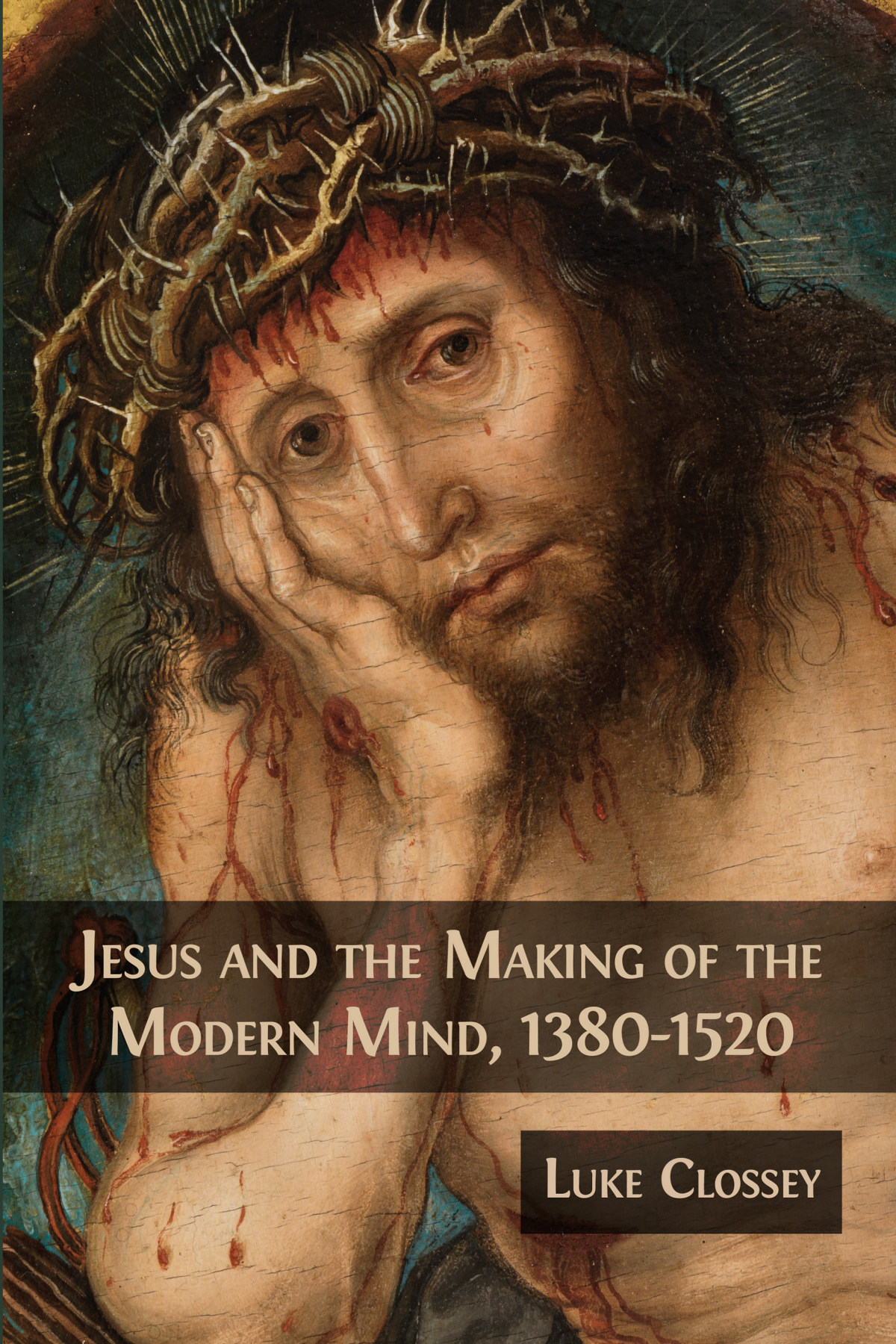

Jesus and the Making of the Modern Mind, 1380-1520

Luke Clossey

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14. Art and the Deep Ken

Consider three visual portrayals of Jesus's entombment (see Fig. 14.1). The first is a fifteenth-century Russian icon, created to be seen with the deep ken. The second is an early seventeenth-century painting by Caravaggio (1571–1610). Although these two images are less than two centuries apart, the difference is stark: While the Caravaggio approximates photorealism, the icon strives for a realism of another kind. The third is a still from the Ludovica Rambelli Teatro's recent live recreation of that Caravaggio painting. Caravaggio's creation closely replicates the appearance of Italian humans, in his time and ours. With little interest in worldly appearances, the deep ken focuses on another question: how closely does it replicate the true reality of Jesus and his entombers?

This is the first of three chapters on visual representations of Jesus. The first describes deep-ken approaches to the problem of representation. The second (Chapter 15) examines the development of plain-ken approaches tending towards a more historical proto-photorealism. The third (Chapter 16) uses the two kens to frame a discussion of the Jesus images hailed in the fifteenth century as the most accurate and powerful.

Contours of Deep-ken Art

Let us begin with a manuscript particularly rich with deep-ken art. The Ottheinrich ("Otto Henry") Bible is the earliest surviving illustrated German New Testament. It was made around 1430, but most of the miniatures were only completed in the 1530s. Many of the images have a dreamlike quality that invites, and resists, investigation. The depiction of Jesus walking on the water (Mt 14) is mesmerizing (see Fig. 14.2). The subject lends itself to this kind of portrayal. The homogeneity of the sea, disrupted by waves, allows for a simple abstract pattern, even less complex than the sky, where a stylized golden vine on red impossibly overlays the stay ropes stabilizing the mast. Peter's near drowning allows him to be portrayed from an overhead angle, where his face stands out above a formless blue garment covering his body. Jesus's face is missing entirely, presumably a casualty of pious viewers who engaged the image with hands or lips in addition to their eyes (see Chapter 20). The depiction of the Last Supper has multiple perspectives (see Fig. 14.3). We observe the table from above, making the food and dishes clear, and the floor from

 https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0371.14

directly above, visually simplifying the regular pattern. Jesus appears facing us at the top of the table, while we see the backs of the disciples "closest" to us. Another image assembles a series of people into triplets (see Fig. 14.4). The first row of six are not named. The second row begins on the left with Hezron, his son Ram, and his son Amminadab. The next group begins with Amminadab's son Nahshon, and the pattern continues. The last (fourteenth) group of triplets are Jacob, his son Joseph, and his wife Mary, who holds Jesus, the the great-grandson of Hezron. Some of the ancestors appear to interact with others, even beyond their own triplets: Jacob and Joseph, and Matthan in the previous grouping, for example, all turn to face Mary and Jesus. The entire assembly, spanning centuries of spacetime, exists out of time, in its own shared space. This is a genealogy visualized with the deep ken.

Fig. 14.1 Collage of three Entombments of Christ: a Russian icon (fifteenth century), Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entombment_of_Christ_(15th_century,_Tretyakov_gallery).jpg; Caravaggio, *The Entombment of Christ* (1603–04), Pinacoteca Vaticana, Vatican City, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Entombment_of_Christ-Caravaggio_(c.1602-3).jpg; a still (0:21) from Ludovica Rambelli Teatro, "Tableaux Vivants – Sutri (VT)", dir. Simone Calcagni, online video recording, YouTube (19 September 2018), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIeyulbiB0A

Fig. 14.2 *Walking on the Water*, Ottheinrich Bible (ca. 1430), BSB Cgm 8010(1, fol. 26r, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CC BY-NC-SA, http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/bsb00021200/image_54

Fig. 14.3 *Last Supper*, Ottheinrich Bible (ca. 1430), BSB Cgm 8010(1, fol. 40v, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CC BY-NC-SA, http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/bsb00021200/image_83

Such images strike me as fundamentally otherworldly. A Byzantine icon of Jesus, for example, does not look much like anyone I have ever seen. Such images do not look like our reality. The icons' abstraction locates them closer to modern cartoons than to the photorealism of later paintings and of the world around us.

Fig. 14.4 *Genealogy*, Ottheinrich Bible (ca. 1430), BSB Cgm 8010(1, fol. 10v, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CC BY-NC-SA, http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/bsb00021200/image_23

In the comic strip *Calvin and Hobbes*, Calvin asks his father, "How come old photographs are always black and white? Didn't they have color film back then?" His father explains: "Sure they did. In fact, those old photographs are in color. It's just the world was black and white back then… The world didn't turn color until sometime in the 1930s, and it was pretty grainy color for a while, too." In Calvin's

father's joke, each kind of photograph is a true representative of a different reality. A black-and-white photograph of the colourful world of 2024 is deficient, just as a colour photograph of the black-and-white world in 1924 is deficient.[1]

In the same way, a photorealistic painting is a deficient representation of the sacred reality. It may look like the world you see, but it does not resemble reality seen from the deep ken, the reality of invisible beings. What appears to be an inaccurate image might in fact be an accurate representation of someone who does not look like a normal person. An apparently accurate image might be, at best, only a superficial reality limited to surface appearances.

The obvious explanations are that abstract images are either deficient or disinterested in reality. An equally possible solution is that reality has changed. Some medieval painters were not attempting to depict *our* reality, but a reality more real.

Although we see a gap between abstract, unnatural eastern icons and the world around us, medievals did not see a gap between those icons and the world around *them*. On the contrary, they were impressed by how lifelike their icons were. Scholars have generally concluded that the medieval Byzantines were so used to aping the ancients that they repeated ancient praise of ancient lifelike images, applying that same praise to their own art without making any new appraisals of their own. This is not quite right: time and again people saw normally invisible beings appearing with icon-like abstraction, and confirmed their identities by referring back to these supposedly abstract and unnatural icons. We can consider Byzantine visionaries as seeing their world as something like the modern film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), a hybrid of abstract beings existing in a photorealistically depicted "normal" world.

Byzantine icons were so realistic, relative to a spiritual reality, that they could serve the function of today's photo identification.[2] In this cartoon (see Fig. 14.5), Tommy Carter's mother and father come to his school for parent-teacher night. Tommy's teacher is surprised at how non-photorealistic the parents are. He likely has just realized that Tommy's crude drawings of his presumably normal-looking parents were, in fact, accurate drawings of his crude parents. Tommy's drawings were realistic not despite their crude abstraction, but because of it.

1 Bill Watterson, *Calvin and Hobbes* (29 October 1989), https://www.gocomics.com/calvinandhobbes/1989/10/29

2 Paroma Chatterjee, *The Living Icon in Byzantium and Italy: The Vita Image, Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2014), 56–62, https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139542401; Robert Grigg, "Byzantine Credulity as an Impediment to Antiquarianism," *Gesta* 26 (1987): 3–9, https://doi.org/10.1111/1540_6245.jaac42.4.0397; Robert Grigg, "Relativism and Pictorial Realism," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 42 (1984): 397–408, https://doi.org/10.1111/1540_6245.jaac42.4.0397; Cyril Mango, "Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963): 53–75 (65–66).

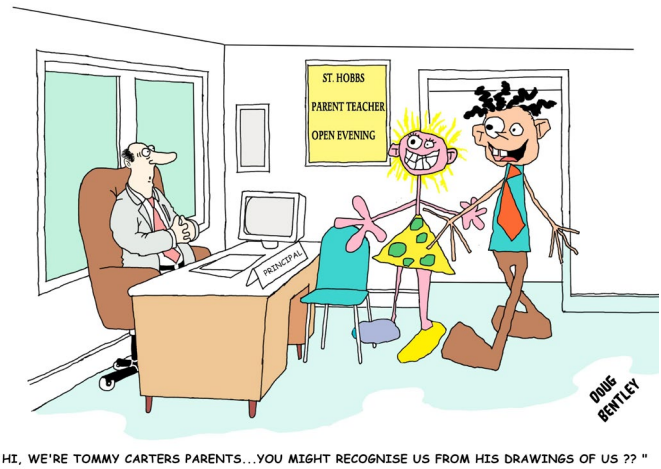

Fig. 14.5 Doug Bentley, "Hi, we're Tommy Carter's parents" (2013)

In the visual arts, perhaps more than other areas, we habitually privilege the plain ken by associating it with the "real." "Realism" is supposed to be an artistic sensibility that depicts its subject "truthfully," that is, in a way compatible with our everyday experience of spacetime, in contrast with the artificial and the stylized. Realistic subject matters tend towards the ugly or random; realistic styles erase themselves to position their product in opposition to "stylistic" art. "Realism" has less arrogant, less confident synonyms, such as "naturalism"—which still presumes that the plain ken is more natural—and "illusionism"—rather more honest in signalling that plain-ken art creates not reality, but an illusion of reality. Illusionistic painting claims, in Joost Keizer's description, that it "repeats a world already there; it does not show a world invented by the painter."[3]

If instead you look at reality through the deep ken, deep-ken art depicts reality more accurately. Instead of using "realism" in the normal art-historian sense, this book envisions two realisms, plain-ken and deep-ken realism. Deep-ken images look unworldly to us, but accurately depict beings like deities, both in intention and in the experience of those who have reported visions. The deep ken tries to get at the underlying reality, at the consonance between real subject and image. In the deep ken, "flat" has no negative connotations. Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood meditate helpfully on paintings with elements

3 Joost Keizer, *The Realism of Piero della Francesca* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 34, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315553641

from different time periods. An image can "double," "bend," and "fold" time.[4] Noa Turel notes that what we here call the deep ken was interested not in "immediacy" or objectivity, but in "tangible, material links to the sacred past."[5] These were not photographs; they were better.

This book's distinction, without preference, between the two kens undermines the conventional link between the plain ken and reality. In the visual arts, our two ways of seeing both become visible. Some artistic strategies and tactics portray the subject and its world in a deep-ken way, others in a plain-ken way. Indeed, plain-ken art appears real only to one looking at reality through the plain ken. Images that resemble our visible world, that depict deities as if they were people you would meet on the street in our own spacetime, appear real merely to the plain ken. Plain-ken realism appears as if it took place at a particular time-point in ordinary spacetime.

This chapter examines art created to be seen with the deep ken. In brief, deep-ken art is beautifully proportioned, indifferent to plain-ken particularities and limitations, and rich with consonance and meaning.

Envisioning the Invisible

Where a strictly plain-ken view would show us what would be visible to a random passer-by, the deep ken includes or omits details to achieve a more meaningful perspective. Depictions of normally invisible saints and angels create a particular difficulty for artists. In Raphael's (1483–1520) *Sistine Madonna* (ca. 1513–14) (see Fig. 14.6), our eyes hurry to the wistful cherubim at the bottom of the composition; where the green curtains are pulled back, the clouds take on semi-visible, translucent but distinct, faces. Raphael brings a plain-ken realism, both in the faces (Madonna's beauty remains human, and is the more beautiful for its humanity) and in the expressions (the wistfulness of the cherubim). Raphael depicts these beings in a plain-ken-realistic way, by taking advantage of our ability to see images in nature, to see faces in amorphous smoke and clouds. Thus, ambiguous visual fields can be used to visualize the invisible. However, that we can clearly see half-clear faces suggests a crossing over to the deep ken, or at least a visualization of a human psychology.

4 Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone, 2010), 9, 13–14, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1453n0p

5 Noa Turel, "Living Pictures: Rereading 'au vif,' 1350–1550," *Gesta* 50 (2011): 163–82, https://doi.org/10.2307/41550555

Fig. 14.6 Raphael, *Sistine Madonna* (ca. 1513–14), Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RAFAEL_-_Madonna_Sixtina_(Gemäldegalerie_Alter_Meister,_Dresden,_1513-14._Óleo_sobre_lienzo,_265_x_196_cm).jpg

Some painters give us a privileged point of observation, making visible to us things and beings that remain invisible to other subjects in the painting. In Master I. A. M. of Zwolle's print of the *Mass of St. Gregory* (ca. 1480s), we share this privilege with a dog, and together we see souls in purgatory; the dog's perception of the souls illustrates their imperceptibility to the other, oblivious figures.[6] In Piero della Francesca's (d. 1492) *Dream of Constantine* (ca. 1447–66) only we and the sleeping Constantine can witness the angel bearing the cross aloft.[7] A miniature in the Prayerbook of James IV of Scotland (ca. 1503) has Queen Margaret (1489–1541) adoring the Blessed Virgin. Because the Queen is not a saint privileged with actual

6 Master I. A. M. of Zwolle, *Mass of St. Gregory* (ca. 1480s), British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1850-0713-16. See Christine Göttler, "Is Seeing Believing? The Use of Evidence in Representations for the Miraculous Mmass of St. Gregory," *Germanic Review* 76 (2001): 121–42 (136).

7 "Constantine's Dream (c. 1466) by Piero della Francesca," *Archive* (2023), https://www.artchive.com/artwork/constantines-dream-piero-della-francesca-c-1466/ San Francesco, Arezzo, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/p/piero/2/4/4vision1.html.

bodily visions, the Blessed Virgin she—and we—see is not a vision that anyone standing nearby would have seen; it is a private vision, given to her imagination alone, to which the artist allows us access.[8] Paintings of patrons praying before saints sometimes have the former's eyes misaligned with the latter's bodies, as few worldly patrons would be able to actually see the normally invisible saints. The misalignment of eyes may reflect the idea that invisible beings were not intended to be seen, a hint at the duality of vision.

Two moments in the life of resurrected Jesus involve delayed recognition: Thomas doubting his reality, and Mary Magdalene misidentifying him as a gardener. Oblivious to the presence—obvious to the viewer—of God, saints, and angels, Thomas still has two doubting fingers in Jesus's side-wound in a typical representation. Thomas's confusion, at the moment of its dispelling, can be portrayed by showing a particular instant in time, when his fingers confirm Jesus's wound.[9] Mary's confusion is more challenging artistically. The confirmation comes not in an action, that can be represented, but in words—Jesus calling her by name and warning her not to touch him. Although deep-ken depiction could visualize them in a text-scroll, words are difficult to render visually in plain-ken space. Therefore, the usual approach is to partially disguise Jesus's visual appearance, just enough to illustrate Mary's confusion, but not so much as to confuse viewers uncertain about the identity of this woman and this gardener. Titian's (ca. 1488/90–1576) portrayal, *Noli me Tangere* (ca. 1514), for example, gives Jesus a hoe, but x-ray analysis suggests that originally Titian wanted to deepen the illusion by giving him a gardener's hat as well. We have here hesitation over how to represent an illusion—or a delusion—visually.[10]

The Trinity also proved difficult to represent, leading to diverse portrayals. Jean Fouquet shows the Trinity as three identical Jesus-like men in the *Hours of Étienne Chevalier* (1450s) (see Fig. 14.7). Some Italian images of the Trinity depicted a three-faced Jesus with four eyes, the middle face sharing an eye with each side face (see Fig. 14.8).[11] Antonio Martini (d. 1433) produced a similar representation, with more distinct faces, in a fresco on a column of the Atri Cathedral. The

8 Gebetbuch Jakobs IV. von Schottland, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1897, fol. 243v.

9 For example, the Master of the St. Bartholomew Altar, St. Thomas Altarpiece (1501), Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Master_Of_The_St._Bartholomew_Altar_-_St_Thomas_Altarpiece_-_WGA14629.jpg. See Rolf Wallrath, "Der Thomas-Altar in Köln: Zur Ikonographie des Thomaswunders," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 17 (1955): 165–80.

10 Titian, *Noli me Tangere* (ca. 1514), National Gallery, London, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/titian-noli-me-tangere. See Cecil Gould, "A Famous Titian Restored," *Burlington Magazine* 100 (1958): 44–50.

11 See also the Trinity in the Chiesa di San Nicolao, Giornico (1478), Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giornico_Chiesa_San_Nicolao_Affreschi_Abside_Trinit%C3%A0.jpg

same visualization was popular in Ethiopia, either independently invented or introduced by the Venetian immigrant painter Nicolò Brancaleon (1460–1526).[12]

Fig. 14.7 Jean Fouquet, *Coronation* (1452–60), Bibliothèque et Archives du Château, Chantilly, MS 71, fol. 15, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean_Fouquet_-_The_Coronation_of_the_Virgin_-_WGA08028.jpg

Fig. 14.8 Nicolao da Seregno, *Trinity* (1478), Chiesa di San Nicolao, Giornico, Switzerland, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giornico_Chiesa_San_Nicolao_Affreschi_Abside_Trinità.jpg

12 María José Friedlander, *Ethiopia's Hidden Treasures* (Addis Ababa: Shama, 2007).

The most famous Trinity image came from Russia (see Fig. 14.9). Andrei Rublev (ca. 1360–1430) enters the historical record in 1405, as a student of Theophanes the Greek (ca. 1340–1410), doing frescoes and icons for the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Moscow. His *Trinity* depicts the hospitality shown by the patriarch Abraham in feeding three visiting angels (Genesis 18). Exegetes had long understood this to refer to the Christian Trinity, and Abraham's meal as a reference to the Eucharist. This is part of a long tradition, before it and after it, of Old Testament Trinities. Some of Rublev's version is new. His table has a niche in front of it, for example, which echoes the contemporary practice of putting niches in altars for the Eucharist. Rublev's depiction was frequently copied: the late-fifteenth century double-sided icon from the Novgorod Cathedral, the 1484–85 icon from the Monastery of St. Joseph of Volokolamsk, a Russian icon from Pskov (ca. 1500), and the early sixteenth-century version in the Makhrishchsky Monastery. In the sixteenth century, the Hundred Chapters Council under Grand Prince Ivan IV (1530–84) ruled that Rublev's *Trinity* would now be the model for subsequent depictions of the Old Testament Trinity.[13]

Fig. 14.9 Andrei Rublev, *Trinity* (1411 or 1425–27), Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelsatmamre-trinity-rublev-1410.jpg

13 Gabriel Bunge, *The Rublev Trinity: The Icon of the Trinity by the Monk-Painter Andrei Rublev* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007), 23, 35–43, 95–97; Georgy Petrovich Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind: Kievan Christianity, the Tenth to the Thirteenth Centuries* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 368; Priscilla Hunt, "Andrei Rublev's Old Testament Trinity Icon in Cultural Context," in *The Trinity-Sergius Lavra in Russian History and Culture*, ed. Vladimir Tsurikov (Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Seminary Press, 2005), 99–122 (99–102, 108–10); Vladimir Ivanov, *Russian Icons* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 57; Johannes Reimer, "Trinitarian Spirituality: Relational and Missional," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 75 (2019): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i1.5348; David Talbot Rice, and Tamara Talbot Rice, *Icons and Their History* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 1974), 103.

Rublev projects the three angels onto a circle. He avoids irrealistic details that might distract: he omits all the tableware except the cup, for deep-ken reasons, to highlight it and its symbolic value. Scholars disagree on which angels correspond to which members of the Trinity. Despite having an inscription referring to Son, Father, and Spirit, the angels of the Zyrian Trinity, attributed to Stephen of Perm (ca. 1340–96) (see Chapter 7), cannot be decoded, as it is not certain that the order of the text was meant to match the order of the angels.[14] Three background objects resonate generally: the mountain with intellectual ascent, the tree with the Crucifixion, and the building with Abraham's tent and the Temple. As Rublev probably practiced hesychasm himself (see Chapter 12), the blue colour in the icon may suggest the uncreated light of the hesychasts.[15] The image as a whole adopts an inverse perspective: instead of the shapes getting larger as they approach the viewer, the opposite occurs—a perspective that can even be persuasively animated through the miracle of linear algebra (see Fig. 14.10). This "reverse perspective" may suggest a theological truth, aligning the largest elements with the most distant ones, perhaps emphasising a proximity to heaven and the divine.[16]

Fig. 14.10 Still (0:18) from Jeremy Mooney Somers, "True Reverse Perspective" (2009), online video recording, Vimeo (12 June 2010), CC BY-NC 4.0, https://vimeo.com/12518619

14 Zyrian Trinity (fourteenth century), Vologda Historical, Architectural and Art Museum, Wikimedia, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Trinity_Zuryanskaya.jpg

15 Bunge, *The Rublev Trinity*, 32, 42–44; Hunt, "Andrei Rublev's," 113–18; Anita Strezova, *Hesychasm and Art* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2014), 194–95, https://doi.org/10.22459/ha.09.2014. For a source that downplays hesychast influence generally but still sees it in this work, see E. P. Buschkevitch, "The Limits of Hesychasm: Some Notes on Monastic Spirituality in Russia 1350–1500," *Forschungen zur Osteuropäischen Geschichte* 38 (1986): 97–109.

16 See Oleg Tarasov, *How Divine Images Became Art: Essays on the Rediscovery, Study, and Collecting of Medieval Icons in the Belle Époque* (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2023), 162–270, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0378

The most important point of divergence between plain-ken and deep-ken imagery can be seen with images of the Madonna and Child. If we misidentify these as plain-ken portrayals, we might see two humans. For the deep ken, however, there is just a Madonna, with the Child serving to make her recognizable, without himself having an independent existence. This is important for understanding the functionality of images perceived as realistic in the plain ken. What in English is a "Madonna and child" is more accurately called in Italian a "Madonna *with* [*con*] child" (subordinating Jesus) or, even better, a "Madonna." Jesus is merely an attribute, an accessory, of Mary, one which helps communicate her identity. In some images of Mary holding the Baby Jesus while posing for Luke, if we peek at his work in progress, he is only painting Mary.[17] Bicci di Lorenzo's (1373–1452) *Madonna and Child* (ca. 1430–31) inscribes the identification of Mary and two saints in their respective halos, but Baby Jesus's halo does not include his name (see Fig. 14.11). Is his identification too obvious to write out, or is he not "really" there? One Associated Press story concerned a stolen "14th-century panel painting featuring the Virgin Mary with a child," a child the reporter seemed unable to identify. In fact, the reporter inadvertently might have correctly understood the image with the deep ken, as a Madonna with a child accessory.[18] Theologically, this is all reasonable: the ubiquitous presence of Jesus on the altar—as well as his relationship to his mother—makes his dominance or even presence in a Madonna-with-child painting less necessary. In fact, artificial-intelligence techniques for identifying Mary images rely more on her veil than her baby.[19]

17 For example, Rogier van der Weyden, *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* (ca. 1435–40), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, https://collections.mfa.org/objects/31035/saint-luke-drawing-the-virgin

18 Brett Barrouquere, "Stolen 14th-century Art Recovered in Ky. museum," *San Diego Union-Tribune* (23 May 2011), https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-stolen-14th-century-art-recovered-in-ky-museum-2011may23-story.html

19 Charles Hope, "Altarpieces and the Requirements of Patrons," in *Christianity and the Renaissance*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1990), 544–45; Federico Milani and Piero Fraternali, "A Dataset and a Convolutional Model for Iconography Classification in Paintings," *ACM Journal on Computing and Cultural Heritage* 14.4 (2021): 1–18 (13), https://doi.org/10.1145/3458885

Fig. 14.11 Bicci di Lorenzo, *Madonna and Child* (ca. 1430–31) (detail), State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, photograph by Sailko (2011), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bicci_di_lorenzo,_madonna_col_bambino_e_santi_giacomo_minore,_giovanni_battista_e_angeli.JPG

Fig. 14.12 *Virgin and Child, with Saints John and Christopher* (ca. 1440–70), Princeton University Art Museum, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint_George_and_the_dragon,_and_Virgin_and_Child_with_Saints_John_and_Christopher,_diptych,_Netherlandish,_c._1440-1470,_ivory_-_Princeton_University_Art_Museum_-_DSC06792.jpg

What about paintings with more than one Jesus? These are necessarily deep ken. Understood with the plain ken, so that what looks like Jesus is an actual Jesus, such images are problematic, as they show two Jesuses in the same space simultaneously. However, when understood with the deep ken, the issue resolves: there are no actual Jesus here; each Jesus in such a painting is just an attribute and not a representation of Jesus himself. This Dutch ivory includes both Mary (with Jesus) and Christopher (with Jesus), for a total of zero (deep ken) or two (plain ken) Jesuses (see Fig. 14.12). Every part of this is done with the plain ken, but the overall composition (being able to put two Jesuses in the same frame) is deep ken, and there is in fact no Jesus here. The Arezzo monastery of Santa Fiore tried to commission Giorgio Vasari (1511–74) for an altarpiece intended for a chapel jointly dedicated to Christopher and Joseph. The envisioned composition included both a depiction of Saint Christopher and the Holy Family, each with a child accessory. This makes sense to the deep ken, but here Vasari understood art with the plain ken and objected to this *mostruosa* [monstruous] idea.[20]

Beautiful Proportions

In some ways, deep-ken art was especially appropriate for capturing Jesus in his full beauty, as contemporaries understood Jesus and beauty both to be intertwined with an emphasis on proportionality and consonance. Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378–1455) insisted that "in all the visible modes" from painting to typography "proportionality makes beauty [*pulcritudine*] more than any other endeavour does."[21] Similarly, in architecture Leon Battista Alberti (1404–72) defined beauty as "that reasoned harmony [*concinnitas*] of all the parts within a body, so that nothing may be added, taken away, or altered, but for the worse." His beauty, appreciated through the deep ken, was "a great and holy matter," not a result of human agency but simply "granted." In some passages he ascribed protective properties to it: "Beauty may even influence an enemy, by restraining his anger and so preventing the work from being violated." It is not clear whether this effect derived from human psychology (plain ken) or from some deep consonance (deep ken) between observer and art. His overall conceptualization, in any case, was deep ken, and his disdain for those who approach beauty in a plain-ken way was palpable: some believed that beauty "is judged by relative and variable criteria, and that the forms of buildings should

20 Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, 14 vols. (Florence: Le Monnier, 1855), XI, 78.

21 Lorenzo Ghiberti, *Denkwürdigkeiten* (*I Commentarii*), ed. Julius von Schlosser, 2 vols. (Berlin: Bard, 1912), I, 105– 07.

vary according to individual taste and must not be bound by any rules of art. A common fault, this, among the ignorant—to deny the existence of anything they do not understand."[22] Similarly, Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) noted that painting, like music, geometry, and the human body, found its beauty in a harmony of proportions. Music, he wrote, concerned itself with the intervals between tones, just as painting explored the space between objects. Unlike arithmetic and its discrete whole numbers, music and painting involved "the proportions of continuous quantities," the flow from one quantity to another.[23]

These ideas echoed in descriptions of Jesus's beauty. Jesus's earthly body was understood to be awesome and beautiful. Just before our period, Pseudo-Bonaventure (1221–74) marvelled at the "grace and shamefacedness" of his body, which made him the most beautiful of all men.[24] Margery Kempe (ca. 1373–1438) rated Jesus as "the handsomest man that ever might be seen or imagined."[25] Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) criticized Donatello (ca. 1386–1466) for putting "a peasant on the cross," when in reality Jesus was "most delicate [*delicatissimo*] and in every part the most beautiful to ever have been born."[26] A sixteenth-century French play put this idea into the mouth of a Roman soldier who, seeing Christ naked, praises his "beautiful, well-formed body [*beau corps et bien formé*]."[27]

Extraordinary Space and Time

Artwork best seen with the deep ken can often be identified by its abandoning the plain-ken rules of spacetime. One ca. 1400 Serbian liturgical stole has a

22 Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1988), 155–57. On proportion, see Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2014), 154–56.

23 Emanuel Winternitz, ed., *Leonardo da Vinci as a Musician* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1982), 210–16. Leonardo Da Vinci's sense of continuous numbers came from Aristotle, who noted that time and space are both themselves continuous, "for it is possible to find a common boundary at which their parts join." See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. Hugh Lawson-Tancred (London: Penguin, 2004), 350 (Kappa 2); Aristotle, *Categories and De interpretatione*, trans. J. L. Ackrill (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1963), 12–13 (Categories, ch. 6); Thomas Brachert, "A Musical Canon of Proportion in Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper," *The Art Bulletin* 53 (1971): 461–66.

24 Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, trans. Isa Ragusa and Rosalie B. Green (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1961), 328; Iohannis de Caulibus, *Meditaciones vite Christi olim S. Bonaventuro attributae* (Brepols: Turnhout, 1997), 265.

25 Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, trans. B. A. Windeatt (London: Penguin, 1985), 249.

26 Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori*, III, 246.

27 Jean Claude Bologne, *Histoire de la Pudeur* (Paris: Orban, 1986), 223–24.

complex composition of Jesus's baptism. Jesus stands central, upright and naked. He appears to stand in front of, rather than "in," the Jordan River: nothing stands in front of his body; behind we see the river, and his form is outlined in pearls to highlight his exclusion from the environment. John stands further down the river, away from the viewer, but when he reaches out to Jesus his hand falls in front of Jesus's halo. Each man is surrounded by a string of pearls, further emphasizing his removal.[28] Both men exist outside of a single moment in ordinary spacetime.

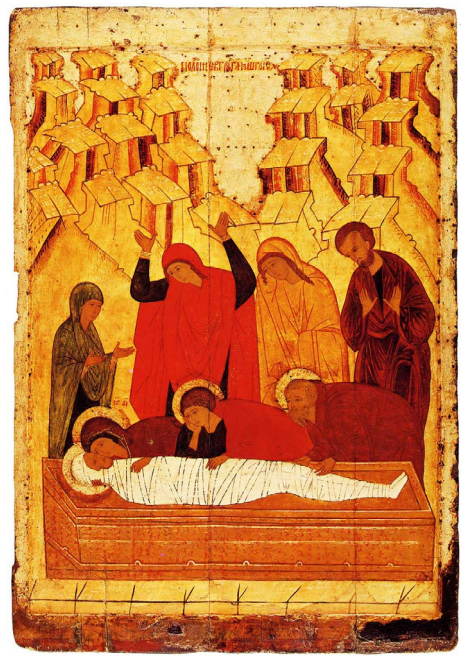

Fig. 14.13 Anonymous, *Entombment* (late fifteenth century), Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Wikimedia, public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entombment_of_Christ_(15th_century,_Tretyakov_gallery).jpg

Deep-ken art can reshape the spatial world itself to better echo the meaning underneath the image. One illustration represents the Marian vision given to the Dominican nun Elsbeth Stagel (d. 1360). Mary had told Elsbeth that the

28 Svetozar Dušanić, *Serbian Orthodox Church Museum* (Belgrade: Serbian Orthodox Church, 2008), 8, fig. 3. The image is similar to a 1307 miniature in a manuscript of al-Biruni. University of Edinburgh, Or.Ms.161, fol.140v, https://images.is.ed.ac.uk/luna/servlet/detail/UoEsha~4~4~64011~102971:Chronology-of-Ancient-Nations%2C-f-14?qvq=q:work_shelfmark%3D"Or.Ms.161";lc:UoEsha~4~4&mi=93&trs=376

mystic Henry Suso (1295–1366) spread the IHS around himself before offering it to her, Elsbeth, who shared it with others. This exchange occurs under the cloak of Eternal Wisdom who says, "into my godly protection shall I take those who carry my name Jesus in their longing." The "my" name identifies Wisdom with Jesus. In the foreground, small people gesture towards the floating IHSs like children chasing blown soap bubbles. The wall is the cloak, the floor bends up to cup the people in its protection.[29] Similarly, this Russian entombment (see Fig. 14.13) has the environment bending reverently towards Jesus's body; each side's landscape echoes the sad curve of the mourners on that side. Other backgrounds achieved a colourful abstraction, almost five centuries before Piet Mondrian's (1872–1944) experimentation, that intensifies the narrative scene by stripping away its context, as in this Armenian gospel (see Fig. 14.14).

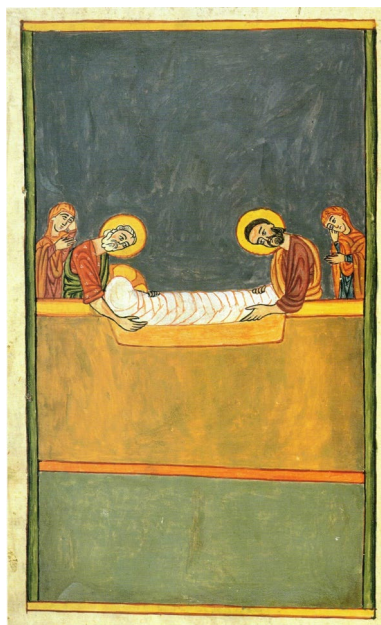

Fig. 14.14 Anonymous, *Entombment* (1437), British Library, London, MS Or. 2668, fol. 5v.

Liberated from the constraints of our spacetime, deep-ken art has no need to represent a single moment only. Different plain-ken moments could appear in

29 Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 710(322), fol. 89r, https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/sbe/0710//89r. See Ingrid Falque, "'Daz man bild mit bilde us tribe': Imagery and Knowledge of God in Henry Suso's Exemplar," *Speculuum* 92 (2017): 447–92, https://doi.org///doi.org/10.1086/690774

the same frame. This might reflect an allegorical truth deeper than any historical coincidence. We might call this "polychronicity," multiple times blended together.[30] We see something similar in film editing, too: a few seconds before a scene ends, we hear sounds from the subsequent scene, which sometimes reinforces meaning, although people in the first scene cannot hear the second one. These so-called "J-cuts" are common in film production today, replacing cruder alternatives like the "wipes" of earlier films such as *Star Wars*. In one episode of *Better Call Saul*, Mike spends a long day digging trying to find a body; the screen depicts a half dozen Mikes digging at the same time.[31] In such montage techniques, frames—actions in time—are cut together to show connections, and form a third idea that bridges the first and second shot. In Jesus paintings, the deep ken requires no cuts of any kind to bridge between Biblical events centuries apart.

Let us consider a range of examples. In Gentile da Fabriano's (ca. 1370–1427) *Nativity* (1423), multiple stages of the journey are depicted at the same time.[32] One early-sixteenth-century Nativity set includes one Jesus laying on a blanket to be adored by the Magi, while Mary holds another Jesus (see Fig. 14.15).[33] Some images of the Mass of St. Gregory combine events from distinct times: for example, from outside the church, a first-century soldier, one of Jesus's tormenters, pokes his head through the window so that he can spit on the sixth-century apparition of Jesus.[34] This phenomenon occurs also in Muslim art. This early fifteenth-century miniature, perhaps once illustrating a collection of Stories of the Prophets, *Qisas al-Anbiya*, is dominated by the giant ʿUj (so large as to go out of the frame) being slain by Moses, but at the base is Muhammad (his face discretely covered by his turban) sitting among family members, and in the upper right is Mary holding the Baby Jesus. Each of the three prophets has a flaming halo. They are out of time, and indeed Jesus is not even an adult (see Fig. 14.16). Israhel van Meckenem's (ca.

30 Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, *The Place of Narrative: Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431–1600* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 2, talks of monoscenic, polyscenic, and continuous compositions, and Franz Wickhoff, *Roman Art*, trans. S. Arthur Strong (London: Heinemann, 1900), 8–13, of continuous, isolating, and complementary ones.

31 "Slip," *Better Call Saul*, season 3, episode 8 (5 June 2017).

32 Gentile da Fabriano, *Nativity* (1423), Uffizi Gallery, Florence, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/gentile/adormagi/adormago.html

33 See Zuzanna Sarnecka, "'And the Word Dwelt amongst Us': Experiencing the Nativity in the Italian Renaissance Home," in *Domestic Devotions in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Maya Corry, Marco Faini, and Alessia Meneghin, Intersections 59 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 163–84, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004375871_009

34 Göttler, "Is Seeing Believing?," 120; Kathryn M. Rudy, *Rubrics, Images, and Indulgences in Late Medieval Netherlandish Manuscripts* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 127, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004326965

1445–1503) engraving shows Jesus eating at Emmaus in the foreground, and two other post-Resurrection scenes, each with its own Jesus, in the background, visible through the dining room's large open archways (see Fig. 14.17).

Fig. 14.15 Giovanni di Nicola di Manzoni di Colle (?), *Annunciation to the Shepherds and Adoration of the Magi* (ca. 1509–15), Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/80700. Photograph © The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

Fig. 14.16 *The Giant 'Uj and the Prophets Moses, Jesus and Muhammad*, MSS 620, Khalili Collections, https://www.khalilicollections.org/collections/islamic-art/khalili-collection-islamic-art-the-giant-uj-and-the-prophets-moses-jesus-and-muhammad-mss620/. Wikimedia, CC-BY-SA 3.0 IGO, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Khalili_Collection_Islamic_Art_mss_0620_rotated.jpg

Fig. 14.17 Israhel van Meckenem, *Christ at Emmaus* (ca. 1480), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, public domain, https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.42003.html

Some of the above examples of polychronicity were convenient. Others set up a new consonance, especially between the Old and New Testaments. While typically these incorporate the older history into the newer, Nicolas Froment's (ca. 1435–86) triptych of the *Burning Bush* (ca. 1475–76) moves time in the opposite direction, away from foreshadowing. Here the Madonna and Child appear amidst the Burning Bush, and in fact, despite their compositional centrality, are clearly situated in the Old Testament.[35] Similarly, the Nativity and the Passion were understood as symmetric bookends to Jesus's life, and the latter cast a long shadow over the former. Some Nativity depictions could be called proleptic, in anticipation of a later event, as if future events happened earlier. Earlier textual connections between birth and death may have been in the minds of some artists, for instance the *Golden Legend*'s description of the star

35 Aix Cathedral, Aix-en-Provence, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nicola_Froment,_Triptych_of_the_Burning_Bush,_1475,_Aix-en-Provence,_Church_Saint-Sauveur.jpg

guiding the Magi to the Nativity as having "the shape of a most beautiful child over whose head a cross gleamed."[36]

The essentially deep-ken links between different times were also depicted for the plain ken, through the use of specific symbols adding illusionism to the composition. Thus, a number of paintings with the deep ken combined the Nativity and the Crucifixion.[37] From the beginning of our period, images of the Madonna with Child often included details alluding to the Passion of Christ, which allowed for simultaneous depiction of Jesus's life's beginning and end. A sleeping Baby Jesus could prefigure the dead adult Jesus of the Lamentation.[38] In Giovanni Bellini's (ca. 1430–1516) *Madonna of the Meadow* (ca. 1500–05), set amidst the fortified hills of northeastern Italy, a vulture perched in a leafless tree reinforces the connection between sleeping Baby Jesus and dead adult Jesus.[39] Bellini's *San Zaccaria Altarpiece* (1505) sits the Madonna with Child on an octagonal pedestal, echoing ideas of birth and rebirth, for Jesus's Resurrection occurred one day after the seventh day of the week.[40] Piero della Francesca bathes his *Madonna of Senigallia* (ca. 1470–74) in a plain-ken light; here Jesus wears a blood-red necklace with coral pendant—pointing to the Eucharist, and on a nearby shelf is a box for holding the consecrated host, which (in the plain ken) cannot exist during his birth.[41] Piero di Cosimo's (1462–1522) *Madonna with Saints* (ca. 1493) has a floor in front of the Blessed Virgin's throne that wants sweeping, with symbolic objects strewn as if each had been absentmindedly abandoned over the course of a day (thus, *in* time).[42]

Some images could stretch even further, linking the Passion not with the Nativity, but with the Fall, thousands of years earlier. Combining Genesis with

36 Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2012), 80, https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400842056

37 For example, Benedetto Bonfigli (attrib.), *Adoration of the Kings, and Christ on the Cross* (ca. 1470), National Gallery, London, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/probably-by-benedetto-bonfigli-the-adoration-of-the-kings-and-christ-on-the-cross and *Christ Child and Holy Heart* (ca. 1463–67), BSB Clm 692, fol. 102 bis v, https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb00124327?page=216,217

38 Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth Century Devotional Painting* (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1984), 61.

39 National Gallery, London, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/giovanni-bellini-madonna-of-the-meadow

40 San Zaccaria, Venice, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Zaccaria_Altarpiece#/media/File:Pala_di_San_Zaccaria_(Venezia).jpg. See Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an 'Iconography of Medieval Architecture'," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 1–33 (29).

41 Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madonna_di_Senigallia#/media/File:Madonna_di_Senigallia.jpg

42 Museo degli Innocenti, Florence, Wikimedia, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Madonna_and_Child_Enthroned_with_Saints_Piero_di_Cosimo.jpg

the Passion, one illumination in the Salzburger Missal depicts the Garden of Eden with a crucifix hanging in a tree bearing forbidden fruit and Eucharistic hosts (see Fig. 14.18). The *Stromu života* [Tree of Life] mural (ca. 1350–1400) in Žehra, Slovakia renders the Crucifixion cross also as the tree from which Eve takes fruit (see Fig. 14.19). That tree divides the composition into two spaces: on the right, the Synagogue rides a donkey, while, on the left, the Church rides a four-headed Gospel-beast. The right side's ADAM becomes INRI, Jesus's *titulus* (see Chapter 8), on the left.

Fig. 14.18 *Garden of Eden* (ca. 1455–94), Salzburger Missal, BSB Clm 15710, fol. 60v, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CC BY-NC-SA, https://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/0004/bsb00045166/images/index.html?fip=193.174.98.30&id=00045166&seite=127

Architecture can be a rich space for such connections. A 1430s Bologna fresco of the Adoration, perhaps by Paolo Uccello (1397–1475), portrays one of the stable's structural-support uprights as resembling a tree, which in turn would be associated with a cross. The Baby Jesus lies at its base, with the musculature of an adult male, and holding an orb with an alpha and omega, the first and

last letters of the Greek alphabet.[43] Hieronymous Bosch's (ca. 1450–1516) *Adoration of the Magi* (ca. 1494) includes objects that represented scenes from the Hebrew Bible. A Magus has offered Mary a sculpture of the sacrifice of Isaac, pre-echoing Jesus's own sacrifice. One Magus's mantle depicts Manoah and his wife's sacrifice, in anticipation of the birth of their own son, Samson (Judges 13). Looking forward more directly, the black Magus's thistle collar evokes Jesus's crown of thorns.[44]

Fig. 14.19 *Tree of Life* (late fourteenth century), Kostol Svätého Ducha, Žehra, Slovakia.

This "disguised symbolism" has been described as a "way to have spiritual depth without disrupting the surface of [apparent, plain-ken] reality."[45] These

43 In San Martino Maggiore. Reproduced at Colin Eisler, "Surgi d'un mur démoli," *Connaissance des Arts* 361 (1982): 70–74, and at Wikimedia, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/97/Paolo_uccello%2C_adorazione_del_bambino%2C_bologna_01.jpg

44 Museo del Prado, https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/triptych-of-the-adoration-of-the-magi/666788cc-c522-421b-83f0-5ad84b9377f7. See Reindert Falkenburg, "Para-typological Imagery in Hieronymus Bosch's Prado Epiphany," in *Visual Typology in Early Modern Europe: Continuity and Expansion*, ed. Dagmar Eichberger and Shelley Perlove (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 61–73; Matthijs Ilsink, Jos Koldeweij, and Ron Spronk, *From Bosch's Stable: Hieronymus Bosch and the Adoration of the Magi* ('s-Hertogenbosch: WBOOKS, [2018]).

45 Marcia B. Hall, "Savonarola's Preaching and the Patronage of Art," in *Christianity and the Renaissance*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1990), 493–522 (512–13).

Passion symbols survive plain-ken art's aversion to polychronicity, as the plain ken sees no polychronicity in them. The plain ken can visualize these symbols and invite a more deep-ken understanding of their invisible meanings. These are symbols hidden in plain sight.[46]

Consonances

In the deep ken, consonance and dissonance substantially impact meaning. This was recognized at the time. Some contemporary theorists argued that consonance between the viewer's emotional state and the work itself was crucial for viewing. The Bohemian theologian Matthias of Janov (d. 1393/94), for example, argued that the effect of an image was due to the viewer's piety, not the painter's skill.[47]

We can also consider consonance between the materials used in the depiction and the subject being depicted. Some materials were earthy and unlovely. Urine was often employed for fermentation, as it released ammonia, and soaked rags smeared with urine-fermented pigments could also be useful. Others were expensive and powerful. The materials used in its creation could give an image additional value, in one of two ways. First, in a tradition going back to Theodore of Studite (759–826), the non-luxury simplicity of the media added spiritual value to the product. Second, expensive materials, like ultramarine, could also add spiritual value, for the opposite reason: a costly image of Jesus better depicted his awesomeness than a cheaply made one. Colours were the most direct way to add this material/spiritual value to an image. Colourants could be expensive, and, outside of major markets, were difficult to source. It is not a coincidence that Venetian paintings were famous for their colours, since that city was a commercial entrepôt. The importance of colour was well recognized from the beginning of our period. People were keenly aware of different hues, and of their relative costs. Despite treatises, such as those by Antoninus of Florence (1389–1459) and Alberti, ready to explain the symbolic connotations of different hues, there was no general agreement.[48]

46 It is interesting that we get so many allegories here, as if art is not fully content with ceding the category of Madonna with Child to the Madonna alone. Much here is about Jesus, too, allegorically.

47 Matthias of Janov [Matěj z Janova], *Tractatus de Antichristo, Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, ed. Vlastimil Kybal, 5 vols. (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1911), III, 85–87.

48 Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988), 81–82; Herbert L. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God's Invisibility in Medieval Art* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 85–86; Phoebe Stubbs, ed., *Colour in the Making: From Old Wisdom to New Brilliance* (London: Black Dog, 2013), 128.

The most powerful system of consonance between depicted and invisible objects and abstractions was what we might call symbols. This word is employed here carefully. Above, we have seen how symbols and time worked together in the deep ken. Of course, symbols served many other functions. This section looks at several unusual symbols and symbolic systems.

Fig. 14.20 Wolgemut workshop, *Jesus and the Animals* (1491), *Der Schatzbehalter*, Inc IV 440, TU Darmstadt, CC0 1.0, https://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/trefferliste/detailseite?tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=14847&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=240&cHash=82420103f6c57527f55f87e06f07d9f8

A number of images use animal consonance to represent aspects of Jesus or his environs. An initial in a manuscript of Guillaume Du Fay's (ca. 1397–1474) *Missa Se la face ay pale* ["If the Face Is Pale" Mass] depicts a nude woman windsurfing on a dolphin.[49] The ancient Greeks recognized the role of dolphins in carrying

49 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Capp.Sist.14, fol. 27v, https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Capp.Sist.14. This is the K of the first Kyrie. Anne Walters Robertson, "The Man with the Pale Face, the Shroud, and Du Fay's *Missa Se la face ay*

the souls of the dead to their afterlife, and the animal entered Christian iconography to represent salvation and Jesus.[50] One image in the *Schatzbehalter* [Treasury] (see Fig. 14.20) portrays Jesus surrounded by a symbolic zoo. From behind his halo burst virtuous beasts: a lamb (gentleness), a dove (purity), a pelican (faithfulness), and an elephant (bravery). Lunging at his legs are a bear (ferocity), a fox (hunger), a lion (boldness), and a dog (malice). Jesus here hopes to bring the virgin (representing the human soul) home to the lambs in the upper right plane.[51]

Vices and virtues are prominently featured in Jesus images. One type of Orthodox depiction of Jesus's Harrowing of Hell includes angels using liturgical fans, called ripidions or hexapterygons, to keep the demons at bay. The head of each ripidion is labelled with a virtue, such as mercy and humility, each consonating with an angel. The demons, like Beelzebub, and vices, like avarice, are labelled in the depths. Jesus reaches out to Adam and Eve to guide them out.[52] A more typical Jesus was located in the centre of a *Wheel of Life* (see Fig. 14.21), a diagram linking five lists with seven items each: the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Seven Requests to Our Lord, the Seven Sacraments, and the Seven Virtues. The Swiss mystic Nicholas of Flüe (1417–87) used as his "book" a Lenten cloth that depicted Jesus surrounded by six narrative scenes from or associated with his life, each with an emblem representing a work of mercy.[53] Such programmatic images became more popular from the 1520s with the Protestant Reformation.

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pale," *Journal of Musicology* 27 (2010): 377–434 (415), https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2010.27.4.377, sees a "rod" in her right hand; I believe it is a bridle.

50 Józef Cezary Kałużny, "Phoenix and Delphinus Salvator: The History of the Forgotten Images of Early Christian Iconography," *Perspektywy Kultury* 3 (2020): 17–23, http://dx.doi.org/10.35765/pk.2020.3003.03; H. Leclercq, "Dauphin," in *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, ed. Fernand Cabrol, Henri Leclerc, and Henri Marrou, 15 vols. (Paris: Letouzey, 1907–5320), IV, part 1, cols. 283–95.

51 See Richard Bellm, *Wolgemuts Skizzenbuch im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett: ein Beitrag zur Erforschung des graphischen Werkes von Michael Wolgemut und Wilhelm Pleydenwurff* (Baden-Baden: Heitz, 1959), 29, 78, 85.

52 *Descent into Hell* (late fifteenth century), Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. A similar image is Workshop of Dionysius, *Harrowing of Hell* (ca. 1502–03), State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg, https://rusmuseumvrm.ru/data/collections/ikonopis/drzh_3094/index.php

53 See David J. Collins, *Reforming Saints: Saints' Lives and their Authors in Germany, 1470–1530* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 99–122, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195329537.001.0001

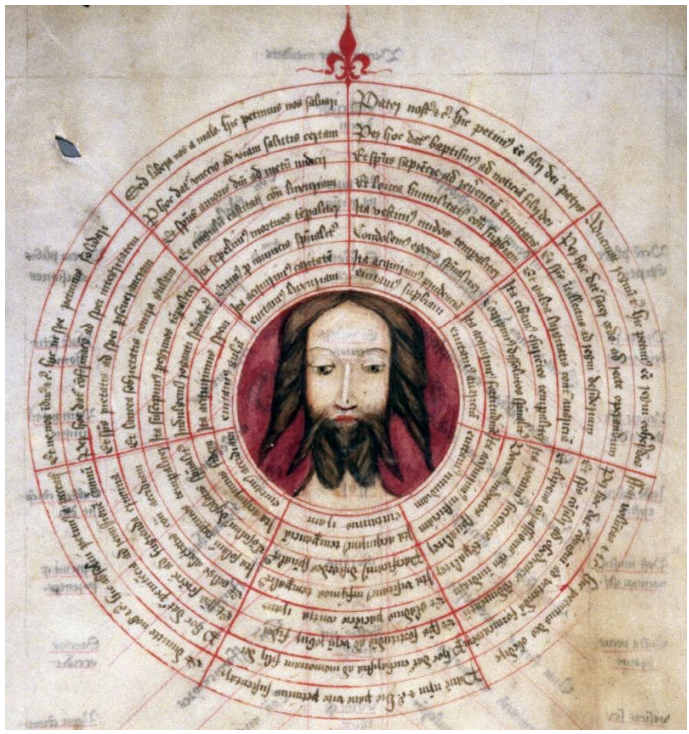

Fig. 14.21 *Wheel of Life* (early fifteenth century), BodL MS Laud Misc. 156, fol. 64v. Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/d46eadb5-57f3-4cef-97fe-91bb48ace698/surfaces/29c59373-589a-4d02-b917-a95ad0790a99/

Sometimes symbolic programs can become quite complex, technical, and subtle. A four-metre-long Swiss unicorn tapestry (1480), primarily wool, is particularly rich with Jesus symbols.[54] In the upper left portion, a lion faces its cubs. Animal descriptions of the ancient Christian text *Physiologus* note that lion cubs are born dead, and then resurrected by the breath of their father after three days, consonant with Jesus's own Resurrection.[55] Further to the right, Gabriel is walking his dogs Truth, Justice, Peace, and Mercy into an enclosed garden—Mary's womb—in which a pelican is perched, representing the Crucifixion.

54 "Hortus Conclusus" church tapestry (1480), Swiss National Museum, Zurich, https://textiles.museumwnf.org/database-item/GALLERIES/sw/Mus01/14/en

55 *Physiologus: A Medieval Book of Nature Lore*, trans. Michael J. Curley (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 4. Durand uses this to associate the lion with Mark, whose gospel emphasizes the Resurrection. See Guillaume Durand, *Prochiron, vulgo rationale diuinorum officiorum* (Lyons: Giunta, 1551), fol. 230v, 283r.

Then comes the main action of the tapestry: Adam (the first sinner) stabs the unicorn, a symbol for Jesus, but Mary catches the blood in a chalice. That is, Jesus's saving blood is saved. The Eucharistic imagery suggests the tapestry's use in conjunction with an altarpiece.[56]

Looking beyond a single work, we can find a similar complexity in a subject treated by many artists, such as Jesus being crushed by a winepress, with or in lieu of the grapes of God's wrath.[57] One engraving of the scene includes an empty scroll, to be filled in later, but already has blood painted in (see Fig. 14.22). Visual associations between Jesus and wine or grapes allowed for multiple consonances. A Flemish plate shows Jesus crucified to a grapevine, with God the Father, Mary, and the disciples standing by. The caption quotes Jn 15:5: *ego sum vitis vos palmites* [I am the vine, you are the branches].[58] A striking depiction of Jesus in the winepress appears on the closed outer doors of a late-fifteenth-century German triptych. A speech scroll around Jesus reads, *Vide si sit dolor ut dolor meus* [See if there is any pain like my pain] (Lamentations 1:12), and a caption at the bottom of the image also turns to the Hebrew Bible: *Nam pro te torcularcum sole calcavi* [For you alone have I stepped in the press], a loose reference to the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah.[59]

56 Jane Beal, "The Unicorn as a Symbol for Christ in the Middle Ages," in *Illuminating Jesus in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jane Beal (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 154–88, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004409422_010; Tobias Nicklas and Janet E. Spittler, "Christ and the Pelican: Function, Background and Impact of an Image," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 92 (2016): 323–37, http://dx.doi.org/10.2143/ETL.92.2.3154618

57 David S. Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* (Farnham: Asghate, 2010), 41–44; Peter W. Parshall and Rainer Schoch, ed., *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-century Woodcuts and Their Public* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2005), 252–57 (no. 76–77).

58 *Crucifixion* (1430s), V&A Museum, London, https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O70833/plaque-unknown/

59 *Mystic Winepress* (late fifteenth century), Mittelrhein-Museum, Koblenz, https://theraccolta.tumblr.com/post/622488247843553280/anonymous-middle-rhenish-master-mystic-winepress. Another example is in Jakob Wolff, *Breviarium Romanum* (Basel: n.p., 1493), BSB Rar. 327-1/4 https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/view/bsb00079851?page=2,3; see Achim Timmermann, "A View of the Eucharist on the Eve of the Protestant Reformation," in *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation*, ed. Lee Palmer Wandel (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 363–98 (384–9), https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004260177_018

Fig. 14.22 Meester van het Martyrium der Tienduizend, *Jesus in the Winepress* (1463–67), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, CC0 1.0, https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-1881-A-4687

How did the winepress work? A passage from Isaiah (63:3–4) offered a powerful image of violence and winemaking: "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing." Medieval scholars understood this as a reference to Jesus and Eucharist wine—a deep-ken link between the Old and New Testaments—encouraging depictions of an angel using a winepress to squeeze the blood out of Jesus.[60] In one sense this is deep ken: it is an abstract schematic showing how a liturgical technology functions, even though no Bible narrative mentions Jesus trapped in a winepress. At the same time, the power comes from Jesus being trapped in spacetime: the only escape route from the three-dimensional confinement, collapsing as time passes, is as blood, through a pipe leading to the chalice. Some unknown genius came across a hydraulic table-sized fountain, which

60 For example, *Christ in the Winepress*, in Jakob Wolff, *Breviarium Romanum* (Basel: n.p., 1493), BSB MS Rar. 327, vol. 1, BOD-Ink B-897-GW 5165. Revelation 14:20 also mentions "the great winepress of God's wrath," which via Julia Ward Howe's "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (1861) gave a title to John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

could be used for wine, designed by Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), and made what might have seemed a natural modification: he added Jesus as the Man of Sorrows, alongside putti holding the Crucifixion Arma, to turn the fountain into a tabernacle for the Eucharist. Some moulds were even made so that the winepress could be "pressed" to create a relief image,[61] creating consonance between the subject depicted and the artifact's production process.

Sometimes symbolic consonance links elements within the image to some aspect of the context of that image. A decorative scheme can consonate with the main narrative image. One lectern cloth depicting the Cana wedding, where Jesus turned water into wine, is covered with stylized grape vines (see Fig. 14.23). A donor kneeling before a painting that depicts a donor kneeling before a holy figure creates consonance between the real and painted donors, and after the donor's death his or her descendants can copy the gesture to expand the consonance through time. There can also be consonance between an image represented on an object and the purpose of the object. One coin minted in Ferrara in the early sixteenth century depicts on one side Alfonso I d'Este, Duke of Ferrara (1476–1534), and on the reverse a Pharisee displaying the coin to Jesus, with an inscription *que sunt Dei Deo* [what are God's, to God] (Mt 22:21) (see Fig. 14.24). Titian's 1516 painting *The Tribute Money* was used as a cover to Alfonso's ancient-coin collection—a collection of historical antiques valued as historical antiques.[62] Archbishop Euthymius II of Novgorod (rl. 1429–58) presided over an artistic renaissance in the embroidery of funeral shrouds depicting Jesus's entombment, creating consonance between the image on the shroud and the shroud's purpose.[63] Some Nativity inkstands offset Jesus to allow space for the ink well. On an inkstand from ca. 1510, the caption *Verbum charo factum est* [The Word was made flesh] suggests a connection between Mary and the writer wielding the pen: each sought to give physical expression to

61 Gothic Table Fountain (1495–1500), British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_SL-5218-83. See Gabriele Finaldi, *The Image of Christ* (London: National Gallery, 2000), 186–87; Jörg Rasmussen, "Untersuchungen zum Halleschen Heiltum des Kardinals Albrecht von Brandenburg (I)," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 27 (1976): 59–118 (75–76). It is not extant, but may be reflected in the *Hallesches Heiltumsbuch* (1520), Aschaffenburg, Hofbibliothek, MS 14, fol. 4v.

62 The painting is in the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Titian_-_The_Tribute_Money_-_Google_Art_Project_(715452).jpg. See Christopher J. Nygren, "Titian's Christ with the Coin: Recovering the Spiritual Currency of Numismatics in Renaissance Ferrara," *Renaissance Quarterly* 69 (2016): 449–88, https://doi.org/10.1086/687607

63 Е. В. Игнашина, *Древнерусское шитье в собрании Новгородского музея* [*Old Russian Embroidery in the Collection of the Novgorod Museum*] (Novgorod: Novgorod State United Museum-Reserve, 2002), 5–7, 16–19.

formless words.[64] Fra Bartolomeo (1472–1517) places a statuesque, triumphant Jesus precariously on top of a paten-covered chalice, itself balanced on the framed text *salvator mundi* [the world's saviour], itself situated atop a landscape tondo.[65] The "world" consonates with the landscape image, and "salvator" with the painting's sponsor, the merchant Salvatore Billi.

Fig. 14.23 *A Lectern Cloth with the Marriage at Cana* (ca. 1400), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, public domain, https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.36522.html

64 Giovanni di Nicola di Manzoni (attrib.), Nativity Inkstand (ca. 1509–16), Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/80698; Giovanni di Nicola di Manzoni, Nativity Inkstand (ca. 1510), V&A Victoria & Albert Museum, London, https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O129396/inkstand-unknown/

65 Fra Bartolomeo, *Christ with the Four Evangelists* (1516), Galleria Palatina (Palazzo Pitti), Florence, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fra_Bartolomeo#/media/File:Fra_bartolomeo_03_Christ_with_the_Four_Evangelists.jpg. See Sandra Richards, "From the Chapel to the Gallery: The Aestheticization of Altarpieces in Early Modern Italy" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2013), 254–56; Victor I. Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 72–74.

Fig. 14.24 Gold 2 zecchino of Alfonso I d'Este (reverse) (1505–34), American Numismatic Society, New York City, public domain, http://numismatics.org/collection/1937.146.35

Envoi

Modern eyes trying to see with a deep ken may project meanings onto an image, or miss meanings too subtle to recognize. Historians have debated the possibility that painters emphasized Jesus's genitals (see Chapter 15).[66] Certainly, the Baby Jesus sometimes puts one hand on or near his groin.[67] Certainly, Mary, or another adult, sometimes has a hand on, or gesturing towards, his groin.[68] These could be meaningful, or we could argue that hands need to be put somewhere and so statistically a number of them would be located near the crotch. In some images, Jesus's loincloth emphasizes his groin, both during and after the Crucifixion. Sometimes this appears so subtle as to be accidental.[69] Other instances might feature a large bow at his groin, or have a piece of cloth drape dramatically; both occur in Lucas Cranach the Elder's (ca. 1472–1553) *Crucifixion* (1503).[70]

66 Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39 (1986): 399–439.

67 Andrea del Sarto, *Tallard Madonna* (ca. 1513), Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+paintings/29566

68 Bernard van Orley, *Virgin and Child with Angels* (ca. 1518), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437229. See also Steinberg, *Sexuality of Christ*, figures. 4 and 13.

69 Mantegna, *Suffering Christ* (1490s), Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christ_as_the_Suffering_Redeemer_(Mantegna)#/media/File:Kristus_som_den_lidende_frelser.jpg

70 Alte Pinakothek, Munich, https://www.sammlung.pinakothek.de/en/artwork/Qlx2dgbGXq

I, with my native plain ken, would suggest that instances where the drapery piles up in a verticality suggesting an erection are merely accidental examples of placement; a loincloth has to be knotted somewhere. The best examples from our period are the Dürer workshop's *Lamentation* (ca. 1495)[71] and Ludwig Krug's *Man of Sorrows* woodcut (ca. 1510–32).[72] No evidence demands acceptance of an intentional genital emphasis in any of these, although it certainly could be the case. The symbols here, if they are symbols at all, were depicted so oriented towards the plain ken that their reality remains uncertain.

Indeed, one person's symbology is not another, which becomes problematic as artists travel. The Venetian painter Nicolò Brancaleon (ca. 1460–1526) arrived in Ethiopia in the early 1480s and became an important painter there. There is a tradition that his painting the Baby Jesus in Mary's left arm caused offence to locals valuing right over left.[73]

Thus, time and distance can both erode the expressiveness and reliability of symbols, creating obstacles for the deep ken. As we will see in the next chapter, the plain ken, in contrast, zeroes in on time and space, creating both new possibilities and new limitations.

71 Dresden Gemäldegalerie, https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/Details/Index/293082

72 British Museum, London, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1929-0211-3

73 Francisco Alvarez, *The Prester John of the Indies*, ed. C. F. Beckingham and G. W. B. Huntingford, trans. Henry Stanley (Cambridge, MA: Hakluyt Society, 1961), 332.