Personification: An Introduction

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Personification, or *prosopopoeia*, the rhetorical figure by which something not human is given a human identity or 'face', is readily spotted, but the figure's cognitive form and function, its rhetorical and pictorial effects, rarely elicit scholarly attention. As a communicative device it is either taken for granted or dismissed as mere convention. The aim of this volume is to formulate an alternative account of personification, to demonstrate the ingenuity with which this multifaceted device was utilized by late medieval and early modern authors and artists. The fact that literary and pictorial genres designed to appeal to large audiences, such as festival plays and royal entries, often utilize allegorical personification, indicates that the figure was seen to accommodate a wide spectrum of tastes and expectations. Personification operates in multiple registers—sensory and spiritual, visible and invisible, concrete and abstract—and it deals in facts, opinions, and beliefs. With reference to the visible, current events and situations were represented by means of personifications that objectified various social groups and institutions, as well as their defining ambitions and the forces that motivated them. As regards the invisible, processes of thinking, feeling, and experiencing were bodied forth by means of personifications that revealed how these *modi operandi* were constituted.

Our interest in personification is motivated by several trends that have emerged over the last decade in cultural (historical) studies, whereby artistic expression is approached from the point of view of the body, performance, and cognition. Seen in light of these trends, personification (along with the texts and artifacts that employ the figure) offers many research opportunities. In methodological terms, personification is susceptible to an approach that balances a more semiotic analysis, concentrating on meaningful effects, and a more phenomenological analysis, focusing on effects of presence. This approach would entail foregrounding the full scope of prosopopoeic discourse—not just the *what*, but also the *how*, not only the *signified*, but also the *signifier*.

The contributors to this volume address one or more of the following aspects of personification in their chapters. First, the theory of personification. What ideas about allegorical personification circulated in late medieval and early modern times? How were its principles and workings described, either explicitly or implicitly? How can modern neuropsychological insights concerning

metaphorical thinking be linked to theories of personification based in contemporary rhetorical theory? Second, the perception of personification. How did contemporary audiences perceive and interpret personifications? How did they react to them and make use of them? Did the device fulfill instructive, persuasive, propagandistic, mnemonic, or even meditative and contemplative functions? To what extent did personification stimulate the imagination or the inner eye? What about the element of playfulness? Third, the means of personification. How was the device constituted? What (self-)descriptive procedures of naming were involved? What kinds of visual and verbal interaction? What clothes, attributes, gestures, facial expressions, positions, and actions? What courses of events or chains of thought, aided either by dialogue (in plays) or inscriptions (on prints)? Fourth, and lastly, the context of personification. What were the wider circumstances within which personification and genres based on personification allegory came to be employed, and how do these circumstances help to explain both the contents and effects of the device in practice? Did particular religious, social, and political situations stimulate its use?

As already noted, personification is readily identified, but the figure's cognitive form and function, its rhetorical and pictorial effects, have elicited little scholarly attention. Another question, therefore, is: Why is personification hardly studied? To find the answer, we have to delve—albeit not too deeply—into the history of allegory, or more precisely, into the study of allegory and its critical tradition; excavating this background will bring to light the mutually supportive relationship and interdependence of textual and visual approaches to allegory and personification. Only by combining the insights and opinions of both textual and visual scholars, of literary and art historians—the project of this volume—is it possible to answer the questions posed above. Much has been written on allegory, far less on personification. Both, moreover, are mainly studied from a textual point of view. We believe it necessary to emphasize the essentially visual character of both. This introduction opens by dealing briefly with the relation between personification and allegory, but it deals mainly with the manner and meaning of personification, and concentrates on some contemporary voices that expound the form, function, and meaning of personification, especially from a pictorial point of view.

Personification and Allegory

Talking about personification means talking about allegory. One reason for this is that texts and images which are considered allegories very often contain personifications. Where personification is used, allegories come into being. For

this reason literary and art historians employ the term 'personification alle-
gory' to denote both the procedure and the result of creating allegory through
personification. Some even speak of allegory and allegories when they in fact
mean personification and personifications. Traditionally, the study of allegory
is the realm of textual scholars, literary historians in particular. And this for
obvious reasons, since some written allegories from the medieval and early-
modern periods—a number of which are discussed in this volume—are
amongst the greatest treasures of world literature.

There is another reason for the dominance of literary scholars amongst the
students of allegory. This is that the word has two meanings or, to be more
precise, that it refers to two procedures: a manner of writing and a manner
of interpreting.[1] The latter is called *allegoresis* and refers to the procedure of
figural, non-literal reading of mythological and scriptural texts, especially the
Bible.[2] Others speak of critical or hermeneutical allegory or (in German) '*auc-
tores*-Allegorese'.[3] Allegory as a reading method is older than allegory as a man-
ner of composition or style, which is also called rhetorical or creative allegory,
and emerged from the moment the Greek term *allêgoria* (speaking) came to
replace the term *hyponoia* (other-speaking):[4] '*Allegoria* came to denote a form
of writing as well as a form of reading'.[5]

As a compositional technique, allegory has always been a part of rhetoric. As
a figure of speech or trope it is classified under *elocutio*, the third of the five
canons of classical rhetoric. Quintilian in his *Institutio Oratoria* (8.6.44) pro-
vides the standard and often repeated—well into early modernity—definition
of it: 'Allegory, which is translated in Latin by *inversio*, either presents one thing
in words and another in meaning, or else something absolutely opposed to

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1 Tambling J., *Allegory*, The New Critical Idiom (London – New York: 2010) 21–23; and
   Copeland R. – Struck P.T., "Introduction", in eidem, *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*
   (Cambridge: 2010) 1–11, here 2. Also see Copeland R. – Melville S., "Allegory and Allegoresis,
   Rhetoric and Hermeneutics", *Exemplaria* 3,1 (1991) 159–187.

2 On allegory mainly as a narrative procedure and on allegorical reading and interpretation,
   see, for example, Madsen D.L., *Rereading Allegory: A Narrative Approach to Genre* (New York:
   1994).

3 Meier C., "Überlegungen zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Allegorie-Forschung", in
   Frühmittelalterliche Studien 10 (1976) 1–69, esp. 45–46. Also see Ohly F., "The Spiritual Sense
   of Words in the Middle Ages", *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 41.2 (2005) 18–42; and
   Hellgardt E., "Erkenntnistheoretisch-ontologische Probleme uneigentlicher Sprache in
   Rhetorik und Allegorese", in Haug W. (ed.), *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie. Symposion
   Wolfenbüttel 1978*, Germanistische Symposien-Berichtsbande 3 (Stuttgart: 1979) 25–37, esp.
   26–27.

4 Copeland – Struck, "Introduction" 2.

5 Ibid.

the meaning of the words. The first type is generally produced by a series of metaphors'.[6] Although he defines allegory in literary terms—the *Institutio*, after all, was a handbook of oratory—Quintilian and other rhetoricians, both classical and post-classical, are aware of the visual or pictorial aspects of this way of 'other-speaking' (or writing). Its aesthetic attraction and effect are attributed to its ability to arouse the listener's (or reader's) imagination, to bring lively images before the mind's eye.

This is also true for personification or *prosopopoeia*, which Quintilian takes to mean impersonation (from *persona*, meaning mask in Latin) and defines in the *Institutio* (9.2.29–32) as:

> a device which lends wonderful variety and animation to oratory. By this means we display the inner thoughts of our adversaries as though they were talking with themselves [...]. [W]e are even allowed in this form of speech to bring down the gods from heaven and raise the dead, while cities also and peoples may find a voice. There are some authorities who restrict the term personification to cases where both persons and words are fictitious, and prefer to call imaginary conversations between men by the Greek name of *dialogue*, which some translate by the Latin *sermocinatio*. For my own part, I have included both under the same generally accepted term, since we cannot imagine a speech unless we also imagine a person to utter it.[7]

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6   This quotation and the following are taken from Quintilian, *The Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler, 4 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA – London: 1920–1922). Also see Tambling, *Allegory* 6; Copeland – Struck, "Introduction" 4; Haverkamp A., "Metaphore dis/continua: Figure in de/construction. Mit einem Kommentar zur Begriffsgeschichte von Quintilian bis Baumgarten", in Horn E. – Weinberg M. (eds.), *Allegorie. Konfigurationen von Text, Bild und Lektüre*, Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien zur deutschen Literatur (Wiesbaden 1998) 29–45, esp. 42; Plett H.F., "Konzepte des Allegorischen in der englischen Renaissance", in Haug (ed.), *Formen und Funktionen* 310–335, esp. 311; and Kurz G., "Zu einer Hermeneutik der literarischen Allegorie", in ibid. 12–24, esp. 14–15.

7   He also uses the term for 'fictitious speeches supposed to be uttered, such as an advocate puts into the mouth of his client' (6.1.25); 'character as revealed by speeches' (1.8.3.); 'an imaginary person speaking on behalf of the accused' (4.1.69); and 'the portrayal of the emotions of children, women, nations, and even of voiceless things' (11.1.41). Cicero, in *De Oratore* (3.53.205), refers to 'impersonation of people' ('personarum ficta inductio'); see Cicero, *De Oratore: Book III*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (London – Cambridge, MA: 1968). The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.53.66) uses the term 'conformation' ('conformatio'), and says it 'consists in representing an absent person as present, or in making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate, and attributing to it a definite form and a language or a certain behavior to its character'; see [Cicero,] *Ad C. Herennium* [...], trans. H. Caplan (London – Cambridge, MA: 1954). Also see Whitman, *Allegory* 267.

One aspect of allegory in general and of personification allegory in particular that is easily overlooked—especially by textual scholars preoccupied with the interpretation of allegories or with allegory as a hermeneutical procedure—is its mnemonic function.[8] The most popular method of so-called artificial memory (*memoria artificialis*) was mentally to link the things to be remembered to images of living beings, objects, and the actions performed by and with them—so-called *imagines agentes* (acting images)—and place these within equally imagined spaces (*loci*) within larger constructs (usually buildings).[9] Such mnemonic sequences amounted to allegories. In fact, the theatre—both the word and the edifice to which it refers—was used to designate or to represent such artificial memories.[10]

Few scholars clearly distinguish between narrative allegory and personification allegory,[11] or even refer at all to the fact that much creative allegory is in fact personification allegory.[12] Until the appearance in 1994 of James Paxson's seminal monograph on the topic (see below),[13] literary scholars only dealt with it in books on allegory, albeit incidentally, if at all. Ernst Gombrich once remarked:

> It seems to me sometimes that it [personification] is too familiar; we tend to take it for granted rather than to ask questions about this extraordinary predominantly feminine population which greets us from the porches of cathedrals, crowds around our public monuments, marks our coins and banknotes, and turns up in our cartoons and our posters.[14]

It apparently takes an art historian like Gombrich—or at least a literary historian with an interest in pictorial art (as well as a strong imagination)—not only

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8   Plett H.F., "Konzepte des Allegorischen" 315–316; Murrin M., *The Veil of Allegory: Some Notes toward a Theory of Allegorical Rhetoric in the English Renaissance* (Chicago – London: 1969) 75–81; and Akbari S.C., *Seeing through the Veil: Optical Theory and Medieval Allegory* (Toronto etc.: 2004) 9.

9   Rossi P., *Logic and the Art of Memory: The Quest for a Universal Language* (Chicago – London: 2000) 1–20.

10   Yates F.A., *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: 1966; reprint ed., London: 2014).

11   Kurz G., "Zu einer Hermeneutik der literarischen Allegorie" 12–24.

12   Meijer, "Überlegungen" 46.

13   Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994).

14   Gombrich E.H., "Personification", in Bolgar R.R. (ed), *Classic Influences on European Culture A.D. 500–1500* (Cambridge: 1971) 247–257, here 248. On this indifference also see Nishimura S., "Personification: Its Functions and Boundaries", *Papers on Language and Literature* 50,1 (2014) 90–107.

to appreciate but also to describe and analyze the essentially visual character of personifications, be they created materially for us to see or evoked virtually for us to imagine. Gombrich again:

> If we ask what it was that led to the marriage between poetry and personification the true answer lies hardly on the purely intellectual plane. It lies less in the invention of suitable defining attributes than in the attractions of psychological and physiognomic characterization. [...] What I mean is that the artistic personification is inexhaustible to rational analysis. It is to this that it owes what might be called its vitality or simply its vividness. While we are under its spell we are unlikely to ask whether such a creature really exists or is merely a figment of the artist's imagination. And thus, the arts of poetry, of painting and sculpture, of drama and even of rhetoric aided by tradition can continue the functions of mythopoeic thought. Potentially personifications can always come to life again.[15]

Sometimes a distinction is made between two approaches to allegory: iconographic and rhetorical.[16] Most studies fall within the latter category. They approach allegory with the apparatus of traditional narratology and word-based rhetoric. Allegories are treated as fictions with plots and characters, as stories that are told or recounted (*diegesis*), as opposed to shown and enacted (*mimesis*). Their metaphorical and prosopopoeic set-up is acknowledged, but the use of metaphor and *prosopopoeia* is analyzed on a theoretical and technical level only. We get definitions and interpretations, but we never learn how the mental imagery created through allegory affected audiences in the way Gombrich describes. Apodictic utterances such as, 'All allegories are texts, words printed or handpainted on a page. They are texts first and last; webs of words woven in such a way as constantly to call attention to themselves as texts'[17]—however true—do not bolster confidence that the vitality and vividness these words generated will receive due attention.

Since Quintilian defines allegory as 'a series of metaphors', studies of allegory almost always deal with metaphor. Given the fact that he also states that allegory (and metaphor for that matter) presents 'one thing in words and another in meaning', textual scholars in their analysis of allegories hardly reach beyond the words and tend to dwell on their meaning. Because *prosopopoeia* is not part of any classical definition of allegory, however constitutive it may be of it,

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15   Gombrich, "Personification" 254–255.

16   Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil* 7.

17   Quilligan M., *The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre* (Ithaca, NY – London: 1979) 25.

personification is only addressed in passing—again, if at all.[18] Even the recent *Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, despite its ambition to offer guidance to students and scholars of diverse historical specializations, only deals with hermeneutical and textual, not visual allegory. Personification and *prosopopoeia* are hardly ever mentioned. Even essays dealing with literary masterpieces of personification tend to concentrate on *allegoresis*. However informative the volume may be on the aspects it does discuss, the visual and imaginative elements of allegory disappear from sight.

We do find this element addressed and treated explicitly, though, in a collection of art historical essays: *Early Modern Visual Allegory: Embodying Meaning*.[19] In their introduction, editors Cristelle Baskins and Lisa Rosenthal state:

> […] the dynamic function of allegory might be situated most fundamentally in its mobilization of the intersecting energies of interpellation and interpretation. Visual allegories engage these energies with distinct force, for as objects designed for particular settings and as images that

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18   In Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, NJ: 1957), much personification allegory qualifies as 'naive allegory', that is, 'a disguised form of discursive writing' which 'belongs chiefly to educational literature on an elementary level: schoolroom moralities, devotional exempla, local pageants, and the like' (90). Angus Fletcher, in his classic *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Princeton, NJ – Oxford: 2012 [1964]), assures us that '[p]ersonified abstractions are probably the most obviously allegorical agents' (25), but he deals with them as characters, protagonists, heroes, or indeed agents in narratives, the interpretation of which forms the main focus of his attention. In Edward Honig's *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory* (New York: 1966 [1959]), the terms 'personification' or 'personification allegory' do occasionally pop up (5, 39, 52, 94), but the combination of the former with 'crudest' (128), 'limited' (180), and 'conventional' (191), and its designation as 'another form of literary analogy' (116), seem to suggest that he deems the figure to be one amongst many and mainly rudimentary. Maureen Quilligan's *The Language of Allegory* calls personification 'one of the most trustworthy signals of allegory' (42) and 'a wonderful tool for revealing intraphysic battles' (234), but that is as much as she has to offer on it. Jon Whitman's *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Cambridge, MA: 1987), contains two appendices, one on the history of the term 'allegory', another on the term 'personification', but nowhere in his book does he put the latter on an equal footing with the former. It is no different in his and others' contributions to Bloomfield M.W. (ed.), *Allegory, Myth, and Symbol*, Harvard English Studies 9 (Cambridge, MA: 1981).

19   Baskins C. – Rosenthal L. (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Allegory: Embodying Meaning* (Aldershot – Burglington, VT: 2007).

represent abstract ideas in embodied form, they operate in the physical world of the senses.[20]

In this quotation, as in Gombrich's, the energy or vitality expended on viewers (or readers with a strong capacity for imagination) by visual allegory, including the embodied allegory of personification, is prioritized. Not until the image, be it real or imagined, has been fully perceived, experienced, and analyzed on this sensual, bodily level, can interpretation in the traditional iconological (or hermeneutical sense) begin. According to Baskins and Rosenthal, historians of visual culture 'are uniquely positioned to contend with the materiality of the sign, with its powerful denotative as well as connotative effects as it is apprehended through the senses and experienced in a tangible form'.[21] Since textual scholars from a semiotic point of view tend to deal with the signified, visual scholars can help provide a fuller understanding and appreciation of the signifier. Baskins and Rosenthal refer to the '[m]ore recent attention to allegory's figural basis [which] builds upon over a decade of intense interdisciplinary focus on the body as a site of cultural meaning'.[22] *Personification: Embodying Meaning and Emotion* shares this focus on embodied allegory and, more specifically, on personification allegory. Like Baskins and Rosenthal, we have endeavored to bring together both literary and art historians, asking them to reflect on personification as a mode of allegorical signification. Many of the questions posed in *Early Modern Visual Allegory* remain pertinent to the current volume: 'What does it mean to allegorize the human figure; what pressures bear upon and shape personifications; what kinds of meaning escape or exceed allegorized bodies?'.[23]

Several contributors to *Personification: Embodying Meaning and Emotion* refer to James Paxson's *The Poetics of Personification*—and with good reason.[24] It offers a thorough analysis of personification and *prosopopoeia*, tracing its theory from Antiquity to the Postmodern, offering a critical apparatus, especially to textual scholars, for analyzing the figure's workings and meanings.

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20   Baskins C. – Rosenthal L., "Introduction", in eaedem, *Early Modern Visual Allegory* 1–10, here 1.

21   Ibid. 3.

22   Ibid. 4.

23   Ibid. 3.

24   Also see his later articles on the topic. Before Paxson's book fundamental discussions of personification remained limited to essays such as Frank R.W., Jr., "The Art of Reading Medieval Personification Allegory", *English Literary History* 20,4 (1953) 237–250; and Bloomfield M.W., "A Grammatical Approach to Personification Allegory", *Modern Philology* 60,3 (1963) 161–171.

Although Paxson, too, is primarily interested in narrative allegory, he is very much aware of the wider spectrum of allegorical usage, and consequently, of the visual and imaginative aspects of personification defined or alluded to by theorists both classical and modern. He speaks of 'localized', 'animate', or 'characterological' personification, and classifies it as a form of '[s]ubstanzialization', which 'subsumes all figural maneuvers wherein a literary text presents the translation of incorporeal abstractions into the corporeal members of several ontological categories'.[25] Later he quotes William Wordsworth's definition of personification: 'Voice assumes mouth, eye, and finally face, a chain that is manifest in the etymology of the trope's name, *prosopon poein*, to confer a mask or a face (*prosopon*)'.[26]

Elsewhere Paxson deplores the fact that in allegory studies 'personification theory often falls off the table', and he asserts 'that the relinking of allegory and prosopopeia is the key to revitalizing allegory theory for literary criticism and art history'.[27] He makes this claim on the basis of a number of studies that appeared in the wake of *The Poetics of Personification*: they 'treat allegory and personifications as central topics' and 'champion a new materialism or enhanced materialism of allegory which [. . .] can help resuscitate interest in one of art and literature's most important pre-modern modes of representation'.[28] One does not necessarily have to share some of these authors' (or Paxson's own) enthusiasm for poststructuralist, postmodern, or deconstructivist writing on allegory in order to appreciate their 'reappropriation of personification or prosopopeia as the mode of allegory's most important trope via the foregrounding of the *body* or *figura*, classical rhetoric's phenomenological locus'.[29] Here Paxson refers to Quintilian, who in the *Institutio* (9.1.10) defines figure as a term that 'applies to any form in which thought is expressed, just as it applies to bodies which, whatever their composition, must have some shape'.[30] Thus, Paxson not only spans the distance between classical and postmodern literary theory, he also alerts us to the work of those literary and art historians of

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25   Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* 30, 33, 40.

26   Ibid. 69; and Tambling, *Allegory* 43.

27   Paxson J., "Re(facing) Prosopopeia and Allegory in Contemporary Theory and Iconography", *Studies in Iconography* 22 (2001), ed. R.K. Emmerson – P. Sheingorn (Kalamazoo, MI: 2001) 1–20, here 4–5.

28   Ibid. 2–3.

29   Ibid. 7.

30   Ibid. n. 22.

the twentieth century who share his fascination with the body as a carrier of meaning—not least, Erich Auerbach[31] and the aforementioned Gombrich.

There are older monographs as well, that approach textual allegory from a material, bodily perspective, written by authors who quite literally have an eye for the visual and, thus, for personification. It is no coincidence that all deal with late medieval and early modern examples of literary personification. One, of course, is C.S. Lewis.[32] His understanding of allegory is principally visual: 'It is of the very nature of thought and language to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms'; allegory 'marries pairs of sensibles and insensibles, the fundamental equivalence between the material and the immaterial'.[33] Another is Rosemond Tuve.[34] She defines personification as 'a most natural form' of allegory.[35] Her conviction that 'great allegories are usually the most concrete of all writings in texture', and furthermore, that 'it is not only by temperament that Spenser became the painter of the poets',[36] confirms the visual orientation already evident from the title of her book.[37]

The lack of attention to personification within studies of textual allegory may have something to do with the opinion—or charge—that the figure operates through characters who are seen to represent a concept merely through name, attributes, and *ekphrasis*. Because of their supposed lack of sophistication, they are deemed naive. But this assumption overlooks allegories such as *Piers Plowman*, wherein 'the allegorical and the mimetic constantly converge, and the trope which most characteristically effects that convergence is personification'.[38] Morton Bloomfield, one of the first to rehabilitate the literary study of personification, alludes to the fact that '[t]he personifier, like the cartoonist, throws his creativeness into what he has his figures *do*'.[39] In other

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31   Auerbach E., "Figura", in idem, *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, Theory and History of Literature 9 (New York: 1959) 11–78. On Auerbach and allegory, see Tambling, *Allegory* 34–35.

32   Lewis C.S., *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: 1936; reprint ed., New York: 1958).

33   Ibid. 44. Also see Bloomfield, "A Grammatical Approach" 168.

34   Tuve R., *Allegorical Imagery: Some Mediaeval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: 1966).

35   Ibid. 26.

36   Ibid. 29.

37   Another example is Susan Hagen's *Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of "The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man" as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens, GA – London: 1990).

38   Scanlon, "Personification and Penance" 22. Also see Wood S., *Conscience and the Composition of Piers Plowman* (Oxford: 2012) 6, n. 27.

39   Bloomfield, "A Grammatical Approach" 166 (italics added).

words: there is more life, more physical and psychological reality, more *mimesis* in personifications than we think.

In his concise introduction to allegory, Jeremy Tambling, too, allots personification a central position.[40] Its importance for constituting allegory literally comes to the fore, since many of his leads are taken from images and the study of art history.[41] Thus, he treats personifications as material and real. Being real, they are more—or at least potentially more—than mere representations, signs, or signifiers, establishing fixed relations with some hidden meaning, value, or truth.[42] As narrative, dramatic, or pictorial characters they develop a distinct reality, one that might not be identical with real or natural persons, but which oscillates between appearance and meaning.[43] They have a life of their own, carrying meaning within themselves, whereas allegory and *allegoresis* tend to pull one away from personification's materiality:

> Where allegoresis draws attention to hidden or abstract meanings, and allegory stresses that the surface meaning is not the ultimate quarry of interpretation, personification emphasizes the face which appears, which is, by definition, the surface meaning. In this way, allegory and personification work, characteristically, in opposite modes.[44]

Personification may also have suffered from the dismissal of allegory as merely conventional and mechanical, a charge made by the romantics, who opposed it to symbolism.[45] Its reestablished prominence within allegory theory may well be connected with Paul de Man's definition of *prosopopoeia* as 'the master

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40   Tambling, *Allegory* 39–50.

41   Two other studies, like Paxson's dating from the mid-nineties, also take a more visual approach to allegory and include pictorial material in their analyses: Teskey G., *Allegory and Violence* (Ithaca, NY: 1996); and Kelley T.M., *Reinventing Allegory*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism 22 (Cambridge: 1997). The latter has a chapter on "Allegorical Persons" (70–92).

42   Tambling, *Allegory* 42. His account of allegory leads him to criticize Erwin Panofsky's iconological method, even as he acknowledges, like others, the important contribution art historians, amongst them the afore-mentioned Gombrich, have made to both the understanding and appreciation of personification; see ibid. 40–42, 114–116, 171–172. Also see Paxson, *Poetics of Personification* 29–30, 107; and Baskins – Rosenthal, "Introduction", in eaedem (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Allegory* 2–3.

43   Cramer T., "Allegorie und Zeitgeschichte. Thesen zur Begründung des Interesses an der Allegorie im Spätmittelalter", in Haug (ed.), *Formen und Funktionen* 265–276, esp. 272.

44   Tambling, *Allegory* 171.

45   Ibid. 80–81, 115–116, 128. Also see Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* 90–91.

trope of poetic discourse',[46] since all speaking and writing involves the anthro-pomorphization of reality—an echo of Lewis's quotation above and at the same time a prospective formulation of cognitive studies' current assertion that all our thinking is metaphorical and embodied.

To medieval and early modern audiences, moreover, the reality aspect of personification extended beyond that of being a material sign. Personifications *were* what they signified. As Johan Huizinga observes:

> Was there any difference between the reality of the holy figures and the purely symbolic? [...] One may in all seriousness consider that Fortune and Faux-Semblant were just as alive as St. Barbara and St. Christopher. Let us not forget that one figure rose from free fantasy outside any dog-matic sanction and acquired a greater reality than any saint and survived them all: Death.[47]

It seems that literary scholars over the last two decades have become much more aware of personification; they now tend 'to view personification not as a harbinger of allegory's weakness, but a central discursive resource and rhe-torical goal'.[48] Two recent volumes of essays, *Thinking Allegory Otherwise* and *On Allegory*, give due consideration to visual allegory and personification.[49] Brenda Machosky, in particular, defines the mode as both verbal and visual: 'There is general agreement that the term allegory refers to a way of saying

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46   Cited in Tambling, *Allegory* 140.

47   Huizinga J., *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. R.J. Payton – U. Mammitzsch (London: 1924; reprint ed., Chicago: 1996) 246. He makes comparable observations in *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*, International Library of Sociology (London: 1944; reprint ed., London et al.: 1980) 139–140. Also see Gombrich, "Personification" 255. This aspect may also be gauged from the way personification was used to concretize positions and relations in medieval society, as expressed in law. See Fowler E., *Literary Character: The Human Figure in Early English Writing* (Ithaca, NY – London: 2003) 24–27. The 'quasi-independent, quasi-material existence' and other bodily aspects of personification in medieval texts, especially theatre, are succinctly treated in Cooper H., "The Afterlife of Personification", in Morse R. – Cooper H. – Holland P. (eds.), *Medieval Shakespeare: Pasts and Presents* (Cambridge: 2013) 98–116, esp. 104.

48   Scanlon R., "Personification and Penance", *The Yearbook of Langland Studies* 21 (2007) 1–29, here 10.

49   Machosky B. (ed.), *Thinking Allegory Otherwise* (Stanford: 2005); and Carr M. – Clarke K.P. – Nievergelt M. (eds.), *On Allegory: Some Medieval Aspects and Approaches* (Cambridge: 2008).

or showing one thing and meaning another'.[50] She defines the study of allegory as phenomenological, 'because it is a study of appearance, the way that phenomena appear by means of allegory. In allegory there is a phenomenologically simultaneous appearance of two things in the same image, in the same "space" at the same time';[51] she thus devotes a whole chapter to "The Allegorical Image".[52]

The currency of personification within modernist literary practice may be gauged from Marina Warner's analysis of female personifications of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: 'To lure, to delight, to appetize, to please, these [personifications] confer the power to persuade: as the spur to desire, as the excitement of the senses, as a weapon of delight'.[53] This is all true, of course, but at the same time—and herein lies one of the reasons for the importance of personification in the pre-modern period—allegory was construed as a method of conveying and impressing opinions and truths, as an authorizing vehicle for the dissemination of cultural values: 'Allegory flourishes at times of intense cultural disruption and reassessment. Not only the place of these texts within culture but the whole set of sociopolitical values that these texts are to justify and propound is what is really at issue'.[54] Personification was deemed intensely expressive of mental and bodily states, ranging from contemplative quietude to passionate tumult, and as such, it was considered one of the most effective, persuasive, and exigent of figurative devices.[55]

Period Voices

The Jesuit pedagogue and master rhetorician Cyprien Soarez, s.j., provides a standard definition of personification or, more precisely, *prosopopoeia*, in the handbook he wrote for students enrolled at the order's schools and colleges, *De arte rhetorica libri tres, ex Aristotele, Cicerone, & Quinctiliano praecipue deprompti* (Paris, Ex officina Thomas Brumen: 1565). His account usefully

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50   Machosky B., *Structures of Appearing: Allegory and the Work of Literature* (New York: 2012) 1 (italics added).

51   Ibid.

52   Ibid. 28–63.

53   Warner M., *Monuments & Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: 1985; reprint ed., London: 1987) xx.

54   Madsen *Rereading Allegory* 135. Also see Tambling, *Allegory* 8–9.

55   Tambling, *Allegory* 10. Also see Edgecombe R.S., "Ways of Personifying", *Style* 31.1 (1997) 1–13, esp. 1–2; and Lyons J.D., "Meditation and the Inner Voice", in *New Literary History* 37.3 (2006) 525–538, esp. 527–528.

enumerates the characteristics of this rhetorical figure, which he classifies at the outset as a *figura sententiarum* ('figure of thought'), rather than *figura verborum* (figure of speech). The distinction proves crucial since figures of thought do not simply amplify words, as if painting them with ornaments, but rather, clarify the speaker's arguments by adorning them with *schemata* ('sensory images') that illuminate the thoughts he is formulating. These images set the matters under consideration in a clearer light, and as such, they belong to a higher species of ornament than mere *figurae verborum*:

> The figure of thought consists not in words but in the dignity of things themselves, and for this reason such ornaments are greater [than figures of speech]. […] The Greeks call those things that adorn oratory in the highest degree *schemata*: and this definition indicates that these images exercise their effect not by painting words but by illuminating thoughts: which is to say that they clarify most if not all thoughts by means of some mimetic image (*aliqua specie*).[56]

Personification, as this formulation implies, operates by means of clarifying images that heighten the persuasive force of one's arguments. It visually enriches them by showing how they may be bodied forth. Specifically, personification involves the 'introduction of fictitious persons' whose emphatic presence intensifies what we say, by enacting how speech is bodily produced, and doing so, in a kind of mise en abime, from within the very speech we ourselves are producing. This figure, when properly deployed, has the power to convince the auditor that he sees the orator's interlocutors addressing him, or sees them speaking with each other, or sees speakers foreign to him, even his enemies, conversing amongst themselves. It can even seem to raise the dead, giving them a voice:

> *Prosopopoeia* is the introduction of fictitious persons (literally, the fictive introduction of persons), or again, a most weighty, intensifying

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56 Soarez Cyprien, *De arte rhetorica libri tres, ex Aristotele, Cicerone, & Quinctiliano praecipue deprompti* (Paris, Ex officina Thomas Brumen: 1565; reprint ed., Cologne, Apud Gosvinum Cholinum: 1591) 117–118: 'Est autem sententiarum exornatio, quae non in verbis, sed in ipsis rebus quandam habet dignitatem. Atque ea de caussa sententiarum ornamenta maiora sunt. […] Schemata ea vocant Graeci, quae maxime ornent orationem: eaque ut definitio demonstrat, non tam in verbis pingendis pondus habent, quam in illuminandis sententijs. Nec aliud quicquam est dicere, nisi omnes, aut certe plerasque aliqua specie illuminare sententias'.

ornament: through it, we bring plausibly into our speeches the speeches
of our adversaries, the speeches we conduct with other speakers, the
speeches they address to each other, putting suitable persons forward for
the purposes of exhortation, rebuke, complaint, praise, and commiseration. Indeed, this mode of speech is granted the power of bringing the
dead back to life.[57]

Personification, so construed, is both visual and verbal: it requires the orator to
fashion a speaking likeness, that is, the image of another speaker, who is seen
to speak approvingly or disapprovingly with the intention of moving someone
else to action. The speaker within the speech, states Soarez, can personify a
group of people—the inhabitants of a city, a republic, or an entire country,
for example—or embody an otherwise disembodied concept, such as rumor,
pleasure, or moral virtue. But whomsoever or whatsoever the prosopopoeic
image concretizes, if it fails to be affective or speaks ineloquently, then the fiction of personhood will appear implausible and meretricious:

> Cities, too, and peoples receive a voice, and in this way, through them,
> the figure is made more agreeable. For example, if the fatherland, dearer
> to me than my very life, if all Italy, if the whole republic, were to speak
> with me, saying, 'What is to be done, Marcus Tullius?'. [...] But [in this]
> a great measure of eloquence is desirable. For fictions, since they lack
> reality, being implausible by nature, must move us greatly if they are
> not to be thought truthless vanities. And moreover, we may oftentimes
> fashion images like Virgil's Fame, Prodicus's Vice and Virtue (as relayed
> by Xenophon), and the many such entities in Ovid. By means of *prosopopoeia*, bodily forms are devised for things devoid of bodies.[58]

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57   Ibid. 120–121: 'Prosopopoeia est personarum ficta inductio, vel gravissimum lumen
     augendi: hac & adversariorum, & nostros cum alijs sermones, et aliorum inter se
     credibiliter introducimus: et suadendo, obiurgando, querendo, laudando, miserando
     personas idoneas damus. Quin mortuos excitare in hoc genere dicendi concessum est'.

58   Ibid. 121: 'Urbes etiam, populique vocem accipiunt, in quibus hoc modo mollior fit figura.
     Etenim si mecum patria, qua mihi vita mea multo est charior, si cuncta Italia, si omnis
     respubl[ica] sic loqueretur: M. Tulli quid agis? [...] Sed magna quaedam vis eloquentiae
     desideratur. Falsa enim & incredibilia natura necesse est aut magis moveant, quia supra
     vera sunt; aut pro vanis accipiantur, quia vera non sunt. Formas quoque fingimus saepe, ut
     famae Virgil, ut voluptatis ac virtutis (quemadmodum a Xenophonte traditur) Prodicus,
     ut multarum aliarum rerum Ovidius'. In margin: 'Formae rerum, quae corporis expertes
     sunt, per Prosopoeiam finguntur'.

Personifications, in giving voice to arguments, convince us by speaking eloquently and movingly. More than this, their eloquence confers on them an evidentiary value, persuading us that Fame, Vice, Virtue, et alii are real, not merely factitious. Conversely, their status as living beings conduces to the credibility of the impassioned things they say.

Were these precepts implemented, and if so, how did they work in practice? The simple answer is yes, as perusal of Jesuit emblem books quickly confirms, although close inspection also reveals that the visual form of the personification—both how it looks and what it does—often becomes the primary source of the author's arguments. Eloquence operates as much visually as verbally, or is primarily effected by pictorial means. Take Emblem 45, "Mundus delirans, non sapit, quae Dei sunt" ("The crazy World fails to know the things that are God's"), in Jan David, *Veridicus Christianus* (*The True Christian*) (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1601) [Fig. 1]. The *Veridicus Christianus* consists of one hundred chapters, starting with Fear of the Lord and ending with the Four Last Things, that encompass the full range of topics—virtues, vices, God-given faculties of the body and the spirit, etc.—which any good Christian must constantly meditate, if he wishes to conduct his life virtuously and thereby achieve salvation. Each chapter centers on an emblem comprising the usual three parts—motto, picture, and epigrams (here, in Latin, Dutch, and French)—and incorporates an extensive exegetical commentary that closely attaches to the emblematic image. The engraver Theodoor Galle designed the pictures, working closely with David, and he and his workshop engraved the book's title-page and hundred plates, all of which are lettered to correlate with specific passages, likewise lettered, in the commentaries. Emblem 45 forms part of an extended discussion of the Eight Beatitudes, stretching over two chapters. The main protagonist, as the motto indicates, is *Mundus* ('The Terrestrial World'), whose character is discernible from her attributes (the crown in the form of an imperial orb, the ass-eared cowl draped around her neck, the mask, its eyeholes dark, covering her face, and, just behind her, the fool perched upon a column, who dangles an immense pair of scales) and actions (her downward gaze, earthbound pose, and topsy-turvy manipulation of the scales).

The epigrams focus on *Mundus*'s actions and attittude:

> Latin: 'Is it not the case that the World spurns these things as mere playthings. She raves, neither seeing what's true, nor judging what's just'.
> Dutch: 'The World mocks such things, construing them as base and low. The world's a fool who knows not what she says'.
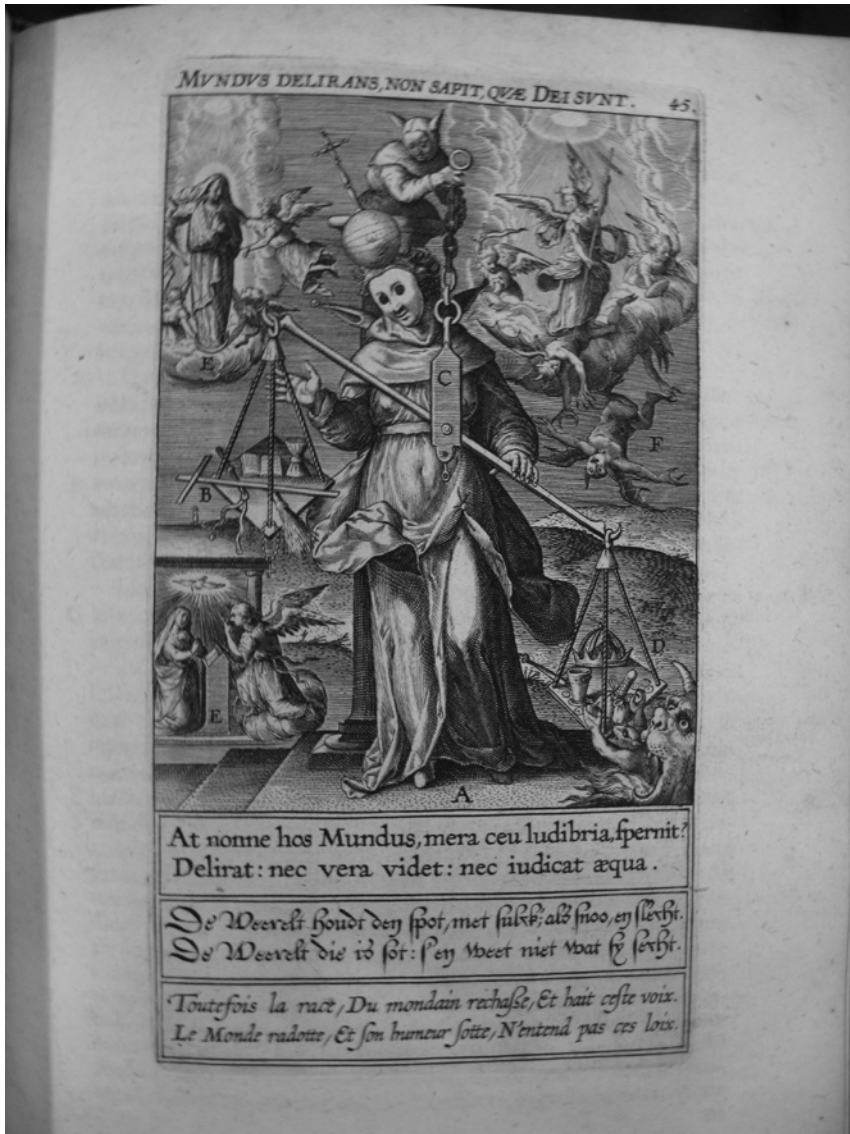
French: 'However much the race of men chases away this hateful voice.
The World goes on wittering, and her foolish humor respects no laws'.[59]

The things *Mundus* is seen to spurn are the eucharistic implements (missal
and chalice) and *arma Christi* (scourge, whip, and cross, labeled B) in the pan
at left, none of which she has any intention of grasping, as her open-handed
gesture makes evident. Contrariwise, with her left hand she pushes down on
the pan at right, signaling her preference for its 'weighty' and, in this sense,
momentous contents (crown, scepter, goblet, die, coins, and moneybag,
labeled D). The covetous demon emerging from hell's mouth to seize these
items echoes *Mundus's* gesture of reaching and grasping, and thus impugns her
delirious and injudicious choice of worldly things.

As will already be apparent, *Mundus*'s identity, her persona, emanates from
three types of symbolic attribute; first, conventional appurtenances, such as
the orb that functions as a rebus of her name; second, novel hallmarks, such
as the smiling mask with black disks for eyes, which adverts to her mock-
ing temperament and spiritual blindness, and signifies her deceitful char-
acter, lack of discernment, and paucity of self-knowledge; third, her action
of weighing falsely, the perverse nature of which is underscored by contrast
with the humble Virgin (E) who, weighing her options wisely, humbly chose
to be the mother of God, and, exalted by her humility, was ultimately assumed
heavenward. Similarly, her action of pressing down is set against St. Michael's
of bearing down upon Lucifer (F), whom he casts out of heaven. Finally, the
foolishness of her actions finds its embodied parallel in the fool dressed like
her in foolscap, who seems virtually to rise from her head; his gestures—raised
right arm, lowered left—imitate hers (and hers his), and just as he stares down
at the terrestrial orb, mocking it, so she mocks the sacred objects placed in the
balance, idiotically rating them as trifling and of little weight. As we shall see,
there are further visual ironies at play, the nature of which the commentary
teases out.

The principal function of the commentary, however, is to give *Mundus* a
voice: she speaks eloquently, if fatuously, and with conviction. David compares

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59   David Jan, *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem
      Moretum: 1601), *imago* 45:
      'At nonne hos Mundus, mera ceu ludibria, spernit?
      Delirat: nec vera vident: nec iudicat aequa'.
      'De Weerelt houdt den spot, met sulck; als snoo, en slecht.
      De Weerelt die is sot: s'en weet niet wat sy secht'.
      'Toutefois la race / Du mondain rechasse / Et hait ceste voix.
      Le Monde radotte / Et son humeur sotte / N'entend pas ces loix'.

her to a teacher of false precepts ('mundus docet') and distinguishes her in this respect from that greatest of teachers, God himself, as described by the Psalmist in *Psalm* 143:15: 'For that people who truly cherish God, holding him to be [their] Father and Lord, are more blessed in every way by far, since he entirely differs from the World, in the way he teaches his own'. *Psalm* 143:12–15, surprisingly, also provides the words *Mundus* is heard to enunciate. In effect, David allows the Psalmist to ventriloquize the World, ascribing to her the things said by 'the strange children whose mouth hath spoken vanity', as paraphrased in *Psalm* 143:12–15. But if she thus speaks forcefully and passionately in the Psalmist's voice, she does so without registering his minatory irony. She believes the things she reports: 'Their daughters decked out, adorned round about after the similitude of a temple: their storehouses full, flowing out of this into that: their sheep fruitful in young, abounding in their goings forth: their oxen fat. There is no breach of wall, nor passage, nor crying out in their street. They have called the people happy, that hath these things'.

David emphasizes that the things *Mundus* says precisely correlate to the things she does. How she looks is of a piece with how and what she speaks. She personifies the World as much in word as in deed, and her power to persuade flows from her embodied personhood, not just from her articulacy:

> Wherefore the response [to the question posed in the first line of the epigram] states very aptly: 'The World's deranged'. In mocking the eight beatitudes, going so far as to declare them execrable, truly she knows not what she speaks, and she judges badly. For indeed, she call bad things good and good things bad, darkness light and light darkness, bitterness sweet and sweetness bitter. The pleasure of virtue she considers worthless, and even flees virtue as if it were burdensome and dolorous; the world's acidulous and toilsome delights she calls pleasurable and wonderingly commends; and thus she deceives her followers miserably.
>
> For this reason, worldly vanity may be depicted in the likeness of a foolish woman who holds a balance, one part of which (the one containing virtues and good works) she elevates, as being of no importance, whereas the opposing part, wherein the world's vanities, pleasures, and allurements are set, she weighs down, her hand placed nearby, as if these were things of grave significance; and this she does in order to persuade foolish men that the latter are more advantageous than the former.[60]

60   Ibid. 145: 'Quare optime dicit Responsio: *Mundus delirat.* Dum octo istas Beatitudines rident, immo ut infelicitates detestatur: nescit vere quid dicat; quia male iudicat. Dicit namque malum bonum, & bonum malum; tenebras lucem, & lucem tenebras; amarum dulce, & dulce amarum. Voluptatem virtutum nihili facit, immo ut tristitiam &

On this account, the types of symbolic attribute that identify *Mundus* as the personified World are also her chief instruments of persuasion, and the arguments they purvey are indistinguishable, in effect if not form, from the visual traits that confer on her the quality of personhood.

David's commentary elaborates upon the eloquence of this personification by calling attention to other ways in which her appearance and actions—how she looks and what she is seen to do—correspond to what she has been heard to say foolishly and enticingly in the words of *Psalm* 143. He implicitly draws a parallel between her darkly masked eyes as indices of blind ignorance ('per opacam enim crassae tuae ignorantiae caliginem') and her inability to observe the foolishness of her actions ('interim stulta non animadvertit') or recognize how different they are from God's, who exalts by humbling, humbles to exalt ('non recogitant enim mundus, Deum contrariae esse sententiae […] ut qui humiles exaltet, & se exaltantes humiliet').[61] In preferring trifles and trumperies, she elevates them as high as the fool perched upon the column behind her ('crepundis interim aliisque reculis in caelum sublatis'). Just as David compares these trifles to children's rattles ('crepudiis'), so Galle makes the orb of the world, its cross greatly lengthened, resemble such a toy. The fool appears grafted to *Mundus*'s head because the 'person of the world is aggregated from the impure detritus of common men'.[62] Heavyset, her feet firmly planted on the ground, her head lowered, *Mundus* lowers the balance to indicate her love of terrestrial *voluptates*. She is as earthbound as the multitude in *Matthew* 5, who, refusing to climb the mountain with Christ and the apostles, failed to hear him preach the sermon on the beatitudes: 'For mundane men do not seek what is truly spiritual and celestial, even if they follow Christ at a distance and rejoice in the appellation Christian. Inconstant, they remain attached to earthly things, whereas Christ climbs ever higher. […] They are solely affected by those things that anchor them fixedly to earth'.[63] Indeed, so distant is *Mundus*

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amarulentiam refugit; acerbam interim & laboriosam mundi oblectationem amoenitatem vocat, & mire commendat; suosque ita sectatores misere decipit.

Ideoque instar stultae mulieris depingi potest mundi vanitas; quae bilancem habeat, cuius partem unam (in qua, quae virtutum & piorum operum sunt, continentur) admota manu elevat ut nullius momenti, partem vero oppositam, ubi vanitates, voluptates, & illecebrae mundi repositae, tanquam gravia, magnique ponderis deorsum premit; ut haec prioribus illis maioris esse praemij stultis persuadeat'.

61   Ibid.

62   Ibid. 146: 'Ita communiter, faex hominum vulgarium, ex quorum colluvie mundi persona conflatur, planis, facilibus, commodis, terrenis, coenosis, & corporeis gaudent'.

63   Ibid.: 'Non enim quaerunt mundani homines, tametsi a longe Christum sequantur, & Christiani nomine gaudeant, ea quae vere spiritualia ac caelestia sunt. In inferioribus

from Christ that she remains oblivious to a key irony: in raising up what she purports to deprecate, *Mundus* is inadvertently imitating Christ, literally lifting sacred things heavenward (the chalice, missal, and *arma Christi*), while lowering hellward the worldly paraphernalia she so patently adores. Blind to the Christian values she unwittingly enacts, she epitomizes the failure to read the true meaning of one's actions: incapable of discerning what she truly represents, she can be said to personify the inability to read personification itself, to uncover its latencies and and decode its apparencies:

> And meanwhile, being foolish, she does not notice that in elevating good things, she brings them closer to heaven, and nor that by lowering vain and perverse things, she situates them closer to hell, where they belong. […] O foolish World! How little you attend to what you speak! […] Whatever extends beyond the limits of your carnal wisdom, whatever is beyond you, beyond the tip of your nose, so to speak, is that which you neither know nor judge anywise to be good. Yes, indeed, whatever is redolent of virtue and the spirit, on your own behalf, with your eyes, smell, and taste you suffer, to the very bottom of your heart. No wonder, then, if you now judge and speak so rashly, foolishly, and contrarily about this heavenly doctrine, this divine philosophy of the eight beatitudes.[64]

David, in this passage, once again elides words and deeds, image and speech, appearance and argument, insisting that the figure of personification operates both visually and verbally, bodying forth and articulating in equal measure.

It bears repeating that David's self-reflexive exposition of the personification *Mundus* occurs in a Jesuit emblem book. The emblematic context requires the reader-viewer to attend closely to the relation between visual and verbal modes of signification, as he sets about the task of interpreting figurative words and images and parsing how they are conjoined. Emblems were therefore an

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infirmiores, Christo in altiora ascendente, remanebant. […] Illa sola afficiunt, illa eos humi defixos tenent'.

64   Ibid. 145–146: 'Et interim stulta non animadvertit, se bona elevando, caelo propinquiora facere; vana vero & prava deprimendo, tanquam quae magni momenti sint, inferno reddere viciniora, ut vere sunt. […] O mundi stultitiam! quam parum quid dicas attendis! […] Quod extra carnalis tuae sapientiae limites est positum, quodque supra te est, id est, ultra narium tuarum peripheriam vel horizontem, non id sapis, neque id ullo tibi modo probatur: immo etiam quoad eiusmodi quae virtutem & spiritum redolent, in propria causa oculis, olfactu, ac gustu laboras, usque ad imum cordis tui fundum. Quid mirum igitur, si de sublimi hac, caelesti, ac divina doctrina atque octo Beatitudinum Philosophia, tam temere, tam stulte, & tam contrario plane modo iudicas & loqueris?'

ideal breeding ground for personifications, as also for the theoretical exam-
ination of this figure, which generally takes the form of a speaking likeness
and, as such, conveys arguments both bodily and verbally, in word and image.
There were other contexts as well that fostered interrogation of the figure—
the *spelen van sinne* (allegorical plays) of the Dutch and Flemish *rederijker-
skamers* (chambers of rhetoric), for example, and treatises on art, such as
Karel van Mander's foundational *Schilder-Boeck* (*Book on Picturing*) (Haarlem,
Paschier van Wesbusch: 1604). Book VI of the *Schilder-Boeck*, the "Wtbeeldinge
der figueren" ("Portrayal of Figures"), printed for Van Wesbusch by Jacob de
Meester, contains a short disquisition on personification, which forms part of
the discussion of poetic devises and hieroglyphs.

Van Mander's notion of what constitutes a personification—*sin-gevend
beeld* ('sense- bearing image')—and how it communicates with the beholder
is quite different from Jan David's. He implicitly differentiates between rhetori-
cal and pictorial usage of this *figura*, most obviously by 'silencing' his *sin-ghev-
ende beelden*, who now purvey their messages purely visually, viz., pictorially.[65]
They form part of Van Mander's attempt throughout the *Schilder-Boeck* to
demarcate a space for *schilderconst*, in which it or, better, she proves more
eloquent than any other *const*, the literary arts included. He spells this out at
the start of "Wtbeeldinge: Het derde boeck": 'In the preceding, I have to some
extent opened the way for my sons of *schilderconst*, showing them how to rep-
resent without letters a certain sense or meaning, in such a way that it may be
decoded or understood by people versed in any language, so long as they are
clever and well-practised'.[66] He then gives some examples of 'how to write with-
out letters, with drawings or figural images, in the manner of the rhetoricians,
who are wont thus to tender their poems or devices'.[67] Van Mander has in mind
the *blazoenen* (blazons) of the chambers of rhetoric, as well as the prevalence

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65   Mander Karel van, "Wtbeeldinge der figueren: waer in te sien is, hoe d'Heydenen hun Goden
      uytghebeeldt, en onderscheyden hebben: hoe d'Egyptsche yet beteyckenden met Dieren
      of anders, en eenighe meeninghen te kennen gaven, met noch meer omstandicheden",
      in idem, *Het Schilder-Boeck, waer in voor eerst de leerlustighe Ieught den grondt der Edel
      Vry Schilderconst in verschedyen deelen wort voorghedraghen* [...] (Haarlem, Paschier van
      Wesbusch: 1604), fol. 135r: '[...] ben ick wel lustich eenighe voorbeelden der gheraemde
      beduydselen, of sin-gheven gedaenten der beeldinghen voor te stellen [...]'.

66   Ibid.: 'In dit voorige heb ick nu mijn Schilder-jeught eenighsins den wegh gheopent, om
      sonder letteren eenighen sin oft meeninge voor te stellen, met beduydingen, die alle
      volcken in eyghen spraeck, so sy doch vernuftigh, oft yet ervaren zijn, souden connen
      raden, en verstaen'.

67   Ibid.: '[...] die wijse van sonder letteren te schrijven, met teecken oft figueren, ghelijck
      de Rethorijckers eenighe devijsen oft ghedichten pleghen uyt te stellen [...]'.

of personifications in their *gedichten* ('poems') and plays. When they rely on visual figures such as these, they are comparable to *schilders*, for they become for all intents and purposes practitioners of *schilderconst*.

Van Mander then qualifies his remarks: devices and poems laden with symbolic images, though they may seem to resemble Egyptian hieroglyphs, belong to a different order of signification, in his view. This is because they operate like rebuses, each device or symbol calling up a word, phrase, or clause, whereas hieroglyphs, more than mere proxies for spoken or written language, were themselves a visual language *sonder letteren*, cognized visually not verbally: 'Common folk admiringly behold this manner of writing without letters, [...] which [devices and poems], even though they are neither read nor understood like [written] language, are not so fine as the ancient Egyptian method of [composing] hieroglyphs or fashioning images'.[68] An example of this modern pseudo-hieroglyphic method is the allegorical representation of the continuous sequence 'peace begets industry, industry wealth, wealth pride, pride discord, discord war, war poverty, poverty humility, humility peace': 'Firstly, for peace one may put forward the caduceus, or a helmet in the form of a beehive, or an olive branch. Industry can take the form of a ploughshare, ship's rudder, hammer, trouwel, spool, and other useful utensils of this sort: this may be placed atop the beehive helm or other peace symbols, to show that peace bears or produces industry. Above industry one may represent wealth by means of a merchant's purse, etc.'[69] Each object is a metonym for the concept signified, and the heaping up of objects signifies the verbal action of 'bearing' or 'producing'.

Van Mander now turns to *sin-ghevende beelden*, which he clearly demarcates from the metonymic pseudo-hieroglyphs: their symbolic identity emerges from the relation between the many symbolic objects they carry and their method of mobilizing them. Although the type of action they perform is relatively fixed, their appearance is otherwise variable, since they can be depicted

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68   Ibid.: 'Het worden wel veel met verwonderen by den ghemeenen volcke ghesien, [...] welcke dinghen alsoose niet als in een spraeck ghelesen, oft verstaen en worden, en zijn soo uytnemende niet, als de oude Egyptsche wijse der Hieroglyphicken, oft uytbeeldingen'.

69   Ibid. fol. 135r–v: 'Vrede brengt neeringe, neeringe rijckdom, rijckdom hooghmoet, hooghmoet twist, twist krijgh, krijgh armoede, armoede ootmoet, ootmoet brengt vrede. [...] Eerstlijck, voor den Vrede machmen stellen *Mercurij* roede, oft eenen Helm tot Biekorf, oft eenen Olijftack. Neeringe machmen uytbeelden met ploegh-kouter, schip-roer, hamer, truffel, spoel, en sulck noodighste tuygh: dit machmen op den voorseyden Biekorfschen Helm, oft ander vrede-teycken stellen, tot bewijs, dat Vrede neeringhe voortbrengt oft draeght. Boven de neeringhe machmen maken rijckdom, met een stockbeurs uytgebeeldt, etc.'

with one or another object, or several objects together. For instance, Peace, or Concord (*Vrede, oft Eendracht*) appears as a woman crowned with olive, laurel, or a wreath of roses, and holding grains of wheat in her hand, or alternatively, a pitcher in the right hand, a cornucopia in the left, or yet again, the *fasces* or a wrencher (a tool used by ropemakers to twist rope); she proffers these objects, as if gifting them to the beholder.[70] None of these objects, in and of itself, signifies peace, nor does the woman on her own embody concord; rather, the confluence of person and things, how she interacts with or manipulates them, is constitutive of the figure's significance, which is to say, of her identity. And precisely because identity and embodied meaning are inextricably linked, this meaning will be tinged with feeling and motivation, animated by an implied psychology of soul. The same is true of the next personification, Fidelity (*Trouw*), whom the ancients dressed in white, in allusion to the fidelity of elderly (that is, grey-haired) couples. He or she (Van Mander is not explicit about this figure's gender) is often shown raising the right arm in an open-handed gesture that was commonly interpreted as a peace-offering, and he or she sometimes also displays a staff topped with clasped hands.[71]

Whereas Peace and Fidelity speak not a word, communicating their meaning solely by visual means, on the model of the ancients, Friendship (*Vriendtschap*), is occasionally shown pointing at the words 'life and death' ('leven en doot') or 'far and near') ('verre en by') written upon her breast, to avow that neither time nor space can compromise friendship.[72] This is a practice Van Mander deprecates: '[…] but indeed, I should prefer that she point at no text'.[73] Instead, young in age, dressed in a robe of rough fabric, her head bare, she should simply point at her heart, thus to signify that she candidly conveys her true intentions, never concealing them from friends. Her youth declares that true friendship remains ever fresh; her bare head attests that she is never ashamed to reveal herself as a friend; her rough robe indicates that friendship is undeterred by adversity. These attributes are metaphors for affective actions whereby friendship makes itself felt and also visibly discernible.

The final three personifications marshaled by Van Mander—Fortune (*Avontuer*), Occasion (*Oorsaeck*), and Good Favor (*Ionste*)—are very similar in the motions they enact: all three speed along, their movements sudden and

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70   Van Mander, "Van Vrede, oft Eendracht", in ibid. fols. 135v–136r.

71   Van Mander, "Van de Trouw", in ibid. fol. 136r.

72   Van Mander, "Van de Vriendtschap", in ibid.: '[…] in welcks boort was gheschreven, leven en doot […] en toonde met eenen vinger haer herte, waer op was geschreven, verre en by […]'.

73   Ibid.: 'doch watmen sonder schrift con doen, soud' ick beter achten'.

unstable, but neverending. In other respects, however, their appearance varies greatly. Fortune is pictured riding a round stone or turning a wheel up which some men climb, down which others fall. She can wear the imperial orb like a crown; her hands and feet may be winged; she can hold an adze, a rudder, or a cornucopia; and she may appear as transparent and brittle as glass.[74] Occasion is painted in the ancient Roman manner, as a woman (or, now and again, a child), one foot perched on a spinning wheel, hair covering her face, the back of her head bald, to signify that opportunity often flies past, unrecognized, and once gone, may no longer be grasped.[75] Finally, Good Favor appears in the guise of a 'blind child' ('blint kindt'), the form given her by the ancient painter Apelles.[76] Her wings indicate that Favor flies whithersoever the wind blows. One foot perches on a wheel to show how unsteady is the path she and her followers tread. She is blind because the fortunate are often oblivious to the unfortunate, and she is puffed up to expose her lack of self-knowledge. Personified around Favor are a retinue of her ill effects: Self-Adulation (*Pluymstrijckerie*) staring at herself in a mirror, followed by Envy (*Nijdicheyt*), and then Riches (*Rijckdommen*), Sensual Pleasures (*Behaginghen*), and Striving after Vice (*Ondeughts Bedrijf*).[77] Van Mander has Apelles speak in dialogue with a Poet (*Poeet*), who asks the painter to justify Good Favor's peculiar appearance, but Favor herself, like Fortune and Occasion, refrains from speech.[78] It is left to the viewer to discern why she looks the way she does, in emulation of Apelles and the Poet, who interpret the pictured personifications by looking attentively at the coalescence of action, attribute, and circumstance. For Van Mander, then, personification has the power to make us speak, but it exercises this power silently, through the sheer force of visual eloquence. Construed as a purely pictorial exercise, personification need not involve, as it did for Soarez and David, giving one's 'sin-ghevende beelden' a speaking voice. To make this point as clear as possible, Van Mander himself demurs from writing at length about this species of *uytbeeldinghe*. Rather, he yields pride of place to the 'sons

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74   Van Mander, "Van d'Avontuer", in ibid.

75   Van Mander, "Van de Oorsaeck", in ibid. fol. 136r–v.

76   Van Mander, "Van de Ionste", in ibid. fol. 136v: 'De Schilderije van de Ionste, en was soo heel niet onghelijck die van der Oorsake, en was gebeeldet met een jongh blint kindt'.

77   Ibid.

78   Ibid.: 'van welcke een Poeet sprekende, wendt hem tot *Apellem* den Schilder, segghende:
      Den Poeet.
      Apelles, seght my doch, wat Vrouwe ist die ick sie
      By Ionste altijt? en blijft ghestadich aen haer sie?
      Apelles.
      Dat is pluymstrijckerie. Etc.'

of *schilderconst*, whose task it is, freely to devise and depict such *beelden*, in images not words:

> Before I finish, it behooves me to produce a few *sin-gevende beelden*, with regard to which more than enough is known: for example, how to represent the seven Virtues or Vices, the Four Elements, the Four Seasons, the Twelve Months, and so forth. Here I have neither the time nor inclination fully to describe them one by one, and I leave it to each [*schilder*] freely to devise what he will, helping himself to what has already been said. […] With this figure of Good Favor I adjure Art-Loving Youth to bring many more such figures to pass, inventing them from their storehouse of memory. […] I could have said much more here, but it will suffice to have roused others to add [what they may] and bring various things to light.[79]

Soarez, David, and Van Mander give some sense of the wide spectrum of approaches to personification: howsoever variously it is construed, personification is consistently endorsed as a rhetorical and/or pictorial instrument preeminently capable of embodying meaning and emotion by means of images. The essays collected in this volume explore some of the many forms this presumption took in late medieval and early-modern European art and literature.

Cognitive Perspectives on Personification

The volume starts with a chapter by Jean Bochorova, who asks 'what […] modern neuropsychological insights about human cognition tell us about the nature of personification in poetry and art?'. Drawing on insights from various

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79   Ibid. fols. 135v–136v: 'Eer ick noch eyndighe, behoef ick wel eenighe ander uytbeeldinghe voort te stellen, aengaende de sin-ghevende beelden, waer van veel dingen genoech gemeen zijn: als, hoe men de seven Deughden uytbeeldt, oock d'ondeughden, vier Elementen, vier Tijden, 12. Maenden, en dergelijcke. Hier heb ick geenen moedt, noch oock tijt, yeder te voldoen, latende elck vry te versieren, en hem te behelpen, met t'ghene voorhenen van my verhaelt is. […]
    Met dese Ionste wil ick den Ionstighen Const-lievenden bevelen, veel ander uytbeeldinghen te weghe te brenghen, en voort uyt zijnen eygenen gheest te versieren […]. Daer waren veel ander dinghen sonder eyndt wel meer by te brenghen: Dan t'sal ghenoech wesen, om een ander te verwecken, hier meer by te voeghen, oft verscheyden vindinghen aen den dagh te brenghen'.

fields and disciplines, she puts together a sample catalogue of cognitive principles that lie at the basis of personification and allegorical representation in general. We are guided through the world of aesthetic universals, and are made familiar with the theory of structured Connectionism, to which we owe the insight 'that metaphorical thinking is at the heart of all human cognition and that to study metaphor is to study truth as we are able to comprehend it'. This is why, in Bochorova's view, personification allegory was so widely applied in pre-modern art and literature. Allegorical theatre, for example, visualized so-called primary metaphors: causes (for forces), motions (for changes), locations (for states). Bocharova takes her examples from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, demonstrating that the way we understand (or perceive, or experience) the concept of despair in this text 'is just as strongly influenced by the poetry and imagery in the first half of the scene as it is by the explicit theological arguments that follow'.

Personification and the Critical Tradition

Three authors deal with personification as it appears in three epitomes of late medieval and early-modern allegorical writing. They apply to the personified characters in these texts critical-hermeneutical concepts taken from literary and cultural studies. Jeremy Tambling aims to show how the portrayal of St. Francis in Dante's *Divina Comedia* amounts to an affective form of personification, his life becoming a living web of spiritual references. Following in the steps of Erich Auerbach and building on insights from Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Benjamin, Tambling argues that 'personifications in Dante imply people at the height of their individualism, but still in process of becoming different'. It is in Dante's seemingly positivist, biographical narrative of Francis's life, put in the mouth of St. Thomas Aquinas, that he discovers a series of 'similes and images which double themselves'. Besides Francis's Christ-likeness, his imitation, even emulation of Christ—after all, whereas Christ bore the stigmata in death, Francis carried them in life—there is his marriage to Poverty, whose nakedness is covered by nothing but a translucent loincloth, 'a veil which is the very symbol of allegory'. Dante's text, argues Tambling, itself functions as a veil hiding Francis's life. Although the radiance of the life shines through, its factual content or, better, facticity can never fully be captured, since it is filtered by allegory.

Any volume on early modern personification should perforce include a chapter on William Langland's *Piers Plowman*. From amongst its many

personifications, William Rhodes chooses that of Hunger to demonstrate 'how personification can embody that which acts on people's bodies'. In his analysis, he employs Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics, that is, 'of power's hold over life', in this case the lives and bodies of the medieval rural populace, how they were fed and disciplined. Intriguingly, Hunger and other personifications of material conditions closely interact with personifications of more abstract, spiritual matters. This reveals the close connection drawn in *Piers Plowman* between body, mind, and soul. Personification allegory enabled Langland to make his audience imaginatively see and feel the effect hunger has on bodies, by graphically describing how Hunger beats the life out of the Waster and his mate Breton. The social criticism inherent in *Piers Plowman* exerted a strong attraction on its sixteenth-century editor, Robert Crowley, whose *Philargyrie of Greate Britayne* exemplifies in a comparable way how the voracious giant Philargyrie—a personification of the greed of the ruling classes—preys on the rural populace.

Posthumously published in 1609, the final version of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* contains a seventeenth book, which includes *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie*, recounting 'the Titaness Mutability's ascent to the heavens'. Brenda Machosky investigates the meaning and function of 'this final personification of Elizabeth'. She utilizes Ernst Kantorowicz's theory of the king's two bodies (amongst others) to explain the evolution of figured Elizabeths, including Gloriana, personifying her body politic, and Belphoebe, signifying her body natural. The poem itself may be seen as an attempt by Spenser to achieve a perpetual unity of these two bodies. Mutability is a special case indeed, since she, too, figures *both* Elizabeth's mortal and immortal aspects. However, as a Titaness, she belongs to a defeated godly lineage, and is therefore finite, like Elizabeth (and the poet, for that matter, who created her towards the end of his life and that of the queen). One could say that Mutability 'defaces […] not only the figure of the Faerie Queene but the poem itself as personification of the realm'. Thus, at the end of his poem Spenser can be seen to de-construct personification: in a way, he undoes it.

Personification and the Modalities of Figuration

Jean Campbell asks how personification—construed as a rhetorical procedure that lends face and voice to a distant or absent entity—operates together with apostrophe—the complementary procedure that posits such an entity as an object of address—to constitute the mimetically dynamic image of the

Virgin Annunciate in Pisanello's *Annunciation* from the *Brenzoni Monument* in San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. The Marian protagonist who emerges from the imagined conversation made possible by these rhetorical figures, is experienced as a liminal creature: iconic and yet historical, biblical and also extra-biblical, she stands proxy for the incontrovertible mystery of the Incarnation even while functioning as a fictional construct indexically linked to the painter's *ingenium*. Personification is thus a crucially generative component of the painter's *ars poetica*; moreover, it forms part of the arsenal of paratactic and meta-pictorial devices that allow Pisanello to call attention to the 'persistent effects of the Incarnation'.

James Clifton examines a specific allegorical lineage centering on the personification of Truth: inaugurated by Willem and Godevaard van Haecht's *Triumphus Veritatis* of 1579, the sequence consists of five engraved variants issued by various publishers in Antwerp, Frankfurt, and elsewhere between 1581 and 1614. Conceived and published by the Van Haechts, who collaborated with the draftsman Maarten de Vos and the engraver Jan Wierix, the *Triumphus Veritatis* features a female personification of the Truth of Christ or, alternatively, a personification that bodies forth the presence of Christ, second person of the Holy Trinity, as Truth. Although the figure of Truth is Christological rather than explicitly confessional, the addition of corollary elements, such as ancillary personifications, attributes, or inscriptions, could be used to inflect the political meaning of *Veritas*, converting her into the embodiment of Roman Catholic or Reformed Truth, or alternatively, stripping her of any discernible confessional alignments. The popularity of the *Triumphus Veritatis* derived, as Clifton suggests, from the functional malleability of the type of personification favored by the Van Haechts.

Ralph Dekoninck contextualizes personification within the modalities of figuration licensed by mystical theology, as set forth by Maximilianus Sandaeus in his treatises, *Theologia mystica* (1627) and *Pro Theologia Mystica clavis* (1640), and illustrated in the engraved series *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (1680s). Just as Sandaeus distinguishes between symbolic and mystical images, arguing that the former operate allegorically by means of metaphor, the latter indexically by means of metonym, so in the *Idea*, the spiritual ascent of the Carmelite votary—her/his mystical *cursus*—is described by what Dekoninck aptly characterizes as a gradual refusal of analogy, a 'break with metaphoricity'. The shift from metaphor to metonym, from a symbolic to an embodied mode of representation, from the register of allegory to that of mystical experience, transforms rather than eliminates the figure of personification, in ways that blur the boundary between allusive

figuration and descriptive exemplification. In a startling paradox, the mystical *modus loquendi* relies upon personification to declare that the nature of God is unfigurable.

Personification on Stage: Forces of Living Presence

The communicative possibilities of theatrical personifications become even more evident within the context of public pageantry, when messages had to be understood quickly and directly to prevent their getting lost in the hustle and bustle of a community event. Katell Lavéant traces the representation of two concepts—time and the printing press—within parades and comic plays, so-called *sotties*, performed by 'joyful companies' of the Lyon trade guilds in the period 1566–1610. Personifications of the former were Present Times (*Temps Présent*), Good Times (*Bon Temps*), and Past Times (*Temps Passé*); the personification of the latter was Lady Printing Press (*Dame Imprimerie*), who came to be identified with the newly-created muse Typosine (Lyon was a major European printing centre). On the basis of both archival evidence and play texts, Lavéant demonstrates how these personifications functioned as 'high-density' conveyors of meaning, with great 'evocative power for the audience'. Even when they are not personified or impersonated, they remain virtually present, for other stage characters refer to them. Their continuous popularity in parades and *sotties*—like the continued popularity of these originally medi-eval genres themselves—gives evidence of the great communicative need to which they answered.

However versatile dramatic personification may have been, it had its representational limitations. In any case, as Greg Walker argues, Sir David Lyndsay in *A Satire of the Three Esates* 'explores the limitations of personification allegory as a vehicle for exploring social and political issues'. Walker draws his insights partly from the staging of the full play on the grounds of Linlithgow Palace, Scotland, in June 2013. Whereas the first half consists of a traditional morality play with a host of personifications surrounding the central protagonist, Rex Humanitas, the second half features real-life characters. 'Lyndsay's desire to rid the world of middle men and intermediaries seems to find its dramaturgical equivalent', observes Walker, in the replacement of personifications by figures taken from the street. This phenomenon takes place literally when a character such as Pauper leaves the audience and clambers onto stage during the interval between the play's two halves: Pauper is liminal—of the people and yet of the stage. King James V, before whom the play was performed, was not indifferent to the social suffering exemplified by Pauper. However, though

realistically portrayed—Pauper makes a convincing working class hero—he never ceases to signify his class as a whole, and thus stays firmly within the scope of personification.

Alisa van de Haar asks why the late-sixteenth-century *rederijker* (rhetorician) and schoolmaster Peeter Heyns includes so many personifications in the plays he wrote for the girls enrolled in his French school in Antwerp. Heyns was familiar with both Neo-Latin school drama and the classically inspired innovations advocated by playwrights associated with the French Pléiade. Thus, he chose biblical subject matter for his plays, which are carefully subdivided into five acts. However, whereas it was normal procedure that they be written in French, the inclusion of so many personifications—more than two thirds of his *dramatis personae*—seems at odds with the standard scholarly opinion that true humanist or Renaissance drama should be populated by realistic, flesh-and-blood characters. Van de Haar demonstrates how Heyns's personifications were able to express general, abstract ideas and look and behave realistically at the same time. This mixed usage created opportunities for both emotional engagement and learning: and not just for the girls watching, but for their actress-schoolmates as well. The trope of personification, whether applied in print, theatre, or poetry, served humanist educational purposes perfectly. Its effects on stage even extended into the realm of the printed play text, personifications on paper being easily evoked for the mind's eye.

Bart Ramakers deals with personification in the genre of the *spel van zinne* (or *zinnespel*), the Netherlandish version of the morality play, which dominated serious drama in the sixteenth-century Low Countries. He analyzes the stage presence of Lady World, which in all its aspects—attire, movement, mimicry, gesture, and speech—tends toward the dense expression, in one or a series of memorable images or scenes, of falsity and sin. She generally appears as the antagonist in a cosmic battle between good and evil, the ultimate originators of which—God and Satan—often take part in the play's action, as also do the representations of vice—the Vices—who second her as servants in scenes of enthronement, banquet, dispute, or battle. Many of the dramatized extended metaphors comprised by the patterns of allegorical action, find their origin in Scripture: in the single Pauline metaphor of the Christian Knight or in elements taken from that most allegorical of biblical books—the *Apocalypse* of St. John. The correspondences between these plays and allegorical prints attest to the rhetoricians' ambition—and apparent ability—to body forth fundamental truths and to claim a position in public moral and religious discourse.

Often deemed Shakespeare's least loved play, *The Life of Timon of Athens* opens with an intriguing scene featuring a Painter and a Poet who engage in

a dramatized *paragone*, a debate on the superiority of either art. Jennifer A. Royston shows how in Shakespeare's opinion, drama, by combining word and image, was able to partake of the best of both painting and poetry. She contextualizes the prefatory scene by discussing the views of three (near) contemporary authors who aimed to discriminate between the two arts. However, as she demonstrates, there is always something of the one in the other. It therefore seems that the *paragone* represents a false dilemma. Dramatic personification proves capable of exemplifying the mixed character of poetry and painting, of operating simultaneously in the registers of the verbal and the visual. In *Timon of Athens*, the Painter and the Poet, through the products of their respective arts—a painting and a poem—attempt to represent the play's namesake, whom the audience has not yet seen. Their mutual description and discussion of Timon's portrayal in one another's art culminates in the confrontation with the object of representation himself: do portrait and poem equally catch his personality?

Jesuit Approaches to Personification

The Jesuits, as indicated above, were enthusiastic proponents of prosopopoeic usage, having affirmed the figure's affective value and persuasive potential in their rhetorical manuals, and utilized it intensively in their sermons, school plays, emblem books, and meditative treatises. Walter Melion explores the form, function, and meaning of *prosopopoeia* in one of the order's foundational emblem books, Jan David's *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* (1605), which centers on the exploits of a prosopopoeic protagonist, Occasion, and constitutes a meta-allegory about the nature of this rhetorical figure and its status as a divinely sanctioned instrument of cognitive and spiritual transformation. The *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, as Melion emphasizes, is a new kind of emblem book, consisting of three distinct subsections—the school play "Occasio, drama", twelve pictorial *schemata* (emblematic images), and twelve chapters of exegetical commentary—that variously participate in the task at hand: the conversion of the pagan goddess *Occasio*, winged, changeable, and inexorable, into her ethical counterpart, Christian *Opportunitas* (Opportunity), who is identified as the occasion of virtue seized (*arrepta*) or shirked (*neglecta*) by respectively virtuous or vicious individuals. The movement through the book's three parts is marked by a change in the ontological status of personifications such as *Occasio* and *Tempus*, who initially resemble the embodied virtues and *sinnekens* (embodied vices) that populate *spelen van sinne*, allegorical plays staged by local chambers of rhetoric, but then become increasingly life-

like, behaving more like actual *personae* than fictional *sinnekens*, and finally, assume the role of hermeneutic guides who encourage the reader-viewer more fully to engage in the process of scriptural interpretation. Passage through the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* might therefore be described in terms of a phased transition from personification as allegory to personfication as an instrument of *allegoresis*.

The Jesuit personifications discussed by Gwendoline de Mûelenaere— noetic and encomiastic embodiments of academic disciplines and virtues, associated with *promovendi* and their patrons—demonstrate a similar mal- leability of manner and meaning. Designed to embellish the broadsides and booklets circulated at thesis defenses, these allegorical figures are composite and polysemous: they affirm the student's knowledge of his field, as well as the erudition of his teachers; simultaneously, they proclaim that this knowledge is not merely facultative but also practical and beneficial, both socially and polit- ically (the relation between geometry and military engineering, optics and bal- listics, for example); and finally, they also celebrate the virtues exemplified by the student's patron, virtues that are themselves dichotomous—prudence in war and peace, justice dispensed legally and on the battlefield—and to which the student is seen to aspire. This multiplicity of functions and meanings goes hand in hand, as De Mûelenaere points out, with the mixed character of thesis-print personifications that are part 'mythological exemplum, part virtu- ous embodiment', and part representative of one or more academic disciplines and their practical applications.

The analogical approach to figuration displayed by Johannes Vermeer in the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* (1671–1672), as Aneta Georgievska-Shine makes clear, derives from Jesuit image theory and, specifically, from the types of *imagines figuratae* codified in such meditative treatises, manuals, and emblem books as Jerónimo Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines* (1593) and Guilielmus Hesius's *Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate* (1633). Whereas the majority of Vermeer's pictures elide the distinction between the verisimilar and the alle- gorical, the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* highlights the tension between the 'domestic habitus' and 'blatantly symbolic content' of its central protagonist, the woman who personifies Faith and concurrently embodies two *personae*, that of Mary Magadalene at the moment of her conversion and that of the Virgin Mary as the epitome of resolute faith. Faith personified also functions as a placeholder for the beholder whom the *Allegory* prompts to shore up his faith by embarking on a meditative *ductus* ('itinerary') respectively demarcated by the terrestrial and celestial globes below and above. This *ductus* transits through the figure of Faith, who thus personifies the spiritual process or, better, exercise that this pictorial *machina* ('apparatus') is designed to engender.

Personifying Charity

Three essays focus on the contingent and composite identity of the personification Charity (*Caritas*). Caecilie Weissert parses the sensuous form, nuptial meaning, and performative character of this embodied virtue, as she appears in a group of newly minted panel paintings by Frans Floris, Lambert Lombard, and Jan Massys, produced between 1540 and 1560, in reaction to a famous print by Jean Mignon after Andrea del Sarto. Inventories reveal that such pictures were displayed in upper-class homes, taking pride of place in rooms associated with the woman of the house, such as the kitchen or bedroom. The mixed messages they deliver—at once sacred and profane, demure and sensual, maternal and erotic—derive from the doctrine of matrimonial love codified in the treatises, epistles, and encomia of Juan Luis Vives and Desiderius Erasmus, who praise the conjugal bed as a licit instrument of uxorial persuasion and celebrate the erotic power of wives to civilize the violent and wayward impulses of their husbands. Moreover, Charity, as personified in these paintings, functions not merely as an attribute of wifely eros, but also as a locus of the charitable attention owed by men to their wives, for as the wife civilizes her spouse, so his task is to respond with love for love, by educating her both in mind and spirit. Ultimately, then, as Weissert demonstrates, these personifications implicitly encode a mutual relation that is reflexively enacted when the figure of Charity encounters the enamored beholder.

The complex relation amongst materiality, referentiality, and personification constitutes the subject of Arthur DiFuria's study of Maarten van Heemskerck's *Caritas* (c. 1545). Formerly the centerpiece of a triptych portraying the three cardinal virtues in the form of living effigies, the statuary figure of Charity incorporates numerous allusions to ancient and Italian art, and in addition, it draws attention to its dual status as an explicitly *painted* image that yet mimics convincingly the appearance of *sculpture*. What is it that such a figure bodies forth when the prosopopoeic process of embodiment is itself mediated by multiple references to materiality, to pagan antiquity, to the artifice of figuration, and to the trope of art becoming life? DiFuria argues that this very process becomes a signifying instrument for the contested character of sacred image-making in the Low Countries at mid-century.

Caroline Fowler explicates the multiple signifying functions of the personification *Caritas* in the *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), the celebrated drawing manual designed by Abraham Bloemaert and engraved and published posthumously by his son Frederik. The *Caritas* is distinctive on several counts: it is one of only seven chiaroscuri featured in the book; it is the only personification; and it diverges from pictorial tradition in depicting Charity and her attendant

children as unsettled and discordant rather than content and harmonious. The figure, as Fowler shows, connects to and, more importantly, coordinates the two chiaroscuri that open and close Part I—*Boy Drawing in the Studio* and *Saint in Prayer*—which respectively exemplify two responses to light, the one sensory, the other metaphysical: whereas the boy attends to the properties of light and shadow, the saint contemplates the light of divine inspiration. *Caritas*, an exemplary chiaroscuro, consists of light and shadow, but she is also the prosopopoeic embodiment of Christian love that lights the way to God. Furthermore, *Caritas* is reflexive, for she not only exemplifies the prosopopoeic and prosopographical process of bringing to life and giving face and voice to what is absent or abstract, but herself personifies this process as fundamental to the drawing manual by which she is comprised—in the sense that the *Artis Apellae liber* teaches how to body forth persons, representing them as if they were actually present. And yet, *Caritas* is depicted as somehow troubled, in response to confessional divisions that had fractured the once unified Christian polity of Bloemaert's native Utrecht.

Personifying Life and Afterlife, Trial and Retribution

We have thus far encountered personifications in paintings and prints. What about sculpture? Elizabeth Fowler takes a careful look at the two effigies of Lady Alice Chaucer above and below her tomb in the parish church of St. Mary the Virgin in Ewelme, Oxfordshire, following the procedures of viewing—or *ductus*—suggested by the architectural setting. Rising above the viewer's line of sight is the effigy of an idealized duchess Alice, signifying her social rank in life as well as on the day of resurrection. Below is the effigy of Alice 'in a frightening state of dessication', signifying her mortality and, by extension, that of her fellow men. Between these signifying layers appears the stone sarcophagus wherein Alice's remains are emtombed. According to Fowler, the viewing procedure or *ductus* along the vertical axis of the monument 'reveals the devotional instrument that the tomb constitutes'. It would have invited contemporary viewers to contemplate both Alice's fate and their own, in life and death and in the afterlife. Fowler contextualizes the tomb's formal and thematic structure by referring to manuscript illumination and to images of the *danse macabre*, both visual and textual, particularly *The Daunce of Machabree* by Alice's poet-client, John Lydgate.

June Waudby delves into the troubled mind and emotions of the Penitent Sinner in Anne Locke's "Meditation", the final section of her translation of some sermons by John Calvin. This Sinner—a remote alter ego of the author—is

the name of the 'I' in this sequence of sonnets. Locke carefully dissects the Penitent Sinners' psyche, as it materializes in the 'I's record of her encounter with equally personified feelings and faculties that act upon her mind, troubled as it is by guilt and doubts about salvation. Locke was familiar with contemporary rhetoric, which enabled her sophisticatedly to apply *prosopopoeia* for the purpose of vivifying the Penitent Sinner's deepest emotions, giving them a face (*prosopon*) and a voice. In fact, given what Jean Bocharova has told us, this might have been the only way cognitively to process and communicate emotions as strong as these. The emotional goings-on take the form of legal proceedings, along the lines of the forensic exercise known as the *controversia*: accordingly, the Penitent Sinner becomes the subject of trial and retribution, with personifications pleading for and against her. The liveliness or *enargeia* thus created provides the reader with ample opportunity to engage in and learn from the process thus envisaged.

Personification and the Assertion of Allegorical Order

Lisa Rosenthal investigates the multivalent figure of Fortune in Frans Francken the Younger's *Painter's Cabinet* (c. 1627), within which a painter at his easel is seen to portray and, in this sense, to stabilize the many meanings that inhere or, better, transit through the personification *Fortuna*. Fortune, jointly identifiable as Occasion, embodies a congeries of negative associations—moral errancy, erotic desire, inconstancy of mind and heart—that the painter overmasters meta-pictorially by 'seizing the occasion' and painting Fortune's portrait; he thereby indelibly fixes her image in the form of a pictured picture, subsuming personified Fortune into the ambient allegorical order of a painted *constcamer* ('art gallery'). This meta-pictorial operation, observes Rosenthal, not only harnesses the Neo-Stoic virtues of *tranquillitas* and *constantia*, and confirms the painter's mimetic skill and power of visual discernment; it also proclaims his commercial acumen, by doubling as an idealized image of the kind of workshop gallery where commodified works of art were sold in early seventeenth-century Antwerp. And finally, the fact that the pose and gestures of Fortune are echoed by many of the protagonists featured in the *constcamer*'s other paintings—Mary in the *Penitent Magdalene*, Hercules in the *Rape of Deianeira*, or John in the *Crucifixion*—suggests that what Fortune personifies is the painter's moral competency, the skill he displays in using *pictura* to propagate virtue.

The stabilizing semantic function of personification within a discursively allegorical construction, and the figure's relation to an alternative mode of

signification, in which symbols partake of perceptual ambiguity and seman-
tic indeterminacy, are the topics addressed by Max Weintraub in his study of
Giambattista Tiepolo's *Allegory of the Planets and the Continents* (1752–1753) in
Würzburg. The vast ceiling fresco consists of two parts painted in two pictorial
modes: whereas *Africa*, *America*, and *Asia* are portrayed in a *non-finito* style
that relies upon the beholder imaginatively to complete the unfinished forms,
the climactic allegory, *Europe*, consists of clearly defined forms whose leg-
ibility reasserts the fresco's didactic imagery and argument, and conversely,
diminishes the beholder's share in shaping the fresco's visual effects. These
two modes, explains Weintraub, correlate to the ceremonial functions of the
Treppenhaus, the grand staircase overtopped by Tiepolo's *Allegory*: as the visi-
tor progresses from *Africa*, *America*, and *Asia* to *Europe*, his freedom of per-
ception and interpretation is abruptly curtailed, and the discursivity of the
allegorical argument, and of its chief rhetorical device—personification—
suddenly increases, in a dynamic staging of the absolute authority exercised
by the artist's patron, Prince-Bishop Karl Phillip von Greiffenklau.

The Four Continents: Sources and Sentiments

Joaneath Spicer traces the genealogy of the personification of Africa, one of
the Four Continents, in particular of her distinctive attribute, the elephant-
head crest, as codified in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (ed. princeps, 1593; revised
ed., 1613), the handbook of personified concepts widely consulted as an icon-
ographical lexicon by poets, artists, and collectors. How did this attribute
come to be, she asks, and further, why was it considered both memorable and
meaningful? The elephant-head crest, it turns out, resulted from a confluence
of visual and textual sources ingeniously woven together by learned paint-
ers such as Taddeo Zuccaro, chroniclers of courtly festivities such as Baccio
Baldini, and humanist antiquarians and numismatists, such as Piero Valeriano
and Hubert Goltzius. In the process, imperial imagery without an ancient tex-
tual pedigree—Augustan and Hadrianic coinage featuring a personification of
the province Africa, for example—came to be associated with ancient texts
that describe elements correlatable to this visual material—Eusebius on the
effigies of deified animals worn by the Egyptians or Strabo on the elephant-
hide shields of the Mauritanians. Visual and textual allegories of the four conti-
nents, as seen in the title-pages of Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum orbis terrarum*
(1570) and Hubert Goltzius's *Caesar Augustus* (1574), provided the matrix for
this complex process of assimilation, in which the identities of personifica-
tions such as Africa came to be fixed in unique, distinctive, and recognizable

attributes. In turn, the connection between identity and identifiable attribute was made lexically and visually stable by the images and explanatory texts in Ripa's iconological dictionary of personification.

We are familiar with personifications of the Four Continents in print, but they appear in seventeenth-century needlework, too, and, as Heather A. Hughes reveals, 'enabled Englishwomen to engage with the "outer world" that lies beyond Europe's border'. First, Hughes traces the origins and development of representations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America in engravings by Netherlandish masters, arguing that the appearance of these female figures aimed primarily to express cultural differences, rather than exemplifying the natural conditions and resources of the respective Continents. Next she analyses various examples of English needlework, which provided a very different thematic context for the Continents, since most of these embroideries visualize Old Testament topics. 'When paired with religious content', states Hughes, 'they could elicit wonder and appreciation for the vast complexity of God's creation', and helped to transmit knowledge about foreign cultures. But this did not amount to value-free ethnography. Whereas the peoples of Europe and Asia were monotheistic and white, those of Africa and America were polytheistic and dark. Their exoticness, howsoever fascinating, was inevitably construed as a sign of moral inferiority. Far from being an innocent pastime, embroidery fixed or, better, stitched evaluative assumptions into the minds of the women who sewed so expertly.

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