



THE ARTIST AS READER OF THE BIBLE VISUAL EXEGESIS AND THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

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Introduction

Increasingly, visual interpretations of biblical texts are included in many contemporary commentaries, indicative of the rich and varied afterlives these texts have enjoyed.¹ In some cases, they are used to draw out the devotional and doctrinal aspects of a biblical theme envisaged by the artist,² in other cases to explore the appropriation of texts in specific historical and political contexts;³ frequently they offer starting points, or are used as evidence for positions already taken up, in gendered readings of the text.⁴ But, given the vast and overwhelming range of visual interpretations now accessible to the contemporary researcher, how does one select images or paintings that shed new insights into the meaning and significance of the text, and in particular, that foreground those aspects otherwise lost, or insufficiently brought out, in traditional or current literary approaches? Is the selection of paintings used to illustrate the significance of a text merely arbitrary, and limited to the range of paintings familiar to the commentator and to his or her academic or personal interests? In what sense does a 'biblical' painting illumine a biblical text and what credibility or authority does an artist or painting really bring to the task of interpretation?

¹ For example, *The Blackwell Bible Commentaries* series emphasizes the influence of the Bible on literature, art, music, and film.

² John Drury, *Painting the Word* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); Martin O'Kane, 'The Flight into Egypt: Icon of Refuge for the H(a)unted', in Martin O'Kane (ed.), *Borders, Boundaries and the Bible* (JSOTSup, 313; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), pp. 15-60.

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

⁴ Mieke Bal, *Reading "Rembrandt": Beyond the Word-Image Opposition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). See especially her discussion of the story of Susanna and the Elders, pp. 138-176.

Some argue that biblical paintings of the traditional art-historical kind do little to support contemporary, inclusive and explorative readings of the text; others question whether modern art with its essentially abstract approach can convey any identifiable cultural afterlife of the narrative, given that artistic subjectivity rather than the biblical iconographical traditions of past centuries is central to its approach.⁵ When art is used to enhance, expand or comment on a biblical text, the dynamic between the written text, the visual expression of its subject matter and the viewer comes to the fore, raising in turn issues of a philosophical nature such as the word-image order, the relationship between a text (what is written) and an image (what is seen), and whether it is even possible to reduce what we see in a painting to the level of verbal explication rather than concentrate on its sheer (inarticulable) sensibility.⁶ To these considerations, we might add the question of what contribution the analyses of visual expressions of biblical subject matter make to the ongoing dialogue between art and the broader theological agenda.

While many biblical commentators now focus on the dynamic that takes place between the written biblical text and its reader,⁷ there has been much less interest in engaging with approaches that explore how the involvement of the viewer in the biblical visual image determines its meaning and significance. It is our response as viewers, or the response that the artist intends to elicit from the viewer, that helps us discover unexpected subtleties in the parallel biblical text.⁸ Traditionally, the role of the patron,

⁵ Gesa E. Thiessen, *Theology and Modern Irish Art* (Dublin: the Columba Press, 1999), pp. 9-36.

⁶ Paul Valery warns 'We should apologize for daring to speak about painting', cited in Simon Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes* (London: the Penguin Press, 1999), p. 1.

⁷ See D. Marguerat and Y. Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories* (London: SCM, 1999) for a presentation of a range of approaches used by contemporary commentators in emphasising the role of the reader.

⁸ Laurie Edson, in *Reading Relationally: Postmodern Perspectives on Literature and Art* (An Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), explores how reading literature in the context of the visual arts enriches our understanding of what texts do and how texts mean. She advocates a practice of reading that directs attention to readers' relationships with texts and to the ways in which our frames of reference and mediating practices shape an object under investigation. By 'reading relationally' across the disciplines of literature and visual art, she sets in motion a series of reverberations between verbal and visual material. Reading relationally, she argues, can shed new light on texts by enabling us to think and

whether church, secular and political authorities or individuals of power and influence, has played a major role in determining how a biblical text should be visually expressed; despite this, however, the patron cannot control or determine the effect a painting has had on its viewers living in different times and cultures.

In the light of such considerations, the aim of this article is to explore the processes at work in a painting's engagement of its viewer in biblical subject matter. It accentuates the role of the artist as an active reader of the Bible and not merely an illustrator of biblical scenes, the dynamic that occurs in the text-reader process as paradigmatic for the image-viewer relationship and the important role of the developing tradition that felt the need to change or rewrite the biblical story while at the same time attempting to maintain its continuity with the author's intentions.

The fact that the visual subject matter is biblical makes it appropriate to explore the process in the general terms of hermeneutics and exegesis—if we define hermeneutics as ‘the interweaving of language and life within the horizon of the text and within the horizons of traditions and the modern reader’⁹ and exegesis as ‘the dialectic between textual meaning and the reader's existence’.¹⁰ Understanding the process at work between a biblical painting and its viewer—and seeing this process in parallel terms to what happens between a biblical text and its reader—allows us to appreciate how the painting of a biblical subject presents to the viewer an event in which he or she becomes involved and how different visual instances of the same subject matter broaden the horizons of the viewer.¹¹

The starting points for such an enquiry lie in philosophical and art historical perspectives as presented in the works of philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer and art historian Paolo Berdini. In

see differently and therefore bring different textual details into sharper focus. A verbal text read through the lens of a visual text, constructed according to different codes and interpreted according to different conventions, can unsettle some of the habitual or codified methods of analysis that have governed the mind and eye.

⁹ Anthony Thiselton, ‘Biblical Studies and Theoretical Hermeneutics’ in John Barton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 95-113 (95).

¹⁰ Paolo Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano: Painting as Visual Exegesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 5.

¹¹ See David Brown, *Tradition and Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 50-52.

'The Question of Truth as it Emerges from the Experience of Art' in his magnum opus, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer sets out the role of hermeneutical aesthetics in understanding the function of art.¹² In his extended theoretical introduction 'Scripture Reading and Visual Exegesis' in *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano: Painting as Visual Exegesis*, Berdini deals with the processes at work when an artist paints a biblical scene and argues that what is visualized is not the text but a reading of the text, a process he calls 'visual exegesis'.¹³ Thus, Gadamer's interests focus on hermeneutics, the critical and theoretical reflection on the processes of interpretation, while Berdini's centre on exegesis, the work of interpreting and understanding specific texts as a first order activity. Applying both approaches to the visualization of biblical subject matter illuminates the key role given to the viewer in the visual hermeneutical process. For the purposes of this article, the biblical text which demonstrates the usefulness of Gadamer's and Berdini's insights is the story of the adoration of the Magi (Matt. 2: 1-12), the first public and universal *seeing* of Christ, a subject matter that constitutes one of the most frequently depicted themes in the entire history of biblical art, and for artists 'has provided the perfect context for involving the spectator in the world of the Bible'.¹⁴ Finally, the conclusion draws out some areas of common interest between the interpretation of the Bible through its visual expressions and the exploration of modern art as a source in and of theology, advocated by Paul Tillich,¹⁵ and applied to a number of contemporary abstract paintings in a recent study by Gesa Thiessen.¹⁶

Hans-Georg Gadamer and Hermeneutical Aesthetics

The philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer has had very significant influence on biblical interpretation. His cen-

¹² Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1975), pp. 5-150.

¹³ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. xi.

¹⁴ Dawson Carr, *Andrea Mantegna: The Adoration of the Magi* (Getty Museum Studies in Art; Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 1997), p. 91.

¹⁵ Paul Tillich, 'Art and Ultimate Reality' in Michael Palmer (ed.), *Paul Tillich: Main Works*, vol. 2, (Berlin: De Gruyter, Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1990), pp. 317-322.

¹⁶ Thiessen, *Theology and Modern Irish Art*.

tral notion of the fusion of horizons (*Horizontverschmelzung*) holds that authentic interpretation does not take place by attempting to put oneself in the shoes of the author but rather through a merging of one's horizon with that of the author. His ideas on how understanding a text from the past and applying its meaning to our present circumstances occur simultaneously and not as two separate events have been used effectively in the area of biblical hermeneutics, particularly by Gerhard Ebeling¹⁷ Anthony Thiselton,¹⁸ and Ulrich Luz.¹⁹ In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer is concerned with three aspects: aesthetic experience, historical consciousness and language. However, since hermeneutics traditionally has placed so much importance on language, especially its written forms, his influence on biblical hermeneutics has generally been restricted to the aspect of language while the application of his perspective on aesthetic experience to biblical visual culture has remained largely unexplored.²⁰ In brief, Gadamer argues that in experiencing a work of art, one undergoes something similar to the experience of play in games; the participant is drawn into an event with its own subjectivity and life. We experience truth in art when the work draws us into its play of meaning and allows us to see something previously hidden about the everyday world in which we live.²¹

¹⁷ Gerhard Ebeling, *The Word of God and Tradition* (London: Collins, 1968).

¹⁸ Anthony Thiselton, *The Two Horizons* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980), pp. 293-326.

¹⁹ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989). Ebeling's view that 'the more deeply a person penetrates the interpretation of a subject, the more strongly one's own relation to the subject matter makes itself felt' (Gerhard Ebeling, *The Study of Theology* [London: Collins, 1974], p. 24) has been further developed by Luz in his commentary on Matthew's Gospel, where he devotes discrete sections in each chapter to 'the history of influence' (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) which explores 'what we have become on the basis of the text' (Luz, *Matthew*, p. 96), as actualised in media such as art, hymnody and sermons.

²⁰ Yet, currently, the application of Gadamer's hermeneutical aesthetics to interpreting visual culture is central to current debates in other disciplines such as critical theory, postmodern philosophy, aesthetic theory, deconstruction and cultural studies—disciplines that 'converge and intersect upon the field of visuality as one of the central terrains of modern critical thought' (Ian Heywood and Barry Sandwell, 'Explorations in the Hermeneutics of Vision' in Ian Heywood and Barry Sandwell [eds.], *Interpreting Visual Culture: Explorations in the Hermeneutics of the Visual* [London: Routledge, 1999], pp. ix-xviii [ix]).

²¹ For a more complete discussion, see D. E. Klemm, 'Hermeneutics' in John J. Hayes (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), pp. 497-502 (500).

In a recent volume that explores the centrality of the visual within contemporary critical discourse in which the 'visual field has begun to be explored with a thoroughness and global understanding unique in the history of human self-reflection',²² Nicholas Davey builds on Gadamer's views on aesthetic experience in *Truth and Method* to present a robust argument for the value of a hermeneutical aesthetic in coming to appreciate what lies in a work of art.²³ His essay provides a useful point of reference since he reflects on Gadamer's views in a contemporary intellectual context that is 'extraordinarily sensitive to the importance of the visual and no less suspicious of its implications'.²⁴ It also demonstrates how the appreciation of visual interpretations of a biblical subject, far from being a simply subjective experience, is essentially dialogical in that it 'underwrites art's ability to take us beyond ourselves and out of the initial horizons of our present historical circumstance into others'.²⁵

Following Gadamer, Davey defines hermeneutical aesthetics as a 'philosophical meditation on what happens to us in our experience of art'.²⁶ Hermeneutics' deep concern with language does not subordinate image to word but applies the sensitivities we acquire from linguistic exchange to reveal how our experience of art is a complex dialogical achievement involving the fusion of the horizons surrounding artist, subject matter and viewer. Davey makes linguistic understanding a paradigm case for grasping the nature of artistic understanding and shows how contemporary philosophical hermeneutics²⁷ emphasise the ability of the said to point to and reveal the unsaid and argues that what comes to pass in language illuminates the nature of our understanding of art. Language discloses of itself subtleties of association and nuances

²² Heywood and Sandwell, 'Explorations', p. ix.

²³ Nicholas Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', in Heywood and Sandwell (eds.), *Interpreting Visual Culture*, pp. 3-29.

²⁴ M. Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 588. The comment by Jay refers to Derrida's stance concerning the claim that the Western tradition of thought is dominated by an ideas-led approach to the visual so that we are always striving to 'see-as', to reduce the seen to a level of verbal explication rather than to concentrate on the sheer (inarticulable) sensibility of the visual.

²⁵ Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', p. 3.

²⁶ Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', p. 3.

²⁷ See Martin Heidegger's *On the Way to Language* (New York: HarperCollins, 1982) and Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, pp. 5-150.

which logical analysis cannot foresee; consequently, embedded within words are world views capable of supplementing and extending our own, the possibility of alternative meanings which flow from the past into our contemporary world. Gadamer holds that there is no fundamental difference between experiencing the disclosive powers of language and experiencing what art discloses to us.

Hermeneutic aesthetics makes a distinction between the broad subject matter of a work and the very particular way a painting interprets it; it discloses how the subject matter an art work brings to mind is larger than what is shown and, at the same time, reveals the individuality of a work, its particular way of contributing towards its expression.²⁸ When an art work brings its subject matter to mind, it will bring to mind more than is initially seen. We are led out of the immediacy of our own horizon and brought to consider other ways of seeing and thinking; reacquainting ourselves with previous interpretations of a subject frees us from being compelled to think and feel solely in terms of our present horizon. By recognizing different traditions of art practice and history, hermeneutical experience exposes the (subjective) limitations of our ways of seeing and opens us to a greater objectivity.²⁹ The subject matter (*Sache*), which a painting expresses, can never be exhausted by its particular exemplifications; it is more than any individual expression of it and always susceptible to extension by further interpretation so that no art work can ever be finished.³⁰

One of the most important contributions of hermeneutical aesthetics is the argument that, in the experience of art, seeing and understanding are not merely passive. On the contrary, the spectator is a condition of what is held within a work or art coming forth and this can effectively change the subject matter it discloses. Davey emphasises Gadamer's crucial distinction between represen-

²⁸ See Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', pp. 14-17.

²⁹ Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', p. 3. See Paul Ricoeur's similar idea in relation to the text: 'to interpret is not a question of imposing on the text our finite capacity of understanding but of exposing ourselves to the text and receiving from it an enlarged self'. Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (ed. and trans. John B. Thompson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 143.

³⁰ Gadamer comments in *Truth and Method*, p. 99, 'all encounter with the language of art is an unfinished event'.

tation (*Vorstellung*) and presentation (*Darstellung*) in art. *Vorstellung* implies a re-presenting of something independent of the work, an attempt to represent something 'objectively', for example, the genre of Dutch maritime painting is taken to re-present the seascape; re-presentation suggests that the work is something other than, distinct from what it re-presents.³¹ The notion of *Darstellung*, however, is altogether different; it suggests a placing (*Stellung*) there (*da*). It hints at that which an art work presents or offers up; how an image occasions the *coming forth* of the subject matter, facilitating its epiphany, its coming into appearance. Gadamer is particularly concerned with what happens in our experience of art, with the 'event of being that occurs in artistic presentation', 'what comes to picture' in a painting. The 'appearing' is not secondary to the subject matter but is, to the contrary, a presentation (*Darstellung*) of the essence itself. Gadamer emphasises that the notion of *Darstellung* is particularly important for understanding religious art since the artist cannot offer 'objective' images of the divine; religious art is not a depiction (*Vorstellung*) but a coming into picture (*Darstellung*) of a divine presence.³²

Gadamer's perspective helps highlight the important role of visual culture in biblical interpretation; it respects the changing and developing tradition of biblical subject matter, it appreciates its range and variety of visual instances and merges the horizons of viewer and artist to expand the subject matter itself. The notion of *Darstellung* is especially applicable to the concept of the Bible as a source of divine revelation. Visual instances of the adoration of the Magi provide a good illustration of the usefulness of Gadamer's approach; as the first public instance of the revealing of the divinity in human form, the subject matter deals essentially with a theological concept that cannot simply be *presented* but must be *re-presented*. Gadamer's notion of the *coming forth* of the subject matter becomes more significant since it corresponds to the biblical narrative's theme of the *coming forth* of the Christ child.³³ The particularly rich visual reception history of the story illustrates the

³¹ Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', p. 19.

³² 'If religious iconography is the means whereby the divine appears to us in our terms, such iconography occasions for us a divine presence'. Davey, 'The Hermeneutics of Seeing', p. 28 n. 23.

³³ 'In speaking to us, an art work reveals something; it brings something forth from concealedness.' Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways* (Albany: University of New York Press, 1994), p. 180.

variety of ways artists have interpreted its subject matter; its many instances show how a work of art points beyond itself, is larger than what is shown while also revealing the individuality of the work. By appreciating a range of expressions of the same subject matter in many different art traditions, we free ourselves from the limits of our present horizon and recognize that no expression of the theme is ever complete, that the subject matter addressed is always more than any individual expression of it.

Paolo Berdini and Visual Exegesis

Paolo Berdini, with specific reference to the late sixteenth-century artist Jacopo Bassano,³⁴ explores the process and implications of what happens when an artist paints a subject or narrative from the Bible.³⁵ In the place of traditional art-historical criticism that emphasises text as *source* and the *function* of the corresponding image, he advocates the notion of textual expansion. What the painter visualizes is not the narrative of the text but its expanded form as it emerges from the painter's reading of it. In other words, 'the complex dynamics of visualization' combines the text with the ideas and images provided by the painter as he or she reads and responds to the text. Painting visualizes a reading and not a text, for the relationship between a text and its visualization has to take into account the circumstances under which that text is read in addition to what makes it the object of the particular interest that might result in its visualization. Painting (and not only Bassano's) thus proceeds by a process Berdini calls 'visual exegesis'. The re-

³⁴ Jacopo Bassano (1518-1592) was 'a painter and reader of Scripture. The list of subjects he took from the Bible for his painting is impressive in its number and variety, and includes Parables and Pronouncement Stories that are seldom visually represented. Bassano's engagement with Scripture, though, was hardly limited to such professional expertise. His biographers tell us that, when fatigued by painting, he resorted to scriptural reading. Reading was his virtuous activity'. (Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. xi).

³⁵ Reviewing Berdini's work, John Marciari affirms the value of Berdini's methodological approach to biblical painting which calls for a re-evaluation of traditional (Panofskian) art historical methodologies that seek close correspondences between painted image and text. Marciari advocates pursuing similar approaches to other artists. See John Marciari, Review of Paulo Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano: Painting as Visual Exegesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) in *Speculum* 75 (2000), pp. 440-441.

relationship between text and image is conceived of, not in terms of a correspondence between a narrative and its visual equivalent, but rather in terms of the visualization of an expanded notion of it; following the exegetical model, visualization addresses the discursive status of the text. The notion of 'visual exegesis' thus registers and promotes the crucial move from image to beholder. What visual exegesis describes is the new encounter with the text made possible by the image.

The problem with traditional art-historical notions of source and function, Berdini argues, is that they stop short the process from textual reading to existential significance—they arrest their interplay.³⁶ Exegesis, on the contrary, valorises the beholder's role in the existential appropriation of the text. Whereas a function remains an attribute of the image, visual exegesis reveals dimensions of the beholder. Replacement of the notion of source and function is necessary because they prevent acknowledgment of the hermeneutic import of beholding. Reading needs to be recognized as an event that, rather than being subjected to patterns of universal validity, registers at any moment the prerogatives the reader brings to the text.

Since the reader is a painter, it is the relationship between the structure of exegesis and the circumstances of visualization that most interests Berdini.³⁷ In dealing with the text of the Bible, he argues, the painter enters a cumulative text, a chain of texts; his or her engagement with it proceeds from an understanding of the text's meaning to the assertion of its significance. Textual exegesis has to be structured in such a way as to be able to register the effect of the text on its reader; it guides and disciplines the reader's search for the existential referent implicit in the text and revealed by its reading. This process is similar to what takes place in visual exegesis.

In particular, Berdini emphasises the *expansive* modes implicit in the process of Christian exegesis in its four traditional stages: narrative, allegory, tropology and anagogy.³⁸ An awareness of the exegetical process assists the reader in transcending a literal read-

³⁶ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. 3, and Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'The Play of Art' in *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, (trans. Nicholas Walker; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 123-130.

³⁷ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, pp. 5-7.

³⁸ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. 5.

ing of the text, in identifying a moral dimension which can be assimilated to his or her life and finally motivates the pursuit of spiritual proximity with the divine. Exegesis thus fulfils its aims whenever the significance of the text can be ascertained as a dimension of being on the part of the reader. Similarly, Berdini argues, visualization enters into a relationship with the text which constitutes a form of exegesis, 'visual exegesis'—a process that allows the text to reveal multi-level meanings that exceed literal-ity while unveiling the existential conditions of the reader.³⁹

Berdini uses the work of the prolific artist Jacopo Bassano, who worked in the Veneto during and after the Council of Trent (1546), to illustrate his approach. Contrary to the case in Reformation Germany, where 'like the word, the image had to be secure in its literal-ity, precluded in its expansion and politicised in its use',⁴⁰ visual culture in Italy was intended to play an important role in the expansion of the text. In fact, the most controversial aspect of the debate over the status of religious images following the Council of Trent was the *exegetical* import of images; there was a high degree of concern for the ways in which the image inevitably expands the text. The case of Veronese is an example that *any* artistic invention could not be taken for textual expansion, for, when he was brought before the Inquisition for his depiction of figures extraneous to textual accounts of the Last Supper, he was questioned primarily as a *reader*.⁴¹

Just as a painter's reading of a biblical text can be shown to function in how an image is visualized, so too the viewer's reading of a painting can function in determining to what degree the work of art is religious.⁴² The Gospel parables provide a good example. In representing a parable, the painter has the difficulty of preserving its religious message while at the same time depict-

³⁹ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. 7.

⁴⁰ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. 9.

⁴¹ 'Veronese was taken to task by his inquisitors for crowding a painting of the *Last Supper* (Accademia, Venice, 1573) "with such irrelevant and irreverent figures as a buffoon with a parrot on his wrist, a servant whose nose was bleeding, dwarfs and similar vulgarities". He staunchly defended his right to artistic license: "I received the commission to decorate the picture as I saw fit. It is large and, it seemed to me, it could hold many figures". He was instructed to make changes, but the matter was resolved by changing the title of the picture to *The Feast in the House of Levi*.' (WebMuseum, Paris. www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/veronese/).

⁴² Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, pp. 123-124.

ing realistically the realm of ordinary existence, the human sphere, in which the action of the parable occurs; the image, not overtly religious, becomes so only in the eyes of the beholder through an exegetical process of reading. It is therefore up to the beholder to determine the degree of 'religiosity' sufficient to make an image religious; the religious status of an image depends on the beholder's reception of it and not simply on the identification of its genre.

Berdini's study demonstrates the importance of the mediating influence on the painter of established and authoritative exegetical traditions. The painter is not painting a text but a *reading* of the text according to exegetical principles; the viewer is guided in reading the painting through the same exegetical process. Since Bassano worked almost exclusively in the rural Veneto, his immediate concern was to address a rural peasant population and so Berdini chooses in particular to deal with his treatment of the theme of the adoration of the shepherds. However, there are very many examples of his *Adoration of the Magi*, a subject matter that also illustrates the notion of textual expansion and one suitable for tracing the exegetical process at work in many of its visual representations. It could be argued that Berdini's approach applies only to mid sixteenth-century Italian painting; but, as we shall see, the same exegetical principles are implied, using different methodology, in Mieke Bal's discussion of Rembrandt's drawing of the *Adoration of the Magi* from seventeenth-century Holland⁴³ as well as in Gesa Thiessen's exploration of modern abstract art in Ireland.⁴⁴

The Adoration of the Magi: Development of Tradition

In Matthew's Gospel, the story of the adoration of the Magi is presented as the first public revealing of Christ; in Christian tradition, as the epiphany, it quickly became associated with two other early Gospel episodes, the marriage feast at Cana (John 2:1-11) and the baptism of Christ (Matt. 3:13-16).⁴⁵ By the fourth century,

⁴³ Bal, *Reading "Rembrandt"*, pp. 206-215.

⁴⁴ Thiessen, *Theology and Modern Irish Art*, pp. 249-283.

⁴⁵ The conflation is summed up in St Gregory's eighth homily for the Epiphany: 'Today the Church is joined to the divine bridegroom because Christ

the Magi had come to represent the three ages of humankind (old age, middle age and youth) and the three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa), and were given individual identities as Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar.⁴⁶ Compared to its importance in tradition and in the reception history of the New Testament, the narrative and the challenges its many visual instances present have received little attention from contemporary commentators.⁴⁷ M.A. Powell has explored the narrative from a reader-response angle, but remains focussed on traditional questions such as the identity of the Magi as wise men, kings or magicians, and the implications such identities might have for the story's first readers and for readers today.⁴⁸ In a detailed study of the reception history of the story, Richard Trexler concentrates on the implications of presenting the Magi throughout centuries of Christianity as a 'legitimizing icon' for power and monarchy and on its potential for social critique,⁴⁹ with little attention paid to its devotional aspects, a criticism that has been made elsewhere of his study.⁵⁰ Larry Kreitzer has explored the theme in literature and film but not in art.⁵¹

washes away its sins in the Jordan; the Magi bring wedding gifts and the wedding guests rejoice at the water made wine'; cited in Jeffrey Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi: Life and Work* (London: Phaidon, 1999), p. 210.

⁴⁶ See Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi*, pp. 38-39; Brown, *Tradition and Imagination*, pp. 86-88; and Paul D. H. Kaplan, *The Rise of the Black Magus in Western Art* (Ann Arbor: Umi Research Press, 1983), pp. 50-52.

⁴⁷ Interestingly, the importance of the visual has been stressed in conservative commentaries; for example, Douglas R.A. Hare, *Matthew* (Interpretation Series; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993), p. 12. Hare states: 'The story of the Adoration of the Magi has often been better understood by poets and artists than by scholars whose microscopic analysis has missed its essence.'

⁴⁸ M.A. Powell, 'The Magi as Kings: An Adventure in Reader-Response Criticism' *CBQ* (62) 2000, pp. 459-480; 'The Magi as Wise Men: Re-Examining a Basic Assumption' *NT Studies* (46) 2000, pp. 1-20; *Chasing the Eastern Star: Adventures in Biblical Reader-Response Criticism* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

⁴⁹ Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi*.

⁵⁰ In a review of Trexler's book, Thomas F. X. Noble (*History of Religions* [40] 2001, pp. 304-306 [305]) makes the comment: 'My main reservation about this book is that its resolute attempt to interpret the magian theme is always and everywhere being about power that strips the image of the range of devotional associations that were surely at its heart'. See similar comments made by David Brown (*Tradition and Imagination*, p. 90) where he argues for a very different interpretation of Benozzo Gozzoli's famous depiction, commissioned by the de Medici family for their private chapel in the Palazzo Medici in Florence. Rather than a way of glorifying the de Medicis, he argues, the de Medici family are given a subordinate role in the annual procession of the Magi to indicate that they acknowledged where true power and wealth lay.

⁵¹ Larry J. Kreitzer, *Gospel Images in Fiction and Film: On Reversing the Hermeneutical Flow* (London: Continuum, 2002), pp. 24-44.

Ulrich Luz in the 'history of influence' (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) section of his commentary finds the apparent lack of correspondence between the text of Matt. 2:1-12 and its afterlives striking and notes:

The discrepancy between the biblical text and popular piety is especially thought provoking. The history of the influence of our text is also an example of its lack of influence. The exegesis therefore aids in critical examination of popular piety to find the way back from the abuses to the message of the text, without destroying the inherently positive element, namely, the possibility of Christians to identify with the Magi.⁵²

David Brown defends the developing tradition as having continuity with Matthew's intentions; the reason behind the re-writings of the story, in particular the development of its characters, was to ensure the concrete realization of the story in the present. In later treatments comes the substitution story that could be experienced as contemporary with the reader's own world. Deliberations on the identity of the Magi as wise men or the significance of the star have receded; the intention now is to speak of a child relevant to every age of humanity and race:

There is the need to hear in them (i.e. later traditions surrounding the Magi) the transformation of the biblical story into a deeper social critique than Matthew himself offers. Through the use of his imagination, the evangelist set the Church on a particular path, but what arose was no mere straight-forward deduction or implication, but itself a creative reworking in the light of later, more developed, Christian self-perception.⁵³

Gadamer and Berdini both emphasise the importance of the developing tradition in appreciating different visual instances of biblical subject matter. In the case of Gadamer, the expansion of biblical themes to address contemporary political or social issues, as well as for devotional or doctrinal purposes, provides examples of how different instances of the same subject matter led to other ways of seeing and understanding. For Berdini, an awareness of the developing tradition informs the viewer of the painter's religious and social priorities in reading, actualising and visualizing the text for the then contemporary viewer. In biblical visual culture, therefore, it is not the literal correspondence between text and image (or lack of it since the correspondence in most instances is partial) that determines our appreciation of the paint-

⁵² Luz, *Matthew*, p. 141.

⁵³ Brown, *Tradition and Imagination*, p. 92.

ing but rather an understanding of how the artist read the text within its developing tradition.

Visual-related Language in Matthew 2: 1-12

Before exploring specific visual instances of the story, it is important to appreciate the visually evocative material contained in the text itself, which becomes especially significant if the reader is a painter. Particularly striking in the Greek narrative of Matt. 2: 1-12, but rarely noted in commentaries, is the use of vocabulary related to sight.⁵⁴ The passage centres around five instances of the verb ὁράω, to see, most often with the Magi as its subject (v. 2, 9, 10, 11) or Herod (v. 16). In the first three cases, it is the star (identified as the star of the Christ child by αὐτοῦ in v. 2) which the Magi see, but in v. 11, the climax of the story, they see ‘the child with Mary his mother’. Herod, on the other hand, despite his efforts, sees neither the star nor the child, only that he has been tricked by the Magi (v. 16). Even when he tries to ascertain knowledge of the star in v. 7, it is in its visual appearance (φαينوμένου) that he expresses interest rather than in its significance. It is the Magi alone who see both the star and the child and therefore only they can pay him homage (v. 11). The ability of the Magi to see is highlighted for the reader by the preposition ἰδοὺ, whose verbal root also comes from ὁράω; normally a preposition which serves as a narrative technique to suggest urgency and immediacy and often translated as ‘look! behold!’, its function here is to direct the reader’s attention both to the Magi (v. 1) and to the star (v. 9).⁵⁵ It serves to conjure up in the mind of the reader visual images of the story’s key components just as elsewhere in the infancy narrative ἰδοὺ introduces the reader to the sudden visual appearance of the angel to Joseph (1: 20; 2: 13,19). The reader thus becomes more visually attuned to the story and, with the Magi, sees the child for the first time in 2: 11. A further visual aspect of

⁵⁴ David Clines (*I, He, We, They: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 53* [JSOTSup, 1; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1976], pp. 40-41) similarly highlights the role of visual language in the Servant Poem in Isaiah 53 and concludes that the poem is ‘about modes of seeing’.

⁵⁵ In Isaiah 53, David Clines (*I, He, We, They*, p. 40) explores the use of הִנֵּה (behold) ‘which announces that the poem is about seeing; that is, in what way the servant should and should not be seen’.

the story is highlighted by the use of the verb φαίνω 'to shine, give light', its middle and passive forms denoting 'to be seen, to appear'. Like ἰδοὺ, it is used of the appearance of the angel to Joseph (1: 20; 2:13, 19) and elsewhere in Matthew often signals the visual appearance or revelation of the divine to humankind (9: 33; 24: 27, 30). Its significance has been retained in tradition by the use of the term *epiphany*, denoting an event that has been made visible.

In this highly visual context, the reader is challenged to create mental images of other objects which are unfamiliar and infrequent elsewhere in the Gospels; in addition to the *Magi*, the *east*, and the *star*, the words *treasure chest*, *gold*, *frankincense* and *myrrh* evoke visual images that bring the story to a colourful conclusion.⁵⁶ But foregrounding the visual goes beyond simply the vocabulary of the passage; the contrast between the blindness of familiar characters (King Herod, the chief priests and scribes) and the ability of the unfamiliar (the Magi) to see, to reveal insight, highlights the metaphorical significance of sight throughout the passage. In addition, familiar place names such as Bethlehem and Jerusalem, known and 'seen' by the narrator, appear to threaten, while foreign and 'unseen' places, 'the east' and 'their own country', terms which enclose the story in v. 1 and v. 12, are synonymous with notions of recognition and faith.⁵⁷ The fact that Joseph, emphasised in Matthew 1-2 as the protector of the child and his mother, is conspicuously absent from 2: 11 allows the child with his mother to stand out iconically; mother and child offer a striking visual image, confronted by the Magi.⁵⁸ Visually imagining the child with his mother faced with the inquisitive gaze of the Magi helps the reader experience the climax and point of the story. The

⁵⁶ A number of key words in the story are very infrequent in the New Testament: ἄστήρ occurs 4 times in the story and elsewhere only in the plural in 24: 29 (dependent on Mark 12: 24). μάγοι occurs 4 times in Matthew 2 but nowhere else in the Gospels. ἀνατολή occurs 3 times in Matthew 2 and elsewhere in the Gospel only in 8: 11 and 24: 27 where it is used as imagery. Other words occur only once, either in the Gospel or in the New Testament generally, for example, λίβανον, σμύρναν.

⁵⁷ The idea is similar to that found in 4: 16, 8: 11-12 and 8: 28, the only other instances where ἀνατολή and χώρα appear.

⁵⁸ The phrase τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ in v. 11 occurs nowhere else in Matthew where the more general phrase τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ is preferred. 'The child *with* his mother' contrasts to 'all Jerusalem *with* him' (Herod) in v. 3, the only use of μετὰ in Matthew 2.

activity of seeing is central in v. 11 since it is the first time anyone sees the child, either the characters in the episode or the reader; the reader must see the child for the first time through the eyes of the Magi.⁵⁹

Foregrounding visual-related language, then, serves to identify a prominent component of the text;⁶⁰ moreover, if the reader is a painter, a professional visualizer, an awareness of the process of forming visual images within the act of reading and the dynamics of the reader's visual participation become all the more important.

Visual Instances of the Adoration of the Magi

For the purposes of this article, paintings that visualize *devotional*, rather than political or social, readings of the text are used to illustrate the approaches of Gadamer and Berdini since devotional paintings have the additional aim of uniting the experience of the viewer with the spiritual aspects of the subject matter. Paintings by four artists, Mantegna, Lippi, Botticelli and Bassano, are representative of the theme in Italian art in the century before the Council of Trent (mid-fifteenth to mid-sixteenth century); they represent a period when iconographic traditions relating to the theme were well established, yet before the injunctions of the Council relating to the depiction of biblical images came into force. Though working within the same century, each artist came under a range of influences in relation to genre and style, so that these paintings can be seen to offer distinct and unique instances

⁵⁹ The tradition of identifying the reader or viewer with the Magi is an old one. For example, in his sermon for the Epiphany in 578 CE, St. Romanos the Melodos writes: 'We are fellow travellers of the Magi. They represent us. The Magi are given for our mimesis. They search, seek and examine but as they retrace their journey, they find deception and blindness'. See Eva Catafygiotu Topping, 'St. Romanos the Melodos and His First Nativity Kontakion', *Greek Orthodox Review* (21) 1976, pp. 231-250, (240).

⁶⁰ Ellen J. Esrock, in *The Reader's Eye: Visual Imagery as Reader-Response* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1994), has explored, through a study of Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, the value of the reader's imagistic consciousness, the complex interactions between a text with visually evocative material and the reader's disposition to visualize and argues that the importance of visual imagery must be recognized and integrated more fully into contemporary literary criticism.

of the same subject matter. I shall also consider a Rembrandt drawing, a devotional image, from seventeenth-century Holland. It has been used by Mieke Bal as an illustration of how a *narrational reading* of a biblical image offers an added critical dimension to traditional iconographical reading. Bal's critique of this drawing illustrates similarities with Berdini's approach, though expressed through different terminology.

Andrea Mantegna

Mantegna's *Adoration of the Magi* in the Getty Museum is regarded as one of his most innovative and best known compositions.⁶¹ It is a personalized devotional image—personalized not by depicting the donor but by including the spectator. Mantegna followed closely, in this painting, the guidelines of his contemporary Alberti in his treatise *De Pictura* (1435) which recommends that the prime goal of painting should be *historia*, meaning storytelling as moral and intellectual instruction. *Historia*, according to Alberti, should convey a multiplicity of higher meanings.⁶² It was not meant to be a pictorial re-creation of an event as it might have appeared to an onlooker; rather it was to be a learned interpretation that would reveal the quintessential meaning of the subject matter to the viewer (in the same sense as Gadamer's *Darstellung*). The ultimate goal of *historia* was the emotional identification of the viewer with the action or moral significance of the scene. Mantegna used Alberti's conception of art as potentially revealing a multiplicity of meanings to exploit the significance of the story of the Magi and to encourage a variety of meditational paths.⁶³

⁶¹ This painting differs from his earlier version in the Uffizi, Florence, in that 'the clear differentiation of characters and the self-conscious inclusion of the viewer evokes the new Renaissance conception of the importance of the individual' (Carr, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 91).

⁶² For the importance of Alberti's emphasis on the inclusion of the viewer and of the painting 'holding the eye of the learned and unlearned spectator', see Lew Andrews, *Story and Space in Renaissance Art: the Birth of Continuous Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 116-117; David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 14-17; and John Onians, 'The Biological Basis of Renaissance Aesthetics' in Frances Ames-Lewis and Mary Rogers (eds.), *Concepts of Beauty in Renaissance Art* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 2-27.

⁶³ Carr, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 67.



Fig. 1. Andrea Mantegna, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1497-1500, John Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

The scene, depicted in half-length format against a dark background (a technique Mantegna derived from classical portraiture), highlights the visually iconic aspects of the biblical narrative, giving it directness and emotional immediacy so that the viewer experiences a closeness to the represented characters. While the Virgin, Joseph and the child wear simple garments, the Magi are dressed in exotic clothing and jewels and bear exquisite gifts. Caspar, bearded and bareheaded, presents the Christ child with a rare Chinese cup, made of delicate porcelain filled with gold coins. Melchior, the younger, bearded king behind Caspar, holds a Turkish censer for perfuming the air with incense; on the right, Balthasar the Moor carries a covered cup made of agate.⁶⁴ Mantegna's posing of a limited number of figures against a dark background is virtually as terse as Matthew's text; the composition is focussed and clear and the darkness leaves the setting to the imagination. The figures are large, promoting an even greater sense of physical proximity to the viewer and are depicted in their traditional allegorical capacities as the three ages of humankind and three continents. The gifts can be interpreted symbolically too. Gold

⁶⁴ Carr, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 83.

pays homage to Christ's kingship; frankincense used for incense honours Christ's divinity; myrrh foresees the death and burial of Christ.⁶⁵ The vessels mimic reliquaries and eucharistic vessels and Mantegna clearly differentiates each object by shape and size to underscore the distinct origins of the Magi. In this way, while not stressing the Magi's kingship, Mantegna presents a series of rich visual icons to the viewer for meditation.

Mantegna deliberately abandons any use of setting such as landscape to concentrate on the psychologies of the scene; every turn of the head, every glance of the eye, every nuance of gesture is studied for maximum impact. In this close up view, his vivid characterisations of the psychological reactions of the Magi attempt to draw the viewer into similar appropriate action—worship of the Christ child and meditation on his incarnation. The Magi, before whom the viewer stands, serve as clear role models; they establish the appropriate devotional state and, as the 'original' worshippers, could show the way in contemporary devotion.⁶⁶ The Magi do not appear together but as individuals and are differentiated by their states of awe: at the right, Casper is lost in ecstatic wonder as he stares at the child with open mouth; Balthaser bends forward eager to see, while Melchior does not allow his eyes to meet the child.

The Christ child responds to the worship of the Magi with the bestowal of a childlike blessing; the benediction is directed at the viewer as much as the Magi. By having the child use his index and middle fingers, Mantegna turns the child's gesture into the jerking movement of an infant; the gesture becomes a sign of the incarnation itself, the divine child is limited to blessing as a human infant might.⁶⁷ The swaddling clothes are slung around his left shoulder, as if a toga, and held over his left arm and cover his head. In antiquity, the Roman male was shown in this way only if he were a priest acting in a ritual role; as symbolic of Christ as high priest, this form of presentation was suitable for the ritual context of the painting. The Magi not only lead the viewer to worship and wonder but also to receive the blessings given by God in recognition of their faith.

Mantegna's reading of the story highlights the visual imagery

⁶⁵ Carr, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 84.

⁶⁶ Carr, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 91.

⁶⁷ Carr, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 84.

already present in the text; in depicting the characters' intense watchfulness, he conveys the text's preoccupation with sight and insight; in the words of Jacques Lacan, applied elsewhere to paintings by Titian,⁶⁸ Mantegna's *Adoration* becomes a 'trap for the gaze', the gaze that connects the painted figures and has the quality of arresting movement and of seeming to stop time. As a 'trap for the gaze' the painting engages the viewer in its own time and space.

The composition permits multiple interpretations; the viewer can identify with one of a number of characters, interpreting the event from different perspectives—the old, humble and wise magus, the entranced middle-aged or the young astonished black magus—or from the perspective of Joseph, who is not in the biblical text but who appears in the left corner, an outsider as it were, scrutinizing the strangers who appear to reveal a deeper level of insight. The sight of the gold coins that fill the rare and precious cup invites the viewer to reflect on the place of material wealth in relation to the blessing the child offers.

Interpreting Mantegna's painting from the perspectives of Gadamer and Berdini makes for a more complete appreciation of it. As an instance of *Darstellung*, it is a presentation and not a re-presentation of the biblical story, a coming into picture, an instance of the subject matter coming forth, an event that takes place in which the viewer participates. It illustrates Gadamer's view that, through art, aesthetic qualities such as intimacy, nearness, directness and inwardness gain a tangibility of presence which, without art's mediation, they would not have.⁶⁹ Here, the viewer is drawn into the intimacy of the scene and becomes part of it. Standing in front of the Christ child he or she completes the circle of characters and is caught up in their network of gazes so that the concept

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the Lacanian gaze in painting, see Laurie Schneider Adams, 'Iconographic Aspects of the Gaze in Some Paintings by Titian', in Patricia Meilman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Titian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 225-240 (225-226).

⁶⁹ Clines (*I, He, We, They*, pp. 44-46) points out that the Servant Poem in Isaiah 53 lacks any affective terminology: 'Of the servant himself, not a single emotion is expressed'. Yet, in traditional and contemporary iconography, it is the emotional response of the viewer that depictions of the subject seek to elicit. On the same point, see Richard Verdi, *Anthony van Dyck: Ecce Homo and the Mocking of Christ* (The University of Birmingham: the Trustees of the Barber Institute of Fine Art, 2002) pp. 27-28 and Thiessen's discussion of Louis le Brocquy's contemporary *Ecce Homo* in *Theology and Modern Irish Art*, pp. 142-144.

of adoration in Matt. 2: 11 now becomes tangible and experiential. Mantegna's *Adoration* illustrates Gadamer's view that each instance of the visualization of a subject matter extends not only the viewer's horizon but also the subject matter itself. In terms of visual exegesis, Mantegna presents a reading of the text that highlights the symbolic, the iconic and that expands the text to offer the viewer a transcendental experience of union with the divine, just as the Magi experience the newborn Christ.

Fra Filippo Lippi

Jack Ruda, discussing the Carmelite priest and artist Fra Filippo Lippi,⁷⁰ shows how, in fifteenth-century Italy, biblical images were called upon in a wide range of situations in daily life for many liturgical and didactic needs, and were subject to highly variable demands. He suggests that, since, collectively, fifteenth-century viewers were familiar with many lessons from the Bible and tradition, most images were planned to be used as loose frameworks to enable individual viewers to make a (personalized) range of associations. To the extent that they have a parallel in literary structure, he suggests, paintings were more like vernacular hymns and sermons with loose sequence of ideas than like theological treatises with closely knit arguments. A flexible and intellectually popular system would have suited most of his likely viewers; the process of composing the imagery for Lippi's paintings would have been similar to a sermon. Such an approach offered flexibility to the viewer in determining the meaning the subject matter contained.

Lippi's exceptionally rich association of images in his *Adoration of the Magi* makes it his most sermon-like painting, suitable for the appropriate moral reflection of his viewers, and presents 'a wider range of incident than virtually any other panel painting of the early to mid-fifteenth century'.⁷¹ The imagery depends on well-known sacred texts and commentaries and not on any particular theological argument so that the painting represents 'an original and sophisticated visual exegesis' in which the expansive modes

⁷⁰ Jeffrey Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi: Life and Work* (London: Phaidon, 1999). See especially his section 'The Painting as a Sermon', pp. 238-257.

⁷¹ Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi*, p. 210.



Fig. 2. Fra Filippo Lippi, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1450, Washington National Gallery of Art

of reading based on traditional principles of Christian exegesis come into play.⁷² From a literal reading of the text, the artist creates a series of symbols that transcends the story's literality and that points to an experience of and unity with the divine, the final goal of exegesis.

Lippi interprets Matt. 2: 1-12 through a series of other biblical texts, particularly Psalm 72: 10-11:

May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service!⁷³

He expands the traditional association made between the Magi

⁷² Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi*, p. 238.

⁷³ Psalm 72:10-11 constituted the Offertory chant for the feast of Epiphany.

and the kings of Tarshish in vv. 10-11 by recalling more visual imagery from the same Psalm:

May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, righteousness! (v. 3).
 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy! (v. 4).
 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth! (v. 6).
 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow down before him (v. 9).
 For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper (v. 12).
 He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy (v.13).
 From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight (v. 14).
 May there be abundance of grain in the land! May it wave on the tops of the mountains! May its fruit be like Lebanon and may people blossom in the cities like the grass of the field! (v. 16).

Lippi attempts to portray these sentiments and images from Psalm 72 in his painting. The fruitful landscape described in vv. 3, 6 and 16 is depicted by the grassy hill at the upper centre while the park-like meadow at the bottom and the trees at the left suggest the fertility of the land. The poor and needy of vv. 4, 12, and 13 are visible among the humble workers within the stable, the ragged shepherds and beggars to either side and among the people of the city at the right, including the mother with clinging naked children. The wilderness of v. 9 is depicted by the rocky landscape beyond the gateway.⁷⁴

The semi-nude figures opposite the cypress represent death and rebirth through the sacrament of baptism (for which they are dressed), since epiphany traditions also commemorated the baptism of Christ. The ruins fit the theme of resurrection in Simeon's prophecy over the infant child in the Vulgate of Luke 2: 34: 'Behold this child is set for the fall (*ruinam*) and rising again (*resurrectionem*) of many in Israel'. Jacobus of Voragine explained this prophecy in terms very close to the imagery found in Lippi's painting: he compared weak humankind to leaning walls that may fall into ruin and God to a mountain or rock of support, while Christ is the sign who appears over a mountain that represents the world. In the painting, followers look up to what may be this sign, while the Christ child and Mary sit on the rock—an allusion to Christ

⁷⁴ Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi*, pp. 213-214.

as the cornerstone (Ps.118: 22, Isa. 28: 16, Matt. 21: 42-4, Luke 20: 17-18).⁷⁵

Other symbols refer to Christ's victory over death; the peacock, looking up, signifies eternity while the pheasant, looking down, represents sin or sloth.⁷⁶ The cypress by the gateway is an ancient funerary sign so that the gate may be the gate of heaven and refer to death and rebirth. The very shape of the tondo enriches its meaning; the circle represents the entirety of creation so that the round shape of Lippi's *Adoration* complements the role of the kings as representatives of the entire community of the faithful while all elements of the composition—figures, cityscape, landscape—spiral in response to the panel's round shape. As the painting draws on the Psalm along with other biblical sources as a sermon might gather quotations and paraphrases to enrich its discourse, the viewer engages with the symbolism of the images presented—the second stage of exegesis—and is invited to explore the correspondences between them.

Through the extensive symbolism in this painting, the artist's aim is to draw the viewer into the final stage of exegesis—proximity with the divine. The context of the *Adoration* is not a natural landscape but rather a supernatural and other-worldly one; the peacocks symbolising eternal life and the neophytes rebirth through baptism point to a scene set in heaven with Mary and the Christ child seated on a throne receiving the saved as they proceed through the narrow gate of heaven. The viewer is drawn into the intimacy of the meeting of the magus as he touches the foot of the Christ child. The attitude of the magus, his state of recognition and adoration, offers a model for the viewer to imitate in order to gain eternal life.

Sandro Botticelli

This painting was commissioned for the Chapel of the Epiphany in the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Rab

⁷⁵ Ruda, *Fra Filippo Lippi*, p. 214.

⁷⁶ For a discussion of the moral dangers of sloth (seen as the spiritual tepidity and apathy of the believer) in fifteenth-century Italy, see Bernard Aikema, *Jacopo Bassano and His Public: Moralizing Pictures in an Age of Reform ca 1535-1600* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 7-8.



Fig. 3. Sandro Botticelli, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1470-75, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence/Bridgeman Art Library

Hatfield notes that 'For an altarpiece in the form of a self contained narrative picture, it is unprecedented in the elasticity and range of its symbolic content'.⁷⁷ As an altarpiece, it presents a very particular type of hermeneutic.

The centre of the picture is taken up by a rock, which is generally believed to derive from that of Lippi's tondo.⁷⁸ An impressive classical building, with its style still recognizable and intact, has been placed in the background to the left where it stands apart from the place of Christ's birth. Hatfield highlights the classical character of the building and suggests that, under the influence of the contemporary theologian Ficino, it symbolizes the cultural excellence of the ancients, represented by the Gentiles.⁷⁹ The jagged corner of wall to which the shed is attached and which here

⁷⁷ Rab Hatfield, *Botticelli's Uffizi 'Adoration': A Study in Pictorial Content* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 67.

⁷⁸ Hatfield, *Botticelli's Uffizi 'Adoration'*, p. 65.

⁷⁹ Ficino argued that the errors of the Gentiles were understandable because they did not live 'under Grace' but they did possess natural philosophy and religion 'which hold out the same truth under different guises to all people'. See Stephen M. Buhler, 'Marsilio Ficino's *De Stella Magorum* and Renaissance Views of the Magi', *Renaissance Quarterly* (43) 1990, pp. 348-371 (354).

serves as the altar may refer to the stone which the builders rejected and which has now become the corner stone of the Church. This painting may be seen as an allegory of the Church, rising amid the ruins of the ancient religions, to which the Magi come, representing the nations of the pagan world, while the shepherds, the Jews, are seen in the background to the left. Many figures portray features of members of the Medici family: Cosimo the Elder as the old king in front of the child, his son Piero, as the kneeling king with a red mantle in the centre, Lorenzo the Magnificent as the young man at his right, in profile, with a black and red mantle. The figure looking out at the spectator is probably the self-portrait of Botticelli.

In terms of visual exegesis, Botticelli offers a reading of the biblical text suitable for the purposes of an altarpiece. The symbolic images in this picture are relatively few and their approximate meanings must have been clear to the average worshipper but it is the manner in which familiar images are interrelated to its function as an altarpiece that sets Botticelli's painting apart. Berdini stresses the function of the liturgical and sacramental in Christian exegesis:

In Christian exegesis, actual comprehension is achieved only when the quest for explanation is submitted by that state of partial deprivatization of experience, which, being the domain of faith can only be resolved in liturgical practice.⁸⁰

Since this is an altarpiece, the meaning of the painting must be interpreted in terms of the liturgical practice of the eucharist; it is the symbolism of the body of Christ that lies at the heart of the conceptual structure of Botticelli's painting.⁸¹ Christ's body, once referred to as a temple, is now the body of the Church; as the eucharist, his body is the nourishment that leads the believer to eternal life. Since it represents a conflation of separate actions,

⁸⁰ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, p. 5.

⁸¹ The hermeneutical aspect of the eucharist is emphasised by John Drury in connection with Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi* above the altar of the chapel in King's College Cambridge (*Painting the Word*, p. xiv). See also his section on 'Partakers of the Altar', pp. 107-115. For a similar idea see David Brown, *Tradition and Imagination*, p. 92. On the importance of the theme of the Magi coming in procession with their gifts to the altar in a range of paintings, see Maurice B. McNamee, *Vested Angels: Eucharistic Allusions in Early Netherlandish Paintings* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), especially his chapter 'Eucharistic Allusions in Epiphany Scenes', pp.159-166.

the doctrine of the eucharist permits a suspension of time and place; it fulfils the past as well as looking to and beyond the end of time. The presence in the painting of so many fifteenth-century Florentines, contemporary with the artist, indicates to the viewer that one may be always present at Christ's first epiphany since he is always present sacramentally in the eucharist; it provides the answer to the Magi's question, 'Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?'⁸²

Jacopo Bassano

Berdini's study of the prolific artist Jacopo Bassano centres on the social and political context of sixteenth-century Veneto, and in particular the role Bassano's paintings play in documenting the religious and political aims of church and state, especially in relation to the status and perception of the peasant.⁸³ Jacopo Bassano produced a large number of paintings of the *Adoration of the Magi*. Two that typify his approach are those now in Edinburgh (National Galleries of Scotland) and Birmingham (the Barber Institute of Fine Arts).⁸⁴ Both paintings are naturalistic and make much less use of symbolism than earlier Italian paintings, allowing the viewer to engage with the subject matter in a number of less overtly 'religious' ways.

In the Edinburgh *Adoration*, Joseph, Mary and the child, along with the three Magi are isolated on the left by massive ruins; within

⁸² Hatfield, *Botticelli's Uffizi 'Adoration'*, p. 67.

⁸³ Aikema, *Jacopo Bassano and His Public*, pp. 52-54, discusses how the peasant was seen as the antithesis of the God-fearing, upstanding civilized burgher, according to the late fifteenth-century text *Alfabeta sopra li Villani*: 'the wicked, disagreeable, evil peasant is always destined to work. Goodness does not reign in him or courtesy; only anger, envy, hatred, and thievery. Evil he is filled with and every vice'. The growing number of indigents from the Veneto coming into Venice in the 1520s and 1530s caused great consternation, as did bogus beggars and pilgrims. This is clear from Bassano's *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the Galleria Borghese, Rome. However, as Berdini notes, during and after the Council of Trent a pedagogy emerged that grounded social behaviour on scripture; methods of expanding the text became diversified in order to confront a specific reader in terms of his/her social identity. Humble labour and agricultural activity, it was felt, had to be praised as Christian virtues if the peasant could be emancipated from the image of the ignorant and lascivious and improve their ways (*The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, pp. 14-17).

⁸⁴ Other depictions of the theme exist in Stamford Abbey, England and in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 4. Jacopo Bassano, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1542, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh

this grouping, the Magi are kept at some distance from Mary and the child. Melchior and the servant directly behind him form a continuation of the crumbled wall separating the group on the right. Two of the Magi have identified the child and worship him; by taking off his hat, the servant too indicates that he has recognized him. No one in the group to the right pay any heed as they fritter away their time on material and worldly concerns; in particular, there is a marked contrast between the prostrate old king in adoration and the peasant (the only character dressed recognizably as a peasant). The lone peasant in the distant background is completely oblivious to the event unfolding. His attitude is in marked contrast to that of Caspar, the king, whose position is directly beneath him.

In the Barber Institute *Adoration*, there are subtle changes in the positioning of the characters. The three Magi are now clearly differentiated as individuals, each conveying a different attitude. The elderly king, kneeling with his throne removed, gazes intently at the Christ child. The second king emerges from the right holding out his gift while the youngest king has not removed his crown.



Fig. 5. Jacopo Bassano, *The Adoration of the Magi* (c.1510-92) The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, The University of Birmingham

He offers his gift but is distracted by the gold platter held by the servant boy. Mary and the child stand out in pastel colours and are positioned between Joseph and the elderly king—who resemble each other in looks and posture. The group on the left denote an attitude of deep contemplation while the group to the right are distracted by commerce and worldly concerns.⁸⁵

In Bassano's naturalist painting, where individuals are not explicitly presented as 'religious' (for example, there are no haloes), it is possible to suspend for a moment the reference to the Adoration 'and decline the cultural and contextual invitation to recognize the traditional storyline'.⁸⁶ The painting can now be seen in a different way: two elderly men looking intensely, representing old age and imminent death, contemplate birth and new life represented by a new born child and a youthful mother. The nakedness of the child, which contrasts with the rich fabrics of

⁸⁵ See Richard Verdi, *The Barber Institute of Fine Arts* (London: Scala, 1999), p. 41.

⁸⁶ Bal, *Reading "Rembrandt"*, p. 210.

his mother and the kings, together with the glittering crowns, suggests the vulnerability of life in the face of death (a point strengthened by the setting of decayed buildings and a desert landscape), regardless of one's wealth and prestige. The investigation of the crowns on the ground by the curious donkey suggests that wealth is alien to and inessential in the natural world. The crowded scene to the right, full of activity and commercial preoccupation, denotes a lack of awareness of the brevity of life and what should be regarded as essential. Seen in this way, the painting becomes a meditation on life, its purpose, priorities and its certain and ultimate decay. Bassano's naturalist paintings allow us to offer less 'religious' interpretations; as Berdini points out, the viewer can determine the degree of religiosity present.

A particular technique used by Bassano to suggest to the viewer an added spiritual dimension (Berdini's final stage in the process of visual exegesis) to a natural scene is his use of light.⁸⁷ Divine manifestation is signalled by the bodily reception of light. Light is supernatural because the body cannot confront it; it declares its nature only in its reception by the human body. Natural light illuminates a landscape whereas supernatural light modifies a body. In the *Adoration of the Magi*, the contrast between the two sources of light confer a binary structure on the landscape. Appearing over the far horizon, natural light defines an open view by providing a sense of depth and spatial recession. Light in the forefront, as it falls on the flesh of the mother and child, Joseph, the elderly kneeling king and the young king, has direction and purpose; it is a source of supernatural light and is superior to the natural light on the horizon. Light illumines the faces and expressions of those characters whose attitude the viewer is invited to meditate on, emulate or disregard. In these naturalist paintings with fewer traditional iconographic symbols, the viewer must determine the 'religiosity' they contain and to what extent natural elements such as landscape, light and animals (important in all Bassano's works) convey the significance of the event. Bassano's reading of the text, therefore, appreciated through the process of visual exegesis, allows the viewer to interpret the painting on a number of levels, from a naturalist painting to an intensively religious one.

⁸⁷ Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*, pp. 27-35.

Rembrandt van Rijn

In her analysis of a Rembrandt drawing on the theme of the adoration of a magus, Mieke Bal adopts a *narrational reading* of the image, which, she argues, is a further interpretive step beyond *reading iconographically*. While agreeing that 'in order to appreciate the subject matter and its visualization, the viewer must know the conventional idiom of visual representation, must be literate in visual traditions and must be well read enough to recognize the story and its other details', she argues that viewing images only in this way is limited in that it can be used to ward off threatening interpretations and fit images into a reassuring tradition.⁸⁸



Fig. 6. Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Virgin Showing the Infant Christ to One of the Magi*, 1635, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam

Bal takes for granted that the viewer of Rembrandt's drawing recognizes the story line immediately from its iconographic symbols, and so suggests that we suspend, for a moment, the obvious reference to the Magi; instead, if we link all the diagonal series of elements, we can form a story or *fabula* that is not the standard scene of the *Adoration*, one in which action, and not a still pose, is being depicted. The drawing can now be viewed as if Mary has just pulled the child from her womb and presents him to the magus; the infant's feet are not visible—they are still in the birth canal—and the expression on the woman's face suggests that she

⁸⁸ There are few examples of Rembrandt's treatment of the theme, mostly drawings. See Hilda Hoekstra, *Rembrandt and the Bible* (London: Magna Books, 1990), pp. 224-247.

is actively in labour. The drawing thus becomes a delivery scene. This *fabula* is not congruent with the iconographically recognizable scene, which tends to obliterate rather than emphasise these elements. If we need to bracket the official story temporarily, she argues, it does not mean that we contradict it; in fact, it merely conflates the Nativity with the Adoration by representing the two in one scene that sheds an unexpected light on both. Bal suggests that the infant himself looks like the magus and that, if he were his father, this would re-inforce the humanity of Christ, just as his birth does.⁸⁹ In handing over the infant to the old man, the woman delivers the child to a representative of those for whom he was incarnated in the first place—the human race, exemplified by this impressed and submissive elderly man. The slight mismatch of the two sides of the scene emphasises the radical separation between the man who can only receive the child and the woman who is actually producing him, between human and divine personae and between natural and supernatural events. Bal concludes that the dogmatic views of theological or iconographical traditions can blind us to other possible readings, including readings that are acceptable within the context of theology; tracing motifs back to traditions and sources tends to preclude active interpretation.

For Bal, a narrational reading offers multiple interpretations of the image. It allows for a reading rather than simply a recognition of a narrative structure. It is much more than recognizing a motif; it is about interpreting the image in relation to the biblical text (pre-text), the cotext (interrelationship between symbols) and the context (the viewer). In this way, the further critical potential of the familiar iconographic reference can be developed. Bal's approach, expressed in different terminology, mirrors Berdini's emphasis on the artist as reader and what he calls the 'exegetical trajectory of reading', the notion that visual exegesis fulfils its aims whenever the significance of the image can be ascertained as a dimension of being on the part of the viewer. In contrast to Gadamer, however, who stresses the importance of appreciating different instances of the same subject matter and their relationship to each other, Bal regards the practice of referring an image back to its predecessor as highly problematic. It is 'a consequence of the reluctance to interpret; citing loose elements is eclectic and

⁸⁹ Bal, *Reading "Rembrandt"*, p. 212.

avoids commitment to specific meanings'.⁹⁰ However, in support of Gadamer, it is difficult to appreciate the full impact of Rembrandt's drawing without reference to his predecessor, Reubens, whose style he followed for this theme, especially his *Adoration of the Magi* (1609), from where he derived his inspiration for the naturalistically floppy-spined child.⁹¹

Conclusion

Different visual instances of the adoration of the Magi show how each artist reveals a different dimension of the subject matter of the text. Mantegna, with his emphasis on classical form, structure and portraiture, highlights the qualities of the individual characters to be imitated by the viewer (Fig. 1). Lippi focusses on the significance of the symbolism traditionally associated with the story and how it impacts on the life of the viewer (Fig. 2). Botticelli in his altarpiece associates the epiphany with the eucharist, thus actualising the text sacramentally in the life of the viewer (Fig. 3). Bassano, through his two naturalist paintings (Figs. 4 and 5) presents the viewer with a stark choice of good and evil by depicting his characters within two mutually exclusive groupings. Each painting, therefore, offers the viewer a different perspective, another way of reading the text, in the light of the developing traditions of the story.

The exploration of these paintings supports Berdini's view that the 'correspondence model', the idea that an image simply reflects its corresponding text with greater or lesser accuracy, imposes serious limitations on the role of the beholder. Such a model leaves little room for any understanding of the interpretive nature of the text and denies the painter a critical role in its reading. Visual exegesis, on the other hand, begins with the awareness that recognition of the subject matter has been exceeded and acknowledges the excess of meaning emerging from the literality of the text 'as it unfolds along a trajectory whose end is the beholder's altered existence'.⁹² What makes an image 'religious' is

⁹⁰ Bal, *Reading "Rembrandt"*, p. 213.

⁹¹ Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes*, p. 140.

⁹² Berdini, *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano*. pp. 126.

not religious motifs or symbols but the experience of beholding it.

Various traditions through the centuries reflect the need to expand and develop the story of the adoration of the Magi; its range of visual expressions shows that artists were interested primarily in making the story relevant to their times and viewers rather than simply depicting the literal details of the corresponding biblical text. Gadamer's concept of *Darstellung*, that the image presents to the viewer an existential event, a *coming forth* of the subject matter, complies with the existential and actualising role of exegesis. His emphasis on the inability of particular instances of a subject matter to exhaust its significance accords with the process of exegesis that explores different levels of meaning within the text. In short, taken together, Gadamer's hermeneutic aesthetics and Berdini's visual exegesis combine to illumine the central role of both the artist and viewer in extending and appropriating a biblical subject or theme through its visual expressions.

Appreciating different visual instances of the same biblical subject is equally important in contemporary art as Gesa Thiessen's detailed critique of the relationship between modern art and theology shows. Her starting point is the work of Paul Tillich,⁹³ and Horst Schwebel.⁹⁴ Tillich argues that modern 'profane' works of art can convey issues of ultimate concern—often much more than the so-called sacred art produced for places of worship, while Schwebel's view is that contemporary religious art has now become autonomous and no longer plays a servant function for the church. With regard to depictions of Christ, Schwebel argues, artistic subjectivity rather than Christian iconography of past centuries is central to modern art so that images of Christ do not appear in familiar biblical surroundings. Christ is often featured not as the Christ of the Scriptures but as a human being without those attributes that would immediately reveal his divinity.

⁹³ Tillich is regarded as the theologian most concerned with developing the dialogue between theology and modern visual art, summed up in 'Art and Ultimate Reality' in Palmer (ed.), *Paul Tillich*, pp. 317-322, first delivered as an address at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1959.

⁹⁴ Schwebel is generally acknowledged as the leading scholar in the field of theology and modern art in the German speaking world. His work, regarded as the most comprehensive theological examination of the image of Christ in twentieth-century European art, is presented in (*Habilitation*) *Das Christusbild in der bildenden Kunst der Gegenwart, Textband, Schriftenreihe Bild und Raum des Instituts für Kirchenbau und kirchliche Kunst* (Geissen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1980).

Thiessen's reservations about Tillich's approach in particular⁹⁵ led her to undertake an analysis of a range of modern abstract paintings with a religious or biblical theme. She concluded that the most meaningful way to appreciate and expand the religious and theological readings of abstract paintings was through the use of theological *writings* (mainly biblical texts and writings of well known theologians) that suggested themselves to her through the painting. For example, she interprets Louis Le Brocq's abstract work *Ecce Homo* through the biblical text of John 19 as well as through Heidegger's dialectical notion of truth as disclosure and concealment. The process of applying a range of theological texts (in a subjective way) in order to interpret the abstract painting with the aim of 'seeing differently or in new ways', is derived from Gadamer who advocates 'using our own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text (the work of art) can really be made to speak for us' since 'interpretation becomes the act of understanding itself'.⁹⁶ The abstract painting thus becomes a source (a *locus theologicus*) for theological interpretation; the work of art, like a text, is perceived as a source to be interpreted and re-interpreted.

Thiessen's study shows that Gadamer's perspective can illumine the theological appreciation of contemporary abstract religious art just as it does traditional iconographical biblical painting. In abstract art, traditional biblical iconography is often substituted by symbols or reference points from the artist's impressionistic and subjective experience. Art, like a text, reveals the world, experience and vision of the artist and thus can broaden the viewer's knowledge and transform or intensify his or her vision of the subject. The very selection of artists and works of art confirm the involvement and significance of the viewer's horizons. Gadamer's insistence that all understanding is interpretation warns us that, even before we engage with it, any text or work of art already presents us with the artist's interpretation of his or her experience.

Thiessen's conclusions support Berdini's notion of the artist as reader inasmuch as a contemporary artist's depiction of biblical

⁹⁵ Thiessen's criticisms include Tillich's failure to base his views on any detailed study of individual paintings, his underestimation of the important aspect of subjectivity in modern artistic creation and the fact that his narrow definition of what constitutes the 'religious' in art would exclude many important artists, and indeed works with religious content (*Theology and Modern Irish Art*, pp. 17-23).

⁹⁶ Thiessen, *Theology and Modern Irish Art*, p. 257.

subject matter will consist of his or her subjective reaction to, and interpretation of, the story as found in the Bible. As he or she engages with it, the viewer may, or may not, find correspondences between the story and the artist's appropriation of it. Hence (and as argued by Berdini) the visual interpretation of a biblical subject is once removed from the way one encounters and interprets the biblical text itself. For Thiessen, this makes it enriching in one sense because of the artist's interpretation of the text (and as Gadamer argues, permits a broadening of the viewer's horizons) but also limiting in that it represents the individual's particularity in his or her rendering of the theme.

Thiessen's study suggests an approach essentially consistent with that of Berdini and Gadamer. Together they help illumine how a wide range of visual instances of a biblical subject, whether traditional or contemporary, can be used to expand the viewer's horizons to think, feel and reflect on a biblical story or text as it becomes '*bodied forth* in surprising, gentle, challenging, shockingly immediate or meditative fashion in a work of art'.⁹⁷

ABSTRACT

The article explores the processes at work in a painting's engagement of its viewer in biblical subject matter. It accentuates the role of the artist as an active *reader* of the Bible and not merely an illustrator of biblical scenes, the dynamic that occurs in the text-reader process as paradigmatic for the image-viewer relationship and the important role of the developing tradition that felt the need to change or rewrite the biblical story. The processes are explored in terms of hermeneutics and exegesis: hermeneutics defined as 'the interweaving of language and life within the horizon of the text and within the horizons of traditions and the modern reader' (Gadamer) and exegesis as 'the dialectic between textual meaning and the reader's existence' (Berdini). Applied to the visualization of biblical subject matter, the approaches of Gadamer and Berdini illumine the key role given to the viewer in the visual hermeneutical process. The biblical story of the adoration of the Magi (Matt. 2: 1-12), the first public and universal *seeing* of Christ and one of the most frequently depicted themes in the entire history of biblical art, is used to illustrate their approach. The emphasis in the biblical narrative on *revealing* the Christ child to the reader parallels a key concept in Gadamer's hermeneutical aesthetics, namely *Darstellung*, the way in which a painting facilitates its subject matter in *coming forth*, in becoming an existential *event* in the life of the viewer.

⁹⁷ Thiessen, *Theology and Modern Irish Art*, p. 262.