

The Work of the Magi:
Adoration Images and Visions of Globalization in Early Modern Europe

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Our minds measure passing time in unexpected ways. Neurologist William Gooddy recalled an encounter with one of his patients who described the effects of Parkinson’s disease on his sense of time. The patient said, “my own movements...seem normal unless I see how long they take by looking at a clock. The clock on the wall of the ward seems to be going exceptionally fast.”¹ That observation makes sense to me when I try to put these past years into perspective. The time really *has* passed exceptionally fast.

This is the point where I am expected to somehow properly express my gratitude to the folks who have come along with me on this expedition of mine. Or perhaps it’s an apology I owe; or a bit of both. My friends and my family especially—my husband Steve, my son Nathaniel, and my daughter Cecelia—each have been endlessly supportive, patient, and interested. They have been a wonder to me. My children pretty much grew up in graduate school with me. This has not always been the easiest journey but my family and friends have never flagged in their encouragement.

This is what I still find startling—the privilege I have had to be surrounded by such fierce and serious scholars who generously shared with me their knowledge and insight. Right before sending out final drafts to my committee I found myself thinking that perhaps this dissertation gig was not as bad as I had been thinking. But then I opened an old file of drafts and proposals. While skimming through them, suddenly I felt like Alice must have as she ate cakes and drank potions after her tumble into the rabbit hole. As I hunted down my first attempts writing chapters, at one moment I was soaring tall

¹ Quoted in Oliver Sacks, “Speed; Aberrations of Time and Movement,” *The New Yorker* (23 Aug 2004), 65.

and confident, while at the next, down I went, shrinking and shriveling while thinking, “oh dear, what miserable dreck.” It was while reading between these two points that I found the reminders of the interventions made by so many dear people in helping me steer clear of disaster by challenging me to think a little harder. It has been a humbling process but ultimately rewarding due in great part to the folks with whom I have been privileged enough to work.

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Dedication

To Steve, who always insists I find the pleasure and not the regret, for his endless patience, encouragement, and unconditional love.

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Introduction

Scope and Theme

The scope of this dissertation covers the long sixteenth century and perhaps that era's Renaissance and Baroque imagery comes to mind when the "Three Magi" are mentioned in the twenty-first century. Across the world, the three reappear every year at Christmas in so many venues and forms that their proliferation obscures the work (from sober to light-hearted) they continue to perform for culture, in defining limits of knowledge and identity. Ongoing interest also confirms that their enigmatic character, the oldest conundrum associated with these figures, remains a key to their continuing usefulness. It is this flexibility that makes certain remarkable examples of the Adoration image valuable tools for closely examining specific moments in time and, when taken alongside the traditional scope of Adoration imagery, contribute to our understanding of the finer workings of transformative artistic and socio-cultural moments.

What makes this imagery useful arises from a key dynamic of the story itself: the travel of the magi; their peregrination across physical, temporal, and spiritual space. The telling of the magi's story takes on a peregrination-like quality in the way that the story wanders owing to its ability to generate connections to so many key beliefs. A list of these beliefs includes the sacramental events the story means to embody: the witness to the Incarnation; the submission of worldly power to divine power; the recognition of the sacred; the Eucharistic celebration (as the magi perform the faithful's own travels to the altar); faith in the word of God; prophecy; pilgrimage; religious conversion. At the same time, the story contains rich connections to the human condition: journeying; the cycle of

gift-giving; birth; recognition of the division between belonging and alienation; trade and travel; exchange and commerce; sovereignty; wealth. This deep well of possible meanings accounts for the story's popularity in images over time.

Within this range of usefulness exists a story that, like the magi themselves, *wanders*. It wanders partly *in search of* meaning and partly as a way to *make* meaning, in the way that “wandering” and seeking is akin to the magi's physical and metaphysical journey. The story itself wanders and in fact, *needs to wander*, in order to perform. At its heart, the story is a sacred one and its constituent elements of wandering, returning, and renewal recalls the unstable nature of human contact with the sacred that demands confirmation again and again. The ever-returning, never-completed cycle suggests a potential for a shift, a migration, of meanings. As we will see, the iconography of the magi plays across time and pictures and accumulates a great weight of symbolic potential, where meanings expand or contract yet rest on some previous variant. What I will do is attempt to seize this migration at particular moments to show the work these magi figures do but with the knowledge that meaning might shift again—and it will—because that is the work of the magi. The Adoration scene becomes a flexible template for illuminating, incorporating, and justifying new knowledge and practice within a Christian world view.

Flexibility also extends to the assumed sacred meaning of the story. Two modern-day examples help to demonstrate this. In the first, in December 2009, a fashionable clothing store in Los Angeles turned to the story of the Adoration of the Magi for their

Christmas window display much like thousands of stores across the world (fig. 0-1).²

Unlike those thousands, this display made the national news for its provocative use of the theme. After all, for some Christians, associating the gift-bearing three kings with clothing sales at Christmas seems crass. However, few if any complaints were directed at the portrayal of the magi as women or at the fact that the figures appeared to promote consumerism. Using seven mannequins, the window dresser arranged the scene in a way that needs little explanation as to its theme: three well-dressed figures enter from the left (fig. 0-2); a mother and child sporting outsized, glittery, gold haloes are seated on the ground while the father looks on; an angel (his feet and legs at least) hovers over the scene. Straw and thatch are included to suggest a rustic setting. The key elements are present: three foreign magi/kings led by a star travel to greet the infant Christ in recognition of his universal holiness.

Some viewers took exception to this portrayal due to the provocative positioning of the Virgin Mary who supports the infant on her lap and props him up with the bare thigh of her bent right leg (fig. 0-3). The short white dress she wears fails to cover her legs and leaves her arms bare as well. Her head is bald. Despite these supposed indignities, the haloed mannequin leans back on her left arm in a confident pose facing the viewer. The three kings to her right have been transformed into “queens”—wise women—and are dressed most extravagantly for their journey and carry bright orange shopping bags stuffed with gifts for the infant. As we will see, the window dresser knew her art history: each figure’s skin color is a different shade of tan, with the first magus matching the holy family in tone, the next a darker tone, then the furthest magus, the

² The store “Madison” is located at 3rd Street and Robertson, Los Angeles, CA.

darkest of all. The artist was careful to distinguish the figure with darkest skin by outfitting her with a different headdress from the other two who wear turbans. Yet it was the positioning of Mary, not the re-gendering of the magi, that drew criticism. At the same time, it was the very presence of the magi that allowed the window dresser some latitude for a broader interpretation of what this story comes to mean for its viewers in the twenty-first century. In essence, like the early modern case studies I introduce, the display is an example of the artist seizing the migration of meaning of the holy story and putting the magi to work for a new (albeit, ham-handed) context.

One other example allows us to consider what the breadth of this latitude might cover. In a blatantly more contentious image, a 1996 painting by contemporary artist Gottfried Helnwein, an attractive young woman steadies a nude infant boy as he stands in her lap, while five solemn, reverent men gather around them (fig. 0-4). The woman looks down and to her right while the child looks directly at us. Their intimacy and pose recall the many representations of the seated Madonna and Child, seen most often as the central focus of the Adoration of the Magi, a theme drawn from the brief chapter in the Gospel of Matthew telling of the “wise men” from the East who seek the “newborn king of the Jews” whose herald is a star. As viewers, and similar to the storefront display, we are familiar with this formula somehow, but set on edge at the same time. Helnwein is clearly referencing this visual tradition of mother and child with their adoring entourage, and in fact, the artist confirms this link by entitling his mixed media painting, *Epiphany I /Adoration of the Magi*.

However, in an unsettling turn, Helnwein has exchanged wise men and subsidiary figures of the New Testament story for men dressed in the uniforms of Nazi officers, a choice that appears at first to be a discrepancy far removed from any convention. Yet, although the elements at play in Helnwein's composition are made disturbing (and pointedly heretical) by their association with heinous human behavior that is then superimposed on a sacred story, Helnwein has simply recognized and exploited the very flexibility that ultimately defines the imagery of the Adoration in order to say something about the human condition. Although separated from the eras producing the largest numbers of Adoration scenes by many centuries, this contemporary (and admittedly hyperbolic and ultimately confusing) take on a familiar composition joins an established artistic practice of marshaling this scene for both sacred and secular purposes; usually a hazy mix of both.

As a complex commentary on modern secular dealings, such as narratives of power and submission, and the frailties of human compassion and imagination, this "Adoration" image, even with its heterodox connotations, is not at all out of sync with the work that the Adoration image has been traditionally asked to perform. As Richard Trexler notes, "[n]o Christian icon has permitted Christians to so form and reform their own social, cultural, and political order and experience as has [the magi's] story and image."³ To be sure, through the many reformulations of the image of the Adoration of the Magi, even from its earliest representations on Roman sarcophagi and catacomb paintings, the unquestioned and unchanging central theme is that of the incarnation of

³ Richard Trexler, *Journey of the Magi: Meanings in the History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 4.

Christ, from which foundational Christian doctrine springs. This central theological tenet is understood as consistent in meaning and thus the image of the Christ child and his mother is a reflection of this consistency. How this tenet applies and is applied to the secular world is, however, the work of the Magi. Most importantly, it is the figures of the Wise Men, the Three Magi, that define the limits of this imagery's usefulness.

Stories of the Magi

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter two, the sole reference to the “wise men” who travel to Bethlehem in search of an infant savior is contained in twelve brief verses that read simply: “1. When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men [Greek, plural: *magoi*] from the east to Jerusalem.⁴ 2. Saying, ‘Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him.’⁵ 3. And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4. And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. 5. But they said to him: ‘In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet: 6. And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee

⁴ Scholars have interpreted the Greek term *magoi* as “wise men,” “learned men,” “priests,” or “astrologers,” all of which indicate the Magi’s origins as coming from Mesopotamia and specifically Babylon. There are precedents in the prophetic books of the Hebrew bible that suggest how the peoples and religious practices of Mesopotamia were viewed by Jews. For example, in the Book of Daniel, there are references to the Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (c. 634-562 BCE) calling on his “magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans” for matters of dream interpretation.

⁵ Mention of the star has often been traditionally understood as a realization of a prophecy from the Fourth Oracle of Balaam in the Hebrew bible’s Book of Numbers 2:17.

shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel.’⁶ 7. Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them; 8. and sending them into Bethlehem, said: ‘Go and diligently inquire after the child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come to adore him.’ 9. Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was. 10. And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11. And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him; and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12. And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country.’⁷

From this scripture is spun a rich and imaginative collection of exegesis, stories, and images by church doctors, theologians, poets, and artists. These verses offer no definitive descriptions for the wise men’s numbers or their precise origins, nor does the Greek description *magoi* in any way reference “kings,” the most popular apocryphal designation for these “foreign” travelers.⁸ However, these descriptive, identifying aspects become the center of speculation and theological debate. At the same time, while

⁶ Verse 6 is a reference to prophetic verses found in Micah 5:1; and 2 Samuel 5:2 of the Hebrew bible.

⁷ *Douay-Rheims Bible; The Holy Bible Translated from the Latin Vulgate Diligently Compared with the Hebrew, Greek, and Other Editions, in Various Languages. The Old Testament First Published by the English College at Douay, A.D. 1609 [...]* (Philadelphia: J. Kelly, 1821), 6, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/011715528> .

⁸ The notion of these travelers as “kings” is not within the range of definitions for this term but becomes an established element of the story of the magi by the 13th century. The development of the theme of the magi as kings is grounded in prophetic language as well. For example, Psalms 72: 10-11.

part of the apocryphal language aims to more precisely describe these enigmatic men by narrowing their possible numbers (ranging from twelve to three),⁹ the narratives surrounding the figures of the magi [singular: magus], involving complex speculation on their roles, station, origins, travel, and especially on their significance, only multiply.

Visual representations of the biblical story of the magi have followed this same course—simultaneously codifying certain aspects of the scene understood to represent the “Adoration of the Magi,” while entertaining a host of potential roles which these men might fill.¹⁰ Visual representations of the figures of the magi are in one sense always a part of the culture that produced them, but at the same time, they are figures that are understood as expressly foreign.¹¹ The ambiguity of the magi’s identity allows for some imaginative play with the limits and conditions of foreignness. Thus, as a scene for treating theological and doctrinal themes, the picture of the Adoration of the Magi and more specifically, the figures of the magi themselves, have proven a flexible template that can respond to a variety of religious, political, and societal events and the representational desires that accompany them. That is, rather than simply reflecting, or in a way recording culture, the Adoration was often deployed to shape or imagine culture; to make sense of new encounters, new lands and peoples, and new cultural structures and developments.

⁹ Paul H.D. Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Research Press, 1985), 21; Trexler, *Journey of the Magi*, 22.

¹⁰ I use the terms “Adoration of the Magi” and “the Adoration” interchangeably throughout the text; both refer to the theme and/or visual depiction of the three Magi before the Virgin Mary and infant Christ.

¹¹ The exception here is the development whereby the magi-kings are depicted by European artists as representatives of the three continents. Thus, a “European” king is designated within the group of three, with the other two magi meant to represent the continents of Asia and Africa.

The tale of the “wise men from the east” who travel in search of the “king of the Jews” is one of the earliest stories to appear in Christian imagery (figs. 0-5; 0-6).¹² The narrative is deceptively simple yet one that became a source for a rich and complex set of theological parallels that facilitated transmission of foundational beliefs that are central to the Christian faith.¹³ Themes of incarnation, prophecy, gift-bearing, sacrifice, kingship, salvation, and religious conversion all find expression through the depiction of these men before an infant savior. While the possible range of references contained within this story is significant in its fundamental commentary on the human encounter with the manifestation of God, it is within the space of this encounter, this submission of temporal kings before a universal king, that the power of the image lies. This juxtaposition of the profane and the sacred—the worldly and the eternal—generates the larger meaning of the Adoration, which relies on a belief in the ultimate recognition of the revealed God.

At the same time, it is understood that this recognition—a conversion of sorts that is affirmed and sealed by gift-giving—is part of a predestined history of salvation realized through the first incarnation of Christ to the Gentiles. The conceptual framework of the sacred as presented in this image then, is of two minds: one, the representation of

¹² The image itself has roots in pre-Christian imagery which on its own makes for a fascinating line of discussion but that is beyond the scope of this study.

¹³ The literature on the theme of the Adoration of the Magi, its theological history and implications, as well as its appearance in art, is extensive. Some of the foundational texts to be consulted are: Hugo Kehrer, *Die Heiligen Drei Könige in Literatur und Kunst* (Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1976 [1908]); Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art*; Merja Merras, *The Origins of the Celebration of the Christian Feast of Epiphany: An Ideological, Cultural, and Historical Study* (Joensuu: Joensuu University Press, 1995); Trexler, *Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story*; Natalia Teteriatnikov, "The 'Gift Giving' Image: The Case of the Adoration of the Magi," *Visual Resources* 13, no. 3-4 (1998): 381-391.

the sacred and profane elements—the first incarnation of Christ to the Gentiles—as an advent of salvation; while the other references the ritual of the Catholic Mass itself, in which the faithful are called again and again to witness and partake in a sacred presence, bearing gifts on approach to the altar where the flesh and blood of Christ is witnessed and consumed. As a mirror of the sacrament of the Eucharist, the Adoration echoes the ritual practice and purpose of the Catholic Mass and within that ritual practice, a confirmation of the bodily presence of Christ.

Finally, the juxtaposition of the “sacred” and the “profane” is far from the opposition of two distinct poles of being as theorists working on the nature of the sacred have long shown.¹⁴ Rather, the fluidity and ambiguity of these “states” are a source of tension and uncertainty upon which certain depictions of the Adoration seem to explicitly comment. For Christians of the early modern era, this tenuousness underpins the understanding of faith as manifested in daily life: the faithful are always in peril of falling yet the sinful can hope for redemption.

From the thirteenth century, pictures of the Adoration of the Magi clearly show how European cultures employed the scene as part of a rhetorical and political struggle to incorporate strangers and outsiders of exotic lands into a foretold Christian narrative. Working from a biblical entry that offers only the indistinct detail of “wise men from the East,” writers dwell on the possible identities of the magi, often divining their homelands

¹⁴ For example, Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: The Free Press, 1995 [1912]); Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share, Volume 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991 [1949]); Roger Caillois, *Man and the Sacred* (University of Illinois Press, 2001[1959]); René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979 [1972]).Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford University Press, 1998).

from the newest interpretation of the places and peoples in this wildly ill-defined “East.” Time after time, no matter what land or ethnicity these travelers are assigned, the critical endeavor here is the incorporation of outsiders by way of their recognition of the Incarnation of Christ. Magi identity ranges from the broadly-applied description “Ethiopians” (who might just come from either Africa or India), to Persians, Armenians, Scythians, or Egyptians. At the same time, while the term “magi” or “wise men” adequately describes three men from one region (e.g., three Persians) this concept becomes problematic when, by the thirteenth century, the magi are often thought of and pictured as kings, and therefore each requires his own distinct land over which to rule, with the solution being that each are assigned discrete kingdoms and ethnicities (fig. 0-7)

Moving further afield in apocryphal possibilities, theologians and artists also imagined the magi as personifications of the three ages of man (fig. 0-8), or the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa and often both embodiments at once (fig. 0-9). By 1450, it is difficult to find pictures of the three magi that do not include a Black magus whose figure generally symbolizes the continent of Africa (fig. 0-9). Whether intended to envision an African king or simply a personification of Africa itself, picturing the black magus sets a precedent for how the scene of the Adoration is used both to reflect, but more significantly, participate in shaping the coherence of the world in accordance with religious beliefs. In that way, the Black magus becomes the most telling example of the use of these figures and this story.

On another level, in the juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane, we are confronted with the visual comprehension of both the pure and the impure, and thus, how

to recognize either. The magi can operate as a discrete location for the representation of otherness and impurity, where through “exotic” dress, physiognomy, and skin color, we can comprehend an opposition to the sacred being toward whom these kings process. These immediate visual clues are often joined by more subtle signs denoting otherness. Indeed, a hallmark of the imagery of the Adoration often depends upon the symbolic display of otherness and alienation in the face of holiness. At the same time, it is expected that the completion of this cycle will necessitate a conversion—a negotiation of sorts between the spiritual and the temporal worlds that is a unifying gesture. How do we view this sacred/profane presence in depictions that use the familiar template of the Adoration for new purposes?

Methodology

My dissertation investigates the extent to which early modern depictions of the three magi of the biblical Adoration story can be understood within a representational “economy,” that is, an economy defined by ideas and ways of knowing that circulate through the visual innovations and re-imaginings of this story. This project is significant in its potential contribution to our understanding of defining events in the early modern period, specifically those having to do with the changing boundaries of world knowledge brought on by the range of encounters with the New World. While much of the scholarship on depictions of the Adoration has focused on stabilizing formal and iconographical content, pictorial innovations suggest a more complex conceptual work that these images are called on to perform which has yet to be adequately explored.

Through a framework that utilizes the concepts of exchange and the movement of people and/or goods, we can use the “work of the magi” to help refine our vision of the production and exchange of material and global identities within and at the borders of the Christian contexts of early modern Europe and the Americas, much the same way the power of the magi themselves is bound to their intrepid pilgrimage and offerings of gifts.

My approach is necessarily interdisciplinary and joins art historical research of images and methods of artistic production with the study of early modern markets and trade, colonization, religious history, and the historical foundations of globalism. My methodology relies on the close examination of a set of images of the Adoration, and the documents that accompany them, that are either singular in their typology or influential in their impact. In between these two poles exists the bulk of Adoration imagery that, in its uniformity forms a sort of standard against which these exceptional images can be measured.

With the recognition that our contemporary interest in and ambivalence toward the mechanics and ramifications of globalization have their parallels in the early modern era, how can we get at a better understanding of the dynamics of exchange, colonization, and ways of knowing presented in visual culture, in a way that moves beyond the pre-occupation with national histories, lineage, and artists’ genealogies? My work engages not so much with the grand narratives of globalization and empire but with the notion of small “g” globalization; the process that not so much traces a genealogy of the networks of trade, exchange, and exploitation, but a process that locates within art production particular transitional moments of thought that circulate in the early modern world that

unsettle any stable sense of Europe as a coherent entity as defined in opposition to the non-European.

Pictures of the biblical story of the Adoration of the Magi—where the three kings gather before Mary and an infant Christ—are one of Christianity’s earliest and most frequently produced images. Their near-ubiquity presents a disciplinary problem for art historians, whose traditional approach has been to catalog these works into a system of stylistic trends and artistic genealogies with the understanding that all pictures of the Adoration are bound by predictable meanings. However, inevitably there are works that include unconventional figures or symbols, that never convincingly settle into a definitive ranking of artists and compositions. My project takes issue with this approach that ignores the cultural work of images in the quest for a static historical categorization of objects. Traditional categorization overlooks the place of art production within the movement and exchange of objects and ideas across a global space.

Characteristically, these unconventional images are misunderstood or overlooked and are placed at the margins of interpretation. For example, while there have been several volumes that trace the production and permutations of Adoration scenes in art, most do not include the images I take on in my work.¹⁵ Historian Richard Trexler’s work from 1997 is the exception.¹⁶ His book, *Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a*

¹⁵ For example, see, Kehrer; Frank Günter Zehnder, ed., *Die Heiligen Drei Könige: Darstellung Und Verehrung* (Köln: Wallraf-Richartz Museums, 1982); Gert Duwe, *Die Anbetung Der Heiligen Drei Könige in Der Niederländischen Malerei Des 15 Und 16 Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1994).

¹⁶ The late Prof. Trexler’s collection and analysis of Magi-related images, stories, and advertising is nothing short of impressive and reflects 20-plus years of study. His last chapter does indeed address the magi as “timeless exemplars” and includes a host of modern permutations. He includes Vasco Fernandes’ *Adoration*, as well as the *Adoration* from the *Book of Hours of*

Christian Story recognizes the significance of the Adoration by way of its persistent place within Christianity's imagination and faith practices. Trexler establishes that the key to this persistence is the story's adaptability through its inclusion of outsiders that allows for a range of "social and experiential" parallels. Further, these foreigners' act of witness to the Incarnation is absolutely foundational to the legitimation of the divinity of Christ.¹⁷ Trexler manages to incorporate inspired readings of magian visual culture together with intricate explication of historical texts from the earliest appearances through the late twentieth century. However, unlike Trexler, most scholarly discussions of early modern scenes do not position the images relative to early modern globalization as my project intends to do. Particularly notable in the early modern era is the marked increase in the numbers of Adoration images and atypical compositions. Through these pictures, artists and their patrons—clergy, merchants, rulers, and nobles—used the story of the magi to address the most urgent questions of the day surrounding the complexities of trade, conquest, and world exploration. These compositions, in turn, inform our examination of the history of globalization.

The story of the magi is useful precisely because it relies on the cultural space in play between earthly, exotic kings humbled before a divine, infant king. Rather than concede that both ubiquity and marginality can be contained by a common meaning of the Adoration, my project argues that these marginalized images are representative of how European culture defined itself through the juxtaposition of the exoticism and

Manuel I, both of which I include here. His work pays close attention to the full scope of the Adoration and its meanings over time; he is less focused on specific early modern connections and associations with the Eucharist.

¹⁷ Trexler, 4.

strangeness of the magi against the perceived stability of a Christian Europe personified by Christ and the Virgin Mary. For beholders, the magi embody the limits of knowledge in the early modern era.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter One, “Cannibal Complexities: Metaphors of Incorporation and Early Modern Globalization,” lays the theological groundwork for understanding how the Adoration scene is used to address secular concerns. The theological reading of the Adoration interprets the scene as a mirror of the religious rites of conversion and the consecration of the Eucharist. Building on the connections made with New World encounters, Chapter One shows how this theological reading is complicated by the inclusion of a man from Brazil as one of the three magi. Using this image as the first case study, Chapter One points to the signs that accompany this complicated new figure as characteristic of the shifting nature of magi imagery.

The Portuguese artist, Vasco Fernandes painted this *Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1501-1506) for a Portuguese altarpiece shortly after the Portuguese explorer, Pedro Álvares Cabral, returned from the Americas (fig. 0-10). This image is possibly the first known European depiction of, what is often taken as, a Tupinambá man from coastal Brazil, although it is quickly followed by images of New World peoples engaging in cannibalism (figs. 0-11; 0-12). Drawing on anthropological and literary studies of the sacred and notions of incorporation and surrogation, I show how these competing images of a New World people are necessary for understanding the fraught theological implications of New World conversion, condemnation, and redemption.

Working chronologically, in Chapter Two, “Currency and Incarnation: Sixteenth-Century Portuguese Illuminated Coins and Notions of Kingship, Conquest, and National Identity,” I examine the overt associations made between the Adoration and trade seen just prior to, and following, Europe’s first encounters with the New World, as pictured in three related manuscripts produced by Flemish artists working for the court of the House of Avis in Portugal. Intriguingly, it is the depiction of coins that links these works to the royal court and to each other. They represent different capacities of the royal realm. First, in the *Book of Hours of Manuel I*, private prayer and the king’s pointed association with the Three Kings are put to work to sanctify and justify Portuguese expansion (fig. 0-14). Second, in the *Pontifical of Cardinal Henrique*, public prayer of the bishop (a member of the royal family) associates the work of the church with the work of the Magi and the gifts that they offer (fig. 0-13). Last, the coins themselves transfer to a chapter from a copy of the chronicle of the House of Avis’ founding king, João I. The illuminated coins appear alongside text that discusses the role that money and war play in establishing dynastic stability (fig. 0-15). Placed in these contexts, the representations and meanings of the Adoration are easily transformed, this time, to assist in lending divine sanction to New World conquest and exploration.

Finally, my last chapter turns to sixteenth-century Antwerp where the subject of the Adoration appeared in more paintings produced in the city than any other subject. “Precarious Economies: The Adoration and Volatile Commerce,” focuses on the prolific production of highly ornate visions of the Adoration by artists in the sixteenth-century economic center of Antwerp. I take this proliferation of Adoration pictures as an

iteration of the wandering quality of the magi story and consequently, a way to think about the visualization of sociocultural precariousness. I argue that paintings such as the *Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1520), by the Master of the Antwerp Adoration were deployed as part of the effort to legitimize and stabilize the worldly concerns of trade and exploration through the sacred activities of the magi, who were unabashedly taken as the models for merchants in early modern Antwerp (fig. 0-16). At the same time, while sixteenth-century Antwerp is certainly an economic powerhouse of unprecedented dimensions, the abundance of trade and money does not equate with ensured stability. A number of image types from this era, starting with the Adorations painted by Antwerp artists and workshops producing lavishly ornamental “mannerist”-style paintings, indeed appear to recognize Antwerp’s top position as a city of trade and the abundance of goods moving through the city, and aim to replicate that abundance in their paintings. However, picturing the tenuous nature of commerce becomes recognizable through subject and formal elements. The excesses of the mannerist style manage to carry the excesses made possible by a magian iconography that works through the migration of meaning, and for Antwerp artists, becomes a way to encompass a new sense of art, artistry, and abundance.

The chapter ends at the close of the long sixteenth century with a study of three works: Jost Amman’s table-sized print, *Allegory of Commerce* (1585) (fig. 0-17); and two civic commissions from 1609, Abraham Janssen’s painting, *Scaldis and Antwerpia* (fig. 0-18) and Peter Paul Rubens’ *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 0-19). The works express the volatility and even moral peril associated with the tenuous and complex interactions comprising Antwerp’s early modern economy.

Chapter 1

Cannibal Complexities: Metaphors of Incorporation and Early Modern Globalization

Incorporation is an action that, when completed, brings the exterior or external into the interior or internal. Incorporation is a taking-in; an act of consuming. Adoration scenes—where the foreign magi appear before Christ—picture incorporation. This first appearance of Christ to outsiders assumes their conversion to Christianity; an incorporation. This incarnation of Christ before the magi doubles for the incarnation of Christ in the Eucharist, to be consumed by the faithful for their salvation; an incorporation. The magi as outsiders, travel to the incarnation of Christ just as the faithful travel to the altar as penitents for the incarnation of Christ in the Eucharist. The first will be converted; the second will be redeemed. Both assume incorporation.

Introduction

In a sixteenth-century painting of the Adoration of the Magi, the Portuguese artist Vasco Fernandes (c.1475-c. 1542) painted a figure from the New World in the place typically reserved for an African magus (fig. 1-1).¹⁸ The Viseu Adoration is one of the panels commissioned for a multi-paneled altarpiece for the Sé Catedral de Viseu, cathedral at Viseu, Portugal and was painted shortly after the return of the first Portuguese explorers from the Americas in 1501 (fig. 1-2). It is one of the earliest known European images of a man from the “New World”; from what Europeans would come to call Brazil. The painting is possibly the only time a New World figure is included among the three kings who adore the Christ child within the typical Adoration scene (fig. 1-3).

¹⁸ Vasco Fernandes is often called Grão Vasco [the Great Vasco] and was likely born in Viseu. He worked with Netherlandish painters like Francisco Henriques, who was probably from Bruges and whose Netherlandish training likely influenced Fernandes. Henriques was in Portugal around 1500. See, Colum Hourihane, ed., *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 99.

This singular appearance, together with the painting's out-of-the-mainstream production in Portugal, usually exiles this painting to the margins of the art historical canon. In this chapter, I show how the very factors that have led to the painting's marginalization reveal its significance as an image of incorporation, that is, an image dealing in the supposed resolution of opposites such as outside/inside; center/periphery; and consumer/consumed.¹⁹ "Incorporation" in this sense becomes a literary, but crucially for my purposes, also a visual strategy, that in its use by early modern Europeans, reveals the nostalgia for lost origins and the desire for a mythical unity that appear repeatedly in western thought. Within this scheme, the exceptional or strange is a source of anxiety and instability, the solution to which is the urge to make that strangeness familiar by taking in, subsuming, and consuming. While the story itself is a tale of incorporation, the *Viseu Adoration* poses to its viewers, at that moment of a post-New World encounter Europe, a formidable question: how to not only incorporate foreigners, but how to rectify *particular* foreigners from lands lacking a clear lineage within the history of salvation.

The *Viseu Adoration* comes from an altarpiece that no longer resides in the *Viseu* cathedral in its original state and location, which will be discussed later. The subjects depicted in the panels of the altarpiece adhere iconographically to typical programs picturing the life and passion of Christ. However, among the series of panels, the painting of the Adoration of the Magi is the only scene that presents an iconographical challenge. I argue that this noticeable shift in the visual formula of the magi would have drawn the

¹⁹ Literary theorist, Maggie Kilgour develops her observations about "incorporation" in her fascinating study, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990). Her work addresses primarily textual accounts. My work seeks to extend this to include visual material.

attention of viewers in a way that truly defines the ways in which the story of the magi wanders and through that action, the work of the magi. The attention this panel drew would necessarily expand and shift meanings to all the other panels surrounding it by way of introducing new geographic and cultural dimensions to the witness of Christ's incarnation. Christendom faced a challenge as to how to incorporate their contacts with lands and peoples that appear to slip beyond the previously understood boundaries of worldly knowledge. This picture of a New World figure demonstrates the ways in which artists leveraged long-standing symbolic associations and substitutions within the magi narrative to propose solutions for incorporating shifts in traditional wisdom caused through human experience in the physical world.

The magi figure as representative of "New World" experience is visual evidence of just such a challenge to traditional wisdom. Scholars have frequently identified the central magus from the Viseu Adoration as a man meant to represent the Tupinambá people from Brazil even though the visual evidence for this assumption is less than solid.²⁰ The painting holds up the Tupi figure as an emblem of a completed and untroubled history of conquest. The young man energetically approaches the mother and child (and we assume, his religious conversion) under his own power, magnificently dressed, and holding out his rare gift: a silver-lined coconut shell. For the sixteenth-century Portuguese viewer, the center figure appeared as an "outsider," with distinctly unfamiliar clothing and attributes and with a skin tone that is darkest and most exposed amongst all the figures. However, by placing the figure under the cover of "magus," the

²⁰ I use a number of terms to indicate the center magus in recognition of the range of possible references he is meant to evoke. I use "Tupi" and "Tupinambá" at times as well but without endorsing the figure as definitively representing either.

artist veils any outward sense of resistance to or questioning of European encounters that might have been experienced. The figure's inclusion and his demeanor suggest that indeed, even the peoples of the "New World" have recognized Christianity's universal king. By picturing the young man within Christianity's familiar story demonstrating the incorporation of far-flung strangers made less strange through their gift-giving, the artist proposes a method for "Old World" viewers to see their expanded horizons through the universal history of salvation.

Nevertheless, the figure's very identity presents the first complication of interpretation. That is, if the figure is indeed meant to represent the Tupi people then his presentation is confusing in its conglomeration of styles, costume, and attributes.²¹ He fails to convince us that he is the same as or a substitution for the traditional figure of the African magus and paradoxically, if a substitution, then, as we will see, the new figure

²¹ Joseph Koerner places Vasco's figure of the magus within a system where the magus stands, not as a motif, but a "device" which he defines as "a feature of an art object designed to create particular effects in the receiver; [...] the device wants to be understood for how it works." He notes that a device's very repetition is the key to understanding its operation, the way it "works" whereas a "motif" has most to do with establishing a particular meaning. See, "The Epiphany of the Black Magus circa 1500," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition. Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque* (vol. 3, Part 1), ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., vol. 3 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 35. Koerner writes in his chapter notes that his study of the Black magus of Epiphany scenes c. 1500 (which includes the Viseu panel) began in 1992, was put aside, and then taken up again in 2009, with this book section published in 2010. My own studies of this painting began in spring semester 2006 as part of Dr. Michael Gaudio's "Atlantic World" graduate course, University of Minnesota. The seminar paper from this course was subsequently developed into the second of my two Plan B projects for the MA, granted in September 2006. In February 2007, I presented my work under the title, "Cannibals Among Us: Communion, Incorporation, and New World Conversion in Vasco Fernandes' Adoration of the Magi," at the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Conference, Tempe, Arizona in February 2007. In April 2007, I presented the revised project at the University of Minnesota's 4th Annual Theorizing Early Modern Studies (TEMS) Graduate Student Roundtable. Finally, in February 2010, a further revision was presented at the 98th Annual College Art Association (CAA) Conference in Chicago as part of the panel "Early Modern Globalization, 1400-1700," organized by Dr. Bronwyn Wilson and Dr. Angela Vanhaelen.

carries the troubles traditionally associated with the figure of the African magus. Then again, the presence of this new figure at the very heart of the Viseu bishopric suggests that the insertion of this newest worldly king who submits before the incarnation of a divine king was or would be understood as a seamless process of incorporation. Yet, his ambiguity intervenes. Further complications arise due to the fact that by the time this painting was displayed above the main altar in the cathedral at Viseu a different vision of the people that Europeans had supposedly encountered in the west had begun to take hold: that of the New World savage, portrayed at the extreme as a cannibal (fig. 0-11; 0-12).

The numerous representations of New World savage man-eaters do not allow this new magus to settle within any easy narrative of seamless incorporation or national history. Therefore, questions about identity are key: is the figure autonomous or consumed or in-between? Cannibalism then, is the *unexpected* incorporation that inhabits this painting and in turn exposes the metaphors of incorporation at work in colonization, globalization, and theology. These issues make the status of this painting worth taking seriously. Literary theorist Maggie Kilgour studies the subject of cannibalism as an early modern discourse and the ways in which it operates within literature (and loosely within “representation”). Summarizing the aims of this discourse and connecting it specifically with the operation of colonial powers, she argues that incorporation and cannibalism reveal a process of identification. She writes, “[c]annibalism is a means of subsuming

what is outside the self...[a] colonial discourse that makes the strange familiar”²² What we will eat/consume and will not eat/consume identifies us.

But why the focus on *eating* when taking in the story and image of the Adoration of the Magi? The answer to that question lies in the foundation of the story: the incarnation of Christ and the subsequent sacrifice of that incarnation which the faithful then consume in hopes of redemption. The imagery of the Adoration represents this cycle of incarnation and salvation and fundamentally relies on vision. Introducing even the suggestion of New World figures as possibly defined by their assumed relationship with what they will eat then introduces uncertainty as to this figure’s identity.

Within a scene that relies on metaphors of incorporation through its symbolic rendering of the Eucharistic celebration and religious conversion, the “Tupi” magus embodies the stark relationship between New World cannibalism and cannibalism *of* the New World. The resemblance between the very corporeal essence of the Adoration, where the literal body of Christ is offered for consumption, and the assumed corporeal activity of New World people, is significant. This young magus is presented as not entirely foreign (his hybrid costume and his very presence) yet not entirely familiar (his presence and his hybrid costume and attributes). This condition is an early modern problem for Europeans and their encounters with New World peoples. The discourse of incorporation reveals distinct problems with these encounters.

²² Kilgour, *Communion*, 17.

The Figure of Balthasar

In updating Arnold van Gennep's theories of ritual for application to modern and contemporary performance, Victor Turner outlines van Gennep's stages of ritual, which consist of: separation, transition, and incorporation.²³ For Turner and van Gennep, transition is a state of liminality. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the word *liminal* as: "of or pertaining to the threshold or initial stage of a process."²⁴ Marked by ambiguity and uncertainty, as well as potential, the liminal is a marginal state of being that is literally on the threshold of transformation. If navigated successfully, the "post-liminal" stage is a reward of incorporation into the whole. Turner also notes that rites of passage are very often just that: *passages*, characterized by physical movement from one stage to the next, "a parallel passage in space" or a "geographical movement from one place to another."²⁵ This process of transition and incorporation is useful for thinking about New World encounters and subsequent conflict and conquest and useful for examining images that focus on the ambiguity and tenuousness created through inhabiting transitional states.

"Balthasar" is the name traditionally given to the magus typically depicted as the middle king of the three magi in Medieval and Renaissance paintings. He often appears "in the middle" in positioning as well as in age. Typically, he is neither visibly aged and gray-bearded as the kneeling king Melchior, nor smooth and beardless as the youngest king, Caspar. Emblematic of the fluidity of the Adoration story in general, it is not

²³ Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1982), 24-26.

²⁴ *Oxford English Dictionary*: OED Online (Oxford University Press, 1989), s.v. "liminal." <http://dictionary.oed.com>.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

unusual to see the figures of Caspar/Gaspar and Balthasar trade places in pictures; their iconography is not set.²⁶ Whereas the gifts of gold and frankincense carried by the other magi refer to the kingliness and divinity of Christ, traditionally, the gift Balthasar offers is myrrh, a symbol for the Passion and death of Christ; a symbol of transition between the earthly and heavenly realms. The position Balthasar occupies then is a liminal space, made apparent both in the depiction of his ambiguous physical characteristics as well as in the symbolic weight his depiction bears as tied to apocryphal writings.²⁷ Balthasar holds a place in-between: in-between youth and old age; in-between divinity and earthliness; and for my purposes here, a place in-between cultures, and the often tenuous line between heresy and orthodoxy. Balthasar's figure can be used to delineate otherness and in this pivotal position, also works to define the limits of his group, marking ethnicity, belief, or even savagery. Finally, Balthasar also stands in a place that

²⁶ Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Dora Nussey (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1972), 212-217.

²⁷ Ibid. Mâle describes the various formulations of Magi legends found in apocryphal writings and texts such as Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*. Emblematic of the fluidity of the Adoration story in general, the Black magus is also associated with Caspar. Paul Kaplan details the variety of textual and pictorial reformulations available over time regarding the order, physical characteristics, and names of the Three Magi. Whereas the kneeling magus closest to Mary and Christ is almost always the eldest and called Melchior, the positioning and names of the remaining two are often interchanged. See Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* 21-34; also Yona Pinson, "Connotations of Sin and Heresy in the Figure of the Black King in Some Northern Renaissance Adorations," *Artibus et Historiae* 17, no. 34 (1996): 159-161 and 172n12. The most common characteristic attribute of the magi is their ages, which are designated as mentioned above. In some instances the term "third" used by pseudo-Bede (8th c.) to designate Balthasar is taken to mean variously as youngest and/or last, but not always decidedly one or the other. Here, because of the obvious youth and beardlessness of the third magus, and the advanced age of the kneeling magus, the Tupinambá is the "middle" by default. However, it should be noted that Balthasar, from the time of pseudo-Bede, has usually been distinguished as fuscus or "dark." Aside from positioning or apparent age, traditionally, the Black magus has been known as "Balthasar." See for example the painting of the *Adoration of the Magi* by Cornelis van Cleve (Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp). The Black magus wears a coat with the name "Baltesar" stitched in gold on the hem.

represents the promise of unity: a position unifying the endpoints with the center; the span of ages into the whole age of man; the earthly gifts unified with the passion and death of Christ. In other words, this is a figure in a crucial position who stands as the embodiment of God's promise of redemption through the incorporation of the body of Christ, ultimately seen as a unification of man with God.

More than any other picture of the middle king of the Adoration, a native figure from Brazil in the guise of Balthasar embodies a heightened sense of tension between the transitional worlds he is typically meant to straddle as well as the new worlds introduced by his presence. This tension is a hallmark of the liminal, with the end desire of the incorporation of difference into the fully initiated being far from guaranteed. At this early date, the competing images of the "savage"—pictured variously as uncivilized, as noble, as pre-Lapsarian, as menacing, as welcoming—highlight this oscillation between sameness and difference. For example, while written accounts of cannibalism arrived in Europe in the 1490s, probably the earliest published image to blatantly link the people of the New World to acts of cannibalism appears in 1505 and thus is contemporary with the Viseu Adoration (fig. 0-11).²⁸ Printed in Augsburg and attributed to Johann Froschauer, the woodblock print shows men and women with feather headdresses and skirts under a lean-to near the shore. Two ships appear in the harbor. Men converse on shore, a woman nurses her infant while women at left prepare and eat food, including human body parts. A man's head and limbs roast over a fire in the center background. Another print that illustrated Vespucci's *Lettera di Amerigo Vespucci delle Isole Nuovamente Trovate*, was

²⁸ Susan Milbrath argues that Froschauer's print likely relied on Vespucci's account of his 1501-2 South American journey. "Representations of Caribbean and Latin American Indians in the 16th century," *Archiv Für Völkerkunde* 45 (1991): 14-15.

printed in Strasbourg in 1509 (fig. 0-12). The six figures are shown nude and outdoors. Two figures in the background work over a table where one wild-eyed man uses a cleaver to chop up human limbs on a table. In the foreground, man stands to urinate while two other figures speak to a woman holding a baby. The woman's long, wavy hair flies up in wild, twirling sections that recall the untamed locks of hair worn by the women pictured as witches in prints by northern European artists such as Albrecht Dürer (fig. 1-4) and Hans Baldung Grien.

Through its contrast of the sacred and profane, the story of the magi is representative of how European cultures defined themselves through the juxtaposition of the exoticism and strangeness of the magi against the perceived stability of a Christian Europe personified by Christ and the Virgin Mary. However, as outlined in the Introduction, the uncertainties surrounding the kings' origins and significance make it clear that the flexible narrative of this story is a sign of inherent volatility. Subsequently, the ambiguity attached to these three peripatetic figures establishes a site for the telling of an unstable history, where the newest and most confounding of experiences facing early modern Europeans are placed for consideration within a history of salvation. This is the cultural work that artists, patrons, and beholders understood as the domain of the magi and explains why the "Tupi" king's European debut logically landed him in the Adoration.

The attempts to visually incorporate outsiders while calling attention to the very differences that necessitate their incorporation, require a flux of memory and forgetting that leaves lives and narratives unaccounted for in the telling of Europe's expansion to

the New World. The middle king's figure creates a noticeable disruption within the Viseu Adoration scene that we can extend conceptually to similar efforts of incorporation as Europeans grappled with reconfiguring the concept of a tripartite world—Europe, Asia, and Africa—to accommodate an unexpected fourth continent. Neither operation is without its excesses and ill-fitting substitutions. As we shall see, these incorporation maneuvers often underpin Christian beliefs and align well with the aims of colonization and global trade.

Background and Documentation of the Viseu Adoration

Between 1501 and 1506,²⁹ shortly after explorers from Portugal made their first encounter with the coast of South America, the Portuguese artist, Vasco Fernandes³⁰—often referred to as *Grão Vasco* or “Vasco the Great”—painted a scene of the Adoration of the Magi as part of a large, oil on wood, multi-paneled altarpiece for the Cathedral of

²⁹ Maria de Fátima dos Prazeres Eusébio provides a passage from a letter from 1500 by Bishop Fernando Gonçalves de Miranda who writes about his desire for a retable for the main chapel at Viseu. Evidently a practical man, he notes that instead of requesting one from Flanders, it would be cheaper to commission a local painter. See “Retábulos da Cidade de Viseu,” *Beira Alta* 50, no. 1 (1991): 8. Luis Reis-Santos deals extensively with the evidence found in documents related to this altarpiece in an effort to define the oeuvre of Vasco Fernandes. The earliest documents from 1501-1502 place Vasco Fernandes in Viseu, having received payment as a “pintor” (37). Specifically for this retable, Reis-Santos lists two secondary source documents that seem to support Vasco Fernandes as the main artist (62; 64). In addition, in another document dated September 29, 1506 having to do with the retable commission for the cathedral at Lamego (Portugal), Vasco Fernandes himself references the retable in Viseu (“...sera da maneira q do dito Retauollo de Viseu”) (40-41), which Reis-Santos feels by that time “estava certamente concluído.” (22). See *Vasco Fernandes e os Pintores de Viseu do Século XVI* (Lisboa: 1946).

³⁰ Vasco Fernandes was active between 1501 and 1540. See Dalila Rodrigues, *Grão Vasco: Pintura portuguesa del Renacimiento, c.1500-1540* (Salamanca, Spain: Museo Grão Vasco, Viseu, 2002).

Viseu, Portugal (fig. 1-2).³¹ The encounter and the painting are inextricably linked, with the painting acting as witness to discovery and encounter, but also as an expression of a new world view. Originally commissioned to be placed in the *capela-mor* or main chapel of the cathedral, the retable program included scenes from the lives of the Virgin Mary and Christ and is thought to have consisted of eighteen panels produced by several different artists.³² The panels are all similarly sized; that of the Adoration measures 51.25 inches x 31 inches. Of the eighteen, the Adoration panel is best known due to its unusual—and only known—portrayal of Balthasar as a native man from Brazil (fig. 1-3). As noted, it is most often cited as being the first depiction in Europe of a “Tupinambá” man, probably just preceding the first woodcuts visually linking the Tupinambá people with cannibalism.³³ In addition, this painting, together with other works by this and other Portuguese artists, is often used as part of the visual evidence documenting the stylistic

³¹ The panel, along with 13 others from the original retable, are now housed in the Museu Grão Vasco in Viseu, Portugal. Dalila Rodrigues, currently the leading authority on this artist, attributes this painting to Vasco Fernandes with the assistance of the Flemish painter Francisco Henriques. See Dalila Rodrigues, *Grão Vasco* 2002.

³² Dalila Rodrigues, ed., *Grão Vasco e a Pintura Europeia do Renascimento* (Lisbon: Galeria de Pintura do Rei D. Luís, 1992), 78-81. Another scholar has proposed a scheme originally consisting of twenty-one panels in total. See Eusébio, 11-14. Reis-Santos also argues that the original scheme probably consisted of additional panels beyond the remaining fourteen. Most convincingly, he notes the lack of a panel depicting the Crucifixion of Christ and especially the lack of a panel depicting the Assumption of Mary, being that Mary of the Assumption is the “padroeira” of the Viseu Cathedral. See page 22.

³³ See for example, Miguel Faria, “Brasil: visões europeias da América Lusitana,” *Oceanos* no. 24 (1995): 71; and Jean Michel Massing, “Early European Images of America: The Ethnographic Approach,” in *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art and Yale University Press, 1992), 517. At least one author points out, reasonably I think, that this claim is difficult to substantiate. I agree that perhaps it is most accurate to designate the Viseu figure as *one* of the earliest depictions of a native man from Brazil. See Maria José Palla, *Traje e Pintura: Grão Vasco e o Retábulo da Sé de Viseu* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1999), 56. The first woodcut thought to show the Tupinambá in the midst of a cannibal feast is dated c.1505 and was printed in Augsburg or Nuremberg. See Helmut Nickel, “Miss America’s Brother and His Club,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 37 (2002): 86-87.

influence of Northern Renaissance art of the southern Low Countries on the art production of Portugal, due to the political and commercial connections between the two regions.³⁴

The picture itself is tightly composed, with the figures of the Holy Family, three magi, and ox and ass crowded closely together before the stable and placed near the front of the picture plane. The ass occupies himself with eating while turned away from the scene in the foreground; a reference to those who “eat blindly”. At left, a road winds to meet a city gate set in a sparse landscape and overhead, the intense blue sky painted into the upper left corner makes a stark counterpoint to the lower right corner filled with the solid blackish-blue fabric of Mary’s heavy robe. The long, feather-tipped spear held by the “Tupi” magus emphasizes this diagonal opposition.

This magus creates a whirl of movement at the center of the group of figures that catches the viewer’s eye and sets this magus apart from his companions. His body position creates an “X”-shaped form with the direction of his spear emphasizing his counterposed limbs. The stride he takes is energetic and outsized compared to his companion magus to the left, yet while he faces forward and steps out to the right, the spear’s direction moves opposite, to the left. The wispy, gold-edged white fabric leading away from his sleeve caps appear to snap back and forth in contrast to the thin fringes of his pants that dangle in six different directions below his knees. The strings of multi-colored beads hanging from his neck call attention to the diagonal pattern of his shirt as they crisscross his chest. And there are more colors and patterns yet: flat, paddle-shaped

³⁴ J. Everaert and E. Stols, eds., *Flandre et Portugal: Au confluent de deux cultures* (Anvers: Fonds Mercator, 1991). Also, Rodrigues, *Grão Vasco* 2002, 19-39; and Rodrigues, “Vasco Fernandes-Revisão Crítica de um Percurso,” *Beira Alta* 55, no. 3 and 4 (1996): 265-273.

feathers in green, red, and yellow flare from the brim of his cap and circle his waist and neckband. In contrast to his rather tame and quietly-composed companions, the forms of this magus emphasize the disunity of his movements and sets him apart visually even beyond skin color and strange costume.

The figure stands out even more when we consider painter Vasco Fernandes' basic composition alongside its stylistic inspiration from Flanders. The attitude of the three magi is reminiscent of the depiction of the same figures in the Adoration scene of Rogier van der Weyden's *Columba Altarpiece* (c.1455) (fig. 1-5). In Rogier's depiction, the aged Melchior kneels before the Madonna and child and the last magus arrives in the midst of removing his cap in a flourish. The middle king takes a dynamic pose, suggesting movement and urgency. Although not dark skinned, with his left leg bent as if in mid-stride, this central figure recalls the stance of Fernandes' middle king, whose own dynamism is made even more apparent with the addition of fluttering lengths of fabric attached to the sleeves of his clothing and dangling, fringed cords at the edge of his breeches, details I will return to later (fig. 1-3).

The direction of the composition in Fernandes' Adoration is the reverse of Rogier's which is a reminder of how these style influences traveled. The similarity between the Fernandes Adoration and Rogier's well-known painting might suggest that Netherlandish work was in fact an inspiration for the Portuguese painting. Fernandes might have known the painting (or copy) through a print in which the composition had been reversed during the process of transferring from drawing to print, a common

occurrence in early woodcuts.³⁵ Dalila Rodrigues and Dagoberto Markl note that prints reproducing northern European paintings were a key source for the Portuguese workshops and point out the compositional and stylistic similarities between another panel from the Viseu retable—that of the *Descent from the Cross*—and Rogier’s work of the same theme (c.1435), a painting that was widely copied both in drawings and prints.³⁶ However, it must be said that like all themes of Christ’s life, the bulk of northern Adoration scenes from the 14th to the 16th centuries employed very similar iconography and composition, relying on stock characters, details, and symbols. It is highly likely that Fernandes was drawing inspiration from a multitude of available examples, either directly or through drawings, copies, and prints.

In efforts to connect this composition to the activities of Portuguese explorers, some scholars have argued that the figure of the kneeling Melchior is a portrait of Pedro Álvares Cabral, the Portuguese voyager and Viseu native credited with Europe’s first encounter with Brazil in 1500.³⁷ Cabral’s voyage (understood as being personified by the presence of Balthasar as a Tupinambá man), as well as a perceived likeness between a sixteenth-century limestone medallion of Cabral and the kneeling king, are two reasons

³⁵ David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 22-23.

³⁶ Dalila Rodrigues, “Vasco Fernandes-Revisão Crítica,” 265-273.; Dagoberto Markl, “Vasco Fernandes e a gravura do seu tempo,” in *Grão Vasco e a Pintura Europeia do Renascimento*, ed. by Dalila Rodrigues (Lisbon: Galeria de Pintura do Rei D. Luís, 1992): 261-269.

³⁷ José Teixeira, “Adoration of the Magi (attributed to Vasco Fernandes)” in *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration*, 153; Faria, 72; Also, Rodrigues, *Grão Vasco* 2002, 91-92. Rodrigues, noting that Cabral would have been only 35 years old at the time of the painting, is quite cautious with this attribution; whereas Teixeira supports it by suggesting that Cabral’s long periods of travel would account for his aged appearance. In my opinion, Rodrigues’ approach is probably best especially in light of the traditional attributes given the eldest king, whose appearance varies the least among the three figures. Koerner draws on Teixeira as well and links the figure with Cabral and calls attention to the medallion at Belém. See “Epiphany of the Black Magus,” 15.

given for this attribution.³⁸ The medallion that José Teixeira uses for comparison is located at the cloister of the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos in Belém, Portugal.³⁹ Another, perhaps more verifiable, argument is Cabral's possible residency in Viseu at the time when the Bishop Gonçalves de Miranda was seeking donors for the completion of Fernandes' altarpiece project for the cathedral.⁴⁰ That said, although these scholars have noted the alleged facial similarities between the medallion and Fernandes' Melchior—a thin face with prominent cheekbones and long, irregular nose—the same similarities could just as well be proposed between this Melchior and that seen in Rogier's *Columba Altarpiece*, suggesting that this resemblance could be coincidence or evidence of the use of stock figures.⁴¹ The interest in detecting a true reference to a notable, contemporary person is relevant given the possibilities, yet this detective work only extends to the elder magus due to the somewhat puzzling identity of the second magus.

³⁸ Teixeira, "Adoration of the Magi," 153. There is a long tradition of picturing historical and contemporary figures as one of the three magi or as part of their retinue.

³⁹ A further problem with this attribution is pointed out by Maria Helena Vala Salvador of the Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico: "Traditionally people say that is 'Pedro Álvares Cabral'. However there is no documentation to prove so. The Cloister was built in the sixteenth century. It was designed and begun by Diogo de Boitaca, continued by João de Castilho after 1517 and finished by Diogo de Torralva between 1540 and 1541. This is also the approximate date for the medallion." Electronic mail correspondence, 21 September 2006.

⁴⁰ Rodrigues, *Grão Vasco* 2002, 91-92; Teixeira, "Adoration of the Magi," 153.

⁴¹ The fact that the medallion features a bearded Cabral—as do two other later engravings—suggests that a beard was known to be essential to the depiction of this explorer. Therefore, the lack of a beard on Fernandes' Melchior (a detail found more often than not on the image of the eldest king in most Adoration scenes) is curious if indeed this figure is truly to come from the same source as used for the medallion. The beard seems to be a detail too crucial to eliminate. Fernandes' Melchior thus has as much resemblance in common with the medallion as Rogier's Melchior. It is unknown whether the source for the medallion was drawn from life or from a copy of a drawing or painting. In any case, it is likely the medallion was carved after Cabral's death c.1520, so it is certain at least that this particular medallion was not Fernandes' source.

The “Tupinambá” Magus and Representation of the New World

By placing a man from the New World—a figure with noticeably dark skin—in his Adoration scene, Fernandes was not performing a radical act, as this figure usurps the position often reserved for the “Black King.” It is not a radical act because by the fifteenth century, it is not uncommon to see one of the magi in Adoration scenes depicted with dark skin and understood as a “Moor” or a king from Africa.⁴² Whether intended to envision an African king or simply a personification of Africa itself, picturing the Black magus sets a precedent for how the scene of the Adoration is used both to reflect, but more significantly, participate in shaping the coherence of the world in accordance with religious beliefs.

The inclusion of the Tupi king signals the entry of the Americas into European thought presented through the dislocation of the traditional depiction of the Black Magus, whose first appearances in images of the Adoration nearly 200 years before this were just as novel and performed a parallel cultural function. The switch between the two figures is akin to the way theorist Joseph Roach has framed the process of surrogation. For Roach, surrogation describes how culture uses the interplay of “memory, performance, and substitution” as a way to sustain and transmit traditions and/or remembrance.⁴³ In order for this transmission to work, the process requires that the actors must replace or compensate for the “cavities created by loss through death or other forms of departure.”⁴⁴ Note that Roach cites substitution, but not as an endpoint. To operate properly, Roach’s

⁴² Pinson, “Connotations of Sin,” 159; Kaplan, *Rise of the Black Magus*, 19-21; Trexler, *Journey of the Magi*, 38-39. See also Hugo Kehrer, *Die Heiligen Drei Könige*, 223-4.

⁴³ Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

surrogation relies on the additional factors of memory and performance. Even though scholars have argued, more or less, that the change in figures—African for New World—is an even exchange, as if one is as effective as the other for displaying a general foreignness, which of course, the magi do collectively represent, the more fitting process for switching one for another is the process of surrogation.⁴⁵

Surrogation raises the question of memory and forgetting—i.e., what is carried over to the new from the old, what elements are left behind, and what *new* conditions are generated by this so-called Tupi magus that a simple substitution cannot contain or accommodate; the process creates an excess of parts that the African magus cannot completely cover. The fact is, surrogation is not a solution nor a completion; the process of surrogation is a condition that must be re-performed in order to maintain the figure's "otherness" since to "solve" the substitution process would end the very need for this image of conversion. After all, were a full incorporation to be achieved, how would the incorporating power maintain its distinct identity? So, while the urge is toward incorporation, we are left to question whether that end is truly desired.

Even decades later, in events such as the pageant for the French king, Henry II's entrance into Rouen, France, the Tupi people continued to perform their otherness to Europeans in a way that belied the apparent message of recognition and conversion that the Old World expressed through Vasco Fernandes' *Adoration*. For the Rouen entry of the king, the city aimed to produce an unforgettable pageant, a "*tableau vivant*" evoking Brazil constructed as one station of several to welcome Henri II. In this "living" scene, with the use of extravagant building and outfitting, the organizers constructed a scene

⁴⁵ Trexler, *Journey of the Magi*, 133-135.

meant to appear as lifted whole cloth from the coast of eastern Brazil (fig. 1-6).

Obviously the most captivating element of the meticulously-planned “scene” were fifty Tupi men and women whose ranks were padded with over 200 French “players”.⁴⁶

The group staged battles with real weapons, lit fires, and worked in their “brazilwood” forest. (They also wore not a stitch.) Strangely enough, with this pageant, the pattern of the Adoration is almost reversed in the way that the lone *king*, seemingly in power, travels to see the “New World.” However, the direction of power is not entirely set since Henry only derives a favorable view of his rule through his presence and his acknowledgement of Brazil (as *tableau vivant*). As historian, Michael Wintroub points out, the mock village was pointedly “created [in order] to lobby the king to support the interests of Normandy’s merchant community in their ongoing and long-standing war with Portugal over the right to trade in the New World. Rouen, as the capital of Normandy... was at the very center of this conflict.”⁴⁷ In the end, the “battles” staged between tribes (the “*Toupinaboux*” and the “*Tabbagerres*”) over two days ended with the sham villages burned—consumed by fire—to the ground.

The Unincorporated Brazilian King as Surrogate

The Black magus as prototype for the “Tupi” magus makes sense given the traditional use of the magus from Africa. The fact that this magus’ portrayal came with a set of indistinct meanings was certainly not lost on most artists and patrons. The choice of

⁴⁶ For a fascinating description of the entry see, Michael Wintroub, *A Savage Mirror: Power, Identity, and Knowledge in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 15-20; see also, Stephen Mullaney, “Strange Things, Gross Terms, Curious Customs: The Rehearsal of Cultures in the Late Renaissance,” *Representations* no. 3 (1983): 40–67.

⁴⁷ Wintroub, *A Savage Mirror*, 21.

figure for the New World magus to displace is a carefully calculated decision. The depiction of the eldest king who kneels before the Christ child remains especially stable. While a young-looking European king might assume the eldest king's position, to my knowledge, the Black magus never advances this close to the Holy Family. The choice then is between the middle and youngest magus, but including two Black magi was never a solution, even when the magi were to signify “continents” and the count had increased from three to four. The three only ever included enough room for one dark-skinned magus.

The Black King was especially popular in northern European art which, as noted above, is a key influence on painting in Portugal at this time. Scholars have pointed out that while many depictions of the Black King are simply understood as representative of the church’s designs for Christian conversion, this representation necessarily relies on a discourse of racial difference where skin color, physiognomy, and costume are understood to signify character.⁴⁸ Further, ambivalent meanings are often attached to the Black King in order to suggest transgression and wickedness, drawing on the long-held belief that black skin was a mark of sin, corruption, and debauchery. The additional connections made to the “Curse of Ham,” the “Mark of Cain,” the threat of the infidel, and even Satan, provided artists—especially those of the Netherlands and Germany—an (unfortunately) rich source from which to draw for their iconographic programs.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Pinson, “Connotations,” 159-161.

⁴⁹ For the relationship between the identification of the biblical Noah’s son, Ham, and one of the magi, see David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 155; for the roundabout reasoning linking the Ethiopian magus and the Queen of Sheba (and therefore, both assumed to be “black”) see, Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*

Consequently, viewers became accustomed to viewing the Black King with not a little suspicion.

These ambivalent depictions of the Black magus in Adoration scenes are art historian, Yona Pinson's concern.⁵⁰ At the same time, she notes the power of the Epiphany scene (the birth of Christ) itself to embody the message of the "triumph of the Church," that is, that the kings "personified the three parts of the world, Europe, Asia, and Africa as well as the submission of the temporal power to the spiritual power of the Church."⁵¹ Viewers grasped this concept when seeing the three kings—the three continents—as symbols of submission and conversion joined together under the banner of one faith, a theme that parallels church doctrine and writings that call for spiritual incorporation, or a return to oneness from division and fracture.

Pinson uses several paintings from the late Middle Ages to highlight her points regarding the often ambiguous but insidious symbolism of evil—decoded through elements both clearly evident, but also some that are less distinct—and argues that these symbols change the meaning of the Adoration theme from one of redemption to that of offering a moral lesson.⁵² This is true to a point, but fails to recognize the ambiguous nature of incorporation and its ambiguous relationship to redemption. The idea of incorporation turns to less manageable associations when complicated with various forms of consuming.

(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 108-109; further reading, see David Whitford, *The Curse of Ham in the Early Modern Era: The Bible and the Justifications for Slavery* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), chapter 3.

⁵⁰ Pinson, "Connotations," 159.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 167.

For example, the *Adoration of the Magi* (c.1510) by the Netherlandish painter, Hieronymus Bosch, includes a fabulously outfitted Black magus (fig. 1-7; 1-8).⁵³ Pinson makes note of the decorative scenes along the edges of this king's garment that show birds and hybrid creatures pecking at outsized fruit while a slender and angular orange bird pecks at a berry at the top of the king's vessel (fig. 1-9). Pinson reads these elements, taken together with the king's luxurious dress, as denoting a figure "entirely given over to the dominance of evil," for which she provides convincing visual evidence.⁵⁴ The Black King wears an elegant ivory-colored robe embellished with a raised collar edged with a striking arrangement of sharply-cut, fabric oak leaves. Larger leaves appear as epaulets on his shoulder. Pearl buttons close the lower section of his robe and pearl embellishments accompany the hybrid creatures on the robe's edges. A small, pearl-covered purse or ornament dangles from his right arm and his sleeves are tight at the wrist but then billow out so that no hint of an arm can be seen. A jellyfish-like tassel hangs from the voluminous sleeve pulling it low enough to cause the tentacle-like fringes to pile up on the ground below (fig. 1-9). The king's costume plus the extravagant and exotic gifts he offers signals to the viewer that the king is dominated by concerns for the worldly and for the material body that, in the end, equates him with impermanence and deception.

The sense of the figure projecting a moral lesson (pace Pinson) is apt but fails to take into account a larger conceptual effort at work in the painting. It is crucial to note that the details on the king's robe primarily have to do with eating and devouring—with

⁵³ In this depiction he is positioned third amongst the three kings, suggesting that he is perhaps the youngest king.

⁵⁴ Pinson, "Connotations," 163.

incorporation—and the presence of the human-headed birds imply a further lustful aspect to the theme. Much like the ass from the *Viseu Adoration*, the hybrid figures engage in unfamiliar and unexpected acts of consuming and are themselves unfamiliar and unexpected. These foreign habits and appearances are qualities that mark the presence of the other. The same preoccupation with incorporation—both physical as well as spiritual—appears in other vignettes from the larger altarpiece: wolves attacking shepherds; the consuming power of fire; symbolic elements referring to the Eucharist such as bundles of wheat high on the stable; and the scene of the Mass of St. Gregory painted on the exterior, where the saint appears in bodily form on the altar as the sacrifice for the mass, to be consumed by the faithful (figs. 1-10; 1-11). Further vignettes appear on and around the Black King and his attendant. The birds and their hybrids on the edge of the robes eat the fruits attached to spiny branches, perhaps recalling the Passion through the symbolic depiction of the “birds who eat amongst the thorns,” yet the presence of these strange creatures seems only to mock the typical depiction of graceful goldfinches in this role.⁵⁵ Perhaps a better biblical parallel in this case would be to the birds who eat the wasted seed thrown by the sower onto infertile ground (from the Parable of the Sower); in other words, depending on the “soil” (the heart and ear of the receiver) the word of God can be fruitful or may fall barren.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ The goldfinch who eats among the thorns is associated with/foretells Christ’s Passion. Raphael pictures a goldfinch in his painting of the *Madonna and Child with St. John the Baptist* from 1506 (Uffizi, Florence).

⁵⁶ The parable is complex but here perhaps a reference to a “fruitful response depends on a pre-existing capacity to receive the word.” See R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 2002), 211.

Just behind the Black King, a young, dark-skinned, finely-featured boy dressed in a pinkish-red robe carries the king's crown (fig. 1-12). Although the frame partially covers the length of the figure, he makes a notable presence since the Black King is the only one of the three kings who has an attendant, suggesting that the king's excess of material trappings requires assistance to contain. In fact, the boy holds to his chest a large gold and silver platter. The hem of the boy's long, two-piece garment is similar to the king's and pictures a hybrid, salamander-type creature swallowing one of its kin (fig. 1-13). The attendant wears an elaborate headdress made of a ripe, round, red fruit and spiky vegetation that recalls the Crown of Thorns. This strange headdress visually rhymes with the elaborate crown of the half-undressed man in the background doorway, who as a parallel to the Black King, has attendants behind him (fig. 1-14). The boy in pink glances in the direction of the odd fellow with the thorny, precarious crown on his head and a crystal-like cuff covering, but drawing attention to, a wound on his leg. The boy is the only person to notice the man in the doorway although the doorway figures fail to notice him. Rather than attending to the scene before him, the boy seems preoccupied by the spectacle of menacing figures emerging from the stable to his left.

The Black King carries a round, silver vessel with a scene in repoussé depicting a man kneeling before an enthroned king—a double for the submission to a divine king that the Adoration exemplifies (fig. 1-9). At the top of the vessel, the menacing orange bird devours a red berry next to a golden strawberry on a chain held by the king. A decorative object, the strawberry implies that the fruits of such a worldly submission are fleeting and quickly consumed and, just like the inedible strawberry, are of little value to famished

souls. In the end, Bosch marks this king as a figure, who, like the Tupi king, is in transition; one who is neither here—yet to submit to Christ—nor there—removed from his foreign lands. When laced before the presentation of Christ—the foretelling of the Eucharistic offering—this African king would be presented with the promise of redemption offered through the infant Christ. However, the Black King’s incorporation into the “body of Christ” (i.e., the Church) is conditioned on the renunciation of his attachment to the earthly, fleeting rewards of consuming and his acceptance of the spiritual, eternal rewards of the Eucharist. The king neither kneels nor attends to the child suggesting this renunciation is yet in process and the viewer is not assured of his conversion.

While Bosch’s Adoration is rich with symbolic convolutions, his ambivalent portrayal of the Black King is characteristic of the visual approach to this figure and has been continued through the process of surrogation with his New World replacement. Where does this type of imagery leave Fernandes’ choice in replacing the Black King? Despite this artist’s likely familiarity with Northern Renaissance painting, Fernandes did not choose to depict the Tupinambá man with outward or hidden symbols of an inherent evil. Yet, as indicated at the beginning, he cannot exist simply as a stand-in representing the hoped-for spread of the Christian gospel to the New World. Fernandes’ Balthasar from Brazil is, on the surface, a presence that is pleasant and stirring to behold, but, like the Black King in Bosch’s altarpiece, his identity is unclear, making him a figure that disrupts as well.

In Fernandes' composition, the Tupi king completes a triangle with two figures on the right, emphasizing his precarious state by suggesting his incorporation into the Christian body is held in balance by the divide these figures symbolize (fig. 1-15). The ass on the right devours his feed, oblivious to the solemnity surrounding him. The splay of his ears pointedly mimics the splay of feathers in the Tupi king's crown which visually associates the king with the animal's "blind" consumption. His act of everyday consumption is contrasted with the Christ child who is seated on Mary's lap just below. While the ass consumes the food of this world, the child, who is situated above an altar-like stone supporting the paten-like cap of the eldest king, is offered as the food of salvation and becomes a redemptive force counteracting that of the beast.⁵⁷ The juxtaposition of the Christ child and the animal reveals a sharp distinction between food for the body and food for the soul. The Tupi king, as well as the viewer, are called to recognize this distinction.

The tension caused by comparing earthly sustenance with heavenly sustenance joins a host of details that mark this king's Christian incorporation as tenuous. He wears a fusion of woven European fabric shot with gold combined with beads and exotic feathers. He wears a feather crown and carries a long staff with a flattened end which approximates the type of war club carried by the Tupi seen in later images such as the print, *Portrait of King Quoniambec* that was included in André Thevet's *La*

⁵⁷ Several authors have documented the use of the scene of the Adoration as a mirror for the celebration of the Catholic Mass. Ursula Nilgen, "The Epiphany and the Eucharist: On the Interpretation of Eucharistic Motifs in Mediaeval Epiphany Scenes," trans. Renato Franciscano, *The Art Bulletin* 49, no. 4 (Dec., 1967): 311-316. M.B. McNamee, "An Additional Eucharistic Allusion in van der Weyden's Columba Triptych," *Studies in Iconography* 2 (1976): 107-113.

cosmographie universelle from 1575; and another print, *Treatment of Prisoners* from Thevet's *Les singularitez de la France Antarctique*, 1558 (figs. 1-16 ; 1-17).

While the other kings' gifts are presented in liturgical vessels, he offers his gift in a silver-lined coconut shell (fig. 1-18). His broad stride causes the fringe below his knees to sway, while the billowing strips of fabric rising up around him radiate an unusual energy and urgency that set him apart from his two fellow travelers, who even in movement appear static and heavy (fig. 1-1; 1-3). With motion and the rich materiality of his costume, he draws our eye away from the theological focus of the composition, the mother and child, and leaves us unsure as to his final destination both physically and metaphysically. This middle king is, in short, barely contained within the compositional and doctrinal constraints of the picture. As a hybrid, mutable figure who carries a gift but also a weapon, who wears ambiguously alien clothing, who moves urgently while surrounded by fabric caught by inexplicable forces, he threatens to unwind the certainty of this narrative and perhaps explains why the "Tupi" king leaves no legacy. He mirrors for us the complexities of colonization where the assumed efficiency of the incorporation of the other—the unquestioned and problematic "substitution"—is undone by the inefficient ways that colonization plays out through the excesses it wastes and the losses for which it fails to account. In the attempt to make the New World figure familiar with vague trappings of Old World kingship, the artist succeeds only in making him stranger and unrecognizable as belonging to any world.

Competing Images of the Savage

The ambivalent portrayal of the Black King is characteristic of the approach to this figure and as shown earlier, has been continued with his New World replacement. Even so, the Tupi king is a decided departure from representations of savages and most scholars choose to see the Tupi magus as a benign figure ripe for colonial assimilation, describing the painting as an untroubled depiction of the Christianization of the New World. For example, in efforts to better grasp the significance of Fernandes' singular depiction, at least two authors use later but roughly contemporary Portuguese paintings for comparison that also include Brazilian figures in order to show an evolution of, or at least conflicting patterns of, European thought regarding the place and humanity of the Tupinambá. Both Hugh Honour and Miguel Faria place the painting *Inferno* (c. 1515-1530) by an anonymous Portuguese workshop alongside Fernandes' *Adoration* for their purposes, which I will address later.⁵⁸ Furthermore, Faria has also suggested that Fernandes' painting is a depiction of Christian conversion of the New World through the “*duplo nascimento*” [double birth] as it were, of the Christ child and the New World.⁵⁹

Along those same lines, Dalila Rodrigues also sees this panel as depicting the promise of a New World and the church's belief in the necessity of the Christianization of New World peoples.⁶⁰ The evangelization of these peoples was at times afforded the same level of urgency as discovery.⁶¹ For example, in his letter in 1500 to Manuel I,

⁵⁸ Hugh Honour, *The New Golden Land: European Images of America from the Discoveries to the Present Time*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975), 53-57; and Miguel Faria, “Brasil,” 71.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Rodrigues, *Grão Vasco* 2002, 91.

⁶¹ Geoffrey Symcox, “Introduction,” *Italian Reports on America, 1493-1522: Accounts by Contemporary Observers*, Vol. XII, *Repertorium Columbianum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 9.

King of Portugal, reporting on Pedro Álvares Cabral's voyage to Brazil, Pêro Vaz de Caminha wrote:

They seem to me people of such innocence that, if one could understand them and they us, they would soon be Christians, because they do not have or understand any belief, as it appears...I do not doubt they will become Christians. For it is certain this people is good and of pure simplicity, and there can easily be stamped upon them whatever belief we wish to give them.⁶²

Vaz de Caminha's empathic portrayal of what amounts to the characterization of the Tupi people as *tabula rasa*, is an observation Rodrigues and other scholars turn to for interpreting Fernandes' picture. The notion of this Tupinambá King as representative of the receptive pool of New World peoples primed for Christian conversion is a fruitful observation and seems to match well visually with Balthasar's pleasing demeanor. Yet, he is not simply a stand-in representing the expansion of Christianity. His very materiality—his movement and ornament—distracts us from the very real implications of his desired incorporation and, as the careful reading of the elements of the Tupi King has shown, the picture itself warns us of this.

Significantly what has not been addressed in this painting are the multiple meanings implicit in placing a Tupinambá—a figure often associated with cannibalism—within the scene of the first incarnation of Christ to the Gentiles, a scene with doctrinal connections that are distinctly Eucharistic and allude to transubstantiation. There is an oblique but somewhat jarring resemblance between the very corporal essence of the

⁶² William Brooks Greenlee, trans., *The Voyage of Pedro Álvares Cabral to Brazil and India from Contemporary Documents and Narratives* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1938), 29.

Epiphany—the “theophagy” or literally “god-eating” and the assumed corporeal activity of the Tupinambá, or anthropophagy (“man-eating”).⁶³

“Metaphors of incorporation” cover a range of conditions but go a bit further than the mestizo in the way that incorporation suggests a persistent hierarchy of power. On the one hand, the most obvious meanings relate to taking food or matter *into* the body and thus are vividly physical. On the other hand, incorporation can also relate to more abstract notions, such as “taking in,” “absorbing,” and even “conquering” that may or may not rely on physical actions. The rich associations evoked through these metaphors readily apply to the doctrine addressing the Eucharist, since for Christians, the Eucharist essentially means partaking in the sacrificed body of Christ. As Kilgour notes, for Christians, the Eucharist “is the sacrament which was seen as the ritual reenactment of the incarnation.”⁶⁴ Transubstantiation is understood as the repetition of the Incarnation again and again; an incarnation that claims the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist for salvation of the faithful. This means the incarnation of Christ connects with both literal and figurative incorporation. Thus, in the most basic of terms, Christians participate in the incorporation of the divine, or “eating God” physically and spiritually (the Eucharist).⁶⁵

The concept of incorporation in Christian thought emphasizes the state of unity as always desirable over fracture and division or duality. In that way, the literal body of

⁶³ Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne*, trans. by Rosemary Morris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 8-10.

⁶⁴ Kilgour, *Communion*, 79.

⁶⁵ Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 360.

Christ—human and divine—is at the core of the earliest arguments over unity and division and the many returning to the one, and is related to the neo-Platonic arguments over “substance and accidents” in the Eucharist.⁶⁶ Fundamentally, by the fifth century, Christ is determined doctrinally to be fully human and fully divine. This is a core rejection of duality—man *or* God—in favor of unity—man *and* God. Kilgour notes that “there are many myths...that trace an existing state of dualistic conflict to a fall from a state of oneness” and that:

such myths feed the assumption predominant within the Platonic and Judeo-Christian tradition that duality itself, the very existence of ‘otherness’ is an evil and unity a good, ultimately identifiable with a transcendent deity behind or above (and therefore in fact *outside*) the multiplicitous world of appearances, from which humanity came and to which it should strive to return.⁶⁷

In summary of this concept, she writes:

Christianity...depends on the existence of a transcendental deity outside the world who guarantees meaning. One of its central problems is getting that deity inside the world without identifying Him totally with it. The Christian image for the reconciliation of opposites—God/man, host/guest, father/son—is the incarnation [of Christ].⁶⁸

In this way, the act of spiritual incorporation through the Eucharist, in which the faithful literally take God in, is placed above that of mere feeding for sustenance.

Seen in these terms, for the Old World the cannibalism reportedly practiced by New World people would be categorized as regression at the furthest distance

⁶⁶ Kilgour, *Communion*, 11. See also Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 51-54.

⁶⁷ Kilgour, *Communion*, 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

from redemption. At the same time, there is a distinct danger inherent to acts of incorporation. Whether by eating or by conquest, those in the midst of incorporation risk a total identification with the incorporated. That is, by “consuming” the other, the fear is that *we* will be consumed and all difference will be lost.

In real world terms, the chronicles of European colonists return repeatedly to their fear of becoming savages through their contacts with the Tupinambá. While not published until the eighteenth century, the sixteenth-century plantation owner, Gabriel Soares de Sousa’s chronicle is useful for identifying the anxieties of colonialists in South America. Soares’ account was written in 1587. Among other things, he records his observations of and contacts with the various groups of native peoples living in coastal Brazil where by 1587, the mix of native peoples with the Portuguese or other foreigners is evident. Historian John Monteiro has analyzed Soares de Sousa’s take on this new generation. He concludes that Soares de Sousa’s journal:

reveals a constant fear that colonial writers entertained with regard to miscegenation: Soares de Sousa seemed less concerned with the impact that the whites and their mixed descendants had on the Tupinambá than with the prospect that whites could also become savages⁶⁹

The underlying anxiety here is a foundation of colonization and is echoed in the central beliefs of Christianity as well. For example, in a meditation on exile, alienation, and difference, Augustine of Hippo hears God proclaim: “I am

⁶⁹ John Monteiro, “The Heathen Castes of Sixteenth-Century Portuguese America: Unity, Diversity, and the Invention of the Brazilian Indians,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80, no. 4 (2000): 696–719.

the food of full-grown men. Grow and you shall feed on me. But you shall not change me into your own substance, as you do with the food of your body. Instead, you shall be changed into me.”⁷⁰ Essentially, Augustine reminds the faithful that incorporation is an unstable desire that must be carefully steered lest we become someone else’s food. After all, it is the offering of food that is the cause of Man’s fall and stands for the temptations of the worldly, external contaminants of the soul.

A sixteenth-century painting of *The Inferno* overturns the categories of consumer and consumed and implies that given his appetites, the Tupinambá is furthest from redemption (fig. 1-19). The artist and patron are unknown. Painted a decade or more after Fernandes’ *Adoration, Inferno* shows a masked and feathered figure presiding over Hell (1-20). While drawing from a long tradition of hell scenes populated with menacing demons and hybrid creatures, this figure, dressed in a distinctive array of feathered crown and winged, feathered cape is unmistakably a presence from the New World.⁷¹ The brightly colored feathers signal his non-European origins to the viewer, just as the very similar feathered garments did for the figure of Balthasar, and for Froschauer’s cannibals from 1505 (fig. 0-11). The winged version of the cape is a distinct feature also seen in

⁷⁰ Quoted in Kilgour, *Communion*, 51.

⁷¹ Art historian Marlene Borges Félix has produced a very intriguing study of the MNAA *Inferno*. Especially interesting is her comparison of the presiding figure with the figure of the magician Hermogenes in the panel painting *St James and the Magician Hermogenes* by the Mestre da Lourinhã from c.1520-1525. The depiction of the faces of the two is eerily similar. Unfortunately, this paper and painting came to my attention much too late to consider for my project here. Marlene Borges Félix, *O Painel Do Inferno Do Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga: Representações Dos Pecados E Tormentos No Século XV*, 2012. <http://exsurge1.blogspot.com/> .

Theodor de Bry's illustration from his chronicle, *America* (a copy from 1627). This print shows a crowd of men. Some are nude; some wear feathered crowns and/or feathered skirts. One figure carries a long spear reminiscent of the one carried by Balthasar. The figure also wears both a crown and a skirt in addition to a feathered cape that sprouts wings from the back that very closely resembles the cape in *Inferno* (fig. 1-21). In the foreground, two demons on the left also display wings. The spiky, leathery wings of these figures pair visually with the *Inferno* figure's wings and taken all together, these winged figures become associated not with the brilliant plumage of exotic birds but with the malign activities of fiends.

The colorful feathers and feathered garments are more than an iconographic attribute that identifies Amerindian people for European viewers. The artists clothe the figures' bodies in colors, patterns, and shapes that suggest the tenuous condition of their souls. The feather patterns for both Balthasar and the winged demon are distinctly ruffled and uneven, both in texture and in color. Their crowns include patterns of dark and light feathers that are inconsistently spaced and changeably colored. The rhythm of patterns is even markedly different on the fabrics and ornaments worn by Balthasar. Uniformly repeated patterns distinguish the European-made fabrics Balthasar wears, while his ornaments and feathers appear conspicuously irregular. The uniformity suggests a certain unity of thought and vision; with diverse colors and textures woven together to create an unbroken whole. In contrast, the feathered garments operate differently as a series of feathers linked together yet with an emphasis on the parts rather than the

whole. Instead of a fabric field woven together as one, the randomly variegated feather garments bring to mind interruption and unpredictability. For example, the neat dotted and lined diagonals on Balthasar's muted brown tunic and the repeated, evenly-spaced diamond-shaped pattern of his breeches contrast with the strings of beads he wears that include arbitrarily patterned black, red, and white beads and with the variable color pattern of his feather accents. The variations become even more noticeable when compared with the smoother, uniform colors and staid patterns worn by all of the other figures. The wildly whiplashing tassels at the lower edges of Balthasar's knee breeches call further attention to his unpredictable nature and appear to sprout unexpectedly from the ordered pattern of his breeches and take on a serpent-like quality.

Visual irregularities as indicators of moral irregularities could take on more pointed definition especially in the ways in which Europeans characterized the unique featherwork found in the Americas. In her studies on Tupi featherwork, art historian Amy Buono shows how Europeans took the Tupi practice of coloring feathers for use in garments as emblematic for the untrustworthy nature of Amerindians since the Tupi were understood to physically intervene in order to alter the colors of feathers produced by living birds.⁷² The Tupi peoples used a complex process known as *tapirage* that involved plucking feathers from the bird, after which different plant-based

⁷² Amy Buono's work on Tupi feathered capes and bonnets is indispensable. See, "Crafts of Color: Tupi *Tapirage* in Early Colonial Brazil," in *The Materiality of Color: The Production, Circulation, and Application of Dyes and Pigments, 1400-1800*, ed. by Andrea Feeser, et al (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 235-246.

substances were rubbed onto the bare follicles that then radically altered the natural color of the feathers as they re-grew.⁷³ For some European observers, it appeared the Tupi were attempting to “trick” viewers by presenting, for instance, what looked to be naturally red feathers from one bird without noting that the feathers were initially blue and from a different bird entirely. Scholars such as Buono have pointed to the words of the Portuguese chronicler, Pero de Magalhães Gândavo (c. 1540-1580), as evidence of European suspicion regarding this process. In the section of his chronicle on Brazil devoted to “The Birds of the Province,” he declares that the Tupi dye practice is intentionally deceptive: “thus it often happens that the Indians deceive people by selling [the dyed feathers] for the true species.”⁷⁴ Beautiful but unsettling; enticing but unfamiliar; the shared feathered attributes of Balthasar and the *Inferno* figure express a greater cultural anxiety surrounding European contact with New World peoples and whether Europeans would recognize the “true species”—the *true* appearance—given the unsettled nature of New World peoples.

In the *Inferno*, the enthroned figure is covered in variegated feather garments and wears a strange skeleton-like mask that, while decidedly a mark of evil, at the same time, still obscures his “true species.” The scene before the enthroned figure is a disturbingly detailed wasteland of torturous acts and seems to be a visual rendering informed by the horrific tales told by European voyagers of the man-eaters supposedly encountered in the New World; that is, the picture is

⁷³ Ibid., 236-237.

⁷⁴ Pero de Magalhães Gândavo, *The Histories of Brazil*, trans. John B. Stetson (New York: The Cortes Society, 1922), 69. Cited in Buono, “Crafts of Color,” 235.

the very realization of colonists' fears. The unknown artist clearly borrows from the nightmarish figures from Hieronymous Bosch's oeuvre, yet without the occasional whimsical insertions Bosch is known for. The artist refuses to release the viewer from the discomfort of final divine judgement.⁷⁵ Chained, prodded, and bound by demons, the men and women here suffer under the weight of their own appetites. All are nude or mostly so, with much of the brightness in the dark image reflecting from pale skin that emphasizes the sensuality and the fallen nature of flesh. In the left foreground, a goat-headed demon force-feeds a pig to his male captive through a metal funnel; his sister demon yanks at the mouth of another victim with a pincer; while a third uses a prong to feed a bound man from a silver dish.

Far from being a figure in transition with the hope of salvation like the Tupi magus (however weakly promised), the enthroned, ruling creature in the background embodies the damnation awaiting those whose appetites are satiated by this world's food. This ritual damnation symbolizes the inherent dangers of the liminal and of the schemes of incorporation—read here as conquest and conversion. That is, liminal conditions are incomplete, unstable and may be corrupted and in fact, overturned. As presider, the enthroned figure is placed in a position of furthest alienation from salvation. His tonsured victims set to boil in the cauldron occupy a distinctly central position, thus creating a visual message that reserves the harshest warning for colonizers of the New World. Colonizers

⁷⁵ The painting's artist and patron remain unknown. Prior to the museum, the painting's last known location was in a Portuguese religious community before the dissolution of religious orders in 1834.

may be called to conquer and evangelize, but they are warned not to succumb to the temptations and deceptions offered in foreign lands. These temptations are exemplified by the cannibal who holds the fate of the figures populating the Inferno. They have joined the savage ranks of the “duplicitous” Tupi, the leader of whom rules over them, while wearing the very sign of his untrustworthy nature by way of his *deceptively*-colored feathered garments, mocking European failure to see the threat placed right before their eyes.

In 1553, Bishop Pero Fernandes Sardinha, writing to the papal court in Rome from Bahia, Brazil, outlined this danger by explaining to the Superior that he had not been sent to Brazil “to make Christians pagan, but to accustom the pagans to the Christians.” To explain this process, Sardinha uses a metaphor that suggests a “re-clothing” [clad] that promises to change both outer and inner natures/species but only if he “plucked out the old man from the roots, with his deeds, and *clad* him with the new man created according to God.”⁷⁶ As feared, Sardinha claims to have witnessed the transition of Christians: they have become savage. The irony then is that Sardinha was captured by the Caeté tribe after a shipwreck in 1556. He was indeed incorporated.⁷⁷

Transgression, Redemption, and the Edge of Incorporation

⁷⁶ Rogério Budasz, “Of Cannibals and The Recycling of Otherness,” *Music & Letters* 87, no. 1 (January 2006): 10. My italics.

⁷⁷ James D. Henderson, Helen Delpar, and Maurice Brungardt, eds., *A Reference Guide to Latin American History* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 93.

In returning to the image of the “Tupi” magus, we see a figure already identified as occupying a liminal or transitional space, marked through his age and the gift he bears. Beyond exotic costume, and more than the other two kings, his foreignness is marked by skin color as well, and understood as not only the personification of a New World, but as significantly culturally different and potentially transgressive. Removed from his native landscape and placed within a new land, he is also a figure in transition between cultures, also understood through the hybrid nature of his clothing, which is painted as a Europeanized vision of the exotic.⁷⁸ His benign presence—unmarked by outward signs of evil as noted for some depictions of the Black King, and seemingly informed by the redemptive qualities reported by Vaz de Caminha—might have been initially unencumbered by the negative connotations of reports by Europeans of New World savagery and especially that of cannibalism.⁷⁹ However, once this benignity is complicated with the suggestion of anthropophagy as reported from the New World, how were viewers to respond? Within this scene of incarnation, the Tupinambá can stand as the most literal model of those who dine on this world’s flesh, who hunger for mere food versus the spiritual hunger for God. For Christians, as early as Augustine, difference in *how* we eat is often a defining characteristic of those who belong and those who are excluded, and for example, was in essence a prime Protestant complaint regarding the literal presence of Christ in the Eucharist.⁸⁰ Using this delineation then, the Tupinambá

⁷⁸ Honour, *New Golden Land*, 53.

⁷⁹ Vaz de Caminha’s letter from Cabral’s journey marking the first contact with Brazil makes no mention of cannibalism among the Tupinambá. As mentioned, the first known visual depiction is from c.1505; chronicles and letters reporting on cannibalism in the New World reach Europe as early as 1494 from Columbus’ voyages to the Caribbean.

⁸⁰ Kilgour, *Communion*, 80-81.

as Balthasar would represent exclusion—from the corporate body of the Church (a metaphor for the body of Christ) as well as the spiritual body with its promise of redemption as realized in the Eucharist.

On the other hand, in keeping with the view (at least at the time) of the Brazilian as a *tabula rasa*, it is possible that while these “accidents” mark Balthasar for difference and exclusion, they are accompanied by the “substance” of a hope for incorporation. Balthasar is on the threshold of transformation; an energetic force as represented by his physical body striding forth—Turner’s “geographical movement” or “passage in space”—toward the physical, but more importantly, the spiritual body of Christ. Christ is manifested in the infant who sits with Mary, where, to remind us of his sacrifice, he is positioned above a stone tablet with the eldest king’s cap recalling the corporal on the altar. Balthasar’s incorporation—cultural, physical, and spiritual—would mean a return to oneness by way of Christian conversion. His full incorporation would rely on the renunciation of the “improper” eating⁸¹—the eating of man that perpetuates disunity (and is exemplified by the long-standing motif of the ass pictured in the background who eats blindly at this solemn moment), exchanged for communion—the eating of God—which returns the many to the one.

Sacrifice and Questions of Redemption

A final comparison offers a very different image from that of *The Inferno* and demonstrates yet again, the competing images and characterizations of New World peoples. The picture shows a scene of the Crucifixion and was also painted by Vasco

⁸¹ Ibid., 48.

Fernandes for the Viseu Cathedral, but for a different altar and at a much later date. In the *Calvário* (c.1530-1534) three crosses are placed close to the viewer among a confused jumble of figures and implements in a shallow space. In the left foreground, Mary swoons into the arms of Mary Magdalen (fig. 1-22).⁸² Following traditional iconography, Christ appears on the center cross and to his left is the recalcitrant thief, a criminal, condemned to death and who joined the soldiers in their taunts of Jesus.⁸³ To Christ's right then is the figure typically identified as the "Good Thief," who, upon realizing his guilt in the presence of the Son of God, asks Christ to remember him in heaven—a request for incorporation, as it were (fig. 1-23). In reply, Christ answers: "I assure you, this day you will be with me in paradise."⁸⁴ The Good Thief embodies the hope of forgiveness and salvation through belief and his plea echoes a familiar theme: a hunger for the unity offered by the sacrifice of Christ. Set between the unrepentant and the salvific, the Good Thief is also a transitional figure.

Miguel Faria and Vítor Serrão have suggested that Fernandes has portrayed the Good Thief as a "Brazilian Indian."⁸⁵ Initially placed within the same cathedral as Fernandes' *Adoration*—although not a part of that altarpiece—Faria asserts the thief is presented as a "converso," and would provide a type of attending figure to the earlier Tupinambá of the Adoration scene.⁸⁶ As this figure only wears a loincloth, and the picture contains no other iconographic notations, the viewer is left to make this

⁸² The painting is now housed in the Museu Grão Vasco, Viseu.

⁸³ Luke 23: 39

⁸⁴ Luke 23:42-43

⁸⁵ Miguel Faria, "Brasil," 72; Vítor Serrão, *História das Artes Plásticas*, (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1991), 50. Rodrigues offers this interpretation as well; see Rodrigues *Grão Vasco* 1992, 168-171.

⁸⁶ Faria, "Brasil," 72.

determination through “*fisionomia*” or facial and body features in comparison to the other figures, a determination about which at least one author has expressed doubts.⁸⁷ The figure does seem to indicate an ethnicity other than that of Jesus or the thief at right. With a heavier, stockier build, darker skin, and a beardless face—attributes Vaz de Caminha and other New World chroniclers remarked on.⁸⁸ Yet, like the Tupi magus, whose obvious difference set him apart from the other two magi, and the enthroned and masked figure of the Inferno, the Thief’s identity is not convincingly readable. His identity, his origins, and his ultimate fate are indeterminate.

Rather than functioning simply as an attendant figure placed at an endpoint from the Adoration Tupinambá, this figure in the *Calvário* suggests instead a range of responses to Europe’s encounter with the New World. Much like the Viseu magus, the Good Thief appears endowed with the redemptive possibilities believed to be afforded to mankind through Christ’s sacrifice. At the last, he, and the New World, are promised the hope of salvation and a return to unity. However, this incorporation is incomplete and comes at great price. The Tupinambá’s body yet remains and even without clothing or adornment of feathers, he is separated by his skin color and marked by this as sinful. In the flux of memory and forgetting required for this incorporation we sense instead that the “Tupi” remains a surrogate; this body stands as the visualization of why this can never be completed, when to do so would erase all distinction and all legitimation for incorporation.

⁸⁷ Maria José Palla, *Traje e Pintura: Grão Vasco e o Retábulo da Sé de Viseu* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1999), 56-57.

⁸⁸ Faria feels that the resemblance to a Brazilian is so close that he suggests that the artist must have drawn the figure from life or, less likely (according to him), from a print or drawing. See, “Brasil,” page 75.

Conclusion

The Antwerp artist, Jan van Kessel (1612-1679) painted a series of four panels on copper purported to represent “America,” “Europe,” “Africa,” and “Asia” (1665-1666) (fig. 1-24 – 1-27). Each consists of multiple images with the largest placed at center with sixteen separate, framed vignettes surrounding the perimeter. The framing and arrangement of the panels mimic European map-making compositions from the seventeenth century in which a map is placed centrally and then the borders or edges are populated with supposedly representative figures and objects from the region depicted on the map.⁸⁹ For the panel titled *Americque*, van Kessel substitutes a *Wunderkammer* (a cabinet of curiosities) as *tableau vivant* that reads strangely as a triumph of Europe’s world expansion as “celebrated” by the very people displaced by the expansions (fig. 1-28).

Only figures meant to represent the New World appear here and they readily—eagerly even—participate by willingly entering the Old World space of the cabinet of curiosities, assembling themselves into a collection of human *exotica*. They naturally settle alongside the assembled collections of variously live and dead insects, fish, and exotic birds and mammals organized along the room’s walls or scattered about the floor in a jumble with coins, vases or a quiver. Yet, the proliferation and disorder of objects

⁸⁹ Benjamin Schmidt, “Geography Unbound: Boundaries and the Exotic World in the Early Enlightenment,” in *Boundaries and Their Meanings in the History of the Netherlands*, ed. Benjamin Kaplan, Marybeth Carlson, and Laura Cruz (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 54-59.; Nadia Baadj argues that the van Kessel’s choice of format especially calls attention to the structure of the elaborate display cabinets—*Kunstkasten*—often made from ebony and including a series of painted panels much like those painted by van Kessel. Van Kessel indeed produced paintings for these types of cabinets which were especially popular in Antwerp. See Nadia Baadj, “A World of Materials in a Cabinet without Drawers Reframing Jan van Kessel’s The Four Parts of the World,” *Nederlands Kunsthistorische Jaarboek* 62 (2012): 215ff.

and *stuff* simply overwhelm the “civilizing” efforts of the rigid “classical” architecture of the room. Presiding over the room are six Arcimboldo-type face masks that adorn corbels where even more objects rest. The masks are constructed from unexpected natural materials like gourds and shells that make them appear somewhat lifelike but grotesquely unrecognizable, echoing the inability of this room to cohere into a space of early modern knowledge-making that hopes to tame the abundance of the New World.

A group of four figures—a man and woman and two toddler boys—cluster at the left corner of the picture on the floor of the large, cluttered room before them. All four are bare-breasted and one little boy is nude. Each child appears to be meant to correspond to one adult by skin color and hair texture. The man and little boy nearest the picture plane have curly, black hair and blackish-brown skin and the man wears a feathered crown, necklace, and belt made of black and bright red feathers. He grasps a large, gold plate while the little boy prepares to strike a golden disk of a Javanese gamelan instrument laid out on the floor.⁹⁰ The lighter-skinned woman and boy have straight black hair. The little boy sports a bright-red skirt and holds a bow in one hand and a bird perches on his other hand.

In the background at the edges of the room are five large niches open to the outdoors and each holds a life-sized statue. While painted in grisaille to suggest stone, the figures’ faces and gestures are eerily lively. Along the back wall, one nude man and one wearing a feathered skirt carry weapons; both men wear feathered headdresses. On the other side of a doorway, stands a statue of a nude woman with long, loose and flowing

⁹⁰ Ibid., 54.

hair. She carries a basket on her back from which a human foot protrudes. In her left (her *sinister*) hand she nonchalantly wields a human forearm and hand.⁹¹

Most notable, however, are the three figures coming through the doorway into the room. Here, another little boy accompanies a young woman dressed in a cropped, golden-colored shirt and matching short pants and wearing bangles on her arms and ankles. Their reddish-brown skin adds yet another hue to the figures in the room. The pair skip across the threshold with one knee and one arm raised, oblivious to the strikingly odd character of the room. The young woman could just as well stand in for the magus who rushes into Adoration scenes, and in fact, she resembles the stance taken by the Viseu panel's middle magus, Balthasar (fig. 1-1). Both enter the room as if dancing to the flute music played by a brown-skinned man behind them with a standing-feather headdress and long feathered skirt. Both are pictured as eager to advance toward their own "new" world. Yet, while the Tupi king from the Viseu Adoration stands poised on the threshold of a Christian space under the guise of spiritual incorporation, these figures are stripped of this sanctified cover and advance toward the viewer simply to be taken in; to be consumed, together with all they have to offer before them.

This lively entry is striking but disturbing once we begin to put together the great variety of objects, artwork, masks, live and dead animals, fish, paintings, exotic costumes, beads, shells, weapons, a standard, armor, displays of beetles and butterflies,

⁹¹ The nude, "Brazilian" woman carrying human limbs, and especially a human foot, was an image reproduced widely in prints and paintings. The original inspiration came from Albert Eckhout's painting of a Tapuya woman, 1646-53. Eckhout was an agent artist for the Dutch governor in Brazil, Johan Maurits, and lived in Brazil for seven years. See, Virginie Spenlé, "'Savagery' and 'Civilization': Dutch Brazil in the Kunst- and Wunderkammer," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 3, no. 2 (2011), 2.

coins... The array of objects is only loosely organized and as at least one scholar has pointed out, rather than a coherent display of possible peoples, flora, fauna, and materials representative of America, the room contains objects only available in other lands. Despite the gold titling that labels the scene as *Paraíba en Brasil*—specifically calling attention to a region in Brazil (Paraíba)—what in fact is presented is a wildly confusing gathering of peoples and stuffs from *all* corners of the world.⁹² While the identity of animals and materials is relatively clear, I am less certain about the ability to definitively connect each of the figures to a specific region, especially the figures wearing feathered crowns.⁹³ It is understandable that Van Kessel’s use of detail and facility with naturalistic features makes us believe we are seeing a type of eye-witness account of the assembled people as representative of their foreign regions. Yet “details” such as severed limbs in baskets and the inclusion of distinctly non-American items within this so-called “American” scene suggests that van Kessel’s accuracy should not be taken as authoritative.

Given the variety of costume and ornament, it is evident we are meant to see these folks not so much as sure representatives of particular tribes or cultures as we are to understand the gathering as *one* thing: as part of the gathering of “curiosities” that reflect on the ability of Europeans (here, the Dutch) to capture the bounty of exotic lands. Yet here, the message is that capturing and extracting is quite unnecessary, as the bounty freely arrives and gathers itself inside the *cabinet* for European consumption. Not only

⁹² Schmidt, “Geography Unbound,” 54-59. Schmidt identifies and sources a number of the objects, costumes, and peoples pictured in van Kessel’s painting.

⁹³ Schmidt suggests that the man wearing red feathers is “African,” the woman next to him an “American Indian,” the boy holding a bow is “Indian-looking,” and the woman in the doorway “wears East Indian costume,” “Geography Unbound,” 54.

that, the sense of excess and overabundance is made clear: rather than one curious item, there are groups of items such as fish, beads, coins, masks, and people and so much in fact that any move made towards arranging or counting or categorizing in order to preserve this abundance either awaits doing or has been abandoned.

To call attention to this excess, two paintings at the far right assure the viewer that, moreover, the abundance of these foreign lands is prolific enough that the natives themselves practice habits that aim to contain the excesses. This is the theme that joins them to each other and to the room since each represent practices from vastly different regions (America and India). In the center painting, a prominent man who wears a feather skirt and headdress butchers a headless human while a chaotic throng of nude figures cavort amongst haphazardly-arranged body parts dangling from the ceiling. Dark-skinned children in the foreground play with a severed head (fig. 1-29). In the bottom picture, a pale woman sprints from a crowd of robed and turbaned men towards a fire tended by a man at right (fig. 1-30). The scene is identified as a Hindu *suttee*, and so the woman—made surplus through her spouse’s death—thus sprints to her own death and consumption through the funeral pyre of her husband. The two paintings share the qualities of abundance, chaotic composition, and a consumption of excess at the bodily level; a consumption willingly performed by the “exotic” peoples shown in the paintings. The two paintings also share qualities with the room where again, there is an abundance bordering on excess to the point of disorder.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ A final observation regarding this series: all four panels include framed artwork and or luxury items in their main scenes. It is notable that in the panels for Asia and Europe, the framed artwork is presented to other figures in the scene, as if for their inspection or study; as if for edification. However, in the Africa luxury objects are left on the floor or are handled haphazardly by the

Returning to van Kessel's main scene, as noted earlier, the young woman and small boy who skip into the room recall in some ways the Viseu Adoration where a similarly exuberant foreign figure appears. However, we are left with starkly different interpretations. While the Tupi king appears to place himself before the divine king with the anticipation of conversion and redemption through the incorporation of Christ's body, the two figures that van Kessel presents in the doorway enter willingly into their own capture without any indication of an imposed higher calling of the soul—no urgency, no conversion assumed, no salvation offered. Instead, we could say the journey of the New World magus has been forgotten within this nod to the New World and only incorporation and consumption remains.

Finally, I want to end with an examination of the very curious vessel from the Viseu Adoration. The "Tupi" magus carries a silver-lined coconut shell, the hybrid nature of which reflects the magus' liminal position. The rough exterior maintains its organic connections while the bright, silver interior, one assumes, would smooth over that roughness. An object like this would fit readily within van Kessel's unnerving cabinet of curiosities, and, in fact, these objects were produced in the early modern period by European craftspeople. The seventeenth-century Dutch-made "Humboldt Cup" is one such object (fig. 1-31).⁹⁵ The Viseu magus holds what is likely the first picture in Europe of one of these ornaments. This first version is carried by a New World figure as a *gift*. In

figures and in the America panel, paintings are art left unattended. Whereas in the first two the viewer senses that the people are observing and engaging with the works on a "sophisticated" level; whereas with the other two, the *viewer* observes / engages with the art work and the people alongside the works are viewed in a similar way: as objects.

⁹⁵ The Humboldt Cup is from a private collection and is documented and brilliantly analyzed in Spenlé, "'Savagery' and 'Civilization,'" 1-7.

a telling comparison, the Humboldt Cup carries the images of New World figures carved onto its exterior in a way that appears to *gift* the materials and the people of the New World to those who claimed them as their own. The gift then would come through an “exchange” of materials taken from the New World, for that of the “civilizing” force imposed from Europe. Art historian, Virginie Spénle, calls attention to the three scenes on the cup and their reliance on stereotyped portrayals of New World peoples.⁹⁶ The much-repeated image of the cannibal woman carrying a leg inside a basket and an arm in her hand appears beneath a cloudy sky and a coconut palm (fig. 1-32). Her partner is nude except for his feathered crown and he carries spears and a weapon like that of the “Tupi” magus and as seen on the stone statue of van Kessel’s *Americque*.

The two other scenes on the cup show “civilization” unfolding through the intervention of European presence and Christianization. One scene shows the nude cannibal figures transformed to a partially-clothed couple, sans feathers, with a basket of fruit replacing the previous basket of human remains (fig. 1-33). The last scene shows the personification of Europe—a woman dressed in Renaissance clothing—handing a fish to a man wearing a loincloth and a feathered crown (fig. 1-34).

A century and a half removed from the “Tupi” magus, this object suggests the “constant metamorphoses,” the indeterminacy, of the New World figure according to European notions.⁹⁷ Although guided by various religious conversion schemes, one cannot sidestep the sense that commodification becomes one way that westerners make sense of these competing images of the New World. The figures on the Humboldt Cup

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Serge Gruzinski, *The Mestizo Mind: The Intellectual Dynamics of Colonization and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2002), 9-10.

are unified with the materials from their lands that Europeans desired, and instead of the New World figure offering a gift in adoration, the New World figure in some ways becomes the gift for the colonizer.

Kilgour reminds us that like sublimation, cannibalism is also “a means of subsuming what is outside the self...[a] colonial discourse that makes the strange familiar.”⁹⁸ In this case, Balthasar is a reminder of the web of intricate meanings between New World cannibalism and cannibalism *of* the New World and is located within a scene designed to invoke the heavenly world that would ultimately consume all. To consider the placement of a Tupinambá king within a depiction of the Adoration, we are confronted with a complex interpretation of what at first appears to be a tranquil scene of the Epiphany. Coming literally on the heels of the first contacts with the New World, it appears unencumbered by the soon-to-be ubiquitous connotations linking Tupinambá culture with cannibalism. While certainly representative of a new continent taking its place among the personifications of the old continents, the figure at first seems to carry none of the ambiguous, often ambivalent undertones associated with some of the depictions of the African magus, but yet must be seen as partly informed by the compassionate characterizations of chroniclers as well as the malevolent. In this case, savagery and cannibalism, suggested by Europeans early on as defining features of Tupinambá culture are not without consequence in interpreting this work.

In returning to the image of the Tupi King, here is a figure that is decidedly ambiguous yet fitting for the typical work of the magi. His foreignness is marked by skin

⁹⁸ Kilgour, *Communion*, 17.

color, and understood not only as the personification of a New World, but as significantly culturally different and potentially transgressive. His symbols of kingship—a war club for a scepter, his coconut shell a gilded remnant of nature, and a crown made of feathers—suggest an exchange between cultures and an attempt at incorporation, but ultimately they reinforce his ties to the savage. Compared unfavorably with the ass, we are not convinced of his conversion. Within this scene of incarnation, the Tupinambá stands as the most literal model of those who dine on this world's flesh, who hunger for mere food as opposed to the spiritual hunger for God. The Tupi king represents alienation. The answer to this alienation, as the Good Thief demonstrates, becomes his sacrifice.

If we take the exchange, travel and conquest in the early modern era as indicators of a nascent “globalization,” then the imagined Adoration scene itself takes an early role in the conceptualization of this phenomenon. If we take consumption, colonization, and an insidious yet resistant incorporation as the traces of this globalization, then this particular Adoration, with its depiction of a Tupinambá man as representative of the New World, embodies the complexities of early modern globalization.

Chapter 2

Currency and Incarnation: Sixteenth-Century Portuguese Illuminated Coins and Notions of Kingship, Conquest, and National Identity

Introduction

This chapter considers three royal manuscript illuminations produced by the workshop of Flemish-trained court painter, António de Holanda, in sixteenth-century Portugal that share similar formats and subject matter. All three manuscripts were commissioned and produced during the reigns of Dom Manuel I, King of Portugal (r. 1495-1521), and his son, D. João III (r. 1521-1557). Two of the three illuminations include the Adoration of the Magi, and significantly, all three display Portuguese gold and silver currency in the margins and borders of the pages (figs 2-1; 2-2; 2-3). My aim is to demonstrate the way in which the play of border/image/border can hold generative and transcendent potential beyond the work itself. In the case of the two Adoration images, we can see another case where the work of the magi allows for the migration of meaning and extends to the interpretation of other works. This potential provides the basis for thinking about the construction of visual narratives as a part of the construction of sovereignty, power, and political boundaries in sixteenth-century Portugal, and the role played by religious faith in the state's projection of these discourses. These illuminations show how paradoxes of illusion are made to align with paradoxes of the sacred that simultaneously reveal and frustrate our human capability to grasp abstract concepts of political rule and statecraft. This set of paradoxes mirrors the representation of the sacred concepts of incarnation and the history of salvation, all of which appear to defy daily experience.

The Interplay of Representations

As introduction and a way to accustom our vision to the complex interplay of these representation/s—in symbolic and material forms—I begin with the more familiar full-page illumination of *Mary of Burgundy Reading Her Devotions* (folio 14v), from the Book of Hours of Mary of Burgundy (c. 1477) (fig. 2-4). The page shows a key example of a type of manuscript illumination also found in the three Holanda manuscripts in which a distinct, decorated border surrounds a central image. The artist for this page is known only by the cumbersome moniker: the “Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy,” who worked primarily in Ghent and Bruges.⁹⁹ The similarities between the work of this master and that of the Holanda workshop bear witness to the rich artistic exchange flourishing between the Iberian Peninsula and the Burgundian Netherlands in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The illumination, *Mary of Burgundy*,¹⁰⁰ shows how these types of two-part (frame and center), illusionistic images render permeable the boundaries between sacred and secular time, space, and presence; those boundaries assumed between divine and human; immaterial and material; transcendent and corporal.

⁹⁹ The style of these illusionistic Flemish manuscripts from the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-centuries has typically been called the “Ghent-Bruges Style.” Several possible identities have been suggested for this unknown artist. The artist responsible for fol. 14v included this and three other illuminated pages for the manuscript.

¹⁰⁰ Scholars disagree over the identity of this woman and another woman in the center scene. The latest scholarship tends to include a question mark in the title to denote this indecision. That said, the evidence pointing to the woman being Mary of Burgundy, daughter of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York and later, wife of Maximilian I of Habsburg, is compelling. For my purposes here in examining the visual dynamics of the page, and perhaps in agreement with James H. Marrow’s call to enrich the investigations of illuminated manuscripts by moving beyond the “preliminary levels of engagement,” those of stylistic, patronage, and artistic genealogies, the identity of the seated woman matters little. (Marrow, “Scholarship on Flemish Manuscript Illumination: Remarks on Past, Present, and Future” in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: JP Getty Museum, 2006), 163-164; also, *Pictorial Invention in Netherlandish Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages: The Play of Illusion and Meaning*, Leuven: Peeters Leuven, 2005), 1-5.

James Marrow's work on Flemish manuscripts has aimed to explore these very possibilities within devotional texts. He writes:

[w]hereas most genres of historical works and some didactic ones are rooted in worldly realities and follow linear patterns of narrative, works of sacred subject matter, such as books of hours and liturgical books, were intended to guide viewers beyond the here-and-now, to evoke multiple and alternative levels of truth, and to effect profound transformations of understanding. As a consequence, many of the novel juxtapositions of subject matter and scale, of viewpoint, and of different kinds of illusionism that we encounter in manuscripts of religious subject matter produced in Flanders during the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries may have been intended to defy customary expectations, contravene traditional pictorial conventions, and pose contradictions—all in the interest of guiding the users of these books to the leaps of thought and imagination deemed necessary to achieve a deepened appreciation of the character of the sacred and the mysteries of the faith.¹⁰¹

For such a small image—8.5 in x 6.3 in.—the illumination of a woman at prayer before an open window is a captivating one. An opulently-clothed woman, complete with tall, veiled hennin situated above a slender face with high forehead, long slim nose, downcast eyes, and small, bow-shaped mouth, sits by the round-topped window and holds her own diminutive book of hours in her hands (fig. 2-5).¹⁰² A slight, white dog

¹⁰¹ Marrow, "Scholarship on Flemish Manuscript Illumination," 166.

¹⁰² In 1948, Otto Pächt called attention to the use of long, slender, vertical forms in late sixteenth-century Flemish painting, which he then tied to the overarching design style of "Gothic linear elegance" and more specifically to "the style of the long line," which he saw as characterizing the "formalized life of Burgundian society." He saw the [Vienna] Master of Mary of Burgundy, as contributing movement and "subtle atmospheric treatment of scenes" that served to soften the "hard linearism" of this style. See *The Master of Mary of Burgundy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), 22-23. Pächt's study was the first of its kind to closely examine the work of this artist, situating the illuminations within stylistic and art historical genealogies. While useful, this is the type of approach that later scholars like Marrow see as an example of a "preliminary" examination that he feels (now over a half century later), should only begin the study of these manuscripts but not remain the central theme.

rests on the crackly folds of dense fawn fabric in her lap.¹⁰³ The sheer, filmy veil from her headdress reaches down her back and then winds around to the windowsill, where it lies under the green velvet cloth spread beneath the opened, hand-sized book. The two wood-framed wings of the arched, masonry window opening hold rows of rondel glass panes and are opened to each side (fig. 2-4). A slender, ridged, clear glass vase holds a cluster of indigo irises that stand tall above their sword-like, green leaves. Two red carnations lay on the sill next to a fine gold chain with one loop slipping down over the edge, and another attached to a magnificent pearl and gem pendant on the sill. The space before and surrounding the window effectively creates a border around the scene pictured at center.

Through the opened window we have a floor-to-ceiling view of the choir of a Gothic-style church flooded with light. The view is out of kilter with the space of the border, with the sill appearing abruptly elevated above the floor of the church. At center, beneath the soaring vault, the Virgin Mary is seated before the altar with the infant Christ on her lap. The three-part walls of the church support tall arched windows that filter brilliant sunlight into the space with several rays falling on Mary and her child (fig. 2-6). The comparatively outsized Mary, crowned in gold and dressed in dark blue, presents the nude child she holds on a white cloth on her lap, to a group of kneeling women on the left. The woman closest to Mary wears a brocade cloth-of-gold, velvet-trimmed dress, and a towering veiled hennin, distinguishing her from the more modestly-dressed women

¹⁰³ For detailed study of this fabric and fashions in the court of Mary of Burgundy's father, see Margaret Scott's article "The Role of Dress in the Image of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy," in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, eds. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006), 42-56; especially 46-47.

accompanying her, yet noticeably echoing the attitude, attire, and facial features of the woman at the window in the foreground.

A distinct space that no other figures aside from angels, touch, is designated for the mother and child. These two are seated on a deep-yellow, flower-patterned carpet while four diminutive, winged and child-like angels, wearing white liturgical garments, tend four slender, golden candlesticks at each corner. Behind this space, a similar fabric demarcation in green appears around the base of the white, cloth-covered altar which supports a golden, arch-topped, winged altarpiece. The grand multi-paneled altarpiece dwarfs two male figures standing in the distance to the left. The altar space is further marked at its corners and sides by six tall and slender golden posts capped with sculpted angels, whose wings stretch nearly vertical, thus echoing, in man-made material, the full-fledged angels accompanying Mary. The six posts are connected by rods used to support altar curtains.¹⁰⁴

To the right and with his back toward us, a kneeling man in a fur-trimmed red cape looks toward Mary while swinging a silver censor, here captured mid-air, at the highpoint of its trajectory. We can imagine it falling, reaching the end of its chain with a snap at the very next moment. The choir walls are divided by elongated, smooth columns that march in a regular and predictable rhythm that directs attention to the altar. With curtains open, censor censing, and the faithful kneeling, the scene mirrors the moment of the elevation of the Host at the altar during Mass (fig. 2-7). A similar performance and

¹⁰⁴ The posts are often called “riddle” or “riddel” posts (English), derived from the French rideau, a type of curtain. Here the image suggests that the curtains are fully open and behind the altarpiece; an appropriate position for the consecration of the host.

furnishings are seen in an altarpiece panel of *The Mass of St. Giles* (Flemish, ca. 1500) (fig. 2-8).

The lighter, brighter tone of the church scene contrasts with the darker, more saturated tone in the foreground and surrounding border, with the contrast marking differences in time, space, and presence (fig. 2-4). The meticulous detail of the foreground is less evident in the central scene where diffused light, atmospheric perspective, and summary outlines suggest physical distance from the praying woman and the viewer.

The woman at prayer appears on the verso of folio 14 of Ms. 1857, held in Vienna's Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.¹⁰⁵ This page along with folio 43v—an equally complex image picturing *Christ Nailed to the Cross*—are the most well-known manuscript examples of the “window view” framed by naturalistic borders produced in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century northern Europe (fig. 2-9). On both pages, the trope of a window opening in a wall creates a frame or border around the main scene at center which appears to take place out-of-sync and –location from the reality of the foreground.

¹⁰⁵ The illuminations are produced using tempera and gold on parchment. Thomas Kren describes the trajectory of relevant scholarship starting with Otto Pächt's work. He notes that Bodo Brinkmann's reassessment of Pächt's attribution and chronology resulted in the more precise appellation of *Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy*, reflecting the Vienna manuscript attribution as containing his key work. See Kren, “Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy,” in Kren and Scot McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: JP Getty Museum, 2003): 126-128 and 137-141; and Brinkmann, “Der maler und sein Kreis,” in *Das Berliner Stundenbuch der Maria von Burgund und Kaiser Maximilians: Handschrift 78B 12 im Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, exh. cat. by Eberhard König with Fedja Anzelewsky, Bodo Brinkmann and Frauke Steenbock (Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, 1998), 39-110. The other key works attributed to the Vienna Master are the miniatures painted for the Hours of Engelbert of Nassau (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Mss. Douce 219-220).

These two illuminated pages come out of, but differ significantly from, the pictorial tradition of manuscripts where the border surrounding the central, main scene or text often serves simply as a way to ornament and/or contain an image. For example, a miniature painted by Willem Vrelant (1460s) shows that while the enframed scene of the Virgin and Child with St. Anne echoes the shape of a round-topped window, there is no attempt to “dissolve” the planimetric restrictions of the parchment page: the image suggests recession into the background but differs from the flattened, stylistic quality of the decorative border (fig. 2-10).¹⁰⁶ The stark difference in composition and effect can be seen in the illuminated facing pages of each of the Burgundian examples (fol. 15r and fol. 44r), where full-formed birds and other fauna simply become part of the decorative mesh of flowers and vines that cast no shadows on the page (fig. 2-11).¹⁰⁷ Conversely, the Burgundy folios 14v and 43v immerse the viewer in the pictured surroundings; indeed, in 43v, two figures look out directly to the viewer, effectively capturing them within the pictorial space (fig. 2-12).¹⁰⁸ The artist explicitly portrays true, physical windows that are utilized not only as an effective visual metaphor for entrance into contemplation, but also as a stunning play between the dimensional restrictions and possibilities of the flat page that enchants the viewer with illusionistic details.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Ms. Ludwig IX 8, fol. 50r. (Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum). In this type of illuminated page, it is usually the case that the margins, text, and main image were painted by different artists.

¹⁰⁷ These show their relationship to earlier illuminated manuscripts that employ “drolleries” or “marginalia”—flora, fauna, imaginative creatures, and often humorous or ribald scenes—in the margins of pages. These may sometimes relate but sometimes not, to the text and images they surround.

¹⁰⁸ This image is discussed later in the chapter.

¹⁰⁹ For a similar interpretation, see Alixe Bovey, “Renaissance Bibliomania,” in *Viewing Renaissance Art*, eds. K.W. Woods, and C.M. Richardson, 93-129 (New Haven, Yale University Press), 112.

The play of spaces in and between foreground and background evokes the abstract concepts of time and presence. The artist constructed the image/s in a way that conjures the ephemeral qualities of these states. As noted, scholars disagree over the identities of the kneeling woman in the choir and the woman at the window (fig. 2-4). However, whether the woman at prayer imagines herself, or another woman, before the Virgin and Child, weighs little on how we perceive the juxtaposition of these spaces. Our perspective tells us that the window and the choir are not contiguous physical spaces and thus are not synchronized in time. To be so would inexplicably place the space of the room and its window in the choir of the church.¹¹⁰ It follows then that one of the women must exist in another realm: that of the imagination spurred by contemplation of the Hours of the Virgin contained in the praying woman's book of hours.¹¹¹

It makes sense that the church space is the conjured image, where a vision¹¹² of Mary, as the *sedes sapientiae*, the Throne of Wisdom—Mary as the vessel for the

¹¹⁰ Hans Belting notes that the room in which the praying woman sits appears strikingly similar to a type of enclosed private chamber with windows overlooking a family chapel in Bruges. The Dukes of Burgundy had one such chapel at their Charterhouse, but is now known only through description. The size of the choir in the illumination suggests a fairly elaborate and large space. Notwithstanding the similar location-type, Belting concludes that the appearance of the “Mother of God” in the chapel, viewed across the threshold of the window is one generated through contemplation and although situated in the real world, Mary’s appearance becomes a “metaphor,” that is, a symbol or representation. See, Hans Belting and Christiane Kruse, *Die Erfindung des Gemäldes: das erste Jahrhundert der niederländischen Malerei* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 1994): 56-57.

¹¹¹ Bovey notes that despite the presence of this book and its page of text suggesting the “power of reading” in private contemplation, she concludes: “this image is arguably more concerned with the visual than the textual: the pictured Mary [of Burgundy] might be reading a text but her spiritual experience is articulated in visual terms,” “Renaissance Bibliomania,” 112.

¹¹² Craig Harbison notes that in late medieval Europe, the action of meditation and the concept of visions were not sharply distinguished. In fact, the notion of spiritual insight gained by the lay person through private contemplation was often “deemed more relevant than the kind of complex, scholastic presentation of church dogma.” See, “Visions and Meditations in Early Flemish Painting,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 15, no. 2 (1985): 87-88.

Incarnation of Christ—but also the Madonna of Humility as she is seated on the ground, has appeared before the altar, a vision prompted by the praying woman’s meditation on the Hours of the Virgin.¹¹³ The altar, the infant’s body, and the small book of hours are each associated with fabric barriers that separate them from direct human touch and thus are rendered precious and in need of protection and devotion. The mother corresponds visually and conceptually to the altar behind her, where the incarnated Christ’s body will be presented to the faithful at Mass, just as Mary presents him now to the devoted followers. As we will see, similar incarnational references appear in many scenes of the Adoration of the Magi and that is the case in António de Holanda’s two Portuguese illuminations, where keen attention is paid to this sacred concept through the incorporation of coins as part of the images.

In the Burgundian manuscript, the nod to this double incarnation within the sacred space of the light-filled church—God made man in the body of Christ and Christ’s body present in the Eucharist—appears on the window sill (which acts as a threshold between the two spaces): two red carnations lay next to the vase holding irises, with the two flower types and the glass vase all being time-honored symbolic references to Christ and the Incarnation, and the sorrow and virginity of Mary.¹¹⁴ A small puddle of water gathers on the sill between the vase and the red carnations with a thin trail just beginning to drip over the edge (fig. 2-5). Perhaps this water set between “incarnation” and “sorrow,”

¹¹³ Ilene H. Forsyth, *Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

¹¹⁴ Iris or “sword lily” is taken as a symbol for the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin.

references the blood of Christ spilled for mankind.¹¹⁵ As the table-like sill in the foreground is directly in line with Christ, Mary, and the altar table, it serves to tie together sacred and worldly, prompting the viewer to recall the force of Christ's sacrifice that moves in daily life, where material objects might spur transcendent meanings. Repeatedly, the associations among material elements, worldly objects, and divine attributes are reminders of the ability of representations to symbolize concepts and presence beyond their physical forms, which for the devotee, offers a lesson in the necessity and rewards of faith and belief.

Further correspondences between the spaces of each realm keep the viewer attuned to the potential of prayer and devotion, modeled by the praying and adoring figures, to make the divine "present." At the same time, a number of anachronisms keep sacred time entangled with that of the present-day, physical world.¹¹⁶ These paradoxical juxtapositions gather the viewer into a realm that transcends the limitations of worldly reality. Fashionable dress, a local cathedral and familiar architecture, modern-day objects, and even the quality of light, place a sacred scene within contemporary

¹¹⁵ John 19:34 on the lancing of Christ's side: "But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water" (Douay-Rheims). The artist appears to have intentionally juxtaposed the three items that fall over the edge, each visually rhyming with the others: the end of the sheer veil, the loop of golden chain of the necklace, and the similarly-formed water droplet. Perhaps these are symbolic references to the Passion of Christ, with the veil signifying the sudarium (Veil of Veronica) joining the spilled water/blood of Christ. Yet the chain is difficult to incorporate into this puzzle. If meant as symbol, it might aim to denote the binding of Christ. If so, together these would all be elements of the Arma Christi.

¹¹⁶ Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood propose careful distinction between the words "anachronistic" and "anachronic," with the latter perceived as less positivistic. "'[A]nachronistic [is] a judgmental term that carries with it the historicist assumption that every event and every object has its proper location within objective and linear time.'" I agree with their point but for my purposes here, "anachronism" accurately describes the relationships between the assumed user or culture, and objects, events, or figures that typically would not exist together. See Alexander Nagel and Christopher S Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, 1st ed. (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 2010), 13.

experience. Naturally, the most momentous of these ruptures in chronology is the presence of the infant Christ before the altar on which his body is offered daily in the mystical sacrifice of the Eucharist. The stylish dress of the women and the sumptuous, gold-trimmed robe of Mary suggest potential and impossibility simultaneously.¹¹⁷ The vision of Mary adopts the present-day fabrics of the wealthy Flemish upper class while calling attention to the importance of the cloth trade in fifteenth-century Flanders. More mundane details such as textiles, architecture, and furnishings pertain to settings familiar to the patron of the manuscript and effectively enfold current time within the history of salvation, the pre-determined history theorized by theologians. Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood characterize the overarching result of these theorizations that try to make sense of the relationship between sacred and worldly time (a type of “time management”) as “a suprahistorical divine plan that suspend[s] earthly time.”¹¹⁸ In order to envision this ephemeral notion of sacred time, written, spoken, and visual attempts must rely on metaphor and the human imagination.

The construction and perspective of the page establish a progression of time that flows visually across the transitions of sacred and worldly spaces: from the choir into the space of the praying woman. Nevertheless, the long, thin lines of the choir walls and vault add a sense of verticality that tends to shorten the space between the woman at the window and the vision of Mary. The “stacked” perspective suggests a closeness and otherworldly synchronization between the two spaces, with the regular rhythm of vertical

¹¹⁷ For a discussion of early modern opinions on the use of contemporary fashion in visual arts, see: Alexander Nagel, “Fashion and the Now-Time of Renaissance Art,” in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 46 (2004): 32-52.

¹¹⁸ Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 10.

columns effectively pulling our concentration from one space to the next. The solid, rounded, and older Romanesque-style form of the altarpiece contrasts with the elongated, pointed, and later Gothic forms of the surrounding choir, and the newer yet, up-to-the-moment dress of the women. The differences among styles would be perceived as a contrast in time. When pictured simultaneously with the appearance of the Madonna and Child, these contrasts suggest a kind of continuum of time, throughout which the central beliefs of divine Incarnation and presence, faith, and devotion, manage to remain stable and relevant.

Further connections are made with the masonry frame of the window with its panels thrown open that mimics the shape of the round-topped altarpiece which then recalls the tall arches in the background, with all three forms capable of symbolizing “entrance” to other physical and spiritual realms. Each opening appears to *contain* and encompass the sacred—the space of the choir and the altar—with the window framing the elements together into one holy vision that would seem to exist across (or perhaps despite) time.

Obvious currents flow between the popular forms of larger, painted wood panels and the painted page of Netherlandish illuminated manuscripts.¹¹⁹ The typical panel painting is rectangular with a rounded top and intentionally evokes the elements of sacred spaces: triumphal arches and baldachins over altars; chapel niches for statues; and stained

¹¹⁹ This is a reciprocal influence. For the interdependence of illuminators and panel painters and for artists who produced both, see: Kren and Ainsworth, “Illuminators and Painters: Artistic Exchanges and Interrelationships,” in *Illuminating the Renaissance* (2003), 35-57; and Kren, “From Panel to Parchment and Back: Painters as Illuminators before 1470,” in *Illuminating the Renaissance*, 81-120; and Marrow, *Pictorial Invention in Netherlandish Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages: The Play of Illusion and Meaning*, Leuven: Peeters Leuven, 2005), 2-5; 14.

glass windows picturing saints. The arched panels and/or holy scenes contained within arched spaces become models for the construction of the page. By their associations, these shapes carry meaning and would be familiar tropes to viewers. Visual displays of the inter-connectedness of holy images, holy spaces, and pious actions across time assume that representations can gain authority from the relationships between oldest and newest, thus placing current time within the lineage of a divine origin.¹²⁰ The small-scale devotional book then allows the viewer to literally take these powerful images, and the visions they evoke, in hand.

The arched “window” view on the page manages to connect with the more publicly-available images of saints and biblical scenes that also frequently defined the shape taken for altarpiece panels just like the one pictured on the altar in the choir. The shape is reminiscent of Jan van Eyck’s influential altarpiece in Ghent, the *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* (1434),¹²¹ in its closed state and further recalls the subject matter and composition, and framing of van Eyck’s much smaller devotional panel, *The Madonna in a Church* (c.1438, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) (figs. 2-13 and 2-14).¹²² In that way, the

¹²⁰ Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, 11.

¹²¹ The famous altarpiece, along with Van Eyck’s other works, were known throughout the Low Countries and beyond. The influence of Van Eyck’s style of painting (attention to detail, use of vivid colors in oil, descriptive ability) was long-lasting. Scholars suggest that his replication of minute details and effects of light as part of his “realistic” style come out of his training in manuscript illumination. See Marrow, *Pictorial Invention*, 14. For questions around Jan van Eyck’s proposed work in illuminations, see (among many other studies): Anne H. van Buren, James Marrow, and Silvana Pettenati, *Heures de Turin-Milan, Inv. no. 47, Museo Civico d’Arte Antica, Torino*, vol. 2, commentary (Lucerne: Faksimile Verlag, 1996). For the extent of Rogier van der Weyden’s hand in painting miniatures, see: Lorne Campbell, “Rogier van der Weyden and Manuscript Illumination,” in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: JP Getty Museum, 2006), 87-102.

¹²² This painting by van Eyck also plays with time, space, and presence. Madonna and Child appear in the nave of a Gothic-style church. Winged angels sing behind the barely distinguishable

frame enclosing the scene at center pointedly recalls these larger, sacred images and formats (and indeed, the turning of pages might recall the act of opening a winged altarpiece), yet, when the familiar shapes are placed in a hand-sized book meant for private contemplation, we begin to understand the parallels made between public and private devotion, with the latter emphasizing a very personal experience of the divine.¹²³

Finally, it would be naïve to conclude that the possession of these quite elaborate and expensive, hand-written and illuminated manuscripts such as the Mary of Burgundy Hours would simply reflect on the owner and/or user's devotion and prayerful habits. The cost involved made the more luxurious works available to a limited section of society. The inclusion in books of hours of contemporary persons, donors, or references to them in the form of such items as shields, mottos, attributes, architecture, and patron saints unmistakably lends a hand in projecting an individual's interest in spiritual matters. In the case of the nobility or those who surround them at court, a reputation for pious devotion would certainly be a virtue worth cultivating as part of a portrayal of status and even power. With downcast eyes and the reverent hold she has on her book of hours, the woman in the midst of her devotions is meant to express such a virtue. She has placed her jewels aside and appears absorbed in the precious book in her hands and doesn't dally with her sumptuous dress and surroundings outfitted with luxurious objects. Indeed, she appears so lost in contemplation that the hanging chain and spilled water fails to draw her

choir screen above which is installed a sculpture group of Christ on the Cross with Mary and John to his sides.

¹²³ For a brief historiography of the development of lay private devotion, see Eugène Honée, "Image and Imagination in the Medieval Culture of Prayer: A Historical Perspective," in *The Art of Devotion 1300-1500*, ed. Henk van Os, et al, trans. Michael Doyle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994): 157-174.

attention. Yet, to her right is the cloth of gold *aumônière*, a textile bag that could hold her book of hours and, as one scholar notes, typically served as “an ostentatious display of piety.”¹²⁴ The image of the book of hours itself shows it as complete with a green velvet covering, the ends of which could be drawn together to hold and protect the book.¹²⁵ The cover and/or the bag allowed it to be kept with its owner, and displayed much like any other luxury accessory—perhaps even affixed to her dress—and in that way, assists in fashioning the woman’s public persona as both devout and occupying a high social class.

The Burgundian manuscript itself, and the two illuminations that use illusionistic window views in particular, have prompted much study and speculation due to innovative and influential composition, the manuscript’s Burgundian court patronage, and its elegant and skilled design by artists working in Ghent and Bruges. This chapter participates in this scholarship by using the woman at prayer and her painted surroundings to consider the way in which an image can encapsulate the artist’s ability to produce visual meditations that assist the viewer in pondering elusive, abstract notions, which is a trait especially useful in devotional books used by the laity. In addition, this approach places the work of Portuguese artists in conversation with that of their closely-connected fellow artists in the Low Countries while gaining better insight into artistic and patronage

¹²⁴ Frederick Bearman, “The Origins and Significance of Two Late Medieval Textile Chemise Bookbindings in the Walters Art Gallery,” *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* vol. 54 (1996): 172. The green covering fits best within the category of “textile chemise bindings.” Bearman notes how these types of bindings, made from expensive textiles and leather, were protective but also a part of the “cultural display of wealth and social standing” for aristocrats and the wealthy bourgeoisie (167).

¹²⁵ Two similar coverings can be seen in the *Mass of Saint Giles* beneath the manuscript set on the prie-dieu before the figure of Charlemagne on the left, and beneath the opened liturgical manuscript on the altar.

practices in Portugal. The production of images by the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy, and workshops influenced by and/or associated with this artist, coincides with the increased demand by the laity in western Europe for personal, devotional objects such as small-scale altarpieces, portraits of saints, rosaries, and hand-sized prayer books.¹²⁶ Illuminated devotional books helped fulfill the desire for private contemplation unmediated by clergy and rely on the image's ability to engage the viewer. This relationship with the viewer is implicit in the construction and subject matter of these works. For example, as we'll see, it is not unusual to encounter perspectives that "place" viewers in the midst of the action of the page, to dress biblical figures in contemporary dress, or to see figures looking out to the viewer from the page.¹²⁷

By echoing, reiterating, and repeating forms across divisions of the page, the Vienna Master creates a network of visual metaphors that reflects on the ephemeral and difficult-to-figure conditions of time, space, materiality, and presence. This image of the woman at prayer lays the groundwork for exploring the possibilities of visual engagement that these two-part, bordered illuminations might bring to mind. We can see the same experiential and transcendent potential at work in the three illuminations from the Holanda manuscripts from Portugal, yet made all the more complex when combined with: one, the powerful, multivalent imagery of the Adoration of the Magi; and two, the

¹²⁶ Harbison, "Visions and Meditations in Early Flemish Painting," 87-118.

¹²⁷ Alixe Bovey writes about the differences between southern and northern approaches to visual references to time in fifteenth and sixteenth century manuscripts. "Instead of emphasizing the connection between their books and the ancient world [as the southern Europeans did], the illuminated manuscripts commissioned by the elites of northern Europe reveal an enthusiasm for narrative illustration and pictorial invention that interpreted the past in contemporary terms." See, "Renaissance Bibliomania," 103.

considerable symbolism carried by coins. Studying the artistic process of joining the open-ended flexibility of the story of the Magi with the equally fluid narrative possibilities of the bordered image, sheds light on both public and private devotional endeavors.

My work expands the examination of Luso-Flemish artistic influence in the early modern era. We can better understand the reciprocal effects of exchange on artistic production by situating the work of the Holanda workshop within the tradition of Ghent-Bruges manuscript production while looking at often-neglected developments in the visual culture of early modern Portugal.¹²⁸ My study of the three Portuguese manuscript illuminations contributes further by placing these geographical and cultural influences in conversation with imagery of the Magi that aims to legitimate human pursuits and frame, as well as produce, new knowledge.

Building on the analysis of the illumination of the woman at the window, I now want to turn to the three manuscript illuminations from Portugal, which share an artistic lineage with their Flemish prototype by the Vienna Master. While produced some 1400 miles south of Bruges and Ghent and over 40 years later, the Portuguese manuscripts share a similar interest in complexly-constructed images that aim to satisfy the needs of private contemplation. They also share a stylistic lineage, as the artist, António de Holanda (c. 1480-1557), is understood to have come to Portugal from the Low Countries after training in Flemish workshops.¹²⁹ Added to this formula are the patron-specific

¹²⁸ The importance of this exchange and influence as evidenced in the Low Countries is further explored in Chapter 3.

¹²⁹ Less is known about the life of António de Holanda, compared to António's well-known son, Francisco, humanist, theorist, traveler, and court painter. António is documented as having done

references that gain meaning through the now-familiar play across borders and central images of the page. Like the Burgundian images, the compositions and subject matter shed light on the practices of the owners while simultaneously conveying a sense of cultural currents, and in this case, currents unique to the state and rule of Portugal. In that way, these illuminations carry insights for thinking about the significance of visual culture in the crafting of Portuguese historical narratives from within and outside Portugal's borders.

Coin-Embellished Manuscripts of the House of Avis

I reflected on how nothing is less material than money, inasmuch as any coin (a twenty-centavo piece, let us say) is, strictly speaking, a repertory of possible futures. Money is abstract...Money is future time.—Jorge Luis Borges, "The Zahir"¹³⁰

Scholars attribute the three sixteenth-century illuminated manuscripts, the *Livro de Horas dito de Dom Manuel* (ca. 1517-1534; Ms. 14; Lisbon, Museu Nacional de Arte

the drawings for many of the illuminations of the *Genealogy of the Royal Houses of Spain and Portugal* (British Library, Add. Ms. 12531) that were then to be painted by Simon Bening in Bruges. The pages were commissioned around 1530 by Dom Fernando, son of King Manuel I (deceased at the time) and brother to King João III, Manuel's successor. The humanist and learned diplomat from Portugal, Damião de Gois, who was stationed in Antwerp on behalf of the Portuguese royal family, was given the task of commissioning the "principal master" of book illumination, "Simon of Bruges," known as Simon Bening to produce images for this lavish volume of illuminated parchment, measuring 23 in. x 17 in., which in the end was not completed in its entirety. António executed the drawings in Lisbon which were then sent to Bruges for Bening to paint. Word of the accomplished work of Bening, as well as available circulating examples, spread through the extensive royal familial connections across Europe, especially Burgundy, Germany, and the Iberian Peninsula. See Kren, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, 460-463. For more on Portuguese and Spanish patronage of Flemish illuminated manuscripts in the sixteenth century, see Kren, "Landscape as Leitmotif: A Reintegrated Book of Hours Illuminated by Simon Bening," in *Illuminating the Book: Makers and Interpreters. Essays in Honour of Janet Backhouse*, ed. Michelle Brown and Scot McKendrick (London: British Library, 1998): 220-225.

¹³⁰ Jorge Luis Borges, *The Aleph and Other Stories*. Steven Boldy, *A Companion to Jorge Luis Borges* (New York: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), 136-139.

Antiga);¹³¹ the *Livro dos Ofícios Pontifícios* or *Officiale Pontificalium* of Inquisitor-General Cardinal Infante Dom Henrique;¹³² (1539-1541; Casa Cadaval 16; Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo), and the *Crónica de D. João I* (ca. 1530; Vit 25/8; Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España) to the same Portuguese royal workshop of António de Holanda (figs. 2-1; 2-2; 2-3).¹³³ In two of the manuscripts—the *livro de horas* [book of hours] and the pontifical—the artist has included a page picturing an illumination of the Adoration of the Magi together with a page border (or margin) filled with precisely-painted representations of Portuguese gold and silver coins (and five Spanish coins) (figs. 2-15 and 2-16).¹³⁴ The third manuscript—a copy of the early fifteenth-century chronicle of D. João I written by Fernão Lopes—does not picture the Adoration, yet, does include the familiar illuminated Portuguese coins, similar in style to the other two volumes.

¹³¹ Throughout the chapter, I use various titles to refer to this manuscript. Along with the two mentioned here (the title currently used by the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon, Portugal and the English translation of that title) I use the shorthand *Manuel Hours* or Lisbon manuscript to refer to the same manuscript. The “so-called” epithet attached to the manuscript’s title is utilized by the MNAA and denotes the uncertainty surrounding patronage of the manuscript.

¹³² This manuscript is a Book of Pontifical Offices, a collection of offices typically performed by a bishop. See: Richard Kay, “Pontificalia: A Global Checklist of Latin Manuscript Pontificals and Benedictionals,” *Antiphon* 10, no. 2 (2006): 192-202; Pierre de Puniet, *The Roman Pontifical: A History and Commentary, Volume 1* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1932). Much later, through an extraordinary chain of events, this same Cardinal Henrique, a younger son of Manuel I, would become king of Portugal in 1578 at the age of 66, only to die without issue in 1580 following Rome’s refusal to allow Henrique to marry. The resulting succession crisis would mark the end of the Avis dynasty and rule of Portuguese kings through the “unification” of the Iberian Peninsula under Philip II of Spain in 1580, lasting until 1640.

¹³³ It is possible that António’s son, Francisco de Holanda (1517-1584) had a hand in the production of illuminations for the later works.

¹³⁴ António Miguel Trigueiros, “Códices Portugueses Quinhentistas Iluminados com Moedas,” *Moeda: Revista Portuguesa de Numismática e Medalhística* 34, no.3 & 4 (2009): 10-11.

The illumination of the *Adoration of the Magi* pictured in the *Manuel Hours* (fig. 2-17) includes a cavalcade of camels, elephants, horses, and the strikingly-attired magi and their followers. These figures sport turbans, shields, and a range of skin tones that aim to remind viewers of the “outsider” status of the three magi while expanding the geographical limits of their possible origins and in that way, recalling Portugal’s travels to Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

The Adoration illumination from the pontifical manuscript is less elaborate and includes only half-length views of the main figures of the Holy Family attended by the three kings (fig. 2-18). All are placed in a small vignette on the bottom center of the page that, appropriately, contains text and music for the Mass of the Epiphany. Within the limited space of this small vignette, room is found to include a throng of camels and travelers carrying standards. The borders of the full page are filled with images of gold and silver coins struck in Portugal, along with the curls of metal shavings that suggest their newly minted condition.

Finally, in the third manuscript, the chronicle, the familiar coins appear once again, not in conjunction with an Adoration scene but pictured in the center of the chronicle page spilled out in full size in the border between columns of text that stress the roles of money and war in terms of dynastic stability (fig. 2-19). As I will show, the limits and content of these borders and their explicit or implicit association with the Adoration of the Magi resonate with key cultural currents of sixteenth-century Portugal and more specifically, those concerning the court, the royal House of Avis who commissioned the manuscripts. My treatment considers in what way the borders from the

manuscripts, and the scenes they surround, might reflect on the construction of a Portuguese national identity that, on the one hand, seeks to solidify an historical lineage while, on the other, seeks to marshal that lineage to extend the limits of Portugal's physical presence in new lands. Both projects depend on representations that attempt to capture the elusive qualities of time, space, and presence.

In a more practical sense, the visual representation of coins in these illuminations plays a role in the study of the manuscripts themselves. For example, the images of coins have been used to raise questions regarding dating and patronage of the two manuscripts, and the miniatures of the Adoration have been used to comment on patronage, stylistic, and iconographic concerns of book painting in Portugal. Yet scant effort has been made to consider these historical, formal, and symbolic aspects collectively. Remarkably, the contextual relevance of the page borders and frames in which they appear has been ignored altogether.¹³⁵ Further, and most notably, no sustained effort has been made to

¹³⁵ For dating concerns, see Margarida Ribeiro, "Livro de Horas de D. Manuel; Subsídios Para a Reconstituição Da Vida Popular Portuguesa No Século XV," *Panorama* 4, no. 32 (1968): 101–114; Albuquerque, Mary Alice Beaumont, "Livro de Horas de D. Manuel," *Observador* 16 (June 1971); Sylvie Deswarte-Rosa, *Les Enluminures de La Leitura Nova, 1504-1552: Étude Sur La Culture Artistique Au Portugal Au Temps de L'humanisme* (Paris: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1977); Dagoberto Markl, *Livro de Horas de D. Manuel: Estudo Introdutório de Dagoberto Markl* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1983); Pedro Dias, "A Crónica Iluminada de D. João I Da Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid," *Oceanos* 26 (1996); José Manuel Garcia, "Poder, História E Exotismo Na Iluminura Portuguesa Quinhentista," *Oceanos* 26 (1996): 25–48; Alberto Gomes, *Moedas Portuguesas E Do Território Português Antes Da Fundação Da Nacionalidade: Catálogo Das Moedas Cunhadas Para O Continente E Ilhas Adjacentes, Para Os Territórios Do Ultramar Grão-Mestres Portugueses Da Ordem de Malta*, 2nd ed. (Lisboa: Associação Numismática de Portugal, 1996); Horácio Augusto Peizeiro, "Um Missal Iluminado de Santa Cruz," *Oceanos* 26 (1996): 54–72; António Miguel Trigueiros, "Códices Portugueses Quinhentistas Iluminados Com Moedas," *Moeda: Revista Portuguesa de Numismática E Medalhística* 34, no. 3 and 4 (2009). For stylistic concerns, see: Reynaldo Dos Santos, "As Iluminuras Da Crónica de D. João I de Fernão Lopes Em Madrid," *Colóquio, Revista de Artes E Letras* no. 29 (1964): 41–48; Ribeiro, "Livro de Horas de D. Manuel," 1968; Vítor Pavão Dos Santos, "O Exotismo Na Vida Portuguesa Na Época de D. Manuel," *Panorama: De Revista*

place these images within a wider, art historical and theoretical context that takes into account the intentional juxtapositions of naturalistically-rendered, worldly materials (gems and jewels), with the emblems of sovereignty (coins, gifts), with and within the symbolic potential of the scene of the Adoration.¹³⁶ While these manuscripts are attached to the highest levels of power in early sixteenth-century Portugal, my study is not concerned with establishing a hierarchy of significance due to their rarified patronage. My aim is not to assume they carry any grand overarching, organizing principles of a

Portuguesa de Arte E Turismo 32 (1969): 84–93; Alice Beaumont, “Livro de Horas de D. Manuel,” 1971; AH Van Buren, “The Master of Mary of Burgundy and His Colleagues: The State of Research and Questions of Method,” *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 38, no. 3/4 (1975): 286–309; Deswarte-Rosa, *Les Enluminures de La Leitura Nova*; Markl, *Livro de Horas*, 1983; Luis Revenga, “Lopes, Fernão, Cronica de João I (Chronicle of John I of Portugal),” in *Tesoros de España: Ten Centuries of Spanish Books. Exhibition Catalog* (New York: New York Public Library, 1985), 186–188; Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Virginia Roehrig Kaufmann, “The Sanctification of Nature: Observations on the Origins of Trompe L’oeil in Netherlandish Book Painting of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” *J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 19 (1991): 43–64; Willy Le Loup, “Bruges and the European Book,” in *Bruges and Europe*, ed. Valentin Vermeersch (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1992), 278–297; André Vandewalle, “Bruges and the Iberian Peninsula,” in *Bruges and Europe*, ed. Valentin Vermeersch (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1992), 158–181; Virginia Roehrig Kaufmann, “The Theme of Pilgrimage in the Miniatures of the Hours of Engilbert [sic] of Nassau,” in *Pielgrzymki: W Kulturze Średniowiecznej Europy* (Poznań, Poland: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1993), 33–42; Peizeiro, “Um Missal Iluminado,” 1996; Anne Margreet W. As-vijvers, “More than Marginal Meaning? The Interpretation of Ghent-Bruges Border Decoration,” *Oud Holland Jaargang* 116, no. 1 (2003): 3–33; Maurits Smeyers, “Iluminuras Flamengas Executadas Para Portugal (1400-1530),” *Revista de Ciencias Históricas* 12 (1997): 169–200; Silvia Maria Brito Gomes Leite, “A Arte Do Manuelino Como Discurso Simbólico: Categorias Ordenadoras Da Imagem Do Mundo E Representação Do Poder No Tardo-Medievalismo Português” (Universidade de Lisboa, 2003); Martim de Albuquerque and Vasco Graça Moura, *Fantasia E Objectividade Nos Descobrimentos* (Lisboa: Aletheia Editores, 2006); Bernardo Vasconcelos e Sousa, “Medieval Portuguese Royal Chronicles. Topics in a Discourse of Identity and Power,” *E-Journal of Portuguese History* 5, no. 2 (2007): 1–7; Anne Margreet W. As-vijvers, *Re-Making the Margin: The Master of the David Scenes and Flemish Manuscript Painting around 1500*, trans. Diane Webb (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).

¹³⁶ Richard Trexler offers the most in-depth look at the theoretical constructs at work within the story of the Magi in general and its deployment in culture. While not an art historical work per se, Trexler’s approach necessarily relies on the iconography and historical documentation of images of the Adoration of the Magi. See *Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

Portuguese mindset, but rather, it is through their examination that we can better understand the construction and circulation of visual and material objects as part of diverse cultural networks that fueled knowledge-making in early modern Portugal.¹³⁷

Expansion, Containment, and Distance

Before returning to the manuscripts and their borders, I want to consider the visual methods of constructing physical and theoretical borders used by two Portuguese mapmakers that contribute a deeper understanding of the generative and fluid qualities of borders. The two mapmakers were commissioned by Manuel I to produce a portolan chart of the eastern coast of Brazil. The map operated somewhat like the other symbols produced for Manuel that aimed to visualize and codify the extent of his reign by addressing the outwardly political and territorial borders that promoted the Portuguese king's expanding empire.¹³⁸ In the sixteenth century, in an age of expansion beyond previously-known horizons and the accumulation of new knowledge borne on the movement of caravels, bodies, and material goods, the physical and theoretical manufacture of "borders" signals the desire of Portugal, and other realms as well, to find ways to contain this rapid expansion and change.¹³⁹ At one moment, this expansion is celebrated for its introduction to new resources and commodities and souls; at the next, this expansive capability provokes anxiety through its capacity to summon a sense of the

¹³⁷ For a useful discussion of this type of approach as applied to the history of cartography, see: JB Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica* 26, no.2 (Summer 1989), 1-20.

¹³⁸ The term "portolan" designates a type of map or "chart" made primarily for nautical navigation and typically shows ports along coastlines and navigational lines set out to correlate with points of the compass. Each folio is made from vellum.

¹³⁹ Following Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 2010).

unknown. One need only revisit the medieval and early modern European maps, texts, and images that envision imagined creatures, figures in exotic dress, and strange “races” that inhabit the lands just beyond reach at any particular moment, despite the expansion of known boundaries.

Thus, the turn to limitations, mapped borders, and treaty-imposed lines of territories (such as the momentous *Tratado de Tordesilhas* [Treaty of Tordesillas], 1494, that effectively divided the world between Portugal and Spain), offers humans and empires some sense of a measurable, containable, and knowable world.¹⁴⁰ Paying attention to the operation of borders alerts us to the conditions that societies mark for definition and containment. There is a set of Portuguese portolan charts (maps) known as the *Atlas Miller* from 1519 that serves as a telling visual example of the way in which borders essentially define and divide one entity from another. However, the effect is not simply a binary relationship of center and periphery, but rather a relationship that reveals a generative and porous divide (fig. 2-20).¹⁴¹ The operation of borders and thresholds on the portolan chart shares similarities with the visual constructions gleaned from the Vienna Master’s praying woman and will aid later in the chapter when we return to the manuscripts.

Like the manuscripts, the charts were commissioned by the House of Avis; this time by Manuel I (1469-1521; reigned 1495-1521). The maps are attributed to Portuguese cartographers, Jorge Reinel and Lopo Homem, with illustrations attributed to António de

¹⁴⁰ Disney. A.R., *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Vol. 2: From Beginnings to 1807: The Portuguese Empire*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 152.

¹⁴¹ Held by Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (BNF). Titled: *Atlas nautique du Monde, dit atlas Miller*; feuilles 2 à 5. <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb40887479k> .
<http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55002607s>

Holanda, the same court painter whose workshop produced the illuminations for the *Manuel Hours*, the pontifical, and the chronicle of João I.¹⁴² Manuel's map commission should be taken in consideration alongside this king's extensive projects to solidify and clarify his presence and rule throughout the Portuguese realm. Upon his succession in 1495, Manuel made a concerted effort to reorganize, centralize, and tighten links between the royal court and the cities, lands, and people under its rule. One key component of this ambitious project was the codification of city charters, begun in 1504 (and continued long after Manuel's death), called the *Leitura Nova* [new reading], which were then inscribed and elaborately illuminated on parchment and eventually bound into 62 volumes (200-300 leaves each). One crucial result of this project was to assure that more consistent revenues came to the crown.¹⁴³

Manuel I also ordered legal scholars to compile a comprehensive manual of statutes applicable throughout the kingdom. These five volumes, known as the *Ordenações Manuelinas*, are roughly contemporary with the *Leitura Nova*. The *Ordenações* were printed and distributed widely starting in 1512.¹⁴⁴ Centralization of power was a key aim of these efforts; however, consequently, a collateral effect of these bureaucratic-type reforms, as historian A.R. Disney has pointed out, was the distancing of the monarch from direct contacts with his subjects.¹⁴⁵ As I show, this physical absence of the king's literal body (any Portuguese king) within the vision of his realm plays an

¹⁴² In addition to the map of Brazil, the *Atlas Miller* also includes portolan charts for India, Africa, the North Atlantic, a world map, the Mediterranean coastline, and part of east Asia.

¹⁴³ Disney, *History of Portugal*, 157.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* On the *Leitura Nova*, see Deswarte-Rosa, *Les Enluminures de La Leitura Nova*; and Dagoberto Markl, "O Imaginário Português de Quatrocentos E Quinhentos: Alguns Exemplos," *História Da Arte Em Portugal* 6 (1986): 10–29.

¹⁴⁵ Disney, *History of Portugal*, 154-159.

important role in the approach to the various forms of representation of the sovereign that are circulated throughout the kingdom.

The *Atlas Miller* is an example of one such type of representation that circulated within the kingdom and in Europe that aimed to signal the expansion and claims of the Portuguese realm. Indeed, Manuel I had possibly given the atlas as a gift to François I, King of France by 1519.¹⁴⁶ This gift from one monarch to another makes some sense being that the map presents primarily as propaganda more than true nautical tool.¹⁴⁷ On folio 5r, the portolan chart shows the coastline of what the Portuguese designated in gold on a red banner as *Terra Brasilis*, thus naming the land after the prized commodity, brazilwood (dyewood), the importance of which is further noted in the text of a cartouche at top (fig. 2-21).¹⁴⁸ Far from being merely an “objective” plotting of distances, the boundaries pictured on the map between land, sea, and one people and another, communicate much more than simply navigational reconnaissance.

¹⁴⁶ The set contains six loose parchment sheets and a total of eight maps. Six measure 41.5 x 59 cm and two 61 x 117 cm (BNF). For the question of the gift recipient, Disney states flatly that this is true without citation (170). Zoltán Biedermann qualifies this gift theory with “possibly.” See, “The New Atlas of Historical Maps of the Persian Gulf: Methodological Aspects,” in *Cartographie historique du Golfe persique*, ed. M. Taleghani, et al (Louvain: Peeters, 2006): 73. In the same volume, Dejinirah Silva Couta takes Disney’s position. See: “Le Golfe dans la cartographie portugaise de la première moitié du XVIe siècle,” 97. It is difficult to track down the source for this assumption and mostly hinges on a later inscription on fol. 1v with the shield of Catherine de’ Medici that mentions Manuel I as patron and Lupo Homem as “cosmographus.” Full inscription available: BNF, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55002620g/f2.item> Recently, some scholars have promoted the idea that the maps were intended as a gift to Leonor of Castile (Austria) from Manuel, her first husband. From this connection, scholars contend the map was part of a Portuguese conspiracy against Spain in their competition for discoveries. Leonor’s second husband was François I. See: Alfredo Pinheiro Marques, “Preface,” in *Atlas Miller* [reproduction], (Barcelona: M. Moleiro, 2009).

¹⁴⁷ Susi Colin, “Woodcutters and Cannibals: Brazilian Indians as Seen on Early Maps,” in *America: Early Maps of the New World* ed. Hans Wolff (Munich: Prestel, 1992), 175-180.

¹⁴⁸ For translation, see Alida C. Metcalf, *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500-1600*, (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2006), 55-57.

The open sea pictured to the right is lightly criss-crossed with rhumb lines and becomes the setting for a fleet of seven double-masted ships, borne on curling blue waves and spread strategically across the cream-colored expanse of parchment. The white sails are full-blown and each is marked with the red *Cruz da Ordem de Cristo*, the Cross of the Order of Christ, and the royal emblem of Portugal (fig. 2-22). Interspersed among the ships and stylized compass roses are small, brightly-colored islands, out of which sprout oversized flags covered with the blue and red standard of the House of Avis (fig. 2-23). Visually, this section of the map manages to trumpet Portugal's control of this entire stretch of sea through the use of emblems of empire.¹⁴⁹ The systematic arrangement of evenly-spaced ships and flags contrasts with the left side of the map that pictures part of the eastern coastline and interior of Brazil (fig. 2-24). Here, the jagged yet finely-detailed coastline is cluttered with the carefully-penned Portuguese names of bays, rivers, and landing sites in red and brown inks; so many in fact that some titles "spill" into the sea. Red-inked names stand out against the more faded (and at times nearly obliterated) names in brown ink, suggesting two stages of inscription work.¹⁵⁰

The orientations of land and text are opposite from one another, so that when viewing the illustrations, the text is upside down; if reading the text, the illustrations are upside down. This likely indicates the north-south direction of nautical navigation for ships sailing from the west coasts of Europe and Africa. Inland, three-dimensional figures populate the flattened spaces of land in between clusters of tall trees. Near the

¹⁴⁹ Metcalf, in *Go-Betweens*, concludes similarly, 55-56.

¹⁵⁰ Metcalf notes that the Portuguese court kept a "master" map (*padrão real*) that cartographers amended to include information gathered from navigators and sailors indicating how some maps were not always finished products. *Ibid.*, 41.

“shore” of the coastline, three nude men (and perhaps one woman) with long black hair and with their bodies twisted in energetic poses, harvest the reddish wood of the trees (fig. 2-24). Further inland, wild cats and a monkey appear among the stone outcroppings and streams of blue water. Large parrots, both red and blue, fly near the tops of the trees while others perch on tree stumps—the remainders of the brazilwood harvest.

Three men with clay-brown skin, dressed in multi-colored feathered crowns, capes, and skirts look out at us with slight smiles while two of them raise their left arms and one points out to the sea. Their feather headdresses resemble that of the “Tupinambá” magus discussed in Chapter 1 (fig. 2-25).¹⁵¹ The third man sits on the ground and all three carry long, thin brown bows in their right hands and arrows in the other, but they don’t assume defensive postures, rather, they appear to welcome or, possibly, bid farewell, to the ships off the coast. Isolated further south, an outsized figure resembling the three men at the shore, also wears a feather crown but his torso is bare (fig. 2-26). He kneels on the ground, and looks back over his right shoulder toward the golden frame of the map. He is the only figure to gesture further west.

The men and animals seem only to grow in imaginative detail as our eye moves from the coast, westward. Furthest inland, and facing toward the sea at the very edges of the map, a two-legged, winged green reptile with flat head, low ears, and twisting tail appears to tower over nearby trees, its wide-open mouth revealing sharp teeth and a menacing thin red tongue (fig. 2-27). For Portuguese viewers, the nude, dark-skinned men laboring near the shore would be familiar figures that pose little challenge to their

¹⁵¹ In the large print, *Triumphs of Maximilian I*, similar figures are seen in the section for “Calicut,” where they gather with a number of diversely costumed folks. Discussed further below.

understanding of physical bodies and common human activities. Likewise, the birds and animals, while perhaps strange, follow typical European depictions of fauna. However, the men wearing feathers and carrying weapons would signal something partly understood but yet also entirely new. The curious winged, green serpent at the outer edge, furthest from the Portuguese ships (in time and concept), takes on the most imaginative form of all. By picturing the least familiar and most fantastic characters at the outermost distance from the “known” world—here embodied by the ships at sea—the artist hews to a tradition of mapmaking images. In striking comparison to his human companions, this conjured dragon is the only figure that appears to register any alarm at the incoming ships. The dragon-like serpent joins the Blemmye, the Sciapod, and their monstrous brethren that signify the outer limits of knowledge and, not coincidentally, are placed where the most threatening figures could be observed: on the margins and at a safe distance, pictorially and conceptually, from the Portuguese (fig. 2-28).

Marking and mediating the differences between the flat, cream-colored Atlantic Ocean and the colorful, topographically varied, and populated land mass of Brazil lies the edge of the land and the edge of the water: the border with all ports marked and mapped and with openings and inroads accounted for with Portuguese text (fig. 2-24). We are reminded of historian Michel de Certeau’s analysis of the ordering of space where our distance from a point tends to smooth and unify our perception of it—both practically and historically—much like the sea pictured here. This distant, all-encompassing viewpoint relies on a position of power and demonstrates the way in which this privileged vantage

point works conceptually to flatten and de-complicate comprehension.¹⁵² However, as de Certeau would point out, this privileged vantage point is simply a representation, not a *lived* [and *written*] experience, or more precisely for this map, it *is* an experience *lived through* by the Brazilian people, but that experience is not represented with this map/viewpoint of the Portuguese.

At a glance, the border communicates a quick visual understanding of separation and opposition: old and new; known and unknown; container and commodity; embodiment and emblem. At the same time, recall the illumination of the praying woman by the Vienna Master and the way that the eruption of out-of-time objects and figures tended to draw together past, present, and future time. Further, the picture of the praying woman shows how the limits of the window frame *as* border are made permeable by human contemplation and imagination. The border, the central image, and the spaces created by and shared between them generate a productive indeterminacy, revealing the representational limits of presence, time, and space. Yet when coupled with the ability of human imagination, the construction of the image reveals how those limits can be questioned.

We can see the same temporal gathering at work on the atlas page and in this case put to work on secular matters. On the one hand, nude bodies appear out of time in their almost prelapsarian innocence, apparently unaware of modern foreign vessels that encroach on the borders of their territory. On the other hand, the men with feather crowns look out beyond the borders, ostensibly aware of this encroachment and, as

¹⁵² Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 91-111.

pictured by the Portuguese, even welcoming if not accepting of it. The kneeling man (perhaps alarmed) looks the opposite way and we follow his gaze toward the regions that we have to imagine must stretch beyond the borders of the map. We wonder if all the figures truly exist together in time, or represent the passing of it, or if these temporal possibilities are brought together with a future inevitability that arrives with the Portuguese. The anthropologist, Johannes Fabian, has identified the practice of observers in power—in this case, the Portuguese—in their effort conceptualizing and deploying physical and rhetorical space and distance as a method that distances the observed—the Tupinambá—temporally as well. The New World then is displaced as the “other.” In that way, the Portuguese suppress the past *and* the currency of the New World, placing it in a contrived past of European imagination and one they have already surpassed.¹⁵³

The hard jagged edges of the coastline keep the figures contained and distinct from the ships at sea. Here is where the abstract technologies of cartography—all lines, angles, and text—appear to blend with the imaginative projection of experienced, habitable space, yet not experienced by the Portuguese. Portuguese encroachment and presence is evidenced materially, not by picturing bodies, but only through symbolic representation. Two Portuguese flags positioned at opposite ends of the land mass, with their poles stabbed into the very edge of the border, mark the edges of land but fail to penetrate the interior, while their red and blue standards breach the gold-leaf margins of the map (fig. 2-20).¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2014 [1983].

¹⁵⁴ For comic relief, on the operation of flags as tools of empire, see Eddie Izzard, “Do you have a flag?” from *Dress to Kill* (1998).

The flags become metaphors for the work of marking a border in order to claim ownership but here, as historian Alida Metcalf has pointed out, due to the construction and perspective of the map, we are not convinced of physical possession;¹⁵⁵ no Portuguese bodies appear on land (and if on sea, they are indistinguishable from the ships that carry them).¹⁵⁶ Indeed, we shouldn't be convinced: aside from the way the visual assertion of possession indirectly indicates the *need* to stake a claim, the map fails to represent Portugal's contemporary clash with France and Spain over territory in the early sixteenth century.¹⁵⁷ The neat rows of red- and brown-lettered place names are superimposed along the whitened edge of the land, creating their own margin of neither-inside-nor-outside and not quite reaching the greener interior of the land. The quality of the lettering goes from bright to faded to smudged and superimposed, suggesting different temporal states while marking the accumulation and appropriation of native knowledge, now translated into that of the explorers' language.

¹⁵⁵ *Go-Betweens*, 56. Metcalf's argument relies on the importance of what she terms the "go-between," or agents of colonization that deliver and exchange desired commodities and knowledge between cultures and across borders. Go-betweens are those agents that are at once beholden to, in this case, the Portuguese crown but yet are not fully incorporated under or fully managed by it (so this would include cartographers and illuminators (41). This position of the go-between functions much like the border, in that both create sites of knowledge production that depend on, yet are distinct from, the entities they move between. At the same time, she notes the unpredictability of these agents to generate the results envisioned by their retainers. While Metcalf includes cartographers and historians within the set of mediators she terms "representational" go-betweens (following on Stephen Greenblatt's study of the European methods of representation of the "New World," in *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), the particular practices of artists and illuminators aside from Albrecht Dürer, are not explored in depth as part of the milieu of cultural translators and mediators. For an in-depth study of the role played by artistic practices in shaping, translating, and disseminating knowledge from the Americas, see Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

¹⁵⁶ The Portuguese occupy that distant point away from "lived" experience.

¹⁵⁷ Metcalf, *Go-Betweens*, 56

It is helpful to consider how these inscriptions might operate within the larger project of history. Writing about the spatial practices exhibited by “the city,” Michel de Certeau has described the unsettled nature inherent in the act of naming locations and destinations, where the orderly text means to pin down and classify a place, while the naming act and the names themselves reveal the layering of space and time in the way that they create, erase, and superimpose relationships and memories. He writes:

[I]inking acts and footsteps, opening meanings and direction, these words operate in the name of an emptying out and wearing-away of their primary role. They become liberated spaces that can be occupied. A *rich indetermination* gives them...the function of articulating a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning. They insinuate other routes into the functionalist and historical order of movement.¹⁵⁸

Lived and living experience are inscribed within the layers of this constructed space. Thus de Certeau sees the “rich indetermination” of names and the act of naming as generative, but also one that erases memory and history in the way that names:

[...] make habitable or believable the place that they clothe with a word (by emptying themselves of their classifying power, they acquire that of “permitting” something else); they recall or suggest phantoms...that still move about; concealed in gestures and in bodies in motion; and, by naming, that is, by imposing an injunction proceeding from the other (a story) and by altering functionalist identity by detaching themselves from it, they create in the place itself that erosion or nowhere that the law of the other carves out within it.¹⁵⁹

With carefully inscribed, straight and unwavering lines, symbols, and text, an empire has managed to gauge and to measure an extension of their own realm without needing to

¹⁵⁸ de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 105. Italics mine.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

picture physical conquest or contact between material realities. The ghostly ships join with the flags, the navigational lines, the penned, ragged border, and the red and brown letters in overwriting and obscuring native memory of place and names (fig. 2-29). For the Portuguese, these symbols create a space of power and control; yet for the native peoples, perhaps a space better described as representing “a network of innumerable conflicts covered up with words”.¹⁶⁰ Taken together, these emblems are effective in translating symbolic rule onto physical bodies. Coming from the other direction however, the precise lines and marks of navigation do indeed present a sort of logical gauge of distance and relationships to the viewer. The cartographer’s lined rulings extend to the edges of the map, where they criss-cross not only the sea, but the land, and the figures themselves (fig. 2-29). Yet as much as they effectively map and measure the uniform and seemingly empty sea, they offer no insight into how one would measure and catalog the topography of the land or the people who live there. That is, while the presence of ships links to the presence of mappable borders, this map also has a way of masking the “historical operations” that precipitated knowledge of the land and people.¹⁶¹ As de Certeau writes about the colonizing function of maps through their ability to “totalize” space and erase history, the fuller dimensionality of the land yields no “figurations of the practices that produced it”.¹⁶²

The knowledge gained here is through our observation of formal qualities—the line is sharp, straight, and brown—but at the same time we gather that this line is out of place and partly obscured by the details of topography and bodies. In that way, the simple

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 16.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 121.

¹⁶² Ibid.

element of a line used as a tool for defining possession contributes another dimension to visual comprehension: that of the failure of the marks of conquest to account for and measure more than distances, and specifically, their failure to navigate the presence of the other once the border is transgressed. With defined borders comes a sense of reaching edges that appear to clarify the hazy understanding of what lies at those edges and horizons. The process of discovery and change works to redefine both center and periphery once quantifiable and qualifiable material entities truly appear to populate those horizons.

Manuscripts and Metaphor

Both the book of hours of Manuel (fig. 2-17) and Cardinal Henrique's pontifical (fig. 2-18) manuscript rely on complex visual metaphor and the meanings put into play through the display and intentional mingling of coins with the image of the Adoration of the Magi, and more pointedly, coins with magi. The artists who worked on these relied on a long-standing practice of using metaphor as a comparative tool in picturing the story of the Adoration. The story itself then becomes an effective way to place current, worldly endeavors within a foretold history of salvation in which the journey of the three magi stands as one of the most adaptable and graspable visions of sacred interaction with divine presence. the mechanics of visual metaphor (and metaphor in general), as a unique process that relies on comprehending and evaluating, and moreover, *creating*, new knowledge through the lens of lived and imagined experience. Further, "new" knowledge

relies on its connection to what is already known; metaphors aim to make this connection.

Through visual metaphor and similar visual operations, the two Portuguese Adoration scenes, the illuminated *Crónica* (fig. 2-19), and images like the *Atlas Miller* reveal a process of early modern knowledge-making generated in the midst of contacts with new worlds and the resulting uncertainties of identity that unfold. However, to be readable, this knowledge-making uses metaphor to link to the past. We can look to world maps older than the charts of the *Atlas Miller* as one example of how the discovery of new lands can upend the characterization of a continent and its inhabitants. “T-O” maps (a “T” inside an “O”) produced by Europeans prior to their bumping into the borders of the Americas routinely divided the known land masses of the world into three: Africa, Asia, and Europe (fig. 2-30).¹⁶³ At the very least, from these designations Europeans could reflect upon their cultural “identity” in a broad sense as a reflection of what they were *not*, that is, they could identify their peoples as *not* from Asia, or *not* from Africa; and implicitly understood as *not* Christian.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ These are commonly known as “T-O maps” due to the division of a circle into three unequal parts, the largest of which is designated as “Asia.”

¹⁶⁴ As William Chester Jordan points out, the term “Europe” was broadly understood in the Middle Ages as “Christendom,” (Latin: *Christianitas*) and can be seen as an expression of the notion of “commonality” or an awareness of common connections despite and/or together with the understanding of precise and unique localities. See, “‘Europe’ in the Middle Ages,” in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union, vol. 13*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 74-75; 89-90. For a fascinating study on how the language used by Europeans to describe and define the native peoples of India and the New World reveals the complex and changing dynamics of “identity,” see: Colette Callier-Boisvert, “Observer, nommer au XVIIe siècle: Les “gentils” du Brésil,” *L’Homme*, 153, (Observer, Nommer, Classer; Jan.-Mar., 2000): 37-61.

More detailed T-O maps such as a mappamundi from a French psalter, which predates the *Atlas Miller* by over 200 years, lay out the world by way of a sacred relationship to the location of Jerusalem, which is placed at the very center as a point of orientation for Christendom (fig. 2-28). The furthest margins of the map are reserved for the fantastical and the unknown, yet imagined, regions and inhabitants of the world, that mark the boundaries of outsiders (fig. 2-28). Like we saw in the map of Brazil, dragons and other imaginative creatures signal the edges of knowledge. Thus, the introduction of the Americas into the European imagination worked in a similar way and forced a shift in the mechanics of identity as well as the way identity could be represented. The edges of maps could mark a zone of the unencountered and we see that within the imagery of the Adoration of the Magi, with its reliance on the witness of “foreigners”—generally understood as “eastern” but freely adapted to other regions of the world—artists had always had recourse to ways of picturing the unforeseen discoveries and, most importantly, accounting for their presence in a foretold, divine plan of salvation.

Serge Gruzinski’s concept of “mestizo mechanisms” provides crucial direction in assessing the complexities of identities—and their metaphors—generated through the contact and borrowings between cultures. Gruzinski applies the term *mestizo* to the condition of permeability and exchange that exists between and among cultural and geographic distinctions, that is, those “...conceptual constructs [that] challenge the alleged universality of our vision of things, because they yield forms of temporality and historicity irreducible to our own.”¹⁶⁵ It is just these sorts of “irreducible forms” of

¹⁶⁵ Gruzinski, *Mestizo Mind*, 27.

comparison that leave unaccounted-for differences to proliferate and therefore demand visual narrative platforms flexible enough to encompass their appearances.

The networks and gaps among seen, imagined, known, unseen, unimagined, and unknown are precisely the paradoxes these Adoration images deal in, and thus refuse to resolve. In our role as viewers and interpreters of metaphor, we are responsible for taking stock of the questions of agency within the “new worlds” generated by these images; that is, who (artist, patron, ruler, kingdom) shapes whose world order and through what metaphoric means? In the case of a wayfaring and mobile Portuguese fleet in the sixteenth century, we can’t escape questioning what happens when entirely new worlds *are* created: new physical boundaries, “new” peoples, new commodities, all contained within the political reach of absolute monarchy. Moreover, and most significantly, how do we chart the shift of identities between art, metaphor, and life?

Concepts Carried by Images of the Adoration of the Magi

My approach to the image of the praying woman and the portolan chart of Brazil offer strategies for apprehending material and immaterial meanings generated by visual forms and the generative play of spaces. The images from Portugal operate similarly but an intriguing level of complexity arises through the addition of scenes of the Adoration of the Magi in the *Manuel Hours* and in the pontifical manuscript. It is important then to recognize the theological and cultural significance of the Adoration as it is understood to operate within images. Overall, images of the Adoration of the Magi recount the New Testament story of the wise men from the east who travel by star in search of the Christ

child. In the sixteenth-century, viewers could rely on pictures of this story to do three things: to draw parallels between the journey of the magi that ends before the Virgin Mary and Christ and their own travel to the altar to partake of communion; to present a vision of the experience of the first incarnation of Christ to the Gentiles, that is to outsiders; and finally for that vision, in some way, to make pointed reference to their contemporary world through the figures of the magi. These two sixteenth-century images of the Adoration do all of these things, but it is the complex visual integration of the theological notions of the incarnation of Christ with the worldly concerns of royal legitimacy and authority that makes these images especially rich.

As outlined in the Introduction, the magi story often refuses easy interpretations. Its treatment by artists and patrons plainly indicates that the story functions as a site to summon, construct, and promote new categorizations, perceptions, and even narratives. Thus, these images must also be read as key examples of how this biblical story is imagined, and imaged, to contain great potential for fashioning an understanding of one's own position (e.g., especially if you are a king) as well as how that position stands within the larger sacred and profane narratives.¹⁶⁶

As a metaphorical representation of the Catholic Mass, with the faithful (Magi) gathered at the altar (Mary, as the "altar" for the body of Christ, just as we saw in the *Mary of Burgundy Hours*), the Adoration calls attention to the importance of vision and

¹⁶⁶ "Profane" is used here to denote *worldly* efforts and cannot always be kept strictly distinct from the aims of human efforts at grasping the sacred. As is made clear with these images, these notions are intricately intertwined.

witness as part of belief in the sacred nature of the Eucharist.¹⁶⁷ As historian Miri Rubin points out, the host itself is understood as a miraculous vision seen every day in the course of the Mass.¹⁶⁸ To have a glance of the host was considered a blessed event and often considered in the minds of the faithful, comparable to partaking. The idea of “visual revelation” signals the crucial role that vision plays for insight, knowledge, and faith, and yet paradoxically, also the role it plays in seeing the unseen. As with the Vienna Master’s illumination (and one additional below), the ability to produce an imaginative image as a result of contemplation enables direct devotion to the divine desired by the faithful.

At first glance then, the choice of picturing the Adoration of the Magi in conjunction with coins and precious gems as seen in the *Manuel Hours Adoration* and that of the pontifical, seems to highlight the standard symbolic relationships among the three “Kings,” gifts, and salvation (figs. 2-15 and 2-16). This is a sound conclusion when taken together with the patronage of the manuscripts: one book commissioned by a king for devotional use, and another by D. Manuel’s cardinal-son that marks the initiation of the Court of the Inquisition within Portugal.¹⁶⁹ Through the auspices of divine intervention, the king’s manuscript connects and embodies rule over a worldly kingdom; the cardinal’s, over a religious kingdom. The two coin-embellished pages within the

¹⁶⁷ Like Christ’s invitation to his doubting disciple Thomas to touch his wounds, vision and witness is understood as divine accommodation for human needs.

¹⁶⁸ Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 112-114.

¹⁶⁹ In regard to uncertainties surrounding the patronage of Ms. 14, whether the commission came from Manuel I and/or his son João III, I remain in the camp that maintains that Manuel I was the patron of significant portions of the illuminations and corresponding texts, and specifically, the illumination of the Adoration of the Magi. This question is explored further later in this chapter.

manuscripts reveal one of the ways in which meaning is exchanged and created between these realms and how that meaning is promulgated within Portuguese culture.

Straight away, a viewer of these two Adoration images faces manifold possibilities of symbolic replacements and substitutions. The gold and silver coins pictured in the borders recall the typical attributes of the magi pictured at center: that of gifts and gift-giving, which within this setting is a reciprocal act. There are many visual examples that show one of the magi (usually the eldest and closest) offering gold coins and quite often the gifts are shown as being held within a liturgical vessel as a reference to the Eucharistic offering. The gifts of the magi are simply one way to allude to the “greater gift” of Christ’s body and through him, an anticipated salvation. On a more intricate level, the coins and the magi, together with their symbolic links to the Christian Eucharist and the Incarnation of Christ (or any incarnation), instigate and ensure transcendent meanings. These are meanings that move beyond the limits of experience and become the conduit for access to conditions far outside the material and representational presence, yet as we saw in the Burgundian examples, are imaged nonetheless and imaged, in part, due to the human desire to satisfy corporal senses. Picturing divine presence, for example, the Incarnation (God made man; word made flesh), and transubstantiation (God made bread and wine) is haunted by the very indeterminacy of images, made all the more changeable as they travel through culture where, through handling and repetition, they gather accretions to some meanings and the forgetting of others. This productive indeterminacy recalls the generative friction of borders surrounding images.

These larger theological and/or cultural meanings can become powerful through their dissemination and circulation through actual physical economies by way of illuminated manuscripts, paintings, altarpieces, luxury items, texts, prints, and so on, but also through sacred economies as well: the exchange of meaning through religious actions. For example, Miri Rubin notes how, in the late middle ages, often the procession of the Eucharist during the feast of Corpus Christi served as a way to weave together various anachronistic lines of sacred and profane influence and tradition, perhaps an ancient and unrelated route taken for the journey joined by the relics of a local saint, the two of which, through proximity to the host, then become part of a community's shared experience of holy objects and spaces.¹⁷⁰ To picture such an experience requires the ability to capture spiritual sensibilities in some visual form.

Often these powerful meanings come to serve powerful ideologies of religion and politics. Since the image of the Adoration of the Magi in the sixteenth century is designed to mirror the central procession of the Catholic Mass, we equate the magi before the Holy Family with the travel of the faithful to the altar to see and taste the body of Christ mystically present in the coin-shaped elements. Further equations can be inferred between the status of these wise men, who by the sixteenth century are typically imagined as kings or noblemen, and the status afforded the faithful. Yet, in the end, most of the Adoration's power turns on what is *not* directly pictured here: the very elements of the Eucharist, the divine presence, which can only be insinuated through visual metaphor and taken on faith.

¹⁷⁰ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 267-269.

Thus, magi and coins exist as both symbols and discrete examples. Within the larger category of “magi” rest distinct models of wise men, kings, pilgrims, and religious converts, whose definitive characteristics—number, race, location, names, position, and significance—have always been ambiguous. Certainly, church teaching says these wise men with three types of gifts came from provinces somewhere east of Bethlehem, under the direction of a star, to pay homage to an infant. What artists, theologians, and the faithful practice however, in ritual, liturgical plays, texts, and images, can differ considerably from this simple story; in fact, its simplicity fairly invites divergent practices and interpretations. The differences among story, representation, and ritual reveal a range of codified and non-codified beliefs and are where we can look for the active and reactive, living and amorphous imagination surrounding the magi, and how culture puts these figures to work to produce meaning. These differences disclose the imprint of a cultural imagination that often struggles to find context and location for the new, for the unexpected, for the inexplicable. The figures and actions of the magi are frequently utilized for picturing just such newness.

The same logic underpinning the work of the magi easily turns to exemplify the work of “coins” and “currency,” where the play of meanings quickly blurs the line between material and immaterial realms; where the merging and muddle of hazy distinctions between one realm and another (presence/absence; sacred/profane; worldly/divine) generates and manufactures new realizations. In the case of these two Portuguese Adoration scenes, patrons and artists put this imaginative potential to work crafting complex relationships between the theological aspects of the main image of the

Adoration and the surrounding border filled with naturalistically-rendered coins. Thus, the scene of the Incarnation of Christ as first witnessed by man¹⁷¹ joins the worldly symbols of kings, sovereignty, and conquest in an age of Portugal's increasing navigational, political, and commercial prominence that is realized largely through exploits outside its peninsular borders, stretching to Asia, Africa, and the Americas beginning in the fifteenth century.

Like the coins pictured alongside it, the representation of the Adoration, together with the sacrificial and incarnational references it contains, are exchangeable entities. Coins, the Eucharist (and by its nature, the Incarnation), and the Adoration, all share an imaginative potential dimension: they hold the capacity to harbor meanings that are difficult, if not impossible, to represent. Like all symbolic systems, these manuscript images ultimately refer to meanings outside their own representations; meanings which are not completely stable across time. Rather, attending to the unstable meanings of these works as it pertains to the notion of "incarnation" suggests that through the material image, despite our limited human capacity, we might comprehend the ephemeral quality of embodiment, of divine presence, of sovereignty, both divine and worldly. The challenge put to the artist to materialize mutable, transient abstractions is precisely why rooting out symbolic pedigrees in the pursuit of some vaguely knowable or perhaps unknowable original intent, is untenable. By placing this group of images—the Vienna Master's illuminations, the *Atlas Miller*, and the meanings carried by the magi—around

¹⁷¹ The sequence of verses in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter two, that describes the journey of the Magi, the "adoration of the magi" (verse 11) marks the first revelation to Gentiles (that is, non-Jews, and "outsiders") of Christ incarnated as man. The Annunciation, the moment of "word made flesh" in the womb of Mary is also referred to as "The Incarnation." In a sense, a key difference between the two is visual and relies on human witness.

the three manuscript pictures, my point has been to expose parts of the possible networks in operation through the course of the production of these images in order to “leave open” potential which, in that way, mimics the operation of the sacred. Now to turn to those three manuscript pictures.

Manuscript Formats and Artistic Choices

Within the specific, traditional format of illuminated manuscripts, artists and patrons rely on conventional expectations for the content and formats of religious books. The *Crónica de D. João I* is not a book intended for devotional purposes, but rather follows a narrative that is roughly chronological (fig. 2-19). While the chronicle is illuminated on nearly every one of its oversized parchment pages (21 in. x 15 in.), the illuminations only comprise vignettes, decorative initials, or marginalia that are sometimes related to the words they surround and sometimes not.¹⁷² Not surprisingly, the presentation of the text is clearly the aim of this book. At the same time, of course, the very size of the manuscript, its subject matter, and its lavish use of materials and labor in the age of the printing press¹⁷³ are deliberate choices and make a statement of their own.

Devotional books typically involve much more imagery than chronicles and other secular works. As James Marrow has noted, even when secular manuscripts do employ

¹⁷² I consulted the outstanding facsimile of this chronicle held at UC Santa Barbara. Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de D. João I: Primeira Parte, Códice Iluminado Da Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid (Vit. 28-5) [facsimile; 2 Vols.]*, ed. Maria Angela Beirante, Pedro Dias, and João Alves Dias (Madrid: SAEPA-Sociedad Anonima de Ediciones y Promociones Audiovisuales; Alfragide, Portugal: Ediclube-Edição e Promoção do Livro, 1995).

¹⁷³ The arrival and adoption of printing to Portugal comes later than northern Europe, yet clearly the court had access since Manuel I chose to have his *Ordenações Manuelinas* printed and not copied by hand.

large numbers of illustrations, they vary in scope and imagination. As we saw with the *Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, a “book of hours” is a visual and textual aid to daily prayer. The books are small; use is private and intimate. A pontifical manuscript contains the offices generally reserved for the bishop to perform and is typically a larger format for easier reading in public gatherings and logically, is more text-heavy. Cardinal Henrique’s pontifical measures 13.3 in. x 9.5 in.

For both of these types of manuscripts, the choice of texts and scripture to be included, and the manner which the text and images will be presented, are somewhat flexible. There is nothing exceptional in this case that within the larger realm of artistic commissions, patrons and artists have a number of options among the given images for each text. Yet, paying attention to the choice and content of images accompanying the text for the Mass of the Epiphany (in Cardinal Henrique’s pontifical) (fig. 2-18) and for the Hours of the Virgin (in Manuel’s Book of Hours) (fig. 2-17), yields clues to comprehending which political, dynastic, cultural, and religious notions were expected to be generated from the juxtaposition of the central, sacred scene with the worldly, material borders of gems and coins. At the same time, these expectations are mediated by our own understanding of history, not available to the image or the image-maker at its inception, and in the end, my work does not seek to excise any alteration effected by the image or its use over time and within history.

In the case of the *Livro de Horas dito de Dom Manuel*, it is easy enough to describe the verso of folio 87 as an enframed image of The Adoration surrounded by a painted border of coins, pearls and gems, executed in the same tradition and era of the

“Ghent-Bruges School” of Flemish manuscript illumination as the Vienna Master’s work in the Hours of Mary of Burgundy (fig. 2-4).¹⁷⁴ In fact, the manuscript is quite conventional in its choice of content and organization and the choices of illuminations for subjects, saints, and biblical narratives.¹⁷⁵ The standard fare for a book of hours is all here (in order) and computational tables (fig. 2-31); a year-long calendar of feast days, illuminated with inventive, detailed, genre scenes appropriate for the occupations of each month (fig. 2-32); the gospel according to St. John (fig. 2-33);¹⁷⁶ the Hours of the Virgin

¹⁷⁴ See Jan Van der Stock’s brief article for insight into the guild and trade aspects of illuminated manuscript production, which, not surprisingly, was fraught with economic and human frailties and disagreements. Van der Stock also notes the practice of court delegates employing artisans, cooks, and other specialist tradespeople from the Low Countries, who were then expected to travel to far-flung regions such as Portugal to produce their wares (119-120). See “Flemish Illuminated Manuscripts: Assessing Archival Evidence,” in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006), 117-121.

¹⁷⁵ For the state of manuscript studies, and particularly the field’s regrettable focus (at times) on concerns of connoisseurship and stylistic categories (“the preliminary levels of engagement [taken] with illustrated manuscripts”), see James H. Marrow, “Scholarship on Flemish Manuscript Illumination of the Renaissance: Remarks on Past, Present, and Future,” in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006), 163-176. Over two decades earlier, Michael Camille expressed a similar concern regarding the conservative state of manuscript studies in Michael Camille, “Opening the Book: A Review of the Present State of Manuscript Studies,” review of Pierpont Morgan Library Exhibition, “Last Flowering: French Painting in Manuscripts 1420-1530,” ed. John Plummer (with the assistance of Gregory Clark); and of Sandra Hindman, ed., *The Early Illustrated Book: Essays in Honor of Lessing J. Rosenwald*; and of D.H. Turner, ed., *The Hastings Hours*; and of John Plummer’s and Gregory Clark’s *The Last Flowering: French Painting in Manuscripts 1420-1530 From American Collections*, *Art History* 7, no. 4 (December 1984): 508-514.

¹⁷⁶ One of the arguments used to name João III (son of Manuel I) as the patron of Ms. 14 centers on the two pages dedicated to St. John in this manuscript: as the opening to the Gospel of John on fol. 25r, John sits on the isle of Patmos with the border of the page showing a contemporary view of Lisbon’s ship-filled riverfront on the Tagus; and the saint’s page on fol. 269r (for both, see fig. 2-33). However, Manuel’s predecessor was João II, and the inclusion of St. John as a patron saint might just as logically refer to this king. Moreover, a reference to João I, whose reign marks the establishment of the House of Avis (1385), Manuel’s own lineage, must also be considered. The full page of fol. 25r is notable for its views of the hills and city of Lisbon and specifically of the Paço da Ribeira (destroyed in the earthquake of 1755) built by Manuel I, which overlooks the river Tagus. See Dagoberto Markl, *Livro de Horas de D. Manuel*, 101-104; M.A. Beaumont,

(abbreviated liturgical “services” fulfilling the eight calls to prayer per day), the core devotional section for which the book is named;¹⁷⁷ the Office of the Dead (fig. 2-34);¹⁷⁸ the Hours of the Cross; many pages devoted to saints; and the gospel according to St. Mark.

Traditionally attributed to the Flemish-trained, Portuguese artist António de Holanda and his workshop, this hand-sized devotional book was produced in fits and starts over several decades— between 1517 and roughly 1551—and comprise 304 folios (610 pages) of text and illuminated miniatures painted in tempera, gold, and silver on thin parchment.¹⁷⁹ A total of 58 pages are illuminated, many of them fully. The full-page illumination on folio 87v (thus located on the viewer’s left) appears in the central section of the manuscript devoted to the Hours of the Virgin. The folio is inserted at the end of

“Livro de Horas de D. Manuel: Evangelho de S. João,” *Observador* 16 (4 June 1971): 61-62; Susannah Humble Ferreira, “Inventing the Courtier in Early Sixteenth-Century Portugal,” in *Contested Spaces of Nobility in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Matthew Romaniello and Charles Lipp (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 93-95. Finally, another consideration would have to include Manuel’s affection for St. John the Divine, supposed author of the Book of Revelation, and Manuel’s identification with “Messianism.” See Disney, *History of Portugal*, 143-144; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Career and Legend of Vasco da Gama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 54-57; LFR Thomaz, “Factions, interests, and messianism: the politics of Portuguese expansion in the east, 1500-1521,” *Indian Social and Economic History Review* 28 (March 1991): 100-109. Thomaz points out the near-frenzy built up around the coming millennium of 1500 combined with the continuing designs on Jerusalem and the desire to defeat the Muslim empire. Discussed further below.

¹⁷⁷ Those are: matins; lauds; prime; terce; sext; none; vespers; compline. The illumination of the Adoration of the Magi typically appears as introduction to the prayers for sext.

¹⁷⁸ Two illuminations (fig. 2-34) in this section show a view of the streets of Lisbon: fol. 129v thought by Vasco Graça Moura to show the burial of D. João II at center while the border shows the funeral procession for D. Manuel I and again, a view of the Paço da Ribeira; and fol. 130r that Moura proposes shows the repatriation of João II’s remains (ordered by Manuel I in 1499) as the initial and in the borders, the funeral procession of Manuel I along an avenue through Lisbon. See VG Moura, “Damião de Góis Eo Livro de Horas Dito de D. Manuel,” *Arte Ibérica* (1999): 3–26.

¹⁷⁹ Size: 14.2 cm x 10.8 cm. The definitive monograph on this manuscript is Dagoberto Markl’s *Livro de Horas de D. Manuel: Estudo introductório de Dagoberto Markl* (Lisbon: Crédito Predial Português and Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1983).

the prayers and scriptures that constitute the third hour (0900) of prayer known as *Terce*¹⁸⁰ and those of the beginning of the sixth hour (1200), *Sext*, traditionally associated with the image of the Adoration of the Magi (fig. 2-35).

Yet, despite its conventional structural and thematic attributes, the artist has devised a composition and perspective within folio 87v (and several other pages) not unlike that of the pages from the Burgundian manuscript examined earlier. The full-page image is somewhat perplexing, and requires the viewer's patience to comprehend all that appears on the page. Visual disorientation becomes a metaphor for our scramble to unwind the uncertainties representation. Together with the way the image links with current life in Portugal, the composition recalls the precarious position of political, world, and historical borders; that is, what supports these entities, what are their beginnings and endings?¹⁸¹

When studied more carefully, the edges of the page that contain gems and coins against a blue background only become edges or borders of the page when we understand that the enframed central image appears to be placed on top of a foundation bed of coins and gems. These objects cast shadows to the right while the background is painted to

¹⁸⁰ *Terce* begins at nine in the morning and typically is associated with illuminations of the Adoration of the Shepherds. In this manuscript, this scene appears on fol. 81v.

¹⁸¹ Anja Grebe explores the developments in page composition and design within the first works of what scholars refer to as the "Ghent-Bruges" school of manuscript illumination. In describing the imaginative construction of space in the *Book of Hours of Philipp of Cleves* (late fifteenth century), she notes the "oscillation between the two modes of perspective" pictured in many of the manuscripts coming out of this region in the late fifteenth century. The oscillation is really one between the older historiated-type border and the *trompe-l'oeil*, illusionistic borders that this school is known for introducing. The difference in perspective between the two is also plays with the representation of sacred and profane time and space. See "The Art of the Edge: Frames and Page-Design in Manuscripts of the Ghent-Bruges-School," in *The Metamorphosis of Marginal Images: From Antiquity to Present Time*, ed. by Nurith Kenaan-kedar and Asher Ovadiah (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2001), 94.

mimic a recessed space—or a bed—below the page into which the coins rest, with the corners of the bed painted darker to suggest depth. The central image of the Adoration is then set apart from this bed/background with the use of a painted-in, round-topped frame of two-tiered panel moulding, like that of a picture frame. With its rounded top, the form clearly recalls the frame of a paneled altarpiece very similar to the rounded window frame and round-topped altarpiece seen in the illumination of the praying woman. Since the border is only recognized as a border once the framed scene is “put in place,” as it were, strict definitions of composition and meaning become murky. In fact, it would be more accurate to describe the artist’s intention here as to portray a framed picture supported by a bed of coins, gems, and pearls.

In his explication of the role of sacred images in creating “inhabited” spaces, and the different operations afforded the framed and the unframed image, art historian Hans Belting notes how the frame surrounding an image, with its obvious parallels to the window, works to place the viewer at a distance—in time, space, and presence—from a sacred vision or locality. Further, a group of framed images, while isolated one from another, might produce a vision of an entirely separate realm—one that is outside our experience—that these images inhabit.¹⁸² Yet, in the case of the image of a woman holding her own devotional book as we saw in the Book of Hours of Mary of Burgundy, these realms of sacred time and space are those that one might *enter* and inhabit. While the central image of the Adoration of the Magi in the *Manuel Hours* approximates the

¹⁸² Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 173-174.

shape of a window, and the composition and perspective plays with the notion of a view “through” the page, this page is not decidedly a “window view.”

In his study of the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy, Otto Pächt traces a progressive change in the Flemish book painters’ repertoire of page illusions in the late fifteenth century.¹⁸³ While scholars have supplemented and revised Pächt’s attributions since his monograph was published in 1948, perhaps Pächt’s greater contribution lies in his elegant approach to the compositions, perspectives, and effects of these inventive book illuminations. Pächt points out that artists are playing with the illusory potential of the book page, starting with the central images themselves, which are painted to mimic the natural world in terms of recession into space and logical spatial relationships among objects.¹⁸⁴ He notes that in the manuscripts pre-dating the types of illuminations emerging from the artists practicing around the Flemish region of Ghent and Bruges in the late fifteenth century, artists surrounded these central scenes with decorative borders (commonly vines and flora) that are flattened and two dimensional (fig. 2-10).¹⁸⁵ This format calls attention to the spatial differences between the borders and the main scene and further, clearly demarcates these two spatial experiences by enframing the central scene. Pächt describes the work of the border in these mostly earlier manuscripts as a necessary space of transition: one that “camouflages the antagonism between that part of

¹⁸³ Pächt, *Master of Mary of Burgundy*.

¹⁸⁴ At times, these central spaces are occupied with text set apart from the space of the border with a frame.

¹⁸⁵ These types of borders are sometimes called “hairspray” borders.

the page which is imaginary space and the other which is plain surface or flat substratum of script.”¹⁸⁶

However, Pächt’s primary concern is with the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy’s later, influential innovation of filling borders with objects that themselves appear to have weight, occupy space, and cast shadows (as if flowers, jewels, shells, or what have you, have been strewn or scattered on the page),¹⁸⁷ the legacy of which is evident in the *Manuel Hours*. Pächt characterizes this innovation as a solution to a compositional failure, one that “solve[s] the inner conflict between the conception of the book-page as a primarily planimetric organism and its treatment as an opening into a recession of depth.”¹⁸⁸

A more expansive reading accepts each style on its merits and each as simply containing divergent approaches to the representation of space(s). The later works, starting with the Vienna Master’s innovations, display a level of multidimensional complexity that marks a search for, or need for, envisioning space and time in a different way. Artists could have chosen to fill the page with the image of the Adoration, yet they understood the generative potential of the margins and they chose to utilize them to explore the visual facets of what are typically very complex mixtures of sacred text, textual and visual apocrypha, and exegesis. As far as the example of the woman at prayer, through the artist’s placement of her in the border, we implicitly understand that this woman occupies a different space *and time* from that of the central scene (especially

¹⁸⁶ Pächt, *Master of Mary of Burgundy*, 24-25.

¹⁸⁷ Thus the term “scatter border” is used at times to describe this style.

¹⁸⁸ Pächt, *Master of Mary of Burgundy*, 25.

in the sense that the prayerful woman before the window cannot physically inhabit two spaces at once).

There is evidence that the innovations begun by the Vienna Master were specifically desired by patrons and were likely seen as fashionable as well.¹⁸⁹ For example, in the *Hours of Engelbert of Nassau* (Mss. 219 / 220, Bodleian Library, Oxford), scholars discovered that most of the hairspray borders¹⁹⁰ (aside from those with text) had been overpainted, thus leaving only three of that style in the manuscript. The double page illumination for the *Adoration of the Magi* (fols. 145v and 146r) is a key example of this revision, where the new border reflected the types of illusionistic borders the Vienna Master became known for and clearly known for in his time. The central scene on the verso is of the Adoration itself while that on the recto is a scene of the Journey of the Magi (fig. 2-36).¹⁹¹ Initially, the borders were of the hairspray type, which can be seen throughout the manuscript. However, at some point, the patron, possibly Engelbert of Nassau, a nobleman attached to the Burgundian court of Charles the Bold (father of Mary of Burgundy) and Philip the Fair, and whose motto and arms appear in the book, commissioned the Vienna Master to re-paint some of the illuminations in the

¹⁸⁹ Anja Grebe points out that when the two types of borders, hairspray and scatter, appear together in one manuscript, it is often the case that a “hierarchical difference” exists between the two, with the older hairspray borders left to the “minor openings” and the illusionistic borders saved for the most important. See “Art of the Edge,” 97.

¹⁹⁰ “Hairspray border” or “scatter border” describes the type of flatter, two-dimensional illumination one can imagine spraying out of a can or as if the spray is on the page and the flowers, etc., are flattened onto it.

¹⁹¹ The *Manuel Hours* also contains another reference to the Three Magi, which is not unusual. On fol. 277r, the elaborately dressed men are shown on horseback as the illumination for the suffrage to the Three Kings. The border pictures illusionistic, regularly-spaced jeweled pendants, pearls, and silver vessels. As the kings and their horses seem to be aimed in different directions, we can assume that this is a reference to their journey, and perhaps specifically their return.

manuscript. For the Adoration, the artist repainted the borders across both pages to resemble a series of carved and decorative wooden compartments that hold items such as ceramics (some of which allude to the Eucharist),¹⁹² flowers and vases, bowls of berries, and peacock feathers.¹⁹³ The result is a border that suggests a space of the viewer through the display of worldly objects while through a window opening, the scene of the Adoration unfolds inside a dilapidated structure in the countryside.

The artists working on the *Manuel Hours*, and specifically the page for the Adoration of the Magi, sought just the sort of “solution” to the space and creative limitations imposed by the two-dimensional page. That artists are considering the ability of a painted and inscribed manuscript to relay a sense of the inter-related phenomena of time and space makes perfect sense in regard to the format of the book of hours: a type of devotional book organized around the gradations of sacred and profane time and space, from the minute and mundane details of the viewer’s world, through to the infinite and the boundless of the otherworldly. The ordering of time anchors the structure and contents of the book of hours and is part of the church’s efforts to ensure uniformity across Christendom. These gradations of time and space appear in the *Manuel Hours* and represent a containment of sorts for all manner of temporal divisions—liturgical,

¹⁹² The lusterware albarello vase or jar (probably from Spain) in the right lower corner (fol. 146r) is decorated with grapevines and is nearly identical to the vase pictured in the central scene of the Adoration of the Shepherds from the *Portinari Altarpiece* by Hugo van der Goes, where it is placed near a shaft of wheat and filled with irises and lilies (flowers of the Virgin). A short clear glass vase, very similar to the one seen in the Engelbert hours at lower right (fol. 145v) holding columbine and carnations (references to the Passion) sits nearby. This artist is typically seen as a key influence in the work of the Vienna Master (and at times has been suggested as the master himself). The Engelbert manuscript is roughly contemporary with this image (1476-1479).

¹⁹³ As seen in the Mary of Burgundy pages, all of the items in the border are symbolic references to the life of the Virgin and to the Eucharist. In addition, these objects in part likely make a reference to pilgrimage and the goods one might gather for keepsakes along the way.

seasonal, zodiacal, lunar,¹⁹⁴ solar, leap years, weeks, Sundays— but also the eight divisions of the Hours of the Virgin, a marking of sacred time that was meant to order the devout's every day.

Time, Space, and Presence

The image of the Adoration in the *Manuel Hours* dates as the earliest of the three “coined” illuminated pages. In this full-page illumination, we view the enframed Adoration as if we are looking through the page. At center, the three magi join Joseph in kneeling before the Virgin and Child (fig. 2-35). The scene takes place before the ruins of a large Roman-style building in the immediate background. A round-arched portal in the back wall opens to a cityscape beyond and simultaneously frames the mother and child. A retinue of travelers together with camels and elephants having just proceeded through a city gate is lightly sketched into the middle and distant background at left. Closest to the shallow gray step painted at the very edge of the foreground at left, stand two men with their backs to us, surely the first of this retinue to arrive (fig. 2-37).

The two men are outfitted in brightly-colored costumes, complete with iridescent pantaloons, striped hose, and pastel-colored tunics ornamented with jewels. The men wear large, complexly constructed hats, one with twisting bands of color topped with tassels. Their triangular shapes might reference the Phrygian hat, the ancient headgear often worn by the magi from the earliest images. Similar headgear is seen in other images and is meant to emphasize the exotic or the outsider. Several examples of this

¹⁹⁴ Key for calculating the date of Easter by way of the “Golden Number,” an example of which is included on fol. 1r (fig. 2-31).

unique headdress can also be seen on the edge of a confessional door and on a carved pier along the nave of the Mosteiro dos Jerónimos (or Mosteiro de Sta. Maria de Bélem) begun 1501), the monastery and church complex in Belém [Bethlehem], outside of Lisbon, which was commissioned by Manuel I (fig. 2-38 and 2-39).¹⁹⁵ Significantly, the elaborate and expensive monastery and church sit along the Tagus River and near the Torre de Belém, the iconic watchtower and launching point for maritime activities. The complex was dedicated to the safe return of sailors and navigators and is the prime example of Manueline-style architecture (fig. 2-40).¹⁹⁶ Reminiscent of the dragon inhabiting the distant edge of the *Atlas Miller*, the confessional sculptures join other imaginative stone beings on the lintels, such as a crowned but inelegant bearded king and a wild man who sticks out his tongue (fig 2-38). Above the door, three joined portrait heads all wearing the twisted and tasseled cap become a corbel for a statue niche (fig 2-39). One can imagine that the significance of these hybrid creatures and strange beings was not lost on the sailors filing into the confessionals who were to embark on dangerous journeys. Nearby, on the base of one pier in the nave, a nude, pot-bellied “dwarf” rides a winged serpent reminiscent of the dragon on the edge of the atlas (fig. 2-39). All of these sculptures of course are literally deemed “marginal” by their placement and are safely removed from the main aisle itself, helping to define and guard the limits of the sacred and its spaces.

Of the two elaborately-costumed men with hats at the left edge of the *Manuel Hours* illumination, one wears an ornate black and gold scabbard, its curling metal tip

¹⁹⁵ For history of the structures at Bélem, see Paulo Pereira, *Jerónimos Abbey of Santa Maria* (London: Scala, 2002).

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

and sword handle drawing our eye to the curled tips of his elaborate short red boots with spurs (fig. 2-37). His ornamentation rhymes visually with the capitals topping the two red columns just to his left. Across a space occupied by an alert, wiry black dog, are two more men: one with dark brown skin wearing a pale blue loin cloth with fringed ends, pointed shoes, and belled anklets. His long, black hair emerges from under a bright white headdress with two fabric ends extending upward. His profile is echoed in the gold coin in the border to his right (fig. 2-41). In his hands, he holds a long shield, its red interior close to his body, its convex black face projecting outwards. Similar figures appear in the massive print commissioned by Maximilian I (a cousin of D. Manuel I through D. Duarte [Edward] of Portugal) known as the *Triumphs of Emperor Maximilian I* (1512-1526) in the section completed by Hans Burgkmair entitled “Savages of Calicut” (fig. 2-42).¹⁹⁷ However, in the same set are men with bare torsos dressed in feather skirts and crowns that hew closer to images of the Tupi peoples of Brazil, similar to the three figures on the *Atlas Miller* map. Finally, in the Manuel *Adoration*, at the far right a man dressed in red and pink looks out at us and catches our gaze, and even though roughly half of his face is visible, his position at the edge and “behind” the frame of the picture draws our eye to him (fig. 2-41).

Figures and architecture crowd the framed scene, but the composition imposes order through the way it organizes existence within time as a progression of space. This visual organization is key to the workings of this image, since in this case, this sense of time follows a history of salvation in order to confer a blessing on those who look on.

¹⁹⁷ The article by Colette Callier-Boisvert, “Observer, nommer au XVI^e siècle: Les ‘gentils’ du Brésil,” addresses the nuances of the terms used by Europeans to describe peoples encountered in the New World and India. In *L’Homme; Observer, Nommer, Classer* 153 (2000): 37–61.

The artist achieves this in a couple of ways. First, as noted earlier, he relies on the long-practiced artistic trope of juxtaposing simplified architectural forms with ornate forms to suggest the advent of a new era with the birth of Christ. Second, he employs a strong vertical axis that causes our eye to work from back to front, effectively situating the viewer in the very currency of time yet within an arc of time that is visually unbroken. Thus Joseph, the Virgin, and the Christ child sit before a building that even in its massiveness appears to deteriorate before our very eyes, signaling the passing of time within an arrival that announces the future (fig. 2-43).

Art historians, Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood apply the term “wrinkled temporality” to the effect generated by the use of contrasting forms of architecture, and especially the use of ruins, in Nativity and Adoration scenes. They note the effective way in which this comparison pushes ancient time and contemporary time together, writing: “[t]he primitive hut and the grand architecture of the ancients do not simply occupy two distant moments on a timeline; they are mutually necessary fantasies, knitted together repeatedly in the projections of Renaissance art and architecture.”¹⁹⁸ However, the Adoration scene from the *Manuel Hours* accomplishes this wrinkling of time not through the ruins of an ancient temple juxtaposed with a humble makeshift hut, but with the inclusion in the mid-ground of the massive red columns with their highly ornate capitals

¹⁹⁸ *Anachronic Renaissance*, 308; also 305-309. Summarizing work done by Georg Simmel and later, Sabine Forero-Mendoza, Nagel and Wood eloquently note the further symbolic interpretation of the comparison and folding together of architectural forms in time and as time, “[a]t the moment when the collapse of the building destroys the form, the opposing parts of the building break down into their originary and universal ‘hostility,’ revealing the inability of form to overcome matter.” See 439, n.2.

that clearly mark a difference in time from their rectilinear predecessors from the temple in the background.

The marble columns position before the temple become symbolic attributes of ruin and the consequent “new” event superseding the old (fig. 2-44). The two massive and intact red and gray striated marble columns topped with ornate capitals gain strength (and significance) by their relationship to the frail remnants of the temple which, in its turn, serves to remind the viewer of his or her own impermanence and vulnerability to the passage of time, and the determinate path to salvation that encompasses them. Compared to the drab background building, these columns compare easily to the brightly-dressed figures surrounding them suggesting they share this temporal space.

The paired red marble columns make an appearance in two other scenes of the Adoration of the Magi from Portugal, each painted on panel and contemporary with the *Manuel Hours* Adoration. In the *Adoration of the Magi* from the São Bento altarpiece by Gregório Lopes and Jorge Leal (MNAA 5 Pint), the twin red columns line up one behind the other along a wall of a large building behind Mary (fig. 2-45). The parallel, vertical lines of the shafts draw our eyes from the foreground into the distance and contrast strongly in style and color to the somber, muted tones of the stone building. The painting was commissioned by Rainha D. Leonor [Queen Leonor], wife of D. João II, predecessor to D. Manuel I, who was her brother. In the second painting, also from an altarpiece, and attributed to the Master of 1515 (MNAA 1289 Pint), once again the two red columns with ornate capitals appear behind Mary but this time in juxtaposition to a darker brown column with a rectilinear capital that supports a dilapidated building in the distance (fig.

2-46). Further on, a single column in ruins appears with only the shaft and base remaining amid an empty plaza.¹⁹⁹ The three sets of columns follow back into the picture and trace a sense of passing time signaled by their states of decay.²⁰⁰

The temple's ancient architectural forms of sturdy square columns topped by simplified, straight-lined capitals and its arched portal are no match for neglect and the passage of time as the roof's ragged holes open to the sky. Once a grand temple, it is now only suitable for stabling the ox and the ass just visible at right. Just in view at the top edge of the picture, the rays of the star followed by the magi further emphasize this shift from old to new while simultaneously sanctifying this advent. The rays shine from above the ruined building, slicing between the temple and the red columns, and acting as divine separation of old covenant from new with the longest ray aimed at the Virgin and child.

The juxtaposition of old and new in the imagery of the Nativity cycle resonates with the cycle's emphasis on the advent of a new age with the birth of Christ. In the other illumination from the Hours of Mary of Burgundy by the Vienna Master that depicts *Christ Nailed to the Cross* (fig. 2-9), the sense of intermingling states of time

¹⁹⁹ Single columns or posts often appear in scenes of the Adoration and are meant to prefigure Christ's flagellation. However, paired columns do not seem to fit within this symbolism from the Passion.

²⁰⁰ Intriguingly, these two Adoration images that picture the paired red columns also share the strikingly similar figure of the middle-aged king which in both pictures is closest to the viewer. Both men have dark brown, precisely-cut, hair with bangs at the forehead, similar to a "page boy" style haircut. Both have trimmed beards and moustaches and long, thin noses. They wear ornate contemporary clothing as they kneel before the Madonna and Child. A very similar figure appears as the middle-aged king in yet another painting of the Adoration attributed to the workshop of the Mestre do Sardoal (c. 1501-1525), in which a single reddish-green column appears, but no red columns. When compared to the figure of Manuel I traditionally thought to be pictured in another painting from c.1515 by Jan Provost, the similarities among these figures is striking. Perhaps it makes sense that the king named Manuel (Emmanuel) would be pictured as a magus-king before Christ, his namesake.

shows that artists found this strategy of composition effective for other images that might assist the beholder's faith in the continued currency and relevancy of a holy event from a distant past. In doing so, this intermingling suggests the presence of a reciprocal and predestined beckoning between the past and present and between absence and presence. The pattern of espousing the intermingling of time and events is evidently supported as a way for Christians to gather and synthesize the "old" and "new" covenants, keeping alive the simultaneously lived yet prophetic experience of the Jews of the Hebrew bible as a prefiguration of salvation. This paradoxical ability of scripture is succinctly explained by Augustine of Hippo in his writings on the interlinking of Old Testament to New: "all things [all these signs] proclaim newness, and the new covenant is shadowed forth in the old. For what does the term old covenant imply but the concealing of the new? And what does the term new covenant imply but the revealing of the old?"²⁰¹ Further, in this chapter, Augustine's explication of the story of Sarah's pregnancy in old age ends with his interpretation that the certainty of the signs of the Hebrew bible should inspire wonder, not doubt.²⁰² Thus signs are identified as a generative source of faith.

²⁰¹ Augustine of Hippo, "Of God's Attestation to Abraham, by Which He Assures Him, When Now Old, of a Son by the Barren Sarah, and Appoints Him the Father of the Nations, and Seals His Faith in the Promise by the Sacrament of Circumcision," [chapter 26], *St. Augustine's City of God and Church Doctrine*, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, series 1, vol. 2, ed. By Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1890), 326. Accessed online November 2011: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.iv.XVI.26.html>.

²⁰² Ibid. This in answer to the laughter of Abraham upon hearing the news of his impending fatherhood: "The laughter of Abraham is the exultation of one who rejoices, not the scornful laughter of one who mistrusts. And those words of his in his heart, 'Shall a son be born to me that am an hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?' are not the words of doubt, but of wonder." For further thoughts on the nature of typology and prefiguration and Augustine's struggle with the location of the Hebrew bible within Christian faith, see Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000 [1967]).

Christ Nailed to the Cross (fig. 2-9), shows this continuing fascination with the linkages of time and presence, bringing both together with a heightened sense of immediacy due to the involvement of the beholder. The composition recalls the same trope of a window opening in a wall positioned to a view of the central image just overlooking a stone outcropping outside the window sill. In the field below we see Christ in the midst of crowds of followers and enemies, being nailed to the arms of a cross on the ground. In the foreground, we recognize an abbreviated, intimate space for prayer that contains contemporary objects: an opulent pearl and gold rosary, with a gold Paternoster “nut”; another book of hours, opened onto its black velvet *aumônière*, and turned to a page showing the Crucifixion; a tasseled, cloth-of-gold cushion placed on the sill, that is, on the threshold between the central scene and the foreground space.

The round-topped opening is framed with elaborate Gothic-style tracery supported on either side by reflective and smooth, striated marble columns. To each side, carved stone sculptures of Old Testament stories are placed on corbels beneath elaborate tracery baldachins overhead. We can see once again how the use of these architectural elements might communicate the abstract ideas of time. Here, the combination suggests the old covenant contained by the new. The sculpture on the left shows the moment of the angel’s intervention in the Sacrifice of Isaac; to the right, a rare scene of Moses Raising the Brazen [i.e., brass] Serpent, an Old Testament story that is referenced in the Gospel of John as a prefiguration of the raising of the cross and the salvation of mankind.²⁰³ Old, new, presence, and absence revolve in and through these linked spaces.

²⁰³ “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14). The moment of Moses and the serpent is found in Numbers 21: 9 (Douay-Rheims).

Objects and architecture are not the only signs of the intermingling of time and presence in this illumination. Appearing just past the window's threshold, and thus present within the scene of the crucifixion itself as they stand near a group of three women, are two women dressed in up-to-the-date fifteenth-century headdresses (fig. 2-47). More striking than the side-by-side comparison of their contemporary dress with that of the "ancient" dress of their companions, is that the two women stare through the window and out to the beholder of the image. The woman closest wears a rounded, light blue hat criss-crossed with strands of pearls. She stands with her back to the window and turns to look over her left shoulder as if looking from one temporality to another. The woman in front of her leans in as they both catch our eye.

Interpretations of this image usually suggest that the woman closest to the sill would operate as a reminder to the viewer of her "participation" in the Passion of Christ. However, in keeping with the construction of physical presence that precludes a spiritual presence and therefore suggests a difference in, or suspension of, time (i.e., the woman at prayer appearing in both the foreground and in the central scene), it makes sense that the woman here is the woman who was, moments ago, praying before her book of hours. She peers back in through the window, to a past that is actually present, while she participates in the past that is actually a future. Again, we see how the very power of contemplation and devotion has resulted in a vision and moreover a vision that transcends the worldly limits of time and space by literally transporting the viewer into the presence of a holy scene.

In the Adoration of the Magi from the *Manuel Hours*, the sense of a progression from old covenant to new by moving from back to front and from oldest elements to the newest, logically extends this covenant to the most recent inhabitants of the history of salvation: the four brightly-dressed men from the entourage of the magi who stand in the foreground closest to us (fig. 2-44). Their elaborate dress, and for one the lack of dress, distinguishes the men from all other figures and clearly marks them as the newest contacts and conquests of Portugal. Further, they stand at the very edge of a sharp gray step whose darkened edge slips below our vision, as if to suggest the ends of the earth from whence they come. This arrangement of space produces a powerful effect by situating the viewer within a divine plan made evident by the appearance of Christ before the magi, and becomes a part of the larger symbolic system that trades on Christ's incarnation within the Eucharist. A space is even made for the viewer to stand in a direct line to the Virgin and Child as a witness to the incarnation of Christ. The opening accommodates the sightline and thus the witness of the viewer both within and outside of the page. Like the examples from the Hours of Mary of Burgundy, the viewer implicated here is the user and/or patron of the manuscript.

Borders and Production

We can extend the operation of visual elements in the works from the Vienna Master and the *Atlas Miller* to our analysis of the border in returning to the three Portuguese manuscripts. Again, the opportunity presents to examine the idea of the border as a generative entity in various forms: the borders of manuscripts, of coins, of

travelers and destinations, of empire; of sacred and profane spaces. Each of these forms depends on some type of opposition for definition, for example, as shown in the separation between land and sea on the portolan map and between physical and contemplated space in the Mary of Burgundy Hours. The forms take on meaning through the enmeshment with and juxtaposition to the elements the borders work to contain. At the same time, the need for containment speaks to a desire to limit movement and change and can be read as recognition of mutable (and adaptable) meanings. We can see these concepts made visible in the border of the *Atlas Miller*.

This border containing coins, like all borders or frames, marks a region that is simultaneously separate from, yet irrevocably and paradoxically part of the image itself.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the presence of this paradox is less surprising and likely more easily ascertained than the manifold possibilities *generated* by the juxtaposition or enmeshment of border and image. This is a material and conceptual relationship that shares similar constructs with the substance and representation of both the Eucharist (the body and blood of Christ) and the Incarnation (God made man), both conditions where the faithful are asked to believe in a presence that is not in itself “visible.”

The border, the central image, and the page taken as a whole comprise a complex pictorial and ideological construction. On a conceptual level, the border of the manuscript page imposes order and context that literally and figuratively assist in containing a central story—The Adoration—that by its nature and production insists on traveling, movement, and circulation and on transformation in the forms of religious

²⁰⁴ Questions about the substance, presence, and location of the “border,” have been explored by Jacques Derrida in his essays on the *parergon*. See, “The Parergon,” (from *La vérité en peinture*, 1978) *October* 9 (Summer 1979), trans. by Craig Owens: 3-41.

conversion and divine incarnation. The physical manuscript is a traveling entity as well. Its portability ensures its participation in the economies of the sacred and profane worlds, comprising both a point of exchange of visual and textual devotion and a precious, hand-sized object that exchanges its luxury for a perception of piety and status. The border attempts to contain content as well as direct our focus. In that way, the border reveals the artist's recognition that the secular meanings attached to images of the Three Magi—their significance, identification, and travel—are often unstable. Finally, the border offers context and helps to root the central scene within contemporary experience. This construction suggests a recognition of the mutability of narratives over time, prompted by cultural experience and human direction, and in that way speaks of the challenge put to the tellers of history—through both texts and images—to form meaning.

The Adoration of the Magi, the story of the wise men from the east, depends on the idea of movement and travel across borders. The relatively terse biblical account of mysterious foreign men bearing gifts, who are drawn westward by the portent of a star, in order to stand witness to a divine birth is a challenging narrative to contain. At the same time, as discussed earlier, information such as the number of men, their specific origin(s), their names are not found in scripture. The variety of imagery sparked by the tantalizingly brief passage in the Gospel of Matthew is testament to the yearning for even the simplest detail of these travelers and their mission.²⁰⁵ The borders put in place around these stories present one of the methods used to enclose and situate this mutable image. The patrons of these manuscripts, the king, princes, and cardinal-prince of the Portuguese court would perhaps see a common link with the magi and their travels, as the court was a

²⁰⁵ Matthew 2: 1-12.

traveling entity as well. As art historian Nuno Senos points out, during the sixteenth century, Lisbon was the site of only two permanent structures associated with the court: the Casa do Cível and the Torre do Tombo. Otherwise, the court and the power it wielded were mobile, along with its monarch.²⁰⁶ The travel of the king and his court also afforded the king visibility to the furthest reaches of the kingdom and pilgrimage travel, such as Manuel's trek to Santiago de Compostela in 1502 (by way of strategic stops at Portugal's powerful monasteries, like Santa Cruz in Coimbra) were spectacles of secular power tethered to religious piety.²⁰⁷ Travel, as de Certeau suggests, (like borders), are "practices that invent spaces."²⁰⁸ In the case of a peripatetic king, these travels create spaces of power and work to disseminate rule.

Furthermore, as art historian Jan van der Stock has pointed out, artists themselves tended to be quite mobile as well, and as one anecdote recounted by van der Stock shows, some at great distances and with little assurance of satisfactory pay:

In August 1490 the king of Portugal's factor, Rodrigues Fernandes, engaged several Antwerp artists, cooks, and pastry cooks [...] They were told they would be paid for the journey to and from Portugal and would enter the service of the Crown Prince Afonso, King João II of Portugal's son, who was about to marry Isabella, daughter of the "Catholic Monarchs of Spain." They were likewise informed that three of the painters—so clearly there were more than three—would also receive remuneration in Portugal. [...] [However,] some eighteen months later Jan Casus [a scribe]

²⁰⁶ Nuno Senos, "A coroa e a igreja na Lisboa de quinhentos," *Lusitania Sacra*, 2ª série, 15 (2003): 101-102. See also Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, vol.1 :150; For an intensive study of the mobility of the Portuguese court in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries (before Manuel's reign), see : Rita Costa Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society : Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal*, trans. Alison Aiken (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2003), 291-356.

²⁰⁷ Disney, *History of Portugal*, vol. 1, 149.

²⁰⁸ de Certeau, "Walking in the City," 107.

was back in Antwerp, where he summoned the king of Portugal's factor before the courts because the agreement had not been fulfilled.²⁰⁹

The thought put toward the construction of the three Portuguese manuscripts and structure of their images raise similar central questions pertaining to the construction and expansion of empire: how to codify borders and realms and power while simultaneously moving beyond the already-thought-to-be-contained? How to name the sovereignty of Portugal as stable, as immutable, as essential while, at the same time, being forced to accommodate new visions of the same? The coined borders of the three manuscripts model a type of recognition of the problematic expansion of empires and their vulnerability. This vulnerability necessitates the presence of borders that indeed signify strength but only while simultaneously broadcasting weakness by the way in which they call attention to the need for an enforced perimeter. While these borders might picture the desires of the Portuguese realm—the desire for expansion, for trade, for accumulation of wealth, and for the stated purpose of religious conversion of new followers—they simultaneously acknowledge that these desires can be perilous in their reference to that which is outside the realm and the risk taken to apprehend it. Thus, the need for borders demonstrates vulnerability and fear of the unknown and unconquered, but borders also represent that which is part of the empire, all that it has managed to control and contain, not unlike the visual containment put in place in the *Atlas Miller*, where the border of land meets the border of the sea but is then further marked by Portuguese text and flags,

²⁰⁹ “Flemish Illuminated Manuscripts: Assessing the Archival Evidence,” in *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: JP Getty Museum, 2006), 119-120.

demonstrating that it is not enough to secure a realm's borders simply through cartographical mechanics.

In the case of the illuminated page from the *Manuel Hours*, the contents of the border surrounding the central image of the Adoration, show precious gems and pearls²¹⁰ interspersed with an abundance of gold and silver currency, and together, represent goods and capital that rely on trade and exchange to acquire value, while the central scene of the Adoration plays on the paradoxes between solidity and stability in one moment and the vulnerability and ruin of "history" in the next, with the collapsing temple in the background acting as a sign of past lives and covenants.

While embellished borders are painted around the central images throughout the pages of all three Portuguese manuscripts, and indeed are a commonplace design feature of most medieval and early modern western, illuminated manuscripts, my point here has been to carefully examine the way in which these borders, coins, and coins in the borders, might operate within and alongside Portuguese culture and what this brings to bear on the central image of the Adoration.²¹¹ In this sphere, these borders of coins signify notions of

²¹⁰ Pearls could be especially precious in sixteenth-century Portugal. Nuno Senos' recent work on a palace inventory from 1563 for a duke of Braganza shows that out of approximately 6000 items, a pearl necklace was valued the most dear (2 million reis in 1563), more than tapestries, horses, and other jewels. Lecture, "A Ducal Inventory in Sixteenth-Century Portugal: From the Caribbean to China," Bard Graduate Center, New York; 10-Nov-2010 <http://www.bgc.bard.edu/news/past-events-09-10/ducal-inventory.html>

²¹¹ As Catherine Reynolds points out in her article "The Undecorated Margin: The Fashion for Luxury Books without Borders," the presence or absence of decorated borders or margins usually correlates with the cost and worth of the manuscript, as typically, the miniatures, text, and borders were priced separately, with the miniatures garnering the highest cost. The absence of decorated borders in some manuscripts often signals a less expensive manuscript or at least a manuscript that "retained connotations of inferior status" (13). However, Reynolds also charts a particular fashion for the aesthetics of a borderless manuscript that were expensive and rare. See: *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Thomas Kren (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006), 9-26

the order of sovereignty, locality, and lineage expressed within and through the early modern Portuguese imagination. They accomplish this by invoking the reference and witness to the Incarnation of Christ pictured at center and through the coins themselves which represent a type of incarnation (embodiment). The coined border surrounds and contains, but also exchanges meaning with the central image of the Three Magi. At the same time, its reproduction of, and adaptation to, contemporary knowledge and desires, resists and overruns this containment. This shifting and sliding of meaning of the image exists alongside the contradiction of “the border.”

Consequently, the examination of these mutable material and ephemeral categories or realms relies on understanding the work of image production specifically as *production*, in the sense that these images continue to *produce* meanings and activate networks of connections that belie any effort at stasis, even now. The images here imagine their own generative possibilities as the magi’s interaction with the Christ child literally *produces* additional followers, seen pouring in at left in the *Manuel Hours* Adoration and directly at center in the pontifical Adoration, where we envision new followers carried by a trail of camels in the background (fig. 2-48 and fig. 2-49).

In his 2005 essay, *Pictorial Invention in Netherlandish Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages*, which updates Pächt’s initial inventory of illusionistic borders, James H. Marrow presses for the investigation of the imaginative play of the page within an illuminated manuscript.²¹² His explication of the image of the woman from the Hours of Mary of Burgundy, seated before a window that appears to open onto an appearance of

²¹² See page 2. Published as volume 16 of the *Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts*, ed. by Brigitte Dekeyser and Jan van der Stock (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters).

the Virgin and Child before an altar in a church, extends Pächt's thesis of the imaginative spaces of the page: "[t]he depiction pointedly contrasts margin and centre, things close and things distant, the profane and the sacred, the here-and-now and the timeless, worldly reality and heavenly vision"²¹³ and thus, "[...] the image is concertedly self-referential and comments insightfully on the function of the type of book in which it is found."²¹⁴ The "contrast" of margin and center that Marrow notes is a source; a generative space; a space that creates meaning.

Robert Calkins takes up the "narrative amplification" made possible through these types of insightful juxtapositions (such as those found in the Hours of Mary of Burgundy) of images with texts as well as images with images, the latter of which is a type of amplification he notes should be seen as a "pictorial gloss."²¹⁵ Unsurprisingly then, book artists made changes to the construction and composition of books of hours in the pursuit of a "heighten[ed]...devotional response of the worshiper."²¹⁶ At the same time, this pursuit and its resulting responses, in the end, reveal an emerging aesthetic awareness and should have some bearing on our understanding of the evolving expectations of devotees,

²¹³ Marrow, *Pictorial Invention*, 22

²¹⁴ Marrow, *Pictorial Invention*, 27. However, my interpretation of this manuscript's fol. 43v, "Christ Nailed to the Cross" differs from Marrow's in which the now-vacated spot by the window that overlooks a new scene, one of the Crucifixion, is taken as an absence/inattentiveness of Mary of Burgundy. The two figures within the scene that turn to look toward the window are described as "admonishing" the devotee. My own sense is that these two women look back in anticipation of the approach of the devotee toward the scene, so transported by her devotions within the book of hours, itself referenced at the lower right corner, opened to an image of the Crucifixion. Susie Nash offers a slightly different analysis of this image yet one that still recognizes the play on space, time, and meditative/contemplative differences. See *Northern Renaissance Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

²¹⁵ "Sacred Image and Illusion in Late Flemish Manuscripts," in *Essays in Medieval Studies: Proceedings of the Illinois Medieval Association* 6 (1989): 2-3. Of course this type of allusive meaning is explored at length by Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006).

²¹⁶ Calkins, "Sacred Image," 4.

artists, and patrons. Marrow uses Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait* (1434) as a way to understand these evolving expectations. In particular, he notes van Eyck's use of meticulous illusionistic detail overall as appealing to the experiential memory of the viewer. With the inclusion of two reflected figures in the convex mirror in the background, Marrow sees evidence of the way in which the image involves the viewer within this experiential world of illusion. He points out that "the work of art makes overt claims even upon that which is external to it—that is, on the world of the spectator, including the beholder himself."²¹⁷ Further, he argues that these "overt claims" are phenomenological, that is, they are

intended...to compel the viewer to see himself in the context of a real relationship with what the artist represents; that is, to proclaim that the viewer must engage pictorial subject matter on terms that implicate him *experientially*—not just cognitively—in *the world of the image* and its meaning. And it is against this background of a new concern with the viewer's presence in relation to the image and its corollaries in terms of the bond that it implies between the two.²¹⁸

I would add to this and say that by "external," we include the visible and indeed also the invisible. In other words, we include the figurable. The experiential aspects of the image then are only imagined, not materialized.

Marrow argues that the inclusion of greater numbers of illusionistic spaces, objects, and materials suggests that these sorts of illusions and allusions "can thus be understood as a kind of pictorial essay on the enlarged field of activity of illusionistic art, its enhanced capacities to link past, present and future, and its new possibilities for

²¹⁷ Marrow, *Pictorial Invention*, 28.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

refocusing meaning directly upon the viewer.”²¹⁹ As a specific and telling visual reference of the beholder’s interaction with the image, and its reciprocal potential across borders, Marrow brings in an image of *The Fall of Man* from the Grimani Breviary (Master of the David Scenes, 1496-1506; British Library, London). Not only does the beholder witness the moment the serpent has given fruit to Eve through a window of an interior meant to be the viewer’s space, but, consequently, the Expulsion of Adam and Eve appears at left “where the first parents are ushered into the world of the beholder [as if they] were banished into *our* world, and that the result of the fall from grace is that those of us who inhabit the fallen world must confront our own mortality.”²²⁰

Coins and Sacred Currency

Christ’s coin is man. In him is Christ’s image, in him Christ’s name, Christ’s gifts, Christ’s rules of duty.—Augustine.²²¹

For the most part, the illuminations of coins appearing in the margins of the three Portuguese illuminations are accurately described in comparison to their antique, physical counterparts available in numismatic collections.²²² The coins also can be dated through the inscriptions of the monarchs under which they were issued. Several coins are positioned so that the Portuguese royal motto, *in hoc signo vinces* [by this sign you will

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid, 29.

²²¹ Augustine, “Sermon XL” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, series 1, vol. 6, ed. Philip Schaff (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1890), 397.

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf106>

²²² Catalog, Museu Numismático Português, Lisbon.

conquer] encircling the Cross of the Order of Christ²²³ on the obverse, is plainly understood (fig. 2-50).²²⁴ In addition, coins pictured here that were minted under King Manuel I (1495-1521) and his son and successor, João III (1521-1557), include epithets that broadcast the extent of Portugal's rule and influence: from Portugal and the Algarve, to parts of Africa, Arabia, Persia and India.

The motto *in hoc signo vinces* co-opts the long-standing tradition of stamping state and monarchy with the impression of Christian legitimacy through reference to Constantine, the first Christian emperor. According to legend, Constantine's victory over Maxentius in Rome in the fourth century was foretold by God under a vision of the sign of the Christian cross. Thus, the motto and cross refer to a founding story of the Christianization of Rome that derives power from a visual revelation. At the same time, the story of the journey of the magi also pointedly relies on the capacity and necessity of vision and witness. The Gospel of Matthew relates that the magi are prompted to search for the newborn "king of the Jews" by their sighting of a star: "[f]or we have seen his star in the East, and are come to adore him." Further, the key moment that spurs adoration relies

²²³ The military order of the knights of Christ was established as a national order by King Dinis in 1319 combining the Knights of Santiago with the remnants of the Knights of the Temple (post abolition). A.R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 94. For a thorough exploration of the interdependence of the orders, the nobility and the crown, particularly within the exploits of the Portuguese expansion, see Malyn Newitt, *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, 1400-1668* (London: Routledge, 2005). Newitt's volume is especially insightful for his de-romanticization of expansion through his critical analysis of the very practical potential benefits driving the desire for conflict and conquest. Further reading on the military orders in Portugal in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Stephen Lay, *The Reconquest Kings of Portugal: Political and Cultural Reorientation on the Medieval Frontier* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

²²⁴ Obverse refers to the "front" of the coin and if both sides are pictured, the obverse is usually placed on the left. Reverse then refers to the "back" of the coin and is typically placed on the right.

on sight as well; none of the other senses, or written or spoken words are necessary: “[a]nd entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him...”. Further, it is in their capacity as witnesses to divine incarnation that the magi confirm God’s grace in the accommodation of the human sense of vision for revelation.

The interaction of kingship and the notion of revelation holds intriguing real-world connections to the reign of the Portuguese kings of Avis, especially that of Manuel, as does the notion of new covenants within a divine plan. The king’s chronicler, Damião de Goís, was the first to put into writing the epithet that is used with Manuel I: that of *O Venturoso*, “The Fortunate.” This title explains that from the beginning of his reign, Manuel and those who surrounded him knew well that his ascension to the throne was nearly miraculous: hinging on the deaths of *six* heirs before him, after which he succeeded his cousin (and husband of his sister, Eleanor of Viseu), João II.²²⁵ His court advisors with leanings toward a branch of theology based in eschatological fervor promoted the idea that Manuel was called by God in the battle to protect the Christian faith.²²⁶

Historians have pointed out several other factors that likely contributed further to Manuel’s sense of religious mission: the near-frenzy built up around the coming millennium of 1500; the continuing designs on Jerusalem and the desire to protect Christendom from “enemies of the faith” (namely Muslims but also Jews) that leant divine legitimacy to the Portuguese battles against the Mamluk Sultanate in northern

²²⁵ Disney, *History of Portugal*, 143. Subrahmanyam, *Vasco da Gama*, 55-59; Thomaz, “Factions, interests and messianism,” 99-100.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

Africa,²²⁷ and bolstered justification for the expulsion of all Jews and Muslims from Portugal in 1497 as well;²²⁸ the belief that lost Christians inhabited the far reaches of the earth, not only in the depths of Africa, in the form of “Prester John,” the mythical Ethiopian king of a Christian kingdom, but India and possibly the Americas. Even if not found in these new lands, their peoples were seen as deliverable to the Church through the conversion of souls.²²⁹ Finally, as historian L.F.F.R. Thomaz points out:

[Manuel] did cherish the idea of becoming Emperor of the East, intending-in all probability-to assume that title after Jerusalem had fallen into his hands; and he tried to act as an emperor in the medieval sense of the word, even if he did not actually assume the title. This means that he felt entrusted with a universal mission, to foster equity, peace and the supremacy of the Christian faith.²³⁰

Given a king whose name evokes Christ himself; who then ascends the throne in a manner harkening to the story of King David;²³¹ and whose spread of empire serves religious power while garnering great treasure for the Portuguese realm; who is told he is led by the Holy Spirit, it is perhaps not difficult to imagine Manuel equating his “good fortune” on secular and sacred grounds with the legitimating potential of the sacred mission of the three Magi (that just so happens to make a case for the legitimization of wealth and the necessity of conversion). In this vein, it is not unusual for powerful men to equate their reigns and/or envision themselves, literally, as magi. The visual precedents are numerous. From there, we might imagine a king who envisions his own quite specific

²²⁷ Called at times the “Sultanate of Babylonia” thus equating the Muslim kingdom to the “whore of Babylon” of the Last Judgement. Thomaz, “Factions, interests and messianism,” 8.

²²⁸ The other key reason was political expediency. The Catholic monarchs, marriage, etc.

²²⁹ Subrahmanyam, *Vasco da Gama*, 55-58.

²³⁰ Thomaz, “Factions, interests, and messianism,” 7.

²³¹ Disney, *History of Portugal*, 143.

scene of adoration before the infant Christ; one that layers time and space and includes familiar aspects and events encountered as part of his rule, such as processions and travel that include exotic animals such as elephants and camels, like those seen in the background at left.²³² As Damião de Goís chronicled, D. Manuel was: “the first Christian King of Europe to receive elephants from India, of which he had five altogether, four males and a female. When riding through the city [...] these elephants went far ahead behind an Indian rhinoceros. Behind the elephants and before His Majesty came a Persian horse with a Persian hunter carrying a lynx sent by the King of Ormuz”.²³³ But also a king who sends precious and exotic gifts, like gems, gold, elephants, and rhinoceros, to the pope, with the conventional gift of gold from the eldest magus being much like the magnificent gold coins struck by Manuel; pearls and gems imported from India that serve as new gifts to the infant Christ; new and exotic followers, such as those in the central scene, brought into the presence of Christ through the auspices of the king. And, these could be envisioned each time the king encountered the illumination of the Adoration of the Magi. Indeed, as we will see, this type of vision could be evoked by the choices Manuel made for his own currency and which surrounds the image of the magi in *Manuel Hours*.

After primarily attending to the two Portuguese illuminated Adoration pages and placing their production and reception within the context of the practices—at times, more accurately described as *deployment*—of the production of Adoration imagery, I now turn

²³² V.P. dos Santos, “O exotismo na vida portuguesa na época de D. Manuel,” *Panorama: de revista portuguesa de arte e turismo* 32 (1969): 84-93.

²³³ Quoted in Palmira Fontes da Costa, “Secrecy, Ostentation, and the Illustration of Exotic Animals in Sixteenth-Century Portugal,” *Annals of Science* 66, no. 1 (January 2009): 71.

to consider their relationship to the third royal manuscript, the sixteenth-century copy of Fernão Lopes' fifteenth-century *Crónica de Dom João I* [Chronicle of King John I of Portugal] (Mss. Vitr. 25-28, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional) (fig. 2-19). The *Crónica* was commissioned by Manuel's sixth son, Prince Ferdinand c. 1530, and this time, illuminated coins are pictured alongside the chapter of the chronicle that discusses money, war, and dynastic stability.²³⁴ Several of the same coins appear here and within a similar schema as Manuel's book of hours and Henrique's pontifical. The recurring emphasis on currency found in these three books and their contemporaneous production, offers us a sense of the cultural "exchange value" of these coins—both the painted as well as their physical counterparts—within early modern Portugal but also an exchange as sought/imagined outside the borders of Portugal. Further, this exchange value gains from and contributes to the conventional contexts of the Adoration of the Magi.

We can sense the conceptual power generated by linking the identity and stability of the Portuguese kingdom with the emblems of currency. The grand manuscript measures 21 in. x 15 in. and is very heavy and cumbersome. This grand style successfully

²³⁴ Resources on the text and the images: Reynaldo Dos Santos, "As iluminuras da *Crónica de D. João I* de Fernão Lopes em Madrid," *Colóquio, Revista de Artes e Letras* no. 29 (Junho 1964): 41-48; Luis Revenga, ed., "Lopes, Fernão, *Crónica de João I* (Chronicle of John I of Portugal)," in *Tesoros de España: Ten Centuries of Spanish Books, 186-188*. Exhibition catalog (New York: New York Public Library, 1985); Pedro Dias, "A crónica iluminada de D. João I da Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid," *Oceanos* 26 (Abril-Junho, 1996): 11-22; José Manuel Garcia, "Poder, História e Exotismo na Iluminura Portuguesa Quinhentista," *Oceanos* 26 (Abril-Junho 1996): 25-48. Chronicle sources: Fernão Lopes, *Chronica de El-Rei D. João I por Fernão Lopes*, vol. 1 (Lisboa: Bibliotheca de Classicos Portuguezes, 1897); Fernão Lopes, *Crónica de D. João I. Segundo o códice no. 352 do Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo*. vol.1, ed. António Sérgio (Porto: Livraria Civilização, 1945 and 1983); Josiah Hillerman Blackmore III, "Fernão Lopes and the Writing of History in the *Crónica de João I*," PhD. diss., (Harvard University, 1992); Bernardo Vasconcelos e Sousa, "Medieval Portuguese Royal Chronicles. Topics in a Discourse of Identity and Power," *e-Journal of Portuguese History* 5, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 1-7. The chronicle was taken to Spain from Portugal after the "unification" under Philip II.

communicates particular notions of monarchy, not only regarding the historical House of Avis, but the current monarch as well.²³⁵ The same sixteenth-century royal coins assist in tracing the lineage of nationhood by the resolution of the fourteenth-century dynastic crisis that is seen as the advent of a new age for Portugal. The full-sized gold and silver Portuguese coins are painted as marginalia outside the text, and more coins can be seen spilling from a large sack carried by a coin-maker positioned as the initial for the chapter. The falling coins recall late medieval manuscript illuminations of the distribution of largesse, a gift of money to the people from their king. The placement of coins and jewels within the borders of illuminated manuscripts has some precedent in pages illustrating the magnanimous gesture of “largesse,” which is generally shown as one or two figures located at the top corners of the page scattering coins that fall along the side borders to the waiting figures below (fig. 2-52). This type of image appears first in the *Hastings Hours*, c. 1480 (fol. 43r; British Library Add. 54782) within the section of the manuscript reserved for the memory of saints.²³⁶

In the *Hastings Hours*, the representation of coins being dropped from above marks the opening of a page dedicated to the Three Kings where the text at center is introduced with the rubric “*Memoria de tribus regis*” [in memory or remembrance of the Three Kings], which is a suffrage to the Three Kings as seen in the Engelbert Hours. (fig. 2-36). Significantly, but not surprisingly, opposite this page is an enframed miniature of the Adoration of the Magi (fol. 42v). Although not announced as “largesse” in the

²³⁵ The facsimile held by University of California Santa Barbara library was used for examination. Lopes, *Crónica de D. João I: Primeira Parte, Códice Iluminado Da Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid (Vit. 28-5) [facsimile; 2 Vols.]*.

²³⁶ Grebe, “Art of the Edge,” 95. See also Janet Backhouse, *The Hastings Hours* (London: British Library, 1996).

Hastings Hours, a series of pages from contemporary manuscripts do specifically entitle similar pages “Largesse”.²³⁷ The same trope is followed with flowers, where a woman above winnows flowers onto the waiting gatherers below.²³⁸ Not surprisingly, this type of illumination parallels and is associated with similarly-constructed illuminations that picture the faithful gathering “manna” that has fallen from heaven.²³⁹ Relationships to gift-giving are clear here as are some suggestion of abundance and, perhaps even excess, an idea we will return to shortly. However, Vitullo and Wolfthal’s keen read of these scenes of largesse, labeled or not, show that images with this type of windfall distribution also have roots in the traditional concerns regarding money, such as greed, wastefulness, and wealth. A closer look at the *Hastings Hours* illumination reveals some ambiguity as to the characters’ intentions: are the showers of coins coming from generous donors or profligate spenders?; are the gatherers grateful and in need, or just greedy?²⁴⁰

The coin-maker’s body from the *Crónica* transforms into the initial “C” at the head of the rubric for section 33 (XXXIIJ) of the manuscript (fig. 2-53). In the margin to the left of the initial are the larger, detailed coins that link with the coins from the other two manuscripts. The chapter of the chronicle entitled, “Como a cidade de Lisboa deu um serviço ao Mestre para ajuda de fazer moeda” [in which the city of Lisbon gave service to

²³⁷ See Grebe, “Art of the Edge,” 95; Juliann Vitullo and Diane Wolfthal, “Trading Values: Negotiating Masculinity in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” in *Money, Morality, and Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, edited by Julian Vitullo and Diane Wolfthal (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 173-178.

²³⁸ Grebe, “Art of the Edge,” 93-94; Anne-Margaret As-Vijvers, “More than Marginal Meaning? The interpretation of Ghent-Bruges Border Decoration,” *Oud Holland Jaargang* 116, no.1 (2003), 5-7.

²³⁹ See Grebe, “Art of the Edge,” 95-97; As-Vijvers, “More than Marginal Meaning?,” 5-7.

²⁴⁰ Vitullo and Wolfthal, “Trading Values,” 173-178.

the Master [of the Order of Avis] to help make money] (fol. 41v).²⁴¹ Significantly, this chapter (according to the royal chronicler, Fernão Lopes) recounts how in 1385, the inhabitants of Lisbon, from all walks of life and religious beliefs (Christians, Jews, and “Moors,”) joined efforts to provide João, the Master of Avis and soon-to-be future king João I, with enough silver for the manufacture of currency in order to pay the costs of defending the kingdom against invasion by Castile.²⁴² This ability of the future king to raise currency is understood as fundamental to ending the Dynastic Crisis of 1383-1385 and thus to the establishment of the Avis Dynasty—the very dynasty from which Manuel and his sons descend. João’s ascent to the throne was indirect, breaking from the House of Burgundy after the death of D. Ferdinand I, and beat back the peril of Portugal’s (seemingly eternal) struggle to remain out of the clutches of Castile. The sense of the “fortunate” in the ensuing chain of events is something like Manuel’s, and perhaps this founding story resonated with the House of Avis, and would appear to mirror its legitimacy.

The Avis dynasty sought to maintain its historical legitimacy understood to have begun with the establishment of the House of Avis under João I in 1385 and maintained until 1580.²⁴³ The painted coins would be part of the effort to join this founding with the

²⁴¹ My translation.

²⁴² Blackmore, “Fernão Lopes and the Writing of History,” 1992. Ana Carolina Delgado Vieira’s historical study of Fernão Lopes’ three king’s chronicles, points out that a key element in the chronicle of D. João I, is the promotion of a legitimate reign, following his tumultuous ascension to the throne. Viera argues that the chronicle is very careful to highlight the assistance given to the future king by the people as a way to boost legitimacy. See: “Do Rei Cruel ao Mexias de Lisboa: imagens nas crônicas de Fernão Lopes,” *Revista de História* 2, no.2 (2010): 31-34.

²⁴³ Ana Carolina Delgado Viera reads the chronicle in conversation with the tone and direction taken in the chronicles of João’s two predecessors (D. Pedro I and D. Fernando), arguing convincingly that the three follow a trajectory that develops a sense of the ideal sovereign—both

present and future goals of the kingdom's rulers. Painted at a time of Portuguese expansion to the furthest reaches of the known world, these images play a deliberate role in creating a narrative trajectory of past, present, and future notions of the kingdom of Portugal and the role of its rulers in that trajectory. The Cross of the Order of Christ together with the prophetic words of Charlemagne that appear on the largest coins aim to push this trajectory even further by situating the Portuguese monarchs within the lineage of Christendom's first emperor. When these representations of coins from the three manuscripts are considered together, it becomes clear that other significant meanings adhere to these images and indeed are generated by their existence and production alongside each other.

Much like the portrait of a king, or any authority, the key element to authenticity is not so much the naturalistic reproduction of the physical being but the representation of the ephemeral qualities of such conditions as, for example, the right to rule, the favor of God, legitimacy, or political power. Of course, within the realm of possible meanings of the travel of the three kings as witnesses to the birth of Christ, is the reference to the pilgrimage of the faithful to the altar to partake of the body of Christ. And within this reference to the Eucharist exists the same representational conundrum as the portrait of a king, the impression on a coin, the portrayal of sovereignty, and the possession of the divine: the problem of substance and accidents; the problem of inside and outside; the problem of representation itself; the sacrifice of the body that is necessary for its representation. In that way, the "coin" is a representation of a lost original.

physically and theoretically—one that ultimately sees the king as God's vicar on earth; "Do Rei Cruel," 22-34.

The coins painted in the borders of these pages help mediate the complexity of the multiple unfoldings of meaning in and between the margins and the central scene by operating as carriers of both sacred and worldly emblems, yet emblems that are distinctly inseparable from each other. While the coins work as reminders of the gifts of the magi, at the same time, the act of coin-making itself—the act of impressing metal so as to leave a trace of the die—that is, we comprehend the die without seeing its physical presence—recalls the paradox of presence within absence, which is a distinctly Eucharistic paradox with roots in the complexities of Incarnation. The faithful were adept at the contemplation of this paradox, particularly in the image of the Adoration, where the magi stand as proxies for the faithful’s encounter with the body of Christ. As the magi kneel before the Virgin we simultaneously recall her role as the altar for Christ. Christ’s appearance within the scene, in turn, recalls the Eucharistic altar where the host held by the priest must be understood as Christ’s bodily and divine presence in a form that suggests the very absence of these things. The communion wafer bears no resemblance to the body or image of the incarnated Christ. Similarly, without the intervention of religious belief, the incarnation as witnessed by the three kings must be understood as the intangible divine presence within a form that eludes the human senses. The infant bears no resemblance to the immaterial divine he is to represent.

To help work through this intersection of sacred and worldly meanings, I turn to Miri Rubin’s work on the theological development and practice surrounding the sacrament of the Eucharist and the establishment of the feast of Corpus Christi during the Middle Ages. Rubin situates the meaning of incarnation within the Eucharist, within the

language of *currency and exchange*, showing how the faithful must negotiate the intangibility of the Eucharist through an exchange between the material and immaterial, between presence and absence; an exchange that has particular resonance with the coined Adoration images. She writes:

The Eucharist placed Christians within a symbolic system operating within a history of salvation, and it was lived as a drama re-enacted at every altar during every mass. The God who was everywhere in every facet of nature, had to be domesticated, located, and his supernatural power had to be apportioned and routinised. It is this economy of the sacred, commuted into sacramental currency, that was being explored and its most precious coin, the Eucharist, evaluated and defined.²⁴⁴

For the faithful, this sacred coin of the Eucharist then is at once an exchange between the fully human and the fully divine nature of the incarnation of Christ and at the same time, it is also a type of currency, and in that way, suggests an equivalency with spiritual salvation. Further, the central worth of the Eucharist can be exchanged, as it were, for tangible matters in this world: for such things as the appearance or condition of piety, for religious conversion, and even for the sanctification of conquest. At the same time, the coin can be said to possess the incarnational value of the sovereign in the way it reminds of a physical presence once pressed into its surface. And it is this multivalent potential for exchange that these images play on. Thus, the artist makes a connection between the transaction potential of exchange signified by the king's coins pictured in the borders and the "precious coin" of the Eucharist signified by the appearance of Christ's body in the central scene. One coin is impressed with the presence of the king; the other with the presence of God and both endlessly exchangeable within an economy of the sacred.

²⁴⁴ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 14.

This scene of the Adoration works as a visual exegesis of this sacred economy. But what kind of royal presence do these coins signify? A coin is a carrier of the paradox of presence within absence—again, the impression we see on a coin is the trace left behind that betrays the die. Thus, a king’s coin acts as proxy for royal presence and authority. His coin is an incarnation of his sovereignty. In the book of hours, the group of five gold coins centered in the lower border speak to this very function. Not only do the coins reinforce the notion of the king’s presence by their imprint, the coins must be viewed with a level of faith in what they do not show.

All five are coins identified with the reigns of Manuel I (1495-1521) and his son João III (1521-1557)²⁴⁵. In full view on the left is the famous *portugués* or gold ten-cruzado coin of the Portuguese, struck by Manuel I. The motto III :: HOC :: SIGNO :: VIICES surrounds the Cross of the Order of Christ on the obverse. (fig 2-50).²⁴⁶ The reverse of Manuel’s coin is not shown, but the inscription on the back would be (starting with the outermost inscription):

+ I : EMAIVEL: R: PORTVGALIE: AL:G: VL: III : A: D:G
CN:C ETHIOPIE: ARABIE: PERSIE I[DE]

[Manuel I King of Portugal and the Algarves. Of the lands before and beyond Africa, Lord of Guinea, and the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India]²⁴⁷

The *portugués* of João III appears just behind Manuel’s to the right (fig. 2-50). The obverse is not shown but would be much the same as Manuel’s.²⁴⁸ Part of the reverse is shown and the full inscription would read:

²⁴⁵ See footnote 170 ff for further considerations regarding the identification of João’s coin.

²⁴⁶ Trigueros, “Códices Portugueses,” 10-27.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

IOHANES: 3: R: PORTVGALIE: AL: IN: A: D: G - +
C. N. ETHIOPIE. ARABIE. PERSIE.²⁴⁹

Widely-circulated and imitated from as far away as Indonesia to the trade centers of northern Europe, weighing over 35 grams, with a purity level at 98.96%, the *portugués* was commissioned by King Manuel in 1499 following the return of Vasco da Gama from India.²⁵⁰ Using the gold obtained from Africa, the kingdom literally transformed the materials of conquest into a carrier of the presence of a new order for the Portuguese. In addition, to strengthen his claim for Portugal's emerging power, Manuel developed a new motto that he used in official documents sent to other kings and the pope and has this motto inscribed on the coin as well (as does his son John III). On the reverse that we can't see, there is an abbreviated form of Manuel's motto. It reads: "Manuel I King of Portugal and the Algarves. Of the lands before and beyond Africa, Lord of Guinea, and the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India." Together with what we *can* see, that is, the Cross of the Order of Christ surrounded by Constantine's *in hoc signo vinces*, we can be sure that Portugal's exploits in foreign lands are understood as sanctified by God and thus pre-ordained by the history of salvation. This new world order, with Portugal conceived of as the conveyor of commerce as well as converts for the church, is reflected in the four figures pictured just above the kings' coins.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Disney, *History of Portugal*, 148; António Miguel Trigueiros, "Portuguese Coins in the Age of Discovery," *The Numismatist* 104, no. 11 (November 1991): 1728–1735. The exchange value of the ten-centavo gold *portugues* ("portague" in English) at between £3, 5s to £4, 10s in c. 1589. See Sandra Fischer, *Econolingua: A Glossary Of Coins and Economic Language in Renaissance Drama* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1985), 106 and 37.

Finally, the workshop of António de Holanda painted coins into one other manuscript commissioned by another son of Manuel. Cardinal Henrique [or Henry], the inquisitor-general, commissioned the *Livro dos Ofícios Pontifícios (Officiale Pontificalium)*, a pontifical, ca. 1539-1541 (fig. 2-18). In the borders of the page containing the beginning of the Mass of the Epiphany, the feast day for the Adoration of the Magi, once again, we see the now-familiar full-size reproductions of Portuguese coins (fig. 2-54). A small image of the Adoration is painted into the center of the lower border, which of course would be an appropriate illustration for the feast of the Epiphany (fig. 2-55). While the subject matter of this vignette is the same as that seen in the *Manuel Hours*, this Adoration scene operates differently. With this illumination, there is a visual correspondence between the Adoration of the Magi and the surrounding currency. Reduced to half-length portraits, the figures of the three kings and the Holy Family are emblematic. Scaled back to their essential iconographic elements, the image is abbreviated, much like the motto inscribed on the reverse of Manuel's coin; we are given just enough to sense its meaning. Placed within a slim, gold architectural band that recalls the ridged coins in the borders, the scene of the Adoration becomes currency, to be exchanged through the commerce of the sacred, in order to, in the words of the Mass of the Epiphany, "proclaim to all nations the Glory of God."

Put in circulation with each other, these royal manuscripts suggest the complex ways in which royal authority might be given material form. Rather than impressing a portrait on his coin, Manuel sought to align his own conquests beyond the borders of Portugal within a symbolic Christian lineage of conquests and conversions by repeating

Constantine's invocation of the cross as divine sanction of victory. Thus, this bit of propaganda has currency in both sacred and profane planes. To situate this worldly connection we are asked to comprehend what can't be seen—the obverse of the coin, with Manuel's newly-minted title, as well as the sovereignty this aims to establish. The assertion of Portuguese control over new domains and markets is emphasized further through the figures pictured alongside these coins, representatives of these lands, whom we are to assume gather before the Virgin and child through the "auspices" of the king of Portugal.

Incarnation

The notion of I/incarnation suggests a rich array of philosophical and material stuffs having as much to do with physical matter as the nature of the immaterial and the transcendent. In that way, incarnation recalls the work of the artist and image-making. Further, it is this creative capacity of the artist to *represent*, to *incarnate*, that is often intentionally aligned with the difficult, near-incomprehensible notions surrounding the divine made flesh. Thus, the artist's work of making the immaterial material parallels the complexities of I/incarnation. Here, I aim to ground this understanding of *incarnation* within an array of inter-reliant as well as generative relationships rather than a precise opposition of the material and immaterial. It is this enigmatic nature of the theology of the mystery of i/Incarnation as it pertains to images and image-making (both pictures and representations outside the image) that this chapter applies to these sixteenth-century illuminations.

Derived from the Latin *incarnāre*, “to make flesh,” the concept of incarnation is at once comprehensible in its bare, sometimes gritty, yet vulnerable and fragile, physical terms. We recognize the root, *carn-* as an indication of flesh, and in this we sense potential for, and danger of, decay. At the same time, the term becomes conceptually difficult once applied to the notion of the sensible flesh of a divine being. The definition in the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives us a sense of the complexities of the term with its reliance on evermore entangled concepts that leave questions of agency unanswered; in fact, it leaves these questions to proliferate. Consequently, we read the following definition: “[t]he action of incarnating or fact of being incarnated or ‘made flesh’; a becoming incarnate; investiture or embodiment in flesh; assumption of, or existence in, a bodily (especially human) form,” and are left perplexed as to *who* causes, or *who* or *what* is invested or embodied.²⁵¹ Further questions might extend to definitions of “flesh,” to what precisely is “assumed,” and so on. Our struggle to grasp these fleshy concepts puts us in company with a diverse and ancient line of thinkers who have wrestled with the problems of agency and representation that surround the notion of the Incarnation of Christ. Ultimately, these are the thinkers and scholars who characterize the action and being of divine incarnation as a “mystery.”

The distinction between the moments/events of Incarnation is critical here. While the moment of the Annunciation to Mary, where the Virgin learns of her impending motherhood via divine intervention, is the moment of the Incarnation, where God becomes flesh in the womb. The sequence of actions known as the Adoration of the

²⁵¹ *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v, “incarnation,”
<http://www.oed.com.ezp1.lib.umn.edu/view/Entry/93332?redirectedFrom=incarnation#eid>.

Magi, where the wise men are present before the Christ child, is the moment of *witness* to the “mystery” of the Incarnation. The magi witness the mystery literally embodied, incarnated in human flesh. The Adoration centers on witness, on seeing, on appearances; it relies on a representation of the divine made recognizable to human vision. The Incarnation thus relies on the sight of humans to enact, to *legitimate* the presence of God in Christ in human terms. This legitimation is a fully *human* need; a divine accommodation for the benefit of the weakness of Man. This weakness is the human need to see and to have representation; to have the ineffable and the abstract made present. In the end, God accommodates this need to make the Word flesh. Thus, the Incarnation, like the “image,” is a moment of figurability.

We can see then how images have the capacity to leave room for the virtual and the “figurable.” For those viewing these images of the Adoration of the Magi, their own practice and experience in comprehending the paradox of a divine Incarnation underlies the *potential* of these images to garner meanings far outside any consideration of either naturalistic or fantastic renderings. Understanding the generative tangle presented within this paradox of image and incarnation is crucial for understanding the cultural work produced by these images.

Drawing similar conclusions from the possibilities that proliferate at the intersections of vision, the visible, the invisible, and faith, Hans Belting locates the very comprehension of “art” and image-making within the artist’s challenge and, at times, reluctance to picture the ineffable moment of divine Incarnation; the moment of God

made man.²⁵² Following on the much- and long-debated 4th-century doctrine codifying the double nature of Christ as both divine and human (and its attendant arguments over the sacred image and the borders of idolatry), the principal model for the sacred Christian image logically centered on the examples of the holiest of icons, those known by the Greek term, *acheiropoieta*, images “made without human hands.”²⁵³ The faithful understood the *acheiropoieton* [sing.] as an image created by way of divine will such as those created by way of physical encounter with the divine. The *vera icon* [true image], known as the so-called “Veil of Veronica,” stands as the best illustration of this process of image production. In the familiar legend, a woman uses a sudarium (a cloth for perspiration) to wipe the face of Christ during the Passion. After this contact, a miraculous image of Christ’s face then appears on the fabric. Within its imprint, the image would also seem to retain physical traces of the divine: a type of “inhabited image.”²⁵⁴ This is a miraculous process especially relevant to image-making as its associations with representation, surface, presence, and absence are central concerns of artists. The image of the Veil of Veronica is often placed in conversation with the notion of incarnation, as seen in an illumination of the *Adoration of the Magi* from the *Da Costa Hours*, c. 1515, illuminated by Simon Bening (fig. 2-56). The central scene shows the three magi before the Madonna and Child while in the border to the left is the figure of Veronica holding her veil now revealing the face of Christ. The *Agnus Dei*, appears in

²⁵² Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

²⁵³ Also known as “unpainted” images.

²⁵⁴ For more on the contentious concept of the “inhabited image” within the early Christian church (with ramifications that still resonate within church doctrine), see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, especially 30-46; 73-77; for the related concept of “inhabited spaces,” see 173-183.

the lower border as a reminder of Christ's sacrifice and both vignettes are placed within a matrix of pearls and bejeweled. On manuscript pages that picture pilgrimage medals, it is not unusual to see an image of the *vera icon* included among the medals. Some are shown as medals but several times with this theme, the image is pictured as if on cloth or paper (fig. 2-57).

The challenging paradox then of the Incarnation of Christ raises an interest, at times a necessity, in picturing the unpicturable. The unpicturable in this case is the materiality of the immaterial: divine nature and word made flesh. Like the *acheiropoieta*, those "unpainted images," the Incarnation exists simultaneously in the realms of the divine and the earthly.²⁵⁵ The centuries-long arguments over the properties potentially attendant/ascribed to the image—as inhabited; as representation; as substitute; and as idol—ultimately return to this question and condition of incarnation. This mystery, the ephemeral qualities of divine presence, then becomes the burden of the artist to communicate. Similar to text in the sense of the limitations of representation, we can see how the artist's visual strategies to conjure transcendent meanings can result in the generative indeterminacy presented in the bordered manuscripts.

Conclusion: Temporalities and Kingship

I want to return to the Adoration from the *Manuel Hours*, and its opening between groups of men in order to accommodate the beholder's view of the Holy Family. Given the association of this opening with the coins positioned below, we might assume that

²⁵⁵ See chapter four in Belting, "Heavenly Images and Earthly Portraits: St. Luke's Picture and 'Unpainted' Originals in Rome and the Eastern Empire," in *Likeness and Presence*.

this space means to evoke the presence of the beholder and in this case, the king. We sense a presence through the gap—an absence—in the center foreground, and the distinct red jewel-like mark placed within it—a presence—as if it marked a place or better yet, as we saw with Mary of Burgundy, a trace of his body.²⁵⁶ This is a privileged space as well, as the blessing, promise, and significantly, the responsibility of a Christian king to uphold the new covenant is unambiguously bestowed on him by way of his direct sight to the Virgin and Child. Further, to emphasize this “presence,” the artist placed the painted coins of Manuel I and his son João III²⁵⁷ directly below this space. The space is reserved

²⁵⁶ The painting of the *Adoration of the Magi* in tondo format by Raffaello Botticini (c. 1495, Art Institute of Chicago), also displays a red mark in the open space on the very edge of the foreground. The location is similarly placed in that the mark directs vision toward the Mother and Child in the midground. In addition, the composition places two of the three magi near the Mother while the third kneels further back near four men in the foreground closest to us, who appear to be followers. Notably, one man has a monkey on a tether and one man is a dwarf, who happens to stand near a dog that is taller than him. The round red mark is perhaps insignificant yet its placement does not appear random or accidental. In addition, the same red color is markedly noticeable throughout the image. Finally, a large, sea-going ship is docked in a bay at left; an unusual detail.

²⁵⁷ I have questions regarding the gold coin whose edge shows from behind the coin of Manuel I. This coin is painted as inscribed with the name of João III: IOHANES: 3: R: PO [RTVGALIE]. It has been identified as such by Dagoberto Markl and other scholars and generally is used as evidence that although the manuscript is clearly dated from ca. 1517 due to the date written on the page containing the Golden Number, the date of this particular page would be much later, as the coins of João III date to 1538. Further, numismatist António Triguieros argues persistently that this page should be attributed to the patronage (and design) of João III as well as the entire manuscript. If it turns out that this page *can* be firmly attributed to his patronage (and dating c. 1525), then that is a separate factor from the patronage of the manuscript as a whole. The date of 1517 places it clearly within the initial patronage of Manuel I (r.1495-1521). In addition, the stylistic differences among sections of the manuscript suggest to me that the book was in fact commissioned and then completed over the course of these two reigns, roughly 1517-1538. Citing documents and through study of this and other illuminations in the manuscript, historian Vasco Graça Moura argues that the manuscript might have been commissioned by Damião de Góis, the learned and multi-talented courtier to Manuel I and later João III. See, “Damião de Góis eo Livro de Horas dito de D. Manuel,” *Arte Ibérica* 3, no. 24 (1999). Nonetheless, attributing the full manuscript to João III’s patronage would require significant alteration of the scholarship surrounding the manuscript. However, the possibility that an artist might have been commissioned to over paint the coin in the lower margin to reflect the reign of João III is an avenue worth considering. Manuscripts were commonly amended and edited by the addition or

for them through the employment of their coins as a physical reference to their sovereignty which in turn recalls the dual nature of the divine sovereign at center.

In his seminal work on the notion of sovereignty, Ernst Kantorowicz explores the concept of the dual natures of a sovereign as reminiscent of that of Christ, who is deemed fully human (physical) and fully divine (spiritual).²⁵⁸ The sovereign, the king, is at once a physical presence and an ephemeral idea of rule that survives the king's physical demise. In exploring the parallels of his "political theology," Kantorowicz describes an early symbolic representation of Christ's ascension into heaven that becomes part of a long pictorial tradition. The only visual evidence of the incarnated Christ—the physical presence of Christ—is captured by the artist in the form of the visible feet of Christ upon his ascension. The feet then become a mark of history, "the feet alone—the mark of the Incarnation—remain as a visible token of the historical fact that the Incarnate has migrated on earth."²⁵⁹ Images of the Ascension take care to remind the viewer of the two natures of Christ one of which endures beyond the loss of his earthly body. At the same time, in picturing feet closest to the earth and assuming Christ's upper body to be in the heavens, the image shows a division between heaven and earth, yet it is crucial for

removal of pages but also by overpainting, especially for those elements that might identify a particular user, such as shields and mottos. According to Dra. Alexandra Gomes Markl, curator of prints, drawings, and manuscripts at Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, no radiographic or chemical studies have been performed on the *Manuel Hours* (electronic correspondence, 15 November 2011). While I have studied this manuscript in person, my interest in this issue was not in mind at that time. In multiple reproductions, the disputed coin, whether due to the intricacy of the coin's inscription or to overpainting, displays what appear to be irregularities in color and details when compared to the other coins surrounding it. As this avenue of research is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I plan to pursue this study as a postdoctoral project.

²⁵⁸ Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997 [1957]).

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 74.

viewers to understand these two natures as one, so Kantorowicz turns to Augustine, who writes “we should not believe that the head [of Christ] is separate from the body: there is a discretion in space but a conjunction in love.”²⁶⁰ There is distinction within the physical realm of space but it is the ephemeral qualities of love and faith that grant the faithful a unified representation of the divine.

As we saw in the work of the Vienna Master, an image like the Adoration from the *Manuel Hours* simultaneously arranges compositional space in order to capture the present into the story of salvation while preconditioning that capture on the faith of the incarnation of Christ pictured at center. Just as we perceive this arrangement as a continuous unfolding of time and space through the connecting forms within the composition, indeed, as time constructed pictorially to move toward us, we also perceive the intrinsic tension between absence and presence that defines the sacred scene at center and the absence and presence that defines the worldly space for the king. The beholder is forced to contemplate the paradox of the incarnation: belief in the immaterial divine that fundamentally requires faith in the presence contained within absence; within the trace of an object or its borders and the object itself. Both of the Portuguese Adoration illuminations match the new arrivals of goods and people to the Portuguese realm, with that of the arrival of the magi and their retinue to Bethlehem, understood at once as two events from two times quite removed from each other. At work here is a similar vision of time to what was constructed in the image of the praying woman, the “wrinkled temporality” of space, time, and presence.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 71-72.

Chapter 3

Precarious Economies: The Adoration and Volatile Commerce

Introduction

For sixteenth-century Antwerp history, a good word to keep in mind is proliferation—proliferation of citizens, of foreigners, of materials, market places, and warehouses; of available credit, of ships in the harbor and visitors at the city gates, and not least of all, even a proliferation of religious ideas. Proliferation in Antwerp is inseparable from the activities of the merchants and traders whose commerce became emblematic of the city's rise to prominence in the sixteenth century. However, for countless generations, the typical characterization of folks who deal in commerce, in money and interest, in worldly materials and in market places, often took the form of caution at best, vilification and the imperilment of the soul at worst.

As shown in the first two chapters, the Adoration makes for a capable carrier of a diverse set of meanings; a fact that places the story itself among items that proliferate. Among these many reflections of sacred and profane meanings, are the links early modern Antwerpers made between magian travel while bearing precious gifts and the travel and trade of the abundant goods coming in and out of Antwerp under the direction of numerous merchants, a burgeoning section of the Antwerp population. Antwerp merchants did indeed associate their livelihoods with those of the Magi at a time when pictures of the Adoration surged in comparison to other themes.

This chapter takes the proliferation of Adoration scenes produced in sixteenth-century Antwerp as a way to think about the visualization of sociocultural precariousness

as an inextricable condition of Antwerp's "golden age." The Antwerp Adoration paintings are notable for their liveliness and ornamental flourish matched with extravagant color that, even for the contemporary viewer, produces a sense of visual unsettledness. One can track this unsettledness through the 16th century in works that address commerce, exchange, and the city of Antwerp itself to the level that one can question whether this approach to composition and style points to artists' attempts to deal with a new visibility present in daily life; a new way of seeing; and a new way of seeing that turns to a new sense of representation.

Beginning with the unprecedented interest in magian imagery that emerges in tandem with Antwerp's economic boom of the first half of the sixteenth century, I trace artists' experiments with the visual guises of physical and metaphysical instability as an index of cultural upheavals in early modern Antwerp. The chapter ends at the close of the long sixteenth century with a study of three works: Jost Amman's table-sized print, *Allegory of Commerce* (1585); and two civic commissions from 1609, Abraham Janssen's painting, *Scaldis and Antwerpia* and Peter Paul Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi*. The works express the volatility and even moral peril associated with the tenuous and complex interactions comprising Antwerp's early modern economy.

In the key works of the chapter, the state of precariousness within these images arises from proliferation—of stuff, of ideas, of people, of imagery, of motifs—that I see as emblematic of a well-documented and unprecedented shift in everyday life due to the commercial and cultural expansion taking place in early modern Antwerp. To thoroughly explore these visual conditions, we will need a guide. In Chapter Two, the Vienna

Master's *Woman at Prayer* became our guide for introducing the radical changes 15th- and 16th-century artists developed for manuscript illuminations and what these changes signaled to viewers. Similarly, to better impart a sense of the breadth of proliferation and its attendant precariousness, this chapter makes use of rhetorical tactics that aim to remind the contemporary reader, dulled to the abundance of visual detail, stuff, and stimuli, how these Antwerp images would be experienced.

First, I take this chapter's key work—the small, winged altarpiece containing the image of the *Adoration of the Magi* by the Master of the Antwerp Adoration—as my model but use the rapid-image work of modern film techniques to draw comparisons between their similar visual manipulation. The structured effect of film editing and of altarpiece composition heightens our attention to a level of artificiality and novelty displayed in each that unnerves the viewer. Second, through a meticulous description of the visual qualities set out through the sequence of exterior to interior scenes of the Adoration altarpiece, I mean to generate in the reader an awareness of the precarious effect of proliferation on the viewer as the way to show how these paintings *work*.

The catalog of visual variations I set out means to parallel the works themselves and in that way requires patience to take in and, by the finish, due to variations and ornamental additions, frustrates our ability to contain the image. Yet, as I have shown, containing the story and image of the Three Magi is a fool's errand, since the faithful have insistently expanded the story to cover new events, questions, and knowledge. Not only that, containing the image and its wanderings, much like assuring the full incorporation of Vasco Fernandes' Tupi magus in Chapter 1, would render the story and

the magi useless. In the end, containment of proliferation is not particularly desired, but hinted at, which, paradoxically reestablishes the necessity for containment in order for the work of the magi to be useful. As I will show, the uncertainties that are specific to the figures of the Magi and to the compositions they inhabit, become emblematic of the uncertainties specific to Antwerp.

What better story—one that enables the viewer to take in layer upon layer of possible meanings—to combine with the artist’s obvious effort at staged display and particularity in order to capture viewers’ attention, perhaps partly in effort to emulate or even upstage the force of commerce and visual competition on view across the city? The Antwerp Adoration paintings excite the eye and the mind as our senses work to catalog the range of colors and surface effects, ornament, gesture, foliage, figures, landscape tropes and adaptations, animals, saints, fantastic creatures, textures, architecture, and even the range of play across time. The catalog of visual details is matched only by the number of possible meanings of the story itself, which then again proliferate further with the increasingly complex physical space and contents of the painting. These pictures can be exhausting to take in at one sitting as detail after detail emerges throughout the surface. For those in the city, the similarity to the changing flow and variety of people and goods moving every day through Antwerp could not have been much different.

In the first three decades of the sixteenth century, groups of artists working in Antwerp initiated a distinctive painting style, noted in its day as fashionable, but only later dubbed Antwerp Mannerism, that coincided with emerging economic factors and prosperity unique to Antwerp that scholars often point to as Antwerp’s “golden age.” A

representative survey of this Antwerp style of painting typically features crowded compositions, high-keyed contrasting colors, and flamboyant line (fig. 3-1). Gauging these works through a representative sweep is in keeping with the process of their creation, as these artists and workshops typically relied on copying and labor-saving techniques that enabled serial production, as if in answer to an atmosphere of and desire for proliferation. Visitors to Antwerp's fairs would surely be attracted to the groupings of brightly-colored panels located among the *hundred*-odd stalls reserved to sculptors, painters, printmakers, and booksellers near Antwerp's landmark Church of Our Lady (Onze Lieve Vrouwekerk).²⁶¹ With their increasing numbers and availability, the displays of Antwerp Mannerist paintings would signal to market visitors—whether scouting for artworks or otherwise—a set of distinguishing characteristics that one can imagine signaled a new type of visual trend; a fashion.

This new trend was part of the so-called golden age of Antwerp which scholars and observers base on measurements of the city's profit from extensive participation in worldwide trade. Recounting what he saw as the origins of Antwerp's prosperity at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Florentine merchant and long-time Antwerp resident, Lodovico Guicciardini wrote in his well-known account from 1567, *Descrittione di m. Lodouico Guicciardini patritio fiorentino, di tutti i Paesi Bassile[...]* (English translation, 1593) *The Description of the Low Countreys and of the Provinces Thereof [...]*:

The second cause of the wealth of Antwerp is this. In the year 1503 the Portugales began to bring spices out of their Indias, and from Calicut into

²⁶¹ Dan Ewing's in-depth study of Antwerp's *panden* remains a key source for the study of the early art markets in Antwerp. See, Dan Ewing, "Marketing Art in Antwerp, 1460-1560: Our Lady's Pand," *Art Bulletin* 72, no. 4 (1990): 558–584.

Portugale, and from thence to Antwerp, which before that time were wont to be brought by the red sea to Barnt and thence to Alexandria, and so to Venice, which (before the Portugals voiage into the Indias) furnished all Christendome of spices. But the king of Portugale, having partly by love, partly by force, drawne all the traffique of spices in Calicut and the Iles adiacent therunto into his owne hands, and having brought them to Lisbonne, sent his factor with spice to Antwerp by which means it drewe all Nations thither to buy spices of the said Factor. Thus Antwerp by this occasion beginning to be greatly frequented: Afterwards in the year 1516 divers Marchants strangers, Spaniards and Italians, departed from Bruges to go and dwell at Antwerp, and after them others, and so by little and little all strangers (a few excepted) left Bruges and went to Antwerp, with no lesse commodity to this citie, than discommodity to that.²⁶²

Guicciardini's account bears out in stunning estimates that by 1540, 75% of all worldwide trade touched down at some point in Antwerp, the city on the Scheldt River.²⁶³

Antwerp's artists participated in the economy as well and the evidence of Antwerp as a draw for artists bears out in the increased numbers of registrations with the city's artists' Guild of St. Luke that in effect mirror Guicciardini's trajectory. Further, the

²⁶² Lodovico Guicciardini, *Descrittione Di M. Lodouico Guicciardini Patritio Fiorentino, Di Tutti I Paesi Bassile Con Piu Carte Di Geographia Del Paese, & Col Ritratto Naturale Di Piu Terre Principali: Con Amplissimo Indice Di Tutte Le Cose Piu Memorabili* (Antwerp: Guglielmo Siluio, 1567); English translation: *The Description of the Low Countreys and of the Provinces Thereof, Gathered into an Epitome out of the Historie of Lodovico Guicchardini*, trans. Thomas Danett (London: Peter Short, 1593), fol. 27.

²⁶³ Bruno Blondé, Oscar Gelderblom, Peter Stabel, "Foreign merchant communities in Bruges, Antwerp, and Amsterdam, c.1350-1650," in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe, Volume II: Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700*, ed. D. Calabi and S. Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 160. In addition, Antwerp was a place where merchants, traders, and other entities could raise capital. Keith Moxey, "The criticism of avarice in sixteenth-century Netherlandish painting," in *Netherlandish Mannerism. Papers given at a symposium in Nationalmuseum Stockholm, Sept 21-22, 1984*, ed. Gorel Cavalli-Bjorkman (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum Stockholm, 1985), 28. Another statistic noted by Clé Lesger concerning the numbers of exports coming out of the Netherlands that were registered at Antwerp, held to be close to 75%. See *Handel in Amsterdam ten tijde van de Opstand: kooplieden, commerciële expansie en verandering in de ruimtelijke economie van de Nederlanden, ca. 1550-ca. 1630* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2001), 33; also cited by H. Nierop, "Introduction," in *The Low Countries As a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, ed. A-J Gelderblom, et al (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2.

way that artists' workshops at this moment successfully pushed toward the serial production of hundreds of paintings suggests that artists were responding to, at times creating, a new demand from patrons, both local and foreign, as well as cultivating a new type of patron altogether, emerging from the middle and merchant classes. The production and increased inventory of artworks, by turns, generated and exploited the extension of market sites and the opportunities for artists to place paintings before viewers and buyers for longer periods.

One must imagine how the interactions taking place in the markets and meeting places of Antwerp, where city dwellers and outsiders mingled, played a crucial part in how early modern Antwerp was understood and, where representations were formed and reformed, taken away for deciphering and interpretation, and at times, returned for further refinement. Perhaps what art buyers sometimes desired from artists was the very narrative of a city and its essence they themselves had helped construct and keep alive. So when one eyed a particular mode of representation, it in many ways returned an expected vision of a type of culture that viewers might find nearly contiguous with the surrounding streetscape; a vision of culture the Antwerp artist, Frans Francken, the Younger (1581-1642) made his stock in trade in the 17th century (fig. 3-2 to 3-5).²⁶⁴

Francken's (and his copiers') picture-gallery paintings frequently include Adoration paintings placed centrally amongst the painting collections viewed by the clientele of well-dressed patrons visiting the gallery with doors and or windows opening

²⁶⁴ I am imagining the visitor to a market stall or a dealer's gallery, located within a busy Antwerp. Here the viewer scans the paintings on view, the edges of which perhaps are framed by the surrounding business of the streets.

onto a view of the city or verdant countryside.²⁶⁵ The sacralized offerings of the Adoration are explicitly juxtaposed alongside the offerings displayed in the gallery that tellingly call attention to the worldly offerings of Antwerp, presented by the merchant. In several instances, the Adoration painting even appears above a large, altar-like cabinet, that holds behind its open doors additional precious objects like coral beads and metalwork vessels or curiosities like sea shells and sculptures of Greek gods (fig. 3-2 to 3-5).

Typically for these paintings the gallery appears to emphasize the abundance of non-essential, imported, material objects. Alongside paintings lining the walls and sometimes stacked in standing groups on the floor, appear a number of other three-dimensional objects from sculpture and porcelain to Roman coins, seashells and even a preserved seahorse (fig. 3-2.). Often a leashed monkey and/or a perched parrot might sit among the collection of commodifiable materials. Despite the attentive expressions of the upper-class visitors suggesting their careful study of the paintings, we sense their attention is captured not so much by a moment of edification but by a moment of transaction.

Francken draws inspiration from a commercial presence in Antwerp that, by his time, was well-examined and one that was closely associated with, even naturally associated with, the story of the magi. With a close look at the Adoration paintings produced by the Antwerp Mannerists nearly 100 years before Francken's, (fig. 3-1), a viewer quickly spots the distinctive traits of the Antwerp style that, one could imagine,

²⁶⁵ Pieter Aertsen's sixteenth-century marketplace paintings provide a similar experience although these works typically include allegorical themes. See Elizabeth Honig's masterful study, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

would effectively catch the eye of market and shop visitors. Francken “documents” their abundance with his effort to include an Adoration painting among his collections of pictures, as if it goes without saying that a gallery would naturally feature this staple of Antwerp iconography that in essence oversees the exchange of goods and knowledge taking place in the shop.²⁶⁶

The painting tradition Francken refers to is remarkable in its beginnings for the emphasis on rich and often clashing color combinations that are especially noticeable in clothing and fabrics that aim to catch the eye and remind viewers of Antwerp’s once-prominent center for the finishing of fine cloth.²⁶⁷ Taken together with the ornamental flourishes, elaborate gestures, and stage-like architectural ruins, the Antwerp Adoration paintings project to the captivated viewer (although, given their flashiness, possibly even appalled viewer) a painting style aware of its own artificiality. And this awareness perhaps reflects the viewers’ own active involvement, and indeed pride, in constructing Antwerp’s economy.

Literature

Art historian, Max Jacob Friedländer (1867–1958), was the first to systematically study the traits of a style emerging from Netherlandish late Gothic painting, summarizing

²⁶⁶ It is worth noting that the styles of Adoration paintings in Francken’s “collections” adhere to a more visually-tamed and muted image reminiscent of the style of Rubens.

²⁶⁷ For a thorough analysis of Antwerp’s cloth trade in the first half of the sixteenth c., see Yao-Fen You, “Antwerp Mannerism and the Fabricating of Fashion,” *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum Voor Schone Kunsten Te Antwerpen* (2004): 141–158.

its characteristic artificiality as “mannered” and labeling it “Antwerp Mannerism.”²⁶⁸

Friedländer’s 1915 survey was the first serious study to peg the unique cast of Antwerp’s early sixteenth-century art production. In his study, Friedländer operates properly within his traditional, formalist training where the label “mannerism” marks a characteristic flamboyant style while also rendering it inferior.²⁶⁹ Many twentieth-century art historians dwelled on the fact that the Antwerp Mannerist paintings relied on copying and workshop reproduction to a degree that seemed to dilute the clear lineage of master painters. Reliance on workshop practices to quicken the pace of production appears, at times, to trade inventive qualities in favor of the repetition of stock motifs. For art historians invested in tracing their vision of classical western art as “realized” in the Italian Renaissance, Antwerp Mannerism was indeed a step away from the rebirth of the ideal only to become mired in the extravagance of the “Gothic.”

²⁶⁸ Friedländer published the first systematic look at this set of paintings in 1915. “Die Antwerpener Manieristen von 1520,” in *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 36 (1915), 65-91. *Early Netherlandish Painting, vol XI. The Antwerp Mannerists—Adriaen Ysenbrant* (Brussels: A.W. Sijthoff, La Connaissance, 1974 [1933 in German]).

²⁶⁹ Ludwig Baldass went further in insisting on these works’ shortcomings which he sees as unsurprising since the works were produced in a cooperative fashion vs. by one master; “Die niederländischen Maler des Spätgotischen Stiles,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 11 (1937). Noted by Dobratz, “‘Antwerp Mannerism’ and the Notion of Style,” 199. Whether scholars consider mannerism a “true style” vs. just a “manner” of painting is less of a focus in current scholarship. For my purposes, building on Jessica Dobratz’s work, I take the appearance of mannerism as observed in the Antwerp paintings as a style that recognizes its mode of production, that is, the paintings exhibit a number of characteristic approaches to formal elements and often, to subject matter. Dobratz explores the limitations of the terms used to categorize Antwerp Mannerist works. She helpfully points out the range of qualities that the term has typically meant to cover as well as the confusion over the relationship (or non-) to Italian *maniera*. She suggests a reasonable solution. She proposes “that when the notion of ‘style’ is expanded to express ‘working method’ or ‘process’ it offers a more nuanced insight into the (in)congruity between the characteristics traditionally ascribed to an art historical style and the actual art it describes. “‘Antwerp Mannerism’ and the Notion of Style: Continuing the Discourse,” *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen* (1998): 199.

Friedländer arranged paintings in groups according to formal elements that trace the production of individual artists and workshops according to a range of formal characteristics.²⁷⁰ While we do know the names of some of the Antwerp Mannerists, the paintings largely still carry cumbersome *Notnamen* (unknown) attributions, such as “Master of 1518” and “Master of the Von Groote Adoration,” with their anonymity being characteristic of workshop production with less emphasis on single, star artists (such as the previous century’s Rogier van der Weyden and Jan van Eyck), or the Mannerists’ contemporaries such as Jan Gossaert, Hans Memling, Quentin Massys, or German artist, Albrecht Dürer.²⁷¹

A good number of scholars have drawn from the available evidence for Antwerp paintings and painters to expand our understanding of serial painting and workshop practices of sixteenth-century Antwerp. Following on these investigations are several recent studies that join the practical aspects of workshop practices with economic aspects

²⁷⁰ Overall, Friedländer’s assessment of the Antwerp Mannerists was less than flattering due to their reliance on serial production and copies along with their rejection of “classical” Italian Renaissance painting conventions, which led 19th and 20th-century art historians to dismiss the works as second-rate. Nevertheless, Friedländer’s studies remain the most extensive in covering the genre. For the most current overview of Friedländer’s research and his impact on the study of the Antwerp Mannerists, see Annick Born, “Antwerp mannerism: a fashionable style?,” in *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (2005), 21-46. The volume coincided with an exhibition and accompanying catalog of Antwerp Mannerist works, *ExtravagAnt! A Forgotten Chapter in Antwerp Painting, 1500-1530 / Catalogue*, ed. K. Belkin and N. van Hout (Maastricht: Bonnefantenmuseum, 2005).

²⁷¹ Scholars peg a number of artists as direct influences on the style of Antwerp Mannerism and, at times, are very closely linked to these workshops’ production. After his time in Rome in 1508, Flemish artist and Antwerp guild member, Jan Gossaert (c.1478-1532), integrated ancient Roman motifs and a decorative quality into his paintings that appear to directly influence the work of the Mannerists. Friedländer named Gossaert as the key source of Antwerp Mannerism. Due to the difficulty of dating and attribution of Gossaert’s work, art historian Annick Born prefers to focus on known, reliably-dated works, thus marking artist Adriaen Overbeecke’s altarpiece painting from 1513 as a clearer beginning; Born, “Antwerp Mannerism,” 27-28.

of a developing art market and its reflection of patterns of patronage in the early modern southern Netherlands.²⁷²

Recent scholarship returning to the investigation of Antwerp Mannerist paintings builds on the initial categories of works set out by Friedländer yet examines more closely the sociocultural, economic, and political contexts of the paintings' production.²⁷³ Even then, the focus of investigation often turns to comparisons of recurring motifs while

²⁷² On the developing art market in Antwerp, see Dan Ewing, "Marketing Art in Antwerp, 1460-1560: Our Lady's Pand," *Art Bulletin* 72, no.4 (1990): 558-584; Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Filip Vermeyleen, "Exporting Art Across the Globe: The Antwerp Art Market in the Sixteenth Century," *Nederlands Kunsthistorische Jaarboek* 50 (1999): 13-29; P. Van den Brink, "The Art of Copying. Copying and serial production of paintings in the Low Countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," in *Brueghel Enterprises* (Ghent-Amsterdam: Ludion, 2001), 12-43; W. Waterschoot, "Antwerp: books, publishing and cultural production before 1585," in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 233-248; Vermeyleen, *Painting for the Market: Commercialization of Art in Antwerp's Golden Age* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003); Also, James Bloom, "Why Painting," in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe: 1450 – 1750*, ed. Neil De Marchi and Hans J. Van Miegroet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 16-34; MPJ Mertens, "Antwerp Painters; Their Market and Networks," *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (2006): 47-74; MJP Mertens and N. Peters, "Paintings in Antwerp Houses (1532-1567)," in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe 1450-1750* (Brepols: Turnhout, 2006), 35-54. Economic studies of the art market: Lorne Campbell, "The Art Market in the Southern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century," *The Burlington Magazine* 118, no.877 (1976): 188-198; Zirka Filipeczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp: 1550-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); JM Montias, "Socio-Economic Aspects of Netherlandish Art from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century," *Art Bulletin* 3, no. 72 (1990): 358-373. Erik Larsen, *Calvinistic Economy and seventeenth-century Dutch Art* (Lanham, MD: University Press, 1999); Michael Limberger, "'No town in the world provides more advantages': economies of agglomeration and the golden age of Antwerp," in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 39-62; Sven Dupré, "Trading Luxury Glass, Picturing Collections, and Consuming Objects of Knowledge in Early Seventeenth-Century Antwerp," in *Silent Messengers: The Circulation of Material Objects of Knowledge in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. Sven Dupré and Christoph Lüthy (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011), 261-292.

²⁷³ The exhibition and catalog of 2004-5, *Extravagant! A Forgotten Chapter in Antwerp Painting, 1500-1530* provides an extensive and critical re-examination of the works and practices of this period. An accompanying set of journal articles was published in the 2005 *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen*. Peter van den Brink's catalog "Introduction" recounts the transformation of Friedländer's studies for the current scholarship (6-9).

seeking to unveil anonymous artists; or further consolidating the types of patronage typically expected with these works (i.e., generally closely identified with an urban “middle class” occupying the commercial city of Antwerp as well as substantial demand from foreign buyers); and finally outlining the ways in which the Antwerp Mannerists follow the ascendance of Antwerp’s commercial prominence.

Methodology

As sure as Zeus sends me *to* any one, a sort of lethargy comes over me, my legs are like lead, and I can hardly get to my journey's end; my destined host is sometimes an old man before I reach him. As a parting guest, on the other hand, you may see me wing my way swifter than any dream.

–Plutus, the God of Riches, explaining his “intermittent” lameness to Hermes/Mercury²⁷⁴

The work of Antwerp Mannerists does indeed coincide with Antwerp’s increasing economic prominence and, as noted by many scholars, intriguingly, the numbers of paintings the Mannerists produced that pictured the Adoration of the Magi outpaced other subject matter²⁷⁵ and is a key reason to bring these works in conversation with my other

²⁷⁴ Lucian of Samasota, “Timon the Misanthrope,” in *Works of Lucian, vol. 1*, trans. Fowler, et al (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), 38.

²⁷⁵ Dan Ewing, “Magi and merchants: the force behind the Antwerp Mannerists’ Adoration pictures,” *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen (2004-2005)*; Vermeulen 1999, 18. Scholars take different approaches to studying the scale of and audiences for painting production in the sixteenth century. Estimates of total numbers produced vary and for these numbers, the portion produced for export vs. local demand. Regardless of differences over precise counts of paintings or set percentages of subject matter, scholars do agree that production itself was unprecedented and the most frequently produced subject was the Adoration. The dialog between Vermeulen and Jean Michael Montias regarding methodology stands as an example of differences in calculating numbers using extant documents. See Vermeulen, “The Commercialization of Art,” 46-61; and in the same volume, Montias, “Commentary: Fine-tuning Interpretations,” 62-65; and Vermeulen’s response, “Further Comments on Methodology,” 66-69;

case studies. Missing from the scholarship of Antwerp Mannerist Adoration scenes is a closer examination and critical interpretation of their innovative visual forms as part of a sociocultural index. Further, no studies have considered the religious symbolism of these Adoration scenes as part of their unusual appearance, popularity, and obvious ties to Antwerp's merchant culture.

My work puts together the development of Antwerp Mannerism with the proliferation of Adoration pictures as a way to sharpen focus on the long-running ambivalence surrounding wealth and worldliness that underlie magian iconography, a condition in common with the works in the previous chapters. My conclusions show that Antwerp Mannerism and particularly Mannerist Adoration scenes point out a certain visual disorder that reflects on the economic and religious atmosphere of Antwerp and on those tending business. Further, these works are really a signal for recognizing a continuing engagement throughout the sixteenth century with visual precariousness and instability. In the end, my work doesn't dismiss the contours of a "golden age" but instead disconnects the largely unexamined optimism of the "golden" signifier and its undeserved equation with "good" in an era marked by limited but powerful pockets of prosperity in unbalanced and transitory numbers. By identifying and underscoring the role played by instability and precariousness within the recognized carriers of prosperity (which includes paintings as carriers too), my research does not aim to disenchant so

all in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001).

much as to more fully reveal the stakes of a self-consciously prosperous and materially-focused era.²⁷⁶

The connections Antwerpers made between commerce and the blessings assumed through biblical alignments deserves further refinement since merchants in cities, and, magi popularly understood in art as closely identified with merchant and banking activities were certainly nothing exceptional for early modern Europeans to encounter.²⁷⁷ More significantly, I propose that the daily life conditions in Antwerp forced folks to take in the sheer volume of *stuff* and wealth in evidence in the city; stuff and bundles that turned over quickly, soon replaced by the cargo on the next line of ships and carts coming or going.²⁷⁸ The visual spectacle of the weight and movement of commodities connected to the crowds of merchants, patrons, shops, displays, and foreign traders communicated a vision of material proliferation that understandably evoked the traditional connections with the enticing riches of the magi yet simultaneously generated a call for ways to aptly communicate the new volume of trade, goods, money, and people being experienced in the city on the Scheldt. Thus, a great number of Antwerp artists working in the sixteenth

²⁷⁶ For expansive coverage of the Dutch “Golden Age,” see Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Vintage Books, 1987).

²⁷⁷ For example, the Medici banking family depicted in Benozzo Gozzoli’s frescoes from 1461 in La Capella dei Magi, Palazzo Medici, Florence.

²⁷⁸ Dan Ewing has documented in many Antwerp Adoration paintings the near-ubiquitous presence of bundles and packages and artists’ efforts to picture the process of preparing and unpacking shipments, usually with merchant marks clearly displayed. He terms this focus on the movement of goods as an “iconography of commercial transport” (282). Most commonly, men are shown laboring over these packages and animals are shown carrying the baled and roped goods, rather than just the bundles shown untended on the ground (284). That is, the artists are sure to make clear that material goods are *on the move*; that moving goods—by shipping, buying, selling, bundling, etc.—is how commerce happens. Of interest with these pictures is the focus on the bundle itself and often not the goods inside it. Ewing, “Magi and Merchants,” (2004-5), 281-287.

century intentionally developed an expanded visual language that, with close observation, answered the call for picturing the character of a city; a visual strategy that mostly lacked any visual precedent.

Whether it's better to call these works "Late Gothic" in style or more specifically, and tellingly, "the last phase of Gothic art"²⁷⁹ misses what the wrangling over categories itself proclaims, and that is, how these visual components, in their novelty and "stylish style" manage to impart to the viewer an ephemeral sense/reflection of Antwerp's own novelty.²⁸⁰ Antwerp Mannerist practices manage to indicate something of the value of novelty and provocation in the early sixteenth-century Low Countries. The choices artists made to then combine these stylistic traits with a narrative culturally understood for generations as embodying novelty, serves as a reflection of the way that new knowledge might prompt uncertainty. The accompanying visual narrative of a liminal *conversion in process* rather than a conversion completed, makes it clear that the act of combining these elements cannot be seen as happenstance. Together, artists and patrons desired to and/or managed to capture, not hope, peace, and faithfulness, but novelty, kinetic figures, and

²⁷⁹ Annick Born describes well the historiography of the term in her essay, "Antwerp Mannerism: A Fashionable Style?," in *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen [JKMSKA] 2004/2005*, 21-45. "Late Gothic" was the preferred term of several art historians following Max Friedlander's first application in 1915 of the term to Netherlandish works which he meant to be distinct from Italian Mannerism (38). No matter the choice of term, scholars generally agreed that Italian and Antwerp Mannerism shared some formal qualities but more importantly, and in my mind, more relevant, was these artists' disinterest in a studied naturalism.

²⁸⁰ One thoughtful exception to the focus on style elements and categories is Paul Vandebroek's essay in the same JKMSKA volume (300-329), where the author gives careful consideration to the psychological and phenomenological sense of the "contrived" nature of Antwerp Mannerism. His title alone, "Late Gothic Mannerism," suggests some impatience with the typical focus on connoisseurship by bypassing the arguments from the get-go through his amalgamation of both schools' favored monikers for the movement.

visually stimulating color and rhythm that remained unconcerned with masking the evidence of the artist's labor.²⁸¹

The Magi as Emblems of Antwerp's Mercantile Identity: *Where We End*

As measured through inventories, known demand, and extant works, the flush of interest in Antwerp in paintings of the Adoration of the Magi diminished dramatically by mid-sixteenth century.²⁸² Despite this decline, when called to present the city metaphorically some 50 years later, in 1609, the city magistrates returned to—or more likely, simply continued with—the theme of the gift-bearing magi as an emblem for Antwerp through their commission to Peter Paul Rubens for a painting of the Adoration (3-7). The painting also served as a thinly-disguised visual plea to the Spanish Hapsburgs to restore the viability of the city's trade by assuring access to the Scheldt River.

In the midst of the Eighty Years' War (the Dutch war of independence, 1568-1648), a Dutch blockade of the river persisted after the fall of Antwerp to the Spanish in 1585 and the separation of the northern provinces from the southern. The city enjoyed some independence from close Spanish meddling after the Spanish Fury of 1576 when Hapsburg attentions were drawn elsewhere and in 1579 Antwerp even served as the

²⁸¹ This would be in comparison to fifteenth-century artists such as Jan van Eyck or Rogier van der Weyden where an artist's labor is understood through a sort of wonder of mimesis that manages to reveal very little about the *constructedness* of the picture (glossy finishes, minimal evident brushwork, underdrawing thoroughly over painted, meticulous attention to detail and reproduction of effects of light and atmosphere). The naturalism of figures and light and space situates the viewer very differently than a painting that reveals the *work* of painting as experienced in Antwerp Mannerist paintings: evident underdrawing; evident use/influence from printmaking; colors that call attention to themselves apart from their function as a figural tool; the clear presentation of the artist's facility with imaginative forms.

²⁸² M.P.J Martens and Natasja Peeters, "Paintings in Antwerp Houses," 48.

capital of the Dutch Revolt. However, the Spanish halted the merchant city's rebellion in August 1585 after a year-long siege.

In 1609, in anticipation of the signing of a truce that would halt conflicts between Spain and the northern provinces but leave the southern Netherlands to be, in effect, “re-Catholicized” under the Spanish,²⁸³ Antwerp leaders continued to associate the operations and perceived benefits of commerce as the foundation of its civic identity, despite significant economic setbacks, not the least of which included the loss of over half the city's population, much of it to the north as Protestants relocated in the face of returning official Catholicism.²⁸⁴ The city leaders chose to plainly display the connection of commerce and civic identity by commissioning Abraham Janssen to paint a classical allegory for the *Statenkamer*, the States Room, of the Town Hall that depicted the fruitful relationship arising between the female figure of *Antwerpia* and the Scheldt river, referenced by the river god, *Scaldis* (fig. 3-6.). Directly across the States Room from Janssen's allegory and placed in conversation with the Antwerpian mythology of the river god and its blessed city, hung Peter Paul Rubens' massive panel of the *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 3-7), touting the merchant city's long, self-conscious connection with the figures of the Magi that in a way disguised any interruptions in the course of a prosperous Antwerp. The two paintings complete a sort of “creation myth” of Antwerp's prosperity. The two paintings command the space of city business and are reminders of Antwerp's prosperity but also a warning that this prosperity needed minding and most of all, at least

²⁸³ The truce signed in 1609 came to be known as the Twelve-Year Truce.

²⁸⁴ Joost Vander Auwera, “Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi* in light of its original Antwerp destination,” in *Rubens: The Adoration of the Magi*, ed. Alejandro Vergara (Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 2005), 38-41.

on the surface, must be wrapped in the remembrance of the prosperity offered by Christ for the human soul.

Thus, in a grand space meant to present the idea of Antwerp to official visitors—and really, to the city itself—the conversation between pictures promised to prompt viewers to recall the sacred figures of the magi who, like Antwerp’s pepper and spice dealers, also carried, according to the Old Testament prefiguration, the “powders of the merchants.” Yet, in the end, in light of the grievous setbacks suffered by Antwerp, the dialog between the two paintings creates a different lineage and clearly links Antwerp’s prosperity to a position of dependence on the fickle blessings of the Gods and the gifts of strangers. I will return to these works in the *Statenkamer* as a final look at Antwerp’s self-association with the Adoration theme. For now, I want to turn to the early sixteenth-century iteration of Antwerp’s identification with the Three Magi that Rubens’ hoped to recall with his painting.

The Magi as Emblems of Antwerp’s Mercantile Identity: *Where We Begin*

The long association of the biblical magi with travelers, foreigners, and merchants appears to fit comfortably within the commercial port city of early modern Antwerp with its large numbers of foreign travelers and residents, its volume and variety of goods present in the markets and on the docks, and its many merchants, traders, and shopkeepers at the heart of these enterprises. Medieval and early modern folks were practiced in scrutinizing merchants and their enterprises—their money, their influence and alliances, their materials; in a sense then, their *worldliness*—or as Erasmus of

Rotterdam, in 1515, calls through the voice of Folly, their “meanness”—and often coming away with ambivalent regard for their earthly pursuits.²⁸⁵

As shown previously, ambivalence and ambiguity make up key components of the magi story beginning with the very words put down as recording their journey.

Uncertainties surrounding magian identity and motive very often account for the imaginative adaptations of the story appearing repeatedly across centuries in literature and art.²⁸⁶ For the Adoration paintings coming out of Antwerp, the symbolism of the magi story easily intermingled with the cultural perception of merchants, a body in which the citizens of Antwerp were particularly invested. Merchants and their trade in goods were key to Antwerp’s prosperity, and as such, Antwerp’s citizens and leaders repeatedly linked their own prosperity and identity with the fate of commerce.²⁸⁷ At the same time,

²⁸⁵ Moxey outlines the historical and contemporary foundations of this ambivalence in the Low Countries. See, “Avarice,” 1985.

²⁸⁶ Hugo Kehrer’s volumes cataloging the magi story in European literature and art (to the early sixteenth c.) remain the mainstay of magian references. See *Die heiligen Drei Könige in Literatur und Kunst, 2 vols.* On the generational adaptations of the Magi story, see also, Richard Trexler, *Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

²⁸⁷ An Kint’s work clearly demonstrates the ways in which Antwerp’s identity was understood not just as a prosperous place for trade and exchange but identity as inseparable from commerce; as Kint terms, a “community of commerce.” That is, Antwerpers understood the vital force of commerce as something that required protection and extreme care. Kint focuses on this relationship arguing that commerce for Antwerp was “the idea that informed public rhetoric at all levels of Antwerp society” and as such, “the city council and the guilds used the argument of Antwerp’s importance as a centre of international trade as emphatically as the merchants when it came down to protecting their own interests” (213). See Kint, “The Ideology of Commerce: Antwerp in the Sixteenth Century,” in *International Trade in the Low Countries (14th-sixteenth Centuries): Merchants, Organisation, Infrastructure*, ed. Peter Stabel, et al (Leuven and Apeldoorn: Garant, 2000), 213-222. The article distills the main themes in her dissertation, “The Community of Commerce: Social Relations in Sixteenth-Century Antwerp,” PhD diss., Columbia, 1996.; Keith Moxey provides useful examples of the efforts taken by city magistrates to balance the desires of the central government with the demands of merchants and bankers working in Antwerp, all the while with one eye on potential outcomes for commerce and the other eye on human salvation and sin. Moxey, “Avarice,” 28-29.

trumpeting Antwerp's commercial prosperity only emphasized the sense that this prosperity urgently needed protection and promotion; that rather than prosperity imparting a sense of stability to Antwerpers, commerce and prosperity were imparting a sense of a precarious existence.

For early modern folks, the value of a prosperous city and citizenry must also be weighed against the dangers of corruption and inequity, not only in worldly matters, but more importantly, in matters of the soul. Who better than the theologian Erasmus (c.1466-1536), writing as "Folly" in 1515, to provide a grasp of the stakes of merchant livelihoods, commerce, and man's salvation? In Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* (1509), Folly herself takes a stinging shot at merchant culture by explicitly naming merchants as among her devoted followers. Of these followers she says:

Well, you have my name gentlemen—but how shall I address you? As 'most foolish'? What more honourable title could the goddess Folly use in addressing her devotees? But first of all, with the help of the Muses, I'll try to explain my ancestry to you, which not very many people know. I didn't have Chaos, Orcus, Saturn, Japetus, or any other of those out-of-date mouldy old gods for a father, but 'Plutus', god of riches himself, the sole 'father of gods and men' whatever Homer and Hesiod and even Jupiter may say. He has only to nod his head, today as ever before, for everything to be thrown topsy-turvy, whether sacred or profane.²⁸⁸

While Erasmus' complaints—dressed in the personification of Folly—regarding the state of morality are longstanding and familiar, his biting essay plainly skewers both individual and collective human foibles with particular aim at the perceived excesses of contemporary society. Significantly, Erasmus places "riches"—that is, the wealth, material, and treasures that humans desire and accumulate and allow to proliferate—at

²⁸⁸ Desiderius Erasmus, *Praise of Folly and Letter to Maarten van Dorp, 1515*, trans. Betty Radice (New York: Penguin Classics, 1993), location 924.

the heart of foolishness.²⁸⁹ Through the “union” of wealth and youth, Folly is born, and Erasmus gives her voice. Then, as Folly recounts the various livelihoods that men choose in pursuit of riches, she bestows a special status on the merchant class, declaring:

Most foolish of all, and the meanest, is the whole tribe of merchants, for they handle the meanest sort of business by the meanest methods, and although their lies, perjury, thefts, frauds, and deceptions are everywhere to be found, they still reckon themselves a cut above everyone else simply because their fingers sport gold rings.²⁹⁰

For Folly, the merchant operates through dubious channels with an emphasis on deceiving those around him for gain. And not just for material gain, but a deception that aims to secure, undeservedly, a beneficial social rank that, one assumes, could be used to make further material gains. Whether material or cognitive, successful deception requires disguising; hiding from vision; or better, for one whose livelihood depends on the material, presenting one thing while representing another. Thus, with her mocking address, Folly points out the inherently visual qualities of deception that manifest through the merchant’s display of his “gold rings”—his wealth—with which the merchant then hopes to shield his ambitions.

Merchants, bankers, and purveyors of commerce could turn to various cultural mechanisms to boost their appeal, guard against risk, and even assuage their guilt.

Antwerp city magistrates enacted regulations that aimed to protect merchant interests in

²⁸⁹ With the mention of accumulation, here I aim to follow Martha Howell’s direction in problematizing the assumption that sixteenth-century European economies, especially in the Low Countries, operated as protocapitalist incubators. Instead, the idea of accumulation rather than capitalization is one of the key ways early modern people thought about the trade and exchange of commodities. See “Introduction,” *Commerce Before Capitalism in Europe, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), especially 10-13.

²⁹⁰ Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, location 1667.

support of stable commerce and thus a stable Antwerp. For example, recognizing the worry over interrupted or lost revenue, Antwerp magistrates moved to ensure that promissory notes maintained their value despite the number of turnovers signed past the original owner. City magistrates recognized that stable commerce was key to a prosperous Antwerp. In another account, the magistrates point out their role in carrying debt for Hapsburg solvency and emphasize what this risk entails for Antwerp:

[...] it is to be feared...that we cannot pay these debts and burdens, if the activity of trade in the city breaks down, and the business would stop and would not continue in their former activity and prosperity, so that all citizens would be at once ruined, broke, and executed for their debts.²⁹¹

Another real-world, contemporary indicator of the currency of Erasmus/Folly's "wisdom" regarding these fellows who deal in worldly trade, appears in studies on debt in sixteenth-c. Antwerp, the merchant city *par excellence*. In one study by Martens and Peeters that looked at inventories of confiscated goods for the purpose of evaluating assets against debt, 32% of the records listed the livelihoods of the debtors. Of this 32%, the study found that the majority were merchants and artisans.²⁹² While Folly harangues the merchants, she makes no direct reference to artisans and image-makers, although, increasingly in the sixteenth century, artisans, especially painters, might function as merchants, either marketing and selling their own and/or others' works.

²⁹¹ Antwerp, City Archives, Pk 480, n 94. Cited in Michael Limberger, "Private Money, Urban Finance and the State: Antwerp in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," Paper Presented at the 14th International Economic History Congress, Helsinki, 2006, Session 13: Citizens, Money and Urban Governments in Northern Europe in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era, 2006, 14.

²⁹² Maximiliaan P.J. Martens and Natasja Peeters, "Paintings in Antwerp Houses (1532-1567)," in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe, 1450-1750*, ed. Neil De Marchi and Hans Van Miegroet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 35-37. Note that "artisans" as termed here, would include a range of craft workers.

Further findings in the same economic and art historical study help to bring Antwerp artisans into the mix of commerce and merchant culture more fully and supports the notion of art work as a commodity; one that could be sold or lost in case of debt. Inventories of art works owned by Antwerpers indicate, not surprisingly, that art ownership fluctuated according to the economic state of the city: when times were tough (e.g., in 1566, the year that saw the Protestant uprising that culminated in the Iconoclastic Riots), counts of art objects (mostly paintings) on average flattened or declined; while in better times, (e.g., c. 1530s), possession of art objects expanded, both in depth and breadth across the population.²⁹³ Findings like these that draw on extant documents and objects locate the work of artists within Antwerp's famed commerce through their comparison with written accounts from the sixteenth and 17th centuries.

Thus, a closer look at artisans (which in the day's lexicon encompassed a range of craftspeople²⁹⁴), their works, and their methods, can logically contribute to a more

²⁹³ Ibid., 37-39. As Martens and Peeters note, these numbers have been used by economic historian Herman van der Wee as support for the health of Antwerpers' living standards in the first half of the sixteenth century. See van der Wee's monumental study, *Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy (14th-16th Centuries)* (3 vols.) (Den Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963).

²⁹⁴ For the registers of guild membership in Antwerp, consult P. Rombouts and T. van Leries, ed., *De liggeren en andere historische archieven der Antwerpsche sint Lucasgilde* (Antwerp: Felician Baggerman, 1864). Membership in Antwerp's Guild of St. Luke (the "painters' guild") included painters of all types: from panels to houses, stained glass artists and glass makers, but also metalworkers, sculptors, printmakers, and embroiderers. Not all Guilds of St. Luke included the same mix; e.g., Brussels' guild system separated the painters and sculptors. See Katlijne van der Stichel and Filip Vermeylen, "The Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke and the Marketing of Paintings, 1400-1700," in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe: 1450 – 1750*, ed. N. De Marchi and H. Van Miegroet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 190-193; Martens and Peeters counted 48 distinct professions linked to the Guild of St. Luke in the years between 1546 and 1558. Over the course of the long sixteenth century, painters outpaced the other artisan categories registered with the Guild of St. Luke. Over one century (1500-1600), the count of master artisans listed in the registers of the Guild of St. Luke numbers 1,925; see Vermeylen, *Painting for the Market: Commercialization of Art in Antwerp's Golden Age* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 128-129. Drawing

nanced understanding of sixteenth-c. Antwerp that extends beyond the notion of an untroubled “golden age.”²⁹⁵ Because indeed, Antwerp’s golden age might best be understood as golden for those whom, in a moment of prosperity, remain untouched by political and religious divisions and flare-ups, yet only to face others that arose with regularity throughout the sixteenth century. A “golden age” relies on the notion of a “not-golden-age” and it stands to reason that a term like this all at once is cognizant of its own end. In that way, the term flattens the notion of prosperity and eliminates the many struggles within this age, e.g., the public executions carried out against Protestant heresy; radical preaching at the doorstep of workshops and markets where one would find the representations painted and printed by artists; the presence of Spanish forces; the Iconoclastic Riots of 1566; the Spanish Fury in 1567; the inflationary periods resulting from the shifts from agriculture to urban trade and exchange that saw the incorporation of new commodities and markets of the East and the Americas. A sense of a “golden age” must expand to include the uncertainties that logically present within a living system; to address disasters and corrections and the discourse between these poles.

on Gucciardini’s chronicle, Vermeulen notes that “some 300 artists [artisans] are believed to have been members at any given time until the 1580s” (129). Before the 1560s, of that 300, Vermeulen estimates around 150 were painters (129; compare Van der Stichel and Filip Vermeulen, 190-191); John Michael Montias calculated lower numbers: from 90-135. See “Commentary, fine-tuning interpretations,” in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 62-65. Also cited in Martens, “Antwerp Painters; Their Market and Networks,” *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen*, 53-55.

²⁹⁵ Patrick O’Brien offers a concise summary of the assumptions and larger questions raised by designations such as “golden ages” in general and most specifically, those claimed for Antwerp, Amsterdam, and London. See, “Reflections and mediations on Antwerp, Amsterdam, and London in their golden ages,” in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London*, ed. P. O’Brien, et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3-35.

In other words, Antwerp's economic and political positions were always precarious, which any chronology of the long century shows, and, the imagery produced and the workshop activities undertaken within this chronology show that the complex structure that was early modern Antwerp was many times expressed as unstable, and possibly, unsustainable and thus required ongoing intervention; a necessity made clear in actions often taken by city leaders.

Visual Tactics for Evoking Precarious Prosperity

Early modern Antwerp artists and workshops contributed a visual sense to Antwerp's shaky prosperity. Perhaps for our contemporary eyes accustomed to visual inundation, a popular style of painting called "Antwerp Mannerism" that developed in sixteenth-century Antwerp loses its quirky edginess. After all, the paintings' display of catchy colors, exaggerated gesture, and a proliferation of detail and decoration describes much of visual culture today. As a way to help us reclaim some capacity for novelty and as a primer on the curious visual strategies used by a number of early modern Antwerp artists, as promised in the chapter introduction, I want to offer an unusual, but ultimately compelling and useful, comparison to a set of visual strategies from the opening scene of the film *Cabaret* (1972), in which the actor, Joel Grey's huckster Emcee welcomes the viewer.²⁹⁶ His invitation and our resulting participation parallel similar tactics used by Antwerp Mannerist artists. Both manage to call attention to a type of visual disorientation fabricated by the artist that aims to catch the viewer's eye. The energy of *Cabaret's* opening scene relies on the viewer's awareness of the artificial nature of the nightclub

²⁹⁶ *Cabaret*, directed by Bob Fosse (Los Angeles: Allied Artists Pictures, 1972).

which builds to a desire for the viewer to see behind the figures' masks and performances. A similar impetus is at work in the Adoration images painted by the Antwerp Mannerists. In both, these visual structures serve to narrate the mood of a city and patronage undergoing significant changes.

In *Cabaret*, the Emcee guides the viewer. The black and white of his tuxedo strangely harmonize with his pale, powdered face, slicked dark hair, and black-lined eyes. The face creates a background that only enhances the mauvish color of the emcee's oversized bowtie and cummerbund and catches the garish cold red of the Emcee's lips and rouged cheeks. The opening shot of a warped, mirrored surface is shortly interrupted by the unsettling close-up of the Emcee's face, only briefly unsmiling before we watch him transform his forlorn and menacing stare to a grin that, as he catches our eye in the mirror, he's careful to show is deliberately constructed as he lifts first the left corner of his mouth and then the right. The sense of menace and artificiality coupled with the scene's distorted, stark colors hang over his enticing invitation that comes when he turns to directly confront our gaze and calls out "*Willkommen...*". The viewer is left unsure of the Emcee's nature, a sense that grows in strength as the camera pulls back to reveal the gloom of a visually compressed nightclub setting cut through in fits and starts with garish reds and electric blues that reflect unevenly across the Emcee's overdressed audience.

When the camera cuts briefly to a dingy figure set up to mimic Otto Dix's hard-edged, mask-like *Portrait of the Journalist Sylvia von Harden* (1926), and then returns to the flamboyant gesturing of the Emcee, the camera shows the viewer both the vaguely familiar, yet highly constructed and ambiguous, nature of the rapidly-cut series of

images. The camera assembles for the viewer a swift montage of moments where art imitates art imitates life in art, which is very much the same effect produced by the Antwerp Master's *Adoration*. In the end, the combination of self-aware artificiality, imagery, garish color, and warped reflections keep us on edge by calling attention to the appearances that visually warn us that all is not what it seems. Rather than leave us with a sure sense of place and meaning, these visual elements merely introduce the sensation of instability and unfamiliarity.

I think of the Emcee when I see the gregarious and exuberant figure of Gabriel on the exterior of an altarpiece triptych dedicated to the Adoration of the Magi and painted in Antwerp c. 1525 by an Antwerp Mannerist painter whose identification, Master of the Antwerp Adoration [MAA] and repertoire derives from this panel (fig. 3-8 and 3-9). The painting is an exemplar of the Antwerp Mannerist style and is fully intact as an altarpiece. With its wings in working order, the effect originally planned for the viewer can be imagined and is key to understanding how these works were displayed and sold. The pictures exhibit a restlessness that would effectively catch the eye of buyers at the market or gallery. The elements that contribute to this effect are worth describing in detail as a way to grasp that experience.

On its exterior, the angel Gabriel's role as herald performs a similar function to the flashy Emcee: he sets himself as a foil for the calm figure of Mary and draws our attention with gesture and movement (fig. 3-10). When the two outside wings of the altarpiece close, the right exterior panel pictures this animated and welcoming Gabriel standing in exaggerated contrapposto with his right knee thrown forward as he arches his

back away from the picture plane, stretches his right arm up, and reaches out to the edge of the niche (3-12). He points with his index finger toward the sky while he turns his head to look over his right shoulder,²⁹⁷ drawing our gaze across the central divide to the standing figure of the Virgin on the left panel. She reads a prayer book and shows no reaction to Gabriel's gesture. Both figures are painted in grisaille save for the pinkish-brown of exposed faces and hands, and the reddish-brown of each figure's hair, as if a live figure has been encased in stone.

The limited color range does little to resolve the strange physical contrast between the alternating states of the same heavy drapery: fluttering at one point then hanging oppressively thick and weighted at another. Contributing to these clashing visual signals is the way both figures' small heads compare uneasily to their fuller, voluminous bodies that then occupy painted, dramatically-shaded, round-headed niches, the floor of which tilts out precariously towards the viewer causing us to wonder how the figures stay in place. Naturalistically rendered features appear familiar but repeatedly the artist combines the familiar with the inexplicable.

Gabriel's gesture creates a strong diagonal which is then countered by another diagonal created by three fluttering bits of drapery ends running from his left wrist, to a curl of fabric at thigh-level, and further to a third rippling bunch at knee level, aimed in the opposite direction from his pointing right finger. The two diagonals—top left to mid-center and outer right edge to lower left edge—intersect visually but unevenly as if the two run parallel to each other and the picture plane. Gabriel's enormous ruffled wings

²⁹⁷ An iconic move repeated much later by the main character in the 1979 film, *Saturday Night Fever*.

curve, buckle, and counter-curve at his back. The inside edges—thick and turned—create a vase-shaped void, the base of which encompasses Gabriel’s reddish-brown, fluffy hair, while the wings’ tips reach up and out, nearly to the top edges of the niche. The lines and volume of the angel’s bulging torso and thick waist flow toward his elongated, columnar right leg ending with just a peek of the right foot jutting from below the heavy “cracked” drapery.

Across the divide, Mary’s figure sways in a gentle “S”-shape with taut grey fabric covering her torso (fig. 3-11). Below a knotted fabric belt at her waist begins a series of arrow-shaped folds that run from waist to left knee; then continue to the ground and end in cracked folds. From the ground, the arrow motif continues upward, pointing to the right knee. A series of three nested, deep arrows point from the outer right hip downward toward the ground, ending in two triangular folds that lay along the ground, their tips pointing away from Mary’s body. More triangles form from drapery at the outer left thigh, the left elbow, and, prominently, outward from the right elbow in a sharp angle that overlaps the niche edge. Much like the unevenly placed diagonals that form the figure of Gabriel, these multi-directional series of arrow-shaped folds relentlessly interrupt any cohesion among motifs, fabric, and the underlying body, the contours of which are mostly lost beneath heavy folds. Fluidity is clearly not a prime concern for these figures. Rather, we sense unbalance and physical contortion which is only heightened by the fluttering length of drapery loose at Mary’s right shoulder that recalls Gabriel’s three fabric curls that roil and flatten, apparently in response to the same curious force.

This Annunciation scene is a typical choice for the exterior panels of an altarpiece. What is unconventional is the flamboyant poses and curves of the figures, which their grisaille coloring does little to tone down. Viewer be warned: *this* tension-filled Gabriel heralds a reimagined, perhaps even startling, vision of the promise of the Incarnation.

True to this promise, the exterior does prepare the eye for similar shapes, motifs, and dynamic poses pictured on the interior of the altarpiece, but with one exception: when open, vibrant, flickering color replaces the somber tones of black and white (fig. 3-13). The same cuts of vertical parallel planes recede into the background causing an ambiguous sense of three-dimensional space. The familiar arrow-shaped folds appear on garments worn by figures in the foreground. In the center foreground, the kneeling king sports a mustard-lined dark pink robe that billows outward from his right elbow in an imitation of the same motif seen on Mary's robe.

The center panel is vertically oriented yet almost measures square. A daytime scene of the Adoration of the Magi takes center foreground before a ruined stone structure opened to the sky. Three pointed archways stand intact but now only support brush and saplings that sprout from the tops of the crumbling walls and to the right, a grey stone sculpture of a bearded man.²⁹⁸ Although the portability of the altarpiece suggests an intended private contemplation, the interior panels do not suggest a private, contemplative, inwardly-focused engagement with the viewer. Instead, in some ways, the composition and the action of the figures presents a raucous romp; “no room in the inn” writ large. This contrived movement and bright, clashing colors, and attention to

²⁹⁸ Identification of this figure has proven difficult but will be considered further.

fabric is the flamboyant scene the Emcee / Gabriel prepares for the viewer. This is a scene aware of its own artificiality and is designed to catch your attention.

In an outdoor setting, before the now-familiar trope of temple ruins, Mary sits on the ground with the baby in her arms, his nude, pudgy body made strikingly pale set against his mother's voluminous, deep blue robe (fig. 3-13). He leans out and reaches his right hand into the golden vessel held by the eldest magus, Melchior. Mary's pale blue scarf mirrors the shape of his gesture as it billows in an arch and seems to snap up and away from her left shoulder. She holds her left hand out and down toward the ground which mimics Christ's gesture; both a reminder of the earthbound position of the gift of gold, with its weighted materiality contrasted with the unseen force that lifts Mary's scarf heavenward.

Surrounding Mary and Christ are two magi on the left, another on the right, and Joseph, clothed in solid bands of lavender, red, and blue drapery stands directly behind Mary. Moving away from the central panel to the altarpiece wings, St. Margaret presents a kneeling, unidentified male (?) patron on the right panel.²⁹⁹ On the left panel, a

²⁹⁹ Other scholars have suggested the possibility that this figure started out as a woman that was altered later to appear as a man. The underdrawing shows some changes that add heaviness to the figure's facial features and shorten the hairstyle. The presence of St. Margaret as a patron saint would support the presence of a woman donor, although it's not unheard of for men to appeal to female saints; see Michel Leeflang, "Master of the Antwerp Adoration: *Triptych with The Adoration of the Magi*," catalog entry 68 in *Extravagant! A Forgotten Chapter in Antwerp Painting, 1500-1530 / Catalogue*, ed. K. Belkin and N. van Hout (Maastricht: Bonnefantenmuseum, 2005), 164. In actuality, nothing of the present figure conclusively rules out the possibility of the figure being a woman; the fur-lined black cloak and garment accented with a pleated white fabric is fairly ambiguous; the figure's hands are decidedly tapered and delicate. However, the facial type matches that of the other male figures in the altarpiece whose large, deep-set eyes, large noses, and sagging cheeks contrast with the three female figures' full, pale, oval faces with downcast eyes, large eyelids, and smaller noses. That said, the visibly altered and fluffed hair and the presence of St. Margaret strongly suggests that the patron figure at one time was meant to be a woman. If we want to consider that workshops that were producing for the art

mounted, sword-wielding St. George, who is fantastically yet illogically dressed in head-to-toe armor interrupted by cotton-candy-colored ostrich feathers flaring from his copper-colored helmet and a delicately-pleated pink skirt at his waist. Beneath St. George's rearing white horse crouches a multi-colored reptilian creature with spiked, leathery wings who (understandably) breathes fire in reaction to the thick, wooden lance in his neck, snapped off by his own green and beclawed left paw.³⁰⁰ A similar creature appears wedged behind St. Margaret in the right panel, the beast from which St. Margaret emerges unscathed. Margaret and George share similar pastel-colored clothing and both sport fluttering, color-changing scarves which help to frame the unruly composition of the Adoration placed between them.

The action in all three panels takes place outdoors with the greenish-brown foreground leading back to fully-leafed, deep green trees which then back up to glimpses of blue water and craggy, Patinir-inspired mountains colored in a range of blue hues.³⁰¹ Roughly a quarter of the three panels are reserved for a clear turquoise sky that joins up with the haziness of distant hills. A lone windmill stands atop a bright hill in the left midground in the center panel. Thatched-roof stucco cottages appear among the

market, and thus on speculation, might be prepared to adjust paintings according to demand, this figure contributes evidence for that. Otherwise, a change in patron or change in patron's commission are also possibilities. Finally, the original underdrawing might also have served as a mock-up (a *vidimus*) for a customer to envision his or her portrait in its place.

³⁰⁰ Perhaps this dragon's paw should be called a hand as it appears he has an opposable thumb. Studies of dragon nomenclature were not consulted here and are beyond the scope of this thesis. The rearing horse and rider and composition of this panel strongly resemble the mounted figure of Justinian (so-named) on the well-known ivory plaque from the 6th c. held at the Louvre (also known as the *Barberini Ivory*).

³⁰¹ The Netherlandish artist, Joachim Patinir (c. 1485-1524; died in Antwerp) paid close attention to landscape in most of his paintings and he is best known for his distinctive style of jutting, strongly verticalized mountainscapes with sheer faces and colored in bluish hues, very much as painted here by the MAA. Patinir's approach to landscape elements influenced a generation of northern artists.

midground forest setting along with a single tower and gate that is framed by the pointed arch of the ruins in the foreground. Inexplicably, there are no walls connecting this tower gate to a smaller city gate on the left which, in the end, read visually as props. Groups of figures on foot and on horseback populate the midground yet the groups do not appear to be ordered toward any particular goal or activity. True to the traditions surrounding the features presented in many Adoration paintings, the ancient story has been reworked to evoke a contemporary world presentation, here evoking northern Europe, yet, simultaneously, nowhere in particular.

While the center panel measures only 11.5 x 8.75 inches, its bright colors and busy composition effectively attract the eye but immediately set it wandering. The image generates a restless vision. The viewer is rewarded then with delightfully-detailed figures whose smallish heads, vivid robes in contrasting colors, and long, delicate fingers contribute to an irregular visual rhythm in the way that each element—head, robe, staff, vegetation, hats, feathers, patterns, masonry, horses, bundles, and on and on—is quickly interrupted by another close by in the crowded composition. That sense of the artists “marketing” their works through eye-catching visual elements takes on more power by mimicking in a sense the world surrounding the painting—the flush of the market that unsettles the viewer’s vision with sheer variety and even the unexpected.³⁰²

Irregularity carries over to single figures as well where, rather than cohering into one figure, and much like St. George’s attire, the elements comprising single figures tend to battle and oppose each other. The result is a dynamic fracture of the figure rather than coherence. For example, from head to toe on the figure of Caspar, the magus on the right,

³⁰² My thanks to Michael Gaudio for calling my attention to this effect.

the soft pinks and yellow of his elaborate pointy cap will never resolve peacefully with his blood-red hose below to create a calm unity for the figure. Further, between these two disparate points, bold green and gold intervene to ensure our eyes are stopped as they take in the swath of thick, deep green folds that lay heavily over the thinner, patterned gold. Then as if in an effort to include the full range of possible colors, burgundy and turquoise bleed together on a wispy scarf that billows out at Caspar's elbow.³⁰³

Shimmering color combinations (*changeants*), patterns, and texture catch our interest before the figures themselves do.

While the figures take up space with their voluminous robes, caught-in-the-moment gestures, and caught-in-the-wind draperies, light is distributed evenly and quite flatly across all three panels, thus shadows are minimized. Together with the lack of much open space, these picture components result in a front-to-back compression and a tilted perspective that elevates the viewer slightly above the scene and again causes a sense of interruption, this time between the viewer's space and that of the painting's. That is, while the figures appear very close to the picture plane we nonetheless sense we're a good distance from them.

So far, the KMSKA *Adoration* composition is similar to the arrangement and elements seen in many other painted Adoration scenes. What makes Antwerp Mannerist

³⁰³ Yao Fen You has shown how these shimmering combinations of colors, known as *changeants*, accurately reflect Antwerp's luxury cloth-dyeing and finishing industry and became a hallmark of Antwerp Mannerist paintings. While somewhat fantastic in their interpretation, Yao notes that the renderings demonstrate the artists' close observations of actual fabrics. Inclusion of so many fabric types and colors in these paintings is not solely for added variation but is a "calculated" nod to Antwerp's premier position in the high-end cloth trade. "Antwerp Mannerism and the fabricating of fashion," *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (2004-2005), 147-148.

paintings of the Adoration (and this one in particular) worth a closer look are the paintings' distinct emphasis on the play of colors, the artist's refusal to mask the constructed and artificial nature of the composition revealed through the artist's (or artists') use of new working methods borrowed from print technology. The marks of this technology are readily evident in the underdrawings of the figures, where the cross-hatching and linear shaping inspired by printmaking are exposed, or rather, left to be seen as part of the image (fig. 3-14). Aside from inspiring a new approach to formal qualities, the easier reproducibility of prints inspires the use of these techniques as a part of quickening and streamlining the production process.³⁰⁴ This would allow for details in the underdrawings to show through as shading and definition and sometimes pattern which decreases the work of modeling figures with oil paints alone. The novel aspect of this technique rests on the fact that the artists allow for the *process* itself—and its association with the newness of print culture—to remain evident to the viewer. At the same time, we sense that the artist would very likely be conscious of painting's inability to reproduce in multiples what print shops could promise, however, by co-opting printmaking techniques, the painter quickens through production and also have more time to turn to multiplying

³⁰⁴ For studies on the concept employing “print conventions” in painting, see Molly Faries, *Making and Marketing: Studies of the Painting Process in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Workshops*, ed. Molly Faries (Brepols, 2006); Faries, “Some Remarks on the Inter-Relationships of Underdrawings, Drawings and Prints,” in *Dessin sous-jacent et autres techniques graphiques: colloque V pour l'étude du dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture, Louvain-la-Neuve, 29 septembre-1er octobre 1983: Université catholique de Louvain Louvain-la-Neuve. Laboratoire d'étude des oeuvres d'art*, ed. R. Van Schoute and D. Hollanders-Favart (Louvain-la-neuve: Laboratoire d'étude des oeuvres d'art par les méthodes scientifiques, 1985), 144-158; Goddard, “Assumed Knowledge. The Use of Prints in Early Sixteenth-Century Antwerp Workshops,” *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen*, 2005: 123-140.

color effects and details, thus serving up a richness unavailable to their fellow image-makers.

Strangers, Merchants, and Magi

As earlier chapters have shown, the figures of the Magi function as a metaphor for the unfamiliar. Their appearance signals change and not so much a completed transformation as a process of *shifting* that takes place at the moment the viewer spies the three kings in the picture. Always mid-arrival and with their work unfinished, the three men captivate the viewer with a feeling of anticipation. Their strange dress requires attention and lends uncertainty to their identity and to their reception since strangers are typically treated with caution.³⁰⁵ Early modern Antwerpers would of course have frequent if not daily contact with “strangers” due to the composition of the merchant communities and foreign travelers to the city. As a foreigner and a resident, Lodovico Gucciardini viewed the presence of strangers in Antwerp—and his brother merchants of course—more positively, writing “...it was a wonderful thing to see such a coming together of so many peoples and nations” and that in Antwerp “since there is always such a mass of strangers, there are new tidings from all over the world.”³⁰⁶

³⁰⁵ As Gelderblom and others point out, the levels of accommodation and tolerance of cities toward foreign merchants and trade varied widely. Sixteenth-century Antwerp in particular understood their own civic identity and prosperity as tightly intertwined with commerce and chose to adapt /enact many laws and build permanent, year-round markets, as part of their promotion of a favorable atmosphere for trade.

³⁰⁶ Quoted in Guido Marnef, “Protestant Conversions in the Age of Catholic Reformation: the Case of Antwerp in the sixteenth c.,” in *The Low Countries As a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, ed. Arie Jan Gelderblom, et al (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 33.

However, the trope of the magus as unincorporated stranger has even closer parallels to the view of the merchant and thus it makes sense to align the two, not only due to their object-bearing connection, but also due to how early modern culture conceptualized the merchant and his/her occupation. Art historian Elizabeth Honig has pointed out that the sixteenth-century rhetoric surrounding the merchant is characterized by an emphasis on the merchant as “other”—a stranger of sorts—and as one who, in sixteenth-century Antwerp, is not completely assimilated into the cultural construct of society. This is to say, the merchant is part of, yet separate from, society and in that sense, is not *one with* society.³⁰⁷ Further, without reference to the parallels of the Adoration story, Honig notes that society’s acceptance of merchants hinges on material exchange and the ability of that exchange to assimilate the stranger. Merchants occupied a tenuous cultural space in sixteenth-century Antwerp that can be illustrated by way of the story of the Three Kings. Just as the outsider kings recognize a divine king through their pilgrimage and gifts that act as an acknowledgement of their soon-to-come transformation, the inclusion of merchants turns on the materials they exchange.

Honig concludes that “the new economic situation of the sixteenth century fundamentally changed daily life. Put simply, everyone had to behave like a merchant, selling goods for as much money as he or she could get and using the profits to buy other goods.”³⁰⁸ For Honig, the result is that,

[i]n a world where social roles and values are determined through acts of exchange at the market, the place of commodity between buyer and seller

³⁰⁷ Honig, *Painting and the Market*, 8-10. Honig argues that this frame of mind changes moving into the seventeenth century.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

comes to be a central focus of attention. Goods are not merely seen as useful necessities but are invested with values perceived by the people who trade them.³⁰⁹

For merchants aiming to lessen their perceived distance from society's central actors, they could do no better than to employ the imagery of the magi to assist in assimilating their "exotic" or outsider standing closer to the very mechanics of a working, prosperous society. In the Adoration, the recognition of a new divine order relied on verification by outsiders; the order only comes into being through the travel to and viewing of the Christ child. Merchants as outsiders might be understood as the carriers of a similar effort but in this case, their presence marks the coming into being of a different order: that of merchant culture.

New Markets and What Needs Seeing

For Antwerp citizens, foreign residents, and travelers to the city in the sixteenth century, contact with materials and their commerce was part of daily life; this included works of art. Getting eyes and hands on art objects, especially paintings,³¹⁰ was not especially difficult given: one, the supply available in Antwerp, home to artists and artisans working within a guild structure; and two, the length of time artists and later, art

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 11.

³¹⁰ Paintings consistently outnumbered other art objects found in collections in sixteenth c. Antwerp. Martens and Peeters document two periods, 1532-1548 and the decade of the 1560s, showing that on average for both periods, inventories show an average slightly over 5 paintings per household and accounting for 68.9% of all art objects in the first period; rising to 85% in the later period. As an indicator of a broader market, the authors note that by the 1560s, numbers suggest that possession of paintings spreads more widely to and throughout the "middle classes." Martens and Peeters, "Paintings in Antwerp Houses," 42-43. On the multiple forces contributing to the increasing value and presence of painting in sixteenth c. Antwerp, see Bloom, "Why Painting?," in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe, 1450-1750* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

dealers (sometimes one and the same), could make works available to buyers. The move during the sixteenth century from seasonally-restricted markets and festivals to markets that were granted extended presence in the city was a determining factor in Antwerp's success in attracting and sustaining trade, in addition to serving as a bellwether for the transition from more direct and circumscribed markets of the fifteenth century Low Countries to the increasingly merchant-mediated and complexly organized economy that developed in port cities like Antwerp and later in Amsterdam.³¹¹ Part of this complexity involved not only the trade and possession of actual, material goods but also in more abstract, and often suspect, vehicles like money and credit that citizens typically saw as riddled with (or destined for) morally questionable transactions.³¹²

With these monumental changes in the place of commerce in Antwerp but also the place of painting in commerce, artists responded by devising new approaches with both the viewer and the market in mind. Artisans, especially the prolific image-makers such as the Antwerp Mannerist painters working in early sixteenth-century Antwerp, placed patterns and schemes of representation before their viewers that worked not so much to reproduce a close physical reflection of place or people, but signaled change in

³¹¹ As recounted by most economic historians, Bruges was the first city widely understood as a location for well-stocked and attended seasonal fairs that drew international business and trade. Simply put, as Bruges responded to political setbacks, Antwerp was able to pick up business by promising less interference and by moving toward extended market periods instead of holding to the seasonal model tradition. The historical arc then moves from Antwerp to Amsterdam in the late sixteenth century as Antwerp suffered the effects of religious strife and Spanish rule. On extended market times, see, Vermeulen, *Painting for the Market*, 19-21

³¹² For the significance of the use of credit and the money market in Brabant (and particularly in Antwerp), see Herman van der Wee, *The growth of the Antwerp market and the European economy: (fourteenth-sixteenth centuries). Volume 1: Statistics* (The Hague, Nijhoff: 1963), 25-26; 35. The literature examining the late medieval/early modern transitions and fluctuations in Antwerp's markets and marketing as well as the moral and theoretical dimensions generated by and influencing them; Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Market*.

what needs “seeing.”³¹³ That is, a sustained interest in a changing scheme of representation says that first, many viewers have accepted changes or innovations as carriers of meaning; second, that the course of demand for these changes says that the meanings expressed are relevant for a time (and then fall out of fashion); and third, that artists have likely adapted along the course in order to capture these meanings and continue to appeal to viewers/buyers for the sake of their own livelihoods.³¹⁴

Most viewers would not likely look at a painting with remarkably new colors, forms, and ornament, and conclude that the changes were simply capricious; especially when these new schemes appear repeatedly and in mass as they did in early sixteenth-century Antwerp. Some patrons clearly indicated a desire for “new” styles that show viewers were indeed aware of changes and that those changes—and not just in subject matter, but the changes to their *representation*—expressed meaning. Most artists and workshops would not likely continue producing in a new style if not met with success. If viewers declined to buy the works, if they failed to see particular meanings and find them compelling (which at some point they do and thus demand wanes), if they realigned their purchasing priorities, then for many artists accustomed to reaping rewards through fulfilling market expectations, failure to adapt to “what needs seeing” surely would be folly.

³¹³ James Bloom raises questions regarding the notion of “need” as a part of demand, in the sense of understanding what a painting’s *function* might be for particular groups (e.g., nobility vs. merchant; for show vs. piety vs. familial loyalty vs. “decoration”). See “Why Painting?,” 25-26.

³¹⁴ In an effort to conceptualize (and possibly de-mythologize) the work and motivation of artists, Montias argues that, pragmatically, an artist would have no reason to continue working to produce art if not met with some monetary success. For Montias, it makes sense that when considered from an economic (even survival) viewpoint, artists generally would not have the luxury to paint simply because they had a passion for it or the subject painted. J.M. Montias, “The Influence of Economic Factors on Style,” *De Zeventiende eeuw* 6, no.1 (1990), 50.

What I'm describing is more than a simple physical supply / demand approach and response to commerce. This is an economy of exchanging ideas and images; exchanging ideas *through* images; generating adaptations and exchanging again; a type of commerce for art and ideas. This is an economy in which the understanding of a thing's *value* becomes indistinguishable from the understanding of that thing as a *representation* (with all the potential for deception and change implied by that latter term).

Yet, as Erasmus so shrewdly points out, commerce and exchange come with grievous moral and cultural traps. Erasmus' Folly speaks for society's awareness of how trade and exchange in the abstract should potentially promise equal rewards for exchanges assume, yet within the worldly acts constituting (representing) commerce there exists a latent sense of imbalance and inequity. That is, exchange might appear (be represented) to operate at a 1:1 basis, but instead turn unequal. The resulting clash between abstraction and the practice—the idea and the action—suggests potential for deception. It suggests an awareness that the stability of commerce and value is precarious, and worse, ripe for manipulation. The potential for deception in commerce, or more pointedly in Folly's argument, deception as *part* of commerce, was a matter of concern for early modern folks as expressed, for example, in the acknowledged confusion over the value and equivalency of the multitudes and volatility of coinage in circulation across the markets of Europe (and beyond).³¹⁵ Thus, the state of confusion arising between materials and their oftentimes ephemeral and/or elusive worth, is in large part a problem of representation, whether the materials are coins, spices, cloth, property, gifts, works of art, or meaning.

³¹⁵ Howell, *Commerce Before Capitalism*, 17-22.

The Spices and Powders of Merchants

6 What is that coming up from the wilderness,
like a column of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all the fragrant powders of the merchant?

7 Behold, it is the litter of Solomon!

About it are sixty mighty men
of the mighty men of Israel,

8 all girt with swords

and expert in war,

each with his sword at his thigh,
against alarms by night.

9 King Solomon made himself a palanquin
from the wood of Lebanon.

10 He made its posts of silver,
its back of gold, its seat of purple;
it was lovingly wrought within
by the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
and behold King Solomon,

with the crown with which his mother crowned him
on the day of his wedding,
on the day of the gladness of his heart.”

--*Song of Songs*, 3:6-11³¹⁶

Into these conditions that defined commerce and the art market in early modern Antwerp, enter the Magi, the traditional purveyors of the “spices of the merchant” or “powders of the merchant,” so-named in the *Song of Songs* explicitly as a way of denoting their rarity, allure, and “exotic” nature. Completing the list of goods worthy of

³¹⁶ Also noted by Trexler, *Journey*, 13; and Ewing, “Magi and merchants,” 288. This verse is one of several Old Testament verses understood by Christians either as a foretelling of the Magi story or as a type for the Magi in the New Testament. For a thorough chronology and discussion of the early church writings regarding supposed precursors, see Trexler, 11-17. Trexler emphasizes the fact that this particular verse was looked to less frequently, likely for two reasons: one, the discomfort of church fathers in reconciling the sensuous with the sacred throughout the *Song of Songs* (typically explained as the love of God for his chosen people); and two, the association of the dignified “wise men” (and later kings) with worldly “merchants” (13). For a catalog of the literature and sources pertaining to the Magi story, see volume one from Kehrer, *Die heiligen Drei Könige*.

elevation to a king, appear the products of trade and import, the “wood of Lebanon,” silver, and gold. The passage begins with an uncertainty about the object or person sighted; thus a problem of representation. From the unknowable “wilderness” emerges the specter of a procession, shifting like a “column of smoke.” From this enigma resolves the figure of Solomon, the Shulamite woman’s beloved.³¹⁷

Christians long understood the mention of the gifts of merchants in this passage from the Hebrew Bible as a magian reference foretelling the travels of the New Testament wisemen of the east, the ones who, through their myrrh and frankincense, made way for the procession of King Solomon, who is understood as a type for Christ. The traditional links between Old and New Testament and their merchant-wisemen made the story so compelling to Antwerp artists and patrons (domestic and foreign alike), that of the thousands of paintings depicting a variety of mostly religious subjects produced by Antwerp artists in the first half of the sixteenth century, somewhere in the range of 32-40% of these thousands were pictures of the Adoration of the Magi.³¹⁸ That is, pictures of the Adoration became the favorite subject of patrons of art in Antwerp and a “trademark” for Antwerp School artists.³¹⁹ Further, the figures of the magi appear to have been compelling enough to citizens of Antwerp as a reflection of their city’s character, that the

³¹⁷ The Shulamite woman is traditionally the name given to the female protagonist in the *Song of Songs* (also called the *Song of Solomon*). Christian allegorical interpretations of the text have typically tied the love of King Solomon and the Shulamite woman as foreseeing Christ’s love for the faithful. As Athalya Brenner recounts, the Shulamite woman at times would be associated with the figure of Mary. See, “Song of Songs, Polyphony of Love,” in *Feminist Biblical Interpretation: A Compendium of Critical Commentary on the Books of the Bible and Related Literature*, ed. Luise Schrottoff, et al (Cambridge: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2012), 289-290.

³¹⁸ Dan Ewing, “Magi and merchants,” 277-278; Filip Vermeulen, *Painting for the Market*, 29; 154.

³¹⁹ Vermeulen, *Painting for the Market*, 154.

names Gaspar / Caspar, Balthasar, and Melchior appear frequently as men's names.³²⁰

Dan Ewing notes this naming trend is especially apparent among merchants and financiers.

Folks could and did make connections between trade, travel, commodities, money, and an unceasing flow and variety of goods they experienced daily in Antwerp, on the one hand, and on the other with the sacred magi and the worldly merchants who were most readily associated with them.³²¹ The proliferation of paintings (of any subject) mirrored the proliferation of material goods coming into and leaving Antwerp; and the proliferation of details pictured in the Antwerp Mannerists' works perhaps mirrors the attempt at communicating the overwhelming fullness of commerce where the multiplication of details best translates as *volume* rather than individual documentation.

But what volumes of goods could be expected in Antwerp? For some measures of Antwerp's stake in trade, take these, for example:

³²⁰ Ewing, "Magi and merchants," 291. Ewing notes a good number of examples of prominent Antwerp merchants named with variations of the Magi names. Particularly interesting are the number of examples of the sons of immigrants to Antwerp given magus names, certainly a sign of popularity and fashion, but also a good indicator of the contours of Antwerp's civic identity. Antwerp taps a long tradition of associating merchants with the magi. Rab Hatfield covers the well-known episodes of the Medici intentionally linking merchants and civic leaders with the magi spectacle. See, "The Compagnia de' Magi," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970); see also Richard Trexler, *Journey*. (Both cited in Ewing, "Merchants," 292-293.) For extensive background on the Medici's use of the magi story, see Henry Bleattler, "Adoration of the Medici: Fifteenth Century Construction of a Princely Identity through the Expropriation of Magian Iconography" PhD. diss., Florida State University, 2001.

³²¹ Other elements Lodovico credits are Antwerp's city walls and the year-long availability of markets. Reference to Italian version of Lodovico's chronicle, *Descrittione di m. Lodouico Guicciardini patritio fiorentino, di tutti i Paesi Bassi* (1567), noted by Woodall, 6. For English translation, see Guicciardini, *The description of the Low countreys and of the Provinces thereof, gathered into an Epitome out of the Historie of Lodovico Guicchardini*, trans. Thomas Danett (London: Peter Short, 1593).

- by the 1550s, the spices, silver, and sugar flowing through Europe by way of Portuguese and English colonies were typically funneled through Antwerp.³²²
- for Portugal, for a decade (1520s), John III, King of Portugal derived a good *half* of his income from the Portuguese hold over the spice trade and that income *depended* on the re-import market in Antwerp.³²³
- after 1530, the Portuguese spice trade met with new competition from Venice and other ports along the Mediterranean, consequently significantly decreasing the Portuguese profit from imports and re-exports³²⁴
- the English with their cloth trade and Germans with copper and silver joined Portugal in relying on Antwerp as a hub to filter trade.³²⁵

As noted earlier, Guicciardini, who made Antwerp his home for 47 years (from 1542 until his death in 1589) understood that “spices”—such as those aromatic gifts of frankincense and myrrh that Christendom inextricably linked with both merchants *and* magi—were a key part of the foundation of Antwerp’s economic success. Guicciardini devotes some thirteen pages to lists of typical imports and exports organized by city or country.³²⁶

³²² Niels Steensgaard, “The Growth and Composition of the Long-Distance Trade of England and the Dutch Republic before 1750,” in *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World 1350-1750*, ed. James Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 106.

³²³ Herman van der Wee, “Structural Changes in European Long-Distance Trade, and Particularly in the Re-Export Trade from South to North, 1350-1750,” in *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World 1350-1750*, ed. James Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 29.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 30.

³²⁵ Steensgaard, “Growth and Composition,” 106.

³²⁶ See fols. 32v-38r in 1593 translation. Lodovico titles the list [as translated for the English edition of 1593], “A notable discourse of the trafique & Commerce of Andwerpe with strang and forren Nations”. These nations are: France, Germany, Denmark (and “Osterlings,” or those from the Baltic region), Italy, Spain, and Portugal. For each nation, he lists various trade cities. Cloth in stunning numbers, varieties, and finishes dominates Lodovico’s list showing trade both into and out of Antwerp. See also, Yao-Fen You, “Antwerp Mannerism and the fabricating of fashion,” in *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen* (2004-2005), 141-158. A sampling of other goods listed range from artillery, metals, and jewels to silver thread, dyes, feathers, rice, drugs, leather, and parmesan cheese.

As an example of the ship traffic that might be expected to land in Antwerp, we can look to the import of these all-important spices. Between 1538 and 1544, spices arrived via Portuguese ships one to two times per year, with estimates of cargo weight at “40,000 to 45,000 quintals” or 4,000,000 kg [8,818,490 lbs] over one year.³²⁷ Just understanding that around 130 ships were required to carry 25,000 quintals of spices, we get a picture of the massive amount of traffic and goods coming into the city just from the sea alone and from one entity. Accounting for the full measure of Gucciardini’s thirteen pages of goods traversing Antwerp’s gates and port helps us picture what must have seemed a proper whirl of activities, people, materials, ideas, languages, scents, noises available to residents and visitors.

The proliferation of goods necessarily links to a proliferation of people needed to deal with the goods. Between 1500 and 1550, the urban center of Antwerp more than doubled its population to around 90,000 inhabitants;³²⁸ and Gucciardini estimated around 1000 merchants lived in Antwerp, c. 1567.³²⁹ And yet, a certain sense of volatility must have attended the sensations produced by commerce in the streets of Antwerp and what must have seemed at times like an inundation of materials and people. Most residents would be fully aware of the dangers and risks inherent in trade and travel; the repercussions from an event like the loss of one ship would be understood and likely felt

³²⁷ Florence Edler-De Roover, “The Market for Spices in Antwerp, 1538-1544,” *Revue Belge de Philologie et D’histoire* 17, no. 1–2 (1938): 218.

³²⁸ Luc-Normand Tellier, *Urban World History: An Economic and Geographical Perspective* (Quebec City: Presses de l’Université du Québec, 2009), 311. At Antwerp’s peak in 1550, its population of around 90,000 compared to Florence at around 60,000 (a decrease from 1500 of 10,000); Genoa at 65,000;. By 1600, Antwerp’s population was 46,000, close to its mark 100 years before; see 586; 290-291.

³²⁹ Gucciardini, *Descrittione*, 32.

at every level of the city as expected goods were lost, creditors were left hanging, and shopkeepers and dealers were missing promised inventory. The staggering estimates at the time of £18,880 (roughly £11,250,000 /\$18m in 2013 dollars) pinned to the lost *Santo António*, a royal Portuguese ship sailing between Antwerp and Lisbon, but wrecked off the coast of southern England in 1527, offers a view of the stakes at play for a cascade of entities.³³⁰

A further measure of the volatility of Antwerp's fortunes is the precipitous decline over the last decades of the sixteenth century, where shortly after the fall of Antwerp to Spain in Aug of 1585 and the resulting Dutch blockade of the Scheldt and the ship traffic that traveled it, Antwerp's population stood at around 40,000; a decrease of over 50% from c.1560. This depopulation included the many artists and artisans who fled the city for the northern provinces. It would take another 55 years for the city to recover a population of 67,000.³³¹ The decline is spectacular given that the population of Antwerp at its midcentury peak numbered close to 100,000 inhabitants, which was more than double from the population at 1500 (compared to Florence at 60,000; Genoa, at 65,000).

Jost Amman's Precarious Commerce

The vitality of Antwerp's commerce was showing faults by the time of the Protestant uprising that resulted in the Iconoclastic Riots in the summer of 1566. The

³³⁰ It is unclear from the records available to me whether the ship was en route to Lisbon or to Antwerp. Both directions are recorded. Cargo included "silver, copper, jewels and cloth" with the copper alone weighing in at 54 tons. Of 86 crew, 45 survived. Kevin Camidge, "St Anthony Designated Historic Wreck Site: Desk-based Assessment," unpublished report EH 6691 for British Heritage, 11. <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/discover/maritime/map/st-anthony/>

³³¹ Hans Vlieghe, *Flemish Art and Architecture, 1585-1700* (Yale University Press, 1998), 2.

riots were stirred in large part by the increasing presence of Protestant-Calvinist practices which briefly enjoyed a respite from official Catholic scrutiny following Margaret of Parma's ruling in August 1566 allowing Protestants to publicly preach in the Low Countries. Despite this significant compromise by the Hapsburgs aimed at calming unrest, the following year the gain was lost as unpaid Spanish soldiers fell on Antwerp in search of recompense for their service to the Spanish crown. In the course of their attack on the city, some 7000 people were killed, parts of the city were set alight, and enormous damage was done throughout Antwerp. In outrage, Antwerp joined with the northern provinces in signing the Union of Utrecht in 1579 in order to present a unified response to Hapsburg brutality. However, by 1584, the Duke of Parma, Alessandro Farnese, Philip II's agent in the Low Countries, was tasked with returning the provinces to Catholic rule. The Duke kept Antwerp under siege from July 1584 until August 1585 at which time Antwerp capitulated and then was brought back under a Catholic Hapsburg rule. Protestants in Antwerp were given the choice to leave within two years for other cities. The northern provinces managed to stay independent from Spanish rule thus creating a greater divide between the north and south, especially once the Dutch blockaded access to the Scheldt in order to limit Spanish incursions into the north. With this added instability, Antwerp never recovered its flush days of the first half of the sixteenth century.

In 1585, by the time a print shop in Augsburg was printing up Johann Neudörfer and Jost Amman's six-piece, table-sized broadsheet known as *The Allegory of Commerce* (fig. 3-15), that pictures the city of Antwerp at its center, Antwerp's once-sure position as

the trade and financial powerhouse of Europe was well on the downside from prosperity. The year of production, 1585, is significant, if not puzzling, since in August the Spanish re-claimed Antwerp, the “commercial capital of Christendom,”³³² for the Hapsburgs, ending Antwerp’s eight-year Calvinist republic. The print’s context is puzzling since the broadsheet pictures the river-view of Antwerp as its central motif, as if to say Antwerp is “Commerce” at nearly the same moment the Dutch northern provinces blockaded the Scheldt estuary.³³³

Amman’s print extols the benefits of double-entry bookkeeping working in concert with merchants’ activities to (as we will see, unconvincingly) promise “balance” and prosperity for the modern city. The likely audience for the broadside were the merchant and counting houses much like those pictured in the bottom register of the print. *The Allegory of Commerce* aims to map out, and one assumes clarify, the complex relationships comprising a successful commercial city, yet, at the same time, the image structure and its components are unsettlingly, visually precarious. The bottom register is the most solid of the three that at once supports and yet relies on the upper registers, as

³³² Paul Arblaster, *A History of the Low Countries*, 2nd ed., 110. The ascendance of Antwerp relied on the diminished role played by Bruges, beginning in the last two decades of the fifteenth century. On the transition of economic power from Bruges to Antwerp to Amsterdam, The scholarship on sixteenth-c. Antwerp commerce and economics is extensive. For detailed accounts of the economic contours of Antwerp, see Henry van der Wee, *The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy, 14th-sixteenth Centuries*, 3 vol., (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963).

³³³ Arblaster, 188-120. A key indicator of Antwerp’s economic struggles is the loss of half its population over the 25 years prior to 1585. See Zirka Zaremba Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp, 1550-1700*, 41; Michael Limberger, “No town in the world provides more advantages!: economies of agglomeration and the golden age of Antwerp,” in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London*, ed. Patrick O’Brien, et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 42-43.

activities appear to be funneled through the font at center directly into the “secret book” (the merchant’s account book) ensconced in a special tabernacle below.

The sense that the upper registers are mid-development and generating at the same moment that the sturdy houses and their counting and organizing activities proceed, brings to mind a near-perpetual production-acquisition-counting-exchange cycle. Perpetual, however, only if all parts stay in place. One tilt too many, one deletion, one absence or too many additions and the cycle is interrupted or perhaps collapses altogether. If not understood visually through vignettes picturing such things as war and sinking ships (fig. 3-16), various warnings in text placed in cartouches regarding possible threats to merchant integrity are placed throughout the print alongside text that acts as a primer for proper bookkeeping. Scholars such as Donald Herral point out the dual emphasis on the private vs. public aspects of merchant activities that appear in the print—the open trade and travel depicted at center compared to the dealings taking place within the buildings pictured in the bottom third of the print.³³⁴

However, the frenzy and variety of activities, architecture, landscape, and natural features suggest multiple exchanges of goods, travel and movement across time, land, and water, that, when taken together become a visual emblem of the dynamics of commerce. Underlying the frenzy are twisting networks of natural and man-made ligatures that are, at times, solid; at others, discontinuous (fig. 3-17). Taut ropes and cording from bundles and wagon payloads appear to connect some vignettes; chains originating from the central font are guided by playful cherubs with each play-working to

³³⁴ Donald Herral, “Trading Places: The Public and Private Spaces of Merchants in Sixteenth-Century Antwerp,” *Journal of Urban History*, 29 (2003), 666, doi:10.1177/0096144203253468.

keep in place the chains, the four account books, and the many inscribed placards that trail them as the rickety mass moves out from the center like sails caught by the wind. The cherubs' carefree natures evokes anything but stability and solidity and care. In the background surrounding the fountain, paths and waterways appear without sources or endpoints; clouds and plumes of smoke curve and counter-curve at the edges and push toward the center as if to suggest that commerce relies on the known but also the unknown; where the evident and the filmy possibilities are not yet completely manifest. The result is that in place of a solidified and coordinated vision of complementary units of commerce, what we are presented with is an image that pictures the possibility and the very structure of how demise happens. Down like a ship, perhaps, much like the vessel sinking in the river at left, full sails taking on water, in the background (fig. 3-16 and 3-17). In a collapse of spaces, the lost ship aligns with the "debtor" pan of the scales that ends up looming just overhead as if the moment of loss threatens to draw the pan down and out-of-balance with the ship.

While not strictly divided, the print comprises three horizontal bands organized along the print's vertical orientation. The long central axis provides a measure of visual coherency. Balancing the vertical orientation is the density of scenes filled with figures, vignettes, and rectilinear structures that take up the bottom third of the broadside. The middle third then lightens and opens up space toward the center, before reaching the upper register from which the dynamic, muscular figure of Mercury oversees—in a pose recalling the vanquishing Archangel Michael of the Last Judgement—the hectic, teeming landscape below (fig. 3-18). He grips in his right hand the top ring of the scale's fulcrum,

yet even though Mercury's body appears powerfully athletic with his form-fitting soldier's dress emphasizing the musculature of his torso and the taut bend of each thick leg revealing further definition of each muscle, he only manages to keep hold of the scale with two fingers and while we should be reassured of his ability given his obvious physical strength, we instead are left with a sense of monumental strain and an unsure grasp. He holds his caduceus in his left hand and tilts his wing-helmeted head down to stare intently at his tenuous grip as if the whole balancing act requires enormous mental and physical attention. Around him are emblems of the zodiac perched on curls of fluffy, shifting clouds and the whole shaky tableau seemingly stays aloft by way of an unseen force that ripples his cape and pushes his robe into a stiff form circling above his head.

Mercury's muscular body twists on axis, he directs his gaze downward as his figure visually cuts through the middle of multiple parallel rows of heraldic shields. Beneath Mercury's "heavenly" realm, in the print's middle third, a landscape view of Antwerp and the Scheldt River stretches side-to-side and meets with the countryside placed at the left and right margins (fig. 3-15). The Scheldt's basin-like form visually rhymes with the bowl of the fountain before it and thus funnels the wealth of the city and its river commerce to the center which is then distributed to the financial houses below. Streams and pathways mimic the curling and ruffled edges of smoke and clouds that wind throughout the image, recalling the real-world pathways of trade into and out of the city. While the swirling clouds and smoke serve as indices of productive activity that emit the excess of labor, their shifting, ephemeral qualities indicate impermanence. Together, the irregular network of curves and counter-curves visually entwine the landscape, trade, and

economic power of the city of Antwerp with the mass and symmetry of prosperous trade and merchant houses pictured at the bottom.

The print displays an ascendant alignment of structures that aims to center the proliferation of activities, progress, and worldly concerns that splay to either side. The effort at alignment attempts to literally rope in the horizontal splay and tries to hitch it to the mast of commerce that promises balance. Yet, at the edges, precisely where the manufactured machine of balance and promise of abundance above meets the horizon marking the lower third of the full print—the realm of merchant and counting houses below—smoke, conflagration, and assault distract from the vertical orderliness of the rigid and ornate center between “credit” and “debit” commanded to balance by the fierce, but precarious, figure of Mercury. Below the bowl of the fountain, two figures erupt into the scene just outside of the side-entry of the counting house, their modest clothing in contrast with the fashionable clothing worn by the counting house representative who meets them at the street level as if to block their entry. Finally, a crowned woman clothed in flowing robes sways in dramatic contrapposto along the print’s baseline. Her right arm extends up and out as she balances a smoking vessel while her left arm points down and away, directing our vision toward a skull positioned amongst a pile of goods, money, and precious objects, not unlike the cabinet collections included in Francken the Younger’s gallery pictures. The smoke emitting from the vessel is irregularly shaped and varies asymmetrically between thin and thick elements, only heightening further the precarity and insolidity pictured above her.

In the end, the didactic thrust of Amman's *Allegory* is countered with visual elements that overwhelmingly suggest instability and uncertainty that then are cast onto the merchant culture. In that way, the print serves almost as an apotropaic image that warns the merchant class against the many possible challenges to commerce that at its heart must depend on the mercurial temperament of the God of Commerce whose unknowable desires might lead (and has, as indicated in several vignettes of the print) merchant culture to collapse in disgrace. Just as the dialog in Antwerp's *Statenkamer* between *Scaldis and Antwerpia* and Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi* suggests that Antwerp's prosperity springs from both known and unknowable forces, the *Allegory of Commerce* appears to hinge on the fickle blessings of the Gods and the gifts/commerce of strangers/merchants.

Gods, Fools, and Disgracers

Fools and Gods animate the general perceptions of Antwerp's early modern economy. It seems fitting then, that these tropes appear in imagery associated with merchant culture. The actions of fools and the volatile nature of the Gods appear to account for a good measure of uncertainty and precarity within these images. If we return to the *Adoration* painted by the Antwerp Mannerist, Master of the Antwerp Adoration, a cheeky example of the shortcomings of Fools and the capricious nature of Gods is made even more evident by their juxtaposition within the painting with the (literally) solid and stable promise of salvation offered by the figure of the Christ child.

In the center panel, the God and the Fool are undeniably visually aligned in order to call attention to the questionable attachment to wealth and the precarity of the faith in the material world. (3-19). In this case, the condition of precarity extends to include the threat to the human soul. The artist invites comparison between the carved statue of Plutus, the God of Riches and the magus dressed in green standing directly below. Plutus takes his place atop a column of the ruined temple and true to his nature, he escapes the destruction unharmed while offering little to the truly needy. Plutus is aged and turns his head up as his empty eyes look out in a display of blindness often seen in depictions of the blind Homer (fig. 3-20) Determining that Plutus should distribute riches without undue influence, Zeus strikes Plutus blind. Zeus seeks “fairness,” so Plutus’ blessings are distributed without regard to *need*. Thus, the already-wealthy may indeed gain further while the destitute go without; or the righteous wealthy may lose everything while a criminal undeservedly gains. In the end, the workings of Plutus are unpredictable since his “blessings” may come or not depending on the blind whims of the Gods.

Plutus appears in other contemporary art works in addition to Erasmus’ mention in the *Praise of Folly*. Erasmus’ friend, the German artist Hans Holbein (1497-1553), also visually associates the figure of Plutus with the activities of merchants. Holbein drew on the contemporary quandaries associated with these activities in his designs for a set of murals commissioned by the powerful Hanseatic league for the hall of their London outpost. Holbein’s *Triumph of Wealth* (1532) visually addresses the uncertainties and moral peril associated with the pursuit and acquisition of wealth and thus directs these

quandaries at the fraternity of merchants who would view the mural.³³⁵ A preparatory drawing of the mural (held in the Louvre, Paris) includes the names of the many characters that Holbein has drawn from mythology and history. Holbein places the blind and feeble Plutus in the seat of the chariot drawn by a selection of characters associated with a variety of material-induced misery (fig. 3-21).

Joining Plutus are figures such as the personification, Fortuna, blindfolded while tossing coins to the crowd; the rich Phoenician king of Tyre, Sychaeus, husband of Dido, whose brother Pygmalion murders Sychaeus for his fortune; the equally rich Lydian king Croesus remembered for his issue of coins struck in gold but captured by the Persians. Drawing this cavalcade are four horses, Avarice, Usury, Contract, and Simony, who strain and lurch forward while the virtues of Bona Fides [Good Faith], Liberalitas, Equalitas, and Justitia struggle mightily to control the horses' impulsiveness. While the horizontal composition lends stability to the crowded scene, elements at the edges—the high, billowing robe of Fortunus that emphasizes her unsteady position; the horses/vices that pitch and rear and pull at their leads—the punisher, Nemesis, entering from the upper right edge threaten to pull the crowd apart, the result of which would leave Plutus alone as the crowd disintegrates into multiple directions, pulled by the forces and whims of vices and the fickleness of Gods. Lost within the crush is the straining figure of Reason in whom we have little faith in his ability to put his reins of Knowledge and Will to effective use to control the turmoil around him. The Latin inscription sums up wealth as a

³³⁵ Michel Régis, *Les Mots Dans Le Dessin, Cat. Exp. Musée Du Louvre* (Paris: Musée du Louvre, Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1986), 30.

sort of paradox. It reads: “Gold is the father of seduction and the son of pain; he who lacks it suffers, he who has it lives in fear.”

Holbein answered this triumph with another mural, *The Triumph of Poverty* (fig. 3-21).³³⁶ The *Poverty* panel answers the restlessness and near-frenzy of the *Wealth* panel with a weakening energy in equal measure. The plodding oxen and mules—Cupidity, Sloth, Negligence—resist the prodding of Diligence, Care, and Moderation and thus bring to a near standstill the “progress” (the repair) of Penia (Poverty). The two panels confirm the work of Plutus as explained to Mercury (the God of Commerce): riches are slow in coming and quick to leave and equally true here, poverty is only grudgingly dislodged.

Thus, in the Antwerp *Adoration*, the magus/merchant standing below Plutus becomes an example of the wasted human effort at securing riches in the pursuit of worldly gains that in the end fail to secure salvation for the soul. In that way, this magus becomes a stand-in for the missing figure of the ass. Although a common feature of *Adoration* scenes, nevertheless, this animal and its companion ox who typically graze more or less in the background, are missing in the Antwerp *Adoration*. Significantly in this case, the ass often references the misguided fool/pagan that “eats blindly” a comparison to the salvific function of the body of Christ.³³⁷ For Christians, the pursuit of worldly gains would be folly; a blind fool’s journey; equated with Plutus’ undiscerning distribution of wealth, and therefore, rewarding unjustly those who fail to “earn” wealth,

³³⁶ Neither mural painting survives. *The Triumph of Wealth* is known through Holbein’s preliminary drawing in the Louvre; a copy made by Lucas Vorsterman the Elder in the Ashmolean, Oxford; and later prints made after the paintings. *The Triumph of Poverty* is only known through drawings and prints by other artists.

³³⁷ See also Chapter 1, p.44ff; here the ass makes a direct visual counterpoint to the Christ child.

in this case, the gift of God. As an elaborately-dressed man-of-the-world who carries gifts/goods, the magus in green is a trope for the merchant who must contemplate his occupation—as Holbein surely caused the Hansa merchants to reflect on theirs—in light of the magus’ own examination of divine order and allegiance.

To emphasize his attachment to the material world, the magus sports an elaborate hat that unmistakably resembles that of the Fool, complete with extravagant, mule-like “ear” flaps and a tall center peak capped with a bell (fig. 3-22). Hans Holbein drew similar figures in the margins of his friend, Erasmus’ book, *In Praise of Folly* (fig. 3-22) but images of the fool in various states of recklessness were widely known throughout the Low Countries. The costume of the magus further distinguishes him as foolishly attached to worldly things as the sheer burden, color, and variety of material and ornaments encase him in vivid contrast to the simple forms of the holy family and the bare skin of the Christ child who pays no attention to the golden vessel the kneeling magus holds out as offering (and only fiddles distractedly with the sparkling contents held directly in front of him). The switch away from traditionally placing ambiguity—as demonstrated in earlier chapters—most obviously with the African magus to placing it with the middle magus is an unconventional choice. Yet, one might imagine that in order to more closely convey the connection between magi and Antwerp’s merchants, the artist chose to turn to a figure more obviously physically approximating the merchants living in and visiting Antwerp; one whose skin color allowed for more flexibility perhaps in its relative distance from white European. Yet this choice has serious implications for the view of the merchant since the shift locates the keenest ambiguity with the members that are the least obviously

“foreign” or outsider. The implication then is that any ambiguity in this instance comes less from the outside than from the stranger/merchant in our midst. In the end, the bearded magus’ stance and the implements he holds mirror that of Plutus above whose material associations are further emphasized by the orb representing the Earth upon which he stands as if to say he is the God who reigns over the worldly desires of men. The promise most Christians would see in the Adoration is the hope of “conversion” and the sin resulting from these desires redeemed through faith in the infant God before them.

A number of artists in the sixteenth-century Low Countries took on the theme of instability and precarity through works similar to that found in Antwerp Mannerist paintings, Holbein’s murals, and Amman’s broadsheet on commerce. Much like the Antwerp fondness for the Three Kings (especially manifest in the popular trend of naming their sons in honor of the magi) that calls attention to the city’s own constructed identity, the exploration by Northern artists of the visual form of instability and downfall might be taken as part of the cultural commentary on the human condition in early modern Europe, and especially in those centers of commerce. For example, the humanist, philosopher, and printmaker, Dirck Volkertsz. Coornhert (Amsterdam; 1522-1590), explores *The Dangers of Human Ambition-The Narrow Path of Virtue* in his 1549 etching after Maarten van Heemskerck through the familiar sixteenth-c. visual tropes of instability, imbalance, and precarity. The print depicts the crumbling structures of Ancient Rome in the background while the foreground is populated by figures from ancient history and mythology who struggle to keep from tumbling into an abyss from a narrow plank high above (fig. 24). On the left, a crowd of figures enjoy a Bacchanal,

oblivious to the perilous journey of those traversing the treacherous path to virtue. On the right, men clamber up a hill but we sense that their tenuous foothold on the craggy outcroppings is short-lived. Once arrived at the top, the figures proceed across the high, thin plank perched over the abyss below. From there, every possible state of human unsteadiness plays out as the figures attempt their journey at the highest levels of ambition represented by the wobbly plank. The fall from grace is dispersed equally across the wide range of persons pictured in their attempt to cross: male and female, strong, weak, bishops and soldiers, the young and old. Their states of decline range from a quick slip off the edge, to a slight wobble, to a straddle, a fall saved by fingertips clinging to the plank, to the fully dislodged, plummeting head over heels, bodies curled or splayed, nude, and in the end, separated from the materials of their wealth, the ornate vessels, crowns, scepters, and purses, that in their downfall offer no salvation. All the while, the celebrants at left fail to heed the warnings arriving from all corners of history and culture.

The roiling figures of Coornhert's moralized etching strikingly recall the work of Coornhert's own pupil, Hendrick Goltzius in his series called the *Four Disgracers* (1588) and indeed scholars argue that Goltzius' figures emerged from Coornhert's.³³⁸ In these small engraved works, Goltzius experiments with the falling and vulnerable human form, drawing on the disgraced figures from mythology of Tantalus, Icarus, Phaeton and Ixion (fig. 25); each a bearer of the moral peril of human hubris and ambition. Each figure is a masterpiece of foreshortening and suspended animation, their heavy, rippling, muscled

³³⁸ Lawrence Goede, "Homage to Goltzius: Four *Disgracers* in One," in *Midwestern Arcadia: A Festschrift in Honor of Alison Kettering*, eds. Dawn Odell and Jessica Buskirk (Northfield, MN: Carleton College, 2014), 17-18. <https://apps.carleton.edu/kettering/>.

bodies mid-fall from a high point in the heavens. Icarus and Phaeton fall through a vast, empty sky with mountains and sea in the extreme distance; while Tantalus and Ixion fall through dark waves of smoke and fire heading directly for jagged rocks and lakes of fire. With each nude body splayed over the majority of the space within their individual tondos, the viewer's position aligns with the falling figure as if we are left to experience the disastrous freefall alongside the figures themselves. We align most closely to the most vulnerable of the four whose position mirrors ours in front of the image: Phaeton who falls backward, leaving us with a view of his muscular back and the back of his head as he reaches up and out, eyes directed to the space he's just left, blind to the destination awaiting him below.

The resemblance of the vulnerable positioning of the Disgracers to Jost Amman's figure of the fickle God, Mercury, is uncanny. Mercury is placed at the pinnacle of a convoluted, multi-part vision, partly organic yet partly manufactured. Evidently, the fruitful workings of commerce then rely on the connections made between these dissonant parts. Below Mercury appear the raw materials of commerce set among vignettes of all types of human situations and conditions which, when all taken together, become the task of the merchants and counting houses below who must funnel the disparate parts into prosperity. While ostensibly Mercury is an emblem for the favorable intervention of the Gods, and he appears to try mightily, the paradox of his knotted, muscular body suspended among the clouds with no means of support along with his slippery hold on what human ambition has managed to cobble together leaves us anxious for what we sense is likely to be a disastrous end. A sense of anxiety surrounding the

city's prospects given the tumultuous preceding decades would logically be foremost in the minds of most Antwerpers and her observers in 1585.

These works by Goltzius and Amman take the theme of the tenuous hold that humankind has on the workings of the world and in that way communicate a sense of instability should be taken in context with the real-world downfalls and precarity set in motion in the late-sixteenth century Low Countries. By 1588, Antwerp, along with the regions of the southern Netherlands, was separated from the independent provinces of the north and had survived the brutality of a Hapsburg empire bent on reclaiming the Low Countries for Spain. Finally denied the open practice of Protestant religion, their lucrative waterway blocked from traffic, and their population reduced by half, Antwerpers and her observers could certainly see relevance in the visual exploration of uncertainty.

Finally, a print produced in 1607 by Flemish artist and humanist, Otto van Veen (1556-1629) for an emblem book published in Antwerp, shows an enthroned, blindfolded Plutus dressed in ermine. The caption below the picture reads, *Pecuniae obediunt omnia* [everything bows to money] and seems to sum up the pure foolishness of humankind's belief that "money is the answer to everything" (fig. 26).³³⁹ While he holds a large scepter in one hand and thrusts out a purse full of coins in the other, the God of Riches entices a crowd gathered before him who hold out their precious offerings in hopes of exchange for his blessing. Behind Plutus hang the trophies gathered from the most powerful in exchange for wealth: an assortment of crowns, a bishop's hat, two scepters, and gold badges suspended on heavy, braided gold necklaces. Nearly one hundred years

³³⁹ Otto van Veen (1556-1629), *Quinti Horatii Flacci Emblemata* (Antwerp: Philip Lisaert, 1612), 125.

earlier, another king, the flamboyantly-dressed magus in green from the KMSKA *Adoration of the Magi*, was pictured holding similar items—a scepter and a gold vessel—meant as an offering to the Christ child. Above him stands the figure of Plutus perhaps mocking this king who offers his own trophies in recognition of a new divine order.

Conclusion

The city magistrates' painting commissions for Antwerp's *Statenkamer* in 1609 is evidence for the city's sustained identification with its former prosperity and that

The painterly style Rubens displays in his *Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 3-7) for the *Statenkamer* is rich in detail and color and adds a quickness to the figures that evokes a convincing liveliness. Compared to the KMSKA *Adoration*, Rubens' composition is more unified and space is created through the massing of bodies. Gesture is calmed in comparison with Antwerp Mannerist conventions but at the same time, the scene is not calm and quiet overall. A sense of movement arises less from gesture and more from the interlocking layers of lines and shapes. The figures on the left appear compressed and more highly detailed giving them a weight that suggests stability. As the eye moves away to the right from the brightly lit infant, that sense of stability begins to unwind as the figures grow slightly in size and small details are exchanged for longer vertical line and simpler blocks of color. The bent and tilting muscular bodies of the strongmen exhibit that same sense of imbalance and instability that northern artists have continued to explore and develop over the same period that saw the first dramatic rise in European

commerce over the long sixteenth century; that same imbalance that often served as an index for cultural instability.

When viewed with its original dimensions, the emphasis in Rubens' *Adoration* clearly shifts away from the crowded and stacked grouping on the right³⁴⁰ to the middle foreground containing the kneeling king before the Christ child, the two of which are then bracketed by the curving figures of the strongmen straining unsteadily under the weight of their boxes and bundles on the right and the similarly curving figure of Mary on the left. The strongmen are nearly nude and the gifts they carry seem to throw them off balance as if to emphasize the sudden awareness before the Holy Family of the burdensome spiritual weight of material goods.

Perhaps in 1609, viewers would associate the Statenkamer paintings as a display of the "past" or as emblematic of Antwerp's civic history being that both paintings recall eternity in a way with their ancient Christian stories and their quasi-mythological figures of Antwerpia and the River God. In contrast with Rubens' lively and vivid depiction of the Adoration, across the room, the figures of Antwerpia and Scaldis appear more languid. Janssen's brushwork is more even and clean and the color deeper with less variation (fig. 3-6). The fabric surfaces of Antwerpia's gown read more like gilding, perhaps suggesting her enrichment by the abundant offerings from Scaldis. Both figures recline but at right angles, perhaps as a measure of their need for stability. While not

³⁴⁰ Rubens has included a self portrait as a young man on this addition of canvas to the right side made twenty years later while he was in Spain. The painting only stayed in the hall until 1612 when the city presented it to the Spanish ambassador as a gift. By 1621, the painting was added to the Habsburg's collection in Spain. The canvas was extended when Rubens visited Spain in 1628. Alexander Vergara and Herlinda Cabrero, eds., *Rubens: The Adoration of the Magi* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2004).

disassociated from promised confluence, their awkward placement seems doomed to misalign as Antwerpia reaches out her left hand to point in a vague gesture toward the River God while he extends his left hand past hers and positions a handful of fruits and vegetables close to her face, which she appears not to notice in the least. He inelegantly offers his unruly cornucopia while Antwerpia, tense, uncomfortably positioned, and eagerly reaching out—but not grasping—the river God’s blessings.³⁴¹ The composition has clear parallels to Michelangelo’s Sistine ceiling fresco of Adam reaching for God, but lacks the stability and assuredness of successful completion.

Further highlighting their mismatch is the positioning of their legs: the calf of Scaldis’ bare left leg rests awkwardly on top of Antwerpia’s turned shoe, giving the viewer a look at the sole of her shoe instead of the fabric upper. In the end, we are not reassured about the fruitful confluence of the fruitful waterway with the merchant city. Instead, their positions are not one of towering presence but of earthly things brought low; of natural confluence squandered by human conflict. In that way, the picture symbolises the importance of the Scheldt while lamenting its lost promise of abundance for Antwerp under the Dutch blockade of the river. In this instance, since the first viewers were the ruling Hapsburgs, Antwerp places the blame for precarity and instability at the feet of the Hapsburgs.

³⁴¹ A cornucopia is one of the attributes sometimes associated with Plutus.

Introduction



Figure 0-1
Two views, store front
“Madison.” 9 December 2009
3rd Street and Robertson
Los Angeles, CA
Photo credit: CNN

232



Figure 0-2
Detail, "Three Magi"
Store front display of "Madison"



Figure 0-3
Detail, "Virgin Mary and Child"
Store front display of "Madison"



Figure 0-4
(Two views)
Gottfried Helnwein
Epiphany I / Adoration of the Magi
1996
Oil and acrylic on canvas; 6.8 ft. x 11 ft.



Figure 0-5 (top)
Adoration of the Magi, 3rd c.
Catacomb of Priscilla, Rome



Figure 0-6
Adoration of the Magi, 4th c.
sarcophagus
Rome



Figure 0-7
Adoration of the Magi (and
The Genealogy of Christ), 12th c.
manuscript (Spain)

“Three Kings”

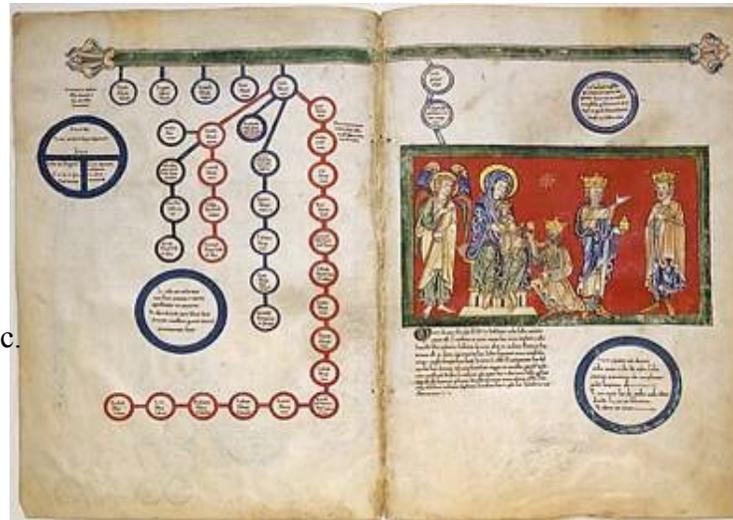


Figure 0-8
Detail, *Adoration of the Magi*
13th c. manuscript from
Cilicia, Armenia

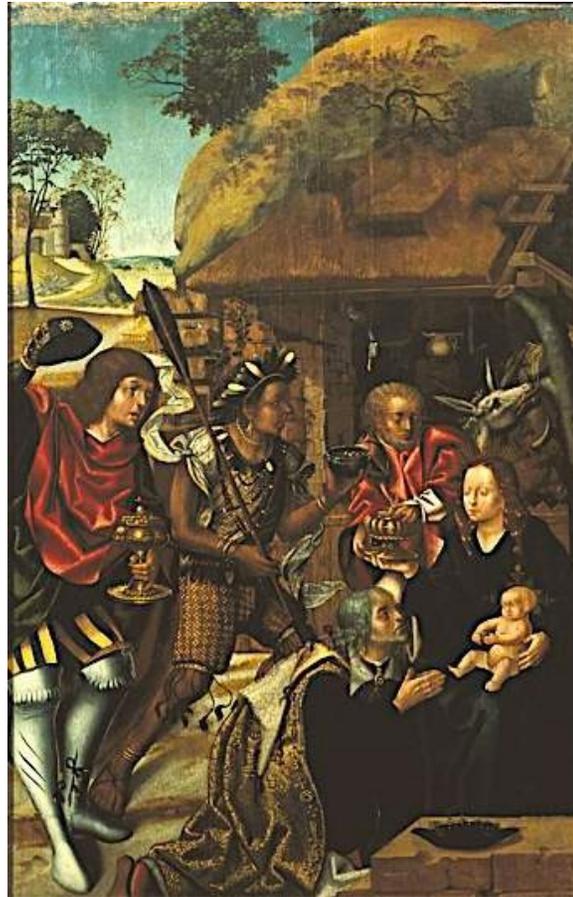
“Three Ages of Man”





Figure 0-9
Andrea Mantegna,
Adoration of the Magi, c.1500
19 1/8 x 25 13/16 in.
Getty Museum, Los Angeles
The Magi as representatives of
the three parts of the world.

Figure 0-10
Vasco Fernandes (and workshop),
Adoração dos Magos
ca. 1501-1506.
Oil on panel, 51 in. x 31 in.
Museu Grão Vasco, Viseu, Portugal.



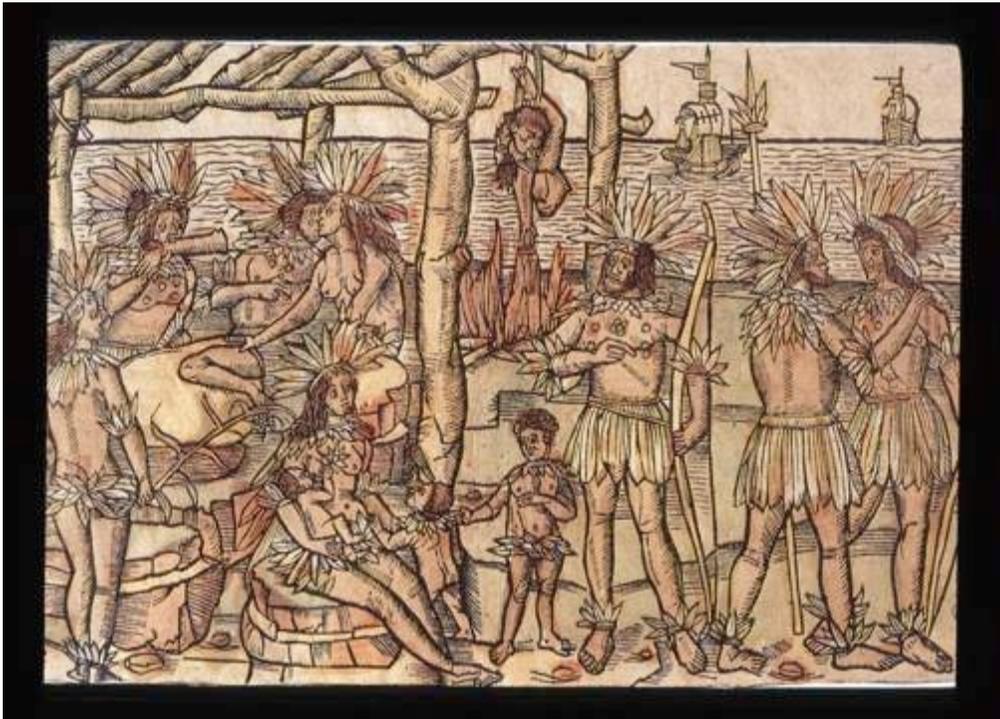


Figure 0-11
Johann Froschauer,
The People of the Islands Recently Discovered..., 1505.
The Newberry Library, Chicago



Figure 0-12
New World scene, illustration to Amerigo
Vespucci's *Lettera di Amerigo Vespucci delle
Isole Nuovamente Trovate*, printed in
Strasbourg, 1509

Figure 0-13 (left)
Livro dos Officios
Pontificios da Inquisição
 (Pontifical of Cardinal
 Henrique), 1539-41



Figure 0-14 (right)
Book of Hours of Manuel I
 c. 1525



Figure 0-15
Crónica de D. João I
 Detail of coins c. 1530



Figure 0-16
 Master of the Antwerp Adoration
Altarpiece with the Adoration of the Magi
 c. 1520 (KMSKA, Antwerp)

Figure 0-17
 Jost Amman, *Allegory of Commerce*, 1585
 (six-piece print; James Ford Bell Library,
 University of Minnesota)

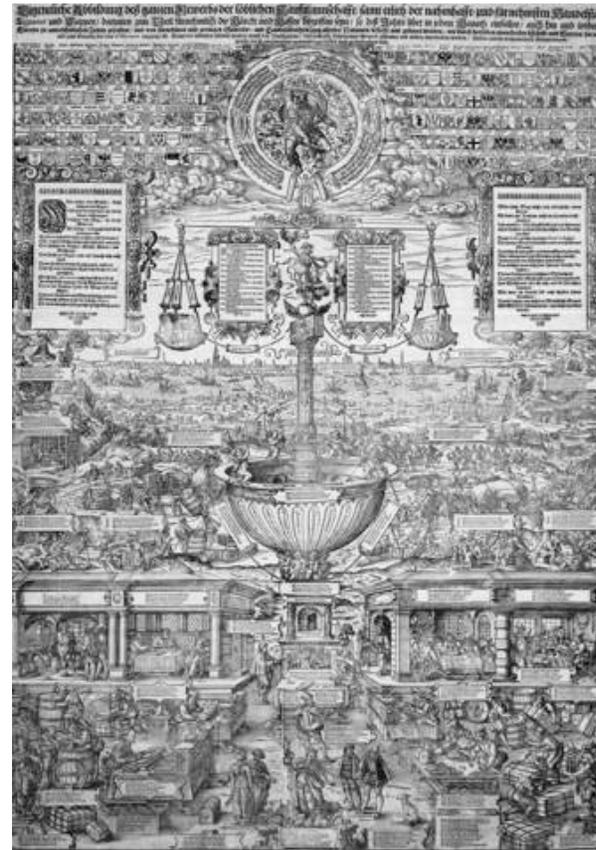


Figure 0-18
Abraham Janssens,
Scaldis and Antwerpia, 1609
Commissioned for the State
Room of Antwerp City Hall.



Figure 0-19
Peter Paul Rubens
Adoration of the Magi, 1609
Commissioned for the
State Room of Antwerp City Hall



Chapter 1

Figure 1-1
Vasco Fernandes
(and workshop),
Adoração dos Magos
ca. 1501-1506.
Oil on panel, 51 in. x 31 in.
(Museu Grão Vasco, Viseu, Portugal)

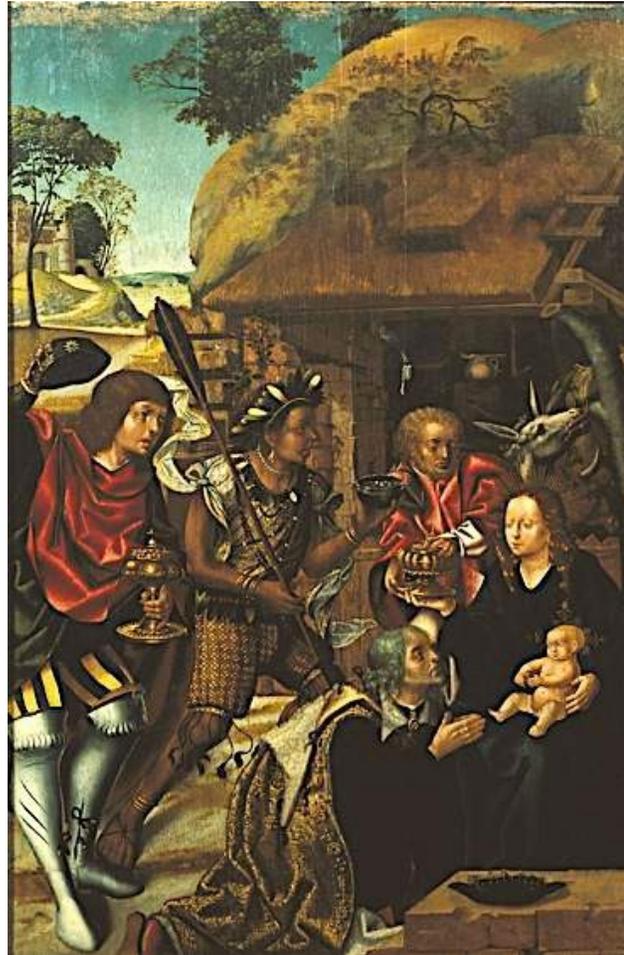


Figure 1-2

Fourteen remaining panels of the altarpiece from the cathedral in Viseu, Portugal (now in the Museu Grão Vasco).



Figure 1-3
Detail
Vasco Fernandes
(and workshop),
Adoração dos Magos
ca. 1501-1506.





Figure 1-4
Rogier van der Weyden, *Adoration of the Magi*
(detail *Columba Altarpiece*), c.1455
Alte Pinakothek, Munich



Figure 1-5
Albrecht Dürer
Witch Riding Backwards on a
Goat, c.1502

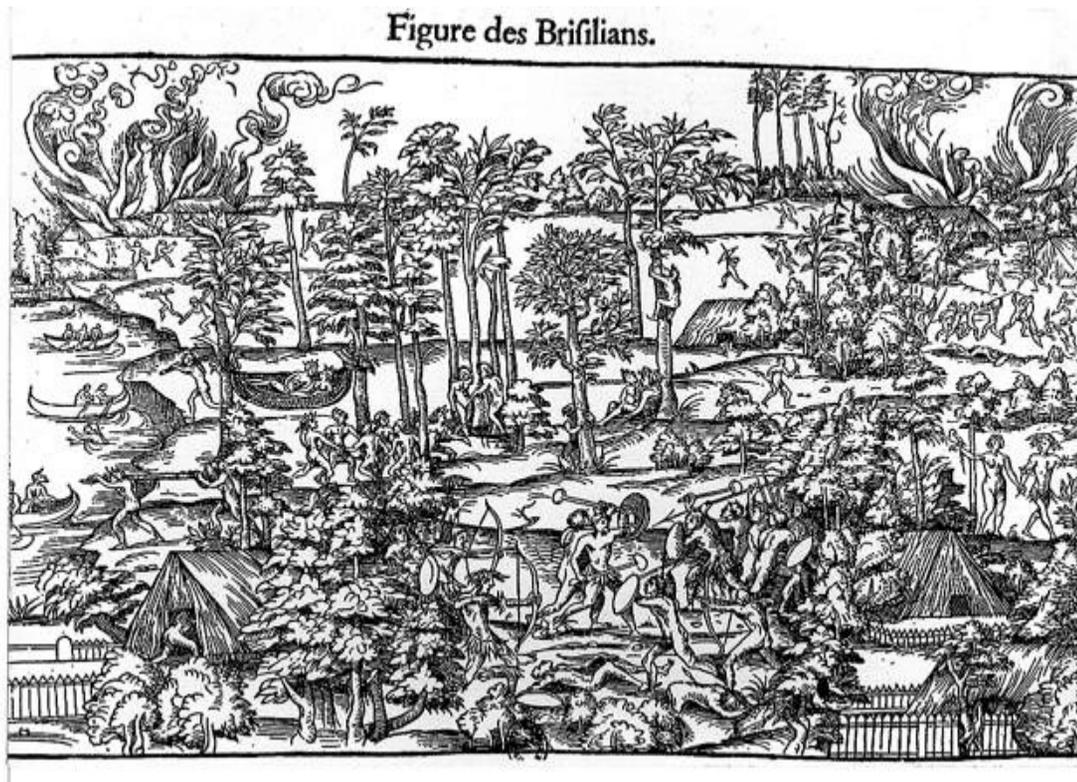


Figure 1-6
“Figure des Brisiliens,” woodblock print from
Entry of Henri II into Rouen, 1 Oct 1550
*C'est la deduction du sumptueux ordre plaisantz spectacles et
magnifiques theatres.* Rouen: Jean Le Prest for Robert Le
Hoy and Jean Du Gort, 9 Dec 1551.



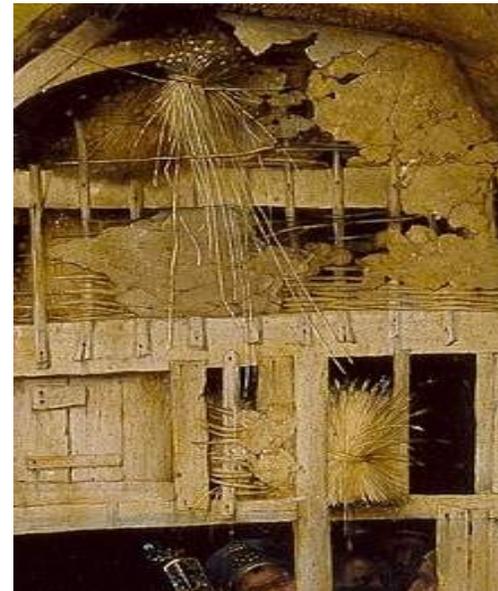
Figure 1-7
Hieronymus Bosch, *Triptych of the Adoration of the Magi* [opened state], c.1510.
Oil on panel; 54 in × 57 in.
(Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid)



Figure 1-8
Detail, center panel



Figure 1-9 Details,
African Magus



L: Scene with fire (interior, left wing); R: Wolves attacking and biting (interior, right wing)
Bottom: Wheat and grain bundles, (interior, center panel)

Figure 1-10

Hieronymus Bosch,, *Triptych of the Adoration of the Magi* [details; opened state], c.1510. (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid)

Figure 1-11
Mass of St. Gregory, exterior [closed state]
Hieronymus Bosch, *Triptych of the Adoration of the Magi [opened state]*, c.1510.
(Museo del Prado, Madrid)

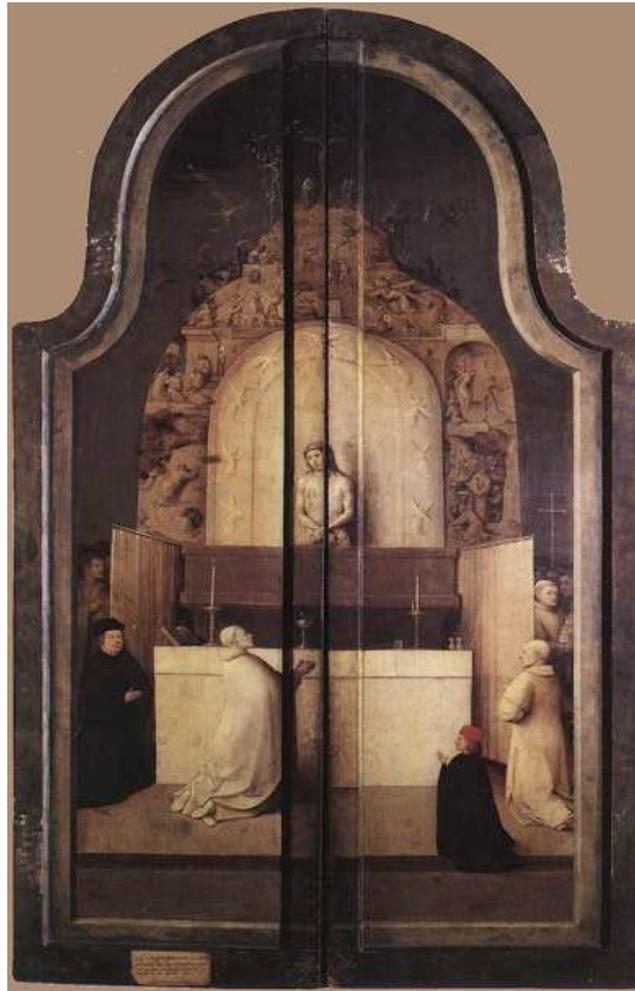




Figure 1-12
Figure 1-13
Details, Attendant



Figure 1-14
Detail, Attendant, African Magus, crowned figure

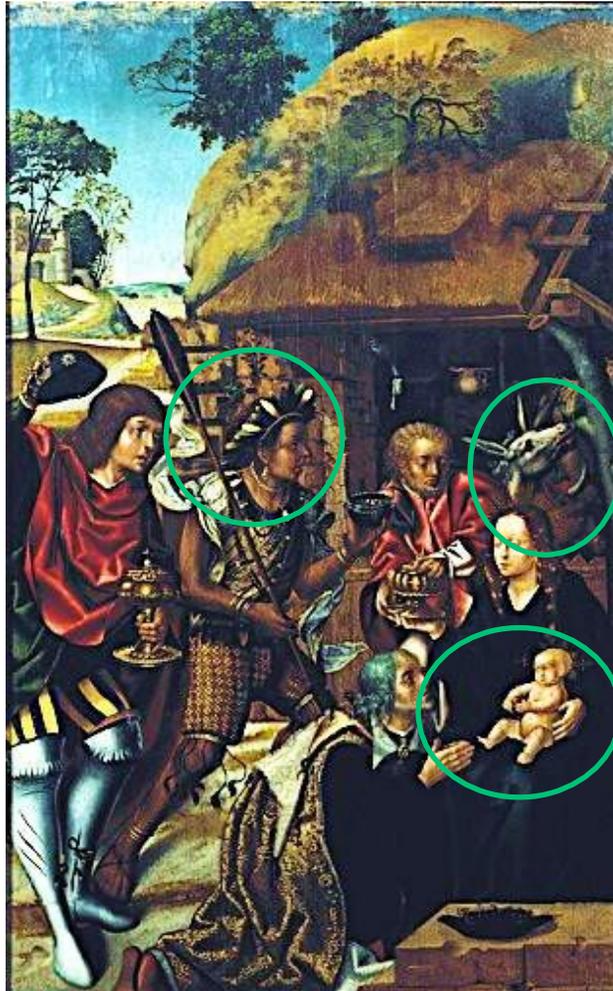


Figure 1-15 Detail,
Adoration



Figure 1-18
Detail, Balthasar

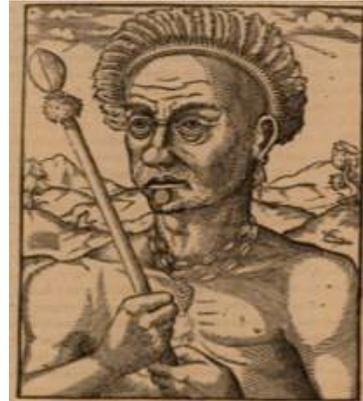


Figure 1-16
Portrait of King Quoniambec from André
Thevet, *La cosmographie universelle*, 1575.
Providence, John Carter Brown Library



Figure 1-17
Treatment of Prisoners from André Thevet,
Les singularitez de la France Antarctique,
1558. John Carter Brown Library.

Figure 1-19
Above: Unknown
Portuguese artist,
The Inferno,
1515-1530.
(Museu Nacional
de Arte Antiga,
Lisbon)



Figure 1-20
Below: Details, *Inferno*
Presiding figure





Figure 1-21
Detail of “winged” feathered cape in
Treatment of Prisoners from
Theodor de Bry, *America* [German
version], 1627. John Carter Brown
Library

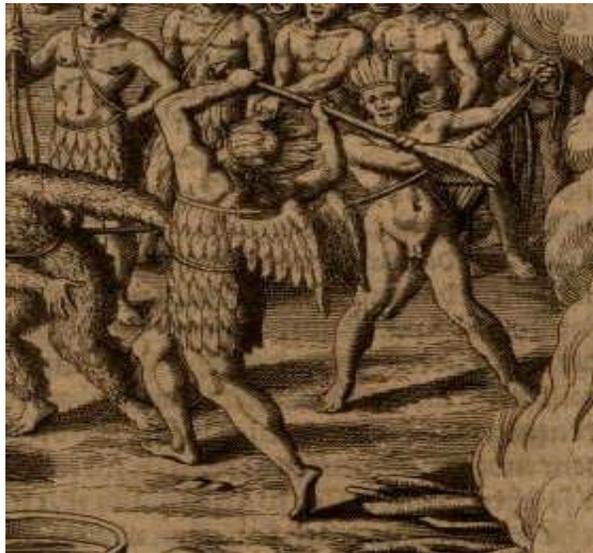


Figure 1-22
Vasco
Fernandes,
Calvário, 1530-1534
Oil on panel
Museu Grão
Vasco Visu,
Portugal

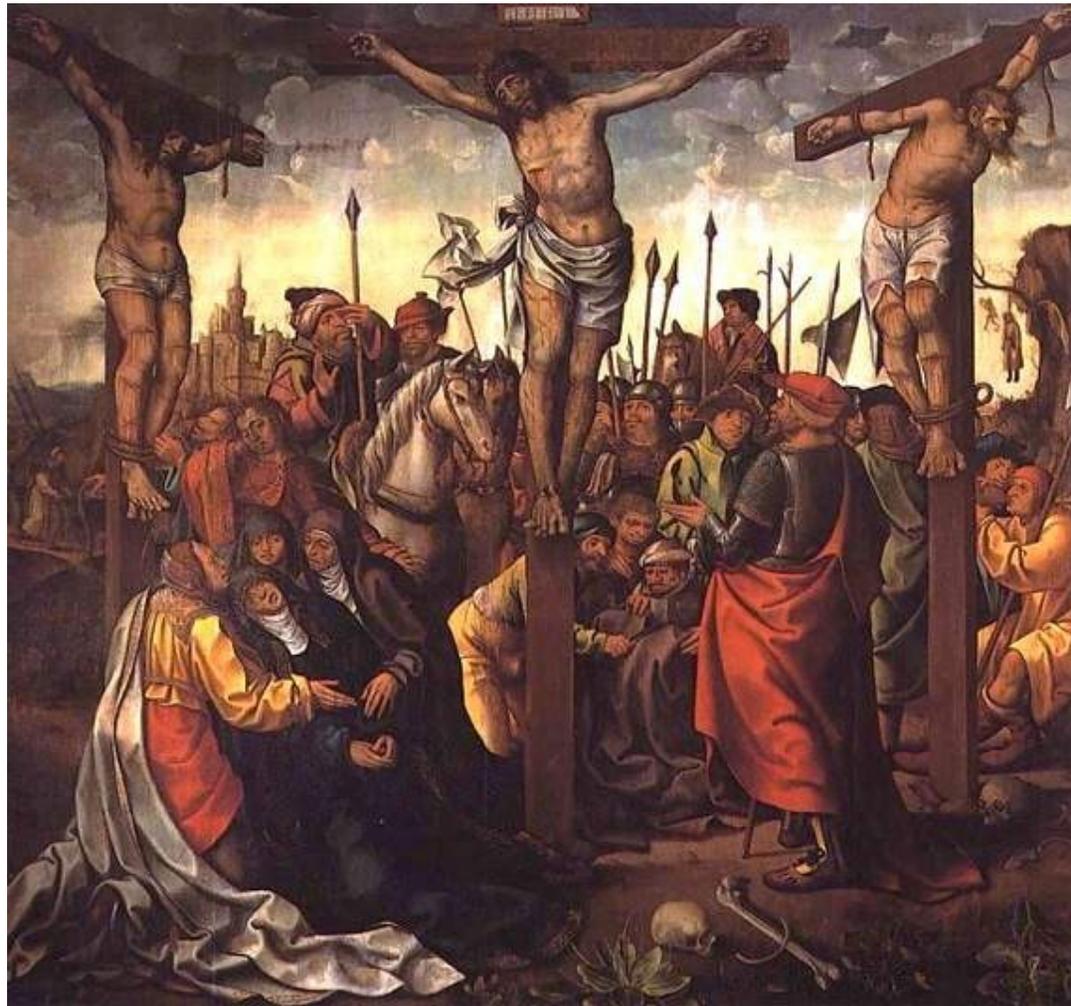


Figure 1-23
Detail *Calvário*, “The Good
Thief”





Figure 1-24 & 1-25; Jan van Kessel, *The Continent of Europe* and *The Continent of Asia*, 1666, oil on copper, 48.5 x 67.5 cm. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.





Figure 1-26 & 1-27; Jan van Kessel, *The Continent of Africa* and *The Continent of America*, 1666, oil on copper, 48.5 x 67.5 cm. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.





Figure 1-28
Jan van Kessel, detail, *Americque* (central panel), 1666



Figure 1-29, detail, Painting with cannibals;
Figure 1-30, detail, Painting with *suttee*
Jan van Kessel, detail, *Americque* (central panel), 1666





Figure 1-31
The Humboldt Cup, Dutch, 1648–53, carved coconut, chased silver mount, no marks, height: 29 cm. Private collection (Photo: Munich, Kunstammer, Georg Laue; cited in Spenlé , 2011).

Figure 1-32
Detail of a man and woman with a basket
filled with body parts
from *The Humboldt Cup*
(Private collection; cited in Spenlé)



Figure 1-33
Detail of a man and woman with a basket filled
with fruit
from *The Humboldt Cup*
(Private collection; cited in Spenlé)



Figure 1-34
Detail of a woman offering a fish to a
man from *The Humboldt Cup*



Chapter 2

Figure 2-1 (left)
Livro dos Officios
Pontificios da Inquisição
 (Pontifical of Cardinal
 Henrique), 1539-41.
 Casa Cadaval 16; Arquivo
 Nacional da Torre do
 Tombo, Lisbon



Figure 2-2 (right)
Book of Hours of Manuel I
 c. 1525
 Ms. 14, Museu Nacional
 de Arte Antiga, Lisbon

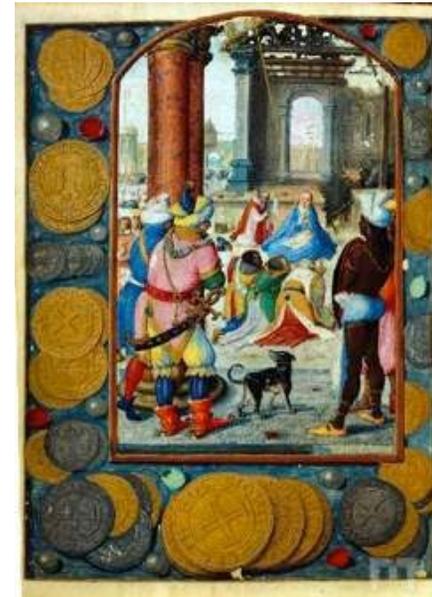


Figure 2-3
Crónica de D. João I
 Detail of coins
 c. 1530
 Mss. Vitr. 25-28,
 Biblioteca
 Nacional Madrid



Figure 2-4
Master of Mary of Burgundy,
*Mary, Duchess of Burgundy at
Prayer Hours of Mary of
Burgundy*,
Cod. 1857; fol. 14v; c. 1480
Tempera and gold on vellum; 8.5 x
6.3 in. ÖNB, Vienna

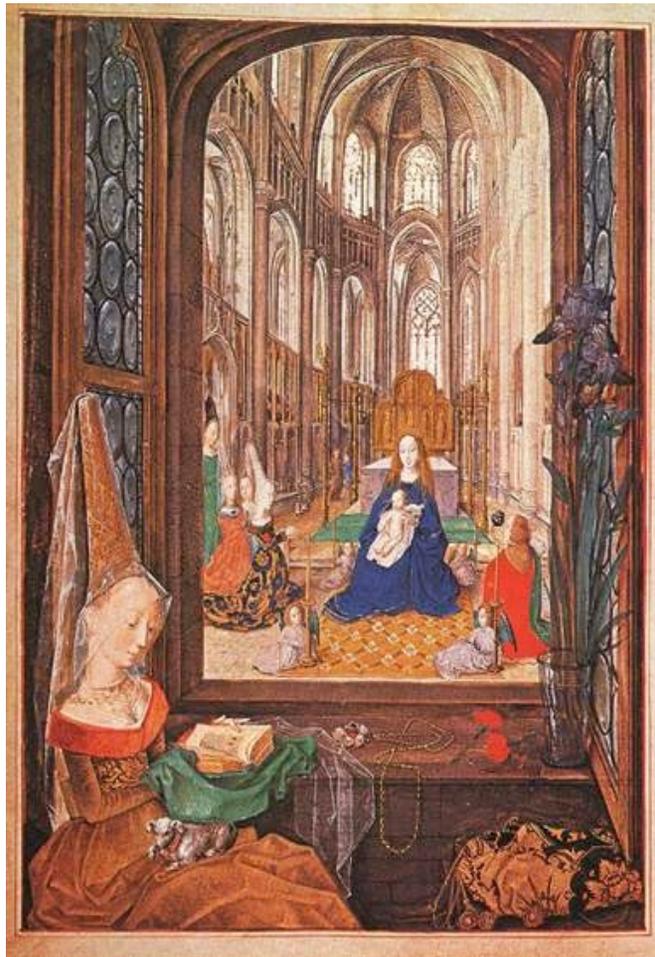




Figure 2-5 and 2-6
Details, Master of Mary of Burgundy,
Mary, Duchess of Burgundy at Prayer



Figure 2-8
Master of St. Giles
The Mass of St. Giles; Flemish, ca. 1500
National Gallery, London



Figure 2-7
Detail, Mary and
Altar

Figure 2-9
Master of Mary of Burgundy,
The Crucifixion from
Hours of Mary of Burgundy, fol. 43v
c. 1480



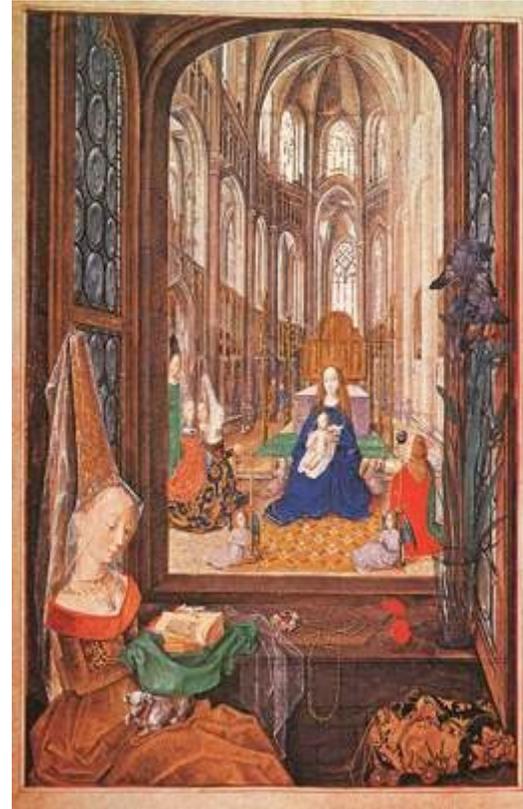


Figure 2-10 (left; compare with image on right)
William Vrelant
Virgin and Child with St. Anne
c. 1460s
Ms. Ludwig IX 8, fol. 50
Getty, Los Angeles

Figure 2-11
Master of Mary of Burgundy,
Above: *Mary of Burgundy at Prayer* and facing page (15r)
Below: *The Crucifixion* and facing page (44r)





Figure 2-12
Left: *The Crucifixion* from fol. 43v
Right: Detail of two women

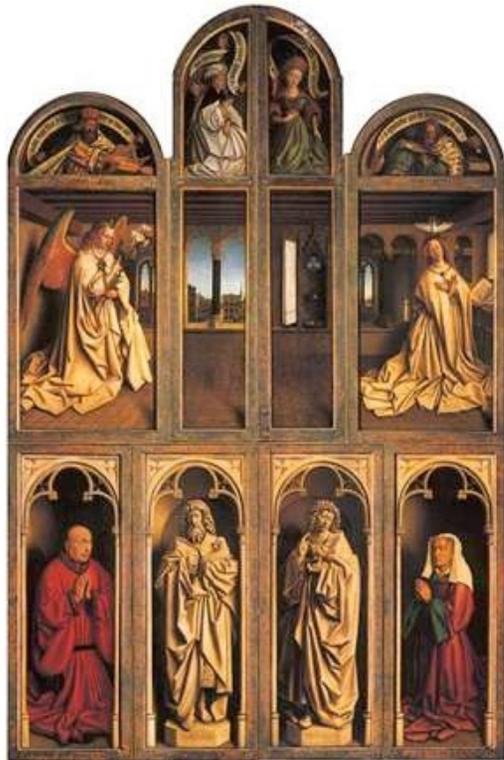


Figure 2-13
 Jan van Eyck
*Adoration of the Mystic Lamb / The Ghent
 Altarpiece* [closed state; 12.3 ftx8.5 ft.]
 1434
 St. Bavo's Cathedral, Ghent



Figure 2-14
 Jan van Eyck
Madonna and Child in a Church
 c. 1438
 12.25 in x 5.5 in.
 Gemäldegalerie, Berlin

Figure 2-15
Book of Hours of Manuel I
 c. 1525



Figure 2-16
Livro dos Officios Pontificios da Inquisição
 (Pontifical of Cardinal Henrique), 1539-41



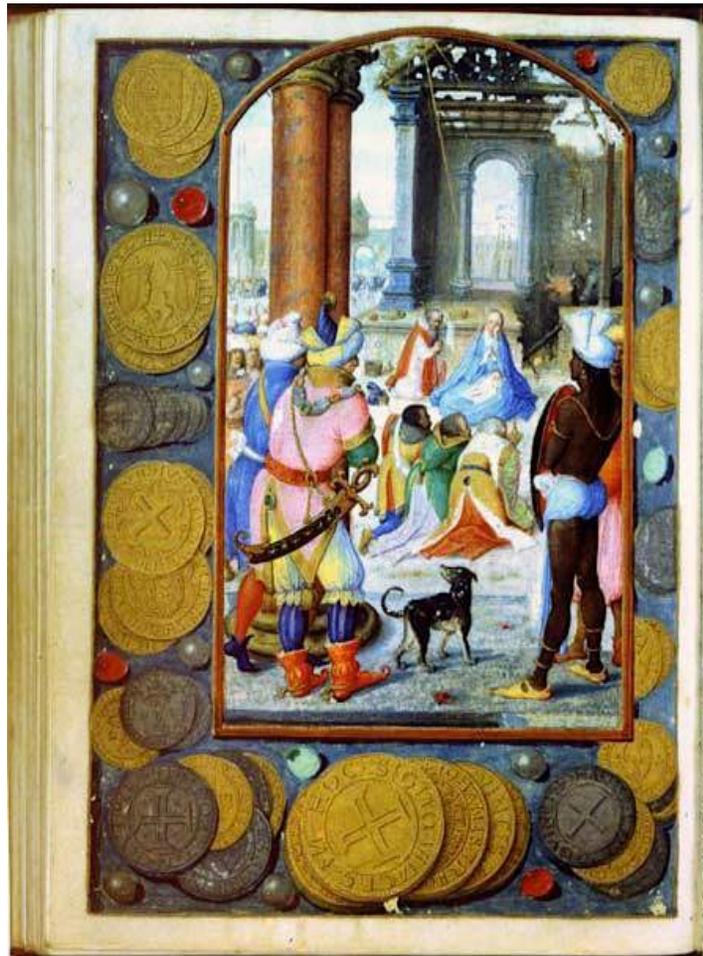


Figure 2-17
António de Holanda
Adoration of the Magi,
fol. 87;
Livro de Horas dito de D.
Manuel I [*Book of Hours of*
Manuel I]; c. 1525
5.5 x 4.1 in.
Tempera and gold on vellum
Museu Nacional de Arte
Antiga, Lisbon

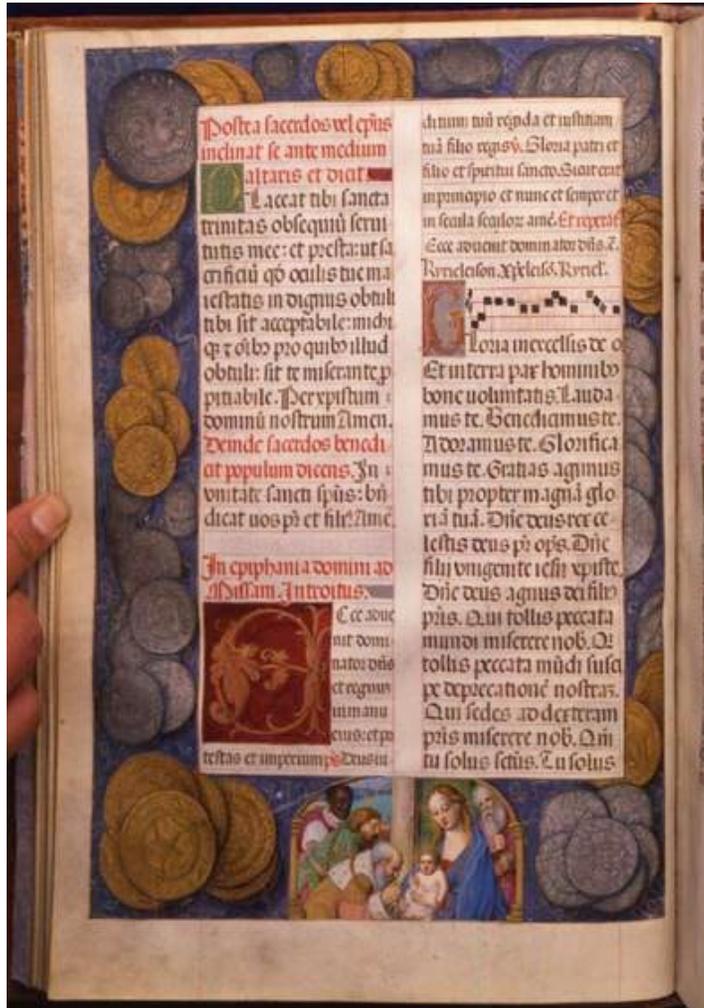


Figure 2-18
 António de Holanda (attributed to)
Livro dos Offícios Pontificios da Inquisição (Officiale Pontificalium)
 fol. 18v
 1539-41
 13.3 in. x 9.5 in.
 Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo.



© Biblioteca Nacional de España



Figure 2-19
 António de Holanda (attrib. to)
*Crónica de D. João I de Fernão
 Lopes*, fol. 33
 ca. 1521-1534.
 21 in. x 15 in.
 Biblioteca Nacional de España,
 Madrid

Left: full page
 Above: detail of coins



Figure 2-20
 Jorge Reinel and Lopo Homem, cartographers
 Ant3nio de Holanda, painter (illuminations)
Atlas Miller (Atlas nautique du Monde), 1519; fol. 5
 Biblioth3que nationale de France, Paris

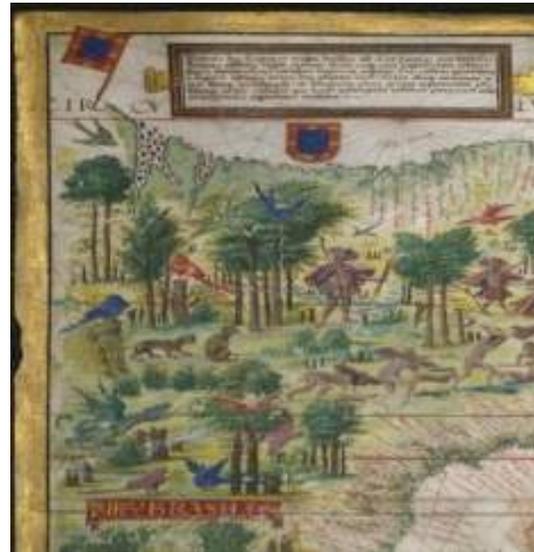


Figure 2-21
 Detail
 Cartouche at top
 Banner "Terra Brasillis" at bottom

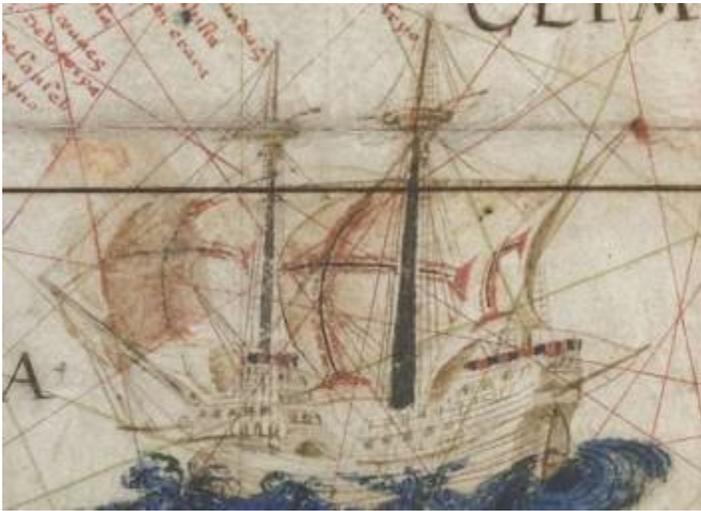
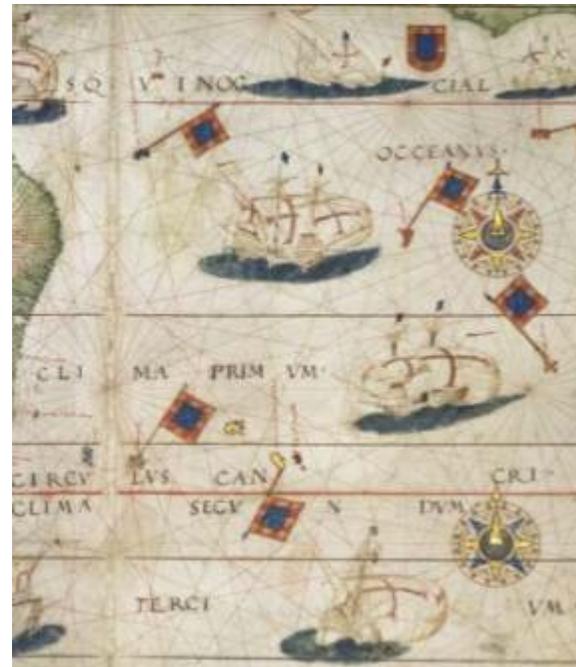


Figure 2-22
Detail, *Atlas Miller*
Double-masted ship bearing the red Cruz da Ordem
de Cristo [Cross of the Order of Christ] on the sails

Figure 2-23
Detail,
Sea, ship, flags



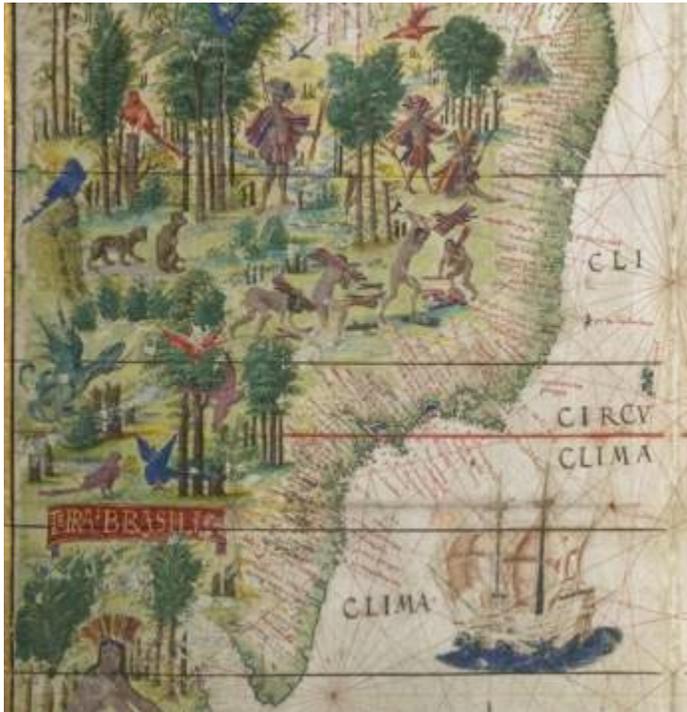


Figure 2-24
Details, Coastline and Tupi people





Figure 2-25
Detail, "Tupinambá" man in feathered
cape , crown, and skirt

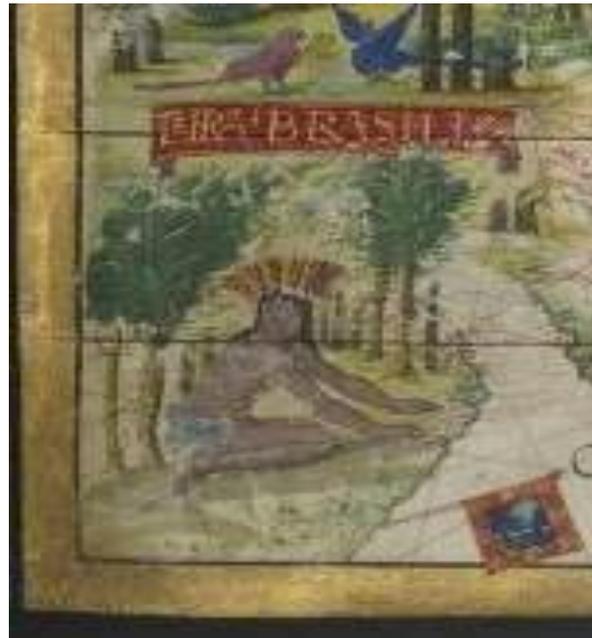


Figure 2-26
Detail, Man at southwest edge of map

Figure 2-27
Detail, Serpent



Figure 2-28
Medieval Map
and detail with
monstrous
races
Add 28681, f.9r,
c.1265
British Library,
London



Figure 2-29
Details, inscriptions on
coastline



Figure 2-30 “T-
O” Map
(from Isidorus'
Etymologiae 1472;
Günther Zainer)

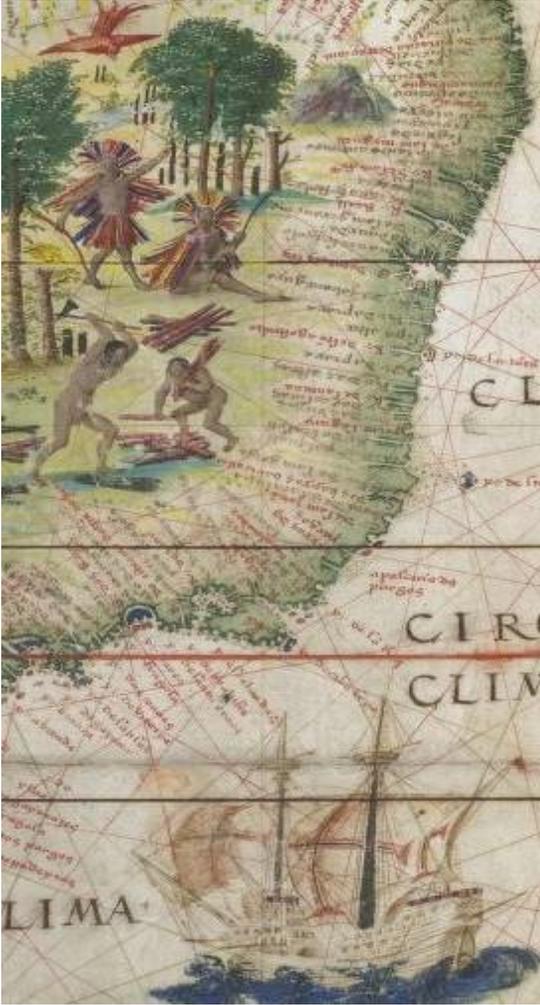


Figure 2-31
 (above)
 Astronomical
 Tables. Left:
 fol. 1, golden
 number
 calculation;
 Right: fol.3,
 dominical
 letter cycle.
Manuel Hours

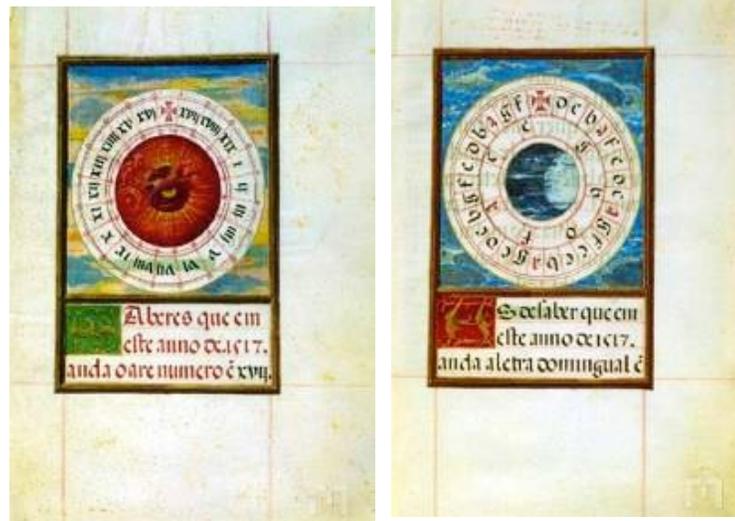


Figure 2-32
 (below)
 Calendar
 Pages
Manuel Hours

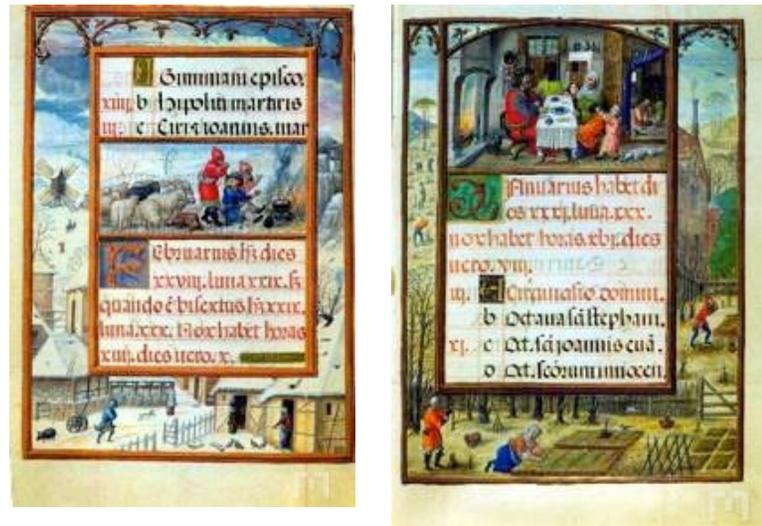


Figure 2-33
 (above)
 Illuminations
 from
 Gospel of John
Manuel Hours



Figure 2-34
 (below)
 Illuminations
 for Office of
 the Dead
Manuel Hours



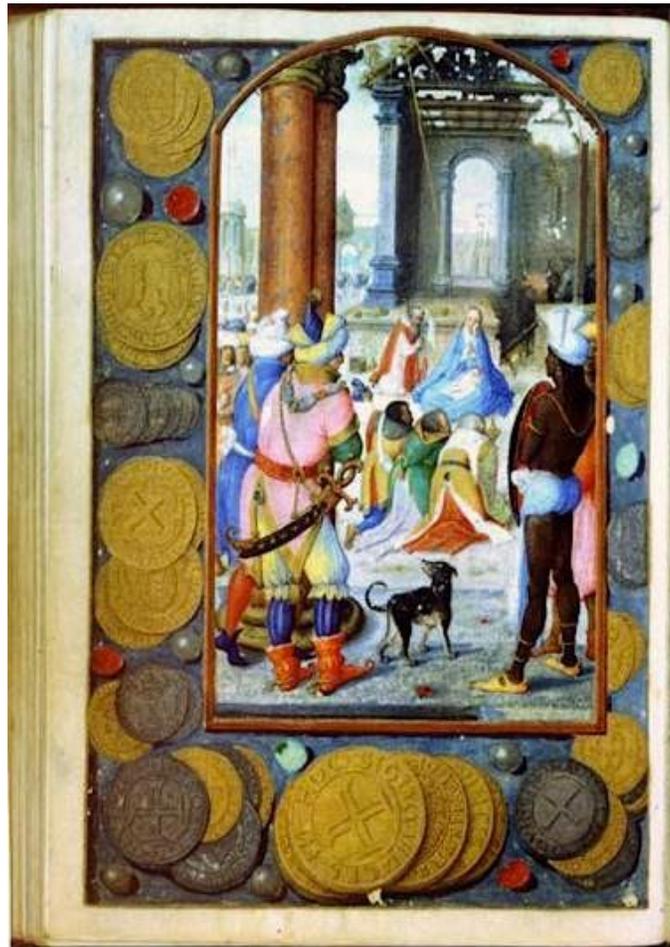


Figure 2-35
*Adoration of the
Magi*, fol. 87 from
*Livro de Horas dito
de D. Manuel I*
[*Book of Hours of
Manuel I*]
c. 1525, 10.5x14 cm
Lisbon, Museu
Nacional de Arte
Antiga

Figure 2-36
Adoration of the Magi,
Hours of Engelbert of
Nassau, 1470s
Douce 219-220
Bodleian, Oxford



Figure 2-37
Detail,
Adoration of the Magi,
Manuel Hours

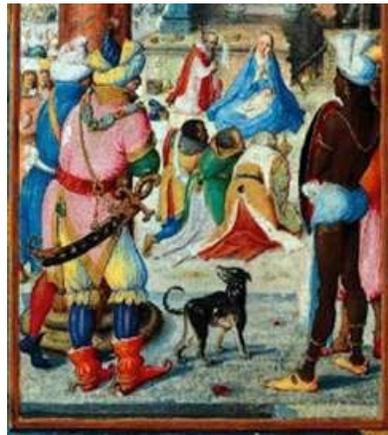




Figure 2-38
Confessional door reliefs from Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, Belém, Portugal





Figure 2-39
Column reliefs from Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, Belém, Portugal



Figure 2-40
Mosteiro de Sta. Maria de Bélem
(Mosteiro dos Jerónimos, Belém, Portugal)
Outside of Lisbon; Manueline Style Architecture



Figure 2-41
Detail, *Manuel Hours*
Figure at edge and coin profile



Figure 2-42
Hans Burgkmeir,
“Savages of Calicut” from
*Triumphs of Emperor
Maximilian* (1512-1526)



Figure 2-43
Detail, *Manuel Hours*
Holy Family and ruins



Figure 2-44
Details, *Manuel Hours*
Red marble columns

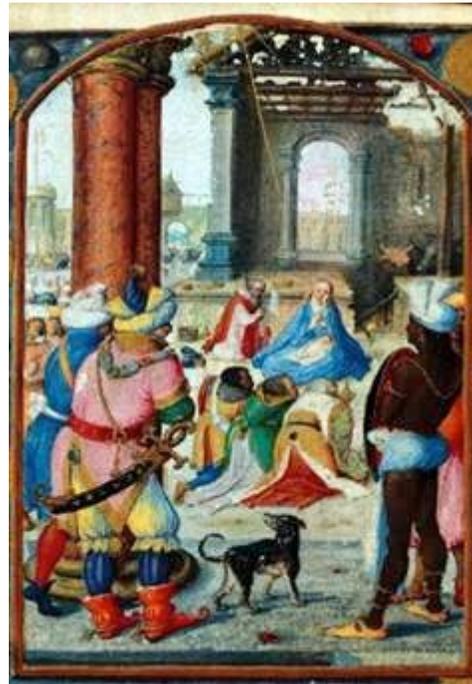


Figure 2-45
Gregório Lopes and Jorge Leal
Adoration of the Magi



Figure 2-46
Master of 1515
Adoration of the Magi





Figure 2-47
Left: Detail of two women
Right: *Crist Nailed to the Cross*





Figures 2-48 (above) and 2-49 (right)
Details from Pontifical manuscript and *Manuel Hours*
showing crowds arriving



Figure 2-50

Detail, *Manuel Hours*, coins

Inscription: IOHANES: 3: R: PORTVGALIE: AL: IN: A: D: G - + C. N. ETHIOPIE. ARABIE.
PERSIE. ИИ :: НОС :: СИГО :: ВИСЕ[E]S



Figure 2-51

"Português de ouro" of D. Manuel I (1500-1521; and of D. João III, 1521-1525)

diameter 3.5 cm; wt. 35.35 g

Museu Numismático Português, Lisbon

Figure 2-52
Adoration of the Magi
 (verso) and
Distribution of
Largesse (recto)
Hastings Hours,
 c. 1480 (fols. 42v; 43;
 (British Library
 Add. 54782)



Figure 2-53
 Details, *Crónica de D. João I*
 Coin bearer



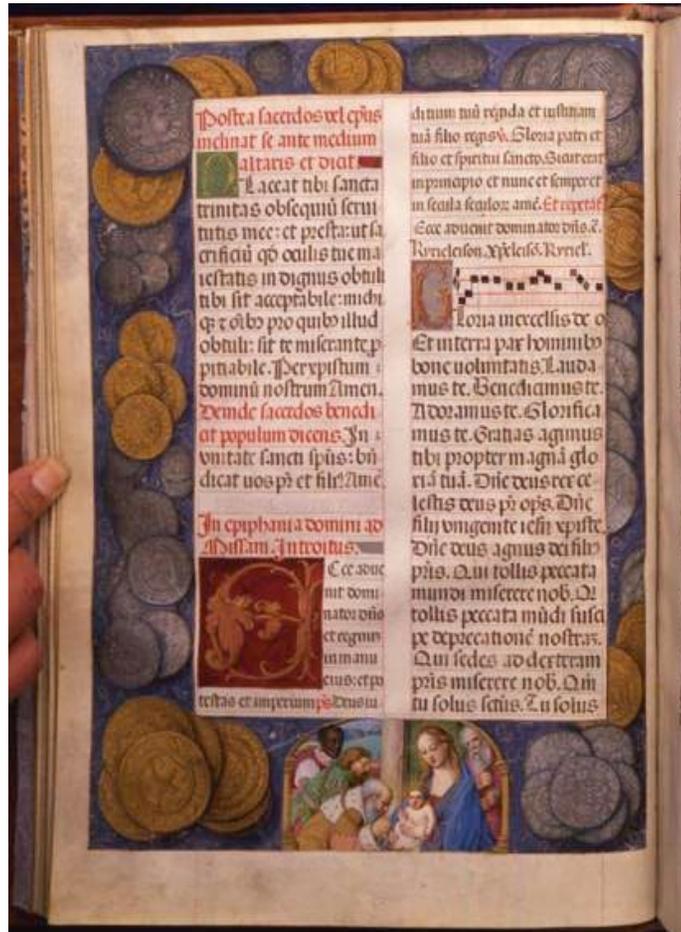


Figure 2-54
 António de Holanda (attributed to)
Livro dos Offícios Pontificios da
Inquisição (Officiale Pontificalium)
 fol. 18v; 13.3 in. x 9.5 in.
 1539-41
 Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo,
 Lisbon



Figure 2-55
Detail, *Livro dos Officios Pontificios da Inquisição*



Figure 2-56
Simon Bening
Adoration of the Magi from
The Da Costa Hours, 1515.
Morgan Library, New York City

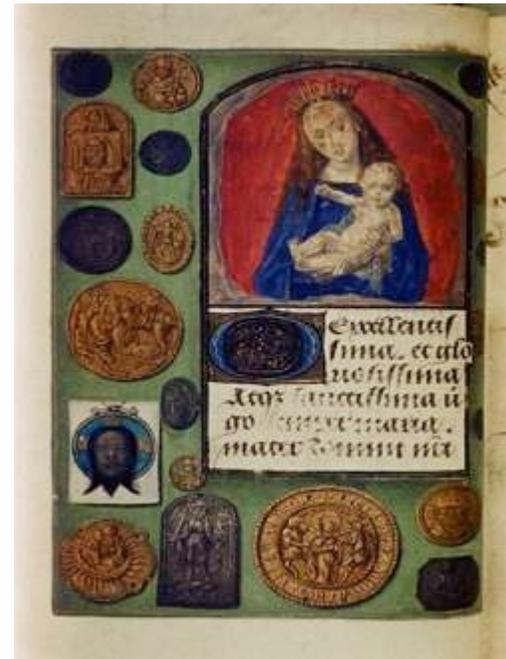


Figure 2-57
Madonna and Child
Surrounded by Pilgrimage
Badges, 1470s, from
Hours of Engelbert of Nassau
(Douce 219, fol. 50)

Chapter Three



Figure 3-1
Representative examples of
Antwerp Mannerism, early 16th
c.



Figure 3-2
Frans Francken the Younger
Kunstammer, c.1636



Figure 3-3
Frans Francken the Younger
Men Visiting a Gallery, c.1620



Figure 3-4 (above)
Frans Francken the Younger
Sebastiaan Leerse in His Gallery
before 1642; KMSKA, Antwerp



Figure 3-5 (below)
Frans Francken the Younger
Interior of a Picture Gallery
before 1642
Private collection.



Figure 3-6
Abraham Janssen, *Scaldis and Antwerpia*, 1609
oil on panel; 68.5" x 121.25"; 5.7' x 10.10'. Originally for the State Room of Antwerp City Hall.



Figure 3-7
Peter Paul Rubens, *Adoration of the Magi*, 1609. Current dimensions: 16.2' x 11.7' (upper strip including angels and far right past the strong men is added 20 years later.)



Figure 3-8
Peter Paul Rubens, *Adoration of the Magi*, 1609. Oil sketch showing original dimensions.



Figure 3-9
Master of the Antwerp Adoration,
Triptych with Adoration of the Magi, c. 1520 [open
state]



Figure 3-10
Master of the Antwerp Adoration,
Open state; exterior



Figure 3-11
Master of the Antwerp Adoration,
Detail exterior, Mary



Figure 3-12
Master of the Antwerp Adoration,
Detail exterior, Gabriel

Figure 3-13
Master of the Antwerp Adoration, *Triptych with Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1520 [open state]

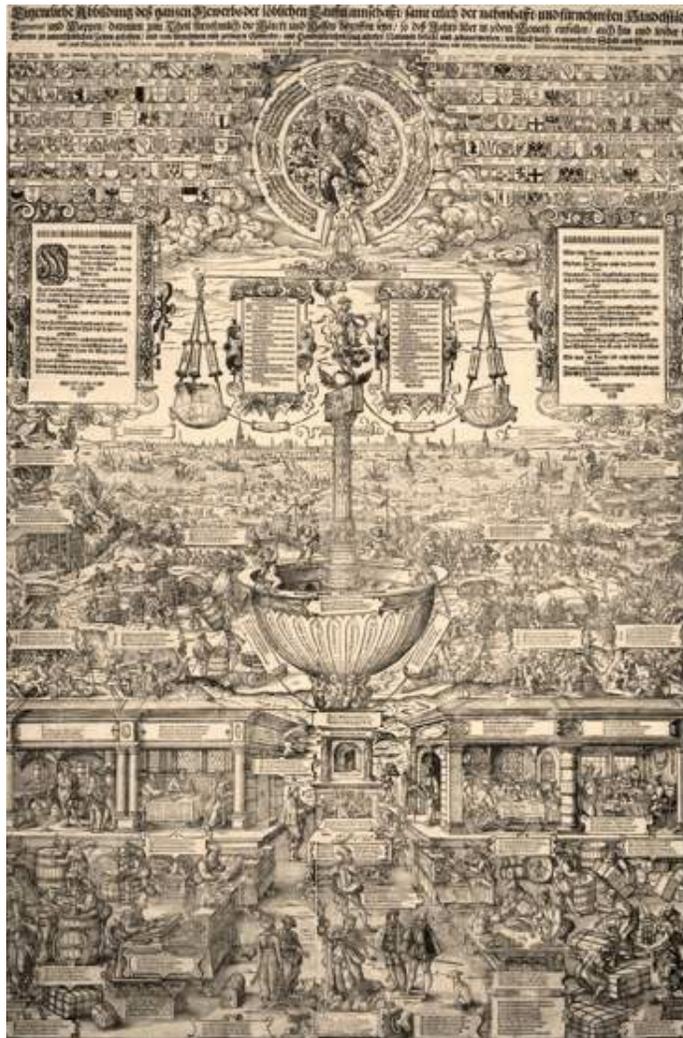




Figure 3-14
Detail showing cross-hatching and shading from underdrawing. Fabric on the figure's right shoulder and arm; on his torso and robe.
Adoration of the Magi, c. 1520

Figure 3-15
Jost Amman, *Allegory of Commerce*, 1585
ink on paper in six sections;
25 in. x 38.5 in.

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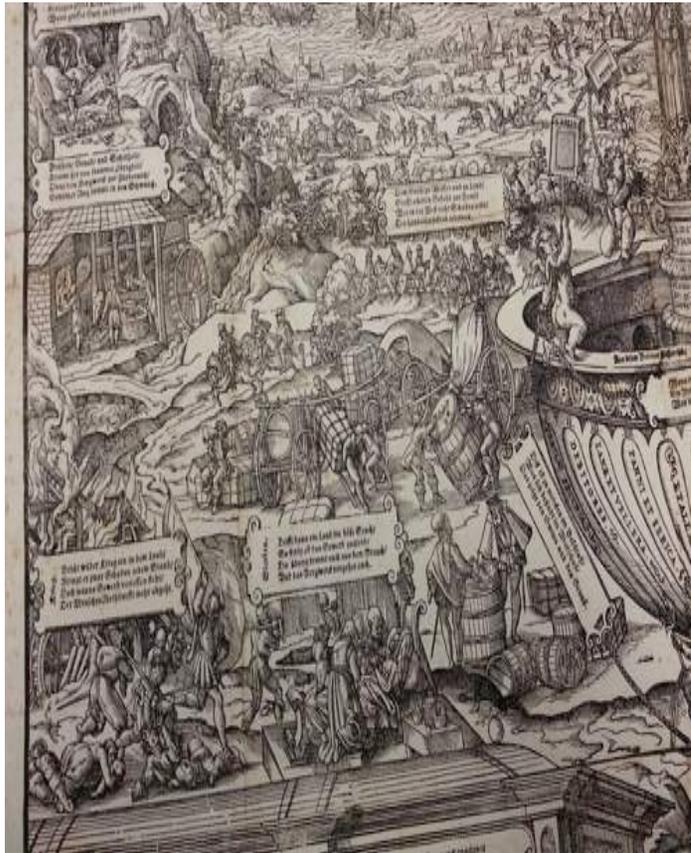


Figure 3-16
Jost Amman
Detail, vignettes; “war” and conflict lower left; sinking ship upper edge.
Allegory of Commerce, 1585

Figure 3-17
Jost Amman
Detail, *Allegory of Commerce*, 1585







Figure 3-18
Jost Amman
Allegory of Commerce
Detail, Mercury



Figure 3-19
Master of the Antwerp Adoration; center panel,
Adoration of the Magi, c. 1520

Figure 3-20
Detail, Figure of Plutus
Master of the Antwerp Adoration;
central panel,



Figure 3-21
Hans Holbein
Triumph of Riches, 1532-34
(ruled by Plutus); Musée du Louvre, Paris





Figure 3-22
Lucas Vorsterman the Elder (after Hans Holbein)
Triumph of Poverty, 1532-1534
(ruled by Penia)
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



Figure 3-23
Detail, Magus as fool, c. 1520
Hans Holbein, *Fool*, marginal images for
Praise of Folly, 1515
Kupferstichkabinett, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel



Figure 24
Dirk Volkertsz Coornhert after Maarten van Heemskerck,
The Dangers of Human Ambition, 1549



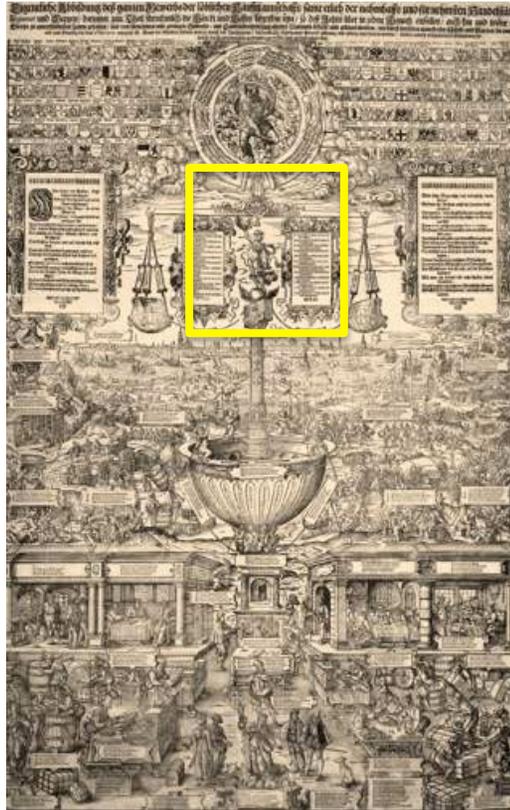
Figure 25
Hendrick Goltzius, *The Four Disgracers*; clockwise from upper left:
Icarus; Phaeton; Tantalus; Ixion; engraving



Figure 26
Otto van Veen, *Pecuniae obediunt omnia* [everything bows to money] ,1607
from *Quinti Horatii Flacci Emblemata* [Emblems from Horace]
Printed in Antwerp. (Photo credit: Warburg Institute)

Jost Amman
Allegory of Commerce,
1585
ink on paper in six
sections;
25 in. x 38.5 in.

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