

THE DIALECTICS
of **ORIENTALISM**
in **EARLY**
MODERN EUROPE

Edited by

MARCUS KELLER

JAVIER IRIGOYEN-GARCÍA



The Dialectics of Orientalism
in Early Modern Europe

Marcus Keller · Javier Irigoyen-García
Editors

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Introduction: The Dialectics of Early Modern Orientalism

Marcus Keller and Javier Irigoyen-García

Accounts of civilizations in the East have been the subject of European historiography and other discourses since Antiquity. One of the major effects of Edward Said's influential and much-contested study *Orientalism* is that, since its first publication in 1978, European writings about the East throughout the ages, as far as they concern the imaginary construct of the Orient, are commonly subsumed under the term that Said chose as the title of his work.¹ Even Said's most fervent critics must contend, one way or another, with his main thesis that Western discourse about the Orient has been more than anything else about the formulation of an Occident, no less imaginary: "Orientalism is—and does not simply represent—a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world."² The studies assembled in this book all take up, directly or indirectly, Said's thesis, and the volume as a whole seeks to re-engage with a work that early modernists first ignored, and then treated with scant, often disapproving attention.

This late and cool reception might be related to Said's own scant attention to early modernity.³ Focusing on modern Orientalism, whose

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beginning he situates at the end of the eighteenth century, Said acknowledges early on the necessity of limiting his study in the interest of mounting a forceful argument: “it has seemed to me foolish to attempt an encyclopedic narrative history of Orientalism, first of all because [...] there would be virtually no limit to the material I would have had to deal with [and] because the narrative model itself did not suit my descriptive and political interests.”⁴ Rather than holding Said’s choice against *Orientalism*, the contributors to this volume see it as an opportunity to think along the lines of its major propositions and develop them to make them productive for the understanding of early modern Orientalism in all its complexity. This renewed engagement appears particularly appropriate at a time when many of the received notions and fantasies about the Orient, if not the name itself, are more alive and spread wider than ever because of evolving geopolitical tensions and new modes of communication. In scope and radicalness, these twenty-first century transformations are not unlike those affecting Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including the continent’s attitude to the Muslim parts of the world. The endurance of Orientalist discourse, in spite of an ever-growing library of works that have exposed its ideological bias in the vein of Said’s pioneering study, in itself seems justification enough for this collection and its contributions to a differentiated critique of Orientalism as well as to the historical and theoretical refinement of its underpinnings.

I.

It took scholars of early modern Europe some twenty years to critically engage with *Orientalism*. In *Worldly Goods*, published in 1996, Lisa Jardine still makes no reference to Said even though her study can be read as an indirect critique of *Orientalism*, demonstrating the material and cultural influence of the East on Renaissance Europe.⁵ In *Islam in Britain*, published in 1998, Nabil Matar is among the first who takes Said’s “ground-breaking study” into account, pointing out that it does “not touch on the Renaissance encounter between England (nor the rest of Europe) and the Muslims.”⁶ He therefore does not consider it any further. One year later, *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* appeared, a first interdisciplinary collection of essays investigating medieval and early modern attitudes toward the Middle East.⁷ More heavily focused on the Middle Ages than on early modernity, the volume is the trailblazer for the in-depth examination of pre-modern Orientalism

from a multidisciplinary and cross-century perspective that requires the collaboration of a group of specialists. In this sense, the present volume follows in the footsteps of *Western Views*. In their introduction, the editors David Blanks and Michael Frassetto emphasize the qualitative change in representations of the East that occurred with the Renaissance, a proposition that by now seems widely accepted and that *Dialectics* also reaffirms. Blanks and Frassetto also observe that modern scholars have had a tendency “to simply assume a degree of enmity toward Islam by medieval and early modern writers.”⁸ Correcting this perception, they see an “East-West dynamic” at work that begins in the fifteenth century and “continues to have tremendous force in the late twentieth century.”⁹ While this proposition entails an indirect critique of Said’s thesis that Orientalists have created an irreconcilable dichotomy between East and West since Antiquity, David Blanks concedes that “whatever else one may think of Edward Said and those who have followed his path, it is difficult to disagree with their basic contention that Western discourse has constructed an Orient that is often completely disconnected from the ‘real’ Orient (whatever that is).”¹⁰

Early modernists’ belated engagement with Said’s study during the second half of the 1990s quickly grew into a thorough revision of *Orientalism*’s minimalist treatment of the early modern period in the following decade. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, early modernists have examined Orientalism from different angles in light of Said’s critique. To varying degrees, they have dismissed Said’s proposition that the Western discourse on the Orient was exempt of any sincere interest in the cultures of the Islamic World. Intellectual historians were among the first to plead for a more differentiated treatment of early modern European discourse about civilizations in the Middle East. Recognizing Said as “one of the most important thinkers on the intersection of cross-cultural and intellectual history,” Nancy Bisaha takes issue with his thesis that any discourse on the Orient is merely a foil for the construction of the West. Focusing on Italian humanist writings about the Ottoman Turks and Islam, she insists on the “more open-minded views of a large number of [Renaissance] orientalists.” Bisaha emphasizes the plurality of humanist discourse on the Turk and argues that “humanists revolutionized Western views of Islam.”¹¹ In the same vein, Margaret Meserve, analyzing humanist historiography of the sixteenth century, critically observes that subsuming all writings about the Orient under Orientalism as the expression of a “monolithic Occident” turns the West into “an entity as undifferentiated

and removed from reality as the Orient it is meant to have fashioned.”¹² Meserve also points out that “detecting Orientalist discourse in the early Renaissance is more problematic, for the very basic reason that there was no one Oriental ‘other’ in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.”¹³ However, regardless of how pertinent the points of early modern critique of *Orientalism* are, most scholars seem to agree—and the contributors to the present volume are no exception—that early modern Orientalism exists and is significantly different and distinct from that of other periods.

II.

“Early modernity” is a notoriously fluid term and any periodization ultimately arbitrary. To demarcate a time frame for this collection, the first and second siege of Vienna by the Ottomans in 1529 and 1683 seem particularly apt. The critical studies that follow focus on texts and works of arts that were created during that period. By 1529, European geopolitics was dominated by the continuous rise of the Ottoman Empire since the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. The Ottomans kept increasing their influence in Southeastern Europe and throughout the Mediterranean, which still constituted the continent’s main geopolitical arena. More so than in any other time period, the Ottoman Turks and the populations of the Barbary Coast incarnated *the* Oriental and *the* Muslim in the European imagination. Those notions, no matter how unstable and dynamic, remained throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and replaced the equally fluctuating concepts of the Saracen and the Moor that were prevalent in medieval texts. The first siege of Vienna also signifies the beginning of an intense fear of an Ottoman, that is, Muslim encroachment felt across Christian Europe. The unsuccessful second siege, on the other hand, spurred an increasing sense of European dominance over the Mediterranean and the East, first signs of which can be detected after the defeat of the Ottoman fleet by the Holy League at Lepanto in 1571. The idea of European supremacy would become the prominent feature of post-1683 Orientalism.¹⁴ By the end of the seventeenth century, Persia, India, China, and Japan began to play a more important role in European knowledge about Eastern civilizations and fantasies about the Orient. The latter would soon be nurtured considerably by the presence of the English and French colonial powers throughout the Near and Far East during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the focus of Said’s book.

In addition to that geopolitical constellation, other factors that define early modernity in general also affected the quality and volume of early modern Orientalism, thus contributing to its distinctive character. The rise of the Ottoman Empire and the real or potential threat it represented in the eyes of Europeans was paralleled by the discovery and conquest of the American continent on the one hand, and the consolidation and expansion of trade routes to the Indian Ocean and the Far East on the other. Those developments, the focus of part II “Empire and its Orients,” led to the rapid expansion of Europe’s material wealth, intercontinental cultural exchange, and intellectual horizon that in turn affected ideas about the East. Numerous travelogues and diplomatic reports reached the European continent and were quickly translated into several vernaculars to cater to an avid reading public curious about the world. As the case studies of part I “Orientalist Epistemologies” demonstrate, the rise of proto-ethnography in the sixteenth century is to a large part the result of the dramatic increase in knowledge about the geographical area that Europe had come to think of as the Orient.¹⁵ The spread of Gutenberg’s new printing technique during the second half of the fifteenth century revolutionized modes of communication, increased the exchange of ideas across the continent, and significantly altered the corpus of texts and images that constitute early modern Orientalism. It also grew exponentially through an unprecedented volume of publications.¹⁶ At the same time, the Reformation led to a diversification of theologies that also had an impact on received notions about Islam. “The Muslim” started to play a variety of symbolic and ideological roles. In their polemical writings, defenders of the Catholic or Protestant cause generously deployed the imaginary figure of the Turk to denigrate their respective opponents.¹⁷ The major ideological, material, and (geo-)political transformations that Europe underwent during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries thus also led to a profound reconfiguration of Orientalism.

III.

This collection, through its title and in each of its chapters, makes the case that early modern Orientalism not only exists but is also a historically distinct chapter that is characterized by rhetorical multiplicity and a dialectic quality.¹⁸ It suggests an understanding of Orientalism that is different from Said’s who based his notion mostly on modern colonial English and French accounts of the East. When applied to early modern

texts and images, the “-ism” in Orientalism needs to be understood as much more open, creative, and flexible than the rather rigid ideology that Said signified by it. This at least is the meaning of Orientalism that underlies *Dialectics* and renders Said’s term useful and productive for the early modern period. Both Said’s and our notion of Orientalism share the premise that it is essentially Eurocentric and therefore conditioned by a unidirectional perspective, looking from the West to the East and from a center to the periphery. What the application to the early modern discourse on the East adds to the conceptualization of Orientalism is that it might be better understood as a “style of thought” than a “system of knowledge.”¹⁹ As a whole, then, the chapters that follow build on *Orientalism*’s theoretical implications while foregrounding the inner tensions and dialectic dynamic that are at work in both the term itself and the discourse it designates.

All case studies focus on what by now we have repeatedly called the dialectical movement of early modern Orientalism. Borrowing from the Hegelian concept of dialectics as a thought process in which apparent contradictions (thesis and antithesis) are seen to be part of a higher truth (synthesis), each chapter reveals aspects of what could be considered a defining feature of early modern representations of the Orient: the development of a third question or problem (synthesis)—for instance the nature of knowledge or the idea of Europe, the focus of parts I and III—within the discussion, or confrontation, of the West and the East, Christendom and Islam (thesis and antithesis). In this dynamic, neither the West nor the East remain stable constructs as they relate, directly or indirectly, to the third term that is developed through their opposition. Dialectics aptly signifies the openness of early modern Orientalism as a thought process and mode of representation, as well as the fluidity of key terms such as “we,” “Turks,” or “Mohammedanism,” to quote examples just in English. For the conceptualization of early modern Orientalism, furthermore, dialectics has the advantage that it expresses a practice that is more complex than simple allegorization. Rather than reading representations of the East as the allegorical treatment of another, entirely different problem—the question of justice for instance—the case studies demonstrate that the treatment of such a question cannot be separated from the reflection about the East and the West, and that all three are affected by virtue of playing a part in the dialectical process that is early modern Orientalism.²⁰

Dialectics therefore builds on collections with an interdisciplinary and transnational orientation while shifting perspectives in significant ways. In

the above-mentioned *Western Views of Islam*, the editors David Blanks and Michael Frassetto similarly argue for the early modern as a distinct chapter of Orientalism. In their introduction, they underline that the Renaissance developed “well worn stereotypes of Muhammad and Islam” through “fresh impressions” and that “in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries more informed and, on occasion, more tolerant attitudes [toward Islam] began to appear.”²¹ According to Blanks and Frassetto, early modern Orientalism is marked by the paradox of fruitful cultural exchange and hostile attitudes between Europe and the Muslim World. With *Re-Orienting the Renaissance*, published in 2005, Gerald MacLean seeks to complicate this dynamic and reveal “more complex forms of differential development and cross-cultural interactivity.”²² Placing a heavier focus on the exchange of not only ideas but also skills and goods, the thrust of MacLean’s important collection is to question the received notion of the Renaissance as a purely European movement and a culturally autonomous period that defines the continent: “the Renaissance would have been entirely different, if not impossible, had it not been for direct and regular contact with the eastern, largely Muslim, world, and the constant exchange of goods and ideas.”²³ With regard to *Orientalism*, the editor observes that “we need a better way of thinking about East-West relations before the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt, the event that initiates the period of most interest to Said.”²⁴

Dialectics proposes such a new way of thinking. With its focus on Orientalism, this collection returns to the critical examination of a Eurocentric approach to Islam but does so in adopting an interdisciplinary and transnational approach to show parallels between Orientalist traditions in several European vernaculars while also revealing particularities of each of those traditions. The thematic, rather than chronological or “nation,” of those order of the chapters provides deeper insights into what this volume is foremost interested in: the cohesive and complex dialectic nature of early modern Orientalism.²⁵ The themes of the first three parts are arguably the most prominent questions with which Orientalist discourse tends to engage in the dialectical dynamic described above: knowledge production, empire building, and the early intertwining of nascent national and European identities. As part I, “Orientalist Epistemologies,” demonstrates, the early modern creation of knowledge about the East, regardless in which language, was often conditioned by ideological interests. It also relied on genres and an aesthetics that allowed for a profound ambiguity toward the

imaginary Oriental, another hallmark of early modern Orientalism. Examining the fate of a Moroccan library, the letters of Ogier Busbecq, and Adam Olearius's polyphonous *Orientalische Reise*, Oumelbanine Zhiri, Kaya Şahin, Aigi Heero, and Maris Saagpakk respectively focus on the relationship between the beginnings of scholarship about the Orient and early modern Orientalism. The chapters on Busbecq and Olearius also reveal how aesthetics help to tame inherent tensions that arise when a genuine interest in knowledge is meshed with ideological goals. The chapters of the second part, "Empires and its Orient," demonstrate that early modern Orientalism is often inseparable from an imperial mindset, particularly in Spain. Evolving ideas about the Orient were used to justify imperial endeavors, informed the comprehension of lesser known civilizations such as China, and could even defeat the colonial enterprise, as José L. Gasch-Tomás, Natalia Maillard Álvarez, and Ana María Rodríguez-Rodríguez show in their studies. Orientalist ideas not only hampered the expansion of the Spanish Habsburg Empire in some cases but also undermined its very foundation, as Natalio Ohanna argues in his reading of humanist treatises about the Turks. He also shows how those treatises contributed to the formation of Europe as an imaginary community, the focus of part III, "Orientalism and the Idea of Europe." The chapters by Marcus Keller and Toby Wikström propose a sustained reflection about the complexity and precariousness of this nascent idea during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. How strongly Orientalist traditions were interwoven in several European vernaculars, indirectly fostering the formation of a continental identity, is the focus of David Moberly's essay that retraces the journey of the Irene narrative from Italy via France to England. The chapters of part IV, "Visual Dialectics," equally relate to the key issues of epistemology, empire building, and Europeanness while demonstrating that the dialectics of early modern Orientalism plays out as much in visual as in textual representations of the East. Through their readings of costume books and illustrated travelogues, Robin Radway and Lydia Soo critically revisit the contributions of Orientalist ideas to the formulation of a European and imperial self, while Lisa Rosenthal shows in her reading of paintings belonging to the *kunstkammer* genre how visual juxtapositions of East and West can also serve the construction of a local rather than a national or European identity.

The chapters can be read individually as independent and original case studies or in the suggested order that deliberately resists a chronological

arrangement both within each of the four parts and among them to avoid any implicit suggestion of Orientalism's historical progress during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Likewise, the contributions of each part touch on different national traditions to show connections between them and put them into a productive dialogue.²⁶

Reflecting the complexity of early modern Orientalism itself, several chapters include discussions of further, related topics: readers interested in the material supports and conditions of early modern Orientalism may find the combination of the articles by Gasch-Tomás/Maillard Álvarez, Rosenthal and Zhiri insightful, whereas those more interested in the interdependence between humanism and Orientalism should turn directly to the contributions by Ohanna, Şahin, and Zhiri. In addition to the authors of part III, Heero/Saagpakk, Radway and Şahin also broach the question of a burgeoning sense of Europe. The chapters by Keller and Soo add to the discussion of Orientalism and Empire, the focus of part II. Last but not least, the chapters of part II and to some extent the one by Keller broaden *Dialectics*' perspective onto the world and to what could be called the first age of modern globalization. The collection thus seeks to build bridges between the critique of Orientalism and the growing field of early modern global studies, demonstrating how much the latter stands to gain from considering Orientalism as the dominant discourse on international encounters, informing the conceptualizations of Europeans' increasing interactions with others worldwide.²⁷

In short, the single chapters, written from a variety of disciplinary angles and examining a composite corpus—ranging from letters to novellas, travelogues, and drawings among other sources—inform each other and, read in varying combinations, enter into a dialogue that creates dialectical effects of its own. A major intention of *Dialectics* would be fulfilled if these effects inspired further investigations into the history of ideas and representations that Europeans and other “Westerners” have formed over centuries about Muslim cultures in the Middle East and beyond. For, as long as public discourse in the West about predominantly Muslim countries remains fraught with simplistic ideas and facile assumptions, the stakes of a continued historical and theoretical critique of Orientalism in the vein of Said's pioneering study remain as high as ever.

NOTES

1. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Orientalism was first used in 1747 with the meaning “Oriental style and character.” Shortly thereafter it could also mean “knowledge of languages, cultures, etc. of the Orient” (since 1812). These two meanings have been overshadowed since 1978 by the sense that Said gave the word: “the representation of the Orient (esp. the Middle East) in Western academic writing, art, or literature,” a clear indication of the influence of Said’s study. For a useful overview of the critical reception of *Orientalism*, see A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism* (London: Longman, 2002). For a more recent sustained critique see Daniel M. Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).
2. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage, 1994), 12.
3. A few short references to Guillaume Postel and other early modern scholars aside, Said summarizes sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Orientalism in six lines: “The European imagination was nourished extensively from this repertoire [of Oriental heroes, monsters, desires etc.]: between the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century such major authors as Ariosto, Milton, Marlowe, Tasso, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and the authors of the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Poema del Cid* drew on the Orient’s riches for their productions, in ways that sharpened the outlines of imagery, ideas, and figures populating it,” *Orientalism*, 63.
4. *Orientalism*, 16.
5. Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1996). Only a few years later, Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton explicitly refer to *Orientalism* in *Global Interests*: “The drive towards commercial expansion in the sixteenth century saw ambitious alliances [...] whose geographical horizons extended well into what Edward Said has referred to as the East. [...] The nature of these exchanges suggests a critical problem with the account of Europe’s construction of the East as offered by Said in his important critique of post-nineteenth-century East-West discourse, *Orientalism*; a problem to which Said himself has recently begun to draw attention,” *Global Interests: Renaissance Art between East and West* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 60.
6. Nabil Matar, *Islam and Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 11.
7. David R. Blanks and Michael Frassetto, eds., *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of Other* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999).
8. Blanks and Frassetto, *Western Views*, 4.

9. Blanks and Frassetto, *Western Views*, 7.
10. David R. Blanks, "Western Views of Islam in the Premodern Period: A Brief History of Past Approaches," in Blanks and Frassetto, *Western Views*, 11–54, here 12.
11. Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 6.
12. Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 11.
13. Meserve, *Empires*, 10.
14. This shift toward modern Orientalism at the end of the seventeenth century is also marked by a change in vocabulary. As Blanks points out: "the word 'Islam' appeared for the first time in English in 1613 and in French in 1687. The use of the proper Arabic term denotes a new consciousness on the part of Europeans, although the older inaccurate, and disrespectful designation 'Mohammedanism' was replaced only very slowly," "Western Views," 14. For an analysis of the qualitative shift of Orientalism during the second half of the seventeenth century in France see Marcus Keller, "The Turk of Early Modern France," *L'Esprit Créateur* 53 (2013), 1–8. For studies about eighteenth-century East-West relationships and Orientalism see for example Fatma M. Göçek, *East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), and Srinivas Aravamudan, *Enlightenment Orientalism: Resisting the Rise of the Novel* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012).
15. For examples of Orientalist texts that were quickly translated into several European vernaculars after they appeared in print, see Kaya Şahin's article about Ogier Busbecq's *Turkish Letters* (ch. I.2) or Aigi Heero and Maris Saagpakk's discussion of Adam Olearius's *Orientalische Reise* (ch. I.3).
16. As Blanks pointedly observes: "Whereas most studies of medieval attitudes depend upon clerical polemics and troubadour poetry, and are centered on southwestern Europe [...], studies of Renaissance attitudes have more sources to draw upon and sweep across the whole of Europe at a time when the threat of Islam was as much political as it was religious," "Western Views," 31.
17. For a study of the multiple uses of the Turk in French religious polemics see Michael J. Heath, *Crusading Commonplaces: La Noue, Lucinge and Rhetoric against the Turks* (Geneva: Droz, 1986). In his discussion, Heath does not refer to Said or see the polemical treatises he analyzes as part of early modern Orientalism. See also Daniel J. Vitkus, "Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe," in Blanks and Frassetto, *Western Views*, 207–230.

18. A few scholars have questioned the pertinence of the term Orientalism for the early modern period. See for example Toby Wikström's article "Was There a Pan-European Orientalism?" (III.3), and Allison P. Coudert, "Orientalism in Early Modern Europe?" in Albrecht Classen, ed., *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 715–755. Contrary to Wikström, who does not dispense with Orientalism for the early modern period but rather questions its function for the formation of the idea of Europe before 1800, Coudert unequivocally answers the rhetorical question posed by the title of her article: "Said's Orientalism does not apply to early modern Europeans who had a very different relationship with the Near and Far Eastern compared with their successors in the nineteenth century" (750). She emphasizes the exchange of goods and ideas between East and West, also considering trade with the Far East, which lies outside of Said's area of interest in *Orientalism*. Said would probably not dispute that there was commerce in both directions since his focus is on discourse that in many cases, also during the early modern period, willfully or subconsciously ignored the material reality of East-West relationships.
19. It is noteworthy that Said calls Orientalism both a "system of knowledge," *Orientalism*, 6, and a "style of thought," *Orientalism*, 2. In his "Afterword" to the second edition of *Orientalism*, Said himself gestures at a more dynamic and differentiated understanding of Orientalist texts than he had originally proposed: "Studying the historical dynamics of this set of experiences [expressed in such texts as Napoleon's *Description de l'Égypte*] is more demanding than sliding back into stereotypes like 'the conflict of East and West,'" *Orientalism*, 1994 ed., 334. In the afterword, Said also speaks about "different periods, and different styles of Orientalism" (336), "its variability and unpredictability" (339), and even "its combination of consistency *and* inconsistency, its play, so to speak" (340; Said's emphasis).
20. It should be noted here that Said also thought of a dialectics inherent to Orientalism, too, but he situates it elsewhere: "My analyses employ close textual readings whose goal is to reveal the dialectic between individual text or writer and the complex collective formation to which his work is a contribution," *Orientalism*, 23–24.
21. *Western Views*, 2.
22. Gerald MacLean, *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), 3.
23. MacLean, *Re-Orienting*, 3. With its emphasis on the material exchange between East and West, MacLean's collection builds on the afore-mentioned works by Jardine and Brotton as well as Jerry Brotton's *The Renaissance Bazaar: From the Silk Road to Michelangelo* (Oxford: Oxford University

- Press, 2002). See also Brotton's most recent study *This Orient Isle: Elizabethan England and the Islamic World* (London: Allen Lane, 2016).
24. MacLean, *Re-Orienting*, 7. This discussion of collections on early modern Orientalism with a trans-national and interdisciplinary scope would be incomplete without mentioning two others: Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann, eds., *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), and Albrecht Classen, ed., *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013). In their succinct preface (1-7), Guthmüller and Kühlmann show no interest in the relationship of their project with early modern Orientalism, nor do any of the contributors, confirming the relatively late reception of *Orientalism* among early modernists, especially outside of the Anglo-American scholarly community. In the copious introductory essay to his collection (1–222), Classen only briefly examines the applicability of Said's propositions to the early modern period and remains skeptical: "As productive as Said's concept of Orientalism has been, especially for the modern era, as misleading it might have been for our more discriminating understanding of the premodern era when the exchanges between East and West ran rather deeply and the interest in other worlds was surprisingly high" (213–214).
 25. Analyses of national Orientalist traditions abound. For more recent examples of studies about England see Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and Jane Grogan, *The Persian Empire in English Renaissance Writing, 1549-1622* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); for France, Frédéric Tinguely, *L'Écriture du Levant à la Renaissance: Enquête sur les voyageurs français dans l'Empire de Soliman le Magnifique* (Geneva: Droz, 2000) and Pascale Barthe, *French Encounters with the Ottomans, 1510-1560* (New York: Routledge, 2016); and for Spain, Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) and Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, *Un Oriente español: Los moriscos y el Sacromonte en tiempos de Contrarreforma* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2010).
 26. For a focus on Orientalism expressed in the same vernacular, chapters can be grouped as follows: for studies of Spanish Orientalism see the articles by Gasch-Tomás/Maillard Álvarez, Ohanna, Rodríguez-Rodríguez, and Zhiri. For a focus on Orientalism in French turn to the contributions by Keller, Moberly, Şahin, and Wikström, and for Orientalism in English to Moberly and Soo.
 27. Among more recent studies of early modern exchanges at a global scale and their representations, also taking into account non-European sources, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus*

to the Ganges (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Jyotsna G. Singh, ed., *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), and Carmen Nocentelli, *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

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PART I

Orientalist Epistemologies

A Captive Library Between Morocco and Spain

Oumelbanine Zhiri

In early modern Europe, the academic field of Oriental studies developed considerably as part of a broader interest for Antiquity and history, and, during the first half of the seventeenth century, was in the process of establishing its enduring institutional bases. A growing number of scholars were deeply engaged in the study of the cultures and languages of the East; Hebrew, Arabic, and related languages were taught in some universities; publishers were offering readers dictionaries, grammar books, and classical texts. This vast enterprise depended essentially on the ability to obtain manuscripts in the languages of the Orient. Scholars eagerly sought to collect documents from the East that would allow them to further their studies, which was not an easy task. Europeans who were interested in the Orient would attempt to create exchange networks that included travelers and missionaries in Eastern countries, as well as local scholars, to be able to acquire manuscripts. In this way, public and private collectors were working diligently to augment the Oriental holdings in European libraries.

However, many manuscripts from the East found their way to Europe in a much less peaceful manner. The development of Oriental studies in early modern Europe is inseparable from the circumstances of “cold war”¹ that

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prevailed in the unstable border zone between Christendom and Islam, particularly in the Mediterranean.² A considerable number of texts ended up in European collections as spoils of war or as the result of piracy.³

The most important and prestigious of those bounties was deposited at the library of the Spanish royal palace of El Escorial in 1614. Its story is recorded in many archival documents; some of them have been published, and in all likelihood, more are still awaiting discovery. This information allows us to better map out the geographies of Oriental studies in early modern Europe. On one hand, it helps present a more nuanced view of the field's development in various regions of Europe; on the other hand, it leads us to consider the multiple routes through which persons and objects circulated between the Orient and the Occident. The acquisition of manuscripts and other artifacts in the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Mediterranean have been particularly scrutinized.⁴ Yet scholars rarely consider Morocco as a point of origin, even though a large part of the Escorial Arabic library originated there. Indeed, Morocco belongs to an area that has been described as an "archetypal Mediterranean frontier,"⁵ a region where Islam and Christendom had interacted and even mingled for centuries. After the end of the *Reconquista* in 1492, this boundary became increasingly rigid, but the contact between the shores did not come to an end, although it took new forms. Morocco, as the immediate neighbor of imperial Spain, and often its victim, inevitably became involved in European politics, and the sultans energetically pursued diplomatic relations with the competitors of Spain, such as England, France, and the United Provinces. The peaceful or more violent interactions allowed for cultural exchanges and impacted the development of European Oriental studies, as the account of the Arabic fund in the Escorial reveals.

A ROYAL LIBRARY ON THE OCEAN

The collection deposited at the Escorial in 1614 first belonged to the Moroccan sultan Mulay Zaydân of the Sa'dî dynasty (r. 1603–1627) who had inherited the bulk of it from his powerful and learned father, Ahmad al-Mansûr. When the latter died in 1603, the power of Zaydân was unsteady, and for many years he remained fiercely contested by several contenders.⁶ In 1612, the agitator Abû Mahallî forced Zaydân to flee his capital Marrakesh and to retreat to Safi on the Atlantic coast. The sultan

took with him his valuables, such as luxurious jewelry and clothes, as well as his beloved library, and hired Jean-Philippe Castelane to put his treasure in a safe place. Castelane was a privateer from Marseilles who was also the representative of the French monarchy in Morocco, and had just signed a treaty of alliance with Zaydân in the name of the king of France, as is confirmed by a letter dated February 13, 1612, written by the sultan and addressed to his agent Samuel Pallache.⁷ On June 14, 1612, Castelane's ship, the *Notre-Dame de la Garde*, left Safi and on the same day arrived at Agadir, another Atlantic port, where Zaydân's property was to be discharged. However, on the night of June 22, possibly because of a disagreement over payment, the privateer ordered the ship to sail from Agadir with the cargo still on board. On July 5, it encountered a squadron of Spanish vessels belonging to the fleet of Don Luis Fajardo, admiral of the Spanish Armada. Ship, crew, and cargo were seized by the Spaniards.⁸

The matter was first judged by a Cádiz court, and then adjudicated again by the Spanish Council of State. Both declared that the seizure was legal.⁹ The consequences of the incident would be far-reaching: for years, the library in particular would be the object of intense diplomatic maneuvering and correspondence between Morocco, Spain, France, and the Netherlands; the Moroccans, with the help of their Dutch allies, would unsuccessfully try to obtain restitution from the French and the Spaniards; and the affair would poison the relationship between Morocco and France. Considering that the French crown was responsible for the theft because it was perpetrated by one of its representatives, Zaydân ordered the arrest of many French subjects residing in his territories, and it took decades for the situation to be finally resolved.¹⁰ The sultan and his successors tried several times to gain the return of the library through ransom or in exchange for Spanish captives held in Morocco, although in vain. Currently, what remains of Mulay Zaydân's collection is still held at the Escorial.

Moroccan ambassadors, who were sent to Spain to negotiate the liberation of captives or peace treaties, also showed interest in the Escorial's library and the Arabic books held in Spain, and wrote about them in their travel accounts.¹¹ For them, and for other Muslim travelers to Spain, the Arabic manuscripts kept in Spain were a painful symbol of the Andalusí paradise lost, that most seemed to barely distinguish between the books left behind in the peninsula after the completion of the *Reconquista* and the stolen library of Mulay Zaydân.

EUROPEAN FANTASIES

In Europe, the booty taken from the sultan became the site of imaginary constructions, as is attested to by the title of a slim volume about the troubles in Morocco, told in verse by Antonio de Vía and published in 1612, the very year of the capture. In its title, the pamphlet mentions the “flight of Mulay Zaydân, and how he loaded his treasure on three ships, among which was a scepter, a golden crown, inestimable diamonds, clothes, and imperial ornaments; his intent was to crown himself Emperor of Marrakesh, and then his fate changed; and how, when disembarking at La Mamora, the general of ships from Dinkerck, there for the service of the King our Lord, seized the ship that contained the treasure, another ship got burned, and the last was defeated and took flight.”¹² The crown and the scepter were not symbols of sovereignty for the Sa’dî dynasty, although other early texts attest to the belief in the presence of these imaginary objects in the seized bounty. In a letter addressed to minister Puisieux, the French ambassador in Madrid, Vaucelas wrote that according to a witness, “in one crate opened by this Fajardo, there was a scepter and a crown estimated to seventy thousand ecus.”¹³ Those rumors made the bounty even more valuable than it really was, both in monetary and symbolic terms. Interestingly, the 1612 pamphlet’s title did not even allude to the library, which became the main issue of contention. The pamphlet’s author and potential readers might have been unaware of how the possession of books could add to the prestige of a ruler, not to mention their scholarly value.¹⁴

Given the state of Oriental studies in Europe in the early seventeenth century, one would think that the presence of the royal library on European soil would have proved to be a boon for the development of the field. In fact, for more than a century and a half, the library remained mostly unavailable to scholars, and some would bitterly complain about that. The Moroccan library became both more tempting and frustrating for them for being located in Europe itself. In 1623, the linguist and humanist Bernardo Aldrete complained about the paucity and high cost of Arabic manuscripts in Spain, at a time when the rich Moroccan library was “buried” in the Escorial.¹⁵ Later, the great French antiquarian Nicolas Peiresc, who would spend much energy and money to acquire Oriental manuscripts, would thus describe the perils of this activity, when manuscripts “could be seized by pirates who would abuse them or condemn them to libraries that would not make them available to those who could use them to help the public, like the King of Morocco’s library in the Escorial.”¹⁶

RELIGION, POLITICS, SCHOLARSHIP: THE FATE OF A LIBRARY

The causes of that frustrating situation were rooted in the double nature of a royal library, as a repository of scholarly treasures as well as a site of power and prestige. When Zaydân's books were deposited at the Escorial, the library was only a few decades old.¹⁷ Philip II founded it at a time when the concept and the reality of the library in Europe were undergoing important transformations, first prompted by Italian humanism, then emulated in France with the creation of a royal library in 1544. Urged by Spanish scholars, Philip II followed those examples, for humanistic as well as political reasons, and decided to establish a royal library that would survive its founder, and transmit a cultural memory to future generations. The collection resided in the newly built monastery-palace of El Escorial, of which the foundation was decided in 1563. Philip deposited his own personal library there, and actively sought to augment the collections through national and international acquisitions. Before 1614, the holdings had already numbered a few hundred Arabic manuscripts. However, as a site and sign of the political power of the king, the library was not necessarily of great help to scholars, despite the hopes many had vested in its creation. The royal library essentially stayed private, and was made only parsimoniously available to learned readers. Moreover, it was created in a context of strong ideological censorship by the "bookphobic" Inquisition.¹⁸ Early on, the suggestion was made that the Escorial library should receive the books that were prohibited by Rome or the Holy Office.¹⁹ The Escorial collections, since their origin, were thus both a library and an anti-library, containing books that, at least theoretically, were supposed to be read and those that had to be kept out of reach of the public. But even in its positive incarnation, the library remained the king's private property and not used for the common good that the humanists who advocated its creation had dreamed about. Those characteristics did not change after the death of Philip II in 1598. In fact, they became more pronounced.

When transferred to Spain, Mulay Zaydân's library became a site of contestation between three different and deeply unequal forces, which continued to play their part in its history: religion, politics, and scholarship. It could be rightfully stated that those principles were always at stake in the history of early modern European Orientalism; however, the Spanish context in which the Moroccan library was received starkly illuminates them. Religious authorities were interested in seeing that the

books that did not conform with Christian orthodoxy be thoroughly removed from possible readership. Statesmen, for their part, were attentive to the political gain that could be derived from the possession of the library. In this context, scholarship could only be advanced with the help of powerful protectors. That battle began when the time came to decide the fate of the captive library, after its seizure was declared legal.

In March 1614, more than a year and a half after the capture of Castelane's ship, the secretary of the Council of State, Juan de Ciriza, addressed to the king a number of documents regarding Mulay Zaydân's books. He wrote himself a very thorough memorandum in which he quoted from two letters attached to the file. One was written by Fray Juan de Peralta, prior of the Escorial, and later archbishop of Saragossa. It informed the king that the library had been kept in the house of Don Juan de Idiáquez, a powerful political insider. Peralta requested that the library be deposited at the Escorial because a large number of the books contained within the library were prohibited and thus should be kept with the other forbidden works in the monastery, while the books that presented no challenge to religious orthodoxy should be included in the royal library.²⁰ Thus the prior sought to have Mulay Zaydân's library combined in the Escorial according to the two typical ways defined at that time: he requested that it should be permanently housed there as a tribute to the power of the Holy Office to keep dangerous books from the public, and as a sign of the prestige and greatness of the Spanish Crown.

Peralta knew which books should be prohibited and which were acceptable based on an assessment written by Francisco de Gurmendi in the second letter accompanying Ciriza's memorandum. According to that appraisal, the earliest that is known of, Mulay Zaydân's library was comprised of "four thousand books minus twenty or thirty. Most of them are untitled, and more than five hundred are unbound." Gurmendi worked hard to class them by content, and found that "two thousand books or more are expositions of the Alcoran, and a thousand are about diverse humanistic subjects. As for the rest, their topics are philosophy, mathematics, and, for some, medicine." At the end of his letter, he asked for permission to keep some of these books for his studies and expressed his intent to translate a few.²¹

Juan de Ciriza was aware of how important the books were in the eyes of Mulay Zaydân: "he so much values them that he would willingly give for them a good number of captives that he holds in his power and other things."²² His recommendations aimed at preserving the rights of the three

realms competing for control of the library: the political, the religious, and the scholarly. He advised that the books be deposited at San Lorenzo until the time came that the king might decide to “exchange them with the king Zidan and if it is seen to be in the interests of the state in Barbary affairs.”²³ The Moroccan collection should thus be kept separate from both the prohibited volumes and the royal library. He recommended entrusting Francisco de Gurmendi with the supervision of the transfer. In conclusion, he stressed “the profit that would result if Zidan so much wants and wishes to obtain them as to exchange them in ways that would benefit the public good.”²⁴ The collection needed to be preserved as a potential bargaining tool with the Moroccan authorities. We know that Mulay Zaydân, and later his successors, would be eager for its return, and clearly some in the Spanish State were not ruling out the possibility, at least in the early stages, although it never came to pass possibly because religious considerations proved to be stronger than political ones.

On May 7, 1614, Philip III replied to Peralta.²⁵ His letter briefly recapitulated the story of the library in Spain, from its seizure to the task given to Francisco de Gurmendi “who works for me as translator and interpreter of the Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages.”²⁶ Following Ciriza’s advice, the king ordered keeping the library at the Escorial, although separated from the other books. He also requested that “Francisco de Gurmendi be allowed to keep some books on various subjects and disciplines that would be necessary for his studies of the Arabic language, such as vocabularies and books on the proper and elegant use of language, as well as books that he finds deserving of being translated in Castilian, on matters of moral philosophy or history.”²⁷

This decision satisfied the demands of all three parties and showed that the Moroccan library was indeed used to advance Oriental studies in Spain, at least early on, prior to it being buried in the Escorial, as later scholars would bitterly complain. More generally, it contradicts a long held view that Spanish scholars during the seventeenth century were absent in the early modern European enterprise of Oriental studies.²⁸ Spain is often said to have rejected the culture and language of the Arabs, not to mention their religion after the completion of the *Reconquista*, a process culminating in the final expulsion of its population of Muslim origins, the Moriscos, between 1609 and 1614. As a consequence, when Spain came to possess the scholarly treasure of Mulay Zaydân’s library, it essentially had no use for it. That view was solidified relatively early on. When the French traveler François Bertaut visited El Escorial in 1659, he mentioned the

library, saying that, among the forbidden books, “there are three thousand Arabic volumes; they say that one *D. Lúis Faxardo*, being a general of an army, took them from the Turks, who wanted to transport this library from one city to another, but unfortunately there is not in the whole of Spain one interpreter from Arabic, despite their closeness to the Moors.”²⁹ According to that narrative, only during the eighteenth century did Spain truly enter the field of European Oriental studies, an advancement that was significantly marked by the fate of Mulay Zaydán’s library because one of Spain’s great contributions is none other than the catalog of the Arabic manuscripts, of which the Moroccan library was an important part. This was the work of the Lebanese Maronite Miguel Casiri, “the decisive figure in the process whereby Arabic studies in Spain were secularized.”³⁰ However, recent work has considerably amended the notion of the quasi absence of Spain in the formation of early modern Orientalism,³¹ and the story of Mulay Zaydán’s library should further assist that revision.

ARABIC SECULAR ADVICE FOR A CHRISTIAN EUROPEAN PRINCE: GURMENDI’S USE OF THE CAPTIVE LIBRARY

There is no doubt that the rapport that early modern Spain had with Islam and the Arabs, including its ambivalence vis-a-vis its Andalusí past, is quite different from that of other European nations.³² Therefore, the status of Spanish Oriental studies is more inextricably related to issues of national identity in comparison. Nevertheless, it is now clear that the interest in the Arabic language and culture was kept alive in seventeenth-century Spain in part because of the continuing issues presented by the Morisco population such as the extraordinary affair of the allegedly ancient “leaden books,” found in the mount of Sacromonte near Granada between 1595 and 1606.³³ Extended controversy about the authenticity of those religious Arabic documents raged for years in Spanish political, religious, and cultural circles and was virulent when Mulay Zaydán’s library was seized.

One of the participants in that contentious debate was none other than Francisco de Gurmendi, the first European scholar to study the Moroccan library. Of Basque origins, he was very well connected, being a relative and protégé of the powerful Juan de Idiáquez (1541–1614), whose functions over the decades included chief advisor on foreign affairs for Philip II; member of the *Junta de Gobierno*, which supervised the education of the

future Philip III; and, beginning in December 1599, President of the Council of Military Orders.³⁴

Francisco de Gurmendi had studied with one of the most distinguished Christian scholars in Spain at that time, Kurd Marcos Dovel, who taught Arabic in the La Sapienza school in Rome between 1606 and 1610, and was brought to Granada to help translate the leaden books, concluding that they were forgeries.³⁵ Gurmendi became sufficiently proficient in Arabic to be appointed interpreter in the service of the king in 1615, and, earlier, as we have seen, to be entrusted with the assessment of Mulay Zaydân's library; the supervision of its transfer to the Escorial; and even with the loan, maybe the gift, of an unknown number of the Moroccan books in order to further his studies. It is probable that he had access to the entire library for more than a year in the house of Juan de Idiáquez. How did this access translate in terms of scholarly work?

Gurmendi's work on Mulay Zaydân's library probably influenced his participation in the leaden books controversy. He was very involved in that affair, on the side of those who identified the documents as modern and heretic forgeries; he translated two of the Sacromonte documents in 1615, and authored two violent critiques of the leaden books in 1615 and 1617.³⁶ Grace Magnier speculates that some of his arguments were based on his knowledge of the books on Islamic theology that had belonged to Mulay Zaydân.³⁷ It is difficult to assess the extent to which he relied on those books because both his translations and his critiques of the documents are still unpublished. However, his only printed text is also in all likelihood the result of his access to the Moroccan library. His *Doctrina Phisica y moral de principes*, published in Madrid in 1615, belongs to the genre of the mirror of princes that was thriving in Spain at that time.³⁸ What sets this text apart is that it is presented as a translation from the Arabic. Although there is no mention of the alleged author of the original, scholars consider that it is very plausible that Gurmendi had in fact at least adapted one or more original Arabic texts.³⁹ This proteiform genre had flourished in Arabic culture for centuries, often called "sultanian literature," and included treatises for the education of princes, collections of moral maxims, and parables for the guidance of rulers, as well as descriptions of the duties of the king's advisors and secretaries. One common trait was the stress on the moral and political virtues of justice and equity. Another is that those texts represented a trend of political thought that is considered to be secular, inasmuch as it presents a conception of politics as autonomous from religion, with little or no reference to the Quranic

Revelation, and which refers extensively to non-Islamic traditions such as the Greek, the Indian, or the Persian.⁴⁰ This important feature may explain why Gurmendi chose to translate texts belonging to this genre. And, indeed, his *Doctrina* passed religious censure. It is reasonable to suppose that the originals adapted by Gurmendi in this work belonged to Mulay Zaydân's library. As was stated in the letters addressed to the king, he did intend to use his unique access to the collection to translate books and make the culture of the Arabs available to the learned reader.

What makes it all the more likely that the *Doctrina* was the result of Gurmendi's unique access to the Moroccan library is that in the same time frame, he did in fact produce another translation-adaptation of a text belonging to that same genre, and that text explicitly came from the Moroccan library: *Libro de las qualidades del rey y de los ministros del reyno, conforme al gouierno de los reyes arabes [...] traducido de Arabigo en castellano, por Fran. de Gurmendi.*⁴¹ The first sentence of the dedication to the Duke of Lerma states that the original came from "the library that was seized from Mulay Zaydân."⁴² As is evidenced by the title, the manuscript, even more clearly than the *Doctrina*, details the desirable qualities of the ruler, but also the role and duties of the ministers. This is relevant because both texts are dedicated to the Duke of Lerma, first of the *validos*, or favorites of the king, who held such great power in the Spain of the Golden Age.⁴³

As Gurmendi said in the presentation of the *Doctrina*, his goal was to deliver the treasure of Arabic political wisdom to his readers, an ambition that confirms that the rejection of Arabic culture in early seventeenth-century Spain was far from thorough. His work, both published and unpublished, allows for a clearer picture of early modern Oriental studies in Europe, a field in which Spain was not as marginal as previously believed. Indeed, beyond Spain, the role of the Western Mediterranean region in the transnational and transcultural history of Orientalism needs to be reassessed. The development of European Orientalism is also a story of the circulation of books, objects, knowledge, and people, between East and West. To understand its evolution, through peaceful or violent circumstances, we need to accurately map its cultural geography of dissemination. The tale of Mulay Zaydân's library highlights that its map was better balanced between both ends of the Mediterranean than one would think. Influential figures in Oriental studies, such as the Frenchman Nicolas Peiresc (1580–1637) and the Dutch Thomas Erpenius (1584–1624), author of the most successful Arabic grammar published in

Europe until the early nineteenth century, had correspondents in North Africa; the latter's famous disciple Jacobus Golius (1596–1667) even spent two years in Morocco, where he was in touch with local scholars. Those relations helped profoundly inform the evolution of Orientalism, as did the story of Mulay Zaydân's collection, thanks to which the Escorial to this day possesses one of the richest libraries of Arabic manuscripts in Europe.

NOTES

1. Anachronistic as it may seem, the phrase “*guerra fría*” was already used by Don Juan Manuel in the fourteenth century, cited by Majid Khadduri, *The Islamic Law of Nations. Shaynânî's Siyar* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 22.
2. Michel Fontenay, *La Méditerranée entre la croix et le croissant* (Paris: Garnier, 2010).
3. Robert Jones, “Piracy, War, and the Acquisition of Arabic Manuscripts in Renaissance Europe,” *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 2 (1987): 96–110.
4. See for example for the seventeenth century *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, eds. Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert, and Bart Westerweel (Leiden: Brill, 2005).
5. Andrew C. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier. A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 4.
6. On the political instability and fragmentation of Morocco after the death of Ahmad al-Mansûr, see *Histoire du Maroc: Réactualisation et synthèse*, ed. Mohamed Kably (Rabat: Publications de l'Institut Royal pour la Recherche sur l'Histoire du Maroc, 2011), 410–419.
7. Henry de Castries, *Sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc. 1 série. Dynastie Saadienne. Part. 2: Archives et Bibliothèques des Pays Bas*, 6 vols. (Paris: Leroux, 1906–1923), 2: 23.
8. On these events, see Mohammed Ibn Azuz, “La biblioteca de Muley Zaidan en El Escorial,” *Cuadernos de la Biblioteca Española de Tetuán*, 17–18 (1978): 117–153; and Daniel Hershenzon, “Traveling Libraries: The Arabic Manuscripts of Muley Zidan and the Escorial Libraries,” *Journal of Early Modern History*, 18 (2014), 1–24.
9. See letter dated August 25, 1613, addressed by Vaucelas, French ambassador in Madrid, to minister Puisieux, in Henry de Castries, *Sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc. 1 série. Dynastie Saadienne. Part. 1: Archives et Bibliothèques de France*, 3 vols. (Paris: Leroux, 1905–1923), 2:556–557.
10. See Oumelbanine Zhiri, “Les corps, les âmes et le droit: Isaac de Razilly et les captifs français du Maroc au xvii^e siècle,” in *Les Nouveaux Mondes juridiques: Du Moyen Âge au XVII^e siècle*, eds. Nicolas Lombart and Clotilde Jacqueland (Paris: Garnier, 2014), 227–251.

11. Three Moroccan ambassadors mention the Escorial library in their travel accounts: al-Ghassânî (1690–91), al-Ghazzâl (1766–67), and Ibn ‘Uthmân al-Miknasî (1779–80); see Henri Pérès, *L’Espagne vue par les voyageurs musulmans de 1610 à 1930* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1937); ‘Abd al-Majîd al-Qaddurî, *Sufara Maghâriba fî Urubba 1610–1922 (Moroccan Ambassadors in Europe [in Arabic])* (Rabat: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université Muhammad V, 1995); Nieves Paradelo Alonso, *El otro laberinto español: Viajeros árabes a España entre el siglo XVII y 1936* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2005), 26–75; Manuela Marín, “The Captive Word: A Note on Arabic Manuscripts in Spain,” *Al-Masâq* 8 (1995): 155–169; Nabil Matar, “Europe through Eighteenth-Century Moroccan Eyes,” *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics* 26 (2006): 200–219.
12. Antonio de Vía, *Relación de la mucha sangre que se derramó en los dos sacos de Fez, y Marruecos por el Morabito, que últimamete se levantó por el Rey, y de la destrucción de tantos enemigos de la Iglesia, y de la buyda de Muley Cidan, y como embarcó su tesoro en tres naos, en el qual avia cetro, y corona de oro, con diamantes de inestimable precio, con ropas, y atavíos imperiales para coronarse Emperador de Marruecos y se le trocó la suerte, y como al desembocar de la Marmora tomó el general de los navíos de Unquerque, que son por quenta del Rey nuestro señor, la nao que traya el dicho tesoro, y otra se pegó fuego, y la otra buyó derrotada* (Málaga: Juan René, 1612). This pamphlet is mentioned by Bartolomé José Gallardo, *Ensayo de una biblioteca española de libros raros y curiosos*, 4 vols. (Madrid: Rivadeneyra, 1863–1889), 4: 1030–1031, number 4285.
13. Dated November 10 1612, Castries, *Sources (France)* 2:551.
14. The admiral Fajardo did a careful inventory of the royal cargo, but did not, according to Hershenzon, see a fundamental difference between the material goods it contained, including astrolabes, mirrors, and clothes, and the royal library, “and thus did not indicate the books’ titles or make any reference to their contents” (“Traveling Libraries,” 8).
15. *Un epistolario de Bernardo José Aldrete (1612–1623)*, ed. Joaquín Rodríguez Mateos (Sevilla: Junta de Andalucía, 2009), 219.
16. They could “tomber en mauvaises mains des pirates, qui en abuseront, ou les condamneront en des bibliothèques où ils ne seront non plus visibles à ceux qui en pourroyent ayder le public, que ceux du Roy du Maroc qui sont dans l’Escorial,” *Correspondance avec plusieurs missionnaires et religieux de l’ordre des Capucins (1631–1637)*, ed. Apollinaire de Valence and Philippe Tamizey de Larroque (Paris: Picard, 1891), 245.
17. The following on the history of the Escorial library is heavily indebted to François Géal, *Figures de la bibliothèque dans l’imaginaire espagnol du Siècle d’Or* (Paris: Champion, 1999), especially the first three chapters.

18. Géal, *Figures*, 91. On book censorship in early modern Spain, see also Géal, “La notion d’enfer de la bibliothèque dans l’Espagne des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles,” *Bulletin du Bibliophile* 2 (2004): 271–300.
19. Géal, *Figures*, 132.
20. “Memorial del Prior de S. Lorenzo el Real,” ed. Claudio Pérez Gredilla, *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos* 7 (1877), 221–222.
21. “Dos mil cuerpos de libros y mas son exposiciones del Alcoran, y mil de diversas materias de humanidad, y los demás de filosofia, matemáticas, y algunos de medicina,” qtd. in Guillermo Antolín y Pajares, *La Real biblioteca de El Escorial* (El Escorial: Real Monasterio del Escorial, 1921), 61.
22. “Los estima tanto que dara de buena gana por ellos buen numero de captivos que tiene en su poder y otras cosas,” “Consulta acerca de los libros arábigos que se dice fueron del Rey Cidan,” ed. Claudio Pérez Gredilla, *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos* 7 (1877): 220–221, 220.
23. “Podra darla á su tiempo segun fuere la instancia que por ellos hiciere el Rey Zidan y lo que se viere convenir al estado de las cosas de Berveria,” “Consulta,” 221.
24. “No se dexara de sacar algun fruto dellos ni tampoco se cortará el hilo al provecho que resultaria si Zidan los apeteciere y desseare tanto cobrallos que a trueque desto venga en partidos convenientes al bien público,” “Consulta,” 221.
25. Cristóbal Pérez Pastor, *Bibliografía Madrileña o descripción de las obras impresas en Madrid (Parte segunda, 1601 al 1630)* (Madrid: Tipografía de la Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, 1906), 333–334. See also Braulio Justel, *La Real Biblioteca de El Escorial y sus manuscritos árabes* (Madrid: Instituto Hispano Árabe de Cultura, 1978), 181–183.
26. “Que me sirve en la traducion é interpretacion de las Lenguas Arabiga, Turquesca y Persiana,” Pérez Pastor, *Bibliografía*, 333.
27. “Que al dicho Francisco de Gurmendi se le dexen algunos libros de todas facultades y ciencias que él tuviese por necesarios para sus estudios de a dicha Lengua Arabiga, como son Vocabularios y otros de la propiedad y elegancia de la Lengua, y el dicho Gurmendi podrá traduzir en Castellano algunos que parezcan merecerlo por ser materias morales ó de hystoria,” Pérez Pastor, *Bibliografía*, 334.
28. James T. Monroe asserted that “during the seventeenth century Arabic studies in Spain underwent an eclipse,” *Islam and the Arabs in Spanish Scholarship* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 23; Pedro Chalmeta, “A guisa de prólogo,” in Manuela Manzanares de Cirre, *Arabistas españoles del siglo XIX* (Madrid: Instituto Hispano Árabe de Cultura, 1972), 7–17, 11–12.
29. “Entre autres il y a trois mille volumes Arabes, qu’ils disent qu’un D. Lúis Faxardo estant General d’une armée prit aux Turcs, qui vouloient transporter cette Bibliotheque d’une ville à l’autre, mais le malheur est qu’il n’y a

- la uy en toute l'Espagne pas un Interprete Arabe, encor qu'ils soient si proches des Mores," François Bertaut, *Journal du Voyage d'Espagne* (1669), ed. F. Cassan, *Revue Hispanique* 47, 111 (1919): 1–317, 159.
30. Monroe, *Islam*, 34. Miguel Casiri, *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana Escorialensis*, 2 vols. (Madrid, Antonio Pérez de Soto, 1760–1770). The erudite catalogue was received as an important contribution to the field of European Orientalism. Unfortunately, it was made after the great fire of 1671, in which a good part of the Escorial library was destroyed, including many of the Moroccan volumes.
 31. See Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, "Fragmentos de orientalismo español del s. XVII," *Hispania* 66, 222 (2006): 243–276; and "Al-Andalus y la lengua árabe en la España de los Siglos de Oro," in *Al-Andalus/España. Historiografías en contraste, siglos XVII-XXI*, ed. Manuela Marín (Madrid, Casa de Velázquez, 2009), 1–20.
 32. Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press: 2008).
 33. For recent studies on this question see *Los Plomos del Sacromonte. Invencción y tesoro*, ed. Manuel Barrios Aguilera and Mercedes García-Arenal (Valencia: Universitat de València, 2006); A. Katie Harris, *From Muslim to Christian Granada: Inventing a City's Past in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, *Un Oriente español: Los Moriscos y el Sacromonte en tiempos de Contrarreforma* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2010).
 34. Patrick Williams, *The Great Favourite, The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598–1621* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 33, 37, and 66.
 35. Mercedes García-Arenal and Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, "De Diego de Urrea à Marcos Dobelio, interprètes et traducteurs des 'plombs'," in *Maghreb-Italie: Des passeurs médiévaux à l'orientalisme moderne (XIIIe-milieu XXe siècle)*, ed. Benoît Grévin (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2010), 141–188.
 36. Grace Magnier, "The Dating of Pedro de Valencia's *Sobre el pergamino y láminas de Granada*," *Sharq al-Andalus* 14–15 (1997–1998): 353–373; and "Pedro de Valencia, Francisco de Gurmendi and the *Plomos de Granada*," *Al-Qantara* 24, 2 (2003): 409–426.
 37. Magnier, "Pedro de Valencia," 420.
 38. María Ángeles Galino Carrillo, *Los tratados sobre educación de príncipes (siglos XVI y XVII)* (Madrid: Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1948).
 39. Magnier, "Pedro de Valencia," 358; García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano, *Un Oriente español*, 248.

40. Jocelyne Dakhli, "Les Miroirs des princes islamiques: une modernité sourde?" *Annales, Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 57, 5 (2002): 1191–1206; on the genre as it was illustrated in the Islamic West, see 'Izz al-Dîn al-'Allâm, *Al-Sulta wa al-siyâsa fî al-adab al-sultânî* (*Power and Politics in the Sultânian Literature*, in Arabic) (Casablanca: Afrique-Orient, 1991); and *Al-Fikr al-siyâsî al-sultânî* (*Sultanian Political Thought*, in Arabic) (Rabat: Dâr al-Amân, 2006).
41. The unpublished manuscript, held at the Library of the Basque Parliament, has been posted online at <http://www.liburuklik.euskadi.net/handle/10771/8887> (consulted in September 2014).
42. "La librería quelle tomó a Muley Zidan," Gurmendi, *Libro de las qualidades*, 2r.
43. Raphaël Carrasco, *L'Espagne au temps des validos 1598–1645* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2009). Their study would be very much worth pursuing, taking into account the specific context of Spanish politics at that time including the struggles for power at the court, and the issues posed by the *validos*.

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Oumelbanine Zhiri Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of California, San Diego. She specializes in early modern culture, including travel literature and geography, comparative studies in European, North African and Middle Eastern cultures, and the history of Orientalism. She has published books and articles on Leo Africanus, François Rabelais, and Arab-European cultural interactions. In her current research, she is interested in mapping the development of European early modern Oriental studies in a transcultural context, as a circulation of objects, manuscripts, knowledge, and people across civilizations.

Political Pragmatism, Humanist Ideals, and Early Modern Orientalism in Busbecq's *Turkish Letters*

Kaya Şahin

Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1520/21–1591) was a typical early modern humanist who was employed as a diplomat, courtier, and tutor by one of the era's dynastic states and empires.¹ Next to the rise of large empires on the Eurasian continent, the main dynamics of Busbecq's life were determined by the political and cultural tensions created by Ottoman expansion into Southeastern and Central Europe and the Reformation. While these developments led to global imperial rivalries, they also contributed to the birth of a new diplomacy and the intensification of commercial and cultural exchanges.² Busbecq reacted to those with his *Turkish Letters*, which constitutes a significant pro-Habsburg contribution to contemporary debates about the Ottomans, the divisions among Christians, and the imperial rivalries.³ The *Letters* were widely circulated in their original Latin and several European vernaculars. By blurring the boundaries between past and present and reality and fiction, and admitting the reader into the author's private world, the epistolary style allowed Busbecq to construct a convincing narrative.⁴ The years he spent as a diplomat in Ottoman territories, and his credentials as a humanist scholar, endowed his writing with a particular authority and gave the *Letters* a canonical status.

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ANCHORING BUSBECQ AND HIS *TURKISH LETTERS*
IN HISTORY AND TRADITION

Busbecq was born in Flanders and studied in Louvain, Bologna, Padua, and Venice. He entered the service of Ferdinand (King of Hungary, Croatia, and Bohemia, 1526–1564; King of the Romans, 1531–1564; Holy Roman Emperor, 1558–1564) in 1552–1553. After attending the wedding of Queen Mary of England (reigned 1553–1558) and the future Philip II of Spain (reigned 1556–1598) in England in the summer of 1554, Busbecq traveled to Istanbul, and then to Central Anatolia, for an audience with Sultan Süleyman (reigned 1520–1566). He was back in Vienna in August 1555, but returned to Istanbul in early January 1556 where he stayed until August 1562. Upon his return to Vienna, he continued to serve the Austrian Habsburgs as courtier, diplomat, and tutor. He relocated to Paris after 1576, where he lived as a respected member of the humanist circles and composed his *Turkish Letters*. Beset by the atmosphere of violence during the French Wars of Religion (1562–1598), he decided to leave for his native Flanders in the fall of 1591. During this final journey, he was abducted by marauding soldiers. Following his release he retired for a few weeks to a nearby castle, where he fell ill and passed away on October 27 or 28, 1591.⁵

It has been commonly believed that Busbecq wrote his *Turkish Letters* in Istanbul. In reality, he began working on the *Letters* after 1579, while in France. The First Letter, which he circulated among his humanist friends, was published in 1581 without his knowledge.⁶ It narrates Busbecq's travel from Vienna to Central Anatolia, and his return to Vienna; it brings together observations about Ottoman religion and custom, anecdotes on Ottoman political life, and exhortations to Christians to reform their ways. Obviously spurred by the unexpected popularity of the unsanctioned edition, Busbecq allowed the publication of the first two letters in 1582, and of the definitive edition, with four letters, in 1589.⁷ The Second Letter, considerably shorter than the others, begins with Busbecq's return to Istanbul in early 1556, and provides detailed information about the succession struggles between the two surviving sons of Süleyman. The Third and Fourth Letters discuss Ottoman political life, Muslim customs and religious beliefs, Busbecq's scholarly activities, diplomatic intrigues, the ruinous consequences of the divisions among European Christians, and the best methods to stem the tide of Ottoman expansion. The *Letters* combine Busbecq's reminiscences of events from nearly twenty years prior with excerpts from the diplomatic correspondence he conducted with Vienna.⁸

They also include materials from his readings, such as Pierre Gilles's study on the antique and Byzantine monuments of Constantinople, Theodore Spandounes's work on Ottoman history and ethnography, and the travelogues of the diplomat Philippe du Fresne Canaye and the naturalist Pierre Belon.⁹ These different layers give the *Letters* a rich and varied texture, and make them a repository of various themes, tropes, and discourses about the Ottomans and the Europeans in the sixteenth century.

The *Letters* were published at a time when the number and variety of works on Islam and the Muslims increased considerably. This veritable "literature" extended from "court news, humanist and merchant epistolary exchanges, and printed newsheets" to travel narratives, dramatic works, religious polemics, and histories.¹⁰ During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in particular, those works dealt mostly with the Ottomans, whose expansion in Europe after the 1360s attracted the attention of generations of humanists, polemicists, travelers, pilgrims, and diplomats.¹¹ After the fall of Istanbul in 1453, the word "Saracen" began to cede its place to "Turk" and the obsession with Jerusalem was refocused on Istanbul.¹² However, in an environment in which the Ottomans were seen as having the military and economic upper hand, early modern Orientalism displayed a profound ambiguity vis-à-vis Islamic polities, and often served the purpose of discussing the problems of the authors' own societies and cultures.¹³ As Bernadette Andrea and Linda McJanet state, "[t]his [wa]s the West representing itself through the East, but in an era when Western European sovereigns and their subjects (diplomats, merchants, missionaries, and would-be tourists) remained supplicants to the more powerful empires of the Ottomans, the Safavids, and the Mughals. Hence, this representation cannot be of 'a sovereign Western conscience'; rather, it consists of uncertain negotiations between 'self' and 'other' and the possibilities for hybrid subject positions that ensue."¹⁴

My reading of Busbecq's *Letters* is inspired by recent studies on early modern Orientalism. In this chapter, I place Busbecq's narrative strategies, cultural concerns, and political engagements within the larger contexts of the Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry, the Catholic-Protestant split, the Habsburg-French rivalry, the increasing rift between the Spanish and Austrian wings of the Habsburg house, the Dutch revolt, and the French Wars of Religion. I pay particular attention to his construction of Muslim alterity and European Christian identity in the face of shifting European realities. I take into account Busbecq's pragmatic remarks and pedagogical aspirations as well as his ambiguous attitudes vis-à-vis everyday interactions

with the Ottomans. I contrast his pragmatic commentary on historical and political issues and the realities of his life as a Habsburg ambassador in Istanbul with his timeless humanist rhetoric and his yearning for pan-Christian unity. While the modern scholarly literature on early modern European representations of Islam usually posits static, immobile Ottoman interlocutors, Busbecq's reminiscences allow us to discern a level of dialogue. At the same time, the *Letters* testify to the limitations of the humanist discourse, through which Busbecq rewrote his reminiscences and diverted his readers away from pragmatism toward stereotypes.¹⁵

THE POWER OF POLITICAL PRAGMATISM: BUSBEQC IN ISTANBUL

Busbecq's stay in Istanbul, during which he forged his firsthand knowledge about Ottoman realities, was related to the Ottoman-Habsburg conflict over the control of Central Europe. The conflict resulted in the division of Hungary into Ottoman- and Habsburg-controlled zones and the creation of a military frontier. It also involved, particularly in its first decades, a strong ideological dimension that revolved around claims to universal monarchy.¹⁶ In 1554, Busbecq's major task was to represent Ferdinand's dynastic claims in Central Europe vis-à-vis the Ottomans, while his more immediate mission was to negotiate an armistice in Hungary and Transylvania. He was able to secure a series of armistices between 1555 and 1562, and a comprehensive treaty in 1562. His activities during that period were facilitated by tensions between the Ottoman princes Selim (1524–1574, reigned as Selim II, 1566–1574) and Bayezid (1525–1561), who engaged in open warfare to secure their succession to the throne during their father's lifetime. Bayezid was defeated in 1559, but took refuge with the Safavid shah Tahmasb (reigned 1524–1576), the main rival of the Ottomans to the East. Furthermore, the Religious Peace of Augsburg in 1555 and the Franco-Habsburg treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559 immobilized the Protestant and French rivals of the Habsburgs in Europe. While it decreed a truce of six years, the treaty of 1562 also entailed Ferdinand's formal relinquishing of his rights over Transylvania, and an annual payment of thirty thousand ducats for his control over western Hungary.¹⁷ His son Maximilian, who became Emperor in 1564, renewed the treaty upon his accession.

As the *Turkish Letters* show, Busbecq familiarized himself with the inner workings of the Ottoman imperial council during that time and established a relationship with two grand viziers, Rüstem (who became grand vizier a second time and served between 1555 and 1561) and Ali (who served between 1561 and 1565). He knew their ethnic origins, and admired their rise from enslaved Christian children to the heights of the Ottoman government through meritocracy. He was also aware of their reputations among the Ottoman elite; for instance, his portrayal of Rüstem's venality and clientelism coincides with the views of contemporary Ottoman sources. He disliked Rüstem's intransigence in diplomatic negotiations, but he clearly liked Ali, whom he presents as soft-spoken and earnest.¹⁸ His interaction with the grand viziers extended into discussions about the reasons behind the Ottoman-Safavid and the French-Spanish rivalries.¹⁹ His presence around the Ottoman court involved a dimension of international intrigue because he had to compete with the French ambassador, Jean Cavenac de la Vigne, who served in Istanbul from ca. 1556 to 1566. Finally, Busbecq interacted with various translators working for the Ottoman imperial court and established a good relationship with one of them, named İbrahim.²⁰ Busbecq treated those individuals as the officials of another empire, rather than the representatives of a barbaric enemy.

Busbecq was fairly well informed about the international and internal challenges faced by the Ottomans, as seen in his detailed description of the execution of Prince Mustafa in 1554, and the war that pitted Prince Bayezid against Prince Selim and Süleyman.²¹ As those passages show, Busbecq was not merely a distant and uninformed observer of a foreign land. He regularly met with Ottoman high officials, maintained a network of informants who supplied him with critical information, and manipulated different palace factions (as well as the tensions between the Ottomans and the French after Cateau-Cambrésis) to promote the Habsburg position. He used the official Ottoman idiom of the time when he said that the rebel princes acted against religion and the State (*din u devlet* in Ottoman), disrupted the peace of the realm (*buzur*), and upset the order of the world (*nizam-ı alem*), which suggests that he was well aware of the rhetoric of elite Ottomans and Ottoman sources.²² Another body of information Busbecq presents is related to Ottoman military practices, the implication being that the Habsburgs could adopt them. He talks about the insulated clothing used by the janissaries, the carrying and distribution of weapons during the campaigns, the finer points of Ottoman horse training, the potential uses of adopting camels as pack animals, and rice as a staple food

in European armies.²³ Ottoman pragmatism in adopting other nations' useful practices is similarly lauded and presented as a model.²⁴

Contrary to Busbecq's assertions about his forced isolation, his living conditions improved and he was allowed to venture into the city, especially after Cateau-Cambrésis and the relative improvement of Ottoman-Habsburg relations.²⁵ He was thus able to observe, firsthand, the religious customs and other habits of the local inhabitants, study the flora and fauna around Istanbul, and interact with a medley of locals, including a Greek Orthodox cleric who, as Busbecq claimed, was a supporter of Catholic-Orthodox unification.²⁶ While it is true that the Ottoman authorities did confine foreign emissaries to prevent intelligence gathering, Busbecq's casual remarks about the visits he received from a Venetian jeweler, the Christian residents of the Pera quarter, or travelers from Ragusa, Florence, and Venice, show that he did not live in complete isolation but, rather, benefitted from the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the Ottoman capital.²⁷ On another occasion, he watched the procession of the Ottoman army from the windows of a Jewish house, and spoke Spanish with the inhabitants, who would have been the descendants of the migrants of 1492.²⁸ At the time, Istanbul was brimming with liminal figures such as a group of Italians who had recently converted to Islam and befriended members of Busbecq's retinue. To Busbecq's delight, the converts swindled Muslim buyers of Italian slaves by going to their houses and claiming they were relatives of their recent purchases, thus buying back their freedom at a lower price.²⁹ Rather than dwelling in a ruined city exclusively inhabited by hostile figures, as he often claimed, Busbecq was thus able to experience a rich demographic and cultural environment in Ottoman Istanbul.

THE POWER OF HUMANIST RHETORIC: BUSBECQ IN PARIS

The shift from the diplomat's pragmatism to the humanist's idealizations and essentialist jargon is, to a certain extent, a reaction to a historical context that is not solely related to the Ottomans. Busbecq's professional career coincided with the period during which the Austrian Habsburgs suffered from the rise of the Spanish branch under Philip II (King of Spain, 1556–1598), following the formal partition of the Habsburg domains in 1555. While Ferdinand became Holy Roman Emperor in 1558, Philip's increasing focus on the Low Countries and the New World meant that the Austrian Habsburgs were left to fend for themselves vis-à-vis the Ottomans.³⁰ There were several tensions around Maximilian's coronation as Holy Roman

Emperor in 1562; ardent Catholics, further empowered by Philip II's martial Catholicism, saw Maximilian as a crypto-Protestant.³¹ While the failure of the Ottomans to take Malta (1565), the Holy League victory over the Ottoman navy at Lepanto in 1571, and the long Ottoman-Safavid War (1578–1590) helped chase away the specter of an impending Ottoman onslaught, the renewed vigor of the Catholic-Protestant rivalry led to a worsening of the political situation in Europe. After 1566, the Dutch Revolt reduced the chances of peaceful coexistence among Catholics and Protestants, and Philip II's harsh policies in the Low Countries drew criticism from many milieus and individuals, including Busbecq himself.³² During his long stay in France, Busbecq witnessed the instability created by the French Wars of Religion, and his letters to Maximilian II between 1574 and 1576 show his concerns.³³ He associated with humanist and scholarly circles during that time, and it is probable that he sympathized with those groups that sought a middle way between the militant Catholics and Protestants.³⁴ While Busbecq's ecumenical approach to religious differences among Christians and his invitation to coexistence have been interpreted as Erasmian, his ideas of peace among Christians relied on plans to redirect the internal violence against the Ottomans, in the form of a new crusade (he wrote his crusade appeal, the *Exclamatio*, as a reaction to the outbreak of religious violence around 1576). That attitude was not unique to Busbecq; rather, a mixture of religious toleration (or "Irenicism") and calls to unity against the Ottomans was often encountered in the Viennese court under Ferdinand and Maximilian.³⁵

Next to the impact of this historical and cultural context, the tropes of the humanist tradition gave their flavor to the *Turkish Letters*. From the mid-fifteenth century onwards, several humanists had used their considerable talents to produce works about the history, politics, and religion of the Muslim empires further east. Like Busbecq's *Turkish Letters*, these works exhibited a crucial internal tension. While their use of the classical tradition pushed them to emphasize a form of knowledge supported by empirical facts, they often yielded to the pressures of what Margaret Meserve calls "political expedience...and enduring cultural tradition."³⁶ Due to that tension, the humanist writings were multilayered products that combined scholarly scrutiny with medieval Christian tropes on Islam, calls to peace among Christians with invitations to crusade, and a genuine ethnographical interest with preconceptions on Ottoman barbarity. Various elements found in the *Turkish Letters*, such as the attempt at delegitimizing the Ottoman possession of lands that once belonged to the

Greeks and the Romans by emphasizing their lack of civilization, stem from that tradition. On a more personal level, the works often involved a crucial dimension of self-promotion behind the façade of academic rigor and moral altruism.³⁷ For Busbecq, writing in his old age, the urge to leave behind a respectable legacy was as important as inviting his fellow Christians to forgo their differences against the common enemy.

The theme of the lands of Antiquity suffering under barbarian rule emerges very early, as soon as Busbecq begins describing his entry into Ottoman territories in the first letter. On his way to Istanbul in 1554, while crossing a land bridge between two lakes on the edge of the Sea of Marmara, the author praises the savage beauty of a land that is “ignored by a barbarian master who despises it.”³⁸ In a passage about a trip from Istanbul toward the Black Sea during his initial stay in Istanbul, Busbecq first lauds the beautiful landscape as the domain of nymphs and muses, and a most suitable retreat for scholars. He then informs his readers that the land, indeed Istanbul and the whole land of the Greeks, desires to be freed from its servitude under Scythian barbarism. The land reclaims the “civilization” it has bequeathed to “us,” and asks for deliverance in the name of “the rights of our common religion.”³⁹

In general, the lands occupied by the Ottomans are presented as a genuine object of desire and fantasy. One of the most potent signs of that desire is the insistent use of Greek and Latin toponyms for the geography through which he travels. This act of “recovering” the geography once described by the classical authors is an “act fraught with meaning and power” through which the gaze of the humanist rewrites the space according to his own fantasies and writes out the current inhabitants.⁴⁰ Busbecq clearly admires Istanbul, which he describes through its natural attractions and its geopolitical importance as the center of an important commercial and agricultural nexus. However, when he sets out to describe the city, he almost solely focuses on buildings and monuments from the Byzantine period, and repeats the opinion, contrary to his remarks elsewhere in the same text, that the Ottomans did not achieve anything remarkable after 1453.⁴¹ He thus chooses to produce a sanitized knowledge, a “coherent subjectivity,” a “misrecognition” that reflects the expectations of his intended audience and establishes a cultural background for the pan-European identity he wants to promote.⁴² Rather than providing information about the Ottoman territories, similar passages create “consensual representations” that comfort their audience and reaffirm the existence of a discursive community.⁴³

Next to those appeals at humanist sensibilities, the *Turkish Letters* are traversed by a highly personal dimension that portrays the reliability, erudition, and integrity of the author within an ethos of political loyalty, humanist scholarship, Christian fortitude, and strength of character. The *Letters* constitute a “persuasive or captivating fiction or performance of self,” which constituted in the Renaissance “the most efficacious form of social and political power.”⁴⁴ Because the voyage to the East was the ultimate test of character, Busbecq is careful to portray his days there spent mostly in isolation. He insists that he did not enjoy himself in Istanbul, and did not have friendly relations with the locals and the Ottoman officials who guarded him.⁴⁵ Given the stigma associated with long stays among Muslims, Busbecq is careful in reassuring his readers that he was often extended an invitation to convert, an invitation he proudly refused.⁴⁶ In front of the perils of early modern diplomacy, the horrors of living among barbarians, and the tedium of long days spent confined in his residence, Busbecq, like his near-contemporary Montaigne, says he takes refuge in his books, which are his loyal friends.⁴⁷

At other times, we find him looking for ancient coins, old Greco-Roman manuscripts and inscriptions, rare plants (he was long credited for having brought the tulip to Europe), and animals.⁴⁸ He proudly informs his readers of the animals he kept in his ambassadorial residence; when he escapes from the plague to a nearby island, he uses the opportunity to take stock of the plants, fish, and other sea creatures in the area.⁴⁹ When he meets emissaries from Crimea who are speakers of Crimean Gothic, he makes notes about their dialect.⁵⁰ When he encounters an Ottoman itinerant preacher on his return from China, he is keen to learn about that faraway land, its religion, and administration.⁵¹ Toward the end of the *Letters*, when he talks about his return voyage, he proudly mentions the animals he brings back, together with drawings of plants, as well as various precious and exotic objects: carpets, an embroidered cloth in “Babylonian style,” various weapons, and decorative trinkets.⁵² He also brings back manuscripts that fill several chariots, the best of which, he argues, are destined for the imperial library.⁵³

Next to the self-portrait of a humanist, the *Letters* are meant to convey Busbecq’s qualities as a diplomat, his loyalty to the empire, and his support to his fellow Christians in enemy territory. Ransoming war captives seems to have been a regular activity for Busbecq.⁵⁴ He portrays himself in intense negotiations to save the honor of the prisoners, particularly after the Spanish defeat at Djerba in 1560; for instance, he says he purchased an

imperial flag depicting the Habsburg provinces before it was offered as a gift to the sultan. He assists the interrogation of the captured commanders at the imperial council, and extends his hand to those who suffer the ills of imprisonment and sickness. In passages that read like Busbecq's gentle reminder to the freed captives and their descendants, we see him organize a monetary collection from the Catholic merchants residing in the city to pay the captives' ransoms. At other times, braving great financial risk, he pays the ransoms personally.⁵⁵ The theme of altruism reappears when Busbecq talks about his diplomatic activities. Using the eternal present of the epistolary genre, and posing as if he is writing from Istanbul, he tells his imaginary interviewer that he will not return to Vienna before his master instructs him to do so. When most of the other Habsburg officials leave the Ottoman capital, he informs his readers he is staying behind to ensure that the negotiations will not collapse into war. He reassures his audience that he will never fail the emperor and will do his utmost to secure an honorable peace treaty. Indeed, he claims that he always negotiates to obtain more concessions than the ones asked for by the emperor.⁵⁶

Busbecq's pro-Austrian Habsburg position manifests itself openly in two passages. In the first, after discussing the servitude of the Greek Orthodox Christians under Ottoman rule, he brings the discussion to the Europeans' servitude to various vices. Busbecq then criticizes those who traverse immense oceans to reach the Indies where, under the pretext of piety, they expropriate a "candid and naïve people." He remarks that their common ancestors only fought for glory, and that glory is to be found in battles against the Ottomans. The passage ends on a dark note: if the European Christians do not fight against the Ottomans now, they may soon have to fight for their survival.⁵⁷ The second, and much longer passage comes at the very end of the *Letters*, in the form of a portrait of Emperor Ferdinand.⁵⁸ The emperor appears, conveniently enough, as an ideal Renaissance ruler who combines stoic virtues with literary taste, administrative skills, and military courage. The humanist in Busbecq finds Ferdinand superior to Roman emperors such as Trajan or Theodosius; the man of obscure social origins lauds the emperor's meritocratic leanings; the diplomat and politician appreciates his attempts at stemming the tide of the Ottoman advance. Ferdinand is portrayed as a hero who fought against tremendous odds in the unsuitable Hungarian plains without much help from his brother Charles or other Christian princes. Busbecq eventually turns Ferdinand into the last defender of Christianity in front of Ottoman expansion. He draws the attention of his readers to previous Ottoman

victories over crusading armies in 1396 and 1444, and the Hungarians in 1526, and emphasizes that Ferdinand was able, unlike any other princes before him, to keep Western Hungary under his control. The Ottoman-Habsburg frontier, at the very end of the *Letters*, becomes the true dividing line between Christianity and Islam: a tenuous border that is protected only thanks to Ferdinand's—and his descendants'—extraordinary vigilance, beyond which the Ottoman/Turkish/Muslim/Barbarian/Scythian specter looms.⁵⁹

THE AMBIGUITIES OF EARLY MODERN ORIENTALISM

The *Turkish Letters* are among the most eloquent documents of early modern Orientalism thanks to their imbrication of fantasy and fear, of self-congratulation and self-scrutiny. They mix aversion to and appreciation for the Ottoman enterprise, synthesize fiction and ethnography, and impose a coherent identity onto a politically and religiously fractured Europe. As Nancy Bisaha argues, the humanists “revolutionized Western views of Islam, transforming an old enemy of the faith into a political and cultural threat to their growing sense of ‘Europe’.”⁶⁰ On the other hand, this “sense of Europe” was a matter of severe contention in the sixteenth century, and it did not yet amount to a well-defined cultural and political identity that was shared by all.⁶¹ In the Renaissance and the early modern period, identity and difference represented “volatile and pliable relations between cultures, rather than...necessary correlatives of traits inherent within them.”⁶²

Busbecq, in this environment, carried multiple identities and mentalities. His identities as a “European Christian,” Habsburg diplomat and courtier, humanist scholar, and traveler to the East helped him create a multilayered narrative that is not mere pan-European and pan-Christian fantasy. His dreams of a Habsburg-led Reconquista of Central and Southeastern Europe and his sober observations on the mores of the Ottoman Muslims exist side by side. As a humanist observer, he comes close to seeing the Ottoman Muslim entity as another “culture” to be studied beyond hierarchical taxonomies, and sometimes to be learned from. Like an anthropologist, he focuses his attention on specific markers of “culture” such as culinary habits, burial practices, superstitions, the relationship between humans, animals and their natural environment, gender relations, notions of purity and cleanliness, sexual practices, marriage, and religious rites.⁶³ Similarly, he sees Ottoman imperialism as something akin to European imperialisms, as a system based on specific political, military, and economic

principles that could be imitated, transformed, and defeated. This does not mean that early modern Orientalism is devoid of racial and hierarchical thinking or violent fantasies. In fact, it has all these attributes, coupled with what I called Busbecq's pragmatic observations or his appreciation of the other side as another culture. As such, rather than being the cultural instrument of Western European superiority, early modern Orientalism denotes a state of ambiguity that defies teleological interpretations, and nudges us toward a more nuanced reading of early modern history.

NOTES

1. I am grateful to Marcus Keller, Javier Irigoyen-García, and Julia Schleck for their comments and suggestions.
2. For the early modern expansion on a global scale, see John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire since 1405* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), 50–99; Jerry H. Bentley, “Early Modern Europe and the Early Modern World,” in *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World*, eds. Charles H. Parker and Jerry H. Bentley (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 13–31; and Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For the humanists' place in the new diplomacy see Timothy Hampton, *Fictions of Embassy: Literature and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).
3. While early modern European authors called the Ottomans “Turks,” the Ottoman ruling elite saw itself as Ottoman, and did not subscribe to a Turkish identity and/or ethnicity. This is why I will use the word Ottoman throughout this article, even though Busbecq and his contemporaries would use the words “Turk/Turkish.” Throughout the article, I am using a recent French translation and critical edition: Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, ed. and trans. Dominique Arrighi (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2010), which is superior in scholarly quality to previous partial (such as E. S. Forster's) and complete (such as C. T. Forster and Daniell's) English translations of the *Turkish Letters*. The quotes from the *Letters* in the article are my own translations into English.
4. For the malleability of the humanist epistolary form, see Dominique Arrighi, *Écritures de l'ambassade: les Lettres turques d'Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2011), 79–87.
5. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 381–387. For detailed accounts of Busbecq's life see Zweder von Martels, “On His Majesty's Service: Augerius Busbecquius, Courtier and Diplomat of Maximilian II,” in *Kaiser*

- Maximilian II.: Kultur und Politik im 16. Jahrhundert*, eds. Friedrich Edelmayr and Alfred Kohler (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik; Munich: Oldenbourg, 1992), 169–181; and “Le cercle d’amis de Busbequius,” in *Sur les traces de Busbecq et du gotique*, ed. André Rousseau (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1991), 27–39.
6. This edition, by Ludovicus Carrio, also included Busbecq’s call for a general war against the Ottomans, his *Exclamatio sive de re militarii contra Turcam instituenda consilium*, which was composed in 1576 and dedicated to Rudolph II, the new Holy Roman Emperor. The *Exclamatio* advocates for military, financial, and cultural/religious reform and renovation on a pan-European scale. Since its main themes are repeated in the *Turkish Letters*, the present discussion is limited to the latter.
 7. For the composition and publication history, see Zweder von Martels, “The Colouring Effect of Attic Style and Stoicism in Busbecq’s *Turkish Letters*,” in *Travel Fact and Travel Fiction: Studies on Fiction, Literary Tradition, Scholarly Discovery and Observation in Travel Writing*, ed. Zweder von Martels (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 140–57; Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 387–388. The 1589 edition was reprinted in both Paris and Frankfurt in 1595. There was another edition in 1594, followed by others in 1605, 1620, 1629 and 1633 in Hanau (Germany), Hanover, Munich, and Leiden. Translations into European vernaculars followed: Czech (1594; only the first two Letters and the *Exclamatio*), German (1596), Polish (1597), Spanish (1610), French (1646), Dutch (1652), and English (1694).
 8. Von Martels, “The Colouring Effect,” 147–150; and “Impressions of the Ottoman Empire in the Writings of Augerius Busbecuius (1520/1–1591),” *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 5, 2 (1995): 212–215. For selections from the diplomatic correspondence, see von Martels, “Augerius Gislenius Busbequius: Leven en werk van de keizerlijke gezant aan het hof van Süleyman de Grote” (Ph.D. thesis, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1989), 477–501.
 9. For Busbecq’s use of contemporary works on the Ottomans, see Arrighi, *Écritures de l’ambassade*, 102–129.
 10. Carina L. Johnson, *Cultural Hierarchy in Sixteenth-Century Europe: The Ottomans and Mexicans* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2. Also see *ibid.*, 2–11 *passim*, and Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 241–243 *passim*.
 11. For an analytical study of this new literature see Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

12. Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 284–288.
13. See, for instance, Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance: 1545-1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Daniel J. Vitkus, “Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe,” in *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of the Other*, eds. David R. Blanks and Michael Frassetto (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 207–230; Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 1–24; Frédéric Tinguely, *L’Écriture du Levant à la Renaissance. Enquête sur les voyageurs français dans l’empire de Soliman le magnifique* (Geneva: Droz, 2000); Susan R. Boettcher, “German Orientalism in the Age of Confessional Consolidation: Jacob Andreae’s *Thirteen Sermons on the Turk*, 1568,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, 2 (2004): 101–115; M. G. Aune, “Early Modern European Travel Writing after Orientalism,” *The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 5, 2 (2005): 120–138, 120–122; Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1–23.
14. Bernadette Andrea and Linda McJannet, “Introduction: Islamic Worlds in Early Modern English Literature,” in *Early Modern England and Islamic Worlds*, eds. Bernadette Andrea and Linda McJannet (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 11. The words between quotation marks are from Said’s *Orientalism*.
15. While I agree with Dominique Arrighi’s presentation of the text as a rich narrative with a strong autobiographical dimension and a powerful fictional aspect, I do not agree that Busbecq’s diplomatic activity and his later retelling of it mostly consists of duplicity, dissimulation, and falsification, as Arrighi asserts, or that Busbecq misunderstands and misrepresents historical reality. See *Écritures de l’ambassade*, 138–195. Beyond an empiricist and positivist interrogation of Busbecq, I believe that the text preserves traces of genuine moments of encounter between Busbecq and various Ottoman subjects, and that it is important to focus on these internal tensions.
16. For a recent account of this rivalry in its several dimensions, see Kaya Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 15–154. For a Habsburg perspective on the ideological rivalry see Johnson, *Cultural Hierarchy*, 78–81.
17. For the events of the period see Şahin, *Empire and Power*; and M. J. Rodríguez-Salgado, *The Changing Face of Empire: Charles V, Philip II, and Habsburg Authority, 1551-1559* (Cambridge and New York:

- Cambridge University Press, 1988). For a detailed account of Busbecq's diplomatic activities in Istanbul, see Lucien Bély, "Busbecq diplomate," in *Sur les traces de Busbecq et du gotique*, ed. André Rousseau (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1991), 42–50.
18. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 305–309.
 19. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 198–199.
 20. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 329–335 passim. İbrahim accompanied him on his final journey from Istanbul to Vienna; they then proceeded to Maximilian's coronation as Holy Roman Emperor in Frankfurt in November 1562. There, İbrahim, who was of Slavic origin, gave a public speech in Polish, and congratulated the new emperor in the name of the sultan. See Thomas Conley, "The Speech of Ibrahim at the Coronation of Maximilian II," *Rhetorica* 20, 3 (2002): 263–273.
 21. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 72–83, 140–152, 228–274, and 337–344.
 22. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 81.
 23. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 175–185.
 24. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 218. Cf. Frank Lestringant, "Altérités critiques: Du bon usage du Turc à la Renaissance," in *D'un Orient l'autre*, vol. 1: Configurations, ed. Marie-Claude Burgat (Paris: CNRS, 1991), 85–105.
 25. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 224, n353.
 26. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 304.
 27. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 220–221.
 28. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 245.
 29. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 257–258.
 30. Rodríguez-Salgado, *The Changing Face of Empire*.
 31. For these rumors as well as other tensions around 1564 see Johnson, *Cultural Hierarchy*, 197–201.
 32. Von Martels, "On His Majesty's Service," 172.
 33. Robert Epes Jones and Bernerd Clarke Weber, eds. and trans., *Letters of Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq to the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1961). A historical survey of the main personalities and events is Janine Garrison, *Guerre civile et compromis, 1559-1598* (Paris: Seuil, 1991).
 34. For these voices of moderation, see Mario Turchetti, "Middle Parties in France during the Wars of Religion," in *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands, 1555-1585*, eds. Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop, and Marc Venard (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1999): 165–183.
 35. See Howard Louthan, *The Quest for Compromise: Peacemakers in Counter-Reformation Vienna* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
 36. Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 4.

37. Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 3.
38. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 70.
39. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 91–92.
40. Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna Singh, “Introduction,” in *Travel Knowledge: European “Discoveries” in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna Singh (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 3–4.
41. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 84–89. For another example where the author treats Ottoman Istanbul as a palimpsest and searches to textually recreate the Byzantine city, see Kimberly Byrd, trans. and ed., *Pierre Gilles’s Constantinople: A Modern English Translation* (New York: Italica, 2008). For a discussion of this antiquarian obsession (and the relative contrast established by the drawings of Melchior Lorck and Pieter Coecke van Aelst), see Amanda Wunder, “Western Travelers, Eastern Antiquities, and the Image of the Turk in Early Modern Europe,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 7, 1–2 (2003): 89–119.
42. I borrow these terms from Kamps and Singh, “Introduction,” 4.
43. See Jonathan P.A. Sell, *Rhetoric and Wonder in English Travel Writing, 1560–1613* (Aldershot, Hampshire; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 29–31.
44. Stephen Greenblatt, quoted in Claire Colebrook, *New Literary Histories: New Historicism and Contemporary Criticism* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 199. This personal aspect of the work is argued throughout Arrighi, *Écritures de l’ambassade*.
45. *Les lettres turques*, 215, 224–227. The myth of isolation and personal fortitude often leads Busbecq to ignore many skilled individuals with whom he traveled and lived, such as the Hungarian humanists Franciscus Zay and Antonius Verantius, or the draftsman and painter Melchior Lorck. Von Martels attributes this to a desire for self-promotion, “Impressions of the Ottoman Empire,” 212. Meanwhile Barnaby Rogerson finds an element of professional jealousy, “A Double Perspective and a Lost Rivalry: Ogier de Busbecq and Melchior Lorck in Istanbul,” in *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East*, ed. Gerald MacLean (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2005), 88–97.
46. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 198, 224.
47. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 152. On solitude as literary trope in Busbecq see Arrighi, *Écritures de l’ambassade*, 36–40, 67–71.
48. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 102.
49. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 163–169 passim, 299–302.
50. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 316–320.
51. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 320–322.
52. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 376–377.
53. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 378. This is another element of ex post facto self-promotion. As Arrighi shows, Busbecq’s intention was to sell some of

these manuscripts, *Les lettres turques*, 378, n560. Donating the ones he could not sell to the imperial library was a decision he made in 1576, and not at the time of his return in 1562.

54. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 165, 170.
55. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 285–291 passim, 332–335 passim.
56. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 152, 154–155, 275, 346. For the trope of devotion also see Arrighi, *Écritures de l'ambassade*, 40–45.
57. *Ibid.*, 91–2.
58. This long portrait, which is somehow awkwardly appended at the end of what is meant to be a travel narrative, reads like a belated funeral oration to the memory of the emperor who had died in 1564.
59. Busbecq, *Les lettres turques*, 361–376. Arrighi again focuses on Busbecq's use of tropes, and his “falsification” or “misrepresentation” of facts, *Écritures de l'ambassade*, 245–283. I interpret this portrait as a meaningful cultural statement closing the *Letters*.
60. Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 5.
61. On the pitfalls of assuming fundamental alterities in the early modern period, see Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 1–24. For a critical assessment of recent works with regard to their notions of alterity see Gerald MacLean, “When West Looks East: Some Recent Studies in Early Modern Muslim Cultures,” *The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7, 1 (2007): 96–112.
62. Barbara Fuchs, *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2.
63. *Les lettres turques*, 108–109, 186–195, 253–256 passim.

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Competing Forms of Knowledge in Adam Olearius's *Orientalische Reise*

Aigi Heero and Maris Saagpakk

Adam Olearius (1599–1671), a scholar, writer, and diplomat, made history with his travel account of a diplomatic and trading expedition from Northern Germany to Persia from 1633 to 1639.¹ His *Offt begehrtte Beschreibung Der Newen Orientalischen Reise* (1647), and its reprint *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung/Der Muscowitischen/vnd Persischen Reyse* (1656) in particular, became bestsellers by modern standards.² Contemporary readers' interest in faraway and exotic countries and their peoples was enormous and Olearius's book satisfied that interest, combining factual information with the description of thrilling, frightening, exhilarating, or disgusting incidents. The narrative is a chronicle as well as a piece of empirical research on the peoples and countries Olearius visited during his voyage.

The sponsor of the journey was Frederick III, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp. Driven by a desire to secure the financial means for his ambitious plan to make his duchy the center of arts and culture in Northern Germany, he attempted to open up a new trade route to Persia via the Baltic Sea and Russia. Two missions were organized for establishing

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diplomatic and commercial relations: the first mission was to Russia to seek permission for the creation of new transit corridors, and the second was to Persia. Because the ambitious dreams of the Duke were never fulfilled, the most important outcome of the expedition was Adam Olearius's travelogue.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the sections of the travel narrative in which Olearius describes the personal contacts of the embassy personnel with foreign peoples. As a critic has pointed out about Olearius's work, his "methodology is that of a comparatist."³ That implies that the reader becomes aware of a certain hierarchy of the described nations, an aspect which has not been addressed in previous research. *Orientalische Reise* reveals competing ways of perceiving the Other, combining three distinct perspectives. The chief focus here is on the modus of description used by Olearius. He describes the people that the travelers met on their journey by using the discursive knowledge about the region which was available through different writings in Western Europe by that time. In his writing, Olearius mostly reflects the information through the prism of his personal experience of the described nations. Olearius's perspective can therefore be characterized as dominant. However, we aim to show that the author finds ways to include other views on the Orient in the text. The travelogue includes poems by the famous German poet Paul Fleming, who can therefore be counted as a secondary author. Although not voluminous, the poems illustrate a sometimes contrasting view of the cultural phenomena depicted in Olearius's account. Furthermore, the calculating and arrogant perspective of Consul Otto Brüggemann, the man in charge of the embassy, adds a third dimension. Unlike Olearius and Fleming, Brüggemann is a character in Olearius's narrative, often quoted directly and described in great detail. Each voice or perspective represents a social group: Olearius's that of scholars, Fleming's that of poets, and Brüggemann's that of merchants. By accentuating these three perspectives the western perception of the oriental Other will be highlighted as a process with different points of emphasis. Although all perspectives carry common features, the socially differentiated perspectives combined in the *Orientalische Reise* are striking and reveal the scope of attitudes prevalent among European elites in those years.

The first edition of Olearius's account was translated into Dutch (1651), French (1656), and English (1662), and has been an object of study ever since. Outside of German-speaking countries, the *Orientalische Reise* was sometimes published in combination with a travelogue by Johan Albrecht

Mandelslo, a seventeenth-century German adventurer who also traveled to Persia and India between 1638 and 1640.⁴ After Samuel Baron's English translation of Olearius's account about Russia in the 1656 edition, the *Orientalische Reise* increasingly received critical attention.⁵ Several historians of Russian culture and history have drawn on Olearius's travelogue. Marshall T. Poe traces the roots of today's perception of Russia and its people to the eyewitness reports of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century European travelers. He refers to Olearius's travel account to describe Russian customs and everyday life, Russian religion and aristocracy, as well as common opinions about Russians.⁶ Gerhard Weiss recounts Olearius's life in Persia and his relationship with the grand vizier in order to show the economic goals of the embassy.⁷ In *Unfolding the Orient* (2001), Elio Brancaforte dwells on the Persian section of Olearius's travel account to discuss the seventeenth-century European conception of the Orient, and the oriental court in particular.⁸ Brancaforte also examines how a German baroque scholar constructed an image of Iran for a mid-seventeenth-century European public.⁹ Finally, Rudi Mathee sees Olearius as a trailblazer, comparing his travel account with those of other famous travelers: he "sets the tone for a reassessment of Iran and the world of Islam among Europe's literati."¹⁰ Because Olearius refers to other authors' writings on the same topic, the text is often understood as the synthesis of seventeenth-century knowledge about the geographic area from Russia to Persia. Early modernists as well as historians of contemporary history thus regard the *Orientalische Reise* as an extraordinary source of cultural history. However, most studies about the *Orientalische Reise* reflect Olearius's opinion and consider less the differing voices inscribed in the text.

This chapter will contribute to the study of the travelogue by taking into account the three voices and perspectives of Olearius, Fleming, and Brüggemann inscribed in the text and discuss their different ways of relating with the cultural "Other."

KNOWLEDGE, DISCOURSE, AND POWER

The study of the acquisition and spread of knowledge in recent cultural theory focuses on the examination of intercultural communication and the various ways it was interpreted, rejected, or understood. The spread of knowledge in a society and its practical use are other important aspects of this area of research. In post-colonialist approaches, knowledge of another culture is often proposed as a pre-requisite and guarantee for the seizure

and retention of power. The model for describing the cultural Other, developed in post-colonial studies, can also be usefully applied to the analysis of different cultures captured in Olearius's travel account.¹¹ Yuri Lotman's concept of the semiosphere is equally useful for the critical discussion of cultural alterity. Lotman regards the semiotic space as a unified mechanism which enables mono-semantic systems to function as a part of a semiotic continuum.¹² When the semiosphere identifies itself with one cultural and territorial space, it provides the facts within this space with specific meanings. Heuristically, these hail from the same space. However, every semiosphere faces constant new input from other semiospheres on its borders. New pieces of information from the outside with different cultural meanings must be reshaped and adjusted to give them a meaning in the existing system of semiotic models. Therefore, the semiotic connotations of a specific cultural sign in one semiosphere inevitably undergo a shift in meaning while being exported to another semiosphere.

From Lotman's point of view, the adaptation and alteration of cultural facts from other semiospheres is not an act of the subject's self-centeredness but rather a way of making new information understandable in a certain established but ever-changing system. Travelogues are excellent examples for the processes applied to rearrange new pieces of knowledge into a system of existing cultural meanings. While introducing new information about phenomena which are unfamiliar to the writer as well as to his reader, the comments and explanations of the author are tools to give meaning to the observations about the foreign culture. The outside perspective already manifests itself in the selection of the data about the Other. The author must introduce enough 'foreignness' to keep the reader interested without confusing him or her too much.

We can observe this careful calibration in the *Orientalische Reise* in which Olearius is both the author and a character. This position enabled him not only to describe certain cultural phenomena he had noticed along the way, but also to comment on them from a Western perspective. For example, he notes that sitting on the floor is a common habit in Persia and comments that he finds it very fatiguing. This technique allows him to introduce new information as well as to contextualize it by making a distinction between 'us' and 'them.' The next step that often follows is the rethinking, re-imagining, or recreation of the 'self' based on new experiences. Reverting to Lotman's concept of the semiosphere, we could say that the majority of the new knowledge gleaned from the semiosphere of the Other cannot and will not be accepted in the center of the Western

semiosphere (e.g. polygamy). However, some features of foreign cultures have the potential to be liked, accepted, and also imported, e.g. some of the foods and drinks. The experience of the Other sometimes also leads to a self-examination that is then used as a tool for self-improvement. In his foreword, Olearius presupposes explicitly that the observation of other nations can be a process of learning.¹³ That positive vision is followed by a surprising attempt to prove that even the mistakes of others can make the observer a better person. To support his point, Olearius cites a Persian who had told him that all he had learned came from clumsy and blunt people—everything they did wrong he tried to avoid. The implication here is that knowledge is power because it helps to make right decisions and the description of the other serves as cultural capital and as a reassurance for the wise choices made in the West.

The textual approach to Otherness in the *Orientalische Reise* adheres to the rhetorical canon prevalent in the seventeenth century with its emphasis on *inventio* and *dispositio*. By choosing authentic material and relating personal experiences, Olearius reveals the picture of each specific object or person. The context determines if the Other is a threat, an interesting contact, even a potential friend, or simply something bizarre. The description of the peculiarities of other peoples emphasizes their otherness compared with the identity of the narrator. Readiness to believe that certain people hibernate, or that some people do not have heads, attests to the marked incongruity between the self and the Other.¹⁴ Many oddities, such as the ones just mentioned however, are denied by Olearius, not without giving rise to new ones, although based on rumors. For example, women are said to be held captive in a bear's cave in Livonia. The amusing co-existence of knowledge and speculation or pure fantasy in the text led Hans-Georg Kemper to call the travel account "a box of rampant oddities."¹⁵

Edward Said's critique of colonialism is based on the questioning of the duality of 'us' versus 'them' which he described as a characteristic feature of Western thought since the time of the ancient Greeks. Said argues that the West's assumption of native backwardness in the East and the latter's general inability to be independent and 'equal' has led to claiming certain rights for oneself and denying them to the other, the most important and best known example being the "right to own the land."¹⁶ The critic states that narrative fiction and history are "premised on the recording, ordering, observing powers of the central authorizing subject."¹⁷ It is the foreign observer who has the power to denote himself as a subject and the Other as an object. According to Lotman, however, there is no escape from the

dominant role of one's own semiosphere, and therefore the self is forced to take the position of the subject. However, there is always a certain scope of variation within one and the same semiosphere which depends on the personal features and beliefs of the subject. Therefore, Lotman does not deny the process of "Othering"; concurrently he rather sees the process as a discussion between different semiospheres on a horizontal level, while Said concentrates on the vertical line of power and control over the Other that results from knowledge.¹⁸ Related to the *Orientalische Reise* we can assert that Olearius is driven by the wish to make the encountered cultures understandable for his readers. Concurrently he remains respectful toward the Other. However, as noted above, the text opens up different perspectives on the Oriental.

THE SCHOLARLY VIEW OF ADAM OLEARIUS

Olearius claims a special role for himself going beyond the wish of informing his readers about distant lands. The act of describing the Other is part of constructing himself as a scholar. He is striving to become an expert of other countries and nations. That effort was indeed crowned with success: Olearius's sharp observations led Frederick III to enlist him in his service.

The author is full of curiosity and respectful of the object of study. Applying a Germanocentric and Christian perspective, his evaluations can sometimes be devastating, but Olearius always remains tolerant of the prevalent customs.¹⁹ As he depicts the foreign cultures he encountered on his journey, he places them in a hierarchical ranking.²⁰ The main destination of the journey, Persia, is seen as a country of high cultural status. Abundantly described by the Europeans, Persia is not unknown to Olearius or his readers.²¹ Olearius makes special reference to seven authors preceding him so that we can contend that there was already a certain perception of Persia among scholars in the Western semiosphere.²² In describing the Persians, Olearius presents two opposing opinions: it is in Persia that for the first time during the journey he makes friends with people of a foreign culture. The astronomer Chalil Minatzim is fascinated by Olearius's measuring devices for preparing geographical maps.²³ The German traveler also makes acquaintances with other scholars with whom he shares common scholarly ground, among them Mullah Maheb Aalij, who teaches him Farsi.²⁴ In Olearius's travelogue, Muslims appear as tolerant and open; the only exception is the ruling king because of some politically driven decisions concerning dissenters. Olearius is highly

appreciative of the Persians' neatness, the condition of their garments, and their living quarters. He also repeatedly expresses admiration for Persian opulence, excessiveness, and exoticism.

At the same time, Olearius emphasizes the expedition's perception of the Orient as a potential source of danger. For example, he describes how after leaving Moscow, fear and anxiety seemed to grow among the leaders of the embassy. They feared attacks by local tribes and the unpredictability of the king, whom Olearius calls a cruel tyrant.²⁵ Furthermore, his comments about traditional Persian cross-gender communication are extremely derogatory. While Olearius is quite tolerant of women covering their faces and staying in inner rooms, he deprecates the Persian tradition of polygamy and the existence of public brothels. The moral corruption is said to come from the bad example of the Prophet Mohammed, so the scholar Olearius is falling briefly in line with western stereotypes about the Orient and Islam.²⁶ In the *Orientalische Reise*, then, Persia is described as a region full of contrasts. Overall, Olearius expresses his appreciation for its level of knowledge and civilization.

The same cannot be said about Russia. The delegation had to spend a lot of time in Russia because of time-consuming ceremonial negotiations. Olearius used that imposed break for an in-depth study of the Russians and the history of Russia. In his depiction, a certain sense of Western superiority is palpable. The primitivism of lower classes is accepted as inevitable, but the educational level and the comprehensive worldview of the Russian upper class are not comparable with those of Germans or Persians. According to Olearius, Russians cannot boast of high-level science or art, and superstition and sorcery are widespread. At the same time, Russians are portrayed as clever, using their remarkable cunning, alas, for cheating and profiteering.²⁷ As far as their national character and daily life are concerned, Russians are barbarians in the eyes of Olearius. They lack any table manners whatsoever and their sexual life is dissolute. The drinking habits of Russians are colorfully portrayed: tragicomical is the statement that Russians who reach the destination of a pilgrimage indulge in so much alcohol that they can never make it to the sermon. According to Olearius, Russians are doomed to live in bondage and must be treated ruthlessly. Their few positive traits include their bravery and their religious tolerance shown even to their serfs. Furthermore, Olearius does not perceive Russians as distinct in terms of appearance when compared with other European peoples: men look like other European men, and women are equally attractive.²⁸

When Russians and Persians are portrayed as different, strange, and, in rare cases, barbarous with astonishing and disgraceful but also familiar features, then these primitive peoples represent *savages* in a binary logic: they are what we are not. In the hierarchical ranking of different nations and cultures inscribed in Olearius's text the primitive or "natural" people seem to take the lowest range. For Olearius, *savages* are exemplified on the one hand by the tribes leading their lives in a natural state (e.g. Samoyeds), and on the other by the enslaved peasants in the Baltic area of Livonia, currently Latvia and Estonia. According to Olearius they have, instead of a well-functioning civil society, a strong connection with their place of habitation and live in harmony with nature.²⁹ They also dress queerly, practice unfathomable rites, defy Christianity, and celebrate superstitious traditions (for example the Livonians sacrifice to rocks and afterwards dance around them naked).³⁰ As he describes that way of living without recognizable social configurations such as the Christian church, Olearius also reveals his astonishment at the possibility of such a lifestyle. At the same time the incompleteness of the information about the *savages* is evident in the text. Olearius acquires his knowledge in this respect through various rumors, anecdotes, and newspaper reports. This can be seen, for instance, in the description of Samoyeds. It is hinted that they may be amphibian and that they obtained their name *samo-jed* ("eat themselves") because of their practice of cannibalism. Livonian peasants are described by Olearius as stupid, naive, and rough; their primitive mode of life necessitates steady management by people of a higher cultural standing: for example in the case of Estonians and Latvians that of the local German nobility. It should be pointed out as well that the author records the local nobility's views of its peasants rather than his personal impressions. Olearius even adopts a term for the characterization used by the local upper class, calling the peasants in serfdom "Undeutsche" [non-Germans]. The narrative contains only a few references to firsthand contacts between Olearius and the serfs, and even those are interpreted from the viewpoint of the local upper class. For instance, Olearius is amazed that peasants are punished by whipping. He then gives the example of a peasant who chose being whipped over a monetary fine and states that such "rough and blunt" people cannot do any better.³¹ It never occurs to him that the peasant may not have had the money. Thus, Olearius's identification with the local upper class clearly affects his view of the Livonian peasants. The author refers to various clichés and stories told by the local noblemen. This also leads to

the justification of the described hierarchical relationships along the lines of a specific knowledge discourse, which is clearly distinct in the text. Through its association with wisdom, strength, and orderly life the upper class is put in sharp contrast to the lower class and its presumed bluntness, barbarism, and immorality.

For Olearius's hierarchical view of other nations, it is therefore crucial whether he understands and approves of their social functioning. Thus, the Persian and Russian cultures that share certain information spaces with Olearius's cultural background, have relatively complex social structures and partly act in the similar semiosphere, and are therefore ranked higher than the culture of primitive or "natural" peoples. Also, there seems to be a limit to the understanding of other cultures. If something lies beyond that limit, he does not try to comprehend it and he does not seem to have a basis for interpreting the witnessed event. Therefore, Olearius earnestly deliberates the possibility that the described people sleep with bears, are amphibian, or have no heads. As a learned man, Olearius tries to create that basis by describing, observing and asking, as well as drawing numerous pictures and maps. However, his ability to make inferences is also restricted by the same knowledge discourse that he seeks to improve with his work.

PAUL FLEMING AND THE ROMANTIC-EXOTIC PERSPECTIVE

Olearius's mostly scholarly approach to foreign nations is complemented by the romanticizing and exoticizing view of his close friend Paul Fleming. Fleming's perception of cultural difference strongly deviates from that of Olearius. The differences in attitudes were due partly to Olearius's higher rank in the embassy, partly to Fleming's love sickness for Elsebe Niehusen, whom he met in Reval, Livonia, and a melancholy that increased during the journey. However, the incongruent perspectives of Olearius and Fleming must be regarded as intrinsic to the *Orientalische Reise* rather than created in the spur of the moment. Fleming is reluctant to give up certain clichés about other nations if he finds them expressive and distinctive.³² His ignorance of factual details and adherence to prejudice can be explained by his willful disregard for trivial issues. Fleming's entire poetry is imbued with baroque sentiment, characterized primarily by the futility and transience of everything in existence.³³

Olearius included fourteen German texts by Fleming in the *Orientalische Reise*.³⁴ Fleming's first poem appears in the second book and deals with the shipwreck that occurred in 1635 in the Baltic Sea during a

storm. The ship of the embassy was destroyed completely; the people on the ship, except two crew members, were saved after several days of desperation. Instead of providing any new information, Fleming allegorically elevates this event beyond the point where the actual purpose set by the embassy, namely to establish the trade relations, would have been justified: "Look / German Christians / this has been done for you." The sentence which indicates that the travelers had a great civilizatory mission while in fact they just wanted to do profitable business also reveals Fleming's romanticized view of the entire journey. The reader finds Fleming's next poem only toward the end of the third book. Although Olearius introduces it as a portrayal of the Novgorod region, it is not a realistic description but a depiction of the ambiance of the Russian nature-loving way of life similar in tone to an idyllic pastoral harmony in baroque style³⁵: "He eats when and what he wants, what is caught on his fishhook, / What is found in the barn and in the nest and what grows in the garden. / He takes his drink from the brook and gathers wild crops from the forest."³⁶ For the depiction of Russian peasants and their life, Fleming borrows motifs from ancient bucolic poetry and from the *Schäferdichtung* of the Renaissance, resulting in the strong idealization of the described object.³⁷ It is more important for Fleming to describe the harmony of man with nature than to do justice to a specific geographical place; where Olearius sees fornication and boozing, Fleming sees a simple and natural way of life. That means that the inclusion of poetry enables a romanticizing perspective on other cultures, which was pervasive in the West at the time. Therefore, we can assume that Fleming's texts are included to give the book an exotic allure that Olearius could not afford to pen himself because he positions himself as a scholar.

However, Olearius's selection of Fleming's poems is not limited to idyllic description; in other poems, pastoral life is contrasted with the activities of the entire embassy, which are seen as a trivial and pointless hustle and bustle in comparison with the beautiful simplicity of Russian peasant life: "It is strange that we take great pains to achieve / Honour, money, and skills; we travel to foreign countries, / Suffer cold, heat, hunger, thirst, fear and hardships. / This man here hardly ever wanders further than the third house from home. / What can I be more than him?"³⁸

Poems by Fleming included in the fourth book give an allegoric interpretation of what Olearius previously described in prosaic terms. For instance, the poet tells the legend about the formation of Sariol Kurgan, a mount at the river Volga. According to the legend, the mount is the grave of a Tatar prince and seven kings. Fleming links the legend to the

transience of mundane glory and concludes with the moral advice that what seems important and awesome now will soon fall into oblivion.³⁹

The last text by Fleming is an extract of a longer poem, dedicated to Hartmann Grahman, the embassy physician. Olearius quotes only the part that depicts the hardships borne by the expedition, discarding the remainder of the poem about more specific goals and outcomes of the journey.⁴⁰ In that poem, Paul Fleming's attitude toward Persia is best expressed in a passage about the village of Rubar: "You, the excellence of the entire land of Persia, / The adornments gathered into this narrow space. / Great, strange, graceful, rich; I bow before you."⁴¹ Persia is great, strange, graceful, and rich—the selection of adjectives again suggests the poet's desire to exoticize.

Maria Cäcilie Pohl has argued that Fleming's poetry was included in the travel narrative because of its ornamental value.⁴² However, that claim is not sufficiently corroborated. Poetry was highly regarded in the seventeenth century, and Fleming's texts do not merely illustrate or adorn the main account but also convey a different perspective that only partially overlaps with that of Olearius. By including Fleming's poems, the latter elevates his travel experiences and observations to a symbolic level, above and beyond the literal meaning.

OTTO BRÜGGEMANN'S AGGRESSIVE PERSPECTIVE

In addition to the views of Olearius the scholar and Fleming the poet, the *Orientalische Reise* also includes a depiction of the attitudes of Otto Brüggemann, the head of the embassy. Brüggemann was a successful merchant from Hamburg. The plan of the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp to establish commercial relations with Persia for trading along overland routes was partly prompted by Brüggemann. Although the personal animosity between Olearius and Brüggemann is alluded to early in the travelogue, there is no open hostility toward the merchant in the first half of the book. As the travel narrative progresses, however, Olearius's criticism of Brüggemann's actions and attitudes becomes increasingly direct and harsh. Depictions of incidents in which Brüggemann's behavior appears inappropriate can be found in the text with increasing frequency. Through this gradual growth of criticism, Olearius portrays Brüggemann as the anti-hero of his account.⁴³

Olearius thus depicts Brüggemann in ever more negative terms, taking issue with his attitude toward other peoples and disregard for his

diplomatic role. For instance, Olearius reports that Brüggemann gives orders to shoot at the boat drifting past them on the Volga and is reluctant to accept a gift from the Persians.⁴⁴ According to Olearius, the merchant is also arrogant in his view of other nations and treats other people above all as hostile opponents who must be outwitted in order to take advantage of them, causing problems for the other members of the expedition. In this respect, Olearius even directly quotes Brüggemann's opinions about other nations, for instance about the Persians: "The nature of this nation is such that what they do not give up willingly must be taken from them by force."⁴⁵ In certain cases, such an attitude produces a backlash against the embassy, for example when the party, visiting a Persian village for the second time, is not allowed to stay overnight because of Brüggemann's previous conduct.⁴⁶ The disrespect and tactlessness of the merchant make him the perfect embodiment of European arrogance in Olearius's work. Olearius, however, makes sure that Brüggemann's effort to dominate appears as a manifestation of his ineptitude and lack of power. He is portrayed as someone who lacks knowledge of foreign cultures and the willingness to understand them, let alone to find a common language with them. At once, Olearius demonstrates that this type of thinking is unproductive, dangerous, and in the end even self-destructive. According to Dieter Lohmeier, Brüggemann's behavior, particularly in the Persian territories, may indeed have contributed to the failure of the embassy. The merchant's main fault was to exceed the authority granted by the Duke. For example, the ambassador plotted political intrigues and also tried to persuade the czar to go to war against Persia in order to seize hold of the silk trade.⁴⁷ But we only know about Brüggemann's conspiratorial machinations through Olearius's account. Otherwise he should have explained the trade-related goals of the journey in more detail, which he was unwilling to do because the mission was not successful. Mentioning it would have shed unfavorable light on the Duke of Holstein.

The final chapter of the book describes Brüggemann's execution. He was found guilty of the continuous misuse of his authority by a court, a verdict that was also meant to send a clear message to the Russian and Persian rulers: the execution of an arrogant ambassador was meant to be a signal that the subordinate of the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp did not represent the Duke's views.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, Olearius's travelogue deals with much more than the encounter of Westerners with the Orient. Mirroring the author's astonishment, admiration, fear and boredom, the *Orientalische Reise* describes the peoples that Olearius and his companions met on their journey from the standpoint of a male Christian European. While Olearius always portrays the cultural Other with respect and tolerance, he includes Fleming's poetry to add an exoticizing perspective and descriptions of Brüggemann's behavior to show his European readers the possible problems which result from the ignorance of cultural differences. Brüggemann's execution serves Olearius as a warning. He seems to suggest that underestimating the Other is an attitude the Occident cannot afford—a Russian may be uneducated but he is cunning, and an intelligent Persian sees through plans that seek to take advantage of him. This implies that Olearius's book was meant not to increase implicit power over the Orient but to widen the horizon of his fellow Europeans and to enable them to learn from other cultures. At the same time the book reveals the complexity and plurality of perceptions of the Orient amid Western culture which deserve further comparative study in the future.

NOTES

1. The authors received support from the Estonian Science Foundation (ETF grant nr. 9026) for this article.
2. All quotes are from Adam Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung der Muscovitischen vnd Persischen Reyse*, facsimile reproduction, ed. Ingrid Hönsch (Leipzig: Faber and Faber, 2010).
3. Elio C. Brancaforte, *Visions of Persia: Mapping the Travels of Adam Olearius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 12.
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13. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 2.
14. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 160–161.
15. "Wuchernder Raritätenkasten," Hans-Georg Kemper, "'Denkt, daß in der Barbarei / Alles nicht barbarisch sei!' Zur Muscovitischen vnd Persischen Reise von Adam Olarius und Paul Fleming," in *Beschreibung der Welt. Zur Poetik der Reise- und Länderberichte*, ed. Xenia von Ertzdorff (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 315–344, 322.
16. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 78.
17. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 79.
18. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 100.
19. Olearius underlines the degree of authority he possesses through the fact that he has seen himself what he describes. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, xiv. See also Haberland, *Paul Fleming*, 436.
20. This aspect has so far received little scholarly attention, because most of the studies have focused on the description of one nation only. There is a large number of studies focusing on a very specific part of Olearius's travel account, such as David Scheffel, "Adam Olearius's 'About the Greenlanders'," *Polar Record* 23, 147 (1987), 701–711; or Bežan Javaxia, *Georgia and the Georgians in the Book of Adam Olearius* (T'bilisi: Gamomc'emloba Universali, 2005) (in Georgian); Aigi Heero and Maris Saagpakk, "Adam Olearius ja kultuuriline Teine teekonnal Oksidendent Orienti," in *Uurimusi kirjandusest ja kultuurist. EKKI toimetised 15*, eds. Piret Viires and Anneli Kõvamees (Tallinn: VALI trükikoda, 2013), 33–55.
21. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 4.
22. Such as Herodotus, Bizarus, Barbarus, Contrarenud, Brissonius, Boissardus, and Reineccius, in Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 3.
23. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 433.

24. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 434.
25. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 535.
26. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 593.
27. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 186.
28. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 179–202.
29. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 159–162.
30. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 109–111.
31. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 113.
32. Heinz Entner, *Paul Fleming: Ein deutscher Dichter im Dreißigjährigen Krieg* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1989), 377.
33. Urs Herzog, *Deutsche Barocklyrik* (München: Beck, 1979), 100.
34. Fleming's poems in Latin were put aside by Olearius for uncertain reasons. According to Detlef Haberland, Olearius was a member of the *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* since 1651; Latin poems did not fit into the society's cultural and political objectives. Olearius was an acting member of the society when he revised his book for the second print edition, "Paul Fleming – Reise, Rhetorik und poetische *ratio*," in *Spiegelungen: Entwürfe zu Identität und Alterität. Festschrift für Elke Mehnert*, eds. Sandra Kersten and Manfred Frank Schenke (Berlin: Frank und Timme, 2005), 413–431.
35. See Klaus Garber, *Der locus amoenus und der locus terribilis: Bild und Funktion der Natur in der deutschen Schäfer- und Landlebendichtung des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Köln, Wien: Böhlau, 1974), 109.
36. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 331.
37. Dietmar Schubert, "Zeuch in die Mitternacht/ in das entlegne Land," in "Rußlandbilder in den Gedichten Paul Flemings und in der Reisebeschreibung des Adam Olearius," in Kersten and Schenke, *Spiegelungen*, 433–452.
38. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 332.
39. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 359.
40. Olearius is extremely careful about the overview and analysis of the goals and accomplishments of the embassy. The aim of the mission was never achieved and thus the endeavors of the embassy were unsuccessful. However, the failed commercial mission must not blemish the reputation of the Duke of Gottorp and hence Olearius gives an impression in the text of a journey that was meant to be a scientific expedition. The success of Olearius's travel narrative in a way legitimates the entire undertaking, and the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp as the patron of the mission enjoys unexpected glory.
41. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 698.
42. Maria Cäcilie Pohl, *Paul Fleming: Ich-Darstellung, Übersetzungen, Reisedgedichte* (Münster, Hamburg: Lit, 1993), 325.

43. Dieter Lohmeier, "Nachwort des Herausgebers," in *Adam Olearius: Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung Der Muscowitischen vnd Persischen Reyse (1656)*, ed. Dieter Lohmeier (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1971), 27.
44. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 369 and 414.
45. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 417.
46. Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung*, 694.
47. Lohmeier, "Nachwort," 25.

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PART II

Empire and Its Orients

The Discourse Regarding the Chinese and Muslim Worlds in the Hispanic Empire (New Spain and Castile, c.1550–1630)

José L. Gasch-Tomás and Natalia Maillard-Álvarez

During the second half of the sixteenth century, a new world was opening up to the Catholic evangelizing zeal: China. The establishment of Portuguese colonies in India and later in China during the sixteenth century, and the conquest of the Philippines by the Castilians in 1565, triggered a series of journeys of European, particularly Castilian and Portuguese, missionaries to China and other Asian countries such as Japan. Those missionaries and scholars (*letrados*) wrote letters, treatises, and books which shaped an early modern discourse about China. At the same time, Iberians encountered their traditional enemies, the Muslims, in those areas of Asia to which they were expanding. They found Islamic kingdoms,

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colonies, and corsairs in India, along the coasts of China, and on many of the islands of Southeast Asia. To what degree did a discourse about Muslims and the Chinese circulate in the Hispanic empire during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries? Who was mainly responsible for setting up a discourse on China, which circulated around the Hispanic empire and other areas of Europe, during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries? And to what extent was the representation of China and her inhabitants built in relation to a discourse on the Muslim world in the Iberian empires? By answering these questions, we aim to gauge the way in which a discourse regarding China as a new “Other” of Europe extended among scholarly circles and was shaped during the second half of the sixteenth century. In relating the rise of a new discourse about China to the existing discourse regarding the Muslim world in the sixteenth-century Iberian territories of the world, we intend to show how European Orientalist discourse was complicated, enriched, and ultimately recreated by China’s entrance onto the scene. The presence of books about China and the Muslim world in the libraries of the elite of the Iberian empires give a first clue. Who were the readers interested in books about the Muslim and Chinese worlds in the Hispanic monarchy? The answer to this question will allow us to grasp the expansion of readership of new titles related to India, Japan, and above all China among Hispanic elites. To shed light on it, we analyze a sample of libraries from two of the most important cities of the Hispanic empire: Mexico City and Seville. We then analyze the discourse about China and the Muslim world that some of the most influential publications passed on to the Iberian elite and scholars from the mid-sixteenth century onward: *Discurso de la navegación de los portugueses* [Discourse on the navigation of the Portuguese] (Seville, 1557) by Bernardino de Escalante, *La conquista de la ciudad de África en Berbería* [Conquest of the city of Africa in Barbary] (Salamanca, 1558) by Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella, and *Historia del Gran Reino de China* [History of the great kingdom of China] (Rome, 1585) by Juan González de Mendoza. These books and their circulation contributed to the underpinning of an existing discourse about the Muslim world and the creation of a new one regarding the Chinese world. Of course, these were not the only books that played a role in transforming Iberian discourse about the Orient, but they deserve further analysis as they, particularly Escalante’s and Mendoza’s books, had a strong impact in editorial and readership circles.

EARLY MODERN BOOKS ON CHINA AND ISLAM AND THEIR READERS

The Chinese and Muslim worlds each had a different impact on the Spanish intellectual production of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for historical reasons. Muslims had appeared in chronicles and *romances* since the Middle Ages, while China acquired its relevance in Iberian literature only in the second half of the sixteenth century when the European presence in Asia began to increase. Prior to that, the main source of knowledge about China was *Il Milione*, the book attributed to the Venetian merchant Marco Polo, which Christopher Columbus possessed and annotated.¹

To study those readers who were interested in China and the Muslim world, as well as the kind of books they collected, inventories and records of public auctions containing books in Mexico City and Seville between 1562 and 1630 is elucidating. The latter are among the richest sources that we have despite the precautions we may take when using notarial documents to study the history of reading.² We compiled 316 inventories for Seville at the *Archivo Histórico Provincial* (see Table 1), out of which 46 (15%) belonged to women and 270 to men (85%).³ For Mexico, the information found in the *Archivo Histórico de Notarías* is complemented by the inventories and auctions included in the *Expedientes de Bienes de Difuntos*, kept in the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville and only referring to those Spaniards who died in America and whose heirs were still in Spain,⁴ as well as by the inventories found in the Inquisition Section of the *Archivo General de la Nación* in Mexico City. Overall, we have compiled 56 documents (see Table 2), out of which 8 (14%) belonged to women and 48 (86%) to men.

Table 1 Book owners in Seville: social and professional distribution

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Clergy | 74 (23%) |
| Aristocracy/urban patricians | 31 (10%) |
| Liberal professionals | 52 (16%) |
| Government officials | 8 (3%) |
| Merchants | 45 (14%) |
| Artisans | 25 (8%) |
| Seamen | 2 (0.7%) |
| Farmers | 1 (0.3%) |
| Unidentified | 78 (25%) |
| Total | 316 |

Table 2 Book owners in Mexico City: social and professional distribution

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Clergy | 12 (21%) |
| Aristocracy/urban patricians | 3 (5%) |
| Liberal professionals | 3 (5%) |
| Government officials | 3 (5%) |
| Merchants | 11 (20%) |
| Artisans | 6 (11%) |
| Seamen | 2 (4%) |
| Farmers | 0 (0%) |
| Unidentified | 16 (29%) |
| Total | 56 |

The two samples are uneven but representative enough to give us a valuable image of readers' preferences. In both Seville and Mexico City, members of the clergy are the best represented group among readers. In Seville, noblemen amount to a higher proportion of readers than in Mexico, possibly reflecting a more aristocratic society. Liberal professionals, which in Seville are the second most common group, seem to have been less prominent in Mexico, while merchants from the American city represent a bigger percentage of readers than in Seville. In both cases the libraries of liberal professionals tended to be better supplied than those of merchants. Artisans represent a small but still considerable percentage of readers, while seamen and farmers seem to be the least interested in book ownership. Another remarkable fact is that the proportion of inventories with books owned by women and the types of texts that we find in them are quite similar in both cities. Additionally, we may emphasize the average small number of books that readers possessed: in spite of the existence of very rich libraries, almost 45% of the Mexican inventories and 33% of the Sevillian ones only include between one and five books. A global survey of all the inventories containing books in Seville and Mexico City shows that, even though the main reason to acquire and store books was devotional and professional, curiosity and interest in faraway lands also had a place in Hispanic libraries.

Among all the books written about China in the sixteenth century, the *Discurso de la navegación de los portugueses* by Escalante and the *Historia del Gran reino de la China* by Mendoza found their way into Sevillian libraries: the first appears three times in our sample, and the second twice. In 1580 we can find Escalante's book in the library of the chaplain Pedro Hernández, who also owned a book by the Portuguese historian

João Barros, probably the *Décadas de Asia* [Decades of Asia].⁵ The musician and canon Alonso Mudarra owned another copy of Escalante's book⁶ that was sold in his auction to the prebendary Pedro Pablo.⁷ Finally, the wealthy Melchor de Biedma owned a copy in 1600.⁸ The *Historia del Gran reino de la China* appears in 1590 in the small and pious library of Bartolomé de Mújica, and in 1606 in the library of the lawyer Juan Pardo. As we can observe, the readers of these books are part of an elite group within the minority of people who could read and possessed a personal library. Except for the case of Bartolomé Mújica, who had twelve books, all the libraries mentioned exceeded 20 volumes, and three of them had more than 80. Their owners accumulated a wide range of books, betraying their curiosity and desire for entertainment.

After 1606 the books by Escalante and Mendoza are no longer found in our sample. There seems to have been a subtle but stable change in the interest of Sevillian readers in the Far East. China began to share its place in libraries with India and Japan, but the focus of readers seems to have shifted to the missions that Catholic orders were carrying out in those areas, and to the friars and laymen who had been martyred there.⁹ The preeminent lawyer Jerónimo de Santa Cruz collected more than 300 books, among which we can find the *Historiarum indiarum libri XVI*, written by the Jesuit Giovanni Pietro Maffei (Florence, 1588), along with the *Historia de las misiones que han hecho los religiosos de la Compañía de Jesus para predicar el Santo Evangelio en la India Oriental, y en los reinos de la China y Japón* [History of the Missions made by the Members of the Society of Jesus to preach the Gospel in East India and the Kingdoms of China and Japan], written by Luis Guzmán (Alcalá de Henares, 1601). In the case of the Portuguese artist Vasco Pereira, whose paintings were permeated by Counter-Reformist ideas, the work of Jesuit missionaries seemed to be guiding his concerns about Asia, specifically Japan.¹⁰

The conflict with the Muslim world, well alive in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, seems to have had a bigger impact in Sevillian libraries. The end of the so-called *Reconquista* was not definitively accomplished with the fall of Granada in 1492.¹¹ On the contrary, the important and sometimes conflictive minority of *moriscos*—Muslims who were forced to convert to Christianity but kept their habits and sometimes, clandestinely, their religion—remained within the territory of Castile until 1609; confrontations with Muslim and Berber pirates in northern Africa were ongoing throughout the sixteenth century; and the Ottoman enemy was a military threat in the Mediterranean during that period.

Concern about this “Orient,” too close and menacing for Iberians, can easily be detected in Hispanic elites’ libraries of the sixteenth century. Many of the titles of Seville’s libraries referred to the military clashes with Ottomans in the Mediterranean. The readers of those books may be found again among the city’s social elite: clergymen, noblemen, and wealthy laymen. The *Conquista de la ciudad de África en Berbería* by Calvete de Estrella, for instance, can be found in the libraries of Don Pedro de Zúñiga y Sotomayor,¹² son of the duchess of Béjar, and the aforementioned chaplain Pedro Hernández, whose library included the *Diálogo entre Pedro Barrantes Maldonado y un caballero extranjero que cuenta el saco que los turcos hicieron en Gibraltar* [Dialogue between Pedro Barrantes Maldonado and a foreign knight about the sack of Gibraltar by the Turks] by Pedro Barrantes Maldonado, the *Diálogo de la rebelión de Túnez* [Dialogue about the rebellion of Tunisia] by Pedro de la Cueva and the *Historia universale dell’origine e imperio dei Turchi* [Universal history of the origin and empire of the Turks] by Francesco Sansovino,¹³ among other titles about the Mediterranean conflict such as the *Relación de la guerra de Chipre y sucesos de la batalla naval de Lepanto* [Account of the war of Cyprus and the naval battle of Lepanto], written by the Sevillian poet Fernando de Herrera. The book by Maldonado was also in the library of the nobleman Alonso Martel in 1600.¹⁴ Books by Luis del Mármol Carvajal on the *Morisco* revolt in Castile, or on more general aspects of the Muslim world were part of the libraries of many elite readers.¹⁵

Despite the extended interest about China in Mexico City,¹⁶ we could not find any book about China in probate inventories or public auctions. This does not mean, however, that books about China did not arrive in New Spain. The historian Edmundo O’Gorman gathered a sample of libraries and bookstores from the *Archivo General de la Nación* which are enough to prove that there were people reading about China and Asia in New Spain during that period. In 1619, Alonso de Herrera presented an inventory with over 180 books to the Inquisition in the town of Nueva Veracruz, including *Conquista de las Molucas* [Conquest of the Maluku Islands] by Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola, *Cosas de Oriente* [Things of the Orient] by Amaro Senteno, *Conquista de la India de Portugal* [Conquest of Portuguese India] by Fernando López de Castanheda, and *Historia de las misiones del Japón* [History of missions in Japan] by Marcelo Rivadeneira. In 1621, a copy of *Historia de la China* [History of China] was sent from Peru to the Mexican priest Manuel Correa.¹⁷ We believe there is a reason why readers in New Spain had fewer books about China

than their Sevillian counterparts: New Spanish elites had access to information about East Asia through means other than printed books. The Philippines were a General Captaincy of the viceroyalty of New Spain, which was linked through the annual voyages of the Manila galleons. In the second half of the sixteenth century many handwritten accounts and treatises by missionaries and seamen who traveled from the Philippines to China and Japan, such as Jerónimo Marín, Martín de Rada, Miguel de Loarca, and Alonso Sánchez, among others, reached New Spain. In other words, printed books were not the only media (not even the main one) through which a new discourse about China circulated in New Spain. Information in other formats easily traveled from the Philippines to New Spain through the viceroyalty's privileged connection with Asia across the Pacific Ocean.¹⁸ Furthermore, we can also find works about China and Japan in the list of books sent to the Americas during the first half of the seventeenth century. The titles of those books reflect the same interest in Catholic missions as seen in Seville during the same period.¹⁹

We know that books about the Muslim world also found their way to the Americas,²⁰ but in our Mexican sample the only reader who owned books about this topic is the bachelor and clergyman Hernando Gutiérrez, who died in 1608. Two books in his library dealt with the conflicts that had taken place between Christians, on the one hand, and Moriscos and Muslims, on the other: *Conquista del Reino de Granada en verso* [Conquest of the kingdom of Granada in verse] and the *Comentarios de la fundacion y conquistas y toma del Peñón* [Comments on the establishment, conquest and taking of the *Peñon*] (Valencia, 1566). Both books were bought in a public auction by a physician.²¹

In summary, three elements can be understood from the libraries of Mexican and Sevillian elites from the second half of the sixteenth century onward. First, books on China and other Asian countries had a growing place in both cases. Yet such books were more numerous in Seville probably because in Mexico information about China usually circulated in forms other than books thanks to New Spain's connection with South East Asia. In fact, as will be discussed later, many components of the discourse about China in the Iberian empires were elaborated in New Spain. Second, there was an increase of books not only about China but also about the missions of Catholic orders in China and other Asian countries. Third, books about the military clashes of the Iberians with the Ottomans and other Muslim peoples in the Mediterranean, which also contributed to shaping and changing Iberian Orientalist discourse in the late sixteenth and early

seventeenth century, were mainly present in Sevillian libraries, although they were also found in Mexico City, where the conflict with Muslims was further away than in Seville.

THE DISCOURSE ON CHINA AND ISLAM IN THE HISPANIC WORLD

Representations of the Islamic and Chinese worlds in those early modern texts were constructed upon an Orientalist discourse aimed at the justification of the Catholic conversion of the “Other,” whether Muslim or Chinese. However, the discourse about the Muslim world was different from that about China because the context was not the same. In most points, the prejudices toward China did not have the same derogative character as those toward the Muslim world.

That sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Hispanic discourses were full of prejudices and negative views of the Muslim world is well known, although such discourses occasionally included signs of admiration for the skill, discipline, and organization of some Muslim peoples and states, particularly of the Ottoman Empire. The fear of, and military struggles with, Ottoman and Berber armies and corsairs resulted in a largely military literature, mainly in the form of chronicles, which reintroduced and deepened medieval clichés about the Islamic world that had been fostered in the Hispanic and Catholic worlds for centuries.²² The interest about that literature, some of which was present in the libraries of Mexican and above all Sevillian elites, lies in the way in which Iberians characterized their Muslim enemies. The Hispanic stories about the military victories over Muslims—chronicles of always Christian victories—are not only narrated in an epic language, but also peppered with negative views of the nature, social customs, and cultural habits of Islamic peoples.

As we have seen, one of the military chronicles that circulated most widely in the Hispanic world during the second half of the sixteenth century was Calvete de Estrella’s *Conquista*, a good example of the image that Hispanic chronicles created about Muslims, especially Ottomans, during the second half of the sixteenth century. It recounts the siege and conquest of the city of Mahdia, in Tunisia, by the Hispanic imperial army headed by Andrea Doria, against the Ottoman corsair Dragut (Turgut Reis). The bravery and courage of Christian soldiers is opposed to Muslim barbarism and cruelty. Ottomans and other Muslims are presented as

“tyrannical,”²³ and “ferocious.”²⁴ Particularly eloquent about the supposed malice of Ottomans is the episode about Ahmed Hassani, a king of Tunisia who ended up helping the Christian army in a battle. The reason for Hassani assisting Christians was that his cruel son had torn his eyes out and expelled him from the kingdom.²⁵ Such anecdotes, stressing the brutality of Muslims, and the general disparaging of the Muslim enemy are representative of military chronicles of that time. Nonetheless, in Calvete’s chronicle, as in other books of that period, the author also devotes positive words regarding Muslims, especially when referring to their abilities in war, which in turn enhanced the praise of Christian victories.²⁶

Escalante’s *Discurso*, among the most successful titles about Asia in contemporary Hispanic libraries, is a good example of the way in which an Orientalist but benevolent discourse about China’s history, peoples, character, and customs was set up in contrast to the view that Iberians had of Muslims. As alluded to above, the reason for this contrast is historical: when Iberians expanded their empire into India, the coasts of China, and the islands of Southeast Asia during the sixteenth century, the Muslims were already there.²⁷ In his account, first published in 1557 and immediately translated into the main European languages and Latin, Escalante describes first (Chaps. 1 and 2) some of the main victories of Iberian kings over Hispano-Muslims in the late middle ages, second the forays of the Portuguese into India and China (Chaps. 3–5), and finally the geography, peoples, and institutions of China (Chaps. 6–16).²⁸ He links the first part, which begins with the “Reconquest” of Iberia by the Christian kings of Castile and Portugal, with the expansion of Portugal into Africa, the eastern Mediterranean and India (second part). That expansion ended with the conquest of Ormuz, Goa, and Melaka. Escalante portrays Muslims as the main obstacle to both the expansion of Catholicism and the opening of trade routes to Asia; in the past, their presence was felt in the Iberian Peninsula, while in the early modern period they occupied the opposite shore of the Mediterranean and pressed other distant kingdoms to withdraw from establishing commercial relations with Christians, such as the kingdom of Calicut.²⁹

The distinction between “Mohammedans,” as Muslims were referred to, and Idolaters, that is, Hindus and Chinese, is consistently present in Escalante’s text, especially in the third part. This difference had important cultural consequences. Iberians built their discourse about China, and the admiration for their culture and some of their customs, upon this difference. The so-called Mohammedans had been enemies of the Christian faith

for centuries and the main way for them to be converted to Christianity was the military. “Idolaters,” on the contrary, were not actually viewed as enemies and could be “saved” by other means. This difference determined that the two were construed through an Orientalist lens but elicited different discourses. The ultimate goal of the Iberians was the spiritual conquest of China and, of course, the Islamic world. However, Escalante’s positive description of China went beyond Chinese military skills and political organization, as in the case of the Ottoman empire. For example, Escalante points out that the Chinese climate, its diversity notwithstanding, was mild and favored a varied and rich production of cattle and vegetables;³⁰ he mentions that printing presses started to be used in China earlier than in Europe;³¹ and he praises the good government and organization of China.³² China was a place to be spiritually conquered, but the Chinese and their culture were not barbarians to be destroyed.³³ Escalante’s view of China and the Chinese was thus based on different assumptions brought to bear on other “Others” in the Luso-Hispanic empires, such as Muslims and the indigenous populations of the New World.

The main reference about China produced in the Iberian world in the second half of the sixteenth century was Mendoza’s *Historia*, the most influential book about the Middle Kingdom published in Europe at least until *De Christiana expeditione* (1615) by Matteo Ricci and Nicolas Trigault. Under the pressure of Augustinians from Manila, Philip II entrusted González de Mendoza with a mission to China from Castile. González de Mendoza headed the embassy in 1580. However, it was stopped in New Spain, and a consultative junta from Manila finally advised against continuing the journey. Yet González de Mendoza remained in Mexico City for some years. His stay in Mexico, where the comings and goings of missionaries and bureaucrats to the Philippines were constant, allowed him to compile information he later used to write his book.

The *Historia* is divided into two parts. The first, consisting of three books, is a description of China’s history, peoples, and so forth, and the second narrates, again in three books, the missions to China by Fray Martín de Rada (1575), Fray Pedro de Alfaro (1579–1580), and Fray Martín Ignacio de Loyola (1580).³⁴ The *Historia* synthesizes previous scholarship, particularly Escalante’s work, and the view of China of the Spanish authorities in the Philippines. We know that to write his book, González de Mendoza had talked to many leaders of Hispanic journeys and embassies to China, and that he had likely read some of the letters and treatises produced by some of those travelers.³⁵ The account about China that

González de Mendoza passed on to Europe was therefore influenced by the idea of China that the missionaries of the Philippines had formed, characterized particularly by their optimism about the possible evangelization of China that was pervasive among the Spaniards of the Philippines before 1600.³⁶

González de Mendoza transmits notions about China that were already present in Escalante's *Discurso*, but he developed them further in the *Historia*, describing the Chinese in a different way than missionaries characterized other "Others," such as Muslims, native Americans, and Filipinos. We have already seen how Iberians viewed Muslims. From the second half of the sixteenth century onward, American Indians and other native populations were understood within the framework of what historiography has called the "myth of the good savage," that is, they were considered human beings who, in spite of living outside of civilization, were virtuous, honorable, and innocent. Their main problem was that they followed natural law.³⁷ Against the background of the "myth of the good savage" and the overall condemnatory understanding of the Muslim world, González de Mendoza's view of China opens a third way which is close to the humanist idea of Ancient Greece and Rome: although the Chinese were idolaters and pagans outside of the Christian fold, they were civilized and had a good political and administrative organization (*policía*). This explains not only the great advance of their culture, technology, and political system, all praised by the author. Insofar as the Chinese were "political" (in the sense that they had a polity), pious, virtuous, and intelligent (*de buenos entendimientos*), they were also closer to the Gospel and therefore more accessible to evangelization than other peoples.³⁸

CONCLUSIONS

The discourse about "the Other", whether Muslim or Chinese, was driven by the evangelizing eagerness of Iberians. This fact and the explicit or implicit comparison that missionaries, scholars, and writers made between China and the Islamic world, determined the type of discourse shaped by, among others, Escalante and González de Mendoza. The idea of empire in the early modern world, which is to say an idea in which politics and religion were indivisible, was reflected by almost every word of the texts by the two authors. In early modern Europe, the conversion of peoples was synonymous with political dominion. Changes in the Orientalist discourse in the Iberian empires must be understood in such a framework. Not by

chance were clerics the main readers of books about China in Mexico City and Seville, and chronicles on the Hispanic wars with Muslims were more numerous in the libraries of Seville's elites, who were closer to the Mediterranean, than in those of Mexico's elites.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, the region of Cathay described by Marco Polo became China, a bigger space and a region closer to the most learned minds of the elites of Iberia and the rest of Europe. The dialectic effect of the different characterization of the Chinese (and other Asian peoples), Muslims, and even native Americans established by Iberian elites was to transform—and complicate—the Orientalist discourse dominant in the Hispanic world until the mid-sixteenth century. For instance, in 1583, when the Jesuits wanted to open a grammar school for native people in Mexico, the authorities answered that they would do better to try it in China, where native people already had schools and were “philosophers.”³⁹ On the contrary, Muslims were characterized as cruel, brutal, and degenerate in several regards, some positive notes in the discourse on Ottoman institutions and warfare skills notwithstanding. A middle space was that of Native Americans, who were seen from the perspective of the “good savage.”

As we have seen, one of the main means, but not the only, through which such a new Orientalist discourse spread over the Iberian empires was the circulation of books about the Muslim world and China. In contrast to the mainly negative discourse about Islam, readers interested in China, particularly during the sixteenth century, often received information stressing the virtues of the faraway kingdom in spite of the absence of the true Christian faith. The permeation of this discourse can be observed, with a humorist nuance, in the second part of Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1615). In the dedication to the count of Lemos, Cervantes points out the desire expressed by many to see the second part of his hero's adventures: “the one who has shown the most interest in him has been the great emperor of China, who a month ago sent me a messenger with a letter written in Chinese, asking me, or more correctly, imploring me, to send him *Don Quixote*, as he intended to found a college in which Spanish would be taught, and he wanted the history of Don Quixote to be the work studied.”⁴⁰

NOTES

1. Rodrigo de Santaella, a clergyman who founded the University of Seville, translated Marco Polo's book into Spanish in 1518. See Juan Gil, ed., *El libro de Marco Polo anotado por Cristóbal Colón; El libro de Marco Polo, versión de Rodrigo de Santaella* (Madrid: Alianza, 1987), 169–286.
2. Benito Rial Costas, “Sixteenth-Century Private Book Inventories and Some Problems Related to their Analysis,” *Library and Information History* 26, 1 (2010): 70–82.
3. Natalia Maillard Álvarez, *Lectores y libros en la ciudad de Sevilla. 1550–1600* (Rubeo: Jaén, 2011).
4. Idalia García Aguilar, “Bienes de Difuntos como fronteras de conocimiento de las bibliotecas novohispanas,” *Relaciones* 29, 114 (2008): 163–204.
5. Archivo Histórico Provincial de Sevilla (AHPSe), Leg. 3496, 295r–301r; Leg. 3497, 478r–483r.
6. Klaus Wagner, “Los libros del canónigo y vihuelista Alonso Mudarra,” *Bulletin Hispanique* 92-1 (1990): 655–661.
7. AHPSe, Leg. 12459, 728r–740v.
8. AHPSe, Leg. 1120, 420r–433v and 1121r–1124v.
9. Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal. 1540–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 178–193.
10. Juan Miguel Serrera Contreras, “Vasco Pereira, un pintor portugués en la Sevilla del último tercio del siglo XVI,” *Archivo Hispalense* 70, 213 (1987): 197–239. Vasco Pereira collected over a hundred books among which we can find two volumes about the Jesuit missions in India, another one about the Philippines, three about Japan, and one about China. In the library of the noblemen Don Luis Tello de Guzmán, in 1620, we find an account about the martyrdom of European friars and native Christians in Japan, AHPSe, Leg. 398, 596r–601r. Finally, in 1622 the prebendary Martín Jiménez had in his library the *Discurso del Japón* [Discourses of Japan], AHPSe, Leg. 12763, 433r–436v.
11. As Martín F. Ríos Saloma points out, the term “reconquista” was coined only in the nineteenth century, *La reconquista: una construcción historiográfica (siglos XVI–XIX)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2011).
12. Natalia Maillard and Manuel F. Fernández, “Música, libros y torneos: Don Pedro de Zúñiga y el patrimonio cultural de un segundón de la nobleza castellana,” in *Testigo del Tiempo, memoria del Universo: Cultura escrita y sociedad en el mundo ibérico, siglos XV–XVIII*, eds. Carlos A. González, Manuel Fernández, and Natalia Maillard Álvarez (Rubeo: Jaén, 2009), 59–98.
13. This book was also owned in 1609 by the lawyer Jerónimo de Santa Cruz, who also had the *Historia de turcos y persianos* [History of Turks and Persians], by Giovanni Tomasso Minadoi. This last book appears again,

- together with the *Relación del origen y suceso de los Jarifes* [Account about the origin and events of the *Jarifes*], in the inventory of the noblemen Hernando Díaz de Medina in 1622 (AHPSe, Leg. 10071, pp. 639r–713r).
14. AHPSe, Leg. 6835, pp. 1039r–1041v; Leg. 6873, pp. 363r–377r. Alonso Martel also collected other books about the conflict between Christians and Muslims.
 15. The *Historia de la rebelión y castigo de los moriscos del reino de Granada* [History of the rebellion and punishment of the *Moriscos* from the kingdom of Granada] appears in 1617 in the inventory of the precentor Dr. Bartolomé de Olalla y Rojas (AHPSe, Leg. 12727, pp. 793r–805v). Other remarkable titles found in our sample are *La muy lamentable conquista y cruenta batalla de Rodas* [The very unfortunate conquest and the bloody battle of Rhodes] by Jacobo Fontano, *Historia en la cual se trata del origen y guerras que han tenido los turcos* [History about the origin and wars of the Turks] by Vicente Roca, and *Historia en la cual se cuentan muchas guerras sucedidas entre cristianos e infieles* [History of the many wars between Christians and infidels]. Among their readers we find again clergymen, but also the rich merchant Bartolomé de Frías (AHPSe, Leg. 4100, pp. 708v–713v) and María Garnica (AHPSe, Leg. 2365, pp. 785v–763r).
 16. José Luis Gasch-Tomás, “Textiles asiáticos de importación en el mundo hispánico, c. 1600. Notas para la historia del consumo a la luz de la nueva historia trans-nacional,” in *Comprar, vender y consumir: Nuevas aportaciones a la historia del consumo en la España moderna*, ed. Daniel Muñoz Navarro (Valencia: Universitat de València, 2011), 55–76.
 17. Edmundo O’Gorman, “Bibliotecas y librerías coloniales, 1585–1694,” *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* 10, 4 (1939): 694–697.
 18. Manel Ollé, *La empresa de China: De la Armada Invencible al Galeón de Manila* (Barcelona: Acantilado, 2002), 53–120.
 19. Pedro Rueda Ramírez, *Negocio e intercambio cultural: El comercio de libros con América en la Carrera de Indias, siglo XVII* (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2005), 277–279.
 20. Rueda Ramírez, *Negocio e intercambio cultural*, 286, and 290–291.
 21. Archivo Histórico de las Notarías de México, Notario 555, vol. 3836, 1542r–1544v.
 22. Ana María Carabias Torres, “Turcos contra Católicos: Barrantes Maldonado y la deformación interesada de los hechos militares,” *Tiempos Modernos* 19, 2 (2009): 10–13.
 23. Juan Cristóbal Calvete de Estrella, *La conquista de la ciudad de Africa en Berberia*, trans. Diego Gracián (Salamanca, 1558), 5.
 24. Calvete de Estrella, *La conquista*, 9.
 25. Calvete de Estrella, *La conquista*, 49–50.
 26. Calvete de Estrella, *La conquista*, 52–54 and 65.

27. Vitorino B. de Magalhães Godinho, *Os descobrimentos e a economia mundial* (Lisbon: Presença, 1991).
28. María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, "Introducción," in Bernardino de Escalante, *Discurso de la navegación de los portugueses* (Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, 1991); Rafael Bellón Barrios, "Acerca del *Discurso de la navegación* (1577) de Bernardino de Escalante: Evangelización, conquista, percepción del otro," *Biblioteca Saavedra Fajardo de Pensamiento Político Hispano* [www.saavedrafajardo.org] (2008): 1–10.
29. Bernardino de Escalante, *Discurso de la navegación que los Portugueses hazen a los Reinos y Provincias del Oriente...* (Sevilla, 1577), 16–28.
30. Escalante, *Discurso*, 31–32. As Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra points out, climate and astrology were very important in the characterization of different peoples and lands during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. See his "New World, New Stars: Patriotic Astrology and the Invention of Indian and Creole Bodies in Colonial Spanish America, 1600–1650," *The American Historical Review* 104, 1 (1999): 33–68.
31. Escalante, *Discurso*, 62.
32. Escalante, *Discurso*, 72–88.
33. Escalante, *Discurso*, 88–100.
34. Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reino de la China* (Rome, 1580).
35. Martín de Rada, who was accompanied on his journey by Fray Jerónimo Marín and the soldiers Miguel de Loarca and Pedro Sarmiento, wrote "Relación de la primera embajada a China del agustino Martín de Rada, y descripción de ese reino" (Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Filipinas, 79, N. 15). Pedro de Alfaro, who was accompanied by other friars, such as Agustín de Tordesillas, also wrote many letters about his travel: AGI, Filipinas, 84, N. 7; AGI, Filipinas, 84, N. 11; AGI, Filipinas, 79, N. 4; AGI, Filipinas, 79, N. 5; AGI, Filipinas, 79, N. 7.
36. Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 39–121. Negative discourses on China, such as that of the General Captain of the Philippines Francisco de Sande (1574–1580), were exceptional in the Iberian literature of the second half of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. See Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 72–84.
37. Escalante's work was produced after the debates of Valladolid about the conquest of the Americas and the dominion over Native Americans between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, which finished with the victory of De las Casas's theses. See David A. Brading, *The First America: The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots, and the Liberal State, 1492–1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 81–101.

- About the “myth of the good savage,” see Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
38. González de Mendoza, *Historia*, 339, 424. Furthermore, González de Mendoza argues that the apostle Saint Thomas had preached in China, as it could be observed allegedly in some of their pagan ceremonies and rites, *Historia*, 26–29, 41–44, and 397–398.
 39. AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, Vol. 2, f. 16.
 40. Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, trans. James H. Montgomery (Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009), 409.

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Mapping Islam in the Philippines: *Moro* Anxieties of the Spanish Empire in the Pacific

Ana M. Rodríguez-Rodríguez

When Spaniards arrived in the Philippines at the beginning of the sixteenth century, they were surprised by the presence of Muslim communities in the South of the archipelago. From that moment on, a number of Spanish colonial agents wrote about different aspects of Christian-Muslim contact in the remote area of the Spanish empire to analyze it for themselves as well as for the authorities of the Iberian Peninsula. Early Spanish colonists made numerous efforts to find ways to explain this new and conflictual reality. Some of their main rhetorical strategies included connecting their situation in the Philippines to the long history of confrontation with Muslims on the Peninsula as well as in the Mediterranean.

In his study about Hispanic-Asian encounters, Robert Ellis explains that “Hispanic writings from the Philippines reveal the ‘contradictions and ambiguities’ that [...] arose when European understandings of human nature and society came into contact with non-European realities.”¹ Although there are indeed many similarities between the Asian colonial practices of Spain and those of other European powers, this issue reaches a greater degree of complexity when one considers how some of those realities (which I would not qualify as easily as “non-European”) were already well-established in the Spanish imaginary. The most fundamental of

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the precedents I am referring to is the long history of contacts between Muslims and Christians in Iberia and in the larger Mediterranean area, contacts which were mostly of a highly conflictual nature.

The Spanish conquest of the Philippines did not begin until Miguel López de Legazpi's expedition in 1565.² Around that time, the Spanish monarchy was already confronting Islam on various fronts. It was fighting the Ottomans in the Mediterranean while simultaneously going through one of the most tense moments in its relationship with the *morisco* minority, which would end up causing the revolt of the Alpujarras in 1568. Both situations largely determined the approach to the Muslims that were present in the Philippines. However, the Filipino context presented peculiarities that made it unique. First, because of the geographical and economic marginality of that colony within the Spanish empire,³ whose connection with the rest of the Hispanic world depended for a long time on the famous Manila galleon, which traveled between the Philippines and New Spain once or twice every year.⁴ The second was due to the experience the Spaniards gained during their previous colonial endeavors in Africa and most importantly America, which offered valuable knowledge but would also prove inapplicable in other respects. Finally, religious factors played a determining role. Firmly anchored in the history of Spain, they greatly affected the subjectivity and ideology of the Spanish colonizers.

Perceptions and representations derived from that earlier knowledge apparently made unknown realities more familiar for the authors and their readers. However, in reality, that lived or learned experience prevented the possibility of epistemic openness, meaning that Spaniards in the Philippines often barely adjusted their own perceptions to the new context they encountered. Facing the disorientation that the unfamiliar context generated, Spanish religious and government officials searched for explanations in the scope of realities that were already well known to them. In their texts, Muslim Filipinos are not represented as an entity of their own: their characterization and representation are inseparable from previous and simultaneous encounters with Islam in or close to the Iberian Peninsula.

In this sense, the role of *morisco* assimilation policies that had been implemented in Spain since the beginning of the sixteenth century is especially meaningful. We must remember that the Jesuits, who were in charge of teaching and converting Muslims in the South of the Philippines, also played a pivotal role in the education of the *moriscos*.⁵ In fact, Jesuits displayed very similar instructional strategies with both communities.

Their previous experience with the *morisco* community was instrumental in the way they envisioned and managed their relations with Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu.

SPANISH ENCOUNTERS WITH ISLAM IN THE PHILIPPINES

Islam arrived in the Philippines as part of its wider expansion process into this area of the Pacific Ocean that started around the beginning of the eighth century. Merchants and missionaries established Muslim communities in Mindanao and Sulu between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. The Spanish conquest of the islands began in 1565. In only ten years, the Spaniards secured control of the maritime provinces of the islands in the north and the center of the archipelago. However, they encountered Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu who would intensely resist the Spanish empire for three centuries. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the colonization and Christianization efforts of the Spaniards actually strengthened Islam in that area, as their presence contributed to generating a sense of belonging among the wider Muslim community.⁶

The wars between the Spaniards and Muslims in the Philippines—referred to as “*guerras piráticas*” in some nineteenth-century Spanish texts and now more generally known as the “Spanish-Moro wars”—marked life in the islands for generations.⁷ The Spaniards tried to turn Muslims into their vassals and to prevent any influence from neighboring communities. In 1635, the Zamboanga fort was established in Mindanao, which clearly embodied Spain’s intentions to conquer Muslim territories and convert their inhabitants to Christianity. The Spanish victories in 1637 and 1638 facilitated the establishment of some missions and the conversion of part of the population, mainly non-Muslims living in the area. Muslim resistance grew while Spaniards tried to implement their plan to depopulate Muslim areas by destroying their plantations. Finally, the Spaniards left Zamboanga and all the other forts in the area in 1663, fearing an attack on Manila by the Chinese corsair Koxinga, called Coseng in Spanish texts. There was no significant fighting between those forces for the next fifty years.⁸

The Spaniards’ presence in the archipelago was not due to the intrinsic riches of the islands. Lacking resources to exploit or spices to trade, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Philippines were mainly a strategic site in the Pacific Ocean, which was valued as a launching pad for the Christianization of Asia and as a door to the commerce between New Spain and the ports in Southern China and the Spice Islands.⁹

THE PHILIPPINES AS A SPANISH IDEA

The role of the Spanish missionaries was fundamental for the creation of the discourse that contained and produced an idea of the Philippines, for consumption in the archipelago itself and, more importantly, in the metropolis. That discourse was very often opposed to the one created by civil authorities. In 1565, the same year that Legazpi arrived in the islands, the Augustinians started their evangelizing work, followed by the Franciscans (1578) and the Jesuits (1581). It soon became obvious to the civil authorities that Spanish hegemony in the islands depended on the authority and prestige of those religious orders.¹⁰ The power of religious orders in the Philippines was immense. They were in control of most of the agricultural land and their members outnumbered the rest of the Spanish population.¹¹ Furthermore, members of religious orders learned the native languages, which gave them the control of communication between conquerors and indigenous peoples. The Jesuits in particular were in charge of Muslims in the South of the Philippines.¹² A noteworthy example is the Jesuit Alejandro López, who acted as the Spanish ambassador in Mindanao on several occasions and who played an important role in Father Francisco Combés's *Historia de Mindanao y Joló* (Madrid, 1667), in which he is represented as a martyr after his death at Sultan Corralat's court.¹³

Contrary to what happened in America, the Spaniards found it relatively easy to characterize the people they found in the Southern Philippines. Conquerors considered Filipino Muslims to be an extension of Spain's enemy par excellence. At times, that perception made it very difficult for the population to receive the same legal protection and treatment as the rest of the indigenous groups, which caused conflicts between civil and religious authorities. For example, while representatives of the civil power (such as Melchor de Ávalos) requested permission from the king to enslave Filipino Muslims based chiefly on their opposition to the preaching of the Gospel, some priests denied this alleged rejection of the Christian faith by Muslims, emphasizing that Islamic practices were only lightly established. Actually, the Jesuits stressed the need to learn Arabic in order to preach effectively, as they had already done with regard to the *moriscos*.¹⁴ It is important to highlight that this conflict was not defined in ethnic or racial terms because Muslim and non-Muslim populations in the Philippines shared the same ethnic origin.¹⁵ The distinction that Spaniards made between "indios" and "moros" as a way to differentiate the newly encountered natives was based on religious criteria.¹⁶ This was made evident by the use of the term

“moros” to refer to all inhabitants of the Philippines among whom they detected more or less implanted Muslim practice.

Many of the reflections about the presence of Islam in the Philippines that appear in documents written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are similar to the type of reasoning used in Spanish anti-Muslim polemic texts since the Middle Ages. These include those produced by *arbitristas* or by religious authorities regarding the *morisco* situation. The connection between the Iberian precedents and the situation in the Philippines is particularly evident in the letters written by Melchor de Ávalos to Phillip II. The letters paradigmatically discuss some of the main elements that characterized Spanish relations with Muslims in that area of the Spanish empire. This contact generated widespread instability among the Spaniards, uncertainty and anxiety in the perception and representation of Islam, and an urgent need to produce a cohesive image of the Philippines for Spanish reception.

COLONIAL ISLAM IN MELCHOR DE ÁVALOS'S LETTERS

The illumination of this complex episode in the history of Spain's relationships with its Others requires paying close attention to the rhetorical strategies of concrete texts. Two letters by Melchor de Ávalos judge of the *Real Audiencia de Filipinas* [Royal Audience of the Philippines] to King Phillip II are paradigmatic of the colonial discourse that elaborated a vision of Filipino Islam directly associated with the previous comprehension that Spaniards had generated about Muslims, and that focused on the historically irreconcilable differences between Christianity and Islam. Accounts of the Philippines in general and the southern islands in particular—where the Muslim population was concentrated—were produced for a reading public that sought to fit this new encounter with Islam within its stock of previous, and ongoing, experiences with Muslims closer to home.

Melchor de Ávalos was assigned to the Philippines as first *oidor* (judge) of the *Audiencia*, which had been established a short time before his arrival. He had previously served in Mexico, where he spent more than twenty years as prosecutor of the *Audiencia*, auxiliary of the Inquisition, and sometimes as juridical adviser for the heirs of Hernán Cortés.¹⁷ He arrived in Manila on May 26, 1584, and began sending letters to Phillip II about the situation on the islands, offering his evaluation and suggestions.¹⁸ I will focus on two of those letters, signed on July 3, 1584 and

June 20, 1585 respectively, in which he focused on the particular situation that the presence of Muslims creates in the archipelago.¹⁹ In those documents, Ávalos expressed his opinions about the measures that the monarch should implement regarding Muslim Filipinos, contradicting on many occasions the policy mandated by the King and displaying a deeply rooted rejection of Islam.

Ana M. Prieto Lucena characterizes Ávalos as the main exponent of the anti-Muslim faction in the Philippines.²⁰ She also places him within the anti-Islamic polemics of sixteenth-century Spain. Lewis Hanke interprets Ávalos's writings as "a manifestation of the strength of the latent anti-Muslim sentiment in the Philippines."²¹ He also upholds the readings that dismiss these texts as "pedantry, fanaticism, egomania, and vanity."²² Passages such as the following justify this characterization: "no Christian prince must allow in His kingdoms these [Muslims], and as for conquering them, it is clear that this requires less commitment than with those that are simply infidels, because Muslims are enemies of the Church and of all Christendom."²³

His ideas about Muslims did not change once he had settled in Manila. For Ávalos, the presence of Muslims in the Philippines was an urgent problem that needed immediate attention from the King:

I wrote to His Majesty about a doubt I understood nobody had addressed, [...] about what should be done about Muslims in these lands and seas, because the archipelago is full of them [...]. I should want to have more competence to write about such a grave and for me difficult matter.²⁴

Ávalos had not found precise instructions about this new situation in the Royal Instructions or in texts about "simply gentile Indians" [*yndios simplemente gentiles*], such as Francisco de Vitoria's or Gregorio López's writings, which he mentions in his letters.²⁵ As a result of the Muslim presence, the rules that applied in America would not be valid in the Philippines. Such would be the case, for instance, regarding the concept of "just war":

although I have been curious, I have not found in any decree of the Instructions about discoveries and conquests, populations and pacifications of the Indies, that war against Muslims in these areas has been dealt with, and that is why I undertook this task of writing about it and informing His Majesty so that instruction and notice of the policy will be put into effect.²⁶

Ávalos conceived his letters as more than a simple report to the King. For Ávalos, they were important opportunities to participate in the making of the Crown's imperial policy. Those letters were meant to both directly influence the creation of the colony and posit him as an expert. Ávalos reported what he observed as a direct witness. He elaborated on the rules for a policy that was presented as the only valid one in a territory whose peculiar, strange, and distant circumstances he was proud to know. For Ávalos, the problem should not be hard to address because Muslims in Luzon were never too numerous and they did not manifest their faith publicly.

But there were large areas where Spanish control was far from complete: Moluccas, Borneo, Mindanao, Sulu, Siam, and Patan, and other places where Muslims were more firmly established because "they are usually corsairs and they come here to capture and make them captives."²⁷ In Ávalos's texts, these newly encountered Muslims are constantly associated with those of the Barbary Coast or with *moriscos* because the author is trying to base their characterization and representation on what he sees as a cultural and political continuity of a religious foundation.

Ávalos is particularly disturbed by a royal decision that he considers to be dangerously permissive. Philipp II had expressed it in letters to Legazpi, and Ávalos transcribed it literally in his two reports:

We give you license to make these Moors slaves and take their possessions, and we warn you that these Moors are Moors by nation and nature, and they come to dogmatize in their Muslim sect or make war against you or the Indians that are subjected to us and at your royal service, you can enslave them, but those who were Indians and had taken Mohammad's sect, you shall not enslave them in any way, but you shall try to convert and persuade them with licit and good manners to our holy Catholic faith.²⁸

Opposing the distinction made by the King between "real" Muslims and "Indians" or natives who were recent converts to Islam, Ávalos proposes a unification of the Philippine population. For Ávalos, all Muslim Filipinos (and those settled in Southern Asia) are just a continuation of the Turks, Tunisians, or Egyptians that Christians had to fight in past times.²⁹ He is determined to present Filipino Muslims as "descendants of those from Granada and other enemies of Spain."³⁰ Ávalos warns the King that the Moors in the Philippines had been advised and instructed by the Turks defeated at Lepanto, who had taught them their doctrine and guided them

in their wars against Spaniards.³¹ His eagerness to bring the reality of the Philippines closer to his superiors in Spain is obvious. He is aware that this strategy could move the issues of the archipelago from the geographical and political margins to the center of the Spanish empire.

Ávalos's 1585 letter deals exclusively with the policy regarding Muslims. His arguments are based on the validity of Alexander VI's papal bull of 1493, ratified by subsequent popes and defended by Gregorio López and Matheo de Afflictis, among others. The bull lays out the Pope's jurisdiction over political issues related to the Catholic faith. Ávalos explains that the King must expel all Muslims from his lands because, as the Indies are under the King's jurisdiction, not taking that radical measure would go against Pope Clement V's "De Iudaeis et Sarracenis." It established that Catholic monarchs should not allow Islam in their territories and that they could use violence against Muslims if necessary. One of the reasons for just war was "to increase the faith of the people."³²

According to Ávalos, Muslims could not argue that they were ignorant about Christianity because the Koran informed them about the birth of Christ by the Grace of the Holy Spirit. This would facilitate their conversion but at the same time also justify a harder treatment toward them in the event that they rejected the Catholic faith:

they are so close to this Royal Audience of Manila, and so close to believing all the articles of the faith, since some of them take confession. According to what I have been told, it is fair, very powerful Sir, that with many people and many ministers, servants of God, that we are assisted to save the souls of these miserable Moors, Mohammad's disciples and recipients and helpers, against which the war is open as enemies of the Church.³³

If they rejected conversion, Ávalos recommends they should be expelled, given their ancestry, the Moors from Granada, and their direct connection with Egypt, the hotbed of expansion of Islam in the Far East.

The second part of the letter focuses on concrete events in the Philippines. Ávalos shows the severity of his positions, as he exposes the reality of co-existence as polarized and unresolved. He also criticizes the local Catholic authorities. They sometimes favored a less aggressive approach to the issue of religious difference, for example, when they censured the burning of the mosque of Borneo ordered by Governor Francisco de Sande, or when they showed certain sympathies toward people who should in his view be seen as mortal enemies. For Ávalos, it is a

mistake to excuse individual characters among the infidels or to try to minimize their guilt, because all Muslims are one and the same:

the Borneo Moors, as others from other parts who follow the order to steal and rob because Mohammad and his princes do not give them any other payments or stipends but what they steal [...]. And the seventh precept in the Koran was that all can steal and capture and kill.³⁴

There were obviously tensions between civil and religious authorities, the main problem being what Ávalos saw as excessive leniency of the Church toward Muslims. The Spanish conquest of the Philippines was marked by polemics about the indigenous populations in America. Francisco de Vitoria and Bartolomé de las Casas were the main protagonists in this dispute. In an effort to move away from the conquest model implemented in Mexico and Peru, the missionaries acted as defenders of the natives on many occasions. They often had to openly confront civil authorities and regularly organized missions to the King's court to let the sovereign know about the abuses and injustices occurring in the Philippines. The first bishop of Manila, the Dominican Domingo de Salazar, attended Vitoria's classes in Salamanca, and he openly declared his admiration for the doctrine of Las Casas. Salazar and other religious figures firmly opposed civil authorities regarding confrontational topics such as the definition of "just war" in the Philippines, the organization of the *encomienda*³⁵ system there, the use of violence against the natives, and the demand of tributes that they considered unfair when they were applied to non-Christians.³⁶ In a letter dated June 18, 1583, the Jesuit Alonso Sánchez wrote that Spaniards who had arrived in the new South Asian colonies were damaging the natives' honor and lives. Consequently, the latter would have the right to expel the conquerors because, under the pretext of preaching, Spaniards behaved like pirates, tyrants, or thieves.³⁷ Salazar feared that if the new converts were mistreated and forced to convert, the missionaries would obtain a "yes with the mouth, but not with the heart."³⁸ In the Philippines, the Jesuits applied the same ideas and procedures that Ignacio de las Casas, a Jesuit *morisco*, had defended: a deep and sincere preaching to *moriscos* would be necessary so that they would not end up being "baptized and not converted."³⁹

Ávalos's ideas are the opposite of the soft approach proposed by many representatives of the religious orders operating on the islands. Before the end of his 1585 letter, he insists on the historical confrontation between Christianity and Islam, tracing the problem back to events that took place

in the Middle Ages and insisting once again on the ties between the Muslims and Jews expelled by the Catholic monarchs and those living in the Philippines in the sixteenth century: “those expelled from Spain by the Catholic Monarchs, more than four hundred and twenty thousand souls between Jews and Moors, some and many of them came to these outskirts of the world.”⁴⁰ Ávalos understands the situation he found in the Philippines as a continuation of a chain of unavoidable confrontations and as an opportunity for the Spanish monarchy to reposition itself regarding Islam with the ultimate goal of eliminating Islam. That could be achieved through the use of sheer force, or through cultural and religious annihilation. Not surprisingly, he supports the establishment of the Spanish empire as a bastion of Catholicism, not only in Spain but also in the new territories that had widened Spain’s global influence, even though his take on the matter would often contradict some of the policies of the Catholic Church. This religious argument is the main reason for Ávalos’s justification of the Spanish presence in the Philippines when other officials, like the Viceroy of New Spain Martín Enríquez, recommended abandoning the islands. Ávalos did not hesitate to confront other colonial authorities to defend his positions because of his firm convictions and his desire to confer prestige and autonomy to the recently created Audience of the Philippines. He perceived the treatment of local Muslims as an instrument to singularize the colonial experience in that archipelago and to grant it the positive status derived from the fight against Spain’s most reviled religious enemy.

At the same time, Ávalos’s letters positioned him in the conflict between local religious and secular powers. For instance, in a letter to the King dated July 25, 1570, Father Herrera argued that the families of a Muslim husband and a Christian wife presented their children to priests to have them baptized, and that many of them were *moros* only by name and showed only external Muslim traits, such as not consuming pork. Herrera recognized that other Filipinos, like Muslims from Borneo, were firmer Muslims, even if recent converts, and in spite of some false accusations, friendly toward Spaniards. He categorically affirms that the only reason that might authorize Spaniards to steal from those Muslims was the fact that they were *moros*, which was not a legitimate motive.⁴¹

The conflict between secular and religious forces was constant, as Ávalos’s letters describe. The encounter with Muslims in the Philippines thus complicated the heated debate about the right to dominate the Indies that took place throughout the empire in the sixteenth century. The fact that the new territories were under Muslim rule was sometimes used as an

excuse to reduce the rights of the natives and to justify mistreating them. On July 4, 1570 the King ordered that the natives known as *mindanaos* could be enslaved because they were considered semi-savages, but all the other Muslims were protected by his decrees.⁴² In 1574, Phillip II prohibited Spaniards from taking natives from the Philippines as slaves, even if they had been made prisoners during a just war. In 1580, he insisted on the need to free natives that were already slaves.⁴³ However, as late as 1620, Phillip III approved the enslavement of Filipino Muslims if they tried to preach their beliefs or provoked war against Spaniards.⁴⁴

Ávalos, then, was not alone in his desire to denigrate Filipino Muslims and to promote the stigmatization of Islam wherever it was present as a permanent and endemic enemy against which any act of defense or attack would be lawful. His response to that new reality was blinded by history and therefore inadequate for the needs of the new colonial setting. In his letters, he presents very few concrete events that actually occurred on the islands. This prejudice is possibly the main reason for the failure of Spanish anti-Muslim policies in the archipelago: they were based on rules and attitudes originating in territories which were very far removed in time and space from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Philippine reality. In Ávalos's argumentation, Filipinos, saracens, *moros*, Turks, Egyptians, Arabs, Africans, and Persians constituted a unified entity that must be explained and treated with a unified approach. Along those lines, his words about the presence of Muslims in the Moluccas defeated in Lepanto or the image of descendants of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Granada walking around Mindanao are shocking.⁴⁵ But those strange statements begin to make sense when they are associated with the tendency to standardize *morisco* identity during the same period as a justification for annihilating or expelling all Muslims. In Spain, this vision would finally result in the expulsion of *moriscos*; in the Philippines, it was possibly the main obstacle for the pacification of the Southern islands, for a better use of their resources, and for the effective conversion of their inhabitants. The main goals of the Spanish colonial policies in Mindanao and Sulu were thus never really fulfilled. They constituted the most important failure in the colonial history of Spain.

NOTES

1. Robert Richmond Ellis, *They Need Nothing: Hispanic-Asian Encounters of the Colonial Period* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 136.

2. Henry Kamen, *Spain's Road to Empire* (London: Penguin, 2002), 201.
3. Kamen, *Spain's Road*, 203.
4. On the Manila galleon, see also the article by José Luis Gasch Tomás and Natalia Maillard Álvarez in this volume.
5. Francisco de Borja de Medina, S.J., "La Compañía de Jesús y la minoría morisca (1545–1614)," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 57 (1988): 3–136. See also Wenceslao Soto Artuñedo, "Los jesuitas de Granada y Málaga y los moriscos," *Isla de Arriarán. Revista Cultural y Científica* 7 (June 1997): 157–162.
6. For a detailed chronology of the arrival of the first Muslims in the Philippines, the reasons for their expansion, and a general summary of the Islamization process, see Datumanong Di A Sarangani, "Islamic Penetration in Mindanao and Sulu," *Mindanao Journal* 3, 3–4 (1977): 29–53. See also Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1999); and Isaac Donoso Jiménez, "El Islam en Filipinas (siglos X–XIX)," Ph.D. diss., Universidad de Alicante, 2011. The presence of Islam in the Philippines has been discussed widely in the last few years in the press due to the activity of the "Moro National Liberation Front" against the central government of the islands.
7. About the use of "guerras piráticas" in Spanish texts, see Vicente Barrantes, *Guerras piráticas de Filipinas contra mindanaos y joloanos* (Madrid: M.G. Fernández, 1878); and José Montero Vidal, *Historia de la piratería malayo-mahometana en Mindanao, Joló y Borneo*, 2 vols. (Madrid: M. Tello, 1888).
8. Majul, *Muslims*, 165–166.
9. Francisco Demetrio, S. J., "Religious Dimensions of the Moro Wars," *Mindanao Journal* 3, 1 (1976): 35–64, 42.
10. John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565–1700* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), 33.
11. Michael O. Mastura, "Administrative Policies Towards the Muslims in the Philippines: A Study in Historical Continuity and Trends," *Mindanao Journal* 3, 1 (1976): 98–115, 104.
12. The role of the Jesuits as intermediaries has been a very polemical topic. They have often been accused of monopolizing the communication with natives in order to ensure a powerful role in their relations both with the civil authorities and with the natives. See Santiago Lorenzo García, *La expulsión de los jesuitas de Filipinas* (Alicante: Universidad de Alicante, 1999), 153–157.
13. For a detailed analysis of Father Francisco Combés's text, see my "Old Enemies, New Contexts: Early Modern Spanish (Re-)Writing of Islam in the Philippines," in *Coloniality, Religion, and the Law in the Early Iberian*

- World*, eds. Santa Arias and Raúl Marrero-Fente (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2013), 137–157.
14. See Medina, “La Compañía de Jesús,” 47; and Soto Artuñedo, “Los jesuitas,” 154.
 15. R. Joel de los Santos, Jr., “Reflections on the Moro Wars and the New Filipino,” *Mindanao Journal* 3, 1 (1976): 22–34, 34.
 16. The term *moros*, used by Spaniards to refer to Muslims in the Philippines in general, had a pejorative connotation until the 1970s. It was avoided in academic circles there. But in the last few decades it has been reevaluated in the islands, and today its use is understood as a mark of ethnic pride that reflects the peculiar identity of Muslim Filipinos.
 17. Lewis Hanke, ed., *Cuerpo de documentos del siglo XVI sobre los derechos de España en las Indias y las Filipinas* (México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1943), xxix.
 18. Hanke dates his arrival in the Philippines on May 26, 1583. This is an obvious mistake, since the letter signed on July 3, 1584, shows that the judge had arrived in the Philippines only a few months earlier, on May 26, 1584. Also, a document preserved in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville (Filipinas, leg. 18) and dated December 3, 1583, indicates the transference of property to Ávalos, placing him still in Mexico.
 19. The original manuscript of the first letter, signed in Manila on July 3, 1584, is located in the Archivo General de Simancas (Audiencia de Filipinas, 1583-1599, est. 67, caj. 6, leg. 18). I quote from the English translation published in volume 6 of Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803* (Cleveland: A.H. Clark Company, 1906–1909), 54–65. The original manuscript of the second letter is located in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville (Filipinas, leg. 18). I will quote from the version published in Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 67–97.
 20. Ana María Prieto Lucena, “Musulmanes y españoles en Filipinas a finales del siglo XVI,” *Homenaje a la profesora Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo* (Córdoba: Monte de Piedad y Caja de Ahorros de Córdoba, 1991), 115–122, 117.
 21. Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, xxxii.
 22. Hanke reproduces the negative opinion of Blair and Robertson in *The Philippine Islands* 6: 14–15.
 23. “Ningún príncipe cristiano debe consentir en sus reinos a los semejantes [musulmanes], y en lo que toca a conquistarlos claro está que se requiere menos cumplimiento que con los que son simplemente infieles, pues son los mahometanos enemigos de la Iglesia y de todo el Cristianismo,” qtd. in Prieto Lucena, “Musulmanes y españoles,” 118. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted. The letter containing these lines was written in Acapulco and dated March 3, 1584, months before Ávalos arrived in the

- Philippines. The original manuscript is located at the Archivo General de Indias, Filipinas, leg. 18.
24. “Escriví a Vuestra Magestad sobre una duda que yo entendía nadie haverla tocado, [...] açerca de lo que se hará de los mahometanos de estas tierras y mares, que están llenos dellos en el archipiélago [...] quisiera más suficiencia para escribir en cosa tan pesada y para mí dificultosa,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 67.
 25. In the 1585 letter, Ávalos uses several terms to refer to the indigenous populations in the Philippines. “Naturales” are all the natives, independent of their religious affiliation. “Gentiles,” “paganos,” or “idólatras” are natives who are not Christian or Muslim. He uses “moros” or “mahometanos” to refer to Muslims. Sometimes he uses “infeles” to write about those who are not baptized, not just Muslims, and he indicates that Muslims are different from the “otros infeles, que son infeles simpliciter” [other infidels, who are *infeles simpliciter*.] (Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 72).
 26. “En ninguna ordenança ni capítulo de las dichas Instruçiones de descubrimientos y conquistas, poblaciones y pacificaçiones de las Indias nunca e visto, aunque e tenido curiosidad, que aya tratádose de la guerra contra mahometanos de estas partes, de lo qual nació que yo tomase este trabajo de escribir açerca della y advertir a V. M. y para que se nos enbía instruçión y aviso de la orden que se tendrá,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 89.
 27. “Suelen ser cossarios y venir aquí a prender hombres y captivarlos,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 89.
 28. “Os damos liçencia para hazer a los tales moros esclavos, y tomarles sus haciendas, y estaréis advertidos que si los tales moros son de su naçión y naturaleza moros, y vinieren a dogmatizar su secta mahomética o hazer guerra a vosotros o a los yndios que están a nos sujetos y a vuestro rreal servicio, los podréis hazer esclavos, mas a los que fueren yndios y ovieren tomado la secta de Mahoma, no los haréis esclavos por ninguna vía ni manera que sea, sino procuraréis de los convertir y persuadir por lícitos y buenos modos a nuestra santa fee cathólica,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 92.
 29. Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands* 6, 58–60, and Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 73–75.
 30. “Desçendientes de los granatenses y otros enemigos de las Españas,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 80.
 31. Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 75–76.
 32. “Acreçentar el pueblo su fee,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 72.
 33. “Tan çerca están de esta Real Audiencia de Manila, y tan çercanos de creer todos los artículos de la fee, visto que confiessan algunos, según tengo rreferido, justo es, potentísimo Señor, que con mucha gente y muchos ministros, siervos de Dios, seamos socorridos para socorrer las almas de

- estos miserables moros, discípulos y rreceptadores, ayudadores, y creyentes de Mahoma, contra los cuales la guerra está abierta como contra enemigos de la Iglesia,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 76–77.
34. “Los moros de Borney, ni otros de otras partes que guardan bien la orden de hurtar y rrobar, porque Mahoma y sus príncipes no les dan otros gajes ni estipendios, sino lo que rrobaren [...] Y fué el séptimo precepto del corán de Mahoma que todos puedan rrobar y cautivar y matar,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 93–94.
 35. Colonial grant of land and its inhabitants given to a settler.
 36. Some of the most important protagonists of the fruitful discussions that took place about the rights of Spaniards in the Philippines are Fathers Rada, Sánchez, Benavides, and of course Salazar himself. For more information about these discussions, see Jesús Gayo y Aragón, *Ideas jurídico-teológicas de los religiosos de Filipinas en el siglo XVI sobre la conquista de las islas* (Manila: Universidad de Santo Tomás, 1950).
 37. Qtd. in Francisco Colín, S. J. [1663], *Labor evangélica, ministerios apostólicos de los obreros de la Compañía de Jesús, fundación, y progresos de su provincial en las islas Filipinas*, ed. Pablo Pastells, S. J., 3 vols. (Barcelona: Henrich, 1900–1902), 1: 312.
 38. Qtd. in Ellis, *They Need Nothing*, 142.
 39. Qtd. in Medina, “La Compañía de Jesús,” 14. Other Jesuit *moriscos* were Juan de Albotodo, Jerónimo de Benarcama, Pedro de Gandía, Martín Bedix, and Francisco Hernández.
 40. “Los expelidos de las Españas por los señores Reyes Cathólicos, que serían entre judíos y moros más de quatrocientas y veynte mill ánimas, algunos y muchos dellos vinieron por estos arrabales del mundo,” Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 96.
 41. Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 34: 232–233.
 42. Henry Charles Cunningham, *The Audiencia in the Spanish Colonies as Illustrated by the Audiencia of Manila (1583–1800)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1919), 57.
 43. Gayo y Aragón, *Ideas jurídico-teológicas*, 201.
 44. *Recopilación de las leyes de Indias*, 6, 2, 12.
 45. Hanke, *Cuerpo de documentos*, 75 and 72, respectively.

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The Invention of Europe and the Intellectual Struggle for Political Imagination: Spanish Humanism on the Ottomans

Natalio Ohanna

During the Middle Ages, there was much pressure on Muslims in Christian lands to convert, on Christians in Muslim lands to stay confined to certain enclaves, and on both religious communities not to communicate with each other, such that they lived in great mutual ignorance. The ordinary Christian lacked open and reliable channels for direct knowledge of Islam, as communication with Muslims was prevented and conditioned by a set of commonplaces, stereotypes, and suspicions based on fear. In the early modern period the situation became much more complex. In the face of the Ottoman threat at the gates of Europe, violent medieval anti-Islamic rhetoric was revived, and the Orient as a discursive configuration took on renewed meanings in the dialectics of sixteenth-century humanism and its major proponents from Erasmus to Enea Silvio Piccolomini, including Nicholas of Cusa, Denis the Carthusian, Juan de Torquemada, and Alonso de la Espina, among others. They collected information mostly from medieval chronicles, disregarding contemporary sources by travelers, merchants, and captives.¹

In this respect, it is difficult to conceive that so many humanists were, or appeared to be, committed to a conception of Islam closer to the Middle

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Ages than to the early modern period. This has sparked a recent debate in historiography. In contrast to the well-known studies of Norman Daniel and Robert Schwoebel, for whom the Renaissance did not present any rupture in European thought about Muslims, Nancy Bisaha supports the thesis that humanism revolutionized the corpus of western ideas on Islam, transforming an old enemy of the faith into a political and cultural threat to the emerging notion of Europe. A clear preference for classical models and concepts would lead to a predominantly secular perspective, defining the Turks as barbarians confronting the heirs to Greco-Roman tradition: "The result was not only an increase in classically inspired rhetoric on the Turks but also the development of a more unified discourse of European civility versus Asian barbarism."² James Hankins, on the other hand, notes that despite the incorporation of classical references into their rhetoric, humanists also recycled a wide range of apocalyptic and providential motifs from the medieval canon in order to explain the advance of the Turks as the wrath of God, the work of Providence guiding the course of human history, introducing the tyrants as an instrument against sinners, and awakening in the faithful the desire to better conform to evangelical doctrine.³ More recently, Margaret Meserve rejected the notion of discontinuity, revealing a panorama of tensions inherent in this historical juncture of the early sixteenth century between the political or secular heuristics and the providential question assumed in historicizing Islam and the Turks in particular; that is to say, between, on the one hand, the Renaissance fascination with Greco-Roman antiquity, its modes of expression and analysis, and, on the other hand, the enduring influence of the medieval Christian mentality and spirit of crusade.⁴ From this point of view, in fact, in the dialogues, treatises, letters, and exhortations of numerous humanists the Turks were described as descendants of the barbarians as represented by Aeschylus and Euripides in classic tragedies of Greco-Persian themes, or as the Scythians of Pontus, whose savage customs Herodotus referred to in the fourth book of his *Histories*, with all the implied connotations of a threat to culture and civilization. But such an adaptation of classical materials would lead neither to secularization nor to the abandonment of the traditional reading with its emphasis on error and infidelity, on the falsity of a doctrine that would spread, in contrast to the true faith and at its expense, by means of a violence unprecedented in human memory, which must be extirpated through a struggle declared in God's name.

In the paradoxical case of Spain, despite or perhaps because of the prolonged presence of Islam on the peninsula, which one would have

expected to engender more direct cultural understanding, the perception of Muslims was neither more favorable nor more realistic than in the rest of Europe.⁵ Nonetheless, compared with other European states, the case of Spain is particularly complex. Although the so-called *reconquista*, ending in 1492, was fought over a porous border with shifting loyalties and interfaith alliances, the resulting nation was imagined as a homogeneous space from which all Islamic elements had to be excised, not only due to the patriotic and religious fervor incited by the victory over the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada, but also in response to external pressure created by the Orientalist image of Spain that was promoted in the rest of Europe, intrinsically related to its Semitic roots.⁶ However, despite the efforts to whiten or Europeanize Spain, as Barbara Fuchs shows in *Exotic Nation*, the inhabitants of the peninsula were irreducibly marked by their multicultural heritage. After 1492 the legacy of al-Andalus was both firmly rooted and celebrated in Spanish society to such an extent that it became impossible to expunge all that had been introduced as local forms and hybridizations in almost every aspect of everyday life, from compilations of ballads known as the *romancero*, to aristocratic equestrian exercises, and fashion.⁷ This phenomenon, however, in no way altered the status of the *moriscos* as a marginalized population in a conflicted society, indirectly confirming the idea of Islam's wrongness and inferiority. Furthermore, the *moriscos'* presence was viewed in close association with the increasing activity of the Barbary corsairs in the Mediterranean or even as a sign of the Ottoman Empire's military prowess, with dominions stretching across three continents, and reaching its pinnacle with the siege of Vienna in 1529.

This geopolitical juncture motivates two treatises at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum, both written in exile and addressed to Charles V, revealing two irreconcilable tendencies with respect to Islam, war, and imperialism: *Cohortatio ad Carolum V, Imperatorem Invictissimum, ut facta cum Christianis pace, bellum suscipiat in Turcas* [Exhortation to Charles V, most invincible emperor, such that, after making peace with Christians, he shall undertake war against the Turks] (Bologna, 1529) by Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, and *De concordia et discordia generis humani* [On concord and discord in the human race] (Antwerp, 1529) Juan Luis Vives.⁸ The clear contrast between these writings exemplifies how, in the case of Spanish humanism, the discursive configurations of Islam and empire were produced within the process of negotiating a national identity.

Juan Luis Vives' thought concerning the Ottoman question and the use of violence evolves during the years between the battle of Mohács and the

siege of Vienna, the most intense phase of conflict between Charles V and Francis I of France. This evolution also coincides with the end of a lengthy inquisitorial process against his parents and his return to Flanders after a long stay in England. While in *De Europae dissidiis et bello Turcico* [On the Dissensions of Europe and War Against the Turks] (1526),⁹ Vives still insists on the necessity of a union among Christian principalities to embark on an urgent military campaign against a seemingly common enemy, three years later, in *De concordia*, he points to the incompatibility between religion and imperialism, calls for an immediate end to hostilities, and proposes a non-belligerent approach to the Ottoman problem.

The ultimate foundation of Vives' pacifism lies in his scrutiny of human nature, which, according to him, provides each individual with the resources to maintain concord and life in society. For example, he highlights the power of will, with its capacity to subdue the forces of discord; reason, serving as a guide for one's actions, leading to harmony, tranquility, and justice; and memory, the treasure of the human mind that contributes to the protection and preservation of society, so that with the memory of similarity and of common nature man will not ignore that he was born to serve others, and he will never neglect to favor them.¹⁰ Additional indicators of the social and peaceful nature of humans include speech, writing, the face as a form of communication, and, most importantly, physical vulnerability, alongside the immaturity of the newborn, entirely dependent on the mercy of others.¹¹ All of this would indicate that, according to Vives, discord originates in a degeneration of human nature, the epitome of which is imperialism. Thus, he explains to King Charles:

And for each of the princes, what is a vast empire if not a constant concern should they do their duty well, or a ready danger should they be negligent? How clearly the senseless malice corrupted the integrity of nature, and the depraved opinion snatched the integrity of judgment! Indeed, what more is governing or ruling than to look out for the good of one's subjects, look out for them and worry about them as if they were children? [...] Even to kill, to destroy and to burn is to govern? To oppress by fear is to look out for the good of one's subjects? Be watchful that it not seem clear that what you wish is not so much to govern as it is to dominate; a kingdom is not that which you desire, rather a tyranny, wishing that many obey your commands, not in order to live well, but rather to fear you and fulfill your orders with submission.¹²

Regarding the question of the Ottoman advance, Vives displays great ambivalence throughout the text. He adopts the term “Turkish” as a synonym for cruelty to condemn the Inquisition and the counterproductive effects of its use of coercion.¹³ Furthermore, explaining the self-destructive forces of discord, Vives criticizes the ongoing negotiations for the imminent Franco-Ottoman alliance, attributing the expansion of the Osmanli dynasty to the struggles between Christian princes who, unconcerned about themselves, in order to hurt the enemy, postpone the protection and defense of their own people. They abandon and betray a “public and common cause” (*publicam communemque causam*) for a partisan feeling.¹⁴ Obviously, that “public and common cause” underlies the idea of European unity based on religion, such that a military pact between the House of Valois and the Sublime Porte would qualify as treason. Nevertheless, while other treatises accentuate the error or falsity of the Islamic doctrine and its supposedly perverse and cruel ways, in *De concordia* the burden falls to the Christians themselves, who, on deviating from the precepts of their faith, set a bad example that fortifies the infidels’ resolve: “So we despise and trample upon the holy name of God, and because of us He has a bad reputation among the pagans who, seeing that we live so differently from how we are ordered by law, suspect that what we say is unfounded and represents an affected comedy.”¹⁵ Vives finds the root of Islam’s sustainability in this hypocrisy that reduces Christianity to its mere representation. As he himself explains: “due to our deeds they move further from our religion and affirm themselves more deeply in their error, in which they see a more humane way of life, more in tune with nature and reason than ours, with our revealed truths and precepts of celestial philosophy.”¹⁶ Needless to say, the praise contained in that passage is not coincidental; it anticipates his rejection of hate speech against Muslims, as well as his proposal for a non-belligerent approach:

How barbaric is it to think that being a true Christian consists precisely in forcefully detesting the Turks or other Hagarites? And he who kills many of them is considered a martyr, as if this could not be better handled by the most perverse and cruel of thieves?

One must love the Turks, for being men, and those who want to obey the words *love thine enemies* must love them; so we shall have good wishes for them, which is characteristic of true love, and we shall want for them the single and greatest good, knowledge of the truth, which they shall never acquire through our insults and curses, but rather through the way that we

acquire it, with the support and favor of the apostles, that is, through reasoning that respects nature and human intelligence, with integrity of life, with temperance, with moderation, with irreproachable habits, such that we ourselves are the first to demonstrate with our acts that which we profess and decree. It must not be that our lives do not conform to the beliefs expressed in our words.¹⁷

Only a few months after the publication of Vives's treatise, at the end of 1529, while King Charles was in Bologna awaiting his coronation as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda wrote his *Cohortatio ad Carolum V.*¹⁸ Dedicated to the monarch, the text begins with a conventional exordium addressing the difficulty inherent in offering advice to a great prince. Then, following a brief review of the justification for armed struggle in accord with the classical tradition, Sepúlveda legitimizes the need for a military campaign against the Ottomans in terms of a mobilization of Christianity for its very existence: "indeed, the fight is not about glory [...] but we must fight for our homeland, children, altars and homes, above all for safety, and freedom, and for religion itself."¹⁹ The notion of common homeland, intrinsically linked to faith, contributes to the ideology of crusade, which must be sustained in opposition to the humanist movement that points out the incongruity between Christian doctrine and war perpetrated in its name. To that end, Sepúlveda seeks to delegitimize any pacifist or conciliatory approach, charging those who would promote such with no less than treason, conspiracy, and corruption:

And I know that you consider not only suspect of impiety but also nefarious those men who I hear spreading rumors disguised with a false color of Christianity, according to whom it is not proper to Christian tolerance to oppose the violence of the Turks with the sword and weapons, whom they consider the scourge of God, and say that Christians must defeat them not with violence but with patience; I'm sure those voices do not come, as do other heretical opinions, from error of the mind, from depravation of thinking nor from ambition, but from the crime and insidious sacrilege of those who, corrupted by the Turks with gifts and promises, set nefarious traps for the freedom of Christians, who hold as a principle taught by science and the religion of our ancestors, that the other wars waged between the faithful are civil and domestic, but that those waged against the Turks and other impious peoples are most just and in accordance with piety.²⁰

Note how, beyond disqualifying any conciliatory movement such as that proposed by Vives, Sepúlveda makes a clear distinction between the wars he calls domestic or civil and those he labels religious or holy, thus disregarding important political and territorial factors of the Habsburg-Ottoman struggle. The author must therefore argue for the compatibility of Christianity and the use of violence, which appears to present a contradiction in principles.²¹ Sepúlveda resolves this contradiction by clarifying that the teachings of the gospel should not be interpreted literally, as they do not apply to all the faithful nor to all circumstances: “Christ taught this and many other things, not with the intent to oblige men to follow these teachings as law, but rather, in part, to show the way to absolute perfection for those who could become teachers of good customs and religion.”²² Such excellence, according to Sepúlveda, would not be expected of kings but rather of saints, those who must teach not only according to doctrine but also without regard for worldly affairs, always recommending complete tolerance and voluntary detachment in order to overcome people’s obstinacy and pride. As for royal responsibilities, however, the king is exempted from these virtues, because “when the republic is attacked by its enemies, or the faith by the impious, he who is able to resist the hostile violence, and not act, shall not be lauded as tolerant, but rather as meek and a defector, earning the aversion of wise and religious people.”²³ Finally, following the enumeration of various biblical examples of struggle under the protection of Providence, Sepúlveda lashes out at the pacifist trend, delegitimizing it by associating it with the Reformation, which he considers an attack on Christian liberty.²⁴

Martin Luther was certainly one of the representatives of the providential perception of the Ottoman advance, at least in his early writings. In *Resolutiones disputationum de indulgentiarum virtute* [Resolutions on the Disputations about the Power of Indulgences] (1518), he argued that Christians should not resist the Turks but rather accept their victories as penance for sins committed and as a call to reform the faithful.²⁵ It is important to clarify, however, that interpretations of this sort had been applied to the Ottoman advance long before the Reformation. Moreover, in 1529 Luther published the pamphlet entitled *Vom Kriege wider die Türken* [On War against the Turks], supporting the need for a defensive struggle against the Ottoman forces by German princes under the banner of the Holy Roman Emperor, that is to say, Charles V, but only if the latter would abandon his alliance with the pope in favor of the gospel.²⁶ In any case, such a link between pacifism and Lutheranism uncovers a strategy to

delegitimize the conciliatory movement, particularly when it entails plotting against Christian liberty.²⁷

In the *Cohortatio*, this issue of loss of freedom is exploited through a series of motifs that highlight the difference between Christianity and Islam on multiple fronts. First, Sepúlveda compares the situation of the faithful living under the tyranny of a Christian prince to the position of those living under the domination of the Turks. However painful it may seem, according to Sepúlveda, life under a Christian despot preserved Christian and civil liberties. And although the subjects might find themselves oppressed, this could easily be remedied through access to laws, magistrates, and the entire structure of a regal republic, that is to say, by living under a legitimate form of social organization that maintains resources for the protection of freedoms and individual rights.²⁸ On the other hand, people living under the yoke of Islamic rule were devoid, in Sepúlveda's view, even of the hope of freedom because "they have no laws nor are they governed by any institution, except by a few perfectly placed at the whim of the tyrants."²⁹

Advancing this comparison, Sepúlveda makes an important inference about the fate of Christians in Islamic lands by observing the form of intellectual slavery to which even those who share their faith and nation with the sultan are subjected. To remove all possibility of real freedom, Turks are prevented from the study of letters and are forbidden the knowledge of the liberal arts, which is most often that which moves the souls of mortals to freedom and true religion.³⁰ Such obscurantism would undermine European civilization, eradicating the classical legacy from its core, at least from Sepúlveda's anachronistic perspective:

Thus, there are no philosophers nor theologians nor orators among them, to the extent that Greece itself, in other times most fertile of ingenuity and master of philosophy and good doctrine, while it was free, spread among the other mortals all human knowledge and science; later, due to discord between Christian princes, it fell to the Turks, becoming so immersed in ignorance of all kinds, that one can barely find in its lands a person who has any idea, even incomplete, of the language used by its old masters of wisdom and science, whose works we now venerate.³¹

The topic of loss of freedom is exploited once again to dramatically describe the recruitment of janissaries. According to Sepúlveda, the condition of Christians under the Turks is such that, beyond the tributes they can barely

pay with their sweat and labor, those of their children distinguished by beauty and character are taken away, so that, forced to abandon the Christian religion from childhood and be educated in Islam, on reaching military age they become satellites of the king and ministers of his tyranny.³² This is an obvious reference to the practice of *devshirme*, initiated by Murad I in the fourteenth century, which consisted of the recruitment of children and teenagers between eight and eighteen years of age from Christian subjects of the empire, principally from rural areas of the Balkans and Anatolia from the early sixteenth century onward, with the political purpose of spawning an army whose loyalty to the sultan would be unconditional and unrelated to any particular nobiliary faction. The young were converted to Islam and assigned to Turkish peasants who taught them the language and introduced them to their new culture. After completing a period of indoctrination, they were integrated into elite military units or sent to serve in the court and the administration.³³ But in Sepúlveda's text the emphasis falls on the coercive nature of the institution, deliberately circumventing the fact that, in practice, it served to integrate minorities and encouraged a multi-ethnic state at all social strata. In the first half of the sixteenth century, the high command of the Sublime Porte was comprised almost exclusively of "new Muslims" from Christian lands, whereas in Charles's empire, the mere idea of a ruling class of *moriscos* and *conversos* would have seemed preposterous.³⁴

Aside from the issue of slavery, the text appeals to a difference in character between the armies, founded on the basis of eternal opposition between Europeans, the inheritors of a glorious tradition of military victories, and Asians, who carry the mark of defeat and cowardice. Sepúlveda corrects those who feel intimidated by the large contingent of Ottoman troops:

If they had read the literary monuments of the Greeks and Latins, which contain the actions and wars carried out by the people of our world, that is, those who inhabit this part of the land that we call Europe, against those Asian nations out of which the ragtag, undisciplined Turkish army emerges, they would know that, indeed, in many cases their enormous masses were scattered and put to flight by a small army of ours, and in no way would anyone judge to be frightening, no matter its size, any mass of cowardly men, if it were to face, as it should, an army of brave men.³⁵

Sepúlveda thus participates in the conceptualization of Europe, not only as a religious union, but also as a territorial, historical, genealogical, and cultural one, imbued with national character or temperament. He contrasts the valor of European warriors with Asian barbarians, greater in number but filled with fear. Following a pseudo-historical listing of victories by those so-called “people of our world,” he takes up the exhortation to war against the Turks, no longer as a justified defense of invaded territory, but as an imperialist endeavor to be sustained by resources from the conquest of America, which will serve as a model for a new colonial project on another fertile ground with an abundance of commercial goods, namely the wealth and fertility of Egypt, Assyria, Arabia, and Anatolia.³⁶ Finally, underlining the economic desirability of such a venture, the text once again raises the notion of crusade for world domination under the protection and guidance of Providence. The classically inspired rhetoric that identifies the Turks as the new barbarians is complemented by the medieval ideology of crusade in the final exhortation:

You shall free the miserable Greece and its confines inhabited by Christians, with Byzantium, formerly the court of Roman Emperors; and once you have taken possession of the most rich region of Anatolia and its surrounding peoples as far as Mesopotamia and Egypt, you shall worship God victorious in the holy city of Jerusalem, eyewitness to our redemption and first and principal sanctuary of the Christian Religion; you shalt venerate Him with great piety, with all due sacrifices for such a great victory; and at the same time, with just prayers you shall ask that, since He favored your commencements, He Himself become guide and author, under your rule and conduct of the war, of the unification of the rest of the world with the Christian domain and its holy Religion.³⁷

In light of these examples, one can affirm that within Spanish humanism there was no univocal perception of the Ottoman question. On the contrary, one cannot even find a distinction between the legacy of the ideals of crusade and the predominantly secular image used to exploit classical rhetoric, transforming the Turks into new barbarians. For Sepúlveda, the two perspectives complement one another in an imperialist discourse that utilizes both with no apparent contradiction. In *Vives*, on the other hand, the distinctly Renaissance spirit of his pacifism is reinforced by a recognition of the Muslim as belonging to a common humanity and, therefore, as a neighbor who must be approached in conformity with the Christian

doctrine, through preaching and the example of impeccable works. It must be emphasized, however, that in response to the geopolitical juncture marked by the greatest Ottoman advance in central Europe, these treatises exemplify a polarization of Spanish humanism into two irreconcilable trends with regard to the perception of Muslims, clearly expressing the tensions within the borders of the Iberian Peninsula, where the capacity to absorb, adapt or obliterate its own Islamic heritage was being negotiated as a matter of national identity.

NOTES

1. The information gleaned from this inherited polemic was preferred to personal observation in identifying the recent development of Ottoman military prowess whose origins could not be easily traced. See Darío Cabanelas Rodríguez, *Juan de Segovia y el problema islámico* (Madrid: Universidad de Madrid, 1952), 22–23; and Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 13–16. Christian Europe therefore formed a variable canon of contradictory beliefs about the Turks, deciding who they were, speculating about their background, forming perceptions materially different from those discoverable by an informed traveler, and creating, in addition to cultural, genealogical and religious distinctions, the parameters by which to create and control, manipulate and even incorporate that which was manifested as a different world. For the European perception of Islam from the Middle Ages until the early modern period see R.W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); Miguel Ángel de Bunes Ibarra, *La imagen de los musulmanes y del norte de África en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII. Los caracteres de una hostilidad* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1989), and “Las crónicas de cautivos y las vidas ejemplares en el enfrentamiento hispano-musulmán en la Edad Moderna,” *Hispania Sacra* 45, 91 (1993): 67–82; Daniel J. Vitkus, “Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe,” in *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of Other*, eds. David R. Blanks and Michael Frassetto (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 207–230; Andrew Wheatcroft, *Infidels: A History of the Conflict between Christendom and Islam* (New York: Random House, 2004); John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Anouar Majid, *Freedom and Orthodoxy: Islam and Difference in the Post-Andalusian Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), and *We Are All Moors: Ending Centuries*

- of *Crusades against Muslims and Other Minorities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009); Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); and Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526-1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008). It is worth noting that the construction of ‘difference’ was not the exclusive domain of Christianity. During the crusades and even later, Islamic perceptions of Europe did not lack cultural and religious prejudices. For this inverse perspective consider Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: Norton & Co., 1982); Amin Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, trans. Jon Rothschild (New York: Routledge, 2000); and Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades*, trans. E. J. Costello (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).
2. Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 44.
 3. James Hankins, “Renaissance Crusaders: Humanist Crusade Literature in the Age of Mehmet II,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995): 112–207.
 4. Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 65–66.
 5. Conversely, the conquest of Granada and subsequent expansion campaigns in North Africa were encouraged by an ideological framework that discounted the geopolitical dimension in order to wield the notion of a holy war against the infidels. With these ideas, Alonso de Cárdenas, Master of Santiago, encouraged King Ferdinand to continue the War of Granada, despite its surrender, in order to keep the cavalry active. See Hernando del Pulgar, *Crónica de los muy poderosos y excelentes Don Fernando é Doña Isabel, príncipes herederos de los reynos de Castilla y de Aragón*, ed. Cayetano Rosell (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1878), 390.
 6. Alain Milhou, “Desemitzación y europeización en la cultura española desde la época de los Reyes Católicos hasta la expulsión de los moriscos,” *Manuscripts: Revista d’Història Moderna* 11 (1993): 35–60.
 7. Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation: Maurophilia and the Construction of Early Modern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).
 8. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio ad Carolum V, Imperatorem Invictissimum, ut facta cum Christianis pace, bellum suscipiat in Turcas*, in *Joannis Genesii Sepulvedae cordubensis, Opera, cum edita, tum inedita, accurante Regia Historiae Academia*, 4 vols. (Madrid: Imprenta Real de la Gaceta, 1780), 4: 358–374; and Juan Luis Vives, *De concordia et discordia generis humani*, in *Ioannis Ludovici Vivis valentine, Opera Omnia*, ed. Gregorio Mayans y Siscar, 8 vols. (Valencia: B. Monfort, 1782–1790), 5: 193–403. For the translation of both Latin sources I consulted the Spanish editions by Francisco Calero and Ángel Losada, respectively.

9. Juan Luis Vives, *Sobre las disensiones de Europa y la Guerra contra los turcos*, in *Obras políticas y pacifistas*, ed. and trans. Francisco Calero (Madrid: Atlas, 1999), 91–113.
10. Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 197.
11. Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 197–199.
12. “¿Et Principum singulis quid aliud est latum imperium, quàm vel cura jugis et gravissima si bene fungantur suo munere, vel paratissimum discrimen si sint negligentes? ¿Quàm aperte naturam integram prava malitia corruptit, et depravata opinio integritatem iudicii sustulit! Nam ¿quid aliud est regere aut gubernare, quàm consulere, prospicere, curare non secus ac filios? [...] ¿an etiam occidere, diruere, incendere est gubernare? ¿et metu opprimere est consulere? vid ene appareat te non tam cupere regere, quàm dominari; non est regnum quod expetis, sed tyrannis, velle multos tibi esse dicto audientes, non ut commodè vivant, sed ut te metuant, et imperata obedienter faciant,” Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 216.
13. Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 254.
14. Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 274–275.
15. “Ergo et nos sanctum Dei nomen contemnimus ac conculcamus, et propter nos male audit a Paganis, qui, quum vident tanto nos aliter quàm habeamus in legis praescripto vivere, vana esse quaecunque dicimus, et fictam nos agere fabulam, suspicantur,” Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 319.
16. “Itaque a religione nostra longius propter nos discedentes, in errore suo magis confirmantur, in quo vident se humanius ac ad naturam rationemque congruentius vivere, quàm nos inter divina oracula, et praecepta coelestis philosophiae,” Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 319.
17. “¿Quae barbaria est, existimare hoc demum esse vere Christiani, si strenue Turcas, aut alios Agarenos excretur? ¿et martyrem se putat, qui plurimos illorum jugularit, quasi id non possit melius praestare impurissimus ac crudelissimus latro? Amandi sunt Turcae, nempe homines, amandi ab iis qui illi voci volunt parère: *Diligite inimicos vestros*: illis ergo, quod veri est amoris, bene cupiemus, illudque optabimus unicum et maximum bonus, agnitionem veritatis, quod nunquam assequentur conviciis aut maledictis nostris, sed eo modo, quo nos ipsi ope ac beneficio sumus Apostolorum consecuti, rationibus naturae et humanis ingeniis congruentibus, integritate vitae, modestia, moderatione, inculpatis moribus, ut nos ipsi priores re ostendamus quae profitemur et iubemus, ne a fide nostrorum arceat eos tam discrepans vita,” Vives, *De concordia*, 5: 390. A historical precedent for this proposal is the pacifist method formulated by Juan de Segovia in *De mittendo gladio Divini Spiritus in corda saracenorum*, after the fall of Constantinople, when in Christian Europe the spirit of crusade was predominant. See a summary of *De mittendo gladio* in Cabanelas Rodríguez, *Juan de Segovia*, 265–272. For a study of Juan de Segovia’s pacifist

- program, see Robert Schwoebel, “Coexistence, Conversion, and Crusade,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965): 164–187; Antony Black, *Council and Commune: The Conciliar Movement and the Fifteenth-Century Heritage* (London: Burns & Oates; Shepherdstown: Patmos, 1979); Santiago Madrigal Terrazas, *El proyecto eclesiológico de Juan de Segovia (1393-1458): Estudio del ‘Liber de substantia ecclesiae’* (Madrid: Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, 2000); and Jesse D. Mann, “Truth and Consequences: Juan de Segovia on Islam and Conciliarism,” *Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue* 8, 1 (2002): 79–90.
18. Sepúlveda formed part of the embassy that Clement VII organized to welcome Charles V to Italy (October 1529), and also encountered the emperor in early November. On this occasion he offered him the *Exhortatio* as evidence of how his intellectual skills could be put to use in the service of the Christian empire. See Luna Nájera, “Myth and Prophecy in Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda’s Crusading ‘Exhortación,’” *Bulletin for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies* 35, 1 (2010): 48–68, 53.
 19. “Non enim de gloria certamen est [...] sed pro patria, pro liberis, pro aris et focus, ad summam pro salute et libertate, proque ipsa religione pugnandum est,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 359.
 20. “Scio enim tibi non suspectos modo impietatis nomine, sed invisos etiam nefarios homines, quos audio sacrilegas voces spargere falso Christianismi colore praetextas, non esse Christianae tolerantiae Turcarum violentiae, quam Dei flagellum esse jactant, ferro et armis repugnare: Christianis enim non vi, sed patientia superandum esse: quorum hominum vocem non ut ceterorum haereticorum placita a mentis errore, non ab ambitione et opinionis pravitate manasse certum habeo; sed ab auctoris scelere et insidioso sacrilegio, qui muneribus ac pollicitis Turcarum corruptus, nefandas insidias tendit libertati Christianorum, quibus insistum est, et majorum sapientia ac religione traditum, ut cetera bella, quae inter pios geruntur, civilia et domestica; quae vero cum Turcis et ceteris impiis, justissima et plena pietatis esse putent,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 362–363.
 21. Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 363. As Luna Nájera points out, “[a]ccording to the principle of Christian peace, Christians should live in peace with one another while promoting ongoing warfare with, in the language of the age, the infidel,” “Myth and Prophecy,” 56.
 22. “Sed haec et pleraque alia Christum docuisse, non quod homines vellet ipsam tamquam legibus obligari; sed partim ut viam ostenderet ad summam perfectionem ipsam, qui ceteris morum et religionis magistri futuri,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 364.
 23. “Cum vero respublica ab hostibus appetitur, aut religio ab impiis oppugnatur, qui non resistit hostili violentiae, cum potest, is non tolerantis

- laudem feret, sed timidi et desertoris invidiam apud sapientes et religiosos mortales incurrent,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 364.
24. Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 367. In general, the Ottoman conquests of Central Europe and North Africa in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were interpreted in this way: The Turk, the successor of the empire constituted by Muhammad, is a divine instrument to punish deviations, vices and errors of Christianity. The confrontation between the two monotheistic religions of the Mediterranean is taken to be living proof that the behavior of Christendom still does not fully comply with the scheme imposed by God. Muhammad and the Sublime Porte, in this view, are a simple means of the Creator, born by his will, to keep the baptized from weakening their faith. See Bunes Ibarra, “Las crónicas,” 81. For the providential perception of the Ottoman advance see also Meserve, *Empires of Islam*. For a comparison between the positions of Luther, Erasmus and Vives on this issue see Marcia L. Colish, “Juan Luis Vives on the Turks,” *Medievalia et Humanistica* 35 (2009): 1–14.
 25. Martin Luther, *Resolutiones disputationum de Indulgentiarum virtute* (Wittenberg: Johann Rhau-Grunenberg, 1518).
 26. Martin Luther, “On War against the Turks,” in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 46, *The Christian in Society*, ed. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 61–205.
 27. This same strategy is employed in his *De convenientia militaris disciplinae cum Christiana religione dialogus, qui inscribitur Democrates* (1535). See Sepúlveda, *Tratados políticos*, ed. and trans. Ángel Losada (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1963), 127–304. Years later he also uses it to delegitimize the questioning of the conquest of America, slavery, and the forced conversion of America’s inhabitants, in *Democrates alter, sive de iustis belli causis suscepti contra Indos* (1550), which was banned in Spain. In this dialogue, the interlocutor representing the pacifist current is the German Leopoldo, who was infected by the Lutheran errors, epidemic in his homeland. According to Sepúlveda, even the extermination of the Amerindians is justified in the face of their sins. See Sepúlveda, *Democrates segundo o de las justas causas de la guerra contra los indios*, ed. and trans. Ángel Losada (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Francisco de Vitoria, 1984).
 28. Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 359.
 29. “Turcarum populi tam dura servitute depressi sunt, ut nullas habeant leges, nullis institutis gubernentur, paucis quibusdam exceptis tyrannorum libidini examussim accommodatis,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 360–361.
 30. Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 360.
 31. “Itaque nulli sunt apud ipsos philosophi, nulli oratores, theologi nulli. Ad summam ipsa Graecia ingeniorum feracissima, et omnis quondam

- philosophiae ac bonarum disciplinarum magistra, et quae ceteris mortalibus omnis humanitatis notitiam et cunctarum scientiarum cognitionem, quamdiu libera fuit, difundebat: postquam Principum Christianorum discordia facta est ditionis Turcarum, tam abruta est omnis generis litterarum ignorantia, ut vix unum in tota ipsa reperias, qui vel semiplenam notitiam habeat ejus sermonis, quo veteres illi sapientiae ac doctrinarum magistri, quorum nunc scripta demiramur, usi sunt,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 360.
32. Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 361.
 33. Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 56–57; and Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 141.
 34. Bernard Lewis examines this phenomenon, attributing it to a strategy to obtain long-term political stability. See *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 64–65. The institution of *devshirme* was admired by Coluccio Salutati, who does not even mention that it dealt with Christian children converted to Islam. See Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 216n89. Suraiya Faroqhi attributes the decline of *devshirme* in the seventeenth century to the political pressures of a stable ruling class and the effects of internal strife, “Crisis and Change, 1590-1699,” in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, eds. Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 571. On the janissaries, see Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*; Halil Inalcik, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1993), and *The Ottoman Empire*, trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973); and Norman Itzkowitz, *The Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).
 35. “Qui si Graecorum Latinorumque monumenta litterarum perlegissent, quibus res ac bella continentur, quae ab hominibus orbis nostri, hoc est, ab iis, qui hanc mundi partem incolunt, quam Europam appellamus, cum illis Asiaticis nationibus gesta sunt, ex quibus fere confusus commistusque est Turcarum exercitus: scirent utique maximas saepe istorum copias parva nostrorum manu futas fugatasque fuisse, nec ignavorum hominum quamlibet magnam multitudinem fortium virorum justo modo exercitui parem, nedum pertimescendam putarent,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 367.
 36. Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 372–373.
 37. “Ut miseram Graeciam et finitimas Christianorum regiones cum Byzantio regia jam pridem Romanorum Imperatorum in libertatem asseras, et minoris Aasiae opulentissimae regionis, et finitimarum gentium usque Mesopotamiam et Aegyptum imperio potitus, in sancta urbe Hierusalem teste nostrae redemptionis oculata, et primo atque praecipuo Christianae

religionis sacrario victor Deum adores, et debitis sacrificiis pro tanta victoria cum summa pietate venereris, simulque justis precibus exores, ut qui coepta secundaverit, idem dux sit atque auctor, ut te Imperatore et bellum administrante, reliquis Terrarum orbis ditioni Christianorum et sanctissimae religioni adjiciatur,” Sepúlveda, *Cohortatio*, 4: 373–374.

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PART III

Orientalism and the Idea of Europe

France, Europe, and the Orient in the *Essays*: Montaigne's Dialectics

Marcus Keller

*Our world has just discovered another world.**
"Of Coaches"

The Orient serves as a major point of geographical and philosophical orientation in Montaigne's *Essays*, much as it does in sixteenth-century European thought in general. As a sphere of the imagination, it is composed of numerous interspersed allusions to Asian civilizations in Montaigne's magnum opus. However, the Middle and Far East are never the dominant subject of a single essay, contrary to the New World which Montaigne ponders at length in "Of Cannibals" (I.31) and "Of Coaches" (III.6).¹ The latter essay in particular has received much critical attention for Montaigne's meditation about the conquest of America and its significance for Europe. The essayist's favorable attitude toward the civiliza-

*"Nostre monde vient d'en trouver un autre," Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, ed. Pierre Villey (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004), 908. All English translations are from *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, ed. Donald Frame (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), here 693.

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tions of Mexico and Peru and his propagation of a cultural relativism have been stressed by many critics.² However, before Montaigne comments on the American Indians and the disastrous effects of their conquest by Europeans in the second half of the essay, he discusses various, seemingly unrelated topics in the first: the nature of fear, the virtue of liberality, and his personal aversion to certain means of transportation, above all coaches. In fact, Montaigne's contemplations under the heading "Of Coaches" are so variegated that the question of the essay's coherence has been one of the focal points of its interpretation.³ In the critical readings concerned with this problem, almost no attention has been paid to the evocations of the Middle and Far East and their strategic position in "Of Coaches," counterbalancing the essay's focus on the American continent and affecting its overall structure and argument. In keeping with the genre of the essay, the thematic unity of "Of Coaches" might ultimately prove elusive, but one of its striking features and perhaps its main organizing principle is an imaginary circular movement from Europe to Asia and America, and back to Europe. Through numerous, seemingly unrelated episodes and references, Montaigne takes his readers from France to Hungary, Turkey, and China. His train of thought then turns westward to the Mediterranean and North Africa. With the beginning of the essay's second half, Montaigne's focus shifts to the New World and, in a final twist, loops back to western Europe. The world that Montaigne thus circumscribes is both one and divided, a unity with two tightly related halves, as signaled by the epigraph. The tension between wholeness and division is reflected and supported by the very structure of the essay, also consisting of two halves forming a textual whole. As we will see, Montaigne replicates this tension thematically not only by simultaneously opposing and intertwining East and West but also past and present, old and new.⁴

The specific configuration of global space and human history in "Of Coaches" elucidates particularly well some of the conundrums of early modern Orientalism. The discursive juxtaposition of the two hemispheres and their interaction necessitate the recalibration of notions of the Occident, relying since Antiquity on the existence of an imaginary Orient, as Edward Said has demonstrated so forcefully.⁵ From Montaigne's firmly Eurocentric perspective, the discovery of the New World amounted to the creation of a New West, seemingly effacing the traditional divide between Europe and Asia and fusing them into one world, an Old World that is also *notre monde*, "our" world. The symbolic and ideological division that, according to Said, separates Europe from an imaginary East, is shifted

westward and relocated between the two hemispheres along the Atlantic Ocean. Keeping a steady vantage point from the study of his chateau in southwest France throughout the *Essays*, in “Of Coaches” Montaigne reveals how deeply his position in the world has been affected by this new configuration of East and West. Rather than stabilizing this new geographic order by a firm divide between the two hemispheres, the essayist renegotiates the symbolic place of France and Europe in human history in a movement that could be called dialectic. It weaves back and forth between the Old World and the New, the past and the present, first to reposition and relativize them and then to arrive at a third related, yet different insight about knowledge. What emerges from “Of Coaches” in this process is an idea of France and Europe as spatially intermediate and temporally indeterminate constructs.⁶ This dialectic movement, through which Montaigne reframes, or unframes, France and Europe is, to Montaigne’s mind, as jolting and troubling as a coach ride. As the essay’s title suggests, it is also the essay’s unifying theme.⁷

EAST-WEST-EAST: GEOGRAPHICAL AND TEXTUAL LOOPS

“Of Coaches” begins with a short deliberation about the causes of certain habits, for instance blessing someone who sneezes, and sensations, such as getting seasick. Speaking from personal experience, Montaigne rejects Plutarch’s assertion that people who travel by sea feel nauseous because they are afraid. Ruling out fear as the cause for indispositions such as an upset stomach, Montaigne observes that traveling by boat or by coach makes him feel uncomfortable and even nauseous because of the jolting movement associated with these means of transportation: “it is an interrupted motion that annoys me, and most of all when it is languid.”⁸

His distaste for traveling by coach leads Montaigne to shift his reflections from the individual and contemporary to the universal and historical. Discussing the use of coaches throughout history, “varying according to the nations and according to the age,”⁹ the essayist takes his readers on an imaginary voyage with a first stop on the eastern edge of Europe. He points out the successful deployment of coaches by the Hungarians who fought against the Turks “in our fathers’ time.”¹⁰ Surprisingly, this example serves Montaigne not to praise the Hungarians or deprecate Europe’s Muslim enemy, as was commonplace in late sixteenth-century France.¹¹ Instead he bemoans humankind’s failing memory. Throughout history coaches have been so widespread, “effective,” and “necessary” that “it is a wonder that

we have lost all knowledge of them.”¹² The coach, thus, becomes the motif which allows Montaigne to associate an imaginary journey across continents with a reflection on the precarity of human knowledge and memory. Through the coach, he rhetorically intertwines East and West, past and present, knowledge and judgment.

Montaigne’s laconic mention of the fight between the Hungarians and Turks is also meant to contrast the effective use of coaches by Europeans in the recent past with the frivolous and degenerate use that ancient Rome made of them, a historical digression to which we will return. Of importance here is that Montaigne’s allusion to the Turks is the first of two evocations of the East in “Of Coaches.” In a passage that is situated at the heart of the essay and initiates the imaginary passage from the Old East to the New West, Montaigne lends the imaginary Orient more depth by referring to China: “We exclaim at the miracle of the invention of our artillery, of our printing; other men in another corner of the world, in China, enjoyed these a thousand years earlier.”¹³ This mention of the centuries-old Chinese craft of printing not only relativizes the sort of Eurocentrism that Montaigne chastises throughout the *Essays*, but also counterbalances his earlier reference to the Ottomans. In “Of Coaches,” the East is the site of printing and artillery warfare, that is, of both cultural accomplishments and potential military threats. That combination, in turn, creates an affinity between the East and Europe as integral parts of the “old” world. The invasion of the Ottomans, mentioned in the first part of the essay, is echoed by the European conquest of the American continent in the second, with the noticeable difference that the latter is painted in much more horrendous detail. Montaigne recognizes the efficiency of European warfare, based in part on the Chinese invention of gun powder that enabled the conquistadors to quickly overcome the indigenous populations they encountered.¹⁴ In doing so, he also indirectly forges unexpected parallels between the New West and what emerges as the New East, the latter including Spain and China.

Thanks to the motif of the coach, continuing to proceed west and south, Montaigne shifts the focus of his deliberations from Hungary and the Ottoman Empire to ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. As mentioned above, the military use of coaches by the Hungarians conflicts with what the essayist describes as the frivolous, wasteful, and degenerate employment of coaches in Rome. This leads Montaigne to embark on a meditation about royal liberality. The numerous Roman and Greek examples Montaigne cites inspire him in turn to allude to Catherine de’ Medici who

he claims would show “natural generosity and munificence”¹⁵ had she the means to do so. This is the only, rather oblique hint in the essay at the civil war that had engulfed the French by the time Montaigne composed the *Essays*.¹⁶ It is also the one and only time in “Of Coaches” that Montaigne redirects his thoughts to the present and to France, reminding his readers of the political and geographical condition under which the ongoing imaginary circumscription of the world is taking place.

Montaigne’s reflections on royal generosity and lavishness feed into a portrait of the Roman circus and its sumptuous spectacles. As he describes artificial landscapes, the staging of naval battles and the slaughtering of gladiators, he also denounces the extravagance of Roman spectacle as part of a Western heritage that, to his mind, foreshadows the events in the Americas of his own time. Surprisingly, the detailed depiction of the circus does not include any mention of chariots or coaches. Instead he chooses other elements to carefully link his example of Roman excess both to the central theme of voyage and illness and to the chapter’s impending passage to the New World: Montaigne’s Roman circus is artificially inundated and populated by sea monsters and armed vessels, one ship spewing hundreds of fighting animals. Twice he uses the verb *vomir* (to vomit) to describe this release of monsters, echoing the chapter’s initial mention of seasickness.¹⁷ The same effect seems to befall the staged Roman circus vessels and the Spanish fleet. After a long voyage overseas, the latter spews its own brand of monsters onto the shores of the Americas, the conquistadors. The theme of nauseating travel links the seemingly disparate parts of the essay. More importantly, it ties the essayist to Roman history and heritage as well as to the colonial enterprises of his time.

The rhetoric that ensues in the second half of the essay on the New World implies not only a personal, but also a collective responsibility for the destruction of the American Indians. After stating that “our world has just discovered another world,” Montaigne continues to describe the dichotomy between an innocent “infant world”¹⁸ and the destructive impact of a obscure *nous* on it. Characteristic of the above-mentioned tension between the wholeness of the world and its division and duality in “Of Coaches,” the two worlds are conceptualized as the members of one body: “The universe will fall into paralysis; one member will be crippled, the other in full vigor.”¹⁹ In the same vein, imagining the American Indians’ reaction to their first encounter with the Spaniards, Montaigne surmises that they must have found the conquistadors very strange because they hailed from “a part of the world so remote.”²⁰ The American Indians themselves are said to

inhabit “the richest and most beautiful part of the world.”²¹ Montaigne conceives of the world as one even though he also clearly distinguishes between “our world” and the “infant world,” divided by the Atlantic.²²

A similar tension persists between the Old World *nous* and the Spanish conquistadors. Montaigne alternates between these two referents in his discussion of the American conquest. Although he accuses Spaniards of numerous atrocities, he refuses to put the blame on them alone.²³ In fact, Montaigne considers himself a member of the community that inflicted disaster on the American continent, as ill-defined as it might be: “I am much afraid that we shall have very greatly hastened the decline and ruin of this new world.”²⁴ Elsewhere he acknowledges with regard to the American Indians that “we took advantage of their ignorance and inexperience.”²⁵ Admissions like these contribute to the rhetorical invention of a European *nous* that is diametrically opposed to the native populations of the Americas and confronts the proclaimed corruption of Europeans with the presumed virtue of New World natives. This stark dichotomy recalls the one that Said claims is inherent in Orientalism and its view of the East. But in “Of Coaches,” vice defines the European, not the fictional Oriental. Or we might say, following Said, that Montaigne orientalizes Europeans, pushing westward the geographic and moral dividing line between a virtuous West and a depraved East.

However, toward the end of the essay Montaigne abandons the indeterminate, presumably European *nous* to focus exclusively on the Spanish conquistadors, their greed and the cruelty of their enterprise, already sanctioned by divine justice: “God deservedly allowed this great plunder to be swallowed up by the sea in transit, or by the intestine wars in which they devoured one another; and most of them were buried on the spot without any profit from their victory.”²⁶ As the imaginary weaving between continents draws to an end, Montaigne exacerbates the core theme that echoes throughout “Of Coaches”: what had started out as a nauseating sea voyage in the first part, has been turned into an endeavor of death and (auto-)destruction motivated by European greed. In hindsight, the sick stomach at the beginning of the essay that Montaigne associates with the jolting movement of travel by coach and by sea can be read as the omen of the brutal infighting among Europeans (“guerres intestines”) looming in the background. In Montaigne’s view, Europeans are at least as barbarous as the savage American Indians.²⁷

With this final scene of the conquistadors’ botched return to Spain, the essay’s imaginary journey also reaches European shores again and has come

full circle. Along the way, he has constructed a universe extending from China and the Ottoman Empire in the East to Peru and Mexico in the New West via ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome in the South. What is striking in this configuration is the implied inclusion of the Orient into the Old World and of Easterners into *nous*. By explicitly portraying Europeans in stark opposition to American Indians, Montaigne implicitly likens the Europeans to the Turks and Chinese in “Of Coaches.”

Leading his reader from East to West and back, by land and by sea, Montaigne also circumscribes a pivotal space and viewpoint from which the universe is organized and critically inspected. Although they are never mentioned in “Of Coaches,” contemporary France and, in a wider sense, Europe crystallize as this vantage point through the spatial organization of the essay, however ill-defined the old continent remains. As its fictive center, France also seems to be situated north, or “above,” a universe that is evenly divided into an Old World—the East and Europe—and a New World. Though geographically firmly anchored in Europe, the imaginary position from which Montaigne speaks is central and above as well as on the edge and between two worlds that are one.

NEW PAST, OLD PRESENT

Because of the essay’s specific movement, past and present are as interwoven in “Of Coaches” as East and West, creating tensions both between the Old and the New World and within each of them. Those tensions betray the difficulty of historically relocating the Old West—forming a new whole with the Old East from Turkey to China—with regard to the New West. The relocation in time of the Old West proves a much thornier issue than its re-conceptualization in space.

We remember that the essay’s imaginary voyage begins with the allusion to a conflict between Ottoman and Hungarian troops in the recent past, continues to sites of Roman, Greek, and Egyptian antiquity, briefly harks back to ancient China, and then leads the reader further westward to the New World and the present before returning to contemporary colonialist Europe. At first sight, the distribution between past and present roughly corresponds to that between the Old World and the New. The former is defined by centuries of interaction between European and Asian civilizations, forming a unity that seems historically as divided from the New World as it is geographically. Montaigne encapsulates this idea by calling the recently discovered world “an infant world,” “so new and so infantile

that it is still being taught its A B C.”²⁸ The metaphor of the infant, signifying the presumed innocence and naiveté of American Indian civilizations, implies the idea of a developed and mature European culture, whose emissaries are eager to teach indigenous populations how to read. But, in the same passage, Montaigne acknowledges that the idea of American candor and gullibility is misguided—their world being “no less great, full, and well-limbed” than his—and not borne out by real life: “they were not at all behind us in natural brightness of mind and pertinence.”²⁹ He goes on to praise the “awesome magnificence of the Cities of Cuzco and Mexico”³⁰ as the expression of Inca and Aztec cultural sophistication. The New World is older than Europeans thought, and Montaigne is the first to recognize the ignorance of the Old World, putting the latter in turn into the position of the unknowing but inquisitive infant. Seemingly divided, both worlds share a developed culture as well as a relative lack of knowledge.

The allusions to the Ottoman Empire and Ancient China take on a different significance as soon as the construction of world history in “Of Coaches” comes into focus. On one hand, the reference to China lends Asia a historical depth similar to that of Europe. On the other, the hint at the Turkish invasion of the European continent—which, as Montaigne and we know, could not be fended off by the Hungarians and their coaches—might be seen as yet another indication of “our own weakness and decay,”³¹ now opposing Asia and Europe. Elsewhere in the *Essays*, Montaigne calls the Ottoman Empire the “strongest state that we see in the world at present,”³² dissociating it from the decline he diagnoses for “our world.” In this context, it should be noted that Renaissance humanists were as unsettled by the apparition of the Turks on the world scene, nowhere mentioned in Roman and Greek sources, as they were by the discovery of America. Scholars were obsessed with the question of the origin of the Turks, a discussion and conundrum of which Montaigne must have been very well aware.³³ In short, the references to the ancient Chinese inventions of gun powder and print and to Turkish supremacy in the Eastern Mediterranean at crucial moments in the essay help create the tensions between past and present and Old and New World that characterize “Of Coaches.” Historically, both the New World and Asia are revealed to be equals in the sense that they are at once old and new, sophisticated and strong, whereas, geographically, Asia is clearly part of the supposedly ailing New East that also includes Europe.

Complicating the configuration of historical relationships between America, Europe, and Asia in “Of Coaches” even more is the generational model that Montaigne introduces when he predicts the “end of our world” and the other world’s “coming into light when ours is leaving it.”³⁴ The assumption here is that the new or young “infant world” replaces an old and degenerate one: “one member will be crippled, the other in full vigor.”³⁵ But again, Montaigne immediately recognizes that the proposed opposition between the New World and the Old does not hold, thus underlining the already noted tension between two parts that are divided yet form a whole: “the universe will fall into paralysis.”³⁶ What Montaigne presents here as a certainty in the near future by using the indicative mood, he has already debunked earlier in the essay when he acknowledges that the New World, appearing fresh and young to Europeans, is not that innocent and future-oriented after all. In fact, Montaigne surprises his reader toward the end of the essay with the observation that the Aztecs “judged, as we do, that the universe was near its end, and they took as a sign of this the desolation that we brought upon them.”³⁷ When he explains the Aztecs’ belief that the world’s existence is divided into five ages, Montaigne not only emphasizes once more how much the supposedly New and Old Worlds have in common but also introduces a third historical model: that of a one-time cycle, defined by a limited number of stages from birth to blossom and decay, unable to renew itself.

Weaving back and forth between East and West, past and present, Montaigne gravitates toward the core of his essay, the nature of human history. In a pivotal passage, placed at the heart of the essay and before the rhetorical transition from the Old World to the New, Montaigne rejects the idea of human history as a natural cycle of rise and fall or as an open-ended succession of generations. Instead, he suggests that history is a continuous movement without direction and subject to repetition. In doing so, he leaves it open who exactly the actors of this movement are: “We do not go in a straight line; we rather ramble and turn this way and that. We retrace our steps.”³⁸ As in other instances in “Of Coaches,” Montaigne’s *nous* is undetermined and can be understood as “we the French,” “we the Europeans” or “we humans.”³⁹ Montaigne inscribes his readers and himself in a community—French, European, or simply human—that is profoundly unsettled and in search of a place in history, be it in the East or the West. Rather than confirming any sort of collective identity, references to Asia in combination with reflections about the New World raise the question of whether such an identity can exist and how it can be

justified. Integrated in a dialectic train of thought, Montaigne's Orientalism is open and productive rather than close-minded and deterministic.

“KNOWLEDGE WEAK IN EVERY DIRECTION”

“Of Coaches” is carefully balanced between the Old World and the New and between the past and the present. As we have seen, geographical and historical entities, Old and New World are connected in multiple ways through the comparisons that Montaigne implicitly draws between European, Asian, and American civilizations, increasingly likening them to each other. He acknowledges that they equal each other in cultural achievements and historical depth but also, at least in the case of Europe and America, in their reciprocal ignorance. Discovering another civilization sheds new light on one's own past and present. To Montaigne's mind, the past of the Old World seems new—the extravagance of the Roman circus outdoing even the spectacular richness of the New World—and its present old. What appear to be exciting contemporary inventions such as gun powder or printing presses were known to the Chinese centuries ago.

We have called the methodical movement between East and West and past and present that is at work in “Of Coaches” dialectic because it allows Montaigne to arrive at a third related but different issue, namely the nature of human history. As we have also seen, this issue is raised in a passage around which the textual organization of the entire essay revolves, thus underlining the centrality of its meaning. In that passage, Montaigne not only conceives of history as an askew and possibly repetitive movement, but also ties it to the question of human knowledge and memory. Having just marveled at the inventiveness of the Roman circus, he observes:

Even in these vanities [of the Roman circus] we discover how fertile those ages were in minds different from ours. It is with this sort of fertility as with all other productions of Nature. This is not to say that she then put forth her utmost effort. We do not go in a straight line; we rather ramble, and turn this way and that. We retrace our steps. I fear that our knowledge is weak in every direction; we do not see very far ahead or very far behind. It embraces little and has a short life, short in both extent of time and extent of matter.⁴⁰

At the heart of the essay lies the insight that “our” knowledge is incomplete and “our” minds relative in terms of creativity and intelligence. An example

from the past as well as the experience of the present—from the confrontation with the Ottoman Empire in the East to the discovery of highly developed civilizations in the New West and the destruction that Europeans inflict on themselves and on others—all lead Montaigne to wonder about the variations of the human mind or *esprit* as part of “Nature.” Because he links *esprits*, used in the plural, to Nature, there is nothing deterministic about them. By nature, Montaigne seems to suggest, *esprits* vary throughout the world and history, capable of great creativity and great destruction. Because of the indeterminacy of human minds, history is open, non-linear and unpredictable as well. Knowledge is equally unstable, fallible and most of all incomplete, “weak in every direction.” Conditioned by the minds of any given era, it cannot remedy their shortcomings. These insights, spurred by European ventures toward the East and the West in the sixteenth century and by the concurrent (re-)discovery of ancient history, become a source of anxiety: “I fear.” The reader is reminded of the opening sequence of the essay in which Montaigne refutes Plutarch’s suggestion that seasickness is caused by fear and maintains that, in his experience, it is the jolting movement that makes him sick because he “was never afraid on the water.”⁴¹ However, he concedes: “Fear sometimes arises from want of judgment as well as from want of courage [...]; besides it takes courage to be afraid.”⁴² With the same courage, Montaigne admits to the insufficiency of human knowledge and the precariousness of history, both seen in a causal relationship with the erratic nature of the human mind(s).

While contemplations of East and West allow Montaigne to arrive at such fundamental insights, they seem to concern mostly France and Europe, conspicuously absent by name but, as we have seen, inscribed in “Of Coaches” as the perch from which Montaigne inspects the world and ponders history. The fluid significance of *nous*, of which the reader can never be certain if it designates the French, Europeans, or all human beings is a continuous reminder of the indeterminate nature of the community of which Montaigne claims membership for himself and for his readers. Through the multiple comparisons that Montaigne draws between Europe, Asia, and America, his country and continent also emerge as profoundly relativist geographical constructs with an indeterminate position in the world, the discovery of a New West turning them into parts of a New East with Asia. In “Of Coaches,” ideas of France and Europe seem even more affected by the insight that they are historically unhinged, temporary, and in flux.

The allusions to China and the Turks at strategic moments in “Of Coaches” contribute to the awareness that pre-conceived notions of French or Western identity are built on shifting grounds and do not account for the complexity of the human mind, the volatility of knowledge, or the unpredictable course of history. Insofar as these allusions contribute to the discourse about the Orient in the *Essays* and are an expression of Montaigne’s Orientalism, the latter is more at the service of the essayist’s skepticism than any other school of thought. An example of early modern Orientalism, Montaigne’s representation of the East works in noticeably different ways from those Said has diagnosed for post-colonial Orientalism because it is always part of a specific dialectics.

“Let us fall back to our coaches”⁴³: In the end, Montaigne returns to the coaches as a symbol of European civilization and the suppression of the American Indians who are ignorant of any mode of transportation other than men carrying other men on their shoulders. Yet this final evocation of the coach also reminds us of the feeling of physical unease and sickness that the jolting movement of a coach ride provokes in the essayist. What remains in the end, then, is the possibility of a nauseous feeling not because of the fundamental insight that human knowledge is weak and the *esprits* of any given era fickle, but because Montaigne and his readers are well aware that they are bound in the indeterminate, heavily jolting course of history like passengers riding in a coach.

NOTES

1. This might be one of the reasons why the representation of the Orient in the *Essays* has been relatively less examined than that of the New World. For a useful recent synthesis see Denis Bjaï, “La Représentation de l’Orient dans les *Essais* de Montaigne,” ed. Albrecht Classen, *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 649–665.
2. See for example G eralde Nakam, “La Conqu ete du Nouveau Monde: ‘une boucherie universelle’,” *Bulletin de la Soci et  des Amis de Montaigne* 19–20 (1984): 48–58; Frank Lestringant, “L’Am erique des ‘Coches’, fille du Br sil des ‘Cannibales’: Montaigne   la rencontre de deux traditions historiques,” ed. Claude-Gilbert Dubois, *Montaigne et l’histoire. Actes du colloque de Bordeaux 1988* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1992), 143–157; or Timothy Hampton, “The Subject of America: History and Alterity in Montaigne’s ‘Des Coches’,” *Romanic Review* 88 (1997): 203–227.

3. See for example René Étiemble, "Sens et structure dans un essai de Montaigne," *Cahiers de l'Association Internationale des Études Françaises* 14 (1962): 263–274; Marcel Gutwirth, "Des Coches, ou la structuration d'une absence," *L'Esprit Créateur* 15 (1975): 8–20; or Karlheinz Stierle, "Vom Gehen, Reiten und Fahren: Der Reflexionszusammenhang von Montaignes 'Des coches'," *Poetica* 14 (1982): 195–212.
4. For a reading with a similar interest in the relationship between structure and ideas in "Of Coaches," focussing on the juxtaposition of the New World and Ancient Rome, see Edwin Duval, "Lessons of the New World: Design and Meaning in Montaigne's 'Des Cannibales' (I: 31) and 'Des Coches' (III: 6)," *Yale French Studies* 64 (1983): 95–112.
5. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978), New York: Vintage, 1994. In his cursory discussion of early modern writers who drew on the rich European imagination of the Orient for their works (63), Said does not mention any sixteenth- or seventeenth-century French authors.
6. Critics have pointed out that Montaigne mentions Europe only once in the *Essays*. But, "named or not, Europe is present as an idea" ["reste pensée"] in the *Essays*, as Claude-Gilbert Dubois observes (my translation). See his article "Europe," *Dictionnaire de Montaigne*, ed. Philippe Desan (Paris: Champion, 2007), 417–418. See also Claude Blum, "Des *Essais* au *Journal de voyage*: Espace humain et conscience européenne à la fin du XVI^e siècle," in *La Conscience européenne au XVI^e et XVII^e siècle*, eds. Françoise Autrand, Nicole Cazauran, and Simone Follet (Paris: ENS, 1982), 23–33.
7. See also André Tournon, "Fonction et sens d'un titre énigmatique (III, 6)," *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Montaigne* 19–20 (1984): 59–68.
8. *Complete Essays*, 687; "C'est un remuement interrompu qui m'offense, et plus quand il est languissant," *Essais*, 901.
9. *Complete Essays*, 687; "Divers selon les nations, selon les siècles," *Essais*, 901.
10. *Complete Essays*, 687; "Du temps de nos peres," *Essais*, 901. As an oriental figure, the Turk is pervasive in the *Essays* and often also incarnates Islam. In the sense that Montaigne's numerous allusions to the Turk constitute a sub-discourse, as Jean Balsamo has proposed, we might think of the *Essays* also as an integral part of sixteenth-century French Orientalism, albeit quite different from the dichotomous Orientalism that Said claims to exist in all of Western writing about the Orient. With regard to the Turk and Islam in the *Essays*, see Jean Balsamo, "L'Histoire des Turcs à l'épreuve des *Essais*," in *Histoire et littérature au siècle de Montaigne: Mélanges offerts à Claude-Gilbert Dubois*, ed. Françoise Argod-Dutard (Geneva: Droz, 2001), 221–236; and Marcus Keller, "Michel Eyquem de Montaigne," *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History 1500–1900 (CMR1900)*, vol.

- 6: Western Europe (1500–1600), eds. David Thomas and John Chesworth (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 815–820.
11. See Clarence D. Rouillard, *The Turk in French History, Thought, and Literature (1520–1660)* (Paris: Boivin, 1941), and Michael J. Heath, *Crusading Commonplaces: La Noue, Lucinge and Rhetoric against the Turks* (Geneva: Droz, 1986).
 12. *Complete Essays*, 687; “Que c’est merveille que nous en ayons perdu toute connoissance,” *Essais*, 901.
 13. *Complete Essays*, 693; “Nous nous escriions du miracle de nostre artillerie, de nostre impression; d’autres hommes, un autre bout du monde à la Chine, en jouissoit mille ans auparavant,” *Essais*, 908.
 14. “Eliminate this disparity [between the Europeans and the Amerindians, not possessing gun powder], I say, and you take from the conquerors the whole basis of so many victories,” *Complete Essays*, 694 [“contez, dis-je, aux conquerans cette disparité, vous leur ostez toute l’occasion de tant de victoires,” *Essais*, 910].
 15. *Complete Essays*, 688; “liberalité naturelle et munificence,” *Essais*, 902.
 16. According to Villey, Montaigne composed “Of Coaches” around 1586–1587, at the height of the French Wars of Religion (1562–1594). The essay was first published in the second edition of the *Essays* in 1588.
 17. Part of Montaigne’s Roman circus scene are “caverns that vomited forth the beasts destined for the spectacle” and “a great ship” coming apart “after having spewed forth from its belly four or five hundred fighting beasts” (691) [“des antres qui vomissoient les bestes destinées au spectacle,” “un grand navire (...) apres avoir vomy de son ventre quatre ou cinq cens bestes à combat” (906)]. At the beginning of the essay, Montaigne tells his reader that he is “very subject to seasickness” (685) [“fort sujet” au “souslevement d’estomac” (899)].
 18. *Complete Essays*, 693; “monde enfant,” *Essais*, 909.
 19. *Complete Essays*, 693; “L’univers tombera en paralisie; l’un membre sera perclus, l’autre en vigueur,” *Essais*, 909.
 20. *Complete Essays*, 694; “D’un endroict du monde si esloigné,” *Essais*, 909.
 21. *Complete Essays*, 695; “la plus riche et belle partie du monde,” *Essais*, 910.
 22. Montaigne emphasizes repeatedly the geographic divide between Europe and America, but its magnitude is not expressed as clearly in the original French as it is in Frame’s translation, rendering Montaigne’s “nostre monde par deçà” (*Essais*, 909) or “les arts de deçà” (*Essais*, 910) with “our world on this side of the ocean” or “the arts of our side of the ocean,” *Complete Essays*, 694. The modern reader might expect in this context that the idea of the world would be opposed to the notion of continent but this concept, gaining currency in the French vernacular since the beginning of the sixteenth century, is conspicuously absent from the *Essays*.

23. For his discussion of the Spanish conquest Montaigne draws on Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, first published in Spanish in 1552 and translated into French in 1579.
24. *Complete Essays*, 693; "Bien crains-je que nous aurons bien fort hasté sa declinaison et sa ruyne," *Essais*, 909.
25. *Complete Essays*, 695; "Nous nous sommes servis de leur ignorance et inexperience," *Essais*, 910.
26. *Complete Essays*, 697; "Dieu a meritoirement permis que ces grands pillages se soient absorbez par la mer en les transportant, ou par les guerres intestines dequoy ils se sont entremangez entre eux, et la plus part s'enterrerent sur les lieux, sans aucun fruit de leur victoire," *Essais*, 913.
27. In "Of Cannibals" (I.31), Montaigne compares Amerindian cannibalism, practiced on dead bodies, favorably to the atrocities perpetrated by his contemporaries: "I think there is more barbarity in eating a man alive than in eating him dead; and in tearing by tortures and the rack a body still full of feeling, in roasting a man bit by bit, in having him bitten and mangled by dogs and swine (as we have not only read but seen within fresh memory, not among ancient enemies, but among neighbors and fellow citizens, and what is worse, on the pretext of piety and religion)," *Complete Essays*, 155 ["Je pense qu'il y a plus de barbarie à manger un homme vivant qu'à le manger mort, à deschirer, par tourmens et par geénes, un corps encore plein de sentiments, le faire rostir par le menu, le faire mordre et meurtrir aux chiens et aux pourceaux (comme nous l'avons, non seulement leu, mais veu de fresche memoire, non entre des ennemis anciens, mais entre des voisins et concitoyens, et, qui pis est, sous pretexte de pieté et de religion)," *Essais*, 209].
28. *Complete Essays*, 693; "un monde enfant," "si nouveau et si enfant qu'on luy apprend encore son a, b, c," *Essais* 908.
29. *Complete Essays*, 693; "non moins grand, plain et membru," "ils ne nous devoient rien en clarté d'esprit naturelle et en pertinence," *Essais*, 908–909.
30. *Complete Essays*, 693; "l'espouvantable magnificence des villes de Cusco et de Mexico," *Essais*, 909.
31. *Complete Essays*, 693; "nostre propre foiblesse et decadence," *Essais*, 908.
32. *Complete Essays*, 106; "Le plus fort Estat qui paroisse pour le present au monde, est celuy des Turcs," *Essais*, 143.
33. See Frank Lestringant, "Guillaume Postel et l'obsession turque," in *Écrire le monde à la Renaissance: Quinze études sur Rabelais, Postel, Bodin et la littérature géographique* (Caen: Paradigme, 1993), 189–224.
34. *Complete Essays*, 693. Speaking of "our end" ("nostre fin," *Essais*, 908), Montaigne's French is less specific than Frame's translation "end of our world," but in the second quote Montaigne clearly refers to "our world,"

- not just “us”: “entrer en lumiere quand le nostre [monde] en sortira,” *Essais*, 908–909.
35. *Complete Essays*, 693; “l’un membre sera perclus, l’autre en vigueur,” *Essais*, 909.
 36. *Complete Essays*, 693; “L’univers tombera en paralysie,” *Essais*, 909.
 37. *Complete Essays*, 698; “Aussi jugeoint-ils, ainsi que nous, que l’univers fut proche de sa fin, et en prindrent pour signe la desolation que nous apportames,” *Essais*, 913–914.
 38. *Complete Essays*, 692; “Nous n’allons point, nous rodons plustost, et tournoions, çà et là. Nous nous promenons sur nos pas,” *Essais*, 907.
 39. For example, when Montaigne refers to “our Queen Catherine” (*Complete Essays*, 688) [“nostre Royné Catherine,” *Essais*, 902], the implied *nous* clearly signifies the French.
 40. *Complete Essays*, 692; “Ces vanitez mesme nous descouvrons combien ces siecles estoyent fertiles d’autres esprits que ne sont les nostres. Il va de cette sorte de fertilité comme il fait de toutes autres productions de la nature. Ce n’est pas à dire qu’elle y ayt lors employé son dernier effort. Nous n’allons point, nous rodons plustost, et tournoions çà et là. Nous nous promenons sur nos pas. Je crains que nostre cognoissance soit foible en tous sens, nous ne voyons ny gueres loin, ny guere arriere; elle embrasse peu et vit peu, courte et en estandue de temps et en estandue de matiere,” *Essais*, 907.
 41. *Complete Essays*, 685; “Je n’eus jamais peur sur l’eau,” *Essais*, 899.
 42. *Complete Essays*, 685–686; “Elle [la peur] naist par fois de faute de jugement, comme de faute de cœur. Encore faut-il du courage à craindre,” *Essais*, 899.
 43. *Complete Essays*, 698; “Retombons à nos coches,” *Essais*, 915.

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Mehmed II and His Woman: The Idea of Europe in Early Modern Representations of a Female Captive

David C. Moberly

Contemporary scholars frequently discuss what has been called the “story of Irene” in the context of the profound and prolonged influence it bears on English literature in the early modern period, on plays such as Shakespeare’s *Othello* and Kyd’s *Soliman and Perseda*, Heywood’s *Fair Maid of the West*, Massinger’s *The Renegado*, and other works by Peele, Goffe, Carlell, and Swinhoe.¹ Yet the story (which I summarize briefly below) was confined neither to the early modern period nor to England. Adaptations extended well into the English Restoration period and beyond, as well as into Spanish, Italian, French, and German literatures from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries.² The Irene narrative, then, does not belong to any individual linguistic group or national tradition but is instead more European in the sense that it was translated, adapted, and appropriated in a variety of contexts throughout the continent. As such, the tale merits consideration within this broader context.

Although names and details change as the Irene narrative evolves, its basic plot remains essentially the same: Irene, a Greek woman, is captured by Turks during the conquest of Constantinople. She is delivered to the Sultan Mahomet, who quickly falls in love with her and eventually spends so much time with her that one of his servants, Mustapha, tells him he will

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be overthrown by his soldiers if he does not separate himself from her. Mahomet then orders his pashas to gather around him, sets Irene by his side, and asks the men whether they think that they could ever part with something so lovely. The nobles admit that it seems impossible and would take extraordinary willpower to do such a thing, whereupon Mahomet seizes Irene by the hair and slices off her head in one stroke. He then begins anew his invasion of Eastern Europe.

Because following the narrative's movements throughout the continent is beyond the scope of this chapter, I will focus on the transformation of the tale from its origins in Venetian stories about the Ottoman court, through Matteo Bandello's 1554 *Novelle*, and finally (by way of France) to England and Carrell's play *Osmond, the Great Turk* (1637–1642) so as to add a new dimension to recent studies of captivity in early modern literature. So far, critics have analyzed the ways in which male European identity was threatened or reaffirmed in captivity narratives and dramas, all written by men, while offering less insight into how such tales represented European women's identities through captivity.³ Irene, or the unnamed woman in Mehmed II's seraglio on whom she is historically based, never speaks for herself in telling her story, unlike her male captive counterparts, many of whom wrote or dictated to others their experiences as slaves.⁴ Irene's collective image, then, is as disconnected from that of any actual, historical woman in the Ottoman seraglio as her Turkish counterparts (Mahomet, Maometto, Melcoshus) are from Mehmed II. Thus, the character of Irene functions as a representation in much the same way as the Orient, specifically in the abstract sense in which Said defines it near the end of *Orientalism*: "a *topos*, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation of someone else's work [...], or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all these."⁵ Irene, like the Orient, operates "as representations usually do, for a purpose, according to a tendency, in a specific, historical, intellectual, and even economic setting."⁶ In other words, in the case of the narrative trajectory explored here, Irene's story is less about Irene than about its many European translators, adaptors, and appropriators.

As the character of Irene develops and adapts in its journey from Istanbul to Venice, from Venice to Lombardy, from Lombardy to Paris, and from Paris to London, an image of the idea of Europe itself is revealed. Irene comes to stand for Europe—its collective hopes, fears, strengths, and foibles—as it confronts the Ottoman world. As author after author represents the European/Oriental encounter as a relationship between a

Turkish Sultan and a Greek woman, what emerges is a Europe that is increasingly fragmented, dynamic, and evolving—changing as much as Irene herself. What begins as a brief tale intended to demonstrate the cruelty of Mehmed II to a woman in his seraglio becomes the story of a Greek woman on the eastern fringes of European identity, used by writers to establish a contrast between what is and is not proper European behavior in confrontations with the Other. To be more specific, the figure of Irene that Bandello creates as a symbolic warning against trusting the Eastern Other, and as a means of encouraging Europeans to unite against a common foe, becomes in England a character who represents an increasingly fragmented, faithless Europe forced to negotiate with the Other at its own peril.

EUROPEAN LOVE, ORIENTAL LUST: THE IRENE NARRATIVE IN ITALY AND FRANCE

Matteo Bandello wrote the first literary version of the tale of Irene for the initial printing of his *Novelle* (1554). The story's historical descriptions, in which Mustafà, the Sultan's servant, reminds his Sultan of the greatness of his predecessors, rely upon Paolo Giovio's 1537 *Turcicarum Rerum Commentarius*.⁷ The story of Irene (as Bandello renders it) and her murder comes from a passage in *Historia Turchesca*, widely attributed to Giovanni-Maria Angiolello, a Venetian former captive, servant, and officer at the Porte during the reign of Mehmed II. Angiolello's version of the tale features in *Historia* as one of two anecdotes describing Mehmed II's cruelty, which Angiolello says was "infinite." In Angiolello's story, Mehmed II spends so much time with a woman in his seraglio that he neglects affairs of state.⁸ When he recognizes his error in spending too much time with her, he goes one day into his seraglio and kills her. He then regrets this act so intensely that he falls ill. Angiolello concludes the tale by stating: "[I]n this way he defeated and destroyed the love that he had borne for that woman."⁹ The woman herself is unnamed and her nationality and religion are unstated, with Angiolello describing her merely as "very shapely."¹⁰ Whether the story is true is difficult to determine, although Angiolello, as Mehmed II's treasurer, was certainly in a position at the Porte to have heard such rumors more directly than most Venetians.¹¹ Although it is impossible to be certain about the veracity of any historical Irene and her origins, Bandello's narrative appears to have

drawn upon an amalgam of Angiolello's work, other popular tales of Mehmed II's cruelty, and chronicles of Ottoman history such as Giovio's.

It is Bandello who takes this obscure anecdote of Angiolello's and develops it into the narrative that would, in time, spread throughout Europe. He adds several key features to the story, for example, giving Angiolello's woman a name (Irenea) and a nationality (Greek). He also makes her a part of the spoils of Mehmed II's conquest of Constantinople, thus directly connecting her to a key moment in the history of Europe, one that had been a historical reference point for many Christians' deepest fears regarding the Ottoman menace since 1453. Also, in Bandello, Irenea is killed not in the private confines of Mehmed's seraglio, but in public, in the presence of all of the Sultan's pashas. Her murder thus becomes, instead of Mehmed's private supposed self-conquering act, a public spectacle for all of the greatest in the realm to see. Thus, in the hands of Bandello, the character of Irene and her fate gain a far greater significance in the story than they had in Angiolello.

Irenea's importance is emphasized in the moralistic first lines of the tale, which warn women against false love, asking them: "Will you be certified, ladies mine, that many say they love and know not what they say, for that what they call love is no love, but a disorderly appetite, an unbridled desire, a blind and bestial frenzy?"¹² In Bandello's version, this distinction between love and lust is a crucial factor in Irenea's fate. She fully trusts that the Sultan's love for her will save her, and does not realize, as she is dressed "in richer apparel [...] than she had ever yet worn," that "she [is] decking herself for her own exequies."¹³ She falls public prey to the Sultan's lust and barbarism, having trusted in his love for her. Love of the Other, the story suggests, is not to be trusted, nor is familiarity the manner in which one should manage an encounter with the Orient. Instead, the tale promotes other values, as the greatest threat to the Sultan's safety is articulated by Mustafâ in his plea that the Sultan return to his militaristic ways, pointing out that the "Pope doth nought but send his prelates hither and thither, to unite all the princes of Christendom for thy ruin. If the Christians should unite together, which God forbend, what should we do?"¹⁴ Bandello, then, uses Irenea to illustrate the danger of embracing the Eastern Other, and inserts a plea for Christian unity as a far preferable alternative.

Bandello's novella was translated and adapted into French by Pierre Boaistuau as the second story in his 1559 *Histoires Tragiques*, a collection so popular that it was republished four more times that same year.¹⁵ The Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis was also signed in 1559, ending the wars

between France and Italy.¹⁶ Boaistuau's prefatory material betrays this conflict's deep echoes within the work, and, perhaps, the motive behind his profoundly influential adaptation of the Irene narrative. He unapologetically states that he has not simply translated Bandello's stories, but remade them into a "new form," mocking the Italian's style as so "rude," "unfit," and "poor" that he has been forced to "recast everything anew."¹⁷ In later editions of the *Histoires tragiques*, Boaistuau goes so far as to make direct pronouncements about the linguistic superiority of his own language, claiming that what is "rough and crude in his [Bandello's] Lombard" is much better in French.¹⁸ Boaistuau's version of the story, then, is intended in part as a form of conquest, demonstrating the dominance of the French language, and, by extension, of France itself, over Italy and its idiom. Despite the distinctions and hierarchies that he creates between his work and Bandello's in his preface, however, his version of the story of Irene remains one in which, ironically, the importance of Christian unity is emphasized. Mustapha, again, warns the Sultan that "the grand Pontiff of Rome" seeks to unite the Christians in war against him.¹⁹ Boaistuau, then, may mock the Italian states, but when it comes to the threat of the Ottoman Empire, unity is suddenly a necessity, and European identity, at least in this tale, maintains its association with a common corps of Christendom.

With regard to Irene, or Hyrenée, herself, although Boaistuau is celebrated for the many psychological details he adds to Bandello's stories—descriptions of characters' interior thoughts and motives—he manages to avoid offering much insight into her internal character at all.²⁰ His psychological embellishments do appear in a number of passages describing Mahomet. For example, when Mahomet responds to his servant's suggestion that he spend less time with Hyrenée, he speaks "agitated by diverse tempests, without other thought, his eyes enflamed with great ire and furor."²¹ In Bandello, the Sultan speaks to his servant "with a good countenance."²² Later, before he addresses his pashas and kills Hyrenée, Boaistuau's Mahomet "turn[s] his furious eyes here and there."²³ In Bandello, the Sultan speaks without any narrative comment on his expression.²⁴

For all the changes made to Mahomet's character, however, Boaistuau's Hyrenée remains as flat and static as Bandello's Irene. In neither the Italian nor the French version is there any comment on her adjustment to her new surroundings, her longing for home, or her feelings toward the Sultan, elements that are only developed in later adaptations. In both

Bandello and Boaistuau's versions, we are told only that she is named Irene, beautiful, about seventeen years old, and Greek. The only detail that Boaistuau adds is in regard to her exterior. He mentions that her hair is blond, a detail not included in versions by Bandello or Angiolello, while describing the way in which Mahomet laces her hair in his hand before cutting off her head.²⁵ Thus, ironically, while Boaistuau has long been championed by critics for adding detailed descriptions of characters' inner thoughts to Bandello's novellas, the only detail he adds to the character of Hyrenée is exterior, superficial, and—in all likelihood—aims to titillate.²⁶

Yet even these early images of Irene reveal something by their silence. Namely, what is important about Irene, and what marks her as European, is not her words, her thoughts, or her beliefs, but her race and her country. She does not speak in either Bandello or Boaistuau's versions of the tale. Her association with Constantinople—and the racial signifier of her blond hair—however, mark her as European. She stands, then, not only as a warning against the “terrible vice of wanton love,” as Boaistuau states moralistically in his brief prologue to the tale, but also against too-familiar relations between Europe and the Orient. Thus, in versions by both Bandello and Boaistuau, Irene serves as an admonition against embracing or trusting the Eastern enemy and as a rallying point for the cause of European unity against an Ottoman threat.

A FRAGMENTED EUROPE, A VILIFIED IRENE: THE NARRATIVE IN ENGLAND BEFORE *OSMOND*

By 1566, the first English version of the Irene narrative appeared as the fortieth “nouell” in the first volume of William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, a collection that was popular enough to be republished in 1569 and 1575.²⁷ Careful comparison makes it very clear that Painter's version is an almost lock-step translation of Boaistuau. The French text had been available in London since at least 1559.²⁸ In that year, Pierre Boaistuau, as a Huguenot, faced religious persecution and fled to England after the sudden death of Henri II. Seeking asylum and the favor of the Queen, he dedicated a new edition of the *Histoires tragiques* to Elizabeth I before meeting her in person at her court the next year to present her with his writings.²⁹

English writers do not make significant changes to Boaistuau's story until the 1590s. At that time, Irene's character alters drastically, becoming

far more fleshed out in new, highly negative, anti-Catholic detail. In these new adaptations, her character is much more central and crucial, and her name begins to be included within the title of the work itself, as for example, in George Peele's play *The Turkish Mahomet and Hyrin the Fair Greek* (early 1590s) and William Barksted's 1611 *Hiren: or the Fair Greek* (as opposed to Bandello's "Mahomet, Emperor of the Turks, Cruelly Slayeth One of his Women," which omits her name entirely).³⁰ What's more, Irene's thoughts and beliefs become paramount, as her character becomes a Catholic straw-woman in Protestant propaganda against Rome. Although Peele's *The Turkish Mahomet and Hyrin the Fair Greek* is now lost, references to it in other contemporary works by Shakespeare, Dekker, Middleton, and Goughe suggest that Peele created an Irene figure who essentially became "the Turkish Mahomet's" whore.³¹ Peele is known to have written anti-Catholicism into other plays of his, such as *The Battle of Alcazar* and *The Old Wives' Tale*,³² and his description of Hyrin in *Merrie conceited iests of George Peele*, makes it very clear what kind of character she was in *Mahomet and Hyrin*:

his Christianly pen had writ Finis to the famous Play of the Turkish Mahamet, and Hyrin the faire Greeke, in Italian called a Curtezan; in Spaine, a Margerite; in French, vn Curtain; in England, among the barbarous, a Whore; but among the Gentle, their vsuall associates, a Puncke.³³

William Barksted also highlighted Irene's unfaithful nature, as well as the faults of her religion, in his poem *Hiren: or the Fair Greek*. His Hiren, despite her initial, chaste resistance to her captor's advances, ultimately gives in to the temptation and the promise of wealth and pleasure. When she first meets Amurath, her captor, she directly refers to her belief in religious images, hoping that it will save her. But Amurath attacks her belief:

These are but shifts of Friers, tales farre fet.
Dearest, I'le teach thee my diuinity,
Our Mecha's [*sic*] is not hung with Imagery,
To tell vs of a virgin-bearing-sonne,
Our adoration to the Moone is set,
That pardons all that in the darke is done.³⁴

In the end, Hiren's response only serves to seal her doom: "what I prize more precious then imagery,/Heauens, grant the same my bane and

ruine be [...].”³⁵ Rather than connecting this dependence on imagery with Greek Orthodoxy, Barksted emphasizes Hiren’s Roman Catholicism. In his initial efforts to woo her, Amurath promises her (falsely) that “they who most abhorre idolatry,/ Shall tender Catholicke conceites to thee.” In the moment when she finally gives into Amurath’s desires, Barksted says that she “Dispences now a little with the Pope,” and soon after, Barksted states, “No pardon will she now implore of Rome.”³⁶ In the world of English Protestantism, Hiren’s trust in Roman Catholicism, imagery, and idolatry makes her giving in to Amurath something to be expected, as she would be essentially replacing one false religion with another. Thus, Barksted’s highlighting of Hiren’s trust in “imagery” serves to direct a not-so-subtle jab at Roman Catholic idolatry, which he saw as dominating much of the continent.

By this time in Irene’s journey, then, her status becomes complicated by an increasingly fragmented idea of Europe, which had become a “Divided House” of Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodoxies vying for control over both Europe’s physical geography and its identity.³⁷ Calls for Christian unity against the Ottomans are completely absent in Peele and Barksted. Instead, division and difference are emphasized. Irene is used, not as a spectacle of pity to rally behind, but as a symbol of the worst and weakest of her kind—faithless, superficial, pleasure-seeking, a veritable whore of Babylon. Ottoman lust and cruelty are still emphasized, but the suggestion is that the Sultan’s success with Irene (and, perhaps by extension, his military success in the more Eastern, “Catholic” parts of Europe) comes because of idolatry, faithlessness, and hedonism.

SYMPATHY FOR GREECE, A MARTYRED IRENE: LODOWICK CARLELL’S *OSMOND, THE GREAT TURK*

This decidedly negative depiction of Irene and of the state of Euro-Ottoman relations is contrasted by Lodowick Carlell’s adaptation of the narrative in his *Osmond, the Great Turk* (1637–1642).³⁸ Carlell’s drama, like Peele’s play and Barksted’s poem, follows Boaistuau’s basic plot, as well as the English custom of more outspoken Irene figures (perhaps in part because, on the stage, it makes less sense to have a major character remain mute).³⁹ His Irene figure, Despina, is captured during the conquest of a large, unnamed Greek city and placed in the Emperor Melcoshus’s harem by Osmond (Mustafa), his servant. Her beauty and

womanly favors distract Melcoshus (Mahomet) from his royal duties, and she is ultimately slain, though not beheaded, as a sacrifice to appease his soldiers. Mark Hutchings observes that Despina is condemned for “turning turk” and clearly labeled as a “theatrically redefined, Jacobean schemer.”⁴⁰ A closer look at the play’s historical context, as well as its contrast with earlier adaptations of the Irene narrative, however, reveals something quite different. Carlell diverts from the trend of Peele and Barksted by portraying Despina in a comparatively positive, sympathetic light. In this, he reflects Charles I and William Laud’s strengthening of relations between the Anglican and the Greek Orthodox churches,⁴¹ as well as a consciousness of the religious persuasion of his patron, Queen Henrietta Maria.⁴² Rather than dying in sin, then, Despina takes on the role of a martyr in carrying the faith to her Muslim captors. In her, Carlell creates an Irene figure whose actions and successes suggest that appropriate European relations with the Orient may come to good, despite their danger, and reestablishes a hope in European religious faith.

Unlike authors of earlier works featuring Irene figures, Carlell makes it clear that Despina does not give in to sensual pleasure and luxury completely, nor does she abandon her religion. Instead, she has a clear Christianizing influence over her captor and lover, and his court. This influence is apparent in a variety of moments throughout the play. Despina initially refuses the King’s advances towards her, and is not tempted by the thought of power she might gain through a relationship with him. She makes it clear that although she sees that she would “be able to command Melcoshus, and in him the world,” she desires instead to return home. She attempts to persuade Osmond to abandon his monarch, convert to Christianity, and take her back to Europe.⁴³ When Osmond, although tempted by her beauty, declines out of a sense of duty, Despina is put in a difficult position, but handles it well. After a scene in which Melcoshus nearly rapes Despina out of desperation, she persuades him to woo her by his love rather than force her. Her beauty proves powerful enough to plant within him the first seeds of conversion from a lustful Tatar into a man who can feel and express a more noble and (in the context of the play) European and Christian form of affection: love. As Melcoshus says to her, in an early outward sign of his inner conversion: “I will not looke on you, your eies tho chaste may more encrease my lust, which my minds pure love makes me now know to be a crime;/And hold our Prophet Mahomet unjust,/ That made no lawes against a Princes lust.”⁴⁴

The religious change in Melcoshus grows and deepens as the play continues. Later, in a conversation with Osmond, Melcoshus confesses, “her [Despina’s] [...] good opinion I strive more to gain, than all the world’s; and by those Christian vertues that she proposes too, Faith and Temperance.” A few lines after this, Despina enters the scene, requesting that Melcoshus be merciful to “some of my religion, and your enemies,” presumably Christian prisoners of war, recently captured. He replies immediately, “[t]hough they had plotted against my life, I freely pardon them,” even adding, shockingly, “Mahomet himselfe shall cease to be adored, if he be not assistant to your wishes.”⁴⁵ At the beginning of act four, Despina says to Osmond, “the Emperour, in my command ore him, makes all the empire subject to my will.” In addition she confirms that “her faith [is] kept sacred to Melcoshus”: her Christianity remains intact despite her relationship with the King.⁴⁶ She has not turned Turk. She is turning Melcoshus Christian.⁴⁷

As the play progresses, the protagonists’ relationship grows quite deep. Despina eventually confesses to Osmond that it is Melcoshus “whom [...] I in my soul adore.”⁴⁸ By this time in the play, Melcoshus has already declared, “shee’s no longer cruell, I have enjoyed her freely, by her own consent.”⁴⁹ These words suggest that he has entered into a sexual relationship with her, as they echo his lines in the earlier, attempted-rape scene in which Despina refuses to consent to Melcoshus’s advances and he accuses her of “crueltie” against him.⁵⁰ Yet, in the same moment in which the text implies that Despina and Melcoshus have become sexual partners, Despina’s Christian status is again emphasized. She tells Osmond once more: “I have a suit concerning the releasing some poore prisoners for which you from the Emperour must receive order, who strait will visit me,” presumably a reference to more Christians held prisoner within the Empire whom she requests he set free.⁵¹ Thus, although Despina does presumably “fall” in the sense of losing her virginity, Carlell softens the blow and makes it clear that her European, Christian identity and influence have remained intact. Despina thus appears all the more noble in comparison to previous, anti-Catholic versions of her character in the Irene narrative, living as an example of European virtues and faith and developing those characteristics in her captors.⁵²

The death scene provides perhaps the strongest evidence that the text exonerates Despina. Unlike Barksted’s Hiren, she is not speechless and shocked in her final moments. Her face is not frozen in unsuspecting horror at a terrible fate that has come at the moment she felt at the height

of her power. Despina offers one final prayer to God before dying, a prayer that takes on the form of a confession, as Despina pleads her own cause as a martyr in the absence of last rites: "Oh me, my fault lay in my blood, let that expiate my sin against heaven, mercy, mercy."⁵³ Melcoshus testifies to Despina's identity, saying "the perfect Christian is so proud of nought as Martyrdom," and eulogizes her as "the advocate of all those of her faith," adding that "amongst those of her sect, she cannot misse the adoration of a Saint."⁵⁴ Regardless of whether or not one considers Melcoshus's testimony of Despina trustworthy, his are remarkable words of praise, coming as they do from the lips of a formerly Muslim, Tatar King. Ultimately, the only character who challenges her innocence, calling her a "painted Sorceresse," is the duplicitous villain of the play, Halycon, who uses this characterization of her to incite the soldiers against the King.⁵⁵ Even Odmer, who directly challenges Melcoshus and accuses him of "too much Love" for Despina, never goes so far as to attack her character and, in the end, acknowledges her innocence: her murder, he says, "moves my pittie, this was no end of mine, heaven knowes."⁵⁶

Thus, Carlell counters and complicates earlier, anti-Catholic versions of the Irene narrative and creates the only female character captive in Islamicate lands in early modern English drama to be exonerated and to remain Christian despite losing her virginity in her captivity.⁵⁷ He also puts an Irene figure on stage that both embodies the newfound friendship between the Anglican and Greek Orthodox Church and embraces the King's marriage to a Catholic Queen. Carlell's Irene, then, is one that promotes a new idea of a unified Europe, and a hope that its religious faith will prevail, although not without tragedy.

In the larger narrative trajectory explored here, then, as European authors have used the Irene narrative to represent the divide between Europe and the Orient and the possibility or impossibility of negotiating it, the image of Irene has been shown to be as varied and changing as a kaleidoscope. In mid-sixteenth-century France and Italy, when Ottoman defeats are still fresh in the minds of Europeans, she serves to promote European unity against the Eastern foe, while in sixteenth-century England, as anti-Catholic fervor rages, she serves as a symbol of division, then, later, of hope and tragedy. As the only European character in each of her stories, at different historical moments and in the hands of different writers she represents her continent as truly beautiful and irresistible, foolish and faithless, wise and pious, as a whore and as a virgin.

Ultimately, then, Irene herself, along with her narrative, falls far short of representing anything like the kind of “declarative, self-evident and timeless eternal” described by Edward Said.⁵⁸ Instead, in her migration through the continent, Irene is just as malleable, discursive, and irreducible as her Oriental counterpart, Mahomet, resisting any simplified definition or representation of what is “European” or of what a proper relationship of Europeans with the Orient might look like. Even as the contours of her story remain the same, the image Irene projects remains as varied and changing as the idea(s) of Europe from which she is born.

NOTES

1. Samuel Chew calls the Irene narrative the “story of Irene”; Jane Hwang Degenhardt and Daniel Vitkus, the “story of the Sultan and the Fair Greek”; and Mark Hutchings, the “Irene myth.” See Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance* (New York: Octagon Books, 1965), 479–480; Jane Hwang Degenhardt, *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 215–216; Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 99.
2. Bridget Orr, *Empire on the English Stage, 1660-1714* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 80–86; María-Helena Sánchez Ortega, “La mujer como fuente del mal; el maleficio,” *Manuscripts* 9 (Jan 1991): 41–81; and Michael Stephan Offering, *Die Geschichte der ‘schönen Irene’ in den modernen Litteraturen* (Würzburg: Stürtz, 1897).
3. See Bernadette Diane Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Galina I. Yermolenko, *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); and Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 92–110.
4. See *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel J. Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
5. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 177.
6. Said, *Orientalism*, 273.
7. Letterio Di Francia, “Alla Scoperta del Vero Bandello,” *Giornale Storice Della Letteratura Italiana* 80 (1922): 1–94, 21–23; Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, 8 vols. (Pest: Hartleben, 1827), 2: 99–100.

8. Donado da Lezze, *Historia Turchesca, 1300-1514*, ed. Ion Ursu (Bucharest: The Carol Gobl Institute of Graphic Arts, 1909), 121–122; Chew, *Crescent*, 280.
9. Da Lezze, *Historia*, 122.
10. “Molto formosa,” Da Lezze, *Historia*, 121.
11. A. M. Piemontese, “Angioiello, Giovanni Maria,” *Encyclopedia Iranica*, 1: 3, 32–34.
12. “Volete voi veder, signore mie, che molti dicono che amano e non sanno ciò che si dicano, perciò che quello che da loro è chiamato amore non è amore, ma un disordinato appetito, una sfrenata voglia, un furore e una bestialità?” Matteo Bandello, *La Prima Parte de le Novelle*, ed. Delmo Maestri, 4 vols. (Alessandria, Italy: Edizioni dell’Orso, 1992), 1: 100; trans. by John Payne, Matteo Bandello, *The Novels of Matteo Bandello*, 6 vols. (London: Villon Society, 1890), 1: 147.
13. “Vestimenti richissimi [...] più che mai s’avesse messo. Il che ella fece, non sapendo la miserella che apparecchiava i suoi funerali,” Bandello, *Prima*, 1: 105; trans. Payne, Bandello, *Novels*, 1: 156.
14. “E ora intendo io che il lor papa altro non fa che mandar i suoi prelati qua e là per unire tutti i precipi de la cristianità a rovina tua. Ma se i cristiani s’unissero, che Dio nol voglia, che faremmo noi?” Bandello, *Prima*, 1: 104; trans. Payne, Bandello, *Novels*, 1: 154.
15. Richard A. Carr, *Pierre Boaistuau’s Histoires Tragiques: A Study of Narrative Form and Tragic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 25.
16. Payne, “Biographical Note,” in Bandello, *Novels*, 1: vii–xiii, ix–x.
17. “Te priant au reste, ne trouver mauvais, si i.e. ne me suis assuietty au style de Bandel, car sa phrase m’a semblé tant rude, ses termes impropres, ses propos tant mal liez [...] qui i’ay eu plus cher la refondre tout de neuf & la remettre en nouvelle forme,” Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires Tragiques*, ed. Richard A. Carr (Paris: H. Champion, 1977), 7; Carr, *Pierre*, 34–35. Jean Balsamo argues that Boaistuau’s and other French writers’ translations from Italian were, at the time, “seen as a form of conquest, an intellectual and literary appropriation of the enemy, after this had become impossible in military and practical terms,” *Les Rencontres des Muses: Italianisme et anti-italianisme dans les lettres françaises de la fin du XVIe siècle* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1992), 94. See also Pollie Bromilow, *Models of Women in Sixteenth-Century French Literature: Female Exemplarity in the Histoires Tragiques (1559) and the Heptaméron (1559)* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 27.
18. “Rude & grossier en son Lombard,” Pierre Boaistuau and François de Belleforest, *Histoires Tragiques* (Lyon: Pierre Roulet, 1578), 152r.
19. “Grand Pontiff de Rome,” Boaistuau, *Histoires*, 34v.

20. René Sturel, *Bandello en France au 16e siècle* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1970), 25–26.
21. “Agité de diuerses tempestes, sans autrement y penser, ayant les yeux estincellans de grand ire & fureur,” Boaistuau, *Histoires*, 58. All translations of this text are mine unless otherwise acknowledged.
22. “Con buon viso,” Matteo Bandello, *La Prima Parte de le Novelle*, ed. Delmo Maestri, 4 vols. (Alessandria, Italy: Edizioni dell’Orso, 1992), 1: 105; trans. Payne, Bandello, *Novels*, 1: 155.
23. “Tourné ses yeux furibonds çà & là,” Boaistuau, *Histoires*, 59.
24. Bandello, *Novels*, 1: 156.
25. “Ayant les mains laces, à la blonde trace de son chef,” Boaistuau, *Histoires*, 59.
26. Along these lines, Bromilow states: “In the *Histoires tragiques*, women are never the focalisers. There is no opportunity for them to give their version of events, as the story is never told from their point of view. Instead, they are always focalized by male protagonists or the male narrator, who speculate on their motivations and construct them as ‘other’,” *Models*, 142. Nancy E. Virtue agrees with this sentiment, arguing that Boaistuau’s apparent “discomfort with female authority” in *Histoires tragiques* is “a response to the empowering female vision of [Marguerite de Navarre’s] *Heptaméron*,” “Translation as Violation: A Reading of Pierre Boaistuau’s *Histoires*,” *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 22, 3 (1998): 37–40.
27. René Pruvost, *Matteo Bandello and Elizabethan Fiction* (Paris: H. Champion, 1937), 53.
28. Pruvost concurs that it adds “almost nothing to Bandello’s narrative,” *Matteo Bandello*, 157.
29. Carr, *Pierre*, 25–26; Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses (Edition de 1561)*, ed. Stephen Bamforth (Geneva: Droz, 2010), 81–105. One omission of Painter’s from Boaistuau’s text is a moment in Mustapha’s speech to Mahomet in which the former refers to the danger of “leaving the handling of [matters of state] to women” (“laissé ainsi manier aux femmes,” Boaistuau, *Histoires*, 53). For an English translator writing during the time of Elizabeth I, such an omission was certainly wise.
30. “Maometto imperador de’ turchi crudelmente ammazza una sua donna,” Bandello, *Prima*, 100; trans. Payne, Bandello, *Novels*, 1:147.
31. See William Shakespeare, “*King Henry IV, Part 2*” in *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*, Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson, and David Scott Kastan, eds. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 2.4. 156–157; Thomas Dekker, *Satiro—mastix. Or The vntrussing of the humorous poet* (London, 1602), I4r; George Chapman, Ben Johnson, and John Marston, *Eastward Hoe* (London, 1605): B3v; Alexander Gouge, *The Queen, or,*

- The Excellency of her Sex* (London, 1653), D1v; Philip Massinger, Thomas Middleton, and William Rowley, *The Old Law, or, A New Way to Please You* (London, 1656), 47.
32. Reid Barbour, "Peele, George (*bap.* 1556, *d.* 1596)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 2004).
 33. George Peele, *Merrie Conceited Jestes of George Peele* (London, 1627), 20.
 34. William Barksted, *Hiren: or the Fair Greek* (London, 1607), A6r.
 35. Barksted, *Hiren*, A6r.
 36. Barksted, *Hiren*, A7v, B5r.
 37. Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided* (London: Penguin, 2003).
 38. There is considerable debate surrounding the date of this play. See Allardyce Nicoll, "Introduction," in Lodowick Carlell, *The Tragedy of Osmond the Great Turk, or, The Noble Servant (1657)* (Waltham Saint Lawrence, UK: Golden Cockerel Press, 1926), ix–xii, x; E. E. Duncan Jones, "The Two 'Osmond' Plays," *Notes and Queries* 8, 4 (1961): 128–129; G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 4: 119–122; and Friederike Hahn, "One *Osmond the Great Turk*, Not Two," *Notes and Queries* 54, 1 (2007): 35–36. Whether the play was written in 1637–1642 or in 1622 (as G. E. Bentley and Friederike Hahn argue), however, is immaterial to the argument of this article, which is that Carlell's fondness for and dependency upon Henrietta Maria shows through in the play, which, even if it was first penned in 1622, certainly may have been revised for later performances in her presence, when Carlell was at the height of his activity as a playwright.
 39. Though by this time Richard Knolles had published his own prose adaptation of the Irene narrative in his 1603 *Generall Historie of the Turkes*, Carlell's play is more likely indebted to Painter for one important reason: Knolles's version omits the portion of the story that mentions "a Capitaine" who brings Irene to Mahomet. As this plot point is an important one in Carlell's *Osmond*, Knolles is not likely the primary source, at least for the Irene narrative material.
 40. Mark Hutchings, "The Stage Historicizes the Turk: Convention and Contradiction in the Turkish History Play," in *English Historical Drama, 1500-1660: Forms Outside the Canon*, eds. Teresa Grant and B. Ravelhofer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 158–178, 166–168.
 41. See Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Church of England and the Greek Church in the Time of Charles I," in *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 213–240; W. B. Patterson, "Educating the Greeks: Anglican Scholarships for Greek Orthodox Students in the Early

- Seventeenth Century,” in *Religion and Humanism*, ed. Keith Robbins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 227–237.
42. Carlell’s plays were frequently performed in the presence of Charles I and Henrietta Maria, at both Blackfriars and Somerset House. He often alluded to his connections with royalty in his publications. Additionally, all of Carlell’s plays were performed by either the King’s or the Queen’s Men, and *Osmond* itself, if we are to believe its 1657 title page, by the Queen’s Men, Charles Henry Gray, *Lodowick Carliell; His Life, a Discussion of his Plays, and “The Deserving Favourite,” Tragi-comedy Reprinted from the Original Edition of 1629* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1905), 27–29; Lodowick Carlell’s, *Heraclius* (London, 1664), A3r, *The Passionate Lover* (London, 1655), and *The Deserving Favorite* (London, 1659).
 43. Lodowick Carlell, *The Famous Tragedy of Osmond the Great Turk, Otherwise Called the Noble Servant* (London, 1657), 11.
 44. Carlell, *Osmond*, 14.
 45. Carlell, *Osmond*, 17–18.
 46. Carlell, *Osmond*, 35–36.
 47. Carlell’s choice to rename Irene “Despina” itself foreshadows her success as a Christianizing influence in a Turkish court, due to the associations her name would have had in published histories of the Ottoman Empire in England at the time. The two Despinas mentioned in Knolles’s 1603 *General History of the Turks* are both Greek women who, as the wives of Islamic rulers, use their influence to Christianize their husbands. See Richard Knolles, *General History of the Turks* (London, 1603), 207, 409, and 464.
 48. Carlell, *Osmond*, 36.
 49. Carlell, *Osmond*, 35.
 50. Carlell, *Osmond*, 13.
 51. Carlell, *Osmond*, 30.
 52. Matthew Birchwood reads Melcoshus’s conversion, which at times approaches a kind of saint worship of Despina, as “a pernicious idolatry that ultimately dissolves the bonds of religion upon which the king’s power rests.” This, he says, amounts to “the play’s denunciation of the king’s love for Despina,” *Staging Islam in England: Drama and Culture, 1640-1685* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007), 112. This reading, however, is complicated by Carlell’s strong relationship with Henrietta Maria, as well as by the fact that what Melcoshus proposes in one scene to give up for his “saint” is worship of Muhammad, not of the English or European God. That Melcoshus is shown to have adopted Despina as his saint can be seen as further evidence of his conversion (however confused) to Christianity.
 53. Carlell, *Osmond*, 46. Hutchings points out that these lines echo Vittoria’s in her death scene in *The White Devil* (1612). This connection, however, does

not necessarily, as Hutchings argues, confirm her role as a re-creation of the “Jacobean schemer” character-type, “Stage,” 168. While Vittoria has a dark vision of her fate upon her death. Despina does not, but is instead held up as a martyr. When Osmond, the most noble and faultless male character in the play, dies and enters “into Elizium,” he says, “me thinks I see Despina stand ready to embrace me,” Carlell, *Osmond*, 57–58.

54. Carlell, *Osmond*, 56.
55. Carlell, *Osmond*, 20.
56. Carlell, *Osmond*, 46.
57. In this way, *Osmond* is perhaps an early precursor to Restoration dramas such as Davenant’s *Siege of Rhodes* (1663), Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery’s *Tragedy of Mustapha* (1668), and Elkanah Settle’s *Ibrahim the Illustrious Basha* (1677), all of which portrayed the Ukranian captive turned Sultana, Roxolana, in a far more positive light than had earlier Tudor/Stuart dramas. See Galina I. Yermolenko, *Roxolana*, 35–36.
58. A paraphrase of Said, *Orientalism*, 72.

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Was There a Pan-European Orientalism? Icelandic and Flemish Perspectives on Captivity in Muslim North Africa (1628–1656)

Toby Wikström

Many cultural historians have observed that “Europe,” the signifier combining geography and cultural identity which seems rather self-evident to us today, was still very much in formation in the early modern era and only gradually supplanted the coexisting older term “Christendom” (*christianitas*) as the designation of the continent’s collective identity in the early eighteenth century.¹ This protracted development of European consciousness forms the basis for one of Edward Said’s central claims in the influential *Orientalism* (1978), namely that “the Orient [...] helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” even before the rise of Orientalism proper in the late eighteenth century.² Underlying this claim is the assumption that different cultures in the area now called Europe, despite obvious divergences in religion and culture, imagined the Muslim world in a similar manner. According to this line of thinking, the early modern European discourse—by which I mean the body of tropes and vocabulary in collective usage—on the cultures of Islam, whether originating in Catholic or Protestant states, would have held constant across the continent. At first glance, the argument seems manifestly self-evident, for researchers would have scant

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trouble verifying that anti-Muslim, and particularly anti-Ottoman, vitriol obeyed no denominational boundaries and ran through all areas of early modern western Christendom from Catholic Hungary, Christianity's eastern bulwark against Ottoman expansion, to Lutheran Iceland in the North Atlantic, from the Iberian Peninsula to England, from Catholic Rome to the Protestant German states.³

Yet what of the geographical and cultural space forming Europe's southern frontier, the Mediterranean? Building upon the pioneering work of the historian Fernand Braudel, whose archival research unearthed widespread patterns of interaction across faith lines in the Mediterranean, scholars within the rising field of Mediterranean Studies have mounted a serious challenge to *Orientalism* in the last decade, arguing forcefully that the Christian-Muslim binary at the heart of Said's theory does not reflect the hybridity and porous cultural boundaries of the Inland Sea.⁴

The theoretical challenge posed by Mediterranean Studies to Saidian Orientalism gives occasion to reactivate two lines of inquiry that might otherwise seem long exhausted. First, was there, as Said would assume, a pan-European discourse on the Muslim world born out of specifically Mediterranean experiences that helped fashion a collective European identity? Second—and this question is inevitable, given the enduring critical traction of *Orientalism* and the scholarly debates surrounding it—if such a general discourse existed, might one call it “Orientalist” in the Saidian sense of the term? This chapter attempts to give a preliminary answer to those crucial questions by examining two narratives of Mediterranean, and more specifically, North African captivity: the *Travels of Reverend Ólafur Egilsson* (*Reisubók séra Ólafs Egilssonar*), written in Iceland in approximately 1628 but remaining in manuscript form until 1741, and *The Account of the Captivity and Liberation of Sir Emanuel D'Aranda* (*La Relation de la captivité & liberté du sieur Emanuel D'Aranda*), which was authored by a French-speaking native of Flanders in the Spanish Netherlands and first published in 1656. Although these two texts originate from vastly different areas of what we now call Europe—Iceland, a poor, sparsely populated Lutheran colony of Denmark on the continent's North Atlantic outskirts, and Flanders, a wealthy, populous Catholic province under Spanish rule at the crossroads of the mainland—they represent North African captivity similarly, but this similarity does not reside entirely in an Orientalist hostility toward Islam. This position does manifest itself in their texts, but coexists in both with another type of discourse. Egilsson and D'Aranda represent their experiences of captivity

through a complex mixture of negative Orientalist tropes and tolerant, proto-ethnographic discourse unanticipated by Said. The argument does not demonstrate the inadequacy of Said's approach for analyzing cross-cultural interaction in the Mediterranean, but rather the need to position Orientalism as a useful theoretical perspective along with that of Mediterranean Studies. The discussion of texts by Egilsson and D'Aranda will also show that the pan-Europeanism theorized by Said is not enabled by a Muslim enemy against which all Christians can unite, as he presumes, but rather by the descriptions of Europeans from different nations and regions gathered in Mediterranean collectivities such as ship decks or slave quarters.

NARRATIVES OF NORTH AFRICAN CAPTIVITY

Both captivity in the Mediterranean and personal accounts of it were widespread during the early modern period. Just as Muslims endured seizure by Christian corsairs, Christians were captured by pirates, many of whom were Christians or Christian converts to Islam, in the Mediterranean or the Atlantic and sold into slavery on the Barbary Coast.⁵ Although estimates of the number of captives vary significantly from one source to another, it appears that at any one time during the period 1550–1700 thousands of Christians languished in the kingdom of Morocco or the Ottoman protectorates of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, with a peak in the first half of the 1600s and a noticeable decline by the 1680s as Christian states began to gain the upper hand militarily against the Barbary Coast.⁶ From these experiences sprang what Nabil Matar has called the “corpus captivitis,” the body of early modern narratives of Christian captivity and enslavement.⁷ Reflecting the increase in the number of Christians held in Barbary in the late sixteenth century, narratives of enslavement in Portuguese, English, Spanish, French, and other languages began appearing in the late 1570s and by the 1650s had become an established subgenre of the travel narrative.⁸

Experiences by Egilsson and D'Aranda in North Africa fit this historical pattern of enduring and writing about captivity. Egilsson, a pastor in the Westman Islands off the southern coast of Iceland, was captured along with some 400 of his compatriots when corsair vessels from Salé (present-day Rabat) and Algiers struck his area and the coast of the main island in a series of raids in June and July 1627.⁹ After those unprecedented attacks, which later became known in Iceland as the Turkish Raid (*Tyrkjaránið*),

the marauders transported their prey back to their home ports and sold them into slavery. Egilsson was brought to Algiers and enslaved there, yet won his release after a few months to obtain a ransom for his fellow captives. He arrived back in Iceland in 1628, about a year after his original capture and thereafter wrote an account of his experiences, the *Reisubók*, which was cited by the Icelandic church's 1643 official history of the Turkish Raid and circulated in manuscript form well into the nineteenth century, implying a certain readership among Egilsson's contemporaries and later generations. The text eventually appeared in print as a Danish translation in 1741, with the first Icelandic edition following in 1852.¹⁰

D'Aranda followed a trajectory similar to that of Egilsson. In 1640, only some thirteen years after the Icelander's seizure, D'Aranda was returning to his native Bruges from Spain when he was captured by pirates off the coast of Brittany and sold into slavery in Algiers, the same city as Egilsson. D'Aranda was released in 1642 and returned home, but did not publish the account of his experience until 1656. One of the longest extant narratives of captivity in Algiers, D'Aranda's text—comprised of a linear narrative and thirty-seven short "relations particulières" or anecdotes—was republished in Paris the following year and enjoyed a measured international success through the early 1680s, receiving multiple editions in French and appearing in English and Dutch translation.¹¹

Because the geographical and cultural background of the Flemish Catholic D'Aranda differs greatly from that of the Icelandic Protestant Egilsson, their narratives lend themselves well to investigating the existence of Said's assumed pan-European Orientalism. Composed within three decades of each other, circa 1628 and 1656, respectively, both are first-person accounts in which the authors detail their almost contemporaneous experience of seizure by corsairs, enslavement in Algiers, eventual liberation, and return to their homeland.¹² Because the texts were composed at roughly the same time, and because many of their salient characteristics—subject matter, genre, and narrative voice—are identical, one can reason that any major difference in their representation of their captor societies would most likely not stem from those common characteristics. Instead, one would need to attribute any such difference to some other factor, for instance the authors' greatly differing religious and cultural backgrounds. The presence of major similarities in these disparate authors' representations of Muslim North Africa, on the other hand, would suggest that inhabitants of different parts of Europe had a similar view of the region. A generalized European discourse on the Muslim world therefore

would exist, which in turn, as Said claims, would contribute to the gradual construction of a collective European consciousness. A close reading of narratives by Egilsson and D'Aranda reveals, however, that the two texts' major similarity resides not only in their common deployment of negative Orientalist commonplaces but also in their tolerant, proto-ethnographical descriptions of their North African captors.

ORIENTALIST TROPES

Egilsson's text contains many disparaging representations of Muslim North Africa, one of which is his description of Algiers. He portrays the Barbary state as a fertile and materially abundant locus that stands in stark contrast to the barrenness of his native Iceland:

[T]he land grows two crops during the year, and all the fruits of the earth—corn, grapes, grain—grow like this. This grass is never cut, and sheep and cattle are never put into houses because there is no winter there, never any frost or snow at any time the whole year round. The windows are uncovered except for iron bars. The sheep, which are both big and fat, lamb two times a year.¹³

Yet Egilsson immediately undercuts this laudatory description of Algiers' material wealth through an allusion to the biblical psalms attributed to King David: "They [i.e. the inhabitants of Algiers] receive the good things in this life, perhaps. Many there are who look fair and embellish themselves in order to better carry out their evil business, as David says. But we belong to the Lord."¹⁴ Egilsson thus creates an opposition between Muslims and Christians; while the "Turks" obtain their rewards in the worldly realm, Egilsson and his fellow Christians will receive theirs in the infinitely superior afterlife. From his Pauline perspective, the Turks represent the sinful letter and the Christians the purifying spirit. In conformity to St. Paul's thinking, the spirit will sweep away the letter.¹⁵

Muslims are described in equally negative terms in D'Aranda's narrative. For instance, he states that "the *Turcs* observe many superstitious ceremonies" such as casting pots of oil when crossing the Strait of Gibraltar; although he does not squarely condemn the rites, his description of them as superstitious rehearses the longstanding Christian trope that Islam is an erroneous faith.¹⁶ Yet the duality between Christians and Muslims appears most notably in a chapter appended to the main narrative, entitled "L'or a

plus de pouvoir que l'amour parmi les Turcs" ("That the Turks Prefer Money before Love").¹⁷ Among no other people, D'Aranda writes, does money trump love as much as among the Turks, who are ruled by avarice.¹⁸ The only proof D'Aranda provides for this vast generalization is a single, brief anecdote. As this and the prior example show, D'Aranda's text, much like Egilsson's *Reisubók*, represents Muslims at times as a monolithic Other imbued with essential, negative characteristics such as worldliness, superstition, and in this last case, greed.

This duplicated Othering of Egilsson and D'Aranda's Turkish Muslim captors conforms well to one of the core concepts of *Orientalism*, imaginative geography, which Said invokes when discussing early modern representations of Islam. Although Said argues that Orientalism, "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" through the intertwined, mutually reinforcing means of military and political power, on one hand, and academic and literary discourse on the other, is only fully established after the Enlightenment, he contends that the Orientalist "system of representation" is founded upon an "imaginative geography" which one can trace back in time from the present all the way to Hellenic antiquity, via the early modern and medieval periods.¹⁹ This imaginative geography divides the world into Western and Eastern halves and constructs the latter as the cultural opposite of the West (and of Europe) by portraying it as irrational, cruel, luxurious, effeminate, sensual, or otherwise inferior.²⁰ Clearly, this doubled division manifests itself in Egilsson's association of Christians with the spirit and Turks with the senses, and in D'Aranda's characterization of Turks as avaricious and superstitious.

PROTOETHNOGRAPHY

In addition to these Orientalist representations of Muslims in both narratives, however, a tolerant, descriptive discourse exists that does not champion religious or cultural difference and does not place Christians and Muslims in hierarchical opposition. Perhaps the most striking example of this discourse in the *Reisubók* is Egilsson's description of his pirate captors:

Truly speaking, they are like other peoples: different in size and look, some small, some large, some black. Some are not of Turkish origin at all but are Christian people of other countries such as England, Germany, Denmark, or Norway [...]. The Turks all have black hair, and they shave their heads and

their beards, except on the upper lip. They are not a wicked looking people. Rather, they are quiet and well-tempered in their manner—if it is possible to describe them like that.²¹

Although he condemns the corsairs elsewhere as the “servants of Satan,” in that instance Egilsson does not portray them as a monolithic Other in accordance with Said’s imaginative geography. Instead, Egilsson emphasizes their physical and religious diversity. The “Turks,” at least with regard to natural physical attributes, are “like other peoples.” This observation emphasizes the pirates’ shared humanity with Christians. Egilsson avoids essentializing the corsairs by accentuating the variety of nationalities and the presence of renegades among the pirates. The clauses that bookend the quote, “truly speaking” and “if it is possible to describe them like that”—in addition to the fact that he calls the corsairs “evil men” (“illþýði”) in the immediately preceding sentence—suggest that Egilsson makes his relativistic observations reluctantly, and contrary to received notions of Muslims. Nevertheless, he makes them.²²

That Egilsson does so is a result of what Joan-Pau Rubiés has called the “ethnographic impulse,” the early modern European tendency to describe “peoples, their nature, customs, religion, forms of government and language” which he sees as an essential component of European travel writing from the 1600s onward.²³ The impulse to describe manifests itself clearly when Egilsson is about to launch into his description of the corsairs. Using the possible curiosity of his readers to justify his description, Egilsson states: “Now, it may happen that you desire to know what these vile people looked like, both in personal appearance and dress.”²⁴ What follows, as we have seen, is a short ethnographic description of the pirates’ appearance and religion.

Similarly to Egilsson’s text, D’Aranda’s narrative offers several examples of tolerant, ethnographic discourse on his captor society. Like the Icelander, D’Aranda describes his captors at length and at times avoids essentializing Muslims, for instance by emphasizing their shared mortality with Christians and the equal worth of all religions.²⁵ Along the same lines, D’Aranda individualizes his slave masters, representing one of them, Ali Pégelin, as cruel and violent, but another, Mahomet Celibi Oiga, as cultivated and curious about the culture and religion of various European peoples.²⁶ The description of the latter diverges in no uncertain terms from Said’s imaginative geography:

Mahomet Celibi Oiga was a graceful person as to his body, well brought up, and very temperate in his meat and drink, for he drunk only water. He was also very devout in his Religion. He was curious in enquiring news of remote Countries. He asked me how the *Spaniards* and *Flemings* liv'd, and whether the *Flemings* were *Papists Christians*, meaning by that word *Catholicks*, because the *Catholicks* have a dependence on the Pope. He understood somewhat of *Cosmography*. He ask'd me why the King of *Spain*, being so powerful as he is, could not with the forces of the Kingdom of *Dunkirk*, that is, with the Provinces of the Low-Countries, subdue the *Flemings*; by *Flemings* he ment the *Hollanders*. I told him that heretofore those Countries had belong'd to the Crown of *Spain*, but that they were revolted.²⁷

In that detailed ethnographic description of his master, D'Aranda invokes no Saidian Christian-Muslim division. Instead of describing an absolute opposition between two monolithic groups—cruel, irrational, sensual Muslims on the one hand and Christians defined by their faith on the other—he emphasizes both the crossing of faith binaries and the variety within each side of the supposed opposition. The narrator presents Oiga as both devout *and* curious about other religions, suggesting that religious engagement and tolerance are not mutually exclusive. By portraying Oiga as especially devout, the narrator emphasizes the diversity among Muslims, for he implies that other Muslims in Algiers may, like Christians, vary in their religious devotion. Christians too appear in all their diversity; the narrator's pedagogical explanation of the conflicts between Spanish Catholics and Dutch Protestants emphasizes the variety, and indeed discord, within Christianity, and thereby undermines the possibility of an essentialist Christian/Muslim combination.²⁸

What we have here, then, are two narratives about captivity from starkly different geographical, religious, and cultural contexts, Lutheran Iceland and Catholic Flanders, which portray Mediterranean captivity in broadly similar terms, combining Orientalist tropes with positive, protoethnographic descriptions. The disparaging of the "Turk" in both accounts provides a clear example of Said's imaginative geography at work. Yet the tolerant, even relativistic protoethnography we find in narratives by Egilsson and D'Aranda contradict the Orientalist dichotomy. This paradoxical combination signals a complex, ambivalent engagement with North African captivity in which Orientalist commonplaces uneasily coexist with tolerant descriptions reflecting the empirical experience of captives. Both types of discourse phase unsteadily into and out of the texts.²⁹

Accordingly, we need to evaluate the position of Orientalism in light of cross-cultural encounters in the early modern Mediterranean, a subject to which the field of Mediterranean Studies has increasingly drawn scholarly attention. One option, albeit drastic, would be to jettison Orientalism entirely and look to Mediterranean Studies for a new overarching concept. Such a move would have the disadvantage of eliding over thirty years of important critical debate, obfuscating the practice of othering the Muslim world with which even the most tolerant of texts, such as Egilsson's *Reisubók* and D'Aranda's *Relation*, at least partially engage. Doing so would also mean neglecting the historical reality of violence in the Mediterranean which Dakhliya and Kaiser urge us not to forget.³⁰ Another, more practical option would be to preserve Orientalism but reposition it alongside Mediterranean Studies as a complementary approach to the latter. This dual perspective would better capture the complexity of captivity narratives in which polemic anti-Muslim discourse inherited from the medieval era coexists with tolerant ethnography.

LOCATING THE PAN-EUROPEAN

Yet the question of the pan-European remains. Might we claim that a tolerant, positive pan-European discourse on Islam exists because our two geographically disparate texts feature it? Although two narratives about captivity from different parts of Europe contain such protoethnography, I would argue that this common property is less a preexisting European discourse than a characteristic of the captivity genre itself. A brief discussion of the genre will help make this more evident.

While the captivity narrative employs narrative strategies indistinguishable from those of certain types of early modern fiction, such as retrospective first-person narration and prefatory guarantees of truthfulness (cf. the novella), one cannot classify the genre as fictional.³¹ Rather, scholars consider narratives about captivity as an intermediate, hybrid genre that mobilizes not only fictional strategies but also historical detail.³² One can even consider such narratives as protoethnographies, for they offer their readers a wealth of empirical detail, what Turbet-Delof calls "extreme historical and geographical precision," about the societies where the captives are held.³³ As Nabil Matar observes, "[c]aptivity mingled populations at the most intimate level, bringing men and women into the kitchens and homes, the gardens and shops of their captors."³⁴ As a result, captive "Europeans learned about the social and private lives of Muslims in a way

no traveler could [...]. Despite the mixture of convention with reality, image with truth, and despite the ethnocentrism and sensationalism that inform the accounts,” captives turned authors exposed their readership to “descriptions” of Muslim life “that were far more substantiated than those provided by any ambassador or traveler, playwright or trader ever could be.”³⁵ Although Matar’s argument mainly concerns accounts written by British captives, it certainly applies to texts written by captives from other parts of Europe; both Egilsson and D’Aranda, for instance, provide a wealth of information about their Muslim captors’ behavior, appearance, and customs. In providing this massive dose of empirical detail—as mediated as it is—at least narratives about captivity open up the possibility for a type of representation that, in the words of Eric Dursteler, is not purely “rhetorical” and “vituperativ[e].”³⁶

As Rubies argues about travel writing, this protoethnography is inseparable from the genre of the captivity narrative itself. Without the ethnographic description there would be no account of captivity. Thus, it is not surprising that Icelandic and Flemish captivity narratives would feature this type of discourse alongside Orientalist tropes.

The argument would seemingly eliminate the pan-European from all consideration here, but I would argue that the accounts by Egilsson and D’Aranda still provide an opportunity for examining the question of European identity formation, although not in ways anticipated by Said. Even though they do not consistently demonize Islam, the *Reisubók* and the *Relation* provide a snapshot of the slow growth of a European consciousness. Granted, neither Egilsson nor D’Aranda employs the word “Europe” in their texts. Instead, each makes copious reference to the various “nations” that compose Europe as we know it today: the English, Germans, Danes, French, Spanish, and others. Even in a situation of contact with the Muslim world, which, according to Said and many other scholars, is the foil against which Europeans defined themselves collectively, the regional and the national are still emphasized over the collective European. Yet in these captivity narratives we can see the contours of European collective identity slowly emerging. In the texts by Egilsson and D’Aranda, we find the disparate Christian nations which will later be collectively identified as Europe gathered—or rather yoked together by force—in the most cosmopolitan, pan-Christian aggregates known to early modernity; the multinational pirate crew evoked by Egilsson and D’Aranda’s description of the slave quarters of Algiers as a cosmopolitan aggregate of Dunkirkers, Spaniards, Danes, Hamburgers, and Frenchmen

attest to that.³⁷ Through those collective descriptions, the two narratives make it possible to think the European. That both Icelandic and Flemish texts present this possibility strongly suggests that the slow formation of a European identity was not isolated to certain regions in Europe but was occurring across the entire cultural zone. Of course, we should not discount the role that contact with the Muslim world played in forming European identity. Nor should we underestimate the complexity of the process, which included not only Christian/Muslim contact, but also *intra*-Christian contact, sometimes violently imposed upon Christians against their will (at times by other, or former, Christians) through captivity in cosmopolitan Algiers and other Barbary ports. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to state that a pan-European consciousness was to some degree—and with no small irony—forced upon Europeans.

NOTES

1. Denis Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1957), 51, 58–59, 96–116, 117–123; Anthony Pagden, “Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent,” in *The Idea of Europe from Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 33–54; and J. G. A. Popock, “Some Europes in Their History,” in *The Idea of Europe*, 55–71.
2. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 1. Readers will notice that Said hesitates between two unquestionably different yet overlapping terms, “Europe” and “the West.” For a discussion of this terminological slippage and other problems within *Orientalism*, see Daniel M. Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), particularly 61.
3. For an account of the inception and growth of the medieval Christian polemic against Islam, see Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997). For examples of anti-Muslim discourse from Hungary, see Clarence Dana Rouillard, *The Turk in French History, Thought, and Literature (1520-1660)* (Paris: Boivin & Cie, [1941]), 189–191; for Iceland, see Jón Porkelsson, “Formáli,” *Tyrkjaránið á Íslandi 1627*, ed. Jón Porkelsson (Reykjavík: Sögufélag, 1906–1909), i–xlvi, xi–xvi; for Iberian and English examples, see Daniel Vitkus, “Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe,” in *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of the Other*, eds. Michael Frassetto and David Blanks (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 1999), 207–230; for ecumenical condemnations of the Ottoman Turks by Martin Luther and Pope

- Pius V, see Adam S. Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Polemics and Apologetics* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 148; and Joseph Mendham, *The Life and Times of Saint Pius the Fifth* (London: James Duncan, 1832), 139.
4. Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Paris: Armand Collin, 1966), 2: 97, 2: 191–192, and 2: 207–208. For recent challenges to Said from scholars of Mediterranean Studies, see Eric R. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 2006; Gillian Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011); Jocelyne Dakhliya and Wolfgang Kaiser, “Introduction. Une Méditerranée entre deux mondes, ou des mondes continus,” in *Les musulmans dans l'histoire de l'Europe. II. Passages et contacts en Méditerranée*, eds. Jocelyne Dakhliya and Wolfgang Kaiser (Paris: Albin Michel, 2013), 7–31.
 5. Gillian Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs*, 7–9. For accounts of Christian privateering see Braudel, *La Méditerranée*, 197–200.
 6. Gillian Weiss, “Barbary Captivity and the French Idea of Freedom,” *French Historical Studies* 28, 2 (2005): 231–264, 248; and Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs*, 179–211.
 7. Nabil Matar, “Introduction: England and Mediterranean Captivity, 1577-1704,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 1–52; 6. As Matar points out, there is also a large body of narratives written by Muslims in European captivity, *Europe Through Arab Eyes, 1578-1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).
 8. Anne Duprat, “Fiction et formalisation de l'expérience de captivité: l'exemple des ‘retours d'Alger’ (1575-1642) en Espagne,” in *Captifs en Méditerranée (XVIe-XVIIe siècles): Histoires, récits et légendes*, ed. François Moreau (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2008), 215–225, 220.
 9. Guðrún Ása Grímsdóttir, “Úr Tyrkjaveldi og bréfabókum,” *Gripla* 9 (1995): 7–44, 11; Þorsteinn Helgason, *Minning og saga í ljósi Tyrkjaránsins* (Reykjavík: Hugvísindastofnun, 2013), 14–16.
 10. Helgason, “Historical Narrative as Collective Therapy: The Case of the Turkish Raid in Iceland,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 22, 4 (1997): 275–289, 275–276; Sverrir Kristjánsson, “Formáli,” in *Reisubók séra Ólafs Egilssonar*, ed. Sverrir Kristjánsson (Reykjavík: Almenna bókafélagið, 1969), 11–47, 12–13. I thank Þorsteinn Helgason for additional philological precisions about Egilsson's text.

11. Duprat, "Fiction," 223; Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs*, 262, n17; Guy Turbet-Delof, *L'Afrique barbaresque dans la littérature française aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Geneva: Droz, 1973), 256; and Latifa Z'Rari, ed., *Les Captifs d'Alger* by Emanuel D'Aranda (Paris: Jean-Paul Rocher, 1997), 261–262.
12. The shared historical context of Egilsson and D'Aranda becomes even more apparent once one considers the fact that the latter author was aware of the Turkish Raid. In one of the short "relations" following the main narrative, D'Aranda details his encounter with an Icelandic slave who recounts the events to him. Emanuel D'Aranda, *Relation de la captivité & liberté du Sieur Emanuel D'Aranda, Jadis Esclave à Alger; où se trouvent plusieurs particularités de l'Afrique digne de Remarque*, in Z'Rari, 23–245, 226–228.
13. "Landið grær tvisvar um árið, og svo vex allur ávöxtur jarðarinnar, korn, vinber, grjón, aldrei gras slegið og aldrei peningur inn í hús látinn, því að þar er enginn vetur, aldrei frost né snjór um alla ævi. Og ekki er í gluggunum nema járngrindur. Sauðfé ávaxtast ij um árið, hvert sauðfé bæði er stórt og svo mjög feitt." Ólafur Egilsson, *Reisubók séra Ólafs Egilssonar*, ed. Sverrir Kristjánsson (Reykjavík: Almenna bókafélagið, 1969), 74; the citation in English is from Egilsson, *The Travels of Reverend Ólafur Egilsson (Reisubók Séra Ólafs Egilssonar)*, trans. Karl Smári Hreinsson and Adam Nichols (Reykjavík: Fjölvi, 2008), 39–40 (I have translated and added one sentence from the original text which Hreinsson and Nichols missed, and otherwise slightly modified their translation for readability).
14. Egilsson, *Travels*, 40 (as above, sentence added and translation revised). "Þeir meðtaka sitt góða í þessu lífi – máske, – ítem fegra sig sjálfir sín á milli, svo að þeir framkomi sínu vondu málefni, sem Davíð segir. En vér erum drottins." Egilsson, *Reisubók*, 75. The seductive appearance of the wicked and their punishment by God are recurrent themes in the Psalms attributed to David. See *The Holy Bible (New Revised Standard Version)* (Oxford University Press, 1977), Psalms 10, 37, 58.
15. *Holy Bible*, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 5: 1–5. Other negative representations in Egilsson's text include his descriptions of the Turkish corsairs as "servants of Satan" (54), "evil men" (56, 58, 60, 62), and "ungodly" (64) (my translations). In addition, as Þorsteinn Helgason has convincingly argued, Egilsson sees the Muslim pirate attack as God's punishment for the sins of the Icelanders. Helgason, "Historical Narrative," 286. From this perspective, the Barbary corsairs and by extension the Ottoman Empire threatening Europe are denied agency and merely constitute the marionettes of a Christian deity punishing his subjects for their sins.
16. Emanuel D'Aranda, *The History of Algiers and it's Slavery. With Many Particularities of Africk. Written by the Sieur Emanuel D'Aranda*,

- Sometime a Slave There*, trans. John Davies (London: John Starkey, 1666), 6; D'Aranda, *Relation*, 32; and Michael Harrigan, *Veiled Encounters: Representing the Orient in 17th-Century French Travel Literature* (Rodopi: Amsterdam and New York, 2008), 138–145.
17. D'Aranda, *History of Algiers*, 266–267; D'Aranda, *Relation*, 242–243.
 18. D'Aranda, *Relation*, 242.
 19. Said, *Orientalism*, 3, 55–57, 202–203. For the purposes of the present argument, I will restrict my discussion of the “West” to Europe. Admittedly, if one follows the strict letter of Said’s theory, it would be inappropriate to designate any early modern representation of Muslim cultures as Orientalist, for he clearly states that Orientalism is a “post-Enlightenment” phenomenon (3). Yet he implicitly assumes the existence of an early modern variant of Orientalism. Early in his introduction, he uses the term “modern Orientalism” to distinguish “representations of the Orient” from the late 1700s onwards from prior ones (22). By using the qualifier “modern,” Said tacitly suggests that some early modern type of Orientalism exists. This implicit acknowledgment of an early modern Orientalism is accompanied by a more explicit engagement with the early modern during the discussion of the imaginative geography. The spaces intentionally or unintentionally afforded by Said for applying his theory to early modern literature and culture have been exploited by a number of scholars, including Vitkus, “Early Modern Orientalism”; Michèle Longino, *Orientalism in the French Classical Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, *Orientalism in Early Modern France: Eurasian Trade, Exoticism and the Ancien Regime* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008); and Ivan Kalmar, *Early Orientalism: Imagined Islam and the Notion of Sublime Power* (New York: Routledge, 2011).
 20. Said, *Orientalism*, 2, 57.
 21. Egilsson, *Travels*, 26–27 (modified); “En það er þar um sannast að segja, að það fólk sér misjafnt út, bæði að vexti og ásýnd, sem annað fólk, sumir litli, sumir svartir, sumir sjá út, þó þeir séu ekki af Tyrkjum, heldur kristnir menn úr öðrum löndum, sem að eru Engelskir, Þýzkir, Danskir, Norskir [...] Tyrkjarnir allir svartir á hár og með rakaðan haus og skegg, utan á efri vörinni, og það fólk er ekki svo mjög illilegt, heldur í viðmóti svo hæglynt fólk, ef svo mætti um þá tala,” Egilsson, *Reisubók*, 63.
 22. Other tolerant descriptions of Turks include an episode in which the pirates aid Egilsson’s wife when she gives birth to a baby en route to Algiers and the narrator’s admission that he and his family receive plentiful food from their captors, *Reisubók*, 65, 71. In addition, the very economy of Egilsson’s narrative deviates from the Orientalist imaginative geography. Instead of setting his entire account in either Iceland (before and during the raid) and

the Barbary Coast (during the captivity)—and thereby constructing an Icelandic/Turkish and by extension Christian/Muslim binary—Egilsson dedicates a little more than half of his entire text to describing the places in continental Europe he travels to during his homeward voyage. The Catholics he encounters along the way seem just as foreign to him as the Turks, *Reisubók*, 83–86. By setting up a tripartite economy of Iceland, Barbary, and continental Europe, Egilsson avoids traditional Christian/Muslim binaries.

23. Joan-Pau Rubiés, “Travel Writing and Ethnography,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, eds. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 242–260, 242.
24. Egilsson, *Travels*, 26 (modified). “Nú kann það að ske, að þig girni það að vita og heyra, hverninn þetta illþýði sá út, bæði í asýndinni og fatnaðinum,” Egilsson, *Reisubók*, 62.
25. D’Aranda, *Relation*, 65. Turbet-Delof characterizes D’Aranda’s position as a “catholicisme tolérant,” *L’Afrique*, 242.
26. D’Aranda, *Relation*, 43, 53.
27. D’Aranda, *Travels*, 38. “Touchant Mahomet Celibi Oiga, c’était un homme fort bien fait de corps, très bien cultivé et fort sobre en son manger et en son boire; car il ne buvait que de l’eau. Il était fort dévot en sa religion. Il était curieux de savoir et d’entendre des nouvelles des pays lointains. Il me demandait les façons de vivre des Espagnols et des Flamands, et si les Flamands étaient chrétiens papistes, voulant par ce mot signifier catholiques, à cause que les catholiques dépendaient du pape. Il connaissait quelque peu la cosmographie. Il me demandait pourquoi le roi d’Espagne était si puissant, et il ne pouvait avec les forces du royaume de Dunkerque, c’est-à-dire avec les Provinces des Pays-Bas soumettre les Flamands; par les Flamands ils entendent les Hollandais. Je lui disais que ces terres avaient été autrefois à la couronne d’Espagne, mais qu’elles s’étaient révoltées,” D’Aranda, *Relation*, 53.
28. My reading of the binaries in this passage is inspired by Dakhliya and Kaiser, “Introduction,” 27–28.
29. While my argument focuses on captivity narratives, I do not mean to contend that they are the only early modern narrative genre that represent Muslim cultures ambivalently. In fact, my findings echo those of researchers working on other genres. Turbet-Delof, for example, detects a double discourse of condemnation and praise in Gomberville’s 1629 novel *Polexandre* and Pierre Dan’s *Histoire de Barbarie et de ses corsaires* (1637), *L’Afrique*, 239–240. Alia Bournaz Bacchar discerns the same in Madame de Lafayette’s 1671 *Zaïde* and other seventeenth-century French representations of Medieval Moors in Spain, “La Représentation des Arabes chez Mme de Lafayette,” *Travaux de Littérature* 23 (2010): 95–104, 98.

- Working primarily on English literature, Vitkus has similarly found that Christian writing on the Muslim world simultaneously expressed hostility and admiration, “Early Modern Orientalism,” 209–210.
30. Dakhliia and Kaiser, “Introduction,” 28–29.
 31. François Moreau, “Quand l’histoire se fait littérature: de l’aventure personnelle au récit de captif et au-delà,” in *Captifs en Méditerranée*, 16; Matar, “Introduction,” 3; and Duprat, “Fiction,” 221. For instances of truth pacts in prefaces, see for instance D’Aranda, 23; William Okeley, “Ebenezzer; or, A Small Monument of Great Mercy, Appearing in the Miraculous Deliverance of William Okeley,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 123–192, 133.
 32. Sylvie Requemora-Gros, *Voguer vers la modernité: Le voyage à travers les genres au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses de l’Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2012), 68; and Turbet-Delof, *L’Afrique*, 280.
 33. Turbet-Delof, *L’Afrique*, 280.
 34. Matar, “Introduction,” 40.
 35. Matar, “Introduction,” 22, 40.
 36. Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, 20–21.
 37. D’Aranda, *Relation*, 152. As Matar remarks, Mediterranean “[c]aptivity brought about an intermixing of peoples, races, and religions that was rarely seen during this period of history,” “Introduction,” 5–6. The presence of Egilsson and other Icelandic captives in the Mediterranean is a notable example of this forced diversity.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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PART IV

Visual Dialectics

Christians of Ottoman Europe in Sixteenth-Century Costume Books

Robyn D. Radway

Leafing through an edition of Melchior Lorck's set of one hundred twenty-eight woodcuts prepared for an unfinished publication on the Ottoman Turks, the viewer discovers a wide cast of characters, including a curious soldier on horseback covered in a showy display of feathers and fur (Fig. 1). Depicted in profile facing the viewer's left, oversize wings rise from the crest of his helmet, back, and shield, creating a flurry of lines and textures. Nearly lost in the mane of the lion pelt that engulfs the horse, a scepter and sword hang from the saddle, while a saber rests against his thigh. The *deli*, identified in the accompanying text of many editions of the work, is one of a handful of Ottoman military regiments from Lorck's incomplete *Turkish Publication*.¹ Lorck began the project in the 1570s, when he traveled first to Constantinople, then to the Ottoman-Hungarian frontier zone with diplomatic missions for Ferdinand I and then Maximilian II.² Developed as part of the sixteenth-century tradition of costume books in manuscript and print form, the prints prepared for the *Turkish Publication* belong to a subcategory devoted exclusively to representing the Ottoman Turks and life in their capital city of Constantinople.³ As guides to the hierarchies of Ottoman society, the collections of images contain purportedly accurate depictions, ranging

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◀ **Fig. 1** Cavalry division known as *deli*, Melchior Lorck, 1576, *The Turkish Publication*, Fischer catalogue #22. Corresponding text (1688 edition): “Dely oder Türkischen Rittern” [Deli or Turkish Knight]

from richly costumed and exotic sultans, their wives, various military divisions, and eunuchs to more quotidian monks, cooks, street fighters, and lepers. They also include members of the wide array of subcultures the cosmopolitan Ottoman capital embraced.

Prior studies of Lorck and other contemporary costume books devoted to the Ottoman Empire make few attempts to account for the substantial number of Christians portrayed alongside the Muslim figures. Yet, according to estimates outlined below, some of those works devote almost a quarter of their pages to Christians living under Ottoman rule. This chapter highlights their neglected presence and suggests that their existence complicates the predominantly Orientalist readings of the albums. Artists depicted the ambiguous identities of the Christians of Ottoman Europe with the same pictorial conventions as their Muslim and Middle Eastern counterparts. Analyzing the place of those Ottomanized Europeans as objects of representation sheds new light on the genre of the costume book by deconstructing the dichotomy of East and West.

Focusing on the winged division of light cavalry depicted by Lorck, I examine the complex history of costume components such as the shield and the way in which the images could lead to a slippage between artistic intention and viewer reception. Finally, I consider a final manuscript, whose Hungarian artist and patron make it a unique example of negotiations of identity along the frontier, stressing the inherent complexities of the phenomenon of sixteenth-century visual culture.

“OTTOMAN EUROPE”

Before delving into the world of sixteenth-century costume books, the terms “Ottoman Europe,” “Christians” within that entity, and “Ottoman” require nuanced definition. “Ottoman Europe” is used here to refer to the large territory under Ottoman administrative control for any period of time on the European continent. This concept was used in scholarly discourse until the nineteenth century, when the formation of new Balkan nations required ethnically and politically charged alternative names. I revive “Ottoman Europe” here because it offers a useful concept to designate a multi-ethnic geographic entity, with inhabitants living “both in and

beyond the West.”⁴ Although the term “Europe” itself is a problematic name, signifying shifting territories and meanings in the early modern period, I use it here to include Catholic and Protestant Central Europe and Orthodox Southeastern Europe, an interpretation based on contemporary atlases and maps, such as that published by Abraham Ortelius in 1595.⁵ I define the Christians of Ottoman Europe as the unconverted inhabitants of these conquered lands. Another complex version of Ottomanized Christian identity is the recently converted Muslims, motivated to abandon their Christian religion for social, political, and economic opportunities.⁶ The concept of the “Ottoman Turk” is just as malleable as any other. Its lines are not ideologically or religiously determined, and although the Ottoman Empire was predominantly a Muslim entity, the Christians of Ottoman Europe, converted or not, operated within its political and social ranks for centuries.⁷ Ethnicity occupies a complicated place in Ottoman identity, one that was in constant flux in the sixteenth century. “Ottoman” refers to a ruling elite while “Turk” often functioned as a synonym for “Muslim.” Here, I discuss the Christians of Ottoman Europe as nonetheless separable from both because it creates a useful framework. However, continually questioning these dichotomies remains crucial.

THE COSTUME BOOK TRADITION

In the sixteenth-century costume book tradition, images of people, costumes, and customs from single events or cities, regions, and continents are compiled in one handheld volume.⁸ The earliest identified costume book in manuscript form is that of Christoph Weiditz from 1529, famous for its representations of indigenous men from New Spain.⁹ The first costume book in print is Richard Breton’s *Recueil de la diversité des habits qui sont de present en usage dans les pays d’Europe, Asie, Affrique et Isles sauvages*, published in Paris in 1562. Ferdinando Bertelli’s *Omnium Fere Gentium* appeared in Venice the following year, soon leading to another ten costume books, each appearing in countless editions and translations.¹⁰ In addition to the printed volumes exclusively devoted to costume, a growing number of regional historical works included sections on costume, such as Wilhelm Dilich’s *Ungarische Cronica* (1600). The widespread copying and borrowing of images produced complex iconographic genealogies often based on imagination rather than the actual clothing of, or encounter with, the represented figure. With the ever-increasing early modern awareness of the vastness and diversity of the world, those volumes essentially map perceptions about

different clothing and manners, using geographic place names and focusing on situating subjects in definable spaces. A subsection of this larger tradition focused on the Ottoman Turks and the city of Constantinople.

Melchior Lorck's set of 128 woodcuts fall into this category. As an artist in the embassy of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I to the court of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, Lorck arrived in the Ottoman capital around 1555 to join the diplomatic mission of Ogier de Busbecq.¹¹ After spending half of his three and a half year stay in Constantinople under house arrest, improvements in diplomatic relations allowed the embassy to explore the ancient and exotic city.¹² During that time Lorck completed a large number of studies and drawings of the diverse and visually captivating urban landscape and its inhabitants.¹³ A decade later, between August and October 1566, he returned to the border between "Christian Europe" and the "Muslim East," accompanying the emperor on a campaign against the Ottomans in the crumbling Kingdom of Hungary.¹⁴ Lorck turned his drawings into woodcuts in the 1570s but death prevented him from completing that project. The works found their way into the collection of a publisher where they sat for nearly half a century until they appeared in a series of seventeenth-century publications.¹⁵ Because the original context for Lorck's images is now lost, their current interpretation rests largely on later printed works utilizing the woodblocks.

The counterpart to this tradition of costume books were illuminated manuscripts produced across Europe and in Constantinople. They were significantly more luxurious and personal than the widely disseminated printed books, with a limited number of original examples reaching a wider audience through copies.¹⁶ Three other traditions are believed to feed into the manuscript genre: cut and paste albums of prints and drawings collected at Ottoman court workshops as early as the mid-fifteenth century,¹⁷ *Amicorum* books produced by and for European travelers,¹⁸ and collections of sultan portraits produced at the Ottoman court.¹⁹ By the early seventeenth century, documentary evidence suggests that manuscript costume albums were available for purchase on the open market²⁰ and as individual commissions.²¹

Sixteenth-century costume books devoted to the Ottoman Turks such as that of Lorck potentially served many functions for consumers from the upper and emerging middle classes. Armchair travelers and real travelers alike treasured them as handheld exotic commodities. Some scholars have suggested that those unable to make the dangerous trip to Constantinople acquired the books and albums out of antiquarian interest,²² while others

argued for proto-ethnographic readings.²³ Ann Rosalind Jones suggested they served as moralizing didactic tools to foster a critical self-awareness of one's own extravagancies and simultaneously, if not paradoxically, as justifications for the ultimately superior social position of the viewer.²⁴ Amanda Wunder put forth the suggestion that costume albums both built on and complicated the stereotypical rendering of the Turk as a barbaric warrior to be tamed through conversion.²⁵ For those who did travel to the Ottoman capital, the books potentially served the practical purpose of helping the possessor identify strangers based on costume.²⁶ Artists across Europe also made use of costume albums as model books to "accurately" represent the exotic peoples from neighboring and distant lands in other media.²⁷

ORIENTALISM?

Leslie Marie Schick traces the spread of the tradition of costume album manuscripts from sixteenth-century Western artists working in Constantinople to seventeenth-century Ottoman artists in Constantinople, all working for Western patrons, to eighteenth-century Ottoman artists using the earlier examples to create works for upper and middle class Ottoman patrons.²⁸ Those Ottoman patrons, Schick argues, gradually bought into the European-manufactured image of themselves. This path, while important for understanding the genre, is one I aim to problematize by backing away from questions of influence across an imaginary line of difference and looking to the grey zones that lay in the region where the Ottoman and European worlds overlapped.

For the past two decades, scholars of costume books have been heavily relying on post-colonial readings in the Saidian tradition to make their claims.²⁹ Amanda Wunder asserts that Lorck incorporated the Turks into scenes with antiquities of the East in order to show them as timeless, unchanging peoples of the past who were different, exotic, and backward.³⁰ In discussing the manuscript's backgrounds, Schick suggests that their bareness reflects an effort to make the figures appear as static reminders of the distant past: iconic and canonical.³¹ Drawing on Foucault and Bastien, Schick concludes that the costume books served to order and tame the 'other.'³² While some scholars nuanced this Saidian approach, suggesting that representational conventions could be appropriated in ways that resist straightforward opposition between East and West, they still pit an imagined East against an imagined West.³³

These two constructed stereotypes are, however, much more complicated. While Venice can firmly lie in the “West” and Constantinople in the “East,” the 12,571 miles of coastline between the two and the countless miles of over-land pilgrimage and trade routes are lined with enclaves that do not fit into those categories.

Of the ninety figural woodcuts Lorck designed for the Turkish publication, the accompanying text identifies four figures as Christians,³⁴ and the images delineate them as such by their costumes: a Christian slave,³⁵ a Christian ambassador (Fig. 2), and two Christian farmers. Taking the presence of these explicitly identified Christians into account, and similar figures in nearly all other examples, greatly affects the Orientalist dichotomy by identifying the contemporary viewer’s potential place within the hierarchies of Ottoman society. For example, if the viewer was a diplomat who acquired the volume for utilitarian purposes, he could see himself as Lorck’s “Christliche Ambassadeur bey der Tükischen Audientz.” Lorck’s images of turbaned Ottoman soldiers and Greek Christian farmers have similar antiquities in decay as backdrops. In other instances, the orderly urban landscapes differ little from each other. Those examples suggest that backgrounds are not an expression of negative judgments about a static and iconic “other.” Visually, they simply do not support the thesis of an outright Western subjugation of a lesser Easterner. As we will see, instead of constructing a Saidian dichotomy, over a quarter of this work represents the fluid identities found along the frontier of the Ottoman Empire.

DELI AS IDENTITY

The unique division of the Ottoman military referred to as *deli* appears in Lorck (Fig. 1), as well as many other contemporary albums. Characterized by large wings and feathers protruding from various points on their costumes, they are often cloaked in leopard skins and carry maces, sabers, and distinctly shaped shields. A regiment of light cavalymen, *deli* tactics and speed enabled them to operate along the frontlines as shock troops and behind the scenes as agile raiders. To this date, questions about the origins and use of those light cavalry divisions remain contested in Central and Eastern Europe, and nationalistic pride has produced a number of non-scholarly publications from all sides claiming them as a national symbol. While there is no scholarly study on the origin of the *deli*, we know that they emerged from the clash of Ottoman and Christian Europe on the



◀ **Fig. 2** Ambassador, Melchior Lorck, 1582, *The Turkish Publication*, Fischer catalogue #104. Corresponding text: “Der Christliche Ambassadeur bey der Türkischen Audientz“ [The Christian ambassador to the Turkish audience]

battlefields of the upper Balkans, the Carpathian Basin, and the Southern Baltic region.³⁶ All participating parties had their version of *delis*, which foreigners often conflated into one frightening enemy. Few scholars note the ambiguity of these figures in the works of Lorck,³⁷ an important aspect best explored through the complex histories of individual components of their costumes.

If we focus on the shield alone, the asymmetrical defensive equipment known as a *targe* carried by the *deli* and several other military figures in Lorck’s *Turkish Publication* points to a vexing question about the origins of this form and its dissemination, still pondered by many costume and armor historians.³⁸ Composed of a convex piece of wood lined with leather, then gessoed and painted, the shields come in two forms: strictly trapezoidal with sharp edges, and elongated ones with rounded bottoms and pointed tops that resemble irregular triangles.³⁹ Their design enables full mobility of the right hand while providing partial to full protection of the left side and back through the shoulders. While the scholarly literature on this subject is somewhat scant, János Kalmár traces their development from fourteenth-century shields used in Central Europe to underscore their development as the product of the unique needs of light cavalry divisions of Hungarian armies in the late fifteenth through the sixteenth centuries.⁴⁰ A recent study on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century hussars discusses the evolution of the shield, referring to it as *Balkan*.⁴¹ The shields are ubiquitously referred to in arms and armor literature as “Hungarian” or “Hussar” style. Who, then, were Lorck’s Turkish *deli*, and where did the many shields he portrays come from?

If, when, and to what extent Ottoman Turkish military divisions appropriated the shield type discussed above is still a mystery. Traditional Ottoman shields are circular and made of metal or woven and painted reeds and silks.⁴² Visual evidence suggests that, if not literally, then in the imaginations of many artists from the Ottoman Empire and Europe, Ottoman troops utilized the angled wooden shields in the late fifteenth through the sixteenth centuries. A shield of this type appears on the back of a turbaned Turk in Pieter Coecke van Aelst’s *Customs and Fashions of the Turks*. Manuscripts produced at the Ottoman royal workshop depict them



◀ **Fig. 3** Siege of Szigetvár, from the *Suleymanname*, illuminated by Nakkaş Osman, Chester Beatty Library, Inventory Number: T 413, folio 95a. © The Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

as well, first appearing in an Ottoman context in a series of late sixteenth-century miniatures related to the campaigns against the Kingdom of Hungary. In some writings the shields are carried only by troops fighting for this kingdom. In others, only Ottoman forces carry the shields, while a few depict both sides carrying the hussar shield.

One particularly interesting miniature depicting both sides of the cause with the Hussar shield is the Siege of Szigetvár in the Chester Beatty Library *Suleymanname* (Fig. 3). Amidst the explosion of the artillery storage in the inner castle walls, the many Ottoman soldiers hold their traditional round shields of blue, gold, or red as they struggle with the soldiers protecting the crumbling fortress. Two defenders hold angled hussar shields while a third appears as a war trophy in the hands of a commander at the bottom of the page.

The striking similarities between a shield carried by an Ottoman Moorish soldier⁴³ in Lorck (Fig. 4) to a surviving shield in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 5) point to yet another tradition. Tournaments held in Habsburg lands, particularly along the Hungarian frontier, often included participants armed and dressed as Ottoman Turks carrying “Eastern” weapons and armor produced locally. Those shields, both decorated with an arm holding the double sword of Ali, have been connected to those tournaments. This practice added to the ongoing interchange of costume elements along the frontier, creating opportunities for armorers and artists to develop designs in a pseudo-Oriental style.⁴⁴ Those patterns of appropriation accompanied the Ottoman conquest of lands in Central Europe, where their new subjects often joined their ranks and the light cavalry divisions who once fought against them now fought for them, bringing along their weapons and armor.

Lorck’s *Turkish Publication* contains fifteen figures carrying those shields.⁴⁵ Several other figures wear culturally ambiguous costume elements whose complex histories match that of the shields. While they cannot be addressed in detail here, they include distinctively designed maces, battle hammers, and headgear. Charlotte Jirousek, commenting on what she calls the “nearly identical dress” of Turkish horsemen in the woodcuts of Melchior Lorck and of their Austrian counterparts in other works, concludes that Turkish military dress had a direct impact on Europeans along the frontier.⁴⁶ If, on the contrary, we consider that the



- ◀ **Fig. 4** *Turkish Moor*, Melchior Lorck, 1581, *The Turkish Publication*, Fischer catalogue #66. Corresponding text (1646 edition): “Ein Soldat des Morae Begi oder Regenten der Statt Modone“ [A soldier of Morae Begi of the regent of the state of Modon (Modoni, a Venetian colony on the Peloponnesian Peninsula conquered by the Ottomans in 1498)]

local populations with their own costumes and armor, finding themselves between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs, retained some of their cultural elements which were then diffused through various methods of appropriation, the images take on new meanings and cease to serve as essentializing icons.



Fig. 5 *Hussar Targe*, mid-sixteenth century, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.57.1, Rogers Fund, 1949

HYBRID AUTHORS AND PATRONS

The focus has been on Lorck's *Turkish Publication*, a costume book executed by a Northern European artist visiting Constantinople and the Ottoman frontiers in Hungary and producing works for consumption back home that are riddled with hybrid costume elements. By way of concluding, I would like to turn to another costume book whose historical context provides us with an opportunity to consider the psychology of this hybridity. The literature on costume books divides the twenty-one unique manuscripts produced prior to 1600 into two categories: a majority produced by Europeans for European audiences, and four late sixteenth-century examples produced by Ottomans for European audiences.⁴⁷ The possibility of objects falling between these categorizations, something previously not considered by scholars, is one I would like to explore in relation to an album preserved in the Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel Cod. Guelf. 206 Blank, which may embody the epitome of the complexities of hybrid identities.⁴⁸

The manuscript's crowded first folio carries a Hungarian dedication, "This book was written in Constantinople, at the gate of captain Ali Pasha, under the hand of Balázs Csöbör of Szigetvár in fifteen-seventy,"⁴⁹ and above the coat of arms, with the same hand but in Latin, "This book is mine, Laurence Gosztonyi."⁵⁰ In addition to a coat of arms and a gold frame, other marks provide details of the early provenance of the manuscript. Ferenc Szakály assumes that the inscription on the first folio identifies Balázs Csöbör of Szigetvár as the artist.⁵¹ Claus-Peter Haase suggests that a Hungarian possessor collected the contents of the binding as individual miniatures and empty folios for an anthology.⁵² The fourteen framed miniatures separated by blank marbled pages each capture a figure or group facing right or left, their hands either tucked into awkwardly placed pockets near their lower abdomens, holding up their robes or skirts, or mindlessly fingering the fabric of their jackets. The most highly decorated images show seated officials accompanied by standing attendants set in richly illuminated interiors of patterned cloths, carpets, and walls. Clothed in sumptuous blue, red, and green fabrics with gold embroidery, the officials sit directly on the ground, set against simple geometric

patterns. The remaining images depict a dervish, two dancers, a eunuch, and various military divisions. The stylistic similarity of the miniatures suggests that they were created by one hand and not compiled from various sources. The modeling of human forms below the cloth and sense of depth points to exposure to European visual traditions.

If we accept that this manuscript came from the hand of Balázs Csöbör, illuminator or compiler originating from the town of Szigetvár in the Kingdom of Hungary and working in Constantinople, the images take on new, context-driven meanings. First and foremost, he identifies himself with a city taken by the Ottomans from the Kingdom of Hungary in 1566 and uses a vernacular language unintelligible to most non-Hungarians. The original owner of this album, Laurence Gosztonyi, is also marked as a member of Latin Christendom by his Hungarian last name and his use of Latin. Following the textual identifications, the illuminations would, under normal circumstances, be considered representations of non-Hungarians, identifiable by their costumes as Muslims with specific ranks in the Ottoman social hierarchy. Csöbör thus embodies a hybrid, fusing Hungarian self and Ottoman other. A number of his illuminations share the same fusion: The Janissary (Fig. 6), for example, may be seen in light of his past as a product of *devşirme*, a former Christian child slave from the provinces. With these very real in-between identities in mind, the original owner of the album, Laurence Gosztonyi would have read the images in a deeply personal way, reading his own potential fate and certainly that of his neighbors and friends into the images. Until some archival evidence can be found, we can only speculate on the exact placement of the individuals associated with the manuscript in relation to the lines of sovereignty and cultural identity that crisscrossed the region between Christian Europe and Ottoman Christian Europe.

By highlighting the presence of the Christians of Ottoman Europe and complicating Saidian readings of an East-West dichotomy, the complexity and hybridity of sixteenth-century Europe's visual relationship with the Ottoman Turks emerge. Cultural identity in those works needs to be reassessed not as static polar opposites, or as sliding on a scale between East and West, but instead, as continually in flux. The self, the other, and the in-between are subject to reflection, and perhaps even control and reappraisal. The figures in these costume books, in the hands of those who lived



Fig. 6 *Janissary soldier*, Csöbör Balázs of Szigetvár, Herzog August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Cod. 206, folio 6

the ambiguity of the images of our *deli*, were read not only in terms of their current positions as members of Ottoman society, but also as former members of a European Christian society.

NOTES

1. In the printed edition of Lorck's woodcuts from 1683–1684 the image appears with the caption “Delli oder ein Türkischer Ritter” [Deli, or a Turkish knight]. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.
2. For a full biography of Lorck see Erik Fischer, Ernst Jonas Bencard, and Mikael Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, 5 vols. (Copenhagen: Royal Library, 2009).
3. For a nearly complete list of costume books devoted to Ottomans in manuscript form from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries see the essay by Rudolf H. W. Stichel, “Das Bremer Album und seine Stellung innerhalb der orientalischen Trachtenbücher,” in *Das Kostümbuch des Lambert de Vos*, ed. Hans-Albrecht Koch (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1991), 31–54. For a list of sixteenth-century printed costume books, see Joanne Olian, “Sixteenth-Century Costume Books,” *Costume* 3 (1977): 20–48.
4. David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 196. Though I hesitate to use the term “West” because of the semiotic baggage it carries, Spurr's quote expresses a contemporary attitude towards the division between European Christian Empires and Islamic Ottoman “heretics.” That contemporaries were acutely aware of their position requires more research in the intellectual production of the period which, for the purpose of this chapter, is impossible to explore.
5. Larry Wolff has argued that the distinction between Eastern and Western Europe is a product of the eighteenth century, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
6. For a discussion of conversions of European Christians in the seventeenth century see Marc David Baer, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 163–178; and Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).
7. For more on this see Leslie Peirce, “An Imperial Caste: Inverted Racialization in the Architecture of Ottoman Sovereignty,” in *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires*, eds. Margaret R. Greer, Walter D. Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 27–47.
8. For the most comprehensive general treatments of the costume book as a genre see Nurhan Atasoy, “The Birth of Costume Books and the Fenerci Mehmed Album,” in *Fenerci Mehmed Album = Ottoman Costume Book*:

- A Facsimile Edition*, ed. Midhat Sertoğlu (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1986), 22–30; Odile Blanc, “Images du monde et portraits d’habits: les recueils de costumes à la Renaissance,” *Bulletin du Bibliophile* 2 (1995): 221–261; and Stichel, “Das Bremer Album.”
9. Christoph Weiditz, *Das Trachtenbuch des Christoph Weiditz von seinen Reisen nach Spanien (1529) und den Niederlanden (1531/32)*, eds. José Luis Casado Soto and Carlos Soler d’Hyver de las Deses (Valencia: Ediciones Grial, 2001).
 10. For a discussion of the history of the printed costume book from the sixteenth century onward, see Olian, “Sixteenth-Century Costume Books.”
 11. For a reproduction of all woodcuts prepared for this Turkish project as well as a comprehensive treatment of the artist’s biography and works see Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–1592) was a sixteenth-century Flemish diplomat for the Habsburgs. As ambassador to the Ottoman Empire he published a volume of correspondences on his experience which is an important source for Ottoman and Eastern European history. The most recent publication of these letters in English is Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq, The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin De Busbecq, Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople, 1554–1562, trans. from the Latin of the Elzevir Edition of 1663, ed. and trans. E. S. Forster (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005). See also Kaya Şahin’s chapter on Busbecq in this volume.*
 12. Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, 1: 96.
 13. Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, 1: 10–61.
 14. Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, 1: 115.
 15. Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, volume 3 provides extensive details about changes made in each edition.
 16. See the list in Stichel, “Das Bremer Album.” See also Leslie Marie Schick, “The Place of Dress in Pre-Modern Costume Albums,” in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity*, eds. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christopher K. Neumann (Istanbul: Eren, 2004), 93–101.
 17. See Atasoy, “The Birth,” 25.
 18. Such albums are discussed in conjunction with costume books in Bronwen Wilson, “*Foggie diverse di vestire de’Turchi*: Turkish Costume Illustration and Cultural Translation,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37 (2007): 115. *Amicorum* books were used by travelers to collect signatures, coats of arms, and mottos from friends and colleagues met abroad. They would also contain sketches of architecture and costumes encountered on the road. For more on these albums see Wilson, “*Foggie*,” 136–137, n52.
 19. Atasoy, “The Birth,” 22–23. This tradition developed out of ancient studies of the correlations between physiognomy and personality. For a

- facsimile edition see Loqman ibn Hosayn al'Ashuri, *Kıyâfetü'l-İnsâniyye fî Şemâilil'-Osmâniyye* (Ankara: Historical Research Foundation, 1987).
20. Metin And, "17. Yüzyıl Türk Çarşısı Ressamları," *Tarih ve Toplum* 16 (April 1986): 40–45.
 21. Pietro della Valle commissioned one in 1614, recording it in his book of travels as "a book of coloured figures which [I] already commissioned, in which all the diverse clothes of every sort, both of the men and of the women of this city will be drawn from life." This passage is quoted in Schick, "The Place of Dress," 99. For the full text see Pietro della Valle, *The Pilgrim: The Travels of Pietro della Valle*, ed. and trans. George Bull (London: Hutchinson, 1989), 14.
 22. Wilson, "Foggie," 121.
 23. Daniel Defert, "Un genre ethnographique profane au XVIe: les livres d'habits (essai d'ethno-iconographie)," in *Histoires de l'anthropologie (XVIe–XIXe siècles)*, ed. Britta Rupp-Eisenreich (Paris: Klincksieck, 1984), 25–41.
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 25. Amanda Wunder, "Western Travelers, Eastern Antiquities, and the Image of the Turk in Early Modern Europe," *Journal of Early Modern History* 7 (2003): 89–119.
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 27. See Otto Kurz, "The Turkish Dress in the Costume Book of Rubens," in *The Decorative Arts of Europe and the Islamic East: Selected Studies* (London: The Dorian Press, 1977), 275–90.
 28. First presented in Leslie Marie Schick, "Ottoman Costume Albums in a Cross-Cultural Context," in *10th International Congress of Turkish Art*, eds. François Déroche, Charles Genequand, Günsel Renda, and Michael Rogers (Geneva: Foundation Max Van Berchem, 1999), 625–28, 625. She repeats this in Schick, "The Place of Dress," 100–101.
 29. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
 30. Wunder, "Western Travelers," 108.
 31. Schick, "The Place of Dress," 94.
 32. Schick, "The Place of Dress," 99.
 33. Wilson, "Foggie," 101.
 34. Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, 3:12–20. His reasoning behind this assertion rests on his belief that the accompanying text "presents items of information about the particular woodcut's theme

- that prove to be so correct and accurate that it is almost impossible to imagine” anyone could have come up with it without the text of Lorck.
35. Corresponding text (1646 edition): “Einer auss den anfangenen Christen, welche von den Türken hin unnd wider nicht anders als wie das Vieh verkaufft werden” [One of the captured Christians which the Turks occasionally sold as though they were nothing more than livestock]. Fischer, Bencard, and Bøgh Rasmussen, *Melchior Lorck*, 3: 174–175.
 36. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, “Deli,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam; New Edition*, eds. B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat, and J. Schacht (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 2: 201–202.
 37. Occasionally Lorck’s figure is discussed without its context of the costume book and inscriptions. Such is the case in Alexandrine St. Clair, “A Forgotten Record of Turkish Exotica,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 27 (1969): 411–423, 413, where the image is called a “Polish mercenary or delly.” While discussing the plumes on their helmets, Charlotte Jirousek calls two of Lorck’s figures *Sipahis* (mounted Ottoman soldier) and *Grenzer* (mounted Austrian border guard). See Charlotte Jirousek, “Ottoman Influences in Western Dress,” in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity*, eds. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Eren, 2004), 246, and her figures on 293.
 38. I was first alerted to this problem by Pierre Terjanian, Head Curator of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Literature on the history of painted shields is scant. Vladimír Denkstein published a number of articles and short volumes on the painted wooden shield but confined his interests to the pavise style rectangular shape popular in central Europe in the fifteenth century. His works on painted shields and their decorated surfaces remain authoritative. See Vladimír Denkstein, *Pavesen böhmischen Typs im Historischen Museum der Stadt Wien* (Brno, 1964). For an article more specific to the angled shaped shield, though not as reliable from a scholarly point of view, see Julius Bielz, “Die Hermannstädter Tartschen,” *Mitteilungen aus dem Baron Brukenthalischen Museum* 3 (1915): 32–40.
 39. Most major collections of arms and armors contain at least one example of such shields. One from each end of the spectrum hangs in the Kretzschmar von Kienbusch Galleries of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (accession numbers 1977-167-755 and 1977-167-756).
 40. János Kalmár, *Régi magyar fegyverek* (Budapest: Natura, 1971).
 41. Tibor S. Kovács, *Huszár-fegyverek a 15.-17. században* (Budapest: Martin Optiz Kiadó, 2010), 255–263.
 42. Shields such as the one shown were often included in rooms devoted to Turkish curiosities. See Ernst Petrasch, ed., *Die Karlsruher Türkenbeute: die “Türkische Kammer” des Markgrafen Ludwig Wilhelm von Baden-Baden: die “Türkischen Curiositaeten” der Markgrafen von Baden-Durlach* (München: Hirmer, 1991), catalogue number 118.

43. Corresponding text (1646 edition): “Ein Soldat des Morae Begi oder Regenten der Statt Modone” [A soldier of Morae Begi or the regents of the state of Modon (Modoni, a Venetian colony on the Peloponnesian Peninsula conquered by the Ottomans in 1498)].
44. For examples of these hybrid pseudo-Oriental armors see the Hungarian *zischagge* helmets painted with ornamental patterns inspired by their Ottoman counterparts in the Kunsthistorisches Museum Waffensammlung, Vienna (inv. A878) and in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum [Hungarian National Museum] (inv. 55.3540). See Bob van den Boogert and Jacqueline Kerkhoff, eds., *Maria van Hongarije: koningin tussen keizers en kunstenaars 1505–1558* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1993), 82, cat. no. 65.
45. The *deli* in de Vos also wears a hat characteristic of Bosnian figures from the period.
46. Charlotte Jirousek, “More than Oriental Splendor: European and Ottoman Headgear,” *Dress* 22 (1995): 22–33, 29.
47. Schick, “Ottoman Costume Albums,” 626.
48. Ferenc Szakály, *Szigetvári Csöbör Balázs török miniatúrái 1570* (Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1983). See also Claus-Peter Haase, “An Ottoman Costume Album in the Library of Wolfenbüttel, dated before 1579,” in *9th International Congress of Turkish Art: Contributions*, vol. 3, ed. Nurhan Atasoy (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1995), 225–233, 225–228.
49. “Ez konw irattot Kustanczÿ Napolban az kapitan Alÿ basa portaiän Szigeth Varÿ Chiobor Balasnak keze altal ezor oth szaz hetuen,” folio 1.
50. “Iste liber pertinet ad me Laurentium Gozthony.”
51. Szakály, *Szigetvári Csöbör Balázs*, 7–9.
52. Haase, “An Ottoman Costume Album,” 226.

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Amazon Battle and the Seventeenth-Century Antwerp Painting Canon

Lisa Rosenthal

In 1627, Cornelis van der Gheest, a wealthy and prominent citizen of Antwerp, hired the painter Willem van Haecht as keeper of the vast art collection that van der Gheest had amassed over the previous decades. In this capacity, van Haecht produced multiple painted representations of van der Gheest's collection. Van Haecht's *Art Cabinet of Cornelis van der Gheest*, 1628 (Rubenshuis, Antwerp) (Fig. 1) presents an idealized "portrait" of the collection while drawing upon the structure and motifs of gallery or *kunstkammer* pictures, a genre that arose in Antwerp in the early decades of the seventeenth century.¹ Van Haecht's paintings, following what had become established conventions for gallery pictures, present grand fictional interior spaces in which learned men, and occasionally women, admire the works of art on display. Most gallery pictures, however, were not catalogs, even embellished and fanciful ones, of actual collections, but were instead fabricated images that programmatically asserted a set of arguments proclaiming the multiple values of art and the elevated status of its patrons and admirers. The emphatically local resonance of the genre, which remained largely exclusive to Antwerp over the course of the seventeenth century, indicates the rapid growth of art collecting among the city's well-to-do and well-educated elite. Representing collecting as an

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Fig. 1 Willem van Haecht, *The Art Cabinet of Cornelis van der Gheest*, 1628, oil on panel, 102.5 × 137.5 cm. Rubenshuis, Antwerp. Photo credit: Scala/Art Resource, NY.

exemplary activity negotiating a range of social and cultural meanings, Flemish *kunstkammer* pictures also refer to and operate within the economics of global trade that enriched Antwerp's mercantile elite in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Furthermore, during that period images of art collections were key artifacts, along with written sources, in constructing an emergent history of Netherlandish art.

Among their diverse meanings, van Haecht's representations of van der Gheest's renowned collection have long been understood as crucially invested in the broader cultural agenda of establishing Antwerp's great painting tradition as its preeminent cultural patrimony. What has remained unexplored is the operation of signs of the East that mobilize a varied set of notions about a place both real and legendary in van Haecht's *kunstkammer* pictures. Fundamental to the investigation are two key concepts

informing a growing body of scholars on the forms and functions of Orientalism in early modern Europe. On one hand, in their increasingly nuanced analysis of the elasticity of what the East might denote in early modern representations, and the multiple types of mystification it performs, scholars have sought to identify its differences from the forms of Orientalism that arose as an artifact of modern colonialism.² At the same time, recent scholarship characterizes the rhetorical dichotomy of East and West as a deeply ingrained structure of difference in early modern Europe.³ The gallery paintings that are the focus of this essay demonstrate both the flexibility of meaning and the structural force of the East/West dichotomy. The pictures' Orientalism, which both domesticates and disavows a broadly defined and diversely imagined East, is integral to their construction of a distinctly local history and culture.

THE ART COLLECTION AS ART HISTORY: FROM METSYS TO RUBENS

Van Haecht's *Cabinet of Cornelis van der Gheest* accommodates its purpose as a record of van der Gheest's collection to a more general encomium on Antwerp's artistic patrimony, a theme established in earlier gallery pictures.⁴ The majority of the art depicted in van Haecht's painting represent works by Netherlandish artists associated with Antwerp.⁵ Van Haecht embellishes the impressive effect of the collection by altering the dimensions and scale of works so that they fill the imaginary setting, and he dramatically demonstrates the collector's status by showing him among a fictionalized gathering of all the distinguished admirers who came to visit the collection over the course of several years. Just as most of the depicted works have been identified, so have the depicted figures.⁶ Most prominently in the foreground we see van der Gheest himself, enlivened with gestures denoting sincere oratory as he points to a picture that he displays to the Archduke Albert and Archduchess Isabella, the Habsburg Regents of the Netherlands, who famously visited the collection in 1615. The company features other European nobility such as the future King of Poland, Nicolaas Rockox, burgomaster of Antwerp, and Peter Paul Rubens, Antwerp's most renowned contemporary artist, whose position

next to Albert reflects not only the painter's international fame but also his role as court artist to the Archduke and Archduchess.

Van der Gheest not only collected art but also acted in multiple ways to promote and shape a history of the visual arts in Antwerp, earning special recognition from his contemporaries as an "amiable lover and connoisseur of the noble art of painting."⁷ He took advantage of the opportunity to gain official recognition as a patron and collector by registering with the Antwerp St Luke painters' guild in 1621 in the newly created category of "arts lovers" [*liefhebbers der schilderijen*]. Van der Gheest was particularly involved in establishing the reputation of the artist Quentin Metsys (1465–1530) as the founder of Antwerp's great painting tradition, overseeing several projects that commemorated Metsys, including the restoration of the artist's tombstone and the erection of a public monument to him.⁸ In the foreground of van Haecht's picture we see van der Gheest's particular devotion to Metsys enacted in what became a tale much repeated over the course of the seventeenth century. According to the story, when the Archdukes visited van der Gheest, he displayed to them his *Madonna and Child* by Metsys. Albert so admired the picture that he wished to acquire it, but van der Gheest, out of his love of the painting, refused to part with it.⁹

Directly above the Metsys *Madonna*, occupying the convergence point of the picture's perspective system is the single largest picture in the collection, Rubens's *Amazon Battle*. This deliberate arrangement diagrams the historical trajectory that van der Gheest was actively promoting: if Metsys was newly heralded as the founder of the great Antwerp School, its full culmination was indisputably credited to Rubens.

RUBENS'S *AMAZON BATTLE* AND EARLY MODERN ORIENTALISM

Van der Gheest's association with Rubens began in 1610 when, as Warden [*Kerkmeester*] for the St. Walburgis Cathedral, van der Gheest was instrumental in securing for Peter Paul Rubens his first major public commission in Antwerp, a new altarpiece for the church's high altar. Rubens most likely presented the *Amazon Battle* c. 1618 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) (Fig. 2) to van der Gheest as a gift in recognition of his patronage.¹⁰ Rubens would have determined the subject of this gift with an eye to the manifold forms of appeal it could offer to such an important and



Fig. 2 Peter Paul Rubens, *Amazon Battle* c. 1618, oil on panel, 120.3 × 165.3 cm. Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo Credit: bpk, Berlin/Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich/Art Resource, NY.

influential patron. The picture displays the artist's command of the genre of history painting, his knowledge of antiquity, and his capacity to inventively adapt the art of the Renaissance to his own purposes.

Rubens demonstrates his creative deployment of an exalted source in the center of the composition where a Greek warrior astride a rearing horse raises his weapon as he prepares to strike down the Amazon being pulled from her mount. This figural group recalls the central action in Leonardo da Vinci's unfinished *Battle of Anghiari*, a picture that Rubens had carefully studied and recorded in a drawing made during his early years in Italy (Fig. 3).¹¹ The reference to Leonardo da Vinci would have flattered van der Gheest's erudition, while the *Amazon Battle* would also have delighted him with a novel subject that was rarely depicted in Renaissance art. The exciting vision of mayhem and violence ordered within a harmonious composition also attested to van der Gheest's sophisticated taste for the effects of *terribilità*. Rubens was aware of the distinctly aristocratic appeal



Fig. 3 Peter Paul Rubens, after Leonardo da Vinci, *The Battle of Anghiari*, c. 1615–16, black chalk with brown pen, gouache and ink, 45.1 × 64 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo credit: Michèle Bellot © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.

of paintings depicting violent and mortal clashes of humans and animals; during the same period that he offered the *Amazon Battle* to van der Gheest, he produced several hunting scenes for courtly patrons in which da Vinci's *Anghiari* repeatedly figured as a source.¹²

Those courtly hunt scenes not only share compositional elements and the general theme of violent combat with the *Amazon Battle*, but also similarly bind their action to distinctly exotic elements. A *Lion Hunt* c. 1621 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) and the *Hippopotamus and Crocodile Hunt* (Alte Pinakothek, Munich) (Fig. 4) both feature unfamiliar fauna as well as men whose turbans were part of a familiar visual iconography denoting Turks or Moors.¹³ Combining specifically rendered details (teeth, scales, claws) with generic signs of the East (turbans, palm trees), the hunt scenes both bring us close to and distance us from their imagined worlds. Even as the enraged hippopotamus and crocodile threaten to lunge out of the picture into our space, the interlocking design of Rubens's composition



Fig. 4 Peter Paul Rubens, *Hippopotamus and Crocodile Hunt*, c. 1618, oil on panel, 248 × 321 cm. Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Photo Credit: bpk, Berlin/Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich/Art Resource, NY.

holds the men and animals in place, containing and controlling the picture's energies. The forms of enjoyment generated by the *Hippopotamus and Crocodile Hunt* arise significantly from its effect of offering the viewer both proximity to, and mastery over, its potentially threatening foreign elements.

In the *Amazon Battle*, the exotic element is not signaled by costume or unfamiliar flora or fauna, but is inherent in the subject of the women warriors. Amazons not only upended gender conventions, but in both classical antiquity and early modern Europe they were also figures who operated at “the boundaries of difference,” associated with Eastern and barbaric lands beyond the borders of civilization.¹⁴ In the classical tradition Amazons spurned men and inhabited a world outside of the polis, functioning as a dangerous and desirable gendered figuration of the Other.¹⁵

Although Amazon battles were only rarely depicted in Renaissance art, their legendary queens, whose exploits were recounted in the myths of Hercules and Theseus, were familiar to early modern humanists. Plutarch and Virgil's works were authorizing texts for accounts of the Amazons' fierce, although ultimately doomed, battle against the Greeks.¹⁶

Rubens's picture for van der Gheest appears to depict the famous conflict when Theseus and the Greek army defeated the Amazons at the Thermadon River. Rubens's treatment of the subject, however, offers no identifiable heroes nor tragic figures; it does not depict any specific narrative moment but instead engages us in a dynamic tumult of action.¹⁷ We can understand the lack of specificity as a deliberate choice given Rubens's previous treatment of the subject in an ambitious early picture, the first of several collaborative paintings he produced with his Antwerp colleague Jan Brueghel the Elder. This *Amazon Battle* c. 1599, now in Potsdam (Fig. 5),



Fig. 5 Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder, *Amazon Battle*, c. 1598–1600, oil on panel, 97 × 124 cm. Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam. Photo credit: bpk, Berlin/Stiftung Preussische Schlösser & Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg/photo: Gerhard Murza/Art Resource, NY.

demonstrates both artists' ambitions to produce complex, dynamic, and iconographically inventive pictures. Brueghel's spacious landscape is densely packed with Rubens's struggling figures and horses. While the earlier picture also draws upon a broad literary tradition rather than a single source, its composition literally foregrounds two specific tales of heroes and Amazons. In the center, Hercules subdues two Amazons while to their left Theseus clasps the slain Antiope.¹⁸ In the later painting for van der Gheest choreographed violence is organized with an emphasis on overall spectacle rather than the representation of specific incidents.

As has been noted by Sabine Poeschel, the *Amazon Battle* is an unusually brutal image, exceeding the standard decorum for battle pictures.¹⁹ For example, Rubens embellishes his quotation of da Vinci's battle scene at the center of the bridge with a decapitated, bleeding male corpse beneath the rearing horse. Such excessive imagery is balanced by the normalizing effects elsewhere in the image of the slain Amazons as visually delectable nudes, such as the two figures arrayed for maximum visibility in the lower left foreground. Directly above them is the most fully and coherently described active Amazon, the helmeted woman whose horse plunges down the bank toward the river. Cloaked in a vibrant red costume that reveals her right breast, the female warrior rhymes visually with the Greek warrior at the center of the bridge: he raises his arm to brandish his weapon while she lowers her arm; his horse rears up while hers rushes downward; the bluish metallic tones of his armor contrast with her flowing red draperies. She is singled out for us as the figure endowed with all the signs of Amazon identity including the bared breast. According to legend, Amazons would remove one breast for greater ease in the use of the bow. In the painting, the one bared breast recalls this and denotes the Amazons' warrior identity as the unmaking of their essential femininity.

The picture's contrasting effects are subsumed within its unfolding action that foretells the ultimate Greek victory over the tribe from Asia Minor. The dark roiling sky linking the violence of battle to nature's own destructive capacities intimates an outcome that will restore the "natural" order of men over women and of West over East and enables the viewer's safe enjoyment of the picture's erotic and potentially disturbing violence. Its dynamic circular composition is perfectly analogous to the looping, repetitive play of pleasure and displeasure that structures the enjoyable frisson of its spectacle.

SIGNS OF THE EAST IN THE *KUNSTKAMMER*

Once Rubens's *Amazon Battle* entered van der Gheest's collection, its imagined Orient of fierce, beautiful, and doomed women warriors was framed by the actual contact between East and West in the European spice trade. Cornelis van der Gheest amassed his fortune as a *kruidenier grossier*, a wholesale merchant in spices and other colonial products. His enterprise was built upon the earlier preeminence of Antwerp as a key port for the spice trade during the sixteenth century as first Portugal, and later Spain, brought colonial goods to Antwerp for distribution across Europe. In the first half of the seventeenth century, Antwerp continued to play an important role in international trade even as its economy contracted and declined in the havoc of the Eighty Years War. Throughout that period of general economic decline, Antwerp's trade in luxury goods, including spices and textiles, remained robust and extremely lucrative. A *kruidenier* such as van der Gheest would have handled spices and other items sold both for cooking and for medical uses, an inventory that typically included honey, sugar, marzipan, wax, perfume, pigments, and ointments.²⁰ Van der Gheest's mercantile success enabled him to achieve exceptional wealth and status. In addition to serving as Warden of the St. Walburgis Church, he held the important position of Dean of the Meerseniers. The largest of the Antwerp merchants' guilds, it functioned as an umbrella organization for a variety of merchants and manufacturers from dealers in butter and oil to hat makers.

Viewed in this context, the Amazon picture operates in intertwined registers: it indicates a teleological history of art in which past excellence (Metsys) leads to a glorious present (Rubens); at the same time, its theme of the West conquering the East revises and heroizes the structure of global trade that underwrites van der Gheest's patronage of the arts. The *Amazon Battle* performs the work of Orientalism precisely in the way it disavows the East as the source of marketable goods and local wealth, for one accommodated to the realm of myth and of the implicitly "natural" mastery of men over women, and West over East.

In addition to its relationship of disavowal to the word outside the frame of the gallery picture, the *Amazon Battle* is situated in van Haecht's *Gallery of Cornelis van der Gheest* within a network of intertextual relationships through which the image's multiple overlapping themes emerge. As Victor Stoichita has argued, seventeenth-century gallery pictures were fundamentally dialogic, non-linear constructions in which viewers were

encouraged to discover and elaborate connections and correlations among the represented gallery's contents.²¹ With this notion of the mechanics of the *kunstkammer* picture in mind we can discover further resonances of the *Amazon Battle*'s theme of East and West in the relationship of this image to others depicted in van Haecht's painting.

Directly above the *Amazon Battle*, and situated between two mythological works by contemporary Antwerp artists, van Haecht depicts a now-lost portrait by Metsys of Paracelsus.²² The renowned sixteenth-century German-Swiss physician and alchemist's many contributions to early medicine and natural knowledge included his pioneering use of chemistry in the treatment of illness and injuries. The portrait depicted in the *kunstkammer* most likely refers not to Metsys's original, but to a copy of the Metsys that Rubens painted around the time he produced the *Amazon Battle*.²³ Combining the identity of Metsys and Rubens in a single work, the *Paracelsus* wittily distills the *kunstkammer* image's larger claims for an Antwerp painting canon that revives, honors, and reflects upon its glorious beginning while celebrating its current excellence.

The *Paracelsus* offers its implicit praise of the art of painting in terms that circle back through an imagined exotic East. In his early career, Paracelsus led a highly itinerant life, traveling throughout Northern Europe, Russia and, according to later accounts of his life, eventually to Egypt, Arabia, the Holy Land, and Constantinople. It was there that he learned the secret of the alkahest. Long-sought by practitioners of alchemy, this was believed to be the substance that could transform base metal into gold and rejuvenate the old and infirm.²⁴ Paracelsus's reputed possession of the arcane alchemical knowledge resonates with the *kunstkammer* picture's assertion of the nobility of art: in a familiar trope the artist, who produces works of great value and beauty from his pigments, oils, and other modest materials was likened to the alchemist. Those "alchemical" powers of art also extended to the capacity of images to bring to life dead or absent sitters in portraits that seem capable of breath and speech. Those qualities are vividly demonstrated in the Rubens's copy of Metsys's portrait where the figure of Paracelsus encounters us with parted lips as though he is about to speak, and his left hand, resting on a parapet, appears to extend beyond the picture frame into our space. The liveliness of the figure is expressed more fully in another of van Haecht's several renderings of the van der Gheest collection. There Paracelsus, wearing the same distinctive red hat trimmed with fur that we see in the portrait, is no longer depicted in a portrait on the wall but now sits among the art lovers inhabiting the room.²⁵

The *Madonna and Child* by Metsys, the *Amazon Battle* by Rubens, and the *Paracelsus* by Metsys/Rubens constitute the *kunstkamer* picture's central axis narrating an Antwerp canon of art. The latter two pictures also offer two fantasies about the East. While the *Amazon Battle* intimates an East mastered by vanquishing the barbarian Other, the *Paracelsus* portrait posits an East that is a source of secret, valuable knowledge. A third version of the relations of East and West is enacted in the right front corner where a group of men cluster about a terrestrial globe. One member of the group takes measurements with a compass while other instruments of cartography lay scattered on the foreground. Scientific instruments such as the terrestrial globe and compass, or the armillary sphere used to track the movements of the heavens were routinely included in *kunstkamer* pictures.²⁶ They function as part of an iconography that ascribes to art collections the broader universal knowledge assembled in the "encyclopedic" collections that arose throughout Europe in the late sixteenth century.²⁷ The placement and composition of the group around the globe loosely recalls the figures in Raphael's *School of Athens* clustered about Euclid who uses a compass to demonstrate the science of geometry. This resonance with the renowned Renaissance fresco associates the activity of the men who measure the globe in the painting by van Haecht with the pursuit of pure knowledge and timeless, disinterested Truth.

The motif of the men gathered around the globe works suggestively within the picture's Orientalist dynamics. Even as they demonstrate the scientific pursuit of knowledge, the men who measure the globe also demonstrate the mapping skills fundamental to the era's trade economy. This representation of the pursuit of knowledge as allegorized and therefore divorced from its specific and instrumental deployment, both recalls and masks over the pursuit of goods that circulate in a marketplace. More specifically, van der Gheest's own profit from global trade, and hence his capacity to effectively champion Antwerp's artistic culture, is signaled in the image in a manner that distances and displaces it from him. Positioned in the lower right corner, the group around the globe is both literally foregrounded and put at the furthest possible remove from the portrait of van der Gheest who enacts his role as *liefhebber der schilderijen*. In this role van der Gheest is characterized primarily by his devotion to a system of aesthetic value rather than commodity value. In van Haecht's picture, and in the associated tale cited above of van der Gheest's extraordinary devotion to his *Virgin and Child* by Metsys, the painting is endowed with the quality of "pricelessness," a quality utterly opposed to the workings of the

marketplace. Julius Held's identification of three of the figures around the globe as artists whose works appear in the depicted collection suggests an additional displacement from van der Gheest of profits derived from the East.²⁸ While art collectors, including Nicolaas Rockox as well as van der Gheest and the Archdukes, display their appreciation for the works on display, the painters at the globe enact the skills associated with the spice trade. This elision of artists with merchants might register the ideal of equal social status of patrons and artists, but it is worth noting how this elision is achieved by disassociating merchants' agency from the motif.

CAMPASPE AND CLEOPATRA

Signs of the East operate in a new configuration in a second free portrait of the van der Gheest collection that van Haecht painted approximately two years later, the *Apelles Painting Campaspe*, c. 1630 (Mauritshuis, the Hague) (Fig. 6). Again the picture catalogs works known to have been in the van der Gheest collection, now situated in an even more magnificent hall. Rubens's *Amazon Battle* is again prominently displayed above the narrative center of the image. This unusual combination of history painting and a *kunstkamer* depicts Alexander the Great, garbed in armor and an extravagant purple cloak, observing as his court artist Apelles paints a portrait of Campaspe, Alexander's favored and most beautiful mistress. In the familiar legend, Apelles fell in love with her while painting her portrait. When the portrait was completed, Alexander presented the woman to the artist, keeping her even more beautiful and enduring image for himself.

This story of art surpassing nature by perfecting and preserving the world's transitory beauty was a well-established trope for the power of art and the esteem deserved by artists in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. A familiar form of praise for an artist during that period was the epithet "the Apelles of his age."²⁹ In van Haecht's image the theme also flatters van der Gheest by implicitly likening him to Alexander, the model *liefhebber* who chooses the picture over the woman; like the figure of van der Gheest in the earlier picture, here Alexander occupies the left foreground, and stands out from the surrounding company while gesturing toward a picture on display.

While invoking the familiar trope, van Haecht provides Alexander with a retinue that includes several turbaned figures, underscoring his identity as conqueror of the East. In that respect, the hero from antiquity functions as a type for the seventeenth-century merchant and art collector who takes



Fig. 6 Willem van Haecht, *Apelles Painting Campaspe*, c. 1630, oil on panel, 104.9 × 148.7 cm. Mauritshuis, the Hague. Photo Credit: Scala/Art Resource, NY

possession of distant lands through the reach of global trade. But in another instance of visual displacement, possession is figured here in aesthetic and sexual terms. Alexander represented as the warrior/Emperor turned *liefhebber*, while the love [*“lief”*] for art is overtly compared with the desires inspired in men by feminine beauty. This theme is particularly emphasized in the central narrative axis. Campaspe, clad in brilliant yellow and blue and with one breast bared to our view, establishes the strongest point of color and most foregrounded position in the picture. We watch her likeness being captured in paint and are invited to enjoy the multiple forms of mastery over her that the picture proposes: she is the Emperor’s concubine, she is the artist’s subject, and she is the medium of exchange between them. Her bared breast, denoting her function as the object of beauty, resonates productively with the Amazon painting directly above her: Campaspe’s willing acquiescence is countered by the breast-baring Amazons who are mastered through force rather than desire.

Campaspe's bared breast links her not only to the Amazon painting, but also to the picture of Cleopatra directly above the Rubens *Amazon Battle*. Occupying a position analogous to that of the *Paracelsus* in the *Cabinet of Cornelis van der Gheest*, the picture of *Cleopatra's Suicide* reproduces one of several on this theme by Guido Reni.³⁰ Reni's picture can be counted among several sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italian paintings in van Haecht's *Apelles Painting Campaspe*, including works by Titian, Correggio, and Domenichino that are displayed with the work of Antwerp artists.³¹ The placement of Reni's painting along the vertical axis that extends upward from the narrative center of the picture endows it with particular prominence: a straight line runs through the image on Apelles's easel to the *Amazon Battle*, and the *Cleopatra*. Van Haecht creates strong consonance between Campaspe and Cleopatra as they incline their heads at similar angles while exposing the left breast. In the Cleopatra painting the gesture secures her meaning as a figure of beauty and establishes the narrative moment: as she points to her heart with her right hand, in her left she delicately grasps the asp whose bite will kill her. In his discussion of Reni's Cleopatra pictures, Richard Spear notes that in the seventeenth century Cleopatra's reputation coalesced around themes of beauty and wanton sexuality with her suicide taken as evidence of her excessive desire for her slain lover, Marc Antony.³² In the context of van Haecht's gallery picture, the image of the Queen of Egypt extends the picture's Orientalist theme. Accommodated to the visual conventions of painting and forms of delectation of art lovers, the images of Campaspe, Cleopatra, and the Amazons collectively comprise a gendered discourse in which the East, figured as a woman, is readily possessed through representation.

As in van Haecht's earlier gallery picture, in the *Apelles Painting Campaspe* the motif of empire and global trade is signaled by men clustered around a globe. The group of three at the left back corner includes a turbaned figure and a dark-skinned moor. Do those figures coded as "Eastern" marvel at the demonstration of European ingenuity that they putatively lack? Or are we invited to imagine that they too possess those world-shaping skills? In van Haecht's picture such questions are accommodated to a rhetorical structure in which the imagined East is fully domesticated: men in oriental garb are legitimized by Alexander's rule over them; it is his authority that admits them into the space of the *kunstkammer*.

CONCLUSIONS

Even with its emphasis on Italian art in Antwerp collections, van Haecht's *Apelles Painting Campaspe*, like the *Cabinet of Cornelis van der Gheest*, makes the case for the excellence of Antwerp's own painters. Several works by Antwerp artists are on display in the Apelles *kunstkamer* picture, and once again Metsys is granted particular attention: his *Portrait of a Scholar* is at the center of the right-hand wall, and propped up in the right foreground is his *Moneychanger and his Wife*, a work known in multiple copies in the seventeenth century.³³ While the historical trajectory of Metsys to Rubens is less insistently diagrammed in the *Apelles Painting Campaspe* than in the earlier *kunstkamer* picture, it remains salient within the painting's larger assertion of the nobility of art. Both of van Haecht's pictures demonstrate how the consolidation of a local cultural patrimony and civic identity is intertwined with multiple imagined accounts of the East. In Antwerp, with its history as a key European port and center of commercial exchange, it is hardly surprising that the literal image of art at home, invested in the project of canon-formation, contends with those "other" places, real and imagined. Yet, framed and contained in the *kunstkamer*, those signs of the East have remained naturalized and largely unacknowledged. Bringing them into focus enables us to acknowledge their constitutive role and to examine how they operate.

The East imagined, re-imagined, and disavowed in the pictures may well have functioned in relation to growing uncertainties at home. Antwerp's artistic culture as represented in van Haecht's images is, like its commercial culture, at once specifically local and essentially porous, taking in and giving new value to objects from a range of places, periods, and media.³⁴ But when van Haecht painted those pictures, Antwerp was rapidly losing its status as a center of international trade while Amsterdam, the home base of the Dutch Republic's powerful East India Company, was in its ascendancy. The *kunstkamer* pictures' celebration of the art's values and virtues, and their contribution to civic identity, was occurring in conditions of general economic decline and contraction of political power. Those economic uncertainties seem to press upon the specific forms of rhetoric van Haecht deploys to exalt the status of art. In the earlier painting van der Gheest's display of the Metsys *Madonna* to the Archduke is associated with the trope of the priceless object; in the Apelles picture, the narrative concerns the painting and the women as objects of gift exchange. The woman exchanged for the picture is a direct and seemingly "natural" exchange

motivated by both parties' love; artistic value is specifically situated outside of a marketplace and is distanced from its function as a commodity. More than simply a well-worn trope, the Apelles theme unlinks the relationship of art and money and posits an alternative to it. Commodity values, fundamental to the entire enterprise of collecting, are purposefully masked over and remade.

The picture's Orientalist themes, which disavow and reimagine economic relations, contribute essentially to its rhetoric. Van Haecht's pictures offer the fantasy that the East, framed as legend or history and representable as feminine beauty, could be fully possessed and accommodated to an ascendant narrative of Antwerp's cultural and economic supremacy.

NOTES

1. Frans Francken the Younger is widely considered an inventor of the *kunstkammer* picture; his studio produced numerous such images during the first two decades of the seventeenth century. On the Francken workshop see Ursula Härting, *Frans Francken der Jüngere (1581-1642)* (Freren: Luca Verlag, 1989), and “‘*Doctrina et Pietas*’: Über Frühe Galeriebilder,” *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen* (1993): 95–133. Key texts in the growing literature on *kunstkammer* pictures include S. Speth-Holterhoff, *Les Peintres flamands de cabinets d’amateurs au dix-septième siècle* (Brussels: Elsevier, 1957); Zírka Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp, 1550-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Annalisa Scarpa Sonino, *Cabinet d’amateur* (Milan: Berenice, 1992); Matías Díaz Padrón and Mercedes Royo-Villanova, eds., *David Teniers, Jan Brueghel y los gabinetes de pinturas*, exh. cat. Museo del Prado (Museo del Prado: Madrid, 1992); Victor Stoichita, *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight in Early Modern Meta-Painting*, trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen, revised Lorenzo Pericolo (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015) and Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998). Studies of van Haecht's pictures of the van der Gheest collection include Frans Baudoin, “De ‘constkamer’ van Cornelis van der Geest geschilderd door Willem van Haecht,” *Antwerpen* 15, 4 (1969): 158–73; Julius S. Held, “*Artis Pictoriae Amator*: An Antwerp Art Patron and his Collection,” in *Rubens and his Circle*, eds. Anne Lowenthal, David Rosand, and John Walsh, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 35–64; Fiona Healy, “Vive l’Esprit. Sculpture as the Bearer of Meaning in Willem van Haecht’s Art Cabinet,” in *Munuscula Amicorum*, ed. Katlijne van der Stighelen, vol. 2 (Turnhout: Brepols,

- 2006): 423–41; and Ariane van Suchtelen and Ben van Beneden, *Room for Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2009).
2. For a cogent discussion of this issue see the introduction to James Harper, ed., *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450-1750: Visual Imagery Before Orientalism* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).
 3. Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanism and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
 4. Gary Schwartz, “Love in the Kunstkamer: Additions to the Work of Guillam van Haecht (1593-1637),” *Tableau* 18, 6 (1996): 43–52; and Honig, *Painting and the Market*, 203, on the predominance of works associated with Antwerp’s great masters in gallery pictures.
 5. For a full accounting of the works of art depicted in van Haecht’s painting see Held, “*Artis Pictoriae Amator*” and van Suchtelen and van Beneden, *Room for Art*, 128.
 6. See Held, “*Artis Pictoriae Amator*.”
 7. “liefd-weerdich life-hebber en kender van de Edel Schilder-Const,” François II Fickaert, *Metamorphosis ofte wonderbaere veranderingen [...] van [...] Quinten Matsys* (Antwerp, 1648), f. A1r.
 8. A detailed account of van der Gheest’s civic activities is in A. J. J. Delen, “Cornelis van der Geest: Een Groot Figuur in de Geschiedenis van Antwerpen,” *Antwerpen: Tijdschrift van der Stad Antwerpen* 5, 2 (1959): 57–71.
 9. The original of the Metsys Madonna is now considered lost but the picture is known through multiple copies including the ones in the Mauritshuis, the Hague and the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, Florida. On the seventeenth-century legend about van der Gheest’s refusal to part with the Metsys Madonna see Maria-Isabel Pousão-Smith, “Quinten Matsys and Seventeenth-Century Antwerp: An Artist and his Uses,” *Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp* (2001): 137–87. Held suggests that van Haecht’s painting rather than illustrating this tale may have been its source, “*Artis Pictoriae Amator*,” 39.
 10. See catalogue no. 324 in Konrad Renger and Claudia Denk, *Flämische Malerei des Barock in der Alten Pinakothek* (Munich: Pinakothek-DuMont, 2002): 350–55.
 11. Rubens, *The Battle of Anghiari*, c. 1615-16, black chalk with brown pen and ink, Musée du Louvre, Paris. This drawing is most likely a re-working of earlier studies of Leonardo’s composition made from prints and from Rubens’s viewing of the fresco during his travels in Italy, David Jaffé and Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens, A Master in the Making* (National Gallery, London, 2005), 41.

12. Four of these were produced on commission for the Elector Maximilian of Bavaria: a *Lion Hunt*, no longer extant; the *Boar Hunt* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Marseilles); the *Tiger, Lion, and Leopard Hunt* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes), and the *Hippopotamus and Crocodile Hunt* (Alte Pinakothek, Munich). See Arnout Balis, *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard Part XVIII: Landscapes and Hunting Scenes. Vol. 2: Hunting Scenes*, trans. P. S. Falla (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 11–149.
13. On the turban signifying the non-Christian in Northern imagery see Heather Madar, “Dürer’s Depictions of the Ottoman Turks: A Case of Early Modern Orientalism?” in Harper, ed., *The Turk and Islam*, 155–83; and Larry Silver, “East is East: Images of the Turkish Nemesis in the Hapsburg World,” in Harper, *The Turk and Islam*, 185–215.
14. Page DuBois, *Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982), 27. Bisaha argues that the Greek discourse of a barbarian East was an important contributing element to fourteenth- and fifteenth-century European ideas about the Turks, *East and West*, 83–7.
15. See Andrew Stewart, “Imag(in)ing the Other: Amazons and Ethnicity in Fifth-Century Athens,” *Poetics Today* 16, 4 (1996): 573–97.
16. See Josine Blok, *The Early Amazons: Modern and Ancient Perspectives on a Persistent Myth* (Leiden: Brill, 1995). The ancient sources include Plutarch *Lives* 1.27 and Virgil, *Aeneid* Book XI, lines 648–63.
17. Renger and Denk note the lack of any clearly identified protagonists, *Flämische Malerei*, 350–55; so does Sabine Poeschel, “Rubens’ ‘Battle of the Amazons’ as a War Picture: the Modernisation of a Myth,” *Artibus et Historiae* 22, 43 (2001): 91–108.
18. On this early collaborative Amazon Battle see exhib. cat. *Rubens & Brueghel: A Working Friendship* (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles and Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, 2006), catalogue no. 1, 44–51 and exhib. cat. *Rubens, A Master in the Making* (National Gallery, London, 2005), catalogue no. 1, 42–4.
19. Poeschel, “Rubens’ ‘Battle of the Amazons’,” 94–100. Poeschel links the evident brutality of the image to her argument that the *Amazon Battle* was a comment on contemporary warfare.
20. On the inventory of the *kruidenier grossier*, see Frans Baudouin, *Pietro Paulo Rubens* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1977), 40–1. For a useful recent overview of Antwerp’s trade economy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries see Herman van der Wee and Jan Materné, “Antwerp as a World Market in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” in exhib. cat. *Antwerp: Story of a Metropolis* (Antwerp: Hessenhuis, 1993), 19–31. Harold J. Cook links the spice trade to new epistemologies of early modern

- science and medicine, *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007).
21. Stoichita, *Self-Aware Image*, 141–179.
 22. The pictures flanking the Paracelsus have been attributed to Hendrick van Balen, *Ceres and Pomona* and Otto van Veen, *Venus in the Forge of Vulcan*. See van Schuchtelen and van Beneden, *Room for Art*, 128.
 23. Rubens's copy of Metsys's Paracelsus is now in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels. See *Rubens: A Genius at Work* (Brussels: Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, 2008), 79–81 [catalogue no. 7].
 24. On the importance of Paracelsus's theories in the Netherlands see Cook, *Matters of Exchange*, 139–41. Many seventeenth-century texts recount the Eastern sources of his knowledge, for example G. Havers, who notes that "Paracelsus learnt all his Knowledge" from "The book of Natural Magick... translated out of Arabick into Latin," *A Collection of Philosophical Confernces* (London, 1665), 324.
 25. Willem van Haecht, *Art Cabinet with Anthony van Dyck's "Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine"*, c. 1630, private collection, Scotland. See van Schuchtelen and van Beneden, *Room for Art*, 76 [catalogue no. 12].
 26. Globes appear in several *kunstkammer* pictures from the workshop of Frans Francken the Younger including pictures in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, and the National Gallery of Art, London.
 27. Härting, "Doctrina et Pietas"; and Ellinoor Bergvelt and Renée Kistemaker, eds., *De Wereld Binnen Handbereik* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1992).
 28. Held identifies three of these figures as the artists Jan Wildens, Frans Snyders and Hendrick van Balen, "Artis Pictoriae Amator," 42.
 29. In his epitaph for Rubens, the poet and humanist Jan Caspar Gevaerts, described the painter as "the Apelles not only of his age but of all time," L. R. Lind, "The Latin Life of Peter Paul Rubens by his Nephew Philip: A Translation," *Art Quarterly* 9 (1946): 37–43.
 30. The Reni Cleopatra in van Haecht's painting has been identified as the version in the collection of the Sanssouci Palace, Potsdam.
 31. Van Beneden suggests that copies, and some originals, of Italian works depicted here were in diverse Antwerp collections in the early seventeenth century, *Room for Art*, 57–92. The entire assemblage presents, in his account, an array of works that van Haecht may have seen in the homes of Antwerp's many collectors.
 32. Richard Spear, *The "Divine" Guido: Religion, Sex, Money and Art in the World of Guido Reni* (Yale University Press, 1997), 87.

33. The Metsys *Moneychanger* is in the Louvre, Paris. Rubens owned a version of this picture, possibly acquired from the estate of van der Gheest in 1638. See Jeffrey Muller, *Rubens as a Collector* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), cat. no. 186; and Kristen Belkin and Fiona Healy, eds., *A House of Art: Rubens as a Collector* (Antwerp: Rubenshuis: 2004), 149–51 [catalogue no. 21].
34. See Christine Göttler, “The Place of the ‘Exotic’ in Early Seventeenth-Century Antwerp,” in *Looking East: Rubens’s Encounter with Asia*, ed. Stephanie Schrader (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2013): 88–107.

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The Architectural Setting of “Empire”: The English Experience of Ottoman Spectacle in the Late Seventeenth Century and Its Consequences

Lydia M. Soo

In early May of 1675, a large entourage from the Levant Company, which looked after the economic and political interests of the British Crown in that part of the world, traveled from Constantinople to Adrianople, today’s Edirne. The ambassador of the Company, Sir John Finch, had an important reason for leaving its headquarters in the capital and making the difficult and expensive trip. He needed an audience with the “Grand Signor” to renegotiate the “capitulations”—a list of privileges authorizing the Company to oversee English trade. Sultan Mehmed IV (reigned 1648–1687) preferred to reside in Adrianople, where he, nicknamed “the hunter,” could escape from the capital and enjoy his favorite pastime.¹

Accompanying the ambassador were several Levant Company officers who at that time were participating in the earliest European efforts to study and record antiquities in Constantinople, as Istanbul was still called at the time. Classically-educated Christians as well as scientifically-minded virtuosi, they were interested in ancient Roman and Byzantine sites, but they also studied Islamic building types, making descriptions and drawings of important monuments.² Although clearly considering it worthy of attention,

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the English unfortunately wrote down very little in terms of their assessment of Turkish architecture.

They were much more expressive, however, when they encountered another physical manifestation of Ottoman culture: the spectacular court festivals that took place in and around buildings. There were two festivals in Adrianople in 1675, celebrating the circumcision of the sultan's son and the marriage of his daughter to his favorite, the second vizier.³ Unfortunately, for those celebrations none of the usual visual records were made. Oftentimes a European embassy commissioned a cycle of paintings that recorded the sultan and his court, their roles and ranks identified by their dress and position. For example, the famous Rålamb paintings made for the Swedish envoy depict the young Mehmed IV's procession out of the capital for Adrianople in September 1657. As for the Ottomans, they created books called *Surname*, with the two most gorgeously illustrated books recording the circumcision festivals of 1582 and 1720.⁴

For the 1675 festivals in Adrianople, there are no paintings or *Surname*, but there are three English eyewitness accounts. Secretary Thomas Coke wrote a letter dated October 9, 1675, soon after returning to the Levant Company's headquarters in Pera, and published the next year. Treasurer Dudley North wrote, probably in mid-July 1675, an undated letter from Adrianople, published in 1744. Most importantly, chaplain John Covel kept a journal of his travels during the 1670s, which includes an illustrated record of the trip to Edirne. A fourth description, borrowing information from Covel, was written by Sir Paul Rycaut, consul in Smyrna (Izmir), and published in his 1680 history of the Turks.⁵

These English accounts contain descriptions of elaborate processions and entertainments which add little to what is already known about the standard pattern and appearance of festival events. They are uniquely valuable, however, because in conjunction with physical documentation they can be used as a means for investigating a more cogent theme: how the English "read" the Ottoman use of space, scale, material, and other more abstract qualities of design and understood them as communicating certain ideas about the prestige and power of that culture relative to their own. To tease out the relationship between architecture and imperial messaging, the spectacles as well as the Levant Company's audience with the sultan will first be situated in their architectural settings—the urban spaces, buildings, and rooms that contained these activities but also shaped them. Next, the visual experience of the English in those settings will be considered: how did they assess what they saw through the lens of their

own cultural practices and the classical tradition in architecture? Finally, we will explore, for English architects who embraced the classical agenda, including Sir Christopher Wren, the consequences of having knowledge of what ambassador Finch called “the Grandeur of this Empire in all its glory.”⁶ Caught in the complicated position of disapproving their architectural forms but admiring their ability to further the imperial agenda, architects did not copy the buildings of the Ottoman and other living empires, including the Chinese, but rather used them as the model for the *idea* of creating a new British nation with its own national style.

THE OTTOMAN FESTIVALS AND THEIR SETTINGS, RECONSTRUCTED

Almost immediately after the company’s arrival in Adrianople, the Festival of Circumcision began. It included three different processions (Table 1). In the Procession of Trades, craftsmen paraded from the city to the “seraglio,” that is, the New Palace (Sarayı Amire) to present gifts to the sultan.

Table 1 The Levant Company’s itinerary in Adrianople, May to September 1675 (Author)

| | | | |
|--------|---|-----------------|---|
| 2 May | Levant Company departs Constantinople | 10 June | FESTIVAL OF MARRIAGE begins |
| 10 May | Levant Company arrives in Adrianople— Cavalcade into city to lodgings in Jewish Quarter of Kaleiçi | | Procession of Groom’s Presents —from groom’s house to New Palace |
| 15 May | FESTIVAL OF CIRCUMCISION begins—daily entertainment at New Palace (Sarayı Amire) | 14 June | daily entertainment at groom’s house begins |
| 16 May | Procession of Trades —from city to New Palace | 19 June | Procession of the Dowry —from New Palace to groom’s house |
| 19 May | AUDIENCE of Levant Company with Grand Vizier—at his house | 23 June | Procession of Marriage —bride taken from New Palace to groom’s house |
| 25 May | Procession of Circumcision —from? to New Palace | 28 June | Festival of Marriage ends—last day of entertainment at groom’s house |
| 27 May | Procession for Muhammad’s Birthday —from New Palace to Selimiye mosque and back | 30 June, 1 July | RACES —in field located southwest of city near Demidestir |
| 28 May | climax of entertainment at New Palace | Beginning July | PLAGUE begins; Levant Company flees to Karaağaç. North and Coke stay in Adrianople; Covell travels around the region |
| 29 May | Festival of Circumcision ends | 27 July | AUDIENCE of Levant Company with Mehmed IV—at New Palace |
| | | 19 Sept | Levant Company departs Adrianople |
| | | 27 Sept | Levant Company arrives in Constantinople |

They pulled wagons carrying elaborate tableaux vivants, according to Rycaut and Covell, respectively, “set out with tokens of their art”: “bakers had an oven, smiths their little forges”.⁷ The Procession of Circumcision, also ending at the palace, was a “Cavalcade” much larger in scale. On foot or mounted, hundreds of officials, soldiers, and attendants paraded by, their identity recognizable from their hats (Fig. 1). The richness of dress increased with rank, making it clearly visible who the honorees were. Thus, the sultan’s adolescent son, prince Mustafa, as well as his horse were laden with jewels, pearls, gold, and silver in addition to fine fabrics and furs. North reported that his two-year-old brother was similarly “lost ... thro’ so much Splendor.”⁸ In the procession, attendants held up *nahls*, similar to today’s parade floats, each constructed of a wooden pole decorated using wire, wood strips, painted paper, as well as wax flowers and fruit. Forty of them were small enough for one person to carry. But two, rising over 70 feet in height—called “walking timber-trees” by Covell—had to be pulled by a hundred slaves (Figs. 2 and 3).⁹ The celebration culminated two days later on Muhammad’s birthday, when there was a similar but much smaller, “neater and Court-like” parade, according to Coke, from the palace to the Selimiye Mosque, with the sultan, his entourage, and the prince.¹⁰ After several hours of prayer, they returned to the palace where the prince was circumcised.

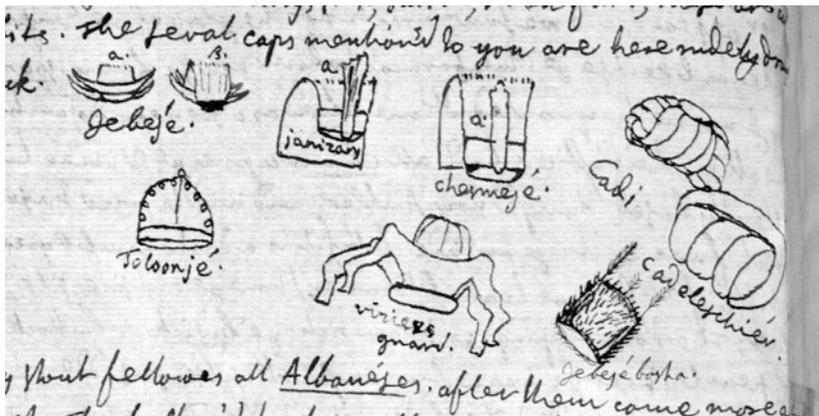


Fig. 1 Hats of officials in the Procession of Circumcision (J. Covell, “Autograph Journal,” BL Additional MS 22912, f. 191v) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f191v)



Fig. 2 Small *nahl*, carried by a single man, in the Procession of Circumcision (J. Covel, "Autograph Journal," BL Additional MS 22912, f. 191v) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f191v)

The processions probably followed a route laid out according to the same criteria used for such paths in papal Rome, which included the need to move fluidly through the streets, maximize one's "exposure" to the people, and capitalize on the presence of important buildings for creating a monumental urban backdrop.¹¹ The procession to the Selimiye began at

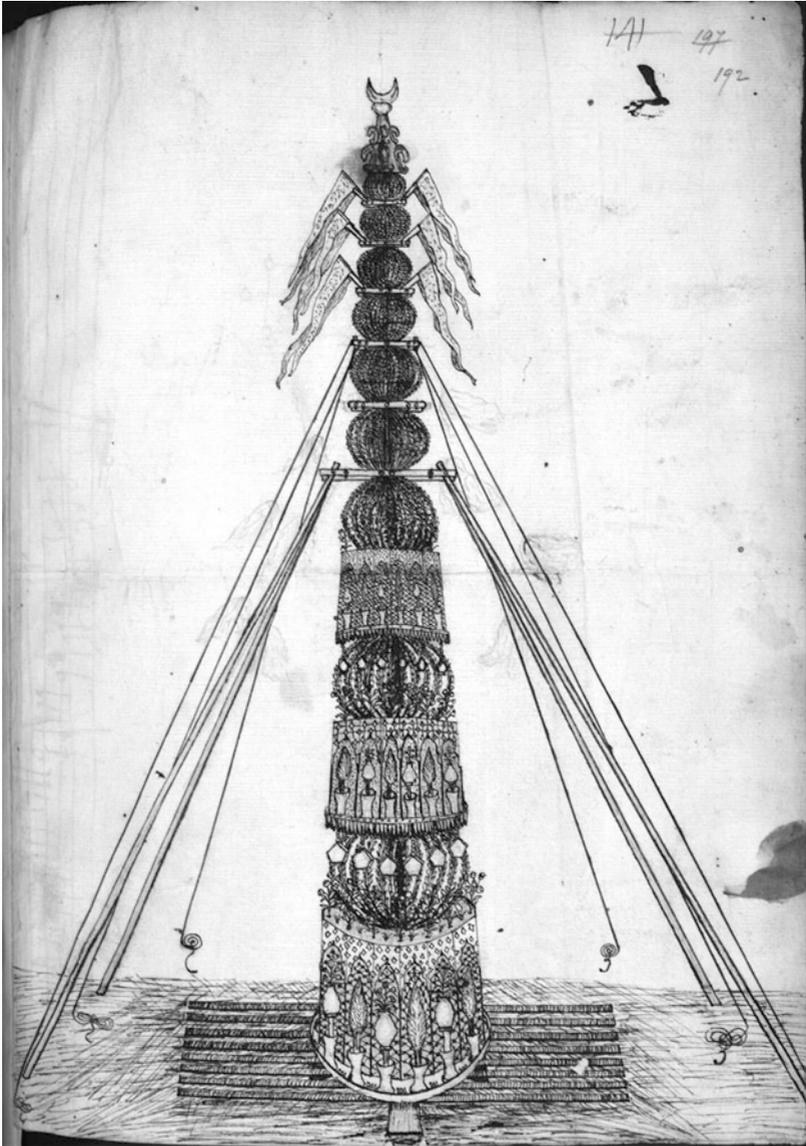


Fig. 3 One of the two large *nahls*, pulled in the Procession of Circumcision (J. Covel, "Autograph Journal," BL Additional MS 22912, f. 192r) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f192r)

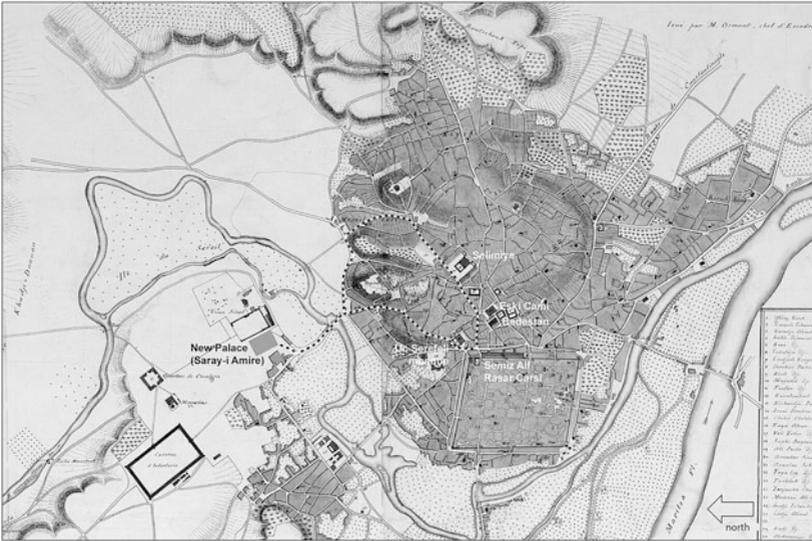


Fig. 4 Plan of Adrianople (Edirne), showing the possible processional route in 1675, connecting important monuments in the center of the city (Colonel Osmont, *carte d'Andrinople*, 1854, Collection du ministère de la Défense, Service historique de la Défense, 6 M R18 4 10 B 225) (© Service historique de la Défense, 6M R18 4 10 B 225)

the New Palace on the other side of the river (Fig. 4). Given the huge size of the entourage and the desire to maximize the size of the crowds assembled on the sidelines, it would probably have followed one of the wider streets through a more inhabited area, passing several mosques, then in front of the Üç Şerefeli mosque, and close to the bazaar (Semiz Ali Paşa Çarşısı). Turning, with views toward the Bedestan and Old Mosque (Eski Cami), the road led straight to the front of the Selimiye. From there the procession would have continued toward another mosque, then turned and returned to the palace.

Meanwhile, at the New Palace there were entertainments every day during the festival. A complex begun in the mid-15th century, it was continually enlarged so that by the 1670s it housed six to ten thousand people. Only a few remaining ruins suggest its former grandeur, but the site of the festivities can be reconstructed schematically based on Covel's drawings, modern reconstructions, and satellite imagery.¹²

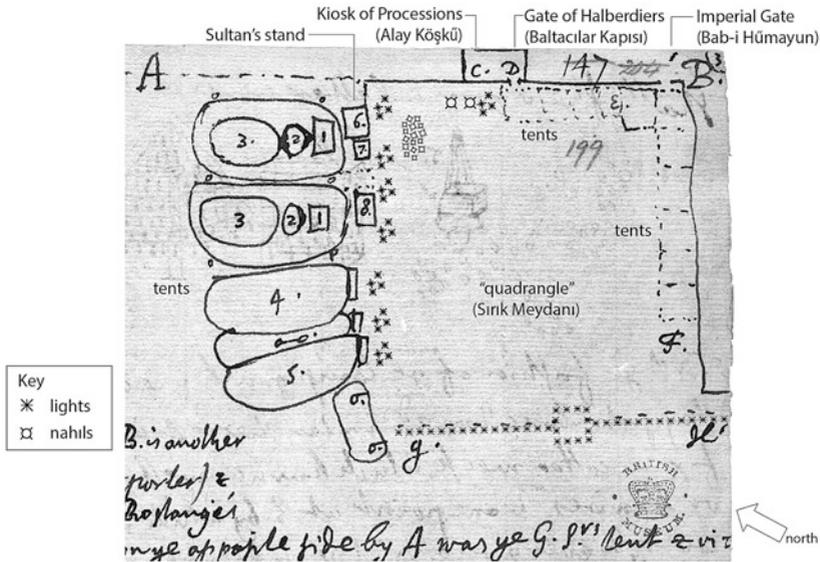


Fig. 5 Plan of the “quadrangle” (Sırık Meydanı) in front of New Palace (Sarayı Amire) (J. Covel, “Autograph Journal,” BL Additional MS 22912, f. 199r) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f199r)

The backdrop for the spectacles was the long façade of the palace with its projecting wing (Figs. 5 and 6). Near the recessed corner was the Imperial Gate (Bab-i Hümayun), “the great gate” or main entry into the complex, and further north, the Gate of the Halberdiers (Baltacılar Kapısı). Then came “a large Keósk or summerhouse with *gelosia*’s or lattices (just like ours in ye garden)”: the Kiosk of Processions (Alay Köşkü) that included a balcony allowing the women of the court to see but not be seen. In front of it were placed the huge *nahıls* carried in the Procession of Circumcision.¹³

Spreading out before the palace was the Sırık Meydanı, described by the English as a “delicate plain” and “field,” but also “a large quadrangle,” a “great square,” and “a large Piazza,”¹⁴ because the area was enclosed during the festivals. Tents for guards as well as the chief porter (Capigébashu) and his men ran along the walls of the palace wing and the main façade up to the Kiosk of Processions. Additionally, groups of many large tents were set up to create a northern edge to the quadrangle. Covel



Fig. 6 Reconstruction of the New Palace or Saray-ı Amire. *Translucent white* areas are outdoor spaces, including courtyards. *Solid white* elements are probable locations of walls, tents, and interior spaces discussed in the text. (Author; satellite image by DigitalGlobe)

described two identical sets reserved for the sultan and the Grand Vizier—a square tent “for entrance,” a “round tent of audience,” and a “long tent of state or habitation”—all crowned by “golden balls,” the largest placed atop the sultan’s tents (Fig. 7). In front of each entry, facing the quadrangle, was an elevated stand: “a very stately Throne, with a Canopy of cloth of gold,” Rycout wrote, that reminded Coke of “a Summer-house in our Gardens, which over looked all.”¹⁵ The sultan’s stand was flanked by a smaller one for the prince, both facing the forty small *nabuls* put here on display. For each high official there was a single rectilinear tent fronted by a narrow one used as a “portico.”¹⁶ At the furthest end of that row was a cluster of several round tents, including one for circumcisions.

Along the fourth, western side of the quadrangle, lamps were set up all in a row, with a large number forming a square area at its midpoint, which created a porous edge that allowed “people to come and be spectators,” but

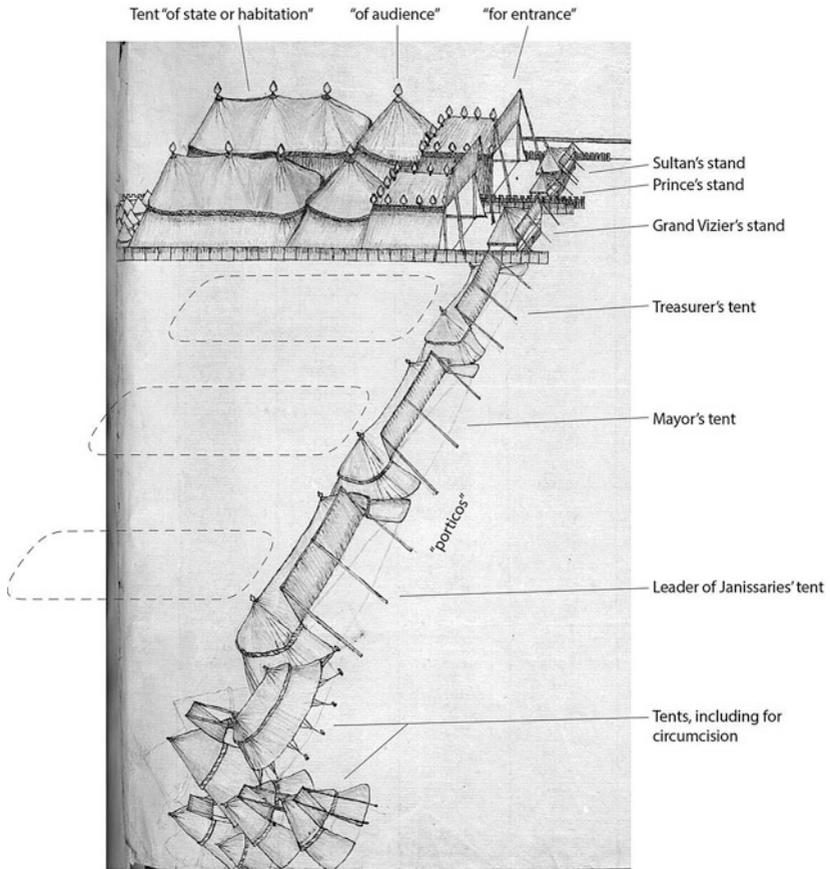


Fig. 7 Tents erected along the northern edge of the quadrangle (Sırık Meydanı) at the New Palace (Sarayı Amire) in 1675 (J. Covel, “Autograph Journal,” BL Additional MS 22912, f. 197r) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f197r)

barred all from passing through. Lamps were also placed before the sultan’s tents and the Kiosk of Processions. Covel was filled with delight: “To see these lights alone was worth my going to Adrianople” (Fig. 8). Hung on ropes from poles or frameworks, the “infinite varietyes” were changed every night and represented “many curious things, as, castles, mosches, ... peacocks, storkes, ... all sorts of birds, beasts, turkish writings” as well as



Fig. 8 Lamps set up at the New Palace (Saray-ı Amire) (J. Covel, “Autograph Journal,” BL Additional MS 22912, f. 199v) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 228912 f199v)

“several figures of ships, Buildings, and woods, &c.” Some were made of colored glass or had colored water inside, others moved.¹⁷

“The Theater [was] thus prepared,” Covel wrote. From the outside spectators looked into what he appropriately called “the Ring,” given the panoply inside: members of the court, important guests, entertainers of all kinds, and those being celebrated over the course of the festival. Moreover, the activities that took place there every day, according to the same schedule, greatly varied in nature and tone. Around noon a “Turkish Feast” was served in a “great Tent” to the artisans but also some of the soldiers.¹⁸ At two o’clock people began to gather. An hour later there were prayers for fifteen minutes. Afterward, courtiers and other dignitaries presented gifts to the sultan sitting on his canopied throne. Pauses were filled in by dances, plays, and sports, but once the gift-giving ended, the entertainments took over. One hour before sunset hundreds of boys were brought into the ring, celebrated with music and song, and then taken to the tent to be circumcised. There was fifteen minutes of prayer at sunset, followed by a ceremony for lighting the lamps. Then the dancing and sports began again—including oil wrestling, for which Edirne is still known. Around midnight the day ended with a vast array of fireworks for an hour or more.¹⁹

The Festival of Circumcision ended after two weeks. Following a ten-day break, the first of three processions began for the Festival of Marriage, all similar in scale and splendor to the circumcision procession. There was also entertainment as before, this time in the large courtyard of

the groom's palace.²⁰ Then, to mark the end of the month and a half of festivals, long distance races were held southwest of the city near the village of Karaağaç in "a fair plain for 20 or 30 mile," where tents for the sultan and other officials were pitched (Fig. 9). There were two horse races, starting thirty miles away and lasting over two hours. There was also a foot race, starting fifteen miles away from the stand of the sultan who, ironically, "sees lesse sport than any," Covel noticed,²¹ because most of the spectators were mounted and following the racers in the field.

The English were allowed to join the throng to witness all the pageantry, and we will discuss their reactions in the next section. However, during their visit, there was one special occasion when they were treated as honored guests. Two and a half months after his arrival, Ambassador Finch was finally granted an audience with the sultan at the New Palace.

The audience began at five-thirty in the morning, when Finch and his officers arrived at the Imperial Gate and were ushered in, Covel wrote,

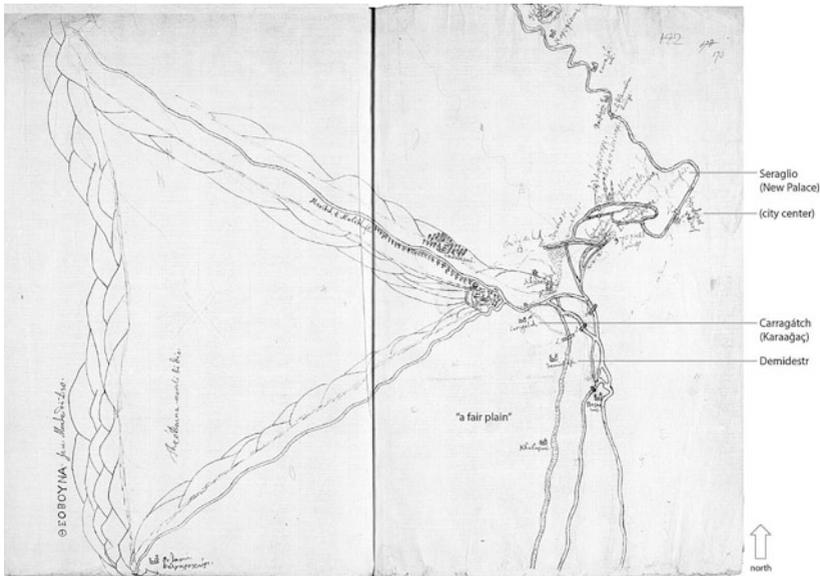


Fig. 9 Map of the area around Adrianople (J. Covel, "Autograph Journal," BL Additional MS 22912, f. 172v-173r) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f172v-173r)

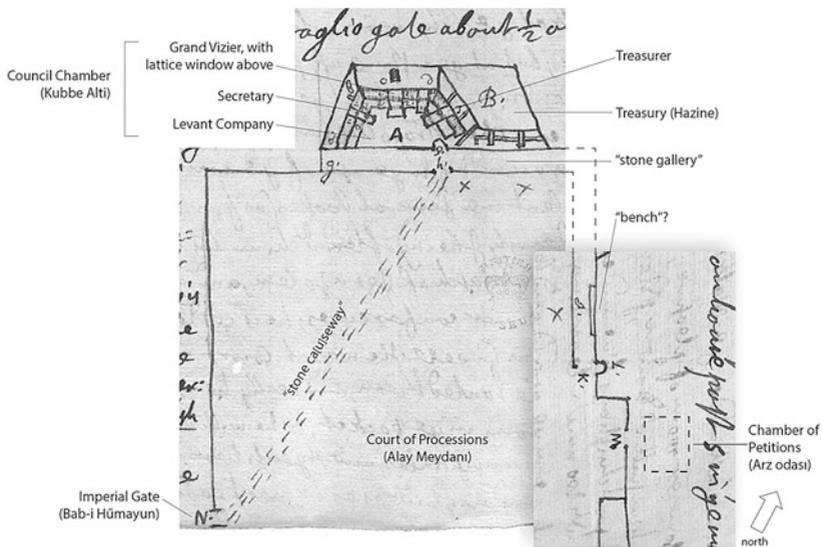


Fig. 10 The plan of the Court of Processions (Alay Meydanı) and perspective of the Council Chamber (Kubbe Altı) at the New Palace (Sarayı Amire). The portion that was oriented incorrectly in Covel’s drawing has been rotated and relocated to reflect the physical evidence. (J. Covel, “Autograph Journal,” BL Additional MS 22912, f. 232v) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22912 f232v)

“upon a stone caseway, through a square court,” that is, the Court of Processions (Alay Meydanı) (Figs. 6 and 10). Led by the master of ceremonies (peskeshjé basha), they went through a “stone gallery” and entered a large room, the Council Chamber (Kubbe Altı). Covel remarked that it “is just in the same fashion as that at Stambol.” Indeed, when constructed around 1529/1530 it was modeled after the new chamber just completed at Topkapı Palace for Süleyman, recorded in a painting made for the German Embassy in 1628 (Fig. 11).²² At the New Palace the room was rectilinear in form, with benches on three sides covered in embroidered silk and furnished with a back cushion. At the center of each side was a rich cloth spread from the back of the bench over the seat and down to the floor. The Grand Vizier sat on the bench facing the entry with a latticed window above his head where the sultan could sit in secret to witness the proceedings. On the vizier’s right sat the principal secretary (Nesharjé



Fig. 11 The Council Chamber at the New Palace was modeled after the public Council Hall (completed 1529) of the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul, recorded in a painting depicting the 1628 embassy of Baron Hans Ludwig von Kuefstein. (Osmanenmuseum Perchtoldsdorf, Austria)

basha) and on his left the treasurer (Testerdare). Two lawyers (cadeleschiers) also had places on a cloth next to the vizier. The room was spacious and open, in part because to one side there were only two pillars separating it from the adjacent Treasury (Hazine), where lawyers handled queries and documents issued from the main area.

Sitting or standing in the corner next to the secretary, the English first witnessed the monthly ceremony for paying the soldiers, when an impressive 320 purses were dispensed. At about eight-thirty, after round tables and stools were placed on each side of the bench, in an arrangement also shown in the German painting, visitors and hosts sat down together for a large meal. Having dined, Finch and his party were taken back into the gallery where, after receiving gifts of fine vests, they sat on a bench to await their audience with the sultan. Next, the group was led around the corner into the east colonnade of the Court of Processions to wait yet again.²³

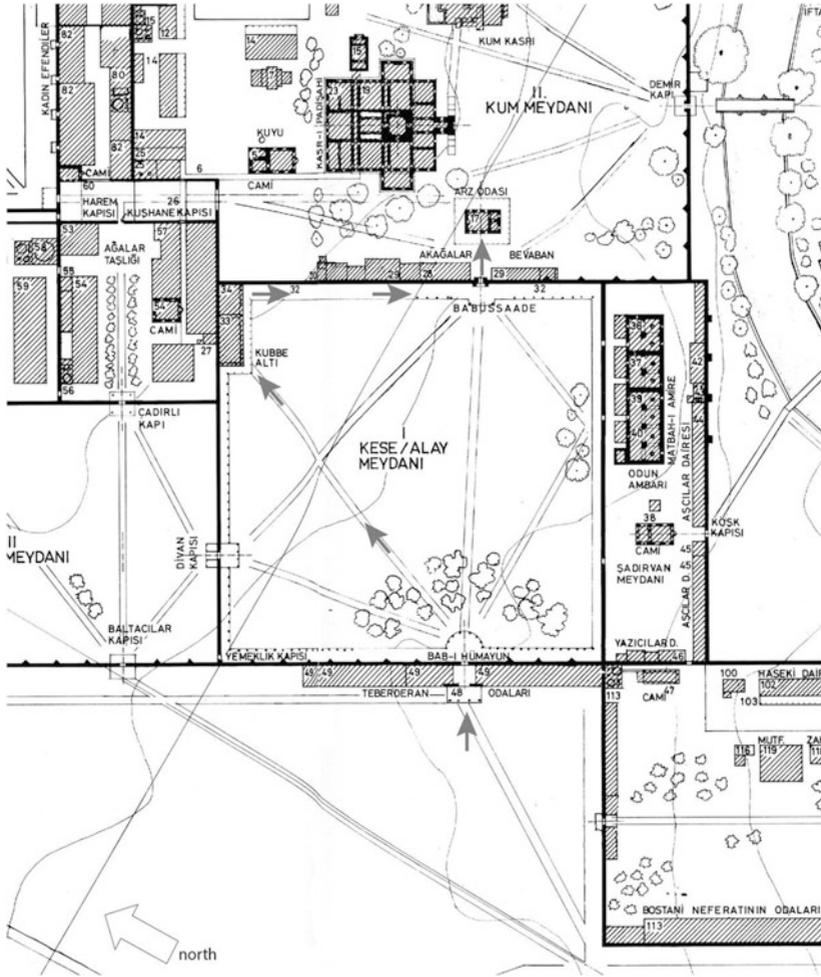


Fig. 12 Reconstruction of the Court of Processions (Alay Meydanı) at the New Palace (Sarayı Amire), with Council Chamber (Kubbe Altı), Treasury (Hazine), and Chamber of Petitions (Arz Odası). The grey arrows indicate the path of the English visitors. (S. H. Eldem, *Türk Evi Osmanlı Dönemi / Turkish Houses of the Ottoman Period*, İstanbul, Türkiye Anıt Çevre Turizm Değerlerini Koruma Vakfı, 1984, vol. 2, pp. 114–15)

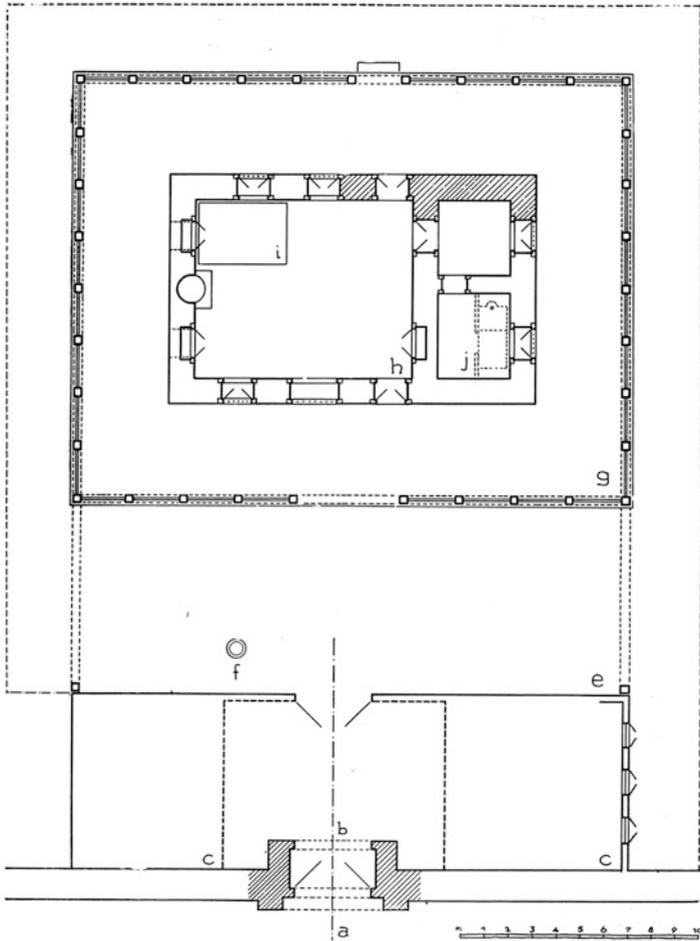


Fig. 13 The plan of Chamber of Petitions (Arz odası) at the New Palace (Saray-ı Amire). The “i” indicates the throne. (Sedad Hakk Eldem, *Köşkler Ve Kasırlar / A Survey of Turkish Kiosks and Pavilions*, 2 vols., Istanbul, Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1969, vol. 1, p. 9)

Finally, Finch’s entourage was brought to a portico leading to the entryway of the Chamber of Petitions (Arz odası) (Figs. 12, 13 and 14). Once inside, Finch stood before the sultan, who, he reported, “sat leaning

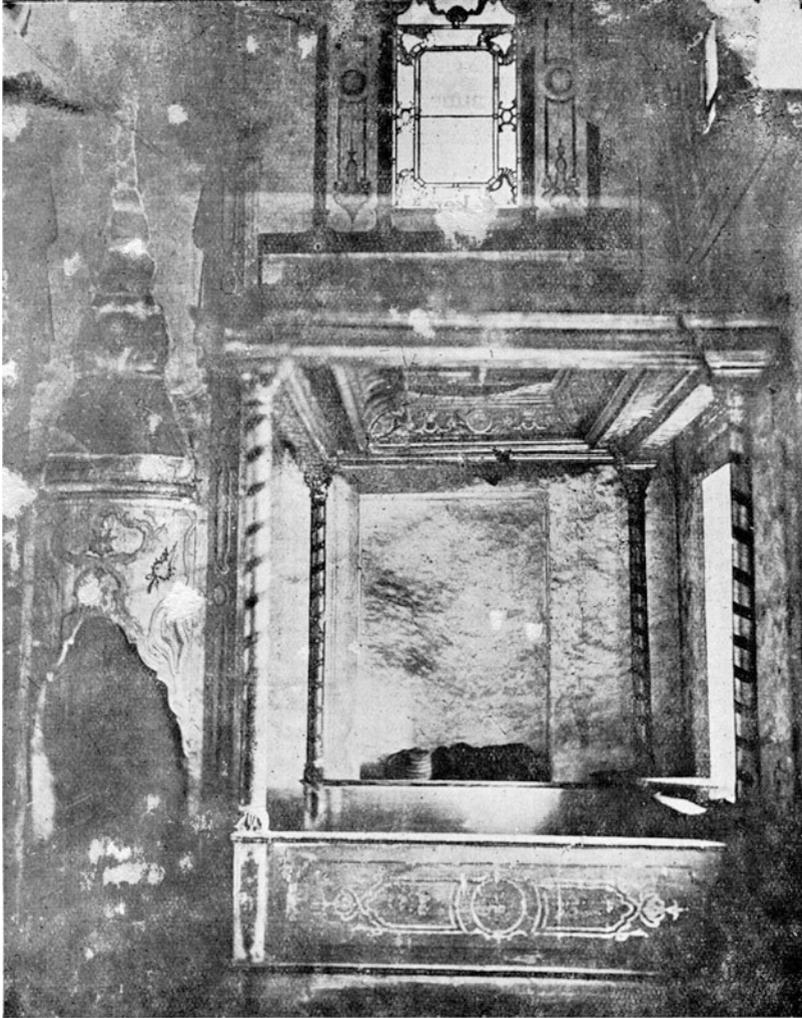


Fig. 14 A nineteenth-century photograph of the interior of the Chamber of Petitions (Arz odası) at the New Palace (Saray-ı Amire), showing the bed-like throne and fireplace. (Sedad Hakk Eldem, *Köşkler Ve Kasırlar / A Survey of Turkish Kiosks and Pavilions*, 2 vols., Istanbul, Devlet Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1969, vol. 1, p. 18, Fig. 14 (original source unknown))



Fig. 15 The Chamber of Petitions at the New Palace was comparable to the same room at the Topkapı Palace, where the embassy of Baron Hans Ludwig von Kuefstein was granted an audience with the sultan in 1628. (Osmanenmuseum Perchtoldsdorf, Austria)

upon a bed ... with four posts.” On it was a crimson covering of embroidered velvet, decorated by rows of large pearls, echoed on the floor by another of red satin with embroidery and large areas woven of gold wire.²⁴ Richly colored and decorated, this small but splendid room with its bed-like throne was probably similar to that of what the Germans found in the audience chamber at Topkapı (Fig. 15).²⁵

THE ENGLISH CRITIQUE

After waiting a few more weeks for the capitulations to be finalized, the officers of the Levant Company finally left Adrianople. How did they assess their experiences of the city, its spaces, as well as the court processions and ceremonies that took place within them?

Coke found the city “pleasantly scituated ... capable of what the most refined Luxury could plant or build.” Inside, however, it was “the

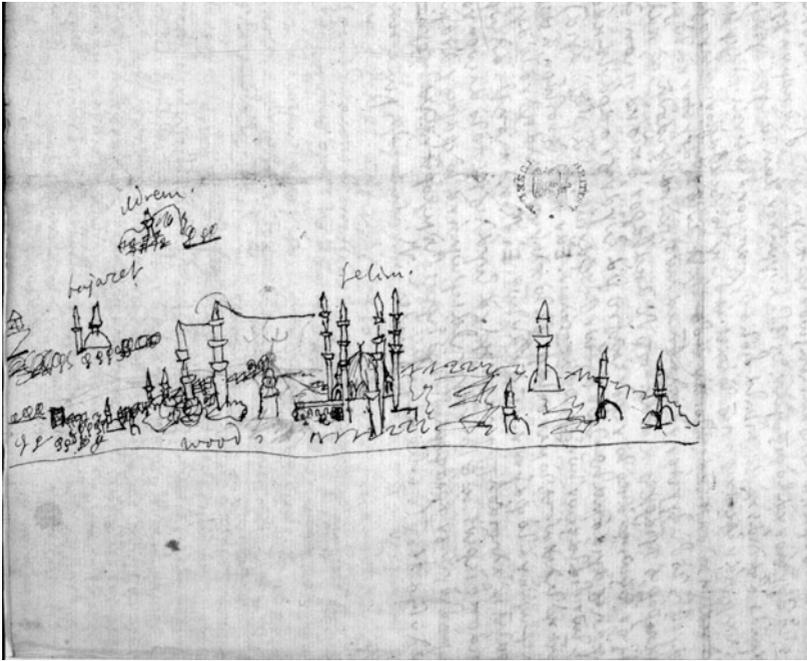


Fig. 16 Covel drew a panoramic view of Adrianople, with the Selimiye shown in the center. (J. Covel, "Autograph Journal," BL Additional MS 22911, f. 477v) (© The British Library Board, ADD. 22911 f477v)

Metropolis of filth and inconvenience." Similarly, Covel found that from several miles away "it shewes gloriously, as all their city's doe at a distance, but within they are very mean and beastly"²⁶ (Fig. 16). Those condemnations echo the habitual rhetoric of English writers about the Ottomans, expressing disdain for their religion, customs, and arts. As for the architecture, Coke declared "the Buildings (except a Mosque or two) [are] so mean and contemptible, that they would disgrace a poor Village."²⁷

Among the exceptions was certainly the Selimiye, the only mosque that Covel studied closely during the trip, going up a minaret to take measurements and sketch as well as acquiring a view drawn by an English trader. Covel concluded that the structure "truely may be said to equall most of those at Stamboul."²⁸ They would have included Hagia Sophia and the Valide Cami, which he also studied and drew.²⁹ His interest in

those mosques is not surprising, given that one is Byzantine in origin and the other is modeled after it. Like the Selimiye, they have formal qualities that ultimately derive from ancient classical architecture—geometry, proportion, and symmetry.

During the festivals and their audience with the sultan, however, the Levant Company officers saw many things that were completely unfamiliar to them visually. In some cases, they expressed approval by referring to them using familiar terminology. For example, the Sırık Meydanı in front of the New Palace was described as a quadrangle, square, and piazza. Covel compared the Kiosk of Processions but also the sultan's stand to a garden summerhouse. In other cases, the English were filled with pure, unmediated admiration—for the distinctive fabrics and decorative arts, finely made of precious materials and displayed in abundance. These were recognized by the English for their economic, aesthetic, and symbolic worth as signs of wealth and power. The prince, Coke declared, was so “adorned or over-laden with jewels, he carri'd the Value of an Empire about him.”³⁰ But there were also abstract qualities and relationships that the English understood as manifestations of “empire,” that is, the appropriation and control of space, achieved by reshaping it, limiting access, and mandating the activities within.

The English found the streets disorderly, both visually and functionally. “The eye is lost in so many solid inconveniencies,” Coke declared, “the Streets and all Avenues to the City so crouded with Carts, Dunghills, and Carrion, that nothing can be more troublesome or offensive to the sight and scent.” For the processions, however, the street was transformed. “The streets are continually kept swept by broom men that waited on purpose,” Covel wrote, and “refresh[ed] with water, ... brought and sprinkled.” Moreover, a few days before the event, “some [houses were] in part pul'd down” to allow the huge *nahls* to pass through the streets. Even during the procession a master carpenter and fifty workmen were on hand, equipped with tools, North reported, “for battering down all Things that but seemed to be in the Way ... beating down as they pleased, without consulting any Owner.”³¹

The street taken over and reshaped, it provided the backdrop for the processions. The order of appearance, hats and dress, mode of transportation—on foot, mounted, or in carriages—and various other props indicated the role and rank of the participants, whether members of the royal family, officials, soldiers, or attendants. North wrote that in the circumcision procession there was “in Honour of the Prince; all the whole

Court conducting him thro' the greater Part of the City to the *Seraglio* with all the Glory imaginable, there being the Vizier and all the Bashas; so that nothing was wanting but the Grand Signor's Person," whose supremacy was understood because of his absence. Covel declared, "All the Court of the G. Sigr. appeared and we saw much of the Glory of the Empire."³² The procession represented the unity, expanse, and power of the empire for both men.

The English were familiar with large-scale royal processions in London, most recently fifteen years prior held for the restoration and coronation of Charles II. In Adrianople, however, the processions had a regimentation that they had never before witnessed, which also extended to the spectators and their behavior. "The streets were lined with women on one side and men on the other," Covel wrote. "Amongst so many people it was most wonderfull to see order and strange silence, not the least rudeness in boyes or men." He observed, to his disbelief that at all the festivities "amongst these vast multitudes all are as husht and orderly as we are at a sermon." But those people were, in the end, the "rabble" kept at the edges of the privileged space and held at bay by guards wielding *tulum*s—inflated sheep-skins smeared with tar.³³

Similar to what they had seen in the street, the English were aware that the vast field taken over for races was more for the sake of occupation, display, and exerting power than for observing the competition. The sultan saw little of the fifteen mile race because his stand was "so farre of[f] from their starting place" and the runners reached the finish line at forty-five minute intervals: "not any one couple come in together to make a contest," Covel observed. But, after walking or trotting most of the way, each runner tried to make a great show before the sultan. "They come at ye stand, they make as if they would run but I assur very few are able to go; they come before ye Gr. Sr and bow, then kisse ye ground then ... receive their reward." Although there was "ye noyse of having 20 or 30 footmen (at his command) run themselves half dead to give him *Gusto*," more was at stake. The real purpose of the two-day event was to spatially and visually demonstrate the ruler's command over a huge number of subjects and their behavior in a vast setting. Covel concluded: "I believe the G. Sr takes more of pride then of pleasure in this sport, for we were above 20,000 horse in ye feild at least, and ye glory of so many attendants is great."³⁴

According to Covel, within the quadrangle in front of the New Palace "every night come the G. Signor and the Prince, the Sultana and ladyes, and all the court to their proper places to see the sights"—in the stands,

kiosk, and the porticos, all assembled according to importance. Similarly, every day before the sultan's stand, following proper modes of address, "all great men throughout his whole empire were compel'd to present him and the sultana," that is, bring them suitably rich gifts.³⁵ In contrast to these controlled demonstrations of status, respect, and wealth, within the ring was a disorder that Coke found familiar: "Had there been but a Noise, Rabble, and abominable Pigs head, nothing could have been an exacter Scene of *Bartholomew-fair*." There were "antick Dances in several habits, Singing and Dancing with most obscene Gesticulations, ... and Punchinello's representations, Wrestling, Rope-dancing, feats of Activity and Strength." The English recognized from their own culture the carnival atmosphere within the quadrangle, but were aware that it was still under control, especially because it lacked "a Noise" and "Rabble." The noisy rabble was kept outside the boundaries and held at bay by janissaries with their "Staves of Correction."³⁶

Covel wrote that "from all parts of the Empire were summon'd all (subjects), Jewes, Greekes, Arabs, Armenians, Turkes, etc." to bring gifts or to perform.³⁷ With their different facial features and dress but gathered together into the same space, these people simultaneously demonstrated the vastness of the sultan's territory and its unity under him. That unity was particularly striking during prayer, in which everyone participated, both people within the quadrangle and the rabble outside. For chaplain Covel, "it was wonderfull to see with what reverence, uniformity, and most admirable devotion all (especially the men of note) betook themselves to their prayers in publick." There were "the chief men in their stands and tents, the others (everywhere round the ring), 20 or 30, or more or lesse, in companys abroad upon carpets or the bare ground." At the same time, non-believers, including Covel and his group, were given leave to watch: they "were permitted to stand by without the least disturbance."³⁸

The imperial message came through to the English not only in the large-scale spatial contexts of the racing field and the quadrangle of the New Palace, but also in small rooms. Back home in Europe, the state apartment of a palace consisted of rooms changing from larger and more public to smaller and more intimate, creating an increasing sense of power and privilege that finally culminated in the person of the ruler or owner.³⁹ Similarly, at the New Palace, the Levant Company entourage was first admitted into the Council Chamber, which was large and open, with relatively simple decoration. After waiting in one area, then another, within the colonnade of the courtyard, they approached the Chamber of Petitions.

But at the door, only ambassador Finch and four others were allowed to enter (Figs. 12, 13 and 14). Half the size of the spacious Council Chamber, this splendid room was small and cramped, filled in one corner with a huge throne, and dimly lit. The contrast caused this space to seem even smaller and thus the richness of the decoration even more concentrated. Sitting at his elevated and canopied throne, the sultan was framed and aggrandized. His relatively simple attire, with a small, plain turban accented by a small feather and a huge diamond, gave his presence against the backdrop of ornate red surfaces even greater impact. This was further enhanced by his "most severe, terrible, stately look," wrote Covel, who, denied entry, had to depend on Finch's account. Although they were there for just four minutes, the ambassador concluded that "it was the richest room for certain in the whole world." Based on this brief encounter but also his own extensive study of Turkish architecture, Covel could confidently declare, "Here are adornments in building very costly and comely, utterly unknown in our parts of the world."⁴⁰

"EMPIRE" AND THE IDEA OF NATIONAL STYLE IN ARCHITECTURE

Although they maintained negative attitudes toward the Ottomans, the spectacles and settings that they witnessed in Adrianople gave the English an understanding of what they called "the Glory of the Empire"—its vastness, power, wealth, and artistic excellence. In addition, their own sense of inferiority was confirmed during the festivals. On one hand, all the "Franks" were given a remarkable degree of access and enjoyed a "strange prodigious civility," Covel wrote. "They took the greatest pride that we should see and ... admire everything."⁴¹ On the other hand, North reported, the Ottomans did not grant the English the "honour" of bringing gifts to the sultan; nor did they give them "any more of their Regards than if we had not been at all there."⁴² The English were so inconsequential to their hosts that they were invisible.

The attitudes exhibited here are within the scope of what Gerald MacLean calls "imperial envy." Rather than operating from "a position of strength," as set forth in Said's paradigm of Orientalism, "the English regarded the Ottomans from a position of relative weakness." Thus, instead of simply a Saidian desire for domination, imperial envy recognizes contradictory attitudes—hatred but also admiration, condemnation but

also emulation. It led in England to “the growth of imperial fantasies and ambitions that would help energize and transform an insular people into an imperial nation.”⁴³ A parallel can be found in architecture: architects, based on their knowledge of the Ottoman Empire but also of the Persian, Indian, and Chinese, reinforced England’s growing ambitions for “empire” by envisioning a national style to go with it.

Sir Christopher Wren, Surveyor General, wrote: “Architecture has its political Use; public Buildings being the Ornament of a Country; it establishes a Nation, draws People and Commerce; makes the People love their native Country, ... The Emulation of the Cities of Greece was the true Cause of their Greatness. ... Modern Rome subsists still, by the Ruins and Imitation of the old, as does Jerusalem, by the Temple of the Sepulchre.... Architecture aims at Eternity.”⁴⁴ For Wren, architecture not only helped to create a nation but also to maintain its greatness for all time. This was demonstrated in the eternal legitimacy of the ancient classical empires of Greece and Rome, despite their extinction, as a model for the present.

Wren was well aware, however, via travelers and through published accounts, of the architecture of *living* empires, which, though strange, was impressive in its effect. He cites the “Saracens,” defined during this period as the followers of Islam, as well as the “Mosques and Cloysters of the Dervises” and the “Seraglio” in his writings.⁴⁵ Once they returned to London, Wren queried North about Turkish construction and may have had access to Covel’s journal. He drew Hagia Sophia, the Byzantine church turned mosque, and knew the images of it and other mosques published in Grelot’s travel account of 1680. In 1680/1681 he saw Chardin’s drawings of Persepolis, the capital of the Persian Empire.⁴⁶ Through these and other sources, Wren and others came to challenge the idea of a universal, absolute beauty derived from nature, sanctioned by God, and proven by the superiority of the ancient Greeks and Romans, by recognizing the existence of different standards of beauty in other cultures based on their own “customs” and “fashions.” But in judging the buildings of those cultures, Wren and others could not avoid applying classical norms. Grelot condemned the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul as a “great heap,” “without any regular Order of Architecture, without Symmetry or Proportion.” Nevertheless, that architecture could not be dismissed. Of the audience chamber at Adrianople, modeled after the one in Topkapı, Covel declared, “Here are adornments in building very costly and comely, utterly unknown in our parts of the world.”⁴⁷

Although in its forms Ottoman architecture might be inferior to the classical, the spectacles set at the New Palace and other places in Adrianople as well as elsewhere in the empire clearly demonstrated its effectiveness in communicating the empire's expansive power and wealth and thereby reinforced it. For English architects, that vision of present-day grandeur among the Ottoman and other eastern emperors energized their aspirations to create an appropriate architectural setting for the restored Stuart monarchy. The Chinese Empire and its architecture, known to Wren and architect John Webb through Nieuhoff's famous 1665 travel account, provided a potent model.⁴⁸ In the dedication to Charles II that begins his 1669 book on the language of China, where he also discussed Chinese buildings, Webb included a prayer on the king's behalf: that he be "religious," "wise," "victorious," and "beloved" on the model of not Roman, but Chinese emperors. "The Lord God ... make all Your People as publicly minded, as ... the Chinois, Whereby Your Majesty and Royal Posterity shall reign happily to Eternity; and Your Kingdoms enjoy Wealth and Prosperity throughout all Ages."⁴⁹ Of course, Webb was offering himself as the one to create the architecture for this new nation under the restored Stuarts.

Although fired up by the example of the eastern empires, Wren and other late seventeenth-century architects did not pursue the aim of nation building through architecture by copying the forms and ornaments used by those cultures—the so-called "exotic" styles would not be utilized until well into the next century. Nor did this goal involve, despite a recognition of the existence of artistic modes outside the classical norm, the acceptance of those modes as anything other than inferior to the ancient style. Instead, by expanding beyond the models of past, extinct empires to include living, thriving ones, and by challenging the authority of nature and God with that of custom and society, architects could envision an architecture that was a specific *national* manifestation of what heretofore had been a *universal* classicism. For architects and patrons, including the king and his successors, that architecture, which we now know as the English Baroque, would provide the setting, but also the inspiration for a nascent nation. Confronted by eastern imperial spectacles and their settings, this agenda was begun with a sense of inferiority. This would soon be overcome, however, through the appropriation of the eternal classical style as *the* style of the British nation, and over time through its expansion into a vast colonial empire.

NOTES

1. See Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 112–21; and “Edirne” and “Meĥemmed IV,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, Leiden: Brill, 2012, <http://www.brill.com>.
2. See Lydia M. Soo, “The English in the Levant: Social Networks and the Study of Architecture,” in *“The Mirror of Great Britain”: National Identity in Seventeenth-Century British Architecture*, ed. Olivia Horsfall Turner (Reading: Spire Books, 2012), 209–31.
3. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Alan Masters, *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Facts On File, 2009), 370. For a study of the festivals, see Ozdemir Nutku, *IV. Mehmet’in Edirne senligi (1675)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1972).
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- entertainment involved men walking or sliding down a tight rope, stretched 480 feet from one of the Selimiye minarets down into the courtyard.
21. Covel, "Autograph Journal," 217r-217v.
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