The myth of return: restoration as reception in eighteenth-century Rome

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This article explores how themes and questions developed within the field of reception studies can be usefully applied to the study of the restoration of ancient sculpture. It focuses on a second-century AD statue which was restored at the very end of the eighteenth century by the Roman sculptor Giovanni Pierantoni and which is now in the collections of the Lady Lever gallery in Port Sunlight. This statue originally represented Antinous, but Pierantoni’s addition of a cup and jug turned the figure into Ganymede. Here I show how the restorer’s choices responded to contemporary trends in sculptural restoration, allegorical portraiture, and Catholic worshipper imagery; in particular, I argue that the myth of Zeus and Ganymede was newly configured to match a Christian model of interaction between mortal and divine.

In recent decades, scholars working on the reception of Graeco–Roman art have drawn attention to the range of ways in which our engagement with ancient material culture is mediated by the interventions of later periods. Thematic studies have been made of topics like copying, collecting, conservation, and display; meanwhile, the complementary approach of ‘artefact biography’ has shown how far any single object can enchain a long series of people, places, and processes. The complex life histories of ancient artefacts are sometimes disavowed by their physical immediacy — our direct, sensory experiences of a Roman sculpture, for instance, can appear to collapse the temporal distance between ancient maker and modern viewer. On the other hand, close scrutiny of the sculpted surface can often reveal the traces of different

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1 Symonds (1878: 128).
actors and events in the form of toolmarks, restorations, and reworkings. It is the restorer’s intervention in the fabric of ancient sculptures that will be the focus of this article.

In contrast to some of the best recent work on the topic, this article does not offer a global view of how attitudes to restoration have evolved over the centuries. Instead, I focus on a single sculpture — a second-century AD statue of Antinous now in the Lady Lever gallery at Port Sunlight, which was restored in Rome by Giovanni Pierantoni between 1794 and 1796. One aim of this study is to illustrate the value of the ‘case history’ approach to restoration, which can throw into relief the sheer diversity of ways in which ancient artefacts have been remade for later audiences. A second aim is to show how the restoration of individual sculptures can direct our attention onto the social, political, and religious worlds outside the walls of the restorer’s studio. My analysis of how this statue is remodelled according to later cultural contexts and art-historical trends shows just how far the restored sculpture is a multi-authored, ‘hybrid’ creation, in which the classical is just one strand of a richly woven tapestry of varied influences. Finally, the story presented here also suggests that the restored statue can provide us with an unexpected vantage point from which the classical past can be inspected and reappraised.

Restoring Antinous

The over life-size Parian marble statue shown at Figure 1 dates to the second century AD. It represents a naked male figure who stands on a pedestal, leaning

3 It is now well understood that eighteenth-century viewers preferred heavily restored sculptures with added attributes, while the nineteenth century saw the rise of the ‘cult of the fragment’ and the corresponding demise of the restorer’s art. Similarly, the aesthetic minimalism of the 1960s led to many sculptures being de-restored, while towards the end of the twentieth century a new appreciation of the historical value of post-antique restorations led to their ‘re-restoration’. For examples of the ‘grand narrative’ approach to restoration, see Dolcini (1986), Pinelli (1986, 2003), True (2003) and Podany (2003). For de-restoration, see Ramage (2003a).

4 Existing case studies of restored statues normally focus on technical aspects: one particularly relevant example is Moltesen and Hast (2004), which addresses the restoration of another Antinous statue (the ‘Antinous Casali’ in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek). Here I am more interested in what the restoration of a statue does to its meaning.

5 On hybridity as a type of reception, see Hardwick (2003: 9, and 2008). For restoration as ‘creative collaboration’ see Ramage (2002: 61). Seymour Howard’s contribution to the Getty volume, like much of his earlier work on the subject, raises questions that are highly pertinent to reception studies. For instance, he begins (2003: 26):

Restoration has been largely seen from the point of view of the restorer’s effect on the antiquity; here I am equally interested in the seemingly passive baseline effect, as field to figure, of the antique fragment on the restorer and his traditions.
forwards with his weight on his right leg, his left heel raised from the floor. His chin is slightly lifted, and his gaze appears to follow the drinking cup held in his upraised right hand — this cup, we might presume, has been filled with the jug in the figure’s left hand, which hangs down by his side. The statue, which was rediscovered in the late eighteenth century, is a portrait of Antinous, the Emperor Hadrian’s young lover, who drowned in the Nile in 130 AD. As such, it has been dated to the period between the death of Antinous and the death of Hadrian in 138, when the emperor was (so the story goes) feverishly commissioning images of his beloved to adorn both his own private residences and public spaces across the Empire.

Figure 1. Second-century AD statue of Antinous restored c. 1795 as Ganymede, from the Lady Lever Gallery at Port Sunlight. Parian Marble. The statue measures 2.33 m from the base of the pedestal to the top of the cup. Courtesy of National Museums Liverpool.

6 Lady Lever Art Gallery, LLAG 208. The most recent publication of the statue, which includes a comprehensive bibliography of sources, is Waywell (1986: 21–2 (cat. 5) and plates 8–14).


8 Vout (2006: 25) suggests that the kneejerk attribution of every Antinous image to the late Hadrianic period owes more to our expectations of Hadrian and his passion than to close scrutiny of the material evidence. The imagery and cult of Antinous may in fact have begun earlier and lasted longer than the narrow eight-year period to which it is usually
The statue’s present home is in the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight on the Wirral. It was bought at auction in 1917 by the First Viscount Leverhulme, William Hesketh Lever, from the disbanded collections of the Regency writer and designer, Thomas Hope. Hope had himself acquired the statue in Rome in 1796, and had shipped it to England, to his London residence on Duchess Street. It was displayed here between 1804 and 1849, probably next to an image of Asklepios at the end of the house’s long statue gallery. After Hope’s death in 1831, his eldest son Henry Thomas Hope moved this statue along with several other sculptures to The Deepdene, the family’s country residence in Surrey. Here it stood in the Entrance Hall until leaving, along with (amongst others) a nymph, a hermaphrodite, and a silenus, to start a new phase of its life on the Wirral.

The archaeological findspot of the statue was given as ‘qualche scavo incerto’ by the French scholar and archivist Montaiglon in 1907, and indeed our other sources disagree on where exactly it was discovered. Adolf Michaelis, the renowned connoisseur and cataloguer of Ancient Marbles in Great Britain, wrote in 1882 that the statue was ‘probably the one which Al. Hirt saw in Rome towards the end of the last century at the sculptor Sposimo’s; which came from Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli, the original home of several of our most remarkable Antinous statues’. Meanwhile, Thomas Ashby recorded in 1907 that the statue had been found at Roma Vecchia, between the fourth and fifth milestones on the road to Frascati. While for obvious reasons Hadrian’s villa is the more attractive of these suggestions, Roma Vecchia seems a more likely alternative. This is not least because this information is said to have come directly from the statue’s restorer, Giovanni Pierantoni, into whose workshop the statue passed shortly after its excavation in 1794.


10 For a full list of the sculptures bought by Lever from the Hope collection, see Waywell (1986: 17). Lever paid £5,600 guineas (£5,880) for the statue, Hope 2,800 scudi. After Thomas Hope’s death, his collection was inherited by his son Thomas Henry Hope, who reassembled his father’s collection at The Deepdene.

11 Montaiglon (1907: 413).
12 Michaelis (1882: 284). Levezow, Visconti and Westmacott also give the findspot as Hadrian’s villa: see Levezow (1808: 111); Visconti (1821: 40) and Westmacott (1824: 221).
13 Ashby (1907: 93): ‘After Visconti’s list Riccy adds (p. 145) from Lisandroni’s notes other sculptures discovered at Roma Vecchia; and (p. 146, no. 101) states that he was assured by the sculptor Pierantoni that the Antinous, which he had restored as a Ganymede offering a cup of ambrosia to Jupiter, which was bought by ‘Milord Hope’ (it is now at Deepdene), was found about the year 1794, when the road to Frascati was being repaired between the fourth and fifth mile, i.e. on the boundary of or just within the tenuta of Roma Vecchia. If this statement is true Michaelis’ supposition (Ancient Marbles in Great Britain, p. 283, no. 8) that it came from Hadrian’s Villa must be corrected.’
A few biographical details about Pierantoni will help to contextualize his restoration of the Antinous sculpture. He was born in Rome in 1742 to Domenica Allegrini and Pietro Antonio, a native of Le Marche. In 1763, he married Flavia di Paolo Cavaceppi, the niece of Rome’s most famous sculptor–restorer, Bartolomeo Cavaceppi, and although his wife died childless fifteen years later, the two men remained close until the end of Cavaceppi’s life. Pierantoni was nicknamed ‘lo sposino’ after remarrying when he was thirty-seven, and his second wife, Francesca di Paolo Ambrogi, bore him four sons. He worked as the chief restorer in the Museo Pio-Clementino for almost twenty years. A painting by Stefano Piale represents a visit made by Pius VI to the gallery’s Sala delle Muse; Pierantoni can be seen at the right of the scene, looking on as the museum’s curator, Giamabattista Visconti, shows the Pope an antique statuette (Figure 2).

In addition to his restorations of ancient stone sculptures, Pierantoni also made several new works, the best-known of which is a colossal statue of Pius VI created in 1784 for the library of the German–Hungarian seminary. Pierantoni achieved great repute as

14 Together with Carlo Albacini, he was charged with making an official inventory of Cavaceppi’s studio after the older restorer’s death (Howard 1982: 198). The execution of Cavaceppi’s will was also in the care of Vincenzo Pacetti, for which see Ramage (1999, 2003b).
15 Pietrangeli (1984b); Collins (2004: 79).
16 Pietrangeli (1984a: 76); Collins (2004: 81–4, figure 43). A rather more eccentric creation was the large-scale statue group of ‘Hercules slaying the Hydra’ that was commissioned in 1796 by Frederick Hervey, Fourth Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry, which now resides in Spencer House in London. A letter from John B. S. Morrît of Rokeby to Sir Walter Scott gives us an interesting glimpse of the artefact, and the patron-sculptor relationship:

Before the heads were finished he [Lord Bristol] almost drove the sculptor mad by selecting for a model of Heracles’ countenance that of Mr Pitt, and insisting on the
a sculptor–restorer, and was admitted into the prestigious Accademia di San Luca in 1783, bearing the title ‘Scultore dei Sacri Palazzi Apostolici’ until his death in 1817.\(^ {17}\)

When our Antinous statue arrived in Pierantoni’s workshop (at some point between its discovery in 1794 and sale to Hope in 1796), it was in a very fragmentary condition. While the head of the statue was virtually undamaged, both arms had been broken off at the elbows. The left leg was missing below the knee, along with the back of the lower right leg and most of the right toes. Pierantoni restored these missing limbs, as well as the figure’s nose, some locks of hair behind his right ear, the penis and sections of the chlamys draped over the stump of the tree. He also retouched the pubic hair, added a clasp and weights to the chlamys, and smoothed the surface of the whole sculpture. His most significant intervention, however, was the addition of the attributes: the cup in the extended right hand and the jug in the left. For with these additions, Antinous ‘became’ Ganymede, the beautiful Trojan youth who was kidnapped by Zeus in the form of an eagle and taken up to Olympus to serve as cupbearer to the gods.\(^ {18}\)

Importantly for the argument that follows, we can assume that many of the earliest viewers of the restoration would have recognized both Antinous and Ganymede in the image. Antinous’ portrait statues appear to have followed one main type (dubbed the ‘Ur-Antinous’ by Moltesen and Hast), and this was already a highly salient image in the eighteenth century.\(^ {19}\)

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An early mention of our restored sculpture, in Konrad Levezow’s 1808 *Ueber den Antinous dargestellt in den kunstdenkmaelern des alterthums*, labels the image as ‘Den Antinous als Ganymedes’, while Riccy was apparently ‘assured by the sculptor Pierantoni that the

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17 Pietrangeli (1975, 1984a, 1984b); Howard (1990: 258, n. 47). For other restorations by Pierantoni in the Pio Clementino, see Lippold (1936, III.1 p. 113, no. 540; p. 116, no. 541; p. 149, no. 557; III.2 p. 536, no. 614; p. 539, no. 20; p. 552, no. 5; p. 555, 558); Stuart Jones (1912: 295).

18 The ancient authors who identify the eagle as Zeus include Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 10. 152ff) and Nonnus (*Dionysiaca* 10. 258ff, 10. 308ff and 25. 430ff). Other texts simply say that the eagle was sent *by* Zeus (cf. Pseudo-Apollodorus *Biblionea* 3.14.1ff; Pseudo-Hyginus *Astronomica* 2.16f, Virgil *Aenied* 5. 252ff, Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 6. 15ff).

Antinous, which he had restored as a Ganymede offering a cup of ambrosia to Jupiter [...] was found about the year 1794.\(^{20}\)

By the late eighteenth century, this practice of adding iconographical attributes to newly discovered ancient sculptures already had a long history. One particularly relevant precedent is described in the autobiography of the sixteenth-century sculptor Benvenuto Cellini. Seeing a fragmentary classical torso which had been sent as a gift to his patron Duke Cosimo I de Medici, the artist exclaimed:

My Lord, it’s a statue in Greek marble, and it’s a splendid piece of work; I don’t remember ever having seen such a beautiful antique statue of a little boy, so beautifully fashioned. Let me make an offer to your Most Illustrious Excellency to restore it – the head and the arms and the feet. I'll add an eagle so we can christen it Ganymede.\(^{21}\)

Cosimo originally placed the completed sculpture above a doorway in the Palazzo Pitti, but today it stands in Florence’s Museo dello Bargello (Figure 3).\(^{22}\) As James Saslow remarks in his book *Ganymede and the Renaissance*, ‘the drapery on the ground and the flattened sack beneath the eagle’s left wing indicate that the two are still on earth. Ganymede’s relation to the eagle suggests that we are witnessing an imagined interlude of playful seduction before their ascent.\(^{23}\)

Such charismatic rebaptisms became the norm in the eighteenth century and were particularly attractive to British collectors like Thomas Hope, who eventually purchased the Antinous–Ganymede from Pierantoni. In her study of British Neoclassicism between 1760 and 1800, Viccy Coltman describes how in this period ‘sculptural fragments became blank canvases inventively patched together as a cast of ancients and identified by the addition of a defining prop.’\(^{24}\) The transformation of previously anonymous marbles into characters known from written sources fits neatly into the overall picture Coltman paints of this era, when Greek and Latin literature formed the cornerstone of elite education and culture, and when the viewing and collecting of ancient art was virtually always mediated through the prism of ancient texts. Many of the mythical figures in the collections of English country houses owe their identities to eighteenth-century restorers such as Bartolomeo Cavaceppi and Carlo Albacini: the collections of Petworth House, for example, boast a Dionysus which was restored by Cavaceppi from a Doryphoros-type torso, and the same sculptor made another Doryphoros into a ‘Diomedes fleeing with the Palladion’.\(^{25}\) Holkham Hall is the home of the second-century

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\(^{20}\) Ashby (1907: 93); see above n. 13. The italics are mine. Admittedly the syntax here is somewhat ambiguous — was it Pierantoni, Riccy or Ashby who identified the statue as Ganymede?

\(^{21}\) Cellini (1906: 335).

\(^{22}\) Saslow (1986: 142–74; figure 4.1 on p. 146).

\(^{23}\) Saslow (1986).


\(^{25}\) Conti (1973: 173). Many more examples can be found in Howard (1982).
statue illustrated at Figure 4, which was discovered without its arms or lower legs. In addition to restoring the limbs, Cavaceppi added a tree-trunk support surmounted by a decapitated boar’s head, and so turned it into Meleager, the hero of the hunt for the Calydonian boar. This restoration has a particularly Ovidian flavour, since the boar’s ‘head of doom and death’ forms the centre point of the myth as related in the *Metamorphoses*, and, together with the boar’s hide, is the catalyst for the tragedy that follows.26

Insofar as it wrote an ancient statue into a new mythical narrative, then, Pierantoni’s addition of the cup and jug of Ganymede conformed to past and contemporary restoration practices. However, while the other examples cited here (Cellini’s *Ganymede* and the three sculptures by Cavaceppi) added a mythical identity to what were essentially generic, anonymous figures, Pierantoni’s restoration


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Figure 3. Cellini, Benvenuto (1500–1571): Ganymede and the Eagle. Museo dello Bargello, Florence. Courtesy of the Soprintendenza Speciale per il Patrimonio Storico, Artistico ed Etnoantropologico e per il Polo Museale della città di Firenze.
superimposed the character of Ganymede onto the recognizable portrait features of Antinous. This move resulted in what is known as an ‘allegorical portrait’, a highly theatrical mode of representation in which one personality is represented ‘as’ or ‘in the guise of’ another. Allegorical portraiture had developed in the Hellenistic period, and grown in popularity amongst imperial Roman patrons, who often likened themselves to figures from the divine pantheon. Well-known examples of this genre include the statue of Claudius represented as Jupiter in the Vatican, the bust of Commodus as Hercules in the Capitoline, and the statue of Livia as Ceres in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek in Copenhagen. Like the literary devices of metaphor and simile, this kind of image demanded a particular type of cognitive work from its viewers, who were not only required to recognize both characters embodied within the representation, but also to identify the points at which these characters overlapped. A successful reading of the Claudius statue, for instance, involved a recognition that he and Jupiter were both kings, while Livia and Ceres were united through their (biological and agricultural) fertility. Amongst the traits shared by

‘Success’ here is defined by the modern scholar: we presume, but cannot know, that the same connections would have been made by the ancient artist and viewer.
Antinous and Ganymede were, of course, their legendary beauty and their roles as younger partners in a homoerotic relationship. Pierantoni’s restoration thus brought both characters’ desirability to the forefront and constructed an ‘ideal’ gaze — that of the desiring older male. At the same time, the image hinted at an invisible pendant figure, another allegorical portrait which conflated the Emperor Hadrian with his mythical counterpart Jupiter.

In turning Antinous into an allegorical portrait, Pierantoni was in fact continuing another tradition begun in antiquity, when Antinous had been represented in many different divine and mythological guises. Amongst the Roman objects displayed at a recent Antinous exhibition in Leeds, for example, were a bronze coin which showed him next to a grazing cow (Antinous as Hermes or Aristaeus), a fragmentary marble bust wearing an ivy wreath (Antinous as Dionysus), and a red sandstone head wearing a headcloth with a cobra (Antinous as Osiris). Pierantoni had himself worked on the body of the Braschi Antinous, a statue from Hadrian’s villa at Praeneste which showed the youth in the guise of Dionysus, complete with mystic *cista*, serpent, and crown of vines. Another iconic image, the well-preserved relief from Torre del Padoglione now in the Terme museum in the Palazzo Massimo, shows Antinous as the woodland deity Silvanus (he stands by an altar topped with a pine cone, holding a flax and accompanied by a dog), while other coins from his homeland Bithynia show him with a *pedum*, as Pan. Interestingly, no extant ancient image shows Antinous as Ganymede, but the two figures are collapsed into one in a passage from Prudentius’ diatribe *Against Symmachus*. Here the Christian writer imagines ‘Antinous seated in heaven...the Ganymede of the God Hadrian, not offering cups to the gods but reclining with Jupiter on the middle couch, sipping that sacred draft of ambrosial nectar and listening to prayers in temples with his husband.’

The discussion so far has shown how Pierantoni’s restoration of Antinous in the guise of Ganymede conformed to long-term traditions in the portraiture of

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28 Vout (2006: 61 cat. no. 1 (bronze coin), p. 69 cat. no. 5 (marble head): 77 cat. no. 9 (sandstone head)). The popularity of Dionysus and Osiris as alter-egos for Antinous resides in their evocation of death and rebirth, plus — in Osiris’ case — his association with the Nile.

29 Marconi (1923: 11, no. 1; p. 226, figure 2). The part of the body covered by cloth is restored. The Antinous Casali also shows the youth in the guise of Dionysus (Moltesen and Hast 2004).

30 Marconi (1923: 174–5, no. 23).

31 Prudentius, Against Symmachus 1.271–7:

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quid loquar Antinoum caelesti in sede locatum/ illum delicias nunc diui principis,
ilium/ purpureo in gremio spoliatum sorte uirili,/ Hadrianque dei Ganymedem, non
cythos dis/ porgere sed medio recumbantem cum Ioue fulcro/ nectaris ambrosii
sacrum potare Lyaemum,/ cumque suo in templis uota exaudire marito?
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Antinous, as well as broader trends in the refashioning of classical sculptures. But a third artistic current is also relevant to our contextualization, one which bears only a tangential relationship to classical sculpture and its restorations. In the eighteenth century, the genre of allegorical portraiture experienced a massive revival. It was particularly popular in France and England, where painters like Nattier, Reynolds, and Romney represented their subjects in an enormous range of divine, mythological, historical, and even religious guises. In 1777, for instance, Giuseppe Ceracchi sculpted a life-size marble portrait of the sculptress Ann Seymour Damer as the Muse of Sculpture (Figure 5), while Joshua Reynolds’ painted portraits include Mrs Siddons as the Tragic Muse (1784), and Mrs Sheridan as St Cecilia (1786). While these three portraits reflected the occupations of their sitters, some subjects morphed into numerous different figures over their lifetimes. Emma Hamilton notably appeared as Circe, Ariadne and a bacchant in paintings by Romney and Vigée-Lebrun, while Madame de Pompadour was painted as Diana, an Arcadian shepherdess, a Vestal Virgin and the embodiment of Friendship.

Kathleen Nicholson explains how these images:

appealed to the eighteenth-century fascination with charade, and its penchant for visual and verbal symbolism in the form of énigmes (literary riddles), or the histoires secrètes, with their promise of a behind-the-scenes view of court politics, or the roman à clef, which invited the public to identify the real people behind fictional characters.

The eighteenth-century images differed from their classical predecessors in one important way — as the list above suggests, the vast majority of both sculpted and painted images represented female subjects. Men did occasionally appear in allegorical guise but were more commonly represented ‘as’ themselves, in the varied real-life roles that their gender allowed them to perform. By removing female sitters to the realms of fantasy, however, allegorical portraits enabled women to take on a wide range of imaginative and often erotic roles, and thus to transcend the limitations imposed on them by society. In this way, these idealized images both underscored female exclusion from civic and political life, and ‘opened a space in which women might question the notion of the limitations of which they were accused.’

One can only speculate about whether, in a world where most allegorical subjects were female, a decision to show Antinous in allegorical guise might have been

33 Circe by Romney (1782); Ariadne by Vigée-Lebrun (1790); a Bacchant by Romney (1785) and Vigée-Lebrun (1790–91). On Emma’s ‘attitudes’, see Rehberg (1794); Jenkins and Sloan (1996: 252–61).
35 Exceptions include the group of Hercules and the Hydra sculpted by Pierantonii himself, described above at n. 16.
informed by perceptions of his ambivalent gender status.\textsuperscript{37} Certainly, earlier (as well as later) literary sources cast Antinous in explicitly female roles; and the representation of Antinous in a visual mode so strongly associated at this time with

\textsuperscript{37} On perceptions of Antinous’ gender in the eighteenth century, see, for instance, Chard (1994) on the statue of Antinous in the Belvedere courtyard, which is shown to have served as a paradigmatic ‘feminised body’ for eighteenth-century travellers and critics.
femaleness is in some way equivalent with his literary representation as a bride.\textsuperscript{38} Whatever the restorer’s intentions, such an image would have made its own contribution to the perpetual re-construction of Antinous’ gender identity. But the prevalence of modern allegorical portraits would also have had more general implications for the viewing of ancient (or apparently ancient) allegorical images. For one thing, eighteenth-century viewers would have been fluent in the complex process of reading allegorical portraits, and receptive to the parallels drawn between the two interwoven characters. Then, the familiarity of the allegorical portrait would also have given the ancient sculpture a more contemporary feel, with both second- and eighteenth-century subjects being seen to use the same form of self-fashioning.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{38} Prudentius’ image of Antinous as wife of Hadrian (above n. 31) is picked up by the nineteenth-century poet John Addington Symonds, who represents Antinous as a bride after the honeymoon:

now, alone,
With saffron veil unbound and broken zone,
My blossom withered, lo, a wanton’s doom
Awaits me, or the purifying tomb!.

Earlier on in the same poem, the reader’s attention had been directed onto his ‘orbed breasts, smooth as dawn-smitten snow’; here, the \textit{blason} style of the description underscored the feminine delicacy of the youth’s body (Symonds 1878: 128, cited by Waters 1995: 208).

\textsuperscript{39} The versatility of Antinous as a model for allegorical portraits was picked up by other later restorers besides Pierantoni. A recent article by Bryan E. Burns discusses our Antinous–Ganymede alongside two other restored statues, both of which fabricate allegorical images of Antinous out of different ancient and modern elements. One statue of Antinous as Hercules (identifiable from the lion-skin) joins an ancient head to an ancient body which was not its own (Burns 2008: 124, figure 1). Another shows Antinous with a water plant clutched in his right hand which, as Burns explains, ‘seems to conflate the historical youth’s death by drowning with the mythological seizure of the young argonaut Hylas by water nymphs’; however the extensive restorations made to this statue include not only the head of Antinous, but also the arms and the plant. Burns goes on to discuss the contribution of these heavily restored images to Victorian formulations of Antinous. For instance, in \textit{The Picture of Dorian Gray}, Oscar Wilde invokes Antinous as a counterpart for the young protagonist. In the novel, the artist Hallward describes Dorian in a range of mythological personas, from ‘Paris in dainty armour’ and ‘Adonis with huntsman’s cloak and polished boar-spear’ to Narcissus and Antinous himself. Wilde (1891: 170):

I had drawn you as Paris in dainty armour, and as Adonis with huntsman’s cloak and polished boar-spear. Crowned with heavy lotus blossoms, you had sat on the prow of Adrian’s barge, gazing across the green, turbid Nile. You had leant over the still pool of some Greek woodland, and seen in the water’s silent silver the marvel of your own face.
Of course, in another way this image of Antinous ‘as’ Ganymede is more complicated than any of the eighteenth-century allegorical portraits cited here, for Mrs Sheridan, Mrs Siddons and Lady Hamilton were ultimately mortal women whose ‘real’ historical identities could be separated with relatively little trouble from those of the goddesses, saints and personifications in whose guises they were represented. Although Antinous did have an historical persona, his portrait image only began to be fabricated after his death and deification, and then artists drew heavily on the iconography of gods and mythical ephebes in constructing his image. In fact, as Caroline Vout has commented, ‘Antinous’ identity as an icon, and the nature of the influence he commands, rely to a large extent on his similarity to youthful deities such as Dionysus, Apollo, and Silvanus and to tragic, eroticized heroes such as Ganymede and Narcissus.\textsuperscript{40} The historical Antinous is thus far less tangible than a Mrs Sheridan or Mrs Siddons, and the two layers of Pierantoni’s sculpture far more difficult to untangle than any of the later allegorical paintings cited here. Perhaps we might say that the representation of Antinous ‘as’ Ganymede responds to and intensifies his already-divine status, completing his apotheosis by transporting him to the dinner table of the gods. It is the complex \textit{religious} identity of this statue, and the insight that it gives us into the development of sacred imagery between antiquity and the eighteenth century, that we will now move on to explore.

**Representing Ganymede**

In 1882, almost a century after its restoration by Pierantoni, Adolf Michaelis saw this statue in Hope’s collections and remarked on the appropriateness of its attributes:

> The restorer has added the cup in his r. hand, and the vase in his lowered l. hand, thus imparting the character of a Ganymede to the statue, but this character suits well with the delicacy of form of our statue and is also in harmony with Antinous’ position as the favourite (\textit{catamitus}) of Hadrian. The breadth of chest usually given to the handsome Bithynian is here much reduced, the hair too does not fall in such masses at the back of the neck, and the weak and effeminate rendering of the pubes is worthy of notice. All this accords well with its acceptation as an Antinous-Ganymede, which may once have been grouped with a Hadrianus-Jupiter.\textsuperscript{41}

Elizabeth Prettejohn has argued that later receptions of ancient artworks draw attention to characteristics of the piece that have previously remained hidden, and here Antinous’ restoration as Ganymede clearly shapes Michaelis’ description of the ancient statue.\textsuperscript{42} But do the statue’s ‘delicacy of form’, ‘narrow chest’ and ‘weak and effeminate pubes’ indicate — as Michaelis suggests — that this Antinous was actually a Ganymede in antiquity? After all, the figure’s lifted right arm survived only to the elbow, and the possibilities for completing this gesture were numerous.

\textsuperscript{40} Vout (2005: 83).

\textsuperscript{41} Michaelis (1882: 283).

\textsuperscript{42} Prettejohn (2006: 245–9).
Geoffrey Waywell has suggested that the statue might have shown Antinous in the guise of an athlete, crowning himself with his right hand, and perhaps holding an athletic object in his left.\(^{43}\) Other commentators have noted similarities with the Capitoline Cacciatore (‘Hunter’), who triumphantly holds a dead rabbit in his outstretched right hand, as well as with a statue of Pan from the Classical period.\(^ {44}\) Whether or not these suggestions are any closer to the truth of the ‘original’ ancient sculpture, Ganymede–Antinous offering ambrosia to Zeus–Hadrian was clearly just one of a multiplicity of ways in which the statue might have been completed.\(^ {45}\) (The reader should note that in this section I deliberately invert the normal labelling of the sculpture as ‘Antinous–Ganymede’, to reflect my focus here on the Ganymede ‘layer’ of the image.)

In fact, when we look at how the encounter between Zeus and Ganymede was represented in ancient art, we find nothing quite like this eighteenth-century version. In the period when the statue of Antinous was originally made, contemporary images of Ganymede simply show the boy relaxing in the company of the eagle. A second-century AD statue group in the Vatican museums shows Ganymede wearing a Phrygian cap and holding a wine cup; he leans on a tree-trunk and looks down at the eagle, which lifts its beak to meet his gaze (Figure 6).\(^ {46}\) This statue type—which, as James Saslow notes, must have influenced Cellini’s later sculpture (Figure 3)—is based on a Hellenistic ‘original’, and is known in a number of Roman copies. Another statue type popular in the Roman period shows Ganymede being lifted off by the eagle, a scene which is also represented in mosaic.\(^ {47}\) Ganymede’s avian abduction was a popular image in Greek art too, although here Zeus is normally shown in anthropomorphic form. A polychrome terracotta acroterion from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia dated to 470 BC represents the bearded Zeus striding

\(^{43}\) Waywell (1986: 21).

\(^{44}\) Fuchs suggests that both derive from a famous original of the Attic–Myronian circle just prior to 450 BC, possible a statue of Pan. Fuchs (1966). For the Cacciatore — a portrait statue of the time of Gallienus — see Stuart Jones (1912: 292, no. 27 pl. 71).

\(^{45}\) And as Caroline Vout notes, ‘Hadrian’s portrait . . . was rarely, if ever, displayed next to Antinous in antiquity’ (Vout 2006: 24). Vout goes on to suggest that ‘the absence of [Hadrian’s] physical presence invites the viewer to take his place and thus affects a greater sense of intimacy.’ In the case of the Lever sculpture, the upwards tilt of Antinous’ head and his upwards gesture—as well as the statue’s elevated display position in its current gallery context—make stepping into an imaged Hadrian’s shoes something of an impossibility. In this case, we are invited to appreciate the majesty and enormity of Antinous’ invisible partner.

\(^{46}\) LIMC IV.1 s.v. ‘Ganymedes’: 161 no. 124, Vatican Museo Chiaramonti 1376, from Rome.

\(^{47}\) e.g. LIMC IV.1 s.v. ‘Ganymedes’: 163 no. 188. Madrid, Prado 35 E (a statue) and LIMC IV.1 s.v. ‘Ganymedes’: 163, no. 174, Antakya, Mus. Hatay 10568, from Tarsos, first half of the third century AD (a mosaic).
purposefully forward with a small naked Ganymede tucked under his arm. Attic pots from the Classical period also show Zeus (who is normally identifiable from his attributes of the sceptre and lightening bolt) carrying off a sleeping boy or wrestling him into submission.

Other ancient pots, though, present a different scene from the myth, and it is here that we find the closest parallels to our eighteenth-century restoration. The red figure klyx shown at Figure 7 was found at Tarquinia and dates from the late sixth century BC. We see Zeus seated on a throne holding a lightening bolt and an ornate bowl; Ganymede raises the jug to fill the bowl, his other hand gesturing in the direction of Zeus’ lap. Here the pair are in the company of other gods — Hestia directly behind Ganymede, Athena, Aphrodite, Hermes, and Hebe (Dionysos frolics with his maenads on the other side of the pot). Another red-figure pelike from

48 *LIMC* IV.1 s.v. ‘Ganymedes’: 157, no. 56, with bibliography. Now in Olympia Museum.
50 *LIMC* IV.1 s.v. ‘Ganymedes’: 157–8, no. 60. (Museo Nazionale Tarquiniese RC 6848), ARV [2] 60, 66.
Vulci, which dates to c. 490 BC, focuses on Zeus and Ganymede. Zeus sits holding a sceptre with the eagle perched on top (a neat reference back to an earlier scene of abduction) while the smaller naked Ganymede again fills his cup. In some ways, then, our restored statue can be seen as a return to late Archaic and Early Classical Greek pottery, since both represent Ganymede filling Zeus’ cup in Olympus. Nonetheless, these images are marked by one striking difference. In the Greek pots, Zeus appears next to Ganymede, holding out his cup; in the statue, Ganymede raises the cup to a god who is unrepresented, unseen by the external viewer. While the viewer of the pots is presented with a complete narrative tableau, the viewer of the statue is required to fill in the missing gap with her imagination. Our only access to Zeus in the later image is the ‘negative imprint’ left on the body of his cupbearer: that is, by looking at Ganymede we can gain some insight into the size and bearing of the god.

Of course, we cannot know for sure whether Pierantoni ever saw these or other similar ancient images of the myth, although it is likely that he was familiar with the Chiaramonti ‘Ganymede and the Eagle’, which had been bought in 1781 and subsequently restored by Cavaceppi. However, it is interesting to note how his novel interpretation of the scene communicated aspects of the mythic narrative which had been sidelined in ancient visual images. For instance, the sculpture engenders in the external viewer a feeling of alienation: this Ganymede sees Zeus, but we ourselves remain (partially) blind. Our sense of exclusion neatly underscores the intimacy of the relationship between Zeus and Ganymede, and the special privileges that Ganymede’s beauty affords him. At the same time, our voyeuristic focus on the lone figure of the youth encourages us to adopt the god’s viewpoint and experience something of his all-consuming desire. This last effect had been achieved in a different way by a black-figure pot made around 500–480 BC, which shows Zeus and Ganymede conversing while Ganymede is being crowned by a draped figure standing behind him (Figure 8). The inscription *Ganymedem* which separates the two

53 LIMC IV.1 s.v. ‘Ganymedes’ no. 73. Munich, Antikenslg. 834. From Nola.
main figures is only legible from the perspective of Zeus: thus, the external viewer of this pot, inclining his head right, adopts the viewpoint of the god.

Putting this eighteenth-century Ganymede into a longer trajectory of Ganymedes from antiquity shows how very different it is from any of its predecessors, and it is here, I believe, that we can detect post-antique contexts encroaching most strongly on Pierantoni’s restoration of the statue. For this image of Ganymede offering ambrosia to an unseen Zeus ultimately conforms to a *Christian* representational tradition in which the focus is on a worshipper who raises his eyes, and often his hands, towards the heavens. Images of this type recur in all periods of Christian art, from the *orant* figures painted on the walls of the Roman catacombs to modern-day paintings, posters and prayer cards.\(^\text{54}\) Figures 9 and 10 give just two representative examples from the seventeenth century, but it is crucial to emphasize that similar body language was adopted by countless saints and worshippers across the urban landscape of Counter Reformation Rome. Figure 9 shows Guido Reni’s image of the early Christian martyr St Cecilia, who looks up in awe-struck wonder at a space somewhere beyond the top left-hand corner of the painting. She absentmindedly plays a violin, perhaps to accompany the singing of angels that she was reputed to hear. The illumination of her face by an unseen source of light is a common visual device in religious painting of this period, and is also reflected in the interplay of

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\(^\text{54}\) For an example of an orant figure, see Stevenson (1978: 88, figure 63) (from the St Callisto catacomb). Late twentieth-century examples can be found at Morgan (1998: 69, figure 20) (St Rita Holy Card, c. 1980s) and Morgan (2005: 155, figure 38) (missionary poster from Aira, Ethiopia, 1999).
sculptures with their architectural context. Pierre LeGros the Younger’s silver statue of St Ignatius stands in the saint’s chapel in the Chiesa del Gesù in Rome (Figure 10). The light which streams through a small window in the niche is reflected in small mirrors placed around the figure, which direct the sun onto the saint’s beatific face and make his body sparkle. This statue is thought to represent a vision of God and Christ carrying his cross which Ignatius saw in 1539 when he was on his way to Rome. Here, the bodies of God and Christ are absent from the tableaux, but Ignatius’ gaze can be followed to the IHS symbol above him. Many more statues in the interior and exterior of Baroque churches gesture passionately towards a vision which remains entirely hidden to the external viewer.

Even this tiny sample of Catholic worshipper imagery helps us to understand how, for a restorer working in the context of eighteenth-century Rome, a fragmentary body with a raised arm and transfixed, upturned gaze might have suggested a scene of divine epiphany. Pierantoni’s restoration was thus a modernizing one, in

55 On the chapel, see Levy (2004: 160–78), with discussion of this statue (which was partly melted down during the French occupation of Rome in 1798 but restored soon afterwards) at pp. 169–75.
which the encounter of Zeus and Ganymede was remodelled according a Christian blueprint. The beautiful mortal who had been snatched away by an eagle was shown in the familiar guise of the pious Catholic worshipper, while the most corporeal of all the Olympian deities was rendered invisible, his new immateriality emphasized through contrast with the heavy marble presence of his lover. As the reconfiguration of a pagan worshipper in Christian terms, the statue provides an interesting counterpart to the more explicit incorporation of ancient marbles into the bodies of Christian saints. One well-known example of this latter trend is the statue of St Agnes in the basilica of S. Agnese sulla Nomentana, which Nicolas Cordier constructed in 1604–5 from a torso of Egyptian alabaster. Another is the monumental statue of St Helen which was placed in the crypt of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme.

around 1724 (Figure 11). St Helen’s body is an ancient torso of Aphrodite type
found at Ostia; the figure’s (modern) head recalls a statue of Niobe in the Uffizi.
Viewing this sculpture alongside our Ganymede–Antinous alerts us very powerfully
to the two-way influence of pagan and Christian religious images.

The conscious or subconscious modelling of our statue on a Christian prototype
obviously made the ancient myth(s) it represented more familiar and comprehen-
sible to an eighteenth-century Roman audience. In turn, the visual parallels between
this statue and other Christian images invited the viewer to reflect on the differences
and similarities between pagan and Christian experiences of the divine. Ganymede’s
calm, reciprocal gesture, for instance, contrasts with the exaggerated passivity of
many of the saints, who were shown either immobilized in prayer or overwhelmed
by the ecstasy of a heavenly vision. At the same time, the eroticism of Ganymede’s
story and statue would have resonated with — as well as developed — other
well-known explorations of Christian worship. Statues like Bernini’s Ecstasy of
St Teresa (1647–52) and Ludovica Albertoni (1681) had made a forceful connection
between sexual and spiritual desire; in fact, while the Ganymede–Antinous is naked,
his somewhat dispassionate bearing contrasts with the exaggerated revelry of many
images of Christian saints. Any depiction of Ganymede would have invited the
viewer to consider the role of eroticism in worship, but the formal parallels between

58 For other examples of ancient statues being reworked into images of Christian saints, see
59 For general discussion of this topic, see Hart and Stevenson (1995). For the role of the
individual reception in the ongoing development of traditions, see Budelmann and
Haubold (2008).
Pierantoni’s restoration and contemporary religious imagery encouraged the direct comparison of Christian and pagan experiences.

For another example of the kind of intertextual reading that was facilitated by the statue’s modernization, we can look at the statue group by Jean-Baptiste Théodon reproduced as Figure 12. The group, entitled ‘Faith Triumphs over Idolatry’, stands in the Chiesa del Gesù next to the silver statue of St Ignatius discussed above (Figure 10). Faith holds her attribute of the chalice in her outstretched right arm, while her feet crush a serpent and a book inscribed with the names of Japanese and Chinese gods. The converted king of the Congo gazes up at her in wonder; at the bottom of the group the rejected Idolatry flails and gnashes her teeth. Without suggesting that all viewers of the statue would be conscious of this scene — or that those who had seen both images necessarily made the (same) connection between them — this example intimates how the knowledge of formally similar images might enrich the viewer’s experience of the restored Ganymede-Antinous. In this case, the statue could be (deliberately?) misread as an image of Faith, and thus incorporated wholesale into a Catholic iconographic system. Alternatively, viewers might recognize the irony of the connection, since the fetishistic worship of

60 Levy (2004: 175).
Antinous portraits in antiquity and beyond came dangerously close to Christian definitions of idolatry.

The refashioning of the ancient sculpture according to the aesthetic of the Italian baroque thus opened up the possibility of new intertextual readings which potentially transformed the viewer’s perspective on all images involved in the comparison. When the statue travelled from Rome to a Protestant England, a new viewing public would have approached the statue with entirely different knowledge and expectations. Nonetheless, the eighteenth-century religiosity of this figure still loomed large, and later receptions that at first sight seem entirely secular continue to respond to the Baroque element of this object’s history. In its current display context in the north rotunda of the Lady Lever art gallery, for example, the sculpture occupies the central point of a colonnaded circular room. The architecture is as much reminiscent of the baroque church as the Graeco–Roman temple. A glass dome directly above the figure mimics a sacred cupola, and sets in motion a similarly dramatic interplay of light and figure as seen in Figures 9 and 10. In this hybrid architectural context, the statue takes on an ambivalent status. On the one hand, it assumes the role of cult statue — the divine Antinous, standing on a tall base at the centre of the classical temple’s cella. But on the other hand, the image might also be seen to represent a beatific worshipper, who reaches up towards the skylight and the intangible realm of a Christian heaven. Ultimately, the complex religious identity of the restored sculpture, which is both mortal and divine, exceeds either pagan or Christian formulations.

Conclusion

In writing this article, I might have taken a very different approach to the restoration of the Antinous–Ganymede in the Lady Lever Gallery at Port Sunlight. I might, for instance, have examined the toolmarks and joins in the marble to find out about the restorer’s technique, or have ploughed the archives to learn more about the commissioning and sale of the restored sculpture. Such topics have been fruitfully explored in the past and indeed provide plenty of scope for future research. But I chose instead to investigate how this statue might be illuminated from the perspective of Classical Reception Studies, and how some of the themes and questions that have been articulated in relation to the translation and adaptation of literary texts might be applied to the reworking of a material object. This approach has given some unexpected insights into how the image has signified at various points throughout its life history, not only at the time of the restoration in the eighteenth century, but also

61 In turn, this last image reminds us how much the physical display context of any object contributes to the ongoing realization of its meaning. For a useful theoretical discussion of the construction of meaning in the visual arts, see Holly (1996). On viewer response in antiquity, the work of Jas Elsner is fundamental. See for example the essays collected in Elsner (2007).
at the time of its original manufacture in the second century AD, and forwards into the present day.

Much of the discussion has served to contextualize the restoration of the sculpture in the late eighteenth century, focusing on Rome, where the restoration was executed, but also gesturing towards Britain, where the sculpture was eventually taken and displayed. Some of the contextual information provided applies to the eighteenth-century reception of classical sculpture in general — the preference for whole (i.e. non-fragmentary) statues which could be identified from attributes, for example, is an important contemporary trend, which certainly influenced the choices made by Pierantoni. Other relevant contexts are perhaps more unique to our Antinous–Ganymede — the allegorical portraits that were once again popular in this period and the Catholic worshipper imagery which saturated contemporary Rome. Identifying these different influences has helped us to appreciate the intertextuality of the recreated sculpture and the different memories and meanings that it held for its earliest viewers.

At the same time, we have seen how an exploration of the statue’s re-making might also open a window onto the classical world. On one level, the process of looking at a statue’s restored attributes can encourage us to reflect on its ‘original’ form and meaning. Together with earlier commentators on our Antinous–Ganymede we have asked ‘if not this, then what?’, wondering whether the ancient statue might have represented Antinous in the form of an athlete, a hunter, or perhaps as a partner to a now-missing Hadrian. On another level, our gaze has been directed to other, seemingly unconnected areas of ancient art and thought, Greek and Roman themes which become more clearly delineated through a comparison with their later manifestations. The unique characteristics of Roman allegorical portraits, for example, are thrown into relief when we compare them with eighteenth-century allegorical portraits; so it becomes significant in retrospect that in antiquity both male and female genders were considered equally suitable for this kind of representation (meanwhile we wonder — perhaps for the first time — why none of our extant ancient portraits of Antinous show him in the guise of Ganymede?) Then there is the profound shift in religious imagery which our restored statue embodies: we might say that the classical gods have never seemed so tangible, so corporeal, as when seen from the perspective of Catholic worshipper imagery. Such insights into antiquity are particularly welcome given that we lack much contextual information for the Antinous statue in the Roman world: who commissioned it, for instance, or where and how it was originally displayed.

Next to the word ‘Restoration’ in the dictionary one finds the following definitions: ‘the replacement or giving back of something lost, stolen’, ‘a return of something to a former, original, or unimpaired condition’ or ‘a bringing back to a former position’. Each of these definitions betrays an assumption that the restored object is identical to the original, and simultaneously disavows the idea that the restorer’s intervention might have changed the statue in any significant way. However, this article has shown that the notion of unmitigated return is a myth. Even if it...
‘succeeds’ in reproducing the exact physical contours of the original (and who could ever know?), the act of restoration is always an act of reception which can alter — sometimes drastically — a sculpture’s form and meaning, and which can also go on to influence subsequent receptions in later periods. Eighty years years after our statue left Pierantoni’s workshop, John Addington Symonds wrote the lines cited at the opening of this article, which envisage Antinous as a cup-bearer at an imperial supper, standing before his king. These lines are powerfully reminiscent of Pierantoni’s restoration and tempt us to wonder whether the poet had seen the restored statue, or perhaps a reproduction of it, before he wrote them. Even if this is not the case, the two sources can now productively be read together, since the reader of these lines is given a mental image of their speaker, while the poem in turn animates the sculpture and provides Antinous with a voice. Each source highlights aspects of the other which previously might not have caught the audience’s attention: the viewer of the sculpture, for instance, is encouraged to think about the contents of the cup, while the sculpture’s gesture of servitude echoes and forefronts the speaker’s evocation of Hadrian as ‘my king’. This single case study thus gives a powerful hint of how far restorations might influence the later trajectories of classical sculptures and their subjects, as well as shining a light back onto the world of the classical antiquity. Hopefully, new explorations of other restored statues will deepen our knowledge and understanding of this process.

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62 On Symonds and Antinous, see Waters (1995). In his Sketches and Studies in Italy, Symonds discussed at length another restored (but wrongly identified) Antinous statue, the famous ‘Ildefonso’ group, which is now normally recognized as a representation of Castor and Pollux (Symonds 1879). On this statue and its copies, see Vout (2006: 83, cat. 12).

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