The Artist, the Writer, and the Queen: Hosmer, Jameson, and *Zenobia*

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FIG. 1. Harriet Hosmer, *Zenobia* (1859), marble, 49" h. Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford.

When Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908) determined at age 19 to become a sculptor, she defied the belief widely held in the mid-19th century that sculpture was physically, if not intellectually, beyond a woman's capacities. Denied access to anatomy courses in Boston because of her sex, she left her home in Watertown, Massachusetts, for St. Louis, Missouri, where an influential friend enabled her to study at the Washington University medical school.[1] By 1852, when she settled in Rome as a student of the English sculptor John Gibson, her scorn for propriety had become more marked: she lived alone, walked alone, and rode horseback alone, and quickly became known in the Anglo-American community as an "emancipated female."[2] As Hosmer's reputation as a sculptor grew, her defiance of the limits society drew for women won her the respect of contemporary advocates of women's rights—a respect shared by 20th-century feminists.[3]

The works Hosmer completed during her six years under Gibson's tutelage included idealized busts of *Daphne* and *Medusa*, a "fancy piece" depicting *Puck*, and two complete figures, *Oenone* and *Beatrice Cenci*. Though female subjects drawn from history, poetry, and mythology were popular with many neoclassical sculptors, Hosmer's preference for them has been interpreted as a reflection of her concern for the subordinate position of women in the 19th century.[4] This is particularly evident in discussions of *Zenobia*, her monumental depiction of the 3rd-century Queen of Palmyra, completed in 1859 and today known only through photographs, reductions, and busts taken from the eight-foot tall, full-length figure of the original.[5] A close examination of *Zenobia* and its genesis suggests that the work does indeed relfect Hosmer's sympathy with the growing concern for women's rights, but it also suggests that it is Hosmer's treatment, rather than her choice of subject that reveals her attitudes. The exhibition history and criticism of the completed work provides insights into the difficulties faced by Hosmer.

Zenobia ruled Palmyra (northeast of Damascus in modern Syria) from 267 to 272 A.D.[6] Known for her courage and learning as well as her beauty, Zenobia came to power as the wife of Odenathus, an ally of the Romans. She ruled

jointly with her husband until his death in 267 and then reigned as regent for their son. Under her leadership, Palmyra's hegemony was extended as far as Arabia and even Egypt. The Roman emperors Gallienus and Claudius apparently tolerated expansion of Palmyran control, even though it encroached on Roman territories, because their armies were not equal to Zenobia's. When Aurelian came to the imperial throne in 270, however, he put a halt to Palmyra's growth. Defeating Zenobia and her generals in two battles, he laid siege to the capital of Palmyra. Zenobia refused the terms of surrender and, when it was clear the city would fall, slipped through her defense lines to seek aid from the Persians. She was captured by Aurelian and the city sacked; while Palmyra burned, Zenobia was taken to Rome.

Hosmer depicted Zenobia as captive of the triumphant Emperor in Rome (Fig. 1). The queen steps forward proudly, holding her back straight and letting only her head tilt forward slightly as she gazes unseeingly before her. Her right arm, weighed down by chains manacled to her wrists, hangs heavily at her side while her left hand grasps at her fetters, holding them up before the elaborate buckle of her belt. An ornate crown sits back from her forehead and a long cape covers her chiton and is caught up over her bent left arm. Despite the chains and bowed head, Hosmer's Zenobia is not a humiliated captive; her erect posture and royal jewels convey her majesty even in defeat.

Hosmer's subject had been popular for over a century: Palmyra and Zenobia had held a particular fascination for the English speaking world since 1753 when Robert Wood and James Dawkins published *The Ruins of Palmyra*.[7] Their engravings showed the ruins of a classical city in the exotic East, inaccessible except to those willing to brave the fierce Bedouins and harsh desert. Travelers who made the arduous journey found nomad tribes camped amid the fallen columns of the great temple. The flamboyant Lady Hester Stanhope was the first modern European woman to visit the site; in 1813 she rode into the city on a camel followed by her lover, her doctor, and a bodyguard of Bedouin horsemen, to admire the ruins and pay homage to the city's illustrious queen.

The story of Zenobia, known from the accounts of Flavius Vopiscus and Trebellius Pollio in the *Augustan History* and Zosimus's *New History*, was taken up by historians, poets, and novelists. Zenobia was the subject of part of a chapter in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 1776-78) and an entire one in Anna Jameson's *Celebrated Female Sovereigns* (London, 1831). She figured in Thomas Love Peacock's epic poem *Palmyra* (London, 1806), and was the heroine of two novels: Adelaide O'Keefe's *Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra* (London, 1817) and William Ware's *The Letters of Lucius Piso* (Boston, 1836, later reprinted as *Zenobia, or The Fall of Palmyra*).

Visual treatments of Zenobia were rare,[8] but like many of her contemporaries, Hosmer relied as much on literary as on visual sources in developing her ideas. Several literary accounts were accessible to and used by Hosmer. There is direct evidence of her familiarity with the *Augustan History* and indirect evidence for her reference to Ware's novel; however, the genesis and development of the sculpture seem to owe most to the writings and influence of Anna Jameson, whom the artist met shortly before she undertook the work.

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Anna Jameson (1794-1860), governess turned writer, was well known in the 1850s as an authority on art.[9] Her works included guides to London galleries, the popular *Memoirs of Early Italian Painters* (London, 1854), and *Sacred and Legendary Art* (London, 1848), a scholarly iconographical study of Western art. Though a resident of England, she traveled to Italy periodically and was a familiar and respected figure in the Anglo-American community there. Her friends in Italy included many of Hosmer's associates, among them Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning and John Gibson. Gibson, who thought highly enough of Jameson's criticism and influence to attribute his success partly to her praise of one of his early works, would surely have introduced Jameson to his young pupil.[10]

Jameson and Hosmer may have known each other as early as 1855. If not, they certainly met when Jameson returned to Rome in 1857.[11] While Jameson's niece Gerardine MacPherson, a resident of Rome, later recalled that her aunt became "keenly interested" in the young American, Hosmer remembered Jameson as a frequent visitor to her studio and a welcome guide through the Roman galleries and called Jameson's conversation "most instructive and helpful."[12]

Long concerned about the problems of women's education and employment, Jameson was an increasingly vocal advocate of women's rights. She had lent her support to women's efforts to enter medicine and publishing, and because of her own art studies, was particularly aware of the difficulties faced by women artists. The unsuccessful attempt to exclude women from England's School of Design, founded in the 1830s to train designers for manufacturers, exemplified for Jameson the obstacles faced by women, and she referred to it frequently. She was an active supporter of gaining for women the right to attend the Royal Academy School.[13] Jameson also rejected what she labelled "that false compliment, that genius is of no sex." Though men and women might be equal in "power," she claimed, in "quality and distinction" they were bound to differ. What she admired in women's work was the "presence of a power felt rather than perceived, and kept subordinate to the sentiment of grace." Unlike most of her contemporaries, Jameson did not think historical subjects beyond women's capabilities, as long as they chose those subjects "within the province of their sex."[14] She apparently felt that women should avoid the male figure: she approved of Elizabeth Sirani's *Annunciation* but not her *Circumcision*, and preferred Angelica Kauffman's nymphs and Madonnas to her warriors. Hosmer's subjects—*Daphne*, *Medusa*, *Oenone*, and *Beatrice Cenci*—were well within the limits Jameson had drawn.

Unlike Gibson, whose taste was limited to Neoclassicism, Jameson appreciated what she called "poetical" and "romantic" scultpure, as long as the subject was "appropriate to a chaste and elegant sculptural treatment."[15] In 1854 she had drawn a list of "characters appropriate to sculpture but rarely treated" that included Helen of Troy, Penelope, Iphigenia, Miriam and Ruth, the

Queen of Sheba, and Joan of Arc.[16](Hosmer, however, never used any of these subjects.)

Hosmer and Jameson were together in Rome from March until May 1857, when Jameson went on to Florence. By early summer, when Hosmer herself left Italy to visit England and the United States, she had already conceived the initial project of Zenobia, for, according to her friend Lydia Maria Child, when she arrived in Massachusetts her "soul was filled with Zenobia"—and her notebooks with studies for the sculpture.[17]Indeed, the subject must have strongly appealed to Hosmer, for this was the first full-length figure she undertook without a commission. It was Zenobia's "womanly modesty, her manly courage, and her intellectual tastes" that first attracted the artist to her subject, according to Child.[18]Hosmer, who called herself a "faithful worshipper of Celibacy" and believed marriage would conflict with art, may have felt an affinity with the queen whose "female dignity and discretion" were such that she "would not know even her own husband save for the purpose of conception."[19] And since Hosmer insisted that sculpture was an "intellectual art, requiring the exercise of taste, imagination, and delicate feeling,"[20] she most likely respected the queen who was a student of Neoplatonism and, according to Jameson, an important patron of architecture.

During her visit to Massachusetts, Hosmer discussed her studies for the figure with friends and gathered additional information about Zenobia, searching libraries for "every allusion to her, whether historic or romantic."[21] When she returned to Italy in November 1857, Hosmer stopped in Florence, where Jameson was staying in the same building as the Brownings. Her letters record dinners with the poets and breakfasts with Jameson, as she gathered still more information about her subject. She was aided by Jameson, who promised to leave her own studies to locate a coin with the queen's profile, and an historian who suggested she study the 8th-century mosaic of the Virgin in the church of San Marco for information about Zenobia's costume.[22]

After Hosmer returned to her studio in Rome to begin work on the four-foot clay model of Zenobia, she consulted regularly with Jameson. In March 1858 she promised Wayman Crow, her St. Louis patron, a photograph of the model and proudly reported that it had "just passed muster" with Jameson.[23] In September Hosmer sent Jameson a second photograph. Jameson's reply, written from Brighton on October 10, offered several pages of detailed comment on the model and the confession that she had "embarked so much of pride and hope" in Hosmer, that she would be "in despair" if the artist failed to live up to her expectations.[24]

By December 1858, Hosmer was ready to begin work on the full-scale clay figure of Zenobia. To have room for the work that would occupy her for the next eight months, she moved to a new studio not far from Gibson's.[25] When Nathaniel Hawthorne visited her in March 1859, he noted that the sculpture was "as yet unfinished in the clay," but by late July when Hosmer left Rome for a summer of traveling, it was ready to be transferred into plaster.[26]In August from Lucerne, Hosmer answered Jameson's letter of the previous October. After apologizing for her 10 months of silence, she explained, "perhaps I have been giving stronger proof of my sense of obligation to you by adopting your suggestions and profiting by your criticisms." Enclosing a third photograph, she again solicited Jameson's opinion and wondered when they might meet again.[27]Jameson had in fact returned to the continent in 1859 and may have been in Florence when Hosmer wrote her; if they saw each other again it was between August and October 9, when Jameson returned to England.[28] Unfortunately, Jameson's reaction to the finished figure of Zenobia is unknown, for she died two years before it was exhibited in London at the 1862 International Exhibition.

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Hosmer not only sought Jameson's opinion about *Zenobia* regularly from 1857 to 1859, but also acknowledged her debt to Jameson. When the work is compared to Jameson's description and characterization of the queen in *Celebrated Female Sovereigns*, other writers' treatments of her, and the visual sources Hosmer turned to as she developed the figure, the extent of the artist's debt to Jameson emerges.

Through her diligent research, Hosmer no doubt read several accounts of Zenobia's reign and defeat: the *Augustan History*, the collected biographies of Roman Emperors compiled in the 4th century, was certainly familiar to her, for she mentioned it in a letter of February 1858.[29]Vopiscus, Aurelian's biographer, briefly referred to the queen's appearance in Aurelian's triumph: "And there came Zenobia, too, decked with jewels and golden chains, the weight of which was born by others."[30] Pollio, whose biography of Zenobia appears in the accounts of "The Thirty Pretenders," gave a longer description:

> She was led in triumph with such magnificence that the Roman people had never seen a more splendid parade. For in the first place, she labored under the weight of the ornaments; for it is said that this woman, courageous though she was, halted very frequently, saying that she could not endure the weight of her gems. Furthermore, her feet were bound with shackles of gold and her hands with golden fetters, and even on her neck she wore a chain of gold, the weight of which was born by a Persian buffoon.[31]

Pollio's account was the basis for most of the late 18th and early 19th-century descriptions of the queen. In the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Gibbon condensed it, retaining only the salient details—the golden fetters that encircled her neck and the heavy jewels.[32] In his popular novel, *The Letters of Lucius Piso*, the American William Ware again used Pollio's description, putting words into the mouth of Piso, a Roman friend of the queen:

> You can imagine, better than I can describe them, my sensations when I saw our beloved friend—her whom I had seen treated never otherwise than as a Sovereign Queen and with all the imposing pomp of the Persian ceremonial—now on foot and exposed to the rude gaze of the Roman populace—toiling beneath the rays of a hot sun, and the weight of jewels, such as both for richness and beauty, were never before seen in Rome—and of chains of gold, which, passing first around her neck and arms, were then borne by attendant slaves. My impulse was to break through the crowd and support her almost fainting form—but I well knew that

FIG. 2. *Athena Giustiniani*, Roman copy of Greek original, 4th or 5th century B.C. Vatican Museums, Rome. Photo: Alinari/Editorial Photocolor Archives.

FIG. 3. *Barberini Juno*, Roman copy of Greek original, Vatican Museums, Rome. Photo: Alinari/Editorial Photocolor Archives.

> my life would answer for the rashness on the spot. I could only like the rest, wonder and gaze.[33]

Although Hosmer never mentioned Ware's book in any of her correspondence, when, in 1864 and 1865, the sculpture was exhibited in the United States, several newspapers cited the novel or quoted an edited version of Ware's description of Zenobia as Hosmer's source of inspiration.[34]

Hosmer's sculpture, however, presents a very different image of the queen than Ware and Pollio describe: Hosmer's Zenobia neither faints nor falters, and her jewels and chains are a minimal impediment to her progress. Hosmer's sculpture is, however, consistent with Jameson's description of the queen:

> Every eye was fixed on the beautiful and majestic figure of the Syrian queen, who walked in the procession before her own sumptuous chariot, attired in her diadem and royal robes, blazing with jewels, her eyes fixed on the ground, and her delicate form drooping under the weight of her golden fetters, which were so heavy that two slaves were obliged to assist in supporting them on either side.[35]

As described by Pollio and Ware, the heavy chains encircling the queen's neck vividly affirm the overwhelming power of Aurelian. By limiting the chains to less cumbersome wrist manacles—a choice more consistent with Jameson's account—Hosmer changes the relationship between the queen and the emperor: Zenobia is no longer Aurelian's crushed and broken victim, but a defiant prisoner whose "impatience," as Hosmer herself called it,[36] is conveyed by the way she grasps at her chains in a gesture that minimizes their weight.

Zenobia's jewels, on the other hand, are emblematic of "the Queen of the East." Palmyran women customarily wore elaborate jewelry, and Pollio's emphasis on Zenobia's jewels may in part reflect Roman astonishment at an unfamiliar custom. Zenobia's crown and cloak were also symbolic of her royal power: Pollio described how, at the death of her husband, Zenobia had "cast about her shoulders the imperial mantle; and arrayed in the robes of Dido, and even assuming the diadem, she held the imperial power in the name of her son."[37]

By the 17th century, however, jewels were also linked to pride and vanity. The visual association had been codified in the 17th century by Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, in which Pride was personified as a woman glorying in her jewels and crown and Wisdom as a woman trampling them underfoot.[38] Pride and vanity—often considered particularly feminine failings—were regularly attributed to Zenobia in the 18th and 19th centuries. Thus Wood, who included the queen's story in the introduction to *The Ruins of Palmyra*, contrasted her "military and manly virtues" with her "female fondness for show and magnificence."[39] Ware, in *The Letters of Lucius Piso*, described Zenobia as glorying "in this coronet of pearl, this gorgeous robe, this golden chair," even as she agreed that wiser men, including the philosopher who was her chief advisor, would scorn such "tinsel trappings." Accused of pride and ambition, she acknowledged the truth of the charge, but asked defiantly and rhetorically: "As to pride, what if my woman's nature, that nature that the gods

implanted and I received from my royal ancestors, loves the pomp and show of power?"[40] It was her pride, however, that in the novel blinded her to her advisors' warnings that she faced certain defeat as she rushed headlong into a confrontation with Aurelian. Thus, in Ware's description of her appearance on Aurelian's triumph, her jewels became a stigma, whose weight suggested that she was overcome as much by her own weakness as by the emperor's power and that she herself bore the responsibility for her people's destruction.

Jameson, in contrast, attributed Zenobia's predilection for jewels and gold to her emulation of her ancestor, Cleopatra.[41] When Jameson described Zenobia as "blazing" with jewels rather than burdened by them as she took her place in Aurelian's triumph, the jewels remained an attribute of her royalty, a confirmation of the ancestry that entitled her to the throne of the East. Jameson's life of the queen thus provided both an alternative interpretation of Zenobia's character and an alternative description of her appearance in Aurelian's triumph.

Hosmer, according to Child, was "so much in love with her subject that she rejected as unworthy of belief the statement that Zenobia was ever shaken by her misfortune. To her imagination she was superbly regal, in the highest sense of the word, from first to last."[42] To assert her confidence in Zenobia's character, Hosmer relied on the stance of her figure and the form of the jewels. Zenobia's proud, straight back, her unwavering slow step, and her impatient grasp at her fetters are all adapted from the Vatican's *Athena Giustiniani* (Fig. 2), as was first noted by Nathaniel Hawthorne.[43] By turning to a figure of the goddess of wisdom and war, Hosmer suggests Zenobia's courage and learning, reminding the viewer that the queen had led her troops into battle and was tutored and advised by a philosopher. The tilt of Zenobia's head, however, is closer to the gracious downward glance of the *Barberini Juno* (Fig. 3), also in the Vatican; the queen of the Olympian gods was another appropriate source for a figure of the Queen of Palmyra.

As she worked on the sculpture, Hosmer devoted much time to the design of Zenobia's jewels, suggesting that she recognized their importance to her subject. When in Fall 1857 she was referred to the mosaic of the Virgin in San Marco, Florence, she was delighted by what she found: "It is invaluable, requiring little change, except for a large mantle thrown over all. The ornaments are quite the thing; very rich and very Eastern, with just such a girdle as is described in Vopiscus."[44] The mosaic (Fig. 4) shows a Virgin *orans* wearing a crown with three prongs and pendant jewels, a collar extending over her shoulders, cuffs, and a belt. It was evidently the large round fastening of the belt that reminded Hosmer of the girdle that Pollio—not Vopiscus—had described as "a purple fillet, which had gems hanging from the lower edge, while its center was fastened with a jewel called a cochlis instead of the brooch worn by women."[45] Despite her initial enthusiasm for the costume, however, the artist retained only an elaborated version of the belt in the completed sculpture.

Hosmer apparently turned to a different source during the following summer as she worked on the small model, for

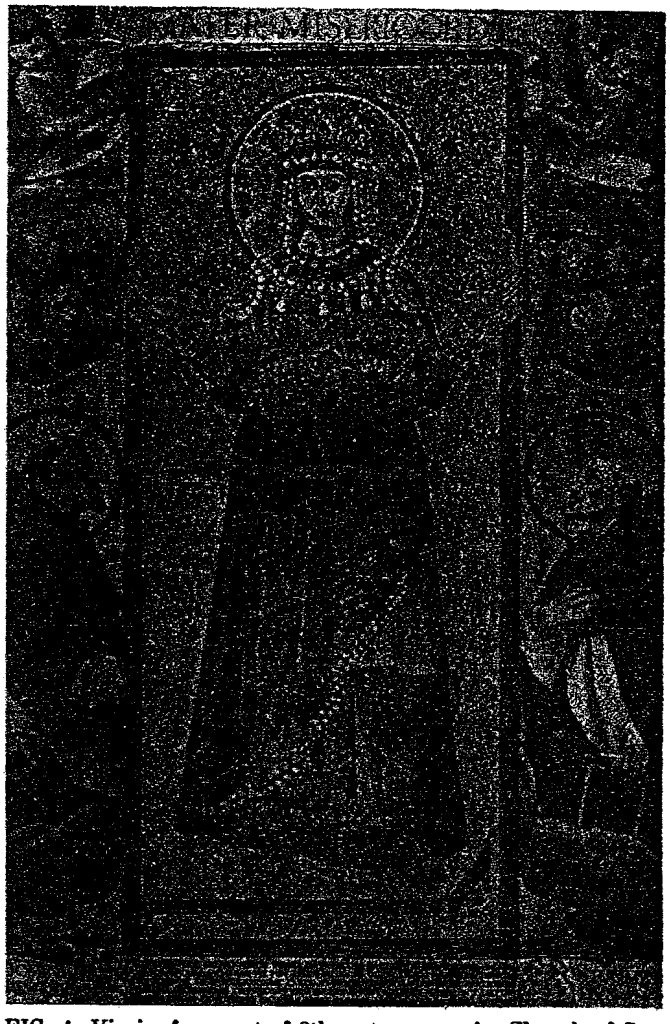

FIG. 4. *Virgin*, fragment of 8th-century mosaic, Church of San Marco, Florence. Photo: Alinari/Editorial Photocolor Archives.

in October 1858, Jameson commented on a photograph of the model:

> The helmet-like diadem pleases me as suggesting the warrior-queen (and the cuirass for the same reason)—but the diadem is too low on the brow—thus taking away from the value and dignity of the face and that intellectual look which Zenobia had, I suppose, as indicative of her talents.[46]

Though the photograph is now lost, the description suggests the helmet and aegis of Athena: Hosmer may have contemplated adapting the armor of the *Athena Giustiniani* as well as her posture. In the completed figure, the cuirass has disappeared, though perhaps suggestions of it remain in Zenobia's girdle: the sinuous shape of the belt is reminiscent of the snake-fringe of Athena's aegis, while the face in the buckle is similar to the head of Medusa attached to the goddess's breastplate.

The "helmet-like diadem" noted by Jameson was also apparently discarded by Hosmer in the finished figure, for Zenobia's crown rises to a single point in the center and, rather than extending down to protect her forehead, is set back from it. The crown is closer to Juno's diadem—it is

similar, for example, to that worn by the *Ludovisi Juno*, a work Hosmer and Jameson had studied together—than to Athena's helmet, and thus suggests Zenobia's position as queen rather than her role as warrior. By exposing rather than hiding the forehead, the crown also endows her with an "intellectual look" in keeping with Jameson's criticism.

By basing the *Zenobia* on such familiar figures as the *Athena Giustiniani* and the *Barberini Juno*, Hosmer subtly reinforced the majesty and authority of her figure. It is virtually impossible to associate these jewels with overweening pride or vanity or to see the woman whose carriage evokes the goddess as the embodiment of reckless ambition. Instead, she is endowed with a divine wisdom and courage, a grandeur that raises her above her tragic fate.

While Ware and other historians and writers had seen in Zenobia's downfall a revelation of her failings, Hosmer shared with Jameson the conviction that the Queen of the East was distinguished by her "intellectual habits," her courage, and her fortitude, and that these qualities sustained her despite her defeat by Aurelian. The sculpture is a testament to their faith in women's capabilities—a faith that was more widely shared in the United States than in England or on the continent, as the reaction to the *Zenobia* showed.

The sculpture was ready to be transferred from plaster to marble by late 1859, but Hosmer waited until 1862 and England's International Exhibition to exhibit it. It was placed, with Gibson's controversial tinted *Venus* and works by several other sculptors, at the center of the main exhibition hall in a small octagonal "temple" lined with niches painted Pompeiian red.[47] Hosmer had high hopes for the work: as early as 1858 she confessed to Jameson that she dreamed of seeing it bought by Queen Victoria, whose son had purchased a copy of Hosmer's *Puck*.[48] The English queen—in mourning for Albert, who had died only the year before—showed no interest, however, and the response of the press was equally disappointing. Several critics ignored the figure, restricting their comments on American sculpture to William Wetmore Story's *Cleopatra*. An anonymous writer in the *Art Journal* called Hosmer one of the best artists produced by the New World, but J. Beavington Atkinson dismissed the *Zenobia* as "a figure of command with an elaborate cast of classical drapery."[49]

In Fall 1863 a more severe criticism appeared in an article published simultaneously in the *Art Journal* and the *Queen*: an anonymous writer complained that the work of a deceased English sculptor had been "unfairly overshadowed" at the International Exhibition by *Zenobia*, "said to be by Miss Hosmer, but really executed by an Italian workman in Rome."[50]

For several years a similar story—that Gibson produced Hosmer's works—had circulated in Rome. When Jameson counseled Hosmer to ignore "the malignant sarcasm of some of your rivals in Rome as to your having Mr. Gibson at your elbow," the young artist replied: "I mean to silence them, though not with my tongue, in return, but with my fingers. I consider their remarks, malicious and ungenerous as they are, the highest compliment they can bestow, because if I were not a little in their way they wouldn't give me trouble."[51]

When the gossip appeared in print, Hosmer had little doubt that she was being harassed because of her sex: "We all know that few artists who have been in any degree successful enjoy the truly friendly regard of their professional bretheren; but a *woman* artist who has been honoured by frequent commissions is an object of particular odium."[52]

When *Zenobia* was unveiled to the American public, the sculpture's equivocal reception in London was replaced by a stunning success. In November 1864 at Derby's Gallery of Art in New York and in January 1865 at Child's and Jenk's in Boston, interest in the work was so great that it was later shown in Chicago. Visitors flocked to see it—one Boston observer noted that "no single work of art ever attracted so much attention here"—and newspapers acclaimed it.[53]

If Hosmer regarded the London exhibition as her opportunity to prove herself before the world, most Americans felt that it was their nation that was on trial at the international exhibitions, where countries competed for the medals handed out by the international juries and American artists had the special obligation of demonstrating that the New World was the cultural and artistic equal to the Old. The public therefore read with satisfaction that, as the New York *Post* reported with some exaggeration, *Zenobia* was "highly praised by all the leading critics" in London and that, as *Watson's Weekly Art Journal* stated, Hosmer "stood at the head of her art, both in this country and Europe." John Greenleaf Whittier placed a distinctly patriotic construction on *Zenobia* when he commented that Hosmer "had been as truly serving her country, while working out her magnificent design abroad, as our soldiers in the field and our public officers in their departments."[54]

Americans were also quick to recognize that Hosmer's sex made her achievement noteworthy. The work would "give new ideas as to woman's ability," stated the *Post*, and several newspapers quoted Hiram Powers's remark that, "If it were the work of a man, it would be considered as more than clever, but as it is from the chisel of a woman, why it is *an innovation*." Neither England nor the continent could boast of a woman whose work could compete with the best male sculptors. "The Sex," noted the New York *Home Journal*, "is undergoing a grand progress by the History of this Republic, and it is of this that Miss Hosmer's *Zenobia* is the most prominent (though inadequate) example."[55]

If reactions to the work suggested that the Europeans and English were more suspicious of women's capabilities than the Americans, it probably came as no surprise to Hosmer. In 1861 she had written: "I don't approve of bloomerism and that view of woman's rights, but every woman should have the opportunity of cultivating her talents to the fullest extent . . . and those chances will be given first in America."[56]

The difficulties Hosmer encountered when *Zenobia* was first exhibited, however, dramatize sharply the work's significance. Like other neoclassical sculptors, Hosmer relied on literary sources and antique visual precedents to develop her sculpture, but by departing from the details in the literary accounts of Zenobia's defeat and by selecting and synthesizing from her visual sources, the artist transformed

the Queen of Palmyra from a symbol of woman's failings to an example of woman's courage and wisdom. The work thus challenged the prevailing 19th-century notions of femininity as unequivocally as Hosmer's decision to pursue a career as a sculptor. Beyond this, the sculpture also reflects Harriet Hosmer's friendship with Anna Jameson, whose advice and encouragement were central to the work's genesis and development—and in this *Zenobia* becomes the embodiment of a shared ideal, a shared confidence that woman's underlying strength of character ultimately transcended the circumstances of defeat. •

1. Most of the facts of Hosmer's life are from Cornelia Crow Carr, *Harriet Hosmer, Letters and Memories* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1912). See also Susan Van Rensselaer, "Harriet Hosmer," *Antiques* (October 1963), 424-28; William H. Gerdts, "The White Marmorean Flock" (Poughkeepsie, New York, Vassar College Art Gallery, April 4-30, 1972); Joseph Leach, "Harriet Hosmer: Feminist in Bronze and Marble," *The Feminist Art Journal* (Summer 1976), 9-13, 44, 45; and Alicia Faxon, "Images of Women in the Sculpture of Harriet Hosmer," *WAJ* (S/S 1981), 25-34. On 19th-century attitudes towards sculpture as a medium for women see "Beatrice Cenci," *Art Journal* (April 1857), 124, and Reverend R. B. Thurston, "Harriet Hosmer," in *Eminent Women of the Age* (Hartford, Conn.: S. M. Betts, 1868), 566.
2. Henry James, *William Wetmore Story and His Friends*, 1 (1903; reprint New York: Grove, 1957), 253-54. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Letters to her Sister 1846-59*, Leonard Huxley, ed., (New York: Dutton 1930), 196.
3. For 19th-century attitudes see M. H. H., "Harriet Hosmer," *Englishwoman's Journal*, 1 (July 1858), 295-306, which shows the respect accorded Hosmer by the circle of Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon; see also Jeanne Weimann, *The Fair Women: The Story of the Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893* (Chicago: Academy, 1981), 39-40, in which there is an account of Hosmer's commission for a sculpture for the Woman's Pavilion. Hosmer is included also in many of the surveys of women artists published in the last 10 years.
4. Faxon, "Images," 25, 28; Leach, "Harriet Hosmer," 12-13; Gerdts, "Introduction" in "Marmorean Flock," and catalogue entries 1-7; William Gerdts, *American Neo-Classical Sculpture: The Marble Resurrection* (New York: Viking, 1973), includes comments on Hosmer's preference for female subjects (44, 122) and on the widespread popularity of female subjects (54, 122).
5. The original work was sold in 1864 to Almon Griswold of New York; copies were ordered by Mrs. Potter Palmer of Chicago, Robert W. Emmons of Boston, and Alexander T. Stewart of New York. The Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, owns a 49" full-length reduction; the Watertown Public Library, Massachusetts, has a 17" bust. A photograph of the original sculpture appears in Carr, *Hosmer*, opposite 200. A photograph of what seems to be another full-scale full-length version appears in Loredo Taft, *The History of American Sculpture* (New York: MacMillan, 1930), 209; this version differs from that in Carr in the treatment of the belt buckle. Taft's photograph is credited to the Metropolitan Museum, which exhibited the work in 1912 and returned it to its owners.
6. *Cambridge Ancient History: The Imperial Crisis and Recovery*, 12 (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University, 1939), 175-80, 301-05; Iaian Browning, *Palmyra* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1979), 44-9.
7. Browning, *Palmyra*, 64-9, summarizes 18th- and 19-century interest in Palmyra.
8. In 1850, *Zenobie trouvée sur les bords de l'Araxe* was the subject assigned to competitors for the Prix de Rome at France's Ecole des Beaux Arts.
9. There are three biographies of Anna Jameson: Gerardine MacPherson, *Life of Anna Jameson* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1878); Mrs. Steuart Erskine, *Anna Jameson: Letters and Friendships, 1812-1860* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1915); Clara Thomas, *Love and Work Enough: The Life of Anna Jameson* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1967). See also Adele H. Holcomb, "Anna Jameson, 1794-1860: Sacred Art and Social Vision," in *Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts*, Claire Richter Sherman, ed. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1981), 93-121.
10. On Hosmer and the Brownings, see Carr, *Hosmer*, 32-4; on Hosmer and Gibson, Carr, 21-2. On Jameson and the Brownings, Erskine, *Jameson*, 323-35; MacPherson, *Life*, 190, 228-30; and Thomas, *Love and Work*, 169-75. On Jameson and Gibson: Erskine, 235, 288-90; MacPherson, 241, 315-31; and Thomas, 212.
11. On 1855: Gerald H. Needler, *Letters of Anna Jameson to Ottilie von Goethe* (London: Oxford University, 1939), 202; Carr, *Hosmer*, 96, quotes Hosmer as saying she knew Jameson during her "third winter in Rome," which would have been 1854-55. On 1857: McPherson, *Life*, 296; Erskine, *Jameson*, 301-24.
12. MacPherson, *Life*, 302. Hosmer quoted in Carr, *Hosmer*, 96.
13. Thomas, *Love and Work*, 50-2, 59-62, 84-5, 140-43, and 206-11. See also [Anna Jameson], "Condition of the Women and Female Children," *Athenaeum* (March 18, 1843), 257-59; Anna Jameson, "Woman's Mission and Woman's Position," *Memoirs and Essays Illustrative of Art, Literature, and Social Morals* (London: Berstley, 1846), 245-46; Anna Jameson, "Prefatory Letter to the Right Honorable Lord John Russell," *Sisters of Charity and the Communion of Labour, Two Lectures on the Social Employments of Women* (London: Long, Brown, 1859), xvi-xxxv; and Anna Jameson, "The Royal Academy," *Athenaeum* (April 30, 1859), 581.
14. Anna Jameson, *Sketches of Art, Literature, and Character* (Boston/New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1890), 347-68 (First published as *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad*, 2 vols., London, 1834).
15. Anna Jameson, *Handbook of the Courts of Modern Sculpture* (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1854), 3-9, 19-20. See also Carr, *Hosmer*, 151.
16. Anna Jameson, *A Commonplace Book of Thoughts, Memories, and Fancies* (London: Longman, 1854), 326-71.
17. On their travels during Spring 1857: Erskine, *Jameson*, 305-06; Carr, *Hosmer*, 82, 192. On Hosmer's plans for the sculpture: Lydia Maria Child, "Harriet Hosmer, Biographical Sketch," *Ladies Repository* (January 1861), 6 and in her "Letter," *Boston Transcript*, February 2, 1865, in which she mistakenly gives the date of Hosmer's visit as 1858. The complete text of both articles can be found in the Hosmer Collection, Watertown Public Library, Massachusetts. See also Carr, *Hosmer*, 127, 192.
18. Child, "Letter"; quoted also in Carr, *Hosmer*, 192.
19. Quoted in Carr, *Hosmer*, 35. On Zenobia, see Jameson, *Lives of Celebrated Female Sovereigns and Illustrious Women* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1870), 25-33 (originally published in *Memoirs of Celebrated Female Sovereigns*, 2 vols., London, 1831) and *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, David Magie, trans., 3 (London: Heinemann, 1932), 137-38.
20. Harriet Hosmer, "The Process of Sculpture," *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1864), 734-37.
21. Child, "Letter;" quoted also in Carr, *Hosmer*, 192.
22. Child, *Hosmer*, 92, 94-5, 97, 100-01, 120, 150; Harriet Hosmer, "Memories," *The Youth's Companion* (August 9, 1900), 74, in Hosmer Collection, Watertown.
23. The sequence of Hosmer's work on the sculpture is suggested in Hosmer, "Process of Sculpture," and in Harriet Hosmer and John Gibson, "Correspondence: Miss Hosmer's *Zenobia*," *Art Journal* (January 1864), 27. Hosmer's letter to Crow is in Carr, *Hosmer*, 124.
24. Jameson's letter to Hosmer is included in Folder #24, Hosmer Papers, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University. It is dated only "Brighton, October 10" and begins: "Your letter (dated Rome Sept. 26th) and the photograph enclosed are lying before me. . . ." Carr, *Hosmer*, 149-51, quotes it in part, dating it 1859. The correct date, however, must be 1858. Erskine, *Jameson*, 243-45, quotes a letter from Hosmer to Jameson, dated "Lucerne, August 10," which begins: "Ten months ago to this very day, as I find by the date of your letter lying before me. . . ." Since Hosmer's trip to Switzerland took place in the Summer 1859 (Carr, 142), Jameson's letter must have been written in October 1858. The letter in the Schlesinger Library is incomplete: it consists of a single sheet, folded in half and written on all "four" sides, and a small fragment of a second sheet which includes Jameson's signature, and the phrases: "All proportion of the head" and "On the drapery"—which suggests that the lost portion continues the discussion of the *Zenobia* begun on the first sheet.
25. Carr, *Hosmer*, 140, quotes a letter from Hosmer to Wayman Crow, giving it the date of December 1858, in which the artist refers to "a monstrous lump of clay, which will be. . . Zenobia." This suggests that the sculptor began work on the full-scale clay model late in 1858. Carr,

122, quotes another letter from Hosmer to Carr, giving it the date of March 4, 1858, in which the artist mentions "my mass of clay in its present humanized form" and her need of a scaffolding to work on it; given the date of the letter to Crow and the sequence of letters discussed in note 24 above, this letter should probably be dated March 1859.

26. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Works: Passages from French and Italian Notebooks*, 15 (Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1871), 493-94. Carr, *Hosmer*, 142.
27. Erskine, *Jameson*, 243-45. See also note 24.
28. Evidence concerning Jameson's travels in 1859 is contradictory: Needler, *Letters*, 227; Erskine, *Jameson*, 243-45, 325; Thomas, *Love and Work*, 212; and McPherson, *Life*, 301, who may have confused Jameson's return to Rome in Spring 1858, when she met Hawthorne, with her travels in Summer 1859. If Jameson did visit Rome in 1859, she may well have missed Hosmer, but it is also possible she visited only Germany this summer.
29. Carr, *Hosmer*, 120.
30. *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, 3, 261.
31. *Ibid.*, 141.
32. Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, J. B. Burty, ed., 7 (London: Methuen, 1909), 334.
33. William Ware, *Zenobia, or The Fall of Palmyra*, 2 (New York/Boston: Francis and Francis, 1843), 278-79.
34. Jameson knew Ware's book (see MacPherson, *Life*, 138-39) and could have referred Hosmer to it. The newspaper articles that connect Hosmer's sculpture to the novel are New York *Post*, November 12, 1864; New York *Home Journal*, November 19, 1864; Boston *Commonwealth*, December 31, 1864 and January 14, 1865: all in Hosmer Collection, Watertown.
35. Jameson, *Female Sovereigns*, 32.
36. Letter from Child to Hosmer October 21, 1859, Folder #18, Hosmer Collection, Schlesinger Library: "I do not see the expression of impatience which you say you intended in the hand that gathers up the chain, but perhaps I shall see it in the marble." Carr, *Hosmer*, 145-47, quotes the letter, but omits this sentence.
37. *Sciptores Historiae Augustae*, 3, 135.
38. Cesare Ripa, *Baroque and Rococo Pictorial Imagery: The 1765-1780 Hertel Edition of Ripa's Iconologia*, Edward A. Maser, ed. (New York: Dover, 1971) nos. 126 (Pride) and 136 (Wisdom).
39. Robert Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra, Otherwise Tedmor in the Desert* (London, 1753), 8.
40. Ware, *Zenobia*, 1, 101-5 (quote from 104-5) and 2, 30-3 (quote from 33).
41. Jameson, *Celebrated Sovereigns*, 28.
42. Child, "Letter"; quoted also in Carr, *Hosmer*, 192.
43. Hawthorne, *French and Italian Notebooks*, 188-89, refers to the work now known as the *Athena Giustiniani* as the *Minerva Medica*, the name it was given because it was found near the precinct of Rome's Temple Minerva Medica.
44. Carr, *Hosmer*, 120.
45. *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, 3, 139.
46. Letter from Jameson to Hosmer, Folder #24, Hosmer Collection, Schlesinger Library, see note 24. Carr, *Hosmer*, 149-51, does not include this entire passage when she quotes the letter.
47. Carr, *Hosmer*, 184.
48. Erskine, *Jameson*, 244-45.
49. "Pictures and Statues, British and Foreign, Introduction," *Art Journal* (May 1862), 115; and J. Beavington Atkinson, "Modern Sculpture of All Nations in the International Exhibition of 1862," *Art Journal Illustrated Catalogue of the International Exhibition of 1862* (London/New York, 1862), 320.
50. "Mr. Alfred Gatley," *Art Journal* (September 1863), 181.
51. Jameson quoted in Carr, *Hosmer*, 150. Hosmer quoted in Erskine, *Jameson*, 244-45.
52. Hosmer and Gibson, "Correspondence: Zenobia." For a further account of this episode and Hosmer's response, see Faxon, "Images," 28.
53. Carr, *Hosmer*, 201-2.
54. "Pictures and Statues." New York *Post*, November 12, 1864, and *Watson's Weekly Art Journal*, November 1864, both in Hosmer Collection, Watertown. Whittier's statement appears in Carr, *Hosmer*, 193-94; it accompanied photographs sold during the work's exhibition in the United States: Hosmer Collection, Watertown.
55. New York *Post*, November 12, 1864. Powers quoted in New York *Home Journal*, November 19, 1864 and Boston *Commonwealth*, December 31, 1864: all from Hosmer Collection, Watertown.
56. Carr, *Hosmer*, 171-72.

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