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Auferstehung Christi am *Isenheimer Alter*: die Funktion der Darstellung der
"Oransgeste" [An Observation on the Resurrection Scene in the *Isenheim
Altarpiece*: Regarding the Function of the Orans Type Christ Imagery]

Ms. Ôsugi offers a new hypothesis regarding the morphological source for the figure of Christ in the Resurrection depicted on the 2nd right panel of Grunewald's masterpiece, the *Isenheim Altarpiece*. She examined German traditions, which other than Dürer had been overlooked by earlier scholars, and focused on the Christ type with both hands raised and showing the stigmata that Panofsky dubbed the orans gesture. She indicates that the similar gesture by Christ in the *Isenheim Altarpiece* connotes the orans gesture's "function of Christ intercession between mankind and God."

As evidence, she did a critical assessment of preceding research and found that evidence of the connotation of the orans gesture was the most powerful. Her ability to summarize the principle arguments regarding Christ's morphology from amongst the numerous preceding studies was superb, and we were also favorably impressed by her unstinting effort and careful use of illustrations to heighten the persuasiveness of her argument. Also regarding the meaning of Christ in the orans pose as mankind's intercessor with God, given that not only religious clerics but also the general laity had widely read the *Speculum humanae salvationis*, she indicated numerous examples within the German devotional image lineage, and thus made a stimulating contribution

that offers many suggestions for the study of German art.

One possible fault in the essay, of which the author is also aware, is the discrepancy that arises when the narrative context is joined with the devotional image function. There are some sections of the article that lack unity because she has referred once again to her once avoided sense of the image as emphasizing divinity, in order to fuse the "Resurrection" Christ of this painting showing the wounds received on his human body with the "ascension" and "transubstantiation" images found in Italian art and Dürer as noted by earlier studies.

The author also recognized that in addition to the painter, the commissioner of the work, laity sick and presumed viewers of the altarpiece are elements that must be taken into account when considering the image formation of this work. Her dauntless engagement with this unavoidable issue when discussing function is laudable. Thus said, however, there is no denying the sense that conversely the puzzle is deepened when we consider the point of this article from her indication that not only the painter, but also the abbot, monastery, original manuscript of *Speculum humanae salvationis* and many of the related clerics all have some connection with France. Further, the article is not altogether convincing on the point that she emphasizes the interpretation favoring real world benefit, imagining the ordinary laity's desire for a cure, rather than the context of the end of the Christian era lay salvation theory. As a result, we can also think that this is an outlook to be proven regarding the overall program of the altarpiece that is referred to as the viewer sees "suffering Christ in the same form as the viewer" in the first panel of the altarpiece, followed by the second panel that promises salvation, and the third panel that "embodies the presentiment of an actual cure."

And yet, we can highly praise the author for her discernment of the German iconographic tradition that had not been previously indicated about this much-discussed masterpiece, along with her will and effort expended to incorporate that tradition into the interpretation of the altarpiece as a whole. Further, while we can say that from an evidential vantage point she has stopped at the offering of a potential interpretation, the offering of this type of hypothesis with this degree of probability in the study of Grunewald, for which there is little documentary evidence, is also meaningful for how it will activate future research.

For these reasons we have awarded the *Bijutsushi* Article Prize to Ms. Ôsugi.