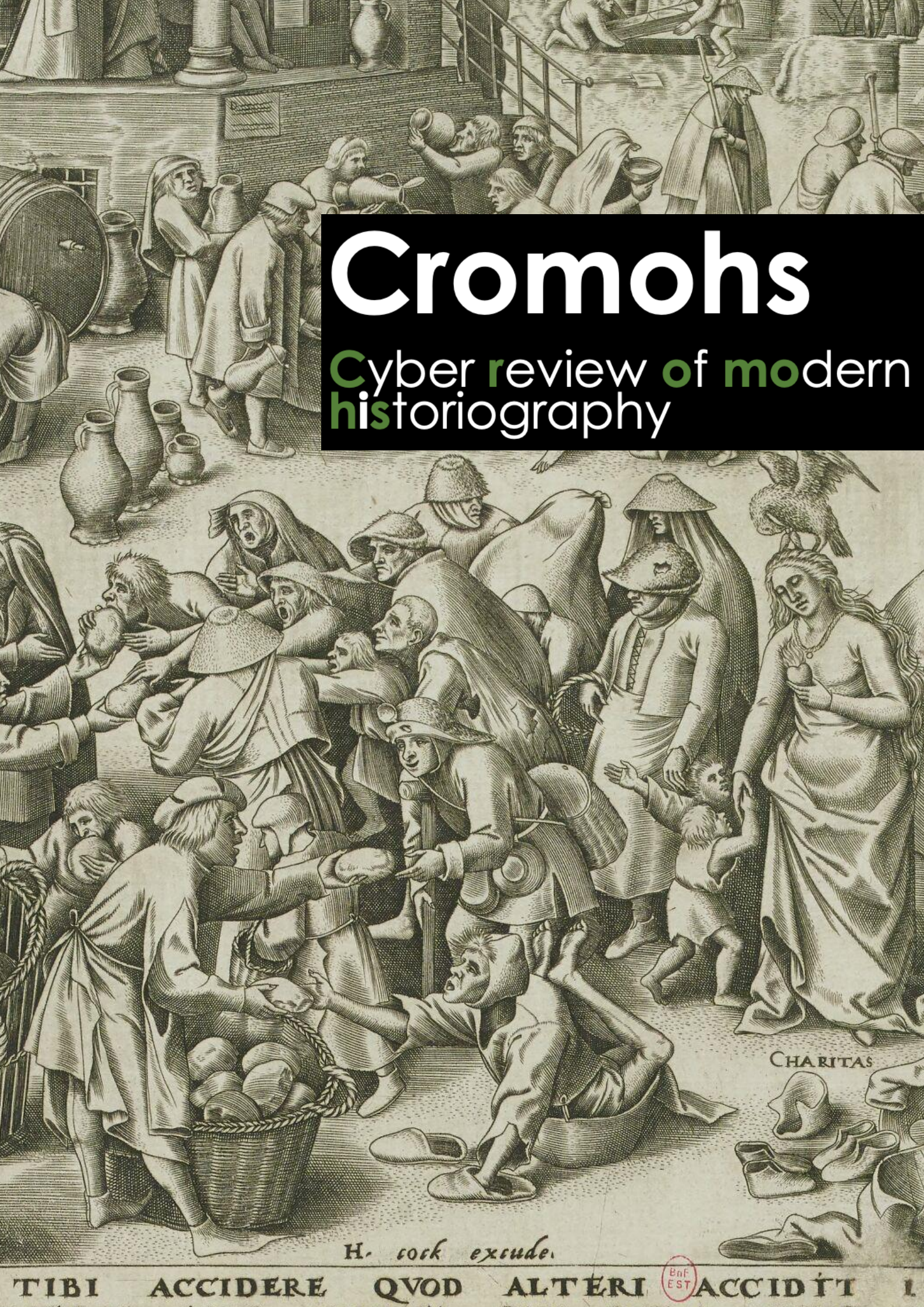

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Communities in Solidarity:
Charity, Welfare, and Identity in Southern Europe
(Fourteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)

Ed. by Sama Mammadova

Introduction *

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In *Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge*, Miri Rubin writes: 'With most social acts, gift-giving shares the quality of reciprocity and exchange, while, on a personal level, it portrays one's identity'.[1] This observation captures the premise of this special issue: that our approach to giving and receiving help represents a crucial part of our identity because it reveals our place in this world—in our families, in our communities, and among strangers. Focused on late medieval and early modern Southern Europe, this collection of essays asks how acts of help reflect and shape individual and collective identities.

In the bustling cities explored in these essays, men and women—free and enslaved, foreign and local, members of different classes and followers of different faiths—were entangled in a shifting and ever-extending web, yet many of them had no networks to rely on in frequent times of crisis and need.[2] As these cities grew, circles of familiars became tighter, bonds of trust more fragile, and patterns of assistance less intuitive and even less reliable. Widespread poverty elicited a variety of responses: private donations, confraternal almsgiving, communal dowry or ransom funds, and, in some settings, state-operated welfare systems.[3]

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* The conception of this special issue traces back to the stimulating discussions that took place during the graduate training school "Moving Goods for Charity Across the Mediterranean (15th–19th centuries)", promoted by the PIMo COST Action (CA18140) and held from 13 to 16 June 2022 at the Centro Studi sui Monti di Pietà in Bologna and the Biblioteca Roncioniana in Prato. I would like to thank Giovanni Tarantino, Emanuele Giusti, and the editorial team of *CROMOHS* for their support in bringing this issue to fruition, as well as the anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful engagement.

1 MIRI RUBIN, *Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1–2.

2 On poverty and attempts to relieve it in late medieval and early modern Europe, see, among countless others, DAVID NICHOLAS, *The Later Medieval City: 1300-1500* (London: Longman, 1997); MICHEL MOLLAT, *The Poor in the Middle Ages: An Essay in Social History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); BRONISLAW GEREMEK, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris*, transl. JEAN BIRRELL (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); CATHARINA LIS and HUGO SOLY, *Poverty and Capitalism in Pre-Industrial Europe. Pre-Industrial Europe, 1350-1850* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1979).

3 The historiography on late medieval and early modern European aid initiatives is extensive, and what follows is only a brief indication of its breadth. NICHOLAS TERPSTRA, *Cultures of Charity: Women, Politics, and the Reform of Poor Relief in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); MAURO CARBONI, 'The Economics of Marriage: Dotal Strategies in Bologna in the Age of Catholic Reform', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 39, no. 2 (2008): 371–87; LAURINDA ABREU, *The Political and Social Dynamics of Poverty, Poor Relief and Health-Care in Early-Modern Portugal* (London: Routledge, 2014); STEFANIA PASTORE, ADRIANO PROSPERI, and NICHOLAS TERPSTRA, eds, *Brotherhood and Boundaries/Fraternità e barriere* (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011); LINDA MARTZ, *Poverty and Welfare in Habsburg Spain: The Example of*

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Building on extensive scholarship on charity, community, and identity, this collection explores how such channels of aid delineated, reinforced, and occasionally subverted the boundaries of belonging in late medieval and early modern Southern Europe. Social psychologists have long recognised that people define themselves both by the groups to which they belong and by those from which they are set apart.[4] Many historians have drawn on this notion to explain collective behaviour and the development of communities in the past.[5] The essays gathered here extend this inquiry by asking what role instruments of assistance—whether private donations, charitable institutions, or mechanisms of state welfare—played in shaping both communities and people within them.

Bianca Lopez opens this issue with a story of Slavic and Albanian migrants who, having moved to the March of Ancona in the fifteenth century, used charity both to integrate into their newfound communities and to preserve ties to the ones they had left behind. By following the local patterns of giving and donating to projects that benefited the entire city rather than their own neighbourhoods, Lopez argues, these men and women

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Toledo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); GABRIELLA PICCINNI, *Alle origini del welfare: radici medievali e moderne della cultura europea dell'assistenza* (Rome: Viella, 2020); ALESSIA MENEGHIN, *Serbatoi di umanità: la Misericordia e i suoi volontari nella storia* (Ospedaletto: Pacini Editore, 2017); JAMES W. BROADMAN, *Charity and Religion in Medieval Europe* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009); ADAM J. DAVIS, 'The Social and Religious Meanings of Charity in Medieval Europe', *History Compass* 12, no. 12 (2014): 935–50; MARIA GIUSEPPINA MUZZARELLI, *Il denaro e la salvezza: l'invenzione del Monte di Pietà* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001); PIETRO DELCORNO, ed., *Politiche di misericordia tra teoria e prassi: confraternite, ospedali e Monti di Pietà (XIII-XVI secolo)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2018); TIMOTHY G. FEHLER and JARED B. THOMLEY, eds, *Do Good unto All: Charity and Poor Relief across Christian Europe, 1400–1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2023); PAOLA AVALLONE, GIUSEPPINA T. COLESANTI, and SALVATORE MARINO, *Alle origini dell'assistenza in Italia meridionale: istituzioni, archivi e fonti (secc. XIII–XVII)*, special issue, *RIME – Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea*, n.s., 4 (2019): 5–199; GIULIANA ALBINI, *Carità e governo delle povertà (secoli XII-XV)* (Milan: Unicopli, 2002); THOMAS MAX SAFLEY, *The Reformation of Charity: The Secular and the Religious in Early Modern Poor Relief* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); BRIAN S. PULLAN, *Poverty and Charity: Europe, Italy, Venice, 1400–1700* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994).

[4] HENRI TAJFEL and JOHN C. TURNER, 'An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict', in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, eds WILLIAM G. AUSTIN and STEPHEN WORCHEL (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1979), 33–47; HENRI TAJFEL and JOHN C. TURNER, 'The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour', in *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, eds STEPHEN WORCHEL and WILLIAM G. AUSTIN (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986), 7–24; JOHN C. TURNER and PENELOPE J. OAKES, 'The Significance of the Social Identity Concept for Social Psychology with Reference to Individualism, Interactionism and Social Influence', *British Journal of Social Psychology* 25, no. 3 (1986): 237–52; BETHAN BENWELL and ELIZABETH STOKOE, *Discourse and Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006); TOM POSTMES and NAOMI ELLEMERS, eds, *Rediscovering Social Identity: Core Sources* (New York: Psychology Press, 2010); RAWI ABDELAL, YOSHIKO M. HERRERA, ALASTAIR IAIN JOHNSTON, and ROSE MCDERMOTT, eds, *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[5] DAVID GRAEBER and DAVID WENGROW, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021); BENEDICT R. O. ANDERSON, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016); ANDRZEJ PLESZCZYŃSKI, JOANNA SOBIESIAK, MICHAŁ TOMASZEK, and PRZEMYSŁAW TYSZKA, eds, *Imagined Communities: Constructing Collective Identities in Medieval Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 1–2; WOJTEK JEZIERSKI and LARS HERMANSON, eds, *Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim, from the Eleventh to Fifteenth Centuries* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016); ANDRE GINGRICH and CHRISTINA LUTTER, eds, *Visions of Community: Comparative Approaches to Medieval Forms of Identity in Europe and Asia*, special issue, *History and Anthropology* 26, no. 1 (2015): 1–143.

strove to assert their new identities as residents of Ancona and blend into the city's social fabric. By joining their compatriots in confraternities and providing for them in their last wills, on the other hand, the migrants not only preserved aspects of their original identities but also reinforced their positions in their ethnic communities and, together with their countrymen, resisted discrimination by local authorities.

The Jewish residents of fifteenth-century Iberia, introduced by Carmen Caballero Navas and Miguel Rafael García Campos, also found their identities entangled with welfare as they faced discriminatory policies. Forced by the new *apartamiento* decree into unsanitary, crammed, enclosed quarters, where pollution and foul smells of tanneries, wastewater, and dumping grounds—bloodless acts of violence inflicted by their Catholic rulers—caused not only discomfort and humiliation but also rampant diseases, they developed collaborative ways to care for their communities. When calls for the authorities to address the unsanitary conditions of the *juderías* fell on deaf ears, the residents turned to Jewish laws and customs to invent their own healthscaping practices and pooled their resources to form mutual assistance societies such as hospitals, confraternities, and charities dedicated to public health. The authors add nuance to the interplay between identity and welfare by underscoring the role of women, who not only contributed to these communal initiatives (for instance, as *hospitaleras*), but also managed sanitation, disease prevention, and healthcare at home.

Women's identities take centre stage in Jessica Hogbin's work, which features prominent women of sixteenth-century Rome—both native and foreign to the city—and their donations to the Ospedale del Santissimo Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum. Ranging from noblewomen and royal mistresses to exiled queens, these patronesses used their donations to the hospital to craft their public images and to highlight—or obscure—certain parts of their biographies. For instance, Vannozza Cattanei —the famous mistress of Pope Alexander VI and the mother of Cesare Borgia—only noted two out of her three late husbands in her *pro anima* donations, denying the excluded spouse posthumous prayers and any association with her memory. Many others ensured that their donations—a bejewelled icon with the benefactress's name and coat of arms inscribed on it, for example—were easily identifiable and featured conspicuously in the hospital for years to come. While, as the author notes, 'the Ospedale del Salvatore provided patrons with a stage to demonstrate their nobility, charity, wealth, and prestige to other notable members of the Roman community', the reverse was also true. As Hogbin indicates, the hospital carefully curated its institutional identity through documents that showcased its influential supporters, including a star-studded list of powerful women who 'acknowledged' the hospital, even if they never actually donated to it.

Women who acted as recipients of aid also had their identities shaped by the process. Lucia Felici's contribution reveals that this was certainly the case for the so-called 'spinsters' enrolled in the Leopoldine Schools of eighteenth-century Tuscany. These public

schools, established by Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo of Tuscany, aimed to provide cultural, moral, religious, and professional education, preparing poor women to assume new roles within the family, the workforce, and society at large. Innovative and transformative, the schools moulded their students into 'useful citizens who actively contributed to the welfare of the state' through education, discipline, and productive labour; offered their female teachers a dignified and financially secure place in society; and allowed their founder to fashion himself as an enlightened reformer.

A different kind of state intervention emerges in Pablo Sanahuja's study of fourteenth-century Valencia, where municipal welfare initiatives blurred the boundary between public assistance and fiscal extraction. In response to food shortages, city officials developed food provisioning policies framed as charitable acts 'for the benefit of the res publica […] for the sake of the poor people, and grace and mercy to the city'. Yet, as Sanahuja shows, these measures—analysed alongside new systems of indirect taxation—ultimately served to expand the city's fiscal capacity and consolidate municipal authority under the guise of the common good.

Finally, Justine Walden illuminates the entanglement of religion, foreignness, poverty, and slavery in her discussion of how Jesuit missionaries instrumentalised charity and identity to convert enslaved Muslims in seventeenth-century Naples. In printed conversion narratives that instructed missionaries on the best evangelisation practices, Walden finds suggestions on how to employ various facets of the slaves' identities to facilitate their conversion. The Jesuits incorporated Islamic tropes into their sermons, offered the uprooted men a sense of kinship away from home and, upon conversion, gifted them with tokens that reinforced their new Christian identities and even produced identity documents that confirmed their new faith. In their pursuit of converts, the missionaries routinely relied on charity: they distributed food and provided medical care and, once someone converted, helped the new Christian find ways to make ends meet to ensure that the convert would not seek support from his or her former coreligionist and become tempted to return to Islam. The enslaved Muslims, in turn, often used conversion as an opportunity for social mobility and a way to gain access to charitable initiatives from which they were previously barred because of their religion.

Taken together, these essays demonstrate that acts of offering and receiving help were inextricably bound up with identity in late medieval and early modern Southern Europe. In doing so, they invite readers to see in the history of aid a parallel history of self-fashioning—one that reveals how individuals and communities imagined and articulated who they were.

Migrant Charity, Collective Life, and the Poor in the March of Ancona, 1400–1460

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Although they belonged to different linguistic, cultural, and religious communities, inhabitants of the fifteenth-century March of Ancona worked and practiced charity in close proximity to one another. Fishermen, merchants, artisans, and ship-workers, all participants in a thriving maritime economy based in the port city of Ancona, depended on notaries to create contracts for marriages, business associations, and land transfers. They also depended on notaries to organise their end-of-life wishes. In 1420, Polo Georgio, a cobbler from Zadar, Dalmatia, but now an inhabitant of Ancona, created a testament with the civic notary Chiarozzo Sparpalli. Along with contributions for all *maleablatis*, the restitution of interest to former debtors, and a tithe to San Ciriaco, the cathedral of Ancona, Polo also provided a small donation to a mendicant church. According to the notary, 'He leaves as his place of sepulture the church of San Francesco of Ancona, [to which] he also leaves one ducat for his soul'.[1] Although formulaic and fragmentary, testaments provide the best evidence related to the charitable activities of migrants from the eastern Adriatic world.[2] These records of migrants' charitable donations can offer insight into how vulnerable groups responded to shifting relationships with civic authorities and the local population.

Late-medieval Ancona, like other parts of Adriatic Italy, was home to not only increased cultural production and technological development but increased anti-migrant sentiment as well. Starting in the early thirteenth century, noble families and wealthy merchants of peninsular city-states brought over eastern Adriatic peoples forcibly as slaves. Enslaved peoples came from Venetian-controlled Greek islands and the Genoese Black Sea region, as well as from ports on the eastern Adriatic coast.[3] The first free individuals from Slavic- and Albanian-speaking lands arrived only after the Black Death. In the late fourteenth century, Italian municipal governments invited Slavic and Albanian guest workers to help build infrastructure and reverse

[1] Archivio di Stato di Ancona (heretofore ACAN), Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, 1420, ff. 16rv: 'Item elegit suam sepulturam apud ecclesiam sancti francisci de ancona cum ecclesie reliquit unum ducati pro eius anima'.

[2] To date, the field of medieval Adriatic migration would benefit from a cultural and geo-political history of the fall of Constantinople. However, the event's political and historiographical stakes can be found here: MARIOS PHILIPPIDES et al. eds, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453: Historiography, Topography, and Military Studies* (London: Routledge, 2017).

[3] FERDO GESTRIN, 'La migrazione degli Slavi in Italia nella storiografia jugoslava', *Quaderni storici* 14, no. 40 (January–April 1979): 13. For a recent social and economic survey of slavery in the Black Sea region, see HANNAH BARKER, *That Most Precious Merchandise, The Mediterranean Trade in Black Sea Slaves, 1260-1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

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demographic losses resulting from the Black Death. Eastern Adriatic migrants came largely from agricultural backgrounds, but also artisan and fisherman families. High rents levied by landlords pushed tenant farmers to Trsat, Zadar, Senj, Split, and Ragusa (now Dubrovnik). From there, they boarded ships for Italian port cities, including Venice, Pesaro, and Ancona.[4] As more migrants arrived, sizable communities emerged, impacting the religion, language, and culture of the region.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, charitable gifts fulfilled several religious functions, from intercessory prayers for the dead, to facilitating the compensation of ill-gotten gains accrued during a person's life. Overlapping and conflicting parties, such as chapel priests, confraternities, and more informal parish groups, could carry out these works. Beginning in the twelfth century, donors from Ancona and its environs gave freely to pious causes, such as maintenance for churches and support for the poor.[5] Migrant residents came from territories with different record-keeping systems and not necessarily from notarial cultures as robust as Ancona's. Moreover, migrants often faced civic and ecclesiastical challenges, which made charitable assistance for their communities all the more important. For this reason, appearances of migrant clients in the notarial record of Ancona demonstrate individuals and families attempting to adapt to the institutional, legal, and administrative systems of their city of resettlement.

Historiographical Trends

In the scholarly traditions related to medieval Ancona, archivists and historians have considered the Adriatic Sea as a place of competition, or of 'instability', according to Giulia Spallacci's recent book on the rise of the commercial economy of Ancona.[6] Within this scope, competitive forces saw the Adriatic as easily subdued but also as a site of opportunity. Ancona, as a city, republic, and trading empire, fit between these two realities, sometimes uncomfortably. Ancona's place in late medieval and early modern scholarship has also influenced the choice of sources, topics of interest, and organisation of evidence in scholarly works on the maritime republic. Beginning in the nineteenth century, scholars standardised medieval statutes, codified notarial materials such as contracts and cartularies, and provided a basis for understanding how the city rose as an economic and diplomatic force despite the formidable presence of the Venetians and Ottomans.[7] From Ludovico Zdekauer to Carisio Ciavarini, early archivists analysed printed statutes to better understand this history.[8] More recently,

[4] GESTRIN, 'La migrazione degli Slavi', 17.

[5] For an overview of diocesan structure and pious activities in the hinterland near Ancona, see MARCO MORONI, *Recanati in età medievale* (Fermo: AndreaLivi Editore, 2018).

[6] GIULIA SPALLACCI, *I commerci adriatici e mediterranei di Ancona nel XV secolo* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2020), 13.

[7] For a recent, and thorough, survey of the complexities surrounding territorial competition between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, see PETAR STRUNJE, 'Defining Spaces of Exchange: Venice and the Eastern Adriatic', PhD diss. (Università IUAV di Venezia, 2022).

[8] MARCO MORONI, 'Ludovico Zdekauer e la storia del commercio nel medio Adriatico', *Quaderni monografici di «Proposte e ricerche»* 22 (1997): 11–36.

archivists have taken up the task of editing and digitising sources pertaining to the fifteenth-century economic success of Ancona.[9]

Scholarship on medieval charity has developed within different categories over time, and tends to highlight distinctions, binaries, and differences between various charitable acts and institutions. Some scholars have called for narrow definitions of charity, based on particular legal formulae in testaments, statutory language, and arrangements with charitable institutions as seen in notarial charters. These scholars are less inclined to argue that charity changed over time and are more concerned with identifying acts mistakenly attributed to charity. For such scholars, any charitable practice enacted with the expectation of a reciprocated act would not count as charity. These works are also supported by anthropological social theory, built on the groundwork developed by anthropologist Marcel Mauss.[10]

Other historians have adopted a broader view of charity that argues against limited, rigid, or static definitions.[11] For these scholars, reciprocity or the expectation of a counter-gift should be included within a broad range of charitable ideals, which also adheres to a neat chronological framework. For instance, charity began in an inconsistent fashion in the early Middle Ages, in commentary, sermons, theological treatises, and penitentials, before emerging as something more institutionalised by the high Middle Ages. With the advent of the mendicant orders, voluntary poverty, confraternities, and family chapels, charity took on a more complicated role and was often performed through urban conduits such as new religious orders, or through the repair and maintenance of important urban churches. For historians who valued this broader view, most works seen as charity could not really count as charity at all because of the formulaic, repetitive, and involuntary nature of such practices. To these scholars, rote and obligation-based gifts for the poor in legal sources could not be born out of an individual's free will.[12]

More recent scholarship has moved away from binary models that categorise charity strictly or more broadly. For some, pointing out innovations became a central focus, especially in terms of gender and the creation of new, and flexible, charitable

[9] Please see relevant issues of the periodical *DigItalia: Rivista del Digitale Beni Culturali*, https://digitalia.cultura.gov.it/issue/archive.

[10] MARCEL MAUSS, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967), 22. For Mauss and his influence on the study of medieval Christianity, see THOMAS HEAD, 'The Early Medieval Transformation of Piety', in *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe: New Directions in Early Medieval Studies*, eds JENNIFER R. DAVIS and MICHAEL MCCORMICK (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 155–62. For a helpful separation of ritualised gift exchanges, which are not enacted for profit, from mundane economic activity, see MARCEL HÉNAFF, 'Is There Such a Thing as a Gift Economy?' *Gift Giving and the Embedded Economy in the Ancient World. Akademiekonferenzen,* 17 (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2014), 71–84.

[11] For a discussion of these scholars, and a general survey of the historiographical traditions of medieval charity, see ADAM J. DAVIS, 'The Social and Religious Meanings of Charity in Medieval Europe', *History Compass* 12, no. 12 (2014): 935–50.

[12] In turn, scholars also challenged this view, indicating that the gifts fluctuated in price and consistency, defying any town's attempt to regulate and enforce charity.

institutions.[13] In particular, institutions neither ushered in nor hindered social welfare, but developed through political, economic, or cultural needs and the rise of the early-modern state. Scholars have also looked at cross-cultural and trans-religious institutions over time, such as in comparing medieval Islamic charitable *waqfs* to hospitals.[14] Similarly, there have been considerations of early-modern Jewish charity in Christian-dominated European cities, as Jewish residents raised money to ransom hostages taken from their communities.[15] In sum, scholars have searched for overlooked cultures of charity that existed beyond the typical sources.

In other recent publications, scholars have considered Ancona's remarkable ability to garner power through seizing diplomatic opportunities and creating political and religious ties with eastern Adriatic ports.[16] Inevitably, the interventions of Ancona's governing authorities in politics and economy helped create a mixed and interdependent urban society. However, this interconnection meant that the social framework of the city was vulnerable to change, crisis, and upheaval, such as after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Building on that challenge, I argue that migrants' charitable activities in the fifteenth-century Papal States varied in meaningful ways, from institutionalised, orderly, and normative to ad-hoc and idiosyncratic. Moreover, considerations of changes in statutory models and notarial sources can provide rationale for these discrepancies before the arrival of the Ottomans and the Venetian conquest of much of the eastern Adriatic coastline. These legal changes simultaneously show that migrants depended on new local legal processes to strengthen their own social bonds.

The present essay contends that testamentary formulae put into place by civic statutes did not remain untouched by historical tensions, as populations at times had to push against legal systems. My intervention builds on attempts to move beyond historiographical binaries placed on charitable activity, separating charity into state-based and devotional acts, and builds on efforts to dispel dichotomies of charity defined by reciprocity and non-reciprocity, voluntary and involuntary acts, and the necessity of specific formulae in legal texts versus cultural diffusion in many source genres. Nonetheless, charity should be understood as experiential and subject to social change, and as contextualised and contingent. For this reason, small shifts in formulae

[13] DAVIS, 'The Social and Religious Meanings of Charity', 940–41. For specific works on lay movements and the possibilities for charitable innovation, see ROISIN COSSAR, *The Transformation of the Laity in Bergamo, 1265-c.1400* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); DAVID MICHAEL D'ANDREA, *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy: The Hospital of Treviso, 1400-1530* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007).

[14] For a foundational examination of the medieval *waqf*, with some connections made to medieval Christian charity, see ADAM SABRA, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam Mamluk Egypt, 1250–1517* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For a more recent discussion of the *waqf* and its urban implications, see RANDI DEGUILHEM, 'The Waqf in the City', in *The City in the Islamic World*, eds SALMA J. KAYYUSI et al., 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2008), vol. 1, 929–56.

[15] TAMAR HERZIG, 'Slavery and Interethnic Sexual Violence: A Multiple Perpetrator Rape in Seventeenth-Century Livorno', *The American Historical Review* 127, no. 1 (March 2022): 194–222.

[16] Some of this issues that arise in the sixteenth century in papal diplomacy are foregrounded in the following article: FRANK LACOPO, 'The Curious Case of Ancona: 'Levantines', Accommodation, and the Exigencies of Papal Power in Adriatic Italy, 1532–1555', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 55, no. 1–2 (Spring/Summer 2024): 93–111.

can indicate push back from below, as well as adaptation and resilience. Innovations also show moments of religious and social change during particular years or decades.

Even as migrant charity in Ancona evolved from individual gifts to formal confraternity-based charity, migrants still eluded the normative modes of social assistance from either church or state.[17] Eastern Adriatic migrants in the Italian peninsula depended on mostly private and family-based support systems in Italy, which could often contradict local charitable norms.[18] Migrants came from regions without institutionalised charitable frameworks but arrived in places where those structures had been long established. As a result, migrant charity in Ancona should be understood not in stark contrast to either earlier medieval family-based or pre-Enlightenment rational civil society, but through adoption of unfamiliar urban frameworks that help not only the poorest of one specific community, but the population at large.

Overview of Sources

In Ancona, eastern Adriatic migrants most often appear in the many volumes of notarial contracts and testaments from the fifteenth century housed at the Archivio di Stato di Ancona.[19] Each volume contains at least some presence of speakers of Albanian and different Slavic and Romano-Slavic dialects, either as testator, witness, heir, or other type of participant.[20] An abundance of documentation exists for relations between Ancona and the southern Dalmatian coast, in particular. Beginning with the notary Giacomo del Pellegrino in 1391, multiple civic notaries worked with migrants in Ancona in forming trading partnerships (*societas*), selling property, and drafting marriage contracts.

Today, some 640 notarial volumes survive from the first half of the fifteenth century, enough to establish mass migration to Ancona and its surrounding March. In particular, the notary Chiarozzo Sparpalli was active for long stretches of time, from 1420–1426, 1432–1439, and 1444–1447.[21] In contrast to Venetian contracts, which provide a notable point of comparison, Ancona's notarial sources contain references to trans-Adriatic merchant exchange, and merchant corporations, such as the *Universitas sclavorum* and the poorer *sclavi bastagi*, which do not appear in sources from outside the Papal States. These two groups counted as an alternative to Ancona's guilds, as the communal government of Ancona refused permission to members of

[17] For a discussion of the kinds of confraternities formed by Slavic and Albanian migrants to Italy, see TOCCACELI, *San Germano*; GIUSEPPE CAPRIOTTI, 'The Cauldron of St. Venera and the Comb of St. Blaise. Cult and Iconography in the Confraternities of Albanians and Schiavoni in Fifteenth-Century Ascoli Piceno' *Confraternitas* 27 (2016): 33–39; JASENKA GUDELJ, 'The Hospital and Church of the Schiavoni / Illyrian Confraternity in Early Modern Rome', *Confraternitas* 27, nos 1–2 (May 2017): 5–29.
[18] One example from many similar archival findings speaks to civic pushback to migrant family violence in Recanati: ANR 54 124 v, Giacomo Petrucci, 1428.
[19] For sources pertinent to the study of charity in the fifteenth century, see the volumes within the *Archivio Notarile di Ancona* housed in the ACAN.
[20] ROMUALDO SASSI, 'Immigrati dell'altra sponda adriatica a Fabriano nel Quattrocento', in *Italia Felix: migrazioni slave e albanesi in Occidente. Romagna, Marche e Abruzzi, secoli XIV-XVI*, ed. SERGIO ANSELMI (Ancona: Quaderni di Proposte e Richerche, 1988), 94–110.
[21] LUCIO LUME, 'Presenze slave secondo la documentazione notarile', *Quaderni Storici* 5 (January–April 1970): 251–60.

both occupational collectives from entering most trade guilds and instead forced them to work with the lye, a putrid and undesirable substance, as leather preparers and soap makers, according to redacted city statutes beginning in 1394.[22]

In particular, the testaments from the Archivio Notarile di Ancona are rich in references to charitable practices, if sometimes oblique in nature. However, even indirect references to charity can help historians reconstruct practices that helped build and support a system of mutual aid.[23] Of the almost sixty migrant testaments that I have viewed so far, all contain a universal format dictated by statutory law. Migrant testaments, like so many other documents compiled in early fifteenth-century Ancona, contained specific formulae, such as a statement of mental and physical capacity, provisions for ill-gotten gains, pious gifts, location of burial, a voluntary (or perhaps involuntary) contribution to Ancona's civic infrastructure assistance program, and ecclesiastical destinations, typically at least to one of two parish churches, San Martino and San Claudio.[24] Testators then named their executor and fideicommissaries, or subsidiary heirs who inherited goods, coins, or property after the passage of a period of time or the death of primary heirs, and directed properties to individual family members, friends, and business associates. Wills concluded with identification of fideicommissaries, sometimes female family members, usually to help create dowries or support widows. It remains impossible to know how many wills went into probate, a process by which notaries and legists reviewed wills against city statutes.[25] Following the publication of a will, a *quietatius*, or a receipt of payment of gifts mentioned in a testament, would also be issued to all heirs and ecclesiastical beneficiaries.[26]

[22] ACAN, Statuti e privilegi n. 4, Statuti della città di Ancona, 1394. This statute is described in CARLO GIACOMINI, *Le magistrature giudiziarie di Ancona nei documenti comunali di antico regime (1308-1797)* (Ancona: Affinità elettive, 2009), 15–16.

[23] The important role parish churches played in the dispersal of charitable alms has been overlooked in the scholarship. For a relevant discussion, see Davis, 'The Social and Religious Meanings of Charity', 944.

[24] In Italy, the collection of civic and ecclesiastical fees could vary city to city. For a helpful explanation of how dioceses collected dependent tithes from churches, and how churches extracted fees from individuals, see NESLIHAN ŞENOCAK, 'Pievi and the Care of Souls', in *A People's Church: Medieval Italy and Christianity, 1050-1300*, ed. AGOSTINO PARAVICINI BAGLIANI and NESLIHAN ŞENOCAK (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2023), 71–92. For an original analysis of the role of civic charity for infrastructure, see EDWARD LOSS, 'Benefattori dall'aldilà: i lasciti per i lavori edilizi di pubblica utilità a Bologna (secoli XIII e XIV)', in *Oltre la carità: Donatori, istituzioni e comunità fra Medioevo ed Età contemporanea*, ed. MAURO CARBONI and EDWARD LOSS (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2021), 49–68.

[25] Larger cities in Italy a more sophisticated probate processes that included the creation of probate inventories. See ISABELLA CECCHINI, 'A World of Small Objects: Probate Inventories, Pawns, and Domestic Life in Early Modern Venice', *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 35, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 39–61 (40).

[26] For a similar, and comparative, function that quietanze could have for migratory workers and shepherds in subalpine Liguria, see MARCO CASSIOLI, 'Migrazioni intralpine e affitto del pascolo. Analisi di una quietanza conservata a Ventimiglia (XV secolo)', *Bollettino Storico-Bibliografico Subalpino* 122, no. 1 (2024): 117–124.

Category	Subcategory	Count
Gender	Men	52
Gender	Women	5
Occupations	Carbonis (smith or forge worker)	1
Occupations	Calzoleri (shoemaker)	2
Occupations	Famulus (domestic servant)	1
Occupations	Policca (city guardsman)	1
Occupations	Fornarius (baker)	1
Occupations	Unlisted	51
Place of Origin	Sclavus	21
Place of Origin	Jadra (Zadar)	5
Place of Origin	Sclavonia	17
Place of Origin	Vegla	1
Place of Origin	Zagreb	6
Place of Origin	Albania	6
Place of Origin	Segna (Senj)	1

Figure 1. Table showing gender, occupations, and places of origin in the testamentary sample.

While migrant testators did not state their motivation for making charitable offerings, nor provide identities for the poor in question, the steady formulae of testaments and contracts can still supply historians with abundant information. For instance, changes in the formulae reveal that migrants in Ancona depended on more typical channels of charity, such as testamentary bequests, rather than on any non-institutional methods

of charitable giving. There is some indication that charity extended from religious fear of God's judgement and for the state of one's own soul after death. For instance, in 1432, the testator Polo di Giorgio from Zadar included unique language that pertained to fears of eternal judgement: 'On account of Christ's grace, health in mind, senses, but ill in body [and] knowing and fearing judgement and death'.[27] In the same year, the testator Giorgio, referred to only as *sclavus*, made reference to the suffering expected before an untimely death: 'Fearing divine judgement and the final trials of death, not wanting to die intestate'.[28] This formulaic inclusion reveals the urgency and frequency by which migrants used the statutory norms of Ancona. Even individuals who lacked patronyms or toponyms adopted local notarial culture and conveyed their property through testaments.

Charity in Ancona: Sticking to the Formula

A survey of testaments deposited by migrant townsmen indicate their gifts to the same traditional religious establishments preferred by all residents of Ancona, including the native-born. Rather than give to peripheral or more neighbourhood-based ecclesiastical churches, migrant men donated charitable gifts to institutions similarly preferred by all residents of the city, indicating the normative, formal, and adaptive character of migrant male charity. Gifts to institutions like the cathedral, particular parish churches, and mendicant convents represented a typical form of charitable donation.[29] The wills left by other migrant men in the 1430s also contain support for mendicant convents, payment of tithes, and charitable donations to parish churches. For instance, Giovanni di Optimide, a smith from the region of Slavonia in the Kingdom of Hungary, demonstrated such features in his will. The document begins with motivations, and the urgency behind the will's creation: 'Being, however, sick in body, fearing and knowing the judgement of God and human fragility, and not wanting to die intestate, [he completes] the deposition of all his moveable and immoveable goods for the present and future'.[30] His will also include ecclesiastical and civic fees paid upon death, typical of all *anconitani*: 'He leaves 5 *soldos* of *moneta parva anconitana* and certain other coinage a perpetual *canonum* for his soul. He also leaves to the *patronatico* 10 *soldos*'.[31] Finally, his ecclesiastical bequests also carried charitable connotations:

> He leaves for the construction of the church of San Agostino di Ancona one ducat. He also leaves for the works of San Domenico one ducat. He leaves for the works of

[27] ANAS, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 1, 25 July 1432, f. 16r: 'Pro Christi gratiam sanus mente et sensu licet corpore languens. Timens et cognitans divinam iniutitiam et mortem'.
[28] ANAS, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 1, 25 July 1432, f. 15v: 'Timens divinam iniutitiam et mortem ultimum tribulium nolens in testabus decedere suum bonorem'.
[29] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 2, 11 June 1439, ff. 195r.
[30] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 1, 24 September 1432, ff. 78r: 'Tamen corpore languens timens et cognitans dei indictum et fratilitatem humanem. Et nolens in testatus decedere dispositonem omnium suum bonorem mobilium et immobilium praesens et futurum'.
[31] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 1, 24 September 1432, ff. 78rv: 'Reliquit suum precepta canonum pro eius animam soldos quinquem denari anconetanae pavorum et certa alia…legata infrascripta fecit de dicta parva moneta anconitana. Item patronatico reliquit decem soldi denari'.

> the church of San Francesco the Greater one ducat. He also leaves for the works of the church of San Claudio one ducat and in this church he wishes to be interred.[32]

As shown by this will, men like Giovanni di Optimide preferred long-established churches, some more directly associated with charity than others, but that still acted as traditional conduits for charitable gifts.

Like in other parts of Italy, Slavic and Albanian migrants in Ancona developed their own charitable networks, both individually and collectively in groups such as confraternities.[33] Their charitable works helped to create and support their communities in the face of civic suppression. Migrant charity could be both traditional and innovative, even simultaneously in the same act.[34] For instance, a testament followed a formulaic structure required by city statute, but choice of ecclesiastical beneficiaries, and the emergence of more collective and undifferentiated types of charity demonstrate migrants attempting to develop resilience in everyday life across the fifteenth century. Individual migrants depended on long-established charitable institutions and norms for the purposes of assisting the general urban poor and impoverished members of their own communities, often through legal apparatus such as testaments. Collectively, migrants sought to create their own religious confraternities. Confraternity membership was important, as it provided permission from diocesan authorities to help the poor and infirm, or simply engage in the

[32] I am creating a map of the various residences of the migrants of Ancona. Until that work is completed, I note that, while the San Ciriaco, the cathedral of Ancona, was located on a northeastern hill of the city, other parish churches preferred by migrants in their testament could be found across Ancona, rather than located in one neighbourhood. As typical for central Italy, mendicant convent churches such as San Francesco the Greater located in the town's periphery. See VINCENZO PIRANI, *Le Chiese di Ancona* (Ancona: Arcidiocesi Ancona-Osimo, 1998). ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 1, 1432, ff. 78rv: 'Item reliquit operi ecclesie sancti augustini de ancona unum ducatum. Item reliquit operi ecclesie sancti dominici unum ducatum. Item reliquit operi ecclesie sancti francisci maioris unum ducatum. Item reliquit operi ecclesie santi claudii unum ducatum apud quam ecclesiam voluit sepelliri et suam elegit sepulturam'.

[33] Italian scholarship has begun to focus on artistic production, trade, intermarriage, and other ways in which late-medieval eastern Adriatic migrants influenced urban life in the Italian peninsula. See GIUSEPPE CAPRIOTTI, 'The Cauldron of St. Venera and the Comb of St. Blaise. Cult and Iconography in the Confraternities of Albanians and Schiavoni in Fifteenth-Century Ascoli Piceno', *Confraternitas* 27 (2016): 33–39; FRANCESCA COLTRINARI, 'Confraternities, immigrants and artistic production of the 'Illyrians' in the Marche (XV-XVI cent.). Master Piero di Giorgio da Sebenico in Fermo (1462)', in *Visualizing Past in a Foreign Country: Schiavoni/Illyrian Confraternities and Colleges in Early Modern Italy in Comparative Perspective*, ed. MASSIMO MONTELLA (Macerata: EUM Edizioni Università di Macerata, 2018), 165–85; ERMANNO ORLANDO, *Migrazioni mediterranee: migranti, minoranze e matrimonio a Venezia nel basso medioevo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2014).

[34] Regarding the work of anthropologist Marcel Mauss, fifteenth-century migrant charity in Italy belongs within more normative pre-modern hybridised gift-exchange, albeit marked by a sense of urgency. In a fifteenth century city-states where gift-giving was becoming more motivated by compunction and overshadowed by economic policy of the state, migrants relied on earlier historical forms of pure gift-giving to survive. This can be seen in regard to their reliance on intricate and extended forms of gift-giving based on overlapping concentric circles of kinship. While the relevant theoretical literature on this subject is extensive, please see JOHN FINE'S introduction to *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* for a survey of scholarly discussion. See MARCEL MAUSS, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967); NATALIE ZEMON DAVIS, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 1–14; JOHN V. A. FINE, JR., *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991).

celebration of important saints' feast days and maintain parish churches.[35] In rural dioceses of the Papal States, authorities' written consent for the construction of a migrant church often permitted a confraternity to be based there as well.[36] In order to take advantage of such privileges, Slavic and Albanian migrants respectively petitioned the diocese of Ancona for official confraternity charters.[37] However, such permission proved elusive until the end of the fifteenth century, as bishops repeatedly denied migrants' requests to create new groups.

More than to any other type of charity, Slavic and Albanian male testators gave charitable assistance through Ancona's churches to benefit the whole city. Civic pride and general concern for the urban poor can also be expressed in gifts to city churches. Most typically, support of the poor appeared indirectly as a gift to important local churches, such as those of the Franciscan order.[38] As testator, Giovanni gave significant gifts of one ducat each to three mendicant convents and a parish church. The support of the mendicant orders counted as an indirect way of assisting the poor and infirm in Ancona even more specifically, as the friars directed concerted effort towards urban pastoral care.[39] While some historians counter that the Franciscans were not actually involved in poverty relief, churches of all kinds used offerings to help pay

[35] Scholarship on the laity overlaps with the field of confraternity studies. Starting with the volume *The Politics of Ritual Kinship*, edited by Nicholas Terpstra (1999), scholars have identified the tension between secular and sacred functions of the confraternity, and demonstrated how the space between the two modes widened closer to the Enlightenment after the age of Catholic reform. In an edited volume from 2006, the essays within represented a sea change in the study of the pre- and early modern confraternity, as scholars focused on new and global themes such as the importance of confraternities to class structures, the relationship between lay groups and political power, and the spread of such groups across the Atlantic Ocean via colonialist endeavours. That work has been furthered by a more recent volume (2019) that confraternity involvement could help groups further other types of aims, whether artistic, cultural, economic, or political in nature. Work on migrant confraternities in Adriatic Italy draws upon the essays in these volumes, showing how confraternity charters represented the ultimate goal of migrants who sought to establish an institutional and permanent presence in their adoptive hometowns. See NICHOLAS TERPSTRA, ed., *The Politics of Ritual Kinship*: *Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); CHRISTOPHER BLACK, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); CHRISTOPHER BLACK et al., *Early Modern Confraternities in Europe and the Americas*: *International and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006); KONRAD EISENBICHLER, ed., *A Companion to Medieval and Early Modern Confraternities* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

[36] For instance, see the example of San Germano a rural church outside of Ancona, and its resident confraternity. FABIO TOCCACELI, *San Germano: Una Chiesa di Schiavoni. Appunti e documenti per una storia della Parrocchia fra Quattrocento e Ottocento* (Camerano: Cassa Rurale ed Artigiana "S. Giuseppe", 1991).

[37] While outside the immediate chronological scope of this article, migrant groups, particularly Greeks, received official recognition for their confraternity charter petitions in the sixteenth century after widespread policy changes led by Leo X (r. 1513–1521). Nonetheless, in the fifteenth century, migrants similarly sought out official administrative and institutional recognition from dioceses for their respective groups. Regarding the Greek community of Ancona, much of this later history has been explored by Niccolò Fattori, who delved deeply into the sixteenth-century notarial archive of Ancona to ground his conclusions related to the fate of the Greek community of Ancona 100 years after the Council of Florence. NICCOLÒ FATTORI, 'Strong-headed Barbarians'. The Greeks of Ancona and the Papal Policies in the Sixteenth Century - 'Barbari, e di cervello gagliardo'. I Greci di Ancona e le politiche religiose del papato nel XVI secolo', *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 72, no. 1 (January–June 2018): 117–40.

[38] ANAS, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 2, 11 August 1437, 154rv.

[39] ANDRÉ VAUCHEZ, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. JEAN BIRRELL (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

for repairs, procure wax for candles, and engage in assistance to the poor and infirm.[40] Charitable acts could be quite efficient, as this same gift both helped church maintenance and supported the poor. Coins flowing through mendicant establishments helped support not only the community of friars, but more generally with poor assistance, even if available sources do not often reveal specific instances of local friars who supported the poor.[41] Testamentary bequests could also help the repair and maintenance of mendicant buildings.[42] While statutory norms dictated the structure of a will, testators still chose their preferred institutions. In particular, migrant testators preferred to give to similar churches, such as the mendicant convents of San Francesco, San Domenico, and San Agostino of Ancona, as well as the parishes of San Claudio and San Martino.[43] These churches, chosen out of the many ecclesiastical beneficiaries available to Ancona's late medieval testators, provide information about how migrants directed their charitable bequests strategically.

The testament of Giovanni di Optimide provides individualised information, even within rigid legal formulae. Through their choice of heirs and ecclesiastical beneficiaries, other migrant testators provided information pertinent to the social and religious features of migrant communities in Ancona. For example, Marco Filippi, a baker from Slavonia, mentioned leaving an inheritance to members of his own community, as well as more direct family members, in his will. He stated,

> In all his other movable and immovable goods…he made and willed that his carnal and universal heirs... be Antonius his son and Catherine di Marinotius of Monte San Vito, his wife, who shall have the portions between them and if the said Antonio his son dies, but with [Antonio's] [own] sons he substitutes Catherine for the portion and part of the aforementioned Antonius.[44]

The presence of gifts to local parish churches indicated a connection to indirect charity, but also a church freely chosen by the testator, as the choice of ecclesiastical beneficiaries belonged solely to the individual commissioning the will.[45] The churches

[40] See relevant discussion in DAVIS, 'The Social and Religious Meanings of Charity', 943.

[41] More quantitative research must be done demonstrating the extent to which the Franciscans assisted the urban poor in fifteenth-century Ancona.

[42] Previously, I have discussed the connections between bequests for church maintenance in testaments and Franciscan spirituality. BIANCA LOPEZ, *Queen of Sorrows: Plague, Piety, and Power in Late Medieval Italy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2024), 61.

[43] See the following for examples: ACAN, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, 1420, ff. 16r; ANAS, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 2, 23 June 1438, ff. 165r; ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 2, 11 June 1439, ff. 195r. In nearby Recanati, migrant testators also chose mendicant convents, as well as the Marian shrine Santa Maria di Loreto. For a discussion of these institutions in the context of trans-Adriatic migration, see Lopez, *Queen of Sorrows*, 133–50.

[44] ANAS, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 2, 23 June 1438, ff. 165rv: "In omnibus autem aliis suis bonis mobilibus et immobilibus…suos heredes carnales et universales...fecit et esse voluit antonium eius filium et catarinam marinotii de monte sancto vito eius uxorem quis portionibus inter eos et si dictus Antonius eius filius decesserit quando cumquam suiis filiis autem cum filiis substituit catarinam in portionem et partem dicti antonii."

[45] Beginning with Michel Mollat, scholars have noted continuously the ambiguous relationship between the Franciscans and care for the urban poor, at least according to the available source material. MICHEL MOLLAT, *The Poor in the Middle Ages: An Essay in Social History*, trans. ARTHUR GOLDHAMMER (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 127–28. At the very least, charity for the poor, help for urban

might not have been precisely associated with migrant communities, but with entire neighbourhoods. The migrants' donations therefore hint at a deep sense of connection to their neighbourhoods and to the other Christian families, whether migrant or local, that lived near them. Both migrants and locals held affinity for these locations, which they expressed through their gifts.

Along with these stipulations, placed either before or directly after gifts to their heirs, migrants also provided assistance to other beneficiaries through gifts that reflected support for the entire city. Both civic and ecclesiastical contributions included in wills left by migrant men demonstrated an affinity for the city of Ancona. For instance, Giorgio Pietro from Zadar directed five gold small coins in local *anconetano* currency to pay for civic fees, as required by the city of Ancona, and he left the same amount to mortuary fees, as well as two small coins to the civic construction of a bridge. In this way, Giorgio participated in civic projects along with fellow residents of Ancona.[46] Although some scholars have indicated that such acts fall outside traditional medieval charity, others have pointed out the similarities between contributions towards public infrastructure and gifts meant to influence Christian intercession by God and saints.[47] Both types counted as attempts to alter the present through small gifts, and to behave within the collective norms of the city.[48]

The testator's gifts to churches also followed a predictable formula, but the specific identification of these churches indicate a special relationship the testator had with each of these institutions. These churches also had strong connotations with charity and works of mercy, not just for the poorest of his own community, but for the needy residents of his entire neighbourhood. According to his testament,

> [Giorgio] also left one ducat to works for the church of Santa Maria di Misericordia. He also left one ducat for the works for the church of San Domenico. He also left the works for the church of San Martino 20 *soldos* which he wished to owe to Christ in the construction of the bell tower of the aforementioned church.[49]

As seen by Giorgio's diversified gifts that both follow a stipulated formula and contain unique information in the choice of specific churches, migrant townsmen's testaments show awareness of the importance of charitable causes, the fear of God's judgement in the face of ill-gotten gains, and a sense of obligation for all of Ancona's poorest residents. With his gifts, Giorgio enacted different types of charitable acts, including more straightforward poverty relief, assistance to churches, and contributions to civic

CHURCHES, and voluntary poverty were all enveloped in a broader culture of charity. See GIULIANA ALBINI, *Carità e governo delle povertà (secoli XII-XV)* (Milan: Unicopli, 2002), JAMES W. BRODMAN, *Charity and Religion in Medieval Europe* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 270.

[46] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, 1435, ff. 195r. For another gift to the same bridge project, see ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, book 2, 23 June 1438, ff. 165r.

[47] For a summary of studies that define medieval charity in either a stricter, or looser, sense, see DAVIS, 'The Social and Religious Meanings of Charity', 940–41.

[48] LOSS, 'Benefattori dall'aldilà'.

[49] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, 1435, ff. 195rv: 'Item reliquit operi ecclesie sanctie marie misericordia unum ducati. Item reliquit operi ecclesie sancti dominic unum ducatum. Item reliquit operi ecclesie sancti martini vigniti soldos quos voluit debere con Christi in fabrica campanilie dicte ecclesie'.

architecture. This final act seems unique to Giorgio's will and suggests that he assigned great importance to making a tangible impact on his adopted city. While this migrant came from the Dalmatian town of Zadar, his post-mortem charity was connected to Ancona, where his family resettled, where his current parish priest—and most likely his confessor—resided, and where his charitable deeds would have the most impact.

While much fewer in number, female testators were much more directly involved in poverty relief.[50] Moreover, some women included diffused and innovative ways to support their social networks with their wills, even when their donations were directed towards established ecclesiastical institutions.[51] In 1437, the notary Chiarozzo Sparpalli helped to compile a testament with Lena, daughter of a certain Nicola from Zagreb. Living in Ancona, she confirmed that, while she was healthy in her mind and senses, her body was in a state of ill-health. As recorded by the notary, she stated, '…fearing the judgement of God and the danger of death, which is [as] certain as the hour is uncertain. She wishes to make a testament and dispose of all of her goods'.[52] While her wish to avoid intestacy did not deviate from statutory formulae, her charitable choices were unique and indicated her attempts to both prevent God's wrath and help the poor. Finally, her motivations ended with the following statement that also appears as distinctive in my survey of Ancona's migrant wills: 'She procured and made, asserting and swearing by the holy gospels of God', which further demonstrates the testamentary connection between charity, faithfulness before God and his court of angels, and the religious significance of drafting a will in the face of death. [53]

Later in the document, Lena noted donations to two different hospitals for the poor in Ancona, San Thomaso and Santa Maria dell'Assunzione. For the latter hospital, she left the sizable gift of six Venetian ducats, rather than the small *anconetonae* coins left by male testators. She also provided ducats for the repair of her parish church San Martino and forty *soldi* for the *operi* of San Agostino di Plano, where she asked to be interred.[54] The specific direction of her estate towards hospitals indicates a more direct and personalised form of charitable offerings not seen in most wills left by male migrants living in Ancona. These gifts reveal that migrant women supported

[50] Only five women out of 57 total testators created wills in this sample. Nonetheless, their activities still provide a suggestive counterpoint to male expressions of charity. Moreover, scholars have noted the wider possibilities afforded to widows who led households and drew up wills. For the variety of pious causes supported by widows in their testaments in nearby Umbria, see MARIA IMMACOLATA BOSSA, 'I testamenti in tre registri notarili di Perugia (seconda metà del Trecento)', in *Nolens Intestatus Decedere: il testamento come fonte della storia religiosa e sociale, atti dell'incontro di studio* (Perugia, 3 maggio 1983), ed. ATTILIO BARTOLI LANGELI (Perugia: Giunta Regionale dell'Umbria – Editrice umbra cooperativa, 1985), 77–93.

[51] This tendency has also been observed elsewhere in late medieval and early modern Italy. TERPSTRA, *Cultures of Charity*.

[52] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, 1437, f. 164 v: "Lena filia dictum Nicolaii de yzagabria habitrix anconae sana mentis et sensus et bone dispositoris expensis licet corpore languens timens dei indictum et periculum mortis quia nil certius mortis et nil incertius hora mortis. Volens facere testamentum et dispositere omnium suum bonorem."

[53] This connection was not unique to migrant women, as it was shared by all Christian testators of Ancona. Nonetheless, the link between charity and the afterlife was a primary focus for migrant testators as well as the native-born. ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 3, 164rv: 'Procuravit et fecit asserens et jurans ad sacra dei evangelia'.

[54] ANAC, Chiarozzo Sparpalli, vol. 2, 23 June 1438, f. 165r.

institutions that also dealt more directly with the poor. However, like their male counterparts, migrant women were concerned with the undifferentiated poor of their city, rather than individual family members in need. This transition to supporting masses of anonymous poor also demonstrates how migrants more fully adhered to local charitable culture, which centred on aiding the poor, by the 1430s.

Exceptions: Recanati

Deeper into the interior of the Papal States, migrants engaged in more personalised charitable practices. In 1423, Tomaso di Francesco, *sclavo* and resident of the hill town of Recanati wished to go on a long-distance pilgrimage and to make suitable end-of-life preparations in the event that he died en route. On March 3rd, he compiled a will with the notary Giacomo di Petrucci: 'Wanting to visit the ends of the earth, St. James the Apostle, and not wanting to die intestate'.[55] Importantly, he left large wax candles and an entire Venetian ducat to the order of *clericos et pauperes*, a semi-institutionalised order of clergymen and poor who begged for alms and accompanied funeral biers to their final resting places.[56] In Recanati, this order was funded by the mortuary fees left in every will, along with a little extra supplemental fee made on a voluntary basis by the testator. In this case, Tomaso di Francesco participated in expected and normative charitable offerings to the *clericos et pauperes*, while also making more individualised contributions to members of the migrant community of Recanati.[57] To that end, he left his house to Tomaso di Tornario, his relative, who lived in the small village near the popular pilgrimage shrine of Santa Maria di Loreto, to which he also left eight ducats. He enacted this choice even though his wife could very well have survived him. This example demonstrates the blurred lines and competition between charity to the poor, charity to ecclesiastical institutions, and aid to one's own kin.

By the mid-fifteenth century, more formalised acts of collective charity that necessitated sanction in the form of a confraternity charter appear in the documentary record. Migrants' collective attempts at self-protection through charity often followed expulsion measures enacted by local authorities. For example, Recanati's town priors expelled its population of *albanensi* in 1448. Eight years later, another reference to limits on migrant activity appeared in the civic *Annales*, naming the Confraternity of *sclavi* of St. Peter Martyr, which successfully overturned forced labour as executioners and gravediggers through the invocation of a diocesan charter that approved their confraternity.[58] The most visible and vocal organisation of migrants in Recanati, the Confraternity of St. Peter Martyr, used the term *sclavus* to refer to themselves, and those

[55] Archivio di Stato di Recanati, Giacomo Petrucci, vol. 113, 3 March 1437, ff. 111r: 'Volens limina beati jacobi apostoli visitare et nolens decedere intestatus'.
[56] For a discussion of the typical roles of *clericos et pauperes*, see EMANUELE C. COLOMBO et al., 'L'economia rituale dalla rendita alle celebrazioni (Lodi, età moderna)', *Quaderni Storici* 49, no. 147 (2014): 871–903.
[57] For a discussion of the intellectual construction of the poor as a radical affront to governance in the early and high Middle Ages, see BRIAN HAMILTON, '*Pauperes Christi*: Voluntary Poverty as Political Practice', Thesis (Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 2015).
[58] Archivio Comunale di Recanati, vol. 27, *Annales*, f. 6r, 21 May 1452.

they wished to exclude from city appointment of executioners.[59] Participation in confraternities assisted individual members of a community and could also have political ramifications. As a form of collective bargaining, confraternities allowed individuals to petition for better representation in government and to push back against civic mistreatment.

Connections between migrant charity and exclusionary measures directed against migrant groups are also discernible in Ancona's statutory and notarial record. The presence of a confraternity charter granted by the diocese, with officially endorsed charitable activities administered by the group, helped protect the community from civic exclusion.[60] In the first half of the fifteenth century, traditional social functions of religious brotherhoods in the Papal States, specifically the March of Ancona, gave way to more flexible and innovative collectives that helped create political leverage for newly arrived Slavic and Albanian migrants. While the landscape of lay Christianity changed throughout the March during this period, structures based on charity and its function in society continued. Specifically, as more migrants congregated in Ancona, there appeared more need for officially recognised confraternities, especially with the growing degree of political exclusion.[61]

Conclusion

The charitable activity of migrants suggests that they did not immediately feel integrated into the city's social fabric, but their borrowing of legal norms of Ancona nonetheless indicate attempts to integrate and to ensure stability in the face of exclusion. Late medieval charitable networks served as the basis of civic and social life for all urban residents of the Papal States. Members of extended communities made up of relations, friends, and neighbours depended on one another for assistance. To cope with the shifting political and economic structures in the early to mid-fifteenth century, migrants relied on increasingly more formal and collective forms of charity to

[59] Medieval Italian notaries adopted the term *sclavus* most likely from earlier Byzantine legal and historical sources. See FLORIN CURTA, 'The Making of the Slavs: Between Ethnogenesis, Invention, and Migration', *Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana* 2, no. 4 (2008): 168–69. I argue that the administrative officials in the Papal States also used the term to refer to Slavic-speaking residents in their territories. Scholar Mario Sensi also cited chronicle sources supporting the existence of an informal lay groups in Recanati devoted to Santa Maria delle Grazie in the 1460s and a formal chartered group devoted to Santa Venera in the 1470s. MARIO SENSI, 'Fraternite di slavi nelle Marche', in *Italia Felix: migrazioni slave e albanesi in Occidente. Romagna, Marche e Abruzzi, secoli XIV-XVI*, ed. SERGIO ANSELMI (Ancona: Quaderni di «Proposte e Ricerche», 1988), 192–212 (211, n. 41). For a summary of the evidence for these groups, see MORONI, *Recanati*, 265–67.

[60] Confraternities were responsible for all kinds of civic charity and activities related to poor relief, including care for criminals, widows, and orphans. For a wide range of chronological and regional case studies on this topic, see the following volumes: TERPSTRA, ed., *The Politics of Ritual Kinship*; Black et al., *Early Modern Confraternities*; KONRAD EISENBICHLER, ed., *A Companion*.

[61] Other ad-hoc groups that lacked a confraternity charter, such as the *Pauperes Christi* represented a traditional, mendicant-based form of collective charity that held several functions, from singing intercessory prayers for the dead, to providing a way for local Christians to recompense for ill-gotten gains accrued during their lifetimes. For a comparable finding from northern Italy, see ROISIN COSSAR, 'The Quality of Mercy: Confraternities and Public Power in Medieval Bergamo', *Journal of Medieval History* 27, no. 2 (June 2001): 139–57; FLORIANO GRIMALDI, *Pellegrini e pellegrinaggi a Loreto nei secoli XIV-XVIII* (Foligno: Bolletino storico della città di Foligno, 2001), 16–68.

support both their city and their own communities. Earlier in the fifteenth century, these forms of aid looked nothing like the more public or church-sanctioned groups found in Italy, such as occupational guilds and religious confraternities, both of which were ratified with town charters by mid-century.

By the time the papacy returned to Italy in the 1420s, migrant charity had long been embedded in local charitable frameworks. In contrast to earlier groups, migrant brotherhoods forged complex relationships with both church and state. Acquisition of an official confraternity charter also allowed migrants to petition for representation in government and push back against state mistreatment. Furthermore, migrants' charitable activities in Ancona and its surrounding region hint at the challenges to everyday experience of migrants in Quattrocento Italy, especially as their numbers grew and as they faced exclusion from their adoptive cities. In Ancona, displaced peoples from the eastern Adriatic often drew on the norms of religious devotion and institutional organisation typical throughout Italy in the 1440s. However, migrants in Recanati also gave long-established institutions and patterns of charity more personal features. Eastern Adriatic groups in the Papal States such as confraternities to assist their poorest members and gain political leverage in face of new discriminatory policies. These efforts to create community show how migrants used charity to reestablish safety, security, and crisis management, all within traditional Latin Christian frameworks. Compared to migrants to other cities in the March of Ancona, the migrants to Ancona used charitable causes to support the cities at large. This tendency demonstrates the mixed and interactive social nature of urban neighbourhoods, where people of different faiths and language groups lived near one another, worked together, and used charity to support the most vulnerable members of their communities.

Health and Segregation: Iberian Jewish Responses to the Crisis of the Late Fifteenth Century*

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In 1480, the Cortes of Toledo (Castile) issued a decree mandating the *apartamiento* (removal) of Jews from their quarters in urban areas, allowing a two-year period for its implementation.[1] This followed a series of similar, albeit inconsistently enforced, decrees issued across various Iberian regions and kingdoms throughout the fifteenth century and earlier. The implementation of the 1480 decree extended beyond the timeline anticipated by the Cortes, with considerable variation from town to town. Although only around thirty Jewish quarters in Castilian towns were relocated, this radical measure—enforcing the complete segregation of Jews into separate, enclosed quarters—marked a turning point in Jewish life.[2] The consequences were swift and severe: the living conditions of the affected Jewish communities deteriorated rapidly. Although the decree originated in Castile, its influence quickly resonated within the Crown of Aragon and other regions of the Peninsula, reflecting a broader pattern of anti-Jewish rhetoric and preaching, polemics, and discriminatory legislation that had characterised the preceding century.[3]

While scholars have extensively examined this tragic episode in the history of Iberian Jewry—rightly interpreting it as a pivotal moment in medieval Iberian anti-Judaism and a precursor to the eventual expulsion—some significant consequences of

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1 REAL ACADEMIA DE LA HISTORIA, ed., *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla*, 7 vols, vol. 4 (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1882), 149–151.

2 FRANCISCO RUIZ GÓMEZ, 'La convivencia en el marco vecinal: el régimen apartado de las juderías castellanas en el siglo XV', in *Del pasado judío en los reinos medievales hispánicos. Afinidad y distanciamiento: XIII Curso de Cultura Hispanojudía y Sefardí de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha*, eds YOLANDA MORENO KOCH and RICARDO IZQUIERDO BENITO (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2005), 247–288 (279–87).

3 DAVID NIRENBERG, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), especially the second part of the book. FLOCEL SABATÉ, 'Jewish Neighbourhoods in Christian Towns (Catalonia, Late Middle Ages)', in *Intricate Interfaith Networks in the Middle Ages: Quotidian Jewish-Christian Contacts*, ed. EPHRAIM SHOHAM-STEINER (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 153–91.

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the *apartamiento* have largely been overlooked.[4] Although some studies acknowledge the severe impact on sanitation and the living conditions of the displaced Jewish population—cut off from urban infrastructure as their quarters were relocated to less favourable areas—historians have yet to fully recognise the broader ramifications of this crisis, particularly in relation to concerns about urban hygiene and poor sanitary conditions.[5] Likewise, the ways in which the affected Jewish communities responded to and confronted this health emergency remain largely underexplored. Perhaps this oversight stems from the fact that, although scholars of medieval public health have demonstrated that such concerns had become increasingly significant for various levels of government as well as the general population at the time, the study of premodern Jewish public health remains in its early stages.[6] However, we contend that a focus on public health opens new avenues for understanding not only the critical situation created by the *apartamiento*, but also other largely unexplored aspects of Jewish communal life and its relationship with the surrounding society. The concept of *healthscaping*, defined by Guy Geltner and Janna Coomans as the process by which 'different communities in the deeper past adapted their behaviours and shaped their environments to address the health risks they faced', offers an ideal framework—and a multidisciplinary methodology—for tracing and assessing communal health in medieval Jewish cultures in general, and Iberian Jewish communities in particular.[7]

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[4] Scholars have generally emphasised that the relocation of Jewish quarters entailed their displacement from the centres of economic and social activity and their consequent marginalisation. See, for example, FERNANDO SUÁREZ BILBAO, 'La comunidad judía y los procedimientos judiciales en la Baja Edad Media', *Cuadernos de historia del derecho* 2 (1995): 99–132 (114), and the bibliography on Jewish quarters' segregation in this essay.

[5] SABATÉ, 'Jewish Neighbourhoods', 153–91.

[6] JANNA COOMANS and GUY GELTNER, 'On the Street and in the Bathhouse: Medieval Galenism in Action?' *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 43, no. 1 (2013): 53–82. CAROL RAWCLIFFE, *Urban Bodies. Communal Health in Late Medieval English Towns and Cities* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013). ABIGAIL AGRESTA, '"The Nourishment of Infections": Disease and Waterscape in Late Medieval Valencia', in *Disease and the Environment in the Medieval and Early Modern Worlds,* ed. LORI JONES (London: Routledge, 2022), 38–51. Regarding Jewish public health, in the context of Roman Palestine, ESTÉE DVORJETSKI, 'Public Health in Jerusalem According to the Talmudic Literature: Reality or Vision?', in *Defining Jewish Medicine: Transfer of Medical Knowledge in Premodern Jewish Cultures*, ed. LENNART LEHMHAUS (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021), 245–92. For the medieval period, MOSHE ORFALI, 'Ecología y estrategias sociales en la jurisprudencia hispano-hebrea', in *Creencias y Culturas: Cristianos, judíos y musulmanes en la España medieval*, eds CARLOS CARRETE and ALISA MEYUHAS GINIO (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia, 1998), 181–201. More recently, NAAMA COHEN-HANEGBI, 'A Healthy Christian City: Christianising Health Care in Late Fourteenth-Century Seville', *Journal of Medieval History* 48, no. 5 (2022): 664–85, has contributed an insightful study on the initiatives to promote public health in Seville and their entanglement with the Christian religious agenda.

[7] GUY GELTNER and JANNA COOMANS, 'The Healthscaping Approach: Toward a Global History of Early Public Health', *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 56, no. 1 (2023): 18–33. Within this theoretical framework, see CARMEN CABALLERO NAVAS, 'Agents of Communal Health in Iberian Jewish Communities, 1200–1500', in *Public Health in the Premodern World. Dynamic Balances*, eds GUY GELTNER, JANNA COOMANS, and RONIT YOELI-TLALIM (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 72–90. The research conducted for that study served as the precursor to this paper and prompted the doctoral thesis currently in progress by MIGUEL RAFAEL GARCÍA CAMPOS, 'Public Health and Jews in 14th- and 15th-century Castile: Mapping City Hygiene from Medieval Documents' (University of Granada, expected 2027).

Building on this theoretical framework, our study adopts a three-layered approach to explore the complexities of Jewish communal health and the responses to the sanitary crisis in the context of the *apartamiento*. This approach considers the interplay between the majority society in which Jews lived, the Jewish community, and the household—where many crucial aspects of daily life such as hygiene and diet were managed—as distinct yet interconnected contexts that together encompassed a complex set of healthscaping practices.[8] Situated at the intersection of ethnicity, religion, class, and gender, this model underscores the importance of space in shaping the experiences of minority groups—a particularly pertinent factor in Christian Iberia, where the gradual yet continuous transformation of the spatial distribution of Jewish population reflected broader political, social, and territorial developments throughout the medieval period. When the organisation of space was abruptly and violently restructured through the enforced segregation of Jews and Jewish quarters, this resulted in a radical disruption of an already precarious balance, leading to a marked deterioration in health conditions within previously thriving communities, which was further exacerbated by the unfavourable circumstances of the newly designated areas. This model also offers insights into the shifting balance within Jewish communities themselves, as internal dynamics were affected by these broader changes.

This essay explores how the affected Jewish communities experienced, responded to, and managed the challenges to health and wellbeing brought about by this major crisis. Before focusing upon the royal decree of separation—its implementation, consequences, and Jewish reactions it provoked—it first offers a succinct overview of the gradual shifts in the spatial distribution of Jewish population from the thirteenth century onwards. The analysis of predominantly collective Jewish responses to the social and existential challenges posed by this extreme measure reveals two interconnected communal spheres of responsibility and action, along with their respective agents. This study focuses on one of them: the community, which responded through its representatives and whatever institutions remained functional, if any. Although addressed only in passing as it lies beyond the scope of this special issue, the household is also considered, with the aim of contextualising the broader dynamics and providing a fuller picture of the situation. Traditionally the primary site of preventive and healthcare practices in premodern societies, the household became, under increasingly adverse conditions, the sole or primary locus for the daily provision of healthcare.

The study presents examples drawn from the first domain and raises a series of research questions, such as: how did Jewish communities collectively respond to the existential and sanitary challenges posed by the ruling society's decree(s)? What roles did communal institutions and representatives play in mediating or managing the health crisis? In what ways did the household become a central arena for preventive and healthcare practices under increasingly adverse conditions? Other questions

[8] This three-layered model has been defined and developed in CABALLERO NAVAS, 'Agents of Communal Health'.

remain open for future research, including: how did the interplay between communal and domestic responses reflect broader patterns of resilience, adaptation, and continuity within Jewish society? And what do these responses reveal about the negotiation of authority and responsibility between communal leadership and individual households?

Moreover, by addressing the challenges of identifying and accessing Jewish sources—written in both Hebrew and local vernaculars—and the scholarly neglect of the associated health crisis, this study highlights written and material records, as well as other potential avenues for future research, which may offer further insights into this tragic episode of medieval Iberian Jewish history.

The Path to Segregation: The Cartography of a Communal Health Disaster

As previously noted, space plays a crucial role in the experience of minority groups, who often inhabit distinct areas that both reflect and reinforce their subordinate status within societal structures. The spatial configuration of Iberian Jewish quarters and smaller settlements significantly shaped the lived experiences of their inhabitants amid the ongoing shifts in settlement patterns during the medieval period—changes driven by Christian territorial expansion and the socio-political dynamics of various Iberian kingdoms. While early medieval policies aimed at repopulating newly conquered territories created opportunities for Jewish settlement and social mobility, divisions and hierarchical disparities existed. From these early times, there is evidence of Jewish groups residing along the same street or within one or a few settlements, often situated in urban areas near fortresses, characterised by narrow streets and enclosed quarters, or in enclaves separated from urban areas.[9] Likewise, during the thirteenth century—a period of considerable territorial expansion by both the Crown of Castile and the Crown of Aragon—a model of Jewish settlement emerged in newly conquered eastern towns.[10] Jewish settlers were allocated specific areas—often walled and gated quarters, or situated within the protection of a fortresses—which they could enter and leave freely. Moreover, while not all Jews lived within these designated spaces, some Christians also resided in the areas assigned to Jews. This is the case, for example, in newly Aragonese towns such as Palma, Valencia, Sagunto, Xátiva, and Castilian Murcia.[11]

[9] MARK MEYERSON, *Jews in an Iberian Frontier Kingdom: Society, Economy, and Politics in Morvedre, 1248-1391* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 10–56; JONATHAN RAY, *The Sephardic Frontier: The 'Reconquista' and the Jewish Community in Medieval Iberia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 15–54. For a survey on early legislation, see also PILAR LEÓN TELLO, 'Disposiciones sobre los judíos en los fueros de Castilla y León', *Medievalia* 8 (1989): 223–52 (223–24 and 230). See also PILAR LEÓN TELLO, 'La estancia de judíos en castillos', *Anuario de estudios medievales* 19 (1989): 451–57.

[10] MEYERSON, *Jews in an Iberian Frontier Kingdom*, 10–56.

[11] JOSÉ HINOJOSA MONTALVO, 'El reino de Valencia: juderías y sinagogas', in *Juderías y sinagogas de la Sefarad medieval: en memoria de José Luis Lacave Riaño*, ed. ELOY BENITO RUANO (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2003), 73–144 (75–78). NORMAN ROTH, 'Coexistencia y

By the late thirteenth century, increased territorial stability gave rise to heightened tensions between majority and minority populations in Iberia, including both Jews and Muslims. The political and social transformations affecting the Jews were underpinned by prevailing religious attitudes, driven by the anti-Jewish decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.[12] Among other measures, the Council mandated the physical separation of Jews, who were to be confined to designated areas. Although these decrees were initially enforced inconsistently across Christendom, they exacerbated negative social perceptions and laid the groundwork for further anti-Jewish legislation. By the end of the thirteenth century, Jewish quarters in towns under the Crown of Aragon began restricting access during Christian festivals, ostensibly for reasons of safety.[13] These developments foreshadowed the intensifying hostility and systemic marginalisation that would characterise the treatment of Jewish communities throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

During the fourteenth century, rising violence against Jewish communities increasingly restricted their movement, although they were not completely confined to their quarters nor were non-Jews entirely barred from entering these areas.[14] In the Cortes of Burgos of 1367, the king resolved to retain the walls surrounding certain Jewish quarters in Castilian cities, citing protection as a primary motive.[15] Similarly, Pope Gregory XI, in a 1375 bull, invoked the need to protect Jewish communities as justification for urging the implementation of segregation measures.[16] What was framed as protective segregation gradually came to serve as a means of social control and dominance.[17]

The devastating anti-Jewish riots of 1391, which swept through nearly all Christian kingdoms of the peninsula, led to the destruction or abandonment of many Jewish quarters and the displacement of surviving communities. In Castile, a royal decree issued in 1412 mandated the full segregation of Jews into enclosed, separate quarters.[18] Similar pronouncements ensued in 1415 by the bull of Benedict XIII, which exerted influence in both the Crowns of Castile and Aragon.[19] Throughout the fifteenth century, further legislation was enacted across various Iberian regions,

confrontación de judíos y cristianos españoles', in *Judíos entre árabes y cristianos: luces y sombras de una convivencia*, ed. ÁNGEL SÁENZ-BADILLOS (Córdoba: El Almendro, 2000), 87–110 (96).

[12] JOSÉ AMADOR DE LOS RÍOS, *Historia social, política y religiosa de los judíos de España y Portugal*, 2 vols (Madrid: Fontanet, 1875–1876), vol. 2, 640–41.

[13] NIRENBERG, *Communities of Violence*, 200–30. SABATÉ, 'Jewish Neighbourhoods', 164.

[14] JOSÉ MARIA MONSALVO, *Teoría y evolución de un conflicto social. El antisemitismo en la Corona de Castilla en la Baja Edad Media* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1985), 155–59; SABATÉ, 'Jewish Neighbourhoods', 171–78.

[15] FRITZ BAER, *Die Juden im Christlichen Spanien Erster Teil. Urkunden und Regesten*, 2 vols, vol. 2, *Kastilien/Inquisitionsakten* (England: Gregg International Publishers, 1970), 196–198, no. 205.

[16] LUIS SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *La expulsión de los judíos de España* (Madrid: Mapfre, 1991), 182.

[17] MAURICE KRIEGEL, *Les juifs à la fin du Moyen Age dans l'Europe Méditerranéenne* (Paris: Hachette, 1979), 20–28.

[18] MONSALVO, *Teoría*, 159–63.

[19] AMADOR DE LOS RÍOS, *Historia social,* 640–41.

institutionalising the physical and social segregation of Jewish populations.[20] However, this policy remained unevenly enforced until the Cortes of Toledo in 1480, when its formal implementation was decreed. Thus, invoking the claim that from 'the continual interaction and mixed living of Jews and Moors with Christians arise great harms and inconveniences' ('la continua conversación e uiuienda mezclada de los judios e moros con los christianos resultan grandes dannos e inconuenientes'), Law 76 states,

> We order and command that all the Jews and Moors of all and any towns and villages and places in our kingdoms [...] shall have their own distinct and separated *juderias* and *morerias*, and shall not dwell side by side with the Christians, nor have neighbourhoods with them, which we order to be done and fulfilled within the first two years, counted from the day that these our laws are published and proclaimed in our court, for which we intend to appoint reliable persons to make the said separation, marking out the lands and houses and places where they can live and contract in their work with the people, in order to do and fulfil it.[21]

The decree was not fully implemented in many locations across Castile, nor did it meet the scope intended by the legislation. The challenges associated with enforcing the decree varied depending on the specific local circumstances, including whether a particular Jewish quarter was merely restructured or entirely relocated. The monarchs appointed *visitadores* and *corregidores*—officials who, in consultation with local authorities and the affected community, determined the location and boundaries of these settlements— ostensibly to ensure they met minimum standards of habitability. However, in several Castilian towns, Jewish quarters were relocated to more disadvantaged areas, characterised by poor sanitary conditions, limited access to urban resources and infrastructure, and often extremely cramped spaces. For example, in 1481, the town council of Palencia decided to establish the new Jewish quarter in the butchers' street (*calle de los carniceros*), an area associated with animal slaughtering and meat trading, and therefore prone to producing unpleasant odours, attracting insects, and generating other conditions potentially detrimental to human habitation, as municipal ordinances of the period often acknowledged.[22] In the same year, a

[20] See, for example, the chronology of the segregation of Jewish quarters in the province of Saragossa (Aragón)—covering twelve locations—between 1412–1415. MIGUEL A. MOTIS DOLADER, 'La comunidad judía de la Villa de Tauste durante la Edad Media', in *Tauste en su historia: actas de las III Jornadas sobre la Historia de Tauste 2001* (Tauste: Patronato de la Casa de Cultura, 2003), 157–238 (165–66). For Catalonia, see SABATÉ, 'Jewish Neighbourhoods', 173–81.

[21] 'Ordenamos e mandamos que todos los judios e moros de todas e quales quier cibdades e uillas e lugares destos nuestros reynos [...] tengan sus juderias e morerias destintas e apatadas sobre si, e no moren a vueltas con los christianos, ni ayan barrios con ellos, lo qual mandamos que se faga e cumpla dentro de dos annos primeros siguientes, contados desde el dia que fueren publicadas e pregonadas estas nuestras leyes en la nuestra corte, para lo qual fazer e complir nos luego entendemos nombrar personas fiables para que fagan el dicho apartamiento, sennalando los suelos e casas e sitios donde buenamente puedan viuir e contractar en sus officios con las gentes'. *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla*, vol. 4, 149–51. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations (from local vernaculars and Hebrew) are by the authors.

[22] Municipal Archives of Palencia, Municipal Acts, June 20 – October 5 1481; PILAR LEÓN TELLO, 'Los judíos de Palencia', *Publicaciones de la Institución Tello Téllez de Meneses* 25 (1967): 1–169 (139–41). See also AGRESTA, 'The Nourishment of Infections', 42.

document establishing the new boundaries of the Jewish quarter in Murcia states that 'the oil mills and tanneries of the Lord Archdeacon of Lorca and Pero Roca are located and remain within the boundaries and area of the Jewish quarter' ('las almaçaras e adoberías del sennor arcediano de Lorca e Pero Roca están e quedan dentro deste limite e sytio de la judería'), even though tanneries—known for producing large amounts of polluted and foul-smelling wastewater—were not considered a suitable environment for human habitation.[23] In 1488, the monarchs ordered the *corregidor* of León to enlarge the Jewish quarter, as the space was so cramped that two or three families were living in some of the houses 'en algunas de las casas ay dos o tres vecinos'.[24]

Such unsanitary conditions undoubtedly played a role in the resistance of Jewish inhabitants of certain towns to living or remaining confined within the designated Jewish quarters. As a result, both the Crown and local authorities were periodically compelled to reaffirm the mandatory nature of seclusion, often following petitions submitted by specific towns, such as Corral de Almaguer, in 1483, or Medina del Campo in 1490.[25] Such unsanitary conditions also prompted responses from Jewish communities, who, through the *aljama* representatives, submitted complaints and petitions to the ruling authorities—including the king and queen—seeking relief from their hardships. For example, the previously noted royal authorisation to enlarge the narrow Jewish quarter of León had been granted in response to a petition submitted by the community.[26] More broadly, the voices of the *aljamas*—describing the dire living and sanitary conditions of the confined spaces to which they had been relocated or further enclosed, and actively seeking solutions for the health risks they faced—reach us today through the official correspondence and documents issued by the royal chancellery and local administrations.

Jewish Inter- and Intra-Communal Responses to Emerging Health Challenges

In 1483, a letter from the king and queen to the *Corregidor* of Ávila—one of the Castilian towns with the largest Jewish population at that time—instructs him to gather information through the testimony of the parties involved in the case referred to in the letter. This informs us about the Jewish community's complaint regarding the insalubrious conditions of their quarter's new location, to which they had been moved

[23] Municipal Archives of Murcia, Royal Letters, 1478–1488, fol. 64–65r. LUIS RUBIO GARCÍA, *Los judíos de Murcia en la Baja Edad Media (1350-1500)*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 1997), 183. See also AGRESTA, 'The Nourishment of Infections', 43.

[24] RUIZ GÓMEZ, 'La convivencia en el marco vecinal', 286. LUIS SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión de los judíos* (Burgos: Aldecoa, 1964), 299–300, document no. 110.

[25] Archivo General de Simancas (henceforth ASG), Registro General del Sello, leg. 148311, 69. Transcribed in SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión*, 212–13; and ASG, Registro General del Sello, Leg. 149012, 57, respectively.

[26] See above, note 24. Around sixty years earlier, the community of Castellón, in Valencia, had complained to the general *baile* (representative) of the Crown about the poor conditions of the street that had been assigned for their relocation. After his mediation, the city's Jurors granted them a new place to settle. See HINOJOSA MONTALVO, 'El reino de Valencia', 81–82.

in 1481 under the supervision of the *visitador* appointed by the monarchs for that purpose. The letter reproduces the words of a community representative who explains that when the quarter was moved to the new site—where some Jewish tanneries were operating—the royal appointee had ordered, under penalty, that all tanneries, vats, and dyeing materials be removed from the area due to the health hazards and offensive odours they produced. However,

> […] every day they work more in them and build new tanneries there, and they spill dye in the streets of the said Jewish quarter, and he says that the people cannot endure the foul smells and the damage that the houses and streets suffer, because they say that the fulling, tanning and dyeing in the said Jewish quarter enter into their houses. Therefore, they pleaded with us to order that justice be done in this matter […][27]

In a new letter from 1487, the monarchs refer to another complaint from the same community through the intermediation of their representative, Ysaque Benacho. It reveals that, despite having been relocated to two neighbourhoods, the Jewish population was living in overcrowded conditions, with an insufficient number of houses—so much so that two or three families were forced to live together in a single dwelling. They requested that a gate to the city, which had remained closed, be opened and be kept open in order to relieve the overcrowding and to allow sunlight to enter. This was sought for the wellbeing of the residents, for drying washed wool, for other needs related to their homes and trades, and because the quarter was said to be very damp.[28]

These documents, like other similar ones, provide valuable information on several fronts. In the form of complaints and petitions, they were addressed to the very authorities responsible for the situation—those who also held the power to resolve the public health challenges emerging from the drastic legal measures. Beyond the purported reasons and objectives behind the drastic decision, they generally detail the conditions of segregation or relocation, the timeline of implementation, and often the specific locations to which Jewish quarters were moved. Most relevant to this study, they reveal that relocation frequently placed Jewish populations in areas far from urban infrastructure, poorly developed and unsuitable for human habitation, as these locations did not meet the basic standards recommended by contemporary medical and public health discourses.[29] Finally, they reflect the affected Jewish communities' awareness of the health risks they now faced, documenting their reactions to the *apartamiento* and its consequences.

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[27] '[…] cada día labran más en ellas e hedefican en ellas nueuas tenerías e derraman la tinta por las calles de la dicha judería e dis que las gentes non pueden conportar los malos olores e el danno que las casas e calles resciben porque dis que entran por los aluannares el cortidunbre e tintería en la dicha judería dentro en sus casas, por ende que nos suplicauan que les mandásemos proueer sobrello de justiçia […]'. PILAR LEÓN TELLO, *Judíos de Ávila* (Ávila: Instituto Gran Duque de Alba, 1963), 73–74.

[28] LEÓN TELLO, *Judíos de Ávila*, 77–78.

[29] COOMANS and GELTNER, 'On the Street and in the Bathhouse'.

The situation of Avila's Jewish quarters echoes the challenges faced in other *apartamientos*. For example, as mentioned above, the newly restructured Jewish quarter in Murcia housed at least two tanneries, if not more.[30] In other towns, the new locations assigned to the *aljamas* were far too small to accommodate their population. In addition to the case of León already mentioned, the *aljama* of Cabezuela del Valle also petitioned the Crown for a less restricted and more spacious site than the one designated for the 1488 relocation of the quarter.[31]

Probably for similar reasons, in 1489, the *aljama* of Badajoz requested the annexation of a nearby street, presenting a twofold argument: first, there are no Christian houses in the street, and second, the place had become a dumping ground for refuse, to the detriment of both Christian and Jewish residents of the town. As they stated, 'much filth is being dumped, which causes great harm both to the Christians of the said town and to the said Jewish quarter' ('diz que se echa mucha suziedad de que viene mucho daño asy a los christianos de la dicha çibdad como a la dicha judería').[32] Therefore, they argued, if the street is occupied and cleaned, it would benefit all the neighbours. Underlying this argument is the widespread contemporary belief, rooted in Galenic medicine, that filth, decay, and stagnant water produced *miasma*—corrupted air or vapours considered to be the source of disease and epidemics.[33] This same rationale underpins another petition by the *aljama* of Aranda de Duero, which objected to the site assigned in the *apartamiento*, describing it as uninhabitable because 'it was very poorly arranged and dangerous, as all the dead animals were thrown there' ('hera muy mal dispuesto e peligroso donde dis que se echavan todas las alimañas que se morían'). Similarly, they noted that wastewater would accumulate in that location, adding other health risks.[34] In towns outside Castile, significant issues regarding wastewater management arose in newly established quarters. In Solsona, in Catalonia, for example, local regulations explicitly prohibited disposal of household water before curfew.[35]

In response to the ghastly conditions and distressing circumstances, each community had to devise and implement its own immediate, internal solutions. These efforts appear to have built upon existing forms of communal health management—now adapted to the crisis—shaped not only by contemporary medical understandings of health, hygiene, and prophylaxis shared with the host society, but also rooted in

[30] See above, note 23.
[31] AGS, Registro General del Sello , 22 mayo 1491, fol. 96; y SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión,* 367–68.
[32] ASG, Registro General del Sello, Legajo 148905, fol. 80. Transcribed by SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión*, 324–25, document no. 128.
[33] COOMANS and GELTNER, 'On the Street', 55–57.
[34] AGS, Registro General del Sello, t. IV, no. 3.213, transcribed by INOCENCIO CADIÑANOS BARDECI, 'Judíos y moros en Aranda de Duero y sus contornos', *Sefarad* 50, no. 2 (1990): 289–318 (303–304).
[35] SABATÉ, 'Jewish Neighbourhoods', 177.

Jewish ethical and legal traditions that emphasised responsibility for both the environment and bodily wellbeing.[36]

Managing Communal Health: Confronting a Major Health Crisis

The first documented evidence that a degree of communal cohesion and organisational capacity persisted, despite the adversities faced, lies in the very act of the interlocution between the community representatives and the Crown or other authorities. However, beyond the sources that stemmed from the interaction with the majority's legal system, a significant challenge becomes apparent: the state of Jewish sources. This reflects the instability of the period, as well as the impact of the abrupt end of Jewish life in Iberia following the expulsion just a few years later. As a result, the availability of sources is limited, and information related to communal health is often fragmented and has been frequently neglected in scholarly research. Jewish sources from this brief period remain largely unexamined or have been studied with different purposes in mind. Identifying the structures, mechanisms, and agents involved in communal health management at all levels during earlier periods is therefore essential for mapping relevant areas and source materials that may offer further insights into developments within the framework of segregation and removal.

Beginning at the organisational level, *halakhah* (Jewish law)—along with custom (*minhag*)—provided the authoritative framework governing Jewish life and underpinned the administrative structure and autonomy of Iberian Jewish communities.[37] More than a set of religious prescriptions, *halakhah* shaped daily life, guiding both individual conduct and communal governance, including public hygiene and preventive health practices. These regulations were rooted in Talmudic conceptions of personal and collective wellbeing, reflecting a clear awareness of the environment's influence on human health.[38]

From *responsa*—rabbinic replies on the application of *halakhah*, known in Hebrew as *she'elot u-teshuvot* (questions and answers)—issued across the Iberian kingdoms during Middles Ages, we gain insight into the daily concerns surrounding communal health and prophylaxis within Jewish quarters.[39] Often overcrowded and characterised by narrow alleys and shared courtyards crowded with workshops, these quarters were sources of fumes, odours, pollution, and noise that affected residents'

[36] DVORJETSKI, 'Public Health', 245–46. ORFALI, 'Ecología', 182.
[37] AVRAHAM GROSSMAN, 'Legislation and Responsa Literature', in *Moreshet Sepharad: The Sephardi Legacy*, ed. HAIM BEINART, 2 vols (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1992), vol.1, 188–221 (218). The *halakhah* operated through the *Beit din* and qualified scholars who issued legal rulings in response to queries from the communities. It also operated through enactments coming from the community, in the form of agreements (*haskamot*) and ordinances (*taqqanot*), although an examination of the surviving documents has not yet yielded evidence specifically related to communal health issues. Regarding customs, see NORMAN ROTH, 'Some Customs of Jews in Medieval Spain', in *From Catalonia to the Caribbean: The Sephardic Orbit from Medieval to Modern Times*, eds FEDERICA FRANCESCONI, STANLEY MIRVIS, and BRIAN M. SMOLLETT (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 27–42.
[38] ORFALI, 'Ecología'.
[39] MOSHE ORFALI, 'Los *responsa* rabínicos y la vida interna en las aljamas aragonesas', in *Aragón Sefarad*, 2 vols (Saragossa: Diputación de Zaragoza, 2005), vol. 1, 161–76 (170).

wellbeing.[40] Such issues were addressed through Talmudic principles, which rabbis and *halakhists* adapted to their contexts, establishing norms for regulating individual and social behaviour within the *aljama*.[41] Particularly relevant is Chapter II of Tractate *Bava Batra* (*Seder Nezikim*, 'Order of Damages'), which provides guidelines for urban management, including restrictions on property use to prevent harm or inconvenience to neighbours or the public, and minimum distances between houses to ensure privacy, ventilation, and light.[42] It also regulates trades producing unpleasant odours, pollution, or noise—for instance, requiring tanneries to be located at least fifty cubits beyond the town limits (Mishnah *Bava Batra* 2:9).

One might reasonably suggest that the ability to apply such important principles was, to a certain extent, preserved despite adversity. This capacity was evident in the intermediation of communal representatives already discussed, particularly concerning the suitability of relocated or further restricted Jewish quarters. It likely informed concerns about dwelling near tanneries, wastewaters discharge sites, or dumping grounds. Yet one must ask: how could a rabbinic ruling prevent Jews from living in such places? How could Jews in Murcia or Ávila avoid settling next to one or more tanneries?[43] How might *halakhah* have assisted families in cramped quarters, or those compelled to share houses with other neighbours in León and Ávila, in maintaining physical distance or accessing fresh air and sunlight?[44] This is not to suggest that individuals or communities ceased to submit queries to rabbis on these matters, or that rabbinic responses were no longer issued. However, due to the nature of this *halakhic* genre, the challenges involved in identifying and cataloguing specific cases and the limited availability of *responsa* collections from this period, this remains an open avenue for further research.

Similarly, contemporary writings on religious philosophy and morals also offer potential for exploration, considering that it was not uncommon for earlier Iberian Jewish ethical literature to convey an understanding of healthy living that was closely connected to the environment, in which ethics and medical thought were often deeply intertwined.[45] Indeed, it was likely the experience of segregation that informed the following passage from Solomon Alami's *Iggeret Musar* (*An Epistle of Ethical Admonition*), written in 1415 in the aftermath of the 1412 royal decree, which, among other discriminatory provisions, confined Jews to designated quarters within towns,

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[40] ORFALI, 'Ecología' and 'Los *responsa*'. ELEAZAR GUTWIRTH 'Habitat and Ideology: The Organization of Private Space in Late Medieval Juderías', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 9, no. 2 (1994): 205–34, discusses *responsa* with regard to spatial distribution.

[41] For a recent analysis of Iberian *responsa* involving the discussion and arbitrament of neighbours' complaints on these grounds, see CABALLERO NAVAS, 'Agents of Communal Health', 79–82.

[42] *Mishnah, Bava Batra* II, *Babilonian Talmud, Bava Batra* 17a–27b.

[43] See above notes 27 and 30, and 23, respectively.

[44] See above notes 24 and 28, respectively.

[45] CARMEN CABALLERO NAVAS, 'Medieval Jewish Views on the Preservation of Health at the Crossroads of the Arabic and Latin Medical Traditions', in *Jews and Health*, ed. CATHERINE HEZSER (Leiden: Brill, 2023), 107–32 (112–14), and 'Agents of Communal Health', 85–87. Regarding jurisprudence, see ORFALI, 'Ecología'.

> Those who dwell in their venerable houses have been expelled from the palaces of delight and pleasure to live in dark caverns; the worm of Jacob has embraced the rubbish heaps and the Jews have to live in hovels in summer and winter to their shame.[46]

In the second half of fifteenth century, the Iberian Peninsula was home of prominent Jewish scholars, scientists, renowned Talmudists, biblical commentators, and preachers. Among them were R. Isaac Arama (c. 1420–1494), R. Abraham Saba (1440–1508), Isaac Abravanel (c. 1438–1508), and David ibn Shoshan ben Samuel, who completed his *Toldot Adam* shortly after 1492. Also noteworthy are Abraham Zacuto (c. 1452–1510), Abraham ibn Nahmias, R. Samuel Atiyah, Eli Habilio, and Shem Tov ben Joseph ibn Shem Tov, who wrote his *Derashot* in 1480.[47] While some of their works remain unpublished or have not been translated into a modern language, the scholars who have examined their contributions have focused on cultural production, attitudes towards philosophy, social criticism, mass conversion, and expulsion, largely overlooking implicit or explicit references to the potentially experienced or witnessed realities of *apartamiento* and segregation.

All in all, some indicators—such as letters to the Crown—suggest that the communities' attitudes were likely pragmatic, aiming to preserve internal mechanisms for regulating communal hygiene and prophylaxis through the institutions that remained functional. Drawing once again on earlier communal practices, the roles of synagogues, charitable institutions, hospitals, and mutual assistance societies or confraternities will be surveyed. Synagogues take precedence over the other institutions for two main reasons. First, the synagogue is the central hub of Jewish life in medieval Iberia—not only in religious terms, but also juridically, socially, educationally, economically, and administratively.[48] Second, the *apartamiento* laws explicitly permitted the establishment of synagogues in the newly designated dwelling areas, which implied the potential relocation of all other institutions associated with them in one way or another—that is, charitable institutions and hospitals.[49] Likewise, although confraternities generally operated independently of communal governance, they too maintained strong ties to both synagogues and hospitals.

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[46] Quoted and translated by GUTWIRTH, 'Habitat', 211. On Alami's aim in writing this treatise, and its response to the events of 1412–1414 see, GUTWIRTH, 'Social tensions within XVth century Hispano-Jewish communities' (PhD diss., University of London, 1978), particularly chapter 1.

[47] ELEAZAR GUTWIRTH, 'The "Stranger's Wisdom": Translation and Otherness in Fifteenth-Century Iberia', *Portuguese Studies* 13 (1997): 130–42; GUTWIRTH, 'Towards Expulsion: 1391-1492', in *Spain and the Jews*, ed. ELIE KEDOURIE (London: Thames and Hudosn, 1992), 51–73. ABRAHAM GROSS, *Iberian Jewry from Twilight to Dawn: The World of Rabbi Abraham Saba* (Leiden: Brill, 1995). MARK D. MEYERSON, *A Jewish Renaissance in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). DAVID NIRENBERG, 'Mass Conversion and Genealogical Mentalities: Jews and Christians in Fifteenth-Century Spain'. *Past & Present* 174, no. 1 (2002): 3–41.

[48] HINOJOSA MONTALVO, 'El reino de Valencia', 117–20. JAVIER CASTAÑO, 'Deserving Poor and Rota Fortunae in Hispano-Jewish Society', in *Ibero-Mediävistik: Grundlagen, Potentiale und Perspektiven eines internationalen Forschungsfeldes*, ed. NIKOLAS JASPERT (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2022), 475–96.

[49] *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla*, vol. 4, 149–51.

A document from 1432 mentions the synagogue established by the Jews of Castellón, in the Kingdom of Valencia, in 'the house they purchased from Na Poceta, which they have made into a synagogue', located in the newly segregated quarter created in 1427.[50] In Ávila, two synagogues were in use by the community in the new location.[51] References to other synagogues functioning within relocated or segregated Jewish quarters appear scattered across various types of written and material sources—including notarial protocols, royal letters, other archival documents, and archaeological remains—in towns throughout the Iberian regions and kingdoms, such as Jaca, Tauste, Segovia, Molina the Aragón, Burguillos, and others.[52] Because the synagogue also functioned as a space where everyday problems were addressed, it may have provided residents of the newly segregated quarters with a secure environment in which to navigate spatial tensions and mediate disputes among neighbours arising from the challenges of adapting to their new surroundings.

Although the archival sources that record the existence of synagogues in the segregated and relocated areas do not generally provide detailed information about their functions and activities, occasional references offer useful insights. For example, the request made by the council of Segovia to the crown in 1492 to make use of the synagogue and hospital left behind by the Jews after the expulsion—intended to be converted into a *studium*—indicates that both institutions were located adjacent to each other, if not housed within the same building.[53] Similarly, a deed of sale from 1492 mentions certain houses in the town of Daroca, which are said to have served as the synagogue and hospital of the Jews.[54] Most intriguingly, a 1490 inquisitorial record from the tribunal of Soria refers to a certain '*hospitalera* of the Jews' hospital', although it does not provide explicit information about her role or responsibilities.[55]

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[50] HINOJOSA MONTALVO, 'El reino de Valencia', 120–21.

[51] DE TAPIA, 'Los judíos de Ávila', 153.

[52] See, for example, MIGUEL A. MOTIS DOLADER, 'Reflexiones en torno a las sinagogas de la judería de Jaca en la Edad Media', *Aragón en la Edad Media* 10 (1993): 641–60 (653). MOTIS DOLADER, 'La comunidad judía de la Villa de Tauste'. FRANCISCO RUIZ GÓMEZ, 'Aljamas y concejos en el Reino de Castilla durante la Edad Media', *Espacio Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval* 6 (1993): 57–77 (59). RUIZ GÓMEZ, 'La convivencia en el marco vecinal', 281. JESÚS A. ARENAS ESTEBAN, 'El asentamiento de Castil de Judíos (Molina de Aragón, Guadalajara)', in *¿Una Sefarad inventada? Los problemas de interpretación de los restos materiales de los judíos en España*, ed. JAVIER CASTAÑO (Córdoba: El Almendro, 2014), 327–48.

[53] 1492, September 15, Saragossa. AGS, Registro General del Sello, 1492-September, fol. 22, quoted by JOSE M. RUIZ POVEDANO, 'Las "conversions" de sinagogas a raíz del decreto de expulsión (1492)', *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Hebreo* 29 (1980): 143–162 (150).

[54] ELEAZAR GUTWIRTH, 'The Jewish Hospitals in Spain', *Pe'amim* 37 (1989): 140–50 (143) [Hebrew].

[55] CARLOS CARRETE PARRONDO, *El Tribunal de la Inquisición en el obispado de Soria (1486-1502)* (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1985), 18. To our knowledge, no studies exist on caregivers in Jewish hospitals and other charitable institutions, both public and private. An information concerning a Christian woman who cared for several Jews in her home may shed light on the involvement of women in healthcare practices. See JOSEPH MARTÍ I BONET, *Processos de l'Arxiu Diocesà de Barcelona* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya. Departament de Cultura, 1984), 108; quoted by CLARA JÁUREGUI, 'El *heqdeix* a Barcelona: assistència i caritat jueva als segles XIII-XIV', *Tamid* 13 (2018): 171–88 (182). The names of three Christian women who served at the poor's hospital of Santa Marta, founded in 1385 in Seville, are mentioned in the will of Ferrán Martínez. COHEN-HANEGBI, 'A Heatly Christian City', 672–73.

The medieval hospital was not a medical institution but a charitable establishment that provided shelter for pilgrims, foreigners, and the destitute members of the community. Scholars have emphasised, however, that its role in tending to those in need often included caregiving, such as provision of food, hygiene, healing, and convalescence.[56] Although in most towns there was a Jewish hospital, in Saragossa four Jewish hospitals are documented to have been in operation during the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, the last one—the *Spital de la judería*—active in 1492.[57] Also active at the beginning of 1492 was the Jewish hospital in Atienza, Guadalajara.[58] A document regarding the establishment of one of the hospitals in Saragossa, founded by mutual assistance societies and operating between 1425 and 1467, explains its function as follows,

> The confraternity of the *aljama* of the Jews of Saragossa, commonly called *de la Merced*, and in Hebrew *Rotfe cedech*, has established a hospital to shelter and receive all Jews, both men and women—whether pilgrims or foreigners, or locals—who are beggars, poor, or ill. Their aim is to fulfil the seven works of mercy there for them, giving them food and drink, and performing other acts necessary due to their poverty or illness.[59]

Clara Jaúregui has argued that, in fifteenth-century Catalonia, the term 'hospital' referring to a place that provided shelter for the poor, whether or not they were ill began to be used as a synonym for *heqdesh* (pious foundation). In some sources, Latin terms such as *elemosyna* (alms) or *hospitale* were also used to describe charitable institutions that cared for the poor. A comparable pattern emerges in Aragon, where, alongside existing hospitals, the city of Saragossa supported numerous confraternities and charitable institutions, which frequently contributed to the founding of both public and private hospitals.[60] Of the fourteen documented mutual assistance societies in Saragossa, eleven of them were socio-charitable, dedicated to assisting the helpless and the sick, supporting study, and caring for the deceased. Among these was the *biqqur ḥolim* (visiting the sick) confraternity, which often helped meet some of the needs typically addressed by a hospital.[61] The existence of confraternities is also attested in Castile, at least in the major *aljamas* such as those of Seville and Toledo.[62] Although

[56] ADAM J. DAVIS, *The Medieval Economy of Salvation: Charity, Commerce, and the Rise of the Hospital* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019).
[57] See above, note 54. See also ASUNCIÓN BLASCO, 'Instituciones sociorreligiosas judías de Zaragoza (siglos XIV-XV). Sinagogas, cofradías, hospitales', *Sefarad* 50, no.1 (1990): 3–46 (46).
[58] JAVIER CASTAÑO, 'Las comunidades judías en el Obispado de Sigüenza en la Baja Edad Media: transformación y disgregación del judaísmo en Castilla a fines del medievo' (PhD diss., Madrid, Universidad Complutense, 1994), 270.
[59] 'La confraria de la aljama de los jodios de Çaragoça clamada vulgarment de la Merce et en abrayco Rotfe cedech han feyto un hospital por acoyer et recebir alli qualesquiera judios et judias assi peregrinos o strangeros como de la tierra, mendicantes, pobres et enfermos, et por conplir alli en ellos las siet obras de misericordia dandoles a comer, bever et faciendo las otras cosas a lur pobreza o enfermedat necessarias'. Archivo Histórico Provincial de Zaragoza, papeles sueltos, 1425. Transcribed by BLASCO, 'Instituciones sociorreligiosas', *Sefarad* 50, no. 2 (1990): 265–88 (284–85).
[60] JÁUREGUI, 'El *heqdeix*', 174–76.
[61] BLASCO, 'Instituciones', 28; JAÚREGUI, 'El *heqdeix*', 175–76.
[62] FRANCISCO CANTERA BURGOS, 'Cofradías judías en Zaragoza', *Sefarad* 7 (1947): 369–71.

information on the continuity of confraternities is limited, records indicate that the confraternity of the Jewish *pellejeros* (skinners) was active in Saragossa by 1485.[63] As trades continued to evolve and the need for internal mechanisms of support and mutual assistance persisted—particularly as conditions deteriorated—it is reasonable to suggest that such societies may have reorganised and continued to function. Nevertheless, this remains an open avenue for future research.

Admittedly, the data we have presented regarding the number and locations of synagogues, hospitals, charitable institutions, and confraternities that persisted after segregation or relocation are neither exhaustive nor comprehensive, representing only a fragment of the broader body of existing research. While the selection of source studies may introduce a degree of bias, the evidence nonetheless offers a meaningful sample of the persistence, scale, and distribution of such institutions. A full prosopographyical study lies beyond the scope of this work; our intention has simply been to demonstrate the continued existence of these structures and to acknowledge that, although valuable research has been already conducted, much remains to be explored—an endeavour to which we hope to contribute in future studies.

Embedded within the community yet forming a distinct sphere, the Jewish household—like its counterparts in other premodern societies—served as the primary site for preventive and health care.[64] Although beyond the scope of this special issue, it is worth noting its role and agency within the wider dynamics of Jewish responses to the health crisis associated with the *apartamiento*. The household maintained a complex array of everyday health practices, some closely linked to *halakhic* principles and ritual observances, and grew increasingly prominent, as conditions worsened, absorbing responsibility for practices that had been previously managed at communal level.

Within domestic spaces, women oversaw hygiene, preventive care, and healing, while waged healers were summoned when required. Their routines often reflected Galenic principles concerning air, environment, and diet—the so-called six non-naturals. Although seldom recorded, these domestic practices were central to communal health, as women engaged in what Mary Fissel terms 'bodywork', serving as vital health resources within their neighbourhoods.[65]

How did Jewish women manage these responsibilities in a world turned upside down, and how can we trace practices that were private, overlooked, and rarely

[63] BLASCO, 'Instituciones', 42.
[64] MONICA GREEN, 'Women's Medical Practice and Health Care in Medieval Europe', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14, no. 2 (1989): 434–73. MARY E. FISSELL, 'Introduction', and MONSERRAT CABRÉ, 'Women or Healers?: Household Practices and the Categories of Health Care in Late Medieval Iberia', in *Women, Health, and Healing in Early Modern Europe*, ed. MARY E. FISSELL, special issue, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 82, no. 1 (2008): 1–17 and 18–51. CABALLERO NAVAS, 'Agents of Communal Health', and 'Curar y cuidar en relación: la práctica sanitaria de las mujeres judías en la Edad Media', in *Dinámicas sociales y roles entre mujeres: Percepciones en grupos de parentesco y espacios domésticos en el Oriente antiguo*, ed. BEATRIZ NORIA SERRANO (Cambridge: Archaeopress, 2023), 200–16.
[65] FISSELL, 'Introduction', 13.

recorded? Feminist scholarship has long advocated for creative methods to recover what is typically unseen and unheard.[66] Building on this foundation, we propose a comparative approach for future research, examining other major historical crises to illuminate how women were mobilised to provide essential care, and to open new avenues for investigating these obscured practices.[67]

Conclusion

In summary, although the enforcement of segregation and removal posed serious challenges to communal health and wellbeing, the key agents and instruments of welfare provision remained largely unchanged: the *aljama*'s representatives and officials, religious authorities and *halakhists*, mutual assistance societies, and the 'bodywork' who carried out preventive and curative practices both within the household and in the wider community, a sphere that was markedly gendered. Such continuities attest to the resilience of preexisting frameworks of care and solidarity, even under the disruptive pressures of forced segregation.

Yet, while these actors persisted, shifts in social dynamics also altered the balance among the domains in which intra-communal discourses and practices concerning preventive medicine and communal welfare were shaped. The *apartamiento* also brought about significant changes in the ways Jewish communities negotiated their collective identity, autonomy, and survival. The reorganisation of urban space and the growing isolation of Jewish quarters not only intensified material deprivation and health risks but also prompted internal adaptations in governance and welfare practices. In this sense, the crisis acted as a catalyst for redefining the boundaries between communal responsibility and individual agency, as well as between religious prescriptions and practical responses to poverty, illness, and vulnerability.

By examining these developments, this study contributes to the broader themes of this special issue by showing how a marginalised minority community reconfigured its welfare structures under coercive circumstances. It highlights the intersection of religious and communal identities with strategies of social care, revealing a dynamic interplay between exclusion and solidarity, imposed otherness and internal cohesion. The Jewish experience in late medieval Iberia thus provides a distinctive case of how minority groups within across the Mediterranean navigated the challenges of welfare, health, and identity amid growing regulation and discrimination.

[66] See above, note 64.
[67] For a recent approach to these issues, see CABALLERO NAVAS, 'Agents of Communal Health', 85–87.

Bestowing Care and Earning Honour: Female Hospital Donors and Politics in Renaissance Rome

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On January 15, 1517, Vannozza Cattanei made a significant *inter vivos* donation to the Ospedale del Santissimo Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum, which included half of the Osteria della Vacca, a hotel previously operated by the donor near Campo de' Fiori, along with instructions to redecorate the icon of Christ in the Sancta Sanctorum.[1] While she was best remembered as the mistress of Cardinal Rodrigo de Borgia, later Pope Alexander VI, and mother of four of his children, Cattanei's affiliation as prominent donor to Roman charitable organisations had its own afterlife.[2] Upon her funeral in 1518, Venetian Marino Sanudo remarked in his diary regarding Cattanei's charitable reputation as a benefactress to the Ospedale del Salvatore, noting that the event was fit for a cardinal while also chiding that, 'the funerals of the Pope's bedchamber servants are not solemn occasions to some'.[3] Cattanei's charity remained blended with her infamy. Cattanei appeared in Marco Antonio

[1] Archivio di Stato di Roma (henceforth ASR), Ospedale del SS.mo Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum (henceforth Ospedale del Salvatore), 452, no. 28. For Cattanei as a hotel owner, see CYNTHIA STOLLHANS, 'Vannozza Cattanei: A Hotel Proprietress in Renaissance Rome', *Early Modern Women* 10, no. 1 (2015): 105–13. For her artistic patronage, see SIMONETTA VALTIERI, 'La presenza Borgiana', *Santa Maria dell Popolo: Storia e restauri*, eds ILARIA MIARELLI MARIANI and MARIA RICHIELLO (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca della Stato, 2009), vol. 2, 217–55 and CYNTHIA STOLLHANS, 'The Artistic Patronage of Vannozza Dei Cattanei and Giulia Farnese: Two Mistresses at the Borgia Papal Court', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 56, no. 1 (2025): 55–87. For the icon, see KIRSTIN NOREEN, 'Re-Covering Christ in Late Medieval Rome: The Icon of Christ in the Sancta Sanctorum', *Gesta* 49, no. 2 (2010): 117–35.

[2] For Cattanei's relationship with Cardinal Borgia, see PAUL STRATHERN, *The Borgias: Power and Fortune* (London: Atlantic Books, 2019) 70–71 and 113–14 and CHRISTOPHER HIBBERT, *The Borgias and Their Enemies: 1431–1519* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2008), 29–31. On the role of mistresses, see HELEN S. ETTLINGER, 'Visibilis et Invisibilis: The Mistress in Italian Renaissance Court Society', *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1994): 770–92 and CATHERINE LAWLESS, 'Women on the margins: the "beloved" and the "mistress" in Renaissance Florence', in *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women: Pawns or Players*, eds CHRISTINE MEEK and CATHERINE LAWLESS (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 111–30.

[3] 'L'altro giorno morì madonna Vannozza, che fu donna di papa Alexandro et madre dil ducha Valentino et di la duchessa di Ferrara. Et quella notte mi trovai in loco donde odii gridar la parte al modo romanescho, con queste formali parole: "Messer Paolo! fate la parle, che l'è morta madonna Vannozza madre dil duca di Candia." È di la compagnia dil Confalone; si sepelisse a Santa Maria dil Popolo; et fu sepelita cum pompa pare quasi ad uno cardenale. Era donna di 66 anni, et ha lassata tutta la sua roba, che non era poca, a San Gianni Laterano. Furono a le essequie gli cubiculari dil Papa, che non soleno gir ad alcuno'. MARINO SANUDO, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*, eds FEDERICO STEFANI, GUGLIELMO BERCHET, and NICOLO BAROZZI, 58 vols, vol. 26 (Venice: Stefani, Berchet, and Barozzi, 1889), 252–53. For his discussion of hearing of her death, see SANUDO, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*, 233.

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Altieri's *Commentario de privilegii, de gratie et indulti* (1525), a manuscript of influential figures affiliated with the institution, which placed her among popes, cardinals, queens, and other Roman nobles as one of the most prominent figures associated with the upkeep of the Ospedale del Salvatore.[4]

When Roman women prepared for their inevitable deaths through the creation of testaments, donations to hospitals were among several charitable options available to provide communal and spiritual benefit.[5] As James A. Palmer has argued, testators in Rome 'acted with considerable autonomy', while caring for their families and their souls.[6] Roman testators often used their donations to pious organisations as a means to form ties between themselves and others.[7] As Sandra Cavallo has demonstrated, the personal circumstances of substantial donors influenced their charitable motivations and, ultimately, shaped systems of charity in early modern Italy.[8] These early modern women were participating in a long history of Roman women cementing their place within the city and their community through testamentary acts.[9] Through the study of Vannozza Cattanei, Cristofara Margani, Tuzia Colonna Mattei, and over fifty other significant female patrons of the Ospedale del Salvatore from 1450 to 1600—roughly covering the span from the admission of women into the organisation through the years following the Council of Trent—this essay examines how female patrons, in addition to caring for their spiritual wellbeing, benefitted from the charity that they provided to the needy of Rome, as seen through their testaments and the *Commentario* by Marco Antonio Altieri, one of the two elected *Guardiani* who ran the confraternity.[10]

While these charitable gifts could have been accompanied by ulterior motives around the legacy of the donor and their family, this does not detract from the spiritual

[4] For Altieri's *Commentario*, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373. For a study of Altieri's *Commentario* and the women included within the work, see ELENA DI MAGGIO, *Le Donne dell'Ospedale del Salvatore di Roma: Sistema assistenziale e beneficenza femminile nei secoli XV e XVI* (Pisa: Pacini, 2008).

[5] JAMES A. PALMER, *The Virtues of Economy: Governance, Power, and Piety in Late Medieval Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 102–32.

[6] PALMER, *The Virtues of Economy*, 78.

[7] PALMER, *The Virtues of Economy*, 73.

[8] CAVALLO, *Charity and Power*. For the influence of individuals in the development of hospitals, see DANIEL BORNSTEIN, 'From Farmhouse to House of God: Micro-institutions of Charity in the Tuscan Countryside', in *Charity, Medicine, and Religion in Late Medieval and Early Modern Italy: Essays in Memory of Philip R. Gavitt*, eds BETH PETITJEAN and GEORGE DAMERON (Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2024), 61–78. On Altieri's other writing, see STEPHEN KOLSKY, 'Culture and Politics in Renaissance Rome: Marco Antonio Altieri's Roman Weddings', *Renaissance Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1987): 49–90.

[9] PALMER, *The Virtues of Economy*, 147.

[10] For Cattanei, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 452. For Margani, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 467 and ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 468. For Mattei, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 449, no. 1. For testaments in fifteenth-century Rome, MARIA LUISA LOMBARDO, 'Donne e testamenti a Roma nel Quattrocento', *Archivi e cultura* 25/26 (1992/1993): 23–130 and ISA LORI SANFILIPPO, 'Morire a Roma', in *Alle origini della nuova Roma: Martino V (1417-1431). Atti del convegno: Roma, 2-5 marzo 1992*, ed. MARIA CHIABÒ (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1992), 602–23.

value of such donations, which was the primary purpose of such charitable giving. The fact that these donations occurred later in the lives of these patrons, or after their deaths, also does not mean that the testators had little connection to the organisation outside of their charity. As was seen with the Margani and Altieri families, those women who donated often continued and strengthened preestablished familial association with the confraternity through their donations, even when the women themselves could not participate in leadership roles in the organisation. In this sense, the Ospedale del Salvatore provided patrons with a stage to demonstrate their nobility, charity, wealth, and prestige to other notable members of the Roman community. For these women, the various forms their donations took often reflected their complex familial relationships with ties to both their marital and natal families. Some female donors engaged in reputational laundering through the charity's structures of institutional memory; others maintained an element of control over their wealth, even after death. Through their critical donations to the hospital, these female donors fortified their relationship to Rome—even if they were not natively Roman—and preserved their memory within the charitable context of an organisation interested in preserving its status as a noble and necessary Roman religious institution at a difficult moment in Roman and Catholic history.

A Resolutely Roman Hospital

As one of the most powerful lay organisations in Rome, with connections across the city, the confraternity of the Raccomandati del Salvatore, which operated the charitable institutions associated with it, boasted both members with ancient, baronial connections and wealthy new figures who desired affiliation with what scholar Barbara Wisch has called a 'resolutely Roman' institution.[11] Established in 1333 and named after the venerated icon of Christ the Saviour in the Lateran Chapel of the Sancta Sanctorum, the organisation was central to public welfare in the Eternal City.[12] While the Santo Spirito was the pope's hospital, the Ospedale del Salvatore served to care for the needy throughout the city of

[11] For more on the Ospedale del Salvatore, PHILINE HELAS and PATRIZIA TOSINI, eds, *Tra Campidoglio e Curia: l'Ospedale del SS. Salvatore ad Sancta Sactorum tra Medioevo ed età moderna* (Milano: Silvana, 2017). For the 'resolutely Roman' nature of the institution, see BARBARA WISCH, '"The noblest Roman of them all"': The Raccomandati del SS. Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum and Confraternal Rome', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 31–42. On the elite nature of the hospital, see Palmer, *The Virtues of Economy,* 27–28. For hospital identity in a rural context, see DANIEL BORNSTEIN, 'Civic Hospital, Local Identity, and Regional States in Early Modern Italy', in *Brotherhood and Boundaries. Fraternità e barriere*, eds STEFANIA PASTORE, ADRIANO PROSPERI, and NICHOLAS TERPSTRA (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2011), 157–70. For the Renaissance hospital as a civic institution, see JOHN HENDERSON, *The Renaissance Hospital: Healing the Body and Healing the Soul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006). For the confraternity's connections with guilds, see ISA LORI SANFILIPPO, *La Roma dei romani: arti, mestieri e professioni nella Roma del Trecento* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2001), particularly 110–15.

[12] ANNA ESPOSITO, 'Assistenza ospedaliera a Roma tra XIV e XVI secolo: il ruolo della Confraternita del SS. Salvatore', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 43–54. For the relationship between art and confraternities, see BARBARA WISCH and DIANE COLE AHL, eds, *Conferaternities and the Visual Arts in Renaissance Italy: Ritual, Spectacle, Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres, 2000), particularly 1–19.

Rome.[13] Medieval and early modern hospitals served as orphanages, shelters, and housing for pilgrims, not just as spaces for healthcare.[14] While the early years of the hospital saw it under the control of a handful of powerful families, such as the Colonna and Orsini, the fifteenth century marked a turning point as minor families became more influential in the institution, opening the doors for new figures to access the organisation's power and authority.[15] During this late medieval transition, confraternities such as the Raccomandati del Salvatore, along with their affiliated hospitals and organisations, served as venues for the city's elite to display their status.[16]

While the hospital thrived in the years after the papacy's return to Rome and before the sack of the city in 1527, its role changed after the Council of Trent placed lay confraternities and hospitals under clerical supervision. The Ospedale del Salvatore saw a reduction in its responsibilities in 1566.[17] While confraternities remained an important element of Catholic Europe, the oversight and the promotion of goals in alignment with the Counter-Reformation, including regulating dangerous social elements, resulted in a shift in perception and activities, along with control of the institution.[18] Still, the Ospedale del Salvatore remained a vibrant and essential organisation throughout the Baroque era, but the influence of benefactors and donors from the institution's past remained with the organisation through their records and ceremonies.[19]

Although women did not have equal access to the status and power of the Ospedale del Salvatore—as they were only permitted to join the organisation after 1452—nor was the organisation as a whole geared exclusively toward the care of women, female donors

[13] On the major hospitals of Rome, ALESSANDRO CANEZZA, *Gli Arcispedali di Roma nella vita cittadina, nella storia e nell'arte* (Rome: A. Canezza & M. Casalini, 1933).
[14] PHILINE HELAS and PATRIZIA TOSINI, 'Introduzione', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia,* 9–15 (9).
[15] ANNA MODIGLIANI, 'Le famiglie dei Raccomandati del SS. Salvatore nei ruoli dirigenziali, cerimoniali e associativi tra Quattrocento e primo Cinquecento', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 17–30 (18–19).
[16] PALMER, *The Virtues of Economy*, 67.
[17] WISCH, '"The noblest Roman of them all"', 38–41. This is not to say that the *Ospedale del Salvatore* did not remain an important institution in Baroque Rome.
[18] CHRISTOPHER F. BLACK, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 7–9. For changing roles of confraternities, see CHRISTOPHER F. BLACK, 'The Public Face of Post-Tridentine Italian Confraternities', *Journal of Religious History* 28, no. 1 (2004): 87–101. On wider confraternity reform in Catholic Europe, JOHN PATRICK DONNELLY and MICHAEL W. MAHER, *Confraternities & Catholic Reform in Italy, France, & Spain* (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999).
[19] For more on the hospital following the Council of Trent, see PATRIZIA TOSINI, '*Sedente Sixto Quinto:* gli affreschi delle Opere di Misericordia nella casa dei Raccomandati del SS. Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 109–24; ENRICO PARLATO, 'Le immagini e l'archivio: la memoria della processione di Ferragosto negli affreschi di primo Seicento nella casa dei Raccomandati del SS. Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 125–36; MARTIN RASPE, 'La Corsia Nuova dell'Ospedale del SS. Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum e i suoi architetti Giacomo e Giovanni Battista Mola', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 137–48; and GUENDALINA SERAFINELLI, 'Giovanni Maria Mariani e Luigi Garzi per l'Ospedale delle Donne ad Sancta Sanctorum', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 149–64.

nonetheless reaped the benefits of their charitable donations to the hospital.[20] In the early modern period, women were both the primary recipients of charity and the minority of charitable patrons.[21] However, women were still crucial to the financial maintenance of the Ospedale del Salvatore and thus were essential to the financing of charity in Rome. As Carolyn Valone has shown, Roman women used their patronage to develop their public personae within the city.[22] By acting as charitable patrons to one of the most important Roman confraternities, women curated and occasionally reshaped their public personae, not just as Romans but as figures central to the success of a vital institution.

This study focuses on the donations of considerable and notable value made by women, rather than on the smaller donations, such as those given to the collection box. The large donations to the Ospedale del Salvatore from female patrons largely fell into three categories: monetary, property, and finery. These donations fundamentally fit into what Nicholas Terpstra has referred to as 'patronal charity', which is reflective of the medieval charity patterns that continued into the early modern period.[23] Through patronal charity, donors emphasised their reciprocal relationship with the recipients of their charity, providing care both to those in need and to the donor's own spiritual wellbeing. By donating to the hospital, they provided for those in need, but by participating in aiding those in need, the donors themselves were cared for on a spiritual level. However, if they so desired, charitable giving also provided the donors with some limited control over the hospital's legacy and activities.

Monetary Donations

While women played a significant role as donors during their own lives, as illustrated by Cattanei's *inter vivos* donation, their deaths also provided the hospital with financial support, often—although not exclusively—through monetary donations. The most straightforward gain for the hospital came in the form of *anniversari*—annual remembrances for the soul of the deceased—which could be arranged either for the donor or for

[20] WISCH, "'The noblest Roman of them all'", 34. For male and female participation in Roman confraternities, see ANNA ESPOSITO, 'Men and women in Roman confraternities in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: roles, functions, expectations', in *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, ed. NICHOLAS TERPSTRA (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1999), 82–97.

[21] For the paradoxes of women and charity, see SANDRA CAVALLO, *Charity and Power in Early Modern Italy: Benefactors and Their Motives in Turin, 1541–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 153–82. For women as recipients of charity, see NICHOLAS TERPSTRA, *Cultures of Charity: Women, Politics, and the Reform of Poor Relief in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013) and Philip Gavitt, *Gender, Honor, and Charity in Late Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For women as donors and recipients of charity, see MONICA CHOJNACKA, 'Women, Charity and Community in Early Modern Venice: The Casa Delle Zitelle', *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (1998): 68–91.

[22] CAROLYN VALONE, 'Matrons and Motives: Why Women Built in Early Modern Rome', in *Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons of Art in Renaissance Italy*, eds SHERYL E. REISS and DAVID G. WILKINS (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2001), 317–35.

[23] TERPSTRA, *Cultures of Charity*, 19–53.

another specified person.[24] The motivation for such charitable giving to the hospital was fundamentally spiritual, providing care for the deceased through the support of an organisation which also cared for the living through medicine. Donations such as these ultimately allowed the donors to have some control over their finances and spiritual wellbeing after death, as the donation promised both care for the needy and care for their departed souls. Some patrons' donations made clear that the desired benefit for their act of charity was the *anniversario*. Paolina Capizucchi, wife of Giovanni Battista Orsini and daughter of Cencio Capizucchi, donated fifty florins to the Ospedale del Salvatore in 1501.[25] It was no coincidence that, since 1408, the minimum donation required for an *anniversario* was fifty florins.[26] In exchange for her substantial financial support, Paolina Capizucchi secured spiritual benefit provided by the guarantee of the *Guardiani* who operated the confraternity. Though less grand than donations such as Elena Conti's 500 pieces of gold, the 1,000 ducats of Vittoria and Giulia Anguillara, or the 1,500 pieces of gold from Elena Anguillara, their aunt, these smaller yet still significant donations—set at the minimum amount required for an *anniversario*—provided spiritual care for the donor and a steady revenue stream for the hospital.[27]

While many individuals paid the customary amount for the *anniversari*, others included their requests for the remembrance as part of their larger donation. Cattanei used her donation to secure several *anniversari*, including one for the soul of Giorgio della Croce, her second husband, to be held on October 13; another for the soul of Carlo Canale, her third husband, on March 24; and finally one for her own soul to be held on the anniversary of her death, along with the souls of her ancestors.[28] By including the *anniversari* for others close to her in addition to herself, Cattanei extracted more personal benefit from the donation than if she had only requested care for her own soul. In this sense, the spiritual care gained from a donation could be extended, allowing the benefactor— or, in this case, benefactress—to act as spiritual caretaker for those already deceased through her own charity. However, Cattanei's *anniversari* also served another function. The donation listed della Croce and Canale as her first and second husbands, respectively, meaning that Cattanei not only declined to give an *anniversario* to her first husband, Domenico da Rignano, but also, in essence, used the donation as a means of partially erasing his

[24] The *anniversario* was custom in Rome and was not particular to the Ospedale del Salvatore. PALMER, *The Virtues of Economy*, 128.
[25] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 455, no. 16.
[26] DI MAGGIO, *Le Donne dell'Ospedale del Salvatore*, 15.
[27] For Conti, ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 20v. For Vittoria and Giulia Anguillara, ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 9r–v and 22r. For Elena Anguillara, ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 165v–166r.
[28] '…celebrari facere anniversaria singulis annis et in perpetuum pro anima quondam Domini Georgi de Cruce eiusdem dominae Donatricis primi viri in dicta Ecclesia Sanctae Mariae De Populo in die qua obiit, quae fuit dies tertia decima Otobris, nec non et dicti quondam Domini Caroli Cavalis eius secundi viri in dicta Ecclesia Sanctae Marie mensis Martii, et pro anima ipsius Dominae Donatricis in eadem Ecclesia in die qua ipsa Domina Donatrix obierit, et pro anima eius parentum…' ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 452, no. 28.

connection to her while she cemented her memory within the institution of the Ospedale del Salvatore.

Other donors left more than just a sizable portion of their estates to the hospital. In 1545, Cristofara Margani made the Ospedale del Salvatore her universal heir.[29] The Margani, a Roman noble family, had established ties with the confraternity, with members of the aristocratic household serving terms as *Guardiani*.[30] For three decades, Cristofara Margani made regular donations of wine from her vineyard near Porta Latina to San Giovanni Lateran, with which the confraternity was affiliated, meaning that charity was a part of both Margani's personal identity and her family's broader narrative.[31] In return for making it her universal heir, Margani requested that the Ospedale del Salvatore pay an annuity of twelve florins from her donation to Antonio, the son of Catarina, Margani's companion.[32] Through her donation, she strengthened her family's connection with the charitable organisation, provided care for the indigent of the city, and, importantly, ensured the continued care of an individual close to her in life, with the institution acting as manager of the funds.

Property Donations

As the Roman housing market began to shift in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the papacy's return to the city, urban housing values began to rise, making the donation of property particularly of interest.[33] By the early modern period, the Ospedale del Salvatore held one of the city's greatest landed patrimonies as a result of donation, and more property contributed to the stability of the organisation.[34] The confraternity had the ability to liquidate any donated immoveable property, but, considering the approximately tenfold increase in price of rental accommodations, these properties were highly profitable investments.[35] Agricultural products were used to feed those in the hospital, with surplus food either given as alms or sold at the market for the benefit of the organisation.[36] The donation of immoveable property by female donors was not uncommon for the Ospedale

[29] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 467, no. 1. Margani's death left two *buste* of material related to her life and donation, including ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 467 and 468. For another example of patronage from Margani women, see Johanna Heideman, 'The unravelling of a woman's patronage of Franciscan propaganda in Rome', *Renaissance Studies* 15, no. 4 (2001): 500–13.
[30] DI MAGGIO, *Le Donne dell'Ospedale del Salvatore*, 23. For Cristofara and family financial dynamics, see IVANA AIT, 'I Margani e le miniere di allume di Tolfa: dinamiche familiari e interessi mercantili fra XIV e XVI secolo', *Archivio Storico Italiano* 168, no. 2 (2010): 231–62.
[31] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 467, no. 21.
[32] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 467, no. 5.
[33] CARLA KEYVANIAN, 'The "Books of Houses" and Their Architects: Surveying Property in Sixteenth-Century Rome', *Thresholds* 28 (2005): 17–22.
[34] WISCH, '"The noblest Roman of them all"', 34.
[35] WISCH, '"The noblest Roman of them all"', 37–39.
[36] ALESSANDRA PERI, 'La gestione economica di un ospedale romano: il SS. Salvatore nel primo Rinascimento', in *Tra Campidoglio e Curia*, 55–64.

del Salvatore.[37] Benefactresses included Antonia, wife of Paulo Mastrone, who donated a house in Trastevere in 1456, Benedetta di Giovanni Pecorari, who made a bequest of a house in Monti in 1463 with the consent of her husband, and Catarina, wife of Stefano de Maccaranis, who left the hospital a house in the *rione* of Sant'Angelo, among over a dozen other records of female donors of immoveable property during the period of study.[38]

Even among other charity of immoveable property, Cattanei's property donation was a significant gift for the Ospedale del Salvatore. After all, Cattanei purchased half of the Osteria della Vacca from Leonardo Capocci for 1,370 ducats in 1500, and she purchased the remainder of the building for 1,500 ducats from Pietro, Antonio, and Ciriaco Mattei in 1513.[39] This particularly valuable hotel property made for an excellent and profitable addition to the hospital's portfolio.[40] Immoveable property donations took many forms, from partial donations to granting of the profits earned from a location to total transfer to the hospital. The value of individual properties widely varied, allowing donors to part with the portion of property that they desired and establish any necessary limitations.

Property donations, especially those by female donors, were not always without controversy. In June 1494, Adriana de Sanguigni, daughter of Francesco de Sanguigni, left half of her Casale Trefusa and two houses in the *rione* of Colona to the Ospedale del Salvatore, although with several caveats regarding how she and her husband, Mariano de Alessandrinis, would benefit from the donation.[41] Despite litigation following her donation, which involved Girolamo di Cecco de Picchio, a merchant, and her husband Mariano, to whom the Casale Trefusa had previously belonged, the donation had ultimately benefited the activities of the hospital by 1525. Altieri's *Commentario* noted de Sanguigni's care for the poor through the donation of a 'certain amount of money, taken from her *Casaletto* of Trefusa', meaning that her charity, despite its initial dispute, succeeded in placing de Sanguigni among the best recalled donors to the hospital.[42]

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[37] These records are stored in ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 451, 'Donazioni di case a favore della nostra compagnia'.

[38] For Antonia, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 451, no. 31. For Benedetta, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 451, no. 35. For Catarina, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 451, no. 38.

[39] The other half of the osteria was owned by Francesco Antonio Boccacci in 1500. For the 1500 purchase, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 452, no. 31. For the 1513 purchase, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 452, no. 34. For Cattanei's ownership history, see STOLLHANS, 'Vannozza Cattanei', 108–10.

[40] For women as hotel owners, see IVANA AIT, 'Donne in affari: il caso di Roma (secoli XIV-XV)', ed. ANNA ESPOSITO, *Donne del Rinascimento a Roma e dintorni* (Rome: Fondazione Marco Besso, 2013), 53–83.

[41] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 454, no. 41.

[42] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 454, no.42 and no. 43. ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 454, no. 41. 'dette materia per certa summa de denari, retracti de quel suo casaletto de Trefusa dunato allo hospitale', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 8r. For other entries, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 22r and 138v.

Finery Donations

Other donations were intended to ennoble the Ospedale del Salvatore through expensive gifts that would otherwise not be purchased, intended for ceremonial demonstrations of the organisation's wealth. In 1593, along with 1,300 scudi, Tuzia Colonna Mattei donated 100 scudi to the hospital with the instruction that the money was to be used to purchase and create three silver cups, each inscribed with her name.[43] Per her instruction, these cups were to be used at the table of the *Guardiani* during meals at the hospital and other ceremonial events.[44] This instruction gave Colonna Mattei a certain degree of control—whether imagined or real—over how her donation ought to be spent in order to improve the institution and preserve her memory as a benefactress.

Cattanei similarly included instructions on the execution of the desired decorative project in her donation, although she also included financial guidance on how this ought to be best completed. In half of her donation to the Osteria della Vacca, Cattanei left instructions for how the property was to be used by the *Guardiani* in order to extract the value required to redecorate the icon of Christ in the Sancta Sanctorum. Following her death, the profits from the Osteria della Vacca were to be stored for four years, and then those funds were to be used in the redecoration of the image. The old ornaments were to be removed and replaced by 'gems, pearls, gold, and silver, along with the arms and title of the Lady Donator'.[45] Much like Colonna Mattei, Cattanei intended to use her donation to leave a mark on the hospital. As this acheiropoieton of Christ was central to the confraternity's identity, Cattanei's donation was intended to be visible and oft recollected. These donations of finery did not only ensure the important role of the women's charity in ceremonies even after their deaths, but it also provided them with some perceived control over the donation since they left instructions on the creation and use of this finery.

Memory

When Altieri wrote his *Commentario* in 1525, just a few short years before the Sack of Rome would plunge the city into crisis, he had been a member of the confraternity for four decades and was serving his third term as *Guardiano*.[46] His work praised both men and women with affiliation to the hospital, oftentimes donors. He provided information on the assistance given to the Ospedale del Salvatore, while also included brief biographies, essentially creating a list of illustrious individuals who had influenced the organisation

[43] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 449, no. 1.
[44] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 449, no. 1.
[45] 'qua secuta morte ipsius dominae testatricis exigautur fructus quatuor annorum dictarum domorum illique deponantur apud idoneam fide et facultatibus dignam personam tenendi usque quo fueriut ex apti dicti fructus quatuor annorum domorum praefatarum quibus exaptis ex illis fiant et fieri mandavit, amotis ornamentis veteribus dictae sacratissimae Imaginis Salvatoris nova ornamenta tum gemmarum, perlarum, auri et argenti tum armis et titulo ipsius Dominare Donatricis…' ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 452, no. 28.
[46] WISCH, "'The noblest Roman of them all'", 34.

throughout recent memory. As Elena di Maggio's research into Altieri's *Commentario* has shown, the inclusion of the profiles of thirty-six women in Altieri's narrative demonstrates the key role that women played in the economic support of the hospital along with their importance to the hospital's own memory and self-imagination by leaders.[47] No patron could have expected a manuscript like the *Commentario* would be written with an entry about their own illustrious lives. However, donors, who in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries mostly came from elite and intellectual backgrounds, would have been aware that significant charitable donations would open them to some form of institutional memory.[48] Altieri's *Commentario* underlines the reputational laundering aspired to by women's gifting, in which the confraternity crafted enduring narratives that positively framed both the organisation and its supporters. Altieri's writing on female patrons often differed from his discussion of men, as these women are often defined by their virtues associated with femininity and a heavy emphasis is placed on the women's relationships, whether they be marital, extra-marital, parental, or filial.

While Altieri's *Commentario* did not have an entry for every patron who gave significant funds or assisted the hospital, the work includes entries for famous (and infamous) Romans from the period who were known to have aided the hospital, including Pope Martin V, Pope Alexander VI, and the writer Saturno Gerona da Barcellona.[49] Cattanei's entry framed her primarily as a donor who held the utmost devotion to the icon of Christ the Saviour, which she wished to decorate with jewels.[50] According to Altieri, in order to complete Cattanei's request, two of the recent *Guardiani* had paid two thousand ducats to the silversmith Cristoforo Foppa, known as Caradosso, to accomplish the work. However, Altieri's account left ambiguity about when the work would be finished.[51] Rather than explicitly acknowledging Cattanei's past relationship with a pope, Altieri discussed Cattanei's personal life in relation to her children, listing her as the mother of 'the most illustrious lords, Lord Duke of Gandia [Giovanni Borgia], Lord Duke Valentine [Cesare Borgia], of the Lord Prince of Squillace [Joffre Borgia], and the Lady Lucrezia [Borgia], magnificent Duchess of Ferrara', with the omission of her son, Ottaviano, whom she had

[47] DI MAGGIO, *Le Donne dell'Ospedale del Salvatore*.
[48] HELAS and TOSINI, 'Introduzione', 12.
[49] For Martin V, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 4v. For Orsini, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 9r and 19r. For Gerona da Barcellona, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 8v, 22r–v, and 139r–v. For Gerona da Barcellona's donation, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 459, no. 6.
[50] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 8v and 23r.
[51] '…alguni anni da poi, per mezzanita et cura delli nobili homini messer Mariano Castellano et del mio si Caro misser Raffaele Casale, poco innanti guardiani, se e convenuta con quello excellente et celebre argentiero nominato Caradosso darli doi milia ducati, accio che collo excellente suo articio se satisfessi al desiderio de quella magnifica et honorata donna', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 8v. For other entries on Cattanei, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 23r and 138v.

with Giorgio della Croce and who died in infancy.[52] While this description is not an explicit reference to her role as a mistress, educated readers would have linked these children with Pope Alexander VI.[53]

Cattanei was not the only woman included in Altieri's *Commentario* who was known for her extramarital relationship. Unlike Cattanei, whose relationship was implicit, Lucrezia d'Alagno's entry began as Altieri wrote that she was 'much loved by the most serene King Alfonso [V of Sicily and I of Naples]'.[54] While never his wife, d'Alagno received a great deal of favour from the king, acting as queen in his court.[55] Despite experiencing diminished wealth and status following the king's death in 1458, d'Alagno left 'a large part of her admirable and laudable dowry' to the Ospedale del Salvatore, although Altieri does not note the exact amount nor its value relative to other donors.[56] Even in death, Altieri maintained d'Alagno's status as a quasi-queen throughout his entry, ending by noting that the honours related with her memory were those belong to a woman 'just like a real, honourable, and most serene queen'.[57]

Other prominent figures discussed in Altieri's *Commentario* include several individuals who held the title of queen, lost their ability to rule over their respective territories, and ended their lives in Rome, such as Catherine of Bosnia and Charlotte of Cyprus.[58] After the 1463 conquest of the Bosnian Kingdom by the Ottoman Empire, Queen Catherine, the wife of the deceased Stephen Tomaš, King of Bosnia, ultimately ended her travels in Rome in 1467, where she remained until her death in 1478.[59] Queen Catherine's entry was included because Altieri wished to 'make record of whoever our hospital might find of use or of magnified honour', making clear that the ultimate goal of

[52] 'matre felice delli illustrissimi signori signor duca de Candia, signor duca Valentino, dello signor prencipe de Squillace et de madonna Lucretia magnifica duchessa de Ferrara', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 8v. On her child with della Croce, see STOLLHANS, 'Vannozza Cattanei', 107.

[53] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 5v.

[54] 'Della magnifica madona Lucretia de Alagni dal serenissimo re Alfonzo molto amata', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 18v. For another entry, see ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 140r–v.

[55] For d'Alagno's role as a literary muse, see FRANCISCO JOSÉ RODRÍGUEZ MESA, 'La relación entre Alfonso el Magnánimo y Lucrezia d'Alagno a través de los poetas italianos de la corte', in *Traducción en las relaciones ítalo-españolas: lengua, literatura y cultura*, ed. ASSUMPTA CAMPS (Barcelona: Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2014), 103–16 and JOSÉ CARLOS ROVIRA, 'Los poemas al amor de Lucrezia D'Alagno y Alfonso V de Aragón', *Boletín de la Real Academia Española* 67, no. 240 (1987): 77–108.

[56] 'lassandoce arrietro una gran parte de soe admirande et laudabil dote…' ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 18v.

[57] '…et anche rascionare publicamente della sua vita exemplare, come de vera, honorata et serenissima regina', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 18v.

[58] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 6r–v.

[59] KREŠIMIR REGAN, 'From Kozograd to Rome: The Voyages of Queen Catherine of Bosnia', in *Social and Individual Spatial Mobility in Late Medieval and Renaissance Croatia in European Context*, eds SABINE FLORENCE FABIJANEc, ZRINKA NOVAK, and ZORAN LADIĆ (Zagreb: Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2022), 37–57.

the *Commentario* was to promote the organisation that he oversaw.[60] Altieri's commentary addressed the tragedy of her political losses in a way that blended reality with rumour, stating she 'saw her kingdom depopulated, her castle ruined, an infinite number of dead and wounded, also her then husband decapitated', although her inclusion in the *Commentario* does not address any outright patronage of the hospital, outside of her recognition of the organisation at the time of her death.[61] Queen Charlotte, another exiled ruler, received a similar treatment from Altieri, describing the tyranny of the half-brother that overthrew her rule and stressing her virtue, while also noting her acknowledgement of the Ospedale del Salvatore at the time of her death.[62] By citing this sympathetic history of an exiled queen, Altieri positively placed his organisation into a narrative about injustice in such a way that might incite future donors who also desired compassionate remembrances. Additionally, the inclusion of these queens gave Altieri the ability to elevate the hospital in a city notably without royalty of its own, even if their true connections to the organisation were flimsier than those of some of the more dubiously regarded individuals.

Other women were included in the *Commentario* less for their own notoriety but because of their connection to Altieri and his family. Rita dei Calvi, who left two houses to the hospital, including an osteria in the Campo de' Fiori known as 'la Galea', which was a donation of significant value, was noted to be the 'wife of my magnificent grandfather, Mister Lorenzo Altieri'.[63] Another entry is for Gregoria delli Albertoni, Altieri's deceased wife.[64] Altieri's positioning of these women as some of the most memorable and honourable donors to the Ospedale del Salvatore not only magnified the memory of those members of his family but also cemented the Altieri family's long-time connection with the institution, framing the author and his kin as fundamental charitable givers. From the inclusion of women close to the author, it is clear that Altieri realised the social benefits of the inclusion of individuals in such a record. Altieri's *Commentario* did more than aggrandise and memorialise the donors and, conversely, the hospital, through its relationship with illustrious individuals. It also served as a means for the author to exalt his own house.

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[60] 'Volendove exequire el medesmo ordine offerto de far memoria de qualunca lo hospital nostro trovassise de utile et de onore magnificato', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, unpaginated recto of 'Della Illustrissima de Cypri Madonna Carula'. Recorded in DI MAGGIO as ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 6r.

[61] 'qual vistase depopulato lo suo segno, ruinate le castella, infinito numero de morti et presonati, el marito anche poi decapitato…' ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, unpaginated.

[62] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, unpaginated, verso of 'Della Illustrissima Regina di Bosna Madonna Catterina'. Recorded in DI MAGGIO as ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 6v. On Charlotte of Cyprus, GEORGE HILL, *A History of Cyprus*, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), vol. 3, 548–620.

[63] 'fussi già donna del magnifico mio avo misser Lorenzo delli Altieri', ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 11r and 21v.

[64] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 373, 157r.

The diverse backgrounds of those included in the *Commentario* allowed for the Ospedale del Salvatore to envision and present itself as a charity that brought together donors from all elements of the city while celebrating each individual donor through their recollection among other esteemed patrons. There was a mutual benefit for all parties involved in Altieri's *Commentario* through the inclusion of this mix of donors. Renowned outsiders who brought little to the hospital were placed among those with life-long attachments to Rome and people whose donations were of significantly greater value. Altieri skirted around any negative terms for donors with dubious reputations while focusing on the value, outside of name alone, that these individuals provided to the organisation. Finally, by elevating everyone's status, he produced the ideal outcome for the hospital's own self-memory, as a location for charitable giving from some of the most powerful, wealthy, and noble people who lived in Renaissance Rome.

Conclusion

Significant donations to the Ospedale del Salvatore by no means precluded patrons from giving charity to other organisations. Cattanei, for example, donated the other half of the Osteria della Vacca property to the Ospedale della Consolazione.[65] Camilla Gonzaga, the daughter of Giampietro Gonzaga, Count of Novellara, left 1,000 scudi invested in the Monte della Gabella Grossa and Monte delle Porte di Bologna to various hospitals, including the Ospedale del Salvatore, the Ospedale della Consolazione, the Ospedale di San Giacomo dell'Incurabili, and the Ospedale di Santo Spirito in Saxia, along with several monasteries.[66] As these intertwined donations and investments show, those who donated to one organisation recognised, along with its central spiritual value, the systematic social benefit of charitable giving. By giving a sizeable donation to the Ospedale del Salvatore, these donors became attached to the narrative of the hospital and the charity it provided to the community, and, through multiple donations, opened themselves to the same possibility of commemoration at every organisation to which they provided charity. Along with the preservation of their charitable acts through maintenance of their archive, their donations provided these women with a connection to one of the most powerful institutions in Rome which, without their charity, they would have almost certainly been unable to achieve.[67] Just as Cattanei's donations cemented her memory in a charitable context outside of her relationship with the pope, other female donors used their charity as an opportunity to benefit from their preexisting financial holdings, whether it be through assistance with their reputation, control of their financial legacy, or care for their soul.

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[65] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 452, no. 28.
[66] ASR, Ospedale del Salvatore, 448, no. 167.
[67] ANNA ESPOSITO, 'La documentazione degli archivi di ospedali e confraternite come fonte per la storia sociale di Roma', in *Sources of Social History: Private Acts of the Late Middle Ages*, eds PAOLO BREZZI and EGMONT LEE (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1984), 69–79.

The examination of the benefits of charity for female patrons does not discount individual piety or the desire to help those in need; rather, it considers, alongside charitable inclination, how women in Renaissance Rome also used charitable institutions—often not designed for their participation—to promote and integrate themselves within the city, care for their souls, and ultimately control the yield of their finances, even after death. The genuine desire to help others through charity and a true interest in the care of one's own soul could coexist with motivations surrounding memory, finances, and family promotion. These donors used their charity as a means to care for the poor while also placing themselves within the Ospedale del Salvatore's institutional memory. Donors also secured some benefits through their donation that would continue after their deaths, as seen with Margani or any donor who received an *anniversario* for themselves or others. Through the charitable dispersal of wealth, Roman women harnessed the institutional power of organisations such as the Ospedale del Salvatore, worked to create and curate a lasting memory and identity within the city, and ultimately shaped the Renaissance hospital.

Normal Schools for Poor Spinsters. A New Approach to Welfare in the Reform Project of Pietro Leopoldo, Grand Duke of Tuscany

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Escaping from poverty through education, work, and moral and religious instruction—this was the goal of the Normal Schools for spinsters, founded by Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo I of Habsburg-Lorraine in 1778, and destined to last for centuries, despite internal changes.[1] The so-called Leopoldine Schools introduced a new approach to welfare for women: secular, state-run, and aimed at preventing poverty—instead of remedying it through charity or confinement—through the professional and scholarly training of useful citizens who actively contributed to the welfare of the state. The institution aimed to transform the lives and identities of poor girls—future women—by enabling their cultural and professional development, and thereby granting them an active role in society and a new sense of dignity and personal and social worth. Their education conformed to a specific ideal of womanhood and was shaped by a very clear vision imposed from above. Nevertheless, the Leopoldine Schools represented a significant innovation in eighteenth-century Italy, given their secular nature and their focus on improving the condition of women and the poor within the framework of a distinctly civic and eudemonistic perspective.

This institution was meant to be one of the reforms through which Pietro Leopoldo profoundly transformed Tuscan society, aligning with his political and intellectual vision.[2] Furthermore, the schools reflected Leopoldo's particular focus on education—especially female education, a key issue in contemporary debates on the role of women and the modernisation of eighteenth-century society.[3]

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[1] I would like to thank Franca Orlandi, Daniela Lombardi, Corine Maitte, Angela Orlandi, Giampiero Nigro and the staff of the Archivio Storico del Comune di Firenze for their precious advice. On the documentation, see MÓNICA VÁZQUEZ ASTORGA, *Le Scuole leopoldine di Firenze e la loro storia (1778-1976)* (Florence: Comune di Firenze, 2019). LUIGI PASSERINI, *Storia degli stabilimenti di beneficenza e di istruzione elementare gratuita della città di Firenze* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1853), 775–84. Cf. also the bibliography cited in the following footnotes, *ad ind.*

[2] GAETANO GRECO, *Storia del Granducato di Toscana* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2020), *ad ind.* (with bibliography); LUIGI MASCILLI MIGLIORINI, 'L'età delle riforme', in FURIO DIAZ, LUIGI MASCILLI MIGLIORINI and CARLO MANGIO, eds, *Il Granducato di Toscana. I Lorenaa dalla Reggenza agli anni rivoluzionari* (Turin: Utet, 1997), 247–421; ADAM WANDRUSKA, *Pietro Leopoldo. Un grande riformatore* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1968). Cf. also the following footnotes.

[3] In addition to the bibliography cited above in footnote n. 2, see MARTINE SONNET, *L'éducation des filles au temps des Lumiéres* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1987); LINDA TIMMERMANS, *L'accès des femmes à la culture (1598-1715)* (Paris: Champion, 1993); GAETANO GUERCI, *La sposa obbediente. Donna e matrimonio nella discussione dell'Italia del Settecento* (Turin: Tirrenia, 1988); GUERCI, *Per una storia delle donne nell'Italia del Settecento*, ed. ELISA STRUMIA (Turin: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2023).

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Despite the importance of the Leopoldine Schools, both in their own right and within Pietro Leopoldo's broader reform efforts, as well as the wealth of available documentation, they have not yet received enough scholarly attention.[4] This essay presents the initial findings of research that remains open to further expansion. The study will focus on the establishment of the Schools and their students. To fully grasp their significance, it is essential to begin with a concise analysis of the Grand Duke's views and policies, with particular attention to the issue of education.

A final note: this essay addresses a topic that follows the main theme of this special issue chronologically. However, it is conceptually consistent in light of the connection first identified by Eugenio Garin between Humanism and the Enlightenment, namely the focus on the development of both men and women through education, the affirmation of human freedom, and the acquisition of a new dignity—secular, industrious, and independent because of its grounding in critical thought—for the overall improvement of society.[5] *Mutatis mutandis*, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Erasmus's voice found a renewed resonance in the great educational culture of the eighteenth century.[6]

Pietro Leopoldo: Reforming Sovereign and Educator

During his 25-year reign (1765–1790), Pietro Leopoldo pursued a reformist agenda that transformed the Grand Duchy of Tuscany into a modern, unified state, making it a model both within Italy and Europe. His actions were marked by strategic planning, realism, and above all, a coherent and comprehensive vision. This vision reflected a unique synthesis of Enlightenment, cameralist, and Jansenist-leaning ideas, combined with his family's governing experience and the model of Austrian rule implemented by his mother, Maria Theresa, and his brother, Joseph II.[7]

Pietro Leopoldo's guiding principles were unity, rationality, equity, humanity, and social well-being. His primary objective was eudemonistic—that is, to achieve the well-being of the state and the happiness of its subjects, through cultural, economic, and social progress, beginning with the lower classes. This goal aligned with the concept of the *Polizeistaat*, a model embraced by eighteenth-century absolutist rulers who pursued reforms marked by contradictions, centralisation, and social control, but also by genuine utopian aspirations.[8] However, Pietro Leopoldo was ahead of his time

[4] The only text is MÓNICA VÁZQUEZ ASTORGA, *Le Scuole leopoldine di Firenze e la loro storia (1778-1976)*. Reference will be made to this text in the description of the organisation of the Schools, without further quotations. The documentation is preserved in the Archivio Storico del Comune di Firenze (from now on: ASCFI), Fondo Leopoldine (online archive), and is comprised of 900 archival units.

[5] Cf. now OLIVIA CATANORCHI and VALENTINA LEPRI, eds, *Eugenio Garin. Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo. Atti del Convegno. Firenze, 6-8 marzo 2009*, with a preface by MICHELE CILIBERTO (Rome–Florence: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura-Istituto nazionale di studi sul Rinascimento, 2011).

[6] JEAN-CLAUDE MARGOLIN, *Érasme, précepteur de l'Europe* (Paris: Juillard, 1995).

[7] CHARLES W. INGRAO, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1618–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[8] ALESSANDRA CONTINI, 'La città regolata: polizia e amministrazione nella Firenze leopoldina (1777-1782)', in *Istituzioni e società in Toscana nell'età moderna. Atti delle giornate di Studio dedicate a Giuseppe Pansini*, ed. CLAUDIO LAMIONI (Roma: Poligrafico Zecca dello Stato, 1994), 426–508.

in conceiving a constitution which, had it been implemented, would have provided a comprehensive framework for his reforms, integrating them into the structure of a new state system.

A cornerstone of Pietro Leopoldo's reformist work was the reorganisation of territorial and administrative structures. This was based on the creation of the Comunità and the Camera delle Comunità, new representative bodies elected according to a census-based system (without religious or feudal discrimination). The community reform aimed to promote the participation and autonomy of citizens in public affairs, improve living conditions, and rationalise both local governance and relations between local and central authorities.[9]

Therefore, the community reform was intrinsically linked to the reform of public education, which, in turn, intersected with the renewal of welfare through the establishment of the Leopoldine Schools. Everything revolved around the issue of youth education, as the possibility of building a new state was (and still is) founded on investment in education—starting with the lower classes and women. For Pietro Leopoldo, this issue was crucial, to the extent that it became the most solid guiding principle of his governance.[10] The sovereign had a genuine and profound passion for—indeed, a true 'obsession' with—the topic of education at all levels. To address this, he relied on his most trusted advisors (Fabbroni, Neri, Mormorai) and the great Swiss pedagogue Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. Before initiating institutional transformations, he also devoted writings and reflections to the subject, which produced a unique 'Leopoldine pedagogy'. In order to provide the appropriate conceptual framework for Leopoldo's initiatives, a brief examination of this pedagogy is necessary—albeit limited to the specific aspect of schooling under discussion.

As evident from his *Notes sur l'éducation* (1775), Pietro Leopoldo drew many insights from pedagogical and Jansenist literature—such as e.g. the works of Fénelon, Locke, La Chalotais, Rousseau, Nicole, the Abbé Fleury, de Noailles, and from the vibrant Enlightenment debates of the time. He also looked to theoretical models (besides Pestalozzi's, probably also Basedow's revolutionary *Philanthropinum*) and practical examples of school reform implemented by rulers in Prussia, France, Italy, and especially the Austrian and Italian Habsburg domains, where such reforms were introduced in 1775.[11] His determination was fuelled by the state of education in

[9] BERNARDO SORDI, *L'amministrazione illuminata. Riforma delle comunità e progetti di costituzione nella Toscana leopoldina* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1991); GIULIO MANETTI, *La costituzione inattuata. Pietro Leopoldo Granduca di Toscana: dalla riforma comunitativa al progetto di costituzione* (Florence: Centro editoriale toscano, 1991); GIORGIO LA ROSA, *Il sigillo delle riforme. La 'Costituzione' di Pietro Leopoldo di Toscana* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1997).

[10] LUCIANA BELLATALLA, *Pietro Leopoldo di Toscana granduca- educatore. Teoria e pratica di un despota illuminato* (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 1984); TERESA CALOGERO, *Scuole e comunità nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo*, with a preface by RICCARDO NENCINI and an introduction by LUIGI LOTTI, 3 vols (Florence: Edizioni dell'Assemblea, 2010); FILIPPO SANI, *Collegi, seminari e conservatori nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo. Tra progetto pedagogico e governo della società* (Brescia: Editrice La Scuola, 2001); WANDRUSZKA, *Pietro Leopoldo*, 529–37.

[11] PIETRO LEOPOLDO DI TOSCANA, *Scritti inediti sull'educazione*, ed. LUCIANA BELLATALLA (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 1990); JAMES VAN HORN MELTON, *Absolutism and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of Obbligo Schooling*

Tuscany, which was revealed through field investigations (later summarised, as usual, in his *Relazioni*). Education was entrusted to religious orders, almost exclusively reserved for the upper classes (with the exception of the Scuole Pie run by the Piarists), and was, overall, inconsistent and largely insufficient.[12]

These influences merged with Pietro Leopoldo's political and cultural vision, shaped, as noted, by movements and experiences that were flourishing in eighteenth-century Europe. The sovereign thus conceived a school aimed at forming new citizens—invested in and responsible for the economic and cultural development of the state, capable of acting rationally, independently, and with common sense, morally upright, and inspired by a sober religiosity. In Leopoldine thought—as in that of other reforming rulers—ideal and instrumental goals were intertwined: on the one hand, the pursuit of public happiness and societal growth through culture; on the other, the strengthening of the absolute state and its control, as well as the expansion of the administrative and economic workforce.[13]

In the *Notes sur l'éducation*, Pietro Leopoldo outlined the means to achieve these educational objectives: fostering knowledge and a passion for learning, practicing method, adherence to moral and spiritual precepts, and constant practical experience. He also provided a wealth of precise textual, didactic, and pedagogical guidelines; humanistic inclinations were highly valued alongside science.[14] Indeed, as Garin noted, 'the Enlightenment outcome […] was not a negation of humanism; it was the declaration that one can speak of human education only in a society of free individuals'. Pietro Leopoldo would have added: individuals who were well-regulated by and for the state.[15]

Removing education from Rome's traditional monopoly, was, in fact, the foundation of Pietro Leopoldo's school project—which was destined to advance initiatives already undertaken by Giulio Rucellai in the 1750s.[16] However, the revision of relations between the Tuscan state and the Catholic Church from a jurisdictionalist perspective was, in fact, a cornerstone of the Grand Duke's entire policy. In his ecclesiastical policy, Pietro Leopoldo was certainly more moderate than his brother Joseph II, and his decisions were not always consistent or successful, partly due to the resistance and challenges he faced. Nevertheless, in line with his deep adherence to Jansenist positions—particularly in their Italian adaptation—and his close relationship with its proponents, foremost among them the Bishop of Pistoia, Scipione de' Ricci, he consistently worked in favour of religious reform and against the centralism,

in Prussia and Austria (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); MARINA ROGGERO, *L'alfabeto conquistato. Apprendere e insegnare nell'Italia tra Sette e Ottocento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999).

[12] Cf. n. 9. PIETRO LEOPOLDO DI TOSCANA, *Relazioni sul governo della Toscana*, ARNALDO SALVESTRINI, ed., 3 vols (Florence: Olschki, 1969–1974), vol. 1, 16–18.

[13] On state control cf. SANDRO LANDI, *Il governo delle opinioni. Censura e formazione del consenso nella Toscana del '700* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000).

[14] PIETRO LEOPOLDO DI TOSCANA, *Scritti inediti sull'educazione*.

[15] EUGENIO GARIN, *L'educazione in Europa, 1400/1600* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 1976), 281.

[16] CALOGERO, *Scuole e comunità nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo.*

absolutism, and interference of the Roman Curia in public life.[17] To implement the secularisation of education and welfare, the state took over the assets and functions of many religious institutions that were then suppressed. At the same time, Pietro Leopoldo experienced his political mission with a religious fervour, a product of his profound evangelical spirituality: ensuring the cultural development of his subjects was also a means of providing for their salvation.[18]

The ecclesiastical issue proved to be particularly significant concerning the condition of women. Pietro Leopoldo's primary objective was to remove women from the Church's control over education, but that was not his only goal.[19] He also intervened in the administration of dowries—private donations traditionally managed by religious and secular institutions—by transferring their management to the State.[20] Furthermore, the Grand Duke expressed deep disapproval of the widespread practice of monachisation, which, as is well known, was linked to family strategies but, in his view, had become 'excessive'. He also condemned the ignorance imposed on young girls by both society and their families, who often entrusted their education to nuns, restricting it to acts of piety.[21] Similarly, the care of girls and women without family ties was also taken away from religious institutions. Believing it a duty of the State to provide for the care and education of women and thus to ensure their redemption, he strongly promoted the creation of new institutions. Moreover, Pietro Leopoldo was a firm supporter of the views that, in Tuscany—thanks to figures such as Rucellai, Neri, Gianni, Scipione de' Ricci, and Mormorai—and in eighteenth-century Europe, recognised women's fundamental natural rights, intellectual capacities, and an active role in society, albeit without fundamentally departing from the traditional paradigm of the 'obedient wife'.[22] Although he continued to see women primarily as mothers within the family, the sovereign nonetheless assigned them a significant place in economic and social life—as workers, educators, and citizens. Men and women alike were called upon to contribute equally to the implementation of Pietro Leopoldo's eudemonistic vision.

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[17] BRUNA BOCCHINI and MARCELLO VERGA, eds, *Lettere di Scipione de' Ricci a Pietro Leopoldo 1780-1791* (Florence: Olschki, 1992).

[18] DANIELE EDIGATI, 'L'abolizione della giurisdizione temporale della Chiesa in Toscana. Linee ricostruttive di una lunga e complessa riforma leopoldina (1776-1784)', *Studi senesi* 121, nos 2–3 (2009): 281–336, 455–517; MARCELLO VERGA, 'Italienische Jansenisten', in *Italien in Europa: Die Zirkulation der Ideen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung,* eds FRANK JUNG and THOMAS KROLL (Paderborn: W. Funk, 2014), 185–200; WANDRUSKZA, *Pietro Leopoldo*, 494–519, 529–37.

[19] CALOGERO, *Scuole e comunità nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo*, vol. 1, 144 ff.; MARTA PIERONI FRANCINI, 'L'istruzione femminile nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo', *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 2, no. 2 (1991): 7–24; CARLO FANTAPPIÉ, 'I conservatori toscani nell'età di Pietro Leopoldo: genesi e significato dell'istituto', in *Annali di Storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni ecclesiastiche* 2 (1995): 39–57; MARIA GRAZIA BIANCHI, *Le zitelle povere a Firenze e in Toscana. La condizione femminile sotto il governo di Pietro Leopoldo di Lorena* (Florence: Semper, 2005).

[20] MARIA LEUZZI FUBINI, *"Condurre a onore". Famiglia, matrimonio e assistenza dotale a Firenze in Età Moderna* (Florence: Olschki, 1999).

[21] PIETRO LEOPOLDO DI TOSCANA, *Relazioni*, vol. 1, 216.

[22] See note 3.

Based on these intellectual and political premises, Pietro Leopoldo undertook his groundbreaking school reform beginning in 1774 with the establishment of the Deputazione for public schools.[23] Numerous initiatives were launched to transform the existing deficient and disorganised educational landscape into a unified and systematic school system, placed under state control and managed by local communities, fostering a collective sense of responsibility for education. Schools were established in most communities, ensuring uniformity in both the curriculum and the recruitment of staff (through public competitions). Education was extended to all social classes and adapted accordingly, providing either a more comprehensive cultural instruction or a more professionalising one, but always accompanied by moral and religious teaching.

However, the reform faced resistance, practical difficulties, theoretical opposition, and compromises—particularly regarding the involvement of the clergy—that undermined its full implementation. The final act, the promulgation of the *Regolamento per tutte le scuole pubbliche* in 1788, remained unenforced due to the sovereign's transfer to Vienna and the outbreak of the French Revolution.

A significant innovation in female education was the restoration of the conservatories in 1785.[24] Inspired by Ricci, Pietro Leopoldo altered the traditional moral and religious purpose of ecclesiastical conservatories—originally intended to house repentant women and vulnerable girls—giving them a secular identity and an educational function. The new institutions were managed by public officials and lay educators. The conservatories, located in suppressed convents and monasteries, housed widows, women in unhappy marriages, poor girls, and children from various social backgrounds, providing them with both cultural and, to some extent, professional training. Education was tailored to different social classes: noblewomen, 'second-class' girls, and 'poor spinsters' followed distinct curricula. While poor girls continued to receive instruction in religious doctrine, basic schooling (reading, writing, and abacus), and female manual skills, young noblewomen and bourgeois girls were taught French, music, and drawing (but not dance), with financial contributions from their families.

Activities in conservatories were hindered by various practical issues: insufficient funds—drawn from church assets and only partially supplemented by state treasuries—spatial and structural inadequacies of the buildings, the decentralisation and limited number of institutions, lack of discipline on the part of the students, resistance from families, and uncertainty regarding the placement of the remaining

[23] CALOGERO, *Scuole e comunità nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo*; SANI, *Collegi, seminari e conservatori nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo*; MÓNICA VÁSQUEZ ASTORGA, *Scuole elementari comunali della città di Firenze: edifici, ordinamenti e metodi d'insegnamento* (Florence: Comune di Firenze, 2017).

[24] See note 18; CARLO FANTAPPIÉ, *Riforme ecclesiastiche e resistenze sociali. La sperimentazione istituzionale nella diocesi di Prato alla fine dell'antico regime* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1986); MARCELLO VERGA, *Per "uno Stato terzo delle dame". Alcune considerazioni sul dibattito politico e culturale e le riforme ecclesiastiche nella Toscana del Settecento*, in *Storia religiosa dell'Austria*, eds FERDINANDO CITTERIO and LUCIANO VACCARO (Milan: Centro Ambrosiano, 1997), 253–94.

nuns, etc. Nonetheless, the conservatory reform represented a lasting and fruitful legacy of Pietro Leopoldo's educational policy, leading to significant theoretical and practical developments in nineteenth-century Florence.

The conservatories were an important component of the sovereign's response to various aspects of the 'female question', which had emerged in conjunction with broader societal transformations. The establishment of the Leopoldine Schools in 1778 represented a second key element, completing the structure of the new system.

This institution, as we will see, was situated at the crossroads of education and welfare. For Pietro Leopoldo, the latter issue represented the flip side of literacy for the lower classes and women, aligning with the Cameralist perspective. He saw the cultural, professional, moral, and religious education of children as an essential prerequisite for curbing poverty at its source—a social ill that also plagued Tuscany and required barriers to safeguard social order and the well-being of the State.

The Grand Duchy was no exception to the general and chronic economic precariousness typical of ancien régime societies, where the risk of falling into destitution was ever-present. The phenomenon of poverty, which worsened in the latter half of the eighteenth century, was driven by both structural and contingent factors: population growth, inadequate employment opportunities, relative food shortages, and constant threats such as famines, wars, epidemics, meagre harvests, and restrictions on the labour market.[25] Institutional responses, which for centuries had been entrusted to religious and private entities, were by then clearly revealing their limitations—characterised by a bloated nature, lack of oversight and consistency, uncoordinated structures, and financial shortages, leading to abuses and severe deficiencies.

Altogether, the welfare system in the Grand Duchy had fewer shortcomings.[26] In particular, Florence boasted an extensive network of institutions with an ancient

[25] From the rich bibliography, I would only cite GIORGIO POLITI, MARIO ROSA and FRANCO DELLA PERUTA, eds, *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna* (Cremona: Libreria del convegno, 1982); STUART J. WOLF, *Porca miseria. Poveri e assistenza nell'età moderna* (Rome: Laterza, 1988); PHILIPP GAVITT, *Charity and Children in Renaissance Florence: The Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1410-1536* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); MARINA GARBELLOTTI, *Per carità. Poveri e politiche assistenziali nell'Italia moderna* (Rome: Carocci, 2016); NICHOLAS TEPSTRA, *Cultures of Charity. Women, Polititics and Poor Relief in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); FRANCESCO AMMANNATI, ed., *Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa Secc. XIII-XVIII = Social assistance and solidarity in Europe from the 13th to the 18th Centuries* (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2013); GABRIELLA PICCINNI, ed., *Alle origini del welfare. Radici medievali e moderne della cultura dell'assistenza* (Rome: Viella, 2020); DANIELA LOMBARDI, *Madri nubili e padri incerti. Secoli XVI-XIX* (Rome: Viella, 2024) (with bibliography). A very important source on the Florentine situation in the eighteenth century is ALESSANDRA CONTINI and FRANCESCO MARTELLI, eds, 'Il censimento del 1767. una fonte per lo studio della struttura professionale della popolazione di Firenze', in *Ricerche Storiche* 23, no. 1 (1993): 77–121.

[26] In addition to the aforementioned bibliography *ad ind.*, cf. DANIELA LOMBARDI, *Povertà maschile, povertà femminile. L'Ospedale dei mendicanti nella Firenze dei Medici* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1988); STUART J. WOOLF and CAROLINE KAUFMANN, 'Charité, pauvreté et structure des ménages à Florence au début du XIX^e^ siècle', *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations* 39, no. 2 (1984): 355–82; GIOVANNI GOZZINI, *Il segreto dell'elemosina. Poveri e carità legale a Firenze, 1800-1870* (Florence: Olschki, 1993); PHILIPP GAVITT, *Gender, Honor and Charity in Late Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); NICHOLAS

tradition, managed by various entities but structured in a fairly organic manner, with a functional internal organisation divided by social class and age group. This system was the result of a series of reforms beginning with Cosimo I de' Medici, aligning it with new trends in centralisation, selectivity, and workforce integration (or coercion), which had gained prominence within the context of welfare management throughout Catholic and Protestant Europe since the sixteenth century.[27]

A crucial element was the central role assigned to labour, which became the primary means of escaping poverty—framed not only as a redemptive act in response to original sin, but also as a tool for controlling individuals potentially dangerous to social order, and as a source of economic utility for the city and the State. This work ethos materialised in forced labour within specialised institutions of confinement for able-bodied poor individuals. With a complete reversal of religious and moral perspectives, almsgiving was instead equated with fostering parasitism and delinquency, with fatal consequences for the social and political community.

In Florence, detention was generally not the preferred choice; however, Florentine institutions hosted an intense productive activity carried out by the assisted individuals since childhood, both inside and outside the institutions, and primarily in the textile industry. This labour force did contribute to the growth of the city's manufacturing or to the improvement of the individual condition of the poor.[28] However, like wage labourers, these manufacturers remained 'fragile and intermittent' figures, so much so that their social status was not fully defined.[29]

Since 1773, Pietro Leopoldo gave a strong boost to the Tuscan tradition of public welfare reform, demonstrating unique precocity in Italy, before the transformations of the French Revolution. The sovereign completed the process of rationalising and controlling state (and communal) institutions by suppressing religious entities and corporations, taking over the administration and funding of welfare, reorienting welfare institutions towards educational and professional training—especially for the most vulnerable (children)—and creating new institutions. The Grand Duke also promoted the adoption of laws regulating child labour and ensuring more humane working conditions, recognising the importance of human dignity in the economic context. Even the newly established 'House of Correction', intended for

TEPSTRA, *Lost Girls. Sex and Death in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2010); TERPSTRA, *L'infanzia abbandonata nell'Italia del Rinascimento. Strategie di assistenza a confronto: Bologna e Firenze* (Bologna: Clueb, 2014). As a source, LUIGI PASSERINI, *Storia degli stabilimenti di beneficenza*, remains fundamental.

[27] THOMAS M. SAFLEY, ed., *The Reformation of Charity. The Secular and the Religious in Early Modern Poor Relief* (Boston: Brill, 2003); L. TORRES and H. RABAEY, eds, *Pauvres et pauvreté en Europe à l'époque moderne (XVIe-XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Garnier, 2016).

[28] LOMBARDI, *Povertà maschile, povertà femminile*, 102 ff.; CORINE MAITTE, 'Donner du travail aux pauvres: les logiques laborieuses dans les institutions charitables florentines aux XVII[e] et XVIII[e] siècle', in *Le istituzioni caritative come luoghi di lavoro (secc. XVI-XX)*, eds ANDREA CARACAUSI and CORINNE MAITTE, special issue, *Mediterranea. Ricerche Storiche* 48 (2020): 97–122.

[29] GOZZINI, *Il segreto dell'elemosina*, 12 f.

disciplining the 'young', the 'idle', and women leading a 'bad life', prioritised educational rather than punitive purposes.[30]

At the conclusion of his reign in Tuscany, Pietro Leopoldo could rightfully take pride in his work:

> Uno degli oggetti che fino dal nostro avvenimento al trono abbia maggiormente interessato la nostra attenzione è stato certamente quello della pubblica istruzione della gioventù. Persuasi che molti dei disordini, i quali turbano la quiete derivano in gran parte dalla ignoranza e dalla cattiva educazione, non abbiamo mancato in diversi tempi di arrecarvi i più efficaci rimedi.[31]

An 'effective remedy' was the establishment of the Leopoldine Schools in Florence, Pisa, Pistoia, Castiglion Fiorentino, Arezzo, Livorno, Montepulciano, Pietrasanta, Prato, and Siena.[32]

Leopoldine Schools: An Institution for the Emancipation from Poverty through Work and Education

On April 9, 1778, a royal *motuproprio* established the Normal Schools for spinsters, dedicated to the 'education and proper guidance of the spinsters of the city of Florence, particularly those who, due to their poverty, neglect, or the poverty of their parents, are the most ignored and deserving of greater care and provisions'.[33] In the Regulation written in 1782 by Senator Marco Covoni, Superintendent of the Schools, all details were outlined with extreme precision, including the features, functioning, and objectives of the schools, as well as their activities, educational goals, target audience, internal staff organisation, required professional profiles, building locations, administration, detailed scheduling, roles, duties, and daily commitments. The overall picture that emerged was one of new institutions, founded on an alternative conception of public assistance and women education. Despite some traditionalist aspects, these institutions aimed to promote a shift in women's personal identity and social role while improving their living conditions.

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[30] SARA DELLA VISTA, 'Varcare la soglia della casa di correzione: disciplinamento di discoli e oziosi e "donne di mala vita"', *Annali di storia di Firenze* 12 (2017): 11–42.

[31] 'One of the issues that has most attracted our attention since our ascension to the throne has certainly been the public education of the youth. Convinced that many of the disorders disturbing the peace derive largely from ignorance and bad education, we have not failed at various times to bring effective remedies'. Archivio di Stato di Firenze, *Esteri*, ins. 5, c. 1: cited by PIERONI FRANCINI, *L'istruzione femminile nella Toscana di Pietro Leopoldo*, 10.

[32] GIOVANNI RESTI, *L'istruzione popolare a Siena nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1987); GUIDO SONNINO, 'La scuola elementare pubblica e privata a Livorno dalle origini all'anno 1866', *Bollettino storico livornese* 3, no. 1 (1953): 3–43. Other schools have not been studied.

[33] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 16, *Filza I. Affari spediti delle Reali Scuole Normali delle povere zittelle della città di Firenze dall'anno 1787 al 1790*, fasc. 1. The regulation was published by Gaetano Cambiagi, the printer for the Grand Duke, under the title *Stabilimento delle scuole erette in Firenze a benefizio delle zittelle povere sotto la protezione di sua Altezza Reale il Serenissimo Pietro Leopoldo I arciduca d'Austria, Granduca di Toscana*: ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 34, *Affari spediti* 1865-1869, fasc. 5, *Comunicazione*, 1869. From this point onward, I will cite these documents without repeating the reference and in my own English translation.

The Leopoldine Schools were public and secular, managed with relative autonomy by a superintendent and staffed with teachers and other personnel, whom we will discuss below. They were located in the four neighbourhoods of Florence, in convenient and easily accessible locations so that 'no candidate was deprived of such a benefit'. They were created within two years, in buildings of pre-existing institutions. The first was the School of St. Catherine, located in the suppressed Conservatorio di Santa Caterina degli Abbandonati, and designated for the San Giovanni neighbourhood. The School of San Salvatore took over the former Conservatorio dei Mendicanti in the Santo Spirito neighbourhood. The School of San Giorgio was placed in the ancient military hospital called the 'Cavalleggeri' in the Santa Croce neighbourhood. Finally, the School of San Paolo was established in 1780, in part of the suppressed San Paolo Hospital called 'dei Convalescenti' in the Santa Maria Novella neighbourhood.[34] The Schools were funded with income from various real estate properties, the manufacturing activities carried out within them, and funds from the Royal Depository, and administered by the Confraternity of the Bigallo through land rents, interest-bearing loans from private individuals and public entities, which covered all personnel expenses, building maintenance, furnishings, as well as machinery and textbooks, which were provided free of charge to the students.[35]

The Schools were intended for girls from the age of seven until marriage, though the duration could extend beyond that depending on additional admission requests. Letters of sponsorship from priests or other public figures were not required. However, strict regulations governed access to the schools. Specific registers were created, listing the student's name and parents, neighbourhood, parish, street address with house number, age, date of admission and departure from the school, the school they were admitted to, and sometimes comments on their conduct. These records were intended for proper administration but also served to closely monitor their behaviour, 'with the effect of being able to track them in case of improper absences, and providing guidance and regulation for those managing them'. Priority for admission was given to girls residing in the same neighbourhoods as the school.

An innovation was that students attended the Schools only during the day, arriving accompanied by a family member—a clear indication of the different nature and purpose of the Schools compared to conservatories. Attendance was required daily, except on holidays and feast days, according to a schedule posted in each school.

The curriculum also had new features, albeit aligned with Pietro Leopoldo's general vision. Completely free of charge, the education aimed at cultural, moral, religious, and, most importantly, professional development. The Schools provided 'the daughters of the lower classes with religious education and catechism, as well as intellectual education, reading, writing, arithmetic', alongside 'general notions of

[34] The Schools were located on via delle Ruote, via di Camaldoli, Corso dei Tintori and in Piazza di Santa Maria Novella.
[35] Tracing the assets of the Leopoldine Schools—well-documented in the rich records of the Fondo—is not the purpose of this paper.

history and geography' and 'rules of decency and elegance appropriate to the girls' status'. However, their primary goal was teaching 'women's work, such as knitting, sewing, and weaving, whether ribbons, linen cloths, or wool of any kind'. These activities shaped the student into 'an industrious worker and a good mother', as well as a modest woman, 'little, if at all, attached to luxury and fashion'. Such occupations were intended 'as the basics for each woman', in her family and social life, and as such, the students were expected to focus on them primarily. Given their significance, practical instructions were also provided on work methods: for silk weavers, it was necessary to start 'methodically, from threading and everything needed to form a good weaver', while for wool weavers, it was essential to 'first learn to spin and then weave tight and loose cloths, thus combining a broader understanding of the craft with a more versatile and easier way to earn'.

Yes, to earn. The Leopoldine Schools indeed offered the students solid prospects of accumulating money—both for themselves, to build the dowry needed for marriage, and for their families, for whom their earnings generally represented the 'only heritage'. The manufacturing production of the Schools was ordered and sold to external parties, both private individuals and public entities, with the proceeds distributed among the workers. We will discuss below the exact proceeds and the initiatives taken by the person in charge to preserve and improve manufacturing production. For now, it is important to highlight the moral criteria underlying this activity: the works, especially those involving sewing, should never follow 'indecent fashions' and must not be 'contrary to modesty and good manners'. The earnings were paid to the students both as compensation for the work performed, according to established tables ('as a reward'), and to encourage them to improve, serving as a prize with significant symbolic value. It was in fact granted in coincidence with 'the annual exercises and public functions of moral building', which had been introduced specifically to 'inspire the aforementioned girls to distinguish themselves in the benefit they derive from such establishments'. Aligning with professional and mercantile rationale, the manufactures were not made 'for the schools' profit'. Experience showed that 'dealings on behalf of the public administration, in addition to encountering the hatred of the merchants and the public […] were less motivating for workers due to the suspicion that others might exploit their labour'. As part of efforts to protect the students, when the workload required late hours, the superintendent of the Schools would set the schedules and methods, 'in order to combine proper economy with necessary precautions, ensuring that the girls are well supervised and returned to their relatives'.

In addition to their income, the most deserving students with eight years of school attendance could receive one of the twenty annual dowries, each amounting to a substantial 140 scudi, from the bequest of Carlo Del Sera. The dowries were very attractive, given their fundamental importance in the lives of women during the ancien

régime.[36] Indeed, as we will see, they were the main object of negotiation for students. Additional rewards and prizes for professional merits and conduct were also available.

Daily organisation and disciplining behaviour contributed to the formation of the students according to specific moral and social standards. The school schedule was from October 1 to March 31, from 8 AM to 12 PM and from 2 PM until half an hour before the Angelus prayer at sunset; during other months, from 7 AM to 12 PM and from 3 PM onward. During the break, lunch was consumed either at home or in designated areas under supervision, but never in the classrooms 'to avoid disturbing the order and cleanliness of the school' and to allow rest for the teachers. Inside the Schools, a strict rule of 'absolute and constant silence' was enforced, to prevent 'confusion or disturbance'; speaking in a low voice was only allowed in cases of necessity. The students' behaviour was under continuous and public supervision by the teachers of the manufacturing activities. Each day, the teachers had to display a table with the students' names, attached to the door of the classrooms, indicating their shortcomings and significant achievements, later recorded in the school register. In case of negligence and inappropriate behaviour, the girls were corrected by the teachers 'with zeal and charity', towards 'silence and obedience, as well as modesty in attire, morality, and external conduct'; in severe cases, the superintendent would intervene. Education continued beyond the Schools, as students were required to attend religious instruction in their parish on holidays, reaffirming the central role of religion in female education.

Schools were organised according to a clear hierarchy. At the top was the superintendent. Appointed by the king and not salaried, the superintendent had full responsibility in managing the Schools in all areas, from financial, administrative, disciplinary, and productive matters to staff coordination, with staff chosen by him and then approved by the sovereign authority. Senator Marco Covoni Girolami Bettoni, commissioner of the Confraternity of the Bigallo (in charge of managing the former assistance institution and its associated estates) and creator of the model statute of the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital, held this position from 1778 until 1804.

However, the direction of the Schools was assigned to female teachers of professional training—which highlighted the unprecedented public valorisation of women in both the personal and professional spheres. The teachers were five or six, one for each subject, such as weaving, sewing, etc. The requirements for appointment were both moral and professional, as candidates had to be 'of proven honesty, capable of teaching with zeal and charity'. A very important and strongly emphasised principle was the obligation not to belong to ecclesiastical orders, meaning they had to have an 'entirely secular status'. Although they were 'not bound by vows or any religious community', their behaviour had to be morally impeccable, 'suitable for the seriousness and delicacy of their duties', and in compliance with the regulations and

[36] On Florence, and for a comparison on the amount of the dowries, see LEUZZI FUBINI, *"Condurre a onore"*; ISABELLE CHABOT, *La dette des familles. Femmes, lignage et patrimoine à Florence aux XIV^e et XV^e siècle* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2011).

'spirit' of the Schools. This rectitude was essential for both personal dignity and the moral edification of the students, as well as for institutional reasons, 'to combine decency, safety, and peace for each individual, as well as good order, unity, and economy for the respective communities'. The private and public spheres coincided, converging toward a single goal: the welfare of the community. With their institutional role, the teachers acquired a new, significant public responsibility in performing their work, which took on an almost sacred function—referred to as a 'ministry'. Personal identity gained more importance in society. Teachers were like Vestals of female education.

Therefore, the teachers were subject to a strict moral code. It was strictly forbidden to accept tips or gifts from students, to avoid injustices or preferences that could damage the 'good order and the common profit'. For the same reason, hosting students for meals and overnight stays was also forbidden. Finally, outsiders were not allowed into the school unless in urgent cases decided by the superintendent.

The teachers' lives were governed by almost monastic rules, though aimed at fostering a strong sense of belonging—the School was considered their 'own home' to which they should give 'common affection'—as well as dignity, and joy for the work they performed for society. Their attire had to be austere, appropriate to their role, especially when going out (when they had to wear the black cap). Outings were highly discouraged, as were contacts with outsiders, to ensure peace while performing their duties; order, decorum, and cleanliness had to prevail even in their homes. Devotional rites (prayers, recitation of theological virtues, rosary, participation in sacraments, etc.) structured their entire day from morning until evening, under the guidance of the priest, who was also the spiritual director and catechism teacher; each school had an oratory or a church. Thanksgiving prayers were to be offered to God for the benefits received and to obtain the grace to fulfil their 'delicate duties' to the best of their ability.

The moral and religious vigilance over the students was, as mentioned earlier, ever-present. After waking early in the morning, the teachers would greet the students upon their arrival to prevent confusion outside the school and reduce the chances for misconduct, immediately imposing prayers and invocations so they could 'awaken the divine presence'; they enforced silence and the recitation of prayers during work and breaks; they checked the cleanliness of the premises at the end of the day. Meals provided a moment of relaxation for the teachers, who ate together in the refectory with the appropriate prayers, followed by a break and walks in the garden or other designated areas. In winter, they were required to gather after dinner in the common room to work together and contribute to 'union and domestic society with good grace and cheerfulness', but only until 10 PM to stay healthy, efficient for the next day's work, and not 'waste light unnecessarily'. Outings had to be rare and in groups, and had to conclude before the communal lunch.

Teaching at the Leopoldine Schools not only granted the teachers social recognition but also good economic conditions compared to other women's jobs.[37] They received a monthly salary of five scudi, were provided with furnished accommodation within the Schools (including bed, linen, lighting, and more), had medical expenses covered, and earned from their manufacturing work. Meals were provided by the custodian or the provisioner, while household chores were performed by a woman. Upon ending their service due to age or illness, they were assigned a pension equal to their salary; if they decided to marry or enter a convent, they could receive a dowry.

Teachers, in turn, were overseen by the first teacher, who was selected by the superintendent based on merit and leadership qualities in various aspects (a 'subject most capable of overseeing the moral and economic direction of each school'). The first teacher was confirmed annually based on considerations regarding the institution's benefit, but also 'in light of the greatest satisfaction of the individuals who comprised it': community spirit inspired this choice as well.

The first teacher had many duties. In collaboration with the superintendent, they involved overseeing the good order of the 'family and respective community', the maintenance of linens, furniture, food supplies, the cook, the teachers' clothing, expenses, managing school costs, income from work, and general domestic economy. All accounts at the end of the month were submitted with her signature. She oversaw the compliance with internal regulations, the schedule of the day (marking the time for lessons, prayers, etc.), and the entry of outsiders.

The first teacher also supervised the work of male instructors who taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, while the teachers collaborated with them to ensure that the students received a good education. However, professional learning held significantly greater importance than theoretical knowledge, which was limited to a few basic notions taught in a handful of hours. Instructors—two for each School—were selected by the superintendent based on their 'well-known probity, prudence, and skill'. However, they could not be alone in the classroom with the students and worked alongside the female colleagues. These colleagues recorded the students' conduct and progress daily, submitting reports to the superior twice a month, and could request additional lessons for students who showed more promise. Instructors were also expected to adhere to a strict conduct and avoid 'chatter, notes, telling tales and visits'. The instructors' duties involved teaching good handwriting, mathematics (including time tables), and reading—although probably not history and geography, as the regulation required—twice a week, as well as correcting the students' homework. According to the available documentation, the financial and working conditions were not very satisfactory. They received eight scudi per month, plus ten annually, which they had to use to cover expenses for ink, paper, etc., and moved between schools for

[37] Cf. for exemple, the salaries of the female workers in the city factories: ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, *Affari spediti dalle* R. *Scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 31.

two lessons a week, for a total of five hours per day, with very large classes of approximately 150 students per school.

The school staff included an accountant, a treasurer, a porter, and a janitor, whose duties, responsibilities, and salaries were clearly specified for the proper management of the institutions and their financial resources. The monthly payment registers, income records and annual school budgets compiled by the accountant and signed by the superintendent are of particular historical significance. The regulations of the institution were also reflected in the supervisory tasks assigned to the porter, who oversaw the students' conduct and behaviour, as well as the cooperative duties of the janitor.

Order, organisation, and new goals defined the life of the Leopoldine Schools. What set them apart as new and exclusive was their nature as institutions managed by women and aimed to bring about a life change for many girls and women, while also creating better life prospects. Their significance was also enhanced by their continuity throughout the nineteenth century. The regulations remained intact through the revolutionary period and the unification of Italy. New research may reveal potential changes in their activities and social function within these altered contexts.

Life and Work in the Leopoldine Schools

The documentation on the Leopoldine Schools is substantial, both in quantity and in the variety of research it allows across various fields, from the history of women's labour, to the history of manufacturing economics, the geography of poverty in Florence, school building, and, of course, the history of welfare and education. For the purposes of our research, certain aspects of the institution's activity are more amenable to analysis than others. In particular, the identity and personal stories of the students and staff remain obscure, with only a few scarce glimpses available. However, some data can be extracted about their scope and professional activity, highlighting the value of their role. More generally, this data allows us to understand the impact of the Leopoldine Schools on female welfare, professional, and educational spheres, as well as their influence in the broader society of late eighteenth-century Florence.

Financial reports and documents related to the manufacturing work provide extensive information. First, we can infer that, in the first twenty years of operation, the Leopoldine Schools accommodated a consistent number of approximately 500/600 students. Each year, twenty of them received a dowry, allocated according to criteria unrelated to their manufacturing work, so they were evenly divided between weavers, seamstresses, etc. The students' contribution to the overall financial balance of the schools was substantial, as shown by a comparison of the annual budgets. For instance, the 1784 budget reveals that at the San Paolo School, 171 students generated 944 scudi 6 lire in revenue, against sales valued at 998 scudi 3 lire 12 soldi, with total income of 1,802 scudi 23 lire 6 soldi, and total expenses of 2,173 scudi 6 soldi (resulting in a loss for the Schools of 1,090 scudi 5 lire 6 soldi). In the overall budget, the value of the work done and paid by respective merchants for the four schools amounted to

3,533 scudi 6 lire 4 soldi, with 671 girls receiving a total of 3,542 scudi 6 lire 17 soldi as wages and rewards.[38] An important 1793 report on the silk merchants, spinners, dyers, combers, and folder workers in Florence—aimed at detailing the number of employed and unemployed individuals—showed that 6,309 women were employed, compared to 171 men. In total, 9,630 workers were employed, with 2,607 unemployed, making a total of 12,237 people.[39]

Letters and records related to work commissioned by third parties (recorded in the *Giornali dei lavori*) are equally interesting. The schools received orders for textile products (wool, linen, ermisino, cotton, hemp, veils, ribbons, drapes) and sewing work, depending on the market conditions. Their clients included institutions such as the Confraternity of the Bigallo—which they provided with clothing for orphans (socks, shirts, etc.)—the Order of the Knights of St. Stephen—for whom they wove silk from the Val di Chiana—and the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, as well as private clients.[40] Among the regular customers were well-known local merchants, such as Gasparo Bonaiuti, who sold silk fabrics from the Leopoldine Schools in his shop in the Mercato Nuovo, and the company of Giuseppe Marchionni and Sons, a wool merchant. After three years of a profitable contract with the schools, financed by a substantial investment of 15,000 scudi, Pietro Donarche, a merchant and machinery supplier, became a partner in 1786. However, the partnership ended badly with a legal dispute and the loss of many goods.[41] It is also through these circumstances that we can understand the extent and quality of the work done by the students, as well as the types of materials used and their respective costs.

Subsequently, the schools were commissioned to produce trousseaux for noble families.[42] The financial investment in the manufacturing production was typically borne by the schools, including machinery and labour. The superintendent was very active in securing work for the schools and was attentive to innovations in textile techniques and machinery. This attention was not solely economic; it also reflected the importance placed on the good functioning of the Schools. Indeed, Covoni himself expressed this to the Grand Duke in 1793, requesting permission to purchase a large batch of silk worth 1,500 scudi to allow the students to work and seek commissions. He justified the request by citing the importance of work for the economy and morality against idleness: these 'poor creatures' should not be deprived of the advantage of a good education and a decent livelihood, lest they 'add to the current number of idle and wandering women, who increase disorder and irregularity'. His great fear was the 'fatal consequences they could be exposed to and the bad habits unfortunately […]

[38] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 16, *Affari spediti dalle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle dall'anno 1778 all'anno 1796*, fasc. 12.
[39] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, *Affari spediti dalle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 31.
[40] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 177, *Quaderno di seta cruda*, 1795-1800; Scuole leopoldine, 16, *Affari spediti dalle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1778 al 1796*, fasc. 5; Scuole leopoldine, 17, *Affari spediti dalle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 1.
[41] Ibidem, *ad ind.*; cfr. VÁZQUEZ ASTORGA, *Le Scuole leopoldine di Firenze*, 40 ss. (reporting Donarche).
[42] VÁZQUEZ ASTORGA, *Le Scuole leopoldine di Firenze*, 42.

fomented by idleness and begging, […] which are inevitable in such dire circumstances, unless timely interventions offer some remedy'.[43] In line with this objective, Covoni promoted the introduction in 1789 of a new machine for the reeling of raw silk, which had been presented to him by Giovan Battista Carioni of Cremona and his wife Maria. Covoni praised the machine for the 'intelligence of this type of manufacturing, the evident benefit for the workers, and the ease with which the method could be learned'. In fact, the processing of silk increased by 4/5, reaching one pound in winter and 2/3 in summer.[44]

On the other hand, there is very limited data regarding the students' identity. The enrolment registers do not provide information about their social background or the professions of their parents; similarly, the merit tables or other records kept by the teachers are also unavailable. Additionally, no details are known about their professional or personal lives after receiving their dowries or rewards.

This silence is occasionally interrupted by a few letters regarding the transfer of the dowry to another person. To confirm the importance of this primary 'asset', the beneficiaries tried to ensure that relatives or friends could benefit from it if they did not marry. To justify the transfer, they recounted their lives, offering a glimpse into the condition of the students, and sometimes the teachers. Testimonies from priests regarding the truth of their statements, despite the repetition of formulas, offer additional valuable details. Similarly, Covoni's reports to the ruler on these transfers, particularly those aimed at denying them in accordance with the regulations, are notably detailed.

A few examples. Eleonora Boboli, a student in the textile workshops of the San Paolo School, described herself as miserable, with four sisters, and elderly, disabled parents, and wished to transfer her dowry to her sister Rosa, who could not 'go forward with the engagement due to lacking even a bed'. The marriage of her sister could provide housing for the sisters in case of the parents' death. The priest confirmed that Eleonora was 'extremely poor and frail'.[45] Teresa Moncelli submitted a very touching petition. She asked for half of the dowry she had received after fourteen years of diligent and productive attendance at the knitting, ribbon, and sewing classes at the San Giorgio School, and requested that the remainder be given to a relative who 'is about to receive the ring', since, 'due to her misfortune', she could not enjoy it. The money would be of 'great relief to her very poor household'. She and her three sisters had been orphaned by their father when they were children and were 'oppressed beyond belief by poverty and deprivation of everything necessary to live'. They did not know how to 'procure even the merest necessary sustenance', having exhausted the

[43] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, Filza II, *Affari spediti delle reali scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 23.
[44] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, Filza II, *Affari spediti delle reali scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 31 (including a description of the functions of the machine).
[45] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, Filza II, *Affari spediti delle reali scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 32.

proceeds from selling their few possessions and loans.[46] Giovanna Lampera, a student at the San Salvatore School, asked to transfer her dowry to her sister, a former student, to enter the religious order at the San Benedetto convent in Arezzo, after years of waiting due to the poverty and old age of her father.[47] Margherita Chelazzi, a former student at the San Salvatore School, needed her dowry to start her new job with more dignity: she wished to purchase clothing for her position as a teacher in Siena, a position she had secured due to her professional skill.[48]

The assessments included in the final observations of the enrolment registers are much more cryptic and very rare: 'with grace', 'with propriety', 'with due decorum and propriety', but also 'without any propriety', as in the case of Maria Anna Cianchi, admitted in 1812 and leaving in 1818.[49]

The documentation related to the teachers is also interesting, as it confirms the disparity in treatment between the male and female teachers. Covoni was very attentive to the requests of the female teachers. For instance, he granted a dowry ('ricaduta', i.e. unclaimed) to Anna Buggini, a former ribbon teacher at the San Giorgio School, to fulfil her dream of joining the Salesian convent in Pescia, despite being forty years old, due to her faithful and diligent service and her status as an orphan.[50] Similarly, he provided a pension of five scudi, as well as a bed and a generous quantity of linens, to Anna Dreoni and Caterina Lensi, teachers at the San Giorgio School, because they had become invalids after a long and honourable service.[51] The instructor Giuseppe Farolfi, however, had to write several petitions and submit medical and ecclesiastical certificates to receive a salary increase, followed by a transfer (to the corps of Royal Guards) or retirement. His situation was very difficult. He suffered from kidney disease, aggravated by the effort of teaching large classes and walking between schools. His salary was low, and he could not supplement it with other work, leading to insurmountable debts. His large family of five children and one disabled sister-in-law had been struck by severe hardships (the murder of his eldest son, the death of his wife in hospital due to lack of care, theft of their bed and tableware, etc.), and was living in a pervasive state of poverty, to the point that his daughters had been placed in a convent, 'having found them in a sea of misery, completely naked, and without even beds and linens'.[52]

[46] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, Filza II, *Affari spediti delle reali scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 51.
[47] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 18, *Filza di affari spediti dal 1795 a tutto il 1798,* fasc. 4.
[48] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 17, *Affari spediti delle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 6.
[49] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 156, *Registro delle ragazze che si ammettono alle scuole 1798-1824, ad annum.*
[50] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 18, *Filza di affari spediti dal 1795 a tutto il 1798*, fasc. 30.
[51] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 18, *Filza di affari spediti dal 1795 a tutto il 1798*, fasc. 31.
[52] ASCFI, Scuole leopoldine, 18, *Filza di affari spediti dal 1795 a tutto il 1798*, fasc. 52; Scuole leopoldine, 16, *Affari spediti dalle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle dall'anno 1778 all'anno 1796*, fasc. 3; Scuole leopoldine, 17, *Affari spediti dalle R. Scuole normali delle povere zittelle di Firenze dall'anno 1789 al 1794*, fasc. 7, 16; Scuole leopoldine, 18, *Filza di affari spediti dal 1795 a tutto il 1798*, fasc. 52, 61.

In the ancien régime society, these were stories of everyday poverty, to which the Leopoldine Schools sought to offer a remedy through work and education.

Conclusions

The pursuit of emancipation from poverty through education, employment, and moral and religious upbringing constituted the central objective of the Leopoldine School established by Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo in Tuscany. They introduced an innovative approach to the social assistance of women: secular, state-administered, and preventative, aiming to mitigate poverty not by mere charity or confinement, but through vocational and educational training intended to form citizens both useful to and participatory in the welfare of the state. The institution sought to transform the life trajectories and identities of poor girls—future women—by enabling their intellectual and professional development, thereby granting them an active societal role along with a renewed sense of dignity and personal and social worth. It is true that the educational model reflected a well-defined, prescriptive ideal of womanhood, rooted in top-down principles of the time. Nevertheless, the Leopoldine Schools marked a significant innovation in eighteenth-century Italy: their secular character and their focus on elevating the condition of impoverished women represented a distinctly civic and eudaimonistic outlook. Though some features remained traditional, the institution endeavoured to reshape both the personal identity of its students and their social functions, improving their living conditions accordingly. The daily structure of the schools was shaped by this purpose. Unlike traditional conservatories, attendance was required only during the day. The curriculum, though in alignment with Pietro Leopoldo's broader vision, contained notable innovations. All instruction was offered free of charge and sought to impart not only cultural, moral, and religious notions but above all vocational skills. The Schools provided religious instruction and catechism, as well as basic intellectual education—reading, writing, arithmetic, general knowledge of history and geography, and lessons in propriety. Their primary aim, however, was to teach domestic skills such as knitting, sewing, and weaving, fostering in the students the qualities of industrious workers, good mothers, and modest women. These occupations were deemed essential for every woman's familial and social life, and were thus a central aspect of the educational program.

Vocational activities offered practical opportunities for students to earn income, thereby allowing them to accumulate savings toward dowries for marriage or to support their families. Particularly deserving and long-serving students could receive one of twenty annual dowries designated by the bequest of Carlo Del Sera—a highly attractive opportunity given the importance of dowries for women under the ancien régime. Additional rewards and distinction for professional merit and conduct were also available. The structure of the daily routine and strict behavioural regulations served to inculcate specific moral and social standards.

The Leopoldine Schools also transformed the identity and social roles of female teachers. Subject to the authority of a principal teacher, they collectively managed

institutional operations—a noteworthy public recognition of women's capabilities. Admission required both professional and moral qualifications, with the explicit stipulation that teachers could not belong to religious orders. The principal teacher, appointed by the schools' superintendent based on merit and leadership ability and reconfirmed annually, was responsible for supervising educational activities, school property, and all staff. Teachers' conduct was required to exemplify strict morality and adherence to institutional norms and ethos; their lives were regulated almost monastically, intended to cultivate a profound sense of belonging essential both to personal dignity and institutional mission. The convergence of private and public interest was directed toward the common good.

Within this institutional role, teachers acquired unprecedented public responsibility, their profession attaining an almost sacred dimension—significantly, it was referred to as a 'ministry'. This conferred on women a new social identity and standing. Teaching at the Leopoldine Schools guaranteed female instructors not only social recognition but also a stable and respectable economic condition

New research focusing on the biographical trajectories of both students and teachers may provide evidence regarding the actual effectiveness of the Leopoldine Schools in enhancing their personal and social identities. Nonetheless, the establishment of these institutions in itself represented a significant opportunity, inaugurating a novel pathway for identity formation in the modern era.

Solidarity or Fiscal Rapacity? The interplay between Food Supply Policy and Taxation in Valencia during the 1350s-1360s *

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Introduction[1]

This paper analyses the intricate relationship between food provisioning policies and the tax system in the Mediterranean city of Valencia during the pivotal decade from 1350 to 1360. These years witnessed the final shaping of the city's financial structure, which came to rely on indirect taxes and the issuance of long-term annuities. At the same time, the city introduced, for the first time, a decisive subsidy policy to ensure the grain supply to its urban population—ostensibly as a means to maintain social stability.

While these two areas—taxation and food provisioning—have traditionally been studied in isolation, I argue that a holistic approach is essential to understanding their interconnected roles within a broader systemic framework. To that end, after outlining the historiographical context and the sources employed, I present the historical background before analysing the city's tax system, its food supply policies, and the internal contradictions that emerged, particularly those relating to the stated goal of preserving social peace.

A preliminary conceptual clarification is necessary: can food supply policy be considered an expression of solidarity? The term 'solidarity' is not explicitly present in medieval thought, but its principles were implicitly understood as part of a broader concept: *caritas*. This complex theological virtue was authoritatively defined by St Thomas Aquinas as the orderly love of God, oneself, and the others, thus constituting the basis for all common good and social harmony.[2] Although medieval thinkers offered other understandings, one of the main derivations was the notion of 'just price' as an element of the 'common good'.[3]

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[1] Main abbreviations: f. (folio), m. (mano), ACA (Archivo de la Corona de Aragón), C. (Cancillería), AMV (Arxiu Municipal de València), MC (Manual de Consells), CC (Claveria Comuna), reg. (registro), srv (sous reials de València), drv (diners reials de València).

[2] ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 23-46, specifically questions 26 and 27. For a detailed explanation on Thomas Aquinas' contribution to the conception of common good see: MARY M. KEYS, *Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[3] RAYMOND DE ROOVER, 'The Concept of the Just Price: Theory and Economic Policy', *The Journal of Economic History* 18, no. 4 (1958): 418–34.

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The question, then, is whether the food supply policies in Valencia were framed in these terms. While it is impossible to know precisely what the city's rulers understood as the 'common good', they explicitly linked their policies to this ultimate purpose. In 1358, for instance, they stated that their initiatives were: 'a be e utilitat de la cosa pública e per tal que major habundància de blats en aquella fos trobada' (for the benefit of the *res publica* and to ensure a greater abundance of cereals in the city).[4] The intention to aid the populace, particularly the poor, was even more explicit during the famine of 1325, when Valencian jurors appealed to the king for help: 'farets-ne servii al nostre senyor Déus, per rahó de les gents populars, e a la Ciutat gràcia e mercé' (you will do service to our Lord God, for the sake of the poor people, and grace and mercy to the city)'.[5]

This study examines the various initiatives known as 'supply policies' as a coherent system. I contend that the evidence presented here suggests a fundamental repurposing of this system. Although its primary aim may have been to serve the common good by ensuring a steady food supply at moderate prices, it was ultimately retooled to expand the fiscal capacity of the city's rulers.

Sources and Historiographical Framework

The complexity of the analysis presented in this paper situates it at the intersection of several historiographical fields, all of which must be taken into account. The first area is the study of urban food supplies. The question of how medieval urban populations secured their sustenance and managed the related logistical, economic, and political challenges has been explored from a range of perspectives, including the history of alimentation, urban governance, market systems, famine studies, and logistics. While the history of alimentation provides the broadest interpretative framework, the approach adopted here aligns more closely with the historiographies of market structures and urban governance.

In recent years, the study of famine—its causes and the societal mechanisms devised to mitigate or prevent its effects—has attracted growing scholarly interest.[6] In this regard, the Crown of Aragon has emerged as a particularly fertile ground for research. Although many important studies could be cited, I will refer specifically to

[4] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 4–6r (05/06/1358). The expression 'a be e utilitat de la cosa pública', or its variations, appears frequently in documents concerning these aids. See, for example: AMV, MC, A-13, m. 1, f. 46v–47v (20/01/1357); AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 26-27r (27/07/1358), 27v-29v (14/08/1358), etc.

[5] AMV, MC, A-1, f. 235v–236r (19/06/1325); *Epistolari de la València medieval*, ed. AGUSTÍN RUBIO VELA, 2nd ed. (València: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2003), 189–90, doc. 79.

[6] Three edited volumes offer a general overview of the topic and reflect the current state of research in this field; PERE BENITO I MONCLÚS, *Crisis alimentarias en la Edad Media: modelos, explicaciones y representaciones* (Lleida: Milenio, 2013); PERE BENITO I MONCLÚS and ANTONI RIERA MELIS, *Guerra y carestía en la Europa medieval* (Lleida: Milenio, 2014); PERE BENITO I MONCLÚS, LUCIANO PALERMO, and ANDREA FARA, *Políticas contra el hambre y la carestía en la Europa medieval* (Lleida: Milenio, 2018).

the recent monograph by Adam Franklin-Lyons, which offers the most comprehensive overview of the field to date for this region of Europe.[7]

The second field at this historiographical crossroads is fiscal history. The study of historical tax systems traces its roots to Joseph A. Schumpeter's seminal 1918 work, which laid the foundation for what would later be termed 'fiscal sociology'.[8] Since then, numerous scholars have deepened our understanding of medieval tax regimes, using them as windows into the functioning of past economies, the evolution of public policy, and the broader processes of state formation.[9]

The Crown of Aragon has emerged as one of the most promising contexts for investigating the formation and evolution of medieval tax systems and their socio-economic impact. Despite regional variations, Aragonese cities generally developed a fiscal model centered on the replacement of direct taxation with sales taxes and a debt structure that increasingly relied on the sale of long-term annuities.[10] The monarchy's financial needs played a crucial role in this development, as urban tax systems became instrumental in transferring the costs of Mediterranean and Peninsular warfare to the local populations.[11] In this way, cities and towns were transformed into what might aptly be described as 'fiscal factories'.[12]

If the Crown of Aragon constitutes one of the most promising European contexts for studying fiscal and provisioning systems, the city of Valencia has, over recent decades, emerged as a privileged case study. Although Valencia's experience is not unique—similar challenges and responses can be found across Europe—it offers a particularly compelling model. The system developed by the city's authorities to address food supply and financial pressures during these decades proved remarkably durable, enduring for more than four centuries.

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[7] ADAM FRANKLIN-LYONS, *Shortage and Famine in the Late Medieval Crown of Aragon: Vulnerability and Resilience in the Late-Medieval Crown of Aragon* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022), vi.

[8] JOSEPH A. SCHUMPETER, *Die Krise des Steuerstaats* (Graz–Leipzig: Leuschner–Lubensky, 1918).

[9] For a broader perspective on the development of this field, see: DENIS MENJOT, MATHIEU CAESAR, and PERE VERDÉS PIJUAN, 'History of Taxation in Medieval Europe: Sources, Historiography and Methods', in *The Routledge Handbook of Public Taxation in Medieval Europe* (London: Routledge, 2023), 15–54; SIMONETTA CAVACIOCCHI, *La fiscalità nell'economia europea secc. XIII-XVIII* (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2008).

[10] MANUEL SÁNCHEZ, ANTONI FURIÓ DIEGO, and JOSÉ ÁNGEL SESMA MUÑOZ, 'Old and New Forms of Taxation in the Crown of Aragon (13th-14th Centuries)', in *La fiscalità nell'economia europea*, 99–130; ANTONI FURIÓ, 'Deuda Pública e intereses privados: finanzas y fiscalidad municipales en la Corona de Aragón', *Edad Media: Revista de Historia* 2 (1999): 35–80.

[11] VICENT BAYDAL SALA, 'El papel de la guerra en el proceso de construcción de la fiscalidad pública en el reino de Valencia (1250-1365)', *Revista Roda da Fortuna: Revista Eletrônica sobre Antiguidade e Medievo*, no. extra 1–1 (2014): 148–69; MANUEL SÁNCHEZ MARTÍNEZ, *Pagar al rey en la Corona de Aragón durante el siglo XIV: estudios sobre fiscalidad y finanzas reales y urbanas* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2003), accessed 11 April 2025, http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy1317/2005420987-t.html.

[12] ANTONIO JOSÉ MIRA JÓDAR and PAU VICIANO NAVARRO, 'La Construcció d'un Sistema Fiscal: Municipis i Impost al País Valencià (Segle XIII-XIV)', *Revista d'Historia Medieval* 7 (1996): 135–48.

The financial system of Valencia from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries has been thoroughly examined in the works of J. V. García Marsilla, R. Narbona, A. Mira, P. Viciano, and E. Cruselles, among others.[13] In parallel, the various initiatives undertaken by city officials to ensure grain provisioning—culminating in a policy of import subsidies and market regulation—have been documented in the studies of A. Rubio Vela, E. Cruselles, and P. Sanahuja, among others.[14]

[13] JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, *Vivir a crédito en la Valencia medieval: de los orígenes del sistema censal al endeudamiento del municipio* (València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2002); JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'La formació d'un mercat del crèdit: orígens i difusió del censal en la societat valenciana: segles XIII-XIV', *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics* 12 (2001): 135–44; JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'La génesis de la fiscalidad municipal en la ciudad de Valencia (1238-1366)', *Revista d'Historia Medieval* 7 (1996): 149–72; JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA and JORGE SÁIZ SERRANO, 'De la peita al censal. Finanzas municipales y clases dirigentes en la Valencia de los siglos XIV y XV', in *Colloqui Corona, Municipis i Fiscalitat a la Baixa Edat Mitjana*, eds MANUEL SANCHEZ and ANTONI FURIO (Lleida: Institut d'Estudis Ilerdences, 1997), 307–36; JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'Las empresas del fisco. Arrendamiento y gestión privada de los impuestos en el reino medieval de Valencia (siglos XIV-XV)', in *La fiscalità nell'economia europea*, 851–62; JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'Avalando al rey. Préstamos a la Corona y finanzas municipales en la Valencia del siglo XV', in *Fiscalidad de estado y fiscalidad municipal en los reinos hispánicos medievales*, eds DENIS MENJOT and MANUEL SANCHEZ MARTINEZ (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2006), 377–90. RAFAEL NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'Finanzas municipales y patriciado urbano: Valencia a finales del Trescientos', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 22 (1992): 485–512. MIRA JÓDAR and VICIANO NAVARRO, 'La Construcció d'un Sistema Fiscal'. Furthermore, Pau Viciano has devoted several works to the same issue in the scenario of the Valencian town of Castelló de la Plana. See: PAU VICIANO NAVARRO, *Més enllà de la senyoria: mercat i impostos a Castelló de la Plana, segles XIV-XV* (Catarroja: Editorial Afers, 2017). ENRIQUE CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, 'Las sociedades arrendatarias de los impuestos municipales de Valencia (1410-1450)', *Medievalismo: Revista de La Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 27 (2017): 133–58. A particularly significant contribution to the development of this area was issue no. 7 of *Revista d'Història Medieval* (1996), devoted to the origins of municipal fiscality.

[14] AGUSTÍN RUBIO VELA, 'El Abastecimiento Cerealista de Una Gran Urbe Bajomedieval. Aproximación al Problema Campo-Ciudad En El País Valenciano', in *L'Escenari històric del Xúquer. Actes de la IV assemblea de La Ribera* (L'Alcudia: Ajuntament de L'Alcudia, 1986), 102–35; AGUSTÍN RUBIO VELA, 'El problema frumentari a València i la crisi de la Unio (1340-1348)', *Homenatge al doctor Sebastià Garcia Martínez*, 3 vols (València: Universitat de València: 1988), vol. 1, 89–102; AGUSTÍN RUBIO VELA, 'Valencia y el control de la producción cerealista del Reino en la baja Edad Media: orígenes y planteamiento de un conflicto', in *Demografía y sociedad en la España bajomedieval* (Zaragoza: Universidad de Zaragoza, 2001), 33–65; AGUSTÍN RUBIO VELA, 'Trigo de Aragón en la Valencia del Trescientos', *Crecimiento económico y formación de los mercados en Aragón en la Edad Media: (1200-1350)* (Zaragoza: Universidad de Zaragoza, 2009), 319–67. ENRIQUE CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, JOSÉ MARÍA CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, and RAFAEL NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'El sistema de abastecimiento frumentario de la ciudad de Valencia en el siglo XV: entre la subvención pública y el negocio privado', *La Mediterrània, àrea de convergència de sistemes alimentaris (segles V-XVIII). XIV Jornades d'Estudis Històrics Locals* (Palma: Institut d'Estudis Baleàrics, 1996), 305–32; ENRIQUE CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, 'El mercado de harina en la huerta de la Valencia cuatrocentista', *En la España medieval* 48 (2025): 225–47. PABLO SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas. El abastecimiento de Valencia durante la Guerra de los Dos Pedros (1356-1366)', *Medievalismo: revista de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 27 (2017): 327–51; PABLO SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Alimentar la ciudad en tiempos de guerra. El abastecimiento cárnico de Valencia durante la Guerra de los Dos Pedros (1356-1366)', *Aragón en la Edad Media* 30 (2019): 351–87. Foundational studies on the urban food supply of Valencia include: HERMENEGILDO RAUSELL BOIZAS et al., 'Movimiento secular de las importaciones trigueras del siglo XV mediante las "Ayudas de la ciudad de Valencia"', *Estudis: Revista de historia moderna* 2 (1973): 5–12; MARÍA AMPARO CUEVES GRANERO, 'Abastecimientos de la ciudad de Valencia durante la Edad Media', *Saitabi: revista de la Facultat de Geografia i Història* 12 (1962): 141–67.

The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to one final area of inquiry: the study of social peace and public order in the Middle Ages. This broad field intersects with several others, including justice, criminality, and urban governance. Focused on Valencia, the seminal work of R. Narbona, *Pueblo, poder y sexo*, provides valuable insight into the complexities of public order in medieval Valencia—a picture further enriched by his studies on urban governance and the administration of justice.[15]

While each of the three areas explored in this paper—public finance, food provisioning, and public order—has been gaining increasing traction on their own, their intersection has not yet undergone sustained or systematic analysis. Only a handful of scholars have touched on this convergence, and even then, only partially.[16]

To address this gap, I draw upon one of the major advantages of working with the Crown of Aragon: the richness and diversity of its archival sources. This study is based primarily on materials from the Archivo Municipal de Valencia (AMV)—particularly the series Manuals de Consells (MC), which records the city council's decisions, and Claveria Comuna (CC), the municipality's accounting books. Additional records were drawn from the Chancery of the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón. This latter archive includes the series Sigilli Secreti, Guerre Castelle, and Comune. While all contain royal letters, they are of a different character: Sigilli Secreti comprises letters issued under the monarch's private seal, Guerre Castelle contains letters relating to the War of the Two Peters, and the Comune series includes letters of a more diverse and common nature.

Historical Context

In addition to the devastating impact of the Black Death across Western Christendom, two major crises defined the 1350s and 1360s for the city of Valencia. The first was the Union Revolt, or Union War (1347–1348), a rebellion against the authoritarian rule of Peter IV of Aragon. This conflict saw a significant alliance between segments of the Aragonese nobility and the urban oligarchies of Valencia. The eventual outcome—a decisive defeat for the rebels—marked a clear affirmation of royal authority and had

[15] RAFAEL NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, *Pueblo, poder y sexo: Valencia medieval (1306-1420)* (València: Centre d'Estudis d'Història Local, 1992); RAFAEL NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, *Valencia, municipio medieval: poder político y luchas ciudadanas (1239-1418)* (València: Ayuntamiento de València, 1995); RAFAEL NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'El justicia criminal: una corte medieval valenciana, un procedimiento judicial', *Estudis castellonencs* 3 (1986): 287–310.

[16] Among the limited number of studies on this subject, noteworthy contributions include those by E. Cruselles, J. M. Cruselles, R. Narbona, and J. V. García Marsilla, who have examined the intersection of urban finances and food supply; CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, CRUSELLES GÓMEZ and NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'El sistema de abastecimiento frumentario de la ciudad de Valencia en el siglo XV'; JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'La sisa de la carn: ganadería, abastecimiento cárnico y fiscalidad en los municipios valencianos bajomedievales', in *Los tributos de la tierra: fiscalidad y agricultura en España (siglos XII-XX)*, eds RAFAEL VALLEJO POUSADA and ANTONI FURIÓ (València: Universitat de València, 2008), 81-102.

lasting consequences for the city of Valencia, which had played a prominent role in the revolt.[17]

The second major crisis was the War of the Two Peters (1356–1366), a protracted and destructive conflict between Castile and Aragon. This war, which ultimately evolved into a Castilian civil war and paved the way for the rise of the Trastámara dynasty, stands as one of the most devastating military engagements in the history of the Iberian Peninsula.[18] The decade-long conflict between Peter I 'the Cruel' of Castile and Peter IV 'the Ceremonious' of Aragon unfolded in multiple phases, with shifting scenarios and varying regional impacts. Although the city of Valencia faced supply difficulties and financial pressures from the outset of the war, the final years posed an especially severe challenge. During this period, the Kingdom of Valencia became the principal theatre of military operations, and the city endured two intense sieges in 1363 and 1364.[19]

Taxes and Subsidies: A Complex Analysis

The two aforementioned crises had a profound impact on the development of both the supply policies and the fiscal system of Valencia. In the aftermath of the Union Revolt, it became necessary to both punish the rebels and address the massive debt accumulated by the city. These objectives were pursued through the imposition of the *Imposició dels Damnificats* (Tax of the Wronged), which comprised two distinct sets of levies. On the one hand, taxes were introduced to compensate the king and others harmed by the rebellion, targeting the territories that had supported the uprising. On the other hand, a specific set of taxes was applied exclusively within the city of Valencia to reduce its public debt.

These taxes fell primarily on essential goods consumed by the broader population—such as cereals, meat, and cloth. Although indirect taxation had been previously employed in Valencia, this marked the first occasion in which such taxes were both intended to last a decade and imposed at notably high rates. Combined with

[17] VICENT BAYDAL SALA, *Els orígens de la revolta de la unió al regne de València (1330-1348)* (València: Universitat de València, 2013); MATEU RODRIGO LIZONDO, 'La unión de Valencia (1347-1348). Una revuelta ciudadana contra el autoritarismo real' (PhD diss., Universitat de València, 1987); MATEU RODRIGO LIZONDO, 'La Unión valenciana y sus protagonistas', *Ligarzas* 7 (1975): 133–66.

[18] Although earlier historiography had already recognised the war's significant role in shaping the institutional and economic development of the Crown of Aragon, recent studies by M. Lafuente and P. Sanahuja have highlighted deeper long-term consequences of this conflict; MARIO LAFUENTE GÓMEZ, *Dos coronas en guerra: Aragón y Castilla (1356-1366)* (Zaragoza: Universidad de Zaragoza–CEMA, 2012); MARIO LAFUENTE GÓMEZ, *Un reino en armas: la guerra de los Dos Pedros en Aragón (1356-1366)* (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2014); PABLO SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Un reino asediado. El impacto de la guerra de los dos Pedros en el reino de Valencia (1356-1369). Estructuras políticas, económicas y sociales' (PhD diss., Universitat de València, 2022).

[19] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Un reino asediado, 244–417.

the general levies, the city-specific taxes placed an unprecedented fiscal burden on Valencia's urban population.[20]

In this already strained financial context, the outbreak of the War of the Two Peters in 1356 led to a dramatic increase in military expenditure. The city's existing tax revenues quickly proved insufficient. This pressure led to negotiations between the city council and the king in 1359, resulting in royal authorisation for new taxes to replace the previous ones.[21] While our understanding of the exact structure of these new taxes remains incomplete, it is clear that their administration—though partially restricted—was transferred to the jurisdiction of the *jurats* and the city council of Valencia.[22]

In September 1362, however, the city council disregarded the initial limitations and introduced a significant tax increase without prior royal approval. These new levies were imposed in addition to existing ones:[23] 2 *sous reials de València* per *cahiz* (approximately 201 litres) of cereal or flour; 1 *diner reial* per pound of mutton; 6 *diners* per pound of cloth; 2 *diners* per pound of other merchandise; 12 *diners* on retail wine and 6 on wholesale wine; and 6 *diners* on the sale of livestock or other goods.[24] These restrictions were eventually lifted during the Cortes of Monzón in 1363, when King Peter IV formally granted the city the privilege of imposing taxes at its own discretion.[25]

Despite the significant tax burden imposed on the Valencian population, municipal debt continued to rise, further accelerated by the mounting costs of warfare. The last reliable debt estimate dates back to 1344, placing it at the already considerable figure of 700,000 *sous reials de València* (srv). The Union Revolt and the subsequent Mediterranean military campaigns only deepened the city's fiscal crisis.[26]

Although no detailed records exist to precisely track the evolution of municipal debt during the War of the Two Peters, one clear indicator of its dramatic increase was the resort to the *censal*. A *censal* was a perpetual annuity contract that allowed cities to convert short-term loans into long-term financial obligations with reduced immediate costs. Valencia issued its first *censal* in 1355, valued at 112,000 srv. By 1366, the growing reliance on this instrument was underscored by the conversion of a 360,000 srv debt

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[20] VICENT BAYDAL SALA, 'Els fonaments del pactisme valencià. Sistemes fiscals, relacions de poder i identitat col·lectiva al regne de València (c. 1250 - c. 1365)' (PhD diss., Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, 2011), 686–94, accessed 12 April 2025, https://repositori.upf.edu/items/8ebc6d97-f8f2-4df1-bcfd-53405feb0442; RODRIGO LIZONDO, 'La unión de Valencia', 404–405.

[21] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 55r–56v (21/02/1359); BAYDAL SALA, 'Els fonaments del pactisme valencià', 691.

[22] Although the original grant charter has not been preserved, other documents indicate that Infante Fernando and the city council had established certain limitations, including regulations on the collection of tax revenues and restrictions on tax farming; AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 51–52r (17/01/1359); AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 55r–56v (21/02/1359); ACA, C., reg. 1168, f. 15 (02/03/1359).

[23] This practice was not uncommon; multiple taxes could be levied simultaneously on the same goods, each serving a distinct fiscal purpose; GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'La génesis de la fiscalidad'.

[24] AMV, MC, A-14, m. 3, f. 11v–12r (23/09/1362).

[25] ACA, C., reg. 1188, f. 150v–151r (16/01/1363); AMV, Privilegios Reales, Pedro IV, n.º 85 (16/01/1363); FURIÓ, 'Deuda Pública e intereses privados'.

[26] GARCÍA MARSILLA, *Vivir a crédito en la Valencia medieval*, 243–47.

owed to the financier Jafudà Alatzar into a *censal* annuity of 30,000 srv. The year before, in 1365, *censal* annuities already accounted for 39% of the municipal budget. In 1366, the city council made the decision to convert all outstanding debts into *censals*, and, by 1367, it had established a dedicated *clavari de censals* (receiver of *censals*) to manage these obligations.[27]

In addition to managing the growing debt and military expenditures, the *jurats*—Valencia's ruling officials—invoked the necessity of securing a reliable food supply as a central argument in their 1359 negotiations with the king for new taxation rights.[28] In the preceding decades, the *jurats* had employed four principal strategies to ensure the availability of cereals, particularly wheat. First, they engaged in the direct purchase of grain in large quantities. Second, they confiscated and redistributed stored cereals. Third, they provided favourable loans to grain importers. Fourth, they regulated sale prices for designated importers. Each of these measures had its strengths and weaknesses, as city leaders had learned through earlier experiences in the fourteenth century.[29] However, these strategies were designed primarily to respond to short-term supply shocks. To address long-term provisioning needs, the *jurats* implemented a more ambitious and financially demanding policy: subsidising wheat imports from abroad.

In 1356, Valencia's municipal authorities introduced a subsidy system, granting a bonus of 2 *solidi reials de València* (srv) for each *cahiz* or *cafís* of wheat—equivalent to approximately 201 litres—imported by merchants under prearranged agreements. This policy proved highly effective in its early years, enabling the importation of five million litres of wheat by 1358.[30]

By contrast, the *jurats'* intervention in the meat market was far less ambitious. Their efforts primarily focused on price regulation through legal measures. Between 1358 and 1366, this policy targeted a range of meat products, particularly mutton, goat, and pork.[31]

The king also intervened during times of acute crisis to secure Valencia's food supply. His involvement took several forms, but two were especially significant. First, he ordered the diversion of ships carrying grain destined for other territories—mainly Catalonia—to the port of Valencia.[32] While this forceful measure proved effective in alleviating the city's immediate shortages, it had serious repercussions elsewhere,

[27] GARCÍA MARSILLA, *Vivir a crédito en la Valencia medieval*, 247–56; NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'Finanzas municipales y patriciado urbano'.
[28] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 55r–56v (21/02/1359); ACA, C., reg. 1168, f. 15 (02/03/1359).
[29] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas'. For a full description of the system, see JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, *La jerarquía de la mesa: los sistemas alimentarios en la Valencia bajomedieval* (València: Diputació de València, 1993), 24–65.
[30] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas'.
[31] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Alimentar la ciudad en tiempos de guerra'; GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'La sisa de la carn'.
[32] These orders were reiterated on several occasions throughout the war: ACA, C., reg. 1183, f. 172v (9/12/1362); ACA, C., reg. 1187, f. 205v–206v (19/06/1363); ACA, C., reg. 1385, f. 147v (06/09/1363); ACA, C., reg. 1191, f. 476 (09/09/1363).

notably causing an artificial scarcity in cities like Barcelona in 1364.[33] Second, the king intervened in price regulation.[34] Although only one such royal decree has been preserved, it offers valuable insight: issued in May 1364, it set maximum prices for cereals—50 srv per *cahiz* of wheat, 20 srv for barley, and 16 srv for oats. While the king acknowledged that these prices were high, he considered them justified given the extraordinary needs of both the civilian population and the army.[35]

Additionally, the Cortes of Cullera, held in June 1364, enacted a sweeping subsidy policy to encourage grain imports. It granted 4 srv for each *cahiz* of wheat and 2 srv for each *cahiz* of barley, reinforcing the broader effort to secure urban provisioning during a period of severe instability.[36]

Contradictions of a Framework

In summary, the city council of Valencia had been granted the necessary tools to confront a mounting public debt, rising military expenditures, and the challenges of implementing a food supply policy during the war with Castile. This policy aimed to guarantee access to affordable food—especially cereals—for the city's population during periods of crisis, ensuring that ordinary residents could participate in the food market without facing prohibitive costs.

Yet, major contradictions surfaced soon after the policy was put into practice. As early as 1358—just two years after its implementation—the *jurats* observed that many citizens were purchasing wheat outside the official granaries, instead resorting to the black market. In response, the city council imposed fines of sixty *solidi* in an effort to deter this behaviour.[37] The fact that common people were willing to risk penalties to avoid the official channels suggests two possible explanations: either the city granaries offered grain of lesser quality or even in a poor state of conservation—a situation demonstrated on multiple occasions—or black market prices were at least comparable to, if not lower than, the subsidised prices offered by the city.[38] According to the city council, the issue was indeed the price: individuals, millers, and bakers were attempting to evade the taxes that increased the cost of grain from official channels.[39]

This scenario, which recurred in 1360, points to a critical shortcoming in the policy's design.[40] Rather than achieving its stated goal of market accessibility, the system inadvertently encouraged avoidance. These developments reveal a deeper contradiction at the heart of the municipal strategy: while framed as a measure for social welfare, the food supply policy increasingly became a mechanism for fiscal

[33] ACA, C., reg. 716, f. 94r (02/03/1364).
[34] ACA, C., reg. 1199, f. 492v (20/05/1364).
[35] ACA, C., reg. 1199, f. 492v (20/05/1364).
[36] MARÍA ROSA MUÑOZ POMER, 'Las Cortes de Cullera-Valencia de 1364', *Saitabi: revista de la Facultat de Geografia i Història* 35 (1985): 87–94.
[37] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 26–27r (27/07/1358); SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas'.
[38] CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, 'El mercado de harina en la huerta de la Valencia cuatrocentista'.
[39] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 26–27r (27/07/1358).
[40] AMV, MC, A-14, m. 1, f. 10v–12r (19/09/1360); SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas'.

extraction—one that burdened consumers and ultimately undermined its own legitimacy.

Although we lack precise data on black-market prices, the transactions involving the Count of Trastámara between 1364 and 1365 offer valuable insight into real price dynamics—or, at the very least, indicate that official prices were significantly inflated. The count, who had agreed to receive part of his and his troops' wages in kind from the king, refused to accept grain at the official rates or to pay the associated taxes. In July 1364, for example, he offered just forty-eight *solidi* for a *cahiz* of wheat that had been purchased at fifty-four *solidi* by municipal officials. By January 1365, he secured wheat at a price of thirty solidi per *cahiz*—a figure well below what royal agents were paying for comparable quantities.[41]

One might argue that, even if the city council failed to ensure consistently low prices, it nonetheless succeeded in maintaining food availability during the two Castilian sieges. However, the historical record does not support this interpretation. In both 1363 and 1364, the city's inhabitants suffered serious food shortages, stemming not from the siege itself, but from the failure of the jurors to secure sufficient provisions in advance.[42] The result was a food crisis that exposed the system's fundamental weakness: despite having the authority and resources to act, the city council was unable to translate its policy framework into effective logistical planning.

The most significant failure of the city's food supply policy occurred in October 1364. Although the king, wary of a potential renewed siege, urged the city to remain well stocked, the jurors faced an unexpected challenge: they were unable to sell the grain stored in the *almodí*, the municipal granary.[43] It appears that elevated taxes had driven much of the population toward the black market, where grain could be purchased at lower prices and without the burden of taxation. The jurors had mandated that all grain transactions in the city take place through the public granary, with taxes applied to each sale—effectively inflating prices to fund the import subsidy scheme.[44] Yet the imported grain represented only a fraction of the total food supply. In practice, the jurors had turned grain commerce into a revenue-generating tool under the pretext of price stabilisation.

In May 1364, following the second siege, the city council dramatically raised taxes on cereals to finance the subsidy programme. By October, however, the strategy had collapsed: residents refused to purchase the now overpriced grain from the granary, which began to spoil in storage. This situation threatened to unravel the entire system, as the jurors relied on grain sales to fund further subsidies. In response, they resorted to coercion, forcing the population to buy between 2,500 and 3,000 *cahices* of

[41] ACA, C., reg. 1199, f. 503v–504r (24/05/1364), 410v (15/07/1364); ACA, C., reg. 1209, f. 16v–17r (15/01/1365); ACA, C., reg. 1210, f. 66r (01/04/1365).
[42] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas'; SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Alimentar la ciudad en tiempos de guerra'.
[43] AMV, MC, A-14, m. 6, f. 38–39r (15/10/1364); SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas'.
[44] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 4–6r (05/06/1358).

grain at official prices—including taxes.[45] A similar dynamic affected the meat market: by 1361, products such as mutton, goat, and pork were subject to taxes that made up a quarter or more of their final price, undermining affordability and access for the city's inhabitants.[46]

Nevertheless, these contradictions could be interpreted as the unintended consequences of implementing a new system under unprecedented conditions. The primary objective of the supply policies was to maintain social stability—and, in that respect, they were largely successful. There is no evidence of popular uprisings or significant protests in Valencia related to the high cost of food during the war with Castile. However, the implementation of this system did lead to open conflict with two other social groups.

The first of these was the city's butchers, who rebelled in 1361 against the meat market regulations. They argued that rising livestock prices, combined with newly imposed fixed prices and taxes, eliminated their profit margins entirely. Only the threat of royal punishment ultimately compelled them to resume their work.[47]

The second, and more dangerous, source of resistance came from the nobility, both within the city and across the kingdom. In early 1363, Valencian nobles protested the imposition of new taxes on goods, claiming exemptions based on royal privileges. The city council refused to grant such exemptions and insisted on enforcing the taxes. At the same time, the king had called upon these nobles to help defend the realm against the Castilian army. In protest, they threatened to withdraw their support unless their privileges were respected. During this tense standoff, Castilian forces advanced significantly through the Kingdom of Aragon, encountering little resistance. The rebellion was only defused by the king's promise to respect their privileges.[48]

These contradictions raise important questions about the true purpose of Valencia's food supply policy—particularly the subsidy scheme. When the subsidies were established in 1358, the city council justified the decision as being "a be e utilitat de la cosa pública e per tal que major habundància de blats en aquella fos trobada"—for the benefit of the res publica and to ensure a greater abundance of cereals in the city. However, financing the policy quickly became a central issue. The council argued that there was insufficient liquidity in the city to justify either a general loan or a direct tax. Instead, they opted for a twofold strategy: first, they banned all grain sales outside the municipal granary; second, they imposed a tax of 2 solidi on every *cahiz* of wheat sold through the granary.[49]

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[45] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Con el hambre a las puertas', 348.
[46] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Alimentar la ciudad en tiempos de guerra', 363.
[47] SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Alimentar la ciudad en tiempos de guerra'.
[48] PABLO SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Estructura y condicionantes del gasto militar directo en la Edad Media. El reino de Valencia y la Guerra de los Dos Pedros como caso de estudio', *Espacio, tiempo y forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval* 36 (2023): 1141–68; SANAHUJA FERRER, 'Un reino asediado', 464–66.
[49] AMV, MC, A-13, m. 3, f. 4-6r (05/06/1358).

In doing so, the city council used the subsidy policy as a means of expanding its fiscal capacity. By centralising all grain sales within the granary and subjecting them to taxation, they ensured a steady flow of revenue under the guise of maintaining food supply. Although reliable data from this initial period is lacking, it is reasonable to assume that the tax revenue collected from wheat purchases far exceeded the actual cost of the subsidies.

Final Remarks

In conclusion, this paper has examined the intricate interplay between the fiscal and provisioning components of a system that would persist in Valencia for more than four centuries. The contradictions discussed above stem from the inherent tension between the two core elements of this model: indirect taxation and a food supply policy nominally aimed at keeping prices low to ensure social stability. These tensions could be interpreted as the result of exceptional wartime circumstances and the inexperience of the jurors and city council in managing such a complex framework.

However, when viewed from a different perspective, these contradictions appear less accidental. Although initially seeking to serve common good as a measure of solidarity, the food supply system ended up being repurposed to expand the city's fiscal capacity. Faced with growing debt and resistance to direct taxation, the city council adopted an alternative strategy: taxing essential goods, which seemed less harmful to the Valencian population.[50] This approach made the entire population taxable while presenting the system as a measure to protect the common good and ensure affordable food.

In this light, relevant measures such as the subsidy policy functioned not only as an emergency provisioning measure, but also as a mechanism to legitimise and secure indirect taxation. Over time, this framework would evolve, and both the supply policy and the indirect tax regime would become profitable instruments of financial control and market regulation for Valencia's ruling oligarchy.[51]

[50] GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'La génesis de la fiscalidad', 157.
[51] CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, 'Las sociedades arrendatarias'; NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'Finanzas municipales y patriciado urbano'; CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, CRUSELLES GÓMEZ, and NARBONA VIZCAÍNO, 'El sistema de abastecimiento frumentario de la ciudad de Valencia en el siglo XV'; GARCÍA MARSILLA, 'Las empresas del fisco'.

Converting Enslaved Muslims in Early Modern Naples: Charity, Identity, and Solidarity in the Seventeenth Century

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Introduction

In a printed conversion narrative from 1648, a Neapolitan Jesuit sought to convert a 'Moorish slave', an act which, for early modern Christians, fell under the rubric of charity.[1] Resisting this transformation, the enslaved man repeatedly declared, 'I was born a Turk and as I was born, so I want to die'.[2] The author declared the 'perfidious Muslim' *ostinato* or obstinate, a trope which encapsulated a range of Christian stereotypes such as that Muslim religious identity was intransigent and Muslim solidarity impenetrable.[3] Still, between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, 'Moorish' and 'Turkish' slaves—individuals hailing primarily from the Ottoman 'East' North Africa, or Sub-Saharan Africa and who often spoke Turkish and/or Arabic—were the prime conversionary targets for Neapolitan clerics such as Jesuits and

[1] Christians considered converting Muslims as charity—an act of care—because it was seen to save the convert's soul from eternal damnation. Early modern understandings of charity, broader than today, included economic, moral, and religious conceptions as well as ideals of social order. MIRI RUBIN, 'The Idea of Charity Between the Twelfth and Fifteenth Century', in MIRI RUBIN, *Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 54–89.

[2] CARLO BOVIO, *Esempi e miracoli della ss. Vergine madre di Dio Maria detti nella Chiesa del Giesù in Roma*, 5 vols, vol. 4 (Venice: Antonio Bortoli, 1704), 31. This man lived in the home of the heirs of Ottavio d'Aragona Taglivia (1565–1623) a successful naval commander for the Viceroy of Naples and Sicily. As he sleeps in the carriage house, he likely worked as a driver, page, or horse-trainer. Describing the same conversion at an earlier date, the Spanish Jesuit Nieremberg called this man 'confirmed in his hardness and obduracy' and 'born obstinate and incompetent'. Other examples can be adduced. A hospitalised Muslim man whom Theatine Camillo de Lello (1550–1614) sought to baptise around 1596 repeated that 'he was born a Turk, and that as a Turk he wanted to die'. A Palermo account printed in 1676 described a 'Turk' 'obstinate in not wanting to become a Christian'. SANZIO CICATELLI, *Vita del P. San Camillo de Lellis* (Naples: Secondino Roncagliolo, 1627), 112; JUAN EUSEBIO NIEREMBERG, *Lettere spirituali del padre Eusebio Nieremberg della Compagnia di Giesù* (Rome: Niccolò Pezzana, 1669), 349; SILVESTRO TORNAMIRA, *La Compagnia di Giesu* (Palermo: Carlo Adamo, 1676), 333. This essay considers enslaved men. For Jesuit conversions of enslaved women, see e.g., EMANUELE COLOMBO, 'Enslaved Muslims on the Early Modern Italian Peninsula: Encounters, Ransoms, and Conversions', *Church History and Religious Culture* 104, no. 3–4 (2024): 422–43. Jews too also characterised as resistant to conversion, as when the Spanish Jesuit Antonio de Guevara imagined God surveying the Jews of Naples 'in their obstinacy […]': ANTONIO DE GUEVARA, *Lettere dell'illvstre S. Don Antonio Di Gvevara, Vescovo di Mondognetto*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (Venice: Gabriel Giolito de'Ferrari, 1560), 240.

[3] Both Muslims and Jews were characterised as so impossible to convert that 'washing a blackamoor white', an emblem of impossibility, was sometimes used to describe efforts to convert them. ALCIATO ALCIATI, *Emblemata Andreae Alciati iurisconsulti clarissimi* (Lyon: Guillaume de Roville, 1548), f. 57r; THOMAS CALVERT, *The Blessed Jew of Marocco: Or, A Blackmoor Made White. Being a Demonstration of the True Messias out of the Law and Prophets, by Rabbi Samuel, a Jew Turned Christian* (London: Broad, 1648).

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Theatines.[4]

Scholars have investigated diverse facets of clerical conversion efforts in Naples and elsewhere in Italy.[5] Rather overlooked, however, is the self-reinforcing network of printed narratives which furnished clerics with models and tactics. Understanding that stories of successful conversion inspired further conversions, these short narratives, in part because they were easily remembered, often circulated for many decades. Beginning to appear with greater frequency around the 1630s, they accompanied printed promotional materials such as Jesuit annual newsletters and appeared in sermon collections, clerical *Lives*, and menologies. Probably also conveyed in private conversations, the accounts were recycled well into the eighteenth century.[6] Printed conversion narratives advanced purposes apologetic, laudatory, and didactic. While their audience was in part the enslaved, these narratives were also designed to provide inspiration and guidance to clerics. This article turns to this less-examined vein of evidence to consider conversion strategies and tactics as these intersected with aspects of charity, identity, and solidarity.[7]

Printed conversion narratives centred at Naples reveal Jesuits, Theatines, and other clerics devoting much attention to converting enslaved Muslims. While clerics were not to use force in conversion, such narratives nevertheless advised clerics to orchestrate forms of 'soft' force to ensure conversions by encountering individuals in

[4] Enslaved Muslims in Naples ranged from the olive-complected to Sub-Saharan African. Jesuits made no distinctions in complexion or ethnicity among Muslims, instead approaching identity as both rooted in religion and monolithic. On black Africans in Naples, see GIULIANA BOCCADAMO, '"Mori Negri" a Napoli Tra Cinque e Seicento', in *Il chiaro e lo scuro: gli Africani nell'Europa del Rinascimento tra realtà e rappresentazione*, ed. GIANFRANCO SALVATORE (Lecce: Argo, 2021), 143–58.

[5] Converting 'Turks' and 'Moors' at Naples should not be conceived in overly local terms, for while Naples possessed local particularities, as the narratives analysed herein show, conversion was intimately embedded in a much broader Mediterranean: a series of networked port spaces such as Ragusa, Cagliari, Florence, Madrid, Genoa, Tripoli, Puglia, Dolcigno, and countless others. EMANUELE COLOMBO and PAUL SHORE, *Jesuits and Islam in Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2023); EMANUELE COLOMBO, "Infidels' at Home: Jesuits and Muslim Slaves in Seventeenth-Century Naples and Spain', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 1, no. 2 (2014): 192–211; PETER MAZUR, 'A Mediterranean Port in the Confessional Age: Religious Minorities in Early Modern Naples', in *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, ed. TOMMASO ASTARITA (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 215–34; PETER MAZUR, ' "Combating 'Mohammedan Indecency": The Baptism of Muslim Slaves in Spanish Naples, 1563-1667', *Journal of Early Modern History* 13, no. 1 (2009): 25–48; JENNIFER SELWYN, *A Paradise Inhabited by Devils: The Jesuits' Civilizing Mission in Early Modern Naples* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); LANCE LAZAR, 'Negotiating Conversions: Catechumens and the Family in Early Modern Italy', in *Piety and Family in Early Modern Europe*, eds BENJAMIN KAPLAN and MARC FORSTER (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 152–77; GENNARO NARDI. *Opere per la conversione degli schiavi a Napoli* (Naples: Ufficio catechistico diocesano, 1967).

[6] A Jesuit circular from 1592 reported a 'good harvest of the converts of Naples' and seven 'Turks' newly 'gathered to the Christian religion'. ANONYMOUS, *Annuae litterae Societatis Iesu anni 1592* (Florence: Philippum Iunctam, 1600); LUKE CLOSSEY, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[7] An important exception to this claim consists of CHIARA PETROLINI, SABINA PAVONE, and VINCENZO LAVENIA, *Sacre metamorfosi: racconti di conversione tra Roma e il mondo in età moderna* (Rome: Viella, 2022) and work by Pavone. Examining slave conversion narratives from Naples, Pavone highlighted strategies of fearmongering, spectacularity, images and visions, and tropes of whitening, odor, and obtaining sight. SABINA PAVONE, 'Conversion Narratives of Slaves in Naples in the Early Modern Period: Some Case Studies', 15th European Social Science History Conference, Leiden University, 26–29 March 2025 (unpublished).

restricted settings. Private and enclosed, hospitals and *palazzi* allowed clerics to capitalise upon the vulnerability of isolated and ill individuals. As a subspecies of charity, conversion manipulated enslaved identities and experiences of solidarity. Meanwhile, charitable institutions such as hospitals manufactured still other alterations in socioreligious identity with varying degrees of subtlety. Working to 'accommodate' Islamic tropes such as visions of the hereafter and dreams, printed narratives also counseled clerics to focus upon praxis over doctrine and to look to incremental approaches. Clerics paid special attention to the social and religious identity of Muslim slaves and new converts, especially their status as poor and their relative social isolation.[8] Most slaves, bereft of community and kin, earnestly longed for kin and family. Speaking to such desires, printed narratives supplied alternative models of maternity and paternity. Printed conversion narratives altered clerical as well as convert identities, pushing clerics to veil polemics against Islam, emphasise affect, and offer gentler forms of persuasion in what one might term a 'feminisation' or 'domestication' of conversion.[9] Some clerics developed surprisingly pragmatic approaches to retaining converts, which ranged from helping converts find employment to creating identity documents to help converts visit their native countries. Such practical forms of solidarity, suggested these narratives, bolstered convert identities as Christian and embedded them more firmly in Christian community. In spite of repeated assertions of Muslim 'obstinacy', printed seventeenth-century conversion narratives present Muslim slaves' religious identity as eminently fluid and manipulable, with Christians showing themselves more intransigent and militant when it came to matters of religious identity. Such narratives also reveal that clerics approached conversion at least in part as a matter of emotional connection. By treating individuals sympathetically, appealing to key aspects of a would-be convert's identity, and speaking to deep needs for solidarity, clerics could successfully persuade Muslims to embrace a new Christian identity.

Background: Enslaved Muslims in Naples; Conversion, Identity, and Charity

Christians enslaved Muslims in the Mediterranean from at least the tenth century, and Naples was home to enslaved Muslims long before the mid-sixteenth.[10] However,

[8] Poverty, or being impecunious, was a reality of early modern life. 'The poor' might refer to destitute men or women, the ill or disabled, foundlings, the elderly, vagrants, foreigners, pilgrims, the insane, or the wounded. In general, 'the poor' were those who suffered diverse forms of calamity yet lacked the social support to address difficulty. Slaves almost always fell into this category. ANNE GOTMAN, *Le sens de l'hospitalité. Essai sur les fondements sociaux de l'accueil de l'autre* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001).

[9] As Miller noted, Jesuits framed their conversion efforts at Naples as a kind of overseas alter-mission—'another Indies'—as a way of inciting zeal. RACHEL MILLER, 'Converting 'the Indies' of Naples in Luca Giordano's *St. Francis Xavier Baptizing Indians* Altarpiece', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 6, no. 2 (2019): 249–69.

[10] CHARLES VERLINDEN, *L'esclavage dans l'Europe médiévale* (Bruges: De Tempel, 1955). In 1390, Raimondello Orsini, prince of Taranto, sent to King Louis gifts of a camel, three coursers, a 'fully stocked Silver Table', two 'Mammon Cats' who 'almost spoke', a Turk, and a 'Black Slave'. ANONYMOUS, *Giornale dell'Istorie del Regno Di Napoli […] dall'anno 1266 fino al 1478* (Naples: Giovanni Gravier, 1770), 45.

Mediterranean naval conflict amplified after 1550 as Christian powers built fleets to rival the Ottoman empire's large navy. As Christians conducted raids in North Africa, purchased slaves there, and poached crews and rowers from Ottoman ships, Southern Italy saw a considerable increase in resident enslaved Muslims. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, male Muslim slaves arrived in larger numbers and became an essential part of Naples' military establishment, most serving as galley rowers. Some worked on constructing fortresses or building galleys in the Arsenal while others served in domestic homes. By the first decade of the seventeenth century, an estimated ten thousand Muslim slaves resided in Naples, a population roughly double that of other cities in Italy.[11] Between 1583 and 1664, Neapolitan Jesuits baptised 2,365 enslaved people there.[12]

Religious and civic groups issued multiple forms of charity to enslaved Muslims in early modern Naples, including food, religious instruction, and sometimes medical care.[13] To some enslaved Muslims or new converts, such offerings may have made a crucial difference in survival. Yet charity often had strings attached. Religious groups might offer food and medical care with no further obligations to attract non-Christians into their orbit, but, over time, accepting charitable offerings might imply a *quid pro quo*; perhaps a tacit assent to Christian efforts to indoctrinate. Arriving in Naples in 1552, Jesuits were converting 'Moorish' and 'Turkish' slaves by the end of the 1580s.[14] A new clerical turn to converting Muslim slaves in Naples coincided with the large influx of enslaved Muslims there after the Christian victory at Lepanto (1571) and state attempts to track and regulate this new religious identity, for Naples immediately founded a registry to record slave names and 'signs of their homelands'.[15] As such, conversion was always intimately tied to bureaucratic efforts to surveil and affix civil and religious identities.[16] Jesuits and Theatines were most active in conversionary

[11] COLOMBO, 'Infidels'.

[12] More broadly, Bono estimated that 1500–1800, Central and Western Europe hosted ca. 2.5m Muslims. SALVATORE BONO. *Schiavi musulmani nell'Italia moderna: galeotti, vu' cumpra', domestici* (Naples: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1999), 73–5.

[13] Jesuits served as conduits for private alms, persuading 'many Lords' to give alms to slaves. FRANCESCO SCHINOSI, *Istoria della compagnia di Giesu, appartenente al regno di Napoli*, 4 vols, vol. 3 (Naples: Vincenzo Mazzola, 1756), 571.

[14] COLOMBO, 'Infidels', 9. Conversion efforts were also reactions to a perception of increased numbers of Christians embracing converting to Islam in Islamic lands. On this, see TIJANA KRSTIĆ, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2020).

[15] At the decisive naval battle of Lepanto, Christians bested Muslims. Six thousand Muslims were captured and divided according to how many galleys nations had contributed to the effort. The Spanish king received 1,926 slaves. PEDRO SAINZ DE BARANDA, *Coleccion de documentos ineditos para la historia de Espana*, 22 vols, vol. 7 (Madrid: Viuda de Calero, 1845), 80; PLACIDO TROYLI, *Istoria generale del Reame di Napoli*, 5 vols, vol. 5 t. 2 (Naples: n.a., 1753), 285.

[16] The 1571 law also noted that 'many Turks and Moors […] had been made free' in Naples and that the state wished 'to know who these are and how many'. Therefore all manumitted Muslims were to appear in the Royal Chancellery to register and produce proof of manumission. Manumitted 'Turks and Moors' were arguably never fully free, for they were required to carry written proof of freedom at all times, under penalty of galley slavery for noncompliance. ALESSIO DE SARIIS, *Codice delle leggi del regno di Napoli*, 12 vols, vol. 1, *Della ragion ecclesiastica, e sue pertinenze* (Naples: Vincenzo Orsini, 1792), 3–5. Naples also passed laws regulating interactions between baptised and unbaptised Muslims in 1555 and 1581.

efforts. The Theatine Paolo Burali d'Arezzo (d. 1578), archbishop of Naples and later cardinal, is sometimes credited as the first to make large-scale efforts toward converting the 'large number' of 'infidel slaves' at Naples, for in 1577, he founded a lay confraternity, a group of 'pious and learned' people to educate and catechise slaves 'with charity and zeal'.[17]

Mediterranean religious identities were distinctly relational: defined by what they were not. Abrahamic religions shared so many resemblances that each, but Christianity above others, insisted upon exclusivity.[18] Conversion frequently resulted in paradox. For example, while conversion to Christianity could be envisioned as a primarily or purely spiritual transformation with no effects on social or civil status—for clerics had reiterated for centuries that conversion did not result in manumission for slaves—it was in practice tightly bound to social identities, which were in turn comprised of discursive formulations, behaviours, mental universes, practices, and cultural patterns. Then, while the goal of Christian conversion—and therefore by extension shared by Neapolitan clerics—was homogeneity, or Christianity for all, in practice, Christians seemed to view converted Muslims as always poised to 'backslide' into their natal religious identity. As a result of this view and other exclusionary policies, Muslim converts rarely saw full acceptance or integration into early modern Christian society, causing conversionary ideals to chafe against outcomes. Most clerics and most Muslim slaves, however, probably saw conversion to some extent as a process through which one identity, that of 'Moorishness' or 'Turkishness', was wholly or partially eliminated and replaced by Christianity, a new set of rules, beliefs, and linguistic practices. Both Muslims and clerics probably also saw conversion as inherently related in one way or another to Muslim solidarity. Since Neapolitan and church law strictly segregated converts from former Muslim coreligionists, conversion was implicitly seen as automatically riving any sense of a unified Muslim community, with the two resulting identities—Muslim and convert—requiring careful and constant separation.

Certain ground rules governed conversion. Printed conversion narratives regularly featured converts asking—sometimes begging—for baptism, a detail meant to underscore to clerics and other readers the understanding that force was prohibited in conversion. The requirement of voluntarism in conversion had been articulated in

Conversion efforts were therefore always deeply entangled with secular and municipal initiatives, a point which cannot be fully explored herein.

[17] Scipione Mormile, a 'Knight', presumably from the military crusading order of Saint John of Jerusalem, was appointed this organisation's head. The group first met at the Church of San Arcangelo, built in 1561 by citizens in divine propitiation for being spared from Ottoman attack, then relocated to the Archbishop's Palace. GIOVANNI BONIFACIO BAGATTA, *Vita del Ven. Servo di Dio Paolo Burali d'Arezzo* (Verona: Giovanni Berno, 1698), 252.

[18] There were nevertheless important differences between the three so-called Religions of the Book. Particularly applicable in this context is Mark Cohen and Mercedes García-Arenal's arguments for Islam's greater tolerance of religious minorities; its allowance of more fluidity in religious identity; and its provision of more possibilities for social mobility for enslaved people than in Christianity. MARK COHEN, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); MERCEDES GARCÍA-ARENAL and GERARD ALBERT WIEGERS, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

the thirteenth century when Thomas Aquinas insisted that Christianity was valid only if freely chosen.[19] However, at Naples in 1290–93 and Spain in 1391, the principle of *favor fidei*, which conceived of conversion as so irredeemably good that it needed to be induced by any means necessary, led to waves of mass, forced baptisms.[20] Since in Iberia, Christian doubts as to the sincerity of converts after these forced baptisms led to widespread social disorder, there was a firmer and more widespread consensus among sixteenth-century clerics Europe-wide that conversions should take place voluntarily and not by force.[21]

Muslim Solidarity and Isolating Converts in Homes and Hospitals

In 1571, Naples officially prohibited all contact between 'Moors and Turks' on the one hand and formerly Muslim men who had recently accepted Christianity on the other. Converts and former coreligionists could neither cohabit, converse, trade, eat, or drink together.[22] The law explained that it aimed to prevent 'the Moors and Turks who are not Christians' from 'pervert[ing] those who have already come to the Holy Catholic Faith so that they return to their Mohammedan sect', thus revealing that even innocuous forms of sociability with former coreligionists were seen as destabilising conversion.[23] As with claims of Muslim 'obstinacy', the 1571 law points to the Christian sense that solidarity, or at any rate influence between Muslims and new converts persisted even after conversion. Printed conversion narratives echoed perceptions of an uninterruptable Muslim solidarity by depicting the profound influence which Muslim companions had on new or potential Christians. As one story recounted, a friend of a potential convert-slave 'whispered in his ear' all day to 'remain firm' and not abandon 'their holy and great Prophet Mohammed', and this man was 'more impressed by a single word that his Moorish companion said than by hundreds and

[19] JENNIFER WEED, 'Aquinas on the Forced Conversion of Jews: Belief, Will, and Toleration', in *Jews in Medieval Christendom: Slay Them Not*, eds KRISTINE UTTERBACK and MERRALL PRICE (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 129–46.

[20] JOSHUA STARR, 'The Mass Conversion of Jews in Southern Italy (1290-1293)', *Speculum* 21, no. 2 (1946): 203–11; on forced conversions, see TAMAR HERZIG, 'The Coerced Conversion of Convicted Jewish Criminals in Fifteenth-Century Italy', in *Forced Conversion in Christianity, Judaism and Islam*, eds MONICA JUNEJA, KIM SIEBENHÜNER, and KEITH P. LURIA (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 266–89; YONATAN GLAZER-EYTAN, 'Incriminating the Judaizer: Inquisitors, Intentionality, and the Problem of Religious Ambiguity after Forced Conversion', in *Forced Conversion,* 235–65; KEITH LURIA, 'Conversion and Coercion: Personal Conscience and Political Conformity in Early Modern France', *The Medieval History Journal* 12, no. 2 (2009): 221–47.

[21] On post-conversion suspicion, see MARINA CAFFIERO, 'Il sospetto di apostasia. Schiavi turchi e conversioni di fronte al Sant'Uffizio romano', in *Per Rita Tolomeo: scritti di amici sulla Dalmazia e l'Europa centro-orientale*, eds ESTER CAPUZZO, BRUNO CREVATO-SELVAGGI, and FRANCESCO GUIDA (Venice: La Musa Italia, 2014), 289–304.

[22] The penalty was five years' galley service and life service if one repeated this infraction. DE SARIIS, 3–5.This prohibition had earlier been articulated in canon law, though was not always enforced.

[23] The 1571 law cited the giving of 'bad examples', underscoring how both Christianity and Islam emphasised living exemplars. This law also banned Muslim ridicule of converts. If any 'Moor or Turk' dared to mock or 'insult with words or deeds baptised Moors or Turks', they could be forced into lifetime galley service. It therefore seems clear that converts did not garner automatic or necessarily any respect from former coreligionists, with Christians deeply concerned that converts were susceptible to their influence. By suggesting that mere taunts could destabilise conversion, the law presented conversion as fragile, unstable, and eminently reversible. DE SARIIS, 3–5.

thousands [of words]' said to him by Jesuits.[24]

While there is no way to gauge levels of solidarity among enslaved early modern Muslims in Naples with any precision, historians have identified broad sources of solidarity across the Islamic world more generally. As Janet Abu-Lughod first showed, Islam enjoyed rapid success across a vast expanse by providing an identity that transcended language and region, and a system of shared morality and trade ethics.[25] Across a vast and multilinguistic empire, even though one might not know the personal history of a fellow Muslim or speak their language, sharing an Islamic religious identity nevertheless furnished a sense of recognition, trust, and solidarity. Ritual, too, bolstered solidarity among Muslims across linguistic and political divides; in particular the shared experience of daily prayer. The role of both slave and émigré would also have engendered fraternity and solidarity. Galley service and rowing involved intense collective discipline and collaboration, while being a slave and foreigner in Naples likely created feelings of comradeship generated by similar trials and experiences. Like immigrants and slaves everywhere, enslaved and converted Muslims in Naples, uprooted and stripped of family and community ties, responded by recrafting new bonds, usually centred around sociability and worship. Such communal bonds helped eliminate feelings of isolation and precarity, and in turn increased feelings of security, well-being, and group belonging.

It is no accident that printed conversion narratives featured no conversions at Naples' Arsenal, where large concentrations of Muslim slaves laboured; nor any conversions occurring after major sermons. Instead, printed narratives depict enslaved Muslims as converting primarily in contained spaces: private rooms, domestic homes, a hospital, a prison cell, and galleys—this latter when the Theatine Camillo De Lellis found 'three sick people among those slaves who were Turks' on the galleys of Messina and exhorted them 'with such efficacy that he induced them to detest Mohammedanism and to ask for Holy Baptism'.[26] This focus on enclosed settings and captive audiences reflects known conversionary tactics of Jesuits and other Neapolitan clerics, as when Girolamo d'Alessandro began to 'interfere in the halls of the noble palaces well supplied with slaves destined to perform the office of cabin boys' and the Jesuit Father Girolamo targeted Muslims 'who lived permanently in Naples in the service of their Masters'.[27] An attention to converting enslaved Muslims in private

[24] NIEREMBERG, *Lettere spirituali*, 349–51. These writings circulated during Nieremberg's lifetime (1595–1658) and were published posthumously in 1669.

[25] Abu-Lughod argued that Islam transcended national and linguistic identities to bind a vast empire. JANET ABU-LUGHOD, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[26] CICATELLI, *Vita del P.Camillo de Lellis*, 171.

[27] COLOMBO, 'Infidels', 10; ANTONIO BARONE, *Della vita del Padre Pierantonio Spinelli della Compagnia di Giesù* (Naples: s.n., 1707); SCHINOSI, *Istoria*, 41–2. Lay congregants too went 'looking for [slaves] for the houses of Padroni' and 'entered palaces' to 'preach Christ to Mohammedan souls'. If one considers that historically, only Inquisitors were allowed to enter private homes, entry into private *palazzi* appears unprecedentedly intrusive and novel. Notably, elite slaveowners were opposed to these conversion efforts and required insistent persuasion. ANTONIO MANFREDI, *L'unico infante massimo, il Verbo in carne, rappresentato in più spettacoli* (Naples: Giacomo Raillard, 1695), 457.

spaces might be supposed to link to a conception of conversion as a deeply individual decision. However the attempt to convert Muslims in isolated venues seems more likely yoked to the persistent perception, as adumbrated above, of an impenetrable Muslim solidarity.[28] That is, printed conversion narratives presumably operated on the assumption that only bracketing potential individual converts off from former coreligionists might render them susceptible to clerical overtures. Clerics therefore tried to isolate converts from Muslims and former coreligionists, and enclosed facilities ensured greater control over catechumens and kept them securely isolated from untoward influences.[29]

Neapolitan clerics applied similar strategies in seeking conversions in hospital settings. In the early modern period, both charity and hospitality institutionalised ideals of assisting individuals in crisis. These forms of assistance were seen as both a religious and civil duty: an obligation to protect and nurture individuals who lacked primary groups able to care for them.[30] While printed conversion narratives reveal little about 'real' motivations for conversion; scholars have shown that, as with enslaved Christians on Muslim shores, some Muslims converted not for reasons of religious conviction but rather pragmatic expediency. As was well known at the time, conversion could lead to significant life improvements for a Muslim slave: better food, social mobility, healthcare eligibility, and sometimes even citizenship.

In their focus upon isolating potential converts, printed conversion narratives moved rather beyond this acknowledgement by revealing the clerical perception that deeply-held identities might be manipulated when enslavement and poverty led to circumstances of disempowerment, isolation, illness, and vulnerability, and that converts were most likely to relinquish natal religious identity at times of crisis or necessity. As printed conversion narratives suggested, clerics should target Muslims in settings of vulnerability, which often meant charitable settings such as hospitals. And

[28] Along with anxieties about Muslim solidarity, lay Christians and clerics alike voiced concerns that religious identities could not be recognised 'from the outside'. Since 'Moors and Turks' resembled Christians, Muslims were legally mandated to wear an identifying ponytail (the *cerro*) to visibly signal their religious and status difference from Christians. Jews were to wear a sash 'of yellow cloth four fingers wide'. DE SARIIS, *Codice delle leggi* (22 October 1571), 3–4. Then, while Christians were uneasy when religious others 'blended in', they were also alarmed at the 'overexpression' of Islamic identity, as when Spain outlawed speaking in Arabic and observing Muslim holidays.

[29] Residential facilities to house potential catechumens operated 1637–49. Paolo Israel would found an institute to house slaves before conversion in the 1720s. GIULIANA BOCCADAMO, *Napoli e l'Islam: storie di musulmani, schiavi e rinnegati in età moderna* (Naples: M. D. Auria, 2010), 10, 235, 239; PETER MAZUR, 'A Mediterranean Port in the Confessional Age: Religious Minorities in Early Modern Naples', in *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, ed. ASTARITA, 215–34 (224).

[30] Anciently, 'hospitality' meant caring for barbarian, strangers, or foreigners who lacked a primary reference group, and this notion were absorbed into Christianity. Mediterranean Catholics therefore saw welcome and the offer of a safe place to stay to the distressed as a moral obligation. While the outlines of *hospitalitas* and *caritas* which undergirded Christian hospitals also appeared in the corporal works of mercy—'feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome in the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, and bury the dead' (Matthew 25:35–46)—these principles also animated a wide range of other ethical, moral, and cultural discourses and practices, on which, see JULIAN PITT-RIVERS, *From Hospitality to Grace: A Julian Pitt-Rivers Omnibus*, eds GIOVANNI DA COL and ANDREW SHRYOCK (Chicago: HAU Books, 2017).

as such narratives showed, the clerical healing of physical pain could also engender conversion. After one cleric heals an ailing Muslim's arm with three signs of the cross, the man is so filled with love for his benefactor that he cannot 'detach himself from his side', which then 'greatly facilitated his conversion'.[31] At this time, physical healing was seen as materialising spiritual principles, while 'health' frequently appeared in ambiguously spiritual and physical terms, as when the Madonna of San Carmine advises a 'Turkish Moor' to convert because it is 'fitting for your health'.[32]

A number of printed conversion narratives—several 'Nativity' accounts, a 'Moor' from Cagliari, and a conversion at Naples' Hospital of the 'Nuntiata' (Annunziata)—featured baptisms *in extremis* or just before death, with slaves either falling ill immediately upon requesting baptism, or requesting baptism when their health declines, as with the man at the Annunziata.[33] Though this man resisted conversion long and fiercely, when his health grew 'hopeless', he 'suddenly […] asked for baptism'.[34] An accompanying emphasis on the quick and miraculous learning of catechisms, described in greater detail below, reminded clerics and converts that people often contracted illness and died quickly but that the catechisms requisite for conversion could be effected with consummate rapidity. Mentions of rapid conversions *in extremis* were designed to convey a sense of the urgency of conversion to converts and clerics. In the 'Nunziata' account, the water on the slave's forehead had scarcely dried when, 'rejoicing, and invoking the Most Holy Name of Jesus and Mary, which who before he could not hear named', the man passed from this life.[35]

Deathbeds were long a charged and existentially transformative site for Christians, with angels and demons seen as battling for individual souls as people prepared to expire. Hospitals brought this intimate domestic site of spiritual decision—the sickbed—into a semi-public realm, allowing clerics to update the terms of the medieval battle. That is, as suggested by the De Lellis account, the battle for souls was at times transposed to a new conflict, that between Christianity and Islam. As De Lellis' efforts at Naples' Annunziata hospital show, clerics were not at all above taking advantage of the physical and mental weakness, isolation, and limited mobility brought about by hospital stays to urge conversion upon those relegated to hospital beds. Rather than considering attempts to convert the ailing a species of entrapment,

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[31] LONGARO ODDI, *Vita del venerabil servo di Dio P. Francesco di Girolamo* (Rome: Mainardi, 1761), 46. Colombo and Mazur have noted that the upstanding behaviour of Christian clerics—behaviour implied by the 'Papasso' reference—was equally important in spurring Muslim conversions.
[32] CAPUTO, Il Monte carmelo, 120.
[33] By the sixteenth century, along with S. Eligio and S. Nicolo al Molo, the Casa Santa dell'Annunziata had become one of Naples' three main hospitals. Founded by a lay confraternity under royal auspices in 1318, after diverse transformations and absorbing many smaller hospitals, the hospital cared for the sick, housed foundlings, and distributed alms and dowries. GIOVANNI VITOLO, 'L'ospedale di S. Eligio e la Piazza del Mercato', in *Napoli angioino-aragonese. Confraternite, ospedali, dinamiche politicosociali*, eds GIOVANNI VITOLO and ROSALBA DI MEGLIO (Salerno: Carlone, 2003), 39–146 (96).
[34] LIBORIO SINISCALCHI, *Iddio del cuore Gesù Bambino. Discorsi per la Novena* (Venice: Lorenzo Baseggio, 1754), vol. 2, 259–60. Galley service involved extreme epidemiological risk since diseases frequently circulated in naval and port settings.
[35] CICATELLI, *Vita del P. Camillo de Lellis*, 112.

force, or harassment, such endeavours were widely considered praiseworthy, with the conversion of Muslims at death's door accounted a victory.

The Annunziata story also showed how the Muslim acceptance of charity could require alteration in social and religious identities, for the episode explains that the ailing 'Turk' concealed his religious identity to obtain hospital admittance, then altered his identity at the hospital, confessing and receiving Christian communion in order to receive care. Clearly, religious and not medical criteria dictated hospital admission, while changes in religious identity were required for charitable care. The De Lellis narrative thus illuminates some of the broad paradoxes attending early modern hospitals and Christian charity. Though wedded to ideals of egalitarianism, inclusion, and universalism in theory, in practice, Christian hospitals were carefully segregated, allocating space and care according to religious identity. As against universality and inclusion, charity was rather more carefully stratified; qualified by the terms of individual and group identity.

The De Lellis anecdote further indexed other ways in which, while providing care and protection to the vulnerable, hospitals extended control to segregate, order, shape, and map social identities, sorting social and religious identities not only through their policies and politics of admission but by physically bracketing off the potentially dangerous or contagious.[36] That is, for De Lellis to seek to effect conversions at the Annunziata was of special significance, for this hospital stood outside of Naples' city walls in the famously decrepit and crime-ridden area of *Malpasso*. This exterior location was intentionally selected, and reflected civic and religious efforts to externalise disease and moral undesirables.[37] While concretising tensions between ideals of inclusion and fear of uncleanliness both moral and physical, charity, hospitals, and conversion freely mixed conceptions of the spiritual and the physical in relation to illness and wellness, and such conceptions had concrete effects in the mapping of urban and civic space.[38]

Conversionary Strategies: Accommodation

Neapolitan religious orders skillfully orchestrated spatial strategies of isolation to reconfigure convert identities and belonging in community. Jesuits especially have also

[36] As Foucault observed, Renaissance hospitals combined care, spiritual transformation, and exclusion. MICHEL FOUCAULT. 'Madness only exists in society', in *Foucault Live (Interviews, 1966–84)*, ed. SYLVÈRE LOTRINGER (New York: Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series, 1996), 7–9; JOSEP BARCELÓ PRATS, 'The Birth of the General Hospital: Background and Development of a New Physical and Symbolic Space of Care in the Late Medieval City', in *The Medieval and Early Modern Hospital: A Physical and Symbolic Space*, eds ANTONI CONEJO DA PENA and POL BRIDGEWATER MATEU (Rome: Viella. 2023), 97–112.

[37] This exteriorising dynamic also governed brothels and *lazzaretti,* placing them far from the city's centre.

[38] Early modern hospitals were very different from today's physical spaces of care, and were arguably more religious than medical. In Naples, *diakonia*, the medieval charitable institutions which cared for the poor, were church appendages. Charity always had a religious function and was understood as applying to spiritual as well as physical needs. Though hospitals were usually founded and governed by secular figures and groups, they also harboured relics and kept priests present. For the evolution of Naples' urban hosptial network into an urban welfare system over time, see SALVATORE MARINO, 'The Urban Impact of Hospitals in Medieval Naples', in *The Medieval and Early Modern Hospital*, eds CONEJO DA PENA and BRIDGEWATER MATEU,165–90.

been credited with a wide range of other conversionary strategies, including a 'top-down' approach which targeted elites or royals on the theory that subsequent conversions would ripple throughout the social hierarchy. Jesuits have also been credited with manipulating diverse forms of visual and theatrical spectacle toward conversionary ends.[39] Jesuits infamously employed 'accommodation', or adopting facets of other cultures, to facilitate Christianity's embrace.[40] With accommodation, clerics used elements of a 'target' religion to make Christianity appear more appealing or familiar. As printed conversion narratives show, Neapolitan clerics frequently employed tactics of accommodation, using Islamic symbols and ideas to gain the ear and trust of enslaved Muslims.

Thus several printed conversion narratives foregrounded symbols and ideas from Islamic texts, as when one Muslim from Lecce dreams of 'a ladder that extended from the ground to Heaven'.[41] He cannot ascend this ladder 'because [he is] not baptised'. Ladders and stairways featured in several important Suras, as when Muhammad finds a ladder (*ma'arij*) of gold and ascends it to the upper skies. The Sura of the Ascension (*Sura Al-Ma'arij*, Ch. 70) described angels and spirits ascending to God, and Suras 52:38 and 6:35 referred to a ladder (*sullam*) or stairway (*ma'arij*) as a spiritual means by which humans might ascend to heaven. Another printed conversion narrative from Naples employed well-known Islamic eschatological and soteriological concepts by describing a convert's joy and happiness as so great after choosing Christianity that 'it seemed to him that he was in Paradise'.[42] The reference appealed to Muslim sensibilities and identities by virtue of its resonances with Islam, while suggesting that clerics might profitably substitute Paradise for heaven without overmuch doctrinal distortion, since both otherworldly sites offered believers divinely

[39] Jesuit spectacularity extended into many realms, including affective piety—the sighs, tears, and 'tears of jubilation' shed by clerics while baptising converts, but also the commissioning of artwork and building impressive architectural edifices; and also staging plays and grand public processions. For example Naples' Jesuit Father Girolamo used spectacularity to great effect. In addition to parading white-robed neophytes 'around the most populated streets of [Naples]', this cleric staged spectacular dockside religious processions 'for many years' for the thirty Spanish Galleys docked at Naples during the war of Messina (1647 and 1674–8), and for the sick at the *darsena* (dock) hospital. In this procession, convicts released from their chains sang Litanies of the Blessed Virgin and processed two by two, carrying lit torches and an effigy of Saint Francis to the Church of Santa Maria del Rimedio. Girolamo also erected extravagant shipboard altars to influence rowers. The altar between the rowers' benches displayed an image of the Virgin, while that on the stern featured 'the Holy Protector'. Both altars 'were crowned with a great many lights, and a large crucifix was placed in view on two cushions'. At the end of his Lenten sermon cycle, Girolamo delivered a sermon from a *tartana* (boat) in the harbor and issued a papal blessing and plenary indulgence. Large numbers of people ('the whole city') attended. ANONYMOUS, *Annuae litterae Societatis Iesu 1592*; ODDI, *Vita del venerabil servo*, 33–5.

[40] The most famous example of Jesuit accommodation is the seventeenth-century Chinese Rites Controversy. For donning Mandarin dress and integrating Confucian principles and ancestor worship into explanations of Christianity, critics alleged that Jesuits distorted Christian principles. For Jesuit accommodation strategies in Naples in addition to those described herein, see DAVID GENTILCORE, "Adapt Yourselves to the People's Capabilities': Missionary Strategies, Methods and Impact in the Kingdom of Naples, 1600–1800', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 45, no. 2 (1994): 269–96.

[41] SILVESTRO TORNAMIRA, *La Compagnia di Giesu* (Palermo: Carlo Adamo, 1676), 333–34.

[42] NIEREMBERG, *Lettere spirituali,* 349–51.

prepared eternal bliss.[37]

In another printed conversion narrative, a convert witnessed a vision of Joseph bearing a silver vase. Vessels and ewers surely represented hospitality and welcome, and were redolent of spiritual purity for bearing water for ritual ablutions. Yet the silver vase also summoned specific messages from the Qur'an and Hadith. Muhammad prohibited believers from drinking from precious vessels in this life since overattachment to luxury often accompanied disbelief.[43] However in Paradise (*Jannah*), believers could expect to drink from unique and exquisite silver vessels (*Al-Insan*, 76:15–16), and, in some Qur'anic traditions, vessels for a particular river of Paradise, *al-Kawthar*, were also fashioned of silver. Thus Islamic tradition contrasted precious metals as used in this world with more lasting spiritual values in the hereafter.[44] To inform a Muslim slave that he would be 'rewarded with heavenly riches and salvation' for small acts of devotion, as in one Neapolitan conversion narrative, therefore invoked familiar Qur'anic promises.[45]

Several printed conversion narratives emphasised the magnificence and splendour of heavenly figures, as when in one slave's vision of Mary, she is 'surrounded by splendour' and her white sleeves are so preternaturally long as to touch the ground. Such descriptions were surely intended to resonate in both a theological and accommodationist key. However descriptions of riches and illumination also spoke to slave identity, perhaps creating awe or desire among slave audiences whose lives were as a rule materially impoverished. For enslaved individuals, descriptions of wealth and splendour likely had a powerful and evocative effect at levels both social and theological, and it is possible that references such as these subtly reoriented enslaved Muslims toward a Christian orbit, recasting their hopes for solidarity and belonging in slow and incremental steps.

Several conversion narratives featured dream-visions, as when one 'Turkish Moor' awaiting execution hears a voice in a dream telling him to awake and convert, or as when Mary appeared to several converts.[46] Dreams were an accepted vehicle of authority and knowledge within Islam, and the Qur'an featured several. Sura *Yusuf* (12) described a royal dream of lean and fat cows and a prophetic dream of stars, while Suras *Al-Anfal* (8:43) and *Al-Fath* (Ch. 48) described Muhammad's dreams of war and conquest. As the Hadith *Sahih al-Bukhārī 7045* affirmed, dreams from Allah provided

[43] Sura 43:34 (*Az-Zukhruf*) described houses with roofs and stairways of silver as associated with disbelief.

[44] SILVESTRO TORNAMIRA, *La Compagnia di Giesu* (Palermo: Carlo Adamo, 1676), 333–4.

[45] Conversion narratives also invoked key elements of Islamic ethics. When a would-be convert asks Mary to make special accommodations for him and she complies, she proves herself a woman of her word. The narrative thus gestured to the importance of promise-keeping, a virtue highly regarded in Islamic ethics. SYED IQBAL ZAHEER, *Tafsir Ishraq Al-Ma'an: Being a Quintessence of Qur'anic Commentaries*. (Bangalore: Iqra, 2008), Al Rad on Sura 13, 1919; MAĞĪD FAḪRĪ, *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 86.

[46] The man was a slave to the nobleman Giovanni Battista Sestriglia, and his conversion had taken place four years earlier in Cagliari. FILOCOLO CAPUTO, *Il Monte carmelo in cui si tratta della miracolosa imagine di N.S. del Carmine del regio convento di Napoli* (Naples: Lazaro Scoriggio, 1636), 119–21.

guidance. With precedents in Islamic tradition, dream-visions provided a powerful form of suggestion to converts, helping them access Christian 'mysteries' and using Islamic forms to legitimate the divine identity of, and messages from, Christian holy figures.[47]

Printed conversion narratives employed accommodationist strategies and attended to perceptions of Muslim identity by emphasising ritual and practice over doctrine. More orthoprax than orthodox, Islam asked less in the way of doctrine than Christianity and instead focused upon the practice of specific behaviours such as *Salah*, or daily group prayer. Several printed narratives therefore tacitly recommended to clerics that, rather than focusing upon doctrine, they might more profitably introduce Muslims to Christianity via small, practical, and incremental activities, even activities so simple as witnessing a creche scene. Thus one conversion took place after an enslaved Muslim man approached a Nativity creche simply out of 'curiosity'. Surely the creche episode gestured to the clerical attention to spectacle as a means of arresting and engaging convert attention. It hinted that, given Islam's lack of a pronounced tradition of figural representation and given Islam's prohibition of figural images in contexts of worship, Muslims might be especially responsive to the life-sized human effigies which featured in Neapolitan nativities.[48] Yet more significantly, the episode reminded clerics that even minute gestures, feelings, and practices—in this case, simple curiosity, witnessing, and proximity—might draw a person closer to Christianity. Another printed narrative featured a conversion initiated by the simple act of lamp-lighting, and another still depicted a cleric effectively recalling a convert from apostasy by the simple act of reciting Christian prayers in unison with him. This last instance, in which the cleric accommodated by recalling *Salah*, reminded clerics to seek inroads with enslaved Muslims via small, shared acts. To advise clerics to recite prayers together with converts, moreover, further reminded clerics of the critical importance of establishing bonds of solidarity with converts. Narrative instances such as these suggested that Muslims might be introduced to Christianity obliquely and even surreptitiously by exposure to seemingly minute and innocuous gestures and practices.[49]

Surrogate Kinship and Slave Identity

Mary appeared in both Islamic and Christian traditions, and, because of this overlap, she has been seen as a figure who allows for offering comparatively easy accommodation between the two religions.[50] Early modern printed conversion

[47] IBRAHIM AL-MASIH, 'Dreams and Visions Among Muslims', *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 18, no. 2 (2022): 106–26.

[48] Neapolitan nativity narratives were meant as regionally specific since elaborate, life-sized Nativity scenes were a Neapolitan specialty.

[49] CICATELLI, *Vita del P. Camillo de Lellis*; GIACOMO CELLESI. *Vita del servo di Dio padre Giulio Mancinelli* (Rome: Varese, 1668), 154.

[50] Mazur and Colombo both noted the use of Mary in conversionary efforts. MAZUR, 'Mohammedan Indecency'; MILLER, 'Converting 'the Indies'. Notably, the accounts analysed herein did not emphasise reason, which both Mazur and Colombo presented as a core Jesuit strategy from this period. That is,

narratives centred around Naples made much use of Mary, and she appears to multiple converts in dreams and visions. Yet, while Mary clearly appeared for reasons of accommodation, printed narratives also featured her as a distinctly maternal figure, in this way speaking directly to the identity of converts as isolated and detached from natal kin. Only one of the narratives analysed herein cast Mary in romantic terms, as when one Muslim slave declares himself 'in love with her'. Yet this account then immediately 'correct' itself to depict Mary as a 'great mother'.[51] The remainder of conversion narratives analysed herein uniformly portrayed Mary in maternal terms. Thus one enslaved 'Turk' encounters a 'beautiful matron like a majestic throne with a little son in her arms', and in other incarnations, Mary appears as a 'majestic matron' and an abundant source of kindness, comfort, and motherly reassurance to converts.

Paralleling their stress on spiritual motherhood, printed conversion narratives also made much of longings for paternal attachment among the enslaved. New converts and enslaved people, lonely and alienated, clearly longed for their natal families and perhaps especially fathers, as when one convert fantasises about visiting his father in Dolcigno.[52] Islamic society, like Christian, was deeply paternalistic, with Muslim fathers morally and spiritually obligated to raise their children with affection, protection, and care. The adage of 'wishing to die in the religion of one's father' surely underscored this patrilineal rooting of Muslim identity. Other printed narratives invoked paternal themes when enslaved Muslims had visions of Joseph as a venerable old man at Mary's side. In one narrative, the holy husband urges the convert to call himself 'Joseph', thus furnishing the convert with a new name and more importantly, an identity rooted in a masculine but now Christian lineage.[53]

In keeping with their attention to spiritual fatherhood, printed conversion narratives anchored in seventeenth-century Naples called upon clerics themselves to cultivate fatherly personae—as when in several Jesuit narratives, clerical fathers guided converts back to the fold. In one episode, an enslaved Muslim man addresses a Christian cleric as 'good Papasso'.[54] Expatriate Muslim slave communities in Naples and elsewhere were led by Imams—'Papassi'—older, respected men who led rites and maintained customs.[55] To figure a Jesuit cleric as a 'Papasso' reminded clerics of how loyalty and identity were fashioned gradually and in minute stages over time, and that an an allegiance to Muslim leaders and father figures could be transformed into an

they argued that moving beyond medieval polemics, Neapolitan Jesuits stressed reason as a principle shared between Christianity and Islam. COLOMBO, 'Infidels', 81.

[51] BOVIO, *Esempi e miracoli della ss. Vergine*, 32.

[52] He plans to escape on Genoese ships headed for Tripoli then go to Puglia via Ragusa. SIMONE BAGNATI, *Vita del servo di Dio P. Francesco di Geronimo della Compagnia di Gesu* (Naples: Felice Mosca, 1725), 67–8.

[53] NIEREMBERG, *Lettere spirituali*, 350.

[54] ODDI, Vita del venerabil servo, 35.

[55] The Papasso enjoyed privileges such as being exempt from work. In Naples a clandestine group of Muslims led by a Papasso was found in 1562. PETER MAZUR, 'A Mediterranean Port in the Confessional Age: Religious Minorities in Early Modern Naples', in *A Companion to Early Modern Naples*, ed. ASTARITA, 215–34, 224.

allegiance to paternally benevolent Christian clerics.[56] Finally, allusions to surrogate parent-couples helped comfort and reassure potential slave converts by making clear that setting aside Islam would not ask converts to renounce their patrilineage or parental ties. As narrative visions of the Holy Couple and the depictions of the interventions of benevolent Jesuit fathers showed, conversion to Christianity simply supplied converts with new sets of parents to watch over and protect them. By foregrounding the importance of parental figures to converts, printed conversion narratives spoke to convert identity as individuals bereft of natal kin, attending to desires for familial solidarity by supplying them with new and alternative kinship ties.

Printed conversion narratives did not solely rely on accommodation. Several narratives framed their appeals so as to speak to Islamic and Chrisitan religious identity at once. The printed narrative of the conversion of Mohammed el-Attaz, for example, applied an approach rather out of keeping with others. El-Attaz, Muslim prince and first son of Fez, converted in 1656 and took the name Baldassar Loyola Mendez, becoming a Neapolitan Jesuit. A printed narrative of his conversion described el-Attaz as raised strictly 'according to the superstitious Alcoranic law'. However while reading the 'Alkoran', he heard 'an internal voice in his heart' execrating Muhammad, which then prompted his conversion.[57] The account of Mohammed el-Attaz/Loyola Mendez' conversion therefore mirrored both Saint God's call to Augustine to 'Take up and read' as well as the Jesuit founder Ignatius Loyola's conversionary transformation through reading. Yet the el-Attaz account also reflected Muhammad's conversion to Islam, for according to Islamic tradition, in around 610 CE, the archangel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad in a cave on Mount Hira near Mecca. Gabriel commanded Muhammad to recite but the latter demurred, declaring himself illiterate. Yet upon being embraced by Gabriel multiple times, Muhammad was miraculously able to read the Qur'an, with this event marking Muhammad's role as God's messenger.[58] The el-Attaz account's decisive emphasis upon literacy and reading were not echoed in other narratives.

In another account which seemed to cleave closely to Christian values, the Virgin instructed a certain 'Moor' to request burial at the Church of Carmine in Cagliari so

[56] Christian galley rowers too also called Girolamo 'their 'Protector', 'Advocate' and 'Father', kissing both his hand and the hem of his garment. ODDI, *Vita del venerabil servo*, 46. Colombo and Mazur noted that the upstanding behaviour of Christian clerics—behaviour implied by the 'Papasso' reference—was an equally important spur to conversion.

[57] As Loyola Mendez, the former Muslim preached to enslaved people in Genoa and Naples, converting over three hundred Muslims in the *annus mirabilis* 1666–67. At Marbella in 1671, five enslaved Muslims converted after simply hearing of Mendez' conversion. GIUSEPPE ANTONIO PATRIGNANI, *Menologio di pie memorie d'alcuni religiosi della Compagnia di Gesu*, 4 vols (Venice: Niccolò Pezzana, 1730), vol. 3, 115–20; COLOMBO, 'Infidels', 77. Colombo has written extensively about Mendez. See for example, EMANUELE COLOMBO and ROCCO SACCONAGHI, 'Telling the Untellable: The Geography of Conversion of a Muslim Jesuit', in *Space and Conversion in Global Perspective*, eds GIUSEPPE MARCOCCI, ALIOCHA MALDAVSKY, WIETSE DE BOER, and ILARIA PAVAN (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 285–307.

[58] CARLOS EIRE, 'Early Modern Catholic Piety in Translation', in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, eds PETER BURKE and RONNIE PO-CHIA HSIA (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 83–100. With thanks to Sama Mammadova for pointing out important Islamic parallels here.

that his interment would be attended by 'almost the entire city'.[59] Muslims were surely attentive to postmortem honor, yet 'good deaths', posthumous *fama*, and funeral pomp received decisively high emphasis in Christian societies. At the same time, the narrative gained power and relevance by drawing upon the threads of slave identity. Poor and inhabiting the lowest ranks of Christian society, enslaved people could scarcely hope for dignified burials. As converts were both socially and politically isolated, crowds did not typically gather at their funerals. In the instance of the Moor from Cagliari, the Virgin offered a quid pro quo for agreeing to alter religious identity. For relinquishing his identity as a Muslim, the enslaved man would enjoy a new form of solidarity, namely belonging in a Christian community, and his burial would be attended by his new spiritual compatriots.

Attending to other socioeconomic and material facets of Muslim slave identity, printed conversion narratives recommended that the Jesuit clerics use religious objects or tokens to subtly alter the religious status of potential converts. Most enslaved Muslims were impoverished and so did not own much. Therefore even small tokens, baubles, and devotional objects such as the 'crowns […] medals […] [and] crosses fixed with images' of the sort that Father Girolamo supplied to sermon auditors at Naples could stimulate feelings of gratitude and loyalty.[60] As printed conversion narratives showed, some Muslim converts kept *agnus dei*, rosaries, and 'similar devout things' in their personal boxes of 'riches' and 'precious gifts'.[61] Such tokens could function as placeholders for conversations, ideas, or people, or an *aide-memoire* for prayers. In their simple materiality, such tokens served as repositories for different kinds of meaning and confirmed religious faith while surmounting language barriers. As the Neapolitan Jesuit Mancinelli noted, such objects betokened 'affection', pointing out how seemingly invaluable items could serve as vessels for attachment and suggesting that the gratitude stimulated by religious tokens could generate new bonds of solidarity, connection, and obligation between recipient and giver.[62]

Tokens worn or displayed such as medals, rosaries, and crucifixes, moreover, made identity publicly visible. Thus, in one episode, a Jesuit cuts off the forelock—a symbol of Muslim identity—of a convert who intends to apostatise, then uses this token to publicise the man's reconciliation with Christianity by hanging it as a trophy of 'defeated infidelity' at the altar of San Francesco Saverio.[63] However, more significant than the display functions of religious tokens was that the mere handling, accepting, or owning of such tokens could, like other minute gestures and acts of practice, alter and impact religious identity. Tokens bearing figural imagery, for example, contravened Islamic prohibitions against the use of figural representation in worship contexts. For this reason, for a Muslim to accept or handle a figurally inscribed

[59] A Holy Office notary was said to have recorded the event. CAPUTO, *Il Monte carmelo*, 121.
[60] ODDI, *Vita del venerabil servo*, 46.
[61] CELLESI, *Vita del servo di Dio*.
[62] CELLESI, *Vita del servo di Dio*.
[63] BAGNATI, *Vita del servo di Dio*, 67–8.

token or small image arguably altered and interfered with their religious commitments and, in turn, spiritual identity. Similarly, simply owning a religious image, as did one convert in these narratives, subtly recalibrated a person's religious approach and allegiance, and hence their religious identity.[64]

Conversionary Realism: Economic Assistance and Identity Documents

At the same time that many printed conversion narratives took more careful account of the emotional needs and identities of converts, some presented a deep realism as to the kinds of solidarity and charity which converts truly required. Sixteenth-century conversion accounts had often been triumphal and celebratory, for example highlighting clerics weeping while baptising Muslims and describing magnificent groups of white-robed converts paraded through city streets. By contrast, some seventeenth-century accounts addressed more difficult challenges of maintaining Christian commitments among converts. Recognising that converts who suffered from economic precarity were not well embedded in society and that nostalgia for one's homeland put them at risk of apostasy, printed conversion narratives addressed the problem of convert employment. Thus, while conversion narratives still employed miracle and divine entities, some forwarded more realistic and practical strategies.

One narrative showed how a Jesuit father supported a convert by locating employment for him.[65] When this convert and former slave fell to begging to survive, he began to blame conversion for his economic decline. Assaulted by 'the demon', he began to fantasise about returning home to 'the sweetness of his country and the comforts that he could enjoy in it' and 'the comforts of his mother's house'. Seeing Father Geronimo preaching in Naples, the would-be apostate was momentarily 'moved' with 'new, better thoughts' that were 'reborn in his heart'. Rejuvenated, he vows to die of hunger rather than abandon his new faith. However, Geronimo then extended a gesture of substantial charity and deep solidarity by offering the man a job with a fruit seller. This act allowed the man to forgo begging and secure his place within the Christian community. It also effected a transformation in identity—by renewing the convert's commitment to his Christian identity—and in solidarity, with Father Geronimo coming to stand as a surrogate father for the convert. With a greater sense of worldly and spiritual security, the convert abandoned his longings for his country and became a peaceful and productive Christian citizen.[66] As this conversion narrative showed, while inspiring preaching could rekindle religious commitment in the moment, true charity and 'deep' forms of social assistance were required to restore a genuine and abiding sense of religious solidarity for Muslim converts within Christian

[64] Along similar lines, another account shows a Muslim slave who unknowingly engaged in a version of Christian charity— 'always offered something' to those who beg alms at his master's house—and in this way merited Mary's attention.
[65] This man had worked on papal galleys and was baptised in Rome (ca. 1691–1700), then fell into poverty after purchasing his freedom. He was unable to improve his economic circumstances because he was banned from practicing 'any trade' in Christian lands. BAGNATI, *Vita del servo di Dio,* 67–8.
[66] BAGNATI, *Vita del servo di Dio*, 67–8.

society.

Europe's proximity to North Africa, West Africa, and Turkey made it comparatively easy for converted Muslims to return to their homelands and reembrace Islam. Moreover by the sixteenth century, it was understood among Mediterranean traders that a Jewish merchant might practice as a Christian in Christian lands, then resume his Jewish identity in Ottoman lands where he was permitted to worship openly as a Jew.[67] However, Catholicism severely penalised any fluidity in religious identity and categorically prohibited such switches. A Neapolitan decree of 1555 prohibited freed and converted 'Moorish and Turkish Slaves' from returning to their country 'to continue their infidelity' without written permission from the King (*in scriptis obtenta*), suggesting that geographically conditional apostasy among slave-converts was seen as common.[68] The political commentator Traiano Boccalini (1556–1613) voiced a similar view. In a work written before 1613 and published in 1678, Boccalini claimed to have seen 'many' slaves depart from Naples then go to Rome to 'become Christian'. From Rome they traveled to Marseilles then on to Algeria, 'laughing at our ease in having given them faith'.[69] Departure to a Muslim homeland reveals one important way that Muslims resisted the conditions of enslavement and reclaimed former religious identities.

As printed seventeenth-century narratives suggested, many alleged 'apostates' simply wished to see their families and then return to Christian lands. At least one Neapolitan cleric adopted a distinctly practical approach to conversion, helping individuals navigate this wish by producing an unusual administrative document. As his biographer explained, the Jesuit father Mancinelli created a 'special certificate which declared the bearer reconciled to the Catholic church'.[70.] This form allowed its holder to visit the Dar-al-Islam while protecting returnees to Europe from severe 'ecclesiastical judges'—the Inquisition. One could therefore in principle use this document to travel to Turkey, practice as a Muslim, then peacefully reenter Europe and resume life as a Christian. While there is no evidence that such a document existed, Mancinelli nevertheless reported that his certificate allowed enslaved Muslims to 'convert more easily', to 'take refuge in their homelands' and be '[re]converted as Christians', and that the document was 'of great benefit to many'. This narrative indicated the Jesuit awareness, and presumably acceptance, of the fact that Ottoman lands were more tolerant of fluidity in religious identity than Christian ones. By providing a means of surmounting potential difficulties involved in religious identity-switching, Mancinelli's document was quite radical.[71] In roundly subverting orthodoxy,

[67] COHEN, *Under Crescent and Cross*; GARCÍA-ARENAL and WIEGERS, *A Man of Three Worlds*.
[68] DE SARIIS, *Codice delle leggi* (28 Nov 1555), 3–5.
[69] TRAIANO BOCCALINI, *La bilancia politica del Boccalini* (Castellana: Giovanni Hermano Widerhold, 1678), 140–1; 326–7.
[70] CELLESI, *Vita del servo di Dio*, 154.
[71] Conversion efforts also amplified bureaucratic and impersonal aspects of converter identity, for efforts to manage conversion repeatedly generated more and more careful administrative oversight. Thus Jesuits reorganised the Congregazione di Schiavi in 1615 and their College in 1618, with Father Ferracuto reassigned to teach Arabic to 'more readily engage in catechising the Mohammedans'. A later

Mancinelli's form underscored a rogue side of Jesuit identity: a willingness to bend official rules toward desired ends. Mancinelli's document also demonstrated considerable emotional support and solidarity to converts, along with a strong helping of realism: a willingness to help them retain and rekindle natal bonds. Finally, in mediating conversions across international borders, Mancinelli's document conveyed decidedly modern identity valences, acknowledging growing state bureaucracies and calls for proof of identity in an age of increased mobility and boundary-crossing.[72]

Conclusion

What do printed conversion narratives centred at Naples tell us about the identity, solidarity, and charity of Muslim slaves, their converters; and conversionary approaches in the early modern period? Such narratives reveal that, in converting enslaved Muslims, Jesuits, Theatines, and other clerics altered simple and traditional top-down approaches and developed a variety of new conversionary strategies. Realising that conversion, a species of charity, generated countless paradoxes in practice, printed conversion narratives advised clerics to employ a strategy of 'divide and conquer': to disrupt perceived Muslim solidarity and isolate individuals within enclosed spaces such as homes, hospitals, and galleys. Clerics therefore took decisive and calculated steps to prey upon convert vulnerability, plying their trade upon ill and dying individuals at hospitals. At these sites in particular, paradoxes in charity both produced and mapped new convert and other social identities. Neapolitan clerics also employed diverse strategies of accommodation, inserting a broad range of Islamic religious symbols into Christian appeals and emphasising praxis as against doctrine. Understanding slave identities and the longing of exiles for natal kin, clerics used printed conversion narratives to promise slaves the attentions of spiritual parental figures while showing decided paternal attention to vulnerable slaves, converts, and would-be apostates. While speaking to core elements of slave social identity and experience such as poverty, such narratives also acknowledged convert needs for belonging and solidarity. Printed narratives showed clerics as willing to dissimulate: to veil their rancour against Islam, and as offering 'deep' forms of charity to bolster conversion to Christianity including employment assistance and the creation of administrative identity documents that enabled converts to 'switch' their religious identity in diverse international settings. While conversion narratives recursively returned to a stereotype of Muslim 'obstinacy', these same narratives revealed an understanding that Ottomans treated religious identity with comparative fluidity and that Christians were rather less flexible in such matters. Finally, through careful clerical

report describing eighteen slaves converted by 'the Father destined to take care of them' indicates efforts to target, or assign clerics to specific cohorts of potential converts. A greater attention to bureaucracy surely shaped the identities of those who engaged in it. That is, an amplified focus upon administration would have increased an overall attention to planning, enumeration, measurability, and attempts to fix social identities over time. SCHINOSI, *Istoria*, 372; 151–2.

[72] On the growth of bureaucracy in Southern Italy, see Roberto Delle Donne, *Burocrazia e fisco a Napoli tra XV e XVI secolo. La Camera della Sommaria e il* Repertorium alphabeticum solutionum fiscalium Regni Siciliae Cisfretanae (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2012).

attention to the identity of Muslim slaves—by addressing their experience, hopes, fears, and needs—conversion narratives showed that 'obstinate' Muslim slaves, contrary to being religiously intransigent, and if addressed with the right techniques and approaches, were indeed quite open to conversion.

Historians and Their Craft

An Interview with Alastair Hamilton

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Alastair Hamilton has reshaped the history of how early modern Europe came to know—and often to misread—the Christian East and Islam. After early and influential work on the Radical Reformation, he turned to the first generations of European Arabic learning and to the Christian communities of the Arabic-speaking world, tracing the precarious traffic of ideas between Europe and the Middle East and the mediations—and the voices, whether of Arab Christians or of Muslims—that governed it: translation, confessional polemic, collecting. His books—including *William Bedwell the Arabist (1563–1632)* (1985), *Arabs and Arabists* (2021), and *The Copts and the West, 1439–1822* (2006)—have reconstructed the worlds in which figures like Erpenius, Bedwell, Abudacnus, Du Ryer and Wansleben worked, where the pursuit of knowledge was entangled with intra-Christian rivalries as much as with 'a lust of knowing'. They follow the allure of mistaken ideas, the ways inquisitors, missionaries and Arabists imposed coherence on fragments, and the lives of scholars and travellers who worked through mediation, translation and disguise. A recurring thread is the unstable labour of gathering and transmitting knowledge: how sources are weighed, how apocrypha and forgeries are sifted, and how persistent illusions arise from misreading. Hamilton has taught at Urbino, Leiden, Amsterdam, London and Cairo, and spent many years at the Warburg Institute; he also edits Brill's series 'The History of Oriental Studies'. His books and editions have given this history both a map and an archive, establishing a field in which Arabic Studies and the history of Eastern Christianity are read together, and in which misunderstandings are treated not as footnotes but as facts that made European knowledge what it was. He is now finishing a study of Western Christians and mosques, a subject that gathers his recurring concerns: trespass, curiosity, and the ethics of looking.

Your career runs from twentieth-century ideologies to heterodox devotion, then to Arabic and the European study of Islam and Eastern Christianity. If you had to draw one line through those twists and turns, what question have you been pursuing all along?

I could never claim to have been pursuing a single question, but there are certain themes that have always interested me. One is the strength of illusions and the attraction of ideas which are now generally considered to be mistaken. My first book was published in English under the title *The Appeal of Fascism*. My own choice was *The Fascist Illusion*, and this was the title used in the various translations—in Italian, French, Spanish—while *The Appeal of Fascism* was a title adopted on the insistence of the publisher. The question I asked myself was why a number of writers whom I admired should have been drawn by, or at least come to terms with, an ideology which I found intellectually contemptible. A similar interest drew me to the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras (4 Ezra), the subject of my *Apocryphal Apocalypse*. Of all the Old Testament

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apocrypha 2 Esdras was the most obviously non-canonical. Compiled in about 90 CE, it contained Christian interpolations—Jesus is actually named—which were added considerably later. Yet, in the teeth of such overwhelming evidence, some of the greatest scholars of their day maintained that it was ancient, canonical and, as a work of prophecy, entirely reliable.

A further theme is the manner in which ideas can be distorted and manipulated. When I was working on the *alumbrados* I was struck by how the inquisitors tried to formulate a coherent doctrine from previous trials and fragments of conversation, and to impose this doctrine on the objects of their investigation. In my research on the Eastern Christians, and particularly the Copts and their relationship with the West, we see that Western missionaries would try to impose certain beliefs on the Eastern Christians, such as the doctrine of purgatory, of which the Eastern Christians did not have the slightest understanding.

The same applies to some early interpretations of Islam. On the one hand there were outright attacks, but on the other, there were efforts to show points that Islam had in common with Christianity. When I was working on the English Arabist of the early seventeenth century William Bedwell, I found that he presented a view of the religious beliefs of the great Muslim scientists in his apologies for the study of Arabic which would have been entirely acceptable to an Anglican readership. His technique was to detach a form of true piety from any association with the Prophet Muhammad. Their religion, he wrote, was free of 'the fables devised by the papists, free of the vain dreams of the delirious, free of the sophisms of the heretics'. The writings of the Arabic-speaking Christians, he went on, were perfectly compatible with Anglicanism since they too were entirely free of any of the beliefs of the Roman Catholics.

Your shift from heterodox devotion to the study of early modern Arabists and Eastern Christians marked a decisive turning point. Was it driven more by temperament, by intellectual necessity, or by a chance encounter? And how did it change your sense of what history itself could be about?

Neither temperament, nor necessity, nor a chance encounter. I had been interested in the Arab world for a long time, ever since my parents took me to East Africa when I was fourteen and I read illustrated editions of Edward Fitzgerald's *Ruba'iyyat* of Omar Khayyam and the *Arabian Nights*. When I was still at university I visited Morocco, and after I had left university I worked briefly in Tunisia. It was only much later, however, that I started to teach myself Arabic, and when I was in Leiden that I started to write about Arabists. In Leiden I benefited from its Arabic department and its connection with the Dutch Institute in Cairo where I occasionally lectured. I cannot say that my contacts with Arabists and Arabic studies changed my sense of what history was about, but they allowed me to gain a taste of a world which seemed to me infinitely fascinating.

You care about style. Do you see the writing of history as a literary craft in its own right—closer to the essay or even the novel than to the standardised

'research output'? And what have novels taught you about writing history that archives have not?

Yes, I certainly see 'history writing as a craft in its own right', but I would separate it from novels which I read to satisfy my curiosity and, sometimes, as models of style. This is something that I owe to my education in England. At Cambridge we had to write five essays a week, and even if I cursed the system at the time, I shall remain eternally grateful to it since it helped me to overcome inhibitions and to write effortlessly. When I was at university, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, English historians prided themselves on the elegance of their style, and on their accessibility to a broad reading public. Fortunately, as we see in the writings of Noel Malcolm and others, this tradition persists, but it also seems to me to be threatened. Although I was never a pupil of his—he was at Oxford when I was a student—I owe much to Hugh Trevor-Roper, above all as a stylistic model, but also because of the advice he gave me and his comments on an early article which I sent him. Style, it seems to me, is now becoming less and less important for historians, especially in America but also elsewhere. The prose of the younger American scholars is frequently dotted with neologisms, misnomers, grammatical mistakes and unnecessary repetitions, and jargons are used derived from other fields. The obscurity with which they express even the simplest ideas seems intended to convey a sense of profundity, but it means that their works are addressed to increasingly narrow readerships, and that an ever larger gulf is being created between popular history, the quality of which is not always high, and academic history which tends to be too specialised.

In your studies of Arabists and Eastern Christians you often reveal a history of mediation, translation, and disguise. How do you think historians should write the story of Christianity and Islam—as a conflict, a conversation, or something more entangled that escapes both frames?

As something more entangled. 'Mediation, translation and disguise' certainly come into it, and attempts were made to establish a dialogue. These attempts, however, do not appear to have got very far. An effort should be made to establish the points of view of both sides, but this is far from easy because of the scarcity of documentation illustrating the reactions of the Eastern Christians and the Muslims to visitors from the West. The result is inevitably one-sided. And then there is another factor which helps to account for this lack of documentation: the degree of importance which each side might attach to the same event. Western visitors tended to regard their mere presence in the East as an event of the greatest significance, whereas it seems to have passed completely unnoticed in the East. In the early modern period, there was hardly any interest in the West in the Islamic world. No notice was taken of the Western scholars trying to produce studies of Islamic beliefs and customs, and few Muslims other than diplomats and prisoners visited Europe. This begins to change in the second half of the nineteenth century when we find a passing reference by the Egyptian educationalist 'Ali Mubarak to Edward William Lane who had been compiling his great Arabic dictionary in Cairo in the 1840s with the help of Egyptian scholars.

We see something similar happening amongst the Copts. The first Jesuit mission intended to persuade the Copts to unite with the Church of Rome set out in 1561. It had the full approval of the pope and included some of the most distinguished members of the Society such as Cristóforo Rodríguez and Giovanni Battista Eliano. The latter was chosen because of his brief experience of Egypt and on the assumption that he knew Arabic. When they arrived in Egypt, however, it turned out that Eliano could neither understand nor make himself understood by the Coptic patriarch and his staff in Cairo or by the monks at the convent of St Anthony on the Red Sea coast. Although the missionaries achieved nothing their journey led to an intense correspondence between the envoys and Rome and, later, to publications criticising the Church of Alexandria. Eliano, on his return to Europe, was given a hero's welcome. He was offered a professorship in Paris, which he refused, but he accepted a chair in oriental languages in Rome. Yet the mission seems to have made no impression whatsoever on the Copts. Members of the Coptic clergy would occasionally arrive in Europe, usually in the hope of getting money, and their presence shows that they were entirely unaware of the disappointment and resentment in Rome caused by the failure of the missionaries. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that a Coptic theologian, distressed by the conversion of one of his co-religionists to the Church of Rome and alarmed by the success of a new generation of Western missionaries, actually bothered to launch a theological attack on the teaching of the Catholics.

Among the many figures you have studied—say Abudacnus, Du Ryer, Wallin, Wansleben—what episode struck you most? And which character most amused you to work on, and why?

This is a difficult question to answer. If we except Wallin, who is relatively recent and whose life is well documented thanks to his letters and diaries, the sources for all the individual scholars I have studied—Abudacnus, Du Ryer, Wansleben, Heinrich Siecke, Claude-Etienne Savary and others—contain tantalising gaps. Little by little, often thanks to colleagues working on different scholars, fragments of new information come to the surface. Each fragment fills me with delight, but also with surprise. I have always tried to fill in the gaps with speculations based on what material I know. What surprises me is how mistaken most of these speculations turn out to be. In reply to the second part of the question I would again hesitate to draw up a hierarchy. Whenever I start working on a particular scholar, I have the same sense of anticipation and excitement. Since Wansleben is the figure on whom I have worked most recently, he is the one who fascinates me most at the moment, and of whom, one day, I would like to write a full biography.

You read everything. In recent history books, what recurring shortcomings strike you most—in style, in argument, or in the claims themselves?

There are, I fear, quite a number of shortcomings. There is a tendency particularly evident in volumes of collected papers, but also apparent in monographs dealing with

an individual scholar of the past, to concentrate exclusively on the scholar's works and to give no biographical information. This usually means that the subject of the book is treated in something of a vacuum. Another shortcoming is the title of many recent books on history. While the subject might be a single scholar, the scholar is sometimes not mentioned in the title, or, on occasion, even in the subtitle. This suggests, presumably for marketing purposes, that the scope of the book is far wider than it is—the Ottoman Empire in its entirety, for example, rather than one particular individual and his place in it. This is frequently attended, particularly among American historians, by great claims to originality and novelty, very few of which stand up to any scrutiny. But my greatest criticism is stylistic. There is a marked tendency, again particularly among American historians but also among certain Europeans, to adopt trendy interpretative theories which often have a jargon of their own. My experience of these theories is that they serve as a superficial veneer in an introduction and are then abandoned in favour of a more traditional approach. In my opinion they offer nothing whatsoever, but serve only to narrow the potential readership. By this I do not, of course, mean the discovery of new areas of research or new approaches which have proved immensely fruitful.

You have written about impostors, plagiarists, and 'trickster orientalists'. From Abudacnus to Wallin, what do such figures reveal about the fragility of erudition? And why do they fascinate you?

The European mastery of oriental languages was, obviously, a lengthy process. It would start with the alphabet and then, very gradually, progress to vocabulary and grammar. At each stage Western scholars, usually in perfectly good faith, would try to make sense of the available material. They inevitably made serious mistakes. One of the first scholars to tackle Coptic, Pierre-Victor Palma Cayet at the end of the sixteenth century, had studied the Coptic alphabet. As long as the characters had a clear Greek equivalent, he was largely correct. But he failed to understand the characters derived from the Egyptian hieroglyphs and he was incapable of separating one word from another. His efforts to transliterate a verse from the New Testament led to complete gibberish. But was he an impostor or simply a scholar making mistakes? The same can be said of Athanasius Kircher and his fanciful interpretations of the hieroglyphs. He is often regarded as a fraud, but at the time nobody in the West knew any better, so nobody could correct his erroneous speculations. In other respects he was a fine scholar. His theory that Coptic was a late derivation of Egyptian was dismissed at the time but was in fact perfectly correct. These are early examples of a phenomenon which stretches deep into the nineteenth century as European orientalists opened more and more fields. So where do we draw the line?

Orientalists have always been relatively few in number and few people outside their particular field have had enough knowledge to criticise them convincingly. This also applies to the discovery of previously unexplored geographical areas. A number of the reports by early explorers quite simply met with disbelief. When James Bruce returned from Ethiopia in 1773, claiming to have discovered the source of the Blue

Nile, he was disbelieved, but in fact he was telling the truth. Of the experiences of others we are not quite so sure. How reliable, for example, are Richard Burton and T.E. Lawrence?

The scope for invention in a generally unknown area with an equally unknown language was obviously immense, and the temptation to dazzle contemporaries with a display of knowledge which hardly anyone shared was sometimes irresistible and frequently aroused suspicion. A number of orientalists marked their experiences in the East with eccentricities such as continuing to wear oriental dress when they were back in Europe. And this raises another point. The adoption of oriental dress was part of an attempt to be assimilated in the eastern world and thus to be able to understand it and fathom its mysteries. But how often did this succeed? A number of Western travellers claimed that their Arabic was so good and their appearance in eastern dress so convincing that they could pass as Arabs, but there are also numerous reports by travellers who wore local clothes but admitted that nobody ever believed they were anything other than Europeans. One of their first objectives was to be as unobtrusive as possible and thus protect themselves in the streets from the insults, and sometimes the attacks, provoked by anyone wearing western clothes. In this they often succeeded, but the better-informed Western travellers were well aware of the fragility of their disguise. The Finnish Arabist Georg August Wallin, who had immersed himself in Egyptian culture and lived in Cairo as an Egyptian, said that he never really knew whether his Egyptian friends thought that he was indeed an Egyptian. They did, however, accept him and treated him as if he was one of them. His moment of greatest satisfaction was when he entered a mosque and realised that he was so unobtrusive that nobody took any notice of him.

In the case of a scholar such as Claude-Etienne Savary, the late eighteenth-century translator of the Qur'an, I believe that we can indeed talk of plagiarism and trickery. I found him interesting for that very reason. To trace his sources was an intellectually satisfying challenge. But, of the Arabists I have studied, he is something of an exception. In the early modern period some degree of plagiarism appears to have been inevitable and was usually acceptable. Travellers would rely on the works of their predecessors when they completed their descriptions of monuments observed in haste or when they added information about places they had been unable to visit. Some would acknowledge their sources, but no objection seems to have been taken to those who did not.

What did you gain from the Warburg Institute—habits of reading, personal encounters, ways of making associations—that have stayed with you?

When I look back on the years I spent at the Warburg I realise that what I miss most are certain colleagues and the students. I had always enjoyed teaching, but, at the Warburg, the standard of the students, who were anyhow MA students rather than undergraduates, was far higher than in any of the other universities in which I had taught. I always maintained that I learned more from the students than they did from

me, and this was particularly true of the Warburg. In the past I had refused to give the same course twice, but at the Warburg I gave the same course, on the Reformation, for almost fifteen years, and each time, thanks to the questions the students asked and the observations they made, I felt that I had learnt something more about the subject. The questions they asked, moreover, were always different.

But I also learnt from colleagues—above all from Jill Kraye who was then the librarian, but also from Charles Hope, the director when I arrived, and Charles Burnett. They were generous with their advice and their assistance, and Jill Kraye would correct meticulously the articles I wrote for the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. She improved them greatly.

You have lived and taught in England, Italy, the Netherlands, and Egypt. What did each of these places give you, through your students and colleagues? Did the way of doing history itself look different in Cairo, London, Rome, or Leiden?

My career as a historian started late, well after I had left university, and there was only one city where I had any discussions about methods of writing history. That was Rome. I was working on *The Appeal of Fascism* in the 1960s, and, as I did so, I developed a close friendship with Piero Melograni and Renzo De Felice. It was they who introduced me to the ideas on history of Karl Popper's *Poverty of Historicism*, and I found that his scepticism made perfect sense. From Renzo De Felice I also learnt about the integrity of a historian. Everything should be sacrificed to accuracy. No deadline imposed by a publisher should be observed if further documents had, or might, come to light. And one should have no fear of revealing facts that were sufficiently documented, however unpopular they might be. Renzo De Felice was extraordinarily courageous, and chose to polemicise on a highly sensitive terrain. When I finished *The Appeal of Fascism* I decided that I had had enough of the twentieth century and should turn to an earlier period and a different area, but the courage and integrity of De Felice, despite his political sympathies which I did not always share, remained an ideal.

Later, when I started to work on the *alumbrados*, I owed much to my conversations in Madrid with Eugenio Asensio and in Paris with Marcel Bataillon. Hugh Trevor-Roper introduced me to John Elliott, the greatest expert on Spanish history in England, who was then teaching at Cambridge, and through him I met younger historians who all influenced me in some way. In Holland I was always indebted to the advice of Herman de La Fontaine Verwey and Paul Valkema Blouw. It was thanks to Valkema Blouw that I became aware of the world of clandestine printers in the Netherlands, their use of fake addresses and more or less anonymous typefaces. His extraordinary eye and memory enabled him to redate a large number of heterodox publications including those of the Family of Love, and, with his encouragement, I incorporated them in my work

Where my work on Arabists is concerned I was initially guided by Jan Brugman, the professor of Arabic at Leiden, and I relied heavily on colleagues such as Jan Just

Witkam and, later, Arnoud Vrolijk. I also learnt much from younger scholars who have since become my closest friends—from Robert Jones, whose doctoral thesis I followed closely, from Maurits van den Boogert, who was a student of mine at Leiden, and from Jan Loop who came to my lectures at the Warburg Institute. All my guides and advisors had a preparation far more specialised and far superior to my own.

After Brexit you 'repudiated' England. How has living in Italy altered your scholarly ear—your sense of audience, irony, even your choice of subjects?

In fact I repudiated England long before Brexit. My mother was Italian. I was brought up bilingual and I always spent the summer in Italy with my Italian relatives. My wife is Italian and I have probably spent more of my life in Italy than anywhere else. As soon as I left university I decided, for various reasons, that I wanted to live and work abroad, as far away as possible from the xenophobia, nationalism and hypocrisy that ultimately bore fruit in Brexit and the series of ghastly governments which ensued. I lived and worked in Tunis, New York, Berlin and Rome, with no attachment to a university, and I came to feel myself deeply European.

Since Italy was the country where I started teaching and the students at the University of Urbino were my first audience, I learnt from them. Above all I learnt that they must never be bored—and they got bored very easily. It was in an effort to keep them permanently entertained that I developed a technique of lecturing without notes and of trying to engage with the audience. Nevertheless I would hesitate to say that Italy affected my choice of subjects. Although I have done a certain amount of work in Italian archives and libraries, especially when I was working on Fascism in Rome, it hardly compares to the work I have done in the Netherlands, Spain, France and England. In my approach to history, however, I have always felt that I was part of an essentially pragmatic English tradition.

After so many books on heterodox devotion, Arabists, Eastern Christians, and travellers, what are you working on now? And what sort of problem still has the power to tempt you into a new project?

At the moment I am trying to finish a book on Western Christians' experiences of mosques. For part of the early modern period mosques, especially those closed to non-Muslims, were a challenge similar to the Holy City of Mecca. When and why did Western Christians start to take an interest in them? How did they cope with the strict prohibition to enter them in parts of Syria, Palestine and Egypt? How unobtrusive did they manage to be in order to do so? And how was it that they ended up by restoring sacred Islamic buildings and even designing them themselves? For many of their exploits they relied on disguise and fake identities. Their description of monuments which have either been destroyed or restored beyond recognition can sometimes be of use to art historians, while their reactions reflect both the changes of taste which we find in the West from the Renaissance to the late nineteenth century and the growing interest in Islam.

Book Reviews

Gender and Cultural Mediation in the Long Eighteenth Century Women Across Borders

Mónica Bolufer, Laura Guinot-Ferri, Carolina Blutrach, eds
(London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024)
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The examination of the centres established and regulated by official intellectual histories from Europe raises inquiries in historical, political, literary, and artistic studies. The question of what lies beyond the European and/or Eurocentric view of the world of letters, arts, and ideas is not merely a matter of intellectual curiosity or an interrogation of the status quo but instead calls for a necessary shift in perspective to understand the globalisation of the history of ideas in the eighteenth century. This shift in perspective, which considers the female perspective and the issue of gender in intellectual production and the circulation of knowledge, is evident in the contributions included in this volume.

The eighteenth century in Europe, characterised as the 'Age of Enlightenment' due to the convergence of intellectual currents based on reason, scientific methods, the spread of knowledge, and the modernisation of society, saw the emergence of thinkers, both men and women, who engaged in activities and reflections about their places and cultures. They engaged in activities and studied traditional social structures in relation to different aspects of knowledge across Europe and the Atlantic. In the philosophy of the Enlightenment, rationalism and empiricism were adopted as methods for acquiring scientific knowledge, leading to significant individual and social development. And yet, despite the Enlightenment's relative openness compared to the history of ideas in Europe in previous centuries, the activities of social actors such as women, and the preconceived ideas about spaces such as the nation, the South, and the periphery still require much further study in historical, literary, and philosophical approaches to this period.

This is the critical context in which this volume edited by Bolufer, Guinot-Ferri, and Blutrach emerges, prompting us to reflect on at least three thematic areas: debates on gender beyond European national borders; the intense negotiation between languages and cultures led by female authors, intellectuals, and translators, among other women beyond those national borders; and the invitation to decentre the study of the Enlightenment by considering other centres, usually depicted as margins or

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peripheries, such as southern Europe, European territories beyond the Atlantic, and other spaces not regarded as European at the time, despite their relative geographical proximity.

Organised into four sections, this volume comprises thirteen essays and a critical introduction that address the issue of women's contributions during the Enlightenment, the role played by gendered expectations, and the observation of the new and the acquisition of knowledge that transcended national limits. In this sense, the book proposes observing transnational relations beyond European horizons. It thus aligns itself with the idea of globalisation processes, which, although initially viewed in global studies as a contemporary phenomenon, can be observed in the time periods preceding the twentieth century. The constant mobility that existed in Eurasia before the 1500s expanded significantly from that century onwards with the great transatlantic and transpacific voyages, thus ushering in an era of early globalisation. By the eighteenth century, transnational activities, as defined by the editors of this volume, were already present in Europe and its territories; however, they require further attention from the perspective of gender roles and expectations, as well as continuous interaction across geographical borders.

Thus, the three chapters of the first section, Part I, 'Discussing Gender in Transnational and Transatlantic Settings', deal with the transfer of ideas through the translation of works on the role of women in the enlightened societies of the eighteenth century. This is the case of the translation of *Defensa de las mujeres* (1726) by the Spanish thinker Benito Jerónimo Feijoo (Mónica Bolufer), followed by the discussion about the role of women as agents of civilization, progress, and commercial exchange in Scotland (Silvia Sebastiani), and on women's education in late colonial Spanish American newspapers (Mariselle Meléndez). These studies lay the intellectual groundwork for the three essays in Part II, 'Women of Letters Across Frontiers'. In this section, one reads about intellectual women from various European societies (France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands) who participated in projects led by men (Lieke van Deinsen), used writing as a tool for self-discovery through introspection (Anthony La Vopa), and created representations of themselves through writing letters in languages other than their own (Amélie Jaques and Beatrijs Vanacker). In this way, the practice of writing, conventionally common among their male counterparts before and after the eighteenth century, fulfils several functions in the development and expression of the European female subject: self-knowledge, knowledge of others, and negotiation with others and their spaces beyond the traditional gender restrictions at that time. The contributions in this section set the groundwork for one of the most striking examples of cultural mediation: translation.

The four essays in Part III, 'Rewriting Through Translation', approach language and cultural practice as a prime example of cultural mediation in the hands of women of the Enlightenment in Italy, Spain, and Turkey. The dynamics of translation as a commercial practice on the one hand and a political one on the other (travelling, translating, transferring) are manifested in cultural mediation through the writing of

European female travellers to new worlds and cultures (Luisa Simonutti). The translation of plays by Spanish writer María Rosa Gálvez in the early nineteenth century is examined in the following essay. Gálvez's translation involved the dissemination of plays that were, in turn, adapted to a new national context (Elizabeth Franklin Lewis). Disseminating and adapting to the relevant context of the cultural translator, such as Gálvez, is a widely discussed feature in contemporary globalisation studies vis-à-vis the role of mass media. The third essay explores the adaptation involved in the act of translation as an example of the domestication of difference in the hands of an English translator of works originally written in Italian (Mirella Agorni). This translator aimed to promote national identity in children's education. Finally, the study of the activities of a multilingual Greek-Venetian aristocratic woman reveals her own translation project of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1838) as an example of the invisible and unpublished works of Venetian women authors, whose writings deserved to be read and appreciated in their time—and today. The three essays in the last section of this volume, Part IV, 'Mediating Knowledge, Making Publics', focus on female reception based on the question: what did women read? It addresses women's cultural mediation with studies that address bibliographic collections, the circulation of literary texts, and the reception of these texts by women in the eighteenth century. The first essay examines women's participation in reading spaces, encompassing both their roles as listeners and readers in public settings, as well as their involvement in library ownership and their impact on the transnational dissemination of knowledge (Alicia C. Montoya). The following essay in this section examines the circulation and adaptation of printed works intended for female readers in New Spain (Laura Guinot-Ferri). This study demonstrates that the impact of the Enlightenment in Spanish America took on a life of its own, extending beyond the initial adaptations of European works. Finally, the development of literary genres such as the short story and the anti-philosophical novel in France paved the way for female readers to engage with works that transcended strictly religious themes and social moral rules. This female reader-character challenged the moralising control of the Catholic Church in Europe over new reading audiences: women, children, and the uneducated (Patrizia Delpiano).

It should be noted at this point that the female subjects addressed in this collection of essays are, as the editors point out in their critical introduction, women of letters, an identification that implies access to a level of education at the time and to the resources necessary to read, write, and submit their works to local, national, or transnational circulation in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, these female figures were typically found in urban centres, where the discussion of Enlightenment ideas was concentrated. Finally, concerning Spanish America, the female subjects addressed in this volume were European travellers who had crossed the Atlantic or Creoles (*criollas*) who identified with the gender principles and expectations of European societies. One might then ask: was there an Enlightenment for women of social classes and ethnic identities beyond the aristocracy and the emerging European and Creole middle class? This is undoubtedly a topic that exceeds

the scope of this book, but it opens the door to a little-studied area, a new project, and possibly other volumes.

To conclude this review, the spirit of didacticism, a characteristic of the European Enlightenment, the interest in disseminating new knowledge through encyclopaedias, translations, and adaptations beyond the original language in which a work had been written or published, meets with the European woman as author, reader, and promoter of universal knowledge for women of letters in Europe and across the Atlantic. Leonor de Almeida Portugal's and Josefa Amar y Borbón's quotations that open this volume's introductory essay suggestively illustrate the reflections of two eighteenth-century women authors who valued the diversity of the human experience beyond national and cultural borders. Such diversity ('the variety of people and mores', Almeida Portugal in 1780) and the curiosity and excitement of learning the new ('to know what is unusual', Amar y Borbón in 1790) highlight the close relationship between women's traveling, experiencing, learning, mediating, and creating knowledge while sharing it. They also clearly reflect both the editors' project and the contributions of the participating authors in this volume. It is one of the pieces of the grand puzzle awaiting further study, shedding light on the gendering of the eighteenth century and the Enlightenment in Europe and its territories.

L'impero nei musei.
Storie di collezioni coloniali italiane

Beatrice Falcucci
(Pisa: Pacini, 2025)
[ISBN 9791254865002]

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Exhaustive critical accounts of the consequences of European colonialism and empire are almost as old as colonialism and empire themselves. Bartolomé de las Casas' censure of Spanish abuse in America was as singular as it was grounded in its time, with its rejection of violence and calls for evangelisation.[1] Perhaps something similar could be said of Diderot's and Raynal's enlightened rejection of the right to empire and their invitation to resistance.[2] Remote precedents left aside, Frantz Fanon's denunciation of colonialism as 'a systematized negation of the other, a frenzied determination to deny the other any attribute of humanity' is the *locus classicus* of the beginning of postcolonial critique.[3] It is well known that this was followed by thorough research on the continuities of colonial cultural attitudes after the end of empires themselves, guided by the understanding that colonialism and imperialism 'are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination'.[4]

More recently, of course, the interest of specialists has turned to the role of the exhibition of objects obtained from the colonies in the construction of this ideological apparatus, which includes an increasing interest for the history and consequences of the material heritage of colonialism.[5] In her recent book, Beatrice Falcucci stresses that museums are 'pervasive spaces where knowledge and collective memory are constructed' (9). She also highlights the fact that the problematic character of colonial collections, their provenance, exhibition, and possible restitution have attracted

[1] BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS, *Apologética historia sumaria* (Mexico: UNAM, 1967 [1536]), III, 264.
[2] 'Sooner than later, justice will be made. If it were otherwise, I would address the populace. I would say to them: "Peoples, your roars will make your masters tremble. What are you waiting for? For what moment do you reserve your torches and the stones that pave your streets? Throw them!"'. GUILLAUME-THOMAS FRANÇOIS RAYNAL, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (Geneva: Jean-Leonard Pellet, 1780), III, 9, 268. My translation.
[3] FRANTZ FANON, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 182.
[4] EDWARD SAID, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Random House, 1994), 9.
[5] See, for instance, DOMINIC THOMAS, ed., *Museums in Postcolonial Europe* (London: Routledge, 2010), or TIM BARRINGER AND TOM FLYNN, eds, *Colonialism and the Object* (London: Routledge, 2008).

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increasing interest from scholars, both in Italy and in other countries. *L'impero nei musei* aims explicitly at understanding how Italian collections are part of this field. The author attempts to 'reconstruct the history of collections originating in colonies and occupied territories' (Eritrea, Somalia, Libya, Ethiopia), in order to understand how they arrived, who curated them, following which guidelines, and what was the role they played in the construction of an image of *oltremare* in the mainland.

Well acquainted with the ever-increasing historiography on these issues, both in Italy and in other countries, Falcucci structures her findings in an introduction and six chapters. The introduction functions more as a preface, stating the aims of the book. The first chapter ('La materialità dell'impero') is the true introduction to the issues at hand. Here, the author proposes that the objects under study were used to produce national and colonial identities, but also to forge institutions and professional careers inside and outside the university. She also explains the peculiarities of collecting objects in Africa as explored and subjugated by Italians, both before and after the formal institution of empire, as well as some of the characteristics of their exhibition: collections became not only devices for knowledge but also nation-building symbols, displaying the empire in the provinces.

The rest of the book is structured chronologically. Chapter II studies museums and collections during 'the first Liberal age'. Chapter III focuses on the acquisition of colonial objects in the early years of the twentieth century, dealing both with temporary and more stable exhibitions. Chapters IV and V are devoted to the analysis of Fascist policies regarding collection and exhibition of several types of goods linked to empire. The first one deals with colonial museums during Fascism, while the second is aimed at tackling the approach of the regime towards nature in the colonies. A short final chapter is devoted to the posthumous life of empire after the empire had formally ceased to exist: it deals with the conflictive survival of colonialism in public exhibits during the Italian Republic, after the Second World War.

Throughout the book, several subjects reappear more than once and are properly contextualised. Various approaches to objects coming from the colonies and knowledge related to them contributed to bring Africa closer to Italians. Those collections were often fragmentary, scattered all over the Italian peninsula, closely linked to local contexts. They were part of attempts to include the colonies within the interests and activities of different social agents. In some cases, local initiative prevailed. In others, particularly during Fascism, there was an attempt to force the incorporation of those enterprises within a national policy regarding empire. All this was true of diverse kinds of objects coming from the colonies: minerals, plants, animals, ethnographic objects of different types. Some were bought, others pillaged, others yet given as courtly or state gifts. They arrived to the institutions exhibiting them (societies, universities, museums) through donation or acquisition. According to Falcucci, in most cases, particularly in ethnographic collections, 'the objects that were gathered revealed the knowledge (or better, the bias) linked to them' (121): they say

less about Africa than about how Italians constructed several succeeding ideas of Africa. At the same time, they contributed to a popularisation of colonial exoticism.

L'impero nei musei could also be read as a contribution to the debates regarding continuity and discontinuity in Italian history, from the *Risorgimento* to the Republic. Some undertones seem to have been present throughout these periods: the idea that expansion towards Africa was in many ways a 'natural' extension of the unification of Italy, that the country exerted some sort of 'benevolent' domination from the Liberal age to the Fascist empire, enacting a 'civilising mission' that allowed for the extension of an ancient *civiltà* eagerly awaited by the African peoples who would welcome it. Nevertheless, the book also highlights two moments of Italian expansion, a first one that could be described as the colonial 'adventure' of local notable people and learned societies; a second one in which the Fascist colonial empire was showcased as something that would be profitable for all Italians and celebrated by them. The construction of knowledge and the lure of economic opportunity was important in both cases. But during the first period scientists and explorers attempted to convince others of the importance of having colonies, while during Fascism the regime promoted the need for everyone, scientists in particular, to be interested in colonies and empire building. As a consequence, museums acquired a double role: they were sites for science and also places of propaganda. Last but not least, the approach to African peoples was also made of continuity and change. During the Liberal age, an evolutionist paradigm to ethnography was framed through a serial typological approach, according to which Africans were 'contemporary primitives'.[6] During Fascism, the promotion of racial policies from above transformed anthropological and ethnographic collections into 'the most active centres of racism' (195). Other signs of continuity were unintentional: while the Fascist regime attempted to transform and control the narrative of several local institutions displaying colonial objects, its ability to actually enforce those changes was in some cases limited and local actors continued to tell the stories as they were used to telling them.

L'impero nei musei is an important book. In dialogue with current global debates and with the latest findings in Italian historiography, it will probably become an integral part of both. Editorial constraints probably explain that a bibliography and a set of maps are not there, and I cannot help but notice that they would have been useful. Intellectually, there are a few questions that perhaps Falcucci will answer in her future research. Did the people of present-day Libya, Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia intervene in the creation of colonial collections? In which ways did they collaborate, resist, or found ways to tell a different story? How did these attitudes change in the long run, before, during, and after the formal existence of empire? Did at least a part of Africa make it through? In all the mass of objects, articles, books, exhibitions, texts and images spanning more than a century, were all the realities of the continent subsumed by colonial ideology and propaganda? The postcolonial hypothesis is that no real

[6] On this, see the classic JOHANNES FABIAN, *Time and the Other* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

knowledge slipped through the web of oppression. It follows that when we look at those objects we do not see Africa, but the colonial construction of the continent: people deprived of their humanity, nature conceived as pristine and Edenic, etc. I wonder whether it would be possible, and perhaps even anti-colonial, to read that fragmentary evidence 'against the grain' or 'between the lines'.[7] This could not only contribute to tracing the agency of the colonised, but also to discover what Italians during the Liberal, Fascist and Republican ages were unable or unwilling to see about the human and natural realities of Africa.

[7] CARLO GINZBURG, 'Unintentional Revelations: Reading History Against the Grain', in *Exploring the Boundaries of Microhistory*, The Fu Ssu-nien Memorial Lectures, 2015 (Taipei: Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, 2017), 41–81 (also published in *La lettera uccide*, Milan: Adelphi, 2021, 25–44).

Europäischer Buchmarkt und Gelehrtenrepublik: Die transnationale Verlagsbuchhandlung Treuttel & Würtz 1750-1850

Annika Haß
(Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing, 2023)
[ISBN 9783968220741]
[DOI https://doi.org/10.17885/heiup.817]

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'Books are and always have been both economic commodities and carriers of ideological, political, cultural and artistic content, which can be and has been valued and interpreted differently depending on necessity' (107).[1] In her 2023 book, Annika Haß provides an insightful and powerful study of books as a political, diplomatic, ethical, and commercial currency, demonstrating the centrality of the book trade to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European intellectual, cultural, and political history. This slightly modified version of her award-winning dissertation marks the first comprehensive business and family history of the Treuttel & Würtz publishing company. Due to the absence of a company archive, little research had been done on the Strasbourg-born booksellers and publishers. Haß undertook exhaustive international archival research, recovering and systematically analysing catalogues, notes, bills, family records, correspondence, legal documents, pamphlets and publications. In this, her work not only makes a valuable contribution but also serves as an instructive model and guide for future research into booksellers and publishing houses whose archives were previously declared scattered or lost.

Organised in three thematic parts, the book narrates the company's origins, success and decline spanning the century between 1750 and 1850. Beginning with the history of the bi-confessional, German and French speaking, bookselling and publishing milieu of Strasbourg, the study identifies the geographical, confessional, intellectual and cultural conditions for the wide-ranging and long-standing success and network of an international family-run business operating in the locations of Strasbourg (through the predecessor Bauer & Compagnie), Paris (since 1796), and London (since 1817). The central argument posits that Treuttel & Würtz's commercial success and international reputation were grounded in a self-understanding as

[1] 'Bücher sind und waren immer sowohl wirtschaftliche Ware als auch Träger eines ideellen, politischen, kulturellen und künstlerischen Inhalts, der je nach Bedarf unterschiedlich aufgewertet und ausgelegt werden kann und wurde'.

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professional members of a transnational network of educated, conservative-liberal elites, which was strengthened through familial and friendship ties, strategic lobbying with politicians and rulers, and even holding public office. By the mid-nineteenth century, the unity of intersecting enlightened, professional, and protestant values had become inflexible in accommodating the absence of heirs and a diversifying European book market, which was increasingly operating on capitalist principles. The business declined in scope and reputation in the 1840s.

Haß introduced two very productive concepts to describe the European book market and reread the 'republic of letters' through the lens of booksellers and publishers. In analogy with political and diplomatic history, she speaks of the 'diplomacy' and 'aristocracy of the book trade' (76–79, 106–-26). This approach relates Jean-Georges Treuttel (1744–1826) and Jean Godefroi Würtz (1768–1841) to much older studies, such as Daniel Moran's work on their famous German colleague and collaborator, the publisher and politician Johann Gottfried Cotta.[2] Treuttel and Würtz served as mediators and translators between the French and German intellectual and literary spheres, both at home and abroad. The company played a crucial role in supplying and establishing libraries and national bibliographies (217–317). Treuttel and Würtz, along with their predecessor Bauer, applied the organisational practices, professional and political language, and professional confidence developed by their German colleagues to their own business networks in France with great success (50–57), marking the zenith of the business reaching its highest trade volume between 1811 and 1830 (343–44). Such activities included lobbying for exclusive trading rights and privileges, strict adherence to national and regional regulations, the plan for an association of booksellers and publishers, as well as petitions for state-financed public libraries to ensure an indirect subsidy and relief for the national book trade. Those familiar with the German story will find parallels in the essays and pamphlets of Philipp Erasmus Reich, published between 1765 and 1785 in Leipzig, as well as in the works of Friedrich Christoph Perthes, published between 1816 and 1828 in Hamburg and Gotha.[3]

The transnational applicability of German book trade principles marks a significant historiographical contribution, bringing together the well-established field of French book history with German book historical research, which enjoys significantly less institutional representation and national reputation. This much-needed intervention comes as no surprise when considering Haß's supervisors were Frédéric Barbier and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, two exceptional scholars who have made major contributions to the study of cultural transfers between eighteenth and

[2] DANIEL MORAN, *Toward the Century of Words. Johann Cotta and the Politics of the Public Realm in Germany, 1795-1832*, (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).
[3] HAZEL ROSENSTRAUCH, *Buchhandelsmanufaktur und Aufklärung. Die Reformen des Buchhändlers und Verlegers Ph. E. Reich (1717-1787): sozialgeschichtliche Studie zur Entwicklung des literarischen Marktes,* (Frankfurt am Main: Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1986). ULRIKE ANDERSCH, *Die Diskussion über den Büchernachdruck in Deutschland um 1700 bis 1815,* (Heidelberg: Mohr Siebeck, 2018).

nineteenth-century France and Germany.[4] In this vein, the case study of Treuttel and Würtz presents a classical subject in the tradition of *Kulturtransfer,* but it moves beyond familiar concerns, such as translation or literary cosmopolitanism. The business history presents an innovative study of publishing practices as a resource for *transcultural* exchange and identity formation, spanning from the intimacy of the family to regional, national, and transnational networks of professional and intellectual elites. It creates a local and translocal lens through which to intertwine the histories of the ancien régime, Romanticism, translation, the rise of liberalism, political movements, the development of capitalist structures, and the formulation of national and international copyrights.

The value of such a theoretical framework culminates in the third part, where Haß analyses catalogues, especially the trade and publication of translations into French (319–411). Here she explains how the success of the business model and programme fundamentally rested on transcultural, i.e., ethical and cosmopolitan, principles originating in Enlightenment thought. This intertwining of commerce and thought enables Haß to assert that publishers and booksellers were instrumental in the material form and distribution through which ideas and knowledge were mobilised. This has been overlooked for too long in aesthetic, literary, and philological studies of cultural transfers and translations (397). Treuttel and Würtz put into practice the aspirations and ideas of Johann Wolfgang Goethe's conceptualisation of *Weltliteratur* long before the ageing poet began to use and propagate the term in the late 1820s (411). The book, therefore, acts as a methodological intervention in response to a growing interest in material and book historical approaches to literary and political history. Haß's book should be read in connection with Daniel Purdy's *Chinese Sympathies: Media, Missionaries, and World Literature from Marco Polo* (2021) and James Brophy's *Print Markets and Political Dissent: Publishers in Central Europe, 1800-1870* (2024).

The book is as entertaining as it is enlightening due to its well-situated introduction of visual and material source material that are central to the history of publishing, intellectual elites, and translocal exchange and identity formation. It is adorned with an array of images, including maps, portraits, genealogical tables, frontispieces, title pages, and graphs, which each receive succinct yet detailed mention and inclusion in the well-written narrative. The reader not only delves into correspondence and transaction bills, but also into an *album amicorum* (59), multilingual Bibles (402–403), and the artistic self-representation of successful German and French publishers (140–47). Haß's curiosity about the relationship between the trade of books and colonial goods occasionally shines through, as she observes how paper, stationery items, and even tobacco were sold by Bauer, Treuttel, and Würtz, yet evidence of more exotic commodities remains (frustratingly) impossible to find (105, 156). This invites further study into the relationship between books, commodities and objects, their

[4] FRÉDÉRIC BARBIER, *L'empire du livre. Le livre imprimé et la construction de l'Allemagne contemporaire (1815-1914)*, (Paris: Les èditions du Cerf, 1995). HANS-JÜRGEN LÜSEBRINK AND ROLF REICHARDT, eds, *Kulturtransfer im Epochenumbruch: Frankreich-Deutschland 1770 bis 1815* (Leipzig; Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 1997).

visual and material qualities, and their role in mobilising and translating ideas. Ultimately, Annika Haß's work is a timely and persuasive reminder that books were and are a multifaceted currency in the hands of publishers and booksellers that have endured and mediated epistemic changes and transnational exchange throughout history.

Toutes les époques sont dégueulasses *

Laure Murat
(Lagrasse: Verdier, 2025)
[ISBN 978-2-37856-253-3]

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This short book by Laure Murat, Professor of Literature at UCLA, bears a deliberately provocative title: *Toutes les époques sont dégueulasses* (*All Eras are Disgusting*). In reality, it is less a bitter, disillusioned observation on historical times than a repurposed quotation from Antonin Artaud (23), used to alert readers to the many current projects seeking to modify or adapt works from the past. How, indeed, are we to accommodate the sexism of James Bond, the racism of Agatha Christie, or the antisemitism of Roald Dahl (9)? And what should be said of the misogyny of Homer, the antisemitism of Voltaire, the obscenity of Sade, or the homophobia of Marguerite Duras or Simone de Beauvoir (32)? Such questions now confront all lovers of culture, whether literature, music, painting, or more broadly history. One observation imposes itself at the outset: the list of authors who stand in contradiction with contemporary social norms is long, especially after 'the advent of #MeToo and Black Lives Matter' (60).

Faced with this situation, Laure Murat distinguishes between two attitudes: *réécriture* and *récriture*. The first denotes the reinvention, from an existing text, of a new form and vision: translation and adaptation fall under this category (12). The second corresponds to the reworking of a text for the purpose of normalisation (typographical, moral, etc.), without aesthetic intent: this is the case with the corrections introduced by 'sensitivity readers' (13 and 33). *Réécriture* belongs to the realm of art and creative activity: such is the meaning of Pénélope Bagieu's work in the graphic novel *Sacrées sorcières* (Gallimard, 2019), a reinterpretation of Roald Dahl's novel; or of Percival Everett's novel *James* (Doubleday, 2024), a version of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), but told from the perspective of a literate and ironic enslaved man (66). *Récriture*, by contrast, pertains to alteration and correction: for instance, when French publishers modified in 2020 the title of Agatha Christie's novel *Dix petits nègres* to *Ils étaient dix* (16); or when Puffin Books removed terms such as 'mad', 'fat', and 'ugly', deemed insulting (24).

Yet for Laure Murat, to bowdlerise a text is to distort it profoundly (25). In seeking not to cause offence, we prefer to deform the past in order to render it more present—or rather more 'presentable'. But the result is a form of 'historical lie', even

* This review was translated from the French by Emanuele Giusti.

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'falsification', that leads to misreadings and paradoxes, ultimately depriving the oppressed of 'the history of their oppression' (28–29). As she forcefully remarks, 'Turn James Bond into a feminist or even simply a man respectful of women, and in fifty years no one will understand anything about the history of ordinary misogyny in the 1950s' (28). Similarly, erasing the racism or antisemitism of fictional characters such as Miss Marple or Hercule Poirot is to remove important information about their personalities and their conception of society (20). More generally, intervening in a text to combat stereotypes raises questions of limits: how far should one go in updating? (16 and 32). For Laure Murat, every *récriture* is by definition doomed to failure, since it can never perfectly fulfil the programme it sets for itself (22 and 31). The desire to 'pasteurise' books is above all a misunderstanding of texts, even a kind of 'hatred of literature' (33).

In response to such reservations, proponents of *récriture* put forward numerous arguments. First are those who claim to 'protect children'. Thus, in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the repeated use of the 'N-word' (219 times) has ultimately led to the book being banned in schools (58). But for Laure Murat, these 'virtuous publishers' would do better to combat 'the mind-numbing awfulness of television' or the violent images circulating on Facebook (23 and 39). What often lies behind an ostensibly moral *récriture*, she argues, is the question of copyright: without *récriture*, 'best-sellers would risk no longer meeting the expectations of new generations'. Is it a coincidence that Roald Dahl's works were rewritten 'just before the massive sale of the rights to Netflix' (27)? Indeed, in Murat's view, adapting works has become the heir to a supposed 'thought police', characteristic of an era of 'pitiless censorship due to wokism', which Donald Trump calls a form of 'far-left fascism' (27 and 60). Yet *récriture* is less a form of censorship than a proposal that does not erase the original work. True censorship is that exercised by the state, backed by American puritanism: never have demands for bans in public libraries reached such heights (4,240 titles in 2023). Unsurprisingly, heading this blacklist are works relating to 'communities of people of colour' and 'LGBTQI+ issues', such as Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Juno Dawson's *This Book Is Gay* (61).

How, then, can we escape this impasse? For Laure Murat, the priority must be to combat the 'de-historicisation' of texts (36), by warning and guiding readers through appropriate paratextual tools that do not intervene in the text itself: prefaces, afterwords, and footnotes (39 and 50). But here, too, simplification must be avoided. The preface to *Tintin au Congo* (2023), written by Philippe Goddin, secretary-general of the Hergé Foundation from 1989 to 1999, does not fully achieve its aim: it presents Hergé as a man of his time (the first edition dates from 1931), who knew of the country only 'what people said about it at the time (42). But why not recall more clearly that the book was commissioned by Abbé Norbert Wallez to extol the virtues of colonisation and evangelisation, and that after the Liberation Wallez was condemned for collaboration with Nazi Germany (41)? Why not point out that information about the Congo was indeed available at the time, such as the writings of André Gide (*Voyage*

au Congo, 1927) and Albert Londres (*Terre d'ébène*, 1929) (46)? Why not specify that the 'petit nègre speech' was an invention of the colonial administration to allow European officers to make themselves understood by their men (48)? The preface is the ideal tool, but it must, in Laure Murat's view, be written 'critically' (45 and 49); otherwise, it leads to dead ends comparable to those produced by *récriture*.

Botany of Empire
Plant Worlds and the Scientific Legacies of Colonialism

Banu Subramaniam
(Seattle: Washington University Press, 2025)
[ISBN 9780295752457]

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In *Botany of Empire*, Banu Subramaniam traces back the science and practice of botany in order to shed light on, challenge, and overcome the colonial underpinnings of the field. A trained evolutionary biologist and plant scientist, Subramaniam now works as professor of women, gender, and sexuality studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. As the back cover blurb of the book announces, *Botany of Empire* aims at contributing to a sensibility of the deep colonial roots of plant science in pursuance of a transformation of those foundations and a creation of a more socially just practice of science. Self-labelled a reckoning and a manifesto, the book expresses profound criticism of academic, institutionalised biology on the one hand, whilst on the other hand sketching possibilities of how to overcome the colonial legacies of the sciences.

To accomplish this undertaking, the author did not only draw on her own expertise as a biologist and scholar in feminist Science and Technology Studies (STS), but also anchored her argument in concepts and methodologies from a remarkably wide range of fields such as Indigenous Studies, Disability Studies, Queer Studies, History, and literature. This review takes an historian's perspective on Subramaniam's work, which contributes to the emancipation of the history of knowledge from a Eurocentric history of science, that heroised white, male scientists and 'western' epistemologies and social orders while overwriting and erasing other forms and structures of knowledge and society.

The book is divided into an unpaginated prologue, an introduction, and five parts, each consisting of two short chapters followed by an interlude. Breaking the norm of academic writing we are all used to, those interludes combine personal observations of ongoing problems within the sciences with fictional imaginations labelled 'Fables for the Mis-Anthropocene'. Though differing in style and content, these parts are interconnected through their shared aim of channelling the ideas and insights of the preceding chapter into a positive and optimistic imagination of the future. The book culminates in a manifesto ('Abolitionist Futures: A Manifesto for Scientists'), laying out the key points of criticism of the sciences, followed by a charting of steps towards a more equitable and inclusive practice of science concluding in a call for their realisation.

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Part One of the book ('Rootings'), takes the author's personal upbringings in India and her education in the United States as a starting point of her exploration of the coloniality of botany, which is also the title of the second chapter ('The Coloniality of Botany: Reckonings with the History of Science'). Approximately twenty years after Londa Schiebinger's foundational works on bioprospecting in a colonial context and her introduction of the notion of colonial botany as an economic enterprise of European Imperialism, Subramaniam uses this first part to assemble key arguments of the feminist critiques of the history and historiography of science. Even though most of the points made in this part of the book are not entirely new, revisiting the lasting effects of colonialism on the sciences and the world through the personal lens of a person of colour, born in postcolonial India and trained in a 'western' institution proves to be a powerful mode of presentation.

One of the key themes of the book is the challenging of constructed binaries like coloniser/colonised, native/foreign, and nature/culture. Using those conceptual boxes, keeps us stuck in the same framings that we try to overcome. To accomplish this task, Subramaniam argues, we need to be precise, use more words, and understand the life on earth with all its diversity and 'embranglements' (7). When talking about colonialism, words to describe connections oftentimes blur or disguise dynamics of power and create a sense of clear and stable links between people, plants, or scientific disciplines. Instead, her reintroduction of the older term 'Embranglement' highlights tensions and conflicts within connections. Further, drawing on Donna Haraway's concept of 'natureculture' and the findings of Indigenous Studies—both challenge the binary distinction of nature and culture, human and non-human—Subramaniam builds a strong conceptual basis for her argument, that emphasises yet problematises the interconnectedness of the world. In this respect, Subramaniam's approach is comparable to studies of indigenous ecologies, cosmologies, and epistemologies like Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013), which have given visibility to understandings of those naturecultural embranglements, overshadowed, suppressed, and oftentimes erased by the ravages of colonialism.

Learning about nature by experience, by touching, smelling, tasting, or interacting with it in whatever way, shape, or form, is way different from learning about it in university. For Subramaniam, entering graduate school in the United States in the biological department meant a harsh break with what she knew from growing up in India. As a child, her 'love of plants was entangled in a botanical knowledge of the everyday. It was a passionate relationship. It was built around not the wilderness but the plants of the gardens, the roadside, the kitchen, and the lush growth in cracks of the concrete' (129). Plants were integrated into life as digestives, beauty products, medicine, games, and musical instruments. Furthermore, in Indian childhood stories and traditional epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, plants are active agents. In contrast, American Academia did neither see nor value the concrete jungle as nature, and even plants Subramaniam knew got latinised—Linnean names creating a 'world in a different tongue' (29). Since this personal experience probably maps on the

experiences of many people from the colonial and postcolonial world, which saw their realities being replaced by a system that claimed to be natural and universal, Subramaniam impressively manages to make her line of thought accessible yet preserving the compelling strength of her argument.

The second part of the book ('Kinship Dreams|Classifying Plant Systematics') critically revisits the process in which systems of classification and taxonomy ordered, transformed, and reduced diverse, complex, and dynamic plant worlds into biological knowledge. Core of the argument of this chapter is the understanding of naming as a practice of power. Even though this has been a well-established perspective in the post-Foucauldian history of science, the chapter is a necessary step in the journey the author takes her readers on. Coming from a Christian tradition, which understood naming of plants and animals as a divine power—Adam is given the power to name animals (86)—botanists working on behalf of a European monarch claimed a 'natural' and God-given power to name (87). From the early beginnings of colonialism, when Christopher Columbus named the first Island he landed on 'San Salvador', knowing that the local indigenous people called it 'guanahani', to the nineteenth century, when Cecil Rhodes put his own name on places and plants, Linnaean naming practice overwrote a plethora of names, erasing their traditional, practical designations (138). In this part of the book, Subramaniam's streamlined argumentation comes at the expense of painting a nuanced picture of the process at the end of which the Linnean binomial system beat its competitors and became the standard model of classification. Still, not least because the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature continues to regard Linnaeus' works as the official starting point of botanical nomenclature (139), it is reasonable to centre a critical analysis of taxonomical practice around his system and its legacy. Furthermore, Subramaniam is siding with abolitionist and decolonial movements all over the world in her call for a revision of plant names, which is held up by 'western' institutions and policies (97). Even in the cases where we can reconstruct local names for plants, animals or places, overcoming the institutionalised monopolies of the power of naming remains a tenacious and complicated, though not impossible, process.

The third part of the book ('Floral Dreams| Sexing Reproductive Biology') lays out an argument about the human anthropomorphisation of plants and plant sexuality. Drawing on and expanding the foundational studies of Londa Schiebinger, Subramaniam argues that humans looked for human characteristics in the plant world, which was in turn used to naturalise what humans saw as human biology. In doing so, early scientists created the idea of the biological as natural and universal. This was consequential and problematic for a multitude of reasons. First, regarding sex and sexuality, this vision 'was shaped by normative ideas of sexuality premised on binary sex and cis-heterosexuality. Human sexuality was naturalized and universalized through its imposition onto the worlds of plant sexuality' (136). Even though this chapter of the book is mainly about Linnaeus and the legacy of his Latin binomial taxonomical system, Subramaniam is right in tracing the underlying problem of

anthropomorphisation back to Nehemiah Grew (1641–1712). Today sometimes labelled the 'father of plant anatomy', he must in this context also be seen as the initiator of labelling plant parts male or female; notably without any other option. Grew, in ascribing maleness to the plant because the stamen looked like, and functioned like, a penis did in animals, laid the foundation on which, by the mid-eighteenth century, Linnaeus had created a hierarchical system of classification which reproduced and reinforced traditional notions of gender hierarchies and thus 'incorporated fundamental aspects of human social order onto the natural worlds' (136). When reading Grew's '*Anatomy of Plants*, first published in London in 1682, one barely finds a paragraph of plant descriptions without metaphors about sex and marriage or uses of words like penis, testicles, or sperm.

Linnaeus' system, building on this tradition of a highly sexualised view on plants, made those metaphors the main differentiating feature for flowers. Instead of using the established nonsexual terminology of stamen and pistils, he not only introduced *andria* (from Greek for husband—*aner* [ἀνήρ]) and *gynia* (from Greek for wife—*gyne* [γυνή]), but made the 'marriage' and sex life of plants the central theme and even title of his *Nuptaiae Plantarum*. As Londa Schiebinger has shown in *Nature's Body* (1993), Linnaeus' system, in addition to humanising and sexualising flowering plants, contributed heavily to a reinforcement of Eurocentric and patriarchal ideals and understandings of family structures. Expanding on his hierarchy of plants, which used their male parts as the primary markers for classes, ending in andria (male), with orders in the second rank ending in gynia (female), Linnaeus also went on classifying humans, thus laying the scientific foundations to a racist worldview that saw Europeans and European men in particular as the apex of civilisation and humanity. By revisiting this process in the history of science, which overwrote older epistemologies and practices of naming, categorising and ordering, Subramaniam situates herself and her research in a tradition of feminist STS and critiques of science. Taking the interwovenness of the categories of gender, race, class, and colonialism and their rooting in the sciences of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a basis, she makes a compelling case for the need of intersectional and interdisciplinary approaches to tackle the problems of racism, sexism, xenophobia, and transphobia, still very apparent today.

As I mentioned, another way in which *Botany of Empire* follows an interdisciplinary approach is by weaving bits of imaginary literature in between chapters of the book. Here I would like to pick out one of those stories as an example of how Subramaniam beautifully manages to channel the learnings of the preceding chapter into a fictional yet inspiring story. In the Interlude 'Fables for the Mis-Anthropocene: The Queer Vegennials' (170–73), a transnational group of young plant lovers organise for the mission of undoing the colonial gaze (170). For this, they initiate the 'Metaphor Project', which, to pursue a queer politics, imagines new models for humanity inspired by plants' capabilities. In the same way early plant scientists used what they believed to see in plants as a basis for naturalising human sex, gender, and sexuality, the Australian branch of the Queer Vegennials uses the Dungowan bush

tomato with its fluid breeding system as a metaphor for their project towards a community embracing a vast variety of sexes, genders, sexualities, and socialities (171). By historicising and deconstructing the scientific biological knowledge of Grew, Linnaeus, and their contemporaries in the first step, and then following it up with a quasi-utopian, but nevertheless realistic, imagination of a future worth aspiring to, Subramaniam elegantly manages to break out of a mode of criticism that is stuck in a negative view on the past without showing a way forward.

The following part of the book ('Pangean Dreams|Mapping Biogeography') is concerned with the echoes of the reconfiguration of environments through the lasting impact of the Columbian Exchange. At least since the works of Alfred Crosby and Richard Grove in the 1970s and 1980s, European Imperialism has been understood not merely as a socio-political, cultural, and economic process, but also as an ecological one, reshuffling global biota (184). Driven by colonial enterprises and accelerated by industrialised globalisation, plants and people, but also microorganisms and animals were displaced into completely new regions of the globe. For people in the west, immigrants, foreigners and products of the global have subsequently be seen as problems and threats to the local. Drawing on the work of Édouard Glissant, Subramaniam understands "the West" not as a geographical space, but a historical and political project linked to colonialism, the Enlightenment and universalism that organised the world into a hierarchical system of centre and periphery. Interestingly, she makes use of the concept of 'rememory' from Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* (1987), to grasp how past experiences remain present and active and are imminent to space. For her, the hauntings of colonialism remain engrained in the field of biology, which created the idea of 'invasion biology' predicated on a binary view of nature in place and nature out of place. Even though the history of knowledge offers a number of concepts for the spatiality of knowledge like Christian Jacob's 'lieux de savoir', Subramaniam's use of an idea from a novel dealing with the physical, psychological, and emotional consequences of slavery is a clever manoeuvre, shedding light on the deeply personal impact of repressive systems. Bringing all of those thoughts together, this part of the book criticises biology's invasion terminology, which, by labelling 'invasive' plants as evil even though it was humans bringing them to new places, practices botanical amnesia and rings xenophobic alarms (190). In line with the book's rejection and problematisation of binaries like native/foreign, the chapter shows how in discourses about invasive species to the United States, the term 'native' was reworked. This rhetoric did not only make a plant like the tumbleweed, brought from Russia, into a national icon, but also reframed white settlers as 'native'. In her account of the problems of this perspective on biogeography, Subramaniam makes an important point, emphasising that all undertakings of thinking and working against those racist, imperialist, and xenophobic undercurrents need to start with historicising and contextualising them.

Botany of Empire is an important contribution; not only to biology and botany, but more broadly to science and its histories. Drawing on, connecting, and critiquing

a variety of thoughts and disciplines, Subramaniam manages a balancing act between personal experiences and scientific criticism, between the subliminal and the obvious, between micro and macro. The value of the book does not lie in highly original and new arguments, but in the way it tells its story. From her citational politics to inter- and transdisciplinary methodologies, to raising visibility for suppressed communities and epistemologies, to the use of imaginary literature to make change thinkable and thus pursuable, Subramaniam created a truly inspirational piece of work, rattling and shaking dated assumptions of how to make science. Of course, we need facts and data on which to build our arguments, but it is stories that drive people towards change, especially when faced with resistance. *Botany of Empire* helps us to reconsider and transform the history of science into a history of knowledge, moving away from one natural history towards many stories about nature(culture). As historians, we need to ask new questions, find new approaches and perspectives to be able to tell these rich yet imperfect and conflicting stories. And I agree with Banu Subramaniam that, indeed, as a categorical imperative of being scientists, 'tell them, we must' (Prologue).

Making Italy Anglican.
Why the Book of Common Prayer Was Translated into Italian

Stefano Villani
(New York: Oxford University Press, 2022)
[ISBN 9780197587737]

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In 1685, the same year as the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the printer Moses Pitt published in London the first Italian edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*, under the title *Il libro delle preghiere publiche ed amministrazione de' sacramenti ed altri riti e cerimonie della chiesa, secondo l'uso della Chiesa Anglicana; insieme col Saltero over i salmi di David, come hanno da esser recitati nelle chiese. E la forma e modo di fare, ordinare e consacrare vescovi, presbiteri e diaconi*.

The translation followed decades of attempts driven, on the one hand, by the desire of certain Italian Protestants to rekindle the flame of religious dissent within the Peninsula, and, on the other, by the interest of English ecclesiastics in promoting an alternative to Catholicism on the European continent.

Within the framework of diplomatic relations with Venice, James I's ambassador Henry Wotton, in 1603, launched an attempt to establish a clandestine Protestant community in the lagoon city, involving in the project the Servite friars Fulgenzio Micanzio and Paolo Sarpi, as well as the Lucchese exile in Geneva, Giovanni Diodati. Their intention was to craft a liturgy distinct from the Catholic rite, employing only selected portions of the Roman Missal. The difficulties they encountered—at a critical moment in relations between Venice and Rome, culminating in the papal Interdict of 1606—left the project unfinished, though it was later resumed by the new ambassador, William Bedell. Bedell intended to create in the city a national Church of Anglican character, for which he produced an Italian translation of the Anglican liturgy, unfortunately now lost. This was only one among the many failed or abortive attempts ('This is a story of failure'; 1) to 'Anglicanise' the religion of Italians through the translation of the *Book of Common Prayer*.—attempts whose expectations, dynamics, and challenges Stefano Villani's book reconstructs with effectiveness and a wealth of documentation, setting them in relation to the shifting aims pursued by the Church of England in its various confrontations with the Church of Rome. The story of each edition is elucidated in detail, distinguishing between genuinely new editions and, more often, corrected and updated versions based on earlier texts. More importantly, thanks to this documentary excavation, the biographical trajectories of minor figures—little known yet often situated at the centre of extensive international networks—also come to light. Regardless of the varying conditions and possibilities for implementing a

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project of 'Anglicanising' the religion of Italians, it may seem surprising that efforts were directed not toward biblical translation—which would have been associated with a form of grassroots education—but rather toward presenting Italian religious and political elites with a liturgical form that embodied the essence of the Church of England and was believed to be closer to the apostolic model. The Church of England held that disseminating an Italian translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* could trigger a significant transformation in the Italian political and religious landscape, positioning itself as an exemplary model to be emulated either in separating from the Church of Rome or in reforming it from within. This perspective helps to explain why the aspiration to promote reform 'from above' suggests that this episode is best interpreted primarily through the dynamics of political history—that is, within the sphere of relations between Church and State, and between England and Italy.

The editorial history of the *Book of Common Prayer* was therefore entirely different from the support given to the dissemination and distribution of the Holy Scriptures and of religious propaganda texts in which the Protestant countries of Europe had repeatedly engaged with regard to Italy. The possibility of supporting the translation of the Bible into the Italian vernacular, together with the first translation of the *Book of Common Prayer*, saw an initial joint attempt during Henry Wotton's ambassadorship in Venice. Indeed, both the first Italian translation of the liturgy of the Church of England in the lagoon city and a new edition of Giovanni Diodati's translation of the New Testament (printed in Geneva and repeatedly used as a literary and linguistic model for the translation of the Anglican liturgy) date to 1608. Diodati's involvement in the British projects for Venice, his brief stay in the city, and his connections with Wotton and Sarpi constituted a 'last-ditch' attempt to propagate Protestantism through what was still considered a potential point of entry for Reformed ideas into the Italian peninsula. The British ambassador's support for Diodati's project to provide a biblical text alternative to the one approved by the Church of Rome—and banned to the laity for nearly half a century by the Council of Trent—indeed led to the choice of a pocket-sized edition (*in-dodicesimo*), so that it could be distributed and read by the widest possible audience.

The 1685 edition—the first complete Italian edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*—promoted by Edward Brown, former chaplain of the Levant Company, was profoundly shaped by Sarpi's legacy. The translation, carried out by Giovan Battista Cappello, the son of a man exiled to London on religious grounds, functioned as an instrument of political propaganda intended to demonstrate the decorum and dignity of the Church of England, and presented as a gift to the new (Catholic) sovereigns James II and Mary of Modena. Yet Brown's edition was above all an attempt to reconstitute an Italian Protestant church in London—an important, though fluctuating, centre of theological debate which, after its suppression under Mary I, had been refounded during the reign of Elizabeth I, only to dissolve again in the mid-seventeenth century. The Anglo-Venetian context of the early seventeenth century that led to William Bedell's translation is reconstructed by Villani in the first section of the

book. Although no copies of the original text have survived, it likely left a substantial trace in the manuscript prepared by Alessandro Amidei—a Tuscan Jew converted to Christianity—for his edition produced in the late 1660s.

During the eighteenth century, the Italian translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* became, in fact, a kind of language manual. Frequently presented as a useful tool for linguistic learning, it was reprinted in 1733, 1796, and several times after 1820. The thorough knowledge of the text expected of every English person of good family made it an excellent resource for practicing and learning Italian. At the same time, however, it constituted a written declaration of the piety of the Church of England, functioning as a potent instrument of anti-Catholic polemic that any young English visitor to Italy was deemed well advised to possess. At the height of the Grand Tour, it served as a warning against the corrupting influence of peninsular Catholicism and the moral customs it was thought to represent.

In 1831, the publication of the eighteenth-century revision of the text was promoted by George Frederick Nott and printed by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in Livorno—a port city, home to multiple confessions, and the only permanent presence of the Church of England on the peninsula. The intended recipients of the new edition (reprinted three more times within a few years) were Italian intellectuals and clergy, with the aim of encouraging internal debate within Catholicism. Later, in another outpost of the Church of England in the Mediterranean, Malta, a new edition of the text was issued. These initiatives formed part of a broader strategy to manifest British superiority within a framework of colonial ambitions, in which the United Kingdom's military and cultural expansion was complemented by the creation of numerous missionary societies of the national church, as well as other nonconformist and interdenominational organisations. The English religious and political elite felt invested with a religious civilising mission that was closely connected to the country's imperial ambitions. Within this horizon, Anglicanism developed as a proposal midway 'between Catholicism and Protestantism while emphasizing its close links to the primitive theological tradition and early patristics' (7). Shortly before the mid-nineteenth century, the translation and printing of the *Book of Common Prayer* once again involved not the Italian Protestant church in London, but a small group of politically exiled individuals with Protestant sympathies, who also founded an Italian Evangelical Union, the periodical *L'Eco di Savonarola*, and organised Bible-reading meetings.

On Italian soil, a further and more bitter failure was the attempt to persuade the leadership of the Waldensian Church to adopt the *Book of Common Prayer* and to orient this small Protestant church toward an episcopal structure and Anglican liturgy. For centuries, the Waldensians had been idealised by the British as custodians or living remnants of authentic primitive Christianity, and as such were supported through diplomatic, economic, and military means during repeated persecutions by the Duke of Savoy and the King of France.

The second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth marked a period in which the doors were opened to the arrival of Bibles, New Testaments, and popular edifying publications in support of missionary work. This development characterised other ecclesiastical denominations—primarily Methodist and Baptist—alongside the Anglican Church, from which they differed, including in their choice of texts to disseminate. Increasing literacy during this period also allowed these texts to reach a broader segment of the population.

Ultimately, Villani's book, through the magnifying lens of the Italian editions of the *Book of Common Prayer*, illuminates two fronts in a story that no longer concerns only the history of a book. On the one hand, it sheds light on the relations between England and Protestantism in the Peninsula, revealing both the support for its aspirations and the difficulties encountered, as well as the rise and fall of churches and groups, including exiles for religious or political reasons and Italian emigrants in London and the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, it illuminates the strategies of the Church of England and its often- limited understanding of Italian religious and political culture. This attitude was frequently due to the 'English lack of understanding of the extent to which Catholic culture had shaped the Italian identity and relations between church and state since the Counter-Reformation' (166). It was therefore often an idealistic and somewhat unrealistic struggle to promote a form of *ecclesiae* through its liturgy, along a path continually disrupted by internal upheavals and stormy relations with the Church of Rome, which had assumed the role of a civilising power not only in Europe but throughout the world.

American Globalization, 1492–1850: Trans-Cultural Consumption in Spanish Latin America

Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, Ilaria Berti, Omar Svriz-Wucherer, eds
(New York: Routledge, 2022)
[ISBN 9781032024431]

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This book, edited by Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, Ilaria Berti, and Omar Svriz-Wucherer, seeks to analyse almost four centuries of consumerism in the American continent. It tries to counter a historiographical trend that has placed great emphasis on the flow of products and merchandise from the American continent to the rest of the world, and in particular to Europe. This book rather seeks to put on the table the impact that the insertion of an entire continent had on global networks and markets during the Modern Age. This collective work, which foregrounds a multifaceted perspective based on material history, economic history, environmental history, and the history of violence, runs through a series of thirteen chapters, and is divided into three complementary parts. These range respectively from the institutional perspective to food products and non-consumable goods and are organically surrounded by the introduction and final reflections written by Professor Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla of the Pablo de Olavide University of Seville.

The political economy of the Iberian empires in the New World is the subject of the first part, which, in four chapters, seeks to analyse the introduction of Eurasian products into the emerging markets of the New World. Starting with a strong editorial position, Alejandro García-Montón ('Trans-Imperial, Transnational and Decentralized. The Traffic of African Slaves to Spanish America and Across the Isthmus of Panama, 1508–1651') deals with enslaved people—one of the main commodities that left the Old World for America, a commodity that would radically affect the history of the New World in all its aspects, from the economic production of its resources to the contemporary cultural and demographic configuration of the continent. The trafficking of enslaved people radically transformed the early modern world by being one of the first regulated commercial practices at a trans-imperial and transnational level, representing in its Iberian approach a projection of the political economy itself of the entire Spanish Empire, but above all by generating a fundamental economic and cultural impact that can be seen throughout the continent and specifically in the author's case study, which is the isthmus of Panama.

Subsequently, José Manuel Díaz Blanco (""The Reader's Information" and Norte de la Contratación: The Translation and Circulation of Commercial Information Between

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Seville and London Around 1700') presents one of the most elegant chapters of the entire volume, with an interesting approach to the circuits of circulation of commercial information between enemy colonial powers; it focuses on the translation of a Spanish text that dealt with the Seville-based Casa de Contratacíon, written by José de Veitia in 1672 and translated as *The Spanish Rule of Trade to the West Indies* by John Stevens circa 1700. With a quick pace and supported by a series of images that allow us to better visualise his plot (being the only chapter of the entire work that includes more than three images or maps, in a volume with such a clearly descriptive character), the author leads us to reflect on information networks in early modernity and, likewise, to recognise the processes of adaptation and training in the commercial and institutional structures that merchants had to undergo to trade with their foreign counterparts.

The globalisation of American consumer markets has not been without paradoxes. Manuel Díaz-Ordóñez ('European Imperialism, War, Strategic Commodities and Ecological Limits. The Diffusion of Hemp in Spanish South America and Its Ghost Fibers') tells us that an essential component of the first globalisation was the availability of the materials to sustain the maritime infrastructure that enabled transatlantic travel. In this order of ideas, the consumption, processing, and, above all, production of hemp was one of the main objectives of the various European empires in the New World. But as the author notes, cultivating this plant ran counter to the mercantilist theses established between Europe and America. The Spanish Empire was determined to find a way to set up these plantations, but it could only secure an effective supply of raw material for the ships of the Pacific Ocean, supplied from Chile, while those of the Atlantic, such as the Havana shipyard, depended exclusively on the production of the Iberian Peninsula or even on imports from Russia. The author also highlights the ecological conditions that had to be overcome to maintain the flow of production of this raw material in the American continent.

At the end of the first part, Amelia Almorza Hidalgo ('Spanish Women as Agents for a New Material Culture in Colonial Spanish America') presents a section on Spanish women who travelled to the New World during the period of conquest and colonisation and became agents of change by adopting a new material culture. The author's work essentially seeks to connect the flow of people with the flow of objects during the first globalisation and the establishment of a colonial society in the New World, detaching itself somewhat from the general topics that have been discussed about the conquest and then exploitation of the American lands of the Spanish Empire. Instead, Almorza Hidalgo exposes how this globalisation began to be transformed through the establishment of markets and consumers of manufactured products on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In this space the role of Spanish women who travelled to the New World and their consumption patterns allow to demonstrate the fundamental impact on the economy and on colonial society of this transit of objects, especially fine fabrics, and that the movement of people was directly connected to the movement of goods.

Gregorio Saldarriaga ('The Introduction of Poultry Farming to the Indigenous People of the New Kingdom of Granada, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries') opens the second part of this volume by discussing the introduction and diffusion of poultry for human consumption in the Kingdom of New Granada, with a focus on indigenous settlements during the first colonial stage until the mid-seventeenth century. From extensive archival documentation, the importance of this agricultural product imported from the Old World becomes evident. Unlike other livestock such as cows, sheep, or pigs, was transversal to all castes and ethnic groups in America due to its capacity for reproduction and maintenance in small spaces. The author also explains how the absence of taxation in poultry breeding and trade enabled indigenous communities to integrate this economic practice and benefit from it in a significant way, as observed throughout the territory of New Granada, with certain regional differences in demographic terms. This is an example of a complex economic network that emerged from the introduction of a transatlantic product.

Early exchanges between Europeans and Native Americans were not peaceful; to speak of barter or ransom is, according to Luis Miguel Córdoba Ochoa, an elegant way of describing the brutal phases of exchange during the first part of the conquest of the American continent. In this chapter ('Gifts, Imitation, Violence and Social Change. The Introduction of European Products in the First Decades of the American Conquest'), addressing how these practices contributed to the social changes brought about by the colonial order, he takes us through various primary sources to different spaces and moments of the early conquest. From the Caribbean through the Darién to Peru, Córdoba Ochoa discusses the social conditions that were violently imposed through indoctrination campaigns by the Church, and through the population's submission to the new social order of the Spanish colonial administration. He shows the slow but sustained transformation of the use of violence into forms of consumption and commerce that were functional toa new social hierarchy.

The next chapter, written by Bethany Aram and Manel García-Falcón ('Rice Revisited From Colonial Panama. Its Cultivation and Exportation'), focuses on what is today one of the essential products of Latin American agriculture and gastronomy: rice. In the specific case studied in this chapter, rice reached the Isthmus of Panama through the cultural influence of the enslaved people of West Africa, who turned their production and consumption into a perennial and crucial effect of early globalisation in this region of Central America, while highlighting the decisive role of African blacks and Creoles in the consolidation of the first urban and agricultural centres of the isthmus. The authors add that, due to the beneficial geographical location of this region, this product expanded and thrived in other spaces of Hispanic America, taking into account the various species of the plant, its form of trade, and its final recipients.

Ilaria Berti, on the other hand ('In the Kitchen. Slave Agency and African Cuisine in the West Indies'), presents an analysis of the Caribbean colonies, whether Spanish or British, where through the cooks and kitchens it is possible to trace the agency that the enslaved people imprinted on the gastronomy of the region as a testimony of their

African heritage. When they mixed with new products and raw materials it resulted in dishes that are generally seen as traditional or typical of a region but in reality, they are the outcome of a network of trade and economic and cultural exchange based on a system of colonial domination. These dishes, then, cease to be considered typical and rather become a global culinary amalgam as is the case of 'ajiaco' in Cuban cuisine.

Closing this second part on empire food is the chapter by Rebecca Earle ('Food, Colonialism and the Quantum of Happiness'), which traces various strategies from the European colonial metropolis for introducing diverse food products originating in America or Oceania into the diet of their subjects. From failed attempts such as arrowroot to plants that are still in vogue such as quinoa, Earle focuses on two star products—the breadfruit from Oceania and the potato from the Andes—whose nutritional qualities were almost immediately clear to Europeans. The chapter narrates in a very informative way the processes of transplantation, with all the logistics that it required, of both crops to other continents, with the aim of sustaining the population with a resistant, nutritious, and cheap product. Again, from a colonialist logic, the physical wellbeing of the primary labour force was fundamental for the extraction of resources, as Earle shows, which in the terms of the Enlightenment, following authors such as the Marquis de Chastellux and Malthus, would be considered the foundation of public happiness.

Beginning the last part of this volume is the chapter written by José L. Gasch-Tomás ('Elites, Women and Chinese Porcelain in New Spain and in Andalusia, circa 1600') who, based on an important documentary collection, seeks to refute the generalised conception about the transit and consumption of Chinese porcelain in European markets. Despite being considered a luxury product acquired only by the elites, and despite its entry into the European economy through the commercial companies of the northern European empires, Gash underscores that it was actually through the route of the Manila galleon—connecting the Philippines to New Spain and from there to Seville—that, since the beginning of the seventeenth century, this commodity flooded the European markets. The author also compares the patterns of consumption of porcelain both in the Old and in the New World, demonstrating that this product was much more popular among various strata of the population in Mexico than in Seville. This result also sheds light on the demand and the importance of the trade route that sustained the Chinese porcelain trade.

The next chapter ("'That in the Reducciones Had Been Noise of Weapons …' The Introduction of Firearms in the Seventeenth-Century Jesuit Missions of Paraguay') examines how some of the most elaborate European manufactures spread into the most remote regions of the American continent. Omar Svriz-Wucherer discusses the arrival of firearms at the missions and the reductions that the Jesuits established in Paraguay, especially during the beginning of the seventeenth century. In an interesting digression, the author proposes the possible legal or illegal trade routes where perhaps one of the most advanced technological products in Europe came into the hands of some of the most isolated indigenous communities on the continent, thus generating

a disruption in the social fabric of these communities and in the ways in which the war developed throughout the continent. Fernando Quiles closes this part of the book with a chapter on the annual Portobello fair ('Transatlantic Markets and the Consumption of Sevillian Art in the Viceroyalty of Peru. The Portobello Fairs in Tierra Firme (Seventeenth Century)') and its implications for regional trade in the Caribbean, continental, transatlantic, with its connection with Seville, and ultimately, global. The witnesses of this event, which took place once a year in the city on the Isthmus of Panama, tell us that no monarch had in his domains a fair as powerful as the one of Portobello, and that it was the envy of all nations: here sometimes twenty, thirty, or forty million pesos in gold and silver could be seen, as well as an endless number of agricultural products of all the corners of Hispanic America (269). In addition to its recognised economic value, the author, by focusing on the consumption of Sevillian art in the viceroyalty of Peru, emphasises the importance of the development of the arts and the exchange of works and styles that occurred at the fair throughout the seventeenth century, which served as a space for both economic and cultural exchange.

In conclusion, this volume represents a new necessary benchmark on the interplay between the Americas and consumption during the early modern globalisation. The three parts of this volume, along with the contributions of each author, fulfil their mission by allowing us to rethink in a more balanced way the main conceptions about the integration of American markets and products into a global economy, and by observing this process from the perspective of the insertion and consumption of products and manufactures from the Old World in the new continent. Although the volume could have benefited from the inclusion of graphic and visual elements that would have made its historical analysis clearer and more effective, it collectively achieves its objective of reconsidering these commodity exchanges.

However, as we are reminded by the last chapter, authored by the general editor Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla ('From Goods to Commodities in Spanish America. Structural Changes and Ecological Globalization from the Perspective of the European History of Consumption'), this volume tacitly raises questions about the present in which it is written as well as about the past to which it refers—like any serious history book. As such, it allows us to rethink and understand the scope of contemporary economic dynamics through the study of consumerism in the United States. Transoceanic trade, the shift in trade poles, and the need to analyse demand and consumption variables are indeed questions that can and should be applied to the economy of the first centuries of early globalisation, as well as to our present.