Sarrasine receives the Zambinellan Z in its true sense—the wound of deficiency. Further, S and Z are in a relation of graphological inversion: the same letter seen from the other side of the mirror: Sarrasine contemplates in La Zambinella his own castration. Hence the slash (/) confronting the S of SarraSine and the Z of Zambinella has a panic function: it is the slash of censure, the surface of the mirror, the wall of hallucination, the verge of antithesis, the abstraction of limit, the obliquity of the signifier, the index of the paradigm, hence of meaning.

Roland Barthes, S/Z

The correlation of modernism and Byzantium that this collection invites us to examine, should also lead us to consider the grounds that may or may not license such correlations. For, in grappling with modernism’s appropriations of Byzantine art, we are being invited to consider how and whether this correlation illuminates the two parts of this equation equally. Or do we lose sight of something as we look from one to the other, our contemplation shaded by the direction of our gaze? This problem is raised by the epigraph for this chapter, which is a quote from Roland Barthes’s S/Z, in which we find the possibility of meaning complicated by the uncertainty of Sarrasine’s point of view, one that is founded upon a miscognition on the part of Sarrasine, who has projected a


perfect female beauty onto the body of the castrated object of his desire. In unpacking the implications of this “graphological inversion” Barthes finds himself confronting the difficulties of such mirror effects, such that the slash that divides and connects the two terms may function as a surface or a wall, a verge (edge), a trace of abstraction or obliquity, and as an indexical mark. Ultimately, this manifold slash marks Sarrasine’s contemplation of his own castration as he projects his desires upon Zambinella’s body. When we connect/divide Byzantium and modernism, do we not also introduce an exchange of miscognitive looks in which each player emerges and disappears, becoming now Sarrasine, now La Zambinella, existing in terms of a correlation that destroys both?

The complexity of this interplay across the spaces described by period thinking re-emerges in light of the recent discourse on anachronism that has permitted the work of art to bear positively the traces of its emergence from and in time. For example, in a recent essay in *Artforum*, Alexander Nagel set a sixth–seventh-century reliquary box into conversation with Robert Smithson’s late 1960s *Non-Site* projects (Figs. 13.1, 13.2). In so doing, Nagel has sought to

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