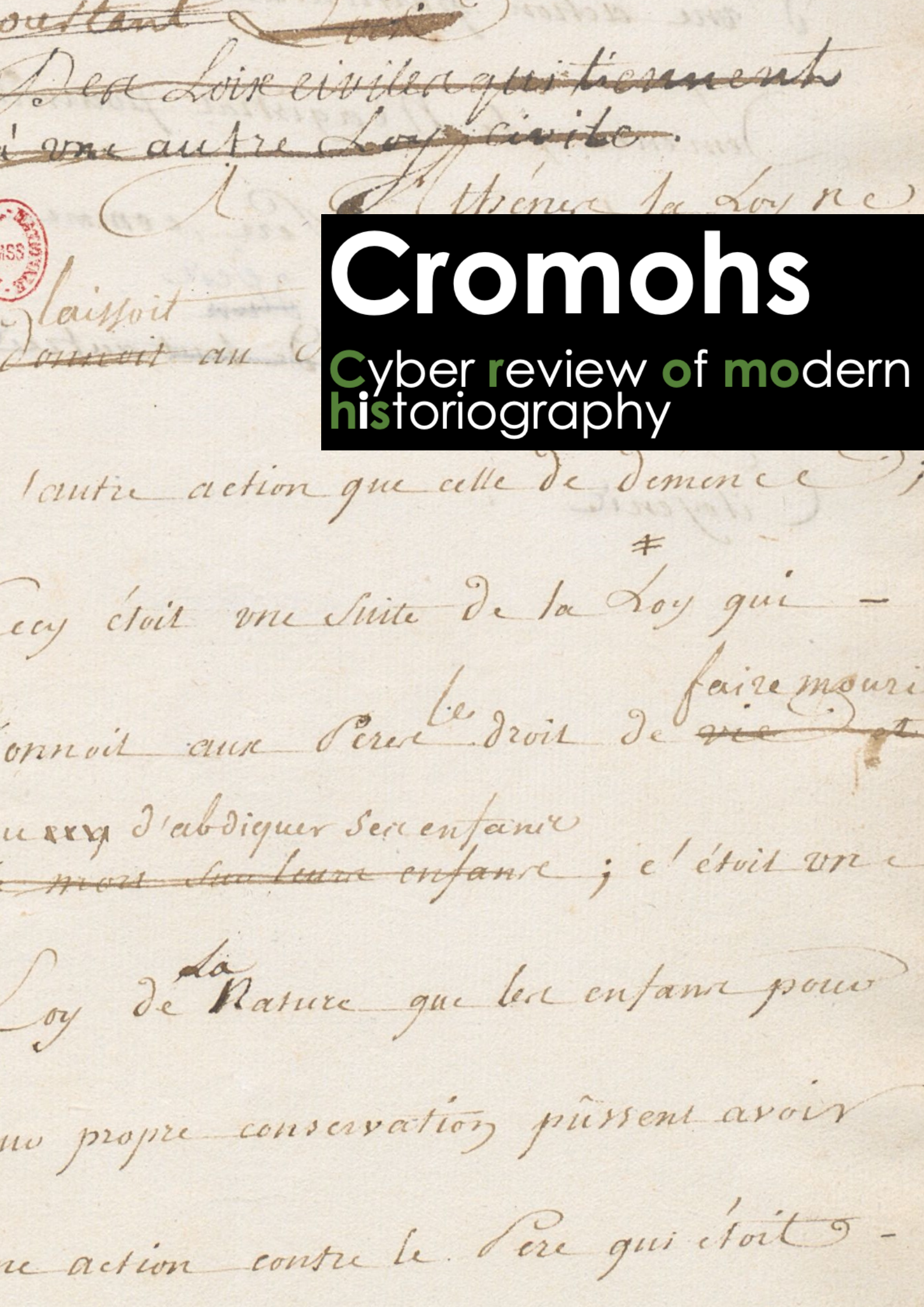

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Contents

Articles

Historians and Their Craft

Book Reviews

Articles

The Stories Paper Tells
Paper in the Life of the Alorna Family, Portuguese State Prisoners (1759–1777)

VANDA ANASTÁCIO
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How can one not succumb to the fascination of paper? How can one escape the seduction of what seems to be the infinite possibilities of its uses? How can one grasp the multitude of symbolic and emotional meanings invested in paper through time and space? How can one dissociate the possibilities of expression and communication it facilitates from the identity it helps construct, the networks it helps build, the communities of practice it makes possible to generate?

In this paper, I would like to examine these issues by briefly focusing on two dimensions of paper mobility: a larger dimension related to international paper trade, documenting the circulation of imported paper in Portugal in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and a smaller-scale one, focusing on the vital importance of paper circulation in a relatively small group of people formed of family members, relatives, clients, and protectors.

Papermaking, paper trade and paper consumption

Although papermaking in Portugal can be traced back to 1411,[1] and printing presses have been operating there since 1487,[2] during most of the early modern period, Portugal was, to a great extent, an importer of fine paper. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the main suppliers seem to have been the papermakers of France

[1] JOÃO RUAS, 'Notícia sobre a História do papel em Portugal', *Cultura. Revista de História e Teoria das Ideias* 33 (2014): 31–37, https://journals.openedition.org/cultura/2344: 'Em Portugal são conhecidos os primórdios do fabrico do papel a partir de dois documentos que testemunham essa prática na região de Leiria: uma autorização, datada de 1411, para Gonçalo Lourenço Gomide instalar um engenho de papel junto ao rio Lis; e outro documento, de 1441, que se refere ao transporte do trapo para os moinhos de Leiria. [In Portugal, the beginnings of paper manufacturing are known from two documents that testify to this practice in the Leiria region: an authorisation, dated 1411, for Gonçalo Lourenço Gomide to install a paper mill next to the River Lis; and another document, from 1441, which refers to the transport of rags to the mills of Leiria.]'

[2] The first books printed in Portuguese territory were the product of the skills of both Jewish and Catholic printers. In 1487, the Jewish printer Samuel Gacon, published a version of the *Pentateuch* in Faro. This incunable was followed a year later in 1488 by the work of Sanchez de Vercial who published, in Chaves, a book on the Christian sacraments with the title *Sacramental*. In 1489, Eliezar Toledano (also a Jewish printer) published in Lisbon the *Comments on the Pentateuch* by Mose ben Nachmann, and in the same year, a work in Portuguese on the sacrament of penance, the *Tratado de Confisson,* was published in Chaves. See JOSÉ VITORINO DE PINA MARTINS, 'O Tratado de Confissom e os problemas do livro impresso em Portugal no século XV', in *Tratado de Confissom* (Lisbon: INCM, 1973), 9–114, and VALENTINA SUL MENDES, *Os Incunábulos das Bibliotecas Portuguesas* (Lisbon: Secretaria de Estado da Cultura-Instituto da Biblioteca Nacional e do Livro, 1995).

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and Italy,[3] but in the seventeenth century, during the sixty years when Portugal was part of the Spanish Habsburg Empire as the junior partner in the 'Dual Monarchy' (1580–1640),[4] the dynamics of availability and prestige of European paper had changed. In the early 1600s, despite competition from Genoa,[5] France was the greatest European exporter of paper, but around 1630, the first paper windmills were established in the Netherlands, and by the 1670s, Dutch manufacturers had perfected a new technological device, known as the 'Hollander beater', which not only improved the quality of the product but also increased production. According to historian Mark Kurlansky, 'within a year of installing the beaters, Holland became a white paper exporter and a major international competitor'.[6]

The reputation of Dutch paper continued to grow over time. In 1751, in the article 'Papier' included in the *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, which was edited by Diderot and D'Alembert, the Chevalier de Jaucourt stated that although 'France, Holland, Genoa and England' were the countries that 'made paper best', Dutch paper was the whitest of all,[7] and concluded that 'Holland makes the most beautiful paper in the world, and in the largest quantity'.[8] By that time, Dutch fine paper was outselling the production of any other country. Joseph Jerôme de Lalande, a French scientist who wrote *Art de faire le papier* (*The Art of Papermaking*) in 1761, was puzzled by this state of affairs. Several chapters of his book were dedicated to examining the differences between the production of paper in France and in the Netherlands (including the construction of the mills, the sorting of rags, and the whitening processes). He acknowledged Dutch technological innovations, underlined the fact that Dutch papermakers were dependent on imports of rags to be able to work, but admitted, albeit reluctantly, that Dutch paper was 'gentler, finer, smoother,

[3] ARNALDO FARIA DE ATAÍDE E MELO, *O Papel como Elemento de Identificação* (Lisbon: Officinas Gráficas da Biblioteca Nacional, 1926), 23. See also VANDA ANASTÁCIO, 'Introdução', in *Visões de Glória (Uma Introdução à Poesia de Pêro de Andade Caminha)*, 2 vols (Lisbon: JNICT-Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1994), vol. 2, xi–xxvi, and VANDA ANASTÁCIO, *Leituras Potencialmente Perigosas e outros Estudos sobre Camões e a sua Época* (Lisbon: Caleidoscópio, 2020), 162–69.

[4] JEAN FRÉDÉRIC SCHAUB, 'The union between Portugal and the Spanish Monarchy', in *The Iberian World 1450-1820,* eds FERNANDO BOUZA, PEDRO CARDIM, and ANTONIO FEROS (London: Routledge, 2019), 126–41.

[5] See LOTHAR MÜLLER, *White Magic. The Age of Paper* (Cambridge-Malden: Polity Press, 2014), 37–46.

[6] According to MARK KURLANSKY, *Paper. Paging through History* (New York-London: Norton & Company, 2016), 170: 'Because the Hollander beater was faster, it produced cheaper paper. The French, British and other papermakers found it very difficult to compete with Dutch paper until they acquired Hollander beaters too'.

[7] CHEVALIER DE JAUCOURT, 'Papier', in *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences des arts et des métiers*, eds Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert (Neufchastel: Samuel Faulche et compagnie, 1765), vol. 11, 846 (https://artflsrv04.uchicago.edu/philologic4.7/encyclopedie0922/navigate/11/4228): 'Les manufactures de *papier* se sont multipliées dans presque toute l'Europe; cependant la France, la Hollande, Gènes & Angleterre sont les pays où on le fait le mieux. En general il depend beaucoup de la qualité du linge dont on se sert dans les lieux où on fabrique le *papier* […]. C'est pour cela que les *papiers* de Hollande & de Flandres sont plus blancs que ceux d'Italie & de France, & beaucoup plus que celui d'Allemagne'.

[8] JAUCOURT, 'Papier': 'La Hollande qui fait le plus beau *papier* du monde, & en plus grande quantité'.

softer and more transparent' than French paper.[9] Competition between the two countries for the international market included industrial espionage on the part of French mill owners and government officials,[10] and even led to the creation of misleading watermarks by French papermakers such as "'armes d'Amsterdam" to imply they were Dutch'.[11]

In Portugal, in the same period, efforts were being made to develop paper production. Several manufactories were established in Lisbon (1623), Tomar (1633) and Vila Viçosa (1637), but their production of fine paper was scarce, and they were short-lived.[12] The demand for paper increased exponentially after the restoration of independence in 1640. During the twenty-eight years of war that followed, paper was crucial to support the printed propaganda machine put in place by the newly acclaimed King João IV. In 1641, the first Portuguese periodical—*Gazeta da Restauração*—was created,[13] and Portuguese agents and ambassadors flooded European courts and printshops with pamphlets and memoirs in several languages, defending the king's right to the Portuguese throne.[14] Surviving as an independent country also implied restructuring public administration and creating a paper-based bureaucratic system capable of managing an empire with territories in India, Africa, and Brazil. Hierarchies of command and networks of correspondents operated at a distance through orders and dispositions set down on paper.[15] In 1655, fifteen years after the political separation from Spain, the Portuguese historian Manuel Severim de Faria, in his *Notícias de Portugal* (*News from Portugal*), stated that although paper was 'a thing of much use' in Portugal, 'all of it comes to us from abroad'.[16]

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[9] JOSEPH JERÔME DE LA LANDE, *Art de faire le papier* (Paris: Saillant & Nyon, 1761), 81 and 82: 'Le papier de Hollande a un oeil plus doux, plus fin, plus uni, plus transparent […]. Le papier de Hollande est plus épais, mieux fourni que le nôtre' and 'Il ya aussi dans les beaux papiers de Hollande un certain velouté agráble à la vue'.

[10] KURLANSKY, *Paper. Paging through History,* 232: 'French mill owners sent industrial spies to Holland to steal Dutch papermaking ideas. More openly, in 1768, the French government sent its manufacturing inspector for papermaking, Nicolas Desmarest, at his own request, to observe papermaking in Zaanland. On his way back, he stopped in Flanders to see water-driven Hollander beaters'.

[11] KURLANSKY, *Paper. Paging through History,* 231: 'The Dutch reputation was so favorable that some French mills used watermarks such as "armes d'Amsterdam" to imply they were Dutch'.

[12] RUAS, 'Notícia sobre a História do papel em Portugal', 2–3; FRANCISCO SOUSA VITERBO, *Artes industriaes e indústrias portuguezas. O vidro e o papel* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1903), 70; FARIA DE ATAÍDE E MELO, *O Papel como Elemento de Identificação,* 23–26.

[13] EURICO GOMES DIAS, *Gazetas da Restauração (1641-1648): uma revisão das estratégias diplomático-militares portuguesa* (Lisbon: Instituto Diplomático-Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros, 2006).

[14] JOÃO FRANCISCO MARQUES, *A Parenética Portuguesa da Restauração 1640-1668: a Revolta e a Mentalidade*, 2 vols (Porto: INIC, 1989); FERNANDO BOUZA ÁLVAREZ, *Imagen y propaganda: Capítulos de historia cultural del reinado de Felipe II* (Madrid: Akal, 1998); VANDA ANASTÁCIO, 'Fragmenting Iberia: Images of Castile in Seventeenth Century Portuguese Pamphlets', *Portuguese Studies* 25, no. 2 (2009): 199–214; VANDA ANASTÁCIO, "'Heróicas virtudes e escritos que as publiquem". D. Quixote nos papéis da Restauração', *Revue der iberischen Halbinseln* 28 (2007): 117–36.

[15] For a reflection on the importance of paper in administration see JOSÉ MARÍA PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ, 'Paper in Motion: Communication, Knowledge and Power: Case Studies for an Interdisciplinary Approach', *Cromohs. Cyber Review of Modern Historiography* 23 (2020): 81–112 and also MÜLLER, *White Magic. The Age of paper*, 31–37.

[16] MANUEL SEVERIM DE FARIA, *Notícias de Portugal* (Lisbon: Officina Craesbeeckiana, 1655), 19: 'O papel também he cousa de muito uso, e que todo nos vem de fora'.

Portuguese rulers became increasingly aware of this growing demand. They were concerned with the country's dependence on paper imports from the major papermakers in France, Genoa, and Holland, and tried to provide incentives to those interested in developing domestic paper production. In 1706, a Genoese investor named Giuseppe Maria Ottoni (or José Maria Ottone in Portuguese) obtained a license from King Pedro II granting him the monopoly on papermaking in the north of Portugal. In association with Marcos Bacelar Dantas, an army official stationed in Minho, he established a manufactory in Braga.[17] In 1708, another factory was created in Santa Maria da Feira,[18] and ten years later, King João V supported the partnership of the same Giuseppe Maria Ottoni with two government officials (the Count of Ericeira and João Neto Arnaud) to build a larger paper factory in Lousã.[19] By the time King João V died in 1750, at least four new paper factories had been created (in Paranhos, Lousã, São José de Braga and Abelheira), mostly by private investors who received legal support from the state.[20] The production, however, was mainly of brown, wrapping and packaging papers, and was too scarce to meet the country's needs. Furthermore, the increase in paper production brought with it a demand for rags, and a parallel export trade expanded in the shadow of the industry. This led to shortages of rags and occasionally forced manufacturing to stop. According to a bill issued in April 1749, which forbade the export of rags,[21] the largest paper manufactory in Lousã was at risk of closure due to a shortage of rags caused by 'men that buy them and send them out of these Kingdoms'.[22]

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[17] AURÉLIO OLIVEIRA, 'Fabrico de papel em Braga no século XVI', *História: Revista da Faculdade de Letras* 3, no. 8 (2007): 25–28 (25). MARIA JOSÉ FERREIRA DOS SANTOS, 'José Maria Ottone e a Indústria do Papel em Portugal no século XVIII', in *O Papel Ontem e Hoje. Catálogo da Exposição* (Coimbra: Renova-Arquivo da Universidade de Coimbra, 2008), 41–48 (41).

[18] MARIA JOSÉ FERREIRA DOS SANTOS, *A Indústria do papel em Paços de Brandão e Terras de Santa Maria (sec. XVIII e XIX)* (Santa Maria da Feira: Câmara Municipal de Santa Maria da Feira, 1997); ANDREIA FILIPA JORGE GASPAR, *Pelos caminhos da indústria do papel: uma abordagem histórico-geográfica. O caso da SOPORCEL*, Relatório de Estágio (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 2014), 43–52.

[19] MARIA DO ROSÁRIO CASTIÇO DE CAMPOS, 'A Fábrica de Papel da Lousã e o processo de industrialização em Portugal', *História: Revista da Faculdade de Letras,* s. 3, 10 (2009): 145–50.

[20] AVELINO POOLE DA COSTA, 'A Indústria do Papel em Portugal', *Boletim da Direcção Geral da Indústria* 2, nos 22–25 (1946); ARMANDO DE CASTRO, 'Papel, Indústria do', in *Dicionário de História de Portugal,* ed. JOEL SERRÃO, 6 vols (Porto: Figueirinhas, 1985), vol. 4, 540–42; JORGE BORGES DE MACEDO, *Problemas de História da Indústria Portuguesa no século XVIII* (Lisbon: Estudos de Economia Aplicada, 1963). ALEX FAVERZANI DA LUZ, 'O fomento manufatureiro em Portugal e os efeitos da política econômica pombalina (século XVIII)', *Revista Trilhas da Historia* 8, no. 15 (2018): 90–104; GUSTAVO DE MATOS SEQUEIRA, *A Abelheira e o fabrico do papel em Portugal* (Lisbon: Tipografia Portugal, 1935). See also LEONOR FREIRE COSTA, PEDRO LAINS, and SUSANA MÜNCH MIRANDA, *História Económica de Portugal (1143-2010),* 3rd ed. (Lisbon: Esfera dos Livros, 2014).

[21] ARNALDO FARIA DE ATAÍDE E MELO, 'Fábrica de papel da Lousã. Alvará proibindo a exportação de trapo em benefício desta fábrica', in *O Papel como Elemento de Identificação,* 86–88 (86): 'Hey por bem, e mando que nenhuma pessoa de qualquer qualidade ou condição que seja, natural ou estrangeira, possa por qualquer modo mandar para fora destes Reynos trapos brancos e negros […]'

[22] FARIA DE ATAÍDE E MELO, 'Fábrica de papel da Lousã', 86: 'A Fábrica de papel […] se achava em termos de não poder subsistir por falta de trapos com que nella trabalhasse, por se haverem levantado nos mesmos Reynos homens, que os comprão, e envião para fora deles, não só por via de negócio, mas com o fim de que a falta dos referidos trapos faça inútil a dita Fabrica'. On international rag trade, see MÜLLER, *White Magic. The Age of Paper,* 46–51.

Although governments changed, paper production continued to be at the heart of the concerns of Portuguese rulers. After the Lisbon Earthquake of 1755,[23] King José I and his Prime Minister, the Marquis of Pombal, paid special attention to the paper industry within the framework of the reconstruction of economic and financial infrastructures. Their policy of reducing imports of consumer goods and stimulating exports could only be achieved by improving existing industries and creating new ones. To foster manufacturing, the government acquired paper factories that were experiencing financial difficulties and took over their administration.[24] Measures to attract private investment were implemented through the concession of loans, legal privileges, and tax exemptions. As a result, at least six new papermills were established in São Payo-Moreira dos Cónegos (1787), Santa Maria da Feira (1789), Queluz, Rio de Mouro and Alenquer (1790–1791) and Paços de Brandão (1795).[25]

Jacome Ratton (1736–1821) was part of a group of businessmen supported by the Marquis of Pombal who were encouraged to invest in paper production. In his memoirs, published in 1813, Ratton states that in the 1760s and 1770s, most fine papers circulating in Portugal were imported, mainly from Genoa, France, and Holland, and attests to both the diversion of raw materials and the scarcity and poor quality of the paper produced locally:

> When the Project for the manufacture of cotton fabrics died out, it occurred to me to establish another one, of fine paper, which appeared to me to be equally beneficial, and of even greater utility; for this is a commodity of first necessity and of enormous consumption in Portugal and its colonies, and was all imported from abroad, mainly from Italy, France and Holland, where the few rags that could be of use were transported.[26]

[23] JORGE PEDREIRA, 'Os negociantes de Lisboa na segunda metade do século XVIII: padrões de recrutamento e percursos sociais', *Análise Social*, s. 4, 27, nos 116–17 (1992): 407–40; JORGE PEDREIRA, 'Tratos e contratos: actividades, interesses e orientações dos investimentos dos negociantes da praça de Lisboa (1755-1822)', *Análise Social*, s. 4, 31, nos 136–137 (1996): 355–79.

[24] This happened in Lousã and Alenquer, for instance. See PEDREIRA, 'Tratos e contratos', 374. MARIA DO ROSÁRIO CASTIÇO CAMPOS, 'Redes de Sociabilidade e Poder: Lousã no Século XVIII', PhD diss. (University of Coimbra, 2003) and JOSÉ HENRIQUE LEITÃO LOURENÇO, *A Indústria na Vila de Alenquer (1565-1931)* (Alenquer: Alenculta, 2017). See also JOSÉ HENRIQUE LEITÃO LOURENÇO and ANTÓNIO MOREIRA, 'Desenvolvimento industrial e atraso tecnológico em Portugal na segunda metade do século XVIII', in *Pombal Revisitado,* ed. MARIA HELENA CARVALHO DOS SANTOS, 2 vols, vol. 2 (Lisbon: Estampa, 1984).

[25] JOSÉ HENRIQUE LEITÃO LOURENÇO, *A Indústria na Vila de Alenquer (1565-1931),* 64; MARIA DE SÃO LUIZ DA CARREIRA, 'Marcas de água, Arquivo Histórico Parlamentar – Monarquia Constitucional 1821-1910', MA diss. (University of Lisbon, 2012), 47–48.

[26] In the original: 'Desvanecido o projecto da fábrica de chitas, lembrei-me estabelecer uma de papel fino, parecendo-me ser igualmente proveitosa, senão de maior utilidade; por ser hum genero de primeira necessidade, e de grandissimo consumo em Portugal, e suas colonias, vindo-lhe todo de fora, principalmente de Itália, França e Hollanda, para cujos países se transportavam os poucos trapos, que se aproveitavão'. JÁCOME RATTON, *Recordacoens de Jacome Ratton ... Sobre occurrencias do seu tempo, em Portugal, durante o lapso de sessenta e tres annos e meio, aliás de maio de 1747 a setembro de 1810, que rezidio em Lisboa: acompanhadas de algumas subsequentes reflexoens suas, para informaçoens de seus proprios filhos* (London: H. Bryer, Bridge Street, Blackfriars, 1813), 38.

Judging by the arguments presented by Estevão Cabral in a *Memória sobre o Papel* (*Report about Paper*), which he presented to the Lisbon Academy of Sciences in 1791, the situation had not changed much by the end of the century. Not only did shortages of rags continue to occur, but the massive imports of fine paper were, in his opinion, a cause of impoverishment and drainage of national resources:

> I'll reduce my subject to just one thing, the reason why treasure leaves our hands, which according to the printed note from customs is said to be more than two hundred thousand cruzados, which we contribute every year to Genoa and the Netherlands. Paper, I mean.[27]

By then, Dutch paper production had achieved such a level of proficiency and prestige that it was almost impossible for any fledgling industry to compete with it.

Private stories

How did innovations in papermaking and changes in the balance of forces in the circuits of trade impact the lives of ordinary people? I would like to argue that the quality, provenance, availability, and scarcity of paper have implications for social practice, individual perceptions, the shaping of self-expression, and the emotional investments of meaning.

On 3 September 1758, in Lisbon, there was an assassination attempt on King José I. Responsibility for the crime was imputed to the Duke of Aveiro and to the Marquis and Marchioness of Távora, who were tortured and executed in public on 13 January 1759 after a summary trial. The same fate befell the Count of Atouguia, who was their son-in-law, two of their sons, and several servants.[28] On the morning of the same day, another son-in-law of the presumed culprits, the Marquis of Alorna, Dom João de Almeida Portugal, was arrested at home and imprisoned—without formal accusation or trial—in the tower of Belém. According to the prisoner's record, made public by Alberto Telles in 1887, Dom João was transferred to the fort of Junqueira on 2 January 1761.[29] Six months later, his wife and children were sent to the Convent of São Félix in Chelas.[30] His son Dom Pedro, heir of the Alorna title, was placed under the tutelage of the Marquis of Pombal. The family remained separated for eighteen years, until King José I died, Queen D. Maria I ascended the throne, and the Marquis of Pombal was removed from power.

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[27] ESTEVÃO CABRAL, 'Memoria sobre o papel', in *Memorias económicas da Academia das Ciências de Lisboa para o Adiantamento da Agricultura, das Artes e da Indústria em Portugal e suas Conquistas (1789-1815),* ed. JOSÉ LUIZ CARDOSO, 5 vols (Lisbon: Banco de Portugal, 1991), vol. 4, 153–157 (154): 'Reduzo o meu assunto a falar de uma só cousa, por motivo da qual nos sai das mãos um tesouro, que pela nota impressa das alfandegas, consta serem mais de duzentos mil cruzados, que todos os anos contribuímos a Génova e à Holanda. O papel digo'.

[28] JOSÉ CASSIANO NEVES, 'Lisboa e a Tragédia dos Távoras', in *Miscelânea Curiosa* (Lisbon: s.n., 1983), 103–20.

[29] ALBERTO TELLES, 'A Bastilha Portugueza', *A Illustração Portugueza* 3, no. 42 (1887): 5–7.

[30] JOSÉ DE SOUSA AMADO, 'Introdução', in *As prisões da Junqueira durante o Ministério do Marquez de Pombal, escriptas alli mesmo pelo Marquez de Alorna, uma das suas victimas, publicados conforme o original,* ed. JOSÉ DE SOUSA AMADO (Lisbon: Typographia de Silva, 1857), iv.

The Marquis of Alorna described his living conditions in the Fort of Junqueira in a book written around 1775, when he was still imprisoned there. The book titled *As Prisões da Junqueira durante o Ministério do Marquez de Pombal* (*The Prisons of Junqueira during the Ministry of the Marquis of Pombal*) was circulated widely in manuscript form until its first publication in 1857.[31] He mentioned the poor conditions in the cells, the penury in which the prisoners lived, and the humiliations to which they were subjected. When he was moved to the Fort of Junqueira—located on the bank of the Tagus, close to the water—the building had just been modified to serve as a prison. There were nineteen cells on a floor located between a basement, where there were two torture chambers and a cemetery, and an upper floor, where the prison director, a clerk, the chaplain, and the guards had their quarters. The cells were small and poorly lit. There was nowhere to lie down, but after much insistence, Dom João was granted permission to build a cot from old doors and beams. Prisoners were kept in isolation and prevented from contacting each other or the world outside.

Dom João knew he was innocent and felt his situation as an outrage against his lineage, his person, and his honour. The deprivation of his privileges, the separation from his family, and the isolation and confinement felt like threats to his individuality and sanity. He knew he risked worsening his living conditions, torture, and even death if he tried to contact his family, but he was ready to risk everything to reach out for support. According to his account, whenever there were no guards present, the prisoners found ways to communicate with each other by means of knocks and whispers 'through the windows and sometimes through doors'.[32] The only way to send messages to family, friends, and supporters involved bribing guards, servants, and porters, but depended mainly on the availability of writing tools and materials. The most versatile and easiest to conceal was, of course, paper. This was not easily found in a prison where detainees were supposed to remain incommunicado. In these circumstances, which we may consider extreme, paper is invested with otherwise unexpected meanings.

Paper and emotions

According to the Marquis' account, at the start of his time in the Junqueira Fort, he could count on the 'compassionate soul', 'natural kindness', and 'charity' of a guard, named Domingos,[33] to communicate with other prisoners and to smuggle messages to

[31] MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *As prisões da Junqueira durante o Ministério do Marquez de Pombal, escriptas alli mesmo pelo Marquez de Alorna, uma das suas victimas, publicados conforme o original,* ed. JOSÉ DE SOUSA AMADO (Lisbon: Typographia de Silva, 1857).

[32] MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *As prisões da Junqueira*, 27. In the original: 'Os presos neste estado de tristeza não podiam deixar de recorrer a outro modo de desafogar o animo, que a forma destas prisões lhe apresentava; começaram a falar pelas janelas e algumas vezes pelas portas. Para condução das vozes dava bastante facilidade o muro do corredor'.

[33] In Portuguese: 'O génio compassivo', 'bondade natural' e 'caridade' in MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *As prisões da Junqueira*, 25–26: 'No princípio houve aqui um moço, chamado Domingos […] que era de genio compassivo, e de uma bondade natural admirável. Continuamente estava empenhado em animar, e consolar estes afflictos […]' (Initially there was a young man here, named Domingos […] with a compassionate soul, and remarkable natural kindness. He was concerned all the time to cheer and to console these distressed prisoners.)

his family. Along with some servants, Domingos had created a veritable network for the distribution of letters and essential goods in and out of the Fort.[34] Unfortunately, after a year and a half, these irregularities were discovered. The guard and his accomplices were arrested, and isolation was reinforced. However, by then, the prisoners were already in touch with their families and supporters and had found multiple ways to elude surveillance.

Albeit with interruptions and very much constrained by the difficulty in obtaining writing materials, the Marquis of Alorna managed to maintain a secret exchange of letters with his wife and children. For someone like Dom João, for whom written messages were the only way to connect with the world outside a prison cell, paper offered the possibility of emotional unburdening, a means of evading isolation, and a chance to keep the hope of freedom alive.[35] Since the correspondence of the Alorna family lasted for eighteen years, it also became a substitute for the expression of affection between husband and wife, and father and children. Paper enabled the Marquis to maintain a loving relationship with his wife and to follow the growth of his children, whose education he monitored at a distance by suggesting readings and giving advice on their behaviours and on the resistance to the State.[36]

The conditions of this exchange of letters varied depending on the opportunities, the goodwill of porters, and even changes in the prison's rules. The surviving correspondence is rich in details about the various ways surveillance was eluded: messages were delivered to the prisoner at night, passed to carriers through cracks in the roofs or holes made in the prison walls. Sometimes, they were hidden inside fabric bags hung outside at night, concealed among leftover food, or rolled up with the dirty laundry collected periodically by servants. The documents are especially eloquent when describing the difficulties the Marquis faced in obtaining writing

[34] MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *As Prisões da Junqueira*, 26: 'Chegou a tanto a sua caridade que aos mais angustiados procurou logo notícias dos seus parentes. O bom sucesso das primeiras empresas o afoitou para outras maiores: todos os que tinham casa receberam deste modo toda a casta de alívios, e assim dinheiro, como coisas de comer, remédios, trastes, etc., de tudo tiveram nesse tempo abundancia'. (His charity reached such heights that he immediately sought news of the relatives of the most distressed. The success of the first endeavours helped him to try bigger ones: all those who had a house thus received all kinds of relief, like money, food, medicines, useful objects, etc., they all got plenty of everything at the time.)'

[35] On writing in situations of confinement see ANTÓNIO CASTILLO GOMEZ, 'Escrito en prisión. Las escrituras carcelarias', *Península*, no. 0 (2003): 147–70; ANTÓNIO CASTILLO GOMEZ, *Entre la pluma y la pared. Uma historia social de la escritura em los Siglos de Oro* (Madrid: Akal Ediciones, 2006); ANTÓNIO CASTILLO GOMEZ and VERONICA SIERRA BLAS, *Letras bajo sospecha* (Gijón: Ediciones TREA, 2005); VERONICA SIERRA BLAS, 'Escrituras y lecturas em reclusión', *Vegueta. Anuario de la Facultad de Geografia e Historia* 19 (2019): 23–29; JAVIER SANCHEZ ZAPATERO, 'La literatura concentracionária: universalidad, representación y memoria', *Vegueta. Anuario de la Facultad de Geografia e Historia* 19 (2019): 431–55; MARIE-FRANCE SILVER, 'Résister: la correspondance des prisonnières protestantes de la tour de Constance', in *Femmes en toutes lettres. Les épistolaires du XVIIe siècle*, eds MARIE-FRANCE SILVER and MARIE LAURE GIRON SWDERSKI (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 97–108.

[36] VANDA ANASTÁCIO, 'La educación de los sentimentos y de las costumbres: el punto de vista del segundo marqués de Alorna (1726-1802)', in *Educar los sentimentos y las costumbres: una mirada desde la História,* eds MONICA BOLUFER and JUAN GOMIS (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2014), 109–30. See also MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere,* ed. VANDA ANASTÁCIO (Lisbon: Caleidoscópio, 2022).

supplies: in his letters to his wife and daughters Dom João constantly asked them to send him paper and quills.[37]

Confinement, isolation, deprivation, and uncertainty about the future were difficult to endure, but from the point of view of the Marquis of Alorna, the lack of paper seemed more important than any other constraint. The shortage of paper led him to invent a process of recycling the bits and pieces he could get hold of. As he explained in one letter to his son, he found a way to wash ink away from used paper:

> In order for you to see the constraints and the poverty in which I find myself you will learn that this paper, which contains what I have said so far, has been written on before. Necessity, that is the mother of all crafts, led me to conceive, with good results, that it would be possible, by moistening, to fade the letters, by a process it would be too lengthy to explain to you here, and I was lucky to have something on which to make such an experiment.[38]

The letters still exhibit the marks of this endeavour. In some of them, one can still see the shadows of squares, black edgings, and traces of the original documents, which make Dom João's letters look like medieval palimpsests (Fig. 1).

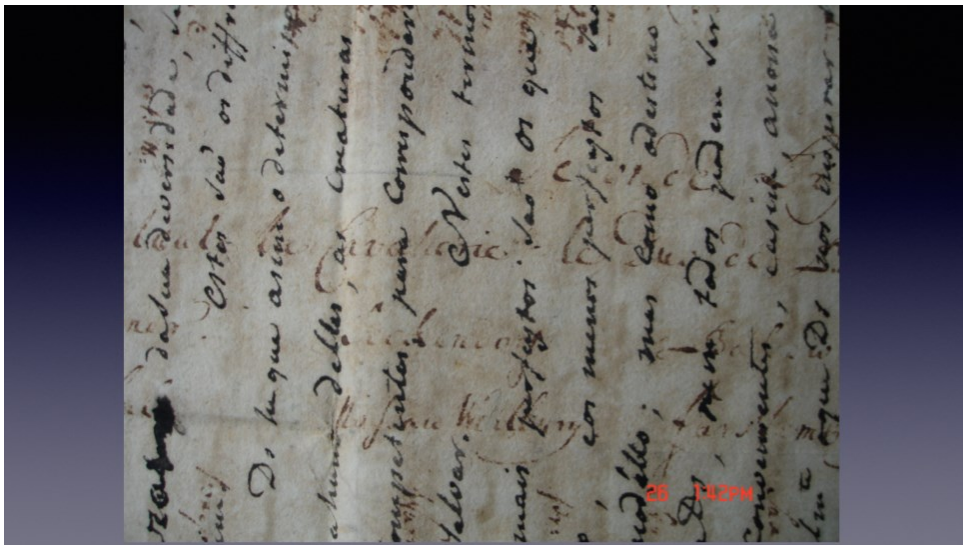

Figure 1. Private Archives of the Fronteira Palace (Lisbon). Letter from the Marquis of Alorna to his wife, evidence of recicling of previous writings. Credits: Fundação das Casas de Fronteira e Alorna.

[37] For instance, in a letter published by JOSÉ CASSIANO NEVES, *Miscelánea Curiosa*, 39, Dom João writes to his younger daughter Maria: 'Manda-me algumas penas boas, porque estas já não prestam para nada' (Send me some good quills, because these are no good anymore) and in another letter to her he says: 'Continua a mandar-me papel' (keep sending me paper). Private collection, Fronteira Palace, ref: PAIALC100.

[38] In the original: '[…] para que tu vejas o aperto, e a pobreza em que me acho: sabe, que este papel que contem o que até agora tenho dito, já foi escrito de outras coisas, e a necessidade que é a mãe das artes, me fez imaginar com bom sucesso, que seria possível molhando-o, desvanecer-lhe as letras, de um certo modo, que seria dilatado explicar-te, e a felecidade foi, ter em que fazer semelhante experiencia'. MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 81.

One should note that paper not only conditioned the possibilities of communication but also interfered with written expression. If we pay attention to the complaints the Marquis of Alorna makes about the permanent lack of paper, we will conclude that he attributes some characteristics of his texts to this fact. He writes to his son, for instance: 'I have finished this letter which I tried to measure by the amount of paper I could find and wash',[39] and on one occasion he explains to his wife that the instructions he was sending her 'cannot be too long because for that, greater care would be necessary, and I intend to do it better when I have more paper'. [40] The Marquis also blames the paper shortage for having to write collective messages to his daughters instead of individual letters addressed to each of them,[41] for not going into detail on certain subjects,[42] and for staying silent about matters that needed to be dealt with at length.[43] In a letter sent to his wife, he even blames the scarcity of paper as one of the drawbacks affecting his mood and his style, saying:

> I can't write any better, because I get tired and bored, and besides, no matter how many mistakes I make, they can't be corrected, nor is there any way to go back with so little paper, and so I'm like Pilate, who said that what he had written he had written.[44]

The paper shortage was also reflected in the way Dom João organised his writings. The differences are noticeable when one compares the letters he wrote in prison with those he wrote after his release. While in prison, the Marquis tried to squeeze as much text as possible into each page—he left no margins, wrote in smaller handwriting, minimised the space between lines, and replaced paragraph breaks with brief gaps placed immediately after full stops (Fig. 2).

[39] In the original: 'Tenho concluído esta carta, que procurei medir pelo papel que pude conseguir e que pude lavar'. MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 99.

[40] In the original: 'Não pode ser coisa muito extensa porque para isso seria perciso ter cuidado com mais vagar, que é o que faço tenção de fazer quando tiver mais papel'. MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 46.

[41] In the original: 'Minhas filhas do meu coração a falta de papel que experimento e que me impede escrever a cada uma de vocês separadamente'. (Daughters of my heart, the lack of paper that I experience and that prevents me from writing separately to each of you.) MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 85.

[42] In the original: 'Já acabei de escrever a Leonor e, por mais breve que quis fazer a tal parlenga das Ciências, sempre me levou quatro folhas de papel. […] Lá lhe recomendo que mande mais papel em maços e tem tu cuidado nisso porque, desse modo, me posso eu devertir bastantemente, fazendo-lhe algum benefício'. MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 41.

[43] In the original: 'Mas, como não tenho papel, nem fiz ainda considerações bastantes a respeito do que tu me dizes da nossa correspondência, ficará isso para outra vez'. (Since I don't have more paper and since I did not comment enough on what you told me, it will have to wait for some other time.) MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 58. On the way the Marquis adapted his writing practices in prison, see also VANDA ANASTÁCIO, 'Written in Prison', in *Private Do (not) Enter. Personal Writings and Textual Scholarship,* ed. JOÃO DIONÍSIO, special issue, *Variants,* no. 8 (2012): 43–56.

[44] In the original: 'Não me posso apurar, porque me cansa e me enfastia, e além disso por mais erros que faça não se podem emendar, nem há modo de tornar atrás com tão pouco papel e, assim, estou como Pilatos, que o que escreveu, escreveu'. MARQUIS OF ALORNA, *Escritos do Cárcere*, 38–39.

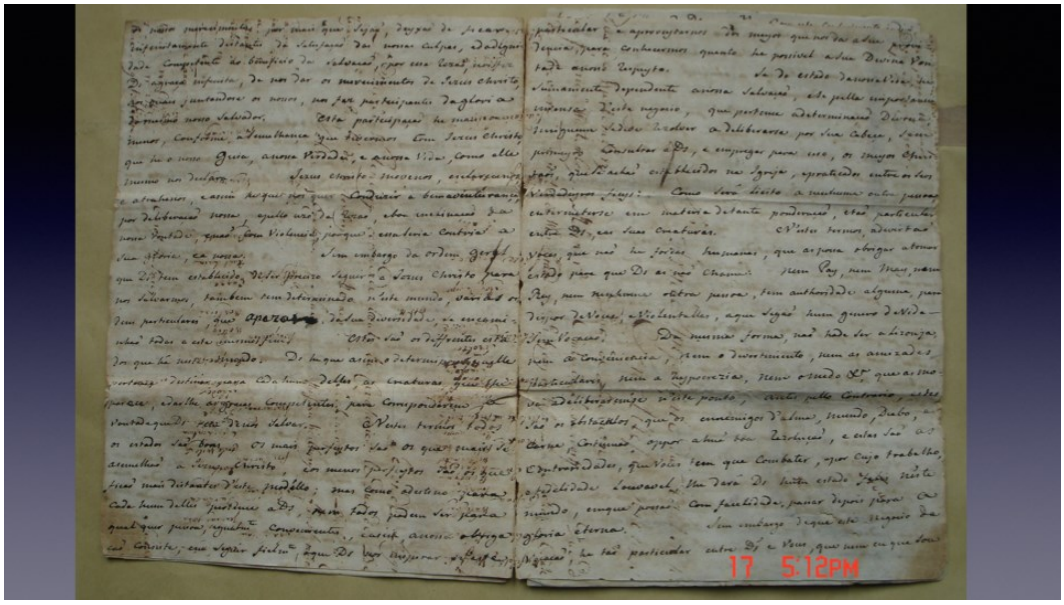

Figure 2. Private Archives of the Fronteira Palace (Lisbon). Letter from the Marquis of Alorna to his wife, evidence of recycling of previous writings and of compact writing due to paper scarcity. Credits: Fundação das Casas de Fronteira e Alorna

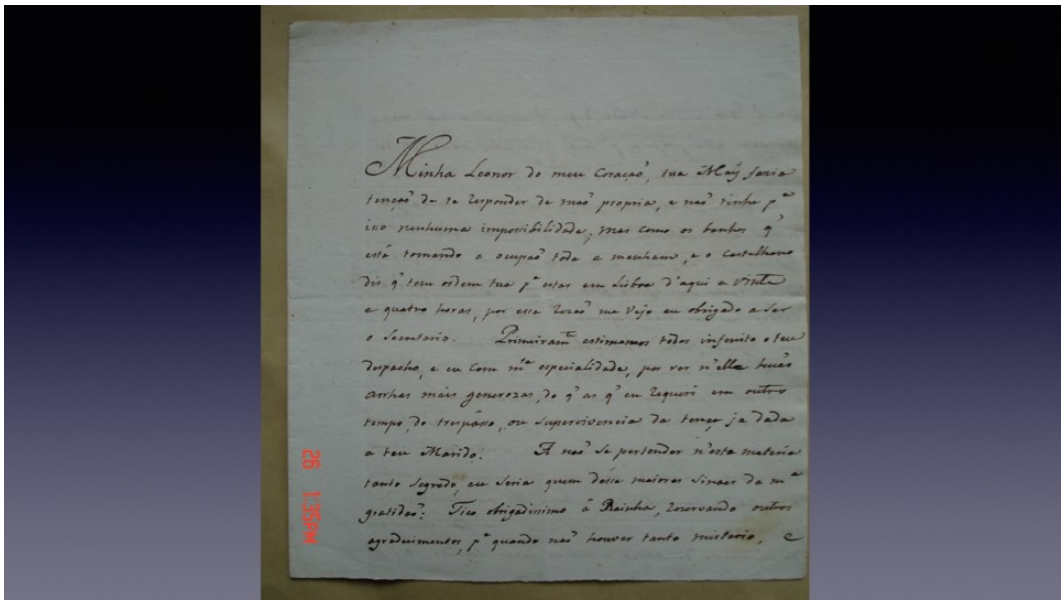

Figure 3. Private Archives of the Fronteira Palace (Lisbon). Letter from the Marquis of Alorna to his daughter Leonor written after being released from prison, evidence of the use of the available space in the paper. Credits: Fundação das Casas de Fronteira e Alorna.

In contrast, when he had enough paper at his disposal, he followed the layout conventions recommended in the letter-writing manuals of the time—what we might call a 'spatial rhetoric' for letters, where blank spaces were charged with meaning. He left blank spaces in the headers (reflecting the respect for the addressee) and on the left margin (to allow the recipient to hold the document without covering the message).[45] He also showed courtesy by designing the first capital letter in the text carefully and starting a new paragraph each time he introduced a new subject (Fig. 3).

Paper… and paper

As state prisoners, the members of this family faced constant deprivation. However, as far as paper was concerned, they preferred to use good-quality Dutch paper in their letters and written messages. In their opinion, the *papel de Holanda* was best suited for writing, as it allowed the pen to glide smoothly through the page. Dom João depended on the regular supply of paper his family managed to smuggle through the prison walls in order to write, and he expressed his ideas about the type of paper he liked the most. One should recall that he was familiar with French paper, for when he was in his teens and his father was appointed viceroy of India, he was sent to France to finish his education. Dom João lived in Paris between 1742 and 1746, in the home of the Portuguese ambassador D. Luís da Cunha.[46] While there is no direct evidence that he was aware of the tensions between French and Dutch papermakers competing for dominance in the paper trade, in one of his letters he compares their products by stating:

> I forgot to tell you that I have received three blocks of this paper, which I know very well because it is French, and all papers of this sort have an excellent appearance but in practice they are a lot inferior to the ones from Holland. It is grainy in some parts, the ink does not flow so well, and since I am reduced to using China ink, which is not good for writing, all these flaws are very obvious.[47]

One can say that the Marquis of Alorna speaks about French and Dutch papers 'from the point of view of the user'. His comments remind us that paper quality, texture, and smoothness were especially relevant at the time, as they had an impact on the complex skills needed for writing with ink using quills made by hand from feathers. To produce a clean legible text without smearing, using those tools, was a challenge. As far as paper was concerned, judging by the surviving evidence, Dom João's family complied with his preferences. The watermarks of their letters reveal a variety of papers produced in Holland—mainly by the firm Dirk & Cornelis Blauw, which is clearly the most

[45] ANA CRISTINA ARAÚJO, 'A correspondência: regras epistolares e práticas de escrita', in *As comunicações na Época Moderna*, ed. MARGARIDA SOBRAL NETO (Lisbon: Fundação Portuguesa das Comunicações, 2005), 105–24.

[46] NUNO GONÇALO MONTEIRO, *Meu querido pai e meu Senhor do meu coração* (Lisbon: Quetzal, 2000).

[47] Letter preserved in the Library of the University of Coimbra (ref.: BGUC Nº 234*). In the original: 'Também me esquecia dizer-te que recebi três cadernos deste papel, que eu conheço muito bem porque é francês, e todos os desta casta tem excelente aparência, mas na experiência é muito inferior ao de Holanda. É pascento em algumas partes, não corre nele tão bem a tinta, e como esta que uso é da china, que não é tão boa para escrever, ainda se fazem mais sensíveis todos estes defeitos'.

represented in this collection—as well as the papers manufactured by Sebelle Ketel & Wassenbergh, D. Sebelle & Wend, and Adriaan Rogge (Fig. 4).

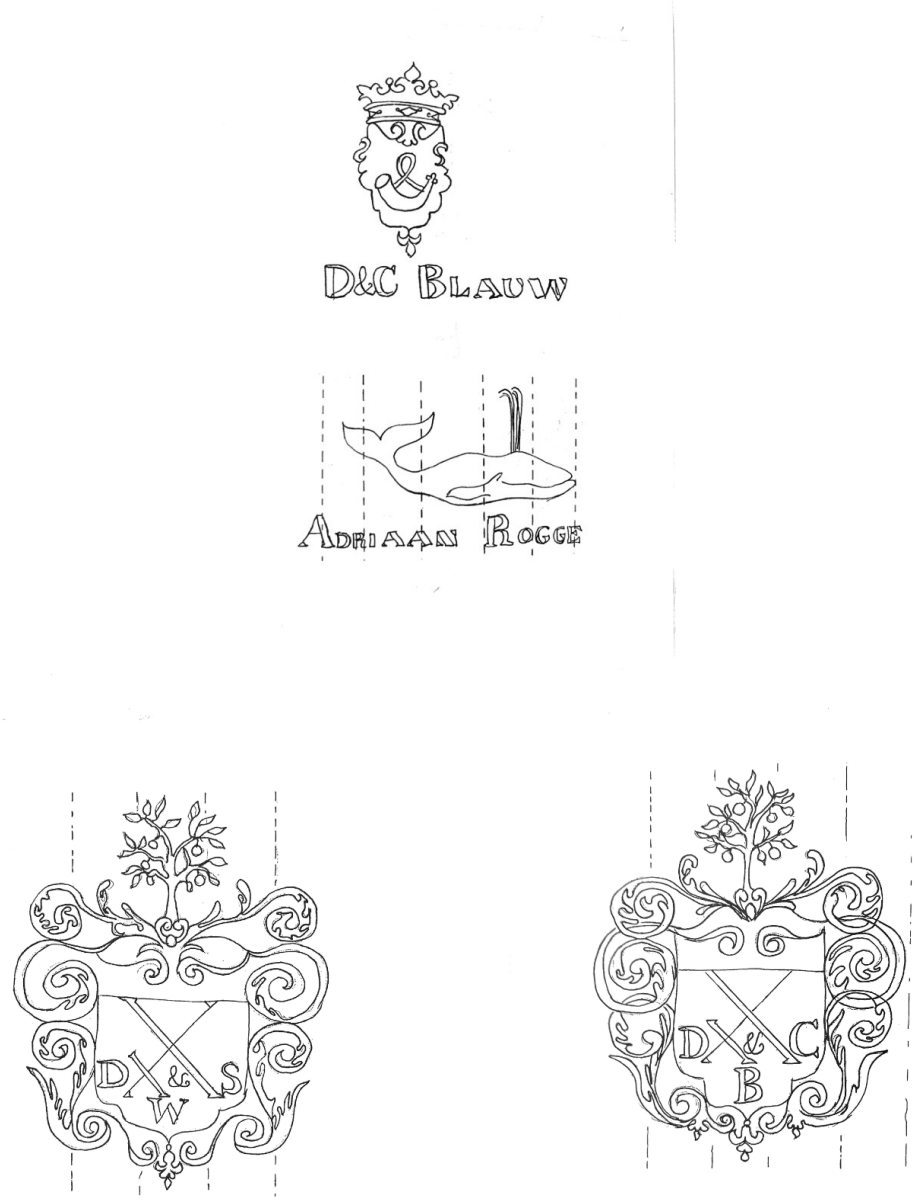

Figure 4. Private Archives of the Fronteira Palace (Lisbon). Watermarks in papers used by the Alorna family. Credits: Fundação das Casas de Fronteira e Alorna. Drawings by Vanda Anastácio.

These were well-known Dutch producers from the Zaand region, who dominated the international paper trade in the second half of the eighteenth century. Given the prestige and the perceived quality associated with imported Dutch paper, it is possible that its use was also seen as a sign of distinction. For a learned aristocrat of the 1700s,

the selection of the type of paper for writing might be seen as yet another distinctive marker of his social status. By insisting on the type of paper he wanted to have, the Marquis maintained a connection to his former habits, thus enabling him to preserve his individuality.

Forbidden and secret, these letters display further interesting characteristics which also justify the attention to paper quality. In their messages, the Alorna family used three different kinds of ink: regular iron-gallic ink, black China ink, and a red ink fabricated by Dom João by boiling in water scraps of red Brazil wood taken from a cell bench. Lemon juice was also used as invisible ink when the correspondents wished to make comments or convey information on political or intimate matters. These texts were written between the lines of seemingly formal, innocuous messages in regular dark ink. In order to read these texts, the paper had to be held near a source of heat, like a candle, and the paper would need to be thick enough not to catch fire easily in the process. Some of the documents exhibit all three types of ink. In certain cases, after revealing the secret text written in lemon juice with the help of a candle, Dom João considered some parts of it too dangerous for anyone else to read and crossed them out immediately with the red brazilwood ink he fabricated in prison.

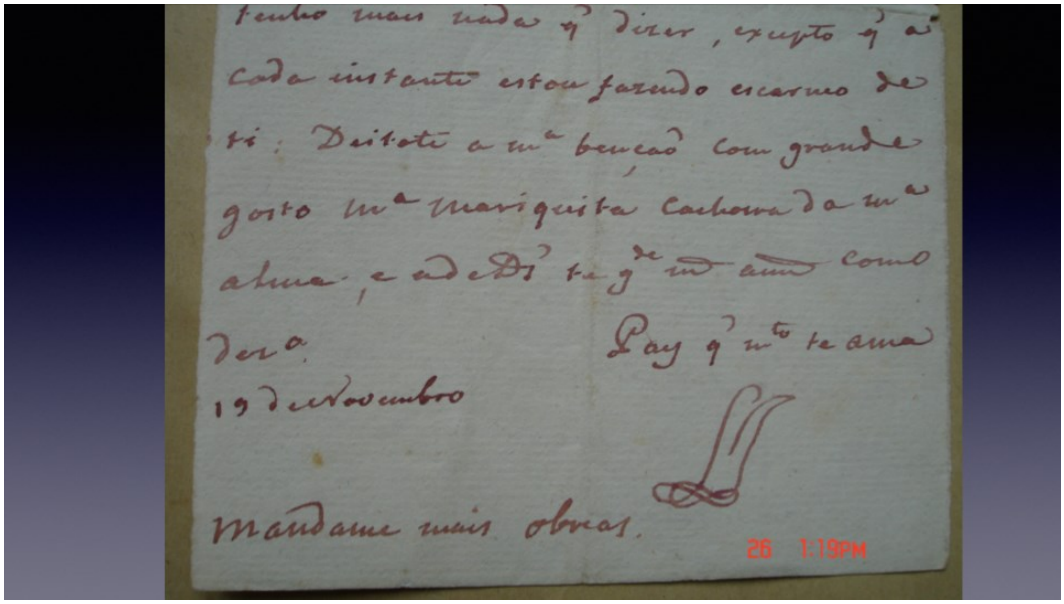

Figure 5. Private Archives of the Fronteira Palace (Lisbon). Letter from the Marquis of Alorna to his daughter Maria, evidence of red ink he fabricated in prison. Credits: Fundação das Casas de Fronteira e Alorna.

Given the risk of incurring a variety of punishments if these letters were found, one might wonder why the Marquis did not simply burn them. It could be argued that once their content—both visible and hidden—had been deciphered, these messages became something more than disposable pieces of paper. Their materiality was imbued with

deep emotional meaning. Being able to touch and feel these documents seemed to be, for the prisoner, an important part of the spiritual experience of receiving something sent by his loved ones. Writing transforms a piece of paper into a message, but the paper embodying the message becomes an intrinsic part of it, making it lasting, tangible, and capable of being revisited through re-reading.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the contrasting ways in which 'paper in motion' can be understood. Observing technological progress and the evolving dynamics of societal needs and expectations projected in the international paper trade allows the historian to better understand the centrality paper acquired over time and space. Yet, paper has been part of human life for so long that its multilayered symbolic uses often go unnoticed. In a world captivated by the possibilities of dematerialisation through the production of digital artifacts, it is worth recalling some of the ways emotional meanings can be projected onto paper which—because it is light, portable, foldable, concealable, and easy to manipulate—can embody the intimate longings and affections of those who use it.

Historiographical Encounters in Colonial South India
The *Kēraḷōlpatti*'s Multiple Lives*

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Historiography and the Colonial Encounter

At least since the beginning of the nineteenth century, a commonly held view is that there was no real interest in history in South Asia: no historical narrative; only vague and whimsical mythologies.[1] This presumed lack of interest has more specifically qualified Hindu traditions, since Europeans have used the term 'historians' to refer to Muslim authors and scholars of the subcontinent, as in the volumes *History of India as Told by its Own Historians* edited from the papers of Henry Myers Elliot (1808–1853) by John Dowson (1820–1881) between 1867 and 1877. As shown by Romila Thapar, this view does not stand up to an examination of different examples emanating from the pre-colonial era. Thapar masterfully argues that discourses about the past, used for legitimating present practices, are very much present in pre-modern and early modern India—documenting for example the history of dynasties or temples—and that it would be uneasy not to speak of these texts as representing some sort of 'history'.[2] In the same vein, in their work entitled *Textures of Time*, Velcheru Narayan Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam[3] have shown that the region of South India offers a rich field for the observation of pre-colonial historiographical practices. Focusing on the activities of 'village record keepers' (*karaṇam*s), the authors show that even if these texts do not correspond to Western 'canonical' historiographical criteria, they constitute narratives about the past that are testimonies to the deep historical consciousness of their respective authors.

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1 For examples, see ROMILA THAPAR, *The Past before Us: Historical Traditions of Early North India* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2013), 19, and in particular her quotation of EDWARD JAMES RAPSON's *Cambridge History of India*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), stating that: 'In all the large and varied literatures of the Brahmins, Jains and Buddhists there is not to be found a single work which can be compared to the *Histories* in which Herodotus recounts the struggle between the Greeks and the Persians or the *Annals* in which Livy traces the growth and progress of Roman power'.

2 THAPAR, *The Past before Us*, 696–97.

3 VELCHERU NARAYAN RAO, DAVID SHULMAN, and SANJAY SUBRAHMANYAM, *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India, 1600–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

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As to the impact of the colonial presence on the conceptualisation of the past, several authors of subaltern studies such as Ranajit Guha have argued that the development of historicism (and history as a discipline) in India is a product of the colonial relationship. One often-quoted example is that of Ramram Basu (1751–1813), a pandit assistant at Fort William College in Calcutta, and the author of *Rāja Pratāpāditya Caritra* (1801), a history of Bengali kings composed under the supervision of the evangelical missionary and orientalist William Carey (1761–1834). For Guha, Basu is the one who introduced modern historiography into the Bengali (and from there, Indian) world under the influence of his British masters.[4] While there are compelling arguments for such a thesis—as show various chapters of the history of the historical discipline in India[5]—it has also been emphasised that cases such as that of Basu cannot be analysed as a mere echo of an imported Western historiographical method but should be considered in the continuity of Persian works of *Tarikh*, while also taking into account a Sanskrit heritage and European influence.[6] This suggests that one should look at such historiographical encounters as complex processes to be recontextualised within their specific contexts of production and reception.

Although it is not helpful to consider any kind of text about the past as 'history',[7] there are at least two possibilities for moving beyond a Eurocentric conception of historical narratives: one can look at culturally specific markers that suggest 'factuality' in a textual content. This is the strategy advocated for by Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam, in the above-mentioned work on 'textures of time'. Another strategy, proposed by the Chicago-based historian of religions Bruce Lincoln, consists in looking not at the content, but at the uses of narratives about the past. As he puts it: 'In my view we would do better to classify narratives not by their content but by the claims that are made by their narrators and the way in which those claims are received by their audience(s)'.[8] Both approaches allow for an analysis of historical narratives as dynamically interacting with other genres of literature, in and out of Europe.[9] Both are also helpful for the study of historiographical encounters, because they consider the larger cultural and social context that accompanies the (dis)qualification of a text as

[4] RANAJIT GUHA, *History at the Limits of World History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 10–12.

[5] See DIPESH CHAKRABARTY, *The Calling of History: Sir Jadunath Sarkar and His Empire of Truth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015) for a detailed study of the Indian historian Jadunath Sarkar (1870–1958).

[6] KUMKUM CHATTERJEE, *The Cultures of History in Early Modern India: Persianization and Mughal Culture in Bengal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 133.

[7] See RAO, SHULMAN, and SUBRAHMANYAM, *Textures of Time*, 253.

[8] BRUCE LINCOLN, *Discourse and the Construction of Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 24.

[9] See for example RAO, SHULMAN, and SUBRAHMANYAM, *Textures of Time*, 254–55: 'Nonetheless, we encounter various fascinating mixtures. History can migrate into "pure" literature. […] Over time, perhaps a very long time, the historical impulse becomes encrusted with other intentions, ramifying into stories that may be romantic, didactic, mythic, parodic – in any case, devoid of the textural markers that insist on factuality per se'.

history.[10] Another important point raised by Lincoln is the fact that narratives about the past can be reconfigured in periods of shifting political regimes or societies, to both consolidate positions of power or help resist brutal changes in the political or social structure.[11]

As a very modest attempt at tackling this general theme, I would like to examine the following questions in the light of an example from Kerala at the turn of the eighteenth century: (1) What were the aims of local traditions narrating the region's past, before the arrival of European actors? (2) What kind of historiographical practices did the European actors bring with them, and how did they interact with local narratives about the past? (3) What were, finally, the longer-term consequences of such historiographical encounters?

The *Kēraḷōlpatti* as a textual tradition

Historical context

The region of Kerala, on the South-West coast of the Indian subcontinent, forms a rather homogenous region whose economy is centred on agriculture. In precolonial times, the political system was largely decentralised, with relatively autonomous local centres and communities, although kings such as those of the Perumal dynasty (ca. 800–1200) ruling out of Mahodayapuram (modern Cranganore/Kodungallur) claimed authority on the whole region. The prosperity of the region largely stemmed from trade with distant lands such as Persia, the Arabic Peninsula or China, allowing the rulers of port cities such as the Sāmūtiris of Calicut (modern Kozhikode) to accumulate considerable wealth and power.[12] The society was organised hierarchically, with groups of Brahmins (in particular the Nampūtiri Brahmins) at its top, often grouped in independent settlements and enjoying landowning rights. In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the region's riches were coveted by various European trading companies: the Portuguese at first, then the Dutch, the French, and finally the British, impacting socio-economic structures in important ways. In that same period, agricultural areas were expanded by non-Brahmanical groups, particularly the Nāyars, to respond to the demands of a growing international trade.[13]

[10] See LINCOLN, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 24: 'For myth most precisely signifies, in its pejorative and condescending usage, a story that members of some other social group (or past era) regard(ed) as true and authoritative, but that the speaker and members of her or his group regard as false'. Cf. RAO, SHULMAN, and SUBRAHMANYAM, *Textures of Time*, 256: 'The history of the loser becomes mere literature in the eyes of the victor'.

[11] LINCOLN, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 25.

[12] See the description of the pre-colonial situation in RAJAN GURUKKAL and RAGHAVA VARIER, *History of Kerala: Prehistoric to the Present* (Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2018), 187: 'Kerala's midland became a land of Malayalam-speaking people, Brahmanical hegemony, Sanskritic intellectualism, hereditary occupations, caste-based hierarchy, agrarian economy, and independent principalities with cosmopolitan ports and inland marketing centres inhabited by Jews, Christians, Islamic Arabs and Chinese traders'.

[13] K. N. GANESH, 'Ownership and control of land in medieval Kerala: *Janmam–kanam* relations during the 16th–18th centuries', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 28, no. 3 (1991): 299–321 (305).

In the eighteenth century, the position of all landowning elites was directly threatened by the Mysore Wars and the new regime imposed on the Malabar region by Tipu Sultan. Indeed, Tipu Sultan was favouring a direct relation to cultivators and marginalising the interests of traditional landholders—a conception that was echoed in the Treaty of Mangalore of 1784 and the Kuttipuram declaration of 1788.[14] Organised in resistance movements and starting rebellions, Brahmanical and Nāyar elites joined the efforts of the British, initially perceived as liberators.[15] With the treaty of Seringapatam (1792), the British took the positions left by Tipu and started building their own administration on the basis of that of Hyder Ali and Tipu.[16] While some rajas started negotiations that ended up recognising the new regime and accepting to pay a tribute, others rebelled against the new power.[17] For example, in the Palassi revolts (1793–1797 and 1800–1805), the elites of the Kottayam region fought against the new tax collection schemes proposed by Colonel Alexander McLeod (1792–1849). The second revolt ended in 1805 with the sudden death of Keralavarma Palassi Raja (1753–1805).[18] The same period also saw attempts to standardise the relations between landholders, tenants and the East India Company, by creating a system of 'permanent settlement' in South India on the model of that of Bengal (1793). This was Regulation XXV (1802) which in reality gave more power to traditional landholders and 'officialised' their superior position.[19]

The elaboration of a textual oral tradition

Even if some versions present themselves as a condensed version of another work attributed to Tunchan, a famous Nāyar poet of the sixteenth century, the *Kēraḷōlpatti* certainly cannot be attributed to any single author.[20] Its date of composition is impossible to assess with any certainty because this is an oral tradition existing in multiple retellings. Referring to the last events recounted in the version edited by the missionary Hermann Gundert (1814–1893), scholars have suggested a date around the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century—but this is more a *terminus ad quem* than a composition date.[21] There are manuscripts in

[14] K. K. N. KURUP, *William Logan and Land Tenure* (Calicut: Sandhya Publications, 1981), 4–5.
[15] KURUP, *William Logan and Land Tenure*, 5.
[16] On the British administrative intervention in the region, see MARGRET FRENZ, *From Contact to Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) and MARGRET FRENZ, "'A Race of Monsters": South India and the British Civilizing Mission in the Later Eighteenth Century', in *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India*, eds HARALD FISCHER-TINÉ and MICHAEL MANN (London: Anthem, 2004), 49–67 (54–55).
[17] See FRENZ, *From Contact to Conquest*, 105–108.
[18] FRENZ, "'A Race of Monsters"', 59–65.
[19] The Act was initially enforced in the region of Tamil Nadu, but attempts were made to apply it in other provinces of the Madras presidency, such as Malabar. On Kerala, see GANESH, 'Ownership and control of land in medieval Kerala', 321: 'However, with British occupation, the janmis were transformed from customary to statutory landholders, and new privileges, including the right to enhance rent and legal eviction enabled them to sustain themselves as a class, and improve their position'.
[20] See KESAVAN VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 133.
[21] M. G. S. NARAYANAN, 'The Ancient and Medieval History of Kerala: Recent Developments and Rationale for Inter-Disciplinary Approach', *Journal of Kerala History* 3, no. 3–4 (1976): 441–56 (441–42).

sanskritised Malayalam with that title dated in the early seventeenth century and texts with a similar content but a different title that are at least as old, for example texts named *Keraḷamāhātmyam* or *Kēraḷanāṭakam*—a manuscript of the latter, coming from Gundert's papers, has a colophon indicating a date corresponding to 1596.[22] As Veluthat puts it,

> there are many recensions and more copies of this book, at least half a dozen available in print and many more that number in palm leaf manuscripts. In fact, many old houses of landlords and local chieftains had in their collection one or more copies of it.[23]

Therefore, and following Cezary Galewicz, it seems appropriate to speak of '*Kēraḷōlpatti* literature' as a literary genre rather than a specific book.[24] In addition, as Veluthat also noted, an important characteristic of the text is that it was not supposed to be read, but rather performed in front of audiences, for example in the framework of *teyyam* performances at the shrines of local deities.[25] This implies that the narrative was not only meant to provide raw information, but also to please target audiences and communicate aesthetic emotions. Being recreated in multiple contexts of performance in front of diverse groups (also in terms of caste), the narrative acquired a remarkable ductility, explaining why it exists in so many different versions.

Textual contents and its aims

In order to understand the text's aims and its uses by both European and Indian actors, it is necessary to give a brief survey of the contents of its most standard version, that edited by Gundert. The text begins with the time of origins and the incarnation of Paraśurāma, Viṣṇu's sixth incarnation, to 'destroy evil kings' in the *kaliyuga*. It continues with the period of the Perumāḷs and ends with a third period, that of the 'kings'—various rulers of Travancore, including, in some versions, the Sāmūtiris of Calicut. The text oscillates between different registers: in places it involves supernatural elements, for example in recounting the origins of Kerala or the divine interventions to counter the arrival of the Portuguese; in other places it reports events in a more factual tone, for example when describing rivalries between the rulers of Kochi, Eranad, and Calicut.[26] This alternating between different registers helps to describe human actions in a continuum with divine acts, and in particular to give a divine origin

[22] See CEZARY GALEWICZ, 'Editorship and History Making: On Historicizing Modern Editions of Tiruniḻalmāla', *Cracow Indological Studies* 23, no. 1 (2021): 1–33 (2–3).

[23] VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India*, 133.

[24] CEZARY GALEWICZ, 'Editorship and History Making', 1.

[25] Cf. KESAVAN VELUTHAT, 'History as Performance: A Note on the Keralolpatti', in *Questioning Paradigms, Constructing Histories: A Festschrift for Romila Thapar*, eds KUMKUM ROY and NAINA DAYAL (Delhi: Aleph, 2019), 242–58 (251–54). See T. PAVITHRAN, *Randu Keralothpathi* (Payyanur: Malayalam Department, Payyanur College, 2007, not consulted) for the edition of two versions of the *Kēraḷōlpatti*, one of which stemming from a *teyyam* performance.

[26] HERMANN GUNDERT, ed., *Keralolpatti (The Origin of Malabar)* (Mangalore: Basel Mission Book & Tract Depository, 1868), 100–101 = T. MADHAVA MENON, Eng. transl., *Keralolpatti* (Thiruvananthapuram: International School of Dravidian Linguistics, 2003), 88.

and legitimation to human institutions—a classical feature of *mahātmya*s and *sthalapurāṇa*s.

The first part of the text tells us about Paraśurāma, 'Rāma with the ax', incarnated to bring an end to the reign of unjust kings, and who created the region of Kerala by making it emerge from the Indian Ocean.[27] He peopled it with Brahmins but frightened by the presence of deadly snakes in the region, they left and returned home. Paraśurāma then repopulated the region with 'Arya Brahmins'[28] from the north and gave them an irrevocable right (*janma*) to rule over sixty-four villages.[29] The narrative continues with three crucial points: first, the fact that Paraśurāma installed other deities in temples, shrines and groves, in particular Ayyapan and Bhadrakali, with their respective festivals.[30] This is particularly interesting, because these deities are not typically Sanskritic or Brahmanical, thus demonstrating that the redactors wanted to encompass the whole socio-religious landscape of the region and not only its orthodox Brahmanical component. The second important point is the aetiology of a specific social order, with Brahmins at the top and Nāyars being entrusted with the task of ensuring a correct order in the relations between those with landowning rights and those actually cultivating the soils on these lands.[31] The third crucial point of this part relates to political institutions: to bring an end to endless quarrels, four Brahmanical settlements were designated to lead the others. At a later stage, Brahmins of these villages consulted among themselves to choose a king, leading to the first king of the Perumal dynasty, 'imported' from foreign lands and replaced every twelve years.[32] This shows a particular conception of the relation between religious authorities and political institutions: the latter are controlled by the former, and not the other way around.

The text evokes the central role of Shankara in prescribing rituals and a social order,[33] and describes the social fabric of the region—including the presence of four 'species' of Europeans mentioned in the section on lower-caste peoples: Portuguese,

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[27] The structure of the story can already be found in the *Mahābhārata* 12.49.56–59, but it concerns Maharashtra, not Kerala. The narrative was likely brought by Brahmins when they migrated south (CHRISTOPHE VIELLE, 'How did Paraśurāma come to raise Kerala', in *Irreverent History: Essays for M. G. S. Narayanan*, eds KESAVAN VELUTHAT and DONALD R. DAVIS (Delhi: Primus Books, 2014), 15–32 (15–16) and VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India*, 135).

[28] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 3 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 26.

[29] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 10–11 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 31.

[30] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 12 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 31–32.

[31] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 13 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 32–33: '[Vedic Brahmins] inducted sudras from several places, and settled them with several rights, privileges and duties; they introduced entailed service [*aḍima*] and tenancy [*kudima*], and ensured *sankalpam* [correct order]; the Nairs were ordained to occupy the *tara* [the portion of a village or administrative unit], and each was sworn to serve as the "eye, the hand and the command" […]. They enacted and enforced that the tenants had subordinate rights, while they had the overlordship and supremacy; to the tenant was the entitlement of *kāṇam* [mortgage], while they [brahmins] retained the *janmam*, and established the customary rights and obligations'. See WILLIAM LOGAN, *Malabar: Manual*, 2 vols (Madras: Government Press, 1887), vol. 1, 133 for a comment about the role of 'supervisors' assigned to Nāyars in this passage.

[32] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 19 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 37.

[33] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 54 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 57. This is of course a tendentious interpretation of Shankara's biography (see VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India*, 139).

Dutch, French and English people, who wear round hats, occupy islands, erect forts and carry trade.[34] In this first part, the text therefore highlights the cosmic unity of Kerala, a place defined by the righteous action performed on its soil, a *karmabhūmi* set up by Vishnu himself. It is a territory where Brahmins play a cardinal role as its hereditary guardians and as the traditional allies of the kings—which they freely chose, not the other way around.

As Veluthat observes,[35] quite a different ambiance emanates from the last part of the text. It moves to political concerns, focusing on the dynasty of the Calicut Sāmūtiris, with a particular interest in rivalries with other rulers. Significantly, the text evokes the Sāmūtiri's failure to win a confrontation with the lords of Pōḷanāṭu until he worshipped the Goddess (Bhagavati) for six months, after which she granted him victory.[36] In a further passage, a minister of the Calicut king, Mangattachan, organised the killing of sixty 'lords' [*nambimar*s, Brahmins specialising as temple guardians] of a temple and their replacement with those who had done the killing.[37] This part also evokes the arrival of the Portuguese as hostile traders who were soon vanquished thanks to the providential intervention of a local deity, Veṭṭaykkorumakan.[38] It ends with a survey of other kingdoms of the region.

The description of non-Sanskritic festivals, the mention of temple guardians killed under the orders of the Sāmūtiri's minister, and the legitimation of the preeminent position of non-Brahmanical ruling families sound as evident dissonances in the general Brahmanical context of the text. Therefore, and contrary to what is sometimes asserted, this part of the text does not mirror pure Brahmanical ideology but rather alludes to a political concern to account for the position of all the groups forming the society.

Cui Bono? Indian and European uses of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* in the early nineteenth century

In the tense context of the advent of a colonial regime, with considerable changes in crucial domains of the society, it is understandable that the local elites tried to use the opportunity of contacts with foreign scholars and administrators to redescribe their socio-political and religious situation in terms favourable to them. The communication of narratives about the past turned out to be a major instrument for this purpose.

Jonathan Duncan (1756–1811)

Born in Scotland and hired at the age of sixteen for working as a writer for the East India Company in Bengal,[39] Jonathan Duncan quickly made his way in the administration of the Company, soon becoming a British officer and the governor of

[34] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 61 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 60.
[35] VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India*, 140.
[36] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 77 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 71.
[37] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 86 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 77.
[38] GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 95 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 85.
[39] V. A. NARAIN, *The Life and Career of Jonathan Duncan, 1756-1795* (London: SOAS, 1958), 6.

Bombay (from 1795 to 1811). Corresponding with the Company's 'official historiographer', the Scottish scholar John Bruce (1744–1826) in the years 1796–1797, he agreed to provide help in collecting documents, indicating his general agreement with Bruce's views on history writing:[40] Bruce (who himself did not travel to India) was deploring that the EIC seemed only interested in the history of trade, and had expressed the need for sources about local customs in order to write a new history of India. Such historical information, he thought, could successfully be exploited politically in order to consolidate the British sovereignty in India.[41] On a deeper philosophical level, Bruce (and Duncan) can be considered as endorsing values of the Scottish Enlightenment, with a tendency to 'empathise' with the people they were writing about. For history writing, this implied not only a genuine interest for understanding the characteristics of a different civilisation (and its location in the larger picture of all human civilisations), but also an attitude that one could call 'relativist', consisting in not immediately discarding local records about the past, whatever form these might be taking.[42] Dilip Menon has suggested that this attitude was typical of late eighteenth century colonial agents—especially those coming from Scotland—who constituted 'superfluous archives' with the help of native agents, such as Alexander Walker of Bowland (1764–1831)—who also left a version of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* in his archive—or Colin Mackenzie.[43] The same attitude led to a specific conception of how India should be governed, a conception that Martha McLaren called a 'Scottish school of Indian governance'.[44] Another writing by Bruce, his *Historical View of Plans for the Government of British India* (1793) is a perfect example: in it, he argues for a government that preserves as far as possible local forms of power and culture.[45]

After the defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1792, Duncan played a critical role for the establishment of British rule in Malabar. He was part of a group of commissioners appointed by the East India Company to determine how to secure peace and revenue in the region of Malabar. Joining other colonial agents such as W. G. Farmer, Alexander Dow (1735–1779), and Charles Boddam (1762–1817), he had been

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40 NARAIN, *The Life and Career of Jonathan Duncan*, 234, referring to British Library, IOLR, Bruce's Letter Book, *Home Miscellaneous* 456e, 178–83.

41 OLIVERA JOKIC, 'Commanding Correspondence: Letters and the "Evidence of Experience" in the Letterbook of John Bruce, the East India Company Historiographer', *The Eighteenth Century* 52, no. 2 (2011): 109–36 (120).

42 Another Scottish scholar and historian, James Mill (1773–1836), author of the influential *History of British India* (1817), would precisely deny any use to local sources for historical purposes, and would place a utilitarian principle as the ultimate yardstick against which all societies can be ranked.

43 DILIP MENON, "'A Farrago of Legendary Nonsense"? Myth, time and history in the *Keralolpatti*', in *Retelling Time: Alternative Temporalities from Premodern South Asia*, ed. SHONALEEKA KAUL (London: Routledge, 2022), 185–99 (195).

44 Cf. MARTHA MCLAREN, *British India & British Scotland, 1780-1830: Career Building, Empire Building, and a Scottish School of Indian Governance* (Akron: The University of Akron press, 2001), 125–27, and her further examples of Scottish historians who wrote about India.

45 DAVID JOHNSON, *Imagining the Cape Colony: History, Literature, and the South African Nation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 73.

> asked to enquire in what manner justice had heretofore been, and may in future be, most advantageously, administered to all classes of the natives; the nature of whose several tenures, and more especially those of the Zamorin of Calicut and of the principal Rajahs and Nayrs and Moplas throughout that and the other parts of the country were to be specified, accompanied with estimates and statements formed on the best material they might be able to procure of the amount of revenue which the several districts are capable of paying.[46]

The mission resulted in the production of several reports which compiled extensive details about the society of Malabar, including its history—anticipating the genre of the colonial gazetteer.[47] In the article he published in the *Asiatick Researches* a few years later, Duncan explained that while staying in Calicut in 1793, he had produced an English translation of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* from a Persian version that itself had been translated from a 'Malabaric [i.e., Malayalam script or language?] copy procured from one of the Rajah of the *Zamorin*'s family'.[48] The text is used to reconstruct a succinct political and cultural history of the region, and especially of Calicut, about which he paraphrases a passage of the text which explains how the institution of the Sāmūtiris came to be.[49] Thus Duncan handled the text as an important source for getting a sociopolitical map of the region, in a genre that—one might suggest—corresponded to Bruce's longing for historical accounts that include information about sociocultural customs, and more generally, to the willingness of many Scottish historians to accept local records as valid sources of knowledge.

Colin Mackenzie (1754–1821)

A few years later, several versions of the text appeared in the collection of documents gathered by another Scottish figure, Colin Mackenzie. Born in a family of traders in Stornoway on the island of Lewis, Mackenzie did not follow any academic curriculum. His personal experiences in Scotland were formative and would arguably contribute to shape his attitude as to his work in India. In particular, he was witness to a process of modernisation and Anglicisation of the Highlands (involving the progressive replacement of the Scottish Gaelic language by English) which he perceived as a brutal process, as the well-being of the local population was not given much consideration. It might have encouraged Mackenzie to valorise vernacular epistemic traditions.[50]

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[46] British Library, IOLR, 'Instructions to Duncan and Boddam', *Home Miscellaneous* 585 [Notes from correspondence concerning Malabar], 195–97, quoted in NARAIN, *The Life and Career of Jonathan Duncan,* 260–61.

[47] For example, *Malabar Report. 11 October 1793, Reports and Regulations, Malabar 1792–1793*, on which see NARAIN, *The Life and Career of Jonathan Duncan,* 284–85.

[48] JONATHAN DUNCAN, 'Historical Remarks on the Coast of Malabar with Some Description of the Manner of Its Inhabitants', *Asiatick Researches* 5 (1798): 1–36 (1).

[49] DUNCAN, 'Historical Remarks', 6, which roughly corresponds to GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 70 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 67–68, about the origins of Calicut and its Zamorin.

[50] Cf. TOBIAS WOLFFHARDT, *Unearthing the Past to Forge the Future. Colin Mackenzie, the Early Colonial State, and the Comprehensive Survey of India* (New York: Berghahn, 2018), 40: 'His experience of the radical modernization of the Highlands, to which he retained a very ambivalent attitude throughout his life. On the one hand he was genuinely convinced of the logic of "improvement", but for all his enthusiasm for

Beyond the important role he came to play in the colonial administration,[51] Mackenzie is famous for his extensive collection of about 1,500 manuscripts in the beginning of the nineteenth century spanning the whole of South India.[52] The general purpose of his operation was to obtain the necessary information to 'take decisions about a variety of claims concerning property rights'[53] by collecting documents in vernacular languages. Evidence shows however that he accumulated a large number of documents that were not all useful for that stated purpose. As is well known, Mackenzie was very dependent on his Indian helpers: not fluent in vernacular languages, he relied heavily not only on interpreters and 'collectors' but also and especially on native scholars. The plan of document collection was actually designed in 1804, with the collaboration of a scholar Mackenzie met in 1796, Kavelli Venkata Borayya (1776–1803), soon joined by his brothers Lakshmayya and Ramaswami.[54] These Brahmins and their own—Brahmin, Jain, or Christian—assistants were instructed to find written records about the past while also conducting interviews about 'ancient customs, laws or historical facts'.[55] As he wrote:

> Regular historical narratives and tracts are seldom found among the natives; such notices as exist are generally preserved in the form of religious legends and popular poems and stories. Yet exceptions appear though rare, which induce an opinion that others may exist, that have escaped the ravages of time and the troubles of the Country.[56]

It is therefore quite understandable that the resulting collection strongly reflects the point of view of these collaborators and their interlocutors.[57] Mackenzie's lack of academic background as well as the above-mentioned experiences in Scotland during his youth might explain—perhaps more than a generic reference to the 'Scottish Enlightenment'—why he gave credit to these vernacular documents. While he did not

reform he was also in favour of moderation; he believed that changes should always be in the interests of the local population, paying due respect to their cultural notions'.

[51] He played a key role in the fall of Seringapatam against Tipu Sultan and later held the position of 'Surveyor General of India'.

[52] First stored in Madras/Chennai, the collection is spread today between archives in Chennai (Government Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Centre) and London (British Library, IOLR). Recent work on the Mackenzie collection includes PHILLIP B. WAGONER, 'Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 4 (2003): 783–814; SU FANG NG, 'Indian Interpreters in the Making of Colonial Historiography: New Light on Mark Wilks's *Historical Sketches of the South of India* (1810–1817)', *The English Historical Review* 134, no. 569 (2019): 821–54, and ANNE VIGUIER, 'Collection Mackenzie (La)', in *Encyclopédie des historiographies: Afriques, Amériques, Asies*, eds NATHALIE KOUAMÉ, ÉRIC MEYER, and ANNE VIGUIER, 2 vols (Paris: Presses de l'Inalco, 2020), vol. 1, 333–52.

[53] RAMA SUNDARI MANTENA, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India. Antiquarianism and Philology, 1780-1880* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 70.

[54] See MANTENA, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India*, chap. 3, 'The Kavalli Brothers'.

[55] MANTENA, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India*, 67. See also WAGONER, 'Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge', 792, for the names of further Indian assistants.

[56] 'Memorandum', February 1808, in British Library, IOLR Eur Mack Misc 108 (and other similar documents in the same volume), reprinted in MANTENA, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India*, Appendix 1, 187–90, about Mackenzie's instructions given to his assistants on their hunt for documents.

[57] See WAGONER, 'Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge', for an argument about how Mackenzie's interlocutors have informed his own interest for epigraphical sources.

produce himself any historical synthesis (with the exception of two articles on Sri Lanka and the Jains),[58] his historiographical practice can be described as that of an antiquarian, accumulating as much data as possible, with the conviction that the quantity could palliate the lack of factual precision.

The *Kēraḷōlpatti* appears at different places in the archive, forming a large part of the collection's Malayalam texts. It includes at least two versions in Malayalam, two translations in English, and one in Tamil.[59] The English translations are partial and deal exclusively with the first part of the text—the one that legitimises the position of Brahmins in their role of *janmakārans*.[60] Even if it was not published at that point, the preservation of the text in Mackenzie's archive, and its cataloguing singled it out as having a special status, as one of the rare written testimony about the history of Kerala. For a while, it seems that the evocation of local traditions about land tenures as we find them in the *Kēraḷōlpatti* (and other similar documents) had an effect in actual policies. For example, Mackenzie's colleague Mark Wilks (1759–1831) grew very critical of the view—coming out of London—that individual property claims should be ignored and that the government was the *de facto* absolute owner of all property and could therefore sell it (!) to *zamindar*s who would then manage it. He concluded that the intended policies advocating for a 'permanent settlement' were not only unjust but also entirely inapplicable in South India.[61]

Hermann Gundert (1814–1893)

Slightly later, the German missionary of the Basel Mission and pioneer of Malayalam studies, Hermann Gundert, took interest in understanding the past of the region he

[58] COLIN MACKENZIE, 'Remarks on some Antiquities on the West and South Coasts of Ceylon', *Asiatick Researches* 6 (1800): 425–54, and COLIN MACKENZIE, 'Account of the Jains', *Asiatick Researches* 9 (1807): 244–86, which both follow closely the descriptive accounts of his informants.

[59] The references to the two English translations (1 and 2), two Malayalam version (3 and 4) and the Tamil version (5) are as follows: (1) British Library, IOLR Eur Mack Misc 5.5, JAMES SUTHERLAND COTTON, JARL CHARPENTIER, and EDWARD HAMILTON JOHNSTON, *Mackenzie General and Miscellaneous Collections Catalogue* (London: British Library, 1992), 57 ['literally translated from the original Maleilen Sargga Charit = Malayalam Sarga Carita']; (2) IOLR Eur Mack Misc 5.6, COTTON, CHARPENTIER, and JOHNSTON, *Mackenzie General and Miscellaneous Collections Catalogue*, 58 [a translation by Thomas Ogilvie Surgeon, Bombay (1770–1802), 'deviating from the previous one on different points']; (3) WILLIAM TAYLOR, *Catalogue Raisonnée of Oriental Manuscripts in the Library of the (Late) College Fort St George*, 3 vols, vol. 1 (Madras: H. Smith, at the Fort St. George Gazette Press, 1857), 667, MS no. 1959 ['a book on 140 talipat leaves, small but thick, and in good order', telling about the legend of *Parasu Rama* and the *Artha Brahmans*] = HORACE HAYMAN WILSON, *Mackenzie Collection: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental Manuscripts and Other Articles Illustrative of the Literature, History, Statistics and Antiquities of the South of India; Collected by the Late Lieut-Col. Colin Mackenzie* (Calcutta: Asiatic Press, 1882), 347–62 [with a paraphrase/translation of the text's first part] (4) TAYLOR, *Catalogue Raisonnée*, vol. 1, 667, MS no. 1956 ['A work in prose, written on 53 talipat leaves, of medium size, telling a legendary account of the formation of the Malayalam country by *Parasu Rama*'], and (5) TAYLOR, *Catalogue Raisonnée*, vol. 3, 296 (Tamil translation).

[60] The summary of the text in Wilson's catalogue is also limited to the first part of the version edited by Gundert: WILSON, *Mackenzie Collection*, 347–62.

[61] MARK WILKS, *Historical Sketches of the South of India in an Attempt to Trace the History of Mysoor*, 3 vols, vol. 1 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1810), chap. 5 (titled 'On the Landed Property of India'), in particular p. 171. See FRENZ, *From Contact to Conquest*, 111, for an analysis of the differences between the local concept of *janma* and that of 'ownership' brought by the British.

was posted in, Kerala. After studies in philosophy and theology at the University of Tubingen, Gundert was versed in the 'new' methods of textual criticism that were developing at that time in Germany. Upon his arrival in Kerala, Gundert learned Malayalam and Sanskrit with multiple munshis,[62] one of whom taught him spoken Sanskrit and helped him to 'assemble material from native books for a Malayalam grammar'.[63] In these conditions, it is not entirely unfounded to speculate that Gundert's work on the *Kēraḷōlpatti* was a collaborative work, perhaps involving the very same scholar mentioned in his 1839 correspondences. A handwritten summary of a text described as 'Kerala Mahatmyam' in *shloka*s is precisely dated from the years 1839–1840, showing Gundert's early involvement with the text.[64] Encouraged by the other missionaries of the Basel Mission Gottfried Weigle (1816–1855) and Hermann Mögling (1811–1881) who referred to the mention of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* in H. H. Wilson's catalogue of the Mackenzie collection,[65] Gundert worked towards making an edited and published version of the text. He was well aware that the text had many variants,[66] and even if he was familiar with the methods of textual criticism, his work nowhere resembled a critical edition. More significantly perhaps: without being entirely explicit about it, Gundert brought the idea—very common in the context of German philology[67]—that the true 'spirit' ('Geist') of a society could be revealed by looking at texts talking about its origins. He thus explained that his new 'rearranged' version would 'give to those who are less fond of such objects a tolerable overall picture of our people, as well as a better appreciation of what is true about it'.[68] The text was one

[62] See ALBRECHT FRENZ and SCARIA ZACHARIA, *Dr Hermann Gundert and the Malayalam Language: Biography and Critical Studies* (Changanassery: Centre for Kerala Studies, 1993), 89: 'At times, Gundert had five Munshis or teachers to instruct him in all known Malayalam and Sanskrit sciences. He travelled at least once a month to a place in the surrounding region. He was thus able to learn much from the people's behaviour and their talk. He collected whatever he could find for his literary work'.

[63] See a passage of Gundert's report of 15 November 1839 sent to Basel ('Letters', Hermann Gundert Portal, accessed 23 March 2024, https://www.gundert-portal.de/cache/letters/TXT/HG39/H151139.TXT): 'This man, to whom I give Rs. 10 a month, knows almost all Hindu learning by heart and is dear and estimable to me for his sense of truth. If a brother feels the need to go into Sanskrit etc. it seems to me far better that he should learn to speak and read it properly at the same time, rather than to learn to recopy it in European colleges. With his help I have also learnt a Malayalam Grammar from native books and authorities, and completed the syntax' (my translation).

[64] 'Manuscripts on Kēraḷa history', Tübingen Universitätsbibliothek, accessed 23 March 2024, http://idb.ub.uni-tuebingen.de/opendigi/MaI864_04#p=1. The text mentions the names Baber and Putucheri, on which see FRENZ and ZACHARIA, *Dr Hermann Gundert*, 89: 'Baber must have been none other than the former Sub-Collector and the conqueror of Pazhassi Raja. The name Putucheri suggests a native' (my translation).

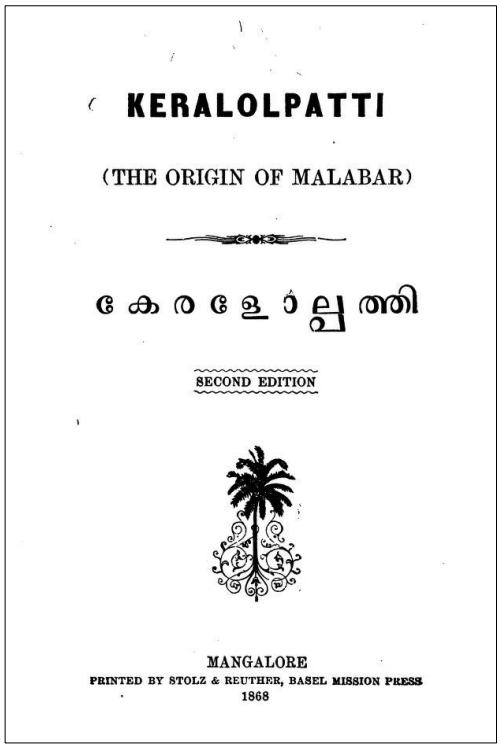
[65] See ALBRECHT FRENZ, *Hermann Gundert: Quellen zu seinem Leben und Werk* (Ulm: Süddeutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1991), 116, for a reproduction of a letter of Mögling and Weigle to Gundert (dated 14 February 1842).

[66] As is evident from his mention of a 'Kerala Ulpatti of the Nasrani [Christian]', on which see letter of 19 November 1843 ('Letters', Hermann Gundert Portal, accessed 23 March 2024, https://gundert-portal.de/cache/letters/TXT/HG43/H191143.TXT).

[67] For several examples of the link between philology and nation building, especially in the German context, see MAURICE OLENDER, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[68] See his letter to the Basel mission committee, 20 January 1841 ('Letters', Hermann Gundert Portal, accessed 23 March 2024, https://www.gundert-portal.de/cache/letters/TXT/HG41/H200141.

of the first Malayalam texts printed on the press of the Basel Mission in Mangalore, in 1843, and became a great success, with periodical reprints.


KERALOLPATTI

(THE ORIGIN OF MALABAR)

കേരളോൽപത്തി

SECOND EDITION

MANGALORE
PRINTED BY STOLZ & REUTHER, BASEL MISSION PRESS
1868

Fig 1. Frontispiece of *Kēraḷōlpatti*, second edition, Mangalore: Basel Mission Press, 1868. Available in the public domain (Google Books)

While this printed edition of the text did not suppress the tradition of oral retellings,[69] it froze the text into one version, thought to be the most original; it also brought it out of the communities that had kept it and made it available for individual readership to a broader audience. Thus, the production of a printed edition gave to the work the status of a classical book, ready to circulate in schools and other arenas. As Frenz noted, it became one of the founding stones of a Keralite national narrative.[70]

TXT). 'Certainly its [of the *Kēraḷolpatti*] existence (although not in its present form) is older than the Puranas that were pieced together on its basis; I think the order in which I have set it will at least give to those who are less fond of such things an acceptable overall picture of our people [*unseres Völkleins*], as well as a better appreciation of what is true about it' (my translation). See also his letter from Kottayam, 9 November 1843 ('Letters', Hermann Gundert Portal, accessed 23 March 2024, https://gundert-portal.de/cache/letters/TXT/HG43/H091143.TXT), about the popularity of the edited version of the text.

[69] GALEWICZ, 'Editorship and History Making', 23. See also STUART H. BLACKBURN, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India* (Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2006) for a similar observation about other cases in South India.

[70] FRENZ, *Hermann Gundert*, 118–19, 'With this work, Gundert played a decisive role in helping the Malayalis rediscover their identity. For him, dealing with the ancient history of Kerala was a matter close

In his monumental work titled *Malabar* (1887), William Logan (1814–1914), a former judge who spent twenty years in the South Indian region, described the text as 'full of Brahmanical legends'.[71] Despite acknowledging the interest-laden character of the narrative,[72] he used several passages of Gundert's edited text to reconstruct the history of the region, either by selective readings or metaphorical interpretations.[73] At the same time, he took part in reflections about the tenancy bill's revision for the region of Malabar. Worried about agricultural productivity, and in the context of recurring famines, he strongly defended the position of land cultivators and their rights of tenancy. Against him, Brahmins defended the other side: that of their hereditary *janmam* rights, quoting from the *Kēraḷōlpatti* on the hierarchical relationship between Brahmins possessing the land and tenants cultivating it, clearly using the text (probably in the version edited by Gundert[74]) to legitimate their pretensions.

Variations on the Kēraḷōlpatti

As we mentioned earlier, it is helpful to think of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* as an oral textual tradition recreated for each of its performance to fit the preferences of the target audience. An interesting example of such a rewriting is a text titled *Memoir of the Birth of Parasha-Rama* (*sic*), and translated from Marathi by Suba Rao, one of Mackenzie's assistants, which conveys a message that is opposed to that of the *Kēraḷōlpatti*.[75] Indeed, like most versions of the *Kēraḷōlpatti*, it features the perpetual conflicts among Brahmins that have been trusted to be Kerala's guardians, their inability to solve the situation, and Paraśurāma's decision to banish them from the land entirely. Upon what, the text continues, Paraśurāma 'created a new land by issuing his command to the king of the Ocean, which land is called Mallialla (or the unclean land), therefore it is not proper for the Bramins [*sic*] to reside on that ground'. The text continues:

> When the Bramins divided the other lands, they remained there, performing devotion and different ceremonies, and not being competent to bear weapons nor having power to destroy the wicked nor to protect the good; therefore everywhere there was a great terror of robbers; therefore the Bramins being afraid, Bhoome-Davee (the Goddess of the Earth) complained to the God Brumma-Dava, saying 'the earth is in great confusion and I am not able to suffer it'. Then God ordered kings of the sun race to rule the Empire as in former times.

to his heart. There is much to suggest that the spark between Gundert and the Malayalis was ignited by the Kerala Utpatti and it still forms the content of the connection today'.

[71] LOGAN, *Malabar*, vol. 1, 222: 'The *Keralolpatti* too is full of Brahmanical legends, but historically, there is something to be learnt from it'.

[72] LOGAN, *Malabar*, vol. 1, 244.

[73] For example, the snakes feared by the first immigrants are interpreted as representing Jains (LOGAN, *Malabar*, vol. 1, 244; VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India*, 130).

[74] The translated portion of the text in KURUP, *William Logan and Land Tenure*, 65, perfectly matches Gundert's text (GUNDERT, *Keralolpatti*, 13 = MENON, *Keralolpatti*, 32–33).

[75] British Library, IOLR Eur Mack Misc 5.1 (described in COTTON, CHARPENTIER and JOHNSTON, *Mackenzie General and Miscellaneous Collections Catalogue*, 53), *Memoir of the Birth of Parasha-Rama: Translated from the Marattas by Sooba Rao Bramin, December 31st 1802.*

This is then a very different point of view than the one we examined earlier, making the region of Kerala (Mallialla/Malayalam) an 'impure house' (*mala illam*) for Brahmins. In addition, they are described as weak, incapable of defending just causes, and unable to rule independently—a reversal of the relation to political power as described in the standard *Kēraḷōlpatti*. Even if this text cannot be dated with any certainty, its message and the language of its composition (Marathi) suggest that it might be representing propaganda from the rulers of the Marathi empire—with perhaps even an allusion to Shivaji's (1630–1680) claims as a descendent of the prestigious solar dynasty of kings.

Another alternative retelling 'capitalising' on the *Kēraḷōlpatti* is the Kannada *Grāmapaddhati*, found in the papers of Basel Mission missionaries working in the Tulu region.[76] In that text (as in Gundert's *Kēraḷōlpatti*), Paraśurāma slays the *kṣatriya*s, creates a new land out of the Ocean and gives it to Brahmins. From this point however, the story diverges: since no Brahmin would accept to move there, Paraśurāma converted a caste of Tulu-speaking fishers into Brahmins. After a few peripeties (involving another group of Brahmins coming from the north but ending up leaving the region), Nāyars and Tulu-speaking Brahmins take possession of most of the land. The text represents thus another counter-narrative that gives an aetiology to the different Brahmanical groups of the region and legitimates the land-managing rights of other castes than Brahmins. As Veluthat noted, this very probably reflects the diverging situations of Brahmin groups in Kerala and South Canara.[77]

The central role that the *Kēraḷōlpatti* played in the creation of a regional identity after it was 'canonised' by Gundert's print edition made it a privileged target for the production of competing narratives. Indeed, during the course of the nineteenth century, the Paraśurāma story became a focus for dissident retellings developed in the wake of movements promoting their respective identity claims. A contemporary of Narayana Guru (1855–1928) with whom he shared the anti-caste rhetoric, Chattampi Svamikal (1853–1924) composed a work on Kerala's past titled *Prācīna Malayāḷaṃ* (1899) ('The Ancient Region of Malayalam').[78] In this text Svamikal developed a new interpretation of the Paraśurāma narrative in which not Brahmins, but Nāyars—identified as the original, Dravidian, inhabitants of the country—are the legitimate owners of the land. The region stretching along the coast from the southern tip of India to Maharashtra thus became their legitimate domain.[79] The text thus reverses the

[76] Translated in NAGENDRA RAO, *Brahmanas of South India* (Delhi: Kalpaz Publications, 2005), Appendix 1 (pp. 175–85).
[77] VELUTHAT, *The Early Medieval in South India*, 137: 'The landed wealth in South Canara was not under the control of the Brahmanical groups as much as it was in Kerala. And, therefore, the importance that the Brahmanas of Kerala had in polity and society was not matched by what their counterparts in South Canara had. As it was much greater in the case of Kerala, it would take none less than Parasurama to be not only the creator of the land but also the donor to the Brahmana groups'.
[78] CHATTAMPI SVAMIKAL, *Prācīna Malayāḷaṃ* (1889; Pala: Sahridaya Books, 2010), available online: https://archive.org/details/PracheenaMalayalam-SriChattampiSwamikal.
[79] DILIP MENON, 'Writing History in Colonial Times: Polemic and the Recovery of Self in Late Nineteenth-century South India', in *History and Theory in a Global Frame*, theme issue 53, *History and Theory*

Brahmin-centric narrative of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* and legitimises the superior position of groups classified as low caste: a move perfectly typical of this period which sees the development of strong anti-Brahmin regional movements.

In sum, the *Kēraḷōlpatti* textual tradition constitutes a reservoir of different patterns about central institutions, such as landholding rights and hierarchical relations between various groups, which could be activated in various circumstances—a process already underway in precolonial times. The events affecting the region by the end of the eighteenth century made multiple reconfigurations of the narrative necessary. In that process, the prestige, print press, and historiographical practices brought by European actors were all crucial to making one version of the story more authoritative than others.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can come back to the questions that we raised at the beginning. As to interactions between local traditions talking about the region's past and the arrival of European actors, one can certainly observe that there was no sudden introduction of a 'historical consciousness': there were indeed preexisting narratives about the past that were claiming both authority and factuality, and these had already a long history of reformulations when they came in contact with European actors. These narratives were hybridised not with a generic 'Western historical consciousness', but with different types of discourses about the past: an historiography interested in comparing civilisations and understanding them through their own records (as in the case of Duncan), an antiquarian historiography interested to find as many records as possible that would allow, *in fine*, a better political control (as in the case of Mackenzie/Wilks), or a search for the origins of a group through editorial work (as in the case of Gundert). The edition, cataloguing, and/or English paraphrase of these texts *de facto* erased the community-based context of their composition and offered them to new audiences: in the case of Duncan and Mackenzie, British administrators and scholars; and in the case of Gundert, orientalists, missionaries and Malayalam-speaking people.

Finally, the historiographical encounters that we surveyed here had lasting effects: they paved the way for the development of more competing (and compelling) narratives up to the present day, across literary genres and media.[80] Indeed, in all of this, the materiality of the texts—including not only the material support but also the conditions of conservation, the translations, paraphrases, new editions, and changes in reading/performing practices—is a central dimension that impacted the success of such narratives in no small way.

54, no. 4 (2015): 64–83 (80). On Chattampi Svamikal's life and teachings, see JOHN W. GLADSTONE, *Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala* (Trivandrum: Seminary Productions, 1984), 215–223.

[80] Cf. BRUCE LINCOLN, *Between History and Myth: Stories of Harald Fairhair and the Founding of the State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 119.

Mobility of the Paper Medium and Dynamics of Writing in Montesquieu's Drafts*

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Although mobility appears today as a privilege of digital media, former means of written communication also were characterised by their portability and capacity to travel from hand to hand around the world as well as to move around in the working space of anyone producing texts. Some years before digital culture became available through the use of personal computers, scholars studying written communication started paying more attention to the material support and writing tools used to produce documents and books. Such a 'material turn' referred in particular to the methodology of palaeographers and codicologists to provide new perspectives to historians, anthropologists, and literary scholars.[1] They soon discovered materiality is not just a concept, it requires a specific approach. As a codicologist, when I mention studying 'the papers of Montesquieu', I am not using a metonymy, where 'papers' would stand for his manuscripts: I am literally describing my research, which consists in examining manuscripts as material artefacts made of paper. That is actually the scope of codicology (science of the codex), a discipline which developed in the wake of medieval studies and diplomatics, and was adapted during the 1970s by the members of Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes (CNRS) to a written artefact drastically different from the medieval codex, namely the modern manuscript, especially in the form of drafts.[2]

With the drafts of Stendhal and Marcel Duchamp, Montesquieu's was one of the major corpuses of modern and contemporary manuscripts and drafts submitted to systematic analysis when Serge Linkès and I started testing our codicology database entitled MUSE (Manuscrits, Usages des Supports d'Écriture) in the early 2000s. At first glance, the impressive mass of Montesquieu's manuscripts, kept in several repositories such as the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Bibliothèque

* Translated and slightly adapted from 'Mobilité des supports, dynamique de l'écriture: l'apport des indices matériels', in *Montesquieu, Œuvre ouverte? 1748-1755,* ed. CATHERINE LARRÈRE, special issue, *Cahiers Montesquieu* 9 (2005): 229–52.

[1] For instance, vol. 2 of *Lieux de Savoir*, entitled *Les mains de l'intellect,* directed by CHRISTIAN JACOB, Albin Michel, 2011, presents the results of such an orientation in the history of knowledge, as developed in France since the 1980s. See https://savoirs.info.

[2] JACQUES LEMAIRE, *Introduction à la codicologie* (Louvain-la-neuve: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales de l'Université Catholique de Louvain, 1989); about modern manuscripts: LOUIS HAY, 'Eléments pour l'étude des manuscrits modernes', *Codicologica* 1 (1976): 91–108; HAY, *Les Manuscrits des écrivains* (Paris: CNRS Éditions-Hachette, 1993), and ALMUTH GRÉSILLON, *Éléments de critique génétique. Lire les manuscrits modernes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994).

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municipale de Bordeaux (henceforth BNF and MBX respectively), gives quite a contrasted picture. On the one hand heavy, compact volumes, apparently homogeneous in their composition, painstakingly calibrated and copied by the hands of secretaries, such as *Geographica*. On the other hand … a chaos of loose sheets, quires held by a single thread, small pieces of paper sliding out of a bundle, including small so-called 'papillons' ('butterflies', for pasted fragments) pinned here or there. A whole array of different paper qualities and formats, sheets covered with various handwritings, which require a detailed analysis, allowing us to describe, classify and cross-check data until we set up a specific frame of material characteristics of the works, which may be useful to help their interpretation.[3] Our methodology comprises measuring and examining each folio in order to identify the type of paper, according to a protocol that I will present hereafter, and finding out how the actual shape of the drafts may shed light on the various stages of the work. A detailed analysis is required to discover recurring aspects among several hundreds of sheets, or appropriate relationships between various files, to collect some geographical or chronological hints allowing to reconstruct step by step the dynamics of writing processes, the working habits and skills of Montesquieu and his amanuenses.[4]

As I shall try to demonstrate, the inventory of the papers found in a manuscript, relying on material analysis,[5] is merely a first stage of the research, indeed a most necessary beginning.[6] Data such as characteristics of the sheet production (dimensions, mould structure, watermark) allow to identify the paper types. Collecting them is most efficient when dealing with eighteenth century documents,[7] since handmade

[3] CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'Les papiers de Montesquieu: une approche codicologique du fonds de La Brède', *Revue Montesquieu* 3 (1999): 179–87 ; 'A Study of Paper in the Manuscripts of two French Philosophers of the XVIIIth Century: Montesquieu and Condorcet', *IPH Congressbook-Livre des Congrès IPH* 14 (2004): 268–81; 'Descriptifs des manuscrits' et 'Tableau des mains et des papiers' in *Œuvres complètes de Montesquieu*, 22 vols, vols 3 and 4, *De l'esprit des loix*, eds PIERRE RÉTAT and CATHERINE VOLPILHAC-AUGER (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation; Naples: Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, 2008), clxxvii-ccxxxvi and ccxlvi-ccli.

[4] As a model for this methodology, see PETER BOWER, *Turner's Papers, A Study of the Manufacture, Selection and Use of his Drawing Papers*, 2 vols (London: Tate Gallery, 1990), and *Turner's Later papers* (London: Tate Gallery, 1999), as well as PETER BOWER, 'Exploring John Constable's Choice and Use of Paper', in *John Constable*, ed. TERRY VAN DRUTEN (Haarlem: Teylers Museum; Bussum: Toth Publishers, 2020), 66–74.

[5] 'Material analysis', as opposed to textual analysis, covers the observation of a written corpus as a set of artefacts produced within a given writing craftmanship and technology; as far as my own expertise is concerned, applying to modern and contemporary literary or scientific manuscripts and drafts, paper is the main support used in Western culture. Our protocol is not referring at any chemical or physical data, such as fibres, dyes, fillers, etc.

[6] See CATHERINE VOLPILHAC-AUGER, with the contribution of CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'Le manuscrit 2506: inventaire des papiers', in *L'Atelier de Montesquieu. Manuscrits inédits de La Brède*, special issue, *Cahiers Montesquieu* 7 (2001): 284–305, also available online at https://montesquieu.huma-num.fr/editions/esprit-des-lois/dossier-ms2506/introduction-generale. The following examples are taken from this inventory.

[7] To study watermarks, a major reference is of course CHARLES-MOÏSE BRIQUET's *Les filigranes. Dictionnaire historique des marques du papier*, 4 vols (1907; facsimile ed., Amsterdam: Paper Publication Society, 1968). Concerning eighteenth-century French watermarks, see RAYMOND GAUDRIAULT, *Filigranes et autres caractéristiques des papiers fabriqués en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Paris: CNRS Éditions 1995), as well as its *Supplément* (Angoulême: Association française pour l'histoire et l'étude du papier et des papeteries, 2017).

production, which is then still a craftsmanship, leaves its specific imprint on each sheet of paper. It is not the case with industrial paper. Yet such data are not enough to describe the manuscript as a material artefact, since the writer's many graphic and material manipulations, as well as those of his amanuenses, also leave some specific users' marks on the sheets.

When we are trying to give a full identification of all the different papers used on the writer's desk along the years, we quite naturally turn to history of paper bibliography for information.[8] Yet it should be noted that relevant answers to the basic question 'who produced what, where and when?' are not as readily available as could be expected. Some results regarding papermakers' biography, production dates or paper categories remain incomplete, sometimes barely reliable. Caution is required in how we make use of these paper history sources, while examining the material context of each corpus of documents. However, such a context may also be defined by its mobility, since as soon as it is used for writing, each new sheet enters a network of relationships with a group or several groups of sheets, a moving network changing with development and revision of the written composition.

As important as the paper production data, are the *ways of using papers*, the writer's (or secretaries') usual or accidental handling of the material, which have modified the aspect of the original sheet.[9] It is all the more necessary to study these transformations that they may often prevent the proper observation of the original characteristics of the sheet. Whereas a final neat copy generally presents only one kind of paper, gathering sheets of identical dimensions (which may be in their original state if the format is in-folio), a draft frequently comprises sheets of various sizes and qualities, which have been cut, folded, separated or assembled during the composition process. Such material alterations of the support make it a difficult task to recognise the sheets of the same type when they have been used in so many different fashions. Yet, it is precisely by paying attention to transformations that may have occurred in dimensions, folding or position of sheets and checking the quantity and location of each type of paper that we may be able to reconstruct successive operations such as copying, corrections and re-ordering which have shaped the irregular, heterogeneous aspects of a modern era 'manuscript'[10].

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[8] Besides the well-known repertories by EDWARD HEAWOOD, *Watermarks, mainly of the 17th and 18th centuries* (Hilversum: Paper Publications Society, 1950) and WILLIAM A. CHURCHILL, *Watermarks in Paper in the XVII and XVIII centuries* (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1935), for the French area see ALEXANDRE NICOLAÏ, *Histoire des moulins à papier du Sud-Ouest de la France (1300-1800)* (Bordeaux: Delmas, 1935); PIERRE DELAUNAY, *Filigranes d'Auvergne* (Clermont-Ferrand: Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Clermont-Ferrand, 1997); GABRIEL DELÂGE, *Moulins à papier d'Angoumois, Périgord et Limousin* (Paris: Bruno Sépulchre, 1991). See also the Memory of Paper portal (Bernstein project) at https://www.memoryofpaper.eu.

[9] CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'Paper Evidence and the Interpretation of the Creative Process in Modern Literary Manuscripts', in *Looking at Paper: Evidence and Interpretation. Symposium Proceedings, Toronto 1999*, ed. JOHN SLAVIN ET AL. (Ottawa: Canadian Conservation Institute, 2001), 88–94, available online at http://www.item.ens.fr/articles-en-ligne/paper-evidence-and-the-interpretation-of-the-creative-proces/.

[10] MONTESQUIEU, *Spicilège*, ed. ROLANDO MINUTI, in *Œuvres completes*, 22 vols, vol. 13 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation; Naples: Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, 2013).

Although the examination of paper alone does not allow us to solve the many enigmas raised by the often-incomplete archive of the genetic process, the analysis may provide a network of material hints. When pieced together by reconstructing the logic of successive tasks affecting the writing support, the elements of the puzzle make sense, as they are produced by daily habits and recurring work procedures.[11] A thorough codicological study of Montesquieu's corpus thus brought about a re-evaluation of Robert Shackleton's essay on his amanuenses, flawed with mistakes as far as paper identification is concerned. Yet Shackleton was a pioneer in resorting to paper evidence, a daring step which must be acknowledged: Georges Benrekassa considered his essay a founding ground for a 'practical history of intellectual work'.[12]

After a brief presentation of the MUSE database, whose structure reflects the methodology adopted to describe Montesquieu's manuscripts, I shall try to show how mobility is a proper angle to approach this corpus, as far as paper production characteristics are concerned, as well as ways of using paper.

An expert tool for material analysis: the MUSE database

The MUSE database (M.U.S.E. standing for 'Manuscripts, Uses of Writing Supports' in French) was conceived at ITEM (CNRS)[13] in order to collect a full description of the manuscripts, specifically in their material composition, which means in the first place identifying the types of paper used as supports for writing.[14] By 'type of paper', we mean the virtual gathering of all the sheets that have been produced—in our case handmade—by the same papermaker with a single pair of moulds (the slight differences between the two moulds inferring small variants between the watermarks and laid structure in the sheets).[15] In order to distinguish paper types, we rely not only on the watermarks but also on production data that may be observed in the sheet by the naked eye or measured with portable instruments.

[11] Some unexpected results from material analysis may overthrow prevailing genetic scenarios, as happened with the drafts of Roussel and Stendhal: ANNE-MARIE BASSET and CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'Les Cahiers d'*Impressions d'Afrique*: l'apport de la codicologie à l'étude génétique', *Genesis. Revue internationale de critique génétique* 5 (1994): 153–66 and SERGE LINKÈS, *Genèse de* Lamiel*, le chaînon manquant*, PhD diss., Université Paris VIII, 2000, published in STENDHAL, *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, 3 vols, vol. 3 (Gallimard: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2014).

[12] ROBERT SHACKLETON, 'Les secrétaires de Montesquieu', in *Œuvres complètes,* ed. ANDRÉ MASSON, 2 vols (Paris: Nagel, 1950), vol. 2, xxxv-xliii et GEORGES BENREKASSA, 'La fabrique de la pensée: l'étude, la connaissance et l'usage du manuscrit dans *L'Esprit des Lois* de Montesquieu', in *Écrire aux XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles. Genèses de textes littéraires et philosophiques*, eds JEAN-LOUIS LEBRAVE et ALMUTH GRÉSILLON (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2000), p. 105–35.

[13] Relational Database on FileMaker Pro by C. BUSTARRET and S. LINKÈS (Application: S. Linkès, Institut des Textes et Manuscrits modernes, CNRS).

[14] CLAIRE BUSTARRET and SERGE LINKÈS, 'Un nouvel instrument de travail pour l'analyse des manuscrits: la base de données *MUSE*', in *Genesis. Revue internationale de critique génétique* 21 (2003): 161–77.

[15] ALLAN H. STEVENSON, 'Watermarks are Twins', *Studies in Bibliography* 4 (1951–1952): 57–91. For a more recent study of moulds, specifically in France, see CLAIRE BUSTARRET, ed., *Formes et formaires. Protocole descriptif pour les formes papetières (XVIII^e^-XX^e^ s.) et répertoire des formaires en France (XVI^e^-XIX^e^ s.)* (Angoulême: Association française pour l'histoire et l'étude du papier et des papeteries, 2021).

Here are the main elements of our protocol:[16]

Description of paper

- Hand/machine made

- Laid/wove mesh: in the case of Montesquieu the whole corpus comprises, of course, only handmade laid paper.

- Colour: natural/azure/other tinctorial agents. In this corpus no tinctorial agent nor whitening substance is used, but we must be aware of possible alteration of colour due to various conservation contexts and chemical interaction with inks: sheets of the same type may slightly differ in colour today. So, colour *per se* is not a reliable criterium: since we do not use any chemical or optical analysis, in our view this aspect has to be interpreted rather than measured.

- Dimensions: height x width (unfolded full-size sheet)—as far as possible we are trying to find untrimmed in-folio sheets for each type, otherwise we reconstruct the dimensions of the original size of the complete sheet by calculation.

- Thickness (measured by a micrometre)

- Rugosity (estimated by hand, or measured by electronic perthometre)

- Short description of watermark (mark + counter-mark + supplementary sign)

- Distance between chain-lines: detailed data or at least minimum and maximum

Optional:

- Number of laid lines/cm

- Rigidity

- Look-through

- Quality of paper-stuff

- Defects

To give an example, the description of type 'BNF79' would read as follows:

[16] Our template comprises the major criteria selected by IPH, the International Association of Paper Historians (*International Standard for the Registration of papers with or without Watermarks*), as well as criteria of use of the paper, which are absent in IPH Standard. See CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'Databases on Modern and Contemporary Papers: Shared Reference Lists or Working Tools for Research?', *IPH CongressbookLivre des Congrès* 19 (2013): 109–15. See also CLAIRE BUSTARRET and MATHIEU DUBOC, 'La base de données *MUSE* et l'étude des filigranes en codicologie moderne et contemporaine', in *Actes des journées d'étude « Les filigranes, une marque à explorer »*, ed. CLAUDE LAROQUE (Paris: Centre de Recherche Histoire Culturelle et Sociale de l'Art, 2020), 85–107, available online at https://hicsa.pantheonsorbonne.fr/sites/default/files/2023-09/livre_laroque_2020_05.pdf.

BNF79 Laid, natural, 370/490 mm, rather thick (0,137 mm), slight rugosity (8,7), watermarked: *Pomponne* coat of arms/'I (heart) C' + 'V (heart topped with lily) BEAL FIN/AUVERGNE', distance between chain-lines: 25–28 mm.

Description of watermark

- Single/double/triple structure: in French eighteenth-century paper the most frequent case is 'double'[17]

- Iconographic identification, transcription of mark, counter-mark, supplementary sign

- Characteristics of lettering: style, dimensions of letters or numbers

- Dimensions

- Location of each element in the full-size sheet

- Position of each element on/between chain-lines[18]

- Identification of the pair of moulds

- Digital photo by transmitted light, with scale in mm.[19]

- Reference in existing bibliography, repertoires or databases.

Identification of papermaker

Although eighteenth-century French paper most often bears the papermaker's and mill names, sometimes accompanied by a production date, this information is collected and checked through external sources: bibliography on paper history, repertoires such as Raymond Gaudriault's most reliable *Filigranes et autres caractéristiques du papier fabriqué en France aux XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles* (see note 7). Identifying the papermaker may provide some elements for dating, at least '*ante quem non*' limits, and allow cross-checking with other paper produced by the same mill, or in the same area.

List of occurrences

For each type of paper, we set up a list of all occurrences found in the examined volume, as well as other manuscripts or letters by the same author. This list is of utmost importance to evaluate if a volume is homogeneous or not as far as writing supports, it allows to interpret how various paper types are located in an individual corpus, either in a single project or in several works, including the correspondence. We then endeavour to establish a chronology of use of different types, or to locate specific places where a paper-type was used, or correlate its use to a specific task or socio-communicative purpose. When ordered by types, the drafts of Montesquieu's major

[17] The most common structure in French eighteenth-century paper is mark + countermark, generally placed in the middle of each folio, seldom with a supplementary sign, found on the edges or at the centre of the sheet.
[18] Position of the watermark between chain-lines facilitates comparison: a 'horn' between two chain-lines cannot be confused with one between three chain-lines.
[19] Our database started with digitised betaradiography images, before digital photography existed.

work *l'Esprit des lois*, kept in Paris (Bibliothèque nationale de France) and Bordeaux (Bibliothèque municipale, MS 2506) have brought forth groundbreaking data about the genesis and organisation of the corpus.[20]

Unlike most paper history tools available, an original feature of the MUSE database is that it relates the nature of paper (type identification) with its use (list of occurrences), which allows a fine reconstitution of the drafting process.[21] When the writer's hand is known, it provides information on the possible place of use: vice-versa, the place of use may be most useful in the search to identify anonymous amanuenses. On a smaller scale, the collected data about cutting, folding and gluing gestures, which require a detailed observation sheet by sheet, may shed a new light on working routines and transformations operated during the textual composition.[22]

Paper identification and dating problems

Some difficulties in classifying papers arise from watermark identification problems. In eighteenth-century drafts such as Montesquieu's, the most common folding format is in-4°, which prevents the access to the complete watermark, especially when a folio bears a countermark composed of two or three lines, hidden in the fold of the *bifolium* (full sheet) or cut in halves and separated.[23] Moreover, it is of utmost importance to find out which mark and countermark belong together, although they have been separated when the initial *bifolium* has been cut in halves or quarters. Luckily, when a writer (or his secretary) uses paper folded into a quire, the preparation of the medium often allows us to find mark and countermark alternating in the sequence of the folded sheets, whether on a regular basis or not—that is in the case of drafts that have not been altered or re-arranged by later archival interventions.

It goes without saying that in order to prove that two sheets belong to the same paper-type, we do not merely rely on watermarks—there are so many different types bearing the most common motives of *Pomponne* coat of arms or *Horn*! We also check all the other aspects of the sheet described and measured according to our protocol. When scholars have not only limited their observation of the sheets to the mere watermark, but also overlooked the double (or triple) structure of French eighteenth-century watermarks, as did Robert Shackleton in his study of *L'Esprit des Lois* manuscripts for André Masson's edition of the *Œuvres complètes*—up to recently the most in-depth analysis of material aspects applied to Montesquieu's drafts—their

[20] See the inventory of MS 2506 by paper type and folio by folio, in *L'Atelier de Montesquieu*, annexe, 294–305.

[21] As demonstrated by the inventory of Condorcet's papers, available at https://www.inventaire-condorcet.com/Inventaire/Papiers_et_filigranes; see also NICOLAS RIEUCAU, 'Comment dater un manuscrit sans le comprendre? Le cas des archives Condorcet', *Dix-huitième siècle* 45, no. 1 (2013): 681–718.

[22] CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'The Handmade Tale: The Paper Medium as the Place for Action', transl. JONATHAN BLOOM, in *Genesis and Revision in Modern British and Irish Writers*, eds CATHERINE ROVERA and JONATHAN BLOOM (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 169–99.

[23] Even worse with correspondence, often in in-8° format, without any probability to find the missing parts of the same folio in surrounding sheets, which is of great help in notebooks or drafts composed of many sheets.

description remains misleading. For instance, the mark Shackleton calls 'chevrons' is actually the rather complex coat of arms of marquis de *Pomponne*, an extremely common motive in eighteenth-century Auvergne writing papers. This wide iconographic category actually comprises dozens of different types, which may be easily differentiated thanks to their countermark. In *L'Esprit de Lois* drafts, there are at least three different types, respectively associated with countermarks 'A. M.' (sometimes with 'LAINE', meaning 'l'aîné', the eldest), 'I. C.' and 'P. C.', initials from the Cusson family, and 'G. MARCHEVAL'. Merging all the *Pomponne* marks into one type, and separating the various countermarks from the marks they are coupled with, definitely gives a mistaken picture of the paper-types.

Some reading mistakes are of lesser consequence: the scholar reads 'Ballange' instead of 'L. BALLANDE' (with 'IHS' monogram), which may prevent him to identify the Périgord papermaker as a local source when Montesquieu works in Bordeaux or in his domain of La Brède. There are also some 'JEAN BALLANDE' countermarks in the drafts of *L'esprit des Lois* (BnF, MS Nouvelles Acquisitions Français 12836, ff. 346, 356, 357), as well as another variant also bearing a date of production, '1744', in a different manuscript (*Mémoire sur la machine de Kunigsberg en Hongrie*, MS NAFR 15465). Such reading difficulties may be compensated by searching in Montesquieu's in-folio manuscripts of the same period, or composed in the same region, where a given watermark may appear more legible, with its complete dimensions: that is the reason why a systematic description of paper, allowing to compare the drafts of a single work with other occurrences, is required.

Other paper identification questions remain unsolved owing to the scarcity of historical sources. We manage to find out that recurring initials or names refer to well-known Périgord papermakers families, located in one or several mills, such as the Ballande family in Villeneuve (Majoulassy, Gavaudun, Martiloque mills) and in Couze, near Bergerac (Bayac mill), or the Dumas family, master papermakers in the Couze harbour. François Dumas seems to have been working since 1731, and Nicolaï makes reference to his widow, Jeanne Grellou, in 1753; Arnaud Dumas is featured from 1742 to 1772, or even 1787 (initial 'A.'), whereas a second François appears during the Revolution, for instance in the Martiloque mill. First names initials may provide precious chronological hints, yet one has to take into account the frequent use of a father or ancestor's initials, sometimes for several generations, which does not help dating operations! When a watermark bears only initials, such as 'A. M.' (type BNF488), one has to rely on repertoires such as Gaudriault's, who suggests reading 'A. Marcheval', belonging to the same family as the above-mentioned 'G. Marcheval' (BNF497); the Auvergne name of Cusson, implied in initials such as 'P. C.' (MBX34), 'I. C.' (BNF79) and 'H.-J. C.' (BNF489), also appears in full on several countermarks (MBX5, 33, 35). As for initials 'I. D. M.', associated with a Malta cross,[24] Nicolaï attributes them to Joseph Demichel, from the Cavart mill in Cahors (1739), yet they

[24] NICOLAÏ, *Histoire des moulins*, plate XXI, no. 2.

could also refer to Jean Demichel, working in the 1720–1740 period in the Saint-Michel and Chantoiseau mills near Angoulême.[25]

Moreover, when several names or initials are associated in a watermark, we do not always know the respective positions of each partner: some of them are owners, managers or operators, partners or debtors temporarily working for a neighbouring mill. For instance we find Cusson's initials I. C. with 'V. BEAL'; the name 'A. Dumas' sometimes appears alone, sometimes in the same sheet as 'L. (Louis or Léonard) Ballande'; 'J. Berger' sometimes shares the space with his father-in-law, Pierre Cusson (P. C.); the case of 'LAINE' or 'LAISNE' deserves attention: it could mean 'the elder' (l'aîné), here linked to Marcheval's initials (BNF488) or elsewhere it could be related to the Cusson family, according to Gaudriault (p. 299). Such approximations in historical data may be frustrating if one is looking for tangible proofs, yet the bibliography on papermaking and mills, although scarcely focusing on watermarks and paper products, often provides enough evidence to differentiate the various paper types encountered in a corpus of manuscripts.[26]

One last element concerning dating documents is to be noted: French eighteenth-century papers often bear a date of making, within the watermark. This is due to legal constraint (January 1739 and September 1741 royal decrees), requiring papermakers to mention their name, the quality of paper ('medium', 'fine', 'raw' etc.) as well as the area of production, followed by the date—the example given in the 1741 decree is '1742', since it applies to the first year of application of the decree.[27] By way of consequence, the '1742' date has been systematically used in watermarks for several years afterwards by many papermakers who tried to escape legal control, while literally respecting the text of the decree[28]… Yet the presence of the suspicious '1742' date means that the paper has definitely not been made earlier—although false, this hint provides a '*terminus ante quem non*' which may prove useful. In Bordeaux's MS 2506 (drafts of *L'Esprit des lois*), half of the watermarks of identified paper types comprise a date, and nine out of ten types actually bear '1742' (BNF490, MBX4, 5, 15, 28, 31, 33, 75). Among Montesquieu's manuscripts, two other dates appear: '1744' and '1750', which are more reliable as date of production (paper types BNF83 and MBX36). An average delay of three years seems a reasonable estimation of the timespan between the production date and the use of paper,[29] when circumstances of the user's work and life are considered stable.

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[25] GAUDRIAULT, *Filigranes*, 198, and DELÂGE, *Moulins à papier*, 258.

[26] GEORGES BUISSON rightfully insists on the mistakes in interpretation resulting from a misreading of watermarks or hasty observation of papers: 'Les papiers d'André Chénier', in *Sortir de la Révolution. Casanova, Chénier, Staël, Constant, Chateaubriand*, eds BÉATRICE DIDIER and JACQUES NEEFS (Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1994), 33–57.

[27] GAUDRIAULT, *Filigranes*, 27.

[28] PETER BOWER mentions a similar phenomenon in the history of British papermaking about the date '1794' in 'The White Art: The Importance of Interpretation in the Analysis of Paper', in *Looking at Paper*, ed. SLAVIN ET AL., 5–16.

[29] GAUDRIAULT, *Filigranes*, 28. The average delay of five years given by Briquet applies to earlier periods and to printed material. For a critical examination of this point, see JEAN IRIGOIN, 'La datation par les

Dated watermarks may contribute to dating a document, but the scholarly method of cross-checking undated documents with dated documents sharing the same paper characteristics is our best guide. Although he failed to identify correctly the different types of paper they used, Shackleton showed us the way when working on the classification of Montesquieu's secretaries' hands. Applying the same methodology to the paper medium of Montesquieu's drafts and correspondence is still a work in progress, which has been launched following the results of Marianne Bockelkamp's material analysis of Diderot's manuscripts and letters.[30] Without going into details here, let us merely point out that in close collaboration with Catherine Volpilhac-Auger, who has studied and published the composition process of *L'Esprit des Lois*, we have been able to date several drafts thanks to the identification of types of paper which Montesquieu and his amanuenses also used for dated letters. These positive results also helped somewhat clarifying the chronology of Montesquieu's many secretaries, but several questions about them remained unsolved. Some of the philosopher's collaborators are still anonymous, so that scholars lack biographical data to figure out their role, for instance, in the process of composition of *L'Esprit des Lois*. Eighteenth-century professional handwritings are so normalised that it is difficult to distinguish them—fortunately, not all of his assistants were professional scribes.

Paper consumption in motion between Bordeaux and Paris

The watermarks' motives give some idea of the place where the paper was made, and as mentioned earlier the text of watermarks also often include, in keeping with the royal decrees, names of a region or mill.[31] As far as *L'Esprit des Lois* is concerned, the various parts of the archive clearly belong to two different paper-making areas, which are not surprisingly closely associated with the philosopher's dwelling places during the many years he devoted to this lengthy project. Montesquieu alternately lived in Paris and Bordeaux (or in his castle of La Brède in the vicinity), where he was President of the local parliament. The distinct paper-making regions concerned are on the one hand Auvergne, main provider of paper for the Paris area, and Périgord, where the paper-production was mostly oriented towards export through the harbour of Bordeaux, en route to Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands or even Russia.

So, it is rather obvious that the *Pomponne* as well as the *Le Tellier* coats of arms, or '*griffon*', bearing the names of Aurilhon, Beal, Berger, Cusson, Marcheval,

filigranes du papier', *Codicologica* 5 (1980): 9–36, and as concerns the eighteenth-century, RUSSELL JONES, 'From Papermaker to Scribe: The Lapse of Time', *Papers from the Third European Colloquium on Malay and Indonesian Studies*, eds LUIGI SANTA MARIA, FAIZAH SOENOTO RIVAI, and ANTONIO SORRENTINO (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1988), 153–69.

[30] MARIANNE BOCKELKAMP, 'L'analyse bétaradiographique du papier appliquée à l'étude des manuscrits de Diderot', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 254 (1988): 139–73. First results on Montesquieu's papers have been published in 'III. De la main à la plume. Les secrétaires de Montesquieu', in *Manuscrit de* L'Esprit des Lois, online edition (Lyon: École Normale Supérieure de Lyon), available at https://montesquieu.huma-num.fr/editions/esprit-des-lois/manuscrit/introduction-generale/de-la-main-a-la-plume; Annexe 'Manuscrits et écritures', available at https://montesquieu.huma-num.fr/editions/esprit-des-lois/manuscrit/annexes.

[31] GAUDRIAULT, *Filigranes*, 26.

Nourrisson or Tamisier, followed by 'AUVERGNE', come from mills in Thiers or Ambert. Whereas in the Aquitaine papers, the names of Ballande and Dumas (sometimes together), or Marot,[32] are associated with the *Amsterdam* coat of arms (whose local name was 'Stradam'), the *Christ monogram* (IHS), or very often *Horns* (placed on a shield generally topped with a crown, or seldom a simple lily)—all accompanied by the 'PERIGORD' legal mention. A single horn made in Auvergne by Nourrisson appears as an exception (MBX28). Although a part of Aquitaine as well, the region of Angouleme is scarcely represented (since its harbour on the Atlantic was not Bordeaux but La Rochelle), by a watermark bearing a name bound to become famous in French paper history during the nineteenth century: Laroche[33] (MBX50).

The group of papers made in each region shares several characteristics: Auvergne papers are often of larger dimensions, whereas Périgord papers are smaller and with nearly-square proportions in-plano, therefore presenting narrower sheets when folded in-folio.

Associated to the weight, the dimensions of the in-plano undergo precise legal control during the Ancien Régime.[34] Yet the craftsmen in smaller mills did not always manage to control their own production in this respect, as the negative reports of inspectors underlined, especially in Périgord.[35] In our corpus we find two main categories of paper sizes meant for handwriting purposes:

- Large sizes, i.e. in-plano 365 to 389 mm in height, by 450 to 510 mm in width (or average 370/250 mm when folded in-folio, and 250/185 in-4°)—associated with the *Pomponne* coat of arms, Bells, and large Horns;

- Small sizes, i.e. in-plano 350 to 360 mm in height, by 400 to 450 mm in width (or average 355/215 mm when folded in-folio, and 215/178 mm in-4°)—associated with the Amsterdam and Le Tellier coats of arms, as well as small Horns.

As Auvergne held a strong position during the early eighteenth century (not on technical terms, but commercially),[36] and Paris being the centre of French intellectual life, Auvergne papers are most common in contemporary writers' archives. Relying mainly on small local papermakers is a distinctive feature of Montesquieu's archive, which implies he did not need to carry with him a large stock of blank paper, when he travelled from Paris to Bordeaux, a large city and harbour with an active paper market. Our hypothesis is that he travelled only with sheets or quires that already bore some work in progress, since he needed them to continue amending his drafts. It was part

[32] NICOLAÏ, *Histoire des moulins*, plates CXLII et XI.
[33] RENÉ LAROCHE, *Les Laroche, papetiers charentais* (Angoulême: Fumées du Nil-Atelier Musée du papier, 1992), 31, mentions Léonard Laroche fils (1700–1752).
[34] See below, § How paper was used: gathering, moving around, transferring, about the folding of sheets.
[35] NICOLAÏ, *Histoire des moulins*, recalls at length.
[36] PIERRE-CLAUDE REYNARD, 'Les choix trop prudents des papetiers d'Ambert', *IPH Congress Book-Livre des Congrès IPH* 10 (1994): 80–82, and PIERRE-CLAUDE REYNARD, *Histoires de papier. La papeterie auvergnate et ses historiens* (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2001).

of his secretaries' tasks to provide paper to the philosopher: when starting a new sheet or quire, Montesquieu wrote (or dictated) on local paper, that is Auvergne paper when working in Paris, and Périgord paper when working in Bordeaux. For instance, the secretary named 'H' by scholars, who took part in the first version of *L'Esprit des Lois*, written in Paris, used only Auvergne papers (BNF488, BNF489, MBX60). In case the sheet was used by several hands in successive stages of composition, which was usually the case with drafts, this observation of a geographical connection between the writing hand and the paper's local origin concerns exclusively the first user.[37]

We have focused, therefore, on several secretaries known for being employed by Montesquieu either in Paris or in Bordeaux and La Brède, trying to set up a list of the paper-types they used, more specifically the ones they used as 'first users'. Since the results confirmed our hypothesis, we then extrapolated to anonymous employees, which we were able to assign to Bordeaux or Paris by means of the local origin of the paper they used (as 'first users').[38] This is where the research on *the kind of paper* used, aiming at a typology of the whole corpus,[39] and the enquiry on *how papers were used* come together, allowing us to identify *by whom* (or at least in which of the two cities) the sheets were used.

How paper was used: gathering, moving around, transferring

Folding and cutting paper were everyday actions, most common, and even necessary when preparing the material for writing during the eighteenth century.[40] Paper was sold and probably also kept by the user in gatherings of twenty-five sheets folded in-folio, yet it was seldom used in its original shape, especially during the first stages of composition. As most of their colleagues, whether professional or not, Montesquieu's secretaries separated the bifolios in single sheets, which they often folded in two (in-4°), in order to get a smaller bifolio of four pages. Given the high quantity of paper used by the philosopher, it is likely that these recurring operations were made in a repetitive sequence of hand movements by the employee who transformed a whole series of sheets one after another.

[37] After a first version, written by him or dictated to a secretary, Montesquieu revised either alone or again with the help of a secretary, adding up to three of four interventions on some sheets before he asked someone to make a neat copy. This process could start in Bordeaux and be finished in Paris or viceversa.

[38] Results of this study have been published and commented by CATHERINE VOLPILHAC-AUGER: 'Les manuscrits de Montesquieu, un château de cartes?', *Dix-huitième siècle* 51, no. 1 (2019): 379–95, as well as in 'Une nouvelle datation de manuscrits de Montesquieu', Actualités de la recherche sur Montesquieu, Hypothèses website, 28 June 2019, available at https://montesquieu.hypotheses.org/3264 (concerning the *Spicilège*).

[39] For a typology of papers used by Montesquieu, established in 2005, see 'Analyse des papiers du manuscrit de *L'Esprit des lois* et du dossier Ms 2506 de Bordeaux', in *Manuscrit de* L'Esprit des Lois, online edition (Lyon: École Normale Supérieure de Lyon), available at https://montesquieu.huma-num.fr/editions/esprit-des-lois/manuscrit/introduction-generale/descriptifs-des-manuscrits#analyse-des-papiers. It should be completed in the near future.

[40] CLAIRE BUSTARRET, 'Couper, coller dans les manuscrits de travail du XVIII[e] au XX[e] siècle', in *Lieux de Savoir*, 2 vols, ed. CHRISTIAN JACOB, vol. 2, *Les mains de l'intellect* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2011), 353–75.

According to the current stage of work, copying excerpts, holograph or dictated drafting, the stock of in-4° bifolios were either used one by one (for instance in the bundle no. 8 of MS 2506), which means whenever the written piece exceeds four pages, the first page of the second bifolio is numbered '5'. Either—and in this archive it is a widely predominant choice—two to seven bifolios were set inside one another as an unbound booklet or quire, whenever a piece of text was planned to expand over four pages. The pages are in this case numbered with a page '3' on the front page of the second bifolio, following page 1 and 2 belonging to the first bifolio. When the text remained unfinished, or when its length had been overestimated, one or several pages remained blank at the end of the booklet. Tearing those apart in order to use the remaining sheets elsewhere would turn loose the first folios: such a risk is generally avoided by keeping the blank sheets. Which means that the quire, although most often unbound, is a material unit somehow taking care of the continuity of the textual unit.

As a matter of fact, the sheets of these handmade 'copybooks' were not necessarily sewn together—a good reason to number them—and whenever they are loosely bound, it is merely by a short needleful of thread, with two or three holes in the fold. In some bifolios, the presence of a larger number of holes reminds us that some sheets may have been added, substituted or extracted from the original set without much effort. Yet, whenever a bifolio was inserted afterwards in a bundle or unbound booklet, several hints betray the latecomer: a different type of paper, slight irregularities in the folding, gaps or changes in the numbering sequence…

Whether it is used for initial drafting or for a neat copy made up from previous drafts, the use of the quire or 'copybook' disposition, appropriate for a long sequence of text, does not mean it constitutes a close unit, with pre-established limits. The writer (or secretary) plans a definite number of pages to be prepared for his use into a handmade artefact, which, as opposed to nineteenth and twentieth industrially bound notebooks, may undergo unexpected transformations in the course of the drafting and/or revision process. Even in the case of handmade bound notebooks, or heavier volumes made up of several working notebooks sewn together, one may notice some sheets which have been cut out after writing (as seen in the fold where words have been truncated). Have these cut out (or torn out) sheets been eliminated or were they moved to a different part of the work? Once again, a detailed analysis of the paper characteristics may help scholars to trace them.

Among the operations aimed at gathering sheets, let me also mention some which produce smaller scale changes, as when one pins a small piece of paper to a larger sheet bearing some part of the text—pinned fragments that Montesquieu called 'papillons'. The minute dimensions of such fragments often make it difficult to identify the type of paper. Nevertheless, such a mode of using paper is typically motivated by mobility, whether they are used to insert a new component into the text, to bring a correction or a bibliographic reference to it or to comment its content or style. The choice of using a needle and not wax (frequently employed by Diderot or Buffon for this purpose) to 'paste' the small piece of paper enhances Montesquieu's concept of a

work in progress, endlessly remaining open to changes at will. Just as the unbound quire, the pinned 'butterfly' facilitates revisions and interpolations: both modalities support the mobility of writing.

Another form of shaping paper to promote mobility is the well-studied index card. Volpilhac-Auger records that Montesquieu used to call them 'bulletins': made of in-8° slips of paper, usually used vertically, they are meant to transfer data, by copying portions of text singled out to be transferred.[41] The cards are structured to facilitate interactions, possibly in several strategic sites. They may also bear instructions for a future action: they behave like movable marginalia, devoted to promoting mobility within the current corpus. Several cards sometimes come from a single sheet of paper, which betrays a serial preparation, and the use (possibly delayed in time) of a stock of available blank slips.

Finally, single in-4° sheets, usually of thick and even coarse paper, may be used as covers for draft bundles, what we would call a folder, which the philosopher appropriately calls an 'envelope' (although it is by no means a closed container). Several dissertations that Montesquieu composed in parallel or after *L'Esprit des Lois*, testify to a remarkable archive-like ordering process. Leftover scraps, aborted beginnings, reading excerpts are gathered in files thanks to these simple bifolios, conveying instructions for reordering the contents, as suggested by the titles they bear: 'Scraps for…', 'Scraps for dissertation or my reflections about…'; 'Everything that this envelope contains is proper material for dissertations on…'; 'I have merely kept all this in case…'; 'See where this would belong most appropriately…' Quite often those titles are cancelled and modified along with the changes made in the composition and ordering of the chapters.

Hence the folder itself, a strictly functional medium serving as mobile binding for an open file, also becomes a draft, subject to erasing and revision. In some cases, it is even folded backwards and used for a second time, endorsing a new purpose. The drafting folders are in charge of materially supporting a forthcoming structure, yet they are ephemeral, since they tend to disappear as soon as this structure is stabilised into chapters and sections of a book, well-ordered and numbered. Such observations enhance the role of the 'bundle' or file, however loose and open this material artefact may be, as the most appropriate descriptive unit for Montesquieu's work in progress.[42]

One may also pay attention to the functions of needles: when the smallest 'butterflies' as well as in-8° index slips or even in-4° draft sheets are pinned to a larger

[41] CATHERINE VOLPILHAC-AUGER, *L'Atelier de Montesquieu,* introduction, 17–19. See also CATHERINE VOLPILHAC-AUGER, 'Astrix, nottes et bultins', in *Manuscrit de* L'Esprit des Lois, online edition (Lyon: École Normale Supérieure de Lyon), available at https://montesquieu.huma-num.fr/editions/esprit-des-lois/manuscrit/annexes/astrix-nottes-bultins.

[42] GEORGES BENREKASSA, 'La fabrique de la pensée', 120: 'On rappellera que les livres, mais aussi les chapitres forment des liasses indépendantes, donc déplaçables, donc susceptibles de distributions et répartitions nouvelles' (Let's recall that books, but also chapters are made up of independent bundles, available for transfer, redistribution and new interpolations). A note on the translation: the 'books' and 'chapters' referred to here are the hierarchical sections of an essay such as *L'Esprit des Lois*.

folio (self-sustaining or gathered in a quire), they are so to say annexed to it, the needle then points out the act of insertion, enacting an implicit hierarchy. When two folios or pieces of paper of equal size and function are pinned together, the needle merely gathers them in a minimal scale bundle, temporarily binds them together in a removable conjunction.

The heterogeneous material composition of the bundles applies to the conceptual mobility of a major work, such as *L'Esprit des lois*, constantly revised and reordered over the years, as well as to the perpetually remodelled archive of side-projects left unfinished. Thoroughly analysing paper and identifying handwritings may provide useful keys to understand in both cases what is a work in progress, in the case of Montesquieu. The mad endeavour to follow the path of each bundle of folios back and forth between Paris and Bordeaux would shed light on the complex chronology of composition of the philosopher's major *opus*. The motion in space between the two cities and the accumulation in time of the paper medium add up with the constant circulation of the sheets between the hands of the author and that of his secretaries, as the layers of successive writing interventions on their surface testify, since each sheet may be used more than once by several persons and in different working places.[43]

The fact that, owing to Montesquieu's concern with his own complex archive, the rough drafts of *L'Esprit des Lois* have been preserved allows us to underline the mobility factor in a composition process that could be called a 'mobilisation' process, since it is using paper in motion.[44] The eighteenth-century philosopher's drafts illustrate what genetic criticism, relying on the working habits of much later authors such as Proust, has defined as the multidimensional, non-linear nature of writing processes. Such 'written intricacies'[45] are nevertheless guided by intentions, shaped by working skills which in this case include the interventions of several hands and the repeated change of working place. Albeit not planned initially, the transformations, reordering and mobilisation of the written material accumulated along the years are facilitated by the flexibility of gathering devices, by the lability and handiness of the paper medium. The writer's determination to build an intellectual project and his creative impulse while composing his masterpiece are not impeded by a rigid, predetermined, limited or formal materiality. Complex as it is, Montesquieu's drafting process implies on the contrary a remarkable resistance against any material restriction which would hinder the essential mobility of the writing act.

[43] CATHERINE VOLPILHAC-AUGER recently added up to this whirlwind vision of the archive, as she included in the picture the mobility of scholarly criticism itself in her 'Les manuscrits de Montesquieu'.
[44] BUSTARRET, 'The Handmade Tale'.
[45] YVES BONNEFOY, 'Enchevêtrements d'écriture. Entretien avec Michel Collot', *Genesis. Revue internationale de critique génétique* 2 (1992): 123–30.

Aldrovandi and New World Volcanoes
The Discovery of a Sixteenth-Century Woodblock of Popocatepetl*

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Introduction

Bologna's Palazzo Poggi Museum holds 1,822 woodblocks from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and the Bologna University Library (BUB) holds a further 1,950. They are part of a large bequest left by the celebrated naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605), whose museum attracted visitors from across Europe and made Bologna one of Europe's natural history centres of excellence over the course of the sixteenth century.[1] Almost his entire legacy is now held by these two institutions in accordance with Aldrovandi's wishes, who left his museum, his manuscripts, his library and his watercolours to the Senate of Bologna. In 1742, the collection was merged with those of the Istituto delle Scienze di Palazzo Poggi founded by Luigi Ferdinando Marsili (1658–1730).[2] The woodblocks were drawn and carved in Aldrovandi's *bottega artistica* (artistic workshop).[3] Among those still held by the museum and the library is one of an American volcano, a woodblock that has so far never been the subject of scholarly investigation.

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[1] PAULA FINDLEN, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994); GIUSEPPE OLMI, *L'inventario del mondo: catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1992); SANDRA TUGNOLI PATTARO, *Metodo e sistema delle scienze nel pensiero di Ulisse Aldrovandi* (Bologna: Clueb, 1981); GIUSEPPE OLMI, *Ulisse Aldrovandi: scienza e natura nel secondo Cinquecento* (Trento: Università di Trento, 1976).

[2] MASSIMO ZINI, *Tre secoli di scienza: lineamenti della storia dell'Accademia delle Scienze dell'Istituto di Bologna attraverso gli studi e le vicende dei suoi membri più celebri* (Bologna: Accademia delle scienze dell'Istituto di Bologna, 2011).

[3] For the woodblocks, see MARIO CERMENATI, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi e l'America', *Annali di Botanica* 4 (1906): 313–66. The papers states that originally there must have been some 5,000 woodblocks. For a description of the artistic workshop, see OLMI, *L'inventario del mondo*, 'La 'bottega artistica' aldrovandiana', 61–90. See also GIUSEPPE OLMI and LUCIA TONGIORGI TOMASI, *De piscibus. La bottega artistica di Ulisse Aldrovandi e l'immagina naturalistica* (Rome: Edizioni dell'Elefante, 1993).

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This essay will examine how knowledge about the geography of the New World, its natural world and in particular its volcanoes was disseminated in sixteenth-century Bologna.[4] The starting point for this paper is the history of how the woodblock of the volcano came to exist, based on an analysis of Aldrovandi's manuscripts and other works in his personal library. The micro-historical approach to these sources reveals the rich tapestry of people, manuscripts and books of the Italian and European courts and cities that Aldrovandi frequented.[5] As Monica Azzolini has observed in her discussion of Aldrovandi's *Historia admirandis*: 'Aldrovandi and his team selected and recomposed information from books and letters about marvellous and exotic artefacts. […] The result of all this research […] generated material for other works which were published during Aldrovandi's lifetime or after his death'.[6] This research methodology enabled him to systematically gather a huge amount of information, including about the New World, and to undertake a methodical and multifaceted study of it.[7]

Aldrovandi's interest in America and its natural world is well-known. From Mario Cermenati's pioneering work at the start of the twentieth century to Davide Domenici's recent papers, research has revealed the significant impact that the 'discovery' of the New World and its consequences in European scholarship had on the creation of what Aldrovandi called his *teatro di natura* (theatre of nature).[8] Recent historiographical work has taken this research to an international scale with the 'Global Aldrovandi' conference held in Bologna in June 2022.[9]

Starting from the recent discovery of the American volcano woodblock, this paper will therefore shed light on the communication network and the sources that lie behind the creation of this single woodblock. Thanks to this network, the relatively rapid dissemination of knowledge and images could satisfy the thirst for knowledge

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[4] On the spread of knowledge of the natural world in Italian courts in the early modern period, see SABINA BREVAGLIERI, *Natural desiderio di sapere. Roma barocca fra vecchi e nuovi mondi* (Rome: Viella, 2019), in particular the chapter entitled 'Itinerari naturalistici: Impero spagnolo, Viceregno, Roma', 31–82, where Brevaglieri also discusses Aldrovandi in detail. On the same topic in Bologna in particular, see LAURA LAURENCICH MINELLI (ed.), *Bologna e il Mondo Nuovo* (Bologna: Grafis, 1992).

[5] For Aldrovandi's relations with the Medici court in Florence, see LIA MARKEY, *Imagining the Americas in Medici Florence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2016).

[6] MONICA AZZOLINI, 'Aldrovandi's Planned History of Marvels: Writing the Preternatural into Nature', *Journal of the History of Collections* 2025, https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/fhaf006, 5.

[7] On Aldrovandi's interest in America, see DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Rediscovery of a Mesoamerican Greenstone Sculpture from the Collection of Ulisse Aldrovandi', *Journal of the History of Collections* 34, no. 1 (2022): 1–21, in particular the section entitled 'Ulisse Aldrovandi and the New World', 3–5.

[8] RAFFAELLA SIMILI (ed.), *Il teatro della natura di Ulisse Aldrovandi* (Bologna: Compositori, 2001). GIUSEPPE OLMI, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi e la natura del Nuovo Mondo', in *Tesoro mexicano: visioni della natura fra Vecchio e Nuovo Mondo*, ed. GIORGIO ANTEI (Fontanellato: Franco Maria Ricci, 2015), 185–89.

[9] On the conference, see 'Global Aldrovandi: Exchanging Nature in the Early Modern World: 3rd Brill Seminar: Bologna, June 16–17, 2002', *Aldrovandiana* 1 (2022): 116–119; DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Global Aldrovandi. Exchanging Nature in the Early Modern World, International conference, Bologna, University of Bologna, 16-17 June 2022', *Annali di Storia delle università italiane* 26, no. 2 (2022): 410. On the conference's results see LIA MARKEY and DAVIDE DOMENICI, eds, *Global Aldrovandi. Exchanging Knowledge in the Early Modern World* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). On the global dimension of Aldrovandi's collections, see PETER MASON, *Ulisse Aldrovandi. Naturalist and Collector* (London: Reaktion, 2023).

generated by the emerging discipline of natural history.[10] As Sachiko Kusukawa has shown, images were fundamental to the practice of natural history in the early modern world.[11] They were equally essential to Aldrovandi's analysis of the natural world of Europe, the Americas and other continents, as evidenced by the roughly 8,000 illustrations preserved in his collections.[12] These illustrations also served as an integral part of Aldrovandi's scientific approach.[13]

A unique woodblock of a volcano in Aldrovandi's collection

We start with an analysis of a pearwood woodblock 12 cm long, 12.4 cm wide and 1.9 cm high that was probably carved by Cristoph Lederlein (Cristoforo Coriolano). He was one of the workshop's most important carvers and worked with Aldrovandi from the mid-1580s.[14] As far as we know, the image has never been published, though this is not an isolated case, as many of Aldrovandi's woodblocks remained unpublished.[15] The recto (Fig. 1) shows a volcano whose summit is engulfed in flame and the verso bears an inscription in Latin arguably written when the recto was carved.[16] (Fig. 2)

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[10] This network often spread Aldrovandi's results to other major natural history research centres, such as, for example, Valencia. See EMMA SALLENT DEL COLOMBO, 'Natural History Illustration between Bologna and Valencia: The Aldrovandi-Pomar Case', *Early Science and Medicine* 21, no. 2–3 (2016): 182–213; EMMA SALLENT DEL COLOMBO and JOSÉ PARDO-TOMÁS, 'Materiali aldrovandiani in Spagna: l'enigmatico caso del Códice Pomar', in *Ulisse Aldrovandi: libri e immagini di storia naturale nella prima età moderna*, eds GIUSEPPE OLMI and FULVIO SIMONI (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2018), 37–48.

[11] SACHIKO KUSUKAWA, *Picturing the Book of Nature. Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany* (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 2012), especially the first part 'Printing Pictures'.

[12] On the role of images in Early Modern Europe see also JANICE NERI, *The Insect and the Image: Visualizing Nature in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011) and FLORIKE EGMOND, *Eye for Detail. Images of Plants and Animals in Art and Science, 1500-1630* (London: Reaktion Books, 2017).

[13] DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Rediscovery', 3. On the role of the images in Aldrovandi's works, see OLMI and SIMONI (eds), *Ulisse Aldrovandi*; GIUSEPPE OLMI, 'Osservazione della natura e raffigurazione in Ulisse Aldrovandi', *Annali dell'Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico in Trento* 3 (1977): 105–81 (150–51); ANGELA FISCHEL, 'Drawing and the Contemplation of Nature – Natural History around 1600: The Case of Aldrovandi's Images', in *The Technical Image. A History of Styles in Scientific Imagery*, eds HORST BREDEKAMP, VERA DÜNKEL, BIRGIT SCHNEIDER (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 170–81. On the rhetorical function of Aldrovandi's imagen see also MONICA AZZOLINI, 'Retorica e autopsia negli scritti di Ulisse Aldrovandi: il draco bolognese tra *historia* e rappresentazione *ad vivum*', in *Poetica e retorica del discorso scientifico nelle letterature europee dell'età moderna*, ed. ELISABETTA MENGALDO (Padua: Padova University Press, 2023), 33–61.

[14] FULVIO SIMONI, 'La natura incisa nel legno: la collezione di matrici xilografiche di Ulisse Aldrovandi conservata all'Università di Bologna', *Studi di Memofonte* 17, no. 2 (2016): 129–44.

[15] Alessandro Ceregato, who has worked on cataloguing surviving woodblocks, has kindly told me in a personal communication that 'There is sparse information about this woodblock. It has never been inked or, to the best of my knowledge, used for the *Museum Metallicum* or other of Aldrovandi's works. Unlike published images, the woodblock shows no signs of printing and there is no indication to the page numbers of a volume'. Personal communication via email (12 May 2022).

[16] Images of the woodblocks are held at the Palazzo Poggi Museum and are accessible online. For the 'Volcano' woodblock see https://bbcc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/pater/loadcard.do?id_card=205161, last accessed 1st December 2024. Recently, a new online catalogue has been published by the Sistema Museale di Ateneo of the University of Bologna: see the catalogue entry for the American volcano woodblock, with more details about its characteristics, at https://catalogo.sma.unibo.it/it/29/ricerca/detailiccd/2053/, last accessed on 4 December 2024.

Thanks to new palaeographic interpretation the inscription reads as follows:

> Hic mons est in America flammivomus ac sunt qui reperiuntur in Europa, ignum emittentur et flammas, ut est mons Aetna qui quidam mons ut lumineis flammas, cineris, lapidis horrenda factu eructat, idia ut noctu latissime ultra centus millia passium videris. Huius figura est depicta apud Corn. Jud. in tab. Americae eius descript. ut d. to. 13. 2966. Observat.
>
> This ignivomous mountain is located in America, and is similar to those found in Europe which emit fire and flames, like Mount Etna when it spews out luminous flames, ash and rocks so terrible that at night you might see them hurled more than a hundred thousand paces. The image was created by Corn. Jud., in *Tabula Americae*, as noted in volume 13. 2966. Observat.

The words 'Corn. Jud. in tab. Americae' suggest that the inscription is a significant clue to the source consulted by Aldrovandi and his team for the creation of the woodblock. A thorough analysis of manuscript 136, volume 13, has revealed no reference to the image of the American volcano. As will be discussed in detail later, however, a single 'Mons Flammivomus' annotation was found in volume 26 of the same manuscript, within a list of images copied on 2 December 1596 during Aldrovandi's consultation of Cornelis de Jode's wall maps, including America. It is therefore plausible that the inscription on the woodblock contains an error in the indication of the volume in which the annotation is to be found.

In addition, although the image never appeared in any of his published works, either during his lifetime or posthumously, an examination of Aldrovandi's manuscripts has uncovered a printing proof, which is published here for the first time as Figure 3.[17] This demonstrates that the woodblock was conceived and carved for actual use. The image of the volcano was to be included in one of Aldrovandi's many works. Despite the existence of the printing proof, no ink is visible to the naked eye on the woodblock, nor are there any marks left by printing, which shows the care that Aldrovandi demanded in how everything produced in his workshop was to be handled. The meticulous cleaning of the woodblock also explains the exceptionally good state of conservation of most of the woodblocks, that are still preserved in the Palazzo Poggi Museum and the University Library in Bologna. In addition, the absence of ink may also be explained by two restoration interventions on the material conditions of the woodblock. The first, carried out in 1969 by the restorer Otello Caprara, involved pest control, consolidation, and restoration, while the second, a few years later in 1983, by Marisa Caprara, is described by the Museum of Palazzo Poggi website as a 'restoration with washing'.[18] It is therefore possible that these maintenance and cleaning interventions on the woodblock contributed to the removal of any ink traces that may have remained from its use to obtain the printing proof.

[17] BUB, Aldr. ms. 108, Tomo I, Icon. Varior.
[18] For these details, see the catalogue entry of the Sistema Museale di Ateneo of the University of Bologna at https://catalogo.sma.unibo.it/it/29/ricerca/detailiccd/2053/, accessed 04 December 2024.

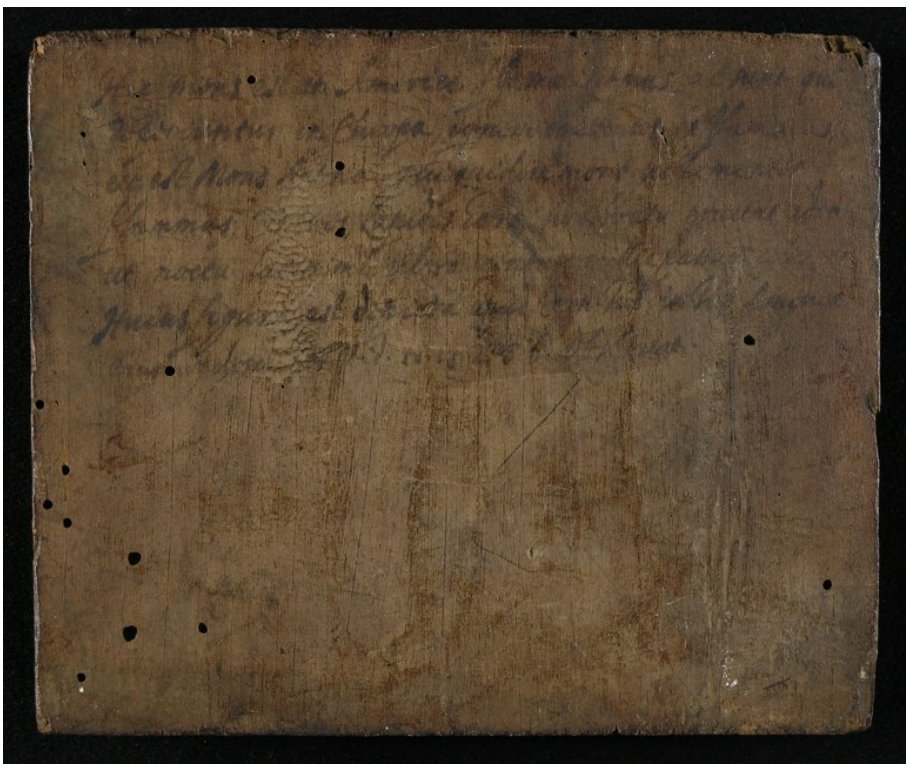

Figure 1 and 2. *Mons Flammivomus ex Americae*, woodblock, recto and verso. Courtesy of the Palazzo Poggi Museum, Bologna. Photo: Fulvio Simoni.

Figure 3. Printing proof of *Mons Flammivomus ex Americae*, BUB, Aldr. ms. 108, Tomo I, Icon. Varior, f. 171r. © Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna – Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (further reproduction or duplication by any means is prohibited). Photo by the Author.

Aldrovandi's sources for the creation of the woodblock

Reading was at the heart of Aldrovandi's quest for knowledge, in the century that saw an explosion of the printed matter market.[19] He gleaned information not only from the works in his extensive library, but also from the rich correspondence he maintained with a wide circle of scholars, as well as from the large number of people who visited his museum.[20] This was not just an institution designed to display naturalia and artificialia but also a place where information and knowledge could be shared informally.[21] Some of the visitors probably showed Aldrovandi prints that they might

[19] DANIEL BELLINGRADT, PAUL NELLES, and JEROEN SALMAN (eds), *Books in Motion in Early Modern Europe. Beyond Production, Circulation, and Consumption* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[20] On Aldrovandi's correspondence see NOEMI DI TOMMASO, 'Censimento preliminare della corrispondenza di Ulisse Aldrovandi', *Aldrovandiana* 1, no. 2 (2022): 29–174, and NOEMI DI TOMMASO, 'Costruire un microcosmo vegetale attraverso le lettere: Ulisse Aldrovandi e l'istituzione dell'orto pubblico di Bologna (1567-1568)', in *Ad limina. Frontiere e contaminazioni transdisciplinari nella storia delle scienze*, ed. CLAUDIA ADDABBO, ELENA CANADELLI, LUIGI INGALISO, DANIELE MUSUMECI, LUCA TONETTI, VALENTINA VIGNERI, and MARTA VILARDO (Milano: Editrice Bibliografica, 2023), 182–195. See also NOEMI DI TOMMASO, 'African Plants in Ulisse Aldrovandi's Correspondence', in *Global Aldrovandi*, eds MARKEY and DOMENICI, forthcoming. On Aldrovandi's museum see CRISTIANA SCAPPINI, MARIA PIA TORRICELLI, and SANDRA TUGNOLI PÀTTARO, *Lo studio Aldrovandi in Palazzo Pubblico: 1617-1742* (Bologna: CLUEB, 1993).

[21] OLIVER IMPEY and ARTHUR MACGREGOR, eds, *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-century Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985). In particular, see the chapter by LAURA LAURENCICH-MINELLI, 'Museography and Ethnographical Collections in Bologna during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries', 17–23.

have acquired in locations catering to the flourishing publishing market. Antwerp in particular had a prominent role in the world of sixteenth-century publishing.

From Antwerp to Bologna: the work of the Belgian cartographer Cornelis de Jode

The inscription on the verso of the woodblock reveals that the source used by Aldrovandi was the *Tabula Americae* produced by Cornelis Judaeis, better known as Cornelis de Jode, a cartographer and printer of Antwerp. There is, however, no deep historiographical analysis of the influence of Cornelis de Jode on the works of Aldrovandi.[22] He therefore remains an unknown figure to most of the scholars researching Aldrovandi, despite the fact that his name recurs in Aldrovandi's manuscripts and in many of his works printed during his lifetime and later, as will be shown throughout the article.

Cornelis de Jode was born in Antwerp in 1571 and died in Mons in 1600.[23] He was the second son of Pascale van Gelder and Gerard de Jode (ca. 1511–1591), a wealthy engraver and publisher of maps and prints. Gerard de Jode was commissioned by Philip II to print his 1578 atlas, the *Speculum Orbis Terrarum*. However, its reputation was eclipsed by the superior quality and accuracy of *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the illustrious atlas produced in 1570 by Abraham Ortelius.[24] Gerard de Jode had started his business in 1555, publishing copies of maps of the world produced by the Venetian cartographer Giacomo Gastaldi, and then, in 1564, Ortelius's eight-sheet world maps.[25] The business was a resounding success in a market that yielded good revenues, and he became Antwerp's leading seller of maps. He then started a project producing his own wall maps of the Four Continents. According to the sales records of the Plantin-Moretus Museum, these maps were best-sellers from 1582 to 1590.[26] However, despite how widespread they became, they did not withstand the wear and tear of time and today are extremely rare. Indeed, none exist from the years 1555–1560 and only three

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[22] MAURIZIO SERRA, *Ulisse Aldrovandi americanista e i suoi manoscritti*, PhD. diss. (Bologna, 1985–1986). The thesis frequently emphasises the use of de Jode's atlas as a source for Aldrovandi's research yet without ever delving into his figure.

[23] The most up-to-date biographical information is in PIETER VAN DER COELEN and MARJOLEIN LEESBERG, *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700. The De Jode Dynasty. Part IV. Gerard de Jode* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: Sound & Vision, 2018), lxv. His date of birth was previously noted incorrectly as 1568.

[24] CORNELIS KOEMAN, *The History of Abraham Ortelius and His Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (New York: American Elsevier, 1964); TINE MEGANCK, *Erudite Eyes: Friendship, Art and Erudition in the Network of Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598)* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

[25] RODNEY W. SHIRLEY, *The Mapping of the New World. Early Printed World Maps, 1472-1700* (London: New Holland, 1984). For Gastaldi's World Map, see 113–14. On Gastaldi, see also ELIZABETH HORODOWICH, *The Venetian Discovery of America. Geographic Imagination and Print Culture in the Age of Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), in particular the chapter entitled 'The Venetian Mapping of the Americas', 89–142. Two copies of Gerard de Jode's 1555 edition are currently known, held at the Geographical Institute of the University of Utrecht and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. For Ortelius's eight-sheet map, of which three copies exist, at the British Library in London, the Maritime Museum in Rotterdam and the University Library in Basle, see 129–33.

[26] VAN DER COELEN and LEESBERG, *The De Jode Dynasty*, lxv.

from 1576–1584.[27] One is held at the Library of Congress in Washington, but it is only a part of the 1576 wall map of America by Gerard de Jode, just a single sheet measuring 55cm by 43cm showing western parts of South America. (Fig. 4)

Figure 4. Gerard de Jode, wall map of South America, single sheet. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g5200.ct006058/

[27] VAN DER COELEN and LEESBERG, *The De Jode Dynasty*, lv.

This map was initially attributed to Gerhard Mercator, but Surekha Davies has shown that it was in fact produced by Gerard de Jode.[28] The sheet was part of a much larger wall map of probably six sheets that have not survived. It showed the whole American continent and was embellished with detailed information and illustrations, some linked to the realm of marvel, others, instead, more plausible.

In 1585, Gerard de Jode started working on an enlarged and revised version of his 1578 atlas. However, he died in early 1591, leaving his works, his workshop and all its tools to his wife and his son Cornelis. Cornelis continued his father's work, publishing the second edition of the atlas in 1593 under the slightly amended title of *Speculum Orbis Terrae* and then travelling across Europe to draft, promote and sell his maps.[29] A letter written in Rome on 18 March 1595 by Jean l'Heureux, known as Macarius, reveals that he was in the Italian Peninsula at that point.[30] We do not know how long he stayed in Italy, but he was back to Antwerp for his niece Anna's baptism on 18 February 1597.[31]

Cornelis De Jode had also turned his attention back to the father's project of the Maps of the Four Continents, with the intention of producing an edition that was revised 'cum Splendore' (with splendour).[32] He published the updated maps between 1595 and 1596, adding an introduction in 1595 of which no copy is known to exist: the *Introductionem geographicam in tabulas Europae, Asiae, Africae, et Americae*.[33] Karen Bowen and Dirk Imhof have demonstrated that Gerard de Jode, and later his son Cornelis, enlisted the services of the printer Plantin 'to print the accompanying texts for his next print-book publications'.[34] These were not cartographic works, but texts of various kinds: it is possible that among these were the introductions to the wall maps of the four continents that have since been lost, due to their independent circulation apart from the maps.

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[28] SUREKHA DAVIES, *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human. New Worlds, Maps and Monsters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 167–71.

[29] GERARD DE JODE, *Speculum Orbis Terrarum*, introduction by R. A. SKELTON (Amsterdam: World Publishing Company, 1965), ix. For a comparative analysis of the two editions of the de Jode atlas, see PETER VAN DE KRUGT, ed., *Koeman's Atlantes Neerlandici*, 4 vols, vol. 3 t. 2 (MS't Goy-Houten: HES & De Graaf, 2003), in particular the chapter entitled 'The *Speculum Orbis Terrarum* by Gerard and Cornelis de Jode', 255–66.

[30] FERNAND VON ORTROY, *L'oeuvre cartographique de Gérard et Corneille De Jode* (Amsterdam: E. van Goethem et Compagnie, 1914), xxvii.

[31] Cornelis de Jode also produced globes. For an analysis of his 1594 globe, see VLADIMIRO VALERIO, 'Report on a globe by Cornelis de Jode, Antwerp 1594', *Geostorie. Bollettino e notiziario* 25, no. 1 (2017): 43–62.

[32] VAN DER COELEN and LEESBERG, *The De Jode*, lxvii.

[33] Cited in VAN DER COELEN and LEESBERG, *The De Jode Dynasty*, lxvi. VALERIUS ANDREAS, *Bibliotheca Belgica* (Leuven: Iacob Zegers, 1643) is available online on Google Books. Cornelis de Jode is discussed on pages 155–56.

[34] KAREN L. BOWEN and DIRK IMHOF, *Christopher Plantin and Engraved Book Illustrations in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 300–305 (303).

There are also no known copies of these maps except for one single sheet measuring 47 cm by 33 cm that was part of the 1596 wall map of Africa, now held by the Plantin-Moretus Museum.[35] (Fig. 5)

Figure 5. Cornelis de Jode, wall map of Africa, single sheet. Collectie Stad Antwerpen, Museum Plantin-Moretus. https://dams.antwerpen.be/asset/a1MPSKUQbbbKRShnuJs2O1TK#id

[35] Joost Depuydt, curator of typographical and technical collections at the museum, has kindly provided me with valuable information confirming that nothing is known about how the wall map was created. Personal communication via email (21 November 2022). For further details about the map, see VAN ORTROY, *L'oeuvre cartographique*, 27–28.

Much better known is the map of Africa he had published in the 1593 edition of the *Speculum*, which clearly shows the influence of Gastaldi's work.[36] Actually, this was a reprint of a map originally produced by his father, copying Gastaldi's one.[37] It is likely that Italian cartography had a significant influence on the Africa and Europe parts of the Four Continents wall maps, as most of the names in the table are in Italian.[38]

Aldrovandi came across de Jode's work towards the end of the sixteenth century. He kept a handwritten register of visitors to his museum, the *Catalogus virorum, qui visitarunt museum nostrum* (Catalogue of men who visited our museum).[39] Among many others, the long list includes this entry: 'Antuerpiensis Cornelis J. […] Belga 475' (Belgian Cornelis J. from Antwerp).[40] This suggests that de Jode passed through Bologna when he was in Italy, as it was an almost obligatory stop en route to Rome, and that he visited Aldrovandi's museum to meet the distinguished naturalist so that he could show him also his maps. This hypothesis is supported by a note written by a member of Aldrovandi's team uncovered among the observations that Aldrovandi recorded during the days of intensive work in the artistic workshop:

> Ricordo di comittire, che in Anversa siasi comprate le tavole quattro del mondo, cioè Asia, Africa, Europa, et Mondo Novo. Venalis reperiuntur hac tabulas apud Cornelius de Iudaeis, cuius opera, et industria, editae sunt anno 1596.
>
> (I remind you to commission the purchase of the four maps of the world in Antwerp, that is, the maps of Asia, Africa, Europe and the New World. The maps can be purchased from Cornelis de Jode, whose works were published in 1596).[41]

It is plausible that de Jode showed Aldrovandi the Four Continents wall maps and presumably also the above-mentioned introduction. It is clear that they were recognised as being of excellent artistic quality from the lengthy catalogue descriptions written by members of Aldrovandi's team, which list the illustrations examined and then reproduced as woodblocks to illustrate his works. For example, Davies has shown that the model for depicting the giants of Patagonia in the *Monstrorum historia* of 1642 (Fig. 6) was de Jode's 1576 edition of the map of South America. The wall maps were

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[36] RENATO BIASUTTI, 'La carta dell'Africa del De Jode (1593) e l'influsso del Gastaldi sulla cartografia olandese', in *Atti dell'ottavo congresso geografico italiano* (Florence: Istituto di edizioni artistiche Fratelli Alinari, 1923), 307–10.

[37] It is worth remembering that Gerard de Jode started his business reprinting or copying the maps of Gastaldi. See CORNELIS KOEMAN, GÜNTER SCHILDER, MARCO VAN EGMOND, and PETER VAN DER KROGT, 'Commercial Cartography and Map Production in the Low Countries, 1500-ca. 1672', in *The History of Cartography,* ed. DAVID WOODWARD, 6 vols, vol. 3, *Cartography in the European Renaissance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 1296–383. The authors refer to de Jode's special affinity with Gastaldi at p. 1301.

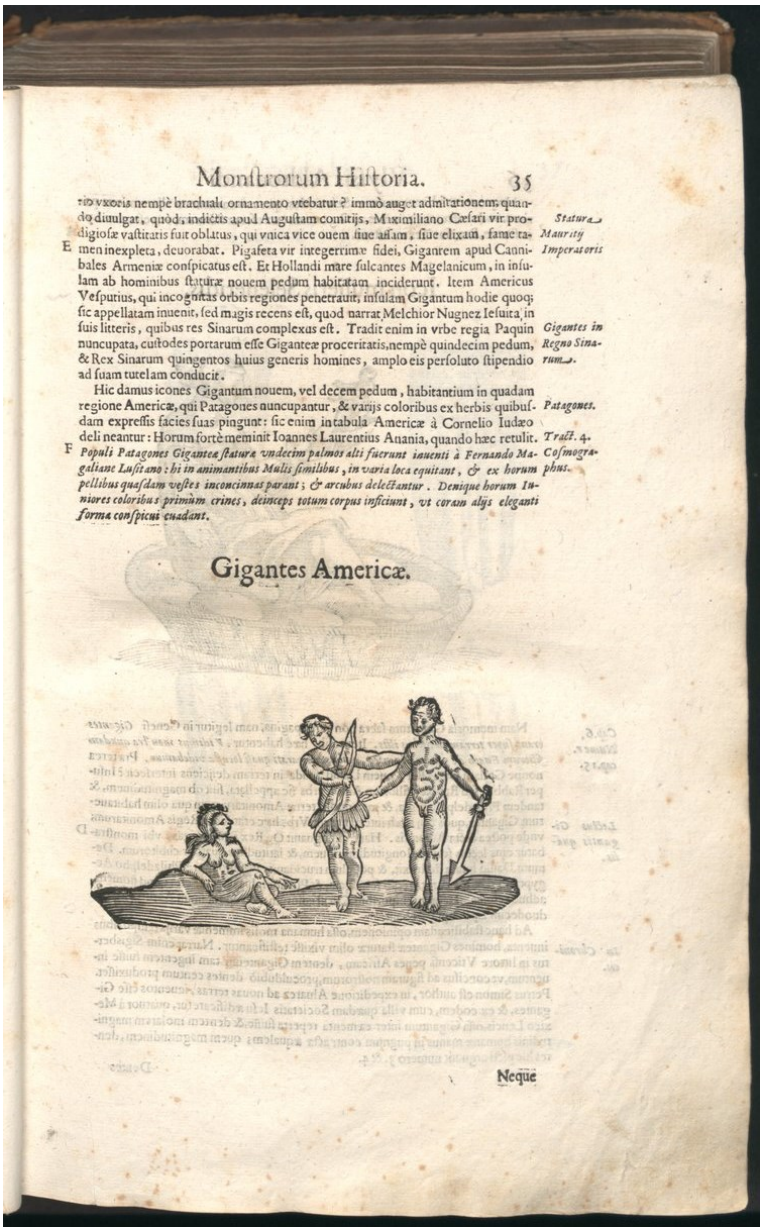
[38] LUCIANO LAGO and CLAUDIO ROSSIT, 'Le raffigurazioni della penisola istriana negli atlanti cinquecenteschi dell'Ortelio, de Jode e Mercatore', in *Centro di Ricerche Storiche Rovigno, Atti Volume IX* (Trieste: Università popolare, 1978–1979), 91–182. The authors note Gastaldi's influence on de Jode's maps at p. 118.

[39] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 110, Tomo I.

[40] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 110, Tomo I, 3r.

[41] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 136, Tomo XXVI, 138r.

also the inspiration for the woodblock depicting a Libyan dromedary and for *Numidia, Camelia alia differentia picta à Cornelio Iudaeo in Tabula Africae*, published posthumously in the section of the *Monstrorum historia* entitled *Paralipomena accuratissima historiae omnium animalium*.[42] (Fig. 7)



Monstrorum Historia. 35

rio vxoris nempè brachiali ornamento vtebatur? immò augere admirationem quando diuulgat, quòd, indictis apud Augustam comitijs, Maximiliano Cæsari vir prodigiosæ vastitatis fuit oblatus, qui vnica vice ouem siue asinam, siue elixam, fame tamen inexpleta, deuorabat. Pigafeta vir integerrimæ fidei, Giganrem apud Cannibales Armeniæ conspicatus est. Et Hollandi mare fulcantes Magelanicum, in insulam ab hominibus staturæ nouem pedum habitatam inciderunt. Item Americus Vesputius, qui incognitas orbis regiones penetrauit, insulam Gigantum hodie quoq; sic appellatam inuenit, sed magis recens est, quod narrat Melchior Nugnez Iesuita in suis litteris, quibus res Sinarum complexus est. Tradit enim in vrbe regia Paquin nuncupata, custodes portarum esse Giganteæ proceritatis, nempè quindecim pedum, & Rex Sinarum quingentos huius generis homines, amplo eis persoluto stipendio ad suam tutelam conducit.

Statura Mauritij Imperatoris

Gigantes in Regno Sinarum.

Hic damus icones Gigantum nouem, vel decem pedum, habitantium in quadam regione Americæ, qui Patagones nuncupantur, & variis coloribus ex herbis quibusdam expressis facies suas pingunt: sic enim in tabula Americæ à Cornelio Iudæo deli neantur: Horum fortè meminit Ioannes Laurentius Anania, quando hæc retulit. *Populi Patagones Giganteæ statura undecim palmos alti fuerunt inuenti à Fernando Magaliane Lusitano: hi in animantibus Multis similibus, in varia loca equitant, & ex horum pellibus quasdam vestes inconcinnas parant; & arcubus delectantur. Denique horum Iuniores coloribus primùm crines, deinceps totum corpus inficiunt, vt coram alijs eleganti forma conspicui euadant.*

Patagones.

Tract. 4. Cosmographiæ.

Gigantes Americæ.

Neque

Figure 6. 'Gigantes Americae', in Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Monstrorum historia*, 35. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 264838-D/FKB 18-022 FID MAG. NoC-NC 1.0. https://data.onb.ac.at/rep/10351590

[42] ULISSE ALDROVANDI, *Monstrorum historia cum paralipomenis historiae omnium animalium* (Bologna: Marcus Antonius Berna, 1642), 132.

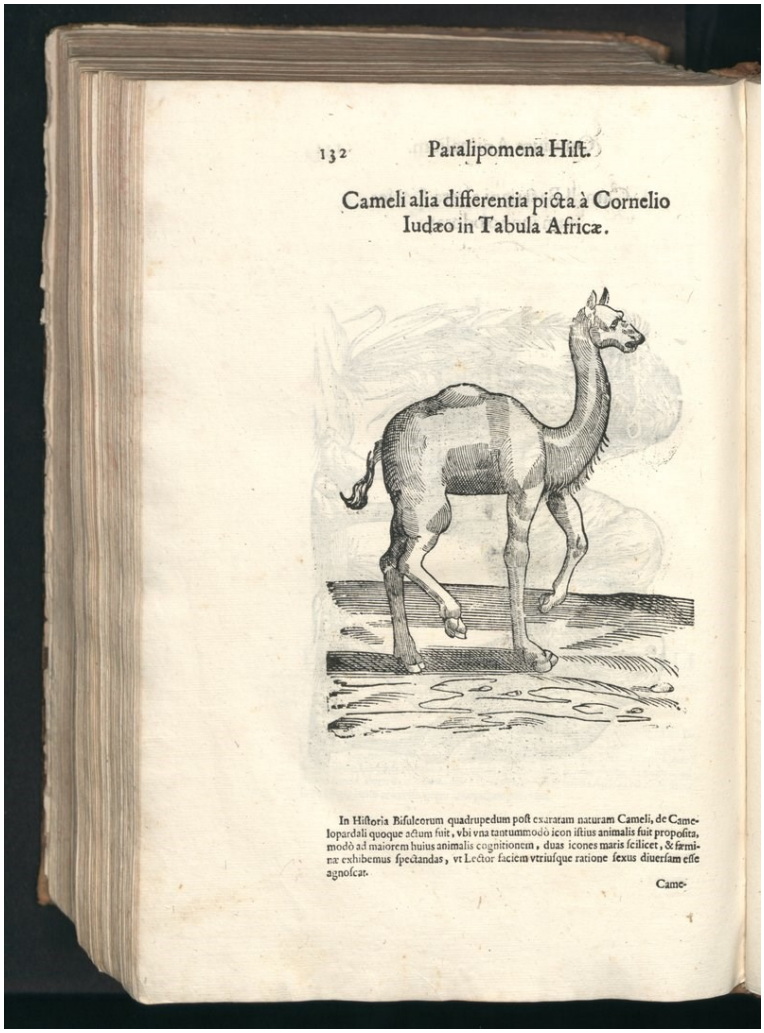


Figure 7. 'Cameli alia differentia', Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Monstrorum historia*, 132. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 264838-D/FKB 18-022 FID MAG. NoC-NC 1.0. https://data.onb.ac.at/rep/10351590

As Aldrovandi only saw the 1596 wall maps, it is likely that many of the illustrations were based on those of Gerard de Jode and only partially modified or embellished to achieve the splendour that had been promised for the map of Africa and probably also for Cornelis de Jode's introduction. We know that Aldrovandi saw the introduction from the many transcriptions he made, which can be found in his notes and in his catalogues.[43] These transcriptions do not in fact always match the descriptions found in the atlas.[44] This indicates that the transcriptions found in Aldrovandi's manuscripts

[43] For the transcription of Cornelis de Jode's lines regarding the New World, see BUB, Aldr. ms. 136, Tomo XXVI, 'Tab. Americae', 136r–157r; Aldr. ms. 143, Tomo IV, 'De America ex Corn. Jd in sua Tab.', 166r–170r; 282v; 328r.
[44] MAURIZIO SERRA, *Ulisse Aldrovandi*, 'Appendice', cxlvi.

came from a different source, that is, from the lost introduction, and as far as we know are now the only source that could be used to reconstruct parts of the introduction. The same reasoning can be applied to the sources used for the woodblocks. For example, Rudolph Wittkower concludes that 'Aldrovandi reports that he got the picture of the roc "ex tabulis geographicis Cornelii de Judaeis". Only the *Speculum* of Cornelis de Jode from 1593 can be meant. But this work does not contain any such picture. Confusions are not rare in Aldrovandi's work'.[45] However, it is clear that Aldrovandi did not make an error here. The image was not taken from the 1593 atlas but from the wall maps that have since been lost. This confirms that the woodblocks and the illustrations are one of the few tools available to try to understand the artistic sophistication of de Jode's cartography.

As established before, we know that Cornelis de Jode was in Italy in 1595 and in Antwerp in February 1597. However, we cannot establish a firm date within this two-year window for when de Jode and Aldrovandi met in Bologna. The available documentation suggests that they might have met in late 1596, as the earliest date in the manuscript containing Aldrovandi's notes on the wall maps is 2 December 1596. In that case, it would have been de Jode himself that showed them to Aldrovandi and indicated how they could be purchased. However, another possibility is that they met in 1595, with de Jode showing his publishing projects to Aldrovandi with a view to selling them to him. Unfortunately, we do not know whether the purchase was concluded. Neither de Jode's *Speculum* nor the 'tavole quattro del mondo' (four maps of the world) were ever recorded as part of Aldrovandi's library. Indeed, neither the University of Bologna library nor Bologna's Biblioteca comunale dell'Archiginnasio (Archiginnasio Municipal Library) hold any wall maps made by Gerard de Jode or Cornelius de Jode. The only printed volumes associated with Cornelis de Jode are *De Quadrante Geometrico* and *Veterum Romanorum ornatissimi amplissimique triumphi*, but the absence of Aldrovandi's ex libris shows that neither were ever part of his library. Two of de Jode's world maps were sold in Antwerp to Marco Antonio Merello in 1598.[46] However, it has so far proved impossible to identify this individual or to link him to anyone who might have been purchasing maps on behalf of Aldrovandi.[47] In any case, the wall maps provided Aldrovandi with visual material about the world beyond

[45] RUDOLPH WITTKOWER, "Roc': An Eastern Prodigy in a Dutch Engraving', *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1 (1938): 255–257. The Latin phrase cited by Wittkower is from ULISSE ALDROVANDI, *Ornithologiae hoc est de avibus historiae libri XII* (Bologna: Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599), book X, 61.

[46] VAN DER COELEN and LEESBERG, *The De Jode*, lxvi.

[47] New information may emerge from further research in the archives of the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp, or from Aldrovandi's many manuscripts in Bologna. Moreover, Aldrovandi had already purchased books printed in Antwerp. See RITA DE TATA, 'Il commercio librario a Bologna tra '500 e '600: i librai di Ulisse Aldrovandi', *Bibliothecae.it* 6 (2017): 39–91. See also CAROLINE DUROSELLE-MELISH, 'A Local-Transnational Business: The Book Trade in Late Renaissance Bologna', in *Bologna: Cultural Crossroads from the Medieval to the Baroque. Recent Anglo-American Scholarship*, eds ANGELA DE BENEDICTIS, GIAN MARIO ANSELMI, and NICHOLAS TERPSTRA (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2013), 27–42.

Europe which must have piqued his curiosity and interest in the natural world made of flora and fauna, geological features, topography and so on.

Aldrovandi's team made a list of the noteworthy elements of the natural world depicted in the wall maps and then reproduced some of them as woodblocks.[48] One of these elements is marked as a '*mons flammivomus*', the Latin for 'ignivomous mountain', or a mountain that is spewing out flames.[49] There is no doubt that this is the volcano featured on the woodblock. As there is no surviving wall map of America—except the single sheet of the Library of Congress—that includes the image on which the woodblock is based, it would appear difficult if not impossible to identify the volcano. However, three well-known sources come to the rescue: the 1562 map entitled *Americae Sive Quartae Orbis Partis Nova Et Exactissima Descriptio* and the 1578 and 1593 editions of the *Speculum* by de Jode father and son. (Fig. 8)

The 1562 map was produced by the Spanish cartographer Diego Gutiérrez, who worked on the master map known as the *Padrón Real* (royal register) of the Casa de la Contratación in Seville. It was illustrated by the Flemish artist Hieronymus Cock, who belonged to the same Antwerp guild as Gerard and Cornelis de Jode. Gerard de Jode was working on the publication of the wall maps at the time, and Cock was from Antwerp and was directly involved in the production of the first wall map of America. It is therefore highly probable that the map produced by Gutiérrez was the model for Gerard de Jode's 1576 map of the New World. Careful examination of the map of the American continent reveals that it shows just a single volcano, close to Mexico City in the Viceroyalty of New Spain.[50]

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[48] In the cartographic tradition of the sixteenth century, it was common practice to copy and adapt elements from existing maps when producing new ones. This suggests that the more maps one owned or consulted, the more details—sometimes recurring, sometimes entirely new—could be extracted. On this topic see RONALD REES, 'Historical Links between Cartography and Art', *Geographical Review* 1 (1980): 60–78 and especially GENEVIEVE CARLTON, 'The World Drawn from Nature: Imitation and Authority in Sixteenth-century Cartography', *Intellectual History Review* 24, no. 1 (2013): 21–37.

[49] BUB, Aldr. ms. 136, Tomo XXVI, 136v.

[50] On the role of the Casa de la Contratación in spreading geographical knowledge, see DUCCIO SACCHI, *Mappe dal Nuovo Mondo. Cartografie locali e definizione del territorio in Nuova Spagna (secoli XVI-XVII)* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1997), 45–55; on the importance of the growth of nautical skills, see Luisa Martín-Merás, 'Las enseñanzas náuticas en la Casa de la Contratación de Sevilla', in *La Casa de la Contratación, la navegación y el comercio entre España y las Indias*, eds ANTONIO ACOSTA RODRÍGUEZ, ADOLFO GONZÁLEZ RODRÍGUEZ, and ENRIQUETA VILA (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2003), 667–93; LUISA MARTÍN-MERÁS, *Cartografía marítima hispana. La imagen de América* (Barcelona: Lunwerg, 1993) and RICARDO CEREZO MARTÍNEZ, *La cartografía náutica española en los siglos XIV, XV y XVI* (Madrid: CSIC, 1994). For the history of the founding of the Casa de la Contratación, see MIGUEL-ÁNGEL LADERO QUESADA, *El primer oro de América. Los comienzos de la Casa de la Contratación de las Yndias (1503-1511)* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2002).

Figure 8. Diego Gutiérrez, *Americae sive Quartae Orbis Partis Nova et Exactissima Descriptio*, 1562. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington. http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3290.ct000342

The same is true of the two editions of the *Speculum*. Both include a map of South America that extends as far as parts of New Spain and shows an erupting volcano near Mexico City whose features resemble those of the woodblock. (Fig. 9) The atlas used for this illustration is held at the National Museum of Warsaw. We can therefore conclude that Aldrovandi's woodblock depicts the Popocatepetl volcano and that it is highly likely to have been carved in late 1596 or early 1597.

Figure 9. The volcano represented close to Mexico City and Cholula, detail from *Brasilia et Peruvia*, in Cornelis De Jode, *Speculum Orbis Terrae*, 1593. Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie Biblioteka, Kart.425. Public Domain. https://mbc.cyfrowemazowsze.pl/publication/87151

The volcanoes of the New World in the Aldrovandi library

Aldrovandi's huge library reflected the broad range of interests he had developed over the course of his research.[51] To appreciate his interest in volcanoes, it is worth focusing on a number of volumes that would have provided him with much food for thought about the nature of the volcanoes of the Americas. First and foremost, a series of atlases and cartographic works that allowed Aldrovandi to spatialise the presence of volcanoes within the geography of the New Worls. Indeed, the library held several volumes published by the Belgian cartographer Abraham Ortelius. It definitely held the 1579 edition of the *Theatrum orbis terrarum* and the enlarged 1584 edition, *Additamentum 3. Theatri orbis terrarum*.[52] Ortelius had added the map entitled *Peruviae Auriferae Regionis Typus*—now held at the BUB—to this edition. The map was created by Didaco Mendezio (or Diego Méndez), cartographer to the Viceroy of Peru and

[51] CAROLINE DUROSELLE-MELISH and DAVID A. LINES, 'The Library of Ulisse Aldrovandi: Acquiring and Organizing Books in Sixteenth-Century Bologna', *The Library* 16, no. 2 (2015): 133–61. DAVID A. LINES, 'La biblioteca di Ulisse Aldrovandi in Palazzo Pubblico: Un inventario seicentesco', in *Biblioteche filosofiche private. Strumenti e prospettive di ricerca*, eds RENZO RAGGHIANTI and ALESSANDRO SAVORELLI (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2014), 133–52. MARIA CRISTINA BACCHI, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi e i suoi libri', *L'Archiginnasio. Bollettino della biblioteca comunale di Bologna* 100 (2005): 255–366. ALDO ADVERSI, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi, bibliofilo, bibliografo e bibliologo del Cinquecento', *Annali della scuola speciale per archivisti e bibliotecari dell'Università di Roma* 8, no. 1–2 (1968): 85–181.

[52] On how the American continent was represented in the atlases of Ortelius, see DENNIS REINHARTZ, 'The Americas Revealed in the "Theatrum"', in *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas: Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of his Death, 1598–1998*, eds PETER VAN DER KROGT, PETER H. MEURER, and MARCEL VAN DEN BROECKE (Houten: HES, 1998), 209–20.

chaplain of Lima's Monasterio de la Encarnación (Monastery of the Incarnation).[53] Ortelius's maps also include a map of Florida by Géronimo de Chaves, royal cosmographer to the court of Philip II at the Casa de la Contratación in Seville, which was responsible for producing maps of the American viceroyalties and territories. It may be that Méndez's map was sent from Peru to Seville and that Ortelius managed to acquire both it and Chaves's map for inclusion in the 1584 edition.[54] Ortelius, as royal cartographer, was definitely in close contact with the Casa de la Contratación, a key institution of the Catholic Monarchy for the production of maps to improve knowledge and guard information about the geography of the New World.[55] Although Méndez's map focuses on the Viceroyalty of Peru, it also shows part of Central America (Fig. 10). In particular, it shows two volcanoes, represented as a mountain labelled with the Spanish toponym *Volcan* (volcano). One can definitely be identified as the Masaya volcano in Nicaragua, near the cities of León and Granada.

Figure 10. Volcano toponyms, detail from *Peruviae Auriferae Regionis Typus*, in Diego Méndez, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, 1584. Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, CA-148-V. Public Domain. https://purl.pt/27803

[53] Diego Méndez is not well-known in historical cartography, but some information is available on the catalogue of the Renaissance Exploration Map Collection of Stanford University, at https://purl.stanford.edu/zs626pm4125, accessed 20 December 2022.
[54] Further research in the archives of the Casa de la Contratación held at the Archivo General de Indias in Seville could uncover more information about Diego Méndez.
[55] DAVID BUISSERET, 'Spanish Colonial Cartography, 1450-1700', in *The History of Cartography*, ed. WOODWARD, 1143–71.

Ortelius's atlas also contains *Hispaniae Novae Sive Magnae, Recens et Vera Descriptio. 1579*. This map shows three volcanoes, for which Ortelius used the following toponyms: 'Popocatepec', 'Islactepec M.' and the more generic term 'Mons Flammivomus'[56] (Fig. 11).

The first is Popocatepetl, the second is Iztaccihuatl and the third appears to be Citlaltepetl, also known as Pico de Orizaba. We can conclude that the *Mons Flammivomus* displayed in Ortelius's map is the Citlaltepetl volcano from its vicinity to Matlatlán and Acultzingo and from the presence of sugar plantations marked by the Spanish toponym '*ingenio*' (Fig. 12). There were widespread sugar plantations in the area of Veracruz where Pico de Orizaba is located.[57]

Figure 11. Volcanoes Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, detail from *Hispaniae Novae Sive Magnae, Recens et Vera Descriptio. 1579*, in Ortelius, *Additamentum 3. Theatri orbis terrarium,* 1584. BUB, A.M.B.2. 30. © Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna – Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (further reproduction or duplication by any means is prohibited). Photo by the Author.

[56] The toponym *Islactepec* used by Ortelius is incorrect. The name of the volcano is *Istatepec*, or *Iztactepetl*, which means 'white mountain' in Nahuatl.

[57] The geographical information is from PETER GERHARD, *A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 205–207 (Orizaba). Gerhard also provides information about the sugar plantations in the Veracruz area. Ortelius's use of the term *mons flammivomus* is unsurprising given that Pico de Orizaba was in fact last active in the sixteenth century.

Figure 12. Volcano 'Mons Flammivomus', detail from *Hispaniae Novae Sive Magnae, Recens et Vera Descriptio. 1579*, in Ortelius, *Additamentum 3. Theatri orbis terrarium,* 1584. BUB, A.M.B.2. 30. © Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna – Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (further reproduction or duplication by any means is prohibited). Photo by the Author.

It is worth noting the toponym *Mons flammivomus*. As no name is provided for the volcano, this appears to reflect a volcano typology that was emerging at the time.[58] It is clearly the same typology that Aldrovandi used in the inscription on the woodblock. As a result, arguably the term served to describe an active volcano, one that was erupting when it was described and depicted.

The second important volume is *Historia dell'India America detta altramente Francia antartica* by André Thevet, royal cosmographer from 1559, whose works were used extensively by Ortelius and de Jode for the descriptive parts of their atlases.[59] The Italian edition was published in Venice in 1561 but Aldrovandi only finished reading it in June 1590. It contains passages about Mount Etna and the volcanoes of the Canary Islands.[60] It notes that Mount Etna 'getta alle volte fuoco con un strepito maraviglioso' (sometimes hurls out fire with an extraordinary din), and that 'alcuni Scrittori moderni, hanno voluto dire che una delle Canarie getta continuamente fuoco' (some modern writers have said that one of the Canaries continuously spews out fire), and then goes on to describe the presence of sulphur near these and other volcanoes.[61] However, Aldrovandi did not highlight these passages or base his observations on them. The main work of Thevet that Aldrovandi drew on significantly was the *Cosmographie Universelle* of 1575, which was a fundamental source also for several images included in the *Monstruorum historia*.[62] There is no surviving copy in the Bologna University Library, but we know that Aldrovandi read it as he cites it extensively in his works and uses some of the images it contains, such as that of a toucan.[63]

Aldrovandi showed great interest in Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia di don Ferdinando Cortes*. The Italian edition was published in Venice in 1560. Aldrovandi finished reading it on 9 January 1561, making notes on many passages in his manuscripts. He had a complete copy made of the chapter entitled 'Del monte che chiamano Popocatepec' (On the mountain called Popocatepec).[64] Gómara described the volcano thus:[65]

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[58] SOPHIE BROCKMANN, 'Volcano', in *New World Objects of Knowledge. A Cabinet of Curiosities*, ed. MARK THURNER and JUAN PIMENTEL (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, SAS, University of London, 2021), 213–16.

[59] On the relationship and cross-fertilisation between the works of Ortelius and Thevet, see FRANK LESTRINGANT, *Mapping the Renaissance World: The Geographical Imagination in the Age of Discoveries* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 175.

[60] THEVET, *Historia dell'India America detta altramente Francia antartica* (Venice: Gabriel Giolito de' Ferrari, 1561), 61–64.

[61] THEVET, *Historia*, 62.

[62] DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi and Indigenous American Featherwork', *Aldrovandiana. Historical Studies in Natural History* 3, no. 2 (2024): 7–39 (13). A discussion of Aldrovandi's use of Thevet can be found here.

[63] DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Rediscovery', 5 and endnote 23.

[64] FRANCISCO LOPEZ DE GOMARA, *Historia di don Ferdinando Cortes* (Venice: Francesco Lorenzini da Turino, 1560), 92v–93v.

[65] FRANCISCO LOPEZ DE GOMARA, *Historia*, 92v–93r.

> era un monte vintiquattro miglia di Ciololla che chiamano Popocatepec, che vuol dire monte di fummo, perché ributta molte volte fummo, et fuoco, Cortes mandò la dieci Spagnuoli […] ma non ardirno di montare nell'alto a vederlo, perché tremava la terra, et cera tanta cenere, che impediva la via, et cosi se ne volevano ritornare, però gli dua che devevano essere più animosi o curiosi, deliberorno di vedere il fine o misterio di si ammirabile, et spaventoso fuoco. […] Saglirno su per mezzo della cenere et arrivorno all'ultimo per disotto di un spesso fummo, guardorno un pezzo, et gli parse che havesse fino a due miglia di bocca quale concavità dove rimbombava il rumore, che faceva tremare la terra del monte.
>
> there was a mountain twenty-four miles from Ciololla which they call Popocatepec, which means mountain of smoke, as it often hurls out smoke, and fire, Cortes sent there ten Spaniards […] but they dared not scale it to view it, because the ground was shaking, and there was much ash, which blocked the way, and so they wanted to turn back, but the two that must have been more courageous or curious, decided to have a look at the mysterious source of the fire that was so wondrous, and terrifying. […] They climbed up through the ash and reached the top under thick smoke, they observed it, and it looked to them as though the crater was up to two miles across where the noise resounded in the concavity and made the mountain shake.

After recounting the conquistadors' expedition to the Popocatepetl crater, Gómara added a passage that influenced how Aldrovandi subsequently categorised the volcano. Gómara wrote that the mountain was called 'Vulcano, per la simiglianza che ha con quello di Sicilia, e alto et tondo, et che mai gli manca neve, appare molto di lontano, le notti che butta fiamma' (Vulcano, because of its similarity to the one in Sicily, tall and round, never free of snow, visible from afar, emitting flames at night), and described a presumed eruption in 1540 after a decade of inactivity.[66] It is this passage that led Aldrovandi to note that the volcano resembled Mount Etna. Gómara had established a direct link between the volcanoes of the New World with those of the Old World. This allowed what was conceived as the exotic natural world of the Americas to be captured using more familiar categories.[67] Gómara had also provided a further element that was essential to Aldrovandi, namely the translation of the Nahuatl name *Popocatepetl* as 'monte di fummo, perché ributta molte volte fummo, et fuoco' (mountain of smoke, as it often hurls out smoke, and fire). Classifying it as a *mons flammivomus* (mountain that spews out flames) was therefore perfect in terms of conveying the volcano's essence and true nature.

Giovanni Botero published his treatise *Relazioni universali* in 1591, which Aldrovandi purchased immediately and finished reading on 5 April 1593.[68] The fourth and fifth volumes of the work address the New World and contain many passages

[66] FRANCISCO LOPEZ DE GOMARA, *Historia*, 93v.
[67] PAMELA H. SMITH and PAULA FINDLEN, eds, *Merchants and Marvels. Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2002). STEPHEN J. GREENBLATT, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[68] For recent work on Botero, see ELISA ANDRETTA, ROMAIN DESCENDRE, and ANTONELLA ROMANO, eds, *Un mondo di relazioni. Giovanni Botero e i saperi nella Roma del Cinquecento* (Rome: Viella, 2021).

about volcanoes. Aldrovandi highlighted what he read about the Mexican city of Puebla de los Ángeles, today's Puebla, which Botero referred to as the *città degli Angeli* (city of angels): 'nel cui contado distinto in valli, e in piani amenissimi […] è il monte Popocanpeche, dalla cui cima esce continoua fiamma' (between the valleys and pleasant flatlands of the surrounding area lies a mountain called Popocanpeche, from whose peak constant flames emerge).[69] He also noted passages about the volcanoes of Santiago de Guatemala, the Masaya volcano in Nicaragua and the many volcanoes near Quito in South America.[70] The sixth volume addresses the world's islands and mentions a volcano in the San Lazzaro archipelago, that is, the Philippines.[71] Aldrovandi also noted the descriptions of the numerous volcanoes of the Aeolian Islands and Mount Etna, which was a recurrent theme and touchstone of sixteenth-century volcanology.[72] Botero's work enriched Aldrovandi's knowledge of these little-studied elements of nature. Indeed, a perusal of the volumes in his library reveals that as his knowledge grew so did his desire to glean any information he could from his reading. This is confirmed by two other volumes in his collection. One is the Italian edition of Sebastian Munster's *Cosmographia Universale*, published in Cologne in 1575. Munster's work described the marvels that emerge from the bowels of the earth, in particular with reference to Icelandic volcanoes and, once again, Mount Etna.[73] It also contains illustrations of erupting volcanoes, which must have caught Aldrovandi's attention. As he completed his reading of it on 15 June 1596, this work and its small woodcut prints is probably what prompted him to produce one that was just as informative but more accurate scientifically and unencumbered by any desire simply to generate awe in the reader. He was in search of realistic images that could serve as models for his woodblock when he met de Jode and saw his wall maps, an unanticipated and decisive meeting. Aldrovandi had started meticulously collecting information about American volcanoes years earlier but had never had the opportunity to travel to America, so the information had to come to him in other ways. The arrival of the *mons flammivomus* in his workshop was a veritable eruption of information about many aspects of the Americas's natural world. Furthermore, the New World's nature was such a magnet for Aldrovandi that reading another work that was seminal in the study of the natural history of the West Indies turned out to be decisive in

[69] GIOVANNI BOTERO, *Relationi universali* (Rome: Georgio Ferrari, 1591), 172.
[70] BOTERO, *Relationi*, 176–77 (Santiago, Masaya), 190 (Quito).
[71] BOTERO, *Relationi*, 198.
[72] BOTERO, *Relationi*, 247–49. On the history of Mount Etna and how it was perceived, see EMANUELA GUIDOBONI and CECILIA CIUCCARELLI, eds, *L'Etna nella storia. Catalogo delle eruzioni dall'antichità alla fine del XVII secolo* (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2014). BUB, Aldr. ms. 143, 3r–3v; 287r–287v.
[73] SEBASTIAN MUNSTER, *Cosmographia Universale* (Cologne: gli heredi d'Adolfo Byrckmanno, 1575), 4–6.

consolidating his interest in America.[74] The work was José de Acosta's *Historia naturale e morale delle Indie*. Aldrovandi purchased the Italian translation, an edition printed in Venice in 1596, and completed reading it rapidly on 11 July 1596. The book contains a wealth of information, with Acosta devoting entire chapters to the volcanoes of America. For example, in chapter 18, *Dei Bolcani, ò bocche da fuogo*, he writes:[75]

> Quantunque in altre parti si ritrovino bocche di fuogo, come nel monte Etna, et nel Vesevo […] nell'India nondimeno è cosa molto notabile quello, che vi è di questo. Sono le Bolcane per ordinario monti molto alti, che si dimostrano fra le cime degli altri monti. Nella parte, superiore hanno una pianura, et nel mezo una fossa, ò bocca grande, che và fino al profondo: il mirare la quale, è cosa di huomo temerario. Da queste bocche viene fumo, et alcune volte fuogo, in alcune è poco il fumo, che ne uscisse, et quasi non hanno più della forma dei Bolcani. […] Il Bolcano del Messico, ch'è vicino alla Puebla delli Angeli è cosi alto, che salisse trenta leghe al diritto. Uscisse di questa bocca non continuamente, ma à tempo quasi ogni giorno un grande viluppo di fumo, et sale diritto in alto come una saetta. Dipoi si fa pian piano come un penacchio molto grande, fin che del tutto cessa, et subito si muta, come in una negra nuvola. Il più ordinario è salire per la mattina quando il sole è levato, et nella notte quando tramonta: quantunque io l'habbia visto ancora nelle altre hore. [...] A questa bolcana sono saliti, et anco entrati in quella Spagnuoli, et cavato solfare per fare polvere.
>
> Although fiery craters exist elsewhere, such as on Mount Etna, and on Mount Vesuvius […] it is nevertheless very notable that there is much more of this in the Indies. Volcanoes are usually very tall mountains, visible among the peaks of the other mountains. There is a flat part at the top, with a pit or large opening at the centre, which runs very deep: just to observe it is a thing of a reckless man. Smoke emerges from these pits, and sometimes fire, in some little smoke emerges, and they almost no longer have the shape of a volcano. […] The volcano of Mexico, which is near Puebla delli Angeli is so tall that it rises thirty leagues into the sky. From this crater, not continuously but sometimes almost every day, a large amount of smoke emerges, rising straight up like an arrow. It then slowly takes on the form of a huge plume, until everything stops, and it swiftly changes, as if into a black cloud. Usually it rises in the morning when the sun has risen, or at night when it has set: however I have also seen it at other times of day. [...] This volcano has been scaled, and even entered, by Spaniards, to extract sulphur to make gunpowder.

[74] Before Acosta, two other people were fundamental to the observation of the natural environment of the New World: Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo and Francisco Hernández. ANTONELLO GERBI, *Nature in the New World: From Christopher Columbus to Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985); JESÚS CARRILLO CASTILLO, *Naturaleza e imperio. La representación del mundo natural en la Historia General y Natural de las Indias de Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo* (Madrid: Fundación Carolina, Centro de estudios hispánicos e iberoamericanos, 2004); ANTONIO BARRERA-OSORIO, 'Knowledge and Empiricism in the Sixteenth-Century Spanish Atlantic World', in *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires*, eds DANIELA BLEICHMAR, PAULA DE VOS, KRISTINE HUFFINE, and KEVIN SHEEHAN (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 219–32.

[75] JOSÉ DE ACOSTA, *Historia naturale e morale delle Indie* (Venice: Bernardo Basa, 1596), 57r–57v.

Chapter 25 entitled *Quale sia la cagione, che in queste bocche duri il fuogo tanto tempo* has a brief passage on the 'pietre abbruggiate' (burnt rocks) extracted from volcanoes, which Aldrovandi transcribed faithfully.[76]

Once he had gathered this information on the American volcanoes, although the image derived from De Jode's wall map did not depict a cone, a crater, or an eruption, it can be argued that, given the geographical distance from the Americas, Aldrovandi deemed the illustration sufficiently true to life to meet his requirements.[77] After creating the woodblock, now he wanted to insert the American volcano appropriately into his microcosm of nature.[78]

Volcanoes in Aldrovandi's natural world

The constant flow of information about the natural world of America stimulated comparisons with the Old World in the sixteenth century. Volcanoes were certainly among the 'prodotti meravigliosi della grandiosa attività creatrice della natura' (marvellous products of nature's majestic creativity).[79] However, the study of these mysterious entities had not yet deeply developed beyond simply marvelling in awe.

Aldrovandi owned a book that Lando Ortensio had translated into Italian and published in Venice in 1553, the *Commentario delle più notabili, et mostruose cose d'Italia*.[80] Etna is mentioned in the volume:[81]

> Verso Sicilia indrizzammo il camin nostro: non fummo lontani di dugento miglia, che incominciammo a vedere molte cose, che ne dettero tanto sbigottimento, che anchora ci sudano le tempie […] entrammo nel porto di Messina [dove] soggiornammo molti giorni […] e provedutoci de cavalli, ci ponemmo curiosamente à cercare tutta l'isola. […] Montati finalmente à cavallo […] primieramente n'andammo à vedere il miracoloso monte di Etna, le cui faville ben cocenti arrivano sovente fiate sin'a Catania, e sino Taurominio. (We set off for Sicily: at a distance of less than two hundred miles, we started observing many things, which caused us such alarm, that our temples are still sweating […] we sailed into Messina [where] we stayed for several days […] and when horses had been provided, we planned to explore the whole island with great curiosity. […] Once on horseback […] we first went to see the miraculous mountain Etna, whose scorching sparks often arrive to Catania, and even Taurominio.)

[76] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 143, Tomo IV, 340v.
[77] LIA MARKEY, 'Aldrovandi's New World Natives in Bologna (Or How to Draw the Unseen *al vivo*)', in *The New World in Early Modern Italy, 1492-1750,* eds ELIZABETH HORODOWICH and LIA MARKEY (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 225–47.
[78] OLMI, *L'inventario del mondo*. See the chapter entitled 'Natura morta e illustrazione scientifica', esp. 152–56.
[79] OLMI, *L'inventario del mondo*, 261.
[80] LANDO ORTENSIO, *Commentario delle più notabili e mostruose cose d'Italia e altri luoghi* (Venice: Bartholomeo Cesano, 1553). For further details on Lando Ortensio, see SILVANA SEIDEL MENCHI, 'Chi fu Ortensio Lando?', *Rivista Storica Italiana* 106, no 3 (1994): 501–64.
[81] LANDO ORTENSIO, *Commentario*, 9r–9v.

Aldrovandi's work was marked by a fascination with monstrous things, which he studied throughout his long career.[82] In 1642, *Monstrorum Historia* was published posthumously. However, volcanoes did not feature as prominently as Mount Etna had for the unknown author of the *Commentario*. The *Monstrorum Historia* contained many classical references, such as Mount Etna's importance to the soothsayers of Ancient Rome or the suicide of Empedocles, the Sicilian philosopher said to have thrown himself 'in ardentes montis Aethnae cavernas' (into the fiery caverns of Mount Etna).[83] Soothsayers based their predictions on Mount Etna, often described as emitting 'great fireballs' (maiores flammarum globi).[84] Although the work also addressed comets and their observation, less space was devoted to volcanoes. This may provide a useful clue for understanding how the study of volcanoes developed, despite the continued entanglement of natural history and the history of marvels throughout the sixteenth century.[85]

Aldrovandi's *Historia Fossilium*, an unpublished treatise whose manuscript has survived, instead has a wealth of references to volcanoes.[86] Its description of sulphur not only considers Mount Etna and Mount Vesuvius but also the Masaya volcano in Nicaragua.[87] He defined Masaya as a *mons ignivomus* whose 'continuo fragores et strepitus' (continuous din and racket) struck terror because of the repeated emission of 'fumi et flammas' (smoke and flames).[88] The work was novel in that it placed significant emphasis on the elements that volcanoes consist of rather than focusing only on their terrifying aspect. Aldrovandi had produced a catalogue of sulphur mines which described the importance of the 'viscere' (bowels) of volcanoes as places where sulphur was produced.[89] As noted above, Aldrovandi had a copy made of Acosta's passage which emphasised the importance of lava rock to house-building in New Spain: 'Si cavano nel Messico pietre abbruggiate, et molto liggeri, molto forti, et eccellenti per fare edifici' (burnt rocks are extracted in Mexico, which are very light, very strong, and excellent for making buildings).[90] The treatment of volcanoes in *Museum Metallicum*, published posthumously in 1648, also contains many references to sulphur, which is the subject of the thirteenth chapter of the third volume, parts of

[82] MONICA AZZOLINI, 'Marvellous Natural Particulars: Testimony, Rumour, and Proof in Ulisse Aldrovandi's Work', *Micrologus* 32 (2024): 567–92.
[83] ALDROVANDI, *Monstrorum Historia*, 222.
[84] ALDROVANDI, *Monstrorum Historia*, 146.
[85] ALDROVANDI, *Monstrorum Historia*, esp. the chapter entitled *Monstrosa rerum inanimatarum ignitarum, et precipue cometarum varietas*, 721–38.
[86] ANDREA BAUCON, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605): The Study of Trace Fossils During the Renaissance', *Ichnos. An International Journal for Plant and Animal Traces* 16, no. 4 (2009): 245–56.
[87] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 94, *Historia Fossilium*, 78v.
[88] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 143, Tomo VIII, *Mesaya mons ignivomus*, 289r–289v.
[89] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 136, Tomo XIII, 279v–280r.
[90] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 143, Tomo IV, 340v. Acosta also mentions Mount Etna and Mount Vesuvius in connection with pumice in book 3, chap. 5, fol. 58. Aldr. ms. 143, Tomo VIII, 3r.–3v.

which replicate the *Historia Fossilium*.[91] The passage on Nicaragua in *Museum Metallicum* is identical to that in *Historia Fossilium*, but there are also other references to the New World, and in particular to Quito in Peru, Guatemala and the volcano on Tenerife in the Canary Islands.[92] However, all of these volcanoes were linked to a single touchstone against which their nature could be compared: their connection to sulphur, in particular, was evident in 'Insulis Aeolijs penes Siciliam, in Aethna monte et aliis locis huius generis' (in the Aeolian Islands near Sicily, Mount Etna, and other places of this type).[93] The type that Aldrovandi was referring to was *mons flammivomus/ignivomus*, but further research is needed in the history of science to shed light on their connection with the realm of geology.[94]

The printing proof of *Mons Flammivomus ex Americae* indicates that Aldrovandi intended to use the woodblock depicting the erupting volcano to produce an image for publication. Given the notable presence of illustrations based on de Jode's wall maps in works printed at the end of the sixteenth century, it is plausible that the woodblock was intended to be used to illustrate *De fossilibus*. In particular, Aldrovandi's interest appears to have been less in depicting specific volcanoes such as Popocatepetl or Masaya, and more in providing another illustration of the general taxonomic category of *mons flammivomus*—in this case American volcanoes—in geological terms.[95]

As established by a note found in one of the volumes of Aldrovandi's *Observationes*, 'Fossilium tabulae delineatae et sculptae sunt quadringentes continentes figuras 1200 usque ad diem ultimus junii an. 1598' (Four hundred plates for the Fossilium were drawn and engraved, containing 1200 figures, up to the last day of June in the year 1598'). [96] By the end of June 1598, 1200 illustrations had been completed for inclusion in the publication of the *Fossilium* manuscript. Among these, it is highly likely that the illustration of the American volcano was includes.

However, *De fossilibus* was never published as a result of the death of the printer with whom Aldrovandi had signed a contract in 1594. Had it been published, it would have been distributed widely after being promoted at the Frankfurt Book Fair, as was

[91] On the relationship between *Metallicum* and *Fossilium*, see GIAN BATTISTA VAI and WILLIAM CAVAZZA, *Four Centuries of the Word Geology. Ulisse Aldrovandi 1603 in Bologna* (Argelato: Minerva, 2003), chapter 3, 113–125.
[92] ALDROVANDI, *Museum Metallicum*, 364–68.
[93] ALDROVANDI, *Museum Metallicum*, 364.
[94] It should not be overlooked that Aldrovandi coined the term 'geology'. For the history of the word, see VAI and CAVAZZA, *Four Centuries*, 72–74. For the scientific study of the volcanoes of America in the early modern period, see MIGUEL LEÓN-GARRIDO, 'El estudio científico de los volcanes en la América colonial española', *Llull: Revista de la Sociedad Española de Historia de las Ciencias y de las Técnicas* 40, no. 84 (2017): 125–55.
[95] The taxonomic category of *mons flammivomus* was already widespread and used to refer to volcanoes in the sixteenth century. For a comprehensive history of the evolution of terms employed to designate volcanoes, in this case Etna, the essential reading is LINA TAUB, *Aetna and the Moon. Explaining Nature in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2008).
[96] BUB, Aldr. Ms. 136, Tomo XXVI, 88r.

the case with its companion work *De avibus*, which was covered by the same contract.[97] Aldrovandi's reference point for the study of volcanoes was certainly Etna, but the image of the American volcano would have had an enormous impact on scholars, collectors and anyone with a thirst for information about the New World and its nature. Moreover, the widely recognised authoritativeness and scientific approach of the scholars and observers on which the work was based, including de Jode and his wall maps, had enabled Aldrovandi to overcome the 'difetto della lontananza' (problem of distance) that hampered the portrayal of the natural world of America.[98] In 1595, Aldrovandi's museum held 18,000 items, of which some 7,000 came from the bowels of the earth.[99] The image of a *Mons flammivomus*, a volcano such as Popocatepetl was one of the pieces missing from Aldrovandi's exposition of nature. The volcano's cone and its crater were the channel through which the bowels of the earth communicated with humanity and the nature at the surface.

Conclusion

The striking eruption depicted in Aldrovandi's woodblock can be seen as a metaphor for the disruptive impact that the New World had on the Old World. This paper has demonstrated that behind the creation of a single woodblock lies an extensive network of channels disseminating knowledge about the natural world of America. Aldrovandi's objective in creating his *teatro di natura* was to provide an accessible setting for the images and information contained in maps, first-hand accounts and other items pertaining to the New World. This paper has also observed the key role of a government body like the Casa de la Contratación in creating, guarding, and disseminating geographical information. Knowledge about America spread from Seville to Antwerp, a major centre of excellence in sixteenth-century publishing. The cartographers and printers operating in Antwerp, including Abraham Ortelius and Gerard and Cornelis de Jode, played an equally decisive role in the spread of information about the natural world thanks to the burgeoning international book market. This allowed Aldrovandi to learn more about the New World in Bologna, having failed to mount an expedition to the Americas.[100] Bologna was at the heart of the political stage of sixteenth-century Europe, and was certainly not immune from the influence of the Americas on the Old World. For example, when Emperor Charles

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[97] VAI and CAVAZZA, *Four Centuries,* 113–25.
[98] VAI and CAVAZZA, *Four Centuries*, 18.
[99] The naturalia e artificialia related to volcanoes might also have been of interest to Aldrovandi for his museum and warrant further research. Indeed, the antiquarian, collector and publisher Pietro Stefanoni (ca. 1557–ca. 1642) wrote a letter to Aldrovandi on 23 January 1599 in which he referred to the collection of the scientist Giovanni Vincenzo Della Porta in Naples, in which he had examined closely a piece of petrified lace that was part of a female garment that had been 'trovato in una spiagia di quel mare, et lo tiene caro, come cosa di gran maraviglia' (found on a beach of that sea, and which he cherishes as an item of great wonder). Quoted in ISABELLA ROSSI, 'Pietro Stefanoni a Ulisse Aldrovandi: relazioni erudite tra Bologna e Napoli', *Studi di Memofonte* 8 (2012): 3–30 (16).
[100] MASSIMO DONATTINI, 'Il mondo portato a Bologna: viaggiatori, collezionisti, missionari', in *Storia di Bologna*, 4 vols., ed. RENATO ZANGHERI, vol. 3, t. 2, *Bologna nell'Età Moderna. Cultura, istituzioni culturali, Chiesa e vita religiosa*, ed. ADRIANO PROSPERI (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2008), 537–682.

V and Pope Clement VII met for the second time in 1532–1533, the American continent impacted the two most important political figures of the day thanks to the Mesoamerican artefacts brought over to Europe by Domingo de Betanzos, a Dominican friar missionary to New Spain.[101] Aldrovandi did not resist the temptation to embark on the scientific study of many aspects of the nature of this intriguing New World. Indeed, he turned his artistic workshop in Bologna into one of the natural history centres of excellence of the early modern period, trying to cover not only the Americas but also every part of the known world.

This paper has also demonstrated the little-known Aldrovandi's interest in cartography and above all its importance for the study of volcanoes. His research focused on these elements of the natural world, eventually adopting the concept of the taxonomical category of *mons flammivomus* and incorporating it into his broader *teatro di natura*. Further research is needed to extend our understanding of the dynamics that saw the emergence of volcanology in the early modern period. Although the key reference point for the study of volcanoes was still Mount Etna, whose eruptions were well-known from classical times, Aldrovandi seemed to decide that the image of Popocatepetl, an American volcano marked on de Jode's map, was the perfect image for a woodblock—finally rediscovered—that best portrayed the essence of volcanoes. The enigmatic nature of American volcanoes of which Hernán Cortés spoke in his second report to Charles V thus began to lose some of its aura of mystery.[102]

[101] DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Missionary Gift Records of Mexican Objects in Early Modern Italy', in *The New World in Early Modern Italy*, eds HORODOWICH and MARKEY, 86–102; LAURA LAURENCICH MINELLI and DAVIDE DOMENICI, 'Domingo de Betanzos' Gifts to Pope Clement VII in 1532-1533', *Estudios de cultura náhuatl* 47 (2014): 169–209; LAURA LARENCICH MINELLI, 'From the New World to Bologna, 1533: A Gift for Pope Clement VII and Bolognese Collections of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Journal of the History of Collections* 24, no. 2 (2012): 145–58.
[102] HERNÁN CORTÉS, *Letters from Mexico*, ed. ANTHONY PAGDEN (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972).

The Curious Case of the Jew Who Married a Buffalo: An Alleged Blood Libel in Hamburg (1687)*

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While scrutinising chronicles and memoirs from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries preserved in Roman and Vatican archives during my doctoral research back in 2015, I came across an intriguing text, involving a trial against a Jewish man from Hamburg who, according to the account, was executed by being burned at the stake on 22 July 1687 after being charged of having murdered a Christian child to perform a kabbalistic ritual. The curious writing that came to my attention—titled *Morte data ad un ebreo che si sposò con una bufala. Caso seguito in Amburgo alli 22 di luglio l'anno 1687* ('Death given to a Jew who married a buffalo. Case happened in Hamburg on 22 July 1687')—is contained in a miscellaneous volume of various chronicles, accounts, newsletters, and literary productions from the library belonging to the Roman count and passionate bibliophile Francesco Maria Cardelli (1715–1778), today preserved in the Historical Archives of the City Hall of Rome (ASC).[1] While the events described in the account

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[1] Rome, Archivio Storico Capitolino, Archivio Cardelli, Miscellanea II, Manoscritti della Libraria di Francesco Maria Cardelli, Relazioni di avvenimenti di cronaca, tomo 69, fols. 340r–349v (from now on: ASC). On the Cardelli library, see FIAMMETTA SABBA, 'La biblioteca Cardelli a Roma nel XVIII secolo. Notizie a partire da una memoria inedita della contessa marchigiana Giustina Pianetti Cardelli', in *Libri, biblioteche e società. Studi per Rosa Maria Borraccini*, eds ALBERTO PETRUCCIANI, VALENTINA SESTINI, and FEDERICO VALACCHI (Macerata: Edizioni Università di Macerata, 2020), 205–20, and MARIA CRISTINA

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refer to Hamburg, the manuscript text is entirely written in Italian. No information regarding its author or the scribe who copied the text is known. This mysterious case is as obscure to historians of the Jewish communities of Hamburg (including those of Altona and Wandsbek) in the early modern period as it is to leading experts on Kabbalah and blood libels.[2]

Independently of my findings and without knowledge of each other's interest in this text, Luciano Allegra recently offered a reflection on this peculiar writing. In his engaging volume on falsehoods and depictions of Jews in the early modern period, he delves into the contents and structure of the text on the alleged blood libel in Hamburg, trying to make sense of obscure names and passages and proposing some hypotheses about the intended purpose of the text.[3] Allegra's study draws on a different manuscript than the one I first consulted, relying instead on a specimen from the Central National Library of Florence (BNCF). I am not aware whether he discovered this manuscript independently or was guided by Francesco Donnini's earlier publication from 2009, which also references BNCF, Ms. Panciatichiano 228. In his chapter, Donnini mentioned the text related to the Hamburg case only briefly, situating it within the library thought to have belonged to a descendant of the Ximenes de Aragão family.[4] While some members of the family remained in Portugal, other branches of this wealthy lineage of Portuguese merchants and *cristãos novos* likely escaped the 1506 Lisbon massacre due to their forced baptism in 1497.[5] Some members of this notable family relocated to thriving commercial hubs such as Florence, Venice, Hamburg, and

FALCUCCI, MICHELE FRANCESCHINI, and ELISABETTA MORI, eds, *Rerum romanarum fragmenta. Viaggio tra le carte di una famiglia romana. L'Archivio Cardelli, 1473-1877* (Rome: Fondazione Marco Besso-Argòs, 1997).

[2] On the history of the Jewish congregations in Altona, Hamburg, and Wandsbek, see YOSEF KAPLAN, 'The Social Functions of the Herem', in YOSEF KAPLAN, *An Alternative Path to Modernity: The Sephardi Diaspora in Western Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 108–42; DEAN P. BELL, 'Jews, Ethnicity and Identity in Early Modern Hamburg', *TRANSIT* 3, no. 1 (2007): 1–16; and now HUGO MARTINS, *The Portuguese Jews of Hamburg: The History of a Merchant Community in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2023). On blood libels, see MAGDA TETER, *Blood Libel: On the Trail of an Antisemitic Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

[3] See ALLEGRA, *L'ebreo che sposò una bufala.*

[4] See FRANCESCO DONNINI, 'Ricerche su un manoscritto seicentesco intitolato *Commercio reciproco tra i paesi della dominazione di Portogallo e esiti delle mercanzie del suddetto paese nei paesi forestieri*', in *From Florence to the Mediterranean and Beyond. Essays in Honour of Anthony Molho*, eds DIOGO RAMADA CURTO, ERIC R. DURSTELER, JULIUS KIRSHNER, and FRANCESCA TRIVELLATO, with the assistance of NIKI KONIORDOS, 2 vols, vol. 2 (Florence: Olschki, 2009), 695–709 (704). I thank Francesca Trivellato for forwarding the file of this publication.

[5] Among the members who remained in Portugal and adhered to the Catholic faith, one could find Fernão Ximenes de Aragão, author of several polemical writings against the Jewish faith, such as *Doutrina catholica para instrucçaõ e cõfirmacaõ dos fieis e extinçaõ das seitas supersticiosas e em particular do Judaismo* (Lisbon: Pedro Craesbeeck, 1625) and *Extinçam do judaismo, e mais seitas supersticiosas: e exaltaçam da só verdadeira religiaõ christaã, dada por Deos aos homes para por ella serem salvos* (Lisbon: Pedro Craesbeeck, 1628). On this, see CLAUDE STUCZYNSKI, 'Anti-Rabbinic Texts and *Converso* Identities: Fernão Ximenes de Aragão's *Doutrina Catholica*', in *The Conversos and Moriscos in Late Medieval Spain and Beyond*, 4 vols, vol. 3, *Displaced Persons*, eds KEVIN INGRAM and JUAN IGNACIO PULIDO SERRANO (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 69–94.

Antwerp, where their enterprises flourished.[6] As other notebooks contained in the Panciatichi fund, most likely commissioned within the entourage of the Ximenes of Tuscany, the text of our interest is connected to members of this family and is placed immediately after another manuscript (Ms. Panciatichiano 226) titled *Curiosità diverse sopra gli Ebrei di Portogallo & Regalia di Francia* ('Various curiosities about the Jews of Portugal and the kings of France').[7] As Donnini observed, the presence of a text referencing a blood libel within the library of *converso* descendants is both striking and unsettling.

Apart from Allegra and Donnini's contributions, an excerpt of the story of the Jew who married a buffalo in Hamburg intriguingly appears in an esoteric book in Italian published some ten years ago.[8]

During the last few years, I have expanded my bibliographical search and was able to retrieve three additional manuscripts: one preserved at the Vatican Apostolic Library,[9] one at the Library of the City Hall and Etruscan Academy in Cortona[10] (about one hundred kilometres from Florence), and another one in the Municipal Library of Bordeaux.[11] Additionally, according to the Bodleian Libraries catalogue online, it seems that another copy of the text is preserved in the Rawlinson Manuscripts Collection.[12] The title of the text in the Florentine manuscript is slightly different from that included in the one I discovered in Rome in 2015 as it reads: *Relatione del caso seguito in Amburgo d'un'ebreo che si sposò con una bufala, e fù abbrugiato vivo li 12 luglio 1687* ('Report of the case happened in Hamburg of a Jew who married a buffalo, and was burned alive on 12 July 1687').[13] The Cortona manuscript shares the same title as the Florentine version, while the Vatican and Bordeaux manuscripts bear similar titles with minor spelling variations: *Caso seguito in Amburgo di un ebreo, che si sposò con una bufala e fù abrugiato vivo li 22 luglio 1687* ('Case happened in Hamburg of a Jew, who married a buffalo and was burned alive on 22 July 1687'). In all five manuscripts (excluding the one from Oxford, which remains to be investigated), the text of interest is found within miscellaneous

[6] On this family, see ANA ISABEL LÓPEZ-SALAZAR, 'The Purity of Blood Privilege for Honors and Positions: The Spanish Crown and the Ximenes de Aragão Family', *Journal of Levantine Studies* 6 (2016): 177–201 and now FRANCISCO BETHENCOURT, *Strangers Within: The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Trading Elite* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2024). On the forced conversion of Jews in Portugal in 1497, see at least GIUSEPPE MARCOCCI, 'Remembering the Forced Baptism of Jews: Law, Theology, and History in Sixteenth-Century Portugal', in *Forced Conversion in Christianity, Judaism and Islam: Coercion and Faith in Premodern Iberia and Beyond*, eds MERCEDES GARCÍA-ARENAL and YONATAN GLAZER-EYTAN (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 328–53. On the ennoblement of the Ximenes of Tuscany, see LUCIA FRATTARELLI FISCHER, 'O processo de nobilitação dos Ximenes na Toscana', *Cadernos de estudos sefarditas* 10–11 (2011): 269–80.

[7] See DONNINI, 'Ricerche su un manoscritto seicentesco', 704.

[8] See DARIO F. ATENA, *I figli del tuono. Biografia di una iniziazione solare* (Borgo Valsugana: Fontana, 2013), accessible via Google Books. How the author learned about this case is not clear.

[9] Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb.lat.1696, fols. 111r–114v (from now on: BAV).

[10] Cortona, Biblioteca del Comune e dell'Accademia Etrusca di Cortona, Ms. 348, fols. 277r–288v (from now on: BCAE).

[11] Bordeaux, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 1018, fols. 241–247 (from now on: BM).

[12] Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Ms. Rawl. C. 916, fols. 14, 15. I haven't examined this specimen yet.

[13] Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Ms. Panciatichiano 228, fols. 311–318 (from now on: BNCF).

volumes comprising writings such as chronicles, curiosities, and related texts. Details surrounding the author, composition date, the geographical and socio-political context in which this curious text was composed as well as its circulation in early modern Italy (and beyond) are unknown. At a first glance, the five specimens do not present substantial variants but the Rome manuscript features some interesting additions that do not appear elsewhere. Regarding their dating, the only available details are derived from online descriptions and library catalogues: 1676–1725 for BAV, 1701–1750 for BNCF, 1715–1778 for ASC, and the eighteenth century for the manuscripts in BCAE and BM. A palaeographical and codicological analysis of these manuscripts, along with a more in-depth investigation into the history of the collections in which they are housed, may yield additional insights. A critical edition of the text is planned for the near future, aiming to compare variations among the six known manuscripts and shed light on their transmission and historical context.

While the author's identity and background and the actual circulation and reception of this text remain obscure, in this article I argue that this narrative belongs to genre of ephemeral literature on monstrous births in the early modern era. Unlike the more popular pamphlets of the time, which were primarily designed to entertain the public—particularly the less educated classes—this text never saw the light of the day and therefore did not reach a broad audience. However, it is possible that the original intention was to publish the text, but for reasons unknown, this never happened.[14]

By situating this work within the broader framework of early modern discourse on monstrosity, I aim to shed light on the fictional use of descriptions about Jewish rituals, customs, and events with an anti-Jewish goal. After presenting the content of the composition, I propose hypotheses regarding the sources accessed and employed by the anonymous author to construct their absurd and anti-Jewish narrative. Particular attention is given to the author's real or purported knowledge of Judaism, Kabbalah, and Sabbateanism. Finally, the significance of Hamburg as the location of the alleged blood libel is contextualised.

A Bloody and Bizarre 'Kabbalistic' Ritual in Three Phases

Although a brief composition spanning only a few folios, the storyline is remarkably intricate, presenting challenges in following it through several passages. The narrative centres on the trial of a murder of a Christian child that occurred in Hamburg in 1687. The narrative opens on 3 July 1687, when a rich Christian merchant named Noberto[15] relocated from Groningen[16] to Hamburg with his wife Radegonda[17] and their seven-

[14] On the influence of printing to spread monstrosity, see RUDOLF WITTKOWER, 'Marvels of the East: A Study in the History of Monsters', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 159–97 (193).
[15] Sometimes also spelled Hoberto, Orberto, Noberto. The family name is Llalad (BAV, BCAE, BM), Clarad (BNCF) and Hilsch (ASC).
[16] Spelled Groninga, Grovinga, Grovigna.
[17] Variants of the name include Rodegonda and Badegonda.

year-old child Ignazio.[18] However, on 8 July, the boy mysteriously disappeared, prompting a three-day city-wide search. Eventually, a witness claimed to have seen the boy conversing with a Jewish merchant named Zebedeo[19] d'Uriel Gallo, who was arrested[20] and later confessed to having kidnapped and slaughtered the Christian child. Zebedeo was interrogated through indirect questions posed in the third person and responded in the first person.[21] The Jewish merchant explained that the murder was justified as part of a kabbalistic ritual in multiple phases, intended to redeem Jews worldwide from their state of suffering and inferiority. He revealed that seven years earlier, in 1680, a certain Raffaele d'Hamai from Adrianople, renowned as a prominent kabbalist ('primo Gabbalista'), had visited Hamburg. The local rabbis impatiently asked Raffaele if and when the miserable state of the Jews would have ended.[22] The kabbalist disclosed esoteric knowledge found in texts like the *Clavicola di Salomone* and a certain *Libro delle credulità* by Rabbi Saadia Assiano.[23] According to these writings, when a child, born to a Jewish man and a buffalo,[24] reached the age of fourteen, they would be able to cross the Jordan River and visit King Sabbatione.[25] After being asked about this king, Zebedeo said that he was a very powerful king who no Jews had ever seen due to the Jordan River casting stones throughout the week, except on the Sabbath when Jews are prohibited from traveling.[26] Following this first explanation, the perpetrator revealed that seven years before he agreed to fulfil the plan suggested by the kabbalist, who thoroughly instructed on the steps to perform the ritual. Firstly, Zebedeo had to find a young female buffalo, marry her following the usual Jewish wedding ceremony and take her as a 'true and legitimate wife' until she got pregnant in 1681. Before having a sexual union with her, all the rabbis and virgins observed a three-day fast in a solemn way 'as if one should pray to the Messiah to achieve a great grace and as is customary to do'.[27] After the sexual union, the buffalo was named Grazia ('Grace') and the child, born by the bestial union, Seth.[28] Possessing human features but buffalo feet, Seth underwent circumcision in accordance with Jewish tradition and was breastfed by a Jewish woman who just gave birth for the first time. After fulfilling her mission, Grazia was slain, her meat eaten by the members of the Jewish community of Hamburg, the remaining bones incinerated, and their ashes kept aside for the second phase of the

[18] Also spelled Ignatio.
[19] ASC: Zodebeo.
[20] The arrest is not explicitly mentioned in ASC.
[21] According to BCAE and BNCF, he confessed only under torture but then recognised the gravity of his actions and guilt.
[22] According to BNCF, a certain Rabbi Morkain was ready to pay a large sum if a solution had been offered.
[23] BAV and BM: Sozadia Arriano; BNCF: Sozudia Ariano.
[24] Buffalo means both male and female. In this specific case, it refers to a female.
[25] Often spelled in different ways throughout the texts: Sabatione, Sabbatione, Sabathione.
[26] This legend is actually not related to the Jordan River but to the mythical Sambatyon River. We will return to this aspect in short. See DANIEL STEIN KOKIN, 'Toward the Source of the Sambatyon: Shabbat Discourse and the Origins of the Sabbatical River Legend', *AJS Review* 37, no. 1 (2013): 1–28.
[27] '[…] come se si havesse da pregare il Messia per conseguire da esso una Grazia grande, come si costuma'. Only BCAE and BNCF present this addition.
[28] ASC and BCAE: Seth.

ritual. As illustrated by Raffaele d'Hamai, when Seth reached the age of seven in 1687, Zebedeo had to find a Christian boy of the same age and, after the rabbi had cursed him with the curse *Nimretzeth*,[29] killed him. The blood of the Christian boy was then used to completely cover Seth. Subsequently, Seth underwent another circumcision and was bestowed with a new name: Salute (which literally means 'Health' but, most likely, has to be interpreted as 'Salvation') or Settima Salute ('Seventh Salvation').[30] Zebedeo confessed to burying the Christian child beneath the doorstep of his house and explained that, according to the kabbalist's instructions, after the body's decomposition, he burned the child's bones and mixed his ashes with those of the buffalo. This ashes mixture had to be used in a further step of the ritual. When Salute would have turned fourteen, he would scatter part of the ashes into the Jordan River, thereby ceasing the stone-throwing and enabling him to cross the river and reach the kingdom of King Sabbatione. The king would joyously receive Salute and bestow upon him numerous gifts, along with a formidable army to defeat both the Turks and Christians. The Sultan ('l'Imperatore de' Turchi') would convert to Judaism, and Salute would marry his daughter. The Jewish people would finally obtain happiness and power 'as it was in the ancient times'.[31]

According to the murderer's confession, Jewish communities contributed funds to support the undertaking of Zebedeo in Hamburg and the trip of his child beyond the Jordan River. The community of Venice donated 3,000[32] *zecchini*, Mantua 1,000 *scudi*,[33] Modena 1,000 *scudi*,[34] Buda 10,000 *ungari*,[35] Constantinople 10,000 *zecchini*, Rome 6,000 *scudi*, and various unspecified communities in France 30,000 *scudi,* for a total of 'more than two millions'.[36] The donations from the 'communities of these places' (perhaps the German communities) are not specified but the text says the money was confiscated to finance the war, as it continues, 'all the princes of the world should do'. Zebedeo then confessed that the correspondence with these Jewish communities, the money received from them, and other precious belongings were located in a box in his home. The Christian child's body was found buried under the doorstep and the letters and money brought to the tribunal. The text concludes with Zebedeo being executed by burning at the stake on 22 July 1687, and his accomplices, as well as the rabbis in Hamburg, being imprisoned. After the execution, a tremendous storm ensued, with thunder and hail persisting until 20 or 22 in the evening, completely washing away the ashes and leaving no trace of the event. Despite being found innocent, the seven-year-old Salute was not exempted from punishment. The child was imprisoned and, to prevent word from spreading that he had buffalo legs and feet, it was initially decided

[29] BAV and BCAE: *Nimerezeth*; BNCF: *Himerezeth*; BM: *Himrezeth*.
[30] With the exception of ASC ('Settima Salute'), all the other manuscripts bear 'Salute'.
[31] This addition appears in ASC only.
[32] According to ASC: 30,000.
[33] ASC: 'mille scudi romani'; BAV and BM: 'mille e più scudi'; BCAE: 'mille zecchini, o più scudi'. The *scudo* was primarily used in the Papal States.
[34] According to BAV: 2,000.
[35] In Italian, 'ongari' or 'fiorini ungheresi' (Hungarian florins).
[36] Currency is not specified in the final sum.

that he should be executed.[37] Eventually, however, given his innocence, the decision was revised to impose lifelong imprisonment instead.

Wisdom from Afar? Uncovering Real and Fictional Sources of Alleged Kabbalistic Knowledge

Throughout the description of the gruesome and odd rituals performed by Zebedeo, the anonymous author of the text pretends to be knowledgeable of Jewish customs, laws, and works but, in fact, he is not. He mentions Jewish ceremonies while talking about the marriage of the merchant Zebedeo to the buffalo Grazia, the solemn three-day fast of all the rabbis and virgins before their sexual union, and the ceremony of their son's double circumcision but he doesn't go beyond saying that everything was performed 'with a usual ceremony' or 'following the Jewish custom'. In only one instance does the author provide more details: before killing the Christian child, the rabbi of Hamburg first had to curse him with the 'maledizione pessima detta ebraicamente *Nimrezeth*' ('the grievous curse called in Hebrew *Nimrezeth*'). This curse is referenced in the Hebrew Bible, specifically relating to the curse that Shimei ben Gera, a member of King Saul's household, cast with stones against David, blaming him for Saul's death at the hands of the Philistines (1 Kings 2:8).[38] Although *Nimrezeth* could be simply translated as 'vigorous', it is far more likely that the anonymous author borrowed the curse description directly from an almost exact quotation of Tommaso Garzoni's encyclopaedic work on professions and crafts, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*.[39] Commenting the aforementioned biblical passage of King David instructing his son Solomon before approaching death, Garzoni wrote that the curse Shimei used against David 'explicates the strength of the execrable curse [maledittione], demonstrating the insult that Shimei hurled against David, as indicated by the letters in that malicious phrase, which is called *Nimrezeth* in Hebrew [la quale Hebraicamente è detta Nimrezeth]'.[40] The act of cursing, letter after letter, is intended

[37] This motivation appears in ASC. The other specimens simply say that it was decided he had to be executed.

[38] The curse is simply translated as 'a grievous curse'. The Talmud provides further insight into the contents and meaning of the curse received by David, explaining that the word *Nimretzeth* (root *NMRZTh*) is the acronym of adulterer [*noef*], Moabite [*Moavi*], murderer [*rotze'aḥ*], oppressor [*tzorer*] and abomination [*to'eva*] (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 105a).

[39] TOMASO GARZONI DA BAGNACAVALLO, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo e nobili e ignobili, nuovamente formata et posta in luce da Thomaso Garzoni da Bagnacavallo* (Venetia: Gio. Battista Somascho, 1585; *editio princeps*). After this, the book was reprinted many times throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The following quotations from Garzoni's work are taken from the 1638 edition (Venetia: Pietro Maria Bertano). On Garzoni, see the biographical entry by OTTAVIA NICCOLI, 'Garzoni, Tomaso', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 52 (1999), 449–53. Other references to the *Nimrezeth* curse, based on Jerome's reading in the Vulgata, could be found in other popular works published in Italy between the end of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century: see, for instance, GIULIO CESARE CARPACCIO, *Il secretario* (Venetia: Nicolò Moretti, 1597); RAFFAELLO DELLE COLOMBE, *Prediche della Quaresima con esposizioni di Scritture sacre, Varietà di traslazioni, Dottrine morali, diverse Erudizioni, e Similitudini* (Fiorenza: Bartolommeo Sermartelli, e Fratelli, 1622); FRANCESCO PANIGAROLA, *Gieremia dolente. Discorsi di mons.re Rev.mo F. Francesco Panigarola Minor Oss.te, vescovo d'Asti fatti da lui in Roma in S. Lorenzo in Damaso* (Bologna: Clemente Ferroni, 1626).

[40] '[…] essaminando quelle parole di David moriente a Salomone, *Habes quoque apud te Semei filium, Gera filij Gemini de Bahurim, qui maledixit mihi maledictione pessima*; esplica la forza di quella essecranda

by Garzoni and other authors as a kabbalistic performance, that is why he mentions this biblical passage in his *Discorso XXIX*, dedicated to kabbalists.

Regarding other instances of alleged knowledge of Jewish customs, as Luciano Allegra correctly noted, the ritual description contains two major absurdities. Firstly, according to Halakha (Jewish law), one can be considered Jewish only if born to a Jewish woman, making it difficult to regard someone born of a buffalo as Jewish. Secondly, the idea of performing a double circumcision is physically impossible.[41] Although Joshua 5:2 states, 'At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites again"', this passage should not be understood literally as describing a second circumcision. Instead, an analysis of the Hebrew word וְשׁוּב, which implies repetition, within the broader context of verses 2–8, suggests that it refers to the resumption of the circumcision ritual, which had been suspended during the Israelites' forty years in the wilderness prior to their entry into the Promised Land.

The disclosure of secret teachings contained in some kabbalistic writings is also fictional. From Adrianople (today Edirne in Turkey) to the deep north of Europe, Raffaele d'Hamai would have brought the solution not only to end the miserable state of the Jews but to 'subjugate Christianity'. The first writing consulted by the kabbalist is the *Clavicola di Salomone*, more commonly known as the *Clavicula Salomonis*, a pseudo-epigraphic grimoire traditionally attributed to King Solomon.[42] While some of its components likely originated in an earlier period, the *Clavicula* garnered significant attention during the Renaissance and early modern era, spreading across Europe in over a hundred manuscripts, numerous variants, and multiple languages. The various versions of the *Clavicula* were already condemned by the Spanish Inquisition in 1551 and included in the first *Index librorum prohibitorum* issued by pope Paul IV Carafa in 1559, categorised under works attributed to unknown authors (*incertorum auctorum libri prohibiti*).[43] Despite censorship and prohibitions, the text remained extremely popular throughout the centuries. According to the *incipit* of Abraham Colorni's version, which started circulating toward the end of the sixteenth century, the *Clavicula* was originally a Hebrew text translated into Latin.[44] This information led many, including Hermann

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maledittione, dimostrando le villanie, che Semei raccolse, contra David, dalle lettere, che sono in quella dittione pessima, la quale Hebraicamente è detta Nimrezeth (GARZONI, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, *Discorso XXIX. De' cabalisti*, 112r).

[41] See ALLEGRA, *L'ebreo che sposò una bufala,* 26.

[42] Regarding the production and circulation of pseudo-Solomonic literature during the Middle Ages and early modern period, and the reception of the *Clavicula*, see FEDERICO BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli. Chiave di Salomone e libri di magia a Venezia nei secoli XVII e XVIII* (Milan: Sylvestre Bonnard, 2002); ALESSIA BELLUSCI, 'Un manuale di magia in ebraico ed italiano dalla collezione privata della famiglia Gross', in *L'eredità di Salomone. La magia ebraica in Italia e nel Mediterraneo*, eds EMMA ABATE and SAVERIO CAMPANINI (Florence: MEIS-Giuntina, 2019), 279–313.

[43] See BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli*, 37 and the bibliography cited there.

[44] Several manuscripts under the title *Claviculae Salomonis Haebreorum regis translate in latinum idioma ex Hebreo, ex mandato Serenissimae Suae Celsitudinis Mantuae Ducis* are preserved in libraries today. This variant of the text has to be connected with Abraham Colorni (or Colorno), engineer, inventor, mathematician, and alchemist, who translated the *Clavicula* into Italian on behalf of the Duke of Mantua. On Colorni, see JOSEPH ADLER, 'An Uncommon Jew in the Italian Renaissance', *Midstream* 42, no. 7 (1996): 16–18;

Gollancz, to believe in the Hebrew origin of the text, associated with the legacy of King Solomon, astrologer, magician and philosopher (*magosopho*).[45] According to Gershom Scholem, however, *Mafteaḥ Shelomoh* (the 'Key of Solomon') 'is a version of the *Clavicula Salomonis* which, in contradiction to Gollancz's own assumption evidently represents a very late Jewish adaptation of a Latin (or rather Italian) *Clavicula* text from the Renaissance period'.[46] This compilation 'contains Christian, Jewish, and Arabic elements which either lie unmixed side by side or show in parts a mutual permeation'.[47] In the same years of Colorni's version, another variant of the text under the obscure title *Lemegeton* or *Lesser* [or *Little*] *Key of Solomon the King* circulated in England and elsewhere.[48]

It is hard to say whether the anonymous author of our bizarre writing actually read one of the variants of the *Clavicula* or rather learned of its existence through other authors like Garzoni. While reflecting on the category of 'magic professionals',[49] Garzoni associates the *Clavicula* with diabolic practices performed by 'perverse magicians' driving men to crazy loves and craziness at large.[50] In another passage of his work, he states the *Clavicula* is an evil book prohibited by the Church.[51]

The second work supposedly containing esoteric knowledge for the deliverance of the Jewish people, mentioned by Raffaele d'Hamai, is a certain *Libro delle credulità* (literally the 'Book of Credulities') by Rabbi Saadia Assiano or Ariano. Allegra asserted that the work should be identified with the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* by Baruch Spinoza, but I find this interpretation unclear and unconvincing, especially since it seemed improbable that the anonymous author of our text had read Spinoza.[52] The

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ARIEL TOAFF, *Il prestigiatore di Dio. Avventure e miracoli di un alchimista ebreo nelle corti del Rinascimento* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2010).

[45] HERMANN GOLLANCZ, *Mafteaḥ Shelomoh. Clavicula Salomonis: A Hebrew Manuscript Newly Discovered and Now Described* (Frankfurt am Main – London: J. Kauffmann – D. Nutt, 1903), 12. See also GOLLANCZ, *Sepher Mafteaḥ Shelomo (Book of the Key of Solomon). An Exact Facsimile of an Original Book of Magic in Hebrew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914). Regarding King Solomon's connection to magic, see YAACOV SHAVIT, "He was Thoth in Everything:' Why and When King Solomon Became Both *Magister omnium physicorum* and Master of Magic', in *Envisioning Judaism. Studies in Honor of Peter Schäfer on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, eds RA'ANAN BOUSTAN, KLAUS HERRMANN, REIMUND LEICHT, ANNETTE Y. REED, and GIUSEPPE VELTRI, with the collaboration of ALEX RAMOS, 2 vols (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), vol. 1, 587–606.

[46] GERSHOM SCHOLEM, 'Some Sources of Jewish-Arabic Demonology', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 16, no. 1–2 (1965): 1–13 (6).

[47] SCHOLEM, 'Some Sources of Jewish-Arabic Demonology', 6.

[48] See BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli*, 49.

[49] The *Discorso XLI* (*De' maghi, incantatori, o venefici, o malefici, o negromanti largamente presi, et prestigiatori, e superstitiosi, e strie*) is entirely devoted to magicians, enchanters, poisoners, sorcerers, necromancers, wizards, witches, and other sort of 'superstitious' people.

[50] 'Et bene dimostrano questi maghi perversi di operare ogni cosa per arte diabolica, inducendo anco gli huomini per via d'incanti in pazzi amori, et odij disordinati, usando la profana clavicula detta di Salomone, battezzando empiamente, e sacrilegamente le pietre calamite e per tale effetto, servendosi d'imagini di cera abbrugiate, e di peci nefandissime, che fanno arricciare i capelli, ove fanno divenir egli huomini come pazzi, et freneticij, et arretticij propriamente, essendo da una più alta natura rubbati, et per forza levati fuori di se stessi' (GARZONI, *La piazza universale*, 184v).

[51] GARZONI, *La piazza universale*, 255r.

[52] See ALLEGRA, *L'ebreo che sposò una bufala,* 14.

reason for Allegra's interpretation lies in the preface of Spinoza's work, mentioning *credulitas et prejudicia* ('credulity and prejudices').[53] While 'credulity' generally carries a negative connotation, implying the believers' naivety, we can also translate the Italian *credulità* (plural) as 'beliefs', highlighting a correspondence with the Hebrew term *emunot*. Several works under the title *Sefer ha-Emunot* can be found in Jewish literature. A *Sefer ha-Emunot* by Rabbi Shem Tov Ibn Shem Tov (c. 1380–c. 1441)—a polemical work against philosophy and defending Kabbalah—is extant in several manuscript specimens and was printed by Usque in Ferrara in 1556. I believe the text hidden under the Italian title should be identified with the *Sefer ha-Emunot ve-ha-De'ot* ('Book of Beliefs and Opinions') by Saadia Gaon (882–942), completed in Baghdad between 922–942 CE in Judeo-Arabic (*Kitāb al-Amānāt wa'l-Iʿtiqādāt*) and translated into Hebrew in the twelfth century by Judah Ibn Tibbon.[54] Despite the connection of Saadia Gaon's *Sefer ha-Emunot* to Kabbalah due to his formulation of *Kavod* ('Divine Glory'),[55] this work is far from being a kabbalistic writing as it constitutes the first major work of medieval Jewish philosophy, attempting to present Judaism as a rational *corpus* of beliefs related to theology and ethics.[56] Once again, it is safe to assume that our anonymous author never really came across Saadia Gaon's work, neither in Judeo-Arabic nor in other translations, but found it listed along with many other writings in Garzoni's *Piazza universale*:

> Intorno à questa scienza cabalistica son citati molti auttori con l'opre loro da moderni […] il libro delle credulità del Rabbino Saadia Astano (sic); il libro del misterio della legge del Rabbino Abraam Abenazra; il libro del Rabbino Homai (sic), ch'è chiamato Principe di eloquenza nella Cabala, et il libro della Speculatione del medesimo […][57]

In the *Discorso XXIX* on kabbalists, Garzoni refers to the aforementioned *Libro delle credulità* by Rabbi Saadia Asiano, with 'Asiano' meaning 'Asian' or 'oriental'. The following works mentioned include *Yesod Mora ve-Sod ha-Torah* ('The Foundation of Reverence and the Secret of the Torah') by Abraham Ibn Ezra (c. 1093–c. 1167), and an unspecified book[58] by Rabbi Hamai, referred by Garzoni to as the 'prince of eloquence in the Kabbalah'. Garzoni also notes that this rabbi is also remembered for composing the *Book of Speculation*.[59] According to Gershom Scholem, the attribution of

[53] ALLEGRA, *L'ebreo che sposò una bufala*, 14, note 3.
[54] It was first printed in Constantinople in 1562. For its English translation, see *The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*, eds ALEXANDER ALTMANN and DANIEL H. FRANK (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002).
[55] In Kabbalah, *Kavod* is associated with the divine presence or the manifestation of God's glory. It is often linked to the idea of the *Shekhinah* ('Divine Presence'), one of the ten *sefirot*, meaning emanations or attributes of God.
[56] On the reception of *Sefer ha-Emunot* Hebrew translation and its influence on early Kabbalah, see RONALD C. KIENER, 'The Hebrew Paraphrase of Saadiah Gaon's *Kitāb al-Amānāt wa'l-Iʿtiqādāt*', *AJS Review* 11, no. 1 (1986): 1–25.
[57] GARZONI, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo, De' cabalisti. Discorso XXIX*, 111r. In the *editio princeps* (1585), Asiano and Hamai are spelled correctly.
[58] Which should be identified as *Sefer ha-Yiḥud* ('The Book of Unity'), the only other work attributed to Rabbi Hammai. See GERSHOM SCHOLEM, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, ed. R. J. ZWI WERBLOWSKY, trans. ALLAN ARKUSH (Philadelphia – Princeton: The Jewish Publication Society – Princeton University Press, 1987), 311.
[59] GARZONI, *La piazza universale,* 111r.

Sefer ha-Iyyun (the 'Book of Speculation') to the legendary Rabbi Hammai is pseudo-epigraphic and based on ancient quotations from *Sefer ha-Bahir* (the 'Book of Brightness').[60] It is not hard to imagine where our anonymous author took inspiration for the name of the esteemed kabbalist of Adrianople. The choice of his provenance may also be intentional, as Adrianople holds a prominent place in the history of Sabbateanism—being the city where Sabbatai Zevi famously converted to Islam in 1666 after being threatened by the Sultan—a point to which we shall return shortly.

Regarding private and family names mentioned throughout the text, with the exception of Zebedeo di Uriel and Raffaele, most of the Jewish names are entirely fabricated, with no attempt to make them sound authentically Jewish.[61] As observed by Allegra, also the couple of the Christian merchants from Groningen (Orberto/Norberto/Norbert and his wife Radegonda) are not Dutch names but German, while their child's name (Ignazio) comes from Latin.[62]

On the contrary, the name of the child born from the bestial union is interesting and related to esoteric knowledge. In Gnostic mythology, Seth (or Sethi in Latin) was often believed to be the first son of Adam and Eve, while in the Hebrew Bible was the third one, born after the killing of Abel (Genesis 4:25; 5). Moreover, in Gnosticism, Seth also had a salvific function 'since he was the one who 'recovered' the glory that had been Adam and Eve's before their fall'.[63] According to the *Zohar*, Adam would have transmitted kabbalistic knowledge to Seth from whom it passed to other generations until Abraham.[64] No trace of these speculations or other references to Seth's secret wisdom could be found in Garzoni's work and other early modern published sources.

Two Rivers, One Cow: Sabbatean Echoes in Early Modern Italy

Two additional elements of the story are worthy of some observations: the Jordan River, which was the obstacle that the ritual was meant to overcome and the buffalo, essential for this ritual. According to the instructions of Raffaele, based on the aforementioned *Clavicula* and *Libro delle credulità*, once Seth (later named Salute) reached fourteen years of age, he would have crossed the Jordan River to visit the powerful King Sabbatione. Prior visits to this king were impossible because of the need to cross the Jordan River, where stones were thrown every day of the week except on the Sabbath when it was calm. Since travel was prohibited on the Sabbath, this prevented

[60] See SCHOLEM, *Origins of the Kabbalah*.
[61] Their corresponding Hebrew names are Zebadiah, Uriel, and Rafael.
[62] See ALLEGRA, *L'ebreo che sposò una bufala,* 18.
[63] GUY STROUMSA, *Another Seed: Studies in Gnostic Mythology* (Leiden, Brill: 1984), 76.
[64] ODED YISRAELI, 'Jewish Medieval Traditions Concerning the Origins of the Kabbalah', *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 106, no. 1 (2016): 21–41 (33). The *Sefer ha-Zohar* ('Book of Splendor') is the foundational work of kabbalistic literature. It is traditionally attributed to Shimon Bar Yoḥai (second century CE) but its authorship is debated as it first appeared in thirteenth-century Spain. It was first printed in Mantua in 1558; see ANDREA GONDOS, *Kabbalah in Print: The Study and Popularization of Jewish Mysticism in Early Modernity* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2020).

any visits from taking place.[65] The specimens preserved in Florence and Cortona add that in a case deemed truthful someone attempted to cross the Jordan River in the middle of the week on the Day of Circumcision and was struck by a stone that resulted in his death.[66]

By casting the mixture of ashes made from the bones of the buffalo and the murdered Christian child, the stones thrown by the river would cease, allowing Seth/Salute to finally cross the river and reach the lands of King Sabbatione. Meeting with this influential king might have ultimately brought an end to the 'miserable state' of the Jews. Seth/Salute would have been welcomed with universal jubilation, receiving infinite wealth and a mighty army from the king. Additionally, he would marry the daughter of the Sultan, who would convert to Judaism, providing him with more soldiers to subjugate not only Christianity but the entire world.

Besides the perplexing reference to the Day of Circumcision, the unidentified author of the narrative refers to the king as Sambatyon ('Sabbatione'), whereas in Jewish and non-Jewish traditions, this name was associated with the mythical sabbatical river. Despite the messianic and sacred connotations of the Jordan River in Jewish tradition, Sabbateanism, and Christianity,[67] numerous sources—including the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, the Talmud, Pliny the Elder, Flavius Josephus, and others—identify the Sambatyon, rather than the Jordan, as the river beyond which the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel were exiled in 721 BCE by the Assyrian king Shalmaneser V.[68] According to this legend,

> six days each week […] the river runs so powerfully that neither these tribes nor their seekers can cross it; on the Sabbath, either natural wonders or halakhic restrictions prevent them from doing so as well. Thus, whether showcasing the sheer power and

[65] '[…] nessuno di noi c'è potuto andare mai a trovarlo, poiché dovendosi passare il Giordano, questo in tutti li giorni della Settimana tira sassi, solo il Sabbato sta fermo, e nel Sabbato non potendo noi viaggiare, per lo che con giusta ragione non possiamo andare, e per tal effetto ci viene impedito' (ASC, fols 341v–342r).

[66] 'Si racconta per caso veridico successo il giorno della circoncisione, che uno volesse fare simil prova e fosse colto da una pietra, che lo atterò di fatto, e cadde morto'. No festivities of this name are known in Jewish tradition. Perhaps the author refers to the Feast of Jesus's circumcision corresponding to 1st January (eight days after his birth) in the Christian calendar.

[67] Several texts related to Sabbateanism mention prophecies according to which the messiah was supposed to appear by the Jordan banks; see, for instance, GIUSEPPE LEVI, 'Documenti inediti su Shabbatai Zevi', *Il Vessillo Israelitico* 59 (1911): 511–16, 588–92 (515); SHLOMO SIMONSOHN, 'A Christian Report from Constantinople Regarding Shabbetai Ṣevi (1666)', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 12, no. 1–2 (1961): 33–58 (41). On Christian pilgrimage and tourism at the Jordan between the Middle Ages and the twentieth century, see the very recent volume by JEHUDA REINHARZ and YAACOV SHAVIT, eds, *The Blessed River: Selected Travel Accounts of the Jordan River* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2024). I thank Jehuda Reinharz for sending me a copy of the book.

[68] On the vast literature on this topic, see the rich bibliography cited in STEIN KOKIN, 'Toward the Source of the Sambatyon' and the entry 'Sambatyon', in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, eds FRED SKOLNIK and MICHAEL BERENBAUM, 22 vols (Detroit: Macmillan, 2007), vol. 17, 743–44. The legend of the Sambatyon River continued to captivate scholars and writers in modern times, including renowned writers such as Shmuel Yosef Agnon (*A Guest for the Night*, 1938) and Umberto Eco (*Baudolino*, 2000). On the legends surrounding the Tribes of Israel, see ANDREW TOBOLOWSKY, *The Myth of the Twelve Tribes of Israel: New Identities Across Time and Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

> solemnity of the seventh day or the piety of the isolated (or general) community, the Sambatyon legend certifies that only in the messianic age will this lost population be restored to the rest of the Jewish people.[69]

Medieval legends highlight what Tobolowsky has defined as 'the dynamic combination—and cross-pollination—of traditions about the tribes with other traditions […] especially those concerning Prester John, the legendary Priest King of the East, and Alexander the Great',[70] which greatly influenced the Christian society. Both Jewish and non-Jewish authors have attempted to identify the geographical location of the river, situating it between Syria, Judea, and other lands. The popularity of this legend led many to travel to the East, as testified by the travelogs by Eldad ha-Dani (ninth century), Abraham Abulafia (thirteenth century), Moses Basola (1480–1560), David Reubeni (1490–c. 1541), and Gershon ben Eliezer ha-Levi Yiddels of Prague (seventeenth century) among others.[71]

In the seventeenth century, and especially after Menasseh ben Israel's publication of his *Esperança de Israel* ('The Hope of Israel') in 1650, the quest for the Sambatyon held great significance beyond mere curiosity as it was imbued with the messianic purpose to gather the Twelve Tribes of Israel to hasten the coming of the messiah.[72] Christians were equally captivated by the finding of the lost tribes beyond the Sambatyon 'since the restoration and conversion of all Jewry was seen almost universally as an unconditional prerequisite for the Second Coming of Christ'.[73]

The association of the Sambatyon River with the self-proclaimed messiah Sabbatai Zevi (1626–1676) needs to be understood within this context. Nathan of Gaza, the prophet of Sabbatai Zevi, wrote to Rafael Yosef predicting that 'within a year and a few months', the messiah would peacefully overthrow the Turkish Sultan, and within 'four or five years' he would journey beyond the Sambatyon River, appointing the Sultan as his interim deputy. By the seventh year (the sabbatical year 1671–1672), he would return from the Sambatyon River to Palestine riding on a celestial lion alongside his spouse Rebecca, the thirteen-year-old daughter of the

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[69] STEIN KOKIN, 'Toward the Source of the Sambatyon', 1–2.

[70] TOBOLOWSKY, *The Myth of the Twelve Tribes of Israel,* 110. On the elaboration of legends between the Middle Ages and the early modern period, see MOTI BENMELECH, 'Back to the Future: The Ten Tribes and Messianic Hopes in Jewish Society during the Early Modern Age', in *People of the Apocalypse: Eschatological Beliefs and Political Scenarios*, eds WOLFRAM BRANDES, FELICITAS SCHMIEDER, and REBEKKA VOß (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 193–209, and now REBEKKA VOß, *Sons of Saviors: The Reds Jews in Yiddish Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2023).

[71] See ALANNA E. COOPER, 'Conceptualizing Diaspora: Tales of Jewish Travelers in Search of the Lost Tribes', *AJS Review* 30, no. 1 (2006): 95–117. On Basola's and Reubeni's accounts, see MOSES BASOLA, *In Zion and Jerusalem: The Itinerary of Rabbi Moses Basola, 1521-1523,* ed. ABRAHAM DAVID, trans. DENA ORDAN (Jerusalem: C. G. Foundation Jerusalem Project Publications of the Martin (Szusz) Department of Land of Israel Studies of Bar-Ilan University, 1999); ALAN VERSKIN, *Diary of a Black Jewish Messiah: The Sixteenth Century Journey of David Reubeni through Africa, the Middle East, and Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023).

[72] See DAVID STERN, 'Mapping the Redemption: Messianic Cartography in the 1695 Amsterdam Haggadah', *Studia Rosenthaliana* 42–43 (2010–2011): 43–63 (62) and the bibliography cited there.

[73] STERN, 'Mapping the Redemption', 62.

resuscitated Moses. At this sight, all nations and kings should prostrate themselves before him.[74]

Before traveling beyond the Sambatyon, another goal of the mystical messiah, described by Nathan of Gaza, was to discover the exact location of the altar and the ashes of the red heifer to perform sacrifices, even though the Temple was not to be rebuilt.[75] This reference pertains to the ritual of the *parà adumà* ('red cow') as in Numbers 19:1–10. According to this ritual, a reddish-brown heifer without blemish, which had never been yoked or used for labour, was required for purification rituals associated with Temple service. These rituals were specifically aimed at purifying individuals who had come into contact with a dead body. The ashes of the red heifer were mixed with water and used to cleanse ritual impurity. Although there are discrepancies—such as our text mentioning buffalo instead of a cow, omitting the colour requirement, and using the ashes for a different purpose—it is clear that there is a connection between the fictional case of Hamburg and the biblical text. On the contrary, what is unprecedented and scandalous is the centrality of zoophilia, a practice forbidden and punished with death in the Hebrew Bible.[76] Unlike Queen Pasiphaë's irrational desire to engage in sexual acts with a bull, which led to the birth of the mythical Minotaur, Zebedeo's union with the buffalo is not only a rational and voluntary decision but also a 'moral' one. Driven by the sense of duty, after listening to Raffaele's instructions, the Jewish merchant decided to take up the task of taking a young buffalo, impregnating her, and following all the other commands for the success of the ritual leading to the end of the 'Jews' miserable state'.[77] In Greek and Roman mythology, numerous myths recount sexual encounters (including instances of rape) between women and both beasts and gods in disguise.[78] In medieval and Renaissance Europe and Italy, a plethora of chronicles and treatises circulated, detailing monstrous births, often attributed to the unions of women (not men) with animals and even the devil.[79]

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[74] The original Hebrew text was published in JACOB SASPORTAS, *Tzitzat Novel Tzvi*, ed. ISAIAH TISHBY (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1954), 11–12. English translations of this letter can be found in GERSHOM SCHOLEM, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah, 1626-1676*, with a new introduction by YAACOB DWECK, trans. R. J. ZWI WERBLOWSKY (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 273, and PAWEL MACIEJKO, ed., *Sabbatian Heresy: Writings on Mysticism, Messianism, and the Origins of Jewish Modernity* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2017), 6 (trans. DAVID HALPERIN).

[75] SCHOLEM, *Sabbatai Sevi,* 273.

[76] See Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 18:23; 20:15–16.

[77] '[…] avendo inteso io quanto dal detto Raffaelle veniva promesso, mi risolsi di dover io intraprendere l'impegno di ingravidare una bufola e conferito con detto Raffaelle l'animo mio […] Sentito tutto questo manifestai alli Rabini l'animo mio […]' (ASC, fols 342r; 345r).

[78] See REBECCA AMSTRONG, *Cretan Women: Pasiphae, Ariadne, and Phaedra in Latin Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 72–73.

[79] See OTTAVIA NICCOLI, *Profeti e popolo nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome: Laterza, 1987); OTTAVIA NICCOLI, '«*Menstruum quasi monstruum*»: parti mostruosi e tabù mestruale nel '500', *Quaderni storici* 15, no. 44 (1980): 402–28. On accounts of monstrous births in England, see LUCA BARATTA, *«A Marvellous and Strange Event». Racconti di nascite mostruose nell'Inghilterra della prima età moderna* (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2016). A famous case (although not linked to bestiality) involving the birth of Siamese twins to a Jewish woman from Venice is known through a pamphlet titled *Discorso sopra il significato del parto mostruoso nato di una Hebrea in Venetia, nell'anno 1575 adi XXVI di Maggio* (Venetia: Domenico Farri, 1575). On the classification and physical description and representation of monsters in the early modern period, see

These accounts reflect a cultural fascination with the supernatural and its condemnation, exploring the implications of such unions, often interpreted as stemming from women's sexual indulgence and moral transgressions. Among the most popular works of this kind in the seventeenth century is *De monstruorum causis, natura et differentiis* (first edition, 1616) by Fortunio Liceti, a physician and philosopher at the University of Padua. In this work, Liceti recounts a case that allegedly occurred in the Low Countries,[80] where an infamous man had intercourse with a female cow ('vacca'), resulting in its pregnancy. The cow gave birth to a male offspring—not a calf, but a boy ('non vitulum, sed puerum'). Witnesses present at the scene lifted the boy from the ground and entrusted him to a wet nurse. The child grew up, was baptised, and received a Christian education. As an adult, he performed works of penitence for his father's crime. Unlike Seth/Salute, who was born with buffalo feet, this child was entirely human in form. However, he exhibited certain bovine tendencies, such as an inclination to graze in meadows and chew grass.[81] Undeniably, the two plots are strikingly similar.

The name attributed to the buffalo after copulation—*Grazia* ('Grace')—may be an allusion to the Hebrew *Ḥesed* ('kindness', 'mercy' or 'grace') or *Tifereth* ('beauty'), two of the ten *sefirot*, namely the attributes of the *En Sof* (the 'Infinite One'). In this case, I tend to exclude that the anonymous author read Garzoni as, in another of his works, he translated *Ḥesed* with 'clemency, that is to say the benignity of the soul and pleasantness', far removed from any explicit kabbalistic context.[82]

On the contrary, it would not be impossible for this narrative to have been inspired by a Latin translation of Kabbalistic works produced by Christian Hebraists, which were known to circulate in Europe and Italy by the late seventeenth century.[83] While a comprehensive discussion of Kabbalistic knowledge in Italy in Christian circles exceeds the scope of this article, it is worth mentioning influential works such as the Latin anthology *Kabbala Denudata* (Sulzbach, 1677–1684) by the Hebraist Christian Knorr von Rosenroth. Despite the availability of earlier Latin translations of Kabbalistic texts, such as *Sha'are Orah* by Yosef Gikatilla (1516), and the numerous errors contained in *Kabbala Denudata*, the latter 'within a few years from its publication […] became the best and most widely read source regarding the Kabbalah for all

ULISSE ALDROVANDI, *Monstrorum historia cum parapolimenis historiae omnium animalium* (Bononiae: Typis Nicolai Tebaldini, 1642).

[80] Liceti's reference to 'in hoc ipso Belgico' could correspond to present-day Belgium, the Netherlands, or Luxembourg.

[81] The account can be found in FORTUNIO LICETI, *De monstruorum caussis, natura, et differentiis libri duo* (Patavii: Paulum Frambottum, 1634), 218–19.

[82] TOMASO GARZONI DA BAGNACAVALLO, *Il theatro de vari, e diversi cervelli mondani* (Venetia: Giacomo Antonio Somascho, 1595), 7v.

[83] The bibliography on this topic is truly extensive. In addition to FRANÇOIS SECRET, *Les Kabbalistes chrétiens de la Renaissance* (Paris: Dunod, 1964) and GERSHOM SCHOLEM, *Kabbalah* (New York: Meridian, 1978), 196–201, and many other publications by Scholem, see the recent Italian edition of GERSHOM SCHOLEM, *Cabbalisti cristiani*, ed. SAVERIO CAMPANINI (Milan: Adelphi, 2024), and also MARGHERITA MANTOVANI, *Il cabalista aristotelico. Paolo Ricci tra Rinascimento e Riforma* (Rome: Viella, 2024).

European Hebrew scholars'.[84] In several passages of this work, *Ḥesed* is rendered as a synonym for *gratia*.[85] By contrast, in the *sefirotic* tree presented in the second volume of Robert Fludd's *Utriusque Cosmi Historia*, which was also very popular, the *sefirah Tifereth* is associated with grace and beauty (*gratia*, *pulchritudo*), while *Ḥesed* is linked to clemency and kindness (*clementia*, *bonitas*).[86] That said, it also remains possible that the choice of the buffalo's name comes from an unidentified source or was purely arbitrary. For now, all hypotheses must remain open.

Without delving into debates about the Christological interpretations of the red heifer's sacrifice in medieval and early modern Christian theological writings,[87] it is evident that our author, in this instance as well, drew upon a variety of basic sources to piece together his absurd narrative, while simultaneously infusing it with his own creative flair.

Hamburg between History and Fiction

Lastly, similar to Adrianople, the choice to set the bizarre story in Hamburg may not be random but could be linked to its associations with Sabbateanism. Between 1665 and 1666, the city emerged as one of the most fervent hubs of the messianic movement, fuelled by letters from the Ottoman Empire that arrived via Venice and Livorno.[88] As testified by the extraordinary account by the businesswoman Glikl bas Judah Leib, also known as Glückel of Hameln (c. 1646–1724), after receiving the news, 'the young Portuguese men would don their best clothes with a wide sash of green silk—the costume of Shabtai Tzvi. In this way they all went to their synagogue *with timbrel and dance* as during *the rejoicing of Beit Ha-Sho'eva* and read the letters aloud'.[89] While prayers for Sabbatai Zevi were introduced in the Hamburg synagogue, Jacob Sasportas,

[84] CHRISTOPH SCHULTE, *Zimzum: God and the Origin of the World*, trans. COREY TWITCHELL (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2023), 107. On the importance of this work, see also WILHELM SCHMIDT-BIGGEMANN, *Philosophia Perennis: Historical Outlines of Western Spirituality in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004), 193–94.

[85] FREIHERR CHRISTIAN KNORR VON ROSENROTH, *Kabbala denudata seu Doctrina Hebraeorum transcendentalis et metaphysica* (Sulzbaci: Abrahami Lichtenthaleri, 1677), 91, 178, 357. In his exposition of the Kabbalah in his *Oedipus Ægyptiacus*, the Jesuit scholar and polymath Athanasius Kircher also associated *Ḥesed* (or *Gedulah*, 'greatness') with *gratia*; see ATHANASIUS KIRCHER, *Oedipus Ægyptiacus*, 3 vols, vol. 2 (Romae: Vitalis Mascardi, 1653), 294.

[86] See the *Arboris sephirotica descriptio* in ROBERT FLUDD, *Utriusque Cosmi* […] *Historia*, 2 vols, vol. 2, *Tractatus Secundus, De praeternaturali utriusque mundi historia* (Francofurti: Erasmus Kempfferi, Joan. Theodori de Bry, 1621), 157. See also WILHELM SCHMIDT-BIGGEMANN, 'Robert Fludd's Kabbalistic Cosmo', trans. GEOFF DUMBRECK and DOUGLAS HEDLEY, in *Platonism at the Origins of Modernity: Studies on Platonism and Early Modern Philosophy*, eds DOUGLAS HEDLEY and SARAH HUTTON (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 75–92.

[87] In addition to being regarded as a messianic animal in Jewish eschatology, late antique and medieval exegesis offered typological interpretations of the red heifer's role in purification, drawing parallels to Jesus's role in spiritual purification and redemption through his sacrifice.

[88] On the spread of news regarding Sabbatai Zevi in Hamburg, see MICHAEL STUDEMUND-HALÉVY, 'What Happened in Izmir Was Soon the Talk of Hamburg: Shabbetai Ṣevi in Contemporary German Press Reports', *El Prezente* 10 (2016): 155–72. On the impact of Sabbateanism in Hamburg in those years, see also MARTINS, *The Portuguese Jews of Hamburg,* 53–54.

[89] GLIKL OF HAMELN, *Memoirs, 1691-1719*, ed. CHAVA TURNIANSKY, trans. SARA FELDMAN (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2019), 104.

rabbi of Hamburg from 1666 to 1673, vehemently criticised the false messiah, who converted to Islam in 1666.[90] If it is true that 'as soon as the first news of his apostasy reached Amsterdam and Hamburg (by November of the same year at the latest), eschatological hopes sank almost instantly, giving rise to a spiritual and religious crisis of unprecedented proportions',[91] messianic expectations and tensions in the Hanseatic city persisted despite widespread condemnation and scepticism, as evidenced nearly a century later in the Emden-Eybeschütz controversy.[92]

The fervour surrounding Sabbatai Zevi intensified anti-Jewish sentiments among the local Christian population, leading to the implementation of heightened security measures in the main streets where the Portuguese community resided.[93]

If we look at the historical reality of Hamburg in 1687, when the ritual homicide should have taken place, two important sources—the *Dinstagishe un Fraytagishe Kuranten*, the world's oldest Yiddish newspaper, and the outstanding memoir in Yiddish by Glikl of Hameln—testify to the climate of social unrest in Hamburg during the summer that year. Several issues of the *Kuranten* cover the killing of a High German Jew in Altona in July 1687 and the imprisonment of the murderer and his wife and maid until he was sentenced to be broken on the wheel alive in September of the same year.[94] Details of this murder and another one that happened in 1684, perpetrated by the same murderer, are revealed in great detail by Glikl, who lived in Hamburg during those years.[95] The murders of these two Jews (who were both money changers) were, according to Glikl, tied to economic issues and did not have anything to share with messianic expectations, Kabbalah, or any other religious reason. Considering the context in

[90] On this figure, see YAACOB DWECK, *Dissident Rabbi: The Life of Jacob Sasportas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019). On Sabbateanism in Hamburg, see MICHAEL STUDEMUND-HALÉVY, *Sabbatai Zwi. Ein Messias für Hamburg* (Leipzig – Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich – Centrum Judaicum, 2022); MARTINS, *The Portuguese Jews of Hamburg*, 53–56.

[91] MARTINS, *The Portuguese Jews of Hamburg*, 56.

[92] This controversy refers to the quarrel between Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697–1776) and Jonathan Eybeschütz (1690–1764), chief rabbi of the communities of Altona, Hamburg, and Wandsbek. Emden accused the latter of distributing Sabbatean amulets and being a Sabbatean believer himself. See MACIEJKO, ed., *Sabbatian Heresy*; SHNAYER Z. LEIMAN, 'When a Rabbi is Accused of Heresy: The Stance of Rabbi Jacob Joshua Falk in the Emden-Eibeschuetz Controversy', in *Rabbinic Culture and Its Critics: Jewish Authority, Dissent, and Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Times*, eds DANIEL FRANK and MATT D. GOLDISH (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008), 435–56.

[93] See MARTINS, *The Portuguese Jews of Hamburg*, 54.

[94] See HILDE PACH, "In Hamburg a High German Jew Was Murdered': The Representation of Foreign Jews in the *Dinstagishe un Fraytagishe Kuranten* (Amsterdam, 1686-1687)', in *The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History,* ed. YOSEF KAPLAN (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 213–23.

[95] GLIKL OF HAMELN, *Memoirs, 1691-1719*, 226–35. The assassinated man was a money changer named Aaron ben Moshe, while the murderer was the son of a renowned innkeeper in Hamburg. According to Glikl's account, thanks to the clever intervention of a woman named Rivka (Rabbi Lipman's wife), the maid of the murderer confessed the killing of Aaron ben Moshe by her master. The Jew's body was eventually found under the threshold of the tavern and transferred to be buried in Altona. Glikl informs us that the Christian perpetrator eventually confessed to have killed another Jewish money changer three years earlier, that is to say Abraham Metz (the husband of Glikl's cousin, Sarah), in a cheese room at his father's tavern and to have placed his corpse in a pit. Glikl confirms that the murderer was sentenced to death by being broken on the wheel, while his wife and maidservant were pardoned and exiled from Hamburg.

which these murders occurred, it is important to note that the economic conditions of Ashkenazic Jews in Hamburg were particularly dire, especially in contrast to the Sephardic community, and were further exacerbated by the Thirty Years' War.[96]

The climate of fear observed by Glikl should also be emphasised: 'the lives of all Jews were in danger due to the great hatred that had been roused. In short, we were in great danger on the day the murderer was sentenced'.[97] The peril is substantiated by a decree issued by the Hamburg Senate, dated 19 September 1687. This order explicitly warned against any harm to Jews or their property on the day of the murderer's execution, emphasising that violators would face severe punishment.[98]

If we accept that the reference to Hamburg is not entirely a product of the author's imagination, it seems, however, unlikely that he learned of this event through the *Kuranten* or Glikl's *Zikhroynes* ('Memoirs'), both in Yiddish, or local decrees. Therefore, he must have consulted other sources—yet to be identified—that were circulating in Italy toward the end of the seventeenth century. These could include chronicles, newsletters, gazettes, and pamphlets.[99] Among German chronicles detailing the Hamburg murders, one can find the twelfth volume of Matthaeus Merian's *Theatri Europaei Continuati* (Frankfurt am Main, 1691) and the *Historisches Labyrinth der Zeit* by Heinrich Anselm von Ziegler und Kliphausen (Leipzig, 1700). However, at this stage, nothing is known regarding their circulation in Italy or their translation into Italian or Latin.

Some Conclusions and Future Perspectives

Although no printed edition of the text is known to have circulated, the bizarre case presented here should be read and contextualised within the popular genre of ephemeral literature, which gained particular success following the invention of printing. This genre often intersected with contemporary societal issues, including the rise of anti-Jewish sentiments.[100] The early modern rise of popular pamphlets about monstrosities were employed for a multitude of purposes: 'prognostications, satire, political and religious propaganda and, above all, business, which always rely on the attraction of the horrible'.[101] The content for these pamphlets was often drawn from the more

[96] See KAPLAN, *An Alternative Path to Modernity*, 64 and other places there.
[97] KAPLAN, *An Alternative Path to Modernity*, 234–35.
[98] On this decree preserved in the Staatsarchiv Hamburg, see MAX G. GRUNWALD, *Hamburgs deutsche Juden bis zur Auflösung der Dreigemeinden 1811* (Hamburg: Janssen, 1904), 17; PETER FREIMARK, 'Zum Verhältnis von Juden und Christen in Altona im 17./18. Jahrhundert', *Theokratia. Jahrbuch des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum* 2 (1970–1972): 255–58.
[99] See MATTHAEUS MERIAN, *Theatri Europaei Continuati*, vol. 12 (Frankfurt am Main: Johann Görlin, 1691), 987–88; HEINRICH ANSELM VON ZIEGLER UND KLIPHAUSEN, *Historisches Labyrinth der Zeit* (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Gleditsch, 1700), 1214. Manuscript news from Hamburg are extant in several manuscripts preserved at the Vatican Apostolic Library; see, for instance, Urb.lat.1114.pt.3 for the year 1627, Barb.lat.9829 for 1640, Bar.lat.9833 for 1641, and Urb.lat.1727 for 1679–1680. So far, I have not been able to retrieve similar sources for the year 1687.
[100] See, for instance, the circulation of newssheets in the Iberian Peninsula as detailed in FRANÇOIS SOYER, *Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories in the Early Modern Iberian World: Narratives of Fear and Hatred* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).
[101] WITTKOWER, 'Marvels of the East: A Study in the History of Monsters', 193.

refined realms of literature and adapted to fit the sensational style demanded by the audience.

Despite incorporating two central elements of early modern anti-Jewish literature—namely the blood accusation and the degradation of Jews to animals—the anonymous author of the *Case of the Jew Who Married a Buffalo* offers a unique reinterpretation of these themes. In this narrative, the blood ritual ordered by the kabbalist is entirely unrelated to the preparation of *matzah* (unleavened bread) for Pesach. Additionally, the dehumanisation of Jewish people through animal comparison bypasses the usual association with dogs or pigs, opting instead for a more unusual and grotesque juxtaposition.[102]

With the exception of the mention of the *Nimrezeth* curse, no other Hebrew words appear in the text. This absence highlights the author's superficial understanding of the language—or more accurately, their complete lack of familiarity with it. Likewise, the author's purported knowledge of Kabbalah and Sabbateanism are entirely fictional. Kabbalistic elements and descriptions of alleged rituals do not stem from Jewish sources but likely from Italian popular literature, such as the works of Tomaso Garzoni, and possibly from the writings of Christian Hebraists in Latin. In contrast, Sabbateanism is invoked in veiled and incorrect references only (i.e. the crossing of the Sambatyon/Jordan River, the River/King Sambatyon, the red heifer/buffalo). In this case as well, the anonymous author most likely drew inspiration for these elements from an Italian milieu. In Italy, home to significant Sabbatean hubs, the circulation of Sabbatai Zevi's prophecies and news of his apostasy in 1666 reached Christian audiences, who often 'used the bizarre story of Sabbatai to arouse the public's curiosity and, apparently, to try to encourage Jews to convert to Christianity'.[103] Indeed, as per the famous Venice convert Giulio Morosini (born Samuel ben David Naḥmias), 'many

[102] On animal representations and associations with the Jews in the early modern period, see KENNETH R. STOW, *Jewish Dogs: An Image and Its Interpreters* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006) and MARTINA MAMPIERI, 'When the Rabbi's Soul Entered a Pig: Melchiorre Palontrotti and His *Giudiata* Against the Jews of Rome', *Jewish History* 33, no. 3–4 (2020): 351–75 and the bibliography cited there. On the association between Jews and pigs in the *longue durée*, see JORDAN D. ROSENBLUM, *Forbidden: A 3,000 Year History of Jews and the Pig* (New York: New York University Press, 2024).

[103] STEFANO VILLANI, 'Between Information and Proselytism: Seventeenth-century Italian Texts on Sabbatai Zevi, their Various Editions and their Circulation, in Print and Manuscript', *DAAT: A Journal of Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah* 82 (2016): LXXXVII-CIII (LXXXVIII). A *Lettera mandata da Costantinopoli a Roma intorno al nuovo Messia degli Ebrei* ('Letter sent from Constantinople to Rome about the new Messiah of the Jews') was published in three editions in 1667 and reprinted in 1694 and 1700. On the Sabbatean movement in Italy, see ISAIAH SONNE, 'On the History of Sabbateanism in Italy' [Hebrew], in *Sefer ha-Yovel Alexander Marx: A Tribute to Professor Alexander Marx*, ed. DAVID FRANKEL (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1943), 89–103; ISAIAH SONNE, 'New Material on Sabbatai Zevi from a Notebook of R. Abraham Rovigo' [Hebrew], *Sefunot* 3–4 (1960): 41–69; ISAIAH SONNE, 'Visitors to the House of R. Abraham Rovigo' [Hebrew], *Sefunot* 5 (1961): 275–95; MATT D. GOLDISH, *The Sabbatean Prophets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); FRANCESCA BREGOLI, 'The Jews of Italy (1650-1815)', in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, 8 vols, vol. 7, eds JONATHAN KARP and ADAM SUTCLIFFE (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 864–93 (878–79) and the doctoral thesis by RACHELE JESURUM, *Le développement du mouvement sabbatianiste en Italie: Binyamin ben El'azar Coen Vitale da Reggio et son 'Et ha-zamir (*עת הזמיר*, Il tempo del canto)* (PhD diss., Università di Bologna – Institut National de Langues et Civilisations Orientales [INALCO], 2021).

individual converts from Judaism cited the messianic movement of Sabbatai Zevi as influential in their decision to convert to Christianity or to remain converted if they had earlier moments of misgiving'.[104] As discussed above, the choice of Hamburg as setting for the blood libel remains enigmatic. However, it is likely not coincidental, given the significance of Sabbateanism, Jewish intracommunal tensions, conflicts between Jews and Christians, and the broader social unrest of the seventeenth century.

The extension of the research in other libraries and archives will hopefully bring to the surface more manuscript specimens of this composition. An edition of the text that takes note of variants and additions may shed light on the evolution and dissemination of the narrative, providing valuable insights into its historical and cultural context. Additionally, a codicological and palaeographical examination of the existing specimens within miscellaneous volumes can offer details on the ownership, readership, and the circulation of the surviving manuscript copies. Together, these approaches will further enhance our understanding of the text significance and its place in literary history.

[104] ELISHEVA CARLEBACH, 'The Last Deception: Failed Messiahs and Jewish Conversion in Early Modern German Lands', in *Millenarism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture*, 4 vols, vol. 1, *Jewish Messiahs in the Early Modern World*, ed. MATT D. GOLDISH and RICHARD H. POPKIN (Dordrecht: Springer, 2001), 125–38 (133). The mockery and disdain prevalent in the polemical literature frequently authored by neophytes during this period offer valuable insights into Sabbateanism and the broader messianic tensions in early modern Italy. Among these works, see for instance, GIULIO MOROSINI, *Derekh emunah. Via delle fede mostrata a'gli ebrei* (Roma: nella Stamparia della Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide, 1683); LODOVICO MARRACCI, *L'ebreo preso per le buone overo discorsi familiari et amichevoli fatti con i Rabbini di Roma intorno al Messia* (Roma: eredi del Corbelletti, 1701); LUIGI MARIA BENETELLI, *Le saette di Gionata scagliate à favor degli Ebrei* (Venezia: Antonio Bortoli, 1703); LORENZO FILIPPO VIRGULTI, *La vera idea del Messia* (Roma: Gio. Battista de Caporali, 1730).

Kant's Racist Anthropology in Context: Ethnographic Archives of the German Enlightenment

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> Moreover, the attached principles of a moral characterisation of the different human races will serve to satisfy the taste of those who do not particularly pay attention to the physical aspects.
>
> IMMANUEL KANT, Letter to Johann Jacob Engel, 1779

Introduction

Historical context matters. Our judgments about the past, what the past means for a present context, should be informed by how we interpret the past in its own. Applied to Kant's racism,[1] given the state of the academy and the world, this banal proposition

[1] By 'racism', I mean judging a socio-political group's internal qualities (e.g., intelligence or morality) based on observed or imagined physical features (attributed to climate or biology; mainly skin tone, in Kant's case). Add the principle of hierarchy, and racism is simply the biological idiom for Kant's most original project as anthropologist: 'characterisation' (*Charakteristik*) of humanity, by 'cognising the interior of the human being from the exterior'. This definition of 'characterisation' reflects what Kant does in that part of his Anthropology course/textbook, even if he may not have added that section heading: see REINHARD BRANDT, *Kritischer Kommentar zu Kants Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht (1798)* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1999), 125. Kant's racism, in this sense of 'characterisation', supports a raciology or 'racist theory' per ALBERT MEMMI, *Racism*, transl. STEVE MARTINOT, repr. (1994, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000): a set of 'pure' biological types that are hierarchical and (therefore) should not mix. As conceded even by a relatively sympathetic view of Kant on race (JON M. MIKKELSEN, 'Introduction', in *Kant and the Concept of Race: Late Eighteenth-Century Writings*, ed. JON M. MIKKELSEN, Albany: SUNY Press, 2013, 1–40, at 27), through the 1780s, Kant advanced a racist theory in Memmi's precise sense: 'four "base" races in response to differing climatic conditions […] reliance on skin colour as the primary "marker" […] the occasional [*sic*!] arrogant racial slur, and a fear of "racial mixing"'. (His views in the 1790s are disputed; see note 4.) On race mixing, see MARK LARRIMORE, 'Antinomies of Race: Diversity and Destiny in Kant', *Patterns of Prejudice* 42, no. 4–5 (2008): 341–63 (349–50, 359–61); JORIS VAN GORKOM, 'Immanuel Kant on Race Mixing: The Gypsies, the Black Portuguese, and the Jews on Saint Thomas', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 81, no. 3 (2020): 407–27. For a different definition of racism and therefore a different critique, see WULF D. HUND, '"It must come from Europe": The Racisms of Immanuel Kant', in *Racisms Made in Germany*, eds WULF D. HUND, CHRISTIAN

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becomes more interesting. Whereas his racism's very existence was long suppressed for various reasons,[2] now that it is not,[3] most of the work on the issues that it raises has been done by philosophers or historians of philosophy. Some have traced the development of Kant's racial theory over time,[4] or in relation to other Enlightenment philosophers;

KOLLER, and MOSCHE ZIMMERMANN (Vienna: Lit, 2011), 69–98. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[2] This neglect is partly because Kant's anthropology was long seen as marginal and tangential in his philosophy (at least until Foucault's 1964 *thèse complémentaire* connecting it to his *Critiques*), and partly because of its sources. He only published one late book on anthropology, which—some argue, because his views evolved (see note 4), or because this was a textbook which defined race in passing as a merely physical category——trumpets his racism less loudly than other sources: the course announcement for his anthropology lectures and student notes on them; his fragmentary *Reflexionen*; and various essays and lectures on racial theory, or other areas where he invoked race (aesthetics; geography; politics; and his 1785 'The Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy'.) On how to locate racial anthropology within Kant's philosophical system, see JENNIFER MENSCH, 'Caught Between Character and Race: 'Temperament' in Kant's Lectures on Anthropology', *Australian Feminist Law Journal* 43, no. 1 (2007): 124–44; WERNER STARK, 'Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions about Kant's Lectures on Anthropology', in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, eds BRIAN JACOBS and PATRICK KAIN (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 15–37 (21–26); WERNER STARK, 'Historical and Philological References on the Question of a Possible Hierarchy of Human "Races," "Peoples," or "Populations" in Immanuel Kant–A Supplement', transl. OLAF REINHARDT, in *Reading Kant's Geography*, eds STUART ELDEN and EDUARDO MENDIETA (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 87–102 (95–97).

[3] TSENAY SEREQUEBERHAN, 'Eurocentrism in Philosophy: The Case of Immanuel Kant', *Philosophical Forum* 27, no. 4 (1996): 333–56; EMMANUEL CHUKWUDI EZE, 'The Color of Reason: The Idea of "Race" in Kant's Anthropology', in EMMANUEL CHUKWUDI EZE, *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reader* (London: Blackwell, 1997), 103–33; ROBERT BERNASCONI, 'Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant's Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race', in *Race*, ed. ROBERT BERNASCONI (London: Blackwell, 2001), 11–36; BERNASCONI, 'Kant as an Unfamiliar Source of Racism', in *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays*, eds JULIE WARD and TOMMY L. LOTT (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 1450–66; BERNASCONI, 'True Colors: Kant's Distinction Between Nature and Artifice in Context', in *Klopffechtereien – Missverständnisse – Widersprüche? Methodische und methodologische Perspektiven auf die Kant-Forster Kontroverse*, eds RAINER GODEL and GIDEON STIENING (Munich: Funk, 2012), 191–207; RAPHAËL LAGIER, *Les races humaines selon Kant* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004); CHARLES W. MILLS, 'Kant and Race, *Redux*', *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 35, no. 1–2 (2014): 125–57 (on his important 2005 essay, 'Kant's Untermenschen'); FRED MOTEN, 'Black Kant (pronounced Chant): A Theorizing Lecture at the Kelly Writers House, February 27, 2007', PennSound, https://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Moten.php#2-27-07, accessed 15 September 2024; MIKKELSEN, 'Introduction'; THOMAS E. HILL JR. and BERNARD BOXILL, 'Kant and Race', in *Race and Racism*, ed. BERNARD BOXILL (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 448–71; BOXILL, 'Kantian Racism and Kantian Teleology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race*, ed. NAOMI ZACK (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 44–53; JIMMY YAB, *Kant and the Politics of Racism: Towards Kant's Racialized Form of Cosmopolitan Right* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); HUAPING LU-ADLER, *Kant, Race, and Racism: Views from Somewhere* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023). Beyond the academy, see ROBIN F. C. SCHMAL, 'Was Kant a Racist? The Public Discussion on Germany's Belated Intellectual Decolonization', in *Places in the Sun: Post-Colonial Dialogues in Europe and Beyond*, eds VALENTIN LUNTUMBUE et al. (Brussels: Institute for a Greater Europe, 2021), 37–47, with further sources and discussion in LU-ADLER, *Kant, Race, and Racism*, 1–3.

[4] SANKAR MUTHU, *Enlightenment Against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 181–84; PAULINE KLEINGELD, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race', *Philosophical Quarterly* 57, no. 229 (2007): 573–92, followed by ALEXEY ZHAVORONKOV and ALEXEY SALIKOV, 'The Concept of Race in Kant's Lectures on Anthropology', *Con-Textos Kantianos* 7 (2018): 275–92; KLEINGELD, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Colonialism', in *Kant and Colonialism*, eds KATRIN FLIKSCHUH and LEA YPI (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 43–67; OLIVER EBERL, 'Kant on Race and Barbarism: Towards a More Complex View on

anthropologists; geographers; and biologists.[5] Others have debated how Kant's racist views bear upon the rest of his system, focusing on their tensions with his critical, moral, and political principles; his cosmopolitanism; and other putatively universalist positions.[6] In general, however, both lines of work return to Kant himself—whether he is framed broadly or narrowly, diachronically or synchronically—as the best context in which to interpret Kant's views. To what extent, these studies ask, were Kant's racism, and other

Racism and Anti-Colonialism in Kant', *Kantian Review* 24, no. 3 (2019): 385–423. Contrast ROBERT BERNASCONI, 'Kant's Third Thoughts on Race', in *Reading Kant's Geography*, eds ELDEN and MENDIETA, 291–318; BERNASCONI, 'The Place of Race in Kant's *Physical Geography* and in the Writings of the 1790s', in *Rethinking Kant*, ed. PABLO MUCHNIK, 5 vols, vol. 2 (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), 274–90; BERNASCONI, 'Heredity and Hybridity in the Natural History of Kant, Girtanner, and Schelling during the 1790s', in *Reproduction, Race, and Gender in Philosophy and the Early Life Sciences*, ed. SUSANNE LETTOW (Albany: SUNY Press, 2014), 237–58; VAN GORKOM, 'Kant on Race Mixing'. See further KLEINGELD, 'On Dealing with Kant's Sexism and Racism', *SGIR Review* 2, no. 2 (2019): 3–22.

[5] BERNASCONI, 'Kant and Blumenbach's Polyps: A Neglected Chapter in the History of the Concept of Race', in *The German Invention of Race*, eds SARA EIGEN and MARK LARRIMORE (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), 73–90; BERNASCONI, 'Silencing the Hottentots: Kant's Pre-Racial Encounter with the Hottentots and its Impact on Buffon, Kant, and Rousseau', *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 35, no. 1–2 (2014): 101–24 ; JORIS VAN GORKOM, 'Skin Color and Phlogiston: Immanuel Kant's Racism in Context', *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 42, no. 16 (2020): 1–22; VAN GORKOM, 'The Reddish, Iron-Rust Color of the Native Americans: Immanuel Kant's Racism in Context', *Con-Textos Kantianos* 9 (2019): 154–77; JOHN H. ZAMMITO, 'Policing Polygeneticism in Germany, 1775: (Kames,) Kant and Blumenbach', in *German Invention of Race*, eds EIGEN and LARRIMORE, 35–54; SUSAN MELD SHELL, *The Embodiment of Reason: Kant on Spirit, Generation, and Community* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996); JENNIFER MENSCH, 'Kant and the Skull Collectors: German Anthropology from Blumenbach to Kant', in *Kant and His German Contemporaries*, eds COREY W. DYCK and FALK WUNDERLICH (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 192–210; MENSCH, *Kant's Organicism: Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013); MONIKA FIRLA, 'Philosophie und Ethnographie: Kants Verhältnis zu Kultur und Geschichte Afrikas', in *XXV. Deutscher Orientalistentag*, ed. CORNELIA WUNSCH (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1994), 432–42; FIRLA, 'Kants Bild von den Khoi-Khoin (Südafrika)', *Tribus* 43 (1994): 60–94; FIRLA, 'Kants Thesen vom "Nationalcharakter" der Afrikaner, seine Quellen und der nicht vorhandene "Zeitgeist"', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Wissenschaft und Kunst* 3 (1997): 7–17.

[6] MONIKA FIRLA, *Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von Anthropologie und Moralphilosophie bei Kant* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1981); ALEX SUTTER, 'Kant und die 'Wilden': zum impliziten Rassismus in der Kantischen Geschichtsphilosophie', *Prima Philosophia* 2 (1989): 241–65; KURT RÖTTGERS, 'Kants Zigeuner', *Kant-Studien* 88, no. 1 (1997): 60–86; CATHERINE WILSON, 'Savagery and the Supersensible: Kant's Universalism in Historical Context', *History of European Ideas* 24, no. 4–5 (1998): 315–30; TODD HEDRICK, 'Race, Difference, and Anthropology in Kant's Cosmopolitanism', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46, no. 2 (2008): 245–68; PAULINE KLEINGELD, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism: The Philosophical Idea of World Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 92–123; BERNASCONI, 'Kant and the Distinction between Nature and Culture: Its Role in Recent Defenses of His Cosmopolitanism', *Eco-Ethica* 3 (2014): 23–38; J. K. GANI, 'The Erasure of Race: Cosmopolitanism and the Illusion of Kantian Hospitality', *Millennium* 45, no. 3 (2017): 425–46; LUCY ALLAIS, 'Kant's Racism', *Philosophical Papers* 45, no. 1–2 (2016): 1–36; ELVIRA BASEVICH, 'Reckoning with Kant on Race', *Philosophical Forum* 51, no. 3 (2020): 221–45; CHARLES W. MILLS, 'Black Radical Kantianism', *Res Philosophica* 95, no. 1 (2018): 1–33; LU-ADLER, *Kant, Race, and Racism*, 43–54.

-isms,[7] contagious with respect to his philosophy? Can one excise his texts on race;[8] passages of his anthropology and geography; some lecture transcripts of his students, *Reflexionen*,[9] other ephemera, etc., in order to 'save' the later Kant of the *Groundwork*, the critiques, and other monuments of the Western canon?[10] Or can one, somehow, still make use of Kant's lectures and writings on anthropology, without lapsing into apologetics for the racism that they disproportionately contain?[11] Does Kant's racism vitiate his contributions in those areas? His entire corpus? As our students might ask: 'Is Kant cancelled?'[12]

Many philosophers drive this line of questioning to one or another equally ahistorical end. The irate Scylla insists that Kant's racism was a durable aspect of his thought with far-reaching connections to other aspects that cannot be 'purified' by quarantining it from the rest of his corpus. The pious Charybdis plumbs details for exculpatory historical context: 'only a product of his time' arguments, or delicate reconstructions of Kant's thought which portray him as distancing himself from his racism (without, however, disavowing it nor stopping the republication of his racist texts). I see stronger arguments on the side of Scylla. But I venture that, if we prioritise the contemporary and local cultural context where Kant acquired and expressed his racism, rather

[7] I will examine the convergence of sexism and racism, showing that it would be artificial to divide them too neatly, as their functions in his discourse on human nature intersect. That said, each bias also merits study in its own right, as it illuminates a particular set of his assumptions. For a prescient intersectional critique, see DAVID L. CLARK, 'Kant's Aliens: The *Anthropology* and its Others', *CR: The New Centennial Review* 1, no. 2 (2001): 201–80.

[8] Collected and translated in MIKKELSEN, *Kant and the Concept of Race*.

[9] Particularly #1520, where Kant offers a typology of racial characters, insisting that '[Whites] are the only ones who continuously make progress in their entirety' and that 'all will be exterminated […], except for the Whites' (KANT, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. ROYAL PRUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, 29 vols, vol. 15, *Anthropologie*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1928, 878). See MARK LARRIMORE, 'Sublime Waste: Kant on the Destiny of the "Races"', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 29, suppl. 1 (1999): 99–125 (114–15, 118–21). (Compare the critical edition of Kant's anthropology lectures, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 25, *Vorlesungen uber Anthropologie*, eds REINHART BRANDT and WERNER STARK, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997, 840.)

[10] For key distillations of these issues, see BERNASCONI, 'Will the Real Kant Please Stand Up?', *Radical Philosophy* 117 (2003): 13–22; BERNASCONI, 'Kant's Third Thoughts on Race'.

[11] ROBERT B. LOUDEN, *Kant's Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 98–103, is an instructive example of the problems which can arise from acknowledging Kant's racism while trying to partition it from his philosophy. On one hand, it is impossible for Kant to be racist (as defined at note 1 above), because he defined race only by skin colour (98). On the other, he did not, and he clearly was racist (98–103.) On one hand, Kant's racial theory is 'fairly tame' (98), or even anti-racist, because it is mono- and not poly-genetic. On the other, what Kant in fact said about race is 'not nearly as tame'. This self-contradiction is not itself explained.

[12] This study is a companion piece to a more constructive and comparative use of Kant's anthropology. On how I struggled with his racism by publishing two antagonistic essays, and reflecting their antagonism in rabbinic sources, see JAMES ADAM REDFIELD, 'Pragmatic Points of View: Kant and the Rabbis, Together Again', in *Talmud /and/ Philosophy*, eds SERGEY DOLGOPOLSKI and JAMES ADAM REDFIELD (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2024), 112–54 (115–17). For feedback on these papers, I would like to thank Bruce Rosenstock (OBM); respondent Naveed Mansoori and other colleagues in the 'Incapacitations' working group at Princeton (2022–2023); and my colleagues in the weekly seminar of the Cornell Society for the Humanities (2019–2020).

than Kant himself, we can avoid this dichotomy altogether. Rather than the philosophy and legacy of Immanuel Kant, here I situate his racism among competing ethnographic archives in the German Enlightenment; archives which were circulating in the twenty-four years when Kant lectured on anthropology, culminating in his only book on the subject: *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798). In this context, we will see that Kant's views on human nature and human difference were indeed products of his time and place. Yet this focus on context rather than on Kant makes Kant's personal racism more audible, not less, by showing why and how he chose to amplify it.[13] Contextualising Kant's racism historically reveals its sources; its rhetoric; and how it was received.[14] Finally, this will point to new intersections between his racism and his sexism that arose in the same context: lectures where he strove to enliven his 'popular' brand of anthropology with ethnographic titbits.

Building on recent work by Zammito and Mensch;[15] earlier under-cited work by Firla;[16] and going beyond apt but passing remarks that Kant's most virulent racism was self-consciously *un*scientific, directed to a 'popular' student-auditor with 'no interest in the physical aspects' to which he theoretically restricted the *scientific* concept of race,[17] here, I aim to recontextualise Kant's racism by emphasising that, especially in his anthropology lectures, he was acting not as a scientist, nor only as a natural philosopher, but as a provincial Prussian pedagogue. Addressing an audience with limited and rather coarse tastes, his anthropology spawned an *ad hoc* catalogue of human types, and was born from an *ad hoc* archive: a vast cabinet of curiosities that is still gathering dust in studies of his thought.

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[13] Contra, e.g., MARIE RISCHMÜLLER, 'Einleitung', in KANT, *Bemerkungen in den »Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen«*, ed. RISCHMÜLLER (1764; Hamburg: Meiner, 1991), xv. See FIRLA, 'Kants Thesen', 16–17 note 109.

[14] As opposed to the approach of, e.g., THOMAS MCCARTHY, *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 26, 47 note 15, 49, and 49 note 20, who posits that Kant's racial theory does not differ 'in substance' between published and unpublished sources, even if most of the 'details' are in the latter. Similarly, McCarthy imagines a dichotomy between 'popular' sources for Kant's 'racist commonplaces', which Kant 'largely repeated', and their 'reflection' in his racial theory. I emphasise that Kant himself presented his anthropology *as* a 'popular philosophy': both emerging from, and directed to, the same social context as its sources.

[15] JOHN H. ZAMMITO, 'What a Young Man Needs for his Venture into the World: The Function and Evolution of the 'Characteristics'', in *Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide*, ed. ALIX COHEN (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 230–48; JOHN H. ZAMMITO, 'The Forster-Kant Controversy: The Provocations of Interdisciplinarity', in *Klopffechtereien*, eds GODEL and STIENING, 225–43; MENSCH, *Kant's Organicism*; MENSCH, 'Between Character and Race'; MENSCH, 'Kant and the Skull Collectors'. On race in the biological anthropologies of Kant, Herder, and Blumenbach, see JUSTIN E. H. SMITH, *Nature, Human Nature, and Human Difference: Race in Early Modern Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 231–63.

[16] FIRLA, 'Philosophie und Ethnographie'; FIRLA, 'Kants Bild'; FIRLA, 'Kants Thesen'.

[17] KLEINGELD, 'Kant's Second Thoughts', and see notes 4, 13. STARK, 'Historical and Philological References', 96, tries to refrain from asserting whether Kant envisioned a racial hierarchy, but acknowledges that, if he did, it would be in his section on *Charakteristik*. This section, in turn, was based on a section of a 1764 essay advertising his lectures on aesthetics, where he similarly courted 'popular' appeal with racist digressions; see ALLAIS, 'Kant's Racism', 3 note 5.

Gleaning fragments of data from eclectic sources about the world, yet speaking to a small clique of *kleinbürgerliche* Königsberg bachelors, Kant was not only trying to fit his new philosophy of human nature into his evolving philosophical system. He was also admonishing specific auditors to inhabit a specific self-consciousness; to find their own page in his unfolding textbook. In this process of constructing a rhetorical subject for his audience—the 'we' behind the Others of Kant's anthropology—his myriad sources reflect both the presence of competing German ethnographic archives, and a series of frustrated efforts, among both Kant and his contemporaries, to subsume new ethnographic data under abstract anthropological categories.[18]

I argue that Kant's racism arises at the shakiest junction points between those contradictory aspects of his project. In part, his racism is a symptom of frustration that his ethnographic archive did not fit neatly into his anthropology's abstract classification of humanity. Racist arguments try vainly to solder the two aspects together by subordinating empirical variation to improvised rules, imposing hierarchies which harmonise the data with his culture's prejudices. The same can be said for Kant's answers to questions that were in the air at the time: what might an explosion of new evidence for human variation, such as Cook's encounters with Tahitians, mean for a Prussian gentleman? Did the 'discovery' of alien norms—which Kant quoted second- or third-hand, via not-unbiased Europeans—have any bearing on the sort of man that the auditor of Kant's anthropology should 'make of himself'? What role did the varieties of human characters have to play in teaching this lesson? Even as Kant flirted with the desire for new ethnographic archives to play a role in his pedagogy, he resisted them, mingling real curiosity about non-European Others with a racism that doth protest too much; a rhetorical tool of self-containment. In order to open up fresh critiques of that rhetoric and its effects, I first contrast his contemporaries' uses of the ethnographic archive to theorise human difference. I then critique how Kant himself did so, via both close and intertextual readings of how he changed his most prominent ethnographic source in the *Anthropology* textbook. I end with a glance at a local genealogy of some of his views on human difference (race and

[18] Since I drafted this article in full (Fall 2019) only to be distracted by a global pandemic and other priorities, one essential study along these lines has appeared that I see as congruent with my thesis: HUAPING LU-ADLER, 'Kant's Use of Travel Reports in Theorizing about Race — A Case Study of How Testimony Features in Natural Philosophy', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 91 (2022):10–19. (See also SALLY HATCH GRAY, 'On Specialization and the Dead Eye: Kant's Race Theory and the Problem of Perception Illustrated in Kleist's 'Betrothal in Santo Domingo", in *Race Theory and Literature: Dissemination, Criticism, Intersections*, eds PAULINE MORET-JANKUS and ADAM J. TOTH, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2019, 95–113.) LU-ADLER shows that Kant was so committed to a principled philosophical categorisation (racial difference = skin-colour) that it limited and distorted his reception of competing ethnographies. Her approach to our shared problems in her 2023 book, LU-ADLER, *Kant, Race, and Racism* (focus on Kant's context as opposed to individualistic critiques or *apologia*; definition of racism as ideology; rejection of 'contradiction' between Kant's racism and moral philosophy; differentiation between racial theories in his work; and anti-racism grounded in a genealogy of Kant's ideas and their reception) is a potent synthesis of the vital issues.

gender) and an alternative approach to these categories in the same 'popular' context as his anthropology—in the writings of his interlocutor, Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel. This contrast further underscores how the intersection of race and gender in Kant was no passive product of his *Zeitgeist*, but resulted from his imposition of hierarchy and teleology, whereas peers were more attentive to contingency and human identity's social construction. That is, Kant's own denial of context was not universal.

Ethnographic Methods and Archives in the German Enlightenment

We begin with a glance at the term 'ethnography' and competing ethnographic paradigms in the German Enlightenment. This survey will point to an essential tension between the empirical (ethnography) and the theoretical (anthropology) in this emerging field of knowledge. Recognising that both terms are anachronistic in this context—mere shorthand for what was a more complex and rapidly shifting boundary between empirical and theoretical knowledge of humanity—they render my historical critique translatable, which should prompt contemporary scholars of human sciences to question the roots of their own disciplines and thereby, I hope, justify the anachronism.[19]

With that qualification in mind, our first question becomes: how did representative figures of distinct approaches to the novel field of anthropology—Schlözer, Herder, Blumenbach, and Kant—use what we now call ethnographic material: travelogue, anecdote, artifact, skull? How did they integrate this empirical evidence for human variation into their theories of the human? How did ethnography pose a problem for each of their anthropologies? Kant's context thus sets the scene for the new way in which his 'pragmatic' anthropology responded to those timely questions. And it shows how the racist reflexes whereby he tried to contain ethnographic data were, in turn, a response to alternative strategies for ordering human variation among his contemporaries.

Schlözer's Ethnographie *and the Tables of Universal History*

As Vermeulen has demonstrated, the term 'ethnography' (*ethnos* + *graphè*) is a scientific neologism of the late eighteenth century.[20] At the time, this term combined and competed with others, largely forgotten, in a struggle which shaped its enduring meanings. *Ethnographia* was coined in a German history of Swabia (1767) and rendered as German *Ethnographie* in a review of the book that same year, without comment. It began as a synonym for 'description of a people' or 'peoples' (*Volks-Beschreibung*; *Völker-Beschreibung*),[21] terms which went back to the historian and explorer of Siberia, Gerhard

[19] On this issue, see JAMES ADAM REDFIELD, 'Ethnography in Antiquity', *Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology*, https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780199766567-0214, accessed 15 September 2024.
[20] HAN F. VERMEULEN, *Before Boas: The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015).
[21] VERMEULEN, *Before Boas*, 277–78.

Friedrich Müller (1740).[22] That, as a synonym for *Volks-/Völkerbeschreibung*, is how *Ethnographie* soon surfaced in a German dictionary (1811).[23]

Dictionaries would quarantine *Ethnographie* in appendices on foreign words until as late as 1823,[24] but it quickly gained traction in scientific circles. Just four years after it was coined (1771), the polyglot polymath August Ludwig Schlözer, who had lived and worked with G. F. Müller, laid out a 'synthetic schema of the universal history of peoples' that included his new 'ethnographic' (*ethnographisch*) method. Whereas Schlözer's other methods of universal history (chronological; technological; geographical) had taken as their objects, respectively, the sum of events in a given period; the fruits of material progress; and the earth, Schlözer distinguished his new 'ethnographic' method by its singular focus on the 'people' [*Volk*]. Schlözer demarcated this new object of history in broad brushstrokes: 'more or less arbitrary similarities that are agreed upon by a particular group of people'.[25] He proceeded to exemplify this historical method by, first, distinguishing the peoples of the world and, second, summarising each epoch of their histories. For instance, after extolling the virtues of 'the Hebrews', such as their laws and a state that would (in the days of David and Solomon) have dwarfed Prussia, he divided their history into periods of equal length (450 years each of tribalism; democracy; and monarchy), followed by irregular periods of foreign domination and diaspora.[26] (Schlözer had a knack for new terms: he was also an early adopter of 'ethnology' [*Ethnologie*] as a scientific name for 'folklore' [*Volks-/Völkerkunde*],[27] and has the dubious distinction of coining the term 'Semitic languages'.[28])

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[22] On the transmission of terms among Müller, Schlözer, and contemporaries, see VERMEULEN, *Before Boas*, 281.

[23] Under *volksbeschreibend*, the entry in JOACHIM HEINRICH CAMPE, *Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache*, 5 vols, vol. 5 (Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1811), 434, reads as follows (parenthetical insertions in original): '*volksbeschreibend*, adj. Describing a people according to its heritage, its physical and spiritual qualities, the constitution of its mores [*Sitten*], etc.; *völkerbeschreibend*, describing multiple peoples in such a way (*ethnographisch*); so, too, the *Volkbeschreiber* and *Völkerbeschreiber*, who describes one or multiple peoples in such a way (*Ethnograph*) and *Volkbeschreibung* and *Völkerbeschreibung* (Moerbeek), this sort of description of one or multiple peoples (*Ethnographie*)'. For Campe's definition of *Völkerbeschreibung*, he seems to draw from the fourth edition of MATTHIAS KRAMER, *Neues Deutsch-Holländisches Wörterbuch*, ed. ADAM ABRAHAMUS VAN MOERBEEK (Leipzig: Junius, 1787), 525 (where it was defined, however, simply as 'description of peoples'. It did not appear in the third edition of Moerbeek's *Wörterbuch*, published in 1768.)

[24] JOACHIM HEINRICH CAMPE, *Wörterbuch zur Erklärung und Verdeutschung der unserer Sprache aufgedrungenen fremden Ausdrücke*, 2nd ed. (Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1813); FRIEDRICH ERDMANN PETRI, *Gedrängtes Handbuch der Fremdwörter in deutscher Schrift- und Umgangs-Sprache* (Dresden: Arnoldischen Buchhandlung, 1823).

[25] AUGUST LUDWIG SCHLÖZER, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie*, 2 vols, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Johann David Dieterich, 1772), 99. This first part of the work had circulated in preprint in 1771: see JUSTIN STAGL, 'Rationalism and Irrationalism in Early German Ethnology: The Controversy between Schlözer and Herder, 1772/73', *Anthropos* 93 (1998): 521–36 (522 note 7).

[26] SCHLÖZER, *Vorstellung*, 123–25.

[27] VERMEULEN, *Before Boas*, 295–314.

[28] VERMEULEN, *Before Boas*, 282. On its reception see MAURICE OLENDER, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, transl. ARTHUR GOLDHAMMER (Cambridge: Harvard University

Schlözer's definition of *ethnographisch* was enshrined in subsequent lexica. As opposed to 'synchronistic' history, which depicts events as they affect *all* peoples of a given time-period, *ethnographisch* was defined as a method of recounting the entire history of one people in a given period. Ethnographic history, as in Herodotus and later Greco-Roman traditions,[29] was a way to 'narrate, rearrange, represent' the world in relation to peoples,[30] rather than in relation to eras; things; or places. *Ethnographie* was born as a method of history which selects typical aspects of peoples in order to study them in their totality. This holistic but selective way to define a 'people', and totalising way to analyse it, would prove durable—even when ethnography parted from history.

From the origins of *Ethnographie*, in fact, there was a lively debate on this method's role in the sciences. Was ethnography only a method of writing history, or could it also belong to the other sciences? This question was bound up with further questions about the infant science of *Anthropologie*.[31] What was the object of anthropology? How could ethnographic methods—however they might be defined—play a role in the new science? On those questions, three formative figures in German anthropology (Herder; Blumenbach; and Kant) staked out very different positions. Their ethnographic evidence supported very different anthropologies, each of which, in turn, implied a different concept of ethnographic method. As this bond between method and theory developed, their relatively new common object of inquiry, the human, was redefined not only in world-historical but also in *poetic*; *physical*; and *pragmatic* terms.

Herder's Poetic hodopaideia*: Language, Travel, Poetry*

In the *Sturm und Drang* decade (1770–1780), Kant's student Herder found himself in an odd position as the senior member of a junior movement. A traveller-turned-clergyman without a foothold in the university system, confined to the town of Bückeberg, he was suspended awkwardly between camps as he struggled to articulate his vision of human history, language, art, and anthropology. In the breakthrough publication of the *Sturm und Drang* (1772), he took up his pen in a short review of Schlözer's *Universal History* that would have longstanding consequences for his career and for his concept of ethnographic method.[32]

Press, 1992).

[29] See REDFIELD, 'Ethnography in Antiquity', §General Overviews, for sources and discussion of this genealogy.

[30] CAMPE, *Wörterbuch zur Erklärung und Verdeutschung der unserer Sprache*, 296.

[31] The term *Anthropologium* for a work on humanity by a German author goes back as far as Magnus Hundt (1501); GUDRUN DIEM, 'Deutsche Schulanthropologie', in *De Homine: Der Mensch im Spiegel seines Gedankens*, ed. MICHAEL LANDMANN (Freiburg: Alber, 1962), 357–419 (360). However, *Anthropologie* was not taught as a distinct subject until Kant (1772).

[32] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, review of SCHLÖZER, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie*, vol. 1, *Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen* 60 (28 July 1772): 473–78 (published anonymously). Citations are translated from the scanned original, available at https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.27329#0487, accessed 15 September 2024.

Herder's criticism of Schlözer's new 'ethnographic' method of history was simple: it is one thing to display history, quite another to actually describe it. Whether one orga-nises history into a 'synchronistic' or 'ethnographic' schema—terms of which Herder feigned equally mocking incomprehension—it remains no more than a schema. Herder's prime target was not simply the content of Schlözer's history but its form: a *table* which purported to represent phenomena while, in fact, merely presenting them in a crudely reduced and haphazard aggregation. As he said:

> That little fable about the fox who dragged his tail to cover his tracks is so well known, and behind everything that Herr Schlötzer [*sic*] here claims as his own—the spirit, plan, or ideal of history; treating all history as a great whole ('synchronistically', 'ethnographically', and other such hard words, for which we cast about in vain for a whetstone [to sharpen their meaning][33])—has already, in fact, largely been accomplished—and not even by way of advice, command, or suggestion, but rather (and this is much harder, hence, less flashy) by way of generally 'failed attempts'.
>
> So shouldn't it be easy […] to show […] that the true ground-clearing for all ancient history is still lacking? That the coordinates for a synthesis—once one grasps them—grow heavier than they appear in a table, and that the prospect of an *aggregation* of many individual histories all too often produces a hodgepodge of parts which will not hold together but instead dissolve and collapse?[34]

Herder's polemic against the 'ethnographic' method of Universal History was not against 'the people' as a new unit of analysis—a term that he would vigorously adopt—but against the lack of nuance and false equivalences between peoples that resulted from inserting them into a single comprehensive table. It was just as much a polemic against Enlighten-ment science, from which Schlözer took his use of the table; specifically, against the zoological and botanical tables of Linnaeus, in which 'knowledge of empirical individuals can only be reached through a continuous, ordered, and universal table of all possible differences between them'.[35] For Herder, what was at stake in history was the *particularity* of human beings and groups, not only their theoretical comparability. Herder could have seen Schlözer's invention of ethno-history as a step in the right direction, towards a finer appreciation of differences, both within and between peoples. Instead, he rejected its schematism and lambasted it as a mere 'aping of Linnaeus'. He concluded:

> Furthermore, is it really so that everything can be demonstrated by this table? Nothing too bold? Nothing due to precious chance? The creation of the earth! The era of obelisks and pyramids in Egypt! Are the Hebrews, together with the Parsis [*Gauren*],[36] the only people

[33] My conjectural gloss of this idiom ['Worte, für die wir hie und da keinen Schleifstein wissen'] added in brackets.
[34] HERDER, review of SCHLÖZER, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie*, 475–76.
[35] MICHEL FOUCAULT, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), 157.
[36] STAGL, 'Rationalism and Irrationalism', 530, misses the reference to Parsis—not just Hebrews—as a stateless people.

> whose laws and customs have survived its state? [...] Isn't it all too artificial to have the Pope as High Priest, Bishop, Patriarch, Head Patriarch, and Dalai Lama—among other places where this aping of Linnaeus rears its head, and ten more besides?[37]

Herder countered Schlözer's 'ethnographic' method of universal history with an eclectic approach to tracing cultural particularities. This approach took as its model, not the table of possible differences between peoples, but the language of each people as a unique and essential index of their spirit. Herder further promoted a novel method to gather such evidence when he argued that travel, properly conducted, could be a valid source for the study of humanity. He had already reflected on language as a model for studying humanity in *Fragments on Recent German Literature* (1767–1768), where he hoped that 'a man of *philology*, historical knowledge, and taste' would investigate words for core domains of life, such as honour and virtue, in order to unlock 'the secret of the nation'.[38] Similarly, in correspondence during his own journey from Riga to France (1769), he acknowledged that travel had planted a seed in him that he would harvest richly later.[39]

In fact, in a typically confused and grandiose passage of this travelogue,[40] he had fantasised about a curriculum for his future students that will extend prior studies of the earth's physical geography to the study of humanity. This anthropology (what he called, in a pre-Kantian sense, the 'natural history' of mankind), would in effect plot human beings onto the map of nature. Excluding their political organisation (perhaps a synecdoche for all *non*-natural features of humanity), Herder proposed that a natural historian of humanity would gather the main features of each group (appearance; clothing; lifestyle; mores; institutions; conditions), in order to assess 'to what extent everything in them forms or does not form a whole'. He seems to have imagined that human groups (their political boundaries erased) would surface on the globe like anthropological continents, bounded and brought into relief by what Schlözer, as we saw, termed 'ethnographic' features ('more or less arbitrary similarities that are agreed upon by a group'.) To bring out those shared features, Herder added, 'stories and pictures will help; all geography will become a collection of pictures.[41] Little reflection, and none of it enforced; no characterisation of

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[37] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, review of SCHLÖZER, *Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie*, 478.

[38] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, 'Fragments on Recent German Literature', in HERDER, *Philosophical Writings*, transl. and ed. MICHAEL N. FORSTER (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 33–64 (47). Emphasis in original. Here, too, Herder counselled travel among 'savage' peoples, praising 'the useful work of [Antoine Yves] Goguet, who has collected all the passages' about their condition, which he takes as evidence for the original condition of humanity (59).

[39] Even if, during his actual journey to France, he wrote on India and the East; immersed himself in French literature out of disdain for actual Frenchmen; and did not record his observations as a methodical ethnographer but as a vague, spasmodic, rather jaded outsider. See the introduction to JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, *Journal of my Travels in the Year 1769*, transl. and ed. JOHN F. HARRISON (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1952), 5–205 (49–57). Herder praised travel literature (*Journal*, 235–37; 260) and language as a key to knowing a culture (*Journal*, 242).

[40] HERDER, *Journal*, transl. HARRISON, 261–63.

[41] He pointed to Picart as his model: 'What Picart is for religion alone, this will be for everything!' (263). See

peoples or lands [*Charakteristik*],[42] but facts, stories'. The ultimate payoff of this approach, Herder imagined, would not be purely intellectual, but moral: studying humans should foster greater openness to humanity as such. He went on:

> Then the youth will learn to look beyond his own little corner of the world; he will learn humanity, not to despise or mock anything blindly, but to get to know everything—and either to enjoy his own situation or to seek a better one for himself. A great study! Who will become weary of it?

In this cosmopolitan goal, one shared by Kant, Herder's ethnography was not distinctive. Yet as a method, what distinguishes his ethnography in this early work is precisely its rejection *of* method. There shall be no method, he insists, but only 'facts, stories'. Similarly, extending his reverie from the natural history of humanity to human history itself, Herder rejected Gatterer's methods and envisioned the epitome of universal history that he would cull from all prior collections: an 'instructive, concrete history of the human race, full of phenomena and facts'.[43] His sources of ethnographic and historical studies might come from anywhere, and his approach to the distinctive status of ethnographic evidence was rather vague.

With his essay *On the Origin of Language*, published the same year as his critique of Schlözer (1772), Herder began to develop a robust idea of ethnography, centred around language and travel.[44] There, he argued that language was not divine but human in origin, as the variety and mutual incomprehensibility of human languages must be a product of natural growth and change rather than design. Therefore, we can use language as the key to the unfolding of the human spirit in various conditions—rather than assimilating these differences to a deterministic origin; claiming that they are merely superficial; or resorting to analogies with the animal kingdom. Differences between languages thus become differences between aspects of humanity ('human nature—in all its parts a texture for lan-

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Picart's illustrations of Jean-Frédéric Bernard's *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (1723–42) at https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz0002gx8m.

[42] 'Of peoples or lands' is the translator's silent gloss by Harrison, in HERDER, *Journal*, 263. By this term, however, Herder may already refer to his teacher Kant's method of *Charakteristik*, which analyses human beings according to general characteristics, including sex; race; and nation. For the debate on when Kant first employed this method in his Anthropology course (1772–1781?) see ROBERT B. LOUDEN, 'Translator's Introduction', in IMMANUEL KANT, *Lectures on Anthropology*, eds ALLEN WOOD and ROBERT B. LOUDEN (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 283–87 (286).

[43] HERDER, *Journal*, transl. HARRISON, 268.

[44] An unsystematic thinker, who did not devote any writings to the term *Ethnographie* (though he did coin the durable term *Naturvölker*), Herder's idea of ethnography is tricky to reconstruct. See PETER HALLBERG, 'Johann Gottfried Herder on European Ethnographic Representation', *Intellectual History Review* 26, no. 4 (2016): 497–517. On Herder as anthropologist, see JOHN ZAMMITO, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 309–45; ANIK WALDOW and NIGEL DESOUZA, eds, *Herder: Philosophy and Anthropology* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017); NICHOLAS A. GERMANA, 'Herder's India: The "Morgenland" in Mythology and Anthropology', in *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment*, eds LARRY WOLFF and MARCO CIPOLLONI (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 119–40; KARL J. FINK, 'Storm and Stress Anthropology', *History of the Human Sciences* 6, no. 1 (1993): 51–71 (54–57).

guage!'),[45] inviting comparison and mutual illumination. As each language adapts to its speakers' needs, it also attests to the course of their inner development. The study of language is the study of human spirit over time.

In his later attempt at a universal history, Herder synthesised his survey of the world's peoples on the same note: language alone 'renders a history of mankind, in transmitted modifications of heart and mind, possible'.[46] As for the method with which to collect these observations of the human spirit—whether in language or in other forms—Herder continued to advocate *travel* as a source, so long as it was properly constrained and guided. While he did not discuss or use the term *Ethnographie* for his own method, he did propose a *hodopaideia* (Herder writes *hodopaedia*), or 'education in traveling', that one could extract from the better travelogues and use as a canon for further inquiry. In travel, he hoped, one might seek 'first principles concerning how human beings and animals should be considered and treated'.[47] Central to *hodopaideia*, like the relativism of later ethnographers, was a suspension of hierarchy between observer and observed: 'A describer of travels ought actually to have no exclusive fatherland'.[48] Herder was not so naïve as to imagine that travellers could approach foreign lands and peoples without a trace of self-interest, even bias: 'The base person seeks bad company, and of course among a hundred nations one will be found there that favours *his* prejudice, that nourishes *his* delusion'.[49] But he hoped that they might draw from their own subjectivity in order to access something deeper, more poetic, than a catalogue of humans as specimens of natural history. Equipped with *hodopaideia* ('a pure eye and in their breast universal natural and human sensitivity'), one could draw from 'the inner content of the travel describers themselves' and savour the full range of human experience—redeeming apparently inferior aspects of other peoples by discerning their originally good principles of organisation. He hoped that ethnography would thus be a spiritual balm, not only for the traveller, but also for his own people: a 'distracted flock of readers who do not know right from left'.[50] In sum, the method, object, and *telos* of Herder's ethnography (*hodopaideia*) were structured by poetic principles. Replacing Schlözer's schematic history-of-nations with the ear of an erratic muse, he kept faith with the ideal of progress, yet redefined progress in terms of a bond between the poet and the folk.

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[45] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, 'Essay on the Origin of Language', in *On the Origin of Language*, transl. and ed. JOHN H. MORAN and ALEXANDER GODE (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 87–166 (147).

[46] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, transl. T. CHURCHILL (London: for J. Johnson by Luke Hansard, 1800), 234.

[47] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, 'Letters for the Advancement of Humanity (1793-7) – Tenth Collection', in HERDER, *Philosophical Writings*, ed. FORSTER, 380–424 (397 note w). Herder here cites Georg Forster, another key figure in German anthropology of this period, as a travel writer of exemplary sensitivity.

[48] HERDER, 'Letters', 397 note w.

[49] HERDER, 'Letters', 397.

[50] HERDER, 'Letters', 397.

Blumenbach's Physical Anthropology

While Johann Friedrich Blumenbach is known as the first modern physical anthropologist, his work on comparative anatomy also shows a lively interest in ethnographic evidence; its function in his work is understudied.[51] Beyond his extensive collection of skulls and *disjecta membra*,[52] Blumenbach was also an avid collector of ethnographic materials. His dissertation *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* (1775) engaged, for instance, up-to-date literature on the figure of the 'wild child';[53] a rumour that some Indian women have sex with apes (of course they don't);[54] legends about giant Patagonians;[55] the affective qualities of each racial countenance (like the eyes of Jews, which 'breathe of the east');[56] diverse literature on haircuts, fingernails, circumcision, castration, tattooing, teeth-sharpening, and penis-stretching, drawn from both ancient and modern travellers, scientists, and more.[57] Particularly relevant in this context are Blumenbach's detailed discussion of leprosy-like skin diseases and 'albinos', where he again drew on many travellers' observations, and considered the hypothesis that the symptoms are influenced by typical *practices* of certain regions (it cannot be poor hygiene, as the disease afflicts members of royal courts in Africa, India, and Indonesia; nor need it lead to cognitive decline, as one sufferer from Malabar was a skilled poet—here we see ethnography surface as a tool of biological explanation).[58] Yet for all its variety, Blumenbach's use of ethnographic materials always supported his basic anthropological thesis: humankind is one, not many. Its rich variety should not mislead us to misplace any human among the beasts or to posit multiple anthropoid species.[59]

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[51] Often, Blumenbach is presented merely as an anatomist, yet he relied heavily—and increasingly—on ethnographic material to contextualise, test, and draw inferences from anatomical evidence. See JOHN H. ZAMMITO, *The Gestation of German Biology: Philosophy and Physiology from Stahl to Schelling* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 198–99 and 206. Medical 'anthropologists' like Ernst Platner were actually more like anatomists of the time than this founding physical anthropologist; see ZAMMITO, *Birth of Anthropology*, 221–253.

[52] MICHAEL SCHULZ, 'The Blumenbach Collection of Human Skulls', YouTube video, Universität Göttingen, https://youtu.be/_Z5g6w6sXyQ?si=9j0LZ5VweIOXpSTC. Blumenbach's collection of skulls also included, e.g., human busts and organs. For the catalogue of Blumenbach's library at auction in 1840, see http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl?PPN504849050; for an excellent Blumenbach site, see https://blumenbach-online.de/Einzelseiten/Blumenbach.php, accessed 15 September 2024. See MENSCH, 'Kant and the Skull Collectors'.

[53] JOHANN FRIEDRICH BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', in *The Anthropological Treatises of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach*, ed. and transl. THOMAS BENDYSHE (London: Longman, 1865), 65–143 (89; 129). Blumenbach devoted a separate essay to the 'wild child' in the second part of his 'Contributions to Natural History' (1811); in BLUMENBACH, *Anthropological Treatises*, 329–40.

[54] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 80–81; citing the early-seventeenth-century Dutch traveller, Jacobus Bontius.

[55] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 104–105.

[56] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 122.

[57] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 126–129.

[58] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 133–140.

[59] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 98, 140, and *passim*.

Despite this essentially physical definition of the basic object of anthropological knowledge, we are still faced with the fact that, already in this early work, Blumenbach's use of varied ethnographic materials (ancient authors, anecdotes, and travelogues) went far in excess of what he needed to demonstrate that point. Those excesses reflect not only his personal curiosity, but his early reflections on ethnography as a method. He protested repeatedly that he must stop distracting the reader from his argument for mankind's inner unity by cataloguing its deformities—verging on monstrosities—including tales of cretinism, and the Italian boy with horny black skin, not to mention 'centaurs, sirens, cynocephali, satyrs, pigmies, giants, hermaphrodites, and other idle creatures of that kind'.[60] Yet they are methodologically significant: why mention all these aberrations, if not to carve out a niche for ethnographic sources within the new science of physical anthropology?

This ambition is clear in his conclusion to the book where, rather than restate his anthropological thesis of the unity of mankind, Blumenbach embarked on a final digression about men with tails and African women with inverted labia. Both reports, he insisted, are pure fiction; mere fantasies of travel writers, where they were already becoming widely diffused racist tropes.[61] But here, unlike his prior digressions on ethnography, he took another step: he proposed criteria for evaluating ethnographic materials as evidence in physical anthropology. Such accounts are not credible, he insisted, because their authors either 'bear no very good reputation' or 'depend on the accounts of others'. Further, he argued, we can reconstruct the gradual corruption of their sources to show how, in the first place, an image of an ape was corrupted into that of a man with a tail, or an elongated coccyx was blown out of proportion; and, second, how 'the pendulosity of the labia seems to have imposed upon the older travellers'.[62] This digression, a gallery of stock racist images, might seem an odd note on which to conclude the inaugural dissertation on physical anthropology. But perhaps precisely because he knew that he had run up against the ragged seam between fantasy and science, it inspired Blumenbach's early attempt to integrate ethnography into anthropology, via his new criteria for evaluating and integrating ethnographic evidence. If travellers' accounts or ancient authors were to serve anthropological science as more than mere curiosities, their sources would need to be critically scrutinised, as well as compared with direct observations of nature. In the course of his career, Blumenbach would develop his

[60] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 141.
[61] See ZOË S. STROTHER, 'Display of the Body Hottentot', in *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business*, ed. BERNTH LINDFORS (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 1–61 (21); JENNIFER L. MORGAN, "Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder': Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770', *William & Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (1997): 167–92; SILVIA SEBASTIANI, 'Monboddo's 'Ugly Tail': The Question of Evidence in Enlightenment Sciences of Man', *History of European Ideas* 48, no. 1 (2022): 45–65 (51–54, and 54 on the fantasy of human cross-breeding with apes, which was equally rejected by Blumenbach).
[62] BLUMENBACH, 'On the Natural Variety of Mankind', 142–43.

reflections along those lines: ethnographic evidence is even more varied and prominent in later editions of this work and his later treatises.[63]

The Problem of Ethnography for Kant's 'Pragmatic Point of View'

As we have seen so far, for the German Enlightenment contemporaries of Kant who—unlike Kant—had a lasting impact on what we call anthropology today, ethnographic evidence was useful in different ways. For Blumenbach, the physical anthropologist, it was a means to prove human biological unity and map its variations, countering a merely anatomical view of human difference. For the world-historian Schlözer, it was a new way to organise an inquiry by taking the totality of the life of a nation, with all its vicissitudes over time, as the lens through which to shape a narrative. For Herder, it was the very essence of anthropology: both art and substance of what it is to know humanity. Through ethnography's experience and expression in the mode of travel or poetry, one could disclose the universal human spirit and its irreducibly singular manifestations in individuals—starting with oneself. Whatever disagreements these thinkers had with one another about the science and method that we now call anthropology and ethnography (and, as we saw in the case of Herder and Schlözer, they had many), the utility of ethnographic knowledge was not up for debate.

For Kant, by contrast, ethnography was not a natural or easy accessory to anthropology.[64] On the contrary, he allowed only partial appeals to ethnography as a means to his systematic end—a theory of humanity—and denied it methodological status. Further, because Kant did not envision anthropology as a physical, historical, or spiritual discipline, but as the study of humanity in terms of prudence and practical ('pragmatic') reason, not all ethnographic material was useful for him. He did use travel accounts, anecdotes, and other ethnography as sources from which to glean and refine his portraits

[63] In the work's third edition (1795), many of the same passages cited above are supplemented by more detailed criteria for evaluating ethnographic evidence (BLUMENBACH, *Anthropological Treatises*, 244–46, 258–59, 272–73). Blumenbach added more explicit reflections on method (e.g., the notion of 'good observers', 251); and privileged the evidence of 'eye-witnesses' (over that of texts) as to whether or not the peoples of the world follow a certain practice (241). In a later treatise ('Contributions to Natural History, Part I', 1811, in BLUMENBACH, *Anthropological Treatises*, 281–324), he again concluded with an ethnographic excursus, this time on Africans and a certain kind of 'albino'. Here, his use of ethnographic evidence was even more radical. To support his thesis that the two groups must be part of a single human species, and not an inferior one, he recalled his personal encounter with a 'creole' woman who—if not for her skin-colour—would have had to be considered universally attractive; 'just as Le Maire says in his travels […] that there are negresses [*sic*], who, abstraction being made of the colour, are as well formed as our European ladies' (BLUMENBACH, *Anthropological Treatises*, 307). Here, for a moment, the physical anthropologist is himself embodied: his desire becomes a factor in his racial theory. On a similar disturbing note, BLUMENBACH is said to have 'fallen in love' with one of the Caucasian skulls in his collection; see SCHULZ, 'The Blumenbach Collection of Human Skulls', 4:26.

[64] See ZAMMITO, *Birth of Anthropology*, 242–53; THOMAS STURM, *Kant und die Wissenschaften vom Menschen* (Paderborn: Mentis, 2009), 261–91; LU-ADLER, 'Travel Reports'; GRAY, 'Dead Eye'.

of human character. He did consider how to arrange and evaluate such sources.[65] However, he also repeatedly warned against straying so far into ethnography that mere description substituted for the philosophy of human nature. A patient search for the norms and regularities of human thought and conduct, neither mere particulars nor absolute universals, was his approach.[66]

Kant's split between ethnography and anthropology is clear in his acrid review of Herder's *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity* (1785), published under a thin veil of anonymity that year. Kant targeted Herder's preferred forms of ethnography: poetry and travel. He held that this method weakened Herder's efforts at anthropological generalisation, especially those which broke with Kant's own. 'The sixth and seventh books' of Herder's *Ideas*, Kant remarked, 'contain almost entirely only extracts from ethnographic descriptions [*Völkersbeschreibungen*] […]'. Praising Herder's choice and arrangement of these pretty extracts, he could not help but wonder whether 'the poetical spirit that animates his expression has not sometimes also invaded the author's philosophy'.[67] Well aware of Herder's vision of ethnography as poetry, Kant insisted that he had been rash to generalise about humanity on that basis. Moving on to Herder's eighth book, he asked if its transition 'from the traveller's remarks about the organisation of different nations and about the climate to a collection of commonplaces based on them […] is not too *epic* […] whether the stream of his eloquence does not here and there involve him in contradictions'.

The contradiction in question was Herder's misunderstanding of Kant's second proposition, in Kant's *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (1784), that the faculty of reason is not fully developed at the level of the human individual, but only of the species.[68] In this book of Herder's *Ideas* he held, to the contrary, that happiness pertains to the individual and *not* the species.[69] Herder saw the end of human nature, happiness, in

[65] E.g., IMMANUEL KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas for the philosophy of the history of humanity*. *Parts 1 and 2*', in KANT, *Anthropology, History, and Education*, transl. ROBERT B. LOUDEN (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 121–45 (139), envisioned something like an archive (amassing, selecting, and placing these sources side-by-side with 'remarks on the credibility of each narrator'). For the German, I cite the original (bibliographical details in *Anthropology, History, and Education,* 570–71), available at https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_4Sw-AAAAYAAJ/page/206/mode/2up, accessed 15 September 2024.

[66] '*General* knowledge always precedes *local* knowledge here, if the latter is to be ordered and directed through philosophy: in the absence of which all acquired knowledge can yield nothing more than fragmentary groping around and no science'. KANT, *Anthropology*, 4.

[67] KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas*', 137–38.

[68] See KANT, 'Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim', in *Anthropology, History, and Education*, transl. ALLEN W. WOOD, 108–20 (109–10) and the editors' note to this volume, 502 note 43.

[69] JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, 1785), 206, available at https://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/book/view/herder_geschichte02_1785?p=218. Compare Herder's letter to Hamann (14 February 1785) in JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, *Briefe. Gesamtausgabe, 1763-1803*, eds WILHELM DOBBEK and GÜNTER ARNOLD, 9 vols (Weimar: Böhlaus, 1977–1988), vol. 5, *September 1783-August 1788*, 106: 'fortunately, I have no need of his infantile program, according to which the human being was created for the sake of the species and as the most perfect

relativist terms, as realised in the individual and taking diverse forms among nations of the world, rather than being fulfilled at the level of 'humanity' in general. Kant—adding, wryly, that he preferred humble prose to lofty poetry—retorted that Herder had misunderstood him. He cited a suggestive counter-example from Herder's own *Ideas*: 'discoverers often had to leave the utility of their discoveries more to posterity than discovering it for themselves'.[70] What Herder had called, there, 'governing fate' [*das waltende Schicksal*], Kant had called 'the wisdom of nature',[71] or simply 'God'.[72] In other words, just as discoverers do not reap the fruits of their own travels, which accrue to their successors, so does the development of human reason pass *through* the individual, only to reach its fruition in the species. This progression is not accidental but necessary (whether one attributes it to fate, God, or nature). Herder had not shown that happiness or reason are fulfilled, neither for the individual nor for the people. He had shown only that their conditions of *possible* fulfilment are to be found there—just as Kant had already said. No amount of poetic evocation could conceal that.

Kant's disdain for this figure of the 'discoverer' reflects his general stance on ethnography. Continuing his harsh review of his erstwhile student, he inveighed against not only ethnography-as-poetry but also ethnography-as-travel (recall Herder's neologism: *hodopaideia*). Neither method surpassed the merely particular.[73] Kant compared Herder to a lost explorer, a man without a map:

> In an untrodden desert, a thinker, like a traveller, must remain free to choose his own path as he thinks best; one must wait to find out how successful he is and whether, after he has reached his goal, he will in due time find his way safely home again, i.e. to the seat of reason, and hence can count on having followers.[74]

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engine of the State until the end of time'.

[70] KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas*', 138; Herder, *Ideen*, vol. 2, 248.

[71] KANT, 'Idea', 110 (German original at https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_4Sw-AAAAYAAJ/page/n143).

[72] KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas*', 139. It is 'blasphemy' [*Gotteslästerung*] to suggest that nature is less-than-perfect with respect to humans by holding, like Herder, that nature does *not* aim to develop the idea of the human beyond its individual form.

[73] KANT, 'Determination of the Concept of a Human Race', in KANT, *Anthropology, History, and Education*, transl. HOLLY WILSON and GÜNTER ZÖLLER, 143–59 (145), criticises travels as 'exciting the understanding' but not 'satisfying it' ('one finds in experience what one needs only if one knows in advance what to look for'). See also the Preface to KANT, 'Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View', in *Anthropology, History, and Education*, transl. ROBERT A. LOUDEN, 227–429, at 232: 'But if one wants to know what to look for abroad, in order to broaden the range of anthropology, first one must have acquired knowledge of human beings at home […] (which already presupposes knowledge of human beings) […]'. See further 'Anthropology-Mrongovius (1784–1785)', in KANT, *Lectures on Anthropology*, transl. ROBERT R. CLEWIS, 335–510, at 346: 'Anthropology educates human beings for social intercourse and is a preliminary practice for the extended knowledge of the human being that one attains through traveling […]'). Finally, and most negatively, 'Anthropology-Friedländer (1775–1776)', in KANT, *Lectures on Anthropology*, transl. G. FELICITAS MUNZEL, 37–255, at 49: 'we should not travel to study human beings, but can examine their nature everywhere'.

[74] KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas*', 141.

Kant's Warped Archive; Or, Tahiti in Königsberg

Yet travel was not only a general metaphor for knowledge that had strayed from the path of reason (in Kant's case), nor an appeal to direct personal experience as a genuine source of knowledge (in Herder's). It was also a growing archive. Both Kant and Herder cited copious travels of others—contemporary Europeans with imperial and colonial gazes—as sources for their own study of humanity. Here, too, Kant subordinated ethnography to his systematic, rational, and abstract anthropological categories. For instance, he responded to Herder's criticism of another proposition in Kant's *Idea for a Universal History* ('The human being is *an animal who has need of a master* and expects from this master, or from their connection, the good fortune of his final vocation'),[75] by dwelling on the philosophical significance of the recent 'discovery' of Tahiti (1767); a subject to which Kant returned throughout his lectures and writings on anthropology. Herder had objected to Kant's proposition on roughly the same grounds as the one discussed above. That is, for Herder, a human individual is the end of his/her own happiness, and therefore has no need of a master.[76] Kant countered that, in Tahiti's indigenous feudal form of government, humans could never be happy *as humans*, but only live in a 'tranquil indolence' no different than that of 'sheep and cattle'. This, he held, is because true happiness beyond the individual (only at the level of the species, in his view) requires another political order: 'a state constitution ordered in accordance with concepts of human right…'.[77] Since Tahitians would never have come up with this superior government on their own, he insisted, they did 'have need of a master', i.e., Europeans, if they were to fully realise their humanity and rise above the illusion ('shadowy image of happiness') of their original state.[78]

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[75] KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas*', 141 (emphasis added; German ed., 235). Kant's proposition appears in his 'Idea for a Universal History', 113 (German ed., 143) and Herder's criticism in his *Ideen*, vol. 2, 260.

[76] Herder's point was developmental rather than political. Human beings, in some roles, need masters (e.g., children need teachers; perhaps an allusion to his 'master' Kant). Yet it is also their nature to grow to independence: 'Just as it is a bad father who raises his child so that it remains immature [*unmündig*] and in need of a teacher its whole life'. On 'maturity' [*Mündigkeit*] see KANT, 'An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?' (my translation in JAMES ADAM REDFIELD, 'A Talmudic commentary to Kant's "What is Enlightenment?"', lecture, Stanford University, 2013, available at https://jamesadamredfield.omeka.net/items/show/2, accessed 15 September 2024). As WERNER STARK notes ('Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions?', 36 note 34), he introduced this term in his anthropology lectures (KANT, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 25, *Vorlesungen uber Anthropologie*, eds BRANDT and STARK, 43. See also KANT, 'Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View', in KANT, *Anthropology, History, and Education*, 227–429, at 333).

[77] KANT, 'Review of J. G. Herder's *Ideas*', 141. See also KANT, 'Idea for a Universal History', 113: here, he envisions a civil society where the principle of Right is enshrined in the constitution of the people as a whole. By contrast, he calls the Tahitian state 'feudal', citing this as proof that Tahitians descend from Malayans, because they also had a feudal state, and also wore beards (as opposed to the indigenous peoples of the Americas, for whom neither was supposedly the case, and who, on the strength of these differences, must be a distinct 'race'.) KANT, 'Of the Different Races of Human Beings', transl. HOLLY WILSON and GÜNTER ZÖLLER, in *Anthropology, History, and Education*, 82–97 (88).

[78] See also KANT, *Groundwork*, 33: '(as with the South Sea Islanders) the human being [must consider whether

The racism in Kant's use of 'Tahiti' here, as Eze and more recently Zammito have noted,[79] reflects his narrow position on an underlying question: What should be the role of the ethnographic archive in a philosophy of humanity?[80] Both Kant's anthropology and his critical philosophy emerged in a context: lecture halls of provincial young *bourgeois* men; in effect, paying customers, for whose hearts and ears he vied with medically minded anthropologists of his day. To slake his students' thirst for the 'exotic', not to mention racy gossip and other curiosities closer to home, Kant punctuated his book and years of lectures with apparent digressions on ethnographic sources like these 'Tahitians'. This material reflects the marginal status of ethnography within Kant's anthropology, even his hostility to it. Although he used a miscellany of ethnographic data (poetry; travel; anecdote; aphorism; commonplace), his readings of accounts of other cultures are, like this one, thin and selective to the point of violence. In his role as anthropologist, Kant curated such materials: pruning, repeating, and refining them for the ears of his students in the lecture-hall.

This process led to the formation of what I call his *warped ethnographic archive*: a stock of descriptions that are radically decontextualised with respect to both the sources and the cultures from which they eventually reached Kant's auditors and readers. He pares each of these morsels down to one anthropological point. Yet his ethnographic materials, in both their Kantian and their present contexts, leave a troubling remainder. Something in Kant's ethnography escapes reduction to his anthropology. This remainder, this something, raises questions in turn about the meaning of the material for his audience. What

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he] should let his talents rust and be concerned with devoting his life merely to idleness, amusement, procreation; in a word, enjoyment…'. As noted by GÜNTER ZÖLLER ('Kant's Political Anthropology', *Kant Yearbook* 3 (2011): 131–59, at 144), Kant's polemical equation of happiness-as-leisure ('indolence'), on one hand, with inferior government, on the other, was axiomatic to his political anthropology. This does not mean that it was not also a product of racism: it is no coincidence that Tahitians, Africans, and other 'southern' peoples (including Europeans) are his target for this attack, drawing as it does on a thick stock of caricatures. (See further SEREQUEBERHAN, 'Eurocentrism in Philosophy', 38–48; MENSCH, 'Caught between Character and Race', 130 notes 15 and 18, and, on the link between these racist tropes and Kant's critique of Herder, JENNIFER MENSCH, 'Kant's Four Examples: On South Sea Islanders, Tahitians, and Other Cautionary Tales for the Case of 'Rusting Talents'', *Goethe Yearbook* 31 (2024): 115–26 (118–20); see further ROBERT BERNASCONI, 'Why Do the Happy Inhabitants of Tahiti Bother to Exist at All?', in *Genocide and Human Rights: A Philosophical Guide*, ed. JOHN ROTH (London: Palgrave, 2005), 139–48; HUAPING LU-ADLER, 'Kant on Lazy Savagery, Racialized', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 60, no. 2 (2022): 253–75. In an apologetic like Zöller's, ROBERT LOUDEN ('Introduction', in *Anthropology, History, and Education*, 1–17, at 9) emphasises that Kant did not see western Europeans as superior *only* to Tahitians. Yet Louden's defence of this passage in relativist terms, that Tahitians can develop 'within their own cultural traditions and practices' (see also MUTHU, *Enlightenment Against Empire*, 177), is off base. Kant insists that, if not for contact with 'more cultured nations', Tahitians would never have been able to achieve the ideal 'state constitution'. There is no gradualist view of human progress here, and Kant's 'anti-paternalism and commitment to freedom' (MUTHU, *Enlightenment Against Empire*, 161) are absent. (Contra Louden, see further BERNASCONI, 'Will the Real Kant').

[79] EZE, 'Color of Reason', 127–30; ZAMMITO, 'What a Young Man Needs'.

[80] On Kant's attack on what Diderot called 'the myth of Tahiti', in defence of Eurocentric ideals of cosmopolitanism and progress, see MUTHU, *Enlightenment Against Empire*, 147; MCCARTHY, *Race, Empire*, 61–62.

exactly was Kant looking for in these 'Tahitians'? Was his anthropology a normative project, an account of human nature that these young men were meant to embody? Or were the norms that he derived from ethnography mere 'popular' fluff, quite apart from Königsberg? What were his young men to 'make of themselves' in light of this fragmented ethnography? The relatively small literature that takes Kant's anthropology seriously in its own right has asked this question philosophically;[81] but in context, we may benefit from a case study of how and why Kant fashioned his ethnographic set-pieces into norms and abstract concepts of the human being.

Violent Delights: Cook's Tahiti Comes to Prussia

The way in which Kant derived his anthropological principles of relations between men and women from Captain Cook's travels in Tahiti, and elsewhere in the Pacific, is another case in point of how his ethnographic archive was warped by this palpable tension between normative and empirical views of human nature. Here again, the theme of domination versus liberation is central. Here again, it is inverted, such that the impotence of one ethnographic subject provides a clue to a teleological principle for all society. Here again, the turn to teleology justifies their domination anthropologically. But at this new nexus of gendered/racial difference, there is an ironic twist. Where the ethnographic subject was the Tahitian, now it is Kant's own audience: the German man.

In the section of his textbook on 'the character of the sexes' (which consumed, he noted,[82] a disproportionate share of his attention), Kant added an aside on sexual jealousy and marital abuse:

> The old saying of the Russians that women suspect their husbands of keeping other women if they do not get a beating now and then is usually regarded as fiction. However, in Cook's *Travels* one finds that when an English sailor on Tahiti saw an Indian punishing his wife by beating her, the sailor, wanting to be gallant, attacked the husband with threats. The wife turned on the spot against the Englishman and asked how it concerned him: the husband must do this![83]

Neither this ethnographic source, nor the anthropological argument that it supports, are straightforward. For his ethnography, Kant has cobbled together a datum of Russian folklore and two of Captain Cook's travels. They likely reached him from translations, an anthology, and a journal article (all appearing in German in the 1780s, while he was

[81] NURIA SANCHÉZ MADRID, 'Prudence and the Rule for Guiding Life: The Development of Pragmatic Normativity in Kant's *Lectures on Anthropology*', in *Kant's Lectures/Kants Vorlesungen*, eds BERND DÖRFLINGER, CLAUDIO LA ROCCA, ROBERT LOUDEN, and UBIRAJARA RANCAN DE AZEVEDO MARQUES (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015), 163–78; ROBERT B. LOUDEN, 'The Second Part of Morals', in *Essays*, eds JACOBS and KAIN, 60–84; PATRICK R. FRIERSON, *Freedom and Anthropology in Kant's Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); PATRICK KAIN, 'Prudential Reason in Kant's Anthropology', in *Essays*, eds JACOBS and KAIN, 230–65. See further REDFIELD, 'Pragmatic Points of View'.
[82] KANT, *Anthropology*, 406–407.
[83] KANT, *Anthropology*, 401.

teaching anthropology).[84] Yet Kant did not merely reiterate this raw material; both the forms in which it reached him, and his decontextualisation of it, have already subjected it to new interpretations. In order to recover how Kant constructed his warped archive, it is first helpful to retrace how he stripped away prior layers of description and interpretation to arrive at, normatively, ambiguous conclusions for his audience.

To begin with Polynesia: in this aside, Kant has condensed and conflated two extracts from Cook's journal, one set in Hawaii and the other in Tahiti. Their common denominator is sexual jealousy—in both sources, Cook cites 'jealousy' as a possible motive for the peculiar association of wifely affection and husbandly abuse.

Here is the extract from Tahiti:

> As in such a life, their women must contribute a very large share of its happiness, it is rather surprising, beside the humiliating restraints they are laid under with regard to food, to find them often treated with a degree of harshness, or rather brutality, which one would scarcely suppose a man would bestow on an object for whom he had the least affection. Nothing, however, is more common than to see the men beat them without mercy; and *unless this treatment is the effect of jealousy, which both sexes pretend to be sometimes infected with, it will be difficult to admit this as the motive*, as I have seen several instances where the women have preferred personal beauty to interest; though I must own that, even in these cases, they seem to be scarcely susceptible of those delicate sentiments that are the result of mutual affection; and I believe, that there is less Platonic love in Otaheite than in any other country.[85]

And here is the extract from Hawaii:

> It will not be improper in this place to take notice, that we were eye-witnesses of a fact, which, as it was *the only instance we saw of any thing like jealousy among them*, shows at the same time that not only fidelity but a degree of reserve is required from the married women of consequence. At one of the entertainments of boxing, Omeeah was observed to rise from his place two or three times, and to go up to his wife with strong marks of displeasure, ordering her, as it appeared to us from his manner, to withdraw. Whether it was, that being very handsome he thought she drew too much of our attention; or without being able to determine what other reason he might have for his conduct, it is but justice to say that *there existed no real cause of jealousy*. How ever, she kept her place; and when the entertainment was over joined our party, and soliciting some trifling presents, was given to understand that we had none about us, but that if she would accompany us toward our tent she should return with such as she liked best. She was accordingly walking along with us, which Omeeah

[84] On the sources, see notes to IMMANUEL KANT, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. ROYAL PRUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, 29 vols, vol. 7, *Der Streit der Fakultaten; Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, ed. OSWALD KÜLPE (Berlin: Reimer, 1917), 368; BRANDT, *Kritischer Kommentar*, 304–305.

[85] *Capitain Cook's dritte und letzte Reise,* ed. and transl. JOHANN LUDWIG WETZEL, 4 vols, vol. 3 (Anspach: auf kosten des Uebersetzers gedruckt mit Messererischen Schriften, 1789), 44–45; *The Three Voyages of Captain James Cook around the World*, 7 vols, vol. 6 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821), 149–150 = JOHANN WILHELM VON ARCHENHOLZ, *Litteratur und Völkerkunde: ein periodisches Werk* (Leipzig: Göschen, 1786), vol. 8, 965–66. Emphasis added ('Otaheite' = Tahiti).

> observing, followed in a violent rage, and seizing her by the hair began to inflict with his fists a severe corporal punishment. This sight, especially as we had innocently been the cause of it, gave us much concern, and yet we were told that it would be highly improper to interfere between man and wife of such high rank. We were, however, not left without the consolation of seeing the natives at last interpose; and had the farther satisfaction of meeting them together the next day, in perfect good humour with each other; and what is still more singular, the lady would not suffer us to remonstrate with her husband on his treatment of her, which we were much inclined to do, and plainly told us that he had done no more than he ought.[86]

As we can see from the original entries (translated faithfully by Johann Wilhelm von Archenholz, likely Kant's source),[87] the focus of both stories is Cook's and his sailors' own preoccupation with the sexual mores of the islanders. They marry monogamously, yet also sleep with other partners. How, then, do they see fidelity and jealousy? In the first extract, from Tahiti, Cook observes that, in some cases, women slept with other men ('preferred personal beauty to interest') but did not associate sex with romance ('Platonic love' was rare in Tahiti),[88] so perhaps this explained the lack of jealousy. For him, the Tahitian case therefore proves that sexual jealousy is *not* the motive for beating, and it remains unexplained. Yet in the second extract, from Hawaii, Cook notes an exceptional case in which a husband *was* seized by jealousy, *did* abuse his wife, and she later confirmed this as a valid norm. Cook is doubly surprised by this exception: he never saw jealousy in Hawaii either, and does not understand why the woman validated her husband's conduct—rather than allowing his sailors to intervene. He explains the exception in terms of the class-status of the couple, concluding that only married women 'of such high rank' should not sleep with other men. Cook's ethnography, unsystematic and absurdly un-self-critical as it is,[89] does yield an anthropological rationale for his anecdote: sexual jealousy in Hawaii is limited to the upper classes.

A variation on the same explanations for violent sexual jealousy—class-status and ethnic difference—appears in Kant's second case: that of the Russian wife who 'expects' to be beaten. Brandt found this anecdote attested in German as early as 1567. Notably,

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[86] *Three Voyages of Captain James Cook*, vol. 7, 152 = *Capitain Cook's dritte und letzte Reise*, vol. 4 (Anspach: auf kosten des Uebersetzers und in Commission bey dem Commerzien Commissair und Hof-Büchhandler Haueisen), 394–96 = ARCHENHOLZ, *Litteratur und Völkerkunde,* vol. 8, 860–61. Emphasis added. NB: this incident is set in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), not the Friendly Islands (Tonga) *pace* Külpe, the editor to the Academy's edition of Kant's *Anthropology* (and scholars following him—and certainly not in Tahiti, *pace* Kant!). The confusion is symptomatic.

[87] KANT, *Anthropology*, 394 cites Archenholz in another connection, supporting this hypothesis.

[88] Clearly, the actual sexual politics of these encounters are a complex subject far beyond the scope of this paper. See DAVID A. CHAPPELL, 'Shipboard Relations between Pacific Island Women and Euroamerican Men 1767-1887', *The Journal of Pacific History* 27, no. 2 (1992): 131–49.

[89] Cook ignores the strong rationale for the husband's jealousy supplied by his own story: he sees his wife accompanying *the English sailors to their tent in expectation of gifts*, yet insists that it had 'no real cause', and his men acted 'innocently'.

that version features a German of the lower classes (a smith). The same observation was reported of Russians, in an article that Kant must have read in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, devoted entirely to this ethnographic datum: 'Women Who Only Love their Husbands If they are Beaten' (1789).[90] Here again, the datum is said to be *not* typical of humans in general, but of 'a certain class of ignoble people, who exist among all nations'.[91] This article also reports the datum among the Peruvians and in comic literature by Europeans (Molière and Cervantes). Here, it is associated with lower classes and passionate Europeans—as opposed to the article's *bourgeois* German public. Yet, as in Cook's *Travels*, the real point of this article (a vernacular ethnography, in the form of a gossip rag) is to explain its odd contradiction. It does so by spinning out a crude theory of power-dynamics between men and women, and concludes by confronting its German readers: *Are you (young gentlemen readers) to be happier in your sexually permissive marriage than these jealous, low-class, non-Germans?*[92]

Here again, just as in the Tahiti material, Kant's ethnographic source not only records an association between wife abuse and sexual jealousy, but also explains it in terms of class, ethnic, and sex difference. His sources' explanations vary only in their particulars. In the German article, the husband's violent sexual jealousy is attributed to lower classes, rather than to 'high rank' as in Cook. Rather than Polynesians, it is attributed to non-German Europeans. Yet both sources set 'us' (the reader) against 'them' (the Other), insisting that only 'they' suffer from violent sexual jealousy. The *Monatsschrift* article takes a further anthropological leap: it interprets the datum in light of a universal sexuality/power dynamic; posits the Other as a reflection of the self in this particular respect; and turns its mirror around to face the reader with a wry critique of their culture.

Kant offered his own anthropological explanation for this warped ethnographic datum, departing from that of the *Monatsschrift* article. To do so, he first had to dismantle the context of his sources and reassemble their data to fit his larger argument about the 'characteristic relations between the sexes'. He brought all of his sources together around the notion of 'jealousy' [*Eifersucht*].[93] He then translated the ethnic and class-based accounts of his predecessors into a universal distinction, grounded in his anthropological theory of sexuality/power dynamics between men and women. The operative distinction

[90] 'Von Weibern, die erst dann, wenn sie geschlagen werden, ihre Männer lieben', *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 13 (1789): 551–60, available at https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015064565222&view=1up&seq=561, accessed 15 September 2024. The article is unsigned. Kant surely read it, as he published fifteen articles in this journal from 1784–1796, beginning with 'What Is Enlightenment?'.

[91] Given in quotation marks; seems like an allusion. Molière is prominent in the essay, but I could not find it in him.

[92] Again, the context of the discussion is sexual jealousy, though it is left unsaid. The article concludes: '…the Russian peasant who *wins her* with blows is no less happy than the Gentleman who holds still, who does what he likes and *lets his wife do what she likes*. And who knows which of their wives is happier?' ('Von Weibern', 560, emphasis added).

[93] This concept not only links the Russian and Polynesian material, but also accounts for Kant's conflation between Cook's travels in Tahiti and Hawaii, as 'jealousy' appears in both.

for Kant was no longer German vs Russian, low-class vs *bourgeois*, English vs Polynesian (let alone low-class vs elite Polynesian), but simply an opposition between the 'character of the sexes' as natural categories. Rather than 'explain away' the datum of violent sexual jealousy by attributing it merely to the Other, he reinterpreted it in terms of the sexes' universal balance of power, with an evolutionary function.[94]

The starting point for Kant's analysis was that a woman is driven by nature to reproduce the species, yet she needs a man in order to do so. Therefore, she naturally attracts as many as possible (even after marriage: after all, what if her husband dies?). The man, for his part, becomes the weaker and passive party. She uses her resources to compete with other women, attract him, get him to reproduce with her, and care for offspring, while he exists mainly to serve her reproductive ends. Kant then discussed how this balance of power develops according to different stages of cultural progress.[95] Even at the lowest stage, polygamy, the women struggle to dominate the man; one woman typically wins out. At the second stage, monogamy, each woman secures a man for herself. At the highest stage of culture, what Kant calls 'gallantry' [*Galanterie*],[96] women do enter into monogamous marriages, but also sleep with other men in order to maximise their reproductive odds.

This schema fits Kant's notion of culture as progressing towards a perfect balance of power between women and men. But it reintroduces the problem of violent sexual jealousy at the stage *between* monogamy and gallantry. After all, a man is not being dominated by his wife if he does *not* prove that he is jealous when she takes other lovers ('abandons his wife indifferently to others to gnaw on the same bone')—let alone if he takes lovers himself. Therefore, rather than attest to a lower form of culture, on the contrary, it proves that culture is progressing if husbands are jealous (although they are wrong to tar their wives' gallantry as 'coquetry').[97] This is precisely where Kant inserts his aside on Polynesia and Russia. Both cases now prove his anthropological point that the jealousy of monogamous men marks a stage *between* brute domination of women and their proper freedom. Here, for Kant, ethnography is not actually about the Other. Rather, it is a way to theorise an intermediate level of anthropological progress. In humanity's most

[94] The following two paragraphs summarise KANT, 'Anthropology', 399–407 ('The character of the sexes').
[95] In the absolute state of nature, Kant did say that the man is the dominant party by virtue of his physical superiority ('Anthropology', 400). But he argued that these characteristic features of the sexes are revealed as soon as culture progresses beyond the point where men are not merely procuring food/protecting the family and women are staying in the home. From that point, women's ascendancy begins.
[96] The word entered German from French about a century before our context. According to the Grimms' dictionary, it generally means 'fashionable' in speech, dress, or behaviour, with this sexual sense listed as a special usage. The Grand Robert sketches a clearer range of uses in French: courtly manners; seduction of women by men (by flattery, 'gallant' gifts or letters, etc.); a euphemism for an affair; and by metonymy (in a nineteenth-century source), a general social norm of heterosexual liberality, which appears to be the connotation here.
[97] KANT, 'Anthropology', 406 (see also 401).

evolved state (when it attains enough 'luxury' for people not to 'squabble' over one another) jealousy will be 'ridiculous', and women will be dominant. He therefore rejects the article's conclusion that a wife's 'gallantry' causes unhappy marriages. It is merely a step on the path to a gynocentric social order.

In sum, by excavating Kant's own reworking of his sources, and prior interpretations of his sources, we saw that his 'warping' of the archive arose from his relentless impulse to impose a universal, teleological, natural hierarchy on material that had previously been contextualised in contingent, descriptive, and social terms. Kant's ethnography was subordinated to anthropology from the very beginning. He looked to Tahiti in order to prove that a form like the Prussian state is necessary for all humans to be happy; or conversely, in order to prove that women's extramarital affairs indicate a higher stage of cultural progress (even by non-Germans). Unlike Herder, whose wandering ethnography shirked schematisation, Kant insisted on reduction to principles: 'anthropology is not a description of human beings, but of human nature'.[98] This reduction relied most violently on racist and sexist tropes as shortcuts to organise an uneven ethnographic dataset.

Yet the question remains: why did his readers/auditors find this form of knowledge useful? Why not elaborate such principles based on further principles rather than sally into tales of Tahiti? And after the lecture, having grasped his anthropological argument on 'the character of the sexes', what were his (mostly young, male, unmarried, provincial) students to make of all this?[99] They might draw the conclusion that they should let their wives practice 'gallantry' (or help other wives to do so). But is that all it meant to become the normative subject of a Kantian anthropology? Here again, the intersection of racism and sexism, and a consistent cultural tension that it masks, make better sense in context.

Hippel and the Reception of Kant's 'Popular' Anthropology

A gold mine of evidence for the context as well as the reception of Kant's warped archive on race and relations between the sexes has long been hiding in plain sight in the works of Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel. Hippel is already familiar to Kant scholars as author of an autobiographical novel (*Die Lebensläufe nach aufsteigender Linie*) where he uses his own notebooks from Kant's lectures in the 1770s, perhaps similar to the various student 'transcriptions' which still form our official record of the anthropology course.[100] Allusions to Kant's popular anthropology course, specifically, are scattered through the first part of

[98] KANT, 'Anthropology Friedländer', in *Lectures on Anthropology*, eds WOOD and LOUDEN, 48.
[99] See ZAMMITO, 'What a Young Man Needs'; Stark, 'Historical Notes', on his specific students and their backgrounds; and, for Kant's students generally, EMIL ARNOLDT, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. OTTO SCHÖNDÖRFFER, 11 vols, vol. 5 (Berlin: Cassirer, 1909), 331–43.
[100] See HAMILTON H. H. HECK, *The Elusive 'I' in the Novel: Hippel, Sterne, Diderot, Kant* (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), 99–126; WERNER STARK, 'Die Formen von Kants akademischer Lehre', *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 40, no. 5 (1992): 542–61 (560 note 65).

Hippel's novel, and fuelled rumours that Kant was the author—ultimately quashed by Kant himself.[101] Whereas scholars have focused on what Hippel took from Kant, however, it is seldom asked what Kant took from Hippel, with whom he dined often, and who became President of Königsberg;[102] or more precisely, how these peers drew from and reacted to a common culture in comparable but meaningfully divergent ways. As both auditor and amplifier of the cultural context where Kant's anthropology was circulating, Hippel's own use of ethnography on similar subjects can help us to appreciate the rhetoric of Kant's. Hippel's twists on Kant's ethnographic archive reveal how Kant's 'warping' or distortion of ethnography—its reduction to principles by racist/sexist shortcuts, even as it stubbornly refuses to be thus reduced—continued to be felt and to generate new meanings for its (*bourgeois* young German male) subjects.

Recall that the common denominator of Kant's ethnographic examples from 'Tahiti' was his argument that the unfreedom of one ethnographic subject (the Tahitians in general, in one case; the cuckolded German married man, on the other) was, upon his proper anthropological reduction, intelligible as a clue to a teleological principle of social order. Because, he argued, the Tahitians are indolent ('happy'), and because they and others of their race have a feudal form of government, this proves that their race has no internal principle of political development that could ever drive them to change to the form of government essential for the happiness of all members of the species, which is the only true happiness, not specific to their 'race' alone. As that form of government more closely resembles European forms than theirs (e.g. Prussia's constitution), this, he concluded, proves that their domination by the European 'master' is needed for the happiness of all humanity. His warped ethnographic archive thus serves as an anthropological justification for colonialism.

Similarly, but in a more complex way given the denser layers of his archive, Kant's appeal to the Tahitian ethnography in his second example was used to justify the domination of another Other (women *per se*; his sources vary as to whether the women involved are Tahitian or Russian, German or non-German, elite or working-class—but Kant's reduction does not) as a necessary but temporary stage in society's development in the opposite direction, from domination to freedom. Whereas, in his archive, men's violent sexual jealousy against their wives (from Cook's Tahiti to the local paper) was viewed as evidence for a cultural curiosity limited to Tahitians or Russians (or, perhaps, to vary with the mores of a social class), again, by way of anthropological reduction to a rule of the

[101] See ARTHUR WARDA, 'Kants 'Erklärung wegen der v. Hippelschen Autorschaft', *Altpreusssische Monatsschrift* 41 (1904): 61–93 (64). For Kant's influence on Hippel, see, e.g., THEODORE GOTTLIEB VON HIPPEL, *On Marriage*, transl. and ed. TIMOTHY F. SELLNER (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 303 note 39; 307 note 7.

[102] SELLNER, 'Introduction', in *On Marriage*, 11–61 (26). For a story about their relationship from Kant's perspective, see UWE SCHULTZ, *Immanuel Kant in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1990), 65–66.

'character of the sexes', Kant argued that domination proved a counter-intuitive teleology at the level of the human species. Women, he held, are destined by nature to be as sexually free as men, because their need to both secure husbands and to maintain multiple sexual partners maximises their odds of reproduction. At a higher stage of society—again, much closer to his own *bourgeois* Prussia than to his 'Tahiti'—this will no longer be necessary. One would therefore expect Kant to critique the abuse of women. Again, however, as in his other 'Tahitian' example, that is not the case. Rather, again, for Kant, domination points to an *intermediate* stage in the teleology of the human species. Abuse (for Kant, the anthropological category is 'jealousy') proves that, on one hand, society is moving in the right direction: away from merely monogamous marriages or sexual freedom for men only. True, it is not yet there; eventually, 'jealousy' will cease. But, like 'mastery' over Tahitians in his other example, here again, Kant cites domination of women as evidence for progress for all humans in the image of his own society; a world where, ultimately, both sexes and all citizens will be free. Kant brings Tahiti to Königsberg to reimagine the world as a better Königsberg.

The writings of Hippel show a more self-critical reflection on these themes in their culture and lead one to doubt that Kant's warping of his ethnographic archive escaped all of his auditors. Two contrary tendencies are apparent. First and foremost, Hippel writes from the standpoint of a conventional Christian universalism, which undermines Kant's teleological argumentation. This applies most clearly to his popular works on power relations between the sexes and marriage, where he consistently argued for the emancipation of women and a conventional view of marriage that seem, at points, calculated to counter Kant's proto-evolutionary view of the 'character of the sexes'. So, for instance, in his *On Improving the Status of Women* (1792), Hippel discusses the problem of the oath of marriage in terms of the larger theme of the domination of women in German society. Breaking from Kant's framework, with its appeal to 'nature' and gradual, apparently contradictory stages of development, he insists that inequality of the sexes is a social ill with a social remedy.

> Above all else in the world, we would like to convince the other half of the human race that it was not *we* but *nature* who pushed them into the background and subjected their will to ours. And yet it is also we who […] play the master over the fairer sex. The clubs and secret societies which surreptitiously procure power, authority, and dominion without ever drawing the sword are but copies of the course taken by men in their rise to power.[103]

These 'clubs and secret societies' such as the Masons (of which Hippel and many men in Kant's audience were members) serve as just one example, from his own German context, of an artificial rather than natural means of women's subordination. Another is the

[103] THEODOR GOTTLIEB VON HIPPEL, *On Improving the Status of Women*, ed. and transl. TIMOTHY F. SELLNER (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979), 93–94.

wedding oath compelling the wife to 'obey' her husband, which—Hippel reminds his readers—neither ensures her fidelity, nor prevents husbands from unwittingly ceding all real power in the home and family to their wives:

> You Germans, whose ancestors respected their women because their advice was important and their judgments holy, especially if the latter inserted in them prophecies of the future—perhaps in such a manner that they were able to guide the men according to the dictates of their own will (a prophetic art not unworthy of respect) …. You Germans, who […] have never sold your women (as if they were household goods) as the Romans did. … Germans! are your ancestors so unworthy? What is more respectable, to keep step with the other sex or to let ourselves be led by this sex without knowing it? Only the *outward signs* of rule are of value to us—*rule itself* we sell for a despicable mess of pottage; and many a clever wife lets herself be elected to the position of governmental representative by her husband, who would never suspect high treason, and who (for pride goeth before a fall) places his wife on the throne himself, fully convinced that everything is being dispatched under his name, under the formula: 'We, by the grace of God… etc.'[104]

Against these forced social mechanisms for control and the fantasy of male domination (which, he adds, in fact causes domination of men, who must tolerate their wives' public affairs), Hippel stages an *a fortiori* argument. If, under such conditions, women have proven themselves to be 'worthy of the glory which nature would make manifest in them',[105] and if most husbands already profess to be 'happy' in such an inferior arrangement, how much more so would men and women alike profit from true equality between the sexes and removal of the artificial (cultural) barriers to it, masquerading as 'nature', such as this clause of the marriage oath. Here, not only is the teleology of Kant's 'character of the sexes', which justified domination as a temporary developmental stage, refuted, but the fact of wives' infidelity is interpreted as a fall from the *original* equality of the sexes, rather than a sign of progress. By reverting to a rather conventional Christian theology of marriage, Hippel also subtly undermines the 'enlightened' arguments of his friend and regular interlocutor.

The second and most striking tendency in Hippel, as in Kant, is an intersection between the ethnographic/racial archive, on one hand, and the discourse on gender (in)equality, on the other. Hippel, like Kant, frequently juxtaposes these two forms of difference, integrating his arguments about the relation of the sexes with reflections on the German Enlightenment's ethnographic Other. Pointedly unlike Kant, however, he does so in a manner which exposes the fallacy of reducing evidence for cultural diversity to fixed hierarchies or using racism/sexism to short-circuit variation. This is not to say that

[104] HIPPEL, *On Improving*, 95.
[105] HIPPEL, *On Improving*, 95.

Hippel lacks similar culturally shared prejudices (his are well attested),[106] but his way of combining cultural or 'racial' with gender difference is critical and less warped, suggesting—indeed, in himself, attesting to—a relatively lukewarm reception of Kant's anthropology.

A transparent example, which seems lodged directly at Kant, is Hippel's critique of the domination of women as having any physical basis. Here too, he argues against nature and in favour of society as the proper frame of reference for sex character and the politics of sexual difference. Yet he refers to an ethnographic example that is anything but innocent or unmarked in the archive:

> Nevertheless, to deny the fair sex all such intellectual capabilities on the basis of physical appearance and to wrest its rank from it through foul play is to behave in precisely the same way as people have toward the American Indians, when, upon the testimony of a few observers who have seen no beards among these tribes, they not only refused to acknowledge the existence of this utterly masculine, and moreover very cumbersome, badge of honour, but in addition they drew the very obvious conclusion from the lack of the latter appendage that nature had refused to grant them the germ cells necessary for it, and thus that they belonged to a much lower class of human beings—and what is not less significant, that it was not possible that both we and they could have descended from the same patriarch. What kind of role can the beard play anyway, for according to the well-known proverb, 'the beard does not make the philosopher'.[107]

While not all of these ideas were shared by Kant (the polygenetic argument, in particular), here we recognise his old argument from the inability of indigenous Americans to grow beards. This, for Kant, designated them as a distinct 'race', whose inferiority ('weakness') he maintained and whose 'natural' extinction alongside all other non-white races he predicted in one of his *Reflexionen*, ignoring the role of European brutality and diseases[108]. By juxtaposing this argument with his case against the domination of women, Hippel displays not only his resistance to Kant's teleology as a justification for colonialism founded on a warped archive, but also an inverted use of the intersection between race and sex-difference, in favour of equality. Here, he shows that not all of Kant's audience found his ethnographic archive persuasive, even as they recognised that it was made in service of a hierarchy which set themselves at the pinnacle.

Conclusion

We began by locating Kant's warped ethnographic archive in the context of other uses of ethnography in the German Enlightenment. We compared how new evidence for human

[106] See, e.g., THEODOR GOTTLIEB VON HIPPEL, *The Status of Women: Collected Writings*, ed. and transl. TIMOTHY F. SELLNER (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2009), 191, on Africa's perpetually 'backward' culture 'since the time of the Greeks and Romans'.
[107] HIPPEL, *On Improving*, 75.
[108] See VAN GORKOM, 'Reddish, Iron-Rust Color', especially 166–67 and 169–71, and see my note 9.

variation was conceptualised and integrated into the emerging human sciences by Kant's contemporaries: Schlözer, Herder, and Blumenbach. The goal of this first section was to illustrate, by way of contrast, how visions of anthropology dovetailed with ways of using ethnography. What we call ethnography went by new names ('*Ethnographie*'; '*hodopaideia*'; '*Charakteristik*') and supported new programs of inquiry, as the human being was newly apprehended in world-historical; poetic-spiritual; and physical terms. In this light, the distinctiveness of Kant's 'pragmatic' anthropology lay in his orientation to norms and regularities, rather than particulars or universals, and his hostility to other ethnographic methods such as Herder's travel and poetry as irrational and idiosyncratic. He justified his own radically selective appeals to ethnographic material, in his own 'very pleasant doctrine of observation', as the 'popular' levity in an education in social belonging: a discourse about how to 'make of oneself' a man in his own *bourgeois* Königsberg cosmopolis.

Yet, given Kant's hostility to ethnography even as he indulged his audience in its riches, its status and role in his anthropology were far from straightforward or without internal conflicts. For the first part of his lecture course and textbook, the 'Didactic' section on humanity as defined from the inside out, he adapted Baumgarten's empirical psychology as the closest established framework. But for his second and most original part of the anthropology (on the 'characterisation' of humans from outside in; from persons to sexes, nations, and races), he integrated his own earlier pamphlet on aesthetic sentiments with a vast archive of textual and anecdotal evidence—much of it from contemporary accounts of the non-European world. Thus the provincial professor who—contra Herder—rejected travel as a valid mode of knowing humanity, and hardly left town, was not shy to glean 'popular' asides from travellers like Captain Cook (or second- and third-hand anthologies and gossip columns that he saw in the paper at breakfast). From those materials, he cobbled together *ad hoc* anthropological categories (e.g., violent 'jealousy' as a universal diacritic for power dynamics between the sexes) and he applied those categories to extract their evidence for human nature and social progress—distortingly, and often violently, reinscribing his 'collection of trivialities' into a manual for would-be 'citizens of the world'.[109] At times, he lost the descriptive forest for the normative trees. As his radically decontextualised observations could only tie human nature to a system of *Charakteristik* still in flux (or more precisely, as Zammito has stressed, arrested at an early stage),[110] his lessons in prudence remained obscure. What could Polynesia's familiar/strange polyamory teach his bright-eyed bachelors? What subjectivity was a Kantian anthropology meant to cultivate?

In conclusion, by turning to his interlocutor Hippel, and exploring an alternative

[109] The phrase 'collection of trivialities' dates from the early reception of Kant's *Anthropology* (Schleiermacher's 1799 review, the year after it was published). See CHAD WELLMON, *Becoming Human: Romantic Anthropology and the Embodiment of Freedom* (University Park: Penn State Press, 2010), 193–212.
[110] ZAMMITO, 'What a Young Man Needs', 243.

approach to the same questions in their culture, we saw a critical reception of Kant's popular anthropology. As opposed to Kant's teleological arguments—which justified male domination as a transient stage in progress toward the equality of the sexes, and European domination as a necessary stage in non-Europeans' progress beyond merely subsisting in 'happy' indolence—Hippel and his fans were more sympathetic to arguments for equality of the sexes *now* as well as, relatedly, sceptical about racism—because they could tell how fluid, social, and recently constructed such notions of 'progress' were. Whereas Kant intended his ethnographic archive to support his normative anthropology, ultimately, it proved subversive of his attempt to warp and reduce it to a teleological rational order. His audience looked to Tahiti hoping to become what he promised: citizens of a better world. But some were more disappointed than the professor to hear that this world was right at home.

And what of our own students, who rediscover Kant's racism and ask why, or whether, to read him today? As I have argued, prioritising context forecloses any one answer to these questions. In Kant's context, we have seen how his racist rhetoric and racist theory of human nature struggled to control new methods and new archives for the study of human difference growing up around him by imposing hierarchy and teleology and using skin tone as a monothetic classificatory principle. We have also seen how, in trying to market his anthropology course to a particular audience, Kant warped his archive's race/gender categories to model power dynamics and norms of progress that he hoped would be 'popular' with them—sometimes digressing into a collection of vulgar prejudices. And we have seen that this was not normal, nor always successful. Neither Kant's anthropological peers with other methods and archives, nor all of his own students, followed him. Rather than excuse or harmonise, context can be a means of critiquing choices and paths not taken. To read Kant in his context is the beginning of a conversation with him about those alternatives.

By the same token, in our own context, Kant's anthropology can be read in new directions. It can challenge us to rethink our context; to ask, for instance, 'Is antiracist anthropology possible? If so, how would it develop a commitment to universals—justice, human dignity, progress—without the racism that accompanied, and did not even contradict, Kant's own formulation of those ideas?' This critique should also challenge us to prioritise our own context as a limit to our demagogical tendencies. Like Kant's, our world is full of unconscious tensions that are symptomatic of historical change; a process which, by definition, outpaces the capacity of any individual to grasp one's place in it. Kant's anthropology offered reassurance, for some, that they still remained the centre of the world. Merely criticising it in order to shore up one's own position risks the same self-justifying distortion. But in what sense are we what we 'make of ourselves'? What is our 'world', and how do we live with others in it? Regardless of his answers, Kant's anthropology still has questions worth asking.

Historians and Their Craft

'Commodities move easily, as can people… but ideas and cultural practices are easier to transplant than translate' An interview with Nile Green

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Nile Green is a historian of the multiple globalisations of Islam and Muslims. After beginning his career as a historian of India and Pakistan, he has traced Muslim networks that connect Afghanistan, Iran, the Indian Ocean, Africa, Japan, Europe, and America. He has published ten books on the subject, including the award-winning volumes *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840-1915* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and *How Asia Found Herself: A Story of Intercultural Understanding* (Yale University Press, 2022). He serves as Professor & Ibn Khaldun Endowed Chair in World History at the University of California, Los Angeles. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Your first books focused on early modern South Asia, but more recently, you've come to redefine yourself as a broader scholar of global Islam from Asia to Europe, working also on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. What accounts for your intellectual trajectory? And how do you understand your evolution as a scholar over the past twenty years?

I'll start with my intellectual formation. My late teens to my early thirties were a period when my interests were shaped by traveling and spending increasingly longer periods wandering around places overland. By the time I got to India at the age of twenty, I'd already travelled a fair bit through the Middle East. This was my connecting link to India. So, I found my way to India first in my actual life and then intellectually through my studies. Moreover, whereas the 1990s was a period when the word 'globalisation' was being used a great deal, I was interested in the very opposite of globalisation. I was interested in what I came at that point to think about as local Islams, local expressions of Muslim cultural life and religious tradition in small towns and rural areas of Pakistan, India, Iran, and other places where I began visiting.

So, the places where I chose to spend more time were always outside of big cities. Sometimes, I would spend a few weeks traveling with some of the last nomadic communities in Western Iran or going to lots of small towns and villages throughout the Arab Middle East. What eventually took me to Aurangabad in India for my PhD research

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were the Sufi shrines that I initially considered as expressions of local Islam and that, as I wrote about in one of my early books, were mechanisms for 'making Muslim space', or as Lefebvre would say, 'place'. That is, shrines functioned as the institutional anchors of community memory through rituals, texts, and architecture working together in a memory-making continuum over time. So, my formation as a scholar of global Islam actually came out of really searching for the opposite: local Islam. This still shapes how I think to this day. Though I've come to theorise and describe 'global Islam' and even written a book called *Global Islam*, I'm very interested in describing the sites, communities, and mechanisms of globalisation as processes that are actually very distinct, particular, and embedded in (and between) different locales.

Another aspect of my intellectual formation to which I repeatedly come back in my writing is the centrality of geography: of physical geography, of historical geography, of conceptual geography, and of processes and cycles of connection and disconnection between different geographical regions. In many ways, I think that disconnection or separation has been much more of a historical norm than its more familiar and fashionable opposite and that it is only by recognising that persistent norm—the local, disconnected lives of most of human history—that we can properly contextualise supra-local or 'global' phenomena.

Perhaps another thing I'll add is my approach to primary sources. Whether it comes from a British empiricist tradition or is merely an idiosyncratic bibliomania, my decisions about what to write about are really driven by primary sources. Over the decades, over my twenty years as a scholar since my PhD, finding different genres and different combinations of sources has allowed me to ask different kinds of questions that, for me, always emerge from such material. However, the kinds of questions I see in my sources are also shaped by my intellectual formation: trying to read textual sources in relation to material, ritual, and architectural contexts, with physical geography as a constant factor in the background.

What new intellectual questions have intrigued you?

To answer this question, it might help to identify my core drive since this is the through line for the many different things I've written about. My core drive, not only as a historian but as a human being, has always been to try to understand how other human beings know what they know. Starting from my own earlier life, certainly from before I became a scholar, my interest was in how humans understand ultimate reality, the basis of knowing about the really big things. And it was this, of course, that drove me to study mysticism, specifically Sufism, the Islamic tradition of asking and framing those big epistemological questions. As I gradually threw in my lot with historians rather than theologians or philosophers, I turned to questions about how humans understand their social reality, how they understand their own history, and how they understand other people and cultures.

And, the specific humans about whom I've asked these questions are Muslims from communities and traditions whose languages I studied.

And that takes us again to primary sources. So, to ask how different Muslims understand other cultures, I've looked at many Persian and Urdu ethnographic accounts and travelogues; and in doing so, tried to see what more finely grained questions, or problems, those sources present in turn. The travel writings on which I've worked in, let's say, the Persian-speaking world led me to questions about how different Muslims have understood the past of other societies and how Muslim authors then adapted methods or sources of historical knowledge from those other parts of the world in order to reinterpret their own past. I edited a volume on Afghan history writing, which reflected my interest in archaeology and its reception in the Islamic world, as material evidence and deep time recalibrated many Muslim understandings of history. My more recent work, for example, in *How Asia Found Herself*, has concerned Middle Eastern and South Asian attempts to understand the deep history of China and pre-Islamic India. This required new systems of historical time-reckoning that in effect resulted in the Muslim adaptation of the BC/Before Christ timeline (as *qabl-i masih* and so on), even as a way of describing the ancient Chinese past. I think there is more to this than mere Westernisation, European discursive hegemony, and so on.

These interests have also touched on the history of science and the Muslim encounter with modern scientific ways of knowing. That aspect came up in my book, *The Love of Strangers,* which was a sort of microhistory of the early Middle Eastern encounter with the *ʿulum-i firangi*, the 'European sciences'. Then there is my interest in Islamic book history, whether printing or the bit of work I've done on the reception of manuscripts and practices of manuscript reading. This, too, is driven by my interest in the media of knowledge and mediated knowledge, whether through books, in printed or manuscript form, or through text, genre, and language.

In sum, as a world historian, I could say that I'm interested in Muslim peoples in contact with other peoples. Beyond the Muslim-Christian encounter, I've looked at the Muslim attempt to understand Buddhist regions, whether in Burma, Japan, or China. Some of my older work—and my current book manuscript on the Indian Ocean—looks at Indian and Middle Eastern encounters with Africa, particularly through Zanzibar and Kenya. And again, always working out of my source materials, I'm interested in the issue of language, whether the terminology of ethnographic difference or the emergence of functional pidgins for different people to communicate in the absence of an established lingua franca. Basically, how do people with one language, one set of linguistically embedded concepts, understand another society, even at the minimal practical level so as to be able to exchange trade goods with some of its members? Even for a region so routinely described as 'cosmopolitan', such as the Indian Ocean, we have a very limited

understanding of these truly fundamental processes that underpin the movement of the material goods that have left a clearer historical record.

I think that was very clear in your most recent book,* How Asia Found Herself*. I found particularly striking the story of the north Indian Muslim missionary ʿAbd al-Khaliq in Burma, who tried to describe to readers back home the essential tenets of Buddhism that he had acquired with no background knowledge or set categories.

Part of your development as a scholar has been an embrace of global history, a field that has grown immensely over the past thirty years. What changes to the field have you witnessed as a participant in recent decades? In which direction or directions does the future of the field lie? Have all the low-hanging fruits already been picked? Is it time to move on?

I think maybe it's become clear that, in some ways, I'm a reluctant or at least a critical global historian because my instincts have always remained and still remain for the particular, the local, the distinctive, the individual. This has led me into the sub-genre of the global microhistory. At least one book I wrote, *The Love of Strangers,* might be called such a thing, and perhaps also *Terrains of Exchange,* in which I tried to develop a methodology for tracing global interactions upwards and outwards from very particular local 'terrains'. This is because I believe all history, including global history, is microhistory in aggregate, and so we should develop lenses and methods to grapple with these processes of aggregation.

Hence, I've always felt that I have a critical stance on much of how the writing of global history has developed. Its formative methodology was one of starting out with commercial and economic or political economy-type questions that are in many ways top-down. For me, history that loses sight of the human being in the realm of action ceases to be history in a really crucial way and ceases—and I think this is particularly germane in the period in which we live now—to have the specific explanatory value that historians can add to conversations whose parameters are increasingly defined by scientists using non-human datasets over which they inevitably have greater mastery than historians.

What do I mean by that? Well, over the last twenty years, so many influential books on history have been written by non-historians, whether people coming out of the material sciences, the biological sciences, cognitive science, or geology and geography. Or, increasingly, there are environmentally-inflected histories of the Anthropocene, working on scales of history and data in which human experience, let alone agency, becomes little more than a colourful anecdote with no centrality to either the narrative, method, or process at large. The embrace of digital technologies and digital histories will likely further the risk of taking human action, comprehension, and even consciousness out of the pictures that historians paint of the world which we still must necessarily inhabit as

humans… So, though I am certainly not a Marxist, such digital mechanisation of the work of history surely at some point risks alienating not only historians but also their public from the products of historical labour—that is, alienating us from the world we must all necessarily inhabit and whose ways and workings 'historians' have in all societies explained for their communities.

Interesting. I had always considered environmental histories, works on the Anthropocene, or studies of materiality as representing a different and separate response to the previous paradigm of cultural history, one that was quite different from global history.

Indeed, the kinds of commodity or material-driven history have again come out of that early coding of global history as a history of economic processes and things that move, leaving material traces that can be mapped and interpreted without necessarily dealing with the question of local meaning (though of course some archaeologists, anthropologists, and others have long been concerned with the local meanings of traded objects).

One other thing I will throw in is that the global history that interests me tries to see the ways in which there are specific 'grids', or infrastructures, of connectivity. Just as I've said that globalisation always happens in specific locales, it can also be added that globalisation never happens everywhere. In every interaction or era, globalisation is always patchy, begging 'grid' questions of who, what, and where were connected, and how. From my *Bombay Islam* book onwards, my intervention in studies of human interactions around the Indian Ocean, or along the Eurasian 'Silk Road', or elsewhere has been to examine port cities and other classic synecdoches of connectivity to question whether commercial connection necessarily delivers cultural comprehension. Commodities move easily, as can people—goods and labour—but ideas and cultural practices are easier to transplant than translate.

Speaking of which, when we read your most recent book* (How Asia Found Herself) *in my graduate seminar, some of the students objected by stating that it disregards mobility and movement across Asia before the nineteenth century: sailors were on ships, Islam transplanted itself into Southeast Asia, etc. Isn't this an example of, if not cultural understanding, at least cultural interaction?

Of course, people have moved around, commodities moved around. But in writing *How Asia Found Herself,* I became interested in a basic question of global intellectual history: how is intercultural information transferred from one place to another?

Let me give a concrete example. Let's say our notional Indians are Tamil-speaking Muslims who go from southeastern India and settle in various places in Southeast Asia. That's great on the spot. They're going to develop variable and, in some cases, superb cultural-linguistic capacity, surely. But to what extent could they transfer that on-the-spot,

and in some respects tacit, understanding to other people in other places or later times? Did they write it and transfer it? Sure, you might be an Indian Tamil who has settled in Sulawesi, or Shanghai, and gained an extraordinary degree of linguistic or otherwise intercultural competence. But how would they explain that to people back in the old country in India by translating local linguistic concepts into Tamil? What is the preexisting ethnographic or philosophical linguistic repertoire in Tamil to describe such Southeast or East Asian others? What I tried to do in *How Asia Found Herself* was to find primary sources—not only travelogues and histories of other Asian cultures but also inter-Asian language guides and translations—that documented how such a process could actually work in practice. There is an oft-quoted old Italian adage *traduttore, traditore* ('translator, traitor'). But even setting aside the epistemological scepticism voiced in such folk wisdom, how intercultural understanding took shape on the ground in one Asian 'terrain of exchange' after another remains a question for global historians that can only be answered in the linguistic (indeed, interlinguistic) and philological nitty-gritty. For this, we need textual source materials that allow us to trace the degree to which cross-cultural comprehension does or doesn't keep pace with the cross-cultural movement of commodities. This takes us back to my earlier critique of the formative methods of global history…

Let me jump to another question here regarding* How Asia Found Herself*. One of the things that I noticed was that part of its purpose was to gauge intercultural understanding among Asians. Why is that? Why is intercultural understanding the marker of what makes Asia a discrete entity?

I certainly don't think this is the only way we can gauge interactions across Asia. But my intervention has been that, again, so much of global history, or, rather, the interregional history of Asia, is predicated on the movement of goods. It's what I've called, often very critically, the 'Silk Road paradigm', which paints trade as the perpetual partner of cultural exchange and which also often projects the continuity of such intercultural connections across the long durée. Yet, when I think of global history, I see interconnectivity waxing and waning across periods and between places, just as we now see with this most recent historical period of globalisation. Again, I think what is much more the norm of human historical experience is disconnection and separation, as well as the distinct intellectual horizons this shapes. By this, I don't mean that most of humanity has thereby historically been parochially narrow-minded because 'connection' and 'cosmopolitanism' are by no means universal requirements for the life of the mind, still less the imagination. I think that so much that is valuable, unique, and worthy of preservation by historians in our role as what Peter Burke called 'remembrancers' consists of such disconnected lives and lifeworlds. But the forces of history have often pushed such lives and lifeworlds together—forcibly connecting them.

But to get to the heart of your question, I certainly don't think that intercultural understanding is the most important way of gauging interactions across Asia. But I think it's a crucial one that has remained startlingly underexamined for the early modern and modern periods.

The way I tried to gauge the transfer of inter-Asian understanding was not simply by looking at source texts (travelogues, translations, etc.) on their own. I also tried to trace what was printed, where such texts were distributed, and who might have read them because it's only then that we can say that such and such an item of information wasn't merely known to one person—to that notional Tamil migrant on the spot in Sulawesi. So, I tried to find evidence of print runs as well as distribution networks. If I have an Urdu history of China that was issued in 2,000 copies by an organisation with an established membership, well, I can say that maybe more people learned from its contents. So, there are ways to demonstrate, or at least postulate, the transfer of cross-cultural knowledge by putting the close reading of texts together with the study of the informational infrastructures through which specific items of knowledge moved from one place to another.

One of the things that I enjoy the most about your work is that you're able to take conventional, established narratives about the nineteenth century—say, for example, the inexorable rise of a centralising and modernising state based on European models, technology and disciplinary mechanisms—and turn them on their head. You find these completely different stories in this period. In* Bombay Islam*, you dismantle Weberian notions of the disenchantment of modernity by looking at how people actually used steamships, railroads, and printing. In* How Asia Found Herself*, you transform the well-worn story about Saidian power-knowledge relations and the creation of Orientalist knowledge into a different story of the creative font of Asian self-discovery. Has anything in particular inspired you to challenge these meta-narratives of the nineteenth century?

What drew me into the nineteenth century originally was simply the sources: finding forgotten lithographs and thinking, 'Now this is interesting!' Moving into the nineteenth century allowed me to answer certain questions in sufficient detail that I felt I couldn't for earlier periods on which I'd worked. Whatever distinction my work has in the simple sense of being a bit different from other scholarship is, I think, because my core works have been drawn from and built on previously ignored primary sources. Only after a source has caught my attention do I say, well, I'd better find out what the professionals, what the historians have written about the themes dealt with in this work. So, whereas the historiography of colonial Bombay was all about factory labour, communal conflict, and so on, the corpus of hagiographies that drew me to Bombay allowed me to depict a very different place from the 'disenchanted' city of labour historians.

There's also an instinctive or perhaps principled issue here. I'm not a Marxist historian. And I'm not a nationalist historian. As one gets older, as one reads more subtly, one increasingly recognises the intellectual consequences of certain axioms of Marx through Gramsci, through Foucault, through Said, and through to scholars writing today. The same might be said for the subtle ideology of (neo)liberalism that has shaped so much of the writing of global history. So, I try to avoid unconsciously replicating these paradigms, which is the work of ideology, since, as the old saying goes, ideology is when ideas have you rather than when you have ideas. Moreover, when you recognise the ideological script, a work of scholarship becomes utterly predictable, and monotonous. The human past is infinitely more plentiful, contradictory, and other than such normative scripts can capture.

There are things that I still value from the interpretive currents that surrounded Said and Foucault. The linguistic turn influenced the way I work with texts a great deal and it still does with its emphasis on the interplay of words and reality since that deals with my driving concerns as a historian with how people have understood the worlds they experience. Likewise, the series of twentieth-century debates in history and in the humanities over the relationship between ideas and objects, which again go back to my core concerns as a human being as much as a scholar: how do people know what they know? Yet, even though I remain driven as a scholar by these basic epistemological questions (which, as a historian, I consider in relation to the material factors I've called intellectual infrastructures, which are inevitably products of capital and labour), I try hard not to unconsciously replicate the claim of Gramsci, Foucault, Said, etc. that human knowledge is an arbitrary replication of power relations. I think world history has many other lessons to teach us.

Book Reviews

Mobilizing Money for the Common Good
The Social Dimension of Credit (14th-19th Century)

Mauro Carboni and Pietro Delcorno, eds
(Bologna: il Mulino, 2024)
[ISBN: 9788815388285]

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In *Mobilizing Money for the Common Good: The Social Dimension of Credit (14th-19th century)*, Mauro Carboni and Pietro Delcorno masterfully weave together contributions addressing the question of 'how the mobilization of capital in pursuit of the public good took place in different contexts' between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries.[1] The volume developed out of a conference entitled 'Mobilizing Money for the Public Good', which was held on 7–8 November 2022 at the Centro Studi sui Monti di Pietà e sul Credito Solidaristico in Bologna. According to the editors, the purpose of the conference was to bridge the gap between the divergent approaches to government debt, community-based credit, and the capital formation of proto-welfare institutions that were adopted by the fields of history and economics. The volume delves deeper into these themes in three sections: 'Credit and Public Bodies', 'The Social Dimension of Small Credit', and 'Credit and Proto-Welfare Agencies'.

The first section opens with 'Providing Capital for the Public Good: The Owners of the Bonds Issued by the King, the Kingdom, and the City in Late Medieval Valencia' by Antoni Furió. As the title suggests, Furió's article explores the development of consolidated, long-term debt in the Valencia. It also explains the ways in which the sale of annuities by the city, the king, and the kingdom created new investment possibilities that were accessible to a much broader segment of the Valencian society. While Furió emphasises in his conclusion that the sale of bonds was hardly meant to serve the public good and catered primarily to 'the noble and bourgeois magnates who ruled the kingdom', his contribution demonstrates that this financial innovation created opportunities for

[1] MAURO CARBONI and PIETRO DELCORNO, 'Introduction', in *Mobilizing Money for the Common Good: The Social Dimension of Credit (14th-19th century)*, eds MAURO CARBONI and PIETRO DELCORNO (Bologna: il Mulino, 2024), 13.

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members of the lower classes to invest their modest capital in public debt.[2] Jaco Zuijderduijn also notes the democratising effect of public debt in 'Public Debt in the Pre-Modern Low Countries, 1250-1800: Who Reaped the Fruits?' The author's quantitative study of several datasets derived from taxation and financial administration records of different cities in the pre-modern Low Countries allows him to conclude that, while the largest share of public annuities fell to the political elites, craftsmen and other middling citizens routinely purchased small annuities for a steady income that could ensure their survival during hard times. He adds that, far from merely serving to enrich the elites, urban public debt furnished rulers with essential financial services, promoted investment opportunities to a large and diverse pool of citizens, and forged stronger bonds between these citizens and the city government. Viewing public debt through the prism of intellectual history, Giorgio Lizzul's 'Taking a Breath: The Use of Corporeal Metaphors to Represent the Venetian Debt and Common Good' surveys various metaphors that described the relationship between capital and the common good in fourteenth- to sixteenth-century Venice. He concentrates on anatomical metaphors that invoked images of the state as an ailing body for which capital provided a relief or a cure, and topographical metaphors that visualised public debt through geographical features such as mountains. Jacopo Sartori's 'New Perspectives on the Role of the *Taula de Canvì* of Barcelona in the Reign of Charles V' shifts the focus from public debt to public banks, namely the one established in Barcelona in 1401. By placing records of municipal deliberations in dialogue with quantitative sources, Sartori reveals that the *Taula de Canvì* employed opaque bookkeeping practices to evade prohibitions on public lending.

The second section, 'The Social Dimension of Small Credit', draws attention to many sources of small loans that existed in Europe between the thirteenth and the twentieth centuries and considers the social forces that made these forms of credit viable. In 'Providing Credit and Capital: The Role of Lombard Moneylenders in Medieval Tyrol', Stephan Nicolussi-Köhler introduces Lombard pawnshops, known as *casane*, that operated in the County of Tyrol in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. According to the author, by performing advanced financial operations and providing a broad range of services, the *casane* were 'offering an adequate substitute for financial services offered by banks'.[3] With this thesis, Nicolussi-Köhler challenges the notion that moneylending activity was stifled in Medieval Europe and that credit institutions did not become commonplace until the establishment of modern banks centuries later. Matteo Pompermaier continues the discussion of private moneylending enterprises in 'Dynamic

[2] ANTONI FURIÓ, 'Providing Capital for the Public Good: The Owners of the Bonds Issued by the King, the Kingdom, and the City in Late Medieval Valencia', in *Mobilizing Money for the Common Good: The Social Dimension of Credit (14th-19th century)*, eds CARBONI and DELCORNO, 45.

[3] STEPHAN NICOLUSSI-KÖHLER, 'Providing Credit and Capital: The Role of Lombard Moneylenders in Medieval Tyrol', in *Mobilizing Money for the Common Good: The Social Dimension of Credit (14th-19th century)*, eds CARBONI and DELCORNO, 148.

Networks? Credit and Trust in Renaissance Florence (1427-1430)' and argues that, 'in Renaissance Florence, the majority of credit transactions took place through interpersonal networks'.[4] Building on his earlier work co-authored with Elise M. Dermineur, which studies the interpersonal credit network of the *gonfalone* of Niccio using the Catasto of 1427, Pompermaier dedicates this article to the question of how networks transform over time.[5] One of the conclusions of his study was that well-connected individuals managed to maintain access to credit even when they consistently failed to repay their loans in a timely fashion because they could rely on a robust social network for support. 'The Importance of Adaptivity in Small-Scale Lending Institutions: The Case of the Dutch Help Banks, 1848-1898' by Amaury de Vicq and Christiaan van Bochove shifts the spotlight to public credit and examines cosignatory lending institutions known as help banks (*hulpbanken*), which operated in the Netherlands between the mid-nineteenth and the late twentieth centuries and offered small loans secured through cosigners. The authors argue that, unlike many contemporary financial institutions, the help banks rendered the urban credit market more inclusive and supported small business owners. According to their findings, the reason for the help banks' success was their adaptability, which enabled them to continue meeting their clients' needs and to stay resilient as the Dutch economy underwent profound transformations.

The final section, 'Credit and Proto-Welfare Agencies', highlights institutions that served the common good by catering to the poor. In 'The Charitable Institution of the *Almoina* of Lleida in the XIV Century', Núria Preixens Vidal introduces the *almoina* of Lleida, which was dedicated to feeding the poor, and explains how it was established, financed, and administered. Supported by the Church, the *almoinas* spread to many cities controlled by the Crown of Aragon and grew to perform financial operations stretching far beyond its original purpose. 'Collecting Resources to Establish a Mount of Piety: Ideas and Experiences in Bernardino of Feltre (1439-1494)' by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli also dwells on the intersection of charity and finance. The author analyses the sermons of a Franciscan preacher, Bernardino da Feltre, who dedicated much of his life to advocating for the establishment of *monti di pietà* (mountains of piety), charitable pawnshops that were designed to offer small loans to the poor and gradually developed into banks. Muzzarelli focuses on the strategies that the preacher—and other friars that followed his cause—employed to collect funds for the *monti di pietà*. With its careful analysis of Bernardino's preaching campaigns, the contribution offers nuanced insights into the relationship between the preacher and the states in which he promoted the foundation of the *monti*. Francesco Bianchi's 'Public and Private Funding for Health and Welfare Services in Late

[4] MATTEO POMPERMAIER, 'Dynamic Networks? Credit and Trust in Renaissance Florence (1427-1430)', in *Mobilizing Money for the Common Good: The Social Dimension of Credit (14th-19th century)*, eds CARBONI and DELCORNO (Bologna: il Mulino, 2024), 150.

[5] ELISE M. DERMINEUR and MATTEO POMPERMAIER, 'Credit Networks in Renaissance Florence: Revisiting the Catasto of 1427', *RiSES – Ricerche di Storia Economica e Sociale* 8, no. 1–2 (2022): 147–76.

Medieval Italy' also addresses the interactions between welfare institutions and mediaeval states by investigating various public and private initiatives to finance healthcare in late mediaeval Italian communes. Bianchi observes in numerous cities in Italy, including Genoa, Lucca, Mantua, and Padua, a tendency to see the care for the ill as essential for the common good and to treat it as a responsibility shared by the elites, various public bodies, and, gradually, the state. The states' role in the development of welfare institutions is also prominent in Mauro Carboni's 'Family Formation and Civic Identity: Funding Dowries in Early Modern Bologna'. In it, the author discusses ways in which the secular and religious authorities of the city of Bologna used charitable institutions dedicated to dowries and marriage to encourage the formation of families that upheld Christian and civic ideals. The *Monte del Matrimonio* holds a special place in Carboni's narrative because, unlike other dowry funds and conservatories that relied on donations, this sixteenth-century institution functioned as a savings bank and enabled parents to deposit money that could later be used for their daughters' dowries.

Carboni and Delcorno's volume brings together stimulating papers that paint a vibrant picture of how credit and welfare in Europe developed and transformed between the late Middle Ages and the end of the nineteenth century. In addition to the themes outlined in the volume's introduction, the papers bring into focus and provide innovative answers to an array of questions: how did medieval and early modern credit and welfare institutions empower their clients to attain financial security instead of depending on charity? How were these institutions received by the public, and what civic and religious ideals did they promote? How did states support, censor, or take advantage of different instruments for credit and welfare, and how did these relationships change over time? And, finally, how did the evolution of credit reshape the notion of the common good and how did the understanding of this concept vary across time and space? The volume offers fascinating answers to these questions and introduces a broad range of sources and methods for future studies.

Le due repubbliche
Pensare la Rivoluzione nella Francia del 1848

Daniele Di Bartolomeo
(Roma: Viella, 2024)
[ISBN 9791254696880]

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From farce to *opera seria*. *Le due repubbliche* can be described as a double reappraisal, aimed at reinterpreting the role of the recent past during a specific historical moment marked by the dramatic duplication and reactivation of characters, institutions, traumas, and hopes—elements of a past that showed no signs of fading away. As is well known, France on the eve of 1848 presented itself as an aspiring Republic gazing into a mirror that distorted its image, reflecting the features of protagonists who had driven first the French Revolution and then the Napoleonic era. What is entirely new in this book, on the other hand, is the deliberate intent to *take seriously*—a phrase that not by chance is repeated several times in the text—the re-actualisation of the recent past, as carried out by commentators and spectators who were often the very actors on stage.

Daniele Di Bartolomeo, the author of this stimulating book, revisits a field of analysis previously explored in his earlier work (see, for example, *Nelle vesti di Clio. L'uso politico della storia nella Rivoluzione francese (1789-1799)*, 2014). The *historical repetition*, resulting from the interplay of objective elements and personal interpretations, is characterised by a series of distinctive traits presented in paragraph 4 of chapter 4 (*Nani e giganti*, 103–12). These traits range from the complexity and variety inherent in the various recoveries of the past, to the asymmetry and contrast—both in terms of importance and degree of (in)authenticity—between the two temporal planes, which often underpin more or less substantiated accusations of anachronism. This form of repetition is primarily *predictive*, capable of prefiguring various and opposing future scenarios through comparison—whether by excess, deficiency, or contrast—with specific episodes of an extremely recent past, in order to make an interpretation possible as well as to predict its outcomes ('al fine non solo di consentirne un'interpretazione ma anche di pronosticarne gli esiti', 204). Taking historical repetition seriously constitutes the common objective of the two levels of analysis structuring this book: on the one hand, to reread a pivotal moment of nineteenth-century European history through a fresh analytical lens and on the other, on a more

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general level, to measure the relevance of the use of history in the development of a French political culture.

In this regard, as the author himself acknowledges (204), the entire analysis serves as a case study to test the diagnostic concepts developed in collaboration with Francesco Benigno in the recent *Napoleone deve morire. L'idea di ripetizione storica nella Rivoluzione francese* (2020). This is an exceptional case study indeed: unlike the Revolutionary Decade explored in the author's earlier work, a very recent historical precedent could be reiterated in the historical period under examination here, one whose memory remained vivid and was experienced firsthand by some of the protagonists themselves. However, French 1848 is also notable for its ability to create new references for historical repetition and thus by the possibility of quickly becoming a precedent in its own right. And here lies perhaps the reason for the emblematic ellipsis in the title of the work. Rather than anchoring the revolutionary dimension to 1789, the title places the concept of revolution in a broader dimension, demonstrating how historical repetition is based on a process *in fieri*—a construction through accumulation and composition rather than a singular or sudden creation. The cover image (L. Fortuné, *Tentative de 1793*), which iconographically depicts the typical parallelism between the first two French republics, illustrates this ongoing redefinition of historical exemplarity (78–79). Although the lithograph was modified in some fundamental stylistic features in light of how the events of 1848 played out, it could not escape the rapid fate of obsolescence that condemned historical snapshots to premature ageing. Such snapshots paled in comparison to a continually unfolding historical 'film' that required new symbols, messages and meanings (162).

While the core of the research is centred on 1848, key moments both before and after are also considered. The *Prologo* (21–25) opens with a view of the events of 1830, already shaped by the dissemination of parallels with the past, both national and foreign, with the narrative of the Glorious Revolution serving as the ultimate historical reference—and cautionary tale. 'L'anno dei portenti'—1848—is placed at the centre of a live history, which from February and the first signs of the imminent revolution follows the evolving public debate on the repetitiveness of history and culminates in the rise of Louis Napoléon to the presidency of the Republic as the embodiment of the political use of the past (chapters 1–3). Particularly noteworthy are the pages of chapter 4 (*«Le cercle où nous tournons depuis bientôt soixante ans»*, 113–40), which reread the constitutional process in light of the influence of a past that constantly threatened to return to the fore. This influence decisively shaped a work that was far from a mere exercise in abstract constitutional engineering.

The choice of sources stands out here, extending beyond the reports of assembly proceedings to include a wide-ranging analysis of the political periodicals of the time, which are examined in search of every reference to events of a recent past ready to return to the limelight. These are tales and imaginaries grounded in recent history that take the form of 'oroscopi del passato', an expression that gives chapter 5 its title. This concept also ties to the use of images, the other main analytical focus of this study.

Prints and lithographs—often found within the same journalistic sources—are examined alongside paintings whose symbolism, allegorical meanings, and historical references are deconstructed by the author.

The study demonstrates that the key features of the 1848 Constitution—from the election of the president to the organisation of the legislature into one or two chambers—were shaped by the perceived threats from the revolutionary past. These threats were seen as oscillating between two opposing scenarios: the potential for an all-powerful Assembly leading to anarchy and the tyranny of a single man poised to repeat the deeds of the first emperor. Hence the relevance of the *interpretation* of revolutionary events and, thus, the centrality of historiographical works on the French Revolution. It is no surprise, then, that some of the key characters of the 1848 events overlapped with the most prominent historians of the period, such as Alphonse de Lamartine, Adolphe Thiers, and Louis Blanc. Di Bartolomeo's analysis thus ends up, perhaps even unintentionally, intertwining with the complex evolution of revolutionary historiography, which, through different perspectives, converged in deconstructing the monolithic portrayal of the French Revolution.

As good 'finalistic readers', we read the pages that minutely reconstruct the evolutions of the politics and imagery of past history in 1848 while waiting—almost yearning—to reach the known conclusion: the imperial restoration. This outcome remains in the background throughout the analysis before being addressed in the last strictly analytical chapter (*Oroscopi del passato*, 141–176), which delves into the plots surrounding the rise of the new emperor. It is precisely plots and narratives that we are dealing with, as we understand that it is only the telling of a particular historical event and the creation of a *script* by the protagonists—according to the concept developed by Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein (*Scripting Revolution. A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions*, 2015)—that make possible the revitalisation of the past and its political significance for the present.

The final chapter, external to the main analysis at first glance, reconstructs an 'archaeology of the state of the art', from early proponents of a century consumed by continuous repetition to the most recent developments in historiography on the use of the past in French 1848. This chapter highlights the most original trait of this book—its commitment to treating *ripetizione storica* as a serious historical object, rather than dismissing it as a mere rhetorical tool or a decadent embellishment. However, this recurring call for *seriousness* seems to depend on an earlier shift in perspective that leads the historian to examine the political use of historical precedents *before* the unfolding of events. This approach illuminates the *predictive* potential of historical repetition—its capacity to forge plausible *scenarios* of imminent realisation, or 'di delineare influenti ipotesi di futuro' (45).

Anyone approaching the book cannot help but think at first of the famous Marxian reading of the rise of the new emperor, as presented in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Marx's analysis profoundly influenced how contemporary observers

and later scholars interpreted the *coup d'état* of 2 December 1851. Di Bartolomeo's study, however, convincingly demonstrates the limitations of the great German philosopher's approach, which was engaged in a frantic search for meaning in the reiteration of a history that seemed perpetually unable to progress. In Marx's construction, the farcical quality that minor duplications of unattainable events take on largely stems from his impatience as a philosopher of historical progress with the permanence of a past that had to be overcome at all costs—leaving the dead to bury their dead ('che i morti seppelliscano i loro morti', 181).

Yet, we might also recognise in this typical mechanism of affirmation and comic denial a form of exorcism: a desperate attempt to dissipate the subversive potential—both psychological and objective—of the most terrible scenarios by evoking them and proclaiming their impossibility. This strategy, while remaining distinct from it, bears certain similarities to the *homeopathic* cure described by the author, whereby some historical actors pre-emptively realised a given event in order to neutralise its destabilising potential (77).

Despite the relevance of Marx's reflection, it is telling that the author chooses to address its contents analytically only in the final chapter (*«Hegel nota in un passo…»*, 177–212), relocating the work in its historical context—namely, the aftermath of the nephew of the great Corsican general ascending to the imperial seat. Here, we learn that Marx is not the initiator of the *topos* of the farcical repetition of the past, as this theme had already been introduced by the likes of Heinrich Heine, Alexis de Tocqueville, Victor Hugo and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Nor—as the author himself points out—was *The Eighteenth Brumaire* the first trace of political conditioning of the past in the philosopher's own production (147–48). Although no longer seen as a pioneering work, Marx's reflections seem to take on an even greater importance as a sign, a 'paradigm of an epoch'—to keep borrowing vaguely Hegelian language. The decision to limit its analysis to the concluding pages of *Le due repubbliche*, however, depends on the ability of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* to indelibly influence (almost) every subsequent approach to the theme of historical repetition. It effectively confined the phenomenon to the realm of farce—or, at best, to the category of the tragicomic—denying its potential as a crucial moment for orienting the present and constructing the future. Hence the importance of Di Bartolomeo's study: by shifting the perspective from retrospection to prediction, it shows that history not only worked as a repertoire of prescriptive exempla, but also as a simulator indicating the political outcomes of different institutional frameworks ('la storia fungeva non solo da repertorio normativo, ma anche da simulatore capace di anticipare le conseguenze politiche dei diversi modelli istituzionali', 127).

By the end of the study, the image of history as "'farmaco", insieme medicina e veleno della politica' proposed in the Introduction (18–19) is confirmed—indeed, it remains to be clarified which of these two poles ultimately prevails. Even if we account for the intrinsic limits of any *philological* conception of historical repetition—i.e. the belief, shared by the actors of 1848 and many later interpreters, that the only way to

duplicate the past is an unrealistic repetition of the same historical, social and political conditions—the obsession with a resurrected past nevertheless seems to threaten both the progress of the future and historical development itself. This fixation risked conditioning the lucidity with which contemporaries read the events they experience firsthand, as they constantly viewed them through the deforming lens of 'historical precedent'.

The whole issue could be resolved precisely by shifting from an unrealistic notion of full historical coincidence to one of partial repetition, which allows for the progressive development of history. This approach does not account for exact re-editions and rather focuses on parallelisms and analogies with forms of the past. Therefore, partial repetition triggers processes of 'sincronizzazione': encouraging dialogues between the present and specific historical scenarios. In this framework, the common people are recognised as a fundamental actor in enhancing the aspects of the past that the present seemed to reproduce, giving the analogy an image of objectivity (215). While the creation of repetition has long appeared to be the monopoly of the ruling classes or the intellectual élite, Di Bartolomeo underscores the crucial role of the popular base: such processes, the author argues, could not take place without its consent. This raises questions about how images of historical repetition circulate within society and, more specifically, among sections of the population not as directly involved in political struggles as representatives and publicists. In addition to the audiences of individual newspapers examined in the book and the circulation of the images they contain, the only thermometer for measuring how imagery from the past influenced the French common people seems, paradoxically, to be electoral outcomes. These, however, represent only the final snapshot, the concluding moment of a process that the author has invited us to consider in its origins and developments.

Thus, while the problem of measuring the incidence of different forms of historical repetition on the people remains inevitably pending—for the time being—its partial application seems to be the only truly productive way to harness history for political use. This is exemplified by the shaping of the concept of *césarisme* (167 ff.), a neologism indicating a newly coined form of government. As the author demonstrates, such a term could only arise from a non-philological understanding of historical repetition. Hence the importance of legacy ('eredità'), a concept evoked by the author (110), as the true dimension for framing the productive potential of historical repetition in a progressive context. It suggests a form of 'ripetizione creativa del passato' (221), which produces ever new historical scenarios and thus manages to escape the *cul-de-sac* of anacyclosis. Among the many historical scenarios evoked and described in this insightful study, one seems to be excluded from any foreshadowing: the Republic as a blank slate—the problem of creation itself.

Tous ceux qui tombent. Visages du massacre de la Saint-Barthélemy

Jérémie Foa
(Paris, La Découverte, 2021)
[ISBN 9782348057885]

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Jérémie Foa's book seeks to reconstruct the individual stories of those involved in the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in August 1572. The author undertakes a significant mission: despite the frequent anonymity of these figures, 'it is our duty to name them' (212). He thus presents a 'history of the small, the ordinary, the mundane', to examine the event 'from below, at ground level, through its anonymous protagonists—victims or killers, mere passersby and fervent slaughterers—within their human triviality' (7). The book is structured into twenty-six short chapters, without an introduction or conclusion, and supplemented at the end with footnotes, bibliographic suggestions, and references to various sources.

This book is highly engaging for its focus on the participants, their life paths, and their actions during the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. This 'history from below' is, above all, an exercise in identification, akin to a police investigation (242). While some well-known perpetrators were already documented—ordinary men such as Thomas Croizier (31 and 275), Nicolas Pezou (55 and 269), or Jean Tanchou (197)—Jérémie Foa introduces us to others like Claude Chenet (93 and 266), Pierre Coullon, André Mornieu (161 and 264), among others. The book also highlights a few victims, such as Louis Chesneau (69), Pierre de La Ramée (81), Abraham Baillet (211), François de la Martellière (226), and more. It also recounts acts of rescue, some heroic, like those of the Burlamacchi children (163), the goldsmith Augustin Cerize (167), or the last-minute salvation of Claude Puget (193).

Foa explores the notion of solidarity, whether local or professional (170), coexisting with the worst atrocities of 'domestic slaughter' (189) and 'neighbourly violence' (234). This proximity between neighbours, between the killers and their victims, is central to the book: all share the same local knowledge and familiarity with the area (39). The historian's work of identification is geographical as well: the rue de l'Homme-Armé (53), the vallée de la Misère (48), and so forth. Beyond merely identifying people and places, Foa aims to show that the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre was a 'neighbourly massacre' (8, 41, and 256), carried out between neighbours on a 'micro-local' scale (157). He argues against the idea that the massacre

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was premeditated, suggesting instead that it was the result of long-standing grievances—cumulative vexations, sometimes minor ('micro-persecutions': p. 142), sporadic imprisonments (such as at the Conciergerie between 1567 and 1570), and various conflicts among neighbours who knew each other well. Thus, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre appears as the unpredictable culmination of prolonged tension (35).

What might initially seem like a history of anecdotal 'news items' (139) involving ordinary men and women gains significance under two conditions. The first is to situate the 'neighbourly crime' within a broader historical context. Foa devotes several passages to clothing (such as the fashion of embossing: p. 158), food (21), the term 'the said opinion' (*ladite opinion*) (27), the inferior status of women (134), the Paris militia (33), the precarious status of scholars (75), the baptismal names given by Protestants to their children (207), and the miniaturisation of watchmaking (255). The second condition involves a critical examination of the sources. The author used notarial records (8), the prison registers of the Conciergerie, and writings from contemporaries like Montaigne, L'Estoile, De Thou, and Aubigné. Of these sources, he heavily relies on *Mémoires de France sous Charles neuviesme* by Simon Goulart (91, 108, 144, 208, 244, etc.): this text enables him to compile lists of names that he then traces in the archives.

However, these archives also reveal surprises, pitfalls, and disappointments, which Foa carefully notes. The banality of evil is reflected in the notarial acts that continue to be recorded during the massacre: marriages, sales, and purchases carried on in St. Bartholomew's Paris (116). The author observes the same 'archival indifference' in Lyon or Toulouse (123), although it is not possible for him to document those who did not participate in the massacres (216). Confronted with sources that are sometimes tedious or incomplete (245), Foa advises 'long browsing' (50 and 253), relying on the serendipity of research (222) to make a 'fortunate find' (92). He stresses the importance of caution, noting that the archives distort reality and often neglect 'humble' people—the weak, the small, the poor, and women (219). The author admits he often resorts to hypotheses (148), for instance, regarding the death of François de la Martellière (233), and imagination serves as 'the primary driver of [his] curiosity' (220). Despite all his efforts, the sources sometimes leave him with a sense of incompleteness (65), powerless before the 'faces we have not recognised' (213). It is to this personal journey that Jérémie Foa invites us, to his dreams of knowledge (65) or digging beneath the Eiffel Tower (101), and to the echoes of the present his research inspires, such as the assassination of Samuel Paty (84).

This is what makes this book so unique and compelling.

Early Modern Litterae Indipetae *for the East Indies*

Elisa Frei
(Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2024)
[ISBN 978 90 04 53800 9]

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No other religious order exemplifies Max Weber's intuition that spirituality and rationality must be studied side by side better than the Society of Jesus. The remarkable corpus of letters, *Litterae indipetae,* collected in the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, in which the Jesuits sought permission from the general of the order to join missions in the Indies, has received ample scholarly attention in the last two decades. Written between 1580 and the suppression and after the restoration of the order, they are of interest for their ardent spiritual content and institutional regulatory function. Elisa Frei's monograph takes a sample of 1,565 *indipetae* letters written between 1687 and 1730 by Jesuits from Italian assistancy and addressed to two generals, Tirso González de Santalla and Michelangelo Tamburini, asking to be sent to Asian missions, preferably Japan and China. In four compact and erudite chapters, she provides a fascinating tapestry of Jesuit lives, torn between Ignatian spiritual desire for 'magis' or Xavier's triple 'magis' and the Society's focus on regulation and procedure. Frei opens the pages to individual Jesuit voices, both lowly and noble members who repeatedly (some of them up to thirty times) requested to be sent to the Indies with old and new arguments. She records a history of responses from superiors and generals who had difficulty matching Jesuit personnel resources with available missionary appointments. A blueprint or model for writing a successful *indipeta*, a missionary 'statement of purpose', was formalised from the late sixteenth century, but individual rhetorical strategies were (perceived as) crucial for achieving a personal goal—that of being sent to the Indies. The *indipetae* stimulated the desire to travel, work hard, and suffer martyrdom, but not all *Indias petentes* were allowed to leave Italian Jesuit institutions. Frei gives equal space to successful and unsuccessful petitioners because she is interested in the details of personal and institutional negotiations, with peaks and lows in recruitment.

In the first chapter ('*Litterae Indipetae*'), Frei shows how the *litterae indipetae* turned into a genre with a predetermined format, especially after Tamburini's circular in 1722, which also provoked an 'explosion' of vocations for the Indies in Italy. It also outlined an ideal missionary model and a 'typical' petitioner. These were not, however, Frei

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claims, fixed and unchangeable models. For China and Japan, certain qualities, such as linguistic skills and mathematics, were required more than others. On the other hand, it was not always clear when to emphasise one's qualities or demerits. The candidates were left to guess the procurator's or general's preference at that moment. In particular, the temporal coadjutors were not considered necessary in the missions unless they had specific talents or skills, such as medical training. Writing an *indipeta* was a difficult task for any writer. One had to fit into the expected scheme and find original words supporting one's candidacy. Frei points out that there were hardly two identical letters out of some 22,000 *indipetae* written over four hundred years.

The second chapter ('Desires: Push and Pull Factors') is structured around Jesuit desires that, in a negative sense, pushed the Jesuits outside of Europe (and their family circle) and pulled them, in a positive sense, towards Asia. The pull and push may be inspired by literary and documentary/hagiographical sources presenting all the advantages of pursuing missionary, active, and spiritual careers. The push factor is discussed in the book in quite some detail. The Jesuits, especially those from noble families, faced problems from their parents, who refused to let them travel far and never return. Even the 'holy hatred' for the natural family appears as an emotion the Jesuits had to deal with. Convincing the procurator or general with prophetic dreams and the premonition of future heroic missionary acts was easier than convincing a powerful noble father or mother. Mostly, however, it was the uncertainty of the general's choice that left many petitioners distressed and inconsolable.

A large part of the third chapter, entitled 'The Petitioners Network', is about Ignazio Maria Romeo (1676–1724?), who desperately wrote letters and fought his father, Marquis delli Magnisi, and his mother, the godmother of the viceroy of Sicily, who used their local political power to stop him from leaving for Asia. Similar stories are pieced together from another important archival source, the correspondence of the generals—*epistolae generalium*. We can glimpse some of the generals' strategies and the complex decisions they had to make to appease both Jesuit candidates and their families.

Four case studies—two unsuccessful candidacies for the mission in Japan or China and two successful ones for China—are presented in chapter four ('Case Studies: China and Japan'). The case of Carlo Sarti is interesting because, after writing *indipetae* with a burning desire to go to Japan or China, this temporal coadjutor left the Society of Jesus. It proves the Jesuit insight from *Spiritual Exercises* that too much desire can leave one 'cold'. On the other hand, Giovanni Berlendis, who wrote three 'suggestive *indipetae*', finally settled into a productive Jesuit life, teaching and ministering, and died in Naples at an advanced age. The two Jesuits, Agostino Cappelli and Ludovico Gonzaga, who were sent to China with Cardinal Charles Thomas Maillard de Tournon, the legate of the Propaganda Fide who stirred the Malabar and Chinese rites controversy and angered the Chinese Emperor Kangxi, are an example of how difficult it was to match Jesuits in the missions since they ended on two opposing sides of the controversy. Cappelli even sided with the Cardinal, defending

his 'ecclesiastical freedom' against the Jesuit policy of *accommodatio*. He settled in the Madurai mission in India, an impoverished, difficult mission, perhaps to atone for the sin of siding with the Propaganda Fide against his brethren. The appendix with two statistical tables based on petitions reveales one interesting fact: that Italian Jesuits preferred China, Japan, or some other East Asian region rather than India or Vietnam and that many petitioners asking for the Philippines preferred China or Japan. They guessed that the Philippines, a part of the Spanish empire, was easier to be assigned to but could also appear to the *petentes* as a second prize (or even a punishment) compared to China and Japan.

Although scholarship on Jesuit missions has emphasised the knowledge-making and knowledge-collecting that was part of the Jesuit mandate, the petitioners, according to Frei, showed a relatively flat understanding of the mission's geography and anthropology. Was it because the *indipetae* format did not allow or require the display of knowledge, or were the Jesuit candidates uninterested in the details of the missionary reports? Profound scholarship brings out new research questions. Elisa Frei's book is a successful teaser into the global world of Jesuit lives and desires, stimulated by new research tools such as the *Digital Indipetae Database* (Boston College).

The Portuguese Jews of Hamburg: The History of a Merchant Community in the Seventeenth Century

Hugo Martins
(Leiden: Brill, 2024)
[ISBN 9789004685796]

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Hugo Martins has written an important new study of Hamburg's Portuguese Jewish community in the second half of the seventeenth century, based heavily on the community's own protocol books. Martins focuses on the period from 1652 to 1682, which he considers to be the most important period of the group's existence. While this community was born around 1600, 1652 marks the year that the disparate congregations agreed to unite and for which detailed communal records are extant. After the 1680s the number of Portuguese in the city shrank considerably and the significance of the remaining community dwindled, though it certainly did not disappear.

The scholarship on the Hamburg Sephardim has grown tremendously over the past generation with the appearance of works by Yosef Kaplan, Jutta Braden, and other scholars, and especially the landmark studies of Michael Studemund-Halévy. Martins nevertheless shows us how much can still be derived from a careful and systematic exposition of the community records.

The book is divided into three sections: historical context, community organisation, and orthodoxy and morality. In the first section we learn about many of the elements which made Hamburg different from the other communities of the Western Sephardi Diaspora, such as Amsterdam, London, and Livorno—elements which reverberated throughout the rest of the century. While the Senate of Hamburg encouraged the arrival of wealthy Portuguese merchants, the populace and especially the Lutheran clergy did all they could to discourage this development. The nascent congregation was repeatedly stymied by these opponents in its attempts to build a synagogue which would help unite the fragmented smaller congregations. The process of unification, begun in 1652, was thus never able to overcome inner divisions and create a genuinely viable, consolidated structure for the long term. Despite Hamburg's

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much vaunted toleration described by Joachim Whaley, the burghers and ministers largely succeeded in stunting Jewish repose in the city.[1]

The second section, on community organisation, accounts for about half the length of the book. Martins explains in great detail the communal leadership, finances, salaried officials, education, and justice systems of the group. He deftly exploits the record books to reveal the many and powerful challenges faced by the leaders from almost every conceivable direction. There was a deep controversy over the method for electing the Mahamad, the governing board, which Martins describes repeatedly as a struggle between oligarchic and democratic impulses. It appears to me that it is in fact about whether it should be a small oligarchy or a very slightly wider oligarchy. In this section again Martins constantly points out how the communal divisions were exacerbated by the community's inability to unite physically with a united synagogue. Multiple plans and attempts were squelched, particularly by the power of Lutheran clergy. This enforced division left festering rifts between families and between the earlier congregations, which continued to function. The outside pressure also led the Mahamad to tighten its control over numerous aspects of religious and social life which were normally the province of the individual or home. Ceremonies and celebrations held in public could (in theory) be better controlled to prevent 'scandal' before the ever-vigilant Christian neighbours. This atmosphere, explains Martins, created many of the conditions which made Hamburg's Portuguese community different than those of the other Western Sephardim. There is a great deal more in this long section that is worthy of note, including, for me, the general lack of friction between the Mahamad and the rabbis over the many matters in which their jurisdictions might have overlapped.

The third section, on orthodoxy and morality, is particularly interesting. Here Martins reiterates something he mentions repeatedly throughout the book: that the failure of the Sabbatai Zevi episode of 1665-1666, about which the Hamburg Portuguese may have been as enthusiastic as any Jewish community in the world, caused a crisis in the community. It is never quite evident why or how this occurred, so more clarity would have been helpful, but Martins marks this as the inception of a significant downturn in the community's fortunes and discipline. It appears to me that fiscal and political factors in this decline—noted by Martins various places—might have been equally significant if not more so. From a religious and cultural perspective, though, the Sabbatean enthusiasm in the city is fascinating and somewhat unexpected. Another matter of great interest derived from the records by Martins is the extreme litigiousness of the Hamburg Portuguese, particularly in the 1660s and 1670s. A shockingly high percentage of the group of 600 to 800 persons was involved in lawsuits or claims adjudicated either within the community or by one of several German courts. The Mahamad also fined, excommunicated, punished or expelled an extraordinary number of congregants, for reasons Martins discusses in detail. These aspects of the

[1] JOACHIM WHALEY, *Religious Toleration and Social Change in Hamburg, 1529-1819* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Hamburg Sephardim and their challenges could hardly have been noted or explained without the painstaking study of these communal records carried out by the author.

Martins rounds out the book with several appendices, consisting of transcripts from the community protocols about the unification of the congregations, the founding statutes of the elementary school, tax burdens, and (most interesting for me) records concerning the Sabbatai Zevi news.

It is all to easy to critique a book like this for what it misses or lacks, since its mandate is clearly defined and limited. I will nevertheless mention a few issues. The footnotes are presented in a bibliography rather than a standard footnote style. While the English is generally appropriate and readable, the author has a tendency to pick the wrong English word to describe something on many occasions, which can obscure his meaning. He also translates the communal protocols, which are often already oddly worded, in a manner which is so literal as to make them even more difficult to understand. Here is an example, which, though not typical, illustrates the problem. The topic is a communal decree against shaving with a blade. 'Having arrived news to the Mahamad that some people of our nation illicitly send themselves shaving in goim houses, consenting that the razor is passed through their face…' (288).

Aside from these technical issues, I had a few thoughts on content. The wealth of the Texeira family is discussed throughout the book, but in the tax registers (329–334) we learn that they paid around three times the tax paid by the next wealthiest family, the Seneor, who themselves paid around three times as much as the next wealthiest. While Martins discusses the international significance of several community members, including the Texeira (42–44), the significance of this remarkable wealth and influence seems worthy of closer attention. In most communities, for example, if one or two families are so much wealthier than the rest, they tend to completely overwhelm the leadership with their power, at least de facto, which did not occur in Hamburg. In additional to the prodigious temporal wealth and power concentrated in this tiny group, there were also a number of fascinating intellectuals. Martins discusses several of them briefly as well (43–46), but he misses some significant rabbinic works written in Hamburg, and does not develop the striking significance of so much intellectual and religious creativity emanating from such a small group. Finally, while there is only so much comparison with other Western Sephardic communities that is possible, there are many cases in which Martins either fails to point out important parallels, or lists the relevant bibliography but does not explain its significance. He is, however, very good at explaining differences which distinguish Hamburg from other Western Sephardi communities.

Despite these quibbles, I am delighted that Hugo Martins undertook this impressive project, which required a very broad background in several fields, and fluency in at least four languages, as well as insightful analysis. His exposition is extremely enlightening, and this work will certainly be a standard for the bookshelf of every scholar interested in the Western Sephardi Diaspora.

L'Oriente nella cultura europea del lungo '700

Rolando Minuti
(Naples: Bibliopolis, 2024)
[ISBN 9788870887037]

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Rolando Minuti's *L'Oriente nella cultura europea del lungo '700* collects eleven articles previously published between 1995 and 2021, the majority in Italian, although three are written in French and two in English. Despite this, the book is eminently coherent, dealing in all cases with various aspects of the intellectual impact of 'the Orient' (a capacious concept that includes Russia and all of Asia as well as Islam) in Enlightenment culture. The concept of 'the Orient' is of course relativistic rather than intrinsic. Indeed, this is primarily a study of European discourses (or 'images', Minuti's preferred word), and therefore a dissection of Eurocentric categories rather than an example of entangled or connected history, if by that we mean one that gives equal weight to non-European sources, contexts and perspectives. Nonetheless, Eurocentric does not mean arbitrary, because Europeans observed and recorded carefully what they saw in various parts of Asia, and often translated texts written in Arabic, Persian, Chinese or other oriental languages. The book, therefore, helps to strengthen the case for the massive importance of engagement with Eastern civilisations in the European eighteenth century, and I would add, throughout the early modern period, against the old idea (now largely abandoned) that the Enlightenment might have been oblivious to other cultural traditions. Eurocentrism emerges as a far more complex and sophisticated attitude than mere cultural solipsism, and arguably the sustained intellectual engagement with many other cultural traditions had a transformative effect in Europe, an impact whose depth we are increasingly able to appreciate in the light of recent scholarship. In this respect this collection can be seen as complementary to Rolando Minuti's previous monograph on how engagement with the Orient helped shape the debates about religious tolerance in eighteenth-century France.[1] Although the articles in this collection are presented in chronological order of publication, it is possible to distinguish various themes: the opposition between civilisation and barbarism, the engagement with the history of Islamic cultures, and most notably (for the depth and

[1] ROLANDO MINUTI, *Orientalismo e idee di tolleranza nella cultura francese del primo '700* (Florence: Leo O. Olschki, 2006). The book includes discussions of the debate on tolerance in relation to East Asia and Islam, as well as more specific chapters devoted to Boyer d'Argens and Montesquieu. An earlier work dealt with the idea of barbarism in relation to the Tartars: ROLANDO MINUTI, *Oriente barbarico e storiografia settecentesca. Rappresentazioni dei Tartari nella cultura francese del XVIII secolo* (Venice: Marsilio, 1994).

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originality of the analysis presented), the interpretation of the religions of East Asia, notably those of China, Japan and Siam.

In the preface to the volume Minuti offers a series of reflections that help situate his work in the Italian tradition of intellectual history, with roots in philological methods of textual analysis. This tradition shares with the so-called Cambridge school attention to a wide range of texts rather than focus on a limited canon of great authors, the analysis of intellectual influences and interactions as opposed to the reconstruction of individual systems of thought, and an emphasis on mediations and transformative appropriations, for example through the study of translations and adaptations that are seldom ideologically innocent. This contextual approach, which is hard not to share, certainly invites moving beyond national contexts and paying attention to a variety of genres. Minuti also offers a useful distinction of the four dimensions of this intellectual engagement with Asia that he detects: through direct experience, antiquarian erudition, popular dissemination, and philosophical reflection. This is methodologically useful, and also helps draw a picture of the Enlightenment as not only porous and trans-national, but also plural and multi-dimensional.

From this perspective, Minuti insists on distancing his analysis from Edward Said's, whose dual dichotomies tend to reduce the variety and complexity of European attitudes towards Eastern cultures. This is of course entirely consistent with Minuti's nuanced approach, although some readers might feel that it is nowadays unnecessary to make the point explicit, given how universally the criticism has been expressed. There might also be a case for considering the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries as a period that saw the hardening of negative stereotypes, in the context of a general shift in power relations that favoured Western nations and was felt everywhere in Asia. In fact, many of Minuti's essays illustrate this, by showing how the themes of despotism and superstition—a deadly combination—became pervasive in philosophical histories and popular encyclopaedias, paving the way for liberal and imperialist uses of radical ideas about politics and religion fostered by the debates of the previous century. One of the book's recurrent themes is the extent to which the all too often dichotomous Orientalism of the nineteenth century, imbued with a strong sense of the superiority of European civilisation, had its roots in the complex and ambivalent historiography of the Enlightenment. An impeccably researched essay devoted to the representation of the Orient in Condorcet's highly influential *Esquisee d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (1794) offers a fascinating example of this fundamental paradox of modernity—the very idea of historical progress as a promise of liberation for all of mankind, including women and slaves, rested upon the celebration of how the enlightened European nations (and in particular the independent Anglo-American colonies and France) had mastered science, technology and political freedom against Church and the monarchical state, in a revolutionary project that stood in sharp contrast with the supposedly culturally static condition of

the 'despotic' states of the East.[2] Of course Condorcet, a true humanitarian idealist, did not espouse the colonial exploitation of savage nations, which Raynal and Diderot had denounced as a manifestation of Spanish greed, but the mission to civilise did imply the mission to create the conditions that would lead other civilisations to progress along a European path understood as universal, an obvious secular appropriation of the Christian missionary spirit of men like Las Casas, who had sought to bring salvation to all of mankind without accepting the legitimacy of violent imperialism. However, while the Catholic friars had exported new superstitions, revolutionary Europe, Condorcet believed, would teach universal truths about utility and human rights for the benefit of servile Orientals, barbarous Africans and ignorant savages elsewhere. The vast empires of the East, however civilised in the ancient and medieval past, now stood as examples of stalled progress, and indeed, of structural decline—a deviation from the universal history of progress driven by reason and *lumières*.

A case like Condorcet, eventually tragic victim of his own French Revolution, does not however simply invite a condemnation of western cultural hypocrisy (much as it manifested itself in some contexts), but more interestingly, also a reflection on the paradoxes of the Enlightenment commitment to the analysis of cultural diversity through the lens of the moral unity of mankind. Nuance is always important in intellectual history, and in other essays Minuti is careful to note the persistence of these contradictions. We can here consider an essay devoted to the discussion of Japan in *Il costume antico e moderno*, a large ethnological encyclopaedia (or, we could say, a cultural history of the world) in twenty-three volumes published in Milan between 1817 and 1834 by the Milanese Giulio Ferrario, with this section penned by the *liceo* teacher of history Ambrogio Levati—a more obscure author than Condorcet, but nonetheless representative of the liberal adaptation and dissemination of Enlightenment culture in various national contexts.[3] Here Minuti draws attention to the fact that before Commodore Perry's famous intervention in 1853, European knowledge of Japan was limited to the use of a rather short list of early modern accounts, because the Tokugawa regime continued to impose a closed country policy. He thus pays attention to how Levati's far from recent sources (mostly dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) shaped his interpretations in different directions: while the always ubiquitous Montesquieu, with a touch of Beccaria, provided the fundamental lens through which to consider Japanese legislation as an example of cruel despotism that disregarded human suffering or, indeed, the value of human life, authors like Varenius and especially Kaempfer made it possible to admire many other aspects of Japanese culture, such as their industriousness, social discipline and knowledge of agriculture. The resulting image of contrasts did not in fact differ substantially from the early Jesuit accounts written by authors like Alessandro Valignano, and still echoed decades later

[2] Interestingly, for Condorcet the driving engine of the great divergence in the progress of civilisation was the history of science, combining technological and political factors (the printing press and freedom of thought in non-despotic contexts), not economic history. *Lumières*, rather than productive capacity, were the measure of decisive change through various epochs.

[3] Interestingly, however, the Milanese publishers also produced in parallel a French translation.

by Daniello Bartoli, one of Levati's sources, who were often very praiseworthy of the Japanese nation in some particular respects, while puzzled by others.

An article on how Boyer d'Argens assessed Peter the Great's Russia also pays attention to how authors who were often popular synthesisers and philosophical interpreters, rather than direct observers or erudite researchers, used their sources. Although the marquis d'Argens is best known for his defence of religious tolerance in his *Lettres Juives*, which prompted a Jesuit response, in this case Minuti's main focus are the subsequent *Lettres Chinoises*, a work of enlightened propaganda written in the tradition of fictional oriental travellers inaugurated by Marana and Montesquieu, and extensively cultivated by d'Argens in the 1730s. Not unlike Fontenelle and later Voltaire, d'Argens participated in the celebration of Peter the Great's efforts to civilise barbaric Russia according to the higher standards of polite Europe, but also expressed doubts about its lasting efficacy. He was in any case an apologist for the enlightened use of despotic power: in the context of Russia, whose orthodox Church was both extremely traditionalist and xenophobic, this was a necessity, even if the methods could be at times brutal and the results doubtful. Montesquieu, a believer in gradual reform but not in the efficacy of despotism, would differ.

The connection between religion, civilisation and political despotism constitutes a thread that connects many of the contributions in this collection. Another article that clearly goes into the first half of the nineteenth century concerns the views of Islam elaborated by the Genevan historian and economic thinker Sismondi. Interpreted in the light of his enthusiasm for French intervention in North Africa in 1830, Minuti's analysis here again reveals the enlightened assumptions behind some forms of liberal imperialism. The capacity of Islam for industriousness and civilisation was not, for Sismondi, in question, and in fact it was even romanticised by reference to the achievements of the Abbasid Caliphate and medieval Islamic Spain. Like others who at the time debated the question of intervention in the *Revue Encyclopédique*, Sismondi therefore believed that the French in Algiers could arrive as liberators, freeing the untapped cultural and economic potential of Moors and Arabs from the negative effects of the oppressive rule of brigands—yet again a *mission civilisatrice*, one that the Swiss historian understood as perfectly compatible with the defence of the national interest.[4] However, Rolando Minuti emphasises in this context Sismondi's positive view of Islam *as a religion*, when separated from despotism, a position distinct from that expressed for example by Volney, or (more subtly) by Gibbon. In Sismondi's reconstruction, Muhammad's pure, simple and tolerant monotheism, well adapted to the social needs of the Arabs, had been perverted for political reasons, in a context of

[4] Sismondi's 'brigands' were the Deys of Algiers, formally a Regency of the Ottoman empire, de facto an independent kingdom with an elective leadership, traditionally accused of harbouring corsairs and enslaving Christians for ransom. Although this practice continued, at the time of the French invasion European navies ruled the seas (the British had already bombarded the city in 1816 in order to free Christian captives), and the most immediate issue was the refusal of France to pay back the millions of Francs it owed to the Sephardic Jewish Bachri-Boujana company based in Algiers for the supply of Napoleon's armies.

imperial success and moral corruption, and as a consequence the orthodox clergy had imposed ever more restrictive interpretations of the Quran. In reality, the superstitious elements one could find in modern Islamic societies were not consubstantial to a religious tradition that shared many moral values with Christianity and was perfectly compatible with scientific rationality; hence, in Algiers all that was necessary was a political liberation orchestrated by the French. We know what that led to. It is hard not to hear echoes in Minuti's reconstruction of Sismondi's chain of thought of some of the naïve analysis or perhaps cynical rhetoric that almost two hundred years later sought to justify on supposedly liberal principles the invasion of Iraq, in order to neutralise an imagined threat and, at the same time, free the country from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein.[5]

Religion remains the key topic in some of the most substantial chapters of the collection. One is concerned with the depiction of the 'idolatrous' religions of China, Japan and Siam (essentially Confucianism and Buddhism) in the increasingly well-known compilation in eight volumes of European materials concerning the religions of the known world, *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peoples du monde* (Amsterdam, 1723–1743). Minuti pays proper attention to the editorial interventions and prefatory material by the editor Jean-Frédéric Bernard, a figure whose crucial role in giving this encyclopaedic work a unique interpretative edge has sometimes often neglected in other studies that, instead, have placed more emphasis on the complementary visual work by the engraver Bernard Picart. What emerges in Minuti's analysis is a Protestant deism that was anti-clerical but not anti-religious, and only moderately anti-Catholic (hence Bernard questioned religious excess in all its forms, but also Bayle's defence of virtuous atheists: in his distinctively non-Puritan interpretation, an idolatrous religiosity was preferable, as it signalled towards the cult of God, however imperfectly). The *Cérémonies* thus offer an excellent example of the free-thinking use of the considerable Jesuit ethnographic corpus, indispensable for China for example (by contrast with the possibility of relying on Kaempfer for the history of Japan, and Simon de la Loubère for Siam, as alternative secular sources of information). This intellectual proximity is perhaps why the Jesuit Enlightenment that flourished in France during the first half of the eighteenth century, best represented by the team behind the *Journal de Trévoux*, sought to appropriate the *Cérémonies* by producing in 1741 in Paris a carefully modulated new edition prepared by the abbé Antoine Banier, best known for his euhemerist explanation of ancient mythology, and (perhaps more important in practice) the often invisible Jean-Baptiste Le Mascrier. Through a detailed analysis of those sections of this alternative edition of the *Cérémonies* devoted to the more intellectually developed 'idolatrous' religions of East and South-East Asia, Minuti shows how these Catholic editors lightened the critique of clerical institutions and religious rituals when it concerned their own Church, but also amplified some ethno-

[5] Minuti does not make the connection, but the article was originally delivered in 2006 and published in 2007, at the height of the insurgency that shattered many of the promises of liberal interventionism.

graphic materials and tried to refute, rather than simply suppress, some of Bernard's ironic comments.

This essay is yet another excellent example of Minuti's ambition to carefully analyse how the intellectual impact of significant works may have been transformed by editors and translators, offering a dynamic and plural view of the intellectual culture of the Enlightenment, especially in France and Italy. The same spirit inspires Minuti's analysis of the French translation of the *De religione Mohammedica* (1705) by the Utrecht scholar and Protestant antiquarian Adrian Reland. This book of what we might define as 'corrective erudition' was a landmark contribution to the knowledge of Islam based on real linguistic expertise, and therefore opened up new avenues to a less stereotypically hostile assessment of a religious tradition whose historical importance could not be brushed aside. It was, nonetheless, extremely technical. The French translation by the Huguenot refugee in England and historian David Durand on the other hand sought to make the text accessible to a wider public by lightening all the erudition in classical and oriental languages, and instead emphasising the ideological implications presented by Reland in a series of *Eclarcissemens*, for example in relation to the theme of religious tolerance, thus reinforcing the role of Islam in anti-Catholic polemics (albeit not by undermining the ultimate superiority of Reformed Christianity). This study of a translator at work, in this case largely in line with the aims of the original but with the occasional hint of the additional influence of Pierre Bayle, offers a good example of how the philosophical culture of the Enlightenment was built around the vernacular popularisation of the previous philological work of humanist antiquarians, facilitating a powerful current of cultural transformation that connected academic erudition to an increasingly plural and well informed popular opinion.

On the question of religious encounters, while Japan had been a crucial field of Jesuit experimentation and confrontation with Buddhism in the second half of the sixteenth century, accounts of Siam, another Buddhist country, became important one hundred years later, at a time of enhanced French diplomatic and missionary opportunities, although (not unlike what had previously happened in Japan) everything collapsed into nothingness after the political revolution of 1688 that brought down Phrah Narai and his Greek minister Constantine Phaulkon. The story is well-known from the previous studies by Dirk van der Cruysse, Alain Forest, and others. Minuti's article on the subject, at the risk of some repetition with some of the other essays in this collection, explores both the theme of religious tolerance as a Siamese political principle that Catholics usually found abhorrent (whilst exploiting it as an opportunity for evangelisation), and the dangerous role of analogies with Christianity when analysing Theravada Buddhist practices and institutions. One thing that emerges as fascinating in this case study is the plurality of perspectives in the observations produced by French diplomats such as Simon de la Loubère, and by rival missionaries from the Society of Jesus, notably Guy Tachard, and the *Missions Étrangères*, with the work of Jacques de Bourges, Louis Laneau and Nicolas Gervaise particularly outstanding.

The impact of these rich materials in the radical culture of the Enlightenment is explored in a complementary article, which focuses in particular on how Pierre Bayle mobilised this information to develop his favourite theses on religious tolerance and the possibility of virtuous atheism, and against *consensus gentium*. Bayle's ruthless manipulation of accounts of religious traditions he could hardly aspire to know (although Minuti excuses this by reference to the errors contained in the sources themselves) stands in contrast to the more cautious but ultimately also ideological, and in this case deistic, strategy pursued by the editor of the *Cérémonies*, Jean-Frédéric Bernard, whose voice in defence of the relative value of multiple forms of religiosity (including those considered idolatrous) we have repeatedly encountered in this collection.[6] Not so Boyer d'Argens, however, who instead used the same evidence about the religion of Siam to ridicule all religious traditions, and in particular any that could be satirically compared to Roman Catholicism—and here the Buddhist monks of Siam, the *talopoins*, were a tempting opportunity for an anti-clerical excursus. Minuti's key conclusion is that the diversity of uses of the same body of evidence within the radical, or heterodox, Enlightenment, makes it necessary to explore this intellectual plurality rather than blur the differences under an overarching category of the 'Radical Enlightenment'—a not too subtle critique of Jonathan Israel's notorious thesis. Minuti tends to refer more approvingly of Paul Hazard's classic notion of the *crise de la conscience européenne* as a historiographical paradigm for the intellectual history of this period.

The oldest article in the collection (written well before John Pocock started publishing his monumental study) seeks to locate Edward Gibbon's idea of barbarism in relation to his knowledge of Central Asia as learnt from, for example, Joseph de Guignes and his *Histoire Général des Huns, des Turcs, des Mogols, et des autres Tartares Occidentaux* (1756–1758). In this way, not only are the French (as opposed to Scottish) sources of Gibbon's historiographical project given due recognition, but also the intimate connections between erudition, narrative and philosophical history—an aspect that some earlier historiography had sometimes missed. The remaining two pieces deal with topics that might seem more obscure to a majority of readers. In one of them, Minuti considers how the news of Nadir Shah's rise to power in Persia in the 1730s and 1740s were received in France. While his remarkable success in restoring the power of the Persian empire after the almost complete collapse of the Safavid regime gave hopes that he might be motivated by a patriotic agenda, this positive image clashed with ideas about the nature of despotism, and the fragility of his political legacy ensured that the negative connotations of the concept that Montesquieu had so effectively championed came to prevail. It was simply not possible, in the new political language of the late Enlightenment, to be both a despot and a true patriot, and the article on *patrie* in the *Encyclopédie* signed by Louis de Jaucourt made this clear. In any case, it is of interest to

[6] My point here is not that Bayle was not conditioned by the limitations of his primary sources about Buddhism, but rather that his interpretative biases were systematic and not very respectful of the plurality of information at his disposal. On the interpretation of Buddhism in this period URS APP, *The Cult of Emptiness. The Western Discovery of Buddhist Thought and the Invention of Oriental Philosophy* (Kyoto: UniversityMedia, 2012) remains essential.

observe how closely were political events in Persia followed in France—perhaps Europeans did not fully understand many intricacies of the politics of Eastern empires, but they certainly were not always indifferent. In the other article, Minuti offers an account of a tragically failed attempt to publish Ibn Khaldun by the now obscure Piedmontese Gian Antonio Arri under the patronage of the king of Sardinia and Duke of Savoy, an effort cut short by his premature death in 1841.

To sum up, this rich collection of essays written over almost three decades offers some of the best fruits of a distinguished career dedicated to analysing European attitudes to the broadly defined 'Orient' in the long eighteenth century. English-speaking readers might be forgiven for only thinking of works like John Pocock's voluminous *Barbarism and Religion*, a rich and digressive analysis built around the topics and sources surrounding Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, as the most obvious point of reference for this subject, and it is indeed a regrettable fact that many of the works produced in Italian or in other European languages tend to have less impact than is warranted, unless they are also eventually translated into English (consider, for example, Jürgen Osterhammel's excellent *Unfabling the East. The Enlightenment Encounter with Asia*, which appeared in English in 2018 but had originally been published in German twenty years earlier, in 1998).[7] This is particularly unfortunate in this case, because over the years Minuti has pioneered much research and at a very high standard on topics that have of late become very topical. In this volume we can consider again, for example, his discussion of the religions of China, Japan and Siam in the various editions of Jean-Frédéric Bernard's *Cérémonies,* before this work became more widely known as 'the book that changed Europe'.[8] This is in fact an article, originally published in *Rivista Storica Italiana* in 2009, that I myself should have read earlier—but of course, even those of us who regularly read Italian, Spanish and French often struggle to keep up with all the academic work that is being produced, and nowadays in particular, it takes time to sort out the significant and original contributions from the avalanche of often redundant academic overproduction. Minuti himself reflects on the changing academic environment throughout his career in the preface to this collection, when he observes that it is nowadays far easier to access primary and secondary sources digitally, by contrast, it is implied, with the need to travel to libraries and archives during many of his formative years. He also suggests that this revolution in the accessibility of historical information poses dangers as well as obvious benefits, something he politely refers to as a redefinition of 'the criteria by which erudition is assessed'. Indeed, ease of access and rapid production are not necessarily conducive to quality. There is something of the old scholar seeing the

[7] Osterhammel nonetheless substantially revised the English edition, so that in may be considered as a new version.

[8] LYNN HUNT, MARGARET C. JACOB, and WIJNAND MIJNHARDT, *The Book that Changed Europe. Picart and Bernard's Religious Ceremonies of the World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); as well as the companion edited volume by the same authors: HUNT, JACOB, and MIJNHARDT, eds, *Bernard Picart and the Global Vision of Religion* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010). Both were published after Minuti's original article.

passing of the world of yesterday in these comments, as well as in his elegant dedication of the collection to those students he taught over many years, and to whom he professes his indebtedness.

Traders in Men: Merchants and the Transformation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Nicholas Radburn
(New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2023)
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In the eighteenth century, more than 2.85 million Africans were shipped overseas in British vessels to meet the demands of expanding tobacco and sugar plantations in America. Nicholas Radburn's latest book offers significant new contributions and interpretations to the vast historiography of the British transatlantic slave trade. Through an easily accessible prose, Radburn emphasises that the eighteenth-century British slave trade underwent a transformation that facilitated a substantial increase in enslavement in Africa, the Atlantic, and America. This shift was driven by the actions of three types of merchants involved in the trade of human lives: British, African, and American. While many works have concentrated on these three groups individually, this book weaves them together into a compelling historical narrative.

The book presents five main arguments, which are highlighted in the introduction. First, British, African, and American merchants collectively expanded and transformed Britain's slave trade through their individual economic self-interest. They did this by formulating new methods for enslaving people across the different coasts in the British Atlantic and Africa. Second, the process of transformation was driven by individuals with similar backgrounds, motivations, and strategies. These individuals are depicted as 'fortune hunters', typically non-elite people willing to ascend socially in a high-risk, high-reward business.

The third main argument is that the slave trade was organized through Atlantic-wide commercial networks. These were decentralised networks formed through small-scale partnerships, creating a self-regarding and resilient business as new actors entered the trade. Fourth, an enslaved person's characteristics, especially their health, were the main factors determining their path through the slave business. Enslaved individuals experienced a multistage 'Long Middle Passage', crossing from Africa, across the ocean, and through the internal markets in America. Finally, the experience of enslavement for Africans varied considerably according to their physical

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characteristics. Besides health, an enslaved person's age and gender largely shaped their path through the 'Long Middle Passage'.

To sustain his previous arguments across the chapters, Radburn uses a remarkably significant and varied set of sources. These range from letters between slave traders, logs of ships, account books recording purchases of enslaved people, instructions given by merchants to captains of slave ships, papers of the Royal African Company, archives of American factors, diaries, petitions in the British Parliament, newspaper advertisements, and more. This strategy is particularly effective, allowing for a mixed method that combines personal histories of slave traders, merchants, and enslaved individuals with quantitative data—two approaches that have often been adopted separately in the historiography. In Radburn's words, 'this book seeks to bridge a methodological divide that has emerged within slave trade studies' (14).

The piece is structured in five chapters, accompanied by an introduction and an epilogue. Throughout the text, detailed explanations are consistently supported by accurate case studies. The quality of the images and the maps, which are well chosen and situated in the text, should be highlighted. Furthermore, the book features comprehensive appendices with data extracted from ships, presented in table formats, which effectively bolsters the arguments laid out in the main text. This organisation allows the reader to fully appreciate the impressive effort behind these pages.

The first chapter explores the role of British and African merchants in developing the infrastructure that supported the growth of the eighteenth-century Atlantic slave trade. Both groups were initially peripheral participants in this trade before the turn of the century. Radburn highlights the emergence of new British and African slave trading ports, showcasing the involvement of private British actors in a market that the Royal African Company had traditionally dominated. The chapter clearly explains how new British slave traders from Bristol, Liverpool, and Lancaster began to move away from the traditional London traders of the seventeenth century. They developed essential goods that African consumers desired in exchange for enslaved people. Additionally, the chapter discusses the rise of new African trading ports established by emerging political groups, such as the Fante and the Ibani. Notably, the Gold Coast and the Bight of Biafra became important new locations for slave extractions in the eighteenth century. The African polities established effective systems to support the growing slave trade. However, 'even as the traffic's scope and scale widened, it remained concentrated in a handful of locations' (20) both in Britain and Africa.

Chapter Two discusses the practices of British and African slave traders in sourcing enslaved individuals in Africa for the transatlantic voyage. African traders played a crucial role in determining who was taken to the coast, while British traders were selective, often rejecting many of the enslaved being offered. Radburn notes through good use of sources that 'Britons turned away very large numbers of people offered to them on the African coast' (70), a new idea in the historiography which

assumed 'that Britons purchased anyone presented to them' (61). British captains prioritized inspecting enslaved bodies to select the fittest, often loading ships first with women and children and placing healthy men—known as 'prime slaves'—last. At the same time, African traders developed stable abstract currencies to acquire goods in exchange for enslaved people, keeping inflation low for most of the century.

The third chapter historicises the transportation methods of enslaved people, which were transformed to increase the British slave trade. A new shipboard regime was developed to minimise mortality rates during the Middle Passage, incorporating strict exercise routines above deck during the day, gender separation, and forced meals. In the seventeenth century, the death rate was nearly one-quarter, but 'during the eighteenth century—when Britons began bringing captives above deck throughout the day and providing greater quantities of food and water—one in six people (16%) perished on the crossing' (103). Radburn also elaborates on the macabre philosophy of slave merchants, who acknowledged the mortality of people on their voyages and sought to pack as many individuals as possible into the ships to overturn losses. Slave ships were modified and prepared for these voyages by carpenters, who created cramped spaces for each person beforehand, aiming to maximise profits even before purchasing the enslaved. In just the eighteenth century, over 400,000 enslaved people died aboard British slave ships due to diseases and ill-treatment.

Chapter Four contributes to the historiography by highlighting that a structured American slave trade existed prior to the disembarkation of enslaved Africans. The chapter focuses on American slave traders, known as Guinea factors, who were instrumental in creating a distribution system across the various British territories in America. These traders often came from non-elite backgrounds and 'served an important dual role: they communicated with the company to ascertain when ships might arrive and then organized sales of enslaved people' (132). Additionally, they provided vital information to the slave ships, enabling them to determine their destinations among the British possessions. Generally, ships would first arrive at the eastern islands of the Atlantic, where they sold the sickly enslaved individuals, while they aimed to sell the healthier ones in Jamaica or mainland America, where prices were considerably higher. Radburn portrays the internal voyage through American waters as a continuation of the Middle Passage, as it began to acclimatise the enslaved people to their new territories, while they received much-needed fresh water and different foods to combat the likely threat of diseases among them.

Chapter Five delves into the process of selling enslaved people and the internal American slave trade, emphasising that the physical condition of the enslaved was a primary determinant of their fate in America. It outlines a sales system where affluent colonists had the first opportunity to access sales venues—typically above the same slave ships—allowing them to select the healthiest enslaved individuals. Following this initial selection, additional rounds of sales took place, in which middle-class and poorer white colonists participated. Notably, those enslaved individuals who were ill—representing about one in five—were subjected to an internal American slave trade, a

hitherto overlooked process that Radburn highlights by noting it was 'designed to extract value from their damaged bodies' (186). In contrast, the epilogue underscores that during the Age of Revolutions, following an initial sharp decline in the slave trade after the American Revolution, British ships gained dominance after the disruption of the French market due to the Haitian Revolution until the final ban in 1807. Radburn, moving away from an abolitionist hagiography, emphasises the paradox that 'abolitionist efforts to improve shipboard conditions for captive Africans therefore inadvertently improved the efficiency of slave traders' business' (204).

In conclusion, *Traders in Men* is a book that both academics of the transatlantic slave trade and those interested in the history of the Atlantic will find compelling. It offers a fresh perspective that illustrates how the British slave trade evolved over the eighteenth century into a brutal system of commodification of human beings. Merchants, whether British, African, or American, have often been overlooked in the historiography. Their decentralised networks, like spiderwebs stretching across oceans and continents, shaped the lives of millions and contributed to countless experiences of violence and marginalization that still resonate in today's world.