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Theatrical Archaeology

EDITH A. HALL

LES IMAGIERS DE L'ORESTIE: MILLE ANS D'ART ANTIQUE AUTOUR D'UN MYTHE GREC, by *Denis Knoepfler.* Pp. 112, color pls. 23, figs. 90. Akanthus Verlag für Archäologie, Zurich 1993. ISBN 3-905083-07-8 (paper).

MONUMENTS ILLUSTRATING NEW COMEDY,[3] by *T.B.L. Webster* (revised and enlarged by *J.R. Green* and *A. Seeberg*). (*BICS* Suppl. 50.) Vol. 1: pp. xvi + 264, pls. 59, figs. 27. Vol. 2: pp. viii + 515. Institute of Classical Studies, University of London, London 1995. £90. ISBN 0-900587-73-3 (I); ISBN 0-900587-74-1 (II); ISBN 0-900587-76-8 (I–II).

THEATRE IN ANCIENT GREEK SOCIETY, by *J.R. Green.* Pp. xvi + 254, figs. 99. Routledge, London and New York 1994. $59.95. ISBN 0-415-04751-X.

THE MASKS OF MENANDER: SIGN AND MEANING IN GREEK AND ROMAN PERFORMANCE, by *David Wiles.* Pp. xv + 271, pls. 7, figs. 9. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991 (reprinted 1994). ISBN 0-521-40135-6.

THE ART OF ACTING IN ANTIQUITY: ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDIES IN CLASSICAL, HELLENISTIC, AND BYZANTINE THEATRE, by *Klaus Neiiendam.* Pp. 151, figs. 43. Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen 1992. 310 DKK. ISBN 87-7289-219-6 (paper).

IMAGES OF THE GREEK THEATRE, by *Richard Green* and *Eric Handley.* (Classical Bookshelf.) Pp. 128, color pls. 20, pls. 61. University of Texas Press, Austin 1995. $19.95. ISBN 0-292-72782-8 (paper).

It is a sign of the times that only one of these books on the ancient theater has selected its material according to a conventional text-based criterion. The conceptual approach behind Knoepfler's *Les imagiers de l'Orestie* may make it more interesting to scholars of "literature"—specifically, the Aeschylean *Oresteia* and its *Nachleben*—than to students of the social institution of theater in the ancient Mediterranean. The book is the catalogue of an exhibition displayed at the Museum of Art and History in Neuchâtel in the winter of 1991–1992. The museum's director, Jean-Pierre Jelmini, confides in his preface that the exhibition was prompted by the 700th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation in 1991: the myth of the *Oresteia*, with its aetiology of Athenian institutions, was deemed appropriate and pertinent to such a national celebration. The ancient inhabitants of the Mediterranean, however, have a way of gently subverting the aims of modern Europeans who attempt to use antiquity for their own ideological purposes. One wonders what any visitor to the exhibition not already conversant with Aeschylus's trilogy would have made of the desire to celebrate Swiss nationhood through a seemingly infinite series of miserable maidens sitting on tombs, snaky-haired monstrous females, human sacrifices, matricides, and unspeakable acts in the bathroom.

The catalogue is beautifully produced on shiny paper, with 23 color plates all reproducing Greek vase paintings. There are 90 excellent black-and-white illustrations (even excluding the frontispiece, maps, and a helpful House of Atreus family tree). These range from depictions of Archaic Cretan artworks through the most rococo of Apulian vase paintings, to Etruscan mirrors, Pompeian murals, and second-century Imperial Roman items encompassing alabaster relief sculptures, sarcophagi, a Spanish mosaic, and an Egyptian fresco. Such diversity proves (if nothing else) the chronological and geographical range of the popularity of the myths relating to Agamemnon, his cousin, their woman, and her children. The iconographic record is supplemented by translations into French of many of the key literary manifestations of the myth, from the *Odyssey* and Stesichorus onward. There is also a useful summary of citations of the *Oresteia* myths in Latin literature up to Dracontius's peculiar Christian epyllion of the fifth century, the *Orestis Tragoedia.*

The work is thus an important supplement to A.J.N.W. Prag's *The Oresteia: Iconographic and Narrative Tradition* (Warminster 1986). But it is true that almost all of the artifacts it includes can be found catalogued under names such as Aegisthos, Agamemnon, and Electra in the *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*: Knoepfler pays tribute to this fundamental research tool in his Introduction, especially singling out Yvette Morizot's fine article on Clytemnestra, to which he had access prior to its publication in 1992. The presence of almost all the few items not cross-referenced to *LIMC* (e.g., fig. 65) is explained by the fact that the *LIMC* article on Orestes had not yet been written. Only two other vase paintings genuinely supplement *LIMC*: they both portray the murders of unfortunate males who may or may not be Agamemnon (namely, pl. xxii and fig. 37—a remarkable fragmentary Lucanian vase painting showing a crowned woman assaulting a bearded man).

Les imagiers de l'Orestie prompts the reflection that too few ancient dramas have enjoyed an individual treatment of their influence on the art and literature of later antiquity. For most plays the scholar still needs to go to a combination of *LIMC* and the meager scattered discussions of the literary influence of each of the playwrights. Genre rather than individual text, of course, is the fundamental criterion for inclusion in the new revised (third) edition of T.B.L. Webster's pioneering *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy* (first edition, 1961; hereafter *MNC*[3]). This accumulated result of herculean scholarly labors over many years, centered at London's Institute of Classical Studies, constitutes a landmark in ancient theater studies. Historians of, say, Shakespearean performances would pale at the pro-

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spect of a similar enterprise. It was typical of Tom Webster to initiate such an ambitious and wide-ranging synthesis as a catalogue of the majority of all known material artifacts relating to a particular genre over a period of 800 years or so, and it is satisfying to find his reputation these days enjoying widespread rehabilitation. For during his lifetime his publications faced vicious disparagement from some influential but narrowly philological scholars at Oxford and Cambridge: such calumny was not unrelated to his dogged and precociously modern insistence on drawing interdisciplinary connections between what used to be called "art" and "life," an attitude that text-obsessed scholars found extremely threatening to their notion of transcendent literary values.

The breathtaking historical sweep of the catalogue takes it from fourth-century Greek vases to Byzantine lamps of the fifth century. The last securely datable image of the comic theater is on the consular diptych of Anastasius (nephew of the eastern emperor Anastasius and Consul of Constantinople in 517); this monument's stunning depiction of a Byzantine actor with flowing robes, high mask, supportive little slave, and unsteady gait is now generally agreed to be a figure from comedy rather than tragedy.

Since the user of *MNC*³ still needs to consult the illustrations in the second edition, this new edition is not a replacement, but rather an expanded and updated supplement to its forerunner. Yet while building on the earlier editions, two features render it indispensable to all students of the ancient theater. First, the new edition sensibly abandons the attempt to date all the individual artifacts in favor of a system assigning them to one of six discrete chronological periods (although the editors admit that the number of totally undated objects "remains daunting"). This chronological classification entails six periods of about a century each, beginning with "Early Hellenistic to ca. 250 B.C." and concluding with "ca. A.D. 180 Onwards" (which actually extends until the fifth century). This simplified system has the merit of presenting the impact on material culture of the theatrical performances denoted by the term "New Comedy" as a broad historical continuum transcending geographical, political, and linguistic boundaries, and lasting for over eight centuries.

More importantly, *MNC*³ incorporates much new material: there are now over 3,500 individual entries. Ancient theater studies is a continually expanding field; striking evidence of the growth in new empirical data is provided, for example, by Charlotte Rouché's work on inscriptions from Aphrodisias in *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias* (*JRS* Monographs 6, London 1993). For New Comedy the most important discovery of the second half of our century has been the recovery of hundreds of terracotta masks and masked figurines by L. Bernabò Brea and Madeleine Cavalier from the Lipari necropolis excavations, and made known to the scholarly world in publications since 1965: notable among them are Bernabò Brea's *Menandro e il teatro greco nelle terrecotte liparesi* (Genoa 1981) and the jointly authored *Meligunis Lipara* V: *Scavi nella necropoli greca di Lipari* (Rome 1991). The Lipari finds are still only beginning to be either sufficiently noticed or digested: as John Gould said in his Gaisford lecture "Something To Do with Dionysos" at Oxford University in May 1996, even the seemingly obvious question of whether the objects were related to an active, practicing theater on the island has hardly yet been posed. *MNC*³ provides an important step forward in ensuring that these finds are given due scholarly attention.

Although *MNC*³ does not claim to constitute a comprehensive catalogue (certain types of monument are listed extremely selectively—for example, Roman marble sarcophagi and imperial lamps decorated with theatrical masks), the editors have achieved their stated goal of compiling lists that are at least "reasonably representative" of all the media in which theatrical images are represented, and of the periods and regions from which they emanate.

The catalogue itself is in the second volume: the first houses the indices, plates, and the authoritative preliminary essays. The chapter entitled "Survey of the Evidence" incisively digests the results to which the contents of the catalogue point, often presenting them in the form of slightly quaint pie charts showing the distribution of listed artifacts by such categories as provenance and medium. This work has in the brief time since it was published already become central to all research into New Comedy and theater in antiquity. It is difficult to see how it could have been improved. The only limitation is the unavoidable result of the study's generic confinement to New Comedy, for the archaeological evidence does suggest that thinking about either tragedy or comedy in generic isolation from one another may be to inherit from literary studies a distinction of little use to the student of theater in society: there are numerous instances of scene types from both genres discovered together—even commenting "intertextually" on one another—as decorations on the walls and floors of the ancients. Murals found fairly recently in a Roman house at Ephesos, for example, placed a scene from Euripides' *Orestes* beside the very scene in Menander's *Sicyonians* that was inspired by the tragedy, and a similar system of tragic and comic pairing is evinced by the so-called "House of the Comedians" at Delos.

J.R. Green has more opportunity for synthesizing tragic and comic material in his commendable *Theater in Ancient Greek Society*. It has been remarkably well produced for a Routledge Classics book, boasting crisp illustrations and typographical accuracy. It is an important symptom of the marked new tendency within Classics to respect theater studies as a legitimate primary avenue by which to approach antiquity: similar exciting signs of interest in the diachronic impact of Greek drama are constituted by two recent University of Michigan Press publications, C.P. Jones's overview "Greek Drama in the Roman Empire," (in R. Scodel ed., *Theater and Society in the Classical World* [Ann Arbor 1993] 39–52), and especially Eric Csapo and W.J. Slater's innovative new sourcebook in translation, illuminating "the social and institutional history of ancient drama" (*The Context of Ancient Drama*, Ann Arbor 1995).

Green distances himself from the "literary" and aesthetic interpretation of plays, and even from the evaluation of plays from the perspective of their performance context(s). His innovative focus is on theater's impact on society; his overarching claim is that the depictions of actors and theatrical images to be found in and on pottery, mosaics, terracottas, glassware, paintings, and sculpture throughout antiquity reveal a much broader social enjoyment of theater than is suggested by written sources, which

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were created by and for an elite group. Yet his treatment of the early period and the fifth century offers a surprisingly conventional account of tragedy, satyr play, and comedy at this time. It is only with the third chapter's excellent overview of theatrical scenes on vase paintings of the fourth century that Green begins to distinguish himself from previous historians of the ancient theater. He is adamant that "the Greeks of southern Italy . . . were addicted to theater," which was "the major source of popular culture, a source of poetry, music and enjoyment as well as an emotional escape that was not restricted to the aristocratic or wealthy segment of the population" (p. 56). Linking the fourth-century efflorescence of theater-building across the Greek world to the evidence that tragedy was by now more emotional and less "political," and to the wide geographical spread of finds of theater-related material relating to Middle Comedy (more pie charts of the *MNC*³ type), he makes a persuasive case for the centrality of theater to the psychosocial lives of the ancients in the Hellenistic and subsequent periods.

Among its other virtues, Green's book offers reproductions and discussions of several little-known examples of iconography related to the theater, which will certainly achieve canonical status within the field. A vase painting virtually guaranteed to be reproduced henceforward in all books on the ancient theater (or on Dionysos, for that matter) is the stunning figure 3.23 on page 86, an early fourth-century Tarentine red-figure bell-krater acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art (89.73). A massive head of Dionysos in three-quarter view, with a grape-laden vine spreading over his head, is attended by a comic and a satyric actor, who respectively pick grapes on his left and collect them on his right; on a scene type such as this from the fifth century, satyrs rather than actors would certainly have been harvesting the vintage. As Green sensitively perceives, the vase pays homage to drama itself. It shows how Dionysos's gift of theater and the conduct of his ministry *by actors* have at last found an instantly recognizable iconography.

It is a sign of the scholarly diligence of the two editors of *MNC*³, the prolific Green and Axel Seeberg, that they meticulously record their regret that David Wiles's "interesting" book on Menander reached them too late for consideration. I suspect that while objecting to many points of detail they would approve heartily of Wiles's performance-centered intellectual trajectory, and of his infectious enthusiasm for the genre on which they have themselves expended so much erudition. Their own view that the masks of New Comedy "had a useful function as part of the system of visual signals making the *dramatis personae* clear to the audience, in an age of no programmes or pre-published texts" (I.3) is not one with which Wiles would disagree. Indeed, his central argument is that the mask was the privileged "master sign" of New Comedy's signification system in performance. To this end he takes the reader on a journey from Athens via Plautus and Rome to the masks of the Japanese Noh theater and to the Italian commedia dell'arte, and from Theophrastus's fragmentary *On Delivery* to modern theorists of sign, text, and performance such as Barthes and Grotowsky. Indeed, the very abundance of transhistorical and transcultural parallels sometimes threatens to submerge Wiles's own views on New Comedy!

The strength of his work is his insistence on investigating the relationship between the sociohistorical context of Menander's plays and their content in order to discover how the particular performative codes of New Comedy—especially the mask—were operating in and for their culture. His theoretical stance is, broadly speaking, a cultural materialist aesthetics deriving ultimately from Marxism, and eclectically seasoned with structuralism and semiotics. Unfortunately, the book has faults. It sometimes uses obscurantist theoretical jargon. To its unsupported generalizations it sometimes adds misleading political inferences (the use of the term "bourgeois" in relation to antiquity never fails to muddy the waters). Sometimes it tendentiously misrepresents other scholars: the long assault in chapter 3 on Peter Brown's canonical article "Mask, Name and Character in New Comedy" (*Hermes* 115 [1987] 181–202) is particularly confusing, because Wiles, despite his rhetorical stance, is actually largely in agreement with Brown's contention.

Yet this engaging work is undoubtedly important, if only because it challenges fundamentally classical scholarship's conventional modes of discussing New Comedy. Since the first "Paris school" publications by Vidal-Naquet and Vernant in the early 1960s, research into fifth-century theater has evolved a sophisticated critical language for contextualizing drama within its civic culture and explaining its ideological function in (re)producing and problematizing communal values and anxieties. Yet the elucidation of New Comedy has remained, relatively speaking, either narrowly philological or naively empirical in its scholarly methods. One reason is that, on a superficial level, New Comedy's content appears more domestic than political. Problems are also presented by the genre's mask-determined repertoire of character types, especially in the light of the rich and continually increasing archaeological evidence for them (witness *MNC*³, passim). In particular, scholars have become fixated on the near-infinite possibilities for reassessing the relationship between the catalogue of masks in the fourth book of Julius Pollux's *Onomastikon* (second century A.D.) and Hellenistic comedy's character typology. All scholars of New Comedy must produce their "line" on the question of whether or not Pollux's taxonomy reflects an Early Hellenistic typological schematization (*MNC*³, incidentally, suggests a cautious "yes," while acknowledging that the Lipari finds imply a greater sophistication and variety than Pollux's catalogue can accommodate). The important task of digesting all these data has resulted in less emphasis being placed on creating a sophisticated debate over critical and interpretative approaches to the genre. This is an omission that the surprising verve and adversarial spirit already demonstrated in the thoroughly diverse reactions to Wiles's "interesting" work suggest may soon be corrected. New Comedy studies would benefit from a little healthy dispute, and it may be that Wiles's book will prove to be the foundation text of a newly stimulating debate.

A striking aspect of *The Masks of Menander* is the prominence Wiles gives to the art of acting and its egregious neglect by most classical scholars (a phenomenon inherited directly from Aristotle's denigration of *hypokrisis*, which subsumes both the performative dimensions of theatrical literature in his *Poetics* and rhetorical performance in his

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Rhetoric). Neiiendam's *The Art of Acting in Antiquity* is therefore a terrible disappointment, for it suffers from a totally misleading title. It actually comprises a skimpy survey of three separate periods of ancient theater history as they are reflected in the visual arts, and contributes practically nothing to our limited understanding of the ancient actor's art. The sources selected are Italian vase paintings of the fourth century B.C. as evidence for the so-called "phlyax" farces, Roman mosaics and murals from Pompeii as sources for tragedy and New Comedy, and the consular diptychs of Anastasius (mentioned above) as testimony to Constantinopolitan theater in much later antiquity.

It is characteristic of this unreliable monograph that Neiiendam still believes, contrary to the current scholarly consensus, that the actor on the diptych is evidence not for the continued performances of comedy at Byzantium, but for "some form of Byzantine tragedy" (p. 115), whatever that enticing-sounding genre might entail. But two outright omissions imply that this book might seriously damage one's intellectual health: first, Neiiendam never even refers to the canonical modern treatment of the ancient sources on actors and acting, P. Ghiron-Bistagne's *Recherches sur les acteurs dans la Grèce antique* (Paris 1976); and secondly, the "List of Illustrations" advertised by the table of contents as appearing on page 146 never materializes at all!

The author is clearly an enthusiast for theater in all its forms, and he is at his most charming when idiosyncratically drawing parallels between ancient and post-Renaissance theater practice. Yet the insertion of anecdotes concerning 18th-century British pantomime cannot constitute plausible scholarly argumentation. Nor does quoting "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life," the song performed in the famous crucifixion scene at the end of the film *Monty Python's Life of Brian*, however droll, really illuminate what Christological mime says about the attitude of the Byzantine theater-going public toward the Church Fathers.

There are further deficiencies. Some of the photographs of the "phlyax" vases are so blurred as to be useless. The translations of ancient authors are unreliable, and confusingly laid out as poetry when they are in prose and vice versa. The English of the text itself, translated from Danish by Jean Olsen, often consists of syntactical nonsentences and overworks the past perfect tense with sometimes hilarious results. It is particularly frustrating to find no bibliographical reference provided for a superb argument culled from the philosopher Kierkegaard, which (if only it could be tracked down) would provide a much-needed basis for a philosophical defense of the importance of performance history to intellectual and cultural studies.

Green and Handley's *Images of the Greek Theater*, on the other hand, is as excellent in execution as it is modest in aspiration. It combines a comprehensive bibliographical apparatus with the accessibility of the best kind of "popular" academic writing. It bridges the gap between the public and specialist readers by combining precision and a freshness of approach with clarity and a refusal to patronize the reader. As a repository of beautiful illustrations, general introduction to the field, and pedagogical tool, this little book is unlikely to be replaced for some years to come.

In eight lapidary chapters, the authors use enviably clear reproductions of ancient artifacts (mostly in the British Museum) to trace the history of the performance of ancient drama from Archaic choral dancing via Classical Athens and Menander to chapter 8, "The Traditions of the Western Theater." The singular virtue of this short book is its emphasis on the processes by which the modern mind reconstructs and interprets the material and textual evidence. The discussion of figurines illustrating New Comedy stresses "the importance of recognising iconographic traditions in representations of theatrical material" (p. 81). A photograph of the remains of the early stone theater at Thorikos in Attica is accompanied by a discussion paying due attention to the risks involved in drawing inferences from it when speculatively reconstructing the historically more significant fifth-century Theater of Dionysos in Athens; and the famous marble inscription recording fifth-century victories at the Dionysia (*IG* II^2, 2318) is offered in both photograph and transcription, with a clear exposition of the process whereby scholarship derives information from it.

These new books, assessed collectively, have opened windows on the cultural and imaginative life of the ancients across the then-known world. They demonstrate that work remains to be done on the reception of individual dramatic texts in antiquity, that there are exciting debates still to be held about the political and social significance of New Comedy, and that we need a thorough new appraisal of the art of the ancient actor. They also indicate that current scholarship on the ancient theater is marked by several interconnected dynamics of change.

The first is an increasingly affirmative interest in *performance*. The literary-theoretical fashion of the 1980s for studying ancient plays as "reading texts," which could only be elucidated by unraveling their internal structures in virtual isolation from the material and social contexts of performance and revival, is now apparently (and mercifully) itself a thing of the past. The second trend is a newly acute awareness that material finds can radically alter our picture of drama and of theater's place in ancient society in a manner unprecedented except by the actual papyrus finds a century or so ago of the tragedians and Menander. And third, there is a new determination to chart in a systematic and scholarly manner the reception, influence, and social role of the institution of the theater and of "classic" drama within antiquity itself.

Green and Handley's *Images of the Greek Theater* closes with three beautiful reproductions — the *Trackers* papyrus, a 16th-century manuscript of Euripides' *Hecuba*, and a portrait of Richard Porson — thus suggesting in a few deft moves the road that the drama of the ancients needed to traverse in order to arrive in the textbooks today. The issue of reception *beyond* antiquity seems to be exercising the minds of scholars more than ever before. Pat Easterling, for example, has recently explored the reasons why Menander, despite his overwhelming popularity throughout antiquity, did *not* until this century arrive in our textbooks, because he did not survive the seventh century ("Menander: Loss and Survival," in *Essays in Honour of E.W. Handley* [London 1995] 153–60). A faint but unmistakable trend discernible in all the books here under discussion hints that one of the most promising directions currently opening up within scholarship on the ancient theater is to be its afterlife far beyond the negotiable category of "antiquity."

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Neiiendam's illustrations include a drawing of a dancer by an engraver who lived in Constantinople in the mid-16th century. Neiiendam suggests that her postures may illuminate the dances of the female mime-performers of the Byzantine profane theater, who scandalized patriarchs like St. John Chrysostomos over a thousand years before. This suggestion, though highly questionable as scholarship, is a powerful articulation of the latent desire among modern scholars to bridge that huge gulf yawning between (approximately) the seventh century and the Renaissance. For Neiiendam, it is the possibility of a continuity of performance mode; for Wiles, it is the possibility of the trans-historical universality of certain kinds of mask and gesture as dramatic signifiers; for the others, it is a more lightly articulated interest in other kinds of manifestation of ancient theater since antiquity. Knoepfler negotiates the beginning of modernity by concluding his book with a reproduction of a 10th-century ivory casket in London's Victoria and Albert Museum portraying the sacrifice of Iphigenia at Aulis. Even the scholarly *MNC*[3] boasts as its frontispiece a drawing of ancient comic masks as perceived by the artist Rubens. It seems possible, therefore, that scholars are becoming increasingly aware that the "reception" and "influence" of the ancient theater and of its images never actually came to an end at all.

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Egyptomanias

HELEN WHITEHOUSE

EGYPTOMANIA: EGYPT IN WESTERN ART, 1730–1930, by *Jean-Marcel Humbert, Michael Pantazzi,* and *Christiane Ziegler.* Pp. 607, catalogue ills. 392, figs. 349. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and Réunion des Musées nationaux, Paris 1994. $49.95. ISBN 2-7118-2834-4.

EGYPTOMANIA. THE EGYPTIAN REVIVAL: A RECURRING THEME IN THE HISTORY OF TASTE, by *James Steven Curl.* Pp. xxii + 298, pls. 151. Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York 1994. ISBN 0-7190-4126-0 (cloth), 0-7190-4127-9 (paper).

Egypt is everyone's past, it seems. Traveling in Italy last summer, I searched the bookshops of Bologna in vain for a general account of the *terramare*, the Bronze Age settlements of the Po Valley whose material remains figure prominently in local museum collections; but I could have bought any number of publications on *l'antico Egitto.* Museum directors know that an exhibition on ancient Egypt will invariably fill (often overfill) their galleries with an enthusiastic public; among other periods and cultural phenomena, only the French Impressionists exert a comparable pull. Even countries with no traditional involvement with Egyptian archaeology and no great national collections to fix its image in the public eye are eager to display Egypt on loan; often they have a rich archaeological past of their own, but nothing rivals Egypt as a crowd-puller. As we hurtle toward the millennium, bewildered by the speed at which our own world is changing and bombarded with more information than we can absorb, the sharply defined profile of pharaonic civilization is apparently more than ever attractive, with its clear outlines, strong colors, and complex but image-rich system of beliefs. For a generation whose eyes are perfectly accustomed to art forms that deviate from the tradition of western representational art, the visual assimilation and enjoyment of Egypt offers no problems, even if they do not understand the conceptual basis of its art as extrapolated by Egyptologists.

Pari passu with the ever-growing interest in ancient Egypt itself has gone an increasing enthusiasm for documenting Egyptomania, the inelegant term applied in its strictest sense to the "craze" for things Egyptian and Egyptianizing triggered by a number of significant episodes in the western encounter with Egypt: the French invasion of Egypt in 1798, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922, and America's discovery of "King Tut" in the exhibition of 1976–1979, to name the most prominent. But the word has been used more widely as an umbrella term for all uses of Egyptian forms in western art and design from the Roman Imperial period onward, and has even been extended, much less appropriately, to cover many aspects of the predecipherment study of Egypt—the academic discipline of Egyptology generally being considered to begin with Champollion's decipherment of hieroglyphs, announced in 1826.

As a creative phenomenon, Egyptomania embraces manifestations as diverse as the Empress Josephine's Sèvres dessert service, Colette and Missy's *Rêve d'Égypte* ballet-mime, and Mr. Jim Onan's Gold Pyramid House in Illinois. It has even returned to source in the sculpture of Mahmoud Moukhtar and the furniture produced by the Madrasa Craft School in the 1920s, as well as in a vast range of commercial kitsch, both in Egypt and worldwide; over the last decade it has been firmly ensconced in the visual repertoire of advertising—everything from shoes to insurance has been sold with Egyptian imagery.

Under the more formal heading of "The Egyptian Revival," the West's appropriation of Egyptian imagery was first accorded serious study in the groundbreaking survey by Nikolaus Pevsner and S. Lang, published in the *Architectural Review* 119 (1956) and republished, with additions, in Pevsner's collected *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design* 1 (New York 1968) 213–35 and 245–48. Since then many articles, monographs, and books have appeared—notable

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