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Heterochrony in the Interpretation of Stained Glass Windows: A Case Study on Light in the Church of Orsanmichele

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Heterochrony in the Interpretation of Stained Glass Windows: A Case Study on Light in the Church of Orsanmichele

Abstract

In the last decade, scholars of medieval art have examined how the materiality of religious objects was seen to increase the sacredness of the rituals in which they were used. Christians in the Middle Ages understood that objects had the potential to move from the material (such as glass or gems) to the immaterial (the divine presence of God). While stained glass is a medium that is defined by the mutability of its material, scholars have focused primarily on the iconography of glass windows and the workshop practices of glaziers rather than phenomenological meanings. There is recognition of the visual effect of light moving *through* stained glass, but few connections are made between the shifting physical conditions of the spaces that include glass and the materiality of glass itself. In this paper I will argue that while the sensorial experience of stained glass windows is a significant part of the historical experience of a building, it is not the whole story. Using the Church of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy as a case study, I will reconsider glass' heterochronic potential in three aspects: boundaries, senses, and temporalities. This research raises questions about how viewers' engagement with past and present can converge to create a clearer understanding of history.

Keywords

medievalism, phenomenology, light, stained glass, temporality

Cover Page Footnote

With immense gratitude for her continued support of this project and other endeavors, I would like to thank my mentor, Dr. Evan Gatti. Additionally, I would like to thank Elon University's History & Geography department and Religious Studies department for generous funding that allowed me to travel to the Church of Orsanmichele.

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Introduction

A work of art may seem to exist in one time, that of its creation or era, but an artwork continues to have agency as it exists through various time periods and engages with different histories. Some works circulate in private collections, museums, and archives, thus becoming distanced from their original contexts. The medium of stained glass, however, requires a different way of interpreting developments across time and space because it is often a site-specific aspect of architecture. While stained glass windows are inevitably tied to the location or time of their creations, this does not mean the medium's meaning does not shift.

These shifts in meaning are particularly clear when looking at medieval stained glass panels in churches that depict saints, tell biblical stories, or use distinct symbols to situate the panels in the historical spaces for which they were created. A stained glass panel's initial purpose of religious devotion in the Middle Ages could become a historical one in the 21st century. It is inevitable that the original themes or iconography will invite new interpretations hundreds of years later.

In this essay I will argue that stained glass should not be interpreted as a stable remnant of the past without agency in the present. Instead, the medium is meant to be heterochronic, meaning that its interpretation conflates time into one[1] and encourages us to consider a wider experiential history. Using the stained glass panels at the Church of Orsanmichele in Florence as a case study, I will show how the church's history is interwoven with the heterochronic potential of the stained glass. Rather than chart Orsanmichele's changes as single, successive moments in a linear chronology or as products of individualized historical campaigns, I will expand upon phenomenological significance. By exploring the concepts of boundaries, sensorial experience, and temporality, I will emphasize the ways in which the illuminated windows link Orsanmichele's pasts to its present, simultaneously marking what was, what now is, and what may be.

History of Orsanmichele

In 895 C.E. the present location of Orsanmichele was recorded as a church dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel.[2] The space was primarily meant for worship but it was also a seat of the magistrate within Florence.[3] After 1240, the church was demolished and turned into a loggia that housed a granary. The loggia featured large open arches that allowed visitors to walk through, similar to the Loggia dei Lanzi, which is still standing in Florence today [Figure 1]. The granary regained a religious connection between 1285 and 1292 when the Madonna and the Archangel Michael appeared in a miraculous painting on a pilaster in the loggia, inspiring people to visit the space to be blessed by the Madonna.[4] The popularity of the icon of the Madonna coincided with the floods of 1284 and 1288, creating a close connection between catastrophic events and miracles in Florence.[5] In her monograph on Orsanmichele, Renée Burnam argues that the floods caused great shortages of grain, leading to famines, therefore it made sense that the miraculous image of the Madonna would appear in the granary as a representation of safety from flooding.[6]

Figure 1: Loggia dei Lanzi, 1382. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

In 1304, the loggia burned down, but the miracles of the Madonna continued, causing Florentines to devote themselves to restoring the loggia and sanctifying the space. The new loggia was commissioned in 1337 for both protection of the grain and hopes of miracles by the Madonna.[7]

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In 1347, before the Black Death wreaked havoc on the city, Bernando Daddi was commissioned to create a new panel painting of the Virgin that replaced a temporary image within the loggia.[8] In 1352, an ornate marble tabernacle was commissioned from Andrea Orcagna to encase Daddi's painting [Figure 2]. Florentines saw developments to Orsanmichele as critical for pleasing the Madonna during times of devastation, meaning much of this growth was understood as necessary to survival in Florence.[9]

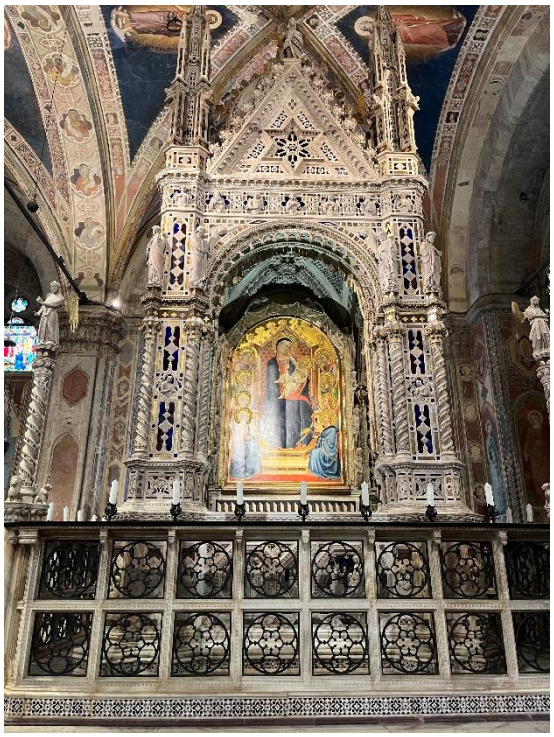

Figure 2: Andrea Orcagna, *Tabernacle at the Church of Orsanmichele*, 1352-1359, Marble. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

Nancy Fabbri and Nina Rutenberg argue that during this period of engagement with the Madonna, the intricate materials of the tabernacle drew visitors into the open air loggia and encouraged petitioners to pray.[10] The tabernacle replicated the shape of a small opulent church, thus framing, protecting, and amplifying the image of the Virgin.[11] The tabernacle helps viewers see Orsanmichele as an adaptive space of sacred and secular uses, rather than one of divided historical moments.

As the space's religious significance grew, the grain was removed from the first floor and the open arches of the loggia were enclosed with building material (stone), tracery, and stained glass [Figure 3].[12] In 1376, the Florentine guilds developed a plan to install sculptures commissioned from the city's most renowned workshops for the exterior niches below the spaces set aside for the stained glass windows[13] [Figure 4]. Since Orsanmichele was the headquarters for the guilds of Florence until the 1570s,[14] it was essential to commission artists whose sculptures would have lasting significance. The whole campaign is still remembered as part of a bold statement to celebrate the centrality and significance of Orsanmichele. For example, in *Gardner's Art Through the Ages-Twelfth Edition*, one of the most notable art history survey texts, the authors state that "[the sculptures] public placement provided an ideal vehicle for presenting political, artistic, and economic messages to a wide audience,"[15] but other features of the church are not noted. This shows that historians have been interested in Florence's independence and civics but not necessarily in the religious meanings of its architecture.

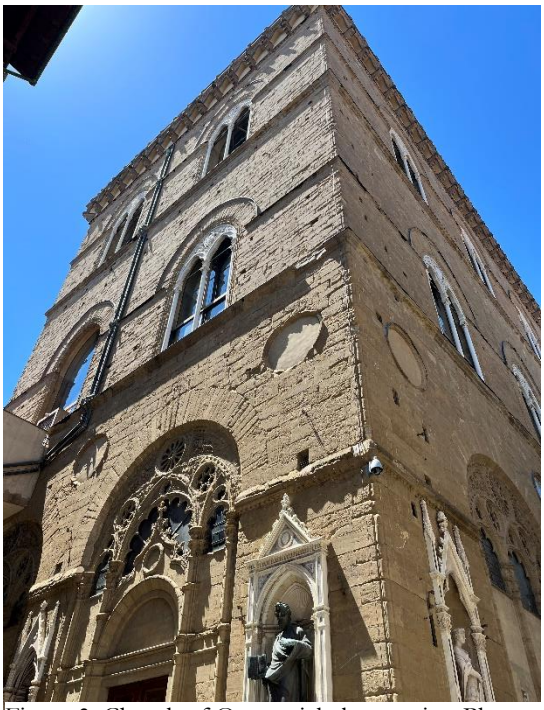

Figure 3: Church of Orsanmichele, exterior. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

Figure 4: Nanni di Banco, *Four Crowned Saints*, 1414-1417. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

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The focus on the sculpture on the exterior as representative of a canon of the greatest Florentine artists means that the stained glass windows are often overlooked. This is in part because the medium did not operate under the same individualistic artistic practices as sculpture. In Florence, stained glass was made by many artists in workshops. The artist, or designer, first created a drawing for the stained glass window. Then, glaziers reworked the image for logistical stability purposes, color arrangements, and other reasons specific to the medium of stained glass that designers were not trained for.[16] The designer was typically more famous and given the credit for the work but due to the changes glaziers had to make to transform an image to a window, it is hard to recognize the designer based on style alone.[17]

Stained Glass Campaigns: Creating Boundaries

There were two campaigns of stained glass installation; the first from 1380-1400 and the second from 1400-1420 [Figure 5].[18] The second campaign relies on traditional iconography of the miracles of the Virgin rather than those associated specifically with the Madonna of Orsanmichele; therefore, I will not focus on this campaign.[19] Two out of four stained glass bays in the first campaign focused on the specific miracles of the Madonna of Orsanmichele, such as *Unchaste Abbess*, *Drowned Sacristan*, and *Miracle of the Snow*.[20] Bay sII, the *Scenes of the Miracles of the Virgin* (1380-1400) [Figure 6], has two windows depicting a tabernacle similar to the one inside Orsanmichele. Renée Burnham argues that the features of Orsanmichele's insignia, the symbol of the grain measure, and general similarities to Florence in bay sII show a purposeful connection to Orsanmichele.[21] These windows could not be moved to another church and represent the same religious themes because the windows tell specific stories about Orsanmichele. The rest of the windows lack these site-specific details, but Burnam argued the themes of "drowning, nourishment, sexual morality, and communal justice [indicate] that the Madonna of Orsanmichele played a decisive role in these areas

of Florentine life."[22] Of the twelve panels of the first campaign, six depict water and four depict drowning miracles.[23] This choice of iconography relates back to the history of flooding around the time the Madonna of Orsanmichele became important to the public of Florence.

Figure 5: Church of Orsanmichele, interior. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

Figure 6: Leonardo di Simone (?), designs by Giovanni Biondo, *Scenes of the Miracles of the Virgin*, Bay sII, 1380-1400. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

The designs for the original campaign of windows were completed by Simone di Francesco Talenti, but they differed dramatically from what was built, likely due to financial reasons. Talenti planned for the stained glass to reach from floor to ceiling for each bay,[24] similar to the stained glass at Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. The smaller windows mean the space is much darker than Talenti intended, something we must remember when examining light in the space today. In fact, Burnam theorizes the clear gridded panels of the second campaign [Figure 7] may have been installed to ensure the space was not too dark.[25] The adjustments demonstrate that when the stained glass windows were installed, the glaziers were cognizant of the impact of light in the church and the

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possibilities for the windows to create sacred experiences for viewers,[26] meaning the final product used light in purposeful, site-specific ways.

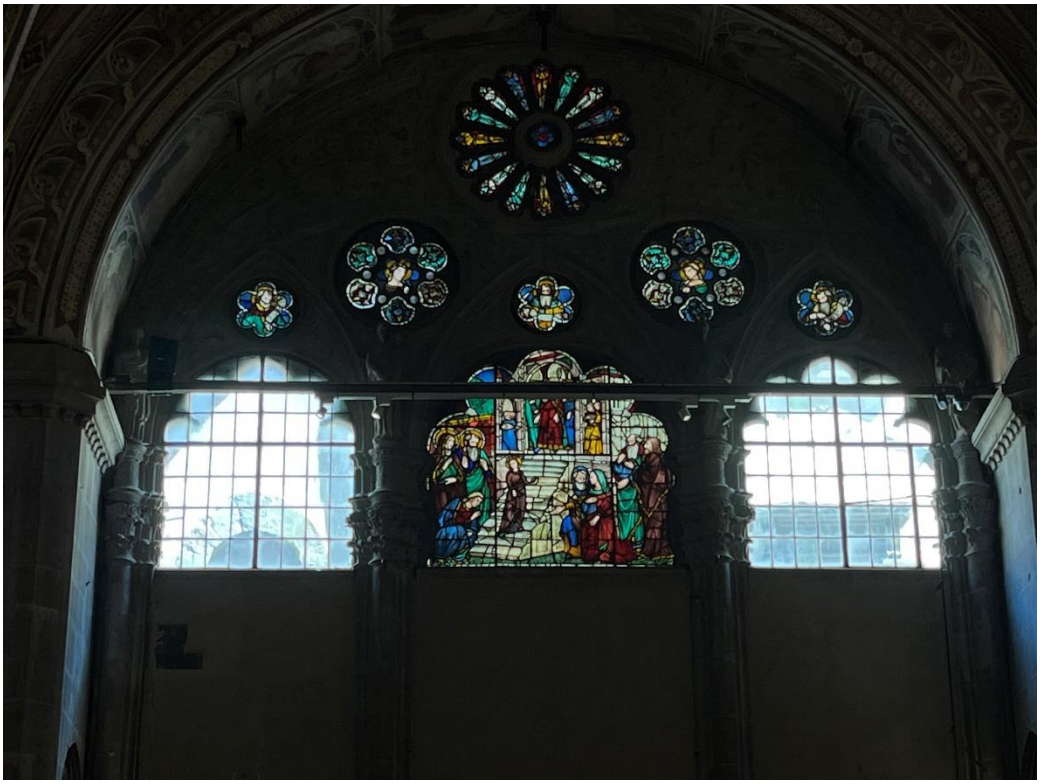

Figure 7. Francesco di Giovanni Lastra and Bernardo di Francesco, designs by Lorenzo Ghiberti (?), *The Presentation of the Virgin,* Bay nIV, 1429. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

If we consider the layering of imagery in the space, we can learn more about the religious significance objects can have. Daddi's panel painting of the Madonna, which itself stood in for the now lost miraculous image, was the first explicitly sacred object in the granary and was later emphasized by the tabernacle. When the tracery of the loggia was enclosed with stained glass, viewers could no longer see the tabernacle through the open arches, so the windows became the new symbol of separation between sacred—represented by all that is within Orsanmichele's walls—and secular spaces. The windows make clear that church rituals are separated from the secular exterior, but that members cannot neglect the world outside the sacred space.

While the windows are not celebrated for art historical value, they preserve an important boundary between the building's historical and miraculous beginnings as a granary by replacing the once open walls of the loggia. The enclosure of the arches with stained glass to protect the tabernacle from the elements[27] led to stained glass operating as the new framing device for the space. These divisions of sacred from secular, interior from exterior, light from dark, and localized from generalized remind viewers that they remain in the heterochronic 'in between' space.

Sensorial Experiences in Churches

The sensorial aspects of art have been understood by Christians since the Middle Ages. Churches have emphasized materiality in religious practices as a way to enliven holy experiences. They believed physical objects[28] such as paint, gold leaf, jewels, and glass had innate physical connections to God.[29] Abbot Suger of The Abbey Church of St. Denis called this the anagogical approach, where the material object could move the viewer to an immaterial, divine world.[30] Suger understood light to function as a metaphorical aspect of the anagogical approach for all objects. For example, the verses inscribed on bronze doors at St. Denis state, "Bright is the noble work; but, being nobly bright, the work / Should brighten the minds, so that they may travel, / through the true lights, / To the True Light where Christ is the true door."[31] In the case of stained glass windows, not only is the religious iconography exemplified by this metaphorical brightness, but also through the literal transmission of sunlight into the space. It could be argued that this dual meaning of light was especially powerful in intensifying religious devotion via the stained glass windows.

I would argue that the stained glass windows of Orsanmichele necessitate a new way of looking. The semi-translucent, jewel-like nature of glass allows some light to enter the space. As rays touched important features like the mosaic tesserae of the tabernacle [Figure 8] or the Altar of St.

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Anne [Figure 9], viewers connected the visible objects to the invisible power of God. Illumination becomes a method of *seeing* the spiritual significance of the space.

Figure 8. Andrea Orcagna, Mosaic on the *Tabernacle* at the Church of Orsanmichele, 1352-1359. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

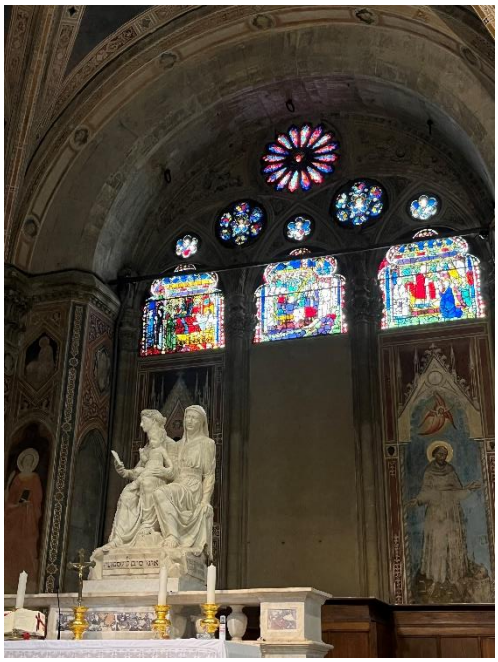

Figure 9. Francesco da Sangallo, *Figure of St. Anne*, 1526, Marble. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

The tabernacle has been the emphasis of scholarship, but the stained glass is what reinforces the meaning over time by connecting the material qualities of light to the immaterial, holy power. Seeing or directly experiencing light through stained glass windows could have been more significant in worship than the iconography itself because it elicits an emotional reaction. This anachronic potential was meant to occur over centuries and continue engaging with all viewers who worshiped in the space. This is also what was discussed above as the heterochronic nature of sensorial experience: the windows exist in and beyond time at the same moment. As long as viewers engaged with religious practices and understood the sensorial way of looking, the light of stained glass windows could have sacred meanings, no matter the era.

Temporality and Stained Glass at Orsanmichele

The connections between past and present encounters are the most useful ways to interpret Orsanmichele's stained glass. As Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood have discussed in *Anachronic Renaissance*, a work of art does not lie dormant at the time in which it was created. They state that art is "the possibility of a conversation across time, a conversation more meaningful than the present's merely forensic reconstruction of the past."[32] Returning to the concept of heterochrony, the multitudes of encounters with a work of art from its creation to today intersect to create a complicated, amorphous history. Artworks are imbued with new associations, beliefs, and ideologies as they continue existing, meaning we cannot assume their "true meanings" lie in the historical contexts of their creation or first use alone.

Stained glass in particular can benefit from analyses focusing on the agency of an object to "break time" because windows typically remain *in situ* as history happens around them. In the case of Orsanmichele, the stained glass windows were installed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but they are still a part of one's sensorial engagement with Christianity, even after the space was transformed into a museum. Many artworks, including the sculptures located in the niches of Orsanmichele's exterior, are more often interpreted for their contribution to the period they were created in rather than their significance for the present-day. Since stained glass windows were less often part of a valued "Renaissance" canon, they are better examples of broad temporal experiences.

Additionally, stained glass windows benefit from heterochronic analysis because they operate on cycles of light. As a space is used in ritual, the light filtering through the stained glass meaningfully connects to liturgy. The conditions, brightness, and position of the lighting change by time and day, but light is a constant variable in worship. Therefore, the stained glass windows at Orsanmichele are not explicitly tied to the history of the premodern world but continue to engage in a cyclical process of illumination with viewers today.

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As viewers enter Orsanmichele in the twenty-first century, however, they are not stepping back in time, so to speak. While most of the medieval windows remain and the tabernacle is still a focus within the space, the purpose of the location has changed. The church is most often experienced as a tourist attraction, with many viewers taking pictures and viewing artworks for aesthetic contemplation rather than devotional or religious impact. Additionally, the church has limited viewing hours and only allows guests to remain in the nave for twenty minutes at a time. Even if some viewers may want to reenact premodern experiences of stained glass with the same material significance, it is impossible to recreate the Orsanmichele of the fifteenth century. As Rebecca Leuchak points out, the innate materiality of the experience of stained glass can never be fully recreated. Her examples of period scene reconstructions like ones at the Met Cloisters or computer recreations of churches cannot replicate the physical experience of a space in the Middle Ages.[33] If we assume we can understand stained glass as a static and unchanging medium, Leuchak states this "[creates] a rigid canon for understanding the past in terms of fixed ideas and romanticized ideals."[34] This desire to fully 'experience' history [35] misses the potential of understanding stained glass as heterochronic. While it existed in the past, stained glass also changes appearance regularly, which informs our interpretations in the current time.

My analysis of Orsanmichele does not intend to imply that we can encounter 14th century materiality, but rather that we can find greater meaning by acknowledging the limitless nature of ephemeral encounters. Engaging with the experience of light makes a present-day viewer more conscious of the heterochronic nature of stained glass. By looking toward the past, we can understand more of stained glass's original function, which informs what changes have been made today. A contemporary analysis of light may not have the same impact as it did for sacred rituals, but the influence of the past can more clearly be conveyed. The impact of seeing and being touched by

the light of stained glass at Orsanmichele in the twenty-first century has a shifting, but relevant significance.

The impacts of time of day and weather at Orsanmichele create a variety of different conditions for viewing within the space. In the morning, the light slants in through the windows on the east end of the church. This lighting illuminates the backside of the tabernacle and the altar. At midday, a sunny day would allow for bright light to come through on both the north and south sides of the church. This lighting would put the greatest emphasis on the viewers seated in the pews and brighten the center of the space. The jewels, enamel, and marble are well-lit as the rays shine onto them directly through the north and west windows. In the afternoon, slanted light comes through the west side and the space is slightly darker. The sun's movement from east to west also highlights Orsanmichele's iconography in an interesting way. The eastern windows, the first to be illuminated in the morning, show stories directly related to the Madonna's miracles at Orsanmichele. As the windows on the north and south sides are brightened, the later campaigns are illuminated, which are less site-specific. As the sun sets, the modern windows have the most vivid potential of the day. While the differences are easier to discern in person, photographs reveal the slight changes of the sun. In Figure 10, which was taken mid-morning, the eastern windows (on the right side) are brighter than the similarly positioned photograph in Figure 11. With direct morning sunlight, the lead lines become less prominent and the coloring is almost washed out.

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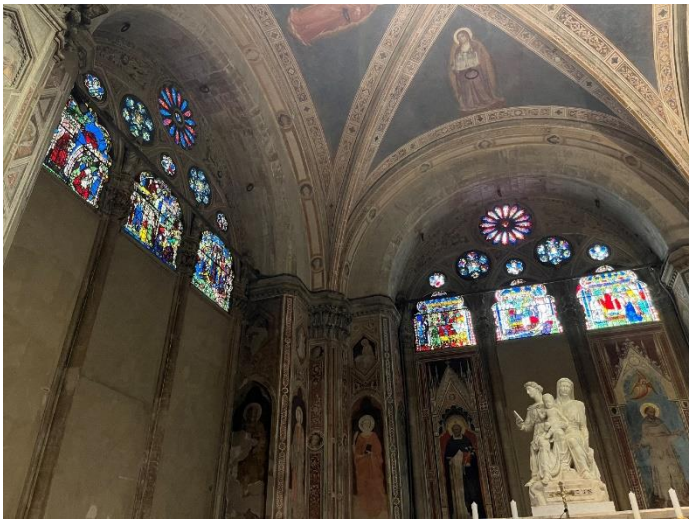

Figure 10. Leonardo di Simone (?), designs by Agnolo Gaddi (?), *Miracles of the Madonna of Orsanmichele*, Bay nII, 1380-1400 (left) and Leonardo di Simone (?), designs by Niccolo di Pietro Gerini (?), Bay nI, 1380-1400 (right). Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022 at 10:27 a.m.

Figure 11. Leonardo di Simone (?), designs by Agnolo Gaddi (?), *Miracles of the Madonna of Orsanmichele*, Bay nII, 1380-1400 (left) and Leonardo di Simone (?), designs by Niccolo di Pietro Gerini (?), Bay nI, 1380-1400 (right). Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022 at 12:53 p.m.

However, a cloudy day would remove any extra emphasis on the windows, revealing the inconsistency in the medium's presentation. This tension between light and dark seen in the stained glass differs at each time of day and with the sunniness of the sky, meaning the positionality of the spectator and activities of the church create a dynamic sensory experience at that moment. The viewer never knows how pronounced the light will be but can always expect a distinct encounter.

One of the most significant changes to the space from the fifteenth century to today is the electric lighting that illuminates the art on the ceiling as well as Daddi's panel painting of the Madonna [Figure 12]. While this lighting brings the viewer's attention to certain works of art, it deemphasizes the stained glass's relationship to the space and more specifically, the tabernacle. The irradiation, or the tendency of stained glass windows to glimmer beyond their frames in dark spaces,[36] is lessened because the artificial light does not allow natural light to contrast with the dim interior. We can imagine that the low light of the 15th century created a stark contrast between the windows and all other features within the church. Where Orsanmichele once drew attention to the

tabernacle using the natural light reflecting off the enamel, marble, and jewels, the artificial lights create a more consistent illumination. Today, you can still see the changes in light in the windows throughout the day, but it requires more attention than it would need without artificial lighting.

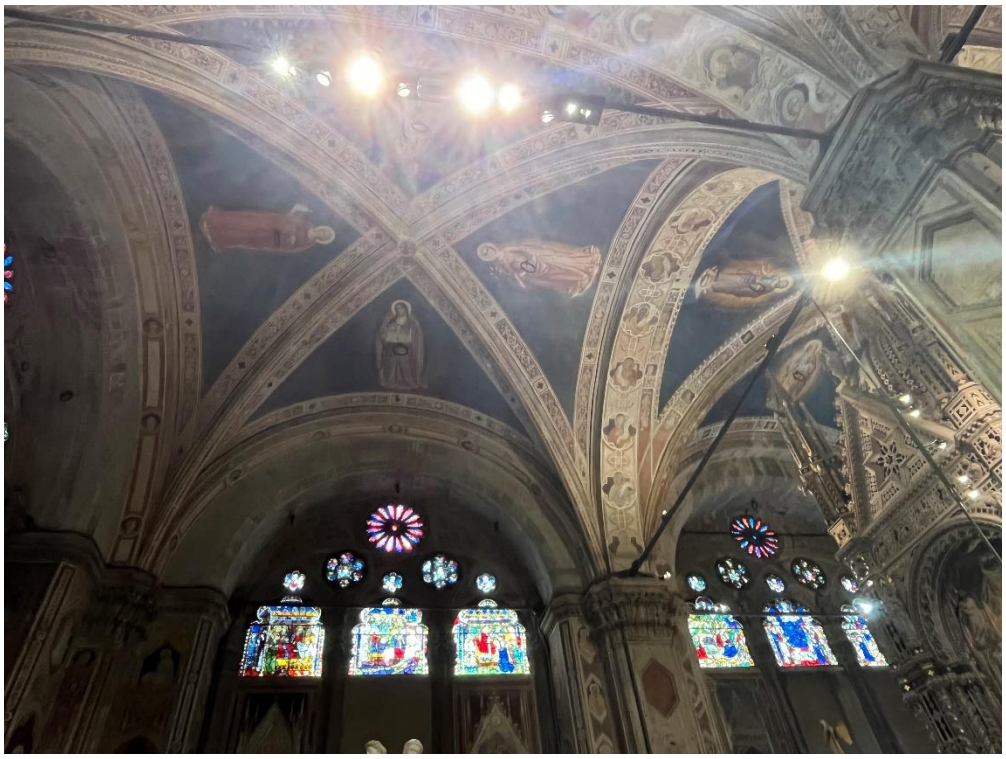

Figure 12. Church of Orsanmichele, interior. Photo by author, taken July 5, 2022.

The impact of light was not only an aesthetic condition but had significance to religious encounters. Bissera Pentcheva argued that medieval viewers primarily sensed the spirit through glitter and shadows,[37] meaning these transient experiences with light at Orsanmichele were significant to religious interpretation in the fifteenth century. The shifting brightness of daylight and shimmering created a feeling of movement or animation the viewer could associate with the divine. To some, this shimmering quality may still have religious significance, but in any temporality, it is a noticeable feature of the space. Interpreting Orsanmichele's stained glass as heterochronic allows these varied encounters to merge in the present day, informing new types of seeing.

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Revivals, Traditions, and Tropes

Examples like Orsanmichele have implications for the creation of stained glass after the premodern period. After a period of disinterest, a 'vitromanie' happened across Europe in the nineteenth century, not only in churches, but also in industrial places, homes, and businesses as a return to the romance of the Middle Ages.[38] Revivalists regularly debated over what method would be most effective.[39] The first was called vitrail-tableau, which embraced the traditional processes of stained glass, but used a style that resembled oil paintings.[40] The other method, vitrail-archéologique, was created in study of medieval stained glass and used colored glass, more extensive lead lines, grisaille for shading, and a more unorganized pattern of lead webbing.[41]

Since the vitrail-archéologique revival was primarily in Florence and meant to awaken a dormant style,[42] churches like Orsanmichele mark a religious past with lasting material significance, even if the spaces are not always used as they once were. When a visitor in Florence engages with windows made hundreds of years apart that use similar styles and subjects, they form associations between medievalism and the more distant past. This implication is not necessarily positive or negative but changes the assumptions people have about stained glass, religion, time, and style. These revivals had different purposes than premodern churches did, but evolving styles allow new associations for the entire medium, regardless of the creation date.

Some contemporary artists are using stained glass to tell unique interpretations of Medieval Christian history. Kehinde Wiley's *Saint Adelaide* (2014) [Figure 13] uses iconographic features common to Christian stained glass, like a halo or a book, while other elements are meant to seem "out of place" or complicate time. For example, rather than a white saint in colorful robes, the panel depicts a Black man wearing clothing from the twenty-first century. We are supposed to interpret the person in the panel as a jarring anachronism; a man out of time, in the wrong place, and the wrong medium.[43] For Wiley, the panel criticizes the legacy of whiteness in Art History and the

Figure 13: Kehinde Wiley, *Saint Adelaide*, 2014, Stained glass window, 96x43.5 in, The Stained Glass Museum (ELYGM 2021:1) © The Stained Glass Museum.

oppression and omission of people of color, but it also shows how the past continues to interfere with current events.[44] While created in the contemporary era, this work evokes the legacy of Medieval and Renaissance histories as an interwoven, inescapable part of our present.

Wiley's work assumes each viewer will use a heterochronic perspective by considering how the stained glass panel complicates our assumptions about time and race. However, older stained glass windows can also invite messy interactions with temporality in less obvious ways. Windows from the premodern world do not stop existing or having spatial significance when a new era or revival begins. Many panels, especially religious ones, mark a sensorial, iconographically important story that continues to be interpreted as time passes. Unlike many other art forms, most stained glass windows are persistent features in evolving architectural spaces and function as a continuous part of sensorial interactions.

Conclusion

The Church of Orsanmichele's legacy of experiences are difficult to grasp in their entirety, but in this lack of a concrete definition we find the importance of heterochronic thinking and seeing. Orsanmichele's history is bound with the sensorial understandings of Christianity, the impact of weather conditions on the presentation of light, modern changes to the space, and the possibilities of infinite interpretations. It is not important to recreate a fifteenth century sense of materiality in a present-day representation of stained glass, but rather to accept the heterochrony of the medium

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itself. While all artworks can be understood in relation to their ever-changing temporalities and contexts, stained glass windows have a unique relationship to boundaries, senses, and time. The windows use light as a ritual that changes appearance slightly each day with different groups of viewers but still exists within the cycle of the sun. The medium defies singular and stagnant interpretations.

This compounding of approaches to stained glass does not exist in isolation but can be related across time and space. In the case of Orsanmichele, stained glass has and will continue transforming meaning over time; therefore, it is necessary to engage with their heterochronic nature in order to embrace the activeness of the medium. Light will be a constant mediator in experiences of stained glass windows regardless of the iconography, methodology, theological purposes, or location, and since light pays no regard to shifting times, it is the most important condition for understanding heterochrony. Light animates what lies in the windows in a ritualistic pattern of night to day and changes with the alignment of the sun, meaning all stained glass windows depend on it for creating the desired influences. In the fifteenth century, viewers at Orsanmichele desired a religious experience through light, while today, the light can reveal more about the church's significance as a historical monument. Discussing heterochrony provides a new, robust way of interpreting stained glass that is specific to the qualities of boundaries, sensorial effects, and temporality under the influence of ever-changing light.

Endnotes

[1] Keith Moxey, *Visual Time* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013), 2.
[2] Reneé Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy*, (PhD diss., Syracuse University, 1988), 4-5.
[3] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 5.
[4] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 6-8.
[5] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 11.
[6] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 12.
[7] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 20.
[8] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 16.
[9] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 21 and 27.
[10] Nancy R. Fabbri and Nina Rutenburg, "The Tabernacle of Orsanmichele in Context," The Art Bulletin 63, no. 3 (Sep. 1981): 390.
[11] Fabbri and Rutenburg, "The Tabernacle of Orsanmichele in Context," 391.
[12] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 27.
[13] Carl Brandon Strehlke, "Orsanmichele before and after the Niche Sculptures: Making Decisions about Art in Renaissance Florence," *Studies in the History of Art* 76 (2012): 24.
[14] Strehlke, "Orsanmichele before and after the Niche Sculptures," 30.
[15] Fred S. Kleiner and Christian J. Mamiya, "Humanism and the Allure of Antiquity: 15th Century Italian Art," in *Gardner's Art Through the Ages-Twelfth Edition*, (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2004), 580.
[16] Reneé Burnam, "Medieval Stained Glass Practice in Florence, Italy: The Case of Orsanmichele," *Journal of Glass Studies* 30 (1988): 77.
[17] Burnam, "Medieval Stained Glass Practice in Florence, Italy," 92-93.
[18] Diane Finiello Zervas, "Lorenzo Monaco, Lorenzo Ghiberti, and Orsanmichele: Part I," *The Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1064 (November 1991): 749.
[19] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 110.
[20] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 362-507.
[21] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 80-81.
[22] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 81.
[23] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 81-82.
[24] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 39.
[25] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 53.
[26] Burnam, "Medieval Stained Glass Practice in Florence, Italy," 92.
[27] Burnam, *The Stained Glass Windows of the Oratory of Orsanmichele in Florence, Italy,* 32.
[28] It is important to note that sensorial encounters were not limited to sight. Eric Palazzo explains in "Art, Liturgy, and the Five Senses in the Middle Ages" that sights, smells, words, art, and sounds link the visible to the invisible as a means of devotion. Eric Palazzo, "Art, Liturgy, and the Five Senses in the Middle Ages," *Viator* 41, no. 1 (2010): 30.
[29] Caroline W. Bynum, *Christian Materiality- An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, M.A.: MIT Press, 2015), 24.
[30] Gerda Panofsky-Soergel, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and Its Art Treasures: Second Edition*, ed. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 20.
[31] Panofsky-Soergel, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and Its Art Treasures*, 47-49.

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[32] Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronistic Renaissance* (Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2012): 18.
[33] Rebecca Leuchak, "Imagining and Imaging the Medieval: The Cloisters, Virtual Reality and Paradigm Shifts," *Historical Reflections / Reflexions Historiques* 23, no. 3 (Fall 1997): 376-377.
[34] Leuchak, "Imagining and Imaging the Medieval," 376-77.
[35] Recent work by Bissera Pentcheva in "Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics" has emphasized the significance of a phenomenological approach to sacred space and the ways in which this approach is made difficult by our current experiences of these spaces as museums. Similar to Orsanmichele, Hagia Sophia once functioned as a museum, meaning the times of day one traditionally experienced the space were different from what they would have been in the sixth century. Pentcheva experimented with sound and light at periods of transition, like sunrise and sunset, that aligned with offices of the day and the rites of the Eucharistic liturgy. To do this, she had to be in the space before and after the museum's hours of operation to get a full understanding of the church's sensorial processes. In anticipation of criticism about her work's desire to recreate the past, Pentcheva states, "my video is not a reconstruction of the sixth-century interior but a record of how light affects reflective surfaces. It directs the attention of the modern viewer to the ephemeral, which lies at the core of Hagia Sophia's aesthetic" (95). This practice of engaging with greater multitudes of experience does not need to recreate the past to be useful. Pentcheva's approach helps the viewer understand pieces of the past, but not to create an exact replica of the past. Instead, she directs them toward imagining a dynamic, changing version of the church today. Bissera V. Pentcheva, "Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics," *Gesta* 50, no. 2 (2011): 95.
[36] James Johnson, "The Stained Glass Theories of Viollet-Le-Duc," The Art Bulletin 45, no. 2 (June., 1963): 128.
[37] Pentcheva, "Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics," 101.
[38] Stephen Knott, "Concours des vitraux de Jeanne d'Arc: The Multiple Ways of Materializing the Past in Late Nineteenth-Century French Stained Glass," *West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture* 21, no. 2 (Fall-Winter 2014): 193
[39] Knott, "Concours des vitraux de Jeanne d'Arc," 198.
[40] Knott, "Concours des vitraux de Jeanne d'Arc," 198.
[41] Nancy Thompson, "The State of Stained Glass in 19th-Century Italy: Ulisse De Matteis and the vitrail archéologique." *Journal of Glass Studies* 52 (2010): 228.
[42] Thompson, "The State of Stained Glass in 19th-Century Italy," 218.
[43] While there were important Black figures from the Christian tradition included in medieval art programs, such as Saint Maurice or the Biblical Queen of Sheba, it is important to acknowledge the legacies of Whiteness in the historiography of the Middle Ages to interpret the typical imagery in medieval stained glass. In "Blackness, Whiteness, and the Idea of Race in Medieval European Art," Pamela Patton explains that medieval people understand human groups not only by skin color or physical appearance, but rather by language, religion, habits, and as generalized communities. On the other hand, Blackness in art was used to represent a geographical distance or foreignness to White Europeans. Depictions of dark skin were often meant to convey negative attributes rather than depict particular ethnicities or groups. Therefore, while the associations of Blackness in the Middle Ages were racist in tendency, Patton argues, they were not understood as racial in the way we define it today. The White figures common in medieval church stained glass were projecting values of purity or authority or purity, as opposed to the meanings of blackness. Pamela Patton, "Blackness, Whiteness, and the Idea of Race in Medieval European Art," in *Whose Middle Ages?: Teachable Moments*

for an Ill-Used Past, ed. Andrew Albin, Mary C. Erler, Thomas O'Donnell, Nicholas L. Paul, and Nina Rowe (New York City, N.Y.: Fordham University Press, 2019), 154-165. See also, Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in European Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[44] In addition to the current-day considerations of medieval stained glass, 20th-century stained glass panels related to the "Lost Cause of the Confederacy" also have complicated interactions with race and history. The "Lost Cause" is an extremist ideology that celebrates the Confederacy's actions to support state rights as heroic while ignoring the brutal realities of slavery. Confederate monuments were erected by "Lost Cause" supporters in the 20th century to show their beliefs, but are now widely protested. However, Larissa Tracy notes in "Fascism and Chivalry in the Confederate Monuments of Richmond" that stained glass windows, such as the windows commissioned by the Daughters of the Confederacy at the University of Alabama, are also connected to this issue. This example shows that stained glass has not only been used as a medium for religious devotion but has also been wielded as a way to depict political beliefs and white supremacy. Larissa Tracy, "Fascism and Chivalry in the Confederate Monuments of Richmond," last modified June 11, 2020. https://www.publicmedievalist.com/confederate-monuments/.

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