

Image of christ

Religion



XXX 2/17/13 The Dual Nature - Commentary Experts believe that Jesus Christ possessed two different qualities regarding his every attribute. The chapter The Dual Nature discusses how this was understood by different artists and presented in their artworks. Both aspects found equal exposure and attention in the scriptures, and interpretation and art works, which later became the most prominent part of Christianity. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) put more emphasis on Christ's incarnation while the earlier Church stressed on the divinity of Christ. This only makes it easier for artists to depict Christ in equal proportions regarding the duality; " In representing Christ's dual nature, Murillo also expresses human ambivalence." 1 But not all artists and painters see Christ in the same light. For instance Pieter Bruegel points to " humanity and vulnerability of Christ Child." 2, more so his painting also depicts inhumanity of the people surrounding the infant Christ.

The artwork of Giovanni Bellini (1459-1516) interests me particularly. His depiction of Christ ' resting peacefully' is superb. Although Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross after being severely tortured, his body hardly bears any mark of torture. He is shown lying across the lap of his mother, peacefully sleeping. However he is not really sleeping as in biblical traditions, sleep was considered " a natural metaphor for death" 3. This piece interests me because by showing so little in his paintings, he tells a whole lot more. In his other painting the infant Christ is lying in the lap of Virgin Mary and the look on her face suggests that she knows the fate of her child. In the background, the white crane fights with the snake; a possible interpretation that Christ will fight the devil where devil is represented by the snake, plus in some

traditions a crane is regarded as a “ harbinger of spring and hence of new life.” 4