L'ensemble des métadonnées est accessible en cliquant sur le lien suivant :
http://dx.doi.org/10.21412/leaves_0702

"Reproduction as Remediation? The Case of Nineteenth-century Photography"

François BRUNET

In David Bolter and David Grusin's text of 1999, remediation and its "double logic" of immediacy and hypermediacy are anchored in the digital culture of the 1990s: virtual reality technology and computer-generated graphics, on the one hand, as examples of immediacy, or the logic of "erasing" the media to access "the real;" and the "windowed style" of WWW pages, as an image of hypermediacy, or the concurrent logic of visibly multiplying modes of access and thereby foregrounding the media's own reality. But right from the outset, the authors offer a much larger claim about remediation:

> Remediation did not begin with the introduction of digital media. We can identify the same process throughout the last several hundred years of Western visual representation. A painting by the seventeenth-century artist Pieter Saenredam, a photograph by Edward Weston, and a computer system for virtual reality are different in many important ways, but they are all attempts to achieve immediacy by ignoring or denying the presence of the medium and the act of mediation. (Bolter and Grusin 11)

Thus, even though the book focuses on digital media, one of its claims, developed in the first part, is that the entire history of the media is subsumed under the logic of remediation. Not only do new media "refashion older media" but "older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media." (15) This process of "refashioning" extends to the task of interpreting older media:

> It would seem, then, that *all* mediation is remediation. We are not claiming this as an a priori truth, but rather arguing that at this extended historical moment, all current media function as remediators and that remediation offers us a means of interpreting the work of earlier media as well. Our culture conceives of each medium or constellation of media as it responds to, redeploys, competes with, and reforms other media. (55)

Hence the striking definition: "a medium is that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of the real." (65) In Bolter's and Grusin's conception, "In the name of the real" means several things. One important aspect is that media are understood primarily as *representational* tools: they serve to "mediate," or access, "the real." If the genealogy of remediation can be identified to the history of (Western) art, or images, or signs, it is among other reasons because, unlike Marshall McLuhan in his analysis of the "extensions of man," Bolter and Grusin squarely assign the media to a dominant function of

representation (and not, for example, transportation, or transformation). In the genealogy of remediation, all mediation ultimately becomes im-medial because it seeks to erase itself as mediation; because it aspires to immediacy (while at the same time often foregrounding hypermediacy) in the sense defined in the digital age. In this paper, I will discuss the conception of remediation and its interpretive (genealogical) application in relation to the idea of photography in its early days—and more specifically to the notion of *reproduction*, an important if often overlooked operative concept in the beginnings of photography, and one that has more or less obvious links to the concept of remediation.

As may be expected, the invention of photography is an important moment in Bolter's and Grusin's genealogy of remediation. "Photography, they write, was a mechanical and chemical process, whose automatic character seemed to many to complete the earlier trend to conceal both the process and the artist" (15). Predictably, the authors quote William Henry Fox Talbot's rhetoric in *The Pencil of Nature*, where the author marvelled at his house at Lacock "having drawn its own picture." We think of countless statements and images about "sun painting" heralding the demise or the reform of illustration, or, in Paul Delaroche's famous dictum, the "death of painting" (and the later discourse about the impact of photography on painting and its assumed "flight into abstraction"). We think, further, of photography's own, prolonged internal debate between the "pictorial effect"—as Henry P. Robinson liked to call the photographic emulation of a picturesque genre style of painting—and the opposite direction of "pure" or "straight" photography, a debate that formed the core of the traditional narrative of the medium's history (Newhall 141-197). Conversely, one could mention nineteenth-century photographs that depict their own medium as re/mediation—as in portraits of mourning sitters holding photographs of their lost ones, or in overtly staged "spirit" photographs—and thus seem to foreground hypermediacy. But I will limit my scope, and concentrate on the notion of reproduction: photography as reproduction in general, first, as envisioned by the French inventors of photography; and then, the extensive practice of photography in the reproduction of works of art and cultural objects, as practiced especially by Fox Talbot; ending with a brief discussion of the photographic reproduction of Paul Delaroche's paintings. My main thread will consist in arguing that the plural logics of reproduction constantly exceed the representational/medial paradigm of remediation, in the direction of the economics or the political economy, of pictures, but also in the direction of esthetics. In other words, I will argue that photographic reproduction, as it was practiced and understood in the nineteenth century, does not easily "fit" in the concept of remediation: on the one hand, because it answers a larger (material, social, economic) purpose than

mediation; on the other, because it raises esthetic concerns that cannot be reduced to the achievement of immediacy.

Photography as Reproduction: the French Model

We are so used to considering photographs as *captures* of scenes and events—as precious glimpses or "windows" on unique moments, especially past moments—or as *traces* of the singular sights and insights of photographers, that we easily forget that the invention of photography and much of the official, political and critical discourse that spelled out its epochal character revolved around the notion of *reproduction* (Brunet, *Histoire et contre-histoire* 29-40).

In the 19th century, as now, reproduction meant a variety of different things, including two of particular interest here. I am using the OED, though changing the order of sequence of these two particular definitions:

> - (2.a) "a copy, or exact equivalent," on the one hand, and especially, "a copy of a picture or other work of art by means of engraving, photography, or similar processes"—emphasizing the semiotic or logical notion of similitude to an original;
>
> - (1.f) "the action or process of producing a text, image, etc., again in the form of a copy, esp. in print"—emphasizing the social-economic process of production and multiplication (*OED*, "reproduction, *n.*")

The practical convergence of these two horizons of reproduction nourished a complex debate—between differing standards of "exactness" or "imitation," on the one hand, different and evolving technologies, artistic practices, and market structures, on the other. This debate permeates the long and rich history of reproductive print technologies, which preceded and accompanied the spread of photography in the 19th century. This is a history that remains relatively obscure today, although it has been masterfully studied by a whole lineage of scholars from William Ivins to Stephen Bann and, more recently, a new generation of technologically-minded historians of art and visual culture. This is the history of what Stephen Bann has called the "visual economy" of the 19th century, an economy where photography was not the single, autonomous, or decisive factor of a Benjaminian, revolutionary "reproducibility," and in which there coexisted for a long time "parallel lines" of reproduction (Bann *Parallel Lines*): let us simplify here by calling the two main "lines" "photography" and "engraving," though the technological and cultural facts of this relationship are much more complex.

The convergence of copy and multiplication under the goal of reproduction was clearly subsumed in the invention of photography. This is apparent in Nicéphore Niépce's original heliographic process, based on a plate coated with a photo-sensitive resin that made it useable as a matrix for etching, which the inventor used alternately to copy engravings and "points of view from nature," as in the famous *Point de vue du Gras*—a deceptive copy from today's standpoint, because on Niepce's original bitumen plate the image has long faded, disappearing almost entirely. In 1829 Niepce wrote about his process that it consisted "in the spontaneous reproduction, by the action of light, with their gradations of tones from black to white, of the images obtained in the camera obscura" ("Memoir on the Heliograph," Trachtenberg 5, translation modified). *Reproduction* covered both the copy of engravings and the production of pictures out of camera images—the specific application that Daguerre pursued and developed. Daguerre's intervention was crucial in several ways, and especially in that it dislocated the convergence of copy and multiplication. Daguerreotypes were unique positive images on silvered plates, and as such totally unsuitable for printing, although efforts to convert them into printable plates started immediately. The publication of the daguerreotype in 1839 and the world-craze that followed it established a durable divorce between the photograph and its printed reproduction.

Yet Daguerre and his contemporaries did not cease to describe these new pictures as "reproductions." In a pamphlet for a subscription scheme he tried to launch in 1838 Daguerre wrote: "the daguerreotype is not merely an instrument which serves to draw nature; on the contrary it is a chemical and physical process which gives her the power to reproduce herself" (Trachtenberg 13). In his first communication to the French Academy of Sciences in January 1839 François Arago similarly wrote that Daguerre had "discovered special screens [...] where everything contained in the image was reproduced in minutest detail, with incredible exactness and delicacy" (Arago 4). Because the daguerreotype process initially required long exposure times, but also because Daguerre was a painter who, much more decisively than Niépce, had aligned photography with the history and public uses of pictures—especially the practice, preservation and valorization of art and architecture—, many of his daguerreotypes depicted objects pertaining to artistic and cultural heritage [Fig. 1], which also invited the comparison of daguerreotypes to other pictures—engravings and paintings. This first pattern of "reproduction," as it applied to engravings, sculpted objects, painterly accessories, or monuments, might be considered "remediative" insofar as it mimicked the reproductive functions of drawing, or, in the looser sense of remediation, because it served to transfer pictures and art objects from one medium to another. At any rate, the "real" it gave access to was of a pictorial kind.

Meanwhile, the paradigm of reproduction informed even the famous metaphor of the daguerreotype as "mirror with a memory," which in early texts does not refer to a mirror that retains images from the past but one that keeps fleeting images printed (Brunet, *Histoire et contre-histoire* 85-89). Inevitably this magic mirror would seem like a prime example of the logic of "immediacy:" as a mirror, it produces an absolutely faithful, "im-medial" and automatic image of reality. Its magic character, however, lay not so much in the perfect similitude of the image—that of the *camera obscura,* without color and motion; these shortcomings were immediately noted—but in the two features that enabled it to function as reproduction in a social sense: stability and portability. As a New York journalist wrote in December 1839 after seeing some specimens, addressing a reader who had not yet seen them:

> Let him suppose himself standing in the middle of Broadway, with a looking-glass held perpendicularly in his hand, in which is reflected the street, with all that therein is, for two or three miles, taking in the haziest distance. Then let him take the glass into the house, and find the impression of the entire view, in the softest light and shade, vividly retained upon its surface. This is the DAGUERREotype! (Anonymous, "The 'Daguerreotype,'" 560)

What would have been impressed in this view, as in Daguerre's famous image of the Boulevard du Temple [Fig. 2], was not the life of the street, such as would be visible about twenty years later in "instantaneous" stereo-views; rather, the street as view—perspective, architecture, solid material shapes, large and small. Such views counted as "reproductions," because the "real" that they reproduced and gave (remote) access to was culturally—pictorially, to be exact—defined and recognized. The logic of remediation, if it may be found here, was embedded in another logic that was fundamentally social, economic, and political.

I have often commented on Arago's speech to Parliament in July, 1839, and I will point out just one fact. When the physicist, after retracing the history of the invention, reached his main point, i.e. the practical justification of a special bill to purchase the process for the French State and thus make it freely available to the public, the first field of application he assigned to the daguerreotype was the reproduction of hieroglyphics:

> To copy the millions and millions of hieroglyphics which entirely cover to the very exterior the great monuments at Thebes, Memphis, Carnac, &c. would require scores of years, and legions of artists. With the Daguerréotype, a single man would suffice to bring to a happy conclusion this vast labour. Arm the Egyptian Institute with two or three of Daguerre's instruments, and on several of the large engravings in that celebrated work, the fruit of our immortal expedition, vast assemblages of real hieroglyphics would replace fictitious or purely conventional characters. (Arago in Daguerre 15)

Here, we might be tempted to say, Arago fully embraced the logic of remediation: "real hieroglyphics" would replace "fictitious characters" drawn by imperfect human copyists. Yet in the preceding sentence the physicist and Parliament member explicitly displayed the political economy of reproduction when he exclaimed that "if photography had been known in 1798, we should this day have possessed faithful representations of many valuable antiquities now, through the cupidity of the Arabs, and the vandalism of certain travellers, lost forever to the learned world." Reproduction, in this case imaginary reproduction, preceded and exceeded immediacy. It exceeded the logic of the media as channels for "the real," in general. It was, above all, a means of preservation, storage, possession, and communication of *patrimoine,* heritage or national past.

From 1839 on photographic reproduction served not only the program of Egyptology but the entire, limitless project of documenting heritage, at first monumental and artistic. In the early period, the technological impossibility of printing directly from daguerreotypes did not impede projects of "reproduction" that were published with illustrations engraved or lithographed, such as a handsome volume of *Paris et ses environs reproduits par le daguerréotype*, published in 1840 with lithographs based on daguerreotype images of the capital's prestigious monuments and squares. In his preface to *Excursions daguerriennes*, a collection of views of famous sites in Europe and around the Mediterranean, published in 1842 with aquatint engravings based on daguerreotypes [Fig. 3], Noel-M. P. Lerebours declared: "thanks to the sudden precision of the Daguerreotype, places will no longer be reproduced through a drawing that is always more or less modified by the taste and the imagination of the painter." (Lerebours "Avis de l'éditeur," n.p.). In the same sweep, this writer claimed superior "exactitude and expression" for the daguerreotype against the drawing, while justifying the non-photographic printing technique, in this case aquatint, as a suitable method of reproduction, because "closer to Nature." This method, the notice added, gave "the expression of sites, monuments, or objects represented," to be enriched if necessary with figures: "when the proofs made on the spot do not include [figures], they will be complemented by groups taken from sketches drawn from nature in the same localities." This was one early example of the increasingly complex "visual economy" that would develop in the following decades, where photographically-based images would be printed in variously transformed and engraved forms.

Starting in the 1840s, with the advent of paper photography (first with the calotype process and then the collodion-on-glass process), photographers, printers and art publishers devised many innovative solutions for "photographic printing," from lavish travelers' photographic albums, now prized by museums, to the later industry of stereo-views, which was a mass

business of reproduction. It is impossible here even to summarize the extraordinary diversity of these projects. Two things, however, are worth mentioning:

a) Photographic printing, far from supplanting lithography or engraving either in the print business or in the illustrated publishing business, was always a minor option compared to attempts at photo-mechanical printing. There were, from the 1850s to the 1880s, countless and often remarkable experimental processes of photogravure, some of them devised by photographers themselves, such as, in France, Charles Nègre and then Edouard Baldus, who came to favor photogravure (its durability, its greater tonal range, and the greater artistic freedom it afforded him [Fig. 4]) over photographic printing for his own images (Addleman-Frankel 274). The publishing market at large did not forego its old reliance on woodcut and steel engraving until the later years of the 19th century and the gradual spread of the half-tone process, which finally offered a cheap mechanical way to reproduce photographs that looked like photographs. Even with half-tone and later processes, the old divorce of photography and print continued, arguably until the advent of digital photographs electronically transmitted on screens.

b) The visual economy of the 19th century was always infinitely more complex than remediation and the twin logics of immediacy and hypermediacy would have us believe, because reproduction never simply answered a demand to communicate or recreate "the real" but always operated under a mix of constraints and aspirations that merged the economic, the political or "patrimonial," and the aesthetic in manifold ways. There was always more to reproduction than the abstract, medial notion of making a better copy of reality—or erasing the media. Reproduction always combined the demand of "accessing the real" with issues of preservation, portability, communication, but also interpretation and style—it always mixed economics, politics, and esthetics. This is already apparent in the work of the English inventor of photography, Fox Talbot.

Fox Talbot and the Art of Reproduction

Among the inventors of photography, the scientist-artist William Henry Fox Talbot is perhaps the one who would appear most readily to embody the logic of remediation as the refashioning of older media "in the name of the real." In his various accounts of his invention of the process he initially called "photogenic drawing," he repeatedly insisted on its magical character, as when he recalled his first attempts, guided by the thought of somehow "fixing" the "fairy pictures" of the camera obscura: "how charming it would be if it were possible to

cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably, and remain fixed upon the paper!" (Talbot "Brief Historical Sketch"). As noted by Bolter and Grusin, his *Pencil of Nature* (*PN*) is permeated with a fascination for pictures "impressed by Nature's hand." I want to point out that, in the *PN* and throughout Talbot's work, this rhetoric of effacement is associated with the logic of reproduction, conceived both pragmatically and esthetically.

Although Talbot's photographic project, private and subjective as it was, is in many ways an antithesis of Arago's grand vision of photography as public good and public service (Brunet *Naissance* 117-156), it is nonetheless equally concerned with reproduction as copy, preservation, and multiplication. Talbot invented photography with paper, not metal. His first and constant goal was to reproduce images, documents and objects in order to publish them. This would serve a goal he summed up with the phrase "everyman his own printer," as he wrote to his friend John F.W. Herschel in 1839, when sending him a photogenic facsimile of a Byron manuscript, the "Ode to Napoleon" (Schaaf 78). He constantly practiced photography for reproduction, especially of flat surfaces: from his photogenic drawings of leaves to the plates of the book *The Talbotype Applied to Hieroglyphics* (1846). The *Pencil of Nature,* Talbot's first photographic book, is among other things a compendium of the possibilities of photographic reproduction. Plate IX is a *Fac-simile of an Old Printed Page* [Fig. 5], an application, he writes, that is "destined to be of great advantage" to the Antiquarian. Plate XI is a *Copy of a Lithographic Print* [Fig. 6], an application that is "a very important one, not only as producing in general nearly fac-simile copies, but because it enables us at pleasure to alter the scale, and to make the copies as much larger or smaller than the originals as we may desire." Plate III, *Articles of China* [Fig. 7], is glossed as a perfect reproduction whose "mute testimony" could be "produced against [a thief] in court." In these examples the social or utilitarian—and proprietary—functions of reproduction tend to overwhelm semiotic or medial functions. The same utilitarian perspective informed Talbot's relentless simultaneous efforts, from the 1840s to the 1850s, to improve the permanence of his paper prints and to devise a suitable, practical way of making photographs compatible with the ink-and-press technology of printing, which resulted in 1858 in his method of "photoglyphic engraving," an early form of photogravure that later evolved in the so-called Talbot-Klic process (Hannavy vol. 2, 1080). For Talbot as for many other experimenters of the century, the photograph would not fully accomplish its revolution—i.e., fully complete its reproductive function—until it was brought into the space of print.

Meanwhile, in the *PN*, Talbot claimed for photography the same esthetic charms that he associated to landscape painting, and manifested a similarly artistic (if more photographic) claim in the very exercise of reproduction. Far from endorsing a static view of reproduction as an integral and im-medial copy of reality, he drew attention to the pluralistic, creative possibilities inherent in the process of "drawing with light." It is certainly striking that we find one of his most explicit statements of photographic agency in his caption to a plate that represents a bust of Patroclus (*PN* Pl. V) [Fig. 8]:

> These delineations are susceptible of an almost unlimited variety: since in the first place, a statue may be placed in any position with regard to the sun, either directly opposite to it, or at any angle: the directness or obliquity of the illumination causing of course an immense difference in the effect. And when a choice has been made of the direction in which the sun's rays shall fall, the statue may be then turned round on its pedestal, which produces a second set of variations no less considerable than the first. And when to this is added the change of size which is produced in the image by bringing the Camera Obscura nearer to the statue or removing it further off, it becomes evident how very great a number of different effects may be obtained from a single specimen of sculpture.
>
> With regard to many statues, however, a better effect is obtained by delineating them in cloudy weather than in sunshine. For, the sunshine causes such strong shadows as sometimes to confuse the subject. To prevent this, it is a good plan to hold a white cloth on one side of the statue at a little distance to reflect back the sun's rays and cause a faint illumination of the parts which would otherwise be lost in shadow. (Talbot *PN*, caption to Pl. V)

In Plate XVII Talbot offered "another view of the bust" [Fig. 9], while playfully suggesting in the extended caption that photography was the "royal road to Drawing," at least for those "who find the rules of perspective difficult to learn and to apply—and who moreover have the misfortune to be lazy." This bust is the only object to be illustrated twice in the *PN*. The paired images materially demonstrate the commentary provided alongside Plate V, about the significant changes of "effect" in the reproduction brought about by choices of lighting and position. This is perhaps the earliest instance of the creative application of photography to sculpture, a field of illustration where, as was always understood to be the case in the print tradition, the "translating" or interpreting power of the illustrator was his great prerogative, which included the eventuality of heightening the "presence" of the original subject in the reproduced head. In a sense, then, Talbot was here practicing reproduction as a kind of remediation; but he did so not so much "in the name of the real" but, quite explicitly, in the name of art—of what the esthetic tradition of *haute gravure* called imitation, as opposed to "imprint" or "fac-simile" (Bann "Fac-similé" 4-7).

Talbot's English followers in the field of the reproduction of sculptures, notably Francis Frith and Roger Fenton in their series of illustrations of the British Museum, would continue to illustrate this tradition, and popularize it in stereoscopy [Fig. 10]. By the time of the Paris World's Fair of 1867, the reproduction of sculptures in the Fine Arts section was one of the predominant themes of stereoscopic coverage—a major example of popular mediation. In these massive editions of stereoscopic views, where the public could select any number of images from a catalogue of several hundreds, what was offered was not only a refashioning of a media—sculpture, or the Exposition itself—by another media, but the more mundane economy of reproduction in its basic social functions of portability, scalability, permanence, memory, and possession (Brunet "Voir et revoir"). In the same period, however, a more artistically-inclined practitioner of photographic reproduction achieved a critical success that seemed to sanction a kind of reverse remediation: photography refashioning realistic painting in the name of art, rather than in the name of the real.

Reproduction as Augmentation: Bingham's Photographs of Delaroche's Paintings

Paul Delaroche (1797-1856), the celebrated painter of history and religion of the July Monarchy, consigned to oblivion by Modernist critics as the champion of *pompier* and *juste milieu,* or "bourgeois" art, is famous in the history of photography as the author of an apparently remarkable contradiction. In August of 1839, Arago, in his speech, quoted from a letter by the painter, enthusiastically endorsing Daguerre's processes: "they carry to such perfection certain of the essential principles of art, that they must become subjects of study and observation, even to the most accomplished artists" (Arago in Daguerre 16). Later sources, meanwhile, attributed to Delaroche the cry: "from today painting is dead." Though probably apocryphal, this exclamation is neither implausible nor incompatible with the letter. Together the two statements testify to what Stephen Bann, in his decisive reassessment (*Paul Delaroche: History Painted*, 1997), calls a "contentious" relationship to photography. Bann's argument does not aim at rehabilitating Delaroche as a secondary master. Rather it aims at making sense of his professional and intellectual biography, his meteoric rise to fame in the Salons from 1824 to 1837, and his subsequent withdrawal from public exhibitions, paralleled by a progressive change in style and conception, partly in response to mounting criticism of his obsession with realistic transparency. Bann is focused on Delaroche's share in "the developing role of painting in visual culture," especially through his "proximity to the world of printmaking and photography" (Bann *History Painted* 9-10). Not only was Delaroche, probably, "the most extensively reproduced artist of his age" (17), but he increasingly

designed his pictures with an eye to their reproductions, so that his painting style may have been consciously influenced by the codes and possibilities of reproductive media—particularly photography. As Bann indicates, Delaroche's letter of 1839 envisages not the death of painting but "a future in which painters will continue to paint"—with photography in mind. Bann adds that Arago's quotation significantly omitted this remark: "color is translated [in the daguerreotype] with such truthfulness that one easily forgets its absence." Hence a possible interrogation on the future of colorists; but also a possible new direction for painting, "to aspire to a restrained yet vivid unity of tone, comparable to the black-and-white range of the daguerreotype." A direction that, according to Bann, Delaroche followed in his later, post-1850 work, thematically less grandiose and more metaphysical, tonally more subdued. Delaroche "moved, in his later paintings, in the direction of the type of pictorial image that was comparable—and could be successfully reproduced by—photography" (Bann, *History Painted* 264-265).

Delaroche's death in 1856 was followed by a rapid and unprecedented institutionalization of his *oeuvre*. In 1857 a retrospective exhibition was organized at the École des Beaux-arts (arguably the first such retrospective show of a painter's entire work). In 1858 the Goupil art publishing house issued in a limited edition the *Oeuvre de Paul Delaroche reproduit en photographie*, the first photographically illustrated *catalogue raisonné* of a painter, complete with descriptive annotations. For this project Goupil had commissioned Robert J. Bingham, an English photographer who after illustrating the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1855 and the Paris Exposition of 1855 had settled in Paris and fully entered the art reproduction business. By 1857 he was recognized as the leading practitioner, having mastered chemical improvements on the collodion process that enabled him to improve dramatically the tonal rendition of colors. What had been formerly a major setback for the field, Bingham brilliantly overcame in the eyes of contemporary critics (Boyer 129-131). Having earned the commission, Bingham achieved his task of reproduction in remarkably little time, using a variety of sources—he photographed paintings, preparatory drawings and some engravings. The *Oeuvre de Paul Delaroche reproduit* "perpetuate[d] the assembly of works in a readily accessible form." As Bann stresses, "it would be hard to overestimate the significance, in institutional terms, of this conjuncture" (Bann, *History Painted* 15-16).

I focus on two of Bingham's reproductions. The first is one of Delaroche's early large historical canvases, *Le Supplice de Jane Grey,* or, in English, *The Execution of Jane Grey* [Fig. 11]. Painted in 1833, exhibited for the first time in 1834 to great applause, bought at the time by a Russian aristocrat for the highest price ever paid to date for a Salon painting, and subsequently acquired by the National Gallery in London, *Jane Grey* is one of the largest and

also one of the most English paintings in Paul Delaroche's long series of historical dramas. The scene it represents was, for viewers of the July Monarchy, perfectly obscure in itself but richly eloquent pictorially and highly resonant contextually. The painter, already known before 1833 for his grand pathetic style and his special predilection for tragic subjects of English royalty (as in *Les Enfants d'Edouard,* 1830), chose to depict the moment before the beheading of Jane Grey, known as the "nine-day queen" for her very brief tenure as Queen of England, in 1553, after she was installed by the dying Edward VI, England's first Protestant king, and before her half-sister Mary Tudor had her deposed, imprisoned, and finally executed. In the context of the early July Monarchy, scenes of bloody English drama were easily received as indirect allusions to France's more recent but largely suppressed revolutionary traumas, and commentaries on the divergent histories of the two nations. Delaroche's perceived political conservatism and subdued religiousness contributed to his durable negative reputation in the eyes of the Romantic avant-garde and its Modernist heirs. Down to the late 20th century a painting such as *Jane Grey* easily epitomized the Greenbergian anathema on academicism for its "penetrability" (Rosen and Zerner 120-121).

In the light of remediation—and the quest for immediacy in particular—, *Jane Grey* takes on another significance. The painting, based on lines in a 16th-century chronicle, "translates"—certainly not without some questionable choices—a remote scene of English history into a pathetic image, morbid and vivid at once, which engages the viewer in full absorption. It is certainly relevant, from the standpoint of remediation theory, that the painting, acquired by the National Gallery in the early 20th century, remained dormant or tucked away until 1974, and then established itself as one of the museum's most popular pictures. In 2010 a whole exhibition was dedicated to it (Bann *Painting History*), and the response was tremendous. This recent fame has spawned a cycle of remediative images, one example of which is a computer-generated redesign of the scene created by the Chinese English video game artist Baolong Zhang, available in full color, detail pieces, and "grey shader" version [Fig. 12].

Circling back to Robert Bingham's reproduction of this painting [Fig. 13], we can only agree with Stephen Bann that—even allowing for fading—"the photograph is a very imperfect notation" (Bann, *History Painted* 265). The monochrome ignores the brilliant colors of the originals; it is strikingly lighter and softer, almost obliterating the dramatic play of light and shadow. The *taille douce* reproduction of *Jane Grey* completed by the experienced engraver Mercuri in 1857 [Fig. 14]—after nearly twenty years' work (Bann, *History Painted* 17)—would easily win a competition with Bingham's photograph, confirming the affinity of Delaroche's early manner with engraving as opposed to photography. Incidentally, now that Bingham's photographic reproductions have become recognized as significant objects for art history, we

wonder how his photograph of *Jane Grey* stands today for us: is it merely a document on reproductive practices? Or is it a remediative image? But if so, remediative in what sense?

The second painting in point is *La jeune martyre* (in English, *The Young Christian Martyr*, 1855) [Fig. 15], a much smaller picture, more intimate, less dramatic tonally, and an image of metaphysical inspiration, considered one of the most successful achievements of Delaroche's late style. Bann contrasts Bingham's reproduction of this picture [Fig. 16]—as providing "almost a replica of tonal values"—to that of *Jane Grey* as part of his argument on Delaroche's increasing emulation of photography and, beyond, "his concern with the nature of automatic reproduction" and its implied affinities with "works 'not made with hands' in Christian iconography" (Bann, *History Painted* 265). In connection with Bingham's photograph, Bann and Laure Boyer quote the enthusiastic review of *L'Oeuvre de Paul Delaroche reproduit* by Théophile Gautier—a critic known for his animosity towards Delaroche as well as photography. Referring especially to *La jeune martyre*, the critic marveled "how much photography has the sense of art," and how "even in the excess of its zeal [it] has changed into very fine pictures very mediocre canvasses." (Gautier 1858, quoted in Bann, *History Painted* 290 note 106) Photography, he went on, "erases, softens, deafens and relieves with an art that it was not deemed capable of." "Photography, which is so accurate in front of nature, becomes fanciful [*fantasque*] in front of paintings; it extinguishes or illuminates them at will." (Gautier 1858, quoted in Boyer 144 note 21) As Boyer notes, Gautier does not impute this miraculous transfiguration to the artfulness of Robert Bingham, but rather to the mechanics of light, chance, and technical limitations. His opinion nonetheless sanctions a remarkable transformation—remediation—of a "mediocre," *pompier* picture into a powerful creation of "fancy."

Because in spite of its limitations photographic reproduction at its best was governed by the same code of "imitation" or "translation" of the painterly ideal that had animated the tradition of engraving, and because Bingham had somehow managed a successful conversion of chromatic values into coherent tonal values, his reproductions of Delaroche *improved* on the paintings. A picture such as *Jane Grey*, the absolute emblem of "bourgeois," "intelligible" art, was perhaps *de-mediated*. A picture such as *The Young Christian Martyr*, perhaps painted with photographic reproduction in mind, was *augmented*. Art reproductions, in the hands of the engravers, photographers and publishers who specialized in this trade, were not mere automatic copies, serving the quantitative purpose of distribution; instead they involved artful technique, artistic sense, and even esthetic choice. Thus they participated in a "new network of circulation of artworks and a new field for the critical study of art" (Boyer 141). If photographs remediated paintings and sculptures—as well as images of the world—

they did not or not necessarily do so “in the name of the real” or in purely critical, deconstructive gestures against “old media,” but rather in the name of an artistic ideal that they hoped to share in, communicate, and if possible benefit from. Thus they participated, more or less actively, in an esthetic rather than a purely medial regime.

Meanwhile, what the theory of remediation tends to obscure is that reproduction, photography, and visual media in general, never answered to purely representational regimes. While engraving and then lithography had already enabled the transformation of cultural objects into images offered to private consumption, the visual economy of the mid-19th century, increasingly guided by the photographic business and the idea of photography, was also increasingly shaped by the demands of circulation: portability, scalability, marketability (Brunet, *Circulation* 22-32). To reduce photography and photographic reproduction to the logic of remediation would be to bypass their historically situated relationship to esthetic concerns and traditions as well as to the shaping forces of economy, technology, and ideology.

Bibliography

Anonymous. "The 'Daguerreotype.'" *The Knickerbocker, or, New York Monthly Magazine* 14 (1839): 560-561. *Google Books*. Web. 27 Jan. 2018.

Addleman-Frankel, Kate. "A Process of Selection: Édouard Baldus, the New Louvre Photographs and Palais du Louvre et des Tuileries." *History of Photography* 38:3 (2014): 255-275. *JSTOR*. Web. 27 Jan. 2018. DOI: 10.1080/03087298.2014.935099.

Arago, François. "Fixation des images qui se forment au foyer d'une chambre obscure." *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Sciences* 9 (1839): 4-7. *Gallica*. Web. 27 Jan. 2018.

Bann, Stephen. *Paul Delaroche*: *History Painted*. London: Reaktion Books, 1997.

Bann, Stephen. *Parallel Lines. Printmakers, Painters, and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France*. New Haven (CT): Yale UP, 2001.

---. "Entre fac-similé et haute gravure." *Études photographiques* 20 (2007): 4-17. Web. 25 Jan. 2018. <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/924>

Bann, Stephen *et al. Painting History: Delaroche and Lady Jane*. New Haven (CT): Yale UP, 2010.

Boyer, Laure. "Robert J. Bingham, photographe du monde de l'art sous le Second Empire." *Études photographiques* 12 (2002): 127-147. Web. 25 Jan. 2018. <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/320>

Brunet, François. *La Naissance de l'idée de photographie*. Paris: PUF, 2000.

---.*La Photographie: histoire et contre-histoire*. Paris: PUF, 2017.

---. "Voir et revoir l'exposition en petit volume. La couverture stéréographique de l'Exposition universelle de 1867." *Transbordeur* 2 (2018): 124-137.

Brunet, François, ed. *Circulation*. Chicago: Terra Foundation/Chicago UP, 2017.

Daguerre, Louis. *History and Process of Photogenic Drawing by means of the Daguerréotype … With notes and explanations, by M. Arago*, etc. Trans. J. S. Memes. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1839. Google Books. Web. 27 Jan. 2018.

Hannavy, John, ed. *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography*. 2 vols. London: Routledge, 2007.

Ivins, William. *Prints and Visual Communication*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard UP, 1953.

[Lerebours, Noël-Marie P.] *Excursions daguerriennes: vues et monuments les plus remarquables du globe*. Paris: Lerebours, 1842. *Gallica*. Web. 28 Jan. 2018.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. 1964. Thirtieth anniversary ed. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 1994.

Newhall, Beaumont. *The History of Photography*. 5th ed. New York: MoMA, 1982.

Oxford English Dictionary [OED]. Web. 24 Jan. 2018.

Robinson, Henry P. *Pictorial Effect in Photography*. London: Piper and Carter, 1869. Web. 26 Jan. 2018. <https://archive.org/details/pictorialeffecti00robi>

Rosen, Charles and Henri Zerner. *Romanticism and Realism: The Mythology of Nineteenth-century Art*. New York: Viking Press, 1984.

Schaaf, Larry. *The Photographic Art of William Henry Fox Talbot*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton UP, 2000.

Siegel, Steffen. *First Exposures: Writings from the Beginning of Photography*. Santa Monica (CA): Getty Publications, 2017.

Talbot, William Henry Fox. *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-1846), ed. by Larry Schaaf, *The Anniversary Facsimile of H. Fox Talbot's The Pencil of Nature*. New York: H.P. Kraus, 1989. Web. Jan. 25, 2018. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/33447/33447-h/33447-h.html>

Trachtenberg Alan. *Classic Essays on Photography*. New Haven (CT): Leete's Island Books, 1980.

ICONOGRAPHY

Fig. 1. Louis Daguerre, *L'Atelier de l'artiste*. Ca. 1837, Daguerreotype.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Daguerreotype_Daguerre_Atelier_1837.jpg

Fig. 2. Louis Daguerre, *Le Boulevard du Temple*. Ca. 1838, Daguerreotype.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Boulevard_du_Temple_by_Daguerre.jpg

Fig. 3. Noël-Marie-P. Lerebours, Riffaut, Bougeard. *Les Propylées à Athènes*. Aquatint engraving after a daguerreotype. *Excursions daguerriennes,* Paris: Lerebours, 1842.

https://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/269123

Fig. 4. Edouard Baldus. *Palais de Versailles, Grand et Petit Trianon: motifs de décoration intérieure et extérieure reproduits par les procédés d'héliogravure.* Paris: Morel et Cie, 1876.

https://archive.org/details/palaisdeversaill00bald

Fig. 5. William Henry Fox Talbot. *Fac-simile of an Old Printed Page*. Pl. IX, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Salt print from calotype negative.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fac-simile_of_an_Old_Printed_Page.jpg

Fig. 6. William Henry Fox Talbot. *Copy of a Lithographic Print*. Pl. XI, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Salt print from calotype negative.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Copy_of_a_Lithographic_Print_MET_DP147231.jpg

Fig. 7. William Henry Fox Talbot. *Articles of China*. Pl. III, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Salt print from calotype negative.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Henry_Fox_Talbot_(British_-_Articles_of_China_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Fig. 8. William Henry Fox Talbot. *Bust of Patroclus*. Pl. V, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Salt print from calotype negative.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Henry_Fox_Talbot_(British_-_Bust_of_Patroclus._-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Fig. 9. William Henry Fox Talbot. *Bust of Patroclus*. Pl. XVII, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46). Salt print from calotype negative.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Henry_Fox_Talbot_(British_-_(Bust_of_Patroclus)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Fig. 10. Roger Fenton. *The Lycian Saloon, British Museum*. 1850s, Albumen silver print from glass negative (stereoscopic view).

https://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/271659

Fig. 11. Paul Delaroche. *L'Exécution de lady Jane Grey en la tour de Londres, l'an 1554*. 1833, Oil on canvas, 246 × 297 cm. London: National Gallery.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DelarocheLadyJaneGrey.jpg

Fig. 12. Baolong Zhang. *The Execution of Lady Jane Grey*. *The Tribute*. N.d., 3D video images.

https://baolong.artstation.com/projects/qwxe

Fig. 13. Robert J. Bingham. *L'Exécution de Lady Jane Grey, tableau de Paul Delaroche. Œuvre de Paul Delaroche reproduit en photographie*. Paris: Goupil, 1858.

http://www.musee-orsay.fr/fr/collections/catalogue-des-oeuvres/notice.html?nnumid=61508

Fig. 14. Paul Mercuri. *Lady Jane Grey au moment du supplice*, salon de 1834, d'après Paul Delaroche. 1858, Hand-chiselled engraving. Bordeaux: Musée d'Aquitaine, fonds Goupil.

http://www.musee-aquitaine-bordeaux.fr/fr/article/lady-jane-grey-au-moment-du-supplice-salon-de-1834-d'après-paul-delaroche-1797-1856

Fig. 15. Paul Delaroche. *La Jeune Martyre*. 1855, Oil on canvas, 171 x 148 cm. Paris: Musée du Louvre.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Delaroche,_Paul_-_A_Christian_Martyr_Drowned_in_the_Tiber_During_the_Reign_of_Diocletian_-_1855.jpg

Fig. 16. Robert J. Bingham. *La Jeune martyre, tableau de Paul Delaroche. Œuvre de Paul Delaroche reproduit en photographie*. Paris: Goupil, 1858.

http://www.musee-orsay.fr/fr/collections/catalogue-des-oeuvres/notice.html?no_cache=1&zsz=5&lnum=&nnumid=61510