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39. Ibid., 535.
40. Charlotte Townsend-Gault, "Circulating Aboriginality," *Journal of Material Culture* 9, no. 2 (2004): 183, doi: 10.1177/1359183504044372
41. Ibid.
42. Medina, "High Curios," 30.
43. Ibid.
44. Townsend-Gault, "Circulating Aboriginality," 189.
45. Ibid.
46. Foster et al., *Art Since 1900*, 431.
47. Townsend-Gault, "Circulating Aboriginality," 189.
48. Brian Eno and David Byrne. (Vancouver, BC, Vancouver Art Gallery, 2016). Exhibition Labeling.
49. "Mutant" (Vancouver, BC: Vancouver Art Gallery, 2016). Exhibition Labeling. The Washington Red Skins football team comes to mind. In Canada, the Canadian Football League's Edmonton Eskimos are a prominent example.
50. Medina, "High Curios," 30.
51. Schlesinger, Joel. "Residential Schools on Trial: A UN-Affiliated Tribunal could Find Canada Guilty of Cultural Genocide." *British Columbia Report* Jun 29 1998: 27. ProQuest. 21 Feb. 2017. The Truth and Reconciliation commission found that the goal of the residential school system, which forced Indigenous children to attend Christian schools, was a "cultural genocide" through forced assimilation. For more on this, see "Fearing social and cultural death: genocide and elimination in settler colonial Canada—an Indigenous perspective" Wildcat, Matthew. 2015. Fearing social and cultural death: Genocide and elimination in settler colonial canada-an indigenous perspective. *Journal of Genocide Research* 17 (4): 391-409.

SHINING LIGHT ON THEFT: THE DUALITY OF GOLD IN JOY LYNN DAVIS'S *REMEMBERING THE LOST*

MARCUS PRASAD

THE THEFT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE has evolved immensely throughout recent history, becoming increasingly more nuanced in its violent stripping of significant religious objects. Nepal is one of many nations that have fallen victim to this looting, thereby devaluing the products of its traditional and national heritage. As these sacred objects increase in scarcity, attention to the issue has grown. Capturing the interest of American visual artist Joy Lynn Davis, the focus of her massive project *Remembering the Lost* is centered around the problem of art theft in the Kathmandu Valley. While Davis sees herself as repatriating the stolen artifacts through her ongoing oeuvre, this essay will argue the ways in which her approach, specifically her use of gold, critically and dialectically engages with the significance of Nepal's historic monuments, as well as with the processes of commodification that art theft entails. Throughout my analysis, I will illustrate how Davis participates within these discourses of art and spirituality—ultimately to encourage further concern for this issue and to incite reactions against widespread apathy about art theft in Nepal.

Over the past fifty years, art and religious objects of Nepal have been routinely extracted from their sacred contexts and the communities that have built identity around their forms. Their significance has oftentimes been reduced through their export to the international art market, consequently transforming, and oftentimes inhibiting, the experience of worship. Through this act, the sacred items become objects of desire for Western consumption at the cost of native cultural integrity. As the removal of these objects continued to the end of the century, Jürgen Schick has provided a visual record of the artifacts with an astute

indictment of the international art market in his book *Gods Are Leaving the Country: Art Theft from Nepal*. Schick's archival approach offers photographs of the sculptures before they were stolen juxtaposed against photographs of the empty cell from which the objects were lifted. This contrast of presence and absence creates a sense of urgency, attempting to raise genuine concern regarding theft. He brings attention to the monetized value of these objects, which overrides their deeper sociocultural meaning, and how their alleged market value separates the object from its epitomized culture and sacred traditions.[1] Blame is directed towards the nefarious combination of governmental indifference regarding the protection of artistic and cultural heritage and the alienation of the general public from the sacred significance that these objects represent.[2] Jürgen Schick's research represents a discursive analysis on art theft, taking into account the delicate nuances of site-object relationships to Nepali spirituality.

The vulnerability of Nepal's religious sites to cultural theft becomes increasingly more evident given the apathy and general lack of interest on behalf of the government in protecting religious and artistic tradition. While most attempts to secure and safeguard objects are neglected by officials, responsibility is consequently given to communities and their individual members. Most communities lack the necessary resources and therefore fail to balance effective protection from theft with maintenance of the aesthetic tradition that signals sacred ambience. Items are frequently displayed in open public spaces of city squares and outdoor temples, exposing them to the threat of theft by those looking to sell the objects on the art market. Locals therefore fasten chains, create grates, or install iron bars to protect their votary objects. These methods have however proven ineffective when faced with a determined thief, and in turn affect the aesthetic and ambient essence that the objects' setting conceives.[3] Given the circumstance, blame cannot be placed on the limited preservation efforts of locals. Schick reasons that the larger problem of art theft lies not only in the neglect of the government, but more generally at a societal level due to the rapid modernization of Nepal culture. Societal transformation encroached rapidly upon the region, and its citizens have become intoxicated with the influx of Western technological influences to the degree that they have become alienated from their own heritage. This creates a disconnect that concedes little concern towards the theft of cultural objects, reducing value towards tradition and the historicity of the nation.[4] Taking advantage of this collective cultural amnesia, the international art market infiltrates the vulnerable community to extract and traffic its sacred objects for monetary gain.

After the trafficking of drugs and arms, the most common form of trafficking is that of cultural objects at an international scale.[5] Nepalese statuary and sculpture are unjustifiably recontextualized as a result, neglecting their sociocultural value. Almost all antique Nepalese religious monuments found in Western museums or private collections are in fact stolen property.[6] With the increasing interest in "Oriental" art upon the discovery of many fifth-century objects within the Kathmandu Valley throughout the last two centuries, idol-lifting has become "demand-driven" by Western collectors interested in their unfamiliar forms.[7] Attempts to smuggle items see no financial restriction, and unfortunately no legal reparation on behalf of the nation. Sophie Vigneron explains that this lawful neglect is a result of states being bound by the principle of sovereignty, according to which control is limited to their territory. Trafficking therefore easily transcends borders and becomes out of the reach of national control upon entering international trade markets.[8] Sophie Vigneron elaborates that this system of governing within one's own territory encourages the looting of cultural objects at an international scale and does not provide an efficient way of either punishing or combatting the ever-growing market for these unlawfully excavated items. Regulating this trade cannot exclusively lie on source nations since these crimes extend to a network at an international level.[9] This ineffective legal system, combined with a sense of generalized apathy in the modern

Joy Lynn Davis. *15th Century Lakshimi Narayan, Patan, Nepal (sculpture stolen in 1984, auctioned internationally in 1990).* Acrylic with 23 kt. gold on cotton rag paper, 40 x 30 inches, 2013.

age, has facilitated the easy theft of these objects.

Monuments and sculptures convey the religious life of Nepal, while the careless attitude of officials and locals reflects the general lack of continuity in the living heritage of Nepalese culture.[10] Within this sociopolitical turmoil, the artistic project of Joy Lynn Davis synthesizes the established problems regarding art theft. Davis's ongoing oeuvre *Remembering the Lost* responds to the cultural amnesia wrought by modernization, persuasively bringing attention to the severity that the absent objects entails. By recreating the space through representation with an astute use of gold, Davis dually restores importance and pride to the religious site, while raising awareness about the reprehensible commodification of these objects on the international art market.

Based in Santa Barbara, California, Joy Lynn Davis is an artist whose practice focuses on painting and digital art. She completed a residency at the Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre from 2012 to 2013. Frequenting Nepal for her project, she incorporates her knowledge of Tibetan and Nepali languages, history, and religions into her artistic practice. As founder and president of the Himalayan Art and Cultural Heritage project, her keen interest in working to protect the artistic integrity of Nepal and to discourage illicit art trafficking is clear, and largely informs her extensive painting project *Remembering the Lost*.[11] Providing an ongoing portfolio of interwoven paintings, interviews, and documentation, Davis explores the effects resulting from the absence of religious art objects on the community. Heavily influenced by the efforts of Lain Singh Bangdel's *Lost Images of Nepal*, and Jürgen Schick's *Gods are Leaving the Country: Art Theft from Nepal* to document the looting, Davis visits the sites of theft and records the memories shared by locals to inform her work.[12] She then carefully and realistically paints the sacred sites where the monuments were originally placed, and through reference to historic photographs, reinserts a representation of the stolen sculptures back into their sites. Accompanying each painting are informational panels exhibiting historical photographs of the stolen pieces, current photographs of the location, and other information regarding the theft of the objects alongside her collected excerpts of interviews with devotees and members of the community.[13]

Davis offers a representation of the sacred space as though the object had never been removed; however, her approach can be extended to a more in-depth analysis. What is poignant about her work is the choice to depict the absent monuments in their original setting with twenty-three karat gold. According to her artist statement, her choice to depict the pieces in gold provides a "visual language revealing which sculptures have been stolen and references the commodification of the sacred through its associations with both wealth and divinity."[14] Approaching representation in this way addresses the religious importance of these sculptures while simultaneously speaking to the commodity value placed onto these objects by the international art market. The use of gold creates a duality: it offers a perspective that operates between an understanding of tradition and necessity to preserve, as well as a visualization of monetary value through theft. Through its geohistorical connotations in Nepal, we can elucidate the ways in which *Remembering the Lost* dialectically references cultural heritage and the processes of commodification.

Throughout the history of religious Nepalese structures, the use of gold in monuments, sculptures, architecture, and ritual has been understood as a means to bestow importance on worshipped deities. Its representational power could also signify the success and prominence of a religious structure, acting as a visual distinction from other monasteries that omitted an extensive use of gilding. The Kwa Baha Temple in Patan is an example of a lavishly decorated monastery employing gilt metals and gold in its architecture, as well as sculptures that are housed within it. Identified as having the largest initiated membership of any Newar Buddhist monastery, the Kwa Baha is an important shrine for the Patan community as a whole, and an essential part of Tibetan Buddhists's pilgrimage routes through the valley.[15] The significance of this monastery

merits its honorific Sanskrit-derived title *Hiranya-varna-mahavihara*, meaning "the golden-coloured great monastery," which equates gold to the importance of the monastery itself.[16] The extensive use of metals serves the beautification of this temple, which in turn signifies the prominence of the site.

Further, the ritual offering of gold to deities by royal figures elevates its associated religious value.

The Painting of Taleju temple in Kathmandu depicting King Pratapa Malla from 1664 illustrates the royal *tuladana* ceremony. Described as "the gift of the balance," a ritual centred around the spiritual value of gold, is performed by the king for his sick son. Weighed against a plenitude of precious items including silver, pearls, and gold, the equivalent of these items to his son's weight was then offered to the goddess Taleju in order to improve the health of the young prince.[17] Through this ceremonial practice, gold is given an alchemic power, acting as an object of divine exchange for the miraculous health of the prince. In addition, the painted representation of the ceremony employs gold alongside pigment onto a cotton surface, creating a visceral visualization of the centrality of gold in this ritual. Acknowledging these examples of religious art making, it is difficult to detach Davis's use of gold in her paintings from the historic background that the material carries in Nepal. The use of gold effectively serves to imbue her work with cultural significance in order to reinforce the sense of urgency the absent monuments entail. Reinserting a gold representation of the stolen objects into the setting in which the theft took place reassesses their religious value through an attribution to the history of Nepali gilt work. This approach can also be understood as an attempt to reconnect apathetic citizens of Nepal to the cultural objects of which they have been stripped, highlighting the missing objects and reaffirming their extensive historical significance.

The use of gold to represent stolen objects in *Remembering the Lost* is not limited to an interpretation exclusive to the history of Nepali gilt work. Davis's particular approach offers a duality of meaning: an allusion to Nepal's votive history, as well as a commentary on the commodification of these objects. The removal of sacred statuary significantly reduces the religious ambience of the pieces to mere objects of exchange on the international art market. Her choice to represent the absent monuments in gold therefore addresses this process of commodification, referencing the monetary value of the material itself as a desired object. Investigations into these thefts have uncovered evidence of stolen art and antiques being sold to an art dealer, and then sold back into the legitimate market.[18] Symptomatic of theft, the sacred objects are given monetary value upon entering this system of exchange. Through this flow of stolen art from the black market to the legitimate market, exchange value overrides the sacred to satisfy the consumption of these objects by Western galleries and private collectors.[19] Arjun Appadurai makes much of the ontology of commodities and their nature through exchange; he identifies commodities provisionally as objects of economic worth, whose value is endowed by demand. Within this infrastructure, exchange is not understood as a by-product of the mutual valuation of objects, but rather conceived as its source.[20]

In understanding this Western system and how it embeds itself within the conception of an object, the notion of loss of sacrosanctity upon entering the market context becomes more apparent. The value of objects in regards to cultural significance becomes irrelevant, and is now appraised primarily on the capitalist logic of exchange. Davis uses gold to equate stolen objects to the value of gold itself as a rate of exchange. Operating in a way that apprehends the value of objects through demand, the international art market completely recontextualizes the cultural significance of religious monuments through commodification. The presence of gold in Davis's representations endows the object with the monetary value of gold itself, which extends the commentary from an allusion to the religious past of Nepal to the use of gold as currency.

Davis creates a dialectic of meaning in her painted representations. By splitting the significance of gold

into discourses of the religious and the commodity, she effectively raises awareness of both the issue of cultural theft and the perniciously reductive perspective with which market operations subsume sacred objects. Gregory Price Grieve elucidates the way in which meaning is connected to an associated material component, and compares it to how spoken language relies on the human body and air. Signification can therefore be communicated only through physical objects of transmission, a substance or thing that carries its essential meaning.[21] Language cannot exist without the air from the human body, as meaning cannot exist without an object to bear it. This understanding regarding the dependence of religious practice on the material is essential to the awareness that Davis encourages in *Remembering the Lost*: stressing the absence of religious monuments and their necessity to religious practice, she works to eliminate the apathy of citizens and government officials towards this national crisis, exposing the crucial nature of the material in contributing to the cultural significance of a space. Her use of gold, elevating the religious importance of stolen objects while simultaneously exposing their monetization through the market value of gold itself, attempts to inspire citizens to reconsider the care for their cultural heritage by uncovering the unjust operations of the international art market by emphasizing the necessity of physical vessels in the transmission of religious significance.

By synthesizing a multitude of sociopolitical discourses, Joy Lynn Davis effectively raises concerns regarding the state of the religious monuments and statuary of Nepal. She creates a computerized network that allows viewers to track her progress in depicting all of the sites that have become victims of theft, illustrating the enormous extent to which art theft has proliferated in the region. Given Nepal's lacklustre political and economic reaction to cultural looting, Davis asserts that simply "remembering the lost" is not entirely sufficient. Throughout the duration of her project, she continuously exposes institutional and communal apathy towards this issue, with hopes to encourage further initiative in the mending of this problem. Her project acts as a visual repatriation of the unjust looting of religious objects, while her approaches address further notions of religious history in the the context of the more contemporary commodification processes through market logic. The use of gold embeds *Remembering the Lost* with a degree of historicity and commodity discourse that expands to an international level, opening up the potential for change, and for these objects to not only be remembered, but also to be returned to their originally intended settings.

Notes

1. Prayag Raj Sharma, "Review: Jürgen Schick: Gods Are Leaving the Country: Art Theft From Nepal," *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2001): 133.
2. Jürgen Schick, *Gods Are Leaving the Country: Art Theft From Nepal* (Thailand: White Orchid Press, 1997), 66.
3. Sharma, "Review: Jurgen Schick: Gods Are Leaving the Country: Art Theft From Nepal," 132.
4. Schick, *Gods Are Leaving the Country*, 66.
5. Sophie Vigneron, "Protecting Cultural Objects: Enforcing the Illicit Export of Foreign Cultural Objects," in *Art, Cultural Heritage and the Market: Ethical and Legal Issues*, ed. Valentina Vadi, Hildegard E.G.S. Schneider (New York: Springer, 2014), 117.
6. Madhu Raman Acharya, *Nepal Culture Shift!: Reinventing Culture in the Himalayan Kingdom* (Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2002), 123.
7. Ibid.
8. Vigneron, "Protecting Cultural Objects," 119.
9. Ibid, 120.
10. Acharya, *Nepal Culture Shift!*, 124.
11. Joy Lynn Davis, "Narratives of Faith and Memory: Remembering the Lost Sculptures of Kathmandu," accessed November 12, 2016, http://rememberingthelost.com/about-the-artist.
12. Sanjib Chaudhary, "American Artist Returns Stolen Sculptures to Nepal With Her Paintbrush," accessed November 12, 2016, https://globalvoices.org/2015/04/26/american-artist-returns-stolen-sculptures-to-nepal-with-her-paintbrush.

13. "Exhibition of Art and Research "Remembering the Lost Sculptures of Kathmandu,'" accessed November 12, 2016, http://un.org.np/headlines/exhibition-art-and-research.
14. Davis, "Narratives of Faith and Memory," http://rememberingthelost.com/about-the-artist.
15. Michael Hutt, *Nepal: A Guide to the Art and Architecture of the Kathmandu Valley* (Boston: Shambhala, 1994), 151.
16. Ibid, 150.
17. Anne Vergati, "Gods and Monuments in Late Malla Period Paintings," in *Nepal: Old Images, New Insights*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2004), 45.
18. Joshua Knelman, "A Brief History of Art Theft," *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol 118, No. 2 (2011): 227.
19. Knelman, "A Brief History of Art Theft," 233.
20. Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 4.
21. Gregory Price Grieve, "The Practice of Everyday Religion in Bhaktapur, Nepal," Doctoral thesis, University of Chicago, 128.

NEW WOMEN AND MODERN GIRLS: THE STATIC TYPOLOGY OF MODERN MANHUA WOMEN

SYDNEY MARSHALL

FEMALE EXISTENCE IN 1930s Shanghai expected allegiance to one of just two opposing identities: the New Woman or the Modern Girl. Anxiety surrounding the recent diffusion of tradition and modernity had divided the female identity into the rural, traditional mother, and the frivolous, contemporary socialite.[1] The propagation of these identities occurred largely by the increase and popularity of accessible mass print material—a decidedly modern technology largely controlled by men. Illustrated magazines such as *Modern Sketch* and its localized predecessor *Shanghai Sketch* were cheaply made and widely accessible, and thus, with their inclusions of imagery depicting the role of the cosmopolitan female, helped facilitate negative stereotypes of women. The Modern Girl was a frivolous, emotional, and selfish figure, likely because of her radically contemporary position and lifestyle. When contrasted to the canonized proletariat New Woman, these negative depictions multiplied exponentially. The prevalence of both reveals a greater cultural phenomenon in which masculine anxieties surrounding modern transition are projected upon female figures, despite some attempt by the female population to challenge these archetypes.

The cultural shift was sparked during a brief (1911 to 1949) Chinese Republican period which presented a new vision of China. A concession of the First Opium War implemented in 1842 oversaw the opening of a number of treaty ports,[2] in turn allowing some coastal cities to develop a Eurocentric cosmopolitan atmosphere at as result of an influx of international cultural material. These changes were most visible in what was then China's largest city, Shanghai. Architecture was Westernized, cultural values were