

2011

Between Morality and Myth: A Parodic Visual Manifesto

Patricia J. Quilichini

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Quilichini, Patricia J., "Between Morality and Myth: A Parodic Visual Manifesto" (2011).
Electronic Theses and Dissertations. 155.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd/155>

This thesis (open access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies, Jack N. Averitt College of at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu.

BETWEEN MORALITY AN MYTH: A PARODIC VISUAL MANIFESTO

by

PATRICIA J. QUILICHINI

(Under the Direction of Bruce Little)

ABSTRACT

Acting on the belief that art communicates, that an image speaks all languages, these works were created as a visual manifesto responding satirically to the absurd way in which myths are elevated to the status of moral values. The photographic works created for this thesis challenge long held beliefs and emotions that associate sex with shame and guilt, and that grow out of the moral traditions we have inherited. Judeo-Christian traditions and religious beliefs have created widely unchallenged social/moral constructs, which regard sexuality and sexual awareness as sinful and woman as subservient to the moral authority constructed by men.

I am reacting to the moral concepts that originate from myths. With a post-modernist approach, I visually explored ways to present metaphoric characters that communicate my ideas by dressing a male penis as a puppet and creating a new mythical narrative to substitute for those that we inherited and continue to believe. The works created for this thesis challenge that tradition.

This supporting paper is a product of my research for my Master in Fine Arts entitled *Between Morality and Myth: A Parodic Visual Manifesto*, a photographic body of work consists of two photographic suites: first the portrait suite entitled *Mr. Peter*; secondly the narrative suite entitled *Peter's Lament*, created at Georgia Southern University in the School of Visual Arts in the year two thousand and eleven.

INDEX WORDS: visual manifesto, myths, moral values, Judeo-Christian Traditions, social/moral construct, parody, sexual monogamy, humor and satire, Western Culture, Max Ernst, Man Ray, Toyen, human behavior, sexual repression, visual symbols, patriarchal religious ideologies, language, control and order, government, penis.

BETWEEN MORALITY AND MYTH: A PARODIC VISUAL MANIFESTO

by

PATRICIA J. QUILICHINI

Master of Fine Art, Georgia Southern University, 2011

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

PHOTOGRAPHY

STATESBORO, GEORGIA

2011

© 2011

PATRICIA J. QUILICHINI

All Rights Reserved

BETWEEN MORALITY AND MYTH: A PARODIC VISUAL MANIFESTO

by

PATRICIA J. QUILICHINI

Major Professor: DR. Bruce Little
Committee: Dr. Julie McGuire
Professor Trish Carter
Professor Desmal Pursell

Electronic Version Approved:
May, 2011.

PREFACE

The inspiration for this academic work came from many different sources of information that I collected throughout experiences with inquietudes about morality and myths, from anthropological ideas of human behavior to philosophies and socio-cultural formations from the western part of the world. I wanted to materialize these ideas into art. I wanted to manifest through art concerns about morality and how these originated from myths. I engaged in conversations with academic and non-academic individuals. I observed and listened to the people around me. I listened to their choice of words, I observed their body language, I observed the mediums of communication, and I wondered why we were behaving in an unnatural way? Why do we view our innermost feelings through the eyes of others? It is all unreal and humorous. I chose a satirical tone to communicate these inquietudes. I shared my ideas with different people of different backgrounds, such as: Rosario Quiñones, a graduate student of theology who is finalizing her PhD at Drew University; Ricardo Jabardo, a film maker and graphic design artist from Venezuela; Myrna Hau, an ex-teacher from Puerto Rico with a degree in psychology and who has never stopped learning from everyday people; and Jackie Garcia, an artist and friend that listened and gave me valuable information which I used for the research portion of the thesis. These people that I am honored to have as friends have given me insights into their own perceptions that enriched my research *Between Morality and Myths: A Parodic Visual Manifesto*.

From the academic perspective, I was greatly influenced by Professor Kelly Berry, through stage craft and stage lighting from theater courses. Intuitively, the work from the second suite evolved into a narrative, and the theatrical influence is evident. From

the technical approach, a difficult task to conquer, Professor Desmal Purcell guided me in solving problems in composition, editing and image manipulation. Dr. Bruce Little was the lead professor of the committee for this investigation. Therefore the written portion of this thesis was the main task through which he guided me until the end. I am surprised he never shed any tears of blood with all that I put him through. Dr. Julie McGuire showed me the road of knowledge throughout the historical and critical aspect for this body of work. Her valuable support never ceased. Professor Patricia Carter always kept her door open and questioned my ideas until they became clear to me, and hopefully, to the viewer. Professor Valerie Dibble was always there for my many preoccupations and concerns and never gave up pushing me to succeed. This body of work has been produced with the efforts and guidance of a team of professors without whom I could not have managed.

I want to thank Professor Valerie Dibble, Dr. Julie McGuire, Dr. Bruce Little, Professor Patricia Carter, Professor Desmal Purcell and Professor Kelly Berry for their academic support, the lessons taught and critiques given for the development of this body of work.

I want to thank Joyce Doyle, my mother, for believing in me and for her unconditional love and support. And to my friend Carlos Gutiérrez, I want to thank you for your patience and eternal love.

I thank you.

Patricia Quilichini

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	9
CHAPTER	
1- INTRODUCTION	1
OVERVIEW	1
STATEMENT OF THE ARTISTIC PROBLEM	1
AN OVERVIEW OF LARGER ISSUES UNDERLYING THE THESIS WORKS, BETWEEN MORALITY AND MYTHS	4
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO ARTISTS AND CRITICS WHOSE WORK HAVE GUIDED MY OWN.....	9
SUMMARY	13
2- SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS	15
SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL PRECURSORS TO THE THESIS WORKS...	19
SUMMARY OF DIRECT ARTISTIC INFLUENCES	22
3- PRESENTATION OF WORKS BY THE ARTIST	28
SUMMARY OF CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO THE THESIS WORK	28
SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO THE THESIS WORK.....	37
CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED INDIVIDUAL WORKS.....	44
4- CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	65

LIST OF ILLUSTRATION

Figure		Page
I.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Vaquero Bill</i> , 2009.....	5
II.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter Cop</i> , 2009.....	6
III.	Max Ernst, <i>The Virgin Chastises the infant Jesus before Three Witnesses: André Breton, Paul Éluard, and the Painter</i> , 1926.....	10
IV.	Man Ray, <i>Untitled</i> , 1919	11
V.	Man Ray, <i>Portemanteau</i> , 1920	12
VI.	Etruscan, <i>Detail Tomb of the Bull</i> , ca. 6 th Century BCE	16
VII.	Etruscan, <i>Detail Tomb of the Bull</i> , ca. 6 th Century BCE	17
VIII.	Roman, <i>Silver Drinking Cup</i> , ca. 1st CAD	19
IX.	Robert Mapplethorpe, <i>Polyester Suite</i> , 1980	20
X.	Kiki Smith, <i>Born</i> , 2002	20
XI.	Andrés Serrano, <i>A History of Sex (Christiaan and Rose)</i> , 1996.	20
XII.	Max Ernst, <i>The Hat Makes the Man</i> , 1920.....	23
XIII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>The Judge</i> , 2010.....	23
XIV.	Man Ray, <i>Untitled</i> , 1929.....	24
XV.	Toyen, <i>Untitled</i> , 1930-31.....	25
XVI.	Toyen, <i>Untitled</i> , 1937.....	25
XVII.	Toyen, <i>Untitled</i> , 1922.....	26
XVIII.	Toyen, <i>Untitled</i> , 1930.....	26

XIX.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Monsignor Peter</i> , 2010.....	31
XX.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Imam Peter</i> , 2011.....	33
XXI.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 1)</i> , 2011.....	35
XXII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 8)</i> , 2010.....	36
XXIII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 3)</i> , 2010	40
XXIV.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Pancho Villa</i> , 2009.....	41
XXV.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Rabbi Peter</i> , 2010.....	43
XXVI.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Vaquero Bill</i> , 2009.....	47
XXVII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter Cop</i> , 2009.....	49
XXVIII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Monsignor Peter</i> , 2010.....	50
XXIX.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 2)</i> , 2010.....	53
XXX.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 6)</i> , 2011.....	56
XXXI.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 7)</i> , 2011.....	57
XXXII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 10)</i> , 2010.....	59
XXXIII.	Patricia Quilichini, <i>Peter's Lament (page 13)</i> , 2011.....	61

Between Morality and Myths:

A Visual Parodic Manifesto

By: Patricia Quilichini

Overview:

The intention of this paper is to provide critical, historical, anthropological and philosophical support for the body of photographic works I have completed for the master of fine arts degree. It is my intention that through the ideas visually presented in the photographic manifesto, *Between Morality and Myths*, and discussed at length within this paper, the viewer will be encouraged to question the absurdity of “moral values” and the mythic power conferred upon them by societal convention. As a result of interacting with this body of work, the viewer will come to question why one would voluntarily choose to live according to such false realities as those presented to us as moral truths.

Statement of the Artistic Problem:

The photographic works created for this thesis work challenge long held beliefs and emotions that associate sex with shame and guilt, and that grow out of the moral traditions we have inherited. Judeo-Christian traditions and religious beliefs have created widely unchallenged social/moral constructs, which regard sexuality and sexual awareness as sinful and woman as subservient to the moral authority constructed by men. The works created for this thesis challenge that

tradition. To approach an issue seen as so sensitive by so many, I have intentionally employed visual parody and satire. The works in the thesis are comprised of two suites of work that deal with the same topic.

The first suite entitled *Peter's Lament*, combines two or more photographs to make each final image and as a group they comprise a narrative, that supplies an alternative to the moral myths created by Western patriarchal society. The architectural ruins in this suite refer to the decay of those patriarchal moral constructs. The human penis with wings represents the patriarchal ego and its self-assigned divinity. It also refers to the trappings associated with male power. Presenting these images in broken down architectural structures with gates and barred windows represents the psychological imprisonment that is the result of the patriarchal moral construct. The series concludes with the patriarchal creator of this false social construct falling victim to his own creation.

In the second suite, entitled *Mr. Peter*, close-up images of the human penis are treated like puppets and presented as humorous portraits of men wearing the different costumes associated with their social status and power. Some represent religious leaders, while others represent political leaders and law enforcement. I comment on this subject both to learn from it and to become free from it.

Even though I employ parody within my work, it should not be viewed as devaluing the seriousness of the themes I explore. Together, the portraits of

“Mr. Peter,” and the settings in which he is portrayed, allow me to humorously destabilize the myths associated with sexual and gender based “moral values.”

My interest in this topic emerges from my background in anthropological studies, and my curiosity about human behavior and the role of humor in acquiring knowledge. While living in Mexico and discovering archeological artifacts in surveys and digs from various cultures in Mesoamerica, I found considerable evidence pointing to the fact that nature was the main influence on these cultures. This suggested to me that it is nature, and what constitutes the nature of self, that brings me to question this challenging topic. I believe that humans are not naturally monogamous creatures and that monogamy is tied to a social construct related to the ownership of property, a concept on which I will elaborate in the following chapters. We are taught by Western society to believe that marriage endures until a spouse dies, and that the spouse should be the only person to whom we are committed for sexual activity, among other things. It is comfortable to think this way, but in reality what Judeo-Christian cultures call “infidelity” is merely a natural biological urge intended to keep the species strong. I believe that the high percentage of divorce and related unhappiness created by this unnatural socio-cultural construct is *prima fascia* evidence against sexual monogamy. I am also considering the monogamous relationship a product of private property, where the female spouse becomes an object of property.

An Overview of Larger Issues Underlying the Thesis Works, *Between Morality and Myth: A Parodic Visual Manifesto*

Humor and Satire:

Presenting my thesis images in humorous and satirical ways is a carefully chosen strategy. It is my belief that humor and satire help us relax and as a consequence to be able to approach challenging ideas that otherwise would be rejected immediately. The two images in Figures III and IV are examples of this humor. The word “humor” by itself, without being coupled to the word “sense,” as in “sense of humor,” is defined as “what we find funny.” When you connect “sense” to “humor” a metamorphosis occurs. Our individual sense of humor emerges as inseparable from our whole being. It is intrinsically woven into our emotional and social psyche and reflects our individual belief systems. The ability to adapt to change with positive acceptance and/or enjoyment defines the essence of having a sense of humor. Figure I, for example, depicts an erect penis wearing a cowboy hat. The work satirizes the macho image often associated with the ruggedness of cowboys from the Western United States. Characters such as Marlboro Man were intended to portray just such an image. In Figure II we see an erect penis wearing a policeman’s hat and a gun holster. Here the penis represents an authoritative member of the community such as the police. By treating the erect penis as a puppet and dressing it in toy costumes the standard by which males “measure” their masculine prowess and

its power is subverted. Dressing the penis in costumes that caricaturize the male sense of machismo and societal power further subverts their patriarchal power.

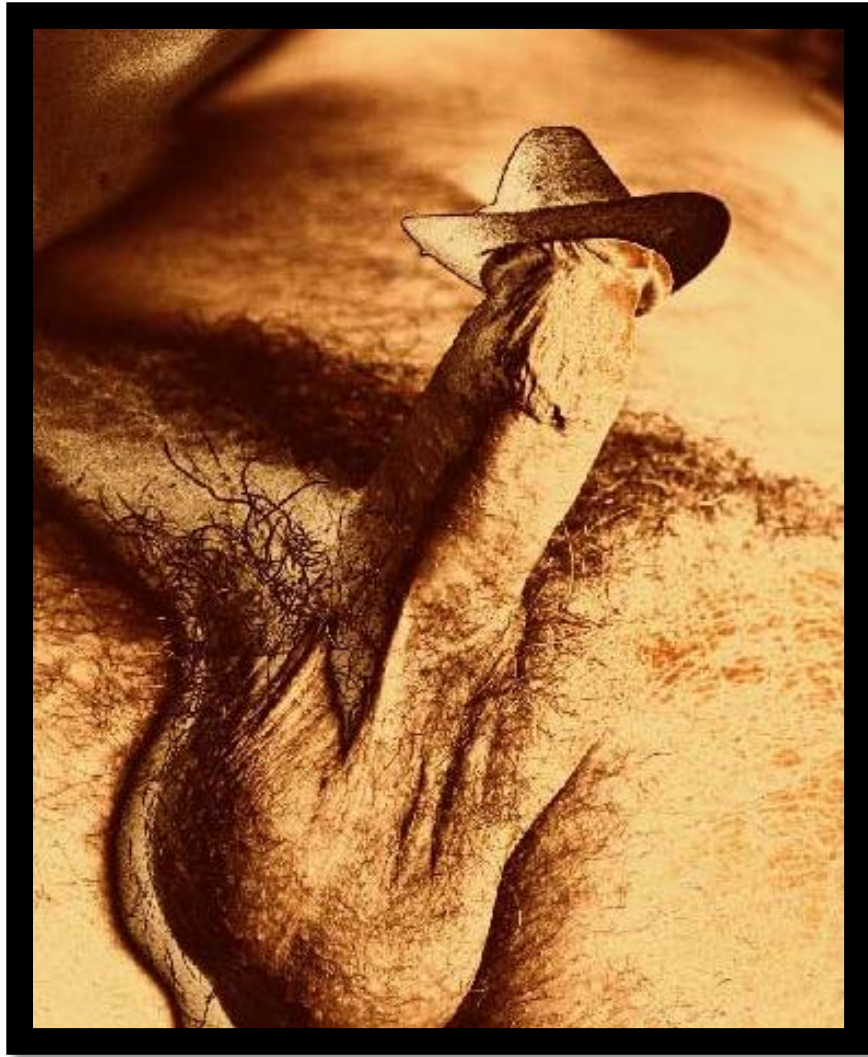


Figure 1, *Vaquero Bill*
Patricia Quilichini/ Lenticular Print
2009

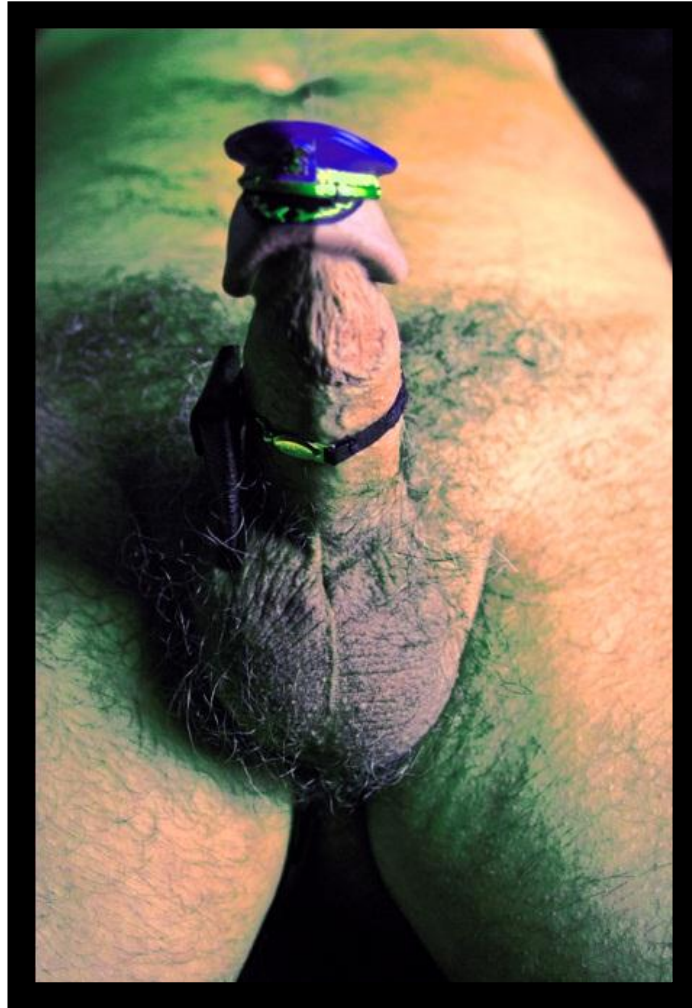


Figure II, *Peter Cop*
Patricia Quilichini/ Lenticular Print
2009

Another line of thinking that has influenced my work comes from cognitive theory in art. It is my intention that, through my visual work, the viewer might question aspects of our morality and codes of behavior and in consequence trigger an emotional response that communicates to the viewer. That is because we cannot separate seeing from thinking. As we visually interact with an image we automatically respond cognitively and emotionally to it. This process involves an emotional factor that is directed by reason. As a result I am using

photographic art to evoke these emotions to address moral issues for the viewer to think about.

According to John Dewey;

“The problem of the relation of art and morals is too often treated as if the problem existed only on the side of the art. It is virtually assumed that morals are satisfactory in idea if not in fact, and that the only question is whether and in what ways art should conform to a moral system already developed.”

John Dewey, *Art as an Experience* (Penguin Putman Inc. 1980) p. 347

I find four commonalities between morality and myth; 1) they are both socially constructed, 2) they are not real, 3) they relate to controlling people’s behavior, and 4) both are typically accepted without question. Morals belong to a specific compartment in theory and practice reflecting the world view of political, economic and cultural institutions. As I have come to understand the meanings of morality and myths and how I might use them in my visual work to confront these “behavioral codes of values” and their “stories,” I chose to combine humor and satire as a vehicle to encourage cognition. My art works examine the intersection where morality and myths are questioned and deconstructed. The ideas and practices of morality are replete with examples of praise and blame, reward and punishment.

In chapter three I will examine the research of authors, who influence my thinking like Pierre Bourdieu, L.G. Hagberg, Dr. Terry Barrett and others. Bourdieu has given me some points of departure that have led me to the imagery I have created. The iconographic implications in *Between Morality and*

Myths will be briefly analyzed using the ideas of Bourdieu. For example, Pierre Bourdieu, in his book entitled *Masculine Domination*, alleges that the sexual relation is one of domination that is constructed socially. He says that because it is constructed through the division of the “active male” and “passive female”, where male desire is a desire of possession and consequently the female will learn the same desire of possession as it is for the male. Bourdieu says:

“If the sexual relation appears as a social relation of domination, this is because it is constructed through the fundamental principle of division between active male and the passive female and because this principle creates, organizes, expresses and directs desires—male desires as the desires for possession, eroticized domination, and female desires as the desires for masculine domination, as eroticized subordination or even, in the limited case, as the eroticized recognition of domination.”
Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, Translated by Richard Nice, California, (Stanford university Press, associated with Blackwell Publishers 2001.) p. 21

According to Bourdieu, the idea of domination and power is represented in this relationship even if the male is impotent, because it has become a representation of a definition of opposites where the role of female and male are expressed and organized based on how it is taught by social institutions. These issues of behavior and sexuality within the socio-cultural makeup of Western Culture are the foundation of this thesis and my intent for it to be a visual commentary. Based on these behaviors in which the construct of moral values from myths equates the exercise of power and sex; I believe it is indispensable to examine these issues in order to understand that controlled eroticism turned to myths for erotic sources used by the bourgeoisie. My thinking equates the sexual agenda of patriarchal society with ownership of

private property and the desire of possession. That is the powerful physical experience of coitus is confused with the power of ownership. The natural act of sex and its completion has been misused and confused by men as if they have the right to possess the person into/onto whom they have ejaculated. In this case, it could be argued that a man's ejaculation marks his partner as his property much like when a dog marks his territory with a squirt from his body.

A Brief Introduction to Artists and Critics Whose Works Have Guided My Own:

My artistic inspiration came mainly from the artists of the Dada and Surrealist periods. Artists like Toyen (Marie Čermínová), Imogen Cunningham, Gertrude Käsebier, Max Ernst, René Magritte, Man Ray, Remedios Varo, among others, are the artistic inspiration for including satirical humor in my work. The visual absurdity with which some of the DADA and Surrealist artists dealt with their subjects, has given me the drive and inspiration to allow my own work to evolve toward a humorous style.

Through my study of the life and works of Max Ernst, I learned how he juxtaposed his imagery to tell a story with absurdist humor. His work enlightened my thinking about how I should address ideas in this thesis.

Max Ernst's painting, *The Virgin Chastises the Infant Jesus Before Three Witnesses: André Breton, Paul Éluard, and the Painter* in (Figure III) de-mystifies the idea of the holiness of both the Virgin Mary and Jesus by showing her spanking her misbehaving child. I am sure that the Catholic Church was not very happy with this painting. What led Ernst to the production of this painting was

an “anti-religious picture-manifesto.” Elizabeth M. Legge, *Max Ernst: The Psychoanalytic Source*. (London: UMI Research Press, 1989.) p. 69

If Christ was God incarnate and God is perfect, what could the baby Jesus have done that was wrong and deserved punishment? Likewise, how could an imperfect mortal woman dare to chastise a God? This image challenges the beliefs we have been given through myths about both Christ and the Virgin Mother.



Figure III, *The Virgin Chastises the infant Jesus before Three Witnesses: André Breton, Paul Éluard, and the Painter*
By, Max Ernst
Oil Painting
1926

The contradiction in the image causes one to pause and think about inconsistencies and stories associated with Christ. This particular image made me realize how satire could simultaneously make one laugh, think and question. Another artist that has inspired me is Man Ray, through the mysterious and playful combination of his photography techniques and subject matter. I enjoy the humor of the image represented in Figure IV in which Man Ray positioned artist's mannequins as if participating in a sexual act. This is one of Man Ray's readymade objects and photographs. This *Untitled* piece is part of a series where Man Ray pays tribute to sex.



Figure IV, *Untitled*
By, Man Ray
Photography
1919

Considering the generally conservative historical time in which Man Ray lived and worked, this piece was a radical break from tradition, not only artistically but conceptually.

Another of Man Ray's works that I found influential is *Portemanteau* 1920 (Figure V), a silver gelatin print that combines a coat rack with the photographic image of a nude female figure.

The use of techniques whereby Man Ray combines different photographs and objects into one originated with the Dada movement and contributed a great deal to one of the suites in *Between Morality and Myths*. By combining variations of conceptual unusual nature with this technique it is my intention to give the viewer a visual dream-scape perspective of my interpretation of the corrosive effects of our moral values.

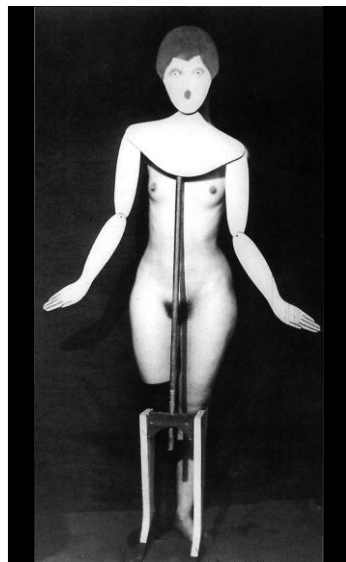


Figure V, *Portemanteau*
By, Man Ray
Photography
1920

Another influence on my work is Terry Barrett's book entitled *Criticism of Photography*. Terry Barrett is one of the leading art theorists of our time, and his conceptual framework for making critical judgments about photography includes a socio-political assumption highlighting the practice and function of criticism, which I will use to elaborate on my work. In my search for a theory that successfully explains artistic practice through verbal language, Dr. Barrett has been a principal source for this investigation and understanding. Referring to the relationship between feelings and learning, Dr. Barrett says,

“Feelings provide important clues to learning about the content of an image. If we are aware that a picture evokes feelings in us, then we can identify them, acknowledge them, and try to decipher whether something in the picture triggers such feelings in us. Then we need to relate those feelings back to the image.”

Terry Barrett, *Criticizing Photography* (Mayfield Publishing Co. 2000) p. 51

With Dr. Barrett's statement in mind, it is my intention to visually employ satirical humor to question morality and the myths upon which it is based, particularly those values about sex and gender that have been imposed by religious systems, government and social conventions.

Summary: The art works in my thesis are constructed through photography as a representation of thoughts, moral values, myths, socio-cultural constructs, and how these may be represented visually. The influence of artists such as those from the Dada and Surrealist movements and philosophers such as Bourdieu and Dewey among others has given me an ideological structure through which I can articulate the problem and concerns I address in the thesis work. My role as an

artist is to comment on these issues of morality and how they have been converted into myths throughout the ages, becoming part of a Western social construct that goes against our natural biological self.

Chapter 2

Summary Of Historical Antecedents:

This chapter will discuss historical examples of art and civilizations that support my ideas. It will also discuss the specific artistic influences that relate to my thesis. We often hear the phrase, “to understand our present we need to understand our past”. In order to understand the contemporary stratification of moral codes it is necessary to find their historical origins and how they evolved to become the myths that we have inherited as moral values. Using historical paradox as we see with the ancient Etruscan Civilization, and what we know about the origins of the more modern Dada and Surrealist movements, I will convey examples of artists that have contributed to the development of my thesis visually and conceptually.

While studying archeology and anthropology, I was introduced to the history and socio-economic origins of diverse cultures. One such culture, which illuminates the topic under discussion, was the Etruscan a society of the 4th Century BCE.

The fourth century historian, Theopompus of Chios, describes the Etruscan society as follows:

“Sharing wives is an established Etruscan custom. Etruscan women take particular care of their bodies and exercise often, sometimes along with the men, and sometimes by themselves. They do not share their couches with their husbands but with the other men who happen to be present, and they propose toasts to anyone they choose. They are expert drinkers and very attractive.”
Theopompus of Chios, 4th cent. BCE (Histories Book 43)

The Etruscan Sexuality and Morality, Internet access April 25, 2010.
www.mysteriousetruscans.com/theopompus/morality.html.

This fragment of information about the Etruscans confirms the naturalistic sexual tendencies of this culture. This sexual freedom, typical of how the Etruscan's lived, strongly suggests their moral codes and their ideologies viewed sex outside of marriage as natural. The following frescoes illustrate sexual acts that were found in the Etruscan society. Through these paintings we may observe evidence that supports what the historian Theopompus of Chios was recording.



Figure VI, Etruscan
(Details of Tomb of the Bulls)
Anonymous/ Frescoes
6th B.C.E.

The Etruscan images (Figures VI and VII) are from the Tomb of the Bulls (Tomba dei Tori) in Tarquinia, north of Rome. These frescoes are considered to be fertility symbols, even though the exact meaning of some of the symbols is not

entirely clear. The panel in Figure VI depicts a fornication scene involving a heterosexual couple, whereas the scene on Figure VII depicts the fornication scene of a homosexual couple. There are several interpretations of these scenes. The bull in (Figure VII) appears to be in an aggressive pose and moving toward the fornicating couple on the right. Some authors have interpreted the scene in Figure VII as a social disapproval of homosexuality. The bull seems to have a human face that perhaps has some indication of a mythological context.



Figure VII, Etruscan
(Details of Tomb of the Bulls)
Anonymous/ Frescoes
6th B.C.E.

In harmony with the Etruscan quest for the uninhibited enjoyment of living came a desire for pleasure. We know from the Greek historian, Theopompus of Chios that it was common for Etruscan women to engage in sexual activities with numerous partners even in the presence of their husbands. There was no embarrassment in being naked, and sexual acts frequently occurred in public for

all to see. The *Tomb of the Floggings, another Etruscan ruin*, has erotic scenes depicting a woman with two men. According to Theopompus it was common to partner swap and for women to engage in gymnastic sexual positions. Etruscan men were keen and skillful lovers to their women and vice versa. The blatant usage of erotic scenes on pottery, in tombs and in combination with Theopompus's account of Etruscan society tends to reinforce the belief they were more inclined to follow natural biological impulses than other societies of their time. Because of their moral beliefs and sexual practices the Etruscans were eventually persecuted and destroyed by the Romans. It is my opinion that the Romans had a hidden agenda and because they felt threatened by the power that women had in the Etruscan society they feared it might spread to Rome and the power held by them would be threatened. Ironically, the Roman's objections to the Etruscan life style, seemed hypocritical when one examines an artifact known as the Warren Cup, which depicts homoerotic scenes in the Bittir (ancient Bethther), near Jerusalem, Roman, AD 5 – 15, Figure VIII. It is speculated that this cup was commissioned from Greek craftsmen by a Roman client, perhaps during the Hellenistic reign of Nero. Obviously, even though the Etruscan sexual activities were criticized by the Romans, they too had a taste for sexual freedom, even if they were not public about it. I believe this political double standard in which moral values are used for the condemnation and destruction of other cultures still continues today.



Figure VIII, Roman drinking cup
Anonymous/ Silver
1st C.A.D.

Summary of Historical Precursors to the Thesis Work:

I fully expect that my thesis images will be considered by some to be controversial or taboo, like those by artists such as Andrés Serrano, Robert Mapplethorpe, Joel-Peter Witkin, Kiki Smith and even Sally Mann with her early works “Proud Flesh.” For some, their work was in conflict with accepted moral norms and touched the nerve of the larger society. I recognize these artists as precursors and although I studied these artists and their work they were not direct influences visually or conceptually for my work. For example, in the case of the works of Robert Mapplethorpe, the piece entitled *Polyester Suit*, (Figure IX) a semi-erect penis emerges from the zipper of the suit pants the man is wearing.



Figure IX, *Polyester Suite*
Robert Mapplethorpe/ Photography
1980



Figure X, *Born*
Kiki Smith/ Bronze Sculpture
2002



Figure XI, *A History of Sex (Christiaan and Rose)*
Andrés Serrano/ Cibachrome Print
1996

And he also dressed the penis in a business suit as a symbol of economic power. His image is also humorously satirical as I addressed in my images. Still it did not have a direct influence on the thesis work.

The bronze sculpture entitled *Born* by Kiki Smith in (Figure X) depicts a deer giving birth to a full grown woman. Many viewers find this sculpture grotesque because it challenges their conventional ideas about sexuality and human transcendence over the rest of nature. The viewer is led to ask what kind of sexual union would permit a deer to give birth to a human? In Andrés Serrano's book entitled *History of Sex*, one of Serrano's images depicts a nude couple spooning with the female behind the male wearing an artificial penis that penetrates him from behind. *History of Sex* is a book comprised of images of people from different countries and cultures in the act of having sex, sometimes with different people and sometimes with themselves and animals. These three contemporary artists have made controversial statements that challenged the established conventions of morality. I recognize their work and their intentions as precursors to mine, but they did not have any direct visual influence on my work. My work differs from these artists in the delivery and the intention. I am commenting about the power of the patriarchal society and using the penis as a metaphor for this power in a satirical and humoristic way. The images in Figures IX, X, and XI are not precisely funny nor do they influence patriarchal society. Each of these compositions does deal with sexual themes and the viewer might

think that my work shares some major similitudes with works by these artists, but the connections are only superficial.

Summary of Direct Artistic Influences:

The art works of artists like Max Ernst, Man Ray, Remedios Varo, René Magritte and Toyen have been the greatest and most direct influence on the development of my work. Ideologies from the Dada and Surrealist movements have also strongly shaped my work. The way in which these artists juxtaposed elements in their work gave me the drive to materialize my ideas in this photographic series. Ideas such as presenting the penis in ridiculous costumes that represent the patriarchal power structure, I owe to the influence of Dada artists. For example, Max Ernst's piece entitled "*The Hat Makes the Man,*" (Figure XII) uses hats to symbolize the uniform of bourgeois conformity. Thus the "men" totally made out of hats are stilted and artificial, scarcely recognizable as humans at all.

As noted in chapter one, Max Ernst's work and humor are important inspirations for my thesis work. Ernst's work made me think about the fact that there is a hat for almost every male dominated profession. Likewise, there is a costume or uniform that will identify traditionally patriarchal professions. In my work I use these hats and costumes to treat the penis as a puppet and diminish its power.

Once you take the hat off, they are all the same; just a naked erect penis with nowhere to go. This is funny. What is not funny is that, as of today, society continues to allow these attitudes of misogynist domination to rule the culture

through its politicians, religious leaders, and industrialists. The hat metaphors I use in the work from this series are intended to reflect a discomfort with and rejection of the established norm.



Figure XII, *The Hat Makes the Man*
By, Max Ernst
Mixed media
1920



Figure XIII, *The Judge*
Patricia Quilichini
Ilfochrome Print
2010

Figure XIII, *The Judge*, represents a judge from the Victorian Era in the Western Culture, a time period where shifts of morality were at their height. The influence of Max Ernst is strongly obvious in my work.

Another artist that influenced the development of my work is Man Ray. He was also a member of the Dada and Surrealist movements. The example shown in Figure XIV is one of his extraordinary photographs' published in 1929. It has no title and only 215 copies were made. I found it amazing and beautiful.

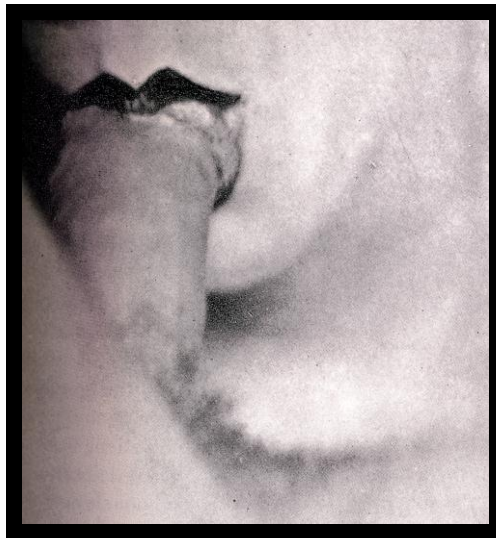


Figure XIV, *Untitled*
By, Man Ray
Photography
1929

It is but one example of how Man Ray and other Surrealists spoke of and made with great frankness art about their sexuality. Ideologies regarding sexuality that emerged during the Dada and Surrealist movement are the core of my work, as is their search for freedom, and their artistic adaptation of humor to comment on the social and political power of the time which were also influenced by the

emerging psychological ideas by Sigmund Freud. The use of humorous eroticized images created by some of the artists of the Dada and Surrealist movement has opened the door for the development of my work.

Marie Cerminova (Toyen) was a surrealist painter from the Czech Republic who worked in the 1920's-30's. What called her to my attention was the fact that she was a woman drawing male genitalia in a unthreatening story-like enjoyable way. Figures XV, XVI, XVII, and XVIII show several of Toyen's drawings. She was unique because women at this time did not typically dedicate their art to erotic images of the male body. Some of her drawings display a satirical sense of humor, and some are playful. I see these drawings as being strongly related to the pinup propaganda style from the early 1920's.

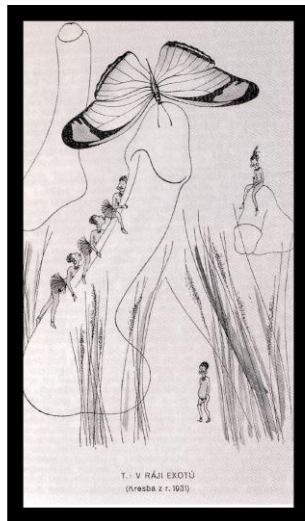


Figure XVI, *Untitled*
Toyen/ Drawing
1930-31

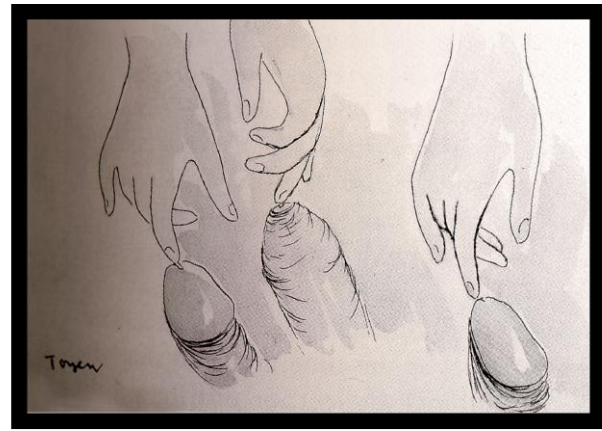


Figure XV, *Untitled*
Toyen/ Drawing
1937

As Toyen's work demonstrates, artistic expression and concerns with sexuality were not restricted to male artists, even though it was and still is more acceptable for a man to illustrate eroticism, whether it refers to the female or male body parts.



Figure XVII, *Untitled*
Toyen/ Drawing
1922



Figure XVIII, *Untitled*
Toyen/ Drawing
1930

Like Toyen, I create images that use male genitalia, but I am using it as a metaphor for patriarchal power. I dress the genitalia in costumes like a doll or puppet, using the costumes to refer to traditional male professions which allow them to perversely exercise their patriarchal power. I want the visual fantasies and visual puns that I have created to be tools for de-constructing and challenging the moral codes arbitrarily and wrongly established by patriarchal societies.

Not only artists have been fascinated with issues concerning sexuality, but philosophers, historians, theorists and others have also directed significant attention to it. The history of sexuality as an independent field of investigation

started nearly 100 years ago with the development of sexology as a scientific discipline. The concept of sexology ("*Sexualwissenschaft*") was first developed by the Berlin physician, Iwan Bloch in 1907 and soon found wide acceptance with his colleagues. (From the Archive for Sexology Pioneers on line date base http://www2.huberlin.de/sexology/Entrance_Page/History_of_Sexology/Pioneers/pioneers.hm accessed April 30, 2010.) Researchers known as sexologists identified sex as a crucial motivation and drive in human behavior, and began to research the origins of this drive. Researchers believed sexuality has its' own history, whether in terms of social problems such as the late nineteenth-century concern with fertility or prostitution or in terms of sexology's own growing subjects of study such as the family, perverse behaviors, and sexual identities.

Numerous Freudian ideologists, referring to the history of sex, argued that many of the moral values from the postwar era were inherited from Victorian prudishness and significantly contributed to the spread of sexual repression of the time. Devalued by the established natural scientists, psychology was a new area of study derived from philosophy in the universities. Based in observation and speculation about human behavior this subject was considered a pseudo-science. Sexuality and behaviors were analyzed, many times, out of context making the findings of their analysis ambiguous and vague. Still, psychology was considered a juicy topic, for most Surrealist artists, with its focus on the idea of the subconscious mind.

CHAPTER 3

Presentation of works by the Artist

This chapter will elaborate on the evolution of the thesis work in relation to the concepts previously addressed regarding morality and myths in the Western Culture. I will begin by summarizing the conceptual considerations and formal attributes. It will end with an in depth discussion of selected works from the thesis.

Summary of Conceptual Considerations Related to the Thesis Work:

Some of the conceptual considerations from which my artworks derive are based in a socio-cultural approach that relates language and visual symbols to a linguistic system. Through photography, the thesis employs visual metaphors to address moral codes that have become myth. The essence of our socio-cultural self is formed by the moral context that directs our behavior. It is important to understand that morality is a cultural product created and reinforced by educational institutions, family and religion. In other words, the evolution of morality in Western Culture originates in the imagination of patriarchal rulers in order to control the behavior of the population. The thesis photographs confront these moral codes that have subsequently acquired mythical power. The rejection of these ideas is conveyed through the photographs in which penises are metaphorically treated as puppets.

According to Pierre Bourdieu;

“The sense of social realities that is acquired in the confrontation with a particular form of social necessity is what makes it possible to act as if one knew the structure of the social world, one’s place within it and the distances that need to be kept.”

Pierre Bourdieu *Distinction* (A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste) Translated by Richard Nice, Harvard University Press 1999. p. 471-472.

It is evident that the sense of social realities is constructed according to the ideology of the dominant class. Those that have the power, like men depicted in the *Mr. Peter* suite, make rules that served their particular needs and are opposed to ideologies that are contrary. According to Bourdieu, this dominant class creates a system of classificatory iconographic strategies, for example the branding created by the bourgeoisie connecting the opposed (the proletarian) to a collection of ideologies. In consequence it establishes a place of reality from a place of fiction that may be suggested by the behavior adopted. This has been done for centuries in order to control the masses. This being said, artists such as Max Ernst address these issues in examples like his painting entitled *The Hat Makes the Man* (Figure XII). Ernst illustrates the idea that men are classified depending on the type of hat they wear, and should be treated accordingly. This ideology is what I recognized as the place of fiction in the morality of Western culture. Respect should be given to any person no matter what hat they wear. I believe we should not value or devalue humanity as objects of existence but rather as humans with equal rights to respect, including women, children and the elderly. Adopting Max Ernst’s strategy of using hats to represent the essence

of a person, I have created photographic portraits of dressed up human penises wearing different hats. Examples of this strategy are used throughout the Mr. Peter suite, and include *Rabbi Peter* (Figure XXV) with his traditional hat, *Vaquero Bill* with a cowboy hat (Figure XXVI), and *Peter Cop*, the police officer with his hat and holster (Figure XXVII). In the image of *Vaquero Bill*, I am addressing the macho mentality that is commonly associated with those who wear cowboy hats, like the iconic Marlboro Man. With *Rabbi Peter* I am commenting on patriarchal religious ideologies that continue to indoctrinate the faithful in principles that do not treat women as precisely equal to men. With the character depicted in *Monsignor Peter* (Figure XIX) I have moved beyond just creating hats and have created a costume that represents the soutane, which the Catholic priest wears. I follow a similar strategy with another religious character, *Imam Peter*, a leader of the Muslim faith wearing his hijab (Figure XX). Throughout the *Mr. Peter* suite I have created parodic images of religious and civil leaders as well as iconic macho man characters.

The portrait, *Monsignor Peter* represents a priest. The fact that it is an erect penis dressed as one might dress a doll or puppet is intended to challenge the moral authority and hypocritical moral codes used by the Catholic Church to indoctrinate its faithful. I am challenging both the motivation and the moral implications of church doctrine cultivated for the purpose of controlling the behavior of people and subordinating women. From the time we are born we are told who we are. We accept this without any question, because we believe

that those raising and teaching us (like priests) are trustworthy and have unconditional interest in our well-being.



Figure XIX, *Monsignor Peter* (Portrait suite)
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

We are encouraged to alter our natural self and submit to this domestication of self for reasons that at times have no clear origins. We are simply expected to

comply. Who are we trying to please when following such codes of behavior and why do those codes merit such submission? Because of these codes and controlling leaders, I believe that knowledge is acquired without experience and without solicitation has become the frame of the so called social realities and their false structure that goes against nature itself.

The work entitled *Vaquero Bill* represents the social construct in which boys are taught to be strong and macho and, therefore, they should make decisions for everyone else simply because they possess a penis. This is another fallacy that most people indoctrinated in patriarchal systems do not even question. The criteria used to define who we are and how we are supposed to be reflecting the limits defined by the patriarchal mentality.

According to Bourdieu a “social necessity” is created or invented by members of a minority that exercise their power to control ideologies that dictate behavioral codes which must be adhered to in order for someone to participate in that social organization. The information that formed the code of values and morality is passed down as tradition becoming a social necessity.

Bourdieu says,

“The power of suggestion which is exerted through things (which are represented with hats and costumes) and persons and which, instead of telling the child what he must do, tells him what he is, and thus leads him to become durably what he has to be, is the condition for the effectiveness of all kinds of symbolic power that will subsequently be able to operate on a habitus predisposed to respond to them.”

Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Harvard University Press, 1991. p.52.

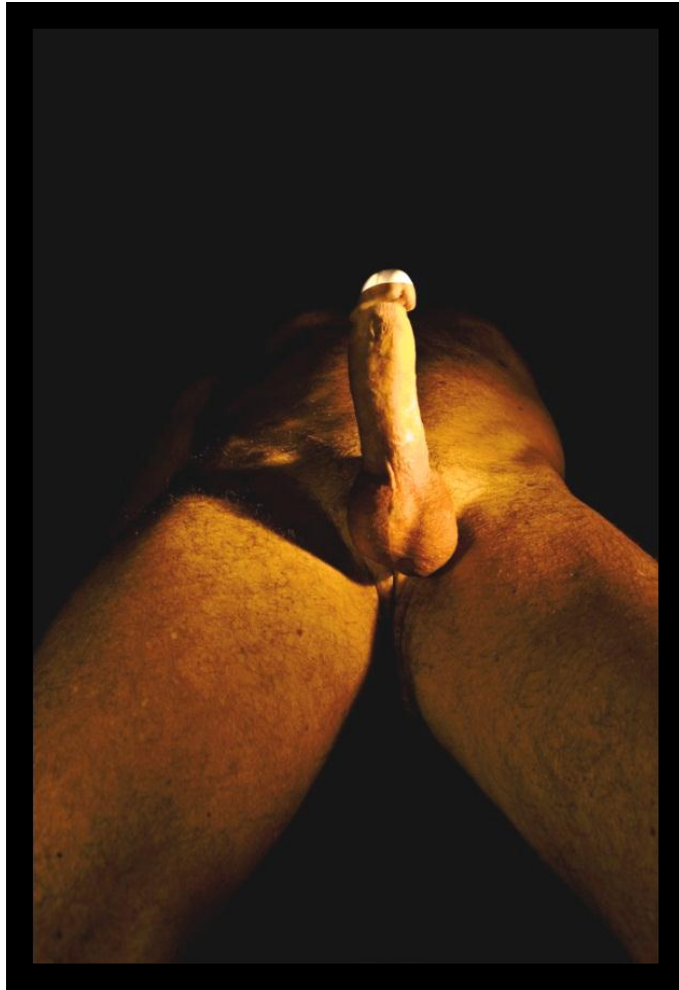


Figure XX, *Imam Peter* (Portrait suite)
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2011

Language and symbols are the vehicles used most by religious leaders, politicians, and the media itself, to promote ideas of self that are based in the materialistic part of the world characterized by the importance of consumption, in so doing they also treat intellectual formation as privatization of knowledge and are consequently a way of control. The same attitude is adopted with human relations. But this is not new; we have inherited these thoughts

camouflaged with words that are selected in a passive-aggressive attitude where sincerity is absent. People believe that they are what they own. In this body of work I also use symbols and codes to precisely address these leaders such are the hats, costumes and the penis itself.

In my second suite entitled *Peter's Lament*, the erosion of morality is represented by the decay of the architectural structures. In this suite the images create a narrative which is the direct result of taking theater courses for several semesters. These theater courses have had a great influence on the works of this second suite. I have selected to discuss several images from the *Peter's Lament* suite to elaborate the significance of the narrative.

The first image I will discuss shows the main character, Peter, sitting and contemplating and wondering what to do with his future (Figure XXI). In the second image, Peter finds himself accompanied by the apparition of an "angel" (that represents his ego) Figure XXVI. In the third image Peter experiences a metamorphosis after eating the angel Figure XXX.

The inception of this narrative came about because I wanted to address the myths upon which moral values are based. In my research of how people come to believe codes there is always a story or an anecdote behind the construct of morality.

Understanding this process, I decided to create a myth of my own to challenge those other myths, which we never question and take as truths. In the suite

Peter's Lament the myth is about a man named Peter that experiences the appearance of an "angel" who advises Peter what to do with his future.

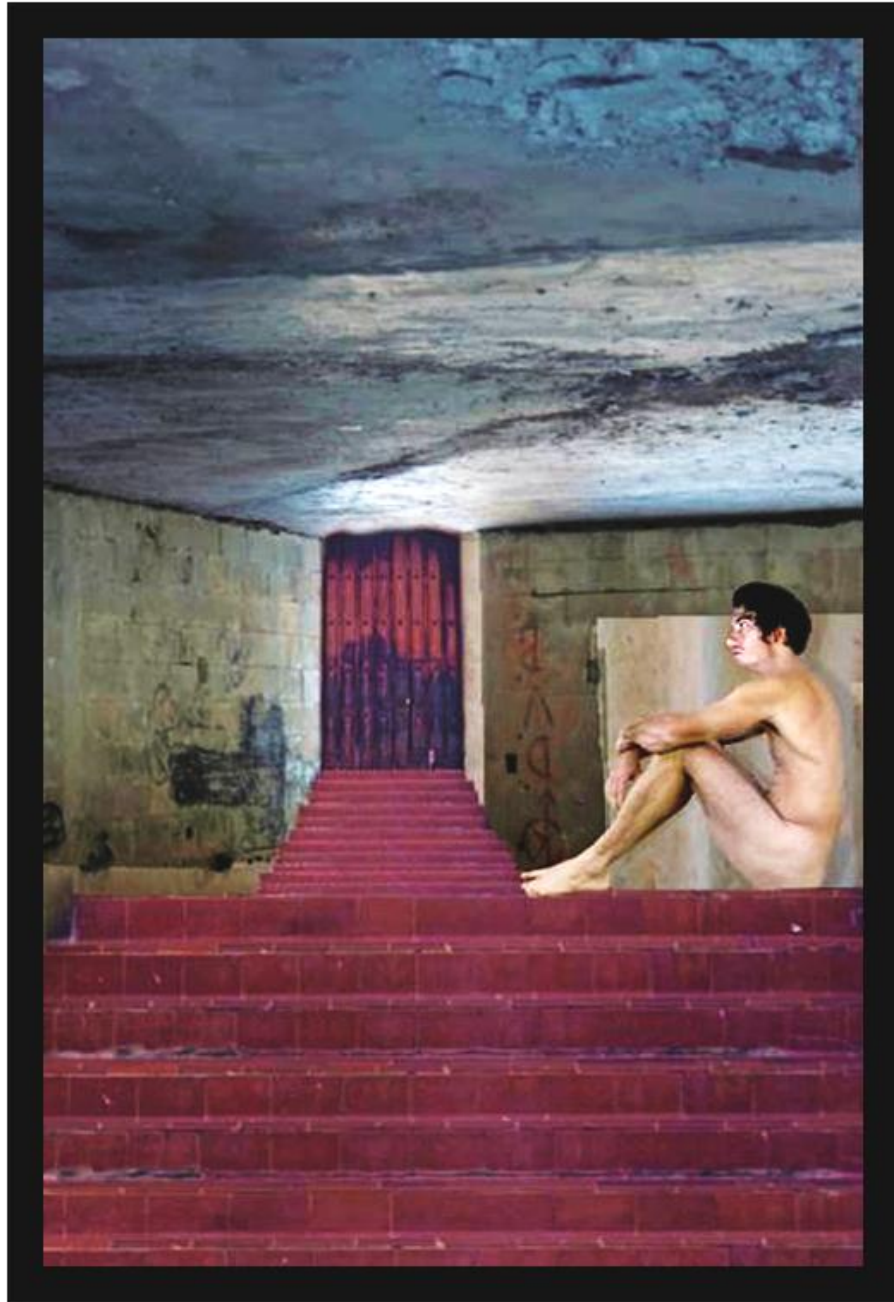


Figure XXI, *Peter's Lament: Page one Narrative Suite*
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2011

The narrative of the new myth states:

Peter's Lament

In the beginning there was a young man named Peter who dreamed of becoming a powerful ruler, a king of law. One day an angel appeared to Peter and in a voice that only Peter could hear, told him how to create laws to govern the people. The angel continued to visit Peter and told him that if he wanted to control the people he needed to consume the flesh of the angel. Finally Peter found the courage to kill the angel and eat it. A tremendous metamorphosis occurred; Peter's head began to assume the shape of the angel's body. Peter began to have power over humanity, he created and enforced laws which guided the people in the ways of "righteousness" and Peter was pleased. But Peter's metamorphosis continued as his head continued to grow and he became trapped in his own body. Peter felt that his power was overwhelming to the point that he lost control. By then Peter's head was so big that he could not even hold it upright. One day Peter died because his head kept getting bigger until it finally exploded.



Figure XXII, *Peter's Lament*: Page Eight Narrative Suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

The angel represents Peter's ego, the stairs are used as a symbol the same way it is used in the story of Jacob's Ladder. The intention of this work is to question the absurdity of moral codes and the power structures behind them.

Summary of Technical Considerations Related to the Thesis Works:

The evolution of this work has been a learning experience not only with regard to aesthetics and art, but the research that comprises its technical facets. After shooting approximately 500 slides for one specific piece, only five to seven were usable. It has been a process that without patience could not have been accomplished. The digital images were downloaded into the computer for the editing process. The program used for digital manipulation was Photoshop. The structure and organization for archiving the images was dictated by the program and dates. When dealing with models a contract was drafted and signed by both, the model and the artist in order to have a legal protection for the artist and the work as well as for the model.

I used several types of cameras, Nikon digital, Sinar large format film, Nikon F5 35mm. When using film I scanned the films and converted them into digital files. For the portrait images I set up a very small area in the living/studio area in my little home. I used one Lowell Omni Light, a set of tri-color lights with five cold light bulbs and diffuser in each lamp fixture. Technical considerations appeared in two ways, those that were planned (such as lighting, selection of camera and lens and so on), and those that appeared spontaneously (as in the case of tying the penis to a string to keep it in an erect position). Hiring a model

was a task that came easily. New technical challenges emerged, as the wardrobe for Mr. Peter had to be designed and materials selected that were optimum for each costume and which defined the character represented by the penis. In the case of the priest's costume, I used the leather type cloth that came with my laptop and worked with it until it appeared to be clerical clothing. I had to imagine how I should attach the costume to the penis without injuring the model. Another problem that presented itself was how to hold the penis straight up. Once erect I cut a long enough string that was tied to the head of the penis on one end and on a hook in the ceiling on the other end. Let me say that this was easier said than done.

In *Peter's Lament* suite I encountered other challenges such as the use of the software of Photoshop to conflate one image with another to be seamless for the final result. I had to travel in search of the decaying architectural structures in the state of Georgia, North Carolina and Puerto Rico, so far. Though I wish I could go to Rome and Athens to acquire images from those architectural structures where Western culture was born, I had to work with what was accessible to me. I appropriated several images and used them in some of the compositions in the *Peter's Lament* suite. I combined partials of these images with other that I have shot to create a dreamscape final image. Such is the case of the image in Figure XXIII the background image is from the Vesuvius volcano in Italy and the valley of Pompeii.

There were many technical challenges of which I was not aware until I experienced them. Examples of these were; scanning resolutions, poor lighting, some images that were out of focus and even out of frame. These were typical problems that occurred when trying to shoot; dress the model and hold the model in place with strings all at once. The outdoor shots had different kinds of problems that I dealt with, such as rain, light, wind, and even shooting while driving 55 mph. Many of the solutions came to me by common sense and experience, but others I needed help from my mentors, photography teachers and online consultations.

Another method that I used to solve problems was, that when I analyzed each image I wrote a list of problems that I needed to address in the next shoot in order to get it just right. This is very practical because when I was paying a model per hour I needed to be able to get as much benefit as possible from his/her time.

Other technical challenges that I experienced in this project included the use of digital color. Color was new to me when I started shooting photographs for my MFA program. I had completed one or two color assignments during my undergraduate studies in photography, but not in depth. Selecting the color, hues, tones, and filters was time consuming because there were variables to be considered; such as compositions in the allegorical representations, and the Ilfochrome digital printing technique. Similar to that of the cibachrome, the ilfochrome uses Ilford brand paper and ink, (these are fancy ways to say archival

digital print with some specifics). I began to apply a unified color palette to this body of work because of the influence of the theater classes I took, specifically the stage lighting course. In the suite entitled *Peter's Lament*, I chose to work with sepia tones using filters and other earth and jewel tones.



Figure XXIII, *Peter's Lament*: Page Two Narrative Suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

For the *Mr. Peter* suite, I chose to work with monochromatic colors and dramatic lighting, accentuating some hues for different iconographic purposes. An example of iconographic color is found in the piece depicted in Figure XXIV entitled *Pancho Villa* in which the penis is wearing a traditional Mexican hat. The entire image is a monochromatic blue known as Mexican blue due to the fact that this color was used in colonial times for some of the architecture and crafts typically representing the culture.

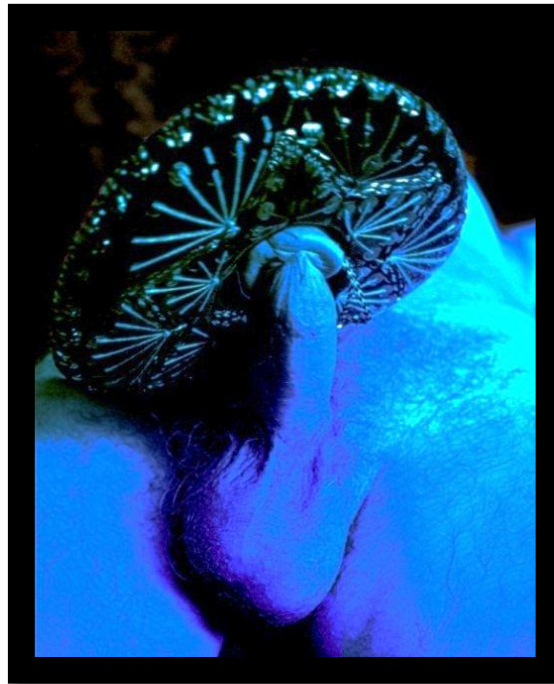


Figure XXIV, *Pancho Villa* (Portrait suite)
Patricia Quilichini/ Lenticular Print
2009

For the Rabbi image (Figure XXV), I commissioned a graduate student in the jewelry department of the university to create a metal cuff with the Star of David

to hang around the shaft of the penis. I made a scaled model of a traditional black hat similar to those worn by Hassidic Jews, including long hair curls on the sides which is so identifiable with that sect of Judaism. This image will be displayed behind a frame designed to convey the feeling of a window from a Synagogue temple. This window like frame also derived from my studies in theatrical set building.

At times I incorporated chance experience into my shooting and selecting; that is, exploring surroundings, shooting and accumulating a large archival image file for future use. This is a common practice used by many artists. I practiced ways of contemplating some images without even considering them in context with the other images in the suite; almost like having a personal relationship with the imagery, before I selected them for composition. With this in mind, I wanted to present a simultaneous interaction between three images. To do so I explored different methods and finally I decided that printing these three images together would accomplish such a relationship. These three images which included; *Vaquero Bill, Pancho Villa and Peter Cop* were printed in a lenticular, commonly known as a hologram. This lenticular image will be displayed as if it was a poster in the lobby of a bank announcing some financial product.

For displaying the image of the priest, I have acquired a 1920's armoire which I converted into a confessional booth in which the photograph will be hung.

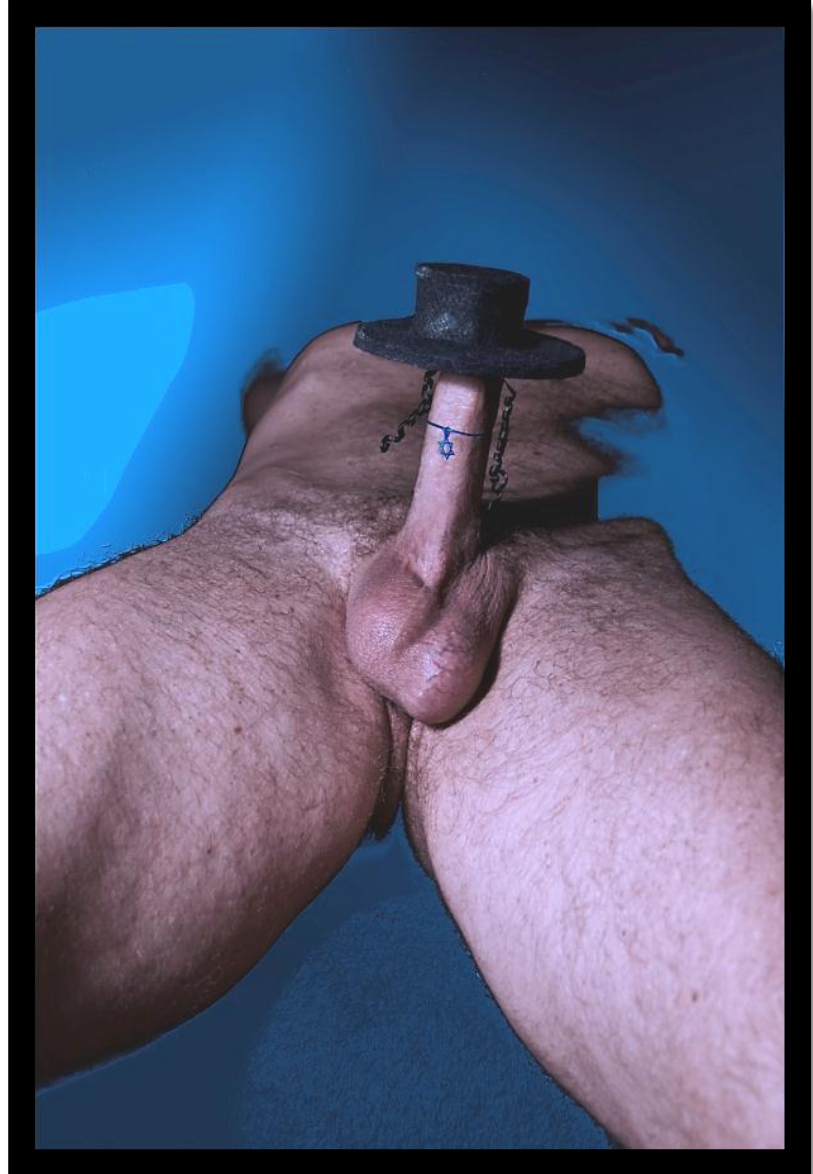


Figure XXV, *Rabbi Peter* (Portrait suite)
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

This image was printed in larger scale 40" x 60" in order to invade the psychological space of the viewer. Selecting the right paper for printing was another task, as was the selection of the right color lab that would print at a reasonable price and remain faithful to the original colors. Expense became a

considerable issue in managing the outcome of this project, not only with printing concerns but also how the images will be presented such as frames, confessional booth and others. Though I should say that cost should not affect the quality of the work, nonetheless, this was an issue that needed to be considered before starting my project.

Critical Analysis of Selected Individual Works:

This section will analyze several selected works from both suites; *Mr. Peter* (the portrait suite), and *Peter's Lament* (the narrative suite). This work started its' evolution as the result of an end of the semester evaluation of my work conducted by several professors and immediately led to the idea for this body of work. I began to question issues like: What do I want to say with my images? What artists inspired me? What philosophy and ideologies am I reading? What are my concerns? What do I know? What do I want to know? What techniques should I use? I have always been curious about cultures and how they are formed. I am curious about the behavior of people and what triggers their behaviors. And humor has always been part of my life and personality. Mixing these thoughts and trying to create imagery that will make people simultaneously laugh and think became the task for my endeavors. I started reading a lot about psychology, history, sociology, philosophy and even poetry, to try to make sense of it all. It was a long elaborate process. Soon I started to dress the penis with Barbie Doll clothes. I was not happy with these costumes because they really did not represent the message I wanted to convey. I chose to

make my own hats and costumes to portray aspects of the characters I wanted to represent. The theater courses that I took had a profound influence on the development and outcome for this body of work.

Vaquero Bill:

The initial suite of works entitled, *Mr. Peter* is comprised of portrait type photographs. *Vaquero Bill*, (Figure XXVI) was the first successful work in the *Mr. Peter* series. In this 16" x 20" digital photograph, the viewer is immediately confronted by an extremely close up and intimate view of an erect human penis, treated as though it were a portrait. Perched atop the head of the penis is a cowboy hat positioned as though the hat and, therefore, the one wearing it is facing directly out toward us, confronting our gaze with his own. The entire composition crops the frontal and highly foreshortened male torso from the base of the scrotum to just below the rib cage. The penis and scrotum move diagonally across the format from bottom left to top right and span slightly less than the full height of the composition. The head and the hat end at approximately the golden mean of the composition in the top right corner. The heightened textures of the skin, body hair and vascularity on the penis and scrotum are clearly evident due to the strong lighting that strikes the main character from the right side. Long flowing darks move in serpentine fashion and connect to one another along the left side, creating a unified visual flow from the top down to the scrotum and back up toward the much lighter and more open areas of the right side of the torso.

The central axis of the penis moving from bottom left to top right is opposed by the direction of the central axis of the hat, which moves from bottom right to top left. An overall golden and brown tonality combines easily with the cowboy hat to remind the viewer of the colors associated with the sun rising over vast areas of the Western desert of the United States. The opposing angles of the penis and the cowboy hat combine to recreate the casual way that cowboys are often depicted wearing their hats, and reinforce the viewer's initial reaction to the work as a portrait. The grainy elements of the skin texture, hair and vascularity project a raw rugged quality onto both the main character and his surroundings. In this image, the dominating scale of the penis created by moving in so close projects both strength and power.

The presence of a strong, rugged, cowboy type of character is quite evident in the work, based on the costume element of the cowboy hat perched casually, but authentically atop the head of the cowboy. The strong warm desert-like colors and raw textures further reinforce this interpretation.

Peter Cop:

The second work in this series is *Peter Cop* (Figure XXVII). The erect penis in the center of the composition gives the impression that he is standing tall and in charge. This photograph is one of the three characters that were conflated into a lenticular print. The lenticular print is a technology in which the image has the illusion of depth with the ability to change or move as the image is viewed from

different angles. In this case the lenticular image is comprised of three different images giving the illusion of changing from one image to another. The three images included in the lenticular print include, *Vaquero Bill*, *Peter Cop* and *Pancho Villa*.



Figure XXVI, *Vaquero Bill* : Portrait suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Lenticular Print
2009

Peter Cop is the second photograph used in the lenticular and from the portrait suite entitled *Mr. Peter*. The costume and holster are similar to those found in military or police uniforms. The holster is buckled up on the shaft of the penis in the appropriate place where the waist would be if it was a human body. The penis is in a vertical position and the composition crops the frontal and highly foreshortened male torso from the middle of his stomach to below the scrotum. The colors are dark with some jewel tone colors caused by the lighting in the composition. These color values have been changed from the original photo in order to give a surrealistic impression. The placement of the penis in the image is typical for portraits, where the subject is quasi centered on the picture plane.

The total height of the penis occupies about 50% of the photograph. The hat and the gun holster are scaled to fit the penis as if it was tailored. The lighting, which was influenced by taking a stage lighting course, enhances the presence of strength and power by casting a mysterious shadow on one side.

The character of Peter Cop represents the force used by governments to “impose control and order” over society. The evidence of Peter Cop’s power is not only represented with the costume but with the erect penis. This muscular erect penis brings to mind the character portrayed by Peter Weller in the movie *Robocop*. The representation of male authority has once again been parodied by dressing an erect penis as if it was an action figure.

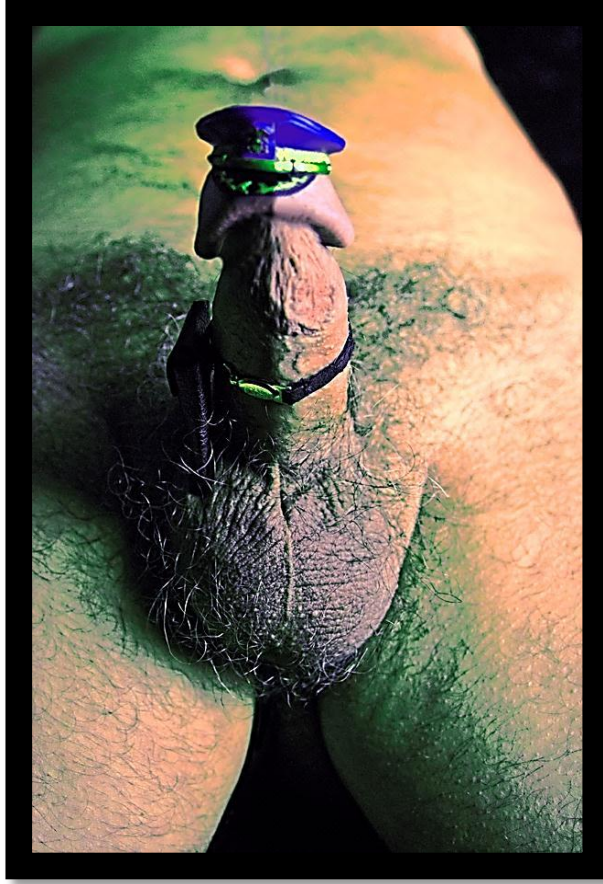


Figure XXVII, *Peter Cop (Portrait suite)*
Patricia Quilichini/ Lenticular Print
2009

Monsignor Peter:

Continuing with the portrait suite entitled *Mr. Peter*, the following image to be discussed is an iconic religious character of a priest. *Monsignor Peter* Figure XXVIII is wearing a soutane similar to the traditional attire worn by the catholic priest. The penis is also in an erect position and posed as a portrait. The composition crops the frontal and highly foreshortened male torso from the thighs to just below the rib cage. The colors are dark in the penumbra. The

scrotum has a bit of a red tint next to the greenish color of the skin on the thighs. By printing this image in a large scale, (40" x 60"), where the psychological space of the viewer will be invaded, there is no place for the eyes of the viewer to escape from the image. The only way the viewer escapes from seeing the image is by turning away and not looking at different parts of the composition. The position of the penis is centered and wearing the black soutane that is typically worn by catholic priests. Because there are so many stories and myths surrounding the confessional booth, this image will be exhibited inside a replica of a confessional booth.

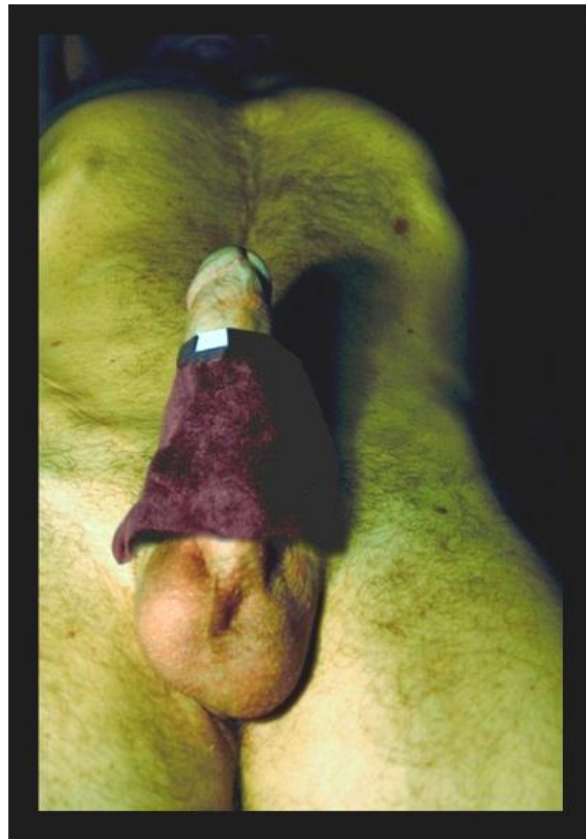


Figure XXVIII, *Monsignor Peter* (Portrait suite)
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

The image will be seen by the viewer once the individual peek's his/her head through the burgundy curtains into the booth.

The physical representation of the booth is a structure similar to what we might see in a church where devotees go to confess their sins.

The colors selected for this photograph are intended to lure the viewer in but at the same time create an uneasy sickly appearance like a spoiled liver color, or the viscera of someone that is sick from the inside. Educated in Catholic schools, I have a firsthand experience of what goes on in this type of education. The representation of a priest in the portrait suite is one of three religious leaders that have power over those that follow and believe these religious ways.

Peter's Lament (narrative suite):

The second body of work to be discussed is entitled *Peter's Lament*, a suite comprised of fourteen 13" x 19" ilfochrome photographic images illustrating an allegorical mythological narrative that I have created. Influenced by my studies in the theater courses, this suite is comprised of a sequence of images that tells a story. Because I am addressing issues of myth I thought it was appropriate to address these issues with another myth of my own creation.

Peter's Lament : Page Two

The image in *Peter's Lament* : Page Two (Figure XXIX), is the second page of the narrative and represents the first appearance of the angel when Peter starts to listen to its voice. The angel appears several times throughout the narrative showing Peter having conversations with him. The shape of the angel's body is

that of a penis and represents Peter's ego. The colors of the angel are soft and ethereal. The door and steps in this image are dark red providing contrast and framing the solarized figure of Peter.

Peter is sitting on the steps in the nude with just a colored cloth draped over his knee. Peter is looking up to the window in the top left where the angel is sitting. Deteriorated stone or masonry walls frame the scene as if it was indoors. The paint on the walls is worn away and the gray colored concrete shows through in some spots. The casual pose of Peter with a draped cloth over his leg suggests that he is in a familiar place, maybe his home. The effect of the color selection may serve as a banal and inviting tool to lure the viewer to come closer to the image.

To define the disembodied penis as an angel, scale model wings were physically fastened to the shaft of the penis when shot. Legs were digitally added to the angel to give it a more human like body and to provide a visual balancing effect when the angel is sitting on the ledge of the window frame. Peter sits on the steps looking up at the angel as if the angel is talking to him.

The colors in this particular image give the viewer the impression of a hallucination or a dream. The figure of Peter is solarized, which may also be interpreted as if he is in a dream state.

The angel's body is that of a penis that perhaps could be interpreted as Peter's ego. The physical condition of the walls of the architectural structure is quite deteriorated and in ruins, which places the story or the dream in an abandoned

place. The steps on the other hand, are quite vivid with a deep red color that might be interpreted as the one in Jacob's ladder myth.

According to the Bible in the Old Testament,

Genesis 28:10–12: first mentions "Jacob's Ladder" when it says: "Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it." The Holy Bible. The New International Version. Old Testament, Genesis 28:10-12. (Zondervan Publishing House, Michigan, IBS 1984.) p. 24

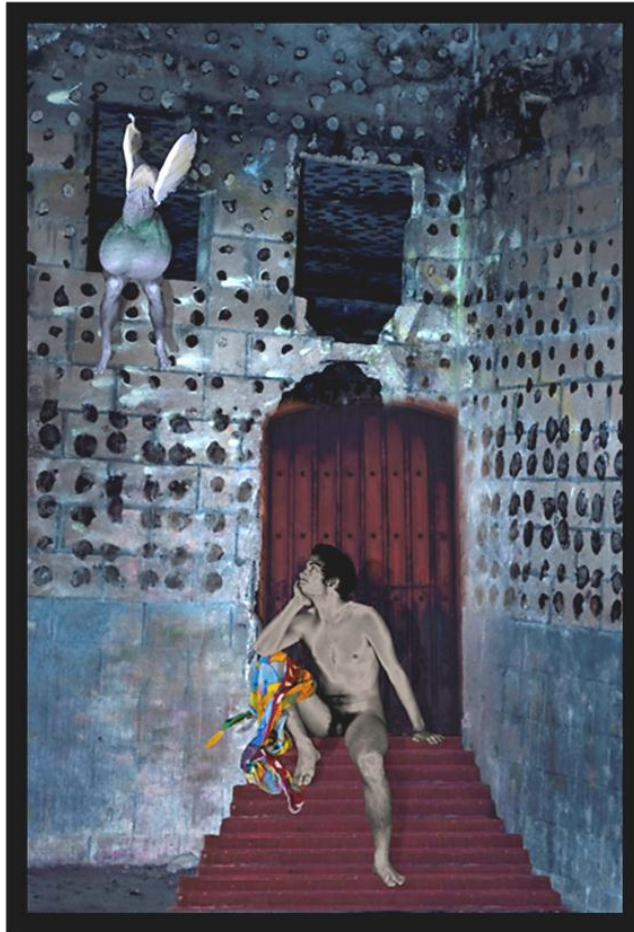


Figure XXIX, *Peter's Lament*: Page Two Narrative Suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

Peter's Lament: Page Six

In *Peter's Lament: Page Six*, the main character, Peter, is depicted while experiencing a metamorphosis, caused by devouring the angel as he was instructed to do by the angel himself. In the center background of the work, the viewer sees a large door with an arched top. It appears to be made of wood and it is a reddish-brown color. From the door descending into the middle of the image we see a set of stairs that ends at a broken stone floor. The walls are colored a ghostly blue tone, as if they were covered with fog. Sitting on the steps there is a human like image that seems to be moving and changing its appearance. The floor color is a gradation of purple with a dry texture as if it is from the desert. The moving image seems to be going through some kind of change from the head of a human to the head of a penis.

The composition of this image is the climax of the narrative, and in my opinion it is the most powerful image of the narrative. The color of Peter's body has some edges illuminated as if it was florescent, similar of those found in some species of vegetation when they go through atmospheric changes. This image is a quite dramatic and powerful photograph. The lighting and scene displays the evidence of the theatrical influence.

It is evident from the presence of motion that a painful change is taking place in Peter. After Peter ate the angel in the previous scene, his body began to transform. Peter's head began to change to the shape of the angel's body. Peter's head is now becoming a penis head. The viewer will not distinguish right

away what is happening to Peter's body until he or she comes closer to the images. The selection of colors has a luring quality that is intended to draw the viewer closer to the image.

Peter's Lament: Page Seven

After the metamorphosis Peter finds himself powerful, as seen in the following image (Figure XXXI) that corresponds to page 7 in the narrative. Peter's head has now assumed the shape of the angel and he is wearing a cape similar of those worn by European kings and emperors. Peter is standing half way up the steps that end at the same door that has been incorporated in many of the images from this series. He is holding a scepter in one hand and standing confidently. The color of the cape is deep red decorated with golden lily flowers. The lighting used in this photograph seems to be outdoor and sunny. A white column like structure frames the image of Peter and this structure is the only one in which the walls are not in decay. Peter is wearing white gloves even though it seems that he is nude under the cape. This is suggested by the visibly bare leg and his bare feet.

The visual representation of power is suggested by Peter's pose and by the regal cape and scepter. This cape decorated with *Fleur-de-lis* appears to be similar to those worn by other emperors such as Napoleon Bonaparte. Peter's head is bright and shiny, standing straight up and regal. In this image Peter is located half way up the steps as if his power is not totally fulfilled, though his

pose represents that of a powerful character. The colors and illumination continue to keep the same color palette, rich, vivid, and dreamlike.

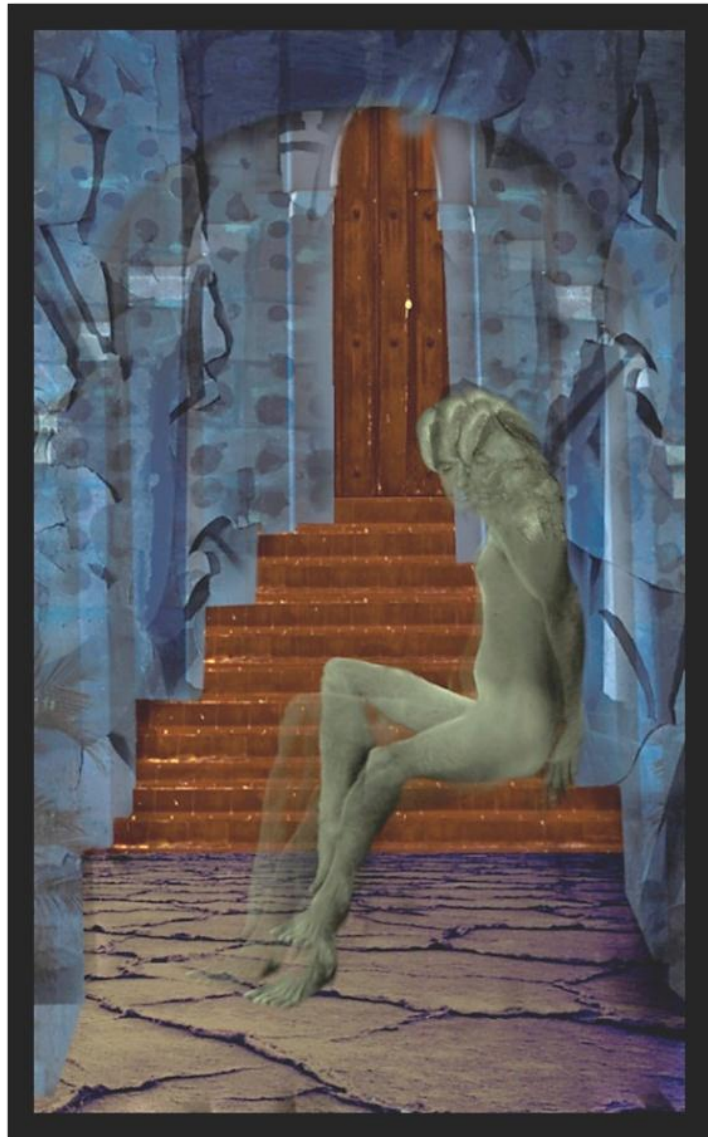


Figure XXX, *Peter's Lament* : Page Six Narrative suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2011

The position of the new Peter wearing a cape and holding a scepter gives the impression that he has power and might be addressing his imaginary minions.

Even though Peter seems to have power, he is still standing only half way up the steps; which can be interpreted as him not having attained full power, much like the Masonic symbol used to portray Jacob's ladder.

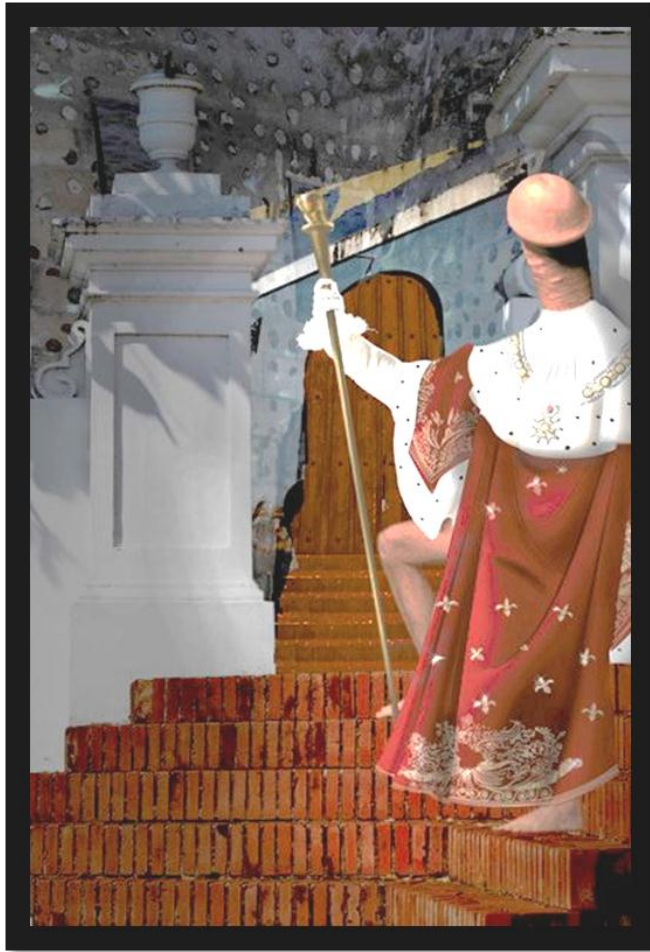


Figure XXXI, *Peter's Lament* : Page Seven Narrative suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochromel Print
2011

The illumination of the composition makes Peter the focal point of the photograph, and the gloved hand holding the scepter is located in the center of the image as a representation of newly acquired power.

Peter's Lament: Page Ten

In this tenth image of the narrative Peter is depicted naked once again; sitting on the floor of a long corridor and his head appears to have grown significantly. The corridor is in penumbra with light that seems to come from one side through the windows. At the end of the corridor there is an illuminated door giving the composition a one point perspective. There is vegetation growing on the ceiling and windows. The structure is in decay and seems abandoned except for Peter. Peter is sitting on the blue floor and is located in the extreme foreground of the image. When the viewer combines the facts that, first, the interior is now covered with decaying vegetation and abandoned, second Peter's posture is submissive and defeated, and third, Peter's head is physically too large for his body to support; the viewer can conclude Peter has fallen from power for some reason. This is further supported by the absence of all the symbols of power represented by the cape and scepter.

Peter's body is the focal point due to its size and location. All of the triangular shapes of the shadowed windows point the viewer to Peter. The submissive position, in which Peter is sitting, with his head leaning on his knees and his hands joined over one knee and the long enclosed passage in an abandoned structure, suggests his failure of power. Inspired by Stephen Wilkes's photograph, from his book *Ellis Island Ghost of Freedom* (1998), I have appropriated parts of the image in Figure XXXII. The parts of this image I appropriated are from the images of the mental ward. I have altered the image

by incorporating Peter with his growing head, and inserting different floors and ceiling.

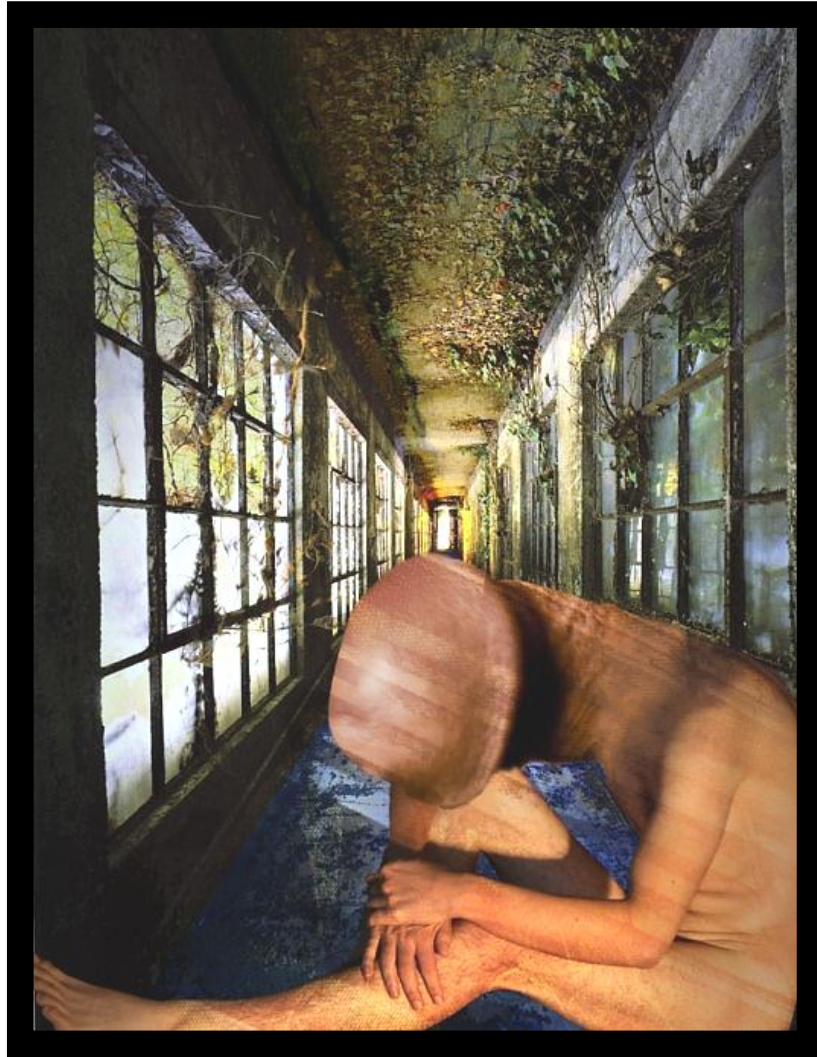


Figure XXXII, *Peter's Lament*: Page Ten Narrative suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2010

The size of Peter's head in proportion to his body causes the viewer to question how Peter can support its weight. In this narrative, Peter has realized that his own need for power has trapped him within the same structure of constraints he created in order to control everyone else.

Peter's Lament: Page Thirteen

The final image to be discussed is that of page 13 in the narrative (Figure XXXIII.) The door and steps are centered marking an elevation of this scene.

Peter's body lies on the ground dead with his head exploded. He is in a skewed position wrapped with a blood red mesh.

The mesh is coming out from the inside of his exploded head and wrapped around his body. Pieces of Peter's head are flying out as if the head exploded.

Peter lies on the ground at the bottom of the steps on a blue textured stone floor. The red door and stone walls in the background frame Peter's dead body and the blue floor serves as the stage where the action is concluded.

The red door and stairs are the same that are repeated in many of the scenes of the narrative. The setting where the story began is also where it ends. The dramatic conclusion of the story, where Peter's head explodes, is similar that of a Greek Tragedy play. The colors continue to be that of a dreamscape by combining outdoor textures with indoor lighting as if the story ends in a place of ruins, represented by the deteriorated structure.

The mesh, loaded with symbolism, is spread from the inside of Peter's head and wraps his arms and is extended across his legs. The vivid hue of the blue ground allows the destroyed body to be seen in sharp and clear contrast.

Like the eruption of a violent volcano, Peter's head has exploded. The mesh that wraps around him symbolizes entrapment. Fisherman and hunters use nets

to catch their prey, but in Peter's case this mesh was always inside him and he was trapped by his own ego.

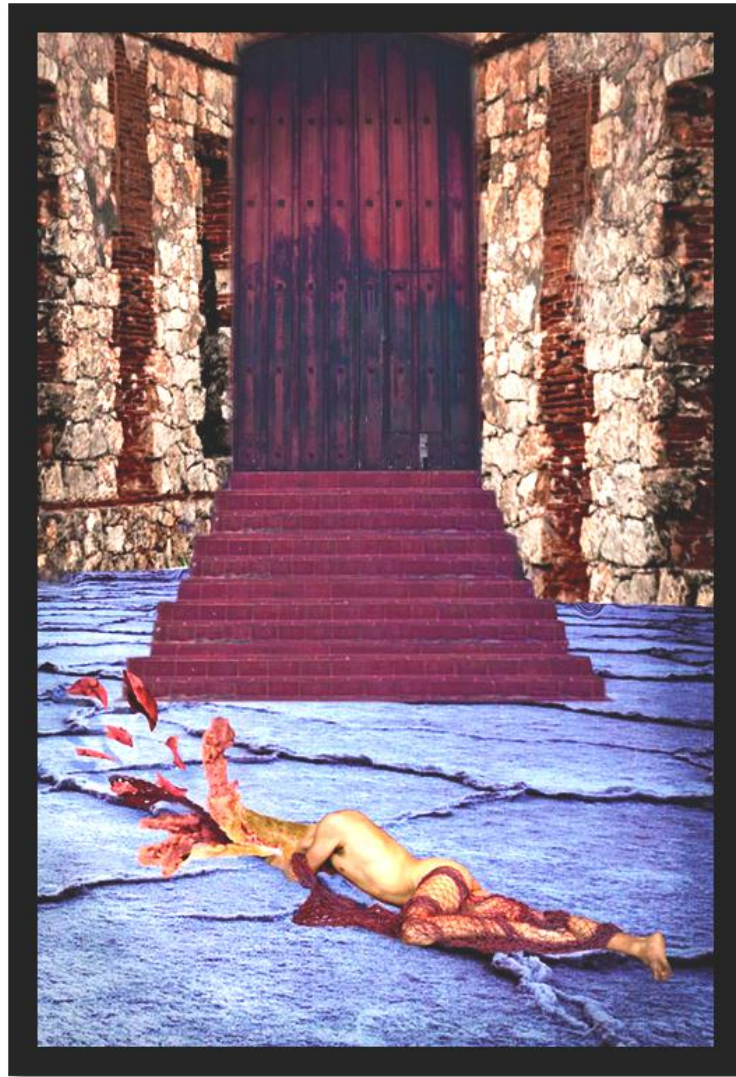


Figure XXXIII, *Peter's Lament*: Page Thirteen Narrative suite
Patricia Quilichini/ Ilfochrome Print
2011

The visual representation of these structures continue throughout the narrative, reminding the viewer that even if the story is presented as a parody, in reality it is sad that we continue to allow leaders to control our lives and beliefs in order

to comply with their own personal agenda. To become conscious of such acts and continue to do nothing is lamentable.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusions and Implications:

The two photographic suites that comprise this body of thesis work represent an allegorical collection of images intended to challenge the prejudicial rules and power of the patriarchal societies of Western Culture. These works respond to what I believe are moral concepts that originate from perverse myths. The works visually present human penises as metaphorical characters representing the patriarchal inventors of these myths. The power accrued to these characters is satirically subverted by dressing the penis as a puppet. The second suite visually creates a new mythical narrative to substitute for those false narratives that we inherited and continue to believe. The influence of theater lighting, and prop making has been a major contributor to the success of this body of work. The evidence of this influence is present particularly in the narrative suite.

A variety of challenges arose as I became more involved with my research. These challenges included finding support for my ideas within the history of art and humanity, understanding the socio-cultural evolution of belief systems that we have inherited, and the medium (photography) in which I chose to develop this visual research. In the creative sense, humor, was always present. Through this research I have concluded that as an individual artist my work may only reach a small group of people with the message of this visual manifesto and new ideas of how life can be. It is a romantic view for which most artists yearn.

With this body of work I am just scratching the surface of an immense philosophical analysis. For the future I believe I might create other mythical narratives printed in books, making art democratically and economically accessible to all by avoiding the overpriced art market. I am considering the continuance of this body of work in my PhD studies and hope to evolve more storytelling through images with an allegorical tone.

Bibliography

- 1- Barrett, Terry. *Why is that Art? Aesthetics and Criticism of Contemporary Art*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- 2- Barrett, Terry. *Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000, Third Edition.
- 3- *The Bible*, "New International Version", Old Testament. Zondervan Publishing House. Michigan, USA 1984.
- 4- Bloch Iwan, Archive for Sexology Pioneers on line date base, 1907, http://www2.huberlin.de/sexology/Entrance_Page/History_of_Sexology/Pioneers/pioneers.hm accessed April 30, 2010.
- 5- Bourdieu, Pierre. Thompson, John B. ed. Raymond, Gino and Adamson, Matthew translated. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- 6- Bourdieu, Pierre. Nice, Richard translated. *Masculine Domination*. California: Stanford University Press, 2001.
- 7- Bourdieu, Pierre and Wacquant, Loïc J.D. *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- 8- Burbank, John and Steiner Peter ed. *Structure, Sign, and Function; Selected Essays by Jan Mukařovský*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978.
- 9- Chadwick, Whitney. *Woman, Art, and Society*. New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1997.
- 10- De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage Books A Division of Random House, Inc., 1989.
- 11- Dickerman, Leah. *DADA*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2006.
- 12- Durozoi, Gérard and translated by Anderson, Alison. *History of the Surrealist Movement*. Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1997.
- 13- Friedman, M. David. *A Mind of its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis*. New York: Simon and Schuster Inc., 2001.

- 14- Hagber, G.L. *Art as Language: Wittgenstein, Meaning, and Aesthetic Theory*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998.
- 15- Legge, Elizabeth M. *Max Ernst: The Psychoanalytic Sources*. Michigan: U.M.I Research Press, 1989.
- 16- Mahon, Alyce. *Eroticism and Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- 17- Sawelson-Gorse, Naomi. *Women in DADA, Essays on Sex, Gender and Identity*. Massachusetts, MIT paperback edition, 2001.
- 18- Stone, Merlin. *When God was a Woman*. San Diego, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1976.
- 19- Swartz, David. *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago: The University Chicago Press, 1997.
- 20- www.mysteriousetruscans.com/theopompus/morality.html
Theopompus of Chios, 4th cent. BCE (Histories Book 43)
The Etruscan Sexuality and Morality, Internet access April 25, 2010.