.

171. Cited in Karl Schnith, “Mittelalterliche Augsburger Gründungslegenden,” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter* (see chap. 2, n. 20), 1: 516n49. See also Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums*, 122–24, on fifteenth-century documentation of inscriptions.

172. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm 2028, fol. 343v–344r.

173. An improved text was given by Marcus Welser, *Rerum Augustanarum Vindelicarum libri octo* (1594), 217, perhaps on the basis of conjecture. Friedrich Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivarum romanae*, no. 135. *CIL* III, 5824.

of Roman inscriptions and sculpture, including the head of a satyr, a half-relief in profile probably from a sarcophagus, the whole lot thrown into the foundations of the post-1467 construction as rubble.<sup>174</sup>

In the second half of the fifteenth century Sts. Ulrich and Afra became a permanent building site. In 1467, after a fire, excavations were undertaken to rebuild the tower. Meisterlin was in town in 1469 and reported the excavation of various old bones, including minor dignitaries like St. Victerpus.<sup>175</sup> In 1474 the church was badly damaged by a storm, and the building continued. Again the histories of the city and the church were coming to light at once. Hektor Müllich reported that “many sarcophagi and large stones with writing were found as well as the *Stadtpir* or coat of arms, three fathoms deep in the ground, that had been put there a long time ago.”<sup>176</sup>

The artifact that Müllich calls the *stat per* was a stone pinecone. It is not clear which surviving Augsburg pinecone was the one found in 1467.<sup>177</sup> The pinecone had been an emblem of the city for centuries. There are two seals with oval Tree of Life forms on arched gates from the thirteenth century.<sup>178</sup> The old seals were apparently founded on earlier discoveries of Roman pinecones. The artifact discovered in 1467 was taken as especially significant and was displayed on a column in front of Sts. Ulrich and Afra. A new official coat of arms was designed with a pinecone. Müllich connected the form, which had always been known locally as the *per* or bunch of grapes, with the tomb (actually cenotaph) of Drusus in Mainz, the *Eichelstein* (fig. 8), as if Drusus had wanted to remember with this emblem the city to the east that he had founded. Sigismund Meisterlin in 1488 accepted the connection to Drusus and connected the word *per* to the Greek *pura*, “pyre.”<sup>179</sup> Pinecones were common emblems of resurrection on Ro-

174. *Die Ausgrabungen in St. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg 1961–1968*, ed. Joachim Werner (Munich: Beck, 1977), 1: 3 and 260–61, nos. 15, 16. These fragments were neither photographed nor described; it is not even clear whether they were left in place in 1962 or removed and later mislaid.

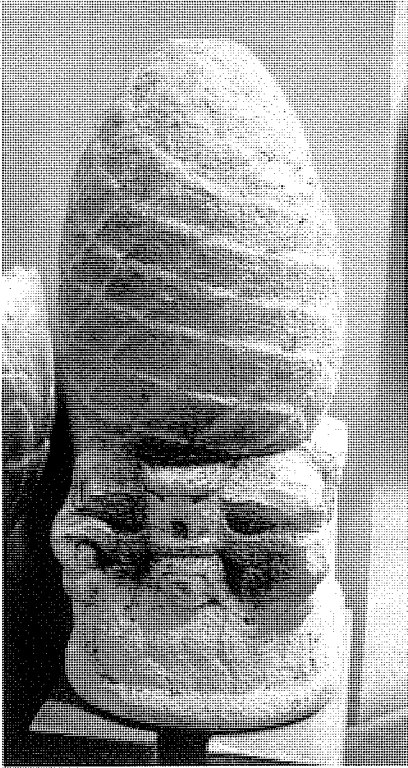
175. Steichele, *Archiv*, III, 345.

176. “Fand man etwa manigen sarch und gross stain mit geschrift und der stat per oder wappen wol dreier manns tief im grund und maint man, das gar vor langer zeit dahin kommen wäre.” *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, 22 (Augsburg, 3) (Leipzig, 1892), 214. A good overview of the rebuilding of the church as the occasion for sacred archeology is Bischoff, *Burkhard Engelberg*, 240–43. On Müllich, a merchant turned scribe, illustrator, and chronicler, see Dieter Weber, *Geschichtsschreibung in Augsburg: Hektor Müllich und die reichsstädtische Chronistik des Spätmittelalters* (Augsburg: Mühlberger, 1984), 47–68.

177. It is apparently Römisches Museum, Lap. 72, 144 cm in height. *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I*, 1, *Raetia und Noricum*, no. 43, but see other pinecones, nos. 43–53.

178. Ulrich Stoll, “Pinienzapfen und Zirbelnuss: Ein Beitrag zur Deutung des römischen Pinienzapfen und zur Geschichte des Augsburger Stadtwappens,” *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben* 79 (1985): 55–91.

179. *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte*, 3 (Nuremberg, 3) (Leipzig, 1864), 38.



73. Pinecone, second or third and sixteenth centuries, stone. Augsburg, Römisches Museum. Photo: author.

man colonial tombs and were associated with the cult of Cybele.<sup>180</sup> The density of finds in Augsburg, about a dozen in all, suggests an active Cybele cult. Such pinecones were found all over the empire and were often protected in the Middle Ages, for example, on the Capitol in Rome and at Aachen.<sup>181</sup> But the idea that the pinecone had been a civic emblem of Augusta Vindelicorum persisted and was still defended by Marcus Welser in 1594. On the basis of these protoscholarly reflections the base of one of the ancient Augsburg pinecones was recut with a female head with a mural crown to make the connection with the old civic emblem (fig. 73).<sup>182</sup> The mystic chords that linked Augsburg with Augusta Vindelicorum impelled the archeologists to alter the artifact.

An undated account found in a Swiss archive, a mid-sixteenth-century copy of an earlier eyewitness account, tells of the sensational discovery of a Roman mosaic: “Jonas Haider, citizen of Augsburg, who had a house and garden not far from the *Sackpfeife*, wanted to build a chicken coop in his garden.”<sup>183</sup> He came across a

Roman mosaic in red, white, yellow, and black stones, which he carefully washed and polished, revealing a battle scene with a triumphal *troika* and an inscription. This mosaic was “so artfully made [*so künstlich gemacht*] that the entire city council came to see it, as well as all the Fugger family, and generally a pilgrimage and confluence that cannot be described.” Haider’s wife collected twenty gulden in entrance fees; but if they had handled it properly, the witness avers, they could have made a great deal of money. “It was believed that this had been a Roman chapel and that a treasure must lie below; Haider dug at length for it.” There was no reason to think this was

180. *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I, 1, Raetia und Noricum*, nos. 1, 42, 43, 45, 46, 50, 144.

181. Gramaccini, *Mirabilia* (see chap. 2, n. 2); Phyllis Pray Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Sources* (London: Harvey Miller, 1986), no. 187. The pinecone in Aachen, however, is undatable (Roman, Carolingian, Ottonian . . .); see Helga Giersiepen, *Die Inschriften des Aachener Doms (= Die deutschen Inschriften 31)* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1992), no. 13.

182. Augsburg, Römisches Museum, Lap. 72. For an example of such a crenellated crown, see Andrea Mantegna’s *Introduction of the Cult of Cybele into Rome*, London, National Gallery.

183. Alfred Weitnauer, article in *Neue Augsburger Zeitung*, January 9, 1939 (= no. 7), n.p. The period account was found among the papers of the Zurich canon Wick in the Zentralbibliothek, Zurich. Lothar Bakker, “Mosaikfunde aus Augusta Vindelicorum,” in *Die Römer in Schwaben*, exhibition catalogue (Munich: Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 1985), 106–7.

a chapel, but the first impulse was to connect any iconography to a cult. Perhaps the hypothesis of a chapel held out a greater promise of “treasure,” presumably metalware or jewelry; perhaps the attested “pilgrimage,” motivated by curiosity, needed to be legitimated.<sup>184</sup> At any rate “Jakob Fugger had it all copied [*hat es alles lassen abconterfetten*] and Haider thought that Fugger ought to buy the house and garden from him.” Fugger was after all the richest man in Europe.<sup>185</sup>

In 1490, on the outside wings of an altarpiece, Hans Holbein the Elder depicted the *Burial of St. Afra* (fig. 74).<sup>186</sup> The already martyred saint, burnt to death in the time of Emperor Diocletian but, miraculously, physically intact, is laid in a sarcophagus in her family tomb by her mother, St. Hilaria, and her uncle, the bishop Dionysius, together with two maidservants. The Roman soldiers converging from the rear will set the crypt on fire and the four accomplices will suffer the same fate as Afra. The painting depicts the scene of archeology, but in reverse, not the excavation but the initial deposit that set local ecclesiastical culture in motion. While Holbein painted, the very sarcophagus supposed to be Afra’s, in fact like the tomb of Sempertus a pagan tomb twice re-employed, first in the fourth century and then again in the eleventh, was resting in the crypt of Sts. Ulrich and Afra.<sup>187</sup> The painted panels were the hinged doors of a retable or box-like structure mounted above and behind an altar. (The original location of Holbein’s altarpiece is unknown but was likely to have been the church of Sts. Ulrich and Afra.) Such panels served as labels that identified the contents of the altar. That altar contained no relics of Afra, but the relics were not far. Scenes of martyrdom were traditional subjects of painted altarpieces, scenes of burial less common. This scene was both, the burial of Afra devolving into the martyrdom of her family and retinue. Holbein’s source for the composition was one of the illustrated copies of Meisterlin’s *Augsburg Chronicle* (fig. 75).<sup>188</sup> That miniature of 1457, which was copied more than once, must equally have prepared and provoked the rediscovery in 1465 of the bones of “Digna,” one of Afra’s ladies-in-waiting, during

184. See Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums*, 52–71, on early sixteenth-century quests for treasure, mainly coins, and the legal issues involved.

185. There is no independent evidence of this discovery, but the voice of the eyewitness sounds authentic. Fugger’s death in 1525 provides a *terminus ante quem*.

186. Eichstätt, Bischöfliche Hauskapelle. Lieb and Stange, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, no. 3a; *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik*, exhibition catalogue, Augsburg, Rathaus (Augsburg: Himmer, 1965), no. 2. These are the external wings of an altarpiece, joined to form a single panel, 149.5 × 145 cm.

187. *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I, 1, Raetia und Noricum*, no. 87.

188. Augsburg, Cod. Halder 1, fol. 74b. Weber, *Geschichtsschreibung in Augsburg*, no. 87. On the illustrations to the *Meisterlin Chronicle* (1457) by Georg and Hektor Müllich, see Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *Schwäbische Federzeichnungen: Studien zur Buchillustration Augsburgs im*



74. Hans Holbein the Elder, *Burial of St. Afra*, 1490, oil on panel. Eichstätt, Bischöfliche Hauskapelle. Photo: Helmut Bauer.



75. Hektor Müllich, *Burial of St. Afra*, 1457, watercolor, pen and ink, from *Augsburg Chronicle of Sigismund Meisterlin*. Augsburg, Stadt- und Staatsbibliothek, cod. Halder 1, fol. 74b.

the demolition of the old church.<sup>189</sup> Beholders of Holbein's altarpiece must then have seen Digna as one of the saintly female companions of Afra in the burial scene.

Holbein allows the facts of the story to unfold temporally and psychologically. The fabricated predicates of St. Simpertus—the facial features, the folds of fabric—had cleaved close to the carved supine effigy and tightened the link between label and corpse. The narrative that painting invents, by contrast, threatens to escape from the relic entirely, proposing a story. Written narratives of saints' lives were also stories with their own intrinsic appeal and momentum. Paintings had their own peculiar way of telling stories, offering at once less and more than the hagiographic text. Holbein was forced to invent information about the scene and the characters that the written hagiography could simply omit. His objective was, in principle, simply to publish the pictorial account of the event he found illustrated in Müllich's chronicle. His task had been assigned to him by printed books and images. If the content of every medium, according to McLuhan, is another medium, then the content of the altarpiece in 1490 was now, inevitably, printed pamphlet and woodcut. Holbein's painting, *qua* publication, ought to have transmitted the received story without comment. But it did more than this, indeed had to offer more just by virtue of being a panel painting many times larger than the page-sized illumination and by virtue of Holbein's talent, far exceeding the amateur Müllich's. A painting replicating a humble narrative report, extending a substitutional chain, could not help veering off into eloquence.

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XV. Jahrhundert (Berlin and Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1929), 34–39, 43–46; and Norbert H. Ott, "Von der Handschrift zum Druck und retour: Sigismund Meisterlins Chronik der Stadt Augsburg in der Handschriften- und Druck-Illustration," in *Augsburg, die Bilderfabrik Europas: Essays zur Augsburger Druckgraphik der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. John Roger Paas (Augsburg: Wissner, 2001), 22.

189. Braun, *Geschichte der Bischöfe*, 3: 52, cited in I. Schairer, *Das religiöse Volksleben am Ausgang des Mittelalters nach Augsburger Quellen* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1914), 121.





### Learned credulity

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Edward Gibbon, with a taste for paradox, described his seventeenth-century predecessors as “antiquarians of profound learning and easy faith,” implying that the true enemy of critical scholarship was a self-serving and superstitious religiosity.<sup>1</sup> For Gibbon, the two states of mind had nothing in common. When J. B. Trapp, by contrast, in one of his articles on the bogus tombs of ancient poets, spoke of “learned credulity,” he suggested with this phrase that the errors of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century antiquarians were not simply missteps, but were in some sense a function of the new erudition.<sup>2</sup> Learned credulity, in this view, was neither a regressive holdover nor a weakness of mind, but a phenomenon bred by antiquarianism itself. The telescoping of history involved in misidentifying artifacts followed from the scholars’ stubborn insistence on seeing them all as monuments. Scholars understood portraits and other images as artifacts that could be counted on to say what they mean, rather than as complex texts whose meaning was inextricable from their material makeup and was therefore continually being reassigned by a succession of subjective beholders. Precisely to the extent that they took interest in the origins of institutions, the antiquarians embraced a nonoriginary, nonsubjective, inclusive conception of the authorship of monuments.

Modernity can sometimes seem just a matter of getting everyone to agree where the boundaries between truth and falsehood are drawn. Mod-

1. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York: Modern Library, 1932), 1: 189.

2. Trapp, preface, *Essays on the Renaissance and the Classical Tradition* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990).

ern patterns of culture involving, for example, efficient use of time and rational comparison of quantities, started to coalesce as soon as those epistemological boundaries became sociologically stable. Print performed, was asked to perform, that stabilizing work. Yet such boundaries were only ever notional; consciousness and experience were (and are) crossing back and forth all the time. In this first generation of archeological scholarship, when conventions of taxonomy and interpretation were still crystallizing, and when the frontier between true and false was not at all agreed upon, there was plenty of category confusion.

The mendacity of the pagan fables and idols was a clerical commonplace in the Middle Ages. But the church repeated and even exceeded the errors of the pagans in its own institutionalized idolatry and cult of relics. Meanwhile, humanistically educated scholars were obsessed with the error and folly of unlettered clerics, professorial imposters, and the credulous folk. The thin web of mostly patrician intellectual elites defined themselves against the confusions of the ignorant and interested. Aventinus mocked the fairy tales and legends of “ignorant priests and monks,” for example, the image of the “Holy Kinship” or extended family of Christ—Christ and John the Baptist assembled with all their aunts and uncles and cousins—transported from devotional texts into painted iconography in the fifteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Conrad Peutinger consistently distanced himself from the enthusiasms of the time, never endorsing the fancies of Maximilian’s genealogists, unimpressed by the astrological prophecy published by the Augsburg cleric Veit Bild in 1524.<sup>4</sup> The most conspicuous symbolic representations of the time were Christian cult objects: the *Gnadenbild* at the terminus of a pilgrimage, the relic, the theatrical altarpiece, the indulgence woodcut, all images that were efficacious in the present tense. The lettered elite carefully detached themselves from the cycles of hope and reconciliation that revolved around these images. Humanists reflected on the power of persuasion and as a consequence despised the *vulgus* that failed to recognize rhetoric for what it was. The credulous listener or beholder was vulnerable to religious visions. This was the basic stock of opinions that Reformation theologians, often humanistically educated, would later draw on in their campaign to rein in the religious image. But even Catholic apologists such as Johannes Cochlaeus complained about readers incapable of distinguishing truth from fiction. They trusted what they saw in print, he complained, and read the heroic epics of the Middle Ages as history.<sup>5</sup> Theo-

3. Aventinus, *Bayerische Chronik*, chap. 105, in *Sämmtliche Werke* 4:793.

4. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, no. 244, March 20, 1524. Heike Talkenberger, *Sintflut: Prophetie und Zeitgeschehen in Texten und Holzschnitten astrologischer Flugschriften, 1488–1528* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), 255–56.

5. Cited in John L. Flood, “Theologi et Gigantes,” *Modern Language Review* 62 (1967): 658.

logians and scholars alike had difficulty seeing the significance of imaginative error within the art of the church and within religious life in general.

Humanist scholars, contemptuous of folklore and vernacular literature, hardly ever mentioned the heroic tales in their own writings.<sup>6</sup> Scholars scorned the cheap published vernacular texts that had been proliferating since the 1470s, especially those illustrated with woodcuts. Tough-minded historians like Heinrich Bebel called the heroic poems “pure inventions.”<sup>7</sup> In the *Epistola obscurum virorum*, Ulrich von Hutten mocked the search for heroic bones of the sort undertaken by princes. There were no less than thirty-nine doctors present at the Diet of Worms, including the skeptical Peutingier, and one can imagine how most of them would have felt about the excavation for the bones of Siegfried conducted there by the emperor.

Theologians were well aware of the popular appeal of the heroic characters. Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg dismissed the heroic material as “foolish, useless words” (*torechte unnütze wort*). Luther warned preachers against inserting Dietrich von Bern (Verona), the popular and legendary counterpart of the historical Ostrogothic king Theodoric, into their sermons. Theologians worried about the ease with which ethical values, both positive and negative, were projected onto the legendary figures, especially the giants.<sup>8</sup> Giants were on the whole seen as violent and antisocial menaces. Luther played this tune when he denounced the pope as “a mighty giant, Roland, and lout” (*ein mächtiger Riese, Roland und Kerl*). But within the context of vernacular literature or civic iconography their value could switch to positive with alarming ease.

For all their suspicions, scholars did not want to dismiss the possibility of a historical background to the heroic legends. Tacitus (*Germania*, § 2) had reported that the ancient Germans, lacking written history, had recorded their history in their songs. The medieval epics might well reflect ancient events. Aventinus made an effort to read the epics critically,<sup>9</sup> and even Luther granted that the heroic tales must reflect distant historical events.<sup>10</sup> The scholars' attitude here was not so different from their attitude to church archeology. The scholars kept their distance from credulous

6. Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*, 320n23; Müller, *Gedechtnus*, 197–203; Johannes Janota, “Zur Rezeption mittelalterlicher Literatur zwischen dem 16. und 18. Jh.,” in *Das Weiterleben des Mittelalters in der deutschen Literatur*, ed. James F. Poag and Gerhild Scholz-Williams (Königstein: Athenäum, 1983), 37–46; Weinacht, “Das Motiv vom Hürnen Seyfrid im Nürnberg des 16. Jhs.,” 142 and n. 17.

7. Bebel, *Commentaria epistolarum conficiendarum* (Strasbourg, 1503), cited in Müller, *Gedechtnus*, 197.

8. Flood, “Theologi et Gigantes,” 654–60.

9. Müller, *Gedechtnus*, 200–201.

10. Flood, “Theologi et Gigantes,” 654.

popular behavior and relic superstition, yet were reluctant to abandon the reality of ancient miracles.

Historians, increasingly turning to archeological evidence, doubted that the *rustici* would know to value an artifact that stood outside the devotional cycle. The historian Aventinus in his *Bavarian Chronicle*, speaking of a Roman inscription he found in a church in Salzburg, drily mocked an old woman who had made a chair for herself out of the stone.<sup>11</sup> The new intellectual elite did not pity only the common worshipers for their ignorance. Aventinus sarcastically derided anyone who failed to recognize the documentary value of these artifacts, not excepting the “good, foolish, and ignorant cathedral canon” in Regensburg who mistook the sarcophagus of a certain Aurelia, a Roman woman, for the tomb of a mythical Capetian princess from Orléans who had taken refuge at St. Emmeram and died there in 1030.<sup>12</sup> Some scholars attacked outright the professors and the learned clergy for their unhistorical approach to scripture. This was the core of the Reuchlin affair, the most important intellectual battleground of the day, where the literary humanists and philologists banded together against the professors of theology to argue that the Hebrew sacred texts were worth preserving for their historical value. The professors wanted to destroy the Hebrew texts. The traditional way to read scripture was nonphilological. Unintelligible details or impasses were solved by allegorization, not by historical scholarship. Alien texts were submitted to the *interpretatio christiana*, a nonhistorical and allegorical reading, and if that proved impossible the texts were not read at all. Aventinus in his scorn for ignorance did not spare the professors of Ingolstadt, the “big Jacks” (*unser gros Hansen*) at the university with their useless prattling, who had no sense of how to treat a Roman tombstone. He describes an inscribed stone that a townsman had purchased for three shillings and placed on his own grave plot—face down, so that the inscription sat in the mud. Aventinus’s colleague Sebastian Ilsing beseeched the worthies of Ingolstadt to buy the stone and have it displayed properly at the university or in a church, but to no avail; the recommendation was ignored.<sup>13</sup>

### Quasi-antiquities

The scholars were led by their own method into folly, repeating the confusions of substitution in their own scholarship. Even the best Italian syllogists copied spurious inscriptions alongside the good ones. Hundreds

11. Aventinus, *Bayerische Chronik*, chap. 56, in *Sämmtliche Werke*, 4:720.

12. Aventinus, *Bayerische Chronik*, in *Sämmtliche Werke*, 4:699; Schmid, “Johannes Aventinus und die Realienkunde,” 93. The fanciful reading of the Aurelia inscription was a fixture of local tradition both before and after Aventinus.

13. Aventinus, *Bayerische Chronik*, chap. 49, in *Sämmtliche Werke*, 4:687.

of inauthentic inscriptions contaminated the Quattrocento sylloges.<sup>14</sup> It was impossible for the sylogist, no matter how conscientious, to track down every last stone to verify the texts he copied. Even that might not have worked, because some of the pseudepigraphic texts were in the end carved in stone, and those stones would have been hard to date on stylistic grounds.<sup>15</sup> Doubt about inscriptions could creep in only if the scholar mistrusted the linguistic form of the text, or the content. The most intriguing inscription to the early sixteenth-century scholar, the very first listed in Apianus and Amantius's published sylloge, was the sibylline prophecy of the discovery of the New World found carved on a square tablet in Lisbon, in "Roman letters of the earliest times." A German living in Lisbon, Valentinus Moravus, sent reports on the text to Hieronymus Münzer and Conrad Peutinger in 1505.<sup>16</sup>

Many scholars had the knowledge and the judgment to discriminate between good and bad inscriptions on internal grounds, that is, on the basis of the linguistic form of the text. In some cases, they suspected inauthenticity but copied the texts anyway. Why not? one might have argued, since the sylloges customarily included modern texts alongside ancient ones. The sylloges tended to be inclusive and to give the benefit of the doubt. Therefore maximum credulity cannot be assumed every time a scholar copies a spurious text.

The importance of pseudepigraphic texts to early scholarship has been abundantly demonstrated. The active rehearsal and simulation of old voices amounted to a more effective way of learning than passive reception. The pseudepigraphs "completed" the literary record in the same way that the forged foundation documents did. The pseudepigraphic texts even helped establish new connections, for example, the integration of Aristotle into the Scholastic canon.<sup>17</sup> Not all pseudepigraphic texts were pure

14. See the bibliography on modern epigraphic forgeries in Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum*, 315 n. 2. On pseudepigraphs in the Quattrocento sylloges, see Avesani, "Felicianerie" (see chap. 1, n. 15), 12–14.

15. The scholar P. Crinito saw the epitaph of Lucan around 1505—*M.A. Lucano Cordubensi poete beneficio Neronis Caesaris fama servata*, a famous forgery—and reported that it was done in *priscis litteris*, "ancient letters." *CIL* VI, 5.6\*; II, 200\*. Limentani, "Sul non sapere leggere le epigrafi classiche nei secoli XII e XIII" (see chap. 4, n. 78), 261. On this topic see also Haskell, *History and Its Images*, 21, 88.

16. *CIL* II, 7\* (30\*). Apianus and Amantius were the first to publish it; *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis*, 2. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, 56–59. Arnaldo Momigliano, "Enrico Caiado e la falsificazione de *CIL* II, 30\*," in Momigliano, *Terzo contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1966), 111–19, does not believe that the forger was the poet Caiado, as a later sixteenth-century source alleged. One must wonder whether the German correspondent in Lisbon saw an epigraphic inscription or merely a written text.

17. Jean-François Maillard, "Apocryphes et pseudépigraphes: Le goût des faux au coeur de l'humanisme de la Renaissance?" *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* 1995: 93–106.

fictions; some were old but badly dated or attributed. Some sixteenth-century Protestant scholars still believed in the authenticity of the correspondence between Christ and King Abgar.<sup>18</sup> Eusebius was after all the authority for the letters supposedly preserved in the archives at Edessa. It turns out that there are real sixth-century letters that must themselves reflect older pseudepigraphs.

Such material triggered the imagination of the scholars, and they ended up committing the very crimes that they had condemned in the life of the pious. The cycle of critique and fall into error came to an end only when it arrived at the artist, who was allowed to remain safely suspended in the state of credulity.

An artifact's value as evidence consists in its performativity, that is, its registration of the circumstances of its own fabrication. Its eloquence, by contrast, consists in its inscriptionality, or its capacity to deliver a meaning transcending those merely accidental circumstances. Eloquence emerges only when the marks of performance are erased, or read through. To read an artifact as evidence, one has to abandon the idea of reading it for meaning. Early archeologists were seldom willing to do that.

The early archeologist's reading of an artifact did not end with the object at hand. It aimed beyond to the "true" origins of the object in a concept or a primary form. Modern archeology, by contrast, has a more literal conception of origins; it asks not after the *true* origins but the *real* origins.

Emperor Maximilian and his scholarly advisors, avid antiquarians, focused on iconography and were seldom clear about dates. At some point in the first years of the century an "idol" was found near Lake Constance. The accounts are conflicting and it is difficult to know for certain what was found and what happened to it. Heinrich Bebel in his *Oratio* of 1504 identified the *Idolum Alemannum aureum* as Hercules.<sup>19</sup> Aventinus later called it an *aeneum signum* from Reichenau and reported that it was in the possession of Johannes Stabius.<sup>20</sup> A published inventory of the Palatine collections at Heidelberg of the late seventeenth century claimed to reproduce the very statue and gave the text of a lost inscription preserved in "old parchments" saying that the object was found in the village of Alma near Constance in the year 1507 and acquired by Maximilian (fig. 76).<sup>21</sup> The inscription had also given the idol's name as *Allman* and said that the Germans took their name from it. The author of the Palatine inventory,

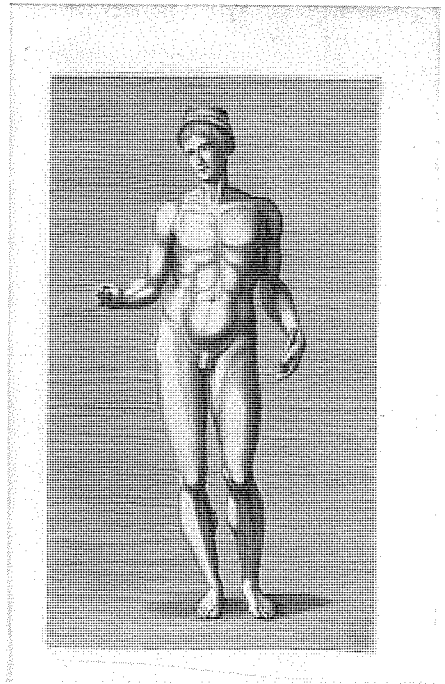
18. Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, 102–5; Mark Jones, ed., *Fakes? The Art of Deception*, exhibition catalogue (London: British Museum, 1990), no. 61.

19. *Schardius redivivus, sive Rerum germanicarum scriptores varii*, ed. Hieronymus Thomas (Giessen, 1673), 101–2, 138; see also Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*, 111.

20. Aventinus, *Annales Boiorum* (Ingolstadt, 1554), I, 41.

21. L. Beger, *Thesaurus ex Thesauro Palatino selectus, sive Gemmarum et Numismatum . . . dispositio* (Heidelberg, 1685), 16–17.

Beger, argued on the basis of the traces of wings on the figure's cap that this god was identical to Mercury. But in Maximilian's time the scholars identified the Lake Constance idol, which may not have been the same as the Heidelberg figure, not with Mercury but with Hercules. They knew from Tacitus, *Germania* § 9, that the ancient Germans had worshiped Hercules alongside Mars, Mercury, and Isis.<sup>22</sup> Aventinus identified this "German Hercules," one of the hero's many guises, as Alman Ärgle, father and first king of the Bavarians and descendant of Tuisco, who had arrived in Germany 131 years after the Deluge.<sup>23</sup> According to Aventinus and Veit Arnpeck, Nuremberg had been founded by a son of this German Hercules, Norix.<sup>24</sup> There was even talk of a Hercules-Hapsburg connection which Celtis, for one, did not credit. Conrad Peutinger responded to Maximilian's interest in a Hercules coin recently found in Hungary with a short treatise on the iconography of Hercules Aegypticus. Here Peutinger reminded Maximilian of a visit to his home, where Peutinger had showed him a Hercules statue newly imported from Rome but, typically, did not indicate whether the piece was ancient or modern.<sup>25</sup>



76. So-called *Hercules Alemannus*, bronze. Engraving from L. Beger, *Thesaurus ex Thesaurio Palatino selectus, sive Gemmarum et Numismatum . . . dispositio* (Heidelberg, 1685), 16.

Conrad Celtis was apparently duped by a modern Italian medal he found in Styria, taking it to be an antiquity. The only trace of the discovery is the woodcut illustration and caption published by Apianus and Amantius in their anthology of European antiquities, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (1534). The woodcut represents a circular field containing a nude man seated in a rocky landscape and accompanied by a winged child and a skull (fig. 77). The man holds his head in his hands as if anguished by contemplation of the skull. The caption reads: "Found by Conrad Celtis not long ago on a lead plate [or coin] at the church of St. Andreas in Kollos in Styria, in the year 1500" (Nuper a Con. Cel. inventum in plumbea lamina in Stiria in Colle: in quo est Ecclesia circa Sanctum Andream. Anno M.D.).<sup>26</sup> The

22. Peutinger, *Sermones convivales*, b5v.

23. Aventinus, *Sämmtliche Werke* 2:41; 4:43, 99. This figure was also called Altmon, Ergle, or Erclle; *Werke*, I, 113.

24. Mummenhof, *Nürnberg's Ursprung und Alter*, 9–10.

25. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, nos. 144–45. *Explicatio nummi cujusdam*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 3344, fol. 1–9. Giehlow, "Dürers Stich 'Melencolia I' und der maximilianische Humanistenkreis," 29–30; Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums*, 75.

26. Apianus and Amantius, *Inscriptiones*, 385. The location, near Pettau (Poetovium) in what is now Slovenia, was identified by Maué, "Antikenrezeption oder Erfindung der italienischen Renaissance?" [see chap. 1, n. 32], 285.



¶ Ibidem.

C. SAMVCONIVS  
SECTATVS ET AMV.  
CABVRRANI F. V. E.  
SIB. ET RESPECTILLE  
F. DE F. AN. X.

¶ Nuper à Con. Cei. inuentum in plum-  
bea lamina in Stiria in Colle: in quo  
est Ecclesia circa Sanctum Andream:  
Anno M. D.



c'c

image is in fact nothing other than the reverse of a self-portrait by the Venetian medalist Giovanni Boldù (d. before 1477). On the self-portrait medal, the reverse with the allegory is inscribed OPVS IOANIS BOLDV PICTORIS VENETVS XOGRAFI (= *zographos*, painter from life) and dated 1458.<sup>27</sup> A later version by another artist replaces Boldù's portrait on the obverse with a portrait of the emperor Caracalla (labeled Antoninus Pius, however) but preserves the allegory on the reverse, though with a different inscription: IO SON FINE, and the date 1466 (fig. 78).<sup>28</sup> None of these inscriptions or dates appears

in the woodcut in Apianus; nor does the obverse, obviously. Instead, oddly enough, the man, the child, and the skull are labeled Cloto, Lachesis, and Atropos, the names of the Three Fates. The scholar who imposed these labels on Boldù's design—apparently Celtis himself—seems to have understood the three figures as symbols of past, present, and future.<sup>29</sup>

Celtis was not the only one to overestimate the composition's antiquity. In the 1490s the sculptor Cristoforo Solari transposed the composition to a marble medallion and mounted it on the façade of the Certosa di Pavia,



77. (Facing) Medal found by Conrad Celtis in Styria, 1500. Woodcut in Petrus Apianus and Bartolomeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 385. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

78. (Above) After Giovanni Boldù, *Youth with Genius of Death*, 1466, bronze medal. Image © 2006 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection.

27. Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals*, no. 421.

28. Hill, *Corpus of Italian Medals*, no. 423. See also Scher, ed., *Currency of Fame*, no. 27. For the reception of the image, see William R. Levin, ed., *Images of Love and Death in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, exhibition catalogue (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Museum of Art, 1975), no. 84; Wendy Steadman Sheard, ed., *Antiquity in the Renaissance*, exhibition catalogue, (Northampton, Mass.: Smith College Museum of Art, 1978), no. 80; and Horst W. Janson, "The Putto with the Death's Head," *Art Bulletin* 19 (1937): 423–49.

29. Perhaps Celtis had confused memories of Pico della Mirandola's reflections on the Three Fates and other trinitarian structures running through his head; see Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958), 45. Peter Luh proposes that the connection Celtis made to the Three Fates derived from a passage in Apuleius; *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet*, 331n25. Cornelius Vermeule related the scene on Boldù's medal to a Severan coin from Ephesus; "Graeco-Roman Asia Minor to Renaissance Italy: Medallion and Related Arts," in *Italian Medals*, ed. J. Graham Pollard, ed. (= *Studies in the History of Art*, 21) (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1987), 268–69. The iconographer Vincenzo Cartari, *Le imagini degli dei* (Venice, 1571), 305, took the illustration in Apianus and Amantius at face value, struggling to reconcile its inscription with his knowledge of classical symbolism; see also the second edition (Padua, 1625), 255, with a more accurate reproduction and more extensive interpretation. Cf. the inscriptions that Celtis added to the composition he found on the gem at Hradisch, fig. 3 above.

alongside other antiquities, including copies of Roman coins as well as the medallion portrait of Emperor Heraclius, the famous “remake” of a nonexistent late antique object, here remade once more into a portrait of Constantine.<sup>30</sup>

One can only speculate about how Celtis came across the object, what it was doing in a rural church, what he really thought of it, and how Apianus and Amantius learned of the discovery. Some of Celtis’s papers remained in Ingolstadt, where he had been professor in the 1490s and where Apianus was professor of mathematics and astronomy and Amantius professor of rhetoric. Perhaps the compilers acquired Celtis’s report on the object from one of the scholarly sources they named in their own publication, for example, Peutinger. Celtis was in Vienna in 1500, so he might well have made a trip to Styria. He must have made, or had made, a drawing, and a good one, for only a few details are misunderstood.<sup>31</sup> Either Celtis decided not to notice that the medal bore the signature of a modern Italian artist or, more likely, he had the 1466 version with the phrase *Io son fine* above the “Three Fates” and the portrait of the Roman emperor on the obverse.<sup>32</sup> He must have believed that despite these marks of modernity the medal reliably transmitted the content of an antique gem or relief, regardless of which modern Italian medalist had actually made it; and he moreover felt compelled to assign the work its “correct” iconographic label.

Celtis’s misconception about the Boldù medal is the exact equivalent of Wolgemut’s and Dürer’s copying the modern Italian *Tarocchi* engravings as if they were archives of ancient pagan form; or Burgkmair copying for his *Kaiserbuch* woodcuts an ancient coin, the portrait of Julius Caesar, that

30. Jean Seznec, “Youth, Innocence, and Death: Some Notes on a Medallion on the Certosa di Pavia,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 1 (1937/38): 298–303; Charles R. Morscheck, Jr., *Relief Sculpture for the Façade of the Certosa of Pavia, 1473–1499* (New York and London: Garland, 1978), 245 and fig. 61. The medallion is on the north side of the socle. The figure of the child on the medal was adopted by Augustus Olmucensis for the central medallion of his dish of 1508 for Celtis’s Sodalitas; Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe, inv. no. IV 40; Heinrich Kohlhaussen, *Nürnberger Goldschmiedekunst des Mittelalters und der Dürerzeit* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1968), 398–400, no. 416; *Renaissance in Österreich*, no. 565. Matthes Gebel reproduced the composition on the reverse of a medal portrait of Georg Ploed dated 1532; Maué, “Antikenrezeption oder Erfindung der italienischen Renaissance?”

31. A stick on the ground ends up in the woodcut as a bone in the skull’s mouth; the flame in the putto’s hand becomes a campfire; a small bush has been added in the background to fill a gap that had opened up at some point in the copying process. For the older literature on the sources of Apianus and Amantius’s sylloge, see Norbert Lieb, *Die Fugger und die Kunst*, vol. 2, *Im Zeitalter der hohen Renaissance* (Munich: Schnell & Steiner, 1958), 349–50.

32. Maué, “Antikenrezeption oder Erfindung der italienischen Renaissance?” 285, argues that the unclarity of the rock edge in the foreground suggests that either the draftsman or the designer of the woodcut was puzzled by the blank spot on the medal where the date should have been; proof, that is, that Celtis found an inscriptionless version.

was not ancient at all but modern.<sup>33</sup> Such examples belonged to a never-defined, never-fixed phantom category of objects that were judged as modern works by some beholders and ancient by others; bronze replicas of the newly discovered antiquities; bronzes that resembled antiquities; portrait busts of ancient personages, and the like; pastiches, hoaxes, artistic *jeux d'esprit*.<sup>34</sup> This category was hardly peripheral to the artistic Renaissance, as Panofsky recognized: a Venetian marble relief of a pagan subject, a modern simulation of an Attic piece of the classic period that nevertheless manages to quote two works by Michelangelo, serves as the frontispiece to and, in the original edition, adorns the very book jacket of Panofsky's great synthetic work *Renaissance and Resuscitations in Western Art*.<sup>35</sup>

Conrad Celtis staked out a strange middle ground where scholarship could venture to appeal to the power of suggestion and to the charisma of names and associations. Just as when Celtis came across the druid portraits at Speinshart, historiography and iconography fell under the spell of the poetic-creative imagination. Celtis, like his Italian counterpart Annius of Viterbo, was clearly something of a confidence man, a *Hochstapler*. But this is a complicated state of mind, not a simple one.

The Dominican historian Giovanni Nanni, or Annius of Viterbo (c. 1432–1502), well known through publication to his German colleagues, gathered and fabricated a war chest of evidence to prove his theses about the earliest history of Europe. Annius maintained that Europe had been settled by biblical patriarchs who believed in Egyptian gods and had to wage a war against autochthonous giants. These ideas about the postdiluvian movements of Noah and his progeny and of the Egyptian gods were not wild fantasies but grounded in old oral traditions.<sup>36</sup> Annius resented the prestigious textual authorities who seemed to contradict his version, for instance, the Roman historians. He mistrusted such sources for their "literariness."<sup>37</sup> He deplored the new technology of movable type, which only multiplied the errors of the scribes and made things worse. In his treatise on scribal copying, *De laude scriptorum* (1492), Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim, warned that "printed books will never be the equivalent of handwritten codices, for so many printed books are deficient in spelling and appear-

33. Campbell Dodgson, "Drei neue Cäsarenköpfe Hans Burgkmairs," *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst* 56 (1933): 27. West, *Hans Burgkmair the Elder (1473–1531) and the Visualization of Knowledge*, chap. 2.

34. Louis Courajod, *L'imitation et la contrefaçon des objets d'art antiques aux XVe et XVIe siècles* (Paris, 1889).

35. Panofsky, *Renaissance and Resuscitations in Western Art*, 41.

36. Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*, many references.

37. C. R. Ligota, "Annius of Viterbo and Historical Method," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987): 48. See also Mark Jones, ed., *Fake? The Art of Deception*, exhibition catalogue (London: British Museum, 1990).

ance. Copying by hand involves more diligence.”<sup>38</sup> Trithemius doubted that the new, cheaper technology of textual transmission would replace scribal transmission; the old parchments lasted longer, he argued, and thus required fewer recopyings. No one appreciated the precariousness of textual evidence better than the forgers of texts. Trithemius, a highly creative scholar who did not hesitate to invent his own texts to fill in the gaps in his literary history of Germany, complained about the proliferation of texts describing phony visions and witnessings.<sup>39</sup>

Like Trithemius, Annius struck back by inventing a purer ancient source to confirm what he knew was true and pre-empted skepticism by planting solid archeological evidence in the ground. The forger’s desire to refute the illusions of others leads him to concoct even better illusions. In 1498 Annius published, with commentary, a classical text that proved his theses, the history authored by Berosus, a Chaldean priest and notary.<sup>40</sup>

Remarkably, Annius took the trouble to point out problems in the texts he had forged.<sup>41</sup> Either this was all part of the ruse or the texts had taken on some measure of authenticity in his eyes. He seems to have held some middle kind of belief in their authenticity.

Even before he published Berosus, Annius fabricated epigraphic evidence supporting his theories. Antiquarian scholars frequently invented inscriptions and insinuated them into the manuscript tradition, but very few troubled to have spurious inscriptions actually carved. Around 1492 or 1493, at exactly the moment Celtis was visiting the monasteries, Annius prepared a manuscript treatise announcing the “discovery” of six inscribed ancient tablets.<sup>42</sup> The forger is someone condemned by a community for insisting too much on the real, material continuity between the past and the future.

Anthony Grafton wrote a short, influential book under the title *Forgers and Critics*, arguing that scoundrels like Annius were manipulating the same sets of skills that honest scholars were developing to work with

38. Trithemius, *De laude scriptorum*, ed. and transl. Klaus Arnold (Würzburg: Freunde Mainfränkischer Kunst und Geschichte, 1973), chap. 7, 64–65.

39. Cited by Schreiner, “Discrimen veri ac falsi,” [see chap. 4, n. 22], 7.

40. Annius, *Commentaria . . . super opera diversorum auctorum de antiquitatibus* (Rome: Silber, 1498).

41. Ligota, “Annius of Viterbo and Historical Method,” 44–56; although see the discussion in Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), chap. 3. Some scholars have argued that even Annius’s Berosus must have had some prior incarnation.

42. Annius, *De marmoreis Volturrhenis tabulis*. Roberto Weiss, “An Unknown Epigraphic Tract by Annius of Viterbo,” in *Italian Studies Presented to E. R. Vincent*, ed. C. P. Brand (Cambridge: Heffer, 1962), 101–20. Three of Annius’s finds survive in the Museo Civico in Viterbo; see Brian Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 121–31. For more on Annius, see Stephens, *Berosus Chaldeus* [see chap. 2, n. 19]; and Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, chap. 3.

ancient texts. The passive and active approaches to the past, in other words, were symmetrical. Anniius helped establish the binding rules for the choice and evaluation of sources. “A forger emerges,” Grafton wrote, “as the first really modern theorist of critical reading of historians—a paradox that only a reader with a heart of stone could reject.”<sup>43</sup>

Eventually scholars realized that Anniius had invented his source. But Berossus had a considerable life, because his account of early European history appealed to many antiquarians and chauvinists of various stripe.<sup>44</sup> The earliest attested reception in Germany is Peutinger’s innocent citation of a spurious text he found in Anniius’s *Commentaria* in 1505.<sup>45</sup> In the *Sermones convivales* (1506) Peutinger cited Berossus (not quite accurately) as the authority for the visit of Osiris and Isis to Germany in the reign of Suevus.<sup>46</sup> Berossus got a mixed reception in Germany. Andreas Althamer (c. 1500–1539) referred to historical figures he found in Anniius. Beatus Rhenanus did not believe in Berossus, but he thought Anniius was a credulous victim, not the perpetrator.<sup>47</sup>

Conrad Celtis, like Anniius, mistrusted the received wisdom of the Romans, transmitted by monkish scribes. He was discouraged by the negativity and skepticism of humanist philology. He was not entranced by the well-chronicled and chronologically plotted romance of Rome. Celtis was constantly hunting for new evidence that would confirm the glory of the German Middle Ages and corroborate his Anniius-like beliefs about the Greek presence in ancient Europe. He believed in a wilder, more open antiquity and sustained it by trusting in stones and trinkets, and in what he *knew* to be true, rather than the good old texts. Celtis is a hinge figure who emblemizes the hinged relationship between scholarship and art in this period.

Celtis understood the jamb figures at Speinshart as notations of portraits of primeval founders, artifacts linked to antiquity no less firmly than was the old textual source material, the chronicles and fables. Celtis was

43. Grafton, *Forgers and Critics*, 104.

44. Some Italian scholars dismissed Anniius’s finds immediately. But in some quarters credence in Anniius or elements of his teachings persisted well into the eighteenth century. Richard John, *Fictive Ancient History and National Consciousness in Early Modern Europe: The Influence of Anniius of Viterbo’s Antiquitates* (PhD diss., University of London, Warburg Institute, 1994).

45. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, March 4, 1505, no. 29, p. 53.

46. John, *Fictive Ancient History*, 103–4, and 99–132 more generally on reception of Anniius in Germany; see also Müller, “*Germania generalis*” (see chap. 1, n. 2), 354–58. Peutinger, characteristically, did not remain long in the dark; in his copy of Anniius he transcribed a denunciation of the Viterban by Juan Luis Vives; see Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtsschreibung*, 162n24; and Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, 93n57.

47. John, *Fictive Ancient History*, 110–11. Hutter, *Germanische Stammväter*, 40–43, stresses the positive reception in Germany, and points out that even Erasmus relied on Anniius in constructing a genealogy of Christ.

not making any precise claims about the date of the physical fabrication of the statues. He was more interested in the content of the images. Celtis did say that the portal figures are of the “oldest” or “extremely old” stone (*vetustissimo saxo*), revealing that he was not thinking in purely notational terms, that is, he was aware that the statues were made at some point and that somehow this had to be reckoned with. With the phrase *vetustissimo saxo* he did not necessarily mean to suggest that those very statues dated from the epoch of the founding druids themselves. He may have wanted to suggest simply that they predated the official founding of the monastery in 1145 or at least the physical church, which he would not have been able to date but which he would have assumed dated from the time of the foundation or shortly thereafter. He did describe the statues as “inserted” into the wall of the portal (*ad fores templi parieti insertas*), again revealing his awareness of their fabricatedness. This could have been simply a way of describing the way the figures were wedged into the stepped jambs, or it could have been a suggestion that the figures were spolia carried over from some previous building. The phrase *vetustissimo saxo* does possibly suggest that he saw the statues as older than the building. He may have got this impression from the inferior state of preservation of the statues, hewn possibly from a softer stone than the building itself.

Whether he thought of the statues as spolia or as contemporary with the building is finally of no account. Celtis’s scheme could accommodate a gap between portraits and their ultimate referents. He had an unspoken confidence in the chain of transmission that linked the statues back with their origins. In effect, he was saying, possibly there had been earlier images, even in a different medium; possibly the statues had been based on lost literary descriptions of the founders’ appearance. His way of circumventing this problem was simply not to ask too many questions.

Celtis was aware that monastic foundations could stretch back into the darkest depths of prehistory. One could not reasonably expect to have original, untampered-with pictorial documents from those times. Portraits of the founders could be carved or “performed” at any time in that stretch of time and still be accepted as evidence about origins. Given this indulgence toward performances, there was no good reason to raise questions about their date.

A good comparison is the contemporary understanding of the ancient text. When the manuscript of Tacitus’s *Germania* turned up in Rome in 1455, the discovery of a German monk, no one claimed that the manuscript itself dated from the first century.<sup>48</sup> Typically, nobody said anything at all about the date of such manuscripts. When Celtis discovered and published the manuscript of the plays of the tenth-century nun Hrosvita, he said

48. Krapf, *Germanenmythus und Reichsideologie*, 11–42.

nothing about the date of execution of the physical manuscript. It might have been an original manuscript of the tenth century, or not (in fact it does date from the late tenth or early eleventh century and was sent to St. Emmeram directly from Gandersheim).<sup>49</sup> The text as he found it was taken to be reliable, as it happens with good reason, and therefore the question of its fabrication did not bear upon the significance of the discovery.

Statues, portraits, and buildings belonged to diachronic chains of tokens all related to a common type. Since access to the type was difficult or impossible, the approach to the token was basically charitable. The label that Celtis applied linking the statues to the historical druids was an arbitrary, but at the same time powerful, almost mysterious, force. It could easily be switched on and off. But it permitted real and virtual statues to stand in for one another without loss of force.

Celtis may well have been spinning a literary conceit. But it is not so easy to disentangle structural credulity of the sort just described from the topology of the fictional imagination.

This is the sense in which early archeological thought, in the crypts of Augsburg as much as in the Hercynian forest, was an intensification of the substitutional model. Archeological thought began as a counterdynamic to notational or substitutional thinking. Archeology presupposed that the vanished lifeworld, through acts of fabrication, had left legible traces. But in order to function, early archeology had to underrate transmission processes. Archeology was at once beginning to exploit fabricatedness, and selectively ignoring it. The new attentiveness to fabrication was running ahead of the capacity to identify context-reflexive marks and make meaningful judgments on material criteria. Two modes of thinking about the historicity of artifacts were interacting. Archeology was simultaneously dismantling and exploiting notational thinking.

Archeology all at once grasped the model of a chain of production as a model, and applied it as a device for knitting the present together with the past. Archeology extracted the artifact and the image out of the welter of lore that connected the present to the past. These principles were the condition for the creativity of Conrad Celtis and Annius of Viterbo. Archeology tempted Celtis and Annius into an overzealous imposition of the substitution model onto recent objects, or the fabrication of links in a non-existent chain. The power of the artifact translated the scholar back into the very frame of mind, vague and credulous, that scholarship was trying to overcome. Celtis and Annius were accidental artists, in the sense that they fell upon the truth of the anachronism of the artifact, its capacity to bend time. But they exercised their creativity within the wrong paradigm, namely scholarship, so it came to resemble either folly or crime.

49. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14485, written by several hands.



## Fictional architecture

The Augsburg architect Hans Hieber was given the chance, rare in these years, to build an entirely new church from the ground up. In 1519 the city of Regensburg expelled a population of five hundred Jews, razed the synagogue, and proclaimed a cult to the Virgin Mary on the site, erecting a wooden chapel to accommodate the tide of pilgrims. Within weeks the city decided to build a permanent structure. Hieber prepared a large wooden model promising an architectural chimera, a hexagonal nave appended to a round-arched choir, all raised on a high podium (the rubble of the synagogue) with a wrap-around balustrade.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps he was thinking of the Temple in Rogier van der Weyden's Columba altarpiece (see fig. 58). The nave was to be couched on four sides by semicircular lobes or exedra topped with bulbous, reverse-curved domes. On the ledges of the stepped buttresses at the angles of the nave stood elegant Italianate baluster-like posts. Hieber died in 1522, however, and the church as finally built, today's Neue Pfarrkirche, although retaining the cross-vaulted choir, lacks the exotic central-plan nave with its lobes. A large woodcut by Michael Ostendorfer reproduced a version of the model and proclaimed the church (fig. 79).<sup>51</sup>

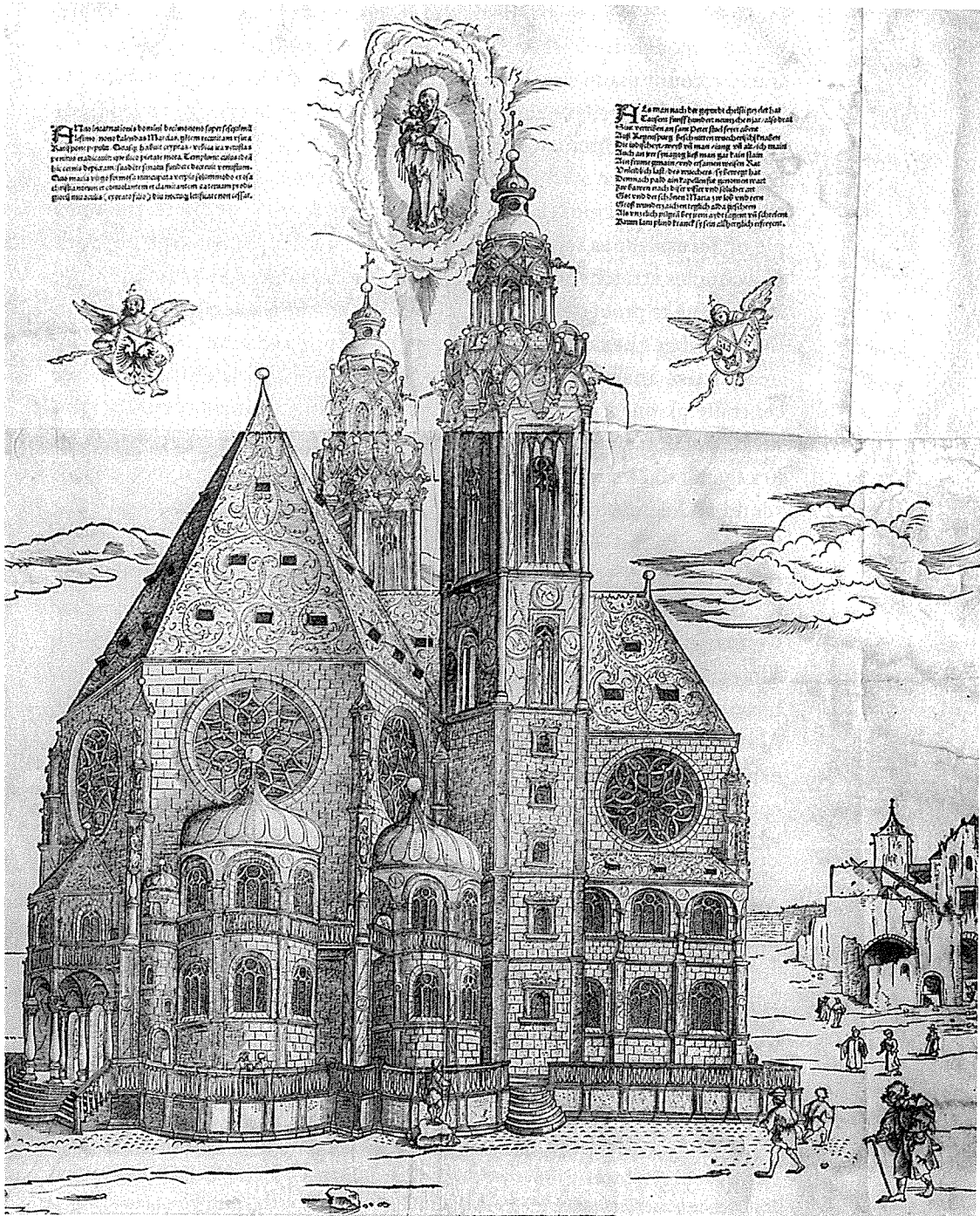
Around the same time, on a wooden model for a reconstruction of the old Perlachturm in Augsburg, a free-standing tower and city symbol, Hieber proposed an octagonal bonnet-like cupola. Hieber's unbuilt cupolas in Regensburg and Augsburg predate the onion domes of the Frauenkirche in Munich (1525) that generated the vast network of bulbous tower tops, the famous *welsche Hauben*, on Bavarian churches. The cupola on the woodcut *Triumphal Arch* of Maximilian belongs to this family as well. The sources of such cupolas are multiple: the *Kleinkunst* of the earlier Middle Ages;<sup>52</sup> the domes of Jerusalem as imagined by fifteenth-century panel painters; the undatable churches of Venice, Augsburg's glamorous trading partner. The lagoon city was physically not so remote, but it represented a link to a little-understood primordial Europe older even than Augsburg's Roman past.<sup>53</sup> Nor were its cupolas so old: S. Michele in Isola

50. The model is in the Stadtmuseum, Regensburg. On Hieber and this design see Irmgard Büchner-Suchland, *Hans Hieber: ein Augsburger Baumeister der Renaissance* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1962); and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *German Renaissance Architecture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 23–30.

51. Hollstein 7, 61.8 × 53.4 cm.

52. Körte, *Die Wiederaufnahme romanischer Bauformen*, 77–78, pointed to the thirteen-segmented dome on the famous cupola reliquary of the Welfenschatz, made in Cologne in the late twelfth century, now in Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum; see Adolph Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 4 vols. (Berlin: Cassirer, 1914–26), vol. 3, no. 47.

53. Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* [see chap. 3, n. 57], 3–29.



Hans Ostendorfer, *Pilgrimage Church*  
*Nuremberg*, 1519, woodcut. Nuremberg,  
 Deutsches Nationalmuseum.

(1469–78) and the campanile of the Madonna dell' Orto (1503) are both possible models for Hieber.<sup>54</sup> Venice delivered the East, as Breydenbach's travel account made clear, and the East was the living archive of the vanished West. Hieber's conches derived from Italian engravings or even from real buildings by Bramante and others in Lombardy. The wrap-around balustrade is a feature of the Duomo of Pavia. Cupolas also derive from Venetian and Lombard models as well as German prints, for example, the Temple of Jerusalem as rendered in Schedel's *World Chronicle*.<sup>55</sup> The network of examples stretched across time and space was mutually corroborating, amounting to proof of the antiquity—the permanent exemplarity—of the form. Hieber's hexagonal nave, meanwhile, unprecedented, was linked by imaginative analogy to medieval chapter houses, baptisteries, and other centrally planned structures, perhaps even Holy Sepulchre replicas. The raised podium cited the cathedral of Regensburg. The strange domes, the hexagonal nave supported by a single central column, the square-bayed, round-arched nave; Hieber held all these features in the sharpest possible tension with the Gothic and customary idea of the basilical church, even retaining Gothic tracery in the vast circular windows of the nave.<sup>56</sup>

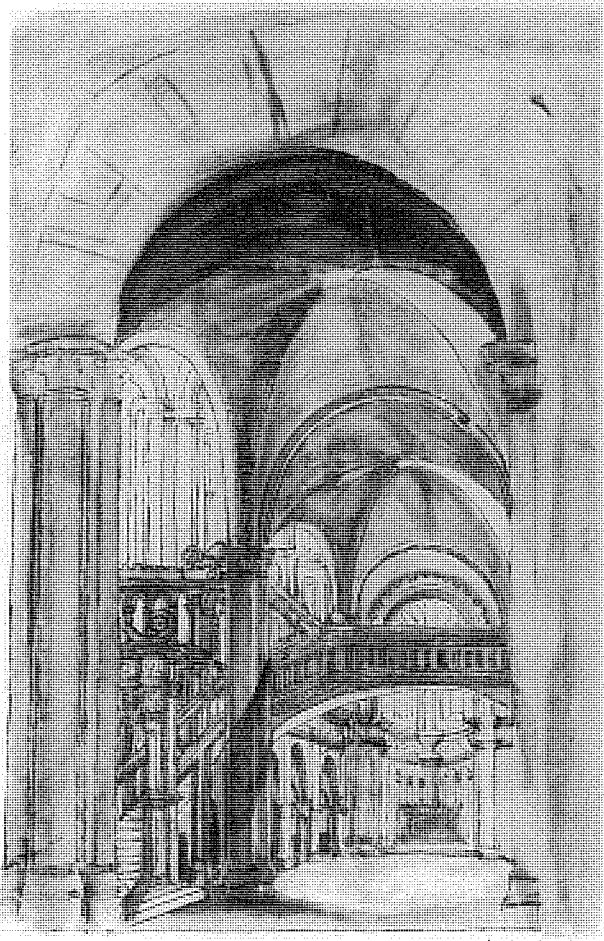
The points of reference were multiple. The same can be said of other German time projectors, designers of never-to-be-built buildings, above all Albrecht Altdorfer, Hieber's contemporary and Regensburg city councilor, heavily implicated in the violent substitution of church for synagogue. Altdorfer was attentive both to local Romanesque and to the architectural experiments of Bramante and others in northern Italy, and frequently incorporated the new ideas as stage settings for his painted narratives, for example, the *Birth of the Virgin* or *Susanna and the Elders*, both in Munich. Just as it did for Hans Holbein the Younger, drawing and painting served Altdorfer as the media of a cryptoarchitectural practice.<sup>57</sup> In a drawing in Erlangen in pen and gray wash, Altdorfer describes an imaginary vaulted

54. S. Michele in Isola, which is formally unrelated to ancient architecture, was nevertheless praised in its time for its successful recovery of antiquity; Hubertus Günther, "Die Vorstellungen vom griechischen Tempel und der Beginn der Renaissance in der venezianischen Architektur," in *Imitatio: Von der Produktivität künstlerischer Anspielungen und Missverständnisse*, ed. Paul Naredi-Rainer (Berlin: Reimer, 2001), 105. See also S. Maria della Croce at Crema, near Cremona (1493); Ludwig H. Heydenreich, *Architecture in Italy 1400–1500* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 114.

55. Büchner-Suchland, *Hans Hieber*, 49–51.

56. Büchner-Suchland, *Hans Hieber*, 50, asserts that the building's references are either Gothic or modern Italian, but not Romanesque. But the ultimate target of the references was always antiquity; antiquity is mediated by many possible channels.

57. Peter Halm, "Eine Gruppe von Architekturzeichnungen aus dem Umkreis Albrecht Altdorfers," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 2 (1951): 158; Oskar Bätschmann and Pascal Griener, *Hans Holbein* (London: Reaktion, 1997), 64–87.



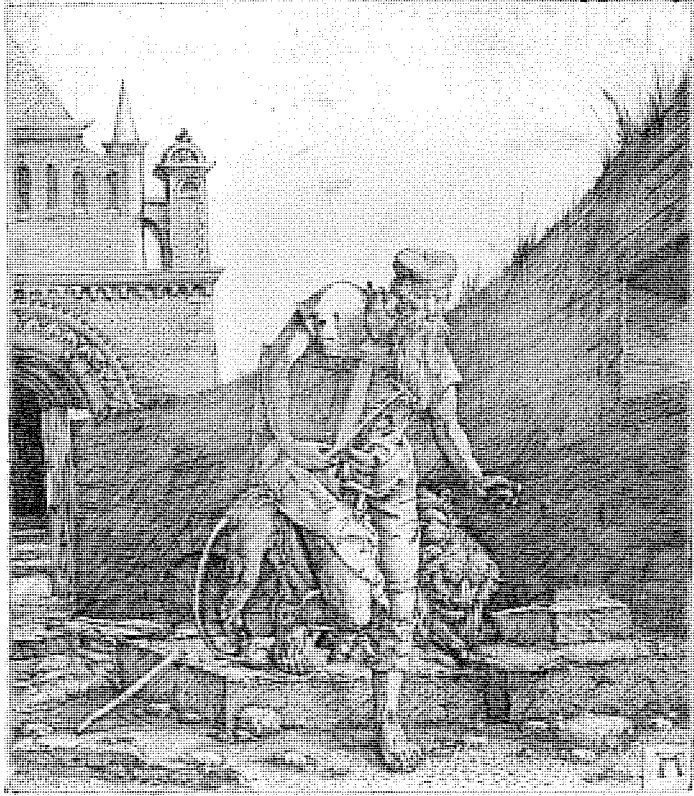
80. Albrecht Altdorfer, *Architectural Fantasy*, c. 1518–20, pen and ink and wash. Erlangen, University Library.

aisle vanishing in a semicircular apse and traversed by a balustraded bridge (fig. 80).<sup>58</sup> The arcades afford a Piranesian glimpse into a soaring nave, round-arched but in high Gothic proportions. Fantastic departures from pictorial custom were licensed in the zone of the setting. Altdorfer's architectural drawings are the exact equivalent of his independent landscapes.

Altdorfer, ingenious, folded an architectural gloss into an engraving of St. Jerome, an enigmatic image of the saint striding alongside a grass-tufted wall and away from a marvelous façade (fig. 81).<sup>59</sup> The massive build-

58. Erlangen, University Library. Elfried Bock, *Die Zeichnungen in der Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen* (Frankfurt: Prestel, 1929), no. 811, c. 1518/20, 21.2 × 13.8 cm. Franz Winzinger, *Albrecht Altdorfer: Zeichnungen* (Munich: Piper, 1952) no. 107; Hans Mielke, *Albrecht Altdorfer: Zeichnungen, Deckfarbenmalerei, Druckgraphik*, exhibition catalogue, Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett [Berlin: Reimer, 1988], no. 168.

59. Bartsch 22; Hollstein 24. Winzinger, *Albrecht Altdorfer: Graphik: Holzschnitte, Kupferstiche, Radierungen* (Munich: Piper, 1963), no. 121; Mielke, *Albrecht Altdorfer*, no. 80, c. 1515. 12.2 × 10.5 cm.



81. Albrecht Altdorfer, *St. Jerome*, c. 1515, engraving. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, accession no. 20.64.1.

ing, Regensburg Romanesque transported to Jerome's fifth century, is marked by a low, deeply embedded arch with thick, foliated archivolts, a dominating porch, and the façade of a nave, plain and massive, but supported by a flying buttress joining a tall exterior pier with a strangely modern semicircular crown. And then it is all bisected by the frame of the print, a compositional insouciance that only calls attention to the building.

To complicate matters, Altdorfer was liable to stage a scene from the lives of the Virgin or Christ, or from the lives of the early Christian saints in up-to-date, pointed-arch architectural settings; or plant a Gothic basilica in the deep background of his *Battle of Alexander*, as if in perverse assertion of the artist's freedom to fabricate. To switch from pointed to round and back again, retaining identity all the while, was by this time no naïve confusion but rather a disingenuous test of the robustness of the substitutional paradigm.<sup>60</sup>

Many scholars have argued that Altdorfer and other German artists

60. Might it be possible to grasp Altdorfer's famous Synagogue etchings as a binary diagram of historical architectural form? One print represents the interior of the doomed structure with its round-arched vaults, the other the portal and porch, built later in the pointed style. Bartsch 63–64; Winzinger, *Albrecht Altdorfer: Graphik*, nos. 173–74; Mielke, *Albrecht Altdorfer*, nos. 116–17.

and architects were interested in reanimating, through citation of round-arched forms, a heroic historical phase of national culture, the time of the mighty Salian emperors, the simpler times of the forefathers. More recently it has been argued that the sixteenth-century artists were more interested in recovering the ideal principles of ancient Roman architecture.<sup>61</sup> But would Altdorfer and his contemporaries have recognized this distinction? Their forms repaired a discontinuity between the present and a long architectural past that embraced both imperial Roman and medieval building manners.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, Hieber's and Altdorfer's architectural thinking was now intertwined with their thinking about authorship. This was no longer the neo-Romanesque of the Netherlandish painters, who reflected pictorially on the history of building under the pretext of a theological argument. Altdorfer was restaging the neo-Romanesque.

### Hypertrophy of alphabetic choice

When he arrived back in Augsburg in 1485 after a long sojourn in Venice, the printer Erhard Ratdolt circulated a broadsheet advertisement and type specimen, the earliest such advertisement known.<sup>63</sup> He offered samples of ten gothic, three roman, and one Greek type, more choices than any printer in Europe. Ratdolt, the great tinkerer and innovator among early printers, was advertising his refusal to reduce typographic choice to a simple alternative, gothic or roman. The capacity of most printers to experiment was limited by the heavy capital costs of designing and casting a metal font. The industry, decimated in the 1470s and 1480s by up-front costs, rapidly settled on a binary system. The lucid binarism of gothic and roman types allows us to read the politics of formal choice with great ease.<sup>64</sup> A binary code is a crude code, however, and there are limits to what a culture can say with its scripts.

61. The first position is held by Hitchcock and Schmidt, the second by Hoppe, "Romanik als Antike," 107–8 and n. 24.

62. This is the argument of Hipp, *Studien zur 'Nachgotik' des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, 516ff. Cf. Günther, "Die ersten Schritte," 34, who suggests that assertions of continuity and celebration of national traditions were a cover for a real break with the past; he identifies the essence of that break—the turn to modernity—as the rationalization of architecture, that is, a new expectation that buildings should demonstrate *ratio*.

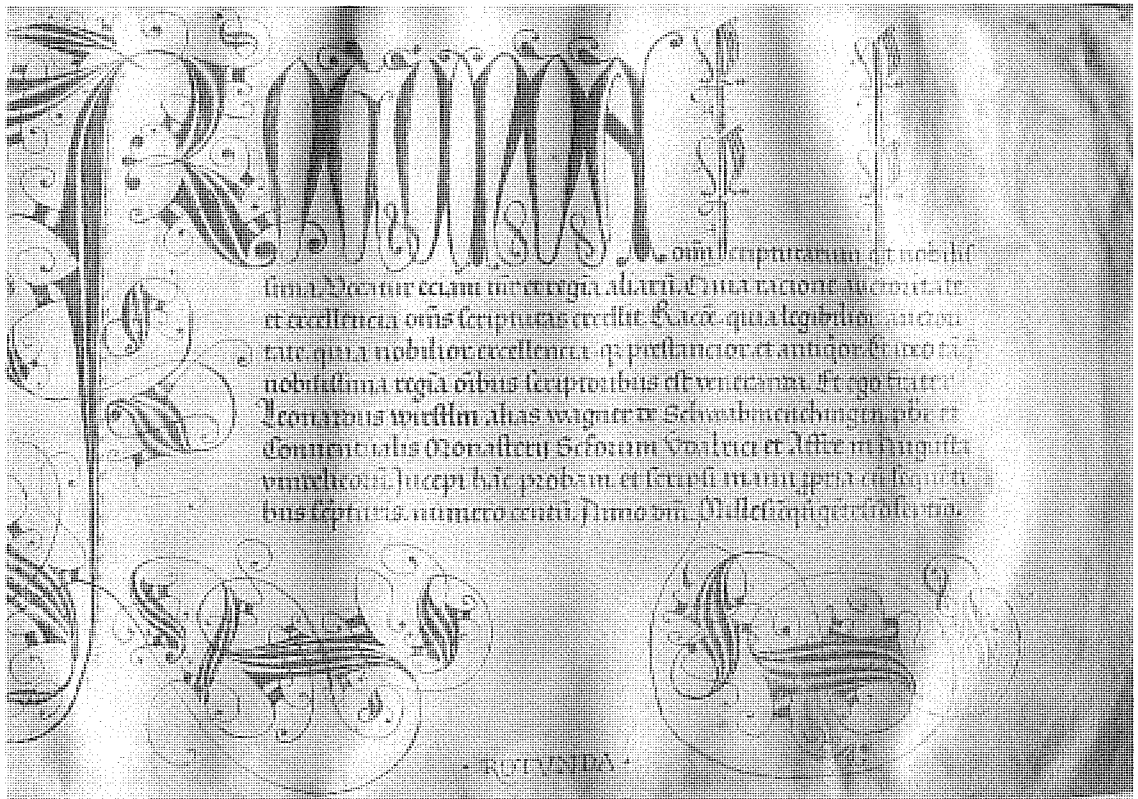
63. The sheet survives in one copy, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Einblatt VIII, 6; see Carl Wehmer, *Das älteste Schriftmusterblatt einer deutschen Druckerei, 1486* (Gräfenheinen, 1936); and Franz-Albrecht Bornschlegel, "Etappen der Schriftentwicklung im Augsburger Buchdruck von Günther Zainer bis Johann Schönsperger," in *Augsburger Buchdruck und Verlagswesen*, ed. Helmut Gier and Johannes Janota (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 158–59, ill. 5.

64. As Henri Zerner points out in the introduction to his *Art de la Renaissance en France* (see ch. 5, n. 22), 14–16.

Two decades later a Benedictine scribe in Ratdolt's Augsburg rebelled against the press and remultiplied the script choices back into an unmanageable plurality. Between 1507 and 1517 the calligrapher Leonhard Wagner (1454–1522) composed a modelbook of one hundred sample scripts, *Proba centum scripturarum*.<sup>65</sup> Wagner begins with a script he labels *Rotunda* and praises as the “noblest of all scripts,” “the mother and queen” (fig. 82). This was the hand he used to copy books whenever possible. It is basically a synthesis of Gothic script and the new humanist round hands of the fifteenth century, for that reason known today as a “gotico-antiqua” hand, and was already out of fashion by 1480. Wagner went on using it because he thought it was the most “legible,” the most “excellent,” and the “oldest.” The humanist script revolution had brought the old pre-Gothic scripts, forgotten for a century or more, back into focus. Wagner grew up preferring the clear round hands of the twelfth century. His tastes were shaped by modern typography, the beautiful antiqua fonts designed in the 1460s and 1470s. The pre-Gothic past, which the present had taught him to see, furnished a set of elegant templates which he then tweaked and embellished. Some of the names he gave his scripts—and he invented many of them—invoke the authority of age: *Antiqua maior*, *Antiqua crassana* (“thicker”), *Antiqua prisca*, *Antiqua simpliciana*, *Antiqua realicana* (“royal”), *Antiqua durana* (“crude”), *Antiquata serrata*, *Antiqua curvalis* (the Carolingian minuscule). And so it goes, page after page of 100- or 150-word texts, sacred and pagan, in hands efficient and festive, cool and hot, a gamut of minuscule alphabets each differing slightly and crucially from the other: *Tenuissana* (a modern or “humanist” hand), *Gippalicana* (based on a twelfth-century document), *Fractura germanica*, *Prisca caudalis lata*, *Neutralicana*, *Cardinalicana*, *Vagalicana extensiva*, *Flacana antiqua* (Carolingian minuscule), *Pictorialis minor* (the hand known as *Textura* improved by small flourishes), and so forth. There is no indication that Wagner had any notion of a linear history of handwriting, any more than he bothered about the geography of scripts. The best scripts were simply the well-formed scripts; some were very old, others very new; really they had no temporality.<sup>66</sup> The scripts more familiar and less appealing to him, the ones we now call “Gothic,” were all too temporal.

65. Archiv des Bistums Augsburg. Carl Wehmer, ed., *Leonhard Wagners Proba centum scripturarum*, 2 vols. (facsimile and commentary) (Leipzig: Insel, 1963). The modelbook was dedicated to Emperor Maximilian, although not actually given to him.

66. Harald Spilling, “Handschriften des Augsburger Humanistenkreises,” in *Renaissance- und Humanistenhandschriften*, ed. Johanne Autenrieth (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1988), 81, discussing Wagner's *Proba*, says that in the fifteenth century *antiquus* or *antiquissimus* generally refers to codexes of the thirteenth century or earlier.



All but one of Wagner's script samples begin with a large Gothic initial in extravagant *Bandwerk* or "strapwork," a chancellery style. On the page devoted to the so-called *Poetica vera*, however, a twelfth-century script, the text sample is introduced by a perfect epigraphic majuscule based on the proportions of the letters in Trajanic scripts, as if somehow the medieval book hand and the ancient epigraphic alphabet belonged naturally together. The initial A of the *Poetica vera* is the stable point in Leonhard Wagner's subtle kaleidoscope of scripts, the axis around which the historical-aesthetic fantasy revolves. Although he began his collection with a copy of a modern woodcut of the *Titulus crucis*, the trilingual tablet nailed to the Cross, Wagner was little interested in the wider horizons of script, the relativized world. His repertoire was finely differentiated on the inside yet tightly bounded, the ethnology of a monastic scribe.

Wagner's hypertrophy of alphabetic choice was a handcrafted, cloistered protest against the strict binarism of mechanical typography, imposed by the logics of machines and business. Breydenbach and Reuwich in their pilgrimage report of 1486, the *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*, published tables of exotic alphabets, Syriac, Coptic, old Ethiopian, Armenian, and

82. Leonhard Wagner, *Proba centum scripturarum*, 1507–17. "Rotunda." Augsburg, Archiv des Bistums Augsburg.



ut in eis emittet israelitum et ut consuetudinem haberent prestandi et. Sic fortasse idipsum non incongrue dici potest in proposito ut factis et saracenos dimittat dno vel in flagellum vel exercitum populi epia ni. Sed ego nichilominus diffinire id de crocibus relinquo. Hoc vniu fco p[ro]pheta testante quia iudicia dei adis sunt mista et. Quis autem nouit sensum dno aut quis consiliarius eius fuit. Apostolus etia clamae. Saluando diuitiam sapientie et scientie dei q[ui] in copre[re]nsibilibus sunt iudicia eius et inuisibilibus vic eius. Et tunc de Saracenis.



Saraceni lingua et littera vniuersa Arabica sic infestis subimp[er]is.

Sal	Sol	Fels	Israhel	Saracen	Arabs	Ar	Ar	Alph
>	>	>	>	>	ل	ل	ل	ل
Alph	Sarac	Ar	Arabs	Sarac	Sarac	Sarac	Sarac	Sarac
ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل
Arabs	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar
ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل
Alph	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar	Ar
ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل

83. Erhard Reuwich, *Arabic alphabet*, woodcut. Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz, 1486). Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Hebrew text found in books or inscriptions seen on tombstones.<sup>68</sup> Meaningless writing based on the ductus of Hebrew or Arabic was an opaque signifier that signified “alien signifier.” The unreadable writing implied a

67. Solms-Laubach, “Der Hausbuchmeister” (see chap. 2, n. 57), 77; Davies, *Bernhard von Breydenbach and His Journey to the Holy Land, 1483–4*, xxvi.

68. On Arabic lettering, see Hidemichi Tanaka, “Arabism in Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings,” *Bijutsu shigaku (Art History)* 19 (1997): 1–39. See also Anna Contadini, “Artistic Contacts: Current Scholarship and Future Tasks”; and Angelo Michele Piemontese, “Le iscrizioni arabe nella *Poliphili Hypnerotomachia*,” both in *Islam and the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Contadini and Charles Burnett (London: Warburg Institute, 1999), 4–5, 9, and 199–220. Apart from the precocious Titulus in Giotto’s *S. Maria Novella Crucifix*, real Hebrew letters do not appear in European painting until the early fifteenth century. Many of the fragments of Hebrew lettering in paintings are transcriptions of Latin words, not real Hebrew. Avraham Ronen, “Iscrizioni ebraiche nell’ arte italiana del Quattrocento,” in *Studi di storia dell’ arte sul Medioevo e il Rinascimento*, Festschrift Mario Salmi (Florence: Polistampa, 1992), 2: 601–24; and Gad Sarfatti, Anna Pontani, and Stefano Zamponi, “Titulus Crucis,” in *Giotto: The Santa Maria Novella Crucifix*, ed. Marco Ciatti and Max Seidel (Florence: EDIFIR, 2001), 191–202. Hebrew or pseudo-Hebrew inscriptions are common in fifteenth-century German paintings, for example, by Hans Holbein the Elder. Recall as well the pseudo-Hebrew lettering on the woodcut *Madonna and Child* reproduced and discussed in chapter 3 (fig. 19).

Arabic; each alphabet appeared here for the first time in print (fig. 83).<sup>67</sup> But both early sixteenth-century approaches to the alphabet, on the one hand, reduction to a binary choice, and on the other, remultiplication into a primer of historical form, were reactions to the alarming idea that form might be sliding freely on the slick surfaces of time and space. Scholars and printers, unwilling to face the problem of the relativity of languages, ultimately of peoples, especially in an age of travel and exploration, were reducing and standardizing, keeping the “world scripts” at bay. Artists, by contrast, were trying to pull the world into their pictures. Fifteenth-century painters embedded alien and even invented letterforms in their sacred narratives, for example, on tablets, altars, or the hems of garments. Such scripts were modeled on Arabic texts embroidered on imported fabrics or on real

whole world of unbreakable codes, not just alphabets and languages but strange customs. The easternizing alphabets created distance and a corresponding sense of relief and community among the beholders. The association of Kufic or pseudo-Kufic scripts with such scripts recovered, finally, the image of a writing with magical force, the writing magic of the magus or heathen priest.

By importing Hebrew letters into a painting, the artist made a picture of a writing system. Albrecht Altdorfer brought them into his own home. In the wake of the destruction of the Regensburg synagogue, Altdorfer salvaged Jewish tombstones and used them as paving stones in his house.<sup>69</sup>

The charismatic strokes of the Hebrew letters, mysterious to all but a handful of German scholars, raised the possibility of a final opacity of language, letters as the unalienated signature of the divine. In an age of increasing literacy and demystification of script, it was ever harder to simulate a talismanic writing. The painters were recreating the way the ordinary Roman alphabet used to look to the illiterate eye: illegible script, the image of authority itself. True authority, the charismatically opaque face of knowledge, was now best glimpsed in a historical picture. That same opacity could equally be encountered in the wider world of forms, among the plurality of peoples and customs. Whereas to the ignorant eye all scripts were equally opaque, now some were more opaque than others.

### Ethnologies of form

Works of art, degrees removed from reality, were places where worries about the contrast between ideal form and its opposite, the anti-ideal, could be converted into themes. Art emerged as a device capable of embracing within one frame both stability and instability, beauty and ugliness, sense and nonsense. In a painting, Roman and Hebrew alphabets, heathen idol and Christian icon, could sit side by side, leveled, on display. The artwork confronted the transparent code to the opaque without choosing between them and without offering to unlock the strange code and render it transparent.

Art began to distance itself from archeology, whose characteristic move was to try to neutralize the relics of otherness by explaining. In Renais-

<sup>69</sup> Wood, *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape*, 254, following an old tradition about the painter. Cf. Peutingen's collection of Roman and Hebrew inscriptions embedded in the walls of the courtyard of his home. See the discussion in Stephen J. Campbell, *Cosmè Tura of Ferrara: Style, Politics and the Renaissance City 1450–1495* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 126–27, of Tura's Roverella altarpiece (London, National Gallery, 1470s) with its Hebrew inscriptions, evidence according to Campbell of an aestheticizing "philo-Semitism" taking the form of a taste for bizarre form.

sance Augsburg, archeological inquiry clustered around a grotesque head bricked into a wall, over a door, at Sts. Ulrich and Afra. That head was removed in 1819. It may be the same head rediscovered in the early twentieth century at the base of an iron funerary cross in a cemetery in Wollmets-hofen. (fig. 84).<sup>70</sup> Apotropaic monsters, vaguely heathen, were ubiquitous in the built environment. The grotesque head embedded in a church, invention or spoliium, symbolized or even enacted Christianity's domination of heathen cults. Early archeologists tried to demystify alien religion through iconographic identification, a reduction of the artifact from the status of reliable witness to the status of mere unreliable representation. Chroniclers and humanistically trained historians adduced the head at Sts. Ulrich and Afra as corroboration of an earlier medieval legend, traceable to Ottonian times, about an ancient local cult of a fertility goddess called Cisa. This legend had arisen to explain an old Germanic name for Augsburg, "Ciesburc," attested in sources as early as about 400. The twelfth-century *Excerptum ex gallica historia*, for instance, recounts the repulsion of a Roman siege at "Cizaris"—Augsburg—on the feast day of Cisa, 28 September. Versions of this story were adopted by the chroniclers Andreas von Regensburg (c. 1420) and Kuchlin (1440).<sup>71</sup> An anonymous fifteenth-century chronicler located the ancient Cisa temple on the site of the cathedral.<sup>72</sup> In fact the name "Ciesburc" seems to have been derived from a local cult of Ziu, a Germanic Jupiter.<sup>73</sup> "Cisa" is a complete invention of the Middle Ages.<sup>74</sup>

Sigismund Meisterlin devoted a chapter of his Augsburg chronicle to the interpretation of the stone head at Sts. Ulrich and Afra. Hektor Müllich's illustrated copy of Meisterlin's *Augsburg Chronicle* shows a nude statue of Cisa mounted on a column in a simple chapel, ringed by kneeling worshipers. She wears a snake collar and has flame-like hair (fig. 85).<sup>75</sup> Whereas the historians were struggling to account for the strangeness of the strange form, the artists—admittedly Müllich was no artist but an amateur, like

70. Height 52 cm, width 44 cm. Augsburg, Römisches Museum, Lap. 73; *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I, 1, Raetia und Noricum*, no. 150; see also 134.

71. Kohl, "Die Augsburger Cisa" (see chap. 2, n. 7), 29–31; Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*, 20, 58, 85, 163.

72. *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städten* 4 (1865): 282.

73. Hellmut Rosenfeld, "Alamannischer Ziu-Kult und SS. Ulrich- und Afra-Verehrung in Augsburg," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 37 (1955): 314–15.

74. See however Alfred Weitnauer, *Keltisches Erbe in Schwaben und Baiern* (Kempten: Verlag für Heimatpflege, 1961), 31–33, 95–98.

75. It is not clear whether the illustration reflects Meisterlin's revision of the popular local image of Cisa. Augsburg, Cod. Halder 1, fol. 25a. Weber, *Geschichtsschreibung in Augsburg*, no. 78.



84. *Medusa*, second century [?]. Augsburg, Römisches Museum. Photo: author.



85. Hektor Müllich,  
*Worship of Cisa*,  
 1457, from *Augsburg  
 Chronicle of Sigis-  
 mund Meisterlin*, pen  
 and ink, watercolor.  
 Augsburg, Stadt- und  
 Staatsbibliothek, cod.  
 Halder 1, fol. 25a.

his brother Georg a local historian and antiquarian with a bent for drawing and painting—were ready to beautify her. The ugly stone head does not appear in the local art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Meisterlin argued that the stone head had wings and, he agreed, what appeared to be a snake around its neck. On this basis he contended that the ancient Augsburgers had worshiped Ceres, the goddess of the harvest, rather than Cisa. Meisterlin rescued the sculpted head as evidence for his theory by practicing creative iconography, as creative as any of his etymological hypotheses. He argued that the wings on the head were actually attached to the snakes and that this recollected the symbol on the ship of Ceres. At the same time he recognized the speculative character of his iconography and did not claim it all for “truth”: “Doch so sag ich das nicht für die warhayt, sunder ich rede, sam ob es etwas gleich dar zu sey” (I do not say this as truth; rather I am speaking as if it were something like that). Meisterlin assumed that the sculpture reliably documented the goddess and her

domain. He took it that once the attributes were identified, the sculpture or the emblem would match up with the literary evidence. The whole is no more than the sum of the parts: the guiding axiom of the iconographer. Meisterlin's attempt to control the alien form contrasts sharply with the poetic garment that Italian scholars were preparing for the excavated sculptural fossils of ancient life.

In his *Sermones convivales* (1506), Conrad Peutinger cited and glossed a medieval verse mentioning the goddess "Zisa," arguing that the local Augsburg deity was identical to the ancient goddess Isis, according to Tacitus § 9 an object of worship among the ancient Germans. The Sts. Ulrich and Afra grotesque head, meanwhile, was a Medusa because it had "hair carved like thick snakes twisted around its neck" (*crines grossos vipereos collum eius plectentes*).<sup>76</sup> Peutinger's brother-in-law Christoph Welser, who was living in Rome, had convinced him of this. Welser and Peutinger were right. The head is a Medusa. According to old sources there were at least two other grotesque heads in Augsburg, and these were probably Medusas as well.<sup>77</sup>

In the context of the Benedictine and episcopal culture of Augsburg, the carved head of Cisa could only be read as a parody of the Christian icon, which constitutionally hides its lower body and retreats into two dimensions. Cisa exposed the icon by raising the problem of the beauty or ugliness of divinity. In Christian imagery, the alien god was often shown as a beautiful nude, female or male, as if nudity itself were potent enough, rousing all the wrong reactions.<sup>78</sup> To symbolize the ugliness of those responses by a physical ugliness was to suggest the proximity of desire and disgust. If the god was represented as ugly, then it was likely to be exceptionally ugly, with exposed genitals or anus. The (Christian) Devil was also often represented in this way. The whole family of representations of the alien god hinged on the fundamental ambivalence of the aspect of the nude body of

76. Peutinger, *Sermones convivales*, b5v.

77. Kohl, "Die Augsburger Cisa," 24. The Italian antiquarian Mariangelo Accursius visited Augsburg in 1530 and 1532. He consulted the twelfth-century source of the Cisa myth and decided she was equivalent to the pagan fertility goddess Cybele/Ceres/Isis. The head at Sts. Ulrich and Afra, he asserted in a pamphlet, was her image, and the pinecone was the emblem of Cybele, as the German word *Zirbelnuss* (*pro Cybelis nux*) revealed. Accursius mocked the Augsburgers for getting their own civic iconography wrong. Friedrich Roth, "Das Aufkommen des neuen Augsburger Stadtpir mit dem Capitäl und dem Cisa- oder Cybelekopf um 1540," *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Schwaben und Neuburg* 35 (1909): 115–27. On Accursius, see Ott, *Die Entdeckung des Altertums*, 184–92, 199–203.

78. Meisterlin, discussing the murals of the founding of Augsburg painted on the house of Peter Egen (c. 1440), objected to the depiction of the goddess Cisa "with bare shoulders"; only Mars should be represented thus. Paul Joachimsen, *Die humanistische Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland*, pt. 1, *Die Anfänge*, 13–14, 295; reprinted in Joachimsen, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. Notker Hammerstein (Aalen: Scientia, 1983), 2: 141–42, 423. On nudity as an attribute of the false god, see Camille, *The Gothic Idol*, 87–101.

the other, which is intrinsically neither beautiful nor ugly, but repulsive or attractive depending on context and framing. Every idol allegorized the hesitation at the moment of religious choice, the ungroundedness of religious certainty. Cisa was a fertility goddess. Her creased face with crown of serpentine hair reproduced sex characteristics of the female, vagina and pubes. But her face also reproduced the same content on a second level by citing the form of the formless mass of drapery familiar from late Gothic sculpture, a bunching of creases usually associated with the lower body of the female and even especially the area of the lap. This is obvious in the ancient torso preserved and vilified in medieval Trier as a public scandal, an affront to Christianity (fig. 4). The whole problem of creasing at the loins was avoided by the convention of the half-length Madonna. Cisa was a recognizable form-module signifying sexuality. Within the church culture of Augsburg that chose to preserve and frame her, she was the equivalent of the realistic portrait embedded in the painted epitaph or in the retrospective tomb, like the creased face of St. Simpertus (fig. 33). Her face functioned as a reality principle. The image within its Christian framework represented the wrong cultic attitude in the form of a pattern of lust. Her scale alone began to achieve that representation, for her head is absolutely, even if not vastly, larger than the heads of the saints in the Christian icons. She was the bride of the giants.

There was an analogue development to all this in vernacular, non-authored art, where poetry—as we saw earlier with the German civic statues of the hero Roland—took the form of the comic or parodic. When pagan motifs entered the German image world in this period, they were often demoted and mocked, as if in a reflex of iconoclasm. A fountain at St. Wolfgang, dated 1515, represented the saint but also several ungainly figures drawn from pagan iconography, including a sleeping nymph and a soldier in the pose of the Laocoön.<sup>79</sup> To burlesque the pagan material was to look away in confusion. It was a deliberate disruption, but not a canceling, of the desire provoked by the strange forms.<sup>80</sup>

Horrified fascination with the formless Cisa/Medusa was the complement to the modern, fashionable approach to the ideal nude body, learned from the Italians, through modular construction or through contour. Jacopo de' Barbari, Dürer, and Cranach all placed this project close to the center of their activities in these years. The ideal nude as developed by Italian artists was a contour-based, degeneralized nude that reconciled all

79. Fritz Saxl, "A Heathenish Fountain in St. Wolfgang," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 1 (1937): 182–83.

80. See Felix Fabri's amazed reaction to the figures of Hercules and Venus on the tomb of the doge in Venice; *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae, Arabiae et Egypti peregrinationem*, ed. C. D. Hassler (Stuttgart: 1843–1849), 3: 425.

possible conflicting responses to the body, and on top of that consigned the nude to a historically remote, no-longer-threatening, theologically neutralized alien religion. The new-model artwork leveled the beautiful and the ugly, subordinating the momentums of desire and repulsion to a more powerful framing logic of aesthetic integration. Religious imagery, by contrast, had to go on insisting upon the identification of beauty and correct doctrine. The Germans experimented with the constructed ideal body, but hesitantly. Dürer diagrammed that hesitation by representing beautiful and ugly bodies in each other's arms. One of the earliest of his full-dress pagan set pieces was the engraving known as the *Meerwunder* or *Sea Monster* (fig. 86).<sup>81</sup> Dürer himself gave it this title in the entry for 24 November 1520 in the diary of his trip to the Netherlands. The literary or pictorial preconditions of the image are obscure. The picture describes the abduction of a nude woman from a coastline. She leaves behind bathing companions and a gesticulating older man in exotic costume. It is a version of a Rape of Europa, but with Jupiter-as-bull replaced by an antlered old man with the lower body of a sea creature. He holds a tortoise-shell shield with more antlers.<sup>82</sup> Tritons, Nereids, and other fantastic marine hybrids were familiar to Dürer from Italian engravings and niello prints. It has been proposed that the print illustrates a historical fable from the *Fasti* of Ovid, for which Celtis was planning an illustrated edition as well as a staged "discovery" of the missing six books. According to this fable from ancient Roman history, Anna Perenna was abducted by the river god Numicius, but this is open sea, not a river.<sup>83</sup> The true theme of the print emerges on the level of form. The pneumatic, segmented body of the woman is interleaved with contrasting layers of rough, irregular, or rebarbative material. Her body is partially shielded from the scaly abdomen of the monster by a cloak. Below the monster the water froths. Her body rhymes with the rough edge of the coastline. Inverted and elevated to the upper part of the picture, her body would nest painfully against the spiked profiles of the twin castles. The nude body, awkward but meant to read as ideal, constructed form, is threatened on all frontiers by centrifugal, malevolent forces.<sup>84</sup> The nude

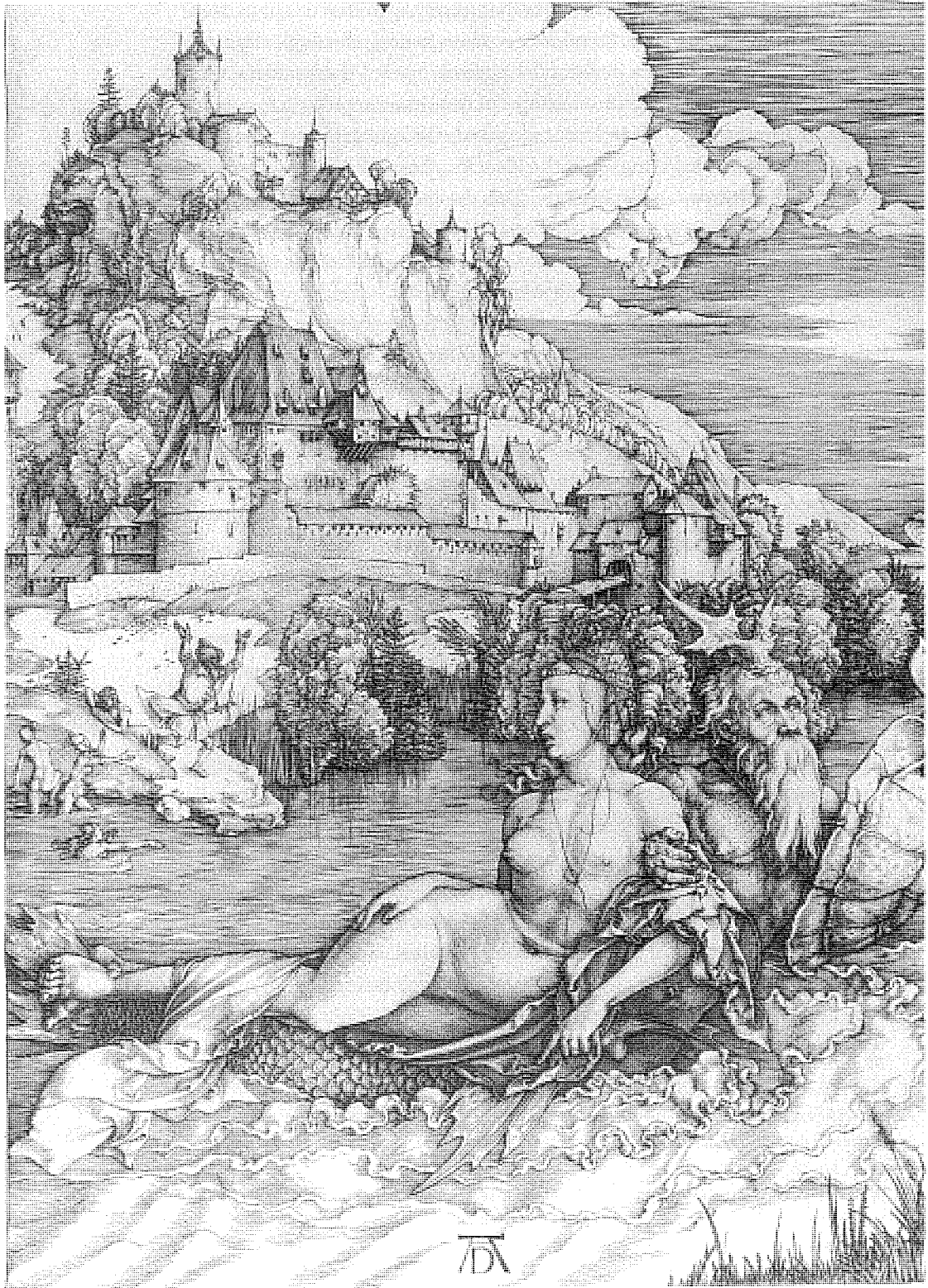
81. Bartsch 71, 25.5 × 19.2 cm.

82. Peter Striedter compared the image to a mosaic in Aquileia, arguing that Dürer misunderstood lobster claws as antlers; cited and discussed in Anzelewsky, *Dürer-Studien*, 48–51.

83. As Anzelewsky, *Dürer-Studien*, 53–57, pointed out. Still others have discerned an unknown Germanic fable behind the image. See Schoch et al., *Albrecht Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 1, no. 21.

84. See the analyses of Moshe Barash, "Le beau ou le démoniaque: Le regard du spectateur médiéval sur la statuaire classique," in *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art*, vol. 1, *De l'antiquité au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. Édouard Pommier (Paris: Klincksieck, 1995), 105–6. The nude in the *Meerwunder* has been compared to Dürer's slightly later drawing of a nude on green paper dated 1501 and self-proclaimed as "constructed" (*gefisyrt*); Winkler 260, Strauss 1501/6.





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victim is juxtaposed to the monster as a rounded roman letter might be to the spiky form of a Kufic or Hebrew cipher.

A female body clothed in flowing draperies and supplemented by loose hair combines these themes. Such a figure interiorizes the wild energies until they become aspects of silhouette. Dürer's print pulls the two formal themes apart, isolating the smooth from the rough, the bounded from the formless. The picture creates, for a German pictorial culture, the concept of contour as a symbol of the containable, the repeatable, the quantity available for comparison.

86. (Facing) Albrecht Dürer, *Sea Monster (Das Meerwunder)*, c. 1498, engraving. Image © 2006 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection.

### Convergences on the epigraphic ideal

Germans reflected their concerns about the contingency of form in the realm of script. There was no equivalent in Germany to the real and imagined world of architecture and urbanism created by Leon Battista Alberti, whose treatise on architecture (c. 1450, first published in Florence in 1485), a modern version of the recently rediscovered treatise of the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius, allowed scholars to envision themselves as shapers of the physical setting of civic life. Alberti offered architecture as the concretization of a philosophy of life. The only perfection the German artist could imagine, it sometimes seems, was epigraphic perfection: not simply letter form, but the letter carved in stone, the one modest domain where the northern artist or craftsman had a chance, or so it seemed, to compete with Roman formal achievement. Epigraphy, a microarchitectural field, permitted a manageable Renaissance.

The majuscule epigraphic capital was the true, the accessible, and the public classical body. The cultivation of the majuscule alphabet was the miniature, two-dimensional accompaniment to the architects' reengagement with Romanesque form.

The stonemasons who carved classical epigraphic alphabets in Budapest, Krakow, and the Rhineland in the 1480s and 1490s were guided by artists and scholars equipped with handbooks to proportionally rationalized alphabetic form—hand-copied texts with hand-drawn illustrations. Replication technology played no role in these episodes.

In the oldest surviving German inscription that imitated ancient Roman epigraphic monuments, however, a different paradigm emerges. Bernhard von Breydenbach and Philipp von Bicken mounted a votive tablet in the cathedral of Mainz in gratitude for their safe return from their pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1484 (figs. 87 and 88).<sup>85</sup> The polychrome sandstone relief, 129 × 111 cm, representing the Virgin and Child in a half-

85. Arens, *Die Inschriften der Stadt Mainz*, no. 25. Today the relief and inscription are mounted on a wall in the cloister.



87. Votive relief of Bernhard von Breydenbach, 1484. Mainz, Cathedral. Photo: author.

88. Votive relief of Bernhard von Breydenbach, 1484, detail. Mainz, Cathedral. Photo: author.



moon, can possibly be attributed to Erhard Reuwich, the artist who accompanied the pilgrims and in 1486 illustrated Breydenbach's book about the journey.<sup>86</sup> Below the relief, outside the frame, is a plain rectangular tablet, 26 × 92 cm, with a four-line text from Psalm 85 in Roman capitals. Breydenbach and Bicken saw Roman inscriptions on their trip to the Levant. But Mainz itself had as many Roman inscriptions as any city in Germany. Although Roman epigraphic conventions clearly dictated the basic format of the votive tablet, the lettering does not scrupulously comply with the most regular Roman canon.<sup>87</sup> The stonemason who carved these letters, perhaps under the instructions of Reuwich, and indirectly Breydenbach or Bicken, must have been looking at local early medieval inscriptions as well as Roman examples.<sup>88</sup> The most important guide for the Mainz alphabet was possibly Roman majuscule type of the sort developed by the Venetian

86. Cf. Solms-Laubach, "Der Hausbuchmeister," 56–60, attributing the relief to an "Adalbert-Meister."

87. The serifs are rudimentary and poorly articulated. Stress is basically random. Individual letters are not ancient at all: *C* is a half circle; the stems of *M* are parallel; *G* has a vertical cauda; *O* is oval, not circular; *R* has a convex cauda, although in one case a straight cauda. The double-sized *F* at the beginning is unthinkable in an ancient inscription. The abbreviations are standard manuscript contractions.

88. A conspicuous text in square capitals was the inscription of Wignand at St. Stephen (1048). Arens, *Die Inschriften der Stadt Mainz*, no. 655. Some letters do break with medieval convention, however: the drop of *M* reaches to the baseline; the middle arm of *E* is as long as the other arms. And there are no ligatures or combined letters, which were standard features in any Romanesque inscription.

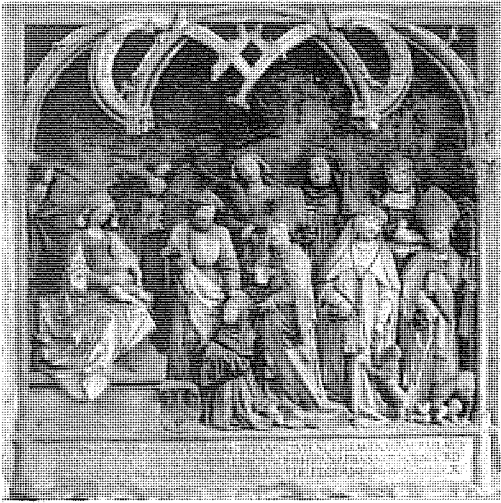
printer Nicholas Jenson in the 1470s. The forms of printed letters had authority. It was not so easy to translate type into epigraphic letters 3.3 cm tall. Stress, or the variable thickness of the stroke, was particularly hard to read in type. It may have been type as much as local Roman monuments that guided the Mainz stonemason to such purely Roman features as the long cauda on Q.

The pursuit of epigraphic perfection was sharpened by competition. It was at the moment when print was pushing all the other scripts into the field of vision that some scholars would start to insist on the Trajanic majuscule.

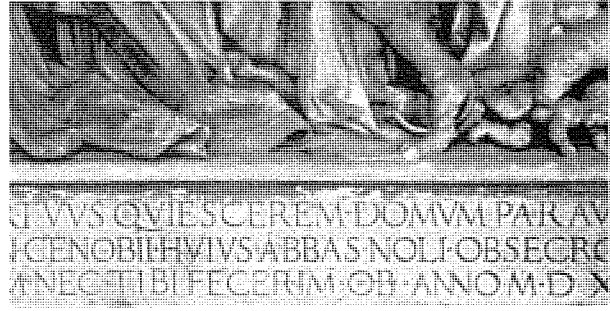
Antiquarians were confident in the rightness of the geometrically constructed alphabet. They believed that imperial stonemasons had used it not because it was the conventional alphabet of their time, but because it was the best alphabet. The antiquarians' interest in Roman epigraphy, in other words, was philosophical and not ethnographic. But in the flow of varying texts and copies the ideology of the rational, authoritative alphabet was diluted. In a workshop, whether printer's, scribe's, calligrapher's, or stonemason's, the model Roman alphabet simply entered the stock alongside the patterns for Gothic majuscules and minuscules, or humanist minuscule. Printers were mainly interested in selling books. Professional scribes were apt to favor some scripts over others, but not necessarily on the basis of geometrical principles or historical associations. And Schedel's mixed compilation, where the square capital was arrayed alongside the other historical scripts, shows that not even an antiquarian had to adopt the Roman model to the exclusion of all others. After all, Gothic letters too could be constructed on geometric principles, as Dürer was later to demonstrate in his treatise. The range of choice in the epigraphic handbooks indicates some hesitation, even among scholars, and helps explain the sudden dispersal of the system into unmanageable multiplicity in the hands of Leonhard Wagner.

Wagner's Augsburg became around 1500 the most important laboratory for the honing of the Trajanic majuscule.<sup>89</sup> The key monument was

**89.** There are several inscriptions sensitive to Roman epigraphic form in Augsburg from the 1480s and 1490s, though no single example is as fine as those from Worms, Maulbronn, or Stuttgart. On these earlier majuscules, see Franz-Albrecht Bornschlegel, "Die frühe Renaissance-Kapitalis in Augsburg," in Koch, ed., *Epigraphik 1988*, 217–25; and Bornschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg* (PhD diss., University of Munich, 1993), the major account of the episode. At the tomb of Bishop Johann von Werdenberg in the Augustine Chapel in the cathedral, probably dating from before 1486, there are two virtually identical inscriptions in near-canonical majuscules. See Volker Liedke, *Die Augsburger Sepulkralskulptur der Spätgotik*, pt. 3, *Zum Leben und Werk des Bildschnitzers Hanns Peurlin des Mittleren* (Munich: Weber, 1987), ill. 25, cat. no. 7, p. 134; Denis A. Chevalley, *Der Dom zu Augsburg* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1995), 292–93.



89. Epitaph of Konrad Mörlin, c. 1510. Augsburg, Maximiliansmuseum. Photo: author.



90. Epitaph of Konrad Mörlin, detail. Augsburg, Maximiliansmuseum. Photo: author.

the epitaph of abbot Konrad Mörlin of Sts. Ulrich and Afra (fig. 89).<sup>90</sup> A sculpted relief of undetermined attribution represents the abbot kneeling before the Virgin and accompanied by Sts. Bartholomew, Ulrich, Jerome, Simpertus, Afra, Benedict, and Scholastica. The three-line inscription below the relief is dated 1510, the year of Mörlin's death, but there is reason to believe it was carved, with a space left for the date, some years earlier (fig. 90).<sup>91</sup> The stress on the letter *O* is diagonal, as it was on Roman inscriptions; *N* is stressed on the diagonal stroke; serifs are correctly placed; there are no medieval ligatures or abbreviations.<sup>92</sup>

Mörlin was the guiding hand behind a group of building inscriptions only recently discovered in the basements of the towers at Sts. Ulrich and Afra. At the end of the fifteenth century the church of Sts. Ulrich and Afra had still not completed the rebuilding campaign launched in 1467. In 1500 the groundstone to a new choir was laid.<sup>93</sup> In a painting of the laying of the groundstone an inscription, now lost, is visible on the ground-

90. Augsburg, Maximiliansmuseum, inv. no. 1340. *Hans Holbein der Ältere und die Kunst der Spätgotik*, no. 262. Rainer Frank, "Das Mörlin-Epitaph," *Augsburger Blätter* 9 (1983): 24–31. The epitaph was commissioned in 1497 and by 1500 was set up in the chapter room of the abbey. In the nineteenth century the monument was transferred to the museum.

91. The only character that appears to be added after the fact is the final numeral *X* of the date, cut a little deeper than the other numerals and extending a little below the base line.

92. Another monument from the same moment that appears to have been carried out under the supervision of a scholar is the epitaph of Reichart and Anna Klieber in the cathedral cloister (1498). Bornschlegel, "Die frühe Renaissance-Kapitalis," ill. 14; Kosel, *Der Augsburger Domkreuzgang*, no. 32.

93. The emperor Maximilian handled a ceremonial spade and made a proclamation in the presence of the archbishops of Mainz and Magdeburg, Elector Frederick of Saxony, Duke Albrecht IV of Bavaria, various cardinals, papal emissaries, bishops, margraves, counts, and other noblemen, and all possible local city and clerical authorities. Rolf Kiesling, *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft und Kirche in Augsburg im Spätmittelalter* (Augsburg: Mühlberger, 1971), 290–91.

stone.<sup>94</sup> In 1506 Mörlin began construction of the eastern towers of the church. Only in the mid-1990s were commemorative tablets found on the inside walls of the basements of the southeast and northeast towers, both carved in canonical majuscules, and dated 1506 and 1507.<sup>95</sup> The carvers of the inscriptions consulted carefully drawn Trajanic alphabets. Here, Roman letters that habitually posed problems like *E* (middle arm too short), *N* (stress on stems instead of diagonal), and *S* (bowls of equal size) are at least in some cases correctly designed. A major antiquarian innovation is the left and right justification of the lines, resulting in arbitrary word breaks; another is the use of triangular interpuncts.<sup>96</sup> Of the two, the tablet under the northeast tower, dated 1507, converges most closely on pagan Roman models (fig. 91). Unlike the tablet of 1506, this text does not mention Christ and avoids arabic numerals. The three ivy leaves are the earliest in an Augsburg inscription.<sup>97</sup>

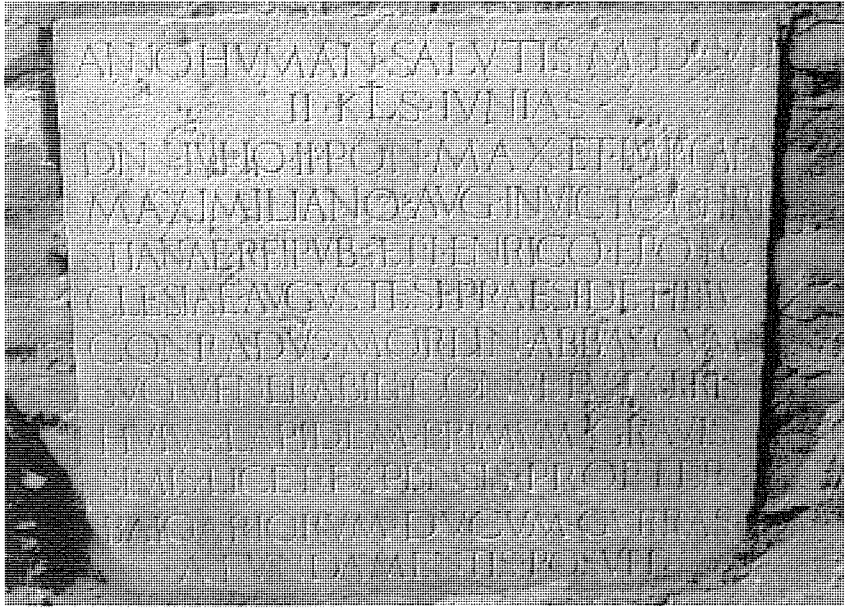
**94.** This event and several others of that day are preserved in canvas paintings hanging in the choir of the church. The paintings date from the early seventeenth century but were probably copied from older originals. Derick Dreher, "Die Maximilians-Darstellungen in der Basilika St. Ulrich und Afra: Historismus in der Augsburger Malerei des Frühbarock," *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Augsburger Bistumsgeschichte* 31 (1997): 86–104. Although Dreher does not speak of earlier models, I believe they must have existed. For the text of the inscription, see Placidus Braun, *Geschichte der Kirche und des Stiftes der hl. Ulrich und Afra in Augsburg* (Augsburg, 1817), 389. Peutingers's biographer Lotter, however, gave a slightly different text in 1783, attributing it to Peutingers: instead of Anno M.D. in the last line, Lotter has Anno lubileo M.CCCCC; Lotter-Veith, *Historia vitae atque meritarum Conradi Peutingeri* (Augsburg, 1783), 222. See also the text given by Bernhard Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Ulrich et Aefrae* (Augsburg, 1627), 44, and the inscription on the trowel by Seld.

**95.** The tablet in the southeast tower measures 65 × 99 cm; the tablet in the northeast tower measures 71 × 83.5 cm. The letters range from 3.5 to 4 cm in height. The texts of the inscriptions were known to the older local literature; see Hertfelder, *Basilica SS. Ulrich et Aefrae*, 8, 18; Lotter-Veith, *Historia vitae . . . Conradi Peutingeri*, 222.

**96.** Nonclassical elements, however, include the arabic numerals and the rendering of the word *incarnationis* as *INCARN* with a hooked, apostrophe-like abbreviation mark. The letter *R* often has an excessively curved cauda. The carver was clearly not using stencils but simply drawing freehand on the stone.

**97.** The letters in the northeast tower tablet are more square and generally more canonical: *M* is fully conical, the bell of *P* is open, *E* and *L* have bottom serifs tilting slightly upward, *R* has a slightly concave cauda. There are also several departures from the Roman epigraphic canon, for example, the superscript *E* above *O* in line 7 and the tiny *E* inserted between *V* and *R* in line 11.

There is a fragmentary inscription embedded in the high altar at Sts. Ulrich and Afra that seems to correspond exactly to the state of epigraphy in Augsburg at the time of the second, northeast inscription, indeed seems to have been carved by the same hand. It was published by Nuber, "Römische Steindenkmäler aus St. Ulrich und Afra" (see chap. 4, n. 72), no. 1, pp. 238–40. All that is left of the inscription is a slice of letters arrayed in seven lines. The fragment was inserted into the console of the altar mensa in 1812 and then rediscovered during the excavations of 1961. The superscript *E* above *O* in the fifth line, however, is unheard of in ancient Roman inscriptions. It must be a modern attempt to romanize the umlaut. The *OE* is preceded by *M*, strongly implying "Mörlin," just as the name in fact appears in the 1506 tablet



91. Dedicatory inscription, 1507. Augsburg, Sts. Ulrich and Afra, basement of north-east tower. Photo: author.

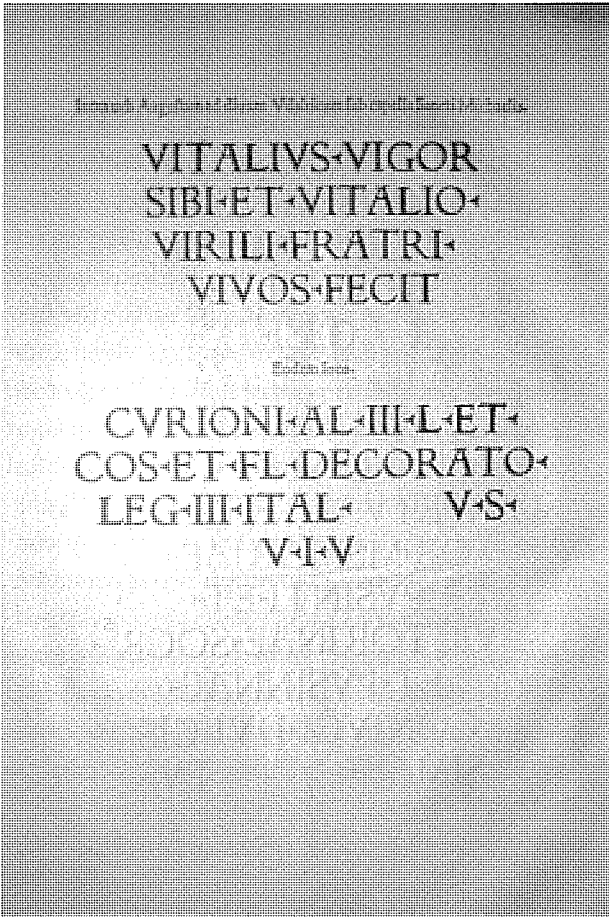
Konrad Mörlin took a personal interest in scripts. A letter from Ulrich, prior at Buxheim, to Mörlin mentions an “alphabet by an ingenious hand”—possibly Leonhard Wagner—sent to him by Mörlin.<sup>98</sup> But Mörlin’s inscriptions at Sts. Ulrich and Afra register above all the impact of Conrad Peutinger and Erhard Ratdolt’s imaginative 1505 publication of twenty-three Roman inscriptions of Augsburg, *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta* (fig. 92).<sup>99</sup> Here Ratdolt used print technology to fix the material, nontextual properties of the inscriptions. This began with the typeface. The font, designed expressly for this book, measured 8 mm in height, making it one of the largest of all early types. It was large enough to register nuances in the serifs and shading. The book prints the inscriptions in Roman capitals and in almost all cases in their true lineation, that is, the printed text follows the real carved inscription line by line. Ratdolt also used metal type to notate orthographic and punctuation usages in the stones and even their

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under the northeast tower. Acknowledgements to Derick Dreher with whom I examined the Sts. Ulrich and Afra material and who arrived at the hypothesis about the modernity of the altar-fragment independently.

98. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 4416, fol. 7v. Spilling, “Handschriften des Augsburger Humanistenkreises,” 84n83.

99. Peutinger, *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta* (Augsburg: Ratdolt, 1505). Christian Hülsen, “Eine Sammlung römischer Renaissance-Inschriften aus den Augsburger Kollektaneen Konrad Peutingers,” *Sitzungsbericht der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse* (1920): 15; *Archäologie der Antike 1500–1700*, ed. Margaret Daly Davis, exhibition catalogue Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994), no. 4.7; and Martin Ott, “Römische Inschriften und die humanistische Erschließung der antiken Landschaft,” in *Deutsche Landesgeschichtsschreibung im Zeichen des Humanismus*, ed. Franz Brendle et al. (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2001), 213–26.



92. Conrad Peutinger, *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta* (Augsburg, 1505), fol. 2v. Photo: author.

physical condition. In several cases black ivy leaves are inserted at the very points where they appear in the actual inscriptions.<sup>100</sup> A symbol meaning “centurion” is rendered in print as a capital *T* with a kind of comma attached to it.<sup>101</sup> In several other cases Ratdolt prints small capitals in superscript at the end of a line to denote similar abbreviating devices used on the actual stones.<sup>102</sup> Extraordinarily, Ratdolt in several cases leaves blank spaces in the text to denote missing or damaged letters, for example, in the last line of the tablet from the cathedral, where half a word (and several following lines) was obliterated by a circular cavity.

**100.** For example, in the second line of a votive tablet to the centurion C. Managnius Iustus, found at the convent of St. Stephan in Augsburg (fol. 3r). *CIL* III, 5317; Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivariae romanae*, no. 128; Augsburg, Römisches Museum, Lap. 52.

**101.** It also appears in the C. Managnius Iustus inscription. On the “centurion” symbol, which Feliciano misunderstood, see Avesani, “Felicianerie,” 21–24. For that matter, there is no reason to believe that Peutinger understood it either.

**102.** He does this twice in a funerary inscription found at the cathedral and later installed by Peutinger in the atrium of his own home; it is still there, badly weathered (fol. 2r). *CIL* III, 5846; Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivariae romanae*, no. 158; Augsburg, Peutingerhaus.



Print technology turned the attention of local scribes, clerics, educated patricians, and artists to the formats and conventions of Roman tablets.<sup>103</sup> Peutingers's metapublication immediately fed back into publication—for what were the commemorative inscriptions of 1506 if not a return to the archaic mode of publication? Some of the innovative features of the tower tablets of 1506 had been introduced by Erhard Ratdolt into the 1505 imprint, for instance, the ivy leaves. Ratdolt's majuscule font, although unusually large and true to Roman epigraphic models, was not taken as a direct model by sculptors. The carver of the 1506 inscriptions, for the first time in Augsburg, had access to an Italian lettering manual, provided probably by Peutingers.<sup>104</sup> Still, the 1505 publication had brought the Roman majuscule into focus. At least half a dozen of the surviving local ancient stones, now easily accessible after Peutingers's researches, used canonical square capitals.<sup>105</sup>

After the publication of Peutingers's inscriptions, the strictly constructed Roman majuscule became the fashion in Augsburg. Some monuments appear to be backdated, so it is hard to construct a precise chronology. The epitaph of Melchior Funck and Anna Herwart in St. Anna is dated 1496 but the majuscules are so attentive to the Imperial canon, including stress, that it must postdate the Sts. Ulrich and Afra tablets.<sup>106</sup> The Lukas Herwart tablet in St. Moritz bears the date 1485 but is dated by Bornschlegel as much as thirty years later.<sup>107</sup> The red marble tomb of Sigmund Gossembrot and Anna Rehlinger in St. Moritz, with unroman raised letters, is dated 1500 and 1530.<sup>108</sup>

**103.** On the relations between typography and epigraphy, see Franz-Albrecht Bornschlegel, "Druckschriften und epigraphische Schriften auf der Schwelle zum Frühdruck am Fallbeispiel Augsburgs," in *Inscript und Material, Inscript und Buchschrift: Fachtagung für mittelalterliche und neuzeitliche Epigraphik, Ingolstadt 1997*, ed. Walter Koch and Christine Steininger (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 213–24.

**104.** The inventory of 1597 reveals that "1 Großgeschriben Romanisch Alphabeth" was to be found on the rear wall of one of Peutingers's rooms, alongside "27 Groß getuschte grawe Kayßersköpf"; Hans-Jörg Künast, "Die Graphiksammlung des Augsburger Stadtschreibers Konrad Peutingers," in *Augsburg, die Bilderbabrik Europas: Essays zur Augsburger Druckgraphik der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. John Roger Paas (Augsburg: Wissner, 2001), 12.

**105.** Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivariae romanae*, nos. 107, 120, 127, 128, 134. The local Roman monument closest in format to the Sts. Ulrich and Afra groundstone tablets was the tablet from Biberbach, a stone that Peutingers mounted in his own home. Vollmer, *Inscriptiones baivariae romanae*, no. 136.

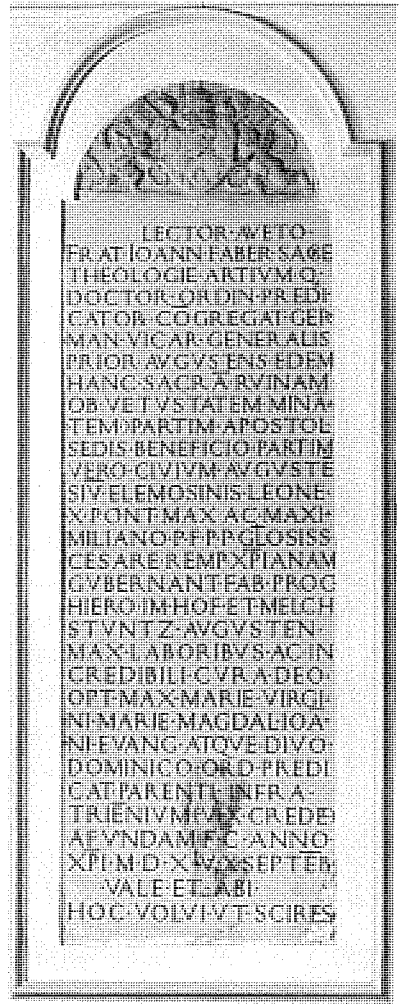
**106.** Norbert Lieb, *Die Fugger und die Kunst*, vol. 1, *Im Zeitalter der Spätgotik und frühen Renaissance* (Munich: Schnell und Steiner, 1952), 391; Bornschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, no. 16; Bornschlegel, "Die frühe Renaissance-Kapitalis," ill. 3.

**107.** Bornschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, no. 8. Thomas Eser attributes the tablet to Hans Daucher and compares its lettering to that on Daucher's Madonna reliefs in Augsburg and Vienna; *Hans Daucher: Augsburger Kleinplastik der Renaissance* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1996), cat. no. 29.

**108.** Bornschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, no. 20.

The most accomplished inscriptions, the climax of Rome-oriented antiquarianism in Augsburg, are a series of commemorative tablets mounted in the 1510s.<sup>109</sup> The letters in these inscriptions differ slightly from one another, but they all imitate the canonical Imperial alphabet as reformulated in the Italian calligraphic manuals. In 1513 Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony commissioned a marble memorial tablet to the tenth-century Emperor Otto III in the north transept of the cathedral, with a text composed by Peutinger, whose large (5.5 cm in height) and nearly perfect Trajanic capitals read almost as corrections of the clumsy epigraphic majuscules of Otto's own time.<sup>110</sup> In the Dominican Church, now the Römisches Museum, the theologian and imperial advisor Johannes Faber erected two tall inscribed tablets, one marking the construction of the church and the other about himself and his family (fig. 93).<sup>111</sup> In format they imitate the Otto III monument. The so-called *Fier Gulden Stain* are tablets to Emperor Maximilian, his son Philip of Spain, and his grandsons Ferdinand and Charles, future emperors, mounted high on the nave wall of the Dominican Church.<sup>112</sup> The texts to Maximilian and Philip were composed by Johannes Faber and published, in the form of woodcuts representing the actual tablets, in 1519.<sup>113</sup>

The possibility of brilliant formal perfection made the talk of a *translatio artium* seem more like a reality, even



93. Memorial tablet of Johannes Faber, 1515. Augsburg, Römisches Museum.

109. One of the finest private tablets commemorates the construction of the Alexius chapel in the Barfüsserkirche by the Rehlinger family. This red marble tablet with a twenty-line inscription has ivy leaves and mostly correct letters, although the bell of *P* is sometimes closed and there are superscript *Ss* and *Ms*. Borschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, no. 34. The epitaph with the finest capitals in the cathedral cloister is the monument to Vitus Meler, dated 1517; Kosel, *Der Augsburger Domkreuzgang*, no. 87.

110. Borschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, no. 33; and "Die frühe Renaissance-Kapitalis," ill. 4; Lieb, *Die Fugger und die Kunst*, 1: 391; Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, nos. 126, 131, 141, and p. 215n4.

111. Augsburg, Römisches Museum. Borschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, nos. 36.

112. Borschlegel, *Die Kapitalis der Renaissance in Augsburg*, nos. 51–54; Peter Halm, "Die 'Fier Gulden Stain' in der Dominikanerkirche zu Augsburg," in *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Plastik, Festschrift Theodor Müller* (Munich: Hirmer, 1965), 195–222; *Welt in Umbruch: Augsburg zwischen Renaissance und Barock*, exhibition catalogue (Augsburg: Augsburg Druck- und Verlagshaus, 1980), vol. 1, no. 24.

113. *Oratio funebris in depositione gloriosis Imp. Caes. Maximiliani* (Augsburg: Sigmund Grimm, 1519).

if it was happening mainly in the realm of epigraphic lettering. There is no formal system easier to teach and to establish than a canonical alphabet, and indeed the ideal alphabet of the early Imperial period had functioned in antiquity precisely as an instrument for enforcing the consistency of the Imperial voice throughout the empire. To contemporary Italian scholars it might have seemed as if the Germans of the late fifteenth century were simply relearning what they had already learned as provincials in the second and third centuries. But that is not how the Germans saw it. In 1500 Romanity and the Imperial style was as much German, in the eyes of German scholars, as it was Italian. When Germans spoke of the *welsch* or Italian mode, they meant the exotic, grandiose, highly ornamented style.<sup>114</sup>

### Unreadable alphabets

The new awareness of a distinctive Imperial Roman alphabet shifted scholarly attention over to the forms of two other ancient alphabets, recreating the triadic comparison enshrined in the book of John's account of the trilingual tablet nailed to Christ's cross reading "King of the Jews" (19:20). Scholars recapitulated this triple array, a relativizing of alphabetic symbols which only seemed to reinforce the consistency of a shared meaning. One of the centers of learning in southwest Germany was the abbey of Sponheim. In 1494 Celtis visited Abbot Johannes Trithemius there, and together, according to old accounts, the two friends composed verses and painted them on the walls of the new abbatial residence.<sup>115</sup> Celtis had a reputation as an expert on Roman lettering.<sup>116</sup> He had used *alten puchstaben* in his decorative program for the cabinet of Sebald Schreyer in Nuremberg in 1495.<sup>117</sup> One of the couplets referred to trilingual inscriptions that Trithemius had painted on the walls: "Aspice versiculos hospes venerabilis istos, Trithemius posuit quos tribus ecce notis" (Behold these verses, venerable guest, which Trithemius here in three scripts has placed). A bi-

114. See the comments on the meanings of the *welsch* and *deutsch* modes by Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, 135–42; and Andrew Morrall, "The 'Deutsch' and the 'Welsch': Jörg Breu the Elder's Sketch for the *Story of Lucretia* and the Uses of Classicism in Sixteenth-Century Germany," in *Drawing 1400–1600: Invention and Innovation*, ed. Stuart Currie (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 109–25. The sculptor "Veyt Bildhauer," a character in one of Peter Flötner's Reformation woodcut broadsheets, says "Vil schöner pild hab ich geschaffen / Kunstlich auff welsch und deutschen sitten"; Heinrich Röttinger, *Peter Flettner's Holzschnitte* (Strasbourg: Heitz, 1916), 62–63.

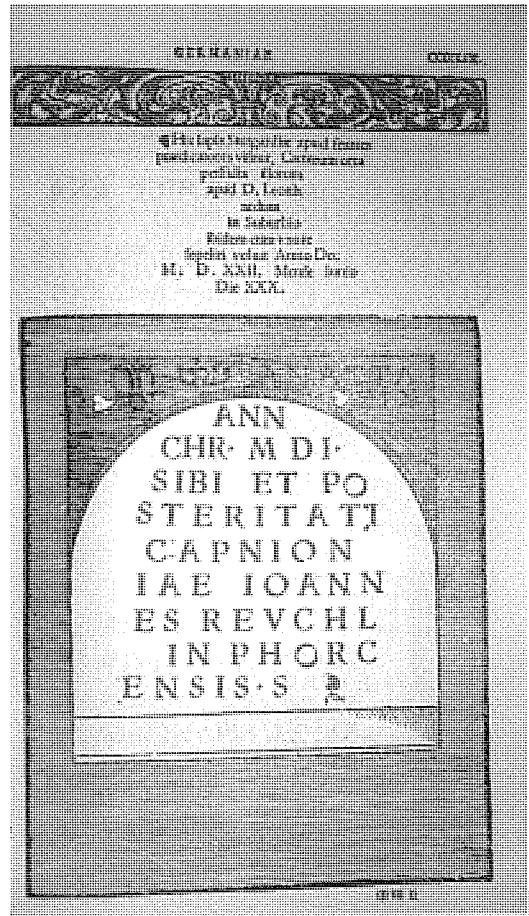
115. *Der Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, 145ff., 11 April 1495; see also Celtis, *Epigrams*, 5, 81.

116. See the letters to Celtis from Heinrich Grieninger and Johannes Fuchsmagen, *Briefwechsel des Konrad Celtis*, nos. 165 and 314. See also Gustav Bauch, "Die Nürnberger Poetenschule, 1496–1509," *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 14 (1901): 16.

117. Ludwig Grote, "Die 'Vorder-Stube' des Sebald Schreyer: Ein Beitrag zur Rezeption der Renaissance in Nürnberg," *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1954–59): 52.

lingual inscription carved on sandstone, presumably commissioned by Trithemius, survives at Sponheim, a verse from Psalm 118 in Greek and Hebrew. The broad, elegant Greek letters are based on Roman models.<sup>118</sup>

The epitaph of Johannes Reuchlin, an inscribed tablet without an image, is a nine-line Latin inscription in square capitals in a round-arched field, here as it was rendered in woodcut by Apianus and Amantius (fig. 94). The text translates as “Anno Christi 1501. Johannes Reuchlin Capnion of Pforzheim, consecrated to his own and his offspring.”<sup>119</sup> The tablet imitates Roman funerary inscriptions more closely than almost any other monument of its time. The formula *sibi et posteritati* is Roman, although in this case meant abstractly since Reuchlin had no children.<sup>120</sup> The word *posteritati* is broken before the last letter to preserve the even spacing; in general the words are broken arbitrarily and without hyphens to create an even, homogeneous field of letters just as in Roman inscriptions. (The woodcut in Apianus and Amantius neglects to reproduce these features of the original stone.) The inscription is embellished by three ivy leaves, possibly the earliest in a northern European inscription. There are no medieval contractions, superscriptions, ligatures, or enclaves. Many of the letters approach the generous 1:1 ratio of height to width of the best Imperial models.<sup>121</sup> In



94. Epitaph of Johannes Reuchlin, 1501. Woodcut in Petrus Apianus and Bartholomeus Amantius, *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (Ingolstadt, 1534), 459. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

118. Eberhard J. Nikitsch, ed., *Die Inschriften des Landkreises Bad Kreuznach* [*Die Deutschen Inschriften* 34] (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1993), nos. 180–81. The painted verses survived at least to the seventeenth century; the residence was destroyed in the nineteenth century.

119. The date is a puzzle, since Reuchlin, one of the great scholars of his age, died in 1522. The tablet was originally in the cloister of the Dominican Church in Stuttgart but was moved after World War II to the church of St. Leonhard, where Reuchlin is actually buried. On the relocation and the problem of the date see Hansmartin Decker-Hauff, “Bausteine zur Reuchlin-Biographie,” in *Johannes Reuchlin 1455–1522*, ed. Manfred Krebs (1955), expanded edition by Hermann Kling and Stefan Rhein (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1994), 97–100.

120. It recalls the Maulbronn inscription of 1493 (see p. 217 above) and the person most likely behind it, Conrad Leontorius, who had contact with Reuchlin. The phrase *posteritati bene merenti* in the Maulbronn inscription must mean “posterity” or “legacy” and not “children,” since it refers to Abbot Burrus.

121. There is considerable inconsistency from one instance to the next of the same letter, however, perhaps betraying the sculptor’s inexperience. The cauda of *R* was a particular

the spandrels are brief inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek, *olam ha-hayyim* and *anastasis*, in somewhat smaller scale.<sup>122</sup> Reuchlin was the most important Hebrew scholar in Europe. The phrase *olam ha-hayyim* means “world of the living” and is neither biblical nor antique. Reuchlin may have drawn it from a medieval philosophical tradition.<sup>123</sup>

### Banishment, temporal and spatial, of the nude

The ideal nude consigned the whole problem of desire for beautiful form, so awkwardly grounded in sexual desire, to remote, safe locations. Once historical thinking had relativized the Greco-Roman religion, its divinities and semidivinities could become the scaffolding for a contour-contained, degeneralized, hairless nudity. In these same years a second possible target for desire emerged, remote not in time like pagan antiquity but in space, and almost as inaccessible: the tropical south and east, whose peoples’ blackness and nudity or near nudity fascinated European travelers. Unlike the Ottomans or the nomadic horsemen from the central Asian hinterlands, unforgotten, the tropical people seemed to pose no threat to Europe. By an accident of commercial and dynastic alliances, Hans Burgkmair came into indirect contact with this long-hidden world. The Portuguese crown had been conducting trading expeditions to the India and the East Indies for years. In 1505–6 a consortium of Augsburg and Nuremberg merchants outfitted three ships and sent them south from Lisbon escorted by a formidable Portuguese fleet of more than twenty ships and 1,500 soldiers. In 1508 Balthasar Springer, an agent in the employ of the Welser family, published a brief account of the voyage supplemented by woodcuts designed by Burgkmair. The eight blocks formed a two-meter-long frieze describing the customs, clothes, ornaments, weapons, and tools of several distinct com-

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problem: it is straight in lines 2 and 8, convex in line 4, and slightly concave in line 7. The lower arm of *E* varies slightly in each case. The bowl of *P* is open, as it should be, but in line 5 just barely. *M* with its vertical stems, finally, is unclassical. These fine points are not reproduced in the woodcut of Apianus and Amantius.

122. If the monument really dates from 1501, then the mottos seem to connect the monument to death with a premature directness. Perhaps the spandrels were originally left empty and carved in 1522. This was the suggestion of Leiva Petersen, *Goldstadt—Ein Epitaph Reuchlins?—Ad vicanos port. . . . Dreifacher Dank an Pforzheim* (Pforzheim, 1987), 9–10.

123. Max Brod, *Johannes Reuchlin und sein Kampf* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1965), 342, believed that Reuchlin had blundered by omitting the vowel *vav* from the first word; indeed he considered it so elementary an error that he wondered whether the great scholar had even seen his own monument. Brod’s opinion has persisted in the literature: Petersen, *Goldstadt—Ein Epitaph Reuchlins?—Ad vicanos port.*, 9. But the omission of the *vav* is not an error at all. More unusual is the splitting of the second word between two lines, as Ivan Marcus, Yale University, has pointed out to me.



munities: a nude, spear-wielding man of Guinea together with his nursing wife and frolicking son; a fur-clad family of Hottentots in Algoa; Arabian parents, draped in patterned blankets, with their child, yet another black Holy Family; women and children in “Gros India”; two blocks depicting the ceremonial procession of the “King of Gutzin” (Cochin, the southwest coast of India); and finally a mounted camel and elephant.<sup>124</sup> The block reproduced in figure 95, a copy of 1511 by Georg Glockendon, represents the monarch on a litter borne on shoulders and shaded by a parasol, an Indian *chatta* of woven straw.<sup>125</sup> The woodcuts were frequently copied and distributed both with and without Springer’s text. Details in Burgkmair’s renderings that depart knowledgeably from Springer’s account prove that the artist had access to drawings made by someone on the trip as well as to the

95. Georg Glockendon, copy of Hans Burgkmair, *King of Gutzin*, 1511, woodcut. Yale University Art Gallery.

124. Bartsch 77; Hollstein 731–36. Hans Burgkmair: *Das graphische Werk*, nos. 23–27; Jean Devisse and Michel Mollat, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 2, *From the Early Christian Era to the “Age of Discovery,”* part 2, *Africans in the Christian Ordinance of the World (14th to the 16th Century)* (New York: Morrow, 1979), 245–53; Jean-Michel Massing, “Hans Burgkmair’s Depiction of Native Africans,” *RES* 27 (1995): 39–51; and Mark P. McDonald, “Burgkmair’s Woodcut Frieze of the Natives of Africa and India,” *Print Quarterly* 20 (2003): 227–44.

125. Yale University Art Gallery, inv. no. 1980.43.182b, 26.7 × 38.5 cm.

Indian artifacts and curiosities, including a talking parrot, mentioned by Peutinger in a letter to Sebastian Brant of 1507.<sup>126</sup>

No bodies could be more dignified and graceful than those of Burgkmair's Africans and Indians. Sexuality is tightly anchored within small nuclear, nurturing families. Contours and poses cite the Greco-Roman antiquities that had so recently come into focus in Burgkmair's imagination.<sup>127</sup> The trumpet-blower echoes the figure of Calliope from the *Tarocchi* engravings (fig. 16). The beautiful form of the body, in Burgkmair's hands, now veers off in the direction of fiction, precisely in a set of images meant to ratify the report of a real voyage. The voyage to the East Indies had provided a specific place on the globe where ideal beauty could be deposited. At last pagan beauty could be motivated and naturalized. It is as if the very unprecedentedness of the voyage, its practical difficulty—even more difficult than a pilgrimage!—invited the fictionalizing imagination. The Asian bodies were "antiquities." They seemed fossils of a more perfect time, marooned in a modern world governed by people who wore clothes. Burgkmair maps distance in space onto distance in time, bringing ethnographic study briefly into alignment with antiquarian study, at this point the better developed discipline.

In the Middle Ages, the body marked exterior to Christendom—the living bodies of the inhabitants of Africa and Asia, known only through dim, fleeting reports not yet stabilized by print—had been a formless, terrifying body. Exteriority had been indicated with the topos of the "monstrous races" at the margins of the world, grotesque recombinations and disruptions of anatomy.<sup>128</sup> Schedel's *World Chronicle* had not omitted to describe these peoples.<sup>129</sup> With Burgkmair's prints, only a decade and a half later, ethnography, or the description of other people, switched instantly from a stress on the formless to a stress on the well formed. The un-Christian body went from being unredeemably imperfect to being perfect and timeless. The menace of the sexualized body did not dissipate, but was reassigned to a different place. The factual relativity of peoples spread out horizontally across time and space, which Burgkmair's idylls denied or downplayed, was from this point on acknowledged in art in what might be called an internal or "vertical" ethnology, namely the pictorial thematics of wilderness, marginality, wild people, and peasant brutality. The lives of solitary, communal, or combative forest people, dwarfish or gigantic, and

126. Peutinger, *Briefwechsel*, no. 48.

127. Massing, "Hans Burgkmair's Depiction of Native Africans," 44, on the dependence of Burgkmair's images on established conventions.

128. John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

129. See the woodcuts in Schedel, *Weltchronik*, 12v–r.

of stolid, sensuous rural folk, emerged in the fifteenth century as a major theme of profane tapestries and engravings.<sup>130</sup> Around 1500 such motifs reconfigured themselves into new iconographic and medial constellations involving scenes from regional folklore, sylvan motifs on the margins of Christian hagiography, and pagan mythology, both as it was handed down through vernacular channels and as it was rediscovered by philological erudition. Violent satyrs and centaurs and club-wielding hirsute men mustered in prints, drawings, sculptures, and paintings, at once symbols of primordial history and of the fictionalizing powers of art. Primitivism was the matrix for Celtis's encounter with the druids as much as for Dürer's adventures on the far shores of iconography. The European peasant, increasingly a subject for art in the fifteenth century, allowed the formless body to be reassigned from the remote "monstrous peoples" to the more familiar underclass of rural Europe.

Few German artists were able to pick up on Burgkmair's cues. Lucas Cranach painted a series of paintings on the theme of the *Nymph of the Spring* that reflected on the parallelism between ideal script and ideal body. Cranach exploited the hesitation of the scholars about the reality of an inscription they all knew well from the Italian epigraphic sylloges. Credulity provided an opening. *Huius Nympha Loci* was a modern poem, devised perhaps as early as the 1460s by the humanist Giovanni Antonio Campani, invoking the classical and pastoral topos of a girl sleeping near water. The poem then appeared in the anthology of ancient inscriptions compiled by Michael Fabricius Ferrarinus in the 1470s or 1480s, together with the explanation that the poem had been found *super ripam Danuvii*, above the banks of the Danube, inscribed on a tablet and accompanied by a statue of a sleeping nymph.<sup>131</sup> From that point on the inscription and the statue were handed on from sylloge to sylloge, often accompanied by a drawing of the statue. The first person to present the text as an inscription, in such cases, was not necessarily pretending to have found the text on a stone on a Roman building. It was a poetic conceit of the sort that the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and its illustrations were built on. But this is the core pattern of epigraphic credulity: a modern poem that at one point in its transmission is reframed as an antique inscription. The Danubian location was remote enough that no one would bother to check—that was part of the joke. In Rome, the pseudoantique poem and statue fell into a mutually corroborating relation with a family of real statues of recumbent sleeping

130. Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952); Timothy Husband, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980).

131. The history of the epigram is complicated; see Elizabeth MacDougall, "The Sleeping Nymph: Origins of a Humanist Fountain," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 357–65, esp. 358–59.



females, ancient and modern. The most celebrated was the Ariadne, known in the Renaissance as Cleopatra, a Roman copy of a second-century B.C.E. Pergamene original, first recorded in the Maffei collection at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Pope Julius II acquired the work in 1512 and mounted it in the Belvedere as a fountain.<sup>132</sup> The statue and another like it, now lost, served as the basis for modern copies and adaptations.<sup>133</sup> Print recreated the modern work as a “false antiquity.”<sup>134</sup>

In each case, the imaginative supplement offered by the artists, Burgkmair and Cranach, deflected the descriptive and antiquarian impulses that had set the images in motion in the first place. Burgkmair’s illustrations to Springer’s travel report stand in the same relation to Reuwich’s woodcuts for Bernhard von Breydenbach that Cranach’s painting does to the antiquarian sylloges with their humble drawings of pagan monuments.

German scholars and artists were especially attentive to the sleeping nymph tradition because the inscription was supposed to have been found on the banks of the Danube. Conrad Celtis knew the nymph verses already around 1500.<sup>135</sup> Dürer made a watercolor drawing of a sleeping nude by a rectangular fountain inscribed with the poem, probably around 1514.<sup>136</sup> Beginning around 1515 Lucas Cranach painted the *Nymph of the Spring* many times, in some cases with a few words of the inscription.<sup>137</sup> The most important of the surviving versions is the panel in Leipzig dated 1518 (fig. 96).<sup>138</sup> It is not clear that he knew the Ariadne sculpture; at any

132. Vatican Museums, inv. no. 548. See Bober and Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture*, no. 79 and p. 97; and Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500–1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 184–87. See Robert W. Gaston’s comments on the intertwining of the literary and archeological traditions of the sleeping nymph, “Ligorio on Rivers and Fountains: Prolegomena to a Study of Naples XIII. B. 9,” in *Pirra Ligorio: Artist and Antiquarian*, ed. Gaston (Milan: Silvana, 1988), 176–77.

133. Bober and Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture*, no. 62. See most recently Gunter Schweikhart, “Nymphen in Statuengarten: Zu einer Zeichnung des Dresdener Kupferstichkabinetts,” in *Ars naturam adiuuans, Festschrift Matthias Winner*, ed. Victoria V. Fleming and Sebastian Schütze (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 244–51. Angelo Colocci installed a nude version of the sleeping nymph together with the inscribed poem as a fountain in his garden on the Pincio; see MacDougall, “The Sleeping Nymph,” 361–62; and Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance*, 182–84.

134. See the inspired argument by Madeleine Viljoen, “Prints and False Antiquities in the Age of Raphael,” *Print Quarterly* 21 (2004): 235–47.

135. Dieter Wuttke, “Zu Huius nympha loci,” *Arcadia: Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* 3 (1968): 306–7.

136. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Ambras Album. Winkler 663; Strauss 1514/36.

137. There are as many as seventeen versions attributed to Cranach and his shop. Koepplin and Falk, *Lukas Cranach: Gemälde, Zeichnungen, Druckgraphik*, 2: 631–41; Max J. Friedländer and Jakob Rosenberg, *The Paintings of Lucas Cranach* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), nos. 119–20.

138. Leipzig, Museum der Bildenden Künste, inv. no. 757. Friedländer and Rosenberg, *The Paintings of Lucas Cranach*, no. 119, 59 × 92 cm.

rate he was not interested in engaging with the identifications of the figure as Cleopatra or Ariadne, but rather cleaved to the original identity of the figure as the accompaniment to the poem.<sup>139</sup> The notional riverbank site of the statue was a northern version of the Belvedere garden in Rome, a site of pleasure where the statue was cut off from its referent—an alienation symbolized in Rome by the perplexity about the statue's identity—and became available for the beholder and for storytelling.<sup>140</sup> The German nymph had to be a painted nymph, and not only because the Saxon court culture that Cranach was working within was unable to produce beautiful sculptures, but also because the painting could provide both garden and statue all at once, creating a *locus amoenus* within its own frame.

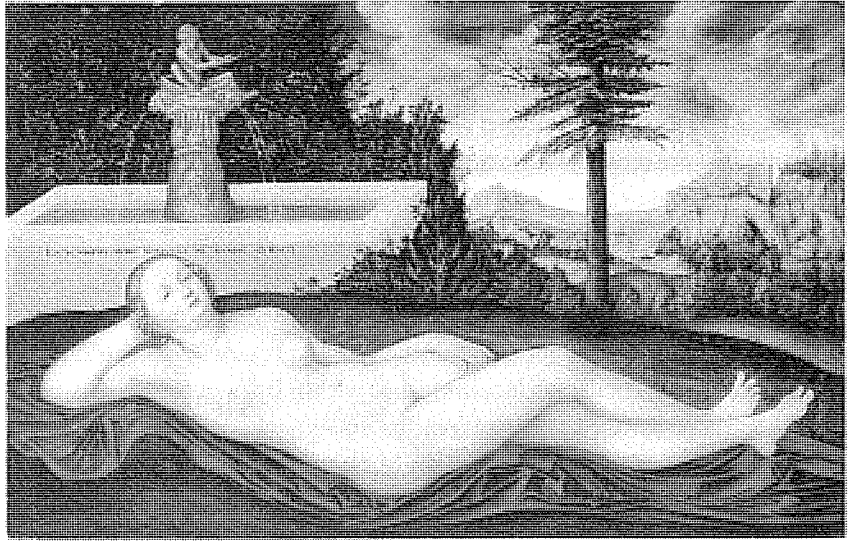
The Cranach nymphs take the creative, imaginative aspect of philological scholarship and inflate it into a fully invented figure. Cranach diagrams the doubled structure of art in that his paintings offer beauty twice over, first in the form of a representation of a beautiful antique statue, in effect an embellished but objective report on a scholarly discovery; and second in the form of the painting itself, which inserts the statue into a fictional landscape and so reconverts it into a sleeping woman. The painting—and this is what painting, at least German painting, is learning to do in exactly these years—is both about beauty and is itself a beautiful thing, and in this unfolding of its own double nature it leaves the scholarly starting point far behind.<sup>141</sup> In sixteenth-century painting, the sleeping figure in a landscape designates the entire picture as the content of a dream. But this picture has no content except the nymph herself; she seems to dream herself, recursively. The content of her dream is missing, for it would be the work of art that Cranach does not yet dare, or know how, to make. For the artist, archeological interest interacted dynamically with the project of *imitatio*, or aesthetic intertextuality, the relation of text to text that makes possible all signification. Once transplanted into the artwork, substitution chains and referential links were recoded as an intertextual network. Art became art by a constant process of microreorientation vis-à-vis other art, soon

139. Edgar Bierende, *Lucas Cranach d. Ä. und der deutsche Humanismus: Tafelmalerei im Kontext von Rhetorik, Chroniken und Fürstenspiegeln* (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2002), 227–34, connects the Cranach painting to interest at the time in a miraculous spring associated by the chronicles with the prehistoric foundation of the city of Meissen; and more generally to Tacitus's account of the early Germans' cult of nature and attentiveness to prophetesses.

140. Barkan, *Unearthing the Past*, 233–47.

141. For Barkan, *Unearthing the Past*, 233–47, the sleeping nymph symbolized the frontier between art and life; she is alive yet immobile, and so figures the aesthetic experience itself as voyeurism. She is equally a metaphor for creative inspiration; Anne-Marie Bonnet, "Der Akt im Werk Lucas Cranachs: Bedeutung und Spezifität der 'nacketen Bilder' innerhalb der deutschen Renaissance-Malerei," in *Lucas Cranach: Ein Maler-Unternehmer aus Franken*, exhibition catalogue, Kronach (Augsburg: Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, 1994), 144.

96. Lucas Cranach,  
*Nymph of the Spring*,  
 1518, oil on panel.  
 Leipzig, Museum der  
 Bildenden Künste.  
 Photo: Erich Lessing/  
 Art Resource, NY.



emerging as the place within culture where the dependence of all expression on repetition was itself represented. The artists' inquiry into the past was conducted in a special neutralizing medium, art.

Northern artists looked to Italian prints or small-scale bronzes with a double vision: they saw these artifacts both as the proximate links in long substitution chains that reached back to antiquity, and as poetic ideas, figurations that immediately implied their own extension into further poetry. For the German artist, the relics of antiquity were inseparable from their poetic transfiguration in the hands of the elite Italian artists of the fifteenth century. The literary interpretation of antique figure and fable was already inscribed within Italian art of the fifteenth century. The German artist, at best dimly aware of the poeticizing culture surrounding, say, the Medici court in Florence, nevertheless entered immediately into the alchemical process just by paying attention to the artifacts. The pagan idols came already neutralized. Poetry, or art, was just the absorption of the superstition, the error, of the other into the self. The German artist could represent the false god without telling a lie, because he was only citing the lie.

Conrad Celtis was trying to hold the culture of scholarship and the culture of poetry together, in the way that Angelo Poliziano had in Florence in the previous generation. That effort failed, basically, and the cultures split in two. Substitutability, or the idea that the referent is continuously carried by a chain of material vehicles and guarantees the identity of those vehicles one to another, turns the tables and reveals the idea of authorship as a peculiar, strained, and romantic idea, severely limited historically. In fact most cultures at all times operate with nonauthored, nonperformative, even "revealed" texts and monuments. The archeological Renaissance had little to do with the authorial Renaissance.

## The tomb of the poet

The poets and painters who learned so quickly to work with and not against anachronism—who recognized and thematized the condition of intertextuality, in other words—stood in a structural overlap with those early archeologists who were working with mediation. In its early phases, the archeological project was as creative as it was analytical. Archeology was projecting substitution chains forward as much as it was inventing prophecy backward. Later, archeology found its identity in the struggle to cancel the noise and distortion of transmission. Over the course of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, error was caged within the institution of art. Only artists were allowed to make error their project. The scholars found themselves liberated into an unending dialectic of critique.

Scholarship no longer enjoyed the luxury, or no longer permitted itself the luxury, of letting reference and imagination flow into one another. Reference and fiction had to go separate ways. The symbol of that lost unity became the spurious tomb of the classical poet. Poetry was assigned a special niche within the archeological imagination. Frequent were the reports of discoveries of the tombs of the ancient poet. A stone inscribed T. LIVIVS was unearthed in Padua around 1320 and immediately hailed as the tomb of the historian, a native son. A century later his bones were found in a sarcophagus very near the find-site of the inscription.<sup>142</sup> In 1508 a cleric of Bratislava, Leonhard Creutzer, reported the excavation of the tomb of Ovid in Szombathely, outfitted with six stone lamps and two plates engraved with verses, though Creutzer could not remember what they said. Presumably some portion of Ovid's name was inscribed somewhere on or in the tomb. The Austrian antiquarian Wolfgang Lazius recorded a similar story, except that the tomb was meant to have been excavated in the time of Frederick III, that is, before 1493.<sup>143</sup> The bones of Livy, meanwhile, had been discovered in Padua in 1413. The scholar Dietrich Gresemund was shown the tomb of Livy when he visited Padua.<sup>144</sup> The tomb of the poet was the point of intersection of archeological and aesthetic cultures.

Print was forcing modern poets into choices, most basically about whether to write in Latin or the vernacular. They were learning quickly how to conceptualize and frame their own authority. The classical poets were *auctores*, authorities, in the best cases, and if not too immoral, on

142. J. B. Trapp, "The Image of Livy in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance," *Lecturas de historia del arte* 2 (1992): 211–38; and "The Poet and the Monumental Impulse," *Society for Renaissance Studies, Occasional Papers* 6 (1980): 12–14. Julius von Schlosser, "Vom modernen Denkmalkultus," *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg 1926–1927* (1930): 8–9.

143. J. B. Trapp, "Ovid's Tomb," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973): 47–49.

144. Wimpfeling, *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, no. 54, p. 123.

the level of the historians or philosophers, or even of the church fathers. Their works were links to a past world. But once the modern poet began to reflect on the referential precariousness of the texts he himself produced, the texts of the poetical *auctores* took on a different status. The prestige of the poet rested perhaps more on the presentness of the texts, their capacity to activate, again and again, a readerly semiosis, than on any testimonial or referential function. The tomb of the poet, therefore, could symbolize the fundamental pastness of the poet, his historical witnessing role, temporarily overriding the creeping awareness of the arbitrariness and freedom of poetic play.

### The tomb of the emperor

Maximilian's most astonishing self-memorializing project was the psychopompic drama in bronze that he envisioned for his own tomb, an extravaganza realized only long after his death and then neither in the place nor in the manner envisioned.<sup>145</sup> If it had ever been assembled according to Maximilian's plans, which date from as early as 1502, the tomb would have involved forty over-life-size bronze statues of princely forebears; thirty-four busts of Roman emperors; and a hundred small statues of the so-called Hapsburg Saints, all gathered in some unknown configuration around Maximilian's body as if in permanent watchful attendance.<sup>146</sup> Only a few of the gigantic ancestors were cast in Maximilian's lifetime, and in the end, after Maximilian's grandson Ferdinand had revived and ministered to the project in the 1550s, only twenty-eight were cast. Those statues are arrayed in rectangular formation around a cenotaph in the Palace Chapel at Innsbruck, a space that did not even exist in Maximilian's own lifetime (fig. 97).

145. Oberhammer, *Die Bronzestandbilder des Maximiliangrabmales*; Erich Egg, *Die Hofkirche in Innsbruck* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1979); Karl Schmid, "Andacht und Stift: Zur Grabmalplanung Kaiser Maximilians I.," in *Memoria: der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, ed. Schmid and Joachim Wollasch (Munich: Fink, 1984), 750–76; Elisabeth Scheicher, "Grabmal Kaiser Maximilians I. in der Hofkirche," in *Österreichische Kunsttopographie*, vol. 47, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Innsbruck, Die Hofbauten* (Vienna: Schroll, 1986), 359–426; *Hispania-Austria*, nos. 179–81; Lukas Madersbacher, "Das Maximiliansgrabmal," *Ruhm und Sinnlichkeit, Innsbrucker Bronzeguss 1500–1650*, exhibition catalogue (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, 1996), 124–39; Hubertus Günther, "Das Projekt Kaiser Maximilians für sein Grabmal," in *Les funéraires à la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Balsamo (Geneva: Droz, 2002), 77–111.

146. On the genesis of the sculptures, see also *Kunsthistorisches Museum, Sammlung Schloss Ambras, Die Kunstskammer*, ed. Elisabeth Scheicher et al. (Innsbruck: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1977), nos. 453–72; Hans R. Weihrauch, "Studien zur süddeutschen Bronzeplastik, IV," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, ser. 3, no. 3/4 (1952/53): 203–12; Jörg Oberhaidacher, "Ein 'unbekanntes' Werk des Jörg Muskat," *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 36 (1983): 213–220; *Hispania-Austria*, nos. 171–73. On the sculptors, see Karl Oettinger, *Die Bildhauer Maximilians am Innsbrucker Kaisergrabmal* (Nuremberg: Hans Carl, 1966).



97. Tomb of Emperor Maximilian, Innsbruck, Palace Chapel, overall view. Photo: Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna.

Only twenty-one of the planned series of imperial busts were cast. It is not known how or where the imperial busts were meant to be placed, and they found no home in the final scheme. Today they are all but one—the bust of Julius Caesar in Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum, apparently the pilot or presentation piece for the whole series—in Castle Ambras near Innsbruck. Only twenty-three of the hundred Hapsburg saints were cast, standing figures measuring two and a half to three feet in height, today mounted on the balcony above the tomb statues at Innsbruck.<sup>147</sup>

The arrangement in the Palace Chapel only partially reflects the original project. Maximilian's vision of the tomb seems to have been in constant flux. Documents and sketches provide glimpses of his thinking. He planned to build a fortress-like church to house the tomb, under the aegis of the Order of St. George, on the Falkenstein near St. Wolfgang in the Salzkammergut.<sup>148</sup> Until the Falkenstein church and the tomb should be completed, he arranged for a provisional burial in the St. George chapel at

147. For the origins of this idea, see the tomb of Frederick III at Wiener Neustadt.

148. Günther, "Das Projekt Kaiser Maximilians für sein Grabmal." Egg, *Die Hofkirche in Innsbruck*, argues that Maximilian originally wanted images of himself and eight forebears standing in front of the church.



97. Tomb of Emperor Maximilian, Innsbruck, Palace Chapel, overall view. Photo: Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna.

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98. *Rudolf of Hapsburg and Philip the Handsome of Burgundy, 1515–17, bronze. Tomb of Emperor Maximilian, Innsbruck, Palace Chapel. Photo: Bildarchiv Marburg.*

head on Rudolf's bronze statue (fig. 98), and glass paintings in the chapel at Wiener Neustadt as the basis for the figures of Ernst the Unyielding and his consort Zimburgis (figs. 101 and 102).<sup>151</sup> The referential relationships of these source monuments to *their* sources were simply presumed.<sup>152</sup>

Most of the tomb figures floated unspecified referential relationships to prior monuments, generating an aura of historical reference but concealing the notational mechanisms behind the reference, if there were any, and displacing the marks of handmadeness through a tactical use of

Wiener Neustadt, his father's capital. In the last testament of 1518, Maximilian settled on Wiener Neustadt as the location of the tomb, and indeed that is where he is buried. But the bronze statues did not follow him there.

The commission for the tomb was supervised by Maximilian's historical advisor, Conrad Peutinger. The sculptor Jörg Muscat of Augsburg began work on the series of imperial busts in 1509. Peutinger may have shown him Roman coins or drawings of ancient busts, for many of the busts achieve excellent pastiches of late antique styles.<sup>149</sup> Muscat's portrait of the emperor Probus (ruled 276–282) was actually mistaken by scholars for an antiquity until 1933.<sup>150</sup> Whenever possible, Maximilian sought out historical models for the portraits of his ancestors. He commissioned a painted copy of the carved tomb of Rudolf I in Speyer to serve as the basis for the portrait

149. On Peutinger's possible role see Oberhaidacher, "Ein 'unbekanntes' Werk des Jörg Muskat," 213n7.

150. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. 35.386. Hans Weihrauch, *Kataloge des Bayerischen Nationalmuseum*, vol. 13, no. 5, *Die Bildwerke in Bronze* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1956), no. 50. The bust is now a half-mask, 39.6 cm in height; the breast has been sawed off. Weihrauch, "Studien zur süddeutschen Bronzeplastik," 210. The bust was recognized as modern by Richard Delbrueck in 1933. See also Ernst Rebel, *Die Modellierung der Person: Studien zu Dürers Bildnis des Hans Kleberger* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1990), 79–80.

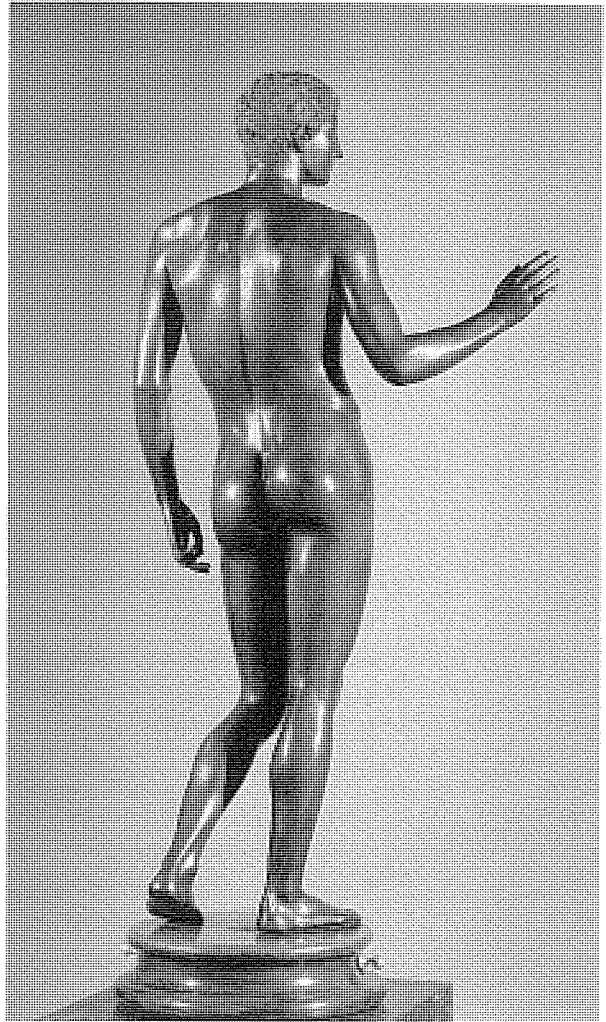
151. Egg, *Die Hofkirche in Innsbruck*.

152. See Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 161–70, on the reliance on citations of form as historical documents in the context of genealogical research.



a replication technology. Bronzes are skins of metal poured between a clay statue and a clay mold, or between two clay molds, melting and thus replacing a layer of wax. The statue can be thought of as the replica of a short-lived and never-viewed work in wax. The bronze result can in turn be replicated by making new molds (the ones used in casting are destroyed in the process), either from the original clay statue or from the new bronze figure. Bronzes on the scale of Maximilian's ancestors were in practice not so easily replicated, and yet they "read" as replicable because their heavy technology implied independence from the inconsistency and unreliability of the human hand.

A good example of antiquarian insouciance about copying bronzes is the *Youth of Magdalensberg* (fig. 99). Classical archeologists considered it a Roman copy of the first century B.C. until technical investigations undertaken in the 1980s proved, to the surprise of everyone, that the statue now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in



Vienna was actually cast in the sixteenth century.<sup>153</sup> According to a document, Archduke Ferdinand had a copy made in 1551.<sup>154</sup> In the mid-eighteenth century the artist Anton Raphael Mengs saw the *Youth* in the castle of Aranjuez in Spain. The statue in Spain, which can no longer be located, was either another copy or, more probably, the Roman original found in Austria in 1502.

**153.** Kurt Gschwantler, "Der Jüngling von Magdalensberg: Ein Forschungsprojekt der Antikensammlung des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien," in *Griechische und römische Statuetten und Grossbronzen, Akten der 9. Internationalen Tagung über antike Bronzen*, ed. Kurt Gschwantler und Alfred Bernhard-Walcher (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1988), 17–27. Theodor Mommsen had in the previous century identified the inscription on the leg, on the basis of letterforms, as a sixteenth-century copy of the original inscription. Until Gschwantler's analysis, no one had doubted the authenticity of the statue itself.

**154.** Wohlmayer, "Der Jüngling vom Magdalensberg," 14n26; the theory that Maximilian himself had the copy made is based on a mistaken reading of the document.

99. So-called *Youth of Magdalensberg*, sixteenth-century copy of first-century bronze. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY.

And yet the modern archeologists' misidentification of a Renaissance bronze copy is not nearly as surprising as the misidentification of a Renaissance fresco as a Roman wall painting would be. Even today there persists an unspoken sense, running against all the dogmas of modern aestheticism, that the Renaissance copy is a fair substitute for the ancient bronze, and that it dependably delivers the model it copied. Outfitted with the proper label—in this case the inscription on the leg, accurately transcribed although in sixteenth-century, neoantique letterforms—the bronze monument notates some prior, reliable representation of a permanently absent referent. The copy of the *Youth of Magdalensberg* was a forgery that did not need to rely especially heavily on invention. It was a highly probable fiction. The point of the episode is that forgery and substitution were just points on a scale. There was no categorical distinction between them. Inside a substitutional or referential mode, either everything is a forgery, or nothing is a forgery.

The forty relations that Maximilian chose to surround his corpse are the same as the ones depicted in the family tree on the woodcut *Triumphal Arch*. This is strong evidence that the two projects were connected. A newly identified document of around 1510 associated with the *Arch* mentions the "24 pictures on the tomb." The twenty-four historical scenes on the *Arch* were the basis for the reliefs that the Flemish artist Alexander Colin carved for the cenotaph in Innsbruck in the 1550s, at the behest of Ferdinand. The new document suggests not so much that Colin's tomb was copying the *Arch*, but the reverse, namely that the *Arch* was based on the early plans for the tomb.<sup>155</sup>

It is not clear from the surviving documents where the body of the emperor belonged. There is reason to believe that Maximilian's corpse was not to have had a tomb at all, no sarcophagus nor even a slab on the ground, but instead to be discreetly concealed under the steps of the altar, so that the celebrant would stand over the heart during Mass. According to instructions Maximilian left on his deathbed, the bronze statues were to be placed "all around, but spaced far enough apart that one can see through to the altars." That is, the statues were supposed to occupy the church space, standing perhaps against columns, perhaps between columns as they are in Innsbruck. Maximilian must have intended at the start to have a *tumba* or traditional sarcophagus with a carved supine figure on the lid, just as his father had in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna or his wife and ducal in-laws had in Bruges, but abandoned the idea of the *tumba* when he realized how large it would have to be to hold its own against the gigantic

155. This is one of the most important hypotheses advanced in the monograph on the *Arch* by Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I*, 36–37.

statues, or perhaps when he saw the impressively ascetic grave markers of the German emperors at Speyer, simple inscriptions.<sup>156</sup> Maximilian visited Speyer in 1494, 1509, 1512, and 1513 and planned to build in that storied city a separate monument to his imperial predecessors, a round temple-like structure, never completed, of course. Maximilian commissioned the statuary from the Salzburg sculptor Hans Valkenauer in 1514. Fragments of the sculpture survive and suggest that the statues of the twelve emperors and empresses, somewhat less than life-size, would have stood under baldachins below a circular crown six meters in diameter.<sup>157</sup>

It is unclear what the focal point of the gathering at the Falkenstein would have been, perhaps the tomb or the high altar, perhaps a statue of the emperor himself. For there is also reason to believe that Maximilian intended to mount a bronze effigy of himself to join the ancestors. In his testament of 1518 he described a chain of charitable foundations, hospitals, stretching across Europe from Mechelen to Vienna, each outfitted with a bronze effigy of the emperor, a "Pilt von unnser Pershon und unnserm Angesicht Conterfeheth."<sup>158</sup> Presumably these statues would have been replicas of one another. If such a statue was meant for the tomb as well, then Maximilian would have stood among his relations as host, in effect. But the giant, three-dimensional self-portrait was never cast.<sup>159</sup>

### "Colossal puppets"

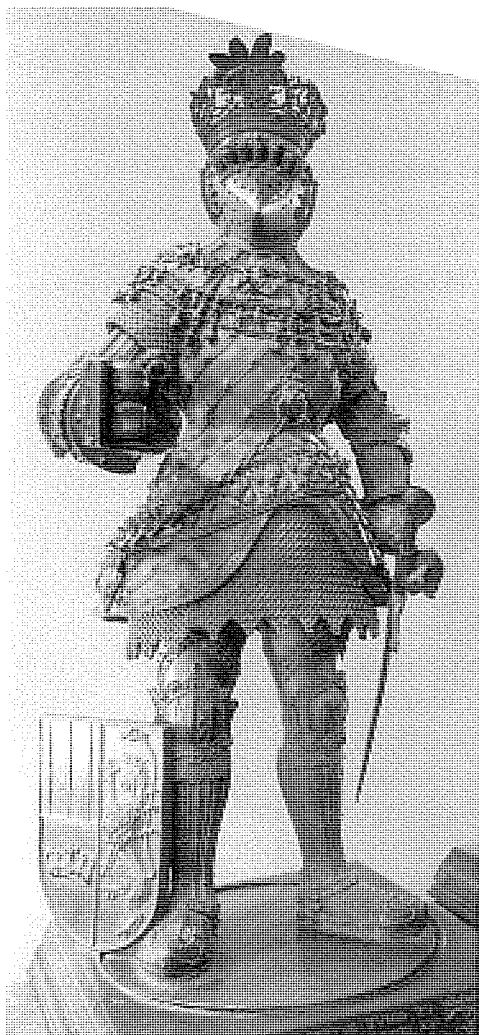
The princely ancestors are all well over life-size, measuring in some cases nearly eight feet in height. They were the largest bronze figures ever cast north of the Alps up to that point. Maximilian hired local artists, Gilg Sesselschreiber of Munich and Jörg Kölderer of Innsbruck, later Stefan Godl of Nuremberg, and local bronze-casters who until then had cast nothing other than bells and cannon. The emperor himself oversaw the casting of ten of the statues; the other eighteen were supervised by Ferdinand but based on designs delivered in Maximilian's lifetime. Given his failure to publish the books and his failure to build any buildings, including the

156. This is the suggestion of Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I*, 37–38.

157. Keller, "Geschichtsbewusstsein des deutschen Humanismus und die bildende Kunst," 682–84; Philipp Maria Halm, *Studien zur süddeutschen Plastik* (Augsburg: Filser, 1926), 176–80; and *Hispania-Austria*, nos. 169–70. For further literature, see Schmid, "'Andacht und Stift,'" 758n36.

158. Schmid, "'Andacht und Stift,'" 760; Günther, "Das Projekt," 81.

159. Wolfgang Brückner, *Bildnis und Brauch: Studien zur Bildfunktion der Effigies* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1966), 41. Schmid, "'Andacht und Stift,'" 760, 770. Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I*, 37n43, suggests that the figure of Maximilian standing next to the tomb of his father in a woodcut in the right tower of the *Triumphal Arch* represents a self-portrait statue, but this figure more likely represents Maximilian himself, not a statue.



100. Ferdinand of Portugal, 1515–16, bronze. Tomb of Emperor Maximilian, Innsbruck, Palace Chapel. Photo: Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna.

church that ought to have housed the tomb, it is a wonder that Maximilian succeeding in having any figures at all cast.

Each is labeled by an inscription on the pedestal. Viewed from ground level they are menacing, beetling figures. The portrait of Ferdinand of Portugal, a thirteenth-century prince, was the first cast (fig. 100). His face mask is pulled down, eliminating the problem of portrait likeness. It is hard to imagine that such giants might ever have stood on high pedestals or columns, as they do in one of the watercolor projects on parchment by Kölderer, and in the instructions dictated by Maximilian from his deathbed, whereby the statues were to be mounted on wooden columns painted to resemble marble.<sup>160</sup>

The rest of the figures have faces and even psychological identities, and in many cases seem to be attending to something. A figure like Zimburgis, consort of Ernst the Unyielding, holding her arm back at the hip, seems to twitch and gesture, refusing to recede into herself as an effigy on this scale, detached from any explanatory narrative context, might be expected to (fig. 101). To some extent, these are painterly qualities that have been transposed into three dimensions.<sup>161</sup> The detour that the referential project took through painting shifted the statues slightly out of the traditional rhetoric of large-scale statuary. They are “colossal puppets,”<sup>162</sup> with all the suggestion of mysterious, behind-the-scenes motivation. The animation enters into tension with the referential aims of the project.

There is no real counterpart to the Maximilian tomb project in European art.<sup>163</sup> It has been argued that the thirteenth-century founder-figures

160. *Hispania-Austria*, no. 177; a second version is partially reproduced in *Ruhm und Sinnlichkeit*, no. 30. See Oberhammer, *Die Bronzestandbilder des Maximiliangrabmales*, 42. Schmid, “Andacht und Stift,” 764.

161. See the figure of Zimburgis in Kölderer’s parchment project.

162. The phrase of the dramatist August von Kotzebue, 1805, cited in Egg, *Die Hofkirche in Innsbruck*, 8. Heinrich Heine spoke of “black wax figures in a booth in a fair”; cited by Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 62, who also found the Innsbruck installation “spectacular if not very tasteful.”

163. Maximilian may have been aware of the ambiguous description by Eusebius of the mausoleum of Constantine in Constantinople, a sarcophagus flanked by twelve “containers” (*thekas*) of relics, “or as it were sacred statues,” of the apostles, a kind of apostolic choir. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 4.60; see the edition by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, with commen-

in the cathedral at Naumburg once stood above tombs.<sup>164</sup> No modern Italian prince commissioned life-size free-standing bronze portraits, certainly not of himself. The bronze portraits of the fifteenth century were equestrian statues, licensed by Marcus Aurelius in Rome, most celebrated of the *mirabilia* or remains of Roman statuary that had survived the Middle Ages in the open air. Pope Julius II commissioned from Michelangelo a bronze portrait of himself for the façade of S. Petronio in Bologna, seated, however, and backed up against the wall (it was destroyed in 1511). The colossal free-standing bronze portrait of the historical individual was a memory from antiquity, a textual memory, for Pliny had described the custom in detail, reporting that the public spaces of Athens and Rome had once been stocked with statues of kings, consuls, Vestal virgins, philosophers.<sup>165</sup> Few of these many thousands of statues survived from antiquity, and in bronze, virtually none. The colossal bronze in Barletta, the statue of a fourth- or fifth-century emperor that had washed up on the Puglian shore in a thirteenth-century shipwreck, was known to few in the Renaissance, although Pomponius Gauricus, who came from that part of Italy, mentioned it in his treatise on sculpture.<sup>166</sup> In Maximilian's orbit, an immediate provocation to the idea of the bronze free-standing effigy was obviously the discovery of the *Youth of Magdalensberg* in Carinthia in 1502, the very year that the plans for an imperial tomb first surface in the documents.



101. *Zimburgis*, 1511–16, bronze. Tomb of Emperor Maximilian, Innsbruck, Palace Chapel. Photo: Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna.

tary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Richard Krautheimer, "Zu Konstantins Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel," *Mullus: Festschrift Theodor Klauser* (= *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 1* [1964]) [Münster: Aschendorff, 1064], 225; Jaś Elsner, "From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics: The Arch of Constantine and the Genesis of Late Antique Forms," *Papers of the British School of Rome* 68 (2000): 157; and Schmid, "Andacht und Stift," 770n89.

164. Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild*, 166–69.

165. Pliny, *Natural History*, 34.9.16–17, 34.11.23–25, 34.12.26–27; 34.16–17.33–37; pp. 138–57.

166. The statue was restored in 1491 by the Neapolitan sculptor Fabio Alfani, but as a figure of Hercules, and thus did Pomponius Gauricus identify it; *De sculptura* (1504), ed. André Chastel and Robert Klein (Geneva: Droz, 1969), 105. The statue of the emperor Trebonianus Gallus (251–53) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is the only surviving full-length bronze from the third century.

Principal sources for Maximilian's concept were the tombs of his Burgundian in-laws, as well as the tomb of his own wife Mary of Burgundy, a *tumba* with a supine bronze effigy in the church of Notre Dame in Bruges which he himself had commissioned upon her premature death in 1482, though it was not executed until 1495–1502. The dukes of Burgundy, scions of royal France, were custodians of the chivalric past, an imagined link to European antiquity. Behind the physiognomic and gestural enlivenment in Maximilian's tomb figures stand the agitated *pleurant* or mourner figures on tombs like that of Philip the Bold in Dijon, made by Claus Sluter around 1400, although those mourners were small in scale, represented both clerical and lay figures, and were not portraits. Yet their expressive behavior may have stood behind the animation of the Innsbruck figures.<sup>167</sup> The Burgundian tombs, in turn, descended structurally from the French royal tombs, such as the tomb of Louis of France, from 1260, where a miniature funeral cortège unfolds on either side of the *tumba*.<sup>168</sup>

There were no allegorical elements in Maximilian's tomb system. The four cardinal Virtues on the cenotaph in Innsbruck belong to Ferdinand's campaign and were designed by Colin in the 1550s. Colin's historical scenes on the sides of the tomb, however, were based on Maximilian's own early projects, and therefore the Virtues, too, might have belonged to the original design. Such a program was not historically inconceivable. Michel Colombe's tomb of Francis II of Brittany in Nantes, initiated in 1499, had the Virtues at the four corners.<sup>169</sup> The tomb of Julius II undertaken in 1505 but never finished by Michelangelo involved Victories, Bound Captives, Moses, St. Paul, and the Vita Activa and the Vita Contemplativa, among other figures; portraits of holy personages mixed with personifications. It is more plausible that Maximilian indeed wanted only the real. Maximilian's tomb project had no such internal articulation or "grammar." His tomb made a minimal proposition, namely, that the body of Maximilian is in the permanent presence of his family and ancestors. The absence of an allegorical dimension gave his project its bluntness and literalness.

Many patrons had themselves portrayed inside sacred narratives. The embedded portrait substituted for a sculpture or for a silver or wax *ex voto*, an effigy of the patron brought into physical proximity with the altar. The

**167.** On the French and Burgundian tombs with statuettes of family members around the edges—a good example is the tomb of Louis de Mâle (d. 1384) and Marguerite de Brabant (d. 1405), Count and Countess of Flanders, once in Lille, erected by Philip the Good in the 1450s—see Anne McGee Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship in France, the Low Countries, and England* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 140–49. Maximilian's tomb was in effect an "exploded" version of these, as Morganstern points out.

**168.** The tomb is now at St. Denis but was originally in the abbey of Royaumont. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, fig. 246. Generally on the late medieval "chivalric-romantic" strain as an aspect of historicism, see Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 95–122.

**169.** Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, fig. 327.

*ex voto* effigy offered testimonial and thanks, and positioned the portrayed within a permanent liturgical context. Maximilian himself appears as a life-size kneeling *ex voto*, a wax figure, perhaps, wearing real armor, in a seventeenth-century engraving describing a chapel in Halle (Flanders) dedicated to the Virgin.<sup>170</sup> Such installations have long since been dismantled. Only a single premodern *ex voto* effigy survives, the figure of Leonhard of Görz, a Tyrolean count, dating from around 1500 and mounted on a wall in a church until 1897.<sup>171</sup> This life-size object has a wooden core, but the hair and fur coat were molded from beeswax. According to tradition, the figure weighs the actual weight of Leonhard of Görz. Apart from this one figure, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century *ex voto* effigies are known only through documents and old prints. Many of these figures in gold, silver, or wax were life-size; they were always placed in physical proximity to a cult image or altar; and they were in some cases linked to their subjects by analogy, such as when they matched the patron's actual body weight.<sup>172</sup> They were apparently always kneeling, however, like the figure of Leonhard of Görz. Such *ex votos* made few gestures toward physiognomic likeness. The coupling of person to sacred place was achieved by the literal sharing of space and by mysterious indexical rhymes between effigy and person. The link between such figures and the rhetorical device of the inserted realistic portrait was suggested by Aby Warburg when he described Domenico Ghirlandaio's portraits of the Medici and Sassetti families in a scene depicting the Confirmation of the Rule of St. Francis as "comparatively discreet" adaptations of the immemorial magical practice of the *ex voto*.<sup>173</sup> In Ghirlandaio's murals, the rhetoric of the painted likeness compensated for the loss of vitality entailed by the shift from three dimensions to two.

Maximilian participated in such a virtual assembly when he appeared kneeling in profile in Albrecht Dürer's mystical *Brotherhood of the Rosary*, his most ambitious altarpiece, now in poor condition.<sup>174</sup> The picture was painted for the German merchants of Venice and installed in the church of S. Bartolomeo in September 1506. An enthroned Madonna and Child are flanked by St. Dominic and framed by portraits of a kneeling Pope Julius

170. Hugo van der Velden, *The Donor's Image: Gerard Loyet and the Votive Portraits of Charles the Bold* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 176–77, and generally 166–88, assembling evidence of a wide family of *ex voto* effigies in the Burgundian realm; see also his fig. 87, *ex voto* of Philip the Good, and p. 237 on Henry VII (1509). On the topic see also Freedberg, *The Power of Images*, 136–60.

171. *Circa 1500* (see chap. 5, n. 145), no. 1–19–4.

172. See the examples in van der Velden, *The Donor's Image*, including the candle that measured the same length as the city walls, 241.

173. Warburg, "The Art of Portraiture and the Florentine Bourgeoisie," 190 and 207, making the connection to Maximilian's tomb.

174. Prague, National Gallery, inv. no. O. P. 2148, 162 × 195 cm. Anzelewsky, *Albrecht Dürer: Das materische Werk*, no. 93; and Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 109–13.

102. (*Facing, left*)  
*Ernst the Unyielding*,  
 1513–16, bronze. Tomb  
 of Emperor Maximilian,  
 Innsbruck, Palace  
 Chapel. From Vinzenz  
 Oberhammer, *Die  
 Bronzestandbilder des  
 Maximiliangrabmales  
 in der Hofkirche zu  
 Innsbruck* (Innsbruck:  
 Tyrolia, 1935), ill. 110.

103. (*Facing, right*)  
*Mary of Burgundy*,  
 1511–16, bronze. Tomb  
 of Emperor Maximilian,  
 Innsbruck, Palace Chapel. Photo:  
 Bundesdenkmalamt,  
 Vienna.

II and Emperor Maximilian. Crowding from the edges are a dozen or so Venetian notables and members of the German community, not always easy to identify, as well as Dürer's self-portrait.<sup>175</sup> Maximilian's tomb project was in effect reliteralizing the painted effigy, promoting it back to the three-dimensionality of the *ex voto*, now with the potent supplement of likeness.<sup>176</sup>

To flatten the effigy into a painting was to contain it. By opening the effigy back into real space, Maximilian dissolves the frame. The ancestors have risen up off the tomb slab, or detached themselves from its flanks, or from the walls of the churches, to instead stand upright and move freely in space. This incursion of the effigies into open space gives them real psychological power.<sup>177</sup>

The membrane between figuration and reality is punctured by the sculptors' use of real props that resist absorption into the virtual reality of figuration. The accoutrements attached to the figure of Ernst the Unyielding, for instance, are not representations of metal belts, chains, and dagger in the sense that the bronze body is a representation of Ernst's body. They are different because they are made of metal, as chains and daggers should be, and could in principle be used *as* chains or dagger (fig. 102). Donatello had done the same on his equestrian portrait of the soldier Gattamelata in Padua (finished 1453).<sup>178</sup> The real metal accoutrements have the effect of setting off the rest of the bronze and insisting on the counterexperiential reading of the bronze as clothing or flesh. Nearly all of the figures, moreover, hold out open hands that are meant to grasp massive votive candles (figs. 98, 100–103). The candles convert the figures into something like immobile robots capable of carrying out at least one or two human functions. For they hold their candles as well as, perhaps more efficiently than, a human attendant would.<sup>179</sup>

175. Saffrey, "Albrecht Dürer, Jean Cuno, O.P., et la confrérie du Rosaire à Venise" (see chap. 3, n. 20), 263–87.

176. A possible conceptual source of the tomb installation is a fourteenth-century poem, the *Sala Malagigi*, in which a magician peoples a room with 1,300 statues of luminaries and heroes. Günther, "Das Projekt Kaiser Maximilians für sein Grabmal," 91.

177. The difference from painting is brought out by a comparison with the referential fresco commissioned by Henry VIII of England in the Privy Chamber at Whitehall in 1537. The image, painted by Hans Holbein the Younger, represented the monarch's parents Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, Henry himself, and his third queen, Jane Seymour, arrayed in a sort of *sacra conversazione* modeled on now-banned sacred images. The mural was destroyed by fire in 1698 and is known today only from a copy. Bätschmann and Griener, *Hans Holbein*, 87.

178. John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture* (New York: Vintage, 1985), 53–54, 262–63.

179. Oberhammer, *Die Bronzestandbilder des Maximiliangrabmales*, 18, says some figures carried cast candles, replaced only in the seventeenth century by real candles, although it is not clear how he knows this. The document about the planned chain of hospitals suggests that the candles were meant to be real.





### The tremor of forgery

The statues at Maximilian's tomb mark the outer boundaries of the referential project. They are carried out in an indexical medium; they operate by genealogical or substitutional mechanisms; they offer minimal propositionality and rely heavily on the rhetoric of spectacle, including the dissolving of frames and the psychological impact of the colossal effigy. But the "activation of the effigy," in Panofsky's phrase, which was introduced as an enhancement of the reality effect, begins to undermine the referential function.<sup>180</sup>

The effigy is supposed to pull distinct entities into contact, overcoming difference and distance through spectacular enforcement of a brute

180. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 73.

physical proximity of effigy and target. The effigy and its target are united in a virtual time-space. The pocket where they notionally meet is outside of experienced time. Effigies suggest the suspension of experienced time by stiffening up, suppressing expression, and appearing to withdraw from the flow of time. The effigy is expected not to register too plainly the circumstances of its own making; it must not have a style; it must not remember an authorial performance. An effigy should have no origin other than its referent.

The effigies at Innsbruck fall very far short of excluding temporality, the marks of factitiousness. Their implied movement, their implied obedience to physical laws, in some cases their stylishness vitiate the self-sufficiency of the effigy function and the economy of simple labeling, the keys to the referential operation.

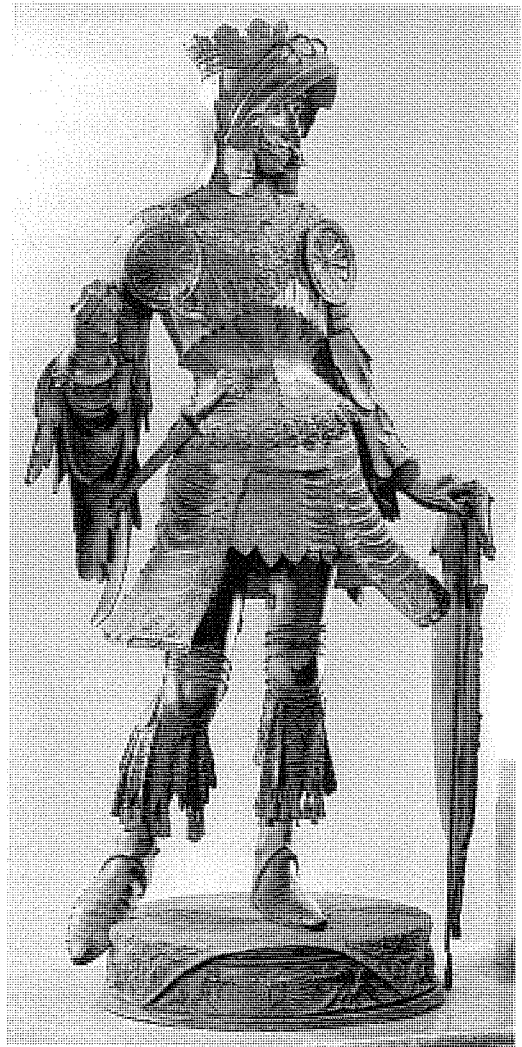
The effigy is meant to be a straightforward proposition, a reference to reality coupled with a simple predicate. The bronze figures at Innsbruck are linked to historical referents by labels at their feet. Beyond this reference, their predicate is properly no more than this: proximity to Maximilian. These figures, however, say too much about their subjects. They offer information about costume, physiognomy, and psychology far exceeding what was known about these individuals or what was known about historical costumes generally (with the exception of Maximilian's immediate family, his father, his first wife Mary, his second wife Maria Bianca Sforza, his son Philip the Handsome, King of Castile, and his sister Cunigunde).<sup>181</sup> The temptation to fill the gaps in the factual record with images was great. These images bore the rhetorical burden of revealing a truth that they had no real access to. This is pictorial reference that tries to describe a target that it only needs to point to. If the beholder does not finally believe in the description of the target, the referential hypothesis comes across as an absurd misfiring. The excess of predication followed from a proliferation of the inventive, fabricating impulse; from an extension of invention to new degrees of simulated contingency. That excess was both the success and the unraveling of forgery. The excess of predication clashed with the literalness and minimal propositionality of the tomb project as a whole. The rhetoric of the figures threatened a plunge into real time, as if the figures were about to lurch into movement, gestures, and glances all apparently meaningless because they lack a focal point, the fiction of an external target, at least in the current installation. It is hard to imagine any installation that would have accounted for all the various gestures of the figures. The implied and predicted body movements introduce a nervous temporality that was not strictly necessary to the functioning of the tomb scheme, for after

181. The portrait of Cunigunde has portrait-like features. On the whole, though, the female tomb-watchers are generalized and the male figures more tightly tethered to historical time.

all the figures are fundamentally tomb-watchers, keeping vigil. The underdetermined gestures, the implied emotions, and the accumulation of facts about the costumes amount to a fictional supplement to the figures' strictly notational axis. It is movement and temporality without issue.

A fiction of animation initiated by gestures invites a temporality of authorial performance. The animation signals the forbidden involvement of strong author-figures, nowhere more clearly than in the effigy of Albrecht IV, where Albrecht Dürer and Hans Leinberger joined forces (fig. 104).<sup>182</sup> Devices like the effete lifting of the foot and lowering of the eyelids, the vegetal peeling—indeed the material ambiguity—of the costume, the flair of the skirt, the twist of the glove, all create a sense that this work was fabricated by someone at some moment. The pose and costume interfere with the operation of the referential chain. Maximilian himself undermined the referential aims of the tomb project by bringing in authorially self-conscious artists who refused to adapt themselves to the stringencies of substitution and the effigy function.

Dürer, as his portraits of Charlemagne and Sigismund suggest, was unsure about the relation between the performative and referential conceptions of art-making, or at least willing to recalibrate the relation. A few years after he completed the imperial portraits for the city of Nuremberg, Dürer made a pen-and-ink drawing of a fantastic warrior encased in scaly armor and a dragon helmet, a guide for a painted roster of Maximilian's ancestors like the ones prepared by Kölderer and vivid prediction of a bronze statue that in the end was never cast. The drawing came to light and was acquired by the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin in 1986 (fig. 105).<sup>183</sup>



104. Albrecht Dürer and Hans Leinberger, *Albrecht IV*, 1517–18, bronze. Tomb of Emperor Maximilian, Innsbruck, Palace Chapel. Photo: Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna.

**182.** Note that two other figures designed by Dürer, Arthur and Theodoric, do not hold candles.

**183.** Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. no. 26812, brown ink, 25.2 × 15.6 cm. Fedja Anzelewsky, "Eine unbekannte Zeichnung Dürers," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 28 (1986): 67–73; Fritz Koreny, "Ottoprecht Fürscht: Eine unbekannte Zeichnung von Albrecht Dürer—Kaiser Maximilian I und sein Grabmal in der Hofkirche in Innsbruck," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 31 (1989): 127–48; *Hispania-Austria*, no. 175.

105. (Facing) Albrecht Dürer, *Ottoprecht fürst*, 1515 and 1516, pen and ink. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photo: Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, NY.

Dürer dated the drawing 1515 at the lower edge (the monogram is by another, later hand) and wrote the words *Ottoprecht fürscht*, “Prince Ottoprecht.” He scrawled instructions for the coloring of the costume: “gold” for the collar, “red” for the shoulder plates, “yellow” for the shield with dragon motif, “iron scales” for the tunic, and so forth.<sup>184</sup> Ottoprecht or Ottobert, son of a Burgundian king, was according to Jakob Mennel’s bold researches the first Hapsburg prince.<sup>185</sup> The armor, the weapons, and the posture of the soldier are firmly rooted in contemporary representations of exotically outfitted soldiers. The winged dragon on Ottoprecht’s helmet, the feathers on his shoulders, and the foliate whorls on his knees are all found on the costumes of figures in Burgkmair’s woodcut *Genealogy*.<sup>186</sup> Burgkmair began designing the *Genealogy* woodcuts, portraits of Maximilian’s ancestors back to Noah, in 1509, and by the following year at least ninety-two blocks had been cut (fig. 106).<sup>187</sup> Some were labeled with the majuscule font that Erhard Ratdolt had designed for Peutinger’s 1505 sylloge.<sup>188</sup> The costumes were meant to look historical but seem to have been chosen virtually at random. Burgkmair’s costumes begin to conform to familiar and practical modern models with the figure of Emperor Otto I. Just as in the case of Maximilian’s appeal to his scholars to seek out historical documents, the cut-off point of about five hundred years seems to have been

**184.** The “Ottoprecht” drawing is closely related to a pair of studies by Dürer for the figure of Albrecht IV of Hapsburg, in Liverpool and Berlin; W. 676–77; Strauss 1515/50 for the Liverpool drawing. Strauss, following Anzelewsky, “Entwürfe Hans Burgkmairs für das Innsbrucker Grabmal Kaiser Maximilians,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 19 (1969): 59–62, attributes the Berlin drawing to Burgkmair, XW.677; *Hispania-Austria*, no. 176, gives it back to Dürer, without comment.

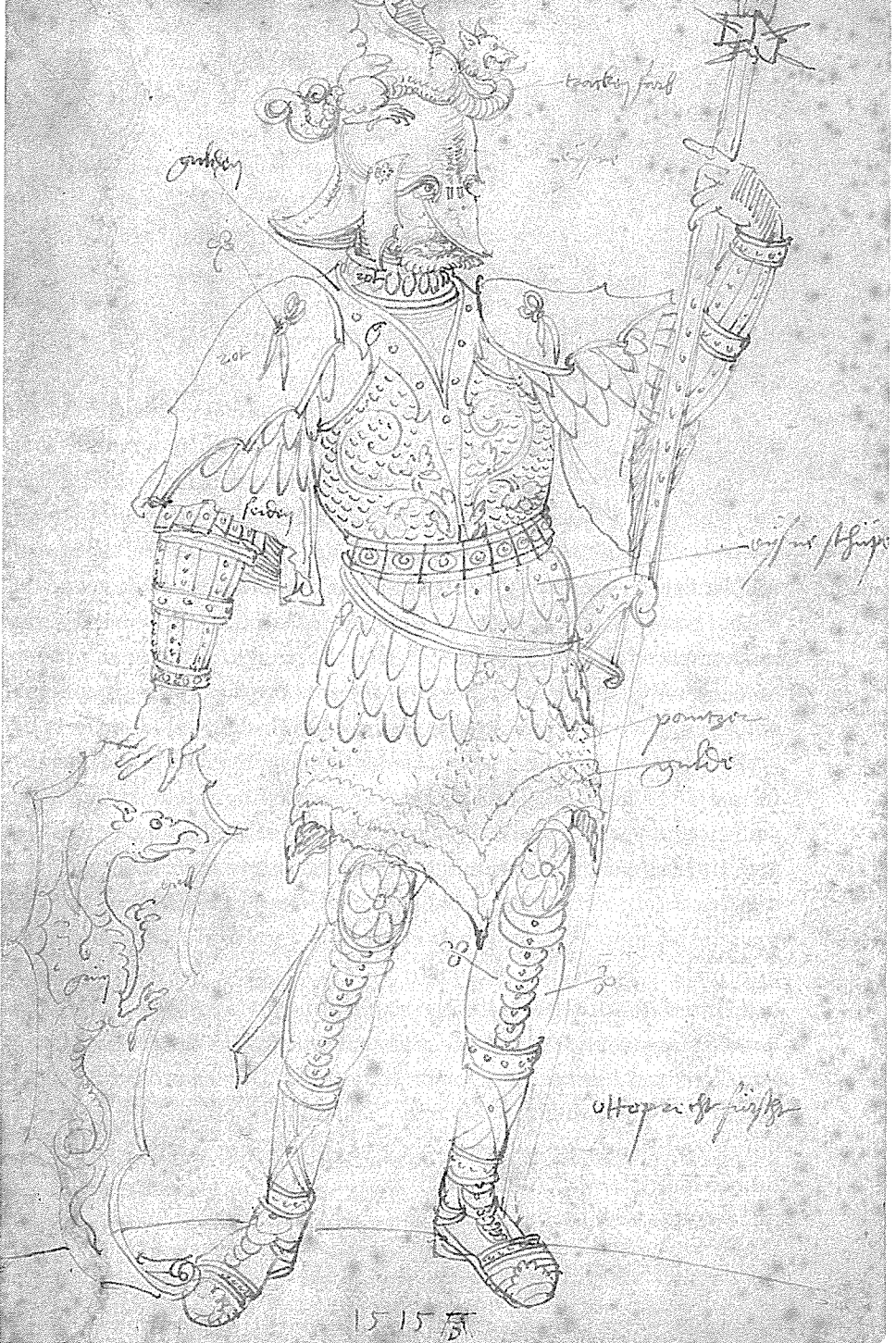
**185.** Dieter Mertens, “Die Habsburger als Nachfahren und als Vorfahren der Zähringer,” in *Die Zähringer: Eine Tradition und ihre Erforschung*, ed. Karl Schmid (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1986), esp. 155–62. Mennel identified an “Otpert” he found in the Hapsburg lineage with the Burgundian king “Theotpert” or Theudebert II (609–10); in the judgment of Schmid, “Andacht und Stift,” 756, not a bad piece of historical sleuthing.

**186.** Simon Laschitzer, “Die Genealogie des Kaisers Maximilian I.,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen* 7 (1888): 1–200; see the figures of Troilus, Glanthonas, Pathmundus, and Archabanus (nos. 4, 16, 18, and 22). Note that the foliate kneecaps, shoulder feathers, and feathered skirt are also found on the “Jupiter on Crete” figure in the *Florentine Picture-Chronicle* of the 1460s; Degenhart and Schmitt, *Corpus der italienischen Zeichnungen, 1300–1450*, pt. 1, vol. 2, no. 582. Friedrich Teja Bach raised the possibility of a possible link between this image and Dürer in his *Struktur und Erscheinung: Untersuchungen zu Dürers graphischer Kunst* (Berlin: Mann, 1996), 48–51.

**187.** Additional literature on this series: Paul Geissler, “Hans Burgkmairs Genealogie Kaiser Maximilians I.,” *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 1965, 249–61; *Maximilian I, 1459–1519* (Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 1959), nos. 193–94; Geissler, “Erhard Ratdolt,” 131; *Hans Burgkmair: Das graphische Werk*, nos. 150–66. *Hispania-Austria*, no. 129, is the handcolored version, Cod. Vind. 8049.

**188.** Otpertus Fil. Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen. Hollstein 377. Laschitzer, “Die Genealogie des Kaisers Maximilian I.,” no. 54; *Hispania-Austria*, no. 129.

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or description, including the number 1516.



1515/1



106. Hans Burgkmair, *Otpertus fil.*, c. 1510, woodcut. Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen.

symbolically important. As suggested by the drawing of the plumed halberdier identified by inscription as a “proper ancient German” (fig. 12), it was nearly impossible to perceive a historical morphology in the field of armor and costume, because the ceremonial, symbolic costumes of court and tournament were perpetually absorbing anachronistic historical forms. Any attempt by Dürer or one of his contemporaries to cite a recent costume is today easily mistaken for a citation of a much older costume, or vice versa, because the target costume was itself already citing archaic fashions.

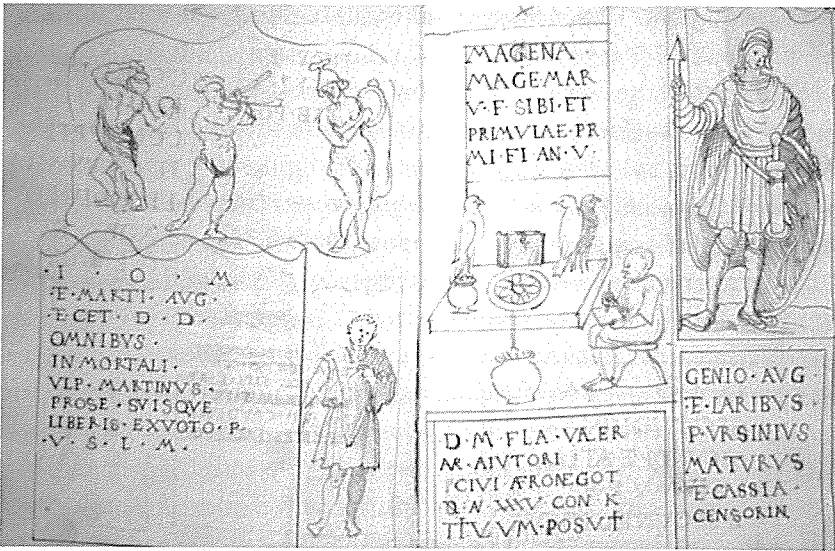
The woodcut *Genealogy* presented itself as the summary of prior iconographic traditions. The beholder was not invited to think of the images as inventions by Hans Burgkmair. Burgkmair would have been understood as an

enabler in this process, not so distinct from Ratdolt the publisher, and the images would have had an authorless, “received” quality. Dürer, by contrast, imposed all his authorial energy on the figures he designed for Maximilian’s tomb. The Ottoprecht above the date 1515 has sprung into vigorous action and looks quite prepared to take on the languid Albrecht IV.

Publication was a destination. Under the responsibility of reducing information to notatable form and then broadcasting it to an anonymous audience, the artist collected the meanderings of the handmade sylloges and the inspirations of the illuminated manuscripts and channeled them toward closed, self-contained, public works. Mantegna and Dürer thought toward the engraving, and their engravings catalyzed the next relay of printmakers. Publication generated more publication. Art was the forcing of an interference between antiquarianism and art, a forced confusion between reference and invention exactly congruent with the confusion that left Celtis and Annius, as scholars, so exposed. Dürer’s project for Ottoprecht, emended after contact with a real Roman soldier—with the substitutional chain—pointed forward to a “print,” not ink on paper but a bronze multiple.

### Fiction and counterfiction

Some time later Dürer came across a document that provoked him to backtrack and reground his drawing, by a slight emendation, in historical fact. An inscription at the top of the Berlin drawing in the artist’s own



107. Antiquarian manuscript, early sixteenth century. Augsburg, Stadt- und Staatsbibliothek, Cim 31, fol. 39. Photo: author.

hand reads, “dis pild ist zw tzili In ein stein gehawen gefunden wordn Im 1516 Jo[r]” (this image was found in Celeia [Cilli] carved in a stone in the year 1516).<sup>189</sup> From the year 1506 Maximilian was collecting at his castle in Graz antiquities excavated at the old Roman settlement of Celeia in Styria (now Slovenia), the seat of a princely court that had sponsored humanistic studies in the fifteenth century.<sup>190</sup> The model that Dürer had before him was possibly a drawing in an antiquarian manuscript owned by Conrad Peutinger, a standing Roman soldier with shield and spear (fig. 107).<sup>191</sup> This page of the manuscript was copied from an unknown Austrian source, presumably by an artist in Peutinger’s employ.<sup>192</sup> Dürer may have seen the manuscript when he was in Augsburg in 1518. A corroborating clue is provided by the French humanist Jean-Jacques Boissard, who was in Augsburg in 1547 and had access to Peutinger’s antiquarian material. Boissard’s

189. Koreny, “Ottoprecht Fürscht,” argued that the inscription about the image found at Celeia in 1516 must refer to another drawing on the top part of the sheet that was later cut away. But the inscription at the top is perfectly centered above the figure of the soldier. If it had belonged to another drawing, Dürer or whoever cut the sheet would have crossed it out to avoid confusion.

190. Primož Simoniti, *Humanizem na Slovenskem in Slovenski Humanisti do srede XVI. stoletja* (Ljubljana, 1979), 284–85 (German summary). Enough remained to inspire a thirteenth-century historian to describe Celeia as an *altera Troja*; Uiblein, “Die Anfänge der Erforschung Carnuntums” [see chap. 4, n. 21], 97.

191. Stadt- und Staatsbibliothek Augsburg, Cim. 31 (= Cod. Halder 26 = Cod. Aug. 656), fol. 39. Peutinger’s hand does not appear in the manuscript, which also contains Spanish material.

192. Fols. 38–46 were credited by Mommsen to “Picturae”; see *CIL* III, 587. Ekkehard Weber, *Die römischen Inschriften der Steiermark* (Graz: Historische Landeskommission für Steiermark, 1969), 18, believes that the illustrations may predate the anonymous *Antiquus Austriacus*, source for many of the Styrian inscriptions in Peutinger’s sylloges and in Apianus and Amantius.

manuscript sylloge now in Stockholm reveals that precisely this soldier relief, now lost, came from Celeia.<sup>193</sup>

When he saw the drawing in Peutingger's manuscript, Dürer recognized, perhaps with satisfaction, that in its basic form the soldier matched his own drawing of 1515. He did make one alteration to his own drawing: he elongated the mace into a spear.<sup>194</sup> Here he departs from the original tomb project, for not a single one of the bronze tomb figures or the figures in Kölderer's parchment scroll carries a spear, nor do any of the ninety-two figures in Burgkmair's woodcut *Genealogy*,<sup>195</sup> whereas every Roman soldier on an ancient tomb relief carries a spear.<sup>196</sup> The drawing in Peutingger's library may well have been the first such monument Dürer had ever seen, since there are no soldier stelae in southern Germany, or at least none have survived.<sup>197</sup> Dürer added the inscription at the top with the archeological information as confirmation of the antique provenance of the weapons and the general posture of his figure.

The tomb project made room for several figures whose very historical existence was uncertain but whom Maximilian's genealogists had recruited into the family, including, besides the Burgundian Ottoprecht, Arthur of Britain and the Ostrogothic chieftain Theodoric, dimly historical figures from the sixth century. It is not clear whether Maximilian was attempting to rescue such figures from mere fictionality, or whether their fictionality was introduced as a deliberate poetical flourish within the tomb's overall rhetoric. The fact that the statues of Ottoprecht, Arthur, and Theodoric were all designed by Albrecht Dürer himself may signal either their special, not quite factual status, or their prestigious historical status.<sup>198</sup> These in-

**193.** Stockholm, National Library, Ms. S68, fol. 153 recto. The page is labeled "Cilia in Stiria." Here the soldier appears on a block together with an inscription beginning "MAGENA," which in the Augsburg manuscript appears to the left of the soldier. *CIL* III, 5255. Boissard's soldier, especially the helmet, is closely related to the drawing in the Augsburg manuscript. On Boissard, see Mommsen in *CIL* III, 1808.

**194.** The prolongation is in paler lines and is clearly not part of the original conception of the mace.

**195.** Every figure in the woodcut *Genealogy* carries sword and scepter; one, Godwinus, has a shield as well.

**196.** On the soldier reliefs in the German provinces, which derive from a northern Italian type, see Harald Hofmann, *Römische Militärgrabsteine der Donauländer = Sonderschriften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien*, vol. 5 (Vienna: Hölder, 1905), 74–75; *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland II*, 5, *Militärische Grabdenkmäler aus Mainz und Umgebung*, nos. 47–52, 71–72; and Sergio Rinaldi Tufi, "'Stehende Soldaten' nella Renania romana: problemi di iconografia e di produzione artistica," *Prospettiva* 38 (1984): 16–29.

**197.** *Corpus signorum imperii Romani, Deutschland I*, 1, *Raetia und Noricum*.

**198.** It is interesting, though, that the participation of Albrecht Altdorfer, an artist with a strong personal style, in the *Triumphal Arch* is undocumented by any source or even by a signature; see Schauerte, *Die Ehrenpforte für Kaiser Maximilian I*, 105–6.



dividuals figured in chivalric epics, the *chansons de geste*, and eventually in the popular retellings of these tales. Their role in historical chronicles was often limited to a symbolic mention near the beginning. By Maximilian's time, as the oral epic tradition was being transformed into something like a literary canon, Arthur and Theodoric, along with the hero Siegfried and other figures, were close to falling into a definitive reification as poetic characters. The quest for Siegfried's bones was structurally homologous to Maximilian's figurative projects. The tomb project could be described as aggressively counterfactual. "Proof" was one of the most important tools at the workbench of illusions. The aim of creative genealogy was to extract the old personalities out of the realm of myth and legend and transfigure them into historical figures. Maximilian was trying to elevate Arthur, no less than Siegfried, to the status of fact and thereby release him from a merely poetic existence.<sup>199</sup> It is just when Maximilian was most intent on mimetic recovery of the real that he appears to be inventing a reality.

To this extent Maximilian's monumental projects resemble the most modern artistic achievements of the day: the vast multimedia retables, combining carved and painted images, and the chapels with their coordinated sacred iconography. All these complex machines offered themselves as dramatizations of realities out of the distant past. These dramatizations were whenever possible guaranteed by material relics or samples of that sacred past. The most receptive medium for experimentation with the rhetoric of likeness was panel painting. In painting, real or spurious facts about physiognomy could be assembled in the most convincing fashion. In a narrative painting, the lifelike face could be juxtaposed to the formulaic or type-controlled face for the strongest contrast. Fictionality is a powerful tool when it is safely nested inside a devotional image. The beholder's imagination is mobilized, but at the same time contained within a secure frame and a conventional function. The altarpiece or epitaph corals stray temporalities and keeps them under control. The device of the realistic portrait embedded in a cult image, sometimes animated with artificial psychological life, was well established in painting. In Jan van Eyck's epitaph of Canon van der Paele (1436), a painting which Maximilian knew from his time in Bruges, the portrait of the canon himself is inserted into the holy company, in a sharing of virtual space, with the Virgin and Child and Sts. Donatian and George. Such a painting stood near the beginning of a tradition of interplay on the painted surface between the temporally anchored portrait of the real individual, the pseudoportrait of the long-dead saint, and the timeless, featureless portrait of the divine personage. Dürer caught Maximilian in just such a web, as we saw, in the *Brotherhood*

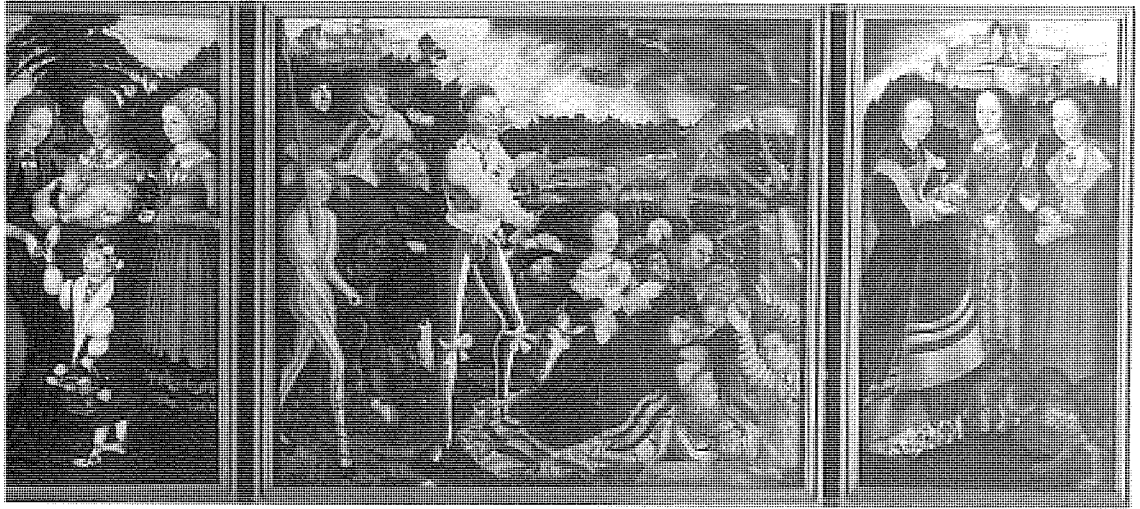
199. Müller, *Gedechnus*, 196.

of the *Rosary* altarpiece. But the bronze effigies of the tomb project are unframed and stand in real space, such that the beholder's experience flows right up against them, colliding with the unreal scale. Neither the painted figure nor the large-scale sculpted figure encased in an altarpiece generates such an effect.

A monumental German altarpiece painted in 1506, the same year that Dürer unveiled his *Brotherhood of the Rosary* in Venice, drove the tension between sacred narrative and descriptive specificity to a pitch. The St. Catherine altarpiece by Lucas Cranach the Elder casts impassive portrait heads in a dramatic scene of martyrdom (fig. 108).<sup>200</sup> The learned maiden Catherine was condemned to death on the wheel by the Roman emperor Maximinus. At the last moment the wheel was shattered by a bolt from heaven and the emperor was forced to summon a swordsman. Catherine's body was carried by angels to Mount Sinai. It was customary to portray the martyrdom as Cranach did in the central panel of his retable, the saint kneeling before the ruined wheel while the executioner behind her reaches for his sword. Cranach has heightened the storm into an apocalyptic blast that drives a cascade of bodies into the lower right corner of the picture. The Roman emperor himself, a burly figure in fur collar and gilded crown to the left of the henchman, cowers under the force of the storm. The storm is a mass of formless color emitting a stylized meandered lightning bolt and a shower of hail. Among the fifteen heads in the central panel, only Catherine herself is a type. She is a generic young woman and resembles the six female saints in the side panels. All the other heads in the central panel have portrait-like features and were based on head studies drawn from life.<sup>201</sup> The observing man at the upper left, unaffected by the storm, is a portrait of the patron, Elector Frederick the Wise. The falling horseman has been identified with some plausibility as the humanist scholar Hans von Schwarzenberg. Some of the other figures must be meant as portraits, though probably not all. The effect of the massing and side-by-side array of characteristic but nameless heads, almost without overlapping, is to actualize the event. The test of the bystander in the face of saintliness is permanently repeated. Heads will tumble again under the storm. The physiognomies are nearly all still and expressionless, registering no alarm. They carry with them the conditions of the drawing from life in the workshop. In the tumult of the narrative, whose overall structure is determined by convention, they are pockets of indexicality, anchoring-points to the real. But their origins in reality remain unspecified. The patch of landscape in

200. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 1906, 126 × 138 cm. Friedländer and Rosenberg, *The Paintings of Lucas Cranach*, no. 14.

201. Drawings for these heads do not survive, however. Cranach's head studies and portraits in gouache and watercolor are catalogued by Jakob Rosenberg, *Die Zeichnungen Lucas Cranachs des Älteren* (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1960), nos. 71–92.



the background, trees and a small cluster of farmhouses, creates the same effect. Landscape and heads offer pure referentiality, referentiality without reference. Structurally it is the same as the Maximilian tomb.

Fiction is the contrivance of a hypothetical reality, out of ingredients drawn from reality but displaced and condensed into text or work. The fiction is a virtual reality that is placed beside reality for purposes of comparison, ludic argument, delight, or utopian projection. In the Middle Ages the *chansons de geste*, or heroic epics, and allegorized courtly romances were main arenas for an emerging concept of the fictional text, marking the beginnings of the institution of the literary fiction in modern European culture. In prefatory material and asides within the poems, and occasionally in extrapoetical texts, fiction was defined as a category standing between *res gesta* or accounts of real deeds, and *res ficta* or fabulous and unheard of inventions, even outright lies. Fiction was theorized as *res ficta quae tamen fieri potuit*, the invention that nevertheless might have been true.<sup>202</sup>

For a long time there was no equivalent to this theoretical niche in the plastic arts. Painters, like poets, could employ their fantasy to invent monsters and other things unseen and unreal. In classical poetics, the impossible monster had been the emblem of fictionality itself (Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 9–10). Artists pointed to their own freedom to invent with marginal drolleries and monstrous sculpted hybrids.<sup>203</sup> The drolleries acted like a lightning rod, suggesting that if this is what pictures that tell lies look like, all

108. Lucas Cranach, *Martyrdom of St. Catherine*, 1506, oil on panel. Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.

202. On the self-theorization of medieval fiction, see the essays by Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, "Wie fiktional war der höfische Roman?"; and Hans Robert Jauss, "Zur historischen Genese der Scheidung von Fiktion und Realität," in *Funktionen des Fiktiven (= Poetik und Hermeneutik*, 10), ed. Dieter Henrich and Wolfgang Iser (Munich: Fink, 1983), 423–31, 433–40.

203. Lilian M. C. Randall, *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

the other figurations must be telling the truth. The drolleries and chimeras were set off in sharp contrast to what was overwhelmingly the main task of art, that is, the recovery of the real, or truth-telling. The drolleries and the monstrosities were conspicuously “make-believe,” the results of an imaginative, often violent, transposition of the natural data, involving cross-breeding and hyperbole. In the Middle Ages, art could tell the truth or it could tell lies, but it was not clear what lay between. Images were not permitted to select elements of the real and then reshape those elements into hypothetical worlds, worlds which might have been but were not. There was no legitimating category for fiction that might have provided for the institutional recognition of fictional pictures. Print helped create that category, for Love Gardens and other profane images developed by the early engraving drew their iconography from profane mural paintings, tapestry, and book illumination. Such iconography emerged out of the elite reading and listening circles that cultivated the epics and romances. By extracting the image of a fantasy-world from private living quarters and putting it into ordinary people’s hands, prints for the first time introduced to a non-elite public a categorically fictional image that could stand alone and not only as a pleasant background to existence. The profane engravings were the precondition for the first independent fictional paintings on panel or canvas by Altdorfer, Giorgione, and others.

At Maximilian’s tomb, the building blocks of fictionality—animation in time and an excess of predication—were by-products of the tremendous, unsustainable pressure of trying to sustain the referential, nonfictional project, the tomb scene. The excess of predication generated by the forgery of colossal portrait effigies served as a placeholder for the rhetoric of the real as it would emerge later within the pictorial fiction. In 1519, at the time of the emperor’s death, all one had was a small company of large statues going through the motions of fictionality, but to counterfactual ends. The forgery system had managed to contain fictionality and contingency of this sort within its replication chains. The system buoyed the contingency with the powerful presumption that the models must be old, or rooted somehow in the origin. The forgery paradigm exploited fictionality as a spur to the imagination, even as the forgeries itself were pointing with all their might away from fiction and toward the real. Forgery in its drive to fabricate facts and fill the gaps in the record of reality ended up sponsoring a kind of rehearsal for the fully developed fictionality that would eventually find its cultural place within the modern institution of the pictorial artwork.

If the effigy at Maximilian’s tomb with its superfluous temporality was an accidental preformation of the modern work of art, then its mirror image is the modern portrait whose occasionality interferes with its identity

as artwork. The bronze statue at Innsbruck was a referential artifact diverted by an overzealous rhetoric of the real into pointless fictionality. The modern portrait-as-artwork is a fiction forced back into an awkward referential relation to reality. For under the aesthetic paradigm, the intention to portray amounts to an unacceptable “irruption of time into the game.”<sup>204</sup>

Maximilian’s attempts to test untestable claims were a grotesque reversal of the poetic process. The frontier between fact and poetry that print had helped establish interfered with the suturing operation undertaken by the three-dimensional colossus. The statue referred to nothing. Print had transferred the suturing power to the author or the image-maker; everything was now routed through this creative node. The authorial node replaced the old centerless network sustained by a faith in the unseeable tethers at its edges. Maximilian tried to resuture the statue to the bodies of his ancestors and to an distant origin time, first through the excavation, then through his monumental projects, which all involved replication technology, either print or bronze. One of the side-effects of Maximilian’s reverse poetry is that it disclosed the folly of the relic cult. Replication technology thus inflamed the very crisis that it was meant to solve.

Maximilian’s tomb project had no afterlife. It is a powerful spectacle, yet no European ruler tried to match it. Maximilian’s genealogy was incompatible with, but not unrelated to, one of the dominant political fictions that was emerging in this period and that would shape state-building for centuries, namely, the “myth of nations,” or the idea of the mystical continuity of a people backward in time.<sup>205</sup> The myth of nations was basically the overlay of genealogical thinking onto the idea of popular sovereignty. This myth, an alternative to pure dynastic politics, appealed to the German humanists. The successful modern political systems were those that learned to manage fictionality and spectacle, even to exploit the category confusion between predication and representation. There is a path, crooked but a path, between Maximilian’s strategy and such systems. No one was more conscious than Maximilian himself of the contingency of his empire and his authority, their lack of deep origins. His power was a contrivance of labels backed up by paper and bronze rather than iron and gold. He compensated for the contrivance with more contrivance, a forged notational system overlaid on top of the political fiction. He was providing facts, in his view, and to that extent his antiquarianism can be understood as a modernizing force. Maximilian was mobilizing material

204. Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 140; *Truth and Method*, 130, echoing the subtitle of Carl Schmitt’s essay on *Hamlet* (1956).

205. Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

evidence against received authority, against mere legend and lore, and against the crass rule of might and force and wealth. Maximilian was asking people to look through the *reality*—his poverty and tenuous hold on current events—and instead perceive the historical *truth* of his lineage. In some ways his archeological and referential approach was rational, scientific, materialist, and scholarly.

But in the event, the project was a cultural dead end, and this was not just a matter of people literally overlooking the tomb because it was incomplete.<sup>206</sup> Subsequent European princes developed new theoretical frameworks for their sovereignty, no longer based strictly in genealogy, but for example in divine right, an idea that had not yet been hatched in Maximilian's time. For the rest of Europe and for most Renaissance princes, allegory came to replace a real genealogical connection to ancestors. Maximilian's "error" was trying to mobilize for his own political aims a system that had developed mainly in the context of the cultural legitimation of sacred images and buildings. The magical claims of the *ex voto* and the relic were debunked by the critical edge of church reform exactly at the moment when Maximilian was trying to put those claims to work for himself.

Maximilian's tomb project is a work suspended between two epochal models of portraiture, beginning as archaic effigy magic but ending as modern political spectacle, a monument that is satisfied (or ought to be satisfied) merely to be a persuasive representation. Maximilian himself may well have persisted, quixotically, in believing in effigy magic, that is, in mistaking representation for identity, but the works themselves were already attending to the business of representation, developing every possible fictional device and addressing themselves to potential beholders. They were already fully engaged in the spectacular promotion of a political argument, retaining the magical format—the colossal scale, the bronze—in order to mobilize that format as just another rhetorical device. The scale, the prestigious material, the real and spurious physiognomic resemblance, all this is reduced in the new disenchanted regime to being a mere set of signs of the magical. The magical work begins instead to make its way in the world through a repertoire of merely rhetorical maneuvers.

**206.** One monument that did not ignore Maximilian's project was the tomb at the Escorial with the figures by Pompeo Leoni of Charles V and Philip II, Maximilian's grandson and great-grandson; see Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, fig. 355.

# 7 RE-ENACTMENT

## Virtual pilgrimage

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In the eleventh or twelfth centuries Europeans learned, or relearned, how to trap time under a net of artifacts, not only documentary images and objects, the tombs, portraits, relics and reliquaries, founder books, dedication images, inscriptions, and genealogies, but also the icons, statuary, altarpieces, and pictorial narratives of history ancient and modern, Christian and dynastic and civic, in all media, and indeed the sacred and secular rituals themselves, which were a kind of artifact fashioned in the media of gesture and space. Fabricated bodies fastened themselves to absent bodies by excess of predication, that is, a display of facts about the phenomenal body beyond any possible real knowledge of that absent referent's appearance. Still other artificial bodies, purged of predication, spoke a supposedly timeless iconic language transcending any local dialect of the image. Each of these rhetorics attempted to force the artifact into unbreakable contact with its authoritative origin. The repertoire of referential artifacts was a collective memory. And on the surface, little had changed by the late fifteenth century. The basic institutions of society were still in place. The rituals and artifacts asserted their own immutability and permanence. In 1500, the distant reference points of ancient pagan and early Christian culture were still stable, only a little more distant.

But in fact nothing was the same. The patterns and pacing of communication had changed since the eleventh century, beyond recognition. The clergy, especially the friars of the mendicant orders in the cities, did more and more public preaching, often with a contemporary political edge. Pamphlets, tracts, almanacs, calendars, broadsheets, how-to manuals,

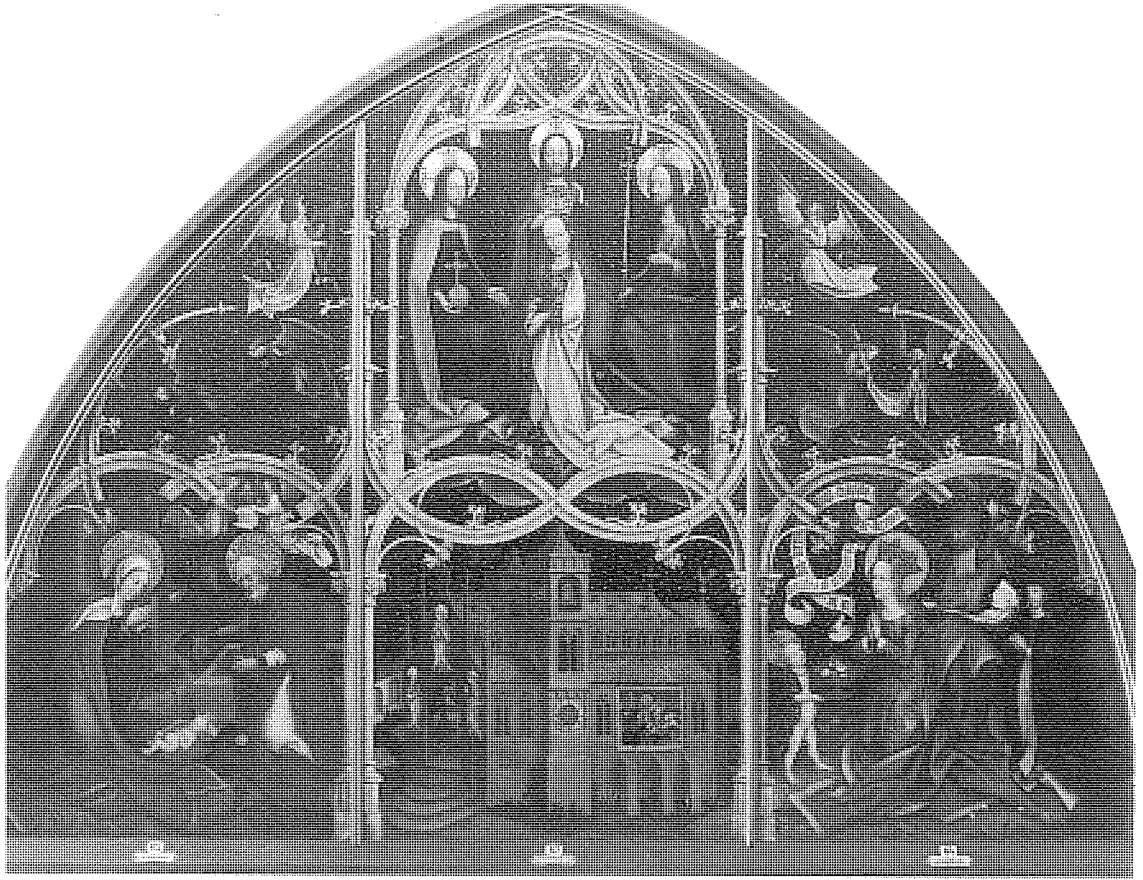
chronicles, vernacular versions of the pagan classics were circulating from town to town, bringing distant news and opinions into sudden sharp focus. An incendiary sermon was captured in print and made available for pennies, in towns miles distant, only weeks later. The accelerating medial technology introduced the tone of urgency in so many chronicles and satires of the period. The immemorial worries about war and judgment, crops and corruption, were now amplified and repeated a thousand times, now wrapped in the deceptive authority of the printed word and printed image.

The institutions of the period that depended most on fictions of continuity and stability, church and Empire, tried to control the flow of opinion and argument by recovering, and if necessary inventing, the model of a stable, integrated premodern culture. This was the image of the better days, the time of the forefathers. Cleric and prince attempted to guide modern life into a pattern of imitation of twelfth- and thirteenth-century life, the time of the founders of the monasteries, the heroic princes who defended Christianity on its eastern borders, the chivalric epics that recorded the deeds of the courtly tribe. The most beautiful costumes, the most dazzling suits of armor, the grandest churches, the most pious cult images all belonged to this epoch. No doubt it always seemed that the previous age, the age just before our own, was the last still living in true continuity with antiquity. But now everyone could repeat that sad fact to one another constantly, in print, and so it seemed more true than ever.

Paintings, repositories of referential forms, tried to reattach modern life to the past. The nuns of the Dominican convent of St. Catherine in Augsburg ordered for their chapter house six enormous panels, painted portraits of the basilicas of Rome, in connection with a papal indulgence of 1487 licensing them to perform virtual Rome pilgrimages. The pilgrimage to Rome was a spatial challenge but also a form of time travel, for it put ordinary Christians in the footsteps of apostles, martyrs, the earliest popes, Constantine, and the penitent emperors. The nuns of St. Catherine, however, daughters of the patriciate, had surrendered their physical freedom and could not leave their building. The inaugural panel, dated 1499 and painted by the city's leading painter, Hans Holbein, represented the fifteenth-century basilica S. Maria Maggiore, the mother of all Marian churches (fig. 109).<sup>1</sup> As with all the subsequent panels, the portrait of the basilica

1. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung, on deposit in Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen, Staatsgalerie in der Katharinenkirche, inv. no. 5335, 204 × 111 cm. Lieb and Stange, *Hans Holbein der Ältere*, no. 15. On the series as a whole, see J. E. Weis-Liebersdorf, *Das Jubeljahr 1500 in der Augsburger Kunst* (Munich: Allgemeine Verlagsgesellschaft, 1901); Gisela Goldberg et al., *Staatsgalerie Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen*, vol. 1, *Altdeutsche Gemälde*





itself is surrounded by narrative scenes, in this case the Nativity, the Coronation of the Virgin, and the Martyrdom of St. Dorothy. Each panel has the shape of a pointed arch to fit the bays of the chapter house. Their scale is vast, as large as the largest painted altarpieces. Holbein's portrait of S. Maria Maggiore is general to the extreme. He imagines a three-aisled basilica in reddish stone, with flanking towers and a semicircular apse. The façade is gabled and pinnacled, the windows either round-arched or lightly pointed. Outside on the wall is a large image of St. George and the Dragon, presumably to be understood as a fresco. None of this has anything to do with the basilica in Rome. Holbein had never been to Rome and, it would seem, could not even rely on a description.

109. Hans Holbein the Elder, *Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore*, 1499, oil on panel. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung, on deposit in Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen, Staatsgalerie in der Katharinenkirche.

(Munich: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, 1988), 129–58; Martin Schawe, *Rom in Augsburg: Die Basilikabilder aus dem Katharinenkloster* (Augsburg: Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung, n.d.); Magdalene Gärtner, *Römische Basiliken in Augsburg: Nonnenfrömmigkeit und Malerei um 1500* (Augsburg: Wissner, 2002), esp. 17–28, on the indulgence and on virtual pilgrimages; and Katharina Krause, *Hans Holbein der Ältere* (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2002), 290–99.

The second commission, the Basilica of St. Peter, went to Hans Burgkmair (fig. 110).<sup>2</sup> Burgkmair, more interested than Holbein in truth to his Roman model, built the panel around an image of an enthroned St. Peter in front of the façade of old St. Peter's. The façade is low and wide with an unadorned pediment and three plain windows without internal tracery. The right side aisle is punctured by a white marble door frame, faced with vine scrolls and vases, whose pediment is inscribed: ALEXANDE [R] BORGIA P[A]PA VI PONT[IFEX] MAX[IMUS] ANNO JVBELI. Through the door one spies a black twisted column with vine scrolls in relief. Here Burgkmair is following woodcut book illustrations or travelers' verbal descriptions of the Porta Santa, which was indeed to be found on the right-hand side of the façade, and of the Colonna Santa. Pope Alexander VI had renovated the Porta Santa in 1499 in anticipation of the Jubilee of 1500, at which time the door was opened for the first time, according to legend, in its history. The twisted column, meanwhile, is one of the twelve that Constantine brought from Ephesos for his basilica. An inscription of 1438 at St. Peter's describes them as spoils from the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> Originally the twisted columns supported the pergola over the shrine of St. Peter in the crossing. Later they were dispersed, and around 1500 one in particular was mounted independently as the column against which the youthful Christ had leaned while teaching in the temple. Eleven of the twelve have survived to today; all but four have vine scrolls; and they are white, not black as in Burgkmair's architectural portrait.

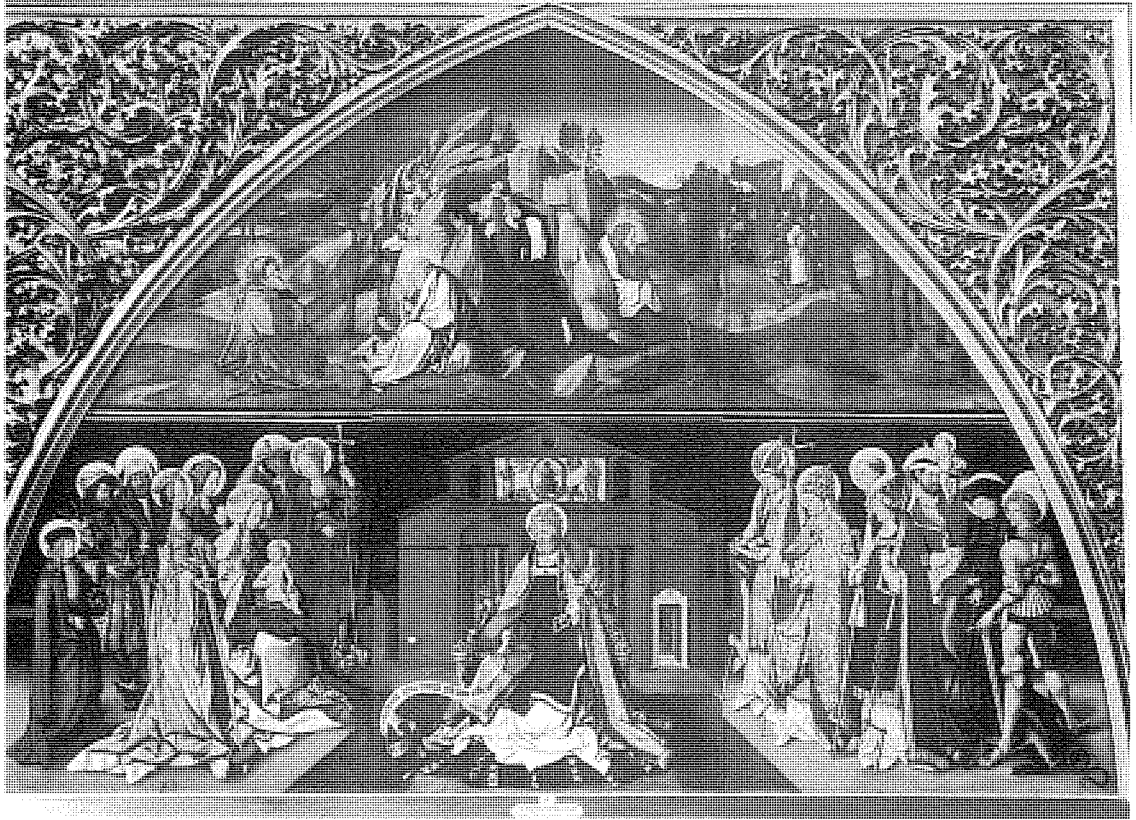
In the pediment Burgkmair reproduces the eighth-century mosaic of the Maesta Domini on the face of the atrium of old St. Peter's. He shows Christ enthroned in a mandorla and flanked by Peter and Paul and symbols of the evangelists. Here he has tried to capture an obsolete iconography and—even in Rome—an obsolete medium, mosaic on gold ground.<sup>4</sup> The citation of the mosaic must be based on a traveler's drawing. Burgkmair reproduces even the effect of mosaic by drawing a fine-meshed grid over the whole scene. Just as Raphael was to do in his historical portrait of the mosaic in his mural painting *Fire in the Borgo* in the Vatican Stanze (1514), Burgkmair abbreviates the mosaic, reducing it from two registers to one.

The other basilical portraits in the cycle do not map so cleanly onto their referents. Burgkmair painted two more, S. Giovanni Laterano (1502) and S. Croce in Gerusalemme (1504), Holbein did S. Paolo fuori le mura

2. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung, on deposit in Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen, Staatsgalerie in der Katharinenkirche, inv. no. 5341, 227 × 130 cm.

3. Naredi-Rainer, *Solomos Tempel und das Abendland* [see chap. 2, n. 39], 139–52.

4. The ancient art of mosaic was out of use in Rome since the fourteenth century. It was revived in the first decade of the sixteenth century by Cardinal Bernardino Carvajal in the Helena chapel at the basilica of S. Croce in Gerusalemme and a decade later by Agostino Chigi in his chapel at S. Maria del Popolo.



(c. 1504); a sixth, compressing S. Lorenzo and S. Sebastiano into one image (1502), was signed by an unknown master, LF. Some of these scenes involve remarkable landscapes or genre-like anecdotes, but none is anchored to its Roman model. Burgkmair did introduce several archeologically oriented details. In the Crucifixion in the S. Croce panel, the Madonna's costume conforms to the conventions of the Luke *Madonna*, with gold-bordered blue cloak and a gold star on the shoulder, just as in contemporary copies and adaptations by Holbein and others of the S. Maria del Popolo icon (see figs. 19, 21). This was practical archeology, the historical and authoritative icon used as an instrument to correct modern conventions. The architectural portrait below resembles the triple-apsed medieval basilicas of the Rhineland more than it does a Roman church, reinforcing the hypothesis that the imperial basilicas of Speyer and Worms were understood in the Renaissance to stand in reliable substitutional relationships to ancient buildings. For S. Croce in Gerusalemme was known to be an ancient building, a foundation of St. Helena herself.<sup>5</sup> The proposition that Burgkmair,

110. Hans Burgkmair, *Basilica of St. Peter*, after 1500, oil on panel. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung, on deposit in Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen, Staatsgalerie in der Katharinenkirche.

5. The church that stood in Rome in Burgkmair's time was constructed in the twelfth century. Nothing survives of the fourth-century structure, which belonged to an imperial palace, except the Helena Chapel beneath the choir. The interior and the façade were then remodeled in the eighteenth century.

when he cited a Romanesque basilica, was effectively citing antiquity, is perhaps more acceptable when the citation is juxtaposed to a citation of a Byzantine Madonna. Burgkmair's *Madonna* copied the icon at S. Maria del Popolo which was itself was a copy of (a copy of) a panel at the monastery of the Hodegoi in Constantinople allegedly painted by Luke but whose true age was unknown. The Constantinopolitan icon was famous by the ninth century but cannot be traced much further back.<sup>6</sup>

In the S. Giovanni Laterano panel Burgkmair twice cited the profile medal of Christ, the Quattrocento invention that he like many others seemed to have understood as standing in some reliable or substitutional relation to antique images of Christ, indeed to Christ himself. In the basilica painting, the Christ of the central Flagellation scene and of the left-hand scene with the Calling of St. John are both shown in near profile and have the high brow and uncovered ear of the medal. Here again Burgkmair anticipated Raphael, just as he did by citing the St. Peter's mosaic in the basilical panel; for in the tapestry of the *Miraculous Draught of Fishes* for the Sistine Chapel (1514–1515) Raphael would also quote the profile medal as if it had antique-rooted authority. Later, as we have seen, Burgkmair would publish the profile in three woodcuts, in each case accompanied by the text of the spurious "Lentulus" letter describing Christ's appearance (figs. 46–47). In one of the woodcuts Burgkmair will reproduce the medal itself. Here the frame and context of the authoritative information, the supposedly ancient artifact itself, will become an object of inquiry. The index or pointer is subject to scrutiny. The question of the reliability of the pointer is brought into the image, and beholders are allowed to decide for themselves. This shift from use of the contents of the authoritative source to reproduction of the authoritative source itself recapitulates the overall dynamic of the historical moment. From this perspective, the citations of ancient artifacts in Burgkmair's Dominican pictures, church façades, and mosaics and icons alike, start to stand out *as* citations. By their very precision they signal their own connection with a competing context outside the picture frame and outside the convent, namely the delights of contemporary antiquarian and archeological research as pursued by Peutinger and others. This was the opposite of the intended effect of the citations, which was to reinforce the architectural portraits, concrete anchorages for the imaginative life of the housebound nuns.

The open door of Holbein's S. Maria Maggiore (fig. 109) reveals a pilgrim kneeling before a panel painting of the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine. In

6. Striedter, "Hans Holbein der Ältere und die deutschen Wiederholungen des Gnadenbildes" (see chap. 3, n. 84), 252–67. The icon disappeared in 1453.

the panel of S. Giovanni Laterano, Burgkmair depicted on the main altar of the basilica a gold round-arched relief with the Crucified and Mary. Such glimpses of the scene of worship deep inside an artifact that was itself the focus of worship were by no means unique at the time. At one level, the embedded scene serves as a set of accompanying instructions, a “user’s guide” to the cult image. As representations of historical worship became more finely differentiated, involving as do Burgkmair’s (not Holbein’s) scenes an acute eye for the historicity of form, the didactic function of the embedded cult image took on greater complexity. The image nested within the image spoke of the historical duration and cultural flexibility of Christian cult practices. At another level, however, the device of the image-within-the-image contributed to the distancing of painting as an art from cultic practice. The nesting of the image initiated a *paragone* or comparison inside painting itself, a pitting of one function of painting against another. The modern painting was displaying its capacity for reflection, which the simple cult image, supposedly, for all its stolid virtues, did not possess.<sup>7</sup> Such painting offered itself as a metatext situated just outside the cult. Through reflection, painting signaled its own willingness to rival poetry, just as the secular romance of the high medieval courts, only a few centuries earlier, had established itself as *literature*, and no longer as the mere recounting of basically true stories, through the devices of authorial interventions and self-regarding prefatory material. Painting had to theorize itself in the fifteenth century because no one else was doing it. The few fifteenth-century thoughts on painting committed to writing offered an incomplete picture of what painting was capable of or where it came from.

The project of sacred antiquarianism began to unravel as soon as it commenced. Substitution had worked better when it was imprecise, when the chains and families of centrally planned buildings described by Krautheimer were held together by a rough geometry. As the replicas converged on visuality and accuracy, on one-to-one mapping, they lost psychological force. The radicalization of the substitutional project was its own undoing, and only created a sharper desire for the old continuities. Now it was feared those continuities may never even have existed. In the twelfth century the chain that linked a painted portrait of the Virgin to St. Luke was asserted by proclamation and by ritual. In the fifteenth century, anxious clerics

7. On reflection or self-reference as the criterion of modern (i.e., post-Renaissance) art, see Luhmann, *Art as a Social System* [see chap. 1, n. 47]; Rudolf Preimesberger, “Zu Jan van Eycks Diptychon der Sammlung Thyssen-Bornemisza,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 54 (1991): 459–89; Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Klaus Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren: Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich: Fink, 2001).

prepared formal historiographical treatises laying out the proofs of the icons' antiquity and invidiously comparing one icon to another.<sup>8</sup>

The concept of "virtual pilgrimage" that the Augsburg basilica cycle was predicated on belongs to the same pattern. The Dominican nuns earned an indulgence—time off from Purgatory—if they performed certain prayers at certain places in the convent. The promise of a transfer of the unique efficacy of a place to another place stood behind some of the earliest replicas of the Basilica or Rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre, or of the Holy Sepulchre itself, in the West. Not until the later Middle Ages was the idea of topographic transferability institutionalized. Indulgences attached to surrogate pilgrimage sites, for those who could not or would not visit the true site, were introduced in the time of Boniface IX, the late fourteenth century. The virtual pilgrimage was formalized in the late fifteenth century by Pope Innocent VIII, the same who gave the Augsburg Dominicans their privilege, when he also granted an indulgence to visitors to the Franciscan convent of Villingen, where the abbess Ursula Haider had replicated some 210 holy sites.<sup>9</sup> The indulgence made the visit to the replica tantamount to the visit to the real site, simply by fiat. The virtual pilgrimage was a wild, unjustifiable literalization of substitutional thinking. Such arbitrariness removed the necessity for awkward, forced accommodations of the pilgrimage experience to the ordinary, homebound worshiper's experience. The Nuremberg patrician Hans Tucher, for instance, in his written account of his Jerusalem pilgrimage, continually assures the reader that a tour of the complicated Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre corresponds at every turn to a tour of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century church of St. Sebald in Nuremberg, even though St. Sebald "dem tempel nit gancz gleich ist" (as anyone who has visited both churches will readily attest).<sup>10</sup> Tucher, unwilling and unlicensed to make the simple magical assertion that St. Sebald "is" the Holy Sepulchre, instead tries to compare the two experiences point by point, hoping by this means to realize the pilgrimage in the minds of his readers.

8. For example, the treatise of 1464 by one Giovanni Baptista, a canon of S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, on the icons of St. Luke in churches in or near Rome; Anna Cavallaro, "Il rinnovato culto delle icone nella Roma del Quattrocento," in *L'arte di Bisanzio e l'Italia al tempo dei Paleologi, 1261-1453*, ed. Antonio Iacobini and Mauro della Valle (Rome: Argos, 1999), 285; and Wolf, *Salus Populi Romani* [see chap. 2, n. 27], 213-20.

9. Renate Stegmaier-Breinlinger, "'Die hailigen Stett Rom und Jerusalem': Reste einer Ablassammlung im Bickenkloster in Villingen," *Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv* 91 (1971): 176-201. On virtual pilgrimage, see Kathryn M. Rudy, "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, Bibliothèque de L' Arsenal MS 212," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63 (2000): 494-515; and Annabel Jane Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 97-143.

10. Herz, *Die 'Reise ins Gelobte Land' Hans Tuchers des Älteren (1479-1480)* [see chap. 2, n. 49], 390-405, esp. 391.

There is strictly no historical evidence that the Augsburg *paintings* ever became virtual pilgrimage sites, the literal focal points for the indulgence-winning prayers. The text of the indulgence itself said nothing about paintings, but rather expressly said, “Eben dieselbe ablass auch erlangen mogen, da sye in Ihre Kloster trey orth so ihnen durch die zu sollicher Zeit anwesende Priorin bestimmt werde besuche, Und an iedem derselben drey Vatter Unser Und drey Englische gruss andechtiglich sprechen.”<sup>11</sup> That is, one needed only to visit three places in the convent, to be specified by the prioress. The paintings may have merely been visual documents or monuments of the indulgence. It is easy to imagine, yet impossible to prove, that in the lives of the nuns the paintings *became* the Roman basilicas. If that were the case, then accurate representation would have come to create place by way of a sliding over of the substitutional movement from architecture into painting, a slide that had no theological basis. For theologically the paintings by Burgkmair and Holbein were only supplements to the virtual pilgrimage. They had no role to play in salvation. And yet there they were, in the chapter house, before the eyes and in the short-term memory of every nun, and so were somehow psychologically involved in the whole enterprise of virtual pilgrimage, wherever it was supposed to take place.

The paintings helped convent dwellers reiterate (travel again) a pilgrimage that others had taken. But then every pilgrimage, even the one involving a physical journey, is a re-enactment of someone else’s pilgrimage. Re-enactment always entails difference. The point of interest is where the re-enactment slips a gear—where there is a medial shift, a transfer of meaning from original building to replicated building to painted building. Every declension in medium raised new problems and doubts. At first one had architectural mock-ups of the holy sites, with a principled insistence on *gleichnuss* or equivalence; now one has only paintings. Paintings were at least (more or less) immobile. Prints, the irresistible next step, made it much harder to sustain the fiction of preservation of identity. Medium transfers themselves came to symbolize the difference between culture and the re-enactment of culture. The printed image carried a double message about mediation. Print was the medium that held out the promise, just by being technological, of the continued possibility of frictionless transmission, that is, successful substitution. Since its origins a century earlier, print had made inexpensive surrogates for painted cult images available to ordinary consumers. At the same time, by transferring its painted model, the previous link in the chain, to the fragile and sensually spare state of black ink stamped on white paper, print signaled the intervention

11. The text of the papal bull exists only in a German translation in an eighteenth-century manuscript; see Schawe, *Rom in Augsburg*, 21–22, for the complete text.

of technology and the possibility of loss, corruption, and noise. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the printed image was contributing, as it had been for four decades, to a public, open-ended archive of information not only about archeological finds, but also topography, current events, botany, architecture, engineering, and alphabets. Half of the meaning of this new knowledge was the very fact of its availability. Knowledge that until then had been hard of access was suddenly lying on the table under one's own roof. The world in print came accompanied by the implicit inscription: *this is knowledge framed for use*. The medium transfer *was* the message. Print was a hinge mechanism that made both cultural arguments at once, the one against substitution and the one for it.

### Devotion folded over on itself

The perpetual repackaging of relics, in hopes of generating new pilgrimage targets, accelerated in the last decades of the fifteenth century. The Swiss town of Solothurn recollected its link to the slaughter of an entire Roman legion, the so-called "Theban" legion, who had converted en masse to Christianity and were accordingly executed, by a process of successive decimations, by Emperor Maximian in the year 286. The bones of the martyrs and their leader St. Maurice were discovered in 350 in the town of St. Maurice (Roman Agaunum) in the Valais. In the tenth century the relics of seventeen men found in Solothurn were identified as Theban legionnaires. Mass graves could feed a relic cult for centuries, as realized Cologne, Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "town of monks and bones," when the remains of the eleven thousand companions of St. Ursula surfaced in the early twelfth century. A report of 1469 predicted that the bones of all sixty-six Thebans supposedly martyred in Solothurn (1 percent of the entire legion) would one day be found.<sup>12</sup> And only four years later thirty-seven more bodies, "completely unexpectedly" according to the contemporary report, were found during repairs to the St. Peter's Chapel. Elevation to the status of relics required papal approval. The clerics of Solothurn, forensic scientists, argued that the new skeletons matched the ones found in the tenth century in size, that they appeared to be sturdy soldiers, and that several missing heads pointed to decapitation. In the ends, the bones were authenticated and blessed by Giuliano della Rovere, bishop of Lausanne, nephew of Pope Sixtus IV, and himself the future pope Julius II. Some of the bones were sent to Basel, where they were identified as the relics of St. Ursus, a patron saint of Solothurn whose fate had been blended in legend with that of the

12. Hans Morgenthaler, "Die Auffindung und Erhebung der Thebäer-Reliquien in Solothurn 1473-74," *Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Kirchengeschichte* 17 (1923): 161-81.



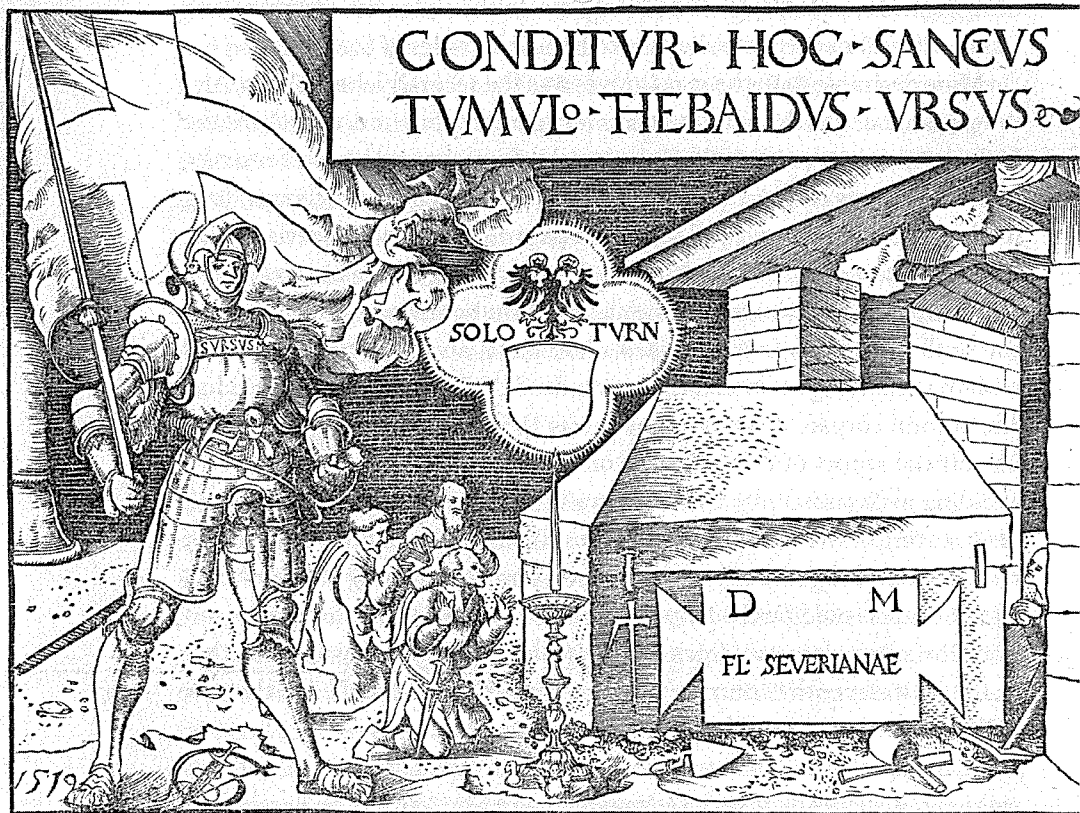
Theban legion. In 1479 twelve more skeletons were found in Solothurn, bringing the total to the predicted sixty-six. In the 1480s the sculptor Hans Gessner fashioned a bust reliquary to house the relics of St. Ursus.<sup>13</sup>

More desirable than the mass graves was the securely labeled body. And in 1519, amazingly, the Solothurners were granted that find. On 5 April the high altar of the church of St. Ursus was broken up to make way for a new one. The diggers found a stone sarcophagus sealed with iron clamps, long hidden. This was the recycled tomb of a pagan child, Flavia Severiana, like the sarcophagi of St. Afra and St. Ulrich in Augsburg a Roman tomb of the third century. It contained the remains of two bodies wrapped in silk. In the skull of one was found a rolled silver plate, an *authenticum*, stamped with the satisfying news that this was indeed the body of Ursus Thebaidus. The second corpse, it was assumed, was Ursus's companion, St. Victor. The official report of the discovery omitted to mention the second body, avoiding awkward conflict with the well-known fact that St. Victor had been resting in Geneva for a millennium. The new-found body of Ursus, of course, invalidated the supposed discovery and enshrining of his relics in 1473, but this could not be helped. The identity of the new corpse was certain. The silver plate, two lines of majuscules, was obviously ancient (that is, tenth or eleventh century). The sarcophagus was reinstalled in the new high altar and made visible through an aperture.

The archeological find was also published in broadsheet form, and this was new. The large page with German text and woodcut by the Basel artist Urs Graf (1485–after 1529) was the earliest published report of the discovery in Solothurn (fig. 111).<sup>14</sup> The page was printed in Basel (Solothurn had no press). The text below recounts the discovery and makes direct reference to the image above, describing the silver *authenticum* “als hie ob verzeichnet ist.” The panel above, surreal, depicts the soldier Ursus with the banner of the legion standing near his own sarcophagus, described by Graf exactly as it is, with its peaked lid, an inscribed *tabula ansata*, and a supplementary inscribed cross to the left (added perhaps at the time of the initial entombment of Ursus in the tenth or eleventh century, when the metal label was prepared). Over the sarcophagus looms, gigantic, the broken altar mensa. The whole scene seems staged in a crypt, however, with bits of rubble on the ground and a single column at the left rear. Several devout, clerical and lay, diminutive, kneel in wonder. Graf applied the date 1519 and

13. Bruno Weber, “Die Auffindung des heiligen Ursus’: Ein unbekannt gebliebene Holzschnitt von Urs Graf (1519),” *Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 34 (1977): 261–79, here 262n38.

14. Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, Graphische Sammlung, PAS II 25/7, 32.1 × 26.4 cm (woodcut 17.9 × 24.2 cm). The Zurich impression, discovered only in 1976, is apparently a unicum. Weber, “Die Auffindung des heiligen Ursus.”



**I**n dem iar als man zalt nach Christj vnser herze geburt tuft  
 fünfhundert vnd Vnntzenen hat es sich begeben durch gottes ordnung das ein loblich Capitel  
 versamlung der Erwürdigen Herren Chorherren der stift Solothurn /den almächtigen Gott /sü  
 würdigen müter dem gnadrichen marterer vñ Ritter sant Ursen mit sampe seiner gseltschafft / Et  
 dem gāzen himelischen her zu lob vnd ere /den Fronaltar in die Chor ab hat lassen Brechen vñ  
 besser gschicklichkeit ein müwen ze Bauen /ist gefundē mitten in dem Altar vermuret ein grab nach  
 zeugung dieser figur mit Inuen klāmeren wol bewarret /hand die erwūrdigen vor genāren Herren  
 geistlichen /die sach durch vñsig vorbetrachtung den Frōmen vesten fürsichtigen vnd wisen her  
 Schulefessen vnd Narren der star Solothurn anbracht entlichen des grab erlich vffheben vff den sechsten tag des Aprre  
 In by wesen erlicher der Capitel herren /Duch des Rats dar zu verordnet /darin gefunden ( Wōnschlischer Tachtmuss vñ  
 send ) Wein zweier cōrpel in einem sidnen Thūck In dem einen houpt schūdel ein silberen Inen geschlagnen zedel / an welch  
 gestampft ist ein vers in Latin also hie ob verzeichner ist lue zu Thūsch Also in diesem grab ist verborgen der heilig Vrs  
 Thebea ) dar nach hat man gott dem almächtigen andechtig rancet mit dem lob gesang Te Deum Laudamus / In an  
 gesungen / von dem woluerdienten Strengen Ritter Christj sant Ursen / vnd seiner gseltschafft /welchen wir bitten ein fürsped  
 ze sin der Frōmen statt Solothurn vnd aller ir zu gehōrd /dere ..... dar zu gemeine Lidgnoschafft ze best  
 ügen vnd Bschürmen vor allen iren stenden / vnd zwitrache Inen vernūfft vnd wisseit Verlichende in allen irem regimē  
 Besserig des lubs vñ der sele Vnd nach diesem leben allen Christjglaubigē mōnsche begilfflich ze sin zu der ewigen seligkeit

Gott sig lob vnd danck der so wunderbartich ist  
 In sinem helgen vnd heilig in allen sine wercken

his monogram with dagger on the ground beneath the martial Ursus, the very name-saint of the artist.

By describing the tomb so scrupulously, Urs Graf relays the reach of the relics one station farther, permitting purchasers of the print in Basel and beyond to peer over the shoulders of the kneeling Solothurners. Here he repeats the move of the printed relic collections of Andechs or Augsburg of the 1490s (fig. 66) or of the woodcut replicas of the Luke *Madonna* (fig. 19). But this print, unlike its predecessors, has an additional function. The woodcut also reports on the discovery by displaying the whole archeological scene, the half-shattered altar, the crypt-like space, the candelabrum for visibility, the expressions of surprise, the abandoned trowel, chisel, mallet, and pickax, even the humble excavator half-concealed on the right, “one of the first of his/our profession worthy of inclusion in a picture.”<sup>15</sup> The print restages the discovery. The two functions of the broadsheet, mystifying and demystifying, diverge. The broadsheet, itself a relic of the discovery, presents the face of the tomb as an invitation to a surrogate experience of St. Ursus. At the same time it narrates the discovery, introducing the tomb as a character within the event. The print shows the tomb, and shows the tomb being shown, turning the relic quest back on itself in a feedback loop. Inside the image, the tomb of St. Ursus is the cynosure of the worshipers’ attention. For the beholder outside the image, by contrast, the tomb is displaced to the right and is forced to compete with rival focal points: the reproduction of the metal label, superimposed on the scene; the narrative scene; the coat of arms of the city revealed by the billowing banner; and the robust saint himself, invisible to the internal worshipers by virtue, apparently, of his footing on the irregular ledge-like strip in the foreground. Such a relic, if reliably presented, is meant to collapse the past onto the present, admitting the poor pilgrim trapped in his own modernity into an ideal fellowship with the company of the holy, anticipating the integration that the end of time will bring. The documentary account of the relic’s discovery, by contrast, splinters time into a cluster of competing facets: the architectural elements, altar and column, hard to date; the tomb itself, obviously—to all but the most ignorant beholders—a Roman artifact, fashioned not for Ursus but for a heathen, even if marked at some later point with the cross; the lettered silver plate securing the bones’ identity, for all Graf’s contemporaries knew a fourth-century artifact; the standing saint, a visitant; and all of this witnessed by the modern cleric, patrician, and laborers.

15. Hans-Rudolf Meier, “‘Archäologie’ im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit,” *Vorträge Saest: Das vergangene Jahrtausend: Aspekte der Forschungsgeschichte der Archäologie des Mittelalters* (2000), <http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/uni/afg/mbl/mbl12/zwei.htm>.

When the labeled relic is snugly nested in its container under a suitable roof, time finds its order. The fabricated environment, architecture, altar, reliquary, image, serves as a storage and retrieval system for the unstable quanta of event, personality, power, meaning; as if impermanence were captured once written in stone, metal, wood, paint. The printed image extended this writerly project, but at the same time anatomized it. Graf's broadsheet spread the whole informational chain, an apparatus of verification, out for display. The elegant sarcophagus validated the presumed body of the martyr-soldier; the incised cross switched the sign of the sarcophagus from negative to positive; the location of the *tumba* inside the old altar and the label found inside authenticated the remains; the kneeling cleric consults a book as if to corroborate the discovery in hagiography; the broadsheet itself, finally, confirms and confirms again the entire sequence by spelling it out in word and image. Such a broadsheet comforted the critics, perhaps even hastened the collapse, of the relic cult that the excavations of Solothurn hoped to sustain. The print reveals too much about the verification process, submitting the relic business once and for all to the instruments of archeological scholarship.<sup>16</sup> The print converts meaning into mere information.

Many cultures have buried valuables with their dead. Putting treasures out of circulation drew a divide between insiders who were willing to leave them underground, and outsiders who would try to disturb the remains of the dead, tempted by the exchangeable, intrinsically valuable goods lying beside them. Burying valuables increases the potential profit of the tomb raid and so renders the defense of the tombs more significant. Protection of tombs from depredation symbolizes allegiance to intangible, nonexchangeable values.

Fifteenth-century archeologists ironized this ancient principle by focusing not on the intrinsically valuable metals, weapons, and baubles they found in the ground, but rather on such worthless, unattractive things as fragments of stone or pottery with writing on them, or even the battered old tombs themselves.<sup>17</sup> When the corpse of a Roman girl, identified by scholars as Cicero's daughter Tulliola, was discovered on 19 April 1485 on

16. The famous broadsheet reporting on the pilgrimage of the Beautiful Virgin of Regensburg, with woodcut by Michael Ostendorfer, dating from 1519 to 1520, is similarly double-edged; see Christopher S. Wood, "Ritual and the Virgin on the Column: The Cult of the Schöne Maria in Regensburg," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 6 (1992): 87–101.

17. Even in the far north of Germany, scholars reflected on pagan burial practices: see the brief epigraphic treatise of Nicholas Marschalk, *Epitaphia quaedam mirae vetustatis* (Erfurt, 1502), with woodcut illustrations of clay pots he excavated in Pomerania, "urns in which the Romans used to devoutly preserve the ashes of their dead." Christian Hülsen, "Die Inschriftensammlung des Erfurter Humanisten Nicolaus Marschalck," *Jahrbücher der Königlichen Akademie gemeinnütziger Wissenschaften zu Erfurt*, N.F. 38 (1912): 161–85.

a building site near the tomb of Cecilia Metella on the Appian Way, crowds queued to view the body at the Palace of the Conservators. In contemporary accounts of the episode the tomb was said to be full of jewels and treasure stolen and concealed by the discoverers, a team of Lombard masons, new barbarians. The story is surely a fiction that pointed to the contrast between the crude conception of value held by the masons and the higher aims of the archeologists and philologists. But this inversion of value systems had already been accomplished within Christianity. The tombs of the saints contained nothing of intrinsic value. The significance of their contents rested on their connection to valued but vanished individuals. Christian treasure was worthless to enemies. The guardians of the saint's tomb protected it from depredation simply by refusing to put anything in it that might hold any universal, noncontingent appeal.

Christian tomb management involved periodic plundering of one's own tombs in order to reconfirm the identity of their occupants. The tomb raid was converted from a crime into a repeatable performance. The self-reflexive tomb raid was a demonstration of a certain attitude toward the contents. Tomb protection was no longer in any way about banking; instead, protection had been stripped down to a core of pure reverence for the dead, and not even the genetically affiliated dead ancestors.

The wealth that the Christian archeologist sought was *information*. Graf's broadsheet is information about information. It repackaged the relics, now once again stowed safely out of view but with their label, in a proper altar with a viewing aperture, in the name-church of St. Ursus, all wrapped finally in a sheet of inked paper that at once confirms the relics and leaves the relics more vulnerable than ever.

The relics cannot settle down within the print because they are subject to the magnetic pull of the artist Graf's presence. Graf's signature, his unique mark on the image, is not limited to the swashbuckling dagger-monogram (he was a mercenary soldier). The colossal saint himself bestriding the monogram stands in for the artist, as the label inscribed on his chest reminds us. The physical presence of the armored Ursus in this scene is no more likely—in fact much less likely—than the presence of Graf himself, who was living in Solothurn, exiled from Basel as an accused murderer. The defiant banner carrier summons the other works of Graf in these years, his drawings dated 1519, bizarre, cruel, obscene inventions, independent-minded, impious, reckless; irresponsible children of Altdorfer's eccentric drawings and prints.

If the right half of the image diagrams the ideal collapse of sacred time and lived time onto one another—exploding the relic mystery and at the same time trying to bundle it all back together again—then the left half invokes the singular, willful intervention of the imagination. The soldier

is a figure for freedom. He wields a tremendous expanse of roiling cloth, he plants his feet aggressively, he hides inside a stylish case of armor. He is cousin both to the civic giants found on fountains and façades, in Solothurn and elsewhere, and to the restless ancestors of Emperor Maximilian, who had died only three months earlier. The broadsheet is meant to convey a message; its brief could not be clearer. The soldier-saint interferes with the message by clearing out space for the artist. Urs Graf did not neutrally “enable” the publication, but rather authored it, by selecting, coordinating, composing. If the “content” of every medium is another medium, then the content of the illustrated broadsheet in 1519 is the printed work of art as it had been invented by Dürer and refined by Altdorfer. The idea of art had entered the sequence of printed images like a virus.

### Paradoxes of the signature

Most major German artists, not only painters but also some sculptors, made prints and in this way came to recognize themselves as the forgers. Artists found themselves in a potentially controlling position, expected by society to drive the cycle of recoveries by manipulating increasingly complex doubling technologies. When they emerged as the orchestrators of illusions, artists began to differentiate themselves from other mechanical craftsmen and instead conceive their own practice in analogy with those of the poets and scholars, the masters of linguistic rhetoric. The idea that the artist might be an authority in his own right threatened to disrupt the entire cultural project of monumental reference, underwritten as it had been for centuries by a model of authorless production. The artists introduced a moment of self-observation into the system; they occupied a position that was simultaneously inside and outside the system.

The notion that responsibility for a picture (though not yet a building, at least not in northern Europe) might lie with an individual, and that the genesis of the picture might be precisely located in time, was given concrete form by the conventions of signature and date. Ironically the signature, blazon of the artist’s independence in the early sixteenth century, was a neo-Romanesque gesture. The first to sign their works were the metalworkers and sculptors, already in the twelfth century, often with extensive inscriptions.<sup>18</sup> Between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries, the meaning of the artist’s signature completely changed. A twelfth-century signature and date connected a work with a building, a foundation, or a patron, an association that accrued to the reputation and the standing of the artist. The convention of the signature permitted an artist to advertise an economic availability within the framework of the votive or dedicatory inscription.

18. Fraenkel, *Signature* (see chap. 4, n. 16), 168–71.

When Jan van Eyck in the 1430s signed his panel paintings, he was reactivating the conventions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, an already remote epoch when art seemed to have humbly served the higher powers, and setting them in deliberate counterpoise to his own increasingly conspicuous authority, ratified by his position at the ducal court and freedom from guild restrictions. Van Eyck developed a signature that worked on two levels, invoking at once the archaic efficacy of the traditional cult image and the new power of accumulated technical and manual virtuosity to compel the admiration of contemporaries. The tension between the two models, one symbolizing a remembered time when art's function in public life was supposedly secure, the other symbolizing the permanently valid appeal of technology and prowess, became itself the content of the artwork. In this way the sixteenth-century artist's neosubstitutional response could involve, in a complex feedback effect, signatures.

Martin Schongauer was the first famous German artist, because of his initials. Initials and other marks on prints were originally marks for trade insiders, quality control, meant to be inconspicuous.<sup>19</sup> On early prints they are never expanded into full names. With Schongauer, who began monogramming prints in the early 1470s, the initials became a signature, for his fame was such that everyone, or at least quite a lot of people, could expand the initials into a name. The initials became a return address, literally a destination for a young artist like Dürer, who at the age of twenty-one took to the road in hopes of meeting Schongauer. (He arrived in Colmar in early 1492, a year after the master's death, indication that news traveled slowly and unreliably and that for most people, though not for Dürer, "Schongauer" was not so much a person as an abstract label associated with a few works and an idea of quality.)<sup>20</sup>

The purpose of the signature was fundamentally to guarantee quality, not to mark a place in the time continuum. Fifteenth-century engravers often monogrammed their works but did not date them, or only rarely. Before 1503 even Dürer dated only a single print, his so-called *Four Witches* of 1497. Fifteenth-century drawings, which were not commodities and did not have to answer for their own authenticity or integrity, were never signed or dated.<sup>21</sup> The monograms on some drawings by Schongauer were applied by later owners.

The conception of signature and date as the basis for a sequencing of

19. See the discussion in Max Geisberg, *Die Anfänge des deutschen Kupferstiches und der Meister E.S.* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt u. Biermann, 1910), 15–18.

20. On Dürer's sense of his own artistic authority, see fundamentally, Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

21. There are some Italian exceptions, for instance the "Stefanus" on a drawing by Stefano da Verona in the Lugt Collection and Pollaiuolo's *Figure Studies* in the Louvre, inv. no. 1486.

works, as punctuation of the transmission chain, had its origins in Dürer's interest in *other* artist's works. Against the custom of his time, Dürer recorded with inscriptions the authorial origin points of several drawings he acquired while traveling. On a pen drawing of the Savior which he must have had from the hands of the deceased artist's brothers, Dürer wrote: "Das hat hubsch martin gemacht Im 1469 Jor" (Hübsch Martin [Martin Schongauer] made this in the year 1469).<sup>22</sup> It is striking both that he was able to learn the date of the drawing, after all a date two years before he himself was born—he learned it presumably from the brothers—and that he cared. Not only that, but another inscribed drawing, recorded in the eighteenth century but now lost, suggests that Dürer applied the dates and monograms only many years later.<sup>23</sup> Not so well known as the homages to Schongauer is a drawing of a horseman now in Gdansk on which Dürer wrote: "Dz hat wofgang pewrer gemacht im 1484 jor" (fig. 112).<sup>24</sup> In this way Dürer, just as his own revolutionary sense of himself as an author was emerging, acknowledged the authority of other artists. By signaling with an inscription the placement of his own drawings within a network of works, Dürer discloses both the performativity of all copies and the iterative nature of all performances. The contrast with Cranach's copy of the late antique calendar images or with Dürer's own copies of the *Tarocchi* engravings could not be clearer (figs. 13, 18). By literalizing the idea of substitutional production, writing it down, giving the coordinates, Dürer is also challenging that idea. Substitution, impersonal, gives way in Dürer's works to the idea of selection, of chains chosen backward, chosen by the artist.

Dürer demonstrated the power of signing and dating with his prints of the 1490s and early 1500s, which always bore a monogram and often (after

22. London, British Museum, inv. no. 1854-6-28-23. Winkler 13; Strauss XW.13; *Le beau Martin: Gravures et dessins de Martin Schongauer*, exhibition catalogue (Colmar: Musée d'Unterlinden, 1991), no. D4. Cf. the drawings *Christ as Judge* in the Louvre, inv. no. 18.175; and *Girl Fanning a Fire*, British Museum, inv. no. 1884-9-13-14, both dated 1469 and monogrammed MS by another hand. Winkler (nos. 13-15) considered all three drawings to be by Dürer himself, copies of lost Schongauers.

23. Winkler 15a, with a report by Carl Heinrich von Heineken who owned in 1786 a drawing inscribed: "Dies hat der Hübsch Martin gerissen in 1470 jar da er ein junger gesell was. Das hab ich Albrecht Dürer erfarn, vnd Im zu ern daher geschrieben im 1517 jar."

24. Gdansk, National Museum, inv. no. MNG/SD/634/R, 18.9 × 17.6 cm. Winkler 9 (as Dürer); Strauss App. 1.1. The drawing became the basis for Dürer's engraving of the Galloping Rider, Bartsch 81 (though some consider the engraving Peurer's). Anzelewsky builds a small oeuvre of works around Wolfgang Pewrer (Beurer); "Eine Gruppe von Malern und Zeichnern aus Dürers Jugendjahren," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 27 (1985): 35-59. See the drawing of a young woman in Hamburg, Kunsthalle, inv. no. 1975/38, with an inscription by Dürer attributing it to "Anthoni Pewrer" in the year 1487; Strauss, Suppl. 1 (1977), App. 1: 1a. See also Bodo Brinkmann, "Ein unbekanntes Werk Wolfgang Beurers, des Meisters WB," *Städel-Jahrbuch* N.F., 15 (1995): 145-74.





112. Wolfgang Beurer, *Rider*, 1484, pen and ink, with inscription by Albrecht Dürer. Gdansk, National Museum. Photo: Friedrich Winkler, *Die Zeichnungen Albrecht Dürers* (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1936–37), no. 9.

1503) a date. With these prints he created his own fame, not only in his homeland but also abroad, and this was truly new. Among other artists he was soon famous for being famous. The monogram, which developed out of the goldsmith's mark, was immediately adopted by other young painters and printmakers who had no connection to the goldsmith's craft. As long as it was associated with the engraving, however, the monogram retained the memory of its original, economically rational function. The key break was when the monogram or signature was transferred to the drawing, for drawings were understood not to have any value on an open market beyond the network of workshops. There was no need to protect the consumer. And since the drawing was a unique object, the artist did not need to protect himself: if he did not want his design disseminated, he only needed to hold onto the sheet of paper. The signature on the drawing took on a new meaning; it was a tether that connected the artifact to a moment of creation. The signature was the interface between the two identities of the artist, as creator moving and acting inside the domain of art, reacting to other artworks, and as person acting in the world alongside everyone else. The signature split the artist into two, and helped everyone get accustomed to the artist as a kind of poet. The signature also signaled that the drawing was now collectible, that is, that nonartists might value it, and in particular value it on account of its origins. A date only reinforced all this. German artists began to leave paper trails marking their own careers. They produced art that already predicted its own narration, art that

presented itself as the legible record of a flow of creativity punctuated by unrepeatable acts. When art can be pieced together on chronologically ordered, reproducible sheets of paper, there will finally be a public culture of art, as opposed to the traditional culture of art dispersed between towns and monasteries and stitched together by the imperfect memories of travelers, who unless they were artists did not usually equip themselves with sketchbooks.

The handmade work, signed and dated and stamped by a recognizable style, was radically noninterchangeable. The drawing placed the beholder in a flattering one-to-one, analogic, and private relationship with the author-artist. Drawing manners developed away from prints, toward graphic effects that prints simply could not capture. The new desirability of the drawing changed the meaning of the printed image. The engraving had been invented in the second quarter of the fifteenth century not as a replica of a handmade work, but as a kind of paper equivalent to metalwork. The engraving was not offering uniqueness for sale any more than was the chased silver bowl. The conformity to template and pattern, the belongingness to a series, and the possibility of replication were all part of the value and meaning of engraving and metalwork. The collectible drawing changed this, recreating the engraving as the facsimile of a drawing. It pointed to the alienation of the engraving from a drawing that stood somewhere behind it. In Italy, this led to the development of the deliberately reproductive engraving, an institution which basically demoted the engraving for all times to a secondary status within the art system. In Germany, meanwhile, and to some extent in Italy as well, the prestige of Dürer's prints almost single-handedly guaranteed the dignity of the medium.

The cohort of artists born between 1470 and 1485, artists of the age of Dürer and a bit younger, quickly adopted the career model constructed by Dürer. Lucas Cranach, Hans Burgkmair, Albrecht Altdorfer, and Wolf Huber all made prints, in all media, early in their careers without any background in metalwork. The generation born around 1500 was in a position to extend this pattern and profit from the sudden new prestige of art, at least within urban culture in southern Germany. Artists like Peter Vischer the Younger, Hans Daucher, Loy Hering, Peter Flötner, Sebastian Loscher, Hans Schwarz, Peter Dell, Sebald and Bartel Beham, and Georg Pencz inherited the performative model. They were not reluctant to sign their works and must have envisioned a new kind of career for themselves, liberated from the limited iconographic repertoire of devotional imagery and from the economic imperative of winning altarpiece commissions. This was also the first generation with exposure from the start to the new antiquarian artistic fashions: the antique ornamental vocabulary, garlands, acanthus, egg-and-dart, and so forth; the new alphabets; the new formats

of medal, small-scale bronze, plaquettes. Some of their work was referential in function, such as the portraits and memorial reliefs of various sorts, and some was narrative or poeticizing. Artists were aware of what was happening in Italy and had every reason to hope that a sophisticated culture of art would unfold in Germany, involving protected status for artists, close cooperation with poets and scholars, and ever more elaborate mechanisms of self-reflection, such as conversations and dialogues about art, treatises on art theory, and space dedicated to display of art. The social predicament of the German artists, squeezed by too many unsympathetic clerics on one side and too many unsophisticated patrons on the other, helped them find their way to the stable ground of a new myth, the true or proper origin of art in the artist himself, a self-perpetuating myth because it appeals to artists. From that standpoint the artist cultivated an ironic relationship to all theories of origins. Substitution was discovered as a historical mode available for manipulation. Artists learned to place their own stylish performances into ironic overlap with the larger cultural aims of recovery, repetition, and integration, shared by communities far beyond the guilds of picture- and statue-makers.

The experiments of the German artists with the new transalpine forms and iconographies in the 1510s and early 1520s prove that it was not the Protestant Reformation alone with its hostility to traditional devotional art that shunted the German artists into secular iconography. It must have looked in 1520 as if German art had taken a radical new course. A young, optimistic artist might not even have been discouraged by the Reformation. The shift away from altar painting that the theologians provoked coincided in any case with the progressive interests of younger artists in small-scale sculpture, medals, pagan and allegorical art; in art theory; and in court patronage.

But this was an illusion. Although Protestant theology was suspicious of the traditional cult image, it was by no means receptive to the authorial model of production. On the contrary, Reformation iconoclasm was the culmination and political application of a long medieval tradition of mistrust of the image, precisely on the grounds that it had too obviously been made by an individual. Even more crippling for the artist, the authorial mode entered into direct conflict with the ideal of transparency, or the transcendence of local formal languages, sponsored by humanist scholarship.

Cooperation between artists and humanist scholars in Germany was forced. The referential monuments favored by scholars, such as medals or epitaphs, deliberately left little room for the public unfolding of an authorial persona of the sort that German painting so dramatically permitted in the first decades of the sixteenth century. On the whole the Renaissance

scholar was most interested in the possibility of the image's adequacy to its object, *adequatio ad rem* in Scholastic terms. An artist who worked too closely with text-minded scholars might pay a price. Hans Burgkmair, attentive to Conrad Peutinger's historiographical concerns, and the most gifted Augsburg painter of his generation, managed to evade the strictures of the guild, but he failed to capture any commissions for large-scale mural work, and his small workshop had relatively little weight.<sup>25</sup> Some artists found ways to insert themselves into the works they produced for scholars by pushing representational conventions to their limits, by citing and distorting traditional iconographical formulas, and by introducing a calligraphic, performative moment. But the humanist monuments afforded them few opportunities for these sorts of inflections of the customary. The referential monument represented its object less problematically than did a picture. An individual is among other things a compilation of socially shared information, above all a name, but also facts like titles, public positions, ancestors, dates of birth and death. Such facts exist only as linguistic units; they are extensions of the name attached to the body. The alphabetic inscription imitates language perfectly; imitates language in its own medium, as it were. There is no need to worry about the link between the monument and its object. There is also little margin for the individual handwriting of the artist. Thus German medals and epitaphs of the Renaissance are notoriously difficult to attribute.

The concept of "humanism" has been used to smooth over the breach between antiquarian scholarship and the practice of art-making in the Renaissance. The disagreement between Celtis and Peutinger over the inclusion of woodcut images in the edition of the *Ligurinus* shows how humanist scholarship might consider certain kinds of images, at least, contaminations of a critical project. Some scholars did take an interest in the allegorical and diagrammatic possibilities of images. Conrad Celtis argued that images might contribute to a philosophical understanding of the cosmos and the human arts. Like some but not all Italian scholars of the period, Celtis believed that emblems could express thoughts differently or even more eloquently than words. But this is a strange idea and most scholars abandoned it. It is hard to see how the partnership between Celtis and Dürer established any durable model for a symbiotic, "integrative" relationship between the humanities and the sciences, between poetry and philosophy, between art and scholarship.<sup>26</sup>

The humanist generally wanted an image that compelled assent, not an image that had to wait around for a charitable reading. Ideally the hu-

25. Johannes Wilhelm, *Augsburger Wandmalerei 1368–1530: Künstler, Handwerker und Zunft* (Augsburg: Mühlberger, 1983), 436ff.

26. Wuttke, "Humanismus als Integrative Kraft" [see chap. 3, n. 23].

manist image would expound permanent and certain truths. The humanist brief for art, as characterized by Robert Williams in his book *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, was the “superintendency of knowledge.”<sup>27</sup> Art for a time looked like a master mode of organizing experience by virtue of its seeming ability to transcend convention, or the limiting codes peculiar to one or another epoch, culture, or class. Beauty was something that many people seemed to agree on, and this unusually wide range of appeal was attributed to an intrinsic connection between beauty and the way things really ought to be, to an ideal model of the world that beholders are naturally drawn to. So it was important that art cleave to ideal form and not collapse back into blind custom.

This seemed like an even more practicable goal for an artist than for a poet. Whereas language is inescapably conventional, the image seems to have a real chance of escaping convention and simulating an ideal, unheard-of form. This ideal form would impress the beholder directly, make direct contact with the mind. The image would emerge as the vehicle *par excellence* for reference. The humanist monumental project thus proceeded from an unmodern, almost unrecognizable idea of how images ought to be received by beholders: there would be no rhetorical appeals through gazes or theatricalism; there would be no internal stagings of moments of beholding and devotion; there would be no stagings of the scene of making through stylish gestures or deliberately deposited manual traces of execution. The image would operate without recourse to perspectival tricks, appealing gazes, and other rhetorical cajolery; in other words, without activating subjectivity.

More promising than the pictorial fiction or the emblem, ingenious as they might be, were the various referential operations that moved back and forth between images and reality: sampling, description, mapping, naming. These are just the traditional expectations on the part of the church or the dynastic court from the image. The archeologist, for instance, was more interested in the who of portraits than in the how. The idea that the identity of the artist might be the most interesting fact about an artwork was quite a new idea. Contemporary praise of the great bronze equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza stressed the sheer size and the engineering feat, downplaying Leonardo da Vinci's authorship.<sup>28</sup> Celtis mentioned no local artist in his otherwise detailed description of Nuremberg of 1495. The text of the epitaph of Fra Angelico in S. Maria sopra Minerva

27. Robert Williams, *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy: From Techne to Meta-techne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

28. Virginia Bush, “The Political Contexts of the Sforza Horse,” in *Leonardo da Vinci's Sforza Monument Horse*, ed. Diane Cole Ahl (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1995), 84.

in Rome was reproduced in sylloges like the one printed by Laurens Coster in the 1470s, but without a name, that is, as a sample of an epitaph to an artist, to the *pictor egregius*.<sup>29</sup> Scholars liked the *idea* of the *pictor egregius*. But it seems that few German scholars of the period had any real enthusiasm for painting. It is striking how seldom the major artists of the period were mentioned in correspondence. Matthias Grünewald was virtually never mentioned by his contemporaries; Pacher, Riemenschneider, Stoss, and Altdorfer never. Literary men paid attention to painters when they handled classical subject matter or emblematic modes, or when they employed rational design principles grounded in nature or antiquity. They sometimes praised court painters or local painters as objects of conventional praise, as filler material for Plinian topoi. Scholars were interested in the concept of a famous German artist, but they were not necessarily sensitive to personal style and not necessarily alert to nuances of figuration and to the varieties of residual content deposited by the transformation of reality into ink, paint, stone, or wood. And they did not necessarily take at all seriously the fey, open-ended fictions of painters like Altdorfer or Hans Baldung, which were not so much humanist riddles to be cracked, as images whose very subject matter was their own irresolvability. Jakob Wimpfeling, Johannes Trithemius, Johannes Reuchlin, Conrad Peutinger, Ulrich von Hutten, Heinrich Bebel, and Johannes Aventinus would all be surprised to learn that painting and the graphic arts are now rated among the central achievements of their epoch. When Johannes Cochlaeus came to praise the artists of Germany, in his treatise on Germany of 1512, he listed first Dürer, obviously, then the musical instrument-maker Johannes Neuschel, the sculptor Peter Vischer, the cartographer Erhard Etzlaub, the clockmaker Peter Henlein, and that is all.<sup>30</sup> Only Beatus Rhenanus expressed, in 1526, the wish that the outstanding painters of the day (Dürer, Baldung, Cranach, and Holbein), who he thought deserved the epithet *auctores*, were more highly valued.<sup>31</sup>

Beatus, immersed in his books, may actually have underrated the renown and sophistication of the German artists. In the same passage he remarked, as if it were remarkable, that in antiquity the “authors” of images were named by accompanying inscriptions. According to Angelo

29. Coster’s volume was an anthology of fifty-six verse epitaphs and epigrams supposedly compiled by Aeneas Silvius. Ludwig Bertalot, “Die älteste gedruckte lateinische Epitaphiensammlung,” in *Festschrift Leo Olschki* (Munich: Rosenthal, 1921), 1–21; reprinted in Bertalot, *Studien zum italienischen und deutschen Humanismus*, ed. P. O. Kristeller (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1975), 1: 269–301.

30. Cochlaeus, *Brevis Germanie descriptio* [see chap. 4, n. 14], 90–91.

31. The passage, from Beatus’s commentary on Pliny (*In C. Plinium* [Basel: Frobenius, 1526], 29–30) is cited and translated in Bächtmann and Griener, *Hans Holbein*, 210.

Poliziano, Beatus reports, a marble pedestal in Rome bears the inscription *Lysippos epoiei*, "Lysippus made it." But had not German painters been signing their works with their full names for two decades? The modern artist, who moved freely between media, traversed Rhine and Alps like a student in quest of ideas, enjoyed open converse with philologists and editors, read and wrote tracts on art and art-making, and expected amateurs to cherish his slightest pen scratchings, in fact had little to learn about authorship from Lysippus.

The humanist model of the reception of images generated its own kind of credulity. This was not the demotic gullibility derided by the humanists themselves, the ordinary beholder's revolutionary propensity to find meaning in the present tense, in an experiential encounter with the work's physical this-and-no-otherness, its haecceity. Humanist credulity refers to something like the opposite: an excessive faith in some essential meaning that the particular artifact at hand gave reliable access to. The focus on reference rather than on signification led to an underrating of the materiality and madeness of the image. Substitutional meaning was authorless, and was assumed to survive the processes of transmission by which images quoted and succeeded one another. Humanist scholars thus tended not to see what art was offering.

Early sixteenth-century artists, in turn, were reluctant to adopt the canonical Roman majuscule prepared for them by antiquarian scholarship. The ideal Roman capital revived in the late fifteenth century, copied from Trajanic inscriptions and justified by geometry, had a short life in stone. As soon as perfection was attained, the stone carvers rebelled, especially in Germany. For their signatures artists tended to choose noncontemporary or exotic scripts, at any rate not the ordinary working hands found in books. Some German artists particularly favored the neo-Byzantine capitals for their signatures. A good example is the signature on the *Death of the Virgin* by the engraver Wenzel von Olmütz, dated 1481.<sup>32</sup> It is as if the loops and bumps in the script of the signature, although not personally invented by the performing artist, still somehow stand as emblems of the artist's distinctiveness. The eccentricity of the signature is doubly ironic since the engraving is a copy after Martin Schongauer. Schongauer had been the first printmaker to sign every single print he published, with the initials always in the same place and in Roman capitals. When Schongauer introduced his capitals, they themselves had looked exotic. Only a few decades later they had come to seem limiting. The epoch of faithful simulations of Roman letters was virtually over by the time Dürer published his treatise on "measurement," the *Unterweysung der Messung*, in 1525. At that

32. Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog*, vol. 6, no. 11.

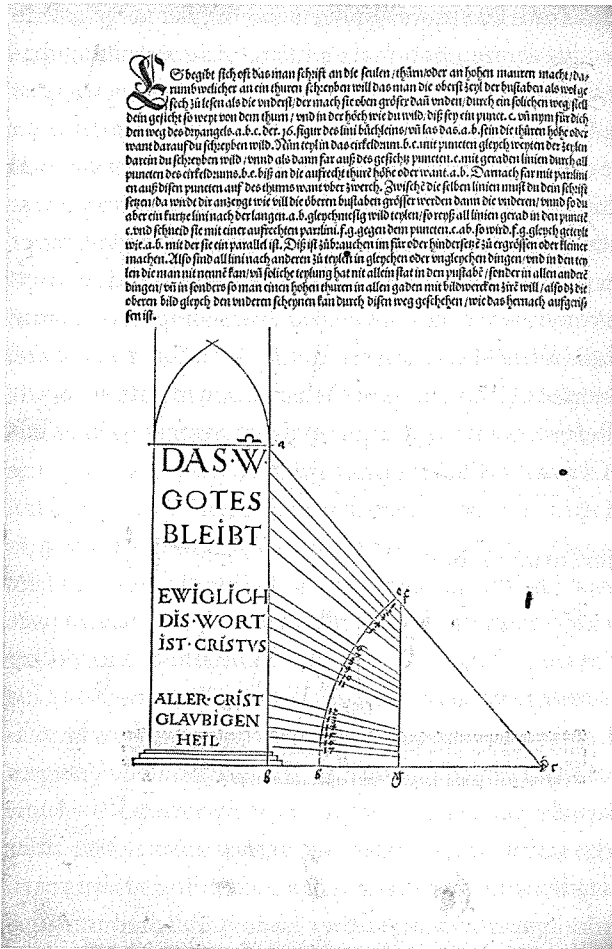
point, carvers either resumed using the Gothic minuscule, adopted the *Fraktur* that Maximilian had sponsored, or modified the Roman alphabet with flourishes, irregularities, and stylizations. Sculptors were more interested in developing their own scripts than in imitating antiquity. In Nuremberg, where nothing Roman was to be seen, the epigraphic capital really had no life at all. The closest approximations to the canonical majuscule in this city of artists surfaced in woodcuts and as metal type.<sup>33</sup> Over the course of the German sixteenth century the texts of modern inscriptions were increasingly written in the vernacular, not Latin. The Trajanic capital looked less and less like the stable ground of lettering.

Lettering in woodcuts and book illustrations, even if ostensibly classical and ideal, insisted on a margin of play, as if asserting the freedom of the performing hand in contrast both to mechanical printing and to the prescriptions of humanist theory. The printed epitaph for Celtis by Hans Burgkmair expressly imitated a Roman monument (fig. 20). The letters are irregular and animated, but not out of technical incompetence. Many other woodcuts by Burgkmair from the same period with nearly perfect woodcut capitals prove this. Even Dürer in his *Unterweysung der Messung* left room for the play of the hand. At the beginning of his section on the construction of the Roman majuscules, addressed to “architects and painters and others” who wish to “make inscriptions on high walls,” he offers a woodcut dealing with the problem of the perspectival diminishment of lettering (fig. 113).<sup>34</sup> The illustrative letters in the woodcut, spelling out a passage from Isaiah 40 in German language but in Roman letters, fail to conform to the very alphabetic canon that he will then go on to explain and advocate in the subsequent twenty-one pages. Paradoxically, antiquarian purism, which was an elitist formulation of the old notational model, in principle cleared the way for a self-consciously materialist modern pictorial style. This is similar to what happened in philology. As is well known, the Renaissance philologists’ purification of Latin had the immediate, unintended effect of killing off Latin as a living language for poetry and instead encouraging vernacular literature. Likewise, the antiquarian episode in Germany and the theory of notational transmission behind it,

33. Luh, *Kaiser Maximilian gewidmet* (see chap. 1, n. 32), 44–52; and Dieter Wuttke, “Dürer und Celtis: Von der Bedeutung des Jahres 1500 für den deutschen Humanismus: ‘Jahrhundertfeier als symbolische Form’” (1980), in Wuttke, *Dazwischen: Kulturwissenschaft auf Warburgs Spuren* (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1996), 1:321–31. On Dürer’s relation to the Italian lettering handbooks, see Ernst Crous, *Dürer und die Schrift* (Berlin: Aldus, 1933). See the comments by Fuchs, “Zu Inschriften des Bistums Worms zur Zeit Bischof Johannes von Dalberg,” 178–79, on the scarcity of the classical majuscule in Germany.

34. *Unterweysung der Messung* (Nuremberg, 1525), fol. K1v. Schoch et al., *Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 3, no. 274, 121.





113. Albrecht Dürer,  
*Perspectival Diminishment of Lettering*,  
 woodcut, from *Unterweysung der Messung*  
 [Nuremberg, 1525],  
 fol. K1v. Beinecke Rare  
 Book and Manuscript  
 Library, Yale University.

including humanistic idealism with its mistrust of the senses, was mostly blind to the force and ingenuity of artists like Dürer, Baldung, Altdorfer, Grünewald, Stoss, Riemenschneider, and Cranach. But by promoting a limited, inflexible theory of the reception of pictures, the antiquarians managed to disqualify that same theory and remove it as an obstacle.

Art constituted itself societally through a withdrawal from games of truth-seeking and truth-telling, a retreat from reference that was only foreshadowed by the self-limitation of the referential artifact to a secular time frame. The transfigurations and spurious argumentation of the substitutional mode—the wild misdatings of old artifacts, the creative fabrication of facts—were the school for art. But for error to become paradox, and forgery to become play, art had to find a protected space inside society. The traditional charges of mendacity and factitiousness needed to be lifted. And this did not happen in Germany, or did not have time to happen. In Italy, the social prestige of the painter was underwritten by the

model of the poet, who since Dante was understood to play some role in the formation of collective or even national identity.<sup>35</sup> Common language created identity; poets were the masters of language. That concept was just starting to coalesce in Germany in the first years of the sixteenth century, in the culturally nationalist pedagogical and publication projects devised by Conrad Celtis and in the re-engagement with the medieval vernacular poets, even if the latter project unfolded partly within the framework of Maximilian's dynastic, neochivalric, and in many ways nonnationalistic memory project. The combined forces of the collapse of imperial patronage, the re-energized theological obsession with the factitiousness of art, the humanist misprision of art, and finally the disruption of elite scholarly culture through the Reformation's near monopoly on print resources left a narrow margin for German artists.

### Pressures on the referential model

In Augsburg, the humanistically generated culture of script, type, and page was extinguished all at once. Maximilian's printer Johann Schönsperger died in 1520, a year after the emperor himself. Erhard Ratdolt closed his shop in 1522.<sup>36</sup> The Reformation massively altered the economics of publishing. The number of titles issued per year in Germany doubled between 1518 and 1520, and then doubled again over the next five years.<sup>37</sup> In Augsburg during the thirty-seven years before the Reformation, 1,474 titles were published; 2,161 titles were published in the succeeding twelve years. Before 1525, there were 454 works by Luther alone published in Augsburg. But 87.5 percent of the post-Reformation titles were German, up from 62 percent in the preceding period (already an unusually high proportion).<sup>38</sup> Humanist print culture in Italy did not have to face these conditions, although admittedly in Italy there were other distractions, such as political tumult and periodic invasions by German soldiers. After 1520, there was less economic incentive than ever to devote paper to graphic effects. Peutinger's *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta* of 1505 and Maximilian's

35. Patricia Emission, *Creating the "Divine" Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004).

36. See Carl Wehmer, "'Ne Italo cedere videamur': Augsburger Buchdrucker und Schreiber um 1500," in *Augusta 955–1955: Forschungen und Studien zur Kultur- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte Augsburgs* (Augsburg: Rinn, 1955), 156–57, on this crucial juncture.

37. Robert Proctor, *An Index to the Early Printed Books in the British Museum* (London, 1898–1903), vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 5.

38. Hans-Jörg Künast, "Entwicklungslinien des Augsburger Buchdrucks von 1468 bis zum Augsburger Religionsfrieden von 1555," in *Augsburg in der frühen Neuzeit* (= *Colloquia Augustana* 1), ed. Jochen Brüning and Friedrich Niewöhner (Berlin: Akademie, 1995), 229–30.

*Genealogy* woodcuts provided a glimpse of a mechanically replicable idealist project that never really got off the ground.

Maximilian's relative indifference to the *scriptura monumentalis* and to roman type suggest that the project of reviving the Trajanic epigraphic alphabet for ordinary use was a strange idea. The ideal lettering canon developed together with attentiveness to the historicity of form, and as a result antiqua lettering could be seen not as timeless and universal but as just another contingent style. It simply looked Roman. In Germany the Roman majuscule appealed to rarefied circles, and only briefly; it did not put the Gothic scripts out of commission. From the start there were strict limits on the project of mimicry. Not even in Italy, after all, did the modern epigraphic text, no matter how archeologically attentive, close up the spaces between words as the ancient inscriptions had. After 1505 Erhard Ratdolt himself had little further involvement with humanist publishing projects. He found few uses for the very large majuscule font he devised for Peutinger's *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta* and used it only twice thereafter, once for the labels on Burgkmair's *Genealogy* woodcuts, and once in the *Historia horarum canonicarum de S. Hieronymo et S. Anna* of 1512, edited by the Tübingen cleric and humanist Heinrich Bebel.<sup>39</sup> Tombs, epitaphs, and portraits turned away from the Roman capital and even from the Latin language, instead increasingly taking on a vernacular and nationalist flavor. In the first half of the sixteenth century, 60 percent of all inscriptions in Augsburg were done in Roman majuscules, a higher percentage than anywhere else covered by the *Deutsche Inschriften* corpus volumes so far. But immediately there were signs of retreat and the reintroduction of idiosyncratic variations. A good example is the Fugger Chapel, where the inscriptions on the epitaphs of Georg, Ulrich, and Jakob Fugger, carved no earlier than 1518 and perhaps as late as 1525, are less canonical than the Augsburg inscriptions of the 1500s.<sup>40</sup> The canonical handbook-governed epigraphic majuscule gave way to an adapted antiqua, all over Germany. Double forms, or letters given two different forms within the same inscription, were reintroduced, anachronistically.

Everywhere the proportion of tombs and epitaphs done in the German language rose, and the proportion done in Roman capitals remained steady or even fell. From 1450, inscriptions in stone were ever more likely to be composed in German and therefore written in Gothic letters, rather

39. Fol. 2v and 3r of this imprint closely imitate the layout of the *Romanae vetustatis fragmenta*. Ratdolt does boast in the colophon of having used thirteen different typefaces. Karl Schottenloher, *Die liturgischen Druckwerke Erhard Ratdolts aus Augsburg 1485–1522* (Mainz: Gutenberg-Gesellschaft, 1922), plates 65–72; Geissler, "Erhard Ratdolt" (see chap. 3, n. 30), 132–33.

40. Bushart, *Die Fuggerkapelle bei St. Anna in Augsburg* (see chap. 2, n. 60), 155–57.

than in Latin and in Roman letters. In the sixteenth century the Roman capital had to compete with both the Gothic minuscule—still accounting for 68 percent of inscriptions in Nuremberg, for instance, between 1550 and 1580—and *Fraktur*.<sup>41</sup>

Despite moments of success from the 1490s through the 1510s, the story of humanist art in Germany is basically a story of uncompleted projects, diverted energies, and dissipated ambitions. The mechanisms of notation and substitution that still controlled most art-making were rationalistic, cautious, iconophobic. Reformation image-theology, meanwhile, disdained forgery. Protestant clergy spent no more energy fabricating links to the hagiographical and monastic past through tombs and monuments.<sup>42</sup> The reformed church simply got out of the archeology business. The church's claims to authority were recast as purely theological. The historical time frame of ecclesiastical truth was displaced from a worldly to an eschatological scale, a time scale no longer historical and no longer dependent on archeological evidence. The church changed the whole basis of its appeal to ordinary people. The Reformation, to the extent that it reflected on the utility of images, tried to distance the image from the entire problem of origins. Protestantism, which massively exploited the printing press not only to disseminate sermons and tracts, but also to publish visual diagrams and allegories of theological and pastoral ideas, released replication technology from many of its customary indexical functions. The Protestant icon was the printed portrait of the reformer, but little more. The *imago contrafacta*, the facsimile of the potent cult image, or the print that reproduced the true dimensions of the side wound of Christ, were suddenly obsolete. The Protestant didactic image escaped all the paradoxes of the interplay between essential and accidental representational features. The Reformation diagram was like a linguistic text in the sense that it was *all* essential.

41. See the surveys of the material collected by the *Deutsche Inschriften* project by Walter Koch, "50 Jahre Deutsches Inschriftenwerk (1934–1984)," in *Deutsche Inschriften: Fachtagung für Mittelalterliche und Neuzeitliche Epigraphik, Lüneburg 1984*, ed. Karl Stackmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 15–45; and Christine Wulf, "Versuch einer Typologie der deutschsprachigen Inschriften," in *Epigraphik 1988, Fachtagung für mittelalterliche und neuzeitliche Epigraphik*, ed. Koch [= *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften* 213] (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), 127–37. The approximately seventy volumes of the series *Die deutschen Inschriften* published to date represent only about 15 percent of the envisioned total.

42. Tombs and epitaphs to modern worthies, however, became a major field for Protestant iconography; for an overview, see Carl C. Christensen, "The Significance of the Epitaph Monument in Early Lutheran Ecclesiastical Art (ca. 1540–1600)," in *The Social History of the Reformation*, ed. Lawrence P. Buck and Jonathan Zophy (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972): 297–314.

In a sense, the Reformation image perpetuated the humanist idealist and ascetic model of the image that referred by transcending historical form. If the humanist cultural project was swept away economically by the profitability of the Reformation pamphlet, it was perhaps reborn, in vernacularized and politicized form, in the iconophobic Protestant Reformation. Reformation asceticism, which was nurtured by humanist training in philology and the classics, ended up inhabiting the ideal of rationalist transparency symbolized by the humanist majuscule. The humanist tombs without portraits anticipated the imageless altarpieces.<sup>43</sup>

A case can be made for the art-like qualities of the Reformation image. When it juxtaposed on the picture plane visible signs for theological ideas, creating strange rebuses, the Protestant image was reprising medieval mystical conceptions of the image that had been suppressed by the realistic, referential, narrative, or monumental image; art, in other words, that tried to make connections to historical reality through labeling. By abandoning the project of forging links to the real world, and instead liberating the image into the closed, autoreferential state of the abstract diagram, where anachronism was the condition of visual theological argument and not a means to a practical or forensic end, the Protestant image structurally resembled the artwork. Protestant theology did not grant that image or its maker any of the theoretical or sociological privileges of art, but Protestant culture, to the extent it was bourgeois, would in the long run do just that.

The Reformation forced many German artists to look for other work. It proved not so easy to make a career out of medals, plaquettes, and drawings and prints of curious pagan subject matter. Artists required steady patronage, and few of them found it. Emperor Maximilian died in 1519 and did not have a chance to tap the talent of that generation of German artists. The predicament of Hans Holbein the Younger, born in 1497, was typical. He abandoned Basel at the time of the Reformation, discouraged by the collapse of the market for cult images, and went abroad in search of court patronage. He eventually found work in London, at first among the community of German merchants living there and later at the royal court. Holbein is an exception, however, for he left home with prestigious personal connections and, of course, talent. The rest of his generation was historically doomed.

German artists were forced into increasingly self-conscious displays of eccentricity, reinforcing the clichés of the comparative and nationalist approach to European art that so preoccupied commentators of the time—still preoccupies many. Eccentricity and the characteristic were assigned

43. On the imageless Protestant altarpiece, see Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image*, 282–307; and Mia Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566–1672* (Aldershot: Ashgate, forthcoming).

to the Germans. German art became an art that was *about* manner, style, the personal, and the inalienable. German artists in the 1520s and 1530s, chronically short of work, made art about each other, extending a theme of self-reference that had first emerged in the fifteenth-century painter's workshop around the practice of life-drawing.<sup>44</sup> One outlet that the German medalists found for their own ambition was making portrait medals of each other, no matter how obscure and unaccomplished as artists. Some of the earliest German medals had been portraits of fellow artists: Hermann and Peter Vischer (1507, 1509, 1511), Hans Burgkmair (1518, 1519), Albrecht Dürer (1520), but also the rather less distinguished personages Alexander Schwarz and Jakob Murmann.<sup>45</sup> Between 1523 and 1527 Christoph Weiditz designed and cast nine medal portraits of other artists, for instance, his colleague Narziss Renner, an Augsburg book painter, and only twenty-five years old at the time. Renner was again portrayed by Friedrich Hagenauer around 1530 in the form of a nude bust. These were monuments that did not mark achievement so much as predict it, or hope for it. Hagenauer portrayed the painter Laux Furtnagel in 1527 when he was only twenty-two and a journeyman.<sup>46</sup> The web of artist's portraits was self-sustaining, attached to nothing stable in the world, an image of the futility of self-authorization.

### Art and prophecy

Artists cast about for ways to articulate what they were doing. A brief inscription on one of Dürer's woodcuts of the 1520s suggests the peculiar power of the image over linear time. The woodcut represents, in the form of a frieze spread across three sheets of paper, a political allegory (fig. 114).<sup>47</sup>

44. Christopher S. Wood, "Indoor/Outdoor: The Studio around 1500," in *Inventions of the Studio: Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Mary Pardo and Michael Cole (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 36–72. See the drawing in Erlangen of a studio apprentice sleeping in a chair, University Library, inv. no. I J 3.

45. Habich, *Die deutschen Schaumünzen des XVI* (see chap. 5, n. 119), vol. 1, pt. 1, nos. 1–3, 13, 16, 124, 126–28, 201. See Max Bernhart, "Kunst und Künstler der Nürnberger Schaumünze des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Mitteilungen der bayerischen numismatischen Gesellschaft* 54 (1936): 1–61, for a list of seventy-five Nuremberg artists portrayed on medals, including twenty-five before 1535; and Bernhart, "Augsburgs Medailleure und Bildnisse Augsburger Kunsthandwerker auf Schaumünzen des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Mitteilungen der bayerischen numismatischen Gesellschaft* 55 (1937): 41–98, for the fourteen pre-1535 Augsburgers.

46. On this medal, see Christopher S. Wood, "Germany's Blind Renaissance," *Infinite Boundaries: Order, Disorder, and Reorder in Early Modern German Culture*, ed. Max Reinhart (= Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, vol. 40) (1998), 241–42 and fig. 5.

47. Hollstein 241, six blocks, 13.5 × 102.0 cm. Campbell Dodgson, *Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts* (London: British Museum, 1903), no. 149. The most thorough treatment is Wilhelm Fraenger, "Der Teppich von Michelfeld," *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde* 1 (1955): 183–211.

There has been disagreement about the authorship of the woodcut. The style leaves little doubt, however, that Dürer provided the drawings and therefore the inscription as well.<sup>48</sup> On the left, the personification of Time and Reynard the Fox, symbol of animal nature, together turn the Wheel of Fortune. At the moment depicted, the ignoble magpie has arrived at the top of the wheel. To their right, the representatives of the worldly estates—peasant, craftsman, king, bourgeois, knight—are united under a banner reading: “Deceit don’t be too dangerous to us: Piety has been asleep for a long time; should she awake, she might cause you difficulties.” They address the figure of Deceit, an enthroned grandee in the second woodblock, at whose feet slumbers an infant labeled “Piety.” Deceit, who has made Justice as well as Reason and Truth “subservient” to himself, seems to be in control of society. Between the petitioning figures and Deceit is a row of three females, the personifications of Justice, Truth, and Reason, pinioned in the stocks. On the third block, further to the right, stands a pair of unidentifiable figures who pay court to Deceit, and all the way to the right stands Eternal Providence, a mystical figure with shining countenance.<sup>49</sup>

The woodcut was published no earlier than 1524, as Dürer’s inscription will indicate. The year 1525 was the moment of maximum contemporary terror and disorder, when Luther’s protest against the Roman church ignited a rural rebellion that threatened to turn the entire society upside down, and had to be quelled with the sword. Dürer was horrified by these events and yearned for peace and order.<sup>50</sup>

Dürer did not invent this allegory. He found it, believing it to be a document from the past prophesying the current muddled state of things. His

48. There is no secure proof of authorship, however, and no unanimity among scholars. The woodcut has also been attributed to Georg Pencz, Sebald Beham, and Peter Vischer the Elder. See the surveys of the attribution debate in Schoch et al., *Albrecht Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 2, no. A22; and in Wim Hüsken, “The *Michelfeldt Tapestry* and Contemporary European Literature: Moral Lessons on the Rule of Deceit,” in *Dürer and his Culture*, ed. Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 71–72.

49. For more thorough readings of the allegory, and the literary and pictorial contexts for it, see R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 140–42; and Hüsken, “The *Michelfeldt Tapestry* and Contemporary European Literature.”

50. On Dürer’s political disillusionment, see Jane Campbell Hutchison, *Albrecht Dürer: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 180–81. In 1521 Dürer designed a mural for the city hall illustrating the lost *Calumny* attributed by Lucian to Apelles and recommended by Leon Battista Alberti as a subject for modern painters (Winkler 922, Strauss 1522/12). The painting was executed by Georg Pencz and destroyed in WWII. This, too, was a *Gerechtigkeitsbild*, or warning to the authorities. David Cast, *The Calumny of Apelles: A Study of the Humanist Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 104–13; Matthias Mende wonders whether the “*Michelfeldt*” woodcut might not reproduce an alternative design for the Rathaus mural; in Schoch et al., *Albrecht Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 2, no. A22.



114. Albrecht Dürer, *Tapestry of Michelfeldt*, after 1524, woodcut. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

four-line inscription at the top of the second block explains the discovery: “These figures with their accompanying rhymes were copied and replicated from an old tapestry, woven about a hundred years ago, and found in Castle Michelfeldt on the Rhine at mid Lent in the year 1524. They show how the elders [the forebears, *die Alten*] had in their minds, and secretly preserved, the current events such as they are occurring daily.”

There is no way of knowing whether Dürer himself saw the tapestry at Castle Michelfeldt, or whether he was relying on someone else’s drawing of it. There is no evidence that Dürer was on the Rhine in March 1524. And yet Dürer does have an opinion about the age of the tapestry—“an old tapestry, woven about a hundred years old” (“*einem alten Tebich / vor Hundert jaren vngefährlich gwürkt*”).

The first mystery is that there is no Castle Michelfeldt on the Rhine, and no record of one. The second mystery is that the hundred-year-old style of the tapestry is thoroughly masked by the woodcut’s modern style, Dürer’s own style.

It once seemed possible to scholars that Dürer had fabricated the allegory and the story about its origin.<sup>51</sup> But in 1937 two isolated fragments of a German tapestry, either the very tapestry Dürer saw or a copy of it, surfaced in an English private collection.<sup>52</sup> Woodcut and tapestry differ in minor details, but the inscriptions match to the letter. Dürer was likely telling the truth in his inscription. But he also seems to have miscalculated the tapestry by some margin. The tapestry fragments found by Betty Kurth have vanished again. But on the basis of the photos she published, the

51. Hans Tietze and Erika Tietze-Conrat thought that Dürer had invented the story about the tapestry to cover himself in case the political satire was deemed offensive; “*Neue Beiträge zur Dürer-Forschung*,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen zu Wien*, N.F., 6 (1932): 134.

52. Betty Kurth, “Zwei unbekannte Fragmente des Michelfeldt Bildteppichs,” *Die graphischen Künste* 2 (1937): 27–31.



en Teich vor Hundert jaren vngföhrlich gewickelt /  
 fünffhundert vnd vier vnd zwenzig Jar gefunden /  
 uff halben / So sich täglich ereügeren / In irem ver-



tapestry seems to date from the 1490s and not much earlier, that is, only a generation before Dürer's copy. It may even be later and closer to the date of discovery.<sup>53</sup>

Dürer understood the figures to be old, regardless of their style. His dating raises the possibility that he could not differentiate between the style of 1425 and the style of 1490. If true, that would be interesting, because if Dürer could not see the distinction, then who at that time could? And if that were the case, then one is tempted to argue that it was the whole set of assumptions about substitution that was still closing the period eye to the historicity of form. It is also possible that Dürer saw the figure style of the tapestry as neutral and realistic, and not particularly context-reflexive. There is finally the third possibility that he recognized the style as recent, but believed that the tapestry registered a still older set of images, which for one reason or another (perhaps on the basis of something someone told him) he thought dated from the early fifteenth century. Tapestry was a reproductive medium, and no one at the time would have assumed that any given tapestry represented the initial, originary redaction of a figuration.

Dürer chose to relate the allegory in the old tapestry to the present-day troubles of his nation. Moreover, his inscription raises the possibility that he considered the tapestry to have prophesied current events. The text is difficult to interpret. The last sentence reads: "Zaygen an was dye alten der jetzigen leüffthalben / So sich täglich ereügeren / In Irem verstandt gehabt vnd heimlich bey sich behalten haben." It is not clear whether the phrase

53. Christina Cantzler, *Bildteppiche der Spätgotik am Mittelrhein, 1400–1550* (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1990), 104–6. The allegory itself is also difficult to imagine in an early fifteenth-century context and seems rather to belong more or less to Dürer's own time. Mende, in Schoch et al., *Albrecht Dürer, das druckgraphische Werk*, vol. 2, no. A22, suggests that Dürer's woodcut might even have served the lost tapestry as a model.

“jetzigen leüffthalben” means the events of the historical time, the time of the *alten*, or the events of today, now, Dürer’s own time. If the former, then Dürer just means that the tapestry shows how our forebears interpreted the events of their own time and that they knew how to encipher them allegorically (“heimlich bey sich behalten”). In that case, he makes no statement about an intrinsic relationship between the allegory and current events, but rather simply leaves it to the viewer to draw any possible parallels. But if the latter reading is best, then Dürer is saying that the elders actually foresaw the current troubles, the troubles of Dürer’s own time, and “secretly preserved” or archived them in allegorical form. This reading is preferable because if the forebears were simply commenting on, or complaining about, the events of their own time, it is not clear why they would have needed to encipher them in allegory.

The idea that images could deliver prophetic truth was no bizarre fancy on Dürer’s part. Doge Leonardo Loredan of Venice (1436–1521), subject of the famous portrait by Bellini in the National Gallery in London, said in a speech of 1509, “Let us suppose that trust is to be placed in ancient divinations (and credence must be given to them, seeing that many things painted centuries long ago, in many places, or written, have come true in the present) and above all in those known in temples, as is seen in the stupendous church of Santa Sophia in Constantinople.” The doge goes on to interpret an old mosaic at Hagia Sophia as a prediction of the city’s occupation by the Ottomans. A Romanesque relief at S. Giacomo di Rialto, meanwhile, once read properly, warns the doge not to go to war against the Germans.<sup>54</sup> In a Carthusian monastery in Nuremberg the Protestant theologian Andreas Osiander found a 1515 Bologna edition of Joachimite prophecies (*Vaticinia*) accompanied by obscure images. He had it re-edited with woodcut copies of the images and verses by Hans Sachs (1527), and interpreted it as a prediction of Lutheranism.<sup>55</sup> Some elements of the Michelfeldt tapestry—the Wheel of Fortune, the animal allegories, the critique of the clergy—were familiar from the woodcut illustrations to published astrological prophecies, for example, the *Pronosticatio* of Johannes Lichtenberg (Heidelberg, 1488).<sup>56</sup>

In the woodcut of the *Tapestry of Michelfeldt*, the inscription above the figure of Eternal Providence on the far right reads: “Eyn yetlich sach gat

54. David Chambers and Brian Pullan, eds., *Venice: A Documentary History 1450–1630* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 397–98.

55. Warburg, “Pagan-Antique Prophecy in Words and Images,” 632–34; Roland H. Bainton, “‘Eyn wunderliche weyssagung,’” *Germanic Review* 21 (1946): 161–64; and Scribner, *Far the Sake of Simple Folk*, 142–47.

56. Talkenberger, *Sintflut* [see chap. 6, n. 4], 192n162. Dürer’s interest in astrological prophecy is attested by his meteorological dream of 1525, recorded in a watercolor and inscription, apparently related to predictions of such a deluge; Winkler 944, Strauss 1525/4.

aus die nu wider eingat / In den vrsprung von dem sy geflossen ist" (Everything that goes out now re-enters the source from which it flowed.) The concept of an endless, self-perpetuating flow, an eternal return, symbolized by the looped ribbon that bears the inscription, is Dürer's figure for the aesthetic gift of prophecy, the defeat of time. Prophecy was another way the culture found to figure to itself the time-folding power that the substitutional model of artifact production had theorized. If substitution was a mechanical theory of image-memory, then prophecy, whose mode of presentation was allegory, was a cosmic theory. The theory of prophetic art was another attempt to locate the true power of the image by the indirect method of locating some power in the cosmos that the image could mimic. The image could link past to present, but increasingly it could do this only in its guise as artwork. Wolfgang Iser argues that under the modern condition of the breakdown of a stable worldview, a literary or artistic restaging of life offers the last possibility of a meaningful repetition, repetition in the paradoxical sense of Kierkegaard's "recollection forward."<sup>57</sup>

Earlier in this book we encountered the misidentification by the natural philosopher Paracelsus, in 1538, of a princely fresco at the church of S. Candido at Innichen in the South Tyrol. Paracelsus's description of the church went further. "Among these images," he wrote, "is carved one in the form of a monk with belt and bare head."<sup>58</sup> That can be none other than the small head below the molding on the right jamb of the south portal (fig. 115). This is either a self-portrait of a thirteenth-century sculptor or just a monstrous head, curious and menacing, an iconographic interloper of the sort so often found in medieval churches. But Paracelsus went on to explain: "Above his head is written the word LUTERUS in capital letters. This is not easily recognized on account of the weather and its age, unless one looks closely."<sup>59</sup> The word in question, indeed badly weathered, is LUDOVICUS, the beginning of the artist's signature on the upper molding of the framing pilaster: LUDOVICUS PARAVIT HOC OPUS.<sup>60</sup> Paracelsus reads "Luther" and comments: "What kind of a portent that is, everyone can best judge for himself."<sup>61</sup> He saw the word and the tiny "monk" as mysterious twelfth-century predictions of the Protestant Reformation. For Paracelsus, one

57. Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, 298, citing Søren Kierkegaard, *Repetition*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 131.

58. Paracelsus, *Sämmtliche Werke* (see chap. 4, n. 116), 1: 245–46: "Unter diesen Bildern ist ein Bild in der Gestalt eines Mönches mit Gürtel und blossem Kopfe . . . gehauen worden."

59. Paracelsus, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 1: 245–46: "Über seinem Haupte ist mit grossen Buchstaben . . . LUTERUS geschrieben worden. Zum Teil wird dies wegen des Wetters und des Alters nicht leicht erkannt, es sei denn, dass man es genau ansieht."

60. Such a signature is more characteristic of the thirteenth century than the late fifteenth and casts some doubt on Erika Doberer's revisionist dating.

61. Paracelsus, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 1: 245–46: "Was das für ein Vorzeichen ist, kann jeder bei sich gut ermesen."



115. S. Candido (Innichen), south portal, thirteenth century. Photo: author.

image at Innichen pointed backward in time, the other pointed forward.

Shared knowledge of the long historical sequence of artistic and architectural styles was quantitatively little more advanced in 1538 than it had been in 1488. But in that half-century the publication of archeological scholarship had established the principle of the systematic, chronologically oriented study of the material record of the past. Many of the inscriptions published in Apianus and Aman-tius's *Inscriptiones sacrosanctae vetustatis* (1534), the first pan-European sylloge of ancient inscriptions, were supplemented by woodcut renderings of objects, some based on drawings by Dürer.<sup>62</sup> Northern artists and collectors found in prints from Italy, by Mantegna, Marcantonio Raimondi, Nicoletto da Modena, Jacopo Francia, Agostino Veneziano, and many others an archeologically corrected image of pagan antiquity. Published architec-

tural treatises, meanwhile, were introducing to northern Europe the notion that modern architecture might be reoriented according to the design principles enshrined within the few remaining samples of ancient Roman architecture, that is, by acts of deliberate historical recovery.

Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries legitimated its own modernity by a massive restaging of antiquity, a paradoxical project associated especially with Italy, where antiquity almost literally rose from the earth to serve as the setting for modern life. The mimicry of antiquity was a mask for the real shifts and breaches which were in fact rapidly distancing modern Europe from antiquity, above all through print technology, transoceanic exploration, commerce and banking, and the development of the bureaucratic nation-state.

62. See Ida Calabi Limentani, "Primi orientamenti per una storia dell' epigrafia latina classica," *Acme* 19 (1966): 162–63. Panofsky, "Albrecht Dürer and Classical Antiquity," 236–94; Phyllis L. Williams, "Two Roman Reliefs in Renaissance Disguise," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (1940/41): 47–66; and *Archäologie der Antike, 1500–1700*, 88–89, no. 4.9. The illustrations have never been systematically studied. Some have attributed them to Michael Ostendorfer; see Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler*, vol. 26 (Leipzig: Seemann, 1932), 78. On Ostendorfer's work for Apianus, and an attribution of the *Inscriptiones* woodcuts to Hans Brosamer, see Karl Röttel, ed., *Peter Apian: Astronomie, Kosmographie und Mathematik am Beginn der Neuzeit* (Buxheim: Polygon, 1995), 35–38.

From the Reformation to the middle of the seventeenth century, the German people had no rest. The Germans were the *gens inquietissima*.<sup>63</sup> The old patterns of art-making were disrupted, and no new patterns emerged in their place. The rapprochement with Italian art and classical antiquity was sporadic, constantly interrupted. To this day, it is impossible to write a “history” of German art after the Reformation. Sixteenth-century German art never settles down within stable institutions and cannot tell stories about itself. This is what art looks like when it is no longer supervised by the church, and no other institutions, physical or discursive, step up to replace the church.

Around 1600, at the same moment when the wealthier unreformed monasteries and bishoprics were recovering historical architectural and sculptural styles, the courtly and urban elite rediscovered the art of the early sixteenth century and crafted the modern historiographic myth of the *Dürerzeit*.<sup>64</sup> The watercolor nature studies of Dürer were collected and copied. Modern artists experimented with the drawing and painting manners of the heroic contemporaries of Dürer. The Germans finally had a classical moment that could stand alongside, and one day perhaps even cast a critical glance on, the equipoise of the Florentine and Roman Renaissance. The *Dürerzeit* became a touchstone for German national self-consciousness at the very moment when artists were at last beginning to internalize the international manner that had emanated from Rome.

The sacred counterpart to the “Dürer renaissance” was the sophisticated Gothic revival in Augsburg and Bamberg, in the context of a German Counter-Reformation. At the high altar of Sts. Ulrich and Afra the sculptor Paulus Mayr erected in 1570–71 a carved retable citing a whole range of Swabian architectural and sculptural forms of the late fifteenth century, for instance, the *Madonna and Child* of Gregor Erhart’s Kaisheim altarpiece.<sup>65</sup> Another late sixteenth-century altar in the same church copies, or imitates, with brilliant fidelity the modest style of late fifteenth-century painted panels. In Bamberg, meanwhile, the church of St. Michael,

63. Günter Bandmann adapts the phrase from a remark of Otto von Freising (twelfth century) directed against the Normans; *Mittelalterliche Architektur als Bedeutungsträger*, 131n46 and 245.

64. On the Dürer “renaissance” of circa 1600, see Fritz Koreny, *Albrecht Dürer and the Animal and Plant Studies of the Renaissance* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), 15–16; Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 222–29; and *Albrecht Dürer and His Legacy*, ed. Giulia Bartrum, exhibition catalogue, British Museum (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 266–82.

65. Now in the Schneckenkapelle. Schmidt, *Reverentia und Magnificentia*, 219–22, 237–42. See also the altars by Hans Degler in the same church, dated 1604 and 1606 and still linked to the Gothic tradition.

on the Michelsberg, where Bishop Otto was buried, was like Sts. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg the Benedictine rival to the city's cathedral and its chapter. In 1610 the flat roof of the nave burned and was replaced with a segmented rib vault and decorated with paintings of leaves and herbs, a celestial garden in the best Gothic manner.<sup>66</sup> Such phenomena are best understood in analogy to the archaism of Scipio Pulzone, Girolamo Muziano, and other Roman painters of the late sixteenth century, a solemn, even (deliberately?) dull-witted approach to religious painting designed to put the brakes on a rampant stylishness spiraling into irrelevancy.<sup>67</sup>

### The future of credulity

Historical retrospective in the sixteenth century never quite disentangled itself from the patterns of misdating and misidentification that have been the subject of this book. Certain classes of objects were especially likely to be misidentified. Fascination with antinormative and aberrant forms was permanently interfering with historical reason. An heir to Celtis's projects was the Lutheran reformer, historian, and antiquarian Andreas Althamer (c. 1500–c. 1539), who took an interest in the sculpted reliefs on the church in his native town of Brenz in Swabia. In his commentary on Tacitus published in 1536, Althamer described the fabulous animals and mannikins carved on the outside of the apse of the parish church (fig. 116).<sup>68</sup> A row of enigmatic heads supports a frieze of round arches. In the two semicircular fields illustrated here an exotic feathered huntsman and collared beast pursue a stag, right to left. Althamer doubted that pious Christians would have carved this menagerie and so attributed it to the Romans:

If the orthodox faith had been proclaimed to this people, then undoubtedly the Christians would have carved some works of the Lord's Passion or sacred history: now since none of these things are to be discerned here, I conjecture that these buildings were constructed before the planting of the faith in this place, not by Germans but by Romans: indeed the people told me that it had been built by pagans; so they described the indigenous people.

66. Peter Ruderich, *St. Michael in Bamberg*, DTV-Kunstführer Nr. 614/3 (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, n.d. [2003]), 7–8, 12. The choir with its even more complex Gothic rib vaulting dates from 1583.

67. Federico Zeri, *Pittura e controriforma: L'arte senza tempo di Scipione da Gaeta* (Torino: Einaudi, 1957).

68. *Die Kunst- und Altertumsdenkmale in Württemberg, Jagstkreis, Oberamt Heidenheim*, ed. Eugen Gradmann (Esslingen: Neff, 1913), 97. See the account in Werner Körte, *Die Wiederaufnahme romanischer Bauformen* (see chap. 5, n. 25), 86.



116. Relief, thirteenth century (?). Brenz, Parish Church, apse. Photo: Foto Marburg/Art Resource, NY.

(Si orthodoxia fides tum fuisset huic populo praedicata, haud dubie aliquid Christiani operis de dominica passione aut sacris historiis incidissent: nunc cum nihil harum rerum cernatur, coniiicio ante plantatam iis locis fidem, non Germanos, sed Romanos id Aedifitii struxisse: nam et populares mei ab paganis, ita ethnicos apellant, exstructum praedicant.)<sup>69</sup>

Althamer, misled by a real Roman inscription lodged in the wall of the church,<sup>70</sup> had mistaken a Romanesque ornamental frieze, carved in the thirteenth century, for a relic of pagan antiquity. Like most scholars of his day, Althamer did not find it easy to date an artifact on the basis of internal formal clues. Archeological scholarship lost its bearings in the realm of the pre-Gothic. This pattern persisted well beyond Celtis's lifetime, and well beyond the sixteenth century. Whenever it came to the fables surrounding the births of the nations, involving the early peoples (Celts, Etruscans) who had resisted the Romans or the emergence of the modern tribes out of the chaos of late antiquity, the creative approach dominated.<sup>71</sup> Local

69. Althamer, *Commentaria Germaniae in P. Cornelii Taciti* (Nuremberg, 1536), 34; reprinted in *Schardius redivivus, sive Rerum germanicarum scriptores varii*, ed. Hieronymus Thomas (Gies-sen, 1673), vol. 1.

70. F. Haug and G. Sixt, *Die römischen Inschriften und Bildwerke Württembergs* (Stuttgart, 1914), pp. 84–85, no. 29, first recorded by Althamer himself.

71. On the late sixteenth-century "fantasists," the "fever-brained" (Scaliger) historians Wolfgang Lazius, Jean Bodin, and Guillaume Postel, see Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*, vol. 2, *Historical Chronology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

scholars in the early nineteenth century still debated whether Althamer's church at Brenz had been a pagan temple.<sup>72</sup> The great medieval antiquarian of the eighteenth century Bernard de Montfaucon accepted the identification, proposed by a local antiquarian in 1724, of Romanesque sculptures on an octagonal chapel at Montmorillon near Poitiers as relics of the druids.<sup>73</sup> Those sculptures represented hideous chimeras, monsters on the margins of the Christian imagination. The notion of a material culture of the druids seems far-fetched, but Montfaucon's thinking here is not different in structure from his better-known identifications of the early Gothic figures on the portals of St. Denis, St. Germain-des-Prés, and Chartres as Merovingian kings.<sup>74</sup> Montfaucon's royal hypothesis has always been understood simply as a misreading. And yet even today it is not so easy to say who was represented at St. Denis. The figures wear strange bonnets and were perhaps conceived as kings, queens, and prophets of the Old Testament existing in anachronistic or typological overlap with the historical founders of France.<sup>75</sup>

The centrally planned temple and the rough, even obscene, sculpted figure represented the monumental outer limits of Christian civilization. The inability to conceive of such artifacts as events, as origin points in their own right, was almost a discursive compulsion. Even after contextual and authorial conceptions of the origins of artifacts had come to dominate historical thought, the polygonal temple and the rough sculpted figure remained exempt. The centrally planned church and the misshapen idol interfered with the taxonomizing and sequencing. These classes of artifacts were conceived of as time tunnels leading back to a mythical homeland that was best left historically unspecified. It suited the early modern historian to leave some ages dark. Temple or idol of murky origins sym-

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1993), 83–89. See also William J. Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1550–1640* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), chap. 13, contrasting the confusion of the later period to the supposed lucidity of the early sixteenth century.

72. See the literature in Haug and Sixt, *Die römischen Inschriften und Bildwerke Württembergs*, 85.

73. On the Montmorillon identification and generally on the late stages of druid-seeking archaeology, see Robert A. Maxwell, "Misadventures of a Style: Romanesque Art and the Druids in Eighteenth-Century France," *Art History* 26 (2003): 609–37.

74. Here he was following his fellow Benedictine, the philologist and diplomatist Jean Mabillon. J. Vanuxem, "The Theories of Mabillon and Montfaucon on French Sculpture of the Twelfth Century," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20 (1957): 45–58.

75. The twenty jamb figures on the west portal at St. Denis, datable to the 1130s, were destroyed in 1771 and are known only from eighteenth-century drawings. The only identifiable figure is Moses. See Willibald Sauerländer, *Gothic Sculpture in France, 1140–1270*. transl. Janet Sondheim (New York, Abrams: 1972), 379.



bolized the ragged edge of historical reason and the ultimate subservience of historical scholarship to the mysticisms of folk or nation. The anachronic pockets of creativity beyond the reach of science kept alive a model of culture as a flow of cosmic energy transcending any individual will or intention. Such pockets ensured that the mechanistic model of culture as a sum of individual decisions, which is the model best adapted to empirical inquiry, would not quite add up. The discourse of empiricism thus always produced its own internal resistance.

The misidentifications of the early medieval material, by Celtis and like-minded contemporaries in every time and place, are reactions against the rationalization of historical thought that estranges knowledge from art. Substitutional thinking in modernity is the symptom of an unwillingness to accept the idea of art as a socially sanctioned, domesticated institution. Paradoxically, the modern philosophical idea of art itself, the sometimes mystical models developed (by Kandinsky, for example, or Heidegger) of the cosmic or epiphanic truth that art alone offers, is another such reaction, even if those models are sometimes protected by the rationalizing institutions of art. The topos of the heathen idol and the topos of the artwork both function in modernity as legitimating shelters for the psychological fact of the chromomorphic play of figuration. The two topoi are postponements of a final consignment of art to its maximally stable institutional niche.

With print and the partitioning of knowledge came the end of the universal medieval cosmology. The Renaissance was basically a limiting of the imagination. Travel, differentiation, collation and comparison of results, editing of texts, anthologizing, taxonomizing, all these projects of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries created institutions and categories where before there had been an anarchic flow of experience. Now there was "literature," "scholarship," "art." For art to be born, the anachronic play, beyond truth or falsehood, of (medieval) art had to be explained away. Art emerged as the institution responsible for absorbing but at the same time strictly monitoring anachronistic thinking. The institution of art was left responsible for a certain kind of truth that used to be dispersed throughout culture.

At least that was the myth that Renaissance art generated of its own origins and prehistory. From the sixteenth century onward, art came to define itself against the idea that there was once a time when art was not necessary.

Modern art, art since the Renaissance, lives instead off a fiction of its own fictionality, its difference from truth-seeking discourses which are supposedly capable of locating their own origins, accurately. Art is the

discourse that grasps perfectly that the origin will never be found. The origin is the one unreachable destination of the well-equipped modern traveler. Scholarship is the discourse that systematically forgets, prefers to forget, that fact. Art, by contrast, perfectly ready to travel without hope of arriving, severs the old referential mechanisms from reference itself, transforming the “as it must have been” of the substitutional chain into the “as if” of fictionality.

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