Visual

Reflections

across

the

Mediterranean

Sea

DALPHINATVS

LONBARDIA

GVASCONIA

LIGVSTICVM MARE

ITALIA

GALICVM MARE

CORSICA

HISPANIAE PARS

MARE BALEARIVM

SARDINIA INSVLA

REGNVM GRANATAE

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AFFRICVM MARE

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A PIMo Collection of Essays
edited by Natalie Fritz and Paola von Wyss-Giacosa

Foreword

Natalie Fritz and
Paola von Wyss-Giacosa

When not the object of study in art history or cultural history, pictorial and material sources often lead something of a marginal existence in academic discourse. They grace book covers and illustrate ideas and themes, in the former role, often to drive up sales, in the latter, mainly to liven up a layout.

This statement is deliberately polemical and as such overdrawn, yet there is some truth in it. The importance of these documents for research in the field of connected histories remains underrated. This does them an injustice. Whether everyday objects, sophisticated artefacts or the works of famous artists, as creations and tangible products of the skills and abilities, knowledge, experience and emotional entanglements of human beings through space and time, they may all be considered essential repositories of memory. As such, whatever the medium – drawing or print, map, letter or book, measuring instrument, textile or glass object, mask, painting or film, sculpture or photograph – these sources are to be thought of not as passive entities but as dynamic and many-layered social actors, invested with meaning and an agency resulting from their interaction with people.

It seemed to us that this unique agency of the visual, which we all know and have experienced time and again, could be an appropriate, accessible and vivid means to convey many of the themes that the COST Action "People in Motion: Entangled Histories of Displacement across the Mediterranean (1492–1923)", or "PIMo" for short, is about. Indeed, the PIMo series of "Visual Reflections", which the present volume is based on, started out as a feature of the "News & Views" section of our project's website, as part of our dissemination efforts. To enhance readability and allow the authors simply to have more fun writing, we asked for short contributions, in a colloquial style, without any footnotes. As the introductory paragraph on the PIMo page reads: "Each short essay takes an image as a point of departure for reflecting on the multiple

functions, meanings and expressions of the visual. The common aim is to share with a wider readership the relevance and fascination of exploring the historicity of representation, and the enduring implications of media presence and circulation."

Recently, when we entered "images of people in motion in the Mediterranean" in ChatGPT, the bot replied that there are many images of people in motion in the Mediterranean on the internet. It also informed us that these images can show different situations, for instance, people on boats or rafts, rescue operations by aid agencies or people reaching the coasts. ChatGPT added that it is important to notice that these images often show the difficult circumstances and challenges faced by migrants and refugees. When we refined our question, "What if we understand people in motion *as migration*?", the chatbot's answer was not significantly different – though in this case, we learned, "people in motion" refers to the movements of individuals or groups of people across borders in search of a better life. Always the preacher, ChatGPT also emphasized that migration in the Mediterranean is a complex matter that needs careful consideration.

So, based on our little ChatGPT experiment at least, one might assume that nowadays the "mediatized" Mediterranean is just a body of water full of problems and human tragedy. In this context, the images that typically come to mind are photographs or videos of migrants either crossing the Mediterranean or dying in the attempt. The intention behind the creation and dissemination of these images is usually obvious: either to arouse empathy for the people crossing the sea or helping those in peril, or, on the contrary, to argue for the closure of borders against potentially dangerous illegals. The human tragedy is real, as are the images. But there is much more to the movement of people, and more too to their displacement and dispossession.

Indeed, the pictorial and material media circulating in the broad Mediterranean space, historically and to this day, offer much matter for thought. One of the goals of this collection of essays is to show

that there are many additional perspectives, too, which are not necessarily negative. Over four years, the PIMo project has been concerned with cultural and emotional entanglements, and histories of human movement in and around the Mediterranean from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. An abundance of media report and at the same time archive these journeys and their impact on the individual and the collectivity, allowing researchers from different disciplines and with different interests to approach this broad field from many unique points of view. Such was the popularity among readers and potential authors of the first articles we published online that the collection grew into a book project and the 45 essays printed in this volume. *Visual Reflections across the Mediterranean Sea*, a bit like a horn of plenty, intends to showcase the diversity as well as the communicative power of media through time and space.

Images, be they mental, physical or ideological, are an extraordinarily powerful way to document, store and transport the emotional aspects of human movement, whether forced or voluntary. A journey may be documented with travelogues, maps, photographs or sketches. Representations of plants and animals, artefacts such as coins or weapons, archaeological and architectural vestiges as well as the manifold illustrations of "the other" bear witness to cultural interactions and ideological exchange, often resulting in the adoption, adaptation or critique of own or "other" aesthetic conventions. Many of the essays in the volume focus on how the feelings evoked by leaving, remembering and arriving are conveyed through pictorial and material objects.

   Paul du Gay and Stuart Hall famously offered a model to enable a better grasp and interpretation of the processes and practices involved in the establishment of culture. Because culture is about shared meaning and significance, they argued, it is mandatory to study media in order to understand the worldviews and ideas they promote, as well as to reconstruct the changes in meaning that happen over time. In doing so, we can gain a better grasp of what the cultural, and emotional, entanglements of people in motion may have meant and continue to mean. Whatever the medium, it

is a particular "carrier of meaning", and the visual dimension communicates a certain perspective on a specific issue. The 45 authors use a tremendous range of pictorial and material documents as their points of departure, uncovering and following traces of the individual and collective histories of people in motion in, on and beyond the Mediterranean. Together, the essays allow the reader to explore what culture means and how different kinds of media serve as sources of historical knowledge.

Not least, the articles offer clues to a common language and dialogue for both authors and readers within the chronologically and thematically very broad range of research topics represented in PIMo. This is why we wanted to remain in keeping with what has provided a frame and valuable structure for the project during these past years. The essays are arranged following the label and focus of PIMo's four workgroups: Things in Motion, Ideas in Motion, Paper in Motion and People in Motion. "Things" are the physical artefacts of mobility. Without them, human movement would not be possible. But without "ideas", meaning visions, intellectual incentives and the willingness to explore and exchange, movement would not take place at all. "Paper" stands for the most common and fundamentally important medium around the Mediterranean for recording the outcomes of intercultural exchange and, of course, cartographic knowledge. Finally, by focusing on "people", the agents and chroniclers of human movement, the PIMo project gives the emotional aspect of displacement its due consideration. It goes without saying that the process of sorting the essays according to these four workgroups has been somewhat arbitrary. They often do not fit neatly into their section or, rather, fit more than just one. This effect is, indeed, quite deliberate, as it mirrors the interdependence and permeability of the categories in this multidisciplinary research project, and its enriching complexity. Whether one reads the essays in sequence or skips around, together they form a dense and innovative mosaic of thoughts about human movement, media and meaning-making in a dia- and synchronic context.

Remarkably, ChatGPT is also very "aware" of history as a complex of individually and collectively made experiences, for when asked about entangled history and emotions, it replies that this concept refers to the image of intertwined and interconnected historical events, narratives and experiences, which are relevant for different regions, cultures and societies. The "Visual Reflections" collected here do exactly that, together making a colourful, enjoyable and highly interesting contribution to the multidisciplinary research field of connected histories.

A Molecular Mediterranean and Metaphysical Shipwrecks

Iain Chambers

Yacht with black sails, Bay of Naples.
Photo by Iain Chambers, under interna-
tional Creative Commons Attribu-
tion-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0
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A consistently and purely maritime perspective on the
land is difficult for a territorial observer to comprehend.
Our common language constructs its markers quite
self-evidently from the land.

Carl Schmitt, *Land and Sea: A World-Historical Meditation*

Reflection is the courage to make the truth of our own
presupposition and the realm of our own goals into the
things that most deserve to be called into question.

Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture"

Schmitt and Heidegger: two deeply conservative thinkers, and both directly associated with Nazism, who nevertheless leave us with a radical interrogation of the manner and method of our thinking. As in all Occidental philosophy, what they have to say is bound to the negated geography of their language. There are no bodies here, and certainly no others; or rather the latter are displaced and reduced to the excluded world upon which they build their pronouncements. Both thinkers are obsessed with the West's worlding of the world. Although they never give up on the white myth of the universalism of their thinking, they do take us to the limits of that constellation and there undermine the attempted transformation of truth into the "certainty of representation" (Heidegger). They insist, even if they refuse to grasp fully the consequences, of a shift in the plan, the projection and the paradigm. In their melancholy conclusions both join hands with Hölderlin and turn back to the gods for salvation. However, we know only too well that melancholy marks a blockage, a refusal to work through the wreckage and remains of the past in order to pull out of the teeth of history another configuration of the present. Even the most acute of contemporary philosophers – here thinking of modern migration reduced to the anonymity of Giorgio Agamben's noted definition of the "camp" and "bare life" – still move within this metaphysical cage. This is to remain within the limits of a discourse, a paradigm, a particular history. The sea proposes more than this.

   With no pretense to speak outside the cage, stripped of my language and formation, it is nevertheless possible and necessary to

look through the gaps between the bars. It remains impossible for me to cut myself loose and fully adopt, as though from scratch, another language and history. So, while I will abandon them on the shore, the voices of Schmitt and Heidegger continue to echo in my attempt to disband the colonial method of the West. This, in its extremes, may also mean to recognize the fascism and racism within the very body of my language, thinking and practices. To recognize is to begin to redeem that tradition, expose it and render it vulnerable to the previously unauthorized.

The Challenge of the Sea

Recently reading Cristina Sharpe's *In the Wake*, I was struck by the following description:

> In the wake, the semiotics of the slave ship continue: from the forced movements of the enslaved to the forced movements of the migrant and the refugee, to the regulation of Black people in North American streets and neighborhoods, to those ongoing crossings of and drownings in the Mediterranean Sea, to the brutal colonial reimaginings of the slave ship and the ark; to the reappearances of the slave ship in everyday life in the form of the prison, the camp, and the school.

And then considering death at sea, the corpses left to decompose in marine graves – those of the slaves thrown overboard from the British slave ship *Zong* evoked in William Turner's famous painting of 1840 *The Slave Ship*, and those of today's migrants rebuffed and rendered non-persons by European law – she writes:

> What happened to the bodies? By which I mean, what happened to the components of their bodies in salt water? Anne Gardulski tells me that because nutrients cycle through the ocean (the process of organisms eating organisms is the cycling of nutrients through the

Isaac Julien, *Western Union, Small Boats*, three screen video installation, 2007. Published with kind permission of the artist.

ocean), the atoms of those people who were thrown overboard are out there in the ocean even today. They were eaten, organisms processed them, and those organisms were in turn eaten and processed, and the cycle continues. Around 90 to 95 percent of the tissues of things that are eaten in the water column get recycled. As Anne told me, "Nobody dies of old age in the ocean". The amount of time it takes for a substance to enter the ocean and then leave the ocean is called residence time. Human blood is salty, and sodium, Gardulski tells me, has a residence time of 260 million years. And what happens to the energy that is produced in the waters? It continues cycling like atoms in residence time. We, Black people, exist in the residence time of the wake, a time in which "everything is now. It is all now" (Toni Morrison).

In this molecular reactivation of the Atlantic slave trade set within the contemporary necro-politics of modern Mediterranean migration, where the historical weight of the adjective black stretches back and forth across the Atlantic and into the Mediterranean,

we catch the sharp sense of a temporality that refuses to pass. As Avery Gordon has put it: "How do we reckon with what modern history has rendered ghostly?" Here the modern market economy and its dependence on subordinate labor, most dramatically rendered explicit in slavery (both past and present), touches the deeper tempos of ecological decomposition and re-composition on time scales beyond the human.

The Mediterranean is frequently evoked as the metaphor for the multifarious faces of modernity: from its presumed roots in classical Greece to the ever tighter intertwining of Africa, Asia and Europe in its waters induced by today's immigration "crisis". From the beginning to the end of this parabola, questions of cultural identity, together with historical and political authority, have been elaborated, contested and imposed. Sedimented in its waters, as though in a liquid archive, both ancient amphorae and contemporary migrant bodies propose an inescapable materiality that breaches the metaphorical consolation of language. Unable to reduce the complex spatiotemporal heterogeneity of this stretch of water to a unique narrative, our language inevitably splutters on the edge of the unsaid and the indecipherable. The sea, with its fluid and tempestuous custody of the ebb and flow of histories we seek to know, frustrates our rationality. This maritime challenge, famously rehearsed by Friedrich Nietzsche ("... at last our ships can put out again, no matter what the danger, the sea, our sea lies there open before us ..."), suggests, beyond the more obvious appeal to the necessity of interdisciplinary and trans-national analyses, the registration of limits, confines and borders. Such limits are never simply barriers. They are also productive in their invitation to consider what exceeds our conception and control. To take an obvious example, we could consider the most widely spoken language, in all of its variants and dialects, in the Mediterranean Basin: Arabic. Perhaps an "Arabic Mediterranean", in the manner we Europeans are accustomed to consider such coordinates, does not exist. As a minimum it certainly evokes a very different set of perspectives and lexicons. It suggests an archive that does not merely mirror a subaltern and repressed version of that elaborated over the

last two centuries on the northern European shore. At the same time, this is not to propose a separate alternative, but rather to consider the underside and the unconscious dimensions of a Mediterranean which when laid out flat as the map betrays the limits of its modern European inscription.

On the Beach

Through this detour we can now return to the Mediterranean and to the sea. In commemorating the termination of western metaphysics (although, of course, it refuses to be overcome), we not only find ourselves on the shore learning other coordinates and listening to other languages, but have also acquired a deep skepticism towards the knowledges and methodologies that continue to dominate explanations of the modern world. If that inheritance cannot be abandoned – we would be left speechless and powerless – it can nevertheless be crossed, confused and confuted by other trajectories. This might draw us towards the more inclusive concept of difference without separability proposed by the Afro-Brasilian philosopher Denise Ferreira da Silva.

To think *with* the Mediterranean in the light of the wreckage on the shore, that is to remove it from the calculus of Occidental objectivity and relocate in the intersecting currents that composes the historical density, cultural complexity *and* epistemological challenge of a dynamic constellation irreducible to a single language or point of view, no matter how universal its claims, is to decolonize and de-link it. By that I mean to renegotiate historical sense and cultural semantics in an altogether more extensive series of concerns not necessarily authorized in the semantics of Europe and the West. This is not to opt for the other shore in the search for a separate and distinctive view. I do not read Arabic or Turkish. If I cannot "go native", neither do I wish to speak for the other. Rather, what I seek to touch and register (rather than represent) are the subaltern, negated and repressed histories sustained and suspended *within* the Mediterranean that compose its complexity, trespass the existing frame and interrogate my language.

Things

in

Motion

Display and Displacement: The Bronze Head of Augustus from Meroë

Marc Bundi

1

The Sudan National Museum in the Sudanese capital Khartoum houses an extensive collection of artefacts and architectural elements, mostly related to the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia (1960–1980), but also artefacts brought in from other parts of the country. In addition, there are some individual objects of various origins and times such as a bronze head of Augustus which is the subject of this essay.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on 2 September 2022, the Sudan's National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums (NCAM) decided to close down the museum and focus on the preparations for a previously announced comprehensive rehabilitation project. Since 15 April 2023, a war between the regular army and paramilitary forces has been ravaging Sudan. In Khartoum, the intense fighting has trapped civilians in a humanitarian crisis and displaced tens of thousands. The rumours of destruction and looting of the Sudan National Museum have not been confirmed so far. However, Sudan's museums and millennia of heritage are caught in the crossfire.

Visitors who had the opportunity to visit the museum before its closure may have noticed that in the permanent exhibition objects of Christian art are far better represented than objects of Islamic art. The Christian gallery on the second floor features a unique collection of medieval wall paintings discovered during the Nubian campaign in the early 1960s in five churches in Lower Nubia. They were brought to Khartoum for restoration and eventually, in 1971, were placed by the secular government in power in the newly built museum. Their toleration by the successive Islamist regimes bears witness to the contradictions of Islamic conservatism. The same applies to the display of statues. While Yusuf al-Qaradawi, influential Egyptian Islamic scholar and author of a compendium on what is allowed and forbidden in Islam, was fundamentally opposed to statues because of the high risk that they could be worshipped, Hassan al-Turabi – at the time Sudan's leading Islamic ideologist and influential Islamic cleric – advocated a more

pragmatic approach, which aimed to encourage all kinds of artistic expression as long as they were meant to enhance the religious experience. This may explain why the monumental statues of Kushite sovereigns on display on the ground floor of the Sudan National Museum have hitherto remained unharmed, although their destruction was seriously contemplated by militant Islamists in the late 1980s.

Overshadowed by the monumental statues, in a dim corner of the museum, an object was on display that one would not expect to find in this place, far beyond the southern boundaries of the former Roman Empire. It is an over-life-sized Roman bronze head, broken through the neck, representing Rome's first emperor, Augustus (who ruled 27 BC–AD 14), in the main, Prima Porta portrait type (*Fig. 1*). Despite its beauty, it did not capture the attention of many who visited, and the object label in Arabic and English only provided the most basic information. The text explained that the bronze head of the Roman emperor Augustus was found beneath the threshold of a temple in the royal city of Meroë; that it probably formed part of the plunder taken by the Kushites during their raids on the Egyptian frontier; that this head is a facsimile and that the original is in the British Museum. Indeed, there, a much-noticed and highly acclaimed *Head of Augustus* – also referred to as the *Meroë Head* – is registered under museum number 1911,0901.1 and displayed at eye level in a glass case in the Wolfson Gallery (Room 70), a section of the museum dedicated to the Roman Empire (*Fig. 2*). The label for the head and the additional information on the museum's website reveal that the head of the Roman emperor Augustus, with inset eyes of glass and stone, is from an over-life-sized statue of Augustus, very likely erected in an Egyptian town near the first cataract of the Nile at Aswan to mark the presence of the emperor on the edges of the Roman Empire, and looted by an invading Kushite army in 25 BC.

The head, torn from the statue, was later buried under the threshold of a small temple dedicated to victory in the Kushite capital

Meroë, so that it would be permanently below the feet of its Meroitic captors. Ironically, it is precisely this act of ritual humiliation that preserved the head which was excavated in 1910 by John Garstang (1876–1956), then Professor of Methods and Practice of Archaeology at the University of Liverpool, and donated in 1911 by the Sudan Excavation Committee to the British Museum.

The available literature on the *Meroë Head* provides insightful information on the history of the discovery of the head and on the circumstances of its transfer to England. The "Roman bronze portrait head of heroic size", as it was described by its discoverer, was unearthed by John Garstang's team in December 1910 in the course of excavations carried out for the Sudan Excavation Committee in Meroë from November 1910 to February 1911. The news of the unexpected discovery of the superb specimen of Roman art spread quickly and attracted prominent visitors, such as Lord Kitchener, who had been touring Sudan, and the then Governor General, Sir Francis Reginald Wingate, with his wife. By the end of the excavation season, in mid-February 1911, 37 crates of archaeological finds, including the *Meroë Head*, were shipped from Port Sudan to England.

It must be stressed here, that, following the promulgation of the first Sudanese Antiquities Ordinance in 1905, antiquities could no longer be taken out of the country without a written licence from the Conservator of Antiquities. However, although not explicitly mentioned, the ordinance covered the division of finds between the institutions sponsoring archaeological excavations and the Sudan Government and it was not infrequent for the most prestigious objects to be allocated to museums affiliated to foreign missions. The shipment of the *Meroë Head* was covered by a provisional agreement arranged between Garstang and Peter Drummond, then Acting Conservator of Antiquities.

As unpublished documents from the archives of Sudan's National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums show, by shipping the

Meroë Head to England, Garstang had created a fait accompli that would be difficult to reverse. In reaction to a telegram from Governor General Reginald F. Wingate, on 22 February 1911 in a letter addressed to James Currie, then Director of Education in Sudan, Garstang acknowledged that the "great bronze head" was not to be regarded, pending final negotiations, as the property of the expedition under his charge. In the same letter, Garstang noted that he was entitled to publicly exhibit the head but that the terms of agreement arranged provisionally between him and Peter Drummond might be cancelled or modified.

In a second letter dated 23 February 1911, entitled "The Bronze Head and Antiquities of Meroé" and addressed to the Governor General of the Sudan, Garstang intimated compliance with the stipulations laid down by Wingate in his telegram and acknowledged that he had given written assurance that he held himself responsible for the safe custody of the head, pending settlement as to its final destiny. In a second part of the letter, "in order to shorten correspondence, to avoid misunderstanding, and to facilitate ... at the same time [Wingate's] own deliberations", Garstang expressed his "personal feelings" on the matter:

> The basis of my own opinion is an assumption (still to be verified) that the bronze head in question is an example of Graeco-Roman Art (probably of the age of Augustus), that its presence in the Sudan is accidental, the result of individual caprice which might as well have sent it to the Roman Frontiers in Britain or in Syria. It does not seem to me to recall, or to have been intended to refer to, any special historical incident or period peculiar to Meroë or the Sudan. At the same time it is a striking piece of work, a fine example of art, worthy of study and worthy of a place where all may see it. It is certainly the best single object that I have had the pleasure of finding during the twelve years devoted to active excavation, and I have had to stifle my own desire to retain it in Liverpool.

After these "personal" considerations with reference to the interpretation and the artistic quality of the *Meroë Head*, Garstang drew the following conclusion:

> The more I think of it dispassionately the more I realize that under the circumstances there is only one place fit and appropriate to receive it. Namely the British Museum. There it would have a permanent security, it would be the focus of our Empire, the whole world could see it without a serious detour. In Liverpool its usefulness would be less: in Khartoum it would be accessible only to the few, and in course of time it would be more exposed to danger of destruction in times of disturbance or at the hands of the fanatic.

In a last part of the letter, Garstang suggested the next steps to be taken:

> My final steps then, after arrival of the head in England, would be to ascertain by consultation and comparison whether my first assumption is correct, and to inform your Excellency of any different opinion. Then I would make provisional overtures to the British Museum, and I would ask for obvious reasons that these negotiations should be left in my hands. We should require an equivalent in value, to include a number of exact facsimiles for ourselves and Khartoum.

At the end of the same letter, Garstang expressed his awareness "that there will be some outcry in Khartoum and in Liverpool, on the part of those whose enthusiasm overcomes their better judgement" and concluded, convinced, that this would however not affect the issue.

Once in England, in May 1911 the *Meroë Head* was put on temporary display at the Liverpool Museum. In July of the same year,

prior to a division of the finds between the members of the Sudan Excavation Committee, the head was displayed with the other objects that had been allowed to leave Sudan in an exhibition under the patronage of Lord Kitchener in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House in London.

While Garstang was determined to have the *Meroë Head* at the British Museum, a member of the University of Liverpool Institute of Archaeology's prominently staffed Sudan Excavation Committee proposed that the head should be auctioned among the committee members. However, the proposal was defeated when Garstang made the questionable assertion that the Sudan Government had only allowed the head to leave the country on condition that it should be placed in the British Museum.

The *Meroë Head* was eventually acquired by the British Museum through the liberality of the Sudan Excavation Committee, owing to a contribution by the National Art Collections Fund towards further excavations. Additionally, a number of casts of the *Meroë Head* were made for members of the Sudan Excavation Committee. In all likelihood, the facsimile designated for Khartoum mentioned in Garstang's letter and a facsimile on display at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford belong to the same set of bronze casts.

Its beauty and remarkable preservation, as well as the fascinating story of its rediscovery, made the *Meroë Head* instantly famous. Photographs taken upon the discovery in Meroë greatly contributed to this fame. For the photo shoot, the head was placed on an improvised tripod, while a bed sheet was used as a backdrop (*Fig. 3*). Following its acquisition by the British Museum, the head was widely publicized and translated into different commodities. In 1911, three photographs providing frontal and lateral views of the *Meroë Head* were published by the Sudan Excavation Committee on a printed cover at a nominal price. On 12 August 1911 these photographs appeared in the *Illustrated London News* and were later published in 1912 by Robert C. Bosanquet in the *Annals of*

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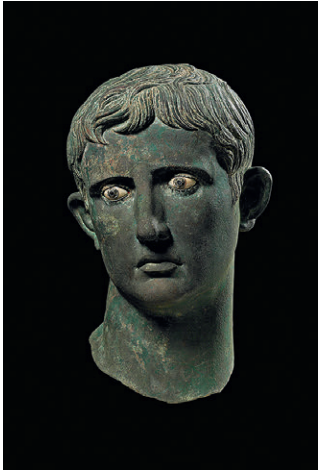
4

² The Meroë Head of Augustus on display at the British Museum. Photo courtesy of the British Museum, London. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

³ "Site 292: Augustus Head". In the background, Robin Horsfall – who volunteered his services to John Garstang – holding a backcloth. Meroë, 1911. The photograph was most likely taken by Horst Schliephack, Garstang's Chief Assistant and photographer of the expedition. Photo courtesy of the Garstang Museum of Archaeology, University of Liverpool.

⁴ Toppled head of the statue of Emperor Augustus at the British Museum. Photo courtesy and copyright of Alecsandra Drăgoi, London.

Archaeology and Anthropology. The photograph showing the left lateral portrait was included in the 1912 edition of J. C. Stobart's *The Grandeur that was Rome*. The publication of the photographs in illustrated magazines, scientific publications and popular books contributed to the growing popularity of the artefact. The *Meroë Head* is a British Museum "highlight". It was selected as the thirty-fifth object in the *A History of the World in 100 Objects* series written and narrated by then British Museum director Neil MacGregor and broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 2010. The book accompanying the series was published in the same year. In 2014, as a part of the British Museum's "Object in Focus" range, the British Museum published an introductory guide to the *Meroë Head of Augustus*.

In the context of the 2004–2005 *Sudan: Ancient Treasures* exhibition devoted to Nubian and Sudanese antiquities, Neil MacGregor, then director of the British Museum, organized public debates around key objects from Sudan in the British Museum collection in order to put the genocidal events happening at the time in Darfur and other issues facing Sudan into a different and wider context. The *Meroë Head* was at the centre of one of these debates which set out, among other things, to banish the notion that Sudan had always been in the shadow of Egypt. The intention was, according to MacGregor, rather to remind that "the Sudanese, the Kushites, were the people who had invaded Egypt under the pharaohs and conquered the Romans and captured the statue of Augustus" and to allow the Sudanese diaspora "to reappropriate their own history, their own culture, in a way that … is impossible to do in Sudan". In my opinion, this use of archaeology to restore Sudanese pride is problematic since it risks inflaming nationalist sentiments. The equating of the Sudanese with the Kushites is likewise problematic, because it implies a form of essentialism and ignores the broad Sudanese ethnic spectrum. Finally, also the claim that the exhibition allowed the Sudanese to regain possession of their own history and their culture is problematic.

At the end of 2014, beginning of 2015, the *Meroë Head* was briefly presented in a new display in Room 3 of the British Museum together with the story of its discovery. The temporary exhibition curated by Thorsten Opper was entitled *The Meroë Head of Augustus: Africa defies Rome*. The exhibition aimed to show how this potent symbol of Rome's authority became a symbol of African resistance.

In the first half of 2018, on loan from the British Museum, the *Meroë Head* returned as a part of the *BBC Civilisation Festival* for temporary display in the Victoria Gallery and Museum in Liverpool, where it had been briefly exhibited more than a century before. The exhibition was accompanied by a public symposium aiming to bring the object and its era to life. On the University of Liverpool website announcing the symposium, the *Meroë Head* was presented as a symbol of power and defiance: "It was meant to be a potent symbol of the power of Rome. Instead, the Meroë Head of Augustus ... became an emblem of defiance and resistance to Roman rule".

Upon its return to the British Museum, the head was included in the British Museum exhibition *I Object: Ian Hislop's Search for Dissent*, showcasing 100 objects that challenge the official version of events and defy the established narratives. The head was displayed laying down on its side, thus harking back to the state in which it was originally discovered and serving as an emblem of mocked power. Contrary to the approach, adopted by Neil MacGregor, of using a glorious past to camouflage a dramatic present, Ian Hislop, editor of the British satirical magazine *Private Eye*, selected the *Head of Augustus from Meroë* as an object which particularly challenges and defies such narratives (*Fig. 4*).

The *Meroë Head*, very likely crafted in Egypt around 27–25 BC, based on a standardized mould created in Rome, is, as British archaeologist Anna L. Boozer has convincingly argued elsewhere, emblematic of imperial and colonial relationships. Originally

erected on Rome's most southerly frontier as a potent symbol of power to mark Roman dominion over the edge of the empire, the emperor's image was ritually decapitated and the head carried to the Kushite capital, Meroë, where it was buried beneath the steps of a victory monument, so it would be symbolically trampled on by the worshipers. Brought to the colonial metropole under dubious circumstances and under the pretext of saving it from the danger of destruction, it first became a display of the glory of the British Empire. Then, it was reinterpreted as a symbol of the power of the Kushite sovereigns, allegedly to flatter the pride of the Sudanese and to help them regain possession of their own history. Eventually, the *Meroë Head* became an emblem of defiance and resistance to Roman rule and, more generally, an emblem of mocked power.

What does the *Meroë Head* actually mean to the Sudanese? Only the few who have the chance to visit the head in the British Museum can answer this question. Those who visited the Sudan National Museum had to make do with the facsimile, which lacks the aura of the original but nevertheless conveys a powerful aesthetic experience. The ongoing war in the Sudan raises the fear that the Sudanese will continue to be deprived of this experience for the near future or, at worst, forever. However, it is to be hoped that the Sudanese will have the opportunity to challenge established narratives and to continue working on their own interpretations of "their" *Head of Augustus*, whose dramatic and piercing eyes "won't look at you" – as Neil MacGregor aptly observed – but "past you, beyond you, to something much more important: his future".

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Trade Wars and Counterfeiting in the Mediterranean: The Zecchino of Venice

Giorgio Giacosa

The Mediterranean has always been the seam between East and West, between different ethnic groups and civilizations often in bitter conflict but bound together by a web of enduring economic and trading interests.

In this context, in the last four centuries of the Middle Ages, some of the Italian maritime cities, driven by strong political and economic revival in Europe, embarked upon a policy of expansion towards the East, supported by the construction of powerful trading and military fleets. The extreme decadence of the Byzantine Empire, mercilessly exposed by the Crusades, together with the gradually increasing strength of the hostile Muslim potentates in Asia Minor and North Africa, prompted the Italian and Catalan maritime cities to adopt an out-and-out policy of force to consolidate ever-more widespread and deep-rooted trading interests.

Such a policy inevitably triggered conflicts and wars between the maritime cities themselves. Two of these, Genoa and Venice, emerged victorious in these struggles. Destined to dwarf every other trading power in the Mediterranean, at the same time they would be in a perpetual state of conflict with each other over the centuries. Until the end of the Middle Ages, they would effectively dominate the Mediterranean. The political power of Genoa would wane in the sixteenth century, though it remained a very wealthy financial centre for centuries. Venice, reinforced by the conquest of an extensive hinterland, continued to be a commercial and political power for a further two centuries, thanks above all to its large fleet. In this period, albeit with progressive losses, it sustained its empire in the eastern Mediterranean, engaging in a number of epic battles against its mortal Turkish foe. One need only mention the battle of Lepanto, where Venice contributed no fewer than 107 battle galleys, plus six galleasses (the battleships of the time), to the total of 212 galleys forming the Christian coalition fleet; or the heroic defence of Crete, which dragged on, amidst continual clashes, for no less than 24 years.

Moreover, Venice's economic interests in the East were still very considerable. In the 1600s there were still four thousand Venetian families operating on the Serenissima's behalf in the great

emboriums of the Levant – in Damascus, Aleppo, Cairo, Alexandria, Baghdad and even Hormuz. In 1603 the volume of Venetian trade in the Aleppo marketplace alone had an estimated value of one and a half million gold ducats per year, around half the trade of all the other Christian states combined.

It was in this world that the gold ducat of Venice, later called the zecchino, was minted (*Fig. 1* and *Fig. 2*). It is the only coin in the world that retained, for the over 500 years of its uninterrupted existence, the same images, the same epigraphs, the same weight and the same absolute purity of the metal. And in Italy today, the expression "oro zecchino" is still used to describe pure gold.

For over five hundred years, from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century, the zecchino was the hegemonic currency of the Mediterranean, sought-after and used everywhere, imitated and counterfeited everywhere, even in France and India.

It was in 1284, during the rule of Doge Giovanni Dandolo, that the Great Council decided to issue a gold coin for the first time. Venice's rival cities, Genoa and Florence, had already minted their own gold coin 32 years earlier, in order to better tackle the enormous rise in commercial transactions. Until then Venice had used as gold coinage the Byzantine coins circulating in the Latin Empire established in Constantinople in 1204 with the crucial help and support of the Venetians. After the collapse of the short-lived and abhorred Latin Empire in 1261, and the restoration of the Byzantine Empire under the Palaiologos dynasty, supported by the Genoese (immediately favoured by the new power with the Treaty of Nymphaeum), Venice no longer had any reason to sustain the now devalued and debased Byzantine hyperpyron. The republic also felt the need to counter the new gold coins of Genoa and Florence, especially as the latter's gold florin had quickly proved to be extremely popular. The delay in the decision to issue a gold coin may have been due in part to the fact that the Venetian silver gross, minted since the final years of the twelfth century, had a very wide circulation and was itself a well-known and appreciated international coin accepted everywhere and imitated by many foreign mints.

These, then, were the characteristics of the new gold ducat, the first exemplars of which were struck in the spring of 1285: 67 pure gold coins were to be obtained from each gold mark ("tam bona et fina ut est florenus"), and each coin was to have a value of 18 silver grosses. A system of bimetallism was introduced in Venice too, as had already happened for Genoa and Florence, with a ratio of around 1 to 11 between gold and silver. The ducat, which would take the name of the zecchino when Francesco Donà was doge (1545–1553), retained its intrinsic value of 24 carats (0.997 of pure gold) right through until the fall of the Republic. There would be just three entirely insignificant reductions in weight, the first in 1491 from 3.559 g to 3.53 g, and then twice more in the first half of the sixteenth century, to 3.51 g and finally to 3.49 g.

The ducat retained the same identical depiction under the rule of all the 73 doges that minted it: on the obverse Saint Mark is handing the standard to the kneeling doge. The legend bears the name of the doge on the right and S M VENET(I) on the left; along the pole of the standard is the word DUX. On the reverse is the Blessing Christ standing in an elliptical halo scattered with stars with the legend SIT T XPE DAT Q TU REGIS ISTE DUCAT (Sit tibi Christe datus quem tu regis iste ducatus). This is a perfect hexameter, the so-called *leonino,* that is to say, with the final word rhyming with the penthemimeral caesura (in the middle of the third foot). The literal translation is as follows: "Let this duchy which thou rulest be dedicated to thee, O Christ".

In the 512 years between the striking of the first ducat of Giovanni Dandolo and those of the last doge Ludovico Manin in 1797, and then in the zecchini issued by Francis II of Habsburg Lorraine as head of the Holy Roman Empire and Duke of Venice between 1798 and 1805, and also the ones he issued with the name of Francis I of Austria in 1815, the figurative elements on both sides remained the same. However, the style did change following the general evolution of the art. The depictions on the prototypes and the successive fourteenth- and fifteenth-century issues, rendered in a magnificent Gothic style, were followed by a gradual softening in the rendering of the bodies of Christ,

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³ Caffa, Filippo Maria Visconti (Duke of Milan and Lord of Genoa, 1421–1435), ducat. Photo by Giorgio Giacosa, under international Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license.

⁴ Pera, Filippo Maria Visconti (Duke of Milan and Lord of Genoa, 1421–1435), ducat. Photo by Giorgio Giacosa, under international Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license.

⁵ Malta, Knights of St. John, Grand Master Fra Jean de la Valette (1557–1568), zecchino. Private collection.

⁶ India, local imitation of a Venetian zecchino, eighteenth century. Private collection.

Saint Mark and the doge, resulting in a Baroque style in strident contrast with the unchanged structure in which the figures themselves were positioned, in particular the elliptical, star-studded Gothic frame (the so-called *mandorla*) that surrounded the figure of Christ.

The hegemonic currency in the Mediterranean for over five hundred years, the ducat or zecchino was imitated or counterfeited by a great many states, in many different periods and contexts.

Imitations are defined as coins which are figuratively identical on both the obverse and reverse, but are distinguished from the original by the writing, which, on one or both sides, indicate, though sometimes in a highly succinct or ambiguous manner, the name of the authority, prince or place of issue.

Counterfeit coins are those where it is impossible to ascertain who issued them: in this case the lettering was copied with varying degrees of skill from that of the original coins or was illegible, composed of meaningless characters.

In both cases, whether imitations or counterfeits, those producing them counted on the resemblance of the figurations to the original, in the certain knowledge that widespread illiteracy combined with the hurried nature of business transactions would pose an obstacle to reading the lettering and hence to recognizing copied or counterfeit coins.

Where possible, the Republic protested and threatened, though generally to little effect. For example, the Republic complained to the princess of Dombes, Anne Marie of Montpensier (1650–1693) for having placed the image of Saint Mark on her imitative zecchini, which were fraudulently released onto the Turkish market. She replied that Saint Mark was the patron saint of Trévouz, just as he was of Venice, insofar as he had been particularly venerated after the plague had subsided following his intercession. At this point the complaints ceased.

These purely fraudulent ends (imitated or counterfeit coins always had a lower gold content and sometimes a slightly lower weight) were often combined with a more subtly political intent to wage a trade war.

Introducing onto the market, together with real zecchini, debased coinage generated confusion and undermined the fame and repute of the original. Genoa employed this tactic extensively, especially during its centuries-long struggle with Venice.

Apart from an imitation issued directly by Genoa towards 1554, the initiative was left, above all in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to the various Genoese lords who, during the break-up of the Byzantine empire, had, effectively if not in name, carved out independent possessions for themselves in the Aegean islands: Chio (Scio), where, from the fourteenth century onwards, a Genoese trading company exploited the lucrative trade in mastic, released thousands of hard-to-distinguish counterfeit coins onto the market until the middle of the sixteenth century, together with imitations bearing the letter S (Scio). Then there was Phocaea, where the Genoese nobles Cattaneo della Volta and then the Gattilusios exploited the rich alum mines, issuing a large number of counterfeits and imitations; and Lesbos (Mytilene), where Francesco Gattilusio and his successors coined imitations. In the fifteenth century imitations were even struck by Pera, the Genoese enclave of Constantinople; and even further afield, in the remote Crimea, the governors of the important Genoese colony of Caffa issued very well-made imitations in the fifteenth century bearing the proud wording "GENUIT ME IANUA CAFFAM" (*Fig. 3* and *Fig. 4*).

Other very rare fifteenth-century imitations were issued by a Genoese commander-governor, Geronimo Sauli, in another small Genoese possession at Cembalo (modern-day Balaklava) in the Crimea.

Apart from the Genoese-inspired imitations, all motivated by fraudulent and political aims, significant numbers of counterfeit coins were produced by the Turks; and, in the fourteenth century, the prince of Achaia, Robert d'Angiò, struck coins in electrum in Glarentza. The Knights of Saint John openly adopted the model of the Venetian ducat because of its prestige; up until the middle of the fifteenth century, all the Grand Masters, first in Rhodes and then in Malta, had their name put on it (*Fig. 5*).

Even the papal government of Rome felt the need to produce, for almost a century between the 1300s and 1400s, imitations of the Venetian ducat. And as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century, at the height of the Napoleonic era, Florence coined zecchino imitations for trade with Turkey; while in France, the princess of Dombes and Prince William Henry of Nassau, the prince of Orange, coined imitations of the zecchino with a view to introducing them fraudulently into the Turkish market in the second half of the seventeenth century.

The fame of the zecchino even reached India, where, in the eighteenth century, numerous crude imitations were coined in gold and in electrum (*Fig. 6*).

Finally, mention must be made of the light Balkan imitations produced for jewellery, given that local and "gypsy" populations had the custom of wearing necklaces of fake coins and of decorating jerkins and belts with light reproductions of Turkish and Venetian coins.

It can therefore be concluded without doubt that the Venetian ducat or zecchino – together with its derivations – played a fundamental role in the economic and political life of the Mediterranean for centuries.

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The "Second Life" of the Mensa Isiaca: The Circulation of Ancient Gods in Modern History

Sergio Botta

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In 2018, a visitor to Los Angeles could have observed an extraordinary example of the circulation of knowledge about polytheistic gods in the ancient world and modern history. The Mensa Isiaca, a bronze tablet depicting several figures of Egyptian origin (*Fig. 1*), was displayed at the J. Paul Getty Museum as part of the exhibition *Beyond the Nile: Egypt and the Classical World*, which explored cross-cultural interactions and influences between Egypt and different parts of the ancient Mediterranean world. This was just one more stop on the long journey of the Mensa Isiaca.

The Mensa Isiaca is an object depicting Egyptian figures that was a product of the circulation of ideas and knowledge in the ancient Mediterranean. After its rediscovery at the beginning of modern history, it went on the move, crossing Italy and Europe and raising questions among intellectuals and antiquarians about its construction, origin and significance.

The Mensa Isiaca is a bronze tablet, 75 cm high, 128 cm wide and about 5 cm thick. Its surface is inlaid with various polychrome metals (silver, copper and an alloy known as "niello") depicting scenes of ritual offerings to gods and other figures emblematic of ancient Egypt. When it was rediscovered, the images on the Mensa were regarded as original Egyptian hieroglyphics. However, it was an object without parallels in ancient history, and right up to the twentieth century its origin was still considered enigmatic. In 1978, a publication by Enrica Leospo enabled scholars to systematically analyse the contents of the bronze tablet and identify its main sections (which she designated with the letters A to E) and the deities contained within them (she assigned numbers to the main figures portrayed in each scene).

According to Leospo, the female figure in the centre of the Mensa, who is portrayed under a sort of canopy, represents the goddess Isis, the deity within the Egyptian pantheon who gives the tablet its name. Isis was the wife of the god of the afterlife, Osiris, and mother of the god Horus; she was symbolized in Egyptian astronomy by the star Sirius.

Over time, many scholars came to believe that the Mensa was a product of the Italian Renaissance; however, there is currently consensus that the metallurgical techniques required for the Mensa's construction were unknown in Italy at that time. During its "second life" in the Renaissance, some esotericists emphasized a supposed mystical interpretation of the Mensa and its connection to occult meanings or alchemical traditions, a common interpretation of objects of alleged Egyptian origin that were rediscovered during early modern times. Consider, for example, the famous *Corpus Hermeticum*, a collection of philosophical/religious writings considered to belong to ancient Egyptian literature that had, in fact, been written in imperial times (second to third century CE). During the Renaissance, these texts were imaginatively attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and were the source of inspiration for Hermetic and Neoplatonic thinkers. Subsequently, esotericists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries continued to regard the *Corpus Hermeticum* as the foundation of a hidden system of thought that spanned the history of the western world. Similarly, some well-known esotericists of the nineteenth century, such as Éliphas Levi and William Wynn Westcott, were convinced that the Mensa Isiaca contained a hidden language that would allow, for example, the 22 Major Arcana of the Tarot to be deciphered.

However, it is now believed that the Mensa Isiaca was not produced in ancient Egypt and that the hieroglyphs and figures portrayed on it are not authentic, but if anything should be considered Egyptianized, that is, made posterior to the ancient Egyptian civilization. Scholars agree that the Mensa may constitute a reworking of some wall decorations from an ancient Egyptian temple that were made to be used as an altar in a Roman temple honouring the Egyptian goddess Isis. As such, the tablet is an extraordinary example of the cultural movement of ideas and representations, the transfer of Isiac rites to imperial Rome and a visual translation of Greek hymns to Isis.

The Mensa was probably made in Rome between the first century BCE and the first century CE to embellish the altar of a temple dedicated to the cult of Isis. However, it is not possible

to entirely rule out the possibility that the tablet was produced during the reigns of Hadrian or Diocletian. In any case, the presence of Egyptianizing objects in Rome is attested from the reign of the emperor Caligula, as evidenced by several repressive ordinances through which, during the first century CE, the Senate attempted to limit the spread of the cult of Isis, which was in danger of supplanting the traditional civil religion. Although no other similar objects are known to have been produced in Rome, the Mensa is not an isolated case; in fact, luxurious objects incorporating Egyptian-style decorations proliferated among the Roman elite during that period.

Nonetheless, the most fascinating aspect of the Mensa Isiaca is related to its modern story. After disappearing for centuries, the bronze tablet reappeared when Renaissance culture was going through a period of renewed interest in Egypt and past civilizations fostered by a series of findings of Egyptian or Egyptianizing objects. The Mensa was probably found in Rome in the early sixteenth century, although the precise date and circumstances of its discovery are unknown. Some speculations claim that it was discovered in 1527, following the sack of Rome by the lansquenets. According to this theory, after its discovery, the bronze tablet came into the hands of Cardinal Pietro Bembo (another name by which it is known is the Tabula Bembina), who bought it from a blacksmith in Bologna and took it to Padua, where he had a collection of works of art from different periods. Other hypotheses, however, claim that the date of acquisition by Bembo was after Alessandro Farnese's accession to the papal throne as Paul III in 1534.

Although it is unclear when the Mensa appeared on the scene, what we do know is that its unexpected discovery would soon intrigue scholars, antiquarians and artists interested in the interpretation of hieroglyphs and that it would also soon be realized that these so-called hieroglyphs were just meaningless decorative representations. The subsequent circulation of the object appears to be better documented. When Bembo died in Rome in 1547, his son desired to keep the collection and library intact. He did so for a long time, eventually allowing engraver and numismatist Enea

Vico to view the Mensa and be the first to reproduce it. Vico's contemporaries appreciated the accuracy of the copperplate engraving, which was used as the basis for many subsequent commentaries.

Due to mounting debts and a complex family situation, Vico was forced to sell part of the cardinal's estate. In January 1592, the Mensa Isiaca was purchased for 480 Venetian scudi by the Duke of Mantua Vincenzo Gonzaga I, who placed it in the Pinacoteca Ducale, where it probably remained until shortly before 1630, the year that the War of the Mantuan Succession ended with the sacking of the city by the Germans. It was while the Mensa was in the possession of Gonzaga that the first works dedicated to the Mensa Isiaca appeared, including that of Paduan antiquarian Lorenzo Pignoria, entitled *Vetustissimae tabulae Aeneae sacris Aegyptiorum simulachris coelachris explicatio*, published in three editions in 1605, 1608 and 1666 (we will return to this later to observe its singular use in the construction of modern discourse on the deities of the ancients). Other works from the same period stand out for their keen philological attention; these include *Thesaurum Hieroglyphicorum* (1607) by Hans Georg Herwarth von Hohenburg, who produced a commentary and reproduction of the Mensa that would later be used by Athanasius Kircher (*Fig. 2*), and *Arcana arcanissima, hoc est, Hieroglyphica Ægyptio-Graeca* (1614) by German physician and alchemist Michael Maier.

The Mensa was purchased by the Duke of Savoy Charles Emmanuel I who, between 1626 and 1630, decided to obtain some rare and precious objects of Egyptian origin from the Gonzaga, the dukes of Mantua. The Savoy dynasty was keen to trace its origins back to illustrious civilizations, such as that of Egypt. In 1563, Duke Emanuele Filiberto decided to move the capital from Chambéry to Turin, and it was necessary to ennoble the city's tradition in order to legitimize the Savoy's power. Since the sixteenth century, a legend had been circulating that was taken up by historian Filiberto Pingone in his work *Augusta Taurinorum* (1577), in which he described an imaginative genealogy that attributed the founding of Turin to an Egyptian prince, Eridanus, who upon arriving in these

lands had admired the River Po, which reminded him of the Nile in his beloved Egypt. Thus, in 1523 BCE he decided to found a colony on the banks of the River Po, which became the nucleus of the city of Turin, making its foundation far older than any Roman town. After receiving the auspices of the Egyptian deity Apis, Eridanus gave the new colony the name and insignia of the same god with the likeness of a bull, calling it Taurina and its inhabitants Taurini. Eventually, after the mid-sixteenth century, a marble statue with an inscription dedicated to the Egyptian goddess Isis was fortuitously discovered during the city's fortification activities. However, the interpretation of the finding fuelled ambivalent interest in ancient Egypt, since it was clear that this just was another example of how the worship of Isis had spread in the Roman Empire. Therefore, this need to legitimize the new capital generated the Savoy's interest in Egyptian civilization and would make the city of Turin not only the European centre of Egyptian studies, but also the heart of an esoteric imagination centred around ancient Egypt.

During the seventeenth century, there was little historical information about the Mensa Isiaca. However, in 1666, the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher mentioned that it was in the collection of the Savoy family in Turin. Kircher had been responsible for commenting on and interpreting the bronze tablet on three different occasions: in the *Obeliscus Pamphilius* (1650), in the *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (1654) and in the *Obeliscus Alexandrinus* (1666). The Jesuit defined the Mensa as an "inestimabile antiquitatis Aegyptiacae monumento", a priceless monument of Egyptian antiquity, making a complex, albeit incorrect interpretation of its symbols within a vast project to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics.

The Mensa "reappeared" in 1711, when it was examined in the Royal Library of Turin by Marquis Scipione Maffei, who wrote about it to Venetian poet Apostolo Zeno. Later, the Mensa was moved to the Savoy archives; on 21 May 1775, King Victor Amadeus III sent an order to royal archivist and counsellor Benedetto Ambel to have the Mensa Isiaca delivered to the Museum of Antiquities. However, the Mensa left Turin in February 1799. The

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provisional government of Piedmont was forced to hand it over to the Directory of Revolutionary France, which took it to Paris, where it was placed in the custody of the national library, the Bibliothèque Nationale, in 1809. Fifteen years later, with the collapse of the Napoleonic Empire, the Mensa returned to the Savoy and, in 1824, it was examined by Jean-François Champollion, the first translator of the hieroglyphs. On that occasion, Champollion stated that "pour moi le chemin de Memphis et Thebes passe par Turin" ("For me the road to Memphis and Thebes passes through Turin"). The Mensa Isiaca subsequently entered the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Turin in 1832, where it was exhibited to the public and is still preserved today.

As already mentioned, Lorenzo Pignoria described the Mensa Isiaca in an articulate commentary, first published in 1605 at the suggestion of Lincei academician Marco Valsero and dedicated to Cardinal Cesare Baronio. Pignoria was born in Padua in 1571 and, encouraged by his father, undertook law studies which he then abandoned. Educated in a Jesuit environment, he joined the circle of humanist Gian Vincenzo Pinelli, whose library was one of the most famous in Europe. Pignoria encountered such illustrious figures of humanist culture as Paolo Gualdo (who had been Pinelli's secretary), Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, Galileo Galilei and Torquato Tasso. In Padua, Pignoria was part of a current of Aristotelian intellectuals who were distancing themselves from the methods and perspectives of the Neoplatonic philosophers. In 1602, Pignoria was consecrated as a priest by the bishop of Padua, Marco Corner, who wanted Pignoria as his secretary and, in 1605, took him to Rome, where he stayed for two years and was able to see the objects he would describe and study in his later works. In Rome, Pignoria met Cardinal Cesare Baronio and was associated with Francesco Barberini and Cassiano dal Pozzo. When he returned to Padua, he resumed his priestly duties, refusing the chair of humanities in Pisa, which was offered to him by Galileo Galilei as an opportunity to devote himself to his studies. In 1630, he obtained a canonry in Treviso. He died on 13 June 1631, during an outbreak of the plague.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Pignoria's commentary on the Mensa Isiaca was regarded as the most authoritative work on the Egyptian object. Although he acknowledged the Mensa Isiaca's antiquity, calling it "an outstanding monument of the purest antiquity", the Paduan scholar was the first to approach its history and contents with a cautious if not sceptical attitude. Pignoria's commentary provided the first historical data regarding the finding of the Mensa Isiaca and the various hypotheses regarding its origin that circulated among his contemporaries. Pignoria's approach to the hieroglyphs of the Mensa Isiaca is resolutely anti-allegorical and based on the innovative methodology that European antiquarians were building at the time. Indeed, Pignoria's interpretation originated in the contributions of other scholars of his day and were based on empirical comparisons with similar objects that he personally saw in private collections.

The emergence of this new empiricism inspired Pignoria with the idea that an empirical methodology could be identified that would show a mutual translatability between the Old World and the New. In 1608, Pignoria was commissioned by Cesare Malfatti to edit a new edition of the mythographic treatise that Vincenzo Cartari first published in Venice in 1551 (*Le immagini con la spositione de i dei degli antichi. Raccolte per Vincenzo Cartari*) and then, in 1571, published in an enlarged edition that contained the first images of the ancient gods (*Le Imagini de i Dei de gli Antichi nelle quali si contengono gl' Idoli, Riti, ceremonie, & altre cose appartenenti alla Religione de gli Antichi*).

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was evident that the news coming from the far corners of the world had completely changed the image of polytheistic deities, and it was necessary to consider this extraordinary diversity. Pignoria worked on three new editions of Cartari's work, which were published in 1615, 1626 and 1648. To the old treatise, Pignoria added some appendices; one of these (*Seconda parte delle Imagini de gli dei indiani. Aggionta al Cartari da Lorenzo Pignoria*) contained an original description of Mexican, Indian and Japanese gods. Here, the antiquarian returned to

the Mensa Isiaca to prove his hypothesis using an empirical methodology. According to Pignoria, all idolatries had originated in ancient Egypt and had spread to the rest of the world, maintaining some common external traits. Therefore, it was necessary to systematically compare the images of the New World with the images of Asian gods by drawing parallels with the gods of Egypt and combining the comparative method with a strong dependence on evidence from material culture. For example, in his interpretation of the curious bodily posture of the Mexican god Homoyoca, which he compared to the Roman god Jupiter (*Fig. 3*), Pignoria inserted two figures taken from his commentary on the Mensa Isiaca. These were juxtaposed with images of Homoyoca to show their "common" kneeling posture and that there was a formal similarity between them.

Thanks to the Mensa Isiaca, Pignoria was able to propose an empirical visual methodology and a historical interpretation of the common origin of all religions of antiquity, revealing the European curiosity about the past and newly discovered parts of the world. At the same time, Pignoria's methodology also showed the need for new tools to interpret and assimilate the surprising religious diversity within a vision of history that culminated in the triumph of Christendom; indeed, Pignoria closed his treatise with an image of Constantine, the protagonist of the victory of Christendom (*Fig. 4*).

Ultimately, Egypt not only aroused antiquarian curiosity, but also inspired a political project. By the time Pignoria's work was completed, the commemoration of Constantine had become a significant element in Pope Sixtus v's reconstruction and decoration of the Lateran Palace. Sixtus v was the same pope who relocated the Egyptian obelisks to the new urban organization of Rome in order to symbolize the triumph of Christianity over the pagans.

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Ottoman Flags Reused as Ex-Votos in the Marca Anconitana
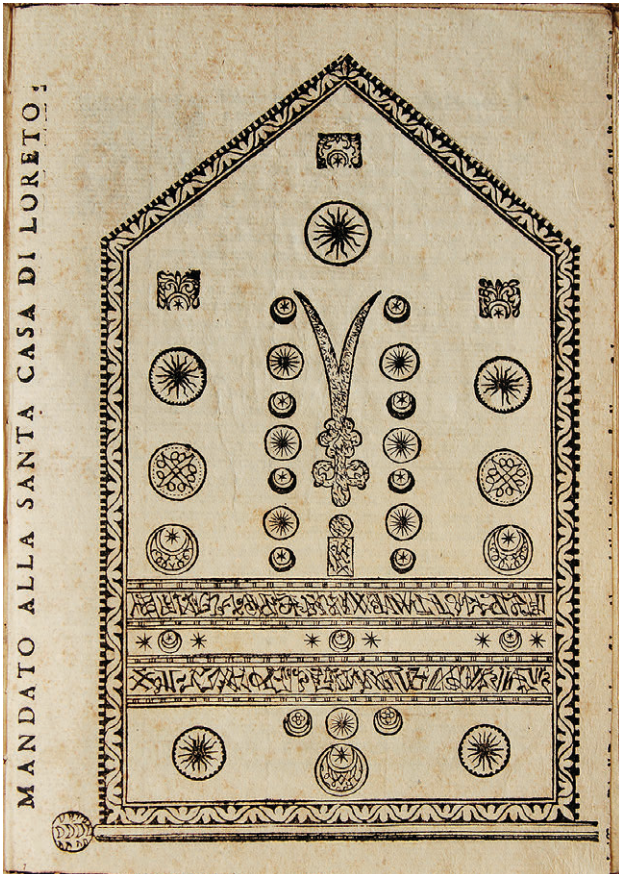
Mattia Guidetti

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On 15 September 1684, blank cannon shots greeted the arrival of an Ottoman flag in Loreto (Ancona). The silk flag (now in the Museum of Cracow) measures 639x321cm and displays an embroidered decoration consisting of stars, medallions and the so-called Dhu al-Fuqar, a double-bladed sword associated with the figure of 'Ali (599–661), cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad (d. 632). The epigraphic decoration includes Quranic verses (the first four verses of Surah 48, the Surah of the Victory), the Shahada (the declaration of Muslim faith), and the expression "There is no sword but Dhu al-Fuqar", a variation of the Shahada to glorify the sword depicted at the centre of the flag.

The banner was a donation sent by the Polish king, John III Sobieski (1629–1696), to the Marian sanctuary of Loreto. Before arriving in Loreto, it passed through Rome so that Pope Innocent XI (1611–1689), who had received another sumptuous flag the previous year, could admire it. The flag came from the Siege of Párkány (today Štúrovo), a battle that followed the liberation of Vienna in autumn 1683, in preparation for the conquest of Buda that occurred in 1686.

The gift of the banner to the Marian sanctuary was an ex-voto. Since the victory in Lepanto (1571), the Madonna of the Rosary had assumed the role of custodian of the Catholic lands against the growing Ottoman threat. At the same time, because the Sanctuary of Loreto was believed to host the House of the Virgin, miraculously transported from Nazareth and saved from the Islamic conquest of the Crusader possessions in the Holy Land, it emerged as a holy place in which they would pray for and then commemorate victories against the Turks. An anecdote about the liberation of Vienna mentions the discovery of a portrait of the Madonna of Loreto. The triumphs against the "Turks" were, therefore, often devoted to her figure.

After the celebrations for its arrival in Loreto, the precious object was put on display in the church. More precisely, the banner was unfurled along the walls of the marble covering that protects the Holy House and the likeness of the Virgin. The banner was added to other votive offerings, including some objects related to

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the Ottoman world. In the sixteenth century, for example, an Ottoman pasha, who had been cured of a serious illness after praying to the Virgin of Loreto upon the advice of his Christian slave, sent gifts to the sanctuary. An arch and a quiver were hung at the entrance of the Holy House. The Ottoman flag donated by the Polish king was later moved on one of the pillars of the octagon that surrounded the Holy House near a commemorative plaque, whose inscription recounted the highlights of the banner's conquest.

Pope Innocent XI celebrated its conquest and donation by coining a commemorative medallion. Furthermore, following what had been done in Rome upon the flag's arrival the year before, the local authorities promoted the publication of an opuscule to illustrate the conquered banner and explain its iconography (*Fig. 1*).

The opuscule on the Loreto banner follows the same compositional schema as the publication about the flag sent to Rome. The publication includes an engraving of the banner, a description of the ceremonies organised to celebrate the arrival of the Ottoman trophy and a translation of its Arabic inscriptions. At least three different publications are known: the six-page opuscule printed in Ancona, a single folio published in Foligno and a further folio from Perugia.

Following on from the example of Loreto, in the following 30 years, many churches and sanctuaries in the Marca Anconitana received Ottoman banners. Although the ceremonies were less sophisticated than in Loreto, all of the flags arrived as ex-votos donated by noblemen of cities such as Urbino, Fano and Osimo to thank the Madonna or a local saint for the protection granted during the battles along the Balkan frontier or on the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian Seas. The role of the Virgin Mary – and more precisely of the Madonna of the Rosary – in protecting the believers from the Turkish threat is also portrayed in two paintings located in the Marche region. They display the Virgin Mary standing on a pedestal, with some Turkish prisoners and a group of Ottoman flags in the background, a direct reference to the spoils of war (*Fig. 2*).

In 1717, a procession brought two flags captured during a battle against the Ottomans and sent from Split, on the Dalmatian coast, to the Sanctuary of the Madonna della Rosa in Ostra (Ancona). The procession, which opened with a wooden statue of the Madonna of the Rosary flanked by the two flags, gave rise to the compositional schema of the paintings with the Madonna, the prisoners and the flags.

The figures of the Turkish prisoners tied to the pedestal were part of a common theme in early eighteenth-century Catholic Europe. Bare-chested and enchained, the men display the stereotypical features attributed to the Turks, with moustaches and shaven heads with a single clump of hair on the back. Very similar figures appear on the ceilings of Baroque palaces (especially in central Europe), but also in statuary groups, such as those in Livorno and Marino Laziale. Tiziano's Philip II Offering the Infante Fernando to Victory (1573–1575) was the point of departure for the iconography of the "Turkish prisoner" as part of the spoils of war (including flags) offered to the emperor or holy figures.

Besides stereotypically depicting the Turks, the figures of the prisoners with the twisted chest and fastened hands were a reminder of the real prisoners enslaved during land and sea battles against the Ottomans. In one of the letters written to his brother, Francesco Guarnieri asks that the Turkish-corsair pennant conquered on the Tyrrhenian Sea and sent by him to his hometown of Osimo, be donated to the church dedicated to the patron saint of the city with all honors. In the final stretch of the procession, the conquered flag was supposed to be offered by his brother's "Moorish" slave. Often, slaves from the Muslim world chose to be baptized or were forced to do so. Numerous documents attest to the baptisms of Turks, both in Loreto and in other locations in the Marche region.

In the early modern Adriatic Sea, the term "Turk" was used to mean a vast array of figures, which ranged from the soldiers of the Ottoman army to the corsairs who, backed by the Ottomans, looted the Italian coastline and threatened the fishermen operating in the open sea.

Where there were Ottoman-backed corsairs there were also those backed by the Church and Venetian army. The same was also true for the prisoners. Numerous Christian prisoners, kidnapped on the coasts or during inland incursions by Ottoman-backed corsairs, were exploited as rowers on the galleys or as an economic resource through the negotiation of ransoms. With the help of some confraternities, the families of those kidnapped collected money and rescued their loved ones from captivity. Their return was accompanied by the donation of ex-votos: a group of former slaves freed at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, for instance, donated their shackles and chains to the Sanctuary of Loreto.

Ex-votos could remind of a miraculous event that saved lives or interrupted a period of captivity. The flags sent to sanctuaries back home dedicated the military victory to the intercession of the Virgin Mary or local saints into whose protection the soldiers put themselves. Besides the flags, dozens of ex-votos remembered the assistance provided by the Virgin Mary to prevent capture by the Turks. They often depicted maritime scenes, in which the enemies' boats can be recognised thanks to the sailors' dress and the flags with a crescent (*Fig. 3*).

Between ca. 1480 and 1830, the Adriatic coast of the State of the Church became a frontier with the Ottoman-Turkish world. Confrontations occurred on a diplomatic level and in fierce battles. The conflict had repercussions on the daily life of the coastal population. From the great Sanctuary of Loreto to small local sanctuaries, intercessory prayers and the evidence offered by the ex-votos displayed within the churches helped neutralise the threat.

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The "Lemon" of Arnstadt: The Story of a Persistent Cultural Misunderstanding

Annette C. Cremer

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The Arnstadt Museum in Thuringia, Germany, is housed in a former palace of the Counts of Schwarzburg, built around 1740, next to the former four-winged castle residence dating from the sixteenth century. The Counts of Schwarzburg ruled over one of the many small territories of the Holy Roman Empire in early modern Germany which, lacking financial resources, turned to music, art and collecting to represent the honour of the Schwarzburg house.

The museum, founded after the First World War, houses an amazing glass object from the former counts' collection (*Fig. 1*). The object consists of a hollow oval body with a highly relief-like surface, probably made of transparent glass with a yellow coating. Very small patches of dark colour are incorporated into the mass. A rolled stem and two leaves of transparent blue glass are fused to the top. Their core is probably opaque yellow, creating a green colour effect. The base of the stem has a clear glass post on one side with remnants of white opaque glass. It is 15.7 cm long, 5.4 cm in diameter and weighs 80.53 grams.

At first, second and even third glance, it resembles a lemon. It was made in Murano, Venice, the unrivalled glass-making centre of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Shortly after 1700, when the glass fruit was created, Murano's leading position was challenged by English, French and Bohemian glassmakers. Thanks to new recipes and technical innovations, these competitors had become more successful by the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, Venice continued to produce high-quality glass objects.

We do not know how the lemon found its way into the counts' collections. For the German nobility, Italy in general and Venice and its carnival in particular were places of longing, and obligatory destinations during a Grand Tour, the European journey that usually completed the education of young princes and introduced them to the courts of Europe. In the eighteenth century, in addition to the Grand Tour, some princesses and princes travelled regularly to Italy, and many German nobles crossed the Alps at least once in their lives. Around 1780, in *Wilhelm Meister* Johann

Wolfgang von Goethe's Mignon sings longingly, "Do you know the land where the lemons grow?", an expression and the result of the enduring German fascination with the climate, culture and savoir-vivre of Italy and its elite.

Perhaps the glass lemon was acquired as a souvenir by the counts and countesses on a trip to Italy. Or perhaps it was bought at the international trade fair in Leipzig, which they attended regularly, or from a travelling merchant who sold Venetian glass. Although the glassworks of the Holy Roman Empire also produced high-quality glass, the output of the Venetian glass industry remained somewhat different due to the raw materials used and more artistic in style. Although the German princes protected their economy from foreign products by imposing high taxes on imported goods, Italian travelling merchants were allowed to sell their glassware in Thuringia and elsewhere. Whatever way it came into the counts' collection, the lemon is mentioned in the New Palace picture gallery inventory in 1786 ("Eine Citroen von Glaß mit Laubwerck und Blüthen"). It probably entered the collection during the reign of Günther I of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen (1678–1740) and his wife Elisabeth Albertine of Anhalt-Bernburg (1693–1774).

Why should a glass lemon be interesting as a collector's item, and what use, if any, could it have had other than purely aesthetic pleasure? As an obviously highly skilled piece of craftsmanship, it could have been placed in a cabinet of curiosities, the early modern form of a museum. Cabinets of curiosities were usually organized along the lines of the material being collected. The idea was to reflect the entire material world in a nutshell ("*macrocosmo in microcosmo*"), collect exotic objects unknown to European eyes, and specimens of all kinds in the quest for knowledge, as well as using foreign objects of craftsmanship as models for local production. The history of glassmaking shows that the transfer of technical knowledge mainly took place through copying and imitation, rather than through the exchange of expertise or collaboration between glassmakers. Thus, the lemon may have served as a model for local glassmakers. The counts granted several licences for

glasshouses in their forest territories, benefiting from many taxes in kind, as each year a certain amount of glass had to be delivered to the court free of charge.

As a fruit, the lemon originated in southwest Asia and has been cultivated in Portugal, Spain and Italy since the Middle Ages. According to Amaranth's *Frauenzimmerlexicon* (1715), the lemon was admired in Germany for its appearance, smell and taste. Its peel was used in large quantities to make essential oils for perfumes; Maria Schellhamer's famous German cookery books, *Die wohl-unterwiesene Köchinn* (Brunswick, 1692) and *Der wohl-unterwiesenen Köchinn Zufällig Confect-Tisch* (Brunswick, 1700) suggest adding lemon juice or slices to fish and meat dishes, baking lemon bread, cakes and making lemon sweetmeats. Lemon skins were peeled into spirals with a special tool called a *Citronenreisser* and used as a decorative element on dishes.

The lemons sold in eastern Germany usually came from Tyrol. In early modern times, the climate in northern Europe was on average up to two degrees colder than it was around 1900, making it difficult for lemon trees to grow. The cultivation of citrus fruits in Germany was only made possible by innovations in the glass industry, which led to the production of larger glass windows. Around 1700, Germany saw the rise of the glasshouse, although its beginnings can be traced back to the German courts of the sixteenth century (e.g., Count Palatine Ottheinrich von Pfalz-Neuburg (1502–1559) at Heidelberg Castle). In the greenhouses, exotic plants native to southern Europe were able to survive the northern winter. The successful growth, flowering and fruiting of a lemon tree added to the cultural capital of its noble owner, and tree and fruit were proudly displayed to guests. Princess Auguste Dorothea of Brunswick (1666–1751), married to Count Anton Günther II of Schwarzburg-Arnstadt (1653–1716), grew lemons in the garden of her maison de plaisance near Arnstadt. Miniature lemon trees with wax fruits were even included in her collection of dolls' houses (*Fig. 2*).

Lemons remained expensive and exotic, but they were widely known. As a result of its use in perfumery, cooking and pharmacy,

the lemon entered artistic production in the form of still lifes, painted on numerous plates and dishes, or produced as three-dimensional objects in faience or porcelain. The lemon, as a fruit or a visual representation, also became an integral part of early modern table decorations. Objects such as lemon baskets functioned as the centrepiece of a dinner service, presenting the costly fruit in the middle of the table (Meissen Porcelain, Möllendorf Service, 1761, V & A, museum number C.248-1921, https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1139462/möllendorf-service-basket-johann-joachim-kändler/). Our starting point, the glass lemon of the Counts of Schwarzburg, may therefore have been more than just a collector's item. It could have been displayed next to real lemons in such a centrepiece. As well as displaying the luxury of natural lemons, whether purchased at great expense or grown with great care, it could have served as a trompe-l'œil, visual illusion and intellectual play for Baroque audiences who loved to have their senses tickled. It not only indicated the wealth and taste of the host, but also subtly hinted at the cultural standards of the Arnstadt court.

In addition to its culinary and decorative uses, the exotic fruit inspired medical and botanical research. In 1688, German physician Hermann Grube published his *Analysis Mali Citrei compendiosa* on the growth, importance and medical uses of lemons. Drawings such as James Sowerby's *Citron Lemon* in 1809 were driven by the desire to expand botanical knowledge (illustration for William Woodville's *Medical Botany*, plate 189, Feb 1, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, UK). Still-life paintings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often depicted lemons and also conveyed allegorical meanings. In the history of ideas, citrus fruits were closely associated with the myth of Hercules and the apples of the Hesperides. They represented "peace, justice, fertility and eternal spring; their golden glow denoting the divine. The Golden Apples were a genuine property of the topos of the Golden Age ..." and a symbol of the Garden of Eden (Helmut-Eberhard Paulus). The lemon fruit was a condensation of the German fascination with the Mediterranean. It combined exoticness with sensual and aesthetic appeal, culminating in the allegory of paradise. Our glass

lemon embraces all these aspects, in celebration and admiration of the Venetian glassmakers' skill.

But what if the glass lemon is not a lemon at all? If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, does that make it a duck? The problem with this glass object is that no one has really looked at it in the last 100 years, and I am afraid I am no exception. Like all other curators and scholars, I only saw what I knew, what I was told it was and what I thought I saw: a lemon. Being of German origin and, in my case, armed only with basic botanical knowledge, I took a cursory look at the object and immediately "recognized" it as a lemon. I was convinced of the correctness of this interpretation because it seemed so simple and obvious. By chance, a friend, a scholar from Tel Aviv, looked at the glass lemon and corrected my interpretation. The glass object is not a lemon, a *Malum Citreum*, but a citron or cedrate, a *Citrus medica Linnaeus*. Its name refers to its smell, which is similar to that of cedar, and to the geographical area of its origin, which is now Iran. It was the first citrus plant introduced to southern Europe by Jewish immigrants in the first century and is therefore the genetic archetype of later citrus plants.

The citron is similar in colour to the lemon, but its shape is bulkier, its skin thicker, uneven and bumpy; the white albedo or pith underneath covers most of the inside, with very little bitter-tasting flesh. The cedrate was considered more or less inedible raw, but it was prized for its intense smell and the fact that the cedrate tree blossomed and bore fruit at the same time, becoming a symbol of continued wealth. In early modern Germany, the fruit was known as the *Judenapfel* ("Jews' apple") or "Apple of Paradise", as in Judaism it was believed to be the apple of the forbidden tree. As etrog (Hebrew) it is one of the four species used during the pilgrimage festival of Sukkot, along with the lulav (palm frond), hadass (myrtle) and aravah (willow branch). Palm, myrtle and willow branches are tied into a bundle and held in one hand with the etrog in the other (*Fig. 3*). During Sukkot, they are waved in prayer to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt. For early modern Jews in northern Europe, it was not easy to get hold of a citron. The

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PROCESSION des PALMES chez les JUIFS PORTUGAIS.

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Krünitz *Oeconomische Encyclopädie* of 1784 (vol. 31, 619) states that the fruit available in Germany came from Montenegro and Calabria and cost up to 20 *Reichstaler* each – a fortune! Early modern drawings and paintings such as Vincenzo Leonardi's *Citron* (1640), or Bartolomeo Bimbi's *Melagoli, Cedri e Limoni* (1715) and the *Citrus medica Linnaeus* by Maria Sibylla Merian (1701–1705), suggest that people in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – unlike me – knew the difference between a lemon and a citron, not only in Italy. The Arnstadt inventory of 1786 also correctly identifies the object as a "citron".

This knowledge of the difference between a lemon and a citron has been lost over the following centuries. The cultural misunderstanding could be blamed on the abundance of lemons in every supermarket today, and, because it is yellow, more or less oval and a fruit, we call it a lemon, ignoring its botanical peculiarities and whatever its actual name might be. But the reasons – linguistic as well as political – are more complex: the German language uses the word "*Zitrone*" as a general term for lemon, thereby transferring the word for citron to a completely different species, the lemon, and thus destroying the link between signifier (language) and signified (object). In English, the difference between citron and lemon has been maintained. Secondly, and certainly more importantly, the extinction of Jewish life in Germany during the Second World War made it impossible to experience the traditions of Judaism and to gather knowledge in an unobtrusive, everyday way. Thirdly and finally, the Arnstadt Museum is located in the former German Democratic Republic, where the restriction of knowledge was paramount. But a glass object misattributed in a small German museum is not the only case of not knowing what we see. The databases of international museums show that, for lack of better knowledge and to be on the safe side, depictions of citrons are simply called "fruit" there too.

Now that the piece can be correctly identified, its interpretation must be changed. As an early enlightened and educated couple, Elisabeth Albertine and Günther I of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen would have known the difference between a lemon and a

citron. The glass citron may therefore have been an expression of their curious interest in faiths other than their own Lutheran religion. Material examples of Judaism would have been collected alongside objects from India, China or the Americas. This interpretation does not erase the admiration for the craftsmanship or its decorative function. But the correct identification of the species as the citron is significant because it requires the addition of another layer of meaning, as a visualization of Jewish history and belief. Spellbound by the object's exotic qualities, contemporary academic understandings of the "lemon" have unconsciously had a blind spot. Amazingly, the problem of the "lemon" shows that knowledge does not always expand linearly or exponentially, but in sines and cosines. What we see is what we know, and there is nothing beyond discourse.

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Woodcut of a Mesoamerican Mosaic-Encrusted Mask from Aldrovandi's *Musaeum metallicum*

Davide Domenici

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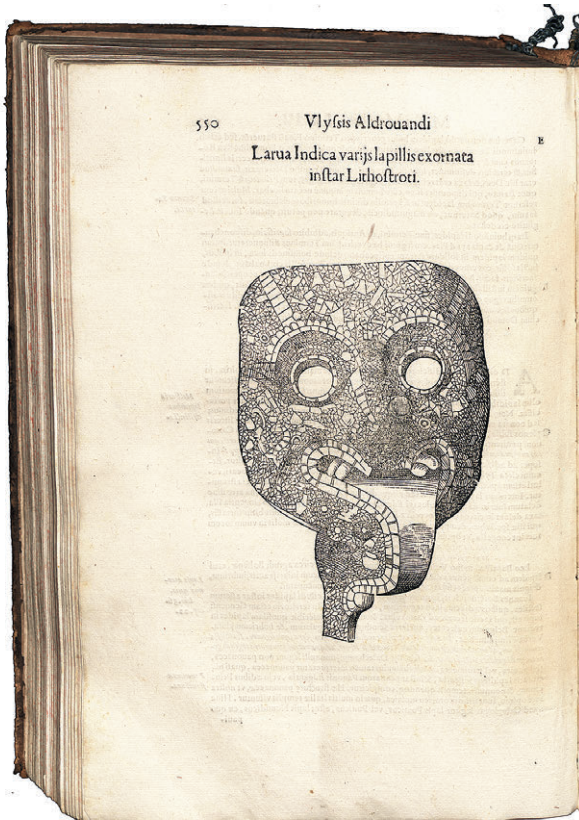
The *Musaeum metallicum*, Ulisse Aldrovandi's treatise on metals and stones published posthumously in 1648, is illustrated by a rich array of woodcuts produced by various artists such as German painter Cornelius Schwindt and engraver Christoph Lederlein, better known by his Italianized name Cristoforo Coriolano. The hundreds of woodcuts of rocks, fossils and artefacts contained in the book are clear examples of the pioneering role that the Bolognese polymath played in the early modern development of scientific illustration as a source of empirical, experiential knowledge. Aldrovandi himself often gained knowledge of plants and animals by studying the watercolours of artists like Jacopo Ligozzi, a painter at the service of the Medici family in Florence. In their turn, Aldrovandi's readers would have been able to explore the "theatre of Nature" by inspecting the woodcuts in his volumes. As aptly phrased by Giuseppe Olmi, in Aldrovandi's works the image "ceased to be a simple ornament of the book to become an integral part of scientific discourse".

The woodcuts of the *Musaeum metallicum* include the image of a strange anthropomorphic face with a long and upturned nose, captioned as *Larva Indica varijs lapillis exornata instar Lithostroti*, "Indian mask furnished with various stones, as in mosaic" (*Fig. 1*). This is one of the twelve Mesoamerican artefacts illustrated in the *Musaeum metallicum*, all of which hailing from the collection that Aldrovandi had amassed in his house. The rear side of the corresponding woodblock, still preserved in the Palazzo Poggi museum (Sistema Museale di Ateneo, Università di Bologna) (*Fig. 2*), bears the inscription *Larva indica ex studio Antonii Gigantii*, thus making it clear that Aldrovandi had received the mask from the same person who bestowed upon him all the other Indigenous American artefacts, his fellow Bolognese collector Antonio Giganti. The actual mask (*Fig. 3*), which had been preserved for centuries in Bologna, is now in the collection of the Museo delle Civiltà in Rome, where it was transferred in 1878 because of an exchange organized by palethnologist Luigi Pigorini.

The existence of the Mesoamerican mosaic mask, its incised reproduction in the woodblock and several extant copies of the

printed woodcut which reproduces the mask in a mirror-like fashion, provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the early modern circulation of Mesoamerican artefacts in Italy, their reception by Italian scholars and collectors, the modes in which their knowledge was widely disseminated by means of printed images, and the role that such images can still play today as sources for scientific research.

The wooden mask, encrusted with tesserae of various stones, metals and shells, portrays a Nahua ("Aztec") deity known as *Yacateuctli*, "The Nose Lord", also known as *Yacapitzahuac*, "He with a Pointed Nose". His names and grotesque facial features derived from his role as patron of the long-distance merchants (*pochtecah*) who often acted as emissaries and spies (they were the first to reach faraway places and the nose is the first part of the body to reach a destination). The Nahua god had a counterpart in a black-skinned Mayan deity similarly depicted with round eyes, prominent nose and pendant lower lip: known as God M in Mesoamericanist jargon, he may be identified with *Ek' Chuwah*, a name that early colonial sources associate with merchants and cacao groves.

In the Nahuatl language the mask would have been called *xayacatl* ("face", "mask") but it is unlikely that it was meant to be worn on the face; rather, it may have been tied to a sacred bundle (*tlaquimilolli*), a physical materialization of a god composed of cotton cloths containing "relics" of some sort. Like other godly insignias employed in ritual practices, the mask would have been perceived as an *ixiptlah*, a Nahuatl term composed of the roots *ix-* ("face", "surface") and *xip-* ("to peel", "to flay"), understood as a reference to a "localized embodiment" of a deity, that is, not a representation of an impalpable entity but rather a living materialization of the god, which actively interacted with humans. According to native historiography, for example, sacred bundles led indigenous migrations by speaking to the bundle keepers (*teomamaque*, "deity bearers"), showing the proper way, forecasting future events and indicating where to settle. According to Mesoamerican notions about materiality and aesthetics, the polished, brilliant, polychrome mosaic "skin" of the mask would make its animacy

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² Christoph Lederlein (Cristoforo Corio-
lano)? Bologna, ca. 1598–1605. Wood-
block carved into pear wood with the im-
age of the Yacateuctli mask collected by
Ulisse Aldrovandi. An inscription on the
back of the woodblock states that the
mask proceeded from the Bolognese
collection of Antonio Giganti. Photo by
Fulvio Simoni, courtesy of Alma Mater
Studiorum Università di Bologna – Siste-
ma Museale di Ateneo – Museo di Palaz-
zo Poggi.

³ Anonymous Nahua artist. Puebla Valley
(Mexico), early sixteenth century. Wooden
mask encrusted with a mosaic of tur-
quoise, malachite, lignite, Strombus,
Spondylus, mother-of-pearl and cinnabar
pigment, with later additions of glass,
brass, and garnet. The mask, once owned
by Ulisse Aldrovandi and today in the col-
lection of the Museo delle Civiltà (Rome)
represents Yacateuctli, the Nahua patron
of merchants. Photo by Davide Domenici,
courtesy of the Museo delle Civiltà –
Rome.

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perceptible to those who observed it. Thus, the mosaic-encrusted Yacateuctli mask interrogates us on alternative notions about the status of an "image" and how terms like "representation" can be misleading when applied to non-western cultural contexts.

Precisely owing to their enormous ritual relevance, after the Spanish conquest godly insignias were violently confiscated by Christian missionaries who were trying to eradicate native religious practices. Most sculptures, mosaics and painted manuscripts were immediately destroyed, but some were sent to Europe to serve as tangible evidence in support of the colonial missionary discourses. Recent research has revealed that during the sixteenth century several Mesoamerican artefacts were brought to Italy by Dominican friars: following a typically Lascasian discourse, the missionaries conceived of the artefacts as tangible proof of "Indian idolatry" but at the same time of the same possibility of overcoming it through conversion: indeed, their technical quality was so high that it testified that indigenous people were endowed with ingenuity (*ingenio*), rationality and humanity, therefore they could be transformed into good Christians. Artefacts were conceived of as carriers of evidentiary knowledge, as explicitly stated in the anonymous text of the *Descrittione dell'India occidentale*, published in Venice around 1564–1570: "by seeing them [i.e., the objects] one can trust what others wrote, & we learnt by means of written relations". According to this "antiquarian" sensibility, tangible objects tell a truth that integrates or even surpasses that of written texts.

The Yacateuctli mask was one of the "very thick masks furnished with turquoises" which, according to Dominican historian Leandro Alberti, Dominican friar Domingo de Betanzos brought to Bologna on 3 March 1533, together with painted manuscripts, sacrificial knives, feathered costumes and a wide array of indigenous artefacts to bestow upon Pope Clement VII. Like the indigenous persons he was trying to convert, Betanzos was convinced of the object's agency, since he asserted that through such masks "the demons were speaking to those peoples". In the eyes of a Christian missionary, the knowledge produced by such "idols" was necessarily false and devilish.

After their arrival in Bologna, the Mesoamerican artefacts passed from hand to hand, ending up in local collections such as those assembled by Giovanni Achillini and Antonio Giganti. Soon after Giganti's death (1597), several objects from his museum passed to his friend Ulisse Aldrovandi. Like the Dominicans before him, Aldrovandi firmly believed that objects were sources of evidentiary knowledge: both an antiquarian and natural historian, in his *Discorso naturale* he boasted that he had avoided writing of things "not seen with my eyes, not touched with my hands". But Aldrovandi's intellectual project was of a completely different kind: when writing the *Musaeum metallicum*, he described the Mesoamerican artefacts with a clear taxonomic intent, carefully recording their colours and visual appearance and inspecting them as examples of those stones that could be polished like gems, like *lapis ophites* (serpentine), *lapis nephriticus* or *renalis* (jade), etc. The mask, on the other hand, served as an example of the diffusion of a specific kind of stonework: while discussing the meaning of the term *pavonacea* in Pliny, Aldrovandi argued that it was a kind of *lithostroton*, or mosaic, and then added: "And it is worth considering what [Francisco López de] Gomara records in the *Historia indica*, that is, that in the Indies masks or faces are made out of wood and then decorated with small stones of various colours, so as to appropriately imitate a *lithostroton*. Thus, for the benefit of the reader, we show an image of such a mask". What is described as a "benefit to the reader" (*in gratiam Lectoris*) is actually an example of one of the key aspects of Aldrovandi's research method and intellectual project, since the full-page woodcut of the *Larva Indica varijs lapillis exornata instar Lithostroti* serves as a visual testimony of the veracity of Gómara's assertion, as well as of the worldwide diffusion of mosaic work. Aldrovandi did not even feel the need to describe the mask in the accompanying text, as if the testimonial power of the image transcended that of his words.

At first sight, the woodcut appears as a distorted representation of the mask, but close observation reveals that the artists were able to represent minute details of the mosaic insofar as several specific tesserae can be made out when comparing the image and

the actual object. Curiously enough, elements which today are clearly visible were overlooked by the artists, as is the case of the green malachite band lined with red spondylus tesserae vertically crossing the forehead of the god, which is completely absent in the woodcut. Nevertheless, we know that at a certain point of its Bolognese life the mask was broken in two halves and then put back together at the end of the nineteenth century, so that it is even possible that when it was in Aldrovandi's hands the forehead and other sections of the mask were badly damaged, thus impeding the observation of a motif that was probably reconstructed many centuries later.

Thanks to its careful reproduction of the details, Aldrovandi's woodcut still serves as an important source for studying the mask and the material transformations it has suffered over time. During a recent research project in collaboration with the Italian team of the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science, we applied several spectroscopic techniques to chemically characterize its constituent materials. Besides materials typically used by Mesoamerican artists, such as turquoise, malachite, lignite, cinnabar and Strombus, Spondylus and mother-of-pearl shells, we detected the presence of European materials such as brass, glass and garnet, clearly added in Italy as forms of restoration. Especially surprising was the discovery that the white colour used to paint the teeth is lead white, a material that was not employed in precolonial Mesoamerica and whose presence testifies that the mouth area of the mask must have undergone some radical transformations. The woodcut of the *Musaeum metallicum* offers a unique opportunity to reconstruct its original appearance, since it clearly represents three-dimensional teeth, most probably actual animal teeth like those seen in a Mesoamerican mask today found in Dumbarton Oaks (Washington D.C.). Therefore, it is clear that the actual teeth were lost subsequent to the engraving of the woodcut, which serves as a unique source to imagine the original, grimacing facial expression of the "Nose Lord".

During its five-century-long biography, the Yacateuctli mask circulated through different cultural contexts and value regimes.

In the precolonial indigenous world, it acted as an animated *ixiptlah*, communicating sacred knowledge to its people. Then, after being appropriated by the Christian missionaries, who devalued its sacred knowledge to devilish, the mask served as tangible evidence to support the Dominican colonial discourse. When transferred to the Aldrovandi museum, it still served as a source of evidentiary knowledge for part of a wider study of stoneworking techniques. In that context, it was reproduced, together with eleven other indigenous artefacts, in woodcuts which count among the first published reproductions of Mesoamerican artefacts in early modern Europe (even more so if they were published during Aldrovandi's lifespan, when the woodblocks were engraved). Its reproduction in a woodblock and then in multiple woodcut prints enormously increased its circulation, since from that moment the mask was inspected by scholars all over Europe and beyond, interested not only in natural history but also in indigenous art and religious practices. Even today, when conjoined with the results of cutting-edge scientific technology, this image serves as a meaningful source to explore the life and powers of the Nose Lord and its visual alter egos.

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Francis Harwood, Emigrant Sculptor, and the Portrait of a Dignified Slave

Cristiano Giometti

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[1] Francis Harwood, Bust of a Man, 1758,
The J. Paul Getty Museum (88.SA.114),
Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of the
J. Paul Getty Museum.

It was common practice for British sculptors, such as Joseph Wilton (1722–1803), Thomas Banks (1735–1805) and Joseph Nollekens (1737–1823), to spend a few years studying ancient sculpture in the cities of Rome and Florence and then to return to London where a flourishing market for funerary monuments would ensure their success. Of them, a few decided to remain in Italy and open an independent studio; this was the case of Christopher Hewetson (1737–1798) and John Deare (1759–1798) who chose to make their own way by cultivating an autonomous language and avoiding the easier and more profitable trade of copying from the antique. To these two artists, we must also add the case of Francis Harwood (1727–1783) who, despite demonstrating a distinct capacity for invention, over time preferred to indulge the requests of his fellow countrymen by producing replicas of classical prototypes and refined furnishings such as table tops, chimney pieces and ornamental vases.

Almost nothing is known about Harwood before his arrival in Rome, where he was registered around Easter 1752 as living on the third floor of Palazzo Zuccari, in strada Felice, in the company of painter Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792). The house was also shared with sculptor Joseph Wilton, who was spending time in Rome and Florence during this period and with whom Harwood formed an immediate friendship. While Wilton would return to his homeland as early as 1755, in Florence Harwood found an ideal climate for the continuation of his career and in a few years managed to build a reputation among the many foreign aristocrats who frequented the salon of Sir Horace Mann, ambassador of the King of England from 1740. Although still young, the sculptor must have developed remarkable technical skills, which earned him admission to the Accademia del Disegno in 1755 and, three years later, the commission from the Grand Duke Francesco Stefano of Lorraine for the figure of *Equity* to decorate the arch of Porta San Gallo.

The study of sources and archive documents and examination of the many works attributed to him over the years allow us to divide Harwood's career into two periods: a first, experimental phase, in which the artist dabbled in the most up-to-date canons of

antique portraiture. And a longer final phase, which lasted until 1783, the year of his death, marked by the more convenient and remunerative choice to almost serially produce copies from antiquity and high-quality ornaments. This last period must also have coincided with a relaxation of his habits, as can be deduced from the caricature engraved by Thomas Patch in 1768 and the unflattering description of him in a letter of 24 October 1780, from Horace Mann to Sir Robert Walpole, in which Mann expressed his opinion on the conditions of art in Florence:

"Here is neither painter, engraver, nor sculptor above the most common class. The best of the latter sort is a drunken Englishman whose sole employment is to make chimney-pieces for the Palace and some for Russia, whose Empress buys everything good and bad that her emissaries can find in Italy".

In this more mature phase of his career, Harwood's entrepreneurial spirit therefore took precedence over his more exquisitely creative flair: indeed, he commendably set up a very well-organized workshop capable of satisfying ever greater numbers of commissions. In his studio in via della Sapienza, obtained by grand ducal concession in 1762 on the death of his colleague Giovanni Battista Piamontini, Harwood employed numerous assistants who were also selected for their different technical skills, including Pietro Pisani, known for his expertise in alabaster work, and Cosimo Siries for his talent with lapis lazuli. The high degree of organization of the work is also testified by the authoritative opinion of the young Antonio Canova who visited the workshop in via della Sapienza on 23 October 1779:

> We passed by the English sculptor Signor Francesco Evort [*sic*] but he was at lunch. In that studio we saw the Apollo of Belvedere ..., the Venus and many statues of large plaster, then an infinity of vases of various stones I believe to be sold, then heads of plaster, an infinity of collaborators working to make chimneys in porphyry, of ancient green ..., and these were to go to Muscovy. ... I saw nothing of invention, nor even models, but I did see

some copies made by the young workers, which leads me
to conjecture that the master is a man of worth.

As Canova pointed out, the space for works of invention thus
gradually diminished over time. If, however, we look back to Harwood's early Florentine years, that is, from 1753 onwards, we are
in the presence of an artist who was fully involved in the current
debate on the fashion for portraits in the ancient style. Indeed, together with Joseph Wilton, he became the intermediary for the
circulation in Florence of the archaeologically inspired classicism
initiated in Rome towards the end of the 1720s when Edme
Bouchardon (1698–1762) carved the *Portrait of Baron Philipp von
Stosch*, now in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin.

As mentioned, Joseph Wilton also fitted into this line of research, executing the *Bust of Antonio Cocchi* (London, Victoria and
Albert Museum) in Florence in 1755, of which Harwood produced
a replica with variants, now in a Florentine private collection,
in 1759 (*Fig. 2*). Harwood very skilfully succeeded in merging the
naturalistic datum with the reworking of the classical model in
which, as already stated, he had much experience.

In this early phase of his career, Harwood produced what is in
many respects perhaps his most astonishing work. It is the *Bust of a
Man*, signed and dated 1758, from the collections of the Dukes of
Northumberland and purchased by the J. Paul Getty Museum in
1988 (*Figs. 1* and *3*). A second, unsigned and undated version, also
attributed to Harwood, is held at the Yale Center for British Art
in New Haven; it is significant to recall that, before entering the
collections of the Mellon Center in 1967, the latter was part of the
Esterhazy collection in Vienna, with the attribution to the High
Renaissance sculptor Alessandro Vittoria (1525–1608). Returning
to the Getty version, what is most surprising is the masterly combination of formal traits taken from ancient sculpture and the
absolute modernity of the whole. Harwood's naturalistic classicism
anticipates the ethnographic portrayals of Charles-Henri-Joseph-
Cordier (*Black of Sudan*, Musée d'Orsay) by almost a century.
There are many features that make this work unique for this time,

starting with the material, touchstone, which was very difficult to carve; not so for Harwood who specialized in the working of semi-precious stones and polychrome marbles in Florence, which he often used as chromatic complements to his marble furnishings. Such a polished surface could also evoke the same effect as Roman basanite busts, further reinforcing the link with antiquity as a founding element of contemporary portraiture. The cut of the bust, to include the chest and part of the shoulders, and the total nudity of the figure are fully in line with the debate of the time triggered by Bouchardon's portrait of Stoch and taken up first by Wilton and then by Harwood himself in their respective versions of the *Bust of Antonio Cocchi*. All of the above examples are portraits *ad vivum* and scholars agree that the Getty bust also depicts the likeness of a man of the time who posed for Harwood, just as the two "Moors", Ali and Morgiano, had done more than a century earlier to allow Pietro Tacca (1577–1640) to create the two most vivid and sorrowful portraits of the famous Livornese monument *I quattro mori* (*Fig. 4*). Harwood's work thus achieves a new dignity since portraits of blacks in sculpture were quite uncommon between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when they were mainly represented in a context of slavery and physical exhaustion as reflected in their ancillary, supporting function in the decorative elements of furniture such as chairs, candelabra and handles, and vehicles such as carriages.

Slave figures, whose identity is often conveyed by a characteristic silver collar, became a frequent sight in aristocratic residences in a series of multiform art objects, also of great value owing to their extreme technical craftsmanship. A political and celebratory connotation is given by the presence of two slaves in the beautiful *Stipo Colonna*, a masterpiece of cabinet-making and ivory carving, made between 1675 and 1700 by a trio of German artists who had emigrated to Rome: cabinet-maker Giacomo Herman and ivory carvers Dominikus and Franz Stainhart. The console is supported by two slaves clearly identified by the presence of an ivory chain around their ebony ankles, which also attracts our attention from a chromatic point of view.

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2 Francis Harwood, Bust of Antonio Cocchi, 1759. Private collection.

3 Francis Harwood, Bust of a Man, detail of the profile, 1758, The J. Paul Getty Museum (88.SA.114), Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum

4 Pietro Tacca, Monumento a Ferdinando I de' Medici detto "I quattro mori", detail of the slave Morgiano, 1599–1617, Piazza Giuseppe Micheli, Livorno. Wikimedia Commons, under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Italy (CC BY-SA 2.5 IT) license.

5 Melchior Barthel, Bust of a Man, 1660s, Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis. Photo courtesy of the Saint Louis Art Museum.

In Venice, too, highly skilled wood sculptor Andrea Brustolon (1662–1732) made extensive use of ebony in the production of his furnishings, populated by Moors whose physical beauty is exalted to the highest degree. This can be seen in the no fewer than 40 pieces of Venier furniture (Venice, Ca' Rezzonico, Museo del Settecento veneziano) commissioned by Pietro Venier and made by Brustolon between 1690 and 1706.

As mentioned, however, there are also much rarer cases of actual sculpture portraits made between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including, for instance, the portrait in the Saint Louis Art Museum (*fig. 5*), made in Venice (ca. 1660) by Melchior Barthel (1625–1672) while he was working on the four colossal slaves for the funeral monument to Doge Giovanni Pesaro in Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari. Or Jean-Baptiste Pigalle's *Servant Paul* from the Musée des Beaux Arts in Dijon, in terracotta, more picturesque in character because of the turban and clothes he is wearing. Unlike these two, Harwood's man passes through the filter of the classical model. Nevertheless, the suggestion of being a real portrait is conveyed, among other things, by the presence of a scar on the man's right temple. Another peculiar aspect is the marked sensual vitality of this man, perhaps seconding the sensitivity of the patron, which is another problematic, as yet unresolved issue in the history of this bust. When the work was acquired by the Getty Museum in 1987, the auction catalogue reported, without citing the source, that the man portrayed was called Psyche and was an athlete in the service of Hugh Percy, 1st Duke of Northumberland. The latter was indeed in Florence during his Grand Tour but not until September 1762, thus four years after the date Harwood inscribed on the base of the work. Furthermore, an analysis of the Duke's accounts shows that no servants of African origin were employed by him before 1764. Even less convincing is the hypothesis that the person portrayed is American-born boxer Bill Richmond, in the service of the 2nd Duke of Northumberland, who only brought him to England in 1777.

Harwood's work therefore still raises many questions and matters for reflection at different levels of interpretation, starting with the material, which on the one hand emphasizes the mimetic

effect of the skin and exalts the powerful musculature, and on the other underlines the bust's nature as an object of luxury. As Cyra Levenson, Chi-ming Yang and Ken Gonzales-Day keenly point out: "the naturalness of the stone can reinforce the essential alterity of the figure ..." and "the colour appears at once to humanize and to objectify".

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Early Modern Luxury Timekeeping

Giulia Iannuzzi

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The image shows an ivory diptych dial made *soli deo gloria* by Paulus Reinman (active 1575–1609) around 1600 in Nuremberg, at the time an important centre specialized in the manufacture of scientific instruments (*Fig. 1*). This pocket dial is part of a remarkable collection of objects for measuring and representing time housed in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan (Italy). This type of dial is formed by two panels that fold flat when not in use, with a string between the inner surfaces that casts a shadow. It was used to tell the time and, among other things, to regulate mechanical clocks. Clocks' rapid technical development had indeed by no means caused the abandonment of gnomon-based methods, in other words, those systems, of which the sundial is the most well-known, that tell the time of day by measuring the solar shadow cast by an object – the gnomon – on a flat surface.

In the invention of the folding sundial, a seminal role is attributed to Georg von Peuerbach (1423–1461), an Austrian mathematician, astronomer and astrologer whose work would shape the reception of Ptolemy in early modern Europe. Some of his creations can still be admired today, such as the piece presented as a gift to Frederick III now on display in the Universalmuseum Joanneum – Museum für Geschichte in Graz (Austria) (*Fig. 2*). During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the production of pocket sundials included single-panel models, models made of various materials – with wooden or brass surfaces, sometimes with reclining metal gnomons – and even exemplars with a wax tablet for taking notes on the back. These objects were particularly suitable for use while travelling, and they allowed forms of private timekeeping, managed by individuals independently from the clock and bell towers of the centres of religious and political power.

Reinman's instrument is representative of a production of which numerous examples are now preserved in museums and private collections. Like similar devices manufactured in the workshops of Nuremberg in the second half of the seventeenth century, as listed on the vertical leaf, Reinman's dial worked at a multitude of

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latitudes, from Danzig to Sicily. The finely decorated details, including stamped decorations and inscriptions filled with red and black colours, and the use of ivory for a secular luxury object, indicate that it was intended for a wealthy clientele. The possibility of using it in a number of different places points to a potential user with cosmopolitan interests, perhaps a noble with a refined aesthetic palate and friendships in various courts and cities of Europe, or a wealthy merchant with trade connections around the Mediterranean, eager to show off his or her economic possibilities through a display of expensive objects.

This pocket device, measuring 11.3 × 9.2 cm, was supposed to be held with the bottom panel parallel to the ground, and oriented North by means of the compass embedded in the base. The string that served as the gnomon had one end fixed immediately above the compass, while the other end was inserted in one of six numbered holes in the vertical leaf, thereby obtaining different angles and rendering it usable at six different latitudes. The time was read by the shadow projected onto one of the six rings on the horizontal surface. The list of cities on the vertical face indicates the number corresponding to the hole to be used for each place (54, 51, 48, 45, 42 and 39° N) (*Fig. 3*).

But that is not all: this small object incorporated a remarkable set of functions, with a sophistication that makes it an apt expression of the contemporary state of the art in its technological field, not unlike tablets or smartphones today. On the horizontal leaf, the concave area with a fixed vertical pin is another sundial, indicating the hour in two different systems which divided the day into 24 units: the Babylonian system, beginning at sunrise, and the Italian one, beginning at sunset. On the vertical leaf, there are two more smaller sundials, also constructed with fixed brass vertical pins. The one on the left, with the signs of the zodiac represented around the edge, indicates the number of hours of daylight in a given day of the year, between 8 and 16 depending on the position of the sun in the ecliptic. The one on the right uses the number of daylight hours according to the so-called "temporary"

or "Jewish" hours – the division of the day into 12 parts, varying in length according to the time of year.

On the top of the vertical surface, in devices such as this, there may be a wind rose to identify the prevailing winds, and on the bottom an epact – in the Gregorian calendar, the age of the moon on 1 January expressed in thirtieths – used as a reference to find the age of the moon on any day of the year and calculate the date of Easter. These brass rotating discs may be admired in a piece housed in MET – The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (*Fig. 4* and *Fig. 5*).

Sometimes one of the external surfaces featured a lunar volvelle with a gilt-brass rim, like in the specimen at the University of Cambridge's Whipple Museum of the History of Science (Holden-White collection no. 1935–42, accession no. 1688). In Flemish specimens manufactured between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there could also have been a *nocturnal*, used to find the time at night from the orientation of the stars, or an *aspectarium*, an astrological diagram depicting the angles (or aspects) between the planets, the sun and the moon, usually placed in the inner circle of a lunar volvelle.

The two sundials on the vertical panel of Reinman's piece in Milan are decorated with scenes of chivalrous life (*Fig. 3*): a musician playing a string instrument with buildings in the background on the left and two seated lovers on the right. The plants in both scenes perhaps intend to symbolize the passage of time, recalling ideas of seasonality and cycles of life. On the inside of the lower panel, the blowing putti – often encountered in Reinman's objects – personify the winds. The geometric frames that decorate the edges of the two panels are also typical of this maker.

The use of ivory gives us a glimpse of the trade routes that connected Africa and Europe in the early modern age, controlled by Arab and – after the fifteenth century – Portuguese merchants. In the German-speaking world of the time, this material was used for other luxury decorative artefacts and scientific objects, such as medical and anatomical models. The fact that Nuremberg's

compass and sundial makers did not normally use brass – a material favoured in other specialist production areas such as Augsburg – testifies to the importance of trade networks in shaping the production of scientific instruments. This "isolation from metal technology", as Penelope Gouck observed, was an important reason for the decline of the Nuremberg school following the splendour of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Many observations could also be made on the professional excellence that, in a field such as time computation, implied the availability in one place of scientific-mathematical knowledge, especially concerning geography and astronomy, technical expertise and craftsmanship, and artistic taste and refinement. In the case of Nuremberg, where von Peuerbach's student Regiomontanus (1436–1476) resided and published his works in the fifteenth century, local manufacturers may also be located within the city's social fabric and merchant class, giving rise to specialized family dynasties. Dials could be marked with an "N" (for Nuremberg), punched by sworn masters of the compass makers' guild to certify the quality of the instruments, or bear the mark of the maker. The crown distinguishable on the MET exemplar (*Fig. 5*), stamped twice on the upper edge of the bottom leaf, was the identifying mark used by Paulus, and by his father Hieronymus before him, to sign their instruments.

A multitude of technical and cultural trends converge in a tiny object: the coexistence of mechanical and gnomonic systems of time calculation in the 1600s, and of different units of measurement for the year and day; the need for a time computation device that could work across geographical and political borders; and the circulation of materials and luxury goods in Europe and across the Mediterranean.

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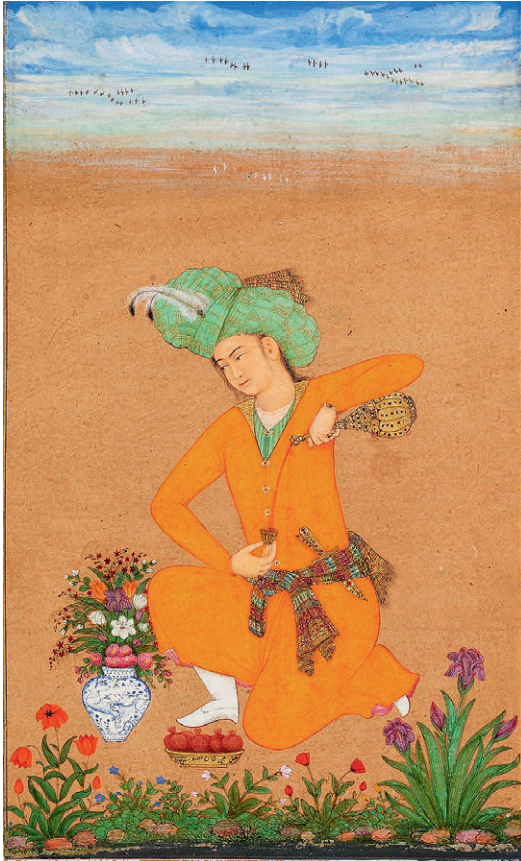
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Far, far away... One of the most interesting living objects that crossed the Mediterranean world on sometimes long and enchanted paths is the tulip, or "*lale*" as it was called in Turkish and Persian. The *lale* was as much a political emblem of the Ottoman expansion towards the East as it was an emblem of knowledge and cultural appropriation on the Habsburg-Dutch side, until it finally entered history as a symbol of economic greed and early capitalist failure. Thus, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the tulip returned to the same sultan's court in Constantinople that had once conquered it, stylizing it into a symbol of domination that has come down to the present-day material culture and symbolic order. To this day, tulip-centred celebrations are present in different cultures and lands, including Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, the Netherlands and the USA. The focus of this paper's reflections is what in psychology is sometimes called *Gestaltwandel*, that is, the striking transformation in form (*Gestalt*) that allows us, according to this essay's main argument, to speak of elemental hybridization in the sense of change. In the Ottoman Empire of the eighteenth century, the *lale* became not only a marker of political disputes over perceived extravagance and power struggles but a field of debates in knowledge history and botany, which basically resulted in its triplication into the historical Persian tulip, the European tulip and the Ottoman tulip, each with its own, decidedly distinct form, which nevertheless cannot be thought of independently from the others. This connectedness (according to linguist Benjamin Whorf) is the subject of this article, which uses visual evidence of material culture to pose the question of cultural entanglement and distortion.

The *lale* enjoyed a relatively untroubled existence in medieval Persia, especially in the areas that were successively incorporated into the Ottoman Empire as vassals or subjugated as tribute kingdoms from the fourteenth century onwards. Interestingly, the *lale* was one of the many flowers (including daffodils and hyacinths in particular) that increasingly became a symbol of the overall success of Ottoman expansion.

Some historians have linked this to the idea that the term "*lale*" contains all the letters that are also contained in the word Allah, which initially made it interesting for artists and craftsmen (i.e., in music, poetry, carpets, paintings). This cultural significance was then accompanied by political appropriation during the expansion. Obviously, the *lale* played a central role in the context of designing the gardens of the Topkapı Palace (built after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, starting in 1465). This floral symbol of the success of the expansion became a symbol of the strategy of taking over and reappropriating cultural symbols. This is evidenced both in material culture (such as the caftans of the sultans and their families, carpets, carvings and ceramics) and in the living plants and garden design. The tulips in these gardens continued to closely resemble the Persian models. They were usually monochromatic, had rather open petals and the preferred colour was red, as shown in a beautiful miniature painting in the *Dara Shikoh* album (*Fig. 1*). Salzmann writes: "The tulip expressed renewal and peace, as well as spiritual turmoil and mythical intoxication, earthly power and self-negation. The tulip's red petals and black stamen served as visual metaphor for the flame, the self-immolation of the seeker in the fire of the divine source, as well as the wine goblet of mystical intoxication." Alongside the political symbolism, the additional religious meaning quite naturally emerges as an indicator of the establishment of a presumably "purified" Ottoman Islam, centred on Islam from Constantinople and withdrawn from Sufi contexts, throughout the Ottoman Empire (as represented, for example, by thirteenth-century poet Jalal al-Din Rumi, 1207–1273). Even though the *lale* continued to bloom alongside many other flowers in the Topkapı gardens, this particular flower acquired a largely independent element of meaning via its singular association with symbols of rulership and power.

Habsburg envoy Augier Ghislain de Busbecq approached the matter quite differently. In *Four Letters from Turkey*, he described the experiences and observations of his legation journey from 1554–1562. Already in his first letter, which was initially published in

Paris in 1581 and much later became known as the "Tulip Letter", he recalled the "beauty and richness of colour" of the tulip, which he had probably encountered in the Macedonian part of the Ottoman Empire that had been annexed shortly before. This was presumably his first encounter with the tulip, and he took the opportunity to send some bulbs to the Viennese court of Ferdinand I. Unfortunately, the date of this consignment remains uncertain. The addressee of this consignment, Viennese court gardener and botanist Carolus Clusius (also known as Charles de l'Écluse), took these bulbs (or their descendants) with him to Leiden in 1575, where he founded the earliest botanical garden in the Netherlands as newly appointed professor of botany. The first radical change in the shape of the tulip can be attributed to the successful breeding of Clusius and his colleagues. The Persian-Ottoman *lale* morphed into the Dutch tulip, and the foundation was laid for the famous "Tulip Craze" and for the first stock market bubble to burst (albeit unintentionally).

Around the same time, in 1545, a young doctor from Leipzig, Johannes Kentmann, travelled to Italy for educational purposes. In Padua, he visited the oldest botanical garden and sketched, among other things, a flower hitherto unknown to him, the tulip. After his return in 1550, by now a city doctor in Meissen, he gave one of his drawing sheets to Johann Herwarth from Augsburg. Herwarth, who had made his fortune in the silver and cotton trade, had a private garden which he cultivated for scientific, aesthetic and botanical purposes. On the occasion of the *Reichstag* in Augsburg in 1559, Ferdinand I, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Johannes Herwarth and a certain Conrad Gessner, city physician and botanist in Zurich, met upon the request of the emperor. It was to Ferdinand I and Conrad Gessner, who had already published the four-volume work *Historia Animalium*, that Herwarth presented Kentmann's drawing. Most probably though, Kentmann had already paid a visit to the admired Gessner upon his return. Gessner subsequently described the tulip drawn by Kentmann and transferred by Gessner as a garden tulip and a narcissus depicted in his posthumously

published work *Historia plantarum* as a *Tulipa moro*. This version of a tulip clearly resembles neither the Persian *lale* nor the Dutch tulip of the sixteenth century. It is quite obviously a hybrid variant not necessarily based on eyewitness testimony. Presumably, he had seen variants of both plants in Herwarth's garden (*Fig. 2*).

Upon this encounter in 1559 in Augsburg, the tulip had become an object that attracted various interests: botanical, medical and, embodied in the figure of Ferdinand I, political, albeit in close connection with expanding the scholarly horizon as a characteristic of social reputation in the wider context of early modern colonialism. Thus, the tulip was not only in motion itself, but it quite obviously moved several people too, physically but above all intellectually and, it may be assumed, emotionally. Tulips can thus be understood as "affecting presences" in Robert Plant Armstrong's sense of the term. Interestingly, the tulip underwent massive changes in its shape (*Gestalt*), in its various habitats and, linked to the respective interests and potential manners of understanding and relatedness, in the context of its presence. Thus, the tulip can be understood in its relation to thought, culture, aesthetic and, likewise, economic exploitability. Furthermore, as this paper argues, it should be understood as extremely mobile in space and form (*Gestalt*), in particular, because this process of change is a crucial feature of entangled early modern history. In this regard, I think it is initially irrelevant whether this process is called *hybridization* or *creolization* or, along the lines of Homi Bhabha, as creating a *third space*. The crucial point is that as an object and subject of material culture, as an "affecting presence" in motion, the tulip underwent an inner and outer change of *Gestalt*, and that, in this capacity, it is representative of the many artefacts, representatives, objects and substances of material culture that were set in motion in the context of early modern globalizing practices. But this also means that this change of form and essence needs to be contextualized in each case, in order to come to an understanding about the circulatory character of the "foreign" (in the sense of the externalized "other") as part of our own history.

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One reason for the massive popularity of the tulip at European courts was certainly its origin in the Ottoman Empire, in combination with successful rebreeding, which could be described as "political-aesthetic appropriation". Although relatively easy to propagate, tulip cultivation carried some risks – in particular, it was never clear which tulip would actually develop from a bulb. Thus, tulips became an object of prestige, increasingly firmly entrenched in court gardening (like in the sultan's court) and a speculative object, especially in the Netherlands. Significantly, the lack of certainty in predicting a tulip's shape and colour in particular became a game owing to its impressive diversity. This found expression in numerous so-called "tulip books", according to which tulip bulbs were soon traded (*Fig. 3*). Between the years 1633 and 1637, speculative trade sold options on bulbs as well as options on options ("*windhandel*"), the peak of which has gone down in the history books as "Tulip Mania". Some historians like to point out that this was the first stock market bubble, the bursting of which plunged hundreds of thousands into poverty. However, the Dutch government put an end to this speculative trade with a decree that set the last round to zero and declared it invalid. The economic consequences were limited, but these four years dominate the perception of the tulip, especially in popular accounts.

By the seventeenth century, tulips had found their place in print stores and bookstores, as well as in the gardens and courts of Europe. In 1636, the Margrave of Baden-Durlach listed 4,796 tulip bulbs to his name. Likewise, in the Dutch Golden Age, the tulip became a metaphor for Dutchness and, as can be seen in paintings, Dutch colonial lifestyle, imported for example to the colonies of Batavia and Cape Town, but also to Nieuw Amsterdam (today Manhattan/New York). As Pavord writes: "A thin, tenuous line marked the advance of the tulip in the New World, where it was unknown in the wild. ... Adrian van Donck, who settled in New Amsterdam in 1642 described the European [*sic*!] flowers that bravely colonized the settlers' gardens". At least one of the Dutch East India Company's vessels was named *Tulp*. Louis XIV had the Versailles garden

planted with tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, and many other examples could be cited too. The tulip existed in manifold versions, a variety of shades and colour refractions. The tulip of Kentmann/Herwarth/Gessner, however, had completely disappeared from the pictorial programmes of flower depiction. When Gessner's *Historia Plantarum* was published in 1751, "his" tulip had become alien to botanists and the publishers of tulip books – a predecessor of today's coffee table books. This might also be why traces of the tulip from the perspective of knowledge history in Europe have almost totally disappeared from historiography, and the dominant narrative focuses on the four years of the Tulip Craze. Furthermore, it has also been almost completely forgotten that botanists continued to study the tulip in the eighteenth century, in the Ottoman Empire as well as in European territories. The tulip continued to pose riddles to them, and one question that sparked discussion was its scent. In 1899 Hermann zu Solms-Laubach mentions, with recourse to Gessner, that in the sixteenth century there were (still) tulips that "emitted a delicate fragrance". This is interesting insofar as at that time Busbecq had emphasized odourlessness as a characteristic of the tulip, but Gessner had found that the tulip in Herwarth's garden was slightly fragrant. Solms-Laubach's treatise was a reaction to an older publication by Heinrich Friedrich von Diez, who translated two tulip writings from the Ottoman language in 1811. One of the translated writings was by an Ottoman botanist and garden master, who referred to himself as Lalézari, literally meaning a "tulip expert". Lalézari was chief gardener under Sultan Ahmed II. Diez had become interested in his writings, published in 1722, when, as Prussia's envoy in Constantinople, he had become acquainted with new species of tulips recently bred in the sultan's palace garden.

The comparison clearly shows that the new Ottoman tulips had a different shape, which visually bore little resemblance to the Persian type and no resemblance at all to the Dutch-European varieties (*Fig. 4*). And yet it was this relationship that interested Diez. From Lalézari's texts, he concluded that European scholars had

taken Ottoman advice on care and cultivation as well as the rules on aesthetics and the nomenclature of the varieties. According to Diez, the only differences were in taste. The Ottomans liked pointed tulips, while in Europe the rounded varieties were preferred. Diez's writing can certainly be understood as meaning that he regretted this. The new shape (*Gestalt*) of tulips was the trademark of Ahmed III, who ruled from 1703–1736, a period also known as the *Lale devri* (tulip epoch). He reportedly bought innumerable tulip bulbs, partially imported from the Netherlands. Whether this exaggerated love of tulips actually cost him his regency and his life in the end must remain open.

The visual representations of the tulip, embedded in the contexts of interpretation and meaning, reveal its significance in a transculturally entangled history. The figure of thought of the circularity of the "foreign" (in the sense of the "other") contains two dimensions. The first dimension takes up the insight that the global history of the early modern period consisted of many processes of cultural exchange which did not follow a single direction. The second dimension concerns the insight that cultural exchange processes turn the "known" into the "foreign" and vice versa, thereby creating something new. While this process of hybridization or creolization is imponderable, it makes terms like "known" and "foreign", "own" and "other", appear obsolete as analytical categories. The change in the shape of signifiers such as the tulip was carried out and negotiated by actors with different scopes and contexts of knowledge. When these encountered each other, they could produce misunderstandings or a lack of understanding, or even silence. Historians are not exempt from this. An actor-centred transcultural historiography can be benefited by integrating these supposed "empty spaces" into historical analysis. The tulip and its rich visual representations over space and time only reveal their respective significance against the background of the flower's essential polyvalence.

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The Yatagan: A Blade between East and West

Achim Weihrauch

1

Objects are strange things. They are like us, in several respects. Some are individuals, standing on their own count, but most belong to a family, sometimes with hundreds and thousands of relatives. They cannot talk to us (fortunately, in many cases): their language is their mere existence; their physical appearance in terms of form, material, construction and artistic merit as a whole; how they appeal to the eye, how they feel in the hand. Some are simply built for their usefulness, to improve the limited capacities of the human owner and user, but many have a larger field of meaning, including aspects of prestige, embellishment, symbolism and cultural identity.

Our object, or subject, is the *yatagan* (*Fig. 1*). It is a somewhat inward-curving knife about the length of an arm, belonging to the large family of edged tools and weapons (in this case, hand-held and single-bladed, to be precise). In the European imagination of the past centuries, it was seen as synonymous with the Ottoman Empire, standing for the threatening military power between the Christian world and the mysterious realms of the east with their exotic diversity, richness and vast magnitude. The *yatagan* or *ataghan* (also called *varsak* or *handzhar*) is a type of Ottoman knife or short sword, reportedly used from the mid-sixteenth to late nineteenth centuries. Presumably it is older, but we lack the information and archaeological evidence to prove this. The town of Yatağan in southwest Turkey (now in the Denizli province) was once famous for its *yatagan* production; in folklore it is the birthplace of the *yatagan*, thence the name. But it is more likely that the name derives from the old Turkish root *yat-* ("to bend", "to incline", "to lie"), also recalling other words like *yatmak* ("to lie"), *yatak* ("bed") and *yatay* ("horizontal"), probably because it is worn horizontally, through the belt.

The *yatagan* was extensively used in Ottoman Turkey and in areas under immediate Ottoman influence, such as the Balkans and the Caucasus. It was omnipresent in Anatolia. But it was also well known in parts of Greece; especially its smaller, identically built cousin, the *bichac* (in Bulgarian *p'chok*, in Bosnian and Serbian

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pichaq, meaning "knife"). It was a common knife type in all regions of ancient Greek cultural influence and the Black Sea regions, where the Ottomans played a dominant role over the centuries. A variety is still endemic in Crete today. All variations of the knife have a single-edged blade with a slight forward curve and a hilt formed of two grip plaques attached through the tang. The blade varies from about 20 centimetres to 65 centimetres in length. The hilt has no guard; metal bolsters connect the grip to the shoulder of the blade. The grip plaques are typically made of ivory, horn or metal and spread out in two "wings" or "ears" on either side of the pommel.

The most-renowned *yatagan* bearers are the Ionian-coast Zeybeks, a kind of warrior class in the Aegean region first mentioned in the thirteenth century (*Fig. 2*). They are famous for their extremely expressive and elegant "warrior dance", the *zeybek*, in which they mimic hawks and eagles. The Zeybeks were probably of Greek and Phrygo-Pelasgian origin, migrating from Thrace and settling in Bursa, Aydin and Sakarya in early historical times. Traditionally, the Zeybeks protected village people against landlords, bandits and tax collectors. The Zeybeks carried T-hilted *yatagana*, seemingly simpler than the Ottoman ones, but often displaying more elaborate blades with complex patterns of welding structures, stars and flower inlays and maybe a date or a maker's stamp. Of more importance than its functional aspects, is the role of the *yatagan* in society. It was an indispensable part of a man's attire and part of his ceremonial dress for marriage, clan meetings, burials and other "events", bringing to mind the part a blade often plays in many traditional societies as a symbol of the entry to a new level of society, ritually expressed by rites of passage. It cannot be proven, but the *yatagan* might well be a sword type given in the Ionic, Balkan and the Black Sea regions as part of initiation and ritual warfare, a practice which nominally became obsolete under Islamic rule but persisted in the villages.

While the *yatagan* is mostly associated with the elite soldiers of the Ottoman Empire, the Janissaries, there are several theories about its origin. There may be some truth in all of them. The most

striking resemblance is seen in *falcata* swords used in the eastern Mediterranean area, which evolved from the Greek-Macedonian *kopis*. This kind of "sickle sword" is often depicted on Attic pottery. It was in use from the earlier Iron Age (around 800–700 BC) until the Roman conquest. It was also used by Hispanic tribes and the Etruscans. From it, Balkan-Celtic people as well as Thracians and Dacians developed a kind of sickle knife (*sica*), not seen in western European contexts. Babylonian and Sumerian people evolved a sickle sword, the *sappara*, out of the Egyptian *khepesh*, which found its way into the Greek-Macedonian and Balkan areas. In parts of Africa, the blade shape is still somewhat present. In addition, the *shotel* of eastern Africa (Ethiopia), the *laz bichaq* (also called Black Sea *yatagan*) probably originating from Egypt, the similar Armenian *yatagan* (with a very pronounced "S" shape) and the *ngulu* of the Ngombe groups in Congo might be seen in this context. Among the Berber cultures of Morocco, for example the Kabyles, a sword-like knife named *flyssa* is used that is clearly a relative of the *laz bichac* from Trabzon. These shapes cast light on many centuries of cultural relationships and migrations between northern Africa and the Black Sea and Ionian / Levantine region.

The Turkish predecessors of the Ottomans, the Seljuks, already recruited their soldiers mainly from the Black Sea region of the former eastern Roman realm of Rumelia, under the regency of Constantinople. One of the most important states under the rule of the Seljuks was the Mameluk caliphate of Kairo. Mamluk translates as "one who is owned", meaning "slave". It is a term most commonly used to refer to non-Arab, ethnically diverse (mostly Turkish, Caucasian, eastern and southeastern European) enslaved mercenaries, slave-soldiers and freed slaves who were assigned high-ranking military and administrative duties, serving the ruling Ottoman and Arab dynasties in the Muslim world. Originally the Mamluks were slaves of Turkish origins from Eurasia, but the institution of military slavery spread to include Circassians, Abkhazians, Georgians, Armenians, Russians and Hungarians, as well as people from the Balkans such as Albanians, Greeks and South

Slavs (*saqaliba*). They also recruited from the Egyptians; there was much migration in both directions under this system. Over time, the Mamluks became a powerful military knightly class in various Muslim societies that were controlled by dynastic Arab rulers. In some cases, they attained the rank of sultan, while in others they held regional power as *emirs* or *beys*. Mamluk factions seized the sultanate centred on Egypt and Syria and formed the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), which was later taken over by the Ottomans. The Mamluks' status was above ordinary slaves, who were not allowed to carry weapons or perform certain tasks. In places such as Egypt, from the Ayyubid dynasty to the time of Muhammad Ali of Egypt, mamluks were even considered "true lords" and "true warriors", with a social status above the general population in Egypt and the Levantine Janissary.

In popular culture, the *yatagan* is directly linked to the Balkan Janissaries. A Janissary (in Turkish *jeni tscheri*, literally "new soldier") was a member of the elite infantry units that formed the Ottoman Sultan's household troops and the first modern standing army in Europe. Christian boys from Balkan and Anatolian ("Greek" or "Rumelian") villages were selected and subjected to a rigorous military education, combined with Islamization (in a Sufistic, mystic Islam), similarly to the early Mamluks in the Seljuk era. In the sixteenth century, they were considered the most feared infantry worldwide. The corps was most likely established under sultan Orhan (1324–1362). The Janissaries became famed for their internal cohesion cemented by strict discipline and order. In the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, they became a "state in a state" and some soldiers acquired high civil positions.

It might well be that the Balkan soldiers of the Turkish rulers, Mamluks or Janissaries coming from the Black Sea domain in a wider sense, discovered the *yatagan* from the ancient Graeco-Roman realm of Constantinople and, owing to their non-Turkish origin, adopted it as a symbol of their identity. It seems probable that the *yatagan*, their iconic weapon, symbolized their special status of slaves from the subjugated "Greek" Christian strata. The Turkish

conquerors never had a *yatagan*-like shape *in petto*, as this would have been useless for their highly successful kind of fighting based heavily on mounted archery. The *yatagan*, or at least its shorter relatives, definitely do not come "out of the steppes"; its grounded shape is as useful today (as a utility knife) as it was 2,000 years ago. Already in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, we have some of the finest *yatagana* ever made, for example, that of Suleyman the Magnificent, made in 1526–1527 by the court jeweller Ahmed Tekel, indicating that at that time it was already a fully established shape, and expressing that the sultan was the supreme leader of the "enslaved" Balkans, his rank symbolized by precious *yatagana*.

So we can construct one part of the *yatagan*'s history: in the Balkans it was a vestige of the Ionian *kopis* and *falcata* blades, which were an adaptation of the *khepesh* and *sappara* swords used in the eastern Mediterranean and Red Sea realms between Egypt and modern-day Iraq, spreading up to the southern Black Sea (today Bulgaria, Turkey and Georgia). In the Slavonic regions around the Black Sea, today Romania, Moldova and the Ukraine, the shape did not take hold. Much of the prestige of this "sickle shape" was given by Alexander the Great's conquests, for the shape also occurs in early Indian temple reliefs and statues, carrying on into Nayar temple swords in Kerala and the Deccan. It seems that the Ottoman Turks, and maybe already the Seljuks, adopted a Greek-Macedonian and Levantine shape and introduced it to their multiethnic empire both as a symbol of their supremacy and to gain the acceptance of the older, indigenous strata of Balkan people they dominated politically, but who often kept their own local "village" administration. The Seljuk and early Ottoman Empire was significant in its tolerance and acceptance of local traditions, as long as taxes were paid in manpower and goods. Indeed, the Turkish rulers were preferred in the villages to the corrupt and tight-fisted Constantinople rulers who had gone before them.

Can the history of the *yatagan* really go back almost 3,000 years? It would be a long time for a steel blade. Several aspects need to be looked at here. One element links the *yatagan* to Bronze

Age times: the broad band that separates the two handle scales, a construction that derives from the "frame handle". The bronze weapons of Luristan (present-day Iran), which were mass-produced and still exist in many collections, are well known. They often have "frame handles" and big ear shapes on the pommel section, clearly reminiscent of the *yatagan*. It can be assumed that they derive from the joint bones of large mammals (and maybe humans), which were used as handle grip plates. The question is: is there a direct link between the *yatagan* and the Bronze Age shapes, or is it the fruit of a "Renaissance movement"? The Italian "ear dagger", the *cinquedea* and other Renaissance shapes have clear links with findings from ancient times, which were newly appreciated in the late Middle Ages. They begin to occur in the fifteenth century and indicate a new kind of aesthetic perception. But in the case of the *yatagan*, in Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, the weapons of the Pashtuns and other culturally related ethnic groups (known as *choora*) have a similar construction and shape. In the fifteenth century, they already had the same appearance as today. So, it does not seem plausible to assume that the *yatagan* was a mere "Renaissance development" from Bronze Age finds. Furthermore, in India, we already find the Nayar sword shape depicted in the temple reliefs of Ayanta and Hoysala in the early Middle Ages. One can hardly assume that all these shapes were the upshot of a "Renaissance trend".

There is another aspect: the blade construction. In the second century AD, we meet a new element in sword blades: the telltale signs of complex pattern-welding. Blades had already been constructed in a forge-welded way – that is, the blade corpus was composed of metals with different properties – for a long time. But now, precisely at the time of the Diocletian reformations, very elaborate techniques suddenly came into being. A particular novelty was the composition of the blades from thin, partially twisted rods and split bars, in a technique identical to contemporary glass decoration techniques. This can hardly be a coincidence. In the third century, sword blades displayed some extremely complicated patterns, yet

this was not known in other parts of the world. They were obviously made for a newly established social stratum: probably high-ranking auxiliary troops at the service of the Romans: Sarmatians, Goths, Huns, Gets, Illyrians and Dacians. These blades (today found in bogs and rivers in Denmark, eastern Europe and Britain) were obviously widely distributed prestige goods, described with words of awe and respect in diverse sources, as they were one of the most prestigious objects available for the nobility.

The *yatagan* conserves these techniques. The finest blades are made from several twisted rods, a technique completely unknown to the ancient Turks. From the Ming dynasty on, these techniques were also found also in China and southeast Asia, but never in Korea, central or southern India, or Japan. It therefore seems that they became established as the Turkish realms became a worldwide agitating power, especially in Islamic "brother states" like Malaysia and parts of Indonesia. Ancient Greek techniques, most probably preserved in the Balkan, southern Black Sea and Anatolian regions, were transmitted as "Turkish" by smiths and soldiers to many Turkish spheres of influence: vestiges of an original eastern Roman technique, "out of fashion" in the high medieval era and rediscovered and brought to life again as the Turks took power in the western part of the word, in a truly spectacular voyage through the "old world".

The *yatagan* therefore symbolizes a kind of mutual respect and exchange on both sides: Turkish respect for the older indigenous "Greek" culture, and Anatolian acceptance of Turkish cultural input and political dominance.

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Marco Polo on the Pearl River Delta: The Venetian Middle Ages and Italy's Colony in China

Lucas Burkart

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Visitors to the Museo Correr in Venice expect *venezianità* – and are duly rewarded by the museum's exhibits and style of presentation: dogal portraits, paintings of the lagoon city, the piazzetta, the Rialto bridge or the church of Santa Maria della Salute. The collection, originally assembled during the first third of the nineteenth century, has since perpetuated an image of Venice's past as historical grandeur. The late romantic vision of John Ruskin's "The Stones of Venice" (1851) provided its programmatic foundations; today's mass tourism with between 20 and 30 million yearly visitors reflects it in the same way as the *Venice Time Machine* project: a factory of dreams!

Since 1881, the collection also contains a wooden, almost life-size seated figure, which doesn't quite fit this impression (*Fig. 1*). Its eyes and facial traits, the moustache, the long robe as well as its gesture and the posture of the right leg and foot appear as if they stem from a different (dream) world. The golden colour throughout is equally irritating, as it intentionally fails to distinguish between the figure's skin and its splendid clothing.

Inquiring into the history of this object, this chapter explores aspects of Venetian history that lie outside the typical imaginations of Venice. The museum's attempt to identify the figure as Marco Polo, and thus to incorporate it into the narrative of *venezianità,* fails to do justice to the object and its history. A creation of the late nineteenth century, the object not only alludes to the most famous Venetian of the Middle Ages, but reveals itself as a representation of the colonial ambitions of a new nation state, the Kingdom of Italy, formed in 1861.

Following meetings in Antwerp (1871) and Paris (1875), the International Geographical Congress of 1881 was held in Venice. Principal initiators were the *Società geografica italiana*, established in 1867, and its first president, Count Cristoforo Negri. In 1880, Italy had become the latest European power to enter the race for colonies, and geography was the scientific endeavour of the hour. It served rather blatantly as a methodical justification of colonial ambitions. Scientific research and imperialism thus coalesced through international cooperation and national rivalries alike.

The impressive number of 1200 academic participants underlined the importance of collegial exchange in the scientific appropriation of the globe, especially those parts of Asia, Africa, and Oceania that had hitherto been less well known in Europe. The national significance of the conference was further reflected in its socio-political and cultural framings. Its official opening was attended by King Umberto I, his wife Margareth of Genua, and a great number of social and political luminaries, in whose honour banquets and *soirées* were held. All this was topped by an *Esposizione geografica* in the Napoleonic Wing of the buildings on Piazza San Marco, which today houses the Museo Correr. Conference and exhibition, according to the contemporary observer Attilio Brunialti, "were meant to reflect the economic potential of a people, while highlighting what a people can do and is bound to do".

The imperialist impetus was obvious. Not limited to the mere desire for territorial expansion, it also included a repertoire of attitudes towards the outside world, which were nourished by militarism, patriotism, feelings of racial superiority, and the belief in the national contribution towards human civilization. In light of Italy's colonial juniority vis-à-vis Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain or Portugal, the splendour of Italian culture came to be emphasised first and foremost.

It was amidst these circumstances that the seated figure made its way into the Museo Correr. A copy of a statue from the Buddhist Hualin temple in the southern-Chinese town of Guangzhou, it was created on behalf of Venice's mayor – who bore the illustrious name of Dante di Serego Alighieri – and brought to Venice on the occasion of the *Esposizione geografica.* While the conference provided the scientific foundations for the discovery and imperialist appropriation of the world, the exhibition made a public display of Italy as a colonial power.

The meaning of the statue does not derive from Marco Polo's historicity as such, but from the European reception of his famous travelogue in the nineteenth century and various attempts to claim him as a national figure. The *Milione* travelled with

Columbus on the Santa Maria in 1492 and framed the whole era of European expansion as an authoritative text. Its status arose not so much from a coherent narrative or the accuracy of its contents as from the promising tale of Eastern riches. The text's wide circulation in several languages and more than twenty printed editions in the sixteenth century alone elevated the merchant from Venice to a historic role model of the European discoverer during the first age of globalization.

Following the *Milione's* loss of appeal in the seventeenth century, the Enlightenment re-discovered Marco Polo as a travel writer. Around 1750, comprehensive compilations of travel literature emerged in England, France, and Germany, which proved highly popular. The *Milione* had its fixed place among this literature. In 1792, the book accompanied the first British delegation to China, helping to better localise their own experiences.

The *Milione's* reception initially focused on its language, on the basis of which its national belonging was negotiated. Yet, although Marco Polo was naturally considered an Italian in the Lazari-Pasini edition of 1847, the French orientalist Guillaume Pauthier claimed him for *La Grande Nation*. In the preface of his 1865 edition, he wrote: "car si Marc Pol est Italien par son origine, il est Français par adoption" ("if Marco Polo is Italian by origin, he his French by adoption").

In essence, Marco Polo only became a colonial figure through a change in perspective in the reading of his travelogue. It was no longer his language as a national marker, but his geographical and historical knowledge of the Mongol Empire – from the Hindu Kush to the Pacific Ocean – that made him valuable to European readers, states, and scientific establishments. New editions were expanded with insights from more recent expeditions, which were incorporated into the historic text. This is most clearly evident in the maps featured in contemporary reprints. Enhanced by nineteenth-century cartographic knowledge, they seemingly reconstructed Marco Polo's route of travel; essentially, however, they were instruments for the spatial mapping and appropriation of the colonial target zones in Asia.

The greatest highlight of the scientific editions was the 1871 English publication by Henry Yule. Its subtitle freely reveals the connections made between history and the present, scientific research and imperialism, as it presents the text "with extensive critical and explanatory notes, references, appendices and full indexes, ... in the light of recent discoveries". These additions also reflected the origins and the biography of the editor. Stemming from a family of military officers, Yule joined the East India Company as an engineer in 1840 at the age of seventeen, in whose service he oversaw the development of various civil and military projects. At the same time, he repeatedly participated in military campaigns, in the wars against the Sikhs just like during the Sepoy Uprising of 1857. Following his retirement in 1862, he returned to Europe, residing in England and in Italy, where he began his research on Marco Polo.

Yule's persona paradigmatically captures the essence of the European reception of Marco Polo: research in the historical geography of the *Milione*, pursued by a representative of the East India Company, an institution that like no other represented the genesis and political significance of European colonialism during the Victorian era. Yule combined scientific and colonial perspectives with his personal experiences as a traveller in India. These experiences were reflected in the editor's imitation of Marco Polo himself. *The book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian* was published as a third edition in 1901, complemented by "a supplement, containing additional notes and addenda, with a memoir of Henry Yule by his daughter Amy Frances Yule and a bibliography of his writings".

With each new edition spurring the reception of the *Milione,* Marco Polo became more palatable as a supposed historical role model for the agendas of European colonial powers, and essentially a colonial figure *avant la lettre*. The transformation from medieval traveller to colonial figurehead was driven primarily by the interpretations of European academies, which in turn nourished their own colonial ambitions while becoming instrumentalised by European powers competing for colonial possessions. Count Cristoforo Negri, the founder of the *Società geografica italiana*, regretted in his review of Yule's edition, despite all due rec-

ognition, that the most dignified memorial to "the Italian Marco Polo" had been created by an Englishman. His exact phrasing neatly exposes the colonialist perspective so intrinsic to contemporary scientific discourse: "Yule ha sotratto agli italiani il lavoro: egli tiene il campo conquistato, e lo manterrà" ("Yule took over the work of the Italians; yet they hold the conquered territory, and they will keep it").

The European colonial powers made use of Marco Polo's travelogue by interpreting it as narrative model and spatial framework that supposedly provided a historical legitimization for their ambitions. While the historical sciences used the "invention of tradition" to legitimise the nation state, geography put it in the service of territorial expansion; through the reception of Marco Polo's Chinese travels, it was possible to combine these two aspects congenially.

In 1866, Italy first established formal relations with the Qing rulers of the Middle Kingdom. Ostensibly, this step was intended to protect Italian missionaries. Yet Italy's latest diplomatic endeavour was more than just religious politics. Western nations systematically used attacks on Christian missionaries as pretexts to demand new concessions such as the removal of trade barriers. The long-term goal of these policies, however, was to secure actual colonial possessions in China.

From a colonialist perspective, Guangzhou was the predestined location for this purpose. Situated in the province of Guangdong on the Pearl River Delta, the city traditionally represented – alongside Hongkong and Macau – the gateway to China in the South China Sea, and had for long been the centre of Chinese foreign trade. It fell to British colonial politics to first take note of this significance. In the Treaty of Nanking (1842), the first of the infamous "Unequal Treaties", Britain cemented her control of Chinese ports from Guangzhou to Shanghai and thus achieved almost all her aims set forth at the beginning of the First Opium War.

It is an almost forgotten episode that Italy too controlled a colony in the area of Tianjin, 120 kilometres south-east of Bejing,

more than 2,000 kilometres away from Guangzhou: 114 acres in size, a *Little Italy* in the north of China. The toponomy of this Italian district imagined Italy as a major European colonial power, an *impero*. The royal couple was represented by the Corso Vittorio Emanuele and the Piazza Regina Elena, the kingdom's territorial claims in the northeast of Italy were upheld by Via Trento, Via Trieste, and Via Fiume, while Italian civilizational achievements were present with Via Dante, Via Matteo Ricci, and – last but not least – Via Marco Polo.

With its participation in the "Eight-Nation Alliance" against the Boxer Uprising (1900), Italy had positioned herself as a colonial power in China, and would stick to her fantasies of global power until 1947. In contrast to other colonial powers in Tianjin, Italy never succeeded in drawing any tangible benefits from the asymmetrical and far-ranging commercial freedoms stipulated in the Boxer Protocol. Neither did Rome's political scene follow a corresponding strategy, nor did the Italian economy even meet the necessary requirements. Yet, Italy's colonial presence in China mattered for reasons of internal politics. In the aftermath of the devastating defeat in the First Italo-Ethiopian War (1896), the colony in Tianjin helped recommit Italian public opinion to the politics of colonial expansion.

Against this backdrop, the seated figure of Marco Polo is of interest from a dual perspective of global and colonial history. In the Buddhist Hualin temple of Guangzhou, the original represents one of 500 Arhats, venerated ancestors who have made headway on the path to salvation (*Fig. 2*). Here too, just like in the Museo Correr, the figure appears out of line. The unusual headgear and collar, both of which appear European, presumably lie at the root of its identification as Marco Polo. The original from the Pearl River Delta and its copy in the Venetian lagoon are both *entangled objects*, although with different histories.

In the heart of Venice, the gilded wood figure appears as an exotic object that documents Venice's connected history with China, harking back to the thirteenth century. On a closer look, however,

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it appears more like a simulacrum; not necessarily one of the merchant Marco Polo, whose only surviving image is the one created by history. Rather, it is a simulacrum of Italian colonialism in China, which, densified by practices and discourses, materialised Italy's colonial ambitions. The fulfilment of Italy's longing for colonial possessions in China in the end had little to do with Marco Polo or the gilded figure in Guangzhou. As a space for the projection of imaginaries, the Italian colony in China nevertheless remained connected to the Venetian merchant.

The source of the statue's identification as Marco Polo, and thus the responsibility for this short-cut from the Venetian Middle Ages to the era of Italian colonialism, remains subject to speculation; however, it does not seem far-fetched to assume that the likes of Dante di Serego Alighieri and Cristoforo Negri were as active in the creation of myths as in the founding of museums and scientific societies.

Thus, the seated figure of Marco Polo also sheds light on the history of the museum and its role in the course of modern imperialism. Although a mere copy of a Buddhist representation of ancestry, the added meaning overwrites the materiality of the figure, and its historical attribution undoubtedly stood in the service of a colonial agenda. The entirely decontextualised presentation in the Museo Correr extends this impression to the present day.

Yet, its effects in the globalised world of the twenty-first century, in which China has a visible presence in Venice and Marco Polo reigns as a global cultural icon, are certainly different from the imaginations of an *impero d'Italia*. The circumstances and their underlying semantics have drastically changed, as exemplified not least by a public square in the Italian district of Tianjin. Formerly dedicated to Queen Elena, it nowadays bears the name of Marco Polo (马可波罗广场); it is unlikely, though, that anyone would still see this as an expression of Italian colonial ambitions.

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— This article, translated by Julius Morche, was first published in German in: https://mhistories. hypotheses.org/1617

Ideas

in

Motion

Where Europe Begins and Where It Ends?

Nasser Rabbat

1

It is said in the myths of the Greeks that the Phoenician Princess Europa was playing on the seacoast of her city of Tyre with her attendants when she was lured by the great Greek God Zeus who had disguised himself as a white bull and abducted her to Crete where he made her queen (*Fig. 1*). Europa, whose name may be derived from the semitic root, 'e-re-b or *gharb* (West) in Arabic, eventually gave her name to the continent north of Greece in an unambiguous symbolic reference to the passing of Civilization from the eastern Mediterranean to the continent that was hitherto nameless, and thus unselfconscious. This mythical cycle was completed by the story of Cadmus, Europa's brother who was sent by his father, the king of Tyre, to look for his kidnaped sister. Cadmus, a hero and a slayer of dragons mentioned by Homer, discussed by Herodotus, and sang by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses,* did not find his sister. He ended up settling in Greece and founding the city of Thebes, of which he became king. He then taught the Greeks the Phoenician alphabet, from which the Greek alphabet was derived; that is, Cadmus gave the Greek the tool that they will brilliantly use to ignite their knowledge revolution. In other words, Europe, according to the founding myths of the Greeks, acquired its name from a Middle Eastern, Semitic, Phoenician princess, whereas the Greeks learned the arts of building cities and writing from her brother Cadmus, also a Middle Eastern, Semitic, and Phoenician prince.

The torch of civilization thus passed from the East to the West in archaic times, at least this is what the ancient Greeks believed, and modern archaeology suggests. That Europe will ultimately claim Greece to be its civilizational cradle, however, did not entail the acknowledgment of Greece's Middle Eastern/Semitic epistemological roots. In fact, as Martin Bernal and many critical academics so forcefully argue, the opposite happened. Scores of European Scholars and artists from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment mounted a sustained effort to cleanse the Greek heritage that they appropriated from Oriental or Islamic influences, even though the evidence to the opposite were growing with new textual and archeological discoveries following the European

forays into the Islamic World. Evidently, Europe, at that triumphant age when it was figuratively and militarily conquering the world, could not tolerate an indebtedness, no matter how small or remote in time, to lesser cultures, which were then the target of European expansionism and colonialism.

With the widening gap between the polemics and the evidence, the historical narrative needed to be tweaked. Thus the continent invented for itself an exclusive civilizational sequence that started with the ancient Greeks and ended with the modern era passing through Antiquity, Early Christianity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Neo-Classical without even rubbing against those cultures that shared not only the geography of Europe, especially around the Mediterranean, but also the history of the Classical age from Alexander the Great to the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453. In other words, according to the modern myths of Europe, the Arabs, Amazighs, Turks, and even Eastern Christians of the Mediterranean do not belong to the classical civilization even though it evolved on their land at the hands of their ancestors for a thousand years and very directly shaped their cultures, past and present. Instances that contradicted that exclusion, such as the introduction of monotheism in Palestine and Hijaz, the nurturing of classical knowledge in the eastern Mediterranean before and after Islam, and actual Islamic philosophy and sciences rooted in the ancient epistemologies, had to be explained away as oddities or aberrations provoked by singular historical circumstances.

The beginning of the European civilization was later amended by adding a nod to Pharaonic Egypt, which no longer could be ignored after the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt (1798–1801) and the ensuing publication of the first edition of the monumental *Description de L'Égypte*. That extensive connection, first observed by the savants of the Napoleonic invasion in the temples of Pharaonic Egypt, is so tellingly represented by an intriguing painting, *L'Etude et le Génie devoilent l'antique Egypte à la Gréce,* that links Europe to Egypt via Classical Greece (*Fig. 2*). Painted by François Edouard Picot on the ceiling of the sixth hall in the section of the ancient

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Egyptian collection at the Louvre, the premier repository of culture in France, and commissioned by king Charles x in 1826, this thoroughly neoclassical painting depicts the encounter between Greece and Egypt prompted by personified Learning and Genius. A Hera-like Greece stands on a cloud with a crown on her head and a specter in her hand, as symbols of power. She is flanked by a winged Learning with laurels and a naked Genius carrying the torch of knowledge. Learning and three putti are lifting a white drape to unveil a seated, topless Egypt with each a lotus and a papyrus in her hands, symbols of the unified country, but also of its most significant gifts to culture: material to write on and form to inform architecture. Crowned with the Horus head, Egypt is surrounded by references to its wonders: the three pyramids, an obelisk, a couple of red sphinxes, and a personified Nile leaning on a crocodile. More objects in the foreground further evoke the image of Ancient Egypt for a neoclassical age that has just discovered the riches of that mysterious country.

But where does Europe end? I would argue that one strong candidate for its geo-temporal boundaries is none other than Palmyra, a historic city located in the middle of the Syrian desert almost equidistant from the Euphrates and the Mediterranean cost. Palmyra is a classical city, with all the accouterments of classical city planning, even though it was built by a Hellenized Semitic, proto-Arab people. It was the last city east of Rome to have been continuously under Roman rule until the arrival of the Muslims in 641, except for few years of independence and imperial aspirations under the audacious and adventurous Queen Zenobia between 267 and 272. Emperor Aurelian defeated Zenobia, destroyed her capital, which was later restored by Diocletian at a reduced size, and brought her territories under direct Roman rule. That Zenobia spent the last years of her life as a captive in Rome, possibly in the Villa of Hadrian in Tivoli, can be seen not just as a sign of the might and magnanimity of Rome, but also as a recognition of Zenobia as "one of us". Her frequent portrayal in Baroque sculpture and painting further proves the point.

The destruction spree in Palmyra in the past few years has again brought to the surface the problematic heritage of Europe itself and how to manage it politically, culturally, archeologically, and architecturally. Palmyra, lost by the Syrian regime to ISIS in May 2015 and restored from it in March of 2016 in a dirty game that we still don't quite understand, suffered from the brutal destruction of many of its monuments and the beheading of its antiquities director by ISIS, and is now suffering from what can be called an increased interest in the world. This Palmyra, "Arus al-Sahara" (the Bride of the Desert) as the Arabs called it, is also called Tadmor in Arabic, but is presented in the West as a Greco-Roman city in the heart of the Syrian desert. Its recovery is celebrated as a triumph of civilization over barbarism, of reason over obscurantism, and of refinement over crudeness.

This recovered Palmyra has emerged as the point at which Europe historically and ontologically ends. Calling it part of the Greco-Roman or classical heritage is perhaps one way to justify the growing European interest in its restoration. But it is also a way to denigrate its non-Greco-Roman heritage or to deny that grand civilizational heritage any possible deviation from its prescribed, Eurocentric frame. From one perspective, these two negations are one and the same. Palmyra is of course a Greco-Roman city, but it is also a Syrian, Post-Aramean, and Arab city in the sense of its connections to the non-Greco-Roman cultures that contributed to its construction before, during, and after the Greco-Roman period. This is so well expressed in the hybrid styles of Palmyra's temples, its Gods' appearances, its street colonnades with consoles, its tomb towers, and above all in its striking funerary sculpture and reliefs that so boldly blend classical and pre-classical, indigenous elements with elements coming from further east. This view is of course in complete opposition to the monocultural construction of civilization as composed of one continuous lineage in disregard of the contributions of the peoples of the eastern Mediterranean and the Arabian Peninsula before, during, and after classical times in building that civilization.

This monocultural model is problematic in and by itself for it fails to account for the fluidity with which ideas, techniques, as well as people and material have crossed all kinds of boundaries throughout history. But this is the least of its liabilities, for, embedded in its seemingly simple linearity and direct contrast is a hierarchy that sees the West as the originator of all modern culture while other non-western traditions are seen as late comers and imitators. This is an oppressive model, which depends on deeply rooted ideological postures and the unequal economic and institutional power relation more than historical facts or intellectual reflection. It is also the conceptual source of a hegemonic structure that exerts extraordinary influence on the conceptualization of both the West and the non-West, reaffirming the authority and creativity of the former and pushing the latter back to marginal, derivative positions, or, at best, politically or culturally situated ones, just like Egypt appears on the ceiling of the Louvre.

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Tripoli Città di Barbaria (ca 1560): The History of a Fake News Map

Giovanni Tarantino

1

Writing in the *Rivista Marittima* in 1913, military historian Camillo Manfroni (1863–1935), professor of history at the Naval Academy of Livorno and later at the universities of Genoa, Padua and Rome, and senator of the Kingdom of Italy from 1929 to 1935, was the first person to refer to the destruction, by the Venetian *bailo* in Constantinople, Girolamo Ferro, of a singular sixteenth-century drawing minutely illustrated with the events and protagonists of a "siege and capture" of Tripoli that never actually happened. Indeed, while a Christian armada under the command of a very young Gian Andrea Doria did leave Maltese waters for Tripoli, which had been captured by the Ottoman Turks nine years earlier, it never actually arrived because the fleet's capacity to attack was blunted by defeat off the island of Djerba. In February 1561, almost a year later, the *bailo* wrote a coded letter to the Council of Ten:

> Having received from Venice a drawing depicting the capture of Tripoli, with galleys and land troops displaying the arms of the Duke of Florence [Cosimo I de' Medici], with His Excellency named in the writing underneath as one of the participants in this venture, it seemed best to burn it, so that no act harmful to Christianity should ever come out of the house of a minister of this illustrious Dominion. I did this in the presence of the two Florentine *balii*, present here now, who appreciated this demonstration so much that the next day they came to visit me on behalf of the Duke, and with the utmost reverence towards the illustrious Dominion, declared themselves well advised that if this drawing had come to the attention of the Pasha they would all have been imprisoned in the tower without any hope of ever being released.

Following the fall of Constantinople, Florence had maintained good relations with the Ottoman authorities, who, in exchange for regular information about what was going on in the West, permitted the establishment of a Florentine colony in Constantinople.

This was tolerated even after Lorenzo the Magnificent was succeeded by Alessandro and Cosimo, as both were very careful to avoid getting involved in the military ventures of Charles V and Philip II against the Ottoman Turks. It was only after the Italian Wars ended with the peace of 1559 that Cosimo I, while leaving his representative in post in Constantinople, ordered his four galleys to join the league of Christian states supporting Spain, perhaps hoping that his siding with the adversaries of the Ottoman Turks would pass unnoticed. This alone perhaps explains both the desperate gratitude of the Florentine "balii" and the satisfied report quickly sent to the most secretive and powerful magistracy of the Republic of Venice (the burning of the drawing, also considering that it originated in Venice, may have been an oblique warning to Cosimo: Venice, which had not taken part in the expedition against Tripoli, could have harmed Florence but had decided not to do so).

Manfroni also reported that two years prior to the publication of his article in 1913 and certainly not by chance – in fact, in 1911 Italy had begun its colonization of Libya, which had been an Ottoman possession until then – he had been shown a print, published in Rome by well-known sixteenth-century printer Claude (Claudio) Duchet (Duchetti, Duchetto), entitled *Tripoli Città di Barbaria*, which portrayed the Christians' capture of Tarābulus al-Gharb (Tripoli of the West) (*Fig. 1*). Manfroni was convinced that it was the printed drawing alluded to in the Venetian despatch, or a derivation thereof (Duchet was the nephew and successor of famous Burgundian map publisher Antoine du Pérac Lafréry, better known as Antonio Lafreri, who for a long time had a shop in Via del Parione in Rome. Lafréry's *Indice delle TavoleModerne di Geografia della maggior parte del mondo* of 1572 – the only surviving exemplar of which is held in the safe of the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence (RU.720), though it was republished in 1908 by Franz Ehrle (1845–1934), a Jesuit scholar and prefect of the Vatican Library – makes reference to a map of Tripoli, under the "Città & Fortezze" subheading).

The drawing was certainly influenced by the growing eagerness of sixteenth-century Christian printers in Europe, especially in Rome and Venice, to offer vivid and almost contemporaneous accounts (on average, around three or four weeks after a given event, according to the estimates of Ganado and Agius-Vadalà) of the ever more fearsome clashes between Christian and Ottoman vessels in the waters of the Mediterranean. A genuinely new communicative genre, the popularity of these "news maps" was favoured by the widespread expansion of the printing industry and postal networks. Within the space of a few years, the educated European public, gripped by a fear of the Turk and hungry for news about ongoing conflicts, had access to detailed and illustrated accounts of developments in the Great Siege of Malta, an event long feared after the offensive launched against the island in 1551 by the commander of the Ottoman fleet Sinan Pasha, who had, however, decided to turn his attention to Gozo and Tripoli instead. As Jessica Maier has noted, these visual news maps were an early and important way of reporting current events and shaping public opinion about the conflict with the Turks. And, Carla Keyvanian adds, the professed geographic reliability of a map made it more historically credible and more attractive for its avid consumers.

In the Tripoli drawing, reproduced here in a previous edition to the one seen by Manfroni but in all likelihood the same as the one promptly burnt by the Venetian ambassador, the outline of the city is clearly delineated, with its forts, barbican, artillery, the quadrifrons arch of Marcus Aurelius and the crescent moon flag fluttering in various spots. But above all it is possible to make out the Christian galleys besieging the city in an unequal contest. The meagre Ottoman forces rushing into position on the city walls seem totally unable to face the challenge before them. Admittedly, these maps did tend to downplay the human dimension, a point that is well discussed by Maier, who writes that little is done to express the human cost of war. Instead, news maps "adopted a matter-of-fact tone, putting their viewers into the position of aloof observers, rather than participants in the field".

A powerful squadron of galleys and ships bear the arms of Genoa (red cross on a white field), the pope (keys and tiara), Malta (pointed cross), the House of Austria (double eagle), Sardinia (four Moors), the Medici (balls) and "certain Arab lords" (*alcuni Signori harabi & mori*) who had demonstrated their loyal intentions by handing over their sons as hostages. The command galleys, distinguishable by the pennant and lantern, have opened fire on the outer pier of Tripoli and on the anchored ships protecting the barbican. The rest of the armada is moving southwest to drop anchor in front of the part of the city which has fewer defenders but is protected by shoals. The sails of the lead galley have already been lowered. On the eastern side, skiffs are disembarking infantry and equipment, and a swarm of men instructed by officers on horseback are setting up tents and positioning artillery. It is also possible to see landing troops forming up into battalions, the first trenches and, behind them, the Christian artillery opening fire. The careful description of the arrangement of vessels, forces and artillery reveal both a grasp of military strategy and great cartographic skill on the part of the author of the work, who sought to represent the different phases of the operation in a single picture.

Manfroni, then Giuseppe Fumagalli and, in a recent essay, Keyvanian, all hypothesized that the creation of such a meticulous drawing of an inexistent event can only be explained by the far-sighted but ill-judged alacrity of an expert printer anxious to preempt his competitors and deliver an anxious European public a "live" report of the long-awaited reconquest of Tripoli (the Christian armada had first been held up in Messina by the late arrival of the infantry and then in Malta by bad weather and contagious illnesses). Moreover, the drawing may have been added to one of the *avvisi*, *gazzette* or *reporti* which, in the sixteenth century, became an embryonic form of periodical journalism. (Manfroni, unaware of the existence in the original version of some writing underneath – though the Venetian *bailo* referred to it with some alarm – and of a legend, erroneously imagined that the alphabetical letters in the drawing were spelled out in the text of the *avviso*). Following the

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defeat off Djerba, however, the publication no longer had any purpose. The expensive copperplate was therefore reused (and then made over to Lafréry, who mentioned it in his rare catalogue) and commercialized, after the more explicit and compromising writing beneath had been expunged, under successive imprints (Lafréry, Duchet, Henricus Van Schoel, Giovanni Orlandi), or with no mention of the publishers. It was not presented as a representation of the military venture, far less as the evocation of a defeat (European printers were reluctant to divulge bad news), but merely as a map of "Tripoli, City of Barbary". Maier has aptly observed that news maps sometimes let themselves down by peddling misleading or evidently false information about the event they were representing, though this does not seem to have deterred their audiences, who were probably sufficiently informed to fill in the gaps left by the maps' typical "verbal and visual reticence".

In 1931, Italian librarian and scholar Giuseppe Fumagalli (1863–1939) was put in charge of preparing a colonial book section for the First International Exhibition of Colonial Art at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome (*Fig. 2*). As part of this he had displayed a photograph of a view of Tripoli from around 1560, held in the British Museum. He had learnt of its existence after consulting the bibliographic note of Playfair on the Barbary States (which doubtfully attributed the engraving to the Venetian Domenico Zenoi, *fl.* 1560–1580). The image was identical in design to the view reproduced in the *Rivista Marittima* but had some writing underneath and an explanatory legend (*Significatione delle lettere*). Fumagalli immediately identified it as the original print that had eluded Manfroni, agreeing with the latter in dating it to the second half of 1559 or the first few weeks of 1560. He conjectured an attribution to Venetian printers Michele and Francesco Tramezzino and published it both in the second edition of the exhibition catalogue (Rome: Fratelli Palombi, 1931) and in a long article entitled "La più antica pianta di Tripoli", which appeared in *Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia* (1932–1933). Fumagalli also ascertained that two different variants of this original version had been in circulation; the second

print run was identical to the first except for some deformities or errors in some words in the writing underneath (partly corrected during printing, as shown by two of the four Lafréry atlases held by the National Library of Florence), probably resulting from a hurried reprinting by the same printer.

In an interesting article published in *Imago Mundi* in 1988, J. B. Harley pointed out that the myth of "measurement-based objectivity in maps" was rightly giving way in historical studies of cartography to the application of the sociological concept of power-knowledge (*pouvoir-savoir*). In this view, cartography is a form of knowledge and knowledge is discourse. Rather than being "neutral" or "value-free" representations, maps can be regarded as "socially constructed perspectives on the world". The concept was reaffirmed by Keyvanian in her recent article (which also touches briefly on the news map of Tripoli), in which she observed that "studies on cartography have thus increasingly regarded maps as objects that bear witness to the systems of representation (or ideologies) of both their makers and consumers". Harley's essay focused in particular on the deliberately eloquent "silences" of maps, decipherable as a kind of "active human performance" if not as "an affirmative ideological act", potentially becoming a key part of the cartographic message. The spectral representation of Tripoli besieged by the Christians, emptied of its inhabitants and occupied by an ineffectual stick-figure force, the ostentatious burning of the map and the secret despatch regarding its destruction, the subsequent removal of the textual elements from the surviving plates and even the continual modifications of the imprints, are effective examples of both "strategic secrecy" and "commercial secrecy". Not to mention – in an age of confessional rifts, cultural hostilities, thirst for dominion and increasingly rigid identities – the shrewd emotional strategies used to outline the iconographic script, the "differential emphases", the impudent distortions and the convenient orientation.

In conclusion, it is worth reflecting on the circumstances that prompted Fumagalli not just to meticulously reconstruct the intricate publishing vicissitudes of this extremely rare view of Tripoli (rare as Florentines and Venetians would have prudently destroyed all the copies they came across), but also to display a reproduction in an exhibition one of whose declared goals was to inculcate or revive a "colonial consciousness" and an "imperial idea" in young people.

Significant in this regard is the emphasis in Fumagalli's essay on how the initial T in the legend beneath the image framed a schematic representation of the tetrapylon of Marcus Aurelius. Positioned at the northeast entrance to the medina of Tripoli, it had been erected in 165 by Gaius Calpurnius Celsus, one of the city's *duumviri quinquennales*, to commemorate the victory of Marcus Aurelius's brother, Lucius Verus, over the Parthians. A recent collection of studies, like this volume also conceived within the framework of the PIMo Cost Action, offers a clear reconstruction of how travel accounts in the early modern age were "mobilized, reinterpreted and reused for political and ideological purposes in the context of the formation and reformation of collective identities, from the Risorgimento to the Fascist regime and the early [Italian] republic". To Fumagalli, the "rereading" of an (albeit spurious) news map of a Tripoli encircled by a swarm of Christian galleys intent on "reconquering" it must certainly have appeared in tune with the Fascist regime's determination to expand the kingdom's possessions and satisfy the irredentists' demands.

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Islamic Variations on Christian Themes: Visual Reflections on the Nature of Muhammad and Jesus

Axel Langer

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In the 1550s, Shah Tahmasp, the second ruler of the Persian Safavid dynasty (r. 1525–1574), ordered an illustrated *Falnama* or *Book of Omens*, whose miniatures are among the largest manuscript paintings on paper produced in the Persianate world. Among the 30 known illustrations of the now dispersed manuscript is the depiction of a man distinguished by a veiled face, a flaming nimbus and a green coat, who dominates the centre of the composition. An old woman crouches at his feet, touching the tip of his right shoe. The holy man is standing in front of a coffin in which an ashen youth lies, his upper body supported by an older man (*Fig. 1*).

The scene has been traditionally interpreted as Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. However, in their analysis of this dispersed *Falnama*, Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı point out that this scene probably shows one of the Prophet's miracles. The holy figure in the middle can be clearly identified as Prophet Muhammad. As a possible source for the illuminated story, the authors cite an illustrated copy of the *Siyer-i Nebi* or *Life of the Prophet*, created in AH 1003 (1594/95) for the Ottoman Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595). The Ottoman-Turkish biography of the Prophet was composed by Mustafa ibn Yusuf from Erzurum, a Sufi of the Mevlevi order, also known as al-Darir, who had finished the manuscript in AH 790 (1388). Al-Darir recounts that on his journey from Mecca to Medina, Muhammad was asked by an old woman called Umma Mabid to heal her paralysed son. He did so by reciting a long prayer. Mother and son then converted to Islam.

It goes without saying that traditional interpretations of a certain picture are sooner or later corrected by scholars. What is interesting, however, is that even the recent identification of the scene has its uncertainties. On the one hand, the text accompanying the picture has not yet been found. Thus, there will be no final answer to the question of who and what exactly is depicted as long as the text remains lost. On the other hand, one may wonder why the palsied son is depicted as a dead man in a coffin. In their discussion of the picture, Farhad and Bağcı cite a copy of the *Falnama* of

1610/30 from Golconda in South India (now in the Khalili Collection in London), in which a comparable scene is illustrated. Surprisingly, the related text states: "The picture of His Holiness 'Isa [Jesus] – peace be upon him – bringing back to life the old woman's baby in front of the king, and the amazement of those present, and her thanksgiving in front of His Holiness". Might our *Falnama* picture, as the authors assume, be a conflation of a Christian and an Islamic miracle story? Or is there more to it? Is it possibly a form of "visual reflection" in which a religious dogma is addressed in the image itself?

At this point, it is helpful to place this folio in its wider historical context. As early as 1999, Rachel Milstein, Karin Rührdanz and Barbara Schmitz dealt with a group of 21 copies of *Qisas al-anbiya'* (*Stories of the Prophets*). All of the manuscripts were produced between AH 982 and 989 (1574–1581). In their detailed analysis, they point to the phenomenon of the increasingly frequent appearance, in the second half of the sixteenth century, of illustrated manuscripts with often religious didactic content both in Safavid Persia and Ottoman Turkey. This is remarkable, since prior to this religious imagery had not played a role in manuscript production; the primary illustrated works were either historiographical (among the Ottomans) or literary (among the Safavids).

In addition to the *Falnama*, the *Qisas al-anbiya'* and the *Siyar-i Nebi*, there are four other works with hagiographic content from this period. Richly illustrated copies from the last third of the sixteenth century exist of several of them. The series starts with a copy of *Athar al-muzaffar* (*The Exploits of the Victorious*), produced in the month of Shawwal AH 975 (April/May 1568). It was followed some 20 years later by *Zubdat al-tawarikh* or *The Creme of History* by Sayyid Luqman 'Ashuri of Urmya (*fl.* ca. 1569–1596), one of whose three existent copies was illustrated for Sultan Murad III by Sun'i between 1585 and 1590. Then came the *Hadiqat al-Su'ada* (*Garden of the Blessed*), written by the Ottoman mystic Muhammad bin Sülayman, better known as Fuzuli (ca. 1483–1556),

and finally *Maktel-i al-i resül* (*The Murder of the House of the Prophet*) by Lami'i Çelebi (1472–1531). Illustrated copies of both exist from the late sixteenth century, at the time of Sultan Murad III, and from 1011 AH (1602/3) respectively.

Thanks to previous research, we know that Shah Tahmasp's *Falnama* played a leading role within this group of illustrated manuscripts, as some of its iconography was used as a model for the later illustrations. The transfer can be explained on the one hand by the fact that artists from Shah Tahmasp's court workshop had to find other patrons after he gradually reduced the size of his atelier. (The reasons for this were manifold and can mainly be linked to Tahmasp's increasing piety and his puritanical turn, as well as his deteriorating eyesight). We know of at least one artist, called Vali Jan, who emigrated to Istanbul in the early 1580s. On the other hand, numerous Persian manuscripts reached the Ottoman sultan's court in the course of the constant battles between the Ottomans and the Safavids.

What has not been considered so far, however – and will be tackled here for the first time – is the role that seems to have been played by Christian iconography. Since the painters had to create many new illustrations for these manuscripts and very often could not rely on pre-existing iconographies, it would only have been natural to look for Christian models at least in those cases where stories were known both in the Islamic and the Christian tradition.

Examples of this can be cited: one case in point is the *Seven Sleepers of Ephesus*. The story tells of seven young men who took refuge in a cave to escape the Roman emperor's persecution of Christians and slept there for 300 years. The tale was first recorded by Jacob of Serugh, one of the foremost Syriac poet-theologians (ca. 451–521). The *ashab al-kahf* or "people of the cave", as the Sleepers of Ephesus are known in Arabic, are dealt with in the Quran in sura 18. The story appears in the *Falnama* and its later versions as

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² The Raising of Lazarus. Constanti-
nople, tenth century. Ivory. Museum für
Byzantinische Kunst, Berlin, 578.
© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulptu-
rensammlung und Museum für Byzan-
tinische Kunst / Hiltrud Jehle.

³ Scene in a Mosque. From the *Falnama*
of Shah Tahmasp I, Iran, 1550–1560. Paint
and gold on paper. MAH Musée d'art et
d'histoire, Ville de Genève, Legs Jean
Pozzi, 1971, 1971-107-35. © Musée d'art et
d'histoire, Ville de Genève / André Long-
champ.

⁴ Idolaters before an Idol. From the *Fal-
nama* of Shah Tahmasp I, Iran, 1550–
1560. Paint and gold on paper. The David
Collection, Copenhagen, 79/2006. © The
David Collection, Copenhagen / Pernille
Klemp.

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well as in some copies of the *Qisas al-anbiya*'. For the illustrations from the late sixteenth century, there are two possible sources: an older Persian representation from the fifteenth century or examples of Byzantine art, either in the form of icons or as manuscript illustrations from *synaxaria*, hagiographic compilations. In at least one case, it can be proven that the painter used a Byzantine model. According to the Quranic narrative, next to the sleepers in the cave – the number of whom is not mentioned in sura 18 – a dog, named Qitmir, always appears. Not mentioned in the Christian legends, it plays a prominent role in the Quranic version. Regardless of the actual visual source, the "people of the cave" are a perfect example of the conflation of Islamic and Byzantine iconographies.

Byzantine models may also have played a role in the *Falnama* resurrection. Thus, the randomly chosen juxtaposition with a tenth-century Byzantine ivory icon reveals some striking parallels (*Fig. 2*). The most tangible is the position of the kneeling old woman touching Muhammad's right shoe. Her gesture is directly comparable to the figure of Mary of Bethany in the icon, who prostrates herself before Jesus and touches his foot. Since, to my knowledge, there is no other example in the corpus of Safavid painting showing a figure in *proskynesis* (which is significant for the Byzantine liturgy), the reference to Orthodox Christian iconography cannot be coincidental.

Central to our consideration is the gesture of the two miracle workers: in the case of the icon, Jesus *commands* the resurrection with an outstretched right arm (John 11:43). In the case of the painting, Muhammad is depicted in the Muslim posture of prayer: He is *asking* God for the miracle by reciting a prayer (as stated in the *Siyer-i Nebi*). From an Islamic point of view, this circumstance is very important. In the Quran, it is pointed out several times that Muhammad himself cannot perform miracles and that he is distinguished solely by the fact that he spreads the divine message. Miracles can only be performed by God. Incidentally, this also

applies to 'Isa, the Quranic Jesus, one of the Abrahamitic prophets. According to the Quran, Jesus "did heal the blind and the leprous, and did bring the dead to life" but only "with Allah's permission" (Q3:49 and Q5:110).

The juxtaposition makes it clear that the *Falnama* illustration is a deliberate "visual reflection" conveying the Islamic dogma of the true nature of the Prophet (or prophets). That this is not an accidental interpretation, but that it was intended, can be deduced from two other *Falnama* folios (*Fig. 3* and *Fig. 4*).

The *Scene in a Sanctuary* and *Idolaters before an Idol* can be read as a pair due to compositional parallels, even though the two pages were incorporated at different points within the *Falnama*. In each case, ten men are praying in similar but not identical poses in front of a niche. In the case of the mosque, one can recognize 'Ali's footprints and a Quran stand with an open Quran; in the case of the "azure monastery" (as it is called in the accompanying text), there are three bronze idols reminiscent of Buddhist figures and presumably symbolizing the Trinity. That the two folios transmit antithetical messages is confirmed by the accompanying interpretations: the mosque scene predicts good fortune whereas the monastery scene foretells bad. Besides their augural function, the two pictures outline the antagonism between (Islamic) orthodoxy and (Christian) idolatry. The veneration of the sacred footprint (a form of bodily relic) is a permitted practice in Shiite Iran, but the worship of a statue, which Muslims considered a characteristic feature of Christianity, is not simply to be rejected: idolatry is expressly forbidden.

Against this background, it becomes clear that it is no coincidence that the Persian depiction of the raising of the dead son contains visual references to the Byzantine iconography of the Lazarus story. It can be understood as an interpictorial dialogue with a Christian counterpart, in which the Islamic conception of the nature of the Prophet (or prophets in general) is visually distinguished from

a Christian one that is considered false. Such forms of interpictorial dialogue are not uncommon in Persian book art: especially in the miniature and calligraphy albums from the fifteenth century onwards, such references are an inherent part of the page layout and the album structure in general. As Gülru Necipoğlu and others have demonstrated, these albums unmistakably invite viewers to compare and judge works of different provenance (be they Persian, Chinese or European). Therefore, it can be assumed that such a dialogue was intended, even in cases where the visual counterpart was not physically present.

This form of interpictorial dialogue is not limited to the *Falnama* or the Safavid court. Another impressive example can be found in the aforementioned copy of the *Zubdat al-tawarikh* for the Ottoman Sultan Murad III, which contains an illustration of the Ascension of ʿIsa (Jesus).

The comparison between the late Byzantine ivory panel, which originally belonged to a triptych, and Sunʿi's illustration, leaves no doubt that the Ottoman painter was familiar with the Byzantine iconography and deliberately quoted it (*Fig. 5* and *Fig. 6*). The deviations are quite revealing. The small relief panel is structured in two zones: at the bottom, on Earth, the apostles stand around Mary. In the top half, Jesus, as ruler of the world, enthroned on a rainbow and enveloped by a mandorla, is being raised into the heavens by four angels. In the Ottoman example, the group of apostles become three Syrian monks observing the ascension with astonishment. Next to them, two men can be made out, wearing felt caps and holding a third man. This figure is Simon of Cyrene, to whom God, according to the Islamic tradition, gave the form of Jesus (here depicted correctly without a nimbus), and who was ultimately put to death in his place. This made it possible for Jesus, who is wearing the same clothing and has the same appearance as the figure of Simon in the bottom half of the picture, to be lifted up to heaven.

The differences in the two Ascension groups are remarkable. Instead of understanding the Ascension as an apotheosis in which Jesus's dual nature, both as true God and true Man, is revealed (as in the Byzantine ivory), one of the angels holds 'Isa by the elbow while the other leads him by the hand. In this gesture, Sun'i quotes Ottoman court protocol, according to which ambassadors and other foreign dignitaries were held by two dignitaries before meeting the sultan. Jesus is thus shown as an envoy who is led before the throne of God after his Ascension. This depiction also reflects the position of Jesus within the Islamic tradition: he stands below Muhammad, the last and most important of the prophets.

Let us summarize: the second half of the sixteenth century saw the increased production of hagiographic illustrated manuscripts, first in Safavid Persia under Shah Tahmasp (r. 1526–1574) and then in Ottoman Turkey under Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595). It was a time of emigrating artists and wandering manuscripts but also of growing piety. For some of their miniatures, Muslim painters drew upon Byzantine models if the stories they had to illustrate were known both in the Christian and the Islamic world. A case in point is the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus or the People of the Cave. The Muslim painters transformed their iconographic models according to their own tradition if necessary, but it seems that the different versions of a story were often conflated. In two cases, however, the paintings go beyond mere illustration. They deliberately visualize a religious dogma (in both cases the true nature of the Prophet[s]). This "visual reflection", as it might rightly be called, is realized through an interpictorial dialogue with Christian iconography. Interpictoriality was a well-established practice known from the Persianate album culture. These dogmatic visualizations certainly helped to reassure the beholder of his or her orthodox leanings.

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Johann Fischer von Erlach, the Mediterranean and Persepolis

Emanuele Giusti
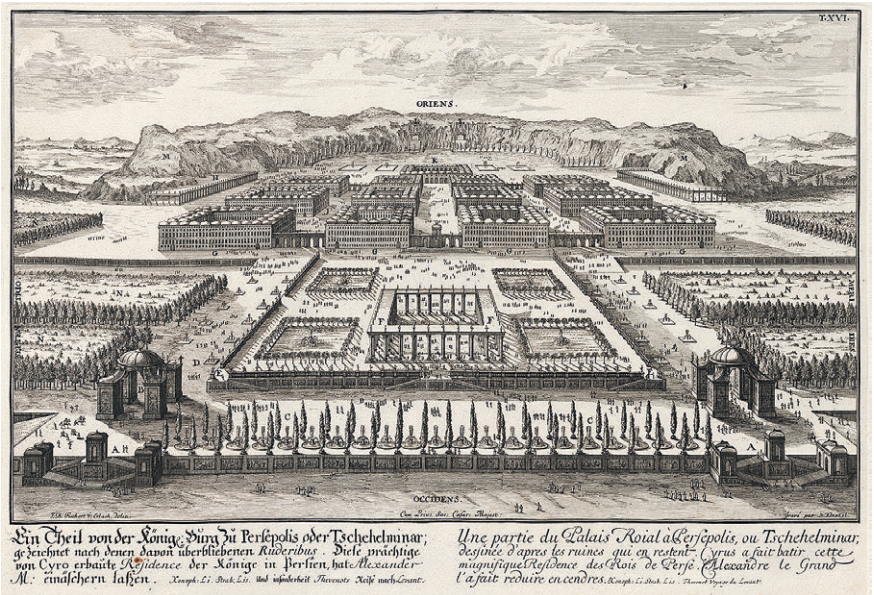
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Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723) is known as one of the most prominent representatives of the European Baroque. His architectural work had a significant impact on the identity of imperial Vienna. However, Fischer von Erlach is also well-known for the *Entwurff einer historischen Architectur*. First published in 1721, the *Entwurff* consists of five books containing plates and descriptions in German and French. The scholarly literature on the *Entwurff* offers two major interpretations. The first sees it as a repertoire of architectural examples to be perused by amateurs, while the second sees it as a history of architecture, more appealing to antiquarians, and the first of its kind in its universal reach. Arguably, Fischer himself intended the *Entwurff* to be seen as the former, stating in the preface that he wanted to

> provide specimens of every sort of architecture to art amateurs, and new sources of inventions to those who are devoted to this activity, rather than instruct the savants. ... This is but a sketch; a show of different specimens of architecture. Nothing more should be seen in it.

The first book of the *Entwurff*, focusing on "some buildings of ancient Jewish, Egyptian, Syrian, Persian and Greek architecture", includes the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Temple of Solomon and a few other monuments. The second book highlights Roman buildings, while the third book features "Arab", "Turkish" and "modern Persian" structures, as well as buildings and landscapes from China and Siam. Then the *Entwurff* presents the buildings designed by Fischer himself, before concluding with a collection of vases in the fifth book. The design and content of the *Entwurff* amply allows for the "historical" interpretation which has dominated scholarly literature since the end of the nineteenth century. Recently, Monica Preti and Marco Folin instead gave new strength to the "collection" perspective, emphasizing the lack of coherence and improvised character of the *Entwurff*, linking it to historical atlases and "exotic geography" rather than to antiquarian scholarship or art history.

In this article, I will try to uncover the historiographical potential embedded in the very looseness and fragility of the *Entwurff* as a repertoire of architectural specimens, by focusing on some of its most understudied components: the map of the Mediterranean and the "Persian" plates included in the first book.

Fischer began working on the *Entwurff* around 1704. The National Library of Zagreb contains many of the preparatory drawings, which were engraved around 1712. A manuscript version of the work was then presented to Charles VI, the newly crowned Habsburg emperor, as a gift. The title page attributed the "short descriptions in German and French" to Stockholm-born court antiquarian Carl Gustaf Heraeus (1671–1725), but there is much debate about his actual involvement in the project. However, the connection between architectural practices and antiquarian knowledge was common in the European visualization of antiquity: even the most imaginative reconstructions often required a reference to written or material documents.

This connection was at play in the case of Persia too. In particular, the ruins of Persepolis had been regularly visited by European travellers since the early seventeenth century and attracted the attention of learned milieus such as the Royal Society of London and the scholarly circle of Amsterdam politician and polymath Nicolaas Witsen. Over the course of several decades, as qualitatively different visual descriptions accumulated in printed accounts, access to the Persian antiquities was provided by a diverse range of interconnected printed materials, with or without the mediation of antiquarian milieus. Fischer's attention to them can therefore be interpreted as participation in a widespread and even "fashionable" trend, rather than as an exceptional fact.

The high cultural status of Persian antiquities in early-eighteenth-century Europe may be the primary reason for Fischer's inclusion of them in the first book of the *Entwurff* and in the "general chart meant to mark the position of each of the buildings contained" therein (*Fig. 2*). At first glance, the *Allgemeine Landcarte / Carte generale* resembles a typical map of the eastern Mediterranean, reprising a long-established format in the European cartographic tradition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Some specific features stand out, however. The first is the variation on the conventional cartographic device of miniature city views enclosed in square frames and distributed along the edges of the map. Fischer instead used this thumbnail device to display monuments. Each box is placed near the supposed original location of the monument, while the captions are given in the legend set out in the lower left corner of the map. The *Landcarte* thus gave a cartographic and miniaturized visualization of the iconographic programme reproduced in the plates included in the 1712 manuscript version of the first book of the *Entwurff*.

Another striking feature of this map is its longitudinal span, extending to the Iranian plateau. Here, the easternmost thumbnail represents the royal palace of Cyrus. Cyrus was one of the few historical figures to play a pivotal role in both sacred and profane history as Europeans understood it. Not only did he liberate the Jews from their Babylonian captivity, but he was also the good prince par excellence in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, a centrepiece of *specula principum* literature well into the early modern era. While the inclusion of Persia in this "cultural geography" of the ancient Mediterranean presented the viewer with an expansive depiction of art and architecture in antiquity, it may also have guided Fischer's selection of a cartographic blueprint for his map.

Preti and Folin recently argued that Fischer repurposed the map of the Mediterranean included in the first volume of Chatelain's *Atlas historique*, published in Amsterdam in 1705. While the resemblance between the two maps is striking, the framing of Fischer's map may also have been indebted to European cartographic representations of the Ottoman Empire. George Kunoth suggested that Fischer's map derived from the *Atlas nouveau* published by Alexis-Hubert Jaillot in 1692. However, any map of the Ottoman Empire could have served as a blueprint for the architect's work, from the Hondius editions of Mercator's maps to those of Joan Blaeu.

Thus, a cartographically trained eye may have recognized the underlying blueprint when looking at Fischer's map. While it is impossible to know for sure what the viewers' reactions may have been, we can nevertheless ask ourselves what complex temporal,

geographical and cultural intersections were evoked by this visual palimpsest. In fact, whether we see the *Entwurff* as a collection of loosely connected sights or as a "history of architecture", for the European learned elites the content of the first book was very much part and parcel of a shared cultural legacy. The very role of the plates as "sources of invention" allowed readers to establish connections between the past and the present as they went through them. Furthermore, while the novelty of Fischer's operation was the superimposition of an architectural subject over a map of the eastern Mediterranean, this case of visual contamination was not unique. Chatelain himself was able to map the military expeditions of Alexander the Great onto the eastern portion of his map, just as Nicolas Sanson had done for "sacred geography".

Using a chart of the Ottoman Empire to lay before European eyes such a temporally loaded landscape from the heart of the Habsburg dominions may have been seen as an attempt to shift a present move to appropriate space back into a foundational past. On the other hand, considering the *Entwurff*'s appreciation of Ottoman architecture, the use of the "Ottoman" map for the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World could be troubling, since it could have reminded viewers that those lands were now the abode of a powerful polity whose eventual demise – even after the humiliating Treaty of Karlowitz (1699) – was all but certain. However, the framing of Fischer's *Landcarte* is best seen as part of a constellation of different cartographical visualizations of both sacred and profane history centred around the eastern Mediterranean. Arguably, such a context provided for historical interferences and contaminations more than for linear and clear-cut narratives.

This point is further illustrated by the two "ancient Persian" plates in the first book of the *Entwurff*. In the manuscript from 1712, Fischer included a depiction of the royal palace of Cyrus that he had drawn (*Fig. 1*), along with a lengthy textual description which drew on evidence from Greek and Latin authors as well as eyewitness accounts from travellers in order to support the architectural reconstruction.

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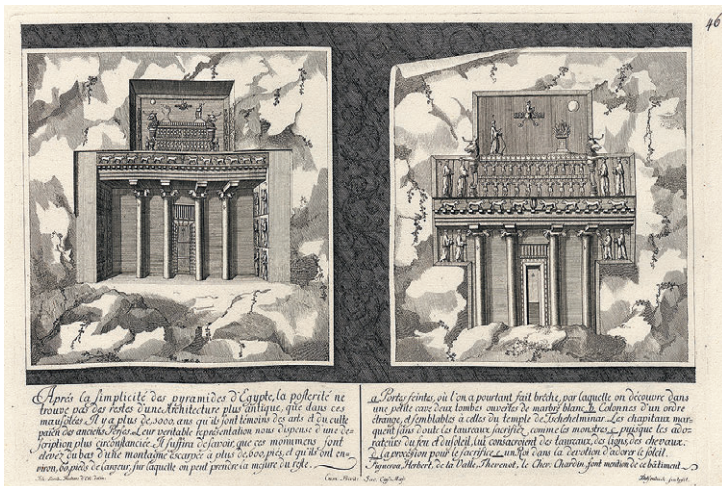
3

² The Allgemeine Landcarte / Carte
generale included in the first book of the
Entwurff as early as 1712. Sammlung von
Handschriften und alten Drucken, Cod.
10791 HAN MAG, Österreichische
Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.

³ The new "Persepolitan" plate in the
printed *Entwurff* from 1721. Bildarchiv
und Grafiksammlung, Cod. 268697-C FID
MAG, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek,
Vienna.

Likewise, Fischer did his best to incorporate architectural elements supported by travel reports in his Persepolitan fantasy. However, the architect gave the complex a markedly "orientalized" appearance by shaping the roof of many of its building as clusters of onion-shaped domes. This did not necessarily entail a pejorative view of the monuments on Fischer and/or his readers' part, if we follow Kunoth's hypothesis that the accounts of Persepolis had played a significant role in Fischer's original projects for the Palace of Schönbrunn. In fact, around 1712, Fischer viewed Chehelmenar (one of Persepolis's modern Persian names) as the royal palace of Cyrus. It may have seemed appropriate for Fischer to present the newly appointed emperor with a view of the marvellous palace of one of history's most highly regarded princes.

This beautiful plate was replaced with another in the first printed edition of the *Entwurff*, published in 1721. Instead of featuring Cyrus's royal palace, the new plate depicted two rock-cut tombs (*Fig. 3*). While the dating of the preparatory drawing is uncertain, it is likely that this change occurred after 1712, since the engraving was directly derived from plates LXVII and LXVIII of Jean Chardin's *Voyages en Perse*, published in Amsterdam in 1711.

What can we infer from this substitution? For one thing, it matches the historiographical narrative of antiquarianism as an intellectual force driven by empirical evidence. Fischer probably preferred to have a "real" visualization of an ancient monument instead of a fanciful reconstruction, however laden with aesthetic and political values the latter may have been. However, it also reinforces the idea of accumulated knowledge as a resistant force, since the *Landcarte* still reproduced the plate of Cyrus's palace in the thumbnails. This was most likely because it was not practical to redesign or engrave the plate anew for such a small detail. At the same time, the lengthy explanatory text had been removed and the plate's new caption made two interpretive shifts.

After the simplicity of the pyramids of Egypt, in no other place does posterity find remains of more ancient

architecture than in these mausoleums. For more than 3,000 years they have born witness to the arts and to the pagan cult of the ancient Persians. Their true representation dispenses us from a more detailed description. ... [the letter B in the picture on the right indicates] columns of a strange order, similar to those of the temple of Tschehelminar [Chehelmenar]. Figueroa, Herbert, de la Valle, Thevenot, the chev. Chardin mention this building.

The first interpretive shift was chronological. In the 1712 version, the reader was left assuming that the complex dated from five to six centuries before Christ was born, as Persepolis was associated with Cyrus. However, the 3,000 years of the 1721 version pushed the construction of the complex much further back in time, positioning it right after the pyramids and before the Temple of Solomon (whose foundation Fischer calculated at around 1,000 years before Christ). The foundational role played by the Temple of Solomon in the development of architecture was confirmed by the descriptive text attached to the corresponding plates. However, the ancient Persian art to which the tombs bore witness could now claim a greater antiquity than the temple, thus constituting an alternative pole of achievement which deserved a place in the *Entwurff* while not playing an explicit role in the ancient history of architecture.

The other interpretive shift is functional. While the caption of the 1712 plate explicitly defined Chehelmenar as the ruins of a royal palace, in 1721 the same site is connected to a temple and, moreover, to the pagan cult of the ancient Persians. The combination of the religious function of the complex and the early chronology attributed to the tombs points to the specific interpretation provided by Chardin. The traveller had argued that Chehelmenar was a more than 3,000-year-old temple, by drawing on the Persian historiographical and poetical tradition that viewed Chehelmenar as the ancient abode of the first mythical kings of Persia, the Pishdadians. His description of the ruins overflows with references to

King Jamshid and to the common Persian, starkly religious definition of these antiquities as *bot-khané*, "houses of idols". We may argue that the shift towards empiricism witnessed in the substitution of the plates also allowed for and even legitimized the introduction to the *Entwurff* of a bit of "alien wisdom", as Arnaldo Momigliano would have called it.

In conclusion, Fischer's map of the ancient Mediterranean and his "Persepolitan" plates reveal the instability and flexibility of the historical outlines of artistic development – and of the very notion of antiquity – that could derive from collections of architectural examples. Before the Greek-centric representations of art history became dominant in the late eighteenth century, there was a period of experimentation which allows us to apply the concept of "inclusive Eurocentrism" – proposed by Jürgen Osterhammel for eighteenth-century culture at large – to the domain of art history. The mobile and tentative nature of these experimentations, as seen in the *Entwurff*, is demonstrated even more clearly by the abrupt shift in the "Persepolitan" plates. While this allowed for a broader perspective and the percolation of "alien wisdom", it also meant inherent fragility. Eventually, these extra-European connections would break and be rearranged in more hierarchical patterns, ultimately failing to translate into an inclusive history of art and architecture.

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Istanbul's Vanishing Memory: The Tangible Heritage of Galata

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1

Throughout the centuries Galata district in Istanbul has been a unique crossroad of diverse tangible and intangible heritage. During the past sixty-seventy years the heritage in the district was and still is under a constant impact and under risk of vanishing due to its neglect and lack of enhancement particularly within the growth of Istanbul's metropolis in the twenty first century.

Since ancient times Galata, which today is a neighborhood within the Beyoğlu Municipality, maintained a distinctive charm in the city's physiognomy, due to the social and cultural contribution of its inhabitants, establishing throughout the centuries this unique urban environment. During the Byzantine Empire, with the establishment of the Genoese colony, Galata district, or Pera as it was also known in ancient Greek and Roman times, grew as an "Italian" and Latin city inside the core of the oriental Orthodox world, building up a distinctive architectural environment within the urban texture adapting to the morphology and the orology of the site, connected to the surrounding hills and to the sea, entirely distinctive and independent from the greater center of Constantinople situated on the opposite side of the Golden Horn. This "foreign" aspect of the colony was somehow implemented and preserved in the following centuries when Galata initiated being constantly populated by Christian foreigners, the so-called Frenks or Levantines, who settled in the area, bringing their own cultural aspects, customs, and traditions as well as religions (*Fig. 1*).

After the Ottoman conquest in 1453, Galata continued its cultural independence enriched by an even more colorful and fresh culture represented by the new Muslim Ottoman rulers. The newcomers added new institutions and new religion, but this foreign community was also enriched by Jews and Arabs mostly coming from the Hispanic peninsula, as well as Turkish nomads from Anatolia and other regions of Asia who also settled here. In the apogee of the Ottoman Empire, Galata became a vital part in the commercial life of the city of Constantinople with its harbor and its natural predisposition for trade, defining a new Levantine center in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In the following centuries due to the consolidation of the Empire and the Ottomanization of the new capital Constantinople, the multiple cultural and historical layers as well as the morphological characteristics of Galata's built environment slowly became incorporated into a more complex system; the choices made by the new Muslim rulers determined the urban and architectural transformations of the ancient Genoese settlement. Even under such circumstances the enwalled town of Galata was able to maintain certain autonomy evident in the architectural contribution of the kaleidoscopic and melting pot community that coexisted and overlapped throughout the centuries.

In a very subtle and specific way the historical periods starting from ancient Greek, passing through the Roman, the Byzantine, the Genoese and finally the Ottoman times affected the urban fabric yet somehow never disturbing the preexisting heritage bequeathed by the various communities that occupied the area. It was in the last decades of the twentieth century and mostly due to the modernization when a disregard for and neglect of Galata's centuries of multiculturalism emerged. The disregard of the minorities' contributions, or the "others" in the district is more evident in present days rather than it was during its Ottoman past, or at least up until the middle of the nineteenth century. In the previous historical periods the urban modifications and adjustments were carried out in a sensitive way without complete annihilation of earlier layers except for some conversions and/or replacements, preserving the distinct character of the whole district.

Present-day Galata is largely the result of the nineteenth and twentieth century urban planning transformations and despite the inevitable and rapid changes that occurred in the last 150 years associated with fires, earthquakes, and human interventions, still a "*genius loci*" is present. Galata's townscape with its various building typologies and architectural styles were a supreme example of a multicultural and multi-ethnic *milieu*. Upheavals over the centuries transformed the appearance of the neighborhood, making it almost unrecognizable in the today's urban layout.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the birth of the new Republic of Turkey, Galata district slowly started losing its significance related to the economy of the city and even to a wider scale, the country. From a multicultural standpoint the religious, social, and ethnic profile of its inhabitants also transformed, and the cosmopolitan atmosphere that characterized Galata for almost seven centuries disappeared, and especially after the 1950s when inner immigration from Anatolia took over the multi-cultural minorities who were slowly abandoning the area. Today, local inhabitants are almost exclusively Turks and only several of the old local communities persist. In the last twenty years new owners, mostly foreigners as well as members of the young Turkish intellectual upper class, began to revitalize Galata trying to bring new dynamism to the social redevelopment of the area however, due to political and economic issues this trend slowly vanished.

Some of Galata's architectural remains still preserve the multi-layered character of the old Genoese town. Among the historical monuments that still exist in the district, the Galata Tower deserves special consideration as the only wholly restored and renovated structure of the ancient scheme of the town walls. Instead, the remaining structures or wall portions from the Genoese era are scattered throughout the district and in most cases disregarded, hidden behind "modern era" buildings and deregulated urban developments, turning them into an unimportant old, ruined elements in the area. Strolling around the narrow streets and alleys of Galata, those not usually frequented by tourists, the compromised remains of the Genoese walls that once were part of its defense system are in urgent need of effective interventions towards their protection since many of the damages to these remaining parts of the walls are relatively recent (*Fig. 2*).

Between the 1950s and the 1980s urban redevelopment intended to de-congest Galata by introducing new demolitions that resulted in an almost complete loss of the remains of the town walls. In 1958 an architectural masterpiece, the Art Nouveau Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Paşa mosque by Raimondo D'Aronco's built in 1903 in

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Karaköy square was dismounted and removed because of the enlargement of Galata's main roads. Most recently the remains of almost 200 meters of the Genoese wall have been damaged and compromised as heavy interventions in reinforced concrete and iron beams were installed to support the entrance to a subway tunnel for the new metro line passing under the Galata hill.

The current conditions of the architectural heritage in Galata display the indifference of the local authorities towards the dilapidation of the significant traces of what they perceive as irrelevant since it belongs to the pre-Ottoman past. For example, in the specific case of the walls of Galata, the Great Municipality of Istanbul is carrying out restoration activities of the damaged wall structures without taking into consideration other interventions such as placing the walls in relation with the urban context of the area. With such actions parts of the urban fabric get even more isolated, forming fragmented monuments that are completely detached from their origin and context thus loosing their significance.

Furthermore, this general attitude towards a punctual restoration or conservation without interfering with the context (both human and urban) does not allow to properly understand what was the cultural and cosmopolitan *milieu* in which these artefacts had been produced. While searching for signs to confirm a strong national identity, administrators commonly overlook the past that has no direct connection to the Turkish or Ottoman heritage, ironically though throughout this process of urban transformation of Galata parts of the Ottoman heritage are overlooked and suffer as well.

The multilayered architectural wealth of Galata is not only limited to its Genoese heritage. The richness of the neighborhood consists of a conspicuous number of buildings dating from the Byzantine period, the Latin domination but also urban and architectural interventions dating from the Ottoman conquests until the beginning of the Republican era and beyond.

A diversity of architectural structures are concentrated in the district, like the *Palazzo del Podestà*, a strong symbolic expression of the Genoese colony (*Fig. 3*), and the remains of the fortified walls;

the mosques and converted churches such as the San Domenico church today known as the Arab Mosque; the almost gone building complex of the "*Castello di Galata*" in Karaköy; Orthodox *Rum* and Armenian churches, as well as Jewish Ashkenazi and Sephardi synagogues spread around the small alleys of nearby Karaköy and around the Galata Tower; public baths such as the mistreated and unrecognizable Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Hamam at Azapkapı; historical Ottoman residences and inns dating from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with particular building techniques in bricks and stones; an original fifteenth century *bedesten* built by Mehmet the Conqueror; hospitals such as the British Art Nouveau masterpiece built just below the Galata Tower; convents as in the present-day French Saint Benoît School and the Austrian Sankt Georg School; the Ottoman Bank by the great Levantine architect Alexandre Vallaury, now partially transformed into "Salt Galata" a cultural center; small fountains like the one by Raimondo D'Aronco, standing not far from the late nineteenth century Neo-gothic Italian synagogue; inns and corporate buildings, like the reconfigured *Ceneviz Han* or the St. Pierre Han; classical sixteenth century Ottoman masterpieces by architect Sinan like the Rüstem Pasha Han (*Fig. 4*) and the Kılıç Ali Pasha and Sokollu Mehmet Pasha mosques in nearby Tophane and Azapkapı districts and many other corporative and financial buildings along the Street of the Banks, like the Generali Han, the Minerva Han, the Sümer Bank, or the Karaköy Palas – nowadays converted into luxury hotels for the benefit of the tourist sector – all these are important examples of the multilayered cultural richness of Galata and its nearest surrounding. The list of this architectural heritage does not end here. It involves many more buildings that assist towards the understanding of the kaleidoscopic amalgam that the urban environment of Galata is.

The ongoing environmental de-classification reduces the potential attractiveness of the district yet within such a complex context articulated by various stratifications, the neighborhood's specific elements and landmarks may once more restore the area into an at-

tractive and pulsing cultural core of Istanbul. Here, as it was in the past, multiculturalism and diversity must be recognized as adding value also as an intangible heritage that needs to be consciously and adequately protected and maintained for posterity. It is important to define a precise asset regarding Galata district to highlight and preserve the importance of the multicultural origins and the importance of the tangible heritage. We should indeed hope for a series of interventions aimed towards ensuring a lasting and effective purpose of the entire area. Regardless of the architectural quality of the individual buildings, the historical and environmental heritage of the entire area must be reassessed. This is an imperative to avoid sporadic and isolated restoration interventions that in most cases are done for speculative purposes and not enough contextualized in a social frame.

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Movement of Ideas: Giovanni Francesco Abela of Malta and his Collection

Chiara Cecalupo
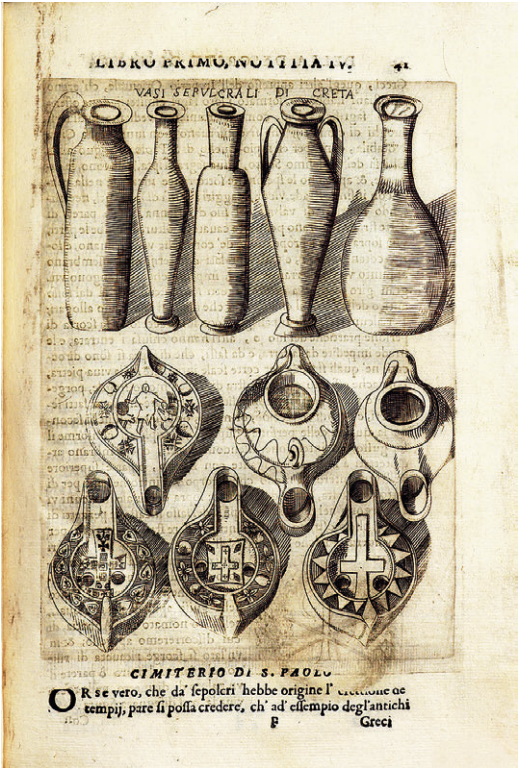
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Table from the *Descrittione di Malta* by Giovanni Francesco Abela, showing some archaeological objects from his collection. Österreichische National-bibliothek, Vienna, 57.E.2 ALT PRUNK/ 264897-C FID MAG, 264897-C.

In 1550, Ulisse Aldrovandi, one of Bologna's most important scholars, began to collect the items that would form the founding nucleus of his museum, in particular dried fish and natural objects. The growth of his collection went hand in hand with his scientific and teaching experiences (for example, the herbarium section took shape when he began to teach botany and mineralogy) and with his growing contacts with many scholars in Europe. This allowed him to receive substantial donations of objects, but also to become a point of reference for every early Baroque private collector of antiquities and curiosities.

His museum was hosted in his house in via del Vivaro in Bologna, where the objects were arranged in four rooms contiguous to the library, where he kept books, manuscripts and drawings. The collection was a visual appendix to the library, and was extremely varied, in order to give the effect of the simultaneous evocation of natural heritage (*naturalia*) and human intelligence (*artificialia*) through the centuries. There was a very wide typological, diachronic and geographical variety and, in typically Baroque incrustation style, the objects were arranged over the entire extension of the walls, including the ceiling, in response to a sort of immense *horror vacui*.

The museum was incredibly well known in Europe and attracted many local and foreign visitors. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the young Giovanni Francesco Abela, son of an important Maltese family and soon-to-be vice-chancellor of the Order of Malta, was studying at the University of Bologna. Abela obtained the title of doctor of law in December 1606. At this time, Aldrovandi's collection in via del Vivaro was still open to illustrious visitors or simply to curious and educated people, among whom we can conceivably count Abela. His presence in Bologna led him to directly know the most important Baroque collection in Europe.

After his doctorate, Abela had the opportunity to travel in Europe (Spain, France and Italy) as secretary of the Embassy of the Order of Malta in Rome, following the ambassadors of Pope Clement VIII. In this moment of his life, he became friends with

many European writers and intellectuals, with whom he maintained erudite epistolary relations for many years.

During his French stay in 1616, Abela embarked upon a long-lasting friendship with Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, who was the first Baroque scholar in France to apply the Renaissance tradition to the new scientific methods and one of the first private collectors of science and antiquities, setting up a museum cabinet in the family home in Aix-en-Provence and a garden in his country house in Belgentier. Peiresc enjoyed extensive relations with intellectuals and researchers from all over Europe and his main correspondent for the Maltese area was naturally Giovanni Francesco Abela, who knew the Frenchman's scientific value and thus drew inspiration from his incredible collection.

Prior to 1625, Abela visited Rome more than once. There, he developed a good knowledge of the Roman catacombs and of Antonio Bosio, who had already distinguished himself for many years for his studies and explorations of the Christian cemeteries of Rome.

During these visits, Abela got to know Bosio's collection. In the early seventeenth century, Bosio was writing his masterpiece *Roma Sotterranea*, while structuring his own collection of art and antiquities held both in his main house in Via Condotti and his suburban villa on Monte Parioli, right above the catacomb of San Valentino. This choice of a dual location for the collection was quite common in Rome. His collection was typically Baroque and eclectic: it hosted many pagan and Christian archaeological finds, numerous paintings, curious materials from exotic lands, archival and library pieces, polychrome peperino statues and ancient golden glasses.

Abela came back to Malta when he became vice-chancellor of the Order in 1626. He treasured his European experiences and the museological concepts that he had seen during his travels and so brought to Malta the museological trend of creating villas outside the main city to host Baroque collections. As such, when he retired from public life in 1640 (in order to dedicate himself to historical research and the writing of his *Della Descrittione di Malta Isola nel Mare Siciliano con le sue antichità, ed altre notizie*), he set up his Casi-

no di San Giacomo near the Christian cemetery of Marsa and near the Grand Harbour outside Valletta as his own private museum.

The European cultural influences that shaped Abela's ideas in his youth and the Casino di San Giacomo in Marsa mark the starting point of Maltese collecting. The site can be seen as the first "museum" on the whole island, becoming a focal point for all the erudite and creative elite of Malta.

The Abela collection had the appearance of a seventeenth-century private scholar's collection. First, the eclectic spectrum of objects varied from antique pieces to naturalistic objects, from strange curiosities to Egyptian finds, from paintings to antique furniture, from archival books to precious decorations. Second, the collection was arranged in specific rooms, on the walls, in drawers, indoors and outdoors in the garden.

If the purpose of his collection was to provide pleasure and erudite satisfaction, both for Abela and for the Maltese upper classes to which he belonged, it also had the clear vocation of illustrating his literary works and research through the pieces he had collected. It was something that Aldrovandi, Peiresc, Bosio and many other European scholars had been doing at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The concept that guided Abela in his research for his book came from his European contacts: in many passages of his *Descrittione*, after many long, detailed quotes from various literary sources, Abela admits that no written source can be preferred over the ancient objects hosted in his collection, which have to be used as faithful historical proof. This sentence summarizes Abela's approach to collected objects, learnt from the great scholars of the European tradition.

These objects are represented in a few illustrations and plates in the *Descrittione*. In addition to drawings of some of the objects in the collection, the work includes a bird's eye view of the ancient capital Mdina, in which Abela graphically reconstructs the city walls, three full-page engravings of Roman sculptures seen and found by him in Mdina and Rabat, and an illustrated map of the places traditionally attributed to the stay of St Paul in Malta.

Regarding the drawings of the archaeological objects held in Abela's collection, they are generally very simple and serve to give a generic idea of the finds discussed throughout the text. An exception is the table depicting objects from the catacombs (*Fig. 1*). This table presents a good array of the small items typically found in the Maltese catacombs: balsam jars, clay and glass cruets and oil lamps with Christian symbols. Abela describes them in the text and through this illustration, in which the pieces are engraved in detail, almost at life size, giving a general idea of their three-dimensionality. They are presented by Abela when he discusses the Christian catacombs in Malta, which indirectly suggests that he removed them during his underground explorations. Moreover, the presence of this engraving in the body of the text is due to the need to also illustrate these pieces graphically, giving an idea of the conceptual importance they had for Abela, beyond their modest archaeological value. It also allowed a direct typological comparison and an immediate visual companion for the readers and other scholars interested in the topic.

Of course, the study of European influences in Abela's work also allows us to find a direct comparison with Antonio Bosio's *Roma Sotterranea*, published in 1632–1634 and always cited as a seminal source in the *Descrittione*. The choice to present the objects found in the catacomb in a table of this kind is also borrowed from Bosio, who was the first to apply this very common seventeenth-century method of commenting on the collection and illustrating it in large thematic tables to Christian archaeology.

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Further development

This work, funded through the PIMo project, has been very important in my career development. It allowed me to deliver a talk for my host institution, to publish a monograph on the subject and to forge strong links with the local university. Indeed, as of 2024, I will be a Marie Curie fellow at the University of Malta.

Depths and Wonders of the Sea: Coral from Collections to Allegory

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Harvested in the Mediterranean Sea, coral has been an object of fascination since antiquity, as it was thought to be a "flexible plant" (*herba mollis*), a plant or animal depending on the author, that becomes a mineral on contact with air. As a symbol associated with metamorphosis and blood in Graeco-Roman mythology, coral was used in pharmacopoeia and religious practices in the form of amulets, particularly during the events of women's lives (childbirth, menstruation, etc.). Able to switch from the vegetable to the mineral world according to the conceptions of the time, with Christianity coral became a symbol associated with the resurrection of Christ, notably in *Virgin and Child* paintings of the *Quattrocento*. However, from the sixteenth century onwards, with the rise of a globalized market and the booming pearl industry, coral came to be represented in a different way. Its extraction intensified radically, making the Mediterranean Sea the hub of a global trade linking the Americas, Africa and Asia. Coral from the Mediterranean region or Africa was prized in India and traded for diamonds: from the seventeenth century onwards, it became one of the main export goods, generating huge profits for the English and Dutch East India Companies.

A sixteenth-century painting shows how coral had become one of the symbols of this globalized world, whose dark side we should nevertheless not forget since it was linked to the trade triangle. This small-format copper painting (55 × 45 cm), made by Jacopo Zucchi between 1580 and 1590, is now in the Galleria Borghese in Rome (*Fig. 1*). Referred to as a "cabinet painting", it was made for Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici's *studiolo* in the Villa Medici in Rome. However, at least three other versions exist, including one in Ukraine (Leopoldi, Lviv Picture Art Gallery, Inv. no. Z272) and two in private collections (one in Milan and the other exhibited in London). The Zucchi painting appears for the first time in literature in 1642, under the pen of Giovanni Baglione, as *Fishing for Coral* (*Pesca di corallo*). In all of the known versions, the composition is similar except for some important details. In the Ukrainian version, there are two disguised portraits: in the centre, we recognize Clelia Farnese, the illegitimate daughter of Alessandro Farnese, in

the guise of a sea goddess or Amphitrite and, behind her, carrying a bow and arrow, the commissioner himself, Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici. But Ferdinando does not appear in the version preserved at the Villa Borghese or in the private collection. In his place is a man in profile holding a parrot, modelled like an antique torso, except that he is black. This depiction of a black man, combined with other elements such as the coral fishing in the background and the presence of a parrot, may suggest that Zucchi's painting could also be an allegory of the New World. The attribution of the various versions of *Fishing for Coral* as an allegory of the Americas is not unanimously accepted, so this analysis of this mysterious and fascinating painting must start from the beginning.

The composition of *Fishing for Coral* does not look like later seascapes or storm views exalting the power of the sea, which show tiny ships in the distance among the waves. There is almost no vegetation in Zucchi's painting, while patches of land form dry islets in the middle of the water. Representations of the Americas had been disseminated in maps, in which the predominant vision is obviously of the land, and in allegories of both North and South America depicting luxuriant vegetation, objects, animals and fruits. In contrast, the landscape in *Fishing for Coral* is minimal, and there is only a small selection of the emblems attributed by the western vision to the allegory of the Americas: there is a bow and arrow, a parrot and a canoe, but no turtle, pineapple or palm tree, which are often found in this type of painting or engraving.

Religious imagery played an important role in disseminating a visual vocabulary of the New World. *Fishing for Coral* has many features in common with an episode in the life of Francis Xavier, a Jesuit missionary to India, Japan and China, who acquired the title of "Apostle of India" (the word "India" was used to cover western India, the Americas and eastern India) and was designated the patron saint of missions, including in the Americas (*Fig. 2*). In a cycle of engravings illustrating the miracle of the crab – when a crab brought Francis Xavier's crucifix back to him after he had lost it in a storm – an abundance of shells and corals frame the scene, as in

Zucchi's painting. Although the engraving largely postdates Zucchi's painting, in the head made from shells above the landscape with the ship, it shows the playfulness that could be used in the depiction of shells.

In Zucchi's *Fishing for Coral*, the focus is primarily on the human crowd, divided into two groups: those who are working and those who are not. It is a vision of human society; not a society tied to a specific territory, but a group capable of exploiting resources hidden beneath the waters. On one hand, seven nude figures (five women and two men) pose in front of the promontory in the foreground, some looking out at the viewer, others showing off their straight profiles. Two of them look like antique sea gods and goddesses, reminiscent of Amphitrite, as mentioned above, and of Neptune, on the right. The women in particular show off their rich textiles and pearl and coral bead jewellery. Coral is thus associated with wealth and power: it is depicted in the form of branches, but also as pearls in necklaces and bracelets. Even the little monkey in centre stage is holding coral bracelets. The abundance of pearls and coral represents nature as an inexhaustible source of wealth, effortlessly accessible to a certain elite – the lascivious figures in the foreground – in contrast to those working behind them. On the other hand, the second group of people are working, swimming in the water to collect crustaceans, fishing for shellfish from small boats or preparing to dive down with weights enabling them to grab the coral from the seabed. The background swarms with dozens of small silhouettes, on the shore, in the boats, forming a compact, moving human mass.

Not one of the figures is clothed. Their nudity alludes to the climate of the place, which could be somewhere on the Mediterranean Sea, since red coral has been harvested there since the twelfth century – from Marseille to Tabarka in Tunisia, as well as in Italy, mainly in Genoa – then from the fifteenth century in the Gulf of Naples, Corsica and Sardinia. But we cannot rule out the possibility that the scene takes place in the Caribbean Sea: indeed, there is a well-known engraving depicting pearl fishing in the Americas in the account of Girolamo Benzoni in Theodor de Bry's

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Great Travels, one of the most widely distributed compilations of texts and engravings on the Americas from the sixteenth century onwards (*Fig. 3*). This illustration refers to the description of pearl fishing on the island of Cubagua before 1521. While in his text, Benzoni condemns the appalling working conditions, the engraver (perhaps de Bry himself) sticks to a more factual illustration, showing Native fishermen in canoes and divers in the water. In the earliest accounts of the Americas, by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés or Bartolomé de las Casas for example, pearl and coral fishing were described in the trade triangle context. Initially, the settlers hired Indigenous Peoples to carry out this arduous task (hard working conditions, long hours underwater, danger from sharks, etc.), but after revolts, it was decided that only enslaved humans from Africa could be used for pearl fishing according to the royal decree of Spain of 1558. In Zucchi's *Fishing for Coral*, the black figure in the centre of the scene could therefore be a representation of a slave.

There is a contrast between the small size of this "cabinet painting" and the abundance of people and things it depicts. Baglione already noted this, pointing out that *Fishing for Coral* represents "many nude women, but small, among whom are several portraits of Roman women of the time, rather beautiful and worthy of view as of marvel" ("molte donne ignude, ma piccole, tra le quali sono molti ritratti di varie Dame Romane di quei tempi, assai belle, e degne come di vista, così di maraviglia"). In the text, the word "marvel" (*maraviglia*) refers to the women, but this term was also widespread in the literature about painting as an art capable of imitating the variety of Creation and reproducing it in miniature within a frame, in order to arouse the viewer's wonderment.

The term "marvel" also brings to mind the *Wunderkammer* or *cabinet de curiosités*, a type of collection which brought together ecofacts (*naturalia*) and artefacts (*artificalia*) of all types and from all over the world: stones, fossils, ancient coins, maps, eggs, naturalized animals (including "monsters"), miniature canoes imported from Canada, feathered headdresses or *plumería* from Mexico, porcelain from China, and so on. Coral and pearl could also be

found in pompous compositions, such as the one in the Ferdinand II cabinet of curiosities in Ambras Castle in Innsbruck, in which coral specimens were arranged on plaster supports to depict stories or myths frequently linked to the sea, such as the coral composition entitled *Triumph of Galatea*, after the sea nymph from Greek mythology, and now in Vienna (*Fig. 4*). As mentioned above, *Fishing for Coral*, now in Villa Borghese, was designed for Ferdinando de' Medici's *studiolo*, in other words, a place that played on the principle of *mimesis*, where natural objects were often exhibited in front of their painted representation. So, we can argue that *Fishing for Coral* was intended to create a *trompe-l'œil* effect with the collection of curiosities, which included coral compositions, hence the still life in the foreground. In another example of this dialogue between collection objects and paintings, Ferdinando's *studiolo* can be compared to that of Francesco de' Medici, created a few years earlier in Palazzo Vecchio in Florence under the direction of Zucchi's master, Giorgio Vasari. In one of his paintings, Vasari illustrates the myth of the birth of coral in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (IV, 742–747): Perseus, having killed the monster and freed Andromeda from her cruel fate, lays Medusa's head on the shore, and coral grows from the drops of her blood. An inventory dating from 1574 indicates that there were 40 coral compositions in Francesco de' Medici's cabinet, allowing us to state that there was a close relationship between Vasari's finely painted coral branches and the coral compositions on display.

Cabinets of curiosities (which also included books, paintings and objects) enabled scientists to come across and comment on the latest scientific findings, compare ancient texts with real specimens, and handle objects from the most remote places. Not only did scholars meet in the cabinets, but renowned scientists were also involved in the Villa Medici building project too. One example is Camillo Agrippa, an engineer known for having developed a new method of coral fishing, who was hired by Ferdinando de' Medici to invent a new fountain system at his villa.

Brought back from the far reaches of the world, the objects displayed in these collections represented the breadth of their owner's

knowledge and, by extension, their power, while the paintings conferred prestige on them. Ferdinando's *studiolo* was an appendage to his colonial plans, as he sought to develop an international trading centre at the port of Livorno, his goal to establish a Tuscan colony in the New World. While the objects in the collections embody the extent of their holders' power, the paintings provide a symbol of it, which is why they can refrain from geographical precision. In the rhetoric of power, ambiguity is very important because it zooms in on a multitude of places and peoples according to very generic categories (workers, colonized peoples, non-Christian nations, etc.). The "exotic" is constructed by accumulating stereotypes of the far away, sometimes associating elements from different geographical areas. *Fishing for Coral* can then be compared with a type of object common in European collections: nautilus shells. In the one housed in Geneva, a black man is carrying a nautilus shell, on which an allegory of America has been engraved (*Fig. 5*). However, this ensemble of shells, the black figure and emblems of the Americas is not really meant to refer to a specific place, but to embody the wealth and prestige that can be obtained from the lands overseas.

The ambiguity of the location is intended to give the image a universal status and ends up hiding the darker sides of history, such as slavery. The scene seems suspended in time and does not refer to a precise fact, but operates as an allegory of the Golden Age. This suspension of time lends the representation a mythical status, as if it had always been there, and allows for comparisons with other mythological compositions by Jacopo Zucchi, such as his project for a fountain on the theme of the birth of coral (Louvre, Paris, Département des arts graphiques, Inv. no. 4553). The figures in the foreground are also reminiscent of the *Golden Age* (Uffizi, Florence) or the *Allegory of Creation* (Galleria Borghese, Rome), in which a coral branch is depicted among the shellfish.

The dialogue between allegories and collections is central to understanding the *vision* of history we have inherited, while cabinets of curiosities are at the origin of today's museums. Ideolo-

gies of power can be found not only in paintings, but also in objects made for the market. As cabinets were privileged places for observation and experimentation, they played a central role in the development of the history of science. In order to revisit narratives on history and understand movements, exchange and trade in the Mediterranean Sea, we need to take a step back and critically analyse these biased representations of elsewhere. By analysing the images, which include representations, objects and displays, with this critical eye, we can reveal the violence implicit in the context in which they were produced. In place of a univocal vision of art history, it opens up a history of *arts* as a world of intersecting perspectives, which current research is seeking to enhance, not to bring out a version that would predominate over the others, but to pave the way to other discourses and rethink our legacy from the past.

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"Provence africaine": Natural Science and Ideology of the Mediterranean

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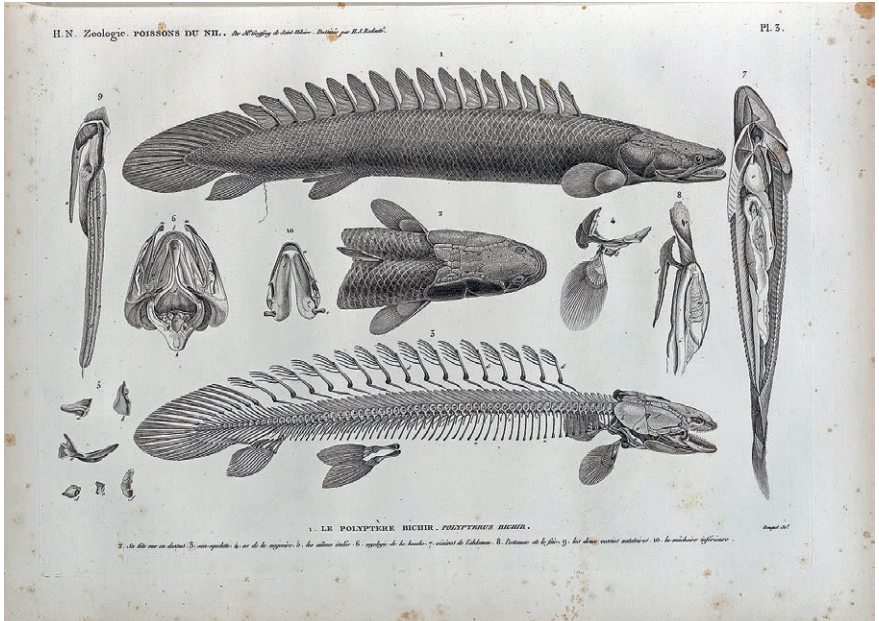
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In his reports, in the *Annales du Museum national d'histoire naturelle* (1802), of the results of his zoological research following Bonaparte's expedition in Egypt, there was no hiding Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's great satisfaction. The mere discovery of the *Polypterus bichir*, he wrote, "would make up for all the effort that a long-distance journey usually entails". It was indeed an important discovery, one of several made by Geoffroy during his scientific journey. The study of the anatomy of this unique fish gave a substantial contribution to his thesis about the anatomic evolution of the species; it was also particularly interesting as living evidence of the ancient Egyptians' "fish of the Nile", whose theogony Geoffroy investigated in another memoir in the same year (*Fig. 1*). But there was also another and more general reason for Geoffroy's enthusiasm in describing his zoological discovery. In effect, these discoveries were also a great relief, if we are to reflect on what had happened to other natural scientists, mainly botanists, who had performed painstaking research in Egypt to look for new species to add to the universal map of flora. Their experience was indeed disappointing – "Egypt gave them barely twenty different species" – nor was that of the mineralogists so different. Where they were looking for diversity, they instead discovered a strong similarity.

The "other" world of northern Africa and western Asia – "other" mainly from the point of view of manners and customs, religion and institutions – was an extremely similar world from an environmental point of view. What Geoffroy remarked was proven by the experience of many celebrated botanists, such as Bory de Saint-Vincent, and others beside. The "invention" of the Mediterranean, as it has been rightly defined, was the result of a complex conceptual development, in which the environment played a primary role, to be considered with cultural and political differences. The result was an ideology of "Mediterraneanism", in which, on the scale of civilization, it was the responsibility of the most advanced nations to unify, at a higher civic and political level, what nature had made uniform and history different. This approach had an important role in shaping the expansionist ideology of the

European nations, France in particular – from the expedition in Egypt to the conquest of Algeria and so on. It was indeed a scheme which could incorporate various kinds of discourses and representations; a scheme, in its general shape, very similar to "orientalism", and actually operating in various ways, although varieties and differences, discordant voices and critical approaches can be made out which render it less simple, consistent and effective than it might appear. The making and the varieties of this approach can be followed and observed in various cultural contexts, not only in France, and so it can be deemed an important aspect in shaping the European concept of modernity.

On the Italian side, for instance, in the first of the three volumes on Africa of *Il costume antico e moderno* – the impressive and preciously illustrated editorial enterprise directed and largely written by Giulio Ferrario in Milan – the author cannot avoid remarking that in the fertile Nile valley "all of the most exquisite European fruits are cultivated with utmost care" (*Fig. 2*).

In the *Aggiunte e rettificazioni* (vol. 2, 1832), published in order to add new and updated information to the major work, he remarked that in the splendid and pleasant environment of Barbary, among myrtles and figs, olive trees "better than in Provence" and various kind of grapes "despite a religion opposed to Bacchus", the botanist could feel as if he were a paradise of familiar flora and "would forget the fatherland there, were he not frightened by the spectacle of barbarism". The opposition between nature and social context was clearly highlighted, but, while devoting his attention to the decadence of civilization under the despotism of the Ottomans or the rulers of the Barbary coast, Ferrario also suggested another reflection. Again, in his pages on Egypt he put forward the suggestion that the magnificent variety of the Nile valley's flora was not exactly a "natural" gift, but the result of human intervention and a long history of adaptations and acclimatization which changed the face of landscape and plant production. Just a few words and a suggestion, but worthy of attention, I think, as well as opening a perspective connectable to another view of the civilizing process.

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We could proceed on this path towards other ways of conceiving the relationships between the major and powerful nations of Europe and the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean while inspecting the various ways in which the civilization process and the very concept of civilization was conceived and transformed, particularly in that critical period between the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first of the nineteenth. Inside the framework of the Saint-Simonian school, for instance, the representation of the Mediterranean as "the nuptial bed of the East and West", like in the famous and fascinating sentence by Michel Chevalier, was considerably different from the hierarchical view which emphasized the virtue – in a way the duty – of imposing liberty and civilization and solicited conquest. It instead showed that not power, but science, technology – to be shared as universal gifts – and communication above all would change the world and make human societies better. The nature of the Mediterranean was not, from this point of view, the premise of conquests but, beyond a long history of wars, violence and intolerance, the most favourable condition for a real new world of brotherhood and an alliance of connected differences. Elsewhere, on the British side for instance, similar attitudes can be made out, clearly going against the main expansionist trend.

In fact, the idea of a uniform environment as the natural basis for the establishment of a "Mediterranean world", led back to civilization by power, became widespread as the nineteenth century progressed. Popular literature, narratives and iconography offer clear and important evidence of this. For instance, in *Les moeurs et costumes de tous les peuples*, collected by Casimir Henricy, the narration began with Africa and Oceania and intended to close with Europe, in order to "proceed from bottom to top, from the lowest to the most perfected" as "these naturalists, [who] to build their nomenclature, go from small to big, from the simplest animal to the best organized being, from nought to the complex number". Taking Algeria as the starting point was obviously also imposed by recent events which, since the French conquest beginning in 1830, had been attracting "the attention of all classes of French society".

Its natural environment, as we noticed in previous texts, was magnificent and familiar at the same time; it was a "privileged land, which partakes of the European climate and of tropical nature; veritable African Provence, which seems destined to become an annex of France sooner or later". It was quite obvious that this "Provence" placed outside the French geographical boundaries would be reincluded in its natural framework – a discourse on human races was also developed to support this conclusion – and France had the noble responsibility of accomplishing this. And so, this kind of Mediterraneanism showed its exclusive and hierarchical face, with all its long-lasting consequences. Other "Mediterraneanisms", however, were possible and active, as suggested, and from the start, the emerging "Mediterranean world" – which took shape as a concept in the last decades of the eighteenth century – showed many more colours than it might seem by looking at the prevailing ideological trends. Hence, it offered a particularly interesting laboratory of investigation.

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Vives Escudero and the Rising Interest in Phoenicio-Punic Archaeology in Spain

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1

Between the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the rising interest in Phoenicio-Punic antiquities fostered an intense movement of ideas amongst various scholars. This flow aimed to develop a framework for studying the previously little-known Phoenicio-Punic culture. Although some Phoenicio-Punic items were already known in the eighteenth century, forming part of the private collections of European nobles and bourgeoisie, it was not until the nineteenth century that a real interest in Phoenicio-Punic culture developed. Indeed, from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, Phoenicio-Punic objects began to be studied not only for their artistic value but mostly in light of their importance in relation to the Phoenician presence along the Mediterranean shores. This process was certainly facilitated by two phenomena that took place almost simultaneously: on one hand, the increase in excavations in regions once interested by a Phoenician presence; on the other, the organization and celebration of the universal exhibitions and other specialized fairs, which provided ideal physical and cultural settings against which to nurture the creation of a common scientific knowledge. In Spain, certainly one of the main actors involved in this changing cultural scenario, as well as one of the most controversial figures in Spanish historiography, was Antonio Vives Escudero (*Fig. 1*).

The beginnings of scientific Phoenicio-Punic archaeology in Europe can be traced back to 1860–1861, when Renan – a French biblical scholar – conducted an archaeological expedition to the Levant. In a significant contribution to the Phoenician archaeological material previously available, Renan's experience produced a pioneering book that introduced the contemporary scholarship to the results of his excavations in various Phoenician settlements.

Barely two decades later, Father Delattre began his excavation of a site in Carthage (Tunisia) (*Fig. 2*). Between 1898 and 1899, he excavated the Punic necropolis of Saint Monique, sending reports of his results to the major journals of that period. By the end of the century, the echo of Delattre's findings in Carthage had already reached a wide international audience, thus in 1892 he was

invited to exhibit a selection of photos depicting his discoveries at the *Exposición Histórico-Europea* held in Madrid. On that occasion, eleven boxes containing photos of Delattre's excavations were sent to Madrid from French Tunisia and displayed in a specific room of the Archaeological Museum of Madrid (hereafter, MAN). Delattre's photographs were appreciated to the point that he was given a medal by the museum's awards board (Archives of the Society of Missionaries of Africa, Y1.IV) and, after the exhibition, 389 photographs were donated by the Bey of Tunis – Ali Bey – to the MAN (the donated photos are classified from 1892/29/FF-1 to 1892/29/FF390; they can be viewed at: http://www.man.es/man/coleccion/catalogos-tematicos/tunez.html).

At that time, Vives was 33 years old and, while still formally a student, he had begun to collaborate with the MAN. In particular, he was tasked with curating the Arabic antiquities section for the *Exposición Histórico-Europea*. There is no explicit evidence that Vives had seen Delattre's photos or that his approach had stimulated Vives's interest in Phoenicio-Punic culture; however, it is highly likely. Indeed, starting from 1905, his career – until that point mainly focused on numismatic and Arabic antiquities – became strictly connected to the study of Phoenicio-Punic archaeology and, above all, to the island of Ibiza, to which he devoted the last 20 years of his life. Specifically, between 1910 and 1914, Vives managed to excavate the Phoenicio-Punic necropolis of Puig de Molins. Nevertheless, this campaign helped cast a significant shadow on his contribution to Spanish archaeology, for three main reasons.

First, in order to start with his own excavations, Vives rented the properties known as Es Porxet and Can Xico Roig, previously occupied by Juan Román y Calvet, director of the Sociedad Arqueológica Ebusitana (the Archaeological Society of Ibiza) and leader of the archaeological works at the necropolis of Puig des Molins since 1903. Taking advantage in some ways of Juan Román's death (on 10 January 1910), Vives also started to make use of the same specialized manpower. At Puig des Molins, Vives thus conducted archaeological campaigns until 1914, when a *Real Orden* (23 May) was issued to stop all excavations at there. Throughout this period

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(1910–1914), Vives was involved in an ongoing dispute with Juan Román's son, Carlos Román Ferrer: this legal action eventually led Vives to be the only archaeologist excavating at Puig des Molins, thus interrupting Carlos Román's works in the same area.

Second, Vives did not explain the methodology he employed during the excavations in his publications. The absence of an excavation diary is probably the first notable failing regarding Vives's archaeological campaigns, especially since he denounced this same shortcoming when referring to Román y Calvet's work. Probably, the justification for this shortcoming can be found in Vives's description of the state of the necropolis, in which he asserted that the situation was already compromised to such a point that it was impossible to reconstruct the original setting. In any case, the correlation between the objects Vives found at Puig des Molins (today preserved in the MAN) and the different hypogea has been lost, and the only details concerning this excavation are found in Vives's 1917 monograph (entitled *Estudio de Arqueología Cartaginesa. La necrópoli de Ibiza*) and a document that lawyer Julio Ferrer y Baonza delivered, in Vives's name, to the Ministry of Public Education and Fine Arts (*Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes*) in 1914. In particular, the former document states that, between 1910 and 1914, Vives's campaigns concerned approximately 400 hypogea, from which 2,003 items were recovered. However, neither of the abovementioned documents provides information on the composition of the grave goods in the single burials.

Finally, Vives decided to transfer all the objects he found on the island of Ibiza to the MAN, where deposited them in 1916. The exact reason behind this choice is difficult to discern, even though Vives may have been waiting for his dispute with the Spanish state to be finally resolved.

Despite the problems connected to the excavation at Puig des Molins, can we say that Vives made a real contribution to Phoenicio-Punic archaeology in Spain? And how should we read his works in light of his contemporary cultural context? From 1905 to 1925, Antonio Vives wrote five works on Phoenicio-Punic archaeology and, although some of them were never published,

they all follow the same layout. Lacking details on the methodology employed during the excavation, they focus on the classification and description of the objects found during the campaign, according to a scheme that complied perfectly with the principles reforming the archaeological discipline at the beginning of the twentieth century. Vives's works always contain a systematic classification of all the materials according to their corresponding typology and there is little doubt that this way of proceeding was deeply influenced by his background as a numismatist. Another undeniable quality of his contributions is the attention he devoted to graphic material: beyond providing his works with sketches, plans and sections, Vives attached a significant number of photographs, frequently taken using innovative techniques. At that time, photography was still not widely attributed documentary value in archaeology, hence its use by Vives should be read as an attempt to adjust his scholarly production to the contemporary international standards. Additionally, since at that time there was so little knowledge of Phoenicio-Punic archaeology, the publication of detailed graphic materials gave other scholars a kind of information that was otherwise difficult to access, thus making it easier to compare findings. In a review in the 1918 *Numismatic Chronicle*, for example, Vives's work is praised for being a "well-illustrated and elaborate scientific account" and using collotype "with very fair success". Furthermore, "Señor Vives" is acknowledged as having taken "the opportunity *for which we must all be grateful*, to put together on plates cii-civ a number of the more important Carthaginian coins, collected from various museums" (emphasis added).

Vives's involvement in the contemporary debate around Phoenicio-Punic archaeology is apparent not only in the way his works are organized but also in their contents. To prepare his contributions, Vives travelled to different European museums that were hosting important Phoenicio-Punic collections: in particular, he appeared to know the pieces exhibited at the British Museum, the Louvre and the museums of Berlin, Cagliari, New York, Palermo, Syracuse in Sicily and Malta. As for his research trips, a friend and

colleague of his, José Ramón Mélida y Alinari, stated that Vives visited Sardinia and Algeria with the purpose of cataloguing and publishing his findings at Puig des Molins. Some years later, on occasion of Vives's death, the same Mélida remembered a series of research trips that Vives took to Sicily and North Africa. However, due to the lack of specifications, it is not possible to reconstruct Vives's exact movements during these travels, nor to know whom he might have met.

While there is little doubt that Vives's lack of interest in the archaeological context caused considerable, permanent shortcomings in the study of the Phoenicio-Punic in Spain, he can still be deemed one of the main actors in that period of transition and origin of modern Phoenicio-Punic archaeology. In his work, one can note how the craving to possess was now converted into a desire to know and understand, a goal that could only be achieved through a constructive and up-to-date exchange of ideas with other scholars.

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Between Imaginary and Reality: Ethnicity and Cooks in the Colonial Space of Cuba

Ilaria Berti

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A busty young woman with a tiny waist, a characteristic of female fashion illustrations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, is depicted in the act of cooking. She is wearing a spotless apron over a fancy striped dress, and is shown in an apparently modern kitchen, stirring her meal at a stove decorated with colourful tiles and surrounded by exotic fruits including pineapples, bananas, papayas and a fish, along with kitchen containers (*Fig. 1*).

This untitled photo portrays a woman and a man in a seemingly clean, modern kitchen. For hygienic reasons, the wood stove area is tiled. The kitchen has five if not six different wood stoves, all of them occupied by a kettle, two pans, a pot and possibly, on the right side, a fish kettle. The vast quantity of stoves and the various metal pots suggest that it was a hotel or a restaurant kitchen. However, in addition to the tools, the dark, grainy picture does not reveal any other key information on either the ingredients used or the dishes prepared (*Fig. 2*).

The overexposed picture of *Kitchen and Cuban servants* shows two women, possibly cooks and/or servants, in an open-air kitchen set in a courtyard as was common for Cuban kitchens at that time. Even though it is not in an enclosed room but outside, on a patio, the kitchen is a modern space, as is shown by the tap and running water. There is a barrel and two buckets, one near the fountain, and the other one in the right hand of one of the cooks or kitchen attendants (*Fig. 3*).

How useful can these three images be for historians? What can we learn about apparently banal processes, such as those which take place in the space of kitchen? Who were the cooks who fed the empires? While giving us the opportunity to shed light on various aspects concerning the circulation of people and ethnicity, we will see that analysis of these pictures raises more questions than the answers they provide, thus paving the way for further investigation in the fields of cultural and social history.

Empires and colonies are the main contexts giving historians the opportunity to examine mass migration, displacement and cultural transfers, and the kitchen is the background against which much of this mixing took place. Within this dynamic physical space, cooks were some of the key agents in this complex modification process.

In political terms, for almost the whole of the nineteenth century, the United States had expressed its intention to acquire Cuba from Spain, whose empire who ruled over the island until 1898. Also, besides the Ten Years' War of the decade 1868–1878, the late Spanish colonial period in Cuba was characterized by intense and rapid transformations, chiefly dependent on the main plantation crop – sugar cane. Despite the Spanish hegemony, a good number of US businessmen purchased plantations, established companies and forwarding agencies, provided credit and contributed to the development of a modern, technological communications and transport system. Cuba and its economy gradually became dependent on the United States and less bound to the Spanish Empire. Furthermore, due to the United States' greater economic power, its proximity to the Cuban coastline, and the milder Cuban weather, starting from the second half of the nineteenth century, a large number of US residents and tourists began to reside for short periods on the island.

The images under discussion were produced when the Cuban slave society came to be abolished (1888), even though the same inequalities continued into the years – 1898 to 1903 – under analysis here.

Within this context, the three pictures of cooks produced by unknown observers that are discussed, compared and contrasted in this article come from a cookery book first published in 1903; the second is an 1898 photograph published in *The American Kitchen Magazine*; and the third and last one was printed in *Neely's Panorama of Our New Possessions* (1899).

Even though there is not any evidence as to the identity of the artist who designed the first image shown, the book cover of the *Nuevo manual del cocinero Criollo* does give information on the author

of the book. It was written by Spaniard José Triay and first published in the Cuban capital, La Havana, in 1903, while the cover shown here is from its 1914 edition.

We know that Triay's parents moved within the area of the Spanish empire, migrating from Spain to Cuba during the early 1850s, and lived there all their lives. In Cuba, Triay became a writer, poet, journalist and, according to the prologue and the *Dos palabras* section of the *Nuevo manual*, he perceived himself and was perceived by his fellow citizens as a gourmet and a cook, too.

Due to the lack of information on the artist of the *Nuevo manual* book cover, it seems useful to focus on its possible readership, who also had the opportunity to look at its cover, too. Unfortunately, the *Prologo* written by renowned Cuban medical doctor, Gonzalo Arostegui y del Castillo, does not give a clear idea of the potential public for whom the recipe book was written. However, Arostegui observed that due to the increasing numbers of tourists visiting the island, there needed to be a renewal of Cuban cuisine and its flavours, his wish being for this to become part of a process described as the passage from the "need for food" to the "satisfaction of eating". Therefore, we can deduce that chefs were the main intended readership, as well as the main observers of the *Nuevo Manual* book cover.

Besides the colours of the newly adopted Cuban flag in the word *Manual*, which is of interest for historians researching nations and nationalisms, here we focus on the woman in the picture. The observer of the book cover sees the image of an evidently happy, young female cook working in a safe, clean and pleasant environment.

Even if the ethnic origin of this fictional cook can only be guessed in part by her somatic traits, the main point is that she was not an Afro-American cook. However, neither her complexion nor her eyes and brunette hair allow us to determine her ethnic origin. The most plausible option is that she was an imaginary Spanish cook, or that she could have been from the United States, or from various other European or American countries. In order to avoid conjectures on where she possibly came from, it is also

HOW THEY COOK IN CUBA.

BY MRS. GILSON WILLETS.

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KITCHEN AND CUBAN SERVANTS IN HOUSE OCCUPIED BY NURSES.

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2 How they cook in Cuba, in *The American Kitchen Magazine*, 1898. Photo courtesy of the Hathi Trust Digital Library.

3 Kitchen and Cuban servants, in Neely's *Panorama of Our New Possessions*, 1899. Photo courtesy of the Hathi Trust Digital Collection.

useful to turn to the book's title, *Manual del nuevo cocinero criollo*, that is, *Manual of the New Creole Cook*. "Criollo" and "creole" are respectively the Spanish and English terms to define a person without any specific ethnic origin, or an economy, society, idea, language, culture, dish and much more besides, arising in, growing and changing in the Caribbean, and in the Americas in general, through encounters and entanglements in the colonial spaces. Therefore, the title of the cookery book leads us to suppose that the intention of the anonymous artist was to portray a Creole chef.

In order to acquire a deeper knowledge of the differences between the cook's desired and imaginary ethnic origins and the reality, it is essential to compare and contrast the book cover of *Nuevo Manual* with a photograph that appeared in *The American Kitchen Magazine* published in 1898, just five years before the first appearance of *Nuevo Manual* and its book cover.

The photograph is taken from Mrs Gilson Willets' *How They Cook in Cuba*. While it is clear who Mr Gilson Willets was – a journalist, author and screenwriter – there is scarce information on his wife, the lady who signed herself as Mrs Gilson Willets. The only information we have on her life comes from news published in the *New York Times* on 24 June 1896, the date that Miss Daisy May Van der Veer married Gilson Willets. At the threshold of the twentieth century, it was still commonplace for women to sign with their husband's name, to use a pseudonym or to remain anonymous. Nevertheless, there is a coincidence that demonstrates that Mrs Gilson Willets was Daisy May Van der Veer: her article on cooking in Cuba was published in 1898 while Mr Gilson Willets was a journalist there covering the Spanish American War. We guess that Mr Gilson Willets came to Cuba with his wife who, thanks to her stay on the island, also had the opportunity to observe day-to-day local life, including food, cooks and kitchens.

Despite the lack of author and title, we can suppose that the photograph was taken by the same Mr Willets who, in 1898, also provided the pictures for Tennyson Neely's *Neely's Panorama of Our New Possessions* on Cuba, Porto Rico and Philippines. This hypothesis on Mr Willets' authorship would make sense because the oth-

er photo shown here comes from another Neely picture book, *Panoramic Views of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Manila and the Philippines*, published in 1899 in which his name appears as photographer.

If we now shift our attention from the authorship to the people in the second and third pictures, we have a much clearer idea of their ethnic origins. The woman in the second picture is unquestionably an Afro-American cook while the man could also be Asian, Cuban or from another ethnic origin that was not Anglo-Saxon. Their position in the kitchen space and their non-verbal communication seem to imply that the person in charge of doing the physical work of cooking was the woman, while the man's crossed arms could be a sign of his supervisory role. Both of them seem to be wearing clean clothes, and the man is also wearing an apron.

Likewise, the third picture shows two Afro-American women in charge of cooking, even though they are not actually cooking in the picture.

Considering that, at the end of the nineteenth century, people still had to pick a pose and maintain it for a few minutes, we should now reflect on the people portrayed. Due to their subaltern role, it is possible that they neither chose their pose and facial expression or their position in the space, nor the clothes that they were wearing. It is also plausible that they were not even cooks but other servants, chosen for various reasons to act this part. Nevertheless, in the conflict between reality and imaginary, we have to point out that observers play a key role in discriminating authenticity from fiction. Therefore, even though the people portrayed in the picture might not have been real cooks, they were credible representatives of that role.

From the style of the kitchens in which the cooks are working and from the quantity of instruments shown, we can also hypothesize that they possibly worked for restaurants, hotels or other institutions in charge of feeding a good number of people.

Another aspect common to the three images is linked to raising interest in modern hygienic cooking habits: they all portray cooks with spotless aprons; the first and second images also show easy-

to-clean, tiled kitchens; the hair of both women in the third image is covered by a turban, in the second photograph, the cook's hair is tied back, while the thick hair of the cook in the first picture is partially loose.

However, the task of comparing and contrasting these three pictures shows its weakness, too. While on one hand there are plenty of resemblances between the portrayed subject, the physical environment, the geographical space and the epoch, there are also some significant dissimilarities.

The first concerns the different means used to represent the cooks in their kitchens: the first picture under examination is a fictional one created by an anonymous artist, while the second and the third are photographs taken by a known author. Photographs should convey a more truthful aspect of life, while paintings are easily the stuff of invention, connected to a desired world far from experience. It goes without saying that images do not say enough about reality, but reveal a lot about the way a society intends to build and represent itself. Banal, everyday pictures can help historians question their sources and discover otherwise hidden aspects of our past. The comparative analysis of three different images of cooks casts light on the society that produced them and reveals complex relationships as well as the ambiguities between reality and imaginary, forcing us to reflect on the meaning of reality itself.

Following this discussion of a fictitious world, the second main difference in the three images shown concerns the ethnicity of the cooks. While on the cover of the cookery book the cook is a Creole woman, both photographs portray Afro-American cooks and kitchen servants.

The analysis of three images of cooks from within the same spatial and time frame raises other questions worthy of future investigation: To what extent can the dissimilarity between the cooks' ethnicity be inserted in the colonial and imperial context? Did the ethnic differences depend on an idea of building a "whiter" society – so-called *blanqueamiento* – in the Cuban context?

To what extent does the image on the book cover of the *Nuevo Manual* represent an idealized version of a cook? Were photographs a faithful representation of reality, especially in a context where cameras were slow and snapshots did not exist? What kind of meanings did the observers give to these images? Within which codes did they observe and contextualize the pictures? And finally, to what extent did images contribute to building a desired reality?

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Nausicaa's Cloth

Henning Trüper

1

Kader Attia's installation *La Mer Morte* (*The Dead Sea*), first shown in 2015, assembles used clothes of various blue colours, for various types of wearers, and scatters them over the floor of an exhibition room (*Fig. 1*). That the clothes are used is crucial; in the quality of wornness, the viewer is meant to discern the sign of former inhabitation by human bodies. The clothes evoke the absence of the wearers, who might have died or simply shed these former second skins and moved on elsewhere. On account of the tones of blue and their horizontal distribution, the installation also connotes the sea itself as a space of absences and losses – those of the living, who have become the dead, and those who have crossed and left their earlier lives behind, a form of social death, but also rebirth. There is a melancholic quality to the installation, a sense of mourning, as if the clothes were remnants and documents of an irretrievable past. But then, there is also the suggestion of bodies and disrobing, the removal of the protections of certain social conventions, intimacies invoking vulnerability as well as a distant possibility of desire – distant, because these are gestures and actions that also mirror the disrobing and shrouding of dead bodies. For the sea is the shroud of its dead. The clothes are ostentatiously products of globalized western capitalist modes of production. They are not handmade, regional, or culturally diverse. All the signs that make up the installation and through which the human body is evoked are mediated by the geopolitics and economic inequality of the contemporary world (in a conversation at Kunsthaus Zürich, to which I include a link, Attia and the curator talk about the installation from ca. 1'05''–1'12'').

I will take the liberty, in this brief reflection, of conjuring up an iconological association for Attia's installation. This association, I hope, can help us understand some of the visual meanings of Mediterranean crossings, in European culture and in the globalized present, and sort out some of the predispositions that are active in present-day responses to "people in motion" in the Mediterranean.

The narrative and iconography I believe are most suggestive here are those of the encounter of Odysseus and Nausicaa. The story is familiar: after leaving the island of Calypso on his self-built

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² Pieter Lastman, Odysseus before Nau-
sicaa, 1619, oil on canvas, Munich, Bayeri-
sche Staatsgemäldesammlungen – Alte
Pinakothek, Inv. no. 10735.

³ Salvator Rosa (and studio), Odysseus
and Nausicaa, ca. 1655, oil on canvas, Los
Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum
of Art LACMA.

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raft, Odysseus is approaching Scheria, the home of the Phaeacians; once again, his journey is interrupted by the ever-vengeful Poseidon, and Odysseus's raft is destroyed. He manages to scramble ashore, exhausted and bereft of all possessions and clothes. After collapsing in the underbrush, he later comes to when he hears noise and singing. He covers himself with leaves and branches and emerges from the bushes, where he encounters a young woman and her entourage washing clothes. Only the young woman, Nausicaa, the daughter of the king of the Phaeacians, is courageous enough not to flee and engage with Odysseus. She clothes him and takes him to her father's court, as hospitality demands. The Phaeacians eventually transport Odysseus back home to Ithaca. He can only reach his destination through human hospitality.

The Odyssey is probably the prime mythological compendium of Mediterranean crossings. It is a narrative repertoire of thwarted homecomings and of death narrowly escaped. On the surface, this may seem to have little to do with Attia's installation, or his artwork more generally. Yet, it seems to me that in an almost paradigmatic fashion Attia's work raises the question, even subconsciously, of iconographic survivals, of the afterlives of visual codes, in a contemporary global and cosmopolitan artistic practice that has emerged – however much this process can be criticized – out of the practices and institutions of western modernism. There is an obvious danger, here, of unduly imposing meanings not present in the work. But there is also an opportunity to bring out less obvious meanings that have to do with the literal and metaphorical crossings of Mediterranean seascapes with which the artistic practice itself continues to engage.

Nausicaa appears late in the overall iconography of ancient mythology in early modern European painting. Her part in the Odyssey only becomes an easily recognizable and common theme from around 1600 onwards. Pieter Lastman introduced what was a rare Italian subject into northern art; he painted two versions, from 1609 and 1619 respectively, which are remarkable in their similarities and differences. The 1609 version (Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig) has Odysseus on the left and in frontal view; the

second on the right, seen from behind. In both scenes, he encounters Nausicaa and her entourage, the latter in various stages of fright and flight. In the earlier version, Odysseus is on one knee, his hands lowered, with his palms and fingers pointing down, held out towards Nausicaa in a gesture of supplication. The maidservants engage in variations of a complementary gesture of both fear and defence, their arms raised with open palms, the fingers pointing upwards. Nausicaa alone, whose head forms the top of the loosely triangular group of personages, displays a gesture of mixed affects, her left hand down by her side, in a gesture that is steadying and protective, and her right hand raised to her chest vertically, in a gesture of apprehension, but also discernment.

The 1619 version varies this composition of postures and gestures, but the distribution remains similar (*Fig. 2*). Here Odysseus is down on both knees, reinforcing his gesture of supplication. He is in the lower corner of the pyramidally arranged group of Nausicaa's entourage, whose gestures of flight are more varied and interactive than in the earlier version; grouped around and atop a mule-drawn carriage and under the exotic contraption of an "oriental" parasol, they form a far more compact body of collective fear than before. Nausicaa stands apart, on the far left. Her arms are stretched out either side of her, but her hands still perform different gestures indicating her mixed feelings and the deliberation with which she resolves her inner conflict; the palm and fingers of her left hand are open, the right is turned downwards and the fingers are half closed. In the 1609 version, her feet are solidly on the ground, and she is shown in profile; in the 1619 version, she is shown in three-quarter profile, and only the toes of her left foot touch the ground, so that there is a greater degree of dynamism in the figure, even though it appears more static. The 1609 version places the encounter in front of a dark background of rocks and vegetation, with only a small portion of the sea and an overcast sky visible, whereas the 1619 image dramatically increases the portion of open sky and sea in the background. In the foreground, in both paintings, there is a sumptuous still life of fruit, vegetables and bread, placed on a white tablecloth. In the background, the

narrative context of Nausicaa's clothes washing is signalled by the figure of a maidservant with a laundry basket; the 1609 version places laundry baskets in the background, but less obviously.

Lastman, a pioneer in the early Baroque development of history painting – meaning the depiction of episodes from any textual tradition: biblical, mythological, legendary or historical in the modern sense – creates carefully crafted spaces of narrative meaning, theatres of gesture and posture, based on careful readings of the texts. From these images, art historians have proved that Lastman was able to read Latin, because some of the detail he included in his paintings could only be accessed through then-untranslated Latin sources. His stage-like image spaces also seem to function as a pretext for a rather straightforward eroticization of the sujet. The context of washing clothes is most clearly present in both versions as a narrative ploy that permits the young women in Nausicaa's entourage to be shown in various states of undress; the 1609 version has two, the 1619 one as many as four female figures with bared breasts. The figure of Odysseus is also displayed in an eroticized fashion, a heroic, overly muscular body bearing but negligible signs of suffering. In fact, the foremost sign of his state of misery is his nudity as such, emphasized by the various arrangements of brush with which he has covered his loins. The erotic tension inscribed in the scene, through the reactions of repulsion and attraction that tie the figures together, is common in modern interpretations of the Odyssey. For instance, when drafting a drama around *Nausicaa* during his sojourn in Sicily in 1787, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe based the plot on an assumed love affair between Odysseus and the princess. Modelled on the story of Dido and Aeneas, the hero renounces the affair, driving Nausicaa to the brink of suicide. If the original epic emphasizes the ethos of hospitality, to the moderns, this appears insufficient for generating an appealing plot. The primary ethical significance given to the scene is the rational management of erotic desire and repulsion, and of humankind's animal nature. In both of Lastman's canvasses, Nausicaa is fully clothed and is shown as presiding over the scene on account of her calm and collectedness.

A generation after Lastman, in around 1655, Salvator Rosa also presents a characteristically original take on the scene (*Fig. 3*) that seems to spoof the erotic meaning imposed on the theme as other artists picked it up (the most prominent of them being Rubens and Jordaens). Rosa greatly reduces the entourage. Nausicaa and Odysseus are both standing, their heads shown in profile; three female figures are crouching at Nausicaa's feet. The interplay of supplication and gracious reception is cut from the scene. Rosa's Nausicaa seems to act on her own account, whereas Lastman shows her as if she were deliberating over Odysseus's request. In Rosa's image, there are no bared breasts. Odysseus, to be sure, is nude as the story demands. Yet this nudity is grotesquely overwrought: the tendril of vine he has tied around his hips hangs down between his legs, all the way to the ground. The formalized play of gestures that could be observed in Lastman's images has meanwhile given way to a more naturalized and psychologized set of expressive poses. As Nausicaa hands Odysseus a fringed piece of cloth, and his hands reach out towards it, her facial expression suggests a mixture of disgust and concern, while Odysseus's sheepish reaction appears to combine gratitude, humiliation, and eagerness to cover himself. The centre portion of the painting is dominated by the piece of laundry, a pathetic-looking cloth of an undefinable dark colour that hangs woefully from Nausicaa's grip.

Rosa wrote a series of rhymed satires on a great variety of topics, which make evident (among many other things) that he disapproved of the lewd eroticism that had become characteristic of the art of painting, with its ever-expanding habit of displaying nudity under various pretexts of virtue and piety. The cloth in *Odysseus and Nausicaa* appears as a visual continuation of this critique, and it suggests that the satires are more than just iterations of clichés. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Rosa served as an identificatory figure for European Romanticism on account of his defiantly raw landscapes, painted in contrast to the more idyllic bent in Claude Lorrain and others. To the early Romantics, Rosa appeared as the inventor of a novel aesthetic of the sublime, as claimed by Edmund Burke, who lavished him with praise.

For all their seeming lack of intellectual sophistication, there is an undercurrent in Rosa's satires that addresses the old problem of *paragone*, the more or less playful competition between the different art forms, which acts as a backdrop to his various invectives against *all* of the arts. Simultaneously finding fault with everyone, the satires aim to transcend *paragone*. In his writings, Rosa often expresses a longing for the wilderness that accompanies an idealization of social withdrawal and hermitage. In a coded way, he avails himself of a toolkit of social critique which, as *Odysseus and Nausicaa* suggests, he also integrates into his painting practice. Arguably, it was this intellectual and critical dimension that made him most attractive to the Romantics and the subsequent modernist movements.

Rosa's landscape-driven aesthetic reduces the human figure to an at least potentially marginal position. Landscape enshrouds the body, and the body is covered in clothing; clothing and landscape become metaphors for each other. This amounts to a liberation of painting from an aesthetic regime in which the depiction of the human body had been the most cherished skill; nevertheless, a skill in which painting always had to compete with sculpture, and with a sculptural understanding of space as constituted around a central human body, ideally a nude. In fact, Lastman's historical theatre of bodies illustrates this rather well: in the narrative centre, there is the naked body of Odysseus, the point from which all the gestures of flight and steadfastness issue; the scenery in the background is only there as a stage setting, to deliver additional narrative cues. Rosa seems to parody this same spatial arrangement by ceding the centre of action to Nausicaa and her cloth. The plasticity represented by the nude body, via its association with sculpture, which makes Lastman's Odysseus a body of virtue – of a moral disposition formed over the course of a heroic life – disappears from Rosa's artwork and gives way to a broader field of forces in which the human body can be more marginal participant than, say, a piece of cloth.

In Rosa's image Nausicaa's cloth becomes a signifier of aesthetic and moral critique. Rather than any more concrete iconographic

recurrence, this seems to me to be the decisive element of continuity that inscribes Kader Attia's installation into the Warburgian *Nachleben* of classical antiquity and the old masters. Yet, since the visual record is prone to little irreversible loss, a question remains about the inadvertent survival of the iconography used by Lastman, in which the clothing is not only a signifier of robing, but also of disrobing, and the scene of the encounter is not only one of the duties of hospitality, but also one of intense affects of attraction and fear, of other and self, and of the distance that still separates us, after all this signage, from ancient imperatives of hospitality. Ultimately, what we see, even whom we see and how we see them, is never independent from the vast visual archive that enshrouds us in a landscape of signs.

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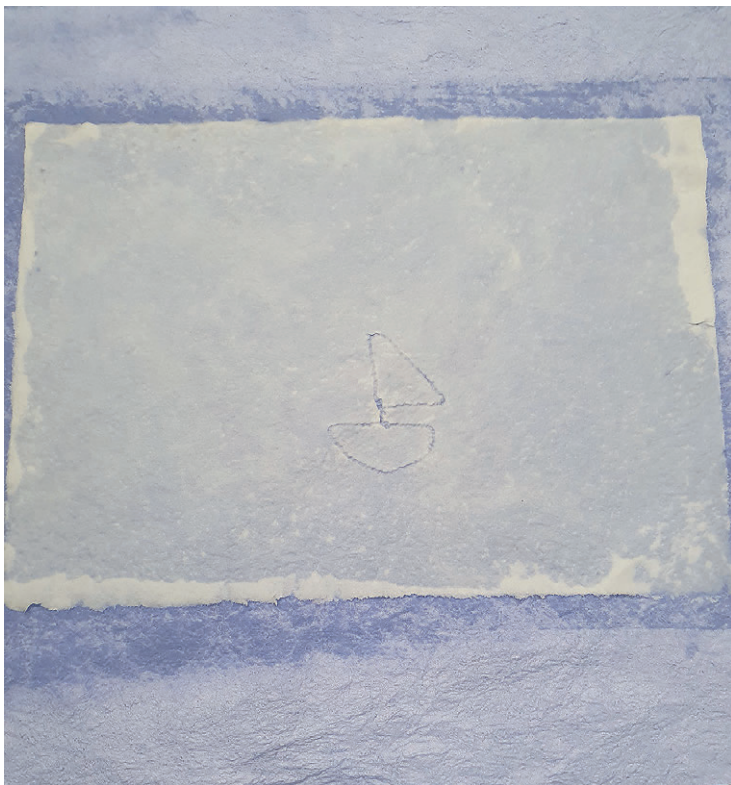
Paper

in

Motion

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Georgina Wilson

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One afternoon during the *Paper in Motion* symposium at the Arnamagnæan Institute, Copenhagen, our group of paper conservators, literary scholars, archivists, and digital humanists attempted to twist and clip small pieces of wire onto a mould to make a watermark. Having abandoned several more ambitious designs I settled on a watermark in the shape of a boat: a half-moon shaped base, topped with a single sail. The wobbly result only vaguely captured some essence of boat-ness, but, as my freshly-made sheet of paper dried on a sheet of blue felt, I began to dwell on the aquatic connections between watermarks and the act of papermaking. It was by generating these interdisciplinary modes of thinking – in this case, moving between the material realities of papermaking, and the creative impulses of my own literary training – that the *Paper in Motion* workshop formed new connections between its participants' differing areas of research (*Fig. 1*).

Where did the word watermark come from? In its first uses, a "water mark" had nothing to do with paper at all, and literally signified the level reached by water either at high tide or against the side of a boat. Thus in 1578 the explorer and travel writer George Best described ships being "heaued vp betwéene Ilandes of Ise, a foote welnéere out of the Sea, aboue their watermarke" (*A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie, for the finding of the passage to Cathaya*, 1578, sig. G3*v*). By 1679, John Dryden assumed that everyone was familiar enough with this sea-faring term to deploy it metaphorically, describing Aeschylus as a man who was "always at high floud of Passion, even in the dead Ebb, and lowest Watermark of the Scene" (*Troilus and Cressida*, 241, ll. 25–26). The creative affordances of watermarks led Thomas Dekker to write that the fear provoked by a ravaging tempest was only assuaged by a rainbow: "had not the Rainebowt beene a watermarke to the world, Men would haue looked for a second *Deluge*" (*A Knights Conjuring Done in Earnest,* 1607, sig. B*v*). The watermark here retains its earlier meaning of the water level, but is transferred onto a cosmic scale in which the rainbow, whose appearance signals the end of the downpour, is imagined in spatial terms as "a watermarke to the world".

None of this would impress many bibliographers, in whose field the term "watermark" is useful in its most practical and precise sense. Philip Gaskell explains that watermarks are "pictures or letters fashioned in wire and sewn with knots of fine wire to the surface of the mould so that their images appeared in the paper along with the chain and wire marks" (Gaskell 1972, 61). The OED gives the first use of "watermark" in this sense to Thomas Hearne (d. 1735): an antiquary, diarist, and friend of John Bagford. In 1708 Hearne received a letter from Bagford asking for "translation of any passage in Greek or Latin relating to the antiquity of paper, parchment, or ink". Bagford was apparently "curious in his observations of bindings" and "has sent specimens of old paper (for water-marks, etc.)" (*Remarks and Collections of Thomas Herne*, vol. 2, 98. The manuscript in question is Rawl. 21.3). Watermarks here become clues in a trail of bookish detective work, through which Bagford and Hearne might together begin to construct a history of the book.

The simultaneous use of "watermark" for these two different senses – the traces of a body of water at its most brimming, and the imprint of a moment in paper's production – are a reminder of water's significance to the making of paper sheets. While water does not directly cause watermarks (the impressions on the sheet are not left by running rivulets of water, but by the disturbances to the distribution of the fibre caused by the wires), water is essential to the making of paper sheets on which watermarks are reproduced in the first place. Pulping rags (a process sped up by the invention of the Hollander beater which, despite its name, originated in Germany at the beginning of the eighteenth century) requires a great deal of water. Paper sheets emerge almost magically from the watery contents of the vat; and, when it has been pressed and dried, paper needs to be re-dampened before it can be effectively printed on.

Water is key to the making of paper, but water is also one of paper's greatest enemies. The great flooding of Florence library in 1966 destroyed thousands of books; meanwhile rare book libraries

and archives maintain their collections in temperature- and humidity-controlled environments to prevent deterioration. The reason you can't bring coffee, or even water bottles, into many reading rooms is not to enforce some kind of performative mind-over-body sense of studiousness, but because an accidental smattering of liquids onto books leaves potentially destructive traces that, repeated over time, render those books unreadable or even unusable.

In 1620, the prolific writer and self-coined "water poet" John Taylor wrote a poem entitled *The Praise of Hempseed* which dwelt on the perilousness of water to paper. Having sung paper's praises as a versatile writing surface for "Philosophers and ex'lent Poets" (E3*v*) as well as a substrate for texts on laws, astronomy, and "physick", Taylor's imagination soars above the writing desk to the post- or non-textual affordances of paper. He describes a journey down the river Thames in a paper boat – a journey which, unsurprisingly, has near-fatal consequences:

> Our Boat a female vessel gan to leake
> Being as female vessels are, most weake ...
> The water to the Paper being got
> In one halfe houre our Boat began to rot ...
> Our rotten bottom all to tatters fell
> And left our boat as bottomless as hell (sig. F*r*).

The very vehicle which is supposed to take Taylor and his companion to safety proves, because of its materiality, nearly fatal:

> The tossing billows made our boat to caper,
> Our paper forme scarce being made of paper (sig. E2*r*).

Taylor's paper boat threatens to revert to its watery beginnings: a swirling mass of insubstantial stuff from which its sheets initially emerged. Paper is water/marked both as water drains away to form a sheet on the mould and, as the imaginary world of this poem makes clear, when a sheet's fleeting moment as malleable writing surface or reading matter disintegrates into a soggy end.

In 1630, *The Praise of Hempseed* was reprinted in John Taylor's *Workes*: a large folio volume of sixty-three texts in which the story of the paper boat is placed alongside Taylor's other travel narratives to York and Edinburgh, along with satirical poems, and epigrams, and sonnets. The pot-shaped watermark legible in Taylors' *Workes* is, I think, that identified in Gravell as Pot. 436.1. Gravel's image of this watermark is from some letters between one William Booth in the Netherlands and his brother John in London, dating to 1628. The watermark identifies the Booth brothers' letters and Taylor's *Works* as originating from the same paperstock: they are marked with the stamp of a shared starting point. If *The Praise of Hempseed* tells one tale of paper in motion from London to Queenborough down the river Thames, its watermark impresses upon us another kind of travel narrative undergone by this sheet. That narrative begins in a watery vat where the future *Works* are mixed in with other potential texts, and continues on to the printing houses of Elizabeth Allde, Bernard Alsop, Thomas Fawcet, and the bookshop of James Boler where Taylor's writings are printed and sold.

Watermarks tell stories about the paper trade but they also invite us to think about the literary affordances of those bookish realities, and of the ways in which water imaginatively leaves its mark on the texts imprinted on paper's sheets. Making watermarks at the Paper in Motion workshop taught me something about the process of paper production – the fiddly difficulties of sewing wires onto a mould – and, at the same time, opened up new readings of Taylor's *The Praise of Hempseed* and the creative affordances of textual materiality as it preoccupied early modern writers.

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Mauro Mussolin

A Wrong Date, an Indecipherable Pen Scribble and a Historiographic Controversy: The Michelangelo Sheet from Venice
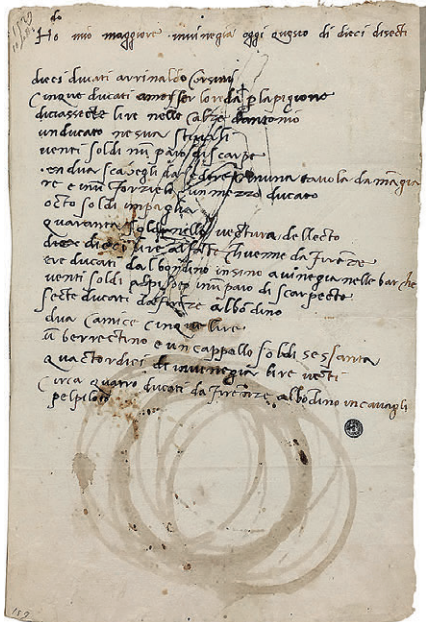
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¹ Letter from Michelangelo and expense record (recto), sketch of a mountain with a river and water stains (verso), Archivio Buonarroti, I, 69, c. 189. Fondazione Casa Buonarroti, Florence. Copyright Fondazione Casa Buonarroti, Florence.

How many times in life have we found ourselves writing the wrong date?

One of the most controversial passages in Michelangelo's biography stems from a *lapsus calami* at the beginning of a letter the artist wrote in Venice (*Fig. 1*) but never completed, which is:

> Ho(norando) mio maggiore in Vinegia oggi questo dì
> dieci di secte / mbr(e)
> [My honoured elder (a title for a leader of a company),
> in Venice, this tenth day of September]

On the same page, a little further down, there is a detailed list of expenses incurred during those "fourteen days in Venice". These expenses include costs for travel such as boat and horse transport, travel-related equipment such as a trunk for luggage, and the rental and furnishing of accommodation with two stools, a table and a bed. Additionally, there were expenses for the purchase of stockings, shoes and boots, as well as shirts, hats, caps and straw. All payments, costs and fees incurred during the journey were for himself and his travel companions, including his assistant Antonio Mini, the goldsmith Giovanni di Baldassarre, also known as il Piloto, and his friend Rinaldo Corsini.

A list that, in its frugality, provides a perfect image of the priorities and needs of travellers in the Renaissance.

> dieci ducati a r•Rinaldo Corsini
> cinque ducati a messer Loredan per la pigione
> diciassecte lire nelle calze d'Antonio
> un ducato ne' sua stivali
> venti soldi 'n un paio di scarpe
> in dua scabegli da sedere, in una tavola da mangia/re e
> in un forziele un mezzo ducato
> octo soldi im paglia
> quaranta soldi nella vectura del lecto
> ~~die~~ dieci lire al fante che venne da Firenze
> tre ducati dal Bondino insino a Vinegia nelle barche

venti soldi al Piloto in un paio di scarpecte
secte ducati da Firenze al Bondino
dua camice, cinque lire
un berrectino e un cappello, soldi sessanta
quactordici dì in Vinegia, lire venti
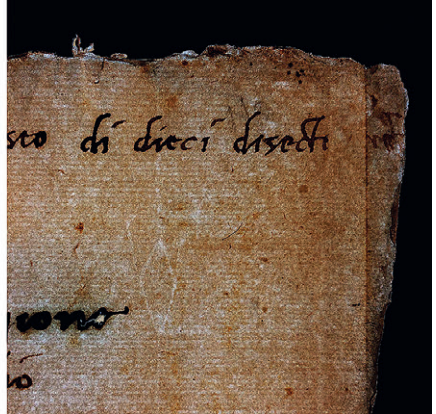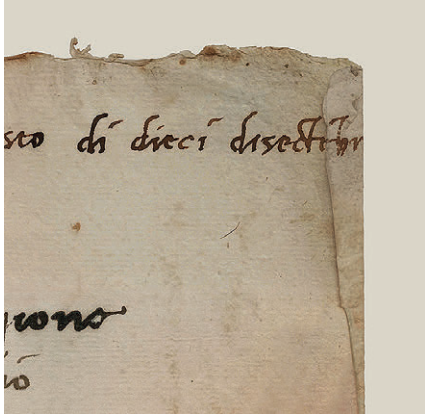circa quatro ducati da Firenze al Bondino in
cavagli / pel Piloto

[10 ducats to Rinaldo Corsini / 5 ducats to messer
Loredan for the rent of the house / 17 lire for Antonio
(Mini)'s stockings / 1 ducat for his boots / 20 soldi
for a pair of shoes / for 2 stools to sit down, a table to
eat at, and a coffer, half a ducat / 8 soldi for straw / 40
soldi for the hire of the bed / 10 lire to the infantryman
who came from Florence / 3 ducats for the boat journey
from Bondino to Venice / 20 soldi to Piloto for a pair
of shoes / 7 ducats from Florence to Bondino / 2 shirts,
5 lire / a cap and a hat, 60 soldi / 14 days' board in
Venice, 20 lire / about 4 ducats from Florence to
Bondino by horse]

On the *verso* of the sheet, there is a pen and ink doodle that is
difficult to decipher, along with some circular stains, evidently
caused by the fact that the sheet was folded and used as a
"coaster". The water has also smudged the pen strokes on both
pages, making it harder to read the text and understand the
sketch. However, the main interpretative difficulty is raised by the
incipit of the letter. In fact, while the year can only refer to 1529,
the indicated month is certainly incorrect.

Due to this *lapsus calami*, another journey of Michelangelo to
the Venetian lagoons was hypothesized, upon the authority of
Aurelio Gotti, Michelangelo's most popular biographer, who first
described this document in 1875. Gotti's misleading conclusions
became part of the most reputable historical reconstructions
of the life of Michelangelo and had a decisive influence on the
subsequent literature:

The opening of the letter clearly states that Michelangelo was in Venice on 10 September, and in the note detailing the expenses incurred, it is mentioned that he had been there for fourteen days. Whether he went directly from Ferrara or from Florence, it is certain that he must have been taken there for reasons of state, as the Republic would not have granted him permission, nor would he have abandoned the work on the fortifications of Florence without another reason. The fact that no mention of this trip is found in the historical accounts of the time suggests that he must have been involved in secret negotiations with the Republic, so much so that no hint of it was given. When reading what Busini wrote about him to Varchi or what Vasari recounts, it becomes clear that everyone spoke of this trip as if it were the same event as the one he made to Venice at the end of September, when he left Florence in a fearful and fugitive manner. On this second trip, his companions were Rinaldo Corsini, il Piloto and Mini, who had been with him on the first trip. (translation by the author)

Therefore, the notion of an initial covert journey to Venice in early September 1529 gained widespread acceptance, between the official invitation to Ferrara at the end of July 1529 (when Michelangelo was invited by Duke Alfonso d'Este to study the newly constructed fortifications protecting the city) and the well-known trip to Venice documented from 21 September to early November 1529. The latter has sparked extensive debates among generations of scholars, including Gaetano Milanesi and Charles de Tolnay, despite the strong opposition of another critical biographer, John Symonds, who, as early as 1893, pointed out that the date of 10 September should be seen as a mistake by the author, with October being the correct month: "I am of opinion that, unassisted by further evidence, the *Ricordo*, in spite of its date, will not bear out Gotti's view that Michelangelo sought Venice on a
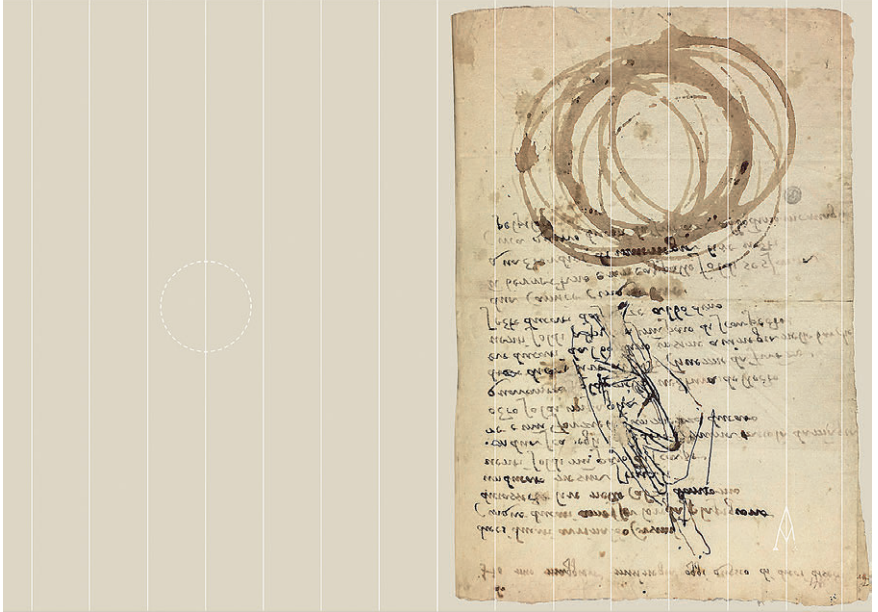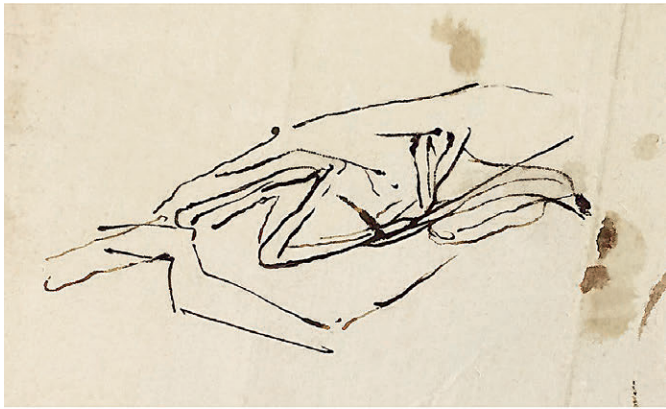
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privy mission at the end of August 1529. He was not likely to have been employed as ambassador extraordinary". In a note, Symonds also stated: "Michelangelo wished to write October 10, and for this reason the word *Secte* may not have been finished". This affirmation remains completely valid despite the fact that the word "secte / mbr(e)" was indeed written in full, half on the recto and half on a small "dog ear", which, when turned over, clearly appears on the back of the sheet. According to Symonds, this would have been the reason why Michelangelo abandoned his intention to write the rest of the letter and reused the sheet to list the expenses incurred during the trip. More recently, the inconsistency of this secret mission based on this erroneously written date, which finds no correspondence in either the sources or the dynamics of the events, is proven conclusively by Michael Hirst in his biography of the artist published in 2011.

The document, as it appears today, consists of a *comune* size (meaning 310 × 440 mm), half sheet of average-quality paper. Upon a closer examination, it can be observed that it was folded before it was soaked in water, as the ink stains on the back stop abruptly at the fold. If this is true, it must also be acknowledged that when the half-sheet was wetted, it was still attached to its other half, which acted as a barrier, preventing the ink from appearing on the upper side of the sheet (*Fig. 2*).

Another interesting characteristic related to the paper is the presence of a countermark, which is visible in the upper right corner of the sheet with the fused letters A and M sewn onto the wire (*Fig. 3*). As far as I know, this is the only recorded presence of a countermark in the paper documents related to Michelangelo. Generally, when a watermark was positioned in the centre of one of the two halves of a sheet, the countermark would be placed in the lower corner opposite to the watermark. The countermark typically consisted of the papermaker's initials and, less frequently, the coat of arms representing the place of production. The production of watermarked paper with a countermark was still quite rare in central Italy during those years. The Briquet *Dictionnaire*

(1907, vol. 1) records the use of watermarks as characteristic of Venetian papers: "A Venise, dès la fin du xvᵉ siècle, cette place était réservée à la contremarque du fabricant, tandis que le filigrane principal était apposé vers le centre de l'un des feuillets. Ces particularités peuvent aider à reconnaître la provenance de certains papiers". However, it should be noted that the term "Venetian paper" usually refers to paper produced in the mainland regions (for example, in Padua, Treviso or Toscolano), which was subsequently commercialized in Venice, before being exporting through maritime trade routes. The presence of this countermark confirms that Michelangelo came into possession of this sheet during his stay in the lagoon, where he started to write his (unfinished) letter between early October and the first half of November, and subsequently reused it as a support for memories and sketches, bringing it back to Florence upon his return to preserve the memory of the expenses incurred while in transit.

While the text on the *recto* has attracted exceptional attention from scholars for over a century, the sketch on the verso has been consistently overlooked, except for brief mentions by two of the most diligent scholars of the drawings included in the Buonarroti Archive: Charles Tolnay in 1928 and Paola Barocchi in 1964 (vol. 3). Tolnay regarded it as an insignificant, clearly not autograph doodle, describing it as as "unverständliches Federgekritzel; nicht von Michelangelo" [unintelligible pen scribble; not by Michelangelo], and thus excluded it from publication in his majestic four-volume *Corpus of the Drawings of Michelangelo*. Similarly, Paola Barocchi regarded it as an insignificant doodle by an assistant, describing it an "incomprensibile ghirigoro, certo non di mano di Michelangelo" [incomprehensible squiggle, certainly not by the hand of Michelangelo].

   Is there anything else that can be added to what has been authoritatively established so far?

   To better understand this sketch, we can envision it as a drawing hastily made during a conversation, possibly on the journey back from Venice to Florence or during a site visit. This type of

doodle is typical of sketches made while talking – rapid, instinctive and cut short. Unconcerned by fidelity or precision, these drawings look like thoughts captured on the fly while engaged in a discussion, like forever mislaid, frozen images of a conversation with an attentive listener. Due to their inherent simplicity, we can consider them graphic devices created to visualize the key moments of a verbal dialogue on paper. For this reason, I have attempted to define this diverse and intricate typology as "interlocutory drawings".

To better understand our doodle, let us imagine it before the water soaked the sheet, as it appears in our digital restoration, cleaned from smudges, and rotated by 90 degrees. My suggested interpretation is that it is as an extremely rapid orographic sketch depicting a mountain caressed by a river. If one is to agree with this judgement, it is impossible to overlook a certain analogy with the image – certainly familiar to Michelangelo – of Lunigiana seen from the Apuan Alps, with the River Magra at the foot of Monte Marcello. Nor would it seem inappropriate to evoke another well-known scene familiar to the artist, namely the bends of the Arno at the foot of Monte Pisano near Cascina, as if seen from a bird's eye view (*Fig. 4*).

Certainly, the point is not to find an exact geographical correspondence to this sketch, but rather to understand the meaning behind such an impromptu and elusive scribble and to find a plausible raison d'*être* for its presence on the sheet. Methodologically, it allows us to consider the possibility of even those drawings so far perceived as insignificant, or as hideous squiggles made by assistants, being autographs instead.

Similarly to other interlocutory drawings by Michelangelo, a comparison can be made with some renowned quick landscape sketches by Leonardo, executed during his surveys in the Lower Valdarno. Particularly noteworthy are the sketches depicting Monte Pisano, with the river gently flowing nearby, as it would appear when observed from the heights of Ponsacco, as portrayed in the Madrid Codex (Biblioteca Nacional de España Cod. Mad. ii, c. 23).

This doodle, along with the two other examples I have discovered, such as the hastily sketched city plans of Pisa and Rome, can serve as evidence of Michelangelo's interest in drawing as a means to effectively control the environment and communicate ideas related to hydraulic engineering and military interventions. Perhaps an echo of this exceptional interest can even be traced in the words attributed to Michelangelo by Francisco de Hollanda in the third of his *Roman Dialogues*, dated around 1540, which constitute a genuine plea in defence of territorial-scale drawing for military purposes. This same passage also serves as an important theoretical source to conclude our *Visual Reflection*:

> In addition to this, a draftsman is of very great service in war for showing in drawing the site of distant places and the shapes of mountains and passes of mountain ranges, as well as ports of bays and harbors; and the form of cities and fortresses, high and low, their walls and gates and the locations of these; to show roads and rivers and shores and lakes and marshes that are to be avoided or crossed; for the course and expanses of deserts and sands where the roads are bad, and of woods and forests, all incomprehensible otherwise, and very clear and intelligible in the sketch and drawing, and all of which are important things in the enterprises of war; and these drawings of the painter are very effective and helpful for the purposes and plans of the commander.

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Notes on the source and acknowledgements

Piety and Pawnbroking: Decorated Account Books

Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli

1

The first Monti di Pietà or mounts of piety, public banks that provided solidaristic credit, date from the 1460s. It is generally thought that the first was founded in Perugia in 1462, while the Monte di Bologna opened its doors about a decade later, in 1473. The service offered was similar to that of the loan bank-pawnbrokers mainly managed by Jewish bankers that had been present in almost all towns in Italy since the thirteenth century. The Monti differed from this previous institution in a significant way. First of all, from the outset they were public institutions whose aim was to meet citizens' economic needs by offering a service that could be considered as providing a form of welfare. Another significant difference lay in their target of customers, the so-called *pauperes pinguiores* (the least poor of the poor), to whom they granted small loans at favourable conditions requiring the sole reimbursement of 5% per annum in management fees, with the aim to help the clients to get through periods of misfortune. But the key novelty of the Monte's service was its provision of an additional form of solidarity and welfare to the range of initiatives on offer for citizens in need. As such, credit was recognised as an indispensable service that cities had to ensure. In order to get the new institution up and running, it was crucial to convince the authorities and citizens to make the necessary money and premises available. Moreover, the payment of low interest, which, while justified, also met with ideological opposition, had to be seen as acceptable. This mission was undertaken mainly by Observant Franciscan friars, who successfully got the message across by recounting previous experiences, taking effective arguments to the streets (at times starkly attacking the Jewish moneylenders) and using powerful images.

Images play an important role in the history of the Monti. Two main images accompanied and supported the institution. The first depicts a mount, meant as the mountain of resources used to provide the solidaristic loans, and as the Calvary, the place of Christ's suffering. The second portrays the Man of Sorrows, the most "devout thing" that can be represented: the Dead Christ showing his

wounds. Therefore, images of one or more mounts surmounted by a cross (*Fig. 2*) and of the Man of Sorrow appear on Mount of Piety charters or alms boxes, in lunettes over institution doorways and on banners carried in fundraising processions. The processions marked the stage when the idea became reality; once the initial capital (the "mountain" of resources) had been gathered, also thanks to these attractive, persuasive, and moving images, and the Monte could start to operate.

While the image of the *Mons Pietatis* had to be at once new and traditional, the real novelty lay in their systematic use to move and create emotions. The words used by the preachers, in particular the renowned words of Bernardino da Feltre (1439–1494) who was "specialised" in propounding the foundation of Monti di Pietà, were also meant to impress, engage, and even disturb. During his lifetime, this highly effective preacher held over 3,600 sermons, preaching for a total of 15,000 hours. From 1471, the year of his first series of Lenten sermons, to 1494, the year of his death, he covered around 17,000 km on foot. During the period of his greatest commitment to the Monti – the last five years of his life – he walked almost 6,000 km. Much ground was covered, not only by Bernardino in his travels, but by the idea itself and for over a century new Monti continued to be established in different parts of Italy. A total of 215 Monti were created from 1462 to 1562. Later on, several Monti were also established outside Italy, in France, Spain, and the Netherlands. In the Mediterranean area, they were found in Malta, Istria, and Dalmatia. The institutions were soon set up in the Greek territories under Venetian rule; a Monte operated in Rhodes from 1505 to 1522, when the island fell to the Ottomans. In Crete, the first Monte was established in 1613 and from then on these institutions spread throughout the Venetian Stato da Mar in the Levant. In short, an idea was afoot that has also borne fruit in modern times, suffice it to think of microcredit which is similar in many ways to these late-medieval initiatives whose insight was to use powerful images to link the institution to the cities and their needs, founders and values.

3

2

The images accompanying the Monte alluded to a sphere of traditionally Christian values: compassion, piety, and participation in other people's suffering. The pain was rendered by numerous variations on the theme of the half-length image of Christ coming out of the tomb: evoking the suffering of God and his salvific sacrifice in accepting the condition of man to partake of human suffering. In the same way as Christ was willing to share the fate of those suffering, a request was made to those citizens with the possibility of alleviating the condition of the needy to feel compassion for their needs and consequently support the Monte. It was with this aim to arouse compassion that many Monti displayed touching representations of Christ's suffering outside or inside the institution. These images spoke to the people of the time as part of a language that involved the observer in a dialogue hinging on emotion.

Some representations have come down to the present day and their message is still loud and strong. This is the case of the late sixteenth-century drawing "Il pignoramento" ("Repossession") by an artist from Faenza (*Fig. 1*). The image represents the general idea at the basis of the Monte, but also the different moments in the institution's life. At the top of a mount, the half figure of Christ as the Man of Sorrow emerges from his burial place. Around the mountain, people walk to and fro, with sacks over their shoulders representing the materials made available (donated, loaned or deposited) to the less well-off. The central part of the scene depicts the life of the institution with the Monte officials intent on accepting and evaluating pledges, giving out money and writing. Indeed, the institution required a great deal of writing, as recommended by the same Bernardino da Feltre (sermon no. 55, held in Pavia on 15 April 1493): "Oportet habere domum securam pro conservandis pignoribus. Oportet etiam habere librum et facere buletum, et multas scripturas etc." (Safe premises are needed to store the pledges. It is good to have many books, issue receipts and make a lot of written records). These records were the way to make the Monte's activities public and transpar-

ent. The bottom part of the scene shows the relationship with the customers as women and men hand over jewellery or pieces of fabric. There is one particular figure who stands out from the other customers, who are active people fit for work and therefore who will hopefully be able to return what they have obtained on loan. It is a woman dressed in a long, dull grey cloak and leaning on a stick, representing the very worst-off, who will probably have to turn to other institutions than the Monte to find support.

The probable knock-on effect of the need for multiple, easy-to-inspect records and transparency of the requested interest (the charters set out that the expenses had to be reimbursed and indicated the amount so there was no point in hiding it) was great attention to carefully compiled and diligently stored account books. The Monti had to keep from two to seven account books or records of the different phases in the life of the institution, and many of them have come down to us today. In many cases these records bear the "logo" of the institution, that is, the representation of Christ suffering which had become the emblem of the Monte. In Bologna, the oldest representation of the scene in the institution's documents dates from the sixteenth century and appears on the front cover of a prioral guidebook ("Breve compendio et regola del signore priore del sacro Monte di Pietà di Bologna" ["Short Compendium and Rules for the Prior of the Holy Mount of Piety of Bologna"]), while other splendid portraits can be seen on the edges of books of entries (*Libri giornale*) with the neat copies of the day-to-day accounts and the main ledgers (*Libri mastri*) recording the opening of personal accounts. Some of the Monti's books are truly magnificent objects, such as the account registers today held in the Monte di Pietà of Bologna archive, amongst which 138 large-format account books dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Account books are probably one of the objects that we least associate with art. They immediately conjure up dull images of numbers, records of mechanical and repetitive operations: we would never think that such documents could be of aesthetic value. The cash reintegra-

tion book (*Libro di rincontro di cassa*) from 1795 (*Fig. 3*) belies this idea and represents the will to transform registers and ledgers into veritable works of art but also not to lose contact with the institution's history and original values.

The specimen shown here incorporates a complex mix of administrative requirements, archival practices, iconographic projects, and social, economic and at the same time religious agendas. They are all embodied in material form in a document reflecting a successful scheme and symbolic construction. As an object, it is useful and at the same time gratuitously beautiful, since the records were for private consultation and not for public display. The culture and history behind this book is summed up by the *Imago Pietatis*: the powerful, dramatic image of Christ suffering, dense in meaning, embellished by enchanting decorative motifs. Colourful anemones, roses and violets, with their different symbolic meanings, accompany and at the same time distract from the numbers and accounts that are the account books' *raison d'être*, showing how this kind of document can mix sense and sensibility, usefulness and beauty. In all its forms, the Monte di Pietà wanted to remind people that providing credit is not only a necessary service but that it can actually save its recipients and safeguard the community by helping to maintain human relations. A notion of all this can also be gleaned from the pictures painted on the edge of a prosaic account book.

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How to Do Things with Paper in *King Lear*

José María Pérez Fernández
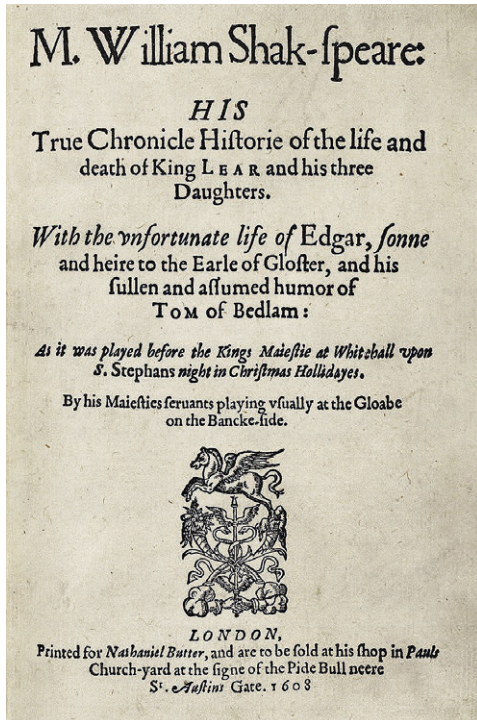
1

EDMUND: If the matter of this paper be certain,
            you have mighty business in hand.
CORNWALL: True or false, it hath made thee
            Earl of Gloucester.

King Lear, 3.5.15–18

(All quotations are from the Arden Shakespeare edition, London, 2016)

This exchange in the third act of Shakespeare's *King Lear* reveals the role of paper as a trope that denotes the messages recorded in this medium alongside their performative power. Edmund, the arch-villain in the play, plots to betray his father, Gloucester, and his half-brother, Edgar, for the sake of self-promotion at court. He does so by weaving an intricate web of letters that manipulate the opinions and views of powerful political agents at court. It is no less significant that in his exchange with Cornwall, the latter claims that the consequences of the "matter of this paper" will take effect irrespective of their veracity. That paper will, indeed, bring about Gloucester's downfall and elevate Edmund to his title instead (1.2.1–182, in particular 1.2.23–61).

Paper matters of this sort do not just constitute the semiotic infrastructure for Edmund's strategy: they also drive the overall plot of a play which rests upon the recurrent exchange of messages. Some of the key issues in *King Lear* involve besides that eminently Shakespearean obsession: the troubled relation between words and deeds, language and truth.

"To know our enemies' minds we rip their hearts, / Their papers is more lawful", says Edgar, Gloucester's faithful son, to his father in Act 4 (4.6.255–256), as they prepare to engage in combat with their opponents. Here paper appears as a semiotic repository for the conscience, intelligence and intentions of an individual ("the mind") on a par with the trope of "the heart" as loci for knowledge and feelings. Soon after these lines, the same act sees the notion of paper as a powerful weapon that can be used to *strike*:

Here in the sands
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers; and in the mature time,
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practised duke.
(4.6.268–272, italics are mine)

Kent, another of Lear's loyal courtiers, gets a letter from Cordelia in the second act, which reveals that the King's loving and faithful daughter (who has fallen out of favour with him for her refusal to falsely flatter him) has been informed of the iniquities inflicted by her two duplicitous sisters, Regan and Goneril, upon their father, and of his utter distress on the verge of madness (2.2.158–171). Another letter frames the moment in act 3 immediately before Cornwall plucks out Gloucester's eyes, one of the consequences of the letter sent by his bastard son Edmund – i.e. the paper whose *matter* also effectively turned the traitorous Edmund into the Earl of Gloucester (3.7.1–13).

Over the course of the tragedy the circulation of letters and paper notes goes in crescendo, leading the plot to a series of dramatic denouements in the last act. A paper note carries the death sentence for Cordelia and Lear, and another one, further amplified by a herald, portends Edmund's final punishment by summoning Edgar in arms to take just revenge on his half-brother for the wrongs he has inflicted on their father (5.3.27–40; 5.3.107–115). And yet another paper note brings about Goneril's fall, who tries to tear it in a fruitless attempt to thwart its consequences:

ALBANY: Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it.
[*To Edmund*] Hold, sir,
Thou worse than any name,
read thine own evil.
[*To Goneril*] Nay, no tearing, lady;
I perceive you know it.

GONERIL: Say if I do, the laws are mine, not thine.
            Who can arraign me for't?
ALBANY: Most monstrous! O!
            [*To Edmund*] Knowst thou this paper?
EDMUND: Ask me not what I know.

(5.3.152–158)

The materiality and the performative function of other means for the registration and the iconic representation of information feature in the map used by Lear in the first act (1.1.35–40, 1.1.63–67). Although the text does not specify, common practice suggests this map would be drawn on parchment, which used to be the medium of choice for documents of this sort, owing to its durability, as opposed to the more fragile and perishable nature of paper. Besides maps, parchment was also used to record texts that had an exceptional political value, such as bills, royal proclamations, or diplomatic treaties. In this public formal occasion at court, Lear uses the map to perform and proclaim the division of his kingdom among his three daughters. This is the decision that triggers the plot, and the parchment where the map is registered constitutes the material foundation that the monarch uses, in his own ominous words, to "express my darker purpose" (1.1.35).

Hard or heavy media, like parchment, wood, clay, arras, or marble, contrast with paper not just in material resistance: their semiotic properties are also less dynamic. This led the historian of communication Harold Innis to suggest that paper-based empires tend to be expansive in spatial terms in contrast with the temporal durability of those which rely on heavy media. The latter also tend to be more expensive to produce, difficult to transport, and, as far as secrecy is concerned, not as easy to conceal as information recorded in a piece of paper. The use of a parchment-based map in a public official proclamation, at the very onset of *King Lear*, and the letters, which contribute to unfold and push the plot fast towards its tragic climax, illustrate the semiotic and performative power of different sorts of media, and how it relates to their material natures.
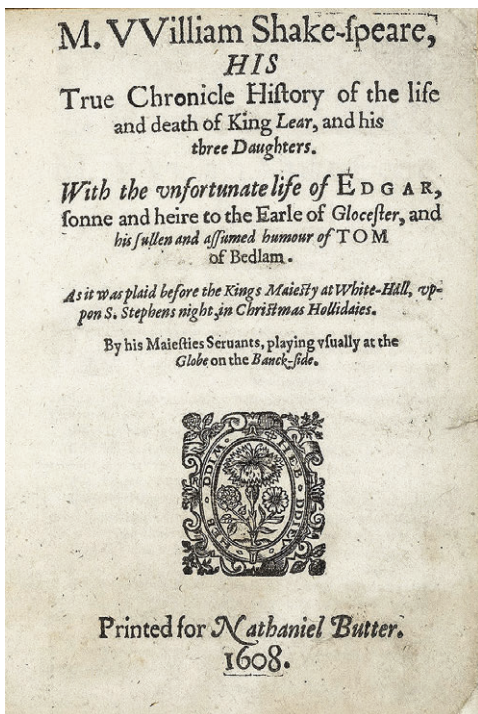
M. VVilliam Shake-speare,

HIS

True Chronicle History of the life
and death of King *Lear*, and his
three Daughters.

With the vnfortunate life of EDGAR,
sonne and heire to the Earle of *Glocester*, and
his sullen and assumed humour of TOM
of Bedlam.

*As it was plaid before the Kings Maiesty at White-Hall, vp-
pon S. Stephens night, in Christmas Hollidaies.*

By his Maiesties Seruants, playing vsually at the
Globe on the *Banck-side.*

Printed for *Nathaniel Butter.*
1608.

2

To the Reader.

This Figure, that thou here seest put,
  It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
Wherein the Grauer had a strife
  with Nature, to out-doo the life :
O, could he but haue drawne his wit
  As well in brasse, as he hath hit
His face ; the Print would then surpasse
  All, that vvas euer vvrit in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
  Not on his Picture, but his Booke.

                    B. I.

Mr. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARES
COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.

Martin Droeshout sculpsit London.
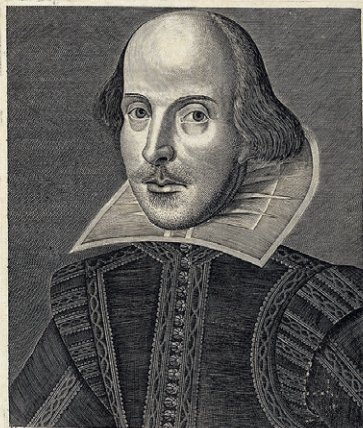
LONDON
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

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The transition from parchment to paper towards the end of the Middle Ages marks the onset of the so-called paper revolution, and thus the beginning of the chronological scope of our work group, "Paper in Motion". We intend to bring to the foreground the manifold uses of paper-based records and documents, a phenomenon that has been frequently overshadowed by the invention of print. The medium of paper in combination with the technology of print functioned as a powerful symbiotic alliance that brought about a number of important new developments, such as their use for religious or political propaganda, for the registration and exchange of ideas, and for the emergence of a market for mass entertainment in the form of popular pamphlets and broadsides, which included forms of popular poetry and prose fiction. The use of these inexpensive and inherently dynamic formats also led to the creation of domestic and international news networks. These markets for printed products frequently overlapped in complex and interesting ways with other new forms of popular entertainment such as the commercial stage, the context within which Shakespeare developed his literary production.

King Lear also exemplifies the joint role of paper and print during this early age of mass entertainment, as it also underlines the fundamental role of paper-based, manuscript, administrative documents when it came to the control and censorship of artistic and intellectual production. Before its publication in print *King Lear* had already materialized as a manuscript record in the Stationers' Register. This was an unavoidable administrative process for any legitimate publication in England. The Stationers' Company was a trade and craft organization which regulated the publication of titles and protected the interests of its members: no title could be printed and circulated if it had not been approved first by the senior administrators of the Company and then officially recorded in its Register. In other words, the material production of any title in any sort of printed format was facilitated and controlled by means of a network of paper-based registers and documents, which in the case of plays for the commercial stage included not just the Stationers' Register, on its transition to legitimate publication, but

also the so-called manuscript "foul papers" used by actors in rehearsals. These "foul papers" were in turn used by the publishers to cash in on the most popular plays, some of which were printed in (not infrequently unauthorized) affordable editions, the *quartos* – a small format which, unlike a book, did not require a huge investment in paper, ink, binding, nor labour. Actually, most of those plays which did not find their way from the manuscript "foul paper" format into these printed quartos have been lost forever: only a small percentage of the plays actually performed on the stage between the end of the sixteenth and the early decades of the seventeenth century have reached us. Only the joint intervention of paper and print, in short, in combination with the popular demand, marketability and literary prestige of these titles, have facilitated their survival.

In contrast with the quartos, which were relatively inexpensive and easy to produce in large numbers, and were consequently highly marketable at reasonably popular prices, authors were canonized for the elites of the Elizabethan or Stuart *intelligentsia* when they saw their work published in the expensive, luxury format of the larger and heavier folio. The production of a folio did not just require a heftier investment on the part of the printer and the publisher, which was reflected in its expensive sale price. A folio format also carried with it the symbolic authority and prestige which turned it into a signifier for a position at the top of the literary hierarchy of the period.

Shakespeare's *King Lear* ran the usual *cursus honorum* for Elizabethan and Jacobean texts. It went first through two different quartos, the second of which was a counterfeit edition published in 1619 but which posed as the first quarto of 1608 (*Fig. 1* and *Fig. 2*).

A few years later, *King Lear* was canonized, alongside the status of its author, in the *First Folio* of 1623. The opening poem and the title page, with a large portrait of Shakespeare, all thematize some of the complex issues posed by the new modes of production and perception of representation involved in the use of paper as medium and print as technology. These included the need

to certify the reliability and veracity of the texts and the images recorded, which in turn denote the anxiety generated by the development of new media and technologies that facilitated their swift reproduction and distribution in unprecedentedly large amounts of copies. Hence the need for institutions like the Stationers' Register, and the development of iconic and textual strategies for the legitimation of the printed artefacts that were set in circulation. The title page explicitly emphasizes the authenticity of the text, proclaiming that it is based on the "True Originall Copies" – in contrast with the frequently illicit quartos that were hastily put together by publishers eager for easy and fast profit from the "foul papers" used by the actors. These imperfect and therefore not totally reliable working copies recorded the fluid state of the text during the stages of rehearsal and production of a play. They frequently abounded in hardly legible annotations, and / or blotted out words and passages, which explains the fact that many of Shakespeare's plays (as well as those of other contemporary playwrights) have reached us in different versions. The canonization of Shakespeare in print frequently occludes for the non-specialist reader the fact that the more or less stable texts we access now are the result of a careful process of critical collation over the course of many years, sometimes centuries, which stand in sharp contrast with these more dynamic and provisional manuscript copies of the actual scripts that were continuously submitted to changes during production for performance, and moreover involved the intervention of several different hands – a phenomenon which comes to undermine traditional notions of individual authorship.

> This Figure, that thou here seest put,
> It was for gentle Shakespeare cut,
> Wherein the Grauer had a strife
> With Nature, to out-doo the life:
> O, could he but haue drawn his wit
> As well in brasse, as he hath hit
> His face; the Print would then surpasse

All that was ever writ in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
Not on his Picture, but his Booke

Ben Jonson's opening poem in the *First Folio* contrasts art and Nature, with the latter standing for the authentic but absent original, represented with a "figure" (i.e. Shakespeare's portrait) on the page next to it, produced with the technique of copper-plate engraving printed on paper (*Fig. 3*). Next to this representation of his face, Jonson laments the fact that the author's wit could not be reproduced with similar accuracy in visual terms and enjoins the reader to look upon the book instead, i.e. upon the text. As in Edgard's address to his father in *King Lear*, printed paper is here a record for an individual's mind – in this case, a reproduction of Shakespeare's wit in absentia of the original. The presence of paper in the narrative and dramatic structure of *King Lear*, and in the larger context and processes involved in its material production and distribution, constitutes just one among the multitude of cases in which the fundamental role of paper – as matter and as trope – has gone largely unnoticed.

One of the chief objectives of the "Paper in Motion" work group is precisely to bring paper to the foreground by a close examination of its nature and its roles in a series of different practices, periods, and contexts. It does so as part of the PIMo project, which focuses on exile and displacement across the Mediterranean and beyond over the *longe durée* that goes from the end of the Middle Ages to the early twentieth century. The presence of Continental Protestant exiles in Elizabethan and Jacobean London, congregated around the different foreign churches licenced for worship by the crown, and the sort of exchanges of texts and ideas that they fostered, all contributed to generate a powerful intellectual and cultural seedbed. This background constitutes, in turn, the larger context for the proliferation of translators, publishers, printers, and the general emergence of a thriving market for intellectual and literary production in disciplines and practices that include theology,

international law, political philosophy, as well as the production of recreational literature such as prose fiction, besides other formats for popular mass entertainment like the commercial stage. The names are too numerous to list here in much detail, so I shall only mention a few representative cases. The Sevillian Lutheran Antonio del Corro fled Spain and travelled all over Europe until he finally settled in Oxford, where he taught theology. He coincided there with another Protestant exile, the Italian Alberico Gentili (1552–1608), Regius professor of civil law and a pioneer in the discipline of international law. A prolific translator and the author of a Spanish Grammar for French and English learners, Antonio del Corro was also closely associated with another Sevillian Lutheran exile, Casiodoro de Reina, the author of the first translation of the Bible into Spanish (published in Basel in 1569), who was also for some time licenced by Queen Elizabeth to preach in London. The Pastor of the Italian Protestant congregation in London was Michelangelo Florio, a former Franciscan from Tuscany converted to Lutheranism who had got in trouble with the inquisition and fled to England. His son, John Florio, is the author of the first major Italian-English dictionary (*Queen Anna's New World of Words*, 1611), and he penned a number of important translations into English. The latter included Montaigne's *Essays* (1603), a text which had a significant impact in some of Shakespeare's plays – there are traces, for instance, of Florio's translation of Montaigne's essay on the cannibals in *The Tempest*. That Florio was part of the literary milieu within which Shakespeare had thrived is demonstrated by the fact that his English Montaigne was published by Edward Blount, who was also responsible for Shakespeare's *First Folio*. These are, in short, just a few samples that illustrate the vast and complex international networks of exiles that crisscrossed Europe at the time, and who took with them skills, texts, practices and ideas that in turn generated innovative doctrinal and intellectual developments wherever they crossed their paths. The hub that they created in Shakespeare's London is just one among the innumerable cases that exemplify the entangled histories of paper, ideas and people in motion, their productive interaction, and their historical relevance.

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Perceiving Others: Representing the Different in Baroque Europe

Loredana Lorizzo

¹ Abraham van Diepenbeeck and Adriaen Lommelin, Ginnaeghel Aethiopiae et Magnae Aegypciae Rex, 1660, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1905-4816. © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

The production of pictorial, sculptural and engraved portraits greatly fostered knowledge of the Other. Effigies of African natives, Moors, slaves, Turks and ambassadors from distant lands helped to entrench or change certain opinions, while reshaping the image of Europe itself, which has always been multicultural and host to a constant struggle between its self-perception as an uncorrupted unicum and the reality of vital and inevitable exchange with other cultures. Images of the Other also penetrated Baroque Europe due to the widespread diffusion of engravings: a phenomenon that can be analysed through a selection of case studies. One of the best known is the representation of Antonio Manuel, Marquis Ne Vunda, ambassador of King Alvaro II of the Congo. He arrived in Rome in 1608 and after his death was celebrated with engravings and a magnificent funeral monument with an outstanding polychrome marble portrait in Santa Maria Maggiore. Another example which has not entered the critical debate to such an extent is provided by Moulay Al-Rashid ibn Sharif, sultan of Morocco from 1666 to 1672. Known as the Great Tafiletta, his likeness appears in several engravings in which he constantly changes appearance, always poised between a European identity and a more authentically Moroccan one. The biography of Tafiletta appears in several successful volumes in which he is identified as an extraordinary fighter, with exceptional physical and intellectual gifts. Of these, Antoine Charant's *Histoire de Muley Arxid, Roy de Tafilete, Fez, Maroc & Tarudent* was published in Paris in 1670. The numerous editions suddenly printed in different languages, from English to German and Italian, demonstrated the interest aroused by this unusual figure, who came from the African continent and took on the traits of a mythical hero in contemporary European literature. In the Italian edition printed in Bologna in 1670, the *Vera Istoria del principe Tafiletto*, he is described as having a complexion "a shade darker than olive and almost black. The features of his face are of such proportions that his air and physiognomy show him to be of great, especially martial quality that makes him majestic and highly respected throughout the world".

To identify Moulay Al-Rashid, the image chosen for the first book published in London in 1669, *A Short and Strange Relation of Some Part of the Life of Tafiletta*, was the one drawn by Flemish artist Abraham van Diepenbeeck and engraved by Adriaen Lommelin in Antwerp in 1660. Portraying the mysterious and appealingly mythical "Ginnaeghel Aethiopiae et Magnae Aegypciae Rex" (*Fig. 1*), it was evidently chosen by the publisher (T.N., probably Thomas Newcombe) in the absence of other images depicting the sovereign.

He shows unmistakably African features and apparel, such as the jewellery and the turban, that mixed Oriental and western elements. The staff of command conveyed his high rank in a way more easily comprehensible to the western observer who was unable to fully understand the previously unseen, unfamiliar Other, perhaps only known through literary tales. It was a figurative compromise, depicting an alleged and imaginary reality. Addressed to the European observer alone, it followed the typical manner of representation of the Other in the Renaissance and Baroque periods. This kind of image also gives a good representation of the bloody and violent Tafiletta described by the English ambassador Lord Henry Howard, Earl of Arundel, in his letters to King Charles II. Howard, as recently argued by Matteo Barbano, had never actually met the sultan during his unsuccessful embassy to Morocco and his account may have resulted from reading an anonymous pamphlet published in London by the printer Samuel Speed in 1664. Entitled *A Description of Tangier, The Country and People Adjoyning, with An Account of the Person and Government of Gayland, the Present Usurper of the Kingdome of Fez*, it narrated the exploits of Abdallah al-Ghailan, an Arabian leader of Morocco.

The image of Ginnaeghel/Tafiletta was very popular and changed over time, taking on more and more European traits, especially in the depiction of his face, while he retained his exotic dress and the pose of an Oriental ruler (*Fig. 2*).

Tafiletta's real face was drawn and engraved by one of the most prolific Baroque engravers, the Bohemian Wenceslaus Hollar, who

was probably the only European artist who had the opportunity to meet him in Morocco (he had met him in 1670 when he participated in Lord Henry Howard's diplomatic mission). In this engraving, inserted in John Ogilby's *Africa* (1670) (*Fig. 3*), Tafiletta wears a long white tunic, wrapped around him from head to toe and suitable for the changing climate of the desert. It was a dress that struck the imagination of politician and writer Samuel Pepys, who in his *Diary* (1660–1670) wrote that the local people of Morocco looked like ghosts in their exotic white garments.

Interestingly, the standardized iconography of Tafiletta is also used to depict his brother Moulay Ismael, who succeeded him to the throne. In the text of Germain Mouette (1652–1691), a Frenchman who set sail to reach the Americas but was instead captured by pirates in 1670 and enslaved in Morocco for 11 years, we find an engraving in which he is portrayed with Oriental clothes and an idealized face with the European traits that characterized the image of Moulay Al-Rashid ibn Sharif. In the volume, entitled *Histoire des Conquètes de Mouley-Archy connu sous le nom de Roy de Tafilet, et de Mouley Ismaël ou Semein, son frère et son successeur à présent régnant, contenant une description de ces royaumes, des lois, des coutumes et des moeurs des habitants, avec une carte du pays* (Paris, 1682), Mouette provides an accurate account of the political situation of the kingdom during the seventeenth century and the traditions of the Moroccans. The historians regard it as a reliable source, but the same cannot be said about the chosen image of Moulay Ismael which is the product of a stratification that has its origins in the European Renaissance, like the drawing and engraving by Albrecht Dürer representing an *Enthroned Monarch in "Oriental" Attire* (New York, The Metropolitan Museum; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum). It was one of Europe's earliest attempts to portray a Muslim ruler, but it was more than simply a vague and ill-informed evocation of the customs of the East.

To represent the Other, a process of identification had to be put into motion, according to a principle that only legitimized an image based on elements deriving from the observer's cultural

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sphere. An example of this communicative strategy is also found in the descriptions of the inhabitants of the New World written by Cristoforo Colombo and other travellers as they dealt with a reality they had never experienced before.

The European perspective often imposed itself on the representation of Otherness. To understand this process, we can also try to highlight how different representations building the Other's identity converged and diverged, especially in the communicative process of engraved images. In my opinion, these images had a decisive impact on the structures and dynamics of building the Other's identity and image within European culture.

The abovementioned case of Ne Vunda is highly representative: in the engraving attributed to Raffaello Schiaminossi and published by Giovanni Antonio de Paoli in 1608 (*Fig. 4*), the unlucky Congolese ambassador, who died in Rome, is portrayed in European clothes.

His bust is set in an oval above a skull, surrounded by an architectural frame with two allegorical figures on either side, and six biographical scenes, two of which dedicated to his perilous journey across land and sea, and four to his embassy in Rome. The last ones have their own captions, with the description of Ne Vunda's arrival, his presentation to Pope Paul v, his deathbed anointing by the pope and his official funeral in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. Executed immediately after Ne Vunda's death, the engraving had three specific functions: to celebrate a unique event, namely the first Congolese ambassadorship to the Holy See; to commemorate the effigy of the noble ambassador through a portrait; and to spread news about the distant country from which he came. These functions are made explicit by the text inserted below the image, which notes that "Congo is a kingdom in the last parts of Africa, very rich in ivory but very poor in metals, so that snail shells are spent instead of money. Being in Ethiopia, this Kingdom produces black people like this Ambassador [who] used to go about there naked with a simple covering of woven palm fronds while in Rome he came in the dress that you see here". A comparison with

the *Avvisi di Roma* makes it clear that the text of the engraving reports what the chroniclers wrote, including the reference to the unusual use of *Cypraea moneta*, that is, shells as cash instead of metal coins.

The traditional garb worn by the ambassador matches the clothing represented in the sculptural portrait by Francesco Caporale and commissioned by Pope Paul v: in the depiction of the ambassador, it was decided to avoid European clothes, and to reproduce Congolese apparel, as had already been done in Ne Vunda's portrait on the commemorative medal commissioned by the pope. As Kate Lowe explains, he wears a tunic of openwork raffia known as a *kinzembe* or *zamba kya mfumu*, that is, clothes reserved for persons of elevated standing, often combined with a cloak and a so-called "power bag" (*nkutu a nyondo*), always worn over the left shoulder. Indeed, the carved quiver seems to represent a *nkutu* that originally contained arrows.

The engraving and the sculpture show the two faces of Otherness. On paper, the format which obviously had a greater circulation, a Europeanized version was chosen to represent Ne Vunda, making him more similar to the observers. Holding the engraving in their hands, they could equate the ambassador's figure with that of a western noble man. Instead, the sculpted image, only visible at first in the Pauline Chapel, a place with restricted access to the public, the dignitary is represented in traditional clothes, to emphasize his peculiarity. Moreover, in line with the date of his death – 6 January, the day of the Epiphany – this representation symbolically endeavoured to compare him to Balthasar, one of the Magi.

The specific clothes allow us to correct the identification of Ne Vunda in the frescoes of the Sala Regia in the Quirinale Palace. Scholars generally identify him as the man in the second loggia on the north wall: the African native who appears between two guards wearing red-feathered hats in the Caravaggesque manner. However, the effigy that fits Ne Vunda's royal status much better is the protagonist in the third loggia on the south wall. Generally identified as an Ethiopian man, a closer inspection reveals that he is wearing a Congolese woven raffia tunic and a yellow cloak.

This representation nevertheless differs from the mentioned images, namely the bust by Caporale, the engraving by Raffaello Schiaminossi and the fresco by Giovanni Battista Ricci depicting the encounter between the pontiff and Ne Vunda on his deathbed in the Sala Paolina in the Vatican Library. While Ne Vunda's likeness in the Quirinale appears to be a freer interpretation of the unfortunate ambassador, it restores his political importance for the Borghese pontificate in the overall context of the pictorial cycle. The engraving with Nu Vunda in traditional dress made by Guillermus du Mortier, born in Douai, and printed by Giovanni de Paoli in 1608 (*Fig. 5*), must also be interpreted according to its political significance.

The illustration is dedicated to the Spanish cardinal Antonio Zapata, who was struggling to get a foothold in the papal curia at the time. Ne Vunda had been detained in Spain for a long time before arriving in Rome and, coming from the Spanish Netherlands, the Flanders-Wallonian engraver thus tried to make an ally of the new cardinal inquisitor by dedicating the print to him.

Hence, knowledge of the Other was expanded and fostered by the production of printed images, which helped create a system for recognizing the different-to-oneself. The circulation of drawn or engraved representations aroused wonder, curiosity and at the same time helped broaden the cognition of Other cultures.

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Preparing for the Immigration of New Subjects: An Early Seventeenth-Century Map of the Zadar Hinterland

Dana Caciur

1

During the sixteenth century, Venetian Dalmatia had to deal with large waves of immigrants arriving from the Ottoman provinces of the inner Balkan peninsula. Searching for a more secure and stable place to live, individuals of different origins (Bosnian, Greeks, Vlachs, etc.) abandoned their homes, goods and routines and chose to move to territories administrated by the functionaries of the Venetian republic. Driven away by fear of the Turks, losses caused by wars or incursions for plunder, or motivated by hopes for a new life in better circumstances, large groups of people, identified by different ethnic labels and the status of "Ottoman subjects" (*sudditi Turchi*), encountered the Venetian authorities and its administrative customs in Dalmatia.

During the sixteenth century, the hinterland administrated by Venice on the eastern coast of the Adriatic proved to be insufficient to host and accommodate the increasing numbers of newly arrived inhabitants. Sixteenth-century Venetian Dalmatia consisted of the major coastal cities of Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir and Split and their rural hinterland, whose extension varied according to the shifting borders, war conquests or uncertainties regarding the rightful owner/ruler of the villages. Given the permanent threat of Ottoman incursions and scarce resources for subsistence, Venice was determined to take some measures in order to relocate the immigrants in other provinces of the *Stato da Mar*. Most commonly, the individuals who arrived in Dalmatia were transferred to Istria, which, in its turn, was affected by depopulation caused by drought and war. The new settlers were attracted by the offer of lands and rights to build houses, as well as the chance to maintain their organisation and develop their traditional activities. They were granted exemptions from tax payments for a specific period of time (usually five years with the possibility of an extension) and from service as rowers on the Venetian galleys. In addition, they received seeds to start cultivating the lands and some sort of state protection. On their part, these new Venetian subjects had to learn and respect the rules of the specific administrative jurisdiction where they settled, to collaborate with the authorities (captains, counts, *podestà*, etc.; also, to name a few men to provide military

services when/if required) and to sell their crops or products in specific places while respecting the customary rules. Obviously, the interactions and accommodation did not always go smoothly and countless letters sent to the Venetian Senate mention complaints from both the new settlers and the inhabitants forced to interact with them.

The sketched map presented here can be found on the back pages of a letter sent from Zadar to Venice concerning the organisation of such a transfer of settlers. The document was written on 23 April 1604 by the secretary Bartolomeo Comio in the name of two Vendramin brothers, Giacomo and Federico, who wanted to transfer 50 Christian families to Istria to settle them on their lands. In order to fulfil this transfer, they collaborated with the leader of the group to be moved, *Milos Zuppanovich*. In this case, the Vendramin brothers acted as intermediaries of the state and direct beneficiaries of the population transfer, with the purpose of populating and cultivating their lands in the hinterland of Rovigno. One of the issues they mention in their letter is the new settlers' inability to adapt to the living conditions and climate of Istria and therefore these new settlers asked to be transferred from Istria to Puglia, another traditional destination for immigrants arriving from Ottoman territories. Furthermore, their letter emphasises immigration to Puglia as one of the challenges they encountered in the struggle for the well-being of the maritime provinces of the Venetian *Stato da Mar*. (*Fig. 1*)

Another aspect of interest resulting from this document are the steps detailed in order to obtain the permission from the state to transfer the families to Istria. The Vendramins expressed their intention to travel to Dalmatia to discuss their plans with men who knew about the families from the Ottoman territories willing to move to Istria and with the leaders of the families who were interested. They mention previous transfer attempts of which they were aware: in 1600 four men (not named) facilitated the transfer of the Vratković Morlachs to the hinterland of Siena, or the case

from 1602 of discussions with Chisanochi and Matteo Jugovich from Herzegovina, leaders of 60 families, to obtain their transfer and settlement in the rural hinterland of the island of Brazza. The group mentioned in our document was gathered by the *harambaša* Miloš Zuppanović, man of value and connoisseur of Ottoman military practices. Zuppanović prepared the people to be transferred to Istria by gathering all those interested from the villages of Gorica and Grastiani in *Banadego* (province of Croatia situated north-east of Dalmatia), and with the help of the general governor of Dalmatia transferred them to the hinterland of Zadar to wait for state approval and support for their settlement in Istria. A group of 300 individuals, of whom 80 men good to become soldiers, 3,000 small animals, 100 horses and 300 large animals were all waiting to cross into Istria. Assuring the senate of the full dedication of these new subjects, whose leaders had taken an oath on their bayonet, the Vendramin brothers asked for the central authorities to mediate with the local authorities from Istria (especially with the captain of Raspo, along with the police in charge of the villages occupied by the new settlers) which were not always keen to close their eyes to the accommodation difficulties that the new settlers might experience. They also expected to be helped with the expenses for the transfer and the gifts needed to prepare for it.

This short resumé of a four- to five-month transaction is but a glimpse at the organised transfer of people across the territories of the Venetian *Stato da Mar*. Throughout the sixteenth century, countless Ottoman subjects left their *nido antiquo* and became subjects of Venice. Some of them (Morlachs, Greeks, Albanians, Bosnians, etc.) later returned to Ottoman Banadego or Bosnia, some of them returned to Dalmatia (e.g., *morlacchi Istriani* settled in the hinterland of Zadar), others left Istria for the Italian states, but most of them remained in Istria and gradually became part of the province. What is to be considered even more from this briefly outlined case study is the fact that different individuals – Venetian citizens – were actively involved in organising the transfer of people, out of personal interest, but in respect of the rules and

collaboration with the state. They became active agents in trans-imperial shared spaces (in our case, Dalmatia) and were careful to reach their goal without starting a diplomatic conflict. Attentive preparations, necessary waiting periods and useful local networks were put together to find solutions to the lack of resources. Even the sketchy drawing of the map provides us with an insight into the men who carefully calculated the distances between the villages where the people to be transferred to Istria were located, while waiting for the move to happen.

The role of the drawings presented here is to provide a pictorial statement of an individual initiative to obtain the approval and the support of the state administration. It puts together personal experiences, personal knowledge of spaces and people, and a mathematical approach to a deal with benefits for personal and general prosperity. In an era in which the art of political and military maps was quite advanced, and more and more experts dedicated their lives to creating more explicit and detailed representations of spaces and people, the sketched map drawn for the Vendramin brothers in 1604 puts the researcher in front of a more personal experience. Together with the document, the map emphasises once more the awareness and mobility of subjects who were not necessarily the most prominent state figures, and the significance of human networks and interactions.

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— More details about the case of the immigrants transferred by the Vendramin brothers can be found in Lia de Luca, *Venezia e le immigrazioni in Istria nel Cinque e Seicento*, PhD dissertation, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 2011, 147–149. However, the document presented here is new, so it adds to the information contained in the thesis.

Mapping Catholic Communities in Early Modern Ottoman Albania

Silvia Notarfonso

1

In the first half of the seventeenth century, Albania was already an Ottoman outpost. Indeed, it is very well known that the early modern Balkan peninsula, if we exclude the Dalmatian area, belonged to the sultans: Albania, in particular, despite the opposition organised by Skanderbeg, had been subjugated by the so-called "Turks" in the last decades of the fifteenth century. Scutari (present-day Shkodër, in Albania) and Durazzo (present-day Durrës, Albania), formerly belonging to Venice, now lay under the flag of the Sublime Porte.

As it is commonly recognised, the Ottoman Empire was a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional entity, and Albania was no exception. The pre-Ottoman religious landscape was characterised by the substantial presence of Catholic groups in the northern part of the region, while in the south the Orthodox represented the overriding majority among the Christian communities.

In fact, the Ottoman conquest did not result in mass conversions throughout the Balkan area: a significant number of conversions only occurred in a few, specific regions of the Balkans, as was the case with Bosnia and Albania. As early as the seventeenth century, the Islamisation process began increasing among the Albanians, slowly yet irreversibly: most conversions took place in the Catholic north, while, at a first stage, the south remained substantially Orthodox.

How did the Roman Catholic church react towards this worrying confessional haemorrhage? The papacy still had a glorious, thinly disguised dream of defeating the Ottomans and expelling them from the Mediterranean basin: the idea of crusades was still considered to be a proper and lawful response to the Ottoman threat, and the memory of the unexpected military success over the Ottoman army in Lepanto (1571) was somehow still alive.

On the other hand, the European kingdoms and states tended to be more cautious on the matter: they often switched from opportunistic, diplomatic alliances with the sultan (in this regard, we could mention the well-known network of alliances between the kingdom of France and the Sublime Porte, consolidated as early as the sixteenth century) to moments of collision and open conflict. Apart

from the ineffective military approach, however, the Holy See progressively implemented a missionary project, especially after the foundation of the Propaganda Fide (1622), the ministry responsible for missionary activities all over the world. The purpose was clear: the papacy was keen to prevent conversions to Islam as well as forms of religious hybridization, and in this sense intended to use its missionaries, who became local agents of the Holy See.

The missionaries put a lot of effort into portraying the local Catholic minority and the environment they were living in: the reports sent to the Congregazione de Propaganda Fide provided vivid descriptions of the territories the missionaries visited, the social customs they encountered, not to mention the local clergy and Catholic hierarchies they were working with. Due to the wealth and accuracy of this information, these documents are often an exceptional source of data to study the customs and social conditions of the people they visited: recording and describing were paramount duties, as the papacy, Propaganda and local Catholic hierarchies needed greater knowledge of the area in order to improve their pastoral work.

For instance, the handmade map on display here gives a visual outcome of these needs. It is an independent document included in a rich folder pertaining to *Servia Albania Dalmatia Illyricum ab an. 1630 ad 1639* (APF, SOCG. 263, f. 149r.) (*Fig. 1*).

The map, primarily serving as an internal administrative tool, shows the territory between Shkodër and Durrës, where several Catholic communities were displaced. As we can see, the lake of Shkodër represented the border dividing northern Albania and southern Dalmatia; while the River Drin separates the ecclesiastical province of Albania from that of "Servia".

More precisely, the map also sheds light on the boundaries dividing the Albanian bishoprics. Nevertheless, interestingly enough, it does not encompass Antivari (nowadays Bar, in Montenegro), which, at that time, was also included within the ecclesiastical province of Albania.

Indeed, on the right bank of the River Drin, there is the "Vescovado Sappatense" (Sappatensis bishopric), while the River Mattia

(today Mati) naturally defines the border of the "Bendensis and Stephanensis" bishopric. The diocese of Alessio (Lezhë), for its part, is very clearly delimited by a thick red line. Evidently, the author devoted special attention to the territory included within the Alessiensis bishopric.

It is clear that he has carefully sketched the villages and parishes of that area, even the smallest ones (for instance, "San Nicola [saint Nicholas] de Soimeo" (Zojmeni) and "S. Barbara [saint Barbara] de Pedana" (Pëdhana) located in the vicinity of Alessio). On the contrary, the author only reports a few of the parishes pertaining to the other dioceses, such as Shkodër, Durrës and Kruja, the main cities of the area, "Clementi" and "Pulati" (upper left corner) or "Barbalussi" (a parish on the left side of our map, close to the River Drin). Why does he do this?

As it has been demonstrated, jurisdictional quarrels over parishes, bishoprics and chapels were not at all uncommon in the early modern Ottoman Balkans, and, once again, Albania was no exception. Local bishops entered arguments in order to extend the boundaries of their territory, as proven – incidentally – by a wide variety of documents included in the same folder. For instance, plenty of letters prove the existence of a lengthy, severe dispute over "Santo Stefano de Barbalussi", aggressively contended between Gjergj Bardhi, archbishop of Bar and Benedetto Orsini, bishop of Lezhë and Shkodër, between the 1620s and the 1630s.

Realistically speaking, the map we are focusing on should be seen in the light of this historical and jurisdictional background. To whom did a certain parish belong? Who was responsible for it? Who was supposed to collect tithes (*decime*) from a certain village? These questions were paramount in Ottoman Albania, where churches, priests as well as economic resources were incredibly scarce.

More often than not, Catholic communities were financially strapped and could not afford to build new churches or repair ones that had fallen into bad shape. Thus, they could barely celebrate holy mass. In addition to the lack of places of worship, local clergy could also represent a major problem for Albanian Catholicism: as

a matter of fact, there was a serious shortage of well-educated priests whose expenses could be met and it is not rare to find reports of the missionaries' frustration at the local priests' ignorance, inability to speak Latin and corruption. The harsh conditions faced by the Albanian Catholics – both spiritually and socially – could easily pave the way for conversion to Islam, the missionaries claimed.

That is why Propaganda Fide and its local agents needed to take a census of the Catholic minority for the *geolocation* – as we would say nowadays – of the people and venues representing the bedrock of their work. Indeed, it was essential in order to distribute further missionaries and subsidies, but more importantly to get acquainted with the local environment – politically, socially and, of course, confessionally.

The overriding majority of conversions to Islam, in northern Albania, occurred among people who lived in urban environments, such as Shkodër and Lezhë, while those who inhabited the mountains tended to preserve their previous religious identity. As a matter of fact, the Ottoman army struggled to subjugate these communities, as the barren and rugged territory proved challenging and hard to control.

It comes as no surprise then that missionaries tried to pay particular attention to the Catholics living in the mountains. The Kelmendi tribe (*Clementi* in the picture), for instance, was considered to be a real outpost in this regard: the missionaries often described them as proper Catholic people (and in fact only a small number of them converted to Islam) and well-trained warriors who could give the Ottomans a hard time.

However, the reality of the matter was slightly different. Even those who identified themselves as Catholic showed peculiar religious identities, enmeshed with social customs derived from other religious traditions. Unsurprisingly, Catholic missionaries, serving as agents of the Holy See, attempted to uproot a variety of "ambiguous", multifaceted practices but apparently, they had little success: clear-cut confessional boundaries could hardly exist in those circumstances.

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A Venetian Edition of *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde*

Paola von Wyss-Giacosa

1

The three dimensions outlined by Hans Belting in *An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body* provide a useful guideline when exploring the biography of an image. Belting highlights the importance of studying the way images and the message they carry adapt to a (new) situation. He points to the role of the medium transporting the images, which influences their reception and circulation. And, lastly, he suggests considering the perception of images by the human actors who engage with them.

Following Belting's proposal for a visual anthropology, I will analyse an illustration within the *Raccolta dei riti, e ceremonie religiose di tutti i popoli del mondo*, published in Venice in 1789 (*Fig. 1*). The editor of this collection featuring 40 pictorial representations was printmaker and dealer Teodoro Viero. For his publication on the "religious ceremonies of all the peoples in the world" he chose a prestigious and encyclopaedic folio size of handmade Venetian paper. As announced on the title page, "per caduna ceremonia", for each ceremony, every plate included a historical explanation, both in Italian and French. The images were organized in seven sections, each dedicated to a different religion or geographical region.

Six plates documenting Jewish ceremonies open the volume, followed by eight plates representing Roman Catholic ceremonies and four plates depicting Muslim ceremonies. Six plates show ceremonies from southern Africa (referred to by the derogatory term "*Cafres*"), four plates illustrate Zoroastrian ceremonies ("*Persans Gaures*"), six plates are devoted to ceremonies from India ("*Banianes*"), and, closing the pictorial anthology, six plates represent Japanese ceremonies (although, despite the title, some images actually show Chinese ceremonies). Each section starts off with an image of ceremonies surrounding birth and ends with the depiction of funerary rites.

There is always much to learn about the genesis of an image by reading the so-called "addresses", that is, the information, usually found in the lower margins of a page, about the people involved in the artistic production and publication, and the printing privileges.

Each image in the *Raccolta* has the following address (with slight variations in position only): in the lower left-hand corner: "Inventé par Novelli d'après l'ouvrage de Mr. Picart", in the centre "Chez T. Viero à Venise A. Priv. du Senat", and in the lower right-hand corner "gravé par Baratti". The information about the Venetian editor and print dealer already given on the title page is repeated here, but with an important addition: Viero obtained a privilege from the Venetian senate for his publication. Such privileges, issued by an authority, were usually granted for ten years, and gave a legal base to secure what we would refer to as copyright. The 40 plates of the *Raccolta* were executed using the aquatint and etching intaglio printmaking techniques. As the address informs us, their inventor, the person who prepared the draft on which the print is based, was "Novelli", possibly Pietro Antonio Novelli, but, more probably, his son, Francesco Novelli. Antonio Baratti was the artist responsible for the graphic translation of the drawing into print. What is worthy of notice is the specification, following Novelli's name, that his pictorial conception is based on the work of "Mr. Picart". In all likelihood, for the contemporary reading public, the long title of the *Raccolta* would already have been a clear indication of the source of inspiration for Viero's editorial project: the seven folio volumes of the *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* published in Amsterdam between 1723 and 1737 by Huguenot bookseller, publisher and author Jean Frédéric Bernard. The success of this ambitious comparatist project, which was translated and reprinted in several editions in and outside the Netherlands, was largely determined by the rich apparatus of artistic illustrations, for which Bernard Picart, one of the most esteemed book illustrators of his time, was responsible. In masterly engraved plates, Picart documented the rituals and ceremonies of Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and the so-called idolatrous religions of the Americas, Asia and Africa. The *Cérémonies* were a major event in the publishing history of the early Enlightenment, their manifold ideological, iconographic and polemical dimensions making them among the most fascinating anthologies of the era. With this publication, Picart

became one of the most influential image stimulators of his time. His depictions, particularly the outstanding series of images of Jewish and Protestant ceremonies based on direct observation in the Netherlands, where Picart had emigrated in 1710, becoming a member of the Huguenot community, must be regarded as important documents of the beginnings of what we may term an early visual ethnography and comparative religious studies.

While the *Cérémonies* counted seven volumes of text with well over 200 plates which comprise more than 600 single images, Viero's *Raccolta* consists of a mere single volume, as said with but 40 visual-only depictions, albeit with long captions. This is a very significant reduction, and further research might shed light on Viero's or the possible commissioner's intentions behind this evidently purposeful selection and concentration of content. We can already highlight, for one, that the ceremonies of peoples from the Americas were not represented at all and that not one image of protestant ceremonies was included in the *Raccolta*. No less noteworthy are the number and selection of scenes for the Christian part, amounting to a representation of the seven sacraments recognized by the Catholic Church, a very popular subject in Counter-Reformation iconography. The eighth and closing image shows the resurrected Christ "instituting the Catholic Church through his preaching", as the caption reads. Again, this is an important feature of Counter-Reformation iconography, in this case one which is nowhere to be found in Bernard and Picart's explicitly anti-Catholic *Cérémonies* (despite the address in the *Raccolta* marking this image too as "d'après l'ouvrage de Mr. Picart").

My focus here, however, will be on the first section in the *Raccolta*, of images dedicated to Jewish ceremonies. Picart had prepared a total of 20 single images arranged on 12 plates. The Venetian volume features six. It opens with a scene of circumcision followed by a representation of the solemn moment of the raising of the open Torah scroll in the Hagbahah ceremony. The third sheet shows a wedding celebration, the fourth a Passover Seder. The fifth image is dedicated to Sukkot, the Feast of the Tabernacles,

and the last plate shows a burial ceremony. Fundamentally, all the compositions, with one exception, are drawn from those of Picart. Still, several changes can be made out – beyond minor variations in the number or position of single figures. These adaptations are all guided by the same intention, namely, to gently move the action from the Netherlands of the early eighteenth century to late-eighteenth-century Venice: the synagogue is clearly no longer the synagogue of The Hague depicted by Picart for the Hagbahah ceremony. The floor, lamps and windows, for instance, have been modified; the women's gallery added. The interiors of the private spaces depicted in the other images are also furnished in a Venetian style. The paintings, mirrors and lights, as well as the people's clothing, all convey an atmosphere that must have been familiar to the audience immediately targeted by Viero. With his drawings, the artist working for him, Novelli, explicitly inserted himself in a successful iconographic tradition, affirming and perpetuating it, but at the same time "modernizing" it and certainly adapting it to his own time and place.

The fourth page, showing the Passover Seder, is also set in a Venetian environment (*Fig. 2*). The composition is remarkable – not least in that it is completely independent from Picart's, even though the address once again repeats the formulaic "d'après l'ouvrage de Mr. Picart". The long caption explains the scene:

> This feast, which is celebrated in commemoration of the exit from Egypt, is still solemn among the Jews, and observed with great religion. There is now much difference between the ancient way of celebrating it and the modern one. Here it is performed in the manner prescribed in ch. 12 of Exodus. They all stand at the table, with their staffs in their hands, clothed and girded for a journey, and they eat the whole-roasted lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, etc., in a hurry. This is the main function of Easter. It is practised on the 15th of the month of Nisan, which ordinarily corresponds to April.

Before continuing the discussion of Novelli's image, we will briefly look at Picart's engraving of the Passover meal (*Fig. 3*). It is one of the most prominent and to this day one of the most discussed illustrations within the *Cérémonies*, a subject of immediate and long-lasting success. After four years of waiting, as Picart emphasized, he was invited by Alvaro Nunes da Costa (Nathan Curiel), agent of the crown of Portugal in the United Provinces from 1712 until his death in 1737, to participate in a Seder in his home. The image shows the family seated at a round table in a hospitable room warmed by a fire. And Picart shows himself, as an invited guest, in street clothes and a cocked hat, participating in this ritual feast marking the beginning of Passover. Like all the members of the da Costa family, the artist, too, is holding the Haggadah, which narrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, while the pater familias distributes matzah. The wealth of detailed pictorial information such as the different foods placed on the Seder plate in the centre of the table, the glasses of wine and the Shabbat lamp with seven lights typical of the Netherlands is remarkable, as are the freshness and naturalism of the representation and the aesthetic quality of the execution. Even in this scene, characterized as it is by the immediacy of direct observation, Picart made perceptive and subtle use of a well-known iconographic tradition – the Mannerist allegorical depiction of concord and harmony in the form of a family gathered around a round table for a communal meal – thus engaging with the pictorial memory of his audience and inspiring their sympathy.

Let us return to the Novelli engraving (*Fig. 2*). The style and atmosphere of this composition are very different: no round table, no people seated around it, no Haggadah, no glasses of wine and few of the ritual elements considered necessary for a Seder. Clearly, the iconography employed here is reminiscent of the "ancient way" of classical illustrations of the Exodus mentioned in the caption, as shown, for instance, in a delicate work on paper by late Mannerist artist Belisario Corenzio, *The Paschal Lamb* (ca. 1610), in the holdings of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, or in an image of the series of plates on the history of Moses for the *Thesaurus*

Inventé par Novelli.　　　　　　LA FESTA DI PASQUA.　　　chez T. Viero à Venise A.Priv. du Sénat.　　　LA FÊTE DE PÂQUE.　　　d'après l'Ouvrage de M.r Picart.

Questa Festa, che si celebra in memoria dell'uscita dell'Egitto, è ancora solenne presso gli Ebrei, e con somma religione osservata. Havvi ora molta differenza fra l'antica maniera di celebrarla, e la moderna. Qui rappresentasi nella maniera che vien praticata al c.12 dell'Esc:Sam tutti a tavola in piedi, col bastone in mano vestiti, e cinti a modo di viaggio, e mangiano come in fretta l'Agnello arrostito intiero con pane d'Amar, e con erbe amare ec. È questa la principal funzione della Pasqua. Si pratica il dì 15 del Mese di Nisan, che d'ordinario corrisponde al Aprile.

Cette Fête, qui est la commemoration de la sortie d'Egypte, chez les Juifs est encore solemnelle, et très-religieusement observée. A present on remarque plusieurs differences entre la maniere ancienne de faire la Pâque, et la moderne. Ici on la represente ainsi qu'on la pratiquoit au Ch.12. de l'Ex: Tous debout, le bâton à la main, et vetûs les reins ceignants à la façon d'Aquan anciennement rôti avec du pain Azyme, et des reinmar, ou herbes ameres ec. C'est la plus remarquable fonction de la Fête de Pâque, et qui on pratic que le 15 du mois de Nisan, qui repond semun à Avril.

2

Dessiné d'après nature et gravé par B. Picart 1725.

1. Le Plat : on voit un Os d'Epaule d'Agneau, avec un Oeuf dur.
2. Plat où sont les Herbes Amères.
3. Plat de Figues. Pommes, Amandes, Canelle &c. hachées et cuites ensemble, représentant la matière dont ils faisoient les Briques en Egypte.
4. Plat avec la Sauce pour tremper les Herbes Amères.

Le REPAS de PÂQUES.
chez les
JUIFS PORTUGAIS.

5. Moitié du Gateau des Levites, dont le Pere de Famille rompt des morceaux, qu'il distribue à tous ceux qui sont à table. N. tous les Domestiques Juifs sont à la même Table, avec lui.
6. Serviette sous laquelle le Gateau a été caché.
7. Panier où sont les Matzot, ou Pain de Pâques.

3

מצות ומנהגי היהודים

BILDER AUS DEM LEBEN DER JUDEN
IN VENEDIG
AUSGANGS DES XVIII. JAHRHUNDERTS

NACH DEN STICHEN VON NOVELLI
HERGESTELLT IN DER REICHSDRUCKEREI
VORWORT VON DR. OTTO EBSTEIN

LITERARISCHES INSTITUT FÜR KUNST UND WISSENSCHAFT, BERLIN-CHARLOTTENBURG

4

² Francesco Novelli, Ritual Feast of Seder, aquatint and etching, in *Raccolta dei riti, e ceremonie religiose di tutti i popoli del mondo*, Venice, 1789. © Digital reproduction courtesy of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kunstbibliothek.

³ Bernard Picart, Ritual Feast of Seder, engraving, in *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde,* vol. 1, Amsterdam, 1723. Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Q 35. © Digital reproduction courtesy of the Zentralbibliothek Zurich.

⁴ Title page of Otto Ebstein, *Bilder aus dem Leben der Juden in Venedig ausgangs des XVIII. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin-Charlottenburg, 1927. Private collection.

sacrarum historiarum veteris testamenti (1585) prepared by Antwerp engraver Jan Sadeler, active in Venice at the end of the sixteenth century. But Novelli's interior looks contemporary and Venetian, as do the people. I am not yet able to provide an explanation or interpretation for this radical change in the representation of Passover in the *Raccolta*, all the less so since Picart, as already stated, is declared to be the pictorial source in this case, too. What is obvious and certainly already highlighted at first glance through this demonstratively different image is that Novelli and Viero sought not simply to adopt the rich and successful iconographic programme of Picart's *Cérémonies*, but to adapt it to their cultural context and even to contrast it – quite intentionally and explicitly – with images that in their opinion and experience would appear more meaningful to their readership.

It would be interesting to learn about contemporary reactions to Viero's *Raccolta*. While the parts on Asia and Africa were presumably meant to feed the public's taste for the exotic (in fact, a few years earlier, in 1783, Viero had successfully presented the public with a pictorial compilation of two quarto volumes on costume, the *Raccolta di Stampe che Representano Figure ed Abiti di Varie Nazioni*), the first part, dedicated to Jewish and Catholic ceremonies, surely aimed to reproduce a reality known to the Venetian public. Few copies seem to have been printed. Occasionally, single sheets are offered for sale by antiquarians or book and print dealers, an indication that at least some copies were disassembled. In fact, hardly any exemplars of the *Raccolta* are extant in international scholarly libraries and collections – but there is one, for instance, in the Royal Collection Trust, and one in the Kunstbibliothek of the Staatliche Museen in Berlin.

Following Belting's guidelines, I have offered a first analysis of the *Raccolta dei riti, e ceremonie religiose di tutti i popoli del mondo*, and namely of the plate dedicated to the Passover meal. I briefly discussed the mediality, in the sense of the tangible quality, of a series of engravings arranged and presented in a book, as well as the

historical, religious and social circumstances which may have influenced and changed the transmission of a particular iconography. Nevertheless, regarding the contemporary readership, the last point raised by Belting, that is, to consider the perception of images by the human actors who engage with them, remains unanswered. But Belting's question is not limited in time. And there is, in fact, one case of the reception of Novelli's Jewish images known to me, with which I will conclude.

In 1926, Otto Ebstein published *Bilder aus dem Leben der Juden in Venedig aus dem Ausgang des XVIII. Jahrhunderts*, images from the life of the Jews in Venice at the end of the eighteenth century, as the title reads. The cover of the book states further that it reproduces engravings by Novelli (*Fig. 4*). Ebstein gives a brief introduction, in which he first discusses the life of the Jewish community of Venice. He then introduces Francesco Novelli as a skilled artist and engraver and praises his illustrations showing key moments of the religious life of the Jewish community and families. It is worth mentioning that Ebstein changed the sequence of the images. The plate depicting a circumcision is still the first, but it is followed by the wedding and the burial scenes. Next comes the presentation of the Torah, then the Seder scene. Sukkot, the Feast of the Tabernacles, is the final plate in this edition, with Ebstein explaining that the ceremony, which highlights the gratitude of humanity for their creator, represented a good conclusion. Ebstein also comments on the Passover image, writing:

> The image of the Seder evening reproduces the ceremony in a different way than we are used to celebrating it today, proof that this celebration has developed historically and that only in the course of this development has it been filled with the spirit that today speaks from the Passover Haggadah.

Clearly, Ebstein considered and valued Novelli's series of illustrations as accurate pictorial documentation of a past Venetian Jewish life. On closing, he noticed that in all likelihood these images were "intended to complement the great pictorial work of Bernard Picart".

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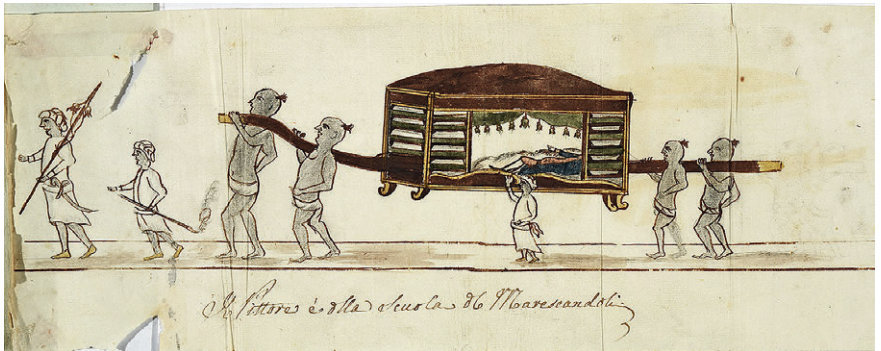
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Keeping up Appearances: The Indian Sedan Chair, or *Palanquin*, through the Eyes of an Eighteenth-Century Livornese Seaman

Matteo Calcagni

1

At the end of the eighteenth century, many Tuscan seamen periodically landed their ships in ports on the Indian coast. At a certain point, the presence of Tuscan interests in India was so massive that the grand ducal government established a Consulate General for the East India ports in these remote regions, protecting both Tuscan and Austrian interests, owing to the kinship ties that bound the two sovereigns. More importantly, between 1779 and 1783, an attempt was made to revitalize the Imperial Company of Ostend. This enterprise, supported by Vienna with the participation of several Livornese trading houses, attempted to open up the route to India and China; however, it was stopped by the wars of the revolutionary era and the blockade of maritime traffic. It is a moment in the history of Tuscan trade that deserves more careful investigation. Indeed, very little is known about these voyages and even less is known about what the seamen who made these crossings saw while sailing, or during their stay in these faraway lands. However, the recent discovery of the Francesco Montemerli papers (1760s–1820) in a family archival fond kept in the Florence State Archives will shed more light on some of these aspects. This small but rich collection of documents, consisting of, among other things, maps, six diaries of erudite notes and fifteen memoirs wrapped inside a large nineteenth-century binder, represents an important discovery for the study of trade and social links between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean at the end of the eighteenth century. In this bundle of small sketchbooks, of a purely personal nature, Montemerli did not just collect impressions of his travels but sketched a few drawings on unusual subject matters, on which he expressed some significant thoughts.

Francesco Montemerli was apparently born in the 1760s in the small hamlet of Campiglia Marittima, in the Maremma Pisana, into a family of the local elite involved in the politics of the Principality of Piombino in southern Tuscany. From his adolescence, his father drove him to seek social affirmation by pursuing the path of commerce, so his new home became Livorno, where he succeeded in becoming commander of a number of ships owned by the Ricci and Recanati families. Inclined towards classical readings

and historical studies, Montemerli composed a long "Giornale Particolare", dedicated to Nina, a young gentlewoman, probably one of the daughters of the shipowner Giuliano Ricci, in which he gave a detailed description of a voyage he had made from the port of Livorno to India between 1787 and 1788. The author had proposed "to deal in this [report] with the greatest possible diffusion of all that is geographical, political and historical, relating not only to the cities and places where I will go personally but also to those of which it will be possible to accumulate news ... I therefore promise you to attend indispensably to this matter during my permanence in Calcutta". Montemerli divided his manuscript into two separate dossiers: in the first he wrote a lengthy account of the journey, while in the second he provided an extensive glossary, in alphabetical order, making special reference to the main cities, politics, society and traditions of India. In other words, a sort of *Bildungsroman* imbued with moral values, flaunted sentiments and rhetorical contrivances, in which the writer presented his travel experience as a fundamental moment of his growth through various vicissitudes until the inevitable joyful end of his return home, in September 1788.

According to the scrupulous account offered by Montemerli, then 28 years old, the turbulent journey to India began on 12 March 1787 with his abrupt escape from Pisa to the port of Livorno, while gallantly conversing in the house of the Ricci family, owners of his ship. The expedition set off the next day and after a month, on 13 April, Montemerli arrived in Cadiz, where he was welcomed by Paolo Greppi, the Tuscan consul in that port. Although he only stayed for six days, the seaman offered a lengthy description of the Spanish harbour. In fact, 16 pages of the memoir are dedicated to the principal aspects of Cadiz, from the composition of its society to opportunities for sociability, up to the *Casa de la Camorra*, a place in the centre of the city which was built as a theatre by the Italian trading community in the second half of the eighteenth century, and then refounded in the 1780s by a hundred or so foreign merchants as a club for gentlemen where they did business, played cards and billiards, and organized balls.

2

3

At around five o'clock on the afternoon of 19 April 1787, Captain Montemerli left the Mediterranean to set sail for the East Indies, noting in his memoir that "solitude and weeping were the only relief for my spirit, which was utterly despondent". The crossing sped ahead and on 21 September, after six months of navigation, Montemerli's ship docked on the coast of Pondicherry. There, part of the merchandise was unloaded, and the crew replenished their supplies before setting off again for Bengal, which they penetrated along the Bhagirathi river, ascending it until the expedition arrived in Calcutta. On 1 November 1787, Montemerli was welcomed with great honours and given command of the ship *The Royal Archdukes of Tuscany* by Charles De Pelgrom, a Belgian merchant acting as Tuscan and imperial consul there. This is how Francesco Montemerli begins his account about his stay in Calcutta, during which he came into contact with the British commercial and diplomatic circles. Through a letter of introduction given to him by the British Consul in Livorno, he met Charles Grant, a famous merchant and politician, who introduced him to the Governor General of India, Lord Cornwallis, who then presented him to the entire British establishment present in Calcutta at the time.

Those spent in India must have been pleasant days for Captain Montemerli. Until then having lived in a small hamlet of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, he found himself surrounded by a truly multicultural climate, but under the constant protection of the reassuring cloak of the British government. In the pages dedicated to his stay in Calcutta, he wrote to Nina about his daily routine, straddling the line between merchant and gentleman:

> up at the earliest hour, walk before the sunshade is needed; breakfast at some friend's, trading till noon, or business relating to my employment, then writing, chatting till two o'clock, at three or four o'clock lunch in town, or in the garden; siesta, reading, thinking, and never sleeping till five o'clock; trot, or 'paranquinata', and walk till evening; conversation, dinner, and at midnight to bed.

Here, then, was the fulfilment of his promise to Nina to report the most curious facts he saw during his journey: "what is a *Paranquinata*? It is a term that is definitely not in the Calepino!", wrote Montemerli, imagining the question of perplexed readers as they hastened to consult the dictionary, using the renowned work composed by Ambrogio Calepio in 1502 as a synonym. Indeed, this would not have been an entirely meaningless question from a young woman growing up in Pisa in the late eighteenth century. The palanquin, however, also known as a sedan chair, had a very long history. The term palanquin derived from the Sanskrit word *palanki*, meaning bed or couch, and was later renamed "Palan Queen" by European explorers, in particular English ones. Dating back to ancient times, the palanquin was mainly used as a means of transport for high-ranking personalities in various cultures, especially in Asia. Its shape differed from China to Persia and it was a luxurious and comfortable means of transport for those who sought protection from their surroundings. In general, a palanquin consisted of a covered platform, carried on the shoulders of its bearers using a long pole. With curtains to preserve the traveller's privacy, they could be more or less richly decorated, symbolizing the status and wealth of the passenger. In the "Giornale Particolare", Montemerli reproduced two variants of the palanquin in drawings, the first a longer (*Fig. 1*), classical version, the second shorter (*Fig. 3*) and more European in taste. These two graphic representations of the palanquin, together with a small map of Ceylon, are the only illustrations that Montemerli included in the "Giornale Particolare". It is therefore all the more noteworthy that two of the three drawings in his detailed memoirs were of Indian sedan chairs.

The fascination of Francesco Montemerli, a global navigator raised in a small town, with such a means of transport for purely overland travel may seem paradoxical, but the visual impact the palanquin had on European travellers in the East in the early modern age was profound. In their first sixteenth-century expeditions, Portuguese and Spanish explorers had encountered sedan chairs of various kinds not only in India (*Fig. 2*), but also in Mexico and

Peru. They were imported to Spain at the end of the sixteenth century, and then started to become commonplace in the European social life of the period, first of all in France and later in England. During his long voyage to India, between 1665 and 1667, Jean de Thévenot (1633–1667) wrote a rather lengthy report on the palanquin, which to this day is probably one of the best descriptions we have of this type of vehicle, covering the richness of the structure's decorative apparatus to its specific construction. In practice, a bed carried by means of a single pole, this was its main difference from the litter, which was more commonly used in the western world. Whereas the litter consisted of a sling or cabin attached to two poles and was reserved almost exclusively for the transport of royalty or, in religious ceremonies, for carrying heavy statues, the palanquin consisted of a chest suspended above a single bamboo pole and was used to carry prestigious travellers.

While Thévenot had described the decorations and technology of this exotic means of transport, Montemerli, who was a seaman but above all a merchant, dwelled, with some emphasis, on the perception of social status aroused by the palanquin traveller, pointing out that a European merchant of any substance could not avoid travelling by such a means if he desired to do business with his Indian counterpart:

> Any respected person, living in Calcutta, as well as in Pondicherry, or any other place in the East Indies known to me, cannot dispense himself from keeping a palanquin, which is a kind of compass: whoever were to dispense with it, besides easily incurring an illness, owing to the great heat, which he would suffer by walking on foot, would have to renounce all commerce with the distinguished class, and would not be safe from all the derision, mockery and disrespect from the blacks.

Thus, the palanquin was an instrument to be flaunted around the streets of Calcutta, to display social prestige and enable an economic understanding between merchants of different cultural origins.

However, despite the impact this "portable bed" had on the western imagination, with the arrival of Europeans and their gradual settlement in Asia, these vehicles underwent modifications to provide greater comfort for these new, more corpulent trading partners. Originally, Indian palanquins were adapted to the reclining position commonly used in the country, but Europeans, used to sitting on a chair, had difficulty with this body position, so new models were built to meet their needs.

Montemerli continued his account by describing the necessary entourage that usually escorted the palanquin and its passenger, consisting of pole bearers, as well as torch, weapon and parasol bearers. An interpreter also acted as waiter when the group was stationary or returning home. Montemerli referred to the palanquin pole bearers as pack animals, an integral part of the travelling vehicle:

> Here, then, is the train from which no foreign gentleman can exempt himself when he leaves home. Four blacks called in Calcutta 'berà', in Pondicherry 'boyes', who carry the paranquin; a 'pion' running forward with a kind of halberd in his hand, and a dagger at his side, who is ordered to make way (the crowd, which at any hour populates the streets of this vast city, is unspeakable), one who bears a parasol; another who bears the torch in the evening, or 'machal' in their language; and finally at the counter a 'daubachy', who serves as an interpreter and performs the office of waiter in the house. It is incredible how the velocity at which you are transported and the manner in which these bipedal beasts shake make for a more unified, and more comfortable, peristaltic motion than if you were on horseback; it is a powerful antidote to indigestion. Although you love to stroll, it is a necessary rubric to have such a retinue with you: I will end by observing that if the simplest and most foreign gentleman is obliged to take this train, imagine what the luxury and pomp in which the tradesmen and the so-called servants of the Company live demand.

Travelling in a palanquin was considered extremely attractive by western travellers. After Indian sedan chairs were mainly used to transport important personalities between the second half of the sixteenth and the eighteenth century, at the turn of the nineteenth century it became common practice for European merchants, especially those involved in the British East India Company, to make extensive use of such vehicles. Using them as transport to *haats* and bazaars in order to do business with Indian merchants, they proved themselves to be reliable and economically sound interlocutors, considering the means needed to maintain such transportation to move around the city's streets. How these artefacts were seen and perceived, in short, was as important a part of their consumption as how they were used. In the second version of the palanquin sketched by Montemerli, it is evident how the taste and needs of the European communities settled in India had conditioned the design of the means. Although the sedan chair remained fixed to a single bamboo pole, just like the classical palanquins, the structure changed from carrying a couch to a cabin. Nevertheless, the two litter-like poles were never adopted in India. It was a characteristic of an increasingly global civilization: the Indian sedan chair, the palanquin, had conformed to the custom of the new European masters, but the support had remained traditional, adapted to the bearers' customs and mentality.

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Wandering Images:
A Dervish and his Garb

Andreas Isler

1

A man stands in front of a door and looks the observer directly and intensely in the eye. Under a tight-fitting cap, his serious-looking face is framed by long dark hair and a beard. He wears several layers of clothing under a dark coat, jewellery around his neck and several implements typical of his profession or, in other words, of the image he is supposed to convey: a large leather bag, a vessel made of half a sea coconut from the Seychelles or *coco-de-mer* with a carrying chain and a curved signalling horn whose tip and its eye represent the face of a fish with its mouth wide open.

This motif is shown on a postcard from Istanbul from the early twentieth century (*Fig. 1*). Its content is explained and categorized as briefly as possible by a one-word legend – "Derviche" – in French in the bottom right-hand corner. The number 8 at the bottom left indicates that this image is part of a series of pictures. The reverse of this card does not reveal much more: apart from lines to mark the border between the correspondence and address sections and some address lines, a manufacturer's signet with the three letters N, B and C in a triangular frame in the stamp box in the top right-hand corner refers to the Berlin picture printing price cartel "Neue Bromsilber Convention", which was active from 1909 until around 1930.

The photograph on this postcard is well-composed and creates a portrait that draws on a long tradition of reports and images. Hence, it must have fully met the expectations of the tourists for whom these cards were produced. Like in earlier times, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, travellers and visitors to the capital of the Ottoman Empire – who had prepared for their journeys by reading travelogues – could expect to encounter religious figures from different groups. An image by photographer Pascal Sébah (1823–1886), which found its way into the representative work *Les costumes populaires de la Turquie en 1873* by Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910), gives a very simplified explanation of who these groups of religious persons were.

Plate III of Part 1 of this richly illuminated work, illustrated using the modern medium of photography, but in the rather traditional manner of staging people, and produced to represent Turkey at the Vienna World Fair, shows a dervish of the Mevlevi Order, a member of the Bektashi Brotherhood and a mullah or hodja as a representative of official Islam, each in appropriate dress (*Fig. 2*).

The depiction of typical groups of people against a neutral background is a long-established display practice. This common way of depicting people in their costume became established in the woodcuts and copper engravings of the popular works of figures such as Nicolas de Nicolay (1517–1583), Salomon Schweigger (1551–1622), Paul Rycaut (1629–1700) and Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson (1740–1807); the early photographs showing oriental peoples not only adopted the categorization used in these previous works to put them into representative groups, but also the style of portraying people in their typical costume and with the attributes that made them recognizable and classifiable.

The figure of the Bektashi brother is depicted in Sébah's photograph with similar attributes to the person on the postcard mentioned above: bearded, carrying a bag and a characteristic bugle. In contrast to the Mevlevi Sufis, who gained notoriety as "Whirling Dervishes", the Bektashi were often simplified as belonging to the "Howling Dervishes" along with other religious orders. As was known from many travel reports, the weekly evening events in the monasteries of both dervish categories could be attended by people from outside the order as well as by foreigners. The fascinating whirling dances of the Mevlevi as well as the trance ceremonies of the so-called Howling Dervishes, who loudly recited the Islamic creed or abbreviations of it, did not fail to make a powerful impression on their spectators. Monasteries had been common tourist attractions since the seventeenth century; accordingly, there was a great demand for suitable visual material to take home.

The dervish depicted on the postcard proves to be a member of a mendicant order. Both the beggar's pouch and the bowl made of half a *coco-de-mer* are used to receive charitable gifts. The bugle serves to announce his coming. The fact that this man is depicted in front of a door is a learned reference to the etymology of the term "dervish", which, deriving from a composite of the word "*dar*" (Persian for "door") and "*wish*" (from "*wihtan*" for "begging"), denotes persons who go from door to door and earn their living by begging. However, this begging was not primarily based on compassion or charity, but was a special form of religious interaction which balanced out giving and receiving. The dervish imparted religious blessings, be it through his mere appearance as a person very close to the divine, through intercessions and advice, or even through the intentional exploitation of the saintly status of a person who moved outside all convention and was therefore endowed with special powers. In return, he received worldly gifts that made his life as a man of God possible.

What is very remarkable about this photographic record is that the penetrating gaze of the dervish conveys a narrative and pictorial tradition that, with a certain ambivalence, has repeatedly been found worthy of mention in words or captured in photographs. Already the Hungarian lay brother Georgius (ca. 1422–1502), who published the experiences of his captivity in the Ottoman Empire in Rome in the late fifteenth century and was the first western author to list the word "dervish" and to explain all the Islamic orders encountered at that time in their diversity and in all the shades of their manifestations, said of the appearance of these religious figures in the *Tractatus de moribus, condictionibus et nequicia Turcorum* (sheet 18rf., my translation):

> Often, however, those who were our guests offered consolation to the audience with the sermons mentioned above. They are of such exemplary character in all their words and works and also display such piety in their behaviour and appearance that they do not seem to be

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men but angels. For such spirituality is expressed in their traits that you could recognize any one of them immediately by simply looking him in the face – even if you had never seen him before.

Following Georgius de Hungaria, it was often never quite clear to the mostly suspicious observers what was authentic about the apparently strange religious practices and behaviour of the monks and what was instead pretend or fake, and therefore, whether their religious motivations could be trusted or not. There was indeed a wide range of inner and external reasons that led men to walk through life in the garb of a wandering dervish. Dressing up in a religious outfit and thus assuming a clearly visible social position was sometimes a welcome way out of a perplexing life situation, making it possible to feel a sense of belonging or make a living. Within such a way of life, it is difficult to clearly separate out the people with true spiritual gifts and a deeply mystical orientation. In any case, taking on a role served the purpose of integration into a social group.

Created by British author James Justinian Morier (1782–1849), the figure of the Persian Hajji Baba, whose adventures Morier initially published anonymously in 1824 and whose life story, sparing no cliché, leads through all realms of oriental life, also lives for a time among dervishes, who tell him their life stories and encourage him to equip himself with the appropriate accoutrements in order to become a dervish. Morier paints a picture of wandering dervishes that mocks their hypocritical practices. However, as shown by the enthusiastic reception of Hajji Baba's account in Persia at the time, this same perception was widely shared by many of the locals too. In order for the dervishes to kit themselves out in accordance with their status, there seem to have been specialized shops for dervishes in the Orient. This is what traveller Isabella L. Bishop Bird (1831–1904) wrote in her *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan* of 1891 (vol. 1, 238):

> ... a dervish at the door is still a sign of being great or
> rich, or both. Their cries, and their rude blasts on the
> buffalo horn, which is a usual part of their equipment,
> are most obnoxious. In the larger towns, such as Kûm
> and Kirmanshah, there are shops for the sale of their
> outfit – the tiger and panther skins, the axes, the knot-
> ted clubs, the alms bowls, etc.

Equipment appropriate to the subject portrayed is also visible in
the studio photographs. Whether the people photographed in the
studios were people taken off the street in their own garb, or were
just outfitted according to their role, cannot be easily determined.
Another photograph exists of the man depicted in the postcard
under examination, which William B. Seabrook (1884–1945), a
most unorthodox American writer, published in his *Adventures in
Arabia. Among the Bedouins, Druses, Whirling Dervishes, & Yezidee
Devil-Worshipers* without further reference (*Fig. 3*).

Here the dervish, the same person as on the postcard, dressed
in his paraphernalia, is shown in a seated position, and here, too,
his gaze is especially striking. In the caption, this person is de-
scribed as follows: "A sheik of the Rufai or Howling Dervishes,
who slash themselves with knives" – an intriguing attribution,
which in turn refers to another, very old pictorial tradition not
discussed here: that of the self-harming dervishes.

Focusing on these visual considerations, it can be concluded that
pictoriality is an important, probably indispensable component of
social group formation, which on the one hand is fixed, but on the
other hand also affords for flexible management. Visuality con-
fronts us in two ways: as an image that people give of themselves
(and which they can also actively take on, depending on the situa-
tion), and as an image that is spread as a product. Groups differ
from each other in their costumes and appearance. The adoption
of a social identity happens by dressing accordingly, by appearing
as a bearer of a specific image. On another level, these images are
reproduced and thus become what we understand by images in the

narrower sense: drawings, images reproduced in print and photographs. The spread of these images, in turn, perpetuates and reinforces the fixedness of socially cultivated images.

In order for the social image to function, that is, to take on its social task, it must be as unambiguous and typical as possible. It relies on being understood. Flat, reproduced images have the same effect. Especially if they are made for tourists, they build on the familiar, they simplify and reinforce typologies. Like the image of the "dervish" as a beggar who travels through the world with the greatest possible disdain for worldly circumstances and carries heavenly blessings with him, his image on a postcard or in books travels away from the place of origin and the real circumstances and, transformed into image codes, reaches the fascinated recipients. In this way, if the people presenting themselves as dervishes fit the image, they may well regain their social relevance, and earnings.

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Fake Miniatures of Islamic Science

Nir Shafir

1

The illustrations – a series of miniature paintings (*Fig. 1*) – catch one's attention immediately. In the main frame, two men sit squatting with their knees folded under their flowing robes. One of the men, the one in a turban, looks up toward the sky in the direction of a large astrolabe hovering above them, drawn in the frame but out of scale. At their feet are other astronomical instruments: a quadrant, a sextant and another astrolabe. In the background is a schematic rendering of the universe. The earth sits at the centre with seven planets circling it, their orbits filled with Arabic-like text as an anthropomorphic sun with an insouciant face peeks out from the top left corner (*Fig. 2*). From the central miniature, one's eyes drift upward to the top, where another astronomical diagram rests above the astrolabe. Then one catches sight of a stamped seal with a *tughra*, the calligraphic mark of Ottoman sultans, illuminated in gold, and further along to the left is a centaurlike archer, somewhat resembling Sagittarius. Below the miniature is a block of text, purportedly explaining the illustrations, another seal, and a cherub's disassociated head and wings. Together, the evocative illustrations suggest a set of scientific or astronomical sketches, perhaps something related to astrology, beautifully painted in the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

If one starts to read the text, though, it becomes clear that something is amiss. The long paragraph below the main figure has nothing to do with the illustrations; it is actually a formal court document (*hüccet*) in Turkish recording the events of a family dispute in the Anatolian town of Karahisar in 1866. Then there is the text within the illustration itself. It is impossible to read. It is gibberish. The words resemble Arabic words, but some letters are simply wrong: final forms are used when they should not have been, and the dots are all off. The illustrations are fakes. The paintings and their gibberish Arabic are from the end of the twentieth century, but they have been painted onto and integrated into a nineteenth-century document to lend them the veneer of authenticity, to make them seem like they came from a much earlier time.
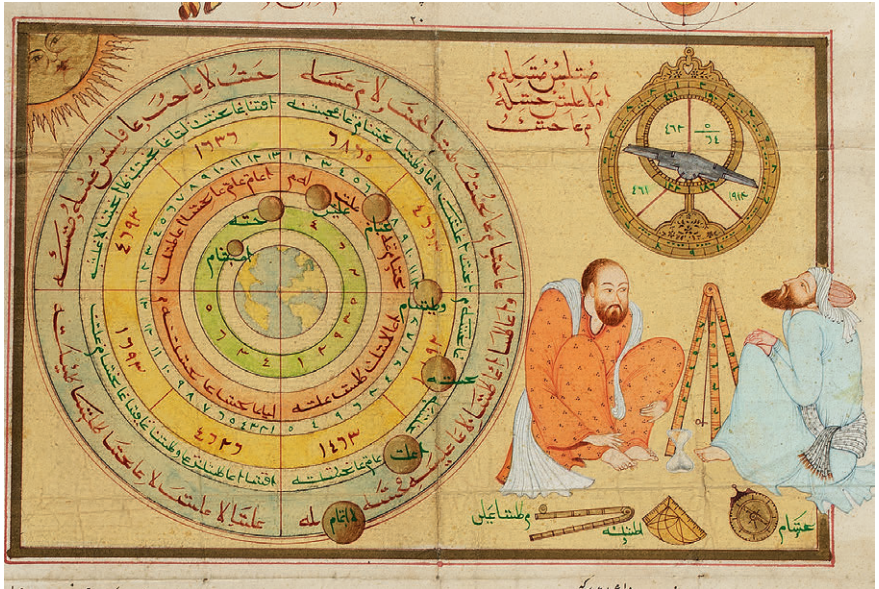
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This illustration comes from the Whipple Museum of the History of Science at the University of Cambridge. There are ten others too. All fakes. One is quite similar to the first (*Fig. 3*): on a nineteenth-century legal attestation is a painting of two men in robes and turbans handling an astrolabe and a quadrant under a starry sky. On their left are two panels. The first contains instruments including, oddly enough, a rather modern-looking caliper and an hourglass, and the second a geocentric model of the universe. Below is a winged angel holding aloft the globe while standing on a bull, standing atop a fish. Astronomical schema and cherubs' faces fill out the empty areas. Another specimen features a large composition painted on the back of four manuscript folios consists of a map of Europe with pseudo-Arabic writing, below which lie three medallions: one with a profile of a sultan, another with an image of mosques in Istanbul, and the third depicting an astrolabe. Other simpler paintings reiterate the same imagery: men in turbans discussing and holding instruments, models of the universe with planets in motion, astrolabes and an armillary sphere. In a different vein, one depicts a turbaned scholar fiddling with a distillation apparatus. Boys and their toys.

The images themselves are taken from different sources. Some are adapted renditions of genuine historical exemplars, but most are concocted artworks that incorporate a mishmash of elements from early modern illustrations. Timurid, Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal and European imagery are pastiched together in an alluring mix. All the fakes, however, purport to be medieval or early modern images.

The Whipple Museum's fake miniatures are not unique. They are not even particularly rare. There are thousands, likely tens of thousands, of such illustrations in circulation today. The phenomenon seems to have begun in the late 1990s in Istanbul where a few enterprising artisans hawked the modern miniature paintings to tourists, but it has now spread across the Muslim world. They can be found for sale in Bukhara and Delhi, Damascus and Sarajevo. The formula is always the same. The pages of an old manuscript – perhaps a book of prayers, a didactic poem or a legal manual – are

painted over, but enough text is left to lend the illustration a sense of authenticity. Sometimes fake seals or stamps are added as a finishing touch. Each workshop tends to have its own unique characteristics, such as the pseudo-Arabic script featured in the paintings above or a particular field of colour used as a background. They also tend to repeat the same type of imagery, which varies from picaresque images of Ottoman ships to a Safavid-like scene of mystics dancing to a titillating sex scene drawn in a Mughal manner. Images of science, however, tend to predominate – telescopes, maps, ships, instruments and more – and thus their appeal to the museum.

The museum acquired its collection in 1998 after being approached by a dealer based in Istanbul's Sahaflar Çarşısı named Haluk Ertezcanlı. The sum requested was enough for the objects to seem legitimate but not so high as to warrant greater investigation. For a few years, between 2004 and 2010, they were placed in a display case devoted to the question of the "Aesthetics of science". The title is fitting. A few of the museum's paintings are exceptionally painted. The detailed brushwork on the turbaned men under the starry sky is unusually subtle and realistic. Had the artist been alive a few centuries prior, he or she could likely have found some auxiliary role in Shah Abbas's palace atelier. Usually, the fake miniatures are sloppier. Perhaps the museum's illustrations were some of the first such pieces, when the artist paid greater attention to details before realizing that tourists would pay a couple of hundred dollars even for slapdash renditions. I receive numerous inquiries every year from members of the public asking if the painting they bought while on vacation or at an estate sale is genuine. Other museums, collections and university libraries have knowingly and unknowingly integrated them into their collections too.

The illustrations do not only find their way into the collections of museums and private individuals, but they also migrate online. Around 2006, the professional art photographer known as Gianni Dagli Orti started photographing these miniatures for the photo stock agency Art Resource, which sells professional photographs of museum artworks and which still hosts some of the

illustrations. Rather than identifying them as reproductions or contemporary creations, Dagli Orti seems to have recorded that they were seventeenth-century miniatures housed in the nearby Rare Books Library of Istanbul University, without providing any proof. The illustrations are not there. They have been attached to an institutional library or museum to lend them the air of credibility. The reality, however, is that many of the images now hosted by stock photo agencies only exist as digital entities; the location and even the existence of their physical counterparts are unknown. From Art Resource, the photos then moved to other stock agencies like the Bridgeman Art Library, Getty Images, Alamy, DeAgostini Images, NatGeo and AP Images. Along the way, these agencies have supplemented their collections of digital images with other unsourced pictures of fake miniatures. Once posted online, the images take on a life of their own, appearing on social media as examples of Muslim genius or creativity or superstition. The images then settle into a semi-academic orbit, appearing on book covers and magazine articles, and even making appearances in the conference presentations of unsuspecting academics.

Despite the artists' attempts to dupe their viewers, the pieces are easily identified as fakes by anyone with some familiarity with Islamic art from the early modern period. The colours are too bright and the imagery too garish, not to mention the fact that the text has no connection to the images' subject matter. In this sense, the harm of fake miniatures is not that they can pull the wool over the eyes of experts. It may not even be in the awful fact that thousands of old books and documents have been scrapped to feed the insatiable desire of tourists to have a connection to history.

The most corrosive effect of the fakes is that they colonize our imagination of the Islamic past and its sciences. The images appeal to us, quickly travelling both online and into institutional collections, because they meet our expectations of science as a universal endeavour. In a time of ever-increasing Islamophobia, the images remind liberal viewers that all humans were and are committed to

the rational quest for truth. In and of itself, this desire is not problematic. However, there are actually very few illustrated depictions of science in Islamic manuscripts. This is not because science was not practised in the premodern Islamic world. Rather, illustrations were expensive to commission and reproduce in a manuscript culture, and artistic conventions rarely led to scientific knowledge being depicted visually in a manner familiar to us. The fakes, however, provide an endless supply of images that seem to conform to our vision of science in action: men fiddling with instruments as they gaze at the stars and debate one another. Like weeds, these images crowd out and smother the original images of Islamic science, which are less directly illustrative than the fakes and operate with a very different visual vocabulary. Like the new images created by artificial intelligence models, the fakes simply show us what we want to see, but they never reveal anything new. In the end, they even distract us from grasping the scientific legacy of the Islamic past on its own terms.

The curators of the Whipple Museum are not troubled much by the fact that the illustrations have been categorically labeled as fakes. In fact, they are noted as such in their online catalogue now. Over 32 objects in the collection have now been identified as likely or known forgeries, and in their view, fakes can be just as edifying as genuine objects. They just have to be presented in the right manner.

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People

in

Motion

"A Lamp in the Holy City": Sephardic Exile, Family Ties and the Messianic Jerusalem. The Ladino Version of the *Passover Haggadah* (Venice, 1624)

Ignacio Chuecas Saldías

1

On Wednesday 11 November 1665, Venetian public notary Angelo Maria Piccino received the last will of "Signora Ester Senior consort of Signore Josef Senior, Hebrewess", penned by herself in the form of a sealed testament and handed to him, in person, in the house of her usual residence in the Ghetto Vecchio of Venice. In this document, which begins with the declaration of faith, "In the name of Adonay, Lord of Hosts, in whom I firmly believe", Ester alludes to the material losses and childlessness that had affected her marriage; the existence of an absent sister, for whom she professed great love; and a nephew, identified as Manuel Aboab, son of her deceased brother. Among the pious dispositions, she makes bequests to her sister, her nephew, a child she had raised whom she names as "Abranelo", and some relatives residing in Livorno and Aleppo. She also asks her executor to pay for a lamp which, in her intention, was to burn for a whole year in the holy city of Jerusalem (*Fig. 1*). The text of the will reflects the existence, around the middle of the seventeenth century, of a Jewish woman who died within the Sephardic community of Venice, but who, despite the company of her husband and a child she had adopted, expresses her feelings of uprootedness, recalling far-away personal ties that had nevertheless been fundamental to her throughout her existence.

Ester Senior was born around 1613 in the city of Lisbon (Portugal) where she was baptized under the Christian name of Ines Henriques. Her parents were the businessman and slave trader Duarte Dias Henriques and his wife Branca Manoel. This family of New Christians was completed by two siblings: Isabel, and Manoel Henriques, who died leaving a bastard son. All of them descended through the paternal line from Isaac Aboab, a Castilian rabbi, who in the expulsion of 1492 had received authorization from the Portuguese Crown to settle with a group of Jewish families in the city of Porto.

In 1616, in Lisbon, her sister Isabel Henriques married a first cousin named Duarte Coronel Henriques, originally from Baiona in Galicia, who would become his father-in-law's business partner. In 1627, the family moved to Madrid, centre of the Hispanic monarchy to which the kingdom of Portugal still belonged, and the city

where Duarte Dias Henriques died in 1631. On 14 August 1633, Ines Henriques, orphaned of both parents, married her third-degree relative Antonio Enríquez de Rivadeneira, who would later change his name to Josef Senior. After the death of Duarte Coronel Henriques, in 1651 the whole family fled to the free lands in Italy for fear of the Inquisition. The itinerary followed by Isabel Henriques is well known to us thanks to inquisitorial testimonies. She undertook the incognito trip by land from Madrid to Irún (Basque Country), where she crossed the French border to Bayonne, going from there to Marseille, taking a galley to Genoa (Italy), then to Naples, where she joined her sister Ines and her husband. In Naples, they all resided for a while with their relatives, the Counts of Mola. Then the two sisters' paths diverged: Ester (Ines) continued to Venice with her husband, and Isabel went first to Rome and then to Amsterdam where she would assume the name of Gracia Senior. In Venice and Amsterdam, the sisters would meet relatives who also claimed to be descendants of Rabbi Aboab of Castile.

Gracia Senior alias Isabel Henriques in turn laid down her will in the city of Amsterdam before the notary Peter Padthuysen, on 30 August 1673, eight years after the death of her younger sister. The wills of both sisters have in common the fact that they were written (probably by the testatrixes themselves) in Spanish. This is relevant for several reasons: both sisters were undoubtedly of Portuguese origin and the family's move to Madrid took place when both were already adults, therefore, Spanish was not necessarily their mother tongue; in the case of Ester's will, at least, a translation was made into Italian (in the Piccino notary's volumes there are in total two Spanish and two Italian versions of this document). At the same time, the context of both documents reflects the linguistic plurality of the environment in which the two sisters resided. Both testaments, written in the language of Castile, show the influence of words and linguistic turns from Portuguese and Hebrew, as well as from Italian in the case of the Venetian text. Furthermore, the materials attached by the respective notaries to the testamentary deeds not only included the Italian translation, but also other complementary texts in Italian, Latin and

Dutch. All this documentation attests to the complex linguistic environment which the Western Sephardic communities inhabited during the early modern period after the expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula.

Among the close relatives who Gracia (Isabel) met in the *Kahal Kadosh* of Amsterdam around 1655 was her second cousin Matatya Aboab. Both knew each other very well, because the orphaned Matatya, at that time Manuel Dias Henriques, had grown up in Lisbon in the house of Isabel and Ines' father, Duarte Dias Henriques. Moreover, before his settlement in Amsterdam, Matatya Aboab had carried out commercial activities in the New World, in Brazil and New Spain (present-day Mexico), thanks to the financial sponsorship of his uncle Duarte Dias Henriques, Angolan slave contractor for the Crown. In Amsterdam, after resuming the public practice of Judaism, Matatya and his family would become active members of the community. In particular, one of Matatya's sons, Ishack de Matatya Aboab, would be an important sponsor of literary activities, promoting the translation and conservation of texts relevant to the construction of the Western Sephardic Diaspora's identity. It would be Ishack who would undertake the important task of collecting family information in order to preserve the memory of the Aboabs. A large amount of the documentary material preserved in archives in Amsterdam, Hamburg and other cities of the Diaspora was the product of his work writing, preserving and editing texts relating to family and communal life. The aim of this article is to draw attention to one of these same texts.

The manuscripts currently preserved in the Ets Haim Bibliotheek – Livraria Montezinos in Amsterdam include one which is indexed as EH 48 A 28. This document consists of a translation of the text of the *Passover Haggadah* from Hebrew into the Spanish used among the Sephardim of Amsterdam, by Ishack de Matatya Aboab himself with the help of Rabbi Isaac Saruco. The translators' aim, as they state in the introduction of the work, was to enable the audience to better understand the questions that traditionally have to be asked in Hebrew during the reading of the *Passover Seder*. In addition, the

manuscript EH 48 A 28 also includes the printed edition of the *Haggadah* which served as a guide for the translators (*Fig. 2*).

This is a perfectly preserved exemplar of the famous edition of the *Order of the Passover Haggadah* (סדר הגדה של פסח) published in Venice in 1629 at the printing house of the Bragadin brothers and including a bilingual Hebrew-Ladino text. This work, which belongs to a publishing series initiated in 1609 by Hebrew publisher Israel ben Daniel Zifroni, would have a long textual and iconographic life within the most diverse Jewish communities.

This edition demonstrates multiple singularities, and in order to adapt its analysis to the original perspective of this collection of essays I have selected the woodcut for the *Haggadah* of Venice that represents the messianic Jerusalem (*Fig. 3*).

It is an image that appears towards the end of the text, in the section where the blessing of the second cup of wine takes place, when the *Haggadah* alludes to the coming of the Messiah and the reconstruction of the destroyed Jerusalem. The engraving shows an idealized Holy City of Jerusalem with the Holy House in the centre (the original temple was actually located on the south side of the city). It is an octagonal building, according to the long tradition that represented it following the current design of the Mosque of the Rock (*Fig. 4*).

The octagonal model is replicated in the layout of the city walls, with their eight towers or gates. The city is surrounded by mountains, probably referring to Psalm 125:2. Various groups of pilgrims are seen in the mountains, heading towards the city. On the horizon, both the sun and the moon appear above the mountains, in a possible allusion to the day of the Messiah in which the distinction between day and night disappears (*Fig. 5*).

In the foreground, the Messiah rides on a donkey, preceded by the figure of the prophet Elijah blowing the horn (שופר) to proclaim his triumphal entry (*Fig. 6*).
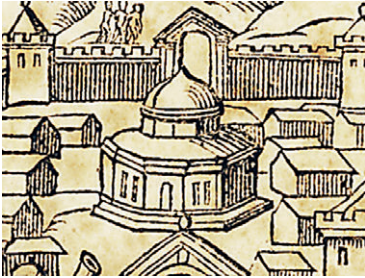
The scene is loaded with references to biblical passages, rabbinical texts and traditional stories related to Jerusalem, the Messiah and the prophet Elijah. At the same time, it seems evident that, from a formal point of view, the iconographic programme is ex-

tremely similar to a second illustration of the same *Passover Haggadah* of Venice, namely a representation of the ark of the covenant (לָה אַרְקֹה דֵעל פֵירְמַאמְיֵינְטוֹ) in the Israelites' camp in the desert of Sinai during the Exodus (*Fig. 7*).

In this illustration the ark is also in the centre of the image, surrounded by eight Levite priests, and then by the twelve tribes of Israel, organized in four groups (according to the cardinal points) around four banners. The similarity between the two iconographic programmes is confirmed by the presence of the sun and the moon on the horizon of the camp. The only difference is that, in the latter image, four emblematic miracles associated with the divine protection afforded as they wandered in the wilderness appear in the corners.

Both images most probably represent paradigms linked to the situation of the Sephardic Diaspora. This fact is evident in the case of the representation of the community of the people of Israel gathered around the ark in a context of transhumance. The wandering in the desert comes to signify the dispersion of Israel among the nations and the absence of a home (a dwelling place) in the concert of nations. The Sephardic tradition refers to this reality when it speaks of an "exile within the exile" (גלות בתוך גלות). The vision of messianic Jerusalem must also be seen as a kind of inspiration for life in the diaspora, aiming to give encouragement to the communities in their situation of exile.

The messianic longing for the earthly Jerusalem reached its maximum expression among the Western Sephardim during the seventeenth century by means of two distinctive phenomena: the events marking the enthusiasm of the communities of Venice, Livorno and Amsterdam among others (which reached its peak in the same year that Ester Senior wrote her last will) following the appearance of the pseudo-Messiah Sabbatai Zevi, and the constant migration of men and women to the Holy City of Jerusalem. This last human movement, which continued throughout the century as reflected in the records of the various communities, seems inspired by the desire to find a burial place in the valley

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of Jehoshaphat, facing the Temple of the Lord, in order to participate in the triumphal entry of the Messiah chosen by God at the end of time.

An eloquent example of these experiences appears in the letter that David Senior sent from Jerusalem to his relatives who had remained in the city of Amsterdam on 1 August of the Jewish year 5398 (1638):

> ... For the desires that your lordships have to know the particularities of this Holy City and our true homeland, since it was the mistress of the people and the joy of the whole earth. And today, because of our sins, it is deserted under the yoke of barbarian peoples, without the use of reason or any policy. And this is well stated in the *pasuk* [biblical passage] that says "the servants trampled on us", because they were [servants of] ours and of other nations. And today, as the prophet Lord *Nemiau* [Nehemiah] says, "we are captives in the land that the God gave to our fathers". But such are the holiness and privileges with which the Lord of the world endowed it above all other lands, that even though it is subjected and has toiled and almost lost its beauty and abundance, whoever attains this good of being in sight of the sanctuary of the blessed God and kissing its holy blessed stones, invoking the Holiness found in them, is still considered blessed. So that even if He should cast away the holiness of the house of God for a long time, by trusting in the divine mercy of he who taught us this Crown of ours, He will show us and all Israel [the house] raised and built by his holy hand... Today this Holy City is surrounded by stone walls. With very good towers, compared to others in Turkey. It will have a good circuit of half a league, and five very good, large gates. But two, which are closed, one next to the other, are much better; called the gates of piety, they are said to be from ancient times...

David Senior, the author of this letter, was the son of a first cousin of Duarte Dias Henriques, and therefore, a second cousin of Gracia and Ester Senior, as well as of their relatives Matatya and Isaac Aboab. In fact, in the same letter, David mentions Doña Reina, wife of Immanuel Aboab, Duarte's brother and author of the *Nomología o Discvrsos Legales* (Amsterdam, 5389/1629), as his relative. The opening section of the missive vividly alludes to the prevailing Western Sephardim imaginary relating to the Holy City: despite its present precarious state, scarcely reflecting its splendid past, imminent divine intervention is expected, which will change the fate of the city and of all Israel. In this sense, the modest physical appearance of the city is nothing other than a prophecy of the future gathering, thanks to the Messiah's reign, of the dispersed people. Next, the author briefly describes the layout of the wall, mentioning five open gates and two closed ones. Strikingly, in the design of the *Haggadah* of Venice there are also two walled gates (*Fig. 8*).

According to David Senior, both gates bear the name of "gates of piety". Perhaps in this mention we find a clue to the hope that propelled a daughter of the Hebrew nation in 1665 as she laid down her last will in her house in the Ghetto Vecchio, recommending that a lighted lamp be dedicated to her in the city of Jerusalem and putting her trust in the "name of Adonay, Lord of Hosts, in whom I firmly believe".

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From Exile to Revenge: The Return of the Waldensians of Piedmont to their Valleys in a Seventeenth-Century Map

Marco Fratini

1

The gaze ranges over the territory of the three valleys of western Piedmont, now known as "Waldensian" – because of the centuries-long presence of the Protestant minority of the same name in the heart of the Alps – ensconced between high mountains overlooking a plain seen from a bird's eye view, crossed by three main waterways, and dotted with villages and hamlets.

Entitled *Nieuwe Caerte der Valleyen in Piemont door de Waldensen* and printed in 1691 in Amsterdam by Joachim Ottens, the map, measuring 47.6 × 57.2 cm, provides a detailed depiction of the territory of the Pellice and Germanasca-Chisone valleys, including the Po valley (*Fig. 1*).

Both from the layout of the representation and most of the topographical information, the descriptive model for the map can be seen to be the *Carta delle Tre Valli di Piemonte*. Dated 1640, it is known only in a printed version signed by Valerio Grosso (ca. 1585–1649/50), a Waldensian minister native to Bobbio Pellice, one of only three ministers to have survived the plague of 1630. It is the first cartographic portrayal of the territory inhabited by the Waldensians, who produced it 15 years before the massacre in 1655 by the troops of the Duke of Savoy upon the desire of the regent Marie Christine de France. The event is best known as the "Pasque Piemontesi" (Piedmontese Easter) or "Primavera di Sangue" (Bloody Spring). The map circulated widely, both reproduced in printed works and as a model replicated in subsequent papers, until the nineteenth century. Its first printed reproduction dates back to 1658, when it was included in *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont* (London 1658) by English ambassador Samuel Morland, followed 11 years later by the *Histoire générale des Eglises Evangeliques des Vallees de Piémont; ou Vaudoises* by Waldensian pastor and moderator, exiled in the Netherlands, Jean Léger – accompanied by the Waldensian coat of arms and the cartouche "Convallium Antiquissima Insignia".

If Grosso's map of 1640, published first in London and then in Leiden, for the first time expressed a territorial identity on the part of the Waldensians in the dramatic situation of the mid-seventeenth century, the political significance of the *Nieuwe Caerte der*

Valleyen was set against the backdrop of a new event of great importance in the history of the minority.

With the Edict of Fontainebleau of 18 October 1685, which revoked the conditions granted to the subjects of the reformed confession in the Edict of Nantes, the Waldensians in the valleys of Piedmont – first those living on the left bank of the Chisone river (at that time under French rule), then, through a similar initiative of the Duke of Savoy Victor Amadeus II, also those in the adjacent valleys – experienced a new season of persecution. Refusing to abjure, after attempts at armed resistance, thousands were jailed in the prisons of Savoy and then, thanks to the intervention of representatives of the Swiss cantons, welcomed as exiles and partly sent to other Protestant lands, in particular Brandenburg, Palatinate and Württemberg. After two attempts, just under one thousand men managed to return to their native valleys in 1689 and then, thanks to the Duke of Savoy's change of alliance in June 1690 and the support of the Protestant potentates, the Waldensians' rights and possessions were officially reinstated in 1694.

The Waldensians received extensive political, diplomatic, economic and military support in those years, especially from England and the United Provinces, where propaganda, not only in print, was widespread and made a great impression. The massacres of 1655 had also aroused emotion and apprehension in the Dutch public, thanks to the circulation of broadsheets, gazettes and chronicles of the events. Some were also accompanied by pictures, as in the case of the *Wreede vervolginge En schrickelijcke moordt Aende Vaudoisen, Jn Piedmont geschiet in Iaer 1655 Ofte Droevige tijdinge over 't onnosel bloet vande Gereformeerden vergoten door den Hartoog van Savoyen* (Cruel persecution and horrendous massacre of the Waldensians in Piedmont in the year 1655, or Sad news about the innocent blood of the Reformed poured out by the Duke of Savoy), printed in the same year by Jacob Cornelissz and illustrated with seven woodcuts with scenes of capture, imprisonment, hangings, burnings and killings. In the same year, Jodocus Hondius printed a large-format manifesto entitled *Growlyke wreede moord en vervolging, aan de Vaudoisen, in Piemont* (Cruel and atrocious massacre

of the Waldensians in Piedmont), divided into sixteen frames depicting the massacres, accompanied by a legend and a map of the Waldensian valleys.

In 1669, in Leiden, Jean Le Carpentier printed the aforementioned *Histoire générale des Eglises Evangeliques des Vallées de Piémont* by Jean Léger. He also printed Grosso's map containing 26 scenes of the massacres perpetrated against the Waldensians in the valleys in 1655 which had already been proposed 11 years earlier in Morland's book.

The presence of images of persecuted Waldensians in Dutch prints continued after 1685, even though compared to the great exodus of French Huguenots, they played a background role in the polemics concerning the policy of the king of France against the Reformed. Amsterdam-born engraver and illustrator Romeyn de Hooghe, closely linked to *stadtholder* William III of Orange, later King of England, is credited with the satirical manifesto entitled *Mardi gras de cocq a l'ane*, a carnivalesque poem in verse also including a character explicitly referred to as "Waldensian", to show the consequences of the French anti-Protestant policy.

Finally, a Dutch medal from 1686–1687, which prompted a complex circulation of printed publications, showed the Waldensians together with the Huguenots not only at the moment of persecution, but also of the hoped-for redemption. Depicting both groups in the guise of ancient martyrs, the medal also prophesised their resurrection as the two witnesses of chapter eleven of the Revelation, in line with the contemporary predictions of Huguenot Pierre Jurieu from his chair in Rotterdam.

The Dutch reading public was therefore accustomed to the presence of the Waldensians in printed iconography, mainly in the bloody version of the persecutions. Following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and in the context of the now harsh conflict between the Republic of the United Provinces and the Sun King's France, the vicissitudes of the Waldensians were to take on a new role in the battle of images.

At the conclusion of the venture to return the Waldensians from exile – a decade later celebrated as a *Glorieuse Rentrée* – the

Nieuwe Caerte der Valleyen published in 1691 is an effective synthesis of various aspects of the pro-Waldensian propaganda: the horror of persecution, the rescue, their role in the European geopolitical context of the conflict with France, and finally the depiction of the confessional identity of the area.

The description of the territory of those valleys – which within a few years the maps would begin to indicate as "Waldensian" – contains not only references to natural and anthropic characteristics but also to the battles fought in the preceding years, which had seen the victory of the anti-French allies. The reference to the French responsibility for the exile of the Waldensians following the Edict of Fontainebleau is in fact made more explicit by the French title in the top right-hand corner: *Nouvelle Carte des Vallees de Pieomont* [sic], *etc, Vaillamment defendues, contre Toute Laviolenge des Francois, Par les Vaudois Reformes, etc*. Reinforcing this reading are the medallions in the upper band, depicting the leaders of the new anti-French alliance: Charles, Duke of Schomberg; Maximilian Emanuel II, Prince-Elector of Bavaria; Vittorio Amedeo II, Duke of Savoy; Prince Eugene of Savoy-Soissons; and Henri Arnaud, "col.[onel] et min.[istre] des Vaudois" (*Fig. 2*).

The re-establishment of the Waldensians in their valleys following the intervention of the United Provinces and England created the conditions for a changed denominational geography in this part of Piedmont, governed by a Catholic sovereign. Made after the reconquest of the territory by the exiled Waldensians, the *Nieuwe Caerte* therefore contains a clear reference to contemporary events and personalities, reinforced by a symbolism that reaffirms the reconquest and the confessional belonging of those valleys.

The crowned Waldensian coat of arms stands out clearly on the lower left-hand side ("T. Wapen der/ Waldensen"; "Les armes/ des Vaudois Reformes"), with the caption "Lux mea splenoet [sic!; i.e., *splendet*] in tenebris", accompanied by a female figure who can be identified as a symbol of the Church of Christ, depicted with a torch burning on her head, the crown of martyrdom, the Bible open in her left hand and a sword raised in her right, while with her feet she tramples a dragon with diabolical features (*Fig. 3*).

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On either side are two scenes of opposing outcomes for the Waldensians: on the left, defenceless civilians are thrown from a cliff, hanged, pierced by soldiers with swords and spears, impaled on a tree trunk, burnt at the stake with the complicity of Catholic missionaries, while a village is set on fire in the background. The inscription "Martyre" provides a comment to these scenes. On the opposite side, a little further to the right over the inscription "Victoire", a long line of soldiers, including some on horseback, escort a group of prisoners wearing bulky, showy wigs, accompanied by mules probably carrying booty, while at the rear of the column men on foot, armed with long spears, repel the attack of other infantrymen and horsemen. The two extremes of the events experienced by the Waldensians in the space of a few years are thus linked by clearly symbolising the revenge and reconquest of the valleys, culminating in the re-establishment of the reformed faith.

The two opposing images thus portray a situation that changed within just a few years, up to the reintroduction of the reformed faith in the Piedmont valleys, which was also seen abroad as a victorious event, especially for the French Huguenots exiled in the Low Countries.

Everything in this depiction of the Waldensian valleys shows the propagandist intent to magnify the exploits of the Protestant powers and the defeat of France: the severe portraits in the medallions, the battle scenes in the lower part, the Waldensian coat of arms and the frontal view of the valleys make it a clear political manifesto.

Until now it has not been possible to clarify whether the *Nieuwe Caerte* was produced for publication in a printed volume or for independent circulation. Later, from the 1720s onwards, it was included in atlases compiled with maps by various cartographers from different periods. Ottens's sons included it (at no. 48) in the *Catalogue Nouveau des Cartes Géographiques*, which they printed and sold in Amsterdam between 1737 and 1750; it was then also included in the *Atlas Nouveau contenant toutes les parties du monde* by Johannes Covens 1 and Cornelis Mortier, which circulated throughout the second half of the century.

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Forbidden Object: An African Woman and her Drawing of Santa Marta

Claudia Stella Valeria Geremia

1

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Canary Islands were a strategic territory for various European powers, which led to the intense trafficking of people, goods, ideas and beliefs between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. In this context, Afro-descendant communities who arrived in the Canary Islands through the slave trade, as well as freed people and migrants, played a fundamental role in shaping the religious and social landscape of the islands. In this context, new religious practices and symbolic representations emerged from the dynamics of syncretic exchange between African beliefs and rituals and Catholicism, giving rise to tensions and conflicts around these religious practices in a society marked by social and racial inequality, religious intolerance and inquisitorial surveillance.

Afro-Catholicism in the Canary Islands during the early Modern Age is a topic that has been little studied but is highly interesting and relevant to understand the cultural, religious and ethnic complexity of these islands. An important source for the study of this religious phenomenon is the inquisitorial archive, which contains detailed records of trials conducted in the Canary Islands during that period. These records provide valuable information about the religious practices and beliefs of Africans and Afro-descendants in the Canary Islands. Therefore, the use of inquisitorial sources is essential to understand the history of Afro-Catholicism in the Canary Islands and its relationship with popular religiosity at the time. These trials shed light on the experiences, beliefs and struggles of Afro-Catholics within a society marked by religious persecution and social inequalities. During the trials, African women were often accused of practising forbidden rituals, possessing charms or engaging in non-Christian religious practices. Their unique cultural traditions and spiritual beliefs clashed with the dominant Catholicism of the time, leading to their scrutiny and persecution by the inquisitors.

However, these trials also provide glimpses into the resilience and resistance of African women. They defended their beliefs and practices, asserting their right to their own spiritual expressions. Their testimonies and narratives reveal their agency and efforts to preserve their cultural heritage despite the oppressive circumstances.

It is important to acknowledge the complexities and nuances of these women's experiences within the inquisitorial system. Their involvement in these trials highlights the intersectionality of race, gender and religion, as well as the power dynamics at play during that time.

The study of Afro-Atlantic Catholics in the seventeenth century has yielded intriguing insights into the rituals and structures of Afro-Atlantic Catholicism. In his research, Jeroen Dewulf focused on the cases of Cape Verde, São Tomé and Kongo, aiming to unravel how African communities adapted aspects of early modern Portuguese Catholicism, later taken with them to the Americas due to the brutalities of the transatlantic slave trade.

I believe a similar analysis can be applied to the enslaved people who were brought to the Canary Islands. A notable example emerging as an emblematic case is the cult of Santa Marta, found among the pages of the trials documented in El Museo Canario. One such case involves an African woman called Juana María who was tried by the Holy Office during the early years of the seventeenth century (1618–1619).

Upon her capture, the prosecutor of the Holy Office went to the house of the woman accused of witchery, where he gathered up several objects, including a painting of Santa Marta (*Fig. 1*). The saint appears to be surrounded by the ocean and dominates a sea dragon, which she holds on a leash. Behind the saint is another kind of dragon: the most common and widespread plant in the Canary Islands whose resin, known as "dragon's blood", was used in many ritual practices.

The prayer of Santa Marta, along with the veneration of her image, played a significant role in the testimonies, accusations and trials of the women facing judgement by the Inquisition in the Canary Islands. These women were both of African origin and native to the islands themselves.

The presence of Santa Marta's cult underscores the syncretic nature of religious practices in the Canary Islands during that period. It exemplifies how African captives, despite being subjected to the oppressive conditions of slavery, managed to preserve and

adapt elements of their spiritual beliefs within the context of Catholicism. Through the veneration of Santa Marta, these women found solace, strength and a means of expressing their agency within a society marked by social and racial inequality, religious intolerance and the watchful gaze of the Inquisition.

By exploring the testimonies and records surrounding the cult of Santa Marta within the inquisitorial trials in the Canary Islands, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics at play, shedding light on how enslaved individuals and marginalized communities navigated the intersections of religion, power and identity in a challenging and oppressive environment.

Women recited the prayer of Santa Marta in front of her image in different ways, depending on the desired outcome. The prayer was used for various purposes such as healing, love and protection. Exclusively used by women, it was transmitted orally from woman to woman. Many North African and sub-Saharan women, as well as Canary Island women, used this prayer. Prints and drawings of Santa Marta were often carried in a bag, a typical African amulet called a *bolsa*. As early as the sixteenth century, we can observe the first variations in the use of this typically Catholic prayer. Centuries later, the same prayer, with very similar variations, would be used by women sorcerers in Spanish Caribbean contexts. The link between Santa Marta and the world of magic can be traced back to the Middle Ages, with early accounts found in southern France, particularly in the Provence region. Marta was the sister of Mary Magdalene and Lazarus, renowned for defeating a dragon that had long terrorized the inhabitants of Tarascon. In classical iconography, Santa Marta was depicted with a broom, a ladle, a pair of keys hanging from her belt and, of course, a dragon, clearly tamed by the saint and held on a leash. This description aligns perfectly with the prints and drawings described by witnesses in inquisitorial trials. It is worth noting that the cult of Santa Marta in New Spain was completely different to that of southern France, where Christian tradition intertwined with Gallic beliefs which culminated in religious and popular ceremonies. In New Spain, as well as in the Mid-Atlantic archipelagos, the tradition of

Santa Marta was associated with magical practices, specifically dealing with love. Sub-Saharan women, North African women and natives entrusted Santa Marta with miracles related to love and women's emotional sphere.

What is the relationship between Santa Marta and African women? Could it be assumed that she indirectly or directly evoked some African deity? Could the rituals dedicated to her have somehow received influences that could be traced back to parts of Africa, or more simply, could the African populations arriving in new lands have assimilated some aspects of Catholic religious practices, including the invocation of saints? There is no definitive data to confirm the hypothesis of African influence on the cult of Santa Marta. However, similarities can be observed when comparing the iconography of Santa Marta with certain Afro-Cuban deities. The recurring detail of long, straight, loose hair, along with the ever-present element of water in the form of rivers or the sea, could resemble certain female spiritual entities linked to water in Afro-Caribbean religions, such as Mami Wata, the snake charmer. Mami Wata is an aquatic deity originally revered in sub-Saharan Africa and later widely embraced in Haitian Vodou, Cuban Santería and even in the United States, in an African version of Santa Marta or Santa Marta la Dominadora. Mami Wata is still depicted on candles and in prints. While studying the use of the Mami Wata deity in contemporary Caribbean communities, art historian Henry John Drewal has observed how during the African diaspora, it was compared to Santa Marta la Dominadora. This juxtaposition is likely due to the fact that African peoples believed in animal-shaped spirits, and since Santa Marta is depicted with a dragon, this is the main characteristic that links the saint with Mami Wata. Mami Wata in the form of Santa Marta has been found in Brazil, Mexico, Haiti and North America. I propose including the Canary Islands among this list. It is highly probable that the Catholic Santa Marta underwent a process of religious syncretism, being interpreted in different ways depending on the the believers' geographical origin, from the Modern Age to the contemporary era.

To conclude: the trial documents preserved in El Museo Canario provide a unique window into the lives of African women who defied societal expectations and stood up for their spiritual autonomy. They highlight the struggles, conflicts and complexities faced by these women as they navigated a hostile environment that sought to erase their cultural heritage.

Studying these trial records as well as the extant material sources such as the drawing discussed here not only allows us to shed light on the experiences of individual African women but also offers valuable insights into the broader dynamics of religious intolerance, cultural exchange and the agency of marginalized communities during that era.

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Algiers on the Amstel: Portraying Thomas Hees's Diplomatic Success in North Africa

Arvi Wattel

1

In 1687, Thomas Hees (1634–1693) had his portrait painted by Michiel van Musscher, a highly sought-after Amsterdam painter at the time. The small painting (76 × 63 cm), currently on display at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (where it is on long-term loan from the Mauritshuis in The Hague), is a so-called commemorative portrait, which memorialized an important event or period in the sitter's life (*Fig. 1*).

Between 1675 and 1685, Hees served as extraordinary ambassador of the States General to North Africa where he completed a string of diplomatic missions. In this role, he ransomed hundreds of Dutch captives and negotiated treaties with Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli for the protection of Dutch ships and seamen against Barbary corsairs. Negotiations were prolonged and repeatedly resulted in only short-lived treatises. Since Hees's accomplishments could not be reduced to a single event worthy of commemoration, Michiel van Musscher therefore needed to convey the diplomat's successful ten-year tenure in North Africa in a single image.

The painter, who had himself never travelled outside the province of Holland, depicts Thomas Hees in the centre of the composition, seated on a red velvet Spanish chair. To his left, Hees's 24-year-old nephew Andries offers him a letter, while his other nephew, the 16-year-old Jan appears behind his uncle to present a bowl, possibly filled with tobacco or sweets. Behind the chair stands a black figure with a slave collar around his neck, identified by an inscription on the back of the canvas as 17-year-old "Thomas the Negro". Thomas looks up to his master as he hands him a characteristically long Turkish pipe (*chibouk*).

Hees's arm rests on a table covered with a rare "Vase" carpet from Kirman. On the table lie Hees's hat, writing implements, a watch (?), books, an hourglass, an atlas and a celestial globe. The plain back wall is adorned with a large mirror in a carved wooden frame and a coat of arms of the Dutch Republic flanked by precious red coral, as well as a collection of arms consisting of two North African miquelet muskets, two sabres in their scabbards, powder horns and hunting bags. While the coat of arms, as well as

the patterned marble floor, the heavy wooden table and the mirror might suggest a Netherlandish location, the Smyrna tapestry on the floor, the plain walls and the palace courtyard reflected in the mirror indicate Hees's Algerian home as the setting, as is indeed confirmed by the address on the letter. Thomas Hees had moved into a much more prestigious home towards the end of his tenure, having initially lodged in a house secured by Jacob de Paz, a Jewish merchant who had acted as provisional consul in Algiers. Hees's second house was known as the "golden home" and "one of the best of Algiers", according to Baba Hasan, the *dey*'s son-in-law. Hees described his new home as "large, built of bluestone ["hert-steen"] and on the inside mostly of marble, [with] a lot of rooms". Yet, since Michiel van Musscher was not familiar with North African Muslim architecture, he instead portrayed the setting in the reflection of the mirror as an Italianate or Mediterranean-style palace, with a sun-lit, two-storey courtyard surrounded by Corinthian or composite columns. The "Italian" black-and-white tiled marble floor further serves to underscore the Mediterranean setting.

The perspective of the floor pattern, in combination with the tapestry on the floor and the positioning of the figures, guides the viewer's eye towards the mirror on the back wall. Its reflection shows two turbaned figures standing in the shaded colonnade of the courtyard at the entrance to the room. Though clearly minor figures compared to the protagonist, Thomas Hees, they form an essential part in the overarching narrative of the painting. While Thomas Hees, at first glance, appears to gaze at us, a closer inspection reveals he is in fact addressing his two Algerian visitors. Although the text of the letter held by Andries is in Dutch – making it legible to the picture's Netherlandish audience – the suggestion is that it has just been delivered by these Muslim messengers. In translation, the letter is addressed to the "Honourable, noble, our dearly loyal friend Thomas Hees, Resident and Commissioner on behalf of Their High and Mighty [Gentlemen of the States General, i.e., the government of the Dutch Republic] at the governments of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. Algiers". While Andries Hees hands

over the letter, the actions of the other family members should equally be read in relation to the visitors. The smoking of tobacco and the offering of sweets (as well as coffee and wine) were a usual accompaniment to Hees's almost daily conversations and negotiations with the Algerian *dey* or his entourage, (Jewish) mediators and foreign diplomats, as Thomas meticulously recounts in his journal. Thus, this diplomatic encounter evokes a scene from Hees's daily life in Algiers.

The props on display further serve to illustrate Thomas Hees's diplomatic activity in Algiers and the other Barbary states. The Dutch inkpot and quill, the locally made red letter case, the paper and wax seal stamp, as well as the opened letter on the edge of the table all indicate the prolific diplomatic correspondence that came with Hees's life as extraordinary ambassador. In his journal, Hees recounts the numerous letters he writes and receives from family and friends at home, the States General, Jewish mediators, local governors, and captured Christian slaves and their families. The hourglass and watch might reference the prolonged conversations and the patience required to negotiate a treaty. The atlas behind the writing implements is opened to show the western Mediterranean Sea and the Barbary states of Algeria, Tunisia and Tripoli. A plaque at the bottom of the map is inscribed with the word "Barbaria" and flanked by two turbaned figures with Christian captives at their feet, illustrating the very reason why Thomas Hees was sent there. The atlas rests against two books: the *Biblia Sacra* and a Quran with the Arabic text "Quran in Arabic" on its spine. Although Thomas Hees's tombstone praised his command of many languages ("Met taalen rijk voorzien..."), we do not know if he could read, let alone speak Arabic. In his negotiations with the *dey*, Hees made frequent use of Jewish interpreters (such as Jacob de Paz), suggesting that he had not fully mastered Arabic. Yet, the main reason the Bible and Quran are displayed here side by side is to emphasize the complicated, cross-confessional nature of Hees's diplomacy, as well as the mutual respect between the negotiators (despite their religious and cultural differences).

In his journal, Hees stresses the friendship and trust he built over the years with the local rulership. Since these friendly relations and the mutual trust explain Hees's diplomatic success, the painting aims to convey this in different ways. The most straightforward indication is the letter from the Muslim messengers, which is addressed to "our dearly loyal friend" Thomas Hees. The armour on the wall, and possibly the coral too, may be evidence of the crucial role of gift-giving in early diplomacy. North Africans believed that exchanging gifts reflected mutual respect and amiability. Hees, on behalf of the States General, repeatedly "presented" – often on request – the *dey* with cannons, bullets and gunpowder, for example, to secure promises of friendship – something Erica Heinsen-Roach has characterized as the "mediterranization" of Dutch diplomatic practices and policies. On his departure from Algiers, the local government in turn gave Thomas Hees two horses, an ostrich and two lions as well as three sashes, three guns and three sabres. The ostrich and lions died on the way to Amsterdam, but some of the weapons on display in the painting may have formed part of this farewell gift. Admiral Michiel de Ruyter possessed a sabre and scabbard like one of Hees's *nimchas* displayed on the wall (*Fig. 2*). However, de Ruyter supposedly captured it from an Algerian corsair in October 1655 under less friendly circumstances.

Julius S. Held somewhat mockingly branded Musscher's painting as "fancy-dress" portraiture, but Thomas Hees's clothes were likely a meaningful gift to him too. In the portrait, Hees wears wide, red pants (a *salvar*), a blue *entari* with a brown kaftan, and a sash with a dagger around his waist. Ottomans often honoured western diplomats with costly kaftans, sashes and turbans as a token of appreciation and Hees's Ottoman clothes may therefore be further evidence of the mutual respect between him and the Algerians.

More subtly, Hees's dress might refer to another of his successful strategies, since it implies he dressed in local clothing while in Algiers. In his journal, Hees shows a strong cultural awareness and clearly aims – for the sake of diplomatic success – to adapt to

North African culture and customs. In a similar vein, he frequently comments on the arrogant behaviour of the English in Algiers and remarks how they disrespect local traditions. Hees is astonished, for example, that the English consul approaches the *dey* and his son-in-law from behind and greets them "in passing". Considering the Algerian government was negotiating a treaty with the English, French and Dutch at the same time, but only wanted to complete one – so their corsairs could continue to attack the other nations' ships – Hees was fully aware of what was at stake. Gaining the trust of the local government – by adhering to their customs, through gift-giving, or through dress – was essential to the success of his mission. Hees's efforts were finally rewarded when the treaty between Algiers and the Dutch Republic was signed on 29 April 1680. Shortly before (in December 1679), while looking back on his four years in Algiers, he remarked: "I was not a merchant nor sought gold or silver", rather, "my one and only interest was to gain honour".

In 1685, Thomas Hees returned to the Dutch Republic. His brother, Johan, who had assisted him from the Netherlands in collecting the money needed to free the Christian captives, had died, but Thomas Hees was reunited with his nephews Andries, from his brother's first marriage, and Jan, from his second. When Hees hired Michiel van Musscher to memorialize his diplomatic successes in the Barbary states, he requested that Andries and Jan, who had never been to Algiers, be included. The resulting amalgamation of a commemorative and family portrait is thus both anatopistic and anachronistic. The scene is supposedly located in Algiers, a city Andries and Jan had never visited, and set around the year 1679. However, it depicts Thomas Hees, his nephews and his servant Thomas as they appeared in 1687 – as testified by the inscription on the reverse, which states their respective ages. Andries and Jan are dressed in European clothing, while Thomas Hees wears an Algerian kaftan that he was probably only gifted on his departure from North Africa. There are further instances of hybridity: Ottomans used rugs on floors. Here, however, a rare Kirman "Vase" rug (which would have been stiff and unpliable

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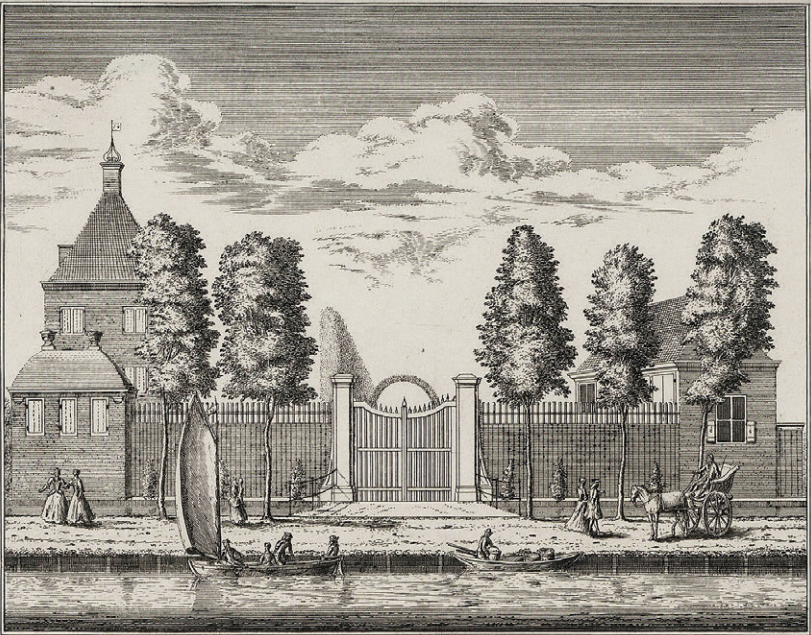
Hoogermeer, Maison de campagne apartenᵗ au très Illustre Mʳ. GILLIS VALKENIER, ancien Echevin de la ville d'Amsterdam.

De Hofstede Hogermeer, toe behoorende den Edelen Agtbaren HEER GILLIS VALKENIER, Oud Schepen der Stad Amsterdam.

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² Unknown maker, sabre ("nimcha") and scabbard of Michiel de Ruyter, ca. 1640–ca. 1664, 67 cm, iron, copper, silver and mother-of-pearl (sabre), wood, leather, cloth and velvet (scabbard), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

³ Abraham Rademaker, The Manor "Hoogermeer" on the River Amstel, 1730, engraving, (published in Hollands Arcadia, Of de vermaarde Rivier den Amstel, Amsterdam: Leonardus Schenk, 1730), Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Amsterdam. Photo © Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Amsterdam.

and therefore not appropriate for use on tables or chests) has been draped over Hees's desk in the European fashion, which deemed rugs too precious to be stepped on. Both Ottoman and western practices are depicted in Musscher's painting. While this may indeed have occurred in Hees's living quarters in Algiers, the carpeted table more likely serves to stress Hees's status for the audience at home. In his study of rugs in Netherlandish paintings, Onno Ydema noted this was the only example of a "Vase" rug found in a Dutch work of art, which makes it likely that the carpet from Kirman was owned by Thomas Hees himself. Alongside this rug, the North African armour, the Ottoman kaftan and letter holder, and all the other gifts and trophies Hees had collected during his time abroad, Musscher's portrait would have found a place in the manor Hoogermeer, where Hees retired after his travels (*Fig. 3*). Located just outside Amsterdam (Nieuwer-Amstel), on the river Amstel, this peaceful, suburban retreat could not have been further removed from the densely built, cosmopolitan city of Algiers, where Hees had spent more than five years of his life.

We do not know what happened to Hees's African servant. At the age of seven, he was being transported on a Portuguese ship when he was captured by Algerian corsairs. He was sold at the slave market in Algiers, where Thomas Hees bought him and gave him a new name: Thomas Joseph Algiers. He is included in the portrait as if he were part of the family (his name and age are written on the reverse of the canvas, just like the other family members), yet the slave collar around his neck as well as his position in the painting indicate his inferior status. And while Andries Hees was appointed universal heir in Thomas Hees's testament of 1692 and Jan was bequeathed the portrait by Michiel van Musscher, there is no mention of the African Thomas. His fate after the death of his master in 1693 is unknown.

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Art History and Social History: Muslims in Early Modern Central European Cities

David Do Paço

Die Schlag-Brücke.   Le pont, du Léopoldstadt.

C.P.S.C.M

Bey Artaria Comp.

1

Social history and art history are still often quite mutually hermetic. Their respective methods, the nature of the documents that scholars examine and academic territories diverge, or even clash. Nevertheless, several recent works by early modern urban historians strongly advocate for an inclusive approach.

A dynamic dialogue between social history and art history could provide an original insight into the economy of the early modern city. A perfect illustration is Melissa Calaresu's study of the ice cream sector in eighteenth-century Naples. Calaresu reinterprets the Neapolitan practices of consumption and sociability using a microhistorical methodology at the intersection of social history, art history and archaeology. Interdisciplinary approaches, especially greater attention to museum collections and material cultures, are now a common expectation of esteemed academic journals dealing with social history. Danielle van den Heuvel and the Freedom in the Street project symbolize the systematization of such an interdisciplinary approach.

As van den Heuvel has demonstrated, this new interdisciplinary synergy is not specific to European urban history. Urban studies also greatly benefit from a building and neighbourhood structure-based approach to develop an anthropology of trade sociability and go beyond cultural areas. Focusing on eighteenth-century Yemeni Mocha, Nancy Um, for example, has implemented an original approach at the crossroads between economic history and history of architecture. She explored the coffee merchants' houses to understand the anthropological structures of the port city at a time when it was the hub between the Arabian Peninsula, Asia and Africa. To better understand early modern southeastern Asian cities such as H ội An, material culture can compensate for the lack of manuscript materials. In Mexico, art gives access to the local counterculture and helps challenge the dominant colonial narrative.

Historical anthropologists have made an equally great contribution to building a dialogue between social and art history. As early as 2011, the collective project directed by Jocelyne Dakhlia – which already aimed to reassess Muslim social life in early modern

Europe – invited us to go beyond the illustrative use of pictures by social historians. Dakhlia drafted new working hypotheses based on what artists perceive and reveal, which is instead either ignored or undervalued in the traditional normative materials on which social historians usually rely. Cesare Santus's contribution on the Muslim population in the free port of Livorno is certainly the most significant achievement of Dakhlia's research group in its promotion of a dialogue between social and art history.

In line with this research, studying Muslims in the eighteenth-century Habsburg Empire exemplifies how art history and iconographic documents can contribute to furthering the understanding of those urban populations that classical social history has failed to identify.

In early modern central European cities, both the imperial administration and modern historians invisibilized the Muslim presence in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire that the Habsburg army conquered between 1683 and 1718. Early modern artists had a different point of view.

In 1691, the *Theatrum Europaeum* offered a view of the 1684 Habsburg siege of Ottoman Buda, and pictured an urban landscape rarely represented by Christian cartographers. Buda and Pest were conquered by Suleiman in 1526 and incorporated into the Ottoman Empire in 1541. In the *Theatrum Europaeum*, Buda and Pest are packed with mosques and minarets (*Fig. 2*). The engraving was undoubtedly inspired by the view published by Braun and Hogenberg in 1617. Buda is still distinguished by the mention of Protestant churches and a synagogue. The cartographer also emphasizes the different Muslim mausoleums under Habsburg fire. Even more remarkable is the importance of the graveyards to the north and east of Buda and to the southeast of Pest.

This engraving raises questions about what happened to the places of worship and graveyards after the Habsburg conquest of the middle Danube river basin, and the ethnic cleansing that went with it. If Muslims were expelled, forcibly converted or massacred, archaeologists and art historians point to numerous reuses of

Muslim cultural sites in the kingdoms of Hungary and Croatia throughout the eighteenth century. In early eighteenth-century Timişoara, Osman Ağa mentioned in his memoirs that his parents were buried in the main mosque, which the Habsburg administration turned into a church. Some transformations of mosques into churches happened later on. Some mausoleums remained active, and more or less formal Muslim pilgrimages continued over the eighteenth century. In the 1770s, after the suppression of the Jesuit Company, the church of St Joseph in Buda – the former mausoleum of the dervish Gül Baba – left its doors open to Muslims. On their way through Hungary, the Ottoman merchants invited to trade in Vienna stopped there and could commemorate a family or community memory. In 1786, the Habsburg ambassador in Istanbul even mentioned Muslim pilgrimages to Habsburg Hungary as an economic and political opportunity: according to Baron Herbert von Rathkeal, Muslims undermined the Catholic Church's authority, facilitating Joseph II's radical secular reforms.

Sometimes, it is enough to switch to a different scale of analysis to contrast the permanence of Muslim municipal culture. In the Slavonian town of Ilok, the Muslim mausoleums record the memory of the former Ottoman families and the municipal elite. This was a common process in religiously diverse societies: the ruling families divided themselves into several branches to operate in several religious communities and hence maintain or develop their influence. Ilok's Muslim mausoleums have also led to the hypothesis that municipal identity prevailed over religious and imperial identities.

Paintings and engravings can also bear witness to the contribution of Muslims – Ottoman or otherwise – to the economic development of Habsburg territories that had never been incorporated into the *Dar al-Islam*.

In 1780, Austrian engraver Johann Andreas Ziegler (1749–1802) delivered a view of Vienna, *Die Schlag-Brücke* (*Fig. 1*), from one of its most vibrant suburbs, the Leopoldstadt. As a topographer of his time, Ziegler pictured a densely populated and busy city. He illustrated a

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diverse crowd and evoked the different social statuses and professions in Viennese society. In the foreground and the middle of the crowd, he placed a Muslim merchant wearing a turban and keeping his accounts as he strolls across the bridge. In the same years, statistician Ignaz De Luca identified "the oriental merchant" in his topography of Vienna. De Luca did not use an administrative category but forged this socio-type from observing the Ottoman merchants' economic practices and how they activated their legal leverage.

Ziegler's engraving was also part of the broader Viennese urban iconographic tradition. It can be compared to the *Hoher Markt* engraving by Viennese painter Carl Schütz (1745–1800) from the early 1790s, which, in a motif inspired by Raphael's *Scuola di Atene*, shows two orientalized merchants in the middle of the square, around whom the economic activity is organized. Also worth mentioning is the view of the *Platz der Jesuiten* from around 1759 which is attributed to Canaletto (1721–1780). In it, a group of merchants wearing turbans are walking towards the Ober-Bäckerstrasse (today's Sonnenfelsgasse), which in the eighteenth century was home to numerous inns for international travellers and traders.

While the history of central-eastern European trading diasporas has mainly focused on the history of the Christian and Jewish merchant minorities in Vienna, the history of the Muslims has been carefully erased or reduced to anecdotal evidence. In this case, engravings and paintings invite historians to question the available materials from a fresh angle. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the Habsburg trade administration did record the Muslim merchants' socio-economic activity. These merchants are still mentioned in the same series, documents and sometimes on the same pages as Armenian, Greek and Sephardic traders from the Ottoman Empire. Historians have ignored them for ideological reasons or because of a heuristic bias. An art history perspective invites scepticism of community categories that may exist more in the minds of the historians than in the society they study. This is a challenge that sociologists like Steven Vertovec and Fran Meissner have been tackling for more than a decade, specifically regarding the structuration of the sociology of migrations field and the way it has been taught.

Furthermore, to study the Ottoman merchants in Vienna in the second half of the eighteenth century is to reinterpret the history of the Habsburg capital city. Muslims' socio-economic activities dot the Hoher Markt residential area, the Fleischmarkt trading area and space for merchant sociability (where the Bäckerstrasse was located) and the Leopoldstadt port area. In other words, the materials of the trade administration confirm what the artists painted. To a certain extent, Ziegler, Schütz and Canaletto also reflect the image of an Ottoman population scattered throughout the city's streets, whose social life was characterized as much by its incorporation into the various groups that made up Vienna as by community life.

Trieste is another interesting case illustrating the *damnatio memoriae* of the Islamic history of Habsburg European urban society, in the Mediterranean too, and how art can help historians to retrieve a part of the city's socio-economic history.

The painting *La Riva Carciotti* by Giovanni Pividor (1816–1872) from around 1840 further illustrates the discrepancy in the history of the Habsburg monarchy between the emphasis put on the Greek merchants and the denigration of Muslim history (*Fig. 3*). Pividor's painting illustrates the free port of Trieste, built from 1719 on the old salt works of the city. On the right of the painting, he represents the merchant ships unloading their goods on the quay; in the centre and on the left, the palaces built with the incomes generated by the Ottoman trade. An important part of the people in the port are racialized individuals wearing a turban or fez depending on their social conditions. Pividor identifies Muslims of different social statuses. One can distinguish the richly dressed merchants from the servants loading and unloading the ships. All around, like in Ziegler's engraving, we find the urban society, also represented in its diversity; a society with which the Muslims mixed.

Pividor's painting was a response to the engraving by Jean-François Cassas (1756–1827), which offers a view of the city and the free port of Trieste from the lazaret of Santa Teresa, the em-

bodiment of the close relations between Trieste and the Ottoman world. Indeed, the growing Ottoman trade in the Habsburg Empire forced the Trieste administration to build a new lazaret to supervise sanitary risks relating to the Ottoman endemic plague and to provide traders from Istanbul, Smyrna or Cairo with modern facilities. Trieste inaugurated the lazaret of Santa Teresa in 1769, and the Habsburg administration specifically asked the lazaret's governors to deliver a regular census of the Muslim merchants entering the city.

However, while Trieste may often be described as "La città dei gruppi", the Muslims' contribution to the free port's history is almost systematically neglected. Although incomplete, the Italo-German archives of the Intendenza Commerciale trade offices and the Trieste government document the Muslims' presence, economic activity and social life. Apart from the lack of a formal community organization, Muslims' lives in Trieste were comparable to those of other Ottoman subjects. Even more so, in the early nineteenth century, statisticians saw the pictorial diversity of the city as evidence of Trieste's socio-economic prosperity. In 1824, Giuseppe de Brodmann – who conducted the 1818 census of Trieste's population – wrote:

> The daring Dalmatian, the dark and indolent Ottoman, the shrewd Greek, the fiery Italian comedian, the thoughtful and diligent German, the talkative, brown Arab, the serious, blond Englishman, and the heavy Slovenian can only be recognized by their differences.
>
> The groups of these peoples, found in the equally populated districts of Vienna, offer an incomparably greater pleasure than the Graben, where everything is breathed into a common, monotonous form of clothes and customs.

At some point, artists influenced how topographers and statisticians organized and delivered the collected data and the society they observed.

These brief examples illustrate how art history is of considerable interest for the renewal of urban history. The history of art and architecture makes it possible to identify populations who are sometimes neglected by historians and to implement new categories of analysis. The family, the household, the street, the neighborhood and the municipal memory were at the core of eighteenth-century urban landscapes. Taking their figuration into account adds many levels of complexity to a history and anthropology of eighteenth-century migrations tied up in the study of diasporas and ethno-confessional communities. Art history is also a powerful instrument to nuance the dominant male, white and Christian history of early modern Europe. The circulation of engravings participated in promoting a city whose cultural and religious diversity was seen as a testimony of good economic health and good government. This circulation accompanied the dissemination of topographies and the progressive elaboration of statistics as a science. It participated in producing an aesthetic of the eighteenth-century cosmopolitan city and in the establishment of a normative framework that, for a time, promoted diversity. This "world of yesterday" flourished until the affirmation of the nation-state.

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Legacies of Exile: The Stuarts in Rome

Katie Barclay

1

A portrait of Maria Clementina Sobieski (1702–1735) overlooks the left aisle of St Peter's Basilica in Rome. It forms part of an elaborate monument to her memory, commissioned by Pope Clement XII, after her death in 1735, designed by Filippo Barigioni, with sculptures by Pietro Bracchi and a mosaic by Pietro Paulo Cristofari. Queen Clementina, the wife of James Francis Edward Stuart, the Jacobite claimant to the British throne and granddaughter of the Polish king John III Sobieski, had in the years before her death devoted her life to her faith, and especially the practice of charity, giving to the poor and serving them in hospitals. Her death, following a period of strict self-denial, including limited food, was treated as evidence of her saint-like existence and immediately capitalised on by the Church and her family. Clementina was presented as a model of piety, her status as queen marking her life the more remarkable while simultaneously affirming the power of the Church (*Fig. 1*).

Clementina was a Jacobite queen. The mosaic portrait shows her in Stuart colours, wearing the blue sash of the Order of the Garter of which she was a member, and two putti carry a crown and sceptre, symbols of monarchical power and divine right. Much more prominently, Clementina is linked with an iconography of charity. The statue consisted of a woman surrounded by three children, a representation of Charity that had been popular since the fourteenth century. This Charity held a portrait of Clementina in one arm. In her other outstretched hand, she held forth a flaming heart, the symbolic representation of *caritas*, the love that bound together the Christian community. Behind them a pyramid rises into the sky, representing eternity. Clementina is commemorated as a queen, but also as a religious icon, due to her pious life and loving actions. As the pyramid suggests, the monument is intended to secure her memory for generations to come and it does so in a church in a city where Clementina found herself more from circumstance than choice.

The Stuart family relocated to Rome in 1719. They had been exiled from the United Kingdom in 1688, when James II and VII was deposed, and moved to Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Following

the Jacobite uprising of 1715, led by Clementina's husband James Francis Edward Stuart, the family were no longer welcome in France, and were offered patronage by the Papacy, who recognised their claim to the throne as Catholic monarchs. They finally settled in Rome, when Pope Clement XII offered the family the Palazzo del Re as a residence, alongside a generous stipend. Through his patronage, the Stuarts were able to establish a Royal court in Rome, a life of luxury and splendour, marked by their patronage of the arts, particularly painting and music, and a base through which to consolidate their political relationships across Britain, not least with an elite for whom a trip to Rome formed an important stop on a Grand Tour. And yet, James Francis Edward Stuart suffered from melancholy and his wife retreated into a religious practice that likely contributed to her death. Exile had emotional impacts that wealth, sociability, and patronage alone could not overcome.

A scholarship on exile has noted the importance of finding belonging and a sense of place to mental health and wellbeing and the challenges that this posed to those dislocated from their homelands, particularly against their own desires. Many migrants found art an important resource in confronting loneliness and establishing place. Migrant communities often introduced features of their homeland architecture or landscaping to their new residences, creating a hybrid style of old and new. Interior decoration provided opportunity to curate a space for comfort, security and identity in a new location. Writing, theatre and other forms of art practice have offered many migrants a site to confront the challenges of displacement and to create solidarity or shared recognition of the associated feelings of loss and loneliness. Studies of the art commissioned by those in exile, particularly royal courts, are now numerous, often viewed as a mechanism through which the elite maintained their authority and social position, even as the foundations of their power shifted. Yet, such work can also be explored as a tool through which an exiled elite, like other migrants, came to terms with their new placement, and its possibilities for their lives.

Much of the art commissioned by the Stuarts has highlighted its function as a form of propaganda that affirmed their place as the rightful claimants to the British throne and acted to encourage the love of a loyal following. Within such works, the Stuarts displayed their connections to Britain, to the British throne, and to the land that they had left behind. To do this, they often used a symbolism of love and connection – hearts, putti, symbols of fertility – as well as hints of connection to British land – Scottish mountain scenes or boats waiting to sail home. Their new settlement in Rome was often incidental; the painting marking the baptism of Charles Edward Stuart, Clementina's eldest son, for example, shows the Royal court in its fullness, with a number of notable British aristocrats as well as religious leaders in Rome. If the rich textiles and marble floor might suggest a palace, that this baptism occurred in Rome is not immediately apparent from the work. The Stuarts largely wished to project themselves in relation to the land they had left, maintaining connection with a legacy that they hoped one day to inherit.

Over time, the possibility of return became less likely, both for individuals, and for the generational family, and so the family had to grapple with how to imagine a new legacy for themselves. Their faith offered significant opportunity here. James II and VII, who died in 1701, had already began a process of imagining the Stuarts as martyrs and saints. At the end of his life, he turned to a practice of penitence and when he died, his family created relics of parts of his body and spread them to places of religious significance to the British Catholic community living in exile. His heart was given to the convent of Chaillot, founded by James's mother Queen Henrietta Maria, and his brain to the Scots College in Paris, a refuge for Scottish Catholic refugees. The parish church of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the English Jesuit college at Saint-Omer received his entrails, and flesh from his right arm was sent to English Augustinian nuns in Paris. His body was given to the English Benedictine.

This was treatment more usually given to those associated with martyrdom or sainthood, where the body was transformed into relics that would support the faithful and raise the status of the

dead into a holy figure. If James II and VII would not regain his throne, he might nonetheless position his legacy as that of a saint within his church. Yet, by positioning those relics within religious communities associated with Britain and especially their exiled Catholic brethren, James continued to place himself within a British story, where his family acted as hope for the restoration of a Catholic monarchy and the return of the exiled community homewards. In 1734, the evidence to support his canonisation was heard by the Archbishop of Paris, but the progress stalled, not least because of the more likely candidate that had emerged in the death of his daughter-in-law, Queen Clementina.

Clementina's enshrinement in St Peter's marked a similar desire to position the Stuart family as part of a martyrdom to a faith, for whom they gave everything. Yet, her commemoration was also suggestive of a shift in identity towards her new home in Rome (perhaps the less surprising as Clementina herself had never been to Britain). British identity, evidenced in her Stuart costume, was bound together with a cosmopolitan and global faith practice, and their iconography shifted from looking homewards to finding place within a Catholic world, represented by the church and the city of Rome, the home of its leaders. Clementina's monument can then perhaps be read as evidence of growing recognition by the Stuarts and their patrons of the growing distance between the family and throne and a need to create a new identity within a new land to ensure their longevity. The symbol of eternity that rests behind Clementina here provides a strong sense of this family's need to be remembered and to survive into the future. The firm conviction in the divine right of kings, that contributed so significantly to their being deposed, is evident, with the family unable to imagine themselves as insignificant and swept away by larger historical forces.

Clementina's monument looks down on another, a large marble funerary stele, dedicated to her husband James, and her two sons, Charles and Henry. It was originally commissioned by the executor to Henry's estate in 1810 and designed by Antonio Canova. The project stalled until Canova and Henry's protégé Cardinal

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Consalvi, managed to convince the Hanoverian throne to fund the completion of the project in 1815. The monument resembles the pyramid behind Clementina, but is truncated, capped by with the royal arms (*Fig. 2*).

The face of the monument contains reliefs of the three men to which it is dedicated, beneath which James is named James III and Charles and Henry his sons and the "last of the Royal House of Stuart". The bottom of the monument is decorated by a door, and on either side are weeping angels, their heads bowed and resting on upturned torches, in the process of being extinguished. Above the door it reads, "Blessed are those who die in the Lord". This monument was a testament to the end of a life, an act of mourning and remembrance of what was lost, funded by the line of monarchs who benefited from their deposition.

In the seventy years between the making of the two monuments, the Stuarts has made a final unsuccessful attempt on the British throne, led by "Bonnie Prince Charlie". When his father died in 1766, Charles's claim to the throne was not recognised by the Pope, nor the monarchs of the surrounding Catholic nations. The Stuarts were left to their life in Rome and Florence, building lives and careers while never entirely giving up their claim to the title. The monument clearly signals the death not only of the men but the family legacy. Their grave is located as a place to mourn the end of the Stuart dynasty – the eternity signalled in Clementina's monument is forestalled, and the work lacks the religious iconography that might suggest a divine purpose beyond the throne. The neoclassical style, associated during the period of the monument's construction with democratic institutions, contrasts with the Baroque abundance of Clementina's commemoration, and signals a new political future where the divine right of kings has been left behind. As a symbol of an exiled family, the monument marks the ways that transportation to a new land was accompanied by a loss of purpose for this family and so the end of its legacy. The placement of their monument not only in Rome, but in one of its most important churches, is testament to the ways the family found new opportunities for recognition and a home "place",

which would mark their existence for generations into the future. But the compromise of finding place after exile was also marked by significant loss; the Stuart story is left as a tragedy to be mourned by those who would remember.

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The Mediterranean Space through South Indian Eyes: Visual and Material Elements in the *Varttamānappustakam*
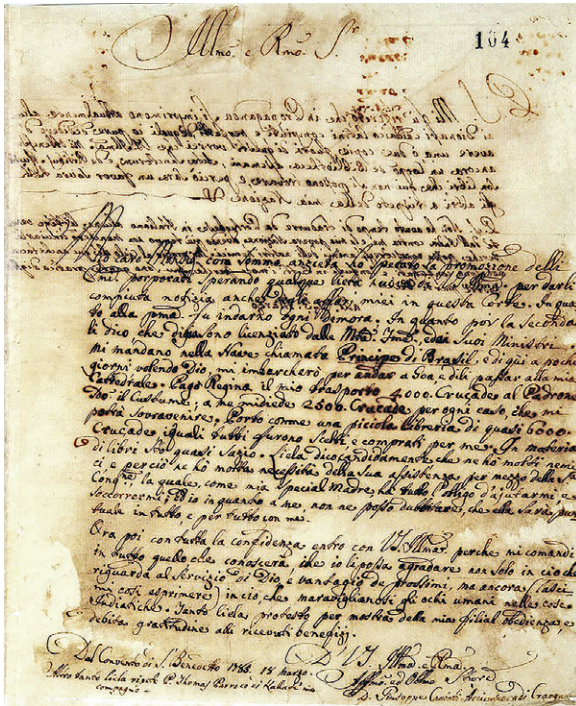
Philippe Bornet

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December 1779. Four men from distant Kerala are waiting for quarantine clearance in Genoa after sailing from Lisbon on a ship belonging to Swedish merchants. Some six years later, a letter was sent by one of these men from Lisbon to the Propaganda Fide in Rome, just before embarking on a boat, destination South India. After exposing details about the logistics of the planned travel, the letter was also referring to a "small collection of books costing about 6000 cruçades", about to be transferred with its owner to South India. Who were these men and what were they doing in the Mediterranean? What can we learn from this case as to the circulation of material and visual goods between India and Europe in that period? And what were the books in that "small collection" (*Fig. 1*)?

This story is told in a book written in Malayalam, the *Varttamānappustakam* ["the book on various events", further abbreviated *VP*], often hailed as the "first travel narrative in an Indian language". In it, we read about the journey from Kerala to Rome in the years 1778 to 1786 of Mar Joseph Kariyattil (1742–1786) and his companion, a certain Paremmakkal Tomma Kattanar (1736–1799), proficient in a variety of languages including Syriac, Latin, Sanskrit and Malayalam, and the book's author.

The general context is one of splits within the communities of Syriac Christians in India in the aftermath of the Synod of Diamper (1599) and the Coonan Cross Oath (1653), with some recognizing the missionaries' authority and others rejecting it. Carmelite missionaries were sent to reunite the congregations, but the initiative did not have the intended effect. When multiple "councils" failed to solve the situation, 72 churches or local communities sent two delegates to Lisbon and Rome, along with two young men who wanted to study at the Propaganda Fide Congregation in Rome. After tough negotiations (which in themselves show the complexity of organizing travels for reasons not directly related to trade or the military), the journey was undertaken on board of a ship, the *Esperança*, belonging to four Portuguese merchants specialising in the trade of clothes. It started out from Chennapattanam (modern-day

Chennai) in November 1778. The route unsurprisingly followed Portuguese trade routes and the voyage is described as extremely unpleasant, even though the ship made two lengthy stopovers, in Benguela (Angola) and Bahia (Brazil), before reaching Lisbon on 18 July 1779. The Malabarians were struck by the city's generally chaotic appearance, even though many of its roads were "orderly and straight". They were, understandably, particularly interested in describing buildings, people, events and sounds related to religion, for example, the number of churches, the sound of bells on festival days or the crowds of "religious people".

The clerics had brought with them a few personal belongings and objects specifically acquired for the trip (shirts and blankets), money provided by local churches from alms or from the sale / mortgaging of church movables (!), as well as medicines from Malabar. They handed over a petition to the queen of Portugal, Maria I (1734–1816), advocating for the situation of the Syriac Christians in whose representation they had come, but since no resolution was made, they were advised to go to Rome. Once again, they had trouble securing a ship and asked a local merchant going by the name of Niccolò Corneli for help. In turn, he directed them to a Swedish captain named Israel Hedman – a name incidentally mentioned in another work, with regard to a discussion about the insured merchandise of a ship that had sailed from Sweden to Spain and Tunisia before sinking (see Émerigon 1783). After no fewer than 33 days of sailing, they arrived in Genoa where they observed a period of quarantine, a concept that the author thought remarkable enough to explain it to his audience:

> In Genoa and in the other cities of Europe there are houses called Lazaretto which are intended for the safety of their citizens. The passengers of ships coming from the country of the Turks or from countries suspected of contagious diseases, or any cases of suspected diseases, are forbidden to enter the cities for about 40 days, the time for clearing off the suspicion (*VP*, 118).

The Malabarians commented on the city, in particular its political administration and osterias. They also met a prominent member of the aristocracy, Marquise Negroni, probably Marianna Negroni Rivarola, the mother of the future cardinal Agostino Rivarola (1758–1842), who specifically asked for Indian drugs after mentioning that Jesuits coming from the same regions often brought them with them. Kariyattil gave her some drugs called *vayugulika* – an ayurvedic remedy for breathing troubles, based on a combination of spices, in particular ginger and pepper, still found today. The two clerics left Genoa for Rome on a small boat and reached Levanto in December 1779 where they were shown writings of Henry VIII against Martin Luther – probably the monarch's treatise on the sacraments and his subsequent letter to Luther. From there, they took the land road to Pisa, Florence and Siena. They stopped in Viterbo where they visited the shrine to Santa Rosa and looked at her perfectly preserved body (*Fig. 2*).

> The body of the saint was dressed in a very precious gilded habit and was laid on silk cloths with a silk pillow over a low gilt couch. The head was covered with a white cloth and it looked like the head of our women when they put on the veil with folds. ... The religious who opened the door of the place where the holy remains rested gave us four threads of cloth that had touched the holy body (*VP*, 130).

What they saw in Viterbo was clearly not exceptional to them, and they shared a similar religious language in which the visual dimension is essential – one may think of the popular visits to saints' tombs in India and on the importance to obtain *darśan* from saints and deities – probably hoping that it would have a positive effect on their mission's outcome.

In Rome, they were received by Stefano Borgia (1731–1804), the secretary of the Propaganda Fide Congregation, who was quick to demonstrate his hostility. The visit to Rome obviously included a

tour of religious monuments such as the Church of Saint Peter with his tomb, the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, but also the Colosseum, which "in the pagan days [was] the place for meetings and sport. Now the devotional practice known as the way of the cross is held in it" (*VP*, 171). The main purpose of the visit was, however, to take action to defend the interests of the Indian Syriac Christians. After several disappointments, they finally met the pope, Pius VI (1717–1799) in a meeting that led to the following curious exchange:

> We saw the Pope sitting on a chair behind the door of this hall. There were on the table in front of the Pope two lighted candles fixed on silver stands. The body of the Pope was tall and stout, his face bright, his hair well combed and their [*sic*] ends arranged into curls like rings. As soon as we entered the room and saw the Pope, we knelt down and bowed three times and kissed his foot as we bow before the crucifix on Good Friday. ... The Pope was very pleased and asked us who was the king in Malabar, whether he in any way persecuted the faithful, whether the climate of the country was agreeable, whether there was good fish there etc. (*VP*, 151–152).

Indeed, instead of addressing the issues of the visitors' concern, the pope is described as more interested in getting information on these remote and exotic lands (whereas one might have expected that he had all this information already). In that way the pope refused to enter into the matter and arbitrate the conflict between the Carmelites and the Syriac Christians of Malabar, to the great disappointment of the two delegates:

> We endured afflictions and sorrows along a long journey and reached Rome and gave into the very hands of the Pope the petitions meant for procuring unity and other benefits for the Malabar Church ... – all clearly written down and splendidly bound together as a book. We were able by the grace of God to implore the Pope to read them himself and

give a reply. But as the result of a quarter-of-an-hour's suggestions, the Pope did not read them nor even open them, but gave them to Msgr. Borgia our enemy (*VP*, 153).

Before leaving Rome, the delegates received money from the Propaganda Fide to pay for their journey back to Portugal, as well as gifts – two gold crosses and laudatory letters from the pope – for friends of Borgia in Malabar.

They returned from Rome to Lisbon where they stayed for several years, retained by religious authorities influenced by the Goa clergy who were afraid that if the delegates returned to India, it would cause unrest. During their time in Lisbon, they were presented with some books in Malayalam:

> While we were in Lisbon … there was found a box of books in Malayalam characters. The people of the place did not know where these characters were in use and who the owner of the box was. … The next day the Malpan [i.e. Kariyattil] accompanied Louis Antony and found out they were books on Theology printed in Malayalam and sent from the Propaganda (*VP*, 198).

Since the journey took place in the years 1778–1786, the "books on Theology printed in Malayalam" must have included the *Saṅkṣēpa Vedārtham* [the meaning of the Bible abridged], the work of the Carmelite missionary Clement Pianius (1714–1782) who had spent many years in Kerala. It was a condensed version of the New Testament written in the form of a dialogue between a guru and his disciple, and the first text printed using Malayalam movable types in Rome, as early as 1772. The way this "box of books" is mentioned suggests that these printed texts were of quite marginal importance. Despite the technical prowess of printing Malayalam and Latin script on the same page, the dissemination of such texts out of Rome seems to not have been as efficient as a production and distribution directly on site (*Fig. 3*).

These were not the only books Kariyattil brought back to India. As we mentioned earlier, he explicitly wrote about a "small collection of books", bought in Portugal and transported to South India. As to what books might have been in that collection, a list of Kariyattil's belongings redacted in September 1786, three months before his death, mentions several "European" books. Some of them would typically be held in a Roman Catholic seminar, such as a multilingual Bible or the Benedictine Augustin Calmet's French commentary on the Bible. Others were less common or even controversial, such as works by the Jansenist Zeger Bernard Van Espen (1646–1728) or by Johann Nikolaus Von Hontheim (pseud. Febronius, 1701–1790), a proponent for a more democratic church and critic of papal supreme authority.

Eventually, in virtue of the Padroado system, the Portuguese queen appointed Kariyattil archbishop of Cranganore. This was a political move by the Portuguese Crown in order to increase its influence in India, in the context of competition between the Padroado regime and the Roman Propaganda Fide: Kariyattil's appointment would reduce the influence of the latter. The clerics were finally able to leave Lisbon for Bahia in April 1785 on a ship carrying 300 convicts. They arrived in Kerala in the summer of 1786 on the same ship, after 23 of the convicts had died on board. The text is abruptly interrupted when they are in sight of Sri Lanka. We know, however, from other sources that Kariyattil died in December 1786 in Goa, before he could actually take up his new position, thus putting paid to the Portuguese intentions in appointing him to this role.

This case study sheds light on the role of the Mediterranean space within a "global Christian network", seen from an external perspective: for the book's author, Europe was evidently Roman Catholic and its centres were Lisbon and Rome, while both the Padroado regime and the Propaganda Fide congregation were seen as sources of authority. The most remarkable goods that are shown circulating here are books and drugs – not to mention, of

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course, the more usual products of spices and textiles, only incidentally mentioned by the text. The text signals the intention of its author to offer its audiences a rather detailed account of these remote lands, perhaps out of the concern to show accountability to communities that had funded the trip, but not without adding "picturesque" details that make the narrative more compelling (in a way that is reminiscent of European travel accounts of the same time). Finally, the case study displays both the mechanics of communication across the cultural diversity of the Mediterranean space in this period, and the deliberate and intricate ways to *not* understand interlocutors from remote lands in order to safeguard religious and political interests.

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The Mediterranean Seen by a Young Nineteenth-Century Syrian Arab Tourist: The Map of Salim Bustrus's Itinerary

Joanna Musiatewicz

1

In the early morning of 1 October 1855, the sun rising above Mount Lebanon must have been gently illuminating Beirut as Salim Bustrus (1839–1883), a young Syrian Arab on board a steamer coming from Istanbul, saw the port of his hometown smiling bright and friendly at him. This serene scene filled the nostalgic lad's heart with peace and made him weep tears of joy, after a tiring but nonetheless enlightening and satisfying journey across the Mediterranean. Six months earlier, he had left Beirut, heading first to Egypt and afterwards to southern and western Europe. He was excited and looking forward to visiting "the lands of the Franks". At least, these were the impressions and emotions that Bustrus decided to write down in his memoirs. The book, entitled *The Pleasant Wander Through Salim's Travel* (*Al-Nuzha al-Shahiyya fi al-Rihla al-Salimiyya*), was published the following year.

Bustrus's travelogue was probably quite popular among the Syrian reading community in the middle of the nineteenth century, particularly the author's relatives and friends, as they were members of the emerging Beiruti cosmopolitan bourgeoisie. The majority of this cosmopolitan community, Christians and Muslims alike, acted as merchants and were engaged in trade on a regional and international scale. Without any doubt, they were interested not only in the current state of affairs in Europe, but also in the results of the reforms implemented by the eastern rulers in Cairo, Alexandria and Istanbul. In the 1850s, the Syrian intellectuals' thirst for knowledge was barely satisfied, as the printing of books and newspapers in the Arab language was still in its infancy. The number of publishing houses and titles would only grow significantly in the next decades. Thus, *The Pleasant Wander* was published at the expense of its author, who was most likely encouraged to disseminate the text by his family and peers. The book's imprint provides neither the name of its Beiruti printer nor the number of copies that were made.

Despite its rather unsophisticated content and form, the memoir should be considered a significant achievement. Of course, many Arabs had travelled to Europe in the centuries preceding Bustrus's journey. Some of them contributed to the rich genre of

Arab travel writing. Nonetheless, *The Pleasant Wander* was apparently only the third Arabic travelogue ever printed, after *The Extraction of Pure Gold in the Abridgement of Paris* by Rifa' Rafi' Al-Tahtawi, published in Cairo in 1834, and *Travel to France* by Sulayman Ibn Siyam, published in Algiers in 1852. What seems even more important is the fact that Bustrus was probably the first Arab tourist who did not travel to Europe as a member of a diplomatic or educational mission, but as a mere teenager, only sixteen years of age, accompanied by his elder cousin.

Moreover, *The Pleasant Wander* contains a schematic map depicting Bustrus's itinerary, which can be considered a valuable source to study the young Arab's conception of an instructive journey and a description worthy of dissemination (*Fig. 1*). It is difficult to ascertain what inspired Bustrus to provide a map for his readers. Since neither Al-Tahtawi nor Ibn Siyam included any illustrations in their works, the author of *The Pleasant Wander* might have been following the example of European travellers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as John Lewis Burckhardt and his *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land* published in 1822. He could have also decided to model his book after the popular French or English travel guides.

Unfortunately, Bustrus's map, apparently a lithography, is of poor quality, prepared by an amateur or novice cartographer. Its title, visible in the bottom righthand corner, states that it demonstrates the itinerary followed by the author in 1855. The Mediterranean coastline depicted in the map is highly simplified. Several large islands are missing, such as Sardinia and Corsica. The political borders are barely sketched, and, apart from Prussia, the Italian and German states are not taken into account (although some of them are mentioned in the travelogue). The features of the landscape are omitted in the source except for the most important rivers, but their names are not specified. This reduction, primarily motivated by technical constraints, suggests that the author of *The Pleasant Wander* was nevertheless not particularly interested in the nature of the Middle East or Europe. On the other hand, the countries and cities visited by Bustrus are indicated in the map,

particularly the ones that he describes in his travelogue. The symbols representing means of transportation that the author used for each episode of his journey are explained in the legend: straight line for ships, wavy line for trains and double line for unspecified kinds of coaches.

Even a cursory glance at Bustrus's map provides an insight into the basic logistics of his travel, particularly as he scarcely mentions its practical aspects in his memoir. We see that he used the most convenient and fastest means of transport available in each region he visited, principally steamers and trains. For a more comprehensive examination of the map, we need to answer at least two questions in conjunction with the text analysis. Which countries and cities attracted the young Syrian's attention and why? Are there any places that he decided to include in his map, even though he did not visit them?

On his Middle Eastern and European itinerary, Bustrus travelled to most of the historical gems and developing industrial or commercial cities, following the footsteps of western tourists and familiarizing himself with the pillars of nineteenth-century modernity. After leaving Beirut, the author of *The Pleasant Wander* briefly visited Haifa and Jaffa. Later, he headed to Alexandria and Cairo. The quality of the Egyptian section of the map is so low that it is almost impossible to decipher the means of transport that he used in the Nile Delta. However, considering the toponyms such as Tanta and Kafr al-Zayyat which are marked on the map, we can assume that he travelled by train for some part of the distance between Cairo and Alexandria. Back on the Mediterranean Sea, Bustrus headed for Malta and Sicily, coming ashore on both of these islands. From Messina, he sailed near the Tyrrhenian and Ligurian coast, stopping in Naples, Civitavecchia, Livorno, Genoa and Marseille. He travelled between the Italian and French port towns and in the hinterlands either by coach (from Civitavecchia to Rome), or by train (from Livorno to Pisa and Florence, as well as from Marseille via Avignon and Lyon to Paris, Versailles and finally to Boulogne-sur-Mer). He boarded a steamer that carried him across the English Channel to Folkestone, where he took a

train to London. After coming back to the continent via Dover and Paris, the Syrian tourist travelled by train through Belgium, Prussia, Hanover, Saxony and Austria. Although the Belgian and German toponyms visible on the map are usually barely legible, using the text as a reference, we can retrace Bustrus's steps in this section of his European journey. First, he stopped in Brussels, then he visited Liège, Verviers, Aachen, Cologne, Bonn, Hanover, Berlin, Potsdam, Dresden, Vienna, Baden, Laxenburg and finally Ljubljana, where he took a coach to Trieste. Bustrus crossed the Adriatic Sea on board a steamer, passing by Corfu, Zakynthos, Piraeus and Santorini. Before arriving in İzmir, he was forced to stop at Chios, as his steamer ran aground. From İzmir, he sailed north, through the Dardanelles and passing by Gallipoli, before arriving in Istanbul. Sailing back to Beirut, he passed by İzmir, Rhodes, Mersin, İskenderun, Latakia and Tripoli.

Apparently, the only toponyms visible on the map which refer to regions distant from the Syrian tourist's itinerary are Russia and Crimea. The Crimean War, which lasted from 1854 to 1856, was probably the most important but not sole reason for this choice, since Bustrus was a Greek Orthodox Christian and his family maintained close relations with the Russian rulers. In the Austrian section of the map, he marked two towns which he merely passed by, probably seeing nothing more than the railway stations – Český Brod and Graz. Most of the European and Turkish toponyms marked on Bustrus's map are the phonetically transcribed Italian, French, English, German or Greek names used in the 1850s, for example, Bahr al-Mansh for La Manche, Iks Lashabal for Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), Buhum for Böhmisch Brod (Český Brod), Laibak for Laibach (Ljubljana), Zanta (Zakynthos), Saqis (Chios), Thira (Santorini), Al-Qustantiniyya for Constantinople (Istanbul), and Aleksandretta (İskenderun).

Although the enumeration of the countries, islands and towns which Bustrus managed to visit during his journey is impressive, his main destination was certainly Paris, not only as a capital of nineteenth-century cosmopolitan culture, but also as host of the second International Exposition. The son of a successful merchant

family and prospective heir to the shares in an international trade company, Bustrus was particularly interested in inventions and commodities from as far away as China or the Americas. The young Arab spent almost a month in the French metropolis and it was the longest sojourn in an individual city during his journey.

The map attached to Bustrus's travelogue, albeit imperfect, is a valuable source to study. It reveals the young Syrian's interests and ambitions, firstly as a tourist and secondly as a disseminator of knowledge. Consequently, it provides a unique visual reflection of encounters between the Arabic East and European West of the period, which Rasheed El-Enany has described as enchanted.

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Love, Gender, and Migration across the Sea: The Myth of Hero and Leander

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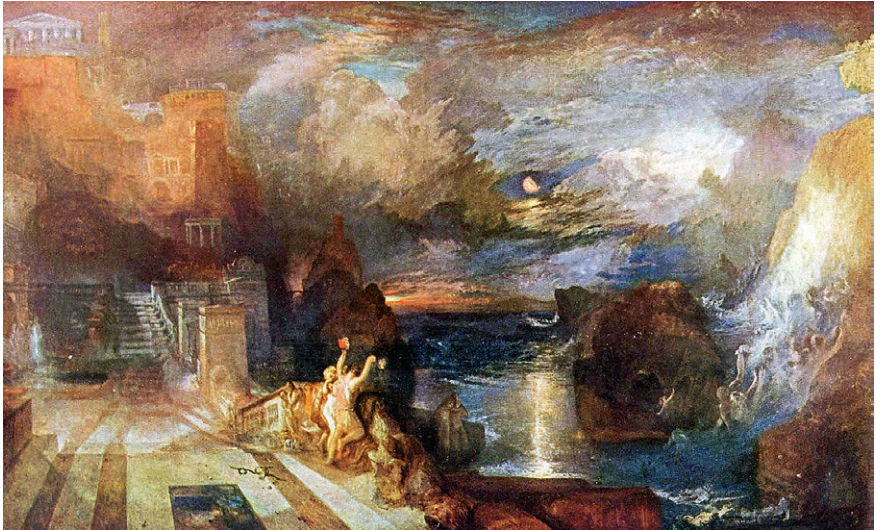
"Wild dashed the Hellespont its straited surge / And on the raised spray appeared Leander's fall". These were the last two lines of the seven that, at the exhibition of the Royal Academy of London, 1837, accompanied Turner's *The Parting of Hero and Leander* (*Fig. 1*). The first five lines described the imminent morning and the fading night, Love and Hymen, the "terraced steep", all the "tokens of departure" depicted in the borders of the painting. The conclusive verses focused on its central elements: the rough sea, the coming storm, the premonition of death.

The myth of Hero and Leander is the Greek archetype of a story of forbidden love and death, many times retold, in which one of the protagonists, one could argue from Turner's verbal/visual interpretation, is the sea. The sea, in fact, stands out in Turner's painting, being the focal point of the viewer's perspective; in the written comment, it appears with its specific name (in Greek) and its metaphoric value as Leander's lethal obstacle is explicitly revealed.

The expanse of water that Leander prepares to face, in the moment of the plot "shot" by Turner, is the Dardanelles Strait. Together with the Bosphorus, it divides and connects the two sides of Turkey, the European and the Asian, the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea: it is a water gateway between Europe and Asia, the West and the East. It encircles a specific point in the Mediterranean, located at its extreme East; but however narrow it can seem compared to the wide *Mare nostrum*, the myths, the aetiology, and the historical episodes (and also the humanitarian tragedies linked to it in our collective imaginary) confer on it a powerful symbolic value. We will see that, in the story of Hero and Leander, this specific point of the sea, which functions narratively as the hero's antagonist, reveals deep meanings regarding important aspects of our contemporaneity: gender, migration, cultural prejudices.

The very Greek name of the Strait, *Hellespont* (Helle's sea), recalls the tragic story of a girl, Helle, who drowned there while she was crossing the sea channel with her brother Phrixus, riding a ram with a golden fleece. Why were Helle and Phrixus on a ram with a golden fleece over the sea? They were trying to escape the

death that loomed over them in their homeland: they were trying to reach a foreign kingdom where they could seek asylum. Their mother made them leave, even though this meant that she would never see them again. Indeed, Helle drowned; but Phrixus succeeded: he arrived at Colchis and married the king's daughter.

Linked as it is to the very name of the Strait, this story of migration is a founding one for the Mediterranean identity – the Mediterranean being the stage of many myths of people in danger seeking to flee their homeland and build a new life in another place: two for all, Dido fleeing Tyre, Aeneas fleeing Troy.

Going back to Hero and Leander, in the *vulgata*, theirs is perceived mainly as a tragic love story, with few further implications. Accordingly, several visual art pieces that have have dealt with this successful subject, have focused on the characters rather than on the setting. In Rubens' interpretation, for instance, the sense of tragic is conveyed by the human figures, that occupy most of the painting and capture the viewer's attention with their plastic poses of agony (*Fig. 2*).

In Turner, instead, the proportions being reversed, there is a meaningful hermeneutical shift. In Rubens, the sea appears as the frame, the stage of a specific mythological story; in Turner – standing out at the centre of the canvas, intertwined as it is with the stormy sky, while the human figures appear marginal, almost as a decorative element – the sea grows bigger, detaches itself from the specific story of Hero and Leander, attracts all the emblematic value of the premonition of death, and finally becomes a universal symbol.

The same great symbolic importance is attributed to the sea in a 2009 cinematic reinterpretation, Philippe Lioret's *Welcome*, which moves the setting from the ancient centre of migrations, the Mediterranean, to one of the numerous contemporary scenes of displacement, the English Channel. In this film, love appears as an individual motive of migration, but is also intertwined with other motives that lie behind the large-scale movements of people: war,

famine, poverty, persecutions, diaspora. Moreover, the separation between the two lovers in the film is symbolized by the rough waters of the English Channel, but is actually caused by geo-political situations (the surreptitious difference between clandestine and legal migration) and by the backward mentality that allows economic and familial interests to overcome women's right to self-determination (*Fig. 3*).

The death of Bilal, the male protagonist, can be seen as the result of his *hybris*. Bilal is a seventeen-year-old boy with no friends, no country, no means at all, not even an identity or papers bearing witness to his right to be alive. Nevertheless, to reach the girl he loves, he tries to fight the established order: her father's economic interests (for which he marries his seventeen-year-old daughter off to a much older man), the French and British police, the dangerous jungle of clandestine migration; ultimately the entire world's rules. All this is symbolized by a powerful image that appears in the film as a visual *leitmotif*: the dark and deep waters of the English Channel, overhung by dense clouds full of rain: water below, water above, death threatened all around. Nevertheless, Bilal tries to swim across the Channel. In the Greek myth, Leander had a guide in the night: a torch, that Hero would light every night to show him the way. In the French film, Bilal, who crosses in a darkness caused not by the night but by the Northern fog, and not regularly but only once, also sees a light. It's not Mina's light, though, but the British Coast Guard, who suddenly appear in the fog, and try to rescue him. Bilal does not know what to think when he sees this light, but has to make up his mind in seconds and decide whether or not to entrust his life to them. Clearly, he has been exposed for too long to society' dehumanizing behaviour towards so-called illegal migrants. So, he instinctively thinks that the Coast Guard will harm him, and ends up making the wrong choice, which proves to be a lethal one: he turns around and disappears down the Channel.

Clearly, Lioret uses the classical paradigm to address burning issues in our world and to engage in public discourse. In Ovid's epistolary archetype of the myth, instead, the intention seems at

first glance quite the opposite: great emphasis is placed on the exploration of the two protagonists' inner thoughts and emotions conveyed through the powerful means of the letter exchange – Ovid is a *virtuoso* of female introspection, and his *Heroides* are a masterpiece in the evolution of the narrative techniques connected to gendered voices. In fact, the emotional exploration and the allegorical interpretation are the main points of interest of this story, whose plot is indeed very simple: two teenagers, separated by the Hellespont, have a forbidden love affair (Hero is Venus' priestess), so their only way to meet is swimming across the sea. Eventually, this challenge to nature and religion leads them to their deaths.

However, social and gender issues, while not being Ovid's main target, do concern the Augustan poet, who explicitly addresses the reciprocal stereotypes that different cultures project on each other, and engages in a gendered discourse related to love and agency.

To begin with, in listing the reasons why her union with Leander must be kept secret, Hero includes the prejudices that the refined inhabitants of Abydos might have against a girl from Thrace – seen by Greek culture as a barbarian land: "Sometimes I fear that my homeland could be a disadvantage, and that I shall be judged unworthy of a union with a inhabitant of Abydos" (*Her* xix, 99–100). So, the mention of cultural prejudices is explicit in Ovid's words.

Moreover, among the many mythological stories of death in the sea that Ovid alludes to in Hero's and Leander's letters, some are based on displacement, social and gender injustice related to migration. Far from being merely ornamental, these side-stories are a hermeneutical tool offered to the reader. Let's list just a few of them.

In Leander's letter (*Her* xviii, 155–158), Ovid recalls the journey of the Argonauts, the Greek heroes who arrived in the Eastern regions of Colchos – connected to Phrixus' and Helle's story. In this passage, where love and wandering are combined (156), the geographical setting is described as exotic and extreme, marking a distance and a separation between Greece and the East (156). Besides,

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mentioning the Argonauts automatically leads, in the Mediterranean collective imaginary as well as in Ovid's mythographic encyclopaedia, to Jason and Medea's story, whose connection to migration and gender issues is a major scholarly topic.

Another relevant quotation from Leander's letter is the one regarding the rape and abduction of Orithyia, daughter of the king of Athens, by Boreas, the god of the North wind, who brought her to Thrace and married her (40–42). Addressing the god directly, Leander highlights precisely the fact that he, a Thracian, had fallen for a Greek woman, to the point of marrying and building a family with her (whereas in most cases stories of this kind end up with the rape of the girl or a metamorphosis). This mythological link between Greece and the extreme East is so strong to be also associated, in the Greek tradition, with the favourable winds that helped the Greeks during the Persian conflicts, and which eventually led to the rise of a cult for Boreas.

However, the most meaningful connection to secondary stories appears to be Phrixus' and Helle's episode, whose strong symbolic value we already recalled, and that is not just mentioned, but also elaborated on by Ovid. Leander mentions it (*Her* xviii, 117, 137–142) just as a premonition of his own drowning; but, in Hero's words, it is significantly connected to a combination of gender and displacement issues (*Her* xix, 161–169). It is not unworthy to remark that, in an epistolary dialogue between a man and a woman involved in a love relationship – a privileged context in which gender-roles as well as intellectual and emotional meanings are constructed and negotiated – it is the female voice which explicitly addresses these issues.

If one compares the two lovers' accounts, it appears that the boy is focused on his own actions that have the power to modify events: his decision to face the waves or wait for a calmer sea is in fact the turning point of the plot. The female part, instead, cannot take action at all. She can only sit at the loom, *feminea ars* (37–38), wonder and imagine what he might be doing meanwhile (39–54). She lives not directly, but through her lover's life and actions; she is well aware that he is the only one who can act, but on his actions

and decisions depend the destinies of both: "It's him the one who swims, but his body and my hope depend on the same waters" (149–150).

Eventually, Hero imagines overcoming these rigid gender separations, and being the one to swim across, taking full responsibility for the relationship: "Often I am tempted to swim myself across the waves" (161). A few lines below, she imagines a shared responsibility: "Or, let us leave each from his own coast, meet in the middle of the sea, kiss over the water, and then return each to his own city" (167–169). Both hypotheses are connected to anti-canonical characterizations of male and female bodies, nature, and potentialities. In fact, Hero is afraid that Leander might not have enough time and strength to go back and forth from Abydos to Sestos: "Perhaps you fear the time not be sufficient to go back, or you do not want to undertake a double effort" (165–166). In depicting this image, implying that a young man might not be strong enough and that a girl could substitute or help him, Hero contradicts the stereotype, supported by common etymologies in the classical era, that the *vir* ("man") is characterized by *virtus* ("strength") and the *mulier* ("woman") by *mollities* ("weakness"); a stereotype that she herself had used as an argument to convey that her suffering was worse than his: "We burn with the same fire, but I am not as strong as you: [...] men have a stronger nature. In tender girls, the mind is weak as is the body" (5–7).

Thus, on one hand, Hero is influenced by gender stereotypes, but on the other she is fascinated by the idea of going beyond the limits assigned to women by culture. For a few lines, she wonders whether this fascinating challenge should be attempted or not. If we consider just the literal meaning, we might perhaps think that Hero is just wondering whether or not to take a swim to reach her beloved. But if we consider the sea in general and the Dardanelles in particular as a concretion of symbols, as seen above, then Hero's temptation to take Leander's place, in leading their relationship and in taking an action that can influence the facts, and the destinies of both, assumes a more revolutionary significance.

Equally significant is the decision taken by the girl about whether or not to give in to this temptation. Hero speaks her mind in writing to Leander, she shares with him her wondering. However, she does not need to wait for his reply, as she can find the solution herself. As we, nowadays, might browse the internet to gather information and then make a sensible decision, she resorts to the means and guides of her time and culture: she mentally recalls the myths that could be relevant to her situation – that is to say the patrimony of common knowledge that guided human communities in pre-science societies. And she finds, so close to her geographically and situationally, the story of a boy and a girl challenging the sea: Phrixus and Helle riding the ram over the Hellespont. In this story, she immediately spots the gendered monition that answers her specific doubt, and suggests to her that she should be a good girl and stay home – to be an object and not a subject of erotic desire. The patriarchal tradition of Hero's culture, *ça va sans dire*, forbids women's challenges more than men's, as the story of Phrixus and Helle clearly show to our doubting woman: "But this channel is usually safer for men. In fact, if both Phrixus and his sister crossed it, why it is named only after her?" (162–164).

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Acknowledgments

The Ile Sainte Marguerite: Geographies of Repression and Incarceration in the Colonial Mediterranean

Dónal Hassett

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The low clicking of the cicadas combines with the gentle lapping of the sea to block out all other noises. The canopy of Aleppo pines offers some much-needed shade on a hot June day. The bulk of the holidaymakers who boarded the ferry with me that morning in Cannes are now sunning themselves in one of the coves that dot the southern shore of the Ile Sainte Marguerite. Some might have briefly visited the island's Fort Royal, best known as the place of incarceration of the mysterious Man in the Iron Mask immortalised in ink by Alexandre Dumas. Few, if any, will have made it to where I now find myself. The ticket vendor at the Fort was puzzled at my request for directions and Google Maps barely works out here on the island. No matter. This is a place best discovered in tranquil solitude. Amidst the encroaching vegetation, I can clearly see the carefully arranged lines of stones, each one marking the resting place of a North African once imprisoned on the island for their resistance to French colonial rule. Here, in the heart of France's Cote d'Azur, these graves, numbering over 200, represent an unexpected and moving reminder of the geographies of repression and incarceration that shaped movement in the colonial Mediterranean (*Fig. 1*).

Now a popular tourist spot, the Ile Saint-Marguerite once stood at the centre of the metaphorical, and indeed sometimes quite literal, carceral archipelago of the emergent French imperial state. The Fort Royal had served as a prison under the Ancien Régime, specifically used for the incarceration of Protestants following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In the wake of the French invasion of Algeria in 1830, the island's vocation as a place of incarceration was renewed, this time with a specifically colonial dimension. The brutal campaign of military conquest pursued by the French in Algeria was met with fierce resistance by large swathes of the Algerian population. In the west of the territory, the charismatic Emir 'Add Al-Qādir emerged as the leader of a counter-state that variously struggled against and sought to negotiate with the French military. To the east, Ahmed Bey, the Ottoman governor of the province of Constantine, led a concerted campaign of resistance

to French encroachment on his territory. The first North African prisoners incarcerated on Ile Sainte-Marguerite would come from the ranks of these resistance movements.

While the French authorities had begun deporting Algerians to the metropole for incarceration as early as 1836, it was in 1841 that the policy was officially instituted, and the Ile Sainte-Marguerite was designated for this purpose. The first prisoners arrived that year, including Ahmed Bey's former leading general and administrator Ali Ben Aïssa, a prominent figure in the successful defeat of the French during the first siege of Constantine in 1836. Ben Aïssa had subsequently pledged allegiance to the French but, when he was accused of minting coins to support Ahmed Bey's ongoing campaign of resistance, he was convicted of counterfeit and sentenced to 20 years hard labour and deportation to the metropole. Ben Aïssa's case underlines the extent to which those imprisoned on the island, whether they were charged with explicitly political crimes (treason, sedition etc.) or convicted for ordinary crimes (theft, forgery, assault), were primarily conceived of as a threat to the nascent colonial order in Algeria (*Fig. 2*).

The numbers of prisoners detained on the island swelled dramatically in the wake of the defeat of 'Abd Al-Qādir's forces at the Battle of the Smala in May 1843. Over 300 men, women, and children captured in the Emir's camp were deported to and detained on the island. This surge in the prisoner population led to a sharp decline in conditions, with the North African detainees suffering the consequences of overcrowding and poor diet. Efforts were made to improve the conditions of the prisoners, especially in the wake of the inspection visit of the noted colonial reformer and convert to Islam Ismaÿl Urbain in 1846–1847. Prisoners were ultimately allowed to leave the confines of the fort during the day and make use of the rest of the limited space on the island. They were allowed to prepare their own food, intermingle relatively freely and, when necessary, bury their own dead.

The numbers incarcerated on Ile Sainte-Marguerite fluctuated for the rest of the period of the conquest. Historian Michel Renard

estimates that the peak of the prisoner population was reached in April 1847, when 843 North Africans were detained there for a range of crimes related to their resistance to colonial rule. Even after the colony was formally "pacified" in 1847, the island continued to serve as a place of detention for those whose actions were considered a threat to the colonial order. Tribal leaders who resisted the encroachment of and expropriation by the expanding colonial state were joined in the prison by so-called "bandits" whose thefts of settler and/or military property were understood as acts of resistance by the colonial authorities themselves. The island continued to operate as a place of detention for North Africans until 1884.

The Ile Sainte-Marguerite was just one outpost of a much wider and constantly expanding network of penitentiary structures developed by the nascent colonial state in this period. Historian Sylvie Thénault has shown how the fortresses of France's Mediterranean coast, including the island of Corsica, were increasingly deployed for the purposes of the incarceration of colonial prisoners from Algeria and subsequently Tunisia throughout the late nineteenth century. In the wake of the mass uprising against French rule in the Kabylia region of Algeria in 1871, the so-called Moqrani Revolt, a significant contingent of prisoners (around 250) were directed to the Fort Royal on Ile Saint-Marguerite. Others were sent much further afield, to penal colonies in French Guiana and, most famously, on the island of New Caledonia/Kanaky, where their descendants are living testaments to the broad and enduring reach both of the coercion of the carceral colonial state of the late nineteenth century and the resistance it provoked.

Of course, the coercive French colonial polity would continue to use a combination of detention and deportation to repress nationalist resistance in Algeria throughout the twentieth century. The founder and first leader of the Algerian nationalist movement Messali Hadj spent much of his life either behind the bars of a French prison or in some form of forced exile, whether in remote regions of Algeria itself, small French provincial towns, a fortress

on a French Atlantic island, or even a labour camp in the French colony of Congo. Many more foot-soldiers in the nationalist movement were imprisoned far away from their families either in labour camps in the harsh conditions of the Sahara or in the prisons of metropolitan France. Both restricting freedom of movement and forced displacement across, within and beyond the Mediterranean space were key coercive tools deployed by the French, and indeed other imperial powers in the region.

The community of prisoners established on the Ile Sainte-Marguerite constituted a micro-society, albeit one profoundly shaped and limited by the omnipresence of the coercive colonial state. Unlike the Emir ʿAbd al-Qādir and his extensive retinue, who were imprisoned in the castles of Pau and then Amboise on the French mainland, the prisoners of Ile Sainte-Marguerite had limited contact with the local French, though did live alongside a significant population of soldiers stationed in the fort. The colonial archive is largely indifferent to how these men, women, and children, built lives for themselves, conducted relationships within and beyond their communities and how they processed their experiences through their own cultural and religious structures of feeling. Fanny Colonna's path-breaking work on North African prisoners in Corsica in the period shows the potential for thorough historical research to shine a new light on the lives of those incarcerated by the French colonial state in the Mediterranean but we have yet to see such a detailed study for the Ile Sainte-Marguerite.

Instead, the prisoners appear to us today through the heavily mediated prisms of painting and photography, objects of display and subjects of imperial power whose agency has been negated. Incarcerated at the peak of the Orientalist craze, a trend that both reflected and reinforced the processes of Othering that underpinned colonial expansion, the prisoners of Ile Sainte-Marguerite soon attracted the attention of prominent French artists. Ernest Buttura, a Parisian painter who summered in Cannes, produced perhaps the best-known portrayal of the prisoners. His composition

juxtaposed the familiar landscape of the Provencal coast with a simultaneously sanitised and exoticised image of the daily life of those incarcerated on the island (*Fig. 3*).

The work of the Orientalist painters like Buttura was somewhat mirrored in the mass production of photographic images of the North African detainees. The multiple postcards portraying the island's prisoners are a point of intersection between the growing market for photography of "exotic" people and places in the Empire at the time and the expanding use of photography as a tool of legibility and disciplinarity for the coercive colonial state. Both the alterity and captivity of the North Africans was foregrounded to underline the power of the emergent French trans-Mediterranean imperial polity (*Fig. 4*).

This same objectifying gaze is replicated in the principal form of commemoration of the North African prisoners on the island today. In 1992, the French artist Jean Le Gac was commissioned to complete a series of murals on the walls of the cells in which prisoners from Algeria had been detained. While undoubtedly striking, Le Gac's murals remain firmly within an Orientalist register. The Kiplingesque colonial administrators, the Bedouin fantasia, the inexplicable bare-breasted African woman and semi-naked North African "belly-dancer", are far more a reflection of the artist's racialised and gendered colonial imaginary than of the experiences of the North African men and women once imprisoned there. Ironically, this artistic intervention unintentionally exposes the persistence of an objectifying and sanitising discourse that minimises the violent nature of the colonial state, even here at a site of incarceration, and dehumanises the victims of colonial oppression (*Fig. 5* and *Fig. 6*).

And yet the cemetery, a largely abandoned space on the margins of the island's official tourist trail, does speak to the dignity and humanity of those who lived and died far from their native land, simultaneously victims of and resisters against French colonial rule. It was the prisoners who ensured that their dead were buried in

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accordance with their religious traditions, it was they who created this sacred space for their community to honour those whose lives were curtailed by the violence of the colonial state. The neat rows of stones marking the resting place of those forcibly displaced across the Mediterranean is a poignant reminder that mobility in the Mare Nostrum has long been shaped by the coercive logics of colonialism. As I stand in silence by these untended graves, I cannot help but think of those among the descendants of these men and women who have found their own watery graves at the bottom of the Mediterranean, victims of the ever-evolving coercive apparatus of border regimes that are, at least partially, grounded in these same, enduring logics. Movement within, across, and between Mediterranean spaces remains restricted by and reflective of geographies of incarceration and repression.

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All that Glitters Is Not Gold

Natalie Fritz

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¹ The gold-wrapped migrants from the international film poster of *Eldorado* (Markus Imhoof, CH/DE 2018). Photo by Massimo Sestini. © Courtesy of Frenetic Films.

They sit or lie on the deck of the huge ship, scared to death and utterly exhausted. Hundreds of people. Women, men and children have been saved by the Operation Mare Nostrum coast guards and now they are trying to stay alive until they arrive in an Italian harbour (*Fig. 1*).

For these people, the idealized vision of Europe as a longed-for place, full of possibilities, turned out to be a veritable Eldorado: almost impossible to reach and, only at a high risk. Fabulous Eldorado, the legendary city or empire of gold, located somewhere in the northern part of South America, was once the place that many European adventurers longed for. Different expeditions were planned and organized from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, based on rumours and legends. They all aimed to find the place and bring back all the wealth, gold and jewels to Europe. None of the exhibitions succeeded in locating the golden city; some of them found silver, gold and other valuables, others made important geographic discoveries, but most of them just found death from hunger, fights with indigenous people and disease.

Later, in the nineteenth century, thousands and thousands of Europeans emigrated to the new and alleged Eldorado, the United States, to establish a – hopefully – better life overseas. A part of these European migrants did not leave Europe voluntarily at all but were forced to go by the local authorities. They sent their inconvenient inhabitants – mostly destitute farmers or mentally disabled people – to North America to avoid the costs their sustenance would have entailed. The communes bought the tickets for the long and risky passage, as the cheapest way to get rid of these people. Of course, many of them arrived in quite a poor state, having had to make the long voyage by "cattle class" where disease spread and hunger was a permanent companion. Already on their journey, many of the migrants realized that the promised paradise on earth may not be what they had imagined. They were inspected and, if rated "useful" in an economic sense, sent to find work and build a life. Human capital to build up the aspiring nation.

If we come back to the first picture of the people on the sea rescue ship, we realize that the only golden thing these shipwreck survivors have found so far on their passage to Europe are the rescue blankets wrapped around them. Today, for many the passage to happiness is no longer across the Atlantic but across the Mediterranean.

Swiss director Markus Imhoof named his 2018 documentary about the situation of migration in the Mediterranean Sea *Eldorado* (CH/DE 2018) because Europe has become a sort of Eldorado, a dreamt-of place, almost unreachable and therefore even more desirable. At the same time, Imhoof's film highlights the parallels between medieval adventurers and contemporary migrants, both groups having specific economic objectives which result in imponderable human consequences, often hidden from the public eye. *Eldorado* is in fact a film that does not primarily document the traffic of people seeking a better life, but the traffic of goods, which in this case also means human capital (*Fig. 2*).

What is intriguing in award-winning *Eldorado* is the fact that it uses the well-known images of shipwrecked or almost shipwrecked people – mostly people of colour – which circulate in the (social) media as representations of either "the Mediterranean Sea migration crisis" or "the flood of migrants overwhelming the European countries", to dig deeper and follow the fortunes of those who were saved.

The audience witnesses how the refugees are examined and categorized on the rescue ship and also attends the arrival processes on land, where the survivors are medically inspected, registered, divided into groups and finally given a number. The migrants are no longer individuals but anonymous numbers, goods with a barcode. Maybe that makes it easier for the men and women performing these immigration inspections, for they have no time for sympathy but just to follow the routine of their jobs. During this highly efficient procedure the camera zooms in on the exhausted faces of the men and women setting foot on Italian soil. Incidentally, the disinfection carpet the refugees must use before entering Europe is red... (*Fig. 3*) But the arrival checks make it absolutely

clear that these people are no guests of honour; if anything, they are labourers who are probably of some benefit to the European economy.

The film follows the hidden paths of illegal employment and exploitation that nowadays has become almost indispensable, for example in the agricultural context in Italy or Spain, where most of the migrants who cross the Mediterranean first set foot on land. The huge number of unprotected illegal migrants are a stroke of luck for the organized crime that makes a lot of money by hiring them in inhumane conditions for the arduous work in the fields. Imhoof and his team clandestinely filmed the situation of these illegal migrants, who live in the middle of the fields in so-called "ghettos" which are controlled by the mafia (*Fig. 4*). The tomato pickers must pay for the housing even though the tents and shacks cannot really be described as decent quarters. Women who are considered too weak for the agricultural work are forced into prostitution.

The former shipwreck survivors are now slaves of the capitalist system that forces agriculture to produce tradeable fruit or vegetables, for example. The lower the production costs, the better the sales. The African illegals are a good without rights or permits, but with debts to pay and so they are are a crucial element of the European economy. In the film an Italian syndicalist explains the paradoxical economic situation of the illegal migrants as follows: "The production of tomatoes is based on the slavery of illegal African immigrants. The tinned tomatoes are sold in Africa because they are cheaper than cultivating tomatoes there. The money the Africans use to buy the tinned tomatoes has been sent to them by their relatives, who work and live in the tomato plantations..."

Interweaving these contemporary scenes with Imhoof's personal memory of Giovanna, an eight-year-old Italian girl the director's family took in after World War II, the film opens three areas of reflection: first, it sheds light on the impact of different representations of migrants either as individuals with specific biographies or as an anonymous mass. Second, it highlights how short-term our historical memory is when European countries try to protect – the military connotation seems inept in this

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² Front credits. Film still from *Eldorado*
(Markus Imhoof, CH/DE 2018), 00:00:40.

³ The red disinfection carpet upon land-
ing. Film still from *Eldorado* (Markus Im-
hoof, CH/DE 2018), 00:39:41.

⁴ Housing in the fields. Film still from *El-
dorado* (Markus Imhoof, CH/DE 2018),
00:51:08.

⁵ Entering the promised land? Film still
from *Eldorado* (Markus Imhoof, CH/DE
2018), 00:39:54.

3

4

5

situation – their borders and sea routes from unwanted migrants, while Europeans left their home countries for the same reasons just over a hundred years ago. Third, the film depicts one of the mechanisms that keep our global, capitalist economy going and that no one really wants to see: there has to be an imbalance to get a good profit. Europe does not want the migrants who cross the Mediterranean because of the costs they entail, as some populist, right-wing European politicians postulate. But without them – legal and illegal alike – many branches of the European economy and infrastructure would not function anymore. The new proletariat, as Imhoof puts it, is an external one which we exported with the economic colonialization of the global South: poverty in African countries is also a consequence of European commercial policies that obviously lack a sense of responsibility.

Eldorado is an emotional invitation to critically reflect on the mass media representations of migrants crossing the Mediterranean and their dehumanizing undertones. Even though we see how the shipwrecked are saved and later registered, Peter Indergand's merciless camera points out that these methodical and professional processes are more reminiscent of the registration of goods or livestock in a customs office than the reception of (nearly dead) human beings (*Fig. 5*). However, the personal strand with the story of young Imhoof and Giovanna, and the background stories of the African migrants, creates an emotional proximity that rehumanizes migrants as individuals and thereby challenges the discourse on the "Mediterranean migration crisis" as a political problem requiring administration in the border states.

The film postulates that the vicious circle can only be broken if Europe, as a fluid conglomerate of nations, first of all acts collectively and in observance of human rights. Regarding the Mediterranean passages and the almost 30,000 dead since 2014, in these lethal circumstances it is no longer humane to make a distinction between economic migrants and for example political refugees – especially if the need to migrate is due to European failures at either a political or economic level. *Eldorado* shows that migrants are individuals with individual biographies which led them to

leave their homes. They are not goods, not a Black mass, but men, women and children with hopes, dreams and dignity – that must be respected.

The images of overcrowded small boats and military ships filled with gold-wrapped survivors, which have been circulating in the mass media for years, will only disappear once the economic imbalance between Europe and the global South is eliminated. But with a view to today's political and climatological situation there is not much hope that this change will come soon. The idea of a safe passage across the Mediterranean to a golden future will unfortunately not die soon either. But a film like *Eldorado* may change how the audience perceives representations of migration and create a certain sensitivity towards the political and economic processes that historically facilitated the evolution of an imbalance between North and South. The international acclaim for Imhoof's film from critics, festival juries and audiences still gives hope, because it makes it obvious that there is a rise in the awareness of these correlations and the sense of responsibility.

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Agnese, Battista: [Portolan Atlas]. [1552]–[1564].
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CAPPADOCIA· ARMENIA·

MINOR·

PONTVS·ET BITHYNIA·

ASIA·

PVGLIA· ALBANIA·

CALABRIA·

PAMPYLIA·

LICIA·

CILICIA·

ANGVSTIA·CILICIAE·

CIPRVS·

CANDIA·

SYRIACVM·

SYRIA·

nazareth

hierusalem

bethlon

MARE·PVNICV· LIBICVM·MARE·

MARE·ABGYTIACV·

SVRTIS·MAGNA·

CAIRO

AEGYPTVS·

AEGYPTVS·

ARABIAE
FELICIS
PARS·

Sancta catarina

MARMARICA·LIBIAE·ET IOTA·AEGYPTVS·

NILVS·FLVVIVS·

When not the object of study in art history or cultural history, pictorial and material sources often lead something of a marginal existence in academic discourse. The importance of these documents for research in the field of connected histories remains underrated. This does them an injustice and prevents new academic insights. Whether everyday objects, sophisticated artefacts or the works of famous artists, as creations and tangible products of the skills and abilities, knowledge, experience and emotional entanglements of human beings through space and time, pictorial and material sources may all be considered essential repositories of memory, traditions and identities. As such, whatever the medium – drawing or print, map, letter or book, measuring instrument, textile or glass object, mask, painting or film, sculpture or photograph – these sources are to be thought of not as passive entities but as dynamic and many-layered social actors, invested with meaning and an agency resulting from their interaction with people. To the editors of this collection of 45 'visual reflections' it seemed that this unique agency of the visual could be an appropriate, accessible and vivid means to convey many of the themes that the COST Action "People in Motion: Entangled Histories of Displacement across the Mediterranean (1492–1923)", or "PIMo" for short, is about.

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Visual Reflections across the Mediterranean Sea

People in Motion
Entangled Histories of Displacement
across the Mediterranean (1492-1923)