THE HISTORY OF ART STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION'S

ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM JOURNAL 2023

when worlds end

VOLUME VI

WHEN WORLDS END

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Cover Image: Caravaggio, *David with the Head of Goliath*, ca. 1610, oil on canvas, 125 x 101 cm.
The Borghese Gallery, Rome.

We wish to acknowledge the sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peacefully share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes communally. Today, this land is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work and connect on this land.

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Acknowledgements

Since its inception, the History of Art Students' Association has aimed to foster curiosity, creativity, and community. Our symposium and this journal are an extension of this, offering the opportunity to our students to explore their art historical interests in a challenging yet supportive environment.

As a tangible celebration of our collective love of Art History and its discipline, this journal would be an impossible endeavour had we not the ongoing support of the Department of Art History. Therefore, first and foremost, we would like to thank the faculty and administration of the Department of Art History at the University of Toronto for not only supporting us but allowing HASA to simply exist. Without your warm encouragement, HASA would not have flourished into the community that it has.

In particular, thank you to **Joseph Clarke**, the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies, for being our faculty advisor in the editing process of our journal. Outside the symposium, thank you for being an incredible support and friendly face in the department. **Colin Murray**, thank you for encouraging us to look beyond the obvious, to delve into the threshold. We are beyond appreciative of your judgment and kindness. **Jordan Bear**, thank you for your continued support and inviting sensibility. **Eyal Sagie Pundik**, thank you for sharing a fraction of your knowledge with us at the symposium. I am so grateful to have met and learnt so much from you over the past year.

Professor Kavaler, a single thank you cannot capture the full extent of my gratitude, but I will try. Thank you for providing our keynote lecture and engaging in a fascinating discussion of Jan Borman's St. George Altarpiece. I am in constant awe of your intellect and can only aspire to be a fraction of the veracious scholar you are. As a teacher and mentor, I am indebted to your warm and nurturing, yet, sharp critiques of my own scholarship.

Thank you for our Guest Artist Keynote, **Sasha Shevchenko**. Touching and timely, your discussion tackled diasporic realities that left everyone in the room speechless. As Art Historians, we often take for granted the emotional realities inherent in artistic representation—your talk was a reminder of its memory ever present in works that persist through and are made from tragedies.

To **Nicholas Westbridge**, **Louise Bartkovich**, and **Ruth Maddeaux** who have bared witness to our best and worst. Throughout midterms, finals, the symposium planning, the editing of this journal, and (despite) HASA's late-night antics, you have been so generous to us. Thank you.

Lastly, I want to thank the **HASA Team**. Each of you is paramount to this association, planning of the symposium, and creation of this journal. I admire the work and effort you have put into growing this association and I cannot imagine doing it without anyone else. In my final year, I am so appreciative to have had the chance to know you.

As I write these acknowledgements on a train to Antwerp, it feels final. The definition of a bittersweet end.

Thank you to all that have read this far.

Iakoiehwahtha Patton
Editor-in-Chief
2022-2023 President

The History of Art Students' Association is proud to introduce our five contributors who presented their papers at the 2023 History of Art Undergraduate Symposium – *When Worlds End*.

AVA STEDMAN (she/her) is a second-year student at the University of Toronto, majoring in Art History and Archaeology. Stedman is interested in the temporal relations across art periods, focusing on how visual conventions maintain, adapt, and evolve over time. She is intrigued by the intersections between Art History and Archaeology, and the possibility of new interpretations and ideas in both disciplines.

SHEENA McKEEVER (she/her) is a budding Art Historian and Classicist at the University of Toronto. At the heart of her academic interest is a focus on the way intellectual systems of knowledge and beliefs are encoded in visual culture and architecture. From Classical housing complexes to Early Modern anatomical treatises, she is intrigued by the treatment of the body and its correspondence to natural science and philosophy.

KALIYAH MACARAIG (she/her) is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto, studying Art History with a minor in Classical Civilization. Macaraig is interested in the role of art and architecture in supporting social bonds within urban communities. Her research often offers reconsiderations of conceptions of heritage and heritage sites, seeking to celebrate overlooked spaces and marginalized communities.

DARIA EVDOKIMOVA (she/her) is a senior at Harvard University studying art history of the Early Modern Period. Her work has appeared in the Columbia Journal of Art History, Journal of Art History and Museum Studies, Asterisk Journal, and Memento Journal, among others.

ASHLEY KOCA (she/her) is a College Scholar, studying Art History at Cornell University. Her academic interests include Medieval Art, Islamic Art, and the Ancient Near East. Koca looks to spend her next summer travelling the Mediterranean and Near East, visiting the major museums and archaeological marvels. She ultimately intends on obtaining her PhD in Art History.

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Symposium Special Guest: Artist Statement

In response to world-ending, we yearn for a maybe-beginning. We yearn to take hold of something so rooted in us that it defies the cruelty of time and circumstance. In reality, our stories are more complicated - our origins and senses of belonging are constantly reshaped by timely tragedies that feel exhaustingly timeless.

While we all try and hold on to our origin stories, however unclear they may be, I'd like to tell you this:

Being a person of shifting narratives, hybrid belongings, or simply, one that navigates change, does not mean that you are a subject of endings. Every time we move or make, drag along our ancestral threads, or invent new ones, a whole new origin story is being written. This gives me hope.

By embracing nuance, by following the soft contours of memory, by enticing meaning with our hands, we begin to see dizziness and change as resource. Nothing is solidified - origin, future and past are dispersed on an equal plane of happening. The sum is greater than its parts.

While there will always be a tension between history and memory, leaning into this non-linear relationship can be useful for opening possibilities and making space for those whose space was taken up. Coming from a messy world of endings means that we have the power to drive stories into the future as flexible and resilient beings.

Like the most destructive of actions, creation does not happen quietly.

Biography

Any origin starts with an act of creation - a sweeping of thread, a linking of name and body, an installation, a setting up of something. Origin is not perfect, nor is it static. We are all carriers of origin stories, even as we move - granular and fragmented.

Sasha Shevchenko
is a Ukrainian, Tkaronto/Toronto based interdisciplinary artist. Inspired by her experience as a Ukrainian person of diaspora, her practice bridges interests in sculpture, textile, archaeology, and intimate ethnography. By combining contemporary and ancient story-telling methods, Shevchenko creates propositional spaces where tradition has the opportunity to whimsically extend into cultural futures. Her work has been exhibited at the Art Gallery of Mississauga, Small Arms Gallery, VAM, Portland State University, along with international online exhibitions. Shevchenko holds a BFA in Sculpture and Installation from OCAD University.

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The History of Art Students' Association 2022-23 team is thrilled to present *When Worlds End* – a volume comprising the papers presented at the 2023 History of Art Undergraduate Symposium.

We have seen the world end many times over. Humanity has shown itself to have a morbid fascination with tragedy, the inevitability of death, and the beauty of the eternally damned. It is this preoccupation with haunting thoughts that has prompted the most macabre imagery in the art historical canon. Artists have a unique ability to tap into our deepest anxieties and fears, prodding at questions that we wish to never know the answer to. In many ways, art allows us to seek solace in calamity; in personal, societal, and religious catastrophe. Hence, endings are more than mere conclusions—they nurture beginnings.

In the history or art, endings can be explicitly told as illustrated by *Death of Marat* (1793) by Jacques-Louis David. They may be a means to grapple with the reality of an ending. Despite an adamant disinterest in metaphorical interpretation of his work, Zdzisław Beksiński was no stranger to this. His ghastly paintings depict scenes of decay, deformed bodies, and obliterated landscapes in a somber, muted palette. Endings can be an internal experience; the ending of a private world. Artists such as Vincent van Gogh and Francisco Goya were famed for the works in which they produced in periods of personal crisis. Or, perhaps more immediate to us, the ending of worlds can be expressed through natural disasters—the eruption of Mount Vesuvius and its fatality, Pompeii.

This year, our intention was to explore the theme of endings, their representations over time, and how this imagery has changed to accommodate evolving societies and civilizations. Our hope was to not only explore all things pertaining to endings, but to expand our understanding of what an ending can be. Accordingly, the papers in this journal tackle issues of iconoclasm, (ostensible) cultural loss, and identity.

Art as a medium provides us with modalities, both visual and sensory, to unpack and understand our fragility. Over historical periods and artistic movements, artists have illustrated the definitive nature of conclusions, however, there is never a final denouement provided by the very nature of art itself. Art exists beyond *when worlds end*.

Iakoiehwahtha Patton
President 2022-2023
The History of Art Students' Association

AVA STEDMAN (SHE/HER)
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Illusory Endings: Pole Carving, Canadian Painting, and Settler-Colonial Myth in the Early 20th Century

ABSTRACT: The settler-colonial myth that Indigenous culture was coming to an end in the face of modernity enjoyed widespread popularity in settler society throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Artists, such as Emily Carr, and anthropologists, influenced by this myth, would commit themselves to documenting these supposedly vanishing people. However, emphasis was placed on "unpolluted" Indigenous artifacts, those determined by settlers to reflect pre-contact culture, while contemporary Indigenous peoples and lifeways were ignored. While disease and colonialism had a devastating effect on Indigenous communities, Indigenous culture did not disappear or "end", as these paintings portray. Rather, aspects of this culture changed in response to colonialism, which can be demonstrated by changes to pole carving tradition in the Pacific Northwest, from the proliferation of tall, free-standing poles along the coast to model pole carving alongside the rise of the tourism industry. In simplifying an incredibly complex period of cultural adaptation, people popularized a myth of an ending through art.

Among the many paintings of the University College Collection, an untitled totem pole resides. While the artist remains unknown, the work was originally attributed to the Tsimshian peoples of Northern BC, with an estimated date of creation between 1890-1905. However, the pole's style is more consistent with the Tlingit of Alaska. Part of this stylistic difference is that the vertically arranged figures are fairly distinct, and that the carving is more in the round, with the sides being carved as well.[1] The University College Collection website speculates that this pole was made as a model pole souvenir, a small totem pole carved for sale and trade, and one of many carved by Indigenous communities at the turn of the 20th century in response to the explosion of tourism along the Northwest Coast at the time.[2] Emily Carr was one such tourist, having travelled up and down the west coast many times. Her early work in particular, characterized as her documentary period, subscribes to the anthropological practice of salvage ethnography, which was common among North American anthropologists, who rushed to record everything they could about Indigenous cultures.[3] At the core of Carr's painting and salvage anthropology was the settler colonial belief that Indigenous peoples were vanishing. Having been carved as a model pole in a modern context, the untitled totem pole of the University College Collection exists as a testimony against this myth of endings. In and of itself, this pole denies the supposedly unchanging and static perception that settler society had of Indigenous communities which were perpetuated by settler-colonial myth, salvage anthropology, and visual representations in art.

FIGURE 1. *Untitled (Totem Pole)*, ca. 1890-1905, carved cedar with oil paint, 182.88 x 27.94 x 15.24 cm, The University College Collection, Toronto.

Among the Tlingit, the carving of tall, free-standing poles likely began when the Haida, where the practice is thought to have originated, moved north into Tlingit territory from Haida Gwaii in the late 17th century.[4] Traditionally, the Tlingit of Alaska carved house posts, which were smaller in scale and made to support the large roof beams of their communal houses.[5] While house posts were still favoured by the Tlingit, both house posts and totem poles were often carved with hereditary crests, representing the history and prestige of a certain lineage. These crests would identify a lineage as being either a member of the Raven or Wolf moiety, and have been distributed among the clans since time immemorial.[6] The University College Collection pole was likely carved by a member of the Raven moiety given the raven occupying the middle position. The relatively early date attributed to the pole indicates that the carving style likely still reflects the local carving tradition of the Tlingit, lending this interpretation credibility.[7] Below the raven, a beaver was identified by its protruding front teeth, while the University College Collection website says that a person sits above the raven.[8] However, it is hard to be certain when identifying animals in crests because the Tlingit did not have a strict set of rules governing animal depiction and often changed details. The style of this carving is known as formline style, as both the carved and painted lines curve and flow smoothly across the pole. These lines also vary in width and depth, with certain areas of wood being cast in shadow while others are highlighted.[9] Paint is still present on the surface of the untitled totem pole; the colours are worn but visible as red, black, and white. The paint remnants create designs on the flat planes of the carving, and serve to emphasize certain aspects of the composition, such as the eyes of the beaver and the head atop the frog. The pole appears to be divided fairly evenly into thirds, with no one figure taking precedence over another.

Outside Indigenous communities, myths surrounding the meaning of totem poles spread rapidly throughout North America. In reality, they were often hereditary family crests, with the carved figures acting almost like a cast of characters relevant to a family's origin story. However, this function as hereditary crests has been historically ignored by settler society, who instead came up with their own readings of these pole carvings, often as narratives or some kind of deep representation of Indigenous spirituality and connection with nature, an interpretation in line with primitivist ideas prevalent in Europe at the time.[10] These primitivist ideas position Indigenous peoples pre-contact as having lived in a purer way, more connected with nature.[11] Even the name "totem pole" is a misnomer, first used by Historian James McCabe in 1876. Relating this art form to totemism connects poles with a religion considered "primitive" and "savage", and works to proliferate ideas about the supposed uncivilized state of Indigenous peoples.[12] Anatolii Kamenskii, a Russian Orthodox Missionary who lived among the Tlingit, wrote about the "evolutionary development of mankind" from savagery, by which he means Indigenous lifeways, to civilized, or in other words European.[13] In this comment, Kamenskii is utilizing Lewis Henry Morgan's theory of unilinear cultural evolution, which he developed in the mid-19th century.[14] This theory posits that there are three stages of social development: savagery, barbarism, and civilization. Morgan positioned Indigenous people as representative of a lower stage of human development on this hierarchy, presenting them as a relic of North America's past, seen to be disappearing in the face of European modernity.

As the myth that Indigenous peoples were vanishing gained traction in American anthropology, the salvage movement grew alongside it as anthropologists tried to record everything about the Indigenous communities they viewed as being in danger of disappearance. However, salvage anthropologists focused on what they perceived to be "traditional" relics of pre-contact Indigenous cultures, and ignored modern Indigenous adaptations. This placed emphasis on the past over the present, further positioning Indigenous peoples as relics of the past.[15] The belief that Indigenous peoples were vanishing also left anthropologists unlikely to help the communities whom they studied, since they saw their suffering as inevitable.[16] This also helped justify colonial expansion across North America and land dispossession, as they framed the land belonging to Indigenous communities as available and positioned Europeans as a superior group with rights to this land.

Myths about the vanishing of Indigenous people took hold in settler society because they conflated cultural change with disappearance, ignoring the impact of a century's worth of cultural interplay and colonialism. Among these changes was the number of poles being carved across the Pacific Northwest. Both the proliferation of pole carving at first

contact and the eventual decrease in production were results of interaction with European settlers. At first, the influx of wealth and availability of steel tools prompted an increase in pole production, with tall free-standing poles only beginning to appear post-contact.[17] Furthermore, pole production increased because of the devastating effect of European disease on Indigenous communities, as more memorial and mortuary poles were erected to commemorate deceased individuals.[18] Later, a decrease in pole carving occurred as more forced assimilation of Indigenous communities into settler culture took place. Primary among these attempts at assimilation was the Indian Residential School System, which operated across Canada from the late nineteenth century to 1996 with the goal of completely assimilating Indigenous peoples through forcibly removing children from their communities, indoctrinating Christianity, and controlling education. In British Columbia, many residential schools were founded on the Catholic missions established by Modeste Demers, a Bishop, in the mid-19th century, the first being St. Mary's Mission Indian Residential School in Mission, BC, which opened in 1863.[19] The Church vilified poles, forcing communities to abandon the crest system, while laws such as the 1884 Indian Advancement Act made ceremonial potlatches illegal and, therefore, the raising of poles.[20] All of these changes occurred before and contemporaneously with the documentary projects of Carr and salvage anthropologists, who misinterpreted them as the end of Indigenous culture rather than as adaptations.

While not collecting physical artifacts, Carr's paintings function in a similar way by documenting totem poles and villages along the Northwest Coast. She described her experience travelling up the Inside Passage along the west coast to Alaska as the beginning of her project to document Indigenous villages and totem poles with her paintings.[21] Throughout what is known as her documentary period, from 1907-1913, Carr travelled this route many times, sketching and painting as she went. While she saw herself as an ally to Indigenous communities, her documentary project had significant ties to salvage anthropology and the settler-colonial myth that Indigenous people were vanishing.[22] She, like her predecessors in anthropology, emphasized totem poles as relics of the past, glorifying the past of Indigenous communities of the Pacific Northwest while overlooking the present. While these early documentary

FIGURE 2. Emily Carr, *Tanoo, Q.C.I.,* 1913, oil on canvas, 170.8 x 110.5 cm, British Columbia Archives Collection, Royal B.C. Museum, Victoria.

FIGURE 3. Emily Carr, *Big Raven,* 1931, oil on canvas, 87 x 114 cm, Vancouver Art Gallery.

paintings, such as her painting *Tanoo, Q.C.I.* which depicts a Haida village, were careful to accurately depict pole carvings, her later paintings begin to simplify and stylize them. Carr imbued pole carvings with her own perceived meaning, believing them to be representations of Indigenous spirituality and values, which aligned with primitivist ideas and not with their actual function as family crests. Furthermore, she began to immerse these poles in the forest, until eventually Indigenous peoples and carvings disappeared entirely into the trees, just as settler-colonial myth at the time said they would.[23] In equating Indigenous totem poles to the forest, Carr may be drawing on the myth of the "noble savage" as Cornelius Krieghoff did, depicting Indigenous peoples as a part of the landscape.

Like Carr, Paul Kane set off across Canada to document Indigenous people before they "vanished" in the mid-19th century. While his field sketches were relatively accurate, the oil paintings Kane did upon his return cast Indigenous peoples as figures straight out of European myth.[24] He knew that romantic images sold well, and, consequently, would embellish his subjects with Indigenous regalia regardless of band origin.[25] In this way he strayed from the documentary mission of the salvage anthropology movement, perpetuating mythologies about Indigenous people for profit rather than attempting to record exactly what he saw.

FIGURE 4. Paul Kane, *Assiniboine Hunting Buffalos,* ca. 1851-56, oil on canvas, 46 x 73.7 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottowa.

FIGURE 5. Cornelius Kreighoff, *Moccasin Seller Crossing the St. Lawrence at Quebec City,* ca. 1853-63, oil on canvas, 27.2 × 22.3 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

Cornelius Krieghoff is a commercial settler artist who used the Indigenous image in his work for profit. He knowingly misrepresented them to fit the European myth of the "noble savage", as a realistic depiction of Indigenous peoples would garner less interest.[26] This myth paints Indigenous peoples as the victims of progress, relics of the past, living in a purer, unpolluted way in-line with nature.[27] In Krieghoff's work, the myth of the noble savage often took the shape of a lone figure in nature, a part of the landscape.[28] Furthermore, while it is known that Krieghoff painted the Iroquois people of Kahnawake village, close to Montreal, a logbook of

visitors kept by the village does not record him ever having been. Instead, Krieghoff likely invented scenes of Mohawk life from his studio, using a series of props and having Indigenous people come to him.[29] In this way he contrasts the documentary style of Carr, making no attempt to see how the Indigenous people he painted actually lived. He certainly did not paint the European-style stone houses they lived in, preferring to cast them almost as parts of his landscapes, almost as one with the natural elements, once again in line with the myth of the "noble savage.[30]

During this period, however, colonial artists were not the only ones aware of the popularity of Indigenous subjects at this time. As the tourism industry grew across the Pacific Northwest at the beginning of the 20th century, Indigenous artists capitalized on this fascination with Indigenous culture by selling model poles, a practice within which the University College Collection pole operates.[31] While the carving of tall, free-standing poles was rendered illegal by the ban on potlatches, model poles continued to be carved and overlooked by settler authorities, as they were seen as non-threatening given the emphasis on past Indigenous practices over more recent, adapted ones. In carving these model poles, Indigenous communities continued to train carvers and perpetuate the techniques and traditions used in the carving of larger poles. In selling them to settler tourists, Indigenous peoples utilized them as a source of income while also protecting them by putting them out into settler society, where they would be safer than among their own communities due to constant government persecution and the destruction of heritage objects.[32] Furthermore, tribes that did not previously have tall, free standing pole traditions until they began carving them for settler visitors also utilized model pole carving and tourism as a source of income after the fur trade had died down. As is the case with the University College Collection pole, an unknown artist is also common when looking at model totem poles from this time period. Carvers did not sign their names and records were not well kept, as collectors of these model poles were often more interested in the idea of Indigenous peoples and not actual individuals, as were Carr, Kane, and Krieghoff.[34] Overall, although the significance of these poles drifted from their hereditary clan-based meanings, they continued to be relevant, significant works of art that perpetuated artistic and cultural traditions during a time of assimilation.[35]

Throughout its long history, the totem pole has held an important yet variable place in Indigenous society, from hereditary clan-based crests to model pole souvenirs. Settlers valued these works of art as relics of the past, ignoring the artists still creating them right before their eyes. They romanticised Indigenous people pre-contact but refused to acknowledge that their traditions were still alive, just adapted to new circumstances. The University College Collection pole represents a period of change in the Pacific Northwest, and its significance can be understood as a reflection of the shifting connections between Indigenous people and European settlers, from the early days of the fur trade, the salvage anthropology movement, and the rise of tourism along the coast.

NOTES

1. "Untitled (totem pole)," The University College Collection, accessed October 25, 2022, collections.artmuseum.utoronto.ca:8080/objects/10617/untitled-totem-pole?ctx=685001cc-72d8-4267-88de-25974d5861d3&idx=0; Viola Edmundson Gar field, *The Tsimshian Indians and Their Arts* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1979): 90-91.
2. Pat Glascock and Michael D. Hall, *Carvings and Commerce: Model Totem Poles 1880-2010* (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 11; Glascock and Hall, *Carvings and Commerce*, 9.
3. Ben Barnes and Stephen Warren, "Salvaging the Salvage Anthropologists: Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, Carl Voegelin, and the Future of Ethnohistory," *Ethnohistory* 65, no.2 (2018): 199.
4. Aldona Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole: an Intercultural History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press; Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2010), 30.
5. Aldona Jonaitis, *Art of the Northern Tlingit* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), 17.
6. Ibid, 67-68.
7. Glascock and Hall, *Carvings and Commerce*, 57.
8. The University College Collection, "Untitled (totem pole)."
9. Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole*, 3, 119.
10. Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole*, 5.
11. Stephen Eisenman, *Nineteenth Century Art: A Critical History* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2011), 336.
12. Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole*, 5.

13. Anatolii Bishop of Tomsk and Sergei Kan, *Tlingit Indians of Alaska* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1985), 15.
14. Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr, *Savages and Scientists: the Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology, 1846-1910* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 28.
15. Barnes and Warren, "Salvaging the Salvage Anthropologists," 189, 199.
16. Ibid, 196.
17. Glascock and Hall, *Carving and Commerce*, 11.
18. Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole*, 4, 42.
19. Indian Residential School History & Dialogue Centre Collections, accessed February 28, 2023, collections.irshdc.ubc.ca.
20. Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole*, 34, 46, 57.
21. Bruce Braun, "Colonialism's Afterlife: Visions and Visuality on the Northwest Coast," *Cultural Geographies* 9, no.2 (2002): 215, 217.
22. Iakoiehwahtha Patton, "Absent Landscapes: Tracing Colonial Lines from Dutch Terrains to Emily Carr's Northwest Coast", *Teaching and Learning as Treaty People*, April 11, 2023: 8.
23. Braun, "Colonialism's Afterlife," 212, 216, 229.
24. Diane Eaton and Sheila Urbanek, *Paul Kane's Great Nor-West* (Vancouver: UBC Press), VIII.
25. Eaton and Urbanek, *Paul Kane*, XI.
26. Harper J. Russell, *Krieghoff* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 137.
27. Jonaitis, *The Totem Pole*, 76-77.
28. Russell, *Krieghoff*, 129.
29. Ibid, 44, 46-47.
30. Ibid, 129.
31. Glascock and Hall, *Carving and Commerce*, 9.
32. Jack Davy, "The "Idiot Sticks": Kwakwaka'wakw Carving and Cultural Resistance in Commercial Art Production on the Northwest Coast," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 42, no.3 (2018): 40-41.
33. Glascock and Hall, *Carving and Commerce*, 12, 14.
34. Ibid, 57.
35. Ibid, 12.

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SHEENA MCKEEVER (SHE/HER)
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The Impressed Identity of the Interior: An Analysis of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Philosophy of Furniture"

ABSTRACT: This paper conducts comparative analysis between Edgar Allan Poe's little-known publication, "The Philosophy of Furniture" (1840), and the contemporary decorative arts in the mid-nineteenth century. Narrated through a witty *flâneur*, an urban idler, Poe engaged the principles of American interior design and its political origins. This analysis explores how textual and visual evidence of interior design – from Philadelphian furniture forms to familial portraits (Drexel, Krimmel) – reflected a person's identity. Poe's narrator uses interior design as a vehicle to critique American capitalism, while its satirical commentary serves as a didactic guide for avoiding ostentatious display. I strive to analyze, contrast, and reconstruct Poe's ideal interior, which culminates in psychological tranquility.

The convoluted nature of Edgar Allan Poe's work is precisely what grants him his recognizable identity. Although known for the dark undertones of his poetry, Poe also composed a series of essays concerning artistic theory and poetics. His essay, "The Philosophy of Furniture," presents an indictment of nineteenth-century American design. Poe narrates through a fictional persona of a witty *flâneur*, an urban idler, who makes bold claims based on slight detail.[1] As a result, he does not necessarily subscribe to the same opinions as those expressed in the essay. First published in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* in May 1840, "The Philosophy of Furniture" engages both the principles of nineteenth-century American design and the political origins of what the *flâneur* considers to be its "displeasing effects." This analysis distills the decorative elements that "The Philosophy of Furniture" both endorses and reprimands. The publication bridges the gap between American literature and the poetic principles of interior design. Poe consciously engages with the nineteenth-century notion that a person's identity is reflection within their interior design and, cognizant of the negative effect, he urges his contemporary Americans to strip themselves of their capitalist customs. Poe advocates for interior designs that avoid ostentatious displays and culminate in psychological tranquility. Though satiric in its presentation, "The Philosophy of Furniture" is a didactic guide that urges contemporary consumers to avoid spending discretionary income on materials that reveal their spending power and social status.

THE CONTEXT OF PUBLICATION

At the time that "The Philosophy of Furniture" was published, Poe was situated in Philadelphia, immersed within the world of magazine journalism.[2] In the summer of 1839, he was hired as an editor for *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, a publication that targeted gentlemen of business, finance, and elite, social clubs.[3] Despite his disdain for its general content, Poe published numerous articles and stories in *Burton's*, including ones concerned with satire and identity.[4] Two issues of "The Philosophy of Furniture" were published, both of which circulated on May 1st, New York's "Moving Day."[5] This was traditionally the day of the year when nineteenth-century New York tenants would sign their residential leases. New York's high rent and housing shortage forced its citizens to bring their interiors into the outside world and onto the streets to seek improved living opportunities. "Moving Day" was an event in which the *flâneur* could freely peruse, inspect, and criticize his society's design choices.

Though not explicit in "The Philosophy of Furniture," Poe suggested his own distinction from a nationalist identity within the new marginalia in the Griswold series of Poe's works:

> *That an American should confine himself to American themes, or even prefer them, is rather a political than a literary idea – and at best is a questionable point. We would do well to bear in mind that "distance lends enchantment to the view."* Ceteris paribus*, a foreign theme is, in a strictly literary sense, to be preferred.*[6]

Poe distinguishes a political idea to be one of suitable opinion. Within the class-conscious society of America, a political idea represented public reputation. Poe's last short story in *Burton's* before the first publication of "The Philosophy of Furniture" criticizes societal concern for external perception. Published in February 1840, Poe's satire "The Business Man" displays the pure exploitation and egotism that runs deep in those who identify with capitalistic ideals. Rather, a literary idea incites imagination and the projection of internal desire. By distancing literature from encroaching American institutional expectations, Poe suggests that an author can subscribe to the freedom of expression, and that such work evokes a delightful experience for the reader. Poe has been analyzed by academics as holding a rather inconsistent status as an American mind.[7] American poet William Carlos Williams considered Poe's "doctrine" to be "anti-American" in its pessimism.[8] Considering his poor relationship with his father and the grievous reception he received at an English boarding school, it goes without saying that his fragmented relationship with the typical American identity impacted his artistic output.[9]

Poe's article, though satiric, aims to instruct the contemporary fashion of middle-class American culture. Within the first paragraph, Poe inserts a quote from German philosopher and logician Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel on the invaluableness of philosophy.[10] The *flâneur* replies with the following bold assertion about American reception of the discipline:

> *There is reason, it is said, in the roasting of eggs, and there is philosophy even in furniture – a philosophy nevertheless which seems to be more imperfectly understood by Americans than by any civilized nation upon the face of the earth.*

According to the *flâneur*, the embedded issues of American design stem from American society's lack of philosophical objective. He suggests that the average American is unable to identify the purpose of design, let alone apply rational principles to it. Poe's famous "unity of effect" from his 1846 "The Philosophy of Composition" informs the goals to which he thinks art should achieve, namely an overall purpose or effect upon an audience. His nineteenth-century Americans have instead been brainwashed by a capitalist mentality that aims for nothing but false grandeur. Poe, through his *flâneur*, outlines the issues inherent to American design and then provides his own ideal interior.

BRAINWASHED AMERICA: A NATIONALIST IDENTITY

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, American design was thought of as a reflection of nationalistic identity. It was during this period of Romanticism – the first literary movement in America – that Edgar Allan Poe emerged and thrived, in the contemporary political climate of capitalism to which the *flâneur* accredits the failure of design. American interior design, furniture and ornamentation included, followed England's lead throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Following antiquarian excavations of the Mediterranean in the eighteenth century, English author Robert Adam endorsed classical motifs that soon became prevalent in Hepplewhite and Sheraton forms.[11] Coinciding with the American Federalist period, American furniture design adopted these classical motifs and paired them with simple furniture forms. Following the Revolution, the American contract with Europe was renewed, increasing the emigration of English, Scottish, and Irish cabinetmakers to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.[12] The first American builder guide, Asher Benjamin's Country Builder's Assistant (1797), was published in Philadelphia and reflected the Federalist style.[13] By 1820, the efficiency of Transatlantic trade routes allowed Americans to adopt current European fashions almost immediately. The motifs of the American Greek Revival (1820-1850) aimed to associate the new American independence with pre-Augustan Republican Rome and the democracy of Greece.[14]

Within the 1830s, political and technological changes coincided with the emergence of a new middle class in Europe and an industrial aristocracy in America. In England, the Reform Bill of 1832 granted power to the rich middle class. America elected its seventh president, Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) and – based on egalitarian principles – Jacksonian Democracy was born.[15] Under Jackson's presidency, the rise of mechanization and its exploited work-force facilitated more efficient transportation of products to the American population.[16] Philadelphia architect Samuel Sloan (1815-1884) first indicated that industrialization undoubtedly influenced the design of inexpensive furniture and generated its high demand.[17] Jackson's policies inspired young entrepreneurs to replace the established economic elite with a new emergence of laissez-faire capitalism.[18] Ironically, the laissez-faire rationale for republican simplicity became the justification for the growth of unregulated centres of economic power.[19]

Poe's *flâneur* argues that the lack of governance within this capitalist society cultivates ill-informed design, and in doing so attests

to the necessity of proper authority as a guide for a suitable interior. Conspicuous consumption engulfed American society, a form of display that replaced "the heraldic display in monarchical countries."[20] Upon William IV's death in 1837, Queen Victoria became monarch of England. Under her rule, she favoured stylistic principles of modesty, to which her subjects reflected in their minimalist fashion and simplistic, Grecian furniture forms.[21] Poe praises this "true nobility of blood" in English aristocracy that "avoids rather than affects costliness." He claims that only these elite offer legitimate taste, of which a population can imitate. Poe thus concludes that, since American democracy is without a political singularity to guide style, Americans inevitably lack sensible judgement for design. Without an "aristocracy of blood," Poe's *flâneur* criticizes the capitalist society that instead, "fashioned for ourselves an aristocracy of dollars," failing to comprehend the distinctions between stylistic grace and abomination.

As a by-product of capitalism, one of the detriments to the *flâneur's* ideal interior was the decline of diligent craftsmanship in America. John Hall's *Cabinet-Maker's Assistant* (1840) illustrated scrolled supports in repetition for every position, providing "an economical arrangement to save labor."[22] A few critics warned against the harmful consequences of mass-production, but not before aesthetic damage had already been done.[23] Poe's commentary on the depreciation of design was not unprecedented. A "decline in taste" characterized this period; by making luxuries available to average families, design lost the guidance of tradition.[24]

Each condemned element within "The Philosophy of Furniture" – excessive pattern, gaudy colours, glare, glitter – was derived from the excess wealth of capitalism. The *flâneur* denigrates kaleidoscopes and mirrors as popular devices in nineteenth-century America. As an advocate for fine craftsmanship, he asserts that kaleidoscope patterns promote a shortcut to the creation of beauty, crafting images that neither the intellect nor imagination could control.[25] Similarly, mirrors were condemned due to their excessive projections that magnified a room's space to verify the owner's affluence.[26] The *flâneur* declares that a poor design element was based "partly on account of its flashiness, but principally on account of its greater cost." Poe blames American culture for cultivating a subservient society to the crazes of fashion.

THE *FLÂNEUR'S* GUIDING PRINCIPLES & IDEAL INTERIOR

Recognizing the hold capitalism had on Philadelphian society, the *flâneur* provides a design model guided by rational principles to which naïve Americans could aspire. His ideal interior attempts to overcome the American failures and facilitate an aesthetic balance between irregularity and "odious uniformity." The narrator implicitly draws upon *ut pictura poesis* ("as is painting, so is poetry") as a guide for his interior when he asserts that, "the picture and the room are amenable to those undeviating principles which regulate all varieties of art." *Ut pictura poesis* was a popular adage in the Early Modern period, expressing the kindred nature of painting and craftsmanship.[27] From furniture forms to fashion, modes of artistic craft were kindred because they were both deemed imitations of nature. The *flâneur* suggests the laws of adjustment within a painting are likewise to those of a chamber. He also outlines two common errors in contemporary style, 1) "Straight lines are too prevalent, continued too uninterruptedly, or clumsily interrupted at right angles," and 2) "If curved lines occur, they are repeated into unpleasant uniformity." He attests that these failures are caused by undue precision which "spoils the appearance of many a room."

The *flâneur's* ideal interior is shaped as an oblong parallelogram with one door and two broad windows, declaring that such shape affords the "best opportunities for the adjustment of furniture." He emphasizes correct proportion and harmony, such that a broad entablature of rich gilt-work shall encircle the room "at the junction of the ceiling and walls," and that no cornices shall supersede the windows. The windows stretch to the floor and are set within deep recesses, opening onto an Italian veranda, appealing to the aforementioned *ceteris paribus*. In contrast to Greek revival, contemporary architect Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852) advocated verandas, piazzas, and balconies to enjoy nature and establish a sense of well-being.[28] Downing's *Cottage Residences* (1842) and *Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) promoted the use of historic styles to establish the owner's individuality and spaces that were suitable for cultivation of the mind.[29] Poe's choice to adapt a historic style that was unassociated with America distances the *flâneur* from a nationalistic identity.

The *flâneur* also provides brief descriptions for the furniture forms in his room, including, "Two large sofas, of rosewood and crimson silk, [which] form the only seats," a rosewood piano-forte, and an octagonal table formed "of the richest gold-threaded marble." The descriptions of the latter two forms are more concerned with display, both to be presented "without cover." Considering the "errors" of contemporary furniture forms, the *flâneur* would certainly have condemned Sheraton's popular "Grecian

FIGURE 1. Artist/maker unknown American, *Couch*, ca. 1820-1830, mahogany, cherry, tulip poplar, white pine, brass, and upholstery. Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

FIGURE 2. James Macdonald, *Occasional Table*, ca. 1837-1846, mahogany and marble. Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

squab" sofa type within Philadelphia (Fig. 1).[30] Its uninterrupted straight lines and asymmetrical curves would certainly dissatisfy the *flâneur*, let alone the mahogany – a type of wood he strictly prohibits. The textile pattern and colouring are also of the sorts which he detests, claiming that all upholstery "should be rigidly Arabesque." Poe's *flâneur* would categorize this sofa with those "bedizzened out like a Ricaree Indian – all red chalk, yellow ochre and cock's feathers." In contrast, the "Occasional Table" (Fig. 2) might be a form that inspired Poe and which he altered to the *flâneur's* taste. The craftsman James Macdonald synthesized curves and rectilinear forms within this table and topped it with a rich slab of marble. Though made of mahogany, Poe may have based his octagonal table off a similar form, characterized by simple, delicate curves and adaptable, wheel feet.

Like his architecture and furniture, the *flâneur's* ideal decorations are characterized by an aesthetic balance, Poe places much more emphasis upon decoration than furniture forms. The *flâneur* is specifically concerned with the harmonious ambiance of the room. Dressed in flowing curtains of rich silk, he is even particular about how the room's drapery should display an "airy appearance." The *flâneur* avers that crimson, gold, and short irregular curves should characterize the interior since they achieve harmony best. As for the decorations within the room, the flâneur outlines the appropriate size, placement, and subjects that paintings should conform to; they should not be diminutive and should be set within broad frames that are richly carved to achieve a lustre of gold. He favours imaginative landscapes as their subjects and even references specific landscapes, including the Fairy grottoes of Stanfield or Lake of the Dismal Swamp, Chapman.[31] Despite acknowledging that paintings are best viewed when hanging off cords, the *flâneur* argues that "the general appearance of the chamber is injured" and thereby must be hung flush against the wall. Other decorations include a candelabrum and a set of vases, one at each corner of the room.

IDENTITIES INFLUENCING THEIR INTERIOR DESIGN

Material culture provides a means by which social status, relations, and identity are visualized.[32] Interior design, likewise, communicates an aspect of one's reflected self, an externalization of their character. Poe emphasizes the aesthetic harmony his *flâneur* yearns for by consciously inserting identity into his composition, complying with the notion that identity imprints itself into interior design. It was becoming customary within nineteenth-century American, urban populations to insert themselves into their domestic environment.[33] Poe, too, imprints a figure into his composition, "a proprietor lies asleep upon a sofa," to highlight the impact a figure makes on their environment – like how a body makes an indentation on a sofa.[34] The proprietor lies at peace within his environment, and while unknowingly, he impresses his own identity upon it.

GENRE PAINTING: KRIMMEL

By imbuing the presence of the proprietor, the *flâneur* contributes to the favour for traditional paintings of domestic life, a popular artistic genre within Philadelphia during the first years of the republic. There is not only a clear distinction between furniture forms and their reflected class, but also of figural identities. In famous genre painter John Lewis Krimmel's *Country Wedding* (1820), rustic finery of country living is displayed (Fig. 3) – albeit, this scene speaks of a lower class than that which Poe directly addresses. The figural identities shape the elements of design. Two types of Windsor Side Chairs (Figs. 4 and 5) are on display in profile, while a cabinet of rectilinear form without intricate carving is placed in the back right corner. Poe's narrator would be impressed with neither of these simple forms, especially considering their orientation – the Windsor Chair closest to the door is used as a resting place for the clergyman's saddlebags, hat, and whip. Though the *flâneur* focuses his criticisms on the design of the urban setting, his ideal interior – its minimal, but rich decoration and lounging atmosphere – certainly opposes the rural environment of this painting. Krimmel's scene consists of haphazardness, as the familial

FIGURE 3. John Lewis Krimmel, *Country Wedding, Bishop White Officiating*, ca. 1814, oil on canvas. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.

FIGURE 4. Attributed to Benjamin Love, *Windsor Side Chair*, ca. 1780-1800, tulip poplar, hickory and maple. Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

FIGURE 5. Artist/maker unknown American, *Windsor Side Chair*, ca. 1760-1790, tulip poplar, maple, hickory and oak. Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

crowd displays a range of emotions and interactions; no two individuals exhibit postural nor emotional uniformity. The figures are scattered about the space, likewise to the decorative elements. The decorations, including a mirror hanging from a cord and diminutive picture frames, are certainly forms which Poe's *flâneur* detests. The interior design appears disorganized on behalf of the dysfunctional identities that impress themselves upon the space.

PORTRAIT PAINTING: DREXEL

Portrait paintings of nineteenth-century, urban elites and their interior designs similarly reflect impressed identities. Francis Martin Drexel's *The Drexel and Gallagher Families, Thirteen Portraits* (1824), impressed upon by the composed individuals, contains design aspects of which Poe's *flâneur* would approve (Fig. 6). This painting highlights three furniture forms: a piano, stool, and tea table. The tea table is characterized by exaggerated curls of the feet, unlike the Philadelphia Museum of Art's form (Fig. 7), that harkens back to the earlier eighteenth century. Aligned with the

FIGURE 6. Francis Martin Drexel, *The Drexel and Gallagher Families Thirteen Portraits*, ca. 1824, oil on canvas. Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

FIGURE 7. Artist/maker unknown American, *Tea Table*, ca. 1700-1800, mahogany. Made in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

flâneur's ideal room, Drexel's interior includes two coordinating paintings on the back wall that depict imaginative landscapes and crimson drapery that frames the window in airy folds. Unlike the figures in Krimmel's genre painting, each of Drexel's figures that sit at a furniture form interact in an appropriate manner. The figures are grouped in a uniform, yet disorganized manner; while they are not all positioned in the same direction, their emotions are unanimous, thereby striking a balance between regularity and irregularity. Their urban identities are undoubtedly reflected in their interior design.

By inserting a proprietor into the *flâneur's* ideal room, Poe contributes to this tradition of identity influencing and dictating interior design. It is notable that Poe's proprietor is sleeping. Not only does this imbue his interior with a sense of comfort and ease, but also with a sense of tranquillity, implicitly suggesting the purpose of Poe's design. The proprietor is unconcerned with the outside world, disconnected from the confines of his capitalist society. By displaying human presence within an interior space, Poe draws connection between décor and identity, between the character of a room and the personal character of its inhabitant.[35] Regardless of a person's awareness, every individual leaves a trace of themselves in the spaces they reside.

A successful interior, in the *flâneur's* terms, achieves a psychological effect, a "thorough diffusion of a right feeling." The *flâneur* encourages his readership to appeal to an individualistic and imaginative pleasure through design. Asserting that "a man of large purse has usually a very little soul which he keeps in it," he condemns the republican identity, primarily for its acquisition of materialistic gains with lack of meaningful objective. As with his poetry, Poe advocates for the necessity of soul in the arts, yearning for ideal beauty.[36] Concerned with the "unity of effect," the notion that art should work cohesively to impact the reader, Poe composes an interior that synthesizes his aspects of ideal beauty. Using satire, Poe allows his *flâneur* to encourage his readership to escape the confines of capitalism and highlight the detrimental impact of capitalism that has permeated further than strictly interior design; more detrimentally, it comes as a result of blind consumerism. Poe's satire implicitly criticizes his contemporary governance and provides a didactic guide for the middle-class Philadelphian to craft a space that facilitates psychological tranquility.

NOTES

1. Edgar Allan Poe, *The Annotated Poe*, ed. Kevin J. Hayes (Cambridge, Massachusetts" The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 114. Assertions from the original text, "The Philosophy of Furniture," are attributed to the *flâneur*. Unless cited otherwise, all quotations have been sourced from the original 1840 publication: Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Furniture," in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine and American Monthly Review* (May 1840).
2. James M. Hutchisson, *Poe* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 80. A few years prior, Poe was a staff writer and critic for the *Southern Literary Messenger*, a periodical published in Richmond, Virginia.
3. Gentlemen's clubs were private, social clubs that were established first by Britain's upper class societies in the eighteenth century. American gentlemen clubs were likewise established, reflecting aristocratic power and influence. See also E. Digby Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class* (London: Routledge, 2017) and Christopher Doob, *Social Inequality and Social Stratification in US Society* (New York: Routledge, 2019).
4. Hutchisson, *Poe*, 82-3. "The Man That Was Used Up" (August 1839), "Morella" (November 1839).
5. Kevin J. Hayes, "The Flaneur in the Parlor: Poe's 'Philosophy of Furniture'," *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 27 (November 2002): 104. Public lectures and essays of nineteenth-century middle-class leisure activities were titled "Philosophy of X." Prior to publishing the second edition of this essay in 1845, Poe altered its title to "House Furniture" to avoid sounding cliché.
6. Edgar Allan Poe, "Supplementary Marginalia," in *The Brevities* (New York: Gordian Press, 1985), 1:508.
7. Poe, *The Annotated Poe*, xvii.
8. Ibid, xix.
9. Hutchisson, *Poe*, 12.
10. "Philosophy is utterly useless and fruitless, and, *for this very reason*, is the sublimest of all pursuits, the most deserving of our attention, and the most worthy of our zeal" - Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.
11. Helen Comstock, *American Furniture* (New York: The Viking Press, 1962), 192-3.
12. Comstock, American Furniture, 197.
13. Ibid, 206.
14. Jeannie Ireland, *History of Interior Design* (New York: Fairchild, 2009), 439; Comstock, 203.
15. Comstock, 276; George Brown Tindall, *America: A Narrative History*, Vol 1. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 1984), 422. Jackson's first major biographer identified him as "A writer brilliant, elegant, eloquent, without being able to compose a correct sentence or spell words of four syllables," suggesting that society was not only concerned with the detrimental consequences of Jackson's policies, but also of his lack of Romantic artistry.
16. While Jackson advocated moral, republican values, he was criticized for building wealth on the backs of slave labour. See Richard B. Latner, "Andrew Jackson," in *The Presidents: A Reference History* 3, ed. Henry Graff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2002), 104; Robert Whaples, "Were Andrew Jackson's Policies 'Good for the Economy'?" in *The Independent Review* 18 (Spring 2014): 545; Tindall, *America: A Narrative History*, 393. Compared to New York and Pennsylvania politicians, who exploited the spoils of office to nourish political machines, Jackson was supposedly behaved.
17. Comstock, *American Furniture*, 277.
18. Tindall, *America: A Narrative History*, 423.
19. Ibid.
20. See also Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899).
21. See Kay Staniland, *In Royal Fashion: The Clothes of Princess Charlotte of Wales & Queen Victoria, 1796-1901* (London: Museum of London, 1997).
22. Comstock, *American Furniture*, 277.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid, 276.
25. Hayes, "The Flaneur in the Parlor," 111.
26. Ibid, 112-3. Mirrors could also relate to Poe's awareness of Bentham's panopticon, attested to by his review of Friedrich von Raumer's England in 1835. Projections could also relate to the contemporary retail surveillance mirrors and cameras.
27. Within the first paragraph of "The Philosophy of Furniture", Poe references an adapted quotation from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* VII.20-1, *meliora probant, deteriora sequuntur* ("They approve the better, but follow the worse") to describe French taste. Poe's explicit classical knowledge makes it unsurprising for him to imbue classically inspired art theory into his essay. *Ut pictura poesis*, though taken out of context, was coined by the Roman poet Horace in the first century BCE. The Greek term *poesis* simply means the art of "making".
28. Comstock, *American Furniture*, 276.
29. Ibid.
30. T. Sheraton, *The Cabinet Dictionary* (London: *W. Smith, King Street, Seven Dials*, 1803), 246-7. Each furniture form and painting has been sourced from a Philadelphia art institution and was crafted for consumption in Philadelphia, dating within the end of the eighteenth century and the first half of the 19th century.
31. The Dismal Swamp, Chapman references Poe's poem, "The Lake".
32. See Joanna Sofaer (ed.), *Material Identities* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), esp. Abigail Harrison, "Aristocratic Identity: Regency Furniture and the Egyptian Revival Style." See also Susie McKellar and Penny Sparke (eds.), *Interior Design and Identity* (Manchester University, 2004).
33. Hayes, "The Flaneur in the Parlor," 116.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Hutchisson, *Poe*, 86-7.

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Al-Azhar Park: Conservation, Heritage, and Sustainability

ABSTRACT: Despite seemingly aesthetic concerns, conservation projects present opportunities to directly improve the well-being of present day communities. In the 1990s, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) revitalized the 500-year-old dumping grounds of al-Darassa into one of the only green spaces in Cairo, renamed al-Azhar Park. An exploration of AKTC's conservation methods reveals how al-Azhar Park was integrated into the surrounding urban fabric as a functional, socio-economic resource for neglected neighbouring communities. The Park thus uses socio-economic outreach as well as the conservation of a once-buried Islamic Fatimid architecture to celebrate and uplift a Shi'i Muslim community whose histories and experiences have been continually overlooked. The socio-economic revitalization and affordance of community spaces for action and interaction demonstrates a conservation praxis that challenges heritage discourses that continually prioritize history rather than living communities. This project works to expand beyond traditional aesthetic and historical concerns by offering new possibilities for conservation spaces to foster living heritages by centering community voices and their wellbeing. The immense success of al-Azhar Park proposes a transition to community-oriented perspectives within urban planning and conservation in which present-day communities are valued, supported, and 'preserved' just as much as their histories.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, an agency that seeks to foster cultural heritage through the built environment, aimed to build a multifunctional green space in the congested urban fabric of Cairo, Egypt (Fig. 1).[1] The site chosen by the AKTC in the heart of the urban centre was located between the historic Fatimid city, the Ayyubid wall, the citadel to the south, as

FIGURE 1. Gary Odette, *Aerial View of Al-Azhar Park with Darb Al-Ahmar on the Left*, digital photograph, Aga Khan Development Network. https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/multimedia/photographs/creating-urban-oasis-al-azhar-park-cairo-egypt.

well as Mamluk and Ottoman architecture nearby. This choice of location presented an opportunity to revitalize the Islamic heritage in the area while also merging the historic elements of the city with the post-medieval settlements (Figs. 2.1, 2.2, 2.3). The ultimate goal of the project was to foster social cohesion through leisure, nature, and a connection to history.[2]

The most striking aspect of this project is the historic connection between the Aga Khan himself and the site. The Aga Khan, the imam of the Ismaili Shi'i community, claims descent from the Shi'i Fatimids. The site of what was to be the sprawling green space of al-Azhar Park in Cairo was a dumping ground. For 500 years, it was known as al-Darassa, left forgotten and filled with rubble and debris.[3] The history of this site can be traced back to the Fatimid period in which it attained a catastrophic and traumatic valence. The Fatimid caliphate, from the 10th to the 12th century, ushered in a period of prosperity in their dynastic capital of al-Qahirah, characterized by economic stability and rich cultural productions. The stability of the caliphate was secured through the sacral authority of the Fatimids as they claimed direct descent from the Prophet Muhammad, according to Shi'i Islamic doctrine. The Fatimids entombed the remains of their ancestors in Turbat al-Za'faran (the Saffron Tombs) in their caliphal city of al-Qahirah, now known as Cairo, which served to declare their sacral lineage and legitimize their right to rule. In 1171, the last Fatimid

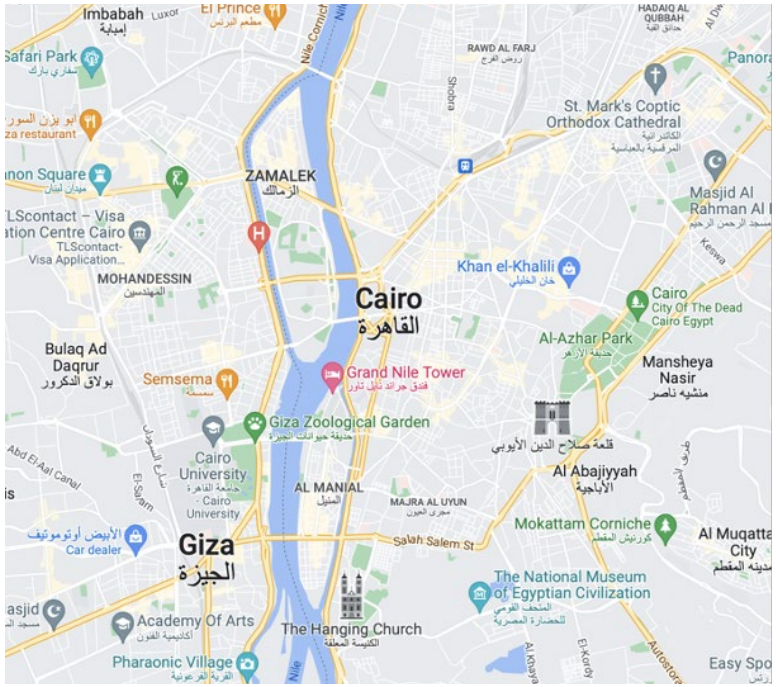


FIGURE 2.1. Present-day Cairo. Google Maps.

FIGURE 2.2. Fatimid Cairo.

FIGURE 2.3. Plan of Al-Azhar Park, in Cameron Rashti, "The History of Al-Azhar Park's Development. Challenges and Opportunities," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018), 59.

caliph was deposed by a rivalling dynasty, the Ayyubids, that sought to erase Fatimid influence from Cairo, and restore orthodox Islamic doctrine within the state and society at large. Two centuries later, Cairene historian al-Maqrizi recounts the disinterment of the Fatimid ancestors from Turbat al-Za'faraan.[4] Their bodies were thereafter discarded onto the rubbish piles of al-Darassa by a Mamluk Emir in condemnation of Shi'i doctrine and Fatimid authority.[5] This disinterment transgressed Islamic beliefs regarding the sanctity of the deceased and their burials, and became a moment of profound loss in the history of Cairo. Furthermore, this moment is a single event in a long, traumatic history of religious persecution and legacies of violence against the Shi'i community which continues into the present day.

The Aga Khan's mobilization of the various project agencies resulted in the revitalization of al-Darassa from a site of personal and historic loss, creating a green space for all of Cairo's residents. Rather than relive a traumatic history, the Aga Khan's agencies and their work honours lost historic Islamic visual languages by restoring their physical forms as the setting for al-Azhar Park. The restoration of a distinctly Shi'i Fatimid architectural history does not erase the trauma resulting from the loss of ancestral remains or the legacies of violence that permeate until the present day. However, the conservation project asserts that the community's history, which has been continually overlooked and marginalized, is worth remembering and celebrating.

Launched in 1995, the project was later completed in 2005.[6] The project's integration of an irrigation and water system to support the vegetation in the arid climate, combined with the removal of tonnes of debris and the grading of the land into elevated planes, transformed al-Azhar Park into a paradisiacal space with a magnificent vista over the city (Figs. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3). The robust water management system was funnelled into the punctuating rivers and fostered the Park's lush vegetation (Fig. 4). Moreover, the space's monumental walkway created a transcendental experience for the viewer by evoking an Islamic architectural lineage of cosmic alignment (Fig. 5). By merging Islamic architectural languages with natural and functional elements, the Park provided a respite in nature for Cairenes. However, the Park and the restoration of a lost Islamic past was only one facet of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture project. The revitalization in al-Azhar Park supported a complementary social and urban revitalization in the nearby historic, residential district of Darb al-Ahmar on the western border of the Park (Fig. 6).

FIGURE 3.1. *Aerial view looking south along the western edge of the park during grading works*, digital photograph, 2000, Archnet. https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=24660.

FIGURE 3.2. *Preliminary testing of suitable plants and planting for an arid climate*, digital photograph, 2000, Archnet. https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=24667.

FIGURE 3.3. *View looking south across the northern (restaurant) terrace during the construction of water channel and pools*, digital photograph, 2003, Archnet. https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=24934.

FIGURE 4. *The central formal garden looking south towards the citadel of Cairo*, digital photograph, in Cameron Rashti, "The History of Al-Azhar Park's Development. Challenges and Opportunities," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 60-61.

FIGURE 5. Christian Richters, *Formal garden area, palm avenue and water channel*, digital photograph, Aga Khan Development Network. https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/multimedia/photographs/creating-urban-oasis-al-azhar-park-cairo-egypt.

FIGURE 6. *Aerial view over the park, looking west across the central section towards the Darb al-Ahmar neighbourhood*, digital photograph, 2005, https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=46076.

This paper will seek to identify the ethical responsibilities that we, as urban historians and archaeologists, have to the communities in which we work in *and* with. I will also explore the ways in which sustainability outlook allows for the activation of conservation spaces beyond aesthetic concerns and toward liveability. Lastly, I will examine how conservation projects, through the example of AKTC, can transform sentiments of loss, death, and decline into cultural memories that celebrate the living histories of an urban community.

By discussing al-Azhar Park, I will present a new model for conservation centred on sustainability, and ultimately, urban equity. As a concept, sustainability is defined as the wellbeing of a community which operates as a multi-layered system and is nurtured on each of its levels in order for the community to sustain itself.[7] With this framework in mind, al-Azhar Park reinterprets the traumatic Shi'i Fatimid past by monumentalizing its architectural language as the site for the project's hands-on efforts that provides socio-economic support to urban communities. The project understands that the history of this area is an essential facet of the community, however, its efforts in bolstering the self-determination of the present community demonstrates its commitment beyond history and into the present as a living heritage. The recontextualization of Cairene and Islamic architecture seeks to foster new spatial meanings, cultural reflections, and expressions for its visitors, both connected to and moving beyond historical linkages, resulting in the creation of a new living history within the urban fabric. Moreover, the site's ability to uplift the wellbeing of present communities thereby challenges and expands discourses of heritage beyond the aesthetic and historic; it asserts that conservation projects have the ability to become functional resources which afford communities the power to determine and create their heritages in the present and future. Ultimately, AKTC's dual approach of architecture and community outreach demonstrates that a community's history and its present day communities are both of value.

Looking closer at the community outreach elements of the project, the nearby neighbourhood of Darb al-Ahmar experienced declining infrastructure, high levels of emigration, and a lack of services and opportunities for its residents.[8] As part of the project, the AKTC provided housing rehabilitation, business and crafts development services, education initiatives, health services, and social development programs in Darb al-Ahmar (Figs. 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4).[9] In some instances, residents were enlisted and trained to help with the conservation efforts (Fig. 8).[10]

FIGURE 7.1. *Computer classes as part of AKTC's engagemet in vocational training*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas, "Community Development," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 151.

FIGURE 7.2. *Community healthcare provided in a clinic established in a historic ottoman house restored by AKTC*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas, "Community Development," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 154.

FIGURE 7.3. *Environmental education for Darb al-Ahmar youth*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas, "Community Development," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 152.

FIGURE 7.4. *Vocational training in traditional woodwork*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas, "Community Development," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 156.

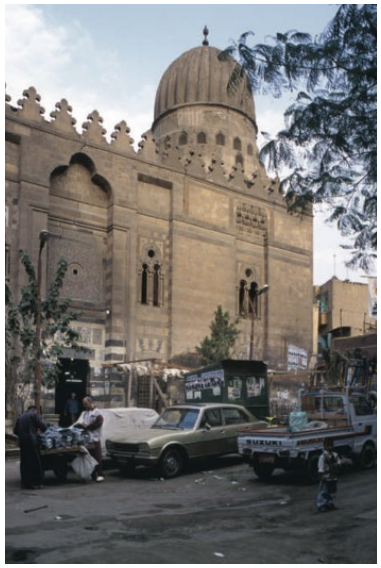
FIGURE 8. *Craftsmen and trainees from Darb al-Ahmar working on the cleaning of the delicate stucco reliefs of the Khayrbek minaret in Darb al-Ahmar*, digital photograph, in Stefano Bianca, "Introduction," in *Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme: An Integrated Approach to Urban Rehabilitation*, 56.

FIGURE 9. *Roof gardening explained by an AKTC community worker*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas, "Community Development," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 150.

Moreover, the Park's spatial linkage to Darb al-Ahmar through city gates encouraged residents to use the space and its facilities. The residents were thus equipped with the skills and services they needed to sustain their socio-economic wellbeing, as part of a total urban revitalization (Fig. 9).

Over centuries, Cairo was subjected to conservation practices from colonial authorities which continually dispossessed, displaced, and disrupted the modes of life present in the urban community. AlSayyad discusses the traumatic history of conservation under colonial bodies such as the Comité De Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe who justified the demolition of small businesses and other buildings they considered "intrusions" onto historic sites which they sought to "conserve."[11] Al-Azhar Park and the community outreach project demonstrates an alternate mode of urban planning. In this instance, AKTC, as a sympathetic and local entity with historic ties, provides conservation and community outreach that supports a self-sufficient mode of living through community-oriented work and consultation.[12] This alternate mode of urban conservation seeks to make conservation functional and meaningful for a community by addressing community-specific issues through the heritage project itself.[13] The affordance of safe homes and street spaces, green spaces in a congested urban area, employment opportunities, vocational training, the repurposing of historic buildings into social facilities are several ways that the project respects the community's values and addresses their needs (Figs. 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.5, 10.6, 10.7, 10.8). The conservation of historic buildings from the Mamluk, Ayyubid and Ottoman period for the use of the Darb al-Ahmar community demonstrates how the restoration of Islamic architectural languages celebrates Cairo's past. These spaces are now the setting for the revitalization of the community's socio-economic wellbeing in present and future years, allowing history to become revitalized as part of a new living heritage.

These socio-economic and conservation revitalization efforts adopt a model of sustainability that offers holistic and long-term modes of support to a community. Specifically, by being equipped with economic opportunities and safe living conditions, the residents can now take part in self-directed economic growth and social engagement within their community and the wider urban fabric. Moreover, the community has gained a new sense of self-determination and agency over their communal wellbeing, empowering them to create their own living heritages and histories based in new opportunities for connection and growth. Moreover, the project protected the community by negotiating with local authorities



FIGURES 10.1 [left] & 10.2 [right]. *Aslam Square before and after AKTC's upgrading intervention*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas and Francesco Siravo, "Urban Renewal," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 174.

FIGURE 10.3. *Opposite view of the same square showing a restored building now reused as a cafeteria*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas and Francesco Siravo, "Urban Renewal," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 173.

FIGURES 10.4 [left] & 10.5 [right]. *An example of housing rehabilitation in al-Darb al-Ahmar. a building prior to rehabilitation (left) and the same building afterwards (right)*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas and Francesco Siravo, "Urban Renewal," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 181.

FIGURES 10.6 [left] & 10.7 [right]. *The advanced level of deterioration in housing stock and open space*, digital photograph, in Geoffrey Salkeld, "Change and Continuity in a Historic Urban Settlement," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 188.

FIGURE 10.8. *Restored wall and restored Darb Shoughlan school converted into the community centre*, digital photograph, in Jurjen can der Tas and Francesco Siravo, "Urban Renewal," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 178.

to stop illegal demolitions, protecting the livelihood and spatial integrity of the neighbourhood.[14] In the same vein, the residents allow the Park to thrive by participating in the facilities offered and gathering in its space; this social engagement from the residents and any visitor sustains the Park, fulfilling its function as a space for community gathering.[15] These interconnected webs of sustainability that rely on shared social responsibility, sympathy, and connection encapsulate a useful model for urban planning moving forward.[16] With this in mind, we must think about how positive space entitlement through urban equity is an essential component that incentivizes visitors to care for the space and one that provides new insights into bilateral relationships between site and community.

Al-Azhar Park is also able to support sustainability in its transcendence of class divides. In Cairo, spaces often operate as tools to include and exclude certain social groups, namely with the wealthier in Cairo having sole access to green spaces which are typically accessible only through paid, exclusive memberships. In contrast, lower classes are relegated to other meeting spaces in the city that are public and free to access, such as coffee houses or city squares. Al-Azhar Park mediates this issue by providing everyday people with an accessible green space. Furthermore, the multifunctionality of the Park welcomes visitors from all walks of life to partake in activities and enjoy the natural space. This creates a sense of social cohesion through equal access to space and fulfils basic human needs through recreational activity and facilities.[17] This social equity encourages the performance of multiple forms of cultural expression through acting and community interaction in this single space from all residents, allowing for new reflections and conceptions of identity that build upon and perhaps beyond the historical lineage cultivated by the site, thereby birthing a living heritage rooted in a united urban community (Figs. 11.1, 11.2).

The Park cultivates this historical lineage through the architectural monumentalization of an Islamic architectural past that thereby declares a shared Cairene history for all residents to gather around. The Park's architectural languages evoke the Fatimid garden typology associated with their caliphal city and the lasting image of the historic city today. The water management of the Park, through its visual forms of glimmering lakes and rivers that flow through the green space, its role in sustaining the horticulture of the space, and connotations of stewardship by way of environmental engineering recalls the rich cultural memory of the Fatimid

FIGURE 11.1. *A hillside lawn enjoyed for moments of relaxation*, digital photograph, in Cameron Rashti, "The History of Al-Azhar Park's Development. Challenges and Opportunities," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 57.

FIGURE 11.2. *Children's entertainment*, digital photograph, 2008, Archnet. https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=62154.

pools, lakes, and fountains that accompanied the garden typologies of their dynasty (Fig. 12).[18] These Fatimid ideals of stewardship and visual delight in nature are thus reimagined in al-Azhar Park, evoking deeply held Qur'anic visions and Islamic languages of paradise. Moreover, the Fatimid belvedere was a keystone of their caliphal city, being placed throughout the garden spaces to provide elevated lookout points over a space. At al-Azhar Park, we see the belvedere placed throughout its elevated planes to provide visitors with visual access to the entirety of Cairo, merging the historic city with the modern fabric through a Fatimid spatial tool (Figs. 13.1, 13.2). The pathways of the Park bisect its curving hills, recalling the ceremonial walkways of the Fatimid caliphs through their city and gardens whilst also providing transcendental vistas over the city. Overall, Fatimid gardens were a place of connectivity between the caliph and his people in a ritual context.[19] We see this same spirit of social connectivity reimagined in al-Azhar Park, aimed towards interconnection between visitors themselves.

Through the honouring of this past, the public heritage site acts as a visual articulation or "mnemonic device" of a cultural memory,[20] which transcends social divisions of class and asserts a united urban identity.[21] For instance, the belvederes present an unobstructed panoramic view of the entirety of Cairo which reaffirms a positive space entitlement for all viewers. From these belvederes, visitors can see Cairo's City of the Dead and numerous mausoleum-madrasa complexes that exist between homes and shops, hearkening to a Cairene architectural vocabulary that has commemorated death for centuries in the urban fabric. Through memorializing the prosperity of their caliphal city as the site for new community activity and crystallizations of identity, the traumatic and catastrophic sense of loss that al-Darassa symbolized is transformed into new opportunities for unity amongst the people of Cairo. Cairenes are invited to become immersed in this Shi'i Fatimid history as part of a living and shared heritage. While this trauma cannot be instantly or entirely healed by the Park, its real promises of connection, work in socio-economic revitalization, and monumentalization of a historically neglected past demonstrates to these marginalized communities that their identities and their wellbeing in the present are important, visible, and worth celebration.

In January of 2011, a revolution and subsequent political unrest led to inflation and a series of uncontrolled building developments, some of which occurred in Darb al-Ahmar (Fig. 14).[22] Buildings next to the Ayyubid wall and the Park became lucrative and are noted as being structurally dangerous whilst having a damaging effect on the community's view to

FIGURE 12. *The lakeside cafe and its lake in the southern meadow*, digital photograph, in Cameron Rashti, "The History of Al-Azhar Park's Development. Challenges and Opportunities," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 62.

FIGURE 13.1. *Park's Green Spaces*, digital photograph, 2009, Archnet. https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=89324.

FIGURE 13.2. *Viewpoint with view to the historic city*, digital photograph, 2008, Archnet. https://www.archnet.org/sites/5003?media_content_id=62147.

FIGURE 14. *Below, post-2011 unauthorized apartment building construction in proximity of the historic Wall*, digital photograph, in Geoffrey Salkeld, "Change and Continuity in a Historic Urban Settlement," in *Cairo: Renewing the Historic City*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Munich: Prestel, 2018): 185.

the Park.[23] Most of the community programs were handed over from the AKTC to several local entities in 2013; the Park continued under the Aga Khan Cultural Services, a separate agency from the AKTC.[24] Lastly, the Park itself continues to charge visitors for admission fees, complicating seemingly simple assertions of accessibility and the levelling of class divides. These events raise a variety of questions regarding the limitations of these urban development programs, particularly regarding the afterlife of the programs, their funding and management, and the limited authority of conservation agencies over land and buildings in comparison to governmental bodies, for instance. The reality of land and economic pressures reflect the complex socio-economic circumstances faced by the residents and serve as critical questions to inform future projects.

The implementation of urban planning and community initiatives are further complicated through various studies conducted in the decades after project's completion. For instance, Ashraf Salama's survey indicated that "18% of visitors do not see the connection" between the project as a positive urban intervention and its promotion of cultural awareness of Cairene heritage.[25] Although this appears to contradict the ideas presented regarding the recognition of shared cultural memory, I argue that the survey demonstrates the seamless integration of the Park into the everyday lives and spatiality of the urban community. In this way, Al-Azhar Park exemplifies a successful conservation project that expands beyond historic concerns for its visitors and operates as a functional resource for its community members, fostering a living heritage.

I do not aim to overlook the significant evocative effect of history or its role in shaping conceptions of identity or culture. However, as my paper and the AKTC, through their work in socio-economic empowerment, strives to assert, the success of conservation projects should no longer be ascertained using metrics of a space's historic educational capabilities. These distinctly Western discourses of heritage privilege the past and its unchanging quality. Ultimately, this narrative dispossesses power from, and results in the neglect of, present day communities, their experiences, and the spaces they invest meaning.[26] Conservation projects should be guided by a commitment to fostering new heritages, cultural expression, and spatial meaning apart from these Western, hegemonic ideas of heritage. Thus, I will use this study to highlight that Cairo's communities are effectively exercising their self-determination and agency by creating new histories as legitimate arbiters and authorities of their own living heritages within the Park, in whichever manner this takes shape, both attached to and divorced from past histories. For these reasons, the AKTC project is an immense success. It meaningfully challenges rigid heritage discourses, transforming conservation projects from a mechanism of colonialism in urban space to a tool of empowerment and self-determination in the hands of the community themselves. At the same time, it fosters a lasting positive effect on the material reality of the Darb al-Ahmar residents. Ultimately, AKTC's work presents a viable and sustainable praxis for other urban development and conservation projects moving forward.

Al-Azhar Park demonstrates how our histories can be brought into conversation with our lived experiences today as part of a sustainable future, with its architectural memorialization of a lost Islamic past birthing a new, living heritage. The bridging of the past into the present is accomplished through the project's prioritization of urban equity. This enables the urban population, of all socio-economic backgrounds, the spatial access to participate in a process of cultural co-creation, allowing an Islamic history to live on in the present for all Cairenes. In the face of the insurmountable challenges that urban communities must navigate across the globe, these perspectives in conservation, urban planning, and beyond, demonstrate the immense potential found within a community-centred praxis, and its essential role in building a sustainable and shared future.

NOTES

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2. Rashti, "The History of Al-Azhar Park's Development," 75.
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4. Al-Maqrizi, *Itti'az*, quoted in Andre Raymond, "Cairo, Fatimid City," in *Cairo: City of History, trans. Willard Wood* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2001), 51.
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6. Rashti, "The History of Al-Azhar Park's Development," 63-64.
7. Dennis Rodwell, *Conservation and Sustainability in Historic Cities* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 132.
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11. Nairy Hampikian, "Medievalization of the Old City as an Ingredient of Cairo's Modernization: Case Study of Bab Zuwayla," in *Making Cairo Medieval*, ed. Nezar AlSayyad, Irene A. Bierman, and Nasser O. Rabbat (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005), 212-217.
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13. Chris Landorf, "Evaluating Social Sustainability in Historic Urban Environments," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 17, no. 5 (2011): 474.
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17. Landorf, "Evaluating Social Sustainability in Historic Urban Environments," 468-469; Izadi, et al., "Structural Functionalism, Social Sustainability and the Historic Environment," 171.
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23. Ibid.
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Architecture as Memory: Gothic Ruins in the Work of Lyonel Feininger, 1928-1953.

> "Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of "images." And by "image" we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a *representation*, but less than that which the realist calls a *thing*, – an existence placed half-way between the "thing" and the "representation." – Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*.

At first glance the cold, windy beaches north of the Baltic Coast would not top the list of coveted vacation destinations. But it is here that Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956) returned every summer from 1924 until 1935 – a little village of Deep in Pomerania, now part of Germany. By then Feininger was already a renowned artist on both sides of the Atlantic, his native New York and his adopted home Berlin, as well as a key figure in German expressionism and one of the founders of the Bauhaus. Lux, one of Feininger's sons, paints an uninviting picture of the rugged landscape from his childhood memories:

> *Instead of the busy traffic of sailing ships of the pre-war years he found a deserted, I would even say a wild beach, lots of stormy weather, loneliness. Instead of the smooth sea in Lee von Usedom, the open coast, exposed to the prevailing west wind, where the thundering surf could be heard nearly every day. […] These were initially disappointments. Even the peaceful lounging on the beach, to which my father was accustomed, was seldom available.*[1]

And yet unexpectedly Deep becomes one of the most persistent leitmotifs of Feininger's oeuvre, rivaled in the number of works produced only by his depictions of the church at Gelmeroda.[2] An obvious question arises: what drew Feininger to return to this location year after year? What did Deep and its ruins come to signify for the artist in the midst of this tumultuous period of German history? It is only in looking directly at the works the artist made between 1928 and 1953 depicting the church in Deep that the answer starts to emerge.

JULY 11, 1928, THE FIRST ENCOUNTER, DRAWING.

It is now the Feiningers' fifth summer in Deep. The artist customarily reserved three months of every summer for drawings and watercolors as a break from easel paintings, his focus for the rest of the year.[3] By now he becomes familiar with his surroundings, his sketchbooks filled with drawings of stormy seascapes and sailboats passing by in the distance.

On July 11, 1928, Lyonel and his eldest son Laurence take a walk into the nearby village of Hoff and discover the ruins of a Gothic church perched off a cliff. Later they will learn that this church stood there as early as 1331. Its vault was originally comprised of Gothic arches, which collapsed in consecutive years. A wooden roof and a brick wall were later added to the crumbling structure. By the time Feininger saw it, the windows of the choir were the only Gothic element which remained.[4]

Lyonel Feininger described this initial encounter in a letter to his wife Julia:

> *Far away, at the highest and steepest point stood something puzzling. There on top of the edge of the precipice, and without a doubt doomed to perdition, stood the ruins of a church. I was completely mystified. I made sketches, and visions of pictures arose in my mind. Successively as we approached, apertures revealed buttresses, and at last a row of beautifully shaped arched window-openings in the Gothic style came into view. It all seemed so magnificent, and full of magic.*[5]

During this first encounter, Feininger makes a number of quick drawings in his sketchbook.[6] Most striking are the drawings made from the right side. The artist starts at a medium distance from the ruins (Fig. 1). The cliffs take up roughly half of the sketchpad, with the church perched on top – a cursory suggestion of the verticality and flatness of the wall and pointed arches of the openings that used to be windows. Then in the next drawing (Fig. 2), the scale expands wider, the camera slowly moves into a panoramic shot of the surroundings – now the sandy beach under the base of the cliff opens up, on it Laurence sits by the seaside gazing into the Baltic coast. Then finally, in the most zoomed-out snapshot (Fig. 3), the vastness of sand and sky take up most of the space; the church melts into the cliff, barely distinguishable from the background. Laurence's figure is now but a speck on the beach, just like one of the rocks lying nearby. Feininger erases the border between objects man-made and natural.

FIGURE 1. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1928. Pencil on paper, 14 x 22 cm. MoMA, New York.

FIGURE 2. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1928. Pencil on paper, 14 x 22 cm. MoMA, New York.

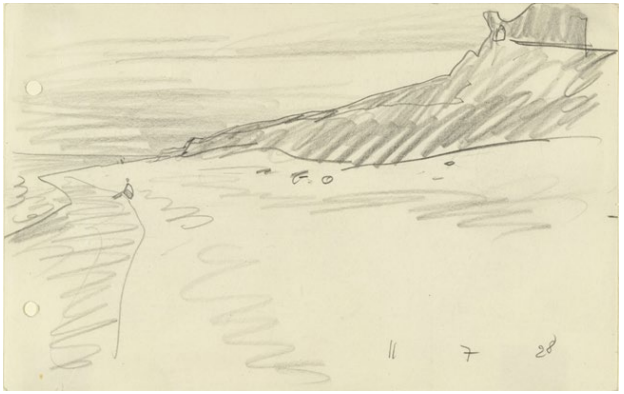

FIGURE 3. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1928. Pencil on paper, 14 x 22 cm. MoMA, New York.

It is impossible to know which drawings Feininger made first – whether he starts close and moves into the distance, or vice versa, or maybe even mixes and matches coming closer and further for each drawing, and yet when looking at the sketches it is irresistible to see them as pages in a flipbook.[7] The viewer is pulled to move from the closeup where the church and the cliff appear as separate entities, towards the point at which both the church and Laurence become indistinguishable from the surroundings, the landscape swallowing up the detail. The images lend themselves so well to a cinematic sequence, a slow pan of the camera from a zoom-in of the ruins into the distance, which introduces another dimension of the works – temporal. As the eye moves along the sketches, time and space mold into one.

The idea of a continuous flow of time and space is at the core of the work of the philosopher Henri Bergson. His conception of reality rejects a static single viewpoint and instead sees objects as constantly changing in the temporal and spatial flux.[8] Bergson is credited with laying the philosophical framework for the Cubist movement and prompting artists to experiment with depicting objects from different vantage points.[9] His foundational text, *Matter and Memory*, was first translated into English in 1911, and some scholars conjecture that Feininger may have read it.[10] Feininger underwent his own Cubist phase, especially between 1918-1921 when he analyzed the Gothic form in Cubist terms in a series of sixteen woodcuts (including the famous Bauhaus logo, Fig. 4).[11] Thus, by the time Feininger discovers the ruins of Hoff in 1928 he had already spent years grappling with the Gothic form as a way to represent the relationship between the past and present in non-linear terms.

Already on this very first day, the new site – ruins of a Gothic church – becomes infused with motifs that will persist in Feininger's depictions of this location for decades to come. Right away he saw everything in these abandoned ruins– repetition, time, history, and his own place in it.

AUGUST 6, 1928, *RUINE AM MEERE I*, INK.

The summer of 1928 marked the first time Feininger discovered the ruins in Hoff. That season would later turn out to be the most fruitful for his depictions of the church – at first in pencil and a month later in ink.[12]

Feininger's next encounter with the church happens on August 6, and this time he changes its materiality entirely.[13] For the first time, he translates the ruins into another medium, something that later becomes key in his reconstructions of the ruins. The drawings from August 6 - 8, 1928 are made in ink and pen on paper (Fig. 5). The perfectly straight lines of the sky, cliffs, and the walls of the church suggest just as much – in

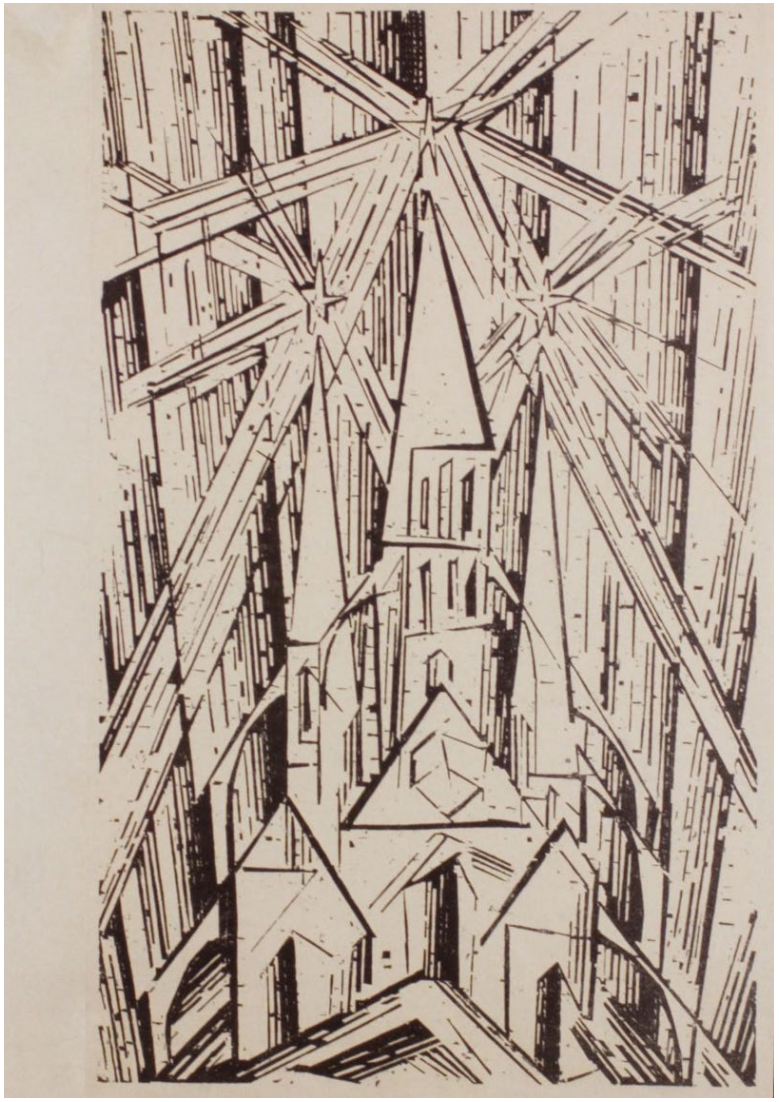

FIGURE 4. Lyonel Feininger. *Bauhaus Proclamation Cover*, 1919. woodcut, 30.2 x 18.6 cm. Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge.

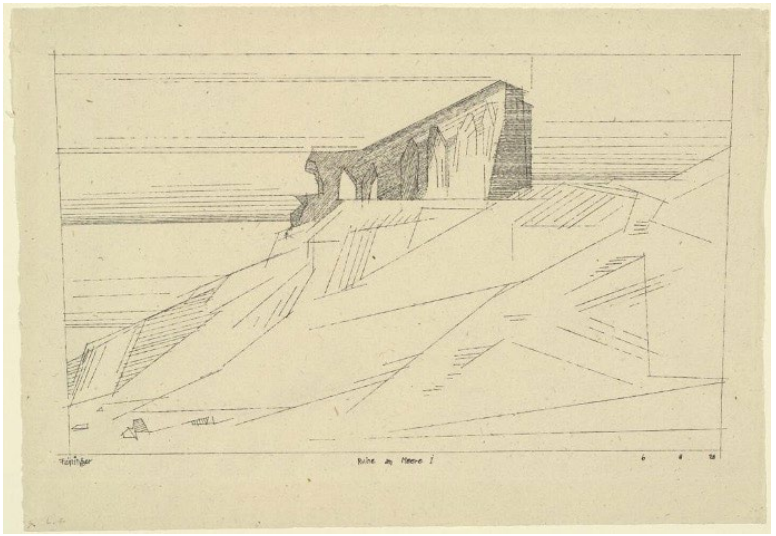

FIGURE 5. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1928. Pencil on paper, 14 x 22 cm. MoMA, New York.

their measured meticulous strokes they recall architectural blueprints, a far cry from plein air rough sketches from July. In its focus on the parallel lines inscribing the church into its larger ambient, this drawing recalls the Bauhaus-era woodcuts depicting architecture (Fig. 4). Here, again, the image fuses Bergsonian past and present into one – architects make renderings for buildings of the future, those that have not happened yet, rather than ruins of the past.

For the first time, Feininger names the scene: *Ruine am Meere I* (*Ruin by the Sea* 1) which suggests remarkable foresight on the part of the artist. He already knows that this ink drawing is part of a larger series, that he will continue returning to the same motif. The next day, August 7, *Riune am Meere II* emerges, and on August 8, he already draws *Ruine am Meere V*, all in ink.[14] The name will also become a testament to Feininger's organization and consistency – he will use the same name for all the numerous depictions of this motif for the rest of his life.[15]

The paper for this drawing is more than twice as large as the pocket sketchbooks used for the first pencil drawings, so these drawings were likely completed not on the walk but from his desk. In fact, Feininger does not come back to plein air drawings of the ruins ever again after that first encounter in July 1928. He completes the rest of his depictions of the church from memory at his desk (Fig. 6). This separation between being physically present on-site and recreating a location from memory in

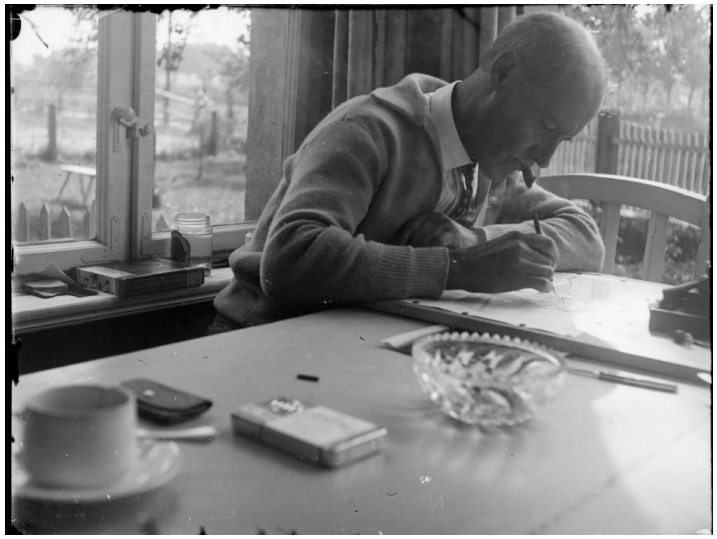

FIGURE 6. Lux Feininger. *Lyonel Feininger drawing on the veranda in Deep*, 1929, photograph. Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge.

his drawings is key to understanding Feininger's work. He explained this distinction to his wife Julia in another letter from Deep:

> *The transcendental formation of space in the picture makes it possible to have an impression of that which was experienced that is equivalent. I currently don't get round to composing, I'm in a period of reception and I'm focused wholly on that. Once I am removed and in a different location, the re-experiencing then comes to me in the only possible form of recreation: that of the picture.*[16]

AUGUST 20, 1929, COMPOSITION FOR PAINTING, CHARCOAL.

Next year the Feiningers return to Deep. And again, the ruins reappear – this time in charcoal.[17]

The change in the mood from 1928 is striking (Fig. 7). The tones here become darker, more ominous, the church blends into the background. The first drawing from this year, labeled *Composition for painting: 'Ruin on the Cliff,'* looks like a foreboding of an impending disaster. Lux's description of the ruins appears particularly fitting for this charcoal sketch: "A more impressive monument of abandonment cannot be imagined."[18] When looking at this drawing with contemporary eyes, it feels inevitable to recall the events unfolding on the global arena at the

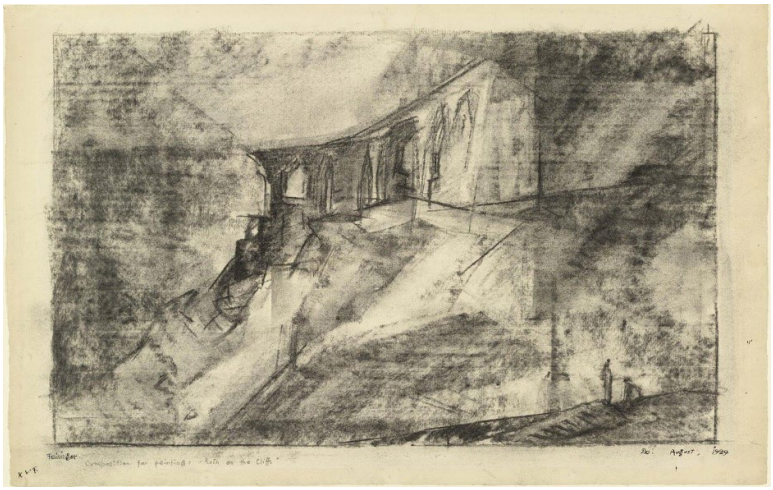

FIGURE 7. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1929. Charcoal on paper, 29.5 x 46.7 cm. MoMA, New York.

time. Historians call 1929 "a turning point" in the history of the Weimar Republic, a period when anti-democratic sentiments started to heat up, prompted by hyperinflation and unemployment of the Great Depression.[19]

Perhaps this sense of economic instability is what drove Feininger to shelve his desire to use the summer as a break from oil painting – the main source of income for his family, which was frequently sporadic and insufficient even in the best of times.[20] Thus at this time of financial calamity Feininger could no longer afford to spend the entire summer making leisurely sketches for his own pleasure. The artist is back at work, in search of an angle for an oil painting, which will be completed the following year. The sketch he chooses is also called *Ruine am Meere II*, just like the pencil drawing from the previous year.[21] Feininger writes the title in English for the first time, as if rejecting his adopted second language in a time when the country's politics started to put the livelihood of his family in jeopardy.

1930, OIL.

Despite the anxieties prompted by global unrest Feininger manages to find a cheerful tone. The colors of the painting (Fig. 8) recall a letter he wrote to his wife during his first year in Deep: "The western sky was green and yellow and marvelously luminous after the violent thunderstorm [...] – and the sea, as we came over the dunes, was golden, only more copper in colour than the sky, which was greenish."[22] This oil painting is an imaginative

FIGURE 8. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1930. Oil on canvas, 68.4 x 110 cm. MoMA, New York.

interpretation of what the church could have looked like in the past – the artist reconstructs the ghost of the rest of the wall on the right, the rays of light emanating from the arches and restoring them to their Gothic splendor. This backward-looking image becomes the most optimistic and elated of the entire series.[23]

This nostalgia for a medieval scene he could not have witnessed first-hand yet again recalls the Bergsonian framework of time. Unlike Descartes, who distinguished the spirit from the body, Bergson argued that the distinction lies only in the temporal domain.[24] While the body remains in the present, the spirit lives in the dominion of the past: "to have or take consciousness of anything, means looking at it from the viewpoint of the past, in light of the past."[25] This retrospective gaze becomes not only central to Feininger's philosophy, it seeps into his working process as well. It is another reminder of Feininger's preference for completing his paintings from his desk, removed from his subject, as he believed that physical proximity bound him too closely to its literal appearance.[26]

Thus, for Feininger reinterpreting a physical monument from his desk becomes his means of connecting the Bergsonian present (physical) and past (memory) – oil painting his preferred mode of transportation. Feininger encapsulates this process of moving from something more tentative in the charcoal sketch of 1929 toward something clear, embodied in the oil painting of 1930 in one of his letters: "in the medium of charcoal I have discovered a great relationship with pure painting. Jotting down one's first nebulous, chaotic conceptions, one gradually can work... through to firm ground and precise form. That which has been halfway indicated is

open to further evolution. Nothing is quite definite until it has reached final clarity in the finished painting in oil."[27]

This painting was originally bought by a collector in Berlin, where it stayed throughout the war. Many of the works that Feininger left behind in Germany were either destroyed as "degenerate art" or lost, making it a miracle that this painting survived. In 1966 MoMA purchased it, partially with funds provided by Julia Feininger. Thus 1966 becomes another crucial point in the kaleidoscopic flux of Bergsonian time encoded in this painting. The moment when Julia saw the painting's return to New York, three decades after their departure from Germany and a decade since her husband's passing, made of it simultaneously a memory of the past and yet something physical, embodied in the present.

1934, *RUINE AM MEERE II*, WATERCOLOR.

Despite continuing to come back to Deep every summer, Feininger does not return to painting the ruins for four years.[28] In the meantime, the Nazi threat grows throughout the continent, and Bauhaus ceased to operate under political pressure. The police start to repeatedly intimidate Feininger at his studio, monitoring for unlawful modernist undertones in his work.[29]

Then finally, in the summer of 1934, Feininger paints a watercolor he named *Ruine am Meere II*, using that title at least a third time around (after works in charcoal and ink). That summer he recreates the ruins several times in watercolor as well as in yet another new medium – colored pencils (Fig. 10).[30]

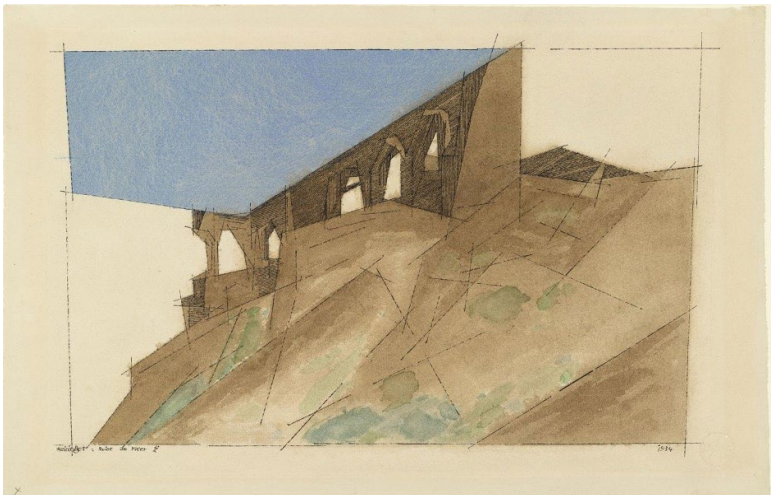

FIGURE 9. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1934. Watercolour and ink on paper, 30.2 x 47 cm. MoMA, New York.

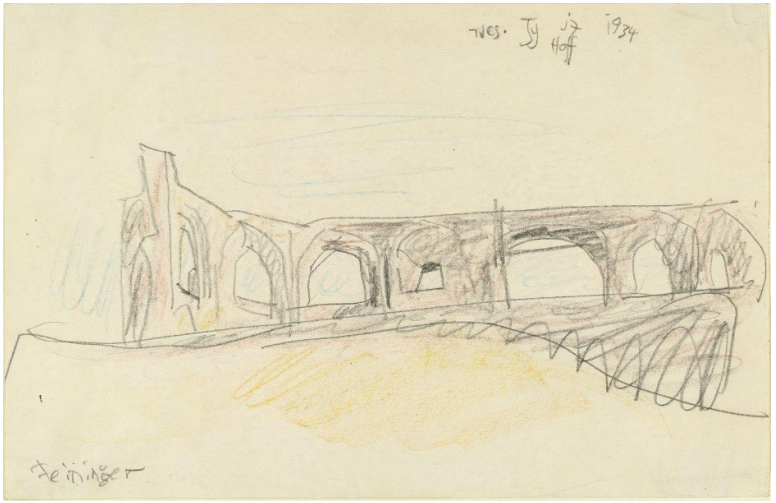

FIGURE 10. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1934. Graphite and coloured pencil on paper, 14.6 x 22.5 cm. MoMA, New York.

FIGURE 11. Lyonel Feininger. *Red Fiddler*, 1921. India ink on watercolour, 30.8 x 24 cm. Private Collection.

FIGURE 12. Lyonel Feininger. *The White Man*, 1907. Oil on canvas, 68.3 x 52.3 cm. Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid.

In this work, Feininger uses the same hues on the walls of the church as on the cliff supporting it. The border between where the foundation of the church ends and where the cliff begins disappears. These motifs eventually become signature of Feininger's oeuvre – melting of architecture into the landscape, or not distinguishing between natural and man-made elements. Thus, this description of the woodcut Feininger created for the Bauhaus (Fig. 4) can be equally applied to most of his architectural depictions – *Red Fiddler* (Fig. 11), or *The White Man* (Fig. 12), or these sketches from Deep:

> *The building here is hardly "rendered" as architecture but is presented as a dynamic figure, harmonious and yet asymmetrical, in vibrating interaction with its environment. The building, the putative "figure" in the composition, is notably unrelieved in relation to the dynamic, pulsing "ground." The building's openings especially—the doors, windows, and flying buttresses – produce patterns of light and dark that knit the building to earth and sky. […] The treatment suggests an extendable logic of fractal embedding. The various arts are integrated and embraced in the composite structure (Gropius's "*Vielgliedrige Gestalt*" ("Multifaceted Gestalt")), which is itself integrated into larger, cosmic rhythmic patterns.*[31]

With this watercolor Feininger returns to his Cubist experimentations of deconstructing physical space – the sky only exists where the line of the nonexistent roof carves it out in the picture plane. The cliff only exists where it merges with the base of the ruins. On both sides of the church, as well as in the apertures of extinct windows, there is nothing at all. Space, and, as a consequence, time, is stopped. During this tumultuous period perhaps Feininger too wished he could stop time – at least through his drawings.

1935, UNSIGNED, UNTITLED, CHARCOAL.

Feininger, known for the meticulous organization of his work, does not date, sign, or label this charcoal sketch.[32] Only a mysterious "X" looms in the bottom left corner.[33] And although Feininger's sketches never look entirely "finished," these charcoal drawings feel particularly incomplete, undefinable. Is it a fire in the building? Is it an incoming storm? Bergsonian space continues to break down, slipping away through the fingers.

The next sketch Feininger names in English (Fig. 14) – *The Ruin on the Cliff*. Looking at this sketch we experience déjà vu – it becomes a variation on the sequence heard before – 1928 pencil, 1929 charcoal – repeated 7 years later – 1934 pencil, 1935 charcoal. Again, these dark

FIGURE 13. Lyonel Feininger. *Ruins by the Sea*, 1935. Charcoal on paper, 31.8 x 48.3 cm. MoMA, New York.

FIGURE 14. Lyonel Feininger. *The Ruin on the Cliff*, 1935. Charcoal on paper, 31.4 x 47 cm. MoMA, New York.

charcoal sketches become reminiscent of the apprehension of the charcoals of 1929. Throughout his letters Lux refers to this year as "üblen Jahr 1935" – the "miserable" 1935.[34] The artist described this year's visit to Deep in even more anguished hues:

> *…Now it's finally over and dead with Deep! […] I had a little chat with the good old forester (Hegemeister) - it was good to hear a real man's view of what the Nazis are doing to Deep - the workers must act according to orders, but there is no sympathy. Laurence and I still go "East" - because we don't dare to go West at all, there for us is the place where our Deep is murdered the most…" […] Laurence and I walk as if in a territory surrounded by invisible walls - we just want to avoid overwriting old memories through seeing all the defacements. The whole fairytale forest and dune area is gone, where you went with Andreas and we both went so often - to the "clearing" and beyond. No, I don't regret that you don't have to see this devastation now…[…] Laurence and I keep the wake on the beloved, now deceased Deep….*[35]

These lines cry out with the sense of funereal finality, something irrevocably lost. But, as Bergson would argue, it is only Deep's physical presence that vanishes in the departure, while its memories will remain in Feininger's psyche unperturbed for the rest of his life.

1953, *CHURCH ON THE CLIFF*, PEN INK WATERCOLOR AND CHARCOAL.

Many of us take the safety of national borders, and our place enclosed within them, for granted. And although, incomprehensibly, having to leave your entire life behind due to fears of war is still the reality for millions of people in 2022, most of us possess the privilege of never experiencing such displacement firsthand. Thus, it is almost impossible to imagine what it would be like to involuntarily leave a country after fifty years of life there. But luckily, although the Feiningers' return was prompted by political pressure, it was still a homecoming, as the artist reunited with his whole family in New York in 1937.[36]

In the first few years after his return, Feininger experiences a creative block.[37] The dense urban space of New York City lies as far away as one can go from the wild unruliness of the Baltic Coast. Eventually, he starts painting again and even adopts the modern architecture of New York as his chosen subject. But he does not forget about the little church in Hoff. In 1953 he comes back to the ruins, for the first time in four different media in one sketch (pen, ink, watercolor, and charcoal), using them as building blocks to reconstruct the church from the ground up. As

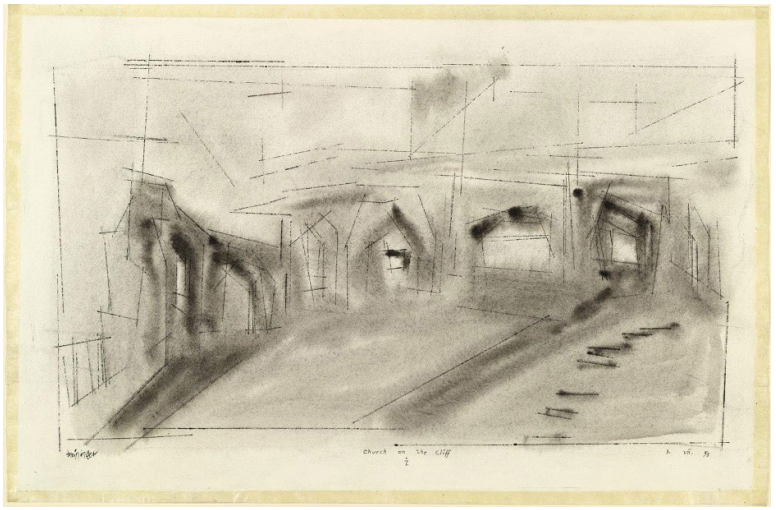

FIGURE 15. Lyonel Feininger. *Church on the Cliff*, 1953. Pen, ink, watercolour and charcoal on paper, 32.1 x 48.6 cm. MoMA, New York.

a result, for the first time he titles it *Church* on the cliff, not simply *Ruins*, as in previous works. Twenty years after his last visit to Deep, Feininger completes the construction of his Gothic cathedral, at least in his memory.

Paradoxically, the building looks the least complete of all his depictions of the site. It is a ghost of a church, a dream-like mirage. The distinction between the background and the church vanishes, only the gaping holes of the windows. The stark contrast between highlights and shadows recalls the charcoal sketches from 1935 – the last summer he saw the ruins in person.

This image appears simultaneously backward-looking, a distant memory, and forward-looking – depicting what will eventually happen to the church as the time will make it vanish into dust. Lux later writes: "Painted again and again, not at the same time, not on the spot, but decades later, among the skyscrapers of New York - these are the inventions that replaced what was hoped for."[38] In this watercolor Feininger feels nostalgic both for the past that he saw, and for the future of what the church will become which he will never see. And yet, as Bergson would argue, the physicality of the drawing is what roots it deeply in the present moment.

Many of the works that Feininger left behind in Germany were either destroyed as "degenerate art" or lost, making it a miracle that this painting survived. In 1966 MoMA purchased most of the works cited here, partially with funds provided by Julia Feininger. Thus 1966 becomes another crucial point in the kaleidoscopic flux of Bergsonian time, so enticing to Feininger. The moment when Julia saw the pieces return to New York, three decades after their departure from Germany and a decade since her husband's passing, made them simultaneously a memory of the past and yet something physical, embodied in the present.

How is one to examine an artist's life? We may pore over his letters and journal entries, trace historical events surrounding his life, or analyze the critical reception of his works. Yet after having read through hundreds of letters and diaries from Feininger's archives, I found the most eloquent "documents" to be in charcoal, pencil, and ink. The sketches from Hoff emerged as the most enduring witnesses, unraveling the richness of Feininger's life and legacy. Progressing through time and changing medium like variations on a theme, the works transformed into uncanny records of disasters of war, expatriation and return, the non-linearity of time itself. These sketches also told a more personal story – that of his family, his lifelong partnership with Julia, the tireless keeper of his works, a search for artistic freedom and a sense of belonging in an uncertain world. This sentiment was best expressed by Feininger's son Lux: "His pictures should really give enough information about what makes a painter's stay in a certain town or landscape essential."[39] Perhaps Lux knew that in understanding the artist's life his works provide the most reliable testimony.

NOTES

1. An Stelle des reichen Segelschiffverkehrs von den Vorkriegsjahren fand er einen verlassenen, ich möchte sagen einen wilden Strand, viel Sturmwetter, Einsamkeit. […] Dies waren zunächst Enttäuschungen. Selbst das friedliche Lagern am Strand, an welches mein Vater von früher her gewohnt war, war nur selten zu haben. Feininger, Lux, "Lyonel Feininger in West-Deep," *Baltische Studien*. (Missing page number, date and volume)
2. "With the exception of a major group of paintings and drawings of the church at Gelmeroda in Thuringia, no other architectural subject had interested Feininger so continuously and resulted in such a large group of works." William S. Lieberman, *The Ruin by the Sea* (New York: Museum of Modern Arts, 1968): 5.

3. Laura Muir and Lyonel Feininger, *Lyonel Feininger* (Ostfildern, Germany: Harvard Art Museums, 2011): 27.
4. Lieberman, *The Ruin by the Sea*, 4.
5. July 11, 1928 letter from Lyonel Feininger to Julia Feininger. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428).
6. At least eleven drawings were dated as 7.11.1928 in MoMA's collection, it is possible more drawings exist in other collections.
7. Feininger made at least 6 drawings from this angle, all of varying distances from the ruins, which furthers the panoramic zoom-out effect. I did not include all of them for the sake of brevity.
8. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*. Library of Philosophy. Ed. by J. H. Muirhead. (London, New York: Allen & Co., Macmillan Co., 1919): 17.
9. Martha Langford, *Narratives Unfolding: National Art Histories in an Unfinished World* (McGill-Queen's Press, 2017): 88.
10. Barbara Haskell, Lyonel Feininger, and John Carlin, *Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2011). (page number???)
11. "In the Spring [of 1911] I had gone to Paris for 2 weeks and found the world agog with Cubism - a thing I had never heard even mentioned before but which I had already entirely intuitively, striven after for years." Lyonel Feininger, letter from 1913. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428); Langford, *Narratives Unfolding*, 87.
12. If we are to judge from public collections, it is unidentifiable how many of these drawings were sold to private collectors.
13. On one of the drawings from the first encounter on July 11 (Fig. 1) he makes a handwritten note stating that he came back to the location on July 28th with his other son Andreas, but there are no separate drawings from that day (again, based on the public collections).
14. The remaining (III, IV) must be missing from MoMA's collection.
15. Except that later he will translate it into English.
16. July 7, 1924 letter from Lyonel Feininger to Julia Feininger. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428).
17. MoMA's collection only has two drawings from this year – from August 20 and August 21.
18. "Ein eindrucksvolleres Monument der Verlassenheit läßt sich nicht vorstellen" Lux Feininger, "Lyonel Feininger in West-Deep," *Baltische Studien*.
19. Lieberman, *The Ruin by the Sea*, 15.
20. Despite being one of the most popular artists in Germany Lyonel Feininger was always on the precipice of financial trouble – Julia in her letters over the years frequently mentions their financial instability, having to rely on sporadic unpredictable commissions. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428).
21. Feininger's numbering on all the works from Hoff never augments beyond 1-5, instead the numbers restart every time he takes up this motif after a break. It is as though in his recreations of the same ruins he restarts a miniseries of 5 drawings every time.
22. 28 June 1924 letter from Lyonel Feininger to Julia Feininger. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428).
23. In my research I came across mentions of other oil paintings of the same motif, particularly one from 1940 seen in a photograph by Lux at the Harvard Art Museums https://harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/27802 and another one which appears to have been sold to a private collector http://www.artnet.com/artists/lyonel-feininger/untitled-ruin-on-the-cliff-ygzvJ7n30Bi0hnWlNtwlLw2. Lux also mentions an "unfinished" oil painting in one of his letters, but I could not find more information on any of these paintings.
24. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 29.
25. Ibid, 127.
26. Lieberman, *The Ruin by the Sea*, 5.
27. June 4, 1932, letter from Lyonel Feininger to Julia Feininger. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428).
28. At least as far as I can tell from the public collections.
29. Haskell and Carlin, *Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World*. (missing page number)
30. Other similar watercolors can be found in private collections. The second work from 1934 is made on July 17 in colored pencils, yet another medium, along with another pencil sketch of the same motif. Pictorially it is a return to the first encounter, a rushed sketch of a man on a walk. Both of these are made on paper of the same size and type as the first drawings from 1928. Perhaps it was an attempt to return to something lost in 1928.
31. Alexander Nagel, *Medieval Modern: Art Out of Time* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2012): 245-246.
32. "Lyonel Feininger maintained a master file of his prints. His etchings were kept in a modest string portfolio on the cover of which were a series of labels. One read. "Collection Julia and Lyonel Feininger": the next was marked, "Only woodblock prints," and was crossed out; the third had "Feininger" in block letters; and the last said, "Etchings." The woodcuts were organized in matboard-type folders, hinged at the side, and arbitrarily numbered, "Parcel 1" through "Parcel 9." In addition, there was a large black case of oversized woodcuts between glassine tissues." – Cole Jr., *Rare Prints: 100 Etchings and Woodcuts from the Artist's Estate*, 27.
33. Probably meaning it is number X in a series, the rest now lost or sold to private collectors.
34. Lux Feininger, "Lyonel Feininger in West-Deep," *Baltische Studien*.
35. "…jetzt ist es mit Deep endgültig aus- und tot! […] [Ich] hatte einen kleinen Schwatz mit dem braven alten Förster (Hegemeister) - es tat gut, die Ansicht eines wirklichen Mannes zu hören über das, was die Nazis Deep antun - die Arbeiter müssen nach Befehl handeln, aber es besteht keine Sympathie. Laurence und ich gehen immer noch „Ost" - denn nach West trauen wir uns gar nicht, dort ist für uns die Stätte, wo am meisten unser Deep gemordet wird…" […]... Laurence und ich halten die Totenwache am geliebten, nun gestorbenen Deep…", 1935 letter from Lyonel Feininger to Julia Feininger. MS Ger 146-MS Ger 146.3, MS Ger 146.1, (1234-2428).
36. He returned to the United States for the first time in 1936. "The invitation to run a summer course at Mills College in Oakland in 1936 brought Feininger and his Jewish wife back to his home country for the first time in 49 years. When this invitation was issued once more the following year he decided to leave Germany for good and move to New York." – Ulrich Luckhardt, *Lyonel Feininger* (Munich, Germany: Hirmer Verlag GmbH, 2019): 37.
37. Luckhardt, *Lyonel Feininger*, 48.
38. "Wieder und wieder gemalt, nicht seinerzeit, nicht an Ort und Stelle, sondern Jahrzehnte später, zwischen den Wolkenkratzern von New York - dies sind die Entdeckungen, die an Stelle des Erhofften traten." Lux Feininger, "Lyonel Feininger in West-Deep," *Baltische Studien*.
39. "Über das, was den Aufenthalt eines Malers in einer bestimmten Ortschaft oder Landschaft wesentlich macht, müßten eigentlich seine Bilder genügend Auskunft geben." Lux Feininger, "Lyonel Feininger in West-Deep," *Baltische Studien*.

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Modern Iconoclash: ISIS and the After-Image

ABSTRACT: Militant groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) destroy ancient works of art and architecture in order to attack the identity of an opposing people through tangible means. They often target historical monuments and museum sites not only to obliterate a region's past, but also redefine its future. This form of hostility towards heritage sites is commonly regarded as traditional iconoclastic behavior, in which such militant groups resent pre-Islamic or non-Islamic art and objects as religious idols. While no longer used for devotion, these objects allow the laypeople to understand their abstract connection to ancestry through the transcendence of past art and architecture. To partially destroy ancient relics is to create an after-image out of their newly rendered state; their identity is then appropriated by ISIS, and historical significance replaced by their role in acts of terror. In this reinvention of the image, ISIS conforms to Bruno Latour's notion of iconoclash as opposed to overt iconoclasm.

INTRODUCTION

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is engaged in a pseudo-iconoclastic endeavour, destroying cultural objects across the Near East. The word "iconoclasm" is used to describe a practice of intentional image destruction. The scope of this term is limited to the erasure of the target image, rendering it far too narrow to define the behaviors of ISIS. A more appropriate characterization is "iconoclash," a phenomenon proposed by French philosopher Bruno Latour in which a new image is born from the effacement of the old. The notion of iconoclash diverges from traditional iconoclasm, in which case the motivations behind the destruction of objects and monuments are clear—to nullify the icon's power by obscuring its recognizability. With iconoclash, "one is troubled by an action for which there is no way to know, without further enquiry, whether it is destructive or constructive."[1] More concisely, an iconoclash occurs when the image is not devastated in its entirety. The partial preservation of the image instead creates it anew. To choose the route of iconoclash over iconoclasm is an attempt to denounce, to disenchant, to generate, or to outline a new truth as opposed to erase entirely.[2] If ISIS wanted to expunge the Near East of pre-Islamic or non-Islamic art, it would have done so without a visual trace—the militant organization would not provide a platform for art it deems sacrilegious. Instead, ISIS participates in an iconoclash to redefine the art ravaged by the organization. No longer are these monuments testaments to the deities from days of yore. They are now tributes to the military triumphs of the Islamic State.

While there are certainly ideological divisions between iconoclash and traditional iconoclasm, both actions participate in varying degrees of cultural heritage destruction. Cultural heritage represents the "collective memories, the memories generated and shared by a society, [that] are anchored in the products of culture."[3] Both iconoclash and iconoclasm actively alter and/or devastate works of art, effectively attacking these "collective memories" by uprooting what binds them to the tangible world. Iconoclasm seeks to erase certain pieces of cultural heritage in their entirety and iconoclash attempts to disturb the appearance of these objects so as to create them anew; in either case, the authentic material culture of civilizations is at risk of disappearance. The destruction of heritage objects is not genocide in the literal sense of the word, but the act effectively kills a society's sense of self and "recast[s] that society in the image and for the purposes of another."[4] The physical traces of these ancient societies remain as the last vestiges of their existence, without objects to ground their histories these civilizations become figments of literary imaginations, dormant memories. The destruction of monuments and works of art alike destroy the sole souvenirs of humanity's past, and "without authentic memories of our own, we literally cannot know who we are, where we came from, to whom we are connected. We are nothing, or more accurately, we are only what other people tell us we are."[5] Yet, this is the goal of both iconoclash and iconoclasm. The two practices aim to either erase or rewrite history in order to support the version of the future favoured by the perpetrators of this destruction.

ISIS seeks not to simply destroy cultural heritage that stands in opposition to its ideologies but, instead, imitates the violent iconoclasm of the region's past as a tactic of humiliation and dominance. More specifically, the Islamic State evokes the decimation of palatial reliefs in which damage is localized to the faces of specific individuals – an allusion to a ruler's literal deposition on the visual plane. In both the ancient and contemporary examples, an after-image is produced from such damage. The destruction serves as an assertion of an iconographic paradigm that aims to establish this modern model of iconoclash not through complete

erasure but through revision. Serving almost as a predictive allusion to the threat of ISIS, fear surrounding this form of monument destruction has existed since the time of the Assyrians themselves. ISIS targets historical sites of both past and living civilizations to alter historical narratives—to render a non-Salafi-jihadi people subordinate. While the Islamic State is not an ethnic group in and of itself, the global Salafi-jihadi ideology that it follows unifies its members under a common cause.[6] Those outside of the movement are labelled as a cultural Other, including the pre-Islamic civilizations in which much of the Near East's cultural heritage is rooted. In accordance with this ideology, ISIS members commit crimes against cultural heritage in order to commandeer the memories associated with such objects by replacing them with its own narrative.[7]

EF(FACE)MENT OF ASSYRIAN ARTIFACTS

In 2015, ISIS released a video that featured its members smashing pre-Islamic antiquities inside the Mosul Museum of northern Iraq.[8] Flooding the internet, this screen capture (Fig. 1) has become prolific in visualizing the atrocities committed by IS militants. Among the monuments destroyed was the Lamassu that once guarded the palace gates to King Sennacherib; its face and ears appear to have been nearly shaved off in their entirety. The Lamassu was originally intended to serve an apotropaic function, assigned to guard the palace entrance and ward off malevolence with only its image.[9] Interestingly, the talisman whose image was made to protect the palace is in the midst of its own erasure. The militants appear to attack the *image* of the object before its total destruction as if it is the face that is the biggest threat to the Islamic State. The screen capture seems to communicate that it is not the monument itself that carries the Lamassu's power—it is not its size or its craftsmanship—but it is the visage, the face, that gives the artefact its mystic function. By leaving the rest of the body intact, targeting just the face, ISIS construes a story far different than what would have been told by a picture of rubble. Without identifiable features, the remaining debris can only be regarded as an alleged piece of ancient history. In targeting this most human element of the Lamassu the militant group expresses an understanding of the power that the object once held. This image of the Lamassu's destruction is a proclamation that ISIS has brought this mystically-charged object to its knees through its own demolition – depicting the active removal of an old regime by the new. A transformation occurs within this liminal space between total recognizability and total erasure. Latour's iconoclash is the result of this state of in-betweeness. The juxtaposition between the defaced and the untouched changes the image entirely. It is neither a picture of the great Lamassu nor merely the detritus of its obliteration. The image has been, instead, co-opted by the

FIGURE 1. 'An ISIS video showed the destruction of ancient Assyrian artifacts in Mosul, Iraq.' Screen capture from video released by ISIS. Retrieved from *The New York Times*, original image from Agence France-Presse — Getty Images.

Islamic State—in which its "significant place-based memories are erased and replaced with a specific Salafist narrative through the re-enactment of Koranic traditions of conquest and dominance."[10] More specifically, these traditions reflect notions of "Al-Wala" and "Wal-Bara," to both love and hate for the sake of Allah – translating to a disavowel of idolatry in this case through purification.[11] To go about "purifying" pagan idols, IS militants imagine themselves as the inheritors of an ancient legacy of "conquest performance," participating in a visual comparison to past acts of monument destruction.[12]

This relief depicting King Sennacherib enthroned, observing the capture of Lachish (Fig. 2), is an example of the same form of intentional damage practiced by ISIS. Such as in the case of the Lamassu above, its vandalism localized to the face of the figure. This act is a form of *damnatio memoriae*, used to "demonstrate the defeat and humiliation of a known and still identifiable character, real or symbolical."[13] Thus, much like the Lamassu, the relief was not destroyed in its entirety so that it could serve an alternative function: to not only depict the *triumph* of Sennacherib, but his metaphorical *downfall* as well. More concisely, the "selective mutilation" of Sennacherib's head amidst an otherwise untouched relief catalyzes the tension between what art once meant and now conveys.[14] The relief was previously erected as a King's assertion of power over a conquered territory and now stands as a counter-assertion of power over that same King. It is

FIGURE 2. Unknown Artist, *Wall Panel Relief depicting Sennacherib as he watches the capture of Lachish*. ca. 700-692 BCE, gypsum relief. The British Museum, London. Accession number: 124911.

in the destruction of the relief that it became an icon, its status was born from its death because its original intention was not to serve as a venerated object—it only became so when the destroyer decided that was what it was. In this stage of destruction, the relief takes on an element of animism, regenerating as an object existent through a metaphorical death, imbued with sanctity and mysticism because of its perceived threat.[15] The screen capture of the Lamassu revives this interpretation of the icon, that the icon only becomes an icon when treated like one—through its destruction by iconoclasts. Except, when considering the enduring effect of this partial iconoclasm, one is not led to an understanding that the destruction's perpetrator was operating on ideological principle because of the remaining potential to recognize the image. Instead, the after-image, the *damnatio memoriae*, is the goal. Iconoclash lies in the production of this after-image, operating on multiple planes. The first of these planes works artistically, as the evocation of the dominance of the new order through the decimation of the old. The second continues the aforementioned Koranic traditions of Al-Wala and Wal-Bara, recalling historic instances of iconoclastic triumph as the militants portray themselves as the heirs of this legacy.

FIGURE 3. Unknown Artist, *Bronze Head of Sargon from Nineveh*. ca. 2300-2200 BCE, bronze cast, 30.7 cm (height). Iraq Museum, Baghdad. Photo credit: SCALA/ART Resource.

To draw a further parallel between the screen capture (Fig. 1) and selective mutilation throughout antiquity, the isolated dismemberment of the Lamassu's ear mirrors the damage exhibited on the mask of Sargon (Fig. 3). The copper head was found with damage localized to four areas: the obvious hole in the place of the left eye, the chiseled upper bridge of the nose, the split beard, and the two missing ears.[16] The Lamassu, in comparison, appears to be missing the entirety of its face along with an ear and the beginning of its beard. In this instance as well, Sargon's head is regarded as a *damnatio memoriae* to explain its partial destruction—to act in a propagandistic manner in which the "particular details of the mutilation may enhance the message to the viewers by alluding to the sinister sphere of punishment and retribution."[17] This idea of allusion is also present in the image provided by ISIS; the mutilation alludes to this evidence of historical iconoclash and uses the Assyrian's own visual language against them in terms of iconoclash. To the ancient inhabitants of northern Iraq, "the bond between animate essence and inanimate image" was created through "rituals that transformed the image from the product of human hands into an animate entity, an irreversible process of

identity fixing that could be terminated (by killing or disabling) but not transferred."[18] In a way, the personhood of the individual depicted became metaphysically intertwined within his image—thus, the destruction of this image would be the equivalent of murder, even beyond the grave. In this culture, there were also rituals that "served to purify the divinely inspired image, erasing the imprint of human agency in its creation and activating its efficacy. This efficacy was understood to endow the image with the senses of smell, taste, and sight."[19] Through these rituals, the artefact gains a secondary agency beyond the biological body that continues on even after death.[20] In this way, the image-destroying behaviors of the ancient Assyrians and ISIS function identically, the Assyrians on a more personal level and the Islamic State on an ideological level. ISIS strives to kill the culture surviving through its objects in using that same culture's behaviors to ensure its destruction in the eyes of its inheritors and descendants.

DOCUMENTING & BROADCASTING ICONOCLASH ACROSS MEDIA

From looting to image destruction, antique Assyria was fraught with cultural heritage loss. It was not only common to commit crimes of cultural heritage destruction, but to depict them in relief—mirroring that of ISIS publishing photos of the organization's own crimes against art history. The damaged relief of the seated Sennacherib comes from a series of panels now housed by the British Museum. Among them, there are multiple relief fragments detailing warriors carrying loot back to Nineveh after the siege of Lachish.[21] The presence of this action on the reliefs speaks to how important the capture of booty was to the Assyrians. Like image destruction, the theft of art and other precious objects from another culture is "deeply intertwined with struggles for sovereignty, whether between nations or within them."[22] The looting and destroying of artefacts are two sides of the same coin, they occur side by side in most instances. In fact, an inscription describing Sennacherib's campaign against Babylon explains that:

> *The wealth of that city — silver, gold, precious stones, goods and valuables — I distributed them among my people and they made it their own. The hands of my people took hold of the gods who dwelled there and smashed them. They took their goods and valuables. . . I destroyed the city and its houses, from foundation to parapet, I devastated and burned them. I tore out the bricks and earth of the inner and outer walls (of the city), of the temples and of the ziggurat, as much as there was, and I dumped these into the Arahtu canal.*[23]

This account of Sennacherib's campaign brutally describes how he razed the city. The inscription boasts of how precious objects were both stolen and destroyed alongside the absolute decimation of religious structures such as the ziggurat. The text was phrased in this way so as to provide a justification for the plundering of Babylon—revenge.[24]

The importance of revenge is not limited to the motivations behind the sacking of the city. Instead, revenge permeates the very bricks comprising the city itself. Inscriptions of this nature are embedded in the bricks of buildings commissioned to commemorate the military campaigns of the king.[25] The writings were buried in the foundations "to guarantee that future generations would know who had constructed the building."[26] Kings would commission these accounts of their triumphs in an attempt to preserve them, to tangibly place themselves in history. The element of revenge comes into play in that "almost every Mesopotamian inscription ends with a curse formula to warn the possible despoiler."[27] Obviously, monument and relic destruction alike were frequent enough to the extent that kings took preventative measures to account for the fact that their personal histories were likely to be destroyed—or, in the case of icons, rewritten. To combat this, the kings would couple their campaign records with warnings of revenge to serve a near apotropaic function that worked to ward off the despoiler, reminiscent of Sennacherib's Lamassu talisman. Yet, in each instance, from Sennacherib to the likes of the Islamic State, the inscriptions are ignored.

The age of burying clay tablets as a way of record keeping is long gone, ISIS now chooses Twitter as its vessel for recording the organization's triumphs and campaigns. The militant organization is fully aware of the power it wields in the form of digital media, utilizing the efficacy of the image to concisely express its vision within a character limit, instead of a religious treatise.[28] The destruction of historical sites are not a mere consequence of war, but rather "choreographed media events which form part of IS's self-representation."[29] Social media allows ISIS to document the organization's efforts in a manner that it sees as authentic to its mission—as opposed to through the lens of news outlets or other parties that may interpret the organization's actions differently. Twitter and other media platforms allow the jihadists to realize their vision of themselves as the inheritors of an ancient performance of conquest and the rejection of idols.[30] As heirs to this performance, the screen capture of the destruction of the Lamassu can, therefore, be interpreted as performance art. Staged and perfectly intentional, the damage to its face was done to evoke imagery of the past and elicit a response from its viewer only possible through recognition of what the object once was, and now is. While portrayed as modern iconoclasts, the militant organization is far from anachronistic, instead, it is "extremely modern in its adoption of social media for

propaganda, creating a sense of hyper-reality."[31] The ancient Assyrians understood the capabilities of the image and its narrative capabilities, it is almost as if they predicted the likes of ISIS through their widespread inscriptions warning of retribution and revenge.

INTANGIBLE HISTORY: PAST AND PRESENT RECEPTIONS BY ISIS

In participating in iconoclash, the Islamic State is unbounded by the ideological underpinnings of traditional iconoclasm, calling for the destruction of an idol. Iconoclash allows the organization to instead wield that very same 'idol' for its own gain, to appropriate its narrative as opposed to reject it entirely. In truth, the Islamic State "may exploit iconoclasm as powerful rhetoric without sincerely believing the icons pose a threat to its religious practice."[32] ISIS uses the idea, and the connotation surrounding iconoclasm, to convey its message without the length of a manifesto, streamlining its communicative abilities. If ISIS truly believed that the icons were a threat to the organization's ideologies, funding would not be derived from the sale of looted antiquities. Most of the State's revenue comes from taxation, oil exports, and the natural resources available in controlled regions—antiquities being seen as just another resource to abuse.[33] These artefacts are "valued as sources of potential capital, wherever there exists a commercial supply and demand for the stolen goods, or, alternatively their deconstruction can serve to extract its individual resources."[34] Because of the reliance on these antiquities to fund the efforts of ISIS, it cannot be true that the militant group entirely condemns the objects, that it is the group's divinely ordained, god-given purpose to destroy them. As established in the previous section, since ISIS acts as the inheritor of a *performance* of conquest, its efforts to destroy the icon are for the sake of visualizing the idea of iconoclasm. More concisely, the looting and selling of antiquities by the Islamic State further bolster the notion that the militants are participating in iconoclash, they are not simply iconoclasts.

Before ISIS even began its campaign against ancient art, the group participated in looting. In fact, the organization only began to release the now famous videos of militants smashing artefacts in February of 2015—when a video surfaced of members taking both sledgehammers and power tools to artefacts in the Mosul Museum.[35] This change in methodology indicates that the eradication of icons was never a matter of ideology—only opportunity. Further, the destruction of the Lamassu was never intended to be a full demolition. The Nergal Gate Lamassu was exclusively defaced by ISIS, the organization did not make use of explosives to level the monument.[36] This choice to use comparatively little violence could not have been merely coincidental, or an incident of a lack thereof. ISIS is fully capable of levelling nearly full cities; the site of Palmyra was decimated for the sake of "ideological symbolism" in which the event was more about the "conquest narrative," as indicated by the excessive use of explosives and subsequent dramatized photo opportunity.[37] ISIS's choice to only partially destroy the Lamassu monument was highly intentional, just as the near-full levelling of Palmyra was too. The difference in tiers of damage can be attributed to the difference in the subject of the resultant image. For the Lamassu, a pile of rubble would not be a convincing sight. For the Palmyra, a half-ruined ancient city would appear just as any other weathered by time instead of explosives. Thus, ISIS follows the playbook outlined by the very Assyrians whose objects the organization was out to destroy—ISIS aimed not only to demolish but to create, a forced rebirth of the image conceived by the death of the original.

While ISIS's destruction of historical sites no longer in use for religious or cultural practices falls under the umbrella of iconoclash, ISIS functions as a nearly medieval iconoclastic entity in the context of shrines and monuments still in use by ethnoreligious minorities. In the targeting of these ethno-religions, ISIS aims to extinguish the cultural diversity and obliterate the history of Iraq and Syria along with the surviving Assyrian, Christian, Yazidi, and Shia cultures native to the region.[38] The Islamic State razed both temples and shrines in villages such as Sinjar, which is just west of the Nineveh province where the Lamassu was defaced.[39] These cultural monuments exist as a tangible form of heritage and "the role that tangible heritage sites play in sustaining and re-making the practices and rituals that constitute the intangible heritage of a people."[40] ISIS obliterates existing Yazidi monuments because violence against archaeology "plays a key symbolic role within IS's visual and moral economy and its visual communication, and has, as such, very material effects on people themselves."[41] These "very material effects" exist to demoralize an existing population, a rival culture and ethnicity in the eyes of these jihadists. ISIS elects to destroy the Yazidi monuments in their near entirety—instead of achieving a form of partial disfiguration—in order to "destroy what's left of [the Yazidis] identity and Yezidism."[42]

Since modern Assyrians are predominantly Christian, the partial destruction of sites representing their ancient polytheistic past would not carry the same emotional weight as the complete decimation of active shrines. This difference in emotional attachment explains the inconsistency in the treatment of Iraq's cultural heritage across the country and cultures, each attack is site-specific and designed according to what visual production would be most striking. To the untrained eye, a pile of rubble would be indistinguishable from any other. In order to ensure both understanding and horror in a cosmopolitan audience, ISIS produced

images that simultaneously represent what the object once was and now is. For the Yazidis, a pile of rubble in the right location would be obvious and all the more shocking for it. Many of the targeted Yazidi monuments are sites of festival and pilgrimage; "they foster ties between the religious heartland of the Yezidi faith and the periphery, many travelling from as far away as Europe to participate."[43] Sites easily recognizable and well-travelled reduced to wreckage and rubble would be even more devastating than if only remnants remained—at least in the latter case hope for reconstruction would remain. The dichotomy between ISIS's treatment of extant and nearly extinct cultures speaks to the Islamic State's media savvy and understanding of visual culture—which is paramount in establishing intangible, ideological dominance through a more literal, tangible dominance.

CONCLUSION

ISIS's use of iconoclash not only attempts to destroy the physical remnants of the past Assyrian culture, but further warps this destruction through the creation of the after-image. To accomplish this, the Islamic State mimics the culture of the Assyrians themselves through the use of their own war tactics in terms of looting and artefact elimination. While seemingly contradictory, ISIS hopes to destroy the remnants of a culture by nearly bringing it back to life through the use of its own tradition. In doing so, ISIS confirms the culture's destruction by using the parameters set by the said culture, so that it would be dead even in the eyes of its inheritors. In an opposite way, ISIS's treatment of surviving cultures can be described as a more or less scorched earth-like approach—to erase the heritage in its entirety so as to discourage any possibility of rebuilding, taking another step toward total annihilation. This nuanced understanding of the meaning of image and the effects of its destruction provide the Islamic State with a range of tactics to emotionally harm the widest audience possible—engaging the lay viewer from across the world and simultaneously those native to the regions affected. The ability to tailor cultural heritage destruction according to site and monument enhances the argument that ISIS is instead participating in iconoclash as opposed to pure iconoclasm, the group is able to cherry-pick ideological dogma in order to enhance the effectiveness of the after-image.

NOTES

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