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**THE MOST
DIFFICULT OF ALL**

THE LIFE AND DEATH
OF ITALIAN
TOMB SCULPTURE,
C. 1280-1490

In the second part of his *Treatise on Painting* of c. 1435, Leon Battista Alberti demands that the living be represented as fully alive and dead persons, in turn, as utterly dead. Alberti, who implicitly portrays the artistic *compositio* of the human body as a gradual revivification of the dead by “dressing” the skeleton with muscles and skin, at the same time describes the representation of the cadaver itself superlatively, as “the most difficult of all”.¹ How, then, can Alberti’s demand ever be fulfilled in the realm of tomb sculpture? We can discern three divergent options in the time after around 1300. The first was to imitate the cadaver in the stages of its very decay, in the dissolution of the body’s form as *transi*; this possibility was realized above all north of the Alps.² A second was to highlight factually dead materials in contrast to the fictive vitality of the statue – a concept particularly present in the sixteenth century and closely interwoven with the career of monochrome marble sculpture. Yet the art history of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, above all in Italy, elaborates a third possibility which, by circumventing Alberti’s binary model of imitation, thereby did justice to the objectively immanent ambiguity of the dead body in the context of funeral culture. Here indications of *signa vitae* reflect the deceased as a “pale reflection of life extinguished”, or proleptically, in anticipation of the yearned-for resurrection of the flesh.³ The young Francesco Bocchi later designated the reverberation of the vital functions in the faces and postures of the deceased as an artistic task (“rimangono in quelli sempre alcuni segni e quasi di adoperare alcuni gesti”), just as Petrarch before him refers to Apelles’ representation of the dying – *expirantium imagines* – as an artistic masterpiece.⁴

The funerary art of the early modern period thus emerges as a preeminent paradigm for the thesis that the vivacity of the artwork in truth involves a suspenseful performance of mediation between the opposing poles of living and dead. Tomb sculpture is a genre in which the fundamental self-referentiality of living art comes to expression at the same time as that same self-referentiality is transcended. The non-identity of image and model furthermore dissolves into the non-identity of dead body and dead individual; in this way, a double absence is made visible that reveals the structural relation

between corpse and image alike. The corpse, as Anton Legner writes, possesses the “visuality of the image”.⁵ Italian funerary art of the late Middle Ages and early modern period established an equation involving the dead person, his or her image, and the dead image itself. Spatially, the latter stands in a tense relation to the presence of the corpse, as well as artistically, relative to the virtual vitality of the elements of sculptural and painterly composition. The image of the deceased does not move, or blink, or breathe – like an actual dead person. And yet, precisely as an *artwork* it is inhabited by a potential vitality – also like a real dead person, longing for resurrection. As an image, it seems to have a *vis formativa* lastingly inscribed into it *qua compositio*.

Tombs both veil and reveal the glaring absence of the dead person. Elisabeth Bronfen has shown how duplication by portrait promises control over the menace of the Real: “The ‘representation’ of a dead person allows the observer to occlude the primordially familiar knowledge – that life is always already the signature of death.”⁶ On the other hand, this knowledge of death breaks through all the more unforgivingly and irrepressibly into the play of representation.⁷ The corpse repressed by the image (and whose presence the image in fact has displaced, in the case of saints’ bodies, since the later Middle Ages) inevitably returns in representation even when sculptural representation claims to negate death. The primary task of funerary images consists precisely in this doubling, to which Fulgentius’ etymology of “idol” seems particularly applicable: *idos dolu*, the image of mourning.⁸ The incomparable creative, social, and financial expenditure dedicated to funerary art in the late Middle Ages and early modern period demonstrates that it touches a nerve, from which the apparent liveliness of art draws its driving force. Elaborate tombs let themselves be understood as “products of compensation” (in Warburg’s sense) that must *in* and *by themselves* withstand the excessive tension between the opaque absence of the dead person and his (or her) reanimation in the image, as unendurable as that would be.

“Voio esserge scolpito,” the Veronese Andrea Pellegrini requests in 1429 for his tomb in Santa Anastasia, executed by Michele da Firenze, which was supposed to show him kneeling in eternal wor-

ship. Worthy of note here is the grammatical identification of person and tomb image. The testament continues: "I want to be made and completed within three years after my death."⁹ An aesthetics of sculptural ambiguity was driven forward by such willingness to commemorate the dead as awaiting resurrection in the beyond, the *hic et nunc* decomposing corporeal shell possessing the potential for future re-ensoulment and revivification. In the perceptual space of the living observer, the monuments oscillate between dead and alive, between the absence of the individual and the presence of his (or her) bodily remains, between apparent movement and rest, between dead material and living force. It should not be forgotten here that the staging of ecclesiastical care for the dead was first established through liturgy and individual *memoria*. That performative relationship of the double absence articulated by the dead effigy to the living clerics, viewers, and visitors is constitutive of the genre as such. The *latency* of the past and future life is mirrored in the *emergence* of sculptural vitality, which at the same time evokes the aliveness of the visitors and viewers, complexly interwoven with a pre-emptive awareness of their own mortality.

Doubling

The formal apparatus of Italian wall tombs of the early modern period was essentially developed in the fifty years between 1270 and 1320, roughly from the monuments of Viterbo, plausibly associated with the Roman Pietro di Oderisio, to the later tombs of Arnolfo di Cambio, Giovanni Pisano, and Tino di Camaino.¹⁰ These artists predominately followed the most modern French examples, such as the tomb of Jean de France in Royaumont (+ 1248), which was destroyed during the French Revolution.¹¹ It showed the dead man twice: once as a supine figure with open eyes, and once as a young man standing upright and presenting a falcon on his left arm. In Italy, the shocking verism of the tomb of Pope Clement IV (+ 1268) in Viterbo – complemented by its vital antithesis in the impressive "floral dynamics" of the architectural ornaments, and which very likely contained a representation of the living soul of the Pope, later lost – remained an exception demanded by the specifically Dominican



context, as Claussen has shown.¹² Arnolfo di Cambio's tomb of the Dominican Guillaume de Bray, c. 1282 (Orvieto, S. Domenico), likewise shows the deceased with the hard, indeed ugly, features of the dead [ill. 1]. If in later years the dead person was usually represented in a less veristic mode on his (or her) bier or sarcophagus, the visual appeal to the viewer was nonetheless intensified at the same time. The dead person often appears within the shadowy, abbreviated *camera funebris*, before which the *cortinae* are energetically closed shut, or held open for one last time by youthful acolytes or angels just at this eternally-preserved scenic moment – a visual departure that does not pass away [ill. 2].¹³

The intensive stare of the acolytes (residues of the painted pupils remain on de Bray's monument) and their decisive movements contrast starkly with the unmoved, peaceful countenance of the dead man's

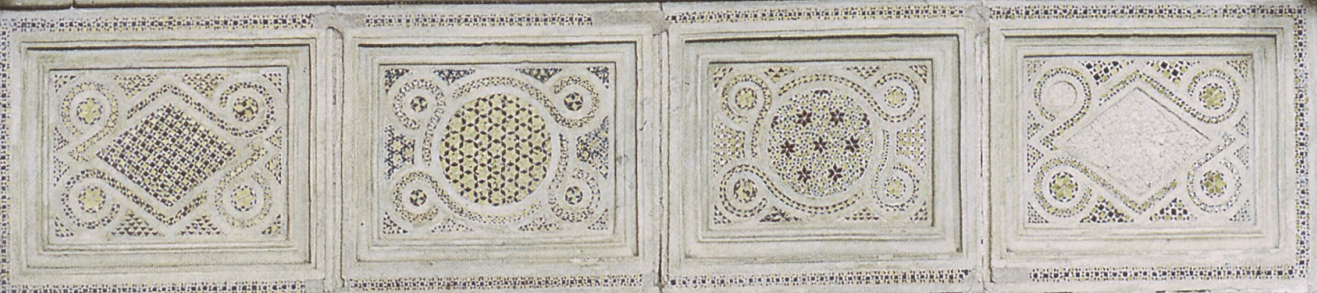
Ill. 1. Arnolfo di Cambio, Tomb of Cardinal Guillaume de Bray (detail), c. 1290, marble. Perugia, San Domenico.

Ill. 2. Arnolfo di Cambio, Tomb of Cardinal Guillaume de Bray, c. 1290, marble. Perugia, San Domenico.

QUI NO PACEDSOPOTSIBIPACG
FRACHAPLAGEIRH IORSISTK TAMB
DEFECTIPRIE QALISIMILISIBIFTE
DEFLEHNC MTHESIS LE KEFDECTARESS
NEGNORSINDEBESSHEUM9 THEMESIN
BISSEKCENTUS BIDUS BISBS OUCED
ANEREX PDOMOS AFFUITISTI
OBIIT TERCIO KEMATI
HOC OPUS FECIT AROLFUS

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BONIFACIUS
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effigy.¹⁴ The gaze of the youthful companions and their dynamic veiling-as-unveiling channels the visitor's gaze in turn, focusing it on the immobility of the blind statue. Italy was especially notorious for its readiness to show the dead person as deceased: consider the firmly closed eyes on Cardinal de Bray's sharply characterized effigy. Yet the still integral bodily form of the deceased, which preserves the moment of lying-in-state, also evokes the living person, as for example in a scenic ensemble with celebrants of the *officio defunctorum* (cf. Arnolfo di Cambio's tomb for Enrico Annibaldi; Rome, S.

Ill. 3. Arnolfo di Cambio,
Tomb of Pope Boniface VIII,
c. 1303, marble. Rome,
St. Peter's.

Giovanni in Laterano), or in the striking contrast between the stony, presumably only faintly variegated tomb images and the luminous color representation of the dead person during their lifetime, in the mosaic situated directly above.¹⁵

With his tomb of the “idoltrous” Pope Boniface VIII overlooking a reliquary altar on the inner façade of St. Peter, Arnolfo di Cambio pits life and death against one another: on the one hand with the impressively reproduced, rigid death effigy [ill. 3] right below its painterly vivification in Jacopo Torriti’s mosaic, and on the other with a bust of the Pope that originally stood directly next to the tomb and which addresses the visitors (or celebrants) with a gesture of blessing [ill. 4].¹⁶ Presumably not part of the original tomb, the slightly oversized

Ill. 4. Arnolfo di Cambio,
Bust of Pope Boniface VIII,
c. 1303, marble. Rome,
Musei Vaticani.





and partly gilded marble bust was added to the tomb either already during the Pope's lifetime or shortly after his death in 1303, as confirmed by an eyewitness in 1304.¹⁷ The corresponding idea was further developed in monumental style by another sculptor in Pisano's circle, Tino di Camaino. The original arrangement of Tino's tomb of Emperor Henry VII (+ 1313) in the cathedral of Pisa has not been preserved, and there have been controversial attempts at reconstruction.¹⁸ This tomb most likely also combined a reclining, dead figure with the living, upright ruler on his throne, surrounded by advisers and making a gesture or oration that clearly echoes Arnolfo's Roman honorary statue of Carl of Anjou (1285) [ill. 5]. Later Anjou tomb sculptures by Tino and his workshop in Naples adopt this type.¹⁹ The same applies in modified form to two works by Agostino di Giovanni: the enormous wall tomb of the Ghibelline bishop Guido Tarlati (executed together with Agnolo di Ventura; Arezzo, Cathedral, 1327–

Ill. 5. Tino di Camaino, Emperor Henry VII with his advisers, c. 1315, marble. Pisa, Museo del Duomo.



Ill. 6. Agostino di Giovanni (attr.), Cenotaph of Cino da Pistoia, marble, 1336-39. Pistoia, Cathedral of San Zeno.

30) and the tomb of the Ghibelline jurist and poet Cino in his hometown of Pistoia, not far from Pisa (Cathedral, 1337-39).²⁰ While the throne figure in Arezzo has gone missing, the orating and gesticulating Cino sits atop his own sarcophagus, upon which he appears a second time *in cathedra* [ill. 6].²¹ One of the listeners places his finger on his lips so as not to disturb the teacher's *visibile parlare*. A third time at the top of the monument, finally, Cino is seen as the *raccomandato* of Saint James, kneeling at the feet of the Madonna.

While Agostino di Giovanni's Pistoiese tomb does not represent the corpse itself, Arnolfo di Cambio's and Tino di Camaino's juxtapositions of life and death remain exemplary in this regard.²² Italian tombs thus dispense with the kind of spectacular confrontation between the living effigy with open eyes and the decaying cadaver in the so-called *double-decker tomb* (Panofsky) of the North, which later found palliated expression in the majestic Renaissance monuments



of St. Denis.²³ The Italian tombs of the Trecento went in a different direction. Closed eyes, immobility, and the corporeal integrity of the dead person's effigy generate transitional effects in the immediate vicinity of the kneeling, praying, and self-aware sculptural double, the *anima* of the deceased. This is especially true when the body of the deceased is literally being pulled by the *physical* dynamics of heavenly helpers, as in Giovanni Pisano's spectacular representation of the tomb of Empress Margaret of Brabant in Genoa (c. 1313), which with good reason has been designated as the first representation of the bodily resurrection of a specific historical individual [ill. 7].²⁴

The latent life of the dead can often be understood literally in the case of the cults of saints (whose hair continues to grow, whose noses bleed, etc.).²⁵ Nonetheless, within the sculptural ensemble the effigy's latent vitality is released by something else: its own double, or the effigy's figural, ornamental, and colored surroundings. Ques-

Ill. 7. Giovanni Pisano,
Fragments from the tomb of
Empress Margaret of Brabant,
c. 1315, marble. Genoa,
Museo di Sant'Agostino.

tions of measure and proportion play an important role in weighing the corpse against its living counterpart, as in Antonio Pollaiuolo's bronze monument for Pope Innocent VIII (St. Peter's, completed 1498) [ill. 8]. Later rearranged and partially gilded, the monument depicts the Pope twice at life size: once upon his bier and once in an energetic gesture of blessing as he presents the point of the Holy Lance (which during his tenure had made its way to St. Peter's). The enthroned figure, acting animatedly within the space of the church, was originally placed on a platform just beneath the sarcophagus of the death effigy, and thus roughly at eye level with the observer. The corpse tilts its head, propped up by two pillows, towards the onlooker. The relation between the effigy and the "soul" here becomes virtually reversed, as Hannes Roser has observed, as the sharply characterized, aged living man is contrasted with a smoothed and ageless dead man.²⁶

The reduplication of the effigy is already ancient and refers with all likelihood to the sepulchral sculpture of Naples, where the Pope's father was viceroy. In this context, the inversion culminates between the rejuvenated gisant and the dead throned figure in the (destroyed) tomb of the unlucky king René d'Anjou (Angers, 1447–72), where the seated figure of the deceased was replaced by a decaying, drastically gesturing "roi mort".²⁷ Surrounded by rich floral and grotesque ornaments, Pollaiuolo's Innocent appears to the *visus* of the observer, presenting a further sculptural double in the form of the Holy Lance that restored sight to the blind Longinus under the cross, and which was found among the major relics of St. Peter in the immediate vicinity of the original tomb. Even Gianlorenzo Bernini's papal tombs are based on this antithetical formula: in this case with an activated *mors*, allegorized with the image of the corpse, and a Pope who, either blessing with a powerful gesture or imperturbably bowed in prayer, seems to overcome death itself. Pollaiuolo's papal throne statue inaugurated a type that lasted up to the tomb of Pope Pius XI (1965).²⁸

Life versus Death

The contrast between the sculptural corpse and the representation of the living person produces a tension that intensifies the emergence of



Ill. 8. Antonio Pollaiuolo,
Tomb of Pope Innocence VIII,
after 1492, bronze and marble.
Rome, St. Peter's.

signa vitae. The *effigies* of the corpse replaces or stands in for the actual body in the grave, while the portrait of the enthroned man underscores his liveliness, force, gestures, self-awareness, and even his speech. As Michael Viktor Schwarz has shown, these figures distinguish not so much between the individual and his or her office or social rank, as between the memory of his or her past life and the promise of a future one, in a manner that is both retrospective and prospective at once.²⁹

Hans Belting has characterized the representation of the decaying corpse in Northern tombs as a kind of implicit iconoclasm, since the mimesis of decay claims to reproduce precisely what one would see if the tomb slab beneath the monument were to be lifted aside.³⁰ In fact, the bare *transi* is a rhetorical exaggeration of the usually lavishly buried dead man in the costume of his rank or office:³¹ The sculptural putrefaction emphasizes the general passing of all flesh and thus polemically dismantles the social rank associated with clothing and insignias.³²

The problem of representing the dead, and hence of representing decay and decomposition, is mirrored in a frequently invoked but seldom read anecdote from a Styrian chronicle that begins in the year 1246 and ends in 1310. Its author is Ottokar aus der Gaal, who mocks the endeavors of the sculptor of King Rudolf of Habsburg's tomb (dec. 1291). The joke is predicated on the relative novelty of the wrinkle-riven portrait in Speyer cathedral. To create an effigy of unimpeachable verisimilitude, the sculptor counts the king's wrinkles one by one and transposes them meticulously onto the stone *imago*. While at work on his sculpture, at some geographical remove from the king, however, the artist gets wind of a new wrinkle that has surfaced on the face of the infirm and aging ruler ("nû het den kunic brâht / gebreste manicvalter / und allermeist daz alter, / daz der kunic hêr / einer runzen mêr / an dem antlutze gewan"). Yielding to the contingent paradigm of his work, the sculptor decides to travel back to Alsace and there verifies the new pathognomic detail. Distressed, the master returns to Speyer, and decides to destroy his work ("warf daz bilde nider") so that he can start fresh on another, with absolute fidelity ("unde macht ez aber gelîch / Ruodolfen dem kunic

rich"). Ottokar – who himself died in the midst of writing his rhyming chronicle when he was just twelve years from his present and 2,000 verses away from the number 100,000 – concludes drily: “now the stone was his roof”, i.e. his own tomb (“der stein wart nû sîn dach”).³³ With its “paragonal” thrust, this fascinating anecdote transfers Zeno’s paradox of motion to the contest between life and art.³⁴ It confirms Belting’s argument insofar as the lasting representation of the body’s transitoriness (with death as its vanishing point) here culminates in an iconoclastic act: It is not the corpse, but the living body that is an “unreliable image”. By destroying the *effigies*, the sculptor himself stands in for *tempus edax rerum*, necessarily failing in his attempt to represent the unrepresentable.

As though to confirm this very contradiction, Michelangelo once complained in another context: “l’arte e la morte non va bene insieme”.³⁵ But tomb sculpture makes the polarity positive when it suspends the opposition between living and dead as an *aesthetic* event. In its oscillation between these poles, the dead artwork releases a surplus that visualizes the signs of life in a play of latency and emergence. In the abovementioned second book of his *Treatise on Painting*, Alberti apodictically declares:

One needs, then, to pay attention so that all the members execute their own task in relation to that of which one speaks. [...] One praises, among Romans, a *historia*, in which dead Meleager is carried and those who are close at hand seem to be afflicted and work with all members. Without doubt, in him who is dead there is not any member that appears alive: namely, that all [the members] hang down, the hands, the fingers, the neck; all descend down languidly. Briefly, all contribute to express the death of the body [...] In every painting, therefore, one needs to observe this: [...] that the members of the dead appear lifeless to a hair, but [...] all [the members] of the living [appear] active. One says that a body is alive when it performs a certain movement of its own free will. Indeed, they say that there is death when the members are no longer able to sustain vital duties [*vitae officia*], namely movement and feeling.³⁶

Alberti's double emphasis on the bodily signs of life and death, identified with movement and perception in the framework of Aristotelian biology, is anticipated in a well-known passage in Dante's *Divina Commedia*.³⁷ There the wanderer in the beyond describes the reliefs in purgatory made by the highest artist, God. On these reliefs the dead appear truly dead, the living alive.³⁸ Both Dante and Alberti stress the direct opposition of living and dead bodies in the viewer's perceptual field; as such they imply a comparative vision in which the polarity of bodily images becomes a visual experience of contrast and transition.

The Italian typology of wall tombs, with their strong compositional links, force the dead gisant and his living spiritual double into a kind of simultaneous image. Such linkages can already be found in Arnolfo's tomb for de Bray, the cardinal and mathematician (as emphasized by the inscription). Their condition is the Italian choice of the verticalized wall tomb as the specifically "ecclesiastical" formula,³⁹ which even presents three-dimensional elements like a composed "image".

Art and the Emergence of Life

But what happens if we read Alberti's postulate of this existential polarity against the grain, not as a mere *contrast*, but as *tension* within the visual field – as in the sense of Jean Molinet's epitaph to Simon Marmion (1489): "Je suis SYMON MARMION, vif et mort, / Mort par nature et vif entre les hommes / Après le vif, moy vif peindis la Mort, / Qui durement m'a peinde [...] Car jay pourtraict tel mort gisant soubz lame / Qu'il sambloit vif et ne rester que l'âme."⁴⁰ What happens if the past and anticipated future vitality of the body is staged against the background of factual death? What if the traces of extinguished life are both written into the representation of dead bodies and at the same time tautologically fuse the soul's departure with the factual inanimacy of the *artwork*? And finally, what happens when the hope for the reunion of body and soul is correlated with the latent vitality of the stone or bronze effigy?

Questions like these give an outline of the experimental field of early modern European tomb sculpture. While in the North, the

gisant's paradoxical halfway position between standing (footrests and consoles) and lying (pillow), not to mention moving (praying, raised arms), became a widespread formula,⁴¹ Italian and Spanish sculptors developed other strategies of ambivalence. In these was mirrored the existential openness of the Christian conception of death in which purgatory stands in a mysterious relation to the terrestrial calendar and mundane space.⁴² That very same transitory note was struck by innovations in funeral liturgy around 1300. Drawing on Wolfgang Brückner, Hans Körner has suggested that Tino di Camaino's tomb of Bishop Antonio d'Orso reproduced the enthroned dead body of the bishop on his *cathedra*, a funerary rite that was practised throughout Europe into the sixteenth century [ill. 9].⁴³ In it, the corpse was disemboweled and filled with fragrant scents, kept upright using a subcutaneous support construction and exhibited for several days in the churches of his diocesan town. The prepared corpse seemed thus to possess at least two of the three fundamental *signa vitae*: movement (sitting upright), and corporeal integrity as opposed to degradation.⁴⁴ The closed eyes point ambivalently either to death or sleep, while the head still appears almost to eavesdrop on the prayers and intercessions of the mourners.

Tino di Camaino's singular monumental tomb for the bishop in the Cathedral of Florence lost its architectonic framework and some additional figural elements at an early stage. For this reason, as with Camaino's tomb for the Emperor in Pisa, it has unleashed an impassioned controversy among experts.⁴⁵ What the countless reconstructions (including the current display) have in common is that they locate the statue of the seated bishop over his sarcophagus. The relief on the sarcophagus signals the expectation of Christ's judgment, as represented by the kneeling bishop; on the verdict, the punishments of purgatory are being meted out. Borne by lions, the sarcophagus rests upon two arches on consoles that, in a reference to the *Documenti d'Amore* by Francesco da Barberino (poet, jurist, and executor of the bishop's testament), show a three-faced *mors* in the center. Deadly projectiles shot in either direction over the clearance of the arches were originally cast as bronze arrows, stuck in bodies of different ages, some already in a state of decay. In the leonine verses,

Ill. 9. Tino di Camaino, Tomb of Bishop Antonio d'Orso, c. 1321, marble. Florence, Cathedral.



the underlying inscription names the humble sculptor who disdained to call himself a master as long as his father remained alive (“hu[n]c [pro] patre genitivo decet inclinari ut magistro illo vivo nolit appellari”).⁴⁶ Slumped in his throne, Bishop Antonio presides over the dramatic scenery with closed eyes and the hint of a smile; his hands are crossed over his midsection.

Alberti would have been pleased: “all [the members] hang down, the hands, the fingers, the neck; all descend down languidly. Briefly, all contribute to express the death of the body”.⁴⁷ Or rather, this would be the case if not for the figure’s upright seated posture, probably originally upon a relief *faldistorium*, and peculiarly floating underarms and hands, in the style of the visual formula of the equally paradoxical, standing-while-lying *Christus patiens* of contemporary Byzantine icons.⁴⁸ Bishop Antonio’s effigy appears to sleep peacefully, while the still-preserved angels above him likely once performed an elevation of the soul, carrying the deceased heavenward. The figure’s inclined head indicates gravity’s effect, while at the same time suggesting the attitude of humility or the expectancy of devoted listening. The effigy of Bishop d’Orso is mounted conspicuously high on the internal façade of the cathedral, flanked by the emblems of both his papal patrons, Boniface VIII and Clement V. The bishop dominates the enormous space of the cathedral as a living dead man: an exceptional work in which the ambivalence between life and death finds an expression that would remain unsurpassed until Michelangelo.

Italian sculptors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries worked to vitalize the effigy, often juxtaposing its immobility and its virtually enlivened surroundings. In the motif of the mortal slumber there appears a protest against death’s inexorability. Consider, for instance, the remarkable epitaph, probably by Pontano, for Benedetto da Maiano’s tomb of Maria d’Aragona (completed 1488/89; Naples, Sant’Anna dei Lombardi, Cappella Piccolomini), which paraphrases an ancient fountain inscription warning the observer not to wake the sleeping nymph – only to conclude on a paradoxical tragic note [ill. 10]: “One could believe that she sleeps, *quae mori digna non fuit*.”⁴⁹ The potentially living image of the dead young woman (here with open lips) is consolation and a sad illusion at once, a rever-

Ill. 10. Benedetto da Maiano,
Tomb of Maria d’Aragona
(detail), c. 1475, marble.
Naples, S. Anna dei Lombardi,
Cappella Piccolomini.





Ill. 11. Mino da Fiesole, Tomb of Bishop Leonardo Salutati (detail), c. 1466, marble. Fiesole, Cathedral, Cappella Salutati.

sal of Petrarch's optimistic formulation "sopita erat; tu mortuam credidisti".⁵⁰

In Mino da Fiesole's somewhat earlier funerary chapel for Bishop Salutati in Fiesole Cathedral, the difference between "dead" stone and living effigy, between fragment and "whole person", becomes thematized for the first time [ill. 11]. Instead of a reclining figure, which was a privilege of the highest ecclesiastical and republican honors in fifteenth-century Florence, in the Capella Salutati one finds a portrait bust – a genre whose reinvention in Florence goes back preponder-

ately to Mino himself, with some other, disputed predecessors in Donatello's orbit.⁵¹ The Cappella Salutati thereby anticipates the dominant genre for effigies beginning in the sixteenth century.⁵² The bishop's smiling countenance, carved with surprising distinctiveness, turns slightly toward the church and contrasts with the presence of the bodily relics of the deceased – as the first line of the sarcophagus inscription (“OSSA”) underlines. The vigorously polished skin of his face glistens; his gaze is intensified by deeply drilled pupils. Profound, expansive tensions unfold between the aniconic facticity of the bones that rest in a partially gilded sarcophagus above the marble bust, and the powerful evocation of the bishop's personality in his fragmented effigy. The inscription on the sarcophagus offers an explanation: after the inventory-like “OSSA”, the observer is addressed directly and made aware that Leonardo Salutati had the tomb built while he was still alive (“vivens sibi posuit”). The inscription concludes by greeting the reader, in a pun actualizing the bishop's family name.

The liveliness of the bishop, who appears suddenly at the edge of the observer's field of vision when approaching the chapel from the church's entrance, shows itself in a bodily fragment. This is brought to expression not only by the bust genre and the noteworthy diagonal cut at the shoulders (perhaps an allusion to the antique bust format).⁵³ Mino also emphasizes it with the narrow console lying just beneath the bust, and through the barely treated cut surfaces: Here is where the artefact of stone with its ‘unfinished’ details is ostentatiously mounted, prominently bearing the artist's signature (“Opus Mini”). In the chapel of Bishop Salutati, the contrast between the dead effigy and the living forms proliferating in their surroundings becomes reformulated as a three-way contrast of the exposed sarcophagus, the bust with its intensified expression, and the very fact of its materiality (marble). The juxtaposition of bones and bust correspondingly echoes the disposition of altars with remnants of saints, and thus adds an hagiographic motif. At the altar, however, the miraculous bodily remains on their own guarantee the living presence of the saint. In the Salutati Chapel, instead, an interminable tension emerges between the invisible body of the deceased in his sarcophagus and the visible

vitality of a sculptural fragment that stresses its virtuosic fabrication from ‘dead stone’, and whose emphatic verism simultaneously transcends the highly individualized, smiling figure. The portrait bust is placed within this tension as a metonymy for the entire figure, just as the invisible corpse stands as a fragment for the ‘whole person’ in both body and soul.⁵⁴

With his representation of an effigy that appears at the same time as a signed artwork – like Donatello’s tomb of Bishop Pecci in Siena – Mino anticipates the development of Florentine tomb sculpture in the sixteenth century, which culminates in Michelangelo’s mausoleum in S. Lorenzo.⁵⁵ Here the effigies are delicately staged between their factual inanimacy as statues and their virtual enlivenment through Michelangelo’s art. Death and vitality thus increasingly become a theme of *art*, which inherits and absorbs older eschatological hopes in turn.

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Notes

1. Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting: A New Translation and Critical Edition*, trans. by Rocco Sinisgalli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 57–58 (De pictura II, 37): “denique omnia ad exprimendam corporis mortem congruunt. Quod quidem omnium difficillimum est”.
2. Cf. Hans Körner, *Grabmonumente des Mittelalters* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), pp. 157–67.
3. Kurt Bauch, *Das mittelalterliche Grabbild: Figürliche Grabmäler des 11. bis 15. Jahrhunderts in Europa* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1976), p. 149.
4. Francesco Bocchi, *Eccellenza della statua di San Giorgio di Donatello* (1584) in *Trattati d’arte del Cinquecento fra manierismo e controriforma*, ed. by Paola Barocchi (Bari: Laterza, 1960–62), 3 vols., III, pp. 125–94 (p. 162); cf. Robert Williams, “A Treatise by Francesco Bocchi in Praise of Andrea del Sarto”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 52 (1989), pp. 111–39; cf. Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 63.
5. Anton Legner, *Reliquien in Kunst und Kult: Zwischen Antike und Aufklärung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995); cf. Hans Belting, “Repräsentation und Anti-Repräsentation. Grab und Porträt in der frühen Neuzeit” in *Quel corps? Eine Frage der Repräsentation*, ed. by Hans Belting et al. (Munich: Fink, 2002), pp. 29–52; Urte Krass, *Nah zum Leichnam: Bilder neuer Heiliger im Quattrocento* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2012), pp. 77–86.

6. Cf. Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over her Dead Body: Death, Femininity, and the Aesthetic* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 320 (in connection with thoughts by Sarah Kofman).
7. Cf. *The Greek Anthology*, trans. by W.R. Paton (London and New York 1925–27), 5 vols., II, no. 565. “The painter portrayed Theodote as she was. If only his art had abandoned him and granted forgetting to those of us who mourn her.”
8. Cf. Krass, pp. 77–86; cf. Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 52.
9. Cited after Geraldine A. Johnson, “Activating the Effigy. Donatello’s Pecci Tomb in Siena Cathedral” in *Memory and the Medieval Tomb*, ed. by Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo and Carol Stamatidis Pendergast (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 99–127 (pp. 111–12 and 119–20; my translation).
10. Peter Cornelius Claussen, “Pietro di Oderisio und die Neuformulierung des italienischen Grabmals zwischen *opus romanum* und *opus francigenum*” in *Skulptur und Grabmal des Spätmittelalters in Rom und Italien*, ed. by Jörg Garms and Angiola Maria Romanini (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990) pp. 173–200.
11. Cf. Bauch, pp. 161–62.
12. Claussen, pp. 185–86.
13. Cf. Joachim Poeschke, “Betrachtungen der römischen Werke des Arnolfo di Cambio”, *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte*, 67/3–4 (1972), pp. 175–211 (p. 191).
14. Cf. Giusi Testa, “Stratigrafia di un monumento: Innovazioni metodologiche e nuove scoperte”, in *Arnolfo di Cambio: Il monumento del Cardinale Guillaume de Bray dopo il restauro* (Florence: Olschki, 2010), pp. 21–36 (pp. 32–33).
15. E.g. Giovanni di Cosma, tomb of Cardinal Guillaume Durand (from whom the renewed funeral liturgy derives), c. 1296; Rome, Santa Maria sopra Minerva. The question of polychromy, especially of death effigies, deserves more comprehensive investigation; some painted tombs of the late Trecento are monochromatic white (cf. Klaus Kraft, *Zum Problem der Grisaille-Malerei im italienischen Trecento* (Ph.D. Thesis: Munich 1956), pp. 21–22), but strongly multicolored gisants are likewise far from uncommon (cf. the tombs in Salamanca, Cathedral Vieja de Santa María). On the representation of the skin colors of the dead, cf. Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell’arte*, ed. by Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza: Pozza, 2004), ch. 148.
16. Cf. Tilmann Schmidt, *Der Bonifaz-Prozeß. Verfahren der Papstanklage in der Zeit Bonifaz’ VIII. und Clemens’ V.* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1989).
17. “iuxta tumbam in pariete simulacrum [sic] suum sculptum atque auro ornatum”; cf. Valentino Pace’s catalog entry in *Arnolfo: Alle origini del Rinascimento fiorentino*, ed. by Enrica Neri Lusanna (Florence: Pagliai Polistampa, 2005), p. 196 (cat. no. 1.15).
18. Cf. most recently Gert Kreytenberg, “La tomba dell’imperatore Arrigo VII a Pisa: una revisione”, *Studi di Storia dell’Arte*, 27 (2016), pp. 25–42.
19. Cf. Tanja Michalsky, *Memoria und Repräsentation: Die Grabmäler des Königshauses Anjou in Italien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).
20. Cf. Antje Middeldorf Kosegarten, “Grabmäler von Ghibellinen aus dem frühen Trecento” in *Skulptur und Grabmal des Spätmittelalters in Rom und Italien*, ed. by Jörg Garms and Angiola Maria Romanini (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), pp. 317–29; Enzo Carli, “Scultori senesi a Pistoia” in *Il Gotico a Pistoia nei suoi rapporti con l’arte gotica italiana*, (Pistoia: Tip. Pistoiese, 1966), pp. 149–64; Roberta Bartalini, *Scultura gotica in Toscana: Maestri, monumenti, cantieri del Due e Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2005), pp. 224–29.
21. The right hand was added in stucco; cf. Carli.

22. See Francesca Baldelli Corrado Fratini, “Ignoto scultore. Monumento funebre a papa Benedetto XI” in *Arnolfo di Cambio: Una rinascita nell’Umbria medievale*, ed. by Vittorio Garibaldi and Bruno Toscano (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2005), pp. 262–65.
23. Cf. Erwin Panofsky, *Grabplastik: Vier Vorlesungen über ihren Bedeutungswandel von Alt-Ägypten bis Bernini* (Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1992), p. 64; Körner, pp. 54–59.
24. See Damian Dombrowski, “Cernite – Vision und Person am Grabmal Roberts des Weisen in S. Chiara zu Neapel” in *Praemium virtutis: Grabmonumente und Begräbniszeremoniell im Zeichen des Humanismus*, ed. by Joachim Poeschke et al. (Münster: Rhema, 2002), pp. 35–60 (p. 49).
25. Cf. Krass, pp. 67–76.
26. Hannes Roser, “In innocentia / mea ingressus sum... Das Grabmal Innozenz’ VIII. in St. Peter” in *Tod und Verklärung: Grabmalkultur in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. by Arne Karsten and Philipp Zitzlsperger (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004), pp. 219–38 (esp. pp. 233–34, with a well-founded critique of the concept of the “two bodies”).
27. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 231–36.
28. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 237.
29. Michael Viktor Schwarz, “Chichele’s Two Bodies: Ein Grabmal in der Kathedrale von Canterbury” in *Visuelle Medien im christlichen Kult. Fallstudien aus dem 13. bis 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Michael Viktor Schwarz (Cologne: Böhlau, 2002), pp. 131–71.
30. Belting, “Repräsentation”, pp. 44–47.
31. Cf. Johnson, p. 103, including references.
32. Cf. Valentin Groebner, *Der Schein der Person: Ausweise, Steckbriefe und Kontrolle im Mittelalter* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2004), pp. 57–59.
33. Cf. “Ottokars österreichische Reimchronik” in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptorum qui vernacula lingua usi sunt: Deutsche Chroniken und andere Geschichtsbücher des Mittelalters* (Hanover: Hahn, 1877–1909), Abt. 5, vol. 1, p. 509 (cit. lines 39153–72). On the author cf. Winfried Stelzer, “Ottokar aus der Gaal” in *Neue deutsche Biographie*, ed. by Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 19 (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1999), p. 716–17.
34. The author states that the appropriate appreciation of the king would not fit beneath even an entire apse.
35. Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Rime*, ed. by Enzo Noè Girardi (Bari: Laterza, 1960), no. 283.
36. Alberti, pp. 57–58 (= De pictura II, 37).
37. Cf. Aristotle, *On the Soul. Parva naturalia. On Breath*, trans. by W.S. Hett (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 19 (= De anima I. 403b).
38. Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia*, comm. by Giuseppe Villaroel (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1991), p. 405 (= Purgatorio XII, 67); cf. Norman E. Land, “The Living and the Dead: From Dante to Vasari”, *Source*, 14/2 (1995), pp. 27–29; Leonard Barkan, *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 65–73.
39. Cf. Ingo Herklotz, ‘Sepulcra’ e ‘monumenta’ del medioevo: *Studi sull’arte sepolcrale in Italia* (Rome: Ed. Rari Nantes, 1990), p. 193.
40. Cf. Chrétien C.A. Deshaisnes, *Recherches sur le retable de Saint-Bertin et sur Simon Marmion* (Lille-Valenciennes 1892), pp. 72–73. I thank Hugo van der Velden for bringing this to my attention.
41. Körner, pp. 99–117; Panofsky, p. 55. For English examples see Antje Fehrmann, *Grab und Krone: Königsgrabmäler im mittelalterlichen England und die posthume Selbstdarstellung der Lancaster* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2008), pp. 40–41 and 59.
42. Cf. Michael Schmaus, *Von den letzten Dingen*, Katholische Dogmatik, 7 vols., IV/2 (Munich: Max Hueber, 5th ed. 1959), pp. 542 and 557.

43. Cf. Wolfgang Brückner, *Bildnis und Brauch: Studien zur Bildfunktion der Effigies* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1966), pp. 31–34; Körner, pp. 54–57. On predecessors in the Roman burial rite, cf. Massimiliano Papini, “La trionfale sfilata dei morti viventi” in *Trionfi Romani*, ed. by Eugenio La Rocca and Stefano Tortorella (Milan: Electa, 2008), p. 91.
44. Cf. Aristotle, p. 63 (= De anima 1.411b).
45. Summarized in Gert Kreytenberg, “Il concetto scenico nell’opera di Arnolfo di Cambio” in *Arnolfo di Cambio: Il monumento del Cardinale Guillaume de Bray dopo il restauro* (Florence: Olschki, 2010), pp. 67–76.
46. See Kreytenberg, “Il concetto”, p. 31.
47. Alberti, *On Painting*, p. 57 (= De pictura II, 37).
48. See the classical study by Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter: Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1981).
49. Cf. George L. Hersey, *Alfonso II and the Artistic Renewal of Naples, 1485–1495* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), pp. 111–15. A comprehensive discussion of the fountain epigram is in Zita Ágota Pataki, ‘*nympha ad amoenum fontem dormiens*’ (CIL VI/5, 3*e). *Ekphrasis oder Herrscherallegorese? Studien zu einem Nymphenbrunnen sowie zur Antikenrezeption und zur politischen Ikonographie am Hof des ungarischen Königs Matthias Corvinus* (Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2005).
50. Francesco Petrarca, *Aufrufe zur Errettung Italiens und des Erdkreises: Ausgewählte Briefe*, ed. by Berthe Widmer (Basel: Schwabe, 2001), p. 130.
51. Cf. Shelley Zuraw, “The Medici Portraits of Mino da Fiesole” in *Piero de’ Medici ‘Il Gottoso’ (1416–1469). Kunst im Dienst der Mediceer*, ed. by Andreas Beyer and Bruce Boucher (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1993), pp. 317–39; Jeanette Kohl, “Talking Heads. Reflexionen zu einer Phänomenologie der Büste” in *Kopf/Bild. Die Büste in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. by Jeanette Kohl and Rebecca Müller (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007), pp. 9–30. Angelica Tschachtli, “Un sourire qui intrigue: les expressions faciales du buste funéraire de Leonardo Salutati par Mino da Fiesole”, in *Rire en images à la Renaissance*, ed. by Francesca Alberti and Diane H. Bodart (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), pp. 311–325. On the discussion of Donatello’s (?) earlier (?) busts of Niccolò Uzzano (?), which may likewise have emerged in the context of funerary art, cf. Michaela Marek, “Donatello’s Niccolò da Uzzano: ritrarre dal naturale und Bürgertugend” in *Donatello-Studien*, ed. by Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz (Munich: Bruckmann, 1989), pp. 263–71.
52. Cf. Thomas Martin, *Alessandro Vittoria and the Portrait Bust in Renaissance Portraiture. Remodelling Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
53. Cf. the fundamental essay by Irving Lavin, “On Illusion and Allusion in Italian Sixteenth-Century Portrait Busts”, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 119 (1975), pp. 353–62.
54. On busts as models of the lacerated unity of the *totus homo*, cf. Irving Lavin, “On the Sources and Meaning of the Renaissance Portrait Bust”, *The Art Quarterly*, 33 (1970), pp. 207–26.
55. One early example, Arnolfo di Cambio’s tomb for Cardinal de Bray, bears the artist’s signature (“Hoc opus fecit Arnolfus”) at the end of its central inscription, but it is not inscribed into a portrait.

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