Dolls, Puppets, Sculptures and Living Images

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From the Middle Ages to the End of the 18th Century

ed. by **Kamil Kopania**

The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw
The Department of Puppetry Art in Białystok

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Table of Contents

Kamil Kopania – Institute of Art History of the University of Warsaw / The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw, The Department of Puppetry Art in Białystok, Poland
Puppetry in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period – New Perspectives 6

Peter Dent – University of Bristol, United Kingdom
The Late Medieval Action Figure and the Living Image 18

Kamil Kopania – Institute of Art History of the University of Warsaw / The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw, The Department of Puppetry Art in Białystok, Poland
The Assumption of Mary in Dieppe – an Unusual Example of Theatricalized Medieval Religious Ceremony 34

Alessia Frassani – Universiteit Leiden, Netherlands
Representation and Reflexivity. Paradoxes in the Image of Christ from Sixteenth-Century Mexico 58

Natalia Keller – Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago de Chile, Chile
'Pick Him up and hold Him in your arms.' The Function of the Holy Dolls in the Convent Life of the Late Middle Ages 76

Markus Rath – Universität Basel, Switzerland
Jointed Dolls as Works of Art 94

Duarte Nuno Chaves – University of the Azores, Portugal
Contributions to the study of the tradition of dressing religious sculptures in Portugal 16th –19th centuries 108

Annette C. Cremer – Justus-Liebig-Universität, Gießen, Germany
Utopia on a Small Scale – Female Escapism into Miniature 126

Piotr Oczko – Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland
A Great Theater of Things. Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus) by Willem van Mieris 140

Illustrations 159

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Puppetry in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period – New Perspectives

The period of the Middle Ages has not attracted broad interest among historians, theorists, and practitioners of the puppet theater. In works on the history of puppetry, we can of course find some information on the subject of medieval manifestations of this kind of artistic work. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, the topic was treated at some length in Charles Magin's seminal and still useful monograph *Histoire des Marionnettes en Europe depuis l'antiquité jusqu'a nos* jours.[1] The French scholar showed the wide scope of the phenomenon, providing both secular and religious examples of puppet performances produced in Western culture, particularly in the high and late Middle Ages. Furthermore, he also analyzed examples on the borderline of traditionally understood puppet theater, discussing religious figures whose construction was subordinated to the demands of animation, by which means the figures represented, usually Christ or Mary, could make a powerful impression on the living spectators.

Later scholars, authors of book-length studies of the history of puppetry, have followed in Magnin's footsteps, including Jacques Chesnais,[2] Hans

[1] Ch. Magnin, *Histoire des Marionnettes en Europe depuis l'antiquité jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1862 [second, revised and extended edition. First edition: 1852]).

[2] J. Chesnais, *Histoire générale des marionnettes* (Paris: Bordas, 1947).

Richard Purschke,[3] Reginald S. Sibbald,[4] George Speaight,[5] John E. Varey,[6] Max von Boehn[7] and Marek Waszkiel.[8] Each of them discovered previously unknown information on puppetry, none of which, however, transformed our knowledge of the medieval theater in any fundamental way. Moreover, none of the works named deals at length with the medieval period. Some few archival references, literary or iconographical, relating to secular or religious puppet performances, contrasting greatly with the abundance of sources on puppet theater in the Renaissance, and especially the baroque period, often lead people to espouse, more or less explicitly, the view that, to paraphrase a subheading in Reginald S. Sibbald's book, the importance of puppetry grew after the Middle Ages.[9] Furthermore, various types of animated religious figures and the ceremonies in which they were used have been discussed only perfunctorily and treated more as a kind of curiosity than a full-fledged phenomenon in the history of the puppet theater.

Only the works of Henryk Jurkowski, many years in the making, finally heralded a new vision of the Middle Ages. In his monumental study of the history of puppet theater, we observe quite a traditional approach to the problem, but one of incalculable value in terms of its broad outlook, including source material not only from Western Europe but from Central Europe as well.[10] However, in his book *Przemiany ikonosfery. Wizualny kontekst sztuki teatru* (Changes in the Iconosphere. The Visual Conetxt of Theater Art),[11] published several years ago, the emphasis shifts to the paratheatrical, thus in the medieval context including various kinds of sculptures used in liturgical

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[3] H. R. Purschke, *Die Anfänge der Puppenspielformen und ihre vermutlischen Ursprünge* (Bochum: Deutsches Institut für Puppenspiel, 1979); H. R. Purschke, Über das Puppenspiel und seine Geschichte. Querschnitt aus dem literarischen Schaffen des Puppenspiel-Historikers und -Theoretikers (Frankfurt/M.: Puppen & Masken, 1983).

[4] R. S. Sibbald, *Marionettes in the North of France* (Philadelphia-London: University of Pennsylvania press, 1936).

[5] G. Speaight, *The History of the English Puppet Theatre* (London: Robert Hale, 1955).

[6] J. E. Varey, *Historia de los títeres en Espańa. Desde sus orígenes hasta mediados del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1957).

[7] M. von Boehn, *Puppen und Puppenspiele* (München: F. Bruckmann, 1929).

[8] M. Waszkiel, *Dzieje teatru lalek w Polsce (do 1945 roku)* (Warszawa: Polska Akademia Nauk – Instytut Sztuki, 1990).

[9] "The growing importance of the marionette after the Middle Ages"; R. S. Sibbald, *Marionettes in the North of France*, 13.

[10] First released in Polish: *Dzieje teatru lalek, od antyku do romantyzmu* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1970). Revised and supplemented English-language edition: *A History of a Puppet Theatre in Europe,* vol. I, *From Its Origins to the End of the 19th Century* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press,1996).

[11] H. Jurkowski, *Przemiany ikonosfery. Wizualny kontekst sztuki teatru* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2009).

or paraliturgical ceremonies to mark church holidays, as well as in daily religious practice. With this book, Jurkowski gave medieval animated sculptures their due, moving them in some measure from their niche as curiosities to the main current of reflection on theater history. He did not go so far, however, as defining them to be worthy of ranking as a full-fledged theatrical phenomenon – as the book's title indicates to readers, it offers reflections on the **context** of theatrical art. Likewise, he did not create an exhaustive catalogue or analysis of works of this type or the activities to which they were connected, since that was not his book's aim; instead, it presents an erudite survey of certain questions, encompassing and syn-thesizing several periods.

Jurkowski's inspiring study challenges us to ask whether the sculptures he describes constitute merely a context of theatrical art, or its essence. Perhaps they simply do not fit within contemporary classifications (ill-suited to the historical reality) applied to the medieval stage? In order to answer that question we must consult some works by art historians. In the last several decades, it is they who have been primarily interested in different kinds of animated sculptures.[12] It is to them that we owe the discovery of numerous works, related sources, and other sources not directly related but nonetheless document various types of theatrical activities involving the use of sculptural representations. Let us begin by enumerating the types of works that constitute the object of their and our interest. In order of importance, those are:

animated sculptures of Christ riding the donkey (*Palmesel*)

animated sculptures of the crucified Christ

animated sculptures of the resurrected Christ

In addition to these three types, comprising most of the surviving specimens and also carrying the strongest theatrical connotations (such sculptures fulfilled a specific function not unlike that of an actor, appearing as the main protagonists of religious spectacles using dramatic or quasi-dramatic texts), we should also mention the figures of Christ in the tomb, figures of Mary used in the ceremony marking the Assumption and crèche figures. They, too, constituted an important element of the sacral *theatrum,* though (as we shall endeavour to show) in a somewhat distinct way. Furthermore, the functions

[12] The most important cross-sectional study of the works discussed here is: J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik: Forschungenzu den Beeutungsschichten und der Funktion des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Hoch- und Spätgotik* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2000). See also: J. Tripps, "'Denn man sieht weder Schnur noch Draht… so dass es wie Zauberei erscheint'. Handelnde Bildwerke in Sachsen um 1500," in: *Alltag und Frömmigkeit am Vorabend der Reformation in Mitteldeutschland: wissenschaftlicher Begleitband zur Ausstellung 'Umsonst ist der Tod'* (*Schriften zur sächsischen Geschichte und Volkskunde*, 50) ed. E. Bünz, H. Kühne (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag GmbH, 2015), pp. 715-734.

and use of the figures of the Child Jesus, Pietàs with a mobile, removable figure of the Savior, and what are called Shrine Madonnas are not theatrical in a self-evident sense. They do share a common feature, however: their construction made it possible to manipulate, activate and animate them.

Sculptures of Christ on a donkey were used on Palm Sunday, during ceremonies relating to the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem.[13] Nearly 200 medieval sculptures of this type have survived into our era, among which a particularly large number consist of works from German-speaking regions. The oldest work of this type dates from the last quarter of the twelfth century. Putting stylistic issues aside, they are all quite similar. They show Christ sitting on a donkey and blessing, holding either a book or the donkey's reins in his left hand. Sculptures of this type, usually close to life-size, were set on a wheeled platform that enabled them to be freely rolled (occasionally, we find platforms with handles, meaning that the figure had to be carried). Where this type of work is concerned, both the subject and the form suggest that its function was exclusively theatrical. It would be difficult to find any justification for a sculpture of Christ on the donkey that stood in church throughout the year. The sculpture was usually kept in the sacristy or another room of the church, to be brought out occasionally, once a year, in order for it to be used in dramatized liturgical ceremonies visually representing Christ's entry into Jerusalem, referred to in source materials by the title *Processio in Ramis Palmarum*,[14] or in folk ceremonies consisting of holiday processions that took place outside the church, perhaps on city streets.

A characteristic element of animated sculptures of the Crucified Christ is their complicated construction.[15] We are dealing here with sculptures equipped

[13] On the subject of these works, see, above all: L. Knapen, P. Valvekens (ed.), *De palmezelprocessie. Een (on) bekend West-Europeesfenomeen?* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006); E. Lipsmeyer, "Devotion and Decorum: Intention and Quality in Medieval German Sculpture," *Gesta* 1 (1995): 20-27; A. Wenger, *Der Palmesel: Geschichte, Kult und Kunst; eine Ausstelung im Museum für Natur & Stadtkultur Schwäbisch Grund, 24 Marz – 18 Juni 2000, Passau* (Schwäbisch Gmund: Museum für Natur & Stadtkultur, 2000); A. Woziński, "Rzeźba Chrystusa na osiołku z Muzeum Narodowego w Poznaniu," *Studia Muzealne. Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu* XVI (1992): 75-96.

[14] Hundreds of records of performances of *Processio in Ramis Palmarum* in almost all areas of Europe (but particularly prominent in Austria, Germany, and Poland) have survived to the present day. See e.g.: J. Lewański, *Liturgiczne łacińskie dramatyzacje Wielkiego Tygodnia XI-XVI w.* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1999).

[15] On the subject of animated sculptures of the Crucified Christ, see, above all: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ in the Culture of the Latin Middle Ages* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2010) (the bibliography covers works up to that time). Among more recent studies, see: S. Cavatorti, *Giovanni Teutonico. Scultura lignea tedesca nell'Italia del secondo Quattrocento* (Perugia: aguaplano, 2016); A. Frassini, "Teatro de la memoria: los retables de la iglesia de Santo Domingo Yanhuitlán. Oaxaca," *Boletín de monumentos históricos*, 29 (2013): 37-50; J. E. Jung, "The Tactile and the Visionary: Notes on the Place of Sculpture in the Medieval Religious Imagination," in: *Looking Beyond. Visions, Dreams, and Insights in Medieval Art & History,* ed. C. Hourihane (Princeton: Index of Christian Art, Dept. of Art and Archaeology,

with mechanisms allowing – in the version most frequently encountered – the Savior's arms to be folded along his body, while in a less frequently produced version the legs, head, tongue, and eyes of the figure of Jesus can be moved. Some of them have a receptacle for blood flowing out from the side, a wig made of natural hair, and a real loincloth; some are also covered with a material made to imitate human skin. Over 120 medieval specimens of this type of sculpture have survived, the largest number of which are located in Italy, Germany, and Spain. We are aware of some dozen others from sources. Those figures measuring between 40 and 270 cm, the oldest of which date from the 12th century, were used in Good Friday processional ceremonies re-enacting the Deposition from the cross and the Entombment of Christ, described in sources as the *Depositio Crucis*.[16] Some of them were used in Italian *Laudes*, sung presentations of the life and death of Christ organized by various kinds of religious brotherhoods.[17] Unlike the sculptures of Christ on the donkey, the animated sculptures of the Crucified Christ also fulfilled various functions during the entire liturgical year. In fact, aside from their animation mechanisms, those sculptures are no different from other sculptural depictions of Christ Crucified. They represent the same iconographic type, and show analogous phases of historical development and stylistic features. They thus habitually served a devotional or cult function, which could also have increased their theatrical potential, influencing

Princeton Univ., 2010), pp. 203-240; D. di Lodovico, *Revising Devotion: the role of wooden sculptures in affecting painting and devotion in the Late Medieval period in Italy (XII-XV century)*, A dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy University of Washington 2016 [Access via ProQuest: ProQuest Number: 10141237]; A. K. Powell, *Depositions. Scenes from the Late Medieval Church and the Modern Museum* (New York: Zone Books, 2012); Z. Sarnecka, "Monteripido and the Identity of Wooden Crucifixes in the Culture of Fifteenth-Century Umbria," *Arte Medievale* 4 (2014): 209-230; J. Tripps, "The joy of automata and Cistercian monasteries: from Boxley in Kent to San Galgano in Tuscany," *Sculpture Journal* 25.1 (2016): 7-28. P. Uličný, "Kristus v pohybu. Přemístitelné objekty v liturgii středověkých Čech," *Umění*, LIX. 2 (2011): 126-144.

[16] Medieval sources offer a wealth of information on the *Depositio Crucis* ritual. There are hundreds of records documenting the ceremony; see: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*, 120-145 (and bibliographical references).

[17] See: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*, 146-157 (and further sources listed in bibliography). We should point out that *Laudes* are related to the monumental, multiple-figure sculptural groups depicting the Deposition from the Cross, popular in Italy, southern France, and in the Iberian peninsula between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The *Laudes* were originally sung before such sculptures. The oldest animated sculptures of the Crucified Christ are secondarily converted figures of the Crucified Christ that originally belonged to such monumental groups. For more on the subject of these groups, see above all: F. Flores D'Arcais (ed.), *Il Teatro delle statue. Gruppi lignei di Deposizione e Annunciazione tra XII e XIII secolo,* (Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2005); G. Sapori, B. Toscano (eds.), *La Deposizione lignea in Europa. L'immagine, il culto, la forma,* (Milano: Electa Editori Umbri Associati, 2004). See also: E. Leeker, *Die Lauda. Entwicklung einer italienischen Gattung zwischen Lyrik und Theater* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 2003). The late medieval equivalent of this type of work was the multi-figure group depicting Christ Carrying the Cross, popular in countries north of the Alps, mainly German-speaking areas; according to certain scholars, these may be linked to medieval theatrical practices; see: U. Ulbert-Schede, *Das Andachtsbild des Kreuztragenden Christus in der deutschen Kunst. Von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts. Eine ikonographische Untersuchung* (München: Uni-Druck, 1966); S.-M. Weitzel, *Die Ausstattung von St. Nikolai in Straslund. Funktion, Bedeutung und Nutzung einer hansestädtischen Pfarrkirche* (Kiel: Verlag Ludwig, 2011).

the intensity of the audience's response during occasional theatricalized rituals in Holy Week.

Sculptures of the Resurrected Christ, like sculptures of Christ on the donkey, did not have mechanisms enabling the figures' advanced animation, that is, moving selected parts of the Savior's body.[18] It was possible to set them in motion by means of a simple procedure: a hook was attached to the head of Christ, and a rope tied to the hook. With the help of the rope, the figure was pulled above the vault of the church, using a special opening inside it. In more complex, representational versions of the sculpture the hook was located inside the mandorla surrounding Christ (sometimes the figure of the Savior was also accompanied by other figures, pulled together with him above the vault of the church, for example angels holding lit candles). Ceremonies of that type, held on the day of the Ascension, were of a more festive, sometimes folk nature. There are no related texts on the pages of liturgical books. We are able to reconstruct the progression of events in these ceremonies using descriptions by participants or people who heard second-hand accounts of them, sometimes by using iconographic sources. To date there has been no study that included a catalogue of this type of sculpture. It is therefore not possible to give the exact number of such sculptures used in Ascension Day ceremonies and preserved into the present day, or other data such as the precise amplitude of their heights.[19]

Figures of Christ in the tomb functioned as static representations relating to the cycle of theatricalized ceremonies in Holy Week. They functioned in the context of the *Depositio crucis,* during the course of which the sculpture of Christ was taken down from the cross and placed inside a specially prepared tomb, either permanent (made of stone, a separately standing architectural structure or one attached to the wall; sometimes made of wood, free-standing and portable) or temporary (undurable or unstable constructions, for example from wood and canvas).[20] The sculpture used in the *Depositio crucis* ceremony

[18] On the subject of this type of sculpture and the ceremonies in which it was used, see: H.-J. Krause, "'Imago ascensionis' und 'Himmelloch'. Zum 'Bild'-Gebrauch in der spätmittelalterlichen Liturgie," in *Skulptur des Mittelalters, Funktion und Gestalt*, ed. F. Möbius, E. Schubert (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1987), 281-35. See also: T. Jurkowlaniec, "Służ Bogu, a diabła nie gniewaj. Rzeźby gotyckie na uroczystość Wniebowstąpienia w Polsce," in *Artifex Doctus. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Jerzemu Gadomskiemu,* Vol. I (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Wydawnictwo – Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2007), 383–391.

[19] This task is also difficult due to the popularity of figures of the Resurrected Christ, of which only a few were designated for use in the course of religious ceremonies (a fact attested to by the lack of hooks to which a rope could be attached). Most were exhibited on the altar for viewing by the faithful.

[20] On the subject of figures of Christ in the tomb and these tombs themselves, see.: S. Aballéa, *Les Saints Sépulcres monumentaux du Ehin supérieur et de la Souabe (1340-1400)* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2003); N. C. Brooks, *The Sepulchre of Christ in Art and Liturgy* (Urbana: University of Illinois,

was not always left in the tomb. Sometimes it was replaced by the figure of the dead Savior (Christ in the tomb), which was then left in the tomb until Easter Sunday.[21]

The figures representing Mary used on Ascension Day form the least-studied group among those related to theatricalized religious ceremonies. The sculptures in the group were certainly not uniform; they are additionally difficult to analyze since all of them are known exclusively through written sources or meager iconographic sources. Some among them may be compared to the sculptures of the Resurrected Christ described above, highly complex in form, sometimes activated by the use of complicated stage machinery (it is worth stressing that quite often young girls took part in such ceremonies, enacting the role of Mary).[22] We usually do not have access to original records of the course of events in particular ceremonies, and must make use in our analysis of descriptions by those who participated. An intriguing and also insufficiently studied group consists of figures who were an indispensable part of stationary creches (usually if not always) at Christmas.[23] These are mentioned in literature from the field of the history of puppetry, but the authors of such works never referred readers to particular existing creche figures who in fact perfectly illustrate the conventions that featured in such presentations.

1921); J. E. A. Kroesen, *The Sepulchrum Domini Through the Ages. Its Form and Function,* Leuven-Paris-Sterling (Leuven: Peeters, 2000); M. Martin, *La Statuaire de la Mise au Tombeau du Christ des XV^e^ et XVI^e^ siècles en Europe occidentale* (Paris: Picard, 1997); M. Meisel, *Sepulchrum domini. Studien zur Ikonographie und Funktion großplastischer Grablegungsgruppen am Mittelrhein und im Rheinland* (Mainz: Selbstverlag der Gesellschaft für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte, 2002); P. Sheingorn, *The Easter Sepulchre in England* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications – Western Michigan University, 1987); P. Sheingom, *'No Sepulchre on Good Friday': The Impact of the Reformation on the Easter Rites in England,* in *Iconoclasm vs. Art and Drama*, ed. C. Davidson, A. E. Nichols (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications – Western Michigan University, 1989), pp. 145-163; A. Schmiddunser, *Körper der Passionen. Die lebensgroße Liegefigur des toten Christus vom Mittelalter bis zum spanischen Yacente des Frühbarock* (Regensburg: Verlag Schnell & Steiner GmbH, 2008).

[21] We should note that in modern times, these tombs of Christ took on forms of increasingly heightened theatricality, due to the reigning tendencies in the realm of set design which they imitated; J. E. A. Kroesen, *The Sepulchrum Domini Through the Ages*, 181-187.

[22] See, for example: G. Poöchat, "Brunelleschi and the 'Ascension' of 1422," *Art Bulletin* 60.2 (1978): 232-234; J. Soleo-Shanks, "From Stage to Page: Siena's Caleffo dell'Assunta, Spectacular Machines, and the Promotion of Civic Power," in *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces,* ed. E. Gertsman, J. Stevenson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012), 281-301; J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik*, pp. 186-202. See also S. M. Guérin, "Activation et Glorification à Saint-Denis: la Vierge, l'ivoire et la liturgie de l'Assomption," in *L'église, Lieu de performances. In Locis competentibus*, ed. S.-D. Daussy, N. Reveyron (Paris: Picard, 2016), pp. 119-136 and my article in this volume.

[23] See, for example, the group of fourteenth-century creche figures from the Poor Clares convent in Krakow: M. Walczak, "Czternastowieczne figurki jasełkowe w klasztorze klarysek w Krakowie. Uwagi o stylu, datowaniu i funkcji," *Modus. Prace z historii sztuki*, 2 (2001): 5–42 (the work also contains a bibliography on this type of sculpture, in which group we also find figures adapted so as to be attired in garments or adorned with decorations. On the dressing of sculptures in its function within the theatrical context, see, with reference in this case to the Iberian peninsula: S. V. Webster, *Art and Ritual in Golden-Age Spain* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998).

Those figures that were not used, or were used only sporadically, in theatricalized religious ceremonies, but were nonetheless designed to be manipulated, set in motion, animated, or, for example, dressed and decorated, represent a separate problem. Among them, late medieval figures of Infant Jesus are particularly noteworthy.[24] This group of representations includes sculptures of a nude, standing baby Jesus, figures of the baby Jesus on which garments or decorations can be placed, and sculptural or gold-work figures of Jesus in the cradle, sometimes also intended for dressing. A common feature of such sculptures was their potential interactivity. The essence of their effect on the faithful was based on concrete actions undertaken by people interacting with them (these were mainly women, particularly nuns – a considerable portion of the sculptural works discussed here were produced for women's convents). The figures were thus clothed, wore different clothing for different occasions, were rocked in the cradle, and held in women's arms.[25] On those sporadic occasions when they were used in theatrical Christmas performances, such actions acquired a manifestly theatrical form. The small, more enigmatic Pietàs with mobile, removable figures of the dead Christ functioned in a similar way. A very small number of these works have survived in Austria, Germany, and Poland, and for the time being, scholars have not presented convincing, coherent hypotheses regarding their function and use.[26] That fact notwithstanding, their construction suggests that they were animated.

The sculptures commonly known as Shrine Madonnas are marked by particular potential for animation. Figures of this type, especially popular in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, have been interpreted in diverse ways, for example as a type of movable altar or repository for

[24] For numerous bibliographical references concerning figures of the Infant Jesus, see Natalia Keller's article *Holly Dolls in Convent Life of the Late Middle Ages* in this volume.

[25] One should also keep in mind the tradition of clothing such figures, in the Middle Ages and later. Different kinds of sculptures were clothed on many occasions. The most important studies in this field are: V. E. Genovese, *Statue vestite e snodate. Un percorso* (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011); H. Jurkowski, *Materiał jako wehikuł treści rytuału* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2011): 280-304; R. C. Trexler, „Habiller et Déshabiller les images: esquisse d'une analyse," in *L'image et la production du sacré,* ed. F. Dunand, J. M. Spieser, J. Wirth (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1991), pp.195-231. See also Duarte Nuno Chaves's article in this volume.

[26] See i.e.: M. Burek, J. Michler, P. G. Vogel, "Eine neuentdeckte frühe Bodensee-Pietá in Meersburg," *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung*, 6 (1992): pp. 315-330; P. Łopatkiewicz, "Czternastowieczna Pietà z Łęk Strzyżowskich," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 1 (1989): 65-69; J. Michler, „Neue Funde und Beiträge zur Entstehung der Pietá am Bodensee," *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Baden-Württemberg*, 29 (1992): pp. 29-49; J. Tripps, "The joy of automata and Cistercian monasteries: from Boxley in Kent to San Galgano in Tuscany," *Sculpture Journal* 25.1 (2016): 7-28. To this group we might also add those sculptures of Madonna and Child in which the head of the baby Jesus is movable. They, too, remain so far an enigma for scholars. Zoltán Gyalókay writes on this subject in: *Rzeźby Marii z Dzieciątkiem o francuskiej proweniencji stylowej w Małopolsce i na Spiszu w pierwszej połowie XIV wieku* (Kraków: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2015). See also: J. Tripps, "The joy of automata and…"

the host.[27] From our perspective, the fact that their design allowed for the sculptures to be opened and for various changes in their form to be made, which were sometimes incorporated into the narratives presented, is of crucial importance. Usually, the sculpture of the Madonna and Child opened up to reveal a carving of the Holy Trinity, as well as an image of the Virgin of Mercy. In some versions after opening the sculpture there were other scenes on display, for example a depiction of the Passion divided into several panels. The way in which the Shrine Madonnas functioned is thus reminiscent of the *retablo*, analyzed in detail by Henryk Jurkowski; the *retablo*, patterned on an altarpiece, provided a visual aid to a narrative being told by a speaker.[28] Where the *retablo* was intended for use in public demonstrations, however, the Shrine Madonnas, if for no other reason than their smallness in size, should be treated as works meant for the individual spectator, who encounters the iconographically and structurally unusual sculpture in private devotion.

The number of medieval sculptures that were animated during religious ceremonies of a theatrical nature, and which could be manipulated for the purpose of creating an intimate encounter with the represented figure or illustrating selected content is, we can say without exaggeration, staggering. Some several hundred works of this type have been preserved and are available to look at, but have never been thoroughly discussed by historians or theorists of puppetry. We can nonetheless go so far as to state that they are entirely theatrical in nature, possessing the typical features of a contemporary marionette, assuming different forms, functioning in a wide variety of social and cultural contexts, including radically diverse staging paradigms, whether connected with the popular and folk theater of the past

[27] A relevant recent work is: E. Gertsman, *Worlds Within. Opening the Medieval Shrine Madonna* (University Park: Penn Press, 2015). It contains an extensive bibliography, but a few other publications should be added, such as: D. Bentley-Cranch, "A Sixteenth-Century Patron of the Arts, Florimond Robertet, Baron D'Alluye and his 'Vierge Ouvrante'," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 2 (1988), pp. 317-333, R. Ciecholewski, "Problematyka badawcza pomorskich Madonn Szafkowych," *Studia Pelplińskie* 8 (1977): 127-153; R. Ciecholewski, "Polityka krzyżacka przełomu XIV i XV wieku w świetle ikonografii malowideł na 'skrzydłach' pomorskich Madonn szafkowych," *Studia Pelplińskie* 11 (1980): 253-270; H. Jurkowski, *Materiał jako wehikuł treści rytuału* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2011): 303-304; J. Nowiński, *Ars Eucharistica. Idee, miejsca i formy towarzyszące przechowywaniu eucharystii w sztuce wczesnochrześcijańskiej i średniowiecznej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2000), pp. 120-130; A. Pinkus, "The Eye and the Womb: Viewing the Schreinmadonna," *Arte Medievale*, 2 (2012): 201-220; A. Pinkus, "The Transformative Body. Seeing Through the Schreinmadonna," in *The Challenge of the Object. Congress Proceedings,* ed. G. U. Großmann, P. Krutisch [Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, Wissenschaftlicher Beiband, 32.4 (2013)], pp. 1207-1211; A. Pinkus, 'Voyeuristic Stimuli: Seeing through the Schreinmadonna' in *Sculpting Simulacra in Medieval Germany, 1250-1380,* ed. A. Pinkus (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 149-178; M. Tripps, "Hans Multschers Frankfurter Gnadenstuhl. Ehemaliges Herzstück einer Vierge Ouvrante?," *Zeitschrift für württembergische Landesgeschichte,* 58 (1999): 99-111; J. Wirth, *L' image à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Cerf, 2011): 205-210.

[28] For related historical details and further bibliographical references see Piotr Oczko's article "A Great Theater of Things. Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus) by Willem van Mieris," in this volume.

several centuries or with institutional theater. In analyzing the sculptures under consideration here, we can state that they belonged to a theater world utterly unlike the one that arose after the medieval period and is now usually treated rather mechanically as the only correct and viable model of theatrical art.[29] The theatrical devices that we can define as forms of puppetry were close to the medieval person's heart, relating as they did to the sphere of the sacred, an area treated with much greater seriousness then than it is in our time of growing secularization. They shaped people's worldview and religious emotions, enabling contact with the supernatural world, but also provided entertainment, sometimes of a very refined order.[30] In this context, they are of interest both to historians who analyze developments in theater throughout bygone centuries and theorists who contemplate the essence of theatrical art, its connotations and potential. They may also attract attention from practictioners; the language of the medieval theater, as we have outlined it here, is incredibly versatile and modern. Beyond any doubt, the issues discussed in this article deserve fuller and deeper appreciation, and should not only be advanced as subjects of debate and contention in puppetry circles, but also, perhaps, reintroduced into active use within the discipline.[31]

Much more has been written on Early Modern puppetry and activities which could be classified as somehow related to it. Characters like Punch, Polichinelle or Hanswurst, puppet theater as a part of popular culture, puppet opera, court puppet theaters, and many other subjects have been studied meticulously in recent years.[32] Considering that numerous sources, archival

[29] See the studies contained in the book: E. Gertsman (ed.), *Visualizing Medieval Performance. Perspectives, Histories, Contexts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

[30] This is particularly true of the animated sculptures of Christ on the donkey and Christ Resurrected that became an element of folk culture in the late medieval period, functioning above all in the context of religious ceremonies in which the crowds took part. For the same reason, these ceremonies, like the sculptures themselves, were attacked by religious reformers in the 16th century, who in the process left us numerous, often highly detailed descriptions of particular figures and rituals. Greater in-depth examination of the areas where the sculptures discussed in this article were used gives one some sense of the variety of their functions and meanings. See the following study of the presence of a range of animated sculptures in the areas formerly and currently constituting Poland: K. Kopania, "*Animating Christ in Late Medieval and Early Modern Poland," Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural* 4.1 (2015), Special Issue: *Animating Medieval Art*, guest edited by E. Gertsman, 78-109 (this issue also contains other articles on related topics). On the subject of reformers' attitudes toward animated sculptures, see: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*…, passim (also bibliography).

[31] In fact this is slowly beginning to happen. See D. Hilborn's recently published article in: D. N. Posner, C. Orenstein, J. Bell (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Puppetry and Material Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), pp. 164-175.

[32] Recently: A. Benucci, M.-D. Leclerc, A. Robert (eds.), *Mort suit l'homme pas à pas: représentations iconographiques, variations littéraires, diffusion des thèmes ; actes du XVIIe Congrès international Danses macabres d'Europe, Troyes, 25-28 mai 2016* (Reims: Épure, Éditions et presses universitaires de Reims, 2016); M. Byrom, *Punch, Polichinelle and Pulcinella: Miscellanous Punch-Ups and Reflections* (Gillingham: Millbrook Press, 2007); K. Gross, *Puppet. An Essay on Uncanny Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); M. Kühn, *Opera dei puppi. Sizilianisches Marionettentheater im Wandel* (Berlin: Frank & Timme,

records, iconographical documents, texts of plays, and even existing puppets or theater edifices from that period have survived to our days, that is fully understandable. But at the same time, this situation has hindered reflection on how puppet theatre as a genre functioned in the wider context of animation, the practice of manipulating objects, efforts to bring various kinds of human simulacra to life, and so on. Only a cursory analysis has been made so far of dolls and puppets used in theatrical religious ceremonies, automatons, dollhouses – to list just a few topics potentially within the spectrum of topics of interest to puppet theater historians – or in some cases, such phenomena have been not analyzed at all. In fact, scholars have tended to focus on puppet theatre as an independent genre. Other activities related to puppetry have been left out of historians' account entirely.

Researchers interested in puppetry have dismissed the Middle Ages as a period less important for the history of puppet theater than Early Modern Times. The scant number of sources has discouraged them from undertaking in-depth studies of medieval puppet shows, actors, and their audience, and led to the conclusion that puppet theater was not as popular at that time as in the Early Modern Period. All puppetry-like activities have remained outside the scope of puppet theater historians' interests. This is a matter of great consequence for perspectives on further research. Puppet theater historians should consider new research models, such as the *agency of things*, the concept that different objects designed to be animated or manipulated strongly influence their users' minds. Sculptures, paintings, and other artifacts which functioned in the context of religion, artistic activities, pleasure, popular culture, etc., seem to present promising material for those interested in the history of puppetry.[33]

2012); B. Müller-Kampel, *Hanswurst, Bernardon, Kasperl. Spasstheater im 18. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003).

[33] Antoni Ziemba writes pithily, substantially, and unerringly about what the agency of things means in the introduction to the third volume of his monumental work on the art produced in Burgundy and the Netherlands between 1380 and 1500: "At present, what is visible before us is only an object, a thing. The people, the former creators, are no longer alive, and the contemporary spectator remains a phantom, someone who comes and goes, is transient, haphazard, and intangible. Perhaps, then, we ought to look at the image as at something endowed with its own life and its own forms of agency – the image as instigator. An instigator of social behaviors, relations, networks of mutual interdependencies. The fabric of every society consists of persons and non-persons: the human being is accompanied and conditioned by animals, the biosphere, objects, mechanisms, and devices, the biochemical and biophysical components of life, as well as mechanical prostheses and supplements to the body, from medieval eyeglasses and lenses to today's cybernetic implants, made from artifacts functioning in the cyber-net. This is the attitude toward human history taken by the latest scholarship in history, called post-humanism Its guru or, if you prefer, pope in the West is Bruno Latour; in Poland it has been promoted by Ewa Domańska, Marek Krajewski and Monika Bakke. Art history is only beginning to engage in dialogue with the premises of post-humanism, as it turns its attention to the role of mobile objects that act on the senses in the construction of the human being's surroundings. But that is the future of the discipline, since after all it is based on the very principle of studying things and objects. How can this non-anthropocentric,

Most of the texts gathered in this volume are focused on those activities which cannot be described as "pure" puppetry. The authors devote their attention to such issues as: living images, animated figures of Mary and Christ and ceremonies in which they were used, holly dolls, jointed dolls, figures designed to be dressed, raree-shows, and eighteenth century dollhouses. One should keep in mind that the art of puppet theater functioned in the context of such practices, and all of them somehow influenced puppetry. But first and foremost, we should remember that all the activities mentioned influenced the viewers of puppet theater shows, who, while perceiving them, were at some level aware of a rich world of puppets, dolls, sculptures, living images, and other effigies in motion which they had previously encountered.

non-humanistic method be applied to the study of art? Well, by treating objects of art not as works of art, but as objects, things created, to be sure, by human beings, but acquiring their own being, their own forms of activity and agency in forming the human being and their shared environment"; A. Ziemba, *Sztuka Burgundii i Niderlandów 1380-1500,* vol. III, *Wspólnota rzeczy. Sztuka niderlandzka i północnoeuropejska 1380-1520* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2015), pp. 17-18. The above description of the agency of things leads us to the assertion that particular powers of agency belonged to those works and obejcts that functioned in the theatrical context, had theatrical or paratheatrical application, or were devised as the type that must be manipulated, that must be animated or activated, i.e., above all, dolls, puppets, sculptures and living images.

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The Late Medieval Action Figure and the Living Image

The point of departure for this paper will be a well-known passage drawn from canto 10 of Purgatory in Dante's *Commedia,* written in the first decades of the fourteenth century. This passage will serve as the basis for a discussion of the relationship between the category of the late medieval action figure and the conceit of the living image as it develops in relation to visual art during the course of the Renaissance. Through a number of examples, I will suggest that action figures, generally works of sculpture with articulated joints and other dynamic elements, are perfectly suited for discussion as living images in terms of the effects they are trying to achieve.[1] However, I will also discuss some of the reasons why this appears not to have been common in the period and therefore to what extent action figures can or should be considered in such a context.

The passage from Dante occurs just as his avatar, a pilgrim travelling through the three realms of the otherworld, enters the middle one of these three, Purgatory, where he is confronted by a series of sculptural reliefs, depicting the Annunciation, David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant, and Trajan and the Widow. In front of these images, the pilgrim hears, or imagines that he hears, the sound of voices and of singing. In the first scene, he swears that the angel is saying "Ave" and that Mary's very appearance is imbued with the force of her reply, "Ecce ancilla dei." The AVE echoes bell-like forwards and

[1] On the tradition of the living image in Renaissance art, see F. Jacobs, *The Living Image in Renaissance Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). On the tradition of the action image, see J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2000) and K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ in the Religious Culture of the Latin Middle Ages* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2010).

backwards through the adjacent tercets in a theologically significant play on its reverse, EVA. The Virgin is a new Eve who undoes the sin of her forbear:

> dinanzi a noi par**eva** sì verace
> quivi intagliato in un atto so**ave**,
> che non sembi**ava** imagine che tace.
> Giurato si saria ch'el dicesse "**Ave**!";
> perché **iv' e**ra imaginata quella
> ch'ad aprir l'alto amor volse la chi**ave**;
> e **ave**a in atto impressa esta f**ave**lla
> "Ecce ancilla Deï," propriamente
> come figura in cera si suggella.
>
> [*Purgatorio*, 10: 37-45, my emphases][2]

In the second scene, seven choirs are shown chanting as the Ark of the Covenant approaches Jerusalem. The depiction is so effective that the pilgrim is unsure whether to trust the evidence of his eyes or of his ears.

> Dinanzi parea gente; e tutta quanta,
> partita in sette cori, a' due mie' sensi
> faceva dir l'un "No," l'altro "Sì, canta."
> Similemente al fummo de li 'ncensi
> che v'era imaginato, li occhi e 'l naso
> e al sì e al no discordi fensi.
>
> [*Puragatorio*, 10: 58-63][3]

This rhetorical exercise culminates with the relief of Trajan and the Widow. The ekphrasis of this final scene is steadily stripped of descriptive elements and replaced by pure dialogue as though the Dante-character has become so absorbed in the depicted fiction that he becomes a witness at the event itself. He has forgotten that he is standing before a piece of sculpture. Even the dialogic markers identifying the different speakers are steadily reduced to the barest minimum:

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[2] "[The angel] appeared before us so truly, carved there in his gentle bearing, that he did not seem a silent image. One would have sworn that he was saying, '*Ave!*' for imaged there was she who turned the key to open the high Love, and in her bearing was stamped this speech: '*Ecce ancilla Dei,*' exactly as a figure is sealed in wax." *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, volume 2: Purgatorio*, ed. and trans. R. M. Durling (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). All translations from this edition unless indicated otherwise.

[3] "Before it appeared people; and all of them, divided into seven choruses, made one of my two senses say: "No," the other: 'Yes, they are singing.' Just so the smoke of the incense imaged there made eyes and nose discordant as to yes and no."

La miserella intra tutti costoro
pareva dir: "Segnor, fammi vendetta
di mio figliuol ch'è morto, ond' io m'accoro";
ed elli a lei rispondere: "Or aspetta
tanto ch'i' torni"; **e quella**: "Segnor mio,"
come persona in cui dolor s'affretta,
"se tu non torni?"; **ed ei**: "Chi fia dov' io,
la ti farà"; **ed ella**: "L'altrui bene
a te che fia, se 'l tuo metti in oblio?";
ond' elli: "Or ti conforta; ch'ei convene
ch'i' solva il mio dovere anzi ch'i' mova:
giustizia vuole e pietà mi ritene."

[*Purgatorio*, 10: 82-93, my emphases][4]

In fact, as Dante's description unfolds, the sound of voices becomes progressively the most emphatic element of the sculptures as they appear in the poem. Once the pilgrim has examined each in turn, he encapsulates their power in a pregnant phrase: visibile parlare.

Colui che mai non vide cosa nova
produsse esto visibile parlare,
novello a noi perché qui non si trova.[5]

The idea of the reliefs as "visible speech" has deep roots that extend down through Augustine and beyond into pre-Christian philosophy.[6] But the phrase here can also be understood more simply as a recognition of the power of visual art to achieve an effect that ostensibly lies beyond its reach: voice. Indeed, one of Dante's aims as a poet in this canto involves a kind of paragone between word and image that picks up on the tradition inaugurated in ancient Greece by Simonides of "painting [as] silent poetry and poetry [as] painting that speaks."[7] God's reliefs may capture the sound of voices, but it

[4] "The wretched woman, among all these, seemed to be saying: 'Lord, avenge my son who has been killed, so that I am broken-hearted!' – and he to be replying: 'Now wait until I return' – and she: 'My lord,' as a person speaks in whom sorrow is urgent, 'if you do not return?' – and he: 'Whoever will be in my place will do it for you' – and she: 'What will another's good be to you, if you forget your own?' – then he: 'Now be comforted; for it is fitting that I fulfil my duty before I move: justice demands it and compassion holds me here.'"

[5] "He in whose sight nothing is new produced this visible speech, novel to us because it is not found here. "

[6] For this argument, see P. Dent, "The Call of the Beautiful: Augustine and the Object of Desire in *Purgatorio* 10," in *Desire in Dante and the Middle Ages*, ed. M. Gragnolati, E. Lombardi, F. Southerden and T. Kay (London: Legenda, 2012), 86-100.

[7] For a recent overview, see L. Barkan, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,

is only through the evocative power of Dante's words that both the sculptural works and the miraculous passages of speech are conjured into existence. It is a deliberate and daring demonstration of poetic hubris on the Ledge of Pride. However, alongside the human voice, there are also other effects at work in the reliefs. The pilgrim smells or imagines that he smells incense, and he sees or imagines that he sees the figures themselves moving and even some military banners fluttering in the breeze: "e l'aguglie ne l'oro / sovr' essi in vista al vento si movieno." [*Purgatorio*: 80-81].[8] This experience is both miraculous and confusing. Dante explicitly mentions that his senses of sight, hearing, and smell are in conflict as to whether what is sensed is really happening. Notably, the senses of touch and taste are not engaged. The reason for this can probably be ascribed to the danger that contact represents in this context. A common division of the senses, derived from Aristotle, ordered them into two groups of mediated and unmediated modalities.[9] The visual, olfactory and auditory senses apprehend their objects from a distance and so require a medium of some description through which to operate. Touch and taste require no such mediated contact unless the body itself, or the flesh, is taken as their medium. In other words, physical contact would be required in order to stimulate both touch and taste and this would bring the pilgrim into a potentially threatening engagement with the matter of the world through his most carnal senses, when his aim must be to keep moving and to overcome the sensual attractions of the here and now.

The pilgrim's experiences on the Ledge of Pride in *Purgatorio* have often been identified as supplying some of the foundational elements of Renaissance art criticism.[10] Giotto and Cimabue are mentioned in such a way that the biographical account of progress through competition is established in a modern literary context. The triumph of the younger painter over his older colleague suggests a movement from one style to another, an idea worked up into a full-blown history of styles by subsequent writers. The very mention of these painters' names alongside those of several poets ultimately serves

2013), with a discussion of Simonides at pp. 28-30 and Dante at pp. 60-73.

8 "and above them the eagles in the gold seemed to be moving in the wind." The depiction of invisible wind through its visible effects becomes a measure of artistic skill. See A. Nova, *The Book of the Wind: The Representation of the Invisible*, trans. M. Shore (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).

9 See, for example, T. Aquinas, *Sentencia libri De anima: Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima*, trans. K. Foster, O. P. and S. Humphries, O. P. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), book 2, XI, lectio 22-23 in particular (consulted 28/6/2015 at: www.dhspriory.org/thomas/DeAnima.htm#224).

10 See recently D. Levi, *Il discorso sull'arte: Dalla tarda antichità a Ghiberti* (Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 2010), 235-251 and É. Pommier, *L'invenzione dell'arte nell'Italia del Rinascimento*, trans. C. Bongiovanni (Turin: Einaudi, 2007), 5-17.

to legitimate the discourse of artists' lives, which produces as its crowning achievement Vasari's *Vite* in the sixteenth century. In particular the description of the reliefs inaugurates the early modern conceit of the living image, a work of art so lifelike that it would seem to speak or breathe or blush or move.[11] Indeed, Dante heralds this very idea after introducing a second set of reliefs on the same ledge of the mountain, this time depicting examples of reckless acts of pride, beginning with Satan's rebellion. Once again, these reliefs, also by God's hand, are a triumph of artistic skill:

> Qual di pennel fu maestro o di stile
> che ritraesse l'ombre e 'tratti ch'ivi
> mirar farieno uno ingegno sottile?
> Morti li morti e i vivi parean vivi:
> non vide mei di me chi vide il vero,
> quant'io calcai, fin che chinato givi.
>
> [*Purgatorio*, 12: 64-9][12]

"Dead seemed the dead and the living living": Vasari quotes these words directly when praising his paragon of superlative artistry, Michelangelo.[13] Writing of the figures in the Sistine *Last Judgement*, Vasari relates how Michelangelo "ha verificato il detto di Dante: 'morti li morti, i vivi parean vivi'; e quivi si conosce la miseria dei dannati e l'allegrezza de' beati."[14] It is this idea of the living image that I would like to follow for the moment. For the sake of confining the discussion of this broad topic to a manageable extent, I want to focus on three elements that appear on the Ledge of Pride ordered according to sense modality. The first of these is incense and its effect on the sense of smell. The second concerns voices and their interception by the sense of hearing (although as will be seen, these two – incense and voice – overlap in an interesting fashion). The final element, the interaction between movement and the sense of sight, I will return to at the end of the discussion in a slightly different context.

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[11] For its importance to portraiture, see F. Pich, *I poeti davanti al ritratto da Petrarca a Marino* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 2010), 61-63.

[12] "What master of the brush or stylus could portray the shadings and the outlines there, which would cause a subtle wit to marvel? Dead seemed the dead, and the living living: one who saw the true event did not see better than I all that I trod upon, while I walked bent over."

[13] See, in particular, N. E. Land, "The Living and the Dead: From Dante to Vasari," *Source* 14.2 (1995): 27-29.

[14] "he verified the words of Dante: 'morti li morti, I vivi parean vivi'; and there one knows the misery of the damned and the joy of the blessed." G. Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini, vol.6 (Florence: Sansoni, 1987), 70-71.

In his classic volume, *Only Connect…Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance,* John Shearman opens the second chapter, "A Shared Space," with an image that he confesses first gave rise to his interest in the argument set out at length in the text, that the Renaissance sees the rapid evolution, if not the inauguration, of what he terms the transitive image, the image that requires the implied presence of the viewer for its completion.[15] Much of the argument of Shearman's book is concerned with images that engage the viewer in imagined dialogue or in actions that play around the conceit that the depicted figures are alive, and that the boundary separating the depicted world from the real world has been erased. Hence the title of the second chapter, "A Shared Space." The painting that Shearman introduces is the *Madonna of the Harpies* by Andrea del Sarto **(Figure 1)**, painted between 1515 and 1517 for the convent of San Francesco dei Macci but now in the Uffizi.[16] The work shows the Madonna and Child supported on a plinth and flanked by Saint John and Saint Francis. As Shearman observes, the Madonna and Child are presented almost as though they are animated polychrome statues within an architectural niche. As such, the scene already plays with the conventions of reality and artifice in a manner that draws on both the discourse of the semi-divine powers of the artist and on the expectations of a community of believers convinced that holy images might, under miraculous circumstances, come to life. But it is not these aspects of the image that are most of interest to Shearman. Instead, he draws the reader's attention to some faint forms that at first sight are easily overlooked: small clouds of white smoke.[17] These are perhaps most visible around the Virgin's head and to her right. In fact, when Vasari described the painting in 1568 he noted "un fumo di nuvoli trasparenti sopra il casamento" [a mist of transparent clouds in front of the architecture].[18] There is no apparent source for this smoke *within* the image,

Figure 1. Andrea del Sarto, Madonna of the Harpies, oil on panel, 1517, Uffizi, Florence

[15] John Shearman, *Only Connect…: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance; The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1988*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

[16] Shearman, *Only Connect*, 59-60.

[17] Shearman, *Only Connect*, 60.

[18] Vasari, *Vite*, vol. 4, 358 (note that Vasari then says immediately after that the figures appear to move: "e le figure che pare che si muovino").

and Shearman acutely suggests that the viewer is therefore prompted to imagine that it has entered the image from outside, hat we see the white fumes of incense burning on the altar below. As he puts it, "the fiction that something may be seen to drift from the real into the illusion is an extraordinarily imaginative way of describing the unity of artificial and liminal space."[19] The fiction functions additionally as a metaphor for the process of intercession. Incense is traditionally taken to manifest the prayers of the faithful rising to God.[20]

Figure 2. Giovanni Tedesco, Crucifix, lime wood and polychromy, 1494, Santa Maria Argentea, Norcia

Shearman's analysis is wonderful, but had he known of it, he could have supplemented his argument with a second image, this time an action figure. This second work predates the *Madonna of the Harpies* by at least twenty years, although I am not suggesting any direct causal link between the two. It is a sculpted crucifix **(Figure 2)** by Giovanni Tedesco in Santa Maria Argentea in Norcia, one of the animated sculptures of the crucified Christ discussed in Kamil Kopania's excellent book on that topic.[21] Like most wooden sculpture of any scale, the interior is hollowed out, and in this case not simply the interior of the body, but also of the head itself. This gave access to the mouth and more importantly the tongue, which could be moved. The mechanism for this, now lost, once passed through a hole on the back near the base of the neck that led up to the area immediately below the tongue. Much more fascinating, however, was the strong smell of incense that came out of the cavity during restoration. This has given rise to the suggestion that smoke could be funnelled up the same hole that served to move the tongue. In the words of the restoration report: "During the cleaning of the interior of the head cavity a distinct odour of incense escaped that led us to imagine, in a manner perhaps not entirely off the right track, additional uses of this cavity, such as the possibility of funnelling into its interior, by way of a pipe, aromatic fumes that would then, exiting through the fissure of the mouth, simulate the exhalation

[19] Shearman, *Only Connect*, 60.

[20] See, for example, *Psalm* 140 (141), 2: 'Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight'.

[21] Kopania, *Animated Sculptures,* 116-117 and 267 cat. no. 69. See also G. Curzi, "Sui Crocifissi lignei attribuiti a 'Giovanni Tedesco': considerazioni e integrazioni per l'Italia centrale," in *L'Officina dello Sguardo: scritti in onore di Maria Andaloro*, ed. G. Bordi, I. Carlettini, M. L. Fobelli, M. R. Menna and P. Pogliani, vol. 1 (Rome: Gangemi, 2014), 571-577, and S. Cavatorti, *Giovanni Teutonico: scultura lignea tedesca nell'Italia del secondo Quattrocento*, (Passignano sul Trasimeno: Aguaplano, 2016), 106, 162 and 224.

of the final breath."[22] Given the symbolism of incense as prayer, this might signify not only Christ's last breath, as the restorer suggests, but also – noting that the tongue was moveable – his last words on the cross according to the Gospel of Luke: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

So with these two images, one a painted altarpiece, the other a sculpted crucifix, we have incense being used to heighten the impression of continuity between the real world and the fictional world so that the boundary between the two becomes confused, just as it does for Dante's pilgrim before the reliefs in Purgatory. In one image, incense apparently travels from the viewer's world into the world of the image, in the second it travels in the opposite direction.

The deployment of incense as scented voice in Giovanni Tedesco's crucifix moves us neatly to the second element that I would like to single out in Dante's reliefs, the sound of the human voice. It helps to range more broadly across a number of examples here, not least because this feature – the voice – becomes the literary cliché for expressing the power or short-comings of the living image. In part this is because it is bound to the ancient statement attributed to Simonides, mentioned earlier, that painting is mute poetry and poetry a speaking picture; in part it is also due to Petrarch's sonnets on Simone Martini's image of his beloved Laura, where he laments that the portrait lacks only the power of speech:

> Ma poi ch'i vengo a ragionar con lei,
> benignamente assai par che m'ascolte:
> se risponder savesse a' detti miei![23]

For much of the medieval period, voice is represented in two ways, either through the language of gesture, the speaking hand, or through the inscription of words within the image, often on a support such as a scroll. However, in the late medieval period, voice is increasingly represented through the use of the open mouth. An early example from the Italian context appears in the lintel sculpture of the Portal from the Church of San Leonardo al Frigido (c.1175)

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[22] "Durante la pulitura dell'interno della cavità della testa si è sprigionato un distinto odore di incenso che ci ha fatto immaginare, forse in modo non del tutto peregrine, ulteriori usi di questa cavità come la possibilità di convogliare al suo interno, attraverso una cannula, fumi odorosi che sarebbero poi fuoriusciti dalla fessura della bocca a simulare l'esalazione dell'ultimo respiro." Quoted in Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*, 117, n. 111.

[23] "then, when I come to speak to her, she seems to listen most kindly: if she could only reply to my words!" *Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The* Rime sparse *and Other Lyrics*, trans. and ed. R. Durling (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 178-179 (no. 78). For discussion, see L. Bolzoni with F. Pich, *Poesia e ritratto nel Rinascimento* (Rome: Laterza, 2008), 78-81 and Pich, *I poeti*, 54-65.

attributed to the workshop of Biduinus, where the chanting figures in the scene of the Entry into Jerusalem underline its liturgical significance within the church calendar.[24] But it is really in the following century that this mode of representation takes hold. A key instance appears on the pulpit by Nicola Pisano (finished 1260) from the Baptistery at Pisa, in the scene of the *Presentation at the Temple* with the figure of the prophetess Anna. She declares her inspired message using the traditional techniques of the scroll and the gesturing hand. For her face, however, Nicola Pisano has borrowed the face of a nurse from the *Phaedra and Hippolytus* sarcophagus, now in the nearby Camposanto.[25] Nicola reused various figures from this sarcophagus but this face almost certainly interested him because it represents an old woman with her mouth open in speech. This fact is confirmed in the slightly later pulpit from Siena where Nicola reworks the face for the scene of the *Visitation* where speech, above all Mary's declaration of the Magnificat, is a crucial element. And on this same pulpit at Siena an important further step is taken. The figure of Christ in Judgement, who sits on one of the angles of the pulpit with the Blessed and the Damned to either side, faces out towards the viewer with his mouth open. The implied voice is no longer contained within the representation, but escapes it and addresses the viewer directly as well.[26] On the one hand, this deployment of the open mouth leads into works of powerful pictorial illusion, such as Jacopo Bellini's *Saint Bernardino da Siena* (ca.1450-55, private collection) where the great fifteenth-century preacher is shown with his mouth clearly open in the delivery of a sermon. This particular image has recently been described as perhaps the first such portrait of the Renaissance where the mouth is used in this way. [27] The conceit anticipates the voice travelling in the opposite direction from outside the pictorial frame like the incense smoke in Andrea del Sarto's altarpiece. A classic example of this is Antonella da Messina's Virgin Annunciate where the viewer is at least encouraged to ventriloquize Gabriel delivering the Ave Maria to Mary, prompting her surprised acknowledgement.[28]

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[24] L. Castelnuovo-Tedesco and J. Soultanian, *Italian Medieval Sculpture in The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Cloisters* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010), 65-73 (cat. no. 16).

[25] M. Seidel, "Studien zur Antikenrezeption Nicola Pisanos," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorisches Institutes in Florenz* 19.3 (1975): 307-92 (325-37).

[26] Note that Shearman recognised in Giovanni Pisano's works early evidence for the transitive image: Shearman, *Only Connect*, 212-14.

[27] *The Renaissance Portrait from Donatello to Bernini*, ed. K. Christiansen and S. Weppelmann (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 322 (cat. no. 40).

[28] Shearman, *Only Connect*, 35-6 suggests that 'the spectator has a viewpoint that might be called angelic. 'This is seconded, for example, by R. Zorach, '"Sweet in the Mouth, Bitter in the Belly': Seeing Double in an Eccentric French Renaissance Book of Hours," *Art History* 36.5 (2013):923-43 (at p. 931). But for a recent discussion that argues for a more complicated arrangement, see L. Pericolo, "The Invisible Presence: Cut-In, Close-Up, and Off-Scene in Antonello da Messina's Palermo *Annunciate*," *Representations* 107.1 (2009): 1-29.

On the other hand, however, the idea of the open speaking mouth is also something actively pursued in the late medieval action figure, above all the representation of Christ on the Cross. During the course of the thirteenth and early-fourteenth century, the idea of sculpted images of the suffering Christ looking down at the devotee with an open mouth becomes an increasingly common feature. In such cases, it seems likely that the viewer is witnessing not just the last gasp, but the last words or even very audible groans and screams.[29] Indeed, such works often suggest that viewers should imagine themselves standing in the shoes of a biblical figure such as Mary, Mary Magdalene, John, or Longinus.[30] Although this effect does not require any moving parts, it is notable that the mechanisms designed to move Christ's tongue are also in due course incorporated into sculpted crucifixes in order to enhance the impression of a mouth capable of speech. That of course returns us to the remarkable work by Giovanni Tedesco from Norcia with its moving tongue and incense. A number of similar works have been catalogued by Kopania.[31] One recent discovery potentially adds another member to this group, considerably predating the others and possibly the earliest surviving example of such an arrangement: the sculpted crucifix **(Figure 3)** from San Fidenzio in Polverara near Padua, restored in 2013.[32] On stylistic grounds, this cross has been dated to the 1380s. To all intents and purposes it appears to be a normal sculpted crucifix, albeit one with particularly high-quality polychromy. During the restoration, however, it was discovered that the head had been reset at a later date. In returning it to its original position the restorers found that the cavity of the mouth opened into

Figure 3. Unknown sculptor, Crucifix, lime wood and polychromy, 1380s?, San Fidenzio, Polverara

[29] For the audible scream, see the dramatic crucifixes by the so-called Master of Santa Anastasia at the Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona and in San Zeno, Cellore d'Illasi. For a recent study, A. Lehmann, *Christus am Kreuz: eine Fallstudie zum Passionsbild um 1300 am Beispiel des Maestro di Sant'Anastasia in Verona* (Weimar: VDG, 2010).

[30] For an early example of such an arrangement, see the discussion of the crucifix incorporated into the Naumburg choir screen in J. Jung, *The Gothic Screen: Space, Sculpture, and Community in the Cathedrals of France and Germany, ca.1200-1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 90-91.

[31] See Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*, 113-19, 'and Cavatorti, Giovanni Teutonico, 167-168 for images of some tongue mechanisms.

[32] See E. Francescutti, "Il *Crocifisso* di Polverara: considerazioni in margine al restauro di un capolavoro," in *L'uomo della croce: L'immagine scolpita prima e dopo Donatello*, ed. C. Cavalli and A. Nante (Padua: Scripta, 2013), 69-81 and M. Dean, "Il *Crocifisso* di Polverara: considerazioni sulla tecnica di esecuzione e riflessioni per il restauro ancora in corso," in Cavalli and Nante, *L'uomo*, 83-99.

a large hollow within the cranium, part of which remained open but invisible beneath the chin. Two small nails were discovered inserted by the upper incisors and the hair that hangs down Christ's right shoulder was found to be carved free of the shoulder itself in a manner that remains hidden from the viewer, presumably to allow the passage of something between the two. It is almost certain that these are the remnants of a lost mechanism for controlling Christ's tongue.

From the examples given, it should be clear that the subtleties of the late medieval action figure and the more familiar illusionistic claims of art as it develops across this period and on into the Renaissance can both be correlated to one of the originating texts of the idea of the living image that I began with, the passage from *Purgatorio* in Dante's *Commedia*. From this perspective, there is no reason to keep these objects in separate categories. They share a common interest in breaking down the boundary between viewer and image, expressed, for example, in the use of an implied voice. However, there is no doubt that in the transition from the late medieval period to the early modern period a breach begins to open up between objects like Andrea del Sarto's painted altarpiece and others like Giovanni Tedesco's sculpted crucifix, with the latter increasingly ignored in literary discourse on the living image, or introduced merely as a novelty. There are various strands to this development, bound up as it is with the definition and subdivision of art as it emerges during the Renaissance.[33] In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to how one of these strands is already embedded in the passage from Dante. As the pilgrim moves in front of the reliefs, he skirts round his guide, Virgil to get a better view – so that the second image seen first from an angle will now come squarely into view:

> "Non tener pur ad un loco la mente,"
> disse 'l dolce maestro, che m'avea
> da quella parte onde 'l cuore ha la gente.
> Per ch'i' mi mossi col viso, e vedea
> di retro da Maria, da quella costa
> onde m'era colui che mi movea,

[33] C. Hessler, *Zum Paragone: Malerei, Skulptur und Dichtung in der Rangstreitkultur des Quattrocento* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014) and S. Hendler, *La guerre des arts: le Paragone peinture-sculpture en Italie XVe - XVIIe siècle*, (Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2013).

un'altra storia ne la roccia imposta;
per ch'io varcai Virgilio, e fe' mi presso,
acciò che fosse a li occhi miei disposta.

[*Purgatorio*, 10: 46-54][34]

It can be argued from Dante's other writings that this is significant. Elsewhere, when discussing the workings of the sense of sight, Dante notes that anything that enters the eye along the central ray impresses itself most effectively on the mind of the viewer, communicating its message with the greatest force.[35] Within a century the optical science that underpins this idea gives rise to the shift in Florentine visual culture towards single point perspective, as demonstrated by Brunelleschi and defined by Alberti.[36] This manner of producing an illusion of three-dimensional space in due course comes to define western visual culture and the painted panel serves as its ideal medium.[37] This has two significant consequences in the present context. Firstly, the ideal viewer of such an image is projected as a static eye positioned at a fixed distance from the representation.[38] This detached viewer is best able to judge what is seen through the mediated senses of hearing, smell, and – above all – vision. The unmediated senses of contact – taste and above all touch – are not primarily engaged, which is also what we find in Dante's text. The viewer's stance becomes one of imaginative absorption in the illusion rather than physical interaction with it. Secondly, single point perspective assumes a plane of representation lying between the illusion and the viewer. Alberti describes such images as functioning like a window

[34] "'Do not fix your mind on one place alone,' said my sweet master, who had me on the side where people have their hearts. Therefore I turned my eyes, and I saw behind Mary, on the side where he was who was prompting me, another story carved in the rock; therefore I crossed beyond Virgil and drew near it, so that it would be wholly before my eyes."

[35] In the *Convivio*, Dante states that: "veramente quella che viene per retta linea ne la punta de la pupilla, quella veramente si vede, e ne la imaginativa si suggella solamente." [nevertheless that which enters along a straight line into the center of the pupil is the only one that is truly seen and which stamps itself upon the imagination.] *Convivio*.2.9.4-5. Translation by R. Lansing, both consulted 28/5/2015 here: www.digitaldante.columbia.edu/library/dantes-works

[36] The literature is vast. For standard accounts, S. Edgerton, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, 1975) and M. Kemp, *The Science of Art: Optical themes in western art from Brunelleschi to Seurat* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 9-52.

[37] See the provocative account in H. Belting, *Florence and Baghdad: Renaissance Art and Arab Science*, trans. D. L. Schneider (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011) and the comments in P. Dent, "Time and the Image: Art at an Epochal Threshold," in *Medieval or Early Modern: The Value of a Traditional Historical Division*, ed. R. Hutton (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 146-174.

[38] "I then establish how much I want the distance between the observer's eye and the painting to be," L. B. Alberti, *On Painting: A new translation and critical edition*, ed. and trans. R. Sinisgalli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 41 (1:20).

with the represented scene on the other side of the window projected onto its glass.[39] From the ideal angle of view the world depicted in that window should appear spatially continuous with our own. The boundary is forgotten and elements on either side of it can communicate, like the incense passing from the real world into the fictional one in Andrea del Sarto's image. In other words, ideally, the plane of representation, the boundary symbolized in Alberti's metaphor by the plane of the window, should be forgotten. In practice, however, painters increasingly seek ways of reminding the viewer that such a boundary exists because the tension between the illusion and the panel surface underlines the power of their art.[40] Fra Angelico's great altarpiece from San Marco makes this clear by juxtaposing the new type of image with an earlier one in the foreground, a gilded panel of the crucifix that sits precisely on that boundary. The key elements of this new visual regime are simply not applicable, except perhaps in marginal cases, to the action figure. Action figures generally require direct physical contact, not detached absorption. This may be for the operation of the mechanism (as in crucifixes with hinged arms) or during acts of devotion that bring the viewer into close proximity with the work.[41] Images of Christ with a moveable tongue are often most effective when viewed from immediately below where someone kissing Christ's feet would have their devotion rewarded by the miraculous impression that his open mouth was speaking to them.[42] For these reasons, action figures nearly always occupy an unframed presence in the viewer's space without any sense of an intervening screen. In other words, the late medieval action figure is ultimately excluded from the discourse on the living image because that discourse is absorbed within a paradigmatic shift in visual culture that is primarily concerned with the nature of painting as a medium. It seems to me that the passage from Dante already anticipates this development. However, it also points us in another direction, towards a way of reintegrating these different image types. Dante's living images are sculptures, but sculptures that lie close to the border with painting, reliefs rather than fully three-dimensional works. Although action figures are usually sculptural works, they are often addressed as a separate category or subcategory because of their moving parts. However, it might be helpful to view all sculpture of any three

[39] "First I trace as large a quadrangle as I wish, with right angles, on the surface to be painted; in this place, it [the rectangular quadrangle] certainly functions for me as an open window through which the *historia* is observed," Alberti, *On Painting,* 39 (1:19).

[40] For a sophisticated discussion that opens with a consideration of perspective and its impact on relief sculpture, see M. Podro, *Depiction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

[41] Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*, 120-62 in particular.

[42] For the rituals during which animated crucifixes may have been used, see Kopania, *Animated Sculptures*, 120-62.

dimensional aspect as possessing an element that moves, that element being the viewer. Indeed, the moving viewer ultimately becomes one of sculpture's distinctive demonstrations of its particular medial power as a living image in relation to painting.[43] The passage in Dante belongs to the prehistory of the so-called *paragone* debate and in the poem the categories of painting and sculpture are yet to be fully distinguished in the terms that will emerge in the early modern period.[44] Dante the pilgrim hovers between a mode of looking appropriate to perspectival painting, static and focused, and one that accommodates the qualities of sculpture, dynamic and explorative.

I would like to conclude with a late medieval crucifix that is not strictly speaking an action figure but which does generate an effect similar to those already discussed in so far as it depends for its power on motion. The sculpture in question is a colossal crucifix **(Figure 4)** from Chioggia, near Venice, perhaps dating from as early as the first half of the fourteenth century.[45] Critical engagement with this work has so far been slight. It is the object of a local cult and like many cult images it has yet to be properly absorbed into the history of art, or even into the history of Italian sculpture for this period. Given the national prejudices that often shape historical discourse, the fact that the sculptor was probably trained to the north of the Alps has also contributed to the scholarly neglect of the work. In fact, the presence of such sculptors in Italy is an important element of late medieval visual culture. There appears to have been an influx of itinerant wood carvers at this date from further north, no doubt responding to a growing enthusiasm for more graphic images of the Crucified Christ.[46] Although they served different purposes and can be documented at an earlier date, the increasing popularity of articulated sculptures of Christ Crucified with jointed arms should also be considered another manifestation of this desire.

Figure 4. Unknown sculptor, Crucifix, poplar and polychromy, fourteenth century, San Domenico, Chioggia

[43] For a recent discussion, taking Alberti as a point of departure, that discusses the nature of a beholder's involvement in painting and sculpture, see H. Kenaan, "Touching Sculpture," in *Sculpture and Touch*, ed. P. Dent (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 45-59.

[44] Hessler, *Zum Paragone* and Hendler, *La guerre*.

[45] See L. Mor, "Il Crocifisso trecentesco della Pieve di Sant'Andrea di Bigonzo e alcune segnalazioni tra Veneto e Friuli," *Il Santo* 53.1 (2013): 47-59 (p. 54) and V. Tosello ed., *Il Cristo e la Chiesa di San Domenico* (Chioggia: Nuova Scintilla, 2006).

[46] For a recent discussion of such grotesque sculptures in their European context, see G. Hoffmann ed., *Das Gabelkreuz in St. Maria im Kapitol zu Köln und das Phänomen der Crucifixi dolorosi in Europa* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2006).

Figure 5. Unknown sculptor, Crucifix, poplar and polychromy, fourteenth century, San Domenico, Chioggia (detail)

Indeed, the Norcia crucifix by Giovanni Tedesco no doubt belongs to a late phase of this flow. The work from Chioggia merits more attention than space permits in this context, but one feature in particular deserves attention here. From a distance, Christ's form is grotesquely contorted, but if the viewer approaches – as one would during the adoration of the cross for example - and stands beneath it by the lacerated feet, the distortions of legs and arms and head largely resolve themselves from this privileged angle of view. And at this point a peculiar detail comes to the fore. Two strange swellings on the upper lip of the side wound are transformed into two drops of blood **(Figure 5)**. This transformation is produced by the moving viewer who, standing below, not only now sees the drops but lies directly in their path as they are about to fall, binding the viewer to the image, like incense and voice, in a moment of contact that possesses the most profound significance.

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The Assumption of Mary in Dieppe. An Unusual Example of a Theatricalized Medieval Religious Ceremony

Everything started during the Hundred Years' War when the Dauphin – later Louis XI – instituted the tradition of commemorating the taking of the Bastille that had been erected by the English general Lord Talbot in Dieppe. Louis XI and his army besieged Dieppe and took the Bastille in 1443, on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption. After the victorious battle, Louis proceeded to the main church of the city, dedicated to St. Jacques, to offer up thanks for his victory. He also presented the Church with a life-size silver statue of the Virgin, to whose help he attributed the victory, and ordained that on that day, 14 August, a procession should henceforth be held every year. This order gave birth to the so called *Mitouries,* an elaborate ceremony held on the Assumption, theatrical in nature, quite unusual due to the use of automatons to act out the central narrative of this event and the presence of a comic character, *grimpe sur l'Ais* – a jester who comments on the action.

Mitouries have aroused the interest of many scholars. Unfortunately, most books and articles in which one may find information on the ceremony, usually written in the 19th century, offer only a brief description of this event, treating it as an interesting and rather strange, somewhat humorous type of activity from the past.[1] It is hard to find publications discussing

[1] A. Boudier, *Dieppe et la region à travers les âges* (Dieppe: Impr. centrale de Dieppe, 1953), pp. 53-54; A. Bouteiller, *Histoire de la ville de Dieppe depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours* (Dieppe: Emile Delevoye, 1878), pp. 295-296; E. Chevallier, *Petite Histoire chronologique de Dieppe* (Rouen: Impr. de E. Cagniard, 1886), pp. 19-20, 51; P.-J. Feret. *Notice sur Dieppe, Arques et quelques monuments circonvoisins* (Dieppe: Marais, 1824), pp. 28-30; M. Frissard, *Notice historique sur la ville et le port de Dieppe* (Paris: Carilian-Goeury et V. Dalmont, 1854), pp. 20-21; M. C. Guibert, *Memoires pour servir a l'histoire de la ville de Dieppe*

the Assumption ceremony organized in Dieppe in the wider context of other theatrical activities of the Middle Ages as well as Early Modern times.[2] Even in recent years, which have abounded in studies devoted to the history of European Stage, especially stage design and the use of sculptures or various kind of mechanical figures, the *Mitouries*[3] have not been investigated in detail by scholars.[4] This leads us to pay closer attention to this subject, which beyond doubt seems to be one of the most underestimated and interesting phenomenon in the field of the history of medieval theater.

The primary source for reconstructing the course of *Mitouries* are *Mémoires chronologiques pour server à l'Histoire de Dieppe,* written by Jean-Antoine-Samson Desmarquets, and published in 1785. This late source deals extensively with the ceremony organized in Dieppe and that is the reason why it has been used (usually only cursorily) by many authors in theirs studies. Apart from *Mémoires chronologiques…*, a short fragment of a poem entitled *Louange et description de plusieurs bonnes villes et cités du noble royaume de France* by Pierre Grognet (published 1534) contains casual and imprecise information on *Mitouries.* It seems that other sources related to this particular Assumption ceremony have not been used by historians interested in it. My analysis will draw on *Mémoires chronologiques*, the most common and rather cursorily

(Rouen: A. Renaux, 1878), Vol. II, pp. 305-323; R. Herval, *Dieppe, cité normande* (Rouen: Editions de la Vicomté, 1928), p. 108-127; L. Lenormant, *Notice historique sur l'église Saint-Jacques de Dieppe. Extrait du «Rapport annexé aux projets de restauration adoptés par le gouvernement»* (Paris: Impr. de A. Graliot, 1841), pp. 16-17; Ch. Merk, *A History of Dieppe* (Paris: Herbert Clarke, 1909), pp. 58-63; B. Picart, *Histoire des religions et des moeurs de tous les peoples du monde* (Paris: L'Éditeur, 1819), pp. 101-103; *A Sketch of the History of Dieppe, Dedicated by Permission, to H. R. H. the Duchess of Berry; to Which is Added a Guide to That Fashionable Watering Place and a Short Account of That Interesting Monument of Antiquity Called Caesar's Camp. Ornamented With Plans and Engravings. By an English Gentleman*. (Signed: M. A. W) (Dieppe: Marais fils, 1828), pp. 106-107; L. Vitet, *Histoire de Dieppe* (Paris: Librairie de Charles Gosselin, 1864), pp. 35-47.

[2] In fact only Charles Magnin paid closer attention to *Mitouries*: Ch. Magnin, *Histoire des Marionnettes en Europe depuis l'antiquité jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, Libraires-Éditeurs, 1862 [second, revised and extended edition. First edition: 1852]), p. 111-113. See also descriptions of *Mitouries* in: G. Baty, R. Chavance, *Histoire des Marionettes* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1959), pp. 34-35; J. Chesnais, *Histoire générale des marionnettes* (Paris: Bordas, 1947), pp. 83-85; E. Maindron, *Marionnettes et Guignols. Les Poupées agissantes et parlantes a travers les ages* (Paris: Impr. Felin Juven, 1900), pp. 99-102.

[3] The etymology of the word *Mitouries* should be explained. L. Vitet writes, that: "[…] les Dieppois fondèrent, toujours en l'honneur de la Vierge, une confrérie dite de la *Mi-aoust,* destinée à faire célébrer, la veille, le jour et le lendemain de l'Assomption, dess jeux et cérémonies dans le gout du temps, et qu'on nommait, dans la langue du pays, les *mitouries de la Mi-aoust*"; L. Vitet, *Histoire de Dieppe…,* pp. 43-44.

[4] Henryk Jurkowski wrote on *Mitouries* over several decades: H. Jurkowski, *Dzieje teatru lalek, od antyku do romantyzmu* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1970), p. 62; idem, *A History of a Puppet Theatre in Europe,* vol. I, *From Its Origins to the End of the 19th Century* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press,1996), pp. 64-65; idem, *Przemiany ikonosfery. Wizualny kontekst sztuki teatru* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2009), pp. 73-74. See also: J. F. Massip, *The Staging of the Assumption in Europe,* in: *Iconographic and Comparative Studies in Medieval Drama,* ed. C. Davidson, J. H. Stroupe , intr. M. Twycross (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1991), pp. 22-23; P. Meredith, J. E. Tailby (eds, transl.), R. Ferrari, L. R. Muir, M. Sleeman (transl.), *The Staging of Religious Drama in Europe in the Later Middle Ages: Texts and Documents in English Translation* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1983), p. 115.

used work, at first, but at the same time my goal is to introduce another source, almost completely overlooked by scholars, important because of the fact that it is a first-hand description from the 17th Century: *Les antiquités et chroniques de la ville de Dieppe* written by David Asseline (1619-1703).

According to Desmarquets the ceremony of the Assumption had a special place in townspeople's hearts and was an important component of the city's identity. The evidence for this is the burgeoning activity of the Brotherhood of Virgin Mary operating in Dieppe, jointly responsible for the ceremony (together with local authorities). Each year around mid-June, the most prominent inhabitants of Dieppe gathered in the town hall to choose "the most chaste girl" who would be honored to play Virgin Mary. Together with her, six other girls, "standing out above others thanks to their wisdom", were chosen, and their task was to play Daughters of Zion – Mary's companions. The next step was the choice of a priest to portray St. Peter and eleven lay people of "blameless repute" to portray the remaining Apostles.[5] In Desmarquets' opinion, the chosen citizens were held in high esteem, so that other inhabitants of Dieppe tried to be worthy of such a distinction. In effect, all who lived in that city were relatively more pious and well-behaved than people from other cities of the Kingdom of France.[6]

With the main characters selected, other preparations could be made. Desmarquets does not write anything about stagecraft, the production of costumes, or props. Taking into consideration that the main stage with automatons was a big edifice, probably a permanent structure located in the gallery of St. Jacques[7] (the stage will be meticulously depicted below), some reparations or improvements to it could be made each year or just when necessary. It is hard to say how varied the costumes were and what kind of props were used during ceremony. Desmarquets perfunctorily writes that during the solemn procession, a part of the ceremony, numerous young people were carrying attributes and were dressed in costumes ascribed

[5] "On prenoit tous les ans, vers la mi-Juin, les suffrages des principaux habitants, assembles en l'Hôtel-de-Ville, pour l'élection de la fille la plus vertueuse, qui devoit cette année représenter la Sainte Vierge, ainsi que pour l'élection de six autres filles, recommandables par leur sagesse, pour représenter les six Filles de Sion, qui devoient l'accompagner. On procédoit ensuite au choix d'un Ecclésiastique pour représenter Saint Pierre, & de onze laïques, d'une conduit exemplaire, pour représenter les onze autres Apôtres"; Ch. Desmarquets, *Mémoire chronologique pour servir à l'histoire de Dieppe et à celle de la navigation française, avec un recueil abrégé des privilèges de cette ville,* vol. I (Paris: Chez Desauges, 1785), p. 69.

[6] "La consideration qu'on attachoit à ceux & à celles qui étoient élus, donnoit une emulation Générale à tous les citoyens pour mériter cette distinction, qui a contribué à la conservation des moeurs & de la piété de nos habitants, qui se sont maintenus plus longtemps dans leur ancienne simplicité, que ceux de toute autre ville du royaume."; ibidem.

[7] On the church, its architecture, interior, etc. see: Y. Bottineau-Fuchs, *Haute-Normandie gothique. Architecture religieuse* (Paris: Picard, 2001), pp. 126-139.

to particular saints which they were to enact. Also, the Apostles were "attired in dresses sewn after ancient costumes".[8] There are no depictions of Mary's dress, in contrast to a kind of a cradle in a shape of a tomb in which the Mother of God was being carried through the streets of the city and in a church.[9] Some considerable expenses had to be borne by musicians and singers, especially since some of them had to be hired in another city, that is Rouen.[10]

Early in the morning on 14 August, around 6 a.m., a crowd began gathering close to the St. Jacques church. Then an elaborate procession traversed the streets; eleven members of the local brotherhood dressed as the Apostles, and one priest as St. Peter, carried a kind of leafy cradle with a young girl in it who represented the Virgin. They were preceded by acolytes and followed by the clergy from St. Jacques and Saint-Rémy, musicians, most noble townsmen, and all others inhabitants of the city, singing hymns, carrying candles and banners. The procession stopped at different stations, and after two or three hours finally entered St. Jacques.[11] And in the interior, in the choir, where the cradle with Mary was put (close to the altar) and Daughters of Zion gathered, the most interesting part of the celebration took place.

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[8] Ibidem, p. 72.

[9] "La Sainte Vierge représentée, com-nous venons de le dire, portée par quatre Clercs dans un berceau en forme de tombeau"; ibidem, p. 69-70. "[…] on portoit l'espèce de tombeau ou berceau dans lequel étoit la représentante la Sainte Vierge […]; ibidem, p. 71. See also fragments on pages 72, 75, 79-80.

[10] Ibidem, p. 71.

[11] "[tous] se rendoient tous les ans à l'eglise de Saint Jacques, le 14 Août, à six heures du matin. On étendoit à cette heure, devant la porte du Maître en exercice, une grande tapisserie, sur laquelle on appliquoit des lettres en or, qui rendoient & formoient quelques vers exprimant les qualités distinctives de ce Maître & de son amour pour Marie. Ces vers a'appelloient Palinods. Ceux qui représentoient Saint Pierre & les onze autres Apôtres, après avoir assisté à l'Office des Laudes, sortoient du choeur de Saint Jacques, portant chacun un cierge, & se rendoient, en chantant des hymnes, à la porte du Maître en exercice, chez qui le Comandant & les anciens Maîtres, ainsi que les Maire & Echevins, don't le temps d'être Maîtres n'étoit point arrive, se trouvoient tous rassembles. Les Apôtres les faisoient avertir qu'ils venoient les inviter de se render à l'Eglise, & que le Clergé approchoit; & réellement le Curé & les Ecclésiastiques de la paroisse, se rendoient dans ce temps, en procession, précédés des bannières, à la maison du Maître. Dès qu'ils y étoient arrives, le Commandant, les anciens Maîtres, les Maire & Echevins en fortoient & marchoient à l'Eglise de Saint Jacques à la suite du Clergé & des représentants les Apôtres, toujours chantant des hymnes ou des pseaumes. Outre les Chantres & Musiciens ordinaires de la Ville, on en faisoit encore venir de Rouen pour cette cérémonie. Ils exécutoient différents motets, soit dans l'Eglise, soit aux stations que la procession faisoit dans la Chapele de Notre-Dame de Bon-secours, & devant l'Hôtel-de-Ville. Cette procession se faisoit en cet ordre. Sur les sept heures & demie du matin, peu après l'arrivée des Maîtres dans l'Eglise de Saint Jacques, la procession fortoit de cette Eglise pour aller chercher le Clergé de Saint Remi. La reunion des deux Clergés étant faite, après les deux Curés, précédés de leur Clergé, on portoit l'espèce de tombeau ou berceau dans lequel étoit la représentante la Sainte Vierge, & à ses côtés les Filles de Sion, qui marchoient avec modestie; ensuite le Saint Pierre avec ses deux Acolytes, revêtus de leurs ornements ecclésiastiques, alloit à la tête des onze autres Apôtres; après quoi on voyoit le Commendant de la Place, tous les anciens Maîtres de la Confrairie, & les Maire & Echevins. Des deux côtes de cette procession, il y avoit un nombre de jeunes – gens avec des attributs & des habits caractéristiques, propres à exprimer les Saints qu'ils vouloient représenter; comme de leur côté la Sainte Vierge, les Filles de Sion & les Apôtres étoient habillés suivant l'idée qu'on sétoit formée de leur ancient costume. Enfin, après les Maîtres de la Confrairie, il y avoit plusieurs jeunes-gens de leurs familles, qui portoient le prix des Palinods; ensuite venoit tout le people"; ibidem, pp. 70-72.

In fact this ceremony – the Assumption of Mary – was a kind of a spectacle and at the same time a part of a solemn mass, or rather: taking place parallel with the mass (*Pendant toute la durée de cette messe*, as Desmarquets stresses it). The main feature of this Assumption was unusual stagecraft, a highly complicated and huge machinery which enabled artificial figures to move and perform various actions. For the purposes of this ceremony enormous architectural construction was erected. According to Desmarquets it was a platform placed in the choir, above an altar, reaching the vault, the upper part of which was probably a kind of a canopy painted in stars on a blue surface. Two feet beneath it sat the eternal Father in the form of an old man. He had four angels on His sides, hovering around in the air, moving their wings to the sound of organs and instruments. Beneath the eternal Father quite a big triangle was placed, which had smaller angels on each side, singing *Ave Maria Gratia Dei plena per secula*… Little bells which they rang, varied in tone, accompanied their song. One more angel, natural in size, with a candlestick in its hands, was placed beneath. At the end of the mass, the candles should be blown out, but all the angels tried to prevent it.[12] According to Desmarquets, an operator was employed to keep watch over this machinery and its elaborate construction attracted a lot of foreigners eager to see this miraculous edifice.[13]

At the beginning of the mass, two of the four angels gathered close to the eternal Father being moved majestically down to the ground, where the cradle-tomb was placed. In front of it, the life-size figure of Mary, equipped with strings, was waiting. Both angels were a kind of an escort in the course of Her smooth, calm, and slow ascension into haven. The mechanical figures' edifices enabled the movements of Mary's body. While Angels were gathering her up and carried her slowly to God, she lifted her arms and head to show

[12] "Pendant toute la durée de cette messe, chantée en musique, on donnoit aux assistants une representation de l'Assomption de la Mère de Dieu: à cet effet on posoit tous les ans, au-dessus de la contre-table du choeur une tribune don't le haut touchoit à la voûte de l'Eglise, & étoit parsemé d'étoiles sur un fond d'azur. Deux pieds environ au-dessous du plancher de cette tribune, s'élevoit un grand siege, sur lequel paroissoit le Père-Eternel sous la figure d'un venerable vieillard; on voyoit à ses côtés quatre Anges, de grandeur naturelle, qui sembloient se soutenir en l'air: ils faisoient batter leurs ailes en cadence, au son de l'orgue & des instruments. Au-dessus de la figure du Père-Eternel, il y avoit un triangle assez grand, don't chaque angle étoit accompagné d'un Ange de moindre grandeur: ces trois Anges à la fin de chaque office exécutoient un trio sur le chant de l'*Ave Maria, gratiâ Dei plena pes secula,* &c. au moyen de petites cloches de différents tons, sur lesquelles ils frappoient. Un peu au-dessous de ce triangle, on voyoit de chaque côté un Ange de grande stature, qui tenoient une trompette don't le son accompagnoit le trio execute par les trois petits Anges. Enfin au-dessous des pieds du Père-Eternel, paroissoit de chaque côté, un Ange de grandeur naturelle, qui tetoient un grand chandelier chargé d'un cierge, qu'on allumoit à tous les offices; mais quand ils étoient finis & qu'on vouloit éteindre leurs cierges, ces deux Anges paroissoient n'y pas consenter, en se tournant avec vivacité de côté & d'autre, pour l'empêcher; de sorte qu'il fallout employer la plus adroite precision pour y parvenir"; Ibidem, pp. 73-75.

[13] Ibidem, p. 75.

her wish to enter Heaven. Having arrived into God's bosom, she received His blessing, and one of the angels put the crown on her head. Than the clouds closed beneath the feet of Mary and hid her from the view of the gazing spectators.[14]

The most astonishing and, at the same time, the most popular moment for the crowds gathered in the church was this final scene. But the popularity of it was in fact based not on the magnificence of the assumption, blessing and coronation, but on the appearance of *grimpe sur l'Ais*.[15] This person, probably like the rest of the figures used in crucial moments of this pious spectacle, was a mechanical puppet. *Grimpe sur l'Ais* would appear suddenly to spectators, fooling around in different parts of the stage structure. Every now and then he clapped his hands and moved his arms to express the astonishment and pleasure he had experienced while beholding the Virgin entering heaven. He pretended to be dead too, but suddenly rose up, and ran through God's feet to hide himself in such a way that only his head was visible for the crowds gathered in the church.

Desmarquets writes that the appearance of *grimpe sur l'Ais* had a bad influence on crowds. Children had a lot of fun, indeed, they were known to laugh and scream loudly when he was visible to all. But at the same time all the special effects seemed to be a bit overwhelming. People were especially touched by the figure of Mary. Seeing her in motion they shouted: *Ah! Qu'elle aime Dieu! Qu'elle a envie de le voir!* and behaved in an improper way. Desmarquets stresses that most of faithful gathered in the church were not praying in silence but shouting, and what was worse – all those voices interfered with the official mass and pious songs. Such a situation caused an awful noise, "as false as obscene."[16]

[14] "Quand on commençoit la messe, deux des quatre Anges qui étoient aux côtés du Père-Eternel, descendoient majestueusement de leurs places jusqu'au pied de l'Autel, où se trouvoit le tombeau de la Sainte Vierge , contre lequel on avoit place, pour la représenter, une figure de grandeur naturelle, dans laquelle il y avoit également des resorts. Dès que les deux Anges étoient descendus jusqu'à cette figure, chacun de son côté l'élevoit très-lentement jusqu'aux pieds du Père-Eternel. Pendant cette Assomption, cette figure de la Vierge levoit ses bras & sa tête de temps à autre, pour témoigner son desir d'être au Ciel. A peine étoit-elle parvenue aux pieds de l'Eternel, qu'il lui donnoit sa benediction, & aussitôt un des autres Anges posoit une couronne sur la tête de Marie, & cette Reine des Anges disparoissoit peu-à-peu, cachée dans un nuage"; Ibidem, pp. 75-76.

[15] In the literature concerning the Assumption staged in Dieppe, one finds the character's name expressed in various versions: *Grimpesulais, Grimpsalais, Gringalet,* etc.

[16] "Pendant cette representation, qui duroit plus d'une heure & demie, l'on voyoit un personage bouffon: dans un moment il paroissoit d'un côté de la tribune, & celui d'après, il étoit de l'autre, & faisoit des singeries; dans un temps il ouvroit les bras du côté de la Sainte Vierge qui montoit au Ciel, pour exprimer sa surprise; & celui d'après il marquoit sa satisfaction, en applaudissant des mains; enfin, il se couchoit de toute sa longueur pour faire le mort, & se relevoit ensuite, & couroit avec rapidité se cacher sous les pieds du Père-Eternel, où il ne montroit que sa tête. Les lazzis & niaiseries de ce personage, que le people nommoit *Grimpe-sur-l'Ais,* faisoient rire une partie des assistants, & sur-tout les enfants, qui l'appelloient

The last act of the main ceremony took place at the end of the mass, when participants had an occasion to look at two mechanical angels holding candles. Angels were moving in a violent way to stress that they did not want to have their candles extinguished. On his way to the gallery, the chaplain of the brotherhood intoned *Assumpta est Maria in Coelum, gaudent angeli, laudantes benedicunt Dominum,* and recited forty verses in French in which he obliged the Apostles to go public and tell the whole world about the Assumption of Mary. Each apostle responded in twenty verses, pledging that he would do it with great joy. At the end, St. John the Apostle intoned *Ave Maria, gratia Dei plena per secula…* and all the others continued the prayer to the accompaniment of little bells and two trumpets held by the three little angels mentioned above.[17]

The main, elaborate ceremony conducted with the use of mechanical figures moving on a huge stage set in the church came to an end. But the religious spectacle, in a different form, lasted much longer. Members of the clergy, the girl embodying Mary, lying in her tomb, the Daughters of Tzion, Apostles, aldermen, and other participants proceeded, singing hymns, in a solemn procession to the house of the Master of the Ceremony, who was obliged to host all of them for two days. Desmarquets writes that in front of his house a big sail was spread out covering the whole length of the street, protecting it from sun and rain. Underneath it, the table was set at which the Apostles ate supper. During the meal it was forbidden for them to speak or interact with the audience. Food, provided by the Master of the Ceremony, was blessed by St. Peter who then distributed it among his acolytes. After supper St. Peter stood up and intoned *Ave Maria gratia Dei plena,* and Apostles continued the song. Eighty verses in honor of Mary and the Master of Ceremony were recited by St. Peter, too. This was also subsequently done by other Apostles. Mass prayer finished this part of the ceremony. Mary was present all the time

à haute voix dès qu'il paroissoit. D'une autre part, ceux qui étoient plus affectés des mouvements de la Vierge, s'écrioient: *Ah! Qu'elle aime Dieu! Ah! Qu'elle a envie de le voir!* de manière qu'au lieu de prier en silence, la plupart des assistants confondoient leurs exclamations différentes avec le chant de la messe; ce qui formoit un bruit prodigieux, aussi discordant qu'indécent"; Ch. Desmarquets, *Mémoire chronologique pour…*, pp. 76-77.

[17] "Dès que la messe étoit fini, ainsi que les offices, le people se pressoit pour être à portée de voir les deux Anges, qui tenoient un grand chandelier, témoigner, par la vivacité de leurs mouvements, ne vouloir pas laisser éteindre leurs cierges. Lorsque le tumulte étoit un peu cessé, le Chapelain de la Confrairie montoit à la tribune des Apôtres, entonnoit *Assumpta est Maria in Coelum, gaudent Angeli, laudantes benedicunt Dominum*; après quoi il récitoit quarante vers François, pour engager les Apôtres à publier par toute la terre, l'Assumption de la Sainte Vierge, don't ils venoient d'être les temoins. Ceux-ci répondoient chacun par une vingtaine de vers, & assuroient qu'ils alloient avec joie s'acquitter de ce devoir. Le récit fait, l'Apôtre Saint Jean entonnoit le verset *Ave Maria, gratiâ Dei plena per secula,* &c. que les autres Apôtres continuoient de chanter en choeur, accompagnés du carillon des trois petits Anges, & de deux trompettes, don't nous avons ci-devant parlé"; ibidem, pp. 77-78.

during listed events, carried from one place to another in her tomb. In the Master of the Ceremony's house, a special room was ready for her, where she spent time with the Daughters of Zion. After supper, she was obliged to go back to church, and get into the tomb once more.[18]

The same day, after vespers, a play showing Mary's death was organized. It was staged "in a theatre situated on marketplace, in front of the town hall". At the beginning, St. John the Evangelist, carrying a crown in the shape of a halo, began the presentation, singing *Tota pulchra es amica mea* and explaining this antiphony in forty verses. Then Mary, in a tomb, was brought into the theatre, where she started rebuking the Daughters of Zion to be devoted and loyal to God. Mary announced her death, and stressed her great joy in having the perspective of being close to Her Son very soon. She recited *Nunciate dilectio meo, quia amore langueo* and at the same time Archangel Gabriel emerged with a palm in his hand. Giving it to her, he sang *Surge propera, amica mea, veni de Libano, coronaberis* etc. and recited forty verses to invite her to enjoy her status in heaven. Mary responded by assuring him that she really wanted to be taken to her Son. In that moment St. John Evangelists got back to the stage just to assure that Mary told him about her sudden death and asked him to accompany her in her joy. After that, St. John and the other Apostles came out one by one, saying that each of them had been miraculously transported to this place from different parts of the world. They expressed their deep pain caused by the awareness of what was taking place. After Mary was pronounced dead, St. Peter closed her eyes and covered her face and musicians performed a motet in a very poignant key.[19]

The sublime atmosphere of that moment was then disrupted by actors portraying Jews who intended to grab Mary's body. A chaotic scene ensued, with the Jews seeming to be stronger and more effective in their efforts, but then, in a crucial moment, all of them were punished by going blind. Not seeing each other they moved chaotically and crashed into each other. Such a situation was very convenient for Apostles who managed to carry out the tomb with Mary's body.[20]

The ceremony and play depicted above were repeated the next day, the 15th of August. The day after, in the same theatre where the death of Mary was staged, a kind of a moral comedy was shown. The Master of the Ceremony

[18] Ibidem, pp. 78-80.

[19] Ibidem, pp. 80-82.

[20] Ibidem, p. 80.

was responsible for its subject and choosing of the author. He was also responsible for payment and refunding of all costs.[21]

That is all that Desmarquets writes about *Mitouries.* This theatrical event was held every year until 1647, when Anne d'Austriche, together with her young son Louis XIV, witnessed the performance during a visit to Dieppe and were disgusted by the presence of *grimpe sur l'Ais*. An order was given to ban the celebration.[22] But, according to Desmarquets, the ceremony continued to be organized until 1684. The stage machinery was preserved until 1694, when it was burned as a result of the shelling of Dieppe.[23]

Desmarquets' description seems to be the most popular description, based on which the Assumption staged in Dieppe was reconstructed by scholars. But in fact, apart from *Mémoires chronologiques pour server à l'Histoire de Dieppe*, other valuable accounts are also available to us today. One is *Blason et louenge des singularitez et excellences de la bonne ville de Dieppe*, written by Pierre Grosnet, which is the part of his monumental *La louenge et description de plusieurs bonnes villes et citez du noble Royaulme de France,* published in 1534.[24] One can read in Grosnet's work that:

> Dieppe est aussi belle ville
>
> Quon peult veoir & assez ciuille
>
> Qui est dessus la mer assise
>
> Soubz vng hault Roc de belle guise
>
> Les marchans et les citoyens
>
> Sont tous riches par tous moyens
>
> A cause de la mer exquise
>
> Don't ilz ont mainte marchandife.
>
> A Dieppe nest quune rue

[21] Ibidem, p. 82.

[22] Desmarquets doesn't write about this fact, which is stated by numerous scholars, see i.e.: Ch. Magnin, *Histoire des marionettes…*, p. 113. But an information that the French court was disguised by *Mitouries* can be find in Asseline's work, see above.

[23] Ch. Desmarquets, *Mémoire chronologique pour…*, pp. 83-84.

[24] On Grosnet's work see: N. Dauvois, "*La louenge et description de plusieurs bonnes villes et citez du noble Royaulme de France* de Pierre Grognet (1534), de l'éloge au parcours," *Seizième Siècle*, 9 (2013): 47-61.

Longue & large de grant vullue

Et est si droicte proprement

Quel na aucun destrournement.

Il y a deux belles eglises

Grandes & de belles maistrises

Lune est de sainct Jacques fondee

Qui est aussi bien accoustree

Quon pourroit veoir & est parroisse

De grant dignite & noblesse.

Et y est bonne chanterie

Dorgues & aultre melodie

Car tous les iours par voix bien traictes

On y chante de choses faictes.

Au pic du roc est le chasteau

Fort & puissant en lieu moult beau

Et si y a femblablement

Vne aultre eglise proprement

Tres belle en singularite

Et y est par antiquite.

Vng Paradis faict et trasse

Contre les voultes compasse

Qui ne feuure quune fois lan

Plus beau nen a iusqua Milan

Il est ouuert a moult grant coust

A la grant nostre Dame Daoust

Et met on sus le grant autel

Lymaige nostre dame, tel

Quil represente son sainct corps

Et les anges en mains accors

Descendent de ce Paradis

Et lemportent aux benedictz.

A bien parler cest si grant chose

Quaultre chose dire nen ose

Car a celluy bel édifice

Ne veoyt on corde dartifice

Ne fil Darchal aucunement

Mais font pourtraictz les mouuemens

Si subtillement en pratique

Quil semble que foit art magique.

Ceste eglise est de sainct Remy

Bien feruie non à demy

Tous biens y font a grant plante

Bledz, boys, et autre bien plante

Et la près les beaulx molins d'Arque

Sont a deux lieues, comme on marque.

Les ieux de pris y font ouuers

A la my aoust des cierges vers

Et des mais de cire nouueaulx

Qui femblent naturelz et beaulx.

Ceulx qui mieulx les font y ont gaiges

Pratiquez y font les vsaiges

Darmonie femblablement

Et y conuiennent noblement

Chantres de diuerses contrees

La ou leurs voix font estimees

Et y a on au ieu de pris

Selon son falaire compris.

Les dames de Dieppe sont

Confraires qui belles sont

Et donnent pris aux balladeurs

Et Orateurs & Rondeleurs

Et si presentent le couronne

Au mieulx disant que lon luy donne

Et pour breue conclusion

La ville est destimation

Et moult vaillamment renommee

Car fus la mer est situee.

Par chascun jour sans point rabatre

La mer vient contre les murs batre

De Dieppe, puis sen retourne

Incontinent dedans sa bourne.[25]

According to Grosnet, *Mitouries* were staged not in St. Jacques but in Saint-Rémy. It seems that there is a mistake in his brief description of the city and its attractions, which reflects the state of the town around 1520. Desmarquets lists Saint-Rémy in his *Memoires…*, writing that clergy from that church were

[25] P. Grosnet, *Blason et louenge des singularitez et excellences de la bonne ville de Dieppe*, avertissement de l'éditeur par A. H. Taillandier (Paris: impr. de A. Laîné et J. Havard, 1866), pp. XVII-XX.

involved in the event. But at the same time it is also possible that Saint-Rémy was the first place where *Mitouries* took place and, after an indefinite time, they were transferred to St. Jacques. At this point our research does not allow us to say for sure. However, the way Grosnet describes *Paradis* leaves no doubts that we are dealing here with an allusion to the ceremony of Assumption,[26] while its general course and all its most important elements are present.[27] Grosnet doesn't mention a very popular element of the ceremony – *grimpe sur l'Ais*. It is hard to say whether *grimpe sur l'Ais* was a later addition to the ceremony or whether the author of *Blason et…* simply omitted him for unknown reasons in his rather brief description of different attractions of Dieppe. The same goes for the elaborate shows, so meticulously recounted by Desmarquets, taking place outside the church, not directly linked to the core of the ceremony of Assumption.

Les antiquités et chroniques de la ville de Dieppe written by David Asseline (1619-1703) seems much more important for our purpose. This work by the chronicler of Dieppe,[28] published for the first time in 1874,[29] gives quite a similar version of events. It confirms that the later description made by Desmarquets can be treated as reliable. There are not many differences; in fact, Asselines' chronicle provides some additional information on the course of the ceremony, as well as on its background. All of them, and a whole part devoted to *Mitouries,*[30] are based on archival sources, that is, the "old register"

[26] "Le blason que Pierre Grognet a consacré à Dieppe présente un tableau fidèle de cette ville vers 1520. Nous n'en connaissons pas de description plus ancienne. A cette époque, la rue de la Barre et la Grande-Rue (autrefois la rue de la *Carreterie*) traversaient, comme aujourd'hui, la ville dans toute sa longuer. Le château, assis au fommet de sa falaise blanche, les églises Saint-Jacques & Saint-Remy, y font retracés avec foin. Si, comme nous le pensons, le *blasons* de Dieppe par Pierre Grognet a été composé vers 1520, la description de Saint-Remy s'appliquerait à l'ancienne église de ce nom, qui était placée aupres du château. En effet, l'église Saint-Remy actuelle n'a été fondée qu'en 1522, par Thomas Bouchard, & c'est feulement en 1640 qu'elle a été achevée. Mais alors une difficulté se présenterait à réfoudre. Notre poëte parle d'un Paradis placé à la voûte de l'église, & qui ne s'ovrait qu'une fois l'an, à la Notre-Dame d'août. Il est évident qu'il fait allusion au jeu des *Mitouries,* que l'on représentait à Dieppe le jour de l'Assomption de la Sainte-Vierge. Or, jusqu'ici, on a toujours pensé que ce mystère n'avait été représenté que dans l'églse Saint-Jacques. Si cette conjecture est fondée, il faudrait croire, ou que Pierre Grognet s'est trompé attribuant à Saint-Remy un Paradis qui existait dans l'église Saint-Jacques, ou qu'après la démolition de la première de ces églises, on aurait transporté dans la feconde tout le matériel nécessaire pour la célébration de la fête du 15 août. Quoi qu'il en foit, le jeu des *Mitouries* tient une grande place dans l'histoire de Dieppe, à l'époque dont nous nous occupons"; P. Grosnet, *Blason et louenge des…,* pp. VII-X.

[27] However, it is not clear to all scholars analyzing Grosnet's text. Forexample Nathaie Dauvois states: "Il décrit ensuite assez longuement un paradis peint dans une église, singularité s'il en est du lieu"; N. Dauvois, "La louenge et description…, p. 56.

[28] On David Asseline see: M. Hardy, *Notice sur David Asseline chroniquer Dieppois (1619-1703)* (Dieppe: Imprimerie d'Émile Delevoye, 1874).

[29] *Les antiquitéz et chroniques de la ville de Dieppe par David Asseline prestre. Publiées pour la première fois, avec une introduction et des notes historiques par MM. Michel Hardy, Guérillon et l'abbé Sauvage,* 2 vol. (Dieppe: A. Mariais, 1874).

[30] Asseline writes on *Mitouries* on pages 170-186.

of the local brotherhood responsible for the ceremony.[31] Asseline writes at length about costumes, props, and subsequent parts of the ceremony, paying attention to the Apostles,[32] the Virgin Mary and the Daughters of Zion.[33] Asseline also writes about the negative reception of the show by the French court visiting Dieppe in 1647.[34] But his description of the stage machinery located in the church of Saint Jacques seems to be the most interesting and informative. Asseline writes about it in detail, so his description should be quoted here at length:

> Cette chasse (que le peuple appelle ordinairement *la casse*, par cette corruption de langage, qui lui fait souvent prononcer CH de même que le QV ds. Latins et le K des Allemans,) est une machine faite de bois d'une forme un peu plus longue que large, tant au dehors qu'en dedans, mais qui paroit ronde au temps de la solennité de la feste de l'Assomption de Nostre Dame, par l'aiustement de plusieurs ornements de diverses matières peintes et façonnées. Elle este élevée au dessus du grand autel à la hauteur des galeries du choeur de Saint-Jacques. Aussi est-elle soutenue par le devant de deux grand arbres, tels ue sont ceux dont on fait les plus hauts mâts des navires, et par le derrière des murailles de cette église. Il y a dans le milieu de cette chasse une forme de ciel, où l'on voit tourne run grand soleil dont le corps reluit de même que le plus fin cristal, et les rayons qui l'evnironnent sont dorez et lumineux,

[31] „Nous en avons un grand préjugé dans un vieux register où sont contenus les r`eglements et les ordonnances que firent et signèrent ceux qui représentèrent les personnages des Apostres et des Prophètes, don't nous parlerons incontinent, et que les maistres et les confrères de la feste de la Mi-Aoust approuvèrent l'an 1482"; ibidem, p. 170. "Ce qui oblige ces pieux habitans de Dieppe à faire register, en la mème année 1482, de ces cérémonies, fut (selon qu'il est dit dans ce register) *qu'ayans esté seulement écrites en la mémoire des anciens Apôtres, ells estoient exposées au danger d'estre mises en oubly et anéanties par la mortalité de la peste ou de la guerre"*; ibidem, p. 171.

[32] See i.e. his description of the beginning of the ceremony: „Suivant les règlements qui furent registrez pour l'exercice de ces mêmes cérémonies, ceux qui devoient représenter les personnages des Apòtres devoient s'habiller honnètement à leurs dépens à l'apostolique, et prendre leurs rangs et leurs places de l'un et de l'autre costé du choeur de l'Eglise de Saint-Jacques, après y avoir conduit la bière de celle qui représentoit la Vierge, depuis la maison de la Confrairie; mais avec tant d'ordre et de cérémonie, que le Saint-Pierre seroit précédé de deux accolites portans des cierges sur deux grands chandeliers d'argent, que les autres apôtres le suivroient, et que les deux derniers tiendroient chacun un coin de la couverture du lit ou bière de la Vierge. Les Vespers estans chantées, ces Apôtres devoient sortir de l'Eglise au même ordre qu'ils y estoient venus, et retourner au lieu où ils devoient laisser leurs vestemens, y estans conduits par les Electeurs de la feste, au son des instrumens des ménestriers, qui marchoient devant selon l'ancienne coûtume"; ibidem, p. 172.

[33] „Là, on apportoit plusieurs jeunes filles parées à la mode des filles de Sion, dont une, qui estoit appelée la Vierge Marie, estoit plus jolie et plus considérée que les autres. Il y avoit avec ells un homme qui estoit vestu à l'apostolique, et qui partoit sur sa teste une couronne de douze poules de diameter, platte, dorée et éclante, pour marque de sa sainteté ou grâce spéciale, conformément à ce qui a esté dit de la sainte et généreuse Judith, *cui Dominus contulit splendorem.* Aussi représentoit-il saint Jean l'évangeliste, et en cette qualité il commençoit les jeux par ces mots de l'Ecriture sainte: *Tota pulchra es, amica mea, et macula non es in te.* […]"; ibidem, pp. 172-173.

[34] Ibidem, p. 185.

de manière que l'on diroit que les étoilles qui sont dans le ciel brillent par la communication de ses lumières. On apperçoit aussi, à costé de ce grand astre, la représentation du Père Eternel, sous la figure d'un beau et vénérable vieillard, habillé à la mode de quelque monarque, couronné d'une thiare.

Plusieurs anges, vestus d'étoffes légères, sont placés au-dessus et au devant du ciel. Quatre, qui sont de grandeur d'homme, sont posez sur des verges de fer, lesquels les détachent de la machine et les soutiennent en l'air, ne les retenant que par le milieu dud os, avec un tuyau ou barre de fer dont on se sert pour les faire remuer, ou leur faire battre les aisles, ou bien en courber et redresser les plis et les replis, selon le ton et la cadence de la musique et du chant de l'église; ou bien encore pour leur faire mouvoir la teste de temps en temps, tourner incessamment la couronne qui est dessus, et enfin agiter leurs bras et leurs corps, tantost à droite, tantost à gauche, lorsqu'après le service divin on veut éteindre les cierges qu'ils portent sur des chandeliers. Il ya a au dessus de ce ciel dela chasse cinq autres anges, deux desquels sont debout aux deux extrémitez de la machine; chacun d'eux tient une palme dans une main, et dans l'autre une trompette, qu'ils embouchent si à propos quand les orgues jouënt, qu'il semble presque que le son des orgues est celuy de leurs trompettes. Trois autres anges, plus petits que ceux dont nous venons de parler, sont suspendus et places d'une façon triangulaire sur une pyramide dont le pied est posé sur le milieu du haut de la machine, et la pointe eslevée jusqu'à la voûte de l'Eglise. Néanmoins, comme s'ils vouloient chanter un trio à la louange de la sainte Vierge, chacun d'eux lève les bras et décharge à la fin du service au marteau sur une clochette au ton de l'*Ave, Maria, gratie Dei plena, per saecula*. Un pluis petit, qui paroît au-dessus de l'ouverture du ciel, se mettant alors de la partie, remue les bras et bat fortement des mains pour témoigner par ses applaudissemens la joye qu'il a de voir Nostre-Dame montée au ciel, après y avoir esté élevée par des anges en cette manière.

Dès lors que Monsieur le Curé monte à l'autel pour y cébrer solennellement la sainte messe, au jour de la feste de l'Assomption de Nostre-Dame, deux anges descendent du ciel de la châsse, se tenans debout sur une solive peinte, ou barre de fer, longue de troi sou quatre pieds, dont une extrémité, qui est jointe à un des masts de la machine, coule insensiblement eb bas par des ressors secrets que ceux de la confrairie du *Soleret* font jouër. Ces anges estans parvenus au pied de ce mast

> qui est derrière le grand autel, et une haute et belle représentation de la Vierge, vestue de riches habillemens, ayans esté placée aumilieu de ces anges, on la fait monter en leur compagnie, mais c'est d'une manière si lente qu'elle ne paroit au-dessus de la contretable de l'autel qu'après un temps que la curiosité des assistans trouve ordinairement trop long. Avant l'an 1630 ouevviron, que l'on fit cette contretable du grand autel, il y en avoit une petite au-dessus de laquelle estoit une forme de jardin dont les arbres , les fleurs et les fruits, faits de cire peinte, s'estendoient depuis un des pilliers du choeur jusqu'à l'autre qui luy est opposé. De sorte que, lorsqu'on faisoit monter cette représentation de la Vierge, il sembliot qu'elle sortoit de ce jardin, ainsi que Nostre-Dame fit autresfois de celuy de Gethsemani, auprès duquel son corps fut inhumé selon la tradition des saints Pères. Ce qu'il y a de plus surprenant est (ce me semble) que cette image de la Vierge (quoi qu'elle soit portée en l'air et plantée debout sur la barre ou solive que j'ay représentée) remue les bras et ouvre les mains, qu'elle tient ordinairement jointes d'une contenance pieuse et modeste, montant au ciel où la représentation du Père Eterne test assise et semble l'attendre pour le recevoir, et luy Donner sa bénédiction par trois fois, au moment qu'elle y est parvenue et couronnée par un ange.[35]

Asselines' long description of the ceremony offers some great material, yet to be discovered by art historians and historians of theatre. Its length allows us to state that it deserves a separate article. The lack of such an in-depth analysis of Asselines' text does not change the fact that in the context of *Mitouries* three main problems demand to be solved, or, at least – three questions should be asked. First and foremost, *Mitouries* should be compared to other, especially French, ceremonies of the Assumption staged in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period. That will enable us to determine whether the ceremony from Dieppe should be perceived as something special and unique or rather ordinary. At this point, the wider context of theatrical religious activities in which *Mitouries* functioned should also be mentioned, meaning all the ceremonies in which animated sculptures or other kinds of automata were in use. And, finally, *grimpe sur l'Ais,* a comic character in a pious, religious spectacle. Is such a person a bizarre local invention or does it have counterparts in other European theatrical manifestations of common faith?

The Dieppe ceremony should not be treated as something truly unique – in fact *Mitouries* is not the only spectacular example of a late medieval religious, theatricalized ceremony in which animated sculptures

[35] Ibidem, pp. 182-185.

or automatons were used. In France, staging the Assumption seems to have been quite popular through the ages and takes on elaborate and, at the same time, quite bizarre forms. Apart from Dieppe, various ceremonies focused on the Assumption were staged in such places as Rouen, Rabastens, Cherbourg and Valenciennes.[36] In each place, the stagecraft was rich and impressive. For example, in one of the chapels of the cathedral of Rouen, Mary, dressed in a solemn costume, appeared in the middle of a specially prepared garden full of flowers.[37] What is more, the twelve Apostles and the Devil, represented by mannequins, were present there and took part in the main events. The local confraternity of the Assumption, responsible for this show that was not always perceived by church officials as really pious and worth supporting, often followed it up with some pure theatrical pieces, that is *Mystère de l'Assomption* and *Miracles de Notre-Dame*. The tradition of celebrating Assumption in Rouen probably started in the first half of the 15th Century and did not last long. All ceremonies were banned in 1521.[38]

In the small town of Rabastens (Midi-Pyrénées) the local clergy organised an Assumption ceremony called *Nostra Dama del montamen* (*Notre-Dame du*

[36] W. Tydemann, *The Theatre in the Middle Ages. Western European Stage Conditions, c. 800-1576* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 201. See also: *Les Marionnettes chez les Augustins déchaussés de Rouen. Représentation de la Passion en 1677*, publié avec Introduction par Eug. de Beaurepaire (Rouen: Imprimerie Espérance Cagniard, 1889). See also the Assumption ceremony organized in Montmirail: M. le baron de Rivières, "L'Histoire de l'Assumption Nostre-Damme, represantee à Montmirailh," *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique du midi de la France*, série in-8º Nº 13, Séances du 28 novembre 1893 au 20 mars 1894 inclus (1894): 21-25.

[37] "A Rouen, la Vierge apparaisait, revêtue d'un costume magnifique, au milieu d'un jardin fleuri, placé dans la Cathédrale, au-dessus du tabernacle de la chapelle affectée à la confrérie des ciriers, confiseurs et épiciers de la Ville. Ce jardin, que le chapitre voyat d'un très longues et très compliquées, qu'en 1526"; *Les Marionnettes chez les Augustins…*, p. XXI.

[38] "A la fête de l'Assomption de la Vierge, dans la chapelle dite de Notre-Dame-du-Jardin, aujourd'hui disparue et qui se trouvait dans le transept de droite, vers l'angle ouest, les confrères de l'Assomption se livraient à des cérémonies que Farin qualifie de folies: un jardin était dispose dans cette partie de l'église, on y voyait des marmousets ou mannequins qui figuraient les douze Apôtres et un diable, et l'on assistait, au milieu du bruit, des cris et de licences de toute espèce, à la défaite de Satan. Souvent aussi on jouait le Mystère de l'Assomption ou des Miracles de Notre-Dame. La solicitude du Chapitre fut plus d'une fois éveillée. Le 26 août 1446, il nomma une commission pour examiner la liturgie des fêtes de la Vierge *et deliberations facultatis theologiae super hoc habitas, et quod tollantur derisions in ipsis fieri solitae.* En 1460, le 21 août, il supprima tous les vieux usages burlesques pour ne plus laisser subsister que la representation du Mystère de l'Assomption: *de misteriis que fiunt in festo Assumptionis beate Marie per fratres ejusdem abolendis et angelis qui sequuntur processionem in habitibus vilibus et inhonestis; etc… Domini concluserunt quod omnia cessent que fieri solent per fratres illius confratrie, exception misterio Ascensus sive Assumptionis, et hoc fiat hora debita, per quam non fiat in ecclesia tumultus et servivium divinum non impediatur seu turbetur* […] Mais la representation du mystère qu'on tolérait ainsi fut encore un prétexte aux abus; la chapelle de la Confrérie était toujours transformée en un jardin figurant la scène de l'Assomption, et il fallut sévir de nouveau. En 1506 les marmousets ou mannequins furent interdits; en 1521, au mois d'aout et au mois d'octobre on délibéra encore pour obtenir la suppression de toute representation donnée dans ce jardin. Mieux vaudrait, disaient les chanoines, que les confrères supprimassent tous ces ornements et employassent le prix à orner leur chapelle d'une verrière"; A. Gasté, *Les drames liturgiques de la cathédrale de Rouen (Contribution à l'histoire des origins du théâtre en France)* (Évreux: Imprimerie de l'eure, 1893), pp. 76-77.

Montement). The main character in this religious show was the figure of Mary surrounded by four angels. Above her five more angels were present. A gilded sun was placed behind them. Nine more angels sat on sunbeams, waiting for the main action. At the crucial moment of the Assumption, all figures were elevated into heaven, and disappeared in the clouds. The show was made possible by machinery which, in 1501, was operated by master Colmet du Bois.[39]

Probably most comparable to *Mitourie,* in terms of origin, stagecraft, structure and scale, was the ceremony of the Assumption organized by the Confrèrie de Notre Dame de Montée in the Holy Trinity church in Cherbourg.[40] As in Dieppe the tradition of staging the Assumption was directly connected to the events of the Hundred Years' War, that is, the liberation of the city, which took place on 12 August 1450. To honor the victory achieved so close to 15 August, the day of the Assumption, local authorities decided to initiate a theatrical feast involving the use of elaborate machinery, created by a skilled local craftsman, master Jean Aubert. This machinery, completed in 1466, was in fact a huge architectural structure filled with numerous mechanical sculptures, treated not only as a kind of stage used once a year, but as a permanent furnishing of a local church, a monument in the form of an ex-voto called *Paradis.* The focal point of this *Paradis* was the figure of Mary, called Notre Dame de Montée. The structure was located in the west part of the central nave. It was almost six metres high and four metres wide,[41] equipped with two large doors, behind

[39] „L'une d'elles que le clergé de la petite ville de Rabastens (Tarn) offrait à ses fidèles, était connue sous la designation romane de 'Nostra Dama del montamen' (Notre-Dame du Montement). Le 'montement' comportaitune figure de la Vierge entourée de quatre anges, deux à sa droite et deux à sa gauche; devant elle, sur une roue à peine visible, cinq autres anges étaient fixes, et, derrière, un soleil flamboyant et doré, en portait neuf autres sur ses rayons. Au cours de la messe de paroise, la Vierge s'élevait majestueusement tandis que les figurines places devant elle tournaient lentement, et que le soleil, se mouvant dans le sens oppose, entraînait dans son movement celles qu'il portait; celles-ci comme les premières conservaient dans leur rotation la position vertical. Le groupe s'élevait et disparaissait dans le paradis don't l'entrée était cachée par des nuages. La machine qui servait à donner à la Vierge et à son cortège le movement ascensionnel du 'montement', est décrite dans un curieux bail à besogne don't nous citons le premier paragraphe: […] 'L'an 1501, le 24 mai, à Rabastens, maitre Colmet du Bois (del Bosc) s'engage à faire une vis sans fin, laquelle devra faire monter Notre Dame du montement, laquelle devra faire tout ce qui s'ensuit'"; A. Chapuis, p. 102. In depth study on the ceremony of Assumption organised in Rabastens see: M. Vidal, "Notre-Dame-du-Montement à Rabastens. Projet pour la construction d'un appareil destine à figurer l'assomption," *Bulletin Historique et Philologique* 3-4 (1907): 415-421. A. Chapuis and Gelis also write about XVIIth Century ceremonies of Assumption organized in the cathedral of Saint-Étienne in Toulouse, see p. 103 of their study.

[40] See detailed study by Anne Marie Binctin: A. M. Binctin, *Paradis de Cherbourg et mariologie,* in: M. Chiabò, F. Doglio, M. Maymone (ed.), *Atti del IV Colloquio della Société Internationale pour l'Etude Théâtre Médiévale* (Viterbo: Centro studi sul teatro medioevale e rinascimentale, 1984): pp. 581-588.

[41] "Suspendu au mur faisant face au portail de l'ouest, le buffet du Paradis occupait tout l'espace vertical qui se trouvait à l'aboutissement de la grande nef. Il avait 18 pieds de haut (5 mètres 832[? – K.K.]) et 12 pieds de large (3 mètres 88). Pendant l'Avent et la Carême, on le fermait avec deux grandes portes de bois qui formaient une demi-sphère. Ces portes se haussaient ou s'abaissaient selon le besoin, en passant entre deux ogives qui se trouvaient en cet endroit"; ibidem, p. 583.

which one could see the scene taking place in heaven. The Holy Trinity, in the company of numerous angels, was taking Mary into Paradise. [42] In Cherbourg as in Dieppe, the mystery play was staged on the occasion of the feast. And, as in Dieppe, the ceremony was cultivated over a long period of time. In the 16th and 17th Centuries both the ceremony and the structure of the *Paradis* were improved in various ways. The history of the *Paradis* came to an end in the 18th Century, when it was destroyed in 1795 during the French Revolution.[43]

French ceremonies, for obvious reasons, constitute the main point of reference for *Mitouries.* But it is worth stressing that various Assumption ceremonies were organized all over medieval and Early Modern Europe. An important study in this field was written by Johannes Tripps. In his excellent book *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik*, one can find numerous examples of different activities, theatrical in nature, connected with the feast of the 15th of August, discussed in a rich historical and theological context.[44] Apart from French examples, Tripps points to many religious ceremonies devoted to Mary from Germany, Italy and Spain, convincingly arguing that the feast of Assumption was one of the most popular feasts of the liturgical year, and an important element of Marian piety.

In the context of *Mitouries*, Tripp's findings can be extended a bit. Although the author of *Das handelde bildwerk*… mentions Spain as a territory where the Assumption was staged, he does not mention *Festa d'Elx,* one of the most elaborate medieval Marian ceremonies organized to this day. *As in Dieppe, Festa d'Elx,* a chanted drama, presenting the dormition, the assumption and the crowning of the Virgin Mary, was a symbol of the town´s identity.[45] Enacted in the Basilica de Santa María, it requires

[42] "La partie supérieure qui occupait les trois quarts du monument était circulaire. Tout l'intérieur était plaque de cuivre doré; ce qui produisait un bel effet lorsqu'on allumait les cierges. Dans la profondeur, au tiers de la hauteur, on voyait la Sainte Vierge, chef d'oeuvre d'orfévrerie de cuivre martelé et ciselé, sortir de son tombeau et s'élever majestueusement vers le Paradis, environée de plusieurs petits chérubins tenant des cierges. Elle s'élevait vers les personnages représentant la Sainte Trinité; Dieu le Père et Dieu le Fils donnaient leur benediction grâce à un mécanisme fort ingénieux; en même temps, l'Esprit Saint sous l'apparence d'un oiseau blanc, descendait une couronne que le Père Eternel posait sur la tête de la Vierge. Alors les anges s'inclinaient devant leur reine. Tous ces personnages, grandeur nature, étaient habillés sompteusement"; ibidem.

[43] Ibidem, p. 588.

[44] J. Tripps, *Das handelnde Bildwerk in der Gotik: Forschungenzu den Beeutungsschichten und der Funktion des Kirchengebäudes und seiner Ausstattung in der Hoch- und Spätgotik* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2000), pp. 186-202.

[45] J. Castaño García, "Documentary Sources for the Study of the 'Festa' or Mystery of Elche," *Medieval English Theatre* 12.1 (1990): 21-33; idem, *L'organització de la Festa d'Elx a través del temps* (Valencia: Consell Valencia de Cultura, 1997); P. King, "Elche Again – the Venida and Semana Santa," *Medieval English Theatre* 12.1 (1990): 4-20; eadem, "The 'Festa D'Elx': Civic Devotion, Display and Identity" in: *Festive Drama: Papers from the Sixth Trennial Colloquium of the International Society for the study of Medieval Theatre, Lancaster,*

the involvement of about 300 volunteers each year. It is divided into two acts: the Vespra or the Eve, which is performed on 14 August, and Dia de la Mare de Déu or the Day of the Mother of God, on 15 August. The scenario is rich and multi-layered. The text itself, which we know from 1625 version, is written in the Valencian language, with several parts in Latin. The music of the play originates from several different eras: the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque. The whole spectacle is performed by non-professional actors and singers. A choir of children with treble voices performs the roles of Mary and the angels. *Festa* dates back to the second half of the 15th century (but some scholars insist on placing its origins in the 13th Century). What characterizes this Mystery Play is the complexity of the staging, with its division into horizontal-terrestrial and vertical-aerial scenographic space and the use of aerial devices which descend from within the dome of the Basilica. Although no automatons are in use during *Festa,* the impetus of the ceremony, as well as elaborate stage design, could be related to *Mitouries.*

The ceremony of Assumption of Mary in Dieppe can also be compared to many other ceremonies, typical of the Middle Ages, as well as Early Modern Times, for example *Depositio Crucis* or Italian *Sacre rapprezentazioni,* commemorating and enacting Christ's death and burial.[46] Elaborate and complicated sculptures were sometimes used in both kinds of ceremonies. Some of these sculptures, like the one from from Valvasone, feature arms that are moveable at the shoulders and elbows, as well as legs that are moveable at the hips and knees.[47] The so called "Mirakelmann aus Döbeln" sculpture possesses moveable arms – in the shoulders, elbows and wrists – moveable legs, although only in the hips, and a moveable head. Its main elements were

13-19 July, 1989, ed. M. Twycross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996), pp. 95-109; P. M. King, A. Salvador-Rabaza, "La Festa d'Elx: the Festival of the Assumption of the Virgin, Elche (Alicante)," *Medieval English Theatre* 8.1 (1986): 21-50; J. F. Massip, *Teatre religiós medieval als països Catalans* (Barcelona: Edicions 62-Institut del Teatre, 1984), passim, especially pp. 148-175; idem, *La Festa d'Elx i els misteris medievals europeus*, Pròleg de Josep Romeu i Figueras, epíleg de Gaspar Jaén Urban (Alacant: Institut Juan Gil Albert-Ajuntament d'Elx, 1991); F. Pedrell, *La festa d'Elche: du Le drame lyrique liturgique espagnol. Le Trépas el l'assomption de la Vierge* (Paris: au Bureau d'Édition de la <Schola>, 1906); L. Quirante Santacruz, "Notas sobre la escenografia del Misteri d'Elx: la 'Coronación'," in: *Atti del IV Colloquio della Société Internationale pour l'Etude Théâtre Médiévale,* eds. M. Chiabò, F. Doglio, M. Maymone (Viterbo: Centro Studi sul Teatro Medioevale e Rinascimentale, 1984), pp. 479-494.

[46] See: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the Crucified Christ in the Culture of the Latin Middle Ages* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2010), pp. 120-158.

[47] On this sculpture, dated second part of the XVth century, see: G. P. Brusca, "Theatrum Pietatis" in: *Theatrum Pietatis,* ed. G. P. Brusca (Pordenone: Galleria d'Arte Hippocratica, 2013), p. 10; V. Bugatti, *Stile Arte* 105 (2007), pp. 44-45; K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the…*, pp. 22, 27, 29, 38, 91, 111-113, 273; T. Perusini, "Il crocifisso con le braccia mobili del sec. XVI della chiesa di San Giovanni Battista a Pontebba," *Vultus Ecclesiae. Rassegna del Museo Diocesano e Gallerie del Tiepolo di Udine* 1 (2000): 30-31; eadem, *"'Descaviglietur corpus totum et detur in gremio Mariae'. Il crocifissi mobili per la liturgia drammatica e I drammi liturgici del triduo pasquale: nuovi esempi dal nord-est d'Italia,"* in: P. Goi (ed.), *In hoc signo. Il tesoro delle croci* (Milano: Skira, 2006), pp. 191-205.

made of linden wood, while other materials, such as canvas, leather and parchment, were used to decorate the figure. A cylindrical metal receptacle for blood, connected to the wound in the side, is placed in a hollow in the back and concealed with a flap. The figure's loincloth is made of canvas and the partially surviving hair and beard are natural.[48] The life-sized animated sculpture of the Crucified Christ from the Dominican monastery in Kraków has moveable arms, left elbow, and legs (both at the knees and hips). Its unusual construction allows the figure to be animated in many ways. It can function as a typical crucifix; it is also possible to arrange it in a different way for use in deposition scenes or, for example, in a *Pieta*.[49]

The sculptures mentioned above could be treated as a reference for the numerous mechanical figures used in Dieppe. In the case of *Mitouries* as well as in those of *Depositio Crucis* or *Sacre rapprezentazioni*, their function was to personify specific characters known from the Bible. But *Mitouries* in fact represented a whole theatre of mechanical figures functioning within a large religious spectacle, which could be treated as an important element of the sacral and secular identity of citizens of Dieppe. In this spectacle, numerous people portrayed the Apostles, the Mother of God, the Daughters of Zion, etc., giving a theatrical show, and not performing a ritual in which there is no place for audience and actors, but only room for participants. *Depositio Crucis* was much more ritualistic, it was in fact a kind of liturgical ceremony, in which everything was focused on the main protagonist, that is, Christ, in the form of an animated sculpture.[50] Although *Sacre rapprezentazioni* were not liturgical ceremonies but pious shows made by laymen, usually gathered in religious brotherhoods, they differed substantially from the show in Dieppe too – everything was focused on the main protagonist, that is, Christ, in the form of an animated sculpture. No other sculptures or mechanical figures were in use in that case, or their number was limited to just a few.[51]

In considering the staging of the Dieppe Assumption, we can find its closest counterpart in the theatrical construction of the ceremonies of Ascension of Christ, popular in parts of northern Europe from the16th Century on.[52]

[48] K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the…*, pp. 19, 27, 29, 40, 41, 93, 100, 107, 111-112, 136, 178, 254.

[49] K. Kopania, "*Animating Christ in Late Medieval and Early Modern Poland," Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural* 4.1 (2015), Special Issue: *Animating Medieval Art*, guest edited by E. Gertsman, pp. 78-109.

[50] K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the…*, pp. 120-146.

[51] Ibidem.

[52] On the subject of this type of sculpture and the ceremonies in which it was used, see: H.-J. Krause, "'Imago ascensionis' und 'Himmelloch'. Zum 'Bild'-Gebrauch in der spatmittelalterlichen Liturgie," in *Skulptur des Mittelalters, Funktion und Gestalt*, ed. F. Mobius, E. Schubert (Weimar: Hermann Bohlaus Nachfolger, 1987),

As in the case of the ceremony in Dieppe, "it seems that the ceremonial pulling up of Christ through the ceiling of the church was not perceived with a reverence equal to that shown in the celebrations of Passion Week, the instructions for which were contained in liturgy books. Nonetheless, numerous descriptions of these celebrations survived. No doubt, one of the most interesting one was penned, in the second half of the 16th c., by Stanisław Sarnicki, a Calvinist historian and activist. In his *Stanislai Sarnicii Annales sive de origine et rebus gestis Polonorum et Lithuanorum libri octo* Sarnicki writes about an event from 4 May 1402, which had taken place in Poznań, during the visit of king Władysław Jagiełło. In the church of Corpus Christi, the ruler apparently participated in the ceremony of Ascension, during which he was surprised to see the figure of the resurrected Christ being pulled on ropes through the opening in the ceiling of the church. He was told that this was a presentation of God ascending to heaven. The king ordered that a candle be lit. Then he asked about the meaning of the dragon being dropped from the vault. Having learned that this was Satan being expelled from heaven, he ordered that two more candles be lit. When asked why he had honoured Satan thus, he said, 'Serve God but don't anger the devil'."[53]

Although much more secular than, for example, *Depositio Crucis* Ascension ceremonies were not as complex as *Mitouries* and other late medieval Assumption ceremonies mentioned in this article. Also, the stagecraft was not as sophisticated as in case of the ceremonies devoted to Mary. It seems reasonable to say that such celebrations as *Mitouries* were much more elaborate than other ceremonies in which different kinds of animated sculptures were in use.

What clearly differentiates the ceremony in Dieppe from most religious ceremonies with sculptures or automatons, is the presence of the comic character – *grimpe sur l'Ais*, who comments on the action. His presence makes us ask about possible connections to the puppet theatre. Religious performances with puppets and also with comic characters were practiced in the Middle Ages, but were, it appears, not very popular – not many records and descriptions of them survived to the present day.[54] Particular attention should be paid to the description of the performance in Witney (Oxfordshire),

281-35. See also: T. Jurkowlaniec, "Służ Bogu, a diabła nie gniewaj. Rzeźby gotyckie na uroczystość Wniebowstąpienia w Polsce," in *Artifex Doctus. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Jerzemu Gadomskiemu,* Vol. I (Krakow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Wydawnictwo – Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2007), 383–391; J. Tripps, *Handelnde Bildwerk…,* passim.

[53] K. Kopania, "*Animating Christ in…,* p. 95.

[54] K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the…*, p. 202.

mentioned in the *Dictionarium Angliae Topographicum*... by William Lambarde (1536-1601):

> In the Dayes of ceremonial Religion they used at *Wytney* to set foorthe yearly in maner of a Shew, or Enterlude, the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour *Chryste,* partly of purpose to draw thyther some Concourse of People that might spend their Money in the Towne, but cheiflie to allure by pleasant Spectacle the comon Sort to the Likinge of Popishe Maumetrie; for the which Purpose, and the more lyvely thearby to exhibite to the Eye the hole Action of the Resurrection, the Preistes garnished out certein smalle Puppets, representinge the Parsons of *Christe,* the Watchmen, *Marie,* and others, amongest the which one bare the Parte of a wakinge Watcheman, who (espiinge *Christ* to arise) made a continual Noyce, like to the Sound that is caused by the Metinge of two Styckes, and was therof comonly called, *Jack Snacker* of *Wytney*.[55]

Lambarde's description does not allow us to state clearly what type of puppets were used in Witney – some researchers point to marionettes, others to hand puppets.[56] But one can definitely notice a comic, noisy character who could be compared to *grimpe sur l'Ais* – Jack Snacker of Witney. In the case of Dieppe, we do not possess clear information, but it is possible that *grimpe sur l'Ais* was a puppet voiced by an animator or an actor who i.e. used a kind of *pivetta* to change the timbre. The fact that all the characters were mechanical statues makes us presume that also *grimpe sur l'Ais* was a sculpture or – better to say – a kind of puppet, in a certain way designed to move quickly from one place to another, attract people by his dynamism and amusing behavior. The ceremony organized in Dieppe was not a typical puppet mystery play at all. It combined an elaborate paraliturgical religious ceremony with rich, multicomponent stage design and numerous actors, as well as automatons that interacted with comic figures similar to the traditional puppet characters of Punch, Pulcinella or Hanswurst.[57] Furthermore the main and most

[55] W. Lambarde, *Dictionarium Angliae topographicum & historicum. An alphabetical description of the chief places in England and Wales; with an account of the most memorable events which have distinguish'd them. By ... William Lambarde ... Now first publish'd from a manuscript under the author's own hand* (London: printed for Fletcher Gyles, 1730), p. 459.

[56] For the resume of the discussion on Witney show and bibliography see: K. Kopania, *Animated Sculptures of the…*, p. 202, note 51.

[57] On puppet theatre in the Middle Ages see first and foremost: H. Jurkowski, *A History of a Puppet Theatre in Europe,* vol. I, *From Its Origins to the End of the 19th Century* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press,1996), pp. 52-91.

important part of the ceremony, the Assumption, was complemented by purely dramatical scenes, in which actors played crucial roles.

Although the Assumption of Mary staged in Dieppe, with many figures and automatons, preceded by a solemn procession, and accompanied by a mystery play, has properly been inscribed in the rich tradition of medieval and Early Modern religious performances, it should also be treated as one of the most complex examples of them. As such it deserves much more interest from scholars than it has received in recent decades. This theatre of automatons and sculptures, which constituted the main aesthetic expression of the whole show, and represented the main vehicle for presenting the content of the sacred story and a stimulus for awakening a wide range of emotions among the faithful, could serve as a great starting point for a much-needed discussion, exploring numerous important problems. First of all, a new typology of Assumption ceremonies staged in Medieval and Early Modern Europe should be formulated. Then the place of automatons, sculptures and dolls in Assumption ceremonies should be examined thoroughly, as they seem to constitute a crucial form of expression employed in the shows. Their place in Assumption ceremonies is a good starting point for reflection on the theatrical culture of the Middle Ages at a whole, too. Religious theatrical activities of that time were closely connected with other kinds of actions and behaviors. All these automatons, sculptures and dolls are crucial to our understanding of this phenomenon. In case of religious ceremonies it is hard to separate theatre from daily devotion concentrated on sculptures or special kinds of automatons, which were used in theatrical functions only now and then and were available to the faithful throughout the whole liturgical year. Last but not least, *Mitouries* should be analyzed much more carefully. Apart from the testimonies of Grosnet, Asseline and Desmarquets, there may be more, as yet unknown, interesting archival sources that could be used in further studies.

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Representation and Reflexivity: Paradoxes in Images of Christ from Sixteenth-Century Mexico[1]

PER FINIRE
In qualche parte del mondo
c'è chi mi ha chiesto un dito
e non l'ho mai saputo. La distanza
di quanto piú s'accorcia di tanto si allontana.

TO FINISH
Somewhere in the world
there's someone who asked an inch
and I never knew it. The shorter
the distance becomes the farther it gets away.

E. Montale

Even before the fall of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec Empire, in 1521, a date that is usually taken as the beginning of the colonial period in Mexico, miraculous images had already been making their way into Mesoamerica,[2] since they accompanied Spanish conquistadors in their military campaign.

[1] This work is part of a larger research project at Leiden University, titled "Time in Intercultural Context," sponsored by the European Research Council (Advanced Grant No. 295434) within the framework of the seventh European Research Programme (FP/2007-2013).

[2] Mesoamerica is a cultural and geographic area that comprises modern central and southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and part of Honduras and El Salvador.

Catholicism in Spain on the eve of the New World's conquest was at a critical juncture. A political tool in the hands of the monarchy, it was at the same time undergoing profound reform, partly due to the religious and cultural ferment of the time and changes in the thinking of the missionary orders, principally Franciscans and Dominicans. Combining medieval scholasticism with Renaissance humanistic principles, they had become increasingly preoccupied with the state of Catholic practice and belief outside, as well as within, the religious establishment.[3] The military and spiritual Reconquista, which forcefully assimilated Jews and Moors in the Castilian Kingdom, found its counterpart in the New World, where Hernán Cortés and his men, closely allied with the Franciscans, displayed their devotion in banners representing the cult of the Virgin, as a clear sign of the divine approval of their cruel and destructive actions.[4] Achieving salvation for the indigenous peoples of the New World by converting them to Christianity was an essential and inextricable component of the enterprise of the conquest.

A generation after those bloody events, many indigenous towns in New Spain[5] were already active in promoting local cults and their images, in a strategy of religious and political appropriation that continued the ancient Mesoamerican tradition of casting community affairs within the context of a wider supernatural cosmology.[6] The present essay is concerned with specific images representing Christ during the most dramatic moments of the crucifixion, deposition and entombment. These images, painted and sculpted, are evidently linked to rituals and other related activities carried out during Holy Week. While all the works discussed belong to the second half of the sixteenth century (roughly from the 1560s to 1580s), the sources I use for interpreting them are both old and new. Missionary accounts and pictographic documents contemporaneous with the images in question accompany data gathered during my personal experience in observing and participating in contemporary celebrations in Mexico between 2007 and 2014. My point of view is that of a trained archaeologist and historian of pre-Columbian art who, although born and raised in Italy, a predominantly Catholic country,

[3] For an appraisal of the complexity of this period in Spanish intellectual and religious history, see Lu Ann Homza, *Religious authority in the Spanish Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

[4] John H. Elliott, "The mental world of Hernán Cortés", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (1967): 54-58; Robert Ricard, *The spiritual conquest of Mexico*, trans. Lesley Byrd Simpson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 15-23.

[5] New Spain was a vast administrative territory that in the sixteenth century comprised the modern southern United States, Mexico, and a large part of Central America.

[6] For a classic introduction to late pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican political ideology, see Alfredo López Austin, *Hombre-Díos: Religión y política en el mundo náhuatl* (México City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1989).

did not receive a religious upbringing. Poetry and, sadly, witnessing the death of my father after a long illness are the only 'supernatural' experiences I can draw on.

I apply a *longue durée* perspective in my study, precisely to take into consideration changes in experience and interpretation. How did the peculiar religious and political climate of the latter sixteenth century affect the way foreign images and cults were incorporated into the life of indigenous towns? What part did these historical events play in the way indigenous Catholicism was born and evolved in Mexico? What was the relationship between New World evangelization and Catholicism in post-Reformation Europe? The image of Christ conflates the idiosyncrasies of different visual and religious cultures through time.

All the works discussed in this essay belong to what used to be, up to the mid nineteenth century, *conventos*, missionary establishments in indigenous territories, which became important economic, social and cultural centers whose influence extended well beyond their religious functions almost immediately after they were founded in the sixteenth century.[7] The art produced within the *conventos* has attracted increasing attention among art historians, becoming a preferred *locus* for discussing the complex intercultural dialogue between friars and indigenous communities in the early colonial period.[8]

Yanhuitlan and the Deposition Ceremony

The *Santo Entierro* (Holy Sepulchre) in the church of Santo Domingo Yanhuitlan in the Mixtec highlands, state of Oaxaca is an animated sculpture of Christ that most likely dates to the early period of the church's construction in the late 1570s, based on technical and stylistic evidence.[9] **Figure 1** shows a picture taken by technicians of the National Conservation Institute during the restoration

[7] The Mexican government, under President Benito Juárez, expropriated almost all Church estates in the country beginning in the 1860s.

[8] A now classic study is George Kubler, *Mexican architecture of the sixteenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948). A more recent appraisal is Eleanor Wake, *Framing the sacred: The Indian churches of early colonial Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010). In Mexico, Elena Isabel Estrada de Gerlero, *Muros, sargas y papeles. Imagen de lo sagrado y lo profano en el arte novoshipano del siglo XVI* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2011); Constantino Reyes Valerio, *Arte indocristiano* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2000).

[9] The Mixtecs, primarily settled in the north of Oaxaca of southeastern Mexico, are one of the several indigenous peoples of Mexico, with roughly 400.000 speakers, although many more identify themselves as Mixtec even though they no longer speak the language, as is the case in Yanhuitlan.

works carried out in 1997.[10] Featuring Christ lying bare on a table, the image's iconography recalls the famous *Dead Christ in the Tomb* by Hans Holbein (1521-22), now in the Kunstmuseum in Basel, long understood, by many academic and non-academic observers, as a non-believer's depiction of the dead body of Jesus.[11] Because of its scientific objectivity, the act of taking the picture desecrates the image. At the same time, because of the very scientific nature of the picture, we can clearly observe how badly the image has indeed been desecrated since its inception. The face is dark and dirty. The neck is crackled and the shoulder damaged. The image was tortured, in cyclical and repetitive gestures ritualistically carried out during Holy Week. Icon and iconoclasm, contested topics among Christians of all periods are indissoluble, because intrinsically associated with the story of the Passion itself.[12]

Figure 1. *The Santo Entierro* (Holy Sepulchre) in the church of Santo Domingo Yanhuitlan, Oaxaca, Mexico.

The *Santo Entierro* lies in the same place throughout the year, resting in its glass coffin under a Passion altarpiece inside the church. It does not receive any attention until Holy Wednesday, when around noon it is taken out in procession, still inside its coffin, and eventually put on display, by the entrance of the church, where vigils are carried out until the end of Holy Week. On the morning of Good Friday, volunteers prepare a Golgotha several meters high made of freshly cut branches. Eventually, behind a curtain, they take the *Santo Entierro* out of the coffin, secure it on a wooden cross by use of a long white cloth, and place it in front of the mount, with images of Saint John and the Virgin of Solitude on either side.

The ritual of the descent from the Cross is performed at night, in a manner strikingly similar to the one described by the Dominican chronicler Agustín Dávila Padilla in the sixteenth century.[13] According to him, in the church of Santo Domingo in Mexico City an image of Christ made of cornstalk paste

[10] Documentation is available at the Archive of the Coordinación Nacional para la Conservación del Patrimonio Cultural, Mexico City. See also, Blanca Noval Vilar and Francisco Javier Salazar Herrera, "La restauración de dos Cristos de pasta de caña como parte de los trabajos del proyecto de conservación integral en Santo Domingo Yanhuitlán, Oaxaca", in *Imaginería indígena mexicana: Una catequesis en caña de maíz*, ed. Antonio F. García-Abásolo, Gabriela García Lascurain, and Joaquín Sánchez Ruiz (Cordoba: Publicaciones Obra Social y Cultural CajaSur, 2001).

[11] Amy Knight Powell, *Depositions: Scenes from the late medieval church and the modern museum* (New York: Zone Books, 2012), 237-44.

[12] Joseph Koerner, "The icon as iconoclash", in *Iconoclash*, ed. Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (Karlsruhe and Cambridge: ZKM and MIT, 2002).

[13] Agustín Dávila Padilla, *Historia de la fundación y discurso de la provincia de Santiago de México, de la Orden de Predicadores* (Mexico City: Editorial Academia Literaria, 1955), 561-65.

belonged to the Confraternity of the True Cross. This admired Mesoamerican technique was employed for images in the colonial period and exported to Spain. It was also used locally, as in Yanhuitlan's *Santo Entierro*.[14] Corn, the Mexican staple, had a widespread cult in ancient Mesoamerica, where it was accepted that humans are made of maize, because this is what we eat. The invention of maize was, according to legend, achieved through the sacrifices of a variety of culture heroes in differing regions of Mesoamerica. After descending to the underworld and defeating the gods of death, these heroes were finally able to return to the world of the living to offer precious corn seeds to the people, but most often by becoming a young maize plant themselves.[15] The symbolic associations of the sacred cornstalk paste image of Christ with the ancient maize gods is evident. Undoubtedly, this basic Mesoamerican metaphor is operating in the case of the crucified Christ presented here: Mesoamerican people eat corn as European Christians eat bread. In both cases, the staple transforms into the body of Christ, the image, the Eucharist, in specific ritual moments.[16]

A closer reading of Dávila Padilla's account opens up a more complex picture of the image in Yanhuitlan and other contemporaneous ones in Mexico. The friar recounts that the enactment of the descent caused a great emotional reaction among those attending the ceremony. Once the nails had been removed from the hands and feet of Christ, nothing held the body in place but a long cloth, placed under the arms of the image. The head, arms, and legs were left dangling.[17] This was due to the fact, as the author earlier explained, that the sculpture's joints at the shoulders and knees had a sphere hidden inside, so that the image could move easily, "as if it were a real body" (*"como si fuese de cuerpo natural"*).[18] He is explicit in accounting for the trick that moved the image, but does not seem to feel that it weakened the emotional and pietistic rhetoric employed throughout the text. The fact that the descent was evidently only a re-enactment, with the use of special effects, did not undermine the ultimate truthfulness of the episode depicted. This seems

[14] Pablo F. Amador Marrero, *Traza española, ropaje indiano: El Cristo de Telde y la imaginería en caña de maíz* (Telde: Ayuntamiento de Telde, 2002).

[15] Because this tradition is widespread in Mesoamerica, many sources relate the same story, with only slight variations. The best-known version is in the Maya book *Popol Vuh*. See, Dennis Tedlock, *Popol Vuh: The Mayan book of the dawn of life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

[16] Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo, "Cristo, su sangre y los indios: Exploraciones iconográficas sobre el arte mexicano del siglo XVI", in *Herencias indígenas, tradiciones europeas y la mirada europea*, ed. Helga von Kügelgen (Frankfurt: Vervuert-Iberoamericana Verlag, 2000); Hans-Jörg Witter, "Die gefiederte Schlange und Christus. Eine religionshistorische Studie zum mixtekisch-christlichen Synkretismus" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Universiteit Leiden, 2011), 34-55.

[17] Dávila Padilla, *Historia*, 564.

[18] Dávila Padilla, *Historia*, 563.

contradictory, as does the movement of the image itself, which occurs when the lifeless body of Christ, without the nails keeping it in place, falls down. The movement of the body, in fact, signifies the death of Christ. It moves not because it is alive, but because it is not. The movement is purely mechanic (the product of gravity) and does not express intent or volition on the part of the image/person/body. The animation of the sculpture, meant purportedly to enhance realism and convey the illusion of actual presence, takes place to signify death. The material presence of the body is deceptive, because Jesus is no longer in this world but in another one, an unreachable beyond. The closer it comes, the farther it gets away.

In semiotic terms, the paradox of the dead-but-moving Christ exemplifies a slippage between the signifier and the signified. It renders acutely and emotionally the mere arbitrariness of the sign. This confusion between the image and what it represents is also, of course, the age-old problem of idolatry, a seemingly constant threat among lower and illiterate Christian classes that has worried the clergy through the centuries. In Dávila Padilla's account, however, it is clear that staging does not equal disillusionment. On the contrary, the moment of the deposition is a moment of realization. It is not only transitional in its moving composition, but also in its conceptual implications. What is the status of the image? What is it supposed to signify? The mechanics of the movement deconstruct the iconicity of the image of Christ and raise doubts about what we are actually looking at.

Another image found in the same church in Yanhuitlan and produced around the same period raises similar questions. In a side chapel known as el *Sagrario* (Tabernacle), a sculpted relief depicts the theme of the Deposition **(Figure 2)**. Now painted with vivid colors, up until the middle of the seventeenth century it displayed its natural stone grey surface.[19] The stone seems to be alabaster, a white mineral with an exquisite translucency and texture. Known by different names and variations in both ancient Europe and Mesoamerica, it enjoyed great popularity in both continents, used for producing tomb effigies and other funerary objects deemed useful in the afterlife of the deceased. In the European Middle Ages, the material was adapted to the representation of Passion scenes, renewing the special relationship between alabaster and death.

Figure 2. *Deposition*. Relief from the side chapel known as el *Sagrario* (Tabernacle) in the church of Santo Domingo, Yanhuitlan, Oaxaca, Mexico.

[19] Francisco de Burgoa, *Geográfica descripción* (Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1934), 295.

In Yanhuitlan's alabaster *Deposition*, a crowded composition still shows many gold details that may have been part of the image even before it was colored, as was indeed common in white sculptures. These details enrich the clothing of the participants of the scene, many of whom display quite elaborate Moorish costumes, such as turbans and doublets. While this could be a reference to an exotic Middle East, it was quite common in Renaissance Spain to wear Moorish clothing.[20] A painted manuscript from Yanhuitlan itself, dated to the 1550s, for example, shows a Spaniard engaged in a lively conversation with a compatriot who sports a turban.[21]

We can only imagine the effect of the whiteness of the relief by turning to examples that have survived from Renaissance Spain, such as the altar table with depictions of the Entombment of Christ, the Veronica, and the Ecce Homo, now in the National Museum of Sculpture in Valladolid or the carved relief of the Entombment in Palencia's Diocesan Museum. In both cases, gold details on garments, oil jars carried by women to anoint the body of Christ, and tree leaves enrich the scene. The dramatic gestures and the contorted position of the lifeless body of Christ are colorless, changing in tones and intensity as one walks closer to or around the sculpture. The change, however, is subtle, and one is always aware that something is missing from this otherwise naturalistic depiction. The pure white is a regression to the potentiality of animation, to that moment in which dead and raw material seems to become alive and transform into something else, the real presence of what the picture claims to be.[22]

The transitional quality of the picture makes its status ambiguous. Perhaps elegantly dressed Spaniards did re-enact the descent in Yanhuitlan and were represented as historical actors in Sagrario's *Deposition*. In this case, the carved relief, in a very self-conscious manner, would represent not the deposition itself, but rather a representation of it. The contemporaneous viewer would have been aware of the fictional quality of the representation. Thus, intellectual self-reflection comes to play a great role in the act of viewing, even in an image that surely compelled an emotional and

[20] Maria Judith Feliciano Chaves, "Mudejarismo in its colonial context: Iberian cultural display, viceregal luxury consumption, and the negotiation of identities in sixteenth-century New Spain" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2004), 177-186.

[21] Codex Yanhuitlan, plate 8. See, Wigberto Jiménez Moreno and Salvador Mateos Higuera, *Códice de Yanhuitlán* (Mexico City: Museo Nacional, 1940). The illustration is accessible at www.bdmx.mx/detalle/?id_cod=27.

[22] Frank Fehrenbach, "Coming alive: Some remarks on the rise of "monochrome" sculpture in the Renaissance", *Source: Notes on the History of Art* 30, no. 3 (2011): 50.

empathetic response. The lack of color contributes to the deep awareness that what seems to be happening in front of us is not the real thing, but just a representation (a sign) of it.

The Image of Christ in Sixteenth-Century Mexican Mural Art

Among the many art forms that flourished in the conventos, mural painting occupies an important place, because indigenous artists practiced it long before the arrival of the Spaniards and were therefore able to transfer style, iconography, and techniques of their ancient tradition into the new context. However, a peculiar and rather ubiquitous trait in convent murals is the use of grisaille, a technique that was most certainly absent from the pre-Hispanic repertoire. From the relatively little material that has survived from the pre-contact period, it is safe to say that ancient murals boasted bright and flatly applied colors. Perhaps because of the lack of a pre-Hispanic antecedent, most scholars consider dependency on print models as the main reason for the use of grisaille in the colonial period, according to an interpretative paradigm that considers colonial Mexican art unoriginal and derivative from its onset.[23] Quite the contrary, however, the use of a grey-scale palette in colonial mural painting is highly original. While European artists mastered the grisaille technique in oil painting on either canvas or panel and applied it to smaller portions of larger works, entire mural cycles with a total lack of color are almost unique to New Spain. Grisaille in mural painting was indeed so common in sixteenth-century Mexico that it raises the question of why this visual strategy was so successful.

I will here consider a few examples that directly relate to our theme: the depiction of the deposition of Christ, the way in which this transitional moment is captured, and its implications for the status of the image.[24] In the church of San Juan in Teitipac, in the valley of Oaxaca, the *portería* (porticoed entrance to the convent) displays one of the best mural cycles in the state of Oaxaca **(Figure 3)**. Along a lateral wall of the *portería*, a two-tiered depiction of the procession of the Holy Sepulchre follows the Deposition from the Cross found in the entrance wall to

Figure 3. *Procession of the Holy Sepulchre* and *Deposition of Christ* – mural cycles in the *portería* of San Juan Teitipac convent, Valley of Oaxaca, Mexico.

[23] See, for example, Jorge Alberto Manrique, "The progress of art in New Spain", in *Mexico: Splendors of thirty centuries* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Little, Brown, 1990).

[24] Most mural cycles deal with the Passion of Christ. Other themes such as events from the lives of the Virgin or other saints are less common.

the cloister.[25] The grey-scale painting is interspersed with a few colored details: the wood of the cross, ladders, and banner poles is naturalistically brown. Schoell-Glass has rightly noted that the introduction of colors, an aspect I already emphasized in the case of Yanhuitlan's carved *Deposition*, is essential to the 'functioning' of the grisaille because it demonstrates that this technique does not denote a lack of something, but rather a difference.[26] In Renaissance Italy, for example, the monochrome reproduction of classical works of art reveals a new 'distanced', (i.e., philological) rediscovery of the Greco-Roman heritage.[27] Ancient sculptures are no longer 'idols' in need of analogical or scholastic reinterpretation to be accepted into the Christian world, but rather objects that can be studied to discover and study the past. In fifteenth-century Dutch painting, the grisaille contributed, in pure visual terms, to the endless debate of the *paragone* between the arts: masters of the oil technique painted marble sculptures to demonstrate the superiority of painting over sculpture. In the first case, the grisaille image is no longer what it was said to represent; in the latter, it never really was. The conscious ambiguity of the image transfers it into another level of reality: theoretical object, theoretical debate.

In Teitipac, several clues indicate that the same heightened awareness of the theoretical implications of the image is at play. The friars (not Moorish-looking men) enact the descent: the image is a representation of a representation. The retinue that follows the image of Christ is eclectic. Indigenous men and women are recognizable by their vestments that are typically Nahua (i.e., central Mexican): the men are wearing a *tilma* (a long cape draped around a shoulder), while women sport a two-horned hairstyle typical of Nahua married females. This is a rather odd depiction in the Zapotec town of Teitipac, far away from the Nahuas of central Mexico.[28] While we do not know who painted the murals, it is clear that the artist did not depict from life what the indigenous peoples of Teitipac wore, rather he or she relied on a model, and as such produced an image that was twice removed from reality

[25] The wall opposite the procession deals with the apparition of the image of the Virgin (possibly of the Rosary), also found in the frontal wall, pierced by the entrance door to the cloister.

[26] Charlotte Schoell-Glass, "*En grisaille*: Painting difference", in *Text and visuality: Word & image interactions 3*, ed. Martin Heusser (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999).

[27] As it is well known, this led to the artificial whitening of a once brightly colored art, a visual distortion that persists to this day.

[28] The Nahuas can be considered the most direct descendants of the Aztecs and amount to about 1.5 million people in the central Mexican states of Mexico, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, and the Federal District. The Zapotecs have the largest native population in central and southern Oaxaca, roughly 800.000 people.

(the depiction of a model). Again, the ambiguity is evident. Friars, indigenous people, and Spaniards walk side by side with John and the Virgin. They converse and interact with them. How is the viewer supposed to understand the image? Are they actors who are just temporarily serving as models, or did this 'really' happen? And if the Virgin and John were there side by side with the Spaniards, Nahuas, and Dominicans, what is inside the coffin? The dead body of Christ or an image of him? This ambiguity, in my opinion, undercuts any possibility of an immanent representation of the sacred, as you would expect in an icon. Rather, the more props and tricks are used to deceive the eye, the clearer it becomes that this is indeed an illusion, a mere representation.

A similar illustration in the Franciscan mission of San Miguel Huejotzingo, in the modern state of Puebla in central Mexico, offers a different example. Along the main nave of the church is a representation of Good Friday rituals **(Figure 4)**. The long and winding retinue that follows the procession depicts a series of hooded penitents, some of whom are carrying images of Saint John, the Virgin, and other saints on platforms. In this case, the ambiguity is gone. This is clearly a somewhat documentary representation of a re-enactment of Holy Week rituals, very different from what we have just seen in Teitipac.[29] Nonetheless, we can ask ourselves: Does the apparent objectification of the Passion events detract from their emotional appeal? Are believers ever really fooled into thinking that the object is inherently sacred, or is the conscious choice to suspend disbelief and participate in the act what finally 'does the trick'? Grisaille, as Philippot argued, has the ability to collapse different levels of reality on a single surface.[30] The ability to move from one level to another and partake in the illusionary act of representation, on the other hand, is the task of participants in the ritual.[31] In a way, all these representations are iconoclastic, in that they question the status of the image. Intellectuals, old and new, are really

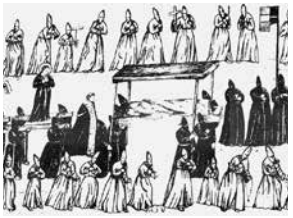

Figure 4. *Good Friday procession*, mural in the Franciscan mission of San Miguel Huejotzingo, Puebla, Mexico.

[29] An interpretation of both Huejotzingo's and Teitipac's murals that is more indebted to the social history of art is found in Susan Verdi Webster, "Art, ritual, and confraternities in sixteenth-century New Spain: Penitential imagery at the monastery of San Miguel, Huejotzingo", *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* XIX, no. 70 (1997): 5-43.

[30] Paul Philippot, "Les grisailles et les 'degrés de réalité' de l'image dans la peinture flamande des 15e et 16e siècles", *Bulletin des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*, núm. 15 (1966): 225-242.

[31] Religious reflexivity as employed here refers to the apparent recognition of others' perception of oneself during ritual and ceremonial actions. Michael Houseman, "Dissimulation and simulation as forms of religious reflexivity", *Social Anthropology* 10, no. 1 (2000): 77-89.

Figure 5. *The Passion: Preparation for the Crucifixion.* Grisaille painting from Augustinian convento, Malinalco, Mexico.

the only ones who believe that 'simple folks' mistake the image for the real thing.[32] The importance of the mental predisposition in understanding such images becomes quite clear in another grisaille painting from Malinalco, in the state of Mexico. In the upper cloister of the former Augustinian convento, there are several scenes from the Passion (Mount of Olives, Descent from the Cross, Resurrection, etc.). A very distinct and interesting one consists of a complex and stratified picture of the Preparation for the Crucifixion **(Figure 5)**, a peculiar devotional image that breaks with the narrative of the Passion cycle. Almost no background detail has survived. All that has remained are a large brown cross that cuts diagonally through the composition and two figures, Jesus and a nun, sitting to the right and left of the cross, respectively, who are deeply involved in their own thoughts. Jesus rests his legs on the cross. His head rests on his upright right hand, clearly showing a mental state of suffering (or at least preoccupation), while his body displays none of the wounds one might expect after a night of torture. The nun, on the other hand, has her gaze lost in a vision. The striking brown color of the cross invites the viewer to meditate directly on this object, even if the diagonal position undermines its status as an icon. The viewer could also follow the example of the nun. We look at her while she is meditating on the image of Jesus, who, in turn, is meditating on his own fate next to the cross. The distancing, far from diluting the emotional effect of the image, seems to enhance it. Suffering becomes a stratified emotion that grows as more people pass it on to one another. There is no action, but rather a suspension of all external and dramatic events that turns the viewer's attention to a mental state. The picture is wholly imaginary: it never really happened or existed.

The painted and sculpted Christ and other Passion images we have seen during the crucifixion, deposition and entombment are transitional representations. They are moved and manipulated, physically and figuratively, to express an ontological shift from life to death, human to supernatural, object to sign. What it represents then, is the transition itself: not Christ alive or dead, human or divine, but rather an undetermined state, which opens up the possibility of an interpretative role on the part of the participant/observer/believer in the ritual act.

[32] Bruno Latour, "A few steps toward an anthropology of the iconoclastic gesture", *Science in Context* 10, no. 1 (1997): 63-83.

To Finish: The Death of Motecuhzoma II and the Cosmic Tree

The examples presented so far, coming from different indigenous towns in New Spain, seem to betray little of the native worldview and understanding of the events surrounding the Crucifixion, but rather express a wholly internalized Catholic practice. In order to explore, as a final interpretative turn, a possible link to Mesoamerican visual and religious practice, I will analyze an illustration from the so-called *Florentine Codex* (*General History of the Things of New Spain*), which dates to the 1580s and is now held in the Laurentian Library in Florence. It was compiled by the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún and a team of indigenous assistants while at the Imperial College of Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco, now part of Mexico City.[33] The *Florentine Codex* reflects the knowledge the friar had acquired through various sources in many years of evangelical labor among the Nahuas of central Mexico.[34] It consists of twelve books spanning all aspects of indigenous culture, from religion and ritual to the natural world, from rhetoric to history. Rich illustrations are interspersed throughout the Spanish and Nahuatl texts, and run parallel to it in columns throughout the pages. The images are brightly painted up until the eleventh book, folio 178r, when the painters seem to have run out of colors or time to apply them. From that point on, only carefully rendered ink-lined drawings appear until the end of the manuscript.[35] In Book Twelve, however, which relates the history of the conquest from the arrival of Cortés in Veracruz in 1519 to the fall of the last Aztec stronghold in Tlatelolco in 1521, the painters briefly and unexpectedly resumed the use of color in a few vignettes.[36]

Folio 40v has a fully illuminated drawing, representing the disposal of the bodies of Motecuhzoma II, ruler of Tenochtitlan, and Itzquauhtzin, ruler of Tlatelolco, in one of the city's canals **(Figure 6, top)**. As Magaloni Kerpel has pointed out, the use of color here takes on a symbolic significance, possibly related to the advent of a new cosmic era.[37] As shown in the trio of scenes, after the Spaniards had discarded the bodies of the two rulers in such a merciless way, Aztec priests recovered them to give them a proper burial

[33] El Colegio Imperial de la Santa Cruz was the first centre for higher learning in the Americas reserved to indigenous nobility.

[34] Since its publication in modern times, the *Florentine Codex* has become the most important source for the study Aztec culture at the time of Spanish invasion. See, Bernardino de Sahagún, *The Florentine Codex: General history of the things of New Spain*, trans. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble (Salt Lake City and Santa Fe: University of Utah Press and School of American Research, 1950-1982).

[35] It should be noted that Book Six, dealing with rhetoric and moral philosophy, is also painted in grisaille.

[36] These are found in folios 18r, 34r, 40v, 48v, 49r.

[37] Diana Magaloni Kerpel, "Imágenes de la conquista de México en los códices del siglo XVI. Una lectura de su contenido simbólico", *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, no. 82 (2003): 39.

Figure 6. *The Death of Motecuhzoma II*. Folio 40v of *The Florentine Codex (General History of the Things of New Spain)*, 1580s, now at The Laurentian Library, Florence, Italy.

(Figure 6, middle). This illustration, which goes back to pure line drawing, depicts the body of Motecuhzoma being removed, in a scene that is strongly reminiscent of the entombment of Jesus in European Renaissance art. The third illustration shows the subsequent cremation of the ruler's body, although in a manner not totally consistent with pre-Columbian practice.[38] What we see again here is not simply lack of color, but a transition from one state to another. The top illustration is fully colored, yet the turbulent water of the canal is grey and the details in the cloak and headdress of the ruler are black and white. The displayed body of Motecuhzoma II in the water is stiff and seen from above, reminiscent again of the iconic and frontal position of Christ, who, after the ultimate sacrifice, is depicted in scenes of the Lamentation (or Pietà), and is symbolically present in the Eucharist. In the middle scene, the Tenochca ruler's body is moving in a manner similar to that recounted in the discussion of Yanhuitlan's *Santo Entierro*: Motecuhzoma's limbs move when he is dead, the movement signifies the absence of life.

The three illustrations in folio 40v are almost diagrammatic of the process recounted so far. Only here, Motecuhzoma II has replaced Jesus, or better, the parable of Jesus' life has replaced that of the Aztec ruler, and possibly those of other culture heroes in the minds and hands of the indigenous painters of the *Florentine Codex*.[39] A world once brightly colored, where the gods and the sense of the divine were immanent and present in the everyday world, has given way to a world where the gods belong to another world, inaccessible if only representable though the paradox of impossibility. Perhaps the iconoclastic representation of the figure of Christ during Holy Week and its numerous grisaille variations are a way of expressing that a new religiosity has arrived, one that has forever broken the bond that existed between humans and gods in the pre-conquest world. The icon must be deposed, disposed of, burnt and made to disappear, replaced by a transitional, mediated, ambiguous, and self-conscious representation of an event (the deposition) in order to express

[38] Ibid.: 40.

[39] Ibid.: 37.

the new *status quo*.[40] Jesus is not the maize god, Quetzalcoatl, or Motecuhzoma II; rather something has violently replaced them.

Do these events, however, belong only to the linearity of history or can they be assimilated into the cyclical time of religion? Ritual memory has its own peculiar way of addressing historical trauma.[41] Considering this, I offer a new interpretation. In the Mesoamerican liturgical calendar, Holy Week always falls within the dry season.[42] In indigenous towns, celebrations intensify during the period between May and November, with the Feast of the Holy Cross (May 3) and the Day of the Dead (November 1) marking the beginning and ending of the cycle, respectively.[43] The first feast celebrates the coming of rain and the rebirth of fertility after many months of apparent death of the earth. If Jesus is a metaphor for the corn god, his triumph occurs during this festivity and not Holy Week. In Mesoamerican terms, the Passion is an expiatory and transitional moment, a sacrifice that awaits its successful outcome at a later stage. The feast of the Holy Cross, rather than the Resurrection, symbolizes the restoration of the natural order of things by placing emphasis on the cross itself, rather than the body of Jesus. The cross is in fact a cosmic tree, a pillar of the world that points to the four directions, while extending from its roots and branches to the earth and sky, and in the fifth direction, the center.[44] The image of the cosmic cross thus takes back its status as an icon, present and tangible in the many chapels and altars on the cloudy mountaintops of Mexico and Guatemala, casting its presence from there onto a wide horizon. The breach of the conquest becomes rational and conceivable once placed within a system that transcends the many centuries of colonization and reaches back to the foundation of Mesoamerican conceptions of time and space.

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[40] For a similar interpretation within the context of Dutch painting at the eve of the Reformation, see Powell, *Depositions*.

[41] See Carlo Severi, "Cosmology, crisis and paradox. On the image of white spirits in Kuna shamanistic tradition", in *Disturbing remains: A comparative inquiry into the representation of crisis,* ed. M. Roth, Ch. Salas (Los Angeles: Getty Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities Publications, 2001), and other studies by the same author.

[42] The latest possible day for Easter Sunday is April 26. Rainy season begins in May.

[43] Witter, "Die gefiederte Schlange und Christus", 24.

[44] This again is a basic metaphor in Mesoamerican cosmology, whose iconography dates to at least a few centuries before the Christian era. The literature on the topic is therefore vast. See, for example, David A. Freidel, Linda Schele and Joy Parker, *Maya cosmos: Three thousand years on the shaman's path* (New York: W. Morrow, 1993). The celebration of the Holy Cross is also of paramount importance in Yanhuitlan, where it revolves around another corn-stalk paste, but not animated, image of the crucified Christ. Alessia Frassani, "At the crossroads of empire: Urban form and ritual action in colonial Yanhuitlan, Oaxaca, Mexico", *Getty Research Journal*, no. 4 (2012): 31-44.

Most murals painted in the first decades after the conquest were whitewashed sometime in the seventeenth century, only to be rediscovered in the 1980s. The *Deposition* in the Sagrario of Yanhuitlan suffered a similar fate by being painted in bright colors that nullified its ability to question the imposition of the new image-making from within. The image of Christ, so idiosyncratically represented in the Passion cycles of sixteenth-century New Spain, belongs to the specific historical moment that generated it, but finds its final meaning within the culture that has nurtured it for centuries.

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Natalia Keller – **Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago de Chile, Chile**

"Pick Him up and hold Him in your arms." The Function of the Holy Dolls in the Convent Life of the Late Middle Ages[1]

Many nunneries and convents all over Europe preserve small figures of the infant Jesus, often in a wooden cradle.[2] Furthermore, such sculptures can also be found in museum collections all over the world.[3] They are commonly connected with religious sisterhoods and emerged as a result of a deep focus among late-medieval Christians on the veneration of God in the form of the Christ Child. Although the number of preserved objects is large, the figures of the Infant Jesus have not met with the level of scholarly interest they deserve. Most researchers usually mention a couple of examples in reference to the wider topics of medieval devotion, sculpture production or attitudes towards children. Only a few broader investigations touching upon the topic of the holy dolls exist.[4]

[1] This article is a result of my studies on the topic of figures representing the Christ Child which I started during my Bachelor program under the supervision of professor Grażyna Jurkowlaniec at the Institute of Art History at University of Warsaw. Those studies continued during my coursework for my Master's degree at Utrecht University, when I worked on the topic of holy dolls in a course taught by Victor M. Schmidt. I am very grateful for the support, encouragement and valuable advice of both professors throughout my work on this project.

[2] Such figures can be found in, for example, the Dominican convent of Maria-Medingen in Bavaria or the convent of Poor Clares in Cracow.

[3] For example, in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, Museo Stefano Bardini in Florence, Staatliches Museum in Schwerin, Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, Bode Museum in Berlin.

[4] Among the most important studies on the subject are: Cesario P. van Hulst, "La storia della divozione a Gesù Bambino nelle immagini plastiche isolate", *Antonianum* 19 (1944): 35–54; Rudolf Berliner, "The Origins of the Crèche," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 30 (1946): 249–278; Rudolf Berliner, *Die Weihnachtskrippe* (München: Prestel Verlag, 1955); Hans Wenzel, "Eine Wiener Christkindwiege in München und das

The purpose of this paper is not dating or attributing doll-like figures of Infant Jesus, but understanding the manner in which they were used. This investigation focuses on their practical application and the functions they acquired in different activities undertaken by religious women, mainly during the 15th and 16th centuries. Although I mainly refer to convent circles, I also include examples of accounts from other institutions of religious women, such as tertiaries, Beguines or occasionally lay women who lived a particularly religious life. My aim is to systematically distinguish and list different forms of use and the various meanings these figures had for religious women in medieval and early modern Europe. In order to do that, I analyze formal characteristics of the objects preserved and investigate a number of written sources such as prayer guidebooks, diaries, descriptions of visions, female mystics' writings and biographies. Although the current article's scope encompasses only examples from northern Europe and Italy due to space limits, it is crucial to emphasize that compared to any of the existing studies on the topic, the scope of discussion has here been broadened, thanks to the inclusion of scholarship written in Polish.[5]

The term "holy dolls" describes a group of objects representing the Christ Child, executed in different materials, forms, scales and levels of artistic quality and accuracy. They range from modest mass-produced examples to high-quality, costly objects designed for demanding commissioners. The cheapest, slightly crude in form and details, are the clay and terracotta images produced on a large scale in specialized manufactories. Measuring usually only a few centimeters long, they probably served in everyday use as a form of a charm or an amulet for keeping in the house or to carry around.[6]

Jesuskind der Margaretha Ebner", *Pantheon* 18 (1960): 276–283; Hans Wenzel, "Ein Christkindbettchen in Glasgow. Addenda aus der Burrell Collection," *Pantheon* 20 (1962): 1–7; Ursula Schlegel, "The Christchild as Devotional Image in Medieval Italian Sculpture: A Contribution to Ambrogio Lorenzetti Studies," *The Art Bulletin* 52 (1970): 1–10; Frank Matthias Kammel, "Das Christkind in der eignen Stube. Private Bilder zum Weihnachtsfest im Spätmittelalter und heute," in *Im Zeichen des Christkinds. Privates Bild und Frömligkeit im Spätmittelalter. Ergebnisse der Ausstellung Spiegel der* Seligkeit, ed. Frank Matthias Kammel (Nürnberg: Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 2003), 37–61; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls: Play and Piety in Florence in the Quattrocento" in Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago–London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 310–329; Henk van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500* (London: Merrell Holberton, 1994), 98–104; Ulinka Rublak, "Female Spirituality and the Infant Jesus in Late Medieval Dominican Convents," *Gender & History* 6 (1994): 37–57.

[5] Cf. Tomasz Borkowski, "Produkcja figurek ceramicznych w późnośredniowiecznym Wrocławiu," in *Wrocław na przełomie średniowiecza i czasów nowożytnych. Materialne przejawy życia codziennego*, ed. Jerzy Piekalski (Wrocław: Uniwersytet, Instytut Archeologii, 2004), 207-244; Patrycja Gąsiorowska, *Życie codzienne w klasztorze klarysek krakowskich od XIII do końca XVIII wieku* (Kraków: Instytut Studiów Franciszkańskich, 2003); Andrzej Włodarek and Maria Podlodowska-Reklewska, eds., *Pax et bonum. Skarby klarysek krakowskich, katalog wystawy, Arsenał Muzeum Czartoryskich, wrzesień–październik 1999. Klasztor ss. Klarysek w Krakowie, Fundacja XX. Czartoryskich, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Instytut Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego* (Kraków: Instytut Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1999).

[6] Borkowski, "Produkcja," 212.

Figure 1. Crib with the Christ Child, Liège, early 15th century

Figure 2. Workshop of Michel Erhart, *Christ Child with an Apple*, Ulm, Germany, ca. 1470–80

These manufacturers operated mainly in northern Europe and were already very popular in the 14th–15th centuries, although some scholars claim that the first ones emerged as early as the 13th century.[7] In the middle of the 15th century, the so-called *Bilderbäcker*, who specialized in the production of small clay figures and objects, operated in, among other cities, Frankfurt, Cologne, Utrecht and Wrocław.[8] A significantly higher artistic level is represented by figures crafted in other materials, such as wood, wax, marble, or even silver and precious stones. Marble objects were usually parts of larger architectural structures and often served as a source of inspiration for artists working in other materials.[9] Some of the figures were richly decorated or made of precious materials **(Figure 1)**. A diverse group of detailed representations of the Infant Jesus is executed in wood, often reaching the size of a real-life baby **(Figure 2)**.

Interestingly, the figures are often accompanied by a set of accessories or some special equipment. For instance, the form of some dolls made it impossible for them to stand – they could only be presented in the lying position – and therefore involved using some kind of bed to lay them down. Consequently, we find a lot of small, usually carved cradles, cribs or mangers **(Figure 3)**. Other items were created especially to adorn naked sculptures. The accessories for holy dolls often include clothes and different types of headpieces **(Figure 4)**. Moreover, some written accounts mention small wooden altars accompanying the figures, together with a set of elegant robes and other rich and luxurious objects[10] or even a bathtub for the infant Jesus.[11] Contemporary textual sources offer many examples of individual nuns possessing

[7] Hulst, "La storia," 37.

[8] Borkowski, "Produkcja," 207, 209; see also the catalogue of the figures on pages 215–242; cf. Hulst, "La storia," 36.

[9] For example, the marble figure of the blessing Christ Child by Desiderio da Settignano from the Tabernacle of the Sacrament (ca. 1460-1464, San Lorenzo in Florence) served as a model for many figures in other materials; see Otto Kurz, "A Group of Florentine Drawings for an Altar," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 18 (1955): 42; cf. Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls," 315–316, figs. 14.1–14.2. The sculpture from the workshop of Nicola Pisano was clearly an inspiration for a set of wooden figures discussed in Schlegel, "The Christchild," 1–10.

[10] Richard A. Goldthwaite, "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture," *The American Historical Review* 70 (1972): 1011.

[11] Rudolf Berliner reports on the habit of the nuns from the Dominican convent in Töss: during Advent, the sisters prepared a house for the Christ Child containing a small bathtub for bathing the infant. The scholar interprets it as a kind of a full dollhouse; Berliner, "Origins of the Crèche," 268.

the figures accompanied by various accessories. Girls would receive a holy doll as a gift, usually on the occasion of entering the convent, but sometimes the figures were also sent to the women already living in the community. For example, when entering the convent in 1505, the daughter of Tommaso Guidettin, Sister Maddalena, took with her a "child dressed in crimson velvet, in a little coat of green brocade, with the sleeves of its dress embroidered with pearls."[12] An even richer set of accessories followed another figure, mentioned in 1452 and given to sister Angelica, a nun in the convent of Monticelli: the Christ Child made of wood was equipped with two elegant robes ornamented with gold and pearls, three different headpieces and a garland, a wooden painted tabernacle and a small altar with all of its accoutrements.[13] The existence of these objects and the fact that some of the wooden figures have jointed arms and legs[14] suggest that the dolls were meant to be physically manipulated by their owners.

Figure 3. Crib of the Infant Jesus, Brabant, South Netherlands, 15th century

During the period under study, it became customary for a novice or her family to donate such a holy doll to the convent; however, sometimes an older woman would receive and possess a figure of the Infant Jesus. For example, Margaretha Ebner, a Dominican nun from the monastery of Maria Medingen near Dillingen, was presented with a cradle and a baby Jesus statuette in 1344 at the age of 53.[15] Although it is difficult to make even an approximate estimate of the number of holy dolls in the medieval convents, some of the convents' inventories suggest how popular these images were among religious women. For example, the Cistercian convent community of the Holy Cross in Rostock had seven dolls and two cradles,[16] whereas until the middle of the 16th century, the Bridgettine convent in Mariawohl near Lauenburg owned as many as fifteen cradles of the Christ Child.[17]

Figure 4. *Blessing Christ Child*, Mechelen, South Netherlands, ca. 1500

[12] Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls," 312. Another example of "a child doll, which came from Madona Nibia, complete with pearls with a little pearl cross, worth over 10 *fiorini*, in a basket," in "Holy Dolls," 313, note 18.

[13] Goldthwaite, "Florentine Palace," 1011.

[14] For example, the figure of the Crist Child with jointed arms in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (ca. 1500).

[15] Leonard P. Hindsley, ed., *Margaret Ebner. Major Works* (New York–Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1993), 58. Margaretha Ebner was born in 1291; Margot Schmidt and Leonard P. Hindsley, Introduction to *Margaret Ebner*, 12.

[16] Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary. Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 23.

[17] Kammel, "Das Christkind," 39.

The popularity of the dolls must be associated with the development of particular devotion practices during the Late Middle ages. Late-medieval Christian theology was characterized by a strong accent on individual devotion and a huge emphasis on the humanity of Christ, especially in two aspects of his life in which the human side of the Son of God was clearly visible: his childhood and the suffering of the Passion. From the 13th century on, particular devotion was given to Christ's humanity and Nativity in women's spirituality.[18] Jesus, as a naked and vulnerable baby in need of being nursed and taken care of, communicated to these women the notion of God's human nature in a very powerful way.[19] St. Francis and the legend of his re-enactment of the events of the Nativity contributed to the promotion of such devotion. When the saint celebrated a mass at the crib filled with hay and surrounded by an ox and an ass, one of the witnesses of the re-enactment claimed that "he saw a beautiful little boy asleep in the crib and that the blessed father Francis embraced it in both of his arms and seemed to wake it from sleep."[20] St. Francis probably used a figure of the Christ Child to lay down in the crib and this action provoked the imagination of some witnesses who believed that the saint was embracing the real baby Jesus. Although the saint is believed to be the first to have created a re-enactment of the Nativity, in fact, such staged plays were probably customarily incorporated into the liturgy at Christmas, for instance, in the Diocese of Salzburg, as early as in the mid-twelfth century.[21] Around the same time, the first figures of the Christ Child produced for individual use and devotion appeared.[22] During the centuries that followed, cradles and holy dolls became more and more prevalent, reaching the top of their popularity in the 14th century.[23]

The purpose of building a crèche at Christmas was to give the viewers the opportunity to relive the events of Nativity and involve them in the celebration more personally. Indeed, devotees could touch or even kiss the new-born in the manger in the form of a holy doll. Their use in that fashion made them

[18] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Patterns of Female Piety in the Later Middle Ages," in *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 179.

[19] Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Robert Suckale, "Between This World and the Next: The Art of Religious Women in the Middle Ages," in *Crown and Veil*, 85.

[20] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God. The Tree of Life. The Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins (London: SPCR, 1978), 278–279.

[21] That information can be found in Gerhoh von Reichersberg's *De investigatione Antichristi* written between 1160–1163; see Kammel, "Das Christkind," 37.

[22] Hulst, "La storia," 37; Rosemary Hale, "'Imitatio Mariae': Motherhood Motifs in Devotional Memoirs," *Mystics Quarterly* 16 (1990): 198.

[23] Wentzel, "Wiener Christkindwiege," 283.

very popular both in the public secular context and in convent life. One of the promoters of this tradition in nunneries was Gertrude the Great from Helfta in Saxony, who already in the last decades of the 13th century used the crib to influence her flock and encourage meditation on Christ's childhood and the secrets of the Nativity celebration in her congregation.[24] The popularity of the tradition of the crèche at Christmas, even in later centuries, can be extrapolated from the convents' inventories. For instance, the monastery of the Clarisses in Kraków possesses a set of crèche figures, including three figures of the Christ Child, statues of Virgin Mary and St Joseph, two cradles and a manger, a chair, a throne and two crowns for the little Jesus, as well as sculptures of the three Magi and the shepherds.[25] During the Christmas season, the crèche was built in the church chancel and the whole community would pray at the manger, sing traditional Christmas carols and later carry the figures of the Holy Family in a procession to the altar.[26] Sometimes the re-enacting of the Nativity or other episodes from the story of young Jesus could take on the character of religious dramas or theatre-like plays creating a broader narrative. In these cases, a figure of the Christ Child functioned like a theatrical prop. We find a report of such a performance in the biography of the mystic Caterina de'Ricci from the Dominican nunnery of San Vincenzo in Prato. For the celebration of the day of the Annunciation, the sisters brought "a little Jesus from the crib" to Caterina, who was dressed up as the Virgin Mary. The visionary in the role of Christ's mother offered adoration to the image and later gave the doll to all the members of the congregation to kiss.[27] Therefore, the figure of the Christ Child facilitated the faithful's participation in the celebration of a particular event, while also serving to further integrate the community of sisters living in the convent. A description of another staging of the events from the Bible with the use of a prop in the form of the holy doll can be found in a Franciscan 14th–century devotional handbook probably written for the Poor Clares, known as the *Meditations on the Life of Christ*.[28]

[24] Kammel, "Das Christkind," 38.

[25] All are listed in the exhibition catalogue by Włodarek and Podlodowska-Reklewska, *Pax et bonum*; the figures and objects include (the catalogue numbers of the items are in the brackets following the description of the object): a standing naked Christ Child in the gesture of beatification, Flanders, ca. 1500 (IV/7), figures of the Virgin Mary and St Joseph, ca. 1370–1375 (IV/10. A–B); a cradle, the beginning of the 16th c. (IV/11); the three Magi, first half of the 17th c. (IV/13. A–C); a cradle, first half of the 17th c. (IV/15), a manger, 18th c. (IV/16); a shepherd, 18th c. (IV/17); a Child Christ with jointed arms and legs, first half of the 18th c. (IV/18); a throne, first half of the 18th c. (IV/19); a standing Christ Child, ca. 1800 (IV/20); a chair, ca. 1800 (IV/21); a crown, middle of the 17th c. (V/14); a crown, first quarter of the 18th c. (V/23).

[26] Gąsiorowska, *Życie codzienne*, 62, 73.

[27] Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York–London: Academic Press Inc., 1980), 193.

[28] Holly Flora, *The Devout Belief of the Imagination. The Paris* Meditationes Vitae Christi *and Female Franciscan*

The relevant fragment of the text refers to the meditation on the Purification of the Virgin. After Simeon's prophecy we are told about a procession in the Temple:

> "After that they walked around the altar in a procession that is today performed in the whole world. First there came the two venerable old men, Joseph and Simeon, holding hands, exultant, and singing with great joy, […]. There followed the virgin mother carrying King Jesus, accompanied by Anna walking at her side, jubilating with reverence and praising the Lord in great happiness. These comprised the procession, few but great people representing almost every kind, for among them there were men and women, old and young, virgins and widows. Turning to the altar, the mother knelt in veneration to offer her beloved Son to God His Father." [29]

The private devotion centering on holy dolls amongst religious women also had particular forms of spirituality developed in the Late Middle ages. As already mentioned, the theology of St Francis moved the focus from the perception of God as stern Judge and Saviour to concentrate instead on the human nature of Christ. The saint preached brotherhood between God and men, focusing on the joy of the Nativity.[30] In Franciscan theology, Christ was more accessible, more sympathetic and easier to identify with, while still retaining his full divinity. This new approach enabled more emotional and physical (rather than mainly intellectual) contact with God, a development perhaps especially appealing to women. Encouraged by this new approach, women from all over Europe positioned Christ and his body at the centre of their devotion, in the moments of his greatest vulnerability: his childhood and Passion.[31] The aspects of this new form of spirituality that women adopted most willingly were a meditative life, the focus on the humanity of Christ, the concept of mystical marriage, and frequent mystical visions.[32] These women

Spirituality in Trecento Italy (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 28–30; cf. Sarah McNamer, "Further Evidence for the Date of he Pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes Vitae Christi*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990): 235–261. McNamer suggests to place the date of the text between circa 1336 and 1364; McNamer, "Further Evidence", 250.

[29] *Meditations on the Life of Christ. An Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Ital. 115*, trans. Isa Ragusa and Rosalie B. Green (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 58–60.

[30] Kammel, "Das Christkind," 37–38.

[31] Different types of veneration and forms of spirituality and piety of religious women in the Late Middle Ages concerning these subjects are analyzed in Bynum, "Patterns," 172–190.

[32] Elizabeth Alvilda Petroff, *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (New York–Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 174.

accepted the teachings of St Francis eagerly, because he offered them closer and more direct contact with God – contact that had previously been reserved mainly for men in their role as clergymen. The focus on the childhood of Christ led to a deep affection for and devotion to the Infant Jesus, additionally promoted in the beginning of 14th century by Dominicans, who encouraged the usage of the Christ Child figures in private devotion during contemplation.[33]

In the typology of medieval representations, holy dolls constitute an example of a new category of images, called devotional images, emerging in the late medieval period[34] – and as such very often served as a trigger of religious ecstasies and visions. The main function of those devotional images was to facilitate entering a state of deep meditation and contemplation of the lives of Christ and Mary. Concentrating on an image led the mystics to experience visions in which statues would come alive, talk, move, change, or perform miracles. Nuns would often handle and manipulate the holy dolls – play with them, touch them, embrace, kiss, swaddle, change clothes, sometimes even suckle the figure – and that could lead to visions in which the lifeless sculpture would turn into a living baby. One of the mystics who describes such visions of physical contact and conversations with the Christ Child is the aforementioned Margaretha Ebner from the Maria Medingen convent. Interestingly, in the hands of Margaretha, a holy doll not only served as an object of individual ecstasy but also influenced the lives of the whole congregation. For both Margaretha and her community the doll was the proof of her intimacy with God. To the nuns from Maria Medingen, the holy doll was a source of revelation, as the visionary learned from it details about, for instance, the Christ's birth and childhood.[35] Hence, through visions involving the doll, Margaretha and consequently all her community gained a deeper understanding of the Divine Incarnation. Furthermore, Margaretha could receive information from the figure about people who were important to the congregation and their conduct or fate. For instance, being a follower of St Bernard of Clairvaux, she demanded a confirmation of his description of the soul's vision of God.[36] On a different occasion, she asked about Emperor Louis of Bavaria. When he came into conflict with the papacy and was excommunicated by Pope John XXII,

[33] Kammel, "Das Christkind," 37–38.

[34] The questions of the origin and exact definition of the term "devotional images" remain beyond the scope of this short study. More about the topic in reference to the late-medieval artworks themes in: Os, "Devotional Themes. The Virgin, the Child and the Crib," in Os, *Art of Devotion*, 87–129. On the history, different definitions of the term and criteria of distinguishing devotional objects from other categories of late-medieval art production with a report on most important studies on the topic see: Wojciech Marcinkowski, *Przedstawienia dewocyjne jako kategoria sztuki gotyckiej* (Kraków: Secesja, 1994).

[35] Hindsley, *Margaret Ebner*, 139–140.

[36] Schmidt and Hindsley, Introduction to *Margaret Ebner*, 45–46.

although the Dominican order took the side of the pope, Margaretha and her community still supported the Emperor. Fortunately for the nun and her congregation, she often received confirmation that God favoured Louis. When the visionary asked about the ruler,

> "Child Jesus Christ said, 'I will never abandon him, neither here nor hereafter because he bears love for me, about which no one know[s], but I myself.' Often he says to me when I ask Him about someone or about something, 'Whoever is dear to you, is dear to me too, and what you intend, I also intend.'"[37]

Consequently, the figure of the baby Jesus that caused Margaretha's visions gave her enormous power, recognition and esteem in her community. It does not seem surprising that in the Maria Medingen convent, the statue located in the chapel dedicated to Margaretha Ebner, traditionally referred to as Ebner's Infant Jesus doll, is still venerated by the members of the monastery and other devotees.[38]

Another spiritual experience in which the statue of the Christ Child might have been of help was the so-called virtual pilgrimage. The nuns, as a group of people living in a strict enclosure, were almost completely deprived of the possibility of visiting the Holy Land or Rome. As a solution, the concept of a virtual pilgrimage was developed, which enabled the members of monastic institutions to travel to and visit holy places and churches in their imagination. The participants in the virtual pilgrimages were also encouraged to incorporate events from the lives of Christ and Mary described in the Bible into their imaginary "travels," among others, important moments from the history of Christ's childhood: the Nativity, the adoration of the Magi and shepherds, the presentation in the Temple, and the Circumcision. Holy dolls were used to help the virtual pilgrim to imagine these events more easily.

"Pilgrimage tourism" to Jerusalem was developed above all by the Franciscan order, beginning in the second quarter of the 14th century.[39] The Franciscans were probably also responsible for popularizing the concept of a virtual

[37] Hindsley, *Margaret Ebner*, 141.

[38] Rublack, "Female Spirituality," 37, plate 1.

[39] It was King James II of Aragon who in 1327 managed to send twelve Dominican friars, very quickly replaced by the same amount of the Franciscan friars, to the Holy City in order to let Christians pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. In 1336 the friars got enough funds to build a monastery and by that time were already virtually in charge of six important pilgrimage destinations in the Holy Land, including the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem; John R. H. Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 436–437.

pilgrimage and promoting literature about its benefits and the indulgences that such a pilgrim could acquire.[40] The indulgences seem, indeed, to be one of the main motivations for taking up a virtual pilgrimage; from pilgrimage guides and instructions we learn, for example, that in exchange for visiting the chapel in Bethlehem where Christ was born, a full indulgence was obtained.[41] Other motivations were of a more spiritual character: the development of a closer, empathetic relation with Jesus while visiting the places of his birth, miracles and Passion.

The first texts encouraging undertaking virtual pilgrimages were simple memoirs of real journeys to the Holy Land or Rome. Only later did instructions and guides especially for imagined pilgrimages evolve from these previous forms.[42] Nuns could imagine their whole journey and visits to the places described in the Bible in their minds while praying. A different method of experiencing such a pilgrimage consisted of a set of practices that enabled them to make the journey within the space of the convent which provided substitutes for the real scenery. Thus, the nuns' local environments might have been imaginatively transformed into the place of Christ's birth or Passion.[43] We can easily imagine that, in the nuns' perception, a room with a cradle and a figure of baby Jesus seemed identical to the chapel of Birth in Bethlehem or even the actual site of the Nativity.

Naturally, guides and instructions for the pilgrimages always mentioned the crib or Christ's birth. A description of the chapel in Bethlehem with the crib can be found, for instance, in two records of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land written in Middle Dutch, in the second half of the 15th century.[44] However, the most interesting example comes from a late-fifteenth-century text in the British Library, probably originating from the Diocese of Utrecht.[45] This so-called Birgittine Virtual Pilgrimage Compilation includes, among others,

[40] Kathryn M. Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages in the Convent. Imagining Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 31.

[41] Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 60.

[42] Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 40. The author analyzes these earlier travelogues and guides in Chapter I, whereas in Chapters II and III she describes other types of text: prayer books or instructions encouraging the reader to make a virtual pilgrimage.

[43] Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 172.

[44] One of the manuscripts (ca. 1480) is in Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Ms 982; Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 293–294. The other text (second half of the 15th century) can be found in The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms 73 F 23; Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 331–333.

[45] London, British Library, Add. Ms 31001. Its fragments are transcribed and translated in: Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 399–410.

a *Prayer to be said while visiting the sites in the Holy Land at the canonical hours for seven days*.[46] The text gives instructions on meditations and prayers for a whole week. Thanks to contemplation and devotional exercises, the reader had a chance to relive the entire Christ story starting with the birth of Mary, to the Nativity and Passion, and closing with the Resurrection. In the margins there are also some hand-written notes added to the original text, which show us how the prayer book was used by devotees. On Tuesday, the reader prays as if she were at the site of the crib in Bethlehem and with meditation on the birth of Christ she collects the same indulgence that she would earn for visiting the place where Christ was born. The notes added in the margin instruct the person praying to lay the baby Jesus down in the crib, mention him playing and touching the devotee with his hands, and describe the angels singing for the Christ Child.[47] A holy doll and a crib that the nun reading the prayer could physically manipulate while reading and meditating would be a great prop in imagining Christ's childhood during such a virtual pilgrimage.

The guides and texts with instructions on how to become a virtual pilgrim encouraged the devotees to employ all of their five senses for deeper participation in the reliving of events. For example, the same seven-day prayer from the Birgittine convent instructed the believer to imagine having meals with the Holy Family or the Disciples.[48] The sense of smell was engaged, for instance, in the encounter with the so-called *besloten hofjes* (enclosed gardens) radiating "the smell of sanctity in the saintly bones and floral bundles."[49] Similarly, the cradles with the Christ Child figure involved the use of different senses. Seeing the image would facilitate imagining the real living baby and, naturally, stimulate the sense of sight. The nuns were also encouraged to sing to the child, whereas some cradles have little bells attached to them – their ringing should be interpreted as heavenly music or angelic singing (a lot of cradles include even small figures of the angels on the corners; for example, **Figures 1 and 3**). Finally, handling the statue incorporates the sense of touch.

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[46] Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 404–410. I adopt the title of the compilation following Kathryn Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 32.

[47] 91r: "ende speelde mit sijn cleyne handekijns tegen u. O maria mit hoe groter vroechen waert gi verblijt doe die heilige engelkijns soe soetelick songen"; "die harderkijns quamen ende sagen dat soete kijndekijn inder crebben leggen"; Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 404–405.

[48] Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 404–409.

[49] Rudy, *Virtual Pilgrimages*, 258. More about the *besloten hofjes* on pages 112–118 and in *Hooglied. De Beeldwereld van Religieuze Vrouwen in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden, vanaf de 13de eeuw*, ed. Paul Vandenbroeck et al. (Brussel: Vereniging voor Tentoonstellingen Paleis voor Schone Kunsten, 1994), 91–104.

Such special attention given to the Christ Child can be connected to another tendency in the new forms of devotion popular amongst religious women in the Late Middle Ages – the concept of following or imitating the Virgin – *Imitatio Mariae*. One aspect of this path was the resemblance to Mary as the Mother, the so-called mother mysticism.[50] In the aforementioned episode from the life of Caterina de'Ricci, the mystic re-enacted the role of Mary. Dressed in a white silk mantle, the nun entered an ecstasy and everyone "saw her changed in a certain way, her face transformed into the grace and beauty one thought the Virgin had."[51] The woman, imitating the Mother, was taking care of the figure of the baby Jesus and lamenting the future suffering of "her son." Thus, Caterina was following Mary in both her appearance and behaviour; the fact that the mystic was in the state of ecstasy gave the proof that she represented the true image of the Mother.

Some nuns' yearning for the deepest intimacy with the infant Jesus led them to compete with Mary or even want to replace her. Such an episode can be found in the vision of an early-fourteenth-century saint, Agnes of Montepulciano. The saint strongly desired and prayed for a vision of Jesus. Eventually, Mary appeared to her and gave her the Child to nurse but after an hour the saint did not want to return the baby. Consequently, the vision ended with a fight in which the true mother and the temporary mother, both transformed into tigresses, quarrelled fiercely over the baby.[52]

Yet another form of imitating Mary and experiencing the presence of God in a deeper way was the experience of mystical pregnancy. A Dominican nun from the convent of Engenthal near Nuremberg, Christina Ebner (probably a relative of Margaretha Ebner), living between the 13th and 14th centuries, had a dream in which she was pregnant with Jesus. Her loving and caring attitude towards the baby is shown in her testimony by her being extremely cautious because of fearing to harm the child even with a slightest movement. After giving birth, she showed the baby to the rest of the nuns, who all rejoiced at the news, and Christina woke up.[53]

The nuns were taught by their superiors to love the infant Jesus as if he were their own child and many of them indeed found an outlet for their maternal

[50] I use the term "mother mysticism" following Hale, "Imitatio Mariae," 193.

[51] Trexler, *Public Life*, 193.

[52] Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls," 325; the original text can be found in: "De S. Agnete virgine org. sancti Dominici Montepolitiani," *Acta sanctorum*, Aprilis II, 797.

[53] Hale, "Imitatio Mariae," 194.

instinct in their contact with the holy dolls. Hence, behavior such as kissing, cuddling, rocking, bathing, taking the doll for a walk around the monastery or even suckling the statuettes must be considered partly as a consequence of this yearning for motherhood. The nuns would probably treat their dolls as real babies and in a sense, as a substitute for the baby they could not have. Nonetheless, we have to remember that in the women's visions these dolls actually *were* real living babies. The idea of mystical motherhood, accompanied by motherhood imagery, is evident in most accounts of the handling of statues of little Jesus. We find this endearingly moving motherly affection toward the baby again in the *Revelations* of Margaretha Ebner. Her relation with the Christ Child was based on mutual dependence. It is vividly illustrated by one episode when the baby woke the nun up in the middle of the night. First, Jesus threatened the nun: "If you do not suckle me, then I will draw away from you and you will take no delight in me," and demanded that she caressed him: "You must pick me up and hold me." Consequently, Margaretha replied with a reproachful but soft motherly tone: "Why don't you behave and be quiet and let me sleep? I tucked you in nicely," just to end up the conversation with a little emotional blackmail: "Kiss me, then I will forget that you have awakened me."[54] The whole dialogue seems to be a game played between the mother and child; a form of loving banter. In this way, while accompanying the experiences of mystical pregnancy and mother mysticism, the dolls representing the Christ Child served as a tool allowing the nun to experience the perfect *Imitatio Mariae*: they made it possible to imagine giving birth to Jesus and taking care of him while retaining one's virginity.

Another type of relationship between a nun and the Christ Child was the mystical marriage in which the doll substituted for the Bridegroom. The concept of the mystical marriage became popular mainly because of the story of conversion of St Catherine of Alexandria. The defiant daughter of the king of Alexandria refused to marry anyone of a state inferior to hers. Subsequently, in one of her visionary dreams she entered a mystical marriage with the infant Jesus in the presence of the Virgin. According to the story, the ring placed on the finger of the girl as a sign of the marriage was still there after she woke up.[55]

[54] Hindsley, *Margaret Ebner*, 132-134.

[55] A detailed investigation into the story of St Catherine of Alexandria, her cult and iconography can be found in Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety. Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence: Centro Di, 2005), 10–30.

In the Late Middle Ages the concept and visions of mystical marriage became extremely popular, experienced both by nuns and other religious women. For instance, St Catherine of Siena, a tertiary of the Dominican order, followed the example of her namesake entering a mystical marriage with the Christ Child,[56] as did the Dominican nun Caterina de' Ricci.[57] However, such relations between a religious woman and Christ should not be interpreted too literally. The marriage of Catherina of Alexandria and all her followers was seen as a representation of the union between God and a virtuous soul. This concept was still recognizable in the Early Modern period, as proved by a passage from Karel van Mander's *Schilderboeck*, where we read a description of a painting by Hendrick Goltzius:

> "He also made a large piece on panel for his travelling companion Jan Mathijssen, with a heaven or heavenly joy, that can be interpreted as the pious Christian soul who clad in the white silk of a pure conscience and true belief, approaches the Church of God where she marries Christ, her gentle and meek bridegroom, in the form of an innocent child without any falsehood or deceit […]. Or it can also be interpreted as the maiden St Catherine who through perseverance in the faith and through suffering, has come to the martyr's crown, whereby she takes Christ as her bridegroom."[58]

Naturally, the metaphor of the mystical marriage derives from the interpretation of the Song of Songs, especially as found in the texts of St Bernard of Clairvaux.[59] The Bridegroom and the Bride were recognized as Christ and a Christian soul in a strong loving relationship. The metaphor served also to describe the spiritual life of virgins dedicated to Christ.[60] The ceremony, in which the nuns promise perpetual virginity and dedication to Christ, is called the consecration of the virgins. This event was compared to the mystical marriage and beginning in the early Middle Ages, the ritual of the secular marriage was incorporated into its celebration.[61] The brides

[56] Petroff, *Medieval Women*, 239.

[57] Klapisch-Zuber, "Holy Dolls," 327, note 66.

[58] Karel van Mander, *Het schilder-boeck*, 1604, fol. 285v–286r; I quote from Hessel Miedema, ed. *Karel van Mander, The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters. Preceded by The Lineage, Circumstances and Place of Birth, Life and Works of Karel van Mander, Painter and Poet and likewise his Death and Burial*, vol. 1 (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1994), 401–402.

[59] Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Robert Suckale, "Between This World and the Next: The Art of Religious Women in the Middle Ages," in *Crown and Veil*, 85.

[60] Schmidt, *Painted Piety*, 12.

[61] Schmidt, *Painted Piety*, 12. On the similarities between these two rituals see Kate Lowe, "Secular Brides and Convent Brides: Wedding Ceremonies in Italy during the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation,"

of Christ would receive a ring, a crown and a veil – all of them symbols of entering into the mystic marriage with Christ.

The question that arises at this point is: why and how can the infant Jesus represent the baby and the Bridegroom at the same time? The integration of these two functions should not be surprising in the context of late-medieval spirituality and was quite common in the context of the contemporary understanding of God. The complicated relations that symbolize the union between a virtuous Christian soul and God are found in many women's visions of the time. Indeed, in one of these revelations, God addresses a Flemish Beguine, Hadewijch of Brabant, with the words: "Behold, Bride and Mother, you like no other have been able to love me as God and Man!"[62] A similar unification of Christ's roles as the child and the Bridegroom in the spiritual understanding of the devotee is expressed in the vision of St Gertrude the Great, a member of the convent of Helfta in the second half of the 13th century. Gertrude imagined that after being a witness to the Divine Birth, she received the Infant in her arms, and described the feeling she experienced thus: "my soul, which was enriched by the presence of my Beloved, soon knew, by its transports of joy, that it possessed the presence of its Spouse."[63] The relation between these two states of God's presence in the believer's soul proceeds in this case from the recognition of the Child who transforms into the Spouse. However, the process can also take the reverse direction. In a religious play from the 1630s by Maria Ubaldini, based on the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins, the Bride explains to her Bridegroom: "And I accept you, much like a new child in my womb."[64] This time the adult Sposo is identified with the unborn child. Furthermore, these complicated relationships can be even more puzzling, as they are in the vision of a religious woman, Margery Kempe, when God tells her: "Therefore I prove that thou art a very daughter to Me, and a mother also, a sister, a wife and a spouse."[65] In the sentences that follow, we learn that a female devotee represents God's daughter when she tries to "please" him; his mother when she mourns the suffering of the Passion;

in *Marriage in Italy, 1300–1650*, ed. Trevor Dean and K.J.P. Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 41–65.

[62] Vision 10, "The Bride in the City" in: *Hadewijch. The Complete Works*, translated by Mother Columba Hart (London, SPCK, 1981), 288.

[63] *The Life and Revelations of Saint Gertrude, Virgin and Abbess of the Order of St. Benedict* (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1949), quoted from Petroff, *Medieval Women*, 227.

[64] Elissa B. Weaver, *Convent Theatre in Early Modern Italy. Spiritual Fun and Learning for Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 196.

[65] Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe. A modern version by W. Butler-Bowdon* (London–Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1954), 41.

his sister when she is crying over other people's sins; and finally, his wife and spouse when she wishes to be already joined with her Lord in Heaven.

Figure 5. Miniature Consecration of Virgins, 16th century

The fusion of the two roles – child and husband – in the figure of the Christ Child and, on the other hand, the fusion of the rituals of the secular and mystical marriage are very clearly illustrated in the miniature of the *Consecration of Virgins* from the abbey of St. Walburga in Eichstätt **(Figure 5)**. The ceremony represents the convocation of the mystical marriage and is depicted in the form of a procession of the virgins approaching the throne of Mother Mary holding the Christ Child. The inscription added to the picture reads: "Take this boy and take care of [literally: suckle] me. I will give you your reward." and: "Come, O bride of Christ, accept the crown that the Lord has prepared for you in eternity."[66] Interestingly, the illustration resembles an episode from the story of St Catherine of Alexandria. The infant Jesus held by the Virgin places a ring on the finger of one of the nuns; the rest of the women await their turn. Importantly, "Christ appears, not as mature, marriageable male, but as a strapping, beefy boy, the object of exalted maternal instincts rather than sublimated sexual desire."[67] The reader is encouraged to love Christ as both a baby and the Bridegroom. What is more, the encouragement comes from Mother Mary herself ("Take this boy") and is repeated in the form of an order by the Infant ("take care of me/suckle me"). Thus, the nun is identified first with the mother and guardian of the God-child in her soul, and later the bride and Christ's partner in Heaven.

There is no doubt about the ubiquity of the veneration of the Christ Child and the popularity of the figures representing the Son of God in the Late Middle Ages. In the *Index Exemplorum* Frederic Tubach mentions some 40 different medieval stories and legends concerning visions in which the little Jesus is the subject or a source of miracles and revelations.[68] Naturally, these written stories, together with the reports of visions passed on by word of mouth,

[66] Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists. The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent* (Berkeley–Los Angeles–London: University of California Press, 1997), 56.

[67] Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists*, 57. Hamburger picks up on the observation of Rudolf Berliner ("God is Love", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 43:1953), who claims that "the feminization and the infantilization of Christ was a strategy for limiting the erotic suggestiveness of images depicting the love between Christ and the soul"; Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists*, 239.

[68] Frederic C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum. A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki: Akademia Scientarum Fennica, 1969).

were an important source of encouragement toward a more profound veneration of the Infant and holy dolls. The encouragement of a loving and affectionate attitude towards the Christ Child and physical care for holy dolls can be found in many visual and written sources of the epoch. One of the most influential texts in this regard was the previously mentioned Franciscan work, *Meditations on the Life of Christ*. The text, addressing the reader in a direct form, concerned in the first part with the childhood of Jesus, encourages the devotee to a loving attitude towards the Child. The author describes the dedication of the Mother and St. Joseph and invites the believer to follow their example and adore the newborn.[69] Significantly, the nun is invited not only to marvel at the sight of the scene but also participate in it and touch the Child:

> "Kiss the beautiful little feet of the infant Jesus who lies in the manger and beg His mother to offer to let you hold him a while. Pick Him up and hold Him in your arms. Gaze on His face with devotion and reverently kiss Him and delight in Him. […] Then return Him to the mother and watch her attentively as she cares for Him assiduously and wisely, nursing Him and rendering all services, and remain to help her if you can."[70]

What is most interesting in the context of these instructions is the assertion of the author that this kind of seemingly childish behaviour, such as imagining taking care of or talking to Christ, is very valuable for the devotee. We are told that these actions "yield devotion, increase love, excite fervour, induce compassion, allow purity and simplicity, nurture the vigour of humility and poverty, preserve familiarity, and confirm and raise hope."[71] It is not difficult now to imagine a nun following all these recommendations with the visual and material aid of a holy doll that would stimulate most of her senses in the process of imagining the described actions.

I have shown that holy dolls had various functions and played different roles in the lives of religious women. Sometimes, these functions had a more social character, as when they were used in the quasi-theatrical presentations and re-enactments of biblical scenes or when they were the subject of the otherwise unfulfilled maternal instinct of the nuns. The various uses of holy dolls in common celebrations and activities are a consequence of a set

[69] See, for example, *Meditations*, 54–56.

[70] *Meditations*, 38–39; cf. *Meditations*, 78, 81.

[71] *Meditations*, 71.

of diverse intentions and purposes. On the one hand, these events were meant to deepen the attention to and veneration of the Christ Child, following current theological tendencies. They would encourage the believers to meditate on the secrets of the Incarnation and the Nativity, as well as develop an emotional connection with the original protagonists of these events. On the other hand, actions such as building the crèche together, communal carol singing, and taking care of and nursing the child would integrate monastic communities. These activities would help develop a bond between all the members of the community and give them the chance to live the spiritual experiences of Christ's childhood and his proximity together. At other times, the dolls served as tools in facilitating some deep spiritual experiences. They permitted the believer to enter into an ecstasy, mediated between God and a religious community, or enabled a religious woman to take on the role of Mother Mary. Finally, the statue of the little Jesus could be the most intimate means of contact with God for women who might have felt intimidated by the stern God-Judge.

Nonetheless, the practical use of the Christ Child figures in late-medieval society still demands further study. Some interesting matters, such as the use of holy dolls by children and men, the attitude towards the statues in male monasteries and the gender-specific differences in the handling of the figures have remained outside the scope of this short study and demand further attention. Also, deeper investigation into the function of these figures in more common public or political contexts would surely lead to some interesting conclusions. These subjects should be the focus of broader research into late-medieval spirituality concerning the veneration of the infant Jesus.

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Jointed Dolls as Works of Art

The Jointed Doll as Model in the Early Modern Period

Dolls are approximate and abstracting imitations of the human form; they vary in size and are executed in countless materials. Dolls become jointed or moveable when they are not finished from a single piece, but are rather composed of various members that can be manually moved independent of one another. For thousands of years, jointed dolls were largely fashioned from wood and clay, but also ivory, bronze, amber. The degree of realism employed in their execution varies as much as their size, which ranges from the span of a human hand to life size. Already in antiquity, jointed dolls were documented in relation to cultic (or sacred) rituals; in the Middle Ages, this role was taken over by figures of Christ or saints.[1] Today the jointed doll is most well known as a tool in the visual arts, and since the early modern period has functioned as a replacement for live models in study of the human figure.[2] The scholarly research on jointed dolls (also known in English as

[1] For an overview of the genre see Markus Rath, *Die Gliederpuppe: Kult – Kunst – Konzept* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2016).

[2] Arpad Weixlgärtner, "Dürer und die Gliederpuppe," in *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte. Franz Wickhoff gewidmet*, ed. Alois Riegl (Vienna: Schroll 1903), 80–90; Julius von Schlosser, "Aus der Bildnerwerkstatt der Renaissance. Fragmente zur Geschichte der Renaissanceplastik," *Kunsthistorische Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 31 (1913/1914): 67-135, esp. 111–118; Joseph Meder, *Die Handzeichnung: Ihre Technik und Entwicklung* (Vienna: Schroll, 1919), esp. 554–557; Arpad Weixlgärtner, "Von der Gliederpuppe," *Göteborgs Konstmuseum Arstryck* (1954): 37–71; Evert Frans van der Grinten, "Le cachelot et le mannequin, deux facettes de la réalité dans l'art hollandais du seizième et du dix-septième siècles," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 13 (1962): 149–180; Wolfram Prinz, "Dal vero o dal modello? Appunti e testimonianze sull'uso dei manichini nella pittura del Quattrocento," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Ugo Bocacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto (Milan: Electa, 1977), 200–208; Marianna Haraszti-Takács: "Compositions de nus et leurs modèles," *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 30 (1967): 49–75; Sally Woodcock, "Posing, Reposing and Decomposing: Life-size Lay Figures, Living

lay figure, in Dutch as *manneken* or *leeman*, in Italian as *manichino*, in French as *mannequin*, and in German as *Gliederpuppe*) has concentrated on its function as a tool for artists in their ateliers, although since the 19th century their symbol-laden external representation has also been considered.[3]

The first reference for the use of a jointed doll as a model for the human figure in an artist's atelier is documented in the second half of the Quattrocento. In his work *Trattato di architettura*, completed between 1460 and 1464, Antonio di Pietro Averlino (circa 1400–1469) also known also as Filarete ("Friend of the Virtues") describes for the first time the execution and employment of a jointed doll. In Book XXIV he considers the question of appropriate contemporary and antique subjects. Filarete presents the jointed doll as a suitable aid by which clothing and draperies in the antique style might be studied directly "from nature": "Obtain a small wooden figure [*figuretta di legname*] with moveable legs, arms and neck; take a garment from linen and then clothe it until it meets your approval, exactly as if it were alive. Let it take the pose that you want it to have, and then drape the garment as it should be. If the textile does not fall the way you want, then take liquid lime and moisten the figure with it, and then you can order the folds to your liking; when the lime dries, the folds will then be fixed. If you want to change the pose of the model, dunk it in hot water, and you will be able to alter its form. In this way, you can capture each figure that you want to represent clothed."[4] The use and value of the jointed doll lies in its function as a changeable template for planned preparatory sketches; the anthropomorphic figure can be draped in antique-style clothing, which can then be arranged into the desired form.[5]

Models and Artists' Colourmen in Nineteenth Century London," in *Looking Through Paintings*, ed. Erma Hermens (= *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 11 (1998)), 445–464; H. Perry Chapman, "The Wooden Body. Representing the Manikin in Dutch Artists' Studios," in *Body and Embodiment in Netherlandish Art*, ed. Ann-Sophie Lehmann and Herman Roodenburg (= *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art / Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 58 (2007/2008)), 188–215.

[3] *Puppen Körper Automaten – Phantasmen der Moderne*, Exh. cat., ed. Pia Müller-Tamm and Katharina Sykora (Köln: Oktagon, 1999); Claudia Peppel, *Der Manichino: Von der Gliederpuppe zum technisierten Kultobjekt: Körperimaginationen im Werk Giorgio de Chiricos* (Weimar: VDG, 2008); *Silent Partners: Artist and Mannequin from Function to Fetish*, Exh. cat., ed. Jane Munro (London: Yale University Press, 2014).

[4] "Fa' d'avere una figuretta di legname che sia disnodata le braccia e le gambe e ancora il collo, e poi fa' una vesta di panno |fol. 184v| di lino, e con quello abito che ti piace, come se fussino d'uno vivo, e mettigliele indosso in quello atto che tu vuoi ch'egli stia, l'acconcia, e se que panni non istessino come tu volessi, abbi la colla strutta, e bagnalo bene indosso a detta figura; e poi acconcia le pieghe a tuo modo, e falle seccare, e staranno poi ferme. E se poi la vuoi fare in altro modo, mettilo in acqua calda, e potra'lo rimutare in altra forma. E da questo ritrai poi le figure che tu vuoi che sieno vestite." Filarete, *Trattato di Architettura*, Cod. Mag., fol. 184r–184v, quoted from: *Antonio Averlino Filarete. Trattato di Architettura*, ed. Anna Maria Finoli and Liliana Grassi (Milan: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1972), 676f.

[5] Immediately before his discussion of how the joined doll should be handled, Filarete declares that seven basic positions can easily represent all the important poses held by the human body. He makes references hereto from Albertis *Della Pittura*, which in turn takes Quintillian's *Institutio Oratorio* as its inspiration. It is reasonable to assume that the jointed doll should be brought into one of those poses: "E' posari delle

It is precisely this attribute of the doll – its ability to make the human figure available on an omnipresent level – that is celebrated in Vasari's *Vite* as well. In his account of the life of the Fra Bartolomeo (1472–1517), the biographer writes about a particular "modello di legno",[6] used by the Dominican friar in his studies of garment folds as well as in the creation of historical figures: "Fra Bartolomeo always liked to have living objects before him when he was working; and in order to be able to draw draperies, armor, and other suchlike things, he caused a life-size figure of wood to be made, which moved at the joints; and this he clothed with real draperies, from which he painted most beautiful things, being able to keep them in position as long as he pleased, until he had brought his work to perfection. This figure, worm-eaten and ruined as it is, is in our possession, treasured in memory of him."[7] The painter's claim that all his representations were taken "from life" (*tenere le cose vive innanzi*) – even from behind the walls of a cloister – were in fact possible through the use of the jointed doll, which functioned as a close approximation and substitute for the human figure in real life.[8] In fact, Vasari's commentary indicates a much deeper level of reflection, in which the memory of the artist is not inspired through one of his paintings, but is rather presented through his old and weathered "helper" (i.e., the jointed doll) that acts as witness to the career of the esteemed painter. In a contract from January 5th, 1512 between Fra Bartolomeo and his long-term professional partner Mariotto Albertinelli (1474–1515), their joint property was divided between the two of them; in addition to the life-size jointed doll, there is a reference to a second model, arm-length in size.[9]

figure sono di più ragioni, ma in quanto allo star fermi, non mi paiono più di sette. Tre ce ne sono pronti e forti, e quattro che mostrano più tosto debilità, i quali si convengono a donne e a fanciulle. I quali sette posari guarda al naturale, e vedrai variati modi e tempi che lo saranno." Filarete, *Trattato di Architettura*, 676. To the contemporary as well as the antique references, see: John R. Spencer, *Filarete's Treatise on Architecture: Being the Treatise by Antonio di Piero Averlino, Known as Filarete: Originally composed in Milan c. 1460–c. 1464*, 2 vols. (New Haven: CT, 1965).

6 The architectural model is also referred to as a "modello di legno," as for example in Vasari's description of the life of Michelangelo: "Aveva portato seco il Vasari, perordine di Sua Eccell[enza], il modello di legno di tutto il palazzo ducale di Fiorenza […]." Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence: Sansoni, 1966–1987), vol. VI, 102.

7 "Aveva openione fra' Bartolomeo, quando lavorava, tenere le cose vive innanzi, e per poter ritrar panni et arme et altre simil cose fece fare un modello di legno grande quanto il vivo che si snodava nelle congenture, e quello vestiva con panni naturali; dove egli fece di bellissime cose, potendo egli a beneplacito suo tenerle ferme fino che egli avesse condotto l'opera sua a perfezzione: il quale modello, così intarlato e guasto come è, è apresso di noi per memoria sua." Vasari, *Le vite*, vol. IV., 101.

8 See: Meder, *Die Handzeichnung*, 555f.

9 "Ancora siamo d'accordo che queste masserizie che restono comune, l'abbi adoperare Fra Bartolomeo a servirsene mentre che vive e dopo la morte sua siano dette masserizie liberamente di Mariotto dipintore et sue rede: cioè uno modello di legno quanto el naturale, cioè una figura; e ancora uno altro modello circa d'un braccio ghangherato." Vincenzo Marchese, *Memorie dei piú insigni pittori, scultori e architetti*,

In the far north of Italy, Vasari notes a jointed doll in the atelier of Benvenuto Tisi, known as Il Garofalo (1481–1559) reputed to have introduced the wooden model to Lombardy. In a slight descriptive variant, the jointed doll is now referred to as "modello di figura fatto di legname": "It is worth noting that in executing that work Benvenuto did something that up to that time had never been done in Lombardy – namely, he made models of clay, the better to see the shadows and lights, and availed himself of a figure-model made of wood, jointed in such a way that the limbs moved in every direction, which he arranged as he wished, in various attitudes, with draperies over it."[10] In his description of the artistic work of Garofalo, Vasari details the simultaneous use of two aids in the creation of his work: on the one hand, clay models were employed for the effects and of light and shadow in the painting's visual composition; on the other, jointed dolls which enabled a precise study of drapery and folds. Thanks to the highly varied model types, individual studies could be executed and whole scenes could be reproduced.[11]

Even further to the north, on the other side of the Alps, Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) employed a jointed doll as well. Over the course of his career – the second half of which was ardently dedicated to the study and documentation of the human form – Dürer developed a method by which structures found in nature (both separate parts or a complete figure) could be transformed into geometric bodies through a kind of "cubification" ("Kubenverfahren").[12] Evidence of the intensive preliminary studies for this process can be found in the drawings and manuscripts collected in the *Dresdner Skizzenbuch*. Unnoticed and undocumented for close to 400 years, this compendium of studies was published for the first time in 1905.[13]

2 vols. (Florence: Presso Alcide Parenti, 1846), vol. II, 608. As late as 1879, Gaetano Milanesi noted the original, life size and worm-eaten jointed doll in the collection of the Accademia di Belli Arte in Florence: "Nella guardaroba della fiorentina Accademia delle Belle Arti si conserva un modello intarlato e guasto, eh' è tradizione esser quello di Fra Bartolommeo. Esso era nelle mani di Carlo Colzi custode della detta Accademia, il quale poi lo vendè a Domenico Bicoli, ispettore della Galleria de' Pitti, e questi al prof. Carlo Ernesto Liverati, che lo legò per testamento alla predetta Accademia." Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, Bd. IV, (Florenz: Sansoni, 1879), vol. IV, 196, note 1. In the interim, the work got lost, as reported by Weixlgärtner, "Von der Gliederpuppe," 38, note 3.

[10] "Ma egli è ben vero che, in facendo quest'opera, fece Benvenuto quello che insin allora non era mai stato usato in Lombardia, cioè fece modelli di terra per veder meglio l'ombre et i lumi, e si servì d'un modello di figura fatto di legname, gangherato in modo che si snodava per tutte le bande, et il quale accomodava a suo modo con panni adosso et in varie attitudini." Vasari, *Le vite*, vol. V, 412.

[11] "Usono ancora molti maestri, innanzi che faccino la storia nel cartone, fare un modello di terra in su un piano, con situar tonde tutte le figure per vedere gli sbattimenti, cioè l'ombre che da un lume si causano adosso alle figure." Vasari, *Le vite*, vol. I, 120. On Garofalo's use of the model, see: Alessandra Pattanaro, "Per Garofalo disegnatore. Uno studio per la pala di Modena e qualche riflessione sull'uso dei 'modelli di terra' e di 'legname'," *Prospettiva* 119/120 (2005): 105–111.

[12] See: Anne-Marie Bonnet, *‚Akt' bei Dürer* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2001), 32.

[13] The Dresden sketchbook suffered severe water damage at the end of the Second World War. For a long time,

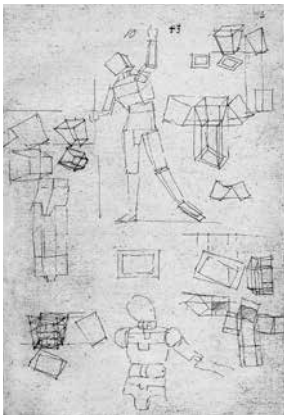

Figure 1. Albrecht Dürer: Sheet of sketches, Pen Drawing, c. 1510, the Dresden Dürer-codex.

The earliest unequivocal representation of identifiable jointed dolls in the early modern period can be found in this work. Folio 143 contains line drawings of simple two and three-dimensional geometric objects, which are divided and placed in the right and the left thirds of a page that is oriented upright **(Figure 1)**. In the upper half of the page, directly in the center access of the leaf, there is a cube figure standing in *contraposto*. The figure bows slightly forward; with his right hand he holds a staff, and his left arm is raised. It is clear that the figure emerged as a result of a highly developed arrangement of the surrounding geometric shapes. The lower half of the page is occupied by a quick sketch that represents the fully mechanical upper body of a jointed doll. Although the line is reduced to an almost cursory representation, the form and the construction of the model are drawn with precision. Dürer represents a doll with its head tilted to the side and its arms stretched out behind it. The figure on the bottom half of the page stands in direct opposition – and as a real, observable counterpart – to body made out of geometric forms above it. It seems as if Dürer recognized the jointed doll as a kind of prefiguring of the form of his representational goal: an abstracted geometric figure in motion, both in the conceptual preparatory process as a kind of "thinking figure" as well as in the practical realization of an anthropomorphic body by which fundamental spatial patterns of movement could be represented.[14]

The figure in Dürer's sketchbook has a highly abstracted form, creating an arc that links the earliest descriptions of the jointed doll in Filarete and Vasari to the models we use today. A small group of jointed dolls were created at about the same time that Dürer's studies of the human canon were published in his *Vier Büchern von menschlicher Proportion*, just

the only images available were the photographs taken by Robert Buck in 1905. After painstaking restoration, the drawings were displayed in 2013/14 at the comprehensive Dürer exhibition at the Städel Museum in Frankfurt. See: Robert Bruck, *Das Skizzenbuch von Albrecht Dürer in der königlichen öffentlichen Bibliothek zu Dresden* (Strasbourg: Heitz, 1905); Thomas Haffner, "Die Dresdner Dürerhandschrift. Ein bedeutendes Dokument der Kunst-, Wissenschafts- und Sammlungsgeschichte," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Technischen Universität Dresden* 55 (2006): 151–158.

[14] Similarly, Erwin Panofsky has analyzed Dürer's understanding of movement: "As he [Dürer] cannot explain human movements as nervous and muscular phenomena, he regards them as purely physical-spatial processes, and his theories on this phenomena accordingly consists in a determination of the place where, and the direction in which they can take place, i.e. the joint function: „Wie und wo man die Bilder biegen soll."" Erwin Panofsky, *Dürers Kunsttheorie, vornehmlich in ihrem Verhältnis zur Kunsttheorie der Italiener* (Berlin: Reimer, 1915), 69ff.

a few days after his death in 1528. The surviving pieces are dispersed in various European collections; several of them were lost in the Second World War. This set of movable dolls decisively magnifies the importance of this type, in that one witnesses a kind of transformation of the dolls from being thought of as merely a purpose-oriented tool, to becoming works of art in themselves.

Jointed Dolls as Masterpieces of Small Sculpture

The collection of the oldest jointed dolls from the early modern period can be ascribed to a wood carver whose œuvre is known only through the monogram "IP".[15] A small jointed doll carved from boxwood belongs to this group, and is located today in the Bode Museum, Berlin **(Figure 2)**. The statue was carved from 57 individual pieces, measures 21.6 cm in height, and weighs an astonishing mere 78 grams. Able to hold all manner of poses, the jointed doll has the highest possible degree of body variability. Through the employment of ball-and-socket joints, the body extremities, the belly, the thighs, the knees and the feet can be positioned into the most varied poses. Fingers and toes can be moved through pivot joints. The sculpture has been carved to the finest level of detail, in particular the face and head, the bones visible in the fingers and feet, as well as the fingernails; even the surface of the hands and the feet indicate the lines and the curvatures found in nature. The figure is held together without the use of screws; instead, extremely fine funnel-shaped channels drilled through the wood and connected though an interior system of strings join the various parts of the doll. Starting at four toggles fastened to the doll's farthest extremities, the delicate system of cords runs through the entire body until the head, twisted to create a tension, where they are then bundled and fixed. This last element in the system of strings gives the entire figure its tension; it is accessible only through a small opening in the back of the doll's head: an artfully disguised, barely visible trapezoidal lid which follows the contours of the hair bonnet's net.[16]

Figure 2. Jointed doll, c. 1530, Bode Museum Berlin.

[15] See the comprehensive research of Jutta Reisinger-Weber, *Der Monogrammist IP und sein Umkreis* (Passau: Klinger, 2007), 111–121, No. 7–13; Markus Rath, "Creatio ex ligno. The Characteristics of Wooden Renaissance Dolls," in *Art, Technology and Nature: Renaissance to Postmodernity*, ed. Camilla Skovbjerg Paldam and Jacob Wamberg (London: Ashgate, 2015), 41–54.

[16] A current research effort on dolls using 3D computer tomography has allowed for an expansive and comprehensive view into the complex inner workings of the doll. See the digital presentation on the subject:

Figure 3. Jointed doll, c. 1530, Grassimuseum Leipzig.

The same system of construction and joints is to be found in a second female doll, located today in the Grassimuseum in Leipzig **(Figure 3)**. The figure is exquisitely well preserved, measures 22.5 cm in height and weighs 86 grams. With regard to the conception of the body and artistic execution, the statuette in Leipzig is quite similar to the piece in Berlin. Nonetheless, the Leipzig example seems less cursory, and its design has been finished to a higher degree. The voluptuous feminine physiognomy of the Berlin figure is absent in the facial expression of the Leipzig doll, which is more distinctive, rigid and defined. Her head covering, a painstakingly executed and voluminous bonnet, is comparable in style to that of the specimen in Berlin, and has a square opening that provides access to the system of strings inside the doll. She wears a crown of flowers, perched crookedly on the right half of her head.

Figure 4. Pair of jointed dolls, c. 1530, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck.

In the Tyrolean State Museum Ferdinandeum, a female and a male jointed doll are preserved, which together form the only surviving pair of this genre type **(Figure 4)**.[17] The design of the female figure is extremely similar to the Berlin doll. Although at 80 grams she weighs less than the Leipzig statuette, she is nonetheless slightly taller, measuring 23 cm in height. Like the two other female figures, the one in Innsbruck attests to a similar soft and smooth treatment of the figure's surface. The head of the female jointed doll from Innsbruck bears a stronger resemblance to the example in Berlin than to the one in Leipzig: although the mouth is closed, the eyes are open wider than the Berlin doll, lending her the impression of being awake and aware. Nonetheless, the figure shares a number of similarities with the Leipzig doll, particularly in regards to the shape of the head and her bonnet, as well as the soft modelling of the face, which imparts her with a far less transparent facial expression. The fig leaves were probably a later addition to the pair, judging from their comparatively poor workmanship.

http://www.grassimuseum.de/mediathek.html [1/10/2015].

[17] Weixlgärtner, "Von der Gliederpuppe," 42.

The counterpoint to the female figure is that of a young-looking male jointed doll. He has the same height of 23 cm as his companion does, but weighs slightly more at 85.7 grams. The male statuette has a round, beardless visage with eyes that are wide open and a thick, unevenly curly head of hair. In contrast to the rather cursory modeling of his female companion, the body of the male statuette has been detailed to the highest degree, as can be seen in the sinews and muscles of his body, his collarbone, the sternum covered by taut skin, the defined ribs and bulging ribcage, as well as the muscles of his abdomen, the athletic arms and the slender legs. Finally, the delicate veins on his temples and his feet should be noted. In the case of the Innsbruck male figure, the ball joints in his shoulders were placed higher in the body of the torso, making them much more pronounced compared to the female statuette, where the line of her shoulders flows more gently.

Another male jointed doll can be found in the collection of the Hamburger Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe (MKG) **(Figure 5)**. It measures 24 cm, and is therefore the largest in this corpus of jointed doll figures. The statuette represents the body and the physiognomy of a man about 40 years of age. It is believed that the jointed dolls in Leipzig and Hamburg once formed a pair.[18] His haggard body is poignantly rendered, particularly in the upper part. The thighs and especially the area around the knees are also particularly defined. The shoulder blades of the figure are pulled together, thereby heightening the musculature of his back. The figure's bones and muscle structure are smooth and yet at the same time clearly articulated. The facial expression of the jointed doll in Hamburg is particularly striking: its cheekbones, forehead, and nose are highly pronounced. The doll's sharp stare imparts it with an expression of concentration and control. An impressive mustache dominates his curly, symmetrical and full beard. On his head he wears a crown of braided laurels.

Figure 5. Jointed doll, c. 1530, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg.

The last example of this group that still survives today is preserved in the Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid. This statuette is markedly different due to an additional structural element: in contrast to the other statues, his lower jaw is moveable so that the tongue is visible and it can perform eating or talking movements when the mouth is open

[18] See Reisinger-Weber, *Der Monogrammist IP*, 117.

Figure 6. Jointed doll, c. 1530, Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid.

(Figure 6).[19] Nonetheless, in comparison with the other figures from the group, the Madrid jointed doll gives an overall impression of cruder workmanship; it is anatomically less well formed, particularly due to the pink colored varnish that covers the entire figure, added at a later time after the doll was carved.[20] Like the statuettes in Hamburg and in Innsbruck, the figure has a slim, defined build. He has a similar upper body and sternum, nipples and ribcage. The nape of his neck is more powerful than those of the other male figures, an impression that is further enhanced by the V-shaped upper body, the broad chest, and the narrow waist. Like the doll in Hamburg, the version in Madrid has a full, curly beard, though it is by no means as fine and detailed, and is cut almost flush to the surface of the face. Like the version in Hamburg, the upper part of the cranium is detachable. The rather schematic rendered pupils of his eyes give the statue only a vague impression of a gaze. This figure was the only one in the group that was preserved in (and along with) a casket-shaped box, which contained three small notes on paper as well.[21] The handwriting on one note, dated to the late 16th century, red: "Maniquí de Alberto Durero". A second note, probably from the 17th century, named Dürer again, along with the inventory number: "Casa 20". On a third note, only the word "Corado" was decipherable.[22]

In addition to the these examples which have survived, there were originally three other jointed dolls: a pair of male and female statuettes, which can be easily documented in various texts and image sources, but which have unfortunately been missing since the Second World War, and a third doll, of which only written accounts survive. The pair of missing dolls was preserved in the Berlin Akademie der Künste until the end of the Second World War. The figures, both 19 cm in height, have been considered lost since 1945.[23]

[19] For provenance, see Weixlgärtner, "Von der Gliederpuppe," 44.

[20] Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, "Un maniquí del siglo XVI," *Archivo Español de Arte* XXV (1952): 101–109, esp. 103; Reisinger-Weber, *Der Monogrammist IP*, 120.

[21] The casket has the dimensions of 26.9 x 9.2 x 5.6 cm. See: Sánchez Cantón, "Un maniquí del siglo XVI," 102.

[22] Cantón, "Un maniquí del siglo XVI," 102f. Today, the box and the notes are lost.

[23] See: Ingrid Hägele, Gudrun Schmidt, and Gudrun Schneider, eds., *Kriegsverluste der Preußischen Akademie der Künste* (Berlin: Akademie d. Künste, 2005), 45, No. 114f. In his seminal work on a study of the corpus wooden statuettes, Arpad Weixlgärtner notes a further male jointed doll, once in the collection of cloister in Styria, Austria. See: Weixlgärtner, "Von der Gliederpuppe," 48.

Thanks to surviving photographic documentation of the objects, it is still possible to consider and appreciate their remarkable, lifelike bodily presence **(Figure 7)**. In comparison to the other examples from this group, the expressively carved figures indicate the absolute pinnacle of anatomically precise execution and detailing. Extremely fine and thin veins are spread over the doll's muscles, and give a sinewy, almost ascetic impression of the body. Together with the artfully carved expressive face (which bears in that aspect the closest resemblance to the statuette in Hamburg), the jointed dolls are imbued with a particular expressiveness. All parts of the body are precisely formed and carved; even those parts of the figure that were cursorily detailed in the other examples of the group (for example the pelvic bone, the navel or the musculature of the back) are meticulously executed in finest detail. The genitals have been properly modeled, are fully intact and are not disguised, giving an important sense of what the other pieces may have looked like prior to the addition of their respective fig leaves.

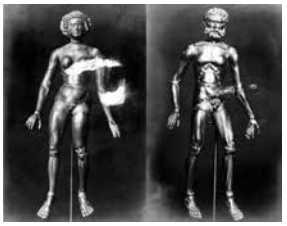

Figure 7. Pair of jointed dolls, c. 1530, originally preserved in the Academy of Art in Berlin, lost since 1945.

The execution and detailing of the male figure is based on the highest level of anatomical precision, and refers to a notable subcategory of this artistic genre, namely the type of jointed dolls called Écorchés **(Figure 8)**.[24] The female member of the pair is even more naturalistic than the examples preserved in Leipzig, as demonstrated in the modeling of her back muscles, her knees, and her genitals. She has in common with the other female examples of the group of statuettes a very feminine body shape, in particular the ball-like breasts that seem attached to the chest. She does not carry a head covering; her hair is rendered quite differently from the other members of the group: her long hair is tied into a braid that wraps around her head in an artful band, crowned by a diadem resting on her forehead, fixed by a ribbon to the nape of her neck.[25]

Figure 8. Male jointed doll (Écorché), Bode Museum Berlin.

An analysis of the figures based on stylistic similarities in the modeling of the body, their technical execution, and the mechanics that make them moveable show that they all formed part of a common œuvre. In comparison to their

[24] Male jointed doll, "Écorché", 16th/19th c. (?), 24,5 cm, Inv. Nr. 7792, Bode-Museum Berlin.

[25] According to Ernst Friedrich Bange, the diadem once took the form of a flaming heart, cut in half. Ernst Friedrich Bange, *Die Bildwerke in Holz, Stein und Ton: Kleinplastik* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1930), 41.

female counterparts, the male examples preserved in Madrid, Hamburg and Innsbruck are anatomically more accurate. The defined groups of muscles and the exquisite detailing of the veins on the limbs and temples distinguish this group from the rest and make them particularly notable. In addition, the male figures represent different stages of life: the figure preserved in Innsbruck can be described as a youth; the statuette in Madrid is an older version of both the example in Munich and the lost doll from the Berlin Academy. It can reasonably be assumed that all the figures came from the same hand.[26] In addition to the fact that these figures all form a corpus of works from one artist, an analysis of the body forms of these statuettes reveal a chronology in which these works were created. Assuming that over the course of his career the work of the artist became more complex with regard to bodily forms, head decoration and symbolic representation, then the statue in the Berlin Bode Museum with its cursory modeling and simple bonnet might be seen as the start of this stylistic and technical evolution. At the other end of this continuum is the lost pair from the Berlin Academy, whose body forms are the most coherently and sophisticatedly rendered.

These figures are too fine and detailed, too small and precious, to have served merely as workshop models for an artist.[27] It is therefore probable that the dolls created by the artist IP were meant to demonstrate the technical capabilities and virtuosity of the artist. They were in fact works to be kept in a *Kunstkammer*, a cabinet of curiosities, and they did not have a specific utilitarian function. As objects that formed part of a *Kunst- und Wunderkammer*, they occupied a unique place on the threshold between "naturalia" and "artificialia".[28] Next to the technical expertise of the wood carver, these works were made out of a desire to create an object that could reveal and serve as an intensive and meticulous study of human anatomy and proportion. Their stark nudity jumps out; because of it, Ernst Bange and others after him believed that the importance of the jointed dolls lay in their function as a kind of "noble toy" (*galantes Spielzeug*).[29] Nonetheless, a glance at the facial expression of the dolls calls this into question. With the exception of the female doll preserved in the Bode Museum in Berlin, their facial expressions show no intention of an erotic engagement with

[26] See also: Reisinger-Weber, *Der Monogrammist IP*, 56.

[27] Weixlgärtner, "Von der Gliederpuppe," 54.

[28] Horst Bredekamp, *Antikensehnsucht und Maschinenglauben. Die Geschichte der Kunstkammer und die Zukunft der Kunstgeschichte* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1993), 33–39.

[29] Ernst Friedrich Bange, *Die Kleinplastik der deutschen Renaissance in Holz und Stein* (Leipzig: Schmidt, 1928), 49.

the beholder.[30] While all the figures could have originally formed part of a male and female pair, this nevertheless does not indicate we should perceive them as mere "love dolls" to recreate erotic scenes. Rather, one must consider them as a complete ensemble for the proper study of both male and female anatomy. Although their limbs are slightly elongated due to their ball joints, they follow in the tradition of Albrecht Dürer's classification of the ideal human proportions of that time, and could therefore be considered as an addition to a connoisseur's collection of "prototypes" of the human body.[31] The movability inscribed in their very form and design, the meticulous detail of their physique, the technical finesse of their construction, as well as their distinctive physiognomies impart the dolls with the quality of autonomous works of art and create the impression of potentially coming to life.[32] In contrast to comparably sized but nevertheless immobile figures, the jointed dolls display a life-like variability as well as adaptability to the human hand. The dolls augment the haptic reception of small-scale sculpture and transform the owner of the work into an artist in his own right, who decides what form the figure will take: in his or her shaping hands, the figures become artistic instruments for comprehending the world.

The Jointed Doll as Masterpiece

No jointed doll created after the group of statuettes carved by the artist IP in the first half of the 16th century ever reached the same degree of artistic sophistication. Nonetheless, jointed dolls created thereafter were not relegated back to the mundane role of practical modeling tools in the artist's atelier. Their continued importance can be seen in the portrait of a wood sculptor that Werner Jacobsz. van den Valckert (circa 1580–1627) created in 1624 **(Figure 9)**.[33] The oil painting on wood shows the sculptor at half-size.

[30] See: Robert W. Scribner, "Vom Sakralbild zur sinnlichen Schau: Sinnliche Wahrnehmung und das Visuelle bei der Objektivierung des Frauenkörpers in Deutschland im 16. Jahrhundert," in *Gepeinigt, begehrt, vergessen: Symbolik und Sozialbezug des Körpers im späten Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Schreiner and Norbert Schnitzler (München: Fink, 1992), 309–330.

[31] See Elisabeth Weymann, "Meister IP (zugeschrieben): Gliederpuppe einer Frau, Gliederpuppe eines Mannes," in *Dürer: Kunst – Künstler – Kontext*, Exh. cat., ed. Jochen Sander (Frankfurt a. M.: Prestel, 2013), 164–165. For possible uses of the jointed doll by Albrecht Dürer, see: Weixlgärtner, "Dürer und die Gliederpuppe," 80–90; Bonnet: *‚Akt' bei Dürer*, Exkurs II.

[32] See also: Rath: "Creatio ex ligno".

[33] In regards to the painting, and jointed dolls in artist's ateliers in the Netherlands (in general) see: P. T. A. Swillens: "Beelden en Ledepoppen in de schilderkunst," *Maandblad voor beeldende kunsten* 23 (1947): 247–258; Katja Kleinert, *Atelierdarstellungen in der niederländischen Genremalerei des 17. Jahrhunderts - realistisches Abbild oder glaubwürdiger Schein?* (Petersberg: Imhof 2006), esp. 77–81; Chapman, "The Wooden Body," 188–215; Astrid Kwakernaak, "Van hout, van stof, van vlees en bloed: de modellen

Figure 9. Werner Jacobsz. van den Valckert: Portrait of a wood sculptor with jointed doll, 1624, The Speed Art Museum Louisville, Kentucky.

He stands in front and to the left of his workbench. He shares the portrait with his newest creation, a magnificent male jointed doll made from wood. In contrast to the painting's dark and bare background, the light that illuminates the pair from above imparts the scene with a theatrical impetus. The jointed doll, about one meter in height, looks at his creator while striking a dramatically gesticulating pose. This position indicates how especially precious the doll is: fourteen ball joints in different positions present and realize the anatomy of a male upper body as well as its extremities. Special attention was given in particular to the detailing of the grand and distinguished face. In contrast, the lower torso was detailed with a navel, but without genitals. The legs are in a slight sidestep and thereby conceal the support rod that connects the statuette to the woodblock on which it was positioned. As if simply stacked on top of one another, the various tools of the artist – five woodcutters of various sizes, a measuring angle and a large wooden hammer – lie at the statue's feet.

It is clearly apparent, however, that this is hardly a snapshot of the moment in which the moveable sculpture has been completed, as there is no trace of wood dust, shreds or chips. Furthermore, the sculptor appears in an elegant black robe, with a snow-white starched "millstone" collar from which his young face, his distinctive nose and his fashionable mustache and chin beard all the more delicately emerge. Harry Chapman was correct in noting that this portrait of an anonymous artist represents a member of the *antieksnijdersgilde*, a guild which required that any individual seeking admission to the group submit a *gildeproef* in the form of a hand-carved joined doll (in Dutch, "en leeman").[34] The portrait could therefore be seen as visual, painted documentation of the master craftsman's certification.[35] It is the portrait of a proud artist, who presents his masterpiece in the company

van de schilder," in *Mythen van het atelier: De werkplaats en schilderpraktijk van de negentiende-eeuwse Nederlandse kunstenaar*, Exh. cat., ed. Mayken Jonkman and Eva Geudeker (Zwolle: Waanders, 2010), 150–165.

[34] See: Chapman, "The Wooden Body," 197 and note 30, where he discusses how the wood carver works in the "antyckse manier," i.e., in the manner of a Renaissance artist, to distance and distinguish himself from his colleagues and competition working in the late-Gothic style.

[35] Chapman's further interpretation of barter – image against mannequin – is perhaps too sweeping. Nonetheless, the making of jointed dolls for painters by specialized carvers can be documented in estate inventories, for example that of Adriaen Huybertsz Verveer of 1680. Abraham Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare: Urkunden zur Geschichte der Holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten und XVIIIten Jahrhunderts*, 8 vols. (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1915–1922) vol. III, 902.

of his rather crude tools, which makes the meticulous contouring of the jointed doll – and the artist's own the craftsmanship – all the more remarkable.

The rather deictic internal visual language of the painting in fact refers to a further level of meaning and understanding: the unifying faculties of *spirit*, *eye* and *hand* in the visual arts (both painting and sculpture). With one hand, the jointed doll points to the head of his creator; his gaze is directed toward the artist's eyes, while simultaneously his right limb is extended down in order to allude to the artist's hand(s). The wooden statuette's indicative gestures reveal a complex, circular nexus of meanings. The position of the gaze of the wood carver's eyes vary slightly; his right eye is directed straight ahead, while his left eye stares slightly up, giving the impression to the viewer that figure portrayed is especially spirited and all-encompassing. At the same time, the artist's hand – placed in the same spot as the doll's missing genitals – indicate his artistic creative capabilities. While the wood carver has created an almost living counterpoint with his doll, the painter has achieved through the means of his own skill a congenial visual reenactment, made possible through the active agent of a completed and elaborate jointed doll.

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Contributions to the study of the tradition of dressing religious sculptures in Portugal 16th – 19th centuries[1]

Introduction

This paper seeks to address the phenomenon of the dissemination of the custom of attiring religious sculptures, practiced by several Catholic lay movements which had their epicenter in Spain and Portugal between the 16th and 18th centuries. In the Counter-Reformation context, devotional sculptures acquired a didactic purpose of spreading the faith within the places of worship of primarily illiterate populations. In Spain this practice was observed as early as the beginning of the 16th century, reaching its peak with the dressing of the *Virgen de la Soledad* sculptures in Madrid's *Convento de la Victoria*. The sponsorship and responsibility for properly dressing these sculptures belonged respectively to Isabel de Valois (1545-1568), third queen consort of Philip II of Spain, and María de la Cueva y Álvarez de Toledo (1490-1566), Countess of Ureña.[2]

[1] In this article we present part of the results of the research being conducted for the author's doctoral dissertation, entitled: "The Dressed Statues of the Procession of Third Order Franciscans: history, concepts, typologies and traditions – A Franciscan cultural legacy in S. Miguel Island 17th-19th centuries," within the program of Doctoral Studies in Art History of the University of Evora, Portugal.

[2] Fernández, 2012.

As far as the Portuguese Kingdom is concerned, we cannot say that the succession crisis that troubled Portugal at the end of the 16th century and resulted in the dynastic union of the Portuguese and Spanish monarchies between 1580 and 1640, giving rise to the Philippine Dynasty, directly influenced the practices relating to the dissemination of religious sculptures for dressing in Portugal, although the historical sources indicate that this tradition was also established in Portuguese territory in the 1500s. As a result of the expansion of the Iberian Empires, the custom of adorning religious sculptures and displaying them in processions was spread throughout the Ibero-American space by various religious manifestations, particularly during Holy Week, a time when dressed sculptures became players in liturgical dramas, portraying the events of the Passion of Christ.

The dressed sculptures used in Portugal

The environment surrounding the Council of Trent also had repercussions in Portugal through the regulation imposed by church authorities. In this context, the Synod Constitution of the Archbishopric of Lisbon promoted the use of wood or clay sculptures during Holy Week religious manifestations in the city, while suppressing the use of live actors in the Passion-Play representations performed in worship spaces and during processions. Although Protestant doctrine did not play a significant role in 16th century Portugal, historian Victor Serrão argues that Tridentine norms pertaining to sacred art were internalized early on by the various players in the social, cultural and religious sectors, even before being accepted as the law of the kingdom during the regency of Cardinal Dom Henrique in 1564.[3]

One of the first sources mentioning expressions of devotion toward Marian sculptural representations and their dressed versions was provided by Friar Agostinho de Santa Maria (1642-1728), whose secular name was Manuel Gomes Freire, vicar-general and chronicler of the Order of Discalced Augustinians. His work, *Marian Sanctuary, and History of the Miraculous Sculptures of Our Lady*, a selection of excerpts organized in 10 volumes, covers the period between 1707 and 1723, documenting news about the sculptures of the Virgin Mary in Portugal and overseas in areas of Christian expansion – Japan, China, Macao, Goa, Daman, Diu, Bassein, Southeast Asia, Philippines, Mozambique, Angola, Morocco. It also includes tomes specifically dedicated to Brazil,

[3] Serrão, 2014: 103-102.

Figures. 1, 2 and 3. Dressed sculptures, subcategory free-standing full body, representation of Our Lady of Sorrows, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal.

which contain references to the Azores, Madeira, St. Thomas and Prince, and Canary archipelagos. It should be mentioned that this collection indicates that the practice of dressing devotional sculptures already existed in the 16th century.

Although the research on which this paper is based covers the period after the Restoration of Portuguese Independence in 1640, we can deduce that despite Marian devotion among Portuguese and Spanish Catholics and the confluence in the joint utilization of religious sculptures for dressing, there were iconographic differences between the two Iberian spaces during this time. In Portugal, the Philippine influence notwithstanding, the tradition of dressing the sculptures of Our Lady of Soledad or of Sorrows (as this Marian figure is also called) in mourning garments did not take root or last, nor do these representations show the traditional Castilian configuration, in which the shapes of the forearms and hands are set separately from the rest of the body. Even though we find some models of these figures wearing black cloaks, the remaining iconographic frame differs from traditional Spanish sculptures.

In Portugal and in the territories that resulted from Portuguese overseas expansion, the iconography of "Our Lady of Soledad" is essentially associated with the moment when "Mary" meets "Jesus Christ" carrying the cross on the way to Calvary. These two figures are part of the traditional processions of "*Senhor dos Passos*" which take place during Lent. The sculptural representations of this biblical episode show a Sorrowful Virgin, immersed in pain and suffering deeply in the face of her son's martyrdom.[4] In terms of iconographic composition, in some cases we find allusions to Mary's seven sorrows described in the Gospels, as one or more swords pierce her heart, a reference to the first of her sorrows, when Simeon prophesizes that "*a sword will pierce your soul*."[5] Other sculptures show Mary simply in prayer, with hands folded on her chest. The garments in which the sculptures

[4] The most common terminologies to title this representation of sorrow by the Mother of Jesus Christ are written in diverse forms: "Our Lady of Sorrows" or "Lady of Soledad". The latter is derived from Latin and means solitude, sadness and yearning. We also find other terms to personify the state of mind of the Virgin Mary: Lady of Compassion, Lady of Anguish, Lady of Tears, Lady of Seven Sorrows, Lady of Calvary or Lady of Lamentations.

[5] Luke 2:35.

are generally dressed include a tunic girdled by a scapular and a veil that covers the form almost entirely. The predominant colors are blue and purple, symbolizing the Passion of Christ; in some cases, the cloak is black. It is also worth noting the greater simplicity in the representations of the "Sorrowful Virgins" in Portugal compared to their Spanish counterparts, specifically at the level of the gold, silver or tin accessories that adorn not only the sculptures but the platforms themselves. **(Figures: 1, 2 and 3)**.

Nomenclature and constructive schemes of dressed sculptures

Through Friar Agostinho de Santa Maria's work, we find that the author either conceived or adopted a classification plan in order to organize the diverse kinds of sculptures that he catalogued. When we speak of religious sculptures for dressing in Spain and in Hispanic America, we encounter a specific but varied terminology for classifying these sculptures, which includes vocabulary from different dialects. In this regard, a nomenclature very close to the Castilian, even identical in some cases, was adopted and followed in the Portuguese lexicon; nevertheless, the term "*Imagem de Roca*" was used consistently in the Portuguese language since at least the 16th century.

This Augustinian chronicler established quite an elaborate classification program to frame religious sculptures for dressing as works of three-dimensional plastic art, though a few variables are present and repeated throughout his work. Sculptures were defined in terms of materials and formal features and also according to their dimensions. Concerning the first item, the author distinguishes between sculptures by establishing three families of sculptures: stone, wood – in these we find variations that have a complete iconographic grammar governing the use of clothing – and finally of *roca* and dresses, though in some isolated instances he uses the expression "sculptures in dresses," which we think to be freestanding full body sculptures covered by clothing. Regarding dimensions, the author, using the "palmo de craveira" as a measuring unit, distinguished two groups of sculptures: small and human-sized sculptures. These were recorded to measure from two to over seven handspans, which when converted to the current metric system results in a scale ranging in the sculptures described by Santa Maria from approximately 22 to over 150 centimeters.[6]

[6] The "palmo de craveira", along with the "*braça*" and "*vara*", is an ancient unit of measurement with origins in Roman and Arab measurement standards, which was used in Portugal and territories under Portuguese rule until the 19th century, becoming forgotten after the current metric system was adopted, Barreiros, 1838: 11-12.

Figures. 4 and 5 – Dressed Sculptures, subcategory *roca*, iconographic representation of St. John, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal.

As far as the origins of the term "*Imagem de Roca*" are concerned, this expression has previously been studied by other researchers and a link has been established with the device artisans used to wind and store wool (roca *de fiar*), the spindle, or with baroque scenography used by the Andalusian friaries to represent the rock (*la roca* in Spanish); however, in our opinion, based on the available data, it is still premature to guarantee a specific origin for this term when applied to devotional sculpture, given that even in Spain the word "*roca*" is not used directly to define religious sculpture.[7] When we consult the dictionaries *Vocabulario portuguez & latino: aulico, anatomico, architectonico (1728),* authored by Raphael Bluteau, a contemporary of Santa Maria's work, and the *Dicionário da Língua Portugueza* (1789) by António de Morais Silva, we easily conclude that the word "*roca*" is simultaneously associated with both the forenamed artisan's instrument and devotional sculptures for dressing:

> "Roca, the cane or stick that women place in the waistband to spin. Roca of Sculptures or Sculptures of Roca. In dressed sculptures of the saints, a union of splines, which are nailed down to a base, [to which] more are affixed in almost pyramid form to the waist and are covered with some sort of garment."[8]

> "Roca, n. f. The cane or rod that women stick in the waist, the other end of which presents the linen or cotton coiled up which [she] spins, (…) Imagem de Roca (…) has half a body imitating the human, resting on a circle of wood that is raised by a balustrade of wood slats in a round [pattern] on a circular base."[9]

[7] On the origin of this terminology, following the article "Imagens de Vestir na Bahia", included in the proceedings of the *V Colóquio Luso-Brasileiro de História da Arte*, organized by the Brazilian historian Maria Helena Ochi Flexor, a connection has been theorized between the religious statues used by the Third Orders during Holy Week processions and the scenography of those processions, which was completed with backgrounds connected with the scenes of the Passion of Christ from the Spanish tradition called the "*roca* solitária." The author defends her thesis in an analysis of several studies that identify the work done by the Jesuits in the use of Baroque theater as a tool for catechizing pagans, where several scenographic elements were used to reference the places in which the acts occurred. Many of these scenes took place in mountains where caves were dug to be inhabited by hermits or on Mount Tabor, The Mount of Olives, and the Nativity Grotto among others. The scenery of the rock was easily transposed to the sculptural groups used in the processions. Flexor, 2002: 275-279.

[8] Bluteau, 1728.

[9] Silva, 1789: 636.

Regarding the classification schemes currently used for these types of religious sculptures, which are scattered across several Catholic churches in Portugal, no specific categorization exists; they are essentially described in a bibliography dedicated to the sculptural exteriorizations of "*imagens de roca*" or "*imagens de vestir*." Among the remaining countries where Portuguese is an official language, we must highlight Brazil, where from the last decades of the 20th century to the present this theme has been the subject of several research projects aiming to distinguish and categorize the different varieties of sculpture that have in common the application of garments and accessories in their final iconography. In this light, the work of historian Maria Helena Ochi Flexor, who has studied the processional phenomena organized by the Third Orders in Bahia,[10] and also Myriam Ribeiro de Oliveira, who at the end of the 20th century already included the Portuguese-Brazilian *roca* sculptures in the family of the dressed religious sculptures, are worthy of note.[11] We should also mention Maria Regina Quites, who developed a classification scheme in her doctoral dissertation that establishes three groups of religious sculptures for dressing: cut or lopped sculptures, full body or anatomical sculptures, and *roca* sculptures.[12] **(Figures 4, 5, 6, 7)**

Figures. 6 and 7. Dressed sculptures, subcategory freestanding full body, iconographic representation of the Virgin Mary, 19th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal.

Saint-makers, sculptors, religious statue makers, and their centers of production

Following the proliferation of religious sculptures made for display with dressing in Brazil during the 17th and 18th centuries, Flexor defines this kind of Christian sculpture as much closer to vernacular conceptions of art, so the schematic conceptions of the saint-makers prevailed over those of sculptors with more academic concerns, that is, popular culture overcame elite aesthetic standards.[13] Still according to this author, artists

[10] Flexor, 2002: 275-281.

[11] Oliveira, 1997: 263-264.

[12] Quites, 2006: 250-25.

[13] The professionals of sculptural production in Portugal comprised three categories in the 17th and 18th centuries: sculptors, religious statue makers and saint-makers. For Sérgio de Oliveira e Sá, each of these three designations, which are not necessarily watertight as far as their meaning, since their definitions

and artisans worked together on these representations; therefore, one should take special care in observing the contexts in which this type of sculpture was produced.[14]

Thus we dare to state that if Baroque art illustrates the emboldened genius of the cultural elite, the dressed sculptures represent the mastery of the popular language.[15] Perhaps it is for this reason that when we speak of the producers of religious sculptures who in Portugal were connected to the production of this format of sculpture, scarce reference is made to the ateliers that filled the orders for dressed sculptures, commissioned mainly by the secular branch of the Franciscan Order. It is probable that at least until the middle of the 18th century there were no workshops that manufactured this type of iconographic medium, although the available data indicate some specialization, particularly after the time when the "fashion" of dressing sculptures had spread throughout Ibero-American space.

During the first half of the 18th century, one of the most prestigious sculptors was the Lisboan Manuel Dias (1713-1753), who became particularly famous for the production of crucified Christ sculptures, earning the epithet "*pae dos Christos*."[16] Although his best known work was a crucified Christ in cedar, dated 1736, which is situated in the chancel of the Cathedral of Evora, this sculptor and saint-maker was also known for his dressed sculptures; he was responsible for fashioning the hagiographic representations for the Ash Wednesday processions of the fraternities of the Third Order of Penance of Coimbra, Mafra and Faro.[17] One of the documents we have concerning such religious sculptures alludes to its sculptor being known for a carving work, featuring fourteen saints and ten platforms, belonging to the processional ensemble of the Third Order Brothers established in the Royal Basilica of Our

varied throughout the centuries, represents a specific status that qualifies the professional in his medium. The appellation "religious statue maker," which came into use in the Middle Ages, and that of "sculptor," accompanied each other until they became interchangeable in terms of meaning, but the designation "saint-maker" describes a separate, craftsman function, with a utilitarian connotation of craft production, based on hierarchical class concepts involving apprentices, assistants and masters. Sá, 2002: 70.

[14] Flexor, 2005: 174.

[15] During the 18th century, we also witness a debate at the philosophical level regarding the place of art in society, with art being seen as an aesthetic science, not joined to the mechanical trades. This differentiation between "saint-maker" and "sculptor" meets the definitions of geniality and mastery present in Kantian thought on the concept of the fine arts. Kant (1729-1804) in his *Critique of Judgment* touches on questions relating to artistic production, particularly with regard to the distinction between mechanical art's ability to satisfy sensations and aesthetical art, whose purpose is knowledge, thus enlivening the debate. Kant, 1998.

[16] Machado, 1823: 259.

[17] Maurício, 2004: 31.

Lady and St. Anthony in Mafra, instituted 17 September 1736. Four years after this movement was established in the Franciscan Convent of the Province of Arrabida, it was decided in a meeting of the brothers to request royal approval for awarding the project, which was granted by King Dom João V. The work of carving sculptures was allocated to sculptor Manuel Dias, and the Master of the Royal Palace was charged with finding a workshop competent to do the work of painting.

Correctly mapping the master saint-makers who were devoted to producing, among other creations, religious sculptures for dressing did not prove an easy task, as throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, religious sculpture production centers were abundant in Portugal, dispersed throughout Alcobaça, Braga, Coimbra, Evora, Guimaraes, Lisbon, Oporto, and other areas.[18] However, it was in north Portugal, namely in the municipalities of Vila Nova de Gaia and Maia in the Oporto area, that we found workshops of religious sculpture makers dedicated to the production of dressed sculptures, not unrelated to the nucleus of Oporto Franciscans, who between the 17th and 19th centuries collected the works of the best religious sculpture makers and carvers of the time, which were produced for the churches of the Venerable Third Order of Penance and for Sao Francisco Convent.[19]

It was precisely in the church of the Secular Franciscans that we discovered one of the clans of religious sculpture makers connected to the production of sculptures for the Oporto Third Order procession. Master Manuel Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão and his sons, João Joaquim, José and Roberto – the last two had painted sculptures since at least 1799 – were given responsibility for maintaining and producing the religious sculptures related to this Lenten procession. In 1880, R. Pinto de Mattos, in his *Memória Histórica e Descritiva da Ordem Terceira do Porto*,[20] mentions that this professional was given the work of designing the sculptures of "Our Lady of the Conception," the "Well Married," and the sculptural set "Mount of La Verna," while his son João Joaquim Alão was given responsibility for the remaining sculptures that comprise the collection. Another extremely curious fact described in *Memória Histórica* is that for some time Manuel Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão had responsibility for dressing the sculptures for the procession, a situation that does not appear to be common, since in the course of our previous research we had not encountered anyone

[18] Sá, 2002: 22.

[19] Ferreira-Alves, 2008: 195.

[20] Mattos, 1880.

who enacted this double function of being a religious sculpture maker and also bearing the responsibility for attiring sacred sculptures. In other words, an exclusive contract with the saint-maker made him the main contributor to the final preparation of the processional ensemble.

In discussing this clan of professionals and the patriarch Manuel Alão, a professed lay Franciscan, it is essential to mention their connection to Brazil and, simultaneously, the continuation of their association with the Third Order of Penance, now on Brazilian land. The Lay Franciscan movement in the Brazilian colony used the Counter-Reformation iconographic program as a way to complement the catechism, an approach that portrayed the themes of the Passion of Christ by means of a highly expressive narrative-visual discourse, in order to indoctrinate a largely illiterate population. The importance of the Alão family is further demonstrated by the prestige of his son, João Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão, the first member of this lineage to emigrate to Brazil, specifically to Rio de Janeiro, contracted to work as master of design for the royal princes[21] and, even before 1822, responsible for doing work in the Royal Family residence, the Palace of Saint Christopher, since that year his address appeared in *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* as a maker of sculptures.[22]

In 1824 the family patriarch, who was 70 years old at the time, arrived in Rio de Janeiro.[23] Recent research by Sónia Gomes Pereira has unveiled the trajectory of the Alão family in Brazil, the work produced by João Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão, and his career as a teacher in the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. This research reveals the importance of the third generation born in Rio de Janeiro, more precisely through the works produced for the third Order of Saint Francis by Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão, the son of João Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão, who created the set of sculptures for this brotherhood's Ash Wednesday Procession. According to Nancy Regina Mathias Rabelo, this group of sculptures was commissioned in the 1840s.

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[21] Matos, 1880: 30.

[22] Pereira, 2008: 228.

[23] We do not know to what extent the departure of the Alão family to Brazil, particularly of the patriarch, already at an advanced age, may have represented a general tendency among religious statue production sectors in the north of Portugal. At the time when Dom João VI returned to Lisbon with his family, leaving behind Rio de Janeiro, João Joaquim Alves de Sousa Alão was making a voyage in the opposite direction. Portugal was experiencing the aftermath of the French invasion, in addition to the economic, social and political crises that culminated in the Liberal Revolution of Porto in 1820, which was led by the commercial bourgeoisie of that city and resulted in the fall of the governing junta headed by Field Marshal William Beresford. At the time, Brazil represented a window of opportunity for a family of learned sculptors, since the Court's stay in Rio de Janeiro made this city the capital of the Empire for one and a half decades, resulting in considerable cultural development, as is demonstrated by, among others, training in the Royal School of Sciences, Arts and Crafts (1816-1822), the future Imperial Academy of fine Arts (1822-1889), where two generations of Alãos taught.

The relationships between the Alão dynasty and Brazilian institutions illustrate the influence of Portuguese artists and craftsmen with varying degrees of erudition in post-colonial Brazil. Their hegemony was evident in the coastal territories, where European work would continue to be imported, though in a more recent phase the Minas Gerais region, despite its location in the interior, benefited from its rich gold deposits. There are countless examples of other sculptors, saint-makers and painters of Portuguese origin, especially from the Oporto area, who crossed the Atlantic to become established with workshops that prospered and were integrated into the local production milieu. In her research on the painters and carvers of eighteenth century Rio de Janeiro, historian Marcia Bonnet surveyed one hundred and seventy craftsmen, obtaining documental confirmation of the origins of sixty-six of them, twenty-one of whom were from the metropolis. Given that it was not possible to ascertain the totality of the origin of these professionals, this number would certainly be much higher if we were to consider their offspring.[24]

Especially in the second half of the 1700s, with the advent of rococo, the growth of Luso did not mean a lack of activity among local artists, on the contrary, as is demonstrated by the specifics of some creators, exemplified by the person of António Francisco Lisboa, known as the *Aleijadinho*. According to Rabelo, only after the 19th century was a nationalist concept of "being Brazilian" established.[25] Quites' research shows that despite the ascendance of religious sculptures demonstrating Portuguese influence during the Old Regime due to either the importation of sculptures from the metropolis or their creation in workshops directed by master saint-makers from Portugal, Brazil was to witness an increasing number of commissions for dressed sculptures to be used in the Lenten processions promoted by the Third Orders, like the ones Flexor described in Bahia; thus Brazil's own network of artists and craftsmen came to be established.[26]

Besides the Alãos, in a more contemporary period in the history of Portugal's northern region, other saint-maker dynasties were established in the border municipalities of Oporto, as indicated in recent research that traced production methods and the progression of these families. Some of them continued full production into the middle of the 20th century.[27]

[24] Among the twenty-one natives of the Portuguese Kingdom referred in her study, Bonnet found two carvers from the Azores and Madeira, two painters and gilders from Porto, four craftsmen from Lisbon (two carvers, a sculptor and a painter and gilder) and six carvers from the Archbishopric of Braga. Bonnet 2009: 53-59.

[25] Rabelo, 2006: 248.

[26] Quites, 2006: 283-288.

[27] Sá, 2002.

In the course of our doctoral research conducted in some areas of the Azores archipelago, we attempted to understand the reach of these generations of saint-makers, in terms of their ability to export sculptures to overseas territories, and concluded that at least until the end of the 19th century almost no works signed by these authors could be found.[28]

On Terceira Island, specifically in the parish church of Sao Mateus, Calheta Parish, we find an exception to the rule: a collection composed of five dressed sculptures belonging to the local Third Order procession, all of them signed by the sculptor as well as by the painter responsible for the polychromy of the work. The four older sculptures, originally from the city of Oporto (depicting St. Francis of Assisi, Queen Saint Elizabeth, Saint Margaret of Cortona, and Saint Ivo), show the date 1893 for the carving work, which was created by sculptor Celestino José de Queiroz. According to the record on the plinth of the pieces, they were painted one year later in the same locality by Diogo J. Coimbra Sampayo. Produced the following century, more precisely in 1925, the fifth sculpture, a depiction of Our Lady of Sorrows, was sculpted by a member of one of the most important lineages of saint-makers from Sao Mamede do Coronado, in the municipality of Trofa, the "Thedim" family. In 1839, this locality was part of the municipality of Maia, being incorporated in the municipality of Saint Tirso from 1852 to 1998, when it was transferred to the municipality of Trofa. For this reason, the plinth of the sculptures, which was signed by José Ferreira Thedim (1891-1971), had its place of origin in Coronado, Santo Tirso, Portugal. The Thedim dynasty's patriarch was José Ferreira Thedim (1832-1898), who handed over the business to his sons. Son José Ferreira Thedim (1866-1918) in turn had a grandson, José Ferreira Thedim, who was responsible for the signed sculptures on Terceira Island. They continued to operate the patriarch's workshop, while the youngest son, named Manuel Ferreira Thedim (1869-1903), established his own atelier in Outeiro, Sao Mamede Parish, initiating another branch of the family business.[29]

[28] Identification of the pieces as well as of the themes and designations of the figures is nearly non-existent until the first decades of the 20th century. According to Sérgio de Sá, in addition to the craftsmen, for a great number of these works of art the chain of production and marketing involved merchants and intermediaries, who frequently represented themselves as the creators of the marketed sculptures. To this we must add the various restorations that the sculptures were subjected to over the years, which could have caused many signatures to fade. Beginning in the first quarter of the 20th century, we find the workshops to be concerned with labeling the sculptures as their creations, in order to stop false identifications from occurring. Sá, 2002: 117-120.

[29] Sá, 2002: 82-83.

Aesthetic artistic components

As we perform a broad analysis of religious sculptures made for dressing, we detect a certain uniformity, especially in the technical manufacturing processes intrinsic to the joints and supports of the sculptures that are sustained by wooden rails, the *roca* sculptures, where notions of movement and realism are created via the automatism of the joints; the vital sense of realism is reinforced by scenographic accuracy, including, in addition to the backgrounds, a wardrobe and accessories such as jewelry.

The diversity of the Third Order Franciscans' hagiographic program makes it a useful example for analysis. There is a noticeable similarity among the masculine figures, particularly the representations of Saint Francis, in which we find very comparable features in the depiction of the beard and hair. In sculptures with masculine anatomy, in contrast with feminine sculptures, wigs composed of human hair are rarely used.[30] The realism of the lineament and the disposition in sculptural groups presents a theatrical dynamic that further reinforces the narrative, enhancing the emotional response from believers. The use of drops of resin to stage trickling tears and vestiges of blood, combined with the insertion of glass eyes and the use of bones and animal horns to simulate nails and teeth in the sculptures were other makeshift tactics that the saint-maker masters relied on to produce striking hagiographic narratives for each saint.

The creation of these sculptures for special use in liturgical productions of the Passion relied in some cases on very particular eccentricities, as demonstrated in the recent study of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), Mexico City, highlighting a figural sculpture of Christ, the "Lord of Patience," 1.5 meters high, from the colonial era (specifically, from the 18th century). The sculpture, in which a dental prosthesis containing eight teeth from an adult human, with the dental roots still present, was found to have been included, belongs to the church of San Bartolo Cuautlalpan, in Zumpango.[31]

In anatomical terms, the construction of these religious sculptures was linked with the practical need to create sculptural sets for processional use, in which lightness and flexibility were fundamental factors not only for

[30] It should be noted that in representations of *Senhor dos Passos*, the statue of the flagellated Christ normally has hair.

[31] http://inah.gob.mx/boletin/14-hallazgos/7285-hallazgo-en-restauracion-del-senor-de-la-paciencia, consulted on 20/09/14.

the ritual processes of dressing, but also in relation to the effort that would be exerted by the men charged with transporting the platforms, since the heavy weight of some sculptural sets would have to be sustained by considerable arm strength.[32] Structural simplification "does not necessarily mean disqualification of the sculptures from a constructive standpoint, as this is a new way to structure the body, which many times attains extreme refinement in execution of the carving work, even with fine, detailed polychromy."[33] This appears to defy common sense, since we normally think of dressing culptures as an approach to the presentation of external visible elements, i.e., representations of the head, hands, and feet, by the saint-maker.

Although in the course of our research we observed some dressed sculptures that exhibit rudimentary anatomical divisions, especially at the level of the torso, a situation that can be deduced from Friar Agostinho de Santa Maria's narrative when he speaks of sculptures with hinged arms,[34] generally the sculptures that were examined displayed considerable structural integrity, a fact that is confirmed by previous studies of this subject.

Clothing and its accessories

One of the main properties of these religious sculptures is inarguably the opulence of the textile production that is essential to their adornment (to producing the accessories that support them). With a few rare exceptions, the Franciscan penance procession collections, comprising opulent wardrobes from the 17th and 18th centuries, has not survived to the present day, for two reasons. The first had its origins in the vocational crisis that the secular Franciscan movement faced in the 19th century, which worsened in the following century, resulting in either the abandonment of many of these collections or their appropriation by other religious organizations, with all the constraints this entailed. The second is tied to the rituals of dressing sculptures. In many regions of the country, the wardrobes of the sculptures were subject to individual appropriation by the brothers, a situation that allowed several generations of families to not only take on the responsibility for dressing a specific saint, but also become faithful trustees of the clothing

[32] Chaves, 2013: 164.

[33] Quites, 2006: 253.

[34] "Here is the statue of wood roca and dresses, very rich ones she has and a headdress, with hands raised; the arms are hinged; [it] is very venerable, and with angelic modesty, and thus elicits great devotion. [It] is very well fleshed of face and hands."; Santa Maria, 1707: 352.

of these sculptures, and these garments disappeared into the oblivion to which this tradition was relegated after the beginning of the 20th century.[35]

There are, however, two cases which do not fit this rule: the aforementioned collection of sculptures for the procession of the Third Order of Mafra, sculpted by Manuel Dias, which since the end of this brotherhood in 1886 has been stored in the Mafra Convent and Basilica, in an annex under the custody of the Brotherhood of the Blessed Sacrament,[36] and the sculptural set of "Our Lady Mother of God," produced in Lisbon by an unknown author, which since 1748 has been under the protection of the Madre de Deus convent in the city of Guimarães.[37] In addition to being comprised of dressed sculptures manufactured in the 1740s, these two collections produced at the end of the Baroque Era have in common a close connection to the reign of Dom João V and the Royal Family.

The Mafra processional set, sponsored directly by royalty, benefited from the climate of opulence in Portugal during the first half of the 1700s. The Third Order brothers profited from the cultural openness shown by the court of Dom João V and the Monarch's rapprochement with the Church, to the great benefit of ecclesiastical stability.[38]

This proximity to the Royal House was expressed in the wardrobe donated for the processional sculptures, which also included donations from other reigning houses of the period, such as the gift of an adornment by the French Monarch Louis XV, patriarch of the third Order of Penance, for the figurative sculptures of "King Saint Louis": "About the 8th platform, the shirt of this dressed [sculptures] is the same [one] that was worn by the King of France, Louis XV, in his consecration and came for now, until he sends another, because if another comes this one will go to the donor of the dressed [sculptures] (…)."[39]

The pomp and care taken in dressing the sculptures remain evident not only in the final details of the manufacture of the clothing once used during liturgical ceremonies, which was donated by prominent members of the nobility and clergy, but also in the quality of the materials used in the processes

[35] Chaves, 2013: 188-190.

[36] This brotherhood is also charged with the task of directing the processions of the "Burial of the Lord" on Good Friday.

[37] Maurício, 2004: 31-32.

[38] Monteiro, 2009: 38-64.

[39] Archive of the Third Order of Mafra (AOTM), *Livro primeiro de Inventário, de tudo o que serve ao uso desta Venerável Ordem 3.ª de Mafra nas suas funções,* fl:7.

of garment manufacturing.[40] When we analyze the inventory dated 1746, we easily infer that Dom João V's sponsorship activities went beyond mere patronage to include the acquisition of sculptures and platforms. His gifts were the source of nearly the entire original wardrobe of this processional set and the eighty-five gingham habits that in 1737, three years prior to the first procession of the Third Order in this locality, were given to the Third Order brothers to wear as they followed the Corpus Christi procession that took place in the Convent of Mafra in the same year.[41]

The affinities and involvement of the Royal Family with the tradition of dressing and adorning religious sculptures were clearly expressed in their affiliation with the sculptural group entitled "Our Lady Mother of God" from Guimarães, which portrays the "Holy Family." A gift from Reverend Luís António da Costa Pego, Chaplain of D. João V, to the church of Madre de Deus convent, which was inhabited by nuns of the Order of the Poor Clare Sisters, these three sculptures arrived in Guimarães, pieces of a sculptural set consisting of a freestanding full-body sculpture representing "Baby Jesus" lying naked on his bed, and figures representing the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph respectively.

Rui Maricio, the scholar who is responsible for the description of this set in the catalogue *Nossa Senhora Madre de Deus de Guimarães: Alfaias,* characterizes the sculpture of "Baby Jesus" as standing out by virtue of the firm plasticity and correct depiction of his anatomy.[42] By contrast, according to the same author, the two remaining representations, comprised of *roca* sculptures, are portrayed only from the perspective of the visible components, namely the structural lines of the faces and quality of facial expressions, which are framed by hair: the Virgin has long blond hair, very likely natural, obtained from offerings by believers.

[40] This preoccupation with the manner of dressing the saints, namely those representing the gods, who in their passage through the earth had belonged to the nobility, is tied in a way to the influence that clothing had, and still has, in symbolizing power. We cannot forget that the period of King João's reign was marked by the reformulation of Court rituals and the resulting hierarchy of precedence, with attire having an important role in Royal appearances and how the king was seen by his subjects. Silva, 1993: 172.

[41] AOTM, *Livro primeiro de Inventário, de tudo o que serve ao uso desta Venerável Ordem 3.ª de Mafra nas suas funções,*fl:1.

[42] Maurício, 2004: 31-32.

CONCLUSIONS

In general terms, we can say that several collections of sculptures in which scenic accessories are used to complete their iconographical grammar are dispersed throughout what is now Portugal. Despite considerable developments in Brazilian historiography in the last few years, we still lack a number of specific studies that would allow us to elaborate a historiographic corpus about this subject within the scope of Art History in Portugal as well as in the countries that were colonized by Portugal during its overseas expansion in the Early Modern period. We hope that this paper will contribute to repairing this deficiency.

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Utopia on a Small Scale – Female Escapism into Miniature

Women of the social elite in Protestant-majority countries in Europe have been collecting dollhouses since the 17th century, thereby preserving an uncommon cultural document, "a realistic, three-dimensional picture … of domestic life"[1] in their time. These miniature houses, in their depictions of kitchens, living rooms, bedrooms and nurseries, primarily reveal the realm of women, as well as demonstrating the owners` habits and tastes.[2] Thus, dollhouses can be considered in connection with the contemporary gender discourse. This article will show how women positioned themselves toward normative ideas about gender roles as mirrored in the dollhouse and how the genre as such was and still is linked to gender.

Many examples from collections of female collectors suggest that women used dollhouses to re-model their lives on a small scale as a form of escape from reality. This hypothesis is not easy to verify, as it is difficult to find evidence for something so elusive as "escapism." Detailed information on the lives of female collectors is rare. To match the little we know with the depicted scenes of the dollhouse or to trace evidence of a life in the miniature form is hardly possible. Although many dollhouses suggest a compensatory function, only very few offer authentic proof. Using statements from modern collectors, I will try to bridge the time-gap and compare the Early Modern use of dollhouses

[1] Caroline Clifton-Mogg, *The Doll`s House Sourcebook* (London: Abbeville Press, 1993), 11; This article first appeared in: Women`s History Magazine, no. 63, (2/2010), s. 4-10.

[2] For general Information see: Vivien Greene and Margaret Towner, *The Vivien Greene Dolls`House Collection* (London: Cassell, 1995); Halina Pasierbska, *Dolls`Houses from the V&A Museum of Childhood* (London: V&A Publishing, 2008); Leonie von Wilckens, *Das Puppenhaus* (Munich: Verlag Georg D. W. Callwey 1978).

with 20th century use. There seem to be many similarities, which allow us to assume an ongoing cultural pattern that makes comparisons possible.

Building and collecting dollhouses is a very popular hobby in today`s English-speaking world. Countless handbooks explain how to "do it yourself," what to collect and what you may have to spend on your hobby. The current literature targets both men and women. Still, levels of interest in miniature objects show a gender-bias. While men's interest relates to miniaturization of existing architecture or interior design, aiming at technical perfection, women's approach has its source in the secondary qualities via the imaginary potential the miniature ensembles offer. With few exceptions,[3] women integrated dolls into their houses while men as constructors or collectors did not seem to see a necessity to fill their rooms with inhabitants. Perhaps the option of a narrative forms the core of the gender-difference in approaches to and use of the dollhouse miniature. It offered a platform for fantasy and play, activated by the possibility of conveying identity to the dolls and the narrative capacities of the miniature items. It created a sphere in which women remembered past times, compensated themselves for losses and re-invented themselves in a space they could occupy regardless of convention. It became a utopia in which a woman and her family would remain young and healthy, and where unfulfilled hopes could come true.

Although there have been a considerable number of collaborations between men and women in constructing dollhouses;[4] the overwhelming majority of those who have occupied themselves with miniature houses were (and are) women.[5] Often the gendering of dollhouses is already reflected in the names they carry.[6] Dollhouses were always handed down via the female line of a

[3] An exquisite exception was constructed and built by Mrs Thorne during the 1930s in Chicago. Coming from a wealthy background, she duplicated typical European and American interior decoration in miniature boxes with a clear educational purpose. Although she tried to integrate dolls into her period-rooms, she was not satisfied with the degree of realism she achieved. See Fannia Weingartner and Elizabeth Stepina**,** *Miniature rooms. The Thorne Rooms at the Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 2004).

[4] i.e. the dollhouse of Queen Mary: a collaboration between Edward Luton and his daughter. See Mary Stewart-Wilson and David Cripps, *Queen Mary's Dolls House* (London: Abbeville Pr., 1988); Peter Wheelwright and Laurie Simmons, the Kaleidoscope House 2001 (V&A Museum of Childhood, London), see Halina Pasierbska, *Dolls` Houses from*, 57; In some cases, fathers commissioned these as gifts for their daughters, encouraging their interest in miniatures. A handmade example from around 1840 is the *Brett House* (Museum of the City of New York), built by Rev. Philipp Brett, who spent two years from 1838-40 creating this house, intended as a Christmas gift for his daughters (see Constanze Eileen King, *Dolls and Doll`s Houses* (London: Hamlyn, 1977), 203).

[5] Unfortunately there are no empirical data to prove this. However, it is striking that the percentage of authors of books on dollhouses who are female is close to 95% and may mirror the proportion of female collectors or builders.

[6] Most famous dollhouses from Early Modern Europe are known by the name of their owner or by the name of the family or estate referring to their origin or the families` affiliation: The House of *Anne Sharp*/ Norwich, the house of *Anna Köferlin*, Nuremberg, the houses of *Auguste Dorothee* of Schwarzburg/

family. Usually the oldest daughter of the initial owner or her closest female relative inherited them. Only wealthy aristocratic or upper-middle class women could afford the costly miniatures, which could easily exceed the cost of a real home. But how *did* the dollhouse enter society and become such a beloved type of female hobby in particular?

Signifiers of the Self

Miniatures formed an integral part of Early Modern European collections. Integrated into so-called *cabinets of curiosities*, they shaped the core of aristocratic and bourgeois self-representation, indicating the owners' wealth, social status and knowledge.[7] While a limited public was admitted to these collections, a cabinet-keeper accompanied them. He took objects from the shelves and told stories about the pieces. For example, he explained how they had come into the collection and what meaning they bore to the owner. Already a narrative was tied to every object, forming in some way an illustration of the collector's – his or her – life.[8] When the dollhouse entered the collection, the transfer of the owner's identity to the dolls – and, by analogy, to all the other pieces referring to his or her life – was just a small step. It perfectly matched the logic of collecting to create a model of one's own life in miniature.[9]

In the mid- 16th century, dollhouses were introduced in South Germany for the first time. In Munich, Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria's multi-storey cupboard-like house presented a princely household.[10] This house displayed personalized miniatures, models of the prince and the princess identifiable by their family armor. Later developments separated the dollhouse from the collection. As a cabinet cupboard, it became the container for depictions of the world of women. The earliest English example, – the house of Ann Sharp (Norwich), given as a present by Queen Anne around 1700, – is a hybrid

Arnstadt, the house of *Petronella Oortman*/Amsterdam, the house of *Petronella de la Court*/Utrecht, the house of *Sara Ploos van Amstel*/ The Hague, *Nostell Priory* Baby-House, *Uppark* Baby-House, *Quantock*-House, the House of *Queen Mary*/London. Many more could be added. For a complete overview on English dollhouses see Pauline Flick, *The Dolls` House Book* (London: Collins, 1973), 53-56.

7 See Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, *The Origins of Museum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

8 Jill Bepler, *Ferdinand Albrecht Duke of Braunschweig-Lüneburg (1636-1687). A Traveller and his Travelogue*. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), 176.

9 It may also be possible that the personalized doll reflects the convention of integrating the patron who commissioned the work into a piece of art, as was common in other art-genres.

10 Brigitte Volk-Knüttel, 'Das Puppenhaus der Herzogin Anna von Bayern von 1558', in: Willibald Sauerländer (ed.), Die Münchner Kunstkammer, *Aufsätze und Anhänge*, (III. 2008), 285-292.

mixture of a cabinet cupboard and a dollhouse, ordered by the formal principles of a plain cupboard. It functioned not only as a box for the display of interior scenes, but also as a receptacle for the collection of further curious objects that did not fit into the housekeeping routine. As in the Munich example, the dolls in this house were personalized. Ann even tied name tags to each of them, defining them as butler, housemaid, and so on. This clearly referred to Ann's own biography and turned the cabinet-house into a memory-casket. That was probably why she held on to it all her lifetime, as noted in the following statement: "Ann continued to play with the house until her death around 1771 and bought miniatures for the rooms throughout her life,"[11] forming a prototype of artwork as a life's work. The identity of the owner and other household-members was transferred to the dolls, who acted as imaginary substitutes in the narrative frame of the miniature houses.

By the late 16th century, the dollhouse miniature had traversed social boundaries and developed beyond the realm of the aristocracy. The dollhouse phenomenon spread over Europe but it only flourished in Protestant countries, such areas as England, the Netherlands, and the free Protestant cities of Early Modern Germany, including Nuremberg. Prior to the 19th century, dollhouses were not at all toys for children but were rather the hobbyhorse of adults; the period saw "the development of adult fascination with the miniature."[12] The dollhouse also offered a forum for the display of female handcrafting. Lace making, knitting, embroidery, weaving – all were humble daily practices assigned to every female, no matter what social rank or age. Thus, the dollhouse can be considered as a variety of daily duty, a project in which women could indulge without neglecting prescribed virtuous tasks.[13]

The challenging question remains as to what the underlying motivation was for women to occupy themselves with miniatures over long periods of time,

[11] Olivia Bristol and Leslie Geddes-Brown, *Dolls' houses. Domestic life and architectural styles in miniature from the 17th century to the present day* (London: Mitchel Beazley, 1997), 38.

[12] Constance Eileen King, *The Collectors` History of Dolls` Houses* (London: Hale, 1983), XXIII.

[13] Many examples show that huge amounts of money went into commissioning and producing the dollhouses. Often architects were even engaged to design exteriors and many more people were needed to implement such an undertaking. Nevertheless from the beginning, dollhouses were used as educational instruments to prepare little girls for the duties of adult life. Gender education included learning by doing or watching the role model of the mother, gradually stepping into her duties. As hard work was not considered appropriate for upper-class girls, the dollhouse substituted for the real life and offered learning by touching without becoming dirty. Thus, the genre of the dollhouse is an expression of Early Modern knowledge systems and forms a connection between touch, visual input and (household-) knowledge. This basic principle of transferring knowledge via small objects is also valid in the cabinet of curiosities and spans across bourgeois and aristocratic use of the dollhouse. While representative and personal motives shaped the dollhouse in the 17th and 18th century, the educational aspect dominated in the 16th and 19th century.

and further, why these were so attractive to them. Can we really define an aesthetic relationship between the female and the small as Susan Steward has proposed?[14] Was it due to the dollhouses` imaginary quality that female fantasies became tied to the aesthetics of the small object? Surely the habit partly derives from long training in the handling of tiny items such as lace, cultivating a sensitive touch. It may be, also, that women's obligation to sit still for hours occupied with needlework helped form the patience needed for such elaborate and time-consuming projects. An attraction to the miniature would thus be a product of gender-conditioning through the centuries.

The following examples are intended to illustrate the imaginary potential of the dollhouse. I only consider unique, handmade pieces here, in spite of the fact that large amounts of industrially produced dollhouses were available to the middle class from the late 18th century onwards, which certainly also encouraged its members' capacities for imaginative escape. The handcrafted examples, however, carry the deep imprint of their owners' consciousness and make a stronger case for an interpretation of dollhouses as vessels for a second life. Dollhouses remain a widely popular hobby among the social elite.[15]

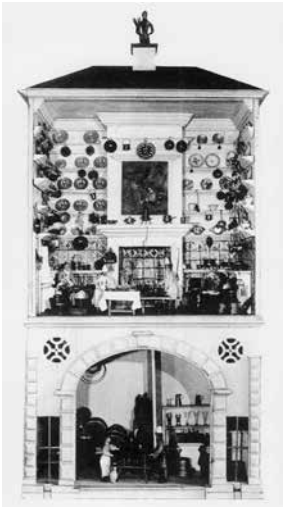

Figure1: Museum Arnstadt, Germany, *Mon Plaisir,* palace kitchen, around 1735.

The Dollhouse as Affirmation of Existing Gender Roles

In early iterations, the dollhouse mirrored the discourses on feminine duties **(Figure1)**. A clear educational purpose is visible in an early example of a bourgeois dollhouse from Nuremberg.[16] An engraving shows us what it looked like and what its main function was. It was the house of Anna Köferlin, showed her dollhouse for a small entrance fee. The house was accompanied by a text that read: "look at the house because children you shall learn hereby how to lead a proper household."[17] In Protestant areas, tracts on household roles promoted the new ideas of egalitarian companionship

[14] See Susan Stewart, *On Longing* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993).

[15] It seems highly plausible that middle-class women also started using dollhouses to record their life from the early 19th century onwards. Missing sources make it necessary to omit them here.

[16] Some early examples survived and are on display in the Germanische Nationalmuseum (GNM)/ Nuremberg. See also Heidi Mueller, *Good Housekeeping. A domestic ideal in miniature* (Nuremberg: Verlag der Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2007).

[17] Original engraving: GNM/Nuremberg, see Wilckens 1978, 2; Translation AC.

in marriage in the wake of the Reformation.[18] Appointing the role of the *major domus* to the wife, these tracts explained how the ideal household should be led in every single aspect of housekeeping, such as supervising and treating the servants, managing food-supplies and health care. While men had to oversee farming, wood supplies and finance, women's job was the organisation of the household as part of the normative ideal. Order and cleanliness were defined as the virtues befitting her her responsibility.[19] These housefather and housemother tracts were popular in Protestant areas only – as were dollhouses. Their enthusiastic reception led to a firm implementation of gendered roles in women's self-evaluation and their visual depiction in form of the miniature house.[20]

The dollhouse of Anna Köferlin, as well as those among her famous companions from Nuremberg,[21] were publicly displayed and could be compared to a real home. Although the interior design, in its perfection and invariability, was an ideal, the order and cleanliness displayed must have corresponded to the real-life expectations of that time and milieu. Thus, use of the miniature shows women taking pride in their position, their responsibility and their status. It does not imply any kind of criticism towards existing gender relations. On the contrary, the display of feminine duties in the medium of the dollhouse-miniature is an affirmation of those relations.

Several layers of meaning can be found in the same object: Anna Köferlin had buried her only two children. The educational aim of the dollhouse could have been partly inspired by her loss. Since she had no children of her own to whom she could convey her knowledge, she chose to teach all children by displaying the dollhouse, possibly as a form of compensation. Although the educational impact is clearly the primary concern, this ex-ample also shows the potential emotionally compensatory function of the miniature house.

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[18] Heide Wunder, *He is the sun, she is the moon. Women in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

[19] Heidi Mueller, the curator of the Nuremberg Dollhouses convincingly stressed the connection between a local tract on the role of the housemother and the visual interpretation of the content in the dollhouses. What has been proved here may well account for the house of Anna Köferlin and the genre more broadly. Heidi Mueller, *Good Housekeeping*.

[20] Even in today` s literature on dollhouses the gendering of rooms and their functions in the house are not questioned: "The mistress of the house has her parlour … above [the kitchen] where she can sew or spin … the little girl stands by an embroidery frame." Michal Morse, *Build a Doll`s House* (London: Anova Books, 1992), 21.

[21] See Heidi Mueller, *Good Housekeeping*.

Traces of Biography

The clearest depiction of a life in miniature is represented by the dollhouse collection "Mon Plaisir" in Arnstadt/Germany. Having become a childless widow in 1716, Duchess Auguste Dorothee from Schwarzburg-Arnstadt (1666-1751) spent the remaining 35 years of her life at Castle Augustenburg, surrounding herself with a large courtly household of up to one-hundred servants, including actors and an orchestra for courtly distraction, leisure and pleasure – all of which can be found in her miniature world. The duchess herself planned, commissioned and built three-dimensional models of almost every kind of cultural life that surrounded her. One third of the scenes are depictions of her court, showing official receptions, leisure activities or logistical supplies of the courtly household. Other cabinet cases show urban scenes such as a market, a mail station, a fountain and Early Modern fair attractions, as well as several crafts. The dolls that "inhabit" the scenes are easily distinguishable by their dresses, visually marking them as belonging to either the farmers, the bourgeoisie or the aristocracy. We presume that the single cabinets were organized along a gallery depicting a street and were connected via balconies. The dolls "lived" inside as well as outside the boxes and if we believe an eyewitness, they could be identified partly as portraits of the ducal household. Female dolls dominate most scenes, in recognizably feminine room arrangements, obviously reflecting the duchess's widow court.

The scholarly literature has failed to link the life of the duchess extensively with her collection of dollhouses. So far, her motive for establishing this huge number of miniatures has simply been reduced to the absolute extravagance of a member of the high aristocracy. However, Auguste Dorothee had many personal reasons for establishing such a great and uncommon collection. Since she had not produced an heir for the Schwarzburg family, her territory was bequeathed to the brother of her late husband, the Count of Schwarzburg–Sondershausen. Social decline and financial problems were the result, and it was precisely in these difficult circumstances that she started building and commissioning her "doll city." The duchess-doll appears several times, depicted in official court-situations such as holding audiences or other ceremonies, representing the widow as ruling duchess. "Mon Plaisir" as such was a comment on her personal situation as a result of political developments. It was also an expression of her claim to power as former sovereign of the principality and a statement of her belonging to high aristocracy as well as a memory-piece.

The 'successful' mother – nursery in the dollhouse

One starting point for dealing with miniature houses was the social, moral and religious duty of biological reproduction. The experiences of pregnancy, birth and motherhood, accompanied by the frequent experience of death, are repeatedly referenced in child-bed scenes and nurseries. Several women-collectors were childless and had thus "failed" at motherhood.[22] When the rooms referring to motherhood were conceptualised by young women, the depictions recorded female family history or were supposed to anticipate motherhood in the future, while nurseries constructed by elderly mothers might remember the happy days when the children were small, or nurseries made by childless widows could compensate for their failure or loss. Many houses refer to the topic implicitly, as in the case of Anna Köferlin, while others show it explicitly.

"Mon Plaisir" mentions the childless life of the duchess-doll. A very richly equipped scene shows an obviously aristocratic childbed, where a young mother receives a visitor after having given birth to a child **(Figure 2)**. Auguste Dorothee's personal fate would probably have been a lot better if her husband had left her as ruling duchess of an underage son or at least as mother of the ruling Duke. Thus having "failed" in this matter seems to have been the central fact of her life. This scene opens up a different interpretation of what is usually viewed as a representative piece and turns it into a compensation for the mother's life that she was not able to lead. Her dollhouses could be a substitute for unfulfilled life-expectations and emotional needs. She literally created the miniature rooms as an imaginative space to lead a wealthy and prosperous imaginary life as a mother and ruling duchess, a life she partly never had and partly would no longer have in reality.

Figure 2: Museum Arnstadt, Germany, *Mon Plaisir,* childbed.

The famous dollhouse-cabinet from 1676, now in the Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam, was constructed and furnished by Petronella Dunois (1650-1695), who was also childless. The child-bed scene of her house held twin baby dolls.[23] We do not have further information on her life; we can only guess

[22] For example "Nostell Priory", built around 1735-1740 by Lady Winn, wife of the Fourth Baronet and her spinster sister Miss Henshaw, who "took overall responsibility for the soft furnishings and made most of them with their own hands" (Nora Earnshaw, *Collecting Dolls' Houses and Miniatures* (London: Collins, 1989), 12); The same applies to the famous dollhouse of Sara-Ploos van Amstel-Rothé/Frans Halsmuseum Haarlem between 1730-50. See Runia Epco, *Sara Poos van Amstel-Rothé – Poppenhuis* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1998).

[23] Jet Pijzel-Dommisse, *The 17th century Dolls` houses of the Rijksmuseum* (Amsterdam: V+K Publishing/ Inmerc B.V., 1994), 38.

the intended meaning of the scene. Perhaps there were twins among her close relatives, perhaps she had suffered a miscarriage or had had twins who died at an early age. Alternatively, perhaps she just liked to imagine being the mother of twins. Another famous collector, the Lutheran Petronella Oortman (1656-1716), had suffered the death of her first baby. Although she had four more children in her second marriage, she integrated a room for mourning into her dollhouse, which at a later stage was turned into a library. A contemporary painting shows the original setting where dolls in black are grouped around a coffin, while a miniature painting shows Christ welcoming the little children.[24] Her dollhouse also had a childbed and a nursery-room pointing to female duties and experiences, but the mourning-scene stresses the house's function as a memorial piece.

The Personalised Dollhouse in the 20th Century

From the beginning of the 19th century dollhouses became predominantly the domain of little girls, for whom they functioned as educational toys. Apart from industrial production of dollhouses, the medium as such remained – in countable figures – as a handmade foible of adult women. As the medium was recaptured from its enlightened function as a pedagogic instrument, its value as a platform changed. While the 17th and 18th century displays remained visually close to the real interiors of their time, the medium was now also open to pure decorative fantasy. Although the dollhouse was still used (and still is) as a memorial box, recording past life, it turned into an extravagant setting for self-invention and self-fashioning on the one hand and a platform for critical remarks on gendered roles in society on the other.[25]

Three quite different pieces caught my attention: The fairy-dollhouse of Colleen Moore (1900-1988), a Hollywood actress, the work of the 1970s artist Laurie Simmons (born 1949) called 'In and around the House' and the dollhouses of the illustrator and writer Tasha Tudor (1915-2008).

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[24] Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum; the painting is by Jacob Appel, see Jet Pijzel-Domisse, *The 17th century Dolls`houses of the Rijksmuseum*, 28; For information on Petronella Oortman see also the digital collection of Dutch women`s biographies: http://www.inghist.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/DVN/lemmata/data/Oortman.

[25] The most famous dollhouse is surely the one in Buckingham Palace, constructed for Queen Mary in the early 1920s. In a modernized form, it represents Early Modern subalterns loyalty to the ruler, expressed by miniature gifts. It does not belong to the category I am concerned with as the owner neither designed it nor influenced the design. See Mary Stewart-Wilson, *Queen Mary's Dolls House* (London: Abbeville Pr., 1988).

Colleen Moore, a famous actress of silent film of the 1920s, had her dollhouse built by more than one hundred people between 1928 and 1937; its design derived mainly from the film sets of Hollywood.[26] After the "fairy castle" was finished, the huge dollhouse with its eclectic style showing oriental influence travelled across America and was on display all over the country. It brought in more than half a million dollars in ticket sales, which the owner gave to children's charities. The house has no doll-inhabitants. Colleen wanted to leave the rooms (although pre-structured as bathrooms, living-rooms etc.) unoccupied, leaving them to the imagination of the viewer. The literature on this fairy-dollhouse tells us the story of the house combined with the story of her life. The curators of the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, where it is hosted today, link the production of the piece to her biography and interpret it as compensation for loss: "The castle was built … when Colleen Moore was recovering from a failed marriage."[27] As in its baroque predecessors, here the themes of motherhood and successful marriage as the underlying foundations of the dollhouse are repeatedly in evidence, enhanced by the fact that the money went towards children in need. As we do not have any comments from the owner, we can only guess at the accuracy of such a diagnosis. In her case, the dollhouse does not resemble a real house with real furniture, but a fantasy world that rather reflects the imaginary qualities of Hollywood – a different kind of flight from unhappy reality.

The case of Tasha Tudor`s Dollhouse was markedly different. Tudor, who apparently started her "miniature version of her highly original life she was living," [28] when she was seven years old, and maintained it as a life-companion until very old age. "Tasha, to this day (1999), maintains an active interest in the parallel life her dollhouse represents." Significantly, a book on her dollhouse is entitled *A Lifetime in Miniature*. While becoming famous during the '40s and '50s as an illustrator of children`s books, Tudor created a parallel life in the dollhouse, in which every room and every miniature item not only resembled an existing room or thing in her real house, but were exact copies of their life-size counterparts. Proportions and size were measured and translated into miniature by architects. Whenever something new was acquired, the miniaturized item followed and went into the dollhouses. Surprisingly the two dolls

[26] *Within the fairy castle- Colleen Moore´s Doll House at the museum of science and industry* (Chicago: The Museum of Science and Indu, 1997), 13. Architect Horace Jackson and decorator Harold Grieve had both designed her real house, while her cameraman Henry Freulich was responsible for the light in the fairy castle.

[27] *Within the fairy castle*, 10, 16. More than 100 people were commissioned by Colleen between 1928-37, the fairy castle rising to a cost of $500,000. The castle contains more than 2000 miniatures.

[28] Harry Davies, *Tasha Tudor`s Dollhouse. A Lifetime in Miniature* (Boston: Little, Brown And Co, 1999), XI.

that inhabited the houses do not carry the same names as their owner and her husband. They are called Emma and Thaddeus. Emma functions as "an alter ego for Tasha."[29] The two main characters of the house have portrait heads but they are not portraits of living people, rather an expression of the aesthetic ideals of the collector-artist Tasha Tudor. The usual structure of a dollhouse – kitchen, living room, nursery, and bedroom – is expanded in her dollhouse and shows a winter garden, a stable for goats and a Christmas scene, representing re-occurring episodes that Tasha seems to have enjoyed as part of the yearly cycle. This dollhouse was developed over 80 years and it shows an "abiding interest that weathered all the changing circumstances of a private and professional life, and today they form a remarkable collection that mirrors a remarkable life." Again we find a parallel constructed in the literature between the owner and her doll. "Tasha's Parlor at Corgi Cottage [real home] is … seldom used … It is the same in the dollhouse. Emma and Thaddeus are most often found in the library. When they do have tea in the parlor, it is a special event."[30] The fusion of Tasha's real life and the "life" of her Tasha-doll reaches a bewildering degree when the parallel narration leads from the imagined into the real world: the bedroom, for example, contains a picture showing a "Portrait of Emma painted in Paris and sent as a Christmas present to Tasha."[31] The doll gives Christmas gifts! Emma, the doll, has the same preferences as her artist-mother; she likes to read, paint and play music.

Tasha invented a second life for herself, a life in which her ideal husband prevailed when her second real husband was gone (as were their children). Her escapism appears to be inspired not by a dreadful life but simply by a fondness for telling and imagining stories. Freezing life at a certain moment in time seems to be the basic goal; life in the house, unlike the outer reality, can always repeat itself. It is an ageless life as part of a personal memory culture, without end; a happy version of the life of Dorian Gray.

A Critical Glance at the Role of the Housewife

The odd one in our row of dollhouses is the series of pictures made by the artist Laurie Simmons in the 1970s.[32] Simmons experimented with single

[29] Davies, *Tasha Tudor`s Dollhouse*, XII.

[30] Davies, *Tasha Tudor`s Dollhouse*, 33; Even the photos shown compare the real person or room with the miniature version.

[31] Davies, *Tasha Tudor`s Dollhouse*, 66.

[32] Laurie Simmons and Carol Squiers, *Laurie Simmons. In and around the house; photographs 1976-78* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003).

miniature objects at first. For example a chair, a woman and their relation to one another in undefined space. Gradually, the artist set up a whole house in her studio with different rooms in which one nameless female doll appeared **(Figure 3)**. The resulting photos are most remarkable in their reflection of the role of the female in the house. The woman-doll is placed among typical interior objects such as a sofa, a bed, or a television. The domestic subject on the surface of the pictures emanates a deep separation between the doll-figurine and the interior, as if the doll would not belong where it has been placed without being asked. The artist, like most other owner-collectors of dollhouses, comes from an upper middle class family, so that that sociological condition is again met. In contrast to her predecessors, in her real life Simmons chose, as a young woman in the '70s, to turn her back on the traditional life, but obviously not without internal ambivalence. When she came into contact with miniatures by chance as an adult woman, she deliberately bought exact copies of toys and miniatures she had had as a child and thus integrated her own upbringing and her memories into her pieces of art. In a second medial refraction of the photographed image, she "simultaneously referenc[ed] both general stereotypes and her own personal memories."[33] While using natural light that travelled around the dollhouse, she imitated the experience of standing in front of the real house and its objects. The static element of the dollhouse scene is captured in the photo, whereas the haptic moment, the tactile sensation and the possible intrusion are lost. Simmons described in her own words how she started to use the dollhouse scenery as a retreat from reality: "Amidst the social and financial chaos of my life and my studio, a calmer place began to emerge in my pictures."[34] It is a modern form of escapism, but one that strangely retreats to a cold, hostile house, in which the woman-doll seems to be disconnected and displaced. The doll is shown completely still and motionless in most of the pictures, looking captured and unhappy as if critically commenting on her role but with no possible escape in sight. The doll's ambivalence culminates in the kitchen setting, as a traditional room for the female in the house. Here the doll performs a headstand

Figure 3: Laurie Simmons, *In and around the house* (1976-78).

[33] Simmons and Squiers, *Laurie Simmons,* 7.

[34] Simmons and Squiers, *Laurie Simmons,* 19.

with moving legs, while the kitchen utensils lie scattered around in a mess. The displacement of the modern woman-doll culminates in her active refusal to execute female duties. The house is a representation of women's role in gendered society. It is a vessel in miniature for both affirmation and rejection of the appointed role-model. It captures a transition period in between role models, in which no harmony has yet been reached.

Conclusion

Many more examples could be added. Countless collectors try to rebuild their own childhood.[35] A strong motive often is a loss in the past and the desire to heal this loss by replaying the experience and possibly healing it, rewriting their own past. What we have found by looking at several dollhouses since the 17th century is a repeating pattern. Some common aspects are striking. Throughout centuries, wealthy women from Protestant areas took to constructing, commissioning and building miniature houses and interiors with dolls. These houses often resembled their own homes, and the dolls were imagined to be them. The scenes depicted represented the traditional domain of women, gendered spaces such as the kitchen, nursery, living room and bedroom. Besides the aspect of fulfilling their virtuous duty according to the ideology of perpetual busy-ness and the production of dollhouses as a part of leisure occupation, dollhouses always unknowingly included the owners` views on the normative ideal and their appointed role. While baroque dollhouses embody the pride of the successful housewife, the 20th century miniature house is also used as a medium for critical reflection on gendered roles. Where the critical potential of the medium has evolved through the centuries, a common feature of all dollhouses has been their potential for escapism and capacity as a medium of compensation. Three main approaches seem to be possible which are reflected in the examples I have examined. Colleen Moore`s fairy tale dollhouse can be understood as a project to compensate for emotional loss. Self-sufficient Tasha Tudor's dollhouse is part of a personal memory culture and exhibits her private life in a playful manner. Laurie Simmons, in her miniature, created a place of retreat and formulated a criticism of the dominant gender relations structure at the same time. Their baroque predecessor Auguste Dorothee seems

[35] The singer Barbara Streisand collects dolls and builds houses and streets for them; this is clearly connected to her own experiences: "I built a doll shop for my dolls because when I was a kid my doll was a hot water bottle. When you don't have things, you have to use your imagination." http://www.female-first.co.uk/celebrity/Barbra+Streisand-28733.html, 17.11.2009.

to have been able to integrate all three aspects into her "Mon Plaisir." The paradox of the dollhouse derives from the fact that every single aspect exists parallel to the others and is nevertheless accompanied in most cases by an educational idea. While the educational side of the presentation points to an audience, the work is focused on the introspective nature of the person. Early modern examples show an integrative life-model, depicting a successful and repeatable life, whereas modern examples mirror individual life, deliberately unrepeatable. The dollhouse serves a whole range of different concepts. Its great potential to form a means of re-inventing and re-fashioning or re-modelling one's own past turns it into a lasting utopia on a small scale.

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A Great Theater of Things. *Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus)* by Willem van Mieris

Figure 1: Willem van Mieris, *Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus)*, 1718

In one of the least frequented rooms of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, where eighteenth-century Dutch art is exhibited, there hangs an intriguing painting by Willem van Mieris **(Figure 1)**, a work of great interest to both historians of the theater and iconologists. It shows the interior of a cluttered Dutch country kitchen in which a ragged itinerant, a "Savoyard" showman, displays a strange object to a most amused peasant family.

Willem van Mieris (1662-1747) was the son of Frans van Mieris, a Golden Age portrait and genre painter from Leiden.[1] Willem followed a tradition already obsolete in his time, namely, the style of so-called *fijnschilders*: painters such as Gerrit Dou, Gabriel Metsu or Godfried Schalcken, who painstakingly and successfully reproduced reality in a meticulous manner, applying complex and exquisite techniques (the surfaces of their paintings looked perfectly smooth), and paying careful attention to detail.[2] The work in question was commissioned in 1718 by an important art connoisseur and collector from Leiden, Allard de la Court, who paid a surprisingly large amount of money for it – (one thousand guilders) and praised it

[1] Cf. *Frans van Mieris, 1635-1681*, edited by Quentin Buvelot (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 2005).

[2] Cf. Peter Hecht, *De Hollandse fijnschilders. Van Gerard Dou tot Adriaen van der Werff* (Amsterdam–Den Haag: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam en Gary Schwartz SDU, 1989).

highly[3]. Its original title, designated by Van Mieris himself, was *'t Fraay Curieus* (A Beautiful Curiosity). Nowadays, it is usually referred to in Dutch as *De rare-kiek*: The Raree-Show.

Raree-shows – History and Mystery

Raree-shows represent a unique, as yet not properly researched,[4] form of historical, puppet-like theatre, popular folk performances, registered only in relatively few textual and iconographical sources. In different languages they were referred to as *retable* (French), *reredos* and *retablo* (Spanish), *kijkkast* and *rarekiek* (Dutch). In English they were also called cabinets of curiosities or curiosity boxes, most probably following the French expression: *la curiosité*.

Figure 2: *O Rare Schow*, anonymous Dutch (?) print after Egbert van Heemskerck the Younger based on Richard Brakenburgh's painting (Figure 19), ca. 1675-1700

We only know for certain that raree-shows were wooden cabinets resembling altarpieces. When opened, a raree looked like a triptych with numerous separate compartments (partitions), actually small scenic spaces in which either painted or carved panels, but above all, little puppets were displayed to the viewers. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century such cabinets **(Figure 2)** were used by storytellers wandering around Europe who earned their bread by entertaining the people both in town streets and in the countryside, competing with charlatans, jugglers, conjurers, trained monkeys and jumping bears. They tried to catch the attention of people who would be eager to watch, listen (and, naturally, spend some copper coins) by playing a musical instrument and shouting "'*t Fraay* Curieus"[5] – these words

[3] Cornelia Willemijn Fock, "Willem van Mieris en zijn mecenas Pieter de la Court van der Voort," *Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, Vol. II (1983), 277-278; Theodoor Herman Lunsingh Scheurleer, Albert Jan van Dissel, Cornelia Willemijn Fock, *Het Rapenburg: geschiedenis van een Leidse gracht*, deel II: *De Paplepel* (Leiden: Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1987), 368-378.

[4] The few works on the subject are as follows: *John Earl Varey, Historia de los títeres en España (desde sus orígenes hasta mediados del siglo XVIII)* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1957), 82-90; Henryk Jurkowski, *Dzieje teatru lalek, od antyku do romantyzmu* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1970), 62-65; idem, *A History of the European Puppetry: From its Origins to the End of the 19th Century*, collaborating editor: Penny Francis (Lewiston: The Edwin Meller Press, 1996), 69-84; *idem, Przemiany ikonosfery. Wizualny kontekst sztuki teatru* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2009), 57-59; Richard Balzer, *Peepshows: A Visual History* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Incl., Publishers, 1998), 22-27; Piotr Oczko, "Patrzcie, rzecz to osobliwa, rzecz to piękna i prawdziwa! Retabla – tajemnicze teatry lalek w dawnej Europie", in: *Literatura renesansowa w Polsce i Europie. Studia dedykowane Profesorowi Andrzejowi Borowskiemu*, red. J. Niedźwiedź et al. (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2016), 517-542. Moreover, when this article had been already written, another book by Henryk Jurkowski was published, being a revised version (in English) of his study: *Dzieje teatru lalek. Od antyku do „belle epoque"*. (Lublin: Teatr im. Hansa Christiana Andersena w Lublinie, 2014).

[5] *Nederlandse kunst in het Rijksmuseum 1700-1800*, deel 3, edited by Reinier Baarsen, Robert-Jan te Rijdt,

Figure 3: *The Raree Show.* Sung by Jemmy Laroch in the Musical Interlude of the Peace of Utrecht, anonymous British print after Egbert van Heemskerck the Younger based on Richard Brakenburgh's painting (Figure 19), 1713

Figure 4: Bartolomeo Vivarini, *Madonna of Humility*, ca. 1465, tempera and gold on wood

being the original title of the painting discussed. They would open their raree-show and start to recite a story or sing a song. The cabinet and its visual contents were only a part of the entertainment, in which the talents and the oral skills of a showman mattered most. In other words, a raree-show was just a pretext for a vivid narration **(Figure 3)**.[6]

The origins of raree-shows are not clear. In his most inspiring book, *A History of the European Puppetry*, Henryk Jurkowski presents a very interesting and convincing hypothesis: raree-shows, he claims, were initially small portable gothic altarpieces **(Figure 4)**, which, after falling out of fashion, were taken over by the itinerant storytellers.[7] This theory is supported by the following evidence: the Spanish word for a raree-show is a *re-tablo*, rooted in Latin *retrotabulo* and meaning an altarpiece. The first historical documents in which raree-shows are described tell us that both the cabinets and the oral performances which accompanied them were of an exclusively religious character – most often their themes included the nativity of Christ or his passion. The division of the raree-shows into many separate compartments or "scenic spaces" reflected the divisions of gothic altarpieces and, above all, imitated the medieval iconographic way of presenting many different scenes at the same time and in the same place. Finally, raree-shows followed an old tradition of preachers referring in their sermons to various church objects (e.g. paintings or sculptures) as illustrations.[8] Although the majority of the earliest records mentioning raree-shows – the very first dating from 1538[9] – come from Spain, researchers suspect that this type of performance might have actually been imported from Italy or France.[10]

However, it is certain that another type of a raree-show came from Italy to Spain: the *mondo nuovo*, translated into Spanish

Frits Scholten; met bijdr. van Dirk Jan Biemond *et al*. (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 2006), 54.

6 Balzer, *Peepshows*…, 26.

7 Jurkowski, *A History*…, 70-74.

8 Jurkowski, *Przemiany ikonosfery*…, 57-59; Karolina Targosz, *Korzenie i kształty teatru do 1500 roku w perspektywie Krakowa* (Kraków: Secesja, 1995), 194-241; Vincenzo De Bartholomaeis, *Le origini della poesia drammatica Italiano,* Vol. I (Torino: Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1952), 328-330.

9 Varey, *Historia de los títeres...*, 82. The author mentions, however, a mechanical raree-show, a *retablo mecánico*, which must have had some simple, just painted, non-mechanical predecessors.

10 Varey, *Historia de los títeres...*, 82; Jurkowski, *A History...*, 72-74.

as *mundinuevo* (new world). These dealt mostly with secular subjects, often not approved of by Church authorities, and consequently made the Inquisition suspicious. In turn, *mundinuevos* found their way to the Spanish colonies in both Americas, where they evolved into other theatrical and non-theatrical forms. In the Spanish *Diccionario de Autoridades* (1726-1739) *mundinuevo* is described in the following manner:

> ... a certain box in the shape of a cabinet, carried by a Savoyard; it opened into three parts and within it little moving figures were seen; inserting a key into a hole he turned an iron handle which made the figures revolve while he sang a ballad. Others suggest that you look through a glass which enlarges the objects, and you see various landscapes passing by with palaces, gardens and other things.[11]

This passage, written almost at the same time as when Van Mieris painted his *'t Fraay Curieus*, draws our attention to a couple of aspects of the *mundinuevo*. The figures, operated by a simple mechanism, like a flat revolving disc or a handle,[12] could move, which allows us to call them mechanical puppets. Of course, their movement must have been quite limited: for example, to revolving from right to left. Mechanical raree-shows were mentioned in the oeuvre of Miguel de Cervantes, for instance in his short drama *El retablo de las maravillas* (*The Marvellous Puppet Show*, ca. 1610) and, especially, in *Don Quixote*, in which a whole chapter is devoted to the puppet performance of Master Pedro:

> Don Quixote and Sancho obeyed him and went to where the show was already put up and uncovered, set all around with lighted wax tapers which made it look splendid and bright. When they came to it Master Pedro ensconced himself inside it, for it was he who had to work the puppets, and a boy, a servant of his, posted himself outside to act as showman and explain the mysteries of the exhibition, having a wand in his hand to point to the figures as they came out. And so, all who were in the inn being arranged in front of the show, some of them standing, and Don Quixote, Sancho, the page, and cousin, accommodated with the best places, the interpreter began to say what he will hear or see who reads or hears the next chapter.[13]

[11] Varey, *Historia de los títeres...*, 86; the above translation quoted from Jurkowski, *A History...*, 73.

[12] H. Jurkowski, *A History...*, 76.

[13] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *The History of Don Quixote*, Vol. 2, Part 26, trans. John Ormsby, quoted from http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5946, last accessed September 20, 2014.

Figure 5: Willem van Mieris, *Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus)*, 1718

Figure 6: *Raree-show*, hand-coloured lithograph, ca. 1830

Figure 7: Noel le Míre, *La Curiosite*, print after an oil painting by Richard Brakenburgh (Figure 19), ca. 1770

Figure 19: Richard Brakenburgh, *An Itinerant Showman*, ca. 1692

Master Pedro, hidden behind a curtain, moves the puppets – "pasteboard figures" (*figurillas de pasta*) in a raree-show while his helper comments upon them, making the oral narration about Don Gaiferos and Lady Melisendra the central aspect of the show. These must therefore be simple mechanical puppets.

However, the raree-show painted by Van Mieris contains nothing in its compartments but reliefs, carved in wood or made of papier-mâché, plaster or wax, painted in bright colors and representing scenes from an unidentified chivalric romance (riders, noblemen, kings, probably some exotic royal court[14] – **Figure 5**). This, together with other iconographical and textual sources, leads us to the conclusion that raree-shows evolved in a huge variety of forms, containing both movable and non-movable figures or painted and carved scenes. Here another important issue arises: if a "Savoyard" had had only a single set of such reliefs, his performance would have been limited to one story, an unreasonable tactic from the commercial point of view, especially if the audience was big and hungry for more. I strongly suspect that the reliefs in the compartments of the cabinet were removable and interchangeable. Mechanical puppets were much easier to deal with: a mere change of costumes could completely transform the figures and even enable the showman to switch from a religious story to a secular one.[15]

A colored lithograph from approximately 1830 **(Figure 6)** shows a "Savoyard" turning the crank beneath the cabinet, either putting the puppets in motion or starting the barrel organ in the box beneath. In other iconographical sources, he is certainly manipulating some device at the back of a raree-show **(Figure 7, Figure 19)**. In a colored wood engraving from around 1840 **(Figure 8)**, we see a storyteller commenting upon the painted images in a raree-show. Henryk Jurkowski quotes many historical records which may refer to a similar kind of folk performances – German *Himmelreich* (Empire of Heaven) or English *motion*.[16]

[14] All attempts to find the story (stories) presented in this raree-show have failed. Except for the upper middle compartment depicting a big bird in front of a monarch (?) they are quite conventional and could refer to many narrations. We cannot rule out the possibility that Van Mieris simply used his fantasy and imagination, not having any specific, real raree-show in mind.

[15] Varey, *Historia de los títeres...*, 83.

[16] Jurkowski, *A History…*, 74-84.

Unfortunately, the vagueness and scarceness of descriptions does not let one draw more definite conclusions. There must have been a whole group of performances in which the narration, storytelling, singing or reciting served only as a comment upon the contents of the cabinet on display. The box could contain the relics of saints (often offered for sale later), medals, coins, wonders of nature – fossils, shells, bones (obviously, corresponding to the phenomenon of the cabinet of curiosities).[17] Or sometimes there was no wooden box at all, just a set of images painted on a screen or cloth which was held up high, as in the late-Baroque paintings by Alessandro Magnasco representing so called *cantastorie* (sung narrations). Such a performance may be also seen in the illustration from a Dutch almanac for children from 1804 **(Figure 9)** or in a Dutch ceramic plate from around 1880 **(Figure 10)**. This theatrical tradition can generally be defined as treating an iconographical subject and being accompanied by a narration. The subjects of these works varied a lot. The first were religious, while later pious fables gave way to secular ones, taken for example from the *chansons de geste*, or even political and social satires.

Figure 8: *Raree-show*, coloured wood engraving, ca. 1840

Figure 9: Print for children from *Prentjes Almanach voor Kinderen; Voor het Schrikkel-Jaar 1804*, Amsterdam 1804 (detail)

Figure 10: Dutch ceramic plate, Utrecht, ca. 1800

A "Savoyard" Voice

The ethnicity of the performers wandering around Europe with raree-shows on their backs is somehow unclear. In the Netherlands and England they were usually called "Savoyards" but this does not necessarily imply that they actually came from Savoy, as "Savoyard" was a common expression referring to all speakers of French. This fact appears to undermine the previous hypothesis according to which the oral skills of the showmen were emphasised: telling and hearing being superior to showing and seeing. If the narration was really meant to be a primary source of entertainment, how could the "Savoyards" possibly depend mainly on their storytelling when confronted with foreign peasants who did not know any French, and moreover, spoke numerous dialects? Probably they learnt their performances by heart in basic English, Dutch or German (as did the actors from the English theater companies active on the Continent),

[17] Balzer, *Peepshows…*, 24.

Figure 19: Richard Brakenburgh, *An Itinerant Showman*, ca. 1692

used gestures extensively, and could not have interacted much with their audience. Here is a sample of the language they spoke – in this case a flamboyant mixture of Dutch and French:

> Ha ha! Messieurs & Mesdames! Daar sien um al wee-romme de Savoiaarte, in de ordre parfaitement, met de Rarekiek, met de nouvelles Pieces, o so mooi! Fraai curieus! Keeve wel akte![18]

Figure 3: *The Raree Show.* Sung by Jemmy Laroch in the Musical Interlude of the Peace of Utrecht, anonymous British print after Egbert van Heemskerck the Younger based on Richard Brakenburgh's painting (Figure 19), 1713

The Raree Show. Sung by Jemmy Laroch in the Musical Interlude of the Peace of Utrecht **(Figure 3)**, a broadside from 1713 satirizing the effects of the treaty, may provide us with some more clues. It touches peripherally upon the new perspectives opening in English-French political relations which, in the context of a raree-show, seem like an old wives' tale. The title of the print mentions James Laroche, a famous London singer and actor (probably of French origin) who started his artistic career as a child, though it is quite impossible that he really performed such a song. Laroche (ca. 1680 – ca. 1710) must have already been dead before the treaty of Utrecht.[19] Moreover, the engraving cannot be depicting him, as has long been believed,[20] because it is based on a Dutch print by Egbert van Heemskerck the Younger, which in turn took its inspiration from a painting by Richard Brakenburgh **(Figure 19)**.[21]

The nine stanzas below the engraving are as follows:

> O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Show, who, see my fine Show, O Raree Show who see my pretty Show.

[18] Quoted from the website "Early Visual Media," last accessed September 20, 2014, http://www.visual-media.eu/vue-optique.html

[19] Julian Marshall, "James Laroche," in: *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. II, edited by George Grove (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900), 92; Balzer, *Peepshows...*, 23; Curator's comment at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3061123&partId=1&searchText=raree-show&images=on&page=1, last accessed September 20, 2014.

[20] Marshall, "James Laroche"; Balzer, *Peepshows...*, 23.

[21] The same regards an earlier anonymous Dutch (?) print *O Rare Schow* from ca. 1675-1700 (Fig. 2), being the mirror reflection of the engraving from 1713.

1.
Here's de English & French to each oder most Civil,
Shake hands and be Friends and hugg like a Devil:
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

2.
Here be de Savoyards a trudging thro' France,
To sweep a de Shimney to Sing and to Dance.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

3.
Here be a great Turk and de great King of no Land,
A Galloping bravely from Hungary and Poland.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

4.
Here's de brave English Beau for de Packet bot tarries,
To go make his Campain vid his Taylor at Paris,
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

5.
Here be de honest Capitain a cursing de Peace,
Here's anoder disbanding his Coach and his Miss.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

6.
Here be de English Ships bring Plenty and Riches,
And dere de French Caper a mending his Breeches.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

7.
Here de jachs set out Lights and dissemble,
And here be de Mob make musquilter and tremble.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

8.
Here be de Sea Captain a reeling a shore,
Here's one spend all his Pay and boarding a Whore.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

9.
Here be de brave Trainbands a drinking Carouses,
And here be de Souldiers astorming deir Spouses.
O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Gallant a Show.

The above text is interesting for several reasons. Firstly, while operating as satire, it also reveals the variety of subjects treated in "Savoyard" performances, with its references to faraway "exotic" lands like Hungary and Poland and potentially "scandalous" topics intended to seize the interest of the broadest or least-educated audience – e.g. the sea captain "boarding a whore." Secondly, it may give us a sense of the story-telling techniques used by these itinerant showmen. They would probably point at a given scene presented in a raree-show ("here," "here's") and shout out a few rhymed lines describing the image. Thirdly – and this may be the most crucial point – this text undoubtedly imitates the macaronic, stylized language spoken by the "Savoyards" (in this case a kind of English, though we can easily imagine equivalent variants of local languages in Germany, the Netherlands, etc.). French or French-influenced vocabulary (such as "musquilter", "Beau for de Packet bot tarries") is deliberately included in the English stanzas; grammatical mistakes are quite evidently emphasized ("Here's one spend all his Pay"), moreover, there is also an obvious attempt to render the speaker's pronunciation. English consonants [θ] and [ð], hardly pronounceable for the speakers of French, have been replaced by "d's" ("anoder", "dere"); the definite article "the" changes into its much easier French equivalent "de." The anonymous author clearly wanted to poke fun at the foreign showmen's poor English, but at the same time he did later researchers of the phenomenon a great favour – he gave us some insight into the linguistic skills and performing techniques of the "Savoyards." The musical notes written out in a score at the bottom of the print correspond rhythmically to the words of the text.[22]

Meanings and Shapes

Figure 11: *A Raree Show*, satirical British print against Charles II, 1681

Raree-shows often appeared in the political pamphlets of the eighteenth century, symbolizing various forms of deception. A satirical British print against Charles II from 1681 **(Figure 11)** depicts:

> the king with a Janus head, carrying a raree show box, followed by three men behind him who carry a key, a scroll and the sceptre, passing across a tower bridge, labelled 'West-Ward Hoy'; on the other side he is shown again falling into a marsh on all fours, assailed by figures who represent Parliament, where

[22] It is not a "Doodle do" melody, most commonly associated with the tradition of raree-shows, cf. Susan L. Porter, Kate Van Winkle Keller, "Ballad opera," in: *Oxford Music Online* database, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com, last accessed September 20, 2014.

figures fall out of his box of political tricks with the Pope's head at one end; in the centre background a group of men labelled 'Dom. Com', and at the right a building labelled 'Lous-Hall' (near Oxford).[23]

The raree-show carried by the monarch represents here a "storage box" of treachery and Catholic faith, the double nature and indecisiveness (popish inclinations versus Protestantism) of the king symbolized by the two heads of the Roman god, Janus.

Figure 12: Raree-show, print from *Prentjes Almanach voor Kinderen; Voor het Jaar 1800*, Amsterdam 1800

The description of a *mundinuevo* in *Diccionario de Autoridades* refers to "looking through a glass which enlarges objects." This brings us to another kind of cabinets, namely peepshows **(Figure 12, Figure 13, Figure 14)**, immensely popular from the seventeenth century onwards, called in various languages: *Guckkasten*, *boîte d'optique,* or *mundo nuovo*. Whereas one looked **at** a raree-show, a peepshow was to be looked directly **into** through the convex lens and provided its admirer with a view inside the seductive, alluring, illusionary, life-like reality of the cabinet. Peepshows also evolved in a multitude of forms, for instance magic lanterns and stereoscopes, most of them registered in Richard Balzer's book *Peepshows: A Visual History*.[24] They had the same entertaining function as raree-shows and probably looked quite similar from the outside. What is more, in Dutch both types of display are called by one name: a *kijkkast*, a cabinet to look at. When comparing a representation dating back to the late seventeenth century **(Figure 15)** and a Dutch game-tile from the eighteenth century[25] **(Figure 16)** it is clear that the two cabinets are almost identical – except for a hole to look through in a peepshow depicted in the game-tile. The popularity of such performances must have been enormous, considering their frequent appearances in prints and books for children.[26]

Figure 13: Magic lantern, print from *Prentjes Almanach voor Kinderen; Voor het Jaar 1800*, Amsterdam 1800

[23] Curator's comment at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3069059&partId=1&searchText=raree-show&images=on&page=1, accessed September 20, 2014.

[24] Balzer, *Peepshows*.... Cf. a popular website: "Early Visual Media," last accessed September 20, 2014, http://www.visual-media.eu/vue-optique.html.

[25] Johan Kamermans, *Het Tegelboek: Hoogtepunten uit het Nederlands Tegelmuseum* (Otterlo: Uitgeverij Waanders, 2011), 120; cf. Jan Pluis [met medeverking van Minze van den Akker en Ger de Ree], *Kinderspelen op tegels* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1979), 153.

[26] E.g. Charles Dibbin, *A collection of songs, selected from the works of Mr. Dibbin*, Vol. IV (London: Printed for the Author, 1790), 74-77; Charles Hindley, *A History of the Cries of London, Ancient and Modern* (London: Charles Hindley, 1884), 280.

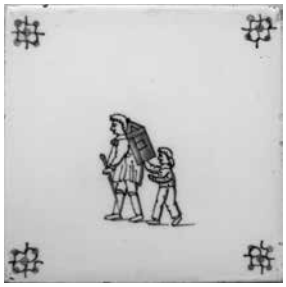

Figure 14: Dutch tile with a representation of a raree--show, Gebr. Ravesteijn, Utrecht, ca. 1890

Figure 15: *Oh Raree Show*, print after Marcellus Laroon II from the series *The Cryes of the City of London Drawne after the Life*, after 1688

Figure 16: *Game-tile (spelbord)*, Rotterdam ca. 1765-1790

To sum up, raree-shows probably originated from small portable gothic altarpieces and underwent considerable alterations over time, e.g. painted scenes were replaced by mechanical puppets, though many earlier and later forms must have coexisted on the market, depending on local and historical factors. All such representations belong to a much larger European family of semi-theatrical objects with the function "show and tell," including not only portable nativity scenes and German portable theaters called *Werckh* or *Bildwerck*,[27] but also, to some extent, perspective boxes (e.g. those painted by Samuel van Hoogstraten) and doll houses[28] **(Figure 17)**, not to mention the cabinets in *Wunderkammers* **(Figure 18)**.[29]

Tabernaculum of the Master of All Saints

The scarceness of old sources and, above all, their ambiguity, often leave much doubt concerning the real nature of the performances described, as in the case of this Latin entry in the royal Polish expense register from 1506:

> Magistro de Omnibus Sanctis, qui comediam in presencia d[omi]*ñi* principis recitavit faciendo tabernacula cum personis – 3 flor[eni].[30]

Henryk Jurkowski translates this as "To the Master of All Saints, who recited a comedy in the presence of the Crown Prince, making tabernacles with characters."[31] According to him, Magister de Omnibus Sanctis presented or recited for the crown prince (in future: king Sigismundus the Old) a comedy (i.e. a theatrical play) dealing with holy beings (*cum personis* – in medieval theater, the word *persona* had sacred associations) displayed in a raree-show (*tabernacula*). Unlike other performers noted in this register (jugglers, *lusoribus*, *cantoribus de bursis*), he was

[27] Jurkowski, *A History*..., 75.

[28] Cf. Jet Pijzel-Dommisse, *Het Hollandse Pronkpoppenhuis: Interieur en huishouden in de 17de en 18de eeuw* (Zwolle- Amsterdam: Waanders Uitgevers, 2000).

[29] Cf. Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux. Paris, Venise: XVIe-. XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987). Especially nice collection of such objects is exhibited in Wunderkammer Olbricht, Berlin.

[30] Adolf Pawiński, *Młode lata Zygmunta Starego* (Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1893), 256.

[31] Jurkowski, *A History*..., 70.

the only person paid (i.e. he had no helpers) and his show was a recitation (*recitavit*), not an actual staging. *Tabernacula cum personis* were interpreted by Jurkowski as a raree-show, as "tabernacle" may refer to part of an altar.[32]

Figure 17: The Dolls' House of Petronella Oortman, ca. 1686–1710

Figure 18: Domenico Remps, *Cabinet of Curiosities*, ca. 1689

However, this hypothesis has been strongly disputed by another Polish researcher, Marek Waszkiel, who stresses that the earliest Spanish record of a raree-show (retablo) dates to 1538 (which would make its Polish appearance a surprising exception, preceding the Western European sources) and explained that at the beginning of the sixteenth century tabernacles (in the modern sense of this word) did not stand on altars but were kept away from them: in sacristies, embellished cabinets in church walls or special stone or wooden tower-like constructions (called in German *Sakramentshäuser*, the Houses of the Holy Sacrament).[33] The idea of placing the consecrated bread right on the altar (though, initially, not the high, i.e. the main one) was first invented in Italy in the beginning of the sixteenth century and very slowly reached the rest of Europe, becoming popular only after the Council of Trent, as a reaction to the Protestant denial of Christ being transubstantiated in the Eucharist. In 1506 the word *tabernaculum* was by no means associated with an altarpiece.

On the other hand, Karolina Targosz understands the word *tabernacula* mentioned in the register as a type of a Terence-stage (at that time referred to as *aedes* – house, chamber[34]).[35] This interpretation is probably the most accurate one. The Latin text, when read closely, reveals the following facts. Magister de Omnibus Sanctis (the master [from the school] of All Saints] was a title reserved for the rector of the School of All Saints in Kraków, located at the parish bearing the same name. It is known that in 1506 this function was held by Noskowski, *artium liberalium magister*.[36] In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the word *tabernaculum* most commonly meant a tent (going back

[32] Jurkowski, *A History...*, 70; Jurkowski, *Dzieje teatru lalek…*, 246.

[33] Marek Waszkiel, *Dzieje teatru lalek w Polsce (do 1945 roku)* (Warszawa: Polska Akademia Nauk, 1990), 29. Waszkiel also opposes the theory of raree-shows originating from altarpieces.

[34] Jan Dürr-Durski, „O mieszczańskim teatrze renesansowym w Polsce," *Pamiętnik Teatralny* (1953), z. 3, 67-72.

[35] Karolina Targosz, *Teatr dworski Władysława IV* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1965), 166-167, 169-170; cf. Zbigniew Raszewski, *Krótka historia teatru polskiego* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1977), 18.

[36] Michał Wiszniewski, *Historya literatury polskiej*, Vol. IV. (Kraków: W drukarni Stanisława Gieszkowskiego, self-published, 1842), 218-219.

to the biblical tradition), a chest (storage box), or a small, house-like structure (*tabernaculum* being a diminutive form of *taberna* – tent, hut, inn, shed, shack). The last meaning comes closest to what we can describe as Terence-stage or maybe a medieval mansion stage. According to Targosz, *recitavit* does not imply a simple act of reciting or telling but staging, i.e. dramatic recitation – the verb *recitāre* was often used in that context, especially with reference to school plays.[37] *Faciendo tabernacula cum personis* can be rendered as "building the stage-constructions for the actors." In my opinion, the text from 1506 should be read as meaning:

> To the Master [from the school] of All Saints who staged a comedy in the presence of the crown prince, having built [having previously arranged] the stage constructions for the actors – 3 florins.

Moreover, it is highly improbable that a rector of the school in which future clergymen were educated would choose to present a raree-show in front of a crown prince. He would rather aim to prove his proficiency in *humanitas* and *artes liberals*, not to mention boasting about his pedagogical success, drama staging (either secular or religious – *comedia sacra***)** being an important element of *ratio studiorum* at that time.[38] Last but not least, the sum of 3 florins paid to the Magister de Omnibus Sanctis, when compared with other expenses for entertainment from the register, seems quite a generous amount of money, suggesting an elaborate, carefully prepared performance, [39] definitely not an ordinary puppet show.[40]

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[37] Cf. Linda Shenk, "Gown before Crown: Scholarly Abjection and Academic Entertainment Under Queen Elizabeth I," in: *Early Modern Academic Drama*, edited by Jonathan Walker, Paul D. Streufert. (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 34-35. Shenk quotes an English playwright, William Gager (1555-1622), who expressed the difference between the school stage and professional theater in such a way: "thay acted theire Playes in an other sorte than we doe, or can, or well knowe; but so exquisytly, and carefully, that we may seeme, compared with them, eyther for skill, or diligence, rather *Recitare*, which you do not dislike, than *Agere*."

[38] I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Elwira Buszewicz, on whose knowledge and remarks I rely completely in my analysis of the text from 1506 – the interpretation presented being actually more hers than mine.

[39] Noskowski, as the rector of a school, was the only person to be paid (a fact emphasized by Jurkowski), because the actors must have been students under his supervision.

[40] Jurkowski's interpretation was probably affected by a patriotic motivation to find an instance of a raree-show in the Polish sources. Such attempts have so far failed; moreover, the lack of a Polish word describing such a performance (in contrast to the situation in Western Europe) does not inspire much hope for future discoveries.

Van Mieris: Reality, Illusion or Play?

The painting by Willem van Mieris discussed earlier is by no means the only representation of a raree-show in Dutch art. Other examples include a scene painted by Richard Brakenburch in 1692 **(Figure 19)** and two slightly different versions of one painting, both formerly attributed to Jan Steen and now regarded as works of his anonymous follower (again, possibly Richard Brakenburch – **Figure 20, Figure 21**). They all follow an iconographical pattern immensely popular in the Dutch genre painting of the seventeenth century – showing various reactions and facial expressions of people carefully watching the Other, a person coming from outside their immediate social group: a quack, a gypsy, a charlatan, a preacher, a doctor diagnosing a patient in a family circle. This pattern was often used often by Gerrit Dou and Jan Steen[41] because, among other things, it served as a good pretext for showing a range of social behaviors. Similarly, in the works previously ascribed to Jan Steen and depicting a raree-show **(Figure 20, Figure 21)**, we not only see the amused onlookers, but also a petty thief pinching a purse from an old woman's shopping basket.

Figure 19: Richard Brakenburgh, *An Itinerant Showman*, ca. 1692

Figure 20: Richard Brakenburgh (?), formerly ascribed to Jan Steen, *Raree-show*, ca. 1690

Van Mieris followed the same iconographical tradition, namely, he painted curious peasants gathered around a "Savoyard," but he also attempted something more. The kitchen is filled with all possible kinds of objects, e.g. a bird-cage, a lantern, a stick and a ball of the type used in the game of *kolf*, a broom, wine barrels, jugs, pans and pots, a pair of slippers, a footwarmer, pipes, a spinning wheel, pinwheels (child's toys), and dishes with fruits and fish. All this domestic imagery can be perceived as a big still-life depicting the interior of a country house. The only other comparable Dutch painting, presenting a similar, seemingly everyday, though completely unrealistic clutter of things, is *Young Mother* **(Figure 22)** by Gerrit Dou, a *fijnschilder* venerated and imitated by Van Mieris. Peter Hecht interpreted Dou's painting as a demonstration of his painterly skills,[42] a great show of his ability to reproduce reality.

Figure 21: Richard Brakenburgh (?), formerly ascribed to Jan Steen, *Raree-show*, ca. 1690

[41] *Nederlandse kunst in het Rijksmuseum...*, 54.

[42] Hecht, *De Hollandse fijnschilders...*, 55 ("staalkaart van zijn schilderkunstige mogelijkheden"); cf. Wayne E. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue. Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 16; Gaby Groen, "De Rarekiek," *Rijksmuseum Kunstkrant*, Jaargang 25 (1999) nr. 4, 10; G. Jansen, "De rarekiek," *Bulletin Vereniging Rembrandt* 9 (1999), nr. 1, 20-22.

Figure 22: Gerrit Dou, *Young Mother*, 1658

Is Van Mieris also making such a demonstration in his painting? Undoubtedly, but there is more to the picture than that. All of the domestic things represented by him belong to a group of objects that carried various hidden meanings in seventeenth-century Dutch painting, for example, disguised symbolism referring to womanhood, virtue, and moral and sexual issues. Dutch painting of that era, contrary to the view that dominated in the nineteenth century and is still commonly favored, was often very far from being a faithful representation of everyday reality; it aimed to provide its viewers with a multitude of semantic puns and puzzles, not to mention ethical guidance and instruction.[43]

In the iconography of Dutch painting of the period, bird-cages functioned either to signify brothels or to symbolize endangered female chastity – their open door represented the loss of virginity.[44] Slippers on the floor could refer either to undressing, foreplay, and readiness for sexual intercourse, or to the gender role of an ideal housewife whose life is limited to her household only, to the exclusion of the outer world.[45] A footwarmer, called a *Mignon des Dames* in the Netherlands, carried not only a connotation of sensual pleasure, but also of cozy domesticity. Brooms could be understood as symbols of female duties and also, surprisingly, symbols of debauchery, according to old Dutch idioms such as *de bezem uitsteken* ("to stick out the broom" – i.e.

[43] Cf. *Looking at Seventeenth Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, edited by Wayne E. Franits (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) – especially the papers by Konrad Renger, "On the History of Research Concerning the Interpretation of Dutch Painting," 9-14; Eddy de Jongh, "Realism and Seeming Realism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting," 21-56; Peter Hecht, "Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: A Reassessment of Some Current Hypotheses," 88-97; Eric Jan Sluijter, "Didactic and Disguised Meanings? Several Seventeenth -Century Texts on Painting and the Iconological Approach to Dutch Paintings of this Period," 78-87. Moreover, see Peter Hecht, "The Debate on Symbol and Meaning in Dutch Seventeenth-Century Art," *Simiolus*, Vol. 16, No. 2/3 (1986), 173-187; Eddy de Jongh, *Real Dutch Art and Not-So-Real Dutch Art: Some Nationalistic Views of Seventeenth-Century Netherlandish Painting Simiolus*, Vol. 20, No. 2/3 (1990/1991), 197-206; Idem, "De iconologische benadering van de zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse schilderkunst," in: *De Gouden Eeuw in perspectief. Het beeld van de Nederlandse zeventiende-eeuwse schilderkunst in later tijd*, edited by Frans Grijzenhout, Henk van Veen (Den Haag: Ou, 1992), 299-329; Eric Jan Sluijter, "Hoe realistisch is de Noordnederlandse schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw? De problemen van een vraagstelling," *Leidschrift* 6, 3 (1990), 5-39; Albert Blankert, "What is Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting?," in: *Holländische Genremalerei im 17. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. von Henning Bock, Thomas W. Gaehtgens (Berlin: Symposium Berlin, 1987), 9-32; David R. Smith, "Realism and the Boundaries of Genre in Dutch Art," *Art History*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (2009), 78-114; Seymour Slive, "Realism and Symbolism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting," *Daedalus. Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. 91, No. 3 (1962), 469-500; Peter Demetz, "Defenses of Dutch Painting and the Theory of Realism," *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1963), 97-115; Jean-Baptist Bedaux, *The Reality of Symbols: Studies in the Iconology of Netherlandish Art 1400-1800* (Den Haag: G. Schwartz/SDU, 1990); *Tot Lering en Vermaak*, edited by Eddy de Jongh (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1976).

[44] Eddy de Jongh, *A Bird's-Eye View of Erotica. Double Entendre in a Series of Seventeenth-Century Genre Scenes* in: *idem*, *Questions of meaning. Theme and motif in Dutch seventeenth-century painting,* trans. and edited by Michael Hoyle (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2000), 25, 43.

[45] Franits, *Paragons of Virtue....*, 77-80; de Jongh, "A Bird's-eye view of Erotica...," 33-34.

to inform a lover that he can come over) and *over den bezem getrouwd zijn* ("to be married over the broom" – i.e. to play house, to engage in extramarital sexual activities).[46] Jugs, pans and pots, depending on the context in which they were actually depicted, carried a whole spectrum of meanings: the idea of *vanitas* (though shiny just after having being scoured, they tend to tarnish quickly), the biblical image of a woman as a vessel (1 Peter, 3: 7) and almost pornographic, "Freudian," as we would say today, associations.[47] Broken pipes scattered on the floor were frequently used in tavern scenes showing drunken companions, referring to indecency and violation of moral rules. In turn, lanterns, particularly if unlit, could denote the patriarchal seclusion of women in the domestic sphere (their destiny is to remain inside the house, not to go outside) or symbolize the lack of reason and morality. "Al heeft de hoer een schoon gesicht, / 'T is een lanteerne sonder licht"[48] (although a whore has a fair face indeed, she is like a lantern without light), wrote the seventeenth-century Dutch moralist Jacob Cats.

Some of these objects also appear in a much earlier painting by Willem van Mieris, namely *The Hurdy-gurdy Player* from 1694 **(Figure 23)**, but there they constitute quite a clear message. In a brothel interior we see a young couple, partially undressed, observed from a distance by a pimp, cynically distancing himself from what is going on. An empty lantern, a broom, pipes, and a wine jug are obvious signifiers of immorality, debauchery, and lust. The same may be said about a dog, chamber pot, cards lying on the floor, and an abandoned footwarmer – the prostitute and her client are already too "hot".

Figure 23: Willem van Mieris, *Hurdy-gurdy Player*, 1694

In the *Raree-show* (*'t Fraay Curieus*) we see all of these objects again – and many more. They are scattered in a seemingly random fashion, and do not seem to convey any symbolic message. Has Van Mieris become just an epigone of an old tradition? Is he showing off his skills? Or is he giving his viewers a wink as he invites them to take part in the game of appearances? The authors of the catalogue *Nederlandse kunst in het Rijksmuseum 1700-1800* write:

[46] Eddy de Jongh, "The Broom as Signifier: An Iconological Hunch," in: *Questions of Meaning...*, 194-214; Piotr Oczko, *Miotła i krzyż. Kultura sprzątania w dawnej Holandii, albo historia pewnej obsesji* (Kraków: Collegium Columbinum 2013).

[47] Franits, *Paragons of Virtue....*, 172; Jochen Becker, "Are These Girls Really So Neat? On Kitchen Scenes and Method," in: *Art in History. History in Art. Studies in Seventeenth Century Dutch Culture*, edited by David Freedberg, Jan de Vries (Chicago: The Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities, 1991),139-173.

[48] Jacob Cats, emblem XLVII, in: *Spiegel van de Oude en de Nieuwe Tyt*, in: *Cats, Alle de wercken* (Amsterdam: Jan Jacobsz. Schipper, 1655), 55; cf. Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London: Fontana Press, 1987), 465-467.

> In this painting Van Mieris took illusionism one step further by adding a lantern on the left side, which belongs both to the external world of the spectator and the world of the painting itself, thus highlighting the ambiguity of the painted space. Van Mieris moreover seems to suggest that whilst the rustic audience merely stares at the garish raree-show of the Savoyard, refined connoisseurs admire paintings like his. Thus, the painting not only explores reality as opposed to illusion, but also the gap that exists between art and artificiality.[49]

I would take this interpretation one step further and ask the following questions. Does the act of painting mean *pretending*, the surface of the artwork being just a scene with various props: jugs, slippers, broom, and lantern? In other words, is the painting depicting a theater? Perhaps Van Mieris is showing us a "theater within a theater" – presenting, with his skillful brush, a stunning theater of domestic objects with a raree-show amid them. Or is it a "painting in a painting," a raree-show following the old tradition of altarpieces?

In the Rijksmuseum, the work of Van Mieris is accompanied by a text that closes with a surprising statement, suggesting another interesting interpretation: "The painting is actually also a kind of a peepshow." Is it then all about the act of seeing and perception? The composition of the picture seems to confirm this suggestion. Our sight is guided straight toward the object displayed in the center of the panel as all lines focus directly on the raree-show. In the gray floor there is even one reddish tile that definitely stands out, serving as an indicator and corresponding to the color-scheme of the raree-show. Actually, we feel as if we were looking not at the painting but right **into** its three-dimensional space, a space that imitates the three-dimensional triptych of a raree-show and requires a similar kind of perception. The effect of spatiality is enhanced by the careful application of light and shadow, intensified by the presence of a deep wall niche with jug and pipes.

The attention of all the amused people depicted in the scene is focused entirely on the raree-show; even the saint from a painting on the wall seems

[49] *Nederlandse kunst…*, 54: "Maar dit schilderij heeft Van Mieris het illusionisme een stap verder doorgevoerd: door middel van het lantaarn links, die zovel tot de externe wereld van de beschouwer behoort als tot die van het schilderij zelf, onderstreept hij de dubbelzinnigheid van de geschilderde ruimte. Van Mieris lijkt ook te suggereren dat zoals het boerse gehoor zich vergaapt aan de kakelbonte kijkkast van de Savoiaard, verfijnde kunstkenners schilderijen als dat van hem bewonderen, zodat het schilderij niet alleen de spanning tussen de realiteit en illusie verkent, maar ook die tussen kunst en gekunsteldheid."

to be looking at this "beautiful curiosity." Moreover, we, the viewers of flesh and blood standing in front of the painting, also get involved, invited by Van Mieris to participate in the performance taking place in the cottage and deluded by his spatial tricks and deceptions. We even have company – an old woman from the neighborhood, probably too poor to give her penny to the Savoyard, shyly observes his show through the window. She is at the same time both in the room/ painting and outside it, she looks at and looks into it, just as we do.

In my opinion, Willem van Mieris here provides us with a self-referential *mise-en-abyme*, a kind of auto-thematic, meta-critical discourse. The artist might even have deliberately chosen to become a "Savoyard" of paint and brush, his painting being as mysterious and intriguing for us as the raree-show is for the group of peasants gaping in admiration. Confronted with this multi-level puzzle, we can only quote again the words from the early eighteenth century broadside:

O Raree Show, O Brave Show, O pretty Show, see my fine Show, O Raree Show who see my pretty show.

*

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the tradition of raree-shows has not been completely forgotten and can be traced through the surprising, elaborate "box sculptures" of Peter Gabriëlse (born 1937), a Dutch artist living in France and specializing in miniature interiors **(Figure 24)**. "These in no way resemble doll houses. His boxes have an atmosphere of the past, theatrical crumbling elegance with a strong 'dust and spider trend.'" [50] It is highly appropriate that Gabriëlse calls his works *kijkkasten*.

Figure 24: Peter Gabriëlse, *Kijkkast*, 2010

[50] Note from P. Gabriëlse, *Architecture in Miniature* (Eindhoven: BLURB, 2012).

Illustrations

Figure 1. Andrea del Sarto, Madonna of the Harpies, oil on panel, 1517, Uffizi, Florence

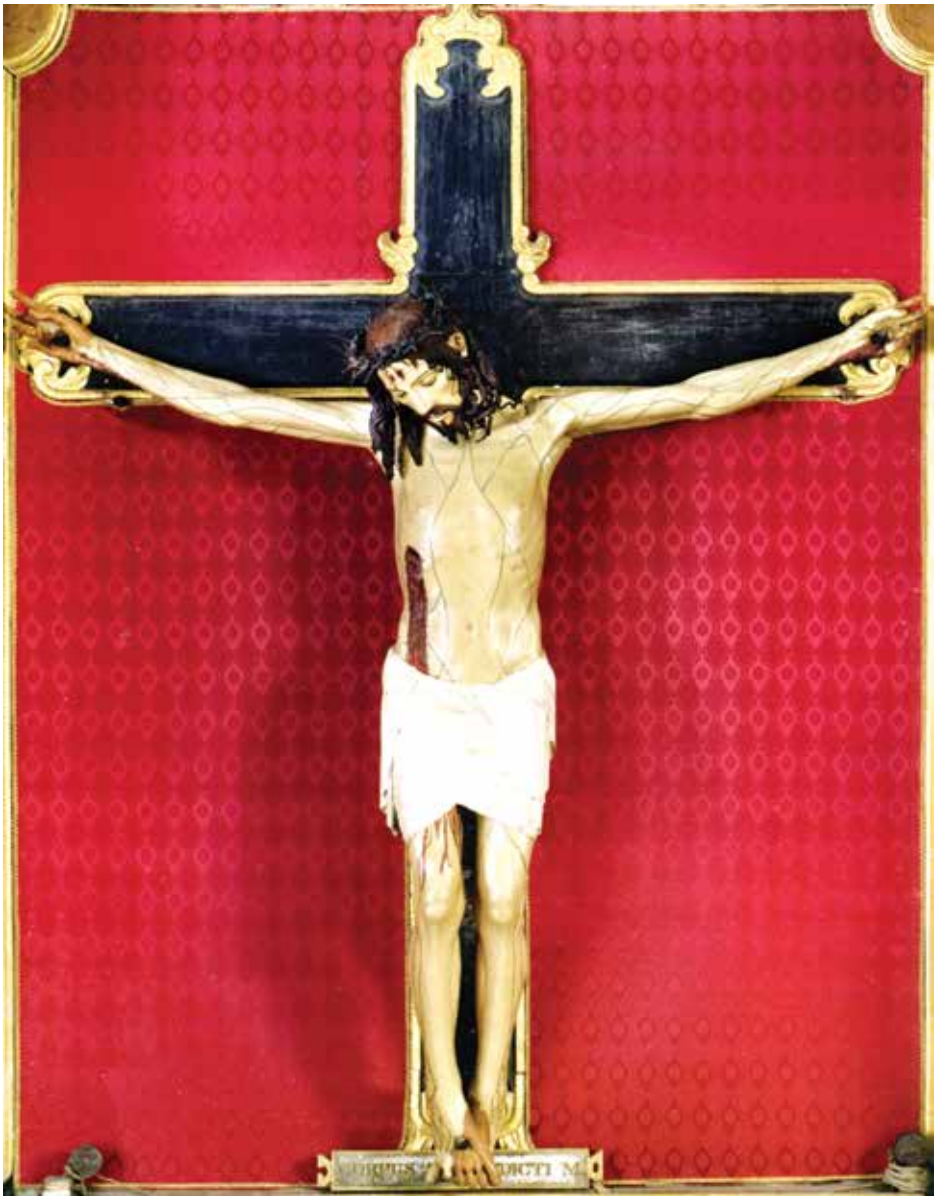

Figure 2. Giovanni Tedesco, Crucifix,
lime wood and polychromy, 1494,
Santa Maria Argentea, Norcia

Figure 3. Unknown sculptor, Crucifix,
lime wood and polychromy, 1380s?,
San Fidenzio, Polverara

Figure 4. Unknown sculptor, Crucifix,
poplar and polychromy, fourteenth century,
San Domenico, Chioggia

Figure 5. Unknown sculptor, Crucifix, poplar and polychromy, fourteenth century, San Domenico, Chioggia (detail)

Figure 1. *The Santo Entierro* (Holy Sepulchre) in the church of Santo Domingo Yanhuitlan, Oaxaca, Mexico.

Figure 2. *Deposition*.
Relief from the side chapel known as el Sagrario (Tabernacle)
in the church of Santo Domingo,
Yanhuitlan, Oaxaca, Mexico.

Figure 3. *Procession of the Holy Sepulchre* and *Deposition of Christ* – mural cycles in the *portería* of San Juan Teitipac convent, Valley of Oaxaca, Mexico.

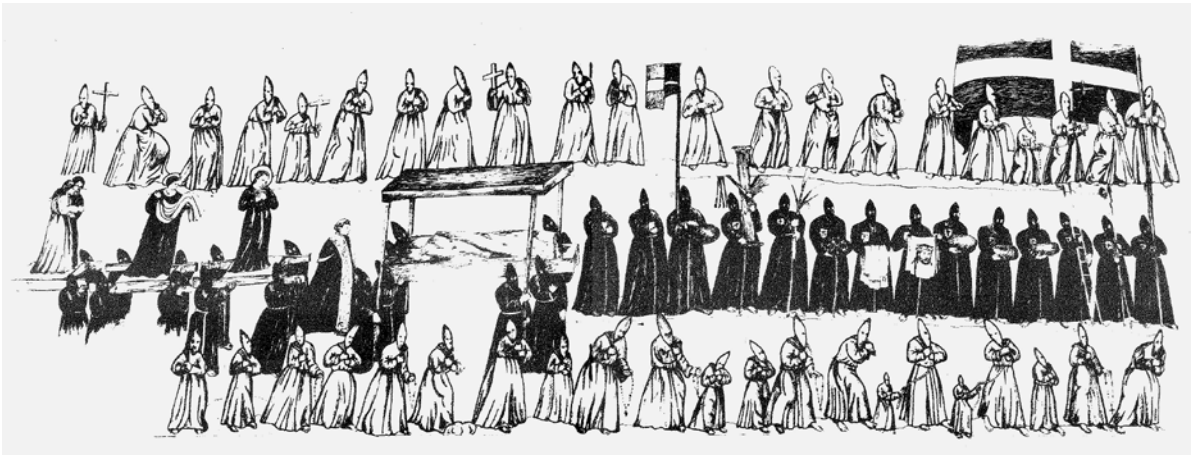

Figure 4. *Good Friday procession*, mural in the Franciscan mission of San Miguel Huejotzingo, Puebla, Mexico.

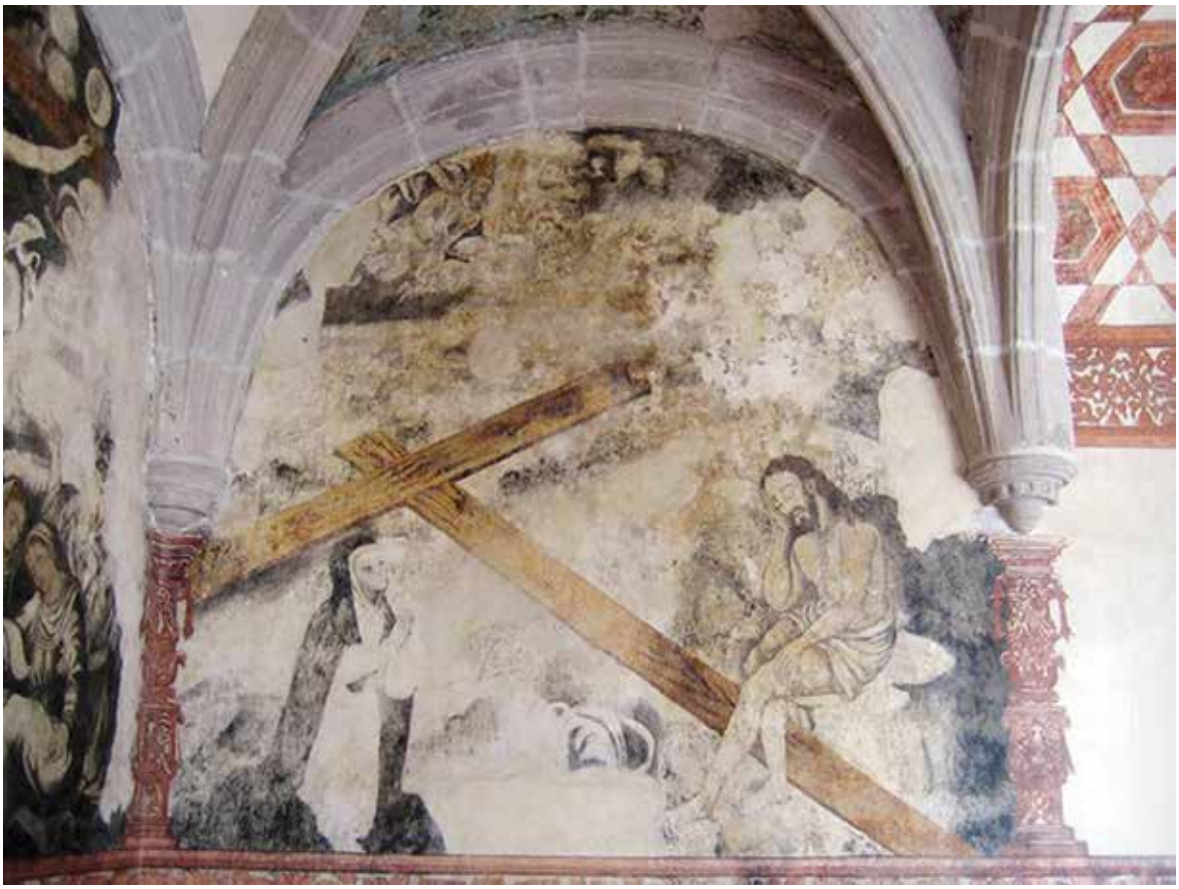

Figure 5. *The Passion: Preparation for the Crucifixion.* Grisaille painting from Augustinian convento, Malinalco, Mexico.

Figure 6.

The Death of Motecuhzoma II: The disposal of the bodies of Motecuhzoma II, ruler of Tenochtitlan, and Itzquauhtzin, ruler of Tlatelolco, in one of the city's canals (top).
The removal of the body of Motecuhzoma (middle)
The cremation of the ruler's body (bottom)

Folio 40v of *The Florentine Codex (General History of the Things of New Spain)*, 1580s, now at The Laurentian Library, Florence, Italy.

Figure 1. *Crib with the Christ Child*, Liège, early 15th century
(Namur, TreM.a. Collection de la Société archéologique de Namur, inv. 54).

Figure 2. Workshop of Michel Erhart, *Christ Child with an Apple*, Ulm, Germany, ca. 1470–80
(New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, 2012, inv. 2012.449)

Figure 3. Crib of the Infant Jesus,
Brabant, South Netherlands, 15th century
(New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Gift of Ruth Blumka, in memory of Leopold Blumka, 1974,
inv. 1974.121a–d)

Figure 4. *Blessing Christ Child*,
Mechelen, South Netherlands, ca. 1500
(Schwerin, Staatliches Museum Schwerin,
Schloss Güstrow, inv. Pl. 600)

Figure 5. Miniature *Consecration of Virgins*, 16th century (Eichstätt, St. Walburg)

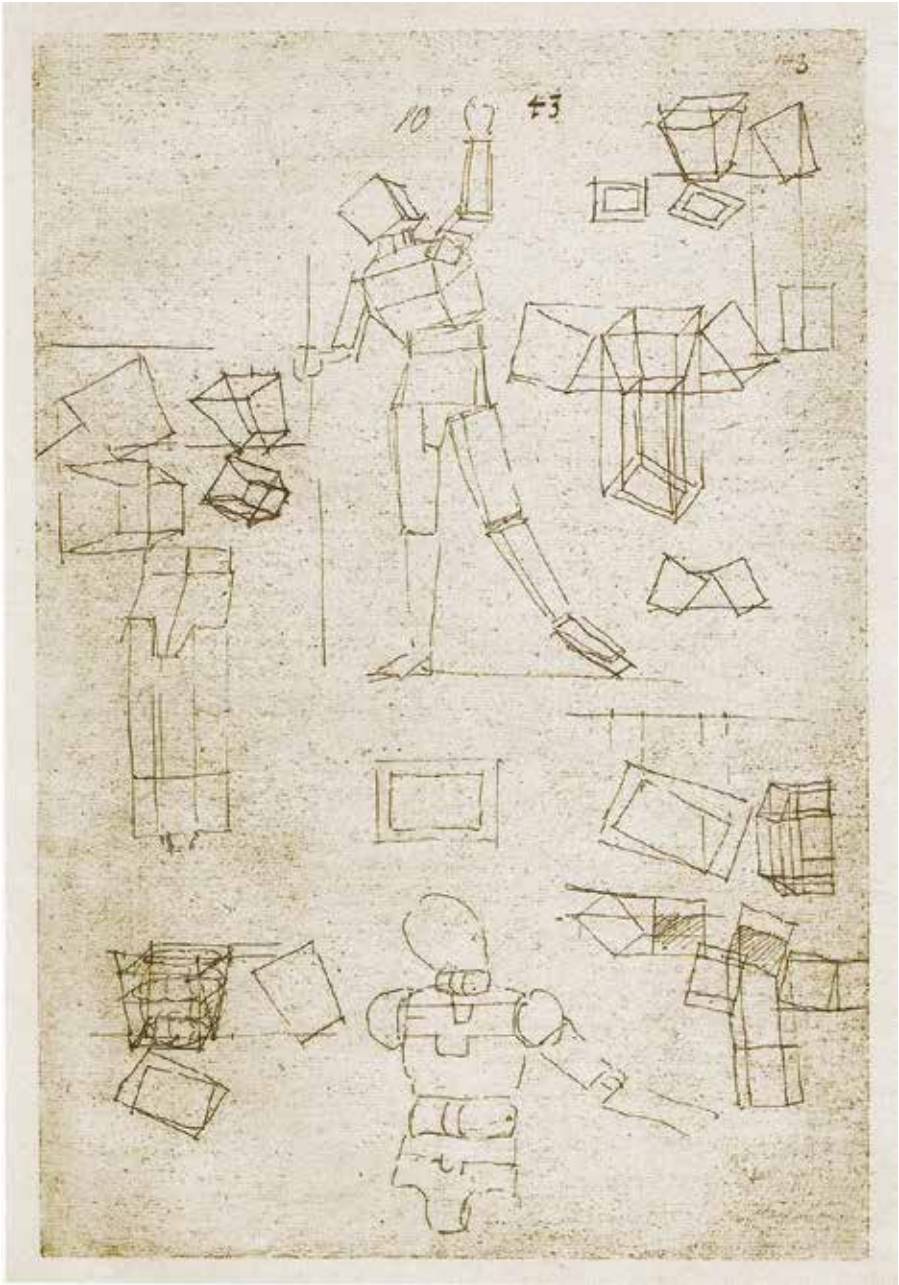

Figure 1. Albrecht Dürer: Sheet of sketches, Pen Drawing, 20.4 cm x 20.5 cm, c. 1510, folio 143b of the Dresden Dürer-codex.

Figure 2. Monogrammist IP: Jointed doll,
boxwood, 21.6 cm, c. 1530, Inv. Nr. 2167,
Bode Museum Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (SMB),
Photo credit: Barbara Herrenkind.

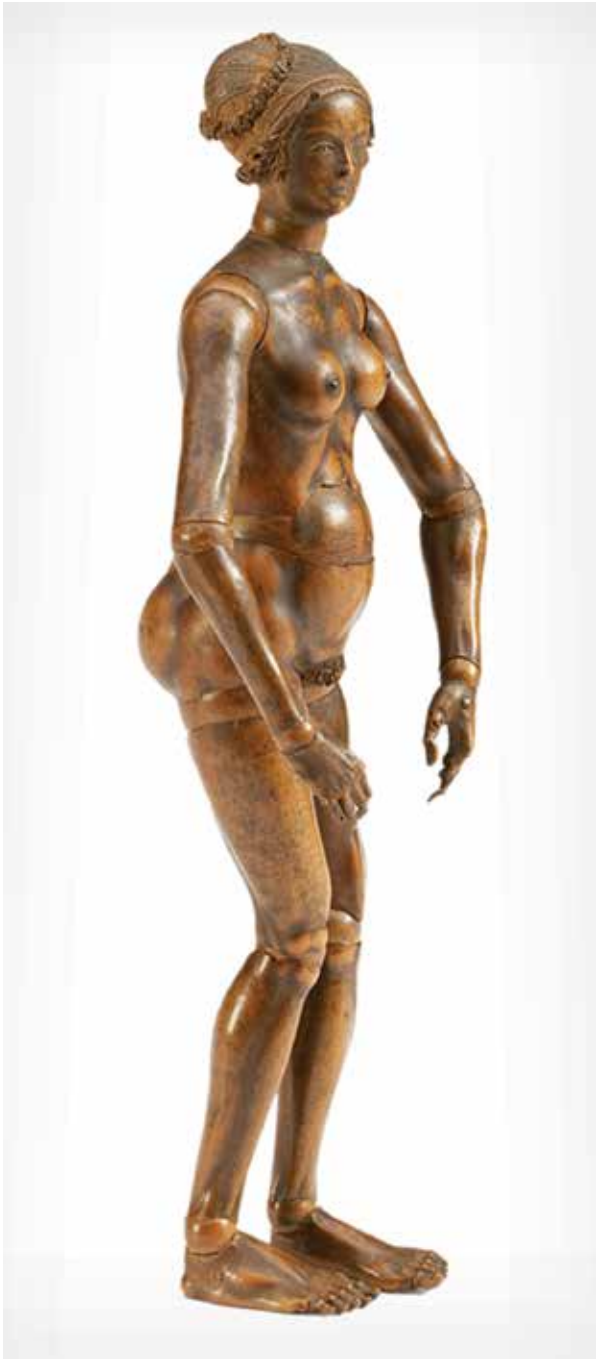

Figure 3. Monogrammist IP: Jointed doll, boxwood, 22.5 cm, c. 1530, Inv. Nr. 12.198, Grassimuseum Leipzig.

Figure 4. Monogrammist IP: Pair of jointed dolls, boxwood, 23 cm, c. 1530, Inv. Nr. P. 415, P 416, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck.

Figure 5. Monogrammist IP: Jointed doll, boxwood, 24.0 cm, c. 1530, Inv. Nr. 1960.58, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg. © Photo: Hiltmann/Rowinski/Torneberg

Figure 6. Monogrammist IP: Jointed doll, boxwood, 23.7 cm, c. 1530, Inv. Nr. E00484, Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid.

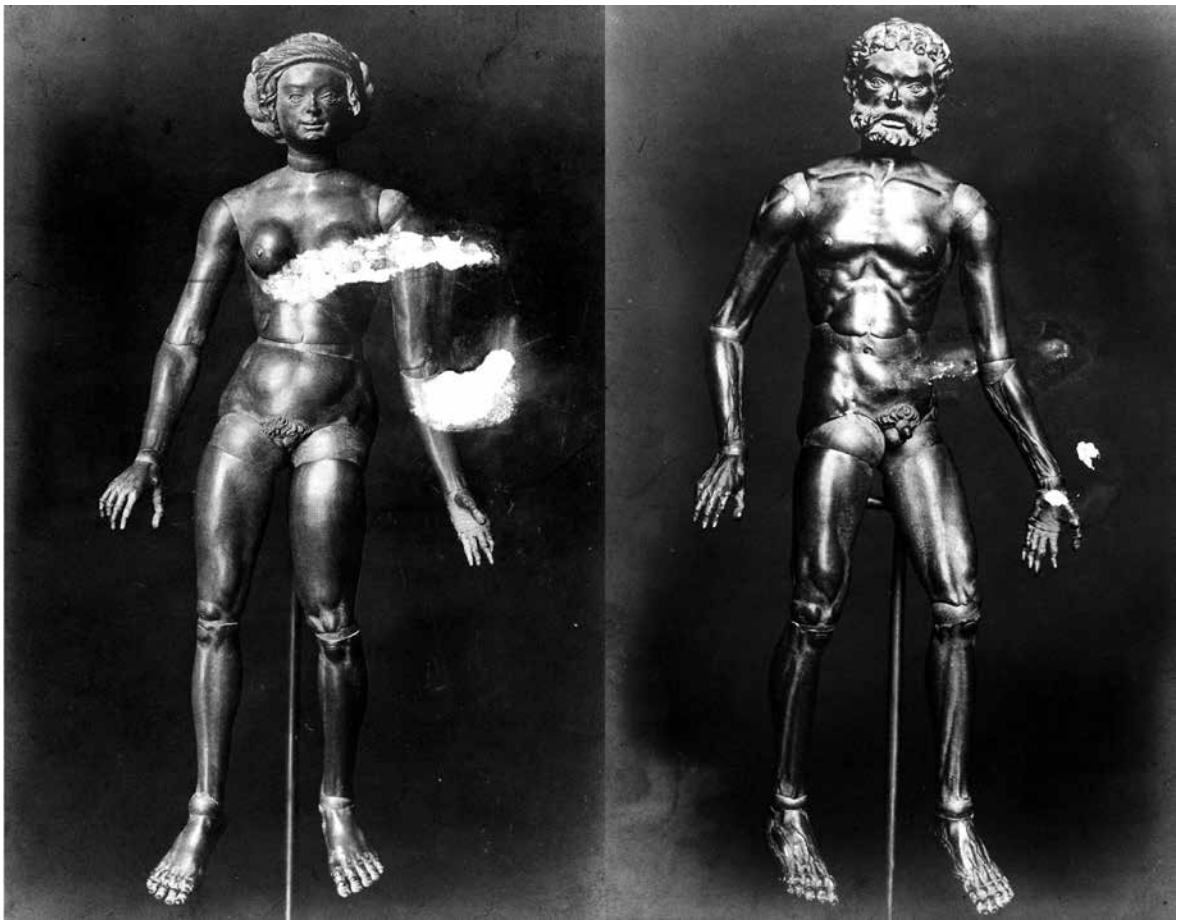

Figure 7. Monogrammist IP: Pair of jointed dolls,
boxwood, c. 19 cm, c. 1530,
originally preserved in the Academy of Art in Berlin,
lost since 1945.

Figure 8. Male jointed doll (Écorché), beechwood, 24.5 cm, 16./19, c. (?), Inv. Nr. 7792, Bode Museum Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (SMB), Photo credit: Barbara Herrenkind.

Figure 9. Werner Jacobsz. van den Valckert:
Portrait of a wood sculptor with jointed doll,
1624, Oil/Wood, 82.2 x 57.3 cm, Inv. Nr. 1963.29,
The Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky.

Figure 1. Dressed sculptures, subcategory freestanding full body, representation of Our Lady of Sorrows, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal (120x61, 8x52 cm). Photo taken by Duarte Nuno Chaves, 2012.

Figure 2. Dressed sculptures, subcategory freestanding full body, representation of Our Lady of Sorrows, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal (120x61, 8x52 cm).
Photo taken by Duarte Nuno Chaves, 2012.

Figure 3. Dressed sculptures, subcategory freestanding full body, representation of Our Lady of Sorrows, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal (120x61, 8x52 cm).
Photo taken by Duarte Nuno Chaves, 2012.

Figure 4. Dressed Sculptures, subcategory *roca*, iconographic representation of St. John, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal (120x61,8x52 cm).

Figure 5. Dressed Sculptures, subcategory roca, iconographic representation of St. John, 18th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal (120x61,8x52 cm).

Figure 6. Dressed sculptures, subcategory freestanding full body, iconographic representation of the Virgin Mary, 19th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal, (159, 8x43, 5x47, 2 cm). Photos taken by Duarte Nuno Chaves, 2012.

Figure 7. Dressed sculptures, subcategory freestanding full body, iconographic representation of the Virgin Mary, 19th cent., Santo António de Pinhel Church, Portugal, (159, 8x43, 5x47, 2 cm). Photos taken by Duarte Nuno Chaves, 2012.

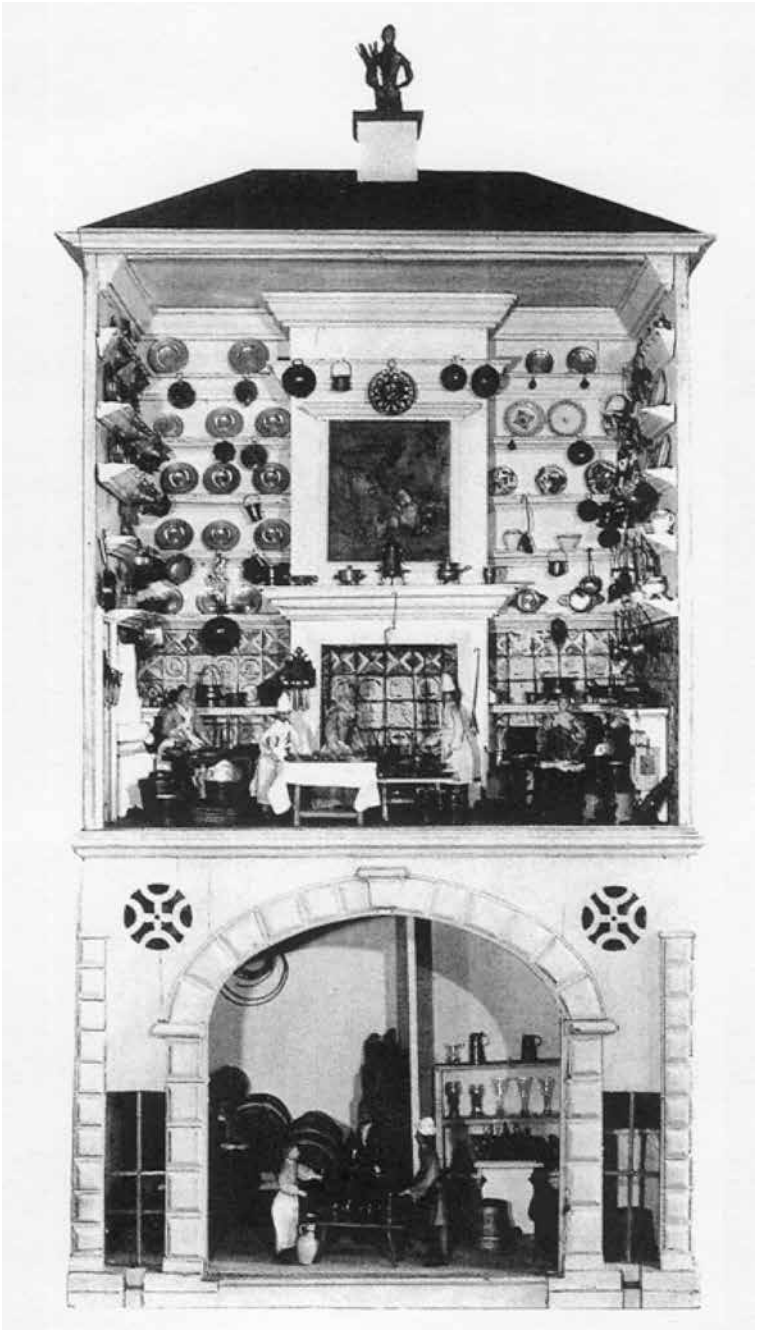

Figure 1. Museum Arnstadt, Germany, *Mon Plaisir*, palace kitchen, around 1735, from Wilkens, Leonie von, *Das Puppenhaus* (München, 1978), 172.

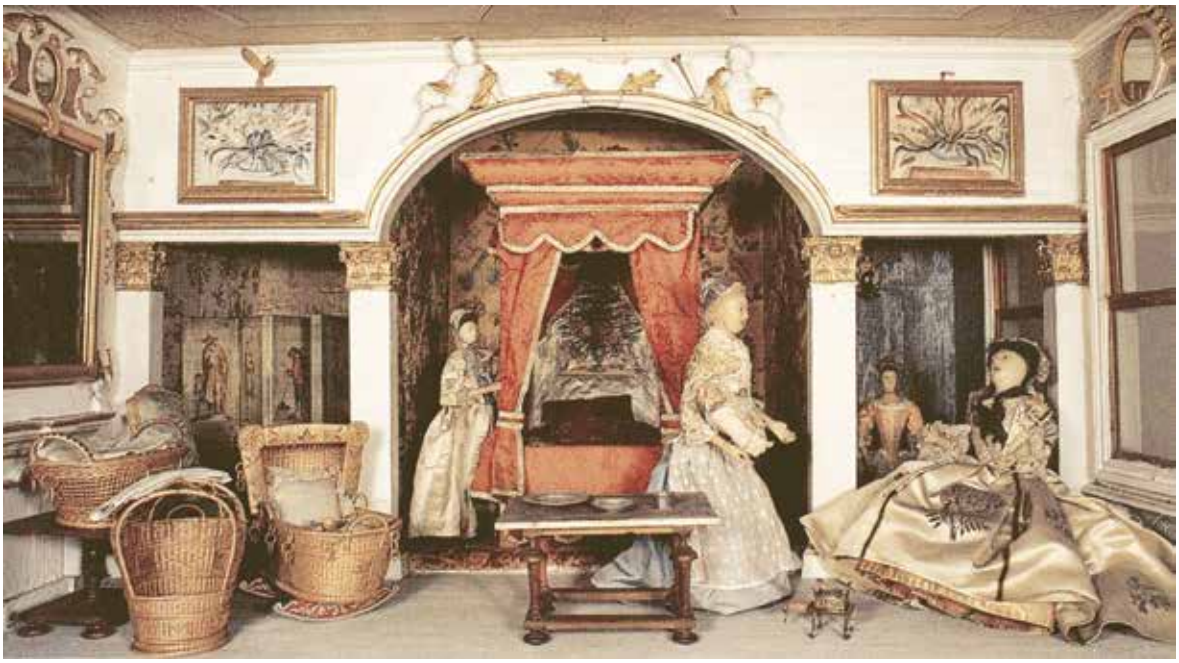

Figure 2. Museum Arnstadt/Germany,
Mon Plaisir, childbed,
from Matthias Klein, *Die Puppenstadt im Schlßmuseum zu Arnstadt* (Königstein,1994), 33.

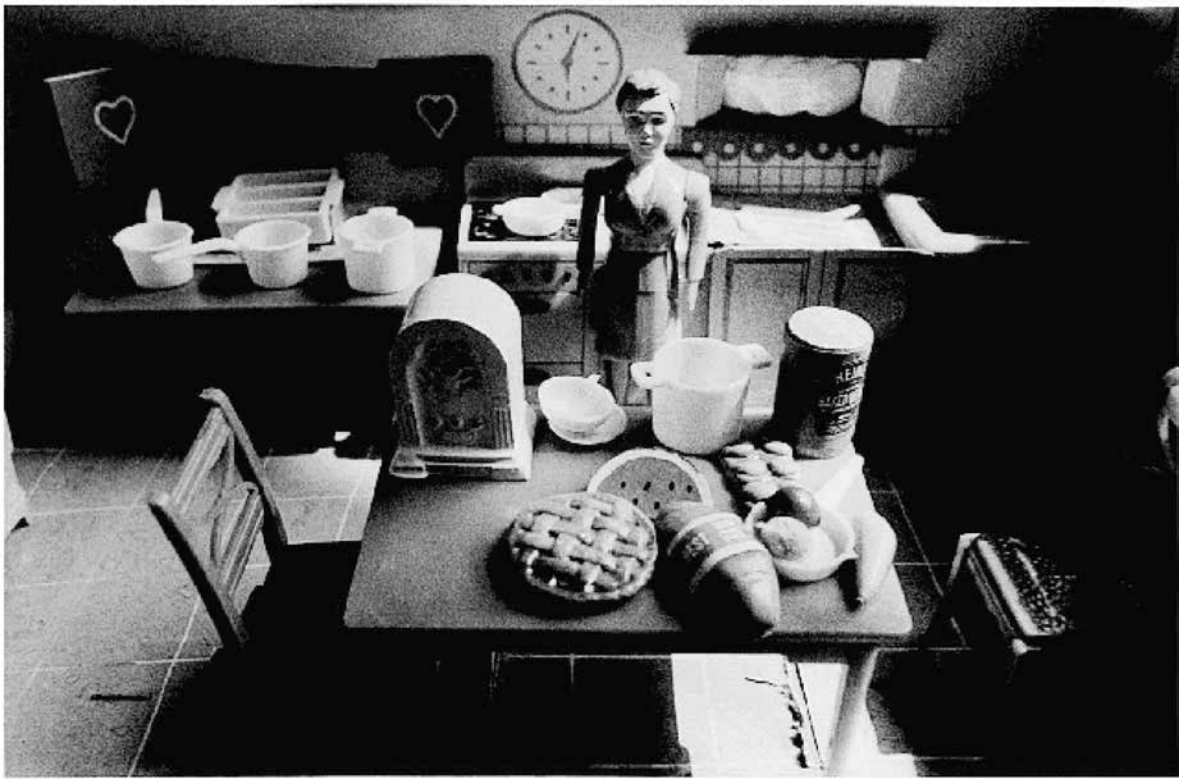

Figure 3. Laurie Simmons, *In and around the house* (1976-78), 64.

Figure 1. Willem van Mieris, *Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus)*
1718, oil on panel.
© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Figure 2. *O Rare Schow*
anonymous Dutch (?)
print after Egbert van Heemskerck the Younger based on Richard Brakenburgh's painting (Figure 19), ca. 1675-1700.
© The British Museum, London

Figure 3. *The Raree Show. Sung by Jemmy Laroch in the Musical Interlude of the Peace of Utrecht*, anonymous British print after Egbert van Heemskerck the Younger based on Richard Brakenburgh's painting (Figure 19), 1713.
© The British Museum, London

Figure 4. Bartolomeo Vivarini, *Madonna of Humility*, ca. 1465, tempera and gold on wood
© The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Figure 5. Willem van Mieris, *Raree-show ('t Fraay Curieus)*, 1718, oil on panel.
© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (detail)

Figure 6. *Raree-show*,
hand-coloured lithograph,
ca. 1830

Figure 7. Noel le Míre, *La Curiosite*,
print after an oil painting by Richard Brakenburgh (Figure 19), ca. 1770

Figure 8. *Raree-show*, coloured wood engraving, ca. 1840

Figure 9. Print for children from
Prentjes Almanach voor Kinderen; Voor het Schrikkel-Jaar 1804,
Amsterdam 1804 (detail)

Figure 10. Dutch ceramic plate, Utrecht, ca. 1800. Private collection

Figure 11. *A Raree Show*,
satirical British print against Charles II, 1681.
© The British Museum, London

Figure 12. *Raree-show*, print from *Prentjes Almanach voor Kinderen; Voor het Jaar 1800*, Amsterdam 1800

Figure 13. *Magic lantern*,
print from *Prentjes Almanach voor Kinderen; Voor het Jaar 1800*,
Amsterdam 1800

Figure 14. Dutch tile with a representation of a raree-show, Gebr. Ravesteijn, Utrecht, ca. 1890

Figure 15. *Oh Raree Show*, print after Marcellus Laroon II from the series *The Cryes of the City of London Drawne after the Life*, after 1688.
© The British Museum, London

Figure 16. Game-tile (spelbord), Rotterdam ca. 1765-1790.
© Nederlands Tegelmuseum, Otterlo

Figure 17. *The Dolls' House of Petronella Oortman*, ca. 1686–1710.
© Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

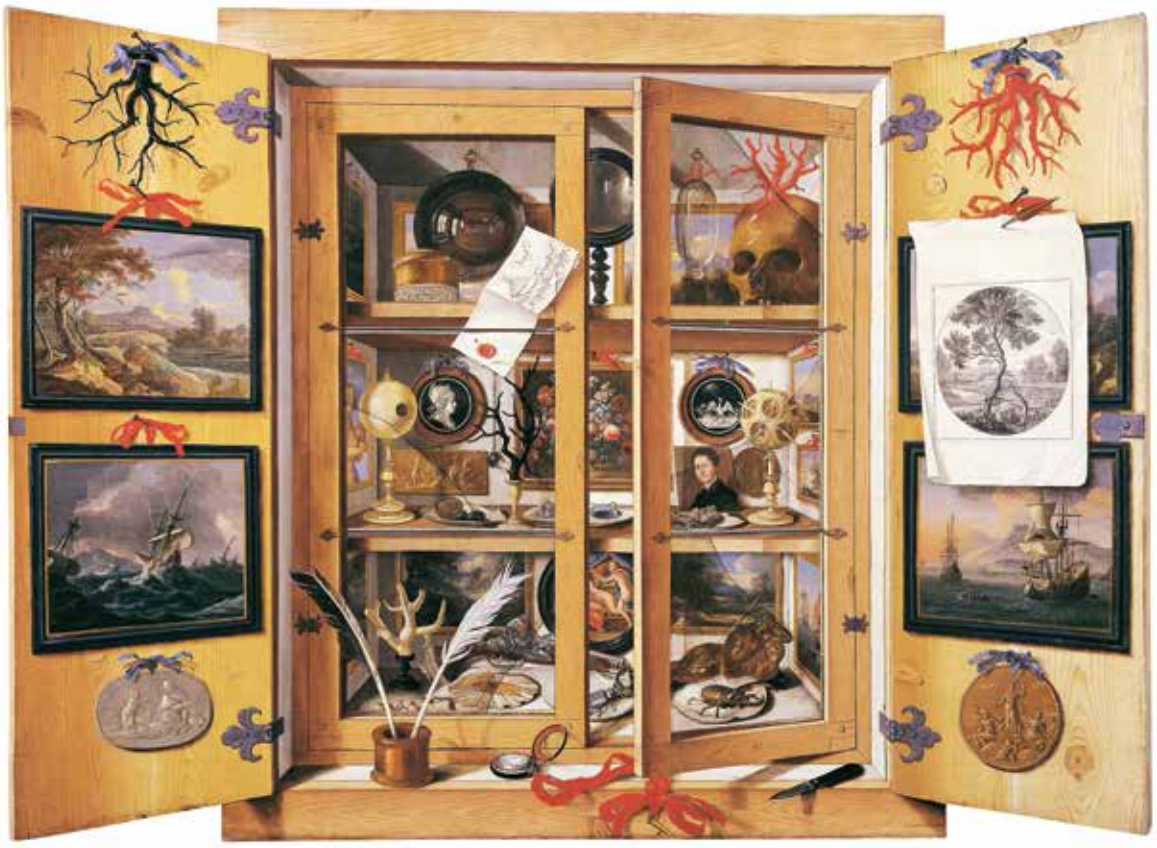

Figure 18. Domenico Remps, *Cabinet of Curiosities*, ca. 1689, oil on canvas.
© Museo dell'Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence

Figure 19. Richard Brakenburgh, *An Itinerant Showman*, ca. 1692,
oil on panel.
Private collection,
photo © Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague

Figure 20. Richard Brakenburgh (?), formerly ascribed to Jan Steen,
Raree-show,
ca. 1690, oil on panel.
Private collection,
photo © Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague

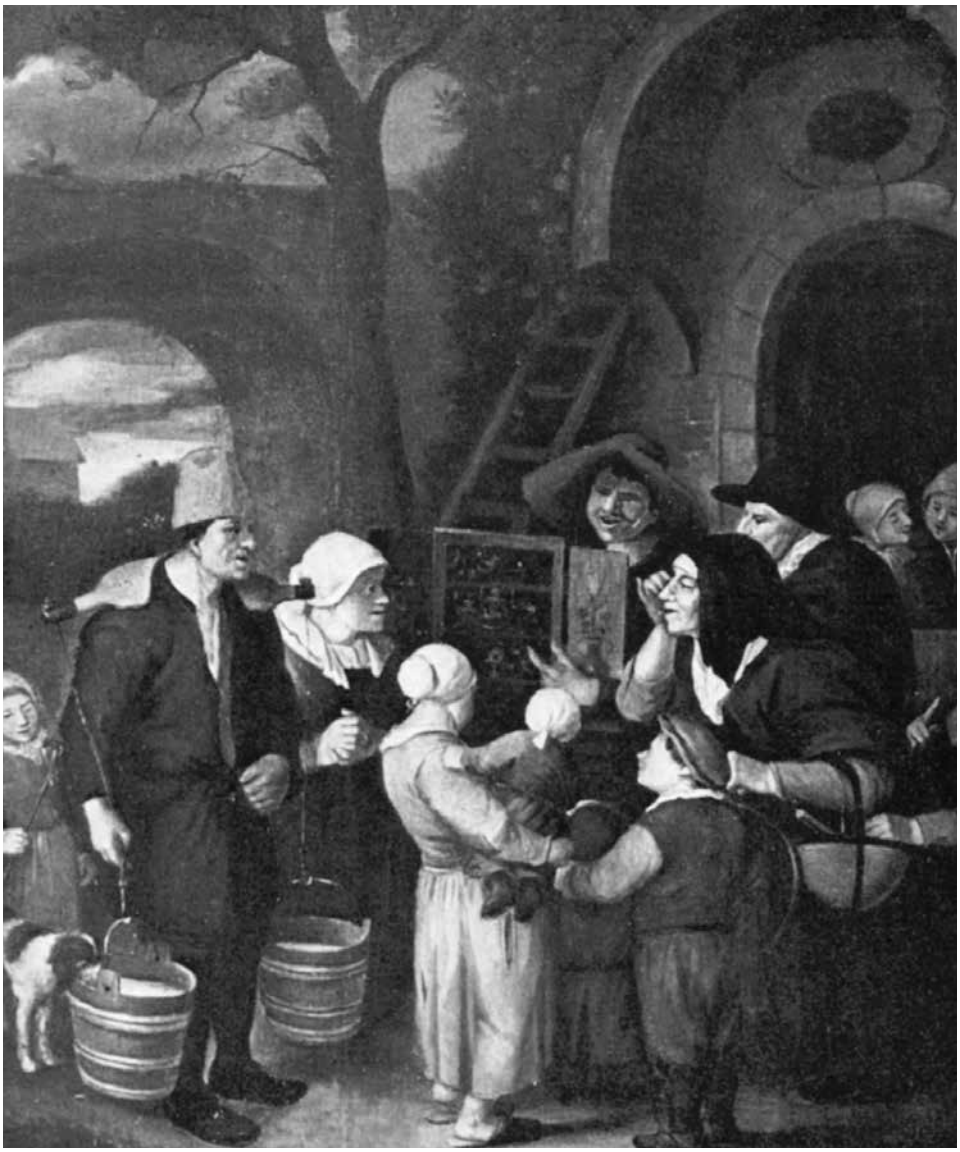

Figure 21. Richard Brakenburgh (?), formerly ascribed to Jan Steen,
Raree-show,
ca. 1690, oil on panel.
Private collection,
photo © Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague

Figure 22. Gerrit Dou, *Young Mother*,
1658, oil on panel
© Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen Mauritshuis, The Hague

Figure 23. Willem van Mieris, *Hurdy-gurdy player*,
1694, oil on panel,
© Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden.
Phot. Hans-Peter Klut

Figure 24. Peter Gabriëlse, *Kijkkast*, 2010, 82 x 66 x 13 cm. Phot. Kotomi Yamamura

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