

THE MATERIAL POLITICS OF IVORY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

THE MATERIAL POLITICS OF IVORY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

presented by Kaitlin R. Grimes,

candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Leslie Ray Johnson and Lesley Rae Grimes for fostering my love of art, and most importantly, for their immensely Scandinavian guidance.

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THE MATERIAL POLITICS OF IVORY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

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Abstract

This dissertation sets out to challenge the material history and biography of ivory in early modern Europe (ca. 1600-1800) and explores the mutable materialities of ivory as both a sculptural material and a vehicle of cultural meaning. As an often-peripheral material, ivory's history needs to be reimagined as a central and integral material player on the early modern European artistic stage. Throughout my dissertation, I upend the normative paradigms surrounding ivory to re-contextualize and reconceptualize the material as a performative mechanism of meaning for an object rather than as material used to create an object. This dissertation focuses on four main geographic areas of early modern Europe – the Austrian Habsburg Empire, the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, the Electorate of Saxony, and the British Empire – as an illustration of ivory's material power and also as an elucidation of non-dominant topographical spaces as centers of material artistic prowess. I explore mythological and religious sculptures, political portraits, ivory frigates, and ivory furniture to answer the question of “why ivory?” What made this African material so desirable for European commissioners? What intrinsic cultural, iconographic, and semiotic value did this natural material hold for elite European society? As I argue, ivory's intrinsic religious, mythological, political, and colonial materialities fashioned a material representative of the changing cultural ideologies of early modern Europe. Through the explication of specified narratives, ivory's agency and material potency shines as bright as its own polished surface.

Introduction

In the Spring of 2012, I received a seemingly innocuous email from my father; it was a link to a 21 January *Wall Street Journal* article, entitled, “What’s in a (Certain) Name? A Big Boost in Price.”¹ My father, a visual and material culture layperson, was curious about the artist discussed in the article, Matthias Steinl, and if I was familiar with his work, which I was not. Through this article, I was introduced to a prevalent early modern material that would consume my academic career: ivory. This simple exchange began an almost decade-long academic journey. From this short commentary about Matthias Steinl, a Habsburg Imperial court ivory artist, emerged a large and encompassing project on the materiality of ivory in early modern Europe and how a single material had the ability to project a mutable materiality depended upon geography, patronage, subject matter, and placement.

Focus of Study

This dissertation is an investigation into the materialities of ivory in early modern Europe as both a sculptural material and a purveyor and vehicle of cultural meaning. Centered around a single material, my dissertation expounds upon the various cultural, geographic, and positional materialities of ivory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. And rather than focusing on a single artist, nation, or type of object, I illustrate how it is possible to develop a working theory of how one material can perform specific societal facets and enact global knowledge through intrinsic and subsumed meanings.

¹ Judith H. Dobrzynski, “What’s in a (Certain) Name? A Big Boost in Price,” *Wall Street Journal* (New York City, NY), 21 January 2012.

Broadly, the objects in this study were created, commissioned, and displayed between 1600-1800, with a particular focus on ivory sculpture from the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century. I have chosen these time periods to my frame my project for a number of reasons: the blossoming of ivory carving and turning for elite collections; the increased importation of ivory into Europe through rapidly expanding colonial trade networks; and the development of a continually interconnected Europe that engaged with and transferred various artistic trends throughout the period.

To narrow the scope of the dissertation, I look at four specific geographic spaces in early modern Europe: Austria, Denmark-Norway, Saxony, and England. Each of these princely, monarchical, and imperial nations uniquely utilized ivory to fill their collection spaces, to educate their young heirs, and to decorate their homes. Early modern Habsburg Austria was perhaps the most prolific utilizer of ivory for artistic objects in this period. For centuries, the Emperors filled their *Kunst-* and *Schatzkammern* with virtuosic ivory sculptures highlighting the potential of the material for elite use. As can be seen in the newly reinstalled *Kunstkammer* today, the profusion of mythological, religious, and political ivories offered some type of intrinsic materiality that I explicate in the first and second chapters (Figure 0.1).

The second geographic space I detail is the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway. As a copious producer and purchaser of ivory sculpture, Denmark-Norway's ivory collection at Rosenborg Castle rivaled large European collections, like those housed in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the Louvre, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The small Scandinavian nation earnestly began their ivory accumulation in

the middle of the seventeenth century, which continued well into the nineteenth century. In a similar fashion to the Habsburgs, the Oldenburg dynasty employed ivory for mythological, religious, and political sculptures to decorate the now-defunct Royal *Kunstammer*. As I expound upon in second and third chapters, Denmark-Norway had a unique interconnected relationship to ivory through the establishment of the monarchy's highest chivalric order, the Order of the Elephant, and its small, but impactful, foray into the Atlantic slave and commodities trade. Thus, Denmark-Norway offers an intriguing view into how a single material became representative of a monarchy as a whole.

The Electorate of Saxony, situated in the eastern quadrant of modern Germany, utilized ivory for objects in their princely collections since the end of the sixteenth century. As one of the Central European initiators of prolific ivory consumption for court purposes, the Saxon collections are a treasure trove of early modern ivory sculpture. Like the Habsburgs and Oldenburgs, the Saxon Electors commissioned, purchased, and displayed numerous mythological, religious, and political ivory sculptures that encapsulate early modern European trends for the material. In the Grünes Gewölbe, located in the Electorate's capital city of Dresden, turned and carved ivory's project the sumptuous luxury of the Electors. And yet, there was another thematic thread that runs through the ivory collection: representations of colonial and "other" figures in ivory. As I detail in Chapter 3, Saxony strategically enacted ivory's multiple materialities to promote their political and colonial aims.

Finally, in the fourth chapter of the dissertation, I turn to England to investigate the island nation's connection to ivory through Indian imperial expansion. Unlike the three geographies discussed above, England did not necessarily have a long-standing or

continual ivory carving/turning tradition until the eighteenth century, or at least not in the same sense. In this chapter, England acts as an outlier for European ivory utilization and as a discussion point for ivory's steadily increasing coloniality in the wake of global expansion. And, unlike the previous chapters, my discussion regarding England does not revolve around the monarchy. Rather, I look towards the nabob – the derided high-ranking officials of the East India Trading Company – and how ivory's mutable materiality could promote more negative aspects of identity.

Together, these four spaces represent the inherent geo-cultural ideologies and practices that perpetuated the ever-evolving materiality of ivory in early modern Europe. But beyond the fact that each of these spaces were significant centers of artistic ivory production, there is another common thread that links these four geographies: aspects of empire. As this dissertation illustrates, ivory become the vehicle in which the presented nations could extol and exude their imperialism, both European and overseas. Furthermore, each state had its own unique relationship to the concept of empire, which allows – as this dissertation illustrates – me the opportunity to explicate how ivory fit into a number of imperial roles. In Austria, the Habsburg's role as the Holy Roman Emperor, the leader of the once vast and impressive European empire, used ivory to purport its legitimate claims as imperial leader. While Austria did not necessarily participate in overseas colonizations and the global expansion of their territories in the time frames I discuss, their imperialism was based on the European continent. Through Austria, I illustrate how ivory became connotative of European imperialism at home. In the Electorate of Saxony, another landlocked non-colonial/imperial state, ivory became symbolic of Saxony's imagined and sentimentalized empire – the one they wish they

possessed. While Saxony did not operate on a global imperial stage, the Electors did have a significant role in the perpetuation of the Holy Roman Empire as one of the nine electors for the imperial throne. The Saxons played with empire but were never fully involved within it; thus ivory became a material proponent of the Saxons' imaged coloniality and imperialism. The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, on the other hand, had a small but significant world-wide empire that ranged from the frigid Arctic waters to India, Africa, and the Caribbean. As one of the larger navies in Europe, Denmark-Norway participated in global trade and colonization to enhance their geopolitical standing both in Europe and globally. Their use of ivory not only connected the small Scandinavian nation to larger European artistic trends, but it also physically visualized Danish-Norwegian colonial supremacy at home. And finally, the British Empire was one of the most powerful and mighty European colonizers of the early modern period. The vast naval fleet and the continued forced colonization of global lands created a powerhouse of colonial power and economic might. Trends like chinoiserie and clothing made of Indian textiles steadily produced a conflated national British identity with its empire. But as imperial products (and peoples) continued to come to the English shore, native Britons became increasingly wary of imperialism at home. Ivory, as a particularly potent colonial produce, could, on the one hand, produce material images of luxurious exoticism and imaginative and idyllic coloniality; it could also, on the other hand, conjure images of rapacity and corruption and the uneasiness and negative aspects of imperialism. While the nature of each geographic space's connection to empire is not as prevalent in each chapter, it is an important qualifier to imagine while considering these objects.

State of the Literature

In modern art historical scholarship of the early modern era, there has been little work dedicated to the materiality of ivory as it relates to the reception of an object. There have been several notable ivory scholars who have written and researched ivory sculpture's inherent symbolism in regard to subject matter: the preeminent Christian Theuerkauff; The Victoria and Albert Museum sculpture curator, Marjorie Trusted; Former Senior Curator of the Rosenborg Castle, Jørgen Hein; Chief Curator of the Green Vault, Dresden, Jutta Kappel; and the now General Director of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Sabine Haag.² While each of these prominent scholars changed the nature of ivory scholarship and produced invaluable articles, books, and catalogues, they have overlooked a major element in early modern ivory sculptural practice. Particularly, as I argue throughout this dissertation, that ivory was its own symbolic vehicle in which cultural meaning was transmitted to the audience. Furthermore, the question of why ivory became so popular in this period and how the material itself became a purveyor of meaning for its commissioners has yet to be fully explored in academic scholarship. This dissertation thus plans to expand the work of these scholars to investigate the broader scope of ivory artistic production and how the material itself – rather than the subject matter – proved to be as powerful a conveyor of meaning as the subject.

² Sabine Haag and Franz Kirchweiger, *Habsburg Treasures at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna* (New York: The Vendome Press, 2013). Sabine Haag, *Kaiserliche Elfenbein: Matthias Steidl (1643/44-1727) in der Kunstkammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums*, (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 2007). Jørgen Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle: Catalog of Carved and Turned Ivories and Narwhal Tusks in the Royal Danish Collection, 1600-1875*, (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2018).

Methodology

To fully explicate the role ivory played within early modern European elite circles, I have utilized a material culture approach to aid in the identification of material understandings and the projection of those associations to the audience. Throughout the dissertation, I frequently utilize the term “materiality.” For my purposes, I define this word as the symbolic and culturally built narratives of a material. The materiality of an object or an entire material operates on two different spheres: the physical and the immaterial. The physical encompasses the surface characteristics of the material – the physical qualities – that alert viewers and artists to the appropriate material designation. The immaterial, on the other hand, are the societal associations, the geopolitical connotations, the semiotic systems and values, and the cultural ideologies attached to a material/object. The materiality of an object/material has the ability to purport changing ideologies viewpoints and narratives that encapsulate a historical moment. For instance, eighteenth-century hard paste porcelain not only held economic value through its enviable translucent surface, but also connoted the societal wants of taste, refinement, elite society, erudition, and the exoticism of Asia. Thus the physical allowed the immaterial to become tangible. For ivory, the potent and singular surface qualities present on the natural tusk fashioned an artistic medium that could and did purport a variety of cultural associations that both continued and fluctuated throughout the early modern period. The term materiality is broad and fits into a number of various categories, as Michael Yonan explicates in a forthcoming article.³ For this dissertation, however, I utilize the term strategically to educe and elucidate how a singular material

³ Michael Yonan, “Describing the Materiality of a Sèvres Teapot,” in *Materialitet*, ed. Elin Manker and Mårten Snickare (Stockholm: Stockholm University Press, *forthcoming*).

could carry specific temporal and geographic connotations that shone through the very surface of the material. While ivory certainly had immovably attached significations throughout the early modern period in Europe, each topographical space I discuss had their own specific associations they ascribed to the material, which I describe as the “mutability” of ivory or its continually changing immateriality. Ivory had the material power the change and modify its immaterial qualities to conform to its geopolitical sphere.

The mutable materiality of ivory, as I posit in each chapter, propagated a myriad of meanings and readings for each object that mutated throughout the object’s biography. I use the materiality of ivory to further promote the symbolic nature of the subject matter to the object’s early modern audience. As I will show, subject and material worked in tandem to produce objects semiotically-charged with religious, political, and colonial materiality that encapsulated specific aspects of early modern European history. In order to conceptualize my argument to support ivory’s materialities, there have been several integral sources that I have turned to in order to develop my working material culture methodology for this dissertation.

Jules David Prown’s “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method” is a particularly influential source for the development of my methodology.⁴ In this article, Prown attempts to define material culture and promptly lays out a working methodology for scholars to use in their approach to the study of often neglected objects. The three-pronged approach of description, deduction, and speculation has completely transformed my object-comprehension process. As such, Prownian

⁴ Jules Prown, “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method,” *Winterthur Portfolio* Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring 1982): 1-19.

material culture theory has informed the way I look at and receive ivory as a concurrent transmitter of cultural ideologies and meaning to the subject matter. Through Prown's approach, my dissertation details the multivalent subsumed materialities that have been imbued within the ivory and how the material articulated meaning to the viewer to enhance the meaning of the depicted subject.

Malcom Baker, a specialist in eighteenth-century British sculpture, is yet another scholar whose work influenced this dissertation. In his 2015 book, *The Marble Index: Roubiliac and Sculptural Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Baker not only illustrates the placement of the sculptural bust and statue within a central cultural context, but also discusses the notion of spectatorship.⁵ Using a combination of reception and material culture theory, Baker is able to elucidate new conventions of viewer engagement with sculpture in the eighteenth century, particularly through primary documentation of the era as well as the processes of sculptural production. It was through Baker's discussion of viewer engagement and the new centrality of the sculptural bust and statue that I began to rearrange my thoughts on how the spectator perceived, consumed, and understood ivory sculpture. Through Baker's text, I concluded that the conveyance of symbolic meaning through the medium is wholly dependent on the viewer's engagement with object – for without such a relationship, the larger cultural understanding of the material is lost. Thus, much of my object discussion is based upon a geographic and a specific cultural milieu; for the conception of ivory in seventeenth-century Austria does not necessarily translate to eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway or England.

⁵ Malcolm Baker, *The Marble Index: Roubiliac and Sculptural Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

While Baker's book on marble enhanced my own scholastic interpretation of sculpture, I have also been quite entranced by his discussion on small-scale ivory. In his first article on the material, "The Ivory Multiplied: small-scale sculpture and its reproductions in the eighteenth century," Baker utilizes ivory sculpture as the vehicle to illustrate the ways in which sculptural reproductions operate and the implication of the original, the copy, and authorship. In Baker's second discussion on ivory, entitled "Ivory Print and the Aesthetics of Devotion: Prints after Pierre-Simon Jaillot, Sculptor in Ivory," Baker articulates that while ivory sculptures often appropriated compositions from prints, the reverse is rarely true, but illustrates this rare reverse with a discussion of two prints produced after French artist Louis Licherie's painting, which was based on a Pierre-Simon Jaillot ivory crucifixion composition (Figure 0.2). The importance of these articles to the study of ivory is not in its methodological approaches, but rather in the author's attention to the subject matter by placing ivory within a larger sculptural setting and its connection to other artistic media. What has become particularly influential is the notion of ivory's reproducibility as well as its relationship to other artistic forms. I have begun to question not only how compositions in ivory were conceived and thus constructed, but also the idea of originality within these sculptures and if this uniqueness in form played a larger role in the reception of these works.

Finally, Michael Baxandall's *Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* was especially influential in the methodological development of this dissertation.⁶

Baxandall's book is an innovative investigation into an often forgotten about material and set of sculptors, analyzed through material culture theory (albeit a burgeoning

⁶ Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

methodology at the time). Although Baxandall discusses the development of limewood sculpture and artists, it is his attention to the material that I posit changed the nature of sculptural material studies. Baxandall offers several integral elements that promoted his thesis: the biological breakdown of the material to provide an etymology and wider cultural understanding; the economy and availability of limewood; the differences between lime and other woods; how to properly carve lime and the most effective tools used; the surfaces qualities of lime; the specific examples and genres of limewood sculpture; and the cultural understanding of the material to Renaissance Germany. It is Baxandall who has not only transformed the way I view sculptures and materials, but it is also him that will inform the organization and methodological configuration of my dissertation.

This dissertation does not, however, follow any single methodological or theoretical approach devotedly. Rather, I have utilized elements of various art historical and sculptural studies to suggest new ways of thinking about ivory as a material and as art.

Notes on Ivory

Before I continue with a breakdown of the dissertation's argument, I would like to elucidate several elements of ivory that are imperative for understanding the nature of the material for each chapter. This fundamental information provides a crucial background from which my proposed materiality derives.

The Structure of Ivory

To begin, the biological composition of ivory is an indelible aspect of the material's artistic prowess in the early modern period. As a natural material, ivory originates from the elephant – both the African and Indian species. Protruding from the mouth of the mammal, ivory acts as a defensive mechanism and as a quotidian instrument for digging, lifting, and obtaining nourishment. Ivory tusks are parallel to human teeth in their compositional makeup; they contain approximately fifty-five percent calcium phosphate and forty-five percent natural protein.⁷ Consistently formed, the material is hygroscopic, or that the material “absorbs or emits moisture depending on relative humidity of its surroundings.”⁸ Ivory is a hard yet malleable material that provides a desired workable surface as it can be carved or turned without total fear of cracking or breaking, unlike other precious materials found in early modern European collections. Ivory's most recognizable element is its off-white and slightly yellowed warm hue. In juxtaposition to other white materials, like cool-toned porcelain or marble, ivory's warm coloration provided an ideal material vehicle for the depiction of skin. While the material was not only used as a replacement for skin in the early modern period, its representative epidermal qualities certainly ingratiated the material into elite circles.

In the early modern period, hunters and merchants obtained ivory from two distinct species, the African and the Indian elephant; but, both species of elephant ivory had distinct biological compositions that prized one over the other. Ivory from the

⁷ Jørgen Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle: Catalog of Carved and Turned Ivories and Narwhal Tusks in the Royal Danish Collection, 1600-1875* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2018), 1.

⁸ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle*, 1.

African elephant was much more desirable in this period as the tusks were larger, less brittle, and more brilliantly off-white compared to the soft Indian variety that yellowed more quickly.⁹ This compositional difference can be seen between these two objects from the *Kunstammer* in the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna (Figures 0.3-0.4). In the Furienmeister's *Flag Waving Woman*, the ivory has a slight yellowed tint as is commonplace with African ivory; on the other hand, the statue of *the Good Shepherd* from seventeenth-century Goa is much more yellowed, indicating that the ivory most likely originated from India. This is not to say, however, that most deeply yellowed ivory can be categorized as India; both African and India ivory are prone to yellowing when kept in dark, unlit spaces.

The other striking difference that classifies a material as ivory is the surface patterning, known as Schreger Lines, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 4. Schreger Lines oscillating wave-like formations are created as the elephant matures and the tusks grow to fit the large mammal. Ivory tusks are comprised of various dentine layers surrounding a central pulp-filled cavity, almost like rings on a tree, with the newest layers closest to the cavity. These various layers can be unfurled from each other and provide the artist with thin sheets of ivory to carve reliefs or to ornament furniture. As Hein notes, "growth takes place from within and in conical form, . . . the tusk is built up from close-set layers of hollow cones that can be seen as patterns of circles or growth lines in a cross-section of a tusk . . . the tusk is permeated by immense numbers of close-packed, wavy, filament-like tubes, the so-called *foramina*, which radiate from the center of the

⁹ Hein, 1.

tusk.”¹⁰ The centralized tubes provide the elasticity to the ivory that made it desirable for artistic creations.¹¹ Tusks can either be broken down into parts for the use in several objects or carved/turned as a whole. As such, the natural origination of ivory along with its ability made into artificially enhanced objects created a material fervor in early modern Europe.¹²

The Ivory Trade in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Europe

The use of ivory has been an integral part in the material culture of Europe since antiquity. The material itself comes from the tusk of elephants with the mammal’s age determining its length and width, as tusk continue to grow throughout an elephant’s life span.¹³ As a robust and flexible material, ivory has the ability to be worked in many difference fashions – like carved, etched, sliced, heated and ground – and the durability to be highly polished into a clean off-white material.¹⁴ Most of the ivory utilized in Europe during the early modern period, and potentially in the previous centuries, came from the African elephant, specifically the *Loxodonta Africana* (the bush or savannah elephant), the *Loxodonta cyclotis* (the forest elephant), or the *Elephas maximus indicus* (Indian Elephant).¹⁵ Perhaps an important equivocation in the obtainment of ivory during this

¹⁰ Hein, 1.

¹¹ Hein, 1.

¹² While the physical characteristics of ivory are indelible to its designation, there are several other materials that could reference or possibly be mistaken for ivory, especially bone and some horn. Bone, in particular, has the same yellowed-white coloration, but lacks the natural patterning. It is very possible that many early modern viewers mistook bone for ivory. But does this misidentification negate the material associations of ivory? Is it enough that the material seems to be ivory or is believed to be ivory? I would argue that this is enough for the material to be believed to be ivory for the potent materiality to be enacted. The immaterial qualities of ivory were often societal and constructed and thus the constructed gaze and explication of the material was not wholly dependent upon its physicality, but rather was dependent upon the viewer’s cultural comprehension of ivory.

¹³ Martha Chaiklin, “Ivory in World History – Early Modern Trade in Context,” *History Compass* 8, no. 6 (2010): 530.

¹⁴ Chaiklin, “Ivory in World History,” 531.

¹⁵ Chaiklin, 531.

period is that not all ivory was acquired through hunting, but also from the dissection of the elephant after its death.¹⁶ Although the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw an upturn in the ivory trade, this was by no means the only massive influx of the material to the Continent: with the expansion of Venetian trade, ivory became a popularized medium during the tenth through the fourteenth centuries, and thus situated ivory's continued use through the Middle Ages.¹⁷ While Venice's hold over the trade markets slowly began to decline in the later centuries of the early modern period, several other countries with large trade networks took on the mantle of ivory importation.

There is an extensive literature surrounding the ivory trade with scholars particularly concentrating on the beginning of Portuguese colonization in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the substantial amounts of ivory exportation from Africa and India in the nineteenth century. A famous study on Eastern African ivory, Abdul Sheriff's *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1830* notes several interesting aspects about the African ivory trade in the eighteenth century. Particularly, the author illustrates that ivory had been exported from this area to the Mediterranean as early as the second century BCE.¹⁸ By the seventh century CE, India and China also emerged as a major market for East African ivory as the indigenous Asian elephant's ivory was too hard and brittle for carving.¹⁹ As al-Mas'udi wrote in the tenth century, "It is from this [Zanj] country that tusks come weighing 50 lbs. or more. They Usually go to Oman and from there are sent

¹⁶ Chaiklin, 532.

¹⁷ Chaiklin, 536. For more information on the medieval ivory trade, please see:

¹⁸ Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1830*, (James Curry Ltd., 1987), 78.

¹⁹ Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 78.

to China and India. This is the chief trade route, and if it were not so, ivory would be common in Muslim land.”²⁰ As he states, African traders preferred the Mozambique Islands because of the Zambezi River, which the Captain of Mozambique held in monopoly that allowed the prices for the tusks to become more competitive. As such, much of the Eastern ivory trade came through Mozambique and their islands. And as Chapter 4 illustrates, copious amounts of East African ivory were traded with India, where many European trading companies purchased the material to bring back to the homeland.

Another important source for the ivory trade in the early modern period is David Birmingham’s *Central Africa to 1870: Zambezia, Zaire, and the South Atlantic*. As Birmingham states, Central Africa had been isolated until the late fifteenth century with the opening of the Atlantic Ocean to Europe, particularly through Portuguese colonization. The main objective of the European trading powers, Birmingham argues, was to obtain minerals comparable to the Western African gold mines, but settled for ivory, palm oil, dyewood, and other exotic curiosities.²¹ One of the main areas of Portuguese concentration was the Kingdom of Kongo, a kingdom in which ivory was an important status of wealth.²²

By the seventeenth century, the Portuguese monopoly on Central Africa diminished as the Dutch opened up trade with competitive prices. Beyond the Kingdom of Kongo, Loango became a plentiful source for ivory.²³ The Loango coast,

²⁰ Sheriff, 78.

²¹ David Birmingham, *Central Africa to 1870: Zambezia, Zaire, and the South Atlantic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981): 25.

²² Birmingham, *Central Africa to 1870*, 31.

²³ Birmingham, 41.

geographically situated between the Zaire estuary and the Gabon forest, had been an active trading spot before the arrival of the Europeans. Through their trade of salt and copper, Loango “supplied the local and coastal traders with elephant tails, needed for charms and bracelets, and with ivory used for ornamental carvings and musical instruments.”²⁴ The Loango ivory trade exponentially expanded with the increase in Dutch demand; as coastal elephants declined, traders looked inland for more sources and thus required new trade networks to be formed.²⁵ Due to lack of a competing slave trade, Loango created long-distance trade routes that supplied ivory for as far as the Teke plateau to possibly the upper Ogowe basin.²⁶ Birmingham notes that many of the traders did not buy the ivory directly from traders, but rather, there was a complex system of exchange that benefitted and stimulated multiple layers of society, a concept that will be further explored in Chapter 4.²⁷

In 1982, Harvey M. Feinberg and Marion Johnson collated and analyzed primary documentation of the Dutch ivory trade from 1699-1725 and provided perhaps one of the most cogent understandings of ivory during the early modern period.²⁸ They were perhaps the first scholars to study ivory as a tradable material rather than just a line item on an inventory, the so-called “...and Ivory” Complex. Although other scholars had attempted to delve into this same type of study, like Philip Curtin and Walter Rodney,

²⁴ Birmingham, 69.

²⁵ Birmingham, 70.

²⁶ Birmingham, 70.

²⁷ Birmingham, 70.

²⁸ Harvey M. Feinberg and Marion Johnson, “The West African Ivory Trade during the Eighteenth Century: The ‘...and Ivory’ Complex,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 15, no. 3 (1982): 435-453.

much of the primary documentation regarding trade inventories was limited.²⁹ As such, much of the following discussion on the trade routes and inflow of ivory into Europe of during this period will be taken from this source. The Dutch West India Company was perhaps the largest importer of ivory during the early modern period, which supplied the material for a number of countries throughout Europe.³⁰ A considerable amount of the Dutch trading company purchased ivory came from the Western coast of Africa, specifically from the stretch between Senegal River and Cameroon. By the end of the sixteenth century, the Dutch monopolized the early modern ivory trade thus challenging the Portuguese supremacy of the region. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Dutch trading companies had established Fort Nassau in Mori, which acted as their trade offices on the Gold Coast. In the middle of the same century, the Dutch had driven the Portuguese from the Gold Coast thus creating a market usurpation that the country would hold until the 1730s. But such a dominion over colonized parts of Western Africa could not be maintained. As Feinberg and Johnson states,

For a short period of time, the Dutch also had strong points or fortresses along the West Coast from Argium to Angola; after the middle of the seventeenth century, however, Portugal regained its forts in Angola, the French took over the northern possessions on the upper Guinea coast, and various north European nations, especially England, effectively competed with the Netherlands West India Company of the Gold Coast.³¹

This transnational trade conglomeration did not stop the Dutch from maintaining eleven to fifteen separate forts on the Gold Coast. This suggests that while other nations began

²⁹ See Philip Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the era of the slave trade*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975). Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).

³⁰ Feinberg and Johnson, "The West African Ivory Trade during the Eighteenth Century," 435. All subsequent information is gleaned from this source unless otherwise indicated. I will indicate specific page numbers if any direct quotation is used.

³¹ Feinberg and Johnson, 437.

to delve into the African markets and shared in the Netherlands's import and export business, the Dutch remained one of the top traders of the region. The headquarters for the West India Company were located in the fort known as Elmina on the Gold Coast, which became the collection and distribution center for the Dutch trade goods. In order to move the commodity purchases to Europe, the cargo was shipped through two trade routes: first, from the Netherlands to West Africa to the New World and then back to the Netherlands, with slaves as the majority of its cargo; second, the Netherlands to West Africa and then directly back to the Netherlands, with ivory as one of the main goods carried on these voyages. The shipping and trading routes of ivory beyond the Dutch companies will be further elucidated in Chapter 3.

Looking at the shipping manifests from the second trade route during 1699-1725, Feinberg and Johnson were able to recreate and analyze the amount of Dutch ivory inflow into Europe. The authors state emphatically that this is only a representation of the West India Company and not of any other country's importers, for, as the authors state, there were no records or inventories of their journeys.³² As the authors show, more than 1,500,000 Dutch pounds of ivory were exported from Africa and imported into Europe between 1699-1725, with about 59,000 pounds of ivory sent to the Netherlands annually.³³ However, there were significant fluctuations in the amount of ivory acquired each year; as Marloes Rijkelijhuizen stated, "between 1675 and 1731 the WIC (Dutch

³² While such a statement may have been correct in the early 1980s, this does not necessarily reflect the current status of ivory importation from countries like Portugal and England. I am currently unaware of any such inventories detailing the trade routes and amount of goods, but that is not to say that it does not exist.

³³ After researching the Dutch pound, its weight is almost equivalent to the modern measurement of the pound. So the 1.5 million Dutch pound mark is around the same weight as it would be today.

West Trading Company) imported a total of 2,955,533 lbs. of ivory with a market value of 2,512,280 guilders from the Gold Coast.”³⁴ With the annual fluctuations in ivory imported each year, the artistic market was often dependent upon the amount and quality of ivory shipped into the Dutch ports. Once unloaded from the various ships, the ivory tusks were then sold either directly to artistic workshops or markets or were sold at auction; ivory demand thus hindered the art market. Ivory was often purchased in varying sizes, from full tusks known as *tanden* to smaller tusks known as *crevel* or *scrivillos*. It is also important to note the weight of the tusks for the number of tusks exported can be interpolated: the average full tusk weighted about 33.55 pounds each and *scrivillos* weighted on average about 5.8 pounds.³⁵

In order to acquire ivory, the West Indian Company traded other goods, ranging from gunpowder, tobacco, cloth, alcohol, and metal. As Feinberg and Johnson explicate, “1,514 pounds of gunpowder purchased 1,590 pounds of ivory and 255-4/5 chests of salt purchased 3,837 pounds of ivory.”³⁶ Once the ivory landed on European shores, the luxurious material was sold in a variety of ways. In England, raw ivory was often sold at auction in batches. In Denmark-Norway, ivory was offloaded from the returning slave ships and sold in the Copenhagen marketplaces surrounding the harbor or purchased from the Dutch. After the sale of ivory to a multitude of buyers, ivory was transformed into a luxurious material that reflected the aesthetics of the early modern period.

³⁴ Marloes Rijkelijhuizen, “Whales, Walruses, and Elephants: Artisans in Ivory, Baleen, and Other Skeletal Materials in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Amsterdam,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 13 (2009): 409-429.

³⁵In my estimated mathematical calculations, there were between 40,000-45,000 tusks of ivory imported into Europe during the early eighteenth century..

³⁶ Feinberg and Johnson, “The West African Ivory Trade during the Eighteenth Century,” 443.

As will be discussed throughout this dissertation, ivory was a luxurious commodity that served as representative material culture for its elite owner. This becomes more apparent when thought of in conjunction with the long and arduous sea journeys the ivory had to sustain in order to make it to European shores, the ever-increasing price due to higher demand for the material, and the potentially limited supply based on a specific animal population's growth.

Once the ivory tusks reached European markets, the material soon turned to the various ivory workshops throughout the Continent.³⁷ Of the many centers of production, Central Europe became a hub of ivory carvings and turnings, specifically in the court strongholds of Vienna, Dresden, Munich, and Augsburg in Southern Bavaria.³⁸ The material also found favor in the knife and comb production in Amsterdam, the courts around Paris, the seaside Northern French village of Dieppe, London, various Italian courts, and Copenhagen.³⁹ The Austrian Habsburg Empire and the surrounding German principalities produced a variety of objects in ivory, such as: drinking tankards, combs, knife hilts, miniatures, personal devotional sculptures, medallions, eating utensils, compasses, flasks, snuff rasps, mythological depictions, scientific and anatomical manikins, furniture, busts, propagandistic monarchical sculpture, and turned cups. As

³⁷ I have yet to find any specific documentation of how ivory moved throughout Europe. As such, any forthcoming assertions on the nature of trade within Europe are merely inference.

³⁸ This list of cities has been produced through my own research of ivory.

³⁹ For more information on ivory production in these locations, see: Rijkelijkhuizen, "Whales, Walruses, and Elephants: Artisans in Ivory, Baleen, and Other Skeletal Materials in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Amsterdam," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 13 (2009): 409-429. Charles Avery, *David le Marchand, 1674-1726: 'An Ingenious Man for Carving in Ivory'*, (London: Lund Humphries Publishers, 1996.)

this list illustrates, the mutable material could be used in a number of different artistic techniques in the early modern period.

The question now remains, how did the ivory move from the ports of the colonial powers, like Portugal, England, and the Netherlands into non-colonial/late developing colonial geographies? Although the answer most likely derives from multiple sources, I wish to offer a few considerations for the intra-European trade of ivory in the early modern period.

The ivory trade into Central Europe and Austria is complex to map. As the Habsburg Empire never colonized Africa in the early modern period, there was no true direct trade between the two lands. My assertion, however, lies with the Dutch Trading Company's vast European reach. As ivory began to flood the markets in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I posit that the Netherlands were the Habsburg's main ivory source. Amsterdam emerged as one of the largest ports for Dutch colonial goods and was thus a prime locale for various Central European courts to obtain exotic commodities. As David Birmingham wrote, "Holland had many advantages over Portugal as a commercial power, since its control of the Rhine route into Germany provided large markets for colonial imports and a steady supply of manufactured commodities in exchange."⁴⁰ With Spanish Habsburg control over the Spanish Netherlands, Habsburg Austria most likely had a valuable trade agreement with the Dutch Republic. As such, it is probable that ivory was transported down the Rhine River and connected to Central Europe through the Danube River. Another possible source for ivory in the later part of the seventeenth century could have been the port at Ostend, which became a popular colonial port in the

⁴⁰ Birmingham, *Central Africa to 1870*, 69.

Spanish Netherlands and later the site of the short-lived Austrian Habsburg Ostend Company.⁴¹ Whichever port is the case, it is most probable – and thus my argument – that a majority of the Habsburg’s imported ivory originated in the West African ports of the Dutch Trading Company and travelled through Amsterdam/Ostend into Vienna and the German courts. The other geographic areas of this dissertation – Denmark-Norway and England – trade obtainment of ivory will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

Ivory and the Development of a Princely Luxury Commodity

One aspect of the ivory that is often glossed over in academic literature is its material function as an early modern commodity and its subsequent relationship to the object. As Arjun Appadurai notes, a commodity is an object of economic value.⁴² As a traded material, ivory fits well into the mold of a commodity. From the original elephant hunters, to the African ivory traders exchanging other goods with European traders, to courts purchasing tusks for turning and carving, ivory’s role as a commodity has been cemented in history. While scholars have focused on the attribution, iconography, and collection interpretations of ivory sculpture, it is important not to overlook its status as a tradable good.

Specifically, ivory can be categorized as a luxurious commodity, as per Appadurai’s formula. The author states that luxury goods are not to be considered “necessities”, but as “goods whose principal purpose is rhetorical and social, goods that

⁴¹ While the Ostend Company did import various exotic goods, though not necessarily from Africa, its founding charter is far too late for a majority of the ivory produced in Vienna.

⁴² Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction”, in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspectives*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3.

are simply incarnated signs.”⁴³ He argues that luxury goods occupy a special register of consumption. Signs of this register include:

...One, restriction, either by price or by law, to elites; two, complexity of acquisition, which may or may not be a function of real ‘scarcity’; three, semiotic virtuosity, that is, the capacity to signal fairly complex social messages; four, specialized knowledge as a prerequisite for their appropriate consumption; and five, a high degree of linkage of their consumption to body, person, and personality.⁴⁴

Each qualification of a luxury commodity fits directly with the ivory material. Appadurai also argues that fashion often dictated the demand of luxury commodities, thus elucidating ivory’s changing favor throughout the early modern period. The author notes that commodities created their own economies as can be seen through ivory’s continually high demand and its status as luxurious and exotic. Ivory’s role as a luxurious commodity would have been understood in early modern Europe with the continued expansion of colonial trade and the influx of colonial goods. The material’s status as luxury was further enhanced through the owners of the ivory objects; in the early modern period, most ivory sculpture belonged to elite members of society, which ultimately designed the material as luxury. Thus, as this section has illustrated, there are several fundamental aspects to ivory materiality that presupposed the specific geo-cultural materialities this dissertation discusses.

Overview of Dissertation Chapters

This dissertation consists of four distinct yet interconnected chapters on the mutable materialities of ivory. Throughout this project, I illustrate that historical,

⁴³ Appadurai, “Introduction,” 38.

⁴⁴ Appadurai, 38.

cultural, chronological, and geographic elements provided the integral material comprehensions of ivory in early modern Europe. The intimate relationship between ivory and its utilizing culture could not necessarily apply to another; and yet, there are generalized themes that continually appear in each case study. Thus, ivory was both mutable and specific; in one geographic space, ivory could gain meaning in one decade and eliminate certain connotations in another, while simultaneously performing as a material representative for its elite commissioners through the entire period. As this dissertation illuminates, ivory was not “one size fits all”; rather, the material constantly underwent socio-cultural changes that built upon pre-existing material ideologies. In early modern Europe, ivory’s variability and specificity fashioned a material that could inhabit many cultural spaces.

The first chapter looks at ivory in seventeenth-century Habsburg Austria and its religious and mythological materialities. With objects ranging from 1620-1750, I argue that ivory’s antique and medieval associations with divine and imperial flesh continued into early modern Austria as a promotional material for Habsburg imperial identity. Throughout Habsburg control over the Holy Roman Empire and much of Central Europe, the Emperors continually reasserted their territorial and imperial domination through elaborate created genealogies that purported ancient Roman and Biblical heritage. In conjunction with these genealogies, the Habsburg’s role as the defender of the faith through their appointment as Holy Roman Emperor developed an intense Catholic piety, known as the *Pietas Austriaca*. As I suggest, ivory emerged as the imperial material in which to promote and project both aspects of Habsburg identity. Through discussions on the antique mythological and the medieval religious connotations of the material, I situate

ivory as the imperative material vehicle for the seventeenth-century Habsburg Emperor through ivory's understanding as divine and imperialized flesh.

In continuance of ivory as flesh, the second chapter turns towards ivory political portraits in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Austria and Denmark-Norway. Through the material's connotations as flesh, this chapter argues that ivory's mythological and religious materiality was reconceptualized to become indicative of monarchical flesh. Rather than the generalized notion of ivory as divine and imperial, in early modern Austria and Denmark-Norway, the material became a much more personalized and individualized representational mechanism for the display of identity. I suggest that ivory developed into such a material vehicle through two aspects of monarchical character: the introduction of ivory lathe turning into princely education; and ivory's relationship to the monarch through its classifiable and categorizable placement within the monarchical *Kunstkammern*. Thus, as I illustrate, ivory developed into an appropriate material for monarchical representations in the early modern period.

The third chapter continues the notion of ivory as flesh. But, rather than discussing the material as a monarchical or princely material agent, I situate ivory within a colonial paradigm through the lens of two monumental ivory frigates. I argue that through ivory's connotation as white European flesh, the material became a juxtapositional tool in the display of "otherness" in the *Kunstkammern* of Denmark-Norway and the Electorate of Saxony. I established ivory's relationship to the growing-colonial world in the early modern period through a detailed analysis of ivory's obtainment and Atlantic journey alongside slaves; as such, the material not only gained an apparent global-ness but was also stained with the European domination and

supremacy over the “other.” With ivory’s codification as white flesh, the material arose as a juxtapositional yet interconnected material for the representation of enslaved and colonial skin in early modern Denmark-Norway and Saxony.

The last chapter of the dissertation acts as an outlier in the ivory’s narrative history. Moving away from continental Europe, this chapter focuses on the second half of the eighteenth-century in England and colonial furniture made in British India. This chapter questions what happens when the material signification of ivory turns negative through its association with a specific group of people. In the British eighteenth century, colonial expansion created an influx of foreign goods that both delighted native Britons and also produced a certain anxiety and uneasiness with the empire. Particularly reviled, high-ranking officials of the East India Trading Company became public fodder for the British citizenry through their perceived Anglo-Indian hybridity. Known as nabobs, these men exemplified the trope of the corrupt economic usurper, who bought his way into elite favor through mysteriously gained wealth. As this chapter illustrates, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture encapsulated every despised nabobian characteristic. Unlike the beloved objects of the chinoiserie trend, these ivory pieces represented negative colonial luxury through their association with the nabob. Together, these four chapters explicate the astounding mutability of ivory in early modern Europe.

Chapter 1

Imperialized Divine Flesh: Early Modern Austrian Religious and Mythological Ivory Sculpture as Material Signification of Habsburg Identity

Religious and mythological subjects became the *de jour* thematic and iconographic norm in the visual arts in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The dictates of the Council of Trent – the Catholic Church’s response to the growing threat of the Protestant Reformation – informed artists in the proper ways to depict biblical subjects. Artists like Caravaggio (1571-1610), Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653), and Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) created a visceral and literal style that inundated churches and the private homes of Church patrons, while elite patronage circles clamored for mythological subjects for their homes. The continued search for classical aesthetics and allegorical figures juxtaposed with the religious emotionality of Catholic artworks created a unique style that pervaded seventeenth-century Europe.

Seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Austria produced a staggering amount of religious and mythologically-themed ivory sculptures. Crucifixes, scenes of the Passion, biblical stories, and images of saints flooded the Habsburg collections and proclaimed the two main thrusts of imperial identity: The *Pietas Austriaca* and their mythic genealogy. The Habsburg dynasty was well-known for their promotion of imperial propaganda through artistic endeavors, like the print culture of Emperor Maximilian I (1459-1519), and the use of ivory fits well into the narrative of imperial self-promotion. This chapter questions the connection between the imperium and ivory and explores why the material became a prominent medium to a century of Habsburg rulers. Why was ivory utilized for many religious and mythologically-themed objects created for the *Kunst-* and *Schatzkammer*? What material function did ivory serve the

Habsburgs in the promotion of their imperial agenda? Could a single material provide the material signification of the two major elements of Habsburg imperial identity?

This chapter looks at religious and mythological ivories produced in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (ca. 1620-1750) and how these objects functioned within an imperial setting. I argue that the ivories served not only as statements of antique erudition or religious piety but functioned as imperial propaganda in the Habsburg quest for progenic legitimacy. Their subsequent placement in the imperial collections acted as the material manifestation of the Habsburg's mythic genealogy and their intense Catholic piety. While this chapter details the religious and mythological ivories in separate contexts, the Habsburgs created these sculptures to serve a similar function: the material identification of the religious and ancestral aims of the imperial family – the *Pietas Austriaca* and their mythic ancestry.

In early modern Central Europe, the Habsburgs continued to assert their territorial and ancestral claims on the Holy Roman Empire as the legitimate heirs by producing vast – and often imagined – genealogies that connected the Habsburg Emperors to the Tree of Jesse, Aeneas, and the Roman Emperors. I contend that it is through the Habsburg harkening of this mythic genealogy that allowed ivory's vibrant potency to enact the Habsburg's imperial agenda. With an imagined ancestry, the mythological ivories created a tangible connection to antiquity through the writings of ancient authors and the material reference to well-known ivory sculptures from Greece and Rome. The Habsburgs created dynastic links to the previous Holy Roman Emperors – like the Carolingians and the Merovingians – to connect themselves with the continuous Empire and with Christ through Davidian ancestry. Thus, the religious ivories played a

significant material role in the promotion of Habsburg legitimacy and their rightful place as Holy Roman Emperors. Ivory also promulgated the Habsburgs profound religious devotion – the *Pietas Austriaca* – and illustrated their role as the defenders of the Catholic faith. Writers of medieval exegetical texts speculated on the meanings of ivory and the material’s connection to promote religious figures, like King Solomon and the Virgin Mary. Many of these associations lived on in the early modern period and informed the ways viewers received ivory sculptures. With the religious, ancient, and ancestral connotations of ivory, the Habsburgs had an invaluable opportunity to turn one material into a signifier for their imperial identity and agenda.

With this chapter, and this dissertation as a whole, I plan to investigate the broader scope of ivory artistic production and how the material itself proved to be just as valuable as a conveyor of meaning as the subject itself. In order to illustrate ivory’s role in the imperial agenda, I divided this chapter into three sections. The first section examines the concept of mythic genealogy and how the Habsburgs utilized this concept in the formation of their imperial identity. I utilize the work of Marie Tanner and Larry Silver and posit the ways in which ivory was the material continuation of mythic genealogy. The second section of this chapter looks at the mythological ivories in the Habsburg collections and provides a detailed discussion of ivory’s usage in the Ancient Mediterranean world with a focus on Greece and Rome. Utilizing the writings of ancient authors – like Ovid, Homer, and Dio Cassius– and the illustrious antique instances of ivory sculpture, I illustrate how the ancient world conceptualized ivory as a replication of divine flesh in a political context. Then, I turn to three ivory sculpture case studies: the Furienmeister’s *Phoenix*, ca. 1610/20; Johan Ignaz Bendl’s *Aeneas flees with Anchises*

from Troy, ca. 1684; and Jakob Auer's *Apollo and Daphne*, before 1688 (Figures 1.1-1.3). I finish this section with a discussion of how ivory – through its association of divine flesh – became a material transmitter of imperial genealogy.

The concluding section of this chapter examines seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Austrian religious ivories. I begin my discussion with a look at the medieval understandings of ivory known through exegetical texts and look towards important medieval ivory examples – like the Throne of St. Peter – to illustrate these medieval associations and posit how such connotations could have extended to the early modern period. I then turn to Habsburg religious piety and practice to understand ivory's production milieu. To fully explicate ivory's material role in Habsburg piety, I further subdivide this section into separate discussions about two imperial collections: The *Schatzkammer* (the Imperial Treasury) and the *Kunstkammer* (the Imperial Art Cabinet). I argue that ivory acted in specific propagandistic ways in each collection. Specifically, I contend that the Crucifixion scenes in the *Schatzkammer* recalled ivory's Marian materiality through her role as the Throne of Wisdom – becoming the New Testament Throne of Solomon – which directly related to three aspects of the *Pietas Austriaca*: The Veneration of the Cross; the Veneration of the Virgin; and the Veneration of Saints. I look at three examples that highlight ivory's Marian materiality: the Furienmeister's *Cross*, ca. 1610/20; Leonhard Kern's *Crucifixion*, ca. 1626; and Matthias Steinl's *Fragment of a Crucifixion Group*, ca 1685/87 (Figures 1.4-1.6). I then detail the functionality of ivory in the Habsburg *Kunstkammer*. I posit that these ivory sculptures were not meant to be seen or utilized as liturgical objects, but rather as religiously themed *objets d'art*, which created a dialogue with their mythological counterparts that aided in

the expansion of the imperial mythic genealogy. I contend that the *Kunstammer* ivories indirectly cite Habsburg divine heritage through their Davidian ancestry. I illustrate this assertion through an analysis of three ivory objects: Leonhard Kern's *König David*, ca. 1620; Master of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian's *The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, 1655; and Johann Schnegg's *Sieg des Erzengles Michael über Satan*, ca. 1740/60 (Figures 1.7-1.9). Together, the *Kunst-* and *Schatzkammer* ivories relate to two aspects of imperial identity: The *Pietas Austriaca* and divine ancestry. Finally, in the conclusion, I bring the religious and mythological ivories together in explication of the Habsburgs utilization of a singular material to express complex notions of identity to viewers of their imperial collection.

Habsburg Mythic Genealogy and the Development of Genealogical Propaganda

From ancient Roman Emperors to the Habsburgs, genealogical creations helped in the propagation of imperial authority and dynastic legitimacy. The Habsburgs, especially, utilized these genealogies to promote their rightful place as Holy Roman Emperors over their French counterparts and many of these genealogies were partially constructed fictions and partly based in reality. In *The Last Descendants of Aeneas: The Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor*, Marie Tanner painstakingly traces the Habsburgs development of this mythic image and the semi-fabricated genealogy of the Holy Roman Emperors as she proposes that the mythic image was continuously developed from antiquity to the sixteenth-century Habsburgs.¹ Larry Silver's *Marketing Maximilian: The Visual Ideology of a Holy Roman Emperor* continues the discussion of

¹ Marie Tanner, *Last Descendants of Aeneas: The Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

mythic genealogy construction and looks specifically at Emperor Maximilian I and his propagandistic use of the newly developed print culture to promote his imperial agenda and perpetuate his lineage.² Each of these texts paints a complex image of how the Habsburgs utilized centuries of genealogies to prove their legitimate claim to the imperial seat of the Holy Roman Empire. In order to fully elucidate how ivory became connected and intertwined with the creation of the mythic genealogies and antiquity, I summarize Tanner and Silver's work to provide a sufficient background of these ancestral claims.

The Development of the Habsburg's Mythic Genealogy

The Habsburgs, as the Holy Roman Emperors, were strategic in their creation of genealogies –often exaggerated or fictionalized – to illustrate their legitimate claim to the imperial throne and to secure their progeny's future rights to the Empire. In her work, Tanner traces the Holy Roman Emperors and medieval king's assertion of Trojan ancestry and its ultimate culmination in the sixteenth-century Habsburg monarchs. The author argues that it was Trojan ancestry that became a major factor in the determination of the imperial image.³ The following discussion looks at Tanner's development of mythic genealogy and how it became a defining characteristic of Habsburg imperial identity.

As Christianity expanded throughout Europe, rulers proclaimed their Christian piety as an element of their legitimacy. In the fourth century CE, the Roman poet Virgil's famous epic *The Aeneid* was Christianized and began the Roman Emperor's

² Larry Silver, *Marketing Maximilian: A Visual Ideology of a Holy Roman Emperor* (Princeton: University Press, 2008).

³ Tanner, *The Last Descendants of Aeneas*, 1

contention of Trojan ancestry.⁴ With the appropriation of ancient texts, rulers promoted both secular and ecclesiastical lineages that fostered their royal bloodline to Christ and ancient gods. Successors to the Roman throne continued to assert their Trojan lineage and created the genealogical standard of the medieval and early modern periods. It was the last descendants of Aeneas that would hold the God-given Empire until Christ – its true ruler – returned to his earthly kingdom.⁵ Monarchs needed to continually assert their Trojanness for their claim to the imperial throne, especially with a Christian connection to a prophecy that God gave the empire to the successor of Aeneas.⁶ Together it was connection between the Son of God and the Roman Empire – with Aeneas as the penultimate founder of Italy – that birthed mythic genealogies.

Emperor Augustus (r. 27 BC- 14 CE) was the one of the first rulers to utilize Aeneian imagery in his imperial image and traced his ancestry through Aeneas and ultimately to Jupiter.⁷ Augustus minted coins to proclaim his connection to Aeneas, as seen in this British Museum example from 42 BCE (Figure 1.10). L. Livineius Regulus created the gold aureus with a right-facing portrait of Octavian surrounded by dots and an inscription, with the reverse of the coin depicting Aeneas carrying his father Anchises from the burning Troy. The scene of the Trojan son carrying his lame father from their homeland became a common theme in the early modern period, like Gianlorenzo Bernini's iteration in the seventeenth century (Figure 1.11).⁸ Aeneas's heroic act of

⁴ Tanner, 1. The application of Christianity to the Roman epic was due to the growing prominence of the Church and thus the synchronism of ancient Roman religious practices became imperative for Christian conversion.

⁵ Tanner, 1.

⁶ Tanner, 1.

⁷ Tanner, 17.

⁸ The Bernini *Aeneas* will be discussed later in the section, particularly in connection to Johann Ignaz Bendl's *Aeneas Flees with Anchises from Troy*.

hauling his father from the conflagrated city to the eventual founding of Latium was an extraordinary exemplar for an imperial image: hero, conqueror, and legend. With this constructed lineage, Augustus secured divinity through his ancestors and claimed any Trojan victories as his and, ultimately, Rome's.⁹

Aeneian genealogy was rooted in divinity – an element of utmost importance to its successors. Writers claimed Aeneas descended from Dardanus, the founder of Troy, as well as the divine Jupiter and Saturn. Aeneas became genealogically connected to Romulus, the founder of Rome, to Augustus and the Julio-Claudians (r. 27 BC- 68 CE) as the ideal strong ancestor.¹⁰ The Flavians (r. 69-81 CE) continued the use of Trojan ancestry and set the standard for Aeneian genealogy. Constantine (r. 306-337 CE) sustained the claim of Trojan ancestry, particularly in his consolidation of the East and West Empire, which brought the birthplaces of Augustus and Aeneas together under a universal monarch.¹¹ As this brief history illustrates, the Augustan successors –the Julio-Claudians, the Flavians, and Constantine– continued the Trojan ancestral lineage until the fall of Rome in 476 CE.

On 25 December, 800 CE, Charlemagne reconstituted Rome as the new Holy Roman Emperor. With this coronation in Aachen, Charlemagne effectively transferred the Roman Empire (*translatio imperii*) from his Italian predecessors to the Franks.¹² Charlemagne's secular biographer, Einhard, portrayed the Holy Roman Emperor as the New Aeneas and Aachen as the new Rome.¹³ The translation of the Empire to the Franks

⁹ Tanner, 1.

¹⁰ Tanner, 69.

¹¹ Tanner, 70.

¹² Tanner, 36.

¹³ Tanner, 36.

depended upon Charlemagne's Trojan ancestry and the new Emperor looked to Clovis I (r. 481-511 CE), King of the Franks, to provide the crucial link to Trojan lineage.¹⁴ The marriage of Ansibert to the Merovingian princess Blichilde provided the corroborating ancestral evidence for Charlemagne to connect the Roman Empire and the Trojans with the Merovingians and the Carolingians.¹⁵ With his election to the imperial throne and his Trojan ancestry intact, Charlemagne united the two branches of the Anchises's Trojan family: Aeneas, the founder of Italy; and Priam the Younger, the mythic founder of Germany.¹⁶ Gottfried of Viterbo best described this reunification in his twelfth-century *Speculum Regum* and declared that Troy gave off two sprouts: one in Rome and the other in the Teutonic Kingdom.¹⁷ The Emperor's embellished lineage to the sons of Troy and his control of Rome and Germany allowed Trojan ancestry to become a major propagandistic element within his imperial image and Priam the Younger's inclusion in Charlemagne's ancestry sanctioned the broadening of the emperor's lineage.¹⁸ Charlemagne thus argued for direct descent from Aeneas through his relation to Clovis.¹⁹

Beyond historical rulers and mythological figures, Charlemagne created ancestral links to Old Testament kings through Constantine and Byzantium.²⁰ Since the sixth century CE the Franks utilized Davidian imagery and motifs, and through the

¹⁴ Tanner, 70.

¹⁵ Tanner, 71.

¹⁶ Tanner, 72.

¹⁷ Tanner, 72. Under the reunification of Rome and Germany, Charlemagne became "*Romulus matre, Teutonicus patre.*"

¹⁸ Tanner, 72. Priam's line brought Franco, Clovis I, and Merovech into the Carolingian dynastic genealogy.

¹⁹ Tanner, 72. Fredegarius argued this narrative in his general *History of the Franks*.

²⁰ Tanner, 77.

Merovingians, Charlemagne claimed Davidian ancestry; in fact, the connection between David and Charlemagne was so ingrained that the Carolingian Emperor was often called David.²¹ To visually affirm Davidian ancestry, Charlemagne modelled his Aachen palace and throne after David's son, King Solomon (Figure 1.12). The Throne of Charlemagne, however, differs dramatically from the Biblical representation of Solomon's throne: primarily, Charlemagne's throne is marble, while Solomon's is ivory. The addition of Davidian heritage did not negate the Trojan ancestry, and as Tanner notes, Charlemagne's genealogical tree developed to include Homer and Genesis, which created two "divine heritages that constituted the mythic image of the medieval king."²²

In 962, Otto I's (r. 962-973 CE) coronation as Holy Roman Emperor in St. Peter's effectively ended the Carolingian dynasty and transferred the empire to the Saxons. The Ottonians continued to utilize the mythic genealogy honed under Charlemagne – like the illustration of Trojan and Davidian ancestry – but placed more emphasis on German-ness and the new Roman capital of Trier.²³ Otto II's (r. 973-983) marriage to Theophanu of Byzantium created an ancestral claim to the Byzantium throne and recalled Constantine's eponymous capital.²⁴ After the dissolution of the Ottonian dynasty in 1024 CE, the Salians became the newest addition to the Holy Roman Empire and continued the mythic genealogical tradition.²⁵

²¹ Tanner, 78-90.

²² Tanner, 80.

²³ Tanner, 82.

²⁴ Tanner, 82.

²⁵ Tanner, 84-85. Ekkehard of Aura, the chronicler for Emperor Henry V (r. 1111-1125), composed the *Chronicon Universale* that continued the ancestry of the Empire. "Here again the alignment of Old Testament and pagan history is appended to the Frankish Trojan myth of the dual settlement of Italy and Sicambria by Aeneas and his brother; this history is applied to the Germans at large." Tanner states that Ekkehard of Aura created a universal chronicle for Emperor Conrad III, who was the first of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, but incorrectly identifies him as Ottonian. He created his universal Chronicle between 1108-1125, decades before the Hohenstaufen claimed power over the Salians.

The Hohenstaufens, the next dynasty to claim the Holy Roman Empire mantle, continued to utilize the mythic genealogy created throughout the Middle Ages to purport their rightful claim to the imperial throne.²⁶ Like the Ottonians, the Hohenstaufens concentrated on the German origins of the Empire, which was strengthened through several factors: Emperor Frederick Barbarossa I's restoration of Charlemagne's palaces at Aachen and Ingelheim; the reiteration of Einhard's claim that Charlemagne named the months of the year in German; the establishment of Roman law throughout the Empire; and the continuation of mythic genealogy.²⁷ The consistent additions to previous mythic genealogies created a strong familiar line – although fabricated – that alluded to uninterrupted imperial power. To complete the biblical ancestral narrative, the Hohenstaufen monarch Frederick II's (r. 1212-1250) marriage to Isabelle, the future queen of Jerusalem, expanded the Empire to the Levant.²⁸

From 1254-1273, the imperial throne sat vacant.²⁹ The imperium eventually transferred to the Dukes of Lothringia and Brabant – ultimately named the Luxembourger dynasty – who had the most direct lineage to the Charlemagne and the Carolingians.³⁰ Under Charles IV (1316-78), the Roman capital moved to Prague.³¹ At Karlštejn Castle near the imperial capital, Charles IV proudly proclaimed his genealogy through a now lost series of portraits that lined the reception halls but Habsburg Emperor Maximilian II

²⁶ Tanner, 87.

²⁷ Tanner, 87.

²⁸ Tanner, 90.

²⁹ The Papacy vacillated between various French and German houses and even offered the throne to St. Louis.

³⁰ Tanner, 91.

³¹ Tanner, 93. When Charles IV's father married Elizabeth, daughter of Premyslide, part of the wedding dowry bequeathed Slovenia, Poland, and Bohemia to the Luxembourgers. This extended the Empire further into Central Europe.

(r. 1564-1576) preserved reproductions of the portraits in a luxurious manuscript (Figures 1.13).³² Charles IV appears next to Charlemagne to illustrate the unremitting and pristine ancestral link between the Carolingians and the Luxembourgers (Figure 1.14). Just as the centuries of dynasties before, the Luxembourgers utilized the creations of mythic genealogies to proclaim their rightful place as Holy Roman Emperors.

In the fifteenth century, the Holy Roman Empire transferred to Frederick III (1415-1493), a Habsburg monarch. But it was Maximilian I, the second Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor, that truly revolutionized mythic genealogy to purport his legitimacy. His marriage to Mary of Burgundy, the daughter of Philip the Good, was particularly integral to his imperial claims.³³ Once the Burgundian and Habsburg lines combined, this link to the Luxembourgers became Habsburgian. From the onset of the Central European dynasty, Habsburg monarchs linked themselves to Rome through their founder, Rudolph I (r. 1273-1291). Through Rudolph, genealogists created Hebrew and Roman heritages with allusions to the Tree of Jesse and Trojan ancestry. In Gerald de Roos's 1592 *Annales Rerum Belli Dominique ab Austriacus Habsburgicae* frontispiece, the Habsburgs visually manifested the link between Troy and the Central European Emperors (Figure 1.15).³⁴ It was Maximilian I that created the most encapsulating propagandistic

³² Tanner, 98. The portraits interlaced both Jewish and pagan ancestors together to promote the two divine branches of the Emperors: Noah, Saturn, Jupiter, Dardanus, and Priam sat beside Merovech and Clovis. Along with the single portraits, Charles IV had a "marriage album" included to illustrate the uninterrupted link between the dynasties. Along with images of the rulers and gods listed above, Charles IV included a wedding portrait of Blichilde and Ansibert, Anchises, Begga, and Gerberga and Lambert, all of which led to Charlemagne.

³³ Tanner, 99. The Burgundian duke had unsuccessfully campaigned for the imperial throne during his reign based upon his lineage to Charles IV.

³⁴ Tanner, 100. As Tanner states, "In the text by Gerald de Roo that accompanies this image, the Hapsburg tree is rooted in Troy, and the etymology of the cognomen is deciphered: Hapsburg = Aventine. Named for Aventinus, a descendant of Aeneas, Mount Aventine in Rome was the dwelling place of the city's last kings."

formula for ancestral legitimacy, especially through his application of the printed medium. His marriage to Mary of Burgundy created a strong ancestral connection to the Carolingians and Merovingians – and thus Trojan – as well as his Roman lineage through Rudolph.

The creation and expansion of mythic genealogies became an integral part in the development of the Holy Roman Emperor, which culminated in the printed works of Emperor Maximilian I. These ancestral claims were an important marker for legitimacy and securing an uninterrupted view of the Empire as it shifted from dynasty to dynasty. But how could one emperor utilize one medium to purport his mythic ancestry?

Imperial Prints and Ancestral Propaganda

Larry Silver's *Marketing Maximilian: A Visual Ideology of a Holy Roman Emperor* fosters insight into a single Emperor's visual quest for imperial legitimacy. Maximilian I extraordinarily utilized the new print medium to expand and illustrate the mythic genealogies of his predecessors. With his cadre of printmakers, Maximilian I created immense and diverse print cycles aimed at the propagation of his ancestry. This section looks at Larry Silver's investigation into Maximilian I and his teams of artists main print creations.

An imperative printed publication in Maximilian I's ancestral propaganda was court genealogists Ladislaus Sunthaium and Dr. Jakob Mennel's *Geburtsspiegel*, or *Fürstliche Chronik (Princely Chronicles)*.³⁵ Maximilian I instructed Sunthaium –

³⁵ Silver, *Marketing Maximilian*, 42. One of the first genealogical projects Maximilian undertook was the *Historia Friederici et Maximiliani*, a didactic princely history (or *Fürstenbuch*) of Maximilian and his father, Frederick III. The first illustration, based on the medieval Tree of Jesse, illustrates Maximilian's genealogical aims with a family tree emerging into the sky from a patriarch situated on the ground. The figures on the tree, designed by Albrecht Altdorfer, have a certain vagueness to them, which illustrate Maximilian's equivocation between "situating his forefathers among ancient Romans, or alternatively, the non-Italian lineage of the Trojan and Franks."

appointed “*Chronikmeister*” around 1500 – and Dr. Mennel to reevaluate Rudolph’s chronicles for a more complete image of his ancestors.³⁶ The *Princely Chronicle*, *The Chains of Family Descent* shows three distinct chains, each culminating with a figure (Figure 1.16). The patriarch Boaz, the founder of the Davidian line, leads the Hebrew line on the left side of the composition and continues through the ancestors of Christ to the popes as earthly representatives of Jesus.³⁷ On the right, the Hebrew line matched the Latin line with a crowned Aeneas at the head. The line runs from Aeneas through the Roman Emperors to Maximilian I’s son and successor, Charles V, “*Karolus Catholicus*.”³⁸ The center of the composition illustrates the Greek Line with the Habsburg peacock, and although the Latin line shows Aeneas as its patriarch, the Greek line begins with Trojan ancestry and ends with Charles V and his brother Ferdinand.³⁹ Each of the links of the chain represents significant figures of the specific line.

Der Zaiger, a compendium of thirty-seven pages of family trees and twenty-one full-page illustrations, was created in conjunction with the *Princely Chronicle*. The most potent ancestral images of the text are three family trees depicted as allegorical ladders ascending to the heavens. The first ladder is silver with eight rungs of ancestors arranged by social ranking with Maximilian I on the uppermost step receiving the imperial crown from two angels (Figure 1.17).⁴⁰ The second ladder, made of gold, rises from the ground to a sunlit sky and holds seven ecclesiastical figures, arranged by rank from hermit to

³⁶ Silver, 42. Mennel succeeded the professor and was appointed an imperial *Rat*, or advisor, and his work became invaluable to Maximilian’s dynastic and propagandistic agendas

³⁷ Silver, 46.

³⁸ Silver, 46.

³⁹ Silver, 46.

⁴⁰ Silver, 47.

pope with the angels offering the top figure the papal tiara (Figure 1.18).⁴¹ As Silver states, “Together these paired ladders convey the medieval theory of authority, the ‘two lights theory’, where the greater spiritual power of the papacy outshines the temporal power of the emperor, as gold outshines silver or the sun the moon.”⁴² But Menel included a third bejeweled five-rung ladder with holy Habsburg men and women representing the world of saints (Figure 1.19). God crowns a “flagellant penitent”, who resembles Emperor Maximilian I, with a haloed crown.⁴³ These three ladders demonstrate both aims of the Habsburg mythic genealogy: the combination of the secular and sacred into one divinely appointed monarch.

The *Arch of Honor* was perhaps the most important printed project for Maximilian I’s genealogical claims (Figure 1.20). Comprised of one hundred and ninety-two separate prints, this colossal endeavor details an intricate genealogical and historical record of its patron. Several artists worked closely with Maximilian I in order to create the *Arch of Honor*, including Albrecht Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Hans Springinklee, and Wolf Traut. Maximilian I employed the triumphal arch motif from ancient Roman imperial architecture thus creating a visual dynastic link between the Ancient Roman Empire and the House of Habsburg.⁴⁴ The *Arch of Honor* gave Maximilian I the ability to link himself with lasting dynasties across Europe and history through illustrations of genealogies, historical events, and heraldry, as well as his own personal achievements

⁴¹ Silver, 47.

⁴² Silver, 47-48.

⁴³ Silver, 48.

⁴⁴ While Maximilian sought to link his new dynasty with antiquity in hopes of securing a progenic lineage, he also attempted to connect his name with other houses throughout Europe, especially the Germanic lands and the Burgundian court.

and attributes. Johannes Stabius, court historian and mathematician, wrote the accompanying colophon that illustrates Maximilian's purpose:

The central tower above the main gate is decorated with the family tree of the honorable House of Austria and its ancient lineage from which the Emperor is descended...It must be understood that the male line of the Merovingian dynasty extends back to the first king of France; who is descended from the magnanimous Hector of Troy and who conquered the Pannonian territories, now known as Hungary and Austria, and gained victory over the Sicambrians, subsequently known as the Franks, and over the Gails... In the present family tree the lineage therefore begins with Chlodvig [Clovis], the first Christian king of the aforementioned Merovingians and royal French dynasty...This same Emperor Maximilian is here shown in his painted likeness sitting uppermost in Imperial majesty. Below him, on his right, his wife Lady Mary, Archduchess of Burgundy, descended on both her father's and mother's side from the ruling house of France.⁴⁵

What Maximilian I achieved with this single – albeit large – print was remarkable. With the colophon, Maximilian I effectively linked himself and the Habsburgs to Troy, Rome, the Carolingians, and Spain without unneeded flourish. The conglomeration of prints on

⁴⁵ Silver, 51. "The central tower above the main gate is decorated with the family tree of the honorable House of Austria and its ancient lineage from which the Emperor is descended. At the very bottom will be seen three matrons who represent the most distinguished nations of Troy, Sicambria, and Francia. It must be understood that the male line of the Merovingian dynasty extends back to the first king of France; who is descended from the magnanimous Hector of troy and who conquered the Pannonian territories, now known as Hungary and Austria, and gained victory over the Sicambrians, subsequently known as the Franks, and over the Gails. Although there are many heathen kings in the line of descent, from father to son, these are not pictured because they were neither baptized nor did they believe in the Christian faith. Their names will be given in another book. In the present family tree the lineage therefore begins with Chlodvig [Clovis], the first Christian king of the aforementioned Merovingians and royal French dynasty. It then continues from person to person, ie., from father to son, from ancient times wherefore the princes of Habsburg, and therefore the archdukes of Austria, are descended, down to the present Emperor Maximilian. This same Emperor Maximilian is here shown in his painted likeness sitting uppermost in Imperial majesty. Below him, on his right, his wife Lady Mary, Archduchess of Burgundy, descended on both her father's and mother's side from the ruling house of France. On his left, Lady Joanna, Queen of Spain and Castile, the wife of Philip, of Spain and Castile. Below the wife of the Emperor is seated Lady Margaret of Austria and Burgundy, His Imperial Majesty's only daughter, an ornament of womanhood. Following this, weighted down by His Majesty's exemplary dignity, the branches and fruit of the tree of his family are bent towards His Most Serene and Noble Highness, King Philip, His Majesty's only son. He may be seen standing below His Imperial Majesty, flanked by his children by Lady Joanna, Queen of Spain and Castile. On one side stands his sons, Charles and Ferdinand, and on the other side, his daughters, the Ladies Leonora, Isabella, Mary, and Catherine."

the *Arch of Honor* lent visual authenticity to the written text with its abundance of heraldry, ancestral figures, and imperial victories.

Arch of Honor copies were kept in Augsburg – their place of creation – until 1526, seven years after the death of Maximilian I, and scholars speculate that the copies were not disseminated due to reverence for the death of the Emperor.⁴⁶ There were also several copies sent to courts, including to Saxon Elector Frederick the Wise.⁴⁷ By sending the print to courts in Germany, Spain, or Hungary, Maximilian I offered these rulers the visualization and materialization of his entire propagandistic agenda. Although there is little evidence of the print's dissemination during the Emperor's reign, its intended purpose remained the genealogical and historiographic representation of Maximilian I for his vast territories and his opponents. With the elements of portability and cost-efficiency inherent in the printed medium, Maximilian I created an image of himself, his House, and his accomplishments. Of the sixteenth-century Habsburg rulers, Charles V and Ferdinand I were the most impacted by their grandfather's print enterprise, especially the *Arch of Honor*.

Charles V—in his reiterations of the *Arch of Honor*—used the print as an example rather than a readied motif. Many of his triumphal entries after his coronation as Holy

⁴⁶ Silver, 51.

⁴⁷ Eva Michel, *Emperor Maximilian I and the Age of Dürer* (Vienna: Prestel, 2012), Catalogue entry for *Arch of Honor*, 374. Andrew Wheatcroft noted that the *Arch of Honor* was copied at least two hundred times during Maximilian I's lifetime and another five hundred were commissioned after his death by his grandson, Ferdinand I.⁴⁷ If these numbers are indeed true, it would appear that the *Arch of Honor* was intended to be disseminated throughout the vast empire as ancestral and imperial propaganda. Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Habsburgs: Embodying Empire*, (New York: Penguin Group, 1995), 97. Wheatcroft does not provide a footnote for this information and does not note whether it is archival research or someone else's mention. In order to show the intentionality of this print as propaganda, I will utilize these numbers as facts.

Roman Emperor included large ephemeral arches placed along the processional path, and Charles V used the *Arch of Honor* to line the streets on his processional routes, including his entries at Innsbruck, Schwaz, and Nuremberg.⁴⁸ The reutilization of the *Arch of Honor* as an object of triumphal procession illustrates the immense power it had over its audience.⁴⁹

Emperor Ferdinand I published an additional *Arch of Honor* cycle in 1559, which differs from the original by its use of color.⁵⁰ The timeline of this edition provides a probable explanation for this commission: Ferdinand I inherited the throne of the Holy Roman Emperor after Charles V's death in 1558.⁵¹ With this ascension Ferdinand I craved to promote his imperial agenda and what better way to disseminate this program than with print that had already been well received within the Empire? Thus, the reprinting of an almost half-century-old print cycle reiterates the power of the efficacy of disseminating ancestral propaganda.

The application of Maximilian I's imperial propaganda expanded beyond to the printed world, particularly with Maximilian I's cenotaph in the Hofkirche in Innsbruck, Austria begun in 1502. Maximilian I's grandson, Emperor Ferdinand I (1503-1564),

⁴⁸ Angelika Lampen, "The Princely Entry into Town: Significance and Change of a Multi-Media Event," in *Multimedia Compositions from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margriet Hoogvliet (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 58.

⁴⁹ For more on this topic, see Jeffrey Chipps Smith, "Portable Propaganda: Tapestries as Princely Magnificence at the Court of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold" *Art Journal* 48 (1989): 123-129. In this article, Smith presents the idea of Burgundian tapestries as pieces of portable and movable propaganda. The author shows that Philip the Good (1396-1467) and Charles the Bold both carried tapestries to diplomatic and court appearances and hung them for all to see. This particular act simulates the Burgundian dukes placing their tapestries on the exterior walls of hotels for the duchy's subjects to see. The combination of Burgundian allusions in the Arch of Honor and propagandistic system created a tertiary visual link to Burgundy: the reference to the Duke of Burgundy's role in Maximilian I's ancestral claims to the Holy Roman Empire.

⁵⁰ Eva Michel, *The Emperor Maximilian I and the Age of Dürer*, 374. From the commission of the print to Ferdinand I's reiterations, there were at least three separate editions printed. Jeffrey Chipps Smith noted that several dukes utilized this cycle in their attempts of self-promotion.

⁵¹ Wheatcroft, *The Habsburgs*, 134.

completed the imperial monument some eighty years after Maximilian I's death in 1584.⁵² Surrounding the large tomb is a series of twenty-eight life-size ancestor sculptures carved by Leonhard Magt and Stephen Godl.⁵³ The completed sculptures range in geography and history to provide any viewer a look at the vast Habsburg genealogical tree, including: Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (1521); Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy (1525-26); Theoderic the Great, King of the Ostrogoths (1513); Rudolph I, King of Germany (1516/17); Clovis I, King of the Franks (1509); Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor (1523/24); and Mary, Duchess of Burgundy (1513/1516). Although the artists have included several important medieval historical figures, it appears that Maximilian I's cenotaph concentrated on recent ancestors that created a genealogical connection with earlier Holy Roman Emperors.

Beyond the ancestral sculptures surrounding the cenotaph, twenty-three portrait busts depicted Maximilian I's Roman imperial ancestors beginning with Julius Caesar (Figure 1.21).⁵⁴ These antique-style portraits divulge Maximilian I's desire to link himself and his German dynasty to ancient Rome. The combination of the portraits, the reliefs surrounding the cenotaph, and the life-size bronze sculptures created an eternal and visual link between Maximilian and the House of Habsburg with the preeminent Holy Roman Empire in perpetuity. The tomb acts as a culmination of Maximilian I's ancestral propaganda efforts and provided the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century

⁵² Silver, *Marketing Maximilian*, 63. Although Silver states that it was Ferdinand I who completed the project, it was finally finished twenty years after his death. I believe it would be more appropriate to state that Ferdinand I initiated the final phases of construction on the Hofkirche cenotaph, rather than completing them.

⁵³ Silver, 63. There were many more sculptures planned for the cenotaph.

⁵⁴ Silver, 78. Jörg Muskat of Augsburg carved the portraits that were modelled on ancient coins – like those in the collection of Konrad Peutinger, an Augsburg official and imperial court advisor to Maximilian I and Charles V.

Habsburg emperors an imperial exemplar for the use of a single medium/material for the dynasty's propaganda.

Ancestry and Ivory: Mythological Ivories in the Habsburg's *Kunstzimmer*

As demonstrated above, the Habsburgs continually evoked their ancestors and genealogies in their imperial propaganda and Maximilian I was one of the most successful emperors in his dissemination of mythic genealogy through impressive print cycles. The utilization of the newly minted printed medium was an intriguing choice for the Holy Roman Emperor and the use of a single medium/material offers insight into the propagandistic efforts of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Habsburg Emperors. This section looks at how the multitude of mythological ivory sculptures in the *Kunstzimmer* acted as a material manifestation of the Habsburgs mythic genealogical aims. I argue that it was through the ancient utilizations of ivory in Greece and Rome and through the writings of ancient authors that ivory gained an ancient association and thus became a signifier of Habsburg ancient genealogy. With discussions on the *Furienmeister*, Johann Ignaz Bendl, Ignaz Elhafen, and Jakob Auer, a picture of the materiality of mythological ivories appears.

Classical Greece and Writings on Ivory

Classical Greece was a time of great aesthetic and scientific exploration, especially with the artist's quest for human perfection and proportions in sculptural form. Bronze and marble were particularly potent materials for the Greek artists, as seen in Polykleitos's marble *Doryphoros* and the bronze *Riace Warriors*. Beyond these common sculptural materials, ivory became an invaluable material for the materialization of gods

and divine flesh. Poets and historians wrote on the beauty and use of ivory around the various Grecian city-states and each author provided insights into ancient associations with the natural and luxurious material.

The *Iliad* and The *Odyssey* are understandably the most influential epics from antiquity. Homer penned the fabled tales of the Great Trojan War and the hero Odysseus's journey home in either the seventh or eighth centuries BCE. Although the Holy Roman mythic genealogies looked to Virgil and his *Aeneid* for ancestral figures, Homer's recounting of the Trojan War was also a primary source for Aeneian mythology. Aeneas only appeared as a minor character in the *Iliad*, but the description of the war and eventual ruin of Troy provided the necessary background for Aeneas's ultimate founding of Italy.

Homer mentions ivory briefly in the *Iliad* – in reference to a nymph dyeing a piece of ivory red in comparison to the Spartan king Menelaus's leg wound – while the *Odyssey* utilizes the luxurious material in more poignant ways.⁵⁵ This epic traces the Greek hero-king Odysseus as he travels back to Ithaca and to his beloved wife, Penelope. Conquering all manner of monsters and trials, Odysseus arrived back to his kingdom to find men attempting to win the hand of his wife.

In Book 19, Penelope speaks of a dream she had:

Stranger, dreams verily are baffling and unclear of meaning, and in no wise do they find fulfillment in all things for me. For two are the gates of shadowy dreams, and one is fashioned of horn and one of ivory. Those dreams that pass through the gate of sawn ivory deceive men, bringing

⁵⁵ Homer, *Iliad*, Book IV, trans. Homerus (Chicago: Belford, Clarke & Co, 1884), 116. "As when some stately trappings are decreed/ To grace a monarch on his bounding steed,/ A nymph in Caria or Maonia bred,/ Stains the pure ivory with a lively red;/ With equal lustre various colours vie,/ The shining whiteness, and the Tyrian dye:/ So great Atrides! show'd thy sacred blood,/ As down thy snowy thigh distill'd the streaming flood."

words that find no fulfillment. But those that come forth through the gate of polished horn bring true issues to pass, when any mortal can see them. But in my case it was not from thence, that my strange dream came.⁵⁶

John B. Vlahos noted, “When Penelope rejects dreams that pass through carved ivory, saying that they will not lead to fulfillment of her dream, she is advising Odysseus that destruction of the suitors will not be accomplished by use of the sword.”⁵⁷ This is an intriguing interpretation of Penelope’s statement as Homer discussed Euryalos giving a sword with a new ivory scabbard to Odysseus to make amends.⁵⁸

Homer also described the ivory reins of Medon, the couch and key of Penelope, and the bed of Penelope and Odysseus. In particular, the bed is a central leitmotif in the tale of Penelope’s test to determine if Odysseus is truly her lost husband.

Then Odysseus said to her, speaking in anger: ‘How comes it that my bed can be moved to this place and that? Not a bed of that kind was the bed I built for myself. Knowest thou not how I built my bed? First, there grew up in the courtyard an olive tree. Round that olive tree I built a chamber, and I roofed it well and I set doors to it. Then I sheared off all the light wood on the growing olive tree, and I rough-hewed the trunk with the adze, and I made the tree into a bed post. Beginning with this bed post I wrought a bedstead, and when I finished it, I inlaid it with silver and ivory. Such was the bed I built for myself, and such a bed could not be moved to this place or that.’

Then did Penelope know assuredly that the man who stood before her was indeed her husband, the steadfast Odysseus--none other knew of where the bed was placed, and how it had been built.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Homer, *Odyssey*, Book 19: 560-69. From Perseus Digital Library, Tufts University, 2019. Digitized version: Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. W. Walter Merry, James Riddell, D. B. Monro. (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1886-1901).

⁵⁷ John B. Vlahos, “Homer’s ‘Odyssey’, Books 19 and 23: Early Recognition; A Solution to the Enigmas of Ivory and Horns and the Test of the Bed,” *College Literature* 34, no. 2 Reading in the 21st Century (Spring 2007): 114.

⁵⁸ Homer, *Odyssey*, Book 8.

⁵⁹ Homer, *Odyssey*, Book 23, 181-205. Homer. Digitized on the Perseus Digital Library, Tufts University. Original Version: Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. A.T. Murray, PH.D. in two volumes. (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann, Ltd: 1919.)

As Homer narrates, ivory became a partial participant in Penelope's test and ultimate trust of her long-lost husband. This leads to a contradiction with Penelope's discussion of her dreams of the Gates of Horn and Ivory as Penelope states that the Gates of Ivory are of false dreams – meaning they are, in essence, deceitful. Yet, it was Odysseus's knowledge of the construction of the bed, with its inlaid ivory, that Penelope discerned the truth of his identity. Homer's description of the Ithacan queen in Book 18 continues the illustration of ivory's importance to Penelope and Odysseus. In this book, the goddess Athena puts Penelope to sleep in order to make the queen more beautiful than Aphrodite. Homer states, "...and meanwhile the bright goddess/ Gave her immortal gifts, so that the Achaians might admire her/...And she made her taller and of goodlier build to behold/ And then she made her whiter than sawn ivory."⁶⁰ Ivory's material meanings go beyond truth and deceit and into the realm of divine beauty and flesh – an indelible connotation. Ivory's dichotomy and multi-layered meaning in Homer's texts was the norm for thoughts about the material and allowed the tangential links of Holy Roman mythic genealogies, so ivory can connect to Aeneas through Homer's epics.

Other Greek authors, beyond the famed Homer, wrote about ivory. Plato, perhaps the most well-known Greek author and philosopher, wrote on the Atlantean temple of Poseidon in *Critias* and notes a particularly unique treatment of ivory. He states, "...As to the interior, they made the roof all of ivory in appearance, variegated with gold a silver and orichalcum..."⁶¹ The inclusion of ivory-veneered architecture into a legendary tale

⁶⁰ Homer, *Odyssey*, 18.190-96.

⁶¹ Plato, *Critias*, 116d-117d, quoted in Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). This late incomplete work of Plato recounts the tale of the fabled island kingdom of Atlantis.

offers the materiality of ivory's inclusion in mythic divinity – an attachment that translated to the early modern period. Also, the combination of three other luxury materials with ivory enhanced this divinity through a luxurious association. Not only is ivory now present in the temples of the most advanced civilization but it also melds with some of the most sought-after and luxurious materials known to man, particularly in conjunction with chryselephantine statues of the Classical Greek world, as will be discussed later.

Plato discusses ivory again in *Hippias major*, written around the end of the fourth century BCE, where Socrates and Hippias attempt to find a definition of beauty. The two philosophers begin discussing Pheidias – the famed Classical Athenian sculptor – and whether his use of ivory is beautiful.

Socrates: ...Consequently when I agree that Pheidias is a good craftsman, 'Well, then,' he will say, 'do you imagine that Pheidias did not know this beautiful that you speak of?' 'Why do you ask that?' I shall say. 'Because', he will say, 'he did not make the eyes of Athena of gold, nor the rest of her face, nor her hands or feet, if, that is, they were sure to appear most beautiful provided only they were made of gold, but he made them of ivory; evidently he made this mistake through ignorance, not knowing that it is gold which makes everything beautiful to which it is added.' When he says that, what reply shall we make to him, Hippias?

Hippias: That is easy; for we shall say that Pheidias did right; for ivory, I think, is beautiful.

Socrates: 'Why then,' he will say, 'did he not make the middle parts of the eyes also of ivory, but of stone, procuring stone as similar as possible to the ivory? Or is beautiful stone also beautiful?' Shall we say that it is, Hippias?

Hippias: Surely we shall say so, where it is appropriate.

Socrates: 'But ugly when not appropriate?' Shall I agree, or not?

Hippias: Agree, that is, when it is not appropriate.

Socrates: ‘What then? Do not gold and ivory,’ he will say, ‘when they are appropriate, make things beautiful, and when they are not appropriate, ugly?’ Shall we deny that, or agree that what he says is correct?

Hippias: We shall agree to this, at any rate, that whatever is appropriate to any particular thing makes that thing beautiful.⁶²

Plato’s inclusion of Pheidias’s chryselephantine statue in his discussion of beauty points to the ineffaceable potency ivory and gold sustained in Ancient Greece and created an intriguing commentary on the “right” or “correct” medium for such representations.

Pheidias, a well-known Classical Greek sculptor, created stunningly monumental chryselephantine (of gold and ivory) statues for temple decoration on an unprecedented scale. The *Athena Parthenos* and the *Zeus of Olympia* became icons of the Classical world and had Roman and Late Antique artists clambering for reproductions – of the statues themselves, and of the material.⁶³ Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, in *Chryselephantine Statuary of the Ancient Mediterranean World*, noted how antiquity viewed ivory as a material: it was luxury and extravagant.⁶⁴ Ivory was considered appropriate for stately exchange and as Lapatin states, “Plutarch (*Lysander* 18.1.1) remarks that the Persian King Cyrus sent the Spartan admiral Lysander a gold and ivory model trireme two cubits long to commemorate the latter’s victory over the Athenian at Aigospotamoi: it was subsequently dedicated in the Treasury of Brasidaws and the Acanthians of Delphi.”⁶⁵ Sculptors and patrons were drawn to ivory for many reasons – including its expense and

⁶² Plato, *Hippias Major*, 290a-d, quoted in Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁶³ Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, 1. The combination of ivory and gold was not a new invention; the Ancient Near East, Anatolia, and Egypt all used this luxurious amalgamation.

⁶⁴ Lapatin, 15. Wealthy members of Greek and Roman society used ivory to decorate and furnish their homes.

⁶⁵ Lapatin, 15-16.

limited availability – but it was the warm and lustrous quality of the surface that made it desirable for sculptural forms for its epidermal reproducibility.⁶⁶ In a marked difference from marble, ivory has subtle pink or yellow undertones that produces a warmth akin to human flesh, rather than marble’s cold and pristine white. Pindar and others discussed the story of the gods replacing Pelops’s destroyed shoulder in ivory. In “Gold and Ivory in Greek Mythology,” H.L. Lorimer postulates that the gods chose ivory due to its close proximity to flesh and bone.⁶⁷ But beyond its associations with human flesh, ancient authors extolled the material’s suitability for the depiction of divine and godly flesh. Most famously, Pliny the Elder, in his *Natural History*, stated, “the tusks fetch a vast price, and supply a very elegant material for images of the gods.”⁶⁸ Thus, ivory’s association with flesh blossomed into an association with divine flesh.

The two most famous chryselephantine statues of the ancient world appear in Classical Athens and Olympia. The *Athena Parthenos* and *Zeus of Olympia* are colossal examples of the power of ivory’s intonation as flesh (Figures 1.22-1.23). Pheidias built both statues with ivory and gold sheets around a wooden core.⁶⁹ The *Athena Parthenos* stood tall in the Parthenon’s main cella as an illustration of her triumph over Poseidon for control of Athens. In reconstructions, Athena has a long and flowing gold toga with a

⁶⁶ Lapatin, 16.

⁶⁷ H.L. Lorimer, “Gold and Ivory in Greek Mythology,” in *Greek poetry and life: essays presented to Gilbert Murray on his seventieth birthday, January 2, 1936*. 14-34.

⁶⁸ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 8.31, quoted in Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). It is interesting to note that the Pliny’s organization of natural forms was continually utilized in the development of the *Kunst* and *Wunderkammern* of Central Europe, and particularly of the Habsburgs. In fact, copies of the book have been recorded in various imperial and noble libraries connected with the Habsburg court. See Sarah Mitchell, “The Kunstkammer Object in Seventeenth-Century Salzburg: A Case Study, Early Modern Collections, Transformation and Materiality,” (Master’s Thesis, McGill University, 2005), 67.

⁶⁹ Lapatin, 134.

shield in her left hand and a spear resting against her left arm and in her right hand holds a Nike figure, which alludes to her victory. While Pheidias crowned Athena's head with a gold headpiece with several gold protrusions that would seemingly command the composition, it is the goddess's ivory-veneered face, arms, hands, and feet that called for the viewer's attention. While the gold shimmers from the clerestory window light above, it is the ivory that magically gleams warm and bright under the diffused rays of sun in the darkened cella chamber. The marvel of the ivory's engineering was a stunning effect to the Greek goddess's ancient audience.

But, the *Athena Parthenos* had a direct chryselephantine rival that consumed the world: The *Zeus of Olympia*. The famed colossal statue would ultimately become one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, with reproductions in drawings, prints, and coins well into the early modern period.⁷⁰ As Plutarch noted in *Aemilius Paullus*, "and at Olympia, as they say, he made that utterance which is now in every mouth, that Pheidias had moulded the Zeus of Homer."⁷¹ In reconstructions of the god, like Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy's (1755-1849) early nineteenth-century drawing, the king of the gods sits on a high back throne shirtless and his lower half covered with a luxurious cloth with crossed ankles. In his left hand, like Athena Parthenos, he holds winged victory – a fitting allusion to Olympia and the Olympic Games – and in his right he holds a scepter with an eagle at its tip. Like *Athena Parthenos*, the clothing and

⁷⁰ The timeless nature of *Zeus of Olympia*'s immense visual power was known to the eighteenth-century Habsburgs through court architect, Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach. In 1721, Fischer von Erlach produced his famous world architecture book, entitled *Entwurf einer historischen Architectur*. Beyond his look at architectural forms from around the world, Fischer von Erlach also included the ancient world – including a depiction of the colossal statue of Zeus.

⁷¹ Plutarch, *Aemilius Paullus* 28.2, quoted in Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

accessories were gold while the flesh was ivory, but the ivory had a larger canvas with Zeus's bare chest. The combination of the luxurious and luminous materials coupled with the colossal size of the statue helped secure Zeus's place within world history. The figures of Athena Parthenos and Zeus became shining exemplars of the power of ivory as divine flesh. Ivory's gleaming warmth in combination with gold's shining exuberance provided a lasting impression on artistic forms throughout the ancient world and into the Middle Ages and early modern periods. As Philo Byzantinus wrote in *De septem orbis spectaculis*:

To this end, Nature brought forth elephants, so that Pheidias, cutting the teeth from the wild beasts, might also furnish the raw material for construction (Libya abounds with the herds of elephants). So while we only marvel at the other seven wonders, we make obeisance to this one, for as much as it is a work of art, it is incredible, and as much as it is an image of Zeus, it is holy.

Ancient Rome and Writings on Ivory

The use of ivory in Ancient Rome was ubiquitous and multivalent; from game pieces to depictions of the emperors, the material was influential part of Roman life. Authors abounded with stories and asides about ivory's usage as imperial, divine, and mythical flesh. One of the most intriguing stories of Roman ivory utilization comes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The famous poem narrates the history of the world from its creation to its dominion under Julius Caesar. Ovid uses ivory in vastly different two tales in Book 1 and Book 10. In Book 1, Ovid relates a meeting of the gods, stating, "When all the gods, then, were seated in the marble hall, he himself [Jupiter] in his place and leaning on his ivory scepter, shook, three and four times the awe-inspiring hair with

which he moves earth, sea, and stars.”⁷² As Charles Segal has argued, Jupiter’s ivory scepter illustrates his godly authority and “visually crystalize[s] his possession of universal power in the *concilium decorum*...”⁷³ The mention of Jupiter carrying an ivory scepter recalls the colossal chryselephantine statue of Zeus at Olympia, although in this representation, the scepter was gold. The use of ivory for the divine scepter alludes to the material’s elite and commanding influence in the ancient Mediterranean world.

The most astounding use of ivory in *The Metamorphoses* appears in Book 10 when Ovid regales the reader with the story of Pygmalion and his cherished ivory statuette turned human. In lines 247-249, Ovid states, “Meanwhile, he sculpted the snowy ivory successfully with wondrous art, and gave it beauty with which no woman can be born and fell in love with his own work.”⁷⁴ Ovid’s narrative states that Pygmalion – an artist – continued to work the ivory but refused to admit that it the statuette – and the material itself – was not flesh.⁷⁵ As Pygmalion works on his beloved female statue, he slowly falls in love with the ivory modelled female as his perfect ideal of femininity and womanhood. At a festival of Venus, Pygmalion begs the gods to make a woman as lovely as his ivory statue. “...When Pygmalion – having made his offering – stood by the altar and timidly prayed, saying: ‘If you gods can give all things, may I have as my wife, I pray – ‘he did not dare to say: “the ivory maiden,” but finished – ‘one like my ivory maiden.”⁷⁶ The artist returned to his workshop and his statuette where “she seemed

⁷² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Mary M. Innes, (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books) Book 1:177-80, 34.

⁷³ Charles Segal, “Jupiter in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*,” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*, third series, Vol. 9, no. 1 (Spring- Summer 2011): 80.

⁷⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 10:247-49, 231.

⁷⁵ Ovid, 10: 254-55. “Often he nears his hands to the work to test whether it is flesh or ivory, and he does not admit it yet to be ivory.”

⁷⁶ Ovid, 10: 260-70.

warm...at his touch the ivory lost its hardness, and grew soft: his fingers made an imprint on the yielding surface..."⁷⁷ Even before the statuette became human, Pygmalion equates the sculpture's ivory veneer with human flesh. The lovely luminosity and warmed hue created a trompe l'oeil effect: Pygmalion's visual and mental realities became inconsistent when in the presence of ivory. The statuette's godly-divined human animation is perhaps the most telling aspect of the story as, while the material did not begin as divine flesh, its transformation into human flesh created the deific association. Patricia Salzman-Mitchell notes that through the statuette's transformation into a woman, ivory was seen as "changing form," an indirect reference to the Homeric notion of ivory as deceitful.⁷⁸

Like the Greeks, the Romans continued to utilize ivory in their representations of the gods and several Roman authors wrote on specific examples sprinkled across Rome. Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* noted two particular examples of statues of the gods in ivory. In Book 7, Pliny states, "And moreover last year, a Knight of Rome died while saying something in the ear of an ex-consul, just in front of the ivory statue of Apollo in the Forum of Augustus."⁷⁹ Pliny describes another ivory statue in Book 15, "[Oil] is considered to be useful for protecting ivory from decay; indeed, the interior of the statue of Saturn at Rome is filled with it."⁸⁰ As the center of daily life for Romans, the

⁷⁷ Ovid, 10.

⁷⁸ Patricia Salzman-Mitchell, "A Whole Out of Pieces: Pygmalion's Ivory Statue in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *Arethusa* vol. 41, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 303.

⁷⁹ Pliny, *Natural History*, 7.183.

⁸⁰ Pliny, *Natural History*, 15.52. Although Pliny does not specify precisely where this statue resided, it is probable that it was created for the Temple of Saturn in the western portion of the Roman Forum.

placement of two prominent ivory statues in the Roman fora alludes to the material's prominence in godly representations.

Ivory statues of the gods were not limited to just the Italian Peninsula. Emperor Hadrian (r.117-138 CE), famed for his love of the Greeks, finished construction on the Temple of Zeus Olympios in Athens, which he completed with an ivory statue that recalled Pheidias's chryselephantine creation from Olympia. Pausanias, a Roman historian, explains the sculpture in his *Description of Greece* and states, "Hadrian the Roman Emperor dedicated both the temple [of Zeus Olympios in Athens] and the statue, one worth seeing, which in size exceeds all other statues except the colossi at Rhodes and Rome and is made of ivory and gold with an artistic skill which is remarkable when the size is taken into account"⁸¹ Thus, the continued influence of Pheidias and of divine chryselephantine statuary continued well into the Roman world.

Calcidius's translation of Plato's *Timaeum* provides another written link between the Roman gods and ivory.

As in the statue of Jupiter on the Capitoline there is one ideal form, of ivory, there is likewise another, which Apollonios, the artist, drew out of his soul, and to which by direct application of his mind he perfected the one of ivory – of these two ideal forms one will be older than the other – so even that which has glorified manner is of secondary quality. That other, truly, compared to the second is perfect, it is the first about which we speak at present.⁸²

Here, there is not only another example of the Zeus/Jupiter figure in ivory but also a reiteration of Pliny's exclamation that ivory was ideal and appropriate for the

⁸¹ Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.20.3, quoted Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁸² Calcidius, *In Platonis Timaeum*, 337, quoted in Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

representations of the gods. The examples above are only a brief illustration of Roman representation of their gods in ivory, although there were undoubtedly more throughout the Empire. Salzman-Mitchell notes that there were numerous ivory and gold statues throughout the Roman Empire: Pasiteles' Jupiter in the temple of Jupiter Stator; the replacement statue of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus; an ivory statue of Saturn in the Roman Forum; and Hadrian's statue of Zeus Olympios in Athens.⁸³

In continuance of this material narrative, the Roman Emperors fashioned images of themselves in ivory to directly connected their eventual apotheosis with their imperial portraiture, as it became standard after Emperor Augustus's death in 14 CE to deify the emperor into the pantheon of Roman gods, thus becoming gods themselves. If ivory was understood as divine flesh and worthy for the depiction of gods, then was it not appropriate for the depiction of the emperors themselves? Several Roman authors described ivory imperial depictions and their function. In his seminal *Lives of the Caesars*, Suetonius articulated Emperor Titus's creation of an ivory statue for his friend Britannicus (son of Emperor Tiberius), stating, "He never forgot his friendship for Britannicus, but had two statues of him made: a gold one to be installed in the Palace, and an ivory equestrian one which is still carried in the Circus procession, and which he personally followed around the ring at its dedication."⁸⁴ The use of an imperial ivory statues in game procession was not an unusual event. Dio Cassius, in his *Roman History*, also described an ivory statue of Julius Caesar and its function for the Circus games.

And they decreed at this time [20 April 45 BC] that an ivory statue of him [Julius Caesar], and later that of a white chariot, should appear in procession at the games in the Circus, together with the statues of the

⁸³ Salzman-Mitchell, "A Whole Out of Pieces," 297.

⁸⁴ Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, trans. Catharine Edwards, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), *The Deified Titus*, Paragraph 2, 274.

gods. Another likeness they set up in the temple of Quirinus with the inscription, 'To the Invincible God,' and another on the Capitol beside the former kings of Rome. Now it occurs to me to marvel at the coincidence: there were eight such statues – seven to the kings, and an eighth to the Brutus who overthrew the Tarquins – and they set up the statue of Caesar beside the last of these; and it was from this cause chiefly that the other Brutus, Marcus, was roused to plot against him.⁸⁵

Dio Cassius not only described the use of ivory in the procession ceremonies of the Roman games but also places Caesar's ivory statue on the same level as the those of the gods. The author also references a similar ivory statue of Julius Caesar in the Temple of Quirinus with an inscription that correlated the would-be emperor with the gods.⁸⁶ The notion of ivory statues in the Roman game processions made another appearance in Tacitus's *Annales*. In Book 2, Tacitus explains, "[Germanicus] was decreed every honor which love or ingenuity could devise...his statue in ivory was to head the processions at the Circus games..."⁸⁷ Yet again, an ivory sculpture of a Roman elite was described as a processional element in the Roman Circus games. While none of these supposed statues have survived, the three reiterations spanning well into the third century CE offers evidence of these statue's ceremonial function.

The most salient mention of ivory in the Roman ancient world for my argument of ivory's connection to the Holy Roman mythic genealogy resides in Virgil's *Aeneid*. In Book 6, Virgil recalls the Homeric Gates of Horn and Ivory. He states, "Two gates the silent house of Sleep adorn;/ Of polish'd ivory this, that of transparent horn:/ True visions thro' transparent horn arise;/ Thro' polish'd ivory pass deluding lies./ Of various things

⁸⁵ Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 43.45. Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁸⁶ Finally, the author insinuates that it was the series of ivory representations of the Roman leader that led to his assassination.

⁸⁷ Tacitus, *Annales*, 2.83. Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

discourging as he pass'd,/ Anchises hither bends his steps at last./Then, thro' the gate of iv'ry, he dismiss'd.”⁸⁸ Here, the same Homeric notion of horn as truth and ivory as deceit appears again as well as references Aeneas’s lame father.

The combination of horn and ivory was translated literally in seventeenth-century Austrian art. In the *Kunstammer* collection two outstanding objects illustrate this confluence of dreams and deceit. In a striking seventeenth-century anonymous pot, the artist utilized the ivory for the spout, handle and lid, and in two bands along the base (Figure 1.24). The spout thrusts actively towards the viewer as an open-mouthed wild boar with terrifyingly sharp teeth lunges from the body of the vessel. The boar’s legs draw up towards its chest as if in the process of jumping out from the pot. The artist carefully articulates the boar’s features with finely carved lines of the fur to the drilled pupils. An ornate and floriated scroll circles the boar and demarcates the end of the ivory and the beginning of the horn. The handle and lid of the pot are also ivory and illustrate various four-legged predators attacking smaller animals. Standing at eleven inches tall, the artist playfully juxtaposed the rough-hewn texture of the staghorn with the pristine smoothness of the ivory, which heightens the stark contrast of the dark horn next to the warm white of the ivory. The pot’s jocularly continues with the boar’s ivory representation. In creating the boar in ivory, the artist subtly – if not unknowingly – references the Homeric and Virgilian Gates of Horn and Ivory and ivory’s role in deceitfulness. But the pureness of the ivory in opposition to the textured horn elicits

⁸⁸ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 6, 893-896. Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

ivory's role in the Penelope's test of truth. Ivory's dichotomous ancient meanings are manifested through the wonderfully playful exchange between the two materials.

Georg Pfründt, a well-known seventeenth-century artist, also created a sculpture of ivory and horn (Figure 1.25). In this work, the artist stresses ivory's whiteness and the horn's translucence with figures on the top and base in ivory. An ivory figure sits on top with dog strewn with gold and gem adornments and small child to the side holding a parasol to protect the pureness of the allegorical figure and the material's luminosity. The vessel's base illustrates a male and female embracing, which act like Greek caryatids, in recollection of the chryselephantine sculptures in Greek temples.

Sabine Haag, General Director of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, states that the two caryatid figures represent allegorical figures, like Mars and Venus, while the top figure resembles Diana with her dog and a Bacchan boy.⁸⁹ Haag also argues that there is no complex iconographic program behind the vessel, just an illustration of the combination of exotic wildlife material. But the author fails to take the material associations into account. The rough rhinoceros horn next to the warm ivory is a testament to the quest for luxurious materials. Unlike the anonymous pot above, the horn's warm brown color highlights ivory's yellowed undertones.⁹⁰ While this vessel is not as explicit in its depiction of ivory's role in both deceit and truth, it nonetheless illustrates an intrinsic knowledge of the Gates of Horn and Ivory.

⁸⁹ Haag, *Meisterwerk der Elfenbeinkunst*, (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 2007). Most of this information comes from the 1750 Kunstkammer inventory.

⁹⁰ Rhino horn was also thought of as mythical unicorn horn, like the narwhal and the Ainkhürn; rhino horn used to ward off poison and as an aphrodisiac.

As seen from the discussion above, ivory was a ubiquitous material in the ancient Mediterranean world. From images of the gods to depictions of emperors, ivory's role began extending beyond the realm of luxury and into the realm of the divine. The association of ivory as flesh – particularly deific flesh – became a fundamental part of its materiality that carried into the early modern period and ultimately to the Habsburgs. The Imperial family collected, commissioned, and displayed a number of mythological ivory sculptures that recalled this notion of divine flesh and connected the material with the continued dynastic quest for ancient ancestors. As previously discussed, the Habsburgs were almost obsessive in their need to link themselves with former Holy Roman Emperors and the ancient world. Emperors, like Maximilian I, disseminated propaganda throughout the Habsburg hereditary lands in order to assert their rightful place as Holy Roman Emperor. But could a single material portray the mythic genealogical message of Trojan and Roman descent for the Habsburgs?

I argue that ivory could carry this imperialistic materiality. Ivory, with its associations of Roman imperial and divine flesh, was the perfect vehicle to illustrate the Habsburg connection with their Trojan and Roman past and to assert their legitimate claim to the imperial throne. The placement of these sculptures in the imperial *Kunstammer* limited the type of viewer to those of elite statues – or those who would potentially be familiar with some of the texts describing ivory's ancient meaning. Thus, the connotations of flesh and luxury intensify with their cabinet placement and illustrated not only the Habsburgs right to the Empire but also their erudite knowledge of their antique past.

Furienmeister, Phoenix, 1610/20

One of the most awe-inspiring and peculiar ivory sculptures in the *Kunstammer* is the anonymous Furienmeister's *Phoenix*.⁹¹ Created around 1610-1620, the majestic mythical creature spreads its feathered wings wide with its head tilted as if taking flight. The sculpture stands at a little over nine inches tall with a total wing span of sixteen inches. The phoenix suspends itself on its inner talon while the other nails tilt upwards, which aides in the almost-flight visualization. The Furienmeister's masterful textural application compounds the dynamic physicality of the sculpture. The feathered wings are highly articulated and appear like a tangible phoenix dipped in a thin layer of ivory. Small patches of stubby feathers cover its barrel chest that appear rough to the touch. The Furienmeister's attention to detail and texture is unparalleled in comparison to other early seventeenth-century examples and the contrast of the light ivory with the textural shadows aid in the wondrous juxtaposition of the work.

The mythology of the phoenix dates back to the ancient world and the mythical bird is uniquely immortal as it regenerates from its predecessor. At the end of its lifecycle, the elderly phoenix bursts into flames and becomes ash from which the new phoenix rises. Authors like Ovid and Pliny the Elder, regaled their readers with stories of the mythic bird. In the *Metamorphoses* Book 15, Ovid states,

There is one living thing, a bird, which reproduces and regenerates itself, without any outside aid. The Assyrians call it the phoenix...When it has completed five centuries of life, it straightway builds a nest for itself,

⁹¹ While there are some characteristics of the mythical bird, there are several features that are missing from the Furienmeister's version of the phoenix – mainly the tuft of hair on the head and the long, plumed tail. After closer examination of the object, I thought perhaps the Furienmeister created an image of an eagle in ivory. This would have been an appropriate representation for the Habsburgs. But since its acquisition into the Habsburg *Kunstammer* in the early modern period, it has been marked as a phoenix in the inventories. For more information, see Haag, *Meisterwerk der Elfenbeinkunst*.

working with unsullied beak and claw, in the topmost branches of some swaying palm. Then, when it has laid a foundation of cassia, and smooth spikes of nard, chips of cinnamon bark and yellow myrrh, it places itself on top, and ends its life amid the perfumes. Then, they say, a little phoenix is born anew from the father's body, fated to live a life number of years. When the nestling is old enough and strong enough to carry the weight, it lifts the heavy nest from the high branches and, like a dutiful son, carries its father's tomb, its own cradle, through the yielding air, till it reaches the city of the sun, where it lays its burden before the sacred doors, within Hyperion's temple.⁹²

Pliny the Elder also remarked on the characteristics of the phoenix in *Natural History*.

He stated,

...is the phoenix, that famous bird of Arabia... It is said that there is only one in existence in the whole world, and that that one has not been seen very often. We are told that this bird is of the size of an eagle, and has a brilliant golden plumage around the neck, while the rest of the body is of a purple color; except the tail, which is azure, with long feathers intermingled of a roseate hue; the throat is adorned with a crest and the head with a tuft of feathers... that it lives five hundred and forty years, that when it becomes old it builds a nest of cassia and sprigs of incense, which it fills with perfumes, and then lays its body down upon them to die; that from its bones and marrow there springs at first a sort of small worm, which in time changes into a little bird: that the first thing it does is to perform the obsequies of its predecessor, and to carry the nest entire to the city of the Sun near Panchaia, and there deposit it upon the altar of that divinity. The same Manilius states also, that the revolution of the great year is completed with the life of this bird, and that then a new cycle comes round again with the same characteristics as the former one... This bird was brought to Rome in the censorship of the Emperor Claudius, being the year from the building of the City, 800, and it was exposed to public view in the Comitium. The fact is attested by the public Annals, but there is no one that doubts it was a fictitious phoenix only.⁹³

So why did the Furienmeister chose to construct this majestic bird from ivory? In the early modern *Kunst-* and *Wunderkammer*, collectors' stove to exhibit works of art that

⁹² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 15, 319-417, 345.

⁹³ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Book 10.2.2, quoted in Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the ancient Mediterranean World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

represented *naturalia* and *artificilia*, or the artificial and the natural. By densely displaying objects in various cabinets and drawers, crammed together in tightly controlled spaces, the viewer was overwhelmed with the wonders of the world and thus associated the obtainment of such objects with the might of the owner.⁹⁴ For the seventeenth-century ivory carver, this interplay between the natural and the artificial was an integral part of their finished work. As such, I postulate that the regenerative mythical bird is an allegorical figure of the Habsburgs and their ancestors and it is ivory that completes the allegory. Like the continual and uninterrupted lineage of the phoenix, the Holy Roman Emperors regenerated and continued the legacy from the ashes of their predecessors. The use of ivory only heightens this connection by utilizing a material with known associations of divinity and flesh. The viewer's material awareness of the ivory educes their knowledge of ancient ivory works and the material's relationship to divine flesh. The symbolism of ivory and deific flesh translated to the *Phoenix* through its storied regeneration.

Johann Ignaz Bendl, Aeneas flees with Anchises from Troy, 1684

Little is known about the life of Johann Ignaz Bendl. In their article, "Johann Ignaz Bendl: Sculptor and Medalist," Christian Theuerkauff and Russell Stockman eloquently theorized the life history of this sculptor.

...I have settled on the following hypothesis: Johann Ignaz Bendl from Bohemia is the creator of the series of ten ivory reliefs from 1684 in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna...I would also like to associate Johann Ignaz with "Ignatio Bendl bildhauren: who appeared in the court

⁹⁴ Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 260.

chamberlain's account books and court finance records between 1699 and 1711 as the recipient of payment for '*nachen hoff verrichte arbeits*.'⁹⁵

While little is known about Bendl's early life, his known oeuvre created an several astounding centerpieces for the ivory collections in the early modern Habsburg *Kunstkammer*. The series mentioned in the above quote are a set of twelve ivory plaque reliefs – carved from the tusk's interior that follows ivory's natural curvature – that depict scenes of gods and heroes.⁹⁶

Bendl's plaque representing Aeneas is particularly noteworthy for the present discussion.⁹⁷ In this frenetic scene, the ancient hero Aeneas carries his lame father, Anchises, from the burning Troy. Bendl places the father and son in the center of the composition in a stable – from the artist's creation of two triangularly composed figures – but dynamic position. The artist captures Aeneas mid-stride with his toga's skirt dramatically swaying in time with his hurried steps. Beneath his curly hair, Aeneas's furrowed brow illustrates his concentration on saving his father – his sacred duty. Anchises holds a statuette in his hand of two figures, which is representative of a vessel that contain the ashes of his ancestors, a fitting element for the Habsburgs. Another figure follows closely behind the Trojan hero carrying a woman, most likely Aeneas's son Ascanius. On the left side of the composition, Bendl flanks Aeneas with brambles in an attempt to balance the composition and behind the vegetation, in very low relief, is the burning city of Troy, which is immediately recognizable by the tall horse between

⁹⁵ Christian Theuerkauff and Russell Stockman, "Johann Ignaz Bendl: Sculptor and Medalist," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 26, (1991): 230. While Theuerkauff states there are ten ivory reliefs, there are in fact twelve currently on display in the Imperial *Kunstkammer* in Vienna.

⁹⁶ Bendl was not the only artist to utilize this method of carving ivory; another Austrian artist, Ignaz Elhafen, also created a series of mythological relief plaques housed in the *Kunstkammer*.

⁹⁷ Refer to Figure 3 from the Introduction of this Chapter.

Aeneas and the bramble. As the horse is twice the size of many of the fleeing figures, this is most likely the Greek Trojan horse used to infiltrate the inner walls of Troy, which ultimately led to the destruction of the city. In the top section of the composition, Bendl created the illusion of thick tendrils of smoke billowing from the city and the artist's careful attention to the conflagration aided in the composition's dynamism. With the high relief of the main hero and the constant sway and movement of the visual elements carved onto the plaque, Bendl not only demonstrated his technical virtuosity in the ivory medium but also an emotional and visceral tone of one of the Habsburg ancestor's trials.

To create such an emotional and powerful scene, Bendl looked to many of his early modern sculptural counterparts. As such, one of the most famous seventeenth-century versions of Aeneas's story – Gianlorenzno Bernini's *Aeneas, Anchises, and Ascanius* from 1618-1619 – provided key iconographic and compositional inspiration for the Central European artist. The Italian free-standing sculpture illustrates the same narrative of Aeneas fleeing Troy with his lame father, and like Bendl's iteration, Anchises carries a visually similar ancestor vessel. Perhaps, Bernini's sculpture was the inspiration for Bendl's emotionally charged rendering, as there are many similarities between the two sculptures: the stacked figures – à la Giambologna's *Abduction of a Sabine Woman* – that created an intense verticality for the viewer; Aeneas's stoic and furrowed brow; Anchises's ancestor vessel; the articulation of the musculature; and the dramatic and emotional positioning of the figures. Thus, it appears that Bernini – whether directly or indirectly – influenced Bendl through his conceptualization of baroque emotionality. But Bendl's translation of Aeneas's origins shows greater dynamism with the dramatic twisting of the figures and the exaggerated billowing of the

clothing. Although the Austrian version of the story is more diminutive, Bendl renders the heroic act with emotional theatricality characteristic of the late seventeenth-century.

While Aeneian mythology and lineage was a critical component of the Habsburg imperial image, there are relatively few depictions of the Aeneas within the imperial collections. In fact, Bendl's Aeneas is the only blatant representation of the Trojan hero in the current Imperial *Kunstkammer*. While the direct portrayal of Aeneas and his heroism certainly points to the Habsburg's adoration, the unmistakable absence of the Aeneian imagery in the imperial collections does raise an interesting quandary. Why would the Habsburgs – the propagandistic manipulators of the Trojan mythic genealogy – not include more representations of their progenitor in their collections? With the records of the genealogical chroniclers and the stunning ancestral propaganda machine of Emperor Maximilian I's court, this question becomes even more nuanced. I posit that the Habsburgs utilized Aeneian and Virgilian allusions and symbolism to create their visual ancestor link within their collections rather than relying on direct representations. The audience viewing these works needed the erudite knowledge of ancient texts and mythologies to understand the artwork's true potency. An excellent example of this antique symbolism appears in the rest of Bendl's relief series; The *Laocoön* and the *Sacrifice of Iphigenia* both act as quiet allusions to the Habsburgs mythic ancestral link to Ancient Troy (Figures 1.26-1.27).

As told in the *Aeneid*, Poseidon punished the Trojan priest Laocoön for attempting to warn his countrymen of the Greek's plan for the Trojan Horse. In retribution, the god of the sea sends sea monsters to stop Laocoön and his sons from alerting the Trojans. Like the famed marble Hellenistic sculpture in the Vatican, Bendl

carves an intricate and highly expressive relief of a dying Laocoön with his dead son splayed across his lap as spectators surround him.⁹⁸ The dramatic and highly volatile scene played a significant role in Trojan mythology, as Poseidon's actions allowed the Greeks to deceive and trick the Trojans with the famed horse. While the Laocoön story is not a direct reference to the *Aeneid* or Aeneas, it is an allusion to it. Relayed in Virgil – and not Homer – the story's allusion between Laocoön and Aeneas becomes even stronger and more concrete.

Like the *Laocoön*, *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia* offers another antique and Virgilian allusion for the Habsburg's Aeneian representation. In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid tells the story of Iphigenia, the daughter of Greek King Agamemnon. The king kills one of Artemis's sacred deer and in order to appease the goddess, the seer Calchas tells Agamemnon that Artemis will either prevent the Greek troops from reaching Troy or he can sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia. Agamemnon chose to sacrifice his daughter for the greater good.⁹⁹ Ovid's iteration of the Iphigenia story holds the most concrete allusion to the Habsburg's Aeneian visuality: for without Iphigenia's sacrifice, Agamemnon would

⁹⁸ The Laocoön Group, created circa the second century BCE, was prominently placed in the Vatican in 1506 and extended the reach and knowledge of the story.

⁹⁹ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book XII:1-38 Iphigenia at Aulis: "Boreas, the north-wind, continued to stir the waves violently, and would not grant the warships a crossing, and some thought Neptune was sparing Troy, because he had built its walls. But not Calchas. He knew and did not withhold from them, that a virgin's blood would appease the wrath of Diana, the virgin goddess. When consideration of the common cause had conquered affection, and the king had suppressed the father, and as Iphigenia stood, among her weeping attendants, before the altar, to surrender her innocent blood, the goddess was vanquished, and veiled their eyes in mist, and, in the midst of the rites and confusion of the sacrifice, and the cries of the suppliants, they say she substituted a hind for the Mycenaean girl. When, therefore, Diana had been appeased, by the required victim, and the sea's anger had subsided simultaneously with that of Phoebe, the thousand ships, driven by a tail wind, reached the shores of Phrygia, after many adventures."

In other versions of this myth, Artemis replaces the young girl with a deer and takes her to the godly realm.

never have reached Greece, Troy would never have fallen, and Aeneas would never have founded Italy.

Like the other relief plaques in Bendl's series, the artist creates a scene brimming with figures and vegetation. Iphigenia, the heroine of the plaque, appears in the center of the composition with a man propping her up. A man situated behind her, who holds the murder weapon in his hand, looks toward Agamemnon as he finishes the heinous deed. Iphigenia's face is serene in death, as if she completed her purpose. To her immediate left, a deer watches over the sacrifice – most likely in reference to Artemis's role in the sacrificial scene. Iphigenia's father stands stoically on the left and stares impassively towards his dying daughter, depicted as Ovid stated, "the duty of the king conquered a father's feelings."¹⁰⁰ Unlike Bendl's two other reliefs, there is certain melancholia that permeates the scene and a stiffness in the figures unseen in the other examples. Although the somber nature of plaque is apparent, the baroque positioning of the bodies and the level of detail are firmly within Bendl's style and the rest of the relief cycle.

Emperor Leopold I most likely commissioned Johann Ignaz Bendl's cycle as evidenced from his appointment as court artist. The choice of ivory belies a sense of commonality with parts of the imperial collections – particularly of Leopold's father, Ferdinand III – but also harkens back to the ancient connotations of ivory as divine flesh. Through the manipulation of ivory, the Habsburg's allusions and iterations of Trojan mythology illustrated and ultimately materially demonstrated their own connection with Ancient Troy. The material's continued connection to the depiction of divine flesh provided an apt representational material for mythological scenes. But while the ivory

¹⁰⁰ Ovid, Book 12, 269.

succeeds in recalling antique representational modes, it also alludes to the Habsburg's genealogical constructions and their ancestry from Troy and the ancient gods. Johann Ignaz Bendl's twelve relief plaque cycle visually and materially signified the Habsburg's understanding of ancient mythology and their own imperial and divine heritage.

Jakob Auer, Apollo and Daphne, 1688

The story of the god Apollo and the nymph Daphne pervaded early modern art, particularly in sculptural representations. Artists like Bernini took Ovid's tale of the love-stricken god and created emotional and dynamic works that littered the halls of elite homes. Yet Jakob Auer's version of the myth offers intriguing parallels to the Habsburg's genealogical claims with the use of the warm and luminous ivory providing viewers with the ancient materiality of divine flesh and another allusion to Ovid and the Habsburgs divine ancestry.

Created in 1688, Auer's small yet utterly charismatic iteration of the Ovidian myth captivates its audience with impressive contrapposto and delicate detailing. Based on travel texts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Auer's remarkable representation of Apollo and Daphne has been in the *Kunstkammer* since the early modern period.¹⁰¹ The artist illustrates the moment Apollo finally catches Daphne but instantly loses her as she turns into a laurel tree. As Ovid describes in Book I,

So the virgin and the god: he driven by desire, she by fear. He ran faster, Amor giving him wings, and allowed her no rest, hung on her fleeing shoulders, breathed on the hair flying round her neck. Her strength was gone, she grew pale, overcome by the effort of her rapid flight, and seeing Peneus's waters near cried out 'Help me father! If your streams have divine powers change me, destroy this beauty that pleases too well!' Her prayer was scarcely done when a heavy numbness seized her limbs, thin bark closed over her breast, her hair turned into leaves, her arms into

¹⁰¹ Haag, *Meisterwerk der Elfenbeinkunst*, 144.

branches, her feet so swift a moment ago stuck fast in slow-growing roots, her face was lost in the canopy. Only her shining beauty was left.¹⁰²

Auer replicates Apollo's heartbreaking realization that this love would never flourish as the god gazes up at the beautiful nymph with his eyes shining in triumph. Yet his mouth is open in shock at the scene playing out before him – her metamorphosis into a laurel tree. The fabric of Apollo's skirt swirl around his legs illustrating his abrupt movements in the moments before the ivory scene. Daphne appears surprised as she gazes up towards her now leafy hands. The untamed arrangement of the interlocked figures proclaims Auer's virtuosic talent with ivory. The deep cuts of the curls, individualized strands of hair, carefully attenuated laurel leaves, and even the indentations of Apollo's fingers in Daphne's flesh created a highly realistic sculpture.

Representations of the Apollo and Daphne's amorous story became popular in the early modern period, particularly during the seventeenth century and perhaps the most famous is Gianlorenzo Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne* (1622-1625), housed in the Borghese Gallery in Rome. The monumental marble sculpture demonstrates the moment before Apollo catches the river nymph and as she begins to turn into a laurel tree. Daphne rises on a rocky outcrop with her body twisted in a strong contrapposto as her hands begin to grow branches and her feet begin to sprout roots. Her hair swings behind her and draws the audience's attention to the look of surprise on her face. Bernini sculpts Apollo mid-step as he races to catch his beloved – only a moment too late. The tense

¹⁰² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 1.

atmosphere coupled with the dynamic theatricality of Bernini's work helped set the standard for sculptural representations in this period.

Auer's sculpture becomes more inundated with antique meaning and materiality when considered in conjunction with the various stories in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. As described earlier, one of the most infamous tales of Ovid's tome was the story of Pygmalion and his love for an ivory statue. After asking the gods to bring him a woman like his ivory maiden, they answered his call and transformed the ivory sculpture into a woman. The motif of transformation plays an influential role in *Metamorphoses* and as Salzman-Mitchell states, "...the ancient world had developed techniques to soften, mold, and unscroll ivory. This hard material could become soft and harden again. Ivory is thus able to 'change form' to make the transition from one shape to another. Hardening and softening of bodies is a central theme in *Metamorphoses*."¹⁰³ The connection between Daphne and the ivory maiden are enhanced when contrasted to Daphne's transformation from her soft semi-divine white flesh into the brown rough bark. In Auer's iteration of the myth, Daphne is the reverse ivory maiden; unlike Pygmalion's love, whose ivory surface transforms into ivory-colored flesh, Daphne's warm and lustrous divine ivory flesh transformed and hardened into bark. Thus, her depiction in ivory is materially Ovidian in execution. Unlike the harsh white of Bernini's marble sculpture, Auer's ivory representation illustrates the stark transformation from ivory's warm smoothness to bark's brown roughness.¹⁰⁴ Thus the connection between

¹⁰³ Salzman-Mitchell, "A Whole Out of Pieces," 303. This hardening and softening of bodies most assuredly had sexual connotations as well.

¹⁰⁴ Apollo and Daphne's story does not end the moment she turns into a laurel, however. After the god of music reaches the former nymph and realizes the loss of his love, he takes the laurel leaves to create a crown. As Ovid notes, "Even like this Phoebus loved her and...He clasped the branches as if they were

ivory, Ovid, and the Habsburg's ancestral claims to Rome become further connected. Like Johann Ignaz Bendl's relief plaques allusion to ancient Trojan mythology and Habsburg Trojan ancestry, Auer's *Apollo and Daphne* acted as a visual and material metaphor for Ovid's ivory transformations and the Habsburg's Roman descent.

Habsburg Ancestry and Mythological Ivories

Throughout the Habsburg reign of the Holy Roman Empire, the emperors continually attempted to connect themselves to the ancient Trojan, Romans, and former imperial rulers. The creation of mythic genealogies was an integral part of imperial identity and in order to illustrate continuous and uninterrupted rule, emperors often fabricated or exaggerated their ancestry and the Habsburgs were no different in this regard. But the Central European rulers took their genealogical claims further with the massive propagandistic efforts through art, like Emperor Maximilian I's utilization of the newly conceived printed medium proclaiming his Trojan and Roman heritage.¹⁰⁵ The seventeenth century saw a different mode of representation placed throughout the Habsburgs imperial collections: clever allusions to their ancestors through various luxury materials.

parts of human arms, and kissed the wood. But even the wood shrank from his kisses, and the god said 'Since you cannot be my bride, you must be my tree! Laurel, with you my hair will be wreathed, with you my lyre, with you my quiver. You will go with the Roman generals when joyful voices acclaim their triumph, and the Capitol witnesses their long processions. You will stand outside Augustus's doorposts, a faithful guardian, and keep watch over the crown of oak between them. And just as my head with its uncropped hair is always young, so you also will wear the beauty of undying leaves...' the laurel bowed her newly made branches, and seemed to shake her leafy crown like a head giving consent." Thus began the Greco-Roman tradition of the laurel wreath and its allusion to victory. The most noteworthy aspect about Ovid's passage is his reference to the Roman Emperor, Augustus. Apollo remarks that the laurel tree will stand as a faithful guardian to the emperor and witness the military triumphal processions throughout Rome.

¹⁰⁵ He particularly accentuated his marriage to Mary of Burgundy, which gave him the Burgundian Duchy and a clear genealogical link to the Carolingians.

I argue that it was through ivory – with its mythological and antique materiality – that the ruling Holy Roman Emperors were able to establish and illustrate their mythic genealogy. Throughout the ancient world, ivory was known as a luxurious and costly material that resembled human flesh with its warm white color. Greek artists, like Pheidias, created monumental chryselephantine statues of the gods and employed ivory for the skin. Ivory thus became associated with divine flesh, which I posit carried on into the early modern period. The Romans also applied ivory as divine flesh with their continuation of chryselephantine statues of gods and in the representations of emperors. Ancient writers described these statues and noted many instances of Roman ivory imperial portraits used in processions. Thus, ivory’s materiality was cemented as deific flesh in antiquity.

The Habsburgs continued this connotation of divine flesh through their manipulation of ivory in the seventeenth century, particularly Emperor Leopold I. Artists like Johann Ignaz Bendl and Jakob Auer capitalized on ivory’s ancient materiality to produce works that bridged antique ancestry with the contemporary needs of the Habsburgs. For imperial propaganda, ivory proved to be an aggressive symbol of antiquity and a sublimated message of dynastic legitimacy. The three sculptures discussed above also illustrate the material’s connection to ancient literature and ivory as a leitmotif for transformation, deception, and divine flesh. The knowledgeable and elite early modern viewers of the Habsburg ivories would have understood these allusions and literary references to create a sound material understanding that promulgated the Habsburgs legitimate claim as Holy Roman Emperor.

Habsburg Imperial Piety and Religious Ivories

Ivory's prestigious status did not diminish with the fall of the Roman Empire; in fact, it continued well into the Middle Ages and became a luxurious, religious material. While the ancients considered ivory as akin to the divine flesh, the rise of Christianity and the development of the renewed Holy Roman Empire allowed ivory to become intertwined with saintly and Marian flesh. In this section, I argue that ivory's ancient connotations merged with Christianity to produce iconographically significant objects that related ivory to the power of Christian flesh. Also, I contend that the Habsburgs understood and exploited ivory's materiality in order to promote another aspect of their imperial identity: The *Pietas Austriaca*, or Austrian Piety. As the Holy Roman Emperors, and thus the Defenders of the Christian faith, Christianity was a crucial element to Habsburg imperial life. Their identity was at times fixed between two poles: their role as Holy Roman Emperor – and their ancestry – and their Christian faith. Like the multitude of seventeenth-century ivory mythological sculptures placed within the *Kunstzimmer*, the Habsburgs also utilized ivory to produce a staggering amount of religious sculptures. Mainly produced between 1610-1740 CE, ivory pervaded the *Kunst- and Schatzkammern*. Leading imperial court artists flawlessly executed hundreds of ivory religious scenes that took on the mantle of Christian divine flesh. As I posit throughout these sections, the Habsburgs were indeed aware of these fleshly connotations and employed the material to illustrate their deep Christian piety.

Materiality of Ivory in the Middle Ages

As I explicated in the previous section, ivory was a commonly utilized material in the creations of sacred images. In her book, *Strange Beauty: Issues in the Making and*

Meaning of Reliquaries 400-circa 1204, Cynthia Hahn discusses the origins of the ivory medium in the context of religious devotion. Like the *Athena Parthenos*, it was through such evocations of the Grecian and Roman gods that the material became associated with the divine flesh. Examining ivory reliquaries from fifth-century Rome, Hahn states, “Ultimately, it is no coincidence that these objects exploring the issue of resurrection are made of ivory. The text of 2 Corinthians 4:7, concerning ‘earthen vessels’ of human flesh that hold both life and death as well as the promise of resurrection through Jesus, in some sense requires that reliquaries be conceived as ‘flesh.’”¹⁰⁶ It would thus appear as though the notion of ivory as flesh translated into the Early Christian era through the modes of ancient representation.

Sarah M. Guérin continued the development of the ivory’s medieval materiality in her article, “Meaningful Spectacles: Gothic Ivories Staging the Divine.”¹⁰⁷ Guérin reiterates the ancient ideas of divine flesh with a discussion of Pliny the Elder’s categorization of ivory as divine flesh through its frigidness, thus elucidating its chasteness.¹⁰⁸ Continuing along this narrative of chastity, the author discusses biblical exegetical texts as the perpetuation of these ideas, with these texts often equating the notion of chaste flesh as reminiscent of the Virgin’s flesh, which were iconographically represented by the Throne of Solomon. As Guibert of Nogent wrote in the twelfth century, “the wisdom of God the Father...that is Solomon, made for himself a throne of ivory, that is the seat of the Virgin, because he would not be placed in anything

¹⁰⁶ Cynthia Hahn, *Strange Beauty: Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries 400-circa 1204*, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), 46.

¹⁰⁷ Sarah M. Guérin, “Meaningful Spectacles: Gothic Ivories Staging the Divine,” *The Art Bulletin* 95, no. 1 (2013): 53-77.

¹⁰⁸ Guérin, “Meaningful Spectacles,” 62.

unchaste.”¹⁰⁹ The connection between the Throne of Solomon and the flesh of the Virgin appears tangential at first glance, but when thought of in conjunction with the *sedes sapientiae* or “seat/throne of wisdom” the connection becomes clearer.¹¹⁰ With the Christ child seated upon the lap of the Virgin contained within a large throne, the visual connection to one of the most prominent biblical thrones becomes more tenable. Illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages represented this notion of the chaste flesh, particularly in the depiction of Solomon’s Throne in the Moralized Bible of King Louis IX (Figure 1.28). Dated to around 1230, the illuminators portrayed the Throne with a subsequent gloss explicating its meaning as “Solomon’s ivory throne signifies the blessed Virgin in whose womb reposed Christ made man. Ivory signifies chastity and gold charity.”¹¹¹

The exegetical tradition of ivory as flesh continued with the argument that the physical processes of carving ivory were analogous to the torture of martyrs. Hugh of St. Cher, a Dominican monk, wrote of this narrative in his *Postilla* as a reworking of the Pseudo-Jerome gloss.¹¹² He stated,

And it is said that the house of ivory is Ecclesia. Because through cold ivory, we are to understand the chastity of the saints. And because just as ivory is at first dull, but with files, and saws, and awls is made to shine, and afterwards is shaped and sculpted, so the Saints through tribulations are made more pure and are engraved, as it were, with a variety of virtues. This is the sense of the words...that the saints may serve as examples of the mortification of the flesh, humility, and faith for the lesser ones of the church.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Guérin, 62.

¹¹⁰ Guérin, 62.

¹¹¹ Guérin, 62.

¹¹² Guérin, 65.

¹¹³ Guérin, 66.

As both Guérin and Hahn have explicated, ivory became synonymous with the divine flesh of the gods, of the Virgin Mary, and with the tortured flesh of the martyr saint. These connotations did not just exist in a medieval vacuum but were reconstituted with ivory's rise to prominence in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This continuation of ivory's materiality can be seen in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century depictions of the Judgment of Solomon, including the Georg Pfründt's large plaque in the Kunsthistorisches Museum and Simon Troger's large-scale sculpture of the same subject in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (Figures 1.29-1.30). Pfründt (1603-1663), a German medalist and sculptor, produced a large-scale relief plaque depicting the famed biblical scene of the Judgment of Solomon. Created in stunningly high relief, the dramatic scene appears to extend into the viewer's space. Pfründt creates a chaotic cacophony of figures in an almost an exact ivory replica of Peter Paul Rubens's version (Figure 1.31). The center of the composition depicts a soldier in the midst of drawing his sword to cut the debated child in half. The baby swings precariously as the "mother" on the right looks passively upon the scene, while the child's true mother kneels in front of King Solomon begging for her child's life. Her back is towards the viewer with her hand flung out to her child, which alerts and directs the viewer's gaze to the main thrust of the scene. King Solomon gazes stoically at the melee in front of him with his hand raised towards his soldier to stop him from killing the child. The king sits upon his illustrious ivory throne – physically created in ivory – with a tall back, Corinthian columns, and a shell in the middle and the heavily ornamented arms peak through the mass of bodies. Pfründt fashioned the plaque with a single sheet of ivory for the background and several strips of thicker ivory to create the figural scene.

Pfründt included two Solomonic columns – or twisted columns – in the right-hand corner of the composition to further explicate the representation of the Judgment of Solomon. The emotionality Pfründt infused into the relief compounded with the droll utilization of the ivory for the depiction of the Solomon’s ivory throne. Thus, it seems that the medieval connection of ivory and the Throne of Solomon continued into the seventeenth century. With the inclusion of Pfründt’s plaque in the *Kunstammer* collection, it appears that the Habsburgs were indeed aware of ivory’s medieval materiality.

The connection between ivory and the Throne of Solomon continued into the eighteenth century as well. Simon Troger, an early eighteenth-century Central European sculptor, was a premier artist of the Holy Roman Empire. Troger’s work spread through the court system of eighteenth-century Germany with patrons like Maximilian III, Elector of Bavaria, and King Frederik IV of Denmark-Norway. Most known for his so-called *Kombinationsgruppe* or “Troger figures”, the artist worked primarily in various woods and ivory in his Munich workshop, and sparked many followers down the path of such combinations.

Dated to 1741, Troger’s *The Judgment of Solomon* utilized ivory, walnut, and colored glass and stands at forty-six inches tall and thirty-nine inches wide. The artist showcased the moment between Solomon’s ordering for the child to be cut in half and the soldier’s completion of said order. Troger sets the dramatic scene as follows: Solomon, seated under the walnut canopy decorated with ivory putti and floriated decorations as well as an allegory of Justice, intensely watches as the soldier lifts his metal sword in the air. One of the women clings to the king’s side and clutches at his leg to beg for the baby to remain unharmed. The second woman, whose scantily clad body turns half towards

Solomon and half towards the soldier, points to the ground where a young child lies lifeless. Carved in exquisite detail, this group showcases Troger's immense talent and knowledge of the material but also his virtuosity in the depiction of religious iconography. The continuation of the Solomonic mythology in ivory into the eighteenth century thus illustrates the enduring nature of ivory's connection with divine flesh. With such religious depictions, the medieval materiality of ivory Christianized the antique connotations of divine flesh. Through associations with King Solomon – and genealogically, Christ – the Virgin Mary, and the flesh of martyrs, ivory's luxurious and holy materiality was cemented.

Medieval Examples of Religious Ivories

Throughout the Middle Ages, rulers and Church leaders used ivory to create small-scale sculptures, illuminated manuscript covers, and portable altars. The material's connection to Christian divine flesh created a sacred materiality that expanded ivory's reach into religious art and piety. While there are numerous prominent examples of medieval ivory, perhaps the most significant for the Habsburgs *Pietas Austriaca* was the Throne of St. Peter in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

Throne of St. Peter

Safely secured behind Gianlorenzo Bernini's high-baroque gilt-bronze reliquary is holiest seat in all of Christianity: The Throne of St. Peter (Figure 1.32). Thought to be the original papal throne of Apostle St. Peter, the so-called "Throne of St. Peter" or "St. Peter's Chair" was originally a gift from Holy Roman Emperor, Charles the Bald, to Pope John VIII, which illustrates the lasting connection between the Holy See and the Holy Roman Empire (Figure 1.33). The majority of the chair was constructed from wood, but

the decorative elements trimmed along the back and front of the chair and the central decorative plaques beneath the seat are ivory. On the back of chair is a portrait of Emperor Charles the Bald surrounded by two angels offering him a crown in reference to his imperial coronation (Figure 1.34). Kurt Weitzmann states that the coronation scene on the back panels of the throne are surround by two different realms: the universe in the gable friezes and the terrestrial realm shown through the battle groups, which is subdivided into three addition segments depicting the earth, sun and moon, and constellations.¹¹⁴ Through the various illustrations of the aspects of the universe, Weitzmann suggests that Charles the Bald – in occupying a similar place in the cosmos as Christ – must be seen as Christ’s earthly representative.¹¹⁵ The juxtaposition of good versus evil and Charles’s place among them therefore equates the Holy Roman Emperor with King David.¹¹⁶ As Weitzmann states, “The concept of the *imitation Davidis regis* played an important role in the life of Charlemagne as well as other Carolingians. Charles the Bald is thus... represented on the throne in a dual role: as the cosmocrator, who rules the work in the name of Christ, and as the Novus David who is the moral force which tries to overcome the iniquities of the world.”¹¹⁷ With the *translatio imperii*, the Habsburgs subsumed these Carolingian traits of religious ancestry and heightened their role as the defenders of the Christian faith. Thus, the most Holy Seat of Christendom became material inspiration for Habsburg religious sculptures.

¹¹⁴ Kurt Weitzmann, “The Iconography of the Ivories,” in *In La Cattedra Lignea di S. Pietro in Vaticano / Quattro studi di M. Maccarrone [et. al.], con dieci appendici di D. Balboni*, ed. Michele Maccarrone, (Rome: Tipographia poliglotta vaticana, 1971), 232.

¹¹⁵ Weitzmann, “The Iconography of the Ivories,” 232.

¹¹⁶ Weitzmann, 232.

¹¹⁷ Weitzmann, 232.

The materiality of the throne's ivory should not be overlooked. As I noted above, ivory came to stand for divine flesh in the ancient world, which Christians adapted into their iconographic lexicon. Ivory also became associated with the Throne of Solomon – and thus Christ through his Davidian ancestry – the Virgin Mary and the skin of martyrs. The representation of Charles the Bald in ivory on the throne raises a provocative material association in which Charles the Bald not only becomes Christ's terrestrial representative, but also becomes a representative of Christian divine flesh. His ivory portrayal not only links him materially and iconographically to the Davidian family tree, but through ivory's association to the Throne of Solomon placed on the Throne of St. Peter itself, Charles the Bald himself materially manifests into Christ's chosen successor.

Charles was not unfamiliar with ivory's religious applicability as the cover of his famed Psalter has an inserted ivory plaque (Figure 1.35). The ninth-century psalter, housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, has two unique inserted ivory plaques: the front plaque illustrating Psalm 56 and the back-plaque portraying King David, Bathsheba, and the parable of the Rich and Poor Man. As Amy Vandersall expertly argued, the style of the ivory carvings is directly related to manuscript illuminations produced at the Court School of Charles the Bold in the later ninth century.¹¹⁸ The author notes that while the Utrecht Psalter was the penultimate inspiration, the *Codex Aureus* and the *San Paolo fuori le mura* Bible provided the most explicit style inspiration (Figures 1.36-1.37).¹¹⁹ The stylistic similarities of the Psalter's and throne's ivory

¹¹⁸ Amy Vandersall, "The Relationship of Sculptors and Painters in the Court School of Charles the Bald," *Gesta* 15, no. 1/2, Essays in Honor of Summer McKnight Crosby (1976): 201-210.

¹¹⁹ Weitzmann, "The Iconography of the Ivories," 242. I would also add that Kurt Weitzmann, when discussing the ivories of the Throne of St. Peter, explicated that several of the ivory figural decorations were derived from the *Utrecht Psalter* and *Codex Aureus*.

plaques are justifiable, as Vandersall argued, many of the Court School ivory sculptors were examining and replicating manuscript illuminations and vice versa.¹²⁰ A thought-provoking commonality between the three manuscripts and the ivory plaques is the depiction of the Coronation of Solomon in the *San Paolo fuori le mura* Bible (Figure 1.38). The Davidian king sits on a multi-layered platform, which recalls the Biblical description of the ivory throne. While there are no explicit references to this manuscript's notation of an ivory throne, it is very probable that viewers would make that connection, especially in the wake of its patron, Carolingian Emperor Charles the Bald.

Thus, the Throne of St. Peter's ivory plaques became a greater player in the continuation of ivory's materiality in the Middle Ages. Beyond Charles the Bald's role as Christ's terrestrial representative, the ivory plaques correlate to Charles's piety through ivory's function as Christian divine flesh, as Holy Roman Emperor, and his mythic ancestry. The Throne of St. Peter, furthermore, aided in the perpetuation of ivory's religious functionality and utilization as divine flesh.

Pietas Austriaca

While the creation of mythic genealogy and the quest of an uninterrupted dynastic lineage was of incredible import to the Habsburgs, there was yet another element of their imperial identity: The *Pietas Austriaca*, or Austrian piety. The Habsburg's intense Catholic faith became ingrained in their daily lives and in their monarchical agenda. Anna Coreth's text *Pietas Austriaca* is the most in-depth look at the various aspects of the *Pietas Austriaca* and discusses the history and implementation of piety during the

¹²⁰ Vandersall, "The Relationship of Sculptors and Painters in the Court School of Charles the Bald," 209. As the Throne of St. Peter was given to Pope John VIII by Charles the Bald, it is very likely that the ivory plaques were made at the Court School, thus explaining their commonalities.

Habsburg's reign. Coreth illustrates how the pious ideals of the Emperors interwove with their political propagandistic program and argues that this piety was the foundation of any good government, particularly in light of the Counter-Reformation ideals purported by the Church and the Council of Trent.¹²¹ Central European authors and Habsburg apologists wrote numerous texts and pamphlets dedicated to explaining the areas of Habsburg piety. In 1605, Justus Lipsius (1547-1606), wrote of the importance of religious piety to any ruler in *Monita et exempla politica qui virtutes et vitia principum spectant* and creates an analogy of constructing a house, wherein the state (the house) must be erected on the support of religion.¹²² In Nickolaus Vernulaeus's (1583-1649) *Virtutes Augustissimae Gentis Austriae libri tres*, the author discussed Austria's prominence and argued that world power belonged to Austria.¹²³ His reasoning for this was trifold: the special lineage – or the genealogy – of the monarchy; its vast world territories; and the monarchy's piety.¹²⁴ Johann Schönleben noted in his *Dissertatio polemica* that there were three main columns or elements of Austrian piety – the catholic zeal of the House of Austria, the veneration of the eucharist, and the promotion of the Immaculate Conception.¹²⁵ Italian Jesuit Joseph Scallertari reiterated these elements but expanded the premise arguing that the main components of the *Pietas Austriaca* were the adoration of God, the cult of the cross, the cult of the eucharist, and the cult of the Virgin Mary.¹²⁶

¹²¹ Anne Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, trans. William D. Bowman and Anna Maria Leitgeb, (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2004), 1.

¹²² Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, 3.

¹²³ Coreth, 4.

¹²⁴ Coreth, 4.

¹²⁵ Coreth, 7.

¹²⁶ Coreth, 7.

Piety towards the eucharist became the norm in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and was paramount to the Habsburg's evocation of Catholic piety. The emperors looked towards their founding father, Rudolph I, as a paragon of eucharistic piety.¹²⁷ In *Josephs des Sieghafften Röm. Kayzers Leben und Thaten*, Eucharius Gottlieb Rinck wrote of Emperor Joseph I's eucharistic piety. "...upon an encounter with the *venerabile* [consecrated host] he always went down on his knees, after the example of the founder of this house, Rudolf of Habsburg, and the great and pious Leopold, and often escorted it [the host] to the place where it was required."¹²⁸ As this passage explicates, the veneration of the eucharist was not only connected to the founder of the dynasty but also to the young Emperor's father, Emperor Leopold I. The sacrament of communion – a sacred element of the Catholic mass – became part of public life. Emperors Ferdinand III and Leopold I publicized the holy practice of taking the flesh of Christ into their body by including it in public ceremonies, festivals, and during pilgrimages.¹²⁹

Dedication to the Cross was also a crucial element in Habsburg piety. Authors like Schönleben connected the Veneration of the Cross with Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 CE to command the Roman throne.¹³⁰ It was through Constantine's divine vision during the battle that the Cross of Christ became synonymous with military victory and divine intervention. Habsburg piety towards the cross became more fervent after a devastating fire in the Hofburg in mid-seventeenth century.¹³¹ On 6 February 1668 the *Kammerkappelle* – the imperial family's

¹²⁷ Coreth, 16.

¹²⁸ Coreth, 16. Eucharius Gottlieb Rinck, *Josephs des Sieghafften Röm. Kayzers Leben und Thaten*, part 1 (Cologne, 1712), 32 and 49.

¹²⁹ Rinck, *Josephs des Sieghafften Röm. Kayzers Leben und Thaten*, 19.

¹³⁰ Rinck, 38.

¹³¹ Rinck, 41.

private chapel – caught fire in the Leopoldine wing of the Viennese imperial palace.¹³² The chapel held a reliquary of the True Cross –venerated by the Habsburgs for generations – and after the fire, the reliquary itself had melted but the shard of the cross remained intact.¹³³ Emperor Leopold I then gave the miraculous relic to his stepmother, Empress Eleonore Magdalena. Hans Jakob Mair created a new reliquary for the True Cross fragment in 1688, called the *Sternkreuzordensmonstranz*, now in the *Kunstkammer* (Figure 1.39).¹³⁴ The glorious finding of the shard of the True Cross intact inspired the Habsburgs to re-constitute the Order of the Starry Cross and became the dynasty’s highest elite female order in 1688.¹³⁵

The Habsburg devotion to the Virgin Mary was one of the most prominent components of the *Pietas Austriaca*. Thoroughly heightened under the Habsburgs, veneration of the Mother of God was standard during the Counter-Reformation. The nature of Mary’s divinity was often in question, particularly in reference to the Catholic dogmatic concepts of the Immaculate Conception and Original Sin. How could Mary, the vessel for the divine, be pure if she carried the sins of Adam and Eve? The Council of Trent raised the question but did not reach a conclusion; on 8 December 1661, Pope Alexander VII issued a papal bull in favor of the Immaculate Conception and effectively ended the purity discussion.¹³⁶ Emperor Ferdinand I (1503-1564) was credited with

¹³² Werner Telesko, “The *Pietas Austriaca*: A Political Myth? On the Instrumentalisation of Piety towards the Cross at the Viennese Court in the Seventeenth Century,” in *The Habsburgs and their Courts in Europe, 1400-1700: Between Cosmopolitanism and Regionalism*, eds. Herbert Karner, Ingrid Ciulisová, and Bernardo J. García García, (Leuven: PALATIUM Heidelberg arthistoricum.net, 2014), 161.

¹³³ Telesko, “The *Pietas Austriaca*,” 161.

¹³⁴ Telesko, 161.

¹³⁵ Telesko, 161. The purpose of the *Sternkreuzordens* was the elite promotion for devotion to the cross.

¹³⁶ Telesko, 161.

beginning a burgeoning cult of the Immaculate Conception due to his youth and education in Spain.¹³⁷

Marian devotion continued strongly under Emperors Ferdinand III and Leopold I, and like their veneration of the Eucharist, they took their Marian devotion public. Ferdinand III commissioned and installed a large *Mariensäule* in the *Platz am Hof* in 1638. In 1667, Leopold I replaced the stone *Mariensäule* of Ferdinand with one made of bronze (Figure 1.40).¹³⁸ Leopold I also strengthened pilgrimage to Mariazell, a site of Marian devotion, with seven pilgrimages to the holy sight. Beyond the physical acts of Marian piety, the seventeenth-century Habsburg monarchs also dedicated their hereditary lands and military victories to the Virgin, which illustrated that all of the Empire's good flowed through the Virgin. As Schönleben noted, "Thus through Mary the Austrians rule, reign, conquest, and bring peace."¹³⁹ After the death of Emperor Leopold I in 1711, the notion of Mary as imperial ruler ended with Maria Theresa and devotion to the Virgin became entirely internalized.¹⁴⁰

As seen in this brief description of the *Pietas Austriaca*, Catholic devotional practice and piety was an elemental component of Habsburg identity. But the veneration of the Virgin did not exist in a vacuum within the *Pietas Austriaca*; it often connected

¹³⁷ Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, 49.

¹³⁸ Coreth, 57. Ferdinand III commissioned the marble column in 1645 after the invasion of Swedish troops into Vienna and seventeen years later, in 1662, Leopold I had the same column recast in bronze and placed in the Am Hof plaza. The column was designed after Johann Jakob Poc's similar pillar in Munich.

¹³⁹ Johann Ludwig Schönleben, *Dissertatio polemica de prima origine aug. Domus Habsburgico-Austriacae*, 2 vols., (Ljubljana, 1681): 172.

¹⁴⁰ Schönleben, *Dissertatio polemica*, 65. Marian devotion became more internalized. Emperor Joseph I showed restraint in his piety towards Mary but did donate a royal crown to the Mariazell Virgin at age 15. Emperor Charles VI was slightly more public in his Marian veneration, especially with his commission of an obelisk topped with a statue of the Immaculate Conception in 1706 for the Placa del Born in Barcelona.

with other elements of Habsburg piety. In Johann Schönleben's 1649 poem praising Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, the brother of Emperor Ferdinand III, the author states,

The Marian genius of the archduke towers over all other genius. In order to hold the walls of [unclear], he erected an ivory tower which he fortified not only with shields but with the entire armor of the mighty: with five thousand hosts. According to the eucharistic-Marian piety of the ancestors that was the strategy; the Austrians confronted their enemies with hosts and beat their hostile victims.¹⁴¹

This poem illustrates a number of interesting intersections within the *Pietas Austriaca*.

First, Schönleben argues that it was through Habsburg faith in the Virgin and the protective wards of the Eucharist that the emperors could defeat their enemies – like the consistent threat of the Ottoman Turks. But an even more intriguing inclusion is the reference to the ivory tower. As Coreth notes, the ivory tower was an old Marian symbol included in the Litany of Loreto, a famous prayer that lists the various names and attributes of the Virgin. Loreto refers to a small Italian site where angels deposited Mary's childhood home and eventually became a site for Marian pilgrimage. Thus, the connection of ivory to Marian flesh and piety was known in the early modern period. The question remains as to the Habsburg's familiarity with the Litany the Loreto and its reference to ivory. The answer lies inside the *Augustinerkirche* in the Hofburg, where the Habsburgs constructed the *Loretokappelle*, a chapel in honor of Mary of Loreto (Figure 1.41). The chapel acted as a space for Habsburg Marian devotion and even became a place for the burial of the hearts of the imperial family. The placement of the *Loretokappelle* within the imperial palace demonstrates a strong probability that the Habsburgs were aware of ivory's association with the Virgin Mary.

¹⁴¹Schönleben, 192.

Habsburg Religious Ivories and the Pietas Austriaca

This section looks at the interconnections between Habsburg religious ivory sculpture in the *Kunst-* and *Schatzkammern* and the *Pietas Austriaca*. I argue that the religious associations of the flesh of the Virgin – or divine and saintly flesh – through the Throne of Solomon connoted the Habsburg’s intense Catholic devotion manifested through ivory’s potent religious materiality. Particularly, I illustrate how the Habsburgs were aware of ivory’s amalgamated materiality through a variety of sources: The Bible; medieval exegetical texts; medieval ivory plaques and sculpture; and the Throne of St. Peter. While I am positing that the Habsburgs were aware of the multifaceted inferences, this does not mean that each religious ivory in the imperial collections was thought of similarly. In fact, there are two distinct exhibition areas for Habsburg religious ivories: the *Kunstzimmer* and the *Schatzkammer*. Each of these spaces changed and propagandistically manipulated the specific associations of ivory’s materiality to express either the divinity of the warm-toned material or relate to the dynasty’s quest for mythic genealogy. Specifically, I contend that it was in the *Schatzkammer* where ivory’s true religious materiality was most highlighted, whereas the placement of the *Kunstzimmer* ivory religious sculptures next to ivory mythological objects connected them to the Habsburgs quest for dynastic legitimacy through the materialization and visualization of mythic genealogy. As I elucidated in the previous subsection, the Habsburgs were aware of ivory’s Marian association – as evidenced by Schönleben’s poem of Leopold Wilhelm and through the Throne of St. Peter and the multiple depictions of the Throne of Solomon – through ivory’s relationship and evocation of Davidian monarchical and biblical power. Although the division of ivory religious sculpture produced varied connotations, all of

these associations presented a visual and material link to the *Pietas Austriaca* and were thus used to promote the imperial religious and dynastic agenda.

Religious Ivories in the Schatzkammer

Since the fourteenth century the Imperial *Schatzkammer*, in the Viennese Hofburg Palace, acted as a repository for the material and precious objects of the Habsburg dynasty.¹⁴² The collection continually grew under various Habsburg leaders and created the cache from which many of the other Habsburg collections began. The *Schatzkammer*, with its location in a monarchical palace, was a private collection and was thus visited by the Emperors, the court, and foreign dignitaries.¹⁴³ By the seventeenth century, the treasury housed a majority of the Imperial treasures, like the crown jewels, insignia, and sacred religious objects.¹⁴⁴ The *Schatzkammer* is demarcated into two distinct sections: The Secular – containing the precious objects of the Monarchy – and the Ecclesiastical – containing the religious objects of the defenders of the Catholic faith.

The *Schatzkammer* is located towards the center of the complex consortium of buildings associated with the Hofburg Palace. The monarchical display space was conceived as a “Z” shaped design, and the location and layout remain mostly unchanged since its installation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁴⁵ Entering through a

¹⁴² See, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1987), 11. Thomas DaCosta Kauffman, “From Treasury to Museum: The Collections of the Austrian Habsburgs,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1994), 137.

¹⁴³ Kauffman, “From Treasury to Museum,” 148.

¹⁴⁴ Kauffman, “From Treasury to Museum,” 138.

¹⁴⁵ *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 11. The *Schatzkammer* has undergone numerous reorganizations and rearrangements since the early modern period, but the separation of the Secular and Ecclesiastical portions of the Treasure Cabinet were intact during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Objects moved in and out of the *Schatzkammer* for safe keeping during times of war and numerous objects were moved into the Treasure Cabinets holdings as the Habsburgs consolidated power. Thus, while the

double staircase, the visitor traveled through a series of rooms that illustrated the history of imperial power. The viewer passed the Austrian Imperial Crown and Scepter that explicated the Habsburgs as the rightful heirs to the Holy Roman Empire, as well as tapestries, imperial jewels, clothing, and precious metal objects before arriving at the final room of the Secular *Schatzkammer*. Room VIII held the objects marked as “inalienable heirlooms”, which were objects not owned by a specific member of the monarchy, but rather belonged to the House of Habsburg and the people of Austria.¹⁴⁶ This room is the last space of the Secular *Schatzkammer* and leads directly into the Ecclesiastical Treasury and where the Habsburgs displayed Matthias Steinl’s three prominent ivory equestrian sculptures of Emperors Leopold I, Joseph I, and Charles VI, which will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.¹⁴⁷

As art historian Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann notes, Charles VI opened several of the private collections to the public, including the *Schatzkammer* in the early eighteenth century.¹⁴⁸ The Matthias Steinl equestrian statues located in the Room of Inalienable Heirlooms were noted within several travel descriptions by the year 1715, which suggests that Charles VI had opened the Treasury to the public sometime between 1711 and 1715.¹⁴⁹ The Emperor was deeply invested in the imperial lineage and the continuation of the dynasty – especially after the loss of Habsburg Spain in 1700 to Bourbon France – and the invitation for all to enter the Treasury conforms to the Emperor’s dynastic plan.

currently arrangement and security of the objects was cemented in the later twentieth century, the original design ideology remains similar to that of the early modern period.

¹⁴⁶ *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 111.

¹⁴⁷ These sculptures will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁴⁸ Kaufmann, “From Treasury to Museum,” 148.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, “Remarks on the Collections of Rudolf II: The *Kunstammer* as a Form of *Representatio*,” *Art Journal* XXXVIII, no. 1 (Fall 1978): 22-28

Two important objects, the Agate Bowl and the *Ainkhiirn*, help contextualize this transitional space, both of which were obtained by Emperor Ferdinand I and named “inalienable heirlooms” after his death.¹⁵⁰ On 11 August 1564, Ferdinand I’s sons reached an agreement regarding these rare objects: they were too valuable to be named as a personal possession.¹⁵¹ Instead, the sons decided that these magnificent exemplars of imperial might should remain part of the House of Habsburg, and should never be sold, pledged or taken out of the country; they were to remain in the hands of the Austrian Electorate, and thus the Empire and its people.¹⁵²

The Agate Bowl is a fourth-century object made from a single piece of precious agate stone of varying colors – from caramel brown to a light blue-gray – originally created in Constantinople (Figure 1.42).¹⁵³ According to Hermann Fillitz,

At the bottom there is an inscription, which in the 18th century could still be transcribed as ‘B, XRISTO, RI, XXPP’. It was held to be a miraculous formation of the stone structure...It dates from the same period as the bowl itself and contains the signature of the artist: Fl(a)b(ius) Aristo Tr(eviris) f(ecit) XX p(ondo). No doubt because of the name of Christ, which it was thought could be read, as a result of a false transcription, the bowl was held to be the Holy Grail. Whether it is identical with one of the vessels of that name, which are mentioned in several important medieval treasures, cannot be ascertained...The earliest preserved written reference to it dates from 1564.¹⁵⁴

Besides the mastery of precious stonework, the bowl was famed for having the name of Christ on the bottom and eventually became associated with the Holy Grail, yet the origins of the engraving are unknown. The placement of the Agate Bowl in Room VIII

¹⁵⁰ Kaufmann, “From Treasury to Museum,” 146.

¹⁵¹ Hermann Fillitz, *Schatzkammer (The crown jewels and the ecclesiastical treasure chamber)*, trans. Geoffrey Holmes (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 1963), 21.

¹⁵² *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 111.

¹⁵³ *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 111.

¹⁵⁴ Fillitz, *Schatzkammer*, 21.

further enhanced its association with the Holy Grail as the bowl was one of the most valuable objects of the imperial collection, which was cemented with its placed in the liminal space between the Secular and Ecclesiastical *Schatzkammer*. In the eighteenth century, it was posited that the bowl was captured in Constantinople in 1204 and then entered the treasury of the Dukes of Burgundy where it was transferred into the Habsburg collections, through the marriage of Maximilian I to Mary of Burgundy, until it reached its final home in Room VIII through Emperor Ferdinand I.¹⁵⁵

The *Ainkhürn*, which dates to the first half of the sixteenth century, is a long, wand-like object made from the tusk of a narwhal (Figure 1.43).¹⁵⁶ The provenance of the twisted spindle of ivory is well documented: King Sigismund of Poland gave the *Ainkhürn* to King Ferdinand I in 1540.¹⁵⁷ Sent to Innsbruck, where the sculptor Silvester Lechner created the stand, the *Ainkhürn* was positioned in the room of Inalienable Heirlooms as its final home in the early modern period. The narwhal was often associated with the mythical unicorn, particularly due to the similarity of the jutting horn of both creatures. By 1200, the narwhal and the unicorn became synonymous with one another and during this period, the unicorn was soundly connected with Christ. “The Middle Ages saw in the unicorn a symbol of Christ; the legend, according to which the shy animal, fleeing from the pursuing hunters, would only allow itself to be caught by a young virgin, was applied to Christ, who was born of Mary in immaculate virginity.”¹⁵⁸ The intimation of Mary’s virginity and thus her purity echoes through the narwhal and

¹⁵⁵ *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 112.

¹⁵⁶ *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 112.

¹⁵⁷ *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 114.

¹⁵⁸ Fillitz, *Schatzkammer*, 21.

encapsulates elephant ivory's materiality. The sea creature thus subsumed the unicorn's symbolism with its reference to Christ's divine power and its dominion predestined the material for sacred and secular works, particularly presentations of the Virgin or the Crucifixion.¹⁵⁹ From the Christian symbolism, the narwhal/unicorn became a symbol of sovereign power, which would have been a particularly potent symbol for the Habsburgs.¹⁶⁰

When the many *Schatzkammer* ivory objects are considered in relation to this environment, specifically in context with the *Ainkhürn* and the Agate Bowl, the sculptures develop a deeper religious tone. With the mysterious Christ engraving on the Agate Bowl and the religious imagery associated with the "unicorn horn," the Emperors also visualized their staunch role as defenders of their Catholic faith. The religious significance of the ivory monuments became enriched from their location in Room VIII, which sits right at the precipice of the end of the *Weltliche Schatzkammer* (Secular) and the beginning of the *Geistliche Schatzkammer* (Ecclesiastical).

In the vestibule leading to the objects of high importance to the Habsburg Catholic faith, the clergy's sacred priestly garments lined the walls in support of these great defenders of Christianity but the most startling monument in this space is the *Mariensäule*, created in Augsburg in 1670-1680 (Figure 1.44). At a little over four feet tall, the object is a reconstruction of the Marian Column in the Am Hof plaza north of the Hofburg. Leopold I commissioned Augsburg artist Philip Küsel to create a replica of the

¹⁵⁹ Fillitz, 21.

¹⁶⁰ Fillitz, 22.

Marian Column as a showpiece of the Ecclesiastical *Schatzkammer*.¹⁶¹ The monument consists of a balustrade, a cubic base on which four armored putti slay dragons and snakes representing evil, all of which is seated on four lion feet. The rising and triumphant Mary at the culmination of the column illustrates her role as the “conqueror of Satan,” which presents the Virgin as the exemplar of victory over the Church’s enemies.¹⁶²

The *Mariensäule*’s placement at the beginning of the ecclesiastical *Schatzkammer* became a beacon of Marian piety and religious signification for the Habsburg emperors. The shining gold and brilliant enamels highlight the dazzling gems that creates a patron-stopping materialization of Habsburg religious piety and speaks directly to the imperial family’s supplication to the Virgin. While the Column has no ivory included into the design, it does present a fascinating connection to the ivory sculptures scattered before and throughout the Ecclesiastical *Schatzkammer*.

The stunning juxtaposition of the ivory with the *Mariensäule* reinforced the Marian materiality of ivory for the erudite viewer. Mary’s role as the Throne of Christ – or *sedes sapientiae* – is further highlighted through this apposition, which Ilene H. Forsyth discussed in *The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France*.¹⁶³ The iconographic genre of the *sedes sapientiae* often illustrated the Virgin in Majesty as both mother and throne for the divine Christ child.¹⁶⁴ During the reign of the Carolingian, the enthroned Mary and child shifted to include the authoritative

¹⁶¹ Fillitz, 22.

¹⁶² Sabine Haag, “A History of the Kunstkammer Wien,” *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien*, http://press.khm.at/fileadmin/_migrated/downloads/KK_History_Haag.pdf

¹⁶³ Ilene H. Forsyth, *The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

¹⁶⁴ Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom*, 1.

power of a monarchy, whose throne was often equated with the illustrious ivory Throne of Solomon.¹⁶⁵ Exegetical author Guibert of Nogent (d. 1125), in particular, linked the Virgin to the Throne of Solomon. In his reference to Kings 10: 18-20 – which describes the Throne of Solomon – Guibert “praises her as the ivory throne and goes on to identify the Wisdom of the Father as Solomon himself.”¹⁶⁶ Peter Damian (d. 1072) made a similar Solomonic reference, “Our Solomon [ie: Christ], not only wise but indeed the Wisdom of the Father, not only pacific but indeed our peace, who unified both, has prepared a throne, manifestly the womb of the chaste Virgin, in which sat that Majesty which shakes the world with a nod.”¹⁶⁷ Damian also employed the ivory and gold Throne of Solomon as an image of the Virgin’s virginity, “in like manner God sheathed the Virgin and was sheathed in the Virgin.”¹⁶⁸ As Forsyth concludes, the Virgin was continually and emphatically connected to the Throne of Solomon through her role as the Throne of Wisdom and her function as the seat of the Christ child.¹⁶⁹ To further compound this material signification of Mary as the Throne of Solomon – and perhaps created a more visual connection for early modern viewers – imperial thrones also connected with the Solomonic and Marian throne, particularly the Throne of Charlemagne.¹⁷⁰ While made of stone and a secular monument for imperial power, the

¹⁶⁵ Forsyth, 6.

¹⁶⁶ Forsyth, 25. The original Latin text is as follows: “Thronus est erburneus Salomonis. – Haec est thronus quem fecit Salomen de ebore grandem et vestivit eum auro fulvo nimis (III Reg. X:19). Sapientia Dei Patris primum, juxta apostolum, pacifica (Jac. III:17), ipsa est Salomon, quae thronum de ebore sibi facit, dum sedem in Virgine, qua nil unquam fuit castius, sibi point. Elephas enim, cujus ossa sunt ebur, continentis ac munda naturae est. Porro grandem, nimirum ex Filio coelis, terries, et inferis praesidentem. Hunc auro fulvo nimis vestit, cum eam non virtutum scintillis ut alios, sed ipsa substantialiter propria divinitate interius exteriusque infercit.”

¹⁶⁷ Forsyth, 25.

¹⁶⁸ Forsyth, 25.

¹⁶⁹ Forsyth, 25.

¹⁷⁰ The Coronation Chair of the Danish-Norwegian monarchy is also made of ivory. The connection between imperial authority and monarchical depictions will be discussed in the next chapter.

throne contained several of the most prized relics of the Carolingian treasury.¹⁷¹ As Forsyth argued, the throne embodied dynastic power for the German people and an enthroned emperor became a “visible analogy to Christ in Majesty.”¹⁷² Above the main altar and facing the imperial throne was an image of Christ in Majesty with the Marienalter directly below it (Figure 1.45). Thus, Mary’s iconographic significance as the Throne of Christ and the Throne of Solomon was bolstered in Carolingian imperial iconography. With the Habsburgs’ intense concentration on genealogical continuity, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the early modern emperors were aware of these Marian connotations – particularly in conjunction with their own Marian piety. Furthermore, it is highly probable that Mary’s medieval Solomonic iconographic construction transmitted to the Habsburgs and became material through their continued use of ivory.

As early modern viewers traversed through the *Schatzkammer*, ivory’s Marian materiality shone bright, but there were few ivory depictions of Mary in the Habsburg collections. I posit that instead of ivory depictions of the Virgin, the Habsburgs exploited ivory’s Marian materiality through the numerous depictions of the Crucifixion. As I previously noted, a chief component of the *Pietas Austriaca* was the Veneration of the Cross alongside the Veneration of the Virgin. The connotations of the Cross with military victories – through Constantine’s Christian victory at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge – is intertwined with the Habsburgs dedication of military success to Mary. This particularly explicates the interconnectedness of *Pietas Austriaca* elements and does provide a plausible explanation of the numerous ivory crucifixion scenes housed in the

¹⁷¹ Forsythe, 88.

¹⁷² Forsyth, 88.

Schatzkammer. But there is also a biblical explanation that possibly highlighted the exegetical correlation between the Throne of Solomon, Mary, and the Cross: as Mary acted as the Throne or seat of Wisdom – and thus perpetuated the longevity of the Throne of Solomon’s connotations – the Cross also acts as a seat or throne of divine suffering and eventual redemption. While the Virgin is the beginning of the majestic and divine Christ, it is the Cross and Christ’s ultimate sacrifice that acts as the final test for the Son of God’s divinity. If, as medieval exegetical texts supposed, ivory equated the flesh of martyrs, then it must equate with the greatest Christian martyr, Christ. Thus, ivory became the material signifier of not only the Throne of Solomon and Mary’s role as the *sedes sapientiae* for the Christ child, but also the Christianized divine flesh of the ultimate Christian martyr. Furthermore, ivory was the material actor for three main elements of the *Pietas Austriaca*: The Veneration of the Cross; the Veneration of the Virgin; and the Veneration of Saints. The luxurious material created a tangible and meaningful bond between the aspects of Habsburg piety, especially when placed in areas dedicated to the objects of Habsburg veneration.

*Ivory Examples of Habsburg Veneration of the Cross in the Imperial Schatzkammer
Furienmeister, Cross, First Quarter of Seventeenth Century*

The Furienmeister’s *Cross* is one of the most captivating crucifixion objects in the Imperial *Schatzkammer*. The anonymous artist created an odd yet riveting Mannerist depiction of a crucified Christ situated on a plain dark wooden cross. The Furienmeister’s creation of exaggerated musculature exacerbates the intense baroque emotional visuality of Christ’s death. The limb elongation and strong bodily position are standard aesthetic choices in the artist’s oeuvre and the arms seem to almost twist in their

extension to his limp hands attached to the cross beam of the crucifix. His long torso and legs continue the Mannerist-esque aesthetic of the arms with a disproportionately small head. The Son of God wears a short rag haphazardly attached at his hip and the Crown of Thrones woven into his long, curly locks. Christ stares solemnly and warily up towards the left in a silent conversation with his Heavenly Father. The strong contrapposto of the figure highlights his corporeal pain, while his face predicts his acceptance of his ultimate sacrifice.

The *Cross* is one of the earliest examples of an early modern ivory crucifix in the *Schatzkammer* collection – like Christian Angermair’s entirely ivory example – and elucidates the seventeenth-century conception of ivory’s connection to the cross (Figure 1.46). The Furienmeister’s iteration illustrates the influence of Italian baroque emotionality through dynamism.¹⁷³ But, the ivory plays a much larger role than a signifier of Habsburg devotion to the Cross. I argue that the ivory also insinuates the INRI plaque that is missing from the composition. In many crucifixion scenes, the plaque that stated Christ’s crimes against the Roman Empire – his role as King of the Jews – is placed directly above the crucified Jesus, but the Furienmeister excludes this iconographic element. I contend that it was Christ’s role as King of the Jews presents through ivory’s layered association with the Throne of Solomon. As the descendant of David – and thus Solomon – Christ did have a rightful claim to the Judaic throne. The

¹⁷³ I utilize the term baroque here as a reference to the style of the Italian seventeenth century, rather than a period designation. The term “Baroque” as a chronological appellation is problematic in that it truly only references the Italian seventeenth-century, while excluding most of the known world. In these instances, my use of the term “baroque” is in direct reference to the stylistic characteristics of Italian seventeenth-century artists who applied the artistic characteristics of the Council of Trent to create viscerally emotional works.

ivory thus symbolizes Christ's dynastic inheritance as King of the Jews as well as his divine flesh, which illustrates both his roles as the Son of Man and the Son of God.

The ivory's warmth coupled with the dark wood stain creates a striking juxtaposition that demands attention. With this stunningly visceral representation of the crucified Christ, the Furienmeister mastered the Habsburgs religious propaganda through careful attention to the medium. The ivory acts as more than just a material: it is part of the symbolic program that illustrates the Marian piety of the *Pietas Austriaca* and both her and Christ's role in the continuation of the Throne of Solomon.

Leonhard Kern, Crucifixion, ca. 1626

As one of the most prominent ivory carvers in the Austrian hereditary lands, Leonhard Kern became a Habsburg favorite for mythological and religious ivory sculptures. Kern's combination of Italian Renaissance classicism with the emotional Italian baroque create an arresting sculptural representation of the Crucifixion scene. Unlike the Furienmeister's single crucifixion scene, Kern includes the two thieves executed next to Christ. In the center of the composition Kern depicts Jesus with his body fully facing the viewer but with his head sharply turned towards the left. With this turn of his head, the viewer sees the long and curly hair wrapped in a low bun at the base of his skull and Kern's delicate attention to each individual curl and strand. The careful attenuation of hair continued to the facial hair shrouding his jaw. His emaciated body fights against the strain of his own weight, which Kern illustrates through the tightness of his arms and the rigidity of his abdomen. The shining metal nails starkly contrasts the pureness and warmth of the ivory. The artist covered Christ's groin with a simple cloth tied at the sides with a thin rope, similar in design to the two thieves at his sides. Kern

placed each figure on a plain and dark-stained wooden crucifix, but there is a stark difference in how the artist created each cross. For Christ's cross, the horizontal beam is straight whereas the thieves' horizontal beam tilts, and the two thieves are tied to the crucifix – unlike Christ who is not nailed. Kern depicted their bodies with more movement and less strain than Christ. The dynamism of the thieves' bodies heightens the baroque emotionality of the sculptural set.

Ivory crucifixion scenes were not necessarily common in early modern Europe, but they did appear. One such example is French ivory sculptor, Pierre-Simon Jaillot's *Crucifixion* in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, England (see Figure 0.2). The artist gained recognition throughout France for his ivory crucifixes, but this *Crucifixion* scene truly encapsulates mid-seventeenth-century French aesthetics.¹⁷⁴ Jaillot includes a number of other figures at the site of the Crucifixion, including the Sorrowful Virgin Mary, a kneeling Mary Magdalene, St. John the Evangelist, and two sets of angels suspended above the composition. Nails artfully suspend the three crucified figures from their dark-stained crosses with their crimes secured above their heads. Like Kern's iteration of the same scene, Jaillot stresses Christ's position with his arms almost directly above his head. As Marjorie Trusted noted, commentators in the eighteenth century – particularly the anonymous author of the *Mémoires Secrets* (1787) – discussed the Jansenist manner of Christ's arms.¹⁷⁵ French writer and engraver, Florent Le Comte (1655-1712), wrote in 1702, "In Jaillot's crucifixes we find all that we could ask for, for the connoisseur and for the devout person. You could say that if he provides an object of

¹⁷⁴ While Jaillot was notable in France during the seventeenth century, the *Crucifixion* is the only signed and dated work still extant.

¹⁷⁵ Marjorie Trusted, *Baroque and Later Ivories*, (London: V & A Publishing, 2013), 244.

study for one, the other no less finds a subject for mediation.”¹⁷⁶ This secular and sacred dichotomy inherent in Le Comte’s quote helps illustrate the duality of ivory in the Habsburgs collections. The amalgamation of ivory’s ancient genealogical and dynastic role mixed with its religious and sacred imperial duty to create stunning works that spanned their cabinet collection.

Kern’s *Crucifixion* was not the only example of a three-dimensional crucifix in the Habsburgs collection; Matthias Steinl – the imperial ivory engraver for Emperor Leopold I – also created a now fragmented crucifixion group. Situated on a lower shelf in the *Schatzkammer*, Steinl’s incomplete group offers a unique instance an early modern non-elephant ivory religious scene. Instead of the standard imported elephant ivory available throughout Europe from Africa and Asia, Steinl utilized walrus ivory. In the Middle Ages, as African and Asian trade sources diminished, artists searched for European animals that could compensate for the loss of elephant ivory – the walrus.¹⁷⁷ This is not to say, of course, that elephant ivory completely disappeared from the artistic milieu in the Middle Ages but was rather slowly supplanted with walrus ivory. Objects like the famed Lewis Chessman, reliquary crosses, and tabernacles were all constructed using this aquatic animal’s tusk. Although similar to elephant ivory in many respects, walrus tusk tends to discolor quickly and has a stronger yellow hue, rather than the elephant ivory’s warm white. This differentiation in color is glaringly present in the

¹⁷⁶ Florent le Comte, *Cabinet des singularitez d’architecture, peinture, sculpture et graveure*, Vol. 3, (Brussels: Chez Lambert Marchant, 1702), 186.

¹⁷⁷ Much has been written about the medieval ivory trade and the sourcing of walrus ivory. See, Karin M. Frei and et al., “Was it for walrus? Viking Age settlement and medieval walrus ivory trade in Iceland and Greenland,” *World Archaeology* 47, no. 3 (2015): 439-466. Matthew Elliott Gillman, “A Tale of Two Ivories: Elephant and Walrus,” *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma* 7, no. 5 (2017): 81-105.

Steinl's crucifixion group and contrasts the other ivory works on the same shelves in the *Schatzkammer*.¹⁷⁸

Perched atop an ebonized wood base, Steinl's crucifixion group depicts three figures, similar to Jaillot's composition: The Sorrowful Virgin, a kneeling Mary Magdalene, and St. John the Evangelist. A small skull centers the scene and draws the viewer's eye below to the *Sudarium*, or St. Veronica's Veil. Taken from a medieval exegetical tale, St. Veronica wiped the sweat from Christ's brow as he carried his cross to Golgotha and when she removed the cloth, the Savior's image was emblazoned into the fabric and is now one of the holiest relics of the Catholic Church. The expressive figures coupled with the skull and veil link these figures with the crucifixion, even though the main action of the story is missing. Sabine Haag noted that the group was whole in the eighteenth century: the 1758 inventory of the Habsburg collections references a cross and another figure but have since been lost.¹⁷⁹

Steinl finely illustrates the intense sentimentality of each figure in their significant loss. The Virgin stares upwards – most likely towards her son on the cross – with her hands folded and stands in a strong contrapposto. Abundantly covered in heavy and idealized fabric that hides most of her body, the Virgin draws the viewer's attention with a melancholic expression on her face. St. John the Evangelist appears behind the Virgin in the same type of heavily draped clothing. His long and curly hair wraps artfully over his shoulder as he gazes directly at the viewer and points to the now-lost crucifix. On the

¹⁷⁸ The image I have reproduced at the end of this chapter is the official photograph from the Kunsthistorisches website and shows the Steinl work much more tan in color than it actually is. The sculpture trends more yellow, particularly under the Schatzkammer's lights. But there is still a definite distinct visible between the elephant and the walrus ivory.

¹⁷⁹ Haag, *Meisterwerk der Elfenbeinkunst*, 48.

right of the composition is the kneeling Mary Magdalene, who also wears this heavy and woodenly styled cloth that does little to accentuate the body. Her head hangs down as she begins to kneel with both hands holding her long and flowing hair. Although Steinl's baroque emotionality is still present, there is a certain stiffness not present in any other of his ivory works – particularly in the equestrian monuments previously housed in the *Schatzkammer* – especially seen in the style of the drapery. Steinl's drapery forms deep crevices that adds to the drama through the interplay of light and shadow, which is an incredible feat in such a small-scale sculpture. Sabine Haag argued that the disproportionate ratio between the clothing and the body shows an indelible influence from ancient Roman sculpture, which was unique for the Austrian seventeenth century.¹⁸⁰

Granting that Matthias Steinl was the Imperial ivory carver for Emperor Leopold I and thus a favorite in the imperial collection, it was the walrus ivory that sealed the sculpture's placement in the Imperial ecclesiastical treasury. The use of a different type of ivory, I posit, does not negate its materiality as divine flesh, but rather broadens the understanding of the material's genre. Just as narwhal tusk became associated with the mythical unicorn – and thus Christ's divine birth through the Virgin – so too did walrus ivory. I argue that walrus ivory bridged the material gap between the standard elephant ivory and narwhal/unicorn ivory present in the secular treasury. The *Ainkhürn*, located in the transitional Room of the Inalienable Heirlooms, offers a direct visual and material reference to the power and might of the narwhal/unicorn religious connotations. The subsequent placement of the three Steinl equestrian monuments directly across from the *Ainkhürn* created a material dialogue between the two versions of ivory that travelled

¹⁸⁰ Haag, 48.

with viewer throughout the Ecclesiastical *Schatzkammer*. The conflation of Christ's purity through his Virgin birth with the Throne of Solomon and the *sedes sapientiae* provided a rich material ground for walrus ivory to act as an intermediary between the two diverse poles. Thus, Steidl's crucifixion group highlights the multitude of layered material meaning through the ivory's association with the Virgin and Christ.

Throughout the *Schatzkammer*, ivory continually acted in the propagation of Habsburg piety. While the devotion and veneration of the Virgin Mary was a primary component for the *Pietas Austriaca*, there are few ivory depictions of the Mother of God in the Habsburgs collection. I argued that the imperial family's illustrated intense Marian piety through scenes of the Crucifixion that connected the two aspects of imperial piety – the Veneration of the Cross and the Veneration of the Virgin. As the Virgin acted as the Throne of Wisdom for the Christ Child – continuing the Davidian ivory throne – the cross became the final dais for Christ's divinely sanctioned sacrifice. Thus, representations of this gruesome scene in ivory became a material signifier of Christianized divine flesh and the Habsburgs intense reverence for the Cross and the Virgin.

Religious Ivories in the Kunstkammer

The Imperial *Kunstkammer*, now located in the nineteenth-century Neo-Classical Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, houses an impressive collection of religious ivory sculptures. Unlike their *Schatzkammer* counterparts, the *Kunstkammer* ivories served an entirely different function for the Habsburg pious identity: their religious ancestry through the Davidian line and their imperial religious role. Situated next to other mythological ivories, the religious connotations discussed above conflate with the ancient

and genealogical mythological ivories to create a singular look into the layers of Habsburg religious identity. This amalgamation proclaimed the Habsburg imperial role as the defenders of the Christian faith – a mandate passed down to the Central European dynasty through their coronation as Holy Roman Emperors. Whereas the *Schatzkammer* ivories assert the various venerational components of the *Pietas Austriaca*, the *Kunstkammer* ivories affirm the role of Christian militaristic protection. The luxurious ivory sculptures disseminated throughout the *Kunstkammer* speak to a larger sanctified responsibility rather than specific sacral function. Sculptures in the *Schatzkammer*, in comparison, had an ingrained religious function through their placement in an ecclesiastical treasury. Many of the *Kunstkammer* objects served no liturgical purpose; they were *objets d'art*. I argue that the *Kunstkammer* religious ivories became another vehicle in which the ruler could imagine his imperial majesty and contend that ivory's connotations, rather than just the symbolism of the subject matter, provided a deeper materiality of imperial status and legitimacy and aided in the viewer's understanding of the object. Ivory thus became part of the propagandistic material signification of the religious identity of the Habsburgs.

As a whole, there are few depictions of crucifixions or of the Holy Family in this collection space. This is not to say, of course, that such depictions are not present in the *Kunstkammer* collection, but they represent only the smallest percentage of ivory religious imagery. Rather, the religious ivories in the imperial art cabinet tended towards scenes of saintly martyrdom, Old Testament figures, and heavenly victories. I contend that the *Kunstkammer* ivories acted as material signifiers for the religious duties of the Holy Roman Emperors. If, as I argued above, the *Kunstkammer's* mythological ivories

were a material link to the imperial mythic genealogy, then the religious ivories positioning extended aspects of Holy Roman imperial identity to the religious objects. Religious ivories became synonymous with Christianized divine flesh instead of ivory's signification as ancient divine flesh. Rather than the material harkening back to their Trojan, Roman, or Grecian ancestral lines, religious ivories aided in the material visualization of Davidian and biblical ancestry, as illustrated in *The Chains of Family Descent*. This materiality is compounded in light of Solomon – the son of King David – and his ivory throne, which conflated of monarchical duty and religious leadership. The *Kunstammer's* religious ivories thus became a material manifestation of the sacred undertakings of the imperial office.

Leonhard Kern, König David, ca. 1620

Leonhard Kern excelled in the creation of religious and mythological ivories as one of the most prolific and respected ivory artists of seventeenth-century German sculpture. Based in Schwäbisch Hall during the ravagement of the Thirty's Years War, Kern's studio prospered in such an unlikely environment and became known for his exquisite work in ivory, alabaster, and boxwood.¹⁸¹ Unlike many of his Central European ivory carving counterparts, Kern continued Michelangelo's and Giambologna's honed Italian Renaissance classicism, which was due to his extended stay in Italy from 1609-1612.¹⁸² Kern's meticulous representation of the Biblical King David offers insight into the classicism he imbued in all of his work, rather than strong baroque emotionality that became the norm in early seventeenth century Central and Southern Europe. The *König*

¹⁸¹ "The Deposition, ca. 1640-50," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed March 1, 2019. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/210255>

¹⁸² "The Deposition, ca. 1640-50," The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

David stands in contrapposto playing the harp – an appropriate attribute for the musically-inclined king. The strong s-curved stance recalls Michelangelo’s *David* as Kern depicts the now older king with the same left leg weight. Although Michelangelo illustrates an earlier portion of the King’s story than Kern, there are several stylistic similarities: the strong left leg contrapposto; the tilting of the head; the deeply cut curls; and that both iterations hold iconographic attributions in their right hands. Kern also imbues a certain Michelangelesque monumentality into this barely twelve-inch sculpture, which heightened the viewer’s awareness of the majesty of King David. Clothed in a short Roman toga, greaves, and a lily crown, Kern’s King David presents a stately biblical king. The penetrating sense of Italian Renaissance classicism with the intricate attention to detail created a representational small-scale sculpture. King David’s gaping mouth – with the teeth and tongue visible – make it appear as if he is singing to his captive elite audience. Kern intensifies the King’s agency through his manipulation of the divinely correlated material to appear as if this ancient biblical king has come back to serenade the Habsburg imperial court.

Although magnificent as a single object, King David is part of a larger set of three Old Testament biblical figures (Figures 1.47). The Schwäbisch Hall artist represented Moses and Abraham sacrificing Isaac, completing a trifecta of ancient biblical power.¹⁸³ On 7 September 1626, Leonhard Kern wrote, “vor 3 Wochen zu Nürnberg gewesen zehen Bilder geliefert welche ein Kauffmann vor 11. monat für ein Kardinal am kaiserlichen Hof bey mir bestellt. [Three weeks ago, ten pictures from Nuremburg were

¹⁸³ I am unaware if this set was originally exhibited together after they were purchased, but today they stand monumental and proud in the *Kunstammer*.

delivered, which a merchant ordered from me for a cardinal at the imperial court eleven months ago].”¹⁸⁴ As Haag postulated, this brief reference could be about the three sculptures now housed in the *Kunstammer*. Furthermore, it is probable that the Habsburg court purchased these directly from Kern or even had them commissioned – though this supposition is much less probable.

But why did the imperial court want objects representing the biblical kings? What function could they have served in the *Kunstammer* collection? I suggest that the depiction of King David by one of Habsburg’s favorite early ivory carvers illustrated the role of Catholicism and their piety with their quest for dynastic lineage. Since Charlemagne and the Carolingians, the Holy Roman Emperors connected themselves to Christ through the Davidian line. The notion of the divine flesh – both ancient and religious – manifest in Kern’s sculpture where ancestry and piety combine together. Just as David fought Goliath, the Habsburgs were the Christianity’s defenders and fought for their subject’s Christological values. The depiction of one of the great ancient kings of the Bible connected the imperial family with Christ’s ancestral line, which extended the Habsburg genealogical record into the biblical narrative. Kern’s creation of David in ivory also plays a significant role in the symbolic understanding of the sculpture: the ivory recalls King David’s son, Solomon’s, famed ivory throne. The material leitmotif of Solomon’s ivory throne and its association to Christ through ancestry and the Virgin birth became intertwined in Kern’s sculpture. The *König David* illustrates two components of the Holy Roman Emperor’s identity: their quest for dynastic legitimacy through the creation of mythic genealogies, often with a biblical branch to connect themselves to the

¹⁸⁴ Haag, *Meisterwerke der Elfenbein*, 74. Translation of original German is my own translation.

Davidian Line through the Tree of Jesse; and their role as the defenders and promulgators of the Christian faith.

Master of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian, Martyrdom of St. Sebastian, 1655

The Master of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian's mid-seventeenth-century *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* is one of the most visually striking objects in the *Kunstkammer's* collection.¹⁸⁵ The massive high-relief panel measures twenty-one inches high and thirty-two inches wide, which creates a stunningly vast expanse for the martyrial narrative. The Master of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian illustrates the graphic moment of St. Sebastian's sacrifice. St. Sebastian, according to various medieval hagiographies, was a Roman soldier martyred for his Christian faith at Emperor Diocletian's command. The Roman ruler ordered St. Sebastian tied to a tree and shot with arrows until he died, but when he did not perish, soldiers beat the future saint with clubs and threw his body into the Cloaca Maxima in Rome, illustrated in Lodovico Carracci's *St. Sebastian Thrown into the Cloaca Maxima* from 1612.

The Master created this monumental ivory relief using ten pieces of irregularly shaped ivory projecting from a flat and unadorned ivory backdrop. The plain ivory background presents an interesting counterpoint to the highly-carved narrative: the Master created this smooth surface by unfurling of thin band of dentine from an elephant tusk – a technique practiced since antiquity – but does not provide a deep enough surface for significant carving. The unknown artist then fashioned a frieze-like relief with virtuosity. The strong contrapposto and highly emotive figures produce a visceral and

¹⁸⁵ For the sake of brevity, from this point forward, I will be referring to the Master of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian as the Master.

emotional scene perfect for the Council of Trent's Counter-Reformation aesthetic dictates. The martyr, St. Sebastian, is immediately recognizable from his heightened and centralized position and the strong s-curve. Roman soldiers aim their bows at the saint in preparation for Diocletian's proclaimed execution. Three figures litter the ground among the brambles in Rubenesque contortions that amplify the scene's theatricality. To the right of St. Sebastian, the Master includes an equestrian figure with a brilliantly detailed flag cutting through the air with a barely visible Roman imperial eagle on the vacillating standard. The Master illustrated technical dexterity through the littered low-relief backdrop of the panels with the layering of towns, animals, and forest. Delicately cut trees frame the edges of the composition forcing the viewer's eye to the central narrative – St. Sebastian tied to the tree – as two weeping angels watch over the soon-to-be martyr in a precarious mid-air position on the smooth background. The intricate and painstakingly carved details aid in the passionate and poignant representation of a soldier martyred for his beliefs.

The Master's tableau of this fairly common scene differed greatly from other ivory objects depicting the same narrative, particularly those in the *Kunstkammer* collections. Ferdinand Murmann's 1630 small figural ivory sculpture illustrates the more common iconographic portrayal of the Roman martyr (Figure 1.48). A barely clothed Sebastian clings to a tree awaiting his sentence and the exaggerated contrapposto assists in the emotional plasticity. Yet, Murmann's sculpture only depicts St. Sebastian, not the entire Roman retinue like the Master's version. The anonymous "Achilles Ag" also illustrated the singular depiction of St. Sebastian awaiting execution in the *Column-Shaped Tower with St. Sebastian* from the first quarter of the seventeenth century (Figure

1.49). Set on a rosette decorated base, the column juts up in between four vases placed on the column's pedestal. The column and base were turned on a lathe rather than hand-carved due to the precise wavy indentations on the column's shaft. But the top of the column boasts a bright red scene of St. Sebastian tied to a tree made of coral – a material commonly found in the *Kunst-* and *Wunderkammern*. The unknown artist also incorporates the main iconographic attribution: the arrows protruding from the martyr's chest. The coral evokes the spilled saintly blood of St. Sebastian but also acts as a visual tool for viewer acknowledgment. What makes the Master's relief portrayal of the martyrdom scene unique is his frieze-like narrative of the moments before the saint's execution with the Roman army, whereas artists like Murmann and "Achilles Ag" chose to focus of the martyrdom itself. The Master's aesthetic decision to include the entire narrative scene generates a stimulating dialogue with ivory's materiality.

In the thirteenth century, ivory's materiality expanded to include the purity of martyred flesh, as Hugh of St. Cher explicated in his *Postilla*. "Because through cold ivory, we are to understand the chastity of saints."¹⁸⁶ He argues that the processes of carving ivory are akin to the desecration of saintly flesh, but "afterwards are shaped and sculpted, so the Saints through tribulations are made more pure and are engraved...with a variety of virtues."¹⁸⁷ As the Roman arrows pierce St. Sebastian's pure Christian flesh, his cementation into the realm of saints and martyrs is complete, just as the Master's chisel completes the ivory scene. But this large relief portrayal belies another layer of material meaning for the Habsburgs: the allusion to their sacred imperial duty as

¹⁸⁶ Guérin, "Meaningful Spectacles," 66.

¹⁸⁷ Guérin, 66. The association of martyred flesh and ivory has already been discussed earlier in this chapter but becomes manifest in the Master's rendition of St. Sebastian's martyrdom.

Christendom's defenders. It is through St. Sebastian's willingness to martyr himself for his preciously held Christian beliefs that the Habsburgs propagandistically proclaimed their readiness to do the same. The fact that St. Sebastian was a Roman citizen strengthens the association of ivory's promulgation of imperial hallowed purpose. Thus, the spiritual – and dynastic – legitimacy of the Habsburg imperial identity becomes disseminated through the ivory medium.

Johann Schnegg, Sieg des hl. Michael über den Satan, 1740/60

The last ivory religious object I would like to discuss from the *Kunstkammer* is sculptor Johann Schnegg's visually dynamic *Sieg des hl. Michael über den Satan*, or *Victory of St. Michael over Satan*, dated between 1740 to 1760. This object is one of the rare instances of ivory sculpture post-Charles VI, created during the reign of Empress Maria Theresa (1717-80). Schnegg's ebony and ivory sculpture explicates the ways in which the materiality of ivory changed during the eighteenth century.

In a scene taken from the Book of Revelations, the eighteenth-century Austrian artist depicts Archangel Michael standing tall and proud over a flailing and prostrated Satan. The brilliantly white angel thrusts his right arm into the air where he holds an artfully carved single feather from Lucifer's broken wings. Michael stares intensely down at the fallen angel and holds a shield against his left hip. Schnegg dresses the archangel in Roman military style clothing, a particularly appropriate allusion for Habsburgs religious duties. Two delicately carved wings burst from Michael's back that provide visual confirmation of Michael's heavenly position. Satan appears under Michael's foot and thus illustrates the end of the Revelation narrative of the great heavenly war. Schnegg contorts Satan's ebony body into a writhing mess of limbs

(Figure 1.50). His small and ominous wings do little to aid in his fight against God's warriors. Satan's gaping mouth gives the sculpture a realistic quality, as if the viewer can hear the pained cries of the Devil. The former angel rests on a series of white, wispy ivory clouds that brace his fall from grace.

The most dynamic element of the composition is the stark contrast between the brilliant white ivory with the blackness of the ebony – a true material evocation of good versus evil, a material theme that will be further discussed in Chapter 3. The layering of ebony and ivory heightens the drama of the sculpture and creates an arresting object for the viewer. Michael appears calm yet intense in his sacred duty to protect the heavenly realm, while Satan's misery commands attention. Michael's defensive role visually alludes to the Habsburgs duty as defenders of those threatening the Church. The ivory aids in this promotion of imperial sacramental duty through its associations with divine flesh and its connection to Habsburg imperial identity. And yet, how did the materiality of ivory change in the eighteenth century? I argue that ivory continued with the notion of the material as flesh and absorbed the eighteenth-century practice of imitation and attention to the surface. Ivory thus acts as an imitator of flesh, just as makeup acted as an imitator of youthful skin.

As such, this sculpture takes on an entirely new meaning under such a theory, especially when considered in combination with the use of the wood. I contend that it was not the religious subject matter but was rather the recognition of the luxurious material and the imitation of the flesh that viewers initially recognized. The notions of luxury pervaded eighteenth-century court life, with members striving to achieve the gloriously Rococo-ized heights of exuberant ornamentation. Imitation is subsumed

within the aspects of luxury, a prominent practice within the eighteenth-century courts. Although ivory had once been associated with the chaste flesh of the Virgin, the eighteenth-century viewer understood ivory as the imitator of unblemished skin. While the viewer might not have been aware of the long sacred history of ivory in Christianity, the depiction of the religious subject in ivory does create a tangential connection between the two. The religious nature of Schnegg's work was secondary and the biblical teachings and typological parallels would not have been the viewer's initial interpretative thought. Thus, ivory became a signifier of eighteenth-century desires and tastes within the elite court settings and as unblemished flesh. But ivory's imitation of flesh and the subsumed religious symbolism in the eighteenth century still promulgated the imperial religious identity as the defenders of the Christian faith through their coronation as Holy Roman Emperors hidden just underneath the thin ivory veneer.

Sacred Ancestry in the Kunstkammer verses Liturgical Materiality in the Schatzkammer

The division of religious objects throughout the imperial collections suggests the imperial understanding of ivory: the differentiation between ivory's sacred ancestral function in the *Kunstkammer* and ivory's liturgical and divine materiality in the *Schatzkammer*. I argued that objects held in the Imperial Ecclesiastical Treasury were explicit in their visual and material manifestation of the deeply held Habsburg piety – or *Pietas Austriaca* – while ivories in the *Kunstkammer* acted as signifiers of the Holy Roman Emperor's sacred and divinely-ordained charge of defending the Christian faith. This functional demarcation is heightened with the purpose of each chamber. The *Schatzkammer* was meant as the imperial treasury for the objects held dearest to the

Habsburgs – particularly those of religious or liturgical function – whereas the *Kunstkammer* was a performative stage for artistic representation.

In the object's concomitance with their location, each sculpture subsumed the functionality of the location into their material schema. For example, ivory objects in the *Schatzkammer* serve a partially liturgical or religious function due to their placement among other religiously functioning objects. Even if sculptures, like Leonhard Kern's *Crucifixion*, never graced the interior of a church or aided in the celebration of the Mass, their function becomes liturgical due to their placement in a treasury delineated as "ecclesiastical". As explicated above, the transmittance of ivory's religious materiality shone through the ivory objects in the *Schatzkammer*. Beyond their generalized liturgical function, each ivory sculpture highlighted the various components of the *Pietas Austriaca*, particularly the Veneration of the Cross, the Veneration of the Virgin, and the Veneration of the Saints. It was through Mary's role as the *sedes sapientiae* that she was associated with the ivory Throne of Solomon – an exceptionally poignant connotation given Christ's genealogical connection to the Davidian line. I argued that while the *Schatzkammer* had few ivory representations of the Virgin, the Habsburgs utilized ivory's Marian materiality in their depictions of the Crucifixion. Furthermore, in the *Schatzkammer*, ivory became aligned with Christianized divine flesh through Marian's purity, Solomon's throne, and Christ's ultimate sacrifice.

In the *Kunstkammer*, on the other hand, ivory objects were religiously themed artistic representations with an imperial agenda; they depicted religious subject matter but did not actively serve a liturgical function. Instead, ivory objects were sublimated propaganda for the emperor's role as defender and protector of the Christian faith. Their

religious symbolism denoted their imperial religious role rather than aspects of their piety. While their placement within the Habsburg art cabinet certainly aided in their understanding as non-liturgical objects, it was the arrangement among the mythological ivories that heightened their material significance. I argued that the use of ivory for these objects recalled the Habsburgs ancestral descent from the Davidian Kings of the Old Testament through their imperial coronation and affirmed their dynastic legitimacy as Holy Roman Emperor. Ivory thus became the material signifier for the emperor's role as the defender and guardian of the Christian faith through their mythic ancestry. Rather than the ancient divine flesh materiality of the mythological ivories, the religious objects promoted Christian divine flesh – another marker of Habsburgs divine charge.

Together the main collections of imperial religious ivories represent the two thrusts of Habsburg religiosity: The *Pietas Austriaca* and their genealogically awarded role as defenders of the faith. In the early modern period, the placement of these objects in imperially prominent collections dictated that nobility and members of the international elite were the main spectators. This limited audience provided these objects the erudite viewer needed to illustrate ivory's full material significance.

Furthermore, ivory was one of the most important material tools in the imperial arsenal that represented both the Marian and Cross veneration components of the *Pietas Austriaca* and the sacred role of the emperor in the defense of Christianity through the allusion to Hebraic ancestry. Ivory was the perfect material vehicle in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for imperial propaganda, like the printed medium was for Emperor Maximilian I. Its ability to subsume multivalent layers of meaning created an ideal canvas for the Habsburgs to illustrate their piety and dynastic legitimacy.

Conclusion

My goal for this chapter was to illustrate how ivory propagated the ideals of imperial identity through a specific material, rather than relying on the subject matter for signification. Looking specifically at the mythological and religious ivories housed in the imperial *Schatz-* and *Kunstkammer*, I argued that ivory was so frequently employed in the imperial collections due to its associative ability to promote the two major facets of Habsburg imperial identity: the continued quest for dynastic legitimacy through the creation of mythic genealogy and the intense religiosity of the *Pietas Austriaca*. Ivory's materiality was a fundamental element in the early modern understanding of these objects.

In order to achieve this goal, I split this chapter into two categories: mythological ivories in the *Kunstkammer* and religious ivories in the *Schatz-* and *Kunstkammer*. For my discussion on mythological ivories, I examined how the Habsburgs continued preoccupation in the promotion their legitimate role as the Holy Roman Emperors manifested itself through these antique-inspired ivory sculptures. I postulated that it was the consistent application of their mythic genealogy – the embellished record of imperial dynastic continuity – and the ancient associations of the material that ivory became synonymous with divine flesh. I argued that through the ancient Greco-Roman association of ivory as divine flesh that the material was able to connect and illustrate the Habsburg ancestral propaganda. From the chryselephantine statues of Ancient Greece to Julius Caesar's triumphal ivory bust to Pygmalion's ivory maiden, ivory was an integral part of ancient material culture.

But how does ivory materially coalesce with the Habsburg practice of mythic genealogy? The Habsburgs needed an avenue to link themselves with past Holy Roman Emperors as the promulgated practice of mythic genealogy was imperative for imperial identity and dynastic continuation and legitimacy. The Empire required a visual format to illustrate their continuous and uninterrupted rule over Europe and Christianity. But as Tanner noted, this exaggerated genealogical technique not only connected the Habsburgs with the various medieval and early modern imperial houses but also to Ancient Rome and Troy. With an ancestral kinship to Aeneas, the emperors had the ability to connect themselves not only to a mythological hero and survivor of the Trojan War but also to their progenitor. Links to Ancient Rome illustrated the continuous Roman Empire that the Habsburgs now controlled. Yet how did the materiality of ivory help the Habsburgs proclaim this mythic genealogy in their imperial collections? While the Romans still employed the Greek chryselephantine style in their temple ornamentation and statuary, the most intriguing Roman ivory examples were those used in triumphal processions and Roman games. Roman emperors – particularly the Julio-Claudians – had ivory busts made of themselves paraded around the various Roman games. The implication of ivory as representative of divine flesh thus transferred to the emperor's depiction, which was appropriate for emperors deified after death. Their ivory depictions became a premonition of their roles after death. Furthermore, I maintained that ivory's meaning translated through the ancient world to become material signification of divine flesh that translated to the Middle Ages and the early modern period.

Together, the mythological and religious ivories in the Habsburg collections represent the continued quest for political and imperial legitimacy as well as their intense

Christian piety – two of the main aspects of Habsburg imperial identity. I began this chapter questioning why the Habsburgs had many religious or mythologically-inspired ivory objects in their collections and the question of “why ivory?” became imperative to my understanding of these objects. Did ivory act as the propagandistic message for the imperial court? Could a material even function in this way? By investigating ancient and medieval associations of ivory as well as the Habsburgs formulation of mythic genealogies, I concluded that ivory could be and was used as material signification for imperial ideology; and that the Habsburgs were masterful in their application of ivory as propaganda.

Collectively, there is little stylistic or narrative commonalities between the religious and mythological ivories in this chapter; it is the material that categorized them into a larger Habsburg propagandistic group. These ivories came to represent the two main thrusts of Habsburg imperial identity: the quest for dynastic lineage and their religiosity. Through the continued use of ivories interspersed throughout their collections, the material was not only synonymous with Habsburg artistic aesthetics but as an imperial material signifier. With its ancient and medieval associations with divine flesh, ivory recalled the basic foundations of Habsburg imperality. The material’s ability to subsume multivalent layers of meaning made ivory a unique and viable material for propaganda. The collection’s elite and erudite audience likely understood the various aspects of ivory’s materiality, which established a stratified participatory space. But, to the Habsburgs, ivory signified their identity, their singularity, and their dynastic role as Emperor and Solider of Christ.

Chapter 2

The Monarch and the Lathe: The Self-Fashioning of Ivory Political Portraits in Early Modern Austria and Denmark-Norway

“Surrounded by the objects he possesses, the collector is pre-eminently the sultan of a secret seraglio.”

--Jean Baudrillard, “The Systems of Collecting,” 1994¹

Introduction

In 1608, Duke Maximilian of Bavaria engraved “*Ebur ars nobilitat, Artem Auctor Maximilianus Bavariae Anno 1608*” onto an ivory candlestick he had turned in his court workshop. Translated to, “art ennobles the ivory and the creator, Maximilian Duke of Bavaria, ennobles the art, in the year 1608,” the Duke successfully interconnected the notions of art, mechanical lathe turning, ivory, and monarchical principles.² While no longer extant, the ivory candlestick illustrates a larger trend in early modern European courts; as part of an inclusive princely education, the mechanical skill of lathe turning – particularly in ivory – became a *de jour* princely pastime to teach young elites the integral virtues of future rule. The Habsburg Emperors and the Danish-Norwegian monarchs both spent considerable time at the lathe, frequently turning intricate and delicate ivory vessel that illustrated both patience and skill. The interwoven nature of early childhood ivory education with the plethora of turned and carved ivory objects in the monarchs’ subsequent *Kunstkammern* suggests a continual material force connecting ivory and the ruler. Not only were these ivory-turned objects prized in their respective realms, but they were also often presented as diplomatic gifts to fellow monarchical

¹ Baudrillard, “The Systems of Collecting,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 1994), 10.

² Klaus Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners: Materials on a Machine Art by Princes*, trans. Dorothy Ann Schade (Zürich: Verlag Ineichen, 1985), 18.

allies. For example, the Danish-Norwegian collection at Rosenborg Castle houses a small lidded goblet with delicate undulations and virtuosic detailing (Figure 2.1). Unlike many of the unattributed turned pieces in the collection, Archduke Leopold V Ferdinand of Austria (1586-1632) produced the stunning work for Denmark-Norway as a diplomatic gift, although for centuries it was thought that Emperor Leopold I turned the work. While many of the princely-turned works no longer survive, the connotations between the material and ruler remain through the application of ivory in the creation of political portraits. As such, this chapter investigates the intimate connection between ivory and the monarch and questions how a singular material could enact the multitudinous associations of monarchical identity. How could ivory – a seemingly ubiquitous material with a myriad of iconographic references – promote and project the carefully constructed character and identity of the monarch through its very surface? Furthermore, how did princely education in ivory turning and the ivory portrayal of monarchical imagery coalesce into a programmatic material schema centered around the fundamental aspects of the ruler himself?

In this chapter, I argue that ivory acted as a personal monarchical material for the Austrian Habsburg and Danish-Norwegian Oldenburg rulers. Through ivory's known imperial and divine skin materiality, as evidenced in the previous chapter, its utilization in portraiture created a deeply layered material symbolism for the representation of absolutist skin. Reutilizing the argument of ivory as divine/imperial skin, I posit the ways in which the material could become subsumed and re-symbolized for political portraiture. Specifically, I explicate that the nuanced and individualized materiality of ivory projected the monarchical skin of European rulers, particularly in Austria and Denmark-Norway.

The use of ivory was prevalent in these two early modern monarchical states, both in terms of the output of ivory sculptural production and the institution of ivory turning on the lathe as part of princely education. Through the placement of ivory political portraits within the various imperial and monarchical collections in Denmark-Norway and the Austrian Empire as well as the institution of ivory turning in princely education, ivory became a prominent symbolic vehicle for the *representatio* of the ruler in the monarchical collection.

To begin this chapter, I discuss the Habsburg and Oldenburg collection's histories and development in the monarchical realms and their collection's indelible importance to the monarchical court. After situating the subsequent objects within their specific cultural moments, I then look towards the theoretical understanding of the early modern collecting to discover the motivations of monarchs to collect, which will ultimately illustrate how and why ivory became imperative to their collecting practices. Through this understanding, I then delve into ivory as a material in the *Kunstkammer* through the various avenues of material comprehension present in early modern Europe. I detail the ways in which ivory fit into the categorical schemas of these innovative performative spaces and how the material acted through its representation of and classification as *naturalia* and *artificilia*. Beyond ivory's natural and artificial status within these princely collection, another thematic understanding was also applied to the material through Pliny the Elder's *Historia Naturalis*, an instrumental text in the development of the categorization and classification systems of the early modern *Kunst-* and *Wunderkammern*. Specifically, I detail the ancient Roman author's discussion of the

elephant and conceptualize it as a representative mammal for princely virtues, which was materialized through ivory political portraiture.

Continuing this narrative, I consider the aspects of princely turning and its role in the practices of princely education. Utilizing Klaus Maurice's masterful text on the subject, I detail the ways in which princely ivory turning not only engendered ideal princely behavior but also created a tangible demand for ivory throughout personal monarchical holdings. Finally, I begin to apply all the material notions I have presented into a discussion on the political portraits of the Habsburg emperors in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Concentrating particularly on Matthias Steinl's ivory equestrian monuments of Emperor Leopold I, Emperor Joseph I, and Emperor Charles V, I argue for the continuation of the representation of the Habsburg's mythic genealogy through ivory's utilization as monarchical skin. I then discuss the original placement of these objects within the Imperial *Schatzkammer* and its performative monarchical function within the space. Lastly, I turn to Denmark-Norway and the Oldenburg dynasty's representation of rulers in ivory. Unlike the Habsburg's continued quest for political and genealogical legitimacy through the creation of vast ancestral networks, I argue that the profusion of ivory portraits within the Danish-Norwegian collections was primarily based upon the establishment of Denmark-Norway's highest chivalric order, the Order of the Elephant. Through the early modern European understanding of the sagacious land mammal, I detail the interconnectedness of monarchical ivory portraits, the highest chivalric organization, and the elephant to produce a plethora of monarchical portraits within the Danish-Norwegian collection.

Building Collections: The Establishment of the Courtly *Kunstammer*

The development of the courtly *Kunstammer* is an integral element in any discussion involving ivory sculpture, particularly in the early modern Central and Northern European courts. As a majority of ivory creations were placed within these settings, the notions inherent within the organizational paradigms of the *Kunstammern* are imperative to the understanding of the nature of the material to the court audience. In this section, I detail the emergence of the monarchical *Kunstammern* in Habsburg Austria and Oldenburg Denmark with the purpose of explicating these collection histories to provide a situated environment in which I can then place ivory political monuments.

History of the Habsburg Kunstammer

As one of the premier monarchical collections of early modern Europe, the Habsburgs created vast repositories of acquired objects that spoke directly to the envisionment of their imperial virtues. As this subsection explicates, the continual collection of, display of, and relocation of imperial objects prompts an understanding of these acquisitions as fundamental to the aims of the Habsburg dynasty. The centuries-long collecting practices spanned from Vienna, to Innsbruck, to Prague, and finally back to the imperial capital; with each relocation, the collection gained an increased and layered monarchical symbolism and materiality that was fostered throughout the early modern period. As I will illustrate, the building of the Habsburg imperial collection produced substantive and categorical practices for other early modern monarchs to emulate.

The beginnings of Habsburg collection practices lie in the Middle Ages – as early as the thirteenth century – as a process of the conglomeration of personal monarchical

goods into categorizable spaces.³ Beginning with the medieval *Schatz* (“treasury”), the burgeoning collecting practices of the early Habsburg dynasty continually morphed to fit within the growing trend of codified and categorized collections in the sixteenth century.

Franz Kirchweger, curator of the *Kunstkammer* Wien, noted,

There is documentary evidence dating from the mid-16th century for the presence of a collection called a *Kunstkammer* in Vienna. In 1554 Leopold Heyperger, the chamberlain of Ferdinand I (1503-64), recorded the receipt of various objects that had been brought to Vienna from Graz and placed in the ‘*Kunsts Camer*’. In 1537 Ferdinand I had issued an instruction to the officials at court that expressly mentioned, along with items of material value, ‘antiques, instruments, and artworks’ as a group and also cited artistic worth as a criterion for assessing value. This point of view marks a turning point in art history and the beginning of the Vienna *Kunstkammer*.⁴

As this quote explicates, the notion of art permeated the ideals of the *Kunstkammer*. As the collection grew throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, objects within the Habsburg *Kunstkammer* frequently changed locations dependent upon the urges and needs of a newly installed Emperor. Alongside the curious and religious objects of the medieval *Schatz*, the majority of the early modern collection contained the amalgamated holdings of Emperors Frederick III (1415-1493), Maximilian I (1459-1519), Ferdinand I (1503-1564), Maximilian II (1527-1576), and Rudolf II (1552-1612), as well as Archdukes Ferdinand II of Tyrol (1529-1595) and Leopold Wilhelm (1614-1662).⁵ Emperor Frederick III ordered a reorganization of the imperial holdings during his fifteenth-century reign; as Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann notes, the Habsburg collections

³ Thomas DaCosta Kauffman, “From Treasury to Museum: The Collections of the Austrian Habsburgs,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1994), 137.

⁴ Sabine Haag and Franz Kirchweger, *Habsburg Treasures at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna* (New York: The Vendome Press, 2013), 14.

⁵ Sabine Haag. “A History of the Kunstkammer Wien,” *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien*, http://press.khm.at/fileadmin/_migrated/downloads/KK_History_Haag.pdf. Kaufmann, “The Collections of the Austrian Habsburgs,” 138.

alongside “those of Ladislas Postumus were located in the *Turmlein auf den purckchtor zu Wienn*, that is, a keep or dungeon.”⁶ The concealed nature of the early Habsburg collections illustrated the personal connection of the imperial family to their objects; they became objects of personal devotion rather than of objects of political aggrandizement that appeared in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Access to these monarchical collections was severely limited; only those possessing the requisite social status were able to enter the prized collection spaces.⁷ During the sixteenth century, the collection blossomed and progressed into a renowned encyclopedic *Kunstammer*, which acted as a microcosm of the known world, a concept that will be explicated in more detail below.⁸

With the expansion of the Habsburg empire through various political marriages, the imperial collections grew into unimaginable splendid spaces. Maximilian I’s marriage to Mary of Burgundy in the late fifteenth century provided access to the *Burgunderschatz*, the princely treasures of the famed dukes of Burgundy.⁹ The introduction of Burgundian collections were coupled with Italian ideals of princely magnificence through collecting. As Kaufmann stated, “According to Jacopo Pontano, one of the promulgators in Naples of this doctrine, magnificence is demonstrated through collecting objects, such as bronzes, paintings, tapestries, furniture, carpets, carved ivory saddles, precious boxes, books, and vessels made of rock crystal, gold, onyx and other precious stones.”¹⁰ The idea of princely magnificence was couple with Pliny the Elder’s *Historia Naturalis* classification system where, as Sabine Haag argued, “the works of art

⁶ Kaufmann, “From Treasury to Museum,” 138.

⁷ Kaufmann, 139.

⁸ Kaufmann, 139. Also see, Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, “Remarks on the Collections of Rudolf II: The *Kunstammer* as a Form of *Representatio*,” *Art Journal* XXXVIII, no. 1 (Fall 1978): 22-28.

⁹ Kaufmann, “From Treasury to Museum,” 139.

¹⁰ Kaufmann, 140.

were arranged for the material from which they were made, so the boundaries between *Naturalia* and *Artificilia* could be fluid.”¹¹ Thus, a new elucidation for the conceptual reasonings of princely collecting emerged – one centered around glorification and extolment of Habsburg might.

The sixteenth century saw integral changes to the notions and application of Habsburg collecting practices. In the 1550s, under Emperor Ferdinand I, a new space was formed for the various collections: the *Kunstammer*.¹² While this new performative monarchical space was not fully formed into the known encyclopedic examples of the seventeenth century, the designations of art and treasure began a classification process fundamental to early modern conceptualizations of art, science, technology, and possession. At Schloß Ambras in Innsbruck, Emperor Ferdinand II codified and displayed his impressive collection of family heirlooms, diplomatic gifts, and purchased objects in various specifically-built chambers and cabinets assembled by material.¹³ The Innsbruck collection also witnessed the development of the *Kunstammer* as the microcosmic world under the control of the collection’s possessor.¹⁴ Under Emperor Maximilian II, the imperial collection resided in the upper floors of the imperial stables, known as the *Stallburg*, in Vienna. The locational change from the eastern Austrian city of Innsbruck to the imperial capital of Vienna created new dimensions for the collection. “Whereas the Ambras collections were more accessible,” writes Kaufmann, “there is

¹¹ Sabine Haag, “‘Von Helfenbain Geschnitzte Bildein’: Bemerkungen zur Wertigkeit von Elfenbein als Material in der Kunstammer in 1600,” in *Der Furienmeister: [erscheint zur Ausstellung Der Furienmeister im Liebighaus, Museum Alter Plastik, Frankfurt am Main, 4. April 2006 bis 9. Juli 2006]*, ed. Herbert Beck and Peter C. Bol (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2006), 143-149.

¹² Kaufmann, “From Treasury to Museum,” 141.

¹³ Kaufmann, 141-142.

¹⁴ Kaufmann, 141-142.

evidence that foreign rulers who visited Maximilian in Vienna saw his collections, which thus came to be regarded as something special: this provides part of the background for the seeming exclusiveness of the collections of Maximilian's son Rudolf."¹⁵ In the 1580s, Rudolf II relocated the Habsburg collection holding to *Pražský hrad*, or Prague Castle, in the now Czech Republic (Figure 2.4).¹⁶ In this new location and under a new paradigm of collecting, Rudolf II's collection spanned across a multitude of media, including paintings, sculptures, automatons, precious stones, scientific instruments, and much more.¹⁷ Kaufmann effectively argues that "Rudolf's possession of a universal collection could symbolically represent his Imperial majesty, his control over a microcosm, that reflected his claims to mastery of the macrocosm of the greater world, and over the body politic of which he was sovereign."¹⁸

In a final geographical change, the seventeenth-century Habsburg collection returned to the imperial capital of Vienna to further establish an immediate and long-lasting connection between the Emperors, their patrimonial territories, and their objects. Throughout this period, the *Kunstkammer* became a more solidified collection, with institutional guidebooks for visitors, illustrating a concrete performative and monarchical environment for the collection.¹⁹ Under the direction of Emperor Matthias, Emperor Ferdinand II, and Emperor Ferdinand III, the imperial collections were categorized and separated into the various types of collection spaces.

These were the library and the *Schatzkammer* proper. The library contained not only books, but also the Emperor's coin collection. And while the Habsburg's *Schatzkammer* of the seventeenth century contained works of art with *naturalia*

¹⁵ Kaufmann, 143.

¹⁶ Kaufmann, 143.

¹⁷ Kaufmann, 144.

¹⁸ Kaufmann, 145.

¹⁹ Haag, "A History of the Kunstkammer Wien".

and *mirabilia*, much as the *Kunstammer* had done, most of the scientific instruments present in the earlier *Kunstammer*, were lacking. Instead, as in the medieval *Schatzkammer*, the centerpieces of this collection became Habsburg regalia and other items inalienably associated with the archducal house. Thus the revival of the term *Schatzkammer* betokens a turn from the ides of the universal *Kunstammer* of the Rudolfine era.²⁰

Furthermore, the Habsburg collection spaces began to perform another predominant imperial artistic premise: the glorification of the Empire; the historical and mythic genealogy encapsulating imperial aims; and the materialization of imperial power, might, and erudition. Thus, the Habsburg Viennese *Kunstammer* and *Schatzkammer* became imperial avenues for the representation of the Emperor's control over their own territories, the imperial ability to understand and utilize precious and exotic materials, and as a space for imperial self-aggrandizement for diplomatic and courtly visitors.

With the ideals of the macro- and microcosmic world and the goal of imperial glorification in place, the eighteenth century established a “homologous” collection through various “reevaluations and reconceptualizations of the nature and history of the visual arts that occurred in the German-speaking world.”²¹ Under Emperor Charles VI (1711-1740), as Kaufmann notes, several of the imperial collections were open to the public, including the later seventeenth-century's newly redesigned *Schatzkammer*.²² After a century of reimagination, relocation, and new construction, all of the Imperial collections – including the *Kunstammer* – were opened into public museums for the people of Austria by 1848, prompting a new age and audience for the collection.²³ Thus,

²⁰ Kaufmann, 146.

²¹ Kaufmann, 147.

²² Kaufmann, 148.

²³ Kaufmann, 152.

the importance of imperial collecting is made material through the continual acquisition within the Habsburg *Kunstammer*.

History of Oldenburg Kunstammer

The development of the monarchical collection in Denmark-Norway began much later than its international counterparts and has traditionally been dated to ca. 1650 with the beginning of King Frederik III's (1609-1670) *Kunstammer* at Copenhagen Castle.²⁴ Although this was the first true "art cabinet" of the dynasty, previous monarchs – like Christian II (1481-1559)– collected arms and spoils that were kept in various castles.²⁵ The Oldenburg's first collection, the Armory, was consecrated in 1598 and contained various weapons and examples of Danish-Norwegian military prowess. In 1599-1601, King Frederik II (1534-1588) ordered a pavilion to be built on the grounds of Frederiksborg Castle, later known as *Sparepenge*.²⁶ Torn down in 1720, there is no extant inventory of the *Sparepenge* but scholars are given some ideas as to the content through travel guides. "Prince Christian of Anhalt's account shows *Sparepenge* as an official display collection, an armoury combining ornate weapons and technical innovations with *ethnographica*, probably mainly presents and inherited pieces."²⁷ Although the official Oldenburg *Kunstammer* was not recorded until 1650 under Frederik III, it was Christian IV (1566-1648) who "defined the existence of a Danish 'Crown treasure'."²⁸

²⁴ Jørgen Hein, "Learning versus Status?: Kunstammer or Schatzkammer?," *Journal of the History of Collections* 14, no. 2 (2002): 178.

²⁵ Hein, "Learning versus Status?," 178.

²⁶ Hein, 178.

²⁷ Hein, 180.

²⁸ Hein, 181.

In 1650, The Royal *Kunstkammer* was recorded within the King's apartments at Frederiksborg Castle.²⁹ The earliest inventory of the collection dates from 1674 and illustrated eight thematic divisions of objects; most of the monarchical objects were relegated to the designation of *naturalia*, while the applied or artificial works were modest and mainly focused on turned and carved works of various natural materials.³⁰ After the development of the absolutist monarchy in 1660, expansion of the royal collections became a priority for Frederik III. In 1665, the king ordered the construction of a three-story building to house a majority of the Oldenburg collections: the first floor was dedicated to the armory; the second floor to the expanded Royal Library; and the top floor was saved for the Royal *Kunstkammer* and was not completed until the 1680s.³¹ While Frederik III was concerned with the establishment of this new collection building, the King also began to reorganize the collections at Rosenborg Castle; as Jørgen Hein notes, the majority of this collection was formed from the *Sparepenge*, which had been kept in an armory in the Great Tower at Rosenborg.³² Around 1665, Frederik III ordered a reorganization of the *preciosa* and *artificilia* objects of the Rosenborg collection to better fit into the prescribed monarchical schema of the dynasty's most important possessions.³³

Under King Christian V (1646-1699), Rosenborg became a "veritable treasure chamber," and the inventory of 1696 confirms this moniker.³⁴ "The inventory itemizes 174 *preciosa* in the Regalia Chamber, 462 pieces of applied art, mainly rock crystal and

²⁹ Hein, 181.

³⁰ Hein, 181.

³¹ Hein, 181-182.

³² Hein, 182.

³³ Hein, 182.

³⁴ Hein, 184.

semi-precious stones, in the Green Cabinet, 167 miniatures and 101 paintings in two chambers, and over 900 weapons as well as a number of riding harnesses in the armory chambers.”³⁵ Within the inventories of the *Kunstammer* and the Rosenborg Castle, ivory’s integral status to the monarchy was particularly present. As Hein notes, “If we look at carved works of ivory and narwhal tusk...the Green Cabinet had most of the goblets, tankards and beakers, while the *Kunstammer* was in possession of most of the portrait medallions and reliefs.”³⁶ With the annexation of the Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp Duchy into the Danish-Norwegian territorial sphere, the Duke’s private collections were absorbed into the Rosenborg collections, with the carved ivory and semi-precious stones sent to the Green Cabinet and the turned ivory sent to the private *Kunstammer* in the Winter Room of the Rosenborg.

The modern history of the Rosenborg and *Kunstammer* collection is a story of continual transfers. In 1823-24, the Rosenborg transferred most of its ivory holdings to the *Kunstammer*.³⁷ The *Kunstammer*, however, eventually shut its collection doors and was redistributed to become part of the Royal Art Museum, which contained the largest collection of applied arts in Denmark-Norway. In 1854, the Rosenborg collection became a “*fideicommis* – entailed property, ‘indivisible and inherited from King to King.’”³⁸ By 1866, most of the ivories originally taken from the Rosenborg returned to the collection, where they have remained as an exemplar of princely collecting.

³⁵ Hein, 184.

³⁶ Hein, 185.

³⁷ Hein, 189.

³⁸ Hein, 189.

Together, the Austrian and Danish-Norwegian collections provide an intriguing look not only into the building of a monarchical collection, but also to – as I will illustrate in a subsequent section of this chapter – how ivory became a symbolic material for the illustration of princely power within these performative spaces. As this section has illustrated, the monarchical collection was a powerful tool in the monarch’s expensive pocket. The illustration of extreme wealth to other societal elites created a web of interwoven knowledge amongst the highest echelons of the known world. The ability for the monarch to “show-off” his/her possessions fashioned not only the identity of the owner – as I illustrate below – but also fashioned the identity of the realm. And, through the display of ivory political portraits within these spaces, the monarchical collector was able to tie art, science, material, politics, and self together for a remarkably potent conceptualization of royal might.

The Art of Collecting: Theoretical Perspectives on the Drive to Acquire

Jean Baudrillard contended that, “any given object can have two functions: it can be utilized, or it can be possessed.”³⁹ The insinuated substantiality of the object to its owner created an indelible need for the collector to acquire. The ability of an object/material/image to represent the owner/collector’s most inherent desires facilitated the drive to acquire said objects. Once acquired, the prideful and fundamental connection between the object to the owner created a need to display the obtained object. The continual purchase-display-purchase-display paradigm generated a recurrent and persistent determination to grow and foster the owner’s collection. Baudrillard states,

³⁹ Jean Baudrillard, “The System of Collecting,” 8.

“that the collection or the series is what underpins the possession of an object, which is to say, the reciprocal integration of object with person.”⁴⁰ He continues, stating, “the collection offers us a paradigm of perfection, for this is where the passionate enterprise of possession can achieve its ambitions, within a space where the everyday prose of the object-world modulates into poetry, to institute an unconscious and triumphant discourse.”⁴¹ But beyond the notion of individual collecting paradigms – both early modern and contemporary – the aspects and systematic principles of monarchical and princely collecting in early modern Europe were a unique application of a common human drive.

As Kaufmann so effectively argues, the *Kunstammer* was a form of *representatio*, or imperial self-representation.⁴² Looking specifically at the collection of Emperor Rudolf II, the author states that these princely collections became not only representations of the ruler’s self-image but also as a representation of the ruler’s control over the world. Its primary conceptual purpose relied on the idea of princely magnificence and elucidated Rudolf II’s role as Holy Roman Emperor.⁴³ As a theater of the world, the imperial collection – located in the Prague Castle – purposefully promoted the Emperor’s royal interests and illuminated the avenues in which the Emperor wished to be materialized and visualized. Through the display of remarkable, exotic, miraculous, curious, and artificial objects, Rudolf II created a performative imperial space for the representation and explication of imperial politics. As Kaufmann argues, “it thus

⁴⁰ Baudrillard, 12.

⁴¹ Baudrillard, 12.

⁴² Kaufmann, “Remarks on the Collections of Rudolf II: The *Kunstammer* as a Form of *Representatio*,” *Art Journal* XXXVIII, no. 1 (Fall 1978): 22.

⁴³ Kaufmann, “Remarks on the Collections of Rudolf II,” 23.

embodied a conception of the Renaissance world view in which the world of man, the microcosm, may be seen to parallel the greater world, the macrocosm.”⁴⁴

While not explicitly stated within this particular argument, the imperial self-representation extended into the artistic realm as well, which illustrated the Emperor’s role as patron and art collector. The inclusion of artistic and technical craft rooms – including lathe and turning rooms – within the Prague Castle, in close proximity to the collection spaces, also purports the connection between making and collecting. The ability of the Emperor to build large-scale workshops and employ technical artisans created a culture of artistic and scientific creation that directly correlated to the influx of imperial objects into the collections. That is not to say, however, that Emperor Rudolf II did not purchase, commission, or utilize non-court objects and artists. But the continued presence of artistic workshops within this space certainly enhances Kaufmann’s thesis regarding the *Kunstammer* as a form of self-fashioning and self-representation. Thus, Rudolf II helped facilitate a new era of monarchical collecting that promoted the ideology of the collection as self; rather than a consortium of randomized objects placed together for entertainment, monarchical *Kunstammern* projected royal virtues and identity. Furthermore, collections like the Habsburg and Oldenburg *Kunstammern* projected airs of societal superiority, intellectual erudition, refined and elite taste, vast global knowledges, and the visual and material culture of the realm.

Baudrillard posited that “for it is the subject, the epitome of narcissistic self-engrossment, who collects and eroticizes his own being, evading the amorous embrace to

⁴⁴ Kaufmann, 24.

create a close dialogue with himself.”⁴⁵ The French theorist continues, stating that the collector’s object becomes the “ideal mirror” for the self-identification of the owner; “for the images it reflects succeed one another while never contradicting one another.”⁴⁶ Thus, the ability for the monarch/emperor to project their royal self-identification in a prescribed performative space through the use of specific and categorizable materials and images enabled and, in fact, drove the elite collector to acquire more. Moreover, unlike the individualized collector, many rulers – like the Oldenburg and Habsburg monarchs – passed down these collectors to their heirs, instigating a new round of the purchase-display paradigm for a new monarchical cohort. The new owner, most likely, conflated the ideologies of the ancestral collection with new visions of his/her own collecting conceptions to create layered and generational symbolism inherent within the collection displays. The objects and materials within these monarchical spaces thus performed as physical marks of progenic legacy and legitimacy. Not only did each object project the self-fashioned representation of the original collector, but they also materially and visually symbolized the royal dynasty as a whole. The object – as an intrinsic monarchical identifying force – displayed within the confines of royal performative spaces created an indelible and somewhat obsessive need for the monarch to present themselves through stuffs. Thus, the collection and the monarchical collector were intertwined in early modern Europe; an interwoven and ineffaceable link between person and thing that would last for centuries.

⁴⁵ Kaufmann, 19.

⁴⁶ Baudrillard, “The System of Collecting,” 11.

Material Understandings: Ivory in the Monarchical *Kunstammern*

As one of the most common materials in the Habsburg and Oldenburg collections, ivory – as a material – offered the ruler some sort of material expression of princely virtues and magnificence. The material’s status as foreign and exotic, natural and artificial, divine, monarchical, and epidermal fashioned a uniquely mutable symbolic material vehicle for the monarch to promote and project their individualized *representatio*. As such, this section looks at the various material understandings of ivory within the *Kunstammern* spaces, particularly focusing on ivory’s role as both *naturalia* and *artificilia* and the interconnected materiality of ivory to its host, the elephant. Through this explication of thematic materiality, I construct a working comprehension of the deep and substantive perceptions of ivory in the early modern collection.

Daniella Bleichmar succinctly encapsulates Martin Kemp’s interpretation of the early modern collection stating, “...early modern collectibles were fundamentally multivalent and variable not only in their corporality but also in their interpretability.”⁴⁷ Particularly, as I will illustrate, the ability of a mutable material and an object to present and represent specific monarchical significations to its viewer created a unique material-object-viewer relationship in the early modern collection. In her dissertation on the seventeenth-century Salzburg *Kunstammer*, Sarah Mitchell noted that “objects have often stood to represent the immaterial and the unknown, as physical signifiers of the intangible. They mediate understandings of abstract notions, as symbols to be seen or

⁴⁷ Daniella Bleichmar, “Seeing the World in a Room: Looking at Exotica in Early Modern Collections,” in *Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, ed. Daniela Bleichmar and Peter C. Mancall (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 20.

held.”⁴⁸ Ivory objects became material descriptors of intrinsic monarchical qualities, even if said qualities were part of a subsumed material meaning underneath the surface of the ivory.

I would like to begin my discussion of ivory in the monarchical *Kunstammer* through an examination of the categorical processes utilized for these performative spaces. Specifically, Pliny the Elder’s *Historia Naturalis*, written in the first century CE, provided the initial arrangement categorizations for princely collections. Found in many of the princely and monarchical libraries across Europe, the ancient author attempted to create a recognizable and classifiable world.⁴⁹ As Mitchell notes, “Pliny’s history was found particularly relevant to the museum projects of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, also conceived as encyclopedic collections of knowledge and culture...Pliny references the miraculous forms of nature, such as exotic elephants and giraffes seen at games in Rome, and places them in the context of empire building.”

In the sixteenth century, Samuel Quiccheberg wrote “*Inscriptiones vel tutluli theatric amplissimi*” as a conceptualization of trending collecting practices. Under the patronage of Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, Quiccheberg’s text was an influential set of parameters for any early modern collector.⁵⁰ Beyond the author’s categorization of proper assembly and display of the princely collection cabinets, Quiccheberg also formulated five classes of objects archetypal for the *Kunstammern*. As Mitchell paraphrases, the classes are as follows:

⁴⁸ Sarah Mitchell, “The Kunstammer Object in Seventeenth-Century Salzburg: A Case Study, Early Modern Collections, Transformations and Materiality” (Ph.D. Dissertation, McGill University, 2005), 29.

⁴⁹ Mitchell, “The Kunstammer Object in Seventeenth-Century Salzburg,” 69.

⁵⁰ See Horst Bredekamp, *The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine: The Kunstammer and the Evolution of Nature, Art, and Technology* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1995).

I- the ruler and his realm with religious representations and family portraits, maps of cities and territories, and local objects indicating cultural aspects of the collector's domain; II- *Artificilia*, containing statues, medallions, clockworks, and works of goldsmithing; III- *Naturalia*, preserved specimens of flora and fauna as well as minerals and metals; IV- *Scientificia*, instruments and tools of science, also armour, musical instruments, playthings and foreign objects like costumes and weapons; V- objects of art and miscellaneous portraits.⁵¹

For the present discussion, the first tier of objects situates ivory political portraits within the collection space. As Stephanie Bowry noted, “the implication in Quiccheberg’s text is that the collector, in creating and presiding over a miniature reflection of the cosmos, was not only the de facto God of his or her own micro universe, but was attaining to the highest calling of all – furthering human knowledge of God’s creation, a through...enshrined in Pliny...”⁵² With the concretization of object types appropriate for princely spaces, materials and objects began to fall into further sub-categories that placed them within these specified classes. Ivory, in particular, fit into a number of these categories, conflating the boundaries of Pliny and Quiccheberg’s paradigms.

The Natural and the Artificial

A prominent layer of association that was inherent in ivory was of *naturalia* and *artificilia*, or the natural and the artificial. These two sides were often directly opposed in the *Kunst-* and *Wunderkammern* of the seventeenth century, creating a dazzling and overwhelming microcosm of the world around the viewer. Often placed within small performative spaces together, such objects acted as elements of wonder, meant to stun the visitor with the owner’s erudition and control over the natural world.⁵³ For seventeenth-

⁵¹ Mitchell, “The Kunstkammer Object in Seventeenth-Century Salzburg,” 72.

⁵² Stephanie Jane Bowry, “Re-thinking the Curiosity Cabinet: A Study of Visual Representation in Early and Post Modernity,” (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Leicester, 2015), 100-101.

⁵³ Bowry, “Rethinking the Curiosity Cabinet,” 57.

and eighteenth-century ivory sculpture, this interplay between the natural and the artificial was an integral symbolic mechanism.

Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park's *Wonder and Order of Things* provides one of the most ambitious scholastic adventures into the dialogue between *naturalia* and *artificilia*.⁵⁴ In this well-researched and beautifully prosed book, the authors discuss how art and the curiosity cabinet utilized these polar opposites to show the micro- and macrocosmic world as well as the owner's dominion over them from the Late Middle Ages to the mid-seventeenth century. The authors argued that these costly *kammern* contained a multitude of objects, from exotica to antiques, from the natural and raw to the artificial and worked, all of which together combined to create a stunning display of wonder for the viewer.⁵⁵ Through the dense display of objects in various cabinets and drawers, crammed together in tightly controlled spaces, the viewer was overwhelmed with the wonders of the world and thus associated the obtainment of such objects with the might of the owner.⁵⁶ While each cabinet had specific sections for natural objects and artificial or created works, there were cases in which these two notions were combined into a single object. As the authors argue, these objects became the "personification of nature as an elevated kind of artisan."⁵⁷ Such a personification became the "creator of luxury objects, as elaborate as they were useless, combining costly materials with fine craftsmanship."⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750*, (New York: Zone Books, 1998).

⁵⁵ Daston and Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750*, 260.

⁵⁶ Daston and Park, 260.

⁵⁷ Daston and Park, 261.

⁵⁸ Daston and Park, 261.

I contend that ivory held this special place between the natural and the artificial, becoming a hybrid of these two opposing poles to create a new type of representative material that was “worthy” of an imperial image. To begin, the natural is showcased in the actual raw material of the ivory through the natural patterning and distinct color of the material’s surface. With its creamy off-white color and the unmistakable striations – known as Schreger Lines – inherent in the tusk, the educated viewer understood the material as ivory. Full and raw ivory tusks were a common inclusion in many of *Wunderkammern*; as such, the semiotic signification of the tusk with the sculptural medium resonated in the viewer’s mind. But, when the material had been altered to depict a specific narrative of power – like an imperial or monarchical portrait – the object becomes part of the artificial through the hands of the ivory artist. The ivory carver/turner thus illustrates his mastery over this natural – and furthermore, the raw material – in order to create an aesthetically beautiful and powerfully artificial work for his royal patron. This material straddling between the natural and the artificial thus thrusts the ivory object into the liminal realm of the hybrid, resulting in an object that was uniquely equipped to support the *representatio* of the Emperor and monarch.

Pliny the Elder and Historia Naturalis’s Elucidation of the Elephant

As Louise E. Robbins recently articulated, “the meanings cultures ascribe to animals are not ‘installed by nature’: symbolic significance, though based on the animals’ features and behavior, is not determined by those traits.”⁵⁹ Animals could signify a host of mutable symbolisms, ranging from religious to political; for instance, the narwhal was

⁵⁹ Louise E. Robbins, *Elephant Slaves and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 4.

frequently associated with the mythical unicorn since the Middle Ages. Was there any relational link between the real and imagined animal? Most likely not, but the twisted ivory tusk that protrudes from between the narwhal's eyes created a tangential link that survived for centuries. Beyond the symbolism ascribed to an animal, the material those animals produced also became signifiers of specific early modern cultural ideologies. As this section explicates, elephants were an admired and princely land mammal with intellectualized attributes that resembled those of the monarch. Through the early modern conception of the elephant, a clear picture of ivory's monarchical materiality can emerge.

Pliny the Elder, famed Roman author, wrote his encyclopedic *Historia Naturalis* in the first century CE. In this tome the poet writes on many subjects, but the ones most interesting are his discussions and musings of elephants and ivory in the ancient world. Within this compendium of the natural world, I look specifically towards the nature and affect of the land mammal as well as Pliny's description of their tusks. In Book 8, Chapter 5, Pliny began his discussion of elephant with a detailed description of the mammal's natural reaction to dangerous situations.⁶⁰ The author noted that when in the company of a lone, wandering man, the elephant will show himself as merciful and kind and even the point the way. But, if the animal were to meet a more disagreeable situation, it would scent the wind for danger, taking its time to assess, and then snort loudly with rage to alert its herd, as the elephant always moves within a pack.

Throughout this series, Pliny often remarked on the sagacity and sensibility of this majestic and large mammal, alluding to its vast memory and gentle but fierce nature. He

⁶⁰ Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, trans. by John Bostock, (London: Taylor and Francis, 1855), Book 8, Chapter 5

stated, “The elephant is said to display such a merciful disposition towards animals that are weaker than itself, that, when it finds itself in a flock of sheep, it will remove its trunk that are in the way, lest it should unintentionally trample upon them.”⁶¹ Pliny posited that while sociable, the elephant tends to protect the weaker members of the herd to ensure survival. In Book 8, Chapter 4, entitled “Wonderful things which have been done by the elephant,” Pliny discussed how the elephant deals with its large tusks.⁶² He stated that elephants were well-aware of the human need for their tusks, and would thus bury them in the earth in order to trick hunters.⁶³ Pliny argued that elephants took great care in their teeth, as the whiteness showed the youth of the animal. The author made clear the prized nature of the protruding teeth and argued for their importance in the representations of the gods, which was most likely in reference to the utilization of ivory in antique Greco-Roman political and religious sculpture, as evidenced in the previous chapter.

While this is just a brief illustration of Pliny’s discussion on the nature of ivory and the elephant, several intriguing notions on the relationship between the elephant, ivory, and rulers becomes present. First, and probably most obviously, is that ivory had been a prized and valuable material for the ancient world and used in the depiction of their most illustrious religious and imperial persons. Second, Pliny’s characterization of the elephant as a gentle giant, regal and loyal to his herd, but also protective and dangerous when provoked, offers striking similarities to the proposed affect of the early modern ruler. As this magnificently large creature is well regarded for their sagacity and intelligence, I contend that these characteristics of the elephant were similar

⁶¹ Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, Book 8, Chapter 5.4.

⁶² Pliny the Elder, Book 8 Chapter 4.

⁶³ I have found no instance that this assertion by Pliny is the truth.

characteristics of the monarchical ruler: a benevolent figure, loyal to his subjects, regal in his affect, but protective and dangerous when provoked by those wishing to harm his “herd”. While this might at first seem to be merely supposition, Pliny’s characterizations of the elephant were well-known during the early modern period. His organization of natural forms was continually utilized in the development of the *Kunst-* and *Wunderkammern* of Central Europe, and particularly of the Habsburgs.⁶⁴ In fact, copies of the book have been recorded in various imperial and noble libraries connected with the Habsburg court.⁶⁵ Although, Pliny’s influential text was utilized throughout Central Europe during this period, I have not found reference to the book’s usage in Denmark-Norway; but, this does not mean, however, that Pliny’s text did not function in a similar manner in the Danish-Norwegian court.

Moreover, this suppositional hypothesis is not meant to suggest that the ruler looked directly towards the elephant in the development of their specific monarchical characteristics, nor am I arguing for such a conclusion. My point, rather, is that the connotations associated with the elephant are in fact similar to those of the court ruler. I posit that such associations were inherently retained in the ivory itself, allowing for those characteristics to become part of the ivory’s subsumed materiality. Thus, when an elite member of society visited the grand *Kunstammer*, the notion of the elephant’s affect was recalled when the viewer looked upon the ivory object. In order for this to occur, the viewer had to look beyond the subject of the sculpture to the material, which they understood through their own knowledge of Pliny. While tangential, this notion of the

⁶⁴ Mitchell, “The Kunstammer Object in Seventeenth-Century Salzburg,” 67.

⁶⁵ Mitchell, 67.

interconnectedness of Pliny's elephant and the required characteristics of the ruler is an intriguing element to consider in the development of the materiality of ivory as well as the ivory monarchical portrait.

As Maureen Cassidy-Geiger noted, "The elephant was a symbol that resonated throughout Europe. A rare specimen even in royal menageries of the eighteenth century, tradition associated the elephant with the ruling prince, and so its image evoked bravery and wisdom, royal prerogative, power and victory. Exotic and foreign, it represented distant lands."⁶⁶ Such connotations of the elephant had persisted since antiquity, with classical and biblical texts illustrating the mammal as "complex intelligent creatures, having what Philo called 'two hearts' or two natures: as gentle and moral beings who, while willing to work for humans in any numbers of endeavors, including going to war, will, when attacked or wounded, exact revenge."⁶⁷ Early modern written sources abound with tales of the sagacious mammal's unique characteristics. Lucinda Cole enumerated many of these narratives, but particularly focused on Wolfgang Franz's *History of Brutes*, which helped further Pliny's original commentary on the elephant. She notes,

In his *History of Brutes*... the natural historian Wolfgang Franz describes at length this double nature of the animal considered 'king over the rest' (p.13). Quoting Aristotle and Pliny... Franz describes elephants as the most rational of the so-called 'irrational creatures', in part because they exhibit 'shadows of virtue' (p. 23)... They are, says Franz, 'very milde and gentle not only towards other Creatures that are small,' but also towards men and even 'criminal persons, who used to be cast before them to be torn into pieces [...] which they will scarcely do unless they be drunk with wine' (p.25). This anthropomorphising of elephant's capacity for empathy and sociability extends to other aspects of their behavior.

⁶⁶ Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, "Of Elephants and Porcelain," in *The French Porcelain Society Journal 1, French Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century, a Symposium in Honour of Geneviève Le Duc (1930-1999), The Wallace Collection, London, 2001*, ed. Oliver Fairclough and Aileen Dawson (2003): 123-24.

⁶⁷ Cassidy-Geiger, "Of Elephants and Porcelain," 124.

Their ‘Temperance and providence’ are manifest in their dietary habits; they couple only in private; they are clean; they never leave their young ones, and, when walking in ‘companies’, they help their calves over rivers and rough terrain’ (p.25). According to Franz, they bury their dead, they cure the sick and wounded; and some elephants disclose their religious sensibility, getting together to salute the ‘New-Moon’ with ‘delight and reverence’ (p.25). Given their gentle nature, even war elephants must be worked up in a rage... ‘to provoke [elephants] to fight [their handlers] shewed them the juice of grapes, and Mulberryes, which [at] the beginning of a fight doth very much enrage and provoke them, in so much that (as *Osonius* relates) they did not only carry wooden Towers on their backs, full of men, but they also took swords with their teeth, with which they did good execution’ (p.26) ...⁶⁸

As this single textual instance illustrates, the elephant had a distinctive and long-lasting connection with the notions of a ruler. In the early modern period, this relationship between man and animal was materialized through the depiction of rulers in ivory. The synecdochic use of a part (ivory) to represent the larger whole (the elephant) in political portraiture fashioned a tangible link between the admired virtuous qualities of ruler and animal. Ivory was not an anonymous material; through the elephant’s lineage via antique writers like Pliny and early modern historians like Franz, the material was known as originating from the elephant.

Furthermore, ivory’s designation as both natural and artificial in the early modern *Kunstkammern* supported the material’s natural origination. When in its raw tusk form, ivory acted as a supreme exemplar of man’s ability to dominate nature; similarly, through the performative acts of turning and carving the material, man is able to transform the once regal animal parts into works of art that promulgated the ideologies of man’s control of the macro- and microcosm. Together, the notions of *naturalia*, *artificilia*, and the

⁶⁸ Lucinda Cole, “Guns, ivory, and elephant graveyard: the biopolitics of elephants’ teeth,” in *Animals and Humans: Sensibility and Representation, 1650-1820*, ed. Katherine M. Quinsey (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2017), 44.

elephant conflate to create an ideal material not only for princely collections but for the depiction of the ruler himself.

The Lathe, The Art of Princely Turning, and the Development of Princely Erudition

As ivory's multitudinous layered materialities developed in the early modern European *Kunstammern*, princes and monarchs further consolidated the material's inherent connection to rulership. During their education as young elite members of society, many princely and monarchical rulers partook in learning the mechanical skill of lathe turning, particularly working with ivory. As such, this section explicates the role of princely turning in ivory's development within the collecting systems of the early modern era. I look toward Klaus Maurice's *Der drechselnde Souverän: Materialien zu einer fürstlichen Maschinenkunst*, more commonly known as *Sovereigns as Turners*, to not only illustrate the princely education on turning ivory on the lathe, but also how this part of their early education potentially inspired their later material choice of ivory portraits.

Maurice maintained that monarchical interest in turning and the mechanical arts began with the development of the sixteenth-century idea, "*ars naturam superat*", or art superseding nature.⁶⁹ Through education at the lathe, the prince was able to learn "above technical matters, science and art, and the links between manufacture and economy."⁷⁰ Ultimately, the lathe and the performance of turning became a cultural phenomenon in early modern Europe and progressed into a metaphor for the absolutist monarchy.⁷¹ But the history of turning did not begin in the early modern period; its root date back to

⁶⁹ Maurice, *Sovereigns as turners*, 7-8.

⁷⁰ Maurice, 8.

⁷¹ Maurice, 9.

antiquity. The first known depiction of the lathe was from a third century BCE Egyptian grave relief, in which two men kneel before a turning apparatus (Figure 2.2).⁷² One man holds a belt that creates the spinning motion of the raw material as the other holds a cutting tool against the material to produce turned ornamentation. Turning on the lathe continued in the Greco-Roman antique world; Pliny the Elder argued that a lathe was utilized to create the cylindrical elements used for architectural columns. He noted, “they [the lathes] were suspended so well in the workshop that one youth (alone) could rotate them when they were being turned.”⁷³ While Pliny did not enumerate the technical details of the ancient Greek lathe, the art of turning became a known craft skill within the antique world. Other authors like Vitruvius (80-15 BCE) and Oribasios (355-363 CE) described the phenomenon of turning without providing the technical particulars like Pliny.⁷⁴ The tradition of lathe turning continued into the Middle Ages; as Maurice notes, “Bishop Joseph of Freising referred to 757 turners, and “*tornatores*” were mentioned in the *Capitulare de Villis*, decreed by Charlemagne around 800, and in the plan of the monastery of St. Gall, drawn on the island of Reichenau, Lake Constance, around 820/30 (a special room, a workroom for turners, is drawn in the ground plan for the monastery).”⁷⁵ Although Maurice does not include any mention of turning in the subsequent years before the beginning of the early modern period, it can be assumed that the skills continued to be taught amongst craftsmen.

The largest revitalization of lathe turning, however, appeared in the early modern period. With scientific, mechanical, and technical advancements, lathe turning grew

⁷² Maurice, 131.

⁷³ Maurice, 131.

⁷⁴ Maurice, 132.

⁷⁵ Maurice, 132.

increasingly complex with turners continually attempting to invent new and innovative turning styles and shapes. Demand for turned objects steadily progressed throughout the era, which caused a need for the concretization of technical turning practices into translatable written texts. In the later sixteen century, Jacques Besson (d. 1569) and Salomon de Caus (d. 1626) produced one of the first early modern depictions of the lathe. Working as a machine builder for King François II (1544-1560), Besson's "*Theatrum instrumentorum et machinarum*" (1578) depicted the lathe with little instructive text on the usage of the machine.⁷⁶ But perhaps the most influential text on the explanation and practices of turning was Charles Plumier's *L'Art de Tourneur*, published in 1701.⁷⁷ The codification of turning practices into instructional manuals produced a new revolution in turning that allowed for the expansion of the craft throughout early modern European courts.

The education of a princely heir was paramount to the continuation of a dynasty as the young princes learned the knowledge of the ancients, contemporary science and politics, as well as integral virtues for the ideal ruler. As both a practical and symbolic art form, turning was presented as a practice of patience and exactitude; the careful planning of the turned form, the intricate and personal handling of the cutting tool against the material that required deep contemplative concentration, and the scientific and mechanical knowledge needed to produce finely turned objects were ideal virtues any ruler would need throughout his/her reign. As Johann Martin Teuber, a master turner and writer on the nature of turning, wrote, "The noble art of turning should prevail over other arts because its very origin is of God's hand. Let common people strive after other

⁷⁶ Maurice, 104.

⁷⁷ Maurice, 106.

handicrafts, the art of turning is a work worthy only of the gods. When this was seen by electors, princes, and kings they decided to with the greatest pleasure.”⁷⁸ Master turners within the court workshops often taught the royal children in the art of turning, promoting the young royals from amateur to exemplar *par excellence*. While most of the princely-turned objects of this period are no longer extant, the few that do remain in monarchical collections illustrate a skilled deftness and attention to the finest minutiae.

The Austrian Habsburgs were one of the first monarchical courts to modernize lathe turning into a princely skill. In the early sixteenth century, Emperor Maximilian I received a beautifully built lathe, presumably from the Tyrolean Degen von Fuchsberg and Christoph von Fuchsberg. With the family’s Tyrolean coat-of-arms and carved medallions of the Order the Golden Fleece – in reference to the Habsburg chivalric order –, the gifted lathe presented the diplomatic relations between various realms within the Holy Roman Empire as well as the burgeoning understanding of princely turning.⁷⁹ Throughout his reign, Emperor Maximilian I would receive at least three more lathes as presents: in 1505, Jörg Salomon presented the emperor with a lathe; he received one at the Innsbruck Diet of the Patrimonial Lands; as well as at the 1518 Imperial Diet of Augsburg.⁸⁰ Astoundingly, one of Emperor Maximilian I lathe’s still survives today at Kreuzenstein Castle north of Vienna (Figure 2.3).

Mythic tales of previous Habsburg monarch’s turning abounded; a 1683 poem praised King Rudolf I (d. 1291) of having “worked (at his art) so that things he turned can still be seen.”⁸¹ Duke Albrecht IV (d. 1404) was also heralded as a princely turner during his

⁷⁸ Maurice, 116.

⁷⁹ Maurice, 32.

⁸⁰ Maurice, 32.

⁸¹ Maurice, 32.

reign. After Emperor Maximilian I's death, subsequent Habsburg emperors continued to turn at the lathe during their princely education, including Emperor Rudolf II, Emperor Ferdinand III, and Emperor Leopold I.⁸² In 1599, in fact, Rudolf II constructed a separate turning chamber in the Prague Castle near his extensive and famous *Kunstammer* of the same period.⁸³ With famed instructors like the Nuremberg-based Zick family – Peter (ca. 1571-1632), Lorenz (1594-1666), and Chrisoph (ca. mid-17th century) – and Martin Teuber – grandfather of the previously mentioned Johann Martin Teuber – the Habsburg imperial children became part of a long-lasting and widespread elite cultural phenomenon. As Maurice conveys, “Such were the Habsburg sovereigns who turned and thanks to whom, according to Müllner...the status of turning was sublimated. ‘This art had been raised from obscurity since the House of Austria has honored it; many have been converted to the pursuit of such pleasure. Indeed, one can speak of it gaining fame.’”⁸⁴ Thus, with this historical – or somewhat ahistorical – understanding of the beginnings of princely turning, the Habsburg's emerge as the trend-setting Central European power that propagated a multi-century spectacle of artistic education.

In Denmark-Norway, the Oldenburg monarchs began turning as early as the sixteenth century; according to historical documents, the famed Kronborg Castle held a turning room in one of its corner towers.⁸⁵ In 1588, after the passing of King Frederik II, the crown paid Osvlad Drejer to bring the lathes and accompanying equipment back to the royal palaces in Copenhagen.⁸⁶ While, as Maurice illustrates, turning was ineradicable to

⁸² Maurice, 32.

⁸³ Maurice, 32.

⁸⁴ Maurice, 34. Maurice did not, however, include a citation for Müllner's quote on Austrian imperial turning, or even the first name of the poet.

⁸⁵ Maurice, 57.

⁸⁶ Maurice, 57.

the princely education of the Oldenburg children, there are very few extant examples from the Danish-Norwegian monarchs known today. One potential object, dated to ca. 1730-34, appears to have been the work of King Christian VI and Queen Sophie Magdalena, produced under the supervision of Diedrich de Thurah (Figure 2.4).⁸⁷ The delicately turned lidded goblet sits on a base of rose-style turned ornaments. The thin lobed turned base leads to a standard ivory goblet with turned undulations. Wrapped around the goblet, however, is a spiralized serpent with dexterously incised scales and facial features. The serpent ornamentation provides the work with a sense of movement and dexterity in juxtaposition to the static nature of the goblet. At the top of the lidded goblet, the royal couple and their tutor utilized several common Danish-Norwegian turning motifs, including the zig-zap basket-weave, crenellated undulations, and the ivory turned crown.

Several prominent Danish-Norwegian ivory artists instructed the royal family on the art of turning, like Jakob Jensen Nordmand (1614-1695) and Lorenz Spengler (1720-1807); with turning chambers in both Copenhagen Castle and Rosenborg Castle, the monarchy had multiple monarchical sites to practice their princely craft (Figure 2.5).⁸⁸ Most of the early modern Oldenburg monarch's learned the art of turning, including King Frederik III (1607-1670), King Christian V (1646-1699), King Frederik IV (1671-1730), King Christian VI (1699-1746), and King Frederik V (1723-1766). In addition the male members of the Oldenburg dynasty – particularly the heirs apparent to the throne – several Oldenburg female children and various Danish-Norwegian queens learned the

⁸⁷ Jørgen Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle: Catalog of Carved and Turned Ivories and Narwhal Tusks in the Royal Danish Collection, 1600-1875* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2018), 120.

⁸⁸ Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, 57.

mechanical arts as well. Queen Sophie Magdalena of Brandenburg-Kulmbach (1700-1770), wife of King Christian VI, for instance, owned her own personal lathe that was concealed within a *secrétaire*, currently located in Rosenborg Castle (Figure 2.6). The officially appointed royal turners, like Nordmand and Spengler, also worked outside the royal turning chambers; they filled the royal *Kunstammer* with turned and carved ivory objects of their own creation. The connection between turning education, the prince, ivory, and the collection was further enhanced with Spengler's appointment as the Director of the Royal Art Cabinet in 1771.⁸⁹ Under the patronage of King Frederik V, Spengler's workshop produced a staggering amount of turned ivory works with the aid of his pupils, like ivory carver Johann Ephraim Bauer (1726-1799). Through the continued patronage and appointment of royal ivory turners at the early modern Danish-Norwegian court, the small Scandinavian nation emerged as a preeminent site of early modern European ivory turning.

Princely education in ivory turning not only taught the young heir all manner of monarchical virtues, but also forged the theoretical and conceptual relationship between God as the first turner and the absolutist monarch. As Maurice illustrates, early modern turners understood God as the mechanic of the world, "indeed the first turner, who turned the globe, making it round."⁹⁰ In 1599, French mathematician Henri de Monantheuil (1563-1606) specified this relationship in *Quaetionnes mechanicae*. In dedication to French King Henry IV (1553-1610), Monantheuil situates God as the "sapientissimus, optimus, potentissimus, mechanikos et mechanopois."⁹¹ The mathematician argues, as

⁸⁹ Maurice, 58.

⁹⁰ Maurice, 13-14.

⁹¹ Maurice, 15.

Maurice paraphrases, “he [God] created man in his image, therefore he wanted man to take in interest in mechanics. For that reason, he gave man hands to assist his intellect in making tools and machines.”⁹² Through the divine interest in turning, the skill took on new life as elite and powerful, raising its status from craft to art. Turning guilds conscripted this heavenly narrative into their turning culture, as the following poem illustrates.

Who made the globe so round? Who hollowed out the starry skies so beautifully/ giving them light and air so fine? Who surrounded the earth with water? Who have the master who maintains and carries it? GOD THE MASTER OF THE WORLD’S FIRST SPHERE. In each of the questions it is obvious to all that the hands of the Almighty, of God in all his greatness, has been at work. It is thus clear/ and easy to see/ that HE IS A SPECIAL FRIEND AND LOVING ADMIRER OF TURNING. That God is a special friend of turning/ who Himself turned the vaults of heaven/so delicately/ Oh, what honour to be of that origin! Oh, splendid antiquity!⁹³

This hymn was utilized throughout European turning guild systems. In a shortened German version of the early eighteenth century, Joachim Müllner wrote, “The art of turning, from its origins/antiquity/growth/establishment and great usefulness to much-honoured commemoration/of this beautiful and wonderful science.”⁹⁴ Thus, through princely education in turning, the young future monarch became a pupil of God. Utilizing the same mechanical techniques of the Almighty that created the monarch’s realms, the young prince established himself as the steward of God’s turned globe.

With the divinely performative act of turning established, the lathe – as a technological mechanism – developed as a symbol of the absolutist state. As Maurice argued,

⁹² Maurice, 15.

⁹³ Maurice, 16.

⁹⁴ Maurice, 16. Fridericus Frisius of Leipzig originally published the poem in 1705 and 1708, according to Maurice.

The machine was both metaphor and model for an age in which everything was subject to mechanistic way of thinking, in which everything was attributed a mechanical function. The princes became springs, weights or balance wheels; and they operated and regulated the state clockwork like mechanical elements. In general Descartes' idea was accepted: 'the world consisted of matter like a machine or: The causes of movement in all material things are the same in artificially produced machines.' Thus, everything became mechanics and, like mechanical things, become sensible, clear, calculatable, controllable...The mechanics of the machine that was programme-controlled and ran to schedule, that was rigid and predetermined in its movements, reflected macrocosmic structures microcosmically.⁹⁵

Like the categorization and utilization of turned ivory objects within the *Kunstkammer*, the prince's learnt regulatory virtues envisioned an idyllic monarch imbued with the virtues of patience, technical erudition, determination, and adroitness.⁹⁶

But why did princes primarily turn in ivory? This is not to say, however, that these young heirs did not turn in other materials – like wood, bone, or even metal. Perhaps it was the material qualities of ivory that drew the prince to turn the natural material, as Maurice suggests. "The ivory creations were fantastic because they seemed to be the 'witches' sabbath of pure forms, always new forms dispensing with meaning, to the 'disturbed form' which triumphed in exaggeration, in combinations, in unbelievable distortions, curves, and fragile forms."⁹⁷ The malleability of ivory through the act of turning certainly played a role in the turner's admiration for the material, but there are far deeper material connections to explore. As an anonymous French author wrote in 1734, "art has long vied with nature. It has invented worlds, it has even succeeded in realizing them. Man's dexterity produces masterpieces each day, and our ability only increases the greatness of the "*souverain ouvrier*" as we owe him our thanks for the ability to imitate

⁹⁵ Maurice, 140.

⁹⁶ Maurice, 139.

⁹⁷ Maurice, 142.

him in something.”⁹⁸ As this quote explicates, the art of turning was intimately tied with the early modern *Kunstammern* reliance upon natural and artificial forms to create a monarchical *representatio*.

Furthermore, I posit that the connection between princely turning and ivory appears through the material’s status as both *naturalia* and *artificilia* as well as its derivation from the elephant. Through the process of turning ivory, the young prince literally and metaphorically turned the natural artificial, creating an object “worthy” of its princely designation. The prince’s careful mechanical attention to the ivory and the dexterous construction of magnificent *contrefait* balls and intricately balanced elements signaled the prince’s control over nature through artificiality. Through technological mechanization, the prince thus becomes the ultimate controller of his microcosm in a continuation of God’s original creation of the world. Moreover, the prince’s turned ivory object became a fundamental element of his collection’s *representatio*, a metaphor for his control over his lands. Furthermore, the iconography and comprehension of the elephant in early modern Europe established an even more layered materiality to these objects and to the princely practice of turning itself. Through the recognition of the elephant’s virtues as princely, the act of turning the most identifiable element of the mammal completed the prince’s ultimate control over his world. Thus, the interconnections between the ruler, ivory/elephant, and the collection are manifested through the mechanical and technological manipulation of the material in the prince’s early education. Through this interwoven material narrative, ivory not only became an

⁹⁸ Maurice, 20. Quoted from, Pour & Contre, Paris, Bd. IV. S. 129-130.

appropriate material for display in the *Kunstammern* but also for the representation and presentation of the monarch's visage.

The Fashioning of Imperiality: Ivory Political Portraits of Habsburg Rulers, (1683-1711)

Ivory flourished under Habsburg patronage in the seventeenth century, with hundreds of centerpieces, mythological reliefs, and religious statues commissioned for the Habsburg collections. Although the *Kunstammer* was filled with various objects of ivory, portraits of Habsburg rulers remained modest; only a handful of ivory objects were created to depict the Imperial family and the nobility of the Viennese court. This section looks at a few of the stunning monuments created to celebrate and propagate Habsburg dynastic leadership and strength. Specifically looking at Matthias Steinl's three ivory equestrian monuments, I argue that the Habsburg Emperors utilized ivory a material vehicle for their *representatio* through its material recognitions of princely turning as well as allusions to Habsburg mythic genealogy and the *Pietas Austriaca*. As detailed in the previous chapter, the seventeenth-century Habsburgs associated ivory with the dynasty's imagined ancestors – built through creative family histories – to Ancient Rome as well as ivory's medieval religious materiality. Through the comprehension of ivory as divine and imperial skin, ivory transformed the nature of the Habsburg collections to a performative space of imperial glorification. When the emperors commissioned their portraits in ivory, these divine and imperial notions prevailed; but rather than the more abstracted and subsumed signification I discussed in Chapter 1, these material connotations now take on a personalized application directed solely to the Habsburg

Emperor. Thus, ivory emerged as the imperial skin of the Habsburg Emperor, divinely appointed by God, to control his sacred microcosm.

Early Habsburg Ivory Political Portraits

Currently housed in the newly reinstalled *Kunstkammer* at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria, a small-scale ivory sculpture of a prominent and seated Emperor Ferdinand II looks upon his audience with stately and steely determination (Figure 2.7). Carved in the 1630s, the object has no artist attached to its creation, but it can be assumed that the artist was affiliated with the Imperial Habsburg court in some fashion. The small sculpture stands at only seven inches, providing a miniature yet effective representation of a powerful ruler. Emperor Ferdinand is seated upon a magnificent throne topped with domed and pointed spindles and volutes on the arms and feet. The three-pointed tiers situated at the apex of the throne are reminiscent of turned ivory centerpieces that became prevalent in the mid-seventeenth century throughout the German and Austrian courts. The Emperor himself is awkwardly shown seated forward in his throne. While the Emperor's torso fits tightly against the back of the throne, his arms rest tensely but naturalistically against the arms, while his bottom half appears out of proportion with the rest of the portrait. With the artist's focus on the bending of the leg and the showcasing the full length of the Emperor's thigh, it appears as if the Ferdinand II is rising from his throne, with his feet planted firmly on the ground. The artist provided a naturalistic depiction of the Habsburg Emperor, with long flowing hair, an upturned mustache, a pointed short beard, a closed and unsmiling mouth, a prominent and regal nose, and deep, penetrating eyes staring slightly off to his right. With an incised cape with foliated design over an elaborately embellished outfit and the necklace of the

Order of the Golden Fleece hanging from his neck, Emperor Ferdinand II is resplendent in his imperial power. Wearing the imperial crown and holding the orb of imperial power, the carver alerts the viewer to Ferdinand II's role as the Holy Roman Emperor.

This type of seated portrait in ivory was not an anomaly in the seventeenth-century Habsburg court. Around the same time as the commissioning and subsequent completion of the Ferdinand II ivory statuette, Emperor Ferdinand III (r. 1637-1657) commissioned a similar portrait (Figure 2.8). The Emperor is shown in a similar position, with his feet firmly planted on the ground and seated in an elaborate – but more subtly ornamented – throne. Ferdinand III also holds the imperial scepter and orb and wears the necklace of the Order of the Golden Fleece, illustrating his imperial presence to the viewer. While Ferdinand III is seated, he appears sprawled upon his throne as he leans against the throne's backing, illustrating a more relaxed Emperor in juxtaposition to his sculpture pendant counterpart, Emperor Ferdinand I. These small-scale sculptures were most likely produced during the reign of Emperor Ferdinand II, given the known dates of creation for these objects.

The next object I wish to discuss is situated later in the seventeenth century but illustrates a new avenue of depiction for the Habsburg rulers in ivory. Created between 1687 and 1691, the ivory plaque of Emperor Leopold I combines centuries of this particular plaque format into a new imperial style of portraiture (Figure 2.9).⁹⁹ Like the small-scale sculpture of Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III, this work is barely six inches tall. The scene is situated within a square, unframed piece of ivory with both high and low

⁹⁹ This style was used throughout Roman, Byzantine and Middle Ages. While the continuation of such a popular format is very important, I will not fully explore the continued relationship between these objects here.

relief. The background consists of light, wispy clouds at the pinnacle of the composition, which sets the representative stage for the bloody battle beneath as hordes of warriors fight on horseback and foot to defend the honor of the Holy Roman Empire. Emperor Leopold I, portrayed in high relief, is triumphant on horseback and bursts from the confines of the plaque into the audience's space. The Emperor's facial features are naturalistic, with his ever present long, curly hair, his large and deep-set eyes, long nose, and his famous Habsburg juttled-out chin. This was a common representation of the Emperor Leopold, as can be seen in Johann Ignaz Bendl's *Gedenkmedaillon auf die Errichtung der Pestsäule* from 1692 (Figure 2.10). His imperial gaze is fixed to his left, gazing upon the battlefield and his future victory. The Emperor appears in the midst of action, seated atop a rearing horse, as a heroic monarchical leader fighting for his kingdom. Emperor Leopold wears highly decorative armor with his cape flying in a dramatic fashion as if the winds of change are following his every move. He holds a small scepter in his hand, which signal his role as the head of his armed forces. The Habsburg Emperor appears calm and in charge in direct juxtaposition to his rearing and neighing horse as the scenes of war rage behind him. Through the subtle low-relief war imagery and the powerful figure of the Emperor propelled forth from the ivory ground, the anonymous artist elucidated the power and might of the Habsburg rulers and their dominion over their ancestral lands.

Matthias Steinl, Emperor Leopold I, 1690

Matthias Steinl, an Austrian Baroque sculptor, was a prominent member of the Habsburg court in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and worked

throughout the Empire, including Silesia, Poland, and the Czech Republic.¹⁰⁰ Through his work on ecclesiastical stone sculptures, Steinl became a recognizable artisan within the Habsburg territories and was eventually summoned to Vienna where Emperor Leopold I appointed him as the inaugural Imperial Ivory Carver the first on 1 March 1688.¹⁰¹ It was through this illustrious position that Steinl created the 1690 ivory double monument for the Emperor and his son for the Imperial *Schatzkammer*.¹⁰²

Known as *Emperor Leopold I on Horseback as the Victor over the Turks*, this monumental ivory statue depicts the hegemony of the Habsburgs over the Ottoman Turks, their longtime political and militaristic adversaries (Figure 2.11). At twenty-seven inches high, Emperor Leopold I (r. 1657-1705) sits atop a majestic horse on a highly decorative saddle with his gaze fixed on the distance. The Emperor has an intense and severe expression, in accordance with the solemn responsibility of his imperial position. The horse rears above a Turkish archer, who peers pleadingly up at Leopold, mouth agape in the moments before his trampling death. Prostrate upon the monument's base, the Turk falls onto an imaginary battlefield – perhaps a reference to the 1683 Battle of Vienna – with French and Turkish war trophies scattered around him. The Emperor dresses in ornate contemporary Austrian armor, complete with the necklace of Order of the Golden Fleece, the Habsburg Monarchy's chivalric organization created for the defense of the Christian faith.

¹⁰⁰ Sabine Haag, *Kaiserliche Elfenbein: Matthias Steinl (1643/44-1727) in der Kunstkammer des Kunsthistorischen Museums*, (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, 2007), 45. Steinl was born somewhere near Salzburg around 1644. Not much is known of his early history of the sculptor, including his place of birth and early training, although records indicate he was born to a cabinet maker. Known for work in stone, wood, and ivory, the Austrian artist showcased his training as a goldsmith throughout his sculptural oeuvre.

¹⁰¹ Haag, *Kaiserliche Elfenbein*, 45.

¹⁰² Haag, 45.

The motif of the equestrian ruler is a popular visual theme in the history of art, from the famous Marcus Auerulis equestrian monument in Rome to *Charlemagne on Horseback*, Leonardo da Vinci's plans for Duke of Milan Ludivico Il Moro's statue to Bernini's statue of King Louis XIV. While Steinl had a multitude of sculptural referents from which to draw inspiration for the manifestation of the equestrian figure, the influence of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna cannot be ignored in reference to the depiction of the Emperor's noble steed. The *Spanische Hofreitschule*, created under the Emperor Maximilian II's reign, was a traditional riding school for Lipizzan horses (Figure 2.12).¹⁰³ During Steinl's production of these ivory monuments, the school was temporarily located on the Josefpplatz at the Hofburg Palace.¹⁰⁴ The rearing horse was a common performative theme within the school, providing a real-life model for the artist in the construction of the Emperor's horse. This connection becomes more tangible through the original of the double monument – the Imperial *Schatzkammer* – located in the Hofburg. Furthermore, the use of the Lipizzan horses from the Hofburg Palace provided a clear association between the palace and the *Schatzkammer*, creating a strong visual link between the Habsburgs and their environment. The question remains, however, were Steinl's ivory horses Lippizan? After careful analysis of Steinl's rearing horses against the Lipizzan Horse, there are many common visual and bodily characteristics that point to the ivory horses' categorization as Lipizzaner. One of the most distinguishing common feature is the large, crested neck, with a prominent fur

¹⁰³ See Mathilde Windisch-Graetz, *The Spanish riding school: its traditions and development from the sixteenth century until today*, (New York City: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1966).

¹⁰⁴ The current location of the Spanish Riding School was not completed until the mid-eighteenth century. The location, however, did remain somewhat close to the temporary Josefpplatz arena.

fringed ridge underneath the styled mane. Both horses have a long face, with large nostrils and a pronounced jaw, and they each exhibit a more compacted body type, with relatively short, yet muscled legs, especially in relation to their longer bodies and protruding bellies. Whether or not Steidl truly used the Lipizzaner as his model, it is highly probable that the majestic Habsburg horses influenced Steidl's representation. Together with the history of equestrian ruler statues and a famous riding school just steps away from the intended exhibition space, Steidl's ivory monuments recall the history of Imperial portraiture as well as early modern Habsburg court life.

Matthias Steidl, King Joseph I, 1690,

To complement Emperor Leopold I's ivory equestrian monument as well as illustrate the line of Habsburg succession, Steidl sculpted *King Joseph I as Victor over the Fury* (Figure 2.13). At almost two feet tall, the future Emperor Joseph I sits in a similar position to his father on a rearing horse, with his cape flying behind as he triumphantly defeats the personification of a terrified Fury. Under the rearing horse, Fury or Rage is sprawled across the base as the young king defeats the embodiment of war-time emotionality as Turkish arrows, shown at the base of the hind foot, illustrates Madness as a servant of war.¹⁰⁵ The young king, at only eleven years old, is composed and steady, illustrating his intrinsic strengths and learnt virtues as the future Emperor. He wears elaborately decorated armor, with perfectly coiffed and curled hair, and stares into the distance, much like the pendant statue of his father. Steidl carves the young king with youthful skin, pouty full lips, large doe eyes, with long hair consisting of gloriously shiny ringlets. The facial representation of the young King is similar to various other ivory

¹⁰⁵ Haag, *Kaiserliche Elfenbein*, 19.

portraits – like Ignaz Elhafen’s ivory equestrian plaque of the young heir – prompting the recognition of a fairly true-to-life, albeit idealized, illustration of the Habsburg imperial heir (Figure 2.14). Previous to Steinl’s monumental ivory constructions, Habsburg ruler portraits tended to be in relief form, like Elhafen’s plaques or Bendl’s medallion, or in small-scale three-dimensional objects, like Ferdinand II’s seated portrait. With the completion and positioning of Steinl’s large-scale ivory political monuments, a new form of viewership for Habsburg ruler portrait emerged. The fully in-the-round presentation allowed the contemporary viewer the opportunity to circumambulate the sculpture, taking in the dramatic details, which aided in the creation of a direct communication between the viewer and the subject within the imperial and performative collection space. To ease the viewer’s comprehension of Steinl’s monuments as imperial, the young monarch is shown with several symbols of his imperial lineage, like the Hungarian and Bohemian coats of arms, the Habsburg double eagle on his chest plate, and the necklace of the Order of the Golden Fleece.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, this sculpture acted as a pendant piece to an equally monumental ivory sculpture of his father, illustrating the Habsburg line of succession and the continuation of a vast and impressive genealogy. Like his father, he carries the official insignia of imperial dignity – the laurel wreath atop his head, which not only characterizes King Joseph as the heir-apparent to the Habsburg throne, but also his hereditary role in the victories of his father.¹⁰⁷

The completion date of 1693 offers some reference as to the *raison d’être* of the commission. In 1690, the year of the commission, the young Joseph was crowned the King of Germany, punctuated with a large coronation and triumphal entry of the Imperial

¹⁰⁶ Haag, 19.

¹⁰⁷ Haag, 9.

family into Vienna on 4 March 1690.¹⁰⁸ The year 1690 was a time of great political spectatorship in the Habsburg Empire through the concretization of the line of ascension with the coronation of Joseph I as the King of Rome, thus signifying his role as the future Emperor of the Habsburg dynasty's patrimonial lands. The coronation of the young king acted a potent reminder of the continuing political power and might of the Habsburgs, only seven years after the Ottoman Turk's famed Siege of Vienna in 1683. To mark the blessed event of a secured descendance, Emperor Leopold I, his wife Empress Eleanora, and King Joseph promenaded through the streets of Vienna in a triumphal procession culminating at the Hofburg. The Imperial City of Vienna watched as the young King jubilantly passed through three temporary triumphal arches strategically placed through the center of Vienna: on the *Wollzeile*, on the *Stock-im-Eisen Platz*, and in front of the Hofburg.¹⁰⁹ These arches were presented as ideological stamps of imperial power for the Viennese spectators to rejoice and bask in the magnificence of the dynasty.

To commemorate this blessed imperial event, Johann Ignaz Bendl created two ivory medallions depicting Johann Bernard Fischer von Erlach's *Arch of the Citizens of Vienna* from King Joseph's procession (Figures 2.15-2.16). Most likely a commemorative commission, the medallions reproduced a version of the triumphal arch on the obverse and a Latin inscription on the reverse. The two medallions are not currently housed together, but reside in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Although both medallions depict the triumphal arch, they are not direct copies of one another, as direct replication in ivory is difficult to

¹⁰⁸ Haag, 9.

¹⁰⁹ Johann Bernard Fischer von Erlach created two of the three arches, which would eventually lead to his obtainment of a noble title and his desirable position as the go-to imperial architect.

achieve. The Victoria and Albert medallion is an almost exact reproduction of Fischer von Erlach's original drawings of the *Arch of the Citizens of Vienna*, while the Kunsthistorisches Museum medallion does not match any of the known sketches of the arches. Perhaps the Kunsthistorisches Museum medallion represents the unknown-designed third arch that was situated closest to the Hofburg, or perhaps it is meant to act as an amalgamation of the three arches together. As the Kunsthistorisches Museum medallion has a somewhat mysterious relief, I will be concentrating on the Victoria and Albert medallion and how Bendl utilized ivory as a measure of commemorative propaganda for the Imperial Family with its relation to the Steinl equestrian statuette of King Joseph I.

The medallion measures about six point three centimeters wide in diameter and in height; its small stature potentially allowed the viewer to hold the medallion within the palm of their hand. Bendl utilized a fairly low-relief carving style, but still achieved vivid visualization of the arch with recognizable specific details. Fischer von Erlach's tangible arch was originally placed in front of the Cathedral of St. Stephan in Vienna and was commissioned by the citizens of Vienna as a congratulatory marker for their future Emperor (Figure 2.17). The tripartite bay arch is centered on the medallion with the attic holding a cacophony of dynamic figures, reminiscent of the Fischer von Erlach drawing. In the center of the attic, directly above the central bay, King Joseph I sits in a quadriga of rearing horses. The apex of the arch depicts the Emperor and Empress accepting gifts of thanks from lands rescued from Turkish control. Scattered with classically-inspired contrapposto statues in niches in the classical Corinthian Order, Bendl stays fairly true to the original drawing – and thus perhaps the original structure – as possible. The only

notable difference is the viewpoint of the drawing versus the medallion. In the Fischer von Erlach's drawing of the arch, the viewer stares straight at the arch, as if they were on the Joseph's triumphal path. The medallion, in juxtaposition, is skewed slightly to the left, as if the viewer is on the road waiting for the King to pass through. This new viewpoint allows the viewer to see inside the central bay – a view not offered in the drawing – which depicts niche statues and a hint of a coffered ceiling. There are several probable conclusions about this change in viewpoint: firstly, Bendl witnessed the triumphal procession from this particular viewpoint and utilized his own recollection and sketches to produce the medallion; secondly, this viewpoint is purely a creation of the artist's mind and was an intentional artistic decision to create more visual drama within the handheld medallion; and finally, this could have been taken from another Fischer von Erlach preparatory drawing of the arch that no longer survives. While each conclusion has its merits, it is probable that Bendl was watching as his patrons' process through the streets of Vienna.¹¹⁰

The back of the medallion has a Latin phrase written in bold block letters with no accompanying decoration. The text reads, "LEOPOLDO MAGNO/ELEONORAE AUGUSTAE/IOSEPHO GLORIOSO/SPQ VIENNENSIS/ARCUM HUNC/TRIUMPHALEM/POSUIT/MDCXC." This translates to, "the citizenry of Vienna erected this triumphal arch to Emperor Leopold the Great, the Empress Eleonora, and Joseph the Glorious in 1690." As such, Emperor Leopold I most likely commissioned the medallions as a commemorative gift for him and his son that would reside in the

¹¹⁰ As a final intriguing element to the composition, Bendl signed his name to the bottom of the medallion's obverse. It is an interesting inclusion to place his signature in such a prominent position, and while the Imperial Family's names only appear on the reverse, especially given the tight space of the medallion.

Kunstammer as a potent material representation of the triumphal procession that announced the continuing Habsburg dynasty, similar to the function of the Steinl monuments.

Like the Bendl medallions, the Steinl equestrian monument of King Joseph I most likely held a propagandistic intent from its conception.¹¹¹ Thus, the ivory monument materially represented the continuation of the Habsburg lineage, a common element in the artistic commissions of the Emperors. Placed alongside the monument of his father, the propagandistic double monument symbolized and projected the present and the future of the Habsburg dynasty.

Matthias Steinl, Emperor Charles VI, 1711

Twenty years after the creation of the ivory double monuments, Emperor Charles VI (r. 1711-1740), contracted the 70-year-old Steinl to create another equestrian portrait to be placed next to Emperors Leopold I and Joseph I.¹¹² After the sudden death of Emperor Joseph I, the newly-installed Emperor Charles VI commissioned the ca. 1711-1712 ivory monument, which was placed in the *Schatzkammer* next to the ivory representations of his father and brother (Figure 2.18).¹¹³ Emperor Charles VI continued Steinl's equestrian motif and thus turned the double monument of father and son, into a triumvirate of Habsburg ancestral identity. In place of the allegorical Turk or Fury, the female personification of the Holy Roman Empire kneels at the feet of the Emperor's rearing Lippizan horse, holding out the Imperial scepter and crown to the new ruler. Charles VI presents a baton to the personification as he connects eyes with the Empire,

¹¹¹ Haag, *Kaiserliche Elfenbein*, 9.

¹¹² Haag, 29.

¹¹³ Haag, 29.

eliding his role as the protector of his subjects. Shown in a more idealized fashion than Emperor Leopold, Charles VI sports large, high curls that frame his youthful face. An intricate and somewhat concealed laurel wreath wraps around the crown of his head, creating another visual link between the three monuments. As was common with his position as Emperor, Charles VI wears the necklace of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

The inclusion of the personification of the Holy Roman Empire's presentation of the crown and scepter is particularly significant given the date of the monument's creation. When young Emperor Joseph I died in 1711, Charles VI immediately took over the Imperial throne, an act meant to secure the Habsburg line after a tragic event; as such, it appears as though the Emperor commissioned Steinl to create his matching monument only a short time after becoming Emperor. Perhaps this was an act of memorial recognition for his predecessors or even a *memento mori* after the death of the young Emperor. While these suppositions could very well have been the case, I assert that the creation of the monument directly after Charles's coronation was to visually and materially reinforce the Habsburg Line of Succession.

On November 1, 1700, the Spanish Habsburg line officially ended, creating not only a vast gap in the Empire's holdings, but also leaving a substantial hole in the Imperial line of succession.¹¹⁴ While the Habsburg Emperors were immeasurably concentrated on the continuation of their dynasty, Charles VI's focus was on the eventual successor after his reign. From 1713-1740, the Emperor spent much of his time attempting to gain allied support for the Pragmatic Sanction, which would allow his

¹¹⁴ Charles W. Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy: 1618-1815*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 106.

daughter, Maria Theresa, the right to ascend to the Imperial Throne.¹¹⁵ This insistence on the invincibility of the monarchy can directly be seen in Steinl's monument, thus illustrating the successive rights of the Habsburg's as one of Charles VI's main concerns.

While Charles VI maintained the equestrian motif of the previous two monuments, the baroque dynamism of the 1690 statuettes is missing. Steinl still depicts the rearing horse with the dramatic wind-swept cape, but the horse is now reserved and contained while the cape only slightly uplifts from the Emperor's back. Unlike the previous two monuments, Charles VI engages directly with the personification, rather than looking off into the distance, like Emperors Leopold I and Joseph I. This monument also lacks the frenetic scenes of war surrounding the base of the sculpture in favor of an unadorned base. The absence of these elements did provide Steinl with the space to illustrate his evolution as a carver – as the rearing horse is no longer balanced on an enemy and explicated the artist's expert technique in counterbalance. The overall tone of the sculpture is more subdued, which continues the iconographic theme of the successful continuation of the Habsburg line.

Each of the Steinl monuments are imbued with a sense of monumentality. The use of ivory tends to belie a sense of fragility, yet each of the Steinl monuments stand at over two feet tall, presenting an august platform for Imperial propaganda. The triumvirate monuments became a widely known artistic element within the Habsburg collections. By 1715, travel descriptions of the period state that the monuments were next to the famous agate bowl on an artificial table filled with rarities and was

¹¹⁵ Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, 129.

emphasized as one of the must-see items of the Habsburg treasures.¹¹⁶ While most visitors to Vienna would not have been able to enter the private Schatzkammer until Charles VI opened the space to the public in 1715, Steidl's monuments managed to illuminate the role of Emperor as defender of the ancestral Habsburg lands.¹¹⁷

Ivory Propaganda in the Schatzkammer

As I detailed in the previous chapter, the *Schatzkammer's* origins date back to the Middle Ages, as the repository for the material and precious goods of the Habsburgs.¹¹⁸ The space was designated into two distinct sections: The Secular – containing the precious objects of the Monarchy – and the Ecclesiastical – containing the religious objects of the defenders of the Catholic faith. Room VIII held the objects delineated as “inalienable heirlooms”, those objects that were not owned by a specific member of the monarchy, but that rather belonged to the House of Habsburg and the people of Austria.¹¹⁹ This is the last space of the Secular *Schatzkammer*, which leads directly into the Ecclesiastical Treasury. Steidl's ivory monuments, conceived specifically for this space, sat upon a table of rare objects collected in the name of the Austrian people, and provided the Empire with links to natural rarities as representative of the power of the monarchy and their economic and political reach.

In order to fully elucidate the meaning of the Steidl monuments within the confines of the Schatzkammer, a look at the surrounding objects housed within this room will be required. Two important objects, the Agate Bowl and the *Ainkhürn*, help contextualize the ivory monuments within this space. Emperor Ferdinand I obtained both

¹¹⁶ Haag, *Kaiserliche Elfenbein*, 19.

¹¹⁷ I will discuss the opening of the Schatzkammer in more detail in the next section of my paper.

¹¹⁸ Kauffman, “From Treasury to Museum,” 137.

¹¹⁹ Kaufmann, 111.

objects during his reign and placed them within their current location and it was only after his death that these highly-revered objects became “inalienable heirlooms.”¹²⁰ On 11 August 1564, Emperor Ferdinand’s sons reached an agreement regarding these rare objects, deciding that they were too valuable to be named as a personal possession.¹²¹ Instead, the princes decided that the Agate Bowl and the *Ainkhürn* should remain part of the House of Habsburg, and should never be sold, pledged or taken out of the country; they was to remain in the hands of the Austrian Electorate, and thus the Empire and its people.¹²²

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the Agate Bowl, a fourth-century objects made of a single piece of precious agate stone, originated from Constantinople. Considered on the most valuable objects of the collection in the seventeenth century, the bowl’s placement in Room VIII further enhanced its association with the Holy Grail as well as promoted the Emperor’s Catholic Piety. This illustration of divinely appointed power illuminated Steinl’s glorification of the Emperors as the defenders of the faith, a chief element of the Habsburg’s constructed *representatio*. The second object housed in Room VIII of the *Schatzkammer*, as I also described in the previous chapter, was the *Ainkhürn*, which dates to the first half of the sixteenth century. The mythic unicorn materiality of the spindly six-foot-tall wand translated into notions of sovereign power and diplomatic relations, as King Sigismund of Poland gifted the tusk to King Ferdinand I in 1540. As an inalienable heirloom, the *Ainkhürn* presented the aspects of the natural while surrounded with the artificial. The tusk’s allusion to imperial power and dominion

¹²⁰ Kaufmann, 111.

¹²¹ Fillitz, *Schatzkammer*, 21.

¹²² *Weltliche und Geistliche Schatzkammer*, 111.

over nature heightened Steinl's imperial narrative and illustrated the Emperor's role as ruler.

The *Schatzkammer*, with its location in a monarchical palace, was a private location for the Emperors, the court, and foreign dignitaries to visit and experience the Habsburg collection.¹²³ This exclusive setting created a particular environment in which the Steinl ivories obtained their meaning. As these ivory monuments were commissioned to be housed within this isolated imperial area, the equestrian monuments were not intended to engage with a large audience, but rather were meant for a personal aesthetic experience. As the works were placed in the room of the Inalienable Heirlooms of the House of Austria, the statues thus came to symbolize a personal reminder to the Emperor of his duty to his subjects. Shown in virtuous defense of the Habsburg territories over the Turks, in the case of Leopold I, and Joseph I's battle with Fury ending with a benevolent Charles accepting the crown and scepter from a personification of the Holy Roman Empire, these monuments performed as material and visual prompts for the Emperor of their God-given monarchical duty and showcasing the hegemony of the Habsburgs as the Holy Roman Emperors. Steinl's monuments indicate the Habsburg's sovereign power over Central Europe and their militaristic efficacy over their enemies, providing a subtle encouragement in the avoidance of war against the vast Empire through ivory's imperial epidermal materiality.

As art historian Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann notes, Charles VI opened several of the previously private collections to the public, including the *Schatzkammer*.¹²⁴ The

¹²³ Kauffman, "From Treasury to Museum," 148.

¹²⁴ Kaufmann, 148. By 1715, Steinl's monuments were noted within several travel descriptions, suggesting that Charles VI had opened the Treasury to the public sometime between 1711 and 1715.

unsealing of the formerly private space invited an entirely new set of viewers, from the elite class to citizens of a lower social standing. Considering that Charles VI was deeply invested in the Imperial lineage, the invitation for all to enter the Treasury conforms to the Emperor's dynastic plan. As inalienable heirlooms, Steinl's monuments *Schatzkammer* location offered little visibility to the people of Austria, the true owners of the works, until Charles VI opened the space. Steinl's monuments now obtained imperial citizen viewership that assuaged their minds as to the continuation of the Habsburg line. The three monuments together provide a striking assemblage of Imperial power – a solid and resilient material ivory representation of strength and invincibility of the Habsburg dynasty. Mitchell argues that “here, the performances of kingship is reinvested with the notion of the ruler of both realms.”¹²⁵ Thus, the statue's position at the end of the Secular and beginnings of the Ecclesiastical *Schatzkammer* situates the imperial riders as both Emperor of Habsburg territories but also as the Holy Roman Emperor, the defender of the Christian faith. The stalwart and glorified Habsburg equestrian riders materially illustrate both their defense of their patrimonial lands – particularly in the wake of the 1683 Ottoman Siege of Vienna – and the intrinsic elements of the imperial while at the same time guarding the precious sacral objects that lay ahead. Through the application of ivory as imperialized and divine flesh and the connection between ivory and the imperium's *Pietas Austriacus* and mythic genealogy, Steinl's equestrian statues became monuments of Austria itself. Categorized as an inalienable heirloom alongside the beloved *Agate Bowl* and *Ainkhürn*, the tripartite equestrian monuments are not only an illustration of Habsburg Empire or their self-referential ideologies regarding their own representation,

¹²⁵ Mitchell, “The Kunstkammer Object in Seventeenth-Century Salzburg,” 31.

but also as a material reimagination of the desired qualities of the Habsburg dynasty and its people.¹²⁶

While ivory played an immense role in the Habsburg court of the seventeenth century, the use of the exotic material tapered off after the first decade of the eighteenth century. After the completion of Charles VI's equestrian monument, there were few ivory sculptures commissioned for the powerful imperial court, particularly of a political nature. I suggest that this was not a mere case of dwindled material interest, but rather the culmination of several historical factors, including: The War of Spanish Succession; the fierce cultural competition with the French Empire; and the steady rise of porcelain. I would also argue, on the other hand, that the aesthetics of ivory fell out of favor with Charles VI and the subsequent Habsburg rulers due to the loss of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty at the beginning of the eighteenth century, which subsequently upended their ivory importation and obtainment methods. While the Habsburg eventually established their own short-lived trading Company – the Ostend Company – the loss of Spain and the ports of the Spanish Netherlands surely effected the Austrian dynasty's love of and utilization of ivory. Whatever the case, the seventeenth century saw the Habsburg emerge as masters of ivory production.

As Haag noted, "From the creative interplay between the claim of the imperial client and the mature potential of the artist, ivory works have emerged, whose delicacy of expression corresponds to the subtlety of the composition and culminates in the

¹²⁶ While the ivory monuments were considered inalienable heirlooms, they did not stay in the Schatzkammer. In 1871 to 1872, the Steidl ivories moved from the Schatzkammer to the Lower Belvedere, where the dynasty planned to build Austrian National Gallery. Although the subsequent exhibition history of the ivory equestrian monuments becomes fairly obscured after this, the monuments eventually ended up in the imperial Kunstkammer and then eventually the Kunsthistorisches Museum, before they were reinstalled in the newly revived Kunstkammer at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in 2013.

refinement of virtuosic carving.”¹²⁷ While this is most certainly the case, ivory had a much deeper connection to the Habsburg Emperors than virtuosity. As I detailed throughout the beginning of this chapter, ivory represented a number of early modern themes within the setting of a collection: *naturalia*; *artificilia*; the sagacious and princely elephant; and finally, the art of princely turning. As the Habsburg Emperors, particularly Leopold I, learned the art of turning in their early education, ivory was a familiar material. Each emperor understood ivory’s material qualities, carving and turning techniques, and especially, its raw form. Through turning, the imperial heirs developed a connective history that molded ivory into an appropriate representative vehicle for imperial portraiture. As the Emperor turned the ivory on the lathe, he subtracted the material’s natural qualities to produce artificial designs and shine, thus insinuating his role as the lord of his realm. Furthermore, the turned manipulation of ivory is a performative conquering act; the emperor tames the elephant’s synecdochal material into art. He has dominated the one of the world’s largest known mammals for his own purpose, turning its remnants into pleasurable cabinet works. Through this subjugation, the Habsburg Emperor illustrates his fierceness, his artistic and mechanical deftness, and his princely virtues through the turn of the lathe. The Habsburg Emperor’s connection to ivory through *ars tornandi* (“the art of turning”) thus presupposes ivory’s utilization in imperial portraiture. The creation of imperial propagandistic portraiture with highly symbolized monarchical ivory produced deeply connotative illustrations of Habsburg power. Ivory was not only an appropriate sculptural material for the representation of Habsburg rulers, but it was most expressive epidermal metaphor for Habsburg imperial

¹²⁷ Haag, “Von Helfenbain Geschnitzte Bildein,” 143-149. My own translation.

rule. As a material signifier of divine and imperial skin, ivory became the personal material tool to represent the emperor's personalized imperial skin. Thus, ivory was as fundamental to the Habsburg's visual and material self-aggrandizement as was their own skin.

The Monarch and the Elephant: Ivory Political Portraits of Oldenburg Rulers (1699-1766)

As detailed above, the use of ivory in the court systems of early modern Europe was prevalent as a vehicle of imperial and monarchical propaganda and Denmark-Norway was no exception. This small Scandinavian nation utilized ivory regularly and strategically throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to illustrate political prowess, and yet, such objects often left out of the annals of ivory art historical scholarship.¹²⁸ This subsection seeks to remedy this exclusion and place Denmark-Norway as a central player of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century phenomenon of ivory political portraiture. While ivory was ubiquitous in mid-seventeenth-century Denmark-Norway, this section looks towards its use in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a material beneficiary and eventual successor of the earlier Central European ivory portraits of the seventeenth century. Rather than focusing on a narrow time frame, like in my discussion on the Habsburg political portraits, I concentrate on ivory monuments created during several different monarchical reigns to

¹²⁸ In 2018, Senior Curator of the Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen, Jørgen Hein assembled a catalog of over seven hundred ivory sculptures from the Rosenborg collection. While this is not a complete compendium of the collection, it is truly the first in depth look at the breadth and width of the imperial Oldenburg collection of ivory. Jørgen Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle: Catalog of Carved and Turned Ivories and Narwhal Tusks in the Royal Danish Collection, 1600-1875* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2018).

explore the continuation and materialization of political ivories through multiple kings under the same dynasty. The following section looks towards the reign of three Danish-Norwegian monarchs, ranging from 1699-1766, and how these rulers utilized ivory as a monarchical material and as a symbol of princely power.¹²⁹

As such, this subsection argues for an amalgamated material reading of the various ivory portraits through several integral avenues of Danish-Norwegian monarchical culture that directly correlated to the production of ivory political portraits. Through monarchical education in turning, like the Habsburgs, the Oldenburg dynasty had a deep material knowledge of ivory that provided a partial reasoning for its ubiquitous usage in early modern Denmark-Norway. The other imperative motive for the continued production of ivory political portraits was development of Denmark-Norway's highest chivalric order, the Order of the Elephant. Codified in the middle of the seventeenth century, the Order of the Elephant was the pride of Kingdom, thus triggering a visual explosion of the elephant into the Danish-Norwegian collections. Furthermore, as I posit, the use of ivory belies this newly formed and introduced Order that invigorated and promulgated the Order – and the animal's – importance to the crown. Through an illustration of the history of Order and its visual and material culture, I argue that the Oldenburg's utilized ivory for their portraits as not only a material nod to the national Order but also as a symbol of their monarchical power in Scandinavia. Conflating ivory, princely turning, and the elephant together, I illustrate how one material could encapsulate the ideologies of an absolutist monarchy.

¹²⁹ The objects chosen are from the current collection at the Rosenborg Castle and represent objects from the personal collections of the monarchs from the *Kunst-* and Treasure Cabinets.

The Danish-Norwegian use of ivory in political contexts dates to the seventeenth century and the Oldenburg dynasty commissioned a number of well-known ivory carvers and turners to create small-scale busts and medallions of the royal family. Traveling court artists, like Joachim Henne (1630-1707) and Jean Cavalier (1681-1740), created spectacular ivory portrait series of the rulers that abound throughout the royal residences to decorate the walls and windowsills (Figures 2.19-2.20). And yet, while not a portrait, one particular ivory object stands out amongst the rest as the most evocative representation of the Danish-Norwegian monarchy: the official royal throne, the *Anointment Chair of Absolutism*, dated from 1662-71 (Figure 2.21).

As the official coronation chair of the Oldenburg monarchy, the *Anointment Chair* regally sits at the end of a grand hall on the top floor of Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen. Surrounded with rich tapestries, sumptuous velvets, and opulently ornamented walls and ceilings, the *Anointing Chair* strikes an impressive and magnificent sight. The twisted and spiralized brilliant white ivory juxtaposes the gleaming gold ornamentation placed strategically around the throne that offers a majestic sight of Absolutist Oldenburg power. King Frederik III initiated the construction of the chair, which was finished after his death.¹³⁰ King Christian V was the first Danish-Norwegian monarch to utilize the throne for monarchical ceremonies; on 7 June 1671, Christian V was coronated king on the *Anointing Chair* at Frederiksborg Castle Chapel.¹³¹

Although the whiteness of the ivory supposes an elephant demarcation, the throne is not made of elephant ivory, but rather of narwhal tusk, the territorial speciality of Denmark-Norway. From the onset of the object's and the material's biography, the use

¹³⁰ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg*, 66.

¹³¹ Hein, 66.

of narwhal was connected with the mythical unicorn, a common mythology dating to the Middle Ages, as previously discussed with the Austrian *Ainkhürn*. With the mythical unicorn's connection to Christ, a further biblical narrative became attached to the Danish-Norwegian monarchical throne; as Hein noted, the model for the "ensemble of chairs and lions was the Old Testament description of King Solomon's throne in 1 Kings."¹³² The famed throne of the ancient biblical king, discussed in the previous chapter, was a particularly potent visualization of monarchical might in Denmark-Norway. Housed within the vast Danish-Norwegian collections, as Hein states, was Peter Paul Rubens's *The Judgment of Solomon*, which became instrumental in the design conception of the chair (see Figure 1.31). In this painting, the legendary story of the Judgment of Solomon dramatically plays out across the canvas. Solomon sits calmly on his gold throne with the golden lion ornamentation, just as it was described in the Bible. Rubens's imaginative representation of Solomon was reutilized throughout various early modern media, including ivory – such as Georg Pfründt's *Judgement of Solomon* relief in the Habsburg *Kunstkammer*, discussed in the previous chapter. The allusion of the penultimate biblical king with the newly formed absolutist Oldenburg monarchy created a highly symbolic vehicle of monarchical materiality, and of narwhal ivory's further political significance to the Danish royal crown.

The narwhal ivory presented a clearly distinguishable material presence, which alerted the viewer to the inclusion of an unusual material. The attributed artist, Bendix I Grodtschilling (1620-1690), utilized long, spindled pieces of the tusk along the back of the chair that acted as columns to buttress the architectural attic punctuated with golden

¹³² Hein, 66.

mythological figures. The use of the tusk as columnar support was replicated along the back of throne's seat to bolster the narwhal arch, arms, and seat. The twisted, fluted nature of the raw tusk as well as the heavy veining and tan/yellowish hue of the material immediately distinguishes the material as narwhal, rather than elephant. The natural curvature of the narwhal ivory supports also recall the twisted Solomonic columns presented in numerous depictions of the famed biblical king – like Pfründt and Ruben's portrayals – and the illustrious architecture of Christ's ancestor. The use of ivory – whether it be narwhal or elephant – for the monarchical *Anointment Chair of Absolutism* provides a solid testament to the role the ivory tusk played within the Oldenburg dynasty. While narwhal was a territorial commodity of the Danish-Norwegian crown, its rarity promoted selective and elite use for only the most special of objects. Thus, the very throne utilized to anoint the new King of the Danish-Norwegian lands was made from the bounty of those patrimonial territories the absolutist monarch possessed. While this chapter focuses exclusively on the Danish-Norwegian use of elephant ivory, there was most assuredly a reciprocal relationship between the ivory of the narwhal and of the elephant in the Scandinavian country, one that will be further detailed in the subsequent chapter of this dissertation. But the designation of narwhal ivory as the 'territorial speciality', or in other words, the material of the monarchy, presupposes its usage for the official seat of the monarch. And, as I will show later in this section, the use of elephant ivory and its connection to Denmark-Norway's highest chivalric order, the Order of the Elephant, presupposes its usage for representations of Oldenburg monarchs.

Magnus Berg, Apotheosis of Frederik IV, 1728

The first Oldenburg ivory monument I will discuss is Danish-Norwegian court artist Magnus Berg's (1666-1730) substantial allegorical relief panel of King Frederik IV (Figure 2.22). Assembled from three pieces of stunningly white ivory on oak board, Berg created a masterfully frenetic apotheosis scene of the deceased Frederik IV some thirty years after his death. In the relief, Frederik IV is splendidly placed in the center of the composition directly facing the viewer, with a swarth of figures and materials surrounding him. The monarch's centralized and resolute stance and his calm and kingly demeanor purport him as the focal point in a cacophony of figures. Berg's dexterity as a premier Danish-Norwegian ivory artisan is displayed through the exquisite high-relief carving with minute detailing. Hein has cataloged Berg's impressive iconographic schema Berg created and illustrates the artist's utilization of allegorical figures to present Oldenburg Absolutist power.¹³³

In the upper left corner of the composition, a winged putto holds aloft a table teeming with the crowned jewels of the Danish-Norwegian monarchy. Another flying putto directly atop Frederik IV's head holds a laurel crown and the palm of peace, an ancient illustration of monarchical might. Winged Fame, on the upper right, pens a message to the king: "*tot tantisque nites rex augustissime gestis | Ut caelare eadem marmore non valeam* (You excel, most august king, in such and so many great deeds that I am unable to carve them all in marble)." Beneath the king lies a globe carved with known Danish-Norwegian territories with a cornucopia of fruits and flowers cascading around it. Berg depicts the two allegorical figures of Justice and Love, whose backs are to

¹³³ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle*, 368. All iconographic information stems from this source.

the king on the right and left lower corners, respectively; directly above Love are depictions of Minerva with Pax behind her. The goddess of wisdom and war looks directly towards the deceased King and points towards the cross on the shield of royal arms she holds. Hein attributes this iconographic detail to the victory in the Great Northern War and the annexation of the Duchy of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp into Denmark-Norway's territorial holdings.¹³⁴ Immediately behind the king in lower relief is the god of War, Mars, with the Fury Discordia hovering over his helmeted head, ready to ignite his fury. The Muse of History, Clio, appears opposite of Mars and Discordia in low relief. Hein states, "As Åshild Paulsen has concluded, the relief expresses Berg's values: war and discord and the hesitant judgment of history are relegated to the background, while justice and love are emphasized as positive opposing forces in the foreground."¹³⁵ The relief came into the possession of the Oldenburgs in 1739 but was originally offered to Christian VI in 1731.¹³⁶ According to Prehn from the *Danske Magazin* in 1745, the relief was made from an "almost flawless tusk weighing almost eighty-five pounds, which Berg was given by Frederik IV in 1725-26."¹³⁷

The application of the monarchically given ivory to create a monarchically driven object for the performative collection spaces of the monarchy allowed for the first large-scale Danish-Norwegian depiction of kingly might in the monarchy's extensive use of ivory. Furthermore, the conglomeration of potent monarchical imagery and symbolism

¹³⁴ Hein, 368.

¹³⁵ Hein, 368.

¹³⁶ Hein, 368.

¹³⁷ Hein, 368. This source is recorded in by Hein, although no first name is given for the author.

conflated with ivory's monarchical material fashioned an imperative object for the depiction of Danish-Norwegian power as well as the royal flesh of the King.

Simon Troger, Equestrian Statuette of Frederik IV, 1733

In recognition of antique and medieval ruler portraits, the Oldenburg dynasty hired Munich ivory artisan, Simon Troger (1693-1768), to create a stunning wood-and-ivory equestrian portrait of Frederik IV (Figure 2.23). A sculptor of the early eighteenth century, Troger was an exceptional ivory carving artist of the Holy Roman Empire. With patrons like Maximilian III, Elector of Bavaria (1727-1777), Troger's work spread through the court systems of eighteenth-century Germany. Most known for his so-called *Kombinationsgruppe* or "Troger figures", the artist worked primarily in various woods and ivory in his Munich workshop, and sparked many followers down the path of such material combinations.

Frederik IV's statuette comprises a number of ivory pieces, which are strategically hidden by wooden elements, a common trait in Troger's ivory and wood construction techniques. For example, the horse was created from nine separate pieces of ivory – the head, the neck and front of the body, the back of the body, the tail, and the four legs. Frederik IV's portrait sculpture was also constructed from nine pieces of ivory – the head and body, arms and legs, the two sashes on the king's thigh, and the hilt and ferrule on the sword.¹³⁸ Frederik IV's portrait verisimilitude is somewhat idealized and standardized, much like Troger's other figures but the inclusion of the glass eyes lends an air of supposed naturalism to the statuette. Although not an exact likeness of the deceased King, the designation of the rider as Frederik IV comes from the Order of the

¹³⁸ Hein, 284.

Elephant necklace around his neck. As Hein notes, the badge for the Order lacks the tower, cross, and Moor, which were prescribed elements of the Statutes of the Order, but were often excluded on monarchical badges, thus eliminating a lesser noble characterization.¹³⁹

Shown in a conventional iconographic pose, the rider King looks up and away from the viewer, in a similar manner to Emperor Leopold I and King Joseph I from the Steinl monuments. But unlike the Habsburg statuettes, the horse jaunts rather than dramatically rears. Hein has argued that the typological model for Troger was perhaps François Girardon's (1628-1715) equestrian statue of Louis XIV, placed in the *Place Vendome* in 1694 that circulated through late seventeenth-century Europe in a series of prints (Figure 2.24).¹⁴⁰ Another possible reference comes from Esaias Phillip Steudtner's (1691-1760) 1720 equestrian monument of Duke August Wilhlem, Brunswick-Lüneburg, which is feasibly the closest model to the Troger monument due the close proximity and interconnectedness of the Duchy to Denmark-Norway as an intriguing marker of potential reference (Figure 2.25). In both ivory sculptures, the horse's tail, with separated tendrils of finely carved hair, swings carefully behind the muscled legs. Similarly, both the Frederik IV and the Duke are illustrated with raised arms holding some type of royal scepter. And in accordance with their elevated societal position, both figures are dressed in antique-style military garb, potentially a reference to Girardon's Louis XIV's similar style of dress. While the presented comparanda possibly provided iconographic and/or positional influence for Frederik IV's equestrian statue, it was Troger's combination of dark-stained wood and ivory that propelled the object to a monarchical materiality. The

¹³⁹ Hein, 284.

¹⁴⁰ Hein, 284.

addition of the dark wooden saddle and bridle provides a stark contrast against the warm tone of the ivory to makes a startling materialization of Oldenburg power for the viewer.

Hein notes that due to the nature of the Order of the Elephant badge carving as an attached element with the sculpture rather than a singularized addition, this statuette must have been a commission from the Danish-Norwegian court several years after the death of Frederik IV.¹⁴¹ In 1743, the statuette is recorded in appearance in the Audience Chamber of Christian VI at Frederiksborg, but with a different base entirely, one that probably held the monogram of Frederik IV. As Hein reveals, the base was changed when the statuette was moved to Frederik V's Cabinet at Christiansborg Castle in 1747.¹⁴²

As the collection's inventory records indicate, the statuette was a statement object that became an integral element in the various Danish-Norwegian monarchical cabinets. As one of the largest ivory political monuments in the Oldenburg's collection, Troger's equestrian monument not only illustrates the Danish-Norwegian monarchy's knowledge of the historical equestrian ruler portrait and its potent iconography but also the elemental monarchical materiality of such illustrations in ivory. Although it is not known if the Danish-Norwegian courts were directly aware of Steidl's Habsburg monuments, the inherent need to compare is almost undeniable. The two styles are much different in composition and performativity, as Steidl's statuettes incorporate baroque theatricality and iconography verses Troger's rococo preciousness. As Hein states, the Troger monuments "echo" the Austrian statuettes.¹⁴³ It is not improbable that the Oldenburg

¹⁴¹ Hein, 284. The statuette is mentioned in an invoice along with the purchase of three other Troger figures, bought from Johann Nicolaus Gempe for a total price of 1000 *rigsdaler*.

¹⁴² Hein, 284.

¹⁴³ Hein, 284.

dynasty was aware of the Steinl monuments, as the Habsburgs and Denmark-Norway were allies with a close diplomatic relationship, with several unsuccessful marriage alliances discussed throughout the period. And yet, while the insinuation of Habsburg influence is certainly apparent in the material utilization of both monuments, Troger's juxtapositional material choices of wood and ivory categorize Frederik IV's equestrian as singular to ivory monarchical portraits in the early modern princely collection.

Lorenz Spengler, Centrepiece with turned medallion of Frederik V and Juliane Marie with Statuettes of Prudentia and Constantia, 1755

In an entirely different approach to ivory political monuments, the third object this section takes into consideration is Danish-Norwegian court turner Lorenz Spengler's ivory centerpiece for King Frederik V (1723-1766) and his wife, Juliane Marie (1729-1796) (Figure 2.26). This small-scale object offers not only an excellent example of Spengler's magnificent turning workshop at Christiansborg Castle but also the turner's favored position among the Oldenburgs. Born in Germany, Spengler traveled throughout Europe as a journeyman and learned the art of turning and sculptural practices before moving to Copenhagen in 1743.¹⁴⁴ On 1 February 1745, Spengler was appointed the Royal Court Turner with an annual salary of 400 *rigsdaler*, and with this position within the royal court, he became the official turning instructor for the royal children.¹⁴⁵ His status as teacher and artist promptly recalled the ivory turner's of the seventeenth century and their evaluation throughout the princely courts as well as the prince's education interest in the art of turning. Thus, each of Spengler's ivory works materially promulgates

¹⁴⁴ Hein, 127.

¹⁴⁵ Hein, 127.

the Danish-Norwegian monarch's own expertise in the material used to politically depict them.

The centerpiece is three-piece ivory construction with an oval plinth in the center and two smaller, with flanking circular plinths. A Latin legend with a ribbed edge surrounds and highlights the focal point, a turned medallion placed atop the central plinth with the profiles of King Frederik V and Queen Juliane Marie. The legend states, "FRID. V. ET. IVL. MAR. REX. ET. REG. D(aniae). N.(orvegiae). V(andalorum) G(ortorum)," which confirms the medallion sitter's as monarchical. To further symbolize the sitter's elite political position, Spengler depicts Frederik V with a Roman-style cuirass ornamented with a lion mask, an ermine stole, and the necklace of the Order of the Elephant.¹⁴⁶ Topping the composition, Spengler intricately ornaments the surrounding edges of the medallion with floral accoutrements and a crown, further highlighting the royal couple below. Bracketing and flanking the centralized portrait medallion, Spengler illustrates the personifications of Prudence and Constance as two young boys – one with a serpent and mirror and the other with a column – which represented Frederik V's monarchical motto, *Prudentia et Constantia*.¹⁴⁷ While Spengler most likely completed the impressive turning work of the centerpiece, J.E. Bauert – an ivory carver within Spengler's Copenhagen studio – fashioned the two boys.

In recognition of the long history of and his royal commission as the Oldenburg royal turner, Spengler lathed several turned plinths that indicated his mechanical dexterity in the manipulation of ivory. Under each monarchical personification and the central

¹⁴⁶ Hein, 176.

¹⁴⁷ Hein, 176.

medallion, the royal turner created layered ornamental turned elements. The two plinths directly under the small personifications are fairly simple in their design, with small grooves turned into the ivory tusk; the undulations of the grooved elements are replicated in the vertical over- and underlays of ivory stacks as well. The central pedestal supporting the turned medallion illustrates a common turning technique in Denmark-Norway – the diagonal basket weave – that appeared on many monarchical objects in the Oldenburg collections. The delicate zig-zagged patterning of the turned plinth provided an exceptional geometric aspect to the organic forms throughout the monument. At the base, Spengler incised his name, indicating not only his allegiance to the crown and his work as the official royal turner and educator, but also his role in the depiction and celebration of the monarchy.

Spengler's presentation of the object to the royal couple further enhanced the monarchical symbolism and purpose of the centerpiece; the turner included a tribute:

Monarch! die eifersüchtige Menge/ Der Kuenstler, hat nie mehr gegluet/
 Sich niemals feuriger bemueht/ Als jetzt, mit emsigem Gedraenge/ Zur
 Schulgigkeit fuer Deine Gunst/ Dies in den Werken ihrer Kunst./ In
 wolgerathnen Meisterstucken, /Der allerspaetsten Zeit zu schicken. | Wie!
 dringt man nicht zu Deinem Ruhme/ In Gold und Silber, Stahl und Stein./
 Dich, Dein Gemahl und Thaten ein? | Wie! denkt man auch noch an
 Trajanen/ Fuer Friedrichen und Julianen? | O! dass die Drehkunst es
 vermoechte!/ Und fuer so manchen Gnaden Strahl/ Dir und dem
 wurdigsten Gemahl/ Der Gnade wurdige Opfer braechte!/ Die kan nicht,
 dennoch ist sie kuehn/ (Hier ist die Probe vom Bemuehn)/ Die Instrumente
 so zu zwingen/ Dein Bild auf Elfenbein zu bringen. | Schon dringt das
 Rauchwerk fromer Bitten/ Aus Staedten, Flecken, Doerfern, Huetten/
 Mein Hertz und jedes fleht fuer Dich,/ Gepriesner Fuenfter Friedrich! |
 Herr! setze Ihn zum Segens Ziel,/ Herr! mache Seiner Jahre viel!/ Heil!
 Friedrichen und Julianen,/Fleh ich und all Untertanen.¹⁴⁸

[Monarch! the jealous crowd/The artist has never worked/Never fiery
 attempts/As now, with a busy crowd/To playfulness For your favor/This in

¹⁴⁸ Hein, 176. My translation.

the works of her art,/In Volga-inspired masterpieces,/The very latest time to send. | As! one does not penetrate to your glory/In gold and silver, steel and stone,/You, your husband and deeds? | As! one thinks also of Trajan/ For Frederik and Julianne? | O! that the art of turning loves it!/And for many graces beam | You and the most precious consort/Graceful sacrifices were made for mercy!/She can not, yet she is bold/ (Here's the sample of the effort)/To force the instruments like that/To bring your picture on ivory. | Already the smokescreen penetrates from devout requests/From cities, spots, villages, huts/ My heart and every one is pleading for you,/ Pronounced Frederik V! | Sir! set him to the blessing goal,/Sir! Make a lot of His years!/ Salvation! Frederik and Julianne,/I implore and all subjects.]

Through the dedicatory poem attached to the centerpiece, Spengler clearly establishes ivory's role in monarchical propaganda and aggrandizement. Each and every ivory turned element promoted the Oldenburg absolutist ideology: the personifications of Frederik V's monarchical motto; the allusions to antique rulership with the Roman costuming; the Latin legend noting Frederik V and Julianne Marie's political position; and the necklace of the Order of the Elephant. And, as this subsection will later address, the ivory's referential materiality of ideal rulership as well as the highest levels of Danish-Norwegian civility created a work illustrative of Denmark-Norway's rising socio-political position in early modern Europe. As the next chapter illustrates, the monarchy's growing colonial presence and their control of the Baltic Sea waterways provided a need for monarchical aggrandizement; Spengler's centerpiece took up this mantle.

Furthermore, Spengler continues the amplification of monarchical might through ivory objects with a pendant piece for the centerpiece. Made in tribute to the King, the centerpiece continues the similar theme of the object above; Spengler recreated the kingly motto's personifications (although now in mirrored positions), the zig-zag diagonal basket weave turning technique, and the large, centralized turned ivory medallion. Unlike the previous object, which included the portrait of Queen Julianne Marie in the

background, this medallion solely depicts Frederik V (Figure 2.27). In both works, the gilt-wooden base creates an intriguing material interplay; the shining gold of the base acts as a grounding element to propel and heighten the subtle shine of the ivory. Together, Spengler's pendant monarchical monuments aid in the illustration of ivory as the kingly power, might, and skin.

Spengler continued this style of monarchical monument with several other carved and turned objects representing Denmark-Norway and the monarchy. In 1758, Spengler and Bauert fashioned *Denmark-Norway* and *Apollo with a portrait of Frederik V*, both of which utilize the ivory motifs discussed above (Figures 2.28-2.29). Each group is based on a zig-zag basket weave turned plinth with a dedicatory signature of the artist. The subtle undulations of the turned ivory ground the frenetic carved ivory scenes of the figural groups. In *Denmark-Norway*, Bauert surrounds the nation's personifications with allusions of government, like the laurel and palm trees behind the two female figures and the globe at the base of the group. Each personification holds a shield in one arm; Denmark's shield depicts three lions while Norway's depicts the axe of St. Olave, the patron saint of Norway. Denmark points to the trunk of the palm tree to guide the viewer to a shield with a turned portrait medallion of Frederik V, with his official monarchical monogram, "F5."

In *Apollo with a portrait of Frederik V*, Spengler's similarly designed base highlights Bauert's mythological and kingly grouping. Situated in front of a dying tree and large supporting rock group, Apollo holds an ornamental garland to elevate the turned portrait medallion of Frederik V punctuated with a large monarchical crown and a legend stating, "FRIEDERICUS V. R(EX). D(ANIAE). N(ORVEGIAE)

W(ENDALORUM). G(OTORUM).” The nude antique god stands in contrapposto with the thin toga snaked around his legs and torso. The god of war directly engages with the viewer through his piercing stare and invites the audience into the celebration of monarchical splendor. *Denmark-Norway* and *Apollo with a portrait of Frederik V* act in conjunction with the previously discussed pendant monuments to display material monarchical power and erudition in the royal collections.

But perhaps the most intriguing and revolutionary elements of Spengler’s designs was the application of red paint to the two monument’s bases. Not only did the paint allow for a greater understanding of the delicate detailing of the basket weave base, but the red color further enhanced the monarchical materiality of the composition. With ivory’s comprehension as white juxtaposed against the vibrant red, Spengler connotes the Danish-Norwegian flag – one of the oldest continually utilized flags in the known world – through the official colors of the Scandinavian nation. The conflation and combination of the material markers of kingly power and erudition, alongside a monarchically material manipulated with royally approved artistic techniques, fashioned objects that were inherently monarchical.

Lorenz Spengler, Triumphal Arch commemorating the centenary of Absolutism, 1760

The final work I look to in this section is the Spengler’s beautifully carved and turned triumphal arch dedicated to the anniversary of Absolutist rule in Denmark-Norway (Figure 2.30). Created in 1760, Spengler included a number of luxurious materials common to monarchical collections, including tortoiseshell, ebony, pear tree, mother-of-pearl, and amber.¹⁴⁹ As an avenue for continued royal favor, Spengler fashioned this

¹⁴⁹ Hein, 189.

particular tribute for the illustration of the continuation of Absolutist rule of the Danish-Norwegian monarchs, much like Steinl's exclamation of the continued Habsburg role as Holy Roman Emperor.

Standing at approximately twenty inches tall, the warm hue of the ivory starkly contrasts the dark ebony of the architectural backing. The turner created a single-bayed arch with an impressively proportioned attic. At the base of the monument, Spengler placed a small ivory bust of Frederik V, who holds not only the central position of the composition, but also the central position of the monarchical nation as the current Absolutist ruler. Personifications of Prudence and Constance flank Frederik V, similar to the Spengler's two pendant monuments discussed above.¹⁵⁰ Rather than creating Prudence and Constance as young boys, Spengler now illustrates the national allegories as adult women, although they still hold similar accoutrements and are posed almost identically to the previous grouping. Six turned ivory Ionic columns surround the personifications and portrait bust, each with gold bases and capitals that create perfectly spaced niches for Prudence and Constance. Spengler continues the ivory architectural ornamentation with an ivory semi-circular element meant to act as arch voussoirs with an ivory garland placed above it. At the center of the ivory and ebony turned balustrade separating the base from the attic, Spengler included a small garland-surrounded medallion of Frederik V's monogram, "F5", topped with a royal crown. At the top of the celebratory arch Spengler incorporated a crowned shield with the arms of Denmark, Norway, and the Kalmar Union with ribbon of the Order of the Elephant, laurel, and a cornucopia.¹⁵¹ Directly underneath the symbols of the monarchical Scandinavian nation

¹⁵⁰ Hein, 189.

¹⁵¹ Hein, 189.

are two turned medallions depicting King Frederik III, the founder of Danish-Norwegian Absolutism, on the right and a lion couchant on the left. As was integral to the depiction of the monarch on a turned medallion, Spengler included the legend, “FRIDERICVS. III. D. G. REX. DAN. NOR. V. G.”. On the right medallion, the personifications of Denmark-Norway crown the lion couchant – “a symbol of royal power” – which holds the “helm of the state” within its paws while Denmark-Norway carries a wreathed scepter beside the sword and orb of the monarchy.¹⁵² Spengler’s brilliant materialization and careful application of the ivory onto the ebony not only produces sharp contrast between the contradictory materials – white versus black – but this juxtaposition serves to highlight the ivory’s own material properties to stun and engage its audience past and present.

While the monarchical iconography intimates the earlier discussed centerpiece, Spengler called upon a new style to create this important monument. As Hein notes, “Compared with the centerpiece...which is just a few months older and done in a fully-flowering Rococo style, this triumphal arch illustrates Spengler’s quick acceptance of the formal language of Neoclassicism.”¹⁵³ With the articulation of classical language and a more reserved style of carving, Spengler’s utilization of neoclassical themes and the recollection of antique motifs illustrates the artist’s comprehension of contemporary European aesthetics as well as places the Scandinavian nation as part of a larger artistic tradition, signaling Denmark-Norway’s position with the geo-artistic politics of the middle eighteenth century. As a celebration of the century of Absolutist rule, Spengler’s

¹⁵² Hein, 189.

¹⁵³ Hein, 189.

use of ivory highlights the indicative materiality in the representation of the Oldenburg monarchy.

The Oldenburg's and Ivory: The Order of the Elephant and the Materiality of Kingship

Perhaps one of the most important elements yet to be discussed in regard to early modern Danish-Norwegian ivory sculpture, particularly political portraits, is the material's relationship to the Order of the Elephant. As Hein states in his recent catalog, "In the Danish-Norwegian context, it is tempting to ask whether perhaps the royals also took special pride in ivory because the Order of the Elephant, the highest distinction of the dynasty, had the animal as its symbol, just as narwhal tusk was one of the royal dynasty's few 'territorial' specialties, since narwhals were mainly caught in the king's waters to the north."¹⁵⁴ Hein is correct that it is a tempting symbolic avenue to explore, and I argue that this relationship most certainly was a driving force in the continued use of ivory in early modern Denmark-Norway.

The Order of the Elephant was established in the 1450s and revived again in 1581.¹⁵⁵ Originally consecrated as a Catholic confraternity in the mid-fifteenth century known as the Fellowship of the Mother of God, the group officially disbanded after the Protestant Reformation took root in the Scandinavian kingdom. Under King Frederik II, the group was reformed under its new name and purpose, the Chivalric Order of the Elephant. While the history of the why the elephant was chosen is not truly known, it is possible that it came from the confraternity's necklace, where the chain used to hold a

¹⁵⁴ Hein, 4. In my visit to the Rosenborg Castle and subsequent meeting with Dr. Hein, I broached this topic of ivory's relationship to the Order of the Elephant while standing in front of Spengler's pendant monuments. Dr. Hein agreed that there must be some type of material relationship between these two and that I should pursue such an avenue.

¹⁵⁵ Jørgen Hein, "An Ivory Chair for the Order of the Elephant: Addenda to the Oeuvre of Joachim Henne," in *Barocke Kunststückh: Sculpture Studies in Honour of Christian Theuerkauff*, ed. Regine Marth and Marjorie Trusted (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2011), 112.

medallion of the Virgin Mary and infant Christ appeared as alternating elephants and towers.¹⁵⁶ Reutilizing similar iconographic elements, the insignia of the Order consisted of an elephant carrying a tower, symbolizing Lutheranism's purity and strength.¹⁵⁷ By the seventeenth century, the Order became a prestigious distinction within Denmark-Norway and abroad. Under Frederik III, membership to the Order was granted to foreigners as well, with famed recipients like Saxon Elector Augustus the Strong.¹⁵⁸ On 1 December 1693, King Christian V codified the official rules of the Order with the "Statutes of the Order of the Elephant," which remained unchanged until 1958.¹⁵⁹ These newly-established statutes concretized the use of the elephant with a tower as its main badge, which was to be worn on a chain during the prescribed Order's day (January 1st and June 28th).¹⁶⁰ In almost every early modern Oldenburg portrait, in both ivory and other media, the ruler was depicted with the necklace of the Order of the Elephant. Just as the necklace of the Order of the Golden Fleece, the monarchs wore their chivalric designation with pride. As such an important element within the monarchical characteristics of the Oldenburgs, the use of ivory becomes even more symbolic and multivalent when created in conjunction with political portraiture. Was there a more potent message of Absolutist power than to create an image of the King from the material of their Order's animal? The desire to create portraits that hung in the monarchical collections in ivory further enhanced the Order's significance in the eyes of the viewer.

¹⁵⁶ "The History Behind the Order of the Elephant," The Danish Monarchy, accessed March 1, 2021, <https://www.kongehuset.dk/en/menu/news/the-history-behind-the-order-of-the-elephant>

¹⁵⁷ Hein, "An Ivory Chair for the Order of the Elephant," 112.

¹⁵⁸ Hein, 112. For more information about Augustus the Strong as a member of the Order of the Elephant and the utilization of the elephant in Saxon triumphal ephemeral culture and in Meissen porcelain, see Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, "On Elephants and Porcelain."

¹⁵⁹ Jørgen Pedersen, *Riddere af Elefantordenen, 1559-2009* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2009), 12.

¹⁶⁰ Pedersen, *Riddere af Elefantordenen, 1559-2009*, 12.

The elephant's importance was also enhanced through the association to Pliny the Elder that was discussed in the first section of this chapter.

As Carsten Bach-Nielsen noted "...Frederik II chose the elephant as his symbol, thereby giving birth to the concept of 'the Danish Elephant' which was to become the insignia of the Order of the Elephant in 1693."¹⁶¹ In the author's delve in emblematica within the early modern Danish-Norwegian state, Bach-Nielsen finds a number of intriguing instances of the use of the elephant.

A look at the inventory of royal Danish medals reveals the significance of the elephant as a symbol of the Danish Kings. The elephant is wise and strong enough to crush all enemies...Jan Schmelzing struck a medal in commemoration of the bombardment of Ratzeburg in 1693...The official medal shows the portrait of Christian V and on the reverse the bombardment with the inscription "Ferro et igni" ('With iron and fire'). Someone produced this medal with an alternative obverse showing an elephant greeting the sun *and* the moon. The inscription reads 'Colit utrumque' ('It worships both.'). This refers to the ancient fable by the Roman Aelianus who explained that the elephant, being a pious animal, worships the sun every morning with its trunk...A pious and wise man only worships the sun, not the moon as well, as the elephant on the Danish satirical medal suggests. (Figures 2.31-2.32)

Another medal of the Danish-Norwegian early modern era illustrates the surrender of Magnus Stenbock (1665-1717), a Swedish military field marshal and councilor to the Swedish monarchy. In 1713, the Danish-Norwegian military captured Stenbock during the battle at Tönning as a political prisoner against their greatest rival. In this medal, dated to sometime after 1713, a large barrel with a ram's head is placed in the foreground of the composition, allegorically representing the captured Swede (Figure 2.33). Surrounded with rocky landscapes, the barrel is inscribed with the Latin legend, "AD AN GUSTIAS REDACTUS." The most intriguing and telling inclusion on the medal is the

¹⁶¹ Carsten Bach-Nielsen, "Emblematica in Denmark," in *The Emblem in Scandinavia and the Baltic*, ed. Simon McKeown and Mara R. Wade (Glasgow: Glasgow Emblem Studies, 2006), 33.

personification of Denmark-Norway as an elephant holding a weapon. Here, the elephant stands strong and mighty with its large muscled tusk tightly gripping the weapon as it fires. The bulbous body of the elephant along with the sharp protrusion of the ivory tusks envisions a ferocious beast protecting its land, as Pliny described. In a uniquely referential allegorical representation, the elephant as Denmark-Norway and the construction of the land mammal's symbolic relationship to the monarchy was visualized and materialized. In another twist to the Danish-Norwegian military tale, the jailed Stenbock – a skilled artist in his own right – produced several turned and carved ivory objects for the Danish-Norwegian monarchy, which are still on display today at Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen (Figure 2.34). In fact, they are presented within a monarchical setting, situated next Peter the Great of Russia's diplomatic ivory turned gifts (Figure 2.35). Thus, the seemingly tangential interrelationship between the ivory, the elephant, and the monarch was concretized in the visual and material culture of early modern Denmark-Norway.

Like the Habsburg portraits, representations of the Oldenburg monarchs in ivory created a tangible link between the king's very skin and the methods of presentation. The ivory, through its known epidermal materiality, displayed the monarchs as unblemished paragons of monarchical might and power. In reference to and in direct juxtaposition to the rough-hewn grayed skin of the elephant, the divinely inspired and monarchically driven ivory conflated the natural world with the monarchy's power over it. Thus, the ivory skin of the monarch projected the integral elements of the Oldenburg dynasty through its material connection to princely turning and the Order of the Elephant, both potent symbols of Denmark-Norway.

The extensive use of ivory in the creation of Oldenburg portrait thus promoted the idea of the elephant as a symbol of the absolutist state. With the animal's ancient princely virtues, this association was deeply rooted into the material psyche of the monarchy. The elephant, and its ivory, was not a mere randomized animal symbol on a coat-of-arms, but rather a personal and elemental material signifier of their chivalrous monarchical duty. And through the royal children's early education in ivory turning, the monarch gained even deeper knowledge and developed an intimate connection with the material. As can be seen from the selection of monuments in this section, the use of ivory was prominent throughout multiple reigns. While the object chosen for this section offer only a brief look at the nature of political ivories from the Oldenburg monarchy, they illustrate not only the commonality of the material in the Danish courts but also its further importance.

Conclusion

As Marcia Pointon articulated, "they [portraits] open onto a politics of representation in which the historical human subject is not a separate entity from the portrait depiction of him or her, but part of a process through which knowledge is claimed and the social and physical environment is shaped...At its most abstract, portrait is a question of the relationship between the self as art and the self in art."¹⁶² The seemingly narrow distinction between "as art" and "in art" is where I began to question the monarch's role in the his own ivory monarchical depiction. What was the relationship between the material and the ruler in the Habsburg Empire and the Danish-

¹⁶² Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 1.

Norwegian Kingdom that prompted the varied and multitudinous ivory political representations? And what specific material significance did ivory hold for the Habsburg and Oldenburg rulers? Furthermore, I began to question how the placement of these portraits in various monarchical collection spaces also enlivened the already potent materiality of ivory.

Throughout this chapter, I argued that ivory's materiality played a significant role in the production of Austrian and Danish-Norwegian political portraits. I began my discussion with a consolidated summary of ivory's connection to *naturalia* and *artificilia* as a reference point to further build upon. As both a natural product that could be fashioned into an artificial work of art, ivory embodied the two theoretical thematic paradigms of the early modern object in the *Kunstammer*. Ivory's early modern status as natural and artificial also led to the material's origination – the elephant. Like the narwhal's connection to the mythic unicorn, knowledge of the elephant deepened ivory's early modern understandings to encapsulate princely virtues. Through Pliny the Elder and other early modern authors, I illustrated the ways in which the elephant exhibited – through second-hand narratives – princely virtues as a fundamental part of the animal's nature and affect. Thus, the natural and the artificial are interlaced with the monarchical. But the natural state of the elephant and its relationship to the monarch appears intangible; it was known throughout early modern Europe, but not necessarily inherent to the ruler. This known relationship, however, was materialized with the introduction of ivory turning on the lathe into early princely education. Through the mechanical arts, the prince gained invaluable material knowledge of ivory that, as I argue, eventually led to the utilization of ivory in the representations of self.

To illustrate such an assertion, I first began with the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century ivory political monuments in Habsburg Austria, specifically focusing on Matthias Steinl's tripartite ivory equestrian monuments housed in the Imperial *Schatzkammer*. Reutilizing my argument from Chapter 1 of ivory as divine and imperial skin as well as ivory's relationship in the Habsburg collections, I postulated the ways in which Steinl's monuments presented the Emperors as the ultimate ruler of his microcosm and his *representatio*. I then turned my attention to Denmark-Norway and the Oldenburg dynasty. Through ivory's intimate connection with the elephant, I enumerated the material's and the animal's relationship to Denmark-Norway's highest Chivalric Order, the Order of the Elephant, and illustrated that the interconnected notions of the elephant as the symbol of Denmark-Norway and the presentation of self in ivory served to establish a strong link between highest order in the kingdom and the most-desired material. Together, Habsburg Austria and Oldenburg Denmark-Norway utilized ivory as a self-referential and material signifier of their monarchical selves. The material now gained a personal and individualized relationship to the monarch through their dexterity in turning, which, as I argue, became directly apparent in the growing grandiosity of ivory political portraits. Ivory thus became the material tool rulers used to craft and present their sculpted image in the vast encyclopedic collections of early modern Europe.

Chapter 3

The Metonymic Colonial Materiality of Ivory Ships in Early Modern Denmark and Saxony

“..The ships coming into port here, bringing all the produce of the Indies and everything rare in Europe...”¹

--René Descartes, *Correspondence*, 15 May 1631

On a dark and stormy night in early December 1768, the Danish slave ship, *The Fredensborg*, ran aground off the coast of Målen, east of Tromøy, Norway. The sea-weathered slave frigate and the travel-weary crew, under the command of Captain Pieter Godbers and Ludevig Ferdinand Rømer, were no match for the rocky and dangerous coastline. The *Fredensborg* was on the last leg of the famed triangular route to deliver colonial commodities – like cotton, sugar, and mahogany – to Copenhagen. The slave ship set sail from Copenhagen on 24 June 1767 to the Danish-Norwegian Fort Christiansborg on the Gold Coast of Africa.² Once anchored off the coast of the stronghold, the *Fredensborg* crew refitted its cargo hold to contain two of the most important African colonial products: enslaved peoples and ivory tusks. Commenting upon the ivory haul on 18 April 1767, the Captain wrote that, “a canoe arrived with a case marked ‘D.G.C. No.2,’ containing 42 elephant tusks and 43 ‘crevells’, or small elephant and hippopotamus tusks...The canoe departed for the fort immediately, taking the Copper and some rope for tying slaves together...”³ Once the ivory and enslaved Africans were boarded into the small and cramped hull of the slave frigate, the

¹ Quoted in Claudia Swan, “Exotica on the Move: Birds of Paradise in Early Modern Holland,” *Art History* 38, no.4 (September 2015): 623. From Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds. *Oeuvres de Descartes*, Paris, 1897, 11 vols, vol. 4 *Correspondence*, nr. 33, 202-204, 15 May 1631.

² Leif Svalesen, *The Slave Ship Fredensborg*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 46. All information regarding the *Fredensborg* emanates from this course, unless otherwise indicated.

³ Svalesen, *The Slave Ship Fredensborg*, 46.

Fredensborg set sail for the Danish-Norwegian colony of St. Croix, anchoring off the coast on 9 July 1767. The enslaved Africans were sold to local plantation owners and the *Fredensborg* was once again refitted; the slave quarters were cleaned and reorganized to hold sugar, cotton, and tropical woods and placed next to the ivory tusks. The Captain noted on 17 August that the ship had “taken on 197 barrels of sugar, a considerable amount of mahogany and dyewood and 4 bales of cotton.”⁴ With the hull full of raw colonial products, the *Fredensborg* raised its anchor and set sail for Copenhagen. Yet, it never returned to its home port; the ship ran aground and much of colonial cargo the *Fredensborg* carried was lost to the frigid waters of the North Sea.⁵ The crew members did, however, managed to salvage several important items from the wreck: seventeen ivory tusks bought from the Danish-Norwegian colonies on Africa’s Gold Coast.

This chapter looks at the material connection between ivory, African colonialism, and slavery through the lens of monumental ivory ships in the *Kunstskammern* collections of Saxony and Denmark-Norway. As such, I question how a singular material could present the global phenomenon of colonial expansion through its very surface. Dresden, the capital city of the Electorate of Saxony, and Copenhagen, the capital of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, offer two intriguing poles of coloniality. On one side, the Electors of Saxony – and Germany more generally – created a “colonial fantasy”, as Suzanne Zantop argued, where although the Central European states had no tangible colonial

⁴ Svalesen, 46.

⁵ In all, according to Sila Tripathi and Ian Godfrey, the *Fredensborg* carried “1768 slaves, 927 kgs of elephant tusks, hippopotamus teeth, cinnamon, tobacco, and cotton.” Sila Tripathi and Ian Godfrey, “Studies on Elephant Tusks and hippopotamus teeth collection from the early 17th century Portuguese shipwreck off Goa, west coast of India: Evidence of maritime trade between Goa, Portugal, and African Countries,” *Current Science* 92, no. 3 (Feb. 2007): 338.

territories, Germans imagined themselves as benevolent overlords of uncivilized and colonial populations. Since the sixteenth century, images of “other” peoples and lands permeated Germany in the sixteenth century through ethnographic prints, like Hans Burgkmair’s (1473-1531) series of engravings illustrating Balthasar Springer’s (late 1400s-1509/1511) 1505-1506 travel narrative of his time in India (Figure 3.1). While some German principalities and German merchant families attempted to ingratiate themselves into the colonial landscape, almost all of the early sixteenth- and seventeenth-century overseas colonizations failed. Germans, and Saxons in particular, were left with only their imagination and the idealized colonial vision of an expanded world without the tangible reality of overseas territories.

The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, on the other hand, had a small but world-wide empire, with territories in India, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Arctic Circle. From the mid-seventeenth century until the early nineteenth century, Denmark-Norway maintained numerous overseas ports that not only acted as a colonial presence in an expanding European world, but also as trade ports for the importation of exotic goods. Unlike their German neighbors, Denmark-Norway experienced first-hand knowledge of a colonial empire and its peoples. Beyond the small Nordic country’s global expansion, Denmark-Norway also participated in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, transporting enslaved Africans from the African Gold Coast to their colonial bastions in the Caribbean. Importantly, slave ships transported caches of ivory tusks alongside the enslaved peoples in their hulls and traversed the Atlantic until these commodities reached their Caribbean or Danish ports of call. Along with sugar, tropical woods, and cotton, ivory made its way into the elite collections of the Danish-Norwegian monarchs and the halls of Oldenburg

collections were filled with evidence of their political and colonial prowess.⁶ As such, ivory became an integral marker of colonial expansion and the growing political power of Denmark-Norway and Saxony and ivory ships were a prescient material reminder of this new status.

In this chapter I analyze two monumental ivory ships in the *Kunstkammern* of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway and the Electorate of Saxony and how the ship's material narrative elucidated two types of European colonialism: tangible and imagined. Specifically, I argue that ivory ships acted – both materially and iconographically – as material metonymies of tangible and imagined colonial expansion and illustrated the political might and power of the Saxon and Danish-Norwegian rulers in their prized princely *Kunstkammern*. During the early modern period, the European *Kunstkammer* was inundated with foreign and exotic materials that perpetuated princely erudition and growing global power, with ivory as a symbol of such power.

But beyond this common iconographic thread of *Kunstkammern* exotic materials, ivory – and ivory ships in particular – purported another meaningful early modern idea: the continued and ever-expanding global reach of Europe and the growing Atlantic slave and commodities trade. As the early modern era progressed and trade routes expanded, ivory ships illustrated more than a simple portrayal of a maritime vessel; through their building with ivory, these ships symbolized global colonization and European domination of enslaved skin in the monarchical *Kunstkammern*. As I illustrate throughout this chapter, ivory ships acted as a global material metonymy, an iconographic icon signifying

⁶ In contrast, Germany had no such direct ivory trade. While many German principalities, including Saxony, enjoyed and created flourishing ivory carving centers, these areas relied on the Danube-Rhine River trade to bring ivory from Amsterdam or Antwerp to large markets in cities like Augsburg.

global colonialization, Atlantic trade, and the power of European monarchial systems. This material association was most striking in these ivory ships as they became a tangible manifestation of princely global reach used to exclaim hegemony. The sheer artistic deftness and material magnificence of the ivory ships illuminates its geographic origin and significance, highlighting European domination over “the other”.

Through the usurpation and exploitation of native Africans and the continent’s flora and fauna, Saxons and Danes created majestic ivory representations of the very implement – ships – used to colonize and enslave. Unlike many of the other ivory objects in this dissertation, ivory ships were not, as I argue, ambiguously exotic with vague understandings of material origin. Rather, I suggest these ivory ships prominently announced ivory’s geographic determination as African through its obtainment and interconnectivity to the Atlantic Slave Trade. Coupled with the growing racial awareness, ethnographic, and physiognomic designations of types of skin in the early modern period, ivory’s seventeenth-century material signification as skin became an even more apparent avenue for the proclamation of white European global supremacy. The intriguing juxtaposition of an African material – frequently employed as a substitute for white European skin – that travelled and was traded alongside Africans – whose very skin prompted their enslavement – and was then carved and turned into large-scale representations of the very object used for their enslavement and commodification for the visual enjoyment of their colonizer was the ironic reality of ivory in the early modern *Kunstkammern*. The placement of ivory alongside recently enslaved peoples aboard slave ships highlights such a connection. Danish-Norwegian and Saxon rulers most assuredly understood the methods of ivory’s importation, which ultimately informed and

reconfigured their interpretation of ivory ships in their collections. Consequently, ivory ships, and thus ivory itself, were understood as African, rather than an ambiguous designation of some exotic locale.

While this chapter looks at ivory's materiality in a global context, I also strive to analyze how the global materiality of ivory was understood in a local context. Originally termed by Roland Robertson, the "glocal" – a combination of the global and the local – is a fascinating way to interpret material perceptions. Robertson bases his glocal theory in contemporary economics, but several early modern scholars have appropriated the term for the eighteenth century. In the seminal edited volume, *The Global Eighteenth Century*, Felicity Nussbaum argues that, "this concept of the 'glocal' (a term coined to inspire 'a careful rereading of the means of articulation' between two geographical coordinates) simultaneously makes legible the larger and smaller scales. In this configuration, neither the local nor the global is the superior term."⁷ Christine Guth utilized the "glocal" in her essay on shagreen in *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* and argues that, as Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello summarize, that the "production and consumption were local and global at the same time: local, because the material formed part of different cultural repertoires that each assigned meaning to the material, but global, because the material depended upon the global knowledge that emerged through networks of trade and the circulation of exotic goods..."⁸ Recently, Michael Yonan and Stacey Sloboda continued the "glocal" narrative

⁷ Felicity Nussbaum, *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 10.

⁸ Christine Guth, "Towards a global history of shagreen," in *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*, ed. Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (New York: Routledge, 2016), 16.

in eighteenth-century art historical methodology and underscored the importance of insinuating the local into discussions of the global. Specifically, the authors advance Éva Forgács's argumentation around the importance of the local within the global. Forgács states, "the reality on the ground, no matter how informed of the global, is *local*: with specific details, history, inner dynamics, and personal relationships that often materialize in conceptual difference or conflicts of artistic, philosophical, and political views."⁹ The concept of the "glocal" is an indelible tool in the discussion of colonial material culture. Objects and materials both lose and gain material signification as they travel from port to port. Such items are often divorced from their original cultural associations only to gain ambiguous or misleading exotic designations, creating a combined glocal materiality of local conceptions through a new global paradigm. To correctly situate ivory in a colonial context, the material must be discussed in a "glocal" context. For it was not just an African commodity nor a European material; it occupied a space of colonial liminality.

As such, I have divided this chapter into three main sections, each of which builds upon the notion of ivory's interconnectivity to colonialism and the slave trade to illustrate the commodity's colonial African materiality. The first section provides a history of Saxony's and Denmark-Norway's coloniality in the early modern period. I begin with the Electorate of Saxony's non-colonial status but augment the non-colonial reality with Zantop's argumentation of Germany's "colonial fantasy," extending her contention to seventeenth- and earlier eighteenth-century material culture thus illustrating the intimate connection between Saxon colonial curiosity and Saxon colonial reality. These insights

⁹ Michael Yonan and Stacey Sloboda, *Eighteenth-Century Art Worlds: global and local geographies of art* (London: Bloomsburg Visual Arts, 2019), 10.

did not negate the Electorate's lack of colonial territories and direct communication with the world, but rather supplemented their knowledge to create an imagined sentimentality of colonialism. I then turn to Denmark-Norway's tangible colonial reality and its small but world-wide empire. Beyond their colonizations around the globe, Denmark-Norway partook in the global commodities trade, particularly of enslaved peoples and ivory. While the various royally chartered trade companies carried a small number of slaves relative to other nations, their direct involvement in the slave and ivory trade prompted a new cultural understanding of the world.

The second section of this chapter details the interconnectivity and expanding material relationship of ivory and slavery through the lens of skin. I first detail the black and white color polarity in early modern Europe that eventually led to African's designation as "other". With this polarity in mind, I discuss the growing racial awareness in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, particularly focusing on how Africans became "othered" to the white European. Utilizing Igor Kopytoff's theory of commoditization I explicate the enslaved person's commodity status as analogous to ivory's similar commodity journey. Using this formulation, I argue for ivory's direct interconnectivity to slavery through commoditization and ivory's designation as global and mobile, ultimately arriving at the moniker of "colonial" to describe the material. As I will show, ivory becomes Africa's metonymic accessory just as the ship is Europe's metonymic colonial accessory.

Finally, I return to the two monumental ivory ships and elucidate how this new material knowledge changed the ship's reception within the *Kunstammer*. In Dresden, I argue that Jacob Zeller's *Große Fregatte* partially shed its seventeenth-century

mythological underpinnings and gained an eighteenth-century African and colonial materiality through Saxony's sentimental relationship with their imagined colonialism. In Denmark-Norway, I contend that Jacob Jensen Nordmand's *Norske Løve* from the mid-seventeenth century – created less than a decade before Denmark-Norway's colonization of the African Gold Coast – was more than a ship model; it represented a larger colonial presence and the emergence of Denmark-Norway as a naval power. As the early modern period progressed and Denmark continued to expand its global presence, ivory's materiality developed into not only an icon of power and imperial skin, but of coloniality, global expansion, and worldwide European supremacy.¹⁰ Ultimately, this chapter seeks to question how Saxony and Denmark-Norway displayed otherness/African-ness in their princely collections through ivory's mutable colonial materiality and how ivory became yet another tool of European colonial exploitation. As such, the intriguing inclusion of monumental ivory ships in the Saxon and Danish-Norwegian *Kunstskammern* offers a look into ruler's understanding of an expanding world. The question remains, however, why did these ruler's and artist's utilize ivory for such objects? What material purpose or signification did the ivory provide for its

¹⁰ I must discuss my methodology, and more importantly, my shift away from post-colonial theory and towards, what I term, colonial material culture. As Urmi Bhowmik eloquently surmised, “post-colonial theory locates its origins in the moment after decolonization, a position from which it can reflect upon anti-colonial as well as imperial ideology.” (Urmi Bhowmik, “Globalizing the Eighteenth Century” *Literature Compass* 1 (2004): 3.). This chapter does not, however, look at the aftereffects of colonialism on these objects and their material through a modern intellectual modality. Rather, the chapter reveals a specific moment in history and how a material acknowledged that temporal and cultural narrative. Specifically, I interpret ivory ships through the lens of eighteenth-century conceptions of race and global expansion and not through a contemporary understanding of the effects of colonialism. As such, there are several intriguing topics related to ivory through post-colonial theory that will not be discussed this chapter. Particularly, I will forgo an analysis of ivory and fetishism. While ivory was most likely fetishized during the early modern period as an exotic and rare material, it does not fit into the purview of this chapter nor does it truly advance my argument regarding ivory's material relationship to colonialism.

viewers? And how, in the wake of a continually expanding globe, did each ship reinvent its meaning to encapsulate the geo-political tone of the early modern period?

State of the Literature

In recent decades, early modern scholars have made an academic push to globally expand the discipline. Critical analyses into the global commodities trade, worldwide artistic exchange, and non-European aesthetics have become an integral part of early modern studies. Yet, to date, there has been little work dedicated to ivory's relationship to this growing field. This is not to say, however, that ivory has not been discussed in any of these contexts. Scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, like Abdul Sheriff and Pedro Machado, have created astounding histories of African and Indian global trade, including ivory's participation in these centuries-old trade networks.¹¹ But such histories often discuss raw ivory and not as a finished artistic product. Other scholars, when discussing ivory sculpture, quickly define the work as "exotic" or "foreign" and, even less frequently, as a product of colonial trade, but rarely expound upon these connections. But, like porcelain or lacquer, ivory was intimately tied with colonial trade, which informed its materiality in this period. Thus, this chapter hopes to fill this scholastic gap and revive ivory's coloniality through objects.

While there is no direct source for ivory sculpture's relationship to early modern global expansion, many early modern scholars have analyzed and argued for material culture's global-ness. As previously mentioned, Felicity Nussbaum's *The Global*

¹¹ See, Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commerical Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1830*, (James Curry Ltd., 1987) and Pedro Machado, *Oceans of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Eighteenth Century is an innovative edited collection of visual and material culture's globality.¹² In recent decades, eighteenth-century scholars have pushed to further the temporal boundaries of the discipline beyond 1700-1800. The new "long eighteenth century" – ca. 1660-1830 – now connotes the period as a cultural phenomenon rather than as a sequential designation. Nussbaum argues that the eighteenth century should not simply be "long" but also "wide". For the eighteenth century was not European nor Asian nor African, but a conflated and engaged world that exchanged ideas – and peoples – which prompted and invigorated modernity. This volume of collected essays utilizes the globe as the central narrative rather than relying on the historical methodology of center verses periphery. From Africa to China, from India to England, and from the Pacific Islands to the West Indies, Nussbaum's volume functions as a reminder that culture was not static in the eighteenth century, but was mobile, global, and colonial.

Another imperative source for this chapter is Giorgio Riello and Anne Gerritsen's *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*.¹³ Like Nussbaum's volume, Riello and Gerritsen take on the notion of the "wide" early modern period to illuminate material meaning through global connections. The volume's authors focus on the movement and transportation of objects and materials as an indicator of the emerging global-ness of the period. Riello and Gerritsen's methodological application of the global to material culture not only explicates the material biography of objects but also establishes an object's global agency.

¹² Nussbaum, *The Global Eighteenth Century*.

¹³ Giorgio Riello and Anne Gerritsen, *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World*, (New York: Routledge, 2016).

Finally, this chapter is particularly indebted to Daniela Bleichmar and Meredith Martin's *Objects in Motion in the Early Modern World*, a special issue of *Art History*.¹⁴ In the introductory essay, Bleichmar and Martin illustrate that material culture should not only be analyzed through its designation as global, but also as objects or materials that moved through the early modern globe. With its movements from port to port, objects shed and obtained meanings through the very act of transportation. And while many of the objects in *Kunstammern* or modern museums have become decontextualized, Bleichmar and Martin argue for a renewed interest in the global biography of objects to reestablish these global artistic exchanges and trade networks. As such, each of these texts provided a key methodological form from which to start building the connection between ivory and Africa and ivory and the slave trade.

Ivory Ships in the Princely European *Kunstammer*

Early Ships and Princely Dining

Since the Middle Ages, ships made of exotic materials have graced the grand dining tables of the elite European courts as elegantly ornamented centerpieces. Often used to store spices or other ingredients needed for court dining, ship centerpieces invigorated tablescapes as a representation of status, erudition, and taste. Artisans constructed these objects out of precious materials – like gold and silver – with allusions to princely power. As the age of colonial expansion progressed, ivory ships steadily evolved into larger, more expensive, and more complicated designs to fit the growing global knowledge of the European elite. In the sixteenth century, automaton ships made

¹⁴ Meredith Martin and Daniela Bleichmar, eds., "Objects in Motion in the Early Modern World," Special Issue, *Art History* 38, no. 4 (2015): 605-619.

of luxurious materials came into vogue, like this 1585 example from Hans Schlottheim (1545-1625) (Figure 3.2). The artist carefully crafted the bright and shiny solid gold hull, which gracefully moved across an opulent dining table as the sharply dressed crew dance around Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612). Music from an interior mechanism within the ship played as the cannons placed along the upper portion of the hull fire in tandem. The performative and joyous nature of the automated ship juxtaposes the painted sails depicting mythological scenes of Neptune and the gold flags atop the masts with the Habsburg double eagle. Schlottheim included an inscription on the automaton in the voice of the ship, “In the year 1585; I am called the double eagle. I am well known to all princes of lords. I sail with great power, and no wind is strong enough to hurt me. I tell you in truth you sailors, be mindful that you cannot overcome me. There is no storm so great that it can prevent me from sailing. I shall oppose anyone who wishes me evil, and I shall not spare the ammunition.”¹⁵ The show of the ship’s strength is a direct allusion to the power and might of the Habsburg empire and the Emperor himself. Together this automaton, like many others, created a lively spectacle of dining theatre and an expression of growing global influence.

In the beginning decades of the seventeenth century, Austrian Habsburgs continued the tradition of ship centerpieces. Instead of the traditional gold and silver used in earlier centuries, ivory became the *de jour* material. In 1626, the Stuttgart artist Georg Burrer (1598/99-1627) produced a stunning ivory automaton galley ship for the Emperor’s table (Figure 3.3). Burrer precisely reimagined a miniaturized three-mast galley with refined ornamentation along the hull and the hidden wheels and propulsion

¹⁵ Sabine Haag, *Masterpieces of the Kunstkammer Vienna: A Brief Guide to the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2013), 152.

mechanisms created a spirited display for courtly dining. The individualized chained convicts appear to be alive and rowing the ship across the table while the helmsmen and the long figure on the bow continue their work as if truly at sea.¹⁶ As Sabine Haag noted,

Automated figures and complicated clocks, which embody the predetermined course of the world on a small scale, manifest in the extravagance of their wealth of forms and the enthusiasm of collectors for such machines. For the people of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, time was considered the *theatrum mundi par excellence*, which resulted in a special effort to make their transience visible through moving figures.¹⁷

Burrer's utilization of delicate linen for the sails in juxtaposition to the ivory provided another movable element for the viewer's delight as the sails waft and sway to the rolling motion of the automaton. The jubilant nature of the automaton coupled with the use of expensive material fashioned an object fit for imperial dining. The application of ivory – rather than the traditional precious metal – alluded to the Habsburg preference for the material but it also represented the expanded understanding of the world and global trade under Habsburg dominion.

In 1643, Central European ivory carver Marcus Heiden supplied the Austrian Habsburg emperors with another ivory ship centerpiece (Figure 3.4). Standing at almost four feet tall, Heiden's centerpiece is a tour de force of seventeenth-century colonial iconography. The columnar orientation of the centerpiece begins with a three-masted ship with a large hull carried on the shoulders of an unknown man. The intricately carved rope ladders lead the viewer's eye towards the wind-blown sails and the sun and

¹⁶ Sabine Haag, *Meisterwerke der Elfenbeinkunst* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2007), 168.

¹⁷ Haag, *Meisterwerke der Elfenbeinkunst*, 168. Originally in German, the translation above is mine. The original quote, "Figurenreiche Automaten und komplizierte Uhren, die im Kleinen den vorbestimmten Weltlauf verkörpern, manifestation in der Extravaganz ihres Formenreichtums die Begeisterung der Sammler für derartige Maschinen. Die Zeit galt für die Menschen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts als *Theatrum mundi schlechthin*, woraus das besondere Bemühen resultierte, ihre Vergänglichkeit durch bewegliche Figuren sichtbar zu machen."

star that punctuate the top of the masts and its lone crew member in the crow's nest.¹⁸ The hull's sides are left unadorned and rely on the subtle turned undulations that recall the many turned *Deckelpokals* throughout the collection (Figure 3.5). At the bow of the ship, Heiden carved a monstrous figure as a guardian of the ship surrounded by carved floriated scroll work. The ship rests on a lathe-turned perch that is carried on the shoulders of an unknown foreign man wearing a Phrygian cap, an ancient symbol of Eastern European peoples. A dragon twists around the legs of the unknown man and creates a termination point for this scene of the centerpiece. The object continues vertically to a turned cup, a particular speciality of Heiden's and is reminiscent of many of the turner's other works in the Habsburg *Kunstkammer* (Figure 3.6). The graceful undulations of the cup's turning oscillate like a wave in recollection the ship's true purpose. The cup concludes atop a sectioned stem surrounded by a woven-patterned basket holding three figures. The first two ivory figures appear to be soldiers or imperial guards holding old long spears and rifles and sport jaunty mustaches beneath their large hats.

The third figure, made of ivory and ebony, is a blackamoor figure holding a chain and pitchfork as if captaining the large animal beneath him and thus entire object. The blackamoor's conical hat and dark ebony skin portray him as "other" in comparison to the two other figure. Beneath this basket of figures and guiding the entire composition, the elephant, with a stylized trunk, smooth skin, and large tusks appears focused and alert as it carries the weight of the ship, cup, and figures. On the turned base of the

¹⁸ Heiden also anthropomorphized the sun to include a rough outline of a face with a sharp nose, a small cut for the mouth, and a slight puncture as the moon's eye.

centerpiece, Heiden included two final figures, representing various geographic areas: first is a man costumed in a long robe, a large mustache and a turban with a feather protruding from the center and most likely represents a Turk; the second figure is an additional blackamoor figure or a personification of the Americas holding a bow complete with a feather headdress, shirt, and necklace.¹⁹ The inclusion of these other and non-European figures was a common trope in the early modern period as an illustration of emergent global consciousness.

During his active carving years, Heiden wrote a small booklet describing some of his works, particularly the present centerpiece. As Sabine Haag commented, Heiden created the monumental work at the end of the Thirty Years' War and it "was his appeal to steadfastness in matters of faith."²⁰ Haag continues her summary stating, "in this way the true believers, like the riders on the elephant, are helped by the Church's ship in the struggle against the temptations of the world; these are symbolized above by the monster under the wearer's feet. As a reward for overcoming all toil, the sun wages on the top of the mast, a symbol of the light of Christ."²¹ While the religious iconography was certainly an important factor after the end of a religiously-motivated war, Haag – and Heiden – miss the larger picture at play with this collocation of colonial symbolism. The ship mixed with the othered figures present an acknowledgment of European globality – and thus – Christianity's expansion into the known world. As a centerpiece for elite

¹⁹ It was not uncommon for the attributes of Africa and the Americas to be conflated. In many early modern examples, Africa is depicted with the feathered headdress and necklace which is often a symbol of the Americas.

²⁰ Haag, *Meisterwerk der Elfenbeinkunst*, 172. Original in German. All translations are my own.

²¹ Haag, 172.

dining, the illustration of global knowledge and a message of steadfast faith provided a material representation of the ruler as learned, powerful, and pious.

Jacob Zeller, Große Fregatte, 1620, Dresden

In early modern Saxony, the Electors conceived a *Kunstkammer* filled with precious materials such as nautilus shells, coral, and ivory to produce stunning vistas of monarchical wealth and splendor. The Saxons continued the tradition of the ship as centerpiece, but rather than the ship as part of a dining table or feast, the ship was now the centerpiece of the princely collections.

In 1620, Jacob Zeller, a Central European sculptor, recently arrived in Dresden via Prague, fashioned the spectacular and monumental ivory frigate (Figure 3.7). One of the first of its scale, the precarious balancing of the ship on Neptune's ivory shoulders created a vivid and lively composition reminiscent of the Habsburg's automaton ships. Standing at almost four feet in height, the frigate is not a representation of actual ship, but rather a nautical reimagination meant as a dynastic message for the Electors of Saxony.²² Zeller inscribed the names of all the Saxon Electors in-between the boards of the hull to alert viewers as to the power of the Electorate. To further this message, the mainsail has the coat-of-arms for Elector Johann Georg I (1585-1656) and his second wife Magdalena Sibylla of Brandenburg-Prussia (1586-1659), which spoke of the commissioner of the grand object, but also of a controlled effort of generational remembrance.

Zeller's deft hand and remarkable attention to detail surely stunned visitors to the Saxon *Kunstkammer*. The artist's knowledge of ivory and his application of the material manufactured an object suited for an elite collection. Razor-thin ivory sheets create the

²² Jutta Kappel, *Elfenbeinkunst im Grünen Gewölbe zu Dresden* (Dresden: Sandstein Verlag, 2017), 29

billowing sails and initiate a scenario of the ship's physical movements. Several small ivory figures climb the rigging to the top of the three-masted frigate, which generated more movement across the lively composition. Zeller ornamented the ship with small gold rivets that create a material interplay of the reflection of the metal to the subtle shine of the polished ivory. At the bow, a figurehead of a bare-breasted mermaid is placed within a floriated scroll cartouche, perhaps insinuating the mythology of the base group. Yet, the ship itself is restrained in its design in comparison to the frenetic allegorical base. And although the frigate is not representative of an physical ship, Zeller's fidelity to the portrayal of the correct aspects of a ship brilliantly juxtapose the fantasy of the base group.

The frigate, set on elegantly-carved leaves, is hoisted up upon the strong shoulders of the god of the Sea, Neptune (Figure 3.8). At the base, Zeller fashioned a dynamic mythological scene that complements the steady reality of the frigate. As the focal point of the entire composition, the figure of Neptune acts as the stem of the composition; he is literally and metaphorically the Atlas of Zeller's created narrative. The powerful twisting of the Roman god's body is heightened by the billowing toga wrapped around his waist and his curled and spread legs that brace the god against a shell in his actions to hold the ship. Underneath his leafy crown, Neptune's head is slightly canted to the side with a look of fierce contemplation, which belies the heavy weight placed on the god's shoulders. Zeller paid careful attention to the detailing of the skin; he very precisely fashioned carved muscles that appear as if they are emanating directly from underneath the skin/ivory, which continues with the feet and the delicate demarcation of the veins. The shell onto which Neptune rests is placed on the backs of

two Hippocampus, a mythological creature with front of a horse and the back of a fish. The contorted hippocampen bray as they powerfully spring forward from the turned base and their deeply cut manes are thrust backwards, illustrating their sudden and forceful movements. At the back of the base composition is a small triton blowing a twisted conch shell alerting the viewers of the coming of Neptune. The small figure also holds a small inscribed tablet with the artist's signature, stating "JACOBVS ZELLER C.S. BESTALTER KUNSTDRETLER FECIT ET INVENTATIVIT 1620." Together, Zeller constructed a tantalizing seventeenth-century *Kunstkammer* work that exclaimed princely might, sophistication, and accessibility to global materials.

The *Größe Fregatte* first appeared in the *Kunstkammer* inventory in 1640. The inventory stated, "*Ein helfenbeinern schiff, welches der Neptunus, auf meer roßen, einer muschel und kugel sitzent, tregent [...]. Die wahlstücklein, nägel und leinen von guten golde, ist in einem schwartz gebeizten holtze und verglasten geheuse*" [The ivory carved ship, which Neptune, sitting on sea horses, a shell and a ball...The choice piece, nails and lines from good gold, is in a black-stained wood and glazed case].²³ After the Elector Augustus the Strong established the Grünes Gewölbe in 1723, a new inventory was ordered, which posited a new ancestral-based explanation: "*Ein Elffenbeinern Schiff welches der Neptunus auf zwey Meer Roßen einer Muschel und Kugel sizend träget, aufm Corpore ist der ganze Stamm Sachßen, von Hardrich vor Christi Geburth an, bis auf Churfürst Johann Georg mit denen Namen geschnitten, im größten Seegel ist das Churfürstl. Sächß. Wappen*" [An ivory ship Neptune carries on two sea horses, a shell and ball, on the body is the whole tribe of Saxony, from Hardrich before the birth of

²³ Kappel, *Elfenbeinkunst im Grünen Gewölbe zu Dresden*, 57. From 1640 Dresden *Kunstkammer* inventory, fol. 486r.

Christ, except for the Elector Johann Georg, whose name is cut in the largest sail, Elector. Saxon. Coat of Arms.].²⁴ The inventory's highlighting of the generational aspects of the frigate's design most likely acted as a reference to the growing Central European power of Augustus the Strong after his election to the monarchical throne of Poland.

In the impressive ivory catalog of the Grünes Gewöble, Jutta Kappel illustrated the mythological iconography of the frigate. Referring to Virgil's famous "Quos Ego" scene in the *Aeneid*, Zeller recalls Neptune's words to the tumultuous winds. "On the one hand, the artist evokes the memory of the sea storm thematized by Virgil, but on the other hand, he also warns of a far greater catastrophe, the deluge in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. Did Zeller want to point to its happy ending, since Neptune commands the water to withdraw when the sound of the conch shell sounds?"²⁵ The inclusion of the small Triton in the base grouping certainly supports this ancient allusion. Kappel also argued that Neptune had become conflated with Fortuna, as the whims of the sea are often left to fate, which was a fitting allusion to the perils of the ongoing Thirty Years' War.²⁶ Thus, Zeller's frigate metaphorically performs the pitfalls of princely power and a reminder for the practice and application of princely virtues in troubled times.

Elector Johann Georg I paid a premium price for the magnificent frigate; on 31 August 1620, an invoice noted the court paid Zeller 3000 guilders for the object. In 2011, Reingard Albert reconstructed the mid-seventeenth-century *Kunstammer* from the 1640 inventory. In this detail, the prominent placement of the frigate illustrates its

²⁴ Kappel, 57. From 1725 Dresden Kunstammer Inventory, folio 111r., No. 16.

²⁵ Kappel, 57.

²⁶ Kappel, 57.

immense importance to the Electors (Figure 3.9). On the left side of the pen drawing, the frigate stands alone on a rounded table next to a large cabinet filled with turned ivory works from the early seventeenth century that made up a large part of the *Kunstammer*'s ivory collection. Unlike many of the other objects in the drawing, Zeller's work was not crowded onto tables with other objects. Perhaps this was due to its monumentality, or, as I suggest, its singular positioning was an elucidation of princely significance. With the frigate's placement on a rounded table, the Elector or important visitors could circumambulate the sculpture and admire each small detail Zeller incorporated into the design. The pen drawing also illuminates several other intriguing additions to this particular corner of the Dresden *Kunstammer*: first, in the right lower corner of the drawing, Albert included two other large ship models; and second, there are several objects – like the Pagoda in the center of the composition and the elephant carrying a castle located on the same table in the right lower corner – that allude to empire.²⁷ It is also highly probable that Marcus Heiden's small turned ivory ship – with a similar hull design to the Habsburg Centerpiece – appeared in the cabinet next to Zeller's frigate.

There were several examples of ships made of precious and exotic materials in the Dresden *Kunstammer*, including Jörg Ruel's 1617-19 nautilus shell *Sailing Ship as Drinking Vessel* and Samuel Lormann's early seventeenth-century nautilus shell *Sailing Ship as a Drinking Vessel* (Figures 3.10-3.11). These were yet another revelatory inclusion of a maritime vessel in a collection filled with mythological, religious, and political works. These examples illustrate the construction of decorative ships in exotic

²⁷ It should be noted that the two ship models Albert included in the drawing are no longer on display at the Grünes Gewöble nor have I seen any reference to them in the collection's holdings.

materials, creating the question of the interwoven nature of sea-traded materials to this decorative object type, a concept which will be explored in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Jacob Jensen Nordmand, Norske Løve, 1651-54

In the early 1650s, Jacob Jensen Nordmand, a Norwegian ivory artisan, produced the substantial ivory *Norske Løve* (Norwegian Lion) that would become the centerpiece of the Ivory and Amber Room in the Oldenburg's Rosenborg Castle (Figure 3.12). Unlike Zeller's frigate, the *Norske Løve* was an actual mid-seventeenth-century vessel under the Danish-Norwegian navy. Lifted from the heraldry of the kings of Norway, the moniker – Norwegian Lion – was Denmark-Norway's direct reference to the union between the two Scandinavian countries.

Nordmand's precise and meticulous detailing of the ship created a breathtaking model for the royal collections. The three-masted frigate has two decks and is armed with forty-four canons and four swivel guns.²⁸ Jørgen Hein notes that the hull – including the battery and main deck – are carved from one piece of ivory, while the other elements were carved separately and then attached to the main piece.²⁹ The sleekly-designed hull and decks provided a solid and restrained base for the wafting and billowing sails. The delicate silver riggings are not encumbered with climbing figures; the frigate was thus a model, not part of a larger narrative. The figurehead at the beak of the ship recalls the

²⁸ Jørgen Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle: Catalog of Carved and Turned Ivories and Narwhal Tusks in the Royal Danish Collection, 1600-1875* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2018), 47

²⁹ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle*, 47.

name of Nordmand's ivory frigate: a lion with its paws resting on the axe of St. Olave – the canonized King of Norway (ca. 995-1030) and an elemental figure in the Norwegian identity. This allusion to the former king of Norway is supplanted by the large crowned “F3” on the main sail – a direct reference to commissioner, King Frederik III of Denmark-Norway (1609-1670). Above the rudder at the back of the ship, in contrast to the figurehead lion, Nordmand included a Moor's head, which was a decidedly unique inclusion that became a calling card for many Nordmand's ivory ships in Denmark (Figure 3.13). A surprising detail included in Nordmand's design is when the roof of the cabin is lifted, the gun deck is fully articulated, with the captain's saloon beneath it, which has a four-poster bed and a table as well as a toilet.³⁰

Unlike Zeller's mythological grandiosity, Nordmand's frigate produced a more restrained representation. The *Norske Løve* is not overly ornamented; the concave windblown sails created an illusion of movement but were not as nearly as dramatic as Zeller's sails. Nordmand also subtly utilized silver riveting and cordage rather than the Dresden frigate's gold accessories to create a similar reflective experience but with a more sparing effect. Also, unlike Zeller or the Austrian examples, Nordmand includes no figures. There are no miniscule ivory men climbing the rigging to the top of one of the three-masts or dancing along the various upper decks. The playful jocularities of the automatons and the mythological theatricality of Zeller's frigate are removed here for a controlled and tasteful model of a naval vessel.

In 1654, Nordmand wrote of this work in his autobiography stating, “after two years of work made...a ship of ivory after the images of the *Norske Løve*, in 60

³⁰ Hein, 47.

divisions.”³¹ Hein noted that there is a debate surrounding which ship Nordmand modelled his ivory representation after: the Norske Løve launched in 1634 or the newest model built in 1652-54. Preben Holck argued that Nordmand’s model clearly represented the 1652-54 Norske Løve “partly because the proportions of the model do not accord with the contract for *Norske Løve* from 1634 and partly because it must be assumed that Frederik III would have wanted a representation of the navy’s newest vessel.”³² But, as Niels Probst explicated, the 1634 *Norske Løve* was in service until 1666.³³ Using Peter Omtvedt’s 2005 analysis of the three seventeenth-century *Norske Løve* examples, Hein concludes that Nordmand’s ivory model was not a direct copy of either ship, but rather a “free copy” or an amalgamation of the Danish-Norwegian navy vessels, which I agree with as well.³⁴ And yet, the composite nature of the frigate does not, however, take away from its show of veracity or princely colonial magnificence.³⁵

Tangible and Imagined Colonialism: Denmark and Saxony in the Early Modern World

In the fifteenth century, Portuguese explorers launched the beginning of what modern scholars have politely named “The Age of Discovery.” In 1482, Portuguese sailors founded Fort São Jorge da Mina – commonly referred to as “Elmina” – in Ghana,

³¹ Hein, 47. The *Norske Løve* was first recorded in the Danish-Norwegian inventory in 1674 as “a large man-o’-war of ivory with pieces and equipments of silver.”

³² Hein, 47.

³³ Hein, 47.

³⁴ Hein, 47.

³⁵ Hein, 47. From 1674 Danish-Norwegian Royal Kunstkammer Inventory, 20v. The *Norske Løve* was first recorded in the Danish-Norwegian inventory in 1674 as “a large man-o’-war of ivory with pieces and equipments of silver.” The magnificent ivory vessel was originally housed in the Oldenburg *Kunstkammer* – which has since been dissolved – and was moved to its present location in 1867.

which began the centuries-long European colonization of Africa.³⁶ At the same time, the Portuguese began purchasing slaves along the Niger Delta ostensibly activating Europe's enslavement of African peoples. The Iberian nation flourished in Africa during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and created a large and imposing global empire that became the envy of their European neighbors. In the seventeenth century England, France, and the Netherlands commenced their own buildup of colonial territories, ensuring Europe's forced supremacy across the globe. Images and prints of indigenous peoples saturated European markets and were sold alongside materials and objects of exotic origin stimulating Europe's collective imagination of the other. The five major colonial nations – England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal – were not the only European countries to participate in this newly gained need for global expansion. Smaller countries, such as Denmark-Norway and Sweden, began erstwhile attempts to establish themselves as larger players on the early modern world stage and began colonizing and trading in enslaved peoples. With so many European nations traversing the globe, trade routes become routinized and systemized; particularly, the well-known triangular trade route – from Europe to Africa to the West Indies back to Europe. Through this growing global awareness, European comprehension of the other and of coloniality blossomed and changed the interpretative nature of European identity.

Early Modern Saxony and “Colonial Fantasy”

The Electorate of Saxony, located in the eastern section of modern Germany, held a strategic position within Europe. As Electors for the Holy Roman Empire, Saxony was a significant power broker for imperial power in Central Europe and the continent as a

³⁶ Svalesen, *The Slave Ship Fredensborg*, 18.

whole. In the eighteenth century, under the leadership of Elector Augustus II the Strong, the Saxon borders expanded as the Electors became the Kings of Poland. But, even with the immense political power of this small electorate, Saxony's power was limited to Europe. This did not, however, negate Saxony's interest in the foreign and global; it, as I suggest, provided a new type of coloniality for German states. Utilizing Susanne Zantop's idea of the "colonial fantasy," Saxony's non-colonial status produced an imagined vision of colonialism that materially migrated into the *Kunstammer*.

This is not to say, however, that German states and principalities did not attempt to become a part of the growing colonial world. As Zantop illustrates, Germans did engage in early colonialization efforts, but not as a state- or princely-sponsored endeavor. Rather, it was individuals throughout the German-speaking lands that wished to explore the expanding world. Germans joined the Spanish and Portuguese expeditions to the New World, merchant families began building fleets to engage in global trade, and scientists traveled the globe as officials within national trading companies.³⁷ Principalities, like the Electorate of Brandenburg-Prussia, established short-lived colonies in the New World, but were ultimately sold due to regional conflicts with other colonial powers or due to lack of funds.³⁸

Beyond state-sponsored ventures, individual families and merchant companies attempted to break into colonial possession and trade. The Welser family, a German banking dynasty turned colonialists from Augsburg, were perhaps the most successful of

³⁷ Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 18.

³⁸ Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 18-19. Friedrich Wilhelm, the Great Elector of Brandenburg, established a trading post on the Caribbean island of St. Thomas in 1685, but had to close said port due to conflict with the Danish. Duke Jakob I of Courland purchased the island of Tobago in the mid-1600s from the British. The low yield of crops on the island forced the Duke to return the colonial property back to England in 1659.

all Germans engaged in global enterprises. After financing Emperor Charles V's (1500-1558) election as Holy Roman Emperor, the Welser's leveraged their support of Charles V to enter into a treaty with the Spanish government to gain colonial properties.³⁹ This treaty allowed the Augsburg family "to conquer, settle, rule, and exploit a hitherto unknown region located between the province of Santa Marta and Cabo de la Vela in the west and the Cabo Marcapaná in the east, and from the Atlantic Ocean in the north to the 'South Sea' in the south – roughly...today's Venezuela and parts of Colombia."⁴⁰ After lengthy physical and legal conflicts with the Spanish, the Welser's ended their dream of German expansion.

But the failures of some German states and families to place a strong foothold in the colonial world did not deter the Central European imagination. Germans displayed the stark economic and physical realities of colonial practice with imaginative mythologies of colonial conquest and control. In her seminal work, Zantop argues that the obsession with "colonial possession" appeared much earlier than the tangible German territories of the nineteenth century.⁴¹ Her argument centers around a cache of late eighteenth-century German literature depicting "stories of sexual conquest and surrender, love and blissful domestic relations between colonizer and colonized, set in colonial territory, stories that made the strange familiar, and the familiar familiar."⁴² Zantop illustrates that these colonial tropes were continually reused until they became "factual reality."⁴³

³⁹ Zantop, 18-19.

⁴⁰ Zantop, 19.

⁴¹ Zantop, 2. The author specifies Germany as a loose coalition of same-speaking people and a general sense of the same history, rather than a unified nation akin to modern Germany.

⁴² Zantop, 2.

⁴³ Zantop, 2.

By virtue of existing in a ‘pure’ realm of the imagination, ‘untainted’ by praxis, German fantasies were not only differently motivated, but had a different function: to serve not so much as ideological smokescreen or cover-up for colonial atrocities or transgressive desires, but as *Handlungersatz*, as substitute for the real thing, as imaginary test ground for colonial action. By commenting upon and criticizing the colonial ventures of others, individuals and nations; by building on, revising, and amending the theories developed outside German borders by foreign discoveries; and above all, by imagining colonial scenarios that allowed for an identification with the role of the conqueror or colonizer, Germans could create a colonial universe of their own, and insert themselves into it.⁴⁴

The development of this imagined community, as Benedict Anderson termed, created a need for the visual and material documentation of this “reality.”⁴⁵

Although Zantop’s argument of German “colonial fantasy” relies on late eighteenth-century literary narratives, German-speaking lands had already begun their fantasy-building through an early interest in the visualization and representation of colonialism and otherness. Ethnographic prints inundated Central Europe with images of other peoples and mysterious lands unbeknownst to the German citizens with printmakers, like Hans Burgkmair, illustrating detailed travel narratives of foreign and exotic places. These early print cycles that circulated throughout Central Europe provided an early vision of “colonial fantasy” that pushed these states towards a colonialist agenda; and when that failed, an imagined colonial empire.

One of the most influential ethnographic depictions in the early colonial age was Hans Burgkmair’s 1508 monumental print series based on the Tirolese merchant Balthasar Springer’s 1505-06 *Die Merfart und erfahrung nüwer Schiffung und Wege zu*

⁴⁴ Zantop, 6.

⁴⁵ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1991).

vilm unerkannten Inseln und Königreichen (The Voyage and Discoveries of New Paths to Many Unknown Islands and Kingdoms). The narrative details Springer's journey to the Malabar Coast of India via Africa's coastal regions during his time in service to the Welser family. Specifically, Burgkmair's representation of Guinea on Africa's East Coast displayed Germany's early comprehension of African otherness.⁴⁶

As part of a two-meter-long frieze of woodcuts, the hand-colored *In Gennea* illustrates a central figure of a naked African man holding three spears with one cocked to attack (Figure 3.14). On the left side of the print, the artist places a small dancing boy; on right hand side, a mother with a small child sits on a tree stump. Springer's original text below the image comments on several aspects of the native Africans, "Moors are stark naked and wear gold rings on their arms and their feet," and "the burning heat of the sun which makes the moors as black as coal."⁴⁷ Using a narrow hatching technique to delineate the skin tone and texture, Burgkmair produced a more truthful representation of Africans than had previously been shown in the early modern era. As Stephanie Leitch noted, the "frieze reflects the most diverse view of African and Indian natives that a European artist had produced to date: a panoply of activities, a profusion of peoples, and perspectives into their humanity...In the frieze, Burgkmair weds physiognomy and ethnography – he evokes the particular within the general – and in so doing so, he gives a prescient view of organized human diversity."⁴⁸ Leitch argues that Burgkmair's

⁴⁶Jean Michael Massing, "Burgkmair's Depictions of Native Africans," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 27 (Spring 1995): 40-41. Burgkmair's woodcut series were still reproduced well into the seventeenth century; as Jean Michel Massing noted, Burgkmair's ethnographic woodcuts appear at the end of Giovanni Botero's *Relatione universalis* from 1618.

⁴⁷ Massing, "Hans Burgkmair's Depiction of Native Africans," 40-41.

⁴⁸ Stephanie Leitch, "Burgkmair's Peoples of Africa (1508) and the Origins of Ethnography in Print," *Art Bulletin* (June 2009): 149-153.

woodcuts “offer a discursive space for the portrayal of ‘race’.”⁴⁹ Rather than representations based upon notions of formulaic otherness, Burgkmair created a taxonomic categorization of other peoples reliant upon narrative and first-hand accounts. The visual importation of others into German lands constructed an early wave of colonial sentimentality and a longing for their place in the colonial world.

Although the Electorate of Saxony did not have tangible colonial territories in the early modern period, the pervasive and invasive visual and material culture of the colonies allowed the Saxons to imagine they did. As princes and elite members of German courts walked among their foreign artistic objects made of colonially sourced materials, they imagined themselves as the owners of those acquired colonies. “The ‘colony’ thus became the blank space for a new beginning, for the creation of an imaginary national self, freed from history and convention – a self that would prove to the world what ‘he’ could do.”⁵⁰ As I will illustrate in the subsequent sections of this chapter, ivory became the material marker of Saxony’s colonial wistfulness. The material’s colonial status among precious *Kunstammer* objects aided in building a web of colonial mythologies in order to concretize their imagined coloniality.

The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway and the Tangible Colonial Empire

Situated in the northwestern corner of Europe, the small seaside Kingdom of Denmark-Norway was often on the periphery of European political importance. As the new global age ushered in drastic changes in Europe, Denmark-Norway quickly rose to prominence as a small colonial power and the gateway to the Baltic Sea. After the collapse of the fourteenth-century Kalmar Union – a politically-driven coalition of

⁴⁹ Leitch, “Burgkmair’s Peoples of Africa,” 148.

⁵⁰ Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 9.

Scandinavian countries – Denmark and Norway united to form a single country under the Danish monarch. With the expansion of their territory, Denmark-Norway formulated various avenues to become the dominant power in the area, particularly against their greatest rival, Sweden. The answer lay in the Øresund, the principal route for Baltic Sea trade.⁵¹ Situated between Danish- Norwegian Zealand and Swedish Skåne, this narrow strait became the primary shipping route for the English and the Dutch into these northern waters. Formerly a difficult waterway to navigate, innovations in maritime travel allowed for easier movements through the straits and into the Baltic. As Knud Jespersen noted, “this trade route rapidly became the busiest and most important in Europe and, as it ran through Danish waters, it naturally had a significant effect on long-term development within Denmark.”⁵² With Denmark-Norway’s strategic positioning as the gateway to such an important trade route, Copenhagen’s harbors developed into important trade ports for European naval powers. As such, Denmark-Norway’s economy was now reliant on international shipping and trade, rather than agriculture, like Sweden.⁵³ In the early modern period, the Baltic Sea trade opened up new possibilities for the obtainment of much-needed crops as well as desirable ship-building materials for the European naval powers.

The Danish-Norwegians, acting as the guards of the Scandinavian waterways, used their geographic position to exert power over these sea-trading nations. They levied a tax, known as the Sound Due, on any ship travelling through the Øresund into the Baltic, which filled the monarchical coffers and provided Denmark-Norway with an

⁵¹ Knud Jespersen, *A History of Denmark*, trans. Ivan Hill and Christopher Wade (London: Springer Nature Ltd., 2004), 13.

⁵² Jespersen, *A History of Denmark*, 134.

⁵³ Jespersen, 145.

economic boom over their neighboring rival, Sweden. The Sound Dues, in place for almost four hundred years beginning in 1429, were collected from the two Danish-Norwegian ports at the mouth of the Øresund, and by 1587, they equated to almost two-thirds of the “national revenue.”⁵⁴

Denmark-Norway’s coloniality began long before many other European nations. In 1380, King Olaf II (1370-1387) united Denmark and Norway in a personal union that would last for centuries. The unification with Norway brought several other small island territories under Danish protection, including the Orkney and Shetland Islands, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Greenland and the monarchy maintained strict control over these island nations for centuries.⁵⁵ In 1636, King Christian IV established a trade monopoly over Greenland, which was given to a Copenhagen-based trading company in order to maintain Danish sovereignty; the monarchy fortified this monopoly when King Christian V gave Copenhagen and Bergen monopoly over sailing to Greenland.⁵⁶ The Danes continued to exercise their colonial control with a 1708 trade monopoly on Iceland. While not particularly lucrative, these trade monopolies, like the Øresund Sound dues, were an exertion of Danish-Norwegian power in an area of growing geo-political importance.

As tales of colonial adventures and tangible materials returned to the continent, European nations steadily built trading companies. The illustrious East India Trading

⁵⁴ Svalesen, *The Slave Ship Fredensborg*, 45. The tax was incredibly unpopular among other seafaring nations, as the Baltic provided strategic trade routes and access to needed materials and crops to much of Europe, but the taxes were not lifted until 1857 when American merchants refused to pay.

⁵⁵ Jespersen, *A History of Denmark*, 22. The Danes ultimately lost the Orkney and Shetland Islands to Scotland in 1468, as they were pledged as a dowry to Scotland during the marriage agreements of Christian I’s daughter Margrete to the Scottish King James I. The Faroe Islands and Greenland are still a part of the Kingdom of Denmark today.

⁵⁶ Jespersen, 26.

Companies of England and the Netherlands were unrivaled in their global influence and authority. In accordance with this global trend, in 1616 King Christian IV created *Dansk Ostindisk Kompagni* (East India Company) and established a colony in India.⁵⁷ The first expedition under Denmark-Norway's new trading company in 1618 was a success, which produced the kingdom's first international trading post, Fort Dansborg, at Tranquebar on the Coromandel Coast on the Indian subcontinent.⁵⁸ With the continued success of their eastern colonies, King Frederik IV (1699-1730) chartered the Asiatic Company in 1732 for exclusive trading rights in India and China.⁵⁹

After successful colonizations in the east, the Danish-Norwegian monarchy looked south to Africa as a new land of colonial promise. Trading companies brought in ships full of colonial products and turned Copenhagen into one of the busiest and most important trading centers in Northern Europe.⁶⁰ In 1671, the monarchy inaugurated the Danish West India Company; this trade enterprise reorganized in 1674 and became the *Vestindisk-guineisk Kompagni* (Royal Chartered West India and Guinea Company), which ultimately dissolved in 1754.⁶¹ In 1658, Denmark founded Fort Christiansborg on Africa's Gold Coast in modern-day Ghana; and in 1736, Denmark expanded their colonial reach in Africa with Fort Fredensborg about seventy-five kilometers west of Fort Christiansborg.⁶² With this continued success, the Oldenburg monarchy then set its sights on the New World and gained a colonial base in the Caribbean with the acquisition of St.

⁵⁷ Svalesen, *The Slave Ship Fredensborg*, 8.

⁵⁸ Jespersen, 21. As Leif Svalesen notes, Tranquebar (also spelled Trankebar) was also known as Tarangambadi. Svalesen, 25.

⁵⁹ Svalesen, 26.

⁶⁰ Svalesen, 26.

⁶¹ Svalesen, 26. See also Holger Weiss, *Ports of Globalisation, Places of Creolisation: Nordic Possessions in the Atlantic World During the Era of the Slave Trade* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 10.

⁶² Svalesen, 72.

Thomas in 1670.⁶³ The Danes continued their New World expansion with the purchase of St. John in 1717-18 and St. Croix in 1733.⁶⁴ With each of these strategic colonial posts, Denmark-Norway gained vast political importance throughout the globe.

From the mid-seventeenth century until the early nineteenth century, the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, in harmony with colonial trends, developed into a small but significant participant in the Atlantic slave trade. As the fourth largest navy in Europe during the early modern period, the Danes had the advantage over other Scandinavian countries in establishing trade routes and a colonial presence.⁶⁵ The Danish-Norwegian trade of slaves began in earnest in the 1660s after the founding of Fort Carolusborg in the Kingdom of Fetu; after a year in operation, Fort Frederiksborg replaced the original Fort Carolusborg in 1658.⁶⁶ However, the Danish-Norwegian slave trade did not meet its apex until the 1780s, when the Danes exported about five percent of the total slaves taken from the Gold Coast.⁶⁷ In total, it is believed that the Danish exported and transported around 111,000 enslaved Africans abroad over four hundred and fifty ships between 1660 and 1806.⁶⁸ This accounts for roughly 0.9% of the 12.5 million Africans kidnapped and trafficked across the Atlantic, and thus becoming the seventh-largest slave trading nation in Europe in the early modern period.⁶⁹

Over the course of the one hundred and fifty years of Danish-Norwegian slave and commodity maritime trade, the various Danish-Norwegian companies oscillated back

⁶³ Svalesen, 72.

⁶⁴ Svalesen, 72.

⁶⁵ Erik Gøbel, *The Danish Slave Trade and its Abolition* (Boston: Brill, 2016), 3-4.

⁶⁶ Gøbel, *The Danish Slave Trade and its Abolition*, 5. The Kingdom of Fetu was located on the Gold Coast, in present-day Ghana.

⁶⁷ Gøbel, 6.

⁶⁸ Gøbel, 10.

⁶⁹ Gøbel, 10.

and forth between private and royal charters. For example, in 1754 the West Indian and Guinea Company dissolved, which allowed for the Danish Royal Guinea Trade Board (*Den kongelige Guineisk Handelsdirektion*) to secure a monopoly over African trade. In 1765, however, the Guinea Company (*Guineisk Kompagni*) – established by Henning Frederik Bargum – attempted to commandeer control as the main purveyor of slave trading in Denmark-Norway after the dissolution of the West India and Guinea Company; while Bargum’s trade company received a royal charter, it was not given exclusive monopolistic rights over African trade.⁷⁰ After the Company went bankrupt in 1776, the Danish-Norwegian monarchy re-seized control and chartered the Danish Royal Trade.⁷¹ In 1781, however, the Baltic and Guinea Trading Company (*Østerøisk-guineisk Handelsselskab*) took over these trade routes once given a royal charter.⁷² This singular instance illustrates several intriguing things: first, the slave trade was not always profitable for Denmark-Norway and companies either dissolved or were continually reformed and reorganized; and second, the continued reorganization elucidates the importance of the slave trade to Denmark-Norway’s colonial endeavors as well as the importance of colonial prosperity to the crown. Particularly, the exportation of enslaved Africans was indelibly integral to plantation owners in the Danish-Norwegian Caribbean for the profitability of the sugar trade.⁷³

On slave ships, the enslaved Africans were stored in the hull in cramped and uninhabitable quarters, where illness and death abounded. Travelling along the Middle Passage of the Triangular Route, enslaved Africans were carried next to various African –

⁷⁰ Gøbel, 11.

⁷¹ Gøbel, 11.

⁷² Gøbel, 11.

⁷³ Gøbel, 11.

and some Danish – commodities needed for the Caribbean territories and the homeland. Erik Gøbel illustrated the typical cargo of an eighteenth-century Danish-Norwegian slave ship. In the inventory from the *Patientia* from July 1753, the slave ship carried: “275 enslaved Africans (at a price of 26,561 RDL [rigsdaler]), 301 *lod* [equal to 14.6 grams] of gold, 62 large elephant tusks weighing 2,508 lbs (1,001 RDL), and 108 so-called *crevels*, weighing 1,052 lbs (175 RDL).”⁷⁴ Once anchored in the Caribbean, the slaves were offloaded and sold and the ship was refitted to hold hundreds of pounds of sugar, cotton, and precious woods. The ship then traveled back across the Atlantic, where the ship and its crew would offload the colonial commodities and sell them at port. The importation of foreign products into Denmark-Norway thus marked the small nation as a major player on the European political stage.

While sugar, cotton and wood had multiple uses throughout the Kingdom, ivory was of particular consequence to the monarchy and to the king’s art collections. As Jørgen Hein noted, before African colonization, Denmark-Norway obtained ivory from the Netherlands, as many Central and Northern European nations did.⁷⁵ After the establishment of Fort Christiansborg, ivory travelled the triangular route from Africa to the Caribbean and finally to Copenhagen in sporadic and intermittent intervals. It was not until the 1690s, Hein maintains, that large amounts of African tusks made their way into Copenhagen’s ports, as evidenced from the 1701 arrival of the *Fridericus Quartus* in Copenhagen and its 7,195 pounds of ivory.⁷⁶ Lorenz Spengler, a prominent eighteenth-century ivory carver, noted that in 1780-81 thousands of pounds of ivory were sold in

⁷⁴ Gøbel, 20.

⁷⁵ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle*, 50

⁷⁶ Hein, 50. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, *Memoires et Document*, vol. 4, 41, 47, 65 respectively.

Copenhagen ranging in weight from one hundred to one hundred and thirty five pounds.⁷⁷ The direct availability of ivory to the Danish-Norwegian crown created the opportunity for the kingdom to become one of the artistic leaders of ivory carving and turning in the early modern world.

Unlike the Electorate of Saxony, the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway's global presence created a tangible colonial link in the minds of its citizens. The Danes did not need to imagine the acts of colonial domination and rule, like the Saxons, nor did they need to create intricate mythologies on the nature of colonialism; the Danes lived it. For the monarchy, their physical ability to rule over global properties – rather than imagined ones – promoted them as leaders of their geographic area. Like England and the Netherlands, Denmark-Norway's trade in global commodities, lands, and peoples propelled them to new geo-political heights and unmatched artistic production in Northern Europe. The filling of the *Kunstkammer* cabinets with glorious colonial materials was a tangible and direct message of this colonial expansion. As the Danes mastered their tangible colonial universe, ivory was Danish-Norwegian colonialism's physical manifestation at home.

Black Gold verse White Gold: The Interconnectivity of Ivory and the Atlantic Slave

Trade

Before I turn my attention to the ivory ships in the Danish-Norwegian and Saxon *Kunstkammern*, I must first establish the interconnection between ivory and slavery in the

⁷⁷ Hein, 50. Quoted from Lorenz Spengler, "Om Elfenbeenets Egenskaber og den Kunst at holde de deraf udarbejdede værker hvide, og naar de allerede er blevne gule eller brune, at gjøre den sneehvide igien," *Nye Samling af det kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskabs Skrifter*, 2, 1783, 205.

early modern world. As I will explicate, the correlation between these two is more elemental than the mere fact they were transported together overseas, although this did lend itself for the creation of a material signification. The association between ivory and enslaved Africans lay, I posit, at the early modern polarity between black and white and ivory's artistic application as skin. In this section, I provide a discussion of this polarity, remarking on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century understandings of black versus white. I then equate these societal constructions to the growing racial awareness throughout the early modern period, and particularly, how blackness became negatively connoted as other to whiteness. Through an explication of ivory as a global, mobile, and colonial material, I reveal the deep interconnections between ivory and slavery and how ivory could act as a material metonymy for the exportation and enslavement of African peoples.

Black/White Color Polarity in Early Modern Europe

Today, white and black are often seen as distinct opposites of one another; one the absence of color, the other the combination of all color. Black and white also insinuate darkness and melancholy or light and purity, respectively. For example, as Merriam-Webster thesaurus illustrates, black is synonymous with the following: dirty, soiled, wicked, cold, gloomy, murky, dire, desolate, immoral, iniquitous, malevolent, bad, evil, wicked, and sinister; white, on the other hand, is connotated with pearly, impassioned, clean, innocent, pure, spotless, candescence, healthy, gentle, impeccable, chaste, moral, virtuous, guiltless, and righteous. These contemporary western cultural associations began to appear in the early modern world and thus instigated an othering process that would have far-reaching societal effects for centuries.

The juxtapositional correlation between black and white was not new to early modern Europe as it had been established in Ancient Greece and Rome. Authors like Homer utilized the color black to illustrate the oppositional nature of darkness from lightness. “The Homeric and Orphic Creation myth that it was the black-winged Night (niktos) and Erebus (darkness) who gave birth to a silver egg from which Eros, a synonym for light and the sun, hatched. Thus, darkness (night) retreats from the light, so that the world and life could begin.”⁷⁸ This connection continued in the description of other peoples as the ancient Greeks understood black African skin to come from the sun. “The Æthiopians then were white and fayre/ Though by the worlds combustion since made black/When wanton Phaeton overthrew the Sun.”⁷⁹ In this description, peculiarly, the Æthiopian – a common term for a majority of African peoples – originated as white men but were then turned into black men, insinuating that whiteness was the human norm and the sun as the instigator of racial difference. Perhaps the most potent utilization of black in the ancient world was Hippocrates’s designation of the four bodily humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. As Milan Hrabovský commented, Hippocrates understood black bile to be an “improper mixture of blood,” which ultimately affected human behavior.⁸⁰ The author summarized the building of black’s vernacular comprehension, “(a) in mythology as the night (*niktos*) associated with the initial state of the world and with the world of the dead, (b) darkness (*skotos*) as opposed

⁷⁸ Milan Hrabovský, “The Concept of ‘Blackness’ in Theories of Race,” *Asian and African Studies* 22, no.1 (2013): 68.

⁷⁹ Adjei Adjepong, “The Image of Pre-Colonial African in European Circles,” in *Distance Forum, a Multidisciplinary Book of Academic Articles*, Vol. 1, ed. Eric Sakyi Nketiah (London: AuthorHouse, 2011), 16.

⁸⁰ Hrabovský, “The Concept of ‘Blackness’ in Theories of Race,” 69. The author adds, “which had a serious impact on human *character* since ancient medicine considered the human organism as *a part* of the universe.”

to light and as a bad nature, (c) black in the meaning of being inflamed (*flegein*) as well as a result of exceeding certain limits, and (d) black defined as melanin (*melanos*) responsible for melancholy.”⁸¹ Thus, the association of the loaded black and white terms to distinctive skin types were cemented in antiquity.

The polarity of black and white meandered into the Middle Ages. From the sixth to tenth centuries, black had been “the color of evil demons,” and eventually became associated with Satan, the antithesis of heavenly (white) virtues and character.⁸² Such color symbolism passed into the burgeoning Christian Church, which eventually equated black with “darkness and evil.”⁸³ This association continued throughout the Medieval church, as illustrated in Pope Innocent III’s (1161-1216) tract from the 1195 Holy Mass where the papal leader spoke directly on the nature of black and white: white became the symbol of Godly purity and innocence, while black signified “repentance, death and Good Friday.”⁸⁴

Beyond the Christian Church, medieval thinkers expanded Hippocrates’s four humors; particularly, Avicenna (980-1037) proposed the Satan’s influence in the creation of Hippocrates’s famed black bile.⁸⁵ In continuance of this medieval narrative, other medieval writers and theologians postulated the growing coloristic gap between black and white, like Julian of Norwich (1343-ca. 1416) and Rupert of Deutz (1075-1129).⁸⁶ Throughout the medieval period, blackness also acquired symbolic ties with Noah’s

⁸¹ Hrabovský, 71.

⁸² Gustav Jahoda, “The Savage African”, in *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999), 26

⁸³ Jahoda, “The Savage Africans,” 26.

⁸⁴ Hrabovský, “The Concept of Blackness,” 72.

⁸⁵ Hrabovský, 74.

⁸⁶ Rabia Gregory, “Black as Coconut and White as a Tusk: African Materials and European Display of Christ Before Columbus,” *Journal of Africana Religions* 2, no. 3 (November 2014): 396.

second son Ham, who medieval scholars argued was dark-skinned. The Book of Genesis's narration of Noah, the famed ark-builder and drunkard, villainized Ham. In the story, Ham saw his father drunk outside of his tent, "and Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside....When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servant shall he be to his brothers.'"⁸⁷ Ham became the predecessor of "villains and slaves;" in 1674, the theologian and geographer Hornius Georgius established Ham's blackness in his work *Arca Noae, sive Historia Imperiorum et Regnorum* by placing "Ham in Arabia, Syria, Egypt, and Africa."⁸⁸ Thus Ham became black. The reinforcing of the black/white color polarity in the Middle Ages concretized these associations for over a thousand years and paved the way for the early modern period to expand and codify these connotations to fit a newly global world.

In the early modern period, the symbolic nature of the black/white polarity continued and eventually developed into the "othering" of non-Europeans peoples. As Hrabovský noted, "the most fatal use and misuse of 'black' as a curse occurred during the slavery system which originated in the 1440s, when a Portuguese captain named Antam Gonçalves received two black slaves on the western coast of the Sahara."⁸⁹ The relationship between blackness and slavery continued with English poet Robert Baker's narrative poem on the nature of his 1562 and 1563 expeditions to the West Coast of Africa. He wrote, "and entering in [a river], we see/ a number of blacke soules,/whose likeliness seem'd men to be,/ but all as blacke as coles./ Their Captaine comes to me/ As

⁸⁷ Genesis, 9:20-25.

⁸⁸ Hrabovský, 74.

⁸⁹ Hrabovský, 74.

naked as my naile,/ Not having witte or honestie/ To cover once his taile.”⁹⁰ In the text, Baker visualizes Africans through their blackness and utilizes the existing semiotic nature of black to produce a heathen-like version of reality. Baker’s use of “blacke soules” and “blacke as cole” situate the African people into the world of darkness, which allowed the poet to finish his ethnographic assessment of Africans as being dishonest, having no “witte,” and uncivilized through the leader’s nakedness. Baker’s explication of African peoples becomes an even more decisive marker of European comprehension of blackness with England’s stringent and systemized meanings of black and white; “blackness, in England, traditionally stood for death, mourning, baseness, evil, sin and danger... White, on the other hand, was the color of purity, virginity, innocence, good magic, flags of truce, harmless lies, and perfect human beauty.”⁹¹

Writers and scholars outside of England also commented upon the darkness of Africans and the classification of race through skin, as can be seen in this anonymous Spanish chronicle translated into English in 1555. “*One of the marveyulous thynges that god useth in the composition of man, is coloure: which doubtless can not be white and an other black, beinge coloures utterly contrary. Sum lykewyse to be yelowe whiche is between blacke and white; and other of other coloures s it were of dyvers liveres.*”⁹² This striking translation categorizes racial difference through skin color, which was ultimately cemented in the early modern period.

⁹⁰ Adjei Adjepong, “The Image of Pre-Colonial African in European Circles,” 16. According to the author, poem originally appeared in “The First Voyages of Robert Baker to Guinie...1562” in Richard Hakluyt’s *The Principal Navigation, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation...*(London, 1589), 132.

⁹¹ Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: Black People in Britain Since 1504*, (Atlantic Heights, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1984): 135. Quoted in Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 9.

⁹² Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 17.

By the eighteenth century, geographic difference through color and skin were actualized in the European narrative. In France, as Anne Lafont recently illustrated, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu (1689-1755) continued the discussion of color's racial burgeoning stating, "*Il est si naturel de penser que c'est la couleur qui constitue l'essence de l'humanité.*" ("It is so natural to think that it is color that constitutes the essence of humanity")⁹³ Here, Montesquieu effectively insinuates human's nature to categorize and often sublimate visual difference. In 1788 art theorist and painter Claude-Henri Watelet (1718-1786) continued the discussion of visual racial difference into the world of art-making, remarking that, "Ultimately, one has to use primal colors...to which white is added to express light and black to express its deprivation."⁹⁴ Watelet's theorization of primal colors was primarily based on Sir Issac Newton's color theory discussed in his 1704 *Opticks*, in which Newton noted that "white is actually composed of the visual spectrum of all colors reflected and that black does not refract light."⁹⁵ This statement recalled the various instances of white as light and bright and black as dark and shadowy. Watelet discusses color's racial distinction further in the 1788 *Dictionnaire des Beaux-Arts*, writing "Attention must be paid to the different shades required by various objects. The shade of flesh is not the same for men...;it varies...according to the color that they received from nature, the climate in which they live, the profession they exert, their custom of living sheltered from air or being exposed

⁹³ Anne Lafont, "How Skin became a Racial Marker: Art Historical Perspective on Race," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 51, no. 1 (2017): 90.

⁹⁴ Anne Lafont, "How Skin Color became a Racial Marker," 89. Original French, "On sera toujours réduit en dernière analyse aux trois couleurs primitives...auxquelles on joint le blanc pour exprimer la lumière & le noir pour en exprimer la privation."

⁹⁵ Lafont, 89-90.

to the heat of the sun and the rigor of the seasons.”⁹⁶ This passage is particularly interesting in its interpolation of color as a racial marker in the later eighteenth-century.

Art Historian Albert Boime summarizes this polarity,

Negro is the Spanish and Portuguese word for the color black. Black is a pigment indispensable to artistic practice. Once the color black was applied to an ethnic group then peoples were differentiated like the colors arrayed on a palette, with *negro* at one end of the scale and *blanco* (*branco* in Portuguese) as the other... The confusion of formalistic categories with ideological biases is a singular phenomenon in the history of art has been sorely neglected. The racial opposition of black and white derives from the color scale; the famous *chiaroscuro*, or light and dark polarity, is intimately associated with the religious dualism of Good and Evil; and the compositional isolation of figures or inanimate motifs that is so central to the semiotics of Western art becomes decoded as exclusionary in the political sense... The predominance of black bile gave the skin ‘a swarthy’ appearance. Hence, ‘emotional expressiveness in art took the form of skin coloration in the early history of Western art, as well as of the grotesque and caricatured physiognomies that dehumanized various ethnic and social groups in the service of oppression.’⁹⁷

This new conception of racial color was illustrated no more clearly than in the visual arts of the early modern period. Since the fifteenth century, the black body had been used as a juxtapositional tool to highlight and glorify the white body. In elite portraiture through Europe during this period, as Kim F. Hall argued, “the ‘black skin’ of both male and female attendants became a key signifier...: associated with wealth and luxury ... black servants became meta-objects, symbols for the accumulation of profitable foreign goods.”⁹⁸ In such portraits, artists used black enslaved skin to “create

⁹⁶ Lafont, 97. The original French entry reads, “Il faut penser aux nuances différentes qu’exigent les objets divers. Les nuances ne sont pas les mêmes dans les **chairs** des hommes, des femmes, des enfants; elles varient encore dans les différents individus de même âge et du même sexe; suivant la couleur qu’ils ont recue de la nature, suivant le climat qu’ils habitent, la profession qu’ils exercent, l’habitude de vivre à l’abri de l’air ou d’être exposés à l’ardeur du soleil, à la rigueur des saisons.”

⁹⁷ Albert Boime, *The Art of Exclusion: representing blacks in the nineteenth century* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), 1-2 and 6.

⁹⁸ Kim F. Hall, “‘An Object in the Midst of Other Objects’: Race, Gender, and Material Culture,” in *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 211-12.

the ‘glow and radiance’ of whiteness.”⁹⁹ Not only did the black body acts as a visual contrivance to extol whiteness, but the enslaved body also projected European supremacy through its semiotic allusion to colonial expansion.¹⁰⁰ Black skin was thus the perfect foil to highlight and enhance the white; its murky obscurity allowed white skin to become luminescent.

Pierre Mignard’s *Portrait of Louise de K roualle, Duchess of Portsmouth* (1682) offers insight into this notion of blackness as the grounding of whiteness (Figure 3.15). The elegant Duchess, dressed in expensive and highly ornamented clothes, faces the viewer in front of a lush garden. Her carefully coiffed hair and delicate makeup highlight the powerful breadth of her ivory skin. Mignard’s meticulous use of color draws the viewer’s attention to the central d colletage of the young Duchess – the gleaming white expanse of the supple flesh against a portrait filled with deep and rich colors. To the left of the seated Duchess is a small black female child servant holding a shining shell filled with pearls. Mignard replicates the pearl’s around the young enslaved child’s neck, a potent illustration of the black/white color polarity, especially as pearls were often used in white women’s powdered face makeup. The artist used a deep brown to create the skin of the young slave that makes the child almost invisible and secondary to the portraiture’s purpose. The darkness of the skin complements and illuminates the whiteness of the Duchess’s skin, remarking on the growing racial awareness of the early modern period. Lafont notes that the portrait “signals an augmentation of the European powers’ natural resources through their prosperous colonies as well as an exploitation of

⁹⁹ Hall, “An Object in the Midst of Other Objects,” 247.

¹⁰⁰ Hall, 253.

black labor, presented as docile and consenting...Moreover, K roualle’s complexion seems all the lighter for being complemented by the presence of a small, manifestly servile dark person.”¹⁰¹ Angela Rosenthal expounded upon the role of the black page, arguing that Mignard presented the young girl as the “ideal colonial subject” through her projected subservience to her white owner.¹⁰² As both Lafont and Rosenthal illustrate, the visualization and materialization of black servitude in portraits showcasing white elitism compounded the already burgeoning distinction between black and white as both color and race and glorified Europe’s forced global hegemony. Such conceptualizations of blackness as both inferior and ancillary to whiteness traversed European early modern artistic culture; this trope of the African/black servant was utilized by many early modern artists, like Anthony Van Dyck’s *Henrietta of Lorraine* (1634), Frans Hals’s *Family Group in a Landscape* (1648), and Jan Steen’s *Fantasy Interior with Jan Steen and the Family of Gerrit Schouten* (1659-1660), to name a few (Figures 3.16-3.18).

Continuing this trend of the black servant in portraiture, The Saxon Electors and the Danish-Norwegian monarchs commanded this visual trope to illustrate their own imagined and tangible coloniality – respectively. In 1714, the famed French monarchical painter Hyacinthe Rigaud (1659-1743) conceived a stunning portrait of the young Elector Prince Augustus of Saxony with a black servant (Figure 3.19). The future Elector and King of Poland stands in contrapposto in his royal finery and looks off into the distance as if contemplating his future role as ruler, a common stance for European ruler’s illustration of political strength. To his right side, a small black servant with a turban

¹⁰¹ Lafont, “How Skin Color became a Racial Marker,” 92-93.

¹⁰² Angela Rosenthal, “Visceral Culture Blushing and the Legibility of Whiteness in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture,” *Art History* 27, no. 4 (September 2004): 569.

rushes behind the sagacious elector-to-be and carries the prince's helmet. The warm brown of the young servant's skin blends neatly into the background, while Rigaud's utilization of the green-blue backdrop highlights and frames Augustus's ivory flesh, increasing the visual difference between European and African skin. Shortly after Rigaud's portrait, Saxon court goldsmith, Johann Melchior Dinglinger (1164-1731) produced an exceptional frame for a miniature of Electress Christiane Eberhardine, the wife of Augustus the Strong (Figure 3.20). The portrait, a miniaturized replication of Louis Silvestre's (1675-1760) painting of the same subject, illustrates the future Queen of Poland seated on her throne dressed in a marvelously rich burnt orange dress that contrasts the saturated royal blue of the throne; her white skin is stark against the rich colors surrounding her. To her left, a small black servant attends to the Electress and looks towards her with admiration. His deep brown skin blends almost seamlessly with the brown background and complements and highlights the Queen's glowing ivory skin.

Augustus II the Strong employed Silvestre yet again to create a stunning monarchical portrait of the aging Central European ruler (Figure 3.21). The Elector and King share a similar stance and style of dress to the Rigaud portrait and allude to the earlier portrait as an age-progressing pendant work. Trailing behind the Elector is a young African boy carrying the end of the Elector's cape to either keep the ends from being frayed against the ground and dirtied or to create volume for the portrait. In the background, Silvestre includes a regiment of equestrian military riders, connoting Augustus II the Strong's military prowess and leadership. The inclusion of the young black servant in these Saxon portraits elucidates the growing trend of African materiality in the Electorate's collections, as will be explored in the following section. The

Electorate of Saxony, having no colonial territories, needed other European slave trading nations to fulfill the material needs of their colonial imagination. Commodities, like sugar, ivory, and slaves, were purchases from German or coastal ports as a method of materializing their imaginative mythologies. The importation of commodities through secondary and European markets – rather than primary contact with colonial territories – prompted Saxony’s colonial imagination, illustrated through the black figure in such portraits.

Like many slave trading nations, Denmark-Norway also incorporated the black body as a contrasting iconographic element in their royal portraits. In the early eighteenth-century portrait of King Christian VI, the anonymous artist portrays the splendor and wealth of the Danish-Norwegian monarchy (Figure 3.22). Surrounded by luxurious fabrics and a royal crown and scepter, the young king is flanked with another luxury item – a small black servant. The young man holds the King’s billowing red velvet cape off the marble-patterned ground, in a similar fashion to Silvestre’s portrait of Augustus the Strong. The elaborate costuming of the servant presents a stunning figure, but one that is secondary to the brightness of the king – in both a literal and figural sense. The bright highlights of the waist sashes and the reflections on the king’s armor draw the viewer’s gaze to the King’s creamy ivory skin as the young slave becomes another invisible addition to the composition.

In another Danish-Norwegian example, Princess Charlotte Amalie of Denmark (1706-1782) – King Christian VI’s unmarried sister – picks flowers from a presented bowl while standing in a lush garden (Figure 3.23). The artist, Johann Salomon Wahl (1689-1765), employed the princess’s vibrant orange and metallic dress to complement

the vast expanse of her skin left on display. On her left side, a young slave holds a plate of flowers for the Princess's inspection, signaling the African's role in the monarchical household. Like all of the portraits discussed above, the dark skin of the young slave blends into the background, creating an invisible side presence for the Princess. The viewer's attention is brought to the young slave through the bracketing of ivory textiles around the slave's face; thus the black is encapsulated by the white. The physical elevation and size differential of the princess to the slave child remarks upon the colonial and political weight of white skin verses black skin. As such, the notion of black and white skin was visually present in the Saxon and Danish-Norwegian courts and thus the comprehension of color as an indication of race began. Such black/white associations and connotations permeated the Danish-Norwegian and Saxon courts to become semiotically-charged racial divisions, particularly through the burgeoning cognizance of other people.

Growing Racial Awareness in the Early Modern World

In the expanding early modern world, the notion of race and racial difference started to manifest. Such conceptions were not "racial" in our contemporary parlance, but rather differentiated by geographic origin and color. As David Bindman noted, "'Race' in the eighteenth century was but one category of 'human variety'...The world 'race' before the eighteenth century tended to be associated with family or dynasty rather than a large community."¹⁰³ In early modern scholarship, race has developed into a highly contested term; as such, this section explores the various arguments surrounding

¹⁰³ David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 16.

the conceptions of race in the early modern world as well as how this affected the perception of black skin, and thus, ivory.

In her work on othered bodies in global maps, Valerie Traub posited that race was not a consolidated idea in the early modern world. “Race...seems to not have existed in the sixteenth century as a stable category of biological difference...Rather than relying on phenotypic characteristics – skin color, bodily structures – ...concepts of race in the early modern period drew from various, albeit exoticized, notions of social allegiance and geographical affiliation.”¹⁰⁴ Early modern scholars have debated the notion of what constituted “race” in this period; some scholars argue that the utilization of “race” is anachronistic, as such conceptions of visual geographic difference did not exist, while others counter that the processes of othering and defining physiognomies based upon “color” most assuredly began in this period. Academics like Margaret Hodgen claimed that “cultural divisions were never associated with ‘racial’ divisions. Any effort to distinguish among the ‘races’ of mankind on either anatomical, physiological, or cultural ground was relatively negligible.”¹⁰⁵ Others, like Kim F. Hall, have argued that although the modern connotations of racial identity and distinction did not develop until the nineteenth century, the continued and expanded polarity of black and white augmented and sustained geographic divides.¹⁰⁶ Like many early modern scholars, I would argue that a new conception of race developed during this period, but it was predicated on geographic and economic disparities rather than modern racial perceptions. For the

¹⁰⁴ Valerie Traub, “Mapping the Global Body,” in *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England*, ed. Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 44.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Traub, “Mapping the Global Body,” 57.

¹⁰⁶ See Hall, *Things of Darkness*.

European, the African or Indigenous American was not less than the white-skinned man because of his/her skin color, but rather because of their “lack” of modernity and innovation that was visualized through their skin.¹⁰⁷ But this distinction does not negate the fact that Europeans were aware of the difference in skin color and began to form the early ideals of racial differentiation.

Gustav Jahoda illustrates such a conception, arguing that the change in attitude towards black skin began during the Early Christian period, particularly with the association of Aethiopians – a catch-all term for dark-skinned peoples – with more adverse stereotypes that are suggestive of modern attitudes towards race.¹⁰⁸ Several notable early modern individuals described their conceptions of the differences of black skin: “Macro Polo wrote that the blacks are naked and horribly ugly, like devils”; ‘Mathieu Paris, Brunetto Latini and Roger Bacon referred to the ‘debauchery’; ‘John Mandeville described them as black ugly giants’; and Ludolph de Suchem mentioned a region peopled by black men and women with the bodies of monkeys.”¹⁰⁹ These descriptions illustrate the burgeoning racial othering of non-European – or non-white skinned – bodies. The severe and prejudicial assignation of blackness as debauched, ugly, and monstrous traversed European opinions of African otherness. In the fifteenth century, non-European continents were conceptualized with racialized iconographic attributes and then placed within an arbitrary hierarchical scale, as can be seen in my discussion of Cesare Ripa’s famed *Iconologica* in the subsequent section.¹¹⁰ Thus, the

¹⁰⁷ This harkens back to the common trope of “barbarism” verses “civility”. This does not, however, mean that there was no European perception of difference based upon skin color.

¹⁰⁸ Jahoda, “The Savage Africans,” 27.

¹⁰⁹ Jahoda, 27.

¹¹⁰ Gregory, “Black as Coconut and White as a Tusk,” 403.

ideological distinctions of otherness began to mature into what would become the systemized and taxonomic racial categorizations of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The foundational grounding of racial difference in this early period emerged under the basis of the spiritual classification system known as the “Great Chain of Being.” Based on ancient philosophers and theologians like Aristotle, Plato, and St. Augustine, this theoretization of the hierarchy of living beings merged with Christian dogma.¹¹¹ This “Great Chain” was based upon the idea of God as the Creator, who birthed all living beings from the simplest of organisms to the idyllic perfection of angels; the Chain becomes the hierarchical ordering of earthly existence with the express purpose of situating humanity with a systemized spectrum of Godly created life.¹¹² With such a system, humans were further classified through religious belief and technological advancement; thus, the white European gained the pinnacle spot on the hierarchical scale while peoples of darker skin were decreasingly listed.

François Bernier (1620-1688), a French physician and traveler, exemplified the systemized thinking of alterity and race in early modern Europe. On 24 April 1684 the Frenchman wrote an article, entitled “*Nouvelle Division de la terre, par les differences Espèces ou Races d’hommes qui l’habitent,*” for the *Journal des Sçavans*. For the first time, Bernier produced a codified and categorized explanation of racial difference via color with five different groupings of human variation: Whites; Blacks; Asian Whites; Lapps; Olive Greenish. Bernier explains,

Geographers of this time have only divided the earth according to its different countries or regions. The remarks which I have made upon men

¹¹¹ Jahoda, “The Savage Africans,” 32.

¹¹² Jahoda, 32.

during all my long and numerous travels, have given me the idea of dividing it in a different way. Although the exterior form of their bodies, and especially their faces, men are almost all different from one another, according to the different districts of the earth which they inhabit...; *still I have remarked that there are four or five species or races of men in particular whose difference is so remarkable that it may be properly made use of as the foundation for a new division of the earth...*

The author continues with a discussion of African Blacks, stating that,

under the second species I put the whole of Africa, except the coasts I have spoken of [Mediterranean ones]. What induces me to make difference species of the Africans, are, 1.) Their thick lips and squab noses. 2.) The *blackness which is peculiar to them*, and which is not caused by the sun, as many think; for if a black African pair be transported to a cold country, their children are just as black, and so are all their descendants until they come to marry with white women.¹¹³

Bernier, like many early modern thinkers, developed a pathway for racial visualization in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As such, these racial formulations would ultimately provide the grounding for the nineteenth century's prominent racial separation and segregation.

But Bernier was not the only predominant thinker of racial difference; Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1788), was perhaps the most influential scientific academic in regard to race. In 1735, Linnaeus published *Systema Naturae*, which proved to be a foundational moment for the modern idea of race.¹¹⁴ Utilizing the writings of Aristotle, Linnaeus produced a taxonomic system for humans, which he asserted were both animal and human.¹¹⁵ In his classification, the Swede organized humanity into four categories: *Europaeus albus* (European White); *Americanus rubescens* (American Reddish);

¹¹³ Quoted in Anne Lafont, "How Skin Color became a Racial Marker," 94. In this article, Lafont refers to Silvia Sebastiani and Claude-Olivier Doron's recent interpretation of Bernier, where they argued that the physician was not the first to develop the taxonomic system of race, but "he did modernize the concept of race by downplaying in the definition of race the preponderant idea of lineage and hereditary transmission.

¹¹⁴ Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*, 16.

¹¹⁵ Bindman, 16.

Asiaticus fuscus (Asian Tawny); and *Africanus niger* (African Black). Linnaeus explained this division in the 1737 *Critica botanica*, stating “[God] created one human, as the Holy Scripture teaches; but if the slightest trait [difference] was sufficient, there would easily stick out thousands of different species of man...But who with a sane mind would be so frivolous as to call these distinct species.”¹¹⁶ In the heavily revised 1758 edition of the famed biological text, Linnaeus reorganized his quadripartite categorization of humanity around the known concept of the Four Continents, in which he characterized Africans as “black, phlegmatic, relaxed. *African*. *Hair* black; frizzled, *skin* silky; *nose* flat; *lips* turned; crafty; indolent; negligent. *Anoints* himself with grease. *Governed* by caprice.”¹¹⁷ Rather than include geographic titles to his racial divisions, like Bernier, Linnaeus categorized the four races as “white, yellow, black, and red,” a division that would last for centuries.

As this subsection has shown, the development of racial politics was very much in the nebulous stages in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The conflation of religious doctrine, ancient medieval medicinal understandings, and the burgeoning study of human variety due to an ever-expanding globe produced an amalgamated and growing understanding of alterity. I strongly disagree with many of the scholars discussed above that early modern Europe did not visualize racial difference; that is not to say, however, that the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European comprehended racial difference

¹¹⁶ Carl Linnaeus, *Critica Botanica*, (Leiden: Wishoff, 1737), 153. The full quote reads: “[God] created one human, as the Holy Scripture teaches; but if the slightest trait [difference] was sufficient, there would easily stick out thousands of different species of man; they display, namely, white, red, black, and grey hair; white, rosy, tawny, and black faces; straight, stubby, crooked, flattened, and aquiline noses; among them we find giants and pygmies, fat and skinny people, erect, humpy, brittle, and lame people, etc. But who with a sane mind would be so frivolous as to call these distinct species.”

¹¹⁷ Linnaeus, *Systema Naturae*, Laurentii Salvii, 1758.

through twentieth- or twenty-first-century conceptualizations of race, which would result in an anachronistic historical reading of the period. But one cannot argue – particularly with the writings of Bernier and Linnaeus as glaring examples – that skin color did not become a factor in the determination of human difference. It might not have been the only determinative factor, but it most certainly played a role. With the expanding examination of human variety, the black and white color polarity concretized Europe’s perceived human hierarchical hegemony. In early modern Europe, whiteness became the standard; everyone else was other.

The Interconnected Materiality of Ivory and Slavery in the Early Modern World

As the above section illustrates, the racialization of skin in the early modern period provided a symbolic and material distinction that was harnessed throughout the visual arts. The growing comprehension of race and the different colors of the global population began a process of alterity for objects and materials of foreign goods. Through the expanded trade networks and the steady increase in the importation of foreign goods, materials became connoted with specific aspects of globality. Ivory, like Chinese porcelain or Japanese lacquer, developed into a geographically other commodity. I posit that ivory’s interconnectivity to slavery through European importation practices designated the material not only as a colonial commodity but as metonymic accessory to the illustration of Africa. As I illustrate here, ivory’s importation into Europe via ships and the triangular route produced a materiality synonymous with the slave trade. Through ivory and slave’s status as commodities in early modern Europe, ivory acted as a referential tool to suggest colonial supremacy – tangible or imagined – and acted as a comparative illustration of the black/white polarity of skin.

In the introduction of this dissertation, I articulated that ivory was a celebrated colonial commodity in Europe, indicated through its status as foreign, luxurious, exotic, its importation through overseas trade, and its exchange for currency. But it was not the fact that both ivory and slavery were both deemed commodities in the early modern world that connected them; rather, as I argue, it was the process of commoditization that intimately and strategically produced an interconnected narrative history that became tied to ivory's material understandings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In his analysis of an enslaved African's commoditization, Igor Kopytoff notes that the enslaved African only considered a commodity for a short time – from capture to sale – and returned to a non-commodity and individualized persona once assimilated into their new “host society.”¹¹⁸ Kopytoff continues stating, “What we see in the career of a slave is a process of initial withdrawal from a given original social setting, his or her commoditization, followed by increasing singularization (that is, decommoditization) in the new setting, with the possibility of later recommoditization.”¹¹⁹ For Kopytoff, the process of commoditization “is best looked upon as a process of becoming rather than as an all-or-none state of being. Its expansion takes in two ways: (a) with respect to each thing, by making it exchangeable for more and more other things; and (b) with respect to the system as a whole, by making more and more different things more widely exchangeable.”¹²⁰ Thus, Kopytoff's theory of commoditization is predicated on the

¹¹⁸ Igor Kopytoff, “The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 65.

¹¹⁹ Kopytoff, “The Cultural Biography of Things,” 64. Although Kopytoff's general argument of commoditization most certainly fits the capture and exploitation of Africans, his notion that the enslaved peoples were decommoditized once sold overlooks the fact that they were continually treated as property and as objects rather than a full person.

¹²⁰ Kopytoff, 73.

notion of exchange.¹²¹ On the whole, Kopytoff's theory on the commoditization process captures – for the most part – the structured othering procedures of slave traders and enslaved Africans. But how could such a process be implemented to discuss colonial material culture and the exportation and trade of colonial materials, like ivory? Like the enslaved African, ivory followed a similar commodified journey: the tusk – taken directly from its original “social setting”, the African elephant – to be used in exchange for European goods like weapons or alcohol. Once obtained by the European, the ivory – like the slave – was boarded onto a large ship to take the commodity to an unknown and new milieu. Once the commodity reached its port of call – whether that be in the Caribbean or Europe – the commodity was offloaded from the ship, re-commoditized as it was sold again in markets or at auction, and then singularized as the commodity became utilized for a specific purpose, like plantation work or for works of art. Like the enslaved African, ivory's commodity status established a direct link between material, trade, and geography.

But ivory's commodity status and its connection to slavery also lay in its designation as both a global and mobile material. As Giorgio Riello and Anne Gerritsen noted, “the social lives of things were global: they transcend the cultural and political boundaries of nations and even continents.” Ivory indeed transcended this notion of cultural boundary in a broad sense; but ivory also retained the material connotations of its original setting. Some ivory objects, like mythological or religious works, were of an ambiguous global locality; ivory's signification as skin was its most important material function. But when in its raw tusk form in the European markets or when carved or

¹²¹ Kopytoff, 83.

turned into othered objects – like images of Africans or ships – ivory’s determinative geography is one of the major illustrative mechanisms to the object’s materiality. In such forms, ivory becomes representative of a global world in the local setting, combining global materiality with local comprehension. While some objects were classified with the ambiguous “Indian” designation or if no geographic origin was noted in the inventories, ivory retained much of its global materiality, which was partially subordinated through European colonization. In other words, while ivory remained an African commodity, the process of carving or turning metamorphized the material – and thus the object as a whole – into a tangible example of European global supremacy. When viewed, ivory objects – like ships – connoted Africa through this European expansion. Within a European milieu, ivory ships promoted the continued local comprehension of the global.

On top of ivory’s global and commodity status, the material was also mobile. As Daniela Bleichmar and Meredith Martin have distinctly defined, “mobility, as conceived here, involved both physical and cultural trajectories. It made objects not only itinerant but also polyvalent, mutable, and interpretively richer than if they had stayed at home.”¹²² The authored continued this argumentation contending that the mobility of an object can also lead to the loss of its original meaning.¹²³ And often through this global movement, objects become “global goods” for European interpretation.¹²⁴ Through this construction,

¹²² Martin and Bleichmar, “Introduction: Objects in Motion in the Early Modern World”, in “Objects in Motion in the Early Modern World,” Special Issue, *Art History* 38, no. 4 (2015): 609.

¹²³ Martin and Bleichmar, “Introduction,” 614.

¹²⁴ Jessica Keating and Lia Markey, “‘Indian’ objects in Medici and Austrian-Habsburg inventories,” *Journal of the History of Collections* 23, no. 2 (2011): 287.

ivory was indeed a mobile material; it traversed vast distances to delight and inspire Europeans wealthy enough to afford it.

But ivory, unlike many other mobile objects or commodities, did not lose its original meaning per se. I suggest the initial loss of ivory's globality was dependent upon how the material was ultimately used. For religious or mythological sculptures, ivory often subsumed a European materiality to favor the identification of material with white skin. When used for political portraits, the ivory became a symbol of princely power and erudition, while jointly retaining a hint of globality to illustrate the ruler's growing international power. But when ivory was utilized to create objects of otherness or, as this chapter argues, ships, then the material's signification not only became global and mobile, but also colonial. Through this genre of ivory ships, the material could not only be read as foreign, but also African. Thus, it was ivory's commodity status that made it designatable as mobile, and furthermore, global. While the mobile can exist exclusively, the global needs the elements of the mobile; the object/material needed the mobility to be declared global and to gain global materiality. Thus, ivory's maturing global materiality directly illustrated African colonization in the European *Kunstammer*.

Ivory's status as a global and mobile commodity was obtained through its movement through colonialist practice. The heightened influx of ivory into Europe in the early modern period was directly correlated to the upswing in slave voyages from Africa to the New World. As such, without the slave trade itself, ivory's ingress into Europe would have been intermittent, at best, during the early modern period. Ivory's colonial materiality and connection to Africa is most prominently represented in the iconographic figures of the Four Continents that pervaded Europe during this period. This tetradic

division of the world's land dates to antiquity with philosophers, like Hippocrates, theorizing and sectioning the natural organization of the known world into three parts with the Americas joining in the sixteenth century.¹²⁵

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, The Four Continents were iconized as allegorical representations in the visual arts. Cesare Ripa, the famed Italian iconographer, ordered and categorized the iconic elements of each continent for universal (European) visual understanding. America was often illustrated as a bare-breasted woman with a feathered headdress carrying a bow and arrow; Asia as a woman carrying various garlands and flowers in one hand and a smoking incense burner in the other standing in front of or next to a camel. Ripa described Europe as, "A lady in a very rich Habit, of several colors, fitting between two...Cornucopias; the one full of all Sorts of Grain; and the other of black and white grapes; holding a Temple in her right Hand;...a Horse amongst Trophies and Arms;...many musical instruments by her;...All which shews it to be the *principal* Part of the World, for *Religion, Arts* and *Arms*" (Figure 3.24).¹²⁶ For Africa, Ripa describes the personification as,

A Blackamoor Woman, almost naked; frizl'd Hair; an Elephant's Head for her Crest; a Necklace of Coral; and Pendants of the same, at her Ears; a Scorpion in her right Hand, and a Cornucopia, with Ears of Corn, in her left; a fierce Lion by her, on one side, and a Viper and Serpent on the other. Naked because it does not abound with *Riches*. The Elephant is only in *Africa*. The Animas show that it abounds with them (Figure 3.25).¹²⁷

Ripa's conceptualization of Africa with the elephant headdress was not new; the conflation of the elephant with the personification of Africa dates to antiquity. As

¹²⁵ Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*, 24.

¹²⁶ Cesare Ripa, *Iconologica: or Moral Emblems* (Padua: Pietro Paulo Tozzi, 1618), 47.

¹²⁷ Ripa, *Iconologica*, 47.

illustrated on this Roman coin of Emperor Hadrian, ca. 136 CE, the reverse illustrates a reclining Africa surrounded by cornucopias and the exotic flora of the southern continent (Figure 3.26). An elephant trunk protrudes from the front of allegorical figure's crown, explicating the ancient connection between the animal and the land. The same motif can be found in Rome's African colonies as well, particularly this example from the El Djem Museum in Tunisia (Figure 3.27). Africa's personification continued into the Middle Ages through the continent's positioning on maps, yet her iconography often changed and it did not always include the elephant headdress. In the Italian Renaissance, Africa's elephant headdress – codified through Cesare Ripa's *Iconologica* – appeared in numerous important venues, like the overdoor decoration of the *Sala Regia* in the Vatican and in the *Sala de Mappà Mundi* in the Villa Farnese at Caprarola.¹²⁸

Images of Africa with an elephant headdress and/or an elephant permeated visual culture in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century church and private home ceiling frescoes as well as maps. The contemporary Maximilian Museum in Augsburg, formerly the Palais Heiss, represents such an illustration (Figure 3.28). Wolfgang Schmale noted that representations of the continental personifications in the eighteenth century were often a “visual expression of historical interest.”¹²⁹ The author points to two Central European depictions of the allegories: Jonas Drentwett's 1695 ceiling fresco in the Vienna Palace Augarten and Johann Rudolf Byss's 1717-18 large and masterful ceiling fresco in the Weissenstein Palace in Pommersfelden (Figures 3.29-3.30). In both early modern scenes,

¹²⁸ The final product of this fresco appears much different from the original drawing. The elephant tusk is shortened and made stubbier and the ivory tusks are thinned and shortened. But the inclusion of the elephant headdress into a such prominent place illustrates the iconographic connection between the elephant and Africa.

¹²⁹ Wolfgang Schmale, “Continental Allegories and the History of Mankind”, in *Language of the Continental Allegories in Baroque Central Europe*, eds. Marion Romberg, Wolfgang Schmale, and Josef Köstlbauer, (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 36-37.

Africa is portrayed as the lowest rung in the hierarchy of human variety, with Drentwett's Africa associated with pure nature and Byss's depiction of Africa as a child.¹³⁰ While neither of the Central European visualizations of the continent illustrate the elephant in relation to Africa, there is another striking iconographic element added to Europe: the ship. In both frescoes, Europe is shown in front of or next to a representation of a ship, which is situated between Africa and Europe. The positioning and utilization of the ship in these frescoes provides Europe with another metonymic illustration of their global prowess; a symbol that – when constructed in ivory – would visually and materially connect Europe and Africa.

While many churches and palatial buildings utilized the Four Continent motif in paintings and ceiling frescoes, perhaps the most important iteration of the four personifications appeared in the decorative arts: Meissen porcelain. In the early to mid-eighteenth century, Dresden became the progenitor and central geographic space for the development of one of the most admired and longed-for materials in early modern Europe: hard-paste porcelain. For centuries, Europeans sought various technological – and often alchemical – techniques to mimic and recreate the luminescent white porcelain from China. In 1708, Johann Friedrich Böttger (1682-1719) cracked the material porcelain code and thus ushered in a new decorative paradigm for Europeans. As a young apothecary's apprentice in Berlin, Böttger maintained that he had “discovered the *Goldmachertinktur*, or gold-making tincture, a brazen, attention-grabbing, and highly

¹³⁰ Schmale, “Continental Allegories and the History of Mankind,” 36-37.

dangerous boast that placed him...in the crosshairs of the cash-starved Hohenzollern prince.”¹³¹ As Benjamin Schmidt narrates,

An alchemist on the lam, Böttger promptly fled Prussia and the pursuing soldiers of Frederick I and stole across the border to Saxony, only to be ensnared by Elector, Augustus the Strong, who summarily tossed the wild-eyed, nineteen-year-old magician into the bowels of his Dresden Castle, where he was charged to replicate the alchemical performance of Berlin that got him into hot water in the first place.¹³²

Eventually, the young prisoner – alongside the Silesian Count Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus – created Europe’s greatest decorative advancement; and with this invented process, the creation and establishment of the Meissen porcelain manufactory in 1710. Meissen became the trending decorative rage in eighteenth-century Europe, with many countries instituting their own porcelain factories, like Royal Crown Deby in England, Limoges Porcelain in France, and Royal Copenhagen in Denmark-Norway. Although porcelain manufactories popped up throughout Europe, Meissen was the inaugural porcelain stronghold that facilitated visual trends for eighteenth-century European decorative arts.

In the 1760s, Meissen artist Johann Joachim Kändler (1706-1775) reimagined the centuries-long trend of the Four Continents in porcelain (Figure 3.31). The stunning quadripartite Meissen figures prompted a new wave of visual and material iterations of the four personifications throughout Europe. In regard to the current discussion, Kändler’s depiction of Africa became endemic to mid-to-late eighteenth-century understanding of both racial divisions and material acknowledgment of the continent to

¹³¹ Benjamin Schmidt, “The Rearing Horse and the Kneeling Camel: Continental Ceramics and Europe’s Race to Modernity,” in *Bodies and Maps: Early Modern Personification of the Continents*, ed. Maryanne Cline Horowitz and Louise Arizzoli (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 326.

¹³² Schmidt, “The Rearing Horse and the Kneeling Camel,” 326.

the European mindset (Figure 3.32). Africa, particularly visible through the stark contrast of her black porcelain skin against the surrounding white porcelain, sits on a white and golden-brown lion with ornamental flowers scattered across the base. The prostrated lion looks up at the personification of its homeland as it playfully licks its lips, which effectively showcases its sharp and dangerous teeth. The figure of Africa sits horizontally on the back of the lion with her right leg behind the left barefoot. On each leg, a set of multicolored feathered greaves punctuate the black porcelain surface with bright reds, blues, and purples. Africa is surrounded and clothed with a bright white diaphanous skirt trimmed in gold. The personification wears a corset of the same multicolored feathers as the greaves, which push and accentuate her bare breasts; and atop the feathered corset is a row of multicolored gems with gold ornamentation. The white and gold-trimmed fabric is repeated as a billowing cape clasped at the sternum with a gold sun motif. In her right hand, Africa holds a gold turned staff and in her left hand carries a stalk of wheat, illustrative of the common African iconographic element of the cornucopia. Although Africa is placed in a quite a static position, Kändler playfully contorts the neck of the figure to add a dynamic dimension that replicates elements of the other four continents. Perhaps the most integral iconographic element of Africa is her elephant headdress. The artist carefully articulates the rough gray skin of the elephant and highlights the gesticulating nature of the elephant's ears. Finally, two large ivory tusks frame the curved and elongated trunk and lead the viewer's eye directly to the personification's face. In juxtaposition to the rest of the composition, Africa's skin is a stark material contrast, particularly in relation to the other three continent figures. In

Kändler's *Africa*, the emerging comprehension of human skin variety becomes material and ivory becomes an accessory to the continent.

Through the renewed interest in representations of the Four Continents in the middle of the eighteenth century, ivory's material and symbolic relationship was revitalized and solidified. Meissen's position as a porcelain trendsetter created a demand for the replication and reproduction of Kändler's figural group, thus prompting a widespread European visualization and materialization of ivory's geographic affiliation with Africa. Although ivory was occasionally designated as generically exotic and foreign – or without a specific geographic designation – the material's visual connection to Africa through representations like Kändler's created a steadily growing tangible link to the continent. In conjunction with the profusion of visual and material examples, the increased comprehension of trans-Atlantic trade and the influx of African materials into Europe cemented the material association between ivory and Africa. The blackness of the personification's skin, on the other hand, recalled the ever-escalating colonial material and slave trade, thus visually connecting Africa and black skin.

With ivory – and the elephant's – exacting placement atop the personification of Africa, several material and semiotic threads come to light. First, as has been discussed in the previous two chapters, ivory's material signification as the ideal divine and imperial/monarchical skin predominated early modern Europe's utilization of the material, which was, in fact, the more common form of ivory sculpture. Furthermore, the particular placement of the ivory atop/above the black African skin provides a subtle visual reminder of African placement within the spectrum of human variety and its continued alterity. Secondly, while ivory was most assuredly an expressive material for

white skin – particularly in the seventeenth century – the growing trade demands of Europe upon Africa as well as the influx of African goods and enslaved peoples prompted a new materiality of ivory to grow throughout the eighteenth century. Through ivory’s transportation alongside enslaved Africans through the Triangular Route, the material gained a significant and semiotically-enhanced material relationship to the enslaved person, and thus, African and black skin. Although ivory was not necessarily used in the representation of black skin, the African-sourced material had an ingrained materiality of African otherness that Europeans sought to dominate. Through the carving of ivory by European hands, the ivory was once again colonized and “civilized” for European collection.

Finally, the utilization of ivory in the personification of Africa created a material accessory for Africa in European representations. Much like Asia (China) and porcelain, ivory had the material power to acknowledge and conjure Africa in the European *Kunstammern*. The direct link of Africa and ivory continued to grow throughout the early modern period and thus often changed how ivory objects were viewed and understood, like the two ivory frigates this chapter discusses. As the seventeenth century progressed into the eighteenth century, the visual and material recognition of ivory as Africa grew and thus changed the viewer’s comprehension of the objects. Through this material process, ivory becomes Africa’s metonymic accessory – just as the ship was the metonymic European accessory for othered domination and colonialism. Ivory objects did not have to display representations or symbols of Africa, the material alone projected Africa to its European viewer.

Ivory Ships in the Early Modern *Kunstammer*: Changing Materiality under a New Global Paradigm

I would now like to return to the two ivory ships and begin to formulate their new material role in the evolving global early modern period. As such, I begin this section with an evaluation of Jacob Zeller's *Große Fregatte* in the Dresden Grünes Gewölbe and its material connection to the early modern Saxon Elector's quest for colonial legitimacy without colonial properties. Their imagined colonialism and admiration for exotic and foreign goods produced a monarchical collection that rivaled other colonial nations. I posit the ways in which Zeller's frigate materially mutated from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries through the continued acquisition of exotic goods, the development and success of the Meissen porcelain manufactory, and the placement of othered figures around the frigate. Moreover, I argue that the frigate's materiality shifted from a mythological representation of a mythical ship to a spectacular and monumental representation of Saxony's longing for colonial holdings. I then turn my attention back to Jacob Jensen Nordmand's *Nørske Love* and discuss the large ivory frigate in relation to Denmark-Norway's tangible colonies. Through the development of a small, but nonetheless important, set of colonial territories and the establishment of global trade companies, Nordmand's frigate becomes a veritable beacon of Danish-Norwegian colonial might. Like the Dresden frigate, through the juxtaposition of othered figures – mainly Greenlanders depicted on narwhal ivory – Nordmand's frigate took on the materiality of Danish-Norwegian trade supremacy in Africa. Understood as a trans-Atlantic commodity, ivory's relationship to Africa and its enslaved peoples blossomed in

the Oldenburg's collections and prompted a material explication of Denmark-Norway's growing global power.

Jacob Zeller's Frigate and the Grünes Gewölbe

As I elucidated in the beginning of this chapter, Saxony continually built a conceptualized imagined colonialism in the early modern period, which was particularly evident through the possession and display of exotic and foreign-sourced materials and objects. Within the Dresdner princely collection, the mythological nature of Jacob Zeller's frigate encapsulates the imaginative coloniality the Saxon's attempted to project and nurture throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Foreign materials and objects, like the frigate, were a fictionalized realization of the tangible realities of overseas expansion visualized through colonial material. As Zantop stated, "since a colonial discourse could develop without being challenged by colonized subjects or without being tested in a real colonial setting, it established itself not so much as 'intellectual authority' (Said) over distant terrains, than as mythological authority over the collective imagination."¹³³ Accordingly, as I argue, Saxony's lack of colonial properties did not deter their creation of a performative colonial space in their princely collections. Moreover, the fact that Saxony did not have to deal with the physical and socio-economic realities of possessing tangible territories allowed the small Electorate to create an idyllic and utopian enterprise that was uniquely Saxon.

On 8 September 1724, Zeller's frigate moved from the princely *Kunstammer* to the Old Grünes Gewölbe, marking a transition that would initiate a change of its materiality from mythological to an integral part of Saxony's colonial imagination. The

¹³³ Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 6.

1723 inventory of the newly inaugurated Grünes Gewölbe – quoted in the beginning of this chapter – reestablishes the generational relation of the Saxon electors to the frigate. Zeller’s careful articulation of the names of every Saxon ruler onto the hull of the ship and the massive ornately designed coat of arms of Johann Georg and his wife on the frigate’s mainsail set a magnificent sight. Through the utilization and recognition of the Elector’s ancestry, the frigate thus becomes the mythological and material vehicle for Saxony’s imagined colonialism.

Once placed within the princely collections, Zeller’s frigate began to interact with the multitudes of other figures and exotic materials, particularly those that depicted Africans. As I argue, through the profusion of antique and contemporary illustrations of Africa with an elephant headdress, ivory metonymically represented Africa and vice versa.¹³⁴ But ivory’s material relationship extended beyond its representation alongside Africa, particularly when placed in proximity to other/blackamoor figures. In the Grünes Gewölbe, specifically, the frigate was often situated relatively close to small representative figures of African stereotypes and blackamoor figures; the simple act of proximal positioning completed the material recognition of ivory to Africa.

In the early 1720s, the Grünes Gewölbe’s collection expanded with the purchase of three small-scale ivory African figurines – two representing humanized monkeys and one of a kneeling African woman in chains (Figures 3.33-3.35). Made between 1720-1725 by an unknown Dresden ivory carver, these three statuettes provide a tangible link between the ivory’s material connection to Africa and the conception of Africa in the

¹³⁴ This was also the case when continental iconography was shifted. For example, a transposed elephant to Asia or a camel to Africa, like Tiepolo’s ceiling frescoes of the Four Continents in the Würzburg Palace. While such representations would seem to upend the current argument of ivory’s exudence of Africa, it does not.

Dresden collections. Johann Heinrich Köhler (1669-1736) decorated and ornamented the small figurines with jewels, which illuminated its economic and cultural value to Elector Augustus the Strong. The collection's inventory discusses the figurines, stating "two monkeys with coats, wearing a bowl in which fruit of oriental cut stones lie...a gold-plated basket, with the same kind of fruit, both items are of brown agate with green festoons and somewhat golden decorative rats, along with a number of diamonds and rubies from Köhler."¹³⁵ Jutta Kappel notes that these figures were part of the grotesque tradition, with a conflation of animal and human characteristics to produce "absurd appearances."¹³⁶ In *Grotesque Monkey with a Fruit bowl* and *Grotesque Monkey with a Basket*, the monkeys have the feet of chickens yet are anthropomorphized with human characteristics that create a humorously uncomfortable figuration of African themes. Each monkey stands on a dark brown stone base decorated with precious stone and gold-plated silver. The striking contrast of the cool-toned brown to the slightly yellow and warm ivory creates a stunning juxtaposition that drew viewer attention. While the inclusion of chicken feet was certainly distracting and perhaps questionable for viewer comprehension, they were very much secondary to the conception of the work as a whole. The gold-plated basket and the gold bowl with its brightly colored fruits acted as the focal point of the sculptural composition, which then directed the viewer's eye towards the humanized face of the monkey, evident through the placement of diamonds in the center of its forehead. The expressive eyes, the smile, and the poses of the animals appear humanoid, but the inclusion of articulated body hair, a protruding snout and

¹³⁵ Kappel, *Elfenbeinkunst im Grünen Gewölbe zu Dresden*, 271.

¹³⁶ Kappel, 272.

mouth, as well as the flattened nose produce a confusing conflation of human and animal. The two monkey figurines are further enhanced and connected to Africa through the third figure: the kneeling African woman.

Like to the two monkey figures, an unknown local artisan sculpted the *African woman with feather crown*, sometime between 1720-25, with Köhler's signature jewelry work. While not explicitly stated, it is more than likely that the same artisan completed all three of the figures and they were meant to be seen as a set, rather than individualized works. The inventory describes the small figure as

A naked African, kneels on her left leg, in her left hand she has a chain of very small diamonds, with which a small ivory monkey attaches, in her right hand a gold-plated arrow, two small diamonds on her chest hang a gold-plated comb and Scherrgen (minion/henchman), on the head a crown of melted feathers, set around the head around diamonds and ruby rings, the position of brown agate, four bound festoons with gold-plated decorative rims and a number of ruby rings and diamonds, by Koehler.¹³⁷

Köhler and the unknown artist set the composition of the small figurine to match the two monkey sculptures, as the kneeling woman is positioned on a brown-agate base decorated with precious stones. She kneels in a similar fashion to the *Grotesque monkey with a basket*, but instead of holding some type of carrying apparatus, the artists chained the bare-breasted woman to the base of the composition with heavy silver chains attached to her left hand. The nature of her enslavement to the composition – and the allusion to the enslavement of African peoples – contradicts the expensive and rare jewels that decorate her ears and along her feathered crown. Rather than the material splendor of the crown and jewels, the African woman's ivory exterior and her imprisonment materializes the figurine's colonial materiality. Thus, the small ivory object perfectly illustrated the

¹³⁷ Kappel, 271-72.

material conflation of ivory with African skin and the trans-Atlantic slave trade in eighteenth-century Saxony. For the ivory kneeling African woman, the utilization of exotic motifs and materials also visually and materially complemented Balthasar Permoser and Johann Melchior Dinglinger's African blackamoor figures, which were kept in the corner cabinet of the Green Vault.¹³⁸

Saxony, and the court specifically, were intimately acquainted with Africans in the early modern period. As Kappel noted, the so-called "Kammermohren" worked both as "free servants" and slaves in the Electoral and monarchical court.¹³⁹ The "free servants" – like the black servant in Louis Silvestre's portrait of Augustus the Strong – acted as living blackamoor figures within the court that elucidated the Elector's perceived colonial prowess and provided physical inspiration for the othered figures in the Grünes Gewölbe.¹⁴⁰ While these specific blackamoor sculptures were not constructed with ivory, the physical characteristics of the figures and the three small ivory statuettes – specifically the kneeling woman – share similar visual elements. In particular, these statuettes utilize the stereotypical physiognomic characteristics of Africans – through Linnaeus's eventual codification – like the flattened nose and the larger lips. In *Moor with an Emerald Cluster*, ca. 1723-24, the artists fashion a resplendent blackamoor figure covered in precious gold and jewels (Figure 3.36). The figure stands in contrapposto, while ornamented with a variety of gold and gem accessories, holding a plate with a large

¹³⁸ Kappel, 271-272.

¹³⁹ "So-called 'Moor with pearl shell' (Historical Name)," *Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden* online collection, accessed February 2, 2021. <https://skd-onlinecollection.skd.museum/Details/Index/117607>. Of particular note was the 1719 shipment of twenty-one "Moors" from the Portuguese ports to Saxony for preparation of his daughter, Maria Josepha's, wedding.

¹⁴⁰ This is not to suggest, however, that these blackamoor figures were direct representations of the Dresden "free servants." Rather, I am suggesting that the enslaved Africans were inspiration for the Elector to include such figures within his prized collections as a completion of his coloniality.

emerald cluster that was gifted to the Electorate by Habsburg Emperor Rudolf in 1581.¹⁴¹ The visual connection between the ivory African figures and the depiction of otherness continued with several small ivory statuettes that appeared in the Saxon collection.

Of particular note, Permoser and Dinglinger's *Riding African as a Trumpeter* links the dark brown pearwood *Moor with an Emerald Cluster* to the ivory African woman and monkeys (Figure 3.37). In this 1690-1700 composition, a brilliant ivory horse stands at attention with a gold, enamel, and jewel saddle. Atop the horse sits a wooden figure, replete with a hat, a red and green feathered belt, a sword, and a large golden trumpet with a hanging gold and enamel decorative attachment that contains the letters "SPQA" in a blush pink squared section. The trumpeter, described as an African, blows mightily into the mouthpiece, effectively alerting the viewer to his heralding mission. While the African rider is seemingly an autonomous figure of the Dresden court, two subsumed elements upend this narrative: the chains handcuffing the rider to the horse's bridle and the collar around his neck. Both inclusions, like the chains of the ivory African woman, not only illustrate the presumed nature of Africans within the court but also their courtly roles, as Augustus the Strong had "employed" many African trumpeters for celebrations during his electoral tenure.¹⁴² Upon closer inspection, however, the African rider is hybridized with animal features; the act of blowing into the trumpet makes the rider appear as if he has a monkey's snout – like the ivory monkeys that would appear in the Grünes Gewölbe's collection thirty years later. Together, these

¹⁴¹ Kappel, 132.

¹⁴² For more information regarding African trumpeters in the Dresden court, please see, Arne Spohr, "'Mohr und Trompeter': Blackness and Social Status in Early Modern Germany," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (2019) 72 (3): 613-663.

exotically-charged objects – alongside similar othered objects like the *Elephant with a Fort and Small Moor* and *Camel with a Moor*, for example – produced a spectacular performative space for the conceptualized depiction of African otherness in early modern Central Europe (Figures 3.38-3.39).

As one of the most substantial works in the Saxon *Kunstammer*, the grandiosity of Zeller's frigate is matched by two other particularly colonial works by court goldsmith, Johann Melchior Dinglinger. In his famed *Coffee Set*, the interplay between Saxon hard-paste porcelain – with its allusion to Asian trade and chinoiserie – with the stunning foreign gold and the ivory figurines of Greek goddesses recalled the limitless ornamentality colonialism offered (Figure 3.40). The second object, Dinglinger's *Mughal Throne*, portrays Saxon perceptions of other cultures directly (Figure 3.41). Although there is no ivory utilized in these designs, its grand scale and colonially obtained materials project the work as other.

But it is interesting that the depictions of Asian peoples – while stereotypical – was not overly prejudicial, like the many small African figures. The juxtaposition between the African monkey figurines and the stately Mughal court purported the racial distinctions that grew throughout the eighteenth century. The African, perhaps the lowest on the racial spectrum, became an illustration of the colonial but also of a growing global differential consciousness. Through these examples, the Mughal is seen as opulent, extravagant, luxurious, majestic, and dignified; the African, on the other hand, is seen as lowly, submissive, and uncivilized. Like the colonial ideology of early modern Saxony, the ivory ships and the various other imagined figures explicate Saxony's conception of colonial other. The focus was less on veracity and more about the grandiose explication

of the conception and representation of their material colonial imagination; it was the imagined made real through colonial materials.

The multitudinous inclusion of colonially sourced materials and objects created a menagerie of otherness in the Dresden collections that was mirrored in the porcelain menagerie in the Saxon *Porzellansammlungen*, a mighty exhibition space for Augustus the Strong's massive porcelain collection in the Dresden Zwinger. As Adrienne Childs noted, the famed King and Elector Augustus had a "seemingly insatiable taste for exotic objects."¹⁴³ Through the development of Meissen porcelain manufactory, Augustus the Strong was able to quickly reproduce many of his beloved objects in the Grünes Gewölbe for much cheaper as the princely collection space acted as a repository for artistic inspiration and imitation for the new porcelain manufactory.¹⁴⁴ Thus, foreign trade and otherness permeated the Saxon collections thereby creating a tangible link to its colonial imagination. The obtainment and showcasing of the plethora of foreign and exotic goods certainly facilitated the idea that the Saxon courts had direct importation access to such materials. But the reality was in fact oppositional to such an idea; Saxony most likely obtained their colonial material culture through various third-party agents – like Amsterdam, Antwerp or London – or through the German markets along the Rhine and Danube rivers. While Saxony, like most of Germany, did not possess physical colonial territories, the abundance of colonial imagery and material culture within the Dresden collections created a performative colonial space for the Saxons to imagine they did.

¹⁴³ Adrienne Childs, "Sugar Boxes and Blackamoors: Ornamental Blackness in Early Meissen Porcelain," in *The Cultural Aesthetics of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain*, eds. Alden Cavanaugh and Michael Yonan (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), 161.

¹⁴⁴ Childs, "Sugar Boxes and Blackamoors," 161.

The pervasiveness of otherness in the Saxon collections continually developed through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which allowed for the development of the exotic objects to correspond to the changing ideological nature of the colonial in Saxony. The built mythologies of imagined colonialism were made material with the frigate's move from the Dresden *Kunstammer* to the newly established Grünes Gewölbe. With numerous allusions to Africans in the collections – which were purchased around the time of the new exhibition spaces' opening – knowledge of colonial peoples and commodities manifested themselves in the very material nature of Zeller's frigate. The ship was no longer a mere mythological celebration of Saxon glorification, but rather, a mythological tale of Saxony's imagined colonization; the frigate was the imagined means for Saxons to achieve their desired global supremacy. Along with the frigate, the purchasing and display of the small African decorative figures created a tangible link between Africa, ivory, and race in this period. Coupled with the portraits of the white Electors with the black servant, the insinuation of racial difference between Europeans and Africans manifested in Dresden and were made material in the electoral collections.

The placement of the frigate in the various collection spaces played a significant role in the object's changing materiality. The frigate was originally placed in the Ivory Room of the Historic Grünes Gewölbe, which was the second chamber in the U-shaped designed space on the main floor of Dresden Castle, directly after the Amber Room. The grandiose ship was almost always placed on a separate and individualized table/exhibition element that was surrounded by various turned ivory works and small-scale ivory sculptures. Its prominent placement signaled the beginning of the visitor's colonial journey through the Elector's collections. The magnificent and opulent nature of

Zeller's ship surely made it memorable for the visitor as they traversed the subsequent collection rooms. As the visitor negotiated their way through the massive two-story exhibition space, the allusions to Saxony's colonial endeavors increased as objects of colonially obtained materials and exotic themes were presented. As Kappel stated in the *Grünes Gewölbe's* ivory catalog, "the exotic, which was understood as a rarity, was to be encyclopedically arranged to convert to the princely collector an image of the distant unknown world that remained enchanted by the myth of the foreign...Africa was imagined as wild, impetuous, mysterious, and rich in treasures."¹⁴⁵ I argue that the frigate became the vehicle in which visitors began to understand the construction of Saxony's imagined colonialism, particularly once they entered the more exotically-charged rooms that proclaimed allusions to foreign territories. With its position at the beginning of the prescribed viewing route of the baroque collection, the frigate acts as a material signal of the colonial imagery throughout the collection. Like the physical ship on the horizon, Zeller's frigate brilliantly proclaims the wealth of material knowledge and obtainment abilities of the Saxon court. With its billowing and vibrant sails, the etched names of the electors, and the antique gods of yesteryear, the frigate powerfully decrees its own agency as the mythological vehicle for Saxony's (imagined) colonial expansion. The frigate acts as the stalwart navigational guide for the *Grünes Gewölbe's* visitor, subtly pointing them to the colonial wealth that lies ahead. Zeller's magnum opus thus becomes a multi-operational material agent that simultaneously elucidates the role of the ivory in the collections but also ivory's metonymic relationship to Africa and the depiction of otherness.

¹⁴⁵ Kappel, *Elfenbeinkunst im Grünen Gewölbe zu Dresden*, 11.

In 2004, the Neue Grünes Gewölbe reopened as a reimagined and modernized exhibition space, with a large and opened layout with objects— like Zeller’s frigate — presented in individualized cases. The frigate maintained a similar positioning to its original placement in the historic Grünes Gewölbe Ivory Room; it is now also located in the second room of the new space, just as it was in the historic Ivory Room. In its new, contemporary configuration, the prominent placement of the frigate acts as a welcoming beacon for contemporary viewers, proclaiming Saxony’s historic love and obtainment of otherness. The frigate also guides the modern viewer to the examples of African otherness displayed in the next exhibition space, including the small-scale anthropomorphized monkeys and the kneeling African woman, which are exhibited in the room directly adjacent to the frigate. The close proximity of the ship to the othered ivory figures cemented the frigate’s four hundred years of colonial materiality, its status as the icon for Saxony’s colonial imagination, and ivory’s material relationship to a beleaguered Africa.

Norske Løve and the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway

In 1634 Jacob Jensen Nordmand traversed the fickle Atlantic Ocean via a Dutch naval vessel to fight and aid in the colonization of Brazil and work as an armorer.¹⁴⁶ As Denmark-Norway was still infantile in its colonial expansion, many Danes joined neighboring Holland’s colonial explorations. As a naval soldier, Nordmand gained immeasurable first-hand knowledge of the sea, naval vessels, and colonial encroachment that ultimately aided the artist during his tenure for the Danish-Norwegian court. As such, this section attempts to reconceptualize Nordmand’s *Norske Løve* with a colonial

¹⁴⁶ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle*, 40.

framework. Specifically, I examine the frigate in conjunction with influx of direct ivory importation into Denmark-Norway in eighteenth century and the development of a small, but lucrative slave trade. Like my discussion of the Saxon frigate above, I utilize the representation of othered peoples – particularly Inuit Greenlanders – to supplement and enhance ivory’s materiality throughout the Danish-Norwegian early modern period. In addition to these figures, I also expound upon Nordmand’s creation of several small ivory ship models that decorated the royal collections. Utilizing both narwhal and elephant ivory, Nordmand produced stunning and realistic maritime vessels, illustrating the growing naval power of the small kingdom and ivory’s innate material connection to Danish-Norwegian colonialism.

Of the handful of ivory ships Nordmand designed and carved for the Royal collections, I would like to highlight three specific examples. Created in 1656, Nordmand’s ivory *Sailing Boat with Frederik III’s crowned monogram* stands at only 15.8 centimeters tall (Figure 3.42). The artist delicately carved the hull, foredeck and quarterdeck in one piece, adding the mast, sails, oars, and other naval accoutrements as later attachments. Like the *Norske Løve*, the artist included silver detailing within the design to act as rivets and grapnel, whose shining and light-catching surface brilliantly illuminated ivory’s surface sheen. The artist continues the tradition of the prominent place of the monarchical monogram “F3” the main sail and the Arms of Norway with the Axe of St. Olave on the opposite side of the sail. Nordmand also placed a Latin cross on the stern and a Maltese Cross on the port side. The punctuation of the main sail with the royal monogram of Frederik III is an integral inclusion to the design as the monogram directly acknowledges and links the small sailing boat with its larger frigate predecessor.

In *Two Masted Galley with five guns*, Nordmand again illustrates his deft carving skills with the one-piece creation of the ivory hull, while the oars, decks, and sails were additions to the composition (Figure 3.43). Unlike the upright sails of sailing ship or the frigate, the two-masted galley's sails are at an almost forty-five-degree angle, which acted as a propulsion technique for galleys in naval service. The sleekness of the sails and their sharp demarcation across the composition create a pleasurable and dynamic scene. The shallow hull, however, attaches to a set of ivory brackets that moors the galley to its base, effectively ceasing any further movement even as the sails waft in the wind. On the main deck, Nordmand included many sets of oars that are casually strewn about that act as competing perpendicular lines against the silver riggings of the main sails. At either end of the main deck, Nordmand includes two cabins, which are covered with decorative fringed carpets in black and brown. A particularly interesting addition on the ship's stern is a carved Moor's head with a turban alongside a Maltese Cross, placed just below the poop deck. Throughout Nordmand's ship creations, the artist utilizes the Moor's head as an illustration of the vast geography of the Danish-Norwegian empire – like on the bow of the *Norske Løve* –, which would become a calling card for Nordmand's creations. The allusion of the Moor's head – and its direct connection to Africa – creates a perceivable and visible correlation between Denmark-Norway, Africa, and ivory.

The third example I would like to discuss is the *Sailing boat with a Magnet in the Stem* from 1663 (Figure 3.44). This miniature vessel was carved not from elephant ivory, but rather from narwhal tusk ivory, a territorial speciality of the Danish-Norwegian kingdom. In Nordmand's autobiography, he wrote of the ship, "In Aug. I madde for his

Majesty a boat of unicorn, fitted with gold; the anchor on which it was also made of gold, the sails were of unicorn, thin as an eggshell; this can sail in a beaker of wine, pulled by a magnet, wherever one wants to go.”¹⁴⁷ As Hein noted narwhal was believed to protect the king against poisoning; as such, the ship, controlled by the magnet, was meant to sail across and “purify the king’s drinks.”¹⁴⁸ Within the Danish-Norwegian collection and exhibition spaces, this small sailing ship appears innocuous in juxtaposition with the larger and more detailed examples of Nordmand’s ship designs, but the narwhal vessel represents an interconnected materiality among all of the artist’s creations.

Nordmand’s fashioning of a ship in narwhal tusk provides a potent reminder for the power and materiality of narwhal ivory in the Danish-Norwegian collections. Before the dawn of the early modern period, narwhal ivory was not an uncommon material in Europe, as evidenced with objects like the *Ainkhürn* in Vienna. But with Denmark-Norway’s growing control over the Northern and Arctic islands and waterways, the sea animal – and its magical, unicorn horn tusk – became symbols of the Danish-Norwegian monarchy. As Denmark-Norway’s northern colonial base grew, the Oldenburg monarch’s began sending naval expeditions to these acquired territories, like Christian IV’s 1605-1607 journey to Greenland, which among other things, brought back numerous narwhal tusks. Once in the possession of the Oldenburg’s, *enhorns* – a moniker with a reference to the mythological unicorn – often became gifts of gratitude for other monarchical and princely European leaders. Famously, in 1570, King Frederik II (1534-1588) gave Saxon Elector Augustus (1526-1586) an *enhorn*, which was eventually hung

¹⁴⁷ Hein, 59.

¹⁴⁸ Hein, 59.

from the ceilings in the original Saxon *Kunstammer*.¹⁴⁹ Narwhal tusk, therefore, became a major element in Danish-Norwegian court life and, as I posit, developed into metonymic material of the Oldenburg Dynasty. Such a material signification was made manifest with Grodtschilling's narwhal throne, the *Anointing Chair of Absolutism*, that I discussed in the previous chapter. The use of narwhal ivory to construct the literal seat of Danish-Norwegian monarchical power was not merely coincidental; the stark colonial power of the material allowed for the throne to illustrate the expansion of the kingdom and the power and might of its ruler. Through its importation, the Danes carefully cultivated narwhal ivory into the material of the state.

Like the relationship between elephant ivory and the enslaved African, narwhal ivory had a similar oceanic voyage alongside other native peoples: Inuit Greenlanders. On the return journey of the 1654 expedition to Greenland, the crew brought back with them four Inuit Greenlanders, three females and one male. While the male died on the voyage back to port in Bergen, Norway, the three women became colonial spectacles for the Danish-Norwegian and Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp courts. Immediately upon arrival, the indigenous women had their portraits painted for easy visibility around the courts (Figure 3.45). As Hein noted, due to a plague at the Copenhagen court, the court moved to Flensburg, where the women were exhibited and performed in the various ballets.¹⁵⁰ The Greenlander women were so popular, in fact, that Frederik III commissioned favored monarchical ivory artist Nordmand to create narwhal drinking

¹⁴⁹ Hein, 12.

¹⁵⁰ For more information, see Mara R. Wade, "Ballet, *Kunstammer*, and the education of Princess Hedwig Eleonora at the Gottorf Court," in *Queen Hedwig Eleonora and the Arts: Court Culture in Seventeenth-Century Northern Europe*, ed. Kristoffer Neville and Lisa Skogh (New York: Routledge, 2017).

vessels with images of the Greenlanders, walruses, and unicorns – the trifecta of Greenland colonial iconography.¹⁵¹

The majority of Nordmand's Greenlander drinking vessels date from the mid-1650s to the early 1660s. In *Lidded Tankard with Inuit (Greenlanders) and Unicorns* (ca. after 1656), the artist constructs a materially dynamic drinking vessel made of narwhal (Figure 3.46). In a striking material juxtaposition against the narwhal, silver is added as the footing, base rim, handle, and upper rim. Like the *Norske Løve*, the silver interacts and frames the ivory while simultaneously highlighting its material qualities. Nordmand cut the twisted narwhal tusk into thin, vertical registers; the natural and prominent silver-colored striations create a marbled surface effect on the exterior of the tankard.

Nordmand's drinking vessels stands on a base of three unicorns made of silver that recall and illustrate the mythological/unicorn materiality of the narwhal that dates back to medieval period. At the upper hinge of the handle, the artist placed a silver Greenlander as the shining finial to the composition. On the top of the tankard lid, Nordmand continued the Greenlandic theme. Surrounded by the sectioned narwhal ornamentation, the artist places a central medallion depicting two Inuit Greenlanders – a woman on the left and a man on the right carrying a bow and arrow in his right hand and a harpoon in his left.

Mogens Bencard, a former curator at the Rosenborg Castle, argued that the two medallion figures represent "Hiob" and "Gunelle", two of the four Greenlanders brought back from Greenland to Denmark after the 1654 expedition to the island. Their likeness was mostly taken from the painted portraits created directly after docking at port in

¹⁵¹ Hein, 20.

Bergen. The bearded male Greenlander in the portrait wears a similar style tunic with a hood, loose fitting pants, and slouched boots, and holds a harpoon and bow and arrows in his hands. The female in the cup's medallion, however, does not directly match to the anonymous portrait, but there are several visual characteristics between the three painted women and the medallion. The figures in both the portrait and narwhal engraving are seemingly reliable depictions of the native Greenlanders and not overly prejudicial. However, both likenesses were created through the white colonial eye, thereby, casting some doubt as to the veracity of the depiction.

In continuance of Denmark-Norway's visual proclamation of territorial colonization, Nordmand fashioned a second lidded beaker with Greenlander iconography. In *Lidded beaker with Inuk (Greenlander)*, Nordmand utilizes the same vertical sectioning as the previous narwhal cup; however, the artist sent the various narwhal pieces to local goldsmith to set each section within gold stripes (Figure 3.47). Enameled ornamentation of bright floral and vegetal motifs surround the base, center, and rim of the beaker, adding an air of whimsy to the composition. The lid of the beaker continues the narwhal stave patterning with a male Greenlander finial at its termination point. Standing on a grass-inspired base, the Greenlander appears somewhat dynamic, as he walks forward to continue his hunt. In his left hand, the man carries a stylized narwhal tusk, explicitly explicating the origin of the beaker's material. The man points to the ground underneath his feet with his right hand, illustrating his and the narwhal's determinative geographic origin. On the Greenlander's back, Nordmand includes a bow strapped across the man's back that crisscrosses his quiver of arrows, illuminating the man's role as a hunter. An intriguing inclusion, as Hein notes, is the style of dress; "this Inuk is a man,

but is dressed in a Greenlandic woman's costume with its tall hood and the so-called gender flaps in front of and behind the fur, and with short trousers and half-length boots."¹⁵² This is particularly evident in the depiction of the Greenland females in the anonymous Bergen portrait; the central female in the portrait has the same tall, conical hood adorning her head and the long pointed strip of fabric in front of her genitals. The common motif of gender and cultural misrepresentation was prevalent in early modern colonial Europe and revealed either the lack of European/Danish knowledge of cultural practices or a passive subordination of colonized cultures. Whichever the case, the enamel Greenlander on the lidded beaker carried a weighty significance in the Oldenburg collections. On the interior of lid, directly under the Inuk male, Nordmand placed a round enamel medallion encased in gold depicting Frederik III's monogram ("FRIDERICUS 3") topped by an ornate gold crown (Figure 3.48). Stylized leaves and berries surround the crown and monogram that connect from one side of the crown to the other along the rim of the medallion. The enamel artist also included the date, 1663, spread out to both sides of the crown. Underneath each of the date, the words "DOMINUS" and "PROVIDEBIT" appear ("The Lord Will Provide"), completing the divinely ordained Danish-Norwegian colonial cycle for the absolutist Oldenburg monarchy. Hein argued that "The Greenlander on the cover makes the beaker a symbol of the Danish king's supremacy over the northern seas, and the dating of the cover medallion makes it tempting to see it as a work commissioned for the betrothal of

¹⁵² Hein, 52.

Frederik III's daughter Anna Sophia to the Prince-Elector Johann Georg (III) of Saxony, which was celebrated with great pomp in that very year, 1663."¹⁵³

I would absolutely concur with Hein's argumentation that this cup visually referenced the monarchy's growing control over the Northern and Arctic waters, but I would like to take this a step further. It was not just the imagery of the male Greenlander that alerted viewers to the cup's symbolism, but rather, as I posit, the material that visually and materially connected Greenland, Denmark-Norway, and narwhal ivory. The inclusion of the male Greenland as a hunter offers an intriguing colonial juxtaposition: the Greenlandic hunter of narwhal becomes the pray of the hunter/colonizer, Denmark-Norway, which completes the colonial cycle. As the territorial speciality of the small Scandinavian kingdom, narwhal thus became the material of the state; its ability to represent both the colonial territories in the northern waters as well as the absolutist power of the monarchy created a material ripe for Danish-Norwegian use. With the union of Denmark and Norway in the medieval period, the gain of the Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands generated a quick and great territorial expansion for the once diminutive kingdom. The narwhal ivory within the collections not only materially alluded to this expansion, but also to the absolutist rule of the monarchy through the construction of the *Anointing Chair of Absolutism* in narwhal. The physical throne of the Oldenburg dynasty, made of the territorial speciality of the kingdom, projected an interwoven and intersected Scandinavian world, one that attempted to rival their neighbor, Sweden.

¹⁵³ Hein, 57.

While the narwhal certainly projected the early modern might of the Danish-Norwegian kingdom, the material also spoke of historical maritime and colonizing practices through the early Norsemen, commonly referred to as Vikings. Prominent in the later eighth to mid-eleventh centuries, these northern men travelled and pillaged many sea-abutting nations, like Ireland, the English Isles, and as far south as the Mediterranean. While the Norsemen did not colonize every geographic space they landed upon, they did establish the original settlements of Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands in the ninth and ten centuries. After the series of military losses, the terror of the “Viking Age” gradually declined. As such, the once-Viking settlements of the northern islands came under the loose control of Norway in the thirteenth century – and subsequently Denmark after the union of the two countries.¹⁵⁴ Although Denmark and Norway united in 1380, it was not until 1536 that Norway and its territories were officially recognized as part of Denmark.¹⁵⁵ The original Norse settlements on Greenland lost contact with the Danish-Norwegian mainland in the fifteenth century after the monarchy cut off direct trade with the island.¹⁵⁶ However, the legends of the Viking settlers historic conquest of the northern medieval world was not forgotten; in fact, the 1605-07 Danish expedition to Greenland was, in part to bring narwhal and walrus ivory back to the mainland, but also to reestablish contact with the original Norse settlers on the island.¹⁵⁷ The Danes were

¹⁵⁴ Lasse Wolsgård, “Viking Settlements in Iceland, Faeroe Islands, and Greenland, and Danish Arctic Exploration,” in *A Historical Companion to Post-Colonial Literatures, Continental Europe and Its Empires*, ed. Prem Poddar, Rajeev S. Patke, and Lars Jensen, 100. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 102.

¹⁵⁵ Wolsgård, “Viking Settlements in Iceland, Faeroe Islands, and Greenland, and Danish Arctic Exploration,” 102.

¹⁵⁶ Wolsgård, 102.

¹⁵⁷ Wolsgård, 102.

met with disappointment as most of the Norse settlers had long died off or intermarried with the indigenous Greenlanders.

Though the Danes never found their adventurous ancestors, the lore of the fabled colonizing northern people became part of the Danish-Norwegian cultural memory and instilled within that memory a colonial purpose. Through the Norse of old, the Danish-Norwegian monarchy had an already established and profitable set of strategic colonial territories that prompted a new age of colonial expansion for the small kingdom; one that would lead them to Africa, India, and the New World. Thus, as I contend, these small and somewhat innocuous narwhal tankards with Greenland iconography, in actuality, purport the political, economic, and colonial strength of the Danish-Norwegian kingdom. The material's utilization and demarcation as the "territorial speciality" of the state produced a metonymic materiality that recalled the absolutist supremacy of Denmark-Norway over Scandinavia. The small narwhal tankards visually and materially unite the physical manifestation of power (the Anointing Chair) of the monarchy, the tangible territories of the kingdom, and its colonized people. Narwhal ivory was Denmark-Norway, even if it did not directly from the mainland harbors.

If narwhal ivory was indeed a material signifier of the Danish-Norwegian kingdom's political power, how then did elephant ivory also become a material metonym for the kingdom? As I illustrated in the beginning of this chapter, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a particularly fruitful time in the kingdom of Denmark-Norway, especially with the development of a worldwide empire and the colonizations of India, Africa, and the Caribbean. Not only did the expansion of their territories increase Denmark-Norway's geo-political significance within Europe, the increased trade between

Denmark and its colonies allowed for direct importation of colonial commodities, like ivory, into Copenhagen. The ivory tusks were often carried next to slaves along the triangular route and then next to other Caribbean commodities that were purchased from the money garnered from slave sales. Once the ivory reached port in Copenhagen, the ivory, imbued with a global African materiality, was taken to its new colonial owners, and then carved and manipulated the material produce artistic objects for elite consumption. As the colonial and slave trading progressed in the early modern age, ivory was increasingly associated with Africa and slaves through its own travel narrative, which permeated into the *Kunstammer* and Oldenburg collections. Elephant ivory, like narwhal, projected images of foreign and uncivilized lands tamed through colonial practice. Within the monarchical collections, the material spoke of Denmark-Norway's possession of the other, either of slaves, sugar, cotton, or land. The material metonymically conceptualized Danish-Norwegian worldwide supremacy over the other and acted as a material monument to the colonial empire and strength of Denmark-Norway in European geo-politics.

Not only was ivory a metonymy of the Danish-Norwegian's advancement within the Atlantic slave trade in general, but the material also remarked upon the monarchy's continued involvement within it, as the small northern kingdom grew to become the seventh largest slave trading nation in the early modern period. Specifically, I posit that ivory became the metonym of the Danish-Norwegian colonial empire within the Oldenburg collections. This was never more apparent than in the realistic rendering of the *Norske Løve*. As I detailed in the beginning of this chapter, the ship was an amalgamated representation of the early and mid-seventeenth century physical frigate of the same

name. However, as was common in Danish-Norwegian naval practices, after a ship bearing the name *Norske Løve* was decommissioned, the signature name was reused. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the *Norske Løve* moniker appeared on another Danish frigate; one that participated heavily within the slave trade. In 1707, this slave-trading frigate sank off the coast of the Faroe Islands and the local Faroese managed to rescue the ship's bell, which is located today in Tórshavn Cathedral.¹⁵⁸ Through the continued reconceptualization of the *Norske Løve* name throughout the blossoming of the Denmark-Norway's global empire as well as the continually growing slave and commodities trade, Nordmand's *Norske Løve* progressively gained a colonial materiality as its imbued Africanness rose to the surface.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, another ship name further strengthens the innate connection between ivory and ships in the Danish-Norwegian naval fleet: The *Elefanten*, which often traveled to colonial ports. Like the *Norske Løve*, the Danish-Norwegian naval fleet had at least three different *Elefanten* vessels from 1648, 1741, and 1773 (Figure 3.49). The HDMS *Elefanten* also promoted the Order of the Elephant at sea; several registers on the stern of the vessel replicate the tower and elephant motif of the Order's necklace chain. At the center of the uppermost register, the elephant with a tower – the symbol of the Order – appears. Thus, the Order's chivalric prominence travelled throughout the globe.

As I detailed in the previous chapter, the elephant was an indelible symbol for the Oldenburg dynasty, particularly with the monarchy's highest chivalric order, the Order of

¹⁵⁸“Places Not to Miss in Tórshavn,” *Visit Tórshavn*, accessed February 16, 2021. <http://visittorshavn.fo/en/things-not-to-miss-in-torshavn/>

the Elephant. The imagery of the elephant pervaded early modern Denmark-Norway and its material connection to Africa and ivory continually matured through the courts. Rather than an abstracted notion of an exotic animal, the sagacious African mammal and its ivory developed into a tangible link between Copenhagen and its global territories. Through evolution of vast global trade networks with Africa, ivory and the elephant became materially connected to the southern colonized continent; the *Elefanten* naming of the Danish-Norwegian naval vessel series illustrates this link. While the name most certainly referenced the Order of the Elephant and its powerful agency within early modern Denmark-Norway, the moniker also alludes to and projects the kingdom's tangible colonialism. As with the depictions of Greenlanders, the colonial cycle of colonizer domination over the colonized manifested itself through the importation of ivory into Denmark-Norway: the exotic/foreign elephant from Africa – a Danish-Norwegian colony– produced ivory – one of the most favored materials in the Danish collections – which was brought to Copenhagen through colonial trade – via the ship. The *Norske Løve* perfectly encapsulated the cyclical interconnectedness of the material, geography, and the burgeoning colonial empire.

In 1649, King Frederick III named Jacob Jensen Nordmand the first official royal ivory artist of the royal collections.¹⁵⁹ With the establishment of the Royal *Kunstammer* in 1650, Nordmand deftly filled the monarchical art cabinets with expertly carved illustrations of their colonial might. Most importantly, of Nordmand's thirteen known works, all of them illustrate some entrenched colonial materiality. Either utilizing elephant ivory or narwhal ivory, the Norwegian artist developed a visualization system of

¹⁵⁹ Hein, *Ivories and Narwhal Tusks at Rosenborg Castle*, 40.

colonial material signification that would affect the continued purchasing and crafting of ivory objects. The immense size of the *Norske Løve* coupled with the expanding knowledge of the colonial world produced an object that projected Danish-Norwegian supremacy over the other. With the collection and display Nordmand's ships, the intimate knowledge of colonial practice manifested itself within the very material of the ships and elucidated Denmark-Norway's relationship to ivory and its direct correlation to the slave trade and tangible colonialism.

Ivory, both narwhal and elephant, metonymically illustrated the intricate web of global and colonial networks in the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway. Through the assembling of an immense naval presence, Denmark-Norway created the ability to expand its small European territory worldwide, while simultaneously maturing into an integral colonial court. The direct importation of ivory from Greenland and Africa into Copenhagen established a deep and abiding affiliation with colonial imports and the monarchy. Furthermore, the monarchy proudly proclaimed this interconnectedness through the inauguration of the Royal *Kunstkammer* and the naming of a royal ivory carver, whose very purpose promoted colonial commodities within the collections. As the early modern period progressed and products of colonialism were understood, Nordmand's numerous ships created a miniaturized colonial fleet in the *Kunstkammer*, striking an imposing tableau of Danish-Norwegian colonial power. As a rising naval power and colonial presence, the strengthening and acquisition of colonial territories throughout the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries elevated the *Norske Løve* itself to an intrinsic material symbol of Denmark-Norway's trade supremacy, their dominion and subordination over the other, and as a colonial rival on the world's stage.

Conclusion

In the seventeenth century, George Barne noted that, “[ivory] resembled ‘the natural’ fairness of mans skinne.”¹⁶⁰ As this quote explicates, ivory progressively evolved into a material fit for the depiction and representation of European/white skin. With the material’s utilization in religious depictions and political representations, ivory was a desired foreign commodity in early modern Europe. But the very nature of ivory’s existence in European collections stemmed from the rising colonial world. Through the conquering and subordination of foreign lands – like Africa – ivory’s importation into Europe was constantly present at colonial ports. In contemporary ivory scholarship, academics tend to focus their attention on ivory objects through the lens of the European/colonizer. However, this viewpoint – while valid and needed to situate ivory within its correct historical context – overlooks the ivory’s global and colonial materiality; subsequently, the full material history and biography of these objects are lost. As I have argued throughout this chapter, ivory possessed an inherent and fundamental colonial materiality present in early modern Europe. Dependent upon the object’s subject matter, ivory could either vibrantly express or almost entirely subordinate its globality.

This chapter’s argument centers around retrieving and comprehending ivory’s colonial agency within early modern Europe, both tangible and imagined. European’s were particularly attracted to ivory’s innate ability to represent and present the foreign or other; and the reconceptualization and manipulation of the material through European hands completed the colonial subordination cycle. I began this chapter with a discussion of two important European territories – the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway and the

¹⁶⁰ George Barne, *Describing the Voyage of John Locke*, 4:57, quoted in Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 51.

Electorate of Saxony – and their two particular approaches to early modern colonialism. The Saxon's lack of colonial properties prompted the creation of a mythological and imagined colonial enterprise, while Denmark-Norway instituted far-reaching global territories and trade networks. The vast difference between these two types of coloniality was evident through their unique construction of ivory frigates in the seventeenth century. To better contemplate the new global paradigm ivory faced within the early modern colonial world, I discussed how the material gained a global, mobile, and colonial materiality through its relationship to the Atlantic slave trade and its African origin. To further this argumentation, I detailed how ivory became intimately connected with Africa: the growing racial awareness in early modern Europe through the continued development of colonialism, the black and white color polarity, and through the personification of Africa in the visual and material arts. With ivory's African/black materiality established, Zeller's mythological frigate took on a new African materiality that proclaimed Saxony's yearning for colonial expansion. In Denmark-Norway, on the other hand, the installation of Jacob Jensen Nordmand's *Norske Løve* and the multitude of small ivory ships produced a magnificent miniaturized naval fleet that projected the kingdom's growing colonial power. With the utilization of both narwhal and elephant ivory to create images of otherness and the vehicles which obtained it, ivory developed into a metonymic material of Denmark-Norway's tangible colonialism. Together, Saxony and Denmark-Norway's ivory frigates portray the material's entrenched colonial materiality as a product of Africa manipulated through European hands.

As whiteness was the normative epidermal identity of the world – at least in the minds of the Europeans – other human skin colors were subsidiary under white's

ebullience. As I argue, ivory's colonial materiality encapsulated this hierarchy of human variety. As a material primarily imported from Africa, that travelled alongside slaves, and was utilized as an accessory for the personification of Africa, ivory's identity as African provided the vehicle for the continued European subordination of the other. Once the material was carved, shined, and displayed, ivory's exterior became European-owned. Its othered materiality still stood, but it was now handled, manipulated, and "civilized" through European hands – much like the enslaved African. Ivory's whiteness – and its idealization as European skin – shifted ivory's material signification to Europe, thus upending its geographic and original materiality. Whiteness became primary and the blackness that surrounded it became a subsumed secondary meaning. In ships, this complex visual/material comprehension process played out with realistic colonial elements. The ship was the European (white) accessory that brought Africa's (black) accessory – ivory/slave – to be "civilized". Ships were the literal and figural civilizing vehicle in the European colonial age. Ivory was thus the penultimate material for ships in the European *Kunstammern*. As the colonial age progressed and the known world expanded, the ship spoke of the colonial, the military, and economic prowess. Its prominent placement in monarchical *Kunstammern* attested to the ship's indubitable and indelible significance to its ruler. With its ivory construction, the ship projected European primacy as the "civilized" continent – the world's "civilized" paragon. The metonymic use of Africa's accessory to build the European colonial accessory materialized European supremacy over the other, but it also brought a tangible manifestation of Africa into the monarchical *Kunstammern*. Africa, although othered and subordinated, became an integral part of the Danish-Norwegian and Saxon

Kunstammern, thus promoting ivory's European and African materiality in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Africanness, while subordinated, never truly left ivory's façade – it was always there, hidden just beneath the surface, surrounded by whiteness.

Chapter 4

The Luxurious, The Exotic, The Nabobian: The Curious Case of Anglo-Indian Furniture in the Eighteenth-Century English Country House

Jauntily standing in front of an exotic locale of lush trees and a serene coastline, a *tabletier* wears the symbols of his profession (Figure 4.1). This print, part of Nicolas de Larmessin II's (1645-1725) *Les Costumes grotesques* series (ca. 1695), illustrates the tools, products, and materials of a French game-table maker. Standing at the top of a raised dais, the *tabletier* adorns his chest with *tornquet* and *eschiquier* boards like an ancient cuirass, while his carving tools cover his legs like Roman greaves. But perhaps the most telling aspect of the *tabletier's* costume lies across his shoulders: *le dant d'elephant*, or a tusk of ivory. While de Larmessin deliberately utilized the game boards as the focal point of the print, the ivory frames the tradesman and the boards, illustrating the material's fundamental role in furniture construction. Ivory was ornamental and decorative; it enhanced and aided in the delivery of furniture's narrative and agency. As *Le Habit de Tabletier* explicated, ivory was indeed crucial to furniture design in eighteenth-century Europe; it was ingrained and desired.

Ivory's primary function in furniture design was its mutability. Unlike other imported luxury materials, ivory's materiality was multivalent and offered artists and artisans a plurality of significations. The material's ability to recall ancient civilizations, medieval religious objects, and the elaborate collections of Renaissance and Baroque elites was juxtaposed with its elemental meaning as a colonial, global, and mobile material. Unlike previously discussed objects, this chapter analyzes ivory in composite settings: the multi-materialized furniture of eighteenth-century England.

During the long eighteenth-century in England, furniture became an integral part of the upper class's ability to showcase their wealth, particularly during the Georgian period (ca. 1714-1830/37). This was a time of profound change and development in domestic Britain and furniture aided in the visual perpetuation of British global domination. But this chapter is not necessarily interested in domestic British furniture production, even though furniture-makers like Thomas Chippendale and Thomas Sheraton utilized ivory in their designs. Instead, this chapter focuses on the curious case of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture brought back to England by East India Company officials and its agency in the English domestic landscape and questions what happens when a material becomes both positively and negatively connoted with its owners.

In this chapter, I look at the second half of the eighteenth-century in England and how these Anglo-Indian ivory furniture pieces interacted and projected imperial luxuriousness and exoticism within the homes of East India Company officials, commonly referred to as nabobs. What specifically makes these objects "Anglo-Indian" is not just the geographical or the domestic positioning in India or in England, but it is their hybridity of English visuality and Indian materiality. While there were major craft centers on the Coromandel Coast, Gujarat, and Bengal, India has had a long history of ivory working, but there was not a large furniture-making industry – at least in the Western sense of furniture. It was not until the colonization of India and the incoming Portuguese, Dutch, and English colonialists that Indian craftsmen began to create seating and storage furniture items. Due to the sudden need of European-style furniture, Indian craftsmen often examined European musters and designs to aid in the creation of these pieces. This was particularly the case in Anglo-Indian ivory furniture produced for East

India Company officials, with Indian craftsmen looking at Thomas Chippendale and George Hepplewhite, for example. And yet, these pieces were not solely English, even if they relied upon English and European design styles. It was the material that made these objects Indian as well. Craftsmen used teak, ebony, padouk, and sandalwood to create the shells and partial exteriors of the pieces, while ivory, tortoiseshell, and other precious materials decorated and ornamented them. Thus, the furniture was neither English nor Indian; they were an intriguing hybrid object that uniquely fit with their East India Company owners, the nabobs.

Although ivory was utilized throughout early modern European furniture history, a historiographical approach to these objects does not reveal the true multivalency of the material. As the previous chapters of this dissertation have shown, ivory's material associations often depended upon its function, time, place, and European geography, and thus an analysis of a large swath of assorted styles, techniques, times, and geographies would not and could not truly illustrate the power and the agency of the material in furniture. Furthermore, to look into a specific subset of owners in a specific domestic setting provides historians of art and furniture the ability to delve deeper into how a material reacts and interacts with its owner. To do this is to give the material – and thus the object – agency.

Beyond the eighteenth-century English associations of ivory, an integral part of this study are the commissioners and owners of the furniture: the nabob. This term refers to East India Company officials who came back to a less-than-thrilled England, whose pockets were lined with mysteriously gained Indian wealth, which they used to buy land, country homes, and government positions. The nabobs were ridiculed in the press and in

Parliament and continually fought for a place in their homeland as they were no longer just English citizens but a hybrid of English and Indian customs. The nabob's peculiar role in the second half of the eighteenth century along with their Indian goods also provides the unique ability to look at two fundamental themes often associated with ivory: luxury and exoticism.

In much of the scholarship surrounding classical, medieval, and early modern ivory, authors often situate ivory into the realms of the luxurious or the exotic, but often in the modern senses of these words. I myself have used these terms as a quick and abstract – yet at the same time connotative – adjective to describe ivory. “Luxury” and “exotic” are fantastic catchwords that illustrate objects worth (cost) and unusualness, but they are also anachronistic if used improperly. Particularly in the early modern period, “luxury” and “exotic” had specialized implications and inferences that were not always positive in nature. Yet, there has been little to no – at least to my satisfaction – detailed analysis of how these terms can be applied to ivory within their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century meanings.¹ This chapter seeks to remedy these overused yet overlooked words and how they can specifically be applied to ivory through Anglo-Indian ivory furniture. Although such a discussion was applicable with any of the previous chapters, England's varied and thorough debates around the aspects of luxury, their narrative history regarding far-away lands, and their continued and growing global trade empire affords scholars with particularly fruitful primary sources that help in the creation of a working model of ivory's luxuriousness and exoticism.

¹ This is particularly referring to the literature in English regarding ivory.

In this chapter, I argue that Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, created in colonial British India, reflected the hybrid nature of the nabob in the English country home during the second half of the eighteenth century. Not only were these objects commissioned, made, and used in East India Company colonial households, these pieces arrived in domestic England with the nabob, where they became documentation of the nabob's Indian tenure. Anglo-Indian ivory furniture thus became a material signifier of the nabob. But how did these ivory furniture pieces project their nabobian status to visitors? I posit that it was through three distinct avenues: the hotly debated notion of luxury in eighteenth-century England; the illustration and comprehension of the exotic through ivory's performative surface ornamentation; and the positioning of the nabobian figure in eighteenth-century English polite society.

Thus, this chapter is separated into three sections, each of which details how Anglo-Indian furniture became emblematic of the nabob. After a discussion of specific furniture pieces, I then discuss the various types of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, but unlike the previous chapters of this dissertation, this discussion is not object specific. I am not looking at one piece of ivory furniture – or even several selected pieces – and analyzing how that one work encapsulates the entire genre. Rather, I am looking at these pieces as a whole and consequently how these Anglo-Indian forms were comprehended in eighteenth-century England. But this does not discount ownership and the nabobian agency of specific pieces. Not readily available to just any member of the East India Company, the objects chosen for this chapter were primarily owned by high-ranking members of the Company, like Edward Harrison (1674-1732), Richard Benyon (1698-

1744), Thomas Rumbold (1736-1791), Robert Clive (1725-1774), and Warren Hastings (1732-1818), all of whom were notorious nabobs.

The first major analytical section of this chapter elucidates ivory's luxurious nature. As one of the primary axioms associated with the material, luxury should be understood within its proper historical setting. To begin, I turn towards debate among eighteenth-century writers such as Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), Montesquieu (1698-1755), David Hume (1711-1776), and Adam Smith (1723-1790) for a more complete image of this imperative term and its turn from "opulent" and "excessive" to part of England's economic discourse. But did luxury's newly reformed associations apply to objects made elsewhere, like India? To trace such material associations, I turn to India's ivory trade with East Africa and ivory's continued interconnectedness with Indian fabric production, including chintz and calico. As I will illustrate, from an early point in England's colonization of India, ivory and Indian fabrics were inextricably linked, which unconsciously lingered in ivory's eighteenth-century English materiality. The affiliation between Indian ivory and fabric was further heightened with the furniture's surface ornamentation that directly referenced dyed and decorated chintz fabric – a popular and eventually banned textile in domestic England.

While ivory and Anglo-Indian ivory furniture were most certainly understood as luxurious – positively or negatively – the material was also connotated as "exotic" due to its unavailability through domestic sources and its non-native material status. To specify ivory's exotic performance, I argue that it was the through the natural characteristics of the surface and the careful attention to Anglo-Indian ornamentation that non-nabobian viewers conceived and perceived these pieces as exotic. Through the manipulation of the

ivory inlay and the ivory veneers, the non-nabobian British viewers recognized the material – and thus the object – as exotic.

The concluding section of this chapter looks at ivory furniture *in situ* within the eighteenth-century nabobian country home. As East India Company officials returned to England with their Indian fortunes, many sought the life of the upper landed classes, including owning and decorating their own country home. Moreover, the country house was a central site of English sociability and interactions among the upper classes. But how did Anglo-Indian ivory furniture either aid or disrupt non-nabobian socialization and politeness with the nabob? I contend that it was the furniture's hybridity – its English visuality and form coupled with its Indian materiality – that propagated the tenuous English and Indian balance the nabob achieved in England. It was, I suggest, the continual utilization of luxurious and exotic Indian materials through furniture that illustrated the nabob's true nature: his Anglo-Indian-ness. His hybridity was perfectly encapsulated within Anglo-Indian ivory furniture; both were luxurious, both were exotic, both were Nabobian.

State of the Literature

Before I begin my discussion of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, I will first analyze some of the important research surrounding the figure of the nabob, furniture's role in sociability, and Anglo-Indian furniture itself. This chapter is especially indebted to Mimi Hellman's indispensable article, "Furniture, Sociability, and the Work of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century France."² In this article, Hellman illustrates how furniture

² Mimi Hellman, "Furniture, Sociability, and The Work of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 4 (Summer, 1999): 415-445

theoretically functioned in the socialized performances of eighteenth-century French elite society. The author argues that furniture decorating elite French homes were social agents and social actors that interacted and reacted to the bodies surrounding them. “...Objects were not simply owned, but indeed *performed*.”³ In such an environment, furthermore, decorative furniture no longer remained a passive viewer to the leisured sociability of eighteenth-century French polite society but became an active participant in the perpetuation of elite etiquette. While the author’s remarkable thesis of furniture as social actors has played a critical role in the conception of this chapter, my argument is not a simple recitation of Hellman’s. Beyond the blatant geographical differences – and thus the different societal practices – my argument is structured around an exclusive subsection of English citizenry rather than the more generalized appellation of “elite society.” Hellman’s work does not necessarily identify specific furniture pieces or even types, but instead contemplates furniture’s role in eighteenth-century society in conceptual terms. She is also not interested in material or how material connotation acted within this performative setting. But, nevertheless, this conceptualized thesis of furniture’s performative power provided the foundation for this chapter.

During his tenure at the Victoria & Albert Museum, Amin Jaffer, renowned art historian and curator, created the first comprehensive catalogue of Anglo-Indian furniture, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon: A Catalogue of the Collections in The Victoria and Albert Museum and The Peabody Essex Museum*, which meticulously

³ Hellman, “Furniture, Sociability, and the Work of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century France,” 417.

indexes and categorizes furniture made in British India.⁴ Divided by province and cities respectively, Jaffer offers his readers a detailed account of the furniture-making industry of each geographical spot as well as how these pieces were utilized in colonial India.⁵ Aside from becoming the primary research source for scholars of British colonial furniture from India, Jaffer's catalogue places these objects within their specified cultural setting with his exhaustive look into British domestic life in India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as how British consumers and Indian artisans worked together to create Anglo-Indian furniture.

Kate Smith, a senior lecturer of Art History at the University of Birmingham, has frequently written about East India Company officials and their Anglo-Indian furniture, particularly ivory furniture. In two separate contributions to edited volumes dedicated to The East India Company in Britain and material culture in the English country home, Smith analyzes Anglo-Indian ivory furniture in regards to their personal biographies and relationships to their East India Company owners.⁶ The author argues that Anglo-Indian furniture "acted as affective displays of familiar love and personal history."⁷ Based upon the gifting of Indian items and the generative passing-down of objects through familiar lineage, Smith explicates that each furniture piece was a special indicator of their

⁴ Amin Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon: A Catalogue of the Collections in The Victoria and Albert Museum and The Peabody Essex Museum* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2004).

⁵ Each catalogue entry distinctly remarks upon the speciality of each piece but also carefully explores the copious amounts furniture comparanda and how they form part of larger category of furniture type.

⁶ Margo Finn and Kate Smith, *East India Company at Home; The Country House: Material Culture and Consumption* (London: University College of London, 2018).

⁷ Kate Smith, "Imperial Objects? Country house interiors in 18th century Britain," in *The Country House: Material Culture and Consumption*, ed. Jon Stobart and Andrew Hann (Swindon: Historic England, 2016), 105.

domestication and link to familiar history. While Smith does mention the nabob figure in each of these two chapters, it is only in brief passing and the author never elucidates how the repudiated nabobian figure's individual experiences within eighteenth-century Britain affected the familiar biographies of these objects. Smith also argued that,

By examining the meanings of these objects contained for those who possessed them, rather than how others perceived them, we can move beyond understanding Asian luxury objects as signs of opulence, luxury, and status to reinscribe the complex meanings they held for East India Company and their families involved in empire...Rather than being seen simply as opulent or imperial, these goods and the interiors in which they were situated need to also be read on a localized and personally meaningful level in order to reveal the full complexity to country house consumption.⁸

Smith does offer some intriguing points about localizing historical analyses, but to disregard luxury and their imperial materiality is to somewhat whitewash these objects. Just like the furniture's hybridity, the meanings of such pieces were not neither/nor, but complex and intricate and interwoven. Moreover, in order to fully develop the localized picture of East India Company official's Indian goods, Smith neglects the nabobian status almost completely, so the local image cannot fully emerge. While her thesis regarding these objects as personally adored pieces is most certainly true – as they did travel the world to make it back to England with their owners – without the full historical narrative surrounding these objects, they lose their Indian-ness.

Tillman Nechtman's *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, one of the most thorough studies of nabobery, details the nabob's dual role between empire and domestic politics.⁹ The author's close attention to primary documentation

⁸ Smith, "Imperial Objects?," 106.

⁹ Tillman Nechtman, *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

and the nuanced relationship between the nabob and England paints a portrait of domestic Britain's uneasiness with their imperial realm. Such a discomfort, as Nechtman illustrates, provided a platform for mockery and dissent. Material culture and imperial collections also played an integral role in the nabob's hybrid status in domestic Britain. As Nechtman states, "Their material collections narrated imperial Briton's experiences – all of the movement, all of the connectivity, and all of the diversity of having been a resident not merely of Britain the small island but rather of a Britain that was global and imperial."¹⁰ Although the author treats the abstracted concept of Indian material culture in Britain through his introduction, Nechtman spends little time within the remaining chapters discussing tangible examples of such material culture. Nechtman, particularly, only mentions imported Anglo-Indian furniture that would come to decorate nabobian homes in passing and most certainly does not elucidate their role to the nabob or the country house. The author's strength lies in his distinct ability to explicate this specific cultural and nabobian hybridity that permeated late-eighteenth-century England.

Perhaps one of the most glaring scholastic gaps in the literature regarding the nabob and Anglo-Indian ivory furniture is the lack of interconnectivity between the two. Nechtman, whose argument partially centers around the introduction of colonial goods as evidence of England's uneasiness with empire, never discusses Anglo-Indian furniture beyond a brief mention. But these objects were substantial and not easily portable, which indicates that they did hold a special relationship with their nabobian owners. Their positioning within the nabob's country home most assuredly held some type of colonial importance to the nabob. Smith and Jaffer gloss over the nabobian ownership and agency

¹⁰ Nechtman, *Nabobs*, 10-11.

in their discussions of the Anglo-Indian furniture and how such a relationship affected viewer's comprehension of these works. In an age of heightened sociability and visibility in the country home, these objects stood out against the standard English furniture types; not because of their design – which was European in nature – but because of their materials and decoration and ownership, which recalled their Indian-ness. To attempt to separate these factors – the nabob and the Indian-ness – is to take away the agency of the objects themselves.

History of European Ivory Furniture

In their seminal work on eighteenth-century European furniture, Dena Goodman and Kathryn Norberg reflect upon the meaning of domestic furniture pieces. The authors argue that domestic furniture falls between clothing “which covers the body” and architecture “which organizes the space in which the body moves.”¹¹ Furniture was less intimate than clothing and more “immediate and flexible” than architecture to its bodily functionality.¹² “Unlike architecture, furniture can be moved; it can be bought and sold, appropriated by a member of one social group only to be re-appropriated by a member of another the next day. Furniture shifts its meaning as it moves from room to room... furniture takes on new uses and therefore new signification. Furniture is matter, but is still mutable.”¹³ Furniture could be impressive objects of prestige or mobile and playful; their mutability within the home was its greatest asset.¹⁴ Such objects were meant to

¹¹ Dena Goodman and Kathryn Norberg, *Furnishing the Eighteenth Century: What Furniture Can Tell Us about the European and American Past* (London: Routledge, 2007), 4.

¹² Goodman and Norberg, *Furnishing the Eighteenth Century*, 4.

¹³ Goodman and Norberg, 5.

¹⁴ Goodman and Norberg, 5.

amaze their viewers and users through their social performativity in the home; their ability to be both useable, utilitarian, or decorative emphasizes their multifacetedness – just like the material used to create them.

Throughout European furniture history, artisans and craftsmen utilized ivory in their domestic creations. Ancient Greek and Roman writers wrote of ivory beds, couches, and thrones, while medieval artists recalled the famed Throne of Solomon through their spectacular use of ivory in religious objects.¹⁵ In the early modern period, ivory became a common decorative material tool in the creation of domestic furniture items and its status as a non-European commodity created a meaningful desire for the material to illustrate wealth, power, and prestige for elite society.

Ébéniste Pierre Gole’s spectacular cabinet-on-stand from 1661-1665 highlights this desire (Figure 4.2). Owned by the Duc d’Orléans, King Louis XIV of France’s brother, this ivory-veneered cabinet stood in the state apartments of the Palais Royale in Paris.¹⁶ Gole’s creative use of ivory also gained the attention of King Louis XIV; the ébéniste made a remarkable table for the King’s *Trianon de porcelaine* with blue-tinted floral marquetry.¹⁷

Beyond France, the Danish-Norwegians and the Austrians frequently utilized ivory to decorate opulent furniture pieces. One particular example from Denmark-Norway is the so-called Inlaid Cabinet, currently located in Christian V’s Hall in Rosenborg Castle, and attributed to German cabinet maker, Lorenz Corbianus (Figure

¹⁵ For more information regarding such objects, please refer to the first chapter of this dissertation.

¹⁶ Th.T. Lunsingh Scheurleer, “The Philippe d’Orléans Ivory Cabinet by Pierre Gole,” *The Burlington Magazine* 126, no. 975 (Jun., 1984): 334. Rather than strictly using ivory in the marquetry detailing, Gole employs the material as the ground to inlay the tortoiseshell and wood designs. As Th.H Lunsingh Scheurleer noted, Gole was most likely the first artisan to use the ivory ground technique in early modern Europe

¹⁷ Scheurleer, “The Philippe d’Orléans Ivory Cabinet by Pierre Gole,” 334.

4.3).¹⁸ The cabinet's ebony ground supports the frenzied floral marquetry of various woods and green-stained bone encompassed within ivory-lined rectangular sections. The stand complements the nature of the marquetry decoration with its Solomonic-column legs bookended with ivory bases and capitals.¹⁹ According to Mogens Bencard and Jørgen Hein, the cabinet's primary function was trivial and potentially adopted for some type of storage, but its significance lies in its historical associations: the commemoration for the end of the Scanian Wars (1675-79).²⁰

Small-scale ivory veneered cabinets came into vogue in seventeenth-century Central Europe – particularly the German principalities and Austria – as well as Denmark-Norway. Portable and miniature, these cabinets acted as personal repositories for monarchs and aristocrats – a portable *Kunst-* or *Wunderkammer* to store significant items like jewels, coins, or documents. Melchior Baumgartner, an Augsburg cabinet maker, specialized in and inspired these types of small-scale ivory-veneered cabinets, as seen in these two examples (Figures 4.4-4.5). In the Danish-Norwegian example, dated to ca. 1650, the ivory veneer grounds the extensive and delicate *pietra dura* mosaics with surrounding ancient-style cameos, pilasters, and architraves. The black ground and bright mosaic colors of the *pietra dura* highlight the warm hue of the ivory and provide a

¹⁸ Mogen Bencard and Jørgen Hein, "Three Cabinet on Stands from the Seventeenth-Century," *Furniture History* 21, Studies in the History of Furniture and Design Presented to Peter Thornton (1985): 154.

¹⁹ Bencard and Hein, "Three Cabinets on Stands from the Seventeenth Century," 153. As Mogens Bencard and Jørgen Hein have described, "The middling part of the interior is fitted out as a room, set in a frame of panels. A staircase of elegantly curved design leads the visitor under an arcade of ivory reminiscent of a triumphal arch and which is dated to 1679, into a polygonal inner space of mirrors, reflected by the additional bevelled mirrors of the doors, also set in panelled frame." Originally placed in the Marble Room of Rosenborg Castle, the cabinet was moved to the *Cammerit ved Thronen* ("Chamber by the Throne") in 1718, although it has now been relocated to the first floor of the castle.

²⁰ Bencard and Hein, 153.

visually stunning monarchical object. In the German example, Baumgartner created this resplendent ivory-veneered and lapis lazuli cabinet for Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria (1573-1651) in 1646. Using the heraldic colors of the royal house of Bavaria, this cabinet was ordered directly from Baumgartner's Augsburg studio to stand among Maximilian I's personal collections.²¹ The intricate designs, exquisite attention to detail, and rarified materials marked these small-scale cabinets as elite, prestigious, and worthy of monarchical display.

Early modern England also decorated and flourished their furniture with ivory. The ivory-veneered Cabinet-on-Stand from the famed Duke of Lauderdale's Ham House illustrated ivory's power in the most significant rooms within a manor house (Figure 4.6). With the entirety of the exterior veneered with ivory, the lightness of Cabinet-on-Stand's elegant and tasteful design prominently contrasts the heavy tapestries and furniture placed throughout the home. Its geometric design is fairly subdued against the rippled plaques surrounding geometrically laid ivory strips. The interior of the cabinet continues this patterning with a series of ivory-veneered drawers each surrounded with rippling ivory strips. As one of the most prized possessions of Ham House, the Cabinet-on-Stand moved between two elemental rooms of the home: The North Drawing Room and the State Apartments.²² Like the Anglo-Indian ivory furniture this chapter analyzes, this

²¹"Cabinet of Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria," Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, accessed November 10, 2019, http://www.bayerisches-nationalmuseum.de/webgos/bnm_online.php?seite=5&fld_0=00032390

²² Peter Thornton and Maurice Tomlin, *The Furnishing and Decoration of Ham House* (London: The Furniture History Society, 1998), 141. The three inventories taken in the later seventeenth century – 1677, 1679, 1683 – lists the cabinet in The North Drawing Room in 1677 and 1679. Between 1679 and 1683, the cabinet moved to the Queen's Bedroom of the State Apartments, which Peter Thornton and Maurice Tomlin characterized as "the most important room in the house of the Lauderdale's time."

cabinet was not produced in England, but rather has a Flemish provenance.²³ The Cabinet's movements throughout the most socially significant rooms of the home illustrate ivory's unique and mutable role in conversing and illuminating its owners' hierarchical performance.

Horace Walpole, the 4th Earl of Orford's (1717-1797), famed Strawberry Hill was the site of the Walpole Cabinet, a classically inspired piece of padouk and ivory furniture (Figure 4.7). Commissioned in 1743 after Walpole's Grand Tour, the wall cabinet is a tour-de-force of antique inspired designs and contemporary artistry. Walpole and William Kent conceptualized the overall design; William Hallet, Senior created the padouk exterior and pine carcass; and James Francois Verskovis and Andrea Pozzo carved the exterior ivory decorations and ivory medallions, respectively.²⁴ Although now at the Victoria & Albert Museum, the cabinet was originally the centerpiece of The Tribune Room in Strawberry Hill where Walpole housed his famed collection of miniatures and enamels.²⁵ With its classically-inspired pediment and antique-derived ivory medallions, the Cabinet was intended to resemble a "Classical Temple of Worthies."²⁶ As acroterion, Verskovis conceived three ivory statuettes depicting Walpole's artistic heroes: Andrea Palladio, architect; Inigo Jones, architect; and François

²³ The Cabinet-on-Stand has been attributed to the Hague. No other cabinet like this is known to exist.

²⁴ Marjorie Trusted, *Baroque and Later Ivories* (London: Victoria and Albert Publishing, 2013), 175-180. Verskovis, a Flemish sculptor, supplied ivory statuettes of artists for the pediment and the ivory eagle heads and festoons of fruit of flowers of padouk wood while Andrea Pozzo created the rest of the medallions. Walpole most likely purchased Pozzo's creations while in Italy on his Grand Tour.

²⁵ Trusted, *Baroque and Later Ivories*, 175. The Cabinet was originally displayed in Walpole's house in Arlington Street, London and moved in 1760s to Strawberry Hill in Twickenham.

²⁶ "The Walpole Cabinet," The Victoria and Albert Museum Online Collection Database, accessed November 20, 2019, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O79041/the-walpole-cabinet-cabinet-orford-horace-walpole/>.

Duquesnoy, sculptor. Verskovis also carved the ivory pedimental ornamentation and the two eagle heads at the base of the cabinet. In the 1784 guidebook to Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole explicated the imagery of the relief medallions on the doors of his cabinet:

A cabinet of rose-wood, designed by Mr Walpole; on the pediment, statues in ivory of Fiamingo, Inigo Jones, and Palladio (sic), by Verskovis, after the models of Rysbrach. In the pediment, Mr Walpole's arms, a cupid and lion, by the same: on the doors, bas-reliefs in ivory, Herodias with the head of the baptist, by Gibbons,; a lady, half-length, by the same; Perseus and Andromeda; the Hercules Farnese; the Flora; Diomede with the Palladium; the Medusa of Strozzi; the Perseus of ditto; Caracalla and Alexander, by Pozzo; and eight other heads. On the drawer, the Barberini lion, by Pozzo; and heads of eagles, by Verskovis.²⁷

The most intriguing aspect of Walpole's cabinet was ivory's connotation as classical due to its placement and its ownership. For the ivory and the wood – both African materials traded with India and thus the East India Company – do not necessarily read as colonial as they would in an object made in India; in fact, they are much more aligned with antiquity than with empire. Does this semiotic recognition stem from its usage as storage for antique items or its positioning within an antique-inspired room? Most likely, it was associated with these antique implications due to Walpole's erudite reputation in eighteenth-century England. In nabobian Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, however, the nabob's direct contradiction to the English gentleman created material understanding linked with their personal behavior and hybridity.

²⁷ Horace Walpole, "A Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole, Youngest Son of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford, at Strawberry-Hill, near Twickenham. With an inventory of the furniture, pictures, curiosities &c'," Strawberry Hill Press, 1784 (expanded edition, ca. 1791).

Types of Anglo-Indian Ivory Furniture

Throughout the eighteenth century, East India Company officials and Indian craftsmen worked together to create numerous types of ivory furniture – including game boards, chairs, tables, desks, dressing tables, cabinets, and bureaus for their imperial clientele. While there were several colonial settlements within British India utilizing ivory in their furniture, in this chapter I focus on two specific sites where high-ranking nabobs commissioned or bought their furniture: Vizagapatam on the Coromandel Coast and Murshidabad in Bengal. Indian craftsmen began creating ivory-inlaid furniture at the start of the early modern period, but the material’s true furniture renaissance came under English patronage.

The British colonialists in India – many of them from the middling classes – suddenly found themselves members of the upper class; as such, it became necessary for Company officials to tangibly demonstrate their wealth and status within their new domestic landscape.²⁸ As Amin Jaffer noted, “The need to assert status through the world of goods set in motion a pattern of extravagance which, in turn, gave rise to high spending that was emulated throughout all levels of society.”²⁹ Thus, furniture became a main signifiers of imperial wealth and station in colonial British India.³⁰ Upon their return to domestic England, nabobs placed Anglo-Indian ivory furniture within a denser domestic landscape of “traditional” English furniture and interior decoration, but their luxurious magnificence, unusually exotic surface ornamentation, and performance within

²⁸ Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon*, 31.

²⁹ Jaffer, 31.

³⁰ Jaffer, 52-61. Unlike English homes, Indian colonial homes could not be filled with expensive tapestries or oil paintings, brocaded walls, or elaborate floors due to the Indian climate and fear of insect infestation.

critical social rooms of the country home elevated their visibility, and thus, their agency to assert nabobian hybridity.

Commissioning and Constructing Anglo-Indian Ivory Furniture

In the 1760s, Mrs. Kindersley recalled the procedure to commission and purchase furniture in Calcutta,

furniture is so exorbitantly dear, and so difficult to procure, that one seldom sees a room where all the chairs and couches are of one sort; people of the first consequence are forced to pick them up as they can, either from the captains of European ships, or from China, or having some made by blundering carpenters of the country, or send for them to Bombay, which are generally received about three years after are bespoke.³¹

As Mrs. Kindersley quote explicates, the commissioning process was difficult, cumbersome, and at times, frustrating. Throughout British India, the most common method to commission furniture pieces was directly from local Indian craftsmen.³² What made this approach preferable to British colonialists was the Indian craftsmen's ability to replicate English design styles so colonists could enjoy English designs in their new environments.³³ This mimicry was noted throughout the early modern period; in the seventeenth century, John Ovington stated that Indians "are admirable Mimicks of what they affect to copy after."³⁴ In the eighteenth century, traveler Edward Terry characterized Indian furniture-makers as "the best apes for imitation in the world...that they will make any new thing by pattern."³⁵

³¹ Quoted in Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon*, 76.

³² Jaffer, 76.

³³ Jaffer, 76-77.

³⁴ Quoted in Jaffer, 77.

³⁵ Quoted in Jaffer, 77.

Another factor in Indian furniture commissioning was the obtainment of materials; it was standard for the purchaser to supply the Indian furniture-maker with the needed materials or for the cash equivalent.³⁶ Ivory itself was most likely sourced from the Gujarat area, specifically Surat, as this was the main trade entrepôt for East African ivory into India. Beyond providing the physical materials for the Indian craftsmen, the commissioner also needed to supply a muster or pattern for the furniture-maker to mimic, many of which came in English furniture pattern books, like Thomas Chippendale's *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director*.³⁷ As evident in this 1770s chair example from Vizagapatam, the ivory-veneered splats are an almost exact replication of Thomas Chippendale's splat designs from plate XVI from the *Director*, but with added Indian iconography (Figure 4.8-4.9). Although the furniture pieces partially acted as "copies" of English Georgian furniture – thus creating a partly English identity – the use of local materials and ornamentation created a competing Indian identity that birthed these hybrid pieces.³⁸

Vizagapatam

One of the most prominent geographical locations for the production of colonial furniture was Vizagapatam on the Eastern Indian Coromandel Coast. Developed into a thriving port city by the end of the seventeenth century, Vizagapatam was the hotspot for

³⁶ Jaffer, 77. Such a process can be seen in this exchange between an early 18th century mistress in Madras and her servant. "Mistress: How shall we get Beds?/Servant: Call the Carpenter, and buy Boards, and after coming to an Agreement, we let make them./Mistress: For what must we agree before?/ Servant: when we don't make and Agreement before making, they will afterwards ask irreasonably, without Reason and beyond all Equity."

³⁷ Jaffer, 78.

³⁸ I use the term "copied" as a reference to the prescribed mimicry noted in the eighteenth century. However, this term does not elucidate the varied skills of the Indian craftsman as artisan. Rather it relegates them to a mere copier. While I will not be discussing this aspect of Indian craftsmen in this chapter, the material and technical skills of these artisans should most assuredly be explored.

ivory-inlaid, and later, ivory-veneered furniture.³⁹ The city's prominent colonial location offered many opportunities for the importation of rare Asian materials and commodities.⁴⁰ With this fine port, timbers from the Northern Circars – like teak, ebony, and rosewoods – ivory from Pegu (modern-day Mynamar), padouk from the Andaman Islands and sandalwood from southern India were readily available for colonialists on the eastern coast.⁴¹ Although some scholars have stated that ivory was imported from Pegu, it is also likely that some ivory came from Ceylon; however, much of this ivory supply line was limited so ivory was imported through trade posts in Gujarat with direct access to the East African coast, with expensive Indian fabrics traded for ivory tusks.⁴²

In 1756, Major John Corneille remarked upon Vizagapatam's inlay work and its chintz fabrics; he noted "the place is likewise remarkable for its inlay work, and justly, for they do it to the greatest perfection," which alluded to ivory's material connection

³⁹ All discussion surround Vizagapatam comes from Jaffer, *Furniture in British Indian and Ceylon*, 172-175, unless otherwise indicated. Jaffer has reconstructed the Kamsali ivory methodology: one group of men was involved in the planning and sanding the wood; another marks and cuts the furniture piece's dovetails; one man cuts the ivory into the desired shapes and placed onto the carcass with mastic; the object is then passed to the engraver; finally, the last craftsmen pours and finishes the lac design. Jaffer, 175. The history surrounding the beginnings of ivory-working and technique remain obscure, but it is known that the main ivory inlayers came from the Kamsali chaste.

⁴⁰ Jaffer, 172. As Jaffer notes, the Vizagapatam port was one of the finest between Calcutta and Madras. With this fine port, timbers from the Northern Circars – like teak, ebony, and rosewoods – ivory from Pegu (modern-day Mynamar), padouk from the Andaman Islands and sandalwood from southern India were readily available for colonialists on the eastern coast of India. Although Jaffer states that ivory was being imported from Pegu, it is also likely that some ivory came from Ceylon but mainly from trade posts in Gujarat with direct access to the East African coast, who traded expensive Indian fabrics for ivory tusks.

⁴¹ Jaffer, 72.

⁴² For more information on Ceylonese ivory, see Martha Chailkin, "Ivory in Early Modern Ceylon: A Case Study in What Documents Don't Reveal," *International Journal of Asian Studies* 6, 1 (2009): 37-63. Due to the brilliant white of much of the surviving Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, it is more than probable that colonialists bought and utilized African, rather than Asian, ivory, as the African elephant's tusks were bigger, whiter, and denser. Also, African ivory was traded in Mozambique and Zanzibar for Indian plain and painted textiles; Vizagapatam had an established tradition of textile production, some of which was likely used for the obtainment of ivory.

with Indian textiles.⁴³ In James Grant's 1786 *Political Survey of the Nothern Circars*, he categorized Vizagapatam's ivory work as art, asserting the practices as "the art of painting, or inlaying ivory and blackwood."⁴⁴

There were two main types of ivory ornamentation in eighteenth-century Vizagapatam furniture: inlaying, which appeared in the beginning and middle of the eighteenth century; and ivory veneer, which developed towards the late 1750s and 1760s. In inlaid furniture objects, ivory with lac designs created the composite decorative scheme with rosewoods or padouk as the structural ground with additional ornamentation in ebony, tortoiseshell, or silver.⁴⁵ In the 1750s and 1760s, ivory became the primary surface material of Vizagapatam furniture with the introduction of veneer into the craftsmen repertoire, which took much less time and dexterity and produced a neoclassic aesthetic geared for English taste.⁴⁶ Such ivory-veneered pieces were also ornamented with lac, which either continued the delicate floral patterning of the inlay or was derived from English prints.⁴⁷

⁴³ Jaffer, *Furniture from British Indian and Ceylon*, 172. Corneille, 1966, 100-101. In the eighteenth-century, furniture workshops centered around what is now called Beach Road, though there is no approximate count for how many furniture workshops there were at the time.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Jaffer, 172. James Grant, *Political Survey of the Nothern Circars*, 1786, 8.

⁴⁵ Jaffer, 173. The process for inlaying ivory was extensive, as Jaffer has shown: the design patterns were drawn onto a panel of ivory; the ivory was then filed and sliced into strips between 3/32 and 1/8 thickness; the artisan then laid the ivory into the hollowed section of wood; mastic was used to gap any borders and create a black outline around the ivory; once inlaid the ivory was engraved, then rubbed with melted lac, which was then scrapped off; finally, the surface was polished to a brilliant shine.

⁴⁶ Jaffer, 173.

⁴⁷ Jaffer, 173. I do not necessarily agree with Jaffer's classification of ivory furniture as souvenirs, a concept that will appear in the concluding section of this chapter. However, as Jaffer notes, this change to ivory veneer created production difficulties, especially in relation to larger-scale furniture pieces. "The obvious difficulties of veneering ...furniture with ivory meant that these no longer featured regularly in the range of manufactures, and the effect of ivory incised with fanciful designs trivialized the appearance of Vizagapatam wares, which were increasingly produced as souvenirs and drawing-room ornaments, with furniture forms reproduced in diminutive sizes."

Types and Examples of Vizagapatam Furniture

With the influx of English men and women to the Coromandel Coast, the colonialists need numerous types of furniture to fill their homes. Each of these types fit into specific performative functions, but their true hybrid nature would not emerge until their return to England. As such, this subsection looks at the furniture's potential function within the English home, rather than the Indian colonial homes where they first resided. Although each object spent some time in India, most of these object's biography takes place in England.

Of a more private nature, vanities, dressing tables, and desks were integral parts of the nabob and nabobina's – the wives of Company men – personal performance; they were participants in the daily performance of the nabob's identity. The use of a vanity or dressing table was critical to the feminine *toilette* performance but was also integral for the male in his quest for the perfect gentlemanly guise. For the English woman, and nabobinas particularly, vanities – or toilet glasses – acted as an imperative social starting point for their Anglo-Indian identity, as can be seen in this rosewood and ivory toilet glass from 1730-40 and this later example Neoclassical-inspired toilet glass from 1790-80 (Figure 4.10-4.11). Objects like this toilet glass were potentially placed atop a dressing table, but their mobility and portability made them marketable to a variety of female buyers.

While toilet glasses and vanities played an immense role in the daily readying of nabobian hybridity, they were just one element of a larger social performative piece: the dressing table. Unlike the dainty toilet glass, the dressing table was a substantial piece with intricate inner-workings and not easily portable. For these desired objects to return

to England, they would have taken considerable preparation and a significant amount of cargo space; thus, they signify a critical significance to the nabob. A notorious nabob and first Governor of Bengal, Robert Clive's Vizagapatam ivory dressing table is perhaps the most famous of this type (Figure 4.12). The table, dated to ca. 1755-60 and located in Powis Castle in Wales, continues the Vizagapatam style of intricate floral ivory marquetry on a wooden ground and consists of three pieces: the knee-hole desk; the toilet glass; and vanity base.⁴⁸ The knee-hole desk's most unusual feature is the shallow and concave knee-hole itself, rather than the more traditional deep and square sections of other nabobian dressing tables and desks, like those belonging Richard Benyon and Thomas Rumbold (Figures 4.13-4.14). In both the Benyon and Rumbold desks, the Indian craftsmen included deep recesses with inlaid drawers and open-front cabinets and provided an ideal setting for the nabob's desk chair to conduct business, write letters, or aid in their daily morning gentlemanly preparations. The shallow and curved recess on Clive's desk should eliminate the possibility for drawer space in the knee-hole nook, but the Indian craftsmen created curved inlaid drawers to fit perfectly into the space.⁴⁹ Although the initial function of the three desks are not known, there are a few extrapolations to be made: first, their substantiality made their transport to England

⁴⁸ Jaffer, 190. Although the pieces stylistically match in decorative formulation, the vanity and the table were not integral to one another but could function together. It is not known if Clive did use these objects together while they were at his townhouse in Berkeley Square in London or at his country seat, Claremont House. They are now positioned together in the Blue Drawing Room at Powis Castle. It was recorded in 1774 Inventory as "A Curious commode Chest of Composed of Rosewood inlaid with Ivory and Silver mounted mark'd A6".

⁴⁹ The National Trust Collection of the United Kingdom, the current trustees of the Clive desk, have noted that the desk was "made for Clive of India's wife, Margaret, Lady Clive, before 1761, when it was restored and the feet were added by William Bradshaw." If this were indeed the case – although this is the only reference I have seen to this attribution – it certainly does not change the nabobian agency. See, "Cabinet-on-Stand," National Trust Collections, accessed November 21, 2019, <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/1139080.1>.

precarious, thus illustrating their significance; second, the desks/dressing tables were most likely utilized in the private daily rituals of the nabobs; and finally, these objects became the site of the nabob's initial hybrid performance.

In the public areas of the country homes, cabinets-on-stands and bureau-cabinets framed the interior spaces of socialization. Situated along the walls of drawing rooms, parlors, dining rooms, and libraries, these large and highly decorative furniture pieces illustrated the power of Anglo-Indian imagery and materiality in the eighteenth-century country home, like this often-reproduced cabinet-on-stand is the ca. 1765 example housed in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Figure 4.15).⁵⁰ A more common style of the cabinet-on-stand genre appears at the Kingston Lacy Estate's South-East Cabinet Room (Figure 4.16). Over five feet tall, the striking cabinet's detailed ivory inlay displays images of India with indigenous floral and palm tree marquetry. The highly decorative nature of the piece continues to the interior with a remarkable architectural vista. While not particularly useful for storing documents or larger items, this padouk and ivory cabinet-on-stand was a showpiece; its primary function was its representation of Anglo-Indian hybridity.

Bureau-Cabinets, as opposed to the cabinet-on-stand, were a much greater travel challenge; their single-unit construction as well as their immense height made transportation cumbersome. But for Edward Harrison and Richard Beynon, both former Governors of Fort St. George, the bureau-cabinet's substantial height did not deter these

⁵⁰ See Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon*, 190-192; Stacey Sloboda, "St. Martin's Lane in London, Philadelphia, and Vizagapatam," in *Eighteenth-Century Art Worlds: Global and Local Geographies of Art*, ed. Michael Yonan and Stacey Sloboda (New York: Bloomsburg Visual Arts, 2019). The original Anglo-Indian owner is not known for this cabinet; it was imported into England in the late nineteenth century from China. But this type of object is reminiscent of those that nabobs would have brought back from India.

nabob's from returning to England with these objects. Now in a private collection, Edward Harrison's teak, tortoiseshell, ebony, and ivory bureau-cabinet is a tour-de-force of Vizagapatam iconography and materiality (Figure 4.17).⁵¹ Dating to the 1720s-30s, the bureau-cabinet had two significant domed attic moldings with doors that fit into the arches. The entire cabinet is inlaid with the characteristic ivory and lac-engraved floral marquetry. When opened, the interior siding of each cabinet door displays an ivory vase with tall and scrolling flowering plants, which replicate the inlaid vase and flower design on the central door of the cabinet's interior. The extensive use of ivory overshadows the warm redness of the teak and reverses the ivory and teak material paradigm; it thus appears as the teak is the inlay and the ivory the ground. At Englefield House, Berkshire, Richard Benyon's bureau-cabinet resides as a testament to his Company service (Figure 4.18). Like the Harrison example, the double-arched cabinet with fitted doors has a frenzied ornamentation of floral and vegetal ivory marquetry. On the exterior cabinet doors, the Benyon Cabinet also includes bird circling the tops of the ivory trees and small animals scrimping around its base. The playful nature of the floral and faunal ornamentation with the intricate inlay artistry produced a stunning visual and material object for visitors to Benyon's country home.

⁵¹ See, "An Anglo-Indian Ivory-Inlaid Teak, Ebony, and Tortoiseshell Bureau-Cabinet," Christie's Live Auction 8033, The Exceptional Sale, 2011, accessed November 20, 2019, <https://www.christies.com/lot/lot-an-anglo-indian-ivory-inlaid-teak-ebony-and-tortoiseshell-5461627/>?. In the inventory taken after his death in 1732, the valuation listed in "The Governor's Bed Chamber" "a very curious Indian Book Case inlaid with ivory" and in "The Long Galery [sic]" "12 Ebony China CHairs inlaid with Ivory 2 Elbow Do, 2 Couches Do and squabs Bolsters and Pillows of Silks." Thus it appears that Harrison brought multiple pieces of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture home to England. December 15, 1732. *An Inventory and Appraisment: then began of the Household Furniture, Pictures, Linen, China, Cattle, Corn, Hay and other Effects belonging to the Honorable Edward Harrison Esq deceased late Governor of Fort St. George &c at his Seat of Balls in the Country of Hertford*, private collection, Ms. H1/4/3.

While there were more types and styles of Vizagapatam ivory furniture, the pieces above represent the most prominent forms for East India Company owners. The use of English design musters allowed for the furniture's transition from India to the English country home, yet the utilized materials and the inlaid and lac designs promoted its Indian origin. *In situ* within England, Vizagapatam furniture aided the activation of nabobian hybridity through their combination and juxtaposition of Englishness with Indian-ness.

Types and Examples of Murshidabad Furniture

Located in northern Bengal, Murshidabad rose to political prominence in the early eighteenth century.⁵² Although Murshidabad never outshone Calcutta for Bengalese dominance, the city's close proximity to European trading posts and the presence of a Mughal court created a unique space for ivory furniture production in the later decades of the eighteenth century.⁵³ But, unlike Vizagapatam, Murshidabad mostly focused their production of smaller-scale objects and furniture-making was primarily reserved for commissions rather than stock items.⁵⁴

In Murshidabad, furniture was not inlaid or veneered; a majority of the surviving furniture from this Bengalese hotspot was solid ivory, including sofas, chairs, and tables. Astoundingly, of the extant Murshidabad furniture known today, almost all of pieces have the same provenance: the collection of Warren Hastings, First Governor-General of

⁵² Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon*, 238. The city was named after Nawab Murshid Quli Khan, the eighteenth-century Mughal Governor of Bengal, who moved his capital to his new eponymous city from Dacca.

⁵³ Jaffer, 238. Like Vizagapatam, the beginning of ivory carving in Murshidabad is obscure, but there are two theories regarding the origins: first, that it began in the eighteenth century when members of the Bhaskar chaste migrated to Murshidabad from Sylhet, a center of ivory carving; the second comes from the oral tradition of a Delhi ivory-carver from the eleventh century.

⁵⁴ Jaffer, 238.

India. While some of the pieces stayed with Hastings and furnished his beloved estate, Daylesford, he also gave away pieces to friends and, strategically, as gifts to Queen Charlotte; thus, there is no true count of how many Murshidabadian ivory furniture Hastings imported into England.

Through letters and personal diaries, a clearer provenance of Hastings's personal furniture collection emerges; Mani Begum, the widow of Nawab Mir Ja'far, gifted most of the furniture to the former Governor.⁵⁵ Even after Hastings's return to England, the Begum continued to send pieces of ivory furniture through Hasting's Calcutta agent, Nesbitt-Thompson. Through correspondence, the agent updated the Governor-General on pieces of Murshidabadian ivory furniture traveling to his home; like in March of 1786, when Hastings was informed that "The Begum has sent four chairs and a very beautiful table all of ivory for Mrs. Hastings."⁵⁶

A table and chair set, currently located in the Victoria & Albert Museum, encapsulates the types and styles of Murshidabadian ivory furniture in Hastings's collections (Figure 4.19). Made in the mid-1780s, this set occupied Daylesford as a testament to Indian craftsmanship. The set's table has solid ivory legs with an ivory-veneered top and is slightly gilt. Atop of the ivory veneer, the artisan placed delicate gilded ivory floral and vegetal ornamentation, which continued onto the table legs. Oval-shaped tables, like this example, seemed to be a favorite of Hastings's; the Daylesford inventory of 1799 lists at least five oval tables in the country home. The inventory described the largest of the oval tables as, "A large Ivory Oval Table with Emboss Work

⁵⁵ Jaffer, 238. According to the author, "She was indebted to him [Hastings] for appointing her guardian of the young Nawab Mubarak-ud-daula, - a position of some influence – even though she was neither his mother nor Mir Ja'far's principal wife."

⁵⁶ Quoted in Jaffer, 247.

in Ivory Gilt with Green Cloth Top.”⁵⁷ There were at least four other smaller ivory oval tables: two in Warren Hastings’ study; and two in his wife, Marian’s, personal study by the fireplace.⁵⁸ The currently discussed table – which I posit was this “large oval table” – was listed in the “Best Drawing Room” in the 1834 inventory, indicating that the Hasting’s intended to use the table in the perpetuation of English sociable practices.⁵⁹

To surround this large oval table, the Begum sent numerous ivory chairs to the Hastings’. Made in the mid-1780s, the slightly gilded solid ivory chairs provided a striking complement to the ivory table. The chairs are ornamented with numerous natural elements, including floral decoration, tiger heads at the terminations of the arms, and back splats constructed of stylized palm fronds. Instead of the standard four-legged chairs, these Anglo-Indian chairs have five cabriole legs concluding in the popularized English ball-and-claw foot. The utilization of the extra leg derives from the “burgomaster” chair of the eighteenth century, a style of cane-seated revolving chairs prevalent in British India, as this Vizagapatam example attests (Figure 4.20).⁶⁰ The subtle glistening ornamentation and unique design of the chairs certainly called Daylesford visitor’s attention to these Indian objects and promoted Hastings’s own hybridity.

Beyond the numerous chairs, tables, and footstools, the Hastings’s received several solid ivory Murshidabadian sofas, like this example from a private collection (Figure 4.21). The piece’s visual and material lightness was vastly different from

⁵⁷ Jaffer, 246.

⁵⁸ Jaffer, 246.

⁵⁹ Jaffer, 246.

⁶⁰ Jaffer, 240. As Amin Jaffer notes, the chair’s designs are also loosely based on English chairs of 1760s, like Robert Manwaring, published in *the Cabinet and Chair-Makers Real Friend and Companion* (1765).

traditional English Georgian furniture and fit well into the decorative scheme of Daylesford's balance between English gentlemanliness and Indian comforts.

This sofa is stylistically similar to the above-mentioned chairs, indicating that they could have been made as a set or at least in the same furniture workshop. The sofa's back splats utilized similar palm frond stylization, the arms terminate in the same tiger head motif, and the sofa's feet have the same ball-and-claw foot. With a creation date of the mid-1780s, the potentiality that the above table and chairs and this sofa were meant as a set is high.⁶¹

Together, the influx of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture into England in the eighteenth century provided the nabob with the material comfort of their Indian tenure, especially when their association with the empire created rifts between Company officials and the British citizenry. But these objects were not just simple reminders of Indian life; they were material documentation of the nabob's status as Anglo-Indian. The mixture of European forms and Indian materials created an uncomfortable object for the nabob's visitors; the piece's form looked familiar, but the material was foreign – much like the nabob himself.

Ivory's Luxurious Materiality in Eighteenth-Century England

The accumulation and possession of luxurious and luxury items grew immensely in eighteenth-century England, especially with the development of the East India Company and the influx of colonial goods that became key elements in upper- and

⁶¹ Jaffer, 240. The 1834 inventory lists two sofas in the Best Drawing Room of Daylesford, along with the large oval table and burgomaster-inspired arm chairs.

middle-class homes. In this section, I argue that ivory was indeed correlated with eighteenth-century English connotations of luxury in the abstract, but when introduced into the English domestic sphere, ivory's materiality became dependent on the societal acceptance of the object and the owner. For example, Horace Walpole's ivory cabinet at Strawberry Hill connotated aspects of gentlemanly leisure, the Grand Tour, interests in antiquity, and refined English taste; on the other hand, Robert Clive's ivory inlaid dressing table recalled the turbulent Anglo-Indian relationship during the middle of the eighteenth century, England's fear of Indian governmental styles, and rapaciousness. Thus, the reputation of the owner became a significant measure to which objects – and the material – were judged in a regulated society.

To understand how ivory's mutability was challenged in the eighteenth-century nabobian home, I will first begin by defining and explicating eighteenth-century notions of luxury, then England's development of its own luxury trade, and how ivory fit into this paradigm through its trade history and interconnectivity to other Indian luxury commodities. As I will show, ivory was luxurious because of its demarcation as global and rare, but its true mutability resided in its formal application. Just like Anglo-Indian ivory furniture's hybridity of neither English nor Indian, ivory was neither positively luxurious or negatively luxurious; its material function was determined through geographical production, societal ownership, and domestic positioning.

Debates and Definitions of Luxury in Eighteenth-Century England

The notions of eighteenth-century luxury and its assistance in the development of a semi-luxurious market-scape in England have fascinated academics for decades. Scholars like Maxine Berg and Michael Kwass have argued that the eighteenth century

saw an increased consumption of material and luxurious goods.⁶² The century's gravitation towards and love of novelty and imitation heightened the influx of luxury goods pouring into Europe during the early modern period.

But the examination of luxury did not begin in the eighteenth-century; rather, its roots lie in antiquity. Greek philosophers, like Plato and Aristotle, wrote of luxury as sumptuous and effeminate; Socrates connected the impulsiveness and passionate nature of luxury to anarchy.⁶³ In the Roman Empire, authors distinguished between private and public luxury; Cicero argued, "The Roman people loathe private luxury but they love public splendor."⁶⁴ For the Romans, the expenditure of state capital for public appreciation was an acceptable form of luxury, while the privatization of luxurious trade items proved un-virtuous to the Roman Empire. Within medieval Christian theology, luxury was linked with the sins of temporal desire, particularly lechery, as the Medieval church categorized all sins of sexuality under the term *luxuria*, a specific nomenclature that later became conflated with the French word *luxe*.⁶⁵ French clergymen debated the issues of luxury and its implications for their congregants and subsequently preached that Christians would need to choose between the fleeting pleasures of luxury and their immortal souls.⁶⁶ This theological insistence towards the fallibility of luxury was in direct contradiction to the expected excessiveness of elite society. Most prominently, St. Augustine contended that engaging in luxury and luxurious behavior was in direct

⁶² Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Michael Kwass, "Ordering the World of Goods: Consumer Revolution and the Classification of Objects in Eighteenth-Century France," *Representations* 82, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 87-116.

⁶³ Till Wahnbaeck, *Luxury and Public Happiness: Political Economic in the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 13-14.

⁶⁴ Cicero, *Pro Murena*, trans. C. MacDonald (London, 1977), Line 76. Quoted in Wahnbaeck, *Luxury and Public Happiness*, 14.

⁶⁵ Kwass, "Ordering the World of Goods," 89

⁶⁶ Kwass, 89.

disobedience to God and thus led to an insubordinate society.⁶⁷ Just as many writers of the eighteenth century equated, luxury in pre-early modern Europe became emblematic of a larger consumptive society and its overindulgence and sinful activities.

The connection between luxury and excessiveness continued into the early modern period, yet its definition began to stray from religious doctrine. Early modern France, in particular, maintained the centuries-old luxury debate. In Monet's *Dictionnaire de l'Academie Française* (1636), the author wrote that luxury was "excessive sumptuousness, be it in cloth, in furniture, or in dining."⁶⁸ Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu was a leading voice in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century luxury discourse. Montesquieu related luxury to disparity, stating "luxury is always proportionate to the inequality of fortunes."⁶⁹ In his view, luxury could not exist in a republic, except for England. The Baron postulated that the "usage that permitted commerce to the nobility in England [was] one of the things that most contributed to weakening monarchical government there."⁷⁰ The institution of a constitutional monarchy after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 permitted greater trade relations to the upper classes, which in turn led to greater importation of luxury goods into eighteenth-century England.

With the development of a new governmental system and the growing trade networks and importation market in England, authors like Bernard Mandeville wrote of the inherent economic strength of luxurious consumption as producers of "Great and

⁶⁷ Wahnbaeck, 15.

⁶⁸ Kwass, "Ordering the World of Goods," 89.

⁶⁹ Wahnbaeck, *Luxury and Public Happiness*, 32.

⁷⁰ Wahnbaeck, 32.

Wealthy Nations,” even with the connotations of vice.⁷¹ Mandeville, a Dutch émigré, began his defense of luxury in the early eighteenth century. He did not necessarily divorce luxury from vice, but rather, argued that such a connection could be beneficial to society as a whole. The author made two important associations about luxury in eighteenth-century English society: the link between luxury and wealth and the relationship between luxury and social progress were inextricable.⁷² “...Look back to Old Greece and the Roman Empire, or the great Eastern Nations that flourish’d before them...we shall find, that Luxury and Politeness ever grew up together and were never enjoy’d asunder.”⁷³ Mandeville’s main contention was that luxury was necessary for the economic growth and societal advancement; the accumulation of luxury goods – either domestic or global – was a singular indicator of a healthy and growing nation. Thus, the rise of conspicuous consumption equated to England’s role as an economic and imperial powerhouse.

David Hume expounded upon Mandeville’s arguments and maintained that luxury – and thus vice – were beneficial to the public. He wrote “little less than a contradiction in terms, to talk of a vice, which is in general beneficial to society.”⁷⁴ But in juxtaposition to Mandeville’s argument, Hume posited that luxury loses its advantageous status when it is no longer innocent, or as Till Wahnbaeck noted, “when man became such a slave to luxury that he forgot his charitable duties.”⁷⁵ But even when private luxury collections turned to public ostentation, the banishment of luxury was not productive to an ever-

⁷¹ Kwass, 90.

⁷² Wahnbaeck, 25.

⁷³ Wahnbaeck, 25.

⁷⁴ Wahnbaeck, 42.

⁷⁵ Wahnbaeck, 42.

evolving economy.⁷⁶ While Mandeville certainly started the progression of luxury's inclusion in economic discourse, Hume's philosophical writings cemented luxury's economic connotations. As Maxine Berg observed, Hume did segregate the philosophical notions of luxury from the economic, which allowed luxury to become part of economic incentives.⁷⁷ "If we consult history," Hume stated, "...most nations foreign trade has preceded any refinement in home manufacture, and given birth to domestic luxury... Thus men became acquainted with the *pleasures* of luxury, and the *profits* of commerce; and their *delicacy* and *industry* being once awakened, carry them on to further improvements in every branch of domestic and well as foreign trade."⁷⁸ In Hume's writings, luxury and trade thus became intertwined within an economic context and gone was luxury's connection to excessiveness.

Luxury's inclusion in England's eighteenth-century economic discourse culminated in the writings of Adam Smith. Like Mandeville and Hume, Smith philosophizes on luxury's public propitiousness, particularly in the juxtaposition of the consumption patterns of the lower and upper classes. In *Wealth of Nations*, Smith distinguishes between necessity and luxury, "[necessities are] not only the commodities which are indispensably necessary for the support of life, but whatever custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order to be without... All other things, I call luxuries, without meaning by this appellation, to throw the smallest degree of reproach upon the temperate use of them."⁷⁹ Smith's use of the

⁷⁶ Wahnbaeck, 42.

⁷⁷ Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, 33.

⁷⁸ David Hume, *Of Commerce* (1752). Quoted in Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, 31.

⁷⁹ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), ed. R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner (Oxford, 1976, repr. Indianapolis, 1982), bk. V, ch. II, para. 3. Quoted in Wahnbaeck, 16.

work “temperate” offers a striking similarity to Hume’s notion of luxury’s private innocence and public pretension. “He managed to rescue luxury’s public benefits but subordinated it to what made the economy grow: frugality and capital accumulation, which increased the possibilities for future consumption.”⁸⁰ This future consumption came with the influx of East India Company imported goods from China, Japan, India, and the New World, which led to luxury and semi-luxury production in domestic England, strengthening the economy. Thus, luxury was economically fertile for eighteenth-century England; this rise in status took excessiveness and greed out of luxury’s definition to one connotated with growth.

If, as Hume postulated, foreign trade and foreign goods were beneficial to English economic growth, how were these objects perceived within domestic environments? Material culture, like porcelain, associated with refined taste and chinoiserie certainly fit into luxury’s newly defined meaning. As the demand for porcelain products grew, England sought for ways to meet this demand without the limitation of overseas trade. But what about materials that could not be replicated in English manufacture, like ivory? How were these materials understood in regard to luxury foreign trade? And did its rationed availability test the limits of luxury’s new connection with economic growth?

Luxury Ivory Trade in Early Modern India

The growing demand for luxurious items and materials created vast global trade networks and routes, especially in British India. The centuries-old ivory trade networks from Eastern Africa into Western India provided the East India Companies – including the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English – an already marketable and producing route;

⁸⁰ Wahnbaeck, 54.

they did not need to seek out new trading paths. But this Indian Ocean route was ritualized and was not a simple matter of monetary exchange between two parties. Instead, East African traders sought specific items from the Indian Banian chaste in barter for ivory tusks: Indian textiles.

As al-Mas ‘udi wrote in the 10th century, “It is from this [Zanj] country that tusks come weighing 50 pounds or more. They Usually go to Oman and from there are sent to China and India. This is the chief trade route...”⁸¹ The major trading post for ivory in East Africa was Mozambique and its islands, where Company and Banian traders bartered for and acquired ivory.⁸² But, those who sold ivory to the Banians in Mozambique were not the ones who procured the ivory; rather, the Yao long-distance traders from the Lake Nyssa region hunted elephants, obtained the ivory tusks, and brought them to market in Mozambique in exchange for Indian textiles. As Pedro Machado’s illustrated, Yaoian routes centered around the Zambezi River, which stretches from modern-day Democratic Republic of Congo through Zambia and Zimbabwe to Mozambique where it empties into the Indian Ocean.⁸³ The ivory trade route between East Africa and India was not a simple line of import/export between two locations; it was unpredictable and wide-ranging.

The ivory trade grew exponentially under Portuguese colonialization beginning in the sixteenth century and these new colonial powers continued the ivory-for-textile barter

⁸¹ Abdul Sherif, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1830*, (James Curry Ltd., 1987), 78.

⁸² Sherrif, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar*, 78. As Sherif states, African traders preferred the Mozambique Islands because the Zambezi River was often held in monopoly by the Captain of Mozambique and allowed the prices for the tusks to become more competitive on the islands.

⁸³ Pedro Machado, *Oceans of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 194.

system.⁸⁴ The Portuguese imported ivory into Diu, Daman, and Surat on the Gujarati coast and obtained Indian textiles to continue the trade cycle. As seen in 1639, one petition claimed that 1000 *bares* [240,000kg] of Indian textiles were exported from Diu to Mozambique, and in October of the same year, reported that 63,000 *parados* worth of ivory arrived in Diu.⁸⁵ For the English, Surat, “proved to be the gateway to European domination in India,” and was the first East India Company stronghold in Britain’s colonization of India.⁸⁶ Subsequently, Surat arose as the premier Indian site for ivory trade in the early modern period and thus became the hub of ivory exportation to other Asian nations – like China, Japan, or Java, – to the New World, and to Europe.⁸⁷ The English continued the Banian and Portuguese ivory-for-textile barter system and looked beyond Gujarati textile production to support the increase in ivory importation, like to the Coromandel Coast and Vizagapatam.⁸⁸ As a 1740 Surat factory report illustrates, ivory was a significant traded commodity to the English; “ivory was likely to sell at a high price...because of a plentiful crop which would allow the ‘lower sort of people’ to purchase ornaments made from ivory.”⁸⁹ During the English’s Gujarati tenure, particularly in the 1780s and 1790s, between 1,700,000 to 2,300,000 kgs of ivory came

⁸⁴ Machado, *Oceans of Trade*, 222.

⁸⁵ M.N. Pearson, “Indians in East Africa: The Early Modern Period,” in *Politics and Trade in the Indian Ocean: Essays in Honour of Ashin Das Gupta*, ed. Rudrangshu Mukherjee and Lakshmi Subramanian (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 241-242. In some years, over 310,000 kg of ivory were imported into Portuguese Diu and Daman, which accounted for sixty-five to eighty percent of their state income. Ibid, 168. Having established trading posts and colonial settlements, the Dutch and the English reproduced the Portuguese trade routes to become players in this centuries old commodities outlet.

⁸⁶ Balkrishna Govind Gokhale, *Surat in the Seventeenth Century: A Study in Urban History of pre-modern India*, (London: Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies, no. 28, 1979), 147. Martha Chailkin, “Surat: City of Ivory,” in *Transnational Trade and Traders: Situating Gujarat in the Indian Ocean from early times to 1900*, ed. Edward A. Alpers and Chhaya Goswami (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2019), 109.

⁸⁷ Chailkin, “Surat: The City of Ivory,” 110.

⁸⁸ Chailkin, 110.

⁸⁹ K.N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 221-2.

through Diu and Daman to the Surati markets, illustrating the massive appeal and power the material held for the English trading company.⁹⁰

The Interdependence of Indian Ivory and India Textiles

Accordingly, ivory and Indian textiles were tightly interwoven in the eighteenth-century British mind. Berg argues that Asian manufactured goods – like fabrics, porcelain, and ivory – were traded luxuries; the long history of commoditization of these goods “made them into very special transformative luxuries for Europeans.”⁹¹ Indian-produced textiles supported the Company’s increasing economic progression in eighteenth-century England, which recalled the debaters’ new formulation of luxury as pecuniary rather than moral. Most of the imported textiles were described as “calicoes,” “chintz,” or “muslin,” but included a number of different types, styles, and decorative patterns of English aesthetics with an Indian flair. As the Company noted, “We send you some patterns, which may govern you so far as to see thereby that we want some new Works...endeavor to send us every year New Patterns, as well of the Flowers and Stripes, at least five or six in a bale, and let the Indian Work their own Fancys, which is always preferable before any Patterns we can send from Europe.”⁹² Like Anglo-Indian ivory furniture musters, Indian textile producers were quick to adapt to European decorative textile patterns to suit European tastes.

But, as the so-called Calico Acts of 1700 illustrate, Indian textiles became increasingly popular and problematic in eighteenth-century England. The Act forbade

⁹⁰ Machado, *Oceans of Trade*, 171. Calculated from HAG, CD 995-1012, CDm 1055-1068, AD 4952-4969, ADm 4836-4852. The highpoint of ivory importation into Gujarat was 1782, with 318,400 kg of ivory arriving in Diu. Throughout the English control of the ivory trade, at least 200,000 kg of ivory were imported from East Africa into India per year.

⁹¹ Berg, “In Pursuit of Luxury,” 94 and 105.

⁹² Berg, 113-14.

“all wrought silks, Bengalls, and stuffs mixed with silks or herbs, of the manufacture of Persia, China, or East Indies, and all calicoes painted, dyed, printed, or stained there.”⁹³ In fact, by 1719, the English government noted that most of the “Calicoes” worn in England were from imported sources.⁹⁴ Moreover, the luxurious Indian commodity encroached on the English silk and wool textile markets and maintained the old narrative of luxury’s corrupt nature and greed. Although Parliament banned many of the brightly colored and decorative Indian fabrics, fine and undyed muslins from India were still importable.⁹⁵ In 1721, however, Parliament modified the Calico Act with sumptuary provisions; “An Act to Preserve and Encourage the Woollen and Silk Manufactures of this Kingdom, and for more Effectual Employing the Poor, by Prohibiting the Use and Wear of all Printed, Painted, Stained or Dyed Calicoes in Apparel, Household Stuff, Furniture, or otherwise...”⁹⁶ Eventually, Parliament revoked the Calico Act and allowed imported fabrics into England’s luxury markets.

As Michael Yonan and Stacey Sloboda recently argued, imported Indian textiles were symbols of colonized South Asia and thus foreign and exotic examples of luxury in eighteenth-century England.⁹⁷ But how did textile’s luxury designation affect ivory’s materiality and interpretation in the same setting and was the interconnection between textile and ivory in India translatable to an English viewer and mindset? In the case of the nabob’s personal collections, this certainly was the case.

⁹³ K.N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 281-7.

⁹⁴ John Irwin and P.R. Schwartz, eds., *Studies in Indo-European Textile History* (Ahmedabad: Calico Museum of Textile, 1966), 37-8. They stated, “more Callcoies worn in England that pay no duty than what are painted and worn here that do pay duty.”

⁹⁵ Susan North, *18th-Century Fashion in Detail* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2018), 9.

⁹⁶ North, 9.

⁹⁷ Michael Yonan and Stacey Sloboda, eds., *Eighteenth-Century Art Worlds: global and local geographies of art* (London: Bloomsburg Visual Arts, 2019), 2.

As illustrated, both the Coromandel Coast – the production site of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture– and Gujarat – the importation site of East African ivory– had long-serving textile production factories; consequently, ivory and Indian textiles had a foundational correlation.⁹⁸ Furthermore, for centuries, the Banian chaste utilized Indian textiles to barter for ivory from East African sources to become one of the top importers of the region. Due to its immense success, European trading companies continued utilizing this system of exchange to obtain and export ivory, which created a clear connection between the two commodities for officers in these trading companies. In Europe, however, this connection was less tangible and more abstracted, but as the rest of the chapter will illustrate, both of these commodities read as Indian imported goods, which were perceived as luxury.

Indian Ivory as Luxurious Indian Commodity in Eighteenth-Century England

Luxurious commodities were an integral element in early modern England’s identity as a colonial and economic superpower. The increasing ability for English citizens to purchase imported and expensive goods as well as the development of a semi-luxurious domestic English production market progressively heightened British erudition of luxury, taste, and refinement in the eighteenth-century. But how did ivory fit into this new national narrative of the desire for luxury domestic items? Unlike many other European nations, ivory sculpture and decorative arts did not truly come into vogue in England until the later seventeenth century and eighteenth century.⁹⁹ For England, the

⁹⁸ The adored patterned chintz and textiles belonged to the Southern Coromandel Coast, while the northern part of the Coromandel Coast tended to produce plain, but rich fabrics. For reference, Vizagapatam is in the very northern quadrant of the Coast.

⁹⁹ This is, of course, not to say that ivory was not utilized in any fashion before the later seventeenth century, but unlike many other European nations, it was not nearly as popular a material as other media. Also, this notion does not assume that ivory was not utilized in other nations after the seventeenth century, but rather, falls out of favor with the elite class as they searched for new imported

increase in ivory's utilization domestically and imperially relied on its status as luxury and its status as rare and exotic.

As discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, ivory compliments Arjun Appadurai's narrative of a luxurious commodity. For Appadurai, fashion often dictates the demand of luxury commodities and thus they created their own economies. Subsequently, ivory fits well into Appadurai's registers of luxury commodity: first, most ivory was sequestered to elite consumption for most of the early modern period; second, it was a rare and imported material with limited availability; third, ivory conveyed mutability in all manner of decorative styles and usages; four, the obtainment of ivory was a difficult and harried process for the African hunter to the Indian trader to the European consumer; and finally, ivory had a significant and long-standing historical association with the substitution of skin. Not only did the warm hue of ivory replicate skin, the material's Indian interconnection with textiles – a material used to cover the body and express personal aesthetic preferences – created another linkage to the body. Ivory was rare; it was foreign; it was elite; it was luxurious. Beyond its commodity status, luxury objects were also “social valuables”, as Jon Stobart and Mark Rothery noted.¹⁰⁰ But to have a luxury object, the item must also have luxurious materiality that heightens the performance of the surface to alert the viewer to its purpose. Ivory was that material.

opportunities. For countries like Austria, France, and Italy, ivory was a common artistic medium from the sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century, when ivory was quickly supplanted by other luxury imports, like porcelain in France and lacquer in Austria. Imperial nations, like England and Denmark-Norway, took over the mantle of ivory sculptural production in the eighteenth century.

¹⁰⁰ Mark Rothery and Jon Stobart, *Consumption and the Country House* (Corby: Oxford University Press, 2016), 24.

Thus, under the development of new luxury discourses and the intensifying trade from India into England, ivory was considered a luxurious and desired material in eighteenth-century England. The utilization of ivory in sculptural representations of elite figures, decorative arts, and interior design communicated the ability – both morally and economically – of the owner to obtain, keep, and tame ivory. Even in its raw form – the tusk – ivory was ambiguously luxurious. Once the material was carved, shined, and positioned in accordance with English genteel directives, ivory was connoted as positive luxury – a type of imported material that aided in the strengthening of the British economy and imperial growth. It was English hands that made the material fit into luxury’s new definition, not its origin.

But how does ivory’s notion of positive luxury change to negative luxury? The answer lies with the societal status of the nabob and their perceived threat to the stability of England’s booming luxury economy. As explicated above, Indian textiles and ivory were inextricably linked in the minds of eighteenth-century East India Company officials, like the nabobs. The textile’s status as a desired luxury commodity permeated England in the early eighteenth-century to the point where its importation endangered domestic production. The Calico Acts of 1700 and 1721 illustrate precisely how a luxury commodity, like fabric, can turn from a positive economic staple to a negative economic entity. Indian textiles thus became usurpers and interlopers against English textile production, recalling luxury’s excessive and sumptuous definition of centuries past. Ivory had the potentiality to act similarly, particularly in the hands of the returned nabob.

As William Pitt, the Earl of Chatham wrote, “the riches of India have been poured in upon us, and have brought with them not only Asiatic luxury, but, I fear, Asiatic

principles of government. Without connections, without any natural interest in the soil, the importers of foreign gold have forced their way into Parliament by such a torrent of private corruption as no private hereditary fortune could resist.”¹⁰¹ Pitt’s use of the term “Asiatic luxury” is an intriguing qualifier. Luxury’s designation as “Asiatic” pushes it out of the realm of domesticity and into the dominion of the “other” and “foreign.” Asiatic luxury was what was corrupt and excessive, not domestic luxury and semi-luxury production, because those were English. Pitt’s analysis was motivated by the returning and vilified figure of the nabob, who brought back Indian objects and placed them within their new country homes. The mysterious wealth of these returning men, their crass demonstrations of extreme wealth, and apparent acquisition of Indian-ness carried connotations of negative luxury. Thus, any object from India associated with the nabob also carried these associations, like Anglo-Indian ivory furniture. But, like the hybrid nature of the nabob, Anglo-Indian furniture’s English visuality and Indian materiality complicated the demarcation between positive and negative luxury. These pieces appeared to genteel viewers as those in their own homes, but with Indian designs and foreign materials. Ivory’s mutability and abstracted luxurious conception further obscured Anglo-Indian ivory furniture’s luxury status: the material was readable as a coveted foreign commodity – and a positive luxury – but ivory’s connection to the rapacious nabob pushed ivory into the characteristics of negative luxury. Thus, while ivory was most assuredly conceived as luxurious in eighteenth-century England, its

¹⁰¹ William Pitt Chatham, *The Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, eds. W. Stanhope Taylor and J.H. Pringle, 4 vols. (London, 1838-40), 3:405.

utilization and subsequent comprehension within the nabobian sphere placed the material, once again, into the realm of excessiveness and sumptuousness.

Ivory's Exoticism

As ivory permeated early modern decorative and interior landscapes, its materiality was subject to a cultural widening that encompassed various measures of antique, medieval, and foreign associations. As explicated above, ivory was complimentary to the notions of luxury in eighteenth-century England thus prompting the material's appropriate demarcation as luxurious. Yet, there is another weighty word that often accompanies ivory in academic writing: exotic. In the twenty-first century, "exotic" tends to communicate the foreign, the unknown, and the unexplored. Without fast travel, photographic capabilities, and high-speed internet, the eighteenth-century European relied on printed materials, written recollections, and oral narratives to begin the processes of comprehending the foreign. For many, places like Asia or the Americas were abstracted and imaginative whispers within the European mindset. Although Europeans had limited recourse to see the exotic and the foreign firsthand, the assorted trading companies brought home material representations through large global trade networks. Moreover, materials like ivory, porcelain, and lacquer were semiotically-labeled as exotic through their geographic origin; it thus became the job of the European to tame that exotic nature into tasteful and refined objects fit for elite consumption. Ivory's exoticism was, as I argue, recognizable through its performative surface qualities that recalled the material's source and subsequent domestication. Using Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, I postulate how a British genteel audience recognized ivory inlay and

vener as luxurious and exotic through the visual replication of Indian chintz fabrics, locating ivory in the realm of the foreign.

Understanding the Exotic in the Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century, exoticism was both an aesthetic and narrative ploy used to define the unknown and the foreign. First entering the English language in the sixteenth century, the exotic “was defined as “something that was ‘outside’.”¹⁰² This rather broad characterization of “outside” further developed with the substantial increase of European imperial expansion in the early modern period. The flood of global goods, literary accounts, and images of foreign lands into Europe expanded the European curiosity of the exotic. But with this curiosity came an uneasiness. As Christa Knellwolf states, “exotic described fantasies as well as historical responses to otherness, both permeated with an attempt to contain it with the intellectual and real boundaries of empire.”¹⁰³ In the eighteenth century, Britons attempted to domesticate the exotic into palatable qualities appropriate for English refined aesthetics and tastes. Exotic materials and designs allowed the English owner the ability to show-off their imperialism, but within a confined set of gentlemanly virtues. But as Natasha Eaton described, the exotic “always predates the imperial;” for something to be foreign and unknown, it had to exist before the European world could conceive it, making a mysterious past, present, and future.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Christa Knellwolf, “The Exotic Frontier of the Imperial Imagination”, *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 10.

¹⁰³ Knellwolf, “The Exotic Frontier of the Imperial Imagination,” 11.

¹⁰⁴ Natasha Eaton, “Nostalgia for the Exotic: Creating an Imperial Art in London, 1750-1793,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 2 (Winter 2006): 228.

As George Rousseau and Roy Porter posited, the exotic in the Enlightenment was “the fantastic realized beyond the horizons of the everyday world the Europeans knew.”¹⁰⁵ The fantastic realm of the exotic also had to be subordinated to European aesthetic supremacy; in other words, tamed.¹⁰⁶ The exotic was, in essence, a “relational concept”.¹⁰⁷ To understand the exotic inherent within an object, European observers had to act upon the object to enact its exotic performance. Without this reciprocal act of viewer and object, the exotic merely languishes in the material landscape. Once the exotic is performed, its plurality of meanings extended to the object or narrative that it occupied. Srinivas Aravamudan noted that the exotic was “a sequence of identification, transmission, and consumption...a series of delivery mechanisms that renders the exotic as legible and continuous in its mystery despite repeat exposures.”¹⁰⁸ This series of comprehensive measures began the subtle processes of taming the exotic into European aesthetic ideals. Tropes of the strange, unknown, foreign, and undiscovered juxtaposed a certain playfulness that the exotic inhabited, like the jauntily decorated porcelain wares from China or the intricate floral chintzes of India.¹⁰⁹ Exotic objects comparatively interacted with the domestically made objects and interior settings as well as the costumes and physical attributes of their owners.

For the British, India became an obtainable and easily tamed avenue for exotic material purchases. As PJ Marshall argued, “the Indian exotic was tamed by bringing

¹⁰⁵ George Rousseau and Roy Porter, *Exoticism in the Enlightenment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 15.

¹⁰⁶ Rousseau and Porter, *Exoticism in the Enlightenment*, 13-14.

¹⁰⁷ Christa Knellwolf and Iain McCalman, “Introduction,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 2.

¹⁰⁸ Srinivas Aravamudan, “Response: Exoticism beyond Cosmopolitanism?,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 25, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 227.

¹⁰⁹ For more information about exoticism and playfulness, see Natasha Eaton, “Nostalgia for Exotic,” 229.

most of its substance into the pale of the knowable and the mundane, while enclosing what was left within European canons of taste.”¹¹⁰ Subsequently, objects of Indian origin became part of the knowable material culture of Europe and thus repressed much of their original exoticity. For the English, Indian objects and culture were increasingly explicated through vernacular experiences.¹¹¹ Although India and other Asian cultures were progressively ingratiated into European artistic aesthetics, there were still stereotypical associations immovably attached to the objects. For India, specifically, Mughal despotic rulership was a particularly potent colonial misrepresentation that allowed for European usurpation of such cultures.¹¹² As Sir Thomas Rowe and his chaplain, Edward Terry, noted in the seventeenth century, “They have no written law. The King by his owne words ruleth, and his governours of provinces by authority.”¹¹³ Such a cliched and formulaic depiction of the “East” and of India continued well into the eighteenth century; François Bernier’s theory of “oriental despotism” particularly affected French and English valuation of India and the Asia as a whole.¹¹⁴ In the minds of the eighteenth-century observer, this style of government was “inherently unstable.”¹¹⁵ The introduction of Asian aesthetics, particularly with the importation and imitation of chinoiserie in the eighteenth century, provided a cogent comprehension process to appreciate the exotic, and at the same time, tame the exotic.

¹¹⁰ P.J. Marshall, “Taming the Exotic,” in *Exoticism in the Enlightenment*, ed. George Rousseau and Roy Porter (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 47.

¹¹¹ Marshall, “Taming the Exotic,” 53.

¹¹² Marshall, 55-56.

¹¹³ Quoted in P.J. Marshall, “Taming the Exotic,” 56.

¹¹⁴ Marshall, 56.

¹¹⁵ Marshall, 56.

Beyond the chinoiserie trend that permeated the early modern period, Europeans also used the exotic in their visual culture. Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle, Générale et particulière, avec la description du Cabinet du Roi* (1749-1804) imaginatively replicated the exotic, particularly in the reproduction of the elephant (Figure 4.22). The large gray elephant stands stiffly against a fictional landscape. In the background of the print, Buffon paints an idealized image of India, but with stylized Chinese-style pagodas that most likely never graced the eighteenth-century Indian landscape. This interpretation illustrates the vagueness of Asian cultural and artistic understanding in early modern Europe and the interchangeability of one culture – like China – with another – like India. The prominent white tusks and curved trunk announce the classification of prominent mammal as an elephant. Buffon's conception of the elephant, however, appears as a taxidermic or scientific model rather than the vivacious and mobile elephant of the wild, which recalls the eighteenth-century Enlightenment move towards scientific exploration. But how does this print explore and explain the exotic in the eighteenth century, beyond the visualization of a non-native animal? Christa Knellwolf postulated that the elephant becomes exotic through the interplay of the print's foreground and background. She argued, "while the pagodas in the background come across as an amusingly inaccurate detail, the weighing of the respective significance of nature and relegating non-European cultural achievements to the periphery of scientific classification, where they not only have less importance but also become playthings of the imagination."¹¹⁶ Although Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle* was not the first, nor the last, to utilize unknown flora and fauna to captivate and

¹¹⁶ Christa Knellwolf, "The Exotic Frontier", 18.

invigorate the early modern European's mind, Buffon's illustration was certainly one of the most popular and widely distributed. Through Buffon, the exotic becomes semi-tangible; it could be seen, touched, and comprehended in a European and imperial mindset.¹¹⁷

Thus, eighteenth-century European visual and material culture became remnants of the tamed exotic and of imperial authority. In England, particularly, India's exoticism stood less for the unfathomable and more for cultivated and captivated "otherness" of colonial domination. The increasing availability of Asian wares and materials, specifically in English markets, provided an increasing visibility that lessened aspects of India's foreignness and promoted Asian aesthetic elements as a part of genteel English life. As the English attempted to embrace and thus tame Indian exoticism through the importation and material acquisition in domestic Britain, the Indian subcontinent as a tangible reality remained firmly set within the unknown exotic other. Although India's products were integral parts of English luxury markets, the people, government, and culture all lingered at the periphery of the unknown and the unseen, and thus encapsulated the exotic. For the English, India was an approachable exotic; the tales and narratives from travelers and East Indian Company officials as well as visual representations of the subcontinent supplied domestic Britons with an idealized version of India, but not the full cultural picture. India was England's gateway to the "East" and to the exotic. Materials, such as ivory, were purveyors of India's exoticism through their performative surfacescapes, which projected Indian luxury and extravagance. In the

¹¹⁷ The elephant was also a tangible reality to many Britons, as many trading companies chartered African and Asian elephants around Europe as examples of living exotic and foreign tamed beasts.

possession of the nabobs, however, objects like Anglo-Indian furniture exuded the negative associations of India and the European determination to tame it.

Ivory as Exotic Through Surface

In recent years, issues regarding the nature of surfaces have become an integral part of material culture studies. The surfacescape – to utilize Jonathan Hay’s terminology – is a highly significant and symbolic purveyor for the viewer’s visual comprehension of objects. Aspects like smoothness, monochrome/polychrome, inlay, patterning, lighting, and ornament played an essential role in the performativity and functionality of objects, particularly in the eighteenth century. In an eighteenth-century English drawing room, for example, visitors could encounter a diversity of material surfaces that educed specific purposes, artistic techniques, geography, and social statuses. With objects like woven tapestries, wood and lacquer furniture, porcelain decorative objects, paintings, and silk or other expensive textile furniture adornments, the eighteenth-century English interior was a kaleidoscope of performative surfaces that engaged owners and viewers into a specified cultural milieu. In this section, I posit that the sui generis surface qualities of ivory and the utilization of the material in Anglo-Indian furniture in the eighteenth-century English home performed as a luxurious and exotic material signifier.

As this dissertation has shown and argued, ivory’s materiality was often dependent upon geography, function, positioning, and subject matter, but in order for these elements to perform their desired function for their audience, said audience must understand the material as ivory. Ivory holds a unique position in early modern Europe; unlike porcelain or lacquer, ivory is a natural material artificially carved from a

distinctive biological structure.¹¹⁸ Beyond ivory's unique structural composition, the smooth and warm surface enticed artists and collectors during the early modern period.

Ivory's color is its most determinative feature; the warm yellowish-white color immediately acknowledges the material's categorization. Unlike the stark blueish white of marble or the translucent luminescence of porcelain, ivory's warm coloration created a material fit for functional diversity. Since antiquity, ivory's warm hue was a perfect substitution for skin. In non-representational objects, however, ivory certainly evoked European white skin in an abstracted understanding. Rather than the material's iconography, decorative objects relied upon the warm hues and unique surface qualities of ivory to illustrate the object's classification as luxurious and exotic ivory.

Intimately connected to ivory's coloring is the material's inherent smoothness. As Jonathan Hay notes, "...decoration requires smoothness not just to be available to the hand's touch but also to be visible – a visual promise of textile pleasure."¹¹⁹ Viewers of decoration and decorative arts coveted smoothness.¹²⁰ For ivory, smoothness is a natural quality, unlike other organic materials like wood, marble, or horn. Also, ivory artists had to mold, carve, and steadily shape the material to inject any form of exterior texture. But smoothness also had to be supported with another visual characteristic, like a monochrome surfacescape.¹²¹ Ivory's warm yellowish-white hue was mostly

¹¹⁸ As I discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, elephant tusk ivory consists of layered dentine around a central pulp cavity, much like a human tooth. Carvable ivory comes from the various layers surrounding the central cavity; but some aspects of the tusk are not consistent to ivory working, like the enamel tip – which is removed for carving – and the interior section of the tusk that connects to the elephant's jawbone. In addition, due to the layered nature of the tusk, ivory unfurls for thinner sections perfect for veneer or inlay ornamentation.

¹¹⁹ Jonathan Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces: the decorative object in Early Modern China*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 109.

¹²⁰ Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*, 109.

¹²¹ Hay, 109.

monochromatic with some slight variations and discolorations; the material's inherent smoothness along with its monochrome nature play against one another to illuminate the other's surface qualities. An unblemished and unfurled sheet of ivory or even a worked ivory sculpture encapsulates Hay's thesis regarding the interconnectivity of smoothness and monochrome colors. The smooth and soft exterior of the ivory highlights the warm hue of the material and vice versa. It entices the viewer to want to touch the object and rejoice in the material's sleek texture. There is a bit of a surprise once one touches ivory – because of the warm coloration – viewers potentially expect ivory to be warmer to the touch or even to warm when touched, but ivory does not readily change temperature with physical contact, unlike porcelain or other white materials. This does not, however, distance ivory's monochrome-ness from warmness, just from its tangible temperature.

While ivory's smooth and monochrome surfacescapes are primary qualifiers in the material comprehension of ivory objects, perhaps the most recognizable surface element for ivory is the ingrained natural patterning, commonly known as Schreger Line. This natural patterning is almost undetectable unless a viewer – at a close proximity to the object – pays careful attention to the material rather than the subject. Schreger Lines appear as a ripple effect against ivory's monochrome surface and are created through age. As the interior layers of the elephant tusks forms, the tusk expands and lengthens, which ultimately creates the rippled patterning. The most exterior ivory layers, and thus the oldest layers, often have the most visible Schreger Lines, while the younger, interior layers have much subtler patterning. The lighter wave-like oscillation pattern of the Schreger Lines subtly interrupts the smooth and shiny monochrome surface of ivory, but

it does not necessarily disrupt the viewer's gaze.¹²² As Hay's attests, "material patterning induces the body to register movement as fluctuating intensity ...it visibly inhabited the entire complex topography of the object to which it had been adapted."¹²³ I would also add that ivory's subtle, natural patterning induces the viewer's eye to move across the object, almost subconsciously. But ivory's patterning, in cooperation with a smooth and monochrome surface, operated as a separate informative vehicle as well.

I argue that it this patterning that alerted eighteenth-century English viewers to ivory's exotic status. Because ivory's warmth and slight patterning were so distinctive from other materials, like porcelain or marble, viewers either immediately recognized or quickly learned the material as ivory. Once identifiable as ivory, and thus a non-native European material, the conceptions of eighteenth-century exoticism began to juxtapose the European-owned objects. In the case of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, for example, the conflation of exotic materials with European designs created an exotic object and material; subsequently, through this juxtaposition, ivory became amalgamated with the exotic. Thus, ivory became even more exotically valuable to Britons, as it represented not only the exotic lands of India and the glory of English trading, but also the hegemony of English erudition over the "tribalism" of the colonized lands. It was through the continually growing networks of global connections that allowed for the trading of material culture throughout the known world, whose unique commodities became known as "exotica."¹²⁴

¹²² This is particularly true when ivory is at its smoothest and uncomplicated. When viewed as a relief with small and intricate details, the Schreger lines are even more difficult to detect.

¹²³ Hay, 130.

¹²⁴ Anne Gerritsen, "Domesticating Goods from Overseas: Global Material Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands," *Journal of Design History* 29, no. 3 (2016): 228.

So how then does ivory fit into the notion of the exotic? Ivory was a major trade commodity within the East India Companies throughout Europe and thus became a readily consumable variant of the exotic, something approachable for Europeans. As David Porter stated, “The experience of unfamiliarity in gazing upon a Chinese tea pot must invariably have been mediated through some recognition, however vague, of the curious disjunction of cultural difference to which it alluded and hence of its potential saturation with largely unintelligible meanings.”¹²⁵ Like the ubiquitous Chinese porcelain object in eighteenth-century English life, ivory always had a hint of the exotic, some type of entrenched otherness, that enlightened viewers and owners to its material biography. Ivory’s peripheral status as luxurious, exotic, and Indian produced a material that spoke of colonial conquest, personal erudition, English trading supremacy, and refined and gentlemanly taste.

Anglo-Indian Ivory Furniture’s Surface and Ornamentation as Performative Luxury Exoticism

As I have enumerated above, ivory most certainly fit the criteria of a luxurious and exotic material in eighteenth-century European thought, particularly in England. Let us now look at Anglo-Indian ivory furniture in the context of their luxurious and exotic domestic performance. This section does not, however, address the nabobian ownership of these objects as this aspect of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture’s biography will be discussed in the subsequent section. Rather, I wish to set a baseline of sorts of how furniture could perform philosophical, economic, and aesthetic elements in an eighteenth-

¹²⁵ David Porter, “Monstrous Beauty: Eighteenth-Century Fashion and the Aesthetics of the Chinese Taste,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35, no. 3, Aesthetics and the Disciplines (Spring 2002): 402.

century British domestic setting, removed from the bubble of personal ownership. The question remains, how did Anglo-Indian ivory furniture promote its status as luxurious and exotic? I argue that it was through ivory's surface qualities that allowed viewers to acknowledge ivory's status as an expensive and traded luxury and the recognition of ivory's foreignness. It was particularly, ivory's shiny, slightly yellow-tinted, and subtle natural patterning that alerted viewers to the furniture's materiality. Without these qualities, ivory could have appeared as any number of European materials, like alabaster, porcelain, or even marble.

As Mimi Hellman argued, furniture pieces were indeed social actors within an eighteenth-century interior setting; they informed, performed, and astutely controlled behaviors of their audiences.¹²⁶ Furniture objects commanded how visitors and residents navigated rooms and mastered the artful backdrop of genteel sociability. But furniture also acted as literal conversation pieces in the home's public sphere; they enhanced and projected genteel sensibility and refined tastefulness. But how would furniture pieces from exotic geographies and made with luxurious materials function in the English sphere of polite sociability?

In the context of the eighteenth-century English interior, Anglo-Indian furniture was a curious example of an object obliviously attempting to blend-in with its surroundings, but failing, as these pieces performed much differently than a Chippendale bureau or a Sheraton chair. These pieces were colonial decorative stamps on the interior landscape of the eighteenth-century home. Beyond the issue of ownership – particularly the nabobian – ivory furniture tells the tale of a travel narrative. They spoke of long and

¹²⁶ Hellman, "Furniture Sociability and the Work of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century France."

difficult ocean voyages and the unfamiliar Indian climate and landscape as well as geographical and imperial hegemony and expansion. The pieces illustrated the primacy of English construction and design across the globe. But how did these pieces perform different from other European-made, particularly English, furniture pieces within similar interior spaces?

Imagine an eighteenth-century English drawing room expertly decorated with chinoiserie-style decorative objects, Neoclassical or Georgian architectural ornamentation, and Chippendale, Sheraton, and Hepplewhite furniture; and envision this Chippendale George III Mahogany Cabinet against one of the country home's interior walls (Figure 4.23). This minimalistic wooden cabinet is without much exterior ornamentation but Chippendale, quite brilliantly, relies on the patterning of mahogany's natural grain to produce a diversified and complicated surfacescape.¹²⁷ While Chippendale did not depend upon inlay, veneer, or ostentatious ornamentation, the subtle decorative elements, like the broken pediment surrounding an egg-like finial or the ten small decorative medallions placed upon the doors, elevate the piece to a work of English design history. It is the bureau's inherent Englishness – illustrated through its design and restrained surface – that drew viewer attention. Together with the typical country home decorative elements, the bureau aids in the creation of a genteel and refined *mise-en-scène* for English polite sociability.

But imagine instead that the Harrison cabinet-bureau or the 1765 cabinet-on-stand examples in the Victoria & Albert Museum replaced the Chippendale bureau? How did

¹²⁷ Like the exotic and tamed nature of ivory, mahogany was yet another colonial product domesticated from its original geographic materiality in order to enter the English interior space.

new visual or material elements change the viewer's interpretation of the piece, even without the context of ownership? Perhaps the most blatant difference between the pieces is the use of material. As mentioned above, Chippendale primarily utilized mahogany to construct the exterior of his bureau, while the Indian craftsmen utilized teak, padouk, and ivory to create their interpretation of English design. Against the backdrop of the polite English country house, these Anglo-Indian furniture pieces stood out for their luxurious and exotic materiality and fabrication. When close to the piece, the natural patterning and yellowish-white monochrome color alerted viewers to the material's categorization as ivory, which immediately recalled luxurious trade and foreign geography.

Yet another aspect that aided in the viewer's interpretation of ivory's luxurious and exotic status was the ivory ornamentation, which resembled the Indian textiles that had pervaded the early eighteenth-century English luxury market. Take, for instance, this *robe à l'anglaise* example from the Coromandel Coast, dated to ca. 1760-70 (Figure 4.24). The subtle floral patterning of the cotton overdress mimics the frenetic floriated ivory ornamentation on the Harrison cabinet-bureau and the border inlay around the central panel on the Victoria & Albert cabinet-on-stand. As Indian textiles, particularly chintz and cotton, were overwhelmingly desired in England during the early eighteenth century, the innate recognition of the ivory floral ornamentation with the floral chintzes and cotton from India that traversed that same trade routes as the ivory it resembled was a potent representation of Indian exotic goods within the English domestic interior. As many of the viewers of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture were familiar with Indian textiles and their designs, the link between the furniture's ornamentation and Indian textile's

fabrication was cemented. Hay argued that decorative surfacescapes were a vibrant realization of bodily adornment, particularly feminine dressing styles that acted as their own visualization of eighteenth-century decorative trends.¹²⁸ The juxtaposition of the soft Indian fabrics – or Indian-inspired English fabrics – with the smooth and sleek ivory ornamentation certainly caused geographical recognition within the minds of the viewers. With this link intact, ivory became a visual manifestation of exotic India and luxurious materiality. In the cases of veneered pieces, rather than the fabric-replicating inlay, the connection to Indian textiles persisted through similar floral and stylistic ornamentation. The addition of “Orientalized” or “Indianized” English elements continued the visual and material connection of ivory to India. This tiered visual process of surface recognition, visual comparison, and exotic explication allowed ivory’s surface to perform the exotic.

Anglo-Indian ivory furniture’s visual and material references and association to India became ingrained in its designation as luxurious and exotic in the minds of its viewers. These pieces were semiotically-coded domestic objects that promoted England’s luxury trade markets, the hegemony of England’s East India Company, and the empire’s colonial domination in South Asia. Without the veil of ownership, Anglo-Indian furniture’s performative exotic surfacescape absorbed Indian visual traditions into the English domestic sphere, and thus tamed the exotic into an appropriate English decorative vehicle. The pieces’ luxurious and exotic nature was thus subordinated into the realm of English polite sociability, a refined and tasteful marker of elite superiority.

¹²⁸ Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*, 273.

The Nabob, the Country House, and Politeness

The figure of the nabob was reviled in the mid-eighteenth-century England. In the minds of the English, the nabob's flagrant disregard for the traditional and polite English mentality, as well as their ostentatious displays of extreme wealth, created a threat to the national domestic identity of England. Beyond their perceived corruption, nabobs also began the process of buying tracts of English land to situate themselves as polite country gentlemen. In these Georgian, Neoclassical, or Palladian country homes, nabobs often displayed their collections of Indian luxuries that evoked their mysterious riches and their hybridity as English and Indian. While decorative objects, textiles, paintings, and prints became popular commemorations for their Indian tenure, the highest echelon of East Indian Company officials also commissioned, transported, and displayed Anglo-Indian ivory furniture within this new country setting. In this section, I argue that Anglo-Indian ivory furniture became subsumed into the nabobian narrative and inherited the negatively associated hybridity of their owners. While these pieces were surely thought of as luxurious and exotic, these terms turned to connotations of corruption, extravagant luxuries, and reminders of the nabob's exoticism. Their placement within the nabobian country home highlighted these associations, as the country home was the penultimate symbol of the nabob: ostentation; extreme wealth; and the usurpation of elite life.

The Cultural Significance of the Nabob in Eighteenth-Century England

As Tillman Nechtman noted, the pejorative term nabob was "an Anglicization of the term *nawab*, the title given to aristocratic regional leaders within the Mughal Empire

in South Asia.”¹²⁹ As shown in “The Memories of a Nabob,” published in *Town and Country Magazine* in 1771, “a nabob, according to the modern acceptation of the word, is a person who in the East-India Company’s service has by art, fraud, cruelty, and imposition obtained the fortune of an Asiatic prince and returned to England to display his folly and vanity and ambition.”¹³⁰ Thomas Babington Macaulay continued this narrative, adding that the nabob was a man with “an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver, and a worse heart.”¹³¹ And Mrs. Eliza Parsons noted that “they return with callous hearts to their native country, to dazzle the multitude with their magnificence, and triumph over those who have ten thousand time more merit, but are less beholden to chance or good fortune than themselves.”¹³² The intense concentration and immense amount of writings on the nabob cemented their revilement in English parlance. But perhaps the most vocal opponent to the nabobs in eighteenth-century England was Horace Walpole (1717-1797). In a letter dated 9 April 1772, Walpole stated, “they starved millions in India by monopolies and plunder, and almost raised a famine at home by the luxury associated by their opulence, and by that opulence, raising the price of everything, till the poor could not afford to purchase bread. Conquest, usurpation, wealth, luxury, famine.”¹³³

¹²⁹ Tillman Nechtman, “Nabobs Revisited: A Cultural History of British Imperialism and the Indian Ocean in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *History Compass* 4, no. 4 (2006): 646.

¹³⁰ The *Town and Country Magazine; or Universal Repository of Knowledge, Instruction, and Entertainment* (London, 1771), 28. Quoted in Nechtman, “Nabobs Revisited,” 646.

¹³¹ Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays Contributed to the Edinburgh* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1843), 192. Quoted in Christina Smylitopoulos, “Rewritten and Reused: Imaging the Nabob through ‘Upstart Iconography,’” *Eighteenth-Century life* 32, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 39.

¹³² Mrs. Eliza Parsons, *Women as She Should Be; or, memoirs of Mrs. Menville. A Novel*. 4 vols. (London: printed for William Lane at the Minerva, 1793), 3:86. Quoted in Smylitopoulos, “Rewritten and Reused,” 41. Playwrights and novelists used the nabobian figure in their satirical narratives, like Samuel Foote’s *The Nabob* (1772), Timothy Touchstone’s *Tea and Sugar: or the Nabob and the Creole* (1772), and Richard Clark’s *The Nabob: or, Asiatic Plunderers* (1773).¹³²

¹³³ Horace Walpole, *Walpole Letters*, 8:157, 9 April 1772.

The nabob was a means to “express imperial anxiety” in eighteenth-century England as the empire grew boundless.¹³⁴ By 1760, the nabob had become a familiar figure in English life, with many of the returning East India Company officials taking seats in Parliament and sought the ideal country home to complete their gentlemanly evolution.¹³⁵ Their insinuation into elite circles and government through their displays of wealth left many English fearful of the societal changes to domestic English life as aspects of the empire began to come home.¹³⁶

Perhaps one of the most recognizable aspects of the nabob was their vast wealth obtained in India. Domestic Britons could not comprehend how East India Company officials returned to England with staggering sums of money; this ultimately caused England to question the morality and corruptibility of the nabob. The nabobs partially gained their wealth through connections to Indian leaders and subsequently turned their Indian wealth into diamonds, which proved to be a much easier and transportable wealth accretion.¹³⁷ Although the nabob’s Indian wealth allowed them to enter into politics and gain substantial power, it was the nabob’s purchasing of country estates that caused ire among their contemporaries; the use of foreign and colonial money to purchase English sovereign land sparked outrage. For centuries, landed estates were symbols of the upper classes and the aristocracy; passed down from generation to generation, country

¹³⁴ Christina Smylitopoulos, “Rewritten and Reused,” 41.

¹³⁵ As Phillip Lawson and Jim Phillips noted, in 1768 there were nineteen nabobs in Parliament and by 1780 there were twenty-seven. Phillip Lawson and Jim Phillips, “‘Our Execrable Banditti’: Perceptions of Nabobs in Mid-Eighteenth Century Britain,” *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 16, no. 3 (Autumn, 1984): 228.

¹³⁶ Lawson and Phillips, “‘Our Execrable Banditti’,” 236.

¹³⁷ Tilman Nechtman, “A Jewel in the Crown? Indian Wealth in Domestic Britain in the late Eighteenth Century,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 41, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 77. Robert Clive spent a fortune giving “his Lady a new set of jewels”, Lady Mary Coke wrote in her journal in 1768. Hastings wife appeared at a party in Tunbridge Wells in 1784 wearing diamonds worth an estimated at £20,000.

estates were the physical manifestation of elite blood. English land was, as Nechtman stated, “honorable; it was British” and that “the land was the nation and it was the strength of the nation’s people.”¹³⁸ By purchasing these formerly landed estates with Indian money, the nabob was buying England to display India.

Nechtman also posits – using Homi Bhabha’s theory – that nabobs were “a hybrid community; they were the human manifestation of the permeable boundary that existed between metropolitan Britain per se and imperial Britain around the globe.”¹³⁹ This hybridity was established through the nabob’s display of South Asian material culture and objects that promoted the imperial ideologies of England on domestic soil.¹⁴⁰ These material nabobian objects visually and tangibly linked the East India Company officials to India as well as provided an Indianized backdrop to the traditional English gentlemen. But this hybridity also became ingrained within the nabob’s person and mannerisms; their Indian tenure changed the ways in which the nabob interacted with their country and its citizens. The nabob encapsulated this cognitive dissonance between the material gains, wealth of imperial expansion, and the changing traditional identity of domestic Britain, as can be seen in James Gillray 7 March 1787 print, *DUN-SHAW, one foot in Leadenhall, and the other in the Province in Bengal* (Figure 4.25).

Of the many returned nabobs to eighteenth-century domestic England, I would like to discuss five particular men who owned and utilized Anglo-Indian ivory furniture to decorate their English country homes and encapsulated the hybrid identity of the nabob

¹³⁸ Nechtman, “A Jewel in the Crown?,” 75 and 81.

¹³⁹ Nechtman, “Nabobs Revisited,” 647.

¹⁴⁰ Nechtman, 647. Although Nechtman plainly asserts that material objects helped create nabobian hybridity, the author does not discuss Anglo-Indian furniture except in passing and certainly not as hybrid objects themselves.

through their purchasing of English country homes and their burgeoning involvement in England's eighteenth-century political landscape bought. Charting their Indian careers and their return to England not only illustrates the power of the nabobian figure but also how these objects aided in the perpetuation of the nabob's reputation.

Edward Harrison was an early example of a prototypical nabob.¹⁴¹ After his work as an East India Company ship captain, Harrison was appointed the Governor of Fort St. George in the Madras Presidency until his return to England in 1717.¹⁴² Upon his return, the former Governor used his new-found wealth and status to run for Parliament and acted as the MP for Weymouth and Melcolombe Regis from 1717-1722 and as MP for Hertford from 1722-1726. After leaving the political sector, Harrison returned to East India Company leadership: in 1728, he was named the Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors; in 1729, he was named the Director; and in 1731, he was renamed the Deputy Director.

Richard Benyon (1698-1774) began his East India Company career in 1712 at just sixteen years old.¹⁴³ After serving as Second Council for three years at Fort St. George,

¹⁴¹ All biographical information on Edward Harrison comes from Kate Smith, "Production, purchase, dispossession, recirculation: Anglo-Indian ivory furniture in the British country house," in *East India Company at Home; The Country House: Material Culture and Consumption*, ed. Margot Finn and Kate Smith (London: University College of London, 2018), 74-75.

¹⁴² He then became the captain of the *Powderham Castle* on its late 1690s journey to Borneo. Harrison also captained the *Kent's* voyage to China in 1704-1705 and 1709-1710.

¹⁴³ All biographical information on Richard Benyon comes from *The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857* blog at the University College London. "Englefield Case Study: The East Indian Company Arrives (1745-1776)," *East India Company at Home, 1757-1857*, accessed March 1, 2019. <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah/englefield-house-berkshire/englefield-house-case-study-the-east-india-company-arrives-1745-1776/>. In 1925, the owner of the Swallowfield Country House, Lady Russell, suggested that Daneil Benyon witnessed Thomas Pitt's acquisition of his famed diamond in 1702, which was potentially Richard's father. Bernard Burke and the Debeauvoir Association confirmed this claim. In 2010, Clive Williams argued in *The Nabobs of Berkshire* that it was not Daniel that witnessed the Pitt diamond exchange, but was Bernard Benyon (d. 1715), a member fo the Madras Council. Henry Davidson Love wrote in the *Vestiges of Madras* (1913) that Bernard could have been Dnaiel's brother and Richard's uncle.

Benyon was appointed the Governor of Fort St. George in 1735 and returned to England for good in January of 1744.¹⁴⁴ Although Benyon did not necessarily participate in political or trade matters once he returned to England, his keen interest in buying English property, his shadowy wealth, and his acquisition of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture and other material objects firmly established Benyon as a nabob – albeit a reserved one.

Thomas Rumbold (1736-1791) was born on 4 January 1736 in Low Leyton, Leytonshire, Essex to William and Dorothy Rumbold.¹⁴⁵ With his familiar connections, Thomas Rumbold procured work in 1753 as a writer in the East India Company's civil service in Madras and a year later served as a lieutenant under Major Stringer Lawrence at Trichinopoly in 1754. During Robert Clive's Calcutta campaign, Rumbold was promoted to captain and Clive's *aide-de-camp* for the Battle of Plassey (1757).¹⁴⁶ After serving as MP for the scandalously corrupt borough of New Shoreham and as the East India Company Director, Rumbold was appointed the Governor of Madras in 1777. After his gubernatorial tenure, Rumbold landed on domestic English soil in January 1781 where faced severe public disapproval as domestic Britons became increasingly uneasy with tangible examples of empire at home. This led to a demand for a parliamentary hearing to discuss his career and conduct in India as he received continued ridicule from

¹⁴⁴ During his tenure as Governor, his first wife died, although the exact date is not known; he then married Frances Davis on 14 October 1738. But tragedy struck the Governor again when his newborn daughter passed away on 24 January 1741. Then, on 21 October 1742, his second wife Frances passed away during childbirth.

¹⁴⁵ All biographical information on Thomas Rumbold comes from the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entry, unless otherwise indicated. Willem G. J. Kuiters, "Rumbold, Sir Thomas, first Baronet (1736-1791), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified October 4, 2008. <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy.mul.missouri.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-24270?rskey=djkZMR&result=1>

¹⁴⁶ In 1763, Rumbold became the Chief of the Company's Patna Factory, and began building his vast nabobian fortune as this Factory often allowed for private trade and personal gains from the Bihar revenue. This Factory often allowed for private trade and personal gains from the Bihar revenue.

the English press.¹⁴⁷ His enduring pursuit of political and global trade power as well as his dealings with the empire led to his intense dislike from the English public and solidified his status as a nabob.

Robert Clive (1725-1774) was perhaps the most famous and despised nabobs of eighteenth-century England.¹⁴⁸ Clive arrived in Madras in early June 1744; by the end of 1749, Clive returned to civil service after a stint in the East India Company military outfit with a prime appointment in the supply commissary for East India Company troops.¹⁴⁹ In March 1753, Clive and his new bride, Margaret Masklyne returned to England due to Clive's declining health with a £40,000 fortune.¹⁵⁰ But after an unsuccessful Parliamentary career, Clive travelled back to India in October 1755 as the second-in-command for military expedition from Bombay against the French.¹⁵¹ The most influential moment of Clive's career occurred during his second five-year stay in India.

¹⁴⁷ Henry Dundas, the chairman of the Committee, introduced a bill to punish Rumbold and another bill forbidding Rumbold from leaving England and to pay £100,000 in fines. In April of 1781, Lord North convened a secret committee to delve into the causes of the Carnatic Wars and Rumbold's conduct. On 29 April, the House of Commons supported the Committee's resolutions against Rumbold's actions in India. The main charges against Rumbold were based around corruption, particularly Rumbold's undiplomatic dealings with the zamindars and with the Nawab of Arcot, which eventually led to the Carnatic Wars. Rumbold fiercely fought against the charges and claimed that Parliament had not given him any voice or allowed him to mount a successful defense.

¹⁴⁸ All biographical information on Robert Clive comes from the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entry, unless otherwise indicated. H. V. Bowen, "Clive, Robert, first Baron Clive of Plassey (1725-1774)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified January 3, 2008. <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy.mul.missouri.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-5697?rskey=myDXAt&result=3>

¹⁴⁹ Clive officially joined the East India Company military service as an ensign in 1746. Clive was promoted to a lieutenant in March of 1749 after his success working under Major Stringer Lawrence at Cuddalore against the French and Joseph Dupleix in June 1748.

¹⁵⁰ They were married on 18 February 1753. Margaret was the sister of Clive's close friend, Edmund. Clive was apparently enamored with Margaret after seeing her miniature portrait.

¹⁵¹ Once Clive returned to England, his fortune began to attract negative criticism. In April 1754, Clive became an MP, but was ultimately unseated in 1755 due to disputed election results. With his political power growing, the East India Company began offering Clive numerous positions in India. Clive accepted the promotion to second-in-command – which also included a royal commission – for an expedition from Bombay against the French. This position also came with a smaller political position for the Governorship of Fort St. David, which would ultimately lead to Clive becoming the Governor of Madras. Clive re-signed with the East India Company in March 1755.

On 23 June 1757, British forces attempted to overthrow the nawab of Bengal, Sirāj al-Dawlā.¹⁵² From 16-20 June 1756, the twenty-year-old Sirāj endeavored to take back colonial Calcutta from the British but ultimately failed. But the retaking of Calcutta did not end the fight against Sirāj. On 13 June 1757, Clive and his three thousand troops set out to overthrow Sirāj in Murshidabad; on their way to the Bengali capital, Clive met Sirāj camped along an embankment close to Plassey. The battle lasted barely eight hours.¹⁵³ While a relatively small battle, Clive's victory at Plassey created British imperial hegemony in the region.¹⁵⁴

Clive returned to England in 1760 and joined the Houses of Parliament again until he returned to India for the final time in 1764 as the first British Governor of Bengal. As Governor, Clive took hard stances against corruption with strict reforms, particularly focusing on private trade. One of Clive's primary objectives was to eradicate "rapacity and Luxury; the unreasonable desire of many to acquire in an instant."¹⁵⁵ As Clive enacted sweeping anti-corruption reforms in India, he simultaneously bought £75,000 worth of Company stock and gave insider information about the Company to his friends.

¹⁵² From 16-20 June 1756, the twenty-year-old Sirāj attempted to take back colonial Calcutta from the British. Thus, Clive and his troops set out for Calcutta on 14 December 1756 and took back the city on 2 January 1757. But the retaking of Calcutta did not end the fight against Sirāj. Clive and the East India Company worked to gain favor with local nawabs, like Mir Ja'far, to topple Sirāj. Mir Ja'far agreed to work alongside the British in exchange for the nawabship of Bengal. The East India Company also received a confirmation that Mir Ja'far would honor the Treaty of Alingagar and would exclude the French from the region.

¹⁵³ Of the three thousand English troops, twenty-eight were killed and fifty were wounded. Over five hundred of Sirāj's troops were killed in the battle. The overthrown nawab fled to Bihar but was captured and executed on 2 July 1757; Mir Ja'far was then installed as the nawab of the region.

¹⁵⁴ This victory would become a defining moment for the rest of Clive's life. In 1759, Mir Ja'far bestowed a jagir – or a grant of land revenue – of £27,000 a year to Clive for the rest of his life.

¹⁵⁵ G. Forrest, *The life of Lord Clive*, Vol. 2, (London: Cassell, 1918), 257. Quoted in H. V. Bowen, "Clive, Robert, first Baron Clive of Plassey (1725-1774)." Clive's reference to the gaining of imperial and Indian wealth and material objects as a luxurious endeavor situates the nabobian fortunes and Indian objects firmly into the negative luxury category. On 9 May 1765, Clive had all the members of the Bengal council sign a contract against the acceptance of presents and other monetary gains. Clive also began to regulate private trade opportunities in Bengal, which limited East India Company officers ability to build fortunes.

He left India for the last time on 29 January 1767 and arrived in England in July 1767 with an estimated fortune of £400,000.¹⁵⁶ Clive's illustrious East India Company career built a substantial fortune, a prominent political career, and a quick elevation in social status but also brought along disdain and mockery from the public.

Warren Hastings (1732-1818), however, was the most prominent and indicative nabobs of the second half of the eighteenth century. His quick rise through the East India Company ranks, the garnering of a vast Indian fortune, and the purchasing of Parliamentary seats and English country homes firmly established Hastings as a quintessential nabob.¹⁵⁷ In January 1750, Hastings left England and arrived in Calcutta in September of the same year. After Robert Clive's successful defeat of Nawab Sirāj al-Dawlā at the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the appointment of a British Company representative in Murshidabad was a necessity to keep pressure on the Bengali nawab; Hastings held this position from 1758 through the British-led overthrow of Mir Ja'far in 1760.

The Company directors appointed Hastings the new Governor of Bengal, a now distinctly British colonial province after the Battle of Plassey.¹⁵⁸ Rather than focusing on

¹⁵⁶ According to the Bank of England's inflation calculator, today Clive's fortune would be valued at £67,017,647.06. On 27 February 1769, he was integral in the debates for the East India Company's contract renewal with the British government. But his enemies proved powerful and a Parliament opened an inquiry to investigate the origins of Clive's private fortune and his jagir. Clive spoke in defense of himself, stating "Leave me my honor, take away my fortune." In the remaining years of his life, Clive's physical and mental anguish worsened, and he continued to use large doses of opium to manage his pain. On 22 November 1774, Clive died on the floor of his Berkeley Square townhouse. Many of his contemporaries and modern scholars suggest that Clive committed suicide, but others argued that his death was a result of an accidental opium overdose.

¹⁵⁷ All biographical information regarding Warren Hastings comes from the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entry, unless otherwise indicated. P.J. Marshall, "Hastings, Warren (1732-1818)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified October 4, 2008. <https://www-oxforddnb-com.proxy.mul.missouri.edu/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-c-12587?rskey=ZYiwnW&result=5>

¹⁵⁸ Hastings served as governor for thirteen years.

building a large fortune as many former Company governors did, Hastings focused his gubernatorial tenure on honorable service.¹⁵⁹ However, he was also able to send over £120,000 back to England in his first four years as governor, which was well above his normal gross earnings. At his return to England in February 1785, Hastings had sent over £220,000 back to England.

In 1788, members of Parliament opened an impeachment trial against the former Governor that would last almost nine years (Figure 4.26). Edmund Burke led the impeachment proceedings and believed that the Company was “laying India waste by rapacious policies within its own provinces by the exploitation of its allies, and by its wars,” and Hastings was responsible for all of it.¹⁶⁰ Hastings was charged with multiple high crimes and misdemeanors; he was formally indicted on 10 May 1787 (Figure 4.27).¹⁶¹ After a lengthy trial, the House of Lords largely voted in favor of Hastings and found him not guilty on 23 April 1795.

In May 1788, James Gillray published a scathing print commenting on Hastings’ relationship with the crown (Figure 4.28). In *Bow to the Throne*, Gillray places Hastings on the British throne with Queen Charlotte kneeling at the nabob’s feet begging for money. Lord Thurlow and William Pitt stand behind the Queen and bow in supplication

¹⁵⁹ Hastings believed that Indian customs, styles of government, and law should be preserved in the British controlled provinces. Hastings also sought to change revenue systems in Bengal, but by the end of his governorship in 1785, Hastings revenue collection systems were considered abject failures.

¹⁶⁰ Lawson and Phillips, “Our Execrable Banditti,” 154. Of the twenty-two impeachment articles, the first charge railed against Hastings was tantamount to genocide; he was accused of subcontracting Company military officers to an Indian prince, which led to the ethnic cleansing in the Rohilla War. But this charge was ultimately rejected.

¹⁶¹ The prosecution closed on 30 May 1791 with only four articles of impeachment: one relating to the raja of Benares; a charge of oppressive treatment of the begums of Oudh; personal corruption in the form of nawabian presents; and political corruption “in distributing contracts to perform services for the company on prodigal terms to favored individuals.”

to the nabob with their hands extended in askance while, King George III crawls behind the throne pleading for any scraps Hastings might throw his way. In the upper left corner of the print, Gillray includes a framed image of a large bag of money with hands dispersing coins to the populace. In the center of the bag, Gillray wrote ‘£4,000,000’, indicating the rumored amount of Hastings’s private fortune.¹⁶² Through Gillray’s prints, the corrupt iconography permeated public perception of Hastings during the late 1780s and potentially affected his trial’s defense.

After the completion of the impeachment trial, Hastings retired to his country seat at Daylesford and acted as the typical English county gentlemen until his death on 22 August 1818. Hastings’s damaged public image was largely strengthened through a century of Company nabobs returning to England with substantial fortunes and increasing political power. Of all five nabobs discussed here, Hastings was perhaps the most notorious of them all; he became the very picture of the nabob in the eighteenth century.

The Georgian Country House and the Politics of Politeness

English country houses were, as Peter Mandler wrote, “the quintessence of Englishness; they epitomize the English love of domesticity, of the country side, of hierarchy, continuity, and tradition.”¹⁶³ This section looks at the integral role of the country house in the polite and gentlemanly society of eighteenth-century England and postulates how the nabob interrupted and upended traditional English-ness in favor of a hybrid imperialism through the utilization of objects, like Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, to sublimate the traditional domestic English identity.

¹⁶² According to the Bank of England inflation calculator, today this amount would be worth a little more than £607 million.

¹⁶³ Quoted in Stephanie Barczweski, *Country Houses and the British Empire, 1700-1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 4.

In the eighteenth century, the English country house was the site of upper-class sociability and the ultimate status symbol of elite consumption.¹⁶⁴ Passed down from generation to generation, the country house stood as a testament for the stability of the English aristocracy, wealth, and economic prosperity. When in residence, owners of the country houses entertained other members of elite society to illustrate their riches and polite gentility.¹⁶⁵ These homes were not only the seats of power for the landed aristocracy but also acted as leisure centers for elite relaxation with staged hunts, elaborate balls, and polite gatherings. Substantial homes like Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill or the Duke of Marlborough's Blenheim Palace or more "modest" examples like Frogmore House or Chatsworth Manor were statements of power and veritable beacons of English supremacy on the national landscape. The impressive façades, often Neoclassical or Palladian in design, surrounded even more elaborate interiors during the Georgian period.

As Hannah Greig and Giorgio Riello characterized,

the Georgian interior was made recognizable by a simple register of components; first, craftsmen and designers (Chippendale, the Adam brothers and Sheraton); second, particular categories of materials and objects (wood, the furniture crafted by 'celebrated' makers and a clock – notably one older than the interior in which it was displayed); third, the suggestion of precise forms of social behavior (dining and taking tea); fourth, the conflation of English style with Britain; fifth, the implication that Georgian style meant expensive goods developed for an elite market; and finally, a concern for authenticity.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ Stobart and Ham, *The Country House: Material Culture and Consumption* (Swindon: Historic England, 2016), 1.

¹⁶⁵ Jocelyn Anderson, *Touring and Publicizing England's Country Homes in the Long Eighteenth Century* (New York: Bloomsburg Publishing Inc, Bloomsburg Academic, 2018), 1. Country homes also became cultural attractions in the second half of the eighteenth century, particularly with the advancement and expansion of the road systems.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁶ Hannah Greig and Giorgio Riello, "Eighteenth-Century Interiors – Redesigning the Georgian: Introduction," *Journal of Design History* Vol. 20, 4 (Winter 2007): 273.

The interiors of these homes were often divided between binary distinctions, like private verses public and masculine verses feminine, with some rooms breaking the gender or divisional boundaries, like the parlor or drawing room. The division of such spaces were “a social imperative” to the societal hierarchies of eighteenth-century England and were integral in the development and implementation of polite sociability.¹⁶⁷ Areas like the parlor acted as localized sociable hotspots for entertaining visitors or taking tea and the fireplace became a central locus for polite interaction.¹⁶⁸ Social mores played a critical role in how these rooms and the objects within them functioned and politeness became one of the most acceptable form of gentlemanly behavior in the English eighteenth-century.

As Lawrence Klein noted, “politeness was aligned with moderation, mutual tolerance, and the overriding importance of social comity...The rise of politeness was associated with a revolt against rigidity, solemnity, ceremoniousness and formality.”¹⁶⁹ The most efficient and effective manner in which to practice politeness was through the art of conversation.¹⁷⁰ From the moment visitors entered the home’s landed boundaries to their departure, the politics of politeness dictated how English men and women interacted with one another and language was the key indicator of elite English behavior. Ritualized activities like taking tea, dining, and parties standardized and perfected polite

¹⁶⁷ Stobart, Hann, and Morgan, *Spaces of Consumption: Leisure and Shopping in the English Towns, ca. 1680-1830* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 121.

¹⁶⁸ Lawrence Klein, “Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century,” *The Historical Review* 45, no. 4 (December 2002): 885.

¹⁶⁹ Klein, “Politeness and Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century,” 874 & 879.

¹⁷⁰ Lawrence Klein, “Liberty, Manners, and Politeness in Early Eighteenth-Century England,” *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 3 (September 1989): 587. As Klein notes, “in other words, in the language of politeness, the archetypal gentleman was envisioned in the company of his peers demonstrating good taste in the manner of his social interactions or in the character of his cultural predilections and activities.”

interactions among the gentility. Unlike many aspects of eighteenth-century English life, the art of politeness was genderless; each gender enacted politeness in their socialized behavior, even if the actual practice and application were, in themselves, gendered.

Politeness, in the English mind, distinguished the English from their colonial subjects, particularly in the wake of a rising global empire. The nabob, through their very existence, disrupted both the sanctity of the country house and the practice of politeness within those homes. Through their acquired hybridity, the nabob's incorporation of Indian mannerisms, clothing, and material objects negated their placement with the upper-class gentleman. Illustrated as corrupt and amoral individuals, the nabob endangered the English national identity, especially in the control of their land and polite behavior. Klein argued that "the anti-world of the civil moralist was epitomized in luxury, a concept redolent of perversity; self-indulgent and private rather than public; soft and sensuous rather martial; expensive rather than frugal and excessive rather than simple – in all ways, a threat to economic and moral independence."¹⁷¹ Klein's analysis perfectly encapsulates England's vision of the nabob. Like their Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, the nabob was neither English nor Indian but a curious intermix between the two cultures. This cultural intermingling produced a character ripe for English derision; the most common grievance against the returning nabob was their "social presumption expressed through the insalubrious emulation of the ruling class's taste and pursuits."¹⁷² The purchasing of country homes and government positions exacerbated this.

¹⁷¹ Klein, "Liberty, Manners, and Politeness in Early Eighteenth-Century England," 593.

¹⁷² Smylitopoulos, "Rewritten and Reused," 46.

The application of politeness into the nabobian social repertoire was part of this social presumption. But their learned Indian-ness – whether real or perceived through rumor or reputation – blocked the nabob from becoming fully polite in the eyes of elite English society. If “Asiatic” or “exotic” luxury as well as rapacious excess were in direct opposition to politeness, then the nabobian character was in direct opposition to the polite English gentleman. But this representation did not stop the nabob from continually striving to invade gentlemanly pursuits, objects, and public and private spaces.

The country house was one of the most acceptable spaces for such performances and acted as the ultimate piece of imperial consumption for the nabob. But for the nabob, the country house was not merely a symbol of national history and identity, but also a marker of imperial expansion and global British hegemony.¹⁷³ Eighteenth-century country homes were imperial spaces; they acted as conduits for imperial funds to flow and Indian material culture to perform.¹⁷⁴ These homes also illustrated an opportunity for the nabobs to create a lasting impression on the English landscape: a landed fortune that could be passed down from generation to generation and that would secure the nabob’s acquisition of elite status.¹⁷⁵

The interior of these homes often told the nabob’s Indian tale. For example, Robert Clive commissioned Claremont, his seat of power, in a Palladian style without any hint of India on the exterior (Figure 4.29). Warren Hastings, on the other hand, intimated his Indian career at Daylesford with an Indian-style dome over the home’s

¹⁷³ Nechtman, “Nabobs Revisited,” 658.

¹⁷⁴ Barczweski, *Country Houses and the British Empire*, 9.

¹⁷⁵ Barczweski, 62.

central exterior portico (Figure 4.30). Sir Charles Cockerell, a late eighteenth-century nabob, chose to honor himself and his brother, Colonel John Cockerell's, East India Company service with a massive country home and Indian-style dome, Sezincote. But no matter how Indian or English the exterior of the nabobian country home, the interior held and presented their treasures from India. The urge to display collections was not limited to the nabob, but the display of their Indian material culture directly affected their reception in eighteenth-century England.

The nabob's need to enshrine and promote their Indian objects perpetuated England's uneasiness with them. Stephanie Barczweski elucidates the problems associated with the nabobian homes in England, "First, these homes reversed the process of imperial colonization by building what appeared to be Indian settlements across the British nation. Second, they served as the nabobs' bold refusal to domesticate themselves to living in Britain...For domestic audiences, these buildings suggested that Britain was being invaded."¹⁷⁶ The invasion did not stop at the purchasing of the country house but continued with the Indian-inspired interior decoration, which created an Anglo-Indian hybrid space that left English visitors with no solely English refuge; they were surrounded with India. Between 1700 and 1850, there were over two hundred and twenty-nine reported nabobian country homes in the United Kingdom.¹⁷⁷

Edward Harrison, perhaps the least ostentatious of these nabobs, inherited Balls Park in Hertfordshire from his brother and stocked the country home with Indian ivory furniture and textiles (Figure 4.31). Richard Benyon, on the other hand, purchased

¹⁷⁶ Barczweski, 141.

¹⁷⁷ Barczweski, 52.

several country homes after his return to England. With his third marriage to Mary Wrighte (née Tyssen) in 1745, Benyon became the owner of Englefield in Berkshire (Figure 4.32). But this impressive country seat was only the beginning Benyon's land acquisitions as he bought Great Newbury in Ilford in 1747 from Thomas Webster and North Ockeden in 1758 from Hugh Meynell.¹⁷⁸

Robert Clive, however, was perhaps the most conspicuous consumer of the eighteenth-century country house. He used his vast Indian fortune to acquire property throughout Shropshire: Montford for £70,000 (1761); Walcot for £91,680 (1764); Owlbury for £60,500 (1767); and Oakly Park for £98,690 (1771).¹⁷⁹ Beyond domestic England, Clive acquired 12,000 acres in County Clare, Ireland for £28,895, which was tied to Clive's noble title, the Baron of Plassey, in order to give the distinction "geographic legitimacy."¹⁸⁰ In 1768, Clive purchased Claremont in Surrey for £40,000 as his main residence for his East India Company and Parliamentary responsibilities.¹⁸¹ Clive commissioned Lancelot Capability Brown to redesign and rebuild Claremont in a Palladian style at an estimated cost of £15,584.¹⁸² Unlike his other homes, Clive used Claremont as a space to illustrate his Indian career. And unlike other nabobs who enshrined India within their country homes, Clive created a memorial to himself and his

¹⁷⁸ Barczweski, 52. Of particular note is that these homes were within a fifteen-mile radius of each other in Essex, indicating that Benyon used these homes to gain political power and representation.

¹⁷⁹ Barczweski, 55. Clive also acquired smaller Shropshire properties, including manors at Adcot, Leigh, Longslow, Northwood, and Stonehouse and in other counties such as Monmouthshire, Radnorshire, and Devon. Clive used his lands and manors for a multitude of reasons, as Barczweski noted. "He focused on his native Shropshire in order to emphasize his ancestral ties to the locale; he purchased land in Ireland in order to give him legitimacy; acquired property in Wales and Devon to increase the number of Parliamentary seats that he controlled; he acquired Claremont because he needed a base close to London."

¹⁸⁰ Barczweski, 58.

¹⁸¹ Barczweski, 58. Architect Sir John Vanbrugh built the original home as his personal residence but sold the property to Thomas Pelham-Holles, the Earl of Clare and eventual Duke of Newcastle. Although Claremont had incredible noble legitimacy, Clive tore the house down because of its low-lying positioning on the property.

¹⁸² Barczweski, 58.

time in India, not to India itself. Like his Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, Clive's display of Indian material culture propelled his own self-aggrandizement and India was the avenue he used to achieve that.

Warren Hastings, in comparison, sought to procure one particular country home: Daylesford. The country home and land had been in Hastings's family since the thirteenth century and had been sold off in the early eighteenth century. Hastings was keen to acquire his family's former home, stating, "If I get it, I shall pay almost twice its worth, according to the common market price."¹⁸³ Subsequently, Hastings purchased Daylesford in 1788 for £54,000 and took up residence in June 1791.¹⁸⁴ Once Hastings purchased the manor, he spent over £60,000 to renovate the space to fit his Anglo-Indian identity and tastes.¹⁸⁵ In the public areas of the country house, Thomas Banks designed two elaborate fireplaces replete with Indian iconography, carving images of Buddha situated between two elephants flanked with two women carrying water from the Ganges.¹⁸⁶ As one of the central sites of sociability within the Georgian country home, Hastings's fireplaces represented India's influence within Daylesford. The inclusion of the elephant was particularly potent, as it perfectly complemented the variety of Murshidabadian ivory furniture throughout the home. For Hastings, Daylesford became a refuge from his political troubles and impeachment trial. He stated that Daylesford "was an object that I had long wished to possess; it was the spot in which I had passed

¹⁸³ Barczweski, 55.

¹⁸⁴ Barczweski, 55. See also, Lindsay Boynton, "Furniture of Warren Hastings," *The Burlington Magazine* 112, no. 809, *British Art in the Eighteenth Century*, dedicated to Professor E.K. Waterhouse (August 1970): 508.

¹⁸⁵ G.R. Gleig, *Memoires of Life of the R. Hon. Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of Bengal* (London: 1841), 251.

¹⁸⁶ Gleig, *Memoires of the Life of the R. Hon. Warren Hastings*, 147.

much of my infancy; and I feel for it an affection... because I see in it attractions which that stage of my imprinted on my mind, and my memory still retains"¹⁸⁷

As these five nabobs illustrate, the obtainment of country homes was paramount to life in eighteenth-century England. The power and authority granted to English landowners was certainly desirable to the nabob, even if their particular reasoning for purchasing country homes varied. Whether the nabob's intention was to bring India back to England or to gain power within Parliament, the country home became part of the material iconography of the eighteenth-century nabob. The nabobian country home was a usurpation of tradition, thus changing English nationalistic identity to one of hybridity. The mere act of purchasing was enough to rile the English against foreign money ashore, but the decoration and utilization of Indian material culture cemented and surrounded Anglo-Indian hybridity in eighteenth-century England. These items provided the stage setting for the nabob to perform their hybrid identity.

The Nabobian Country House and Anglo-Indian Ivory Furniture

The placement and utilization of furniture was an integral component for the eighteenth-century home. Pieces like sofas, chairs, and tables controlled and managed how people moved through interior spaces and interacted with one another. Anglo-Indian ivory furniture acted similarly to traditional English eighteenth-century furniture, as the ivory furniture provided the backdrop for nabobian sociability and their performance of hybridity.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Gleig, 55.

¹⁸⁸ Unfortunately, much of the Anglo-Indian furniture has been sold or donated to various museums, so the exact placement of these pieces can only be hypothesized through textual evidence, like inventories.

Ivory furniture often appeared in the most important social spaces within the nabobian country home. At Balls Park, Edward Harrison positioned his Anglo-Indian ivory furniture within his personal bed chamber and in the long hallways of the manor house. As the inventory from the 1730s states, “‘The Governors Bed Chamber’ contained a ‘very curious Indian Book Case inlaid with Ivory’ while the ‘The Long Galery [sic]’ included twelve ebony ‘China’ chairs inlaid with ivory, as well as two similar elbow chairs and couches.”¹⁸⁹ Interspersed throughout Balls Park, Indian textiles complemented the ivory furniture. The more expensive examples of Indian textiles, like chintz, were proudly displayed in the public and sociable areas of Balls Park.¹⁹⁰ Pieces like Harrison’s teak, ebony, and ivory bureau-cabinet harmonized and supported the various Indian textiles through the utilization of similar floral and vegetal motifs, which provided a visual relationship between textiles and ivory and India and ivory.¹⁹¹ The luxurious connection between ivory and textiles provided a direct causal link between India and the ivory furniture in the minds of Harrison’s visitors. It also supported England’s preoccupation with negative luxury and the importation of otherness to the nation’s shores.

Richard Benyon displayed his Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, like his desk and bureau-cabinet, at Englefield in Berkshire. Alongside these rosewood, ebony, and ivory pieces were Benyon’s collections of Chinese porcelain. The interplay between the blue-

¹⁸⁹ Smith, “Production, purchase, dispossession, recirculation,” 74-75

¹⁹⁰ Smith, 74-75.

¹⁹¹ Harrison’s ivory furniture pieces eventually passed down to his daughter, Etheldreda, commonly known as Audrey. After her marriage to Charles Townshend, 3rd Viscount of Townshend, and the death of her father, Audrey moved many of the ivory furniture pieces to the Viscount’s seat at Raynham Hall, which legitimized these Anglo-Indian ivory furniture pieces into the English elite society.

whiteness of the porcelain and the yellow-tinted ivory was not doubt intriguing to eighteenth-century visitors. Together, the furniture and the porcelain decorative objects produced a space in which the India and China interacted and combined with Britain. Like Harrison's ivory furniture, the luxurious nature of the ivory desk and bureau-cabinet highlighted Benyon's nabobian identity. The furniture's juxtaposition against elements of England's chinoiserie trend illustrated the divide between Asian colonial products through their exotic surface performance. Porcelain alluded to the refinement and gentility of English taste, while ivory portrayed nabobian rapacity and corruption.

While not much is known about the locations of Robert Clive's Anglo-Indian ivory furniture collection during his lifetime, but it can be surmised that some – if not most – of the pieces were displayed at Claremont. Michael Edwardes commented that at Claremont “the eating room never got past the design stage and though the decorations would have been whimsical as to fact, they and the elegant Indian ivory furniture which Clive proposed to furnish, would have made the room eminently suited for its owner.”¹⁹² There is little reference to what specific pieces Clive would have used to furnish the dining room, but such ivory furniture would have stood as a testament to Clive's power and career in India and alerted visitors to Clive's hybridity. Clive's ivory-inlaid desk, however, was most likely placed at Claremont. This particular desk illustrated Clive's growing nabobian power as not only a site of his Anglo-Indianness, but as a specific space that perpetuated the nabob's projection and control of power. When seated at this desk, Clive put on his gentlemanly guise in order to ingratiate himself into the world of English

¹⁹² Michael Edwardes, *The Nabob at Home* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1991), 36-37.

elite society. The performance of the nabob's attempted gentility while seated at a luxurious and exotic Indian object projected his own hybridity.

Of all the nabobian country homes, Warren Hastings's Daylesford was the most inundated with ivory furniture. Three inventories of Daylesford exist from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century (1799, 1834, and 1853) that paint a grand picture of a country house filled with solid ivory furniture, listing "solid ivory superbly carved and richly gilt, the elbows finished off with tiger heads" and "a solid ivory table, silver laced."¹⁹³ In 1827, the Reverend F.E. Witts noted the drawing room at Daylesford was "remarkable for its suite of ivory chairs and sofas."¹⁹⁴ The 1834 inventory lists a suite of two solid ivory sofas, eight ivory armchairs, two ivory fire screens, a large ivory oval table, and an ivory footstool in the "Best Drawing Room" at Daylesford.¹⁹⁵ The 1853 Inventory lists several ivory pieces within the country home: an ivory footstool in the small drawing room; six ivory arm chairs, a large ivory oval table, two smaller ivory oval tables, and an ivory foot stool in Hastings's personal study; two ivory writing boxes in Marian Hastings's bedroom; and two ivory oval tables on either side of the fireplace in Marian's study.¹⁹⁶ Through the inventories, a clearer picture emerges about Hastings's

¹⁹³ Elisabeth Lenckos, "Daylesford," in *East India Company at Home, 1757-1857*, ed. Margot Finn and Kate Smith (London: University College of London, 2018), 1.

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon*, 243.

¹⁹⁵ Jaffer, 243.

¹⁹⁶ Lindsay Boynton, "The Furniture of Warren Hastings," 515-519. The exact inventory listings are as follows:

The Small Drawing Room:

"An ivory footstool of which Green velvet embroidered with gold."

Hastings's Personal Study:

"Six Ivory Arm Chairs painted & Gilt, the backs on bottoms stufed and covered with Yellow and White Cotton & flower'd bordering with Medallion of flowers in the back and seat of each Chair."

"A large Ivory Oval table with Emboss Work in Ivory Gilt with Green Cloth Tup and border embroidered in gold Thread."

"Two smaller Ivory Oval Tables of the same Workmanship with black Velvet Top which is embroidered in Flowers and Coloured Chinnts, on these two Tables are Placed Dresden China consisting of

personal relationship to his ivory furniture. While many other nabobs transported selected ivory pieces to travel with them, Hastings continued to receive ivory furniture as gifts from Mani Begum long after he settled into English life.¹⁹⁷ As Hastings's began socializing at Daylesford, his Murshidabadian ivory furniture played an significant role in his visitor's perceptions of not only his home but also of Hastings's himself. With the public areas of the country home decorated with ivory furniture, the gentile English visitor became surrounded by India and the tangible representation of Hastings's Indian-ness. In that instance, the visitor becomes part of the nabobian narrative, partaking in nabobian identity and the expression of nabobian wealth. Polite conversations took place over ivory oval tables with visitors seated in ivory chairs or elegantly staged in ivory chairs and sofas. The ivory furniture, a potent material manifestation of the nabob's social presumption, thus becomes the backdrop for nabobian politeness and behavior. But, unlike an elegant Chippendale sofa or a Sheraton table, the ivory furniture's Indian provenance negates these interactions as fully polite.

Ivory furniture, in fact, became synonymous with Hastings in the English press, particularly the rumors swirling around Hastings's gift of an ivory bed to Queen Charlotte. In *The Rolliad*, a satirical epic from MP Charles James Fox's coalition, mocked the gift, stating, "O, that for you, in Oriental State,/ At ease reclin'd to watch the

each *Three* Coffee Cups & Saucers, two handle Cups and Saucers of the same for Tea Making in all *Six* Cups and Saucers and *four* handle Tea Cups and Saucers."

"An Ivory Foot Stool."

Mrs. Hastings Bedroom:

"Two Satin Woods Secretarys inlaid with Green on Which are Placed Two Ivory Writing Boxes."

Mrs. Hastings's New Study:

"On each side of the Fire placed stands an oval Ivory table on the top of each (of) them are a Rose Water Bottle/a Crab with a stand and three Boxes all of Filiagree Work cover'd with glass Shades.

¹⁹⁷ Hastings did not, however, keep all of these gifts; he gave many of the ivory pieces to his peers and to Queen Charlotte, who developed a strong adoration of ivory furniture.

long debate,/ Beneath the gallery's pillar'd height were spread/ (with the Queen's leave)
your WARREN'S ivory bed!/. . . Above in colors warm with mimic life,/ The German
husband of your WARREN'S wife,/ His rival's deed should blazon; and display,/ In his
blest rule the glories your sway."¹⁹⁸ The significant designation of the bed as ivory as a
form of tendered monarchial favor illustrates ivory's innate connection with Indian
wealth and nabobian disdain.

As this section has explicated, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture was placed in the
most significant rooms within the nabobian country homes, which visiting peers could
see and admire. The question remains, however, how did Anglo-Indian ivory furniture
act within these sociable, nabobian spaces? As social actors, how did ivory furniture
explicate the nabob's Indian career? And how did the notions of ivory as luxurious and
exotic perform and enhance the nabob's hybridity in the country home? I argue that
Anglo-Indian ivory furniture acted as a *mise-en-scène* for the nabobian disruption of
English gentility. In particular, it was the ivory – with its connotations of luxurious
exoticism – that perpetuated and scenographically-aided visitor's subliminal
interpretation of the nabob as a hybrid figure. In the context of Anglo-Indian furniture,
ivory became nabobian: a hybrid of rapacious luxury and opulent Indian exoticism.

As Timothy Touchstone wrote in 1792, "Thus, Britons are procured these eastern
wares,/ Your ivory cabinets and your ivory chairs./ Your silks, your costly gems, and
baneful teas. . . /Which for gain, thousands of Indians bleed,/ And base corruption's ready-
growing seed/ Is largely sewn over Britain's famous and/ By an unprincipled, a savage

¹⁹⁸ Joseph Richardson, et. al., *Criticism on the Rolliad: A Poem*, 2 Vols., 8th edition (London: J. Ridgway, 1788), 87-89.

band.”¹⁹⁹ Ivory, thus, encapsulated the greed and corruption of the nabob and, unlike other Asian products such as porcelain, ivory was stained with the reputation of its owner in the eighteenth century. Ivory’s mutability and its inability to become reproducible in England prompted its designation as luxurious, exotic, and nabobian when employed in Anglo-Indian furniture.

As was the case of nabobian ivory furniture, “the decorative object was a screen onto which social values were projected and a mirror in which a reified social identity was reflexibly recognized.”²⁰⁰ In the eighteenth-century nabobian country home, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture acted as the theatrical stage setting for the nabob’s hybrid performance. These pieces were not mere souvenirs or tokens of their time in India, but strategically placed representations of nabobian identity. As Freya Gowrley argued, souvenirs are objects that “collapse geographical, temporal, and spatial distances.”²⁰¹ But Anglo-Indian ivory furniture was in direct opposition to such a definition; in fact, these pieces enhanced the geographical, temporal, and spatial distances to illustrate nabobian identity and materiality. The furniture’s purpose was to semiotically highlight the nabob’s connection to India through ivory’s materiality. The visitor’s processes of visual connection and material recognition of ivory to India propagated the nabob and the country home’s status as neither English nor Indian. Thus, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture was the antithesis of the contemporary Georgian furniture styles of the English gentlemen. If Chippendale or Sheraton pieces were the theatrical stage-setting for the

¹⁹⁹ Timothy Touchstone, *Tea and Sugar of the Nabob and the Creole: A Poem in Two Cantos* (London, 1792), 9-10. Quoted in Eaton, “Nostalgia for the Exotic,” 239.

²⁰⁰ Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*, 61.

²⁰¹ Freya Gowrley, “Craft(ing) Narratives: Specimens, Souvenirs, and ‘Morsels’ in A la Ronde’s Specimen Table” *Eighteenth-Century Fictions* 31, no. 1 (Fall 2018): 84.

polite performance in the country home, then Anglo-Indian ivory furniture was its performative counterpart, like in Hastings's Daylesford. Ivory furniture surrounded, contained, and exhibited the nabobian hybrid performance through its visual connection to India. It was not merely the design of the pieces that garnered recognition but it was the ivory itself that created this connection between the material, the nabob, and India. In the nabobian country home, ivory became the defining material marker of the repudiated figure.

Situated around the public and important rooms of the nabobian country house, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture provided the scenery in the spaces where the nabob attempted to regain his Englishness. In such settings, the furniture became abstracted portraits of its owner, recalling the English exterior and Indian materiality of the nabob. Placed along walls or in the middle of rooms, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture became a featured character in the nabobian narrative. The delicate construction, exotic origin, and luxurious materials set the stage for the nabob to illustrate his imperial wealth in his homeland. As part of the nabob's colonial collections, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture was semiotically-charged with notions of India.²⁰² The striking material usage and intricate ornamentation drew visitor attention to these substantial pieces. Ivory furniture, like the Harrison and Benyon ivory-inlaid bureau-cabinets, framed the nabob's attempted polite performance and recalled India through their ivory ornamentation. These ivory floriated designs mimicked the Indian fabrics of the visitor's own clothing and illustrated the

²⁰² The term "semiotically-charged" comes from: Bernard Herman, "Tabletop Conversations: Material Culture and everyday life in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World," in *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830*, ed. John Styles (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2006).

strong connection between luxury materials and India. The difference was, however, the direct versus indirect obtainment of such materials: the polite visitor purchased Indian fabrics or Chinoiserie decorative objects through English suppliers; nabobs, on the other hand, obtained their luxury materials from the source. As such, the nabob's direct involvement with the empire and the return of imperial objects to England created a growing unease with displays of otherness. The visitor's imperial discomfort was heightened when surrounded by large furniture pieces exclaiming imperial materiality.

The layered visual and material recognition processes were key to eighteenth-century English understanding of nabobian ivory furniture as Indian, which as I contend, contained five main elements in the identifying process. The first was the visitor's recognition and categorization of ivory as a non-English or non-European sourced material. After visitor acknowledgement of the material, the second and third steps were the characterization of ivory as luxurious and exotic. As I argued above, in eighteenth-century England, ivory encapsulated the paradigms of luxury and exoticism. Ivory's connection to Indian textiles – a known luxury item in England – through trade and ornamentation mimicry alerted those polite viewers to the material worth. The utilization of Indian textiles for upper-class dress furthered the visual imitation and reception processes and the narrative of ivory as luxurious. Moreover, the decorative imitations and ivory's natural patterning and surface qualities aided in material's exotic classification. Once situated within the eighteenth-century realm of luxury and exoticism, ivory was subliminally connected to their owner's – the nabobs – reputation and agency. The material became an expensive and foreign representative vehicle for the nabob's own revilement and distrust in England. Finally, this material recognition process extended to

include the entire furniture piece; the hybrid nature of the returned East India Company official was directly reflected in the surfacescapes of these Anglo-Indian ivory furniture materials and thus the entire piece itself. Through the application and utilization of the semiotically-charged ivory, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture became the material documentation of “Asiatic” luxury, Indian exoticism, and nabobian rapaciousness. With Indian artisans interpreting English designs, Anglo-Indian ivory furniture presented a curiousness within the walls of the eighteenth-century country house. They were neither English nor Indian; neither traditional nor other; neither gentlemanly nor unpolite. They were nabobian.

Conclusion

Ivory’s mutability was perhaps its most prized characteristic, which as this chapter has explicated, was particularly evident in furniture. The meaning and reception of ivory objects and pieces entirely depended upon a variety of variables, like the owner, viewer, interior positioning, maker/artist, technique, etc. Ivory’s ability to act as a sign of economic expansion and colonial dominion, monarchial hegemony and power, religious ideology and iconography, or signifying growing unease of signs of empire at home distinguishes ivory from other materials. In the case of Anglo-Indian ivory furniture, the ownership of pieces played a considerable role in the object’s own agency and recognition.

Horace Walpole’s cabinet from Strawberry Hill in opposition to Robert Clive’s ivory-inlaid desk explicates this distinction. The Walpole Cabinet, with its allusions to antiquity and gentlemanly pursuits, complemented Walpole’s role as the typical English

polite upper-class male. The neoclassical designs and refined ornamentation spoke to the gentleman's love of erudition and taste. In this application, ivory was temporally exotic; the material recalled the foreignness of an ancient and revered society long passed. In direct juxtaposition, Robert Clive's Vizagapatam ivory-inlaid dressing table/desk encapsulated the nabobian identity through the frenzied floral and vegetal marquetry and the use of expensive and foreign materials. But perhaps the most striking difference between the two pieces was that Walpole attempted to tame ivory's exotic nature through antiquity while the nabob embraced the material's exoticity.

As Maya Jasanoff wrote, "by bringing foreign objects to Britain, collectors played an important role in shaping images of empire at home...best of all is how 'Britishness' itself could be manipulated, blended, and even subverted by imperial individuals who laid claim to it."²⁰³ The nabobs typified this subversion and disruption of traditional Englishness through their very existence. In the eighteenth century, national identity was no longer strictly binary. In the wake of a rising global and colonial empire, the paradigms of identity began to shift to one of hybridity, like the nabob. As the ideals of what it meant to be English broadened to include colonial territories, the English rebelled against the visualization and materialization of the empire at home. Englishness was slowly becoming mutable on the world's stage and Anglo-Indian ivory furniture in the nabobian country home became the physical manifestation of this new reality. The curiousness of the pieces, English visuality, and Indian materiality both intrigued and caused viewer disdain. Moreover, ivory became the material marker of this shift through its inherent Indian materiality that was heightened through its connection to the hybrid

²⁰³ Maya Jasanoff, "Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning," *Past & Present*, no. 184 (August 2004): 112 and 135.

Anglo-Indian nabob. The material's use throughout European elite circles to denote erudition and colonial strength was supplanted by a new hybrid identity that threatened the very fabric of Englishness. Ivory's ability to take on the attributes of its owner marks ivory as truly one of the most mutable, unique, and versatile materials in the early modern world.

Conclusion

My dissertation set out to challenge the material history of ivory in Early Modern Europe and to explore the mutable materialities of ivory as both a sculptural material and a vehicle of cultural meaning. As an often-peripheral material, ivory's material history needed to be reimagined as a central and integral material player on the early modern artistic stage. Throughout my dissertation, I upended the normative paradigms surrounding ivory to re-contextualize and reconceptualize the material as a performative mechanism of meaning for an object rather than as material used to create an object. Furthermore, ivory's antique, medieval, and early modern conceptions conflated to produce a powerful medium that directly affected viewer reception.

In the first chapter, I looked at religious and mythological ivories produced in early modern Austria and argue that the works functioned as imperial propaganda in the Habsburg quest for progenic legitimacy. Examining ivories in the imperial *Schatz-* and *Kunstammer*, I suggest that ivory was employed due to its associative ability to promote the two major facets of Habsburg identity: the continued quest for dynastic legitimacy through the creation of mythic genealogy and the intense religiosity of the *Pietas Austriaca*. With its ancient and medieval associations with divine flesh, ivory recalled the foundations of Habsburg imperialism and signified their identity, their singularity, and their dynastic role as Emperor and Solider of Christ.

The second chapter focused on the relationship between ivory and the representation of power in elite collections through the lens of early modern ivory portraits, explicating the individualized materiality of ivory as monarchical skin, particularly in Austria and Denmark-Norway. Through the placement of ivory portraits

within monarchical collections along with the introduction of ivory turning into princely education, ivory became a prominent symbolic vehicle for the monarchical *representatio*. In Habsburg Austria, I analyzed Matthias Steidl's tripartite ivory equestrian monuments and postulated how they presented the Emperors as the ultimate ruler of his microcosm and his imperial image. In Denmark-Norway's portraits, I enumerated ivory's relationship to the Oldenburg's highest Chivalric Order, the Order of the Elephant, and illustrate how the interconnected notions of the elephant as an emblem of Denmark-Norway and the presentation of self in ivory served to establish a strong link between the monarchy and its most-desired material.

Chapter 3 analyzed two monumental ivory ships in the *Kunstkammern* of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway and the Electorate of Saxony and how the ship's material narrative elucidated tangible and imagined European colonialism. I argued that ivory ships acted as material metonymies of colonial expansion and illustrated the political power of the Saxon and Danish-Norwegian rulers, purporting the expanding global reach of Europe. Thus, through their building with ivory, the ships signified European colonization and domination of enslaved skin in the *Kunstkammern*. I suggested the ships prominently announced ivory's geographic determination as African through its obtainment and interconnectivity to the Slave Trade. Coupled with the growing racial awareness, and physiognomic designations of human variety, ivory's material signification as skin became an even more apparent avenue for the proclamation of white supremacy. Together, Saxony and Denmark-Norway's ivory frigates portrayed the material's entrenched colonial materiality as a product of Africa manipulated through European hands.

The final chapter of this dissertation focused on Anglo-Indian ivory furniture brought to England by East India Company officials. I looked at how these curious ivory pieces projected imperial luxuriousness and exoticism within the country homes of Company officials, men known as nabobs. What makes these objects Anglo-Indian is not just their geographic or domestic position, but their unique hybridity of English visuality with Indian materiality. I posited that ivory became a material signifier of the nabob through three avenues: the debated notion of luxury in eighteenth-century England; the comprehension of the exotic through ivory's performative surface ornamentation; and interior placement. Thus, it was the furniture's hybridity that materially propagated the nabob's hybridity through ivory's imperial mutability. Through the application of semiotically-charged ivory, the furniture became the material documentation of luxury, Indian exoticism, and nabobian rapaciousness.

Together these chapters purport ivory's increasing globality and imperialism in early modern Europe. Through the material's mutable materialities, ivory became an important vehicle in the perpetuation of imperial and monarchical identity. As each chapter illustrates, ivory's material potency had the ability to enact specific facets of self. From its application as divine skin to ivory's manifestation as the white imperial epidermis, the material's constant evolution as a materialization of identity created a continued need and want for the material in elite art collections. But ivory's own colonial materiality also projected an intriguing aspect into the depiction of European imperial identity: with ivory construction, European identity is rooted in Africa. It was Africa that produced and nurtured the elephant from which the ivory came. While each of the objects discussed within this dissertation are part of the white imagination, there is

always an ingrained Africanness that permeated the surface of the ivory. As a known non-native material, early modern viewers understood ivory as non-European, and potentially, even as African. Ivory's foreign and colonial status helped promulgate European identity as imperial, all of which was grounded in Africa. Thus, in the abstract, it was Africa that built European identity through ivory.

These chapters illustrate just the beginning of early modern ivory studies and there are still more narrative and material histories to uncover. There are several aspects of ivory that I did not discuss in this dissertation, which I would like to briefly discuss here as a starting point for future research. The first is ivory's relationship to early modern conceptions of gender. A growing field of study in the discipline, gender norms played an immense role in the perpetuation of masculine and feminine ideologies and within European socio-cultural structures. In recent years, early modern historians have begun to place material culture within specific gendered contexts. Ivory, for the most part, has been left out of this discussion. Scholars like Angela Rosenthal and Anne Lafont have illustrated ivory's abstracted connection to feminine beauty and skin, but no scholar to date – that I am aware of – has quantified this connection and utilized it for object analysis. That is to say, how did ivory as a material purport and represent discursive gendered ideologies in the early modern object? And how did either men or women utilize ivory specifically to enhance their own gender identity?

Secondly, one aspect of ivory's physicality that I did not discuss was its tactility. On 17 April 2021, renowned art historian Mimi Hellman asked me an intriguing question during the Emerging Scholars Showcase for Historians of Eighteenth-Century Art and Architecture. Hellman inquired about the tactility of ivory in early modern spaces as

another quality for viewer reception of the material. Although not necessarily addressed in my dissertation, the haptic qualities of ivory are nonetheless important to its material comprehension. Many of the objects within this dissertation were most likely not touched, due to their size or overall importance in the collection spaces, but there is an abundance of ivory objects created that were handled. The smooth, polished surface of ivory creates a pleasurable tactile experience when touching the material. Unlike many other objects, ivory remains fairly cool to the touch, like marble. The sensorial nature of ivory as a haptic material and its subsequent relationship to viewer reception of an object is certainly an avenue that should be explored.

Another aspect of ivory studies that still needs to be address is the juxtaposition of ivory materiality when applied in multi-media compositions. Or more simply, how does ivory interact with, enhance, or contradict other materials in a single object? In the early modern period, ivory was often utilized alongside various exotic/indigenous woods, amber, precious gemstones, expensive metals (like gold and silver), and porcelain, each of which had their own specific cultural materialities. Artists like Simon Troger repeated fashioned large sculptures, known as “combination figures,” that employed both ivory and wood, as I illustrated in both Chapter 1 and 2. In Scandinavia, ivory and amber – a naturally-occurring Northern European mineral – often appeared together. Gold and silver became fashionable secondary ornamentation to many ivory objects, sometimes coupled with strategically-placed gemstones. It would be an interesting study to look at how ivory either worked in tandem with or perhaps against these other material agencies.

In ivory studies, there are needs to be a more concerted effort to decentralize Europe as the main creator of ivory objects. Many cultures within the African continent

used ivory as both as a means of economic wealth and as an artistic material. In the early modern period, Japan created small ivory objects, known as *netsuke*, that portrayed figures, animals, and natural scenes. Chinese cultures utilized ivory in depictions of a multitude of subjects and types of objects, both decorative and figural. In early modern India and Southeast Asia, representations of religious figures and furniture became a common application for ivory. I suggest that work needs to be done in creating a more nuanced global understanding of ivory, rather than just a European one. While this dissertation does take on that European point of view, the interconnection of the expanding early modern world places these various cultural objects together on the world's stage, and thus, should be discussed in conjunction with one another and not as separate entities.

And finally, another scholastic gap is ivory's materiality in the nineteenth century. Although this chapter does not delve into this period, ivory was still a frequently-utilized material in many parts of Europe and was still heavily traded through colonial trade networks. Moreover, I would content that ivory's materiality most certainly devolved from the monarchical and princely understandings as these systems began to collapse. In particular, it would be a stimulating avenue of research to place ivory with Marx and Engel's "commodity fetish" paradigm in the nineteenth century. These brief areas of potential research I have enumerated above are only the beginning of the study of such a whimsically changeable material.

Together, these various avenues of potential/future research illustrate the growing and imperative need to study the materiality of early modern ivory. But while the above-mentioned scholastic explorations will continue to provide new ways of viewing ivory,

this dissertation has taken on the mantle of changing the current methodological and analytical apparatuses that have encompassed ivory studies for the past century. Specifically, this dissertation engages with the concept of empire and centers on how ivory was used in various kinds of imperial art. In the geographies I presented, ivory became the materialization of European imperial status – both European and global imperialism. Ivory differed from most of the common materials used in early modern Europe due to its mutable materialities that could project and promulgate various aspects of identity and empire. From its religious and mythological associations to images of rulers in ivory to colonialized ships and furniture, ivory’s specific temporal and geo-cultural materiality established ivory as a “go-to” material for European elites. As European colonial empires began to interact and engage with Africa, the Americas, and Asia, the steady flow of colonial commodities produced a populace that could visually and materially comprehend coloniality at home. And it was through this continued accumulation of goods in which ivory became a shining material star for the projection of European global hegemony. Furthermore, ivory became the vehicle in which local conceptions of the global merged into the glocal empire. As such, this dissertation situates ivory as the purveyor and materialization of European identity through its imperial status. Each chapter explicates this idea through varied notions of imperialism, from European to imagined to tangible empires. Thus, as this dissertation has argued, ivory was a powerful material within the early modern European landscape. Through its ability to conjure images of the foreign and project the identity of the most elite members of a given society, ivory continually ripened into an enviable and sought-after material. Ivory was indelibly and fundamentally important to the European portrayal of self as

imperial; it was ivory that visually and materially aided in the propagation of the most integral elements of elite identity through artistic practice. Ivory was art, empire, identity, and self all at once. The mutable materiality of ivory was its greatest strength and elevated the material into an integral representational material vehicle in early modern Europe.

In conclusion, this dissertation has been a labor of love to reclaim and proclaim ivory's potency. Ivory's intrinsic religious, mythological, political, and colonial materialities fashioned a material representative of the changing cultural ideologies of early modern Europe. Through the explication of specified narratives, ivory's agency within this period shines as bright as its own polished surface.

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Vita

At the tender age of fifteen, Kaitlin Grimes realized her passion for the history of art and thus began her life-long determination to study and teach the discipline. Growing up in Jacksonville, FL, Kaitlin always had an interest in the visual and performing arts. She began her art historical career at Florida State University, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Art History with a minor in French. In 2011, Kaitlin embarked on her graduate school journey, completing her Masters of Art in Art History at Florida State University, with a concentration on Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture. Taking two years off, Kaitlin spent her time tutoring in the Florida State Athletics Department and as an adjunct at the Florida State College of Jacksonville. In 2015, Kaitlin moved to Columbia, Missouri to begin her doctoral studies at the University of Missouri-Columbia. From 2015-2021, Kaitlin's passion for the history of art and material culture studies grew to produce a dissertation dedicated to the study of ivory in early modern Europe. While at Mizzou, Kaitlin worked as a graduate teaching assistant for three years and spent the last half of her doctoral studies working as the Public Arts Curator for the Mizzou Student Unions. Kaitlin plans to enter the academic world as a professor of art history to inspire and guide a new generation of art historians.