CHRYSALIS

[kris-*uh*-lis]

from Latin chrȳsallis, from Greek khrusallis

1. the obtect pupa of a moth or butterfly

2. anything in the process of developing

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Editor: Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson, Professor of Art History, McGill University
Managing Editor: Uma Vespaziani, BA Cultural Studies and Art History, McGill University

CHRYSALIS was created by Dr. Charmaine A. Nelson as a vehicle to showcase the most innovative, rigorous, and sophisticated research produced by students within the context of her Art History courses at McGill University (Montreal). Over the years, Nelson observed that undergraduate students in her courses were more than capable of producing exceptional research on par with that of graduate students, and at times even professional academics. Disappointed that the majority of these students were faced with a negligible audience (if any) for their incredible work, with the help of her MA Art History student Anna T. January, Nelson came up with the idea to provide another platform for their research dissemination. CHRYSALIS is that platform!

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JAMES PECK THOMAS'S BUST AND THE HYPER-VISIBILITY OF A BLACK ARISTOCRAT
Margo Cayla

James Peck Thomas was part of the elite "Colored Aristocracy"[1] in nineteenth-century America. Born a slave in Tennessee, Thomas was sold for four hundred dollars to his mother's white friend in order to avoid being sent away to another state.[2] From a young age, he began working for small businesses in order to gain financial freedom as well as acquiring knowledge to, "shape his own social and economic behaviours."[3] This article seeks to demonstrate James Peck Thomas's efforts to erase his racial hypervisbility by engaging in white bourgeois customs as well as the social limitations he faced as a freed black man in nineteenth-century America. The research will then turn to the bust sculpture of Thomas by the Native and African American artist Edmonia Lewis. As a hyper-visible sculptress in Rome, Lewis would have faced similar racially motivated discrimination throughout her career. Despite the scarcity of black patrons commissioning art from Native or African American artists, the bust adheres to neoclassical norms imposed on a person of colour subject.
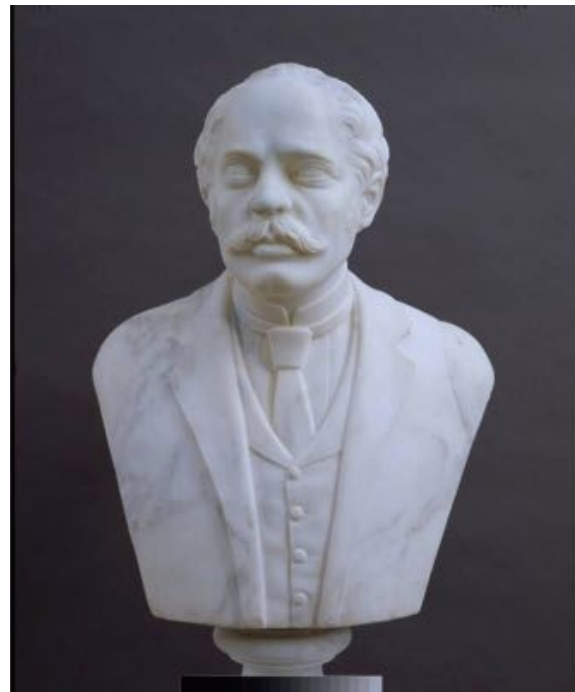

Figure 1: Edmonia Lewis, James Peck Thomas (1874), marble, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio.

The Nashville City Cemetery Association papers show that James P. Thomas was born to "quasi-slave" Sally Thomas and white attorney John C. Catron. Granted some level of freedom by her owner, Sally Thomas ran her own laundry service gaining financial as well as social mobility.[4] She was permitted to "rent her own house, move about freely, buy, sell and negotiate her own business contracts."[5] Sally's business was located near the city's courthouse, which in turn brought her in contact with white males on a daily basis.[6] Through her business connections and profits, Sally purchased her son James's freedom.[7] Despite strenuous efforts, the law in Tennessee unfortunately required enslaved people who had been manumitted to leave the state. In order to remain near his mother, James then became the official property of Ephraim Hubbard Foster, attorney and family friend.[8]

In her MA thesis titled "Visual Narratives and the Portrait Busts of Edmonia Lewis," Susan Crowe discusses the social liberties that Thomas was granted through his mother's efforts while also emphasizing the rarity of such freedoms in nineteenth-century Tennessee. Following the death of his mother, Thomas continued the entrepreneurial tradition of the family and worked as an assistant in a barbershop. As Crowe notes, a large portion of barbershops were owned by blacks and "catered to a white professional clientele."[9] Thomas was introduced to music and theatre performances, participated in political rallies, and engaged in social activities. These events were attended not only by white middle and upper class communities, but also black people who had gained their freedom.[10] Still enslaved, Thomas remained modest about his earnings and did not challenge the social restrictions imposed by the white bourgeois class on

Figure 2: Edmonia Lewis, Colonel Robert Gould Shaw (1864), marble. (Photo: Shailesh Saigal http://negroartist.com/)

African Americans.[11] With time, due to the respect gained from his white social contacts, Thomas was freed in 1851 by his owner and granted permission to remain in Tennessee.[12]

Permitted to leave the state freely, Thomas moved to Missouri in 1857 to expand his business opportunities. Having acquired substantial land in Tennessee, Thomas arrived in St. Louis with an estimated worth of $15, 000 dollars.[13] Once again, through his social and entrepreneurial skills, Thomas rapidly became part of the "Black Aristocracy," defined as the coloured upper class composed of freed slaves. He later met Antoinette Rutgers, one of the richest women of the coloured aristocracy and married her in 1868.[14] In From Tennessee Slave to St. Louis Entrepreneur: The Autobiography of James Peck Thomas (1984), editor Lored Schewinger notes that in 1870, "Thomas was the richest Negro in the entire state… and controlled more than 5 percent of the total property owned by Missouri blacks."[15]

The coloured aristocracy participated in activities and customs associated with the white bourgeois class. In so doing, these free(d) African Americans differentiated themselves socially from the enslaved community. In 1879, the couple expanded their wealth through the purchase of a three story Victorian home.[16] Researching Rutger's records, Crowe found the following account of commodities in their household: "On the first floor the rooms were decorated with marble top tables, a piano, a music box, upholstery chairs and sofa, two mirrors, mahogany chairs, lace curtains, an assortment of pictures as well as three family portraits."[17]

According to Crowe, the transformation of Thomas into a full aristocrat was fulfilled during his travels in Europe as a cultural tourist.[18] In the late nineteenth century, Thomas would typically have faced strict racial segregation during steamship travels due to his racial identity.[19] Access to the main deck of the ship would have been refused despite his social standing. The accounts of his Grand Tour seem to have omitted such discomfort and celebrated the cross-racial mixing in nineteenth-century Europe: "Thomas remarked on the various skin hues of the Europeans he encountered and the ease at which people of all races seemed to interact with one another."[20] Editor Julie Winch in her annotations of The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis (1858) also remarked that Thomas was "pleasantly surprised to discover few Europeans shared the racial attitudes of white Americans."[21]

He began his tour in England continuing to France, Switzerland, and finally Italy.[22] Rome was advertised as the capital of international art in numerous "guidebooks, tourist literature, travel diaries, novels, personal letters, and articles in popular journal."[23] At the height of neoclassicism, Rome catered to the nostalgic sentimentality of cultural tourists.[24] It was also to this Italian city that aspiring artists chose to expatriate. The American sculptors Hiram Powers, William Story, Louisa Landers, Harriet Hosmer, and Edmonia Lewis all spent years in Rome

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nurturing their art. Visiting the studios of such artists and purchasing works would have then been a cherished activity for travelling lovers of art.

Throughout his career, Thomas succeeded by adapting white bourgeois traditions. He would have "fully understood the unwritten custom of using art as a means to advertise his cultural achievements and establish his social legacy."[25] Both Crowe in her text and Albert Henderson in The Indomitable Spirit of Edmonia Lewis (2013) speculate that it was during this leg of the trip that Thomas heard of the Native and African American artist, Edmonia Lewis. To commemorate his social standing as a black aristocrat, Thomas made continued efforts to meet with Lewis. In 1873, he commissioned Lewis for a portrait bust [fig. 1], in turn becoming the sculptor's first African American patron.

Prior to sculpting Thomas, Lewis had already gained recognition in 1864 for her bust of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw [fig. 2]. Lewis chose to portray him "in the neoclassical style, as bare-chested as an athlete of ancient Greece."[26] Shaw, a white man, became an iconic figure of the abolitionist movement for leading the first black regiment during the Civil War. Sadly, Shaw was killed during the Second Battle of Fort Wagner. In her portrayal of the war hero, Lewis excluded any military and social signifiers. It was implied by Lewis that Shaw's accomplishments were nationally recognized and hence purging the bust of decorative elements elevated the colonel to the level of ancient Greek figures.

The bust of the late Robert Gould Shaw was highly praised by critics. In the National Anti-Slavery Standard, Lewis's bust was presented as follows:

Figure 3: Edmonia Lewis, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1872), marble, 68.5 cm, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England.

"A young woman of mixed Negro and Indian blood, excited much interest during the Union war, by exhibiting, at the soldiers' relief fair in Boston, a bust of Col. Shaw – the 'fair-haired hero,' and martyr to the cause of her race; it seemed like an inspiration of grateful homage, that so authentic likeness and pleasing a work should have emanated from the unpracticed hands of a dusky maiden."[27]

Despite being first informed of the sculpture only after its completion, the Shaw family expressed pleasure (at least publically) at its execution.[28] Mr. Shaw proved his gratitude by granting permission to make and sell multiples of the work, while Colonel Shaw's sister commissioned a marble version of the bust.[29]

Lewis took on a similar approach in her representation of American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [fig. 3]. Similar to the Shaw bust, the iconic literary figure of the nineteenth century exudes a contemplative allure, devoid of any specific narrative. The marble
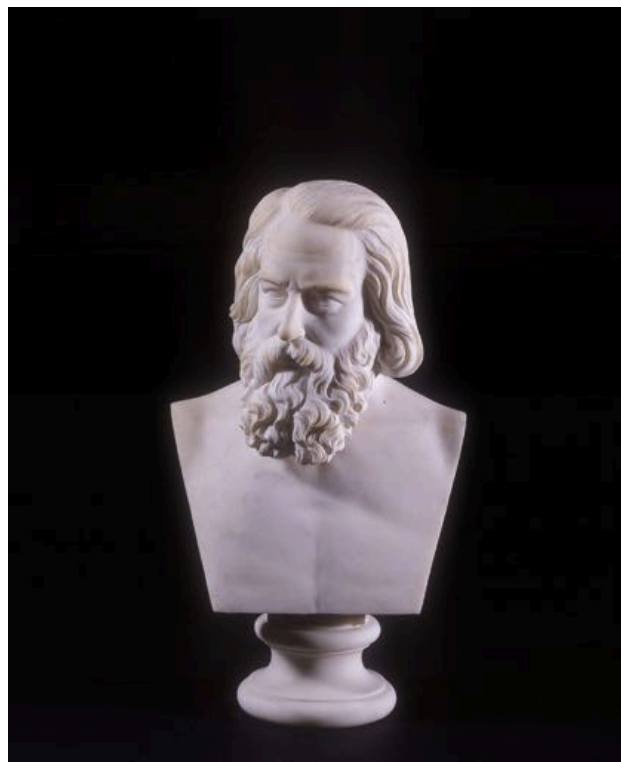
bust is reminiscent of Homer, the Greek epic poet [fig. 4]. Lewis removed any contemporary elements in her portrayal of Longfellow, in turn comparing the American poet to one of the most praised figures of antiquity.

The bust of James Peck Thomas was completed in 1874, during a period when the country was attempting to rebuild itself economically and socially following the American Civil War. [30] An outcome of the Civil War was the granting of African Americans full legal status as citizens. Sadly, despite the gains of the Civil War, racist actions such as lynching persisted. The upper class tradition of commissioning busts offered Thomas a form of aristocratic stature akin to white bourgeois traditions, thus giving the impression of lessening social "gaps" between black and white American citizens. Hearing of the works Lewis completed for wealthy individuals such as Colonel Shaw, Longfellow, and Maria Weston Chapman [fig. 5] would have encouraged Thomas to seek out her talents.
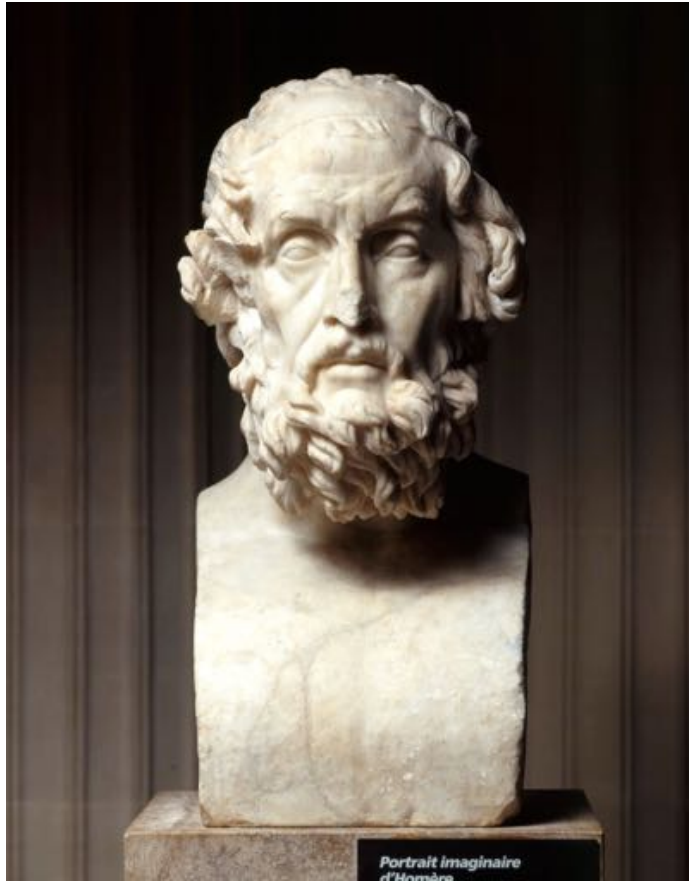

Figure 4: <u>Imaginary Portrait of Homer</u> (2 C.E.), marble, 53 cm, Louvre Museum, Paris, France. (Photo: Hervé Lewandowski. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY)

The commissioning of a marble bust was a significant expenditure. Thomas would be required to pay for the cost of Italian marble, the artist's time, as well as the shipping of the bust from Rome.[31] Ownership of such a prestigious piece of art was a clear indicator of wealth and status.

The white marble bust presents Thomas wearing a three-piece suit, a collarless shirt, and a tie. His wavy hair is slicked back and his abundant moustache is well groomed. His attire confirms his social standing as a wealthy entrepreneur. The facial expression of the black aristocrat is severe as he looks ahead. His full lips would seem to be the only obvious African American trait, yet it remains difficult to decipher his racial identity. The similarities to Thomas's white father were also noted: "Historians Franklin and Schweninger used the bust to point out his resemblance to Justice John Catron, who votes with the majority in the infamous Dred Scott decision – and who was his father."[32] The lack of photographic evidence makes it unclear if Thomas had requested to be racially neutral or if his mixed race physical traits rendered him closer to his father in appearance.

Although Lewis proudly emphasized her mixed race, non-European heritage throughout her career, she may have also been sympathetic to Thomas's attempt to play down his hyper-visibility as an African American in rigid white upper class society. Lewis was the first person of colour sculptor to gain international recognition, yet throughout her career she was often characterized for her racial identity instead of solely for her skills.[33] In newspaper articles and interviews, Lewis was repeatedly questioned on her racial parentage. Abolitionist newspapers such as the <u>National Anti-Slavery Standard</u> celebrated Lewis's talent as a coloured artist:

> "Miss Edmonia Lewis excites much interest abroad, not only from her cleverness in sculpture but from her parentage. She is scarcely twenty-two, was born in Greenbush, opposite Albany, of Indian and Negro parentage, and bears in her face the types of her origin."[34]

Figure 5: Edmonia Lewis, <u>Maria Chapman</u> (1865), plaster. (Photo: Harry B. Henderson, Jr.)

Clearly then, the readers were informed that their interest in the neoclassical artist was to be, at least in part, due to her racial lineage.

Abolitionist activists such as Lydia Maria Child were also constantly referring to Lewis's heritage. In a letter to the editor of <u>The Liberator</u>, Child only partly praised the Native and African American sculptor and placed most of the emphasis on her limitations: "I, with my sixty years of observation, knew better than she could what a long and difficult hill she had to climb before she could reach the summit of her Art."[35] Throughout the letter, Child uses words such as "little" and "young" in order to infantilize Lewis and maintain a racial hierarchy. Despite fighting for the liberation of enslaved people, white abolitionists were not necessarily advocates of equal rights.

Lewis was conscious of the false praise of abolitionists. During Child's visit to her studio, Lewis explicitly requested Child's honest opinion: "I don't want you to go to praise me," she said, "for I know praise is not good for me. Some praise me because I am a coloured girl, and I don't want that kind of praise. I had rather you would point out my defects for that will teach me something."[36] Thus, at once Lewis expressed pride in her racial heritage and a keen understanding of how white patrons and supporters might use it to belittle or underestimate her work. As Kristen Buick states in her article "The Ideal Works of Edmonia Lewis: Invoking and Inverting Autobiography," Lewis would neutralize the racial features of her female subjects in order to avoid being read into her sculptures.[37]

Despite Lewis and Thomas's attempts to mix with the white bourgeois class, a full and equal social standing was unattainable. In Thomas's bust, while the need for such proper attire

points to the racial hierarchy imposed in the nineteenth century, it also acted to demonstrated his position as a self-made man. In comparison to Colonel Shaw and Longfellow, Thomas is fully clothed in a three-piece suit, pointing to his accomplishments as a wealthy entrepreneur. Arguably then, unlike Lewis's white subjects, Thomas needs a *raison d'être* to be sculpted. But importantly, Thomas's representation, not as a stereotypical type, but as a composed, self-possessed, and well-dressed individual – one capable of sitting and therefore paying for his own portrait bust - represented a dramatic shift away from the dominant ways in which black men were represented at this moment.[38]

The social rise of James P. Thomas in white bourgeois society and the commissioning of his bust offer a different perspective on the life of an elite class of African Americans. Regardless of the legal restrictions imposed on freed blacks, some individuals such as Thomas and his wife Antoinette Rutger acquired certain social liberties perhaps by rendering their racial characteristics less visible and by engaging in bourgeois traditions. The commissioning of Lewis for Thomas's bust demonstrates this while also pointing to the existence of black patronage in the nineteenth century.[39] Neoclassical material norms restricted Lewis's aesthetic choices when depicting a black (or any) human subject.[40] Despite the potential of fostering a strong African American patron-artist relationship, Lewis and Thomas's professional relationship ended in court after Lewis successfully sued James for not fulfilling the terms on their contract.[41]

ENDNOTES

[1] The term was coined in Cyprian Clamorgan, The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis, ed. Judith Winch (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999)

[2] Jim Hoobler, "Sally Thomas (1787- 1850)," Monuments & Milestones (Nashville, Tenn), vol. 5, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2009), p. 1.

[3] Susan Crowe, "Visual Narratives and the Portrait Busts of Edmonia Lewis," (Kansas: Master of Arts, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2010), p. 15.

[4] Hoobler, "Sally Thomas," p. 1.

[5] Hoobler, "Sally Thomas," p. 1.

[6] Hoobler, "Sally Thomas," p. 1.

[7] Hoobler, "Sally Thomas," p. 1.

[8] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 15.

[9] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 15.

[10] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 15.

[11] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 15.

[12] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 16.

[13] Clamorgan, The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis, p. 59.

[14] Clamorgan, The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis, p. 96. Antoinette's mother, Pelagie, disapproved of Thomas. She did not wish for her daughter to be with an ex-slave. It was only after Pelagie's death that the couple married.

[15] James Thomas, From Tennessee Slave to St. Louis Entrepreneur : The Autobiography of James Peck Thomas, ed. Lored Schewinger (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984), p. 11.

[16] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 24.

[17] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 24.

[18] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 20.

[19] Charmaine A. Nelson, The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. 32, 46.

[20] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 20.

[21] Clamorgan, The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis, p. 97.

[22] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 20.

[23] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 45.

[24] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 45.

[25] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 21.

[26] Harry Henderson and Albert Henderson, "The Bust," The Indomitable Spirit of Edmonia Lewis: A Narrative Biography (Milford: Esquiline Hill Press, 2013), np.

[27] "American Artist-Life," National Anti-Slavery Standard (New York, NY), issue 31, Saturday, 7 December 1867, np.

[28] However, private correspondence between the Shaws and their good friend Lydia Maria Child (also an early patron of Lewis) paint another picture. Upon hearing of Lewis's plans for the portrait bust, Child had deliberately withheld photographs of Shaw from Lewis and discouraged her from creating the work since she thought her too untutored to complete it appropriately. See: Nelson, The Color of Stone, pp. 28-30.

[29] Harry Henderson and Albert Henderson, "The Shaw Family," The Indomitable Spirit of Edmonia Lewis (Milford: Esquiline Hill Press, 2013), np.

[30] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 10.

[31] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 58.

[32] Harry Henderson and Albert Henderson, "Mr. and Mrs. Thomas," The Indomitable Spirit of Edmonia Lewis (Milford: Esquiline Hill Press, 2013), np.

[33] Lecture, Charmaine Nelson, "Theorizing Sculpture," McGill University, Montreal, Canada, 5 September 2014.

[34] Lydia Maria Child, "A Chat with the Editor of the Standard," The Liberator (Boston, MA), issue 3, Friday, 20 January 1865, p. 12.

[35] Child, "A Chat with the Editor," p. 12.

[36] Lydia Maria Child, "The Thirtieth National," The Liberator (Boston, MA), issue 8, Friday, 19 February 1864, np.

[37] Kirsten Buick, "The Ideal Works of Edmonia Lewis: Invoking and Inverting Autobiography," American Art, vol. 9, no. 2 (Summer 1995), p. 14.

[38] Lecture, Charmaine Nelson, "Sculpture and Masculinity: Heroism and Manhood," McGill University, Montreal, Canada, 26 November 2014.

[39] Crowe, "Visual Narratives," p. 12.

[40] On the use and racial meanings of white marble in neoclassical sculpture see: Charmaine A. Nelson, " 'So Pure and Celestial a Light': Sculpture, Marble, and Whiteness as a Privileged Racial Signifier," The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

[41] "Legal Lore: The Edmonia Lewis Sculpture Case Before Judge Adams," St Louis Post and Dispatch (St-Louis, MO), Thursday, 23 January 1879, p. 1.; "A Suit by Edmonia Lewis," The New York Times (New York, NY), Sunday, 26 January 1879, np.

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Figure 1: Edmonia Lewis, <u>James Peck Thomas</u> (1874), marble, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio.

Figure 2: Edmonia Lewis, <u>Colonel Robert Gould Shaw</u> (1864), marble. (Photo: Shailesh Saigal http://negroartist.com/)

Figure 3: Edmonia Lewis, <u>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow</u> (1872), marble, 68.5 cm, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England.

Figure 4: <u>Imaginary Portrait of Homer</u> (2 C.E.), marble, 53 cm, Louvre Museum, Paris, France. (Photo: Hervé Lewandowski. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY)

Figure 5: Edmonia Lewis, <u>Maria Chapman</u> (1865), plaster. (Photo: Harry B. Henderson, Jr.)

THE IDEALIZATION OF ABOLITION IN BRITAIN: RICHARD WESTMACOTT'S MONUMENT TO CHARLES JAMES FOX
Yael Chapman

For all nations that participated in the slave trade, it is crucial to question what the collective memory emphasizes: the victims of slavery and the atrocities they endured, or the efforts of abolitionists? In Britain, the emphasis has always been on the latter. This attitude is clearly demonstrated in Richard Westmacott's 1822 monument to the abolitionist Charles James Fox [fig. 1], which reinforces the stereotypical image of inferior black males who owed their freedom entirely to the good will and morality of

Figure 1: Richard Westmacott, Charles James Fox (1822), marble, Westminster Abbey, London, United Kingdom.

benevolent white abolitionists. This article will begin with an exploration of the life of Charles James Fox and the decision to memorialize him, before pursuing a visual analysis of the sculpture. It will then go on to demonstrate Britain's historical tendency to disproportionately focus on the triumphs of the abolitionists as opposed to the horrors of the slave trade to which it very substantially contributed. The significance of the African figure in the memorial and its connection to the images utilized by the abolitionist movement will also be explored. This essay will ultimately argue that Westmacott's memorial to Charles James Fox is an embodiment of the contradictions endemic to Britain's collective memory and representation of its participation in slavery.

Charles James Fox (1749-1806) was a prominent British statesman of the Whig Party for nearly four decades, from his entrance into the House of Commons in 1768 at the ripe age of nineteen, to his death nearly four decades later in 1806.[1] After being elected as a Member of Parliament in 1780, Fox was given the informal title of the "Man of the People, because he sympathized with their disappointments and voiced their aspirations."[2] Some of his most significant political causes included fighting for the removal of civil restrictions on religious dissenters, supporting the revolutionaries in France and America, and most notably, supporting the abolition of the slave trade.[3] While some advocated for reforming and/or regulating slavery, Fox advocated for terminating the practice in its entirety.[4] In a letter dated April 1791 to his

mistress and later wife, Elizabeth Armistead, Fox stated that the fight for abolitionism gave him great pleasure, commenting that "it is a cause in which one ought to be an enthusiast and in which one cannot help being pleased with oneself for having done right."[5] He allegedly justified his position as standing for humanitarianism and personal freedom, but it is crucial to acknowledge that believing in the abolition of slavery certainly did *not* necessarily equate in a belief in the equality of whites and blacks.[6]

Despite possessing relatively modern and ethical political views (at least for the eighteenth and nineteenth century), Fox's reputation – and thus, legacy – failed to avoid being tainted by the many questionable tales about his excessive and scandalous life.[7] He was notorious for being overweight, a gambler, and a womanizer, making him one of – if not the most – popular British caricature subjects of the time.[8] It has been widely suggested that Fox's reputation is one of the main reasons that his name never became nearly as well known as other British abolitionists such as William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson.[9]

In 1809, three years after Fox's death, it was decided that funds would be raised to establish a monument to him in the "most public indoor space" in London, Westminster Abbey.[10] Given the commission, Richard Westmacott estimated that he would need 6,000 pounds – an extremely large sum at the time – in order to create a worthy sculpture.[11] The choice of Westmacott is important to my argument, since his family had West Indian ties and his other major commissions included sculptures of slave-owning planters and colonial figures such as Horatio Nelson.[12] Donations were collected over the next two years, with so much money flowing in that the committee raised enough for Westmacott to erect a second monument to Fox in Bloomsbury Square.[13] The contributions came from a wide variety of major political and royal figures, demonstrating the high regard in which they remembered Fox.[14] Although Westmacott completed the sculpture in 1815, its installation was delayed until 1822 after the coronation of George IV.[15] The finished product is considered to be not only Westmacott's finest work, but also one of the most grand and moving memorials in Westminster Abbey.[16]

The monument to Fox is a neoclassical piece, sculpted in white marble and featuring references to traditional Greek and Roman allegories and style. It features three large scale figures composed around a lightly draped bed in which the deceased Fox lies.[17] He is presented leaning back on a woman representing the allegory of Liberty, effectively dying in the arms of "the virtue to which he had devoted his entire career."[18] At Fox's feet, a similarly conceived figure of Peace is bent over, weeping at the loss.[19] Next to the bed, hands clasped together, kneels an obviously African man gazing at Fox mournfully.[20]

The modeling of the group is bold and powerful. The sculpture's neoclassical style is further demonstrated in the arrangement of the individuals, inspired by the posing of figures in Roman sarcophagi.[21] Westmacott's talent is aptly shown in the piece, specifically in the impressive draping of the fabric adorned by the figures and the intricate details on the base of the bed where Fox lies. The sculpture is fairly successful in evoking the pathos Westmacott aimed for; the overstated, mournful faces of Liberty, Peace, and the African man demonstrate the scope of the loss.[22]

In order to successfully argue that the Fox memorial is a direct product of Britain's self-congratulatory attitude towards its history of abolitionism (and its concomitant erasure of slavery), it is important to first substantiate the claim that this contradictory outlook exists. Between 1700 and 1810, Britain perfected the Atlantic trade system, successfully transporting 3,000,000 Africans across the Atlantic Ocean in incredibly inhumane conditions.[23] By the Georgian era, Britain was considered the premier slaving nation of the world, with London

functioning as its commercial centre and the largest slave port in the country.[24] Britain enjoyed the immense financial benefits of slavery long after its internal abolition of slave trading in 1807, especially considering that slavery itself was not outlawed in the British colonies until many years later in 1833.[25] In fact, Britain made more money from its participation in slavery *after* 1807 than it did prior.[26] The 1807 act abolished the slave trade within the British Empire, but did not outlaw slavery itself in the British colonies.[27]

It is curious, then, that 1807 has been consistently celebrated as an anniversary of moral triumph in Britain.[28] Despite having been the ones to perfect the system, the government and monarchy seem to be very proud of their relatively early abolition movement.[29] The bicentennial in 2007 was framed as a national event, marked with an astonishingly tone deaf affair at Westminster Abbey where the "monarchy and government invited the descendants of both slavers and enslaved Africans to an orgy of hypocritical moral profligacy," in which no apologies were made despite having been the leader in the crime for centuries.[30] The event reflected a widespread pattern in Britain of sidelining the hardships and achievements of enslaved Africans in exchange for a narrative that emphasizes the actions of white abolitionists. This attitude can be experienced easily even today. For example, the very first sentence of the British Library's educational page on the slave trade states that slavery was abolished in 1807.[31] The country has been further assisted in distancing itself from this history because of the absence of memorial sites such as plantations or slave ports, and its geographical distance from the Caribbean and Americas where most of the slaves were sold.[32] The visual manifestations are extremely important contributors to this blind eye perspective; "if monuments are about remembering, who or what gets 'forgotten' in the public discourse can be just as significant."[33] The memorial to Fox embodies Britain's choice to try and overshadow the experiences of the enslaved with a concentration on the abolitionists and demonstrates the racist undertones of the nineteenth-century antislavery movement.

The main impetus of this argument lies in the representation of the kneeling black male next to Fox. The African figure starkly stands out in the memorial in comparison to the other characters. While Fox and the allegories of Peace and Liberty are clothed in traditional Roman style dress, the black man is covered by a short and flimsy looking loincloth. Despite being sculpted in white marble, Westmacott suggests the male figure's blackness in a number of ways; the hair is tightly coiled, the nose wide and flat, and the lips full. The revealing loincloth allows for a full view of his very sculpted body, where the muscles in his arms and legs appear to be flexed by the minor acts of clasping his hands together and kneeling. He is placed close to the ground and does not possess the same fanciful representation awarded to the other figures depicted.

Having previously discussed Fox's prominence in the British abolitionist movement, it becomes obvious that the African male is placed in the memorial with the intention of signifying the gratitude of the enslaved who supposedly gained freedom in part because of Fox's dedication to the cause. This begs the question of what or whom the African man is meant to represent, as he "occupies a symbolic space somewhere between the purely metaphorical female emblems of Peace and Liberty on the one hand and the historically specific figure of Fox himself."[34] The very distinctive face of the slave does evoke the impression that it was modeled from a specific individual.[35] It has been speculated that a popular African American artist's model from Boston named Wilson could have been the sitter; his excellent physical form was documented in artworks by some of the most important artists of the period.[36] However, no records of

Westmacott can confirm this, ultimately leaving viewers of the monument with the impression that the black man is neither wholly an allegorical symbol *nor* an individual.[37]

A major way in which the dissimilarity of the African figure can be noted is through the particularly sharp contrast between him and Fox. The representation of Fox's body can be most accurately described as being plush and bulky, the direct opposite of the muscular black man kneeling at his feet. In the nineteenth century and prior, fuller and plumper bodies were significantly more desirable because they indicated the upper class status of people with enough wealth to be well-fed and to deem work unnecessary.[38] Conversely, toned and strong bodies signified the lower class status of those who were required to labour physically.[39] As such, the differences between the two male bodies in the monument indicate the racialized social division between them. Westmacott's generosity in his representation of Fox is obvious when compared to the very unflattering depictions of him in the caricatures made while he was alive; his heavy weight was depicted and discussed extensively in the media. Westmacott evidently made the decision to be forgiving to Fox's figure in the interest of ensuring that he was not read as less important or masculine than the enslaved male placed below him: "it would not do, in either compositional or political terms, to portray Fox as the swollen, 'dropsical' and physically flabby figure he was by the time of his death."[40]

However, there seems to be elements of contradiction in the opposing bodies of Fox and the African slave. On the one hand, the black man is clearly represented by his toned muscles as superior in strength in comparison to Fox. On the other, Westmacott seems to have fashioned the proportions unevenly; the slave would be easily dwarfed by Fox and the other figures if they were to all be placed standing and upright. This strange paradox can undoubtedly be explained by the deeply racist stereotypes of the period, held even by those who believed in ending slavery. Firstly, the reality that abolitionists did not necessarily believe that blacks should be treated as equal to whites came from a deep-seated and widespread belief in the inherent and unavoidable inferiority of the black race.[41] George Thompson, one of the prominent antislavery activists in Britain, was documented to have spoken of Africans as "pagans and of as dark a mind as complexion."[42] The notion that people of colour were anatomically unaesthetic, biologically subhuman, uncivilized, and in need of white enlightenment and control was the very justification behind both colonization and treating black people as property to be bought and sold in the first place.[43] Secondly, the stereotype of black people as strong, wild, and dangerous was pervasive, and has in many ways continued to this day.[44] As such, Westmacott was required to convey through the statue the clashing representations of the African as dangerously strong and in need of restraint on the one hand, and simultaneously inferior to the white man and his race on the other. The combination of these racist convictions is evident in the strange portrayal of the African slave in the sculpture as both threatening (through his muscular form) and inferior (through his smaller size and relegation to the floor) to his white counterpart.

Arguably the most crucial feature of the memorial's composition is the simple fact that the figure of the African slave is literally kneeling *on the ground*, thus denoting the supposed submissiveness and inferiority of the black race. If we are to assume that the racist notions of the unruly black man were widespread even among the "most Whiggish of the ruling elite," then it is fair to contend that by representing the African man as willingly subservient through his kneeling, served to diminish white fears regarding how liberated slaves would act and the possibility of slave rebellion.[45] More simply even, this depiction of the African as the only one touching the ground creates a tangible, visual hierarchy of the races.

Westmacott's vision of the kneeling black male is not an original one; it is an image of Africans that has pervaded for centuries and has appeared all over the world in numerous contexts from proslavery to abolitionist art. In fact, the concept was pivotal to Britain's abolition movement. In the late eighteenth century, Josiah Wedgwood, an English Potter, conceived of the picture of a kneeling, shackled black slave with clasped arms, accompanied by the statement "Am I not a man and a brother?"[46] The image became the official symbol of the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade [fig. 2].[47] Wedgwood understood the commercial value of abolition; the emblem became extremely popular amongst the upper classes, who would place the figure on cameos, snuff boxes, jewelry, and more.[48] The notion that bearing the image of the shackled black man was a means to associate oneself with a noble cause is similarly reflected in Britain's continuing tendency to self-congratulate for having abolished slavery while ignoring its contributions to the institution.[49]

Figure 2: Josiah Wedgwood, Anti-slavery Medallion (1787), jasperware, 3.0 cm, The British Museum, London, United Kingdom.

My contention is that an analysis of the origins of the abolitionist symbol in Britain sheds further light on the significance of the African man depicted in the Fox monument. It implies that the African character does not simply represent freed slaves generally, but rather is a particular reference to the shackled man in the antislavery medallion who is *no longer shackled* –supposedly thanks, in part, to Fox. In almost all nineteenth-century sculptures that utilized the image of the kneeling, enslaved, black man, the moment in time captured is implied to be either before or during the man's liberation.[50] Manumission was a right afforded to slave holders "that did not in fact sever the relationship between master and slave but usually perpetuated it in another guise."[51] This is not to imply that enslaved blacks were void of agency and simply reliant on whites to give them their freedom, but rather to point out the particular absurdity of Westmacott's decision to position the figure of a kneeling black man at the foot of an white abolitionist's bed, in a memorial completed nearly ten years after his death. In doing so, the sculpture depicts not only the sentiment of the "benevolent white authority who

mediates between God and the lowly slave,"[52] but implies that a slave would be so grateful to the white man for giving him back the freedom *that should never have been taken away in the first place*, that he would literally grieve at his bedside years after the fact. The contradiction of the kneeling black slave can be seen in both the shackled emblem of the abolition society and the unshackled figure in Fox's monument. The image asks viewers to see the black man as someone who has everything in common with them, while simultaneously putting him at a distance through the supplicating, emasculating pose.[53] Wedgwood himself described the image as a "pathetic figure which would increase its effect."[54]

  In this article, I have argued that Richard Westmacott's monument to Charles James Fox is an embodiment of British attitudes toward abolition and slavery, both in the nineteenth century and today. The memorial paints Fox as an abolitionist who was so benevolent as a white man that a former slave would actually mourn at the foot of his deathbed. It embodies the underlying, racist notions of the abolition movement, which worked to portray the enslaved as worthy of freedom while at the same time deeming them as inferior to whites, in need of their good will and control. Moreover, the fact that Westmacott, an artist with significant ties to slavery, was chosen to sculpt this piece, meant in part to commemorate abolition, further cemented the contradictions endemic to the memorial. Although beautiful, the monument to Charles James Fox is just one of the many ways in which there has been a "persistent submergence of the history of Trans Atlantic Slavery beneath the history of abolitionism" in Britain.[55]

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[20] Whinney, "Sir Richard Westmacott," p. 384.

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[42] John M. G. Barclay, "'Am I not a Man and a Brother?' The Bible and the British Anti-Slavery Campaign," The Expository Times, vol. 119, no. 3 (September 2007), p. 11.

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[51] Savage, <u>Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves</u>, p. 74.

[52] Savage, <u>Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves</u>, p. 74.

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PLATE LIST

Figure 1: Richard Westmacott, <u>Charles James Fox</u> (1822), marble, Westminster Abbey, London, United Kingdom.

Figure 2: Josiah Wedgwood, <u>Anti-slavery Medallion</u> (1787), jasperware, 3.0 cm, The British Museum, London, United Kingdom.

SEXUALITY AND POSSIBILITY FOR NINETEENTH-CENTURY FEMALE SCULPTORS: NON-HETERONORMATIVE IDENTITIES ACROSS RACIAL LINES
Viola Chen

For the prominent group of expatriate American women sculptors living in Rome during the nineteenth century, lifestyles that ventured outside heteronormative expectations presented different possibilities across racial lines. While queerness provided a site of relative freedom to the white female sculptors in Rome, the black and indigenous female sculptor Edmonia Lewis was denied access to similar freedom. This is attributed to the hegemonic narratives of racialized sexuality, in which black female sexuality is pathologized — coded as savage and hypersexual.[1] Moreover, due to her lack of social privilege, Lewis did not have access to influential people to archive her life and career, therefore very few primary sources on her life have been uncovered.[2] Within this narrow selection of primary sources, her sexual and romantic relationships are very rarely mentioned, except in passing. Although non-heteronormative lifestyles provided new opportunities for some members of the aforementioned group of female sculptors, the use of an intersectional analysis must be deployed to examine the factors that excluded Edmonia Lewis from sexual expression and freedom.

In the group of Neoclassicist female sculptors, derogatorily dubbed as "The White Marmorean Flock" by American writer Henry James, several women did not adhere to heteronormative ways of living.[3] Sculptor Emma Stebbins was involved in a romantic relationship with acclaimed actress Charlotte Cushman for approximately twenty years, during which they greatly supported each other's careers.[4] The relationship was extremely stable, and Cushman had disclosed in her letters that she had perceived the relationship to be, "like a marriage."[5] Harriet Hosmer, another white female sculptor, was in a dedicated relationship with Lady Louisa Ashburn, widow of Bingham Baring, Second Baron Ashburn, for twenty-five years.[6] In their relationship, Lady Ashbury acted as both Hosmer's patron and lover.[7] Sculptor Anne Whitney was also involved in a same-sex, long-term relationship; Whitney and her partner, artist Abby Adeline Manning, lived and worked together for over forty years.[8] Evidently, although lesbianism as an identity had not been discursively constructed yet, many women already navigated its lived realities.[9]

It is notable that all three female sculptors who were involved in stable, same-sex relationships were white women who were of the middle or upper classes. Although there has never been evidence of Edmonia Lewis's involvement in same-sex relationships, many art historians have grouped Lewis together with Stebbins, Hosmer, and Whitney as lesbians.[10] Of course, this is fundamentally fallacious, as the identity of lesbian in Western culture had only been constructed in the twentieth century. More importantly, however, contemporary historians have not been able to unveil any overt clues to Lewis's sexual and romantic experiences. Lewis may have been grouped with women engaged in same-sex relationships because of the ways in which she performed, or did not perform, her gender which was also perceived to fall outside of the boundaries of heteronormativity. Moreover, her identity as a black (and Native) woman may have intrinsically placed her in a sexual sphere that was deemed to be Other.[11]

Feminist theorist Mary E. Wood notes that for white, middle-class women, female same-sex desire had been perceived to be a harmless form of preparation for heterosexual marriage and family. Subsequently, errant female sexuality was displaced onto women of colour and working class women.[12] White female subjects in nineteenth-century Rome also demonstrated the ability to choose non-heteronormative identifications and actions over the pressures of heterosexual

marriage, therefore, queerness for white women presented liberating possibilities.[13] For the most part, the white female sculptors who led non-heteronormative lifestyles could express their queerness with more ease in Rome than they could in America.[14] This does not imply that sexism and homophobia did not exist as persistently in Rome, but rather, that these prejudices assumed different forms.[15] Moreover, the logic of mobile subjectivity would argue that the ways in which the women's identities were read shifted when they migrated from America to Rome, due to the specificity of social and cultural contexts. Emma Stebbins and Charlotte Cushman held very large parties in their homes for reputable members of the colony, which became privileged social sites for gaining cultural capital in the community.[16] By creating these spaces, the non-heteronormative relationship between Stebbins and Cushman was able to gain certain forms of social acceptance. The language that most primary accounts have used to describe the women's relationship rigidly situates it within the limits of the hegemonic sexual imagination. Traits of the relationship that are commonly emphasized include: its stability and commitment, which suggest the monogamous nature of the relationship, and the decorum of the two women, which denotes a white, middle or upper class sensibility.[17] Therefore, white middle or upper class women engaged in non-heterosexual relationships could retain their "heterosexual purity."[18]

In 1859, Edmonia Lewis began her studies at Oberlin College, the first American institution of higher learning to admit African American students and female students.[19] Lewis's education at Oberlin significantly contributed to her early exposure to art education. However, in the winter of 1862, controversy arose when Lewis was suspected of poisoning two white, female classmates.[20] Having planned to embark on a sleigh-riding trip, Lewis supposedly "invited the young women to her room for a drink of hot spiced wine," after which the women began to feel severely ill.[21] Proceeding medical examinations showed that the wine contained an aphrodisiac called cantharides.[22] It is with this knowledge that vigilantes from the town abducted Lewis while she was walking home alone one night, "dragged her to an empty field nearby and brutally beat her."[23] Following the attack, the town officials showed a notable lack of effort to discover and to reveal the identities of the assailants, demonstrating their complicity in the punishment of what was perceived to be the sexually perverse black assailant.[24] In colonial, white supremacist constructions of sexuality, the black body is constructed as hypersexual: black males are identified as sexually predatory while black females are characterized as constantly sexually available for white consumption and also as sexually aggressive and lascivious. Of course, these racist constructions also operate within a gendered framework. It is interesting to note that Lewis's mischaracterization fit within this racist construction by positioning her as a sexually predatory figure toward white women. Her involvement in this incident is often cited as a prominent source of verification for her supposedly homosexual desires, which testifies to the lack of agency that Lewis possessed in the depiction of her own sexuality. It also discloses the racism of some scholars who have taken the accusation at face value. What appears in recorded history is important to examine, but often, what is left out of recorded history is even more telling of social realities.

Regardless of differing romantic and sexual liberties between racial lines, the female sculptors who engaged in non-heteronormative lifestyles were prone to sexist scrutiny, particularly from their male contemporaries. In the context of institutional sexism and gender-based discrimination, the portrayal of women's sexuality in historical records must be questioned. The American writer Henry James had infamously noted in his biography of William Wetmore Story:

"Story's 'Hatty' is of course Miss Harriet Hosmer, the most eminent member of that strange sisterhood of American 'lady sculptors' who at one time settled upon the seven hills in a white, marmorean flock. The odd phenomenon of their practically simultaneous appearance would no doubt have its interest in any study of the birth and growth of taste in the simmering society that produced them; their rise, their prosperity, their subsidence, are, in presence of some of the widely scattered monuments of their reign, things likely to lead us into bypaths queer and crooked."[25]

James' bold description of the female sculptors suggests that he was not the only influential figure within their social circle to perceive them as "queer and crooked." According to James, the women's "strangeness" abides in their unwitting interdependence — his account illuminates the presence of male anxiety in the face of strong female relationships that seem to exclude male influence.[26] James' use of the term "queer" originally meant strange or peculiar, which developed into a pejorative term for "homosexual" in the late nineteenth century.[27] Beginning in the late 1980's, the term has been re-appropriated by communities to dictate identification with non-heteronormative desires, however, it is important to recognize James' use of the term as purposely derogatory. The conflation of gender non-conformity with homosexuality is significant in the analysis of relationships between the female sculptors, as it problematizes essentialist assumptions of the correlation between gender performance and sexual identity.

With the above factors considered, it is important to differentiate between sources that convey the female sculptors' personal accounts and those that convey the perspectives of outside parties. Since socially privileged authors typically write the accounts that enjoy academic longevity, they generally express the hegemonic views of society. Although these accounts are valuable in examining social institutions in historical contexts, they also inherently oppress and silence marginalized voices. The reproduction of hegemonic views is not only realized in primary accounts — they also exist in all the secondary accounts that appropriate the information of primary accounts. For privileged writers in the nineteenth century, who were typically educated, middle or upper class, heterosexual, white men, the ability to deem women as masculine or otherwise gendered in a disorderly way was used as a tool of oppression.

In 1959, an article titled "The White, Marmorean Flock" was published by feminist journalist Margaret Farrand Thorp in The New England Quarterly. In the article, Thorp intended to centre the lives of the American expatriate female sculptors through a feminist lens.[28] However, it is evident that she was limited by the language of the female sculptors' male contemporary writers, as well as by the aspects of the women that the male authors chose to focus on, in order to frame the women's experiences. Thorp echoed sexist, nineteenth-century opinions of sculptor Harriet Hosmer by describing her as an individual with, "[m]asculine energy and strength.[29] In her article, Thorp emphasizes Hosmer's "tomboy childhood," in which she had keenly participated in sports and activities that had traditionally been coded as masculine.[30] Therefore, it is evident that both the language used in historical accounts and the selection bias of authors hold a potentially oppressive power. Under patriarchal institutions, women's gender identification and sexual lives have long been sites of male control and entitlement.

If heteronormative marriage is perceived to be a requirement for women under patriarchy, then the decision of women to remain celibate can be seen as a site of dissent. In a letter Hosmer sent to the academic and politician Wayman Crow in 1854, she had famously declared:

"Even if so inclined, an artist has no business to marry. For a man, it may be well enough, but for a woman, on whom matrimonial duties and cares weigh more heavily, it is a moral wrong … for she must either neglect her profession or her family."[31]

However, Hosmer's letters indicate vague regret at what she described as her decision to remain celibate, as demonstrated through her later correspondence with Crow, in which she writes: "I have been searching vainly for Mr. Hosmer … I must leave it to sharper eyes than my own to find him."[32] Although Hosmer's remark was conveyed in a lighthearted manner, it illuminates the strength of the pressures that were placed upon women to conform to heteronormative standards, even in private communications with close friends.

These pressures were present in the lives of all the female sculptors, but they were differently configured in the life of Edmonia Lewis, the only woman of colour in the group. In all likelihood, Lewis would not have viewed marriage as something that would have been inevitable (if not for the intervention of her own conviction), as did her white female friends. The majority of the black men that she would have regularly encountered while taking the Grand Tour would have been the slaves and servants of her white companions, with whom marriage would obviously have been impossible. On the other hand, marriage to a white man would have presumably presented many problems of another kind for Lewis, due to the racist social reality of nineteenth-century Rome. Evidently, the naturalized structure of heteronormativity in nineteenth-century Rome was inherently coded as white and exclusive of non-white peoples.

However, the memorialization that these queer female sculptors have received focuses primarily on their gender and sexuality, thus erasing the significance of racial and class-based differentiation amongst them.[33] Emma Stebbins' tombstone in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York is spotlighted in Walk About New York's "Gay Graves Tour," the first gay-themed tour of Green-Wood Cemetery.[34] Both Stebbins and Anne Whitney are featured in Improper Bostonians: Lesbian and Gay History from the Puritans to Playland, a publication produced by the History Project.[35] The History Project is an organization based in Boston, Massachusetts that focuses on three major initiatives; "to conduct research on lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgenders [sic] in Massachusetts; to preserve the documentary record of that community's social and historical contributions; and to provide a forum for educating the general public."[36] These examples of memorialization take the women's non-heteronormative lifestyles out of their historical context, shaping the successes of Stebbins and Whitney into queer triumph narratives. In 2013, Oberlin College founded The Edmonia Lewis Center for Women and Transgender People, stated on its website to be "a collective of students, staff, and administrators who strive to transform existing systems of oppression."[37] Although the centre's mission statement constructs Lewis as an iconic figure for marginalized communities in general, the main purpose of the centre is to privilege the experiences of women and trans* people.[38] Therefore, the establishment primarily associates Lewis's name with gendered systems of oppression, despite the fact that Lewis had arguably experienced greater marginalization due to her race and class positions.

The memorialization of these female sculptors demonstrates that an analysis of intersecting oppressions is absent from contemporary studies of heteronormativity in nineteenth-century Rome. The historical configuration of Western heteronormativity is based upon a model of normalized and naturalized sexuality that inherently excludes bodies of colour, Othering them as pathological and savage. While white women such as Emma Stebbins, Harriet Hosmer, and

Anne Whitney had wilfully chosen to distance themselves from the heteronormative ideals imposed upon women, Edmonia Lewis was accorded the identification of queerness due to her racial identity, her alternative gender performance, and her association with the "Flock". In white feminist narratives, the practice of same-sex relationships between women in the nineteenth century have been constructed as an unproblematized site of female rebellion and liberation. However, it is crucial to recognize that access to such relationships differed across racial and class-based lines. For an artist of colour like Edmonia Lewis, the freedom of sexual expression is confined by racial marginalization and even if attained, could only bring about partial liberation.

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CORDIER'S VENUS: THE BEAUTIFUL OTHER
Carla Conradie

    The non-European subject, as represented in Western art, often reveals more about its creator than it does about the subject itself. The body of the African female in nineteenth-century France, for instance, was constructed with an Orientalist discourse in which her sexualized form was seen as the "exotic" opposite of an ideal white femininity. Bathing scenes by painter Jean-Léon Gérôme work to visualize this dichotomy, perpetuating the notion of an inferior black female body through an imagined setting. On the other hand, French sculptor Charles Cordier's ethnographic busts seem to celebrate African beauty, paying attention to scientific precision and negating a fictional space around the female subject. However, despite what appears to be a scientifically objective motivation behind Cordier's work, a closer observation of his African Venus (1851) reveals the depiction of the black female subject as one without agency or individuality; she is beautiful, but remains an Other defined by European tastes and colonial desires.

    Art and sculpture in a nineteenth-century French context must first be understood through the lens of Orientalism, considered an essential part of European material culture and civilization in this period.[1] This discourse, as discussed in the seminal work of Edward Said, is rooted in the distinction and opposition between the Western "Occident" and the Eastern "Orient," spaces invented by Europe in order to define itself and assert its dominance abroad.[2] According to Said, "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self,"[3] as its "contrasting image, idea, personality, experience."[4] As the sole authority on conceptions about this opposite mirror image,[5] the West was able to construct the Orient as an "exotic," immoral, but above all inferior Other. This binarism, perpetuating convictions of Western superiority, justified European colonial projects such as that of France in North Africa.[6] Furthermore, after Napoleon Bonaparte's 1798 expedition to Egypt and the subsequent publication of nine illustrated volumes known as La Déscription de l'Egypte, French artists became equally intrigued with this Other space.[7] Fuelled by an obsession with their primitive opposite, they reproduced Orientalist stereotypes regardless of their experiences in the French colonies, recording their perspectives as objective historical and ethnographic fact.[8]

    Directly linked to Orientalist notions of the Other is the view of the African female body and the limits of its representation in nineteenth-century art. French men branded the black female subject as excessively lascivious and sexually aware,[9] "an abject and racial body, the polar opposite of the idealized white female subject."[10] Therefore, in the same way that the Orient helped to define the Occident by what it was not, an eroticized black female sexuality played an integral role in constructing the supposedly superior white subject.[11] Moreover, the sexual and racial differences encapsulated in the African or Oriental female subject served to "inspire acute fears in the French male psyche," an anxiety that could only be mastered by defining and therefore owning that difference.[12] In other words, the European male gaze, associated with power and domination,[13] looked to unveil the unknown black female in order to control her.[14] These limitations on the representations of the black female subject are apparent in Orientalist artworks.

    Jean-Léon Gérôme was perhaps one of the most representative Orientalist artists in nineteenth-century France. Travelling extensively throughout North Africa, the Middle East, and Spain in the mid-1800s,[15] the painter was accustomed to working in situ to create genre paintings

Figure 1: Jean-Léon Gérôme, The Large Pool at Bursa (1885), oil on canvas, private collection.

of everyday life in the Oriental world. In the process, he was thought to "reveal a new version of the modern Near East to the eyes of the West."[16] Indeed, because of Gérôme's precise realistic style (in comparison to that of Romantic Orientalist painters like Eugène Delacroix), his work was praised for its ethnographic quality that seemed to create the "illusion of a tracing of reality."[17] In truth however, Gérôme often ventured into imaginative and "exoticist tendencies,"[18] avoiding "the dullness inherent in accuracy"[19] and undermining authenticity to portray this intriguing world of the Other. Illusion and fantasy are thus integral facets of his depictions of Oriental subjects.

A popular site for such illusory portrayals of Oriental life was the harem, deemed "the ultimately 'other' space of the Orient."[20] These private scenes of foreign sexuality were for a period thought to be Gérôme's sole subject,[21] though they could not possibly have been painted in situ as Western men were denied access to these spaces.[22] The place of these works within a European male imagination is further revealed by the presence of juxtapositions between white Occidental and black African female sexualities. For instance, in The Large Pool at Bursa (1885) [fig. 1], Gérôme presents us with a sunlit *hammam* populated by several porcelain-skinned nudes and three clothed black attendants. Already, that the white subjects are unveiled while the black subjects remain covered suggests the preference for white skin in the realm of ideal beauty. Furthermore, the strangeness of white women in this African space does not appear to be an issue; indeed, in harem scenes, "the architectural settings and utensils used seem to be more authentic than the alluring inhabitants," who were most likely painted from French models.[23] The

intertwined figures in the foreground present a direct contrast between the flawless, fleshy body of the odalisque and the laboured, hunched form of the servant – she who is recognizable and desirable, and she who is Other and inferior.

Gérôme's series of paintings depicting Moorish baths present the same Occident-Orient, white-black dichotomy through female forms. Gérôme himself named these works despite never having been to Morocco, creating "home concoctions of an established genre" made commercially popular by French artists like Ingres.[24] In his painting titled The Bath (1880-1885) [fig. 2] the typical *Bain Maure* depicts a private bath tiled in rich colours and patterns, with a "Nubian attendant" sponging the luminescent white body of a modestly posed odalisque.[25] Again, while the firm, clothed black body was likely painted from a live model Gérôme

Figure 2: Jean-Léon Gérôme, The Bath (1880-85), oil on canvas, 73.3 x 59.7 cm, de Young Museum, San Francisco, United States.

encountered, the white woman's soft form seems to be simply an ideal European type pulled from the artist's memory.[26] The stark contrast between these two sexualities clearly demarcates the black body of the Orient as the inferior Other.

It would seem that this Orientalist aesthetic, limiting representation of the African female body to the exotic subordinate, is missing in the ethnographic busts of Charles Cordier. Motivated by science and "art's ethnographic potential,"[27] Cordier was tasked by the French government with the accurate portrayal and therefore preservation of non-European races in the colonies. These busts were intended for the ethnographic gallery of the Natural History Museum in Paris, acting as objective evidence of these racial types.[28] For this reason, Cordier's commitment to truthfulness seems greater than Gérôme's, bolstered by his conviction that "one's preference for art should never stand as a reason to neglect scientific precision."[29] For instance, the sculptor travelled to Algeria in 1856 under state sponsorship, living for six months in a native quarter in order to achieve proximity with his subjects.[30] He eschewed working with casts that he believed erased physiognomy,[31] favoring live models such as the local women who agreed to pose for a European *roumi*.[32] In a lecture presented at the *Anthropology Society of Paris* in 1862 concerning sculpture and the representation of ethnic types, Cordier outlined his

detailed procedure for obtaining physiognomical measurements.[33] Through such scrupulous methods, Cordier aimed to "present the race just as it is, in its own beauty, absolutely true to life."[34] Uninterested in depicting an African woman as a pale odalisque, Cordier seems to be rejecting the racial hierarchy of beauty that is so apparent in Gérôme's work. For him, beauty was "not the province of a privileged race,"[35] and Africans deserved to be depicted realistically in their unique and dignified loveliness. His work in the colonies, therefore, seemed to be not only a scientific mission of documentation but also a search for a universal beauty undivided by Orientalist binaries and prejudices.

Cordier's 1851 bronze bust entitled African Venus [fig. 3] attests to such a search for a unique African beauty. Purchased by the French state for the ethnographic gallery of the *Natural History Museum*[36] as well as by Queen Victoria as a gift for Prince Albert,[37] Venus' interest lies at the intersection between art and science, celebrating the beauty in an accurate depiction of a non-European subject. First, by embracing polychromic materials, Cordier portrays Venus' difference at the level of skin colour, considered by neoclassicists as a defilement of the human ideal (read: white) beauty, an all-too-realistic and "seductive distraction" from art's intellectual purpose.[38] Portrayed with distinctly African features, Venus defies both the belief in a singular European beauty,[39] as well as the notion that black female sexuality is inherently vulgar. Indeed, though her position as an allegory would provide a *raison d'être* for nudity, she is clothed in elegant drapes, and her downcast eyes give a sense of dignity, modesty, and intelligence.[40] Furthermore, because she does not exist within a fantastical setting as Gérôme's painted subjects do, Cordier's Venus seems to be free of stereotypes about her identity as an African woman.

However, beneath Cordier's guise of truth and dignity lie motivations similar to those of Gérôme. First, by denying African Venus individuality, Cordier works to silence her black subjectivity. In fact, while the specificity of her face suggests that the bust is a portrait, Venus is

Figure 3: Charles Cordier, African Venus (1851), bronze and gold, 49.5 x 21 x 17 cm, The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, United States.

in truth a racial type composed of several black sitters living in Paris at the time.[41] In this way, Venus is denied personhood and reduced to an "aesthetically stunning generic 'specimen' of racial and cultural difference."[42] She is not a person, but a combination of many people, and therefore nobody at all.

Cordier began to display his ethnographic busts in 1848, the same year that France abolished slavery. By representing the Other at a time when it was rarely seen in Europe, the sculptor believed his scientific art to serve as visual evidence of the turn in racial relations in France.[43] According to Cordier, his work "incorporated the reality of a whole new subject, the revolt against slavery and the birth of anthropology."[44] However, by shifting the French viewer directly from slave owner to scientific anthropologist, Cordier managed instead to congratulate the French for abolition while supporting a colonial expansionist agenda.[45] The bust consequently becomes a politicized medium through which a particular individual – in this case, several former slaves – is silenced into "a universalized ethnographic type,"[46] to be studied instead of respected as a human being. So, while elevating a body formerly regarded as property to the level of mythology could be construed as an act of ennoblement, African Venus worked instead to erase the individual humanity of newly emancipated slave bodies.[47] This dehumanization would play a key role in the domination of the Other in North African colonies.

The elevation of Cordier's bust to the status of a goddess further silences black subjectivity by confining her to Western visual paradigms.[48] By imposing the Western embodiment of love and sexuality onto her Oriental body, Cordier restricts it to a European definition and visual ideal. The Black Venus narrative, according to Sharpley-Whiting, works to "perpetually ensnare" the black female form, to imprison it in "an essence of [itself] created from without."[49] In African Venus, Cordier uses a combination of scientific realism and classical refinement[50] to visualize this paradoxical subject – one that is neither truly African nor entirely European. She is physiognomically the latter, and therefore fundamentally "exotic" and sexual, but her serious expression, elongated neck, and draped clothing speak to a classicized aesthetic, while her upper body suggests an antique *contrapposto* stance.[51] Here, her intelligent dignity and a European aesthetic are inextricably linked, implying that the only way to represent a black female body without its sexualized narrative is to make it quasi-European. Thus, though she is meant to be an emblem of African beauty, Venus' dignified loveliness hinges on that which is not African but inherently Western. She is not a unique subject in her own right but an odd variation of another established one: an Other. The ironic result is that Venus' beauty is not reflective of Africa at all, but of the Western artist-ethnographer's aesthetic ideals. Her loveliness is shaped not by her own subjectivity but by Cordier, and though the sculptor claims to seek a uniquely African beauty, he remains the sole judge of when it it was captured.

The desire to configure the aesthetic form of a black body relates directly to the French male effort to define and control sexual and racial difference in the nineteenth century. The visual abstraction of black femininity through ethnographic busts like African Venus allowed European viewers to make these Other bodies legible. The collection and classification of Oriental bodies, integral to the discipline of natural history at the time, "allowed subjects under the gaze to be ordered into a totalizing system of representation, that allow[ed] the seen body to become the known body."[52] It followed that by owning knowledge of these bodies, and, through slavery, by owning the bodies of enslaved Africans.[53]

A poignant example of this possession of black females is that of Sarah "Saartjie" Bartmann, a Khoikhoi woman from South Africa brought to Europe in 1814 as a perverse spectacle of racial and sexual difference.[54] Named the "Hottentot Venus," Sarah was put on display for her large buttocks and supposedly savage, bestial sexuality.[55] Reduced to an object of ridicule, she acted as the repulsive Other that reaffirmed white Frenchwomen as the "erotic objects of the white male gaze."[56] After Sarah's death, French anatomist Georges Cuvier

dissected her body and displayed her body parts (including her genitalia) at the *Natural History Museum*,[57] officially making her body legible to and therefore property of the West.

In the same way, Cordier's composite <u>Venus</u> helps to establish racial and sexual difference that ultimately positions her Other body as inferior. Her official and private patrons reveal her liminal status between subjective art and objective science; like Sarah, she was at once considered a decorative object of "exotic" curiosity and one of scientific fact.[58] Cordier's bust is the artistic equivalent of Sarah's spectacle. They are both deviations from the ideal Venus, their identity constructed by and against the Western allegory. This "anthropological establishment of difference" not only perpetuated Orientalist ideas of the Other, but also justified colonial goals of possessing those bodies abroad.[59]

According to curator Édouard Papet, it would be an understatement to classify Charles Cordier as "an Orientalist sculptor, par excellence."[60] At first glance, a comparison of his ethnographic busts with the bathing scenes of painter Jean-Léon Gérôme appears to leave the latter in the realm of Orientalist fantasy and the former within a dignified scientific mission. However, closer observation reveals that Cordier's <u>African Venus</u> worked to construct the same dichotomy of racial Otherness that demarcates the black female body as inferior, despite the exclusion of a white odalisque at her side. By imposing the narrative of Black Venus onto her composite form, the sculptor not only reduces an individual to "an emblem of a geographic space,"[61] but also ties her to Western ideals that emphasize her Otherness. Ultimately, Cordier's search for African beauty failed to capture Africa at all, but instead reflected the Oriental, contrasting image of his Occidental self.

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[41] Nelson, "Venus Africaine," pp. 54-55.

[42] James Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells: Sculpted Slave Portraits and the French Ethnographic Turn," <u>Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World</u>, eds. Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Angela Rosenthal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 293-94.

[43] De Margerie, "The most beautiful negro," p. 15.

[44] De Margerie, "The most beautiful negro," p. 15.

[45] Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells," p. 283.
[46] Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells," p. 285.
[47] Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells," p. 295.
[48] Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells," p. 295.
[49] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, p. 10.
[50] Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells," p. 295.
[51] Smalls, "Exquisite Empty Shells," pp. 294-95.
[52] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, p. 22.
[53] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, p. 25.
[54] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, p. 32.
[55] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, p. 33.
[56] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, p. 34.
[57] Sharpley-Whiting, Black Venus, pp. 22, 25, 28.
[58] Nelson, "Venus Africaine," p. 54.
[59] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 5.
[60] Papet, "Charles Cordier and the Sculpture of the Second Empire," p. 71.
[61] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 2.

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PLATE LIST

Figure 1: Jean-Léon Gérôme, <u>The Large Pool at Bursa</u> (1885), oil on canvas, private collection.

Figure 2: Jean-Léon Gérôme, <u>The Bath</u> (1880-85), oil on canvas, 73.3 x 59.7 cm, de Young Museum, San Francisco, United States.

Figure 3: Charles Cordier, <u>African Venus</u> (1851), bronze and gold, 49.5 x 21 x 17 cm, The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, United States.

VINNIE REAM'S LINCOLN (1871): WHAT DID IT MEAN FOR THE UNITED STATES TO ISSUE AN OFFICIAL COMMISSION TO AN UNKNOWN FEMALE SCULPTOR?

Gabrielle Dinger

Figure 1: Vinnie Ream, Abraham Lincoln (1871), Carrara marble, 6 ft. 11 in. high, United States Capitol Rotunda, Washington, D.C., Architect of the Capitol.

Figure 2: Vinnie Ream, Abraham Lincoln (1871), Carrara marble, 6 ft. 11 in. high, United States Capitol Rotunda, Washington, D.C., Architect of the Capitol.

Internationally famous in her prime and virtually invisible to the history of art not long after her death, the biography of Vinnie Ream (1847-1914) remains enigmatic. Ream's most famous work is her marble statue of Abraham Lincoln, which was revealed to the public on 5 January 1871 and remains in the statuary gallery of the United States Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C.[1] [fig. 1, 2]. Though she completed and exhibited several other works in her lifetime under equally interesting circumstances, this article will focus on Lincoln (1871) and how its significance can be read with a modern-day understanding of gender dynamics and power structures.[2] By focusing on the representation of Ream across various media, I will examine how her identity was constructed in order to aid her success with Lincoln. It is important to note how conceptions of Ream and her work have changed and been challenged over time, but most relevant to this paper is understanding how Lincoln was understood in its contemporary political and cultural context.

Vinnie Ream was born on 25 September 1847 in Wisconsin and had a humble yet comfortable childhood.[3] She attended various all-girls schools including Christian College in Missouri, in which she was exposed to fine arts and excelled academically and socially.[4] In April of 1861, the Ream family relocated to Washington, D.C. just as the nation was entering the

fervor of the Civil War and employment opportunities were high in the capital city.[5] Ream's training in sculpture formally began upon visiting the studio of American sculptor Clark Mills, located in the basement of the Capitol building.[6] James S. Rollins, a Missouri congressional representative who knew Ream from her days at Christian College, introduced her to Mills in 1863.[7] Allegedly, Ream managed to meet President Lincoln and he agreed to sit for her over the course of months, but the documentation surrounding this period of both Ream and Lincoln's life is inconclusive. These sittings were not mentioned in the debate over the commission held by the US Senate, which is discussed below, but were used to promote Ream during the public reveal of Lincoln.[8]

By the time of Lincoln's assassination on 15 April 1865, Ream was eager to establish herself as a legitimate sculptor.[9] It is logical that Lincoln would have been a desired subject for Vinnie as she was active at the Capitol at a time when the martyred president's image was gaining popularity. According to Ream's own writing below, she was well versed in the rhetoric of the time, which praised Lincoln for his justice and "unfathomable sorrow":[10]

> "His power had been almost unbounded, and how had he used it? 'With charity for all, with malice toward none.' He had sworn to protect the honor of the Government, and history will tell how well he kept that oath; and yet while he guarded the sanctuary of its honor with fire and with sword, he wept that any should suffer."[11]

As Gregory Tomso argues in his essay regarding "the cultural work of sympathy in Nineteenth-Century America," a certain amount of sympathy for the late president allowed the public to embrace Ream's work.[12] Tutored by a self-taught American sculptor, Ream was removed from neoclassical ideals to an extent. She was depicted as an untutored genius at the time that the commission for Lincoln was given (30 August 1866).[13] Tomso describes the "ultra-realism" involved in analysis of Ream's Lincoln, in that it functioned on the "truth" of the likeness of the president at the same time as capturing some kind of spiritual meaning.[14]

As Ream was aware that such a realist portrayal would be graciously accepted by the American people, she expedited the process of receiving a government commission to sculpt a life-size marble statue of Lincoln by campaigning on a personal level. Vinnie must have been aware that a life-size Lincoln would be a high-profile production, and that if she were successful in its completion she would gain the attention of potential future patrons. Though a competition for this Lincoln commission is regularly alluded to in the literature on Ream, there were no official plans for a commission until she decided to take on the project.[15] In order to prove her aptitude as a sculptor to the men who would be in charge of issuing the commission, Vinnie arranged an exhibition of sorts in order to show some of her work, including a bust of Lincoln, which had gained modest publicity, to the men who frequented the Capitol.[16] Ream appealed to congressional representatives, senators, prominent military figures, and others through letters, gifts, and conversation.[17] Her unorthodox methods led to controversy surrounding the sculptor's moral character yet Ream's persistence, complimented by her social grace, was undeniably effective. With that in mind, there was essentially no orthodox way to become a successful sculptor while being female in the nineteenth century; there was no precedent for Ream to follow.[18]

Relevant to my discussion of the Lincoln commission is the conception of Ream as an aspiring young, poor sculptor from the American frontier. Although based in reality (yet containing exaggerated elements), the image that Ream seemed to embody in the minds of the

senators who spoke on her behalf allowed her to receive the rare government commission at the age of 18. The sheer number of signatures (178) compiled for a petition in support of Ream's artistic endeavors is a testament to the personal and interconnected nature of early American politics.[19] The introduction of this petition, written by congressmen and dated April 1866, was not only an appeal to the sculptor's skill, but also positioned her goal as a supremely patriotic endeavor: "As Americans, we should feel national pride in Miss Ream, and a desire to aid her in the development of her unquestionable genius".[20] Ream submitted this petition along with a short statement describing the nature of the desired commission.[21] With the sculptor's personal involvement, a resolution for Ream to sculpt Lincoln for the Capitol was passed by the House of Representatives and finally brought to Senate on 27 July 1866.[22]

In the mid-nineteenth century, it was still somewhat of an anomaly for the government to issue an official commission for a sculptural work.[23] The congressmen who held the responsibility to allocate such an order seem to have been in discordance about its significance, according to what transpired in Senate that day in July. Massachusetts senator and champion of neoclassical art, Charles Sumner, led a conversation among the congressmen about the place of art in the Rotunda. Unlike the majority of the men present, he remained uncharmed by Ream and did not sign her petition.[24] By reading the transcripts available from that day in Senate, it is evident that the debate over the commission focused not only on the abilities of the sculptor at hand, which most of the men wholeheartedly had faith in, but also over her symbolic association with the beloved Lincoln.[25] Both within the Senate debate and in the popular literature following her receipt of the commission, Ream was positioned as a prodigy of the American West, an example of the possibility to overcome hardships and the persistence of genius to succeed. An argument by one of Ream's acquaintances, Senator Nesmith, which was directed at Sumner, particularly captures this feeling:

> "Here is a young girl of poor parentage, struggling with misfortune, her father a mere clerk in the department here; and by causality, on being introduced into a studio, she manifests great taste and great powers of art, and in the short experience which she has had she has developed wonderful powers in that line. But the Senator from Massachusetts, with all his learning and all his foreign tastes, is unable to appreciate anything of that sort."[26]

Within this debate, Sumner's taste for "foreign" art was criticized and a common desire for a naturalistic depiction of Lincoln by a domestic artist was expressed. Employing Vinnie Ream signified the government placing trust in domestic artists and the cultivation of American-based genius.[27]

Senator Howard, who supported the notion of a sculpture of Lincoln yet considered Ream to be too inexperienced to take on the project, brought up the issue of Ream's female identity. Arguably, Ream was in fact relatively inexperienced at the time of the commission, but many senators expressed faith that she would produce an acceptable model. Howard was the only one to discredit her outright: "having in view her sex, I shall expect a complete failure in the execution of this work. I would as soon think of a lady writing the Iliad of Homer". [28] When countered by one of Ream's supporters, Senator McDougall, who claimed that the female poet Sappho "exceeds Homer in many respects," Howard retorted: "In many respects? In erotic expression she certainly exceeds Homer. Whether the proposed work in the present case would have similar merit I cannot say."[29] This exchange reveals the mindset that art made by women

was inherently measured in terms of the sexual identity of its creator. Furthermore, Howard's aversion to "erotic expression" may be viewed as a foil to the feminine sensitivity that has been typically attributed to art produced by women. Overall, art made by women during Ream's time was judged by the creator's biography, a practice to which art made by the default, or ideal, white male was simply not subjected.

Ream's critics did not see into the complexity of this commission process, and were not hesitant to defame her based on rumors.[30] Female sculptors were constantly under public scrutiny, though the commentary on Ream is somewhat unique as she was consistently described in terms of her femininity, as opposed to being labeled a spinster or being asexualized.[31] It seems as if the public was divided as to what to make of this five-foot, ninety-pound "slip of a child".[32] To some, Ream's feminine image, enhanced by practices such as selling photographs of herself and keeping flowers and birds in her studio, gave the impression of being vain and manipulative.[33] Arguably, Ream had to indulge in her femininity in order to ensure that she would remain pleasing to her male acquaintances (and patrons) that were indispensable to her career. However, with every negative newspaper article about Ream, her supporters retaliated with the highest praise.[34] It is difficult to say what the general opinion of Ream was, but the immediate reception of her Lincoln was positive.[35]

Figure 3: Unknown photographer, Vinnie Ream at Work on Her Lincoln Bust (ca. 1865), photographic print, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

It is likely that Ream was aware that constructing an image that would align herself with the late president would work in her favor on a number of levels. First of all, appealing as a young and poor artist actively worked against the idea that working women threatened the male professional sphere.[36] It provided a basis on which political men could argue for Vinnie (and feel as if they were her heroic champions) without revealing their anxiety about her sex or their possible romantic affiliations with her. While it is arguable that Ream's personality and widely cited good looks swayed the senators who defended her, as is the nature of politics, she could not have won any commissions if she had not worked hard at her craft and shown evidence of such labour.

The tendency to position Ream in a privileged position to Lincoln was successful to a certain extent. Parallels between Ream and Lincoln were composed through images such as a photograph of Ream posed with her Lincoln bust. She stands before the memorialized president in a smock and sculptor's cap, her chisel in hand asserting her artistic license [fig. 3]. Ingrained in this image is the popular ideology from post-slavery America that every individual was given an equal chance to succeed. In order to understand how this narrative of Ream functioned, it is

necessary to acknowledge how she assisted in the construction of racial difference. Ream sculpted her Lincoln as a solemn emancipator, with a benign expression as he looks down and holds with his right hand papers meant to represent the Emancipation Proclamation [fig. 1]. This was a popular motif for Lincoln during the early 1900's, and Kirk Savage notes, in reference to Miner K. Kellogg's popular description of the work, that the downward tilt of Lincoln's head would have readily implied the presence of newly freed slaves at the feet of the president.[37] Contemporary accounts of this work imagined Lincoln not only as the emancipator of the enslaved, but also a man who gave this poor young artist a chance to succeed.[38]

Reconstruction-era America was fundamentally sentimental, and Ream's narrative, minus the controversy, fit well into the discourse. As Kirk Savage has analyzed, a letter published to the Washington Chronicle in 1871 described Ream's sculpture as having encapsulated "the tenderness and humility of the womanly soul that was in the man".[39] This review contains a markedly progressive handling of gender, which was not universally shared. It was still an issue in the mid-to-late nineteenth century for a woman to sculpt a man, and it is interesting that Ream was largely able to dodge that vein of controversy.[40] Contemporary sculptors such as Harriet Hosmer and Anne Whitney were chastised for sculpting men, as female knowledge of male anatomy was viewed as immoral.[41] Perhaps since Ream went to lengths to accurately employ Lincoln in his own clothing, which he was wearing on the night of his assassination, less emphasis was placed on the uncomfortable fact of a young unmarried woman sculpting a man's body.[42] This is not to say that Ream's critics never took notice of the young sculptor in juxtaposition with male nudity. Mark Twain commented on Ream's "awful apparition of Mr. Lincoln, naked as mud could make him" as she was in the process of producing her model in her Capitol studio.[43]

The texts relating directly to the commission and official unveiling of the work gave much focus to the young artist's humble upbringing and uniquely American chance at success. At the unveiling of the work, a highly publicized event, Illinois Senator Lyman Trumbull was quoted as saying:

> "Perhaps other causes than the striking resemblance which the bust executed by Miss Ream bore to the deceased President may have led to the making of the contract with her for the life-sized statue. Both President Lincoln and the Artist were of humble origin; both were brought up in the West, and both, under God, are the architects of their own future."[44]

The ceremony included several other speakers, such as James Brooks of New York who shared a similar sentiment in appreciation of Ream's symbolic effect on the work, praising "the double memorial of not only a chief magistrate […] but the memorial of a woman's handiwork".[45] The final address at the ceremony was given by Senator Carpenter of Wisconsin, who addressed the public's surprise at the choice of Ream to sculpt the work. He went on to describe the value of this young, American artist who imitated the nature of Lincoln perfectly.[46] The same news article that reproduced these speeches included an account of what Ream looked like at the event, which is not only a decisive contrast to how she was depicted by her critics but also telling of the desire to gloss over Ream's womanhood in order to align her more accurately with her Lincoln-like character: "…it was no doll-like, dimpled face of seductive grace that met the view, but one which told in its paleness, and in the sad, earnest eyes, of overwork, broken health, and a burden

of care and responsibilities beyond her years".[47] Similar descriptions could be made about the face that Ream sculpted onto her <u>Lincoln</u>.

Evidently, sensationalized texts obscured the specificities of this commission process, and the gossipy nature of the nineteenth-century artistic community was not generally favorable to women. Granted, Vinnie herself spoke unreliably about her own history and seems to purposely have made her past vague in order to appeal to the public.[48] However, as much as Ream and her supporters tried to stress the significance of her work, during Ream's lifetime the story of her <u>Lincoln</u> had already been largely obscured or rendered unimportant. In 1908, novelist Henry James remembered Vinnie without even mentioning her name as "a 'gifted' child (speaking by the civil register as well as by nature) who shook saucy curls in the lobbies of the Capitol and extorted from susceptible senators commissions for national monuments."[49]

Constructions of public image and sentimentalizing narratives did not exist on the same level for Ream's contemporary white male peers, as their sex and biographies were not read extensively into their work. Though she was a popular subject of letters and news articles in her time, and though the public reveal of her <u>Lincoln</u> was a highly anticipated event, Ream's contribution to art has been widely overlooked in the decades following her death. In William E. Barton's 1927 speech "The Enduring Lincoln", he refers simply to Ream's monument as "Academic Lincoln".[50] His research, if any was done, did not go back far enough to consider the iconography of the work. Perhaps Ream's contribution had already lost its public impact and air of controversy, just thirteen years after the sculptor's death.[51] In order to understand how Ream has been represented historically, it is necessary to look to the foundation of her sculptural career and her entry into public consciousness.

The production of Vinnie Ream's <u>Lincoln</u> depended upon the sculptor's knowledge of political workings and was complicated by her sex and gender identity. As an acquaintance of Ream recalled, "when she had wished to become a sculptor, everyone in her native place had been shocked at the unfemininity of it, and people fabled behind her back about her depraved instincts."[52] This shocking "unfemininity" was likely the intersection of the masculine craft of sculpting and the masculine field of politics.[53] As art historian Melissa Dabakis argues in regards to the mixed reviews of <u>Lincoln</u>, "Ream's dualistic public identities were at war with each other—the youthful prodigy and dangerous public woman."[54] Ream's journal entries reveal laborious hours of work, but the face that most accounts of Ream described was rarely tired.[55] She was thrust into the public eye after receiving the Lincoln commission, and though it may be argued that Ream desired publicity, she was not in complete control of her image and expressed dissatisfaction at the claims made about her. Narrations of Ream's life, typically enhanced to serve a specific purpose, allowed for a generally positive reception of <u>Lincoln</u>, but not lasting respect for Ream or her body of work.

ENDNOTES

[1] Glenn V. Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love: The Life and Art of Vinnie Ream</u> (Hygiene, CO: SunShine Publications, Inc. 1997), p. 154.

[2] Other sculptures by Ream include General David G. <u>Farragut</u> (1881) at Washington Square, Washington, D.C. and <u>Sequoya</u> (1912-14) at the National Statuary Hall Collection in the United States Capitol.

[3] Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love</u>, p. 1.

[4] Edward S. Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream: An American Sculptor</u> (Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 2004), p 3.

[5] Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love</u>, p. 10.

[6] Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love</u>, p. 18.

[7] Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, pp. 2-8.

[8] Sherwood, <u>Labor of Love</u>, pp. 349-52. Each resource I encountered established these sittings as fact except for a few articles such as Carmine Prioli, "Wonder girl from the West: Vinnie Ream and the Congressional Statue of Abraham Lincoln," <u>Journal of American Culture</u>, vol. 12, no. 2 (Winter 1989) pp. 1-20.

[9] Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, p. 22.

[10] Vinnie Ream, "Personal Recollections of Lincoln," <u>Washington Sunday Star</u>, 9 February 1913, reproduced in R.L. Hoxie, ed. <u>Vinnie Ream</u> (Washington, D.C.: Gibson Brothers 1908), p. 59-60.

[11] Vinnie Ream Hoxie, "Lincoln and Farragut," <u>The Congress of Women: Held in the Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, U. S. A., 1893</u>, ed. Mary Kavanaugh Oldham Eagle (Chicago: Monarch Book Company, 1894), pp. 603-608.

[12] Gregory Tomso, "Lincoln's 'Unfathomable Sorrow': Vinnie Ream, Sculptural Realism, and the Cultural Work of Sympathy in Nineteenth-Century America," <u>European Journal of American Studies</u>, vol. 6, no. 2 (2011), p. 1.

[13] Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, p. 39. After completing her plaster model, Ream did study in Europe where she produced a number of ideal works and her Lincoln was transferred to Carrara marble. These events are detailed in Cooper's biography.

[14] Tomso, "Lincoln's 'Unfathomable Sorrow'," p. 8.

[15] Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, p. 26.

[16] There are multiple references to this exhibition in the Senate debate, reproduced in full in Sherwood, <u>Labor of Love</u>, pp. 45-65.

[17] Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream,</u> pp. 21-27.

[18] For discussion about the difficulties that female sculptors faced during Ream's time, see: Nancy E. Proctor, "American Women Sculptors in Rome and in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Feminist and Psychoanalytic Readings of a Displaced Canon," (Leeds: Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 1998).

[19] Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love</u>, p. 39.

[20] Hoxie, ed. <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, p. 7.

[21] This letter is reproduced by Sherwood who did researched on the Hoxie Papers, which are archived in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love</u>, p. 37.

[22] Cooper, <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, p. 29.

[23] Kirk Savage, "Vinnie Ream's *Lincoln* (1871): The Sexual Politics of a Sculptor's Studio," <u>American Pantheon: Sculptural and Artistic Decoration of the United States Capitol</u>, eds. Donald R. Kennon and Thomas P. Somma (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004), p.160.

[24] Sherwood, <u>A Labor of Love</u>, p. 39.

[25] Sherwood, <u>Vinnie Ream</u>, 45-64.

[26] Sherwood, <u>Labor of Love</u>, 50.

[27] It is important to note that Charles Sumner was great friends with the American neoclassical sculptor, William Wetmore Story, commonly heralded as the leader of the expatriate colony at Rome. Therefore, Sumner's desire for a "foreign" artist likely signalled his wish to direct commissions to his friend Story, and not a non-American artist. Charmaine A. Nelson, <u>The Color</u>

of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. 154-56.

[28] Sherwood, Labor of Love, p. 55.

[29] Sherwood, Labor of Love, p. 55.

[30] For instance, journalist Jane Swisshelm maliciously stated that "Miss Minnie Ream" (sic) had on exhibition a nude self-portrait bust, which as Sherwood explains was in actuality not a portrait but an ideal work, not unlike the ones regularly shown without comment in the studios of male sculptors. Sherwood, Labor of Love, p. 69.

[31] Contrasts between sculptor Harriet Hosmer and Vinnie Ream's public images are described throughout Kirk Savage, "Vinnie Ream's *Lincoln (*1871)."

[32] Ream, "Personal Recollections of Lincoln," p. 59.

[33] Savage, "Vinnie Ream's *Lincoln* (1871)," p. 167.

[34] Sherwood, Labor of Love, p. 117.

[35] Newspapers from all over the nation commented on the unveiling of Ream's Lincoln, such as one Tennessee ledger that stated simply: "Vinnie Ream's statue of Lincoln was unveiled in the Capitol at Washington last night in the presence of a large number of distinguished guests, who complimented the fair artist on making so handsome a statue from so ugly a subject." "Brevities," Public Ledger (Memphis, Tennessee), 26 January 1871, p. 3.

[36] For a discussion of the separate spheres theory, see Joy Kasson, "Introduction," Marble Queens and Captives: Women in Nineteenth-century American Sculpture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990)

[37] Sculptures such as Thomas Ball's Emancipation Memorial (1876) and Randolph Rogers' Lincoln and the Emancipated Slave (c. 1866) actually include a kneeling slave. See: Kirk Savage, Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997), p. 83; Charmaine A. Nelson, "Male or Man?: The Politics of Emancipation in the Neoclassical Imaginary," Companion to American Art, eds. John Davis, Jennifer A. Greenhill and Jason D. LaFountain (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2015).

[38] For discussion on Women's Rights in regards to representations of Lincoln, see Melissa Dabakis, "Sculpting Lincoln: Vinnie Ream, Sarah Fisher Ames, and the Equal Rights Movement," American Art, vol. 22, no. 1 (Spring 2008), pp. 78-101.

[39] Savage, "Vinnie Ream's *Lincoln* (1871)," p. 174.

[40] Elenor Tufts, "An American Victorian Dilemma, 1875: Should a Woman be Allowed to Sculpt a Man?," Art Journal, vol. 51, no. 1 (1992), pp. 51-56.

[41] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 23.

[42] Correspondence with Mary Todd Lincoln and others show that eventually Mrs. Lincoln sent the clothes to Ream for her to sculpt from. These letters are reproduced in Cooper's Vinnie Ream, pp. 78-80.

[43] Mark Twain, "Mark Twain's Letter," The Chicago Republican (Chicago, Illinois), 19 February 1868, np.

[44] Hoxie, ed. Vinnie Ream, pp. 32-3.

[45] Hoxie, ed. Vinnie Ream, p. 40.

[46] Hoxie, ed. Vinnie Ream, p. 43. An interesting comparison to this feeling can be found in Mary Clemmer Ames', Ten Years in Washington: Life and Scenes in the National Capital, as Woman

Sees Them (Hartford: A.D. Worthington 1873), in which the author expresses that Ream depicted too much of Lincoln's age in his countenance. (p. 112)

[47] Hoxie, ed. Vinnie Ream, p. 47.

[48] In her 1893 speech, for instance, Ream stated that it "never occurred" to her to "compete for that great honor" of sculpting the standing Lincoln for the Capitol. Vinnie Ream Hoxie, "Lincoln and Farragut," p. 605.

[49] Henry James, William Wetmore Story and his Friends (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, & co. 1903), p. 258. Not long after this, Ream was completely written out of art history, for example through her exclusion from Rufus Rockwell Wilson's otherwise meticulous Lincoln in Portraiture (New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1935).

[50] William E. Barton, "The Enduring Lincoln," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984), vol. 20, no. 2 (July 1927), p. 246.

[51] Also notable from this speech is the fact that Barton states he cannot recall any sculptor who worked from life. Speaking in 1927, Barton was clearly unaware or simply ignorant of the lore surrounding Ream's Lincoln commission.

[52] George Brandes, "Reminiscences of my childhood and youth," from Hoxie, ed. Vinnie Ream, p. 22.

[53] Ream was accused of not having created her own work due to "a deep-seated belief in the impossibility of women being creative artists." Nancy E. Proctor, "American Women Sculptors in Rome," p. 78.

[54] Melissa Dabakis, "Sculpting Lincoln," p. 93.

[55] Such journal entries and contemporary news stories are reproduced throughout Sherwood, Vinnie Ream.

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PLATE LIST

Figure 1: Vinnie Ream, <u>Abraham Lincoln</u> (1871), Carrara marble, 6 ft. 11 in. high, United States Capitol Rotunda, Washington, D.C., Architect of the Capitol.

Figure 2: Vinnie Ream, <u>Abraham Lincoln</u> (1871), Carrara marble, 6 ft. 11 in. high, United States Capitol Rotunda, Washington, D.C., Architect of the Capitol.

Figure 3: Unknown photographer, <u>Vinnie Ream at Work on Her Lincoln Bust</u> (ca. 1865), photographic print, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM AND GENDERED COLONIALISM AS REPRESENTED IN HÉBERT'S *THE ABENAKI GROUP*

Marie-Claude Gill-Lacroix

Figure 1: Anonymous, <u>Monument de la 'Halte dans la forêt' au Parlement de Québec</u> (1923), photograph: Silver salts on paper, 11 x 14 cm, Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec, Montreal, Canada.

In 1958, Horatio Greenough's <u>Rescue </u>(1853) and Luigi Persico's <u>Discovery of America</u> (1844), two public sculptures depicting Native Americans bowing to white men, were permanently removed from the American Capitol's main staircase.[1] Art historian Vivien Green Fryd has argued that the removal of these works was widely sanctioned because they presented narratives of colonial expansion.[2] Likewise, Parliament Hill's <u>Anishinabe Scout</u> (1918), previously crouching under Hamilton McCarthy's <u>Champlain Monument </u>(1915), was relocated in 1999 because Native Canadian leaders believed it to be "demeaning to Aboriginal people," since it also "[constructed a] colonial narrative."[3]

Although public monuments representing indigenous figures have become highly contested, surprisingly, little has been said concerning <u>The Abenaki Group</u> (1889) [fig. 1] located at the front of Québec's parliament.[4] In fact, Canadian sculptor Louis-Philippe Hébert's "tribute to the country's first inhabitants" has received no real critical attention.[5] Keeping in mind the precedent set in place by <u>Rescue</u>, <u>Discovery of America</u>, and the <u>Anishinabe Scout</u>, what follows is an attempt to determine whether <u>The Abenaki Group</u> should also be viewed as a work

promoting narratives of Westward expansion.[6] To arrive at an accurate conclusion, this article will answer the following questions: in what context was The Abenaki Group produced? What is its subject? How is it represented? It will be made evident that the manner in which Hébert chose to represent the group's female figure is indicative of a Christian subject, which in its disavowal of pagan tradition and gender roles serves to perpetuate colonial understandings of womanhood within colonized familial units. Simply put, The Abenaki Group perpetuates colonial narratives that are gender-specific.

      In "Les héros de la patrie: la façade du parlement," Denis Martin outlines the construction and design of Québec's current parliament building (1886).[7] Existing plans to construct a new edifice for Canada's French assembly were expedited in 1883 when Quebec City's original parliament was destroyed during a fire.[8] The architectural designs of Eugène-Étienne Taché [fig. 2] were deemed representative of the province's character and ideology.[9] The aim was to produce "a pantheon dedicated to the memory of Québec's national heroes."[10] As such, Taché (who, fittingly, is also credited with coining the provincial slogan "je me souviens," or "I remember,") hoped to decorate the structure's façade with several historical statues dedicated to "the glories of Québec."[11] The first sculptural work commissioned and installed was that of Frontenac (1890), followed by an allegorical work meant to represent Religion and Patriotism (1890).[12]

      Religion and patriotism were at the heart of Québec's social, cultural, and historical context during the nineteenth century.[13] It was during this period that the French Canadian clergy began amalgamating concepts of Christianity and nationality in hopes of transforming Québec's citizens into Catholic citizens: "[for the church] it was no longer a matter of teaching religion but

Figure 2: Eugène Haberer, Façade des nouveaux édifices du parlement à Québec (1880), engraving, 9 x 15 cm, Archives Nationales du Québec, Québec, Canada.

of shaping [identity] by means of religion."[14] The goals of Christian propagation were especially prevalent after 1850 when prominent Catholic and political figures began exploiting French Canada's collective memory by amplifying colonialist Christian virtues.[15] New France's foremost figures were revised and corrected to become even more devout than previously thought.[16] For instance, an 1883 biography dedicated to Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve assured readers that the founder of Ville Marie was not led by hopes of economic expansion, but by the desire to "pursue Jacques Cartier's Christian ideology through the conversion of savages, and the inherent need to found a Catholic empire."[17] Taché's new parliament, completed in tandem with Quebec's religious fervour, was not immune to narratives like the one presented above.[18] The building's central and right towers are dedications to Cartier and Maisonneuve—two figures understood to epitomize Catholic faith.[19] Sculptural renditions of New France's military generals and missionaries were also added throughout the late nineteenth and early-mid twentieth century.[20] Martin believes that these commemorative sculptures were "an important element for [the] Catholic propaganda," necessary for the transposition of religion onto Québecois nationalism.[21]

Keeping the period's emphasis on French colonialism and religiosity in mind, the decision to install The Abenaki Group at the front of the parliament's entrance seems peculiar.[22] Why would a pantheon-like structure dedicated to the remembrance (no matter how fabricated) of New France's Catholic faith prominently feature Abenakis, or "savages"?[23]

During the seventeenth century, Québec's Abenaki population was resistant to certain aspects of Christianization.[24] Though "very few refused to be Christened,"[25] a large segment rejected the gender roles assigned following Catholic marriages.[26] This is because pre-contact Abenakis were part of an egalitarian society, "in which men and women performed complementary roles."[27] Native female converts, who were forced to undertake tasks previously performed by men, found Christianity to be disempowering.[28] Consequently, many of them embraced new, Christian ways of asserting power.[29] They reiterated their importance within tribes by adopting the role of converters.[30] However, their passionate espousal of Christian work aggravated French missionaries called Jésuits, many of whom were men.[31] For instance, Chrétien Leclercq bitterly lamented the fact that "some [Abenakis] dared to perform the office and function of missionaries!"[32] Colonial determination of gender roles eventually became too pervasive for women to remain powerful entities within their tribe.[33] The "New World" thrust upon the Abenaki population, "elevated men to positions of power in the home […] essentially just for being male, Christian, and married."[34] Colonialism's patriarchal doctrines severely diminished the support available to women who felt unhappy within their nuclear families.[35] Whereas pre-contact Abenaki women were able to amicably end relations with men, Catholic law prohibited the end of marriages and newly established capitalist economies (based on fur trade) rendered women completely dependent on their hunter husbands.[36]

Now that the roles of Abenaki women - both before and following the establishment of New France - have been outlined, it is easy to understand why The Abenaki Group was placed at the front of Quebec's Christian pantheon: it is a sculpture depicting a *Catholic* Abenaki family.[37] Their Catholicism is emphasized by the work's hierarchical composition.[38] Whereas a sculpture representing a pagan Abenaki family would have had the mother and father standing in equally prominent positions,[39] Hébert's work presents the adult male as being the highest and, therefore, most important figure of the group. Meanwhile, the female figure crouches at the level of his hips. The Abenaki woman's powerlessness is further emphasized by her infantilization. Not only is she barely the height of her pubescent son, she is also interlinked with her toddler: mutually

located at the husband's/father's right side, these figures are the only two that come into direct contact. In contrast, the adult male figure stands above his children and spouse, making him the group's leader. He is also coupled with his eldest son. Both carry a bow, indicating their role as hunters and providers.[40] They are a Christianized Native family because they exemplify the patriarchal doctrine introduced by the Catholic Church and its Jésuits in New France.[41]

Admittedly, the reading provided above makes two important assumptions. The first is that Hébert was aware of Abenaki history and that his decision to produce a subservient female figure was an actual attempt to disavow pre-contact, pagan Abenaki culture. The second is that nineteenth-century viewers would also have read The Abenaki Group as a sculpture depicting a Catholic group of Natives, which would explain its emplacement among the Christian figures of French Canada. What follows is a validation of both of these assumptions.

Most of Hebert's journals and correspondence were written in the twentieth century, allowing little insight concerning the design and development of The Abenaki Group.[42] Despite this limitation, Hébert's auto-biography, Étapes de ma vie (1901),[43] does indicate that he was fairly familiar with the Christianization of Native Canadians, especially that of Abenakis:

> "The missionaries' endless travels with the savages, their nomadic life, wintering in the forests sheltered by wretched huts of bark; the elk hunts on snowshoes through deep snow, the journeys on lakes and rivers in frail bark canoes, their customs, their wars; the cruelty of the savages, the deceitful practices, the invocation of the Manitou etc., held me strangely spellbound [as a child]."[44]

This quote is telling because it highlights Hebert's knowledge of "pagan" Abenaki practices.[45] In fact, "the invocation of the Manitou" was a popular ceremony during which Abenaki-Algonkians would call upon the spirit Manitou, understood as nature's "life-giving force," to provide them with natural goods.[46] It is not unreasonable to assume that Hébert, who had knowledge of the tribes' spiritual practices, was also well aware of the prominent role women occupied before their mass christening (after all, Abenaki women were always the ones charged with performing spiritual convocations).[47] If his goal was to present a pagan Abenaki group, then he certainly would have sculpted the piece's adults as equivalently powerful.[48] However, his decision to present the Abenaki woman as a bowing, infantilized figure indicates his real intent was to produce a group of Christian Abenakis.[49]

The religious nature of his work is further evident by the partial nudity of his female figure.[50] The fact that her right breast is exposed specifies that the statue must rely on "colonial narratives to promote […] [Europeans] as Christianizing saviours of the uncivilized pagan."[51] Canonical artworks of Native women produced during the nineteenth century were often informed by the notion that, "Christianity [was] intrinsically superior to all other […] religions."[52] As such, artists responsible for these works represented their subjects as liminal bodies capable of enabling Western civilization's eradication of "pagan savagery."[53] Sculptures of Native women were often semi-clothed in order to denote "the influences of Christianity upon the savage and the savage upon Christianity."[54] For instance, Joseph Mozier's Pocahontas (1859), like the mother in the Abenaki family, presents a single, exposed breast.[55] Her semi-nudity is both a nod to her indigenous spirituality and an indication that, ultimately, Christianity was able to triumph over it.[56] Hébert was, without a doubt, conscious of Europe's sculptural norms of colonial aestheticism.[57] Although the majority of his artistic education took place in Quebec, he spent several years studying sculpture in France.[58] In fact, it

was while residing in Paris that he completed The Abenaki Group.[59] There, the work was lauded by critics and awarded a Medal of Honour at the Universal Exposition of 1889.[60] Europeans' endorsement of the work suggests that it fit the period's colonial tenants of sculptural representation which, as explained above, dictated that indigenous female subjects be presented as liminal grounds for Christian indoctrination.[61] The Abenaki woman's exposed breast likely serves to indicate Jésuits' triumph over "pagan" practices.[62] It is no wonder Taché wanted this Abenaki family to be presented among New France's Christian colonialists: they were the product of Europe's Christian mission![63]

When the sculpture was inaugurated in Québec City, on 26 August 1890, the reception was mixed.[64] Members of the audience were shocked by the Abenaki woman's exposed breast.[65] An article published in Montreal's La Presse on 8 September 1890 described the sculpture as "depraved."[66] Bruno Hébert, in his biography of Louis-Phillippe Hébert, states that the public's reservation was caused by its Catholic prudishness, which produced resentment toward the sight of any and all forms of nudity.[67] His simplistic reasoning completely de-contextualizes nineteenth-century Québecois audiences. In truth, French Canadians were not all that phased by sculptural depictions of nudity - as long as these were allegorical. This is made obvious by the manner in which art critics reacted to Quebec City's Champlain Monument (1899).[68] When the work's official maquette was exposed in 1896 (just six years following the inauguration of The Abenaki Group), members of the press were very pleased with the allegorical work produced at the base of the monument, even though a semi nude woman was prominently featured.[69] One writer for La Presse stated that the allegorical figure was "prodigious and full of life."[70] Seeing as the breast of a winged woman (meant to represent Champlain's "fame") did not cause the same shock as that of an Abenaki woman, it becomes clear that French Canadian viewers did not perceive The Abenaki Group to be an allegorical "tribute to the country's first inhabitants."[71] Instead, I would argue that they understood The Abenaki Group to be a representation of contemporaneous Abenakis. As such, their dislike of Hébert's work was not caused by the sight of an exposed breast (as Bruno Hébert would have it), but by the sight of an exposed Catholic woman.[72]

Does The Abenaki Group perpetuate colonial narratives? The short answer is yes. Through its presentation of a Christian Abenaki family, this public monument disavowed "pagan" norms of gender equality and promoted colonial requirements of female subservience within Native nuclear families.[73] Perhaps a more important question (one that has yet to be addressed in this article or elsewhere) is: why has this piece not engendered the same level of criticism as the Anishnabe Scout, Rescue, or Discovery of America?[74]

According to Elizabeth Bird, the gendered iconography of Native women naturalizes male appropriation of their cultural and sexual identities.[75] Specifically, she finds that the popular presentation of "Indian" women as willing rejecters of traditional norms (usually for the sake of romantic affairs) has perpetuated their negligibility in the eyes of men.[76] So while the racial dichotomization of Natives and Whites operates to affirm cultural stereotypes,[77] the creation of gendered binaries between men and Aboriginal women establishes the latter's continued cultural dispensability, often characterized through her physical dispossession.[78] Bird's theory is of significance, especially in the case of Canada where indigenous women are disproportionately represented as victims of physical and sexual violence.[79] Could it be that the mistreatment of indigenous women has become so commonplace that it is no longer visible - even when memorialized in front of a government building?[80] This would certainly explain why, despite the uproar associated with racially dichotomous public monuments, The Abenaki

Group's gendered hierarchy has remained unremarked and unexamined.[81] Ultimately, it is certain that many more Canadian public monuments have remained un-criticized due to the fact that they perpetuate colonial narratives through a gendered, rather than an exclusively racial, lens.[82]

ENDNOTES

[1] Vivien Green Fryd, "Two Sculptures for the Capitol: Horatio Greenough's 'Rescue' and Luigi Persico's 'Discovery of America'," The American Art Journal, vol. 19, no. 2 (Spring 1987), pp. 17-20.

[2] Fryd, "Two Sculptures," pp. 22, 37.

[3] Susan Hart, "Lurking in the Bushes: Ottawa's 'Anishinabe Scout'," Espace: Art Actuel, no. 72 (2005), pp. 14-15.

[4] Denis Martin, "Les héros de la patrie: la façade du parlement," Cap aux diamants, vol. 1, no. 4 (1986), p. 11.

[5] The original text reads as follows: "La Halte dans la forêt [a été] conçu pour rendre hommmage aux premiers habitants du pays." Martin, "Les héros," pp. 10-11.

[6] Fryd, "Two Sculptures," pp. 22, 37; Hart, "Lurking in the Bushes," pp. 14-15.

[7] This title translates as follows: "National Heroes: the Parliament's Façade." Martin, "Les héros," p. 9.

[8] Martin, "Les héros," p. 10.

[9] Martin, "Les héros," pp. 10-13.

[10] The original text reads as follows: "Taché […] voulais faire du Palais legislatif un panthéon consacré à la mémoire des personnages illustre de notre histoire." Martin, "Les héros," p. 10.

[11] "[Taché voulait] des personages [représentant] la gloire du passé nationale." Martin, "Les héros," p. 10.

[12] Martin, "Les héros," p. 11.

[13] Martin, "Les héros," p. 11.

[14] Martin, "Les héros," p. 11; Brigitte Caulier, "Developing Christians, Catholics, and Citizens: Quebec Churches and School Religion from the Turn of the Twentieth Century to 1960," Churches and Social Order in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Canada, ed. Michael Gauvreau (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2006), p. 179.

[15] Martin, "Les héros," p. 11.

[16] Martin, "Les héros," p. 11.

[17] The original text reads as follows: "Maisonneuve [non pas comme] les commerçants [qui avaient] le désir de s'enrichir, poursuivie la pensé Chrétienne de Jacques Cartier en convertissant les sauvages et en fondant un empire Catholique." M.H. J. J. B. Chouinard, Paul de Chomedey Sieur de Maisonneuve: Fondateur de Montréal, etudes historique et bibliographique, 1640-1665 (Québec: A. Coté, 1882), p. 26; Martin, "Les héros," p. 11.

[18] Martin, "Les héros," pp. 11-13.

[19] Chouinard, Paul de Chomedey, p. 26; Martin, "Les héros," p. 12.

[20] Martin, "Les héros," p. 12.

[21] The original text reads as follows: "la statuaire commémorative apparait comme un élément important de la propagande du clergé Canadien Français." Martin, "Les héros," p. 13.

[22] Martin, "Les héros," pp.10-13.

[23] Chouinard, Paul de Chomedey, p. 26; Martin, "Les héros," pp. 9-11.

[24] The Abenakis (also called Wabanakis) represented in The Abenaki Group (1890) are certainly from Quebec. This province has housed Canada's only two Abenaki lands (Odanak and Wôlinak) since the tribe's northward migration in 1700. "Abénaquis," Secrétariat des affaires autochtones du Québec, http://www.autochtones.gouv.qc.ca/relations autochtones/profils_nations/abenaquis.htm (date of last access 27 November 2014); Alice N. Nash, "Gender and Conversion in New France," The Abiding Frontier: Family, Gender and Religion in Wabanaki History, 1600-1763 (New York: PhD Department of History, Columbia University, 1997), p. 201.

[25] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 201.

[26] Men supposedly resented doing fieldwork (typically a woman's job) and women felt disempowered by imposed morals of marital subservience. Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 201, 210.

[27] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 210.

[28] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 201, 210.

[29] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 210.

[30] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 206-208, 210.

[31] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 204.

[32] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 204.

[33] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 229.

[34] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 229.

[35] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 229.

[36] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 229-230.

[37] The Abenaki Group is the translation usually provided for the work's original title: La Famille D'Abénaquis. Hébert wanted viewers to understand his work as a depiction of an actual nuclear family, not a mere grouping of Native Canadians. Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, "Hébert in Paris," Louis-Philippe Hébert, ed. Daniel Drouin (Montreal: MBAM, 2001), p. 77.

[38] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 229.

[39] This would have been representative of the "complementary roles" Abenakis espoused before European contact. Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 210.

[40] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 229-230.

[41] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 204-205, 229.

[42] *The Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec in Montreal* (Banq) only holds one written document pertaining to Louis-Philippe Hébert produced during the nineteenth century: a journal in which Hébert lists his commissions and ideas. Louis Philippe Hébert, Fragment D'un Journal de Phillippe Hebert [sic], sculpteur, 1886-1901, Serie 1, File D5, CA M001 BM028-1-D5, Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec, Centre d'archives de Montréal, Canada; In a short entry (4 October 1886) he describes signing the contract for Québec Parliament sculptures, but does not indicate which ones he is referring to. Hébert, Fragment D'un Journal, p. 2.

[43] Étapes de ma vie translates to "Steps of My Life."

[44] This is a translation provided by François-Marc Gagnon in "Indian Iconography of Hébert." François-Marc Gagnon, "Indian Iconography of Hébert," Louis-Philippe Hébert, ed. Daniel Drouin (Montreal: MBAM, 2001), pp. 163-164. The original manuscript is part of the Gertrude Hébert collection in Chicoutimi. Bernard Pothier, "Un Duel de Philippe Hébert et ses Variantes," Journal of Canadian Art History, vol. 15, no. 2 (1993), p. 62.

[45] Edward J. Lenik, Picture Rocks: American Indian Rock Art in the Northeast Woodlands, (Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2002) p. 102.

[46] Lenik, Picture Rocks, p. 102.

[47] Gagnon, "Indian Iconography," pp. 163-164; Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 237.

[48] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 210.

[49] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," p. 229.

[50] Charmaine A. Nelson, "White Slaves and Black Masters: Appropriation and Disavowal in Hiram Powers's Greek Slave," The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. 98-105.

[51] Nelson, "White Slaves," p. 100.

[52] Nelson, "White Slaves," p. 102.

[53] Nelson, "White Slaves," p. 98.

[54] This quote is taken from correspondence by E.D. Palmer. Nelson, "White Slaves," pp. 102, 209.

[55] Nelson, "White Slaves," p. 104.

[56] Nelson, "White Slaves," pp. 103-104.

[57] Yves Lacasse, "Hébert, Louis-Philippe," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, http://www6.biographi.ca/en/bio/hebert_louis_philippe_14E.html?revision_id=5516 (date of last access 29 November 2014)

[58] Lacasse, "Hébert," (date of last access 29 November 2014)

[59] Lacasse, "Hébert," (date of last access 29 November 2014)

[60] Lacasse, "Hébert," (date of last access 29 November 2014)

[61] Nelson, "White Slaves," pp. 98-105.

[62] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 204-205, 229; Nelson, "White Slaves," pp. 103-104.

[63] Martin, "Les héros," pp. 10-13; Nelson, "White Slaves," pp. 98-105.

[64] Bruno Hébert, Philippe Hébert, Sculpteur, (Montreal: Fides, 1973), p. 74.

[65] Hébert, Philippe Hébert, p. 74

[66] The original text reads as follows: "Sujet dépravé et libertin." Anonymous, "M. Philippe Hébert à Montréal," La Presse, Monday, 8 September 1890, no. 265, p. 4, La Presse (Montréal), Reel 7 Microfilm AN63 M65 P74: 2 Jan 1890-31 Dec 1890, McLennan Library, McGill University, Montreal, Canada; Jean Pierre Labiau, "Limited-edition bronzes: Hébert's Statuettes," Louis-Philippe Hébert, ed. Daniel Drouin, (Montreal: MBAM, 2001), p. 14.

[67] Hébert, Philippe Hébert, p. 74.

[68] Ronald Rudin, Founding Fathers: the celebration of Champlain and Laval in the Streets of Quebec (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), pp. 66-70.

[69] Anonymous, "Monument Champlain: Exposition des Maquettes et Dessins," La Presse, Wednesday, 26 February 1896, no. 97, p. 1, La Presse (Montréal), Reel 15 Microfilm AN63 M65 P74: 1 Aou 1895- 29 Fev 1896, McLennan Library, McGill University, Montreal, Canada; Rudin, Founding Fathers, pp. 68-70; Hébert, Philippe Hébert, p. 74.

[70] The original text reads as follows: "prodigieuse de vitalité." Anonymous, "Monument Champlain," p. 1.

[71] Denis Martin describes the piece as "[un] hommage aux premiers habitants du pays" (Martin, "Les héros," p. 10); Rudin, Founding Fathers, p. 70.

[72] Hébert, Philippe Hébert, p. 74.

[73] Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 201, 204-206, 208, 210, 229-230; Nelson, "White Slaves," pp. 98-105.

[74] Fryd, "Two Sculptures," pp. 22, 37; Hart, "Lurking in the Bushes," pp. 14-15; Martin, "Les héros," p. 10.

[75] Elizabeth Bird,"Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media," Journal of Communication, vol. 49, no. 3 (September 1999), pp. 72, 80.

[76] Bird, "Gendered Construction," pp. 72-78.

[77] Bird, "Gendered Construction," pp. 61, 63-72.

[78] Bird, "Gendered Construction," pp. 72-74, 79-80.

[79] Katie Scrim, "Aboriginal Victimization in Canada: A Summary of the Literature," Canadian Department of Justice, http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/rd3-rr3/p3.html (date of last access 30 November 2014)

[80] Martin, "Les héros," p. 11.

[81] Fryd, "Two Sculptures," pp. 22, 37; Hart, "Lurking in the Bushes," pp. 14-15; Martin, "Les héros," p. 10.

[82] Bird, "Gendered Construction," pp. 64-80; Fryd, "Two Sculptures," pp. 22, 37; Hart, "Lurking in the Bushes," pp.14-15; Martin, "Les héros," p. 10; Nash, "Gender and Conversion," pp. 201, 204-206, 208, 210, 229-230; Scrim, "Aboriginal Victimization," (date of last access 30 November 2014)

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Figure 1: Anonymous, <u>Monument de la 'Halte dans la forêt' au Parlement de Québec</u> (1923), photograph: Silver salts on paper, 11 x 14 cm, Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec, Montreal, Canada.

Figure 2: Eugène Haberer, <u>Façade des nouveaux édifices du parlement à Québec</u> (1880), engraving, 9 x 15 cm, Archives Nationales du Québec, Québec, Canada.

NOT YET DEAD: THE NATIVE MALE BODY IN NEOCLASSICAL SCULPTURE
Kristen Kephalas

      "Indian" and "savage" denote the most popular terms for Native American peoples in the nineteenth century. As it is widely known that European Americans and Native peoples have had strained relationships since first contact, it is no accident that these words carry pejorative connotations; North American history is replete with violent conflicts between these two groups. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, the American government had supposedly quelled the perceived threat of Native American communities.[1] Neoclassical sculpture utilized historical allegory as a tool to express wider societal attitudes. When it came to depicting Native American subjects, sculptors employed Hellenistic Greco-Roman history as a means of reflecting these sentiments to the bourgeois consumers of art. The resulting sculptures depict the Native man as a defeated hero forced into submission, with the most poignant of examples being The Dying Tecumseh (1856) by Ferdinand Pettrich [fig. 1].

      In the nineteenth century, "high" art consumption was relegated to a bourgeois upper class, especially in the post-Civil War era.[2] This was intrinsically tied to their access to education, especially to historical resources. The bourgeoisie of Boston embodied this privilege. Like many other major northern cities, Boston had elite cultural organizations and libraries dedicated to art and history.[3] These organizations were not open to the general public, rather, they required the patron to pay a hefty membership fee in order to enter.[4] This kind of cultural involvement was private and so the wealthiest people got an education that the common person could not. During this century, higher education establishments in the United States grew rapidly.[5] Between 1800 and 1850, Harvard University grew from having six to twenty buildings, gained fifteen professorships, and its library of resources increased from fifteen thousand books to sixty-five thousand books.[6] Although an interest in higher education grew rapidly in the young country, it

Figure 1: Ferdinand Pettrich, The Dying Tecumseh (1856), marble, 93.1 x 197.2 x 136.6 cm, Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C.

is evident from the high costs that it was reserved for the wealthy. Sculptors, knowing that they were appealing to an elite and educated audience, were able to include historical references to clarify the narrative of their pieces.

Even the viewing of art was restricted. The Dying Tecumseh, a sculpture of a Shawnee chief to be discussed further in this essay, was displayed in the Capitol after the Civil War; therefore it was inaccessible for broad public viewing. In 1859, prior to the Civil War, the sculpture was shown in galleries across the United Sates, including a public gallery in New York City.[7] By 1864 it was placed in the House of Representatives, then in 1868 it was moved to the Capitol crypt built for George Washington.[8] Limiting public access to the piece ensured a exclusive viewership, mainly composed of the wealthy. The consumption of "high" art was not meant for the general public who would likely not understand the historical narratives that accompanied much of the sculpture and painting of this era.[9]

While conditions for the bourgeois class were steadily improving, Native American groups, especially those who inhabited the northeastern part of America, were increasingly oppressed. It is important to understand the Native plight before examining how this translated into art. The events of the nineteenth century, such as the War of 1812 and the Indian Removal Act of 1830, altered the balance of power between Native American groups and the American government. In the War of 1812, Chief Tecumseh led and united a group of Shawnee, Miami, and Potawatomi against the Americans who wished to force them out of their lands.[10] Tecumseh's forces met defeat, and the chief himself was murdered and mutilated.[11] In a final act of dominance, the soldiers supposedly sliced off and tanned pieces of Tecumseh's skin as souvenirs of their victory.[12] His body came to represent a white political tool; many men claimed they were responsible for the great chief's death in order to gain voter support.[13] This method was so effective it helped a cavalry commander of the victorious force, Richard Johnson, win a seat in the Senate, then the Vice Presidency in 1836.[14] As Tecumseh's death began serving the Americans positively, his legacy changed. He and his comrades were no longer the fearsome "Indians" who threatened America's stability, instead they were seen as noble savages advocating for their inevitably doomed people.[15]

Tecumseh's posthumous transformation was not isolated. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 demonstrated the government's newly found confidence in dealing with the Native population. The act, which forced migration of the tribes east of the Mississippi River to the west, was met with resistance, but was ultimately successful.[16] From the American perspective, the Act was supposedly beneficial to both sides. However, the expansionist aims of the Act were well expressed by President Andrew Jackson:

> "It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements, is approaching to a happy consummation… It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the General and State Governments, on account of the Indians. It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites… enable them to pursue happiness in their own way, and under their own rude institutions…"[17]

In this passage alone, the Natives are portrayed as "savage" and unfit for white society while also insinuating that they were a burden to the white administration. However, the overall shift in attitude towards the Native peoples was evident in the next part of his address:

"Towards the aborigines of the country no one can indulge a more friendly feeling than myself, or would go further in attempting to reclaim them from their wandering habits, and make them a happy and prosperous people."[18]

There is a patronizing, even pitiful subtext here. The "aborigines" were no longer considered threatening in their fierce differences and resistance to white colonialism, simply lost and in need of guidance. It is implied that until the Natives submitted to assimilation, they would continue to be pushed out with their "wandering habits."[19]

Nineteenth-century neoclassical sculpture reflected the American government's newly imperious view of Native Americans. Before the mid-nineteenth century, Natives posed a threat to the white settlers, but the threat was being moved increasingly westward.[20] There was, instead, a growing fascination with the image of the "Indian".[21] Native men were popularly depicted as heroic figures whose bodies shared the same anatomy as the classical Greek nude: muscular, naked, and stoic in the face of their doomed situation.[22] One very early example of the hero-Indian hybrid is The Death of General Wolfe (1771) by Benjamin West, which depicts an indigenous character sitting calmly and pensively while the European figures are painted in distress. The Native is quite muscular and nearly naked, starkly contrasted by his fully clothed, white-skinned peers.

Figure 2: Thomas Crawford, The Indian: The Dying Chief Contemplating the Progress of Civilization (1856), marble and wood, 152.4 x 141 x 71.1 cm, The New-York Historical Society, New York City.

By the mid-nineteenth century, artistic renditions of Native men commonly depicted their final moment before death. The extinction of Native life had become a popular subject in American art.[23] Thomas Crawford's artwork The Indian: The Dying Chief Contemplating the Progress of Civilization (1856) [fig. 2] aptly illustrates the conflation of noble strength and death. He is naked, except for his moccasins and a headdress, which distinguishes his Nativeness. His body is impressively fit, but the physically powerful subject is seated with his head in his hands, defeated. This exemplifies the most important understanding of the dying Native image: the figures are at their weakest living point, but they are not yet dead. This understanding is easily transposed to the reality of Native groups east of the Mississippi as they were in the process of

Figure 3: <u>The Dying Gaul</u> (1st century CE copy of original ca. 220 BCE), marble, 94 × 186.5 × 89 cm, Archivo Fotografico dei Musei Capitolini, Musei Capitolini, Rome, Italy.

being expelled, but still not entirely eradicated from white America.[24] Since the attitude towards the Natives has shifted toward both pity and admiration for their "savage" way of living, sculptors took to mythologizing the Native body.[25] This interest in the mythologized Native body could be interpreted as a way for America to relegate Native existence to the past, expressing their intentions to erase the diverse Native communities in their whitewashed future.

  Neoclassical sculptors and their American patrons ultimately dismissed the Natives' right to self-representation by imposing mythologized images upon them. As exemplified by the sculptures of this era, white dominant culture settled on an amalgamated image of the noble savage and the Greek hero. Thus, the connections to antiquity were often explicit and direct. The highly popular Hellenistic sculpture, <u>The Dying Gaul</u> (1st century CE) [fig. 3], inspired sculptural depictions of Natives in the nineteenth century.[26] One example, <u>The Wounded Indian</u> (1850) [fig. 4] by Peter Stephenson is modeled after the ancient sculpture.[27]

  <u>The Dying Gaul</u> was an important and beloved sculpture in the nineteenth century. Displayed at Rome, it was a highly popular attraction for those on the Grand Tour.[28] It was so popular that copies of the sculpture were being made in Europe into the late 1700's.[29] It is therefore understandable to assume that the educated bourgeoisie of America was familiar with this famous sculpture. However, before the mid-nineteenth century, the sculpture was widely misunderstood to represent a dying gladiator, and was incorrectly coined, <u>The Dying Gladiator</u>.[30] Lord Byron popularized this mistake in a poem that recounted his viewing of the sculpture.[31] In his poem, "Childe Harolde's Pilgrimage," he wrote:

> "I see before me the Gladiator lie:
> He leans upon his hand - his manly brow
> Consents to death, but conquers agony,

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And his drooped head sinks gradually low
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him: he is gone."[32]

Since his poems were very popular, the misinterpretation was perpetuated, even though many people apparently thought it was odd for the Romans to depict the death of their strongest warriors.[33] The truth behind the sculpture was actually that the popular Roman version in Lord Byron's poem was a copy of the lost Attalid original. In the third century BCE, Attalos I defeated the fierce northern tribe of the Gauls.[34] This difficult victory allowed him to be proclaimed king and he celebrated the achievement by commissioning sculptures to memorialize the event.[35] The sculpture was meant to represent the Greeks' civilized victory over the barbarism and savagery of the Gauls.[36] The Romans then went on to copy the sculpture nearly three hundred years later, possibly because the Gallic tribes continued to pose a threat to Roman civilization.[37] In 1821, antiquarian Antonio Nibby confirmed in both lecture and writing that the sculpture was actually of an enemy Gaul.[38] As the nineteenth century progressed, this information circulated, and it was understood that the sculpture was in fact The Dying Gaul and not The Dying Gladiator.[39] By the mid-nineteenth century, The Dying Gaul's narrative was widely known enough to act as inspiration for many neoclassical depictions of the Native body. The stories of the Gauls and the Natives, in the eyes of the educated art consumers of

Figure 4: Peter Stephenson, The Wounded Indian (1848-1850), marble, 92 x 149.9 x 78.7 cm, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA, Gift of James H. Ricau and Museum Purchase 86.522.

America, shared several parallels; in both cases, "civilization" prevailed over "savagery". By the time sculptures like The Wounded Indian and Pettrich's The Dying Tecumseh were created, the artists knew that they were drawing from an ancient narrative about the Gauls that would be understood by educated art consumers. H.B. Walters, an early twentieth-century historical writer, describes:

"In The Dying Gaul we see the unmistakable indications of a barbarian, in the rough matted hair, the moustache, and the collar or tore of twisted gold round his neck, as well as

in the shape of his shield. The anatomical details are executed with almost Lysippian truth
and vigour, and the whole conception shows that the Greek of the period could feel
admiration for the courage, and pity for the fate, of his fallen foe.[40]

In the nineteenth century, Americans were likely feeling towards the Native Americans as the
Greeks had felt towards the Gauls upon finally vanquishing them. Now that the Indian Removal
Act was literally pushing Natives out of their lands, the white population could appreciate them
from the stance and distance of the victor.

The Dying Tecumseh is the best example in this context of an ancient event being
transposed onto a nineteenth-century narrative. The sculptor, Ferdinand Pettrich, was of German
origin, but moved to Rome at the age of twenty-one to study under the acclaimed neoclassicist
Albert B. Thorvaldsen.[41] As a neoclassical sculpture student in Rome, it is highly unlikely that
Pettrich did not study the immensely popular sculpture of The Dying Gaul. In fact, according to
the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Pettrich's sculpture intentionally draws upon The Dying
Gaul.[42] The sculptor then moved to the United States in 1835 where he became enamoured by
the Native body.[43] Father Antionio Bresciani describes Pettrich in The Art Journal (1868):

> "The Chevalier Pettrich, one of the most celebrated pupils of the admirable Roman school
> having lived many years in the United States of America had every opportunity to examine
> with his skillful artistic eye the most minute features and exact forms of the heads of the
> different savage tribes which he undertook to portray."[44]

Pettrich's "skillful artistic eye" that took in "the most minute features and exact forms" of
the Native body was actually not as familiar with the Native chiefs as Bresciani claims.[45] He
rendered likenesses of Natives based on chiefs who came to Washington to negotiate treaties in
light of the anti-Native legislation.[46] It is likely that he did not spend much time with the
individual chiefs at all. Instead, he created a store of general images of Native males to use for
future projects.[47] He was also inspired by the idea of Native males embodying Greek
mythological heroes like Apollo and Achilles.[48] Consequently, his artistic renditions of Natives
are better interpreted as types rather than portraits. The Dying Tecumseh is one of these pseudo-
portraits. By the time Pettrich had finished sculpting the piece, Tecumseh had been dead for
almost fifty years. Though it is called a portrait, there are many inaccuracies on the body that
suggest that Pettrich's goal was not authenticity. The Dying Tecumseh shows the chief in
feathered leggings and laced moccasins adorned with even more feathers. In reality, Tecumseh
and all other Native warriors were likely dressed in a crossover between Shawnee and European
battle garb, which would have been more practical.[49] However, this fact does not fit the
mythologized Native hero's body that the neoclassicists seemed to prefer, so Pettrich rendered
the chief in a way that he believed was most beneficial to his colonial narrative. By sculpting the
chief in stereotypically "Indian" regalia, he othered Tecumseh through appearance in the same
way that The Dying Gaul was differentiated from the clean-shaven, well-groomed Greek.

It is also noted that Pettrich himself wanted to inspire educated viewers with his work.[50] In
1859, The New York Herald advertised the sculpture for "lovers of the beautiful" who would,
"be charmed by this elegant piece of statuary."[51] The sculpture was also put forth as a
"delineation of this great Chieftan, Tecumseh."[52] The claim, however, was inaccurate as the
word "delineation" implies correct likeness, and this article has already concluded that The
Dying Tecumseh is wrought with inaccuracies about Shawnee appearance. Pettrich instead

abstracted the very real personage of Tecumseh. The sculptor was unconcerned with memorializing the history and greatness of the chief.[53] The Dying Tecumseh should be understood as a representation of the wider relationship between the Natives and white Americans in the mid to late nineteenth century, not as a portrait of a historical figure. Tecumseh's death was mythologized by Pettrich to reinforce the idea that even the greatest of Native chiefs could not resist the expansion of America. Even without Pettrich's rendition, Tecumseh's legacy had already changed to benefit American aims.

The nineteenth century marked a turning point in American-Native relations, which the art produced at the time strongly reflects. American efforts to subdue Native resistance were increasingly successful, most notably the War of 1812 and the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Consequently, neoclassical sculptors seized these new circumstances to depict the Native body in a way that was pleasant and acceptable to white, bourgeois American art consumers.[54] Their interest in history and art intersected with their fascination with the newly defeated Native persona. Thus, artists like Ferdinand Pettrich, Peter Stephenson, and Thomas Crawford created a mythologized Native male body that recalled the classical Greek ideal. These bodies, though physically strong, were often presented in the process of their deaths, representing the wider expulsion of the once formidable Native peoples. The most popular template was The Dying Gaul, whose significance for the ancients was then echoed by nineteenth-century Americans. For both victors, the sculptures symbolized a perception that "civilization" had triumphed over "savagery".

ENDNOTES

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BROUGHT INTO LIGHT: HOW AND WHY EXTERNAL, TEMPORAL POLYCHROMY BY MOONLIGHT AND TORCHLIGHT WAS AN ACCEPTED AND REVERED PRACTICE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY SCULPTURE

Olivia Maccioni

Figure 1: Joseph Mallord William Turner, <u>Modern Rome-Campo Vaccino</u> (1839), oil on canvas, 36 x 48 in., The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, United States.

The preface of Nathaniel Hawthorne's <u>Marble Faun</u> (1860) notes, "Italy, as the site of [Hawthorne's] Romance, was chiefly valuable to him as affording a sort of poetic or fairy precinct, where actualities would not be so terribly insisted upon, as they are, and must needs be, in America."[1] In other words, for Americans in the nineteenth century, Italy was seen as an escape from the reality and challenges of their homeland. It offered a "past endowed with the solidity of 'the square blocks of granite wherewith the Romans built their lives'."[2] America, like England, was experiencing rapid and immense changes during this period. With the Industrial Revolution creating a new middle class and the Civil War and emancipation liberating scores of enslaved Africans in America, the white, classical western tradition was being questioned and greatly challenged. Thus, the idea and image of Rome as a preserved, mystic, classical world of white marble ruins became incredibly attractive to those who were pining for times past, when white, western, bourgeois rule remained unchallenged and seemingly set in stone.

This was reflected not only in "neoclassicism's complex rejection"[3] and fear of polychromy or coloured stone, but also within the practice of the revered Grand Tour. Both practices became a way for white, bourgeois men to indulge in the image of "pure," white stone and the history of the classical tradition, in turn, ridding themselves of their fear and anxiety of a changing, "coloured" society. However, *temporal* polychromy, achieved through moonlight and

torchlight walks, became an acceptable and enticing form of colouring marble sculpture and stone, especially for men, due to its reinforcement of nineteenth-century bourgeois cultural values, its potential to offer cultural capital, and its ability to be controlled by the viewer.

Polychromy, in the form of externally pigmenting marble with moonlight on Grand Tourists' excursions through Roman ruins, became an accepted and revered practice due to its ability to fulfill the tourists' mystical, idealized expectations of Rome. As Art Historian Charmaine Nelson argues, to be considered a proper cultural tourist, one needed to prepare for the "never-before-seen" by "the imagining of experience via visual and literary triggers, such as plaster casts of canonical ancient sculpture, engravings of the *campagna*, and travel narratives of other tourists."[4] Thus, before their trip to Rome, tourists would have spent time imagining and dreaming of the classical world that was supposed to reveal itself upon arrival. However, for many, this ended in disappointment resulting in the idea that

Figure 2: Caspar David Friedrich, Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog (1818), oil on canvas, 95 cm x 75 cm, Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany.

Rome's classical mystique was fading; an image often found in paintings of the period, like Joseph Mallord William Turner's Modern Rome-Campo Vaccino (1839) [fig. 1].

In his travel narrative Six Months in Italy [1853], George Stillman Hillard notes:

"The traveller who visits Rome with a mind at all inhabited by images from books, especially if he come from a country like ours, where all is new, enters it with certain vague and magnificent expectations on the subject of ruins, which are pretty sure to end in disappointment."[5]

As Hillard notes, modernization and the Industrial Revolution, among other changes, were permeating the tourists' homeland with the "new," simultaneously leaving many distraught and pining for the "ruins" and reminders of the Old World. For instance, many paintings of the era, such as Caspar David Friedrich's Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog (1818) [fig. 2], picture human figures staring into Romanticized natural scenes and phenomena. However, Italy was also experiencing its own modernization, and thus, was unable to offer the pristine, classical world of ruin that cultural tourists sought after.[6] Rather, as nineteenth-century cultural tourist George Stillman Hillar argues, "the trail of the present [was] everywhere over the past;"[7] the city now filled with the hustle and bustle of everyday modern life and work. During the day, popular tourist sites such as the Trevi Fountain were not draped in a classical mystique, but rather the

"stalls of vegetable and fruit-dealers, chestnut-roasters, cigar-venders."[8] However, upon viewing these same areas under the light of the moon, serving to externally colour the stone, "now, at nearly midnight, the piazza [became] a solitude; and it was a delight to behold this untamable water, sporting by itself in the moonshine."[9] It was under moonlight that the imagined, mystical Rome of nineteenth-century tourist literature revealed itself. The same was true when viewing the Colosseum by moonlight, with Hillard noting, "by day, the Coliseum is an impressive fact; by night, it is a stately vision. By day, it is a lifeless form; by night, a vital thought."[10] When draped in moonlight, Rome lived up to both the vision and imagination of the previously disappointed cultural tourists, and in turn became a widely celebrated activity and a practice of external polychromy.

Tourists indulged heavily in this practice, creating a scene of luxury in which countless parties would visit on any given night to sing, dance, and drink among the moonlit ruins.[11] This act fulfilled Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital in various senses.[12] For instance, these moonlit "parties" illustrated one's wherewithal to access these ruins at night, demonstrating particular tourists' "authenticity of material contact"[13] with such esteemed historical pieces of art, as well as a "mastery of time."[14] This practice also demonstrated cultural capital in the sense that it proclaimed one's ability to understand and narrate the so-called "inner soul"[15] of the art. Bourdieu notes that bourgeois society attempted to "impose their recognition of values" on art in separating it "by space or by time from the habitus for which it was intended."[16] In other words, Grand Tourists would impose their own meanings upon the ancient art, based upon popular cultural values of their own time to try and demonstrate cultural capital. For example, tourists would party amongst the ruins because popular art of the time like Thomas Couture's Romans During the Decadence (1847) [fig. 3] pictured Romans luxuriating in the same way. In this way, neoclassicists were imposing their own bourgeois ideas on classical works in the attempt to demonstrate cultural capital. Tourists attempted to elicit "knowledge…of the habitus,"[17] or at

Figure 3: Thomas Couture, Romans During the Decadence (1847), oil on canvas, 472 x 772 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France.

least what they believed historical narratives of these places to be to gain cultural capital. For instance, Hillard noted the image of a moonlit Colosseum, as represented in J.M.W. Turner's The Colosseum, Rome, by Moonlight (1819) [fig. 4]:

> "Deep vaults of gloom where the eye meets only an ebon wall, but upon which the fancy paints innumerable pictures in solemn, splendid, and tragic colors. Shadowy forms of emperor and lector, and vestal virgin and gladiator and martyr, come out of the darkness, and pass before us in long and silent procession."[18]

As such, Hillard was eliciting an "intellectual and sensorial response"[19] to the art, demonstrating his cultural capital. Furthermore, he was showing his ability to access the scene in front of him physically – also a form of cultural capital – as well as an ability to reach the "inner soul" of the artwork by embedding his own subjective idea of a classical narrative; one of the nineteenth century's ideal

Figure 4: Joseph Mallord William Turner, The Colosseum, Rome, by Moonlight (1819), watercolour, Gouache and Pencil on White Wove Paper, 232 x 369 mm, Tate Britain, London, United Kingdom.

characters like "vestal virgins" and dominating "emperors." The external polychromy of moonlight was what allowed for the idealized, mystical, classical Rome of the travel guides to expose itself, and thus was celebrated in its ability to illustrate one's acquisition of cultural capital as a response to the scenery.

This practice of temporal, external polychromy by moonlight also reinforced nineteenth-century ideals of male superiority, thus becoming an even more celebrated practice of polychromy, especially to bourgeois, male cultural tourists. Whereas men, like Hillard, elicited cultural capital from this practice, women were said to have turned to states of hysteria, lost in the "gloomy" and "solemn" space that Hillard described. This idea of male superiority is illustrated within Hawthorne's descriptions of the moonlit excursion to the Colosseum in his novel Marble Faun (1860). In this scene, Hawthorne's character Miriam immediately notes that the Colosseum "was a strange place for song and mirth,"[20] feeling unsettled by the image of men and women celebrating among the ruins of such a valiant, classical work of architecture. Simultaneously, Hawthorne's character, a white bourgeoisie man named Kenyon, exclaims, "the Colosseum was really built for us, and has not come to its best uses till almost two thousand years after it was finished!"[21] Applying his own values and habitus to the ruins, Kenyon sees the Colosseum as demonstrating the superiority of his culture over that of the classical. Due to the feeling of superiority that he derives from viewing the Colosseum under the light of external

Figure 5: Lambert Van Noort, The Self-Sacrifice of Marcus Curtius (1550), oil on panel, National Gallery Alexandros Soutzos Museum, Athens, Greece.

polychromy, Kenyon grows to revere the practice. Meanwhile, Miriam grows suspicious. Hawthorne writes that instead, she reacts with a "fit of madness,"[22] reflecting the nineteenth-century stereotype of "female hysteria."[23] In this moment, she is overcome by the idea that a "chasm [in front of her] was merely one of the orifices of that pit of blackness that lies beneath us, everywhere."[24] Meanwhile, Kenyon desires to stare into that same chasm, indulging himself in its rich history of masculinity, in which Curtius sacrifices "his good steed and himself"[25] as depicted in Lambert Van Noort's The Self-Sacrifice of Marcus Curtius (1550) [fig. 5]. Hawthorne's depiction of these opposing gendered reactions to the same moonlit scene illustrates external polychromy's ability to reinforce nineteenth-century bourgeois cultural values of male superiority, in turn illustrating why it was so revered, particularly by males at the time.

The dichotomy between male and female reactions, as in Hawthorne's novel, was also congruent with nineteenth-century culture's linking of the moon and moonlight to ideas of femininity, hysteria, and purity. These comparisons, emphasized in travel narratives' journaling of moonlit excursions, served to further reinforce nineteenth-century cultural values of white, male superiority. "By the nineteenth century, 'moon' as a term was beginning to be associated with femininity even though it originated from Old English as masculine in grammatical gender."[26] For instance, Percy Shelley, in his poem "The Waning Moon" writes, "And like a dying lady, lean and pale, / Who totters forth, wrapped in a gauzy veil, / Out of her chamber, led by the insane / And feeble wanderings of her fading brain, / The moon arose up in the murky East, / A white and shapeless mass—."[27] In this poem, Shelley feminizes the moon. The moon is not only personified as a female figure, but as a pale, white, lunatic "lady," not too far from Hawthorne's depiction of his character Miriam. Moreover, Miriam's description in the novel "as a fair-haired New Englander…almost a model of Christian virtue,"[28] matches many other portrayals in nineteenth-century art of girlhood and femininity treasured as pale, white, and pure, serving to further the ideal of white male superiority.

However, this purity also came with the stereotype of the nineteenth century that women were insane or hysterical. For instance, the origin of the word "lunacy" stems from the Latin word "luna," defined as "intermittent insanity such as was formerly supposed to be brought about by the changes of the moon."[29] Thus, when this type of lighting accentuated the "beautiful

white surfaces of the statues,"[30] women were portrayed as running in hysteria, while men remained calm and indulgent in the image of the gleaming white, classical world, as in Hawthorne's novel. Therefore, such excursions supported nineteenth-century ideals of male superiority, and in turn, were revered by the men who partook in them.

Furthermore, often times men returned to the same scene with torchlight,

Figure 6: Jacob Abbott, "Coliseum By Torchlight," (1858), print, Rollo in Rome (Boston, Massachusetts: Brown, Taggard & Chase, 1858), Boston Public Library Rare Books & Manuscripts.

heightening their sense of control over what aspects of the ruins became visible. With this physical control of the torchlight, particular statues that emphasized a strong, androcentric narrative of classical Rome were often chosen for illumination. In his travel guide Rollo in Rome (1858), Jacob Abbott noted that, "it is very common to make moonlight visits to the Coliseum, but Rollo thought a torch light view of the majestic old ruin would be better."[31] As in Abbott's description and illustration "Coliseum By Torchlight," (1858) [fig. 6] in his travel guide, the use of torches was added to moonlit excursions to enhance the viewers' experience seeing the Roman ruins. The torch visits themselves were incredibly expensive "on account of the cost of the torches, and on account of the attendants that are required."[32] Therefore, cultural capital such as money and leisure time was essential to such excursions.

Figure 7: Unknown, Colossus of the Nile (1st Century A.D.), marble, Musei Vaticini, Vatican City, Italy.

Figure 8: Jacob Abbott, "The Vatican By Torchlight," (1858), print, Rollo in Rome (Boston, Massachusetts: Brown, Taggard & Chase, 1858), Boston Public Library Rare Books & Manuscripts.

Figure 9: Unknown, Apollo Belvedere (130-140 A.D.), marble, 2.24 m high, Musei Vaticini, Vatican City, Italy.

Moreover, this cultural capital reinforced male superiority. For example, rather than inviting women on the torchlight guide of the Vatican, Mr. George, a male cultural tourist in Abbott's travel narrative, offers to pay the fee for the places of three women, rather than have them attend.[33] He does this in front of the rest of his party in order to demonstrate his superiority, both in terms of cultural capital and gender. Even more, the heavy torches were commonly held by men, furthering the idea that this practice was there to show the superiority of the male in experiencing this art and illuminating it (both visually and through narrative) for the female viewer.[34] Only a "comparatively small number of the statues"[35] were specifically chosen to look at by the men holding the torchlights, such as the head of Jove, the father Nile, and Apollo Belvedere, whose figures were supposed to have been extraordinarily accentuated and celebrated by the light of the torch.[36] The statue of the Father Nile, Colossus of the Nile (1st Century A.D.) [fig. 7], pictures a strong, white man caring for the children of Egypt, a clear celebration of white domination over a "coloured" culture of Egypt. Yet, Greenwood writes:

"But the Apollo [fig. 8], peerless in beautiful majesty…seemed bursting from the darkness, radiating new light from his triumphant brow, breathing new life from his delicate, disdainful lips. I bowed before him as the most worthily immortal shape of

power, and beauty, and grace, the fairest and highest heathen imagining of a God, that the world contains."[37]

Even the female visitors like Greenwood fell victim to androcentric narratives that highlighted the 'manliness' and 'beauty' of figures such as Apollo. For instance, in the Vatican Museum's Apollo Belvedere (130-140 A.D.) [fig. 9], his sculpted body is visually accentuated further by his gesture holding the torch. These torchlight guides through the moonlit ruins of Rome celebrated the male acquisition of cultural capital, creating a great acceptance and reverence for this form of temporal, external polychromy for many tourists in its celebration of nineteenth-century ideals of white male superiority.

Furthermore, the torch itself alluded to Prometheus, a renowned and extremely popular mythical subject of the period who was said to represent the power and logic of man,[38] furthering the practice of torchlit moonlight walks amongst Roman ruins as an accepted practice in its reinforcement of a mystical, androcentric narrative to be indulged in by cultural tourists. Prometheus himself was venerated and celebrated in his own mythological time with torchlight, often pictured holding a torch in nineteenth-century artwork.[39] For instance, Heinrich von Füger's Prometheus Brings Fire to Mankind (1817) [fig. 10] portrays Prometheus with a torchlight illuminating a white, cold figure of a man; an action emulated by nineteenth-century torch lighters in the lighting of white marble statues. He was also a popular literary and musical figure, the subject of works such as Percy Bysshe Shelley's Prometheus Unbound (1820) and Beethoven's The Creatures of Prometheus, Op. 43 (1801).[40] For instance, John Edward Carew's Prometheus and Pandora (1835-1837) pictures the strong body of Prometheus standing over the body of Pandora, the goddess known for opening the unwanted, seductive, and troubling "Pandora's Box" [fig. 11]. Such works as Camille Claudel's

Figure 10: Heinrich von Füger, Prometheus Brings Fire to Mankind (1817), oil on canvas, 221 x 156 cm, Liechtenstein, The Princely Collections, Vienna, Austria.

Lost in Thought (1905) [fig. 12] even portray women bowing to the power of fire. The power of Prometheus – or fire – over women rings familiar to the nineteenth-century stereotype that women needed to be looked after for fear of the hysteria that might arise, as in the case of Pandora's Box or Hawthorne's Miriam. Not only was Prometheus used to offer an androcentric narrative, but also a "possibility of a new cosmos, opposed to the materialistic reality entailed by the Industrial Revolution."[41] In a time when modernity and the Industrial Revolution were

Figure 11: John Edward Carew, Prometheus and Pandora (1835-1837), marble, 2410 mm high, National Trust Collections, London, United Kingdom.

drastically altering the landscape and daily lives in the hometowns of Grand Tourists, any sort of reminder of a figure like Prometheus, able to bring "an alternative vision of the world"[42] rooted in a classical masculine narrative, was celebrated. Thus, the use of torchlight, in its allusion to Prometheus and his classical, masculine narrative, helped the practice of torchlit moonlight walks become even more accepted and revered in the nineteenth century.

The temporal nature of some applied polychromy, achieved through these torchlit and moonlit walks, was an acceptable and enticing form of colouring the marble sculpture due to its ability to be fully controlled by the viewer and to illustrate cultural capital, while also reinforcing nineteenth-century bourgeois ideals of white male superiority. Moreover, it highlighted the strong sense of patriarchy that was dominating nineteenth-century culture. Ironically enough, nineteenth-century bourgeois women's inability to understand the allure of applied polychromy, instead responding with gloom and "fits of hysteria," seems like a more rational response to such strange practices of the Grand Tour from the eyes of a modern reader. What the women were responding to was really the hypocrisies of neoclassical racist and sexist ideals were

bourgeois ideas of cultural capital and habitus, in which placed onto classical art; works that were even known to have been originally coloured at this time [fig. 13].[43] However, white, bourgeois males still revered this temporal, external polychromy, indulging themselves in the temporary colouring of stone.

It is interesting to note that the neoclassical fealty to white marble and the simultaneous popularity of applied polychromy paralleled the similar push-pull of the white fear/desire of black subjects within the context of slavery and its immediate aftermath. As such, the racial dimensions of the popularity of applied polychromy through light sources (moonlight or torchlight), which enlivened the white marble precisely because the light was seen as providing a glow that replicated skin colour, can be understood

Figure 12: Camille Claudel, Lost in Thought (1905), bronze, onyx, & lamp, 24 x 22 x 27.5cm, Collection Lucile Audouy, Paris, France.

within the context of white male sexual desire for black women. It is significant to note that the colouring of the marble bodies in external polychromy was temporary and controlled by the men, in that *they* decided when and where these coloured statues could be celebrated. Similarly, when indulging themselves in sex with enslaved or free black females, acts which rarely resulted in legitimate cross-racial relationships, nineteenth-century bourgeois white males could take pleasure in the fact that their ideals of racial superiority (the socially acceptable white wife or the classical white marble ideal) was *coloured* only temporarily (by their sexual contact with black females or the momentary titillation of the illuminated classical sculptures) and on their terms. Here, indulgence in colour was temporary, and thus, removable and revered for its ability to reinforce and "validate" nineteenth-century bourgeois ideals of white male domination and superiority.[44]

Figure 13: Antoine Chrysostôme, Le Jupiter Olympien ou l'art de la sculpture antique (1815), frontispiece, 50 cm Bibliothèque de l'INHA, collections Jacques Doucet, Paris, France.

ENDNOTES

[1] Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Marble Faun (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 1.

[2] Leo B. Levy, "The Marble Faun: Hawthorne's Landscape of the Fall," American Literature, vol. 42, no. 2 (May 1970), p. 140.

[3] Charmaine A. Nelson, The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. 66.

[4] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 50.

[5] George Stillman Hillar, Six Months In Italy (London: John Murray, Albemarble Street, 1853), p. 228.

[6] Genevieve Ellerbee, "Voyage to Italia: Americans in Italy in the Nineteenth Century," Sheldon Museum of Art Catalogues and Publications, Paper 83 (Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln, Nebraska, USA: January 1, 2010), p. 5.

[7] Hillard, Six Months In Italy, p. 228.

[8] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 145.

[9] Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 145.

[10] Hillard, Six Months In Italy, p. 242.

[11] Hawthorne describes the scene of a moonlight visit to the Colosseum, as full of merry song, dance, and drink. Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, p. 154.

[12] Pierre Bourdieu's Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste cited and discussed in Nelson, The Color of Stone.

[13] Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. 53.

[14] These particular tourists had so much extra time they could even devote a night just for partying amongst moonlit Roman ruins. Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. 53.

[15] Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. 53.

[16] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," <u>Marxists.org,</u> https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm (date of last access 2 December 2014)

[17] Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," (date of last access 2 December 2014)

[18] Hillard, <u>Six Months in Italy</u>, p. 527.

[19] Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. 50.

[20] Hawthorne, <u>The Marble Faun</u>, p. 154.

[21] Hawthorne, <u>The Marble Faun</u>, p. 156.

[22] Hawthorne, <u>The Marble Faun</u>, p. 157.

[23] B. J., "What the Moonlight Reveals about Women and Madness in the Nineteenth Century," <u>Dickens to Eliot: Cultural and Serial Contexts of Mid-Victorian Novels,</u> http://dickenstoeliot.wordpress.com/2013/12/08/what-the-moonlight-reveals-about-women-and-madness-in-the-nineteenth-century/ (date of last access 30 November 2014)

[24] Hawthorne, <u>The Marble Faun</u>, p. 161.

[25] Hawthorne, <u>The Marble Faun</u>, p. 161.

[26] B. J., "What the Moonlight Reveals," (date of last access 30 November 2014)

[27] John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley, <u>John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley Complete Poetical Works,</u> eds. Bennett A. Cerf and Donald S. Klopfer (New York, New York: Random House, Inc., 1949), p. 661.

[28] Sacvan Bercovitch, "Of Wise and Foolish Virgins: Hilda versus Miriam in Hawthorne's Marble Faun," <u>The New England Quarterly</u>, vol. 41, no.2 (June 1968), p. 281.

[29] Oxford English Dictionary, "lunacy, n.," <u>Oxford English Dictionary OED Online,</u> http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/111163?redirectedFrom=lunacy#eid (date of last access 2 December 2014)

[30] Jacob Abbott, <u>Rollo in Rome</u> (Boston, Massachusetts: Brown, Taggard & Chase, 1858), p. 205

[31] Abbott, <u>Rollo in Rome</u>, p. 208.

[32] "Mr. George, however, preferred to [pay for three spots] and he accordingly took out his purse and paid his four scudi and a half, which was the amount due for three persons." He noted that women [like Allie] "generally feel very little interest in statues." Abbott, <u>Rollo in Rome</u>, p. 201.

[33] Abbott, <u>Rollo in Rome</u>, p. 200.

[34] Abbott, <u>Rollo in Rome</u>, p. 204.

[35] "The torch bearers [male guides whose identities are not really elaborated upon] accordingly selected such as they thought were most important to be seen, and they passed rapidly on from one to another of these, omitting all the others." Abbott, <u>Rollo in Rome</u>, p. 205.

[36] Grace Greenwood, <u>Haps and Mishaps of a Tour in Europe</u> (London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1854), p. 270.

[37] Greenwood, <u>Haps and Mishaps</u>, p. 271.

[38] Corbeau references the idea that Prometheus was said to have "the divine torch whose flame shall give light to the world." Caroline Corbeau, "From Myth to Symbol: The Nineteenth-Century Interpretations of Prometheus," (London: PhD English Department, King's College London, 2005), p. 243.

[39] Corbeau writes, "Indeed, Prometheus was venerated during the torchlight run." Corbeau, "From Myth to Symbol," p. 19.

[40] Beethoven's piece "clearly emphasized the greatness and triumphant character of Prometheus, as shown by the outbursts of fortissimo and the dynamic syncopated rhythms of the overture." Corbeau, "From Myth to Symbol," pp. 91-2.

[41] Corbeau, "From Myth to Symbol," p. 313.

[42] Corbeau, "From Myth to Symbol," p. 313.

[43] "Nineteenth-century neoclassical sculptors were certainly aware that their ancient predecessors had suffused their marble prototypes with coloured pigments, although this knowledge was suppressed." Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 59.

[44] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 111

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PLATE LIST

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THE PRIVILEGE OF VIEWING: ABOLITIONIST NARRATIVE AND ACCESSIBILITY ON THE TOUR OF HIRAM POWERS'S *THE GREEK SLAVE*

Iseabail A. C. Rowe

Figure 1: Hiram Powers, The Greek Slave (1847), marble, 166.4 x 48.9 x 47.6 cm, Gift of Franklin Murphy, Jr., 1926, Newark Museum, New Jersey, United States of America.

Hiram Powers's The Greek Slave (of which six versions were produced between 1841 and 1869) [fig.1] has been described as the most successful artwork of its time, and was responsible for positioning Powers as the most famous sculptor of his generation.[1] There has been much debate in contemporaneous and modern scholarship surrounding the abolitionist intent of both sculptor and sculpture; arguably due to Powers's evasive stance and the popularity of the sculpture on both sides of the Mason-Dixie line.[2] Many historians have attributed this popularity to the marketing strategies employed by Miner K. Kellogg in hosting a tour of the sculpture across America between 1847 and 1849, which enabled thousands of visitors to view the spectacle of The Greek Slave.[3] However, Charmaine A. Nelson describes The Greek Slave as having two audiences; one real and one imagined, referring to that of the physical viewers, and the narrative of Turkish slave traders viewing the body for sale.[4] In what follows, I wish to extend this point to argue that the awareness of this imagined audience, by the real one segregated the physical audience into those with narrative understanding and those without. This awareness was arguably determined by social access to education and experience, whereby those with understanding were predominantly white, bourgeois males.

In the course of this article I wish to investigate to what extent the anti-slavery narrative of the sculpture The Greek Slave was made accessible to the diverse audience that viewed it throughout the tour. I will focus predominantly on the abolitionist sentiment that the sculpture and the tour projected by mirroring the forced travel and displacement of real slaves. I will likewise consider the ways in which the necessity of disseminating this sentiment led Powers and Kellogg to innovate new methods of propaganda for a group of people previously denied access to such depth of artistic understanding.

In distinguishing the ways in which these two groups of people considered the sculpture, it is important to first establish what defined them. Access to artistic understanding (for "high" art) was typically a practice reserved for wealthy white males, reflected in contemporary art criticism which both spoke from and assumedly addressed this perspective without qualification.[5] This knowledge was closely associated with education and the ability (through

wealth and social position) to take the grand tour with the intention of gaining "cultural capital."[6] Those without such ready access to this education included: women (who could not travel unless chaperoned), people of colour (who were denied access to *tourism* but instead were forced to *travel*), and those without enough money to undertake the huge expense and education that the grand tour demanded.[7] Although it seems counter-productive to group those denied access as non-white, bourgeois males, their common denial has been well-recognized since "gender, like race, is deeply implicated in class status," within nineteenth-century society.[8] Similarly, Karen Sánchez-Eppler aligns women and slaves through their mutual experience of being defined by their bodies, which in the eyes of nineteenth-century viewership superseded the abilities of their minds.[9] The difference in mental ability was noted in the introduction to the pamphlet used to accompany the tour of the sculpture, which stated, "each spectator is affected according to the particular point of view, or the individual cast of his mind."[10]

However, this differentiation not only related to the internal understanding of The Greek Slave's narrative by a viewer, but also the external projection of this understanding. This is because in nineteenth-century high society, there was an expectation of performance around the viewing of an artwork. This particularly came into play when viewing sculptural depictions of the nude figure (the most revered art form of the era), around which carefully constructed behavior was expected and necessary when perceiving the work's potentially titillating subject matter, in order to preserve the modesty of high society.[11] This was due to the paradoxes of nineteenth-century society and its artistic community, which focused on an appreciation of classical culture within a deeply Christian society.

Therefore, the sculptor was required to sculpt the nude while adhering to classical design principals, demonstrate their knowledge of the human body, as well as provide justification – or a *raison d'etre* for doing so – to impress and appease his educated, Christian audience. With artists and viewers adhering to these specifically required behaviors, they entered into a contract of production, display, and reception, which aimed to eliminate impropriety within a strictly polite society. However, this was a contract performed exclusively for the purpose of the wealthy, educated, bourgeoisie society who were aware of both the Christian necessity of prescriptive viewing, the potentially transgressive nature of the unclothed body, and the power of narrative to render the human body legible as "high" art.

As such, those audiences without access to the "cultural capital" necessary to navigate the symbolic cues of the sculpture's *raison d'etre*, could only appreciate the figure for its physical, aesthetic, and immediately present qualities, notably, relying on their instincts to form an opinion. This group of people was therefore excluded from the contract between audience and artist by virtue of their inability to perform the viewing process. It placed those specifically male viewers (in nineteenth-century heteronormative society) in danger of association with the imagined, lascivious audience of Turkish slave-trader who viewed the figure of the The Greek Slave with sexual intent.

Without knowledge or understanding of the significance of the imagined audience, such a group could never be seriously considered for their input in the inevitable debate and discussion which artworks of this sort prompted. This ultimately perpetuated a vicious cycle in which they were further denied access to such forums and their opinions or reactions to this art would go unnoticed and unrecorded. I will differentiate between these two types of reception as *viewing* and *looking*. While those who *look* can consider only an artwork's aesthetic quality, the *viewer* can see past this and understand its deeper meanings and purpose. In this way, those who *view* have access to the "true intent" of the artist comparative to those who *look*. The sculpture in this

sense can further be evaluated as appearing different to each audience: to those who *look*, it is merely an object, and to those who *view*, a neoclassical artwork.

The fame and popularity of The Greek Slave likewise bought with it the opportunity of visual dissemination beyond its physical presence on the Kellogg tour, and therefore practices of viewing the sculpture beyond its immediate site on tour. Miniatures and busts were produced for sale in addition to several copies of The Greek Slave that had already been made. As such, those visitors who could afford to do so could purchase some part of the sculpture they were viewing. This offers a further dimension to the viewing practice: viewing to buy. A comparison between this viewership of the statue and the practice of purchasing slaves can be drawn from a description of the latter, "On the auction block, the black body was presented, often unclothed, for an authoritative white bourgeois gaze."[12] The only differentiation here can be seen in the reversal within the narrative subject and audience; the gaze is reversed in The Greek Slave (1847) with the imagined black (or brown) viewers of a white slave body. In doing so, Powers highlighted the hypocritical nature of some viewers who had sympathetic responses to this sculpture, but simultaneously failed to recognize the suffering of enslaved Africans in America. Similarly, engravings were made of the The Greek Slave (1843), which were far more widely disseminated and more accessible. These have been described as both a visual tool of proscriptive behavior and social boundaries,[13] and as falling short of the sculpture's "exquisite symmetry and purity of expression so apparent to every person who has had the pleasure of seeing the marble itself."[14] The engravings gave both those who had, or were going to see the real display, a chance to reflect upon or prepare for the scene, and those unable to attend the tour an opportunity for visual involvement. Reliance on the visual was particularly key for *lookers* who perhaps did not have ready access or adequate education to comprehend literary resources.[15]

The tumult of literature that emerged around The Greek Slave during its production recorded the responses of its audience. However, they were for the most part incredibly limited and biased towards the *viewing* audience, who in their elevated position had access to writing and printing that *lookers* often did not. This is recorded by Reverend Orville Dewey, who said of the sculpture, "The world will see it, the skillful will judge of it."[16] Likewise, the literature these "skillful" people produced demonstrated the prescriptive nature of viewing in nineteenth-century society and disseminated it almost exclusively amongst the *viewing* class, who also had privileged access to purchase and read literature. Therefore, literature arguably enabled a self-perpetuating cycle in which access to viewership and its recording was preserved for a select few.

However, the tour of The Greek Slave was designed for those who *looked* as well as those who *viewed*, unlike when received statically in a single gallery (or more likely on display in the artist's workshop for the benefit of those on the grand tour to view with the intent of purchase). As such, and arguably with the knowledge that the plethora of literature surrounding the sculpture remained largely inaccessible to those who came to *look*, Powers and Kellogg appropriated literature on this subject re-presenting it to their audience in the form of a pamphlet.[17] The extracts and selections made for this brochure reflected a diverse range of responses including poetry and commentary, significantly some by women.[18] This, along with the incredibly low price of the pamphlet, 6½ cents, demonstrates a clear intent for this literature to be accessible to the marginalized *looker*.

As Joy Bracewell explains, "the sculpture was accompanied by a pamphlet at every city at which it was shown, instructing viewers on how they should and should not comport themselves."[19] Joy Kasson goes further saying the pamphlet became "an etiquette manual,"

which "cues its readers to behave, not as if in a place of entertainment… but as if they were in a church."[20] Arguably, using both literature and display in this manner intentionally targeted an audience normally excluded from the viewing performance. I would further argue that doing this was an attempt to disseminate the abolitionist sentiments that were attached to the sculpture. In the same way, the pamphlet can be seen as a tool to educate *lookers* in the practice of *viewing*, it can also be seen as an educational tool for the practice of seeing abolitionist sentiment both in the sculpture itself and in its literary responses. The inclusion of such lower classes of people was key in disseminating abolitionist support across America, by targeting a class of people below those who could purchase slaves, but above those who would work alongside them. Nevertheless, this lower income target audience likely would not otherwise have been exposed to the first-hand experiences of slavery that the figure of The Greek Slave claimed to embody.

Another method of including those who could not normally access these forums of discussion was to put the sculpture on tour. The tour reflected many existing practices pertaining to the spreading of anti-slavery propaganda, as well as innovating new ones.[21] By primarily considering the sculpture as an artwork, the purpose of its tour was to expose it to new and diverse audiences. It could be viewed as an inverse of the grand tour through which wealthy patrons journeyed to see artwork. Rather, in this instance, the artwork traveled to those unable to participate in the grand tour.[22] This is substantiated by the extremely low cost of entry at 25 cents, making the tour accessible to the middle and lower classes. Furthermore, this low cost demonstrated that Powers's motivation for the tour went beyond monetary gain.[23]

However, The Greek Slave could also be considered as the embodiment of its subject matter – an actual female slave. This was not incredibly farfetched for the nineteenth-century viewer for whom the celebrity of The Greek Slave came from her realism. As H. T. Tuckerman's poem "The Greek Slave" demonstrates: "Some pent glow, methinks, diffuses o'er those limbs a graceful soul, Warm with Nature."[24] As such, moving state to state and putting "her" on display drew parallels from touring anti-abolitionist speakers and campaigners of the time, who often included ex-slaves themselves.[25] Another way in which the reading of the sculpture as an actual slave promoted anti-slavery sentiment was by touring her amongst the northern states (some of which were free and certainly had more free blacks than in the south). This juxtaposition acted as a gateway to promote anti-slavery sentiments. Later, the resale of one of the versions of The Greek Slave prompted a newspaper report that highlighted the absurdity of this juxtaposition with the headline "A Slave to be Sold at Auction in New-York," which was intended to provoke a disbelieving response amongst its unionist readership.[26]

The display of another version of The Greek Slave (1843) in Britain at *The Great Exhibition* of 1851 – timed closely with its tour of the United States – further emphasized this juxtaposition. By 1833, Britain had abolished slavery in its empire, so the display of a slave in America (albeit intended as a demonstration of American artistic skill) prompted some ridicule among its acclaim, exemplified by this quote taken from The British Anti-Slavery Society: "[Americans] exhibited the worst taste possible by placing a Greek slave there, and beside the figure, placing a man with a stick to turn it round, precisely as they would do were they trafficking in human sinew and bone."[27] Therefore, much of the early literature relating to the display of The Greek Slave was British, disparaging, and decidedly abolitionist. Some of this sentiment ultimately bled into the American literature produced during the end of the American tour. Not least was Powers's own sentiments, recorded in an 1856 letter in which he expressed "my astonishment has increased, that such things *could* take place *in the United States* without

instant chastisement by the people, who on the contrary appear to have looked on, until very lately, with almost indifference!"[28]

Nevertheless, The Greek Slave was not decisively connected with the abolition of American slavery. Nelson explains that Powers, "in choosing to represent a Greek Woman… effectively disavowed the specificity and immediacy of American Slavery and the black female slaves on which it depended."[29] The subject being white and taken from an actual, historical event (that may still have been in the consciousness of many of the viewers of the sculpture) did distance it from the actual, concurrent plight of enslaved blacks in America. The Greek-Turkish War, from which the subject matter was derived, was well known across America. Furthermore, the sympathy for enslaved Greeks, captured by Turkish slave traders in the conflict, was also widespread with one source describing, "The numerous meetings called in every part of the country, to procure aid for the Greek Cause. It is sufficient to say the feeling is universal."[30] The sympathy felt towards these white, Christian victims was therefore already well established. Therefore, the reaction to Hiram Powers's The Greek Slave was arguably based more upon this popular focus of sympathy and not actually upon the immediate issue of American abolition. However, the concurrency of the production of this sculpture with early challenges to slavery in America, and its abolition across Europe, would suggest the artist's intention was to stir up sympathy for victims of slavery in a form that made it more easily digestible to a white American audience.

Furthermore, I would argue that drawing on a relatively recent narratives of slavery not only evoked existing feelings of sympathy but also, and in a departure from neoclassical practice of depicting mythological subject matter, included the *looker*, who did not have the same access to mythological allusions. The decision to forgo the depiction of a female nude within a mythological context of sculptural tradition was especially significant as it departed from an established and highly credible *raison d'etre* for the nude. This departure was not always well received, since an anonymous author in one newspaper suggested that the artist should have substituted one *raison d'etre* (her captivity) for that of mythology: "If the sculptor had taken off the chains which confine the wrists of the statue and called it Eve, or Venus or a Nymph coming from the bath, he would have done better."[31]

Beyond this, I argue that it was the tour itself that more closely associated the sculpture with the contemporary plight of enslaved people of African descent in America, in the continual travel and displacement of The Greek Slave, which mirrored the continual and forced displacement of enslaved blacks in America. The deeply felt personal reactions and connections made with the sculpture amplified the plight of the slaves by encouraging a noticeable feeling of loss when the sculpture was moved onto another state. However, the fact that copies of the sculpture were made could have undermined the personal connection upon which such a response relied. Instead, as an established practice amongst neoclassical sculptors, and beyond Hiram Powers's desire to make money, the production of multiple figures further mirrored the plight of the enslaved in their dehumanization and generalization into types such as "Mulatto," or as here with The Greek Slave (1843), the white negro-type or "octoroon".[32]

Although there were many motivational forces for the production of The Greek Slave (1847) by Hiram Powers, one was undoubtedly tied to his anti-slavery sympathies. Taking the sculpture on tour can be seen as a "travelling display" which served to highlight the plight of the constantly displaced slaves across America, and mirrored the abolitionist activity of touring speakers. The decisions made by Powers and Kellogg – although at times appearing to be motivated by financial gain – can be seen as an attempt to disseminate both the cultural capital

surrounding neoclassical art depicted by the sculpture, and the anti-slavery awareness of its meaning to an audience previously denied connection to and understanding of works of art such as this sculpture. In so doing, Powers mobilized an untapped population, directing them towards abolitionist opinions through the popularization of an anti-slavery icon, embodied in his sculpture. At the same time, the popularity and frenzy that surrounded the tour established Hiram Powers as the greatest sculptor of his generation, which in turn made him a legitimate and widely known authority both on art and social affairs, including abolition. This, along with the intentional appropriation of contemporary literature and its dissemination in the form of a pamphlet throughout the tour, marked his ultimate intention to present abolitionist views to a diverse, and otherwise overlooked audience of viewers.

ENDNOTES

[1] The Greek Slave was first produced in 1841, however, a subsequent six versions were produced. This article refers to the third version, dated 1847, which toured America (unless otherwise stated).

[2] Vivien M. Green notes: "Powers avoided identification with the abolitionist… After the passage of the [Kansas-Nebraska] Act, however, Powers took an outspoken slavery stand." Vivien M. Green, "Hiram Power's *Greek Slave:* Emblem of Freedom," American Art Journal, vol. 14, no. 4 (Autumn 1982), p. 32.

[3] Later, between 1850-1851, The Greek Slave also toured four cities in the Southern states: New Orleans, Louisiana, Augusta, Georgia, and Charleston and Columbia, South Carolina.

[4] Charmaine A. Nelson, Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. 82.

[5] This is likely continued even into our modern literature on the period; the assumed white male figure being the prototype on which all general text about this subject is based. One example of this can be seen in Joy S. Kasson, "Narratives of the Female Body: *The Greek Slave,"* Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America, ed. Shirley Samuels (North Carolina: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 172-190.

[6] Nelson, Color of Stone, p. xiv.

[7] The necessary differentiation between *traveller* and *tourist* is designated in: Nelson, Color of Stone, p. 7. It is important to note that while lower class white females experienced a degree of "free" mobility, although under threat of patriarchal interference and violence, it was the middle and upper classes of mainly white females who required chaperones.

[8] Amy Schrager Lang, "Class and the Strategies of Sympathy," Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America, ed. Shirley Samuels (North Carolina: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 130.

[9] Karen Sánchez-Eppler, "Bodily Bonds: The Intersecting Rhetorics of Feminism and Abolition," Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America, ed. Shirley Samuels (North Carolina: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 93-94.

[10] Miner K. Kellogg, Power's Statue of the Greek Slave (Boston: Eastburn's Press, 1848), p. 4.

[11] It is important to note that nineteenth-century categorization of art placed sculpture as superior to all other art forms for its ability to recreate its subject in three dimensions rather than, for example, the imitation of depth a painting could provide. For further explanation, see: Nelson, Color of Stone, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

[12] Nelson, Color of Stone, p. 118.

[13] Linda Hyman, "The Greek Slave by Hiram Powers: High Art as Popular Culture," <u>Art Journal</u>, vol. 35, no. 3 (Spring 1976), pp. 220-21.

[14] Anonymous, "The Greek Slave," <u>Cosmopolitan Art Journal</u>, vol. 2, no. 1 (December 1857), p. 40.

[15] At this time, at least twenty-two percent of the American population was illiterate, see: Howard Clayton, "The American College Library: 1800- 1860," <u>The Journal of Library History</u>, vol. 3 (April 1968), p. 127.

[16] Rev. Orville Dewey, "Power's Statues," <u>The Union Magazine of Literature and Art</u>, vol. 1 (October 1847), p. 160.

[17] They altered the pamphlet slightly from state to state, the following exists from the Boston display; Miner K. Kellogg, <u>Power's statue of the Greek Slave</u> (Boston: Eastburn's Press, 1848)

[18] The pamphlet included Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "On Power's Statue," <u>Poetical Works</u>, 14 ed., vol. 5 (London: Smith, Elder, 1886)

[19] Joy Bracewell, "Transatlantic Interiority and 'Hiram Powers' Greek Slave'," <u>Victorians Institute Journal</u>, <u>http://www.nines.org/exhibits/Transatlantic_Interiority_and_?page=-1</u> (date of last access 26 November 2014)

[20] Joy S. Kasson, "Mind in Matter in History: *Viewing the Greek Slave,*" <u>The Yale Journal of Criticism</u>, vol. 11, no.1 (1998), p. 81.

[21] Abolitionist orators like Frederick Douglass often toured America and Europe during the nineteenth century. As ex-slaves, they spoke about their own experiences with slavery in order to raise support for abolition.

[22] Please note once again here the distinction between *traveler* and *tourist* as designated by Charmaine A. Nelson. <u>The Greek Slave</u> travels, as it is moved without choice just as a slave would be. Likewise, those who are able to view it on tour are those unable to be tourists, compared to those who are tourists, taking the grand tour. Although the accepted phraseology referring to Kellogg's role in the marketing of <u>The Greek Slave</u> is "tour," I would challenge the use of this word in this context and refer to it instead as "travelling display" as a slave "touring" seems entirely against the social framework established in nineteenth-century society.

[23] The exhibition programme raised a total of $23,500. See: Nelson, <u>Color of Stone</u>, p. 203.

[24] H. T. Tuckerman, "The Greek Slave," <u>The Literary World</u> (18 September 1847) cited in Kellogg, <u>Power's Statue</u>, p. 20.

[25] Examples of this similar practice in England are discussed at length in: Anonymous, "The enslaved as spectacle: Ellen Craft, Sarah Parker Remond, and American Slavery in England," <u>The Free Library</u>, <u>http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+enslaved+as+spectacle%3a+Ellen+Craft%2c+Sarah+Parker+Remond%2c+and...-a0188967292</u> (date of last access 12 November 2014). This phenomenon is also explained by Frederick Douglass who both watched and participated in such rallies. Frederick Douglass, <u>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave</u> (Boston: Anti Slavery Office, 1846).

[26] Anonymous, <u>New York Evening Express</u>, as quoted in Anonymous, "The Greek Slave to be Sold," <u>Cosmopolitan Art Journal</u>, vol. 1, no. 4 (June 1857), p. 133.

[27] "British Anti-Slavery Society," <u>New York Observer and Chronicle</u>, 14 Aug 1851, p. 258; cited in Bracewell, "Transatlantic Interiority," (date of last access 26 November 2014)

[28] Letter, Hiram Powers to N. Longworth Esq., Sept. 17, 1856, <u>Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio</u>, vol.1, no. 2 (April- June 1902), p. 37.

[29] Charmaine A. Nelson, "Hiram Powers' America: Shackles, Slaves, and the Racial Limits of

Nineteenth-Century Identity," <u>Canadian Review of American Studies</u>, vol. 34, no. 2 (2004), p. 173.

[30] Extract from Anonymous, <u>The New York Commercial Advertiser</u> (6 January 1824); cited in footnotes of: Green, "Hiram Power's *Greek Slave*," p. 34.

[31] Extract from Anonymous, <u>The New York Tribune</u>, (15 September 1847); cited in Kellogg, <u>Power's Statue</u>, pp. 20-21.

[32] Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. 119.

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PLATE LIST

Figure 1: Hiram Powers, <u>The Greek Slave</u> (1847), marble, 166.4 x 48.9 x 47.6 cm, Gift of Franklin Murphy, Jr., 1926, Newark Museum, New Jersey, United States of America.

ASSIMILATION AND APATHY: AN ABJECT REPRESENTATION OF NATIVES IN MONTREAL'S 1893 JACQUES CARTIER MONUMENT
Lexi Stefanatos

> "Public monuments are the most conservative of commemorative forms
> precisely because they are meant to last, unchanged, forever."

> — KIRK SAVAGE, Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race War and Monument in
>   Nineteenth-Century America (1997)

Figure 1: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, front view, right angle, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Anonymous Illustrated Post Card, c.19 - -?, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), Montreal, Canada.

In his recent book The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of the Native People in North America (2013), Thomas King cites a question that is very often heard posed by Canadian politicians about the indigenous peoples of Canada: "What do Indians want?"[1] King's response is simple, but striking. As he articulates:

> "[This is a] great question. The problem is, it's the wrong question to ask. While there are certainly Indians in North America, the Indians of this particular question don't exist. The Indians of this question are 'the Indian' that Canada and the United States have *created for themselves*."[2] (italics mine)

In what follows, my questions are the following: what factors have contributed to the creation of this stereotypical "Indian" in our own Canadian context? What characteristics have we attributed to the "Indian"? How has a biased Canadian history been kept alive in visual representations of indigenous peoples? And finally, how has our apathy vis à vis the representations of indigenous peoples in very public forms of visual culture perpetuated the notion of the stereotypical "Indian"?[3]

In order to begin to address these questions, I will explore various histories surrounding the representation of Native peoples in Joseph-Arthur Vincent's Jacques Cartier Monument (1893), which takes the shape of a fountain, located in Montreal's Square Saint-Henri. [fig. 1, 2, 3].[4] Widely recognized as the "discoverer" of the Saint Lawrence River Valley, memorialization in Jacques Cartier's likeness began with the erection of Vincent's monument in Montreal in the late nineteenth century.[5] At the time of the monument's erection, and specifically within the context of the province of Quebec, it was thought that the monument represented one of the nicest chapters in Quebec history, which served as a reminder of the reasons for which Quebecers should be proud of their race.[6] In this article, I will consider the problematic representation of the relationship between Cartier and the indigenous peoples he encountered in the land that is now known as Quebec, through a formal analysis of the 1893 Cartier Fountain.

Figure 2: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, front view, left angle, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Anonymous Montreal Import Co., 190-?, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), Montreal, Canada.

Figure 3: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, front view, right angle, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Anonymous Photograph, 1915, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), Montreal, Canada.

Ultimately, I would like to suggest that the racially abject portrayal of Native bodies in this public monument is symptomatic of the way in which a revisionist Quebec history has been reinforced by the subordinate representation of Native peoples, thus contributing to a severely biased collective memory, which has remained evident in Quebec and Canadian politics to this day.

Jacques Cartier was born in Saint-Malo, France circa1491, a time almost coterminous with the transition from the Renaissance to the early modern period in Europe.[7] Cartier himself played a small role in the geopolitical struggles of early modern Europe, especially in the rivalry between the Hapsburg emperor Charles V and his own King, François I.[8] He did, of course, fit into the line of great navigators who began exploring the "New World" with the followers of Henry the Navigator, and continuing on through Vasco da Gama, Columbus, John Cabot, Giovanni da Verrazano, and so on into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[9]

By the 1530's, it had become clear to Europeans that the Gulf of the Saint Lawrence River was the last hope of finding a navigable sea route through the coastal barriers on to the Orient.[10] With the support of François I and Jean Le Veneur, abbé of Mont St. Michel and bishop of Lisieux, Jacques Cartier set sail across the Atlantic on 20 April 1534 in the hopes of finding a route to Asia.[11] Cartier's first significant contact with Native peoples occurred on 6 July 1534 as he was exploring the Baie des Chaleurs. As Cartier recounts, two fleets of canoes set upon them, waving "some skins on sticks" in an effort to open trade.[12] The French were panicked, as they "did not care to trust their signs and waved them to go back."[13] The next day, however, the Natives ended up trading with the French for some small trinkets, beginning a profitable relationship with the Natives, probably the Mi'kmaq, which continued for the following centuries.[14] Later that month, Cartier met another group of Natives while on a fishing expedition around the southern and eastern coasts of the Gaspé Peninsula.[15] Cartier quickly noted how these Natives differed from the Mi'kmaq as, he said,

> "This people may well be called savage; for they are the sorriest folk there can be in the world, and the whole lot of them had not anything about the value of five sous; they go quite naked, except for a small skin, with which they cover their privy parts; they are not at all of the same race or language as the first we meet."[16]

Finally, at Stadacona (around present-day Quebec City), Cartier encountered the Stadaconans.[17] These Natives had been living in the Saint Lawrence Valley for centuries, cultivating crops and supplementing their diet with game and fish.[18] Cartier's first voyage ended on 24 July 1534 as he left Gaspé where his men erected a wooden cross carved with the words "Vive le Roy de France" along with the three fleur-de-lys of François I's arms.[19] Significantly, after a conflict with the Natives, Cartier decided to kidnap the two sons of the Stadaconan Chief, Domagaya and Taignoagny, whom he brought back to France and whose direction Cartier relied on during his second voyage.[20] During his second voyage in 1535, Cartier used Domagaya and Taignoagny's guidance in order to navigate the Saint Lawrence. As Cartier explains,

> "On September the first we set sail from this harbour to make our way towards Canada. Some fifteen leagues to the west-southwest of this harbour, in the middle of the stream, lie three islands, and opposite to them there is a very deep and rapid river, which is the river and route to the kingdom and country of the Saguenay, as we were informed by our two men from Canada."[21]

Having reached Saguenay, Cartier followed the Stadaconans upstream, past the Montmorency Falls, to what would one day be known as Quebec City.[22] Once Cartier had reached the Quebec City area, he docked his ships and set up a winter camp without obtaining permission from the nearby village of Stadacona.[23] Cartier further offended Native customs by announcing that he intended to travel to Hochelaga, present-day Montreal, without obtaining the Chief's permission to travel through Stadaconan territory.[24]

On his third and final voyage in 1541, Cartier returned with Sieur de Roberval with the intention of setting up a colony at Cap Rouge, a short distance west from Quebec.[25] Again, Cartier did so without consulting or obtaining permission from the Stadaconans and during that winter his settlement was besieged by several groups of indigenous peoples.[26] Despite these conflict-ridden historical accounts of Cartier's relations with the indigenous peoples, the 1893 Cartier Fountain effectively works to erase these narratives from public memory.

As Alan Gordon notes, it was only three and a half centuries after Cartier last saw the North American shore that he reached the height of his popularity.[27] Gordon dubs this period "Cartiermania," a phenomenon that swept across the Saint Lawrence Valley during the second half of the nineteenth century.[28] The residents of Montreal's Saint-Henri borough are a prime example. The 14 June 1893 issue of La Presse newspaper released a small article describing the inauguration of the first monument to be erected in Cartier's likeness.[29] At a municipal council meeting held at the Saint-Henri City Hall on 6 July 1892, the president of the parks committee Toussaint Aquin decided to commission the sculptor Joseph-Arthur Vincent to erect a monument in Jacques Cartier's honour, to be placed at the center of Square Saint-Henri.[30] Vincent agreed to be paid a total sum of $ 1,800 in his contract, which also stated that he create a sculpture "representing Jacques Cartier and his accessories."[31]

Figure 4: Jacques-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, wide-angle front view, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Collection Ville de Montreal. Photograph taken by Guy L'Heureux, 2013.

The 1893 Cartier Fountain is situated in a round pool in the centre of the park, and stands on an octagonal base decorated with gold bulrushes, a common plant found in the Saint Lawrence River Valley [fig. 4, 5, 6].[32] On the base sit four large water-basins, alternating with four small columns topped with cups and fountain jets. Towards the centre of the monument, four small beavers hug the base of the pedestal [fig. 7]. The upper part of the monument has

three sections. The bottom section is adorned with foliage and branches knotted together with ribbon, alternating with four relief sculptures of Native faces topped with a gold headpiece. The indigenous faces are all exact replicas and when activated, the fountain spouts water out of their mouths [fig. 8]. The middle section bears inscriptions relating to episodes in Cartier's career. The inscriptions read,

> "À Jacques Cartier né à Saint-Malo le 31 décembre 1494" / "Jetant l'ancre le 16 juillet de la même année dans l'entrée du Saint-Laurent" / "Envoyé par François 1er à la découverte du Canada le 20 avril 1534" / "Il prit possession de tout le pays au nom du roi son maître et l'appela Nouvelle-France."[33]

The top section of the pedestal has a large fountain jet protruding out on all four sides. On the top of the monument is the sculpture of Jacques Cartier wearing a cap, a coat, and baggy shorts characteristic of the sixteenth century. His right hand rests on his sword belt, while his left arm is raised and extended to point westwards, in the direction of his navigational endeavours. At his feet is a tree stump, symbolizing European colonization of the land.

At the inauguration ceremony on 14 June 1893, the streets and houses around Saint-Henri were decorated with flags and lanterns in celebration.[34] At roughly seven o'clock in the evening, approximately ten thousand people gathered in the square to witness the unveiling of the monument.[35] Following its inauguration, celebrations and festivities commenced as the Mayor of Saint-Henri, Ferdinand Dagenais, gave a speech followed by the former Prime Minister of Quebec, Honoré Mercier, who delivered a nationalist message.[36] The mayor suggested that

Figure 5: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, front view of top section, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Photograph taken by Lexi Stefanatos, 2014.

Figure 6: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, back view, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Photograph taken by Lexi Stefanatos, 2014.

Toussaint Aquin, the man who proposed that the monument be erected, was one of the most progressive Canadians alive.[37] Finally, the federal deputy of Hochelaga, the physician Séverin Lachapelle, commented on the role Jacques Cartier played in the founding of New France.[38] The amount of pride and celebrations that took place for the monument's inauguration suggests that the importance the 1893 Cartier Fountain was attributable to is symbolism of Quebec history.

As previously mentioned, the period during which this monument was erected has been referred to as "Cartiermania."[39] As has already been made clear, Cartier failed to successfully establish any colonies in New France, and, as such, some scholars have questioned Cartier's real significance and historical contribution to Quebec and Canada.[40] We are therefore forced to consider how and why Cartier became such an important aspect of public consciousness — how did he become Quebec's national hero, and at whose expense? Before the 1893 Cartier Fountain was built, the most common way Cartier was commemorated was by erecting a cross, symbolizing the cross he planted upon his departure in 1534.[41] Historian Ramsay Cook has pointed out that French Canadians have always been a self-conscious minority.[42] In trying to compensate for their perceived lack of security, Cook suggests that the figure of the Native was used as an icon for French Canadian plight from the middle to the end of the nineteenth century.[43] In so doing, Quebec tried to erase, or assimilate, their historical past with indigenous peoples in order to assert their own distinctive identity. During the "Cartiermania" period, Cartier played an important role in emphasizing a particular view of the history of Quebec and Canada. Quebec had been a British colony from 1760 until 1791 when the Constitution Act (1791) was implemented.[44] At this point, French people living in present-day Quebec no longer identified as citizens of New France, but rather created a new identity as part of the new "habitant" culture.[45] As the Constitution Act divided Upper and Lower Canada, Lower Canada being present-day Quebec, "les habitants" retained French laws and institutions. By 1820, as Gordon suggests, "les habitants," also referred to as "Québécois," had become very concerned with promoting their own sense of identity as a self-conscious minority.[46] Specifically, after the 1837 rebellion, the fear of losing their French Canadian identity to the large Anglophone population prompted the Québécois to focus on their own history.[47] It was within this context that Jacques Cartier rose to prominence and was attributed the heroism he is afforded with to this day. As I will demonstrate in what follows, this turn towards national identity came at the expense of the indigenous peoples who had lived on Canadian land long before European contact. This sentiment is evident in the way that Native bodies are depicted in the 1893 Cartier Fountain.

Figure 7: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, detail of beavers, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Photograph taken by Lexi Stefanatos, 2014.

As Native historian Amelia Kalant has argued, French Canadian colonization has long been viewed as an exercise of *integration* rather than forcible colonization, an idea that has been perpetuated in the literature on Quebec history.[48] She refers to his phenomenon as the "myth of vacancy," and argues that it must be dismantled in order to unravel the truth about French colonization.[49] The mythical idea of the "absent" Native is clearly visible in the 1893 Cartier Fountain, as is Ramsay Cook's suggestion of the assimilation of Natives as a means to assert French Canadian identity.

Figure 8: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, detail of Indigenous faces, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Photograph taken by Lexi Stefanatos, 2014.

It is evident that Cartier's encounters with indigenous peoples were not free of conflict or animosity. Yet, none of these dynamics are visible in the 1893 Cartier Fountain. Instead, four Native faces, all with equally simplistic and racially stereotypical facial features, are depicted on the same scale as the decorative foliage branches and beavers, both natural features of the Saint Lawrence Valley landscape. The sheer scale of their representation suggests that Natives were merely considered a curious, quaint, and interesting aspect of the natural landscape, an afterthought made to be looked at, as well as used to advance the European agenda; much in the same way that beaver was used in the fur trade, the belief was that Natives also passively and willingly contributed to the betterment of the Europeans. This idea is emphasized by the functional aspect of the indigenous faces in this monument. Not only do the faces act as another decorative feature, but the relief sculptures of Natives are also designed to spout water out of their mouths, further objectifying the Native bodies while adding to the functionality of the monument's status as a fountain. In comparison to Cartier's dignified, life-size, erect, and individualized portrayal, the representation of Native faces diminishes their humanity as well as refuses to acknowledge the historically significant role that they played in Quebec history. Instead, Native representation plays a doubly abject role, on the one hand as just another decorative aspect of the natural Canadian landscape (one of Cartier's "accessories") and on the other hand, as serving a particular functional role in the monument's status as a fountain. This references both the "myth of vacancy" where Native populations were believed to have left the land free for European colonization, as well as the assimilation efforts of Europeans wherein Natives were used as a means to passively support the needs of the Europeans, namely, to allow them to assert a distinct identity.

These observations now leave us with the problem of how to address the inaccuracies engrained in our collective memory. Given this monument's history of reparation and reconstruction, it is necessary to consider the implications that arise as a result of leaving the issues relating to the problematic representation of Natives in this monument entirely absent from its official narrative.[50] Why, over the course of the many times this monument has been repaired and reconstructed, did no one consider opening up a dialogue about these issues? Surely, in amongst the available documentation about this monument's history through the City of Montreal, including brochures, web pages, and a didactic panel in the Place Saint-Henri metro station, some mention of the fountain's problematic representation of Native peoples should be mentioned [fig. 9]. As alluded to at the beginning of this article, monuments, as representations of collective memory, have played an important role in contributing to the creation of a phantasmal "Quebecois Indian." As Thomas King suggests, "the Indian" of contemporary popular imagination does not exist. Instead, it is a social creation, perpetuated by the racially abject representation of Natives peoples in monuments such as the Jacques Cartier Monument.

Figure 9: Joseph-Arthur Vincent — Monument Jacques Cartier, original sculpture of Jacques Cartier on view in the Place Saint-Henri metro station, 1893, approx. 9.14 x 3.6 meters. Photograph taken by Lexi Stefanatos, 2014.

ENDNOTES

[1] Thomas King, The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of the Native People in North America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), p. 215.

[2] King, The Inconvenient Indian, p. 215.

[3] Throughout this paper I will use the terms indigenous and Native interchangeably to refer to all the peoples who occupied Canadian land before contact with Europeans. The terms indigenous and Native are inclusive of all Native peoples, namely those referred to as First Nations, as well as the Métis, and Inuit. I will only use the word "Indian" when directly referring to language that was used in the context of Cartier's voyages, in the nineteenth century, and in any more recent direct quotations.

[4] From this point on, I will refer to the Jacques Cartier monument in Square Saint-Henri as the "1893 Cartier Fountain."

[5] I have used the word "discoverer" in quotations to emphasize the problematic nature of claiming the "discovery" of a land where there were already settled peoples. Anonymous, "La Statue de Jacques-Cartier," Le Monde Illustré, 1 July 1893, vol. 10, no. 478, p. 101, Reel M-176 Microfilm A117, Collection national, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), Montreal, Canada.

[6] This translation, as well as all subsequent translations in this article, are my own. Trans.: "[…] ce monument tiendra continuellement sous les yeux du peuple une des plus belles pages de notre histoire. […] c'est ainsi souvent que les masses apprennent à connaitre leurs héros et les raisons pour lesquelles elles doivent être fières de leur race." Anonymous, Le Monde Illustré, p. 101. It should be noted that the author's use of the word "race," in his own late nineteenth-century context, does not have the same connotation as it does in its present use in the English language. Whereas now we distinguish *race* from the notion of *ethnicity*, it is likely that the author's intention was to use the word *race* in a similar way to our notion of *nationality* today.

[7] Little is known about Cartier's life, particularly his early life. Fragments are pulled together from court and legal records, as well as from the various accounts of his voyages. However, to date, no certain record of his date of birth has been found. Given the stature he established for himself in France, the scholar Henry Percival Biggar has traced some of his life and prestige through baptismal records in which Cartier was frequently asked to stand in as godfather. See Henry Percival Biggar, Collection of Documents Relating to Jacques Cartier and the Sieur de Roberval (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1930); Alan Gordon, Hero and the Historians: Historiography and the Uses of Jacques Cartier (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), p. 10.

[8] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 10.

[9] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 10.

[10] Bruce G. Trigger, Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), p. 124.

[11] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, pp. 13-14.

[12] Cartier's Voyages are the most reliable and informative description of the French voyages written during the sixteenth century. However, these letters do present three immediate problems: their authenticity, their authorship, and the paucity of information about Cartier himself. As scholars have pointed out, their authenticity must be questioned because no original manuscripts have been found. All three reports have been published in different languages in different years starting from 1565. Secondly, their authorship must also be questioned. It remains unclear whether the same author wrote the three voyages, and how much was written by Cartier himself. Finally, bibliographic information about Cartier is extremely sparse, therefore very little is known about his life prior to his voyages as well as after. Jacques Cartier, The Voyages of Jacques Cartier (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p. 20.

[13] Cartier, The Voyages, p. 20.

[14] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 16.

[15] Cartier, The Voyages, pp. 23-24.

[16] Cartier, The Voyages, p. 24.

[17] These Natives are commonly thought to have been a branch of the Iroquoian peoples.

[18] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 16.

[19] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 16.

[20] Cartier, The Voyages, p. 18.

21 Cartier, The Voyages, p. 47.

22 Cartier, The Voyages, pp. 52-53.

23 Trigger, Natives and Newcomers, p. 131.

24 Trigger, Natives and Newcomers, p. 131.

25 Trigger, Natives and Newcomers, p. 133.

26 Trigger, Natives and Newcomers, pp. 133-134.

27 Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 2.

28 Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 2.

29 Anonymous, "Jacques Cartier," La Presse, 14 June 1893, p. 15, Reel R-10 Microfilm A-28, Collection nationale, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), Montreal, Canada.

30 Jean Bélisle, Square Saint-Henri (Montreal: Société historique de Saint-Henri, 1992), p. 6.

31 Translation: "[…] Vincent doit exécuter une sculpture représentant Jacques Cartier avec ses accessoires." Bélisle, Square Saint-Henri, p. 6.

32 Vincent's original monument has since been replaced with an exact replica, designed by Jules Lasalle. In 1965, the original monument had begun to collapse due to its poor construction, which involved copper sheets being fixed to an interior wooden structure. At that time, the Montreal Foundry Limited Company replaced certain elements in an effort to restore the original. By 1991, The City of Montreal decided that the monument had continued to decay and was beyond repair. At this point, Lasalle was commissioned to copy the original using epoxy resin. Unfortunately, Lasalle's version did not stand the test of time, and forced the city to replace it once again, with a bronze version, in 2010. The bronze version was made using Lasalle's casts. Vincent's sculpture of Cartier, which originally topped the monument, is now on display permanently in the Place Saint-Henri metro station with a didactic panel explaining its history [fig. 9].

33 Translation: "To Jacques Cartier born in Saint-Malo on the 31 December 1494" / "Dropping the anchor on 16 July of the same year at the opening of the Saint Lawrence" / "Sent by François I to discover Canada on 20 April 1534" / "He took possession of the whole country for his King and Master and called it New France."

34 It should be noted that Square Saint-Henri was originally named Park Jacques Cartier, but was renamed in 1910 after the creation of Square Sir-Georges-Étienne-Cartier, also in Saint-Henri, to avoid confusion between the two Cartier parks. Anonymous, "Jacques Cartier," p. 15. Bélisle, Square Saint-Henri, p. 10.

35 Bélisle, Square Saint-Henri, p. 10.

36 Bélisle, Square Saint-Henri, p. 10.

37 Translation: "Il en fit part au conseil de sa ville, dont M. F. Dagenais est le maire dévoué et l'un de nos Canadiens les plus progressistes." Anonymous, Le Monde Illustré, p. 101.

38 Bélisle, Square Saint-Henri, p. 10.

39 Gordon suggests that the period lasted approximately from 1820 to 1920. Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 2.

40 Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 24.

41 There is also no shortage of the use of Cartier's name, some examples of which include but are not limited to: the Jacques Cartier bridge in Montreal, the Jacques Cartier River, Jacques Cartier streets in Gatineau and St-Pie Quebec, Jacques Cartier beach in Quebec, as well as the Place Jacques Cartier in Montreal. The cross Cartier planted on his 1534 voyage is also referenced in Quebec's national flag. Gordon, Hero and the Historians, p. 50.

[42] Ramsay Cook, Canada, Québec and the Uses of Nationalism, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1995), p. 107.
[43] Cook, Uses of Nationalism, p. 107.
[44] John F. Conway, Debts to Pay: The Future of Federalism in Québec (Toronto: Lorimer, 2004), pp. 21-55.
[45] Conway, Debts to Pay, pp. 21-55.
[46] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, pp. 73-74.
[47] Gordon, Hero and the Historians, pp. 73-74.
[48] Amelia Kalant, "Displacing the Native in Canadian Histories," National Identity and the Conflict at Oka: Native Belonging and Myths of Postcolonial Nationhood in Canada (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 95-96.
[49] Kalant, "Displacing the Native," p. 97.
[50] For a history of the monuments reconstruction, please see "J.-A. Vincent, Monument À Jacques Cartier, Parc Saint-Henri," Bureau d'art public Montréal, http://artpublic.ville.montreal.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/front/medias/5276.pdf (date of last access 1 December 2014)

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ENDURANCE, DIGNITY, AND STRENGTH: THE REINTERPRETATION OF CLASSICAL MYTHS IN HARRIET HOSMER'S DAPHNE, MEDUSA, AND OENONE

Abby Suissa

Nineteenth-century Rome saw the rise of an American expatriate community of neoclassical sculptors who sought inspiration from the classical past in order to convey ideals and moral messages for the development of a civilized society.[1] While various female sculptors had come to work within this community, they faced the gender biases of the nineteenth-century world, such as those described by American writer Henry James, who maintained that by nature women were incapable of intellectual or creative artistic achievement.[2]

Born in Massachusetts in 1830 and having studied modeling and anatomy in both Boston and Missouri, Harriet Hosmer was one of the colony's first female sculptors. Arriving at Rome in 1853, she studied under the tutelage of the Welsh sculptor John Gibson.[3] Diverging from the renowned male sculptors of Rome who often depicted female victimization and powerlessness, Hosmer's earliest sculptures conveyed moments of private contemplation and expression of emotion to focus on the personal female experience.

Figure 1: Harriet Hosmer, Daphne (1853), marble, 69.9 x 49.8 x 31.9 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, United States.

In replacing the harsh metamorphosis of Daphne (1853) with endurance, the horror of Medusa (1854) with dignity, and the misery of Oenone (1855) with strength, Hosmer reinterpreted these myths of tragic women from a distinctly female perspective, thereby opposing the common notion that women were incapable of ingenuity in their art.

In 1853, Hosmer began one of her first works in Rome, Daphne [fig. 1], the mythological nymph whose fate was detailed in the Roman poet Ovid's pivitol work Metamorphoses (8 CE). Daughter of the river god Peneus, Daphne preferred to run free through the forest than accept the bonds of love or marriage. Hit by Cupid's arrow, the god Apollo was enflamed with desire for her and began an aggressive chase. Terrified, she prayed to her father to save her, and just as Apollo was about to embrace her, she was transformed into a laurel tree.[4] The myth has been popularized in sculpture since antiquity, with one of its most renowned treatments being Apollo and Daphne by Gian Lorenzo Bernini in 1625 [fig. 2], which depicted the two vitally active figures in the moment of Daphne's transformation.[5] Although Bernini paraphrased his male figure from the Apollo Belvedere (c. 130-14 CE), the celebrated classical sculpture housed in the Vatican, he replaced its serene repose with the dynamic action characteristic of Baroque taste.[6] Tense with emotion, Apollo reaches out aggressively to capture Daphne just as her fingers have begun to turn to leaves and her toes to roots.

Figure 2: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, <u>Apollo and Daphne</u> (1622-25), marble, 243 cm, Galleria Borghese, Rome, Italy.

Figure 3: Harriet Hosmer, <u>Medusa</u> (1854), marble, 68.58 x 48.26 x 22.86 cm, The Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit, United States.

Although certainly familiar with <u>Apollo and Daphne</u> (1622-25) housed in the Borghese Gallery in Rome, Hosmer wrote of her revulsion of the "contortions of the Bernini school," characteristic of Baroque art.[7] Rather, Hosmer's adherence to the restraint and clarity of the neoclassical style enabled her to provide a new perspective upon the classical tragic tale. Replacing the anguish of Bernini's Daphne, Hosmer depicts the nymph in mournful contemplation and with considerable dignity in her suffering, her head turned slightly to her left as she calmly gazes downward. Her wavy locks of hair are neatly parted in the centre and twisted into a bun at the nape of her neck. The idealized facial features demonstrate the classical austerity Hosmer learned from her teacher Gibson, while the nubile breasts and full arms and shoulders convey the "roundness of flesh" Gibson admired in Hosmer's work.[8]

Rather than depicting Daphne's harsh moment of metamorphosis, Hosmer portrays the nymph contemplating her impending fate as a laurel tree, emphasizing her eternal endurance rather than her victimization. With her gaping mouth and fearful eyes, Bernini's Daphne is conveyed as powerless, caught between a forceful suitor and a brutal transformation as her limbs aggressively transform into leaves and roots. Eliminating Bernini's violent transformation, Hosmer depicts a garland of laurel leaves and berries slowly encroaching under Daphne's bare breasts. In a letter to Wayman Crow, she describes the nymph as "just sinking away into the laurel leaves."[9] Furthermore, in excluding the presence of Apollo, Hosmer bestows upon Daphne a private moment of contemplation. The horror Bernini depicted in her eyes is replaced with a calm acceptance, and resilience is conveyed through her stoic demeanor. She will endure forever as a

Figure 4: West Pediment of the Temple of Artemis (580 BC), stone, 23.46 m x 49 m, Archaeological Museum of Corfu, Corfu, Greece.

Figure 5: Antonio Canova, Perseus with the Head of Medusa (1804-6), marble, 220 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, United States.

beautiful element of nature and will never be ravaged by any man, thereby eternally fulfilling her vow to remain chaste.

In 1854, Hosmer sculpted Medusa [fig. 3] as a companion piece to Daphne, both sharing the themes of metamorphosis and victimization by men. According to Ovid's Metamorphoses, Medusa was a woman whose incredible beauty led the god Neptune to ravage her in the Temple of Athena. Furious at this desecration, Athena, goddess of wisdom and justice, turned Medusa into a hideous Gorgon, with snakes for hair and a gaze that would turn any viewer into stone. The hero Perseus was able to triumphantly behead her by looking at her reflection through his bronze shield.[10] The horrifying Medusa had been depicted since antiquity, exemplified in the sixth century BCE west pediment of the Temple of Artemis at Corfu [fig. 4], rendering Medusa with vicious fangs, demonic wide-set eyes, and a head of writhing snakes.[11] One of the myth's most celebrated treatments was Antonio Canova's Perseus with the Head of Medusa [fig. 5] of 1801 in the Vatican collection, with which Hosmer was certainly familiar. Canova reduced Medusa to a severed hair held up by her serpentine skull by Perseus, whose muscular physique, classical drapery, sword, and helmet clearly depicts him as the hero for slaying her. Throughout the centuries, Medusa has continuously been depicted as a monstrosity, emphasizing the vicious snakes and her horrifying gaze; her original beauty was seemingly completely omitted from the history of art.

Engaging the forgotten origins of the myth, Hosmer portrayed her Medusa as classically beautiful – the tragic cause for her punishment – providing a sympathetic perspective upon the traditionally loathed

female. Neoclassical sculpture was "dominated by the memory of Canova," according to Wayne Craven, and since Canova had served as Gibson's teacher, Hosmer's departure from the hideous Medusa marked a subtle challenge to authority.[12] Akin to Daphne, Medusa is rendered with classically idealized facial features, with aquiline brows tempered by her full face and soft lips. She turns to the right with a look of melancholy in her blank eyes, set deeply in their sockets. Her transformation is suggested as her waves of hair terminate into coiling snakes, their marvelous scaled texture contrasting the softness of her human flesh. Two intertwined snakes meet in a knot below her breasts to constrain her, marking her impending imprisonment in a monstrous form. Rather than the heroism of Perseus and the horror of Medusa, Hosmer bestows a mixture of sadness and dignity upon her subject, as a visitor of her studio had written to Reverend Robert Collyer in 1867: "When you see that these

Figure 6: Harriet Hosmer, Oenone (1855), marble, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri, United States.

waves terminate in serpents, it strikes you with no feeling of repulsion. The face, whose eyes look upward, is full of sadness, to which the serpents add mystery and gloom, and make the beauty more thrilling."[13]

Daphne and Medusa have often been interpreted by both critics and viewers as visual allegories for Hosmer's personal experiences and the challenges she faced in the nineteenth-century, male-dominated art world.[14] Daphne's shunning of marriage has been equated to Hosmer's public (and private) declarations of celibacy; declarations, however, refuted by her long-term relationship with Lady Louisa Ashburn.[15] Hosmer wrote to Wayman Crow in 1854 that she "waged an eternal feud with the consolidating knot," believing matrimonial duties could terminate her ambitions for a career in sculpture.[16] Furthermore, her claim to celibacy was also a way for her to rid attention from her same-sex desires, which she only later openly acknowledged.[17] As Medusa's great beauty led her to be ravished by Neptune and cursed by Athena, Hosmer's focus on Medusa's origins engaged with the punishment for female sexuality in the nineteenth century, which she herself would experience while working on Oenone in 1855. Modeling a female nude from life, Hosmer was harshly criticized by Thomas Crawford, who was shocked that a female sculptor would have the same access to the nude figure as a male sculptor, and claimed her "want of modesty is enough to disgust a dog."[18]

However, beyond a more autobiographical interpretation of their meanings, Daphne and Medusa were significant works in the establishment of Hosmer's career, as her divergence from distinguished male artists such as Bernini and Canova in content and style marked Hosmer's independence and ingenuity as she early embarked upon her career in the Roman colony. The myth of a woman who could turn men into stone was a powerful metaphor for a female sculptor,

Figure 7: Ludwig Michael Von Schwanthaler, Paris and Oenone (1848), marble, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, UK.

as Hosmer created marble statues of both men and women that left her audience frozen in awe. An anonymous visitor wrote to Collyer of Medusa: "it was hard for me to look away from this statue; if long gazing could have turned one to stone, the old tradition would have been fulfilled."[19] However, Hosmer's power as an agent of metamorphosis went beyond her physical ability to turn people to stone. As nineteenth-century art theory maintained, female artists were supposedly incapable of endowing their work with ingenuity or creativity. Gail Marshall asserts that through Daphne and Medusa, Hosmer undermined the contemporary connotations of the classical as remote and fixed and especially unyielding to female hands.[20] Compared to the celebrated sculptures that depicted these women aggressively being conquered by men, Hosmer excluded the male presence, instead centering the personal female experience, with Daphne and Medusa contemplating their impending fate with both sadness and dignity.

Furthermore, Joy Kasson maintains that while many of Hosmer's male predecessors explored female victimization in their works, the subjects she chose were also women of strength and power.[21] Daphne's transformation into a laurel tree marked a triumph over Apollo, as the metamorphosis enabled her to escape his aggressive pursuit and eternally fulfill her vow of chastity. Instead of depicting her beheading, Hosmer rendered Medusa during her transformation, where she will emerge more powerful, embodying a head of snakes and with the capacity to turn her victims into stone. Thereby, Hosmer ingeniously reinterpreted classic myths that emphasized the victimization and domination of women, alternatively providing these women with sympathy and strength by focusing on their individual experiences.

With her first full-length sculpture, Oenone [fig. 6] of 1855, Hosmer continued to explore the personal female experience by capturing the expression of grief across the nude's entire body, while also bestowing the potential for strength upon a traditionally pitied character. In a letter to the patron of the work, Wayman Crow, Hosmer asserted that ideal busts were a fair starting point, but she believed that a life-sized figure would give her opportunity to express her ideas with greater power.[22] In Ovid's poem titled Heroides V (43 BCE - 17 CE), he explains that when an oracle prophesized that Paris, son of King Priam, would be the cause of Troy's destruction, Paris was then sent to be raised as a shepherd in order to conceal his identity.[23] Oenone, a nymph of

fountains and streams, fell in love with Paris, and the two were soon betrothed. However, when selected to judge who was the fairest of the goddesses, Paris chose Aphrodite, who bestowed upon him the Trojan Queen Helen as his prize. Mesmerized by Helen's beauty, he abandoned Oenone. While Ludwig Michael von Schwanthaler had sculpted Paris and Oenone in 1848 [fig. 7], the abandoned Oenone was a rare figure in the history of art.

In preparation for her Oenone, Hosmer carefully studied the work of Gibson, borrowing the seated pose and contemplative demeanor of his Narcissus (1829), which had been inspired from life from a boy sitting by a Roman fountain.[24] Hosmer bestowed the ideals of classical beauty upon her Oenone, with a small mouth, strong nose, and hair gently drawn back, allowing soft waves to frame her delicate face. Her facial expression hints to her internal state, with her eyes lowered in melancholy. However, the grief is mor e powerfully expressed throughout her body, which has collapsed to the ground as her head bows in despair. As one reviewer had described that Hosmer represents "Oenone when the intensity of grief has passed away from sheer exhaustion, leaving its traces not only upon her face,

Figure 8: Hiram Powers, The Greek Slave (1844), marble, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., United States.

but all over her weary frame."[25] While her breasts are exposed, her lower body is gently concealed by drapery. The fingers of her left hand curve over the edge of the oval base, etched to convey the texture of grass, while her right hand caresses the shepherd's crook that Paris has also abandoned.

Nineteenth-century neoclassical sculptures of women generally apply a narrative of victimization and powerlessness to justify female nudity. One of the most renowned and publicized works of Hosmer's day was Hiram Powers's The Greek Slave of 1844 [fig. 8].[26] In various pamphlets he published upon its release, Powers created a narrative of a Greek woman captured by the Turks during the Greek War of Independence.[27] The Greek Slave was thereby to be imagined as shown on display at the slave market, as identified by the delicate chains hanging from her bound wrists. Her body is fully exposed to the viewer, except for the strategic placement of her left hand covering her genitals. Her head is turned away, with a facial expression of quiet despair that absolves her of any responsibility for her nudity. Resting on a draped pillar, her right-hand holds a locket and a cross, respectively representing her betrothed and Christian resolve. Similarly, Erastus Dow Palmer's The White Captive of 1857 [fig. 9] relied upon romanticized legends of Native Americans capturing young white women, depicting a girl whose hands are bound behind her to a tree stump, fully exposing her breasts and genitals. Pathos for these anonymous white women relied on the European popular belief of their moral and religious superiority over the supposedly villainous and cruel Turks and "Indians," who were believed to have subjected these women to public exposure through slavery or captivity.[28]

Figure 9: Erastus Dow Palmer, The White Captive (1857-58), marble, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, United States.

While not physically enslaved or captured, Hosmer depicts a nude subject who is mentally imprisoned by the thought of her abandonment by a man. In contrast to the imagined audience of the Turkish slave-traders or the "Indian" capturers for the sculptures of Powers and Palmer, Hosmer completely excludes the imaginary male gaze in depicting Oenone alone in private contemplation. Although her upper body is exposed, her inward-turning pose prohibits the viewer from full access to her nudity. The closed posture refuses objectification, just as the marble's matte finish diminishes the sculpture's eroticism.[29] Rather than making nudity the central focus as in The Greek Slave and The White Captive, whose internal states are reduced to ambiguous facial expressions, Hosmer renders the effect of despair across her subject's entire body, thereby giving prevalence to the personal female experience over the male gaze upon the exposed body.

Not simply relying upon European myths of the white female captured by men of colour to create pathos for her subject, Hosmer borrowed from the internal state of agony expressed in Lord Alfred Tennyson's poem "Oenone" of 1833, having been a fan of his work since her arrival in Europe.[30] Relegated to a passing mention in Ovid's telling of the Trojan War, Tennyson revived the tale from the perspective of the heartbroken Oenone, who in solitude recounts the events leading to her despair to her mother, Mount Ida. However, in contrast to The Greek Slave and The White Captive, Hosmer provides a narrative of a woman who is not powerless. Rather, Joy Kasson asserts that even in her despair, Oenone possesses strength and the capacity for retribution.[31] Tennyson's last two stanzas reveal how her inner pain can be transformed into power, as she proclaims, "I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts/ Do shape themselves within me." As prophesized, only Oenone knows the cure to save Paris when he is fatally injured in battle, which she inevitably choses to deny him. Thus, Hosmer provides the viewer insight into a personal moment where a woman in misery becomes transformed. However, rather than the physical transformation she provides for Daphne and Medusa, Oenone experiences an internal transformation expressed through her emotive body language. Revisiting her posture, one can see that although Oenone has reclined in grief, she has not completely collapsed upon the ground. As she holds herself up by her gentle arms, Oenone is also in a position where she can stand and emerge from her agony.

Between Hosmer, one of the first women artists in the Roman colony, and Mary Edmonia Lewis, one of the last to arrive, a progression of images of women focusing on the personal female experience can be seen diverging from their male counterparts' emphasis on female vulnerability. Although it is hard to determine a precise relationship of influence between Hosmer and Lewis due to limited historical evidence, it is known that Hosmer both encouraged and aided Lewis at the start of her career at Rome.[32] Like Hosmer, Lewis engaged with the theme of female

victimization in her Hagar in the Wilderness of 1875 [fig. 10], a figure that she had sculpted numerous times.[33] Commenting on her sculptures of Hagar, Edmonia asserted, "I have a strong sympathy for all women who have suffered and struggled."[34] According to the Old Testament, Sarah, who was "barren" at 90 years old, gave her husband Abraham an Egyptian servant to produce an heir. However, after the miraculous birth of Isaac by Sarah, she cast away Hagar and her illegitimate child Ishmael into the wilderness. While Hagar's banishment has been a subject of depiction by eighteenth and nineteenth-century American painters such as Benjamin West and John Singelton Copley, Hagar was a rare subject for American sculptors.[35] With Lewis having recently left America at the end of the Civil War (and the end of slavery) and considering her black (and Native) heritage, Michelle Cliff asserts Lewis' choice of Hagar recalls the experience of enslaved black females and the institutionalization of rape by white owners for the purpose of "breeding" new slaves.[36] Lewis rendered Hagar fully clothed in classical drapery, with long, curling hair flowing behind her. The figure gazes upward, clasping her hands together in obvious pleading. The definitive placement of the overturned water vessel marks this

Figure 10: Mary Edmonia Lewis, Hagar in the Wilderness (1875), marble, 133.6 x 38.8 x 43.4 cm, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., United States.

as the biblical moment when Hagar is forced to search for water to ensure the survival of her and her son.[37] Lewis chose a traditionally pitied, although rarely examined, female subject in a moment of despair. However, she also chose to focus on her strength and resilience to survive, akin to the precedent Hosmer had set in her earliest sculptures in the colony.

In diverging from the renowned male sculptors of Rome who often emphasized female victimization in their works, Harriet Hosmer's first sculptures in the colony conveyed the personal female experience to provide new perspectives upon tragic women of mythology. In replacing the harsh metamorphosis of Daphne with endurance, the horror of Medusa with dignity, and the misery of Oenone with strength, Hosmer opened up the classical to reinterpretation, thereby opposing the popular belief that female artists are incapable of ingenuity in their work. By omitting the male presence and denying the objectifying male gaze upon her nudes, she created moments that prioritized private contemplation and the expression of emotion. Thus, Hosmer's reinterpretation of these classic tales reveals truths of both personal and universal female experiences, while advancing the possibility for other female sculptors of the colony, such as Edmonia Lewis, to give prevalence to the female perspective in their neoclassical practice.

ENDNOTES

[1] Melissa Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life of a Perfectly 'Emancipated Female': Harriet Hosmer's Early Years in Rome," Perspectives on American Sculpture before 1825, ed. Tolles Thayer (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003), p. 35.

[2] Jane Mayo Roos, "Another look at Henry James and the 'White, Marmorean Flock'," Women's Art Journal, vol. 4, no. 1 (Spring-Summer 1983), p. 29.

[3] Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life," p. 35.

[4] Dolly Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, American Sculptor, 1830-1908 (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1991), p. 82.

[5] Gail Marshall, "Harriet Hosmer and the Classical Inheritance," Forum for Modern Language Studies, vol. 39, no. 2 (2003), p 207.

[6] Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, p. 83.

[7] Marshall, "Harriet Hosmer," p. 209.

[8] Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, p. 86.

[9] Harriet Hosmer, Letters and Memoirs, (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1912), p. 25.

[10] Kate Culkin, Harriet Hosmer: A Cultural Biography (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 2010), p. 35.

[11] William Gerdts, "The Medusa of Harriet Hosmer," Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts, vol. 36 (1978), p. 107.

[12] Culkin, Harriet Hosmer, p. 35.

[13] Gerdts, "The Medusa of Harriet Hosmer," p. 106.

[14] Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life," p. 35.

[15] For more on Hosmer's romantic relationship with Ashburn see, in this volume: Viola Chen, "Sexuality and Possibility for Nineteenth-Century Female Sculptors: Non-Heteronormative Identities across racial Lines".

[16] Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life," p. 37.

[17] Charmaine A. Nelson, The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in 19th Century America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2007), p. 47.

[18] Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life," p. 36.

[19] Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, p. 87.

[20] Marshall, "Harriet Hosmer and the Classical Inheritance," p. 207.

[21] Joy Kasson, Marble Queens and Captives: Women in Nineteenth Century American Sculpture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 146.

[22] Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, p. 115.

[23] Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, p. 117.

[24] Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life," p. 39

[25] Culkin, Harriet Hosmer, p. 43.

[26] For more on Hiram Powers's The Greek Slave see, in this issue: Iseabail A. C. Rowe, "The Privilege of Viewing: Abolitionist Narrative and Accessibility on the Tour of Hiram Powers's The Greek Slave".

[27] Kasson, Marble Queens, p. 46.

[28] Nelson, The Color of Stone, p. 98.

[29] Dabikis, "The Eccentric Life," p. 39.

[30] Sherwood, Harriet Hosmer, p. 116.

[31] Kasson, Marble Queens, p. 150

[32] Alicia Faxon, 'Images of Women in the Sculpture of Harriet Hosmer,' <u>Woman's Art Journal</u>, vol. 2, no.1 (Spring-Summer 1981), p. 25-29; Nelson, <u>Color of Stone</u>, p. 33.

[33] Nelson, <u>Color of Stone</u>, p. 33.

[34] Eleanor Tufts, <u>Our Hidden Heritage: Five Centuries of Women Artists</u> (New York: Paddington Press, 1974), p. 159.

[35] Kristen Pai Buick, <u>Child of Fire: Mary Edmonia Lewis and the problem of Art History's Black and Indian Subject</u> (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 67.

[36] Tufts, <u>Our Hidden Heritage</u>, p. 159.

[37] Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. xiii.

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Figure 1: Harriet Hosmer, <u>Daphne</u> (1853), marble, 69.9 x 49.8 x 31.9 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, United States.

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Figure 7: Ludwig Michael Von Schwanthaler, <u>Paris and Oenone</u> (1848), marble, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, UK.

Figure 8: Hiram Powers, <u>The Greek Slave</u> (1844), marble, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., United States.

Figure 9: Erastus Dow Palmer, <u>The White Captive</u> (1857-58), marble, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, United States.

Figure 10: Mary Edmonia Lewis, <u>Hagar in the Wilderness</u> (1875), marble, 133.6 x 38.8 x 43.4 cm, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., United States.

CHARLES CORDIER: ETHNOGRAPHIC SCULPTURE AND THE IDEOLOGY OF RACE
Gloria Wallace

Arguably the most celebrated and renowned nineteenth-century practitioner of polychromy, Charles-Henri-Joseph Cordier (1827-1905) was a French sculptor whose work was believed to occupy a liminal space between art and science.[1] Charles Cordier's ethnographic polychromic sculptures are products of an ideology of race that supported European colonization of indigenous people and people of colour. Masquerading as objective scientific documents, Cordier's artworks can be located within the theoretical frameworks of Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said, and David Batchelor.

Figure 1: Charles Cordier, Saïd Abdallah (1848), bronze, 32 3/4 x 19 5/8 x 14 1/2 in., Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA. Over thirty full size or reduced versions are extant in plaster and bronze.

Cordier held the position of ethnographic sculptor to the *Museum d'Histroire Naturelle* in Paris for fifteen years from 1851-1866.[2] In his official role, he participated in several government-sponsored missions, namely to Algeria in 1856, Greece in 1858-9, and Egypt in 1865.[3] Over the course of his state-sponsored travel, Cordier attempted to produce scientifically objective representations of modern ethnic "types" to be consumed as evidence of racial difference corroborating and contributing to the colonial investment in nineteenth-century anthropology.[4] As an Orientalist artist and member of the *Society of Anthropology*, Cordier's polychrome busts were distinct from the traditional practice of portraiture.[5] His sculptures were believed to straddle the boundary between art object and scientific document due to their status as "ethnographic" works, held as accurate depictions, not of any particular individual, but of entire categories of humanity within a racial hierarchy.[6]

Cordier's role as artist-ethnographer emerged from a broader ideological and political European fascination with non-European Other(s). Since the sixteenth century, European courts exhibited different "kinds" of bodies considered "exotic" or curious, such as dwarves, hirsute women, indigenous and foreign people, for public display as entertainment and for study.[7] Arguably the most famous instance of this public humiliation was the exhibition of Saarjie Baartman. Colonial fascination with her anatomy, which was labelled "hypersexual" and alien, motivated the captivity, exploitation, and abuse of Baartman, who was a Hottentot (now a derogatory term), Bushwoman or Khoisan brought to London from South Africa in 1810.[8] Her short and tragic life exemplifies how discourses of racial difference were both a source of entertainment

and scientific inquiry. Not only was Baartman toured across Europe as an object of ridicule and hilarity, but her portrait was also commissioned by several painters and draftsmen for anatomist George Cuvier of the *Museum d'Histoire Naturelle*.[9] Denied the wealth and safe return home that she was originally promised, after her death in 1815, Cuvier dissected her body.[10] Her remains were not returned to South Africa until 2002 when the French government finally agreed to the longstanding South African demand.[11] The abuse and humiliation of Saarjie Baartman was not a unique occurrence, demonstrating the pervasive colonial treatment of people of colour and indigenous people as both curiosities and scientific specimens.

Debate over the origins of humanity and the subsequent divisions and hierarchy of races, were fashionable subjects of the period.[12] Despite the scientific community's best attempts to project an air of objective neutrality, these debates were by no means apolitical. The concept of race was highly contested in the mid-nineteenth century.[13] Two main theories divided the newly established field of anthropology into monogenists and polygenists.[14] The former group, to which the scientists at the *Museum d'Histoire Naturelle* belonged, believed that all races descended from the same two people, Adam and Eve, and that anatomical differences could be accounted for by the degenerative effects of non-European climates.[15] The latter group, to which the founders of the *Society of Anthropology* belonged, believed each race to be a different species of humans with separate origins.[16] Although the theory held by the polygenists does not explicitly centre on notions of degeneration, both groups found "proof" of African inferiority in physical characteristics such as the slant of the forehead, weight of the brain, or composition of the face.[17] Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago and specialist in the study of the modernization of developing nations in Latin America and Asia, the late Manning Nash (1924-2001), articulated how the nineteenth-century quest for evidence of racial difference and inferiority of the non-European Other supported Europe's colonization of other continents:

> "Along with the study of race there may exist the 'ideology of race'. The ideology of race is a system of ideas which interprets and defines meaning of racial differences, real or imagined, in terms of some system of cultural values. The ideology of race is always normative: it ranks differences as better or worse, superior or inferior, desirable or undesirable, and as modifiable or unmodifiable. Like all ideologies, the ideology of race implies a call to action; it embodies a political and social program; it is a demand that something be done."[18]

Cordier produced his ethnographic sculptures within the context of the anthropological belief in the possibility of categorizing and quantifying racial difference through collecting records of comparative physiognomies.[19] In this context, Cordier argued for the scientific validity of his sculptural process, employing the vocabulary and methodologies of anthropology and anatomy to choose a model in explicit terms of racial typing:

> "To set up my measurements, I start from some central point – for example, the center of the ear – to determine the slant of the medial line from the chin to the occipital bone; then I trace the arc of a circle, beneath which I determine the position of each feature, each depression, every landmark, and so on for all the lines, for all the countours, down to the most delicate crevice and protrusion."[20]

Cordier consciously attempted to frame his artworks as scientific specimens, describing the similarity between his sculptural process and anthropological methods of recording physiognomy.[21]

The selection of his models, titles of his works, his proximity to the subjects of his "study," and the display and exhibition of his ethnographic sculptures all contributed to authenticate his claims of objective scientific documentation, rather than artistic fabrication. Prior to his appointment as ethnographic sculptor for the *Museum d'Histoire Naturelle* in Paris or his membership in the *Society of Anthropology* in 1860, Cordier displayed a painted plaster bust entitled <u>Said Abdallah, of the Mayac Tribe, Kingdom of Darfur </u> at the Salon of 1848.[22] This work was a plaster replica of the bust [fig.1] that began a series of bronze and marble "ethnographic" busts of people of other races, which progressed into the lavish ethnographic sculptures for which he became famous.[23] The subject of the particular bust was Seid Enkness, a former slave who worked as a professional artist's model in Paris.[24] The title with which Cordier displayed the bust of Enkness severed his likeness from the contemporary African living in Paris, and geographically and culturally relocated him as a representation of an imaginary African type.[25] Cordier's ethnographic sculptures are distinct from portraiture in that their purpose was not to represent an individual, but through attention to features that displayed racial difference, such as the texture of the hair, shape of the nose, garments and accessories, their purpose was to represent an entire fixed and monolithic racial type.

Cordier's reduction of fluid and heterogeneous groups to a singular fixed and homogeneous type exemplifies Homi K. Bhabha's theoretical description of the ideological operations of stereotyping from a Postcolonial Studies framework in "The Other Question: Stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism" (1983). Bhabha argues that through the creation of signs, stereotyping is a semiotic activity, which constructs a group or individual as Other owing to the discursive production of difference.[26] The paradoxical strategy of producing Otherness through the creation of stereotypes aims to construct the group as unchanging, rigid, without variation, and "entirely knowable".[27] The paradox of this strategy lies in the need for repetition in the forging and maintenance of the stereotype: while it insists that the Other is identifiable and unchanging, the need for constant reiteration of the stereotype undermines the assumption of fixity.[28] If the identities of the victims of stereotyping are in reality unchanging, entirely knowable, and irrefutably different, these repetitions and reiterations would be redundant rather than necessary. Bhabha argues for the reading of the stereotype in the psychoanalytic terms of fetishism: the stereotype as fetish.[29] Bhabha explains:

> "The recognition of sexual difference…is disavowed by the fixation on an [fetish] object that masks that difference and restores an original presence…For fetishism is always a 'play' or vacillation between the archaic affirmation of wholeness/similarity— in Freud's terms: 'All men have penises'; in ours 'All men have the same skin/race/culture'—and the anxiety associated with lack and difference—again, for Freud 'Some do not have penises'; for us 'Some do not have the same skin/race/culture'. The fetish or stereotype gives access to an 'identity' which is predicated as much on mastery and pleasure as it is on anxiety and defense, for it is a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and its disavowal of it."[30]

Bhabha's analysis of the function of colonial discourse in constructing racial difference can be directly applied to the success of Cordier's ethnographic sculpture in uniting art and science.

Cordier's creation of distinct and measurable racial (stereo)types complies with the discursive aims to construct the group as unchanging, rigid, without variation, and "entirely knowable." His work allowed the French public to access a singular figure that was endorsed by the scientific context of its anthropological association to stand in for an entire group. Not only was the sculpture literally unchanging, rigid, and entirely knowable, but the French public, who would have had nearly no access to the groups "documented" in Cordier and other Orientalist artists' works, was made to believe that those groups in their entirety were accurately and scientifically represented in a singular, entirely knowable, figure. Drawing the connection between the stereotype and the fetish object, Bhabha also accounts for the desire for Orientalist art. European audiences were able to take pleasure in reiterated and constructed representations of Otherness because, like the fetish, the stereotype soothed anxieties about fluid, undefined, and varying racial difference; a variation often heightened through colonial racial mixing.

　　Cordier's ethnographic sculpture only accounts for a fraction of his body of work. The balance of his sculptural artworks adhered to the neoclassical conventions of a mid-nineteenth century French sculptor. These works were made up of an assortment of public and private commissions, architectural ornaments, monuments to famous men, and both commemorative and private portraits.[31] Of Cordier's catalogue totaling six hundred and seventeen works, three hundred and sixty-five are busts, including ethnographic busts, and one hundred and three are bourgeois portraits.[32] The division between Cordier's compliance with neoclassical taste and his polychromic ethnographic works unite the highly contested practice of polychromy with representations of marginalized Others in a manner that conforms to David Batchelor's theory of Chromophobia, meaning the fear of colour, in western culture.[33] Batchelor argues that colour has been the object of extreme prejudice, viewed as corrupting, foreign, and superficial in western culture since antiquity.[34] Colour, according to Batchelor, has been systematically marginalized, reviled, diminished, and degraded in the west.[35]

　　Batchelor's characterization of the ideological operations of the prejudice against colour echoes Homi K. Bhabha's characterization of the ideological operations of stereotyping. The manifested loathing of colour masks a fear of contamination and corruption by something that is unknown or appears unknowable.[36] In the same manner as the stereotype, colour functions as a stand in for irresolvable societal fears—a stand in which can be symbolically contained or purged to sooth anxieties surrounding difference. Batchelor outlines the two manners in which the purging of colour may be accomplished: first, by designating colour the property of some "foreign" body (feminine, oriental, primitive, infantile, vulgar, queer, or pathological), second, by relegating colour to the realm of the superficial, the supplementary, the inessential, or the cosmetic.[37] In a conflation of the sinister and the superficial, according to Batchelor, "colour is dangerous, or it's trivial, or it's both."[38] To avoid the threat of colour it can be abandoned all together or, more commonly, controlled: "it must be ordered and classified; a hierarchy must be established."[39]

　　Charles Cordier's practice of polychromy entailed the used of different media in singular sculptural works, such as the combination of bronze, marble, onyx marble, enameling techniques, and plating bronze to create combinations of lights and darks, colours and patterns, and a range of patinas, to produce colourful and contrasting materials.[40] The alliance of polychromy and ethnographic pursuits in Cordier's work exemplifies the prejudicial relationship of western culture to colour, as argued by Batchelor. The French Academy's condemnation of colour, as "a seductive distraction, a mere simulation of the 'real,' which impeded the 'beauty,' 'grace,' 'purity,' and 'nobility' of white neoclassical sculptural form," conforms to Batchelor's theory of western culture's perception of colour as both dangerous and trivial.[41] Not only can this distain for deviation

from the culturally endorsed white marble within neoclassical sculptural practice be understood as an attempted abandonment of colour, but also the hierarchy of polychromic practices, can also be understood as an attempted control of colour. Nineteenth-century critics distinguished between the favoured "natural" polychromy, colouring achieved through the combination of various marbles and other materials, and the denounced "artificial" polychromy, colouring achieved through the application of colour not natural to the sculpted material, also known as painted sculpture.[42]

Within the colonial context of Cordier's artistic production, the practice of natural polychromy staged and unified the myths of natural essential difference between races and European conquest of foreign land and resources. With an outspoken passion for sculptural materials, Cordier's aim was to use the *natural* qualities of his material to represent a living being, which accompanied the anthropological rhetoric of his ethnographic sculptures to draw a parallel between the "scientific findings" and material resources available for extraction from foreign colonies.[43] Cordier visited the onyx-marble quarries near Constantine during his mission in 1856.[44] *The Algerian Onyx-Marble Company* was founded in 1858.[45] Cordier conflated geographic, biological, and cultural signifiers of identity into composite racial types, which he then presented to the French public as scientific truths by virtue of his aspirational persona, not only of ethnographer, but also of colonial explorer, within the contextualized exhibition platform of the *Museum d'Histoire Naturelle*. The copies of Cordier's bust of Enkness and Venus Africaine (1851) [fig. 2], purchased by the French government in 1851, were displayed in the *Museum d'Histoire Naturelle* among anthropological skulls and ethnographic artifacts in the Gallery of Anatomy.[46] The contexts of the exhibition of Cordier's Orientalist busts have situated them within the realm of artifact and scientific evidence.[47]

Edward Said's canonical text, Orientalism (1979), analyses the process through which western perception of the mythologized "Orient" more accurately reflects the values and characteristics of the west than it does the east.[48] Said argues that Orientalist art and scholarship is so inextricably tied

Figure 2: Charles Cordier, Venus Africaine (1851), bronze, 32 x 17 x 11 5/8 in., Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA.

to the imperialist societies that produce it, thus inherently political, servile to power, and intellectually suspect.[49] As a product of western ideology, the construction of a false dichotomy between east and west, Orientalism offers insight into western power structures and value systems through a process of negative self-identification. By characterizing or defining the Orient through qualities inherent to all of humanity, but which the west perceives as flawed or inferior, Orientalism reveals how the west perceives itself in contrast.

Batchelor's theory of Chromophobia reveals the process of negative self-identification operating within the western cultural prejudice against colour - another false dichotomy echoing the function of Orientalism. Batchelor describes "White" as a myth, an "aesthetic fantasy."[50] According to Batchelor, "white must be whiter than white, and to achieve that, colour must be added."[51] The colonial process of Cordier's assumption of the "white gaze as an 'objective' tool of visual scrutiny" and the polychromic practice through which he represents the perceptions of that white gaze follow the same structures by which Chromophobia and Orientalism attempt to establish, secure, and defined western identity as compatible with patriarchal, heteronormative, white supremacist ideology.[52]

Arguably the most celebrated and renowned nineteenth century practitioner of polychromy, French sculptor Charles-Henri-Joseph Cordier's work was a product of, and contributed to, the ideologies that supported European colonization of people of colour and indigenous peoples. The theoretical operations of racial stereotypes, Chromophobia, and Orientalism, formulated by Homi K. Bhabha, David Batchelor, and Edward Said respectively, reveal how Cordier's ethnographic sculptures, authenticated by the rhetoric of nineteenth-century anthropology, functioned as discourse in the ideology of race.

ENDNOTES

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[2] "Cordier, Charles," (date of last access 3 December 2014).

[3] "Cordier, Charles," (date of last access 3 December 2014).

[4] Charmaine A. Nelson, The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. 63.

[5] Robley Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference: Charles Cordier's Ethnographic Sculptures," (Chapel Hill: MA Department of Art and Art History, University of North Carolina, 2011), p. 10.

[6] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 2.

[7] Laure de Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro is not the one who looks most like us'—Cordier, 1862," Facing The Other: Charles Cordier Ethnographic Sculptor (1827-1905) eds. Laure de Margerie & Edouard Papet (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 2004), p. 20.

[8] Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro'," p. 20.

[9] Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro'," p. 20.

[10] Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro'," p. 20.

[11] Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro'," p. 20.

[12] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 19.

[13] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 19.

[14] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 19.

[15] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 19.

[16] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 19.

[17] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 19.

[18] Manning Nash, "Race and the Ideology of Race," <u>Current Anthropology</u>, vol. 3, no. 3 (June 1962), p. 285.

[19] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 27.

[20] Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro'," p. 27.

[21] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 13.

[22] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 3.

[23] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 3.

[24] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 3.

[25] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 3.

[26] Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question," <u>Screen</u>, vol. 24, no. 6 (1983), pp.18-36.

[27] Bhabha, "The Other Question," p. 18.

[28] Bhabha, "The Other Question," p. 18.

[29] Bhabha, "The Other Question," pp. 26-27.

[30] Bhabha, "The Other Question," p. 27.

[31] Margerie, "'The most beautiful Negro'," p. 13.

[32] Edouard Papet, " 'To have the courage of his polychromy': Charles Cordier and the Sculpture of the Second Empire," <u>Facing The Other: Charles Cordier Ethnographic Sculptor (1827-1905)</u> (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 2004), p. 109.

[33] David Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u> (London: Reaktion, 2000), p. 22.

[34] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 23.

[35] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 23.

[36] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 22.

[37] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, pp. 22-23.

[38] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 23.

[39] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 48.

[40] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 12.

[41] Nelson, <u>The Color of Stone</u>, p. 60.

[42] Papet, "'To have the courage of his polychromy'," p. 95. For more on the different practices of polychromy see, in this issue: Olivia Maccioni, "Brought into the Light: How and Why External, Temporal Polychromy by Moonlight and Torchlight was an Accepted and Revered Practice in Nineteenth-Century Sculpture".

[43] Papet, "'To have the courage of his polychromy'," p. 83.

[44] Papet, "'To have the courage of his polychromy'," p. 83.

[45] Papet, "'To have the courage of his polychromy'," p. 83.

[46] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," pp. 4-5.

[47] Holmes, "Re-Casting Difference," p. 5.

[48] Edward Said, <u>Orientalism</u> (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 46.

[49] Said, <u>Orientalism</u>, p. 46.

[50] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 47.

[51] Batchelor, <u>Chromophobia</u>, p. 49.

[52] Nelson, <u>The Colour of Stone</u>, p. 63.

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PLATE LIST

Figure 1: Charles Cordier, <u>Saïd Abdallah</u> (1848), bronze, 32 3/4 x 19 5/8 x 14 1/2 in., Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA. Over thirty full size or reduced versions are extant in plaster and bronze.

Figure 2: Charles Cordier, <u>Venus Africaine</u> (1851), bronze, 32 x 17 x 11 5/8 in., Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA.