Agents of Space

Agents of Space:

Eighteenth-Century Art, Architecture, and Visual Culture

Edited by

Christina Smylitopoulos

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PREFACE

PRESIDENT, HISTORIANS OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ART AND ARCHITECTURE

MICHAEL YONAN

The Historians of Eighteenth-Century Art and Architecture (HECAA) is an academic society born of a lack. It was founded in 1993 by a small group of art historians who regularly attended the meetings of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS). ASECS had welcomed them into its ranks in the 1980s and they had developed a steady presence at its annual conference, publishing their research in ASECS's scholarly journals (notably *Eighteenth-Century Studies*), and becoming vital contributors to its discussions.

Art historians were attracted to ASECS for two reasons. As an interdisciplinary conference, it enabled the kind of fertilization across disciplinary lines now widely admired in academic thought. At ASECS conferences, art historians mingled with literary scholars, historians, philosophers, musicologists, and others who shared an interest in the period and were fascinated by the issues that emerged from a close examination of its culture. The art-historical scholarship born out of HECAA was keenly attuned to the broader trends of eighteenth-century studies and, in the eyes of many, decisively stronger as a result. The second reason for ASECS' allure is that the premiere academic organization for art history in the United States, the College Art Association (CAA), was slow to recognize the eighteenth century's importance in the history of art. CAA preserved a notable bias against the period throughout the 1980s, and opportunities to present new research at its conference were few and far between. When eighteenth-century specialists got a chance to speak, it was often in panels devoted to seventeenth- or nineteenth-century art. This made the eighteenth century's full complexity difficult to convey and hindered its development into a distinct field.

Thus, the need for HECAA. Dora Wiebenson was its founding president and a major early champion of its existence. Its initial cohort included Patricia Crown, Christopher M. S. Johns, Dorothy Johnson, Jerrine Mitchell, Julie Anne Plax, Paula Rea Radisich, Wendy Wassyng Roworth, and Mary D. Sheriff. Amidst the current flourishing of eighteenth-century art studies in the English-speaking world, it is easy to forget how small this early community was. Twenty people were present at the first HECAA lunch I attended in 1996, and this comprised almost the entire membership! Those early attendees could scarcely have imagined how much HECAA would grow in the following decades. In the early 2000s it became an affiliate society of CAA and now sponsors annual panels at both CAA and ASECS conferences. It has recently organized further panels in Canada, chaired by Christina Smylitopoulos, at the annual Universities Art Association of Canada (UAAC) conference and aims to join the Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (CSECS) conferences. With a membership of around 200, HECAA is now a global organization that communicates knowledge about eighteenth-century art to interested parties across the world. Its online newsletter *Enfilade* (http://enfilade18thc.com) is read daily in dozens of countries and its membership increasingly reflects this global reach.

HECAA may have grown, but its purpose remains the same: to foster scholarship on eighteenth-century art in all of its diversity and to create opportunities, especially for younger scholars, to advance research. It is therefore a great pleasure to see a selection of papers from several recent HECAA-sponsored events come together in this volume of essays. As *Agents of Space* demonstrates, HECAA's interdisciplinary tenor enables scholarship unfettered by traditional disciplinary boundaries that finds unexpected connections between the visual arts and other areas of culture. These essays synthesize approaches from multiple academic perspectives into richly textured historical inquiries. And, true to HECAA's mission, many of this book's contributors are scholars in the early stages of their careers. That they are producing such excellent work indicates that the organization has fulfilled its role and that the initial vision of its founders lives on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In bringing the ideas presented in this book together, I am grateful to the members and officers of the Historians of Eighteenth-Century Art and Architecture (HECAA), who agreed that holding HECAA-sponsored panels at the annual Universities Arts Association of Canada (UAAC) conferences could be a good idea. Michael Yonan (HECAA President, who has graciously provided this book's Preface), Jennifer Germann (Treasurer) and Craig Hanson (Editor) were enthusiastic supporters who helped to disseminate the call for papers in the incomparable online newsletter, *Enfilade*. This resulted in so many excellent proposals that in 2013 I hosted a double panel of scholars amidst the sublime prospects of the Canadian Rockies at the Banff Centre in Alberta (UAAC, 2013). A year prior, I had joined the faculty in the School of Fine Art and Music at the University of Guelph (SOFAM, UofG; Guelph, Ontario). In many ways, the HECAA-sponsored panels at UAAC—the national organization for Canadian artists, art historians, and critics—became my *rentrée* into art-historical scholarship in Canada following a Postdoctoral Research Associateship at the Yale Center for British Art (New Haven, Connecticut, USA). In 2014, I held another HECAA panel, this time hosted at OCAD University's dynamic urban campus in Toronto. For HECAA's warm welcome at UAAC, thanks go to esteemed colleague and former President of UAAC, Sally Hickson, and the current president, Anne Whitelaw (Concordia, Montreal, QC), who kindly invited us back. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies' (ISECS) International Seminar for Early Career Scholars, which was held in Manchester, UK (2014) under the direction of Jeremy Gregory (President, British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies) and Penelope J. Corfield (Vice-President, ISECS). At this event, I met extraordinary scholars, some of whom are represented in this book. I also gratefully acknowledge the support of Dean Donald Bruce of the College of Arts (UofG); former Director of the School of Fine Art and Music John Kissick; and our current Director, Sally Hickson, who provided research assistance through the Undergraduate Research Assistant program. Stephanie Caskenette (now at McGill University) and Hannah Milliken (soon to attend the University of York, UK) worked on aspects of this book in its early stages. Thanks are also due to a most valued colleague, Julia Skelly, for reading and providing feedback at several crucial stages in the development of this essay collection. I would also like to formally

acknowledge the informal assistance provided by UofG colleagues Dominic Marner (SOFAM), Amanda Boetzkes (SOFAM), Margot Irvine (School of Languages and Literatures), Kimberly Francis (SOFAM), Paola Mayer (School of Languages and Literatures), and Chris Lee (College of Arts). Very special thanks to Sheelagh Frame for her excellence in copy-editing and to Christina Ionescu (Mount Allison University) and Richard Taws (University College London) for their generous support of this book (and its editor). For financial assistance in preparing this manuscript, I acknowledge the SSHRC SIG-General Research Grant. Many thanks are also due to Samuel Baker, Commissioning Editor at Cambridge Scholars Publishing, who first approached me in my role as HECAA's Canadian conference chair and whose partnership brought this collection to publication. I would also like to show appreciation to the institutions that agreed to allow the authors to publish reproductions of works in their collections and, in some cases, waived publication fees. Thanks to the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam, the Netherlands) in particular, for the work that welcomes readers to our study. S. Connor Maitland, who was the Undergraduate Research Assistant (2015), deserves special recognition for a superb job assisting me in bringing this collection together and for learning with me. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the collection's contributors; their scholarship, dedication, and intellectual energy have advanced the discipline.

INTRODUCTION

DISCURSIVITY: SPACE, AGENCY, AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND VISUAL CULTURE

CHRISTINA SMYLITOPOULOS

> For this Janus, in the most remote antiquity, whether a demigod or a king, being remarkable for his political abilities and his cultivation of society, reclaimed men from their rude and savage manners; he is therefore represented with two faces, as having altered the former state of the world, and given quite a new turn to life. (Plutarch, *Numa.*, 19.6)[1]

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the Flemish engraver Gaspar Bouttats (ca. 1640–ca. 1695) engraved for Franciscus Verhaer's bestselling history of the Netherlands a copy of a frontispiece attributed to Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640). Bouttats's engraving (Fig. Intro-1) depicts the façade of the Roman temple of Janus, a shrine that, according to Plutarch, was dedicated by Numa Pompilius (753–673 BCE; reigned 715–673 BCE), who succeeded Romulus as the second king of Rome.[2] It was understood that when the doors of the shrine were closed, Rome was at peace; but when the doors were opened, Rome was in a state of war. On the left side of the engraving, a muscular Discordia, the goddess of strife and conflict, depicted here with writhing Medusa-like serpents in the place of hair, braces the door; on the right, a torch-bearing Blind Fury pries the door open with his hand and foot. Unsealing the temple has unleashed the Hydra—a multi-headed water creature and sentinel of the underworld

1. All citations from Plutarch are from *Plutarch's Lives, Translated from the Original Greek: with Notes, Critical and Historical: and A Life of Plutarch*, trans and ed. John Langhorne and William Langhorne (Baltimore: William and Joseph Neal, 1831).
2. Franciscus Verhaer, *Annales Ducum Seu Principum Brababtiae Titiusque Belgii* (Antwerp, 1623).

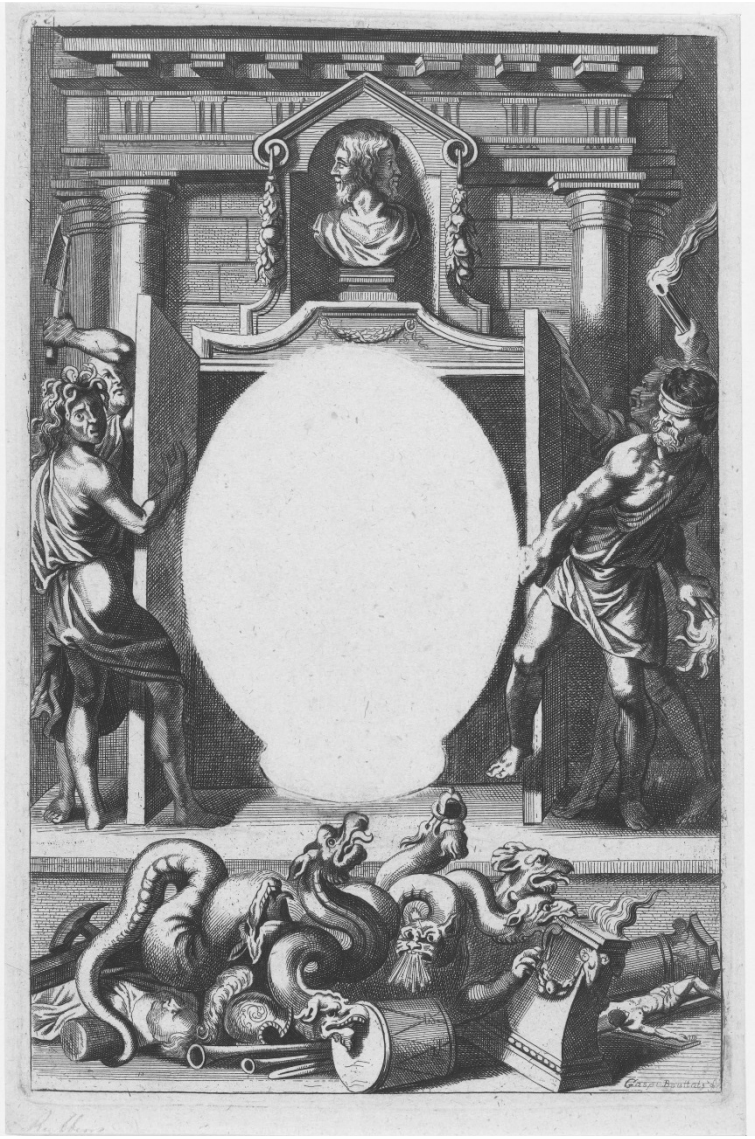

Figure Intro-1. Gaspar Bouttats, Lucas Vorsterman (I), after Peter Paul Rubens, *Allegorical Frame* (*Allegorische omlijsting*), 1650–1695. Etching, 29.4 cm x 19.2 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

deployed here to symbolize iconoclasm and heresy—that has already claimed numerous victims: Music, Architecture, Sculpture, and Religion lie defeated in the foreground. In this version, however, Bouttats has made a curious departure from Rubens's original design (Fig. Intro-2).[3] In the place where Rubens had portrayed a heavy tapestry, and where his countryman Cornelis Galle the Elder (1576–1650) situated the text in the final engraving for Verhaer's frontispiece (Fig. Intro-3), Bouttats inserts an oval space that is devoid of text or image. Whether this void anticipates the text of a new foreign language edition, or, as suggested by its shape, was meant to incorporate an engraved portrait miniature that could be printed separately, the knowledge of the frontispiece's prototypes suggests that this space is a plane upon which value could be inscribed or elided.[4]

In the last twenty-five years, the concept of *space* has emerged as a productive investigative tool with which historians of the long eighteenth century can examine the varied and mutable issues at play in the creation and reception of objects, images, spectacles, and the built environment.[5]

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3. Lucas Vosterman (1595–1675), who had a stressful working relationship with Rubens, was apparently paid 75 guilders for the copper and the cutting of the new title, although it is not clear what participation if any he had in Bouttats's version. See J. Richard Judson and Carl Van de Velde, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, Part XXI, Book Illustrations and Title-Pages* (London and Philadelphia: Harvey Miller-Heyden and Son, 1978), 1:232–33. Rubens' drawing was purchased in the first decade of the nineteenth century for the Royal Collection during the reign of George III, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (1738–1820).

4. Whether Bouttats's version of the frontispiece was designed as a generic image for a variety of potential uses in book illustration is unclear, but it was used as a frame for a portrait of Anne Boleyn in an interior book illustration in Prudencio de Sandoval, *Historia de la vida y hechos del emperador Carlos V. maximo: fortissimo, rey catholico de España, y de las Indias, islas, y tierra firme del mar oceano, &c* (En Amberes: Geronymo Verdussen, 1681), 2: between pages 134–35.

5. Some examples of the most recent studies include Karen Harvey, "A Place Called Sex: Gender, Space and Modernity in Eighteenth-Century England," *History Workshop* 51 (Spring 2001): 158–79; W. J. T. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Charles W. J. Withers and Miles Ogborn, *Georgian Geographies: Essays on Space, Place and Landscape in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Douglas Fordham, "New Direction in British Art History of the Eighteenth Century," *Literature Compass* 5, no. 5 (2008): 906–17; Denise Amy Baxter and Meredith Martin, *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2010); David Warren Sabean and Malina Stefanovska, *Space and Self in Early Modern European Cultures* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

Building on the work of late-twentieth-century theorists—including, among others, the philosopher Michel de Certeau (1925–1986), the sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1901–1991), Marxist theorist Ernest Mandel (1923–1995), and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002)—*space* has been positioned against its more stable counterpart *place* to enliven the analytical differences between the static and the dynamic, the real and the imagined, the actual and the aspirational, and the signified and the signifiable.[6] In the study of art and visual culture, spatial contexts—which might include exhibition spaces and their remnants; the geographies (urban, provincial, or otherwise) wherein works were created; the markets where objects circulated; the public and private spaces in which collections of art were amassed, stewarded, and interpreted; the representation, aestheticization, and historicization of land and the built world; the movements of artistic influence regionally, transnationally, and internationally; or the ways in which people have moved through spaces—have been fruitfully explored to expand our understanding of how environments occupy a constitutive *place* in artistic production.[7]

This collection of essays broadens the scope of *space* by adopting a global approach; it reflects scholarly engagement in the eighteenth-century artistic phenomena of Italy, Mexico, and India as well as Britain and France in immediate, imperial, and transnational contexts. The book,

6. The works most often cited as helpful theoretical works are Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984); Henry Lefebre, *The Production of Space* (1974), trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1972), trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977).
7. Fordham's, "New Directions," cited above, offers a good list of these approaches in British art. To these I would also add, Finola O'Kane's *Ireland and the Picturesque: Design, Landscape Painting and Tourism 1700–1840* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2013); Jill H. Casid, S*owing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); G. H. R. Tillotson, "The Indian Picturesque," in *The Raj: India and the British, 1600–1947*, ed. C. A. Bayly (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1990); Jeffrey Auerbach, "The Picturesque and the Homogenisation of Empire," *British Art Journal* 5, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2004): 47–54; Ian MacLean, "The Expanded Field of the Picturesque: Contested Identities and Empire in Sydney Cove 1794," in *Art and the British Empire*, eds. Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley, and Douglas Fordham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 23–37; John E. Crowley, *Imperial Landscapes: Britain's Global Visual Culture, 1745–1820* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2011).

Figure Intro-2. Peter Paul Rubens, *The Temple of Janus.* ca. 1620–1623. Design for the title-page to Franciscus Haraeus's *Annales Ducum Brabantiae*. Pen and brown ink with brown wash over black chalk heightened with white oil colour, on brown-washed paper; traces of underdrawing in black chalk, 29.0 cm x 17.7 cm. Royal Collection Trust/ © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015

therefore, has not been organized by nationalistic schools of art or by a reflection on the *type* of space invoked—domestic, public, political, imperial—rather, it invites global difference. This approach owes much to the "imperial turn" that has been characterized by historian Antoinette Burton as the "accelerated attention" to the influence of imperial history on the histories of metropolitan cultures following decolonization.[8] Postcolonial theory and literary studies have stimulated historians to build on revolutionary work in social and intellectual history and to reintegrate the domestic and the imperial.[9] A consequence of this trend has been a widening out of the view of past events, patterns, and representations. As much a deliberate offering to what Felicity Nussbaum called "critical global studies" as an acknowledgment and reflection of what Simon Varey identified as eighteenth-century "[habits] of spatial thinking," this collection of essays engages with space as a discursive opportunity.[10] What these essays share is an emphasis on *agency*, which in this context we have taken to mean the way in which objects, artists, architects, and patrons (in their many guises) have attempted to negotiate various artistic, political, philosophical, and socio-economic values through creating, reflecting, appropriating, denying, or reimagining *space*—or, better still, through attempting to harness the *agency of space*.[11]

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8. Antoinette Burton, ed., *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 2.

9. Selected examples include David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000); Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-century English Narratives* (New York: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003); Andrew Sluyter, *Colonialism and Landscape: Postcolonial Theory and Applications* (New York and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); Jeffrey Auerbach, "Art and Empire," in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 5, Historiography, ed. Robin W. Winks, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 571–83; Anne McClintock, "The Lay of the Land: The Genealogy of Imperialism," in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1995), 21–74; Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550–1800*, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography 41 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008).

10. Felicity A. Nussbaum, ed., *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 3. Simon Varey, *Space and the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 4.

11. Edward W. Soja, "The Socio-Spatial Dialectic," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70, no. 2 (June 1980): 207–25.

The energy in contemporary theory surrounding agency, which at its core refers to manifestations of the capacity to act, reveals critical responses to the iconographical and aesthetic traditions of art historical inquiry. The late British social anthropologist Alfred Gell's (1945–1997) controversial intervention in the debate, stimulated by the intrinsic inequities that become apparent when Western methods and approaches are used to address (or, indeed, assimilate) non-Western works of art, identifies the problem as concretizing the "aesthetic response" apart from the social context of its materializations.[12] For Gell, art (which he approximates as being "the social relations in the vicinity of objects mediating social agency") is not merely a form of communication, a visual language, as it were; rather, art is a "system of action."[13] In recent years, the conception of an agent as one who initiates actions that are caused by deeds of the mind, will or intention has been complicated.[14] The understanding that there are, in fact, agents capable of acting upon their environments, who/that cannot display or do not possess intentionality has widened discussions on the nature of acting, or indeed, being.[15]

A stimulating complication that has enlivened studies of art, architecture, and material culture more generally is the approach collectively known as *thing theory*. Drawing from the German philosopher Martin Heidegger's (1889–1976) ground-breaking works, including "*Das Ding* (The Thing),"[16] the literary theorist Bill Brown, a leading proponent of this "comparably new idiom," has argued for a framework by which one might "think with or through the physical object world."[17] The questions thing theory pose differ from queries traditionally put to objects. For instance, instead of asking "How do people produce things that reflect social worlds?" thing theory speculates "How do things produce the social worlds of people?" The potential of thing theory for eighteenth-century

12. Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), 4.
13. Ibid., 6, 7.
14. Ibid., 16.
15. Intentionality is a key component of phenomenology, which collectively refers to the various philosophical methods or theories that emphasize the significance of examining the structure of conscious subjective experience. This line of thought was influenced by the work of German philosopher, Edmund Husserl (1859–1938).
16. Martin Heidegger, "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1971), 161–84.
17. Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 3.

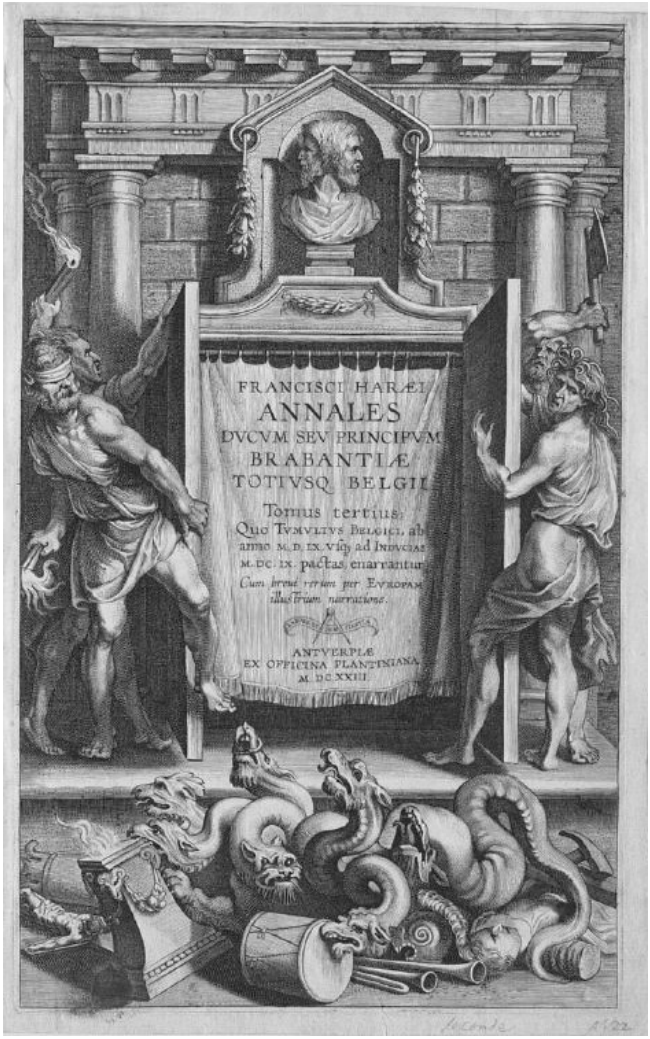

Figure Intro-3. Cornelis Galle (I), after Peter Paul Rubens, Frontispiece for F. Van Haer's, *Annales Ducum Seu Principum Brababtiae Titiusque Belgii*, III, 1623. Engraving on paper, image: 30.4 cm x 18.9 cm; sheet: 30.4 cm x 18.9 cm. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA, USA. Acquired with funds donated by Stephen D. Paine, 1983.17.

studies has been recently explored in a collection of essays edited by Ileana Baird and Christina Ionescu.[18] Among the many theorists, critics, and historians that underpin their study, Mark Blackwell's *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* is significant.[19] Concentrating on the peculiar trend in literature, which he positions as a sub-genre of the novel, Blackwell's book features essays from literary historians that engage with the inanimate and animal characters of "it-narratives."[20] The various histories and adventures of objects and animals, which may or may not have subjectivity, are examined to answer the question he poses: "Was there thing theory in the English eighteenth century?"[21] *Agents of Space* poses a similar question: Was there a conception of an agency of space in the eighteenth century?

Whereas Gell's conception of thing-ly agency is ultimately tied to humans by being "an emanation or manifestation of agency," a more radical understanding of agency has lately been considered.[22] Heidegger's reach has been both long and diverse and in a new text, art historians Amanda Boetzkes and Aron Vinegar examine the potential for Heideggerian thought in reviving critical approaches in art history in light of the discipline's expanded fields of interest and objects of analysis.[23] In critically engaging with the multifarious lines of inquiry that have emerged from Hiedegger's work, the editors of this collection of essays see potential in object-oriented ontology, a philosophy that invites a more ethical philosophical stance by challenging the human-centric conception

18. Ileana Baird and Christina Ionescu, *Eighteenth-Century Thing Theory in a Global Context: From Consumerism to Celebrity Culture* (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013). For another example, see Joseph Monteyne, *From Still Life to the Screen: Print Culture, Display, and the Materiality of the Image in Eighteenth-Century London* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

19. Mark Blackwell, *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 9.

20. Ibid., 10.

21. Ibid., 9. Also cited in Baird and Ionescu, *Eighteenth-Century Thing Theory*, 8.

22. Gell, *Art and Agency*, 20. In this sense, Gell's understanding of art's relationship to agency is reminiscent of Hegel's understanding that art is merely the "art as itself proceeding from the absolute Idea," or a vehicle for an agent capable of action. See G. W. F. Hegel, "Philosophy of Fine Art," in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Donald Preziosi, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 80.

23. Amanda Boetzkes and Aron Vinegar, *Heidegger and the Work of Art History* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014).

of subjectivity.[24] This ontological position, developed by the American philosopher Graham Harman and advanced by fellow speculative realists, including Ray Brassier, Iain Hamilton Grant, and Quentin Meillassoux, suggests that objects that do not possess mental states—which might include "thoughts, beliefs, desires, perceptions and imaginings"—are nevertheless capable of agency.[25]

As recent as this philosophical intervention appears to be, there is evidence that eighteenth-century theorists, artists, architects, and patrons considered and even attempted to harness what could be characterized as the agency of objects. For example, although landscape was seized upon as an object of contemplation, that is to say an object to confront phenomenologically, it was nevertheless also understood as an object that could work upon the viewer, resulting in a kind of agentive space. In terms of a historiography of ontology, it is generally accepted that the eighteenth century saw the ascension of the individual; therefore, subjectivity in this period is frequently discussed in terms of interiority.[26] The individual, as Martin Calder explains, was "understood as the primary source of moral value, an autonomous agency, with inalienable rights."[27] However, eighteenth-century theorists were advancing a kind of moral improvement that could be attained through observing nature. This was not solely found in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712–1778) challenge to Hobbesian philosophy in the natural man, the hypothetical speculation on the moral superiority of life before society interfered by introducing, among other

24. Graham Harman, *Tool-Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects* (Peru, IL: Open Court, 2002), 2. Also helpful here is the definition offered by Marcoulatos: "Directly put, the analytical device of imposition—and the subject/object ontology on which it rests—is profoundly and pervasively political." Iordanis Marcoulatos, "The Secret Life of Things: Rethinking Social Ontology," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 33, no. 3 (2003): 247.

25. Ray Brassier, Iain Hamilton Grant, Graham Harman, and Quentin Meillassoux, "Speculative Realism," in *Collapse III: Unknown Deleuze* (London: Urbanomic, 2007), 187–221. For a definition of mental states, see David Pitt, "Mental Representation," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/ mental-representation/.

26. Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), xi. See also Isabel Karremann and Anja Müller, *Mediating Identities in Eighteenth-Century England: Public Negotiations, Literary Discourses, Topography* (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 9.

27. Martin Calder, ed., *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (Bern, Switzerland: International Academic Publishers, 2006), 8.

damaging constructs, ownership and resultant greed.[28] It was also found in considering the natural world as both a reflection of God's will and as an object with the capacity for true expression.[29] In Thomas Wately's (1726–1772) *Observations on Modern Gardening* (1770), the author differentiated between what might appear in a garden and could be read emblematically and what, perhaps more rightly, "irresistibly occurred; not sought for, not laboured; and [having] the force of a metaphor, free from the detail of an allegory."[30]

Writings abound regarding the emergence of landscape as a source of aesthetic pleasure and who, precisely, was able to view (or alter) the land appropriately.[31] Furthermore, there is a recurring theme in this period of cultivating, indeed, mastering nature not only as an extension of ideological expressions of authority, but also as a reflection of the rightful progress of civilization.[32] Notwithstanding this urge to control, glimpses of an object's "effect" upon a viewer can be seen in the emerging philosophical preoccupation with aesthetics.[33] The Anglo-Irish philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke's (1729–1797) theorization of the sublime and the beautiful, for example, although ultimately employed as a device for

28. For an excellent new study of this debate, see Robin Douglass, *Rousseau and Hobbes: Nature, Free Will, and the Passions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

29. Lorraine Daston and Fernando Vidal, *The Moral Authority of Nature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 161.

30. Thomas Whately, *Observations on Modern Gardening, and Laying Out Pleasure Grounds, Parks, Farms, Ridings, etc*. (1770) (London: West and Hughes, 1801), 84. See also John Dixon Hunt, "Emblem and Expressionism in the Eighteenth-Century Landscape Garden," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4, no. 3 (Spring 1971): 294–317.

31. For the classic ideologically infused essay on this topic, see Raymond Williams, "Pleasing Prospects," in *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 120–26. Other benchmark examples are found in John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting, 1730–1840* (Cambridge University Press, 1980); John Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt The Body of the Public* (Yale University Press, 1986); and David H. Solkin, *Richard Wilson: the Landscape of Reaction* (London: The Tate Gallery, 1982).

32. Nathaniel Wooloch, *History and Nature in the Enlightenment: Praise of the Mastery of Nature in Eighteenth-Century Historical Literature* (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 195–96.

33. Nicholas Grindle, "New Ways of Seeing: Landscape Painting and Visual Culture, c. 1620–c. 1870," in *The History of British Art, 1600–1870*, ed. David Bindman (London and New Haven: Yale Centre for British Art and Tate Britain, Yale University Press, 2009), 2:131.

judging the compositional values of a landscape, nevertheless shows that theorists understood that "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas" could act upon the viewer in profound, arresting ways.[34] It has been suggested that were it not for his political career, Burke may have taken on his fellow Anglo-Irishman, the philosopher George Berkeley (1685–1753), who advanced his notion of "immaterialism" that in essence denies that objects exist beyond our perception.[35]

Precisely how things ("Whatever") achieve agency ("is fitted to excite") is not the aim of this book, provocative as this question might be. Furthermore, despite the intriguing possibilities in these recent radical interventions in notions of art and subjectivity, this collection does not abandon aesthetics and iconography. It invites, instead, investigations that deal with the potentialities afforded by space, and argues that this agency was something that could be deployed in an effort to pursue a specific aim or aims: spaces to construct cultural memory; spaces created to anticipate loss; spaces theorized to control behaviour; spaces appropriated to reflect and support shifts in power; imagined spaces in which humanity attains its fullest potential; spaces of concealment; marginal spaces occupied by central agents; and spaces of profound political ambivalence. This invitation has, nevertheless, revealed another form of discursivity: a toing and froing, an urging forward and a harkening back, like the bust of the Roman god Janus that welcomes readers to our study (Fig. Intro-4). The eighteenth century has been approached as if it were itself, Janus-faced, peering in one direction at stable elements from the past and, in another, at the developments in nearly all forms of human experience. The metaphor of the ancient god of commencements and changes, which implicates not only endings and beginnings, but more spatially-based transitions like doorways, passages, gates, and doors, has been seized upon by several scholars of the eighteenth-century.[36]

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34. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) (London: N. Hailes, 1834), 34. See also Nicholas Grindle, "New Ways of Seeing: Landscape Painting and Visual Culture, c. 1620–c. 1870," in *The History of British Art, 1600–1870*, ed. David Bindman (London and New Haven: Yale Centre for British Art and Tate Britain, Yale University Press, 2009), 2:131.

35. See Blackwell, *Secret Life of Things*, 10; Michel Fuchs, *Edmund Burke, Ireland, and the Fashioning of Self* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1996), 159.

36. For examples of authors using the Janus-face as a metaphor for the eighteenth century, see H. M. Scott, "Review Article: The Eighteenth Century 'Forty Years On'," *The International History Review* 24, no. 4 (December 2002): 857; for laws on poaching, see Frank McLynn, *Crime and Punishment in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 203; for the complexities of finding

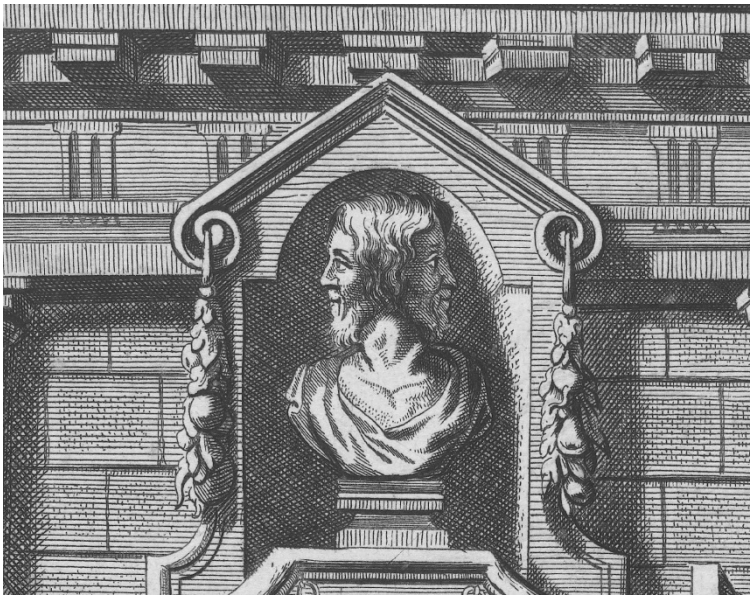

Figure Intro-4. Janus head—a detail from *Allegorical Frame*, 1650–1695, Gaspar Bouttats, Lucas Vorsterman (I), after Peter Paul Rubens.

As a reflection of this discursivity, *Agents of Space* has been divided into two parts. The essays in the first part of this collection, "Memory," examine specific episodes of eighteenth-century art and visual culture that are acts of remembering, or a result of such action, or objects used to persuade through reminding. In these chapters, space's agency—whether understood as real, theoretical, or imagined—is harnessed by recalling (from near to distant) past cultures so as to assert and reassert identities that are also bound by limiting factors, including class, religion, artistic methodology, and materiality. The essays in the second part of this collection, entitled "Reform," do not completely depart from memory; more exactly, they demonstrate memory's perseverance in eighteenth-century attempts to strike off in new directions. Although this tension between the past and the present can also be identified in the chapters that make up Part I of this study, Part II considers more concrete and

nationalism through multi-national perspectives, see Holdger Hoock, *Empires of the Imagination: Politics, War and the Arts in the British World, 1750–1850* (London: Profile Books, 2010), 85.

purposeful instances of reaching toward the future. In this section, the capacity of space to inform the development, growth, and even transformation of this period are emphasized, revealing an interest in the incremental or radical reform of politics, psychological states, artistic eminence, and colonial/imperial identities.

Beginning our study's examination of agency and space through "Memory," Joan Coutu traces the evolution of the grand tour and the effects of "cultural memory" on British identity over three generations of aristocrats. The grand tour's classical influences and teachings, visually manifested in a variety of objects either collected or created in response to this experience abroad, became imbricated in patriciate society. In this chapter, Coutu applies *Schriftlichkeit*, or "the literality or medium used for memory storage, such as a place, object, text or ritual" to the collective study of the aristocrats' knowledge of classical texts, oral memory, and empirical encounters with Roman visual culture in the eighteenth century. In doing so, the author reveals the importance of Rome to the understanding, collection, and display of classical artefacts (and copies thereof) in English aristocratic homes before grappling with the physical spaces these acquired artefacts occupied and the agency they exercised on contemporary and subsequent identities. These collectors understood the significance of the objects they had acquired, and were thus able to use them to construct varied classical and contemporary narratives. Over time, collecting practices and their intellectual contexts changed; nevertheless, each generation of tourists further deepened the country's classical memory, which became an object of distinction between the "natural" ruling class and upstarts determined to take their place in the composition of British politics.

Incorporating sacred space theory, Elizabeth Nogan Ranieri's chapter builds on this harkening back to earlier cultural identities as a means of creating and strengthening contemporary values. Her study focuses on the Neapolitan baroque painter Francesco Solimena's eighteenth-century fresco in the sacristy of the Basilica of San Domenico Maggiore in Naples. In her reading of the *Trionfo della Fede sull'Eresia ad Opera dei Domenicani* (Triumph of Faith over Heresy by the Works of the Dominicans), executed by the artist in the first decade of the eighteenth century, Ranieri argues that in commissioning the construction and decoration of the sacristy, the Dominicans have created a sacred space. Crucially, however, it was not achieved through representing traditional Christian virtues. As the fresco assumes the role of a mnemonic device, the performance of pious activity becomes an act of remembrance of the virtues of central figures of the Dominican Order. Solimena's depiction of

allegories, such as Faith, Wisdom, Obedience, and notables like Saint Thomas Aquinas, weigh upon those who occupy and move through the space, encouraging deep reflection and introspection, thus eliciting most pious and faithful conduct. But this fresco could also become an agent of Dominican values beyond the Dominicans themselves; beholders, moved both by the aesthetics and, subsequently, the principles that drove the imagistic performance, could properly contemplate the Order's sacred responsibility in combatting heresy.

In Chapter Three, Barbara Tetti provides a close visual analysis of the architectural drawings of the eighteenth-century Italian architect Carlo Marchionni (1702–1786). Marchionni approached space as multifaceted, and in his drawings he integrated instrumentality with imagination and emotionality by appropriating from the pictorial traditions of geometry, *vedutismo*, and scenography. This detailed examination does not merely invite reflection on the eighteenth-century discourses between scientific and experiential conceptions of space; it reveals a contextualizing of space through time by incorporating the quotidian life of Romans and the persistence of their architectural creations. Memory becomes reflected in the shifts in the very terminology used by architects: *spazio* (space) came to incorporate the time between two terms, while *luogo* (place) engaged with metaphysical realities and philosophical investigations of objects in space. In attempting to reconcile new ideas about nature and landscape with advances in science and philosophy, Marchionni makes a case for subjectivity in architectural design and becomes an agent of space; his aesthetic strategies are emblematical of the artistic character of architectural drawings of the period.

In the final chapter of this section, Kristin Campbell explores John Boydell's *Houghton Gallery* engraving project and his efforts to recreate Sir Robert Walpole's collection of paintings, which was sold and transported *en bloc* to Catherine II (1729–1796), Empress of Russia in 1779. Through analyses of this print collection and the *Aedes Walpolinae*, a work by Sir Robert's son Horace Walpole, Campbell explores the emergence of a nationalistic discourse using both Horace's descriptive literary mapping of Houghton Hall and the real and the imagined spaces created through Boydell's print collection. Given the cultural significance afforded to Walpole's collection of art, Campbell confronts what she terms a "narrative of loss" and posits that Boydell's projects created conceptual spaces in which the collection could be remembered and, therefore, persist. In doing so, Boydell contributed to the fashioning of a British cultural identity and the shaping of a collective memory. His creation of this innovative cultural space, or *place*holder, permitted Britons to both

remember and explore the lost collection of Great Britain's first Prime Minister.

The chapters that make up the second part of this study examine not memorialisation, but rather reform-minded projects conducted by eighteenth-century philosophers, revolutionaries, aristocrats, painters, and imperialists who seized upon space as a method for enacting change. In Chapter Five, Paul Holmquist unites one of the Enlightenment's most famous texts with a highly theoretical approach to architectural design, demonstrating how architectural agency and occupied space can reunite a people with their values and natural virtue. The author interprets the neoclassical architect Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's pre-Revolutionary architectural treatise through the lens of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*, equating Ledoux's "Architect" with Rousseau's divinely inspired and all-knowing "Legislator" through a discussion of the ideal city of Chaux. Ledoux's Architect, performing a role comparable to the Legislator's, transforms and directs a people's moral and social development and cohesion, demonstrating architecture's role as an agent in the development of virtue. Ledoux's engravings of the city's institutions and architectural sites illustrate how Chaux's social, moral, and productive accord with nature is induced by the harmonious extension into the natural environs of the region.

In keeping with Revolutionary France and the transformative powers of architectural space and design, Ji Eun You examines how interior furnishings were deployed by the revolutionary government to reshape national identity in France in the last decade of the eighteenth century. In Chapter Six, the author examines the strategic removal and placement of fabrics and furnishings in interiors of revolutionary spaces, including departmental and ministerial offices. In analysing the adoption of fabric drapery as an economical, temporal, and efficient means of refashioning spaces within the revolutionary flux of French society and culture, she engages with the changing definitions of both luxury and privilege. She argues that this collective examination of objects, furnishing fabrics, and revolutionary spaces serve as a representative media of society and implicates the larger social issues of representation in Revolutionary politics.

Redefining politics spatially, however, was not simply an institutional exercise, as Diana Cheng demonstrates in Chapter Seven. The agency of private, domestic interiors could also be arrogated in order to reform psychological states. Cheng's chapter takes up Lord Chesterfield's appropriation of the *boudoir*, which at the time was understood to be a spatial construct for French aristocratic women. Once a space in which

devout women asserted spatial sovereignty by indulging in dark moods and repelling men through disagreeable countenances, Chesterfield recasts the space as one that is used to reform potentially disagreeable social interactions. For Chesterfield, his boudoir was not the place for sullen moods but an affective space which, by combining an English gentleman's tastes and requirements with its French precursors, recast unpleasant encounters into irresistibly cheerful events.

Alena Robin further expands the enquiry into spatial reform by researching how archival spaces and the records maintained within can enlighten the agency exerted by New Spanish painters in Mexico City. In opposition to the sacred spaces and cathedrals typically studied in New Spain, Robin focuses on the Royal Mint and in particular the works undertaken there by master painter and gilder Phelipe Chacón. His request for payment sparked a series of events that would soon involve artists who were intent upon advancing the stature of New Spanish painting and painters in eighteenth-century Mexico City. Robin's chapter is but one part of a larger enquiry into New Spanish painting and seeks to challenge the marginal position attributed to some New Spanish painters, a scholarly endeavour that has been until now little studied or pursued.

In the final chapter of this study, Sutapa Dutta traces the conscious transformation in the identities of the British, from merchants to rulers, in early colonial India. Central to her study, which spans the late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century and employs missionary, native, and Company publications, correspondences, and reports investigating the implications of education as a means of (re-)forming identities, the author argues that Fort William took on a new role in fortifying a new campaign. From a military fort to college, the space (both physical and epistemological) undermined the bellicose mercantile image of the colonialists and, instead, projected an image of benevolent rulers offering enlightenment through knowledge and education. Key to this intervention is her examination of the role of the colonial government and the indigenous intelligentsia, along with the views on English education that emerged from the debate between the Anglicists and Orientalists. Though the College began with the intention of disseminating Oriental knowledge, an alternative vision of Empire, confident in the authority of British culture, transformed a key site of transculturation to enculturation.

In the chapters that follow, the authors explore varied and diverse examples of what might be considered agentive space, suggesting that the recent ontological turn currently being investigated in multiple disciplines can, in part, trace its history to the practical and theoretical engagements with space and agency in eighteenth-century art and architecture. Janus-

like, this collection of essays offers a point of transition that invites a broader geographical scope to studies of *space* in eighteenth-century art and visual culture and underscores the ways in which agency can be productive to multifarious lines of artistic, cultural, and historical inquiry.