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Anda D. Lopazan 04/ 17/ 2012

Creation and Deception in the Evolution of Art Forgery

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Abstract

Creation and Deception in the Evolution of Art Forgery
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This thesis will trace the evolution of the concept of "forgery" from its connections with creation to its modern associations with deception. I will discuss this change using examples of art from the Middle Ages to explain forgery as creation, from the Baroque to show how borrowing blurred the line between emulation and stealing, and from the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries to demonstrate how forgery became synonymous with fraud. Many examples from other times could have been used. I chose these examples because they correspond to two moments of transition in history and in art: the advent of the printing press and the application of the scientific method to analyzing art. These two events had a role in shifting the conception of forgery because they changed the intellectual climate that gave meaning to the concept. Distinguishing between the nuances of the word "forgery" is another useful tool for showing the difference in "forgery" from one time period to the next.

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Introduction – Defining Forgery

"Guilty of treason, forgerie, and shift."[1] In 1593, the master of forging words, William Shakespeare, used the word "forgery" in his play *The Rape of Lucrece* to mean the action of counterfeiting or falsifying.[2] This nuance of "forgery" derived from a definition of "to forge," meaning "the act of forging or inventing; devising; invention; esp. feigning; fiction."[3] The line comes from a lengthy passage in which Lucrece laments the horror of the crime committed against her by Tarquin. The placement of the word in this context assigns it a criminal connotation.[4] In addition, Lucrece uses the word forgery earlier in the play, when she is suddenly awoken in the middle of the night, and expresses her confusion about what she sees in her room: "Such shadowes are the weake-brains forgeries,/ Who angrie that the eyes flie from their lights,/ In darknes daunts them with more dreadfull sights."[5] Forgery in this context denotes a creation, a fiction projected by Lucerne's brain. Shakespeare manipulated the subtleties in the meaning of the word "forgery" to express Lucrece's thoughts and feeling at key moments in the play.

The multiple nuances of the words "forgery" and "forge," as seen with Shakespeare, can also be used to express the complex interaction that artists and art scholars have with original and fraudulent works of art at multiple points in history. This thesis will trace the evolution of the concept of "forgery" from its connections with creation to its modern associations with deception. I will discuss this change using examples of art from the Middle Ages to explain forgery as creation, from the Baroque to show how borrowing blurred the line between emulation and stealing, and from the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries to demonstrate how

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[1] Shakespeare, *Rape of Lucrece* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1921), line 920.
[2] Robert K. Barnhart, "Forge," in *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* (The H.W. Wilson Company, 1988), 400.
[3] *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* 2nd ed., (Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1944), 990.
[4] Shakespeare, *Rape of Lucrece,* line 920.
[5] Shakespeare, *Rape of Lucrece,* lines 460 -462.

forgery became synonymous with fraud. Many examples from other times could have been used. I chose these examples because they correspond to two moments of transition in history and in art: the advent of the printing press and the application of the scientific method to analyzing art. These two events had a role in shifting the conception of forgery because they changed the intellectual climate that gave meaning to the concept. Distinguishing between the nuances of the word "forgery" is another useful tool for showing the difference in "forgery" from one time period to the next.

Art forgery was not always considered a crime. During the Middle Ages, art forgery belonged to the realm of making and invention. One of the earliest definitions of forgery, emerging about 1279, was "to form or shape out in any way; produce; fashion."[6] "Forge," is the root word of "forgery" and comes from the Old French word "forge" referring to a "place where metal is heated and shaped" as a noun and to "make, shape, or form" as a verb.[7] This definition links "forgery" to a particular trade, that of forging, shaping metal and creating an original object with that metal. In essence, even the creation of an original work of art can be considered as "forging" when the word is used in this sense – that of making an object out of a raw material. Forgery does not stand for a crime or a fraudulent work of art. With this aspect of the definition, forgery becomes a source of creativity, ingenuity, and, in a way, originality. When referring to art forgeries made in the Middle Ages, the predominant association is that of creation and invention.

Copying and replicating were important forms of medieval art making. In modern society, creating a copy or emulative work does not exhibit the degree of originality necessary for the work to be valued. Copies and emulations are deemed forgeries if they were placed on an

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[6] *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 990.
[7] Barnhart, 400.

equal level with the more valuable original. Copies and emulations have their place in the art world, as long as they are labeled as such. Their role is to educate about a legitimate and valuable work of art.

During the Baroque, artists and scholars began considering the intent of the artist and the amount of copying present in a work when determining its artistic worth. Borrowing from earlier art and masters was an important part of Baroque artistic tradition and could be considered creative forgery. But when an entire original work was a borrowing, the difference between fraud and creativity became blurred.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, "forgery," especially when applied to art, describes a fraudulent work created with the sole purpose of deceiving its intended audience. The scientific method gave scholars the ability to distinguish between different artists. This ability to distinguish between works redefined the meaning of an original work. To qualify as an original, the work of art had to exhibit the stylistic markers that identified that artist. Having a more definite line between original and non-original created a more defined idea about the characteristics of a forgery in relation to works of art. The prevailing definition of forgery during the modern era is that of "to make or imitate falsely; to produce or devise (that which is untrue or genuine)."[8] More than in any other time period, modern conceptions of forgery have a great deal to do with the intent of the artist.

The various definitions of "to forge" and "forgery" are important in mapping the evolution of the idea of art forgery because these meanings indicate the complex issues in separating originals and non-originals. The criminal associations of art forgery gained strength as more and more value was placed on original works of art. The exaltation of the original artwork was a result of an artistic tradition that valued uniqueness and the individuality of the artist. This

[8] *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 990.

love for the original excludes the importance and value of copies and emulations of this original work.

One interesting nuance of the word "original" lies in its connection with forgery as creation: "designating the thing, as a document, text, picture, etc., from which another is copied or reproduced; that is the original."[9] This definition presupposes the existence of both – an original cannot exist without a copy, yet a copy cannot be made without the existence of an original. "Original" has another definition that relates "copy" and "original": an original is "created, composed, or done by a person directly; produced first-hand; not imitated or copied from another."[10] This part of the definition is a near reverse of the earlier one because it separates the original and the copy. An original is not dependent on any copying. This idea of the original becomes significant when identifying artists and their works. Art experts look for individual markers to distinguish between forgeries and originals. The identification of a work of art as an original or fraudulent forgery depends on the judgments reached by these experts.

Analyzing the definition of the word "forgery" and words related to it can help explain the shift in the conception of forgery from one artistic period to another. The issue is not, for example, whether fraudulent forgeries existed during the Middle Ages. The issue is that the word "forgery" means different things during different times. The meaning of "forgery" very much depends on the visual culture of the time period. Analyzing this shift in the conception of forgeries leads to a better understanding of how forgeries have shaped current views about art. Most studies about forgeries focus on the means and methods used by forgers to create believable originals, or on techniques for spotting forgeries. Tracing how the concept of forgeries

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[9]Oxford English Dictionary, "Original," http://www.oed.com.proxy.library.emory.edu/view/Entry/132564?redirectedFrom=original#eid (accessed November 19, 2011).

[10] Ibid.

changed over time enhances studies about forgeries by bringing new understanding to why these works were created and why they hold such a fascinating and taboo place in modern society.

Chapter 1 – Creative Forgery in the Middle Ages

Forging. Creating. Emulating. Copying. Reusing. These five words represent the art-making tradition of the Middle Ages. The forging of a work of art meant creating a new work. Creating new work was often done by emulating earlier art, earlier artists, earlier styles. New artistic styles and new art also emerged through the copying of already existing works. Copies of these older works were meant to perpetuate traditions and ideas. The reuse of older art in a new medieval setting brought forth the reverence for the antique. The outcomes of these processes are medieval forgeries. But these medieval forgeries hearkened to the metallurgical origins of the word "forgery" – shaping an already existing material into a new creation. Making copies and emulative works was an act of forgery and an act of creation. As a result, medieval creative forgeries had the same worth as the original.

Medieval forgeries were a mode of continuing history. As such, art's value derived from its ability to relay information. Walter Benjamin explains that "the uniqueness of the work of art is identical to its embeddedness in the context of tradition."[11] Certain art becomes important to a culture because of how well it resonates with the beliefs and traditions of that culture. Medieval art took on the roles of historical document, educational tool, and profession of faith. The "uniqueness" of medieval art and medieval forgeries was tied to their success in fulfilling these cultural roles.

Copies were an integral part of medieval artistic practice because they perpetuated beliefs, ideas, and traditions. Christopher Wood explains a process of copying called the

[11] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," in *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*, ed. Michael Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Levin (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2008),105.

substitution model in his work *Forgery, Replica, Fiction*.[12] With the substitution model, when the original work did not survive or needed replacement, a new piece would take its place without loss of meaning and without breaking the connection to an original model.[13] With the substitution model, authenticity and specificity were not relevant characteristics of the art. As long as the new work referred to the originating model or ideal, it was just as meaningful and useful as the substituted artwork. This particular mode of creating copies is most clearly seen with medieval icons.

Perhaps the most apt examples of Wood's substitution model are Byzantine icons depicting the *Virgin Hodegretia* whose copies were as sacred as the original. This particular icon type shows the Virgin enthroned, with the Christ child sitting on her knee (Figure 1). The Virgin's hand is pointed towards the Christ child because she is showing the true way. Worshipers believed that Saint Luke painted the original icon, preserved in the Hodegon Monastery in Constantinople, from real life. In essence, Saint Luke was painting a portrait of the Virgin and Child in their presence.[14] The original prototype could be replicated in multiple media, such as a mosaic from Constantinople (Figure 2) and the Byzantine pendant icon (Figure 3) showing the Virgin and Child in the same pose as the painted icon. Though made of different media, these two copies were just as powerful and sacred as the original image. Gary Vikan emphasizes that the "Byzantines believed that the power and sanctity of revered iconic archetypes resided collectively and individually in all copies, regardless of medium, style, aesthetic merit, or expense."[15] Both original and copy had a connection to the moment when St.

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[12] Christopher Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction: Temporalities of German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
[13] Wood, 15.
[14] Gary Vikan, "Ruminations on Edible Icons: Originals and Copies in the Art of Byzantium," *Studies in the History of Art*, Vol. 20 (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1989), 51.
[15] Vikan, 50.

Luke painted the Virgin and Child. A later copy of the *Virgin Hodegretia* possessed the same religious and spiritual importance as the prototype. The connection to the moment of creation gave the icon its value, not its artistic invention.

Wood explains that the substitution model works with medieval art because "one artifact was as good as another, at least within classes of artifacts that shared a purpose and pointed to a common referent."[16] An object's importance was derived from its position within a continuous chain of experience. Though the original work no longer existed, its successors easily served the same function and elicited similar responses in viewers. These new "copies" continued traditions and knowledge deemed important to a location or culture.

Former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas Hoving provides a counter viewpoint to Wood's. Hoving implies that medieval works were deliberately forged: "intellectuals of the early Charlemagne period – c.a. A.D. 800 – 820 – appear to have copied, even deliberately forged, the essence and some artifacts of what they thought was the ancient Rome of the time of Constantine."[17] The intellectuals Hoving mentions were actually emulating an older tradition. By copying the art form, they revived the ideals of the earlier society. For the intellectuals living during the reign of Charlemagne, art was part of a great tradition; individuality in art did not serve this purpose. "Forged" is an appropriate term in the sense of facture, since the actions of the intellectuals created new works. These new works emphasized a link with previous cultures and artistic traditions, whether those of earlier medieval cultures or ancient Rome. Copying and emulating took priority over invention because the connection with earlier art and culture was of high value.

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[16] Wood, 15.
[17] Thomas Hoving, *False Impressions: The Hunt for Big-Time Art Fakes* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 40.

Medieval illuminated manuscripts demonstrate how the process of copying from one manuscript to another was in fact an act of new creation. Hans Swarzenski refers to these copied illuminated manuscripts as creative copies: "here the copyist is not satisfied, or even concerned, with correct reporting and surface reproduction."[18] The aim of the copyist was in relaying the information presented in the original. Exact replication of details did not have the same importance as staying true to the overall composition. This freedom of visual representation is allowed as long as the artist does not stray from accurately conveying the intended message. If the new work remained embedded within iconographic and even theological tradition, the artist could take liberties with the exactitude of the copy.

Made in the early ninth-century, folio 36 from the Lorsch Gospels (Figure 4) shows Christ in Majesty (Christ seated on a throne, a book in his left hand and the right hand raised in blessing) at the very center of the page.[19] A circular band showing the symbols of the four evangelists surrounds Christ, creating a larger halo that encompasses the whole body of Christ. The page is dominated by dark, rich, colors – gold, dark orange, dark brown, and deep blue. An inscription is divided into four lines, two above the sphere holding Christ and two below. The margins are decorated with rich patterns. Every part of the surface has been thoroughly colored and decorated.

The Gero Gospel is a copy made in the later tenth-century from the Lorsch Gospel (figure 5).[20] When considering the difference between the Gero and Lorsch Gospels, Swarzenski writes that "the copyist [of the Gero Gospel] has outlined and filled the drapery with a system of linear patterns and details, thus destroying the clarity of the model. Everything has become more

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[18] Hans Swarzenski, "The Role of Copies in the Formation of the Styles of the Eleventh Century," in *Romanesque and Gothic Art: Studies in Western Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 8.
[19] Swarzenski, 8.
[20] Swarzenski, 13.

abstract, more geometric, more simplified, and flattened."[21] The copyist has indeed simplified the representation of Christ in Majesty and the surrounding framing. The Christ figure is larger than the one in the Lorsch Gospel and the drawing of his features is more organic. Like the Lorsch Gospel, Chris in the Gero Gospel image still holds a book in His left hand and raises His right hand in a gesture of blessing. Christ is still enthroned and surrounded by a wide band showing the symbols of the four evangelists. The structure of Christ's clothing, the position of His feet, and the way in which the evangelists' symbols are drawn are all indications of the link between the Lorsch and Gero gospels. But the Gero Gospel has a different color scheme and less decoration in the margins.

Stylistic differences aside, the Gero Gospel is a copy of the Lorsch Gospel. Swarzenski emphasizes that "the concern of the medieval copyist, on the contrary, was above all, iconographic content, truth, and tradition."[22] The divergence in style and amount of detail reproduced did not affect the iconography of the Christ in Majesty. In both images, the authority, power, and majesty of Christ is still evident. The truth about Christ's power is shown through the drawing of His right hand in a gesture of blessing. The copy follows the tradition of depicting Christ surrounded by the four evangelists. As a copy, the Gero Gospel does not qualify for the modern definition of original creation, instead, had the Gero Gospel been created in modern times, the work would have been classified as a forgery intending to deceive because, in essence, it stole an earlier idea. The Gero Gospel can be classified as a forgery – but only in Swarzenski's sense of a creative copy. The margin detailing and the filling in of Christ's drapery were inventions by the artist. His invention created a new work, one that referred to the Lorsch Gospels and that presented a traditional motif in a different setting.

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[21] Swarzenski, 10.
[22] Swarzenski, 9.

Jonathan Alexander expands on Swarzenski's analysis of the tradition of copying of illuminated manuscripts, especially with regard to copies made during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Utrecht Psalter, an illuminated manuscript of Carolingian origin made circa 820 at Reims (Figure 6), was replicated during this time.[23] The general layout of a page in the Utrecht Psalter has the illustration in the middle of the page, breaking up the text into two parts, one at the top and one at the bottom (Figure 6). The image looks more like a sketch instead of a careful, painstaking, and detailed illumination. The illustration is sepia in color, the lines made out of ink.

Between the years 1000 and 1200 in Cambridge, three illuminated psalters were made, copying the images from the Utrecht Psalter.[24] The Harley Psalter, the Eadwine Psalter, and the Paris Psalter, all demonstrated how a copy can be an invention. For this discussion, I will focus on the later two manuscripts, the Eadwine and Paris Psalters. The manuscript currently at Trinity College, known as the Eadwine Psalter, shows a clear difference between the original Utrecht Psalter and this twelfth century copy (Figure 7). The composition is the first difference between the original and copy. The Eadwine Psalter has the image on the top of the page, with the text running underneath. The illustration itself is not very elaborate, reminiscent of the sketch-like quality of the original Utrecht Psalter (Figure 6 and 7). The lines are very neat and thin, indicating precision on the part of the artist in bringing the scene to life (Figure 8). The main difference between the Utrecht and Eadwine Psalter is color. In the Eadwine Psalter, a holy man stands upon a hill drawn in multiple shades of green (Figure 8). The cluster of figures on the left side of the page is similar to the groupings of figures in the original (Figure 6). With the Eadwine Psalter, the artist clearly took creative license in copying the image. The copyist changed the

[23] Alexander, 72.
[24] Koert van der Horst, William Noel, and Wilhelmina C.M. Wüstefeld, *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David* (Houten, Netherlands: HES Publishers, 1996), 121.

organization of the page and used his own unique style to draw the figures and architectural details. This work is still considered a copy because it uses an earlier manuscript as a model.

The second twelfth-century copy of the Utrecht Psalter is currently in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale (Figure 9). The folio illustrates the same Psalm as the Eadwine Psalter, Psalm XIX.[25] The Paris manuscript also mirrors the organization of the image in the Eadwine Psalter (Figure 7). The Paris Psalter, however, contains much more detail and color. The same story is represented in a fuller, more life-like manner. The lines are broader and the colors are richer than both Utrecht and Eadwine Psalters (Figure 9). In contrast to the Eadwine Psalter's light, almost pastel coloring, the Paris Psalter has a very dark color scheme, composed primarily of blue, brown, and gold (Figure 10). The gold background makes the figures and architecture stand out boldly. The artist of the Eadwine Psalter interpreted the Utrecht Psalter in a more organized and regimented manner than did the artist of the Paris Psalter. In the Paris Psalter, the figures blend into one another so that it becomes difficult to separate when one body begins and another ends, especially with the group of figures on the left side of the hill. Natural details, such as the rocks forming the hill and the plants that grow on it have an abstract, almost surreal style. The deviation from the original and from other contemporary copies is a characteristic of twelfth century copies of illuminated manuscripts.[26] During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the artists making illustrated manuscripts did not aim for a perfect copy. Alexander states that "facsimile copies, that is the copying of both the subject matter and of the style of an earlier period, appear to be very rare in the Romanesque and Gothic periods."[27] Rather than remaining faithful to every miniscule detail, the copyist followed his artistic vision in the representation of

[25] Alexander, 100.
[26] Alexander, 101.
[27] Alexander, 101.

figures, decorating margins, and color scheme. The style in which the work was replicated could be different as long as the copy transmitted the spirit and the message of the original work.

Alexander brings forth the idea that "the notion that the task of the artist is to do something new is deeply embedded in twentieth-century cultural awareness, but this emphasis on originality is, of course, a legacy of the post-Renaissance period, and particularly of Romanticism."[28] I want to expand on this statement by emphasizing that art during the Middle Ages was not necessarily valued for its originality. During the Middle Ages, artists focused on continuing traditions and disseminating core Christian concepts when creating art. Copies were just as valuable as originals, as long as the copies fulfilled their designated function.

The reverence for tradition in the Middle Ages is most readily seen with the re-use of stained glass. When an entire stained glass window from the earlier Middle Ages was saved and reinstalled, it became a Belle Verrière. According to Mary Shepard, a Belle Verrière truly means "a window saved from an earlier structure and incorporated into a new architectural setting."[29] The most well-known examples of stained glass windows incorporated into new structures are the *Belle Verrière* of Chartres Cathedral (Figure 11) and the *Virgin and Child in Majesty* from the abbey church of La Trinité at Vendôme (Figure 12). The term Belle Verrière was first used in the fifteenth century to describe the Chartres window.[30] These two windows were preserved and reused in the Middle Ages. They did not function just as spolia because they were not reworked from a different context for their current use.[31] Rather, the Belles Verrières became part of a new

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[28] Alexander, 72.
[29] Mary B. Shepard, "Memory and 'Belles Verrières,'" in *Romanesque Art and Thought in the Twelfth Century: Essays in Honor of Walter Cahn*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton: The Index of Christian Art and Penn State University Press, 2008), 292.
[30] Shepard, 292.
[31] Shepard, 297.

visual culture while providing "continuity from one context to another."[32] Though the reinstallation of these windows was a different method of creating than was copying in Byzantine icons and illuminated manuscripts, the Belles Verrières also demonstrate the reabsorption of older art into a more contemporary context.

At Chartres Cathedral, the Belle Verrière was reinstalled in the first part of the thirteenth century into the new Gothic building after a fire in 1194 destroyed the previous church.[33] The window's miraculous survival added to its value – the window became a relic. *The Notre-Dame-de-la-Belle-Verrière* (Figure 11) represents the young Virgin in her designated blue robe, seated on a throne, with the Christ child on her lap. The red background draws the viewer's eye to the Virgin's face. She is crowned, with a light blue halo behind her head. The halo adds greater emphasis to her face and the kindly expression she projects towards the viewer. New panels, generally identified by their blue background, were added to the *Notre-Dame-de-la-Belle-Verrière* to accommodate the larger window opening in the Gothic structure. Its new surroundings stayed true to the theme of the original window, containing images of angels and narrative scenes showing the public life of Christ in the lower half of the window.[34] The angels flanking the Virgin and Child all face the pair, their gestures indicating reverence and praise for the mother and child (Figure 11). These gestures of praise refer to the majesty of the Virgin and Child and to the majesty of the window itself. Gothic artists added scenes from the life of Christ cycle in the lower part of the window for structural support, to compensate for the larger frame of the Gothic window. The Gothic additions blend stylistically with the Romanesque panels, yet a viewer can still detect that the top four red-grounded panels with the Virgin and Child are different. This reincorporation of the Romanesque glass highlighted the importance of the

[32] Shepard, 298.
[33] Shepard, 292.
[34] Shepard, 295.

window as a relic. Though the additions did transform the window by increasing its size and adding narrative context, the main purpose of the depiction is still conveying the majesty of Christ and the Virgin's role as an intercessor.

The Chartres Belle Verrière underwent restoration in the early thirteenth century. The head of the Christ Child is one of these restorations.[35] These medieval craftsmen did not rely on surviving stained glass to supply the new Gothic buildings with works of art. Instead, they carefully saved stained glass by repairing damaged parts and they created extra panels for support in the new setting. This care undertaken in the restoration and reinstallation of stained glass indicates the glass's function as a keeper of memory and tradition.

Like the Chartres window, the *Virgin and Child in Majesty* at the abbey church of Vendôme (Figure 12) was saved from the Romanesque building and reinstalled in the new Gothic structure. The image shows the Romanesque widow in its Gothic scale, flanked by stained glass windows from the twentieth century. By saving and then re-installing stained glass windows, Gothic artists also placed great worth on these works. Their worth derived in part from their status as Romanesque art.[36] The material of the Belles Verrières also made them valuable. Shepard also emphasizes that Belles Verrières "signaled the active presence of the past within the present."[37] The constant reminder of the past was a big part of medieval artistic practice. This reference to the past was an affirmation of the art's validity. By invoking past precedents, the medieval artist becomes part of a tradition of depiction much greater than himself.

With icons, their meaning and significance remains the same no matter the status of the copy. The same concept applies to the Romanesque Belle Verrière at Chartres – its function and

[35] Shepard, 295.
[36] Shepard, 295.
[37] Shepard, 296.

meaning did not change simply because it was re-installed in a Gothic building.[38] For Chartres, the window still referenced the Marian program of the cathedral and alluded to its most sacred relic, the *Sancta Camisia*, the robe worn by the Virgin at the birth of Christ. Both windows emphasize the glory of Christ, the holiness of Virgin Mary, the connection between mother and child, and the role of Mary as a vessel for Christ's majesty. These messages and impressions are constantly present in the work of art, no matter whether it is in a Romanesque or Gothic building.

The reverence for older forms also extended to antique artwork. According to Madeline Caviness, the importance of the ancient source is also evident in the copying of its style: "high regard for these [ancient works] is suggested also by the way in which they were used as models by later artists, even if they were creatively transformed in the copying."[39] A medieval viewer interpreted ancient art in a unique manner. These unique interpretations, when applied to art, created small variations from the original. The variations were not evident to a contemporary viewer because he or she was part of the same visual tradition as the artist. One sarcophagus indicating the function of the substitution model within medieval culture is the tomb of St. Guilhem in Provence at St- Guilhem-le-Désert.

Only a few fragments survive from the tomb of St. Guilhem. Two fragments are currently displayed in the museum at St-Guilhem-le-Désert. One fragment is identified as a miracle scene carved in fourth century (Figure 13), the other is a twelfth-century relief of a Madonna and Child (Figure 14).[40] The surviving miracle scene is composed of two three-quarter-length figures and the lower half of two others. Only one partial head remains. The lines, knots, and folds of drapery dominate the entire sculpture. By contrast, the *Madonna and Child* fragment contains more identifiable features. Sitting on a chair, the Virgin's arm is extended to embrace the child

[38] Shepard, 298.
[39] Caviness, 218.
[40] Caviness, 214, 215.

sitting on her lap. The top of the Virgin's head is broken off and the figure of the child is quite damaged. The foot and leg of the Christ child are still visible on top of the Virgin's knee, as is one of his arms. As with the figures in the miracle scene, the Virgin's body is covered in drapery.

When looking at the drapery of the figures, I see an attempt on the part of the twelfth-century artist to emulate the drapery from the earlier figures. The fourth-century drapery is looser and more naturalistic (Figure 13). The drapery gives shape to the figures without much emphasis on details of the figures' bodies. The fall of the drapery also creates an easy, relaxed movement throughout the panel. The figure carved in the twelfth century attempts to imitate the multiple folds found in the earlier figures (Figure 14). The shorter, tighter lines and the manner in which the cloth sits on the figure draws on the style of these earlier figures. This *Madonna and Child* is unique because the folds of the drapery neither overshadow nor outline the body. The twelfth-century artist uses drapery to depict the bodies in a manner similar to that of the fourth-century artist. The twelfth-century re-carving differs from the earlier carving in the style of the drapery and in how the artist uses the drapery to outline the body of the Madonna. The differences between the two fragments demonstrate that the artist of the *Madonna and Child* created a new work while emulating the representations on the rest of the sarcophagus.

The surviving fragments of the tomb of St. Guilhem do not tell the object's entire story. There is no direct evidence for a gradual change from one style to the next with the remaining parts of the sarcophagus. What we have left are two carved figures at polar ends of a stylistic spectrum. Direct comparison is inevitable because of the ease of placing the objects (or their pictures) side-by-side and noticing the difference in the drapery and how it activates the bodies of the persons represented. Without the context provided by the substitution model, one might

label the twelfth-century piece a forgery intending to deceive its audience. The *Madonna and Child* is an independent creation that emulates an ancient style from a medieval perspective.

Wood declares that the substitutability of art continued up until the fifteenth century: "things that are today considered works of art and therefore non-substitutable, like statues and paintings, were still constantly standing in for one another. Copying was the normal way to make new things."[41] Copies of works today are accepted as long as they act like copies – meaning that they are advertised as replicas. In the Middle Ages, copies were seen as works in their own right as long as they fulfilled their role as part of a chain of artifacts. Art was an important mode of continuing history and upholding traditions, and the artist did not necessarily aim to create an original work. Two main events that occurred on the cusp of the Renaissance changed the perspective about the role of art: archaeological thinking and the printing press.

Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the substitution model gradually gave way to a regimented system of attribution as archaeological thought developed. Archaeology, according to Wood, "began to parcel and collate historical time," and this fragmentation of time changed expectations about the origin and creation of art.[42] Parceling time assigns characteristics to segments of time. These traits were inevitably transferred to art. Just as archaeology created a new discipline and opened ways of looking and thinking about objects, Wood emphasizes that "print technology systematized scholarship and accelerated its dissemination. The woodcut captured the image itself, so opening for the first time an effective two-way path between scholar and artifact."[43] The dissemination of images allowed for the possibility of comparison between works of art and especially between an object and the source of its inspiration. Assigning art objects the labels of original and copies designates the possibility of creating an artistic

[41] Wood, 19.
[42] Wood, 12.
[43] Ibid.

hierarchy. Side by side scrutiny of originals and copies yielded precise observations about the differences between the two. Thus, print allowed scholars to explore a new framework of analyzing, a framework that changed from general to specific observations. Attention shifted from the commonality of these objects to their individuality.

This hierarchy placed the original first and the copy second, with the assumption that the first object is more valuable than its copy. Though the copy may have had value on its own, the original still retained a greater dominance. When a temporal aspect was added to the division between original and imitation the original became the earlier object and the copy the later work. The combination of first and earliest led to the perception that the original work should be distinguished from copies that would follow thereafter because of its greater supposed value. This distinction emphasized that any subsequent copies were emulative references to the original that evoked its spirit, and could never fully replace the original.

Publication also introduced the convention of signing and dating works. Wood explains how the signature of an artist and the date of a work guided the change towards non-replaceable artworks: "the notion that responsibility for a picture . . . might lie with the individual, and that the genesis of the picture might be precisely located in time, was given concrete form by the conventions of signature and date."[44] Adding a signature to a work of art adds responsibility for the work, and responsibility also implies ownership of the ideas and style expressed in the work. As we move towards the prolific Baroque, the ownership of ideas by an artist becomes a great source of debate and the line between allusion, emulation, and theft of ideas blurs.

[44] Wood, 346.

Chapter 2 – Borrowing and Stealing in the Baroque

New ideas about authorship, emulation, and invention emerged during the seventeenth century. The reverence for the antique still prevailed and served as inspiration for many of the period's greatest artists. But this respect for the classical mixed with new opinions about uniqueness of composition and individual traits belonging to an artist. In the intellectual climate of the Baroque, ideas circulated about art that changed "forgery" from an element of creation to one of deception. This change occurred as a result of a close link between forgery and emulation. In the Baroque, the types of motifs accepted as allusions limited emulation. Restrictions on emulation highlighted the reworking of the concepts of originality and the ownership of ideas.

Seventeenth-century artistic practice still revolved around reverence for and emulation of classical art. Baroque artists and art enthusiasts expressed this reverence, in part, through the restoration of fragments of antique sculptures to complete forms, as medieval artists did with the sarcophagus of St. Guilhem. Jennifer Montagu emphasizes how "the antique was valued, but not as a fragment. . . . Only complete statues were fit for display. And so developed the profession of the restorer, the man who converted the former into the latter."[45] To a seventeenth-century viewer, restored antique sculptures were still considered original classical works. And in public, fragments of antique sculptures could only be displayed in a complete form. Restorers were acknowledged for their work without taking away from the original creation of the classical artist. The ancient fragment was integrated into the Baroque artistic tradition, but did not become a part of the Baroque canon. The restorer, in a sense, specialized in upholding the artistic standards of the time. Montagu's discussion of 1650s restorer Orfeo Boselli demonstrates just how integral restoration was to the Baroque art scene: "Boselli held strong and rigid views on the

[45] Jennifer Montagu, "The Influence of the Baroque on Classical Antiquity," in *Roman Baroque Sculpture: The Industry of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 151.

subject of restoration. It was not, as many believed, a job for mediocre talents, but one that required such high and sublime invention that it was the equal of the greatest arts."[46] Boselli's high regard for the art of restoration shows the continuation of the medieval tradition of re-using and remaking. Restoring ancient sculptural fragments required imitating the style of the antique and merging ancient and contemporary works of art. Successful imitation of antique styles placed the Baroque artist on a par with classical artists revered for their skill.

To illustrate his ideas about how invention and creation are part of a restorer's art, Boselli discusses three successful restorations. These three restorations demonstrate the difficulty that exists in distinguishing art as "original" or as fraudulent "forgery." Algardi, Bernini, and du Quesnoy's restorations reveal the importance of considering the artistic climate at the time the restorations were made. Boselli's treatise on the art of restoring features Algardi's *Hermes Logios* (Figure 15), a restoration "conforming to the good ancient manner" of an ancient torso.[47] Modern archaeologists discredit Boselli's comment and Algardi's restoration because the torso calls to mind a statue in the Louvre of *Germanicus in the Pose of an Ancient Orator*, rather than a Hermes type.[48] Though now seen as a mistake in restoration on Algardi's part, the Hermes is important because of Boselli's reaction to the statue. Boselli believed Algardi's work conformed to the style of the classical fragment and deemed the restoration a success.

Bernini's approach to restorations is almost the opposite of Algardi's. Where Algardi carefully disguised his additions by using marble similar to the original, Bernini deliberately used a different marble from the one of the ancient statue.[49] Boselli highlights Bernini's restoration of the seated *Ludovisi Ares* (Figure 16), where Bernini's additions are evident and

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[46] Montagu, 151.
[47] Bellori, as quoted in Montagu, 157.
[48] Montagu, 157 -158.
[49] Montagu, 158.

still give the sculpture classical integrity and wholeness. Expanding on Boselli's example, Montagu discusses Bernini's restoration of the *Hermaphrodite on a Mattress* (Figure 17). Bernini added a marble mattress to an already reclining figure of a hermaphrodite. Montagu emphasizes how Bernini's restorations are different compared to those of his colleagues:

> Startling though Bernini's restorations may be in their frank disregard for the original appearance of the antique, it is significant that the liberties he took were all marginal. The mattress may bother purists who look at the *Hermaphrodite*, but it leaves the original figure intact, and his additions to the *Ares* are equally inessential to the figure of the seated nude. This is an interesting approach to the art of restoration, combining ancient and modern, setting the classical statue with baroque embellishments, but it is an approach which should not surprise us in an artist to whom the classical past was not just something to be revered, but a living influence.[50]

Bernini used the antique as a springboard for his own work. Bernini does not even pretend to integrate his restorations with the original work. By sculpting such an appealing mattress for the Hermaphrodite, Bernini shows a different kind of reverence for the antique. Rather than directly copying the style of the ancient artist, Bernini's restorations complement the antique sculptures.

The final example is du Quesnoy's *Rondini Faun* (Figure 18), whose restorations, according to Montagu, "appeared to his contemporaries to be so much more correct."[51] This observation stands in stark contrast to the sculpture's modern reception. Montagu emphasizes that "little of it met the criteria of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities" and is now "the centerpiece of the Baroque primary gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum."[52] Du Quesnoy's restoration of the *Rondini Faun* demonstrates the different attitudes towards original art that existed between Baroque and modern viewers. The restoration did not meet the modern criteria for an antique because so little of the statue was actually composed of ancient fragments.

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[50] Montagu, 161.
[51] Montagu, 161.
[52] Ibid.

Most of the statue is a Baroque reconstruction. A Baroque viewer still considered the statue an ancient work because, as Montagu emphasizes, of the "readiness of men of the seventeenth century to see ancient sculpture through the forms of their own classically orientated contemporaries, and demonstrate the way in which contemporary sculpture can reflect back on antiquity."[53] The high status that antique art held in Italian Baroque society created the desire for contemporary art to refer to the older art. Alluding to ancient works or emulating their style in one's own work was considered a mark of great artistic achievement.

The three examples of restoration that Boselli cites all demonstrate the varied influence of the antique. Restoration presents a dilemma in the realm of attribution because a work can contain elements of many different time periods. Restoration in the Baroque held a similar position to the copying of illustrated manuscripts during the medieval period. The restorations showed a reverence and love for the classical. Invention and originality existed within the additions to the classical stone, especially with the restorations done by Bernini. Bernini created new art within the context of the ancient style. The Baroque attitude towards art emerges with these restorations. Classical works were the heights to which artists aspired; they were the standard and ideal. Reference to these works was considered a mark of education and taste.

Recreating the antique showed respect for earlier artists and their inventions. During the Baroque period, certain conventions emerged about including references to past works in new art. These conventions helped shift the definition of "forgery" from the act of creating and inventing to "forgery" as taking ideas and elements from another artist. Two artists, Nicolas Poussin and Domenichino, both referred to previous masters in their paintings. The latter would be accused of stealing another's ideas.

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[53] Montagu, 163.

The Ovidian paintings from Poussin's early years (1624- 1630) are good cases studies of how allusion to earlier works, whether antique or Renaissance, was properly executed in a painting. Poussin's *Cephalus and Aurora* (Figure 19) shows the Ovidian story at the moment when Cephalus rejects Aurora's advances upon seeing an image of his wife, Procris.[54] Poussin painted Cephalus and Aurora on the right side of the painting. Aurora is shown nearly nude, a white cloth draping the lower half of her body. She is earnestly looking at Cephalus, and has her arms around his waist, attempting to pull him toward her. Cephalus tries to break out of her hold, his upper body twisting away from Aurora. He is holding his hand up, palm facing Aurora, the gesture indicating his attempt to ward off Aurora's advances. Cephalus' eyes are completely focused on an image of his wife, held up by a putto. His gaze shows that he is completely enraptured by the image of his wife. As Cephalus responds to the image of his wife, his body shifts away from Aurora. Poussin depicts Cephalus in motion. His body seems to be involuntarily drawn towards the image of his wife while firmly denying Aurora.

Two major allusions, or borrowings, exist in this particular painting. The first one is that of a cupid presenting the image of Cephalus' wife and Cephalus reacting to the image. The borrowed conceit comes from Peter Paul Rubens' painting *The Presentation of the Portrait to Henry IV* (Figure 20), part of his Marie de Medici cycle.[55] By alluding to this particular motif, Poussin is emphasizing the power of images to elicit feeling in the viewer. Poussin draws a parallel between Cephalus and Henry IV to suggest feelings Poussin believed Cephalus had: "when Cephalus responds to the picture of his wife, he does not do so out of an abstract sense of duty, he is as infatuated as a young suitor who catches sight of his future bride."[56] Thus, the

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[54] Richard Wollheim, "Painting, textuality, and borrowing: Poussin, Manet, Picasso," in *Painting as an Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Presss, 1987), 198.
[55] Wollheim, 198.
[56] Wollheim, 199.

image of his wife stirs powerful emotions within Cephalus and these emotions translate into his ability to resist Aurora's advances.

The second allusion in Poussin's painting is represented by Cephalus' pose as he looks upon the image of his beloved wife. Wollheim explains that for this reference, Poussin "clearly went to a picture that we know he knew well from the time he first arrived in Rome . . . he borrowed from this painting the image of Bacchus as he leaps from his chariot to embrace Ariadne."[57] The painting source for the allusion is Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (Figure 21). As with the reference to Rubens, Poussin's borrowing from Titian brings to the painting additional commentary about the frame of mind of the young Cephalus. Cephalus rejects Aurora not only in a sense of duty to his wife, but rather because his wife's image inspires in Cephalus the same form of desire and passion shown by Bacchus when he excitedly leaps from his carriage to meet Ariadne.[58] Poussin chose these two allusions to impart his own interpretation of Ovid's story. The two borrowings work together to "show us how, according to Poussin, the conflict between reason and desire is there fought out. It is fought out, they show us, they remind us, ultimately as a battle between desire and desire."[59] Poussin uses a classical story and infuses it with references to near-contemporary artists so that his message can be better understood. With Poussin, reason and desire are not opposite entities, rather, they are varied expressions of similar thoughts and feelings.

Poussin borrowed individual motifs from earlier artists that would reinforce the overall meaning of his painting. Wollheim explains that for borrowing to be effective and appropriate it needs to generate "fresh meaning, but does so in order to reveal or consolidate existing

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[57] Wollheim, 199.
[58] Wollheim, 199.
[59] Ibid.

meaning."[60] This is precisely the case with the *Cephalus and Aurora*. The two allusions still have their original meaning – Rubens' presentation of Marie de Medici's portrait still comments on the ability of images to inspire feelings and Titian's Bacchus represents the desire and infatuation of the drunken god. Poussin's genius as an artist comes through because there is still invention in his works. Poussin in a way re-invents these motifs because he places them in a different context. He creates "fresh meaning" because he uses these allusions to reveal new information about Cephalus in the moment represented.

Poussin's first stay in Rome coincided with the painting of the dome at S. Andrea della Valle by Giovanni Lanfranco and its accompanying pendentives by Domenichino.[61] Poussin came to Rome at the time of a great debate between Lanfranco and Domenichino, the result of which was Lanfranco charging Domenichino with theft.[62] Domenichino had painted an altarpiece for San Girolamo della Carità entitled *The Last Communion of St. Jerome* (Figure 22). Lanfranco claimed that for this work, Domenichino stole "Agostino Carracci's invention for his painting of the *Last Communion of Saint Jerome* in the Certosa outside Bologna"(Figure 23).[63]

Agostino Carracci's altarpiece, painted in 1592, presents an elderly priest hunching over the kneeling St. Jerome, presenting the saint with his last rites. In attendance are a number of churchmen and two putti.[64] The scene is set against a dramatic architectural backdrop containing a large archway. Through the arch a mysterious landscape appears, its coloring hinting at the time of day – sunset. Domenichino's work can be seen as a mirror image of Agostino's. Where the old priest faces towards the right side of the painting in Agostino's composition,

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[60] Wollheim, 190.
[61] Anthony Blunt, *Nicolas Poussin: The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 1958* (New York: The Bollingen Foundation, 1967), 57, 59; Elizabeth Cropper, *The Domenichino Affair: Novelty, Imitation, and Theft in Seventeenth-Century Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 5.
[62] Cropper, 6.
[63] Cropper, 6-7.
[64] Cropper, 56.

Domenichino places him facing left. Domenichino's painting also has St. Jerome on his knees, waiting to receive the last rites. A number of churchmen and putti are also present for the presentation of the sacrament. Again, the scene is set against an architectural backdrop with a landscape visible through the archway.

The basic structural and compositional elements of the two works are undoubtedly similar. Domenichino can argue that he's alluding to Agostino's painting because he added new elements not present in the earlier altarpiece. Domenichino's landscape is lighter, more detailed. There is a greater sense of place because of the houses included in the landscape. Domenichino's figures are also crisper, more active in their engagement with the dying St. Jerome. Agostino painted a host of monks silently praying, most raising their eyes towards heaven. Domenichino's figures are focused on St. Jerome, their gazes making the body of St. Jerome the focal point of the image.

A print created by François Perrier and circulated by Lanfranco showed Carracci's altarpiece in mirror image (Figure 24). Because of this reversal, Agostino and Domenichino's works appeared even more similar. As a viewer compared the print and Domenichino's altarpiece, the similarities became more evident than any differences. The print did not show the details of Carracci's altarpiece very clearly. Instead, the print emphasized the layout of the painting and the basic elements of the altarpiece: the leaning priest, the kneeling St. Jerome, and the number and position of the other figures. The difference between the two altarpieces lay with the coloring, lighting, texture, and background detail, not elements that are immediately evident in a print. Carracci had a much softer, more golden light than Domenichino. This difference is especially evident in the color, and in the illumination of the putti in both works.

But the accusation of theft against Domenichino stuck. When comparing his work to Perrier's print, there did not seem to be much invention in his altarpiece. And rather than alluding to certain motifs from Agostino's painting, Domenichino seems to have borrowed Carracci's entire work. The second, unspoken issue, was that the work Domenichino chose to emulate did not have the canonical status of, say, a Rubens or a Titian. Cropper properly explains that Domenichino "did not use a well-known ancient or modern model and advertise his emulation of it to those capable of appreciating his transformation of the original."[65] The distinction between allusion and theft very much depended on the status of the object being imitated and on how well the artist re-used the borrowed motifs. Domenichino emulated a lesser work of a great master. Poussin alluded to a classical literary work and borrowed motifs from well-respected masters. Though both artists used similar techniques, one violated artistic norms and the other demonstrated a proper method of copying.

Elizabeth Cropper aptly explains how the accusation against Domenichino illustrates ideas of originality and forgery in the Baroque period: "the 'Domenichino Affair' was not about the relatively more easily defined issues of originality, copying, or forgery, but a challenge to the long-established conventions of artistic imitation itself."[66] Domenichino challenged the long-standing traditions of imitation by raising the question of what it meant to emulate and what it meant to forge (copy or steal). Artistic imitation was a legitimate form of creating art that could add value to a new work, especially when conforming to established artistic practice. Connecting to an earlier, more prestigious work integrated new art in the established artistic tradition. The value of the painting then resided in the cleverness of the artist in building upon an earlier motif, as Poussin did in his painting *Cephalus and Aurora*. Domenichino, with his *St. Jerome*

[65] Cropper, 154.
[66] Cropper, 21.

altarpiece, shifted the invisible line that separated original from emulation, emulation from copy, and copy from forgery. His work borrowed the layout and many compositional elements from Agostino's painting. The borrowing seemed to dominate the painting, questioning just how much an artist can borrow before sacrificing his own invention and originality.

Even fifty years after the initial accusation, Italian scholar Malvasia tried to justify the complaint against Domenichino.[67] Malvasia does not deny that Domenichino stole from Agostino, but that Domenichino "stole not out of need but from choice."[68] Malvasia raised an important distinction. Stealing, or borrowing, was acceptable so long as the artist did it in good conscience. Domenichino "stole" from Agostino Carracci to demonstrate his artistic skill through reverence for an earlier work, not because he needed to rely on another artist for ideas. An artist infringed on another when he copied or stole out of need. Stealing out of need implied a lack of skill, invention, and aptitude as an artist. For Malvasia, the intent of the artist determined whether a copy, a borrowing, or an emulation was fraudulent. Cropper explains that, in Domenichino's case, Malvasia's argument can be interepreted as equating thievery with imitation.[69] By equating Domenichino's actions with imitation, Malvasia could argue that Domenichino did nothing out of the ordinary. Domenichino followed artistic convention.

Concerns over setting boundaries between original works and forgeries gained importance as the original work acquired value and importance. Giulio Mancini, who was director of the hospital of Santo Spirito in Rome and personal physician to Pope Urban VIII in the early 1600s, wrote a treatise that reflected the concern for separating forgeries and identifying the hand of an artist. In the treatise, called *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, Mancini

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[67] Cropper, 96.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

sought a method for differentiating between originals and forgeries.[70] Mancini focused on identifying an artist by the elements that would need to be "done deliberately," such as eyes, beard, and hair to separate between authentic and fake, and especially in differentiating between the work of a master and his pupil.[71] These small parts of paintings served as an artist's unconscious signature. Historian Carlo Ginzburg explains that Mancini's desire to create a method of distinguishing between artworks stemmed from Camillo Baldi's premise that "individual handwritings differed and were impossible to imitate." Mancini hoped to identify in paintings elements "which were equally impossible to imitate" and he believed that the eyes and hair were some of the elements that exhibited an impossibility of imitation.[72] Mancini wanted to apply the systematic methods of analysis developed for the literary fields to analyzing art. Part of his method of analyzing and identifying originals involved the dating of paintings. Mancini indicated that "learning about the variety of paintings and their periods, just as antiquarians and librarians know letters, from which they deduce the epoch of the writing" can be used as a method of identifying art.[73] Mancini's emphasis on unique markers to identify specific artists and specific artistic periods indicate the importance of giving individual artists their due.

Though Mancini did not achieve his goal of creating a systematic method of separating originals and forgeries, he set the stage for the formation of connoisseurship and the formation of a more specific definition of "forgery." Part of the reason for his lack of success was that he never completed his treatise; though still circulated, it remained in manuscript form and with

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[70] Walter Friedlaender, "Review of: Considerazioni sulla pittura, Vol. I by Giulio Mancini; Adriana Marucchi," *The Art Bulletin* 44, no. 2 (Jun., 1962), 146, 147.
[71] Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. by John and Anne C. Tedeschi (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 110.
[72] Carlo Ginzburg and Anna Davin, "Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method," *History Workshop,* no. 9 (Spring, 1980), 18.
[73] Ginzburg, 109.

multiple marginal notes and additions.[74] Mancini was adept at perceiving these individual differences between artists' works because of his medical training. Physicians practicing during the early seventeenth century realized that "the symptom was an unmotivated, differential sign arising from natural causes, rather than some divine sign of retribution communicated by resemblances."[75] The symptom, like the individual artistic element, is a telltale sign of a broader condition.

Ginzburg rightly states that Mancini was working under an important and wide-spread assumption when trying to create his method: "between a canvas by Raphael and any copy of it (painted, engraved, or today photographed) there is an ineradicable difference."[76] This difference comes in the form of the artists' direct hand in creating the painting. A Raphael original is valued for the artistic ingenuity of its creator and, especially, for Raphael's role in physically putting his ideas on a canvas. This distinction gives the original greater value than any of its copies, imitations, or forgeries: "the implications of this for the market – that a painting is by definition unique, impossible to repeat – are plain, and they are connected with the emergence of the connoisseur."[77] The connoisseur's role was to separate originals from fraudulent imitations because the original, by its sheer uniqueness, had a greater value.

Thomas Hoving describes the Baroque period as a creative time period that "was also a watershed for fakes. Not only did they explode in numbers and virtuosity, but for the first time serious fakebusters came into being and began to solidify their methods of how to expose

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[74] Friedlaender, 146. A concrete method of separating between an original work and derivatives did not come into play until the nineteenth century, with Giovanni Morelli's treatise on studies of Italian painters.
[75] Todd Olson, "Caravaggio's Coroner: Forensic Medicine in Giulio Mancini's Art Criticism" *Oxford Art Journal* 28, no. 1 (2005), 95.
[76] Ginzburg and Davin, 17.
[77] Ibid.

forgeries, especially textual forgeries."[78] Mancini could be considered one such "fakebuster" because of his interest in the details of style and execution distinguishing one artist from another. Lanfranco also fits in the same class as Mancini because he used methods of direct comparison and submitted his observation for the judgment of the masses, very much as we do today.

In the Baroque the conception of forgery as a crime was emerging. In Domenichino's case he was accused of plagiarism, of the theft of the ideas of Agostino Carracci. The theft of ideas is a derivation of the modern definition of forgery as crime. A modern forgery takes from the style or content of an earlier artist. Though the word forgery was not directly mentioned in Domenichino's case, his alleged crime very much conformed to the spirit of modern forgeries. However, Hoving identifies an important difference that existed between forgeries created during the Baroque and forgeries created during the modern era: "what distinguishes many of the Renaissance and Baroque fakes from those of today is that they were created not so much to make a quick buck, but for the poetry of it all and to indicate to lesser artists how skilled the faker was and how well he understood the styles and psyche of the ancients."[79] This description fits very well with the reconstruction of ancient sculptural fragments by Baroque sculptors. Forging the work of others was still a matter of emulation. Though these forgeries were created with the intent to deceive about who was the true artist, the focus was still on the artistic skill.

The case of Claude Lorrain and his *Liber Veritatis* demonstrates the precautions taken by a Baroque artist to ensure the correct attribution of his work. The *Liber Veritatis* is a collection of detailed drawings in book form of paintings made by Claude himself.[80] The project began fairly

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[78] Hoving, 51. I acknowledge Hoving's status as a popular figure and that his work does tend to cater to a wider, more general audience. Despite his penchant for sensationalizing, Hoving does bring a very acute mind to the field and he raises some very interesting points about forgeries and their makers.
[79] Hoving, 52.
[80] Michael Kitsen, *Claude Lorrain: Liber Veritatis* (London: British Museum Publications, 1978), 11.

early in his career as a safeguard against forgeries and copies made of his work.[81] In their series of articles on Claude and the *Liber Veritatis*, Michael Kitsen and Marcel Rothlisberger ask whether the *Liber Veritatis* was indeed effective in identifying Claude forgeries.[82] The close relationship between the paintings and their respective drawings led them to conclude that indeed, the *Liber Veritatis* was a useful tool in identifying works falsely attributed to Claude. Maintaining such a thorough record of one's work added a measure of control.

Claude's drawings in the *Liber Veritatis* are very fastidious in their level of detail and likeness to the original paintings. The differences between the actual painting and its drawing were scale, proportions, color, and medium. In Claude's drawings, the figures and other small details would often appear larger in scale than in his paintings. Consequently, empty spaces, such as the sky, were drawn in smaller proportions. Claude made these adjustments so he could include an accurate outline of the painting within the confines of the size of the drawing paper.[83] Despite these discrepancies, these drawings were faithful representations of the paintings. The drawing of the *Seaport with the Embarkation of St. Ursula* (Figure 25) and the corresponding painting (Figure 26) demonstrate the close link between one and the other. The drawing has a brown and light blue color tone. Claude did not fill in the details in the drawing, leaving the pen lines visible. On the left of the drawing, on the steps of a rounded porch with Doric columns, stands a large number of figures. In the foreground, four men are pulling a ship to port (Figure 25). A vessel rests in the center, serving as the focal point of the image. On the right side of the drawing are a number of other ships either anchored or coming into the harbor. Claude's painting

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[81] Michael Kitson and Marcel Rothlisberger, "Claude Lorrain and the Liber Veritatis – I," *Burlington Magazine* 101 (January 1959), 17.
[82] Michael Kitsen and Marcel Rothlisberger, "Claude Lorrain and the Liber Veritatis – II," *Burlington Magazine* 101 (September – October 1959), 328
[83] Michael Kitsen and Marcel Rothlisberger, "Claude Lorrain and the Liber Veritatis – II," *Burlington Magazine* 101 (September – October 1959), 328-331.

of the *Embarkation* (Figure 26) has the same compositional elements as the drawing. Like the *Liber Veritatis* drawing, brown and blue still predominate the colors scheme. But unlike the drawing, the forms are filled with color, which gives the painting an ordered and serene atmosphere. Because the drawing is faithful to the painting, a forger would have to stand in front of the Claude painting and painstakingly imitate it to be able to sell it as Claude's work.

Claude's creation of the *Liber Veritatis* might have been a reaction to the workshop practices he encountered as an apprentice to Agostino Tassi during the early 1620s. Patrizia Cavazzini writes that "copies and imitations of Tassi's work could be sold as originals, with or without the master's permission, by the master himself, or by his apprentices."[84] This meant that copies of an artist's work were common in the Baroque art market and they could vary in their quality and their faithfulness to the master's style. As an apprentice, Claude certainly copied his master's work. With the *Embarkation of St. Ursula* (Figure 26), Claude based his preparatory drawing on one made by Tassi of a queen departing from a seaport.[85] Even if the final product was not an identical copy of his master's work, Claude still relied on Tassi's ideas, in terms of both subject and composition, to create his own works. Copying served both as a form of instruction and as a source of revenue for those studying under Tassi. Apprentices would sell their own art as their master's work because it was more valuable and would bring in more profit.[86] By creating the *Liber Veritatis*, Claude turned against some of the artistic practices in which he participated. The painstaking work of recording these drawings and maintaining a high level of accuracy allowed Claude control of the distribution of his work. Claude was aware of the paintings he created and, often, to whom they were sold. Kitsen and Rothlisberger argue against

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[84] Patrizia Cavazzini, "Claude's Apprenticeship in Rome: The Market for Copies and the Invention of the Liber Veritatis," *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 73, no. 3 (August 2004): 142.
[85] Cavazzini, 138 – 139.
[86] Cavazzini, 140.

any comparison between Claude's attempt to guard against forgeries and those of modern artists trying to ensure ownership of their works:

> We may be led unconsciously to assume, having our modern laws of copyright in mind, that Claude's position was like that of a present-day author or photographer who finds that his work is being surreptitiously reproduced by others and who therefore takes action to prevent the loss of his royalties.[87]

Kitsen and Rothlisberger write that Claude's incentive to guard against fraudulent imitations of his work differs from the modern artist's incentive for preventing forgery because modern artists focus on loss of revenue. The issue is not whether or not modern artists and Claude differ in their motivation. The main focus is Claude's fear of imitations of his work because of how they could alter the opinion of his viewers about his skill as an artist. After experiencing the freedom with which Tassi's students copied and imitated Tassi's work, Claude refused to maintain a workshop.[88] Integrity as an artist was more valuable to him than operating a large-scale, prolific workshop.

The Baroque was the period during which the definition of forgery took on new meanings and nuances. Art forgery could now be associated with the theft of ideas, whether intentional or unintentional. As the nineteenth century approached, forgery shed its remaining associations with original creation, allusion, and emulation. Forgery became associated with deliberate deception and with the desire to use another's style and ideas to profit monetarily.

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[87] Kitsen and Rothlisberger, "Claude Lorrain and the Liber Veritatis – II," 334.
[88] Cavazzini, 144.

Chapter 3 – Identifying Forgeries in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

In 1936, Han van Meegeren painted the most beautiful Vermeer the world had ever seen. With his painting *The Supper at Emmaus* (Figure 33), Van Meegeren was able to fool some of the world's greatest connoisseurs. But he did not do it alone. The connoisseurs' expectations about their prowess in identifying art played a major role in Van Meegeren's deception. The hype surrounding legitimate Vermeer discoveries during the 1920s also helped create the proper setting for Van Meegeren to succeed at his deception. When the painting originally came to the market, *The Supper at Emmaus* was declared Vermeer's greatest masterpiece by its authenticator, Abraham Bredius.[89] Bredius made this claim in part because he believed it, and in part because he wanted to affirm his prowess as a connoisseur. The only problem with Bredius' attribution was that, as Jonathan Lopez eloquently puts it, by "1927, the age of miracles was over, there were no more genuine Vermeers left to be found- although no one realized it at the time."[90] Van Meegeren's forged Vermeers were accepted as part of the canon of Dutch Golden Age painting. In 1945, after the chaos of World War II calmed, Van Meegeren admitted that he was the forger responsible for *The Supper at Emmaus*.[91]

Van Meegeren's forgeries catered to beliefs and methods of authentication employed by connoisseurs of the early twentieth century. During the time when Van Meegeren created his Vermeers, the eye of the connoisseur still had great weight in the attribution of paintings. Connoisseurs prided themselves especially in forming snap judgments – identifying the work's maker on the first viewing.[92] To a certain extent, the number of correct attributions the and speed

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[89] Jonathan Lopez, *The Man Who Made Vermeers: Unvarnishing the Legend of Master Forger Han van Meegeren* (Orlando: Harcourt Inc., 2008), 99.
[90] Lopez, 53.
[91] Lopez, 52.
[92] Edward Dolnick, *The Forger's Spell: A True Story of Vermeer, Nazis, and the Greatest Hoax of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 184. Malcolm Gladwell discussed this process of

with which connoisseurs arrived at those judgments determined their reputation. Hesitation was seen as a sign of uncertainty and ignorance.[93]

Jaynie Anderson observes that "connoisseurship, as we know it in the modern sense, was invented in the 1850's."[94] The man whose "name has always been associated with the invention of connoisseurship," Giovanni Morelli, was the first person to apply the principles of the scientific method to looking at art.[95] Morelli was not an art historian. In the 1830's, Morelli studied comparative anatomy at the University of Munich. His training as a physician was the crucial influence in the formation of his method.[96] However, Morelli's main occupation throughout his life was that of politician. Through his position as a senator for the region of Bergamo, Morelli created legislation that prevented foreign powers from gaining some of Italy's most valuable art.[97] Morelli's involvement with art on a political level and his training as a physician provided him with the necessary incentive and background to create a groundbreaking method of authenticating art.

From 1874 to 1876, Giovanni Morelli published a number of articles on Italian painting under the penname Ivan Lermolieff.[98] These articles were eventually compiled in a treatise outlining the method of looking at and analyzing art that became known as the Morellian method. His treatise, *Critical Studies of Italian Painters*, explains how the most effective method of identifying an artist was from the "trivial details" such as "earlobes, fingernails, shapes of

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"snap judgements" in his book on the impressions that form in the first few seconds of viewing an object or a experiencing a situation. Malcolm Gladwell, *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* (New York: Little, Brown, and Co, 2005).

[93] Dolnick, 239 – 240.

[94] Jaynie Anderson, "The Political Power of Connoisseurship in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Wilhelm von Bode versus Giovanni Morelli," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* no. 38 (1996), 110.

[95] Anderson, 109.

[96] Anderson, 109.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 96.

fingers and of toes."[99] In his treatise, Morelli included sketches that compared how different artists drew hands and ears (Figures 27 and 28). The first sketch recreates hands by eight difference Renaissance masters, including Fra Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, and Bramante (Figure 27). The second sketch shows eight different styles of ears drawn by Renaissance artists (Figure 28). He paid careful attention to the anatomical details of hands and ears because Morelli believed that "every independent master has his own special conception and treatment . . . of the form of the hand and ear."[100] These special conceptions on the part of the artist included the size and shape of the palm, and even the way in which the fingers were joined to the rest of the hand.[101] These fragments retain the individuality of an artist, thus marking them as the hardest parts to copy, imitate, emulate, forge. By carefully comparing and analyzing how various artists drew these distinct features, Morelli was able to reattribute many works to the right creator.

The Morellian method was also useful in distinguishing between works done by master artists and copies made by their pupils.[102] Morelli writes about a male portrait in the Munich Gallery originally attributed to Giorgione by Vasari's Florentine commentators (Figure 29).[103] Named *Male Portrait* (Figure 29), Morelli's contemporaries re-attributed the painting to Italian artist Palma Vecchio based on the original account Vasari provided of the painting. The painting became widely accepted as a self-portrait of Palma.[104] The painting shows a youthful man, his back towards the viewer, looking back over his right shoulder (Figure 29). The man's shoulder-

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[99] Ginzburg, 97. Though Morelli's ideas are similar to Mancini's, there appears to be no direct connection between the two. Ginzburg speculates that any connection between the two was indirect. In a footnote, Ginzburg suggests that Morelli may have come across Mancini's ideas in the writings of Baldinucci, a seventeenth-century art historian, and Lanzi, an eighteenth-century art historian.
[100] Giovanni Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 1, trans. Constance Jocelyn Foulkes (London: John Murray, 1893), 76.
[101] Morellli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 1, 81.
[102] Giovanni Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, trans. Constance Jocelyn Foulkes (London: John Murray, 1900), 2.
[103] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 16.
[104] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 16.

length hair is combed back, prominently displaying his right ear. He is wearing a fur coat, which dominates the lower left of the picture. The figure's gaze is directed at the viewer; his mouth set in a hard line. Morelli labeled this portrait as a work by Giovanni Cariani, pupil and assistant to Palma Vecchio.[105]

Morelli described the impressions he had when he saw the painting hanging in the gallery and why he disagreed with the attribution of his colleagues:

> the broad drawing and modeling of the head undoubtedly point to Palma more than to any other Venetian, yet in the pose of the head, which seems calculated for effect, in the almost defiant expression of the features, I was unable, when I first saw the portrait, to discern the spirit, and still less the features, of this simple and unassuming painter, and a second visit to Munich only confirmed this impression.[106]

Morelli elaborates on these observations by reflecting on his knowledge of Palma Vecchio's life, personally, and his known oeuvre. The defiant expression is the one element in the work that did not fit with Morelli's knowledge of Palma. His outlook prevented him from agreeing with his contemporaries in labeling the painting as a Palma self-portrait. Morelli joked that someone who appoints a wine-seller and fruitier as executors of his will would not "have borne himself so haughtily as this young man."[107] Morelli also takes into consideration Palma's preference for drawing female heads, the rarity of a Palma male portrait, and the abundance of male portraits by Cariani.[108] Morelli did not consider these observations sufficient in assigning the painting to Cariani. Rather, he turns to his logical and meticulous method of identification based on the small details. With the painting *Male Portrait* (Figure 29), Morelli distinguished between the work of Palma and his student, Cariani, through the overall shape of the ear and the specific shape of the lobes: "Palma's ear is large and rounded in form, and terminates in a pointed and

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[105] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 17-18.
[106] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 16.
[107] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 16.
[108] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 18-19.

well-defined lobe; Cariani's is also rounded, but has no distinct lobe."[109] When looking at the portrait, the figure's lobe does appear rounded and is not particularly distinctive (Figure 29). The importance of the distinction between Palma Vecchio and Cariani is a symptom of the importance placed on the individual artist and his attributes. For a work of art to be considered a Palma Vecchio, the work had to have been created by the hand of the master rather than being a product of his studio.

Using the Morellian method to distinguish between the work of a master and his pupil demonstrates the greater value placed on the work of the master than that of the pupil. Morelli's method showed that no matter how careful, a pupil could not directly copy his master because artists each had small quirks of representation. Thus, there is a concrete, identifiable difference between owning a Palma Vecchio or a work made in the style of Palma Vecchio by one of his students. This difference is enough to deem one work original and the other an imitation or an emulation. And during the nineteenth century, emulation and imitation did not hold the same importance and value than they did in the time of Palma Vecchio. Rather, the worth of a work of art was in its uniqueness and individuality. An "original" work had to have some level of distinction. "Forgeries," then, were works not valued as originals. Morelli recognized that original works of art are valuable and distinct.[110] The value of an artwork, in the nineteenth century, resulted from its proximity to an artist. Originals provided viewers with the impression of direct contact with the artist and his ideas.

Morelli's inductive method of identifying artists appeared during a time when gleaning information from individual characteristics played a large part in answering questions. The most popular example of the use of this process is that of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous detective,

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[109] Morelli, *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of Their Works,* Vol. 2, 18.
[110] Anderson, 109.

Sherlock Holmes. Published in 1887, the short story *A Study in Scarlett* introduced the beloved duo Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.[111] In a way, Sherlock Holmes is "a typical figure of the *fin de siècle*" because he embodies the intellectual climate of the 1890's.[112] Morelli's method demonstrates that this intellectual climate was very much attuned to using individual clues to obtain a larger impression. The manner in which Holmes solves crimes can almost be considered Morellian. The two figures are similar in that Morelli and Conan Doyle both had backgrounds in medicine – Morelli had a medical degree and Conan Doyle worked as a doctor before becoming a writer.[113] Both men functioned with a similar mindset. They used individual symptoms as evidence for a larger argument. Symptoms translated as clues for Holmes and features of paintings for Morelli.[114]

Holmes can be considered the fictional embodiment of late nineteenth-century connoisseurs: "the art connoisseur and the detective may well be compared, each discovering, from clues unnoticed by others, the author in one case of a crime, in the other of a painting."[115] Holmes' method of solving crimes and Morelli's method of looking at art are very similar. Paul Barolsky compares Holmes' approach to solving crimes with that of connoisseur Walter Pater and his method of viewing and analyzing a work of art.[116] Both Holmes and Pater insisted on paying attention to details about the studied object, the impressions these details have upon the

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[111] Andrew Lycett, *The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes: The Life and Times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 143.
[112] Paul Barolsky, "The Case of the Domesticated Aesthete," in *Critical Essays on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, ed. Harold Orel (New York: G.K. Hall & Co., 1992), 92.
[113] Carlo Ginzburg and Anna Davin, "Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method," *History Workshop,* no. 9 (Spring 1980), 12. It is interesting to note that Mancini also practiced medicine. The methods of analyzing patients and of looking at art have been intertwined since the seventeenth century.
[114] Ginzburg and Davin, 11.
[115] Ginzburg and Davin, 8.
[116] Barolsky, 96-97.

observer, and, most importantly, understanding the significance of this knowledge.[117] This method of analysis influenced art critics such as Bernard Berenson. Delving into the deepest detail of an artist's works creates expectations about how each detail should look. Forgeries do not meet these expectations.

As a follower of Pater and admirer of Morelli, Bernard Berenson became a Sherlock Holmes, examining "with a magnifying glass . . . paintings with the attention to details of a sleuth. [He determined] attributions on the basis of how ears, noses, fingers were painted."[118] Berenson was a direct heir of the Morellian method.[119] His methods in authenticating art were a result of his study of Morelli's methods. Berenson also had a unique view about art. Angelo de Gennaro describes how Berenson believed that "the artist must be spontaneous," and that "the true artist does not pay any attention to outside pressures but he centers his attention on the authenticity of his interior world."[120] The belief in the spontaneity of an artist brings a new dimension in separating original and fraudulent work. Based on Berenson's ideas, original art had to be something new, something spontaneous. Copies and emulations could not be considered original works because they had an outside influence, either from another artist or from cultural practices.

Berenson is an important figure because he bridges the gap between Morellian connoisseurship and connoisseurship as it was understood and practiced in the early twentieth century. Toward the end of his career, Berenson gained a stellar reputation as a connoisseur and "his pronouncements were accepted as infallible."[121] Berenson represented the level of

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[117] Barolsky, 96-97.
[118] Barolsky, 97-98.
[119] Kenneth Clark, "Bernard Berenson," *The Burlington Magazine* 102 No. 690 (September 1960), 381.
[120] Angelo A. de Gennaro, "Berenson's Aesthetics," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 24, no. 2 (Winter, 1965), 259.
[121] Clark, 383.

knowledge and instinct art critics in the early twentieth century wanted to achieve. Though the prestige of connoisseurship had declined by 1932, the practice of iconographical analysis employed some of the methods used by connoisseurs.[122] Berenson "maintained that real conclusions were always arrived at instinctively."[123] This pronouncement resonated with the art world of the twentieth century.

The twentieth century brings us back to Han Van Meegeren and his forged Vermeers. Van Meegeren was not the only forger of this time period to paint Vermeers. The rediscovery of the Dutch master during the 1920s led to a proliferation of Vermeer forgeries. Many artists sought dealers who would authenticate their painting as a Vermeer for a price.[124] The difference between the many other Vermeer forgers and Van Meegeres was that, in his forgeries, he achieved a striking combination of new artistic elements and those already connected to Vermeer.

One of Van Meegeren's first successful Vermeers went on the market in 1932. Initially labeled as *Conversation Piece* by Abraham Bredius, the painting shows an interior scene, with a smiling woman sitting down at a harpsichord and a man standing by the instrument (Figure 30). Van Meegeren positioned the figures towards the back of the composition, separated from the viewer by a piece of drapery. Currently labeled as *The Gentleman and Lady at the Spinet* (Figure 30), this painting seems to be a composite of known Vermeers. The drapery in the foreground was copied from the recently discovered *Allegory of Faith* (Figure 31) and the tile floor in the forgery is a common element in Vermeer's paintings, present in both *Allegory of Faith* (Figure 31) and *Allegory of Painting* (Figure 32). Van Meegeren's forgery seems to be a combination of the two Vermeer paintings.

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[122] Clark, 383.
[123] Clark, 384.
[124] Lopez, 54-55.

Abraham Bredius attributed *The Gentleman and Lady at the Spinet* (Figure 30) to Vermeer in an article in the Burlington Magazine. Bredius was also the scholar who discovered *Allegory of Faith*. Jonathan Lopez argues that "by all appearances, Van Meegeren painted *The Gentleman and Lady at the Spinet* with Bredius firmly in mind."[125] The Van Meegeren forgery and the Vermeer original do resemble each other. Bredius had already discovered a legitimate Vermeer. *The Gentleman and Lady at the Spinet* (Figure 30) resembled Bredius' earlier discovery, but it also had enough differences from it not to raise suspicion.

Perhaps the most amusing part of the article presenting the Van Meegeren's Vermeer is Bredius's discussion on how the re-discovery of Vermeer as an artist has fueled forgers and how poor their attempts are at creating a genuine Vermeer forgery.[126] Bredius comments about some of the fakes appearing on the market:

> [the forgeries] are quite genuine old pictures, touched up with infinite nimbleness with tiny streaks and spots of the famous Vermeer blue, and the still more popular Vermeer yellow. Many, of course, are shockingly unlike anything Vermeer could have painted, but a few are so cunningly contrived by masters. . . as to deceive even very good judges.[127]

Convention called for certain characteristics for a painting to be considered a Vermeer, and forgers manipulated precisely these sought-after traits. Yet, despite the warning that Bredius so eloquently articulated, the connoisseur was deceived by the very same clues he warned against. Forgers focused on replicating these two colors because they were part of the Vermeer iconography. Connoisseurs looked for the "true Vermeer" blue and yellow, thus forgers attempted to replicate them.

Bredius exalted the "unpublished Vermeer" as having "splendid harmonious colouring, the true Vermeer light and shade," "the colouring of the figure of the woman [including] the true

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[125] Lopez, 111.
[126] Abraham Bredius, "An Unpublished Vermeer," *Burlington Magazine* 61, no. 355 (October 1932), 145.
[127] Ibid.

Vermeer lemon colour painted with unusually strong impasto," and the woman wearing "the large pear-drop pearl earring which Vermeer loved to paint."[128] Bredius lavished his praise on the depiction of color on the woman's clothing to demonstrate the strength of his conviction in the painting's authenticity. The light, the color, the pearl earrings were part of the iconographic content associated with Vermeer. The presence of these clues in Van Meegeren's works pre-determined Bredius's attribution because of his opinions of how a Vermeer painting should look.

A striking element of *The Gentleman and Lady at the Spinet* (Figure 30) is its material. Van Meegeren used the new Bakelite substance – a forerunner to modern plastic - as a base for mixing his pigments.[129] Van Meegeren painted this forgery, and the ones to follow, using this concoction. When baked in an oven, the substance dried and took on the same characteristics as centuries-old oil paint.[130] Because Bakelite was "impervious to just about anything," Van Meegeren's paintings could pass various scientific tests, including the rubbing of alcohol on the surface to test the pigments' dryness.[131]

The success of *The Gentleman and Lady at the Spinet* (Figure 30), in the art market and in fooling art critics, inspired Van Meegeren to produce a series of six Vermeers based on religious themes.[132] The key to their success was that, as Lopez describes, the fake Vermeers were "unified in both subject and style, and present[ed] a sustained argument about the hidden pathways of Vermeer's artistic development." [133] Van Meegeren took a risk by painting religious subjects because most of Vermeer's known oeuvre consisted of quiet, domestic scenes such as

[128] Bredius, "An Unpublished Vermeer," 145.
[129] Lopez, 107.
[130] Lopez, 107-108.
[131] Lopez, 107-108.
[132] Lopez, 119.
[133] Lopez, 119.

The Milkmaid (Figure 7). Though all of Van Meegeren's biblical Vermeers achieved success on the art market, the most "beloved" work of all was *The Supper at Emmaus* (Figure 33).

When *The Supper at Emmaus* (Figure 33) came to the market in 1937, Abraham Bredius quickly identified the work as a Vermeer and as "*the* masterpiece of Johannes Vermeer of Delft," in part because it seemed to answer many questions about Vermeer's beginnings as an artist and his source of inspiration.[134] The figures in The Supper at Emmaus, as is the case with most of Van Meegeren's "Vermeer" figures, have long, drawn, pale faces, with hollow eyes and cheekbones (Figure 33). The bold yellow and blue colors of the fabric contrast brightly with the intense chiaroscuro of the setting. To a contemporary eye, the difference between Van Meegeren's corpse-like figures and Vermeer's rounded delicate figures is instantly apparent. But for the art critics of the 1930s, especially for Bredius, the painting's failings were not so apparent because the painting followed in the tradition of previous "Vermeers" that had appeared on the market during the decade.

Part of what made *The Supper at Emmaus* (Figure 33) so appealing to Bredius and his contemporaries was a visual connection between Vermeer and Caravaggio, an Italian artist known to have influenced Dutch painters during Vermeer's time. [135] Rather than continue painting the typical Vermeer genre subjects, Van Meegeren used a religious subject that art critics would inevitably connect with Caravaggio's oeuvre.[136] Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* from 1606 (Figure 34) is very similar in composition to Van Meegeren's *Supper at Emmaus* (Figure 33). This link to an earlier master gave Van Meegeren's *The Supper at Emmaus* an impression of legitimacy. His countrymen admired Van Meegeren's skill as a forger because he

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[134] Abraham Bredius, "A New Vermeer," *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 71, no.416 (November 1937), 211.
[135] Lopez, 121.
[136] Dolnick, 197.

was able to deceive art critics and collectors. Van Meegeren played into the critics' expectations by joining the aquamarine blue and Vermeer yellow with a religious subject and intense chiaroscuro. Van Meegeren's Biblical Vermeers passed all the tests, scientific and artistic. His success in flooding the art market with fake Vermeers briefly altered opinions about Vermeer's style and life. [137] Van Meegeren led the world to believe that Vermeer had painted more religious subjects than he had and, also, that Caravaggio influenced Vermeer's work.

By the time Van Meegeren's forgeries reached the art market, critics no longer followed Morelli's method as thoroughly as Berenson had. Bredius' method of choosing the iconographical characteristics of Vermeer's was not in line with Morelli's method of using marginal details instead of general characteristics as guides for identifying an artist's work. Bredius and his contemporaries were adamant about relying on their "eye" to identify works. Though often described as a sixth sense, Thomas Hoving wrote a very descriptive account of what informs a connoisseur's eye when referring to Berenson: "hundreds of thousands of associations, observations, artistic subtleties colors, hues, the shape of all but undetectable lines, which flooded into his mind the instant he looked at a picture."[138] Berenson was the ideal connoisseur because of his attention to detail and his ability to retain hundreds of images in his mind. Though Berenson advocated making quick judgments about a painting, Bredius and his contemporaries took the matter to the extreme. Their reverence for correct snap judgments almost overruled considerations for careful comparison.[139] Van Meegeren's forgeries would not have passed Morelli's or Berenson's intense scrutiny. Van Meegeren challenged the method of attribution in the 1930s by reminding art critics that scientific and iconographical tests can be

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[137] Lopez, 242.
[138] Thomas Hoving, *False Impressions: The Hunt for Big-Time Art Fakes* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 20.
[139] Dolnick, 239-240.

overcome. His work also demonstrated the steep difference in cultural worth and financial value between originals and forgeries. Once the deception was uncovered, the value and importance of Van Meegeren's paintings plummeted.[140] Their status as forgeries of seventeenth-century paintings superseded any artistic merit they might have had.

The skill of the connoisseur in looking at paintings influences how well forgeries are separated from originals. As connoisseurs became more and more skilled at distinguishing between artists, "forgery" becomes a work of art that does not fit with the style and technique of an artist. With the emergence of the Morellian method and the lessons drawn from the Van Meegeren deception, the boundary between forgery and original became clearly defined. Gone was the conception of forgery as a method of original creation. Forgery had gained a negative association. To paraphrase Malvasia, the fraudulent forgery was defined as the work that stole from another because of a certain need. That need could involve an artist's desire to make a profit in the art market, or the wish to gain prestige by fooling art experts. In the modern conception of forgery, the intent of the artist is paramount in separating original work, copies, or allusions from outright deception.

[140] Lopez, 234, 240.

Conclusion: Art and Deception

Tracing the evolution of forgery has been a challenge because the word and the concept of art forgery did not evolve in perfect parallel. While both the word and the artistic practice evolved from a process of creation to one of deception, the definition of the word shifted within a shorter span of time (the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries) than the art (twelfth century to nineteenth century). Art forgery became a crime when art historians developed the ability to separate between originals and forgeries.

Because of my interest in the interaction between art and crime, the beginning stages of my research focused on "forgery" and "forging" as defined today: "to make or imitate falsely; to produce or devise (that which is untrue or genuine); to fabricate; to counterfeit."[141] This definition embraces the criminal connotations of forgery and the deceptive intent behind the creation of these works. My beginning research also led me to the case of Han van Meegeren and his Vermeer forgeries. As I researched this case, I noticed the discrepancy between forgeries and originals; I started questioning how forgeries became undervalued in comparison to the originals that inspired them. To find that answer, I looked at earlier art forgeries to gain a deeper understanding of how the concept of "forgery" was seen in different time periods. Defining the words "forgery" and "to forge" became central to distinguishing between the different types of forgery. The final example, the selling of forgeries by Knoedler & Company, completes the progression of art forgery from creation to deception that I mapped in my thesis.

All the Knoedler forgeries came from the same private collector. The first painting presented to Knoedler & Company was a Mark Rothko. Then, over the next ten years, Jackson

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[141] *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language* 2nd ed., (Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1944), 990.

Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Robert Motherwell joined the collection.[142] New York Times writer Patricia Cohen has written about the developing investigation in a series of articles from early October 2011 to March 2012. All articles express similar concerns about the artworks: the identity of their original collector, their missing provenance, and the disagreement between scholars about their authenticity.[143]

Art gallery owner Glafira Rosales sold these works to the Knoedler gallery through Ann Freedman, the gallery's president until 2009.[144] Freedman purchased these works based on her firm belief in their authenticity. Rosales neither provided documentation of provenance nor identified the collector who gave her access to the art.[145] While Freedman emphasized that private collectors prefer to stay anonymous, the secrecy of the collector is not as much of a problem as the lack of documentation for the works.[146] Without legitimate documentation, authentication becomes more problematic because it becomes harder to prove the connection between the work and the artist.

The story of the Knoedler forgeries is similar to that of Van Meegeren's *Supper at Emmaus* (Figure 33) in how the art came to be sold. After finishing the forgery, Van Meegeren sold the painting in Paris through an agent. Instead of providing a provenance, Van Meegeren told the agent that the work was an heirloom belonging to an Italian aristocratic family who wanted to remain anonymous for political reasons; he exploited the political tensions of his time to account for the lack of documentation.[147] The Van Meegeren case also demonstrates that any

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[142] Patricia Cohen, "Suitable for Suing," *New York Times* (February 26, 2012).
[143] Patricia Cohen, "Possible Forging of Modern Art Is Investigated," *New York Times* (December 2, 2011).
[144] Cohen, "Possible Forging of Modern Art Is Investigated."
[145] Cohen, "Suitable for Suing."
[146] Cohen, "Suitable for Suing."
[147] Frank Arnau, "Twentiety-Century Vermeers," in *The Art of the Faker: Three Thousand Years of Deception*, translated by J. Maxwell Brownjohn (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961), 308.

sudden flood of the art market in a short span of time with works by the same (or similar) artist is cause for concern. The similarities between the cases are not proof that the Knoedler gallery was a victim of a forgery scheme. Rather, both cases indicate the difficulty of identifying original works without provenance. With the Van Meegeren forgeries and the Knoedler forgeries, scholars debated about the elements of the paintings that could determine authenticity.

Spanish Elegy (Figure 35), a painting initially identified as a work by Robert Motherwell, was supposed to be a part of a series on the Spanish Civil War.[148] The "Elegy" purchased for the Knoedler collection is composed predominantly of a thick, undulatory, black streak across an ivory background (Figure 35). The inspiration for the forgery becomes apparent when compared to an authentic Motherwell from the series, *Spanish Elegy (Alcaraz) XV* from 1953 (Figure 36). Similar to the Knoedler "Elegy," the Motherwell painting has thick, black, rounded blots that are painted on a muddy white and gray background (Figure 36). The general idea of the Knoedler forgery is similar to that of the originals. While the genuine Motherwell has balance between the background and detail, a large black streak dominates the composition of the forgery.

The forgery from the Rosales collection that sold for the greatest amount was a supposed Jackson Pollock, selling for seventeen million dollars.[149] The resemblance to an authentic Jackson Pollock is striking. The colors scheme and the pattern of the lines resemble Pollock's work (Figure 37 and 38). The greatest difference between these two works lies with the reaction they elicit in the viewer. The supposed Pollock, *Untitled 1950* (Figure 37) does not stir the same powerful emotions as the original Pollock, *Eyes in the Heart* (Figure 38). The viewer can feel turbulence in the artist in how he painted the swirling, entangled lines in *Eyes in the Heart*. Pollock uses the tension between the lines coursing through the painting and the oval shapes that

[148] Cohen, "Possible Forging of Modern Art Is Investigated."
[149] Patricia Cohen, "Hearings Shed Light On Pollock Dispute," *New York Times* (December 17, 2011).

create eyes to convey a sense of confusion, complexity, and wandering. By contrast, the Knoedler "Pollock" does not convey any emotion or purpose in the placement of the color and lines. The painting does conform to the drooping technique made famous by Pollock. But while the forger seems to have mastered the technique, he or she failed to replicate Pollock's spirit and intensity. *Untitled 1950* looks like someone just splattered painting on canvas in a haphazard fashion, rather than with any intended meaning.

The Knoedler forgeries provide a perfect demonstration of the modern conception of "forgery" because, upon their discovery, they were treated as works of fraud. Once the Knoedler Motherwell, purchased for $650,000, (Figure 35) was uncovered as a forgery, Killala Fine Art filed a lawsuit against the art dealer who sold them the painting, Julian Weissman, and the art dealer who brought the painting to market, Glafira Rosales.[150] As part of the court settlement, Weissman and Rosales would repay the Killala gallery and the painting would carry a marking made of indelible ink on the back that identified it as a forgery.[151] Understandably, Killala Fine Art wanted to be reimbursed. Included in the hefty price tag of an original is the prestige and quality that comes with the artist's name. When the Motherwell painting was revealed as a forgery, its value decreased because its authenticity was called into question.[152]

According to the modern definition, a forgery is a work of art presented as the work of an artist other than its actual maker. Forgeries can be created with the intent to deceive, or they can start as genuine copies or emulations that are then sold with a fraudulent purpose. In the case of the Knoedler forgeries, their makers are unknown, adding to the difficulty of determining whether they were created with a fraudulent motive. An interesting note about the Knoedler

[150] Patricia Cohen, "Motherwell Painting Declared a Forgery," *New York Times* (October 12, 2011), 1.
[151] Cohen, "Motherwell Painting Declared a Forgery."
[152] Cohen, "Possible Forging of Modern Art Is Investigated."

"Elegy" is that it was branded as a forgery by a court of law rather than an art expert.[153] Though Motherwell experts had a significant influence in the process, ultimately, a judge ruled on whether the work should be considered genuine or false.

Stories about art forgery have captured the popular imagination: movies such as *How To Steal a Million Dollars* with Audrey Hepburn and *Incognito* with Jason Patric romanticize the forger as a disgruntled artist. Even as "forgery" becomes synonymous with fraud, the forger becomes the popular hero who exposes the elitism of the art world and the heightened value assigned to the names of popular artists. As definitions of "forgery" continue to evolve, this idealized notion of forgery permeating the public sphere could alter its definition to embrace its potential as entertainment.

[153] Cohen, "Motherwell Painting Declared a Forgery."

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