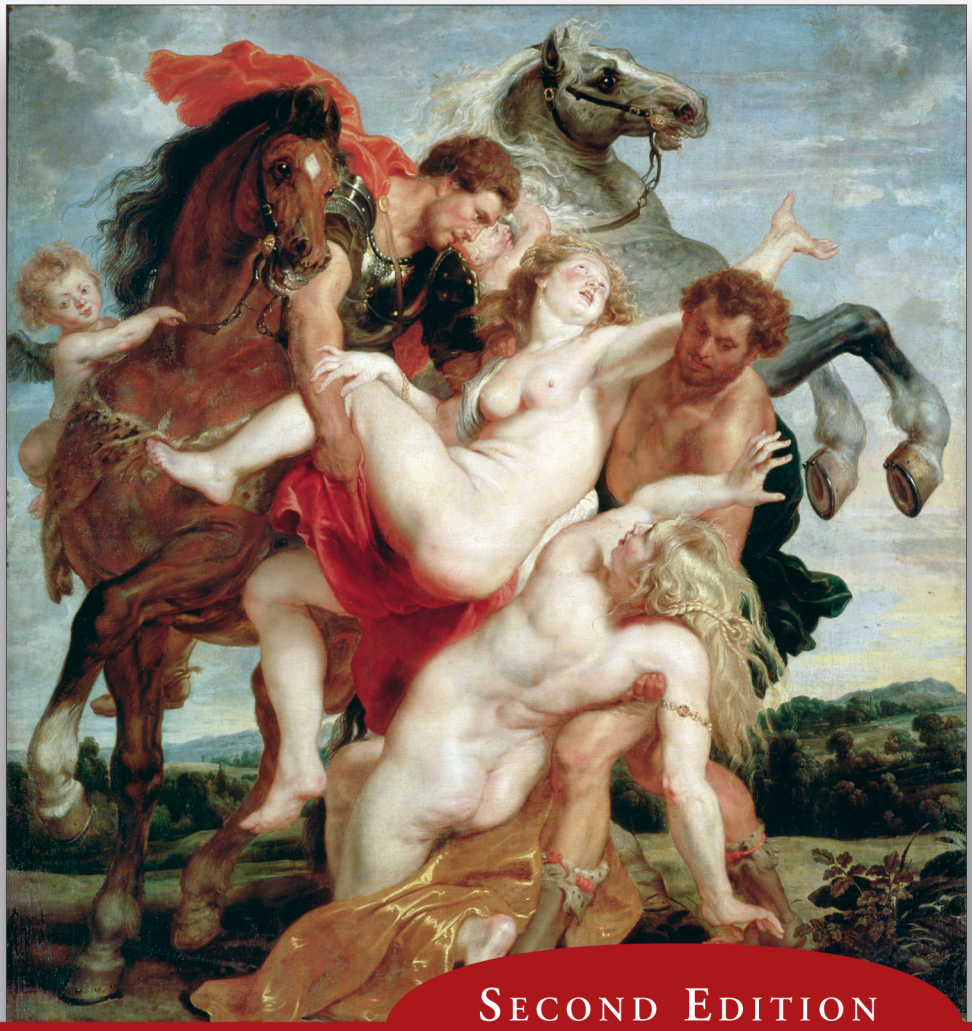

SECOND EDITION

DICTIONARY OF SUBJECTS AND SYMBOLS IN ART

JAMES HALL *Introduction by* Kenneth Clark

DICTIONARY OF SUBJECTS AND SYMBOLS IN ART

Second Edition

Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art

James Hall

Introduction by Kenneth Clark

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INTRODUCTION BY KENNETH CLARK

Fifty years ago we were told that the subjects of pictures were of no importance; all that mattered was the form (then called 'significant form') and the colour. This was a curious aberration of criticism, because all artists, from the cave painters onwards, had attached great importance to their subject matter; Giotto, Giovanni Bellini, Titian, Michelangelo, Poussin or Rembrandt would have thought it incredible that so absurd a doctrine could have gained currency. In the 1930s, the tide began to turn. In art history the pioneer of this change was a man of original genius named Aby Warburg, and although he himself, for various reasons, left only fragments of his prodigious learning, his influence produced a group of scholars who discovered, in the subjects of mediaeval and renaissance art, layer upon layer of meaning that had been almost completely overlooked by the 'formalist' critics of the preceding generation. One of them, Erwin Panofsky, was unquestionably the greatest art historian of his time.

Meanwhile the average man had become progressively less able to recognize the subjects or understand the meaning of the works of art of the past. Fewer people had read the classics of Greek and Roman literature, and relatively few people read the Bible with the same diligence that their parents had done. It comes as a shock to an elderly man to find how many biblical references have become completely incomprehensible to the present generation. As for the more esoteric sources of pictorial motives, very few people have read the Golden Legend or the Apocryphal Gospels, although without them the full meaning of such supreme works of art as (for example) Giotto's frescoes in the Arena Chapel cannot be grasped.

Although we are all grateful for the ingenious elucidations of the Warburg Institute or the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Princeton, what the ordinary traveller with an interest in art and a modicum of curiosity requires is a book which will tell him the meaning of subjects which every amateur would have recognized from the middle ages down to the late eighteenth century. The identification of these themes will add greatly to his pleasure in looking at sculpture or painting as 'works of art'. The old painters took their subjects seriously. It is true that they often followed traditional models, but they always wished the spectator to believe that the incidents they depicted had really happened and were still worth remembering. Composition, design, even colour, were used to make these subjects more vivid and comprehensible. If we do not know what a picture or series of pictures represents, our attention soon wanders, and our so-called 'aesthetic experience' is curtailed.

Mr. Hall's book is intended to help the non-specialist art lover to look at pictures and sculpture with more understanding. It contains much that anyone of average education and over fifty years of age will know already. It also contains a good deal that is new to me, and so, I suppose, will be unfamiliar to some other readers. It is clearly written, well arranged, and can be read for its own sake as a compendium of the image-making faculty of western man. I would recommend it strongly to anyone who wishes to increase his interest and pleasure in visiting a picture gallery or turning over the illustrations of a book on art.

Kenneth Clark

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

As a young man I always found pleasure in visiting an art gallery. I was fortunate to live in central London, near the National Gallery. Contemplating the subjects of the pictures was always part of the pleasure, but was also often puzzling. For example, in scenes depicting the Infant Christ, the Virgin and Child were often accompanied by a number of unnamed saints, and the infant himself often held one of various kinds of fruit, itself symbolic.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a symbol as simply "something that stands for, represents, or denotes something else." We seem to have a natural tendency to create symbols in the way we think and in our art, which must reflect a deep-seated trait of the human spirit. Take the lion, for instance. Essentially it is a "large, fierce, tawny, loud-roaring animal of the cat family." But once we begin to call it the "King of Beasts" or "Lord of the Jungle," the lion is on its way to becoming a symbol. In fact, the lion is one of the creatures most frequently endowed with symbolism, much of which is religious and relies very little upon familiarity with it in its natural state.

When an artist uses the human body to represent a god or a goddess, it must first be clothed in a distinctive fashion in order to make it recognisable as a deity. We use armour, for instance, to represent Mars, the god of war. If we then add a pair of wings, the figure becomes the Archangel Michael, Commander of the Heavenly Host. By giving substance and identity to beings whose form is, in reality, unknowable, the artist is creating a symbolic image.

Even the most sacred figures of history have often been treated as symbols. We can only guess how the Buddha or Jesus looked in life, but their symbolic

representations allow us to recognise them. The Buddha, with his tight, curly hair, topknot tuft between the brows, pendant earlobes, and mystic signs on hands and feet, bears little resemblance, we may assume, to the historical founder of Buddhism. Jesus, when crowned and enthroned in the style of a Roman emperor, is immediately recognisable as the Sovereign King, the Almighty. Yet when clad in a peasant's tunic, girded at the waist and carrying a lamb round his shoulders, he becomes the Good Shepherd of the Gospels.

There are many instances when an object is both symbol and identification. For example, two keys identify St Peter and at the same time symbolize the founding of the Christian Church. A thunderbolt, the attribute of numerous sky-gods, became for some Buddhists a symbol of the very heart of their philosophy, the state of Enlightenment. In other instances, the object is not symbolic, but merely identifies a figure. For example, a swan beside a bishop indicates that the bishop is St Hugh of Lincoln, for the simple reason that he kept a tame swan as a pet.

The world's first civilisations centred on four river valleys: the Nile, the Euphrates/Tigris, the Indus and the Huang-Ho. From the beginning each had some kind of representational art, much of which consisted of religious symbols. When their cultures came together, invading armies brought representations of their gods with them, and the growth of trade and accompanying exchange of coinage provided a rich and varied source of imagery.

Buddhist art traveled from India, through Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Tibet, China and Japan, borrowing imagery from local cults along the way and adapting it. Christianity, born in the Near East, absorbed some of the religious imagery. For example, Persian textiles that found their way to the West have motifs that appear in Byzantine church art, giving it fresh Christian meaning.

Understanding symbolic art in these terms has allowed the pleasures of visiting an art gallery to continually grow for me.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

This book is about the subject-matter of art, about the stories it tells and the people it portrays. It is concerned not with individual works but with themes, that is to say subjects that recur in the work of artists and craftsmen who lived at different times and in different countries.* Some of these themes have a very long history indeed. For example stories from the Bible, especially ones that could be used to illustrate Christian doctrine, are found in wall painting dating from the 3rd cent. The classical gods and goddesses, after many centuries of comparative obscurity, emerged again at the end of the Middle Ages in scenes of their ancient loves, conflicts and revelry.

The book is devoted mainly, though not exclusively, to Christian and classical themes as they are found in the West, the latter mostly from the Renaissance or later. The repertoire of religious art is derived from numerous sources besides the canonical books of the Bible: there are the legends of the saints, the stories from the Old and New Testament Apocrypha (in the latter we have the life of the Virgin Mary), and the writings of medieval Christian mystics and others. Secular (non-Christian) themes include not only the gods and goddesses of Greek and Roman mythology, but the heroes, legendary or otherwise, of ancient history. The figures of moral allegory, often related in their visual aspect to the pagan gods, are included, as are the characters from romantic epic poetry that established themselves in the art of the 17th cent. and later. The reader will also find

*Individual works of art are mentioned only in the case of comparatively rare or unfamiliar themes or, occasionally, to illustrate a point.

here some of the more popular figures in northern European genre painting, the alchemist, the quack doctor and so on.

The field is not quite so large as it might at first appear because religious art, under the guidance of the Church, was restricted to a fairly well-defined range of themes, and the choice of secular subject-matter showed a similar tendency to be channelled by the taste of patrons and the existence of literary sources. Even so, some selection has been unavoidable. On the whole I have concentrated on what might be called the mainstream of the Christian and humanist tradition in art and on subjects of which more than just one example exists. This means for instance that much of the Pre-Raphaelite narrative painting falls outside the scope of the book. As for the Christian saints I have been influenced in favour of those whose cultus and iconography are general rather than local. Straight historical subjects, battles and the like, that contain no secondary, symbolic, meaning have no place here either.

Entries are arranged in one alphabetical sequence. They are of several kinds: *Descriptions of persons* (and personifications) with their identifying 'attributes' and the themes in which they play the principal part—cross-references lead to the themes in other articles where their role is secondary. For example, under the entry for Venus will be found 'Venus and Adonis' and a cross-reference to 'Judgement of Paris'. *Titles of pictures,* when well-established and familiar, have their own entry: 'Raising of Lazarus', 'Rape of Europa'. *Objects,* especially those traditionally associated with a person as a means of identification (his 'attribute')—each has an article which lists its owners. Under 'Lion' are references to St Jerome and Hercules, under 'Arrow' are Cupid, Diana and St Sebastian.

The elucidation of the 'lost language' of attribute and symbol has been carried far by modern scholarship. It is not only a fascinating subject in itself leading one to a fuller understanding of a work of art, it helps the present-day spectator to see it as the artist's contemporaries saw it. At its simplest level an attribute tells us whom the artist wishes us to recognize in the figure he has depicted. The pig with a bell round its neck standing beside an old cowled monk identifies him as St Anthony the Great. (Why a pig with a bell? One explanation is that the pigs bred by the Antonine monks enjoyed special grazing rights and were therefore distinguished in this way.) But an object sometimes does more than just identify, it may stand instead of someone or something. It is then no longer an attribute but has become a kind of visual metaphor, or symbol. Well-known examples are the dove that stands for the Holy Ghost, and the fish for Christ. Renaissance artists, by combining symbols, wove elaborate, complicated allegories into their pictures. Still-life painting, especially in the hands of the Dutch and Flemish masters of the 17th cent., often has symbolic overtones: courtship and love in musical instruments, the vanity of human life in a skull and hour-glass and many other everyday objects, the Christian message in a loaf of bread, a jug and a bunch of grapes. The elements of a picture make not only a unity of design but contain a unity of meaning, sometimes not immediately recognizable. It is one purpose of this book to provide some of the keys.

There are a number of 'signpost' articles to lead the reader to the subject of a picture when he has no external aids to identification and the figures lack any formal attributes. There are personal types such as 'Warrior', 'Hunter', 'Preacher', 'Pilgrim', 'Beggar', 'Artist', 'Writer', 'Infant', 'Blindness' and 'Blindfolding'. Activities or situations are found under 'Lovers', 'Judgement', 'Battle, Scenes of', 'Combatants' (usually two), 'Death, Scenes of', 'Prayer', 'Repast' and so on. Ones involving what might be termed a disparate relationship are under 'Benediction', 'Supplication', 'Obeisance' or 'Succour'. Numbers may give a clue: 'Three Graces', 'Four Seasons', 'Five Senses'. Remember that among object-articles are parts of the body: 'Head', 'Breast', 'Hand', 'Foot', 'Hair', 'Eye' and others.

In the notes on the following pages are brief explanations of the concept of 'typology' in the Old Testament, the naming of Greek and Roman deities, and the *impresa*.

NOTE TO THE REVISED EDITION

This revised edition incorporates a number of additions and amendments suggested to me since the book was first published. It also includes an index, not of subjects and symbols which belong in the dictionary proper, but of some of the ideas and beliefs, the social and religious customs that form the background to much of the subject-matter and which the reader may enjoy dipping into. I have also taken the opportunity of including in the index a number of extra 'identifying objects' that could not conveniently be fitted into the main body of the book.

One difficulty facing the compiler of a book of this kind arises from the very richness of the English language in synonyms and near-synonyms. Are saints in armour to be listed under 'Warrior' or 'Soldier'? Is the drinking vessel on the banqueting table a goblet or a cup? And what about all the other receptacles, the vase, pot, pitcher, jug and urn, not to mention the names of their numerous Greek counterparts which often feature in classical themes? And so on. Cross-references have been supplied to help meet the problem and more have been added in this edition but it is impossible to deal with it exhaustively. If the depicted object does not yield a reference in the dictionary at first try it is worth the reader casting around in his mind for another word to describe it.

J. H.

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Among the numerous people to whom I have become indebted in the course of writing this book I should like to thank in particular Mr Alistair Smith for his advice and help on countless matters of Renaissance iconography and for putting me on the track of many an object and theme; Mr John Warrington, especially on matters of Church history, hagiology and classical mythology; Miss Carol F. Thompson for her drawings; and my wife Stella not only for her enthusiasm and helpful criticism but for long hours spent at the typewriter. It goes without saying that any errors and omissions are wholly my responsibility.

I am grateful to the following for permission to quote from copyright works:

Oxford and Cambridge University Presses: *The New English Bible,* 2nd ed. © 1970.

Clarendon Press, Oxford: *The Apocryphal New Testament,* translated by M. R. James, 1924.

Mr Robert Graves: Apuleius' *The Golden Ass,* translated by him, 1950.

Penguin Books Ltd: *The Divine Comedy,* translated by Dorothy L. Sayers and Barbara Reynolds, copyright © Anthony Fleming, 1962.

Of the books listed in the bibliography I should mention those that have been my more constant companions: *Iconographie de l'art Chrétien* by Louis Réau; *Barockthemen* by André Pigler; the volumes by Emile Mâle; *Studies in Iconology* and *Early Netherlandish Painting* among the works of Erwin Panofsky; the dictionary of attributes and symbols by Guy de Tervarent; *Iconographie de l'art profane* by Raimond van Marle.

The bibliography as a whole should be regarded as a list of acknowledgements, not merely a guide to further reading.

NOTES

THE TYPOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The doctrine that the Scriptures, as divine revelation, form a coherent, integrated whole, their authors guided by the hand of God, was developed by the early Fathers of the Church into a more specific system of correspondences between the two parts. People and events in the Old Testament were seen as having exact counterparts in the New, in other words they were a kind of foreshadowing, or prefiguration, of the future. Abraham's 'sacrifice' of his son Isaac foreshadowed God's sacrifice of Christ; David was seen as a type—in the sense of the original model—of Christ, and his fight with Goliath represented the struggle of Christ with Satan. 'The Old Testament', St Augustine wrote in the *City of God,* 'is nothing but the New covered with a veil, and the New is nothing but the Old unveiled.'* Examples of themes that are grouped in such a way as to illustrate their typological relationship may be seen in the medieval *Biblia Pauperum* and in church windows, where a scene from the New Testament is accompanied by one or more relevant episodes from the Old. In time, the themes from the Old Testament that had been given this special relationship acquired an importance in their own right and became established as separate subjects in Christian art. Some of the classical myths too were treated in a similar way by the medieval Church. The story of Danaë, for example, the virgin who was made pregnant by Jupiter in the form of a shower of gold, was regarded as a prefiguration of the Annunciation. This was one of the ways in which the medieval Church came to terms with the pagan world.

*Bk. 16, ch. 26.

THE NAMING OF GODS AND GODDESSES

How has it come about that Roman names are used for the deities in myths of Greek origin? It was Aphrodite who was born of the waves, yet Botticelli depicted the birth of Venus; Dionysus rescued Ariadne from Naxos, yet Titian painted Bacchus coming to her aid. It was not uncommon in antiquity for the gods of one religion to become identified with those of another. The process often occurred between the gods of one nation and another as the result of conquest, or through contacts established by seafaring peoples in the course of trade. The assimilation of Greek gods with Roman probably began before the expansion of Rome, through the influence of Greek colonies in southern Italy and Sicily, and was well-established by the end of the 3rd cent. B.C. Identification tended to occur between gods having like functions or characteristics, or simply because they were worshipped in the same locality. Thus the Roman god Mars adopted the features and accompanying myths of the Greek god of war Ares. Vulcan, the god of volcanoes, took over the Greek smith-god Hephaestus—who likewise had volcanic connections—acquiring in the process his anvil and other attributes. Venus, on the other hand, originally a comparatively insignificant Roman deity connected with vegetable-growing, was promoted to the front rank by her identification with Aphrodite, without having any obvious similarities. The old Roman divinities, on the whole rather characterless and lacking in colour, were much enriched by their assimilation with the Greek pantheon and its extensive mythology. The Latin language, spread by Roman conquest and kept alive by the early Church, became for many centuries the *lingua franca* of learned intercourse over a large part of Europe, and the classical myths were thus best known in the Latin authors, especially Ovid and Virgil. In England in the 15th and 16th cents. Ovid was the most widely read of the classical poets, and the translation of his *Metamorphoses* by Golding was probably the main source of the mythological imagery in Shakespeare and Milton. In this way the Greek deities have come down to us in their latinized versions. Even those from Homer, when represented in art, are commonly known by their Latin names. The following are frequently met.

Aesculapius, Asclepius	Juno, Hera	Proserpina, Persephone
Aurora, Eos	Jupiter, Zeus	Saturn, Cronus
Bacchus, Dionysus	Latona, Leto	Sol, Helios
Ceres, Demeter	Luna, Selene	Ulysses, Odysseus
Cupid (or Amor), Eros	Mars, Ares	Venus, Aphrodite
Diana, Artemis	Mercury, Hermes	Vesta, Hestia
Hercules, Heracles	Neptune, Poseidon	Vulcan, Hephaestus

THE IMPRESA

The *impresa* was a 'device' consisting of a simple image and an accompanying motto; its use flourished among the educated classes in Renaissance Italy. Unlike armorial bearings which served to identify a family through successive genera-

tions the IMPRESA was primarily intended to be a personal device adopted by, or sometimes conferred on, an individual perhaps to commemorate some significant event in his life such as a feat of arms or affair of the heart, or to illustrate a trait of character. The word is from the Italian meaning an enterprise or undertaking. Its antecedent was the *impresa amorosa,* the personal emblem worn by the jousting knight, whose meaning was understood only by his chosen lady. It was a requirement also of the later *impresa* that its sense be veiled and yet remain intelligible to one with a courtier's upbringing. The picture and motto were required to complement each other so that neither should alone convey the full meaning: thus the picture came to be called the *corpo,* or body, and the words, often in the form of a graceful pun, were known as the *anima,* or spirit, without which the body had no life. A good example of such a device was the porcupine of Louis XII of France whose armies invaded Italy in 1499 and from whom the Italian fashion for *imprese* may have originated. The porcupine was represented with its spines shooting off its body in all directions like spears (which according to Pliny was the way in which it defended itself). The accompanying motto *Cominus et eminus*—hand to hand and at a distance—alluded to the king's power to strike his enemies both near and far. The popularity of the *impresa* grew rapidly in the 16th and 17th cents., fostered by a considerable literature. It was adopted not only by the nobility but by judges, lawyers, ecclesiastics, artists and others. Those of the great families, patrons of the arts like the Medici, Gonzaga and Farnese, are to be seen in their palaces, often in the corners of decorated ceilings. They are occasionally incorporated in easel paintings.

SOURCES

Only those works to which reference is made in the text are mentioned below. Books of the Bible are omitted.

Acts of Pilate, see New Testament Apocrypha.

Aelian (Claudius Aelianus) (3rd cent. A.D.). Author of *Variae Historiae*, a series of studies of famous men and women in fourteen books, originally in Greek.

Apollodorus (2nd cent. B.C.), native of Athens. The *Bibliothēkē*, a collection of myths formerly attributed to him, probably belongs to the early Christian era.

Apollonius of Rhodes (*c.* 295–*c.* 215 B.C.). Poet and grammarian, citizen of Alexandria who spent part of his life at Rhodes. Author of the *Argonautica*, the epic account of Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece, the only extended version of the story that survives.

Apuleius, Lucius. Born at Madaura in north Africa early in the 2nd cent. A.D., educated in Athens and Carthage in which latter town he settled. The author of philosophical treatises, but best known for the *Metamorphoses*, or *The Golden Ass*, a romance in which the narrator is magically turned into an ass. It includes the story of Cupid and Psyche.

Ariosto, Ludovico (1474–1533). Italian poet and playwright, born at Reggio, the author of *Orlando Furioso*, a romantic epic in verse, first published in 1516, appearing in its final enlarged form in 1532. It deals with the wars between Christians and Saracens at the time of Charlemagne with much interweaving of characters and plot.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.). Greek philosopher, born at Stageira. His very numerous and varied works include ones on the natural sciences. The *Historia*

Animalium assembles and classifies what was then known about animal life. It was an early antecedent of the medieval bestiary.

Boccaccio, Giovanni (1313–75). Italian poet and prose writer, born in Paris, he lived much of his life in Florence. The *Decameron* (1348–58) is a collection of one hundred mostly amorous tales concerning people from all walks of life in his day. The *De Genealogia Deorum* (1373) is a manual of classical mythology and was an important source-book for Renaissance artists.

Boethius, Anicius Manlius Severinus (*c.* a.d. 480-*c.* 524). Late Roman statesman and philosopher; the author of *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, written in prison, a dialogue with Philosophy (personified as a woman) on the nature of good and evil. Boethius writes from a non-Christian standpoint.

Book of James, see New Testament Apocrypha.

Brant (Brandt), Sebastian (1458–1521). German satirical writer and poet, born at Strasburg. His best-known work, the *Ship of Fools* (*Das Narrenschiff*) (1494) is a topical satire in verse on the follies and vices of his fellow men. It was widely translated, and may have inspired Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*.

Catullus, Gaius Valerius (*c.* 84–54 b.c.). Latin poet, born probably at Verona, lived in Rome. His verses, collectively called the *Carmina* ('lyric poems'), are mostly short and highly personal. They often evoke scenes from the classical myths. Those addressed to his mistress Lesbia (Clodia Metelli) are among the best known.

Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de (1547–1615). Spanish novelist, playwright and poet, born at Alcala de Henares, near Madrid. *Don Quixote de la Mancha* was published in two parts in 1604 and 1614. Many editions have been illustrated, by French artists in particular.

Dante Alighieri (1265–1321). Italian poet, born in Florence. The *Vita Nuova* is a series of thirty-one love poems addressed to Beatrice dei Portinari, each with an explanatory narrative and analytical commentary. The *Divine Comedy*, in three parts, *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, was completed in the closing years of his life. It appeared in many illustrated editions including one with drawings by Botticelli. Its influence on Christian iconography was considerable, for example in the treatment of heaven and hell in Italian Renaissance painting.

Dares Phrygius. Trojan priest of Hephaestus (Iliad 5:9) to whom was once attributed the authorship of the *Daretis Phrygii de excidio Troiae historia*. The work probably originated with the earliest extant Latin version, about 5th cent. a.d. It was a popular medieval source-book of the story of Troy, though historically worthless.

Dictys Cretensis. Legendary Cretan, said to have been present at the Trojan war. The *Ephemeris Belli Troiani* (4th cent. a.d.) purported to be the translation of an original account in Greek by him. Like the *History* of Dares Phrygius it was much used by medieval writers on Troy.

Diodorus Siculus (1st cent. b.c.). Sicilian, author of the *Bibliotheca Historica*, a history of the world in Greek from the early myths of gods and heroes down to the time of Julius Caesar. Fifteen of its forty books have survived.

Diogenes Laertius (*fl.* first half of 3rd cent. A.D.) probably of Laerte in Cilicia. Author of *Lives of the Philosophers*, a series of anecdotal biographies of the classical Greek philosophers.

Eusebius of Caesarea (*c.* A.D. 260–*c.* 340). Born probably at Caesarea in Palestine where he became bishop. His *History of the Church* is a unique account of the development of early Christianity. It appeared about 324. He wrote a life of Constantine the Great.

Fénelon, François de Salignac de la Mothe (1651–1715). Archbishop of Cambrai, born at the château of Fénelon in Périgord. He wrote on religious, educational and other matters. The *Adventures of Telemachus* (1699) amplifies the account in the *Odyssey* of Telemachus' travels in search of his father, combining it with political and moral instruction.

Gesta Romanorum. 'The Deeds of the Romans'—a medieval compilation (13th–14th cent.) of stories from classical antiquity and elsewhere, presented for the reader's moral edification.

Golden Legend, see Voragine, Jacobus de.

Gospel of Nicodemus, see New Testament Apocrypha.

Gospel of Thomas, see New Testament Apocrypha.

Guarini, Battista (1538–1612). Italian pastoral poet, born at Ferrara. The author of *Il Pastor Fido*, 'The Faithful Shepherd' (1589), a play in verse, the source of several themes in baroque painting.

Herodotus (*c.* 484–*c.* 424 B.C.). The 'father of history', born at Halicarnassus in Asia Minor. His work is an account of the wars between Greece and Persia. It is interwoven with anecdote and portrayal of character which provided themes for Renaissance and later art.

Hesiod (*c.* 8th cent. B.C.). Early Greek poet and Boeotian farmer, born at Ascra by Mt Helicon. The *Work and Days* deals with the hardships of rural life, the virtue of toil and the need for justice. The *Theogony* is a history of the Greek gods; its authorship is disputed.

Homer. Greek epic poet of about 9th cent. B.C., reputed author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Some authorities have questioned whether he himself wrote either work, or even whether he existed. The *Iliad* describes the individual conflicts between Greek and Trojan heroes during a period of the siege of Troy, with Achilles as the central character; the *Odyssey* describes the adventures of the Greek hero Odysseus on his journey home to Ithaca after the fall of Troy. (See also above, Dares Phrygius; Dictys Cretensis; Fénelon.)

Hooft, Pieter Corneliszoon (1581–1647). Dutch playwright and poet, born in Amsterdam. The pastoral play *Granida* (1605) reflects the influence on him of French and Italian Renaissance culture.

Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus) (65–8 B.C.). Roman poet, born at Venusia. The four books of *Odes,* lyric poems about life, death and the role of the poet, contain his best work.

Hyginus, Gaius Julius (*fl. c.* 25 B.C.). Roman scholar of Spanish origin, a freed slave, a friend of Ovid. The *Fabulae* (or *Genealogiae*), a compilation of some

300 myths and legends, formerly attributed to him, are now thought to be 2nd cent. A.D.

IMAGINES, unless otherwise attributed, see PHILOSTRATUS.

JUVENAL (Decimus Junius Juvenalis) (*c.* A.D. 60–*c.* 130). Roman satirist. The sixteen *Satires* in five books deal with the corruption and follies of those in public life in his day.

LIVY (Titus Livius) (*c.* 59 B.C.–A.D. 17). Roman historian, born at Padua. His *History of Rome* (*Ab Urbe Condita*) from its legendary foundation was in 142 books of which only part survives. He illustrated all types of moral conduct, good and bad, which provided Renaissance artists with many useful models.

LONGUS (*c.* 3rd or 4th cent. A.D.). Author of one of the earliest pastoral novels, *Daphnis and Chloe*, in Greek. Nothing is known of his life.

LUCIAN (*c.* A.D. 115–after 180). Rhetorician and satirist, born at Samosata in Turkey. His works cover a wide range. *The Dialogues of the Gods (Deorum Dialogi)* is a satirical treatment of the Greek myths. The *Imagines* (*Eikones*) consists of sketches purporting to be descriptions of works of art.

METAMORPHOSES, unless otherwise attributed, see OVID.

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA. The New Testament canon was established not by any decree but by a gradual process of winnowing from a much larger body of early writings. By the end of the 2nd cent. the four gospels, the Acts and the Pauline epistles had been recognized. The criteria applied by the early Fathers were those of apostolic authorship and the extent to which a work had gained general acceptance among the churches. The residue of rejected writings, some of very early date, forms what is called the New Testament Apocrypha. It includes stories of the infancy and childhood of Christ, the birth and death of the Virgin, the Passion, Acts of apostles, Epistles and Apocalypses, categories in many respects similar to those of the canon. Many of the stories found their way into the *Golden Legend* and so became widely disseminated in the Middle Ages. The following works are important iconographically:

Book of James (called *Protevangelium* from the 16th cent.) (2nd cent.). Nativity and childhood of the Virgin. Nativity of Christ.

Gospel of Thomas (2nd cent.). Childhood of Christ.

Gospel of Nicodemus, or *Acts of Pilate* (4th and 5th cents.). Passion. Descent into Limbo.

An account of the Death and Assumption of the Virgin attributed to Melito, bishop of Sardis (about 4th cent.).

The Acts of various apostles: *John* (2nd cent.): The Raising of Drusiana, etc. *Paul* (2nd cent.): The story of Thecla. *Peter* (end 2nd cent.): Simon Magus, Domine quo vadis, etc. *Andrew* (3rd cent.): incidents on his missionary journeys and crucifixion. *Thomas* (3rd cent.): King Gundaphorus, etc.

OVID (Publius Ovidius Naso) (43 B.C.–A.D. 17). Latin poet, born at Sulmo east of Rome; exiled to Tomi on the Black Sea at the age of fifty, where he died. The *Metamorphoses* is a retelling of the myths and legends of Greece and

Rome, and the east, ingeniously arranged as a continuous narrative in verse. Ovid was widely read in the Middle Ages and the *Metamorphoses* was translated into several languages. A popular version, known as the 'Moralized Ovid', gave Christian interpretations of the myths, making them into prefigurations of biblical events. The *Fasti* (*Festivals*) is a poetic treatment of the Roman calendar and embodies legend, history and descriptions of the seasonal rites and festivals. Only six books, January to June, exist.

Pausanias (2nd cent. A.D.). Greek traveller, probably of Lydia in Asia Minor, the author of an itinerary of Greece (*Hellados Periegesis*) in ten books, describing in detail the Greek cities and religious sites as they then stood.

Petrarch (Francesco Petrarca) (1304–74). Italian poet and pioneer of the Renaissance movement in Italy. The epic poem *Africa*, in Latin, a history of the second Punic War, extols the Roman general Scipio Africanus Major and contains many descriptions of the classical deities. The *Trionfi* are a set of allegorical poems in which each succeeding figure triumphs over the last (Love, Chastity, Death, etc.).

Philostratus. The name of a Greek family from Lemnos three or four of whom were rhetoricians and writers. The *Imagines* (*Eikones*) is a series of descriptions of pictures, in two books. The first is attributed to Philostratus 'the Elder' (*c.* A.D. 170–*c.* 245), the second to his grandson, known as 'the Younger'. The subjects are mostly from classical mythology, though none has been identified with any known work of art. During the Renaissance they were copied by writers of mythographical manuals and inspired numerous pictures.

Physiologus (The 'naturalist'). Name given to the anonymous Greek author (A.D. 2nd cent. or later) of a natural history of animals. It drew on Aristotle, Pliny and other early sources. It became widely diffused through Europe and the Mediterranean and was the predecessor of the medieval bestiary.

Plato (*c.* 427–*c.* 347 B.C.). Greek philosopher, born at Athens. His Theory of Ideas, in the *Republic* and *Phaedo*, asserts the existence of pure forms (justice, temperance, fortitude, etc.) underlying and distinct from their individual manifestations. From this concept were ultimately derived some of the personification in art of the virtues and vices. The *Phaedo* contains the description of the death of Socrates in prison. The *Symposium* (the 'Banquet') is a dialogue on the nature of love.

Pliny the elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus) (A.D 23–79). Born probably at Como. Of his prolific writings only the *Historia Naturalis*, in thirty-seven books, survives. Books 35 and 36 in particular deal with art and artists.

Plutarch (*c.* A.D. 46–after 120). Greek biographer and moralist, born at Chaeronea in Boeotia. His *Lives* of the ancient kings, statesmen and philosophers are mostly arranged in pairs (one Greek, one Roman) followed by a comparison of the two. The emphasis is moral rather than historical. Its influence on later ages was considerable.

Protevangelium, see New Testament Apocrypha.

Prudentius, Aurelius Clemens (a.d. 348–after 405). Religious poet, born in Spain; author of the *Psychomachia* (battle for the soul), a long allegorical poem in which the virtues and vices are personified and engage in combat. The subject lent itself to illustration and was widely popular in the Middle Ages.

Ripa, Cesare (*c.* 1560–before 1625). Italian iconographer, born in Perugia; author of the *Iconologia*, descriptions of the allegorical figures of the virtues and vices, the arts, seasons, parts of the world, etc. The first edition, 1593, was unillustrated; the third, 1603, was greatly expanded and illustrated. It rapidly became a standard reference work for artists of western Europe, especially of the Counter-Reformation.

Seneca, Lucius Annaeus (*c.* 4 b.c.–a.d. 65). Latin Stoic philosopher, born at Corduba (Cordova) in Spain. The *De Beneficiis*, one of a group of Moral Essays, deals with the nature and effects of benefaction, of giving and receiving. The *De Ira* treats of anger and the ways of controlling it. Stoic thought was felt by the Middle Ages and Renaissance to have affinities with Christian morality.

Statius, Publius Papinius (*c.* a.d. 45–96). Latin poet, born at Neapolis (Naples). The *Achilleid*, an epic poem of which only the first part exists, describes the childhood and youth of Achilles.

Tacitus, Publius Cornelius (*c.* a.d. 56–after 117). Roman historian. The *Histories* deals with the period a.d. 68 to 96, from the emperor Galba to Domitian; the *Annals* with the earlier period, a.d. 14 to 68, from the death of Augustus to the death of Nero. Parts of both works are lost.

Tasso, Torquato (1544–95). Italian poet, born at Sorrento. The *Gerusalemme Liberata* (*Jerusalem Delivered*) (1575) is a romantic epic poem describing the capture of Jerusalem in the First Crusade by Godfrey of Bouillon. The story contains many amorous adventures between Christian and pagan men and women.

Terence (Publius Terentius Afer) (*c.* 185–159 b.c.). Latin comic poet and playwright, born at Carthage. He came to Rome as a slave and was later freed. The *Eunuch* (162), one of six surviving plays in verse, was adapted from Menander. Terence was performed in Renaissance Italy and influenced later European comic drama.

Theocritus (3rd cent. b.c.). Greek pastoral poet, born probably at Syracuse. His *Idylls* are the earliest bucolic poetry, set in the Sicilian countryside. They were the foundation of the pastoral tradition which flowered in the Renaissance and the 17th cent.

Valerius Maximus. Roman historian, living at the time of Tiberius; author of *De Factis Dictisque Memorabilibus Libri IX*, a varied collection of short anecdotes giving examples of good and bad conduct from the lives of the famous, notable events and customs, etc., arranged in nine books. It was popular in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro) (70–19 b.c.). Latin poet, born at Andes near Mantua. The *Aeneid*, his last work, is the epic story of the journey of the Trojan prince Aeneas and his companions, and their settlement in Latium. For the Romans of Virgil's day it lent substance to an old legend that they were descended from the ancient heroes and hence from the gods. The *Eclogues* (*c.* 37) are pastoral poems in the vein of Theocritus. The *Georgics* (30) describe the ideal life and work of the countryman.

Voragine, Jacobus de (*c.* 1230–*c.* 1298). Dominican friar who became Archbishop of Genoa. He was the author of the *Golden Legend* (*Legenda Aurea*) (*c.* 1275), a compilation of the lives of the saints, legends of the Virgin and other narratives relating to the Church's feast days. They are arranged in the order of the Church calendar, starting with Advent. Its influence on Christian iconography was very great. It was first translated into English by Caxton in 1483 from a French version.

Xenophon (*c.* 430–*c.* 355 b.c.). Athenian general and historian, a friend of Socrates. The *Memorabilia* is one of a group of works dealing with aspects of the life and teaching of Socrates.

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A and Ω, or ω. Alpha and omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. They are the symbol of God as the beginning and the end of all things, and associated in art with the First and Second Persons of the Trinity, from the Book of Revelation (22:13 and elsewhere), 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end'. The letters are found in conjunction with the CHI-RHO MONOGRAM in early Christian art. In Renaissance painting and later they are generally seen on the pages of an open book held in the hand of GOD THE FATHER. The more usual form of omega is **ω**, sometimes drawn to resemble the Roman letter W. A hand-sign forming a W stands for omega.

Aaron. Elder brother of Moses whom he accompanies in several scenes (see MOSES, 5, 10, 11, 12). One of the tribe of Levi that had special sacerdotal functions, Aaron was the high priest of the Israelites in the wilderness, and the prototype of the ancient Jewish priesthood which was traditionally descended from his sons. The vestments are described in detail in Exodus (28), though Aaron is by no means always depicted wearing them. They are sometimes characterized by the golden bells that fringe the robe—their sound was supposed to drive off evil spirits—and by the headdress which is either a turban or, as a prefiguration of the Christian priesthood, a papal TIARA. Aaron holds a CENSER and a flowering WAND, or rod.

1. *The punishment of Korah* (Num. 16:1–35). Probably a conflation of more than one account of revolt against the leadership, which tells how Korah, a Levite, with Dathan and Abiram, contested Aaron's right to the high-priesthood. Challenged by Moses to offer incense to the Lord—a rite reserved to the priest—they and their followers found themselves swallowed up by the earth as soon as they attempted to do so. They are depicted beside an altar, censers flying, as the ground opens beneath their feet. Moses raises his wand; Aaron swings a censer.

2. *The flowering rod* (Num. 17:1–11). To settle the issue of leadership among the twelve tribes the head of each brought a staff which was laid in the tabernacle. Next day it was found that the staff of Aaron, representing the tribe of Levi, had sprouted, flowered and produced ripe almonds. This example of the unfertilized

bearing of fruit, together with the verbal similarity of the Latin *virgo* with *virga,* a rod, led to the adoption in the Middle Ages of the almond as a symbol of the Virgin's purity. (See also MANDORLA.) Jerome's account of the choosing of JOSEPH from among the suitors of the Virgin is an adaptation of the story of Aaron's rod. A flowering staff is hence an attribute of both Aaron and Joseph.

Abacus, attribute of Arithmetic, one of the SEVEN LIBERAL ARTS.

Abduction. Traditionally the fate of helpless maidens, but also sometimes of youths, not always protesting. Maiden: abducted by greybeard, in air, BOREAS; by blackbearded king on chariot (into flaming cavern), RAPE OF PROSERPINE; by white bull into sea, RAPE OF EUROPA; by young man, towards harbour, ships, HELEN OF TROY. Two maidens: seized by two warriors on horseback, CASTOR AND POLLUX. Youth: borne aloft by eagle, GANYMEDE; borne aloft by bishop, from banquet, NICHOLAS OF MYRA (5). Warrior: sleeping, garlanded, laid in chariot by women, RINALDO AND ARMIDA (2).

Abel, see CAIN AND A.

Abigail, see DAVID (5).

Abraham. The first of the great Hebrew patriarchs of the Old Testament. Called by God, he left Ur of the Chaldees with his wife Sarah and nephew Lot to go to Canaan. He is white-haired with a flowing beard. His attribute is the knife with which he meant to sacrifice Isaac, his son.

1. *The meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek* (Gen. 14:18–24). After their sojourn in Egypt to escape the famine Abraham and Lot came north again 'rich in cattle'. They separated, Abraham returning to Canaan, Lot settling in Sodom. When raiders attacked the Cities of the Plain, Lot was captured and his possessions seized. The news was brought to Abraham who armed some three hundred men and set off in pursuit. He attacked by night and defeated the foe, releasing Lot and recovering the stolen goods. Abraham returned in triumph. At Salem (Jerusalem) he was received by Melchizedek, the king and high priest, who brought out bread and wine and blessed Abraham. The latter in return paid Melchizedek a tithe (one-tenth) of his spoils of victory. Melchizedek wears priestly robes and a crown or mitre. He carries the eucharistic chalice and bread, since the episode was regarded in the Middle Ages as a prefiguration of the Last Supper.

2. *The three angels* (Gen. 18:1–19). While Abraham 'sat at the tent door in the middle of the day' three men appeared before him. Realizing that they were angels he bowed down before them, fetched water and washed their feet; then with the traditional hospitality of the nomad he brought them food. The angels prophesied that a son would be born to Abraham's wife Sarah. But Sarah laughed at the idea because by now they were both 'old and well striken in age'. However she afterwards bore Isaac so the prophecy was fulfilled. The three visitors are usually represented as angels, with wings and sometimes with haloes. Abraham kneels before them or washes their feet or fetches food. His dwelling, contrary to the text, is more often a humble building than a tent. The angels were regarded as a symbol of the Trinity and their prophecy was made a prefiguration of the Annunciation.

3. *The banishment of Hagar and Ishmael* (Gen. 21:9–21). Ishmael was Abraham's first son and his mother was Hagar, the Egyptian handmaiden of Sarah. When Isaac, Sarah's son, was born Ishmael mocked his younger brother so that Sarah asked Abraham to banish him, together with his mother. Abraham provided them with bread and a bottle of water and sent them off into the desert of Beersheba.

When the water was spent Hagar put Ishmael under a bush to die and then sat some way off, weeping. But an angel appeared, by tradition the archangel Michael, and disclosed a well of water near by, so they were both saved. There are two scenes, the banishment, and the appearance of the angel, both common in 17th cent. Italian and Dutch painting.

4. *The sacrifice of Isaac; the binding of Isaac* (Gen. 22:1–19). To test Abraham's faith, God commanded him to make a burnt offering of his son, Isaac. They went to the place of sacrifice, Abraham on his ass and Isaac carrying the wood for the altar fire. Abraham bound Isaac, laid him on the altar and drew his knife. At that moment an angel appeared and stayed Abraham's hand, saying, 'Now I know that you are a God-fearing man. You have not withheld from me your son'. Abraham raised his eyes and saw a ram caught in a thicket which he sacrificed instead. This subject occupied a central place in the system of medieval typology—the drawing of parallels between Old and New Testament themes. Abraham's intended sacrifice was seen as a type of the Crucifixion—God's sacrifice of Christ. Isaac carrying the wood prefigured Christ carrying the Cross, the ram became Christ crucified, the thorns in the thicket were the crown of thorns, and so on. Artists commonly portray Abraham with his knife poised; sometimes his other hand covers Isaac's eyes. Isaac kneels or lies, usually naked, on a sort of low altar on which there are faggots of wood. The angel is in the act of staying Abraham's hand and at the same time points towards the ram. According to Moslem tradition Abraham's sacrifice took place on the site of the Mosque of Omar (the 'Dome of the Rock') at Jerusalem.

Abraham's bosom, heaven: see LAST JUDGEMENT (5); DIVES AND LAZARUS.

Absalom, see DAVID (8).

Abundance. Ample supplies of food, the basis of man's well-being, flowed from peace, justice and good government. Hence the allegorical figure of Abundance is often associated with other such virtues, celebrating the end of a war, sometimes on public buildings, or on a sculptured tomb in allusion to the benefits bestowed by the dead man in his lifetime. The figure of Abundance is found particularly in Italian art. Her principal attribute is the CORNUCOPIA. She may, like CHARITY, be be accompanied by several children. She may hold a sheaf of CORN in her hand since her classical prototype was Ceres, the goddess of agriculture. A RUDDER, which came to be associated with the idea of government, dates from ancient Rome and derives from the annual celebration of the grain harvest which mostly came to the city by boat. The rudder, with terrestrial GLOBE and cornucopia together suggest that the world-wide rule of Rome brought about plenty ('Triumph of Caesar', Mantegna, Hampton Court).

Acedia, see SLOTH.

Achelous, see HERCULES (22).

Achilles. Legendary Greek hero, the central character of the *Iliad* which tells of his deeds in the Trojan war. The following are non-Homeric themes concerning his upbringing and death. See TROJAN WAR for the others.

1. *Thetis dips Achilles in the Styx* (Hyginus 107; Statius, *Achilleid* 1:269). Achilles was the son of Thetis, a sea-nymph. Knowing the destiny in store for her son, she tried to protect him by dipping him at birth in the waters of the river Styx. This made his body invulnerable except for the heel by which she held him. Thetis is shown standing at the water's edge holding the infant upside down by the foot. Its head is submerged. In the background the souls of the dead—wraithlike

figures—may be seen thronging the river bank, while Charon ferries a boat-load across the water. Cerberus, the watchdog, lies near by, his three heads showing varying degrees of wakefulness.

2. *The education of Achilles by Chiron* (*Fasti* 5:385–6; *Achilleid* 2:381–452). In his youth Achilles was handed over to Chiron, a wise and learned CENTAUR who taught him many arts. The Centaur is depicted playing the lyre to his pupil, or they duel, swim side by side, practise gymnastics and so on. The various activities may be combined in one picture. A related theme shows Achilles as an infant being handed over by his mother into the arms of Chiron.

3. *Achilles and the daughters of Lycomedes* (Hyginus 96; *Met.* 13:162–70; Philostratus the Younger, *Imag.* 1). By far the commonest Achillean theme, yet an unheroic one. Like that of HERCULES (17) and Omphale it concerns a hero dressed in woman's clothes, which perhaps explains its popularity. Knowing her son was destined to die if he went to fight in the Trojan war, his mother disguised him as a woman and entrusted him to King Lycomedes, in whose palace on the isle of Scyros he lived among the king's daughters. Ulysses and other Greek chieftains were sent to fetch Achilles. They cunningly laid a heap of gifts before the girls—jewellery, clothes and other finery, but among them a sword, spear and shield. When a trumpet was sounded Achilles instinctively snatched up the weapons and thus betrayed his identity. A group of female figures is seen crowding round caskets of gifts. One of them lovingly fingers a sword, or springs up brandishing it to the others' astonishment. Ulysses and other warriors may be present.

4. *Death of Achilles* (Dares Phrygius, *Excidium Troiae* 34; Dictys Cretensis 4:10–13). Achilles was offered the hand of Polyxena, daughter of Priam, king of Troy, if in return he agreed to raise the siege of the city. But this was a plot to kill him. At Polyxena's request he came to make a sacrifice to Apollo. As he knelt at the altar he was shot by her brother, Paris. The arrow was guided by Apollo to Achilles' one vulnerable spot, his heel. Achilles is seen kneeling before an altar, his foot pierced by an arrow. Or he may be supported in the arms of another of Polyxena's brothers. She stands by with an attendant. Paris is in the doorway, bow in hand, Apollo at his elbow. Homer, whom Ovid follows, tells that Achilles died in battle, but this version is seldom represented.

Acis, see GALATEA.

Actaeon, see DIANA (3).

'Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam', see IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA.

Adam and Eve. God created Adam and Eve together with the plants and animals on the sixth day (Gen. 1:24–31). The theme is often combined with the *Temptation* and the *Expulsion* (2 and 3 below). Before the early Renaissance it was usual to represent God as the Second Person of the Trinity but in later works he conforms to the 'patriarchal' type of God the Father. He breathes life into Adam's nostrils, or reaches out his hand to transmit life by his touch. In the scene of the creation of Eve, Adam lies on the ground, since God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him while removing his rib. Although Genesis states in the second account of the Creation (Gen. 2:21–2) that Eve was fashioned from the rib after God had removed it and closed up Adam's side, there is a widespread convention that depicts her emerging from his body while he sleeps. Another version shows her fully formed, standing before God in a devout attitude. Rarely, artists represent the pair without navels. According to medieval typology Adam prefigured Christ on the grounds