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# Interventions: Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism

*Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood*

The Venetian painter Vittore Carpaccio pictured Saint Augustine seated at a table in a roomy study, pausing, his pen raised from the paper. Augustine is writing a letter to Saint Jerome asking the older man for advice and at that very moment, in distant Bethlehem, Jerome dies. Augustine looks up from his desk, as his room fills with light and an ineffable fragrance, and he hears the voice of Jerome. Carpaccio painted the picture about 1503 for the Confraternity of S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni in Venice, where it still hangs today (Fig. 1). It is a historical picture, re-creating an incident supposedly narrated by Augustine himself in a spurious letter frequently published in late-fifteenth-century Venice as a supplement to biographies of Saint Jerome.<sup>1</sup> The fluttering pages of the open codices, the fall of the shadows, the alerted dog, the poised pen all suggest the momentariness of that moment, the evening hour of compline, as Augustine tells us. This is secular time, the time of lived experience, whose each moment repeats but differs from the previous moment. The *saeculum* is measured out against a completely different temporality, the time frame of perfect understanding. Augustine had been planning a treatise on the joys of the blessed and was writing to Jerome for guidance on the topic. However, his letter was badly placed in secular time and would never reach its addressee. Instead, at the moment he put the salutation down on paper, Augustine reports, Jerome's voice came to him from that place of the blessed to chastise him for his hubris in attempting to reason about what was beyond his comprehension. "By what measure," Jerome asked, "will you measure the immense?"

The artifacts and the furnishings described by this picture, occupants of mundane, "fallen" time, are all tied to history by their forms, but in different ways and with differing degrees of certitude. It seems at first that everything is much as it might have been in an Italian scholar's well-appointed study of about 1500. At the left is an elegant red chair with cloth fringe and brass rivets and a tiny lectern. A door at the back opens onto a smaller room with a table supporting piles of books and a rotating book stand. Carpaccio portrays writing implements, penholders, scientific instruments, an hourglass, and, on a shelf running along the left wall, under a shelf of books, still more bric-a-brac of the sort that scholars like to collect: old pots, statuettes, even prehistoric flint artifacts, misunderstood by the painter and his contemporaries as petrified lightning.<sup>2</sup> Some of these objects clash anachronistically with the picture's subject matter. One of the small statues is a representation of Venus, an object that a modern clergyman, a man of taste and liberal views capable of distinguishing a shelf from an altar table, might have prized, but that Saint Augustine would not have owned.<sup>3</sup> Augustine was vehement in his condemnation of pagan statuary, as any of his Renaissance readers would have known.<sup>4</sup> On the rear wall is a kind of private chapel, a wall niche framed by pilasters

and faced with spandrels with inlaid vegetal ornament, which shelters an altar. The altar looks as if it is in use: the curtain is pushed aside and the doors on the front are open, revealing ecclesiastical equipment. Augustine has placed his bishop's miter on the altar table and propped his crozier and a censer on either side. They are the appurtenances that a modern bishop might have owned. Even so, those modern artifacts, and a modern chapel with its fashionable frame, all had an *all'antica* flavor that connected them with the Roman past, with Augustine's historical world, more or less. Such artifacts, given a virtual life inside a painted fiction, entered into poetic play with each other, orchestrated by the painter-author.

## A Clash of Temporalities

Many fifteenth-century painters mingled historical and contemporary references in their works. Even Carpaccio's Augustine, it is argued by some scholars, was a screen for a modern portrait, a papal official in one account, in another, Cardinal Bessarion.<sup>5</sup> Such deliberate anachronisms, juxtapositions of historically distinct styles in a single picture and stagings of historical events in contemporary settings, fed back into the symbolic machinery of the pictures. Fifteenth-century Flemish painters, for instance, embedded samples of medieval architectural styles as an iconographic device: the round-arched or "Romanesque" style as the signifier of the old covenant, "Gothic" pointed arches as the signifier of the new.<sup>6</sup> Rogier van der Weyden attached an anachronistic crucifix to the central pier of a ruinous Nativity shed, site of maximum condensation and redundancy of epochal time.<sup>7</sup> Sandro Botticelli dressed the characters of his *Primavera* in the costumes of contemporary festival pageantry, a blend of the still fashionable and slightly out-of-date, creating a delicious tension with the literary premise of a primordial theophany, the invitation to the first spring of all time.<sup>8</sup> The staged collision between the visually familiar and the unfamiliar was one of the ways that modern paintings, to borrow a phrase from Alfred Acres, "customized the terms of their own perception."<sup>9</sup> Such works dared to make reference to a "here" and a "now" relative to a historical beholder, through perspective or modern costumes or hidden contemporary portraits. The "customized," contingent aspect of the work could be folded back into the work's primary, usually nonlocal aims. The internal dissonance between universal and contingent then generated a whole new layer of meanings.

The condition of possibility for such complex feedback effects was the idea that form would be legible to the beholder as the trace of an epoch, a culture, a world—as a "style," in other words. Behind the idea of historical style stands a theory about the origins of formed artifacts. According to this theory, the circumstances of an artifact's fabrication, its originary context, are registered in its physical fea-



1 Vittore Carpaccio, *The Vision of Saint Augustine*, 1502–3. Venice, S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni (photo: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

tures. A clash of temporalities of the sort we find in Carpaccio comes about when patrons and artist and beholders all agree to see the artifacts “cited” in the painting, the buildings or statues or costumes, as traces of historical moments. One can characterize this theory of the origin of the artifact—which is equally a theory of the origin of the artwork—as *performative*. The artifact or the work, according to this theory, was the product of a singular historical performance. Any subsequent repetitions of that performance, for example, copies of the work, will be alienated from the original scene of making.

This theory of origins came into especially sharp focus over the course of the fifteenth century. An artist was now conceived for the first time as an author, an *auctor* or founder, a legitimate point of origin for a painting or sculpture, or even a building. The author, more generally the entire context of fabrication, leaves traces in the fabric of the work. By the third quarter of the fifteenth century, the image of the stylus or pen, the writing instrument that both in ancient rhetorical treatises and in modern Petrarch had come to stand symbolically for the individual author’s peculiar, inalienable way of putting things into words, was carried over into the contemporary discourse on painting. The Florentine Antonio Filarete, in his *Treatise on Architecture* (1461–64), wrote that “the painter is known by the manner of his figures, and in every discipline one is known by his style.”<sup>10</sup> A character in

Baldassare Castiglione’s dialogue *The Courtier* (1528) says of Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Giorgione that “each is recognized to be perfect in his own style.”<sup>11</sup> Since the late fifteenth century some version of this theory of origins is inscribed into every European painting.<sup>12</sup>

Carpaccio’s painting dramatizes the clash between temporalities. At the heart of the picture, inside the wall niche, the system of anachronistic citations reaches a crescendo and then collapses in upon itself. On Augustine’s private altar stands a statue of the resurrected Christ. Here Carpaccio has imagined an Early Christian altar, adorned not by a carved and painted retable but by a freestanding bronze. Of course, no such work would have stood on a fifth-century altar. Carpaccio in fact was describing a modern work, a bronze statue today in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan (Fig. 2). The work was made in the Veneto in the early 1490s and could be found, at the time Carpaccio painted his picture, on an altar in the Venetian church of S. Maria della Carità in Venice.<sup>13</sup> It was commissioned, together with an elaborate chapel, by the wealthy jeweler and antiquarian Domenico di Piero.<sup>14</sup> At 54¾ inches (138 centimeters), it is significantly larger than a statuette, though under life-size.<sup>15</sup>

Since the Christ figure on the altar was a modern work, it seems to match the other anachronisms in the room, the



modern furniture and the bound codices. But this statue is presented as an ancient work. Of course, no such artifact had survived from Early Christian times. The literary tradition, however, mentions an ancient bronze statue of Christ. The early-fourth-century church historian Eusebius had described a bronze statue group in Paneas (present-day Baniyas, north of the Sea of Galilee) that showed a woman kneeling in supplication before a man with a cloak draped over his shoulder and with his arm outstretched to her.<sup>16</sup> Eusebius's account was retold and embroidered throughout the Middle Ages and in the thirteenth century made it into the pages of the *Golden Legend*, one of the most widely read devotional texts of the later Middle Ages. In the *Golden Legend* the two-figure group had become a single statue of Christ.<sup>17</sup> The story was frequently invoked by iconophiles during the sixteenth-century image controversy as an example of the use of images in archaic Christian times.

We will argue that the bronze Christ cited in the painting was not merely, for Carpaccio, a modern work functioning as an ingenious hypothesis of a lost ancient work. The bronze Christ did not just "stand for" or refer poetically to antiquity. Rather, for him the statue *was* an antique work.<sup>18</sup>

### Substitution

To make sense of this claim about the statue we will need to introduce a new model of the relation of artifacts to time. The thesis proposed here and in the research project it introduces is that all artifacts—not just statues but also chairs, panel paintings, even churches—were understood in the pre-modern period to have a double historicity: one might *know* that they were fabricated in the present or in the recent past but at the same time value them and use them *as if* they were very old things. This was not a matter of self-delusion or indolence but a function of an entire way of thinking about the historicity of artifacts repeatedly misunderstood by the modern discipline of art history.

Images and buildings, as a general rule, were understood as tokens of types, types associated with mythical, dimly perceived origins and enforcing general structural or categorical continuity across sequences of tokens. One token or replica effectively substituted for another; classes of artifacts were grasped as chains of substitutable replicas stretching out across time and space. Under this conception of the temporal life of artifacts, which we will call the principle of *substitution*, modern copies of painted icons were understood as effective surrogates for lost originals, and new buildings were understood as reinstantiations, through typological association, of prior structures. The literal circumstances and the historical moment of an artifact's material execution were not routinely taken as components of its meaning or function; such facts about an artifact were seen as accidental rather than as constitutive features. Instead, the artifact functioned by aligning itself with a diachronic chain of replications. It substituted for the absent artifacts that preceded it within the chain. Richard Krautheimer, in his seminal article "Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture," of 1942, made this point about medieval buildings.<sup>19</sup> He held that the ground plans of many early and high medieval churches were governed not so much by structural, formal, or liturgical concerns as by a desire to comply with a set of simple design



2 *Resurrected Christ*. Milan, Poldi Pezzoli Museum

principles embodied in a few prestigious and symbolically weighty early models. Krautheimer carefully declined to push his thesis beyond a limited group of centrally planned churches dating from the ninth to the twelfth centuries. In effect, we are trying to extend the Krautheimer thesis, beyond



3 *Resurrected Christ*, detail of foot and plinth (photo: Alexander Nagel)

its original brief, to the painting and the sculpture of the Renaissance.

The bronze Christ once in Venice and now in Milan did not actually belong to a chain. It appears to have been a philologically sensitive replica of the historical statue described by Eusebius and others through to the *Golden Legend*. The modern statue preserves a peculiar detail of the legend. According to the texts, exotic plants that grew beneath the statue and came into contact with the sculpted hem of Christ's cloak took on miraculous powers and were used to heal illnesses of all kinds.<sup>20</sup> (Luke 8:44 and Matthew 9:20 specifically say that the hemorrhaging woman was healed by touching the hem of Christ's garment.) On the bronze statue now in Milan, the very work Carpaccio used as his model, the pedestal carries a dense motif of foliage, and the hem of Christ's pallium drops down sharply below the level of his feet (Fig. 3). The motif is strange and emphatic: the cloth pools up to the side of the pedestal as if to insist on the idea that it has come into physical contact with the ground. The vegetal ornament and the overflowing hem show that the patron of the bronze statue, Domenico di Piero, deliberately understood it as a replica of the original ancient statue of Christ recorded by Eusebius.<sup>21</sup>

In the literature on the ancient and medieval use of *spolia*, that is, elements of early monuments reused in later times, some conceptual space has been cleared for artifacts like this. In her book *Venice and Antiquity*, Patricia Fortini Brown identifies a "level of copying—the deliberate faking of an antiquity—in which the present virtually *becomes* the past."<sup>22</sup> Following a distinction drawn by Richard Brilliant, she describes such works as the thirteenth-century relief *Hercules with the Cerynean Hind and the Lernean Hydra* on the facade of S. Marco or the thirteenth-century ducal tombs as "conceptual spolia": artifacts filling gaps in the monumental record and made to look as if they might have been *spolia*.<sup>23</sup> Our model amplifies and radicalizes this argument. Not just a few but a vast range of works can be understood as virtual *spolia* or fabricated antiquities, whether they closely resemble real antiquities, to our eyes, or not. The rare examples that succeed in simulating the look of antiquity serve as signposts that help us map out the full reach of the model.

The simple presence of an artifact like the Venetian Christ carried enormous validating power. Reflexively placing it within a substitutional mode of production, contemporary viewers looked past the local circumstances of its fabrication and instead concentrated on the referential target. Even a prototype otherwise unknown was in effect "retroactivated" by such a work. In the presence of the actual statue—especially one in bronze, a rare sight in churches at this time—the legend of an antique original immediately gained compelling concreteness.

The substitutional, retroactive power of the bronze Christ explains why the statue, which appeared in Venice in the 1490s, had such an extraordinary and immediate impact on Venetian art of the period. Although authorless and virtually unknown today, about 1500 the figure carried great authority, as if it were understood to be more than an imaginative fiction. It was often copied. In S. Maria della Carità in Venice, where the bronze originally stood, the Christ in the Resurrection relief from the Barbarigo Tomb, finished by 1501, is closely based on the statue. Freer emulations of the statue abounded: Alvise Vivarini's *Resurrected Christ* of 1497 in S. Giovanni in Bragora, Cima da Conegliano's figure of Christ in his *Doubting of Saint Thomas* of 1504, the statue of Christ in marble by Giambattista Bregno in the de Rossi Chapel in the Treviso Duomo of 1501–3. Its powerful effect on Fra Bartolommeo, who visited Venice in 1508, can be seen in the Florentine altarpiece he painted for Salvatore Billi in 1516 (now in the Palazzo Pitti). And Carpaccio, as we have seen, copied it closely.<sup>24</sup> This reception history reveals that the Christ statue had come close to attaining the status of a true likeness.

Let us return to the Carpaccio painting, moving outward from the statue. The mosaic in the apse behind the statue unmistakably renders an actual mosaic of a seraph from the Creation cupola of the atrium of S. Marco in Venice.<sup>25</sup> Made in the thirteenth century, the mosaic is only a few hundred years distant from Carpaccio's painting. Augustine never saw it or anything like it. Perhaps Carpaccio simply did not know how to date the mosaic and in citing it actually meant to invoke the remote time of Christian antiquity, the time of the Church Fathers. To put it in these terms, however, to speak of a "misdating," is to misunderstand the mechanism of the

substitutional mode. Carpaccio knew that S. Marco and the mosaic were postantique; at the same time, he considered them substitutions for lost antiquities. Nothing was more natural than the hypothesis of a chain of replicas linking the mosaic in S. Marco back to an origin. It has been shown that these mosaics from the S. Marco atrium were, in fact, modeled especially carefully and thoroughly on illustrations of the type of the fifth-century Cotton *Genesis*.<sup>26</sup> The principle of substitution was powerful enough to *make* the S. Marco mosaic an antiquity.<sup>27</sup>

To perceive an artifact in substitutional terms was to understand it as belonging to more than one historical moment simultaneously. The artifact was connected to its unknowable point of origin by an unreconstructible chain of replicas. That chain could not be perceived; its links did not diminish in stature as they receded into the depths of time. Rather, the chain created an instant and ideally effective link to an authoritative source and an instant identity for the artifact. If under the performative theory of origins a given sequence of works is seen perspectively, each one with a different appearance, under the substitutional theory different objects stack up one on top of another without recession and without alteration. The dominant metaphor is that of the impress or the cast, allowing for repetition without difference, even across heterogeneous objects and materials. Striking affirmations of the idea emerged in Byzantium in the wake of the iconoclastic controversy. The ninth-century theologian Saint Theodore the Studite, for example, compared the relation of image to prototype to the impress of a seal on different materials at different times: "The same applies," he wrote, "to the likeness of Christ irrespective of the material upon which it is represented."<sup>28</sup>

It is not enough to see the painting as a virtuoso manipulation of historical styles. Nor can it be described as an incompletely performative picture, with its historical vision of the past not yet quite in focus. Its interlocking anachronisms cannot be explained away as fancies of the artist or the peculiar preoccupations of the Venetians. Within the substitutional mode, anachronism was neither an aberration nor a mere rhetorical device, but a structural condition of artifacts.

Carpaccio's painting stages the statue's substitution mode against a context of performativity, and in so doing diagrams a clash between two different versions of the time-artifact relation. From one point of view, the painted statue is the lost and absent original, the nonexistent original, that the modern Italian statue reinstantiates. From another point of view, the statue is simply an anachronism, a citation of a modern work. The painting thus becomes something like an anatomical model, revealing the inner workings of picture making at this historical moment. The painting proposes as the resolution of the predicament a new, or at least newly institutionalized, function for pictures: the staging operation itself. Pictures like Carpaccio's become places where competitive models of the historicity of form can be juxtaposed, places of impossibility, of critical reflection and nonresolution. This staging operation is itself noncompetitive with the substitutional and performative modes. That is, a picture like Carpaccio's can itself maintain a particular substitutional relation to the past, or a performative relation to the past, or a combination of the two, and at the same time function as a

diagram of the conceptual interference between the two modes. And that simultaneity of operations becomes an essential feature of the work of art in the modern period.

This project has three aims: to outline two theories of the historicity of form that competed in the Renaissance, the performative and the substitutional; to suggest that the pattern of dialectical interference between the two theories so clearly diagrammed by Carpaccio's painting was constitutive of all European art in this period; and to argue that the historiography of Renaissance art, and of art historical discourses generally, is structurally compelled to misrecognize that pattern.

### Good and Bad Anachronism

The substitutional mode of artifact production hides behind the idea of style. The idea that the look of a painting or a building registers the mind of a historical artist, or even an entire historical period, in the way that a pen responds to the workings of the mind of an author is, according to the powerful model established by Erwin Panofsky and never since challenged, the defining achievement of Renaissance art. According to this celebrated thesis, the Renaissance artist saw historical art in perspective. One thinks of the range of Donatello's interpretations of Roman sculpture, from impeccable pastiche to poetic *imitatio*,<sup>29</sup> or of Mantegna's fine-grained antiquarian reconstructions of Roman architecture or weaponry.<sup>30</sup> The insight into the relativity of style was the precondition for a rebirth of antique art, for not until one could perceive ancient art as a corpus of works united by a common period style, clearly distinct from all the works made in the intervening "middle" period, could that corpus become the basis for a revival of the arts. The idea that a performative or relativist conception of style was the precondition for the Renaissance itself has for a long time been the basic premise of historical scholarship in that field, but it is also the founding myth of the discipline of art history, for were not Renaissance artists, in their ability to match up historical styles with historical epochs, themselves the first art historians?

The performative mode of artifact production brings the art of painting into alignment with the art of poetry. Deliberate anachronism was the catalyst of poetic creation in the Renaissance. To imitate an ancient literary model was to extract it from a historical matrix and reactivate it in the present. When fifteenth- and sixteenth-century architects, sculptors, and painters first saw themselves as creative authors, they, too, began to provoke what Thomas M. Greene called "miniature anachronistic crises" in their works.<sup>31</sup> The scholarly study of early modern visual culture recognizes the category of "good," or artistically productive, anachronism. Leonard Barkan, in some ways building on Greene, has recently shown how Renaissance archaeology became a framework for poetic storytelling about objects and origins. In Barkan's analysis, the fictions and projections with which Renaissance writers and artists responded to these anachronistic irruptions of the material past became paradigmatic for Renaissance fiction making and aesthetics generally.<sup>32</sup>

It has proved much harder to make historical sense of the period's many "bad" anachronisms: misidentifications and wild misdatings of old buildings and sculptures, iconographic

solecisms, deliberate forgeries. Modern scholars, for example, have tried to inventory all the works of ancient art known in the Renaissance.<sup>33</sup> But this inventory—a colossal and invaluable undertaking—is distorted by a massive historical misperception: it includes only works of art that modern scholarship judges to be antiquities. It excludes everything else that for Renaissance beholders carried the authority of antiquity: “medieval” sculpture thought to be Roman, Early Christian icons and mosaics of various periods, a whole range of buildings, from Carolingian to Gothic, celebrated in the Renaissance as models of ancient architecture—that is, the vast corpus of artifacts governed by what we have called the principle of substitution. When it comes to the problem of the historicity of form, art historians still proceed as if the best observers of the period—artists and architects and acute patrons—saw buildings or pictures more or less as we do.

This essay proposes that thinking about historical artifacts in the late medieval and early modern period, and even the production of images and buildings were built on the following paradox: the possibility that a material sample of the past could somehow be *both* an especially powerful testimony to a distant world *and*, at the same time, very likely an ersatz for some earlier, now absent artifact. The interpretation of artifacts rested on two logically incompatible convictions, neither of which could be easily abandoned: on the one hand, that material evidence was the best sort of evidence; on the other hand, that it was very likely that at some point material artifacts had been replaced. Instead of allowing one conviction to prevail, people thought “doubly” about artifacts. They did not think doubly about holy relics. A pig’s bone was not an acceptable substitute for the bone of a saint. The falsification of relics was plainly seen to be wrong. Nor did they think doubly about nondocumentary verbal texts, which were obviously substitutable, handed down through time from one material vehicle to another without loss of authenticity. The force of an old poem did not depend on the literal antiquity of the page it was written on.

A political document like a charter or a deed, or a material artifact like an image, moved between these two poles, between the nonsubstitutability of the bone and the perfect substitutability of the linguistic text. Under the substitutional theory of artifact production, the forgeries of documents so common in the Middle Ages can be understood as the legitimate reproduction of accidentally misplaced facts.<sup>34</sup> Thousands of documents were fabricated and planted in archives by later scholars, monastic or courtly, between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries. Such documents were used to shore up the claims to antiquity or legitimacy of a monastic foundation or a bishopric or a ducal house. They attested to origins. If the crucial document did not exist, it was invented. “Double think” meant that a document—or, in our case, an image—was at the same time thought of as something like a relic and as something like a poem. In the statue of Christ at the center of his picture, Carpaccio captured such an artifact, half relic and half fiction.

The claim put forward here is that all these kinds of anachronism, good and bad, were grounded in a common way of thinking about artifacts and have to be dealt with together. Renaissance beholders understood medieval or even modern works as antique not because they were con-

fused about dates but because they were preoccupied with the relation of artifacts to prototypes. In contrast to modern art historians, they focused on the referential authority of the work, its transmission of authoritative content, rather than those context-reflexive elements that advertise the moment of the artifact’s production. The enabling premise of the discipline of art history—that style is an index of history—has actually disabled our efforts to understand premodern visual culture.

### Figure and Discourse

The model of linear and measurable time was by no means foreign to the Western historical imagination before the modern period, as many medieval chronicles attest. But to tell a story from year to year, from event to event, was simply one way of organizing time. Artifacts and monuments configured time differently. They stitched through time, pulling together different points in the temporal fabric until they met. By means of artifacts, the past participated in the present. A primary function of art under the substitution system was precisely to collapse temporal distance. Such temporalities had something in common with the typological thinking of biblical exegetes, according to which sacred events, though embedded in history, also contained what theologians called a mystery, figure, or sacrament—a spiritual meaning that lifted the event out of the flow of history. The “omnitemporal” scheme of history presupposed by figural thinking constituted an effort to adopt God’s point of view, which grasps history all at once, topologically, not in a linear sequence.

This way of thinking was not limited to the educated elite: figural structures were embedded in every Mass ceremony and in virtually every sermon.<sup>35</sup> There is a mystical dimension to the substitutional approach to artifacts, a conviction of the real, and not merely symbolic, link between artifact and artifact. Visual artifacts by their very nature were well suited to the representation of the figural dimension of history. The juxtapositions, stackings, displacements, and cyclic configurations found in countless medieval church facades and altarpieces presupposed the beholder’s competence for thinking through time in flexible and associative ways.

Visual artifacts collapsed past and present with a force not possessed by texts. They proposed an unmediated, present-tense, somatic encounter with the people and the things of the past. Artifacts enacted a breaking through time and a raising from the dead. The Greek scholar Manuel Chrysoloras, who taught in Italy for several years around the turn of the fifteenth century, vividly expressed the contrast when confronted with the material remains of ancient sculpture in Rome in 1411:

Herodotus and the other historians are thought to have done something of great value when they describe these things; but in these sculptures one can *see* all that existed in those days among the different races, and thus this [image-based] history is complete and accurate: or better, if I may say so, it is not history, so much as the direct and personal observation [*autopsía*] and the living presence [*parousía*] of all the things that happened then.<sup>36</sup>

The anachronistic force of images and other artifacts was grounded in assumptions about the straightforwardness and instant intelligibility of figural representation.

Here and elsewhere the direct and time-collapsing power of the image is compared favorably with the confusing filter of discursive representation. Discourse or linguistic signing proceeds linearly into the future and thus involves a permanent falling away from the event. The real event is rendered in conventional signs whose deciphering is not a simple matter but an ongoing, dynamic process. The image, by contrast, had a way of bending the linear sequence of events back on itself, as if exerting a pull on time. This followed as a psychological fact from the capacity of the figure to embody materially its own signified.

Erich Auerbach insisted that the figural or typological relation was not allegorical but real. The Old Testament type did not merely stand for the New Testament antitype: both were equally real events in the flow of history. The connection between the two events, indeed, the *identity* of the two events, was perceptible to an exegete, who did not see them, as a modern observer might, in historical perspective, foreshortened, but instead saw their symmetrical subordination to a higher, ultimate truth. That identity across time was sustained by substitution, and it is disrupted by modern historicism.

The figural alternative to discursive and causal temporality is a permanent lure, a rhetorical, poetical, and political occasion. Figurality played a major role in twentieth-century efforts to adjust the relation between history and memory: in Sigmund Freud's isolation of the psychic operations of condensation and displacement; in the art historian Aby Warburg's paratactic memory atlas diagramming the coils of transhistorical pictorial reference; or in Walter Benjamin's adaptation of the principle of montage to history writing. For Benjamin, the "constellation" or configuration of images held a critical power, the capacity to shatter the order of things.<sup>37</sup> He saw in Surrealism the promise of the figural irruption or "illumination." Indeed, Louis Aragon had spoken of the critical productivity of stylistic clashes, violations of the historical logic of style: such "asynchronisms of desire" would reveal the contradictions of modernity.<sup>38</sup>

In two recent books Georges Didi-Huberman has pointedly confronted the modern discipline of art history with its own chronographic complacency. In *Devant le temps* (2000), he identifies two modern modes of dialectical and productively anachronistic thinking about images, montage and symptom, associated in multiple ways with Benjamin and Carl Einstein. In *L'image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes* (2002), he takes Aby Warburg as his guide and unravels the obsolete evolutionary temporal schemas that have structured the historical study of Western art. As an alternative to a developmental, "biomorphic" conception of history, Warburg offered a discontinuous, folded history in which time is redistributed in strata, networks, and deferrals. Above all, Didi-Huberman brings Warburg's model of the *Nachleben*, or survival of antique pathos formulas, into alignment with the psychoanalytic mechanism of *Nachträglichkeit*, or "delayed activation."<sup>39</sup> Our own project responds to Warburg's provocation, amplified in Didi-Huberman's exegesis, by attempting to draw a nonevolutionary "metaphorics" of time from the

historical works themselves, a temporality in structural misalignment with, and therefore systematically misrecognized by, art historical scholarship. We want to work by a process of reverse engineering from the artworks back to a lost chronotology of art making.

The idea of a nonlinear, nonperspectival, "artistic" time plays no role in the most influential interpretation of Renaissance historical attitudes, that of Erwin Panofsky. For Panofsky, a lucid sense of historical distance was the basis of what he called the "factuality" of the Renaissance as a period concept.<sup>40</sup> He argued that the Renaissance distinguished itself from the Middle Ages by its sense of "an intellectual distance between the present and the past."<sup>41</sup> Medieval art, for Panofsky, had been incapable of joining historical subject matter with its proper historical form: Eve was portrayed in the pose of a *Venus pudica*, for example, and the Trojan priest Laocoön tonsured like a monk. Panofsky maintained that fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian scholars and artists reactivated the power of classical culture through an accurate realignment of classical subject matter with its proper classical form: literally, the representation of ancient Greek and ancient Roman gods and heroes with their correct costumes, physiognomies, and attributes, rendered in ancient Greek and Roman style. Renaissance culture was essentially a "stabilizing of the attitude toward antiquity,"<sup>42</sup> a dispelling of temporal confusion and the blind clash of cultures.

Panofsky drew an explicit analogy between the Renaissance historical imagination and Renaissance perspective:

In the Italian Renaissance the classical past began to be looked upon from a fixed distance, quite comparable to the "distance between the eye and the object" in that most characteristic invention of this very Renaissance, focused perspective. As in focused perspective, this distance prohibited direct contact—owing to the interposition of an ideal "projection plane"—but permitted a total and rationalized view. Such a distance was absent from both medieval renaissances [that is, the "incomplete" revivals of antiquity that occurred in the Carolingian era and then again in the twelfth century].<sup>43</sup>

The new "cognitive distance" from the past, crucially, brought the freedom to choose between stylistic models. Freely chosen anachronism, Panofsky contended, was good anachronism. Panofsky showed how cognitive distance could generate not only the approved neoclassicism of the High Renaissance—basically a rejection of local and prevailing artistic custom in favor of antique style—but also the accurate emulation of obsolete medieval styles, if desired. Panofsky demonstrated this in his article "The First Page of Vasari's 'Libro'" (1930), the earliest formulation of his cognitive-distance thesis.<sup>44</sup> In this article, Panofsky pointed out that the logical complement of Giorgio Vasari's neoclassicism was his ability to emulate with his drawing pen late medieval formal vocabularies, the very same styles that he was elsewhere at pains to discredit with his writing pen. According to Panofsky, in Vasari's album of drawings by the great Italian masters, which he called his *Libro*, Vasari drew architectural frames around the mounted drawings in the style of the period of the drawing. The frames around the drawings that Vasari



attributed to the early Florentine artist Cimabue, for instance, used finials and gables characteristic of that very Gothic style, or *maniera tedesca*, that he so violently disparaged in his history of Italian art. Vasari was thus, in Panofsky's view, capable of perceiving and replicating Gothic ornamental style "on its own terms." For Panofsky that was the very core of historicism.

Bad anachronism, the blind disjunction of medieval art, was by contrast unfree, a simple incapacity to perceive historical style on its own terms. Unlike his contemporaries Benjamin and Aragon, Panofsky had little faith in the disruptive power of the figure. And he did not share Warburg's conception of a history of images carrying persistent figural charges that concretized elemental impulses and aversions. Art in his view did not really enter into its full historical role, its civilizing potential, until the figural and substitutional folding of time had finally been straightened out.

The blind spot in Panofsky's powerful schema emerges clearly at the end of his book *Renaissance and Renascences*, as his account converges on the so-called High Renaissance. Panofsky treats the antiquarian art of the late fifteenth century as fundamentally reconstructive and even pedantic in spirit. Not until Raphael, he suggests, does the project of reuniting classical form with classical content transcend mere philological accuracy and generate real art. Raphael, he points out, was able to put a modern *lira da braccio* in the hands of his Apollo and, in effect, get away with it. But Panofsky does not actually spell out what Raphael did to escape the logic of historicism. He never explains the relation between cognitive distance from the past—the criterion of the historical period as a whole—and the aesthetic achievement of Renaissance art, whatever that might be. It is a moment comparable to the closing page of Panofsky's *opus magnum* *Early Netherlandish Painting* (1953), where he brings his account face to face with, but then declines to comment on, the mysterious art of Hieronymus Bosch.

### Anachronic Renaissance

Early modern notions of the past were in fact nowhere less perspectival than in the realm of artifacts, of pictures and statues and buildings. No one in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was entirely clear about which artifacts were antique and which were not; about when things had been made; about what it meant to speak of the age or the date of an image or a building. Even humanist scholars and the most thoughtful artists were unmodern in their indifference to or vagueness about the historicity of art. Leonardo da Vinci, for instance, wrote a great deal about how to make art and what good art might be, but he never once discussed historical art or the relation of modern to historical art.<sup>45</sup> Leonardo was interested in architectural types and made many drawings of centrally planned churches similar to S. Lorenzo in Milan, whose core dated to late antiquity.<sup>46</sup> One gets the sense that the exemplarity of S. Lorenzo for him was a matter of its plan and not of its antiquity per se. S. Lorenzo held for him the authority of an example and it did not occur to him to ask overprecise questions about when it was built. There is no evidence to indicate that the keenest critics of ancient art, such as Michelangelo, ever concerned themselves with the precise dating of ancient objects. For Michelangelo it was all

the *buon antico*; if he made any distinctions, they were distinctions of category and motif. When the Paduan humanist Niccolò Leonico Tomeo was presented with a bust of Socrates for potential purchase his main preoccupation was with the accuracy of the likeness. In his extended rumination he did not ask whether the work was Roman or Greek nor speculate on its date.<sup>47</sup> Such indifference to the performative dimension of the artifact is typical for their period.

Raphael's famous letter to Pope Leo X on the preservation and recording of the remains of ancient Rome, written with the help of Baldassare Castiglione, has often been taken as the first clear statement of a historical understanding of art. Yet even here, the history is very rough. The letter asserts that "there are only three kinds of architecture in Rome": that produced by the ancients, that produced "during the time that Rome was dominated by the Goths, and one hundred years after that," and finally, the architecture of the period extending from that obscure moment until the present.<sup>48</sup> The blurred coordinates of that middle period remind us of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian's similarly vague approach to chronology when he announced in these same years that he would reward humanist scholars for discoveries of any "treatises or documents" written "more than five hundred years earlier."<sup>49</sup>

Chronology is sketchy in the Raphael letter because strict historical accuracy and clarity were not the letter's main purpose. While he distinguished between the Constantinian and the Trajanic, Hadrianic, and Antonine sculptural elements on the Arch of Constantine, the point was not to assign every possible style to a historical moment but rather to demonstrate that ancient architecture remained consistently good: "Let no one harbor doubt that among ancient buildings the less ancient were less beautiful, or less well understood, because they were all made according to the same principles [*perché tutti erano d'una ragione*]."<sup>50</sup> The letter aimed to reveal these principles, to make ancient architecture into a coherent corpus, a canon, and it is, in fact, the first document in the history of architecture to notate the varieties of classical columns as orders. Again, what mattered above all to the Renaissance artist and critic was the exemplary model, not the vicissitudes of historical styles. This is why later constructions thought to embody the best antique principles were given the authority of the antique.

The importance of typological over chronological thinking is at the basis of the spectacular misdating of the eleventh-century Baptistery in Florence, thought by knowledgeable Renaissance artists and scholars to be an ancient temple. Some modern historians propose that the Florentines could not really have believed that their Baptistery was built by Romans but merely thought it a very old structure. However, Filippo Villani in 1330 asserted that it had begun its existence in antiquity as a temple of Mars, as did Coluccio Salutati. Vasari proposed with great architectural sophistication that the Romanesque S. Miniato emulated "l'ordine buon antico" found in the "antichissimo tempio" of S. Giovanni al Monte (that is, the Baptistery). Only in the later sixteenth century was the building's antiquity seriously challenged, in the carefully reasoned treatise of Girolamo Mei.<sup>51</sup>

In our view, the misdating of the Baptistery was not just a blind spot in an otherwise lucid vision of the past, a break-

down of rationality explained by local patriotism and rivalry with Rome's antiquity. It is instead a crucial clue to the way scholars and artists thought about old buildings all the time. This way of thinking was made explicit only when critics such as Vincenzo Borghini were put on their mettle to defend the Baptistery's antiquity. There are many more "errors" of this sort, which were not errors at all, any more than premodern copies were forgeries. They only seem so to us because they do not conform to a modern, scholarly conception of buildings as authored artifacts anchored in historical time and to our conviction that this anchoring must be legible in style.

Panofsky had to ignore or explain away these errors in order to keep his thesis of cognitive distance intact. He did not discuss Leonardo's interest in centrally planned churches at all. He explained the alarmingly inaccurate phrase "anchora Cento anni di poi" in the Raphael letter as a way of saying "an indefinite period of considerable length."<sup>52</sup> He absorbed the misdatings of the Florentine Baptistery by pointing out simply that Filippo Brunelleschi was influenced by various Romanesque and pre-Romanesque buildings.<sup>53</sup> Panofsky maintained that the artists and writers of the Renaissance were able to imitate the classical style because they had achieved historical perspective on antiquity. We contend that architects were able to pick out a historical antique style only insofar as it exemplified some normative conception of architecture.

Renaissance artists and scholars could refer to no established chronology of artifacts, nor did anyone make much of an attempt to establish such a chronology. The full system of historical chronology, on which Panofsky's cognitive distance thesis and the very idea of a unity of time depend, was the laborious construction of later sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century scholarship. Historical chronology as the chronographers built it was a sequence of *events*, and it was not at all clear that artifacts were to be understood as events. When people in the Renaissance did measure out a "cognitive distance" to a historical work of art or building, it turns out to be a peculiar, contrived aspect of the period's historical imagination, not more essential to the period than other aspects. Historical lucidity was scarce in the Renaissance. That has seemed clear enough to historians such as Elizabeth Eisenstein, who wrote of the "amorphous spatio-temporal context" of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century humanist scholarship, and Lucien Febvre, who described the multiple temporalities that structured life in sixteenth-century Europe.<sup>54</sup> The researches of Frank Borhardt, Walter Stephens, Anthony Grafton, and others force us to take seriously the vitality and persistence of old stories about races of giants locked in combat with Egyptian gods in the valleys of ancient Europe.<sup>55</sup> Fantastic myths of national origins were promulgated well into the seventeenth century.<sup>56</sup> Yet in Panofsky's model, a historical chronology of artifacts, medieval and ancient alike, snaps suddenly into perfect focus.

Today it is easy to agree that "artistic" time—folded, misremembered—is more interesting than merely linear historical time. The modern scholar willingly submits to what Jorge Luis Borges called the "plebeian pleasure of anachronism."<sup>57</sup> The principle of substitution generates the effect of an artifact that seems to double or crimp time over on itself. The time of art, with its densities, irruptions, juxtapositions, and

recoveries, comes to resemble the topology of memory itself, which emerged in the twentieth century in all its tangledness as a primordial and powerful model of historical understanding, a threat to the certainties of empirical historical science. In the substitutional mode, however, no human subject is involved. Substitution resembles the modern topology of memory, but there is no place in it for an actual working memory. It is a memory effect generated by the substitutional machine.

It may actually have proven convenient to modern theorists of memory-based time to preserve the image of a prosaically historicist Renaissance, something like Panofsky's Renaissance. For them, modernity can be seen to emerge out of this delusion of lucidity with its own more fluid, sophisticated, and complicated notion of time and history. There may be an incentive to overrate the clarity of Renaissance and Enlightenment thought so that a delirious twentieth- and twenty-first-century modernity can stand out in relief.

And for those who wish to believe in the lucidity of the Renaissance, either as the foundational moment of their own lucid modernity or as the foil for their own obscure modernity, it may be equally convenient to stress the confusion and irrationalism of medieval thought. In the 1961 postscript to his well-known article on the iconography of medieval architecture, Krautheimer spoke of the "medieval pattern of 'double-think,' or, better, 'multi-think,'" and said that multiple connotations and images "all 'vibrated' simultaneously in the mind of educated Early Christian and medieval men."<sup>58</sup> Krautheimer had been careful to explain in the article itself that all this "vibration" settled down as the Middle Ages came to a close and the archaeological vision of the artistic past came into focus. By the time of the Renaissance, "multi-think" was over. From that moment on, apparently, people were careful to think only one thought at a time. Krautheimer maintained this distinction in all his writings, as Marvin Trachtenberg pointed out. Krautheimer's Middle Ages were endlessly complicated and self-contradictory. The Italian Renaissance, by contrast, remained for Krautheimer an idealized "never-never land" insulated "from the complexities of facture and chronology, from the messy realities of Renaissance practice, and from . . . social context."<sup>59</sup>

The same schema is at work in the writings of Didi-Huberman, although with the values reversed: here, the "delirious" Middle Ages are prized over a rationalist modernity launched in the Renaissance. In imposing a mimetic function on the image, the Renaissance introduced a "tyranny of the visible," suppressing an indexical conception of the image that prevailed in the Middle Ages. In contrast to the Renaissance rhetoric of mastery, adequation, and intelligibility, the medieval image, in Didi-Huberman's histories, presents an opacity, a disruption of the coded operations of the sign, a disjunctive openness by which the image is opened onto a dizzying series of figurative associations well beyond the logic of "simple reason." It is an understanding of the image better served by the Freudian concepts of the symptom and of dreamwork than by the procedures of iconology developed by the Kantian inheritors of Renaissance humanism, in particular, Panofsky.<sup>60</sup>

In the end, all parties agree that the Italian Renaissance imposed the contrivance of cognitive distance on the fluid,

memory-based models of historical time that prevailed in the Middle Ages. The only point of difference is that Panofsky prized cognitive distance as one of the founding intellectual achievements of European civilization, whereas his many later-twentieth-century critics repudiate the historical objectivity of the Renaissance and the succeeding "classical" epoch as a grand lie that needed to be unlearned in the twentieth century.

To continue the debate in these terms is pointless. Panofsky knew very well that cognitive distance was a cultural contrivance that overcame the subjective, "interested" distortions of memory. The tension between unmeasurable memory and measured historical chronology was implied, for Panofsky, in the system of linear perspective developed by the fifteenth-century painters: "the history of perspective," he had explained in his 1927 essay *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, "may be understood with equal justice as a triumph of the distancing and objectifying sense of the real, and as a triumph of the distance-denying human struggle for control."<sup>61</sup> To continue discussing the Renaissance vision of history as a contest between, on the one hand, an invested and interested figural imagination and, on the other, the contrivance of disinterested cognitive distance is to repeat the error of those historians and critics of modern art who struggled interminably to overcome the legacy of Clement Greenberg by refuting him in terms that were already dialectically present in Greenberg's own writing. For both the formalist and the political or critical reading of modern art are contained within Greenberg's avant-gardism.

### Interference

In seeking to transcend this dilemma we might ask: How was the question of origins addressed by the *work of art*? Panofsky actually pointed to the answer, in the essays collected in *Studies in Iconology* (1939), trackings of the artistic fortunes of iconographic motifs such as "Father Time" or "Blind Cupid." Here, he relaxed the historical schema implied by the "principle of disjunction," crossing the threshold of the sixteenth century and looking directly at the fully developed Renaissance artwork, supposedly purged of temporal confusion, in a way that later, in the closing pages of *Renaissance and Resuscitations*, he was unable to do. In *Studies in Iconology*, he conceded that medieval attributes and features frequently "clung" to the new, archaeologically correct image of the Renaissance.<sup>62</sup> To characterize such persistences of the medieval mismatch between historical form and historical content, Panofsky borrowed a term from Oswald Spengler (without actually naming Spengler): *pseudomorphosis*, a term that Spengler in turn had adapted from mineralogy.<sup>63</sup> Spengler had used it in his *Decline of the West* to denote the unwilling conformity of a new and dynamic culture to the forms and formulas of an older culture, for example, when the early Christians adopted the pagan form of the basilica. The basilica "employs the means of the Classical to express the opposite thereof, and is unable to free itself from those means—that is the essence and the tragedy of the 'Pseudomorphosis.'"<sup>64</sup>

Although Panofsky did not dwell further on the idea of pseudomorphosis,<sup>65</sup> his practical iconological readings can be understood as demonstrations of the "unwilling" and in-

complete character of the early modern artwork. Silvia Ferretti has argued that Panofsky's artwork was temporally "antinomic," that is, it occupied two incompatible time schemes at once. On the one hand, the artwork was fixed within historical or absolute time, and on the other, it inhabited an ideal or immanent time structured by an artistic problem.<sup>66</sup> One could make the case—in defense of Panofsky—that although this antinomy slips through the mesh of the periodization schema entailed by the principle of disjunction, it is brought out by the practical hermeneutic of iconological analysis.

Our own angle of approach to Ferretti's antinomic artwork is what we have been calling the substitutional principle, which held that an image or a building was a token of a type, invoking and perpetuating an originary authority through participation in a sequence of similar tokens. The principle of substitution created conditions of real identity between one token and another, something like a magical bond. It is neither an absolute, historical conception of time nor an idealist, extrahistorical time, but another temporality altogether.

We are not proposing simply that substitution was a medieval way of thinking about artifacts that persisted but was finally vanquished in the Renaissance. Modern understanding of the Renaissance is already governed by a version of this schema: for did not Vasari say that in the Middle Ages artists were content to copy one another and only with Giotto stopped copying and began attending to nature?<sup>67</sup> Since then, basically, we have heard nothing but versions of this account. It is true that in many medieval images we find an attempt to make their contents present by downplaying their historical fabrication and instead claiming magical, handless production. Renaissance images, by contrast, were more likely put forth as authored and anchored in this world, in the *saeculum*. Under the theory of artifacts as singular performances emerging out of unique historical circumstances, associated with the historical rise of artist-authors in the fifteenth century, copies can be seen only as repetitions, not substitutions. But the interference between the substitutional principle of origins and the authorial or performative principle of artifact production was dynamic. Although two completely different theories of origins, substitution and performance each had its uses. In every case, it must be asked which conception of origins was in effect. Very often both conceptions were in effect at once.

The author-based theory of artifact production was neither a historical inevitability nor an enlightenment; it was not more true than the other theory. Nor can it cleanly be coordinated with other "progressive" developments, like the rise of pictorial naturalism or the revival of antiquity. Indeed, it is possible to argue that the neoclassicism of the early sixteenth century, prized by Panofsky as the product of self-conscious historical distancing, may equally reflect just the opposite trend, a deliberate reapplication of the substitution principle in the face of an emerging culture of artistic performance. Likewise, the symmetrical case can be made that new conceptions of artistic authorship arose within and against the highly substitutional tradition of painted icons—think of the emergence of Jan van Eyck's authorial self-consciousness against the model of the Byzantine icon. The

disengagement of a few prestigious artifacts from their traditional functions and the establishment of non-labor-based and non-material-based criteria of value—the emergence, in other words, of the work of art—developed in a dialectical relation with the substitutional principle of artifact production.

The interference between the substitutional and the authorial principles had as one of its effects the emergence of the category “art forgery.” The art forgery was a historical novelty of the Renaissance. Until the late fifteenth century, when the market for art began to link value to demonstrable authorship, no one had been accused of “forging” an artwork. This criminalization of substitution came about only when the two modes of production we have been outlining entered into their dialectic. What is an art forgery if not a substitution cruelly unmasked as a mere performance?<sup>68</sup>

Archaism, aesthetic primitivism, pseudomorphic imitation, typology, forgery, misdating, citation, the deliberately “styleless” mode, ideal classicism: each of these temporal disturbances of the Renaissance image was an effect generated by conflict between the two theories of origins. The friction of mutual interference only brought out the contours of the competing theories with greater conceptual clarity. By 1500 the two principles, performative and substitutional, needed one another. No sooner had the performative mode emerged than artists began to reinforce and restage the substitutional mode in compensation. Many of the archaizing tendencies in Renaissance art, including the revival of ancient art, can be seen not simply as exercises in formal imitation but as quasi-theoretical efforts to reinstate the substitutional approach to artifact production. In works of art, like Carpaccio’s picture, the principle of substitution was mobilized deliberately, and its workings revealed. A painting might do such a thing for any number of reasons: to bend the expectations of a beholder, for instance, and so generate a peculiarly aesthetic effect, or to comment negatively on the competing, performative theory of origins.

Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as prints sent pictorial ideas circulating all over Europe, and as published treatises and dialogues and ephemeral conversations created an independent culture of art, the dialectic between the two theories of production accelerated and the cycles of response and counter-response became briefer and briefer. Artistic authorship itself, which emerged in the early fifteenth century as a purely performative mode, later learned to manipulate substitution. Already by the beginning of the sixteenth century, one can almost define artistic authorship as the capacity to manipulate the two modes within the confines of an aesthetic field. It is just such a dynamic historical model, involving continual interaction between substitution, theories of artistic authorship, and self-conscious revivalism motivated by propagandistic or doctrinal principles, that has the best chance of making sense of the strange density of the bronze Christ at the center of Carpaccio’s anachronistic kaleidoscope.

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## Notes

1. The subject was identified by Helen I. Roberts, “St. Augustine in ‘St. Jerome’s Study’: Carpaccio’s Painting and Its Legendary Source,” *Art Bulletin* 41 (1959): 283–97.
2. Alain Schnapp, *La conquête du passé* (Paris: Carré, 1993), 318–19, 346–47.
3. On the Venus and other items in the picture, see Zygmunt Wazbinski, “Portrait d’un amateur d’art de la Renaissance,” *Arte Veneta* 22 (1968): 21–29.
4. See Karel Svoboda, *L’esthétique de Saint Augustin et ses sources* (Brno: Vydává Filosofická Fakulta, 1933), 144, 156.
5. The identification of the figure as Bessarion was first suggested by Guido Perocco, “La Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni,” in *Venezia e l’Europa: Atti del XVIII Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell’Arte, Venice, 12–18 Settembre 1955* (Venice: Arte Veneta, 1956), 23. Vittore Branca, “Ermolao barbaro e l’Umanesimo Veneziano,” in *Umanesimo Europeo e Umanesimo Veneziano* (Florence: Sansoni, 1964), 163–212, at 211 proposed that the seal in the foreground could be that of the cardinal. Augusto Gentili, “Carpaccio e Bessarione,” in *Bessarione e l’Umanesimo*, ed. Gianfranco Fiaccadori (Naples: Vivarium, 1994), 297–302, argued compellingly against basing the identification on either the seal or the likeness. However, Patricia Fortini Brown, “Sant’Agostino nello studio di Carpaccio: Un ritratto nel ritratto?” in *Bessarione e l’Umanesimo*, 303–19, strongly reaffirmed the identification on the basis of a close examination of the patronal context and the divergences between the preparatory drawing in Vienna and the final painting.
6. Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), 131–48.
7. Alfred Acres, “The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World,” *Art Bulletin* 80 (1998): 422–51, esp. 424–25, 432–34.
8. Charles Dempsey, *The Portrayal of Love: Botticelli’s “Primavera” and Humanist Culture at the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 65–78.
9. Acres, “The Columba Altarpiece,” 432.
10. Filarete, *Treatise on Architecture*, trans. and ed. John R. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), vol. 1, 12; Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, book 1, fol. 5v, ed. Anna Maria Finoli and Liliana Grassi (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1972), 28: “così colui che dipigne la sua maniera delle figure si cognosce, e così d’ogni facultà si cognosce lo stile di ciascheduno. . . .”
11. Baldassare Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano*, ed. Vittorio Cian (Florence: Sansoni, 1947), 93: “. . . si conosce ciascun nel suo stil essere perfettissimo.”
12. For a clear statement of the performative principle, see Leonardo, “On the Imitable Sciences,” chap. 8 in *Paragone, parte prima*, where he says “painting alone . . . honors its author”; Claire J. Farago, ed., *Leonardo da Vinci’s “Paragone”: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the “Codex Urbinas”* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 186–90.
13. Marcantonio Michiel, *Notizia d’opere di disegno*, ed. Gustavo Frizzoni (Bologna, 1884), 231, noted a “statua de ’l Cristo, de bronzo, sopra l’altar” in the “capella del Salvatore” in the church of the Carità in Venice, and it is virtually certain that the statue corresponds to the one in Milan. For the extremely active reception of the statue among Venetian artists besides Carpaccio, see below.
14. The chapel was gutted, together with the rest of the church, in 1807. Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia città nobilissima et singolare, descritta in XIII libri . . .* (Venice, 1581), 94v, declared the chapel “notabilissima fra tutte della città, edificata da domenico di Pietro gioielliere ricchissimo, & antiquario, con marmi, con porfidi, & con serpentini molto alla



- grande." Tommaso Temanza, *Vite dei più celebri architetti e scultori veneziani* (Venice: Palese, 1778), 96, described it as "rich in marbles, porphyry, and serpentine, as was common in those times." Some sense of Domenico di Piero's tastes can be gained from the facade of the Scuola di S. Marco, commissioned from the Lombardi at his behest and under his direction during his tenure as *guardian grande* of the Scuola; see Philip Sohm, *The Scuola Grande di San Marco 1437–1550: The Architecture of a Venetian Lay Confraternity* (New York: Garland, 1982), 118–22. A 1548 document states that the chapel was finished in 1489; see Pietro Paoletti, *L'architettura e la scultura del Rinascimento in Venezia: Ricerche storico-artistiche*, vol. 1 (Venice: Ongania-Naya, 1893), 184. A recently discovered document shows that in April 1494 the chapel was still "almost finished"; see Rosella Lauber, "Ornamento lodevole" e "ornatissima di pietre": Marcantonio Michiel della chiesa veneziana di Santa Maria della Carità," *Arte Veneta* 55 (1999): 147. Nonetheless, it was sufficiently finished in 1493 to be noted by the diarist Marin Sanudo among the notable things in Venetian churches. See Wendy Stedman Sheard, "Sanudo's List of Notable Things in Venetian Churches and the Date of the Vendramin Tomb," *Yale Italian Studies* 1, no. 3 (1977): 256.
15. The statue has not been clearly connected to an author. The Poldi Pezzoli catalogue, *Museo Poldi Pezzoli: Tessuti—Sculture—Metalli islamici* (Milan: Electa, 1987), cat. no. 24, offers an unconvincing attribution to Severo da Ravenna.
16. Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 7.18, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Arthur Cushman McGiffert (New York: Christian Literature, 1890), quoted in Christian Classics Ethereal Library, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.xii.xix.html>: "Since I have mentioned this city [Paneas] I do not think it proper to omit an account which is worthy of record for posterity. For they say that the woman with an issue of blood, who, as we learn from the sacred Gospel, received from our Saviour deliverance from her affliction, came from this place, and that her house is shown in the city, and that remarkable memorials of the kindness of the Saviour to her remain there. For there stands upon an elevated stone, by the gates of her house, a bronze image of a woman kneeling, with her hands stretched out, as if she were praying. Opposite this is another upright image of a man, made of the same material, clothed decently in a double cloak, and extending his hand toward the woman. At his feet, beside the statue itself, is a certain strange plant, which climbs up to the hem of the bronze cloak, and is a remedy for all kinds of diseases.
- "They say that this statue is an image of Jesus. It has remained to our day, so that we ourselves also saw it when we were staying in the city. Nor is it strange that those of the Gentiles who, of old, were benefited by our Saviour, should have done such things, since we have learned also that the likenesses of his apostles Paul and Peter, and of Christ himself, are preserved in paintings, the ancients being accustomed, as it is likely, according to a habit of the Gentiles, to pay this kind of honor indiscriminately to those regarded by them as deliverers."
- The double cloak here is the diplois, the pallium, doubled in length, worn without the underlying tunic or any other undergarment by ascetics and Cynic philosophers. When Eusebius says the figure of Christ was clothed decently (*kosmios*: decorously) in the diplois, he is perhaps specifying that unlike other convention-bashing ascetics and philosophers who liked to go without undergarments, this figure wore it without looking half naked and indecent. In the statue now in Milan (Fig. 2), Christ is shown modestly wearing an ample diplois in the specific form of an exomis, without a fibula, leaving the right shoulder free.
17. The association of the work with the hemorrhaging woman persisted, however, and she came to be identified with Saint Martha. Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea: Vulgo historia Lombardica dicta and optimorum librorum fides*, ed. Theodor Graesse, (Leipzig: Arnold, 1846), 445, Life of Saint Martha: "Refert Eusebius in libro hystoriae ecclesiasticae quinto, quod mulier Emorroissa, postquam sanata fuit, in curia sive viridario suo statuum fecit ad imaginem Christi cum veste et fimbria, sicut ipsum viderat, et eam plurimum reverebatur, herbae vero sub illa statua crescentes, quae ante nullius erant virtutis, cum fimbriam attingerent, tantae virtutis erant, ut multi infirmi inde sanarentur" (Eusebius tells in book 5 of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* that the hemorrhaging woman, after she was healed, made in her court or garden a statue in the likeness of Christ, with cloth and hem, just as he had looked, and it was most revered. In fact the herbs that grew under the statue, which earlier were without virtue, when they came into contact with the [statue's] hem, became so powerful that many sick people were thereby healed).
18. As, very likely, was the small bronze Venus on the shelf. It, too, depicts a modern work, now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, by Jacopo Bonacolsi, called Antico, as noted by Wazbinski, "Portrait d'un amateur d'art," 25–26. This small bronze was itself a miniature copy of an antique marble Venus, the so-called *Venus felix*, which had been recently discovered and set up in the Vatican. Thus, Carpaccio quotes a modern work but not as a modern work.
19. Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 1–33.
20. See the accounts by Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, and Jabobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, quoted above.
21. It is true that the modern statue represents the resurrected Christ rather than the Christ who healed the hemorrhaging woman (as stated in Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*; see n. 17 above). The statue shows the wounds and originally would have held a banner, as we see it in Carpaccio's painting. It is possible that this is an instance of typology prevailing over iconography: the triumphant Christ was by far the most common way of presenting the standing figure of Jesus in late medieval iconography. It is also true that the antique statue form itself carried strong associations of triumph and apotheosis, which would have been best embodied in the figure of the resurrected Christ.
22. Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 22–23.
23. Richard Brilliant, "I piedistalli del Giardino di Boboli: Spolia in se, spolia in re," *Prospettiva* 31 (1982): 2–17. Salvatore Settis develops the concept in "Continuità, distanza, conoscenza: Tre usi dell'antico," in *Memoira dell'antico nell'arte italiana*, vol. 3 (Turin: Einaudi, 1986), 375–486, esp. 399–410. For more on "virtual spolia," see Dale Kinney, "Spolia: Damnatio and Renovatio Memoriae," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 42 (1997): 117–48.
24. He missed, however, the telling detail of the dropping hem. The statue clearly carried authority for him without the support of "philological" clues such as this.
25. See Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice*, 2 vols. in 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), vol. 2, pt. 2, colorpl. 35. The mosaic angels in the pendentives of the Creation cupola are blue and are clearly identified by the inscription as cherubim. Carpaccio isolated the figure in the center of his little apse and made it red, thus promoting it to the level of seraph.
26. Kurt Weitzmann, "The Genesis Mosaics of San Marco and the Cotton Genesis Miniatures," in Demus, *Mosaics of San Marco*, vol. 2, 105–42.
27. In this sense Carpaccio and his contemporaries were continuing a well-known Byzantine tendency to regard images of later centuries as ancient. Robert Grigg, "Byzantine Credulity as an Impediment to Antiquarianism," *Gesta* 25–26 (1987): 3–9, explains the chronological confusions that abound in Byzantine writings as the result of Byzantine "credulity," with the result that people were "deceived into thinking there was no difference between ancient and Byzantine art" (7). The substitution model explains these phenomena without the need to speak of deception or error; the Byzantines knew that their images came later and at the same time granted them antique status on the basis of their reference to ancient prototypes.
28. Saint Theodore the Studite, quoted in Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 174.
29. Ulrich Pfisterer builds the strongest case imaginable for the early emergence of the concepts of historical, local, and personal style in the proximity of Donatello, in *Donatello und die Entdeckung der Stile 1430–1445* (Munich: Hirmer, 2002).
30. See also Jack M. Greenstein's close reading of the marks of time in the view of Jerusalem, a "diachronic urban fabric," in the background of Mantegna's *Agony in the Garden* from the S. Zeno altarpiece, *Mantegna and Painting as Historical Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 64–70, and generally chap. 3.
31. Thomas M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 42.
32. Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
33. See the preliminary volume by Phyllis Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, with contributions by Susan Woodford, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Sources* (London: Harvey Miller, 1986). The project has been expanded in the digital "Census of Antique Works of Art and Architecture Known in the Renaissance" maintained by the Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar der Humboldt-Universität in Berlin, at <http://www.census.de>.
34. For positions close to this within the well-developed debate about medieval forgery, see Giles Constable, "Forgery and Plagiarism in the Middle Ages," *Archiv für Diplomatik* 29 (1983): 1–41; Horst Fuhrmann, "Die Fälschungen im Mittelalter," *Historische Zeitschrift* 197 (1963): 529–54; and idem, "Mundus vult decipi," *Historische Zeitschrift* 241 (1985). See generally P. Herde and A. Gowlik, "Fälschungen," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, by Robert Auty et al., vol. 4 (Munich: Artemis, 1988), col. 246ff.; and *Fälschungen im Mittelalter: Internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1986*, 6 vols. (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1988–90).

35. Erich Auerbach, "Figura," in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 11–76; and Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: Les quatre sens de l'écriture*, 2 vols. (Paris: Aubier, 1959–64).
36. Manuel Chrysoloras, quoted in Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 81, app. 6, 148–49; translation modified with the help of that of Settis, in *Memoria dell'antico*, vol. 3, 456.
37. See Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 71–74, 217–27.
38. See Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), 172–74.
39. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps: Histoire de l'art et anachronisme des images* (Paris: Minuit, 2000); and idem, *L'image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg* (Paris: Minuit, 2002).
40. Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (Stockholm: Almqvist und Wiksels, Gebers Forlag, 1960), 38. Panofsky offered the clearest and most economical account of this argument in "Renaissance and Renascence," *Kenyon Review* 6 (1944): 201–36, as a response to a symposium published in the *American Historical Review* on the validity of the Renaissance as a period concept.
41. Erwin Panofsky, introduction to *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 28; reprinted as "Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Italian Renaissance Art," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Press, 1955), 51.
42. Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences*, 202.
43. *Ibid.*, 108.
44. Erwin Panofsky, "The First Page of Vasari's 'Libro': A Study on the Gothic Style in the Judgment of the Italian Renaissance" (1930), in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 169–235.
45. On Leonardo's only two references to antiquity, see Aby Warburg, "Sandro Botticelli's *Birth of Venus and Spring*," in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999), 140.
46. On the church designs, see James Ackerman, *Origins, Imitation, Conventions: Representation in the Visual Arts* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 67–93.
47. Andrew Gregory, "Aspects of Collecting in Renaissance Padua: A Bust of Socrates for Niccolò Leonico Tomeo," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 58 (1995): 252–65.
48. We cite the transcription of the Munich manuscript by Ingrid Rowland, "Raphael, Angelo Colocci, and the Genesis of the Architectural Orders," *Art Bulletin* 76 (1994): 100–103; translations are ours.
49. Reported by Beatus Rhenanus, *Rerum germanicarum libri tres* (Basel, 1531), vol. 2, 107–8.
50. The three known versions of the letter agree in this wording; see John Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources (1483–1602)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), vol. 1, 503, 511, 520. Here is the text from the first redaction in Mantua (503): "E perché ad alchuno potrebbe parer che difficil fosse el conoscere li edificii antichi dalli moderni, o li più antichi dalli meno antichi, per non lassare dubbio alchuno nella mente de chi vorra haver questa cognitione, dico che questo con poca fatica far si pò. Perché de tre sorti di aedificii in Roma solamente si trovano, delle quali la una si è tutti li antichi et antichissimi li quali durorno fino al tempo che Roma fu ruinata e guasta dalli Gotti et altri barbari, l'altro tanto che Roma fu dominata da' Gotti et ancor cento anni dipoi, l'altro da quello fino alli tempi nostri." Later in the letter the time frame is even less defined; Raphael and Castiglione distinguish between the good ancient architecture and those buildings "che forno al tempo deli Gotti, et anchor molti anni di poi" (505). This suggests that the expression "cento anni" of the earlier sentence is not a reference to a specific number of years but rather a placeholder for a substantial period of time.
51. Robert Williams, "Vincenzo Borghini and Vasari's Lives" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1988), 96–99; and Zygmunt Wazbinski, "Le polemiche intorno al battistero fiorentino nel '500," in *Filippo Brunelleschi, la sua opera e il suo tempo*, Atti del Convegno di Studi, 2 vols. (Florence: Centro Di, 1980), vol. 2, 933–50.
52. Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences*, 24 n. 1.
53. *Ibid.*, 40.
54. Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 187, and generally on Panofsky's disjunction thesis, 181–225. Lucien Febvre, *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais* (1942; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), 393–400.
55. Frank L. Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971); Walter Stephens, "Berosus Chaldaeus: Counterfeit and Fictive Editors of the Early Sixteenth Century" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 1979); idem, *Giants in Those Days: 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 idem, "Traditions of Invention and Inventions of Tradition in Renaissance Italy: Annus of Viterbo," in *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 76–103.
56. See William J. Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance 1550–1640* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), chap. 13, who can see this only as a regrettable falling off from the clarity of the early sixteenth century.
57. Jorge Luis Borges, *Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote*, in *Labyrinths*, ed. Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions, 1964), 39.
58. Richard Krautheimer, postscript to "Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture," in *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval, and Renaissance Art* (New York: New York University Press; London: University of London Press, 1969), 149–50.
59. Marvin Trachtenberg, foreword (1995) to *Rome: Profile of a City, 312–1308*, by Richard Krautheimer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), xix–xx.
60. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant l'image: Question posée aux fins de l'histoire de l'art* (Paris: Éditions du Minuit, 1990). The schema is dramatized at the historical juncture of the early Renaissance in idem, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance et figuration* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990).
61. Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 67.
62. Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, 70–71.
63. Even the 1982 *Supplement to The Oxford English Dictionary* lists only mineralogical usages of the term. *Webster's Third International* (1963), however, quotes Lewis Mumford on "the concept of the cultural pseudomorph."
64. Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West* (1918–22; reprint, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), vol. 1, 209; see also vol. 2, 189–90.
65. Thomas Greene picked up on it, though; see *The Light in Troy*, 42. In effect, Greene was using Panofsky against the Spenglerian "tragic" view, whereas in fact Panofsky's view may have been closer to Spengler's than to Greene's.
66. Silvia Ferretti, *Cassirer, Panofsky, and Warburg: Symbol, Art, and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 207–20.
67. Giorgio Vasari, *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori*, ed. Rossanna Bettarini (Florence: Sansoni, 1966–), vol. 2, 96: "Onde andando un giorno Cimabue per sue bisogne da Fiorenza a Vespignano, trovò Giotto che, mentre le sue pecore pascevano, sopra una lastra piana e pulita con un sasso un poco appuntato ritraeva una pecora di naturale, senza aver imparato modo nessuno di ciò fare da altri che dalla natura."
68. There is no indisputable example of an art forgery, that is, a stylistic anachronism condemned by society as deceitful, before the late fifteenth century. The intentions behind many of the earliest alleged cases are ambiguous, including the *Cupid* by Michelangelo sold to Raffaele Riario as an antiquity. For this and other cases, see Paul Eberhard, "Falsificazioni di antichità dal Rinascimento al XVIII secolo," *Memoria dell'antico nell'arte italiana*, ed. Salvatore Settis, vol. 2 (Turin: Einaudi, 1985), 413–39.