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VICTOR PLAHTE TSCHUDI

Recollecting prints: Remembrance and Reproduction in Goethe’s *Italian Journey*

Abstract

This article probes into the little explored topic of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s hunt for, obsession with, and dependence on prints. Goethe’s travel memoirs from Italy and Rome, written mostly in retrospect and published with the title *Italian Journey*, reveal a multitude of references to graphic reproductions of Roman art and architecture. The prints Goethe preferred were often ones that represented buildings and paintings in states in which they no longer existed. Thus, prints not only helped Goethe remember, but they illustrate remembrance itself, and I shall argue that Goethe’s view on prints therefore complicates the conventionally held opinion of copying in the Enlightenment. The second part pursues Goethe’s attitude to copies further. Leonardo’s *Last Supper* became an icon of the age not the least thanks to Goethe’s essay on the fresco and his endorsement of Raphael Morghen’s engraving of it. The 19th century reception of this rapidly deteriorating Renaissance masterpiece in fact outlines a notion of reproduction that precedes, also conceptually, Walter Benjamin’s reduction of the idea of copying to the level of mere duplication. In fact, Goethe endorses a creative reproduction that gently reanimates the original, so to speak, which this article will define as a historicist vision of copying.

Introduction

In *Swann’s Way*, the first volume in Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time*, the author recalls how his grandmother had trouble finding pictures to hang on the walls in the bedroom where he slept as a boy. Her doubts had nothing to do with the subjects reproduced, but with the reproductions themselves.[1] Famous buildings and landscapes she thought of as an essential part of young Marcel’s education, but since mere photographs of these subjects seemed vulgar she wanted to have them reproduced in high quality paintings, by for example Corot or Turner, which unquestionably “were a stage higher in the scale of art.” But then she realized that not even paintings would do since they too in the final instance were available only as photographs. That is when Marcel's grandmother approached the family friend, Monsieur Swann, asking him if these paintings "had not been engraved, preferring, when possible, old engravings with some interest of association apart from themselves, such, for example, as show us a masterpiece in a state in which we can no longer see it today..."[2]

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[1] This article results from a postdoctoral fellowship at the Norwegian Institute in Rome (2008-12) and I would like to thank the institute for the support which has been instrumental for my academic activities in recent years and for my development as a scholar. I would also like to thank the Proust Society for invaluable support and advice on the interpretation of Proust for this article.

This tirade unfolds a wonderfully interconnected series of representations – a building in a painting in a print, a typically Proustian kaleidoscope that turns an already refracted world one, seemingly impossible, degree further. A recurring dialectic in this monumental novel centers precisely on how segments of reality are transformed into art before being pieced back together again but on terms that have become irreversibly artificial.[3] To Marcel's grandmother, engraving emerges as the compromise – documentary but still handmade – striking an equilibrium between art and mechanics at that poignant late 19th century junction in the history of art. Her high of evaluation of the graphic print, as Angela Cozea points out, was not only as a representation whose referent can be verified but as a "representation of a lost representation."[4] In other words, engraving symbolizes remembrance itself, juggling fact and invention like Proust does in his gargantuan lost world recovery.

Going back some seventy years – still with an eye to prints in French fiction – Fabrice del Dongo in Stendhal's novel *The Charterhouse of Parma* (1839) has in an early scene escaped from his childhood home by Lake Como. Years later he finds himself standing outside looking up at the room where he had lived as a boy, regretting that during his last short visit "I hadn't the time to go up there, not even to see my engravings."[5] When Fabrice was young, his father had sent him to the Jesuit school in Milan with the explicit instructions that he should be taught Latin, not from those old authors who were talking about republics, but from a magnificent volume illustrated with more than a hundred engravings, "a masterpiece of seventeenth-century art: it was the Latin genealogy of the Valaserras, the Marquises del Dongo, published in 1650."[6] In reality of course this book does not exist, but Stendhal affirms, even parodies, a trust in the engraved image's verisimilitude and a faith in representation that Marcel's grandmother probably would find naive. In the time that has elapsed between Fabrice's father and Marcel's grandmother, the view not *in*, but *of* the medium of print had changed profoundly. In the early 19th century one could look at engravings without necessarily having to see them as art. One could still innocently enjoy the sight of what the print actually contained, which the incised view painstakingly brought to light. And the things contained in handmade views, unlike in photography, could very well in reality be entirely vanished.

* * *

When Johann Wolfgang von Goethe arrived in Rome for the first time in October 1786 he knew the city well already – he had even seen it, three-dimensionally, and in a better state than he would find the real version. Models and miniatures of Rome's antiquities abounded in 18th century Germany. They were usually executed in plaster and cork, and displayed in grand collections like the one Goethe himself had visited in 1769 in the *Antikensaal* at the Mannheim academy.[7] An industry of model makers kept the ancient city still intact, splendid and classical for the population north of the Alps. Travelers to the actual capital of the past were bound to be disappointed – including Goethe: Surveying the heaps of stones he simply did not recognize the city he had studied at home and knew so well by heart. He had grown accustomed to a cleansed and shining miniature Rome, so that when he finally arrives there, it is Rome that seems alien. A haunting formulation sums up his first few days in the eternal city: "Wherever I walk, I come upon familiar objects in an unfamiliar world."[8] The convinced classicists' sense of displacement in this utterance is so strong that it throws the world, not him, out of balance. Rome as the embodiment of architectural perfection continues to exist of course, but just not at its actual location. The classical city that Goethe knows, and hunts for, is the one he has left behind. It is the Rome of ruins, street markets, noisy festivals and other tourists that Goethe casts as the distorted counter image.

The model vision of the Eternal City was one Goethe not easily was able to discard. The 22 of November was a happy day, he writes – warm and sunny, and he had been in Rome for three weeks already. Johann Wolfgang and his friend, the painter Johann Wilhelm Tischbein, decided to walk all the way to St. Peter's. There they lingered on the square for a while, eating grapes, before they went inside to look at the paintings in the Sixtine chapel, and after that the basilica itself. "Then we climbed up on the roof", Goethe continues, "where

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[2] The passage from Proust, *Swann's Way* (1913), is discussed on the basis of the English translation by Charles Kenneth Scott Moncrieff (1922) in a revised edition by D. J. Enright 2002, p. 46.

[3] The inverted role of art and architecture in Proust's text is discussed in Mari Lending's article in this volume, "Wandering Among Models: Stendhal, Proust, Sebald."

[4] Coeza 1993, 223

[5] Stendhal 2009, 162

[6] Stendhal 2009, 17

[7] This article is based on Goethe's *Italienische Reise* in the English translation of W. H. Auden and Elisabeth Mayer (1962) published by Penguin in 1970. Goethe 1970, 129 (1 November 1786) writes on his arrival in Rome that: "everything I have known for so long through paintings, drawings, etchings, woodcuts, plaster casts and cork models is now assembled before me." On more than one occasion does he mention the immense impression the visit to the Mannheim collection made on him. See Goethe 1970, 491 and also Schreiter 2010, 125–126. On 18th century architectural models of Roman monuments, see for instance Kockel 2010, 419–433.

[8] Goethe 1970, 129 (1 November 1786).

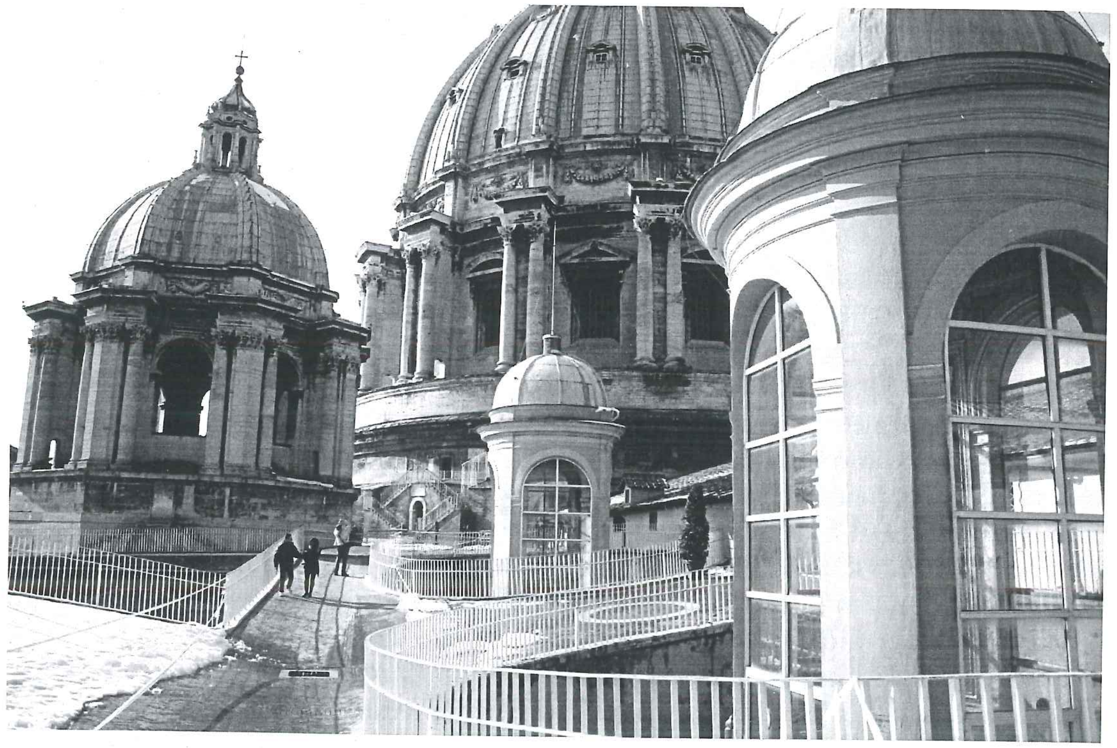

Fig. 1 – The "cityscape" on the roof of St. Peter's. Author's photo

one finds a miniature copy of a well-built town with houses, shops, fountains, churches (at least they looked like churches from the outside) and a large temple – everything in the open air with beautiful walks in between."[9] It is an observation that has the potential to puzzle architectural historians on 18th century Rome, for what did Goethe see? Did he describe the sight of a diminished Rome below him or was there an actual model city on the roof of the basilica? Most likely he conveyed his impression of structures that were there, such as the graceful lanterns perforated by windows that filed out on top of the nave in the shadow of Giacomo della Porta's towering cupola – in fact, much as this lofty assembly presents itself today (FIG. 1). Even the "shop" is still there selling architectural souvenirs and thus inviting to a model world on yet a tinier scale. The cumulation of forms turns out model-like in the hyper-architectural setting on St Peter's roof.

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[9] Goethe 1970, 142 (22 November 1786).

Reconstruction and remembrance: enlightenment obscured

The two initial parts of Goethe's Italian journey were published in 1816–17, thirty years after the actual visit, with the title *Italienische Reise*. A third part was completed as late as 1829, three years prior to the author's death. By the time of this late editing, I shall argue, the actual impressions of the stay had fused with the visual material he had gathered, such as prints, resulting in re-ordered and even entirely artificial recollections.

His first four-month stay in Rome lasted from October 1786 to February 1787 at which point he went on to Naples and Sicily only to return for a second Roman sojourn in June 1787, lingering on until April the next year. The published journal, based on a combined material of diary, letters and notes, was by no means the first travel account from Rome, but Goethe's restrained and detached tone turned traveling almost into a science. Escaping without notice from Weimar, Goethe arrived in the papal city incognito. Although the celebrated author of *Werther* was soon recognized, he managed to remain the impassionate observer who surgically analyzed Roman society, art and architecture. Even though he could be "aroused" by what he saw, such a sentiment was for Goethe itself an object for study, a part of the effect classical beauty at the time was supposed to exert on the beholder, described by Johann Joachim Winkelmann, whose *History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764) Goethe says he bought shortly after his arrival in Rome to read on the spot where it was written.[10] And even though he must have trotted up and down the same cramped and filthy streets as everyone else, he somehow induced himself into believing he was moving through a classically ideal Rome. And in a certain sense he did. For a fact that has passed unnoticed is Goethe's remarkably extensive and varied relation to Rome in prints. He studied and collected prints to a point where he in the end no longer only saw engravings of Rome, but Rome through engravings. Prints and printmaking always interested the German, as Johannes Grave so impressively has documented, and by the end of his life his collection counted thousands of prints.[11] The enthusiasm for reproductions of Roman art, however, naturally peaked when he was there and in particular when his departure was nearing.[12] As he was about to leave for Germany, Goethe's rooms on the Corso had become a veritable museum of things he had collected: it contained casts of several different Junos and Jupiters, a Medusa, a Hercules and a Mercury, as well as "half-reliefs, casts of terracotta works, Egyptian casts taken from the top of the obelisk, and sundry other fragments."[13] For Goethe, just as for Stendhal, a reproduction is almost as good as the real work, helping one grasp dimensions of the work that the original itself not easily reveals. Everything "beautiful, great and venerable" around the city Goethe wants to see and judge for himself, adding: "This cannot be done without copying."[14] It is as if the true understanding of an artwork first gradually materializes through its remaking.[15] Filtering an artwork through layers of representations does not necessarily debase the original, as Proust's grandmother undoubtedly would have thought, but on the contrary, it captures even more firmly its essence. Although plaster casts on several occasions are labeled by Goethe as mere shadows of the authentic ancient sculptures, representations may also subject the original to a heightened degree of perfection and order, one that "gives one a completely fresh view of the figures."[16] How he envies the artist who "through reproducing and imitating these great visions, comes closer to them in every way."[17] In the presence of plaster copies after the antique, Goethe wrote, "wird man mehr als man ist," – one becomes more than one is.[18]

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[10] Goethe 1970, 148 (3 December 1786).

[11] See Grave 2006 and also the review of the book by Herrmann 2007.

[12] Grave 2006, 104 –111.

[13] Goethe 1970, 490 (April 1788).

The situation is the opposite of the one Walter Benjamin describes in his celebrated essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936): to Goethe an artwork does not lose its "aura" through being reproduced, on the contrary; reproduction gives the work an added meaning. The entire process of loss of aura is reversed as the original remains "outside" human understanding until reproductions inscribe it in its measured, enlightened rationale. In one respect does Benjamin's "mechanical reproduction" approximate Goethe's optimistic view on copying: Through zooming or slow motion, photography may bring out aspects of reality not immediately apparent to the naked eye.[19] Otherwise Benjamin's fundamental understanding of a reproduction's goal as *accuracy* short-circuits the whole idea of the subtly re-creative 19th century copy and its legitimacy.

It was very much reconstructed Rome Goethe coveted in engraving – the shiningly intact imperial metropolis that he never got to see – and quite at odds with Goethe the observer of nature (although somewhat in tune with his search for the *urpflanze* – the primordial plant from which the general flora derived). On his wall in Weimar hung Pirro Ligorio's staggering birds-eye view of the antique capital, complete with hundreds of imaginatively restored buildings, published for the first time in 1561, and reprinted in several editions. And in Rome he describes the impression that two nearly identical drawings by a French architect made on him, one showed a view of contemporary Rome while the other showed Rome from an identical standpoint but as it supposedly looked in its

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[14] Goethe 1970, 358 (5 July 1787).

[15] Coltman 2006 gives a good account of the 18th century notion of original vs. copy in relation to antique sculpture. On Goethe's meeting with Rome she writes: "For Goethe, a city famous for its art objects was constructed and mediated through a multiplicity of copies of those objects." (p. 126). On Goethe's view on Roman antiques, see also Andreae (n. d.), 132–139.

[16] Goethe 1970, 152 (25 December 1786).

[17] Goethe 1970, 161 (16 February 1787).

[18] For this quote in particular (Goethe's *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 15, 638) and on Goethe's emotional and idealistic response to plaster casts of the antique in general, see Catalano 2007, 95–99.

[19] Benjamin 1999, 214.

imperial past, in addition to being "charmingly coloured."[20] A prerequisite, perhaps, for the rise of the late 18th century neoclassicism is that one saw Rome, not in its actual condition, but through the veil of graphic reproductions.

Prefiguring Fabrice and Marcel, the first engravings young Johann Wolfgang remembers were the views of Rome that decorated the hall in his parents' house – black and white realms that made him yearn for the southern city.[21] And years later when he stepped into real Rome he still looked for, and continued to collect, Rome in prints, and with relentless determination: Euphoric about Michelangelo he wrote: "I shall bring home as many engravings and drawings made after his work as I can get hold of."[22] By the 1780s there were ranges of Michelangelo reproductions to choose from, including Giulio Bonasone and Martino Rota's mid 16th century *Last Judgement* series and the architectural designs of St. Peter's and the Capitol engraved by Étienne Dupérac.[23] Raphael's cycle of Psyche in the Villa Farnesina Goethe said he knew "almost by heart" from coloured reproductions long before he got there and the etchings of Giovanni Battista Piranesi had prepared him for the imposing sight of Roman structures such as the *Cloaca Maxima*.[24] But Goethe was also able to point out parts of Rome that to his surprise had escaped reproduction: "In every corner here are magnificent things which are almost never mentioned and have not been disseminated over the world in etchings and reproductions. I shall bring some with me, done by excellent artists."[25] If there only were some means of fixing the images of Rome firmly in one's memory! Goethe exclaims.[26] Engravings clearly served that purpose. Returning home, however, and as the decades passed, engravings failed to help him remembering what he saw, as they themselves became what he remembered.

Goethe's recollection is often not of monuments he saw in real life, but of monuments he saw in print. In the third part of the *Italian Journey*, edited and published when the author approached eighty, Goethe describes how his friend Philipp Christoph Kayser at some point had introduced him to various 16th century volumes of engravings representing Roman monuments. Goethe names these volumes, and occasionally even gets down to identifying individual plates.

The first volume he mentions, the *Admiranda Romae*, is an elegant collection of printed Roman bas reliefs engraved by Pietro Santi Bartoli and published for the first time in 1690. Occasionally the elderly Goethe gets the titles wrong: It is not necessarily the un-illustrated treatise on art theory by Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo he means when he refers to Lomazza's *Architetture*. In the context of listing visual compendia it is more probably Antonio Labbaco's *Libro appartenene al'Archittetura*, a famous compilation of engraved reconstructions of Roman temples, mausoleums and other structures, published in 1554 and reprinted in several editions.[27] However, when Goethe in the 1820's scans his brain for concrete images of prints it is not Labacco's exact and academic – almost proto-neoclassical – renderings that come to his minds, but images that themselves illustrate remnants and loss, and more concretely Rome as an architectural palimpsest.

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[20] Goethe 1970, 378–379 (27 August 1787).

[21] Goethe 1970, 129 (1 November 1786).

[22] Goethe 1970, 147 (1 December 1786).

[23] On the 16th century printed reproductions of Michelangelo's works, see Barnes 2009.

[24] On Raphael see Goethe 1970, 361 (16 July 1786), and on Piranesi, 492 (April 1788).

[25] Goethe 1970, 139 (18 November 1786).

[26] Goethe 1970, 1947 (2 December 1786).

Goethe's most detailed recollection of prints is of items in the work he identifies as *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*. This was a famous collection of engravings issued with this title from ca. 1575 onwards by the shrewd and ambitious publisher Antonio Lafréry. It was a brilliant marketing move. Lafréry simply commissioned a title page from his compatriot, the Roman based engraver Étienne Dupérac, which he then attached to a selection of folios that he already had in stock – executed by different artists, at different times – and bound them in volumes on clients' request. The *Speculum* volumes are exclusive custom-made souvenir books brought back home by tourists and ordered by aristocrats and collectors across Europe. No single copy of the *Speculum* is therefore alike, and versions proliferate at libraries in Europe and beyond.[28]

All prints in the *speculum* copies have as the title suggests one thing in common: – Rome. Sculptures, reliefs, medallions, views, architectural plans and imaginative reconstructions mingle to form a spectacular kaleidoscope of the amassed visual record of the city since the genesis of Roman printmaking industry in the 1530s. Antonio Salamanca in Rome, whose stock Lafréry were to inherit, and the brothers Michele and Francesco Tramezzino, partly based in Rome and partly in Venice, ran profitable businesses – commissioning artists, employing expert engravers like Nicolas Beatrizet, and printing, publishing and selling the result in their own "shops."[29] The studios of both Salamanca and Francesco Tramezzino were places where "Archaeologists and lovers of antiquity met," according to the German humanist Georg Fabricius de Chemnitz who travelled to Rome in 1542.[30] Printed images even became so popular that these publishers quickly were forced to formulate an idea of copyright – so called "privileges" – to keep keen rivals at bay.[31] Some of these early views are among those Goethe mentions.

These early images of Rome count among the finest graphic renderings in the history of engravings, exerting far-reaching influence on the history of archaeology and architecture. Included in the *Speculum* were for instance Pirro Ligorio's sensationally detailed reconstructions of Roman monuments, based on years of research, and incised by a team of artists that included Jacob Bos and Giulio de Musi. Also the reconstructions by the friar Onofrio Panvinio appear in most *Speculum* copies, including an imaginative evocation of imperial Palatine and another of an arena for mock naval battles. Goethe, to all accounts, consulted one or several copies of the *Speculum* in German libraries, which he said "transported me back into those earlier times when antiquity was regarded with awe and reverence and its remains were skillfully reproduced."[32] He seems to take up the standpoint, not of an ancient Roman, but of the 16th century engraver, a position I think Goethe in reality rather would have avoided had he known of the rivalry, low wages, and unhealthy and dangerous conditions of the profession brought to light by Christopher Witcombe.[33] In particular he admires, or remembers to have admired, prints of the two Colossi, the ruin of the vanished Septizonium of Severus, the façade of St. Peter's before it was rebuilt, and a view of a tournament taking place in the Vatican Court. These four were all early and important works in essential *Speculum* compendiums.[34]

It is not certain that Goethe's memory always served him right. The notes from his second visit to Rome were heavily edited, even rewritten, decades after it took place. They were also bolstered by observations that only could have been produced in retrospect: for instance when he looks back on his departure from Rome in April 1788 he restages his last solitary walk as an evocative tableau infused in hindsight with the yearning and sublime feelings typical of the romantic movement of the late 1820s: He describes his descent up the stairs to Michelangelo's Capitol and how the statue of Marcus Aurelius reminded him of the intimidating Commandatore in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. It is highly unlikely that Goethe in April 1788 had seen, or indeed even knew of, this opera which had premiered in Prague only six months earlier.[35] So when focusing on what Goethe in the revised *Italian Journey* says he "remembers" of the engravings in the *Speculum*, he understandably gets the details wrong. Which image he refers to when he remembers to have seen an engraving of the "colossi which were still standing in their old place in the Colonna gardens" is not entirely clear. Possibly he meant the engraving of the two colossal ancient horse tamers in marble standing on the square outside the Quirinale palace, originally published by Salamanca and later reissued and copied several times. In 1546 Lafréry published an imposing version of the horse tamers seen from the front, engraved by an unknown artist (FIG. 2), and then in 1550 he issued a second view in which

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[27] Lomazzo's treatise *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura* came out in Milan in 1584.

[28] The authoritative catalogue of prints in the *Speculum* (based on the comparison of more than 30 copies) is still Huelsen 1921, 121–170, but see also McGinniss 1976; Parshall 2006, 3–28.

[29] On the business of Salamanca, see Deswarte-Rosa 1989, 47–62. On the careers of the Tramezzino brothers, see Tinto 1968; Leicht 1957, 357–167; Sman 2000, 235–247 and Witcombe 2004, 112–122.

[30] Tinto 1968, xxv. On de Chemnitz' stay in 1542-43, see also Pagani 2000, 150.

[31] On privileges on 16th and 17th century Roman prints, see Tschudi 2014.

[32] Goethe 1970, 420 (November 1787).

[33] See Witcombe 2008.

[34] The following discussion on these four images is based on a single passage in Goethe's retrospective notes on November 1787, published in Goethe 1970, 420–421.

[35] Goethe 1970, 497 (April 1788).

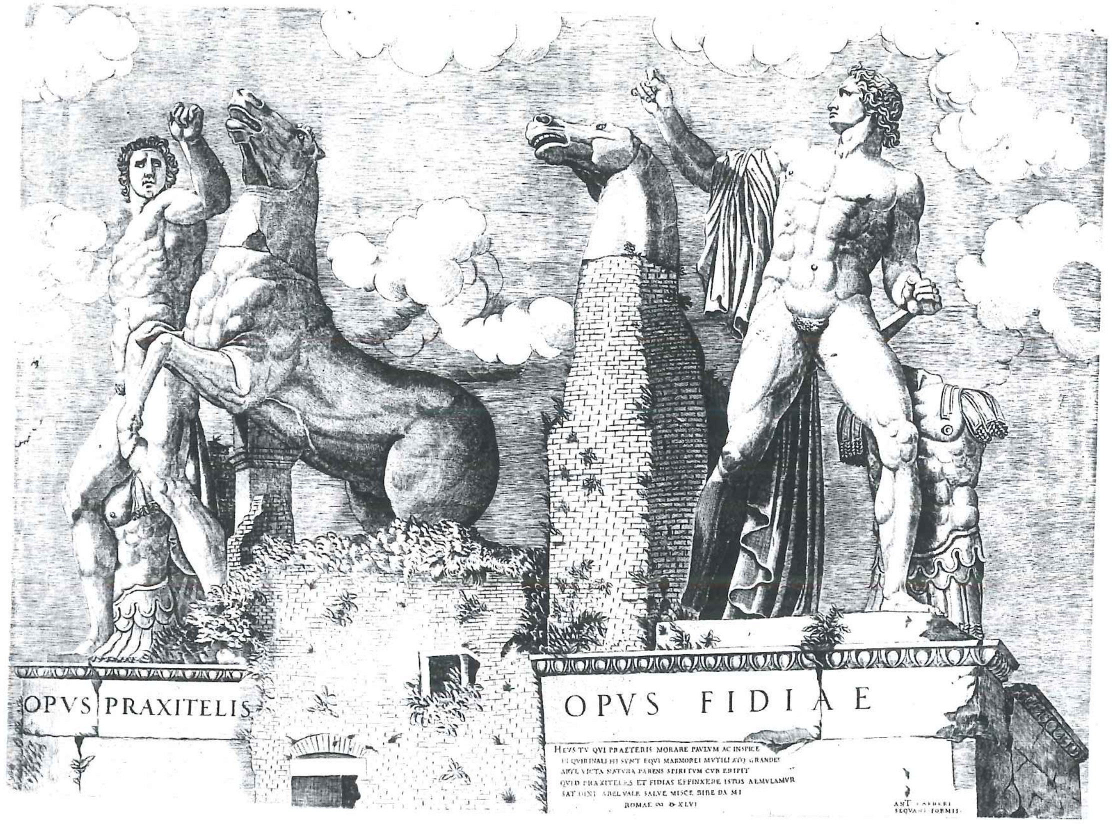
OPVS PRAXITELIS
OPVS FIDIAE

Fig. 2 – The *Horsetamers* (*Dioscuri*). Engraving, 1546, published by Antonio Lafréry. *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, Riserva S.7, p. 66 ©2012 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

the sculptures are seen from behind, and even named "colosi" in the text underneath the image.[36]

The second engraving Goethe remembers from the *Speculum* is one that showed the "half ruined Septizonium of Severus." The monument itself was built by Septimus Severus in the second century CE, an unusual construction of superimposed porticoes rising in tiers, standing close to the Palatine Hill. But in 1588–89 pope Sixtus V pulled down the last remains, and reused the marble, in an act that must be seen as a symbolic reaffirmation of a Roman Catholic Church extending its might even to antiquity. A beautifully evocative representation of the remains before they were demolished was published by Lafréry already in 1546 – his first known original commission – engraved by an anonymous artist who delineated the cracks and weeds with obvious relish (FIG. 3).[37]

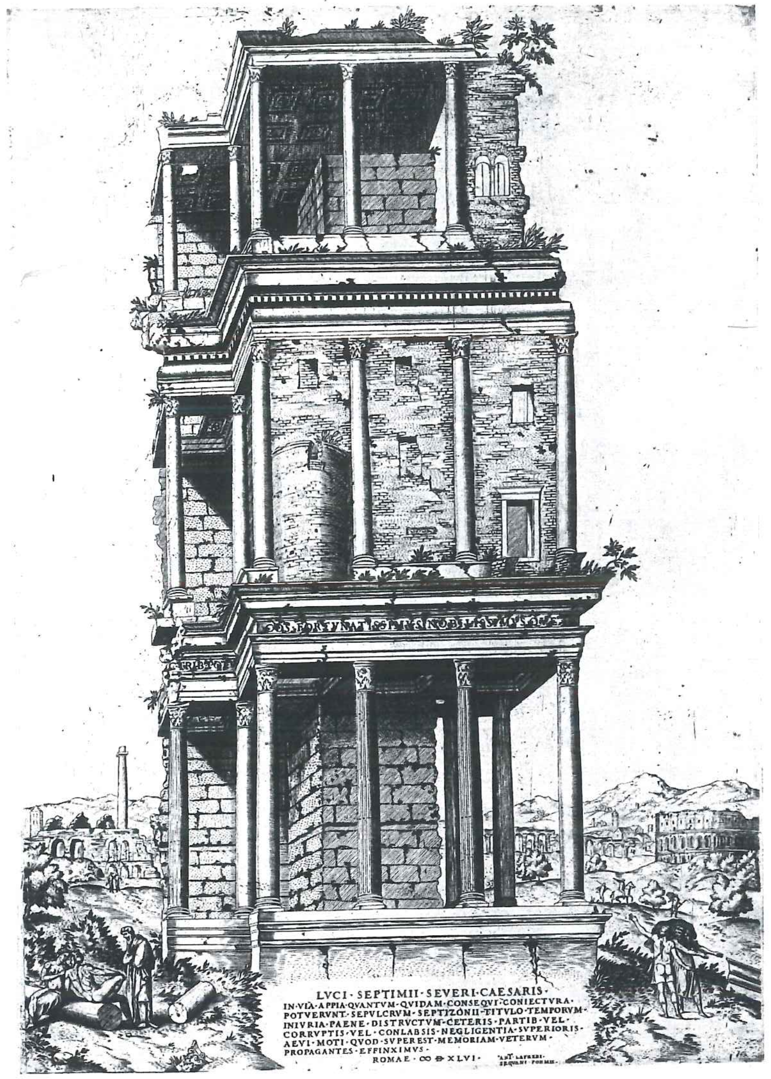
LVCI · SEPTIMII · SEVERI · CAESARIS ·
IN · VIA · APPIA · QVANTVM · QVIDAM · CONSEQVI · CONIECTVRA ·
POTVERVNT · SEPVLCRVM · SEPTIZONII · TITVLO · TEMPORVM ·
INIVRIA · PAENE · DISTRVCTVM · CETERIS · PARTIB · VEL ·
CORRVPTIS · VEL · CONLABSIS · NEGLIGENTIA · SVPERIORIS ·
AEVI · MOTI · QVOD · SVPEREST · MEMORIAM · VETERVM ·
PROPAGANTES · EFFINXIMVS ·
ROMAE · ∞ D · XLVI ·
ANT · LAFRERI · SEQVANI · FORMIS ·

Fig. 3 – The ruins of the Septizonium of Severus. Engraving, 1546, published by Antonio Lafréry. *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, Cicognara XII.3886, fol. 10 ©2012 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

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[36] Goethe calls these two sculpture groups "colossi" elsewhere in the *Italian Journey* (1970, 130 (3 November 1786)). For an impression of the 1546 copy by Lafréry, see *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, BAV, Riserva S. 7, fol. 66, and for an impression of the 1550 engraving, see the same volume, fol. 67. A sculpture of Hercules was also named "colossus" in a print engraved by Bartolomeo Ammannati and published by Lafréry in 1553, and included in several versions of the *Speculum*. See also Huelsen 1921, 153, nos. 53 & 54.

[37] An impression of Lafréry's original is in BAV, Cicogn. XII. 3886, fol. 10r. Later states of the print were published in 1582 by Lafréry's heir Claudio Duchetti and later by Henrik van Schoel (BAV, Cicogn. XII. 541, fol. 57r). See Huelsen 1921, 151, no. 40.

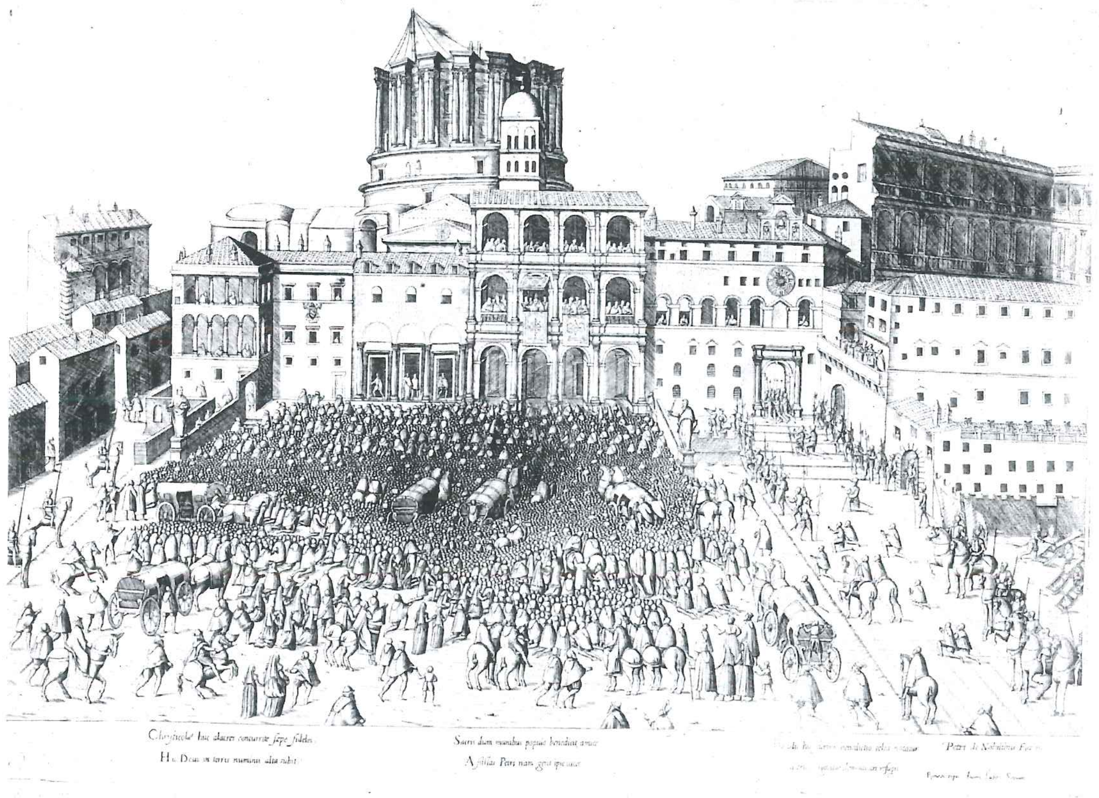

Fig. 4 – Benediction on the square of St. Peter's. Engraving, before 1573 (1565), published by Antonio Lafréry. *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, Cicognara XII.541, fol. 111 ©2012 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

The majestic *di sotto in su* perspective sets an early standard in an aesthetics of ruins enhancing the lone relic's towering grandeur. Not only was the antique building gone, but as Goethe points out, also the remains, doubling the sense of loss for the aging man who reads into his memory of the engraving of a lost ruin both yearning and awe of a meeting with Rome that he in retrospect claims aroused in his "agiated soul" a mood he calls "heroic-elegiac."[38]

The last two engravings Goethe specifically remembers to have seen in the *Speculum* were both mid 16th century views of the Vatican. The first one showed "St. Peter's, before the façade and the centre dome were added," he writes, probably referring to a print representing a papal benediction on the piazza of St. Peter's, originally published by Bartolomeo Faletti in 1565 but existing, too, in a

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[38] Goethe 1970, 497–498 (April 1788).

slightly reworked copy issued by Lafréry sometime before 1573 (FIG. 4).[39] Quite possibly Dupérac was responsible for the execution of both the original and the copy, but regardless of which version Goethe might have seen it would have figured the irregular façade – or rather the row of several ones – screening St. Peter's before Carlo Maderno in 1612–13 concluded Michelangelo's initial project with the imposing Baroque front. Remains of the early Constantine basilica as well as the Renaissance benediction loggia were juxtaposed in a far from orderly fashion at the time the engraving was made. So the half completed state that captured Goethe's attention in these prints was not necessarily of a Rome in ruins, but of a Rome not yet built.

The last image, described by Goethe as "the old Vatican in the court of which tournaments could still be held," could be one of two prints in the *Speculum* showing the festivities taking place in the Belvedere courtyard on 5 March 1565 on the occasion of the marriage of Annibale Altemps to Ortensia Borromeo. Both prints were commissioned by Lafréry shortly after the event, but with the monogrammist HCB (possibly Hendrik van Cleve) engraving the view of the courtyard looking south and Dupérac doing the other looking north.[40] In the first image the unfinished aspect of St. Peter's is a striking feature, the basilica's half-built dome exposed, casting Baroque Rome as a ruin on its way up, still awaiting its completion (FIG. 5). Alternatively, if the view Goethe remembered was the second one, looking towards the Belvedere, the complex gave a grander, more palatial impression, digestible to a classicist temperament. Still, in all the engravings he mentions people play a major part precisely as being minor. Preshadowing both Piranesi and Caspar David Friedrich, human figures are deliberately dwarfed to make the architecture appear even grander; reclining at the foot of the seemingly gigantic remains of the Septizonium, the conversing men are hardly noticeable at first. The vast and tightly packed crowds in the Vatican prints are themselves a *topos*. Whether they are distributed as a vibrant mosaic to enliven the regularized tournament images or forming a strangely anamorphic substance on the square of St. Peter's in the effort to create the effect of density – people, as a throng, is pictorially invented in these prints.[41]

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[39] On Faletti and the 1565 print, see in particular Witcombe 2008, 228 and Bury 2001, 158, no. 109. An impression of Lafréry's copy is kept in BAV, Cicogn. XII. 541, fol. 111r. The copy is mentioned in Lafréry's stocklist compiled in 1572, published by Ehrle 1908, appendix 12, 53–59. A later state of this copy was engraved by Ambrogio Brambilla and published by Claudio Duchetti shortly after 1580 (BAV, Riserva S. 7, fol. 121r). See Huelsen 1921, 121, no. 92.

[40] An impression of the print of the south-looking view is kept in BAV, Riserva S. 7, fol. 119. A later state is kept in BAV, Cicogn. XII. 541, fol. 112r. For a discussion of this print see Bury 2001, 162–163, no. 111. An impression of the tournament-print looking north is kept in BAV, Cicogn. XII. 541, fol. 113r. See Huelsen 1921, 162, nos. 99 & 100.

[41] Images of crowds in art exemplify what Ernst Gombrich in his celebrated *Art and Illusion* 2010 (1960), 176–186, calls "the problem of abbreviation".

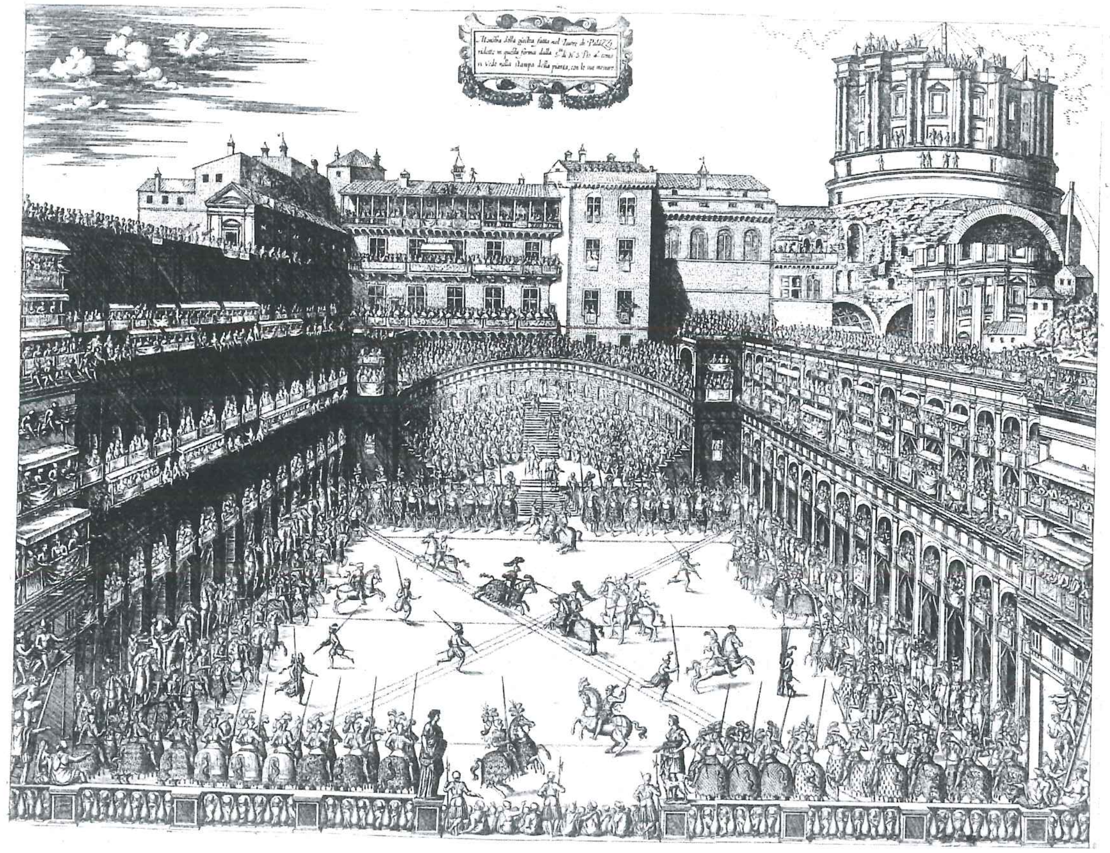

Fig. 5 – Tournament in the Belvedere courtyard. Engraving, 1565, engraved by HCB (Hendrik van Cleve?), published by Antonio Lafréry. *Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae*, Riserva S.7, p. 119 ©2012 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

What all these images have in common is that their original states can be traced back to Antonio Lafréry's earliest production, either to copies he had made or to fresh commissions. This does not have to mean anything more than that Goethe consulted a copy of the *Speculum* which probably had been compiled by Lafréry himself before he died in 1577, and in Goethe's days kept either in Rome or in some German library among which Huelsen has cataloged more than twenty copies.[42] But there are more important conclusions to be drawn. The images of the city that Goethe attempted to recall were not of Rome as he himself once encountered it, but of Rome in engravings – pictures built on pictures, equivalent to the sight of a city placed on top of another that met him on the roof of St. Peter's. Engravings, which he initially collected in order to be able to remember the monuments, became themselves the memories that he recalled. The prints, or imprints, of sites that Goethe never could have seen, such as the Septizonium and the early facade of St. Peter's, re-founded in the memory of the aging man a new Rome. In Goethe's case, remembrance reconstructs a cityscape as ideal as the one in the Ligorio map that he owned. In the *Italian Journey* these architectural prints, extraordinarily, produce "memories" not of his own youthful days, not even of a poetically imagined antiquity, but of Rome in the 16th century. As he sits down to edit and rewrite forty year old impressions, the impressions are replaced by remembered engravings which "transported me back to those earlier times when antiquity was regarded with awe and reverence" – in other words to the Renaissance.[43] The prints bring him back to a time he in fact had never known and to buildings he had never seen. The images of the past become recollections whether they are his own or not. Proust's series of mediums – an engraving of a painting of a building – finds a frailer and less arty counterpart in Goethe's memory of an engraving of a place; it involves an old man's flickering inner vision of representations that themselves were recollections of buildings that in the meantime either had been demolished, like the Septizonium, or rebuilt like the new St. Peter's. In both cases prints of a past that is lost become metaphors of a personal past that in its details perhaps no longer can be remembered.

One gets the impression that even as he investigates the actual city, he continues to add to his ideal "Rome" to be erected back in Weimar, and to which he unstoppably collects material. The welcoming correction offered by printed views keeps reality's sorry ruins and modern urban sprawl at bay still propagating an "Everlasting Rome" which he clearly favors and "not the Rome which is replaced by another every decade."[44] So much so does engraving come to his aid that it is almost no longer Rome he imagines, when he remembers it, but prints. During a concert taking place in February 1787 in the Senator's residence on the Capitol, Goethe only has to turn his head slightly, he recalls, in order to enjoy the unequalled vista stretching from the Arch of Septimus Severus to "the labyrinth of the ruins of the Palatine."[45] And the view comes with an illustration, so to speak, for Goethe continues: "I would recommend to my readers very highly a panorama of the north-western part of Rome as seen from the tower of the Capitol, which was drawn and engraved in 1824 by Fries and Thürmer." With time, the city disappears from view under the cloak of its countless reproductions. Goethe is one short step away of describing a situation where the things he sees, even as he looks at them, already has the form of art.

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[42] Huelsen 1921, 140.

[43] Goethe 1970, 420 (November 1787).

[44] Goethe 1970, 154 (29 December 1786).

[45] Goethe 1970, 477 (February 1788).

In the "Italian journey" Goethe also writes about a visit to an artistic priest.

> In the house of a priest who though without original talent, has devoted his life to art, we saw something interesting copies of great paintings which he had reproduced in miniature. The best of all was of the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci. Christ is sitting at the table with his intimate disciples, and the painter has chosen the moment when He prophesies and says: "Verily, one of you shall betray me." I am trying to make arrangements to have an etching made, either after this copy or another. It would be the greatest blessing if a faithful reproduction could become available to a wider public.[46]

It is important to stress that the opus Goethe hails in this passage is not Leonardo's *Last Supper*, but a reduced copy, which he hopes someone in turn would produce "faithfully" in a new copy so that it may be appreciated by a wider audience. Goethe invites us into a world of semblances in which any approximation of truth is achieved by making imitations seem less artificial.

The succession Goethe outlines – a print of a painting of a painting – is almost as artful as Proust's. But to the German, the chain of reproductions far from devalues the original, but rather seems to animate it. The manually produced engraving reconstitutes reality to a degree that photography's "lifeless" reframing is not able to do, being free to interpret, rather than to replicate, the motif. Just as a true "masterpiece" could be interpreted in a variety of ways, reproductions legitimately were able to remake it in a variety of versions. In the age before Benjamin, then, "mechanical" was precisely what a reproduction was *not*, but quite the opposite; spirited and vibrant, and subtly independent of the original. Goethe would never think of a copy as diminishing an artwork's "aura", but on the contrary, it recreated the original to a new level of clarity, and it also served to edify man: Surrounded by casts "one is greeted by perfection", Goethe declares, "ones whole thinking becomes permeated by their presence, until it becomes impossible ever again to relapse into barbarism."[47]

Seeing feelings: the historicist vision

Goethe's call for printed *Last Supper* reproductions came as if on a clue. Raphael Morghen was in Rome at the same time as the German author, although there is no evidence that they met. At this point Morghen was merely at the start of a career as an engraver that in the end would make him professor of the Academy of Fine Art in Florence (1803) and *Chevalier* of the Légion d'honneur (1816) and, above all, the author of hundreds of extremely popular reproductive prints. Napoleon himself commissioned work from the Italian.[48] Born in 1748

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[46] Goethe 1970, 166 (25 January, 1787).

[47] Goethe 1970, 490.

[48] On Napoleon's commission of three plates from Morghen, including one after J.-L. David's portrait of the emperor crossing the Alps, see Murgia 2011. On Morghen's career in general, see Crespi, 2010.

in Naples, and after practically being raised in the workshop of his engraver father, Raphael Morghen moved to Rome in 1778 to train with the famous printmaker Giovanni Volpato, whose daughter he was to marry and whose inventory he was to draw up after Volpato's death.[49] In 1793, Morghen was called to Florence where Ferdinand III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, commissioned from him a reproduction of Leonardo's *Last Supper*. Raphael was not the first to produce an engraving of the work, but his version achieved an unmatched success and made him a household name in what I shall argue is a particular and forgotten phase in print history.[50] On 13 December 1799 Teodoro Matteini, who had been responsible for producing the preparatory drawing, writes to Morghen because he has heard that it is only a matter of days before the engraver has completed the masterpiece.[51] And in 1800, with the new century in its infancy, Morghen's engraving saw the light of day, measuring more than 50 x 100 cm. (FIG. 6). It created a sensation. Already on 3 July 1801 the Belgian Christian Mechel writes and asks for 12 good impressions,[52] and soon Morghen's *Last Supper* became indispensible on the walls of a growing middle class irresistibly nailing down that 19th century bourgeois blend of piousness and celebration of "genius". Leonardo's painting, as engraved by Morghen, even appeared in other paintings, as Marani points out.[53] It was a showpiece that "became crucial to the afterlife of Leonardo's *Last Supper*", according to Steinberg.[54] Indeed, the copy's resounding success was very much responsible for making the original an icon.

Of course the *Last Supper*'s popularity depended on a combination of factors.[55] The French occupation of Lombardy in 1796 was partly responsible for catapulting into stardom what surely must have been a frustratingly unmovable loot in Napoleon's effort to create Paris as a world capital of art based on imported treasures. Napoleon himself visited the refectory with the *Last Supper* in 1796 and the French invaders took important steps towards the codification of the work as a "masterpiece" through the protection and restoration, and also publication, of Leonardo's work.[56] Nationalist sentiments in the region even seem to hinge on the preservation and continued existence of the work, as expressed

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[49] On Morghen's inventory, see Marini 2011.

[50] See Marani 2001, 6. Between 1789 and 1794 André Dutertre worked on a drawing of the *Last Supper* which apparently was to be engraved by Morghen, but the collaboration came to nothing. Dutertre's work was engraved only in parts from 1808. See Steinberg, 2001, 265–268.

[51] Matteini informed Morghen on 12 September 1795 that the drawing was well underway. Seven months later, it was in the hands of Tomas Puccini, the director of the Uffizi Galleries, who claimed that Matteini never had produced such a "perfect work". The letters are published in Campori 1866. On Morghen's letters see also Marsand 1855.

[52] Campori 1866, 400.

[53] The engraving (probably) by Morghen appears on the background wall in John Everett Millais' *Portrait of Mrs James Wyatt and Her Daughter Sarah* painted in 1850. See Marani 2001, 56.

[54] Steinberg 2001, 268.

[55] On the history of the reception of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, see in particular Leo Steinberg's article from 1973: "Leonardo's *Last Supper*", *The Art Quarterly* 34:4, 297–410, but see also the author's revised and enlarged text in Steinberg 2001 and Marani 2001, 1–79.

[56] Marani 2001, 24–25.

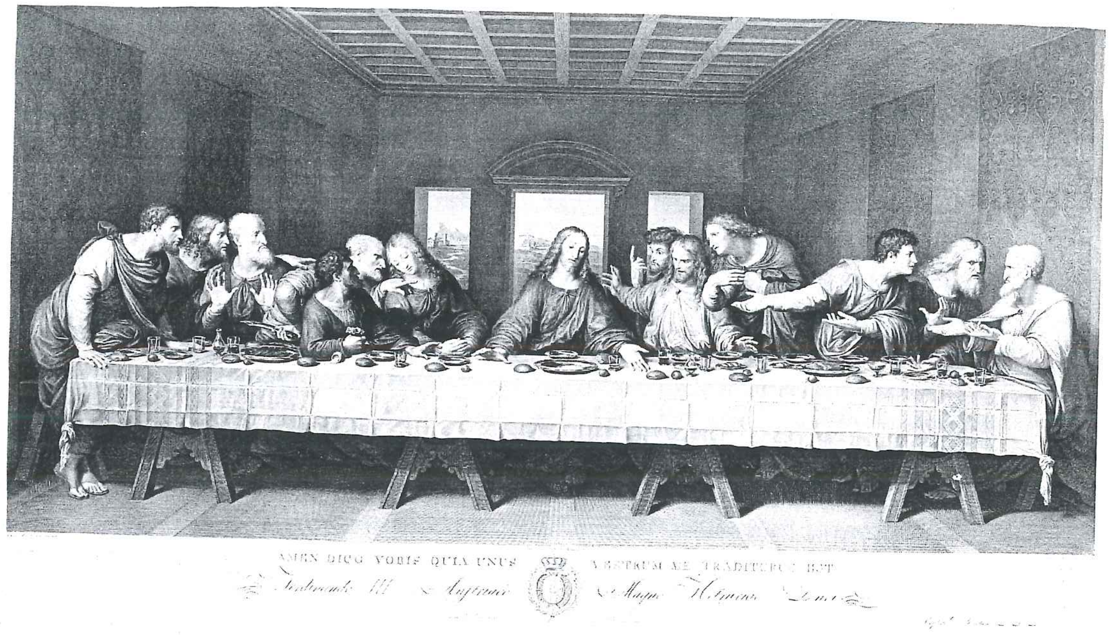

Fig. 6 – Raphael Morghen, *The Last Supper* (after Leonardo), 1800, etching and engraving. Published with permission from the Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome

by the interior minister of the Lombard duchy.[57] But the greatest factor to its 19th century success was, paradoxically, that so little of it remained. By 1800, the fragile fresco was in a dramatic state of deterioration, having suffered from humid conditions for three centuries. The widely condemned and excessive 18th century restorations of Michelangelo Bellotti did as much damage to the fresco as the ravages of time, leaving in place what Steinberg aptly names a "repainted ruin"[58] – but leaving too, in the mind of the romantics at least, a melancholic and voguish sense of loss which propelled the image to the pinnacle of fame at the moment of its peril. The many copies after Leonardo therefore were at some level reconstructions.[59] And the early 19th century debate raged not so much over these copies' various techniques and material as over the degree they succeeded to evoke a Leonardesque "spirit". It is as if the lack of visible traces made it all the more important to probe the realm of Leonardo's intentions, not to say the emotional and psychological reality of the event of the Last Supper itself. A copy of Leonardo, then, was not just a copy, but a deeply felt recreation of the conditions that produced it. The emphatic partaking in the subject matter "enlivened"

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[57] Marani 2001, 26.

[58] Steinberg 2001, 268. On the restoration history of the *Last Supper*, see in particular Marani 2001, 21–35.

[59] On copies after Leonardo's *Last Supper*, see Steinberg 2001 (appendix E).

the replication from within, as it were. Copies aimed to capture the no longer visible dimension of the original, responding to the particular 19th century revival of history as something *felt* – a combination of nostalgia and morality. The competing copies of Leonardo's nearly lost work not only sharpened the field of restoration and connoisseurship, but raised questions concerning artistic intention and the genesis of a work of art – questions crucial to the founding of art history as a modern discipline. In a more narrow perspective, Leonardo's dramatically fading original gave reproductions a new authority, which in the end challenges the very notion of a reproduction. At least it can be said that the transition from imitation to reinterpretation is subtle but once crossed it extends the reproductive prints' license considerably.

"It has almost ceased to exist, in its own substance, but is still an object of wonder from the recollection that has remained." These words are from Goethe's introduction to his essay *Observations on Leonardo da Vinci's celebrated Last Supper* which was published in 1817, simultaneous to the *Italian Journey*, and nearly 20 years after Goethe saw Leonardo's fresco on his way from Rome back to Germany.[60] Goethe's text is a slightly pedantic critique of a copy after Leonardo completed by Giuseppe Bossi in 1807, and the immediate reason for him to write about the *Last Supper* was that he had by his elbow some of Bossi's preparatory drawings, acquired by the Duke of Weimar, and also Bossi's Italian's text on Leonardo published in 1810. Leonardo's original, however, hardly came into focus given that Bossi's copy and Goethe's critique both in turn were based on different copies, as shall become clear.[61] So, original and replica, loss and recollection, are all elements in the institutionalization of the early 19th century art historical discourse centered on the *Last Supper*. But the point I wish to make is that in this discourse Goethe's attitude to copies and prints remains highly unresolved. At the surface his attitude contradicts, but in reality it develops, the classicist notion of imitation from his Rome days.

In the essay on Leonardo, Goethe speaks of "Art" as a teleological, female, force, relentlessly unfolding through time, nations, mediums, before it is at certain highpoints, and "by a few extraordinary men [...] brought to perfection." In the 1817 essay, the German's early passion for copies seems to have cooled considerably. The original artwork now stands solitarily on top of a hierarchy, and with an apparent change of heart he now dismissively declares that "a share in the corruption of art may be attributed to the discovery, and the abuse of engraving." Engravings distort the painted image, he says, and the painter who in his turn copies prints adds to the capriciousness. Worse still are copies made not even from other copies but "sometimes perhaps only from memory". Memory, which had served him so well in the Rome journal, now comes last in the image making necessary to transmit a lost original. [62]

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[60] The translation of Goethe's text into English by G. H. Noehden was published in 1821 and approved by Goethe himself. The translation is reprinted in *Goethe on Art*, John Cage (ed.), 1980.

[61] Bossi largely based his replica on a now lost early 16th century copy of Leonardo, attributed to Andrea Solario, in the Convent of Gerolamini at Castellazzo. On the method and reception of Bossi's copy see Marani 2001, 27.

But Goethe's rejection of copies is only apparent, or at least only partial, for the type of a copy that Goethe discards is at scrutiny the facsimile – the soulless replica. His enthusiasm for copies has not waned since the Rome days, but quite the opposite it has proliferated and branched into a second although admittedly slightly contradictory idea of imitation, for intriguingly, the text supports a form of copying that is not reproductive. In fact two categories of copies may be distinguished based on Goethe's text, one we may call "mechanical" that approximates photographic likeness, and the other "animated" which requires some explanation. What appealed to the early romantic "cult of ruins" voiced by Goethe (at least late in life) – linking collapsed Roman antiques with a Leonardo painting in decay – was the "lostness" of an artwork. The *Last Supper*'s fame and 19th century idolization grew with the realization that it was irreparable. The impossibility of recovering the actual fresco led all the more determinedly to the idea of recovering the intention behind it. The *Last Supper* simply called for a new kind of copy, or for a copy that came with extended powers, as it were. Goethe's hailing of "masterpieces" and exaltation of the idea of the original does not, surprisingly, deal the copy its deathblow, but on the contrary, it imbues the copy with the authority to become itself an original. The fresco's missing part gave adaptions the opportunity to transcend replication and to claim a position as an artwork in their own right. The celebration of the original, then, permits also the copy emerging in its shadow to escape the category of "mechanical labour" (Goethe's phrase not Benjamin's) and to acquire on its own, albeit lesser terms, the status of a masterpiece.[63]

But the animated copy comes with the obligation to repaint the psychological and emotional portrait which the original no longer yielded. Goethe is untroubled therefore by copies of the *Last Supper* that distort both the format and material of the original as he directs all his shots at what he perceives as an untrue or un-noble rendering of human expressions. He is the classicist having gone internal. Heads and hands are vehicles of man's spirit and in this respect the thirteen characters in the fateful meal Leonardo portrays constitute a veritable catalogue of emotions: "Here is seen, in one instance, the softest, gentlest demeanor, and, in another, the most passionate and violent emotion, with the intermediate steps between the extremes", Goethe states.[64] This symphony of feelings was of course no longer all that obvious in Leonardo's damaged original (to the degree it ever had been), but it served to distinguish qualitatively the copies from one another. So the engraving that manages to capture most lucidly the spectrum of human composures, from the base betrayal of Judas to the "form of an exalted being" of Christ, comes out on top in Goethe's early 19th century hierarchy of reproductions.

In light of Goethe's two texts on Italian art, his appreciation of reproductive prints – whether they showed a building or a painting – hinged on their ability to reconstruct a lost original. Both ancient Rome and Leonardo's *Last Supper* had "almost ceased to exist," and both were propagated by, and enhanced in, print production. During the 30 years since his visit to Italy Goethe's view on copying had grown increasingly sophisticated. The classicist imitation of nature transmutes into an interpretation of *inner* nature because, simply, the nearly extinct masterpiece yielded no other option. Giuseppe Bossi, in 1810, makes a telling distinction in his own list of *Last Supper* adaptions (counting twenty-six), taking into consideration only works he calls "copies" while excluding those he names "imitations," such as prints; his own rework he even straight out names "reconstruction".[65] Clearly, in this flourishing production trade *Leonardo's Last Supper* had become a subject in itself, attracting a sentimentalist school of artists who in this recycling of the Renaissance appropriately were named Michelangelo (Bellotti) and Raffaello Sanzio (Morghen). Importantly, though, the copy as a mere Xerox is worthless to both Bossi and Goethe, but as a reactivation of the feelings of both painter and subject it has the power to penetrate the invisible depth of the original.

That is why Goethe favors Morghen. Throughout his discussion on Leonardo's *Last Supper* he asks his reader to keep Morghen's print before him since "it will enable him to understand our remarks, both in the whole, and in the detail."[66] Of course it is an extraordinary admittance for anyone accustomed to Benjamin's rejection of the copy. But the particular characteristic of Morghen (and Mianettis) design is the creatively inspired attempt to share in, and indeed improve, Leonardo's interpretation of the event. When Goethe observes how Leonardo added "life, motion, passion" these were not traits apparent to him from the original but from Morghen's copy.[67] Writing on the fresco two decades after he had seen it, the print acts as stand-in for a failing recollection, just as the *Speculum* prints had served to boost his impressions of Rome. So which qualities did the print have? Morghen's reanimation of the scene, display of details, and soft tone made the episode "come alive" which would make sure that the print "always will live with those who know you and those who do not," according to the collector and official to the Grand Duke, Federico Manfredini, who wrote a letter to Morghen in 1804.[68] In a short biographical note on the engraver published in 1866 he is simply called "the foremost engraver of his century" while for instance the name of Piranesi is not even mentioned. His fame in the 19th century no doubt rested on his ability to produce extremely subtle tonal effects with his burin resulting in images that appeared "almost photographic", according to one recent characterization.[69] That is of course a grand compliment until photography itself emerges and makes an art that seems "photographic" no longer an art. The advent of a medium that effortlessly created the verisimilitude that Morghen painstakingly toiled to produce probably explains why his reputation so rapidly and dramatically faded. Arthur M. Hind, the celebrated print historian and author of the authoritative *A History of Engraving and Etching*, first published in 1908, simply dismissed Morghen with the words: "The monotonous regularity of hatching, cross-hatching, dot and flick is rarely relieved by any spark of real life."[70] This sudden arrival at the opposite verdict on the engraver highlights the dismantling of historicism itself: A view of Morghen's oeuvre that goes from "coming alive" to lacking "in real life" prepares for the new and utter incomprehension of Morghen's *Last Supper* as well as of reproductive prints which had enjoyed such high esteem for the entire century: "His most celebrated print, after Leonardo's *Last Supper*, will suffice to demonstrate at once the elaboration of his style and lack of real insight into the spirit of his original," Hinds writes – also speaking about "spirit" but with the opposite connotation. In an age of mechanical reproduction, paraphrasing Benjamin, the failure of Morghen's *Last Supper* to look like Leonardo is its principal crime when that lack of semblance was precisely what secured its success a few decades earlier. Today it is difficult to comprehend the early and mid- 19th century conception of the copy as an imitation from *within*, as it were, as an attempt to create a spiritual-emotional unity expressed through variations of heads and hands, fleshing out the scattered traces remaining in Leonardo's original. How utterly misunderstood the print has become is evident in John Cage's 1980 English edition of Goethe's essay on the *Last Supper*. In the illustration to the essay, the edition substitutes Morghen's engraving by the one of André Dutertre on the grounds that the latter comes closer to Leonardo's original. Not only does this recent editing remove the example Goethe himself instructs his reader to consult, but more seriously, it ignores the most lasting legacy of Goethe's text, namely its propagation of a delicately contraire but distinct branch of creative replicas, replacing it with a post-photographic and simplistic demand for likeness.

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[62] Goethe 1817, 180–181.

[63] Painters whose work is based on engravings is confounded with mechanical labour, according to Goethe 1817, 187.

[64] Goethe 1817, 187.

[65] Steinberg 2001, 227.

[66] Goethe 1817, 170.

[67] Goethe 1817, 192–193. Johann Boloz Antoniewicz was the first to emphasize Goethe's reliance, not on Leonardo's original, but on Morghen's engraving. See Steinberg 2001, appendix 8, for full text and translation of this essay.

In his 1817 reflections on the *Last Supper*, Goethe transcends the neoclassical celebration of imitation of his Rome days, as well as the Romantic recharging of his recollections, as he points to a new and more complex age of recovery of art's inner life, so to speak – the hallmark of historicism. As a movement, and very simply put, historicism is not about imitation, but about animating the copy, giving it something that the original has lost (or perhaps never had). The objective was not to duplicate history, but to extract its spirit, to partake in the past – be it Milan around 1500 or Jerusalem in 33 – based on the interpretation of timeless, human sentiments. The *Last Supper* seems by itself to have possessed those qualities that the 19th century demanded from the past – being made by a "genius," ethical in content, and nearly vanished. Art history itself is in this respect a historicist creation, an emphatic restitution not of the actual artworks but of the notions and feelings that produced them. Leonardo's *Last Supper*, almost on its own, required – and why not prompted? – modern art history to be invented in order for its enigma to be resolved.

Hind's dismissal of Morghen's print came out in a third edition the year after Proust died which was also one year after Charles Kenneth Scott Moncrieff published *Swann's Way* in an English translation (1922). Let us return to young Marcel's grandmother as she ponders which pictures to choose for his bedroom. The elderly lady is unquenched by the time's growing demand for reproductions to be exact. What she looks for, to repeat a point, is "Engravings that have an interesting association by itself" – in other words, which on top of their documentary function expressed an "aura."

To conclude I shall pick up the story at the point I left it in the introduction to this article, for the next thing that happens is that Proust himself exemplifies the engraving his grandmother would have in mind. As one might have guessed, the example is Morghen's print of the "Cenacolo" (as Proust calls it) – "before it was spoiled by restoration."[71] Indeed, Morghen's *Last Supper* is an irresistible reference for the French author in many ways. The print shows an artwork in a state that is lost, in the same way memories hold on to a past that is gone. It also displays a reality completely confined to art – one image encapsulated by another, with Proust's own text as the final form of fiction embracing it. The engraving is the crowning feature of a world of copies from which there is no escape until Benjamin "rescues" the authentic, irreducible original and reduces the spectrum of finely graded imitations to one category as replica. But from Goethe to Proust, this article argues, Morghen's *Last Supper* forms a leitmotif in a development that marks historicism in print. When Proust revives Morghen's *Last Supper* for its last grand appearance it has already become an emblem of a reality that sees its continuation only in, and *as*, art, resembling the ideal Rome that Goethe continuously keeps cultivating. Thus, the reproductive print in the 19th century appears not only as an illustration of remembrance, but as a symbol of a world that in its entirety is lost.

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[68] The letter is dated 6 December 1804 and transcribed in Campori 1866, 295.

[69] See Chappell 1996, 113. On Morghen's sophisticated and laborious method, see also Crespi 2010, 26–28 and Murgia 2011, 22–24.

[70] Hind's book came out in a 2nd edition in 1911, and in an enlarged and revised 3rd edition in 1923 from which the quote is taken from (p. 209).

[71] Proust 2002, 46.

Victor Plahte Tschudi
Professor
The Oslo School of Architecture and Design
Victor.Plahte.Tschudi@aho.no

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