

Interventions: Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism

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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.¹ 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.² 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.³ Augustine was vehement in his condemnation of pagan statuary, as any of his Renaissance readers would have known.⁴ 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.⁵ 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.⁶ 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.⁷ 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.⁸ 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."⁹ 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.”¹⁰ 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.”¹¹ Since the late fifteenth century some version of this theory of origins is inscribed into every European painting.¹²

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.¹³ It was commissioned, together with an elaborate chapel, by the wealthy jeweler and antiquarian Domenico di Piero.¹⁴ At 54 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches (138 centimeters), it is significantly larger than a statuette, though under life-size.¹⁵

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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

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 reinstatements, 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.¹⁹ 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.²⁰ (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.²¹

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."²² 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*.²³ 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.²⁴ 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.²⁵ 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*.²⁶ The principle of substitution was powerful enough to *make* the S. Marco mosaic an antiquity.²⁷

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."²⁸

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 reinstatiates. 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*,²⁹ or of Mantegna's fine-grained antiquarian reconstructions of Roman architecture or weaponry.³⁰ 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.³¹ 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.³²

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.³³ 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.³⁴ 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.³⁵ 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 [*autopsia*] and the living presence [*parousia*] of all the things that happened then.³⁶

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.³⁷ 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.³⁸

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."³⁹ 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.⁴⁰ He argued that the Renaissance distinguished itself from the Middle Ages by its sense of "an intellectual distance between the present and the past."⁴¹ 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,"⁴² 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].⁴³

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.⁴⁴ 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 Resuscitations*, 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.⁴⁵ 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.⁴⁶ 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.⁴⁷ 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.⁴⁸ 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."⁴⁹

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*]."⁵⁰ 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.⁵¹

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."⁵² He absorbed the misdatings of the Florentine Baptistery by pointing out simply that Filippo Brunelleschi was influenced by various Romanesque and pre-Romanesque buildings.⁵³ 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.⁵⁴ 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.⁵⁵ Fantastic myths of national origins were promulgated well into the seventeenth century.⁵⁶ 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."⁵⁷ 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."⁵⁸ 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."⁵⁹

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.⁶⁰

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."⁶¹ 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 Renascences*, 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.⁶² 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.⁶³ 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.'"⁶⁴

Although Panofsky did not dwell further on the idea of pseudomorphosis,⁶⁵ 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.⁶⁶ 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?⁶⁷ 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?⁶⁸

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: Vydávací Filozofická 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 Crassi (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 serpentine 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 [Pabeas] 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 (*kosmos*: 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 fidem*, 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 Jacobus 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 *Memoria 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 decepti," *Historische Zeitschrift* 241 (1985). See generally P. Herde and A. Gowlit, "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 and 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 edifici 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 può. 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. Borchart, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971); Walter Stephens, "Berosus Chaldeus: 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: Anniius 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, *Cassiner, 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. Rossana Bettarini (Florence: Sansoni, 1966–), vol. 2, 96: "Onde andando un giorno Cimabue per sue bisogno 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.

Response:

Historia and Anachronism in Renaissance Art

Charles Dempsey

Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood have presented what is clearly the prolegomenon to a much larger study in which they attempt to retheorize phenomena that have, in fact, in one way or another, received a great deal of attention from art historians at least since Aby Warburg pointed out that in the fifteenth century “the antique as a source of poised and measured beauty—the hallmark of its influence as we have known it since Winckelmann—still counted for comparatively little” and asked his famous question of what then was it about antiquity that “interested” artists of the period.¹ The question of itself acknowledges historical self-awareness by Renaissance artists vis-à-vis antiquity. Many historians (well before Erwin Panofsky) had agreed that a sense of historical distance from the classical past seems first to have appeared with Petrarch, who in 1341 wrote in his celebrated letter to Fra Giovanni Colonna (quoted by Patricia Fortini Brown as the prologue to her book *Venice and Antiquity*, significantly subtitled *The Venetian Sense of the Past*),

Our conversation was concerned largely with history, which we seem to have divided among us, I being more expert. It seemed, in the ancient, by which we meant the time before the Roman rulers celebrated and venerated the name of Christ, and you in recent times, by which we mean the time from then to the present.²

Petrarch's notion of historical periods is broadly defined, to be sure, and he formulated it when the new age of the recovery of ancient texts was just beginning, which necessitated the humanist invention of the techniques of philology, or the study of language founded in historical principles. Absent such consciousness of history, Giorgio Vasari's conceptualization and periodization of the development of the arts in early modern Italy into three distinct periods succeeding a fourth, the *maniera greca*, would not have been possible. Like Lorenzo Ghiberti's before him, Vasari's ultimate point of departure was Pliny's account of the historical development, or progress, of ancient art. In this respect Nagel and Wood's polemic with Panofsky, the theme of the second half of their essay, seems too narrowly focused. So far as the arts are concerned, the roots of their complaint lie with Ghiberti, who had proudly made the setting for the ancient gemstone he thought to be the *sigillum Neronis*, and who in his *Commentarii* distinguished ancient achievement in the arts from the *maniera greca* that succeeded it, and further distinguished this from the modern era that commenced with Giotto and his followers. Above all, their quarrel is with Vasari.

What did the humanists actually see in their minds' eyes when reading the ancient authors? And what did artists look for when studying the ancient models? The classical prototype for Antonio Pisanello's famous drawing of dancing maenads is all but unrecognizable in the ill-proportioned and ungainly women he

drew: the style of Bertoldo di Giovanni's bronze battle relief is far closer to Ghiberti's than to the marble sarcophagus on which it is actually modeled; and the young man in Benozzo Gozzoli's drawing of one of the Quirinal horse tamers evokes not Johann Joachim Winckelmann's noble simplicity and quiet grandeur so much as a teenage shop assistant, neither unhandsome nor out of the ordinary, who has shed his clothes in order to pose. For Warburg the answer to such questions was to be sought not only in art but also in contemporary art theory (Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo), literature (Politian and Luigi Pulci), and such vernacular expressions of popular culture as the celebration of civic rituals (the Festa di San Giovanni and Calendimaggio). In such contexts the figures of the past appeared “not as plaster casts but in person, as figures full of life and color, . . . the embodiment of antiquity as the early Renaissance saw it.”³ He offered as a prime example Baccio Baldini's engraving of Bacchus and Ariadne, in which the deities appear just as Florentines had actually witnessed them being enacted in the carnival festivities of 1490, for which Lorenzo de' Medici himself composed the immortal *canto di carro*, entitled the *Canzona di Bacco*, “Quant' é bella giovinezza.”⁴

Warburg's argument has been often taken up, resisted by some and adapted by others, and in the past twenty years has been the subject of vividly renewed interest in Europe, resulting in a rapidly burgeoning bibliography by German, French, and Italian scholars.⁵ I have myself tried to develop certain of his perceptions in case studies devoted to Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera* and *Mars and Venus*, among others, advancing the argument that in the Renaissance a literal “rebirth” of antiquity (and certainly not in the Winckelmannian sense) was never the central issue.⁶ Save for a few humanist die-hards who insisted that vernacular expression was unworthy of comparison to the ancients, the far more complex ambition entailed a *renovatio*, a remaking of living culture by assimilating into it the more perfect forms of Greek and Roman civilizations, in art as well as in literature. In this way the living forms of the vernacular (which are the expressions of actual experience) might come to equal the achievements of the Greeks and Romans (which were, among other things, the expressions of history), or even to surpass them, as Vasari in fact believed Michelangelo had done.

Hans Belting's *Likeness and Presence* is a powerful recent contribution to the problems addressed by Nagel and Wood, and it is especially pertinent in that the material discussed is for the most part religious. Belting's point of departure is Walter Benjamin's celebrated formulation that two polarities in particular determine the reception of a work of art: its cult value, on the one hand (a notion adumbrated by Warburg's pioneering interest in art and ritual), and its value as an object for exhibition, on the other.⁷ Belting posits a medieval concept of the image (*Bild*), which has its own history that develops and changes over time but which on another level paradoxically remains always

the same. He suggests that the age of the cult image, or icon, was gradually superseded by the era of art (*Kunst*), originating in the Renaissance and lasting down to the present day, when "art took on a different meaning and became acknowledged for its own sake—art as invented by a famous artist and defined by a proper theory."⁸ Belting's concept of *Kunst* encompasses what Nagel and Wood call the performative principle, not really by analogy with J. L. Austin's notion of a speech act, but according to which each work of art is understood to be the creation of an *auctor*, and what they call "the product of a singular historical performance." Equally, Belting's concept of *Bild*, by which he means a holy image (or icon), embraces what our authors call the principle of substitution, defined by them as sequential "reinstantiation," or the making of "modern copies of painted icons . . . understood as effective surrogates for lost originals. . . ."

Nagel and Wood's substitution principle would seem to me better exemplified by tracing the historical fortunes of two images in particular, the *vera icon* and the Man of Sorrows.⁹ Both were extremely popular, often repeated in art over a long period of time. Belting (followed in this respect by Joseph Koerner in his absorbing discussion of Albrecht Dürer's *Self-Portrait* in Munich¹⁰) took them as prime exemplars of an evolving theory, preceding and continuing into the era of art, of an image that could simultaneously be understood as a cult object and as embodying an aesthetic of its own. Each takes its origin from a heavily indulged icon preserved in one of the pilgrimage churches in Rome, the former the *sudarium* of Veronica in St. Peter's and the latter a Byzantine icon in S. Croce in Gerusalemme that was said to record a vision of Christ granted to Saint Gregory the Great. All later depictions of the two themes explicitly refer to these two cult prototypes, for which they effectively stand as substitutes, even as it can be said (as per Nagel and Wood's argument) that most also exemplify the "performative principle." Dürer's *Sudarium Held by Two Angels* and Domenico Fetti's *Sudarium of Veronica* in the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, are both exquisite singular performances by an *auctor*. So, too, are depictions of the Man of Sorrows by artists as diverse as Lorenzo Monaco and Meister Francke. Even Israel van Meckenem's literal copy of the S. Croce icon unmistakably reveals his own distinctive manner and is proudly graced by the artist's signature. None of these examples, including van Meckenem's engraving, attempts an exact reproduction of a relic-prototype, to which reference is made iconographically but not stylistically. This is because the prototype to which they truly refer is neither a work of art nor a relic, in the same sense, it must be added, that Theodore of Studion's comparison, cited by Nagel and Wood, of the relation of image and prototype to the impress of a seal on various materials at different times does not refer back to an artistic prototype. The prototype is Christ. (This is also clear from the complaint made in 1439 by the Byzantine prelates at the Council of Florence that they could not recognize Christ or his saints in the works of art they saw in Italy.)

The example Nagel and Wood chose to illustrate "a clash between two different versions of the time-artifact relation" (performative and substitutional modes simultaneously at work), Vittore Carpaccio's *Saint Augustine in His Study* (*The Vision of Saint Augustine*), is perhaps not entirely appropriate for the purpose. They call it a historical picture. But what does this

mean? Although Augustine is no doubt a historical figure, Carpaccio made no attempt to show him in a fifth-century setting, which is why the painting is often claimed to be a very accurate depiction of the characteristic *studiolo* of a Venetian humanist cleric.¹¹ Far from having an "*all'antica* flavor" that conjures up Augustine's historical world, this *studiolo* has not a single object in it that can be securely identified as ancient. Indeed, the room seems insistently up-to-date in its furnishings, books, astronomical equipment, and even objets d'art. The bell on the saint's desk and bronze horse on his shelf both appear to be characteristic Paduan productions of the later quattrocento, as do the statuette of *Venus felix* by Antico and the bronze *Resurrected Christ* on the altar, deriving from the bronze *Redentore* made in the 1490s for the altar of S. Maria della Carità.¹² The reasons for attributing this statue to Severo da Ravenna (of which our authors are justifiably skeptical) are that its round base, the pose of the feet, and the fatal detail of the long drapery falling all the way to the ground recall not a statue of Christ, but Severo's marble *Saint John the Baptist* in the Cappella del Santo at Padua. This being so, perhaps the detail of the extended fall of drapery should be considered a styleme without iconographic significance. And perhaps the symmetrical low-relief foliage adorning the base of the bronze *Redentore* should be seen simply as the familiar, highly conventional decorative pattern it appears to be. If this is the case, it would follow that the bronze for S. Maria della Carità does not substitute for the prototype described by Eusebius of a miracle-working statue of Christ (which is not specified as the resurrected Christ) and the hemorrhaging woman. Moreover, it would follow that the bronze shown by Carpaccio on the altar in Augustine's study does not substitute for Eusebius's prototype either, especially since the statue he showed differs from its specific model of the *Redentore* in two iconographically crucial details: the base of the statue has been altered, omitting any depiction of foliage (whether iconographically significant or simply decorative), and the drapery falling from Christ's arm all the way to the ground is also deleted. Although the statue depicted on Saint Augustine's private altar has a ritual function, like everything else in the room (including the mosaic with the seraph) it is wholly consistent with the Venetian furnishings and contents of his study, which include his ecclesiastical paraphernalia, his beautifully bound books, finely crafted astrolabes and armillary spheres, and exquisite bronzes crafted by the finest artists of Carpaccio's generation. All are uniquely appropriate to the apartments of a humanist prelate living about the year 1500.

The concept of a history painting is a surprising latecomer to the history of Renaissance art, and even paintings that we are accustomed to thinking of as "histories," such as Giulio Romano's in the Sala di Costantino or Francesco Salviati's in the Sala dei Fasti Farnesiani, are discussed by contemporaries in terms of such literary genres as epic poetry.¹³ For a painter of Carpaccio's generation the point of reference for painting an *historia* would of course be Alberti, whose writings were well known in the courts of north Italy. In classical Latin, as Anthony Grafton has pointed out, *historia* carries two related but distinct meanings, referring both to *res gestae* and to narrative accounts of them (*narrationes*).¹⁴ Alberti's particular use of the term, however, is notoriously so difficult as to be the only word Cecil Grayson declined to translate into English in his exemplary edition of *De pictura*. Alberti's "historia" does not really carry the meaning

"history," certainly not exclusively so. Nor does it quite mean "story," as it is often translated (and the examples Alberti gives of good inventions for an *historia*, namely, the Three Graces and Apelles' allegory of Calumny, are, properly speaking, neither stories nor histories). Alberti's term derives from *ἱστορία* as used by the Byzantine rhetoricians (to whom humanist scholars were greatly indebted), who were the first to apply it to painting, meaning by it simply "a representation," or "a painting," and, indeed, the use of *historia* in the sense of *figura* or *imago* also appears in other late medieval and Renaissance sources.¹⁵ The closest surviving English parallel is "historiated" (from the medieval *historiatus*), as applied to manuscript illumination, where it refers to the image itself, whether of men, animals, grotesques, foliate decorations, or even capital initials, and not necessarily to a narrative subject.¹⁶

However, Alberti employs another word to refer to painting, *pictura*, which encompasses the total phenomenon and all its properties (such as points, lines, light, color, spatial construction, and composition). *Historia* he calls the supreme part of the painter's work ("summum pictoris opus historia"), and it refers to the things represented (we might say "historiated") or set forth in painting, among which he mentions human figures, horses, animals, and "every other object worthy to be seen," including inanimate objects such as ships.¹⁷ The sense of "historiation" as a representation, or "setting forth," also has a more abstract, but nonetheless clear, application. When in 1516 the Venetian publisher Nicolò Zopino issued the *Facetie, fabule e motti del Piovano Arlotto prete fiorentino* (reproducing the Florentine edition published a year earlier by Giovanni Stefano), he added for the edification of his Venetian audience that this was an "opera dilettevole vulgare in lingua toschia hystoriata," thereby alerting them that what they were about to read was set forth, or narrated, in the Tuscan vernacular, and not in Latin or in the Venetian dialect.¹⁸

Analogously, it seems to me more satisfactory to consider Carpaccio's *Saint Augustine in His Study* not as a history painting but as the *narratio* of an incident from the saint's life represented in a contemporary visual vernacular, the event placed in a setting consonant with the actual, lived experiences of all Venetian viewers. As such it is also an interpretation (*enarratio*), an exposition in Augustine's sense of the word when he interpreted the Psalms for the needs of a contemporary audience, giving them new life and meaning pertinent to the present. Saints Augustine and Jerome are presented not only as historical figures but also as exempla of *παιδεία*, humanist learning and training in virtue, just as they were invoked in 1471 by the Venetian legate Bernardo Giustiniani in his speech officially congratulating Sixtus IV on his elevation to the papacy.¹⁹ Carpaccio did not attempt to reconstruct a remote, historically Roman past, as Nicolas Poussin might have done, and as Andrea Mantegna did do for the *Introduction of the Cult of Cybele to Rome* or the *Triumph of Caesar*. For him the meaning of Augustine's vision was alive in the religious and civic culture of the present, and he imagined the saints, in Warburg's words, "not as plaster casts but in person, as figures full of life and color." In this his painting is typical of its time, an obvious parallel being Botticelli's fresco *Saint Augustine in His Study* in the church of the Ognissanti, as well as its companion, Domenico Ghirlandaio's *Saint Jerome in His Study*, which together depict the very same episode shown by Carpaccio.²⁰ The only difference is that the

Florentines set the miraculous event in humanist studies that are not Venetian but of their own city, just as in the *Saint Jerome in His Study* putatively ascribed to Jan van Eyck (which was owned by the Medici and was a precedent for Botticelli and Ghirlandaio) the saint appears serenely at work in a study in Bruges.²¹ None should be considered anachronistic but instead as an affirmation of contemporary culture and its foundation in the cultures of religious and humanistic learning of the past. In a similar way, Carpaccio's *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, like *Saint Augustine in His Study* part of the series of paintings he undertook for the Scuola di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, depicts the saint as the very model of contemporary chivalric culture, he and his horse outfitted in completely up-to-date armor and harnessing. The painting is characteristic of Renaissance depictions of the popular subject of Saint George, including Raphael's for the duke of Urbino. In that painting Saint George appears as the *preux chevalier par excellence*, and Raphael, with no sense of anachronism, honored his patron by showing Saint George displaying the English order of the garter, which only recently had been bestowed on Federico da Montefeltro.

About the second half of Nagel and Wood's paper I have little to add. It is devoted to an extended critique of the "powerful model" argued by Panofsky in *Renaissance and Resuscitations*, which they claim has never since been challenged. Panofsky's book has certainly had its influence, as it should, especially on medievalists, who have responded to his notion of "renaissance," in particular as it modifies Charles Homer Haskins's classic discussion of the twelfth-century "Renaissance." So far as Renaissance scholars are concerned, however, I am not sure that in actual practice Panofsky's theoretical claim has even been noticed, positing as it does that the Renaissance only began with Botticelli and Mantegna. It was they, according to Panofsky's "principle of disjunction," who for the first time attempted to unite classical form (pathos) with its own subject matter (ethos), in an effort not fully realized until the time of Raphael and what we normally call the High Renaissance. To be frank, this was an extreme, even eccentric, reconceptualization of the Renaissance, which historically (and I think rightly) had been understood to originate nearly two hundred years before with the beginnings of the recovery of ancient letters, with Petrarch, and with Giotto. It has had little effect on scholars of trecento and quattrocento art, who continue to think of themselves as students of the Renaissance, though it has perhaps encouraged some medievalists (though I doubt encouragement was needed) to extend their own researches later in time, emphasizing continuities rather than positing a decisive break with the Middle Ages. Some of the best work in this respect has again been done by Belting, himself a medievalist, who, however, has been especially sensitive to the fundamentally new social structures of reality, based in lived experience, that inform the narrative and allegorical paintings of the trecento, which he terms vernacular ("volks-sprachliche Gebildeten") and which indeed often include lengthy inscriptions in the vernacular.²² I might add that it is surely significant that while earlier iconic paintings of the Virgin in the *maniera greca* completely hide the Madonna's hair beneath her mantle, we find that in the trecento instead, as in Simone Martini's *Annunciation* for the cathedral of Siena, tresses of golden hair the color of Laura's begin to slip out from beneath their cover and can be seen framing her face. A more radical recasting of the associations inherent in the traditional

icon, endowing the Queen of Heaven with the normative attributes of the beauty of the Petrarchan beloved, could scarcely be imagined.²³

As I suggested at the beginning, it seems to me that Nagel and Wood's specific focus on Panofsky distorts the historiography of twentieth-century criticism of Renaissance art, especially as regards the universally high evaluation accorded the classical solution (which I think they are right to call Renaissance "neoclassicism," a style identifiable in particular—as the polemic between Giovanni Pietro Bellori and Carlo Cesare Malvasia makes clear—with the local school of Rome in the sixteenth century). The most extreme affirmation of the primacy of the classical solution was made by E. H. Gombrich, who claimed that "relativism in these matters can easily be exaggerated," that the norms achieved by Raphael in lucid narrative and presenting physical beauty "have a permanent meaning," and who concluded that "I know quite well that ideals of beauty vary from country to country and age to age, but I still think we know what we mean when we call Raphael's Madonnas more beautiful than Rembrandt's, even though we may like Rembrandt's better."²⁴ Whatever one may think of this statement, there are those nowadays who might opt for Rembrandt, who would question the exclusive permanence of one set of expressive values—the classic as opposed to the contingency of all other alternatives—especially in forms that have been so easily adapted to the requirements of various strains of authoritarianism, whether ecclesiastical or of the state, whether fascist or Stalinist, or whether put to the service of an elite ruling class or a triumphalist capitalism. It is this that (only) partly accounts for sharply renewed recent interest in Warburg's preoccupation with the irrational, the darker, the Dionysian in Friedrich Nietzsche's sense, aspects of the afterlife (*Nachleben*) of antiquity in the Renaissance (a sample of which, as the authors observe, may be found in Georges Didi-Huberman's above-cited study of Warburg, *L'image survivante*). It is most emphatically true, nevertheless, that the classical solution of the High Renaissance in Rome, of Raphael above all, still retains its force undiminished, and it is a model not created by Panofsky or Gombrich. Faith in that solution underpins virtually all scholarship of the past two centuries, from the moment in 1797 when Friedrich Schlegel first defined "classicism" in relation to the arts.²⁵ It was especially powerful among the entire generation of scholars who lived through the darkest days of twentieth-century irrationality, despotism, and brutality and who found historical warrant for the humane values of Renaissance arts and literature (also the products of turbulent times) in Renaissance Neoplatonism and in the revival of the Greek notion of *παιδεία*, translated by Battista Guarino in the mid-fifteenth century as the *studia humanitatis*.²⁶

Knowledge does increase, and it is certainly true that the achievements of nineteenth- and twentieth-century history and philology greatly surpass those of the Renaissance. But it increases incrementally, and Isaac Casaubon's demonstration that the corpus of Hermetic writings had been dated far too early by Renaissance scholars and theologians (who had been drawn to them precisely because of their presumed antiquity, their distance from the present) did not bring to a halt the search for the *prisca theologia*, any more than did an inability to read the Egyptian hieroglyphs correctly. Similarly, even as sophisticated quantitative mensuration came gradually to supersede the qualitative analyses of medieval science, alchemists and astrologers serenely

continued their work. Galen's pneumatological physiology continued to influence medical practice long after William Harvey proved the circulation of blood, and Sir Isaac Newton is as famous for his superstitions as for his calculus and his science. For these reasons it seems to me that Nagel and Wood's understanding of Renaissance conceptions of history is skewed and would indeed be more apt (as their citation of Richard Krautheimer acknowledges) as a description of a medieval perspective. To suggest that in the Renaissance chronological particularity was less developed than in later centuries is a truism, but this does not mean that an awareness of distance from the past did not exist. Manuel Chrysoloras's remark that only in images is it possible to see things as they actually appeared in the time they were made strikes me as an extraordinarily precocious affirmation of the evidentiary value of artifacts (whether statues, coins, or other objects) for the study of history. It certainly does not seem to be, as our authors claim, evidence for a continuing "anachronistic force of images" or for the dominance of typological over chronological forms of thinking by humanist historians.

As Lorenzo de' Medici wrote in his preface to the *Raccolta aragonesa*, it was necessary to study both ancient and earlier Tuscan letters in order to water the gardens of present-day literature, that they might produce even more beautiful flowers. Donatello's bronze *David* was conceived in emulation of an ancient bronze *Mercury*, now lost, then in the possession of the humanist Niccolò Niccoli. Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* (Warburg's *bewegte Beiwerk* and all) consciously places the artist, beyond any doubt aided by the philological knowledge of Politian, in a historic rivalry with Apelles and with the Roman sculptor of the Medici Venus.²⁷ We began with Petrarch's broad distinction between an ancient past and the Christian era succeeding it, which certainly does not give evidence of fine chronological distinctions. Ghiberti's distinction between antiquity, a period of decline after Constantine and Pope Sylvester, and the modern era is scarcely more finely tuned. However, Lorenzo Valla was contemporaneously applying a far more discriminatory, critically sensible, and erudite historical judgment in his proof that the Donation of Constantine was a forgery. And in 1516, just about a decade after Carpaccio's *Saint Augustine in His Study*, Desiderius Erasmus in his magisterial *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis opera omnia* rejected as pious forgeries the very letters, attributed to Augustine and Cyril of Jerusalem, that relate the miracle of Saint Jerome's posthumous appearance to the bishop of Hippo, hence striking from the canon the very texts on which Carpaccio's imagery depended. The letters were filled, he said, with glaring anachronisms and were written in a Latin so bad that "balbutiret ipse Tullius." Even Cicero, if forced to speak it, would have stuttered.²⁸

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Notes

1. Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, introduction by Kurt Forster (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999), 89, 161.
2. Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 49; and see Theodor E. Mommsen, "Petrarch's Conception of the Dark Ages," *Speculum* 17 (1942): 226–42. The bibliography is enormous, but for a brief but efficient discussion of the distinction made between ancients and moderns in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see Salvatore Settis, *Futuro del "classico"* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 2004), 61–64, as well as 124–25 for bibliographic notes.
3. Warburg, *Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, 161.
4. Lorenzo de' Medici, *Opere*, ed. Tiziano Zanato (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1992), 357.
5. To cite only a very few examples: Dieter Wuttke, *Aby M. Warburgs Methode als Anregung und Aufgabe* (1977; reprint, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990); Horst Bredekamp et al., eds., *Aby Warburg: Akten des internationalen Symposiums Hamburg* (Weinheim: VCH-Acta Humaniora, 1991); Salvatore Settis, "Pathos and Ethos, Morphologie und Funktion," *Vorträge aus dem Warburg-Haus* 1 (1997): 31–73; Giorgio Agamben, "Aby Warburg et la science sans nom," in *Image et mémoire* (Paris: St. Hoëbeke, 1998), 9–43; Philippe Michaud, *Aby Warburg et l'image en mouvement* (Paris: Macula, 1998); and Georges Didi-Huberman, *L'image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg* (Paris: Minuit, 2002), with extensive further bibliography. See also the excellent introductions by Forster to Warburg, *Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, and by Joseph Leo Koerner to Aby Warburg, *Le rituel du serpent: Récit d'un voyage en pays pueblo* (Paris: Macula, n.d.).
6. Charles Dempsey, *The Portrayal of Love: Botticelli's "Primavera" and Humanist Culture at the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and idem, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).
7. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Fontana, 1968), 217–51. Hans Belting's book, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), xxi, originally published as *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1990), is based on a far more sustained historical analysis than Benjamin's short essay, which centers on Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* and Hubert Grimme's now discredited analysis of the circumstances of its commission ("Das Rätsel der sixtinischen Madonna," *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 57 [1922]: 41–49); for which, see Daniel Arasse, "L'ange spectateur: La *Madonne Sistine* et Walter Benjamin," in *Les visions de Raphaël* (Paris: Liana Levi, 2003), 113–41.
8. Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, xxi.
9. Ibid. See also Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter: Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 1981); idem, "An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34–35 (1980–81): 1–16; and Gerhard Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel: Traditionen des Christusbildes und die Bildkonzepte der Renaissance* (Munich: Fink, 2002).
10. Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 80–126.
11. Brown, *Venice and Antiquity*, 248. The contemporaneity of Carpaccio's setting itself explains the tendency among scholars, including Brown, to hypothesize that Augustine is portrayed with the features of Cardinal Bessarion, a notion that has received formidable support from Vittorio Branca. The identification has been exploded by Augusto Gentili, *Le storie di Carpaccio: Venezia, i Turchi, e gli Ebrei* (Venice: Alfieri, 1996), 85–90, who is the only scholar I know to have examined the question closely. Gentili compares Carpaccio's saint with Gentile Bellini's portrait in Vienna of the white-bearded Bessarion, his spectacularly bulbous nose almost as outsize as his intellect, who could not conceivably be the same man painted by Carpaccio. He suggests that Carpaccio may have portrayed Angelo Leonino, a major benefactor of the Scuola di S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, as Augustine, and he moreover proposes that Bessarion may appear as the old, white-bearded, bulbous-nosed monk shown at the far left of Carpaccio's *Exequies of Saint Jerome*, one of the companion pictures to *Saint Augustine in His Study* (which, properly considered, takes as its subject a miracle of Saint Jerome, one of the dedictees of the Scuola).
12. Nagel and Wood rightly follow Zygmunt Wazbinski in identifying the statuette of Venus as a copy of Antico's *Venus felix*, though not the virtuous version in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, with its fire-gilt hair and drapery and its silvered eyes. Carpaccio reproduced an ungilded cast, similar to those preserved in Naples (Museo di Capodimonte) and London (the Victoria and Albert Museum); see A. H. Allison. *The Bronzes of Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi, called Antico*, special issue of *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 53–54, no. 29 (1993–94): 222–27. Carpaccio's adaptation of the bronze Christ tentatively attributed to Severo da Ravenna, now in the Poldi Pezzoli Museum, Milan, is well established in the literature, though with an equally tentative attribution of the statue to Antonio Lombardo; see Jan Laus, *Carpaccio: Paintings and Drawings, Complete Edition* (London: Phaidon, 1962), 232, cat. no. 13.
13. Charles Dempsey, "Mythic Inventions in Counter-Reformation Painting," in *Rome and the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. Paul A. Ramsay (Binghamton, N.Y.: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1982), 55–75. The same is true of the seventeenth century, when discussion centered not only on epic but also tragic construction on the basis of Aristotle's *Poetics*; for which see Dempsey, "Nicolas Poussin between Italy and France: Poussin's *Death of Germanicus* and the Invention of the Tableau," in *L'Europa e l'arte italiana*, ed. Max Seidel (Venice: Marsilio, 2000), 321–35.
14. Anthony Grafton, "Historia and Istoria: Alberti's Terminology in Context," *I Tatti Studies* 8 (1999): 37–68.
15. Dempsey, *Portrayal of Love*, 29; and Henry Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 9. For examples of the influence of the Byzantine rhetoricians on humanist criticism of the arts, see Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition 1350–1450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971). And for *historia* as *figura* or *imago*, see Charles du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1954), s.v. *historia*. Grafton, "Historia and Istoria," correctly emphasizes the application of *historia* to sculpture as well as painting, and especially to relief sculptures.
16. Du Cange, *Glossarium*, s.v. *historiare* and *historiatus*, as well as *historiographus*, which carries via the Greek fathers the meaning *pictor*. See also Dante, *Purgatorio*, canto 10, lines 49–52 (and 73–75), "vedea . . . un' altra storia," to which Charles Singleton comments: "'Storia' here is used in the sense suggested later by 'storiata' (v. 73), i.e., a depiction in art, even as stained-glass windows or initial letters in manuscripts or frescoed walls were said to be 'historiated'"; Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. with a commentary by Singleton, vol. 2, part 2, *Purgatorio*, *Commentary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 204.
17. Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting and Sculpture: The Latin Texts of "De pictura" and "De statua"*, ed. and trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Phaidon, 1972), 103.
18. Gianfranco Folena, ed., *Motti e facczie del piovano Artotto* (Milan: Riccardo Ricciardi, 1953), 290, ill. opposite 288.
19. Patricia H. Labalme, *Bernardo Rustiniani: A Venetian of the Quattrocento* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1969), 197: "Nullum omisisti litterarum genus, cui non animum incenderis? Sic Augustinus, sic Hieronymus, Basilius, Gregorius aliique complures qui profecto non dubitarunt in omni litterarum genere et ratione versari," and so on. For Jerome as a humanist saint par excellence, see Eugene F. Rice Jr., "Divine litterarum princeps," chap. 5 in *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 84–115.
20. For other examples of Augustine shown in fifteenth-century studies, see the classic analysis by Helen I. Roberts, "St. Augustine in 'St. Jerome's Study': Carpaccio's Painting and Its Legendary Source," *Art Bulletin* 41 (1959): 283–97. Quattrocento depictions of Saint Jerome in his study are much more common, and they, too, characteristically show the saint in a contemporary room.
21. I am aware that this painting is disputed between Jan van Eyck and Petrus Christus and have here followed the attribution argued by James Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, and the Graphic Arts from 1350 to 1575* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985), 116–17, 150–51. I leave final resolution of the problem to specialists in the northern Renaissance.
22. See in particular Hans Belting's masterly essay "Das Bild als Text: Wandmalerei und Literatur im Zeitalter Dantes," in *Malerei und Stadtkultur in der Danteseit: Die Argumentation der Bilder*, ed. Belting and Dieter Blume (Munich: Hirmer, 1989); and also Blume, "Ordenskonkurrenz und Bildpolitik: Franziskanische Programme nach dem theoretischen Armutsstreit," in *ibid.*, 149–70. See also Belting, "The New Role of Narrative in Public Painting of the Trecento: *Historia* and *Allegory*," in *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Herbert L. Kessler and Marianna S. Simpson, *Studies in the History of Art*, no. 16 (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1985), 151–68. Also relevant is Blume, *Regenten des Himmels: Astrologische Bilder in Mittelalter und Renaissance* (Berlin: Akademie, 2000), which traces astrological thought and illustration from the later Middle Ages to the humanist period; and, for an excellent case study of the intermingling of communal and vernacular cultures, see C. Jean Campbell, *The Game of Courting and the Art of the Commune of San Gimignano, 1290–1320* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

23. Petrarch, of course, wrote two sonnets (*Rime sparse*, 77 and 78) about Simone's portrait of Laura: "Ma certo il mio Simon fu in Paradiso / onde questa gentil donna si parte; / ivi la vide, et la ritrasse in carte / per far fede qua giù del suo bel viso." Aside from her telltale blonde hair, the Madonna Simone painted in the *Annunciation* also follows other normative conventions describing the poet's beloved. See Dempsey, *Portrayal of Love*, 53–64; and the classic article by Elizabeth Cropper, "On Beautiful Women: Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo*, and the Vernacular Style," *Art Bulletin* 58 (1976): 374–94.
24. E. H. Gombrich, "Norm and Form: The Stylistic Categories of Art History and Their Origins in Renaissance Ideals," in *Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1966), 81–98. esp. 96. The comparison is odd, for, while Raphael is famous for his Madonnas, the Protestant Rembrandt painted few of them. Gombrich was surely thinking, as Elizabeth Cropper has suggested to me, of the long gallery of the Zwinger in Dresden, at one end of which is hung Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* and at the other, facing it on axis, Rembrandt's famous *Self-Portrait* in which he raises a *roemer* aloft and bounces Saskia on his knee.
25. Rene Wellek, "The Term and Concept of Classicism in Literary History," in *Aspects of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. E. R. Wasserman (Baltimore, 1965), 105–28; and Elizabeth Cropper and Charles Dempsey, *Nicolas Poussin: Friendship and the Love of Painting* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 24–26.
26. Labalme, *Bernardo Giustiniani*, 19.
27. Charles Dempsey, "Love and the Figure of the Nymph in Botticelli's Art," in Daniel Arasse et al., *Botticelli: From Lorenzo the Magnificent to Savonarola* (Milan: Skira, 2003), 25–37.
28. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, 131, 247 n. 62.

Response: *Nihil sub Sole Novum*

Michael Cole

In the field of Renaissance art history, we can usually assign makers' names to works, and so we do: we avail ourselves of biographical information of a sort that would, for earlier periods, be unimaginable, and we insert the objects we study into stories of their makers' lives. Our field also provides an unusually rich documentation about how things were made; its wealth of writings about everything from the techniques and technologies of the workshop to the principles of design and composition tempt us to think back from works to their production, to see the object as the result of a vividly knowable operation. We can even aspire to drawing the very words we bring to art from a vintage language of making, one devoted already in the period to the manners and modes of visual expression: the Renaissance was the first moment to see concepts like "hand" and "school," even "style," applied to visual works, the first period to fashion artists themselves by mythologizing their real or imagined activities. For these reasons and others, it can seem almost natural to approach Renaissance artifacts with what Nagel and Wood call a "performative" theory of origin. And precisely because the material itself seems to invite this, we too seldom reflect on the art historical habits that Nagel and Wood acutely characterize.

The fact that Nagel and Wood must resurrect Erwin Panofsky to find a worthy interlocutor suggests that what they present is not just a new theory but an almost forgotten question. If we agree, moreover, that historians of Renaissance art, despite Panofsky's example, seldom question the basis of the periodization that defines their field, it will come as little surprise that in seeking comparanda for their own model, Nagel and Wood look especially to areas of study that, in part out of necessity, cast their own objects in a different light. More specifically, what Nagel and Wood at least sometimes seem to advocate is that we look at our materials as a medievalist might. This comes through in their recommendations for further reading (Richard Krautheimer, Mary Carruthers, Cyril Mango). It also echoes in a number of their sharpest formulations. Reading that "the dominant metaphor" in the substitution model "is that of the im-

press or the cast," for example, I could not help but think of Gerhard Wolf's recent book, *Schleier und Spiegel*, which explores the way that Renaissance conceptions of the picture depended on but also departed from medieval ideas about the image of Christ—especially the *vera icon*, or "true image," the face left on the veil that Saint Veronica laid against it. One of the things that intrigues Wolf is how in the years leading up to the Renaissance, the notion of the "original" that the *vera icon* exemplified began to change: continued reverence for and copying of the *sudarium* notwithstanding, artists gradually began to move their *own* work, composed in the head or in the heart, into the position of the *Urbild*, or prototype.¹ Wolf's book, in turn, is most pointedly in dialogue with Hans Belting's *Bild und Kult* (translated into English as *Likeness and Presence*), a survey that describes itself as "a history of the image before the era of art." The scope of Belting's study is somewhat broader than Wolf's, but here, too, the manufactured object is frequently counterposed to the replica—the idea, as Nagel and Wood elegantly put it, of "types associated with mythical, dimly perceived origin and enforcing general structural or categorical continuity across sequences of tokens." Consider how Belting taxonomizes the earliest prints: on the one hand, there was the mass-produced devotional image, "a substitute or derivative that spoke not with its own voice but with the voice of its model"; on the other, the sheet that explored new compositions, above all, the engraving, which "soon became an opportunity to demonstrate technical virtuosity and thematic inventiveness."² Or again, here in more dialectical fashion, witness the way Belting thinks about Netherlandish panel painting: "It is not an invention," he writes of a *Madonna and Child* in Kansas City often attributed to Hayne of Brussels, "but repeats the very type on which its cult value depended. At the same time, however, it is a product by the hand of an eminent painter, whose technique and style determined its artistic value."³ One gets the impression that for Belting, what defines the waning of the Middle Ages is the coexistence, even within the same work, of "the image" and "art."

Comparing what Nagel and Wood refer to as the "principle of substitution" with Belting's idea of the *Bild* or with Wolf's em-

blem of the "veil," accordingly, brings some of what is new in Nagel and Wood's model of anachronism into sharper focus. Notable, to begin with, is their insistence that the topic that concerns them is specifically that of *Renaissance* anachronism. Nagel and Wood reject what "all parties"—not just Panofsky, they remark, but also Krautheimer and Georges Didi-Huberman—agree on, "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 polemic of the essay, in other words, is directed not only against the way Renaissance scholars approach their field but also against the way medievalists frame theirs. With Belting and Wolf, too, we might observe, it is in contrast to the medieval tradition of the iconic image, the divine picture that authenticates even its copies as "true," that the period we think of as the Renaissance gains definition. Though the idea of a picture that is, as it were, guaranteed by an earlier one survives into the sixteenth century, that survival is shadowed by a broader paradigm shift. For Belting, the forces that began working against the old idea include the rise of art collecting and, eventually, the Reformation; for Wolf, they include the recovery of classical etiologies of the image and the invention of new ones. In both books, nothing is more transformative than the growing internalization of images, the sense, increasingly common in the later Middle Ages, that the image might both press on and flow from the imagination.

To question the contours of these accounts is to open up new horizons for historians of Renaissance art: when we're looking for what is different, or original, in our period, we invariably find it; what Nagel and Wood's powerful thesis offers is a way to break the circle. Their arguments, it seems to me, give us new terms for thinking, for example, about the centrality of copying in most of Renaissance Europe's artistic pedagogies, about the willingness, especially among the historically minded to destroy older works that had found better modern doubles, and about what it might mean for the works of a modern painter or architect to become "iconic." At the same time, the objects that served as watersheds for the authors mentioned above—frequently those that most insistently draw our attention to performance—are likely to present Nagel and Wood with some of their most challenging territory. When Jan van Eyck makes a panel that, in its way, repeats the portrait of Christ that a series of predecessors had left him, then signs and dates the work, declaring it to be a painting of his own creation and of his own moment, this looks indeed like "the emergence of authorial self-consciousness against the model of the Byzantine icon." Less easy to see is how that same picture, or any following its example, can still also allow a point of view according to which "no human subject is involved." Wolf underscores the fact that van Eyck's copyists, in turn, repeated not only the date they found on his picture but also the signature;⁴ can we continue to maintain, in view of a work like this, that "[t]he literal circumstances and the historical moment of an artifact's material execution were not routinely taken as components of its meaning or function"? And if this is true of van Eyck's work—and not just of the copy done after it—why should we take it as an example of Renaissance anachronism, rather than as an indication that artists and viewers alike remained conceptual denizens of the long Middle Ages? At the end of the essay, the authors write: "We are not proposing simply that substitution was a

medieval way of thinking about artifacts that persisted but was finally vanquished in the Renaissance." They *do* seem to be proposing, though, that it was a medieval way of thinking, and that it persisted: Is the resistance, then, just to the idea that the medieval principle of substitution eventually succumbed to the logic of performance? Does the principle of substitution, as they see it, continue to hold into the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth centuries?

Another area in which Nagel and Wood's model stands apart from other characterizations of the substitutionary image is in the way that it handles (or declines to handle) categoric subject matter. Wolf and Belting alike, with varying degrees of explicitness, circumscribe the kinds of things to which they mean their arguments to apply. Though Belting's subtitle promises nothing less than a history of the image, he identifies this largely with the icon tradition, and Wolf's core material primarily consists of representations of Christ. What Nagel and Wood describe, by contrast, is a single model that applies universally: "images and buildings were understood as tokens of types"; "all artifacts—not just statues but also chairs, panel paintings, even churches—were understood in the premodern period to have a double historicity"; "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." Where the temporality of the artwork was concerned, in other words, there was, for Renaissance artists and viewers, no difference in *principle* between icons and other manufactured objects.

Such an approach would elide or minimize the relevance of a whole series of antitheses that early texts might seem to encourage. Klaus Krüger has recently stressed, for example, that when the Oratorians at the Chiesa Nuova in Rome commissioned an altarpiece from Peter Paul Rubens, the documents (including a letter by the artist himself) distinguished between the *quadro*, the painting Rubens was to deliver, and the *immagine*, the miraculous icon it was to ornament.⁵ The idea that those two kinds of picture would require two different terms seems consistent with the contrasts that Belting has drawn, and even with his reference to the crucial premodern category as that of the "image." Other writings—especially those concerned with issues of pictorial decorum—confront the issue of the models to which works of either sort might be related. The Mantuan cleric Gregorio Comanini, for example, borrowing his terms from Plato, distinguished between *icastic* imitations, pictures made after things in nature, and *fantastic* imitations, inventions generated from the painter's own *fantasia* and having their basis primarily in the imagination. The distinction bore directly on the kind of seriality that Nagel and Wood describe. The fact that the fantastic subject, as Comanini saw it, was one "never before drawn by anyone else,"⁶ "never before created,"⁷ made it suspect in certain religious contexts: the speakers in Comanini's dialogue admire Arcimboldo for his hybrids, but when they come to consider a representation of God the Father as an old man, they are satisfied only after they establish that the image was not a result of caprice but a derivation from the biblical vision of Daniel, and therefore, effectively, an authorized image in the tradition of the icon.⁸ Comanini's generic categories are premised, that is, on the belief that there *were* in the Renaissance works without precedent, and in this he

was not alone. One decade earlier, Gabriele Paleotti had compiled a list of painted religious subjects he considered “new” or “lacking in certain authority.”⁹ And Paleotti’s attention to the matter, in turn, was undoubtedly prompted by the 1563 decrees of the Council of Trent, which had proscribed the display of anything that might be regarded as an “unwonted image.”¹⁰ What is important here is not the dogma that Tridentine writers attempted to explain but the fact that sixteenth-century thinkers understood a broad group of pictures, including sacred pictures, to have veered from the principle of the prototype. These consisted not merely of images that could be claimed not to have been based on other images—paintings inspired directly by texts, for example—but also of images that seemed to have come essentially from nowhere. When Catholic writers and artists, in the same period, insisted that modern painting, sculpture, and architecture be reconnected to Early Christian images and practices, it was in part against such “unwonted” pictures (or what they took to be such pictures) that they were reacting.

The publications of the cleric and Farnese courtier Giovanni Andrea Gilio da Fabriano raise still more pointed questions. To a degree, Gilio’s concerns resemble those that later exercised Comanini: to demarcate art and truth and to establish guidelines for knowing and respecting the difference. Where Comanini framed the problem in terms of portrayal and ideation, however, Gilio was more interested in literary form. He divided painting into “historical” subjects, essentially depictions of true events (including future events that the Bible foretold), and “poetic” ones, those that showed fabricated stories, adding a third, mixed mode that combined elements of both. In the course of discussing this last category, he directly engaged the topic of anachronism. Recalling that critics had faulted Virgil for employing “*Cataprolepsim*, that is, anticipation in time, or in history, which is nothing other than saying later that which should have been said first, which is nothing other than a change in order,”¹¹ the speakers in his dialogue go on to consider a motif Michelangelo placed at the center of his depiction of the Flood in the Sistine ceiling, a kind of boat that the speakers ultimately agree to be one that Noah’s contemporaries could not have built. Comparing this instance of *anticipazione* to other representational curiosities (the depiction of the Greek poet Orpheus in Roman garb, the posing of the Quirinal horse tamers in such a way that they act as though they hold bridles when in fact they do not), what emerges is that Gilio considers at least Michelangelo’s version of anachronism to be a *fantione*, a fiction. For Gilio, prolepsis was a “figure,” a rhetorical device employed to augment the beauty of the work. Because it compromised the unity of the scene, he maintained, it should be employed only sparingly.¹²

As Nagel and Wood remind us, terming anachronism a “figure” evokes premodern conceptions of time, especially Christian time; theologically informed artists and writers, as Didi-Huberman has also argued, would have been familiar with a system of thinking in which, “as a result of the figural relation, every individual story drawn from Holy Scripture becomes a commemorated past, a prefigured future, and a mysterious present.”¹³ Gilio himself, a Dominican priest, must have been well versed in such ideas. Yet this only makes it all the more remarkable that he brings the problem of anachronism into the

competition between history and invention in the way that he does, treating it as a signal that the work it shapes is not quite a “historical” subject. Gilio’s terms, to be sure, date to the very late end of the period that interests Nagel and Wood. The broader question his text raises, however, pertains to the earlier decades, too: Where the performative and the substitutive, the poetic and the historical, can be distinguished, does the distinction produce two ways of looking at the same object, or two kinds of object altogether (noting, in either case, that the overlap between the two sides may generate a category in itself)? Is a single model of “Renaissance” anachronism sufficient for Leonardo’s *historie* and Titian’s *poesie*, as well as for icons, buildings, and chairs?

It makes sense that the statue on the altar of Carpaccio’s painting should so crystallize the issues Nagel and Wood raise: readers of Wolf will *expect* the image of Christ to be a substitute, and in the “era of art,” to run up against the implication of the conspicuously and self-consciously artficial work. It is no accident that Didi-Huberman, too, uses the representation of Christ as a primary reference point, and that Belting, like Nagel and Wood, draws attention to Eusebius’s account of the bronze statue at Paneas.¹⁴ One does not, however, expect the same of, say, Mantegna’s *Camera degli Sposi*, or even, to take one of their examples, of Botticelli’s *Primavera*. This is, perhaps, the most counterintuitive claim Nagel and Wood make: that the works we admire precisely because they have no precedents would, to Renaissance viewers, have seemed “an ersatz for some earlier, now absent artifact.” If we think of the *Primavera*, following Charles Dempsey, as a work that could not be but for the coming together of Botticelli and Politian and for the festival culture that marked Lorenzo the Magnificent’s new golden age,¹⁵ how are we to understand that it would have been appreciated for “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”?

These may be the exceptions that prove the rule. For one could always make the case that the Renaissance, with its interminable sequences of Madonnas, was on the whole distinctly lacking in invention. Nagel and Wood suggest that art historical discourses, built around ideas of authorship and style, are “structurally compelled to misrecognize” the dialectic of the performative and the substitutive, yet do we not teach our students, in their very first encounters with the field, to rely on the inherent repetitiveness of the Western tradition, identifying what they have not seen by assuming its likeness to what they have (or, in a pinch, consulting that great rebuttal to all fantasies of innovation, James Hall’s *Subjects and Symbols in Art*)? And do we not ourselves, whenever we go source hunting, assuming that the meaning of the work will disclose itself in the knowledge of whence it derives, do the same? Let us hope that Nagel and Wood, turning their lights on the way things relate to their prototypes, provoke all their readers to seriously reexamine the repetitious. We may long have needed Nagel and Wood’s thesis to be true, even if we didn’t know it.

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Notes

1. Gerhard Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel: Traditionen des Christusbildes und die Bildkonzepte der Renaissance* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2002); see, for example, the discussion of Schongauer on 174.
2. Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 425. Wood has discussed Belting's idea of the *Bild* in a recent issue of this journal; see *Art Bulletin* 86 (2004): 370–73.
3. Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 440.
4. Wolf, *Schleier und Spiegel*, 196.
5. Klaus Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren: Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2001), esp. 146.

6. Gregorio Comanini, *The Fígino, or On the Purpose of Painting: Art Theory in the Late Renaissance*, trans. Ann Doyle-Anderson and Giancarlo Maiorino (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 17.
7. *Ibid.*, 28.
8. *Ibid.*, 74.
9. Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle imagini sacre et profane*, anastatic reprint (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1990), 206–9.
10. H. J. Schroeder, ed., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1955), 485: "statuit sancta synodus, nemini licere ullo in loco vel ecclesia, etiam quomodolibet exempta, ullam insolitam ponere vel ponendam curare imaginem. . . ."
11. Giovanni Andrea Gilio, *Due dialogi*, anastatic reprint (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1986), 110v.
12. *Ibid.*, 110–13, esp. 112v: "with *anticipation* the work is sometimes made beautiful, and delightful."
13. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 125.
14. Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 40.
15. Charles Dempsey, *The Portrayal of Love: Botticelli's "Primavera" and Humanist Culture at the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Response: Time Out of Joint

Claire Farago

And—to pose a question that sums up all of the others—what do we mean by “anachronism”?—Hubert Damisch, “The Theme of Choosing,” 1992¹

What Erich Auerbach understood as an “omnitemporal” scheme of history that attempts to adopt God’s point of view through figural thinking, grasping history all at once, Wood and Nagel develop into a brilliant reading of material works of art as “the capacity of the figure to embody materially its own signified.” But is it surprising that Wood and Nagel do not acknowledge that their art historical ruminations perform (at a metacritical level) the same operations that occupy the depicted humanist saint in his *studiolo*, surrounded by works of art? The most obvious typological structure in Carpaccio’s painting is (the presumed) Cardinal Bessarion’s imitation of Saint Augustine. A memorializing portrait that captures its sitter receiving a lesson in humility offers many parallels to their stratified acts of interpretation, not the least of which are the multiple ways in which they tease out of the picture a series of distinctions between the discursive manner in which humans come to knowledge over time and the timeless presence of divine knowledge.

The topic of “anachronism” was discussed at length by historians of what came to be known as the French Annales school to express philosophical doubts about the practice of history as an exact science. Reconsiderations of the historian’s “sin of sins,” as Lucien Febvre referred to “anachronism” in 1942, were initially framed by Marc Bloch and Febvre, who worried about historians projecting their mental “equipment [*outillage*]” onto other eras.² The influential concepts of *mentalité* and *longue durée*

emerged in response to the question of how, if ever, the past is objectively portrayed, given that historians necessarily approach the past from the present, anachronistically, “like a movie reel that is unwound in the opposite direction from which it is viewed.”³ In other parts of Europe, most famously in Frankfurt, where another “school” was simultaneously forming, similar discussions of the contingency of historical truth developed on the same Marxist foundation.⁴ The most sophisticated theoretical model of “anachronism” conceived as a term operating in opposition to “chronism” is undoubtedly Walter Benjamin’s notion of the “dialectical image.”

Any methodological consideration of “anachronism” for the practice of art history deserves to be situated in the context of these conundrums and unfolding critiques of existing models of historical time in relation to the historian’s subjectivity. The artwork’s complex relation to time has always been central to the debates, though they took shape outside the discipline of art history. Karl Marx’s contribution was considerable: the artwork’s temporality was integral to his analysis of the commodity, laying the foundation for all future discussion on the understanding that what it means to do history must address what history does to members of society. After the revolutions of 1848–50 were crushed throughout Continental Europe, Marx and Friedrich Engels retreated to England, where they revised their short-term plans for attaining social justice through revolution into a long-range educational program intended to prepare the working class for leadership.⁵ For the next decade, the British Museum library served as Marx’s humanist study. Not since his shattering critique of the political economy in terms of

the social relations involved in the production of commodities had European intellectuals been as politically engaged with the ongoing social crisis as they were during the years that World War II devastated Europe. The sudden loss of civil liberties, persecution, and genocide—the failed dream of the modern nation-state and its escalating nightmares—were the living conditions of the historians who first questioned the scientific historian's techniques of factual representation and linked them to explicitly political agendas.

Wood and Nagel seem to want to position themselves in relation to existing discussions of anachronism by locating a different sense of historical time, one that existed prior to the development of the hegemonic chronological narratives of modern nation-states that Bloch and Febvre, no less than Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Benjamin, dismantled in their critical writings. But the context of the discussion in which Wood and Nagel wish to participate has lost sight of its political engagement with society at large, transforming urgent concerns with social justice into the reductive terms of a debate directed to revising existing disciplinary and interdisciplinary practices. In *Torn Halves: Political Conflict in Literary and Cultural Theory* (1996), Robert Young argues that the dialectical form of theoretical conflicts, far from tearing academic institutions apart, constitutes their necessary structure. These “torn halves of an integral freedom” never add up because the dialectical structure of academic dissension reproduces the economy of capitalism itself.⁶ What is the point of making “anachronism” a self-reflexive tool for interrogating the hegemonic structures of chronologically organized historical narratives today? I would like to broaden the terms of discussion, and it will be useful to dwell on the role that Marx assigned to the work of art, which has an unexcavated history of its own in the same historical continuum as Auerbach's “omnitemporal” scheme, Leonard Barkan's archaeological scheme, and Wood and Nagel's “principle of substitution”/“principle of performativity,” which might just be two modern names for the same dialectical phenomenon seen from different, mutually exclusive points of view.

Historical time conceived as a chain of replicas somewhat resembles the structure of typological exegesis, Wood and Nagel observe, and both resemble the structure of “dialectical anachronism” defined as the strategic juxtaposition of heterogeneous moments in time. Yet the substitution of an “anachronic” structure for a “chronological” one does not eliminate the need to legitimize the reality of the historical account. It is crucial for the narrator to articulate his or her position in relation to the events narrated. Marx posed the question of why we moderns still find aesthetic appeal in the cultural products of past and different societies. For Marx and Engels, Trotsky, and Lenin, to name some of the most famous political analysts to address this question, the work of art is far richer and more “opaque” than political and economic theory. The work of art yields insight into the realities that ideology hides from view.⁷ The specifics of Marx's arguments, grounded in typological assumptions of the nineteenth century, are probably less interesting than the way he framed the question.

In his reading of Marx, Jacques Derrida observed that “if a work of art can become a commodity, and if this process seems fated to occur, it is also because the commodity began [historically] by putting to work, in one way or another, the

principle of art itself.”⁸ There are two fundamental ways in which the concrete work of art, in its distinctly modern sense that the word acquired by the late fifteenth century, prefigures the nineteenth-century commodity. First, because works of art commanded price and prestige beyond the cost of their manufacture, they illustrate Marx's concept of surplus value, source of both the capitalist's profit and the worker's exploitation. Second, because the work of art is too complex to be explained in terms of base and superstructure alone, it provided Marx with a test case for developing a theoretical model sufficiently subtle to explain the political economy. The majority of writing on art in the Marxian critical tradition obscures the relations and oppositions between artwork and commodity, however, and pressures to erase these distinctions entirely (thereby maintaining their conflation) persist in all fields, including art history, art criticism, museology, and visual and material culture studies.

Precedents for Marx's general notion of the work of art exist in philosophy and political theory, where the Thomistic/Aristotelian understanding of the work of art as a unified composition appeared as a paradigm for productive legislation in discussions by seventeenth-century political philosophers. Long-standing associations existed between philosophical “reflection” as the quintessential activity of human judgment and the order that actual works of art manifest.⁹ John Locke's 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is an important philosophical precedent for the abstract idea of the work of art as the product of “reflection and deliberation.” Human knowledge is acquired in successive stages, according to Locke, and when knowledge is finally gained, the order of things within the mind will be displayed simultaneously.¹⁰ That is, the activity of reflection disposes knowledge, arranging it in a manner comparable to visual order. And this analogy is not surprising, given the longevity of the theory that cognition proceeds on the model of vision. René Descartes and many other philosophers combined the language of rhetoric and optics to distinguish the “clarity” or “distinctness” of ideas represented in the mind from “dark” impressions at the “lowest” levels of conscious attention.¹¹ Beyond this, the description of human knowledge as a simultaneous display recalls descriptions of God's omniscient gaze. Both kinds of “time” were defined as a divine proportion, or harmony, for example, in a well-known passage of Leonardo da Vinci's defense of painting, where painting is judged as if it were a creation of nature: “In effect, whatever there is in the universe by essence, presence, or imagination, the painter has it first in his mind and then in his hands, which are of such excellence that in an equal time they generate a proportioned harmony, as things do in a single glance.”¹²

While Jacob Burckhardt drew explicit analogies between actual works of art and the state as a work of art, the same metaphors played out somewhat differently for Marx. Marx used the abstract example of the work of art to put his own schematic account of social relations involved in the production of commodities into question—a motif he probably borrowed from political theory. He also used the figures of the fetish and the camera obscura, two kinds of human artifice at the opposite ends of the spectrum of made things, as concrete metaphors to aid his analysis of the multiple ways in which commodities appear unified but mask an underlying

set of contradictions and conflicts.¹³ Marx's reading of things as concrete metaphors and his theoretical appreciation of the work of art might have derived from Thomas Hobbes's comparison of productive legislation, which "makes" a commonwealth, with God's creation of the world, where the underlying paradigm of the work of art connoted an illusory unity in the way that anamorphic art does—and also like Marx's camera obscura.¹⁴ In a sense, both Burckhardt's cultural history of Italy and Marx's contemporaneous writings on political economy are self-consciously fabricated "works of art" by their authors' own definitions of the term and in keeping with long-standing conventions for discussing beauty in philosophy and political theory.

The pejorative charge of anachronism as the inadmissible confusion of periods or eras presupposes that the accuser knows what the correct time of history is. Even though Bloch and Febvre understood the reductiveness of positivist historians' conception of historical time in this sense, the Annales school notion of the *longue durée* never called into question the ideological effects of chronological time itself, as Hubert Damisch recognized in the passage excerpted at the beginning of this text.¹⁵ Benjamin, on the other hand, developed the Marxist understanding that art is a social practice into the argument that the revolutionary artist develops existing forces of artistic production to create new social relations between the artist and audience. Howard Caygill glosses Benjamin's concept of a dialectical cultural history as a concrete illustration of what it might mean to rub history against its grain in this manner. The decisive element in establishing new social relations through writing or other revolutionary ways of making art is not the restitution of past suffering by the present, which would be for the present to come into complete possession of the past, but rather the impossibility of ever possessing the past.¹⁶ A dialectical cultural history, which would recognize that the past can unsettle and disrupt the present, is possible if it adopts "the destructive element which authenticates both dialectical thought and the experience of the dialectical thinker."¹⁷ The "destructive element" refers to the possibility that the reserve of the past will destroy aspects of the present and open it to the future. Ultimately, historical materialism fails to achieve this because its practitioners prescribe in advance the relation between past and present, selecting what is relevant and why it is relevant and reducing the past to items in an inventory of the present.

Disciplinarity and professionalism do not excuse intellectuals from taking responsibility for the effects of the knowledge they produce beyond their own narrow specializations. The ways in which the subfields of art history and its neighboring humanistic fields of study are framed have wide-ranging concrete effects in and well beyond Western Europe that are crucially implicated in contemporary thought and action. Yet most contemporary discussion among art historians of "anachronism" as a creative interpretative paradigm has not acknowledged the culturally and historically specific nature of chronology as a Western, European construct.¹⁸

The most fundamental problem at hand for conceptualizing disciplinary knowledge as an ethical practice is the notion of identity itself. Emmanuel Lévinas has argued for a notion of truth that is at considerable odds with the dominant

rationalist one: his framework relies on the lived experience of the other. Against a notion of the truth as the instrument of a mastery being exercised by the knower over areas of the unknown as he or she brings them within the fold of the same, Levinas proposes that there is a form of truth that is totally alien to me, that I do not discover within myself, but that calls on me from beyond me, and it requires me to leave the realms of the known and of the same in order to settle in a land that is under its rule. And this other is not a threat to be reduced, nor an object given to a knowing subject, but that which constitutes me as an ethical being. In this encounter I discover my responsibility for the existence of this other, a responsibility at the root of all my decisions: this is the ground of my response-ability—that is, my capacity to communicate with others and with myself in noncoercive ways.¹⁹

Connections between foundational critiques of disciplinarity as such and the concrete project of critiquing a given disciplinary practice are often obscure. It may be one thing to critically assess practices that conform to existing disciplinary expectations, but it is often quite another to question the configuration itself. Nonetheless, unless the subject position of the critic in the institution is brought into the equation, the past will always haunt the present, and the most significant epistemological and ethical issues remain unarticulated and unaddressed. The specter is invisible in the mirror, as Derrida put it, and this condition can either haunt us in the manner of the ghost of Hamlet's father reminding us that "time is out of joint" or we can remember our past, learn from it in the present, and use the lessons to devise a better future.

Regarding the standing of anachronism in current debates over the status and nature of historical time, Sanjay Seth writes that "constituting an object as an object of historical investigation" involves dividing it from our present, marking it off as different, definitively separated from the present, yet the practices and protocols by which we do so are always those of the present (what else could they be?). The current methods, which have erased these events and transformed them into codes or problematic issues of research, nonetheless bear evidence of former structurings and forgotten histories. Thus founded on the rupture between a past that is its object and a present that is the place of its practice, "history endlessly finds the present in its object and the past in its practice."²⁰ Yet "history" cannot do precisely this in the case of the non-Western world. Here, history continues "to find the present in its object," but it does not find "the past in its practice," for the past of non-Western countries is not history's past. It follows that history is not a fact of the world that is more or less accurately represented, but rather that it is only one way for a society to constitute the past and establish a relation with it. To live in history, and to wish to write it, is not a universal anthropological postulate, but it is a certain way to conceive of and be in the world, and it is a certain practice of subjectivity. We have to conceive writing history as a translational exercise; Kalahari bushmen, Seth continues, do not write anthropologies of the white man. If we take this as a regulative ideal of how to give reasons when confronting other modes of reasoning besides the cause-and-effect model of historical narration, it may serve to make history writing an ethical rather than an imperial practice.

Could the moral urgency of the indignation of those who have suffered at the hands of victors and colonizers be the starting point of constructive involvements with an ethical politics? Unless our museologies and art histories are linked explicitly to the oldest and most fundamental questions of how our societies should be run, of how free societies in particular should be structured, they will remain, wittingly or not, facets of the corporatized aestheticism of identity politics and of the infotainment and edutainment industries that constitute cultural practice in the current epoch of neofeudalism euphemistically called globalization.²¹

In the current political climate in the United States and elsewhere, the extent of our responsibilities as academics and intellectuals to link museology, history, theory, and criticism to contemporary social conditions is an urgent and painfully obvious question. Museology and art history have long remained under the sway of scientism. The ethics of scholarship, however, demands radical acts of self-reflection. In 1978, conveying the lessons of French deconstructionists (who succeeded the Annalists), Hayden White criticized the assumptions of empirical historians who assumed that they eschewed ideology if they remained true to the facts, who believed that history could produce a knowledge as certain as anything offered by the physical sciences and as objective as a mathematical exercise. White's famous essay entitled "The Fictions of Factual Representation" problematized the illusion that history could be written without employing any fictional techniques at all, an illusion that was itself a reflex of the nineteenth-century ideology that a value-neutral description of the facts prior to interpretation or analysis was possible. As White observed, "What is at issue here is not, What are the facts? But rather, How are the facts to be described in order to sanction one mode of explaining them rather than another?"²²

What has been at stake in the writing of art history is likewise the control of "modes of explaining"—that is, the legitimization of the "reality" of history has often been cast in terms of legitimizing a single interpretative truth. The truth (in the guise of the facts of history) would make us free. But, as White argued, the difference between history and a philosophy of history is one of degree, not of kind, in the explicitness of its philosophical content: every history contains a full-blown if only implicit philosophy of history. History buries its conceptual apparatus in the interior of its narratives, whereas philosophy brings that apparatus to the surface of the text. Factual (re)presentation is grounded in an implicit philosophy that claims that a chain of causes and effects constitutes mere temporal succession and not narration. Chronology is a powerful and seductive rhetorical apparatus, a fictive construct that masks ideology under the guise of "natural time."

There is, of course, nothing "natural" about constructing time as chronology or privileging temporal succession above other forms of narration. White's point about the distinctions between history and a philosophy of history being at base a matter of implicit versus explicit philosophical argumentation resonates with the arguments of Michel de Certeau in an essay entitled "Psychoanalysis and Its History," where he observes that history writing and psychoanalysis contrast with each other as two modes of structuring or distributing the

space of memory.²³ They stage two strategies of time, two methods of formatting the relation between past and present. While history juxtaposes past and present, psychoanalysis recognizes the past *in* the present. For conventional history writing, this relation is one of succession (one thing after another), cause and effect (one thing following from another), and separation (the past as distinct from the present). Psychoanalysis, though, treats relations between past and present as one of imbrication (one thing in the place of the other) and repetition (one thing reproduces the other but in another form). Both, de Certeau argued, developed to address analogous problems—to understand the differences, or guarantee the continuities, between the organization of the actual and the formations of the past; to relate the representations of the past or present to the conditions that determined their production.

Wood and Nagel might have adduced additional cultural evidence to support the existence of a "principle of substitution," such as geometric habits of telling time and of measuring space as a series of proportional units, along the lines of Michael Baxandall discussing habits of gauging or estimating volume as an exercise in practical geometry. Baxandall suggested that art historians interested in historical modes of artistic production and reception deserve to consider geometric habits of analysis, even though they are not, strictly speaking, artistic procedures, as pertaining to the "period eye."²⁴ Similarly, Wood and Nagel might also have inquired more deeply after the philosophical underpinnings of the two types of artistic authority that they argue operate in tension as mutually exclusive theories of origin. In their historical investigation of how the "cause" of the work of art was understood by audiences contemporary with its physical manufacture, it appears to me that they rely on standard forms of historical documentation and iconographic analysis to provide the historical evidence for their argument, despite their simultaneous critique of Erwin Panofsky's iconological method. By contrast, when Georges Didi-Huberman posited that art history was an "anachronistic" discipline, he meant that in practice, art historians impose a modern notion of art on evidence that came before this notion of art developed. Read as an active interrogation of the limiting conditions of art historical writing and research in general, Didi-Huberman's study of Fra Angelico's S. Marco frescoes explored the philosophical context in which works of art might once have functioned as both devotional practice and theological meditation. Viewing art in this expanded field of cultural production, the colored blotches that imitate the appearance of feigned marble panels are recognized by the historian to be "enigmatic" and not merely decorative features of the fresco cycle. Didi-Huberman refers the fictive marble panels "back to the mystery from which it [the enigma] drew its most profound and peculiar necessity," namely, Christian theology of the Incarnation and the figured language in which this theology found expression.²⁵

Thus, various types of historical evidence that the artist may not have known directly or to which neither he nor his viewers necessarily had access can be brought to bear on our present-day comprehension of historical works of art. In thus characterizing the pictorial poetics of blotches and traces, Didi-Huberman conceived the pictorial sign as a material

imprint, the symptom of a culturally and historically specific kind of figurability—in this case, one that “presupposes” both resemblance and distance, dissemblance and a manner of touch. He refers the artistic image to the figuration of a mystic understanding of the Christian doctrine of Incarnation as the sublime union of opposites, a simultaneous contradiction. Or, if you will, to a historical variety of a sensate dialectical image, a concrete metaphor with which the informed viewer interacts to experience individually the ineffable truth of divine presence as collectively envisioned by a society. I have already mentioned why Didi-Huberman’s conception of anachronism does not go far enough, because it fails to put into question the culturally constructed concept of time as chronology.

Wood and Nagel appear to be interested in a similar set of cultural conceptions and methodological issues regarding the ability of cultural historians to recuperate the metafigurability of artistic production within a specific historical setting. However, they have not pushed the envelope of conventional art historical practices as far as Didi-Huberman did. They reflect critically on one of the categories of Panofskian art history, namely, the unacknowledged tropic structure of “chronology” as an ordering device. Yet Wood and Nagel seem untroubled by other chronological assumptions that inform their own interpretation, such as the terminology of periodization (“Middle Ages,” “Renaissance”) that they employ without comment. Writing history in terms of continuities and ruptures does not mandate reliance on nineteenth-century notions of distinct historical periods identifiable by certain characteristic traits. Nor do they call for the consideration of other forms of evidence than those that would be adduced in an empirically conceived model of inferential argumentation. Richard Krautheimer’s discussion of medieval floor plans or historical attitudes toward relics and forgeries, for example, are asserted within the framework of their own argument as analogous cases, similar on the basis of resemblances perceptible to us from our own standpoint in time. The historical and cultural (dis)continuum between us and “them” as different categories of viewers is collapsed into a single point of observation. To argue in this manner is still to think in terms of an art historical model of “style” as something that privileges us to understand material evidence from other times and places directly, using our trained X-ray vision.

I don’t mean to discount Wood and Nagel’s efforts to interrogate scholarly conceptions of artifacts as anchored in historical time by the legibility of their style, but the manner in which works of art exist “through” time deserves even more scrutiny, even more vigorous shaking of our discipline’s epistemological foundations. To introduce one key category of available evidence that seems beyond their purview, Aristotle described recollection as an inferential series of mental connections between discrete experiences stored in the material memory. Aristotelian accounts of recollection as an inferential process taking place in the physical medium of the brain in certain respects resemble both contemporary accounts of the topology of memory that Wood and Nagel mention and historical attitudes toward certain works of art as “ancient” regardless of their actual date of manufacture. Might it have been useful to bring the Aristotelian underpinnings of cer-

tain long-standing mental categories to bear on their observations? If time was perceived as a proportional regression of moments into an authoritative past, and if the workings of the individual mind were once conceived on this Aristotelian model of recollection, then Wood and Nagel’s understanding of two conflicting “principles” might be described differently, as two halves of a single dialectic operating at a deeper level of historical relatedness than the discipline of art history generally acknowledges as part of its domain. That’s just one possible avenue of investigation disclosed by their valuable critique. The value ascribed to the artistic design over its material form, the manner in which this historical set of categories operates in various settings, the way in which such historical categories impose on our present-day understanding of which questions are worth investigating, and what kinds of evidence are related, simply because we do not recognize the categories themselves as forms of cultural production—all these open up existing disciplinary and subdisciplinary formations to healthy and creative acts of self-reflection. My remarks are intended to suggest why and how the process of meaning production is inherently, and without exception, always politically charged. Writing with a social conscience in 2005, one cannot fail to ask who is served and who is excluded today by studying the capacity of early moderns to manipulate two theories of origin in the same conceptual field. How do we deal with historical theories of “origin”? How do we define our own “conceptual field”?

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Notes

1. Hubert Damisch, “The Theme of Choosing,” in *The Judgment of Paris*, trans. John Goodman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 144–45.
2. On the *Annales* historians’ contributions, which emerged in connection with writings of the Surrealists, see the short overview in Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps: Histoire de l’art et anachronisme des images* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2000), esp. 28–49, here quoting Febvre at 30.
3. Marc Bloch, *Apologie pour l’histoire, ou Métier d’historien* (1941–42), ed. E. Bloch (Paris: Armand Colin, 1993), 96–97, quoted in Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps*, 31: “Mais, dans le film qu’il [l’historien] considère, seule la dernière pellicule est intacte. Pour reconstituer les traits brisés des autres, force a été de dérouler, d’abord, la bobine en sens inverse des prises de vues.”
4. See David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
5. The best text for studying Marx’s intellectual development and methodology during these years is the set of notebooks now known as the *Grundrisse*, first published in 1953: Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), with an excellent introduction by Nicolaus.
6. Theodor Adorno to Walter Benjamin, March 18, 1936, quoted in Robert Young, *Torn Halves: Political Conflict in Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 21.
7. Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), provides an excellent summary of Marx’s dis-

- cussion of the work of art. See also Tony Bennett, *Formalism and Marxism* (London: Methuen, 1979).
8. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), 162.
 9. See further discussion in Claire Farago, "Vision Itself Has Its History": 'Race,' Nation, and Renaissance Art History," in *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450 to 1650* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 67–88, esp. n. 7.
 10. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, defined the two mainsprings of cognitive activity as "sensation" and "reflection," which combine and abstract the contents of the mind to produce its "compositions," or ordered assemblages of knowledge. "Reflection" is the "fountain, from which experience furnisheth the Understanding with Ideas, [which] is the Perception of the Operations of our Minds within us"; Locke, *Essay*, II, I, sec. 4; and Abbé de Condillac, *The Logic*, I, ii, both quoted in Robert Norton, *Herder's Aesthetics and the European Enlightenment* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 25.
 11. René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, 1637, provided the terms of this debate, and Immanuel Kant laid the foundation for the modern assumption that art is the model of perception with the argument that fine art ("schöne Kunst") elicits pleasure considered as a "mode of cognition": "aesthetic art, as art which is beautiful, is one having for its standard the reflective judgement"; and Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 306.
 12. Leonardo da Vinci, *Codex Urbanus*, no. 14, quoted in Claire Farago, *Leonardo da Vinci's "Paragone": A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbanus* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 196–97: "in effetto, ciò che ne l'universo per essentia, presentia, o immaginazione, esso l'ha prima nella mente e poi nelle mani. E quele sono de tanta eccellentia che in pari tempo generano una proportionate armonia in un solo sguardo qual fano le cose."
 13. See W. J. T. Mitchell, "The Rhetoric of Iconoclasm: Marxism, Ideology, and Fetishism," in *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 160–208.
 14. Howard Caygill, *Art of Judgement* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 19–22, citing Hobbes's interest in optics. Caygill studies a textual tradition from Giovanni Pico della Mirandola to Kant in which discussions of the difficulties of judging beauty grounded in Scholastic Aristotelianism point to the difficulties of judgment in general.
 15. Damisch, *Judgment of Paris*, 144–45.
 16. Howard Caygill, "Walter Benjamin's Concept of Cultural History," in *The Cambridge Companion to Walter Benjamin*, ed. David S. Ferris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 73–96. See also idem, *Walter Benjamin: The Colour of Experience* (London: Routledge, 1998), esp. chap. 1.
 17. Walter Benjamin, "Fuchs," in *Selected Writings*, ed. Michael Jennings et al., 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996–2003), vol. 3, 268, quoted in Caygill, "Benjamin's Concept of Cultural History," 93.
 18. Georges Didi-Huberman, who revived the discussion begun by his predecessors and brought it to the attention of art historians, seems not to have heeded the precaution offered by Damisch; see Didi-Huberman, *L'image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg* (Paris: Minuit, 2002), and the review by Spyros Parapetros, "The Eternal Seesaw: Oscillations in Warburg's Revival," *Oxford Art Journal* 26, no. 2 (2003): 169–76. Most contemporary historians, including Didi-Huberman, have carefully situated Warburg's interests in the context of an experimental philosophical and artistic milieu. His preoccupations with visual symbols, such as the serpentine form, have been seen to belong to the context of experimental art, film, and dance. In this process of recontextualization, historians have also ignored obvious parallels between Warburg's fascination with Indians and the contemporaneous popularity of the "Wild West" in Germany. There is another arena in which contemporary scholars act without self-reflexion within existing political and intellectual frameworks of institutional authority. Contemporary scholarship on Warburg has adopted a stance insensitive to—and astonishingly lacking in political understanding of—these historical circumstances and the manner in which they are reproduced in current cultural relations. See Claire Farago, "Letting Objects Rot," in *Artwork through the Market*, ed. Jan Bakos (Bratislava, Slovakia: Komenius University Press, 2005). I discuss these issues more fully in a forthcoming study, co-authored with Donna Pierce, *Transforming Images: New Mexican Santos in between Worlds* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, in press).
 19. Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: M. Nijhoff; Hingham, Mass.: Kluwer Boston, 1981). The critique is extended by Judith Butler, *Precarious Balance: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso Press, 2004), 128–51.
 20. Sanjay Seth, "Reason or Reasoning? Clio or Siva?" in *Postcolonial Traces*, ed. Brent Hayes Edwards, special issue of *Social Text* 78 (spring 2004): 84–101.
 21. The rest of this paper is based on a conference talk jointly written with Donald Preziosi and delivered in a session, chaired by Saloni Mathur and Ruth Iskin, entitled "Beyond Museology," College Art Association Conference, Philadelphia, February 25, 2002. I am grateful to Preziosi for allowing me to adapt the paper for the present purposes and for generously sharing his ideas throughout the writing process.
 22. Hayden White, "The Fictions of Factual Representation," in *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 121–30, at 134.
 23. Michel de Certeau, "Psychoanalysis and Its History," in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi, foreword Wlad Godzich, *Theory and History of Literature*, vol. 17 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 3–16. De Certeau's concept of the mnemonic trace is yet another historical framework on the model of dialectical anachronism. Godzich, in his foreword, xx–xxi, writes that de Certeau's conception of discourse recognizes that discursive activity is a form of social activity, an activity in which we attempt to apply the rules of the discourses that we assume. These may not be heroic roles, but they place us much more squarely in front of our responsibility as historical actors.
 24. Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 86–93, argued that merchants learned skills in secondary school that were closely related to painting, and that the latter required the same geometric skills of its literate public.
 25. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 3.

The Authors Reply:

Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood

The image produces the effect of a collapse of time, an effect that we attempted to describe and account for in various ways. Philology, the science of difference, emerged in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a tool for chronological sorting. Philology is therefore compelled to dismiss the constitutional anachronism of the image as mere error. In one classic account of the Renaissance, reasserted by Charles Dempsey, art proceeds in step with the recovery of letters

initiated by Petrarch. Our account stresses instead the misalignment between philology and art. The new category "artwork," we have argued, offered a theoretical sanctuary for the lies and confusion generated by figuration by reconceiving forgery and anachronism as intertextual citation.

The aim of our paper, in any case, was not to readjust period labels but rather to introduce an analytical model that describes the emergence of the modern institution of the

artwork as a reframing and redirecting of figural anachronism. This model is capable of tracking the artwork as it distances itself from competing myths of origins and reinvents itself as the projection of a hypothetical world within which metaphors of time can be staged and compared. As we proposed above, the self-divided, ironic nature of the artwork, which was latent in Erwin Panofsky's thought, was later lost in the academic obsession with periodization.

For Aby Warburg, a painting or a costumed ritual was a dense archive of cultural energies, a "dynamogram" that concretized and transmitted traumatic, primordial experiences.¹ Archaic stimuli were directly imprinted in matter and gesture, Warburg believed, giving figuration the power to disrupt a historical present tense. Dempsey, in his book on Botticelli's *Primavera* and in his response here, says that Warburg shows us that quattrocento vernacular festivals were engaging in a vital rapprochement with antiquity, "a remaking of living culture by assimilating into it the more perfect forms of Greek and Roman civilizations. . . ." We believe Warburg was saying something far stranger. Warburg's cultural symbol was a token (*symbolon*) that "throws together" past and present. For Warburg, Botticelli was doing more than "assimilating" ancient art; his paintings themselves, mystically, fled their own historical present and became works of ancient art. The chain of strong symbols is recursive, as Michael Podro pointed out, in the sense that the symbol is both an image of a situation and a gesture within that situation.² The work of art that was built around an antique pathos formula itself became a pathos formula in its own right.

Both Dempsey and Michael Cole maintain that Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera* was a unique product of Florentine Laurentian culture and could only with difficulty be connected to a substitutional theory of image production. We believe that Botticelli's citations of antique models function in Warburg's sense as reactivations of archaic gestures. *The Calumny of Apelles* was a reinstatement of a lost original achieved through a process of reverse engineering from textual sources. *The Birth of Venus* was a repetition of a famous painting by Apelles, doubled and reinforced by an embedded citation of the Knidian Aphrodite by Praxiteles (through the Medici Venus, as it were). In *Primavera* Botticelli cited the ancient group of the Three Graces and then added another layer of commentary on substitution by taking seasonal recursion as its subject matter. This is not to begin to speak of its relation to altarpiece and tapestry traditions. And then these three modern paintings themselves reentered the chain of substitutions.³ Like many other works of the time, these are authorial interventions whose remarkable qualities are, paradoxically, in part the result of the effort to find a way back to a system of authorless production.

Cole rightly points out that Jan van Eyck's signed works deliberately broke with an authorless, substitutional theory of origins. He also points out that van Eyck's signatures and dates were blindly copied by later painters still working within a traditional paradigm. This suggests to Cole that our argument may amount to no more than the simple distinction between, on the one hand, progressive author-artists and, on the other, mediocre copyists still inhabiting a "long Middle Ages." We would respond that artistic authorship and replication were locked into a closer, more dialectical relation.

Van Eyck's paintings thematized authorship, but within the framework of a reengagement with the authorless Byzantine icon. No mode of figuration more clearly embodied visual art's challenge to time than the portrait, which, as Leon Battista Alberti famously recognized, allowed the person to live on after death. Portraiture in the fifteenth century, in fact, arose in response to the importation of Byzantine portrait icons, as the portraits of van Eyck, Giovanni Bellini, Albrecht Dürer, and Leonardo plainly announce. All of these artists were enthralled by the capacity of the icons—to which they attributed a hoary antiquity—to report the likenesses of people over vast stretches of time and thus to allow direct face-to-face encounters with past people. They drew associations between the icons' time-collapsing capacity and their apparent authorlessness, what we would call the suppression of context-sensitive features in the interest of referential functionality. The efforts of Renaissance artists to endow their own works with such time-resistant capacities became, however, the laboratory of a new conception of authorship.

The institution of the artwork thus crystallized around a series of stagings and restagings of the clash between the two theories of origins we have attempted to outline. Art is a sequence of nested reflections on the origins of art. The artwork framed itself, then reframed that framing operation, and then again framed that reframing, and so on, and in this way marked out a provisional place for itself in society as an autopoietic system whose sole function was to generate fictions, or hypotheses about reality. The substitutional and authorial theories of origins, therefore, do not map respectively onto Hans Belting's categories of *Bild* and *Kunst*, as both Cole and Dempsey suggest. For Belting, *Kunst* adopts some of the rhetorical and semantic mechanisms of *Bild* but eventually, after transportation to a secular and bourgeois sphere, is alienated from *Bild*. In our model, by contrast, *Bild* is a myth invented retrospectively by *Kunst*. Moreover, our model adds a dimension that is not present in either Belting or Warburg: the idea of art as a self-staging and self-referential project.

The concepts of substitution and performativity were clearly articulated, as Cole points out, in the late-sixteenth-century controversy over the legitimacy of the Christian image. The invented, fictive image, for Gregorio Comanini or Gabriele Paleotti, was the image that did not belong to a substitutional chain. The theologians were at last finding words to match the self-theorization of art that had unfolded over the first decades of the sixteenth century. But to frame the problem of artistic authorship in theological terms, in effect recapitulating the medieval debates about the legitimacy of the Christian image, was to miss the point of modern, fictional art. The artwork by 1560, certainly by 1600, was already several cycles beyond the idolatry problem. The theologians misunderstood the dialectic between substitutional and authorial theories of authorship—already articulated during the Eastern iconoclastic controversy of the eighth to ninth centuries—as a still-vital competition. The religious image of 1600 appeared to repeat the dilemma of the primordial Christian cult image, but it was repetition with a difference. Through the recursive process of self-staging set in motion in the fifteenth century, the artwork had long since acquired an autonomy that alienated it both from its divine

prototypes and from its author. The new modes of display, the art market, the collecting of drawings and prints, the concern with establishing authorship, and the published treatise on art constituted sociological registrations of the radical claims made by the autopoietic closure of the work of art. The torrent of theological writing about art in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries formed still another kind of response, memorable mostly for its inadequacy to its object.

Against this broader recapitulation of the argument, we can now return to Vittore Carpaccio's painting. The painting is a figuration that is already deep into the framing process. Its art quality is the effect of its intensive citational character, which generates a diagram of available theories of the origins of art. Dempsey endorses the view that Carpaccio has represented a pair of adjoining rooms that would have been familiar to contemporaries. In effect, he brings the picture back into temporal focus, seeing it as a painting that clearly locates itself in the year of its own genesis, say, 1503. We stress instead the painting's internal temporal dislocations and argue that the rooms cannot so easily be mapped back onto an interior of 1503. In Carpaccio's painting we see a contemporary statue, copied from one standing on a church altar in Venice, embedded in a S. Marco-style apse. That mosaic-clad apse itself, fronted by an altar and flanked by portals, has been likened (rightly) to the typically Byzantine church arrangement of apse and pastophoria,⁴ and yet here it is strangely inserted into a private space—a collapsing of private and public spheres that would have struck a temporally dissonant note with any contemporary viewer. Carpaccio may have thought that the conjunction spoke of earlier times. Recent research has, in fact, increasingly revealed the presence of invented and anachronistic elements in otherwise very deliberate depictions of contemporary interiors in painting of the period. The incongruous elements, precisely because they appear in an otherwise recognizable setting, would have been especially provocative invitations to contemporary viewers, unsettling the temporal focus on which Dempsey insists. Through their capacity to restage things in a fictional context, paintings had the capacity to mobilize even the contemporary and quotidian elements into a more complex temporal and symbolic economy—an operation already at work in contemporary devotional exercises and mnemonic practices.⁵

Both rooms are stocked with recognizable contemporary objects, or old things of the sort that might be seen in contemporary collections—a paratactic arrangement, with temporal references shooting off in all directions. It was one of the functions of the scholar's study to operate as a machine for imaginative time travel, as many period voices from the scholar's study attest. The anachronistic theater of the study was, in other words, itself one of the preformations of the artwork. Carpaccio's painting effects the translation by reframing the space pictorially and filling it with citations of time-bending artifacts and with the time-resistant costumes and appurtenances of a prelate.

Of course, Carpaccio represented finely crafted items of his own day, including images, like the bronze Venus by Antico or the bronze Christ. In the painting these modern figures, like the miniature copy of one of the S. Marco horses, function as effective stand-ins or equivalents for antiquities.

The strongly surrogate function was explicitly acknowledged in period documents. In a letter to Isabella d'Este, Antico himself referred to a batch of bronzes he had made after the antique as *antichità*, and in her response Isabella uses the same word.⁶ We propose that it is the referential authority of the modern works that commends them for inclusion in Augustine's study. Dempsey's objection that "this *studiolo* has not a single object in it that can be securely identified as ancient" disregards that thesis. Our argument was directed precisely against the prevailing assumption that when a painter represented contemporary features it was in order to insist on the contemporaneity of those features. The bell, the armillary sphere, the hourglass, the finely crafted chairs, the liturgical implements, the vestments, and so on, certainly were based on close examination of the best examples of contemporary manufacture. At the same time, they are presented as samples of fine furnishing of the sort that might have existed at any time and that would be appropriate for the study's occupant. This kind of furnishing is the least time specific. The point of our argument was to pull the works of "art" in the room into the temporal model that applies naturally to the furnishings.

A legendary tradition initiated by Eusebius and perpetuated throughout the Middle Ages described an ancient bronze statue of Christ at Paneas whose drapery, coming into contact with herbs growing beneath it, rendered those herbs miracle-working. The highly unusual drapery of the bronze statue in Milan is, we believe, fashioned in direct reference to this legend, tying the statue to this originary image. Dempsey attempts to normalize the drapery through comparison with other statuary. But his comparison misses what is particular to the Milan statue: the drapery does not simply fall to the side of the figure and onto the plinth, it falls to the side of the plinth itself and well below the level of the figure's feet, pooling up on the ground beside the statue. It is a singular motif, not found in any other work of the period. It insists on the idea that the drapery is crossing an ontological boundary, making contact with the world beyond the work of art. The motif is thus not only an evidentiary link to the Paneas statue but also a form of boundary testing, a symptomatic response to the problems raised by freestanding statuary as a category of object. The foliage on the plinth, which we take in this context to refer to the herbs of the legend, is not "familiar" and "highly conventional" (Dempsey) for the simple reason that plinths themselves were a new development in the period, part of the new set of problems that arose with the revival of freestanding statuary. Arguably, any motif underneath a statue would have been significant at this early date, and it is worth noting that the closest comparanda that survive from this period—for example, the statuettes by Antico, among others—stand on smooth, unadorned bases.⁷

As we pointed out, Carpaccio does not record these details of the statue in his notation of the type. No one at the time needed a philological reference on that level of specificity in order to grasp the substitutional import of the statue. It is a freestanding bronze figure in a pallium; it reverberated, overwhelmingly, with antique associations. The natural response would have been to see it as a redaction of an antique prototype, with or without help from Eusebius. And that is exactly what people appear to have done, for why else would

this statue have impressed itself so suddenly and forcefully on the entire world of Veneto art of about 1500—on Carpaccio, on Alvise Vivarini, on Cima da Conegliano, on Antonio Lombardo, on the Bregnos, and on Andrea Riccio? The statue carried authority not because of its now forgotten author of the 1490s but because it held out the promise of proximity to a portrait from the time of Christ, and thus to Christ himself. In its abstract handling of body and face the statue actually suppresses the signs of authorship, ensuring a smooth referential operation. The drapery detail was an added footnote to engage and animate the cognoscenti—and perhaps also a symptom of worry that the substitution model needed philological bolstering.⁸

The analysis of the Christ statue was part of our effort to outline a structure of temporal instability at work in the painting as a whole, a structure that, we argued, was in part modeled on exegetical procedures going back to Augustine himself. Our reading thus offers a conceptual framework for the many erudite exegeses of the picture that have been presented. It arose from an effort to go beyond an analysis of the picture's meaning or program and instead to understand the picture itself as a metacommentary on the temporal operations of images, artifacts, books, music—the whole array of human arts whose limits are exposed in the story of Augustine's vision. Hence, our emphasis on the picture's elaborate citational structure, the recursive pattern that runs through the painting and whose logic inexorably absorbs the painting itself.

We concur with virtually everything Claire Farago says about disciplinary responsibility and self-awareness and about the ideological force of the discourse of chronological reason, obviously one of the foundational self-legitimizing discourses of the West. We do not actually feel addressed by her critique. She speaks of “the context of the discussion in which Wood and Nagel wish to participate” as disengaged from politics and society at large. Which “context of discussion” is that? Our text explicitly signaled its connection to Benjamin's reception of Surrealism, and in general to a body of highly creative prewar thinking about the temporality of the figure. Surrealism is negatively inscribed within the neo-enlightened, liberal (in the European sense) scholarship of the postwar period. The wearisome debates about the periodization of the Renaissance that dominated American scholarship from the 1940s to the 1970s and, in general, the orthodoxies and pieties of postwar scholarship emerged out of the context of world war and emigration. One might hesitate before describing the scholarship of the émigrés, even the Renaissance scholars among them, as politically “disengaged.”

To take up Farago's excellent challenge: Saint Augustine's study is indeed our study. The modern scholar who recognizes him- or herself in the Carpaccio painting must be prepared to see the world through its temporal kaleidoscope. The Renaissance *studiolo* proves to be an inhospitable setting for the lucid differentiations of nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship. The continuity between Carpaccio's painting and the model we have proposed is already implicit in the art system of our own time. The art system today theorizes itself as postautonomous, in the sense that art is

located no longer in a discrete object but rather in a network of display, commentary, mediation, and theorization. This is the place where our paper is written *from*, and from such a vantage point it starts to look as if historical art was always already dispersed in networks. It seems obvious today that the work of art was a fragile historical construction; that the campaign to secure a concept of “pure visibility” that might underlie the institution of the artwork was never really won; and that the forces and conflicts that shaped the idea of the artwork are still legible in the artworks. A chronologically rationalist approach, as Farago suggests, will not help very much in understanding the historical processes of cancellation, condensation, and misremembering that created the institution of the artwork. Our effort to excavate the anachronic underhistory of the work of art is therefore by its nature a challenge to enlightened historical models.

Notes

1. For the citation, see Ernst Gombrich, *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography* (London: Phaidon, 1970; reprint, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 248; see also Georges Didi-Huberman, *L'Image survivante: Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg* (Paris: Minuit, 2002), 176.
2. Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 176–77.
3. On recursion and reentry as basic structures of aesthetic communications, see Niklas Luhmann, *Art as a Social System* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2000), 53, 245–46, 277, 301–2.
4. Patricia Fortini Brown, “Carpaccio's St. Augustine in His Study: A Portrait within a Portrait,” in *Augustine in Iconography: History and Legend*, ed. Joseph C. Schnaubelt and Frederick van Fleteren (New York: Lang, 1999), 507–547, at 511.
5. These problems are perceptively treated by Luke Syson in his essay “Representing the Domestic Interior,” due to appear in the catalogue of the exhibition *The Renaissance at Home*, which will open in 2006 at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. We thank Mr. Syson for sharing his work and ideas with us.
6. Ann Hersey Allison, “The Bronzes of Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi, called Antico,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 89–90 (1993–94): 92, docs. 74–75. Also discussed by Dora Thornton and Luke Syson, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), 130.
7. The motif was familiar from Roman ornament. It can be found, with palmette variations on the lotus motif, on the frieze of the Forum of Nerva and, closer to the Veneto, at the palace of Diocletian at Split. A version of it appears on capitals in the Doge's Palace in Venice. In our period it was often used as border ornament, as Dempsey suggests—in contemporary bronze work as well as on frames and moldings. The closest parallel to its use under the statue in Milan is in a Venetian bronze relief of a resurrected Christ that may well be modeled on the Milan statue, where it decorates the stylobate directly under the feet. See John Pope-Hennessy, *Renaissance Bronzes from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Reliefs, Plaquettes, Statuettes, and Mortars* (London: Phaidon, 1965), cat. no. 335, and see also cat. nos. 492, 566. There is no question here of correlating the ornament with actual herbs, a procedure discredited in an analysis of this very motif by Alois Riegl, *Questions of Style*, trans. Evelyn Cain (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 220–28, chap. 3.10.b.
8. The case of this statue is almost exactly analogous to the contemporary phenomenon of profile medal portraits of Christ. These, too, were a fifteenth-century invention, and yet they enjoyed authority as artifacts imprinted with an ancient likeness, according to some originating in a portrait of Christ engraved on an emerald given by Sultan Bajazet II to Pope Innocent VIII in 1492. Again, the medium of bronze reinforced the conceptual possibility of a reliable chain of replications extending back to antiquity. And once again contemporary artists pressed the image into service, as if it had special authority. Raphael used the medal portrait as a model for his image of Christ in the tapestry cartoon of the *Miraculous Draught of Fishes*, as has often been noted. See Philine Helas, “Lo 'smeraldo' smarrito, ossia il 'vero profilo' di Cristo,” in *Il volto di Cristo*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Gerhard Wolf (Milan: Electa, 2000), 215–26.