

The image features a dark green, textured background with a highly ornate, symmetrical border in gold leaf. The border is composed of intricate, swirling acanthus-like scrolls and floral motifs, with small decorative finials at the top and bottom centers. The text "JAMES TISSOT" is centered within this decorative frame.

JAMES  
TISSOT

# JAMES TISSOT

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WITH

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# THE RESURRECTION OF PAINTING: TISSOT AND CINEMA

VALENTINE ROBERT

**K**nown for their innovative framing, documentary detail, and spectacular appeal, the works of James Tissot have had a profound impact on cinema. *The Life of Christ*, Tissot's series of 350 watercolors illustrating the New Testament, has been of particular interest to filmmakers. Begun in 1886 with extensive campaigns of study, sketching, and photography in the Holy Land, Tissot's biblical illustrations were both exhibited as a pictorial cycle—at first in 1894 in Paris, then in London, the United States, and Canada—and published as a book (see Buron, this volume). Commonly referred to as the “Tissot Bible,” the published edition of *The Life of Christ*—which initially appeared in French in 1897, and in English in 1898—combines images with excerpts of the Gospels (selected and harmonized into one continuous narrative), historical and artistic commentary, and plot developments added by Tissot based on sources such as apocryphal texts, Jewish writings and testimonials, and archaeological and ethnographical research.<sup>1</sup> But it was cinema that perhaps offered Tissot's illustrations their richest “remediation.”<sup>2</sup> Not only have the compositions given rise to numerous film reenactments, faithful even to the tableau vivant, but also Tissot's artistic approach as a whole has been a source of inspiration for generations of filmmakers who have depicted the Passion of Christ.

## TABLEAUX

Since the medium of film emerged, at the turn of the twentieth century, many of the movies dedicated to the life of Christ have explicitly acknowledged the influence of Tissot's religious illustrations.<sup>3</sup> The early film *From the Manger to the Cross* (Sidney Olcott, 1912) was so closely based on the painter's work that the art historian Cyrille Sciamia claimed to “have the sense that Tissot himself was behind the camera.”<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the film includes nearly twenty tableaux vivants—exact reenactments, down to the smallest detail—of Tissot's biblical compositions.<sup>5</sup> The Annunciation scene illustrates the precision with which Olcott re-creates Tissot's sets, props, and costumes: the blind arcades and their checkered cladding, the carpets, the cushions and drapes—all materialize in front of the camera (figs. 65–66; pl. 144). This tableau vivant also demonstrates how the mystical aspect of Tissot's iconography—in this instance, the supernatural

effect of the angel—is finely translated into a cinematic play of lighting and special effects using the technique of superimposition.

Olcott's experimentation with lighting also led to “improved” tableaux vivants—for example, in the reenactment of Tissot's *The Youth of Jesus* (ca. 1886–1894; Brooklyn Museum), enhanced by the addition of cast shadows. In the filmmaker's version, young Jesus carries a wooden board that projects the shadow of the cross at his feet, making the prefiguration of the crucifixion even more striking. Olcott even more drastically appropriated some of Tissot's other illustrations, such as *The Vision of Saint Joseph* (ca. 1886–1894; Brooklyn Museum), where the angel is transposed into a dazzling light beam. Nevertheless, the filmmaker's fidelity to the painter remained consistent and is apparent from the opening scene of *From the Manger to the Cross*, which restages Tissot's *The Holy Virgin in Her Youth* (ca. 1886–1894; Brooklyn Museum) so faithfully that the tableau vivant has been considered a primer for considering Olcott's film as “almost like a motion picture version of Tissot's *The Life of Christ*.”<sup>6</sup> Olcott's film is not an isolated case; Alice Guy-Blaché's *The Birth, the Life, and the Death of Christ* (*La vie du Christ*, 1906) and Giulio Antamoro's *Christus* (1916) also contain many scenes modeled on works by Tissot.<sup>7</sup> And from *Intolerance* (D. W. Griffith, 1916) to *Redemption* (*Redenzione*, Carmine Gallone, 1919) to *Ben-Hur* (William Wyler, 1959), numerous biblical films have imitated at least one of Tissot's compositions for a scene.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to inspiring direct reenactments, Tissot's biblical illustrations may also have played a less comprehensive but nonetheless substantial referential role for specific filmic images. The raising of Lazarus in *The Life and Passion of Jesus Christ* (*La vie et la passion de Jésus-Christ*, Alexandre Promio, 1898) features the same frontal staging as Tissot's raising of Jarius's daughter. The painter's complex architectural setting of the third denial of Saint Peter, featuring interweaving arcades and colonnades, can be recognized in Ferdinand Zecca and Lucien Nonguet's *The Life and Passion of Jesus Christ* (*Vie et passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, 1907); his depictions of the rocky depths of Lazarus's tomb are reflected in *The Raising of Lazarus* (*La résurrection de Lazare*, Honoré Le Sablais, 1910) and *The King of Kings* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1927); and his solemn

portrayal of the face-to-face encounter between Pilate and the Man of Sorrows is echoed in Franco Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977).

## FRAMES

The prime feature—often called “protocinematic”<sup>9</sup>—of Tissot’s Bible is the sequential nature of the illustrations, which depict the book’s events in an almost continuous temporal flow, using various points of view. Traditionally subdivided into the fourteen Stations of the Cross, the Passion of Christ as depicted by Tissot develops over more than three hundred compositions, resulting in a work that unfolds, like a film, “frame by frame.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1906, films were typically broken down not by shots but rather by tableaux, since each set was traditionally filmed in one take, with a wide, static frame. Tissot’s Bible, however, inspired Alice Guy-Blaché to re-frame her sets.<sup>11</sup> Twice—both times influenced by Tissot’s use of multiple points of view of the same scene—the shots in *The Birth, the Life, and the Death of Christ* change within the same tableau. The miracle of the veil of Veronica is thus augmented by a precursory “cut-in shot” that isolates Saint Veronica’s frontal display of the holy face of Jesus, an effect found in Tissot’s two-frame depiction of the same scene.<sup>12</sup> And while the flagellation of Christ and the *Ecce Homo* take place successively in a common décor—scrupulously modeled on Tissot, who depicts the setting from a half-dozen viewpoints—Guy-Blaché also varies their framing, changing the shot size.

It is no accident that Olcott’s *From the Manger to the Cross*, the film most influenced by Tissot’s *The Life of Christ*, was the first film about Jesus that broke with the cinematic form of individual tableaux, varying the angles and presenting all of the scenes in a continuous fashion. This way of filming Evangelical events—one reviewer described the movie as “linked together in one chain . . . from the ‘Manger to the Cross’”—was immediately hailed as an effective means of matching the ambition of Tissot, who, in seeking to “link together those great occasions which earlier artists had only depicted separately,” was said to have been “waiting for the advent of the wonders of the cinematograph.”<sup>13</sup>

Still, the painter’s “editing” and “framing” remain richer than that of Olcott’s—particularly in the treatment of the Crucifixion, which in Tissot’s work marks the culmination of his use of multiple points of view. For that scene, Tissot covers all viewing angles over the course of twenty pictures, revolving around the cross, cropping it, and even adopting the perspective of Jesus himself (see pls. 151–152). To attain such diversity, cinema would have to wait for the virtuosic editing of *The King of Kings*, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (Martin Scorsese, 1988), or *The Passion of the Christ* (Mel Gibson, 2004). Nonetheless, Olcott’s method of depicting the crucified Christ with shots taken below, behind, and very far from the cross was groundbreaking and would have great cinematic impact.<sup>14</sup> Even the intertitles that punctuate these shifts in framing were directly inspired by the texts of Tissot’s Bible, which Olcott truly considered as “a kind of preliminary script, a storyboard.”<sup>15</sup>



FIGURE 65  
James Tissot, *The Annunciation*, ca. 1886–1894  
(pl. 144). Opaque watercolor over graphite on paper,  
6¾ × 8½ in. (17 × 21.7 cm). Brooklyn Museum,  
Purchased by public subscription, oo.159.16



FIGURE 66  
Promotional photograph of Sidney Olcott’s *From  
the Manger to the Cross*, 1912. Private collection



FIGURE 67  
James Tissot, *The Procession in the Streets of Jerusalem*, ca. 1886–1894. Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 6 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (22.5 × 17.6 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Purchased by public subscription, oo.159.194

FIGURE 68  
Film still from D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance*, 1916



## DOCUMENTS

Filmmakers not only used Tissot as an artistic reference they also saw in him “a way of attaining the authentic imprimatur of history.”<sup>16</sup> One defining attribute of Tissot’s religious works was his travel to the Holy Land, which permeated the images with an exoticism seen as authentically biblical.<sup>17</sup> In addition, his compositions were accompanied by “notes and explanatory drawings” presented in a scientific manner.<sup>18</sup> Whereas Olcott followed Tissot’s example by going so far as to shoot his own story of Christ in the Holy Land—an approach that was deemed an extraordinary sign of historical authenticity—Guy-Blaché made use of Tissot’s *The Life of Christ* as “ideal documentation.”<sup>19</sup> For *Intolerance*, Griffith referred to it in a similar way, listing Tissot in his intertitles as an authority on a par with the greatest scholars of biblical history.<sup>20</sup>

Not all films about Jesus enact proper tableaux vivants of Tissot’s illustrations, but many of them include one or more visual details from the Tissot Bible—long considered a veritable encyclopedia for representations of the era, and used as an iconographic repertory in film production since its beginnings. Whether recognized in a film’s settings (such as the enfilade of the arches in *Intolerance* [figs. 67–68]), the costumes and accessories (such as specific earthenware jars, lamps, or flower garlands), the ropes used to raise the cross, the trilingual titulus, or the hat-like crown of thorns that covers Jesus’s head, it is hard to verify the historical accuracy of these details. But through Tissot, who itemized and popularized them in his Bible, these features have become referential in film history.

## SPECTACLE

If the film world immediately seized on Tissot’s images, it is because the artist himself had intended them for reproduction and spectacle. When he first exhibited *The Life of Christ* in 1894 at the Salon du Champ-de-Mars in Paris, Tissot had not even yet finished the series. As soon as he had, he converted it into an international sensation, propagating his work in a myriad of books, using the most sophisticated lithographic processes.<sup>21</sup> Tissot went so far as to display the pages of his Bible side by side with the original watercolors, pioneering a new type of exhibition, dedicated less

to the paintings themselves and more to the spectacular quality of their reproduction.<sup>22</sup>

Tissot’s compositions even spawned by-products such as postcards, prayer cards, catechism pictures, and stained-glass windows,<sup>23</sup> with the magic lantern becoming a favored means of dissemination.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, as early as 1898, *The Life of Christ* had become an onscreen phenomenon in which the paintings were projected, enlarged, and illuminated, enhanced by added commentary, dialogue, and music.<sup>25</sup> In the magic-lantern slides format, the works’ immersive power was magnified and their sequential logic perfected: the images flowed in succession, almost filmic. Although no current research has uncovered a concrete link between Tissot and the emerging cinematograph, he is known to have been involved with at least one of these numerous lantern-slide screenings of his works.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, it is no exaggeration to consider Tissot’s display practices as akin to that of an early cinema exhibitor. Already in 1890, when he unveiled the first compositions of his *Christ* series at home to a circle of friends, he did not hesitate to present a full spectacle. He successively presented 125 paintings while playing with great intensity the role of the narrator—a key figure in lantern-slide shows who would become essential to early film screenings.<sup>27</sup> Finally, right after having published them, Tissot took his images on tour. *The Life of Christ* became a traveling paid public exhibition, reaching mass audiences throughout North America in the years 1898–1900. These exhibitions filled the same halls as many nascent film shows, which likewise toured at that time.<sup>28</sup> The tableaux vivants by Guy-Blaché and Olcott may thus have been projected on the very same walls where Tissot’s original paintings had once hung, almost as if the paintings themselves had come to life. Having followed the artist’s compositions line for line, his pictorial narrative frame by frame, and his production and promotional itineraries step by step—from the Holy Land to the New World—cinema, ultimately, would grant Tissot’s work its most perfect resurrection.

theories became so prevalent that a response was posted in the church: "Contrary to fanciful allegations in a recent best-selling novel, this is not a vestige of a pagan temple. No such temple ever existed in this place. . . . No mystical notion can be derived from this instrument of astronomy except to acknowledge that God the Creator is the master of time." Drummond 2006, 71.

32 Saint-Sulpice features in Joris-Karl Huysmans's novel about Satanism in nineteenth-century France, *The Damned* (*Là-Bas*, 1891).

33 It is not known if Tissot actually ever made this painting; there is no image of it in Tissot's photographic albums of his art. Misfeldt 1982, 8. According to Misfeldt, "It was the custom in Paris at that time for fashionable women, mainly opera singers, to perform at mass. The painting entitled *Musique Sacrée* depicted a prima donna and a nun rehearsing a duet in an organ loft with another nun accompanying them at the organ." Misfeldt 1971, 236.

34 Levy 1898, 954, 956.

35 In his introduction to *The Life of Christ*, Tissot wrote, "I also consulted Catherine Emmerich, whose visions, generally so precise, impressed me greatly." Tissot 1899, xi. Emmerich's visions were first published in German in 1833, with the French translation published in 1854. Emmerich 2003. A notebook found at the Château de Buillon contains Tissot's notes on the gospels and on Emmerich's corresponding visions. Collection Frédéric Mantion.

36 Cleveland Moffett recounted that Tissot "had gone with the pilgrims to Lourdes, to ask a benediction on his effort." Moffett 1899, 390. For more on Lourdes, see Harris 1999. See also Mongeau 2017. Tissot also reportedly planned an unrealized series about another seer of visions, Joan of Arc. Bastard 1906, 277–278.

37 Stead 1897, 178.

38 Sherard 1895.

39 Shaw 1895.

40 Tissot 2009, 39. Tissot earned 100,000 dollars from the United States tour admission fees alone.

41 This amounts to approximately 1,800,000 dollars in 2019. The acquisition of these works was heralded by the president of the Brooklyn Museum's board of trustees, A. Augustus Healy, as so important that "the popular interest in them will be permanent and that the galleries . . . which will contain them, will be the most crowded of the building." Tissot 2009, 37, 39. The museum later acquired a sketchbook for *The Life of Christ* series (accession number: 1992.20), which reveals how Tissot worked out his ideas in squares that he painted over in red when completed.

42 New York 1982. Tissot writes about this process to Maurice de Brunhoff, publisher of the Old Testament series; the letters are held in the Fondation Custodia / Collection Frits Lugt, Paris.

43 Collection Frédéric Mantion.

44 I wish to thank Krystyna Matyjaszkiewicz, who first brought these designs to my attention. Matyjaszkiewicz suggests that auditorium seating and a stage on the lower level could have been for dioramas or lantern-slide presentations. Krystyna Matyjaszkiewicz, email to author, October 12, 2015. Bastard wrote that Tissot wanted to make a giant

panorama for the 1900 exposition, but that this ambition remained unrealized. Bastard 1906, 277–278.

45 Jopling 1925, 61.

46 The portrait is accompanied by the text: "Ye who have read these volumes written for your benefit and have perhaps been moved by what they contain . . . say a prayer for their author: Oh God, have mercy on the soul of him who wrote this book, cause Thy light go shine upon him and grant to him eternal rest." Tissot 1899, 272.

47 Nancy Rose Marshall observes of this image that Tissot's left hand seems transparent, as if he is a dematerializing or materializing spirit, giving the impression that "he seems to hover in space, as though this were a portrait of his ghost rather than his living body, like the spirit of Kathleen Newton in *The Apparition*." New Haven, Québec, and Buffalo 1999–2000, 184.

48 Moffett 1899, 387.

49 Misfeldt 1971, 238.

50 Cited in Laver 1936, 48–49. Tissot is also mentioned in Bennett's April 9, 1905, diary entry. Bennett 1932, 214.

51 Thomson 1984, 92.

52 Wentworth 1984, 196.

53 "J'ai ressenti la même émotion dans Jérusalem, au saint Sepulcre, le lieu même, les vieux souvenirs, tout sur la foi, on entre certainement là dans un état d'âme spécial, on sent, ou plutôt je sens une certaine présence autour de soi que nous pénétre particulièrement, l'intuition se développe certainement on se dématérialise, on s'attendrit sans cesse." Tissot to Brunhoff, Jerusalem, April 6, 1896, record ID: 116297, Morgan Library and Museum, New York. Brunhoff was the publisher of Tissot's series of Old Testament illustrations.



## THE RESURRECTION OF PAINTING: TISSOT AND CINEMA

VALENTINE ROBERT

This essay was translated from the original French into English by Rose Vekony.

1 For more on Tissot's *The Life of Christ*, see Tissot 2009.

2 The term comes from Bolter and Grusin 1999.

3 Beginning in 1906, newspapers announced the projection of biblical films "according to the French artist J. J. Tissot"; *New York Daily Tribune* 1906. Vitagraph Studios indicated that it had consulted the painter's work to prepare the sets for *The Life of Moses* (J. Stuart Blackton, 1909); *Film Index* 1910. "The touch of [Tissot's] master hand" was said to be evident in *The Deluge* (J. Stuart Blackton, 1911); *Nickelodeon* 1911, 196. Also, the director Fred Niblo stated that the casting of the Virgin Mary for his production of *Ben-Hur* (1925) was based on Tissot's drawings; Niblo 1925, 23.

4 Cyrille Sciana, interviewed in the documentary *First Passion* (*Première Passion*, Philippe Baron, 2010).

5 Herbert Reynolds documents these references in detail in Reynolds 1992.

6 Staley 2013, 99.

7 In her memoirs and interviews, Guy-Blaché elucidates the influence of Tissot on her work, an aspect studied in particular by Gwendolyn Audrey Foster in Foster 1998. Also see Staley 2013; Shepherd 2016. With regard to *Christus*—a film celebrated for its many tableaux vivants inspired by diverse art-historical sources—no one has previously remarked on the importance of Tissot's influence, even though nearly a dozen of the film's tableaux vivants are clearly based on his work.

8 In *Intolerance*, the scene of the adulteress is a strict imitation of Tissot's *The Adulterous Woman* (ca. 1886–1894; Brooklyn Museum), but the composition is reversed, which possibly indicates that Griffith knew the composition as recorded on the engraving plate or had seen it projected in reverse during a lantern-slide lecture. In *Redemption*, the painter's influence can be specifically noted in the scene of Mary Magdalene anointing Jesus's feet, a direct reenactment of Tissot's composition of the same event, *The Ointment of the Magdalene* (ca. 1886–1894; Brooklyn Museum). A still of this scene from *Redemption* can be found in the undated and unpaginated "Publicité artistique" collection of promotional pictures and posters for the film, published by Gaumont-concessionnaire, and conserved at the Cinémathèque française in Paris. In *Ben-Hur*, Wyler explores the cinematic potential of one of the most innovative images of the Passion offered by Tissot: *Bird's-Eye View of the Forum* (pl. 150), which depicts the scene when Jesus is told his death sentence. This reference is identified in Morris 2009, 23. The scale and width of the composition is perfectly adapted to the CinemaScope format. The chromatic balance—in particular, the dialectic of red and white that surrounds Jesus's silhouette—gives the director the opportunity to enhance the Technicolor possibilities. The perspective from above, which de-dramatizes this moment using distance and order while also giving it its right collective and historical measure, blends perfectly with the framing aesthetics of Wyler's film, in which Christ is depicted as only a silhouette, without a face. For more about the ban on film depictions of Christ's face, see Robert 2015.

9 Buser 2002, 429.

10 Sitar 2009, 200.

11 Alice Guy-Blaché's sets were replicas; she explicitly asked her set decorator, Henri Ménessier, to construct twenty-five sets after Tissot's Bible. Foster 1998, 10.

12 David J. Shepherd even claims that Tissot "effectively anticipated the cinematic cut-in shot." Shepherd 2016, 71.

13 Jackson 1912, 121.

14 See Robert 2008.

15 Reynolds 1992, 285 n5, 277.

16 Keil 1992, 117.

17 Shepherd 2013, 145.

18 The full English title of the Tissot Bible was *The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Three Hundred and Sixty-Five Compositions from the Four Gospels with Notes and Explanatory Drawings by James Tissot*. On Tissot's scientific context and the "illusion" of his historical accuracy, see Schiff 1982.

19 Guy-Blaché 1986, 42.

20 The intertitle that quotes John 2:1 to announce the episode of the marriage at Cana in Galilee contains a footnote

specifying, “The ceremony according to [Archibald] Sayce, [James] Hastings, [Francis] Brown, and Tissot.” On the use of Tissot’s work as visual documentation for *Intolerance*, see Martin 1983.

21 Dolkart 2009a, 27.

22 On these promotional exhibitions, which took place in spring 1897—or perhaps as early as 1896—at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris, see *ibid.*, 27, 33n72.

23 Dolkart 2009b, 45.

24 The projection plates reproducing the works of Tissot’s *The Life of Christ* have an exceptional status in most magic-lantern catalogues in terms of both quantity (they could be sold in series comprising more than two hundred items) and quality (they sometimes cost more than average and were praised for their precise reproduction technique). See in particular Kleine 1905, 164–166; Moore 1902, 153, 431–434.

25 The first films about Jesus had already appeared by 1898, but the development of cinema in no way diminished the success of Tissot’s still projections; in fact, the opposite is true. Series of his plates remained popular in catalogues up to the 1920s. The success of Olcott’s *From the Manger to the Cross* even became a selling point; an advertisement in *Moving Picture World* urged readers to go see the still projections of the paintings, which were “the basis of the Kalem Co.’s famous production.” *Moving Picture World* 1912.

26 Tissot personally selected the images to project for a lecture given at Plymouth Church in Brooklyn on November 29, 1899, some months before the Brooklyn Museum acquired his work. Morgan 2009, 65n28.

27 The Goncourt brothers, who attended this event at Tissot’s home, describe it in a February 1, 1890, entry in their journal. Goncourt 1895, 130. Early films existed only as live film shows; an exhibitor would buy the films and then present many of them in one touring show, replete with additional accompaniments, such as a narrator-showman speaking next to the screen and live music. On the central role played in early film screenings by this narrator (*bonimenteur*), see Boillat 2007; Lacasse 2000. In their account, the Goncourts use the term “boniment” to describe Tissot’s performance.

28 In Montreal, for example, the “Famous Tissot Paintings” were shown in 1899 at Windsor Hall—the same place where *The Passion Play of Oberammergau*, produced by the Edison Co. had been screened the year before. *La Presse* 1898; *La Presse* 1899. In 1899, the New York–based department store Wanamaker’s anointed a “Tissot Gallery” on its fifth floor in order to display the painter’s religious watercolors and sell the Tissot Bible. *New York Tribune* 1899. Some twelve years later, Olcott’s *From the Manger to the Cross* would premiere in that same gallery. Morowitz 2009, 199.



## FINAL YEARS AT THE BULLON ESTATE

FRÉDÉRIC MANTION

This essay was translated from the original French into English by Rose Vekony.

1 Tissot 1865.

2 Misfeldt 1984, 25.

3 *Ibid.*, 24–25.

4 *Ibid.*, 24.

5 Misfeldt 1971, 328.

6 Misfeldt 1984, 25–26.

7 *Ibid.*, 24.



## “ALL ARE CLEVER, SEVERAL ARE HIDEOUS”: TISSOT AND HIS PRINTS IN LONDON

DONATO ESPOSITO

The author thanks Rachel Sloan at the Courtauld Institute of Art Library, London, for her assistance with obtaining images used in this essay.

1 Misfeldt 1991, 182.

2 *Illustrated London News* 1876.

3 Hopkinson 2012; Lanigan 2003.

4 *Builder* 1876, also quoted in Hopkinson 2012, 388.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Athenaeum* 1876, 837.

7 Rossetti 1876, 592.

8 Taylor 1877.

9 *The Widower* (1876; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney).

10 *Times* 1877b.

11 *Athenaeum* 1877. The etching’s catalogue number was 507.

12 *Scotsman* 1878. The etching was Tissot’s most expensive submission that year, priced at 9 pounds and 9 shillings.

13 Also see the painting *Trafalgar Tavern (Greenwich)* (pl. 80).

14 *Athenaeum* 1879b.

15 *Athenaeum* 1880, 798.

16 *Daily News* 1880.

17 *British Architect* 1880. The large version of the painting *Emigrants* is dated 1873 (location unknown), and Tissot painted at least two small replicas as well. Either the 1873 picture or one of the smaller versions—it is not known which—was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1879. See “Tissot’s Sales Notebook,” this volume.

18 *Glasgow Herald* 1880. The etching’s catalogue number was 864.

19 *Morning Post* 1880.

20 *Manchester Courier* 1880.

21 Blackburn 1880, ii.

22 Tissot records earnings from etchings totaling 1,289 pounds in 1880, and 1,120 pounds in 1881. Misfeldt 1991, 21; “Tissot’s Sales Notebook,” this volume.

23 On the founding of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, see Hopkinson 1999.

24 *Standard* 1881.

25 *Daily News* 1882.

26 *Bell’s Life* 1882.

27 *Morning Post* 1882.



## “ALWAYS IN SEARCH OF THE EXQUISITE IN ART”: TISSOT’S CLOISSONNÉ ENAMELS

KRYSZYNA MATYJASZKIEWICZ

1 *Leeds Mercury* 1882.

2 French manufacturers, notably Ferdinand Barbedienne and Christofle & Cie, had shown new cloisonné enamel pieces at the 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris. No independent artists outside of these manufactories, however, were attempting to make cloisonné enamels at the time Tissot was developing his creations, which was most likely from around 1878. Tissot continued making cloisonné enamels until at least 1888, the year of his latest-dated plaque. His pieces were larger and more technically difficult than the cloisonné bracelets for which the French jeweler Lucien Falize became famous.

3 The Chinese jardinière that Tissot owned is pictured in Rutherford 1984, 81, fig. 36.

4 Irvine 2006, 29, pl. 25.

5 Tissot’s description for the vases, “en gaine,” is difficult to translate into English, and his precise intended meaning is unknown. In nineteenth-century French, “gaine” meant “scabbard” or “sheath,” but could also mean “case.” The term was also used in architecture to denote a terminal, while in naval speak it referred to a canvas edging.

6 See Matyjaszkiewicz 1988, 53, pl. 16.

7 Dudley Gallery 1882 exhibition catalogue, quoted in Rutherford 1984, 85.

8 Information on Chinese and European methods as well as Tissot’s were kindly shared with me by Erika Speel after her close-up viewing of Tissot’s cloisonné enamels at the Barbican Art Gallery, London. Erika Speel, correspondence with author, January 1985.

9 Speel 1986, 38.

10 *Ibid.*, 37, 39.

11 No small furnace has ever been found on the Grove End Road property in Saint John’s Wood, where Tissot spent the bulk of his London years. The only known reference to Tissot’s cloisonné materials being at the house is a recollection by Lawrence Alma-Tadema’s daughter Anna, stated to the Tissot biographer James Laver, of “the basement” of the property being “full of pots containing colours.” Laver 1936, 50.

12 No bronze-founder’s marks have yet been identified on Tissot’s pieces. Further research is needed to determine who cast and finished his bronze sculptures. Barbedienne was the leading Paris founder at the time. Hatfield’s specialized in bronze figure and ormolu manufacture. “British Bronze Sculpture Founders and Plaster Figure Makers, 1800–1980,” National Portrait Gallery, London, [npg.org.uk/research/programmes/british-bronze-founders-and-plaster-figure-makers-1800-1980-1/british-bronze-founders-and-plaster-figure-makers-1800-1980-h](http://npg.org.uk/research/programmes/british-bronze-founders-and-plaster-figure-makers-1800-1980-1/british-bronze-founders-and-plaster-figure-makers-1800-1980-h).