ARS
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55

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

With this volume, *Ars Orientalis* continues its exciting return to open submissions. While the earlier thematic volumes were tremendously popular, this shift will allow *Ars Orientalis* to continue to represent the breadth of scholarship on the arts and material cultures from the Mediterranean to the Pacific.

The peer-reviewed articles in volume 55 speak to *AO*'s wide range and the multitude of geographic areas, periods, and topics it covers. The contributors explore Palmyrene inscriptions and their preservation by twentieth-century scholars, European representations of a famous Japanese screen, the proliferation of "beautiful women paintings" (*meiren tu*) in late Ming China, and Isamu Noguchi's often overlooked deep engagement with early Indian sculpture.

This issue also inaugurates "New Directions," a series that offers broader perspectives on the field, presents historiographical overviews, and suggests new avenues of research or the reframing of current methodology. This initiative launches with an article by Gülru Necipoğlu, the fifteenth recipient of the Freer Medal, an award that honors scholars who have over the course of their career contributed in a significant and often transformative way to the understanding of the arts of Asia. Necipoğlu here expands on her keynote lecture delivered at the National Museum of Asian Art on October 27, 2023, on the dynamic artistic relationship between the medieval Persianate world, Europe, and China.

Conversations from the Field focuses on the issue of replicas from diverse viewpoints and highlights how various institutions have used digital and physical facsimiles to engage with new audiences and underscore materiality albeit through mimesis.

Digital Initiatives continues the theme of replication in our section that engages with the digital turn of art history. This piece addresses the potential for photogrammetric modeling to capture ritual context as well as its limitations, particularly for Asian materials that bear religious significance.

ELEONORA CUSSINI

THE ERNST HERZFELD PAPERS AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Identifying the Palmyrene Squeezes

ABSTRACT

The National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, houses a collection of about 30,000 documents originally belonging to the German architect and archaeologist Ernst Emil Herzfeld (1879–1948). They comprise photographs and negatives on glass plates, sketches, excavation journals, maps, and letters illustrating Herzfeld's archaeological fieldwork in the Near East. Among them is a group of twenty-seven glass negatives documenting the work on Palmyrene epigraphy by one of his colleagues, the German semitist Moritz Sobernheim. Herzfeld and Sobernheim traveled extensively in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, collecting Islamic inscriptions. Their journeys and epigraphic survey are documented in photographs that are part of the Ernst Herzfeld Papers, and some of the images show their personal friendship and family relations. The photographs of the Palmyrene squeezes illustrate the use of three-dimensional replicas of inscriptions for study purposes and publication during that early phase of research. They are an invaluable record of Sobernheim's pioneering epigraphic work and illustrate the productive working partnership between the two scholars. A careful analysis of the photographs, which present a reversed impression of the epigraphs on the paper squeezes, has allowed the identification of twenty-six Palmyrene inscriptions that are listed here according to the numbers on the negatives, with reference to text type and findspot, and are cross-referenced to the *editio princeps* and other major publications. The present identification provides a significant element to complete their inventory in the Ernst Herzfeld Papers.

The Ernst Herzfeld Papers

The National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, houses a collection of about 30,000 documents originally belonging to the German architect and archaeologist Ernst Emil Herzfeld (1879–1948). They comprise photographs and negatives on glass plates, sketches, excavation journals, maps, and letters. The documents illustrate many epigraphic surveys Herzfeld conducted together with his colleague and friend the German

FIGURES 1A,B. (a) Moritz Sobernheim in Northern Syria (ca.1908–14). (b) Moritz Sobernheim on a ladder, examining an Arabic inscription in a fourteenth-century caravanserai, now destroyed, Khan al-Sabil, Idlib Governorate, Syria (ca. 1908–14). National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3574; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3366

semitist Moritz Sebastian Sobernheim (1872–1933), as well as his archaeological fieldwork in the Near East.[1] Following his retirement from Princeton University in 1944, Herzfeld sold his library containing rare books, his precious carpets and household furnishings, and his collection of ancient artifacts, and in May 1946 he returned to the Near East.[2] He was first in Aleppo and Damascus, and in the fall he finally moved to Cairo. There he fell ill, and in 1947 he joined his sister Charlotte in Switzerland to undergo medical treatment in Basel, where he died on January 21, 1948. In 1946, upon the encouragement of his friend Richard Ettinghausen, then curator of Near Eastern art at the Freer Gallery of Art, Herzfeld had donated the bulk of his documents to the Freer Gallery and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of what is now the National Museum of Asian Art.[3] The rest of the documents were donated after his death by his heirs and friends to the same institution and to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.[4] In the early 1950s,

FIGURES 2A,B. (a) Aleppo (Syria): Great Synagogue, Moritz Sobernheim seated, probably 1914. (b) Ernst Herzfeld (left) with Moritz Sobernheim (center) and an unidentified colleague and a local worker, probably 1914. To the right, detail of a wooden panel with geometrical motifs and Abu Bakr inscription (likely from the *Takiyyat ash-Shaykh Abu Bakr*), Aleppo. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3463; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3512

FIGURES 3A,B. (a) Professor Moritz Sobernheim family portrait, 1903/1904: Georg Hahn (second row, at far left) and wife Frida Sobernheim (front row, second from left) next to her uncle Rudolph Magnus. Second row, between ladies: Walter Sobernheim; (behind him at right), Moritz Sobernheim (?). Top, center: Curt and Luise Sobernheim (?). (b) Moritz Sobernheim with Ernst Herzfeld's sisters, Elizabeth (Boldt) and Charlotte (Bradford), between 1900 and 1907 (in Lebanon?). National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3573; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3595

his sister Charlotte Bradford (formerly Brodführer) donated other documents to the Freer Gallery. The rest of Herzfeld's papers and a manuscript that he had left at the French Institute in Cairo entered the Freer Gallery of Art Collection in 1952 and 1965.[5] Additional documents were donated in 1960 and 1970 by one of Herzfeld's friends, the leading American expert in Islamic numismatics Charles C. Miles.

While researching Moritz Sobernheim's 1899 epigraphic survey of Palmyra, I consulted the online resources in the Ernst Herzfeld Papers, specifically the photographs of the paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions from Herzfeld's original negatives on glass plates measuring 13 by 18 centimeters, now housed at the National Museum of Asian Art. The images of the paper squeezes offer a glimpse of the early phases of epigraphic research at Palmyra.[6] They also provide an invaluable record of inscribed artifacts now mostly lost after the destruction and plunder of the site and the Palmyra museum in 2015 and 2016. As the inventory notes accompanying Herzfeld's glass negatives do not reference the inscriptions they illustrate, I identified each squeeze to provide the museum records with a significant element to complete the entries.

Among the images available for online consultation are family photographs that display Herzfeld and Sobernheim's personal friendship and family relations. These last images, although not relevant to the discussion on the Palmyrene inscriptions and squeezes and their photographic reproduction, are important historical visual documents. Some of the family shots Herzfeld saved among his papers allow us to catch a glimpse into the world of renowned German Jewish scholars, patrons of the arts, and collectors, a world soon to be upset by persecution, flight, and relocation, and tragically disrupted.

Herzfeld's Photographs and Early Epigraphic Surveys with Moritz Sobernheim

The Ernst Herzfeld Papers include glass negatives documenting the work on Palmyrene epigraphy by one of Herzfeld's colleagues, Moritz Sebastian Sobernheim (1872–1933), a scholar with interests in Palmyrene and Islamic epigraphy who had visited Palmyra and nearby sites in 1899. Sobernheim surveyed the Palmyrene frescoed hypogeum known today as the Tomb of the Three

Brothers, reexamined already known inscriptions, and made copies and paper squeezes of other new texts, which he published in an article in 1902.[7] A larger collection of Palmyrene inscriptions appeared in a monograph he published in 1905.[8] In preparing that contribution, Sobernheim worked on hand copies as well as on a group of paper squeezes he had received from Otto Puchstein (1856–1911), director of the German expedition to Baalbek, who made the squeezes during a field trip to Palmyra from Lebanon. From 1900 to 1914, Sobernheim, who was also a member of the archaeological expedition to Baalbek, made various epigraphic surveys in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. Herzfeld, who was also an architect and a skilled draftsman, collaborated with Sobernheim in preparing the architectural plans for the 1905 expedition to Baalbek.

In June and July 1908, Sobernheim and Herzfeld visited Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and other sites.[9] A photograph taken in April 1908 shows them aboard a steamer in the Mediterranean on their way to Syria, with Maria Humann, wife of the German archaeologist Friedrich Sarre, with whom she was traveling to Egypt.[10] Between March and May 1914, Sobernheim and Herzfeld continued their epigraphic mission in Aleppo and Damascus. They surveyed monuments and collected Islamic inscriptions as part of their ongoing project sponsored by the French Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, and directed by the Swiss Arabist Maximilien van Berchem (1863–1921). Their joint research project led to the publication of the series of monographs devoted to Islamic inscriptions from Egypt, Syria, Jerusalem, and Arabia, titled *Matériaux pour un Corpus inscriptionum arabicarum: deuxième partie, Syrie du Nord; Inscriptions et monument d'Alep* (1894–1985).[11] Their research is documented in glass negatives and photographs that are also part of the Herzfeld Papers archive.[12] In addition to details of inscriptions and their findspots, the negatives show images of the two scholars, sometimes accompanied by a colleague, local workers, or guides (see fig. 2b). Other photographs show Sobernheim at work, examining inscriptions and during visits to Aleppo and other sites (figs. 1a,b). In one picture, he sits pensively on a bench in the Great Synagogue in Aleppo, probably between 1908 and 1914 (fig. 2a). In 1916, Sobernheim, who was an active Zionist, became president of the Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums (Society for the Promotion of Jewish Scholarship), and from 1918 to 1932, he was in charge of the departemente of Deutsch–Jüdische Beziehungen (German–Jewish Relations) at the German Foreign Office.[13]

Herzfeld and His Friends: The Sobernheims and the Hahns

The Herzfeld Papers contain numerous records of Herzfeld's archaeological fieldwork, which included the excavation of the Islamic site of Samarra on the Tigris that he conducted between January 1911 and July 1913 together with Friedrich Sarre (1865–1945), head of the Islamic department at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin (now the Museum für Islamische Kunst). Once again, that project connected Herzfeld to Sobernheim and his family, and more precisely to Sobernheim's sister Frida and her husband Georg Hahn.

Two photographs show a group of people in formal attire and are labeled "Professor Moritz Sobernheim family portrait, 1903/1904" (fig. 3a). Despite the lack of information, it seems probable that the photos were taken at a festive family celebration, perhaps an engagement or a marriage. Curiously, Moritz Sobernheim is not mentioned in the handwritten notes left by his son Rudolph in 1973 on a print from one of the two negatives.[14] However, I suggest that Moritz Sobernheim can be identified as the young man on the right in the third row (standing behind an unidentified woman who looks down), behind and to the right of his brother Walter Sobernheim, who looks directly at the camera. Their sister Frida is in the front row, second from the left, in a dark gown with a long string of pearls, seated between a lady

in a light gown and her uncle Rudolph Magnus, a renowned pharmacologist.[15] Another glass negative (FSA A.6 04.GN.3572) shows an image of the same family group in slightly different poses, some having switched their positions. Perhaps the lady to the left of Walter Sobernheim (and behind him in photograph FS-FSA_A.6_04.GN.3572), covered by him in figure 3a, is his wife, Gertrud Schottländer.[16] Frida's husband, Georg Heinrich Hahn (1864–1953), was an art collector and heir of the company Hahnsche Werke AG, founded in 1890 in Großenbaum near Duisburg by his father, the steel entrepreneur Albert Hahn (1824–1898), who expanded it as Albert-Hahn-Röhrenwerke, and later as Hahnsche Werke. The family came from Breslau in today's Lower Silesia, at the time part of Prussia, and their last name derived from the original form "Elchanan."[17] During the so-called Aryanization of Jewish-owned firms and properties, the process of confiscation that started in 1933, their company was sold to the Mannesman group and renamed Stahl und Walzwerke Großenbaum AG.[18]

It is probable that Moritz Sobernheim's research work inspired his sister Frida and brother-in-law Georg Hahn. They became collectors of ancient Near Eastern antiquities and patrons of the arts, and supported the excavations of Herzfeld and Friedrich Sarre at Samarra in Iraq, and Hugo Winckler's work in Turkey at Boğazköy, where he discovered the ancient Hittite capital, Ḫattuša.[19] In his capacity as a member of the board of the Vorderasiatische Gesellschaft, Georg Hahn generously contributed to the publications of relevant research.[20] Thanks to his funding, eight cases with some of the Samarra findings were shipped to Germany in 1922 and displayed at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin.[21] As a token of appreciation for their financial support to the Boğazköy expedition, the Hahns received from Winckler two unique cuneiform tablets, the so-called Aleppo Treaty and the letter of the Egyptian Queen Nefertari, Ramses II's wife, to the Hittite Queen Puduḫepa, wife of Ḫattušili III.[22] Herzfeld's expertise contributed to the expansion of the Hahns' collection of Near Eastern and classical artifacts, displayed in their Berlin residence at Tiergartenstrasse 21, and in their summer home in Wannsee. The Tiergartenstrasse villa was destroyed by an Allied bombardment, and the modern building of the embassy of Turkey, completed in 2012, was built on a portion of the former lot. To mark the memory of a family member, a *Stolperstein* laid in 2009 by the German conceptual artist Gunter Demnig where the Hahns' residence once stood commemorates Grete Sobernheim,

daughter of Curt Joseph Sobernheim and Luise (Lilli) Rosenfeld (fig. 4).[23] Curt and Lilli Sobernheim left for France in July 1933, where they were eventually arrested by the Gestapo and both died in 1940: Curt in the Cherche-Midi military prison and Lilli in unknown circumstances. Grete remained in Berlin and moved into an apartment in the Hahns' villa until the whole residence was expropriated and she was forced to find different accommodations. On October 24, 1941, she was deported from the Grunewald train station to the Litzmannstadt ghetto in Łódź, where she died on March 9, 1942. An exquisite ex-libris with the names of Curt and Luise Sobernheim on a book looted from their library was discovered in the Württemberg State Library in Stuttgart, through an inventory of books looted from Jewish homes.[24] This, together with the family photographs in the Herzfeld Papers, are faint traces of their former lives in Berlin.

Among the Near Eastern artifacts in the Hahns' collection were cuneiform tablets, including the two donated by Winckler, a piece of Old Babylonian jewelry (a gold necklace from Dilbat), a notable collection of 428 cylinder and stamp seals, Islamic glasses, and Palmyrene funerary reliefs.[25] At the end of 1938, when the Hahns left Germany, they managed to take a great part of their collection with them. After a period spent in England, they eventually settled in Latin America, first in Mexico and then in Rio de Janeiro, where Georg Hahn passed away at the age of ninety in 1953, followed by Frida at eighty-one in 1955.[26] In 1947, the Dilbat gold necklace was sold to the Metropolitan Museum of Art through an art dealer on behalf of Georg Hahn, who, later that year, also donated four late–Old Babylonian or Kassite small cylinder seals dated to roughly the seventeenth or sixteenth century BCE.[27] The collection of Mesopotamian seals was eventually donated to the State of Israel in 1965 by the Hahn-Voss family after the death of Anna Marie Hahn Voss in 1962. It is now kept on long-term loan at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.[28]

The friendship and closeness between Ernst Herzfeld and the Sobernheims is also illustrated by other negatives in the Herzfeld Papers, which show cherished moments of happiness in their life, among them: Moritz Sobernheim and Herzfeld's sisters (fig. 3b); Moritz's wife, Klara Nelly Gitta Schiff, sitting in the nursery with a baby, perhaps their firstborn Rudolph; and her mother, Emma Clothilde Schiff, holding a baby, again, possibly Rudolph.[29]

Photographing the Palmyrene Paper Squeezes

As was commonly done at the time, the paper squeezes Sobernheim used to prepare his 1905 text edition were made by placing moist paper sheets on the stones, making sure that the paper filled the carved inscriptions. When the paper had dried, the squeezes offered a three-dimensional replica of the inscription, and provided a reliable physical reproduction of the texts.[30] The twenty-seven glass negatives of the Palmyrene paper squeezes are an invaluable record of Sobernheim's (and Puchstein's) pioneering epigraphic work. They illustrate a technique of reproduction of the epigraphs quite common at the time, and document the productive working partnership between Sobernheim and Herzfeld. Moreover, Herzfeld's glass negatives offer insight into the process of photographing the paper squeezes, which was probably carried out in Berlin around or after 1905, perhaps at Herzfeld's home, either at Schaperstraße 37 or at Nürnberger Platz 5 (both in Wilmersdorf, Berlin), where he moved in 1909.[31]

A print from one of Herzfeld's negatives offers a wider view of what surrounded the wooden easel on which the squeezes were pinned to be photographed (fig. 5a; a reverse image of the negative, allowing the inscription to be identified). The image preserves the atmosphere of a room decorated with elegant flower-motif wallpaper, a bourgeois interior turned into a
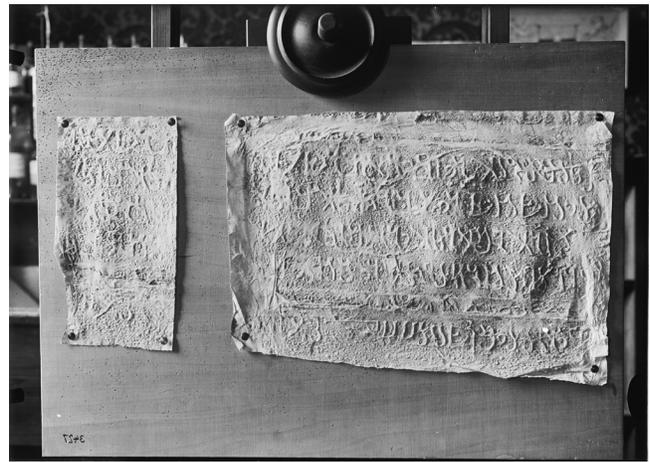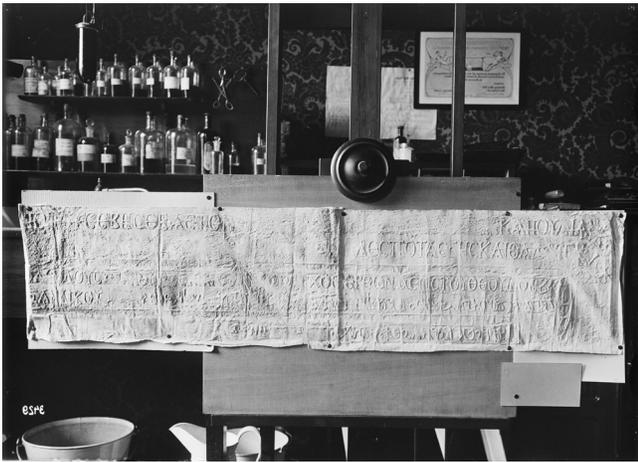
FIGURES 5A,B. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (a) Right portion of a Greek and Palmyrene honorific text on door lintel. PAT 0316, CE 203. (b) Palmyrene honorific text on column bracket. PAT 0265, CE 117 (on smaller squeeze to the left, concluding portion of same text). National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.604.GN.3429, photo file 12, image no. 95; (b) FSA A.604.GN.3427, photo file 12, image no. 75
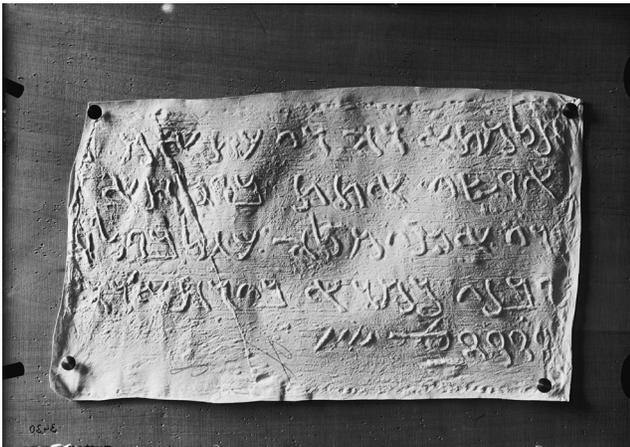
FIGURES 6A,B. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (a) Palmyrene honorific text on statue base. PAT 0315, 18 BCE. (b) Palmyrene honorific text on statue base. PAT 0314, CE 135. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.604.GN.3430, photo file 12, image no. 96; (b) FSA A.604.GN.3428, photo file 12, image no. 76

photographer's studio. To the left are labeled bottles probably containing chemicals used in the process of fixing the negatives and printing photographs, placed in orderly rows on two shelves. A pair of scissors and two large keys hang next to the bottles and, from the ceiling, a suspended oblong lightbulb, probably a red darkroom light used in the developing process. Behind the easel, pinned to the background wall is a sheet of paper and, in a frame, possibly a (university?) certificate, with elegant Jugendstil decoration, both unfortunately illegible. On the floor, below the easel, are two white enamel metal buckets and a jar. On the easel, ready to be photographed, is the paper squeeze of the left portion of a bilingual honorific inscription of 203 CE, in Greek and Palmyrene script (PAT 0316).[32] The inscription was carved on a door

FIGURES 7A,B. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (a) Palmyrene dedicatory text on altar. PAT 0334, after CE 89. (b) Palmyrene dedicatory texts on altars: (left) PAT 0361, CE 207; (right) PAT 0448, fragment, date lost. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3433, photo file 12, image no. 99; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3081, photo file 12, image no. 80
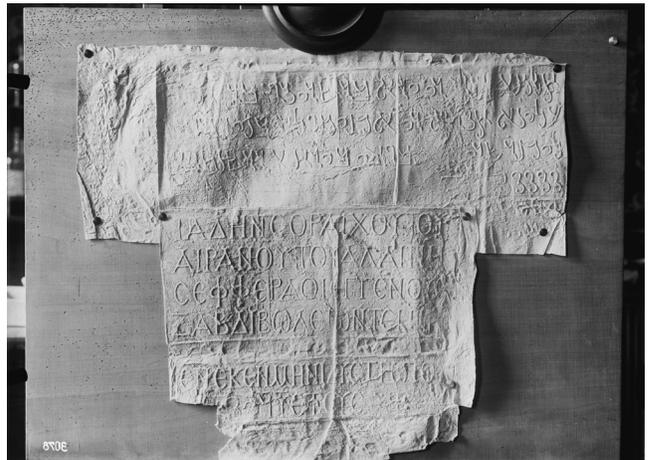
FIGURES 8A,B. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (a, top) Palmyrene and Greek honorific text on column bracket. PAT 0267, CE 120. (a, bottom) Palmyrene dedicatory text on stela. PAT 0335, CE 135. (b) Greek and Palmyrene honorific text on column bracket (Greek, bottom squeeze, on front face of bracket; Palmyrene, top squeeze, on left side of bracket). PAT 0296, CE 179. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3434, photo file 12, image no. 100; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3078, photo file 12, image no. 77

lintel, and this allowed for long lines, especially of the Greek text, to appear on the stone. It is likely that the lintel was originally placed above a monumental gate in a public building, but in this as in many other cases, it had been reemployed in a later structure, a Byzantine church. There it was found by Otto Puchstein, as one reads in the introductory notes to this inscription in the *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*.[33] As in other photographs of the Palmyrene squeezes taken by Herzfeld, one can see cardboard sheets of various sizes pinned on either side of the easel to extend its surface in order to unfold and display the entire squeeze. In 1905, Sobernheim published his edition of a group of Palmyrene inscriptions
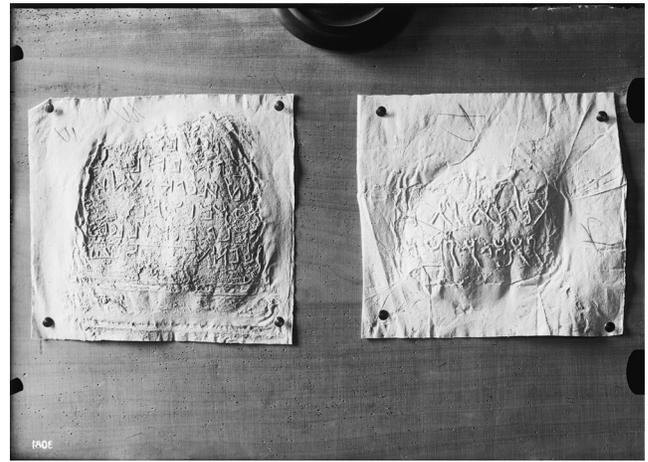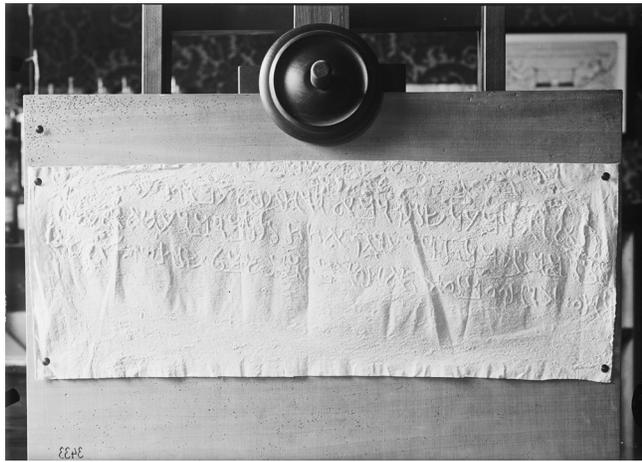
FIGURES 9A,B. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (a) Palmyrene and Greek honorific text on column bracket. PAT 0266, CE 127. (b) Palmyrene honorific text on column bracket. PAT 0306, CE 157. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3082, photo file 12, image no. 81; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3091, photo file 12, image no. 90

accompanied by photographs (of the same squeezes) made by "Frl. Ch. u. E. Gusserow," whom he wholeheartedly thanked.[34] I suggest identifying the two photographers as Charlotte (later von Bodeker, 1884–1953) and her sister Elisabeth Marie Emilie (later Schlepegrell, 1885–1968), daughters of the renowned Berlin gynecologist Adolph Ludwig Sigismond Gusserow (1836–1906) and Clara Margarethe Oppenheim (1861–1944), and at the time in their twenties. Although the paper squeezes are the same, there is no doubt that the images published in the 1905 edition and the set of negatives by Herzfeld resulted from different photo sessions. In the photographs by the Gusserow sisters, one may observe another setting: the squeezes are placed (or pinned?) on another support or background, different from the easel always seen in Herzfeld's pictures. To confirm the possibility that Herzfeld photographed the squeezes after the 1905 edition was published, the museum notes to this section of the Herzfeld Papers, perhaps by Joseph M. Upton, an archaeologist and former collaborator of Herzfeld's, read:

> Glass negative related primarily to an expedition to Palmyra (Syria), carried out by Moritz Sobernheim in 1899, when he photographed and made squeezes of some of the inscriptions. A few years later, while in Berlin, Ernst Herzfeld collaborated with M. Sobernheim by drafting architectural plans for the 1905 expedition to Baalbek. At that time, he might have gained access to the squeezes of the Palmyrene inscriptions that are the subject of this series of glass negatives.

In contrast, as Sobernheim pointed out in the 1905 edition, the squeezes photographed by the Gusserow sisters (and later by Herzfeld) were made by Puchstein and not by him. It seems likely that Herzfeld's photographs were not yet available to Sobernheim when he submitted his *Palmyrenische Inschriften* for publication with the images provided by Charlotte and Elisabeth Gusserow. Later, Herzfeld photographed the squeezes again to preserve an important epigraphic record. The paper squeezes were in fact extremely fragile, and as the photographs show, they look quite worn out and damaged both in Herzfeld's negatives and in the earlier

FIGURES 10A,B. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (a) Greek and Palmyrene dedicatory text on altar. PAT 0344, CE 132. (b) Palmyrene dedication on another side, same altar. PAT 0344. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3085, photo file 12, image no. 84; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3083, photo file 12, image no. 82

images. It is unknown whether the process of reproduction was carried out by Herzfeld alone or if Sobernheim participated as well. Fifteen negatives are marked by sequential inventory numbers (3078–3095), and eight have another sequence (3427–3434), possibly an indication of two different photo sessions (figs. 6a,b). Finally, the negative with the image of a map of Palmyra has yet another inventory number (0840), as does the one of a paper squeeze with an inscription—not identified here—with remains of a line in Palmyrene script.[35] In addition to cardboard extensions to accommodate squeezes of different sizes, the easel was turned vertically, and sometimes it held two or even three squeezes. At times, squeezes of different inscriptions were grouped and photographed together (e.g., figs. 7b, 12). Different squeezes reproducing parts of the same inscription appear together (fig. 5b), or were assembled, although not always according to the original layout of the epigraphs (fig. 8b). One negative shows a squeeze with a Greek inscription, and four lines in Palmyrene, below the Greek text originally from an altar (PAT 0344, CE 132; fig. 10a). Another inscription in Palmyrene, six lines, carved on another side of the same altar, appears on another squeeze, photographed alone (fig. 10b). A Greek and Palmyrene honorific inscription on a stone tablet (PAT 0260, CE 175) was copied onto two different paper squeezes because of its long lines, and each squeeze was photographed alone (figs. 11a,b).

Palmyrene Inscriptions in Herzfeld's Glass Negatives: Identifying the Records

The paper squeezes provide a "negative" three-dimensional image of the inscriptions; therefore, all of the available images have been reversed here in order to allow Greek and Palmyrene inscriptions to be read. For this reason, the handwritten inventory numbers appear reversed in the images presented here. Present whereabouts of the original Palmyrene squeezes are not indicated in the museum notes to the Herzfeld Papers.[36] The examination of Herzfeld's photographs of the squeezes, based on consultation of the online resources, has allowed me the identification of the following twenty-six Palmyrene inscriptions, listed here according to the number on each glass negative. In the case of no. 27, it was not possible to read and identify
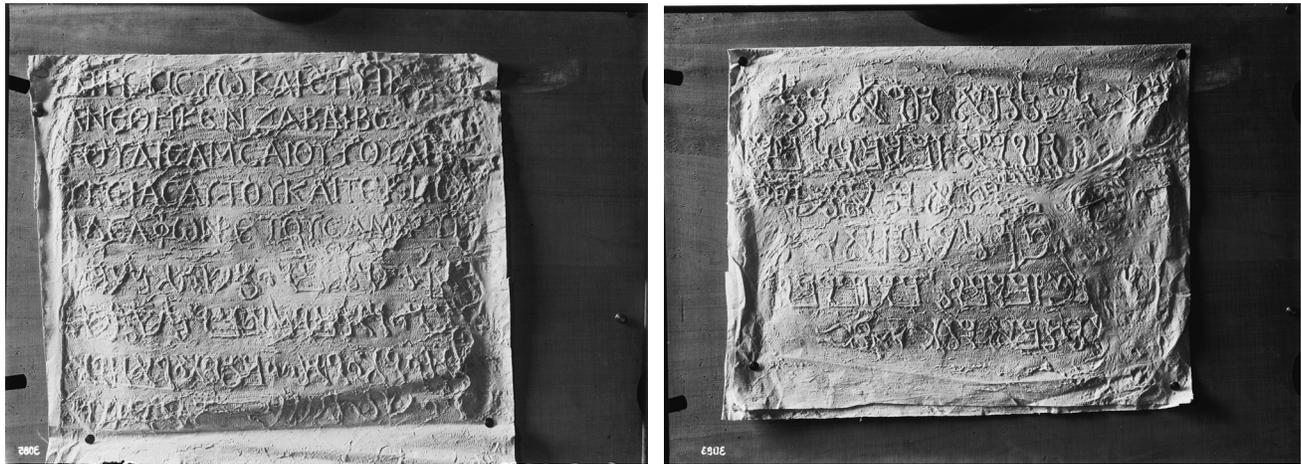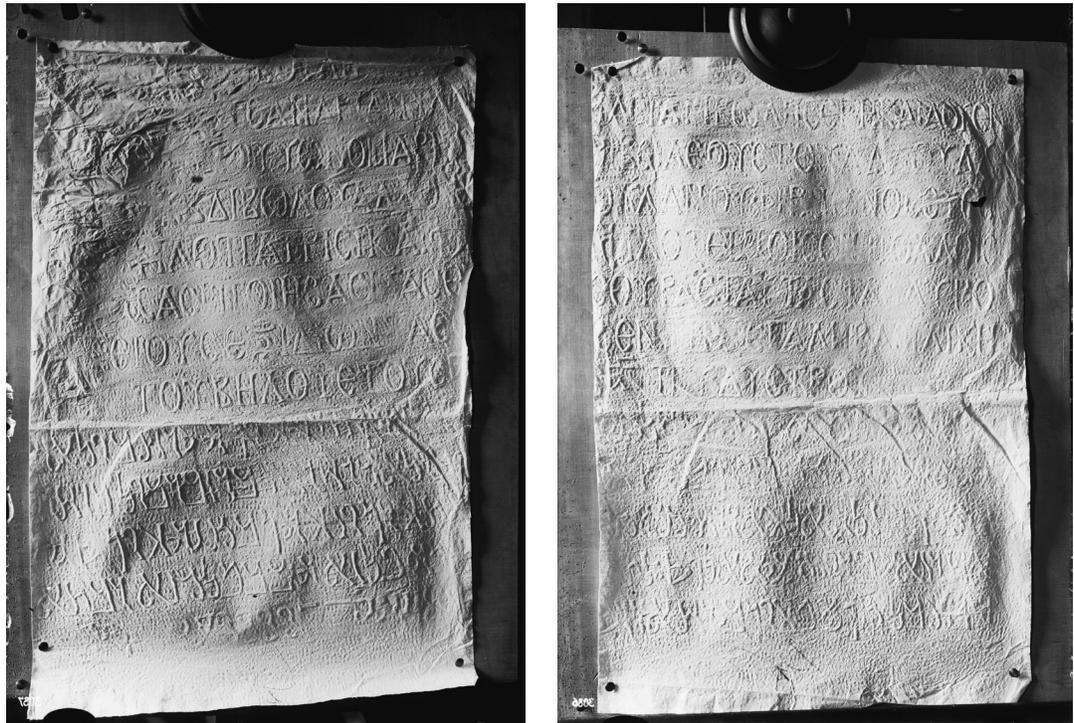
FIGURES 11A,B. Paper squeezes of a Palmyrene inscription, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. Greek and Palmyrene honorific text on a stone tablet, divided into two squeezes. PAT 0260, CE 175. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, (a) FSA A.6 04.GN.3087, photo file 12, image no. 86; (b) FSA A.6 04.GN.3086, photo file 12, image no. 85

the inscription on the basis of the remains of one line. The process of making two squeezes to reproduce one inscription took place on the field, and depended on the length and dimensions of given inscriptions (e.g., fig. 11). When the inscription was rather long, the epigraphists used two separate sheets of paper. During the photographic session, the two parts of the original inscription were sometimes reassembled, although not always, according to the original lay-out. One negative shows the squeeze with a Palmyrene inscription pinned on top, and that with the Greek text below it (fig. 8b). In contrast, the Greek inscription was carved on the front face of that column bracket, and the Palmyrene text, in longer lines, on its left side as one can see in PAT 0296, CE 179 (no. 1, below).

The present identification of each inscription has been a relatively complex process. In the first place, each photograph had to be reversed in order to obtain a positive image and enlarged as a whole and in its details, allowing for easier examination. Second, it was possible to read and cross-reference each text. Only at a later point did it became evident that the same squeezes appeared in the photographs accompanying Sobernheim's 1905 edition. A comparison between the texts and images in that publication to those in the Herzfeld Papers confirmed the correct identification of each Palmyrene inscription. Today, however, as the literature shows, several readings in Sobernheim's first edition have been improved and completed. The negatives in the Ernst Herzfeld Papers archive illustrate the following inscriptions, still in situ or part of the collection of the former Palmyra museum until 2015.

FIGURE 12. Paper squeezes of Palmyrene inscriptions, photographed in Herzfeld's study (?), Berlin. (top) PAT 0554, CE 204; (center) PAT 0307, date lost; (bottom) PAT 0311, date lost. National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Ernst Herzfeld Papers, FSA A.6 04.GN.3088, photo file 12, image no. 87

1. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3078 (photo file 12, image no. 77):[37] Sobernheim 1905, XIII, 28 = PAT 0296, CE 179 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 116[38]). Greek (six lines) and Palmyrene (four lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket from the Transversal Colonnade (fig. 8b).
2. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3079 (photo file 12, image no. 78): Sobernheim 1905, XI, 24 = PAT 0309, date formula partly lost, between 89 and 188 CE (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 244). Greek (two extant lines) and Palmyrene (four lines) honorific inscription on a wall bracket from the agora.
3. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3080 (photo file 12, image no. 79): Sobernheim 1905, VI, 10 = PAT 0268, CE 28. Palmyrene honorific inscription (three lines) on a column bracket from the Temple of Bel.
4. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3081 (photo file 12, image no. 80): two squeezes; (on left) Sobernheim 1905, VII, 13 = PAT 0361, CE 207. Palmyrene dedicatory inscription (seven lines) on an altar dedicated to the so-called Anonymous God, in the former Palmyra Museum; (on right) Sobernheim 1905, XVIII, 37 = PAT 0448, date lost. Palmyrene dedicatory inscription (remains of two lines) on an altar fragment, now lost (fig. 7b).
5. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3082 (photo file 12, image no. 81): Sobernheim 1905, V, 8 = PAT 0266, CE 127 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 28). Greek (four lines) and Palmyrene (four lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket found reemployed in a later Muslim wall. In the former Palmyra Museum, in storage (fig. 9a).

6. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3083 (photo file 12, image no. 82): Sobernheim 1905, XVII, 34b = PAT 0344, CE 132 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 130[39]). Greek and Palmyrene dedicatory inscription on an altar found reemployed in the Diocletian Camp area. The squeeze has a second Palmyrene dedication (six lines) carved on another side of the altar, offered by a son or descendant of the first dedicant (fig. 10b). The first inscription in Greek (five lines) and Palmyrene (four lines) appears on another squeeze; see no. 8 (fig. 10a).

7. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3084 (photo file 12, image no. 83): Sobernheim 1905, XIV, 29a = PAT 0312, CE 64 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 124). Greek (nine lines) and Palmyrene (eight lines) honorific inscription on a column, framed by a *tabula ansata*, also visible on the squeeze that displays the Greek inscription and the beginning of the Palmyrene section (first and part of second line). The complete Palmyrene inscription appears on another squeeze; see no. 23.

8. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3085 (photo file 12, image no. 84): Sobernheim 1905, XVI, 34a, XVII, 34b = PAT 0344, CE 132 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 130). Greek (five lines) and Palmyrene (four lines) dedicatory inscription on an altar found reemployed in the Diocletian Camp area (fig. 10a). For the other Palmyrene dedication on another side of the same artifact; see no. 6 (fig. 10b).

9. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3086 (photo file 12, image no. 85): Sobernheim 1905, I, 1a = PAT 0260, CE 175 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 21[40]). Greek (eight lines) and Palmyrene (five lines) honorific inscription on a stone tablet from the Temple of Bel. The inscription was carved in long horizontal lines, and the squeeze contains a partial vertical section of both parts: roughly the second half of the Greek text and the first part of the Palmyrene. For the other portion, see no. 10. For an image of both squeezes, see fig. 11.

10. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3087 (photo file 12, image no. 86): Sobernheim 1905, II, 1b = PAT 0260 CE 175 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 21). Greek (eight lines) and Palmyrene (five lines) honorific inscription on a stone tablet from the Temple of Bel. This squeeze completes the previous one, no. 9. The inscription was carved in long horizontal lines and contains a partial vertical section of both parts: the first half of the Greek text, and the second part of the Palmyrene text. Both squeezes appear in fig. 11.

11. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088 (photo file 12, image no. 87): Sobernheim 1905, XXIV, 42b = PAT 0554, CE 204 (top squeeze): Palmyrene funerary inscription, fragmentary (remains of three lines, lower portion of original text) probably recording the sale of a tomb section. In the former Palmyra Museum. Another portion of this inscription is on another squeeze; see no. 12. The same negative shows two other squeezes: (center squeeze) Sobernheim 1905, X, 22 = PAT 0307, date lost. Palmyrene honorific inscription on a column bracket from the agora (remains of four lines); (bottom, smaller squeeze) Sobernheim 1905, XII, 27 = PAT 0311, date lost. Palmyrene honorific inscription on a column bracket, from the agora (remains of one line). See fig. 12.

12. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3089 (photo file 12, image no. 88): Sobernheim 1905, XXIV, 42a = PAT 0554, CE 204 (top squeeze, poor quality). Palmyrene funerary inscription, fragmentary, with remains of three or four lines, upper portion of the original inscription. The lower portion of the same inscription is on another squeeze; see no. 11. In the former Palmyra Museum. On the same negative, the bottom squeeze displays another epigraph: Sobernheim 1905, XII, 26 = PAT 0310, date lost. Palmyrene honorific inscription on a column bracket, from the agora (remains of one line).

13. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3090 (photo file 12, image no. 89): Sobernheim 1905, VII, 11 = PAT 0269, CE 51 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 18). Greek (eight lines) and Palmyrene (five lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket, Temple of Bel, second column in eastern portico (top squeeze with central tear, smaller than the bottom squeeze, Palmyrene section only). The negative shows another squeeze, larger in size. This is another inscription: Sobernheim 1905, X, 23 = PAT 0308, date lost (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 208). Greek (remains of three lines) and Palmyrene (remains of four lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket, from the agora (bottom squeeze).

14. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3091 (photo file 12, image no. 90): Sobernheim 1905, IX, 21 = PAT 0306, CE 157 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 248). Greek (remains of seven lines) and Palmyrene (eight lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket, from the agora. The squeeze has the Palmyrene inscription only. See fig. 9b.

15. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3092 (photo file 12, image no. 91): Sobernheim 1905, XXV, 43a = PAT 0316, CE 203 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 157[41]). Greek (remains of five lines) and Palmyrene (two lines) honorific inscription, found reemployed in a Byzantine church in Palmyra. The squeeze, almost illegible from Herzfeld's negative, records the left portion of the inscribed lintel. The right portion appears on another squeeze; see no. 21 and fig.5a.

16. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3093 (photo file 12, image no. 92): Sobernheim 1905, III, 5 = PAT 0263, CE 108 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 23). Greek (two lines) and Palmyrene (seven lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket from the Temple of Bel, ninth column in southern peristyle: (top squeeze) Greek text, and Palmyrene (three lines); (bottom squeeze) Palmyrene (four lines).

17. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3094 (photo file 12, image no. 93): Sobernheim 1905, XXII, 40 = PAT 0323 A, date lost. Palmyrene dedicatory inscription on stone fragment (remains of four lines). Another fragment, B (remains of two lines), is not documented by a squeeze. From the Diocletian Camp area.

18. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3095 (photo file 12, image no. 94): Sobernheim 1905, VIII, 14 = PAT 0304, CE 181. Palmyrene honorific inscription on a column bracket, from the temple of Baalshamin (remains of seven lines; only ll. 4–7 of the original inscription on stone are partly legible).

19. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3427 (photo file 12, image no. 75): Sobernheim 1905, IV, 7 = PAT 0265, CE 117. Palmyrene honorific inscription on a column bracket, Temple of Bel (five lines). The concluding part of ll. 1–5 appears on a separate squeeze, smaller in size, pinned next to the larger one. See fig. 5b.

20. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3428 (photo file 12, image no. 76): Sobernheim 1905, XXI, 39 = PAT 0314, CE 135 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 123[42]). Greek (remains of one of two lines) and Palmyrene (remains of six lines) honorific inscription on a statue base, from the Diocletian Camp area. See fig. 6b.

21. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3429 (photo file 12, image no. 95): Sobernheim 1905, XXV, 43 = PAT 0316, CE 203 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 157). Greek (remains of five lines) and Palmyrene (two lines) honorific inscription on a door lintel found reemployed in a Byzantine church. The squeeze has the right part of the Greek inscription, and the Palmyrene text (two lines) (fig. 5). For the left and initial portion of the Greek text, see no. 15.

22. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3430 (photo file 12, image no. 96): Sobernheim 1905, XXIII, 41 = PAT 0315, 18 BC. Palmyrene honorific inscription for a woman, on statue base (five

lines). Found by Puchstein near the 'Afqa spring. In the former Palmyra Museum.[43] See fig. 6a.

23. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3431 (photo file 12, image no. 97): Sobernheim 1905, XV, 29b = PAT 0312, CE 64 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 124). Greek (nine lines) and Palmyrene (eight lines) honorific inscription on a column framed by a *tabula ansata*, from the Diocletian Camp area. This squeeze, partly damaged, only has the Palmyrene inscription. Another squeeze (no. 7) shows the Greek section and the first and part of the second line of the Palmyrene text.

24. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3432 (photo file 12, image no. 98): Sobernheim 1905, XX, 38 = PAT 0313, CE 150 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 128[44]). Greek (remains of two lines) and Palmyrene (three lines) honorific inscription on two stone fragments, from the Diocletian Camp area. The squeeze has the Palmyrene text only.

25. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3433 (photo file 12, image no. 99): Sobernheim 1905, XIX, 36 = PAT 0334, date formula partly broken. Palmyrene dedicatory inscription on altar (three lines). Found reemployed in the Diocletian Camp area. See fig. 7a.

26. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3434 (photo file 12, image no. 100): (top squeeze) Sobernheim 1905, VI, 9 = PAT 0267, CE 120 (*IGLS* XVII.ı, 20[45]). Greek (three lines) and Palmyrene (three lines) honorific inscription on a column bracket, found reemployed in a medieval Muslim wall. In the former Palmyra Museum. The bottom squeeze in the same image illustrates another text: Sobernheim 1905, XVIII, 35 = PAT 0335, CE 135. Palmyrene dedicatory inscription on stela, from the Diocletian Camp area (four lines). See fig. 8a.

27. FS-FSA A.604.GN.3612 (photo file 12, image no. 74): squeeze fragment, with remains of Palmyrene letters, one line. Unidentified inscription. The squeeze is pinned upside-down on the easel.

Concordances

PAT = D. R. Hillers and E. Cussini. *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*. Publications of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project 3. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

PAT 0260 = Sobernheim 1905, I, 1a, II, 1b (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3086; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3087)

PAT 0263 = Sobernheim 1905, III, 5 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3093)

PAT 0265 = Sobernheim 1905, IV, 7 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3427)

PAT 0266 = Sobernheim 1905, V, 8 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3082)

PAT 0267 = Sobernheim 1905, VI, 9 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3434, top squeeze)

PAT 0268 = Sobernheim 1905, VI, 10 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3080, top squeeze)

PAT 0269 = Sobernheim 1905, VII, 11 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3090, top squeeze, Palmyrene text only)

PAT 0296 = Sobernheim 1905, XIII, 28 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3078)

PAT 0304 = Sobernheim 1905, VIII, 14 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3095)

PAT 0306 = Sobernheim 1905, IX, 21 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3091)

PAT 0307 = Sobernheim 1905, X, 22 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088, center squeeze)

PAT 0308 = Sobernheim 1905, X, 23 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3090, bottom squeeze)

PAT 0309 = Sobernheim 1905, XI, 24 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3079)

PAT 0310 = Sobernheim 1905, XII, 26 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3089, bottom squeeze)

PAT 0311 = Sobernheim 1905, XII, 27 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088, bottom squeeze)

PAT 0312 = Sobernheim 1905, XIV, 29a; XV, 29b (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3084, Greek text and two lines of Palmyrene text; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3431, end portion of Palmyrene text)

PAT 0313 = Sobernheim 1905, XX, 38 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3432, Palmyrene text only)

PAT 0314 = Sobernheim 1905, XXI, 39 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3428)

PAT 0315 = Sobernheim 1905, XXIII, 41 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3430)

PAT 0323 = Sobernheim 1905, XXII, 40 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3094)

PAT 0334 = Sobernheim 1905, XIX, 36 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3433)

PAT 0335 = Sobernheim 1905, XVIII, 35 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3434, bottom squeeze)

PAT 0344 = Sobernheim 1905, XVI, 34a, XVII, 34b (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3085, Greek text and four lines of Palmyrene; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3083, six lines of Palmyrene. This is another inscription, later than the bilingual text.)

PAT 0361 = Sobernheim 1905, VII, 13 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3081, squeeze on left)

PAT 0448 = Sobernheim 1905, XVIII, 37 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3081, squeeze on right)

PAT 0554 = Sobernheim 1905, XXIV, 42, photos a,b (respectively: FS-FSA A.604.GN.3089, top squeeze; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088 top squeeze)

M. Sobernheim. *Palmyrenische Inschriften*. Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft 10, Heft 2. Berlin: Wolf Peiser, 1905.

Sobernheim 1905, I, 1a, II, 1b = PAT 0260 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3086; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3087)

Sobernheim 1905, III, 5 = PAT 0263 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3093)

Sobernheim 1905, IV, 7 = PAT 0265 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3427)

Sobernheim 1905, V, 8 = PAT 0266 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3082)

Sobernheim 1905, VI, 9 = PAT 0267 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3434, top squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, VI, 10 = PAT 0268 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3080, top squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, VII, 11 = PAT 0269 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3090, top squeeze, Palmyrene text only)

Sobernheim 1905, VII, 13 = PAT 0361 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3081, squeeze on left)

Sobernheim 1905, VIII, 14 = PAT 0304 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3095)

Sobernheim 1905, IX, 21 = PAT 0306 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3091)

Sobernheim 1905, X, 22 = PAT 0307 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088, center squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, X, 23 = PAT 0308 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3090, bottom squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, XI, 24 = PAT 0309 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3079)

Sobernheim 1905, XII, 26 = PAT 0310 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3089, bottom squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, XII, 27 = PAT 0311 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088, bottom squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, XIII, 28 = PAT 0296 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3078)

Sobernheim 1905, XIV, 29a; XV, 29b = PAT 0312 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3084, Greek text and two lines of Palmyrene text; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3431, concluding portion of Palmyrene text)

Sobernheim 1905, XVI, 34a, XVII, 34b = PAT 0344 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3085, Greek text and four lines of Palmyrene; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3083, six lines of Palmyrene. This is another inscription, later than the bilingual text.)

Sobernheim 1905, XVIII, 35 = PAT 0335 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3434, bottom squeeze)

Sobernheim 1905, XVIII, 37 = PAT 0448 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3081, squeeze on right)

Sobernheim 1905, XIX, 36 = PAT 0334 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3433)

Sobernheim 1905, XX, 38 = PAT 0313 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3432, Palmyrene text only)

Sobernheim 1905, XXI, 39 = PAT 0314 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3428)

Sobernheim 1905, XXII, 40 = PAT 0323 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3094)

Sobernheim 1905, XXIII, 41 = PAT 0315 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3430)

Sobernheim 1905, XXIV, 42, photos a,b = PAT 0554, CE 204 (FS-FSA A.604.GN.3089, top squeeze; FS-FSA A.604.GN.3088, top squeeze).

Eleonora Cussini, PhD (The Johns Hopkins University), 1993, participated in the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon project, codirected by Delbert R. Hillers, working on the lexical analysis of Palmyrene Aramaic (1986–96). Since 1999, she has been teaching semitic philology at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, and has offered courses in Aramaic and Palmyrene epigraphy at the University of Warsaw. Her research interests focus on Aramaic legal language, Aramaic and Palmyrene epigraphy, and Palmyrene social history, with attention to the role and representation of Palmyrene women, and on Jewish identity in first- to third-century Syria. She has published extensively on Aramaic legal language and Palmyrene epigraphy. With Hillers, she published *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (1996). Cussini also edited *A Journey to Palmyra: Collected Essays to Remember Delbert R. Hillers* (2005) and published a monograph on Palmyrene epigraphy, *Tadmorena: Documenti per lo studio della cultura e dell'aramaico di Palmir*a (2022).

Notes

1 On the history of the collection, see Colleen Hennessey, "The Ernst Herzfeld Papers at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, n.s., 6 (1992): 131–41. The items are arranged in seven series: 1: Travel journals; 2: Sketchbooks; 3: Notebooks; 4: Photographic files 1–42; 5: Drawings and maps; 6: Squeezes; 7: Samarra Expedition. The collection documents Herzfeld's field activity and excavations at Samarra, Persepolis, Pasargadae, and Aleppo: https://www.si.edu/object/archives/sova-fsa-a-06?destination=object/archives/components/sova-fsa-a-06-ref28381. On Herzfeld and his work, see Ann C. Gunter and Stefan R. Hauser, eds., *Ernst Herzfeld and the Development of Near Eastern Studies, 1900–1950* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). This work contains only brief mentions of Sobernheim and Georg Hahn (see below). Therefore, it seemed important to highlight and discuss here the ties, the significant working partnership, and the friendship between them, using the visual documents in the Herzfeld Papers.

2 His library was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1938, Herzfeld sold part of his collection of artifacts to the British Museum. In 1945, he sold other parts of it to American museums and to a New York art gallery. See Ann C. Gunter and Stefan R. Hauser, "Ernst Herzfeld and Near Eastern Studies," 3–44, esp. 37–38, in *Ernst Herzfeld and the Development of Near Eastern Studies*.

3 In the 1970s, Herzfeld's papers were catalogued and organized by Joseph M. Upton, his former collaborator at the Kuh-i Khwaja excavation in Iran. See Elizabeth S. Ettinghausen, "Ernst Herzfeld: Reminiscences and Revelations," in Gunter and Hauser, *Ernst Herzfeld and the Development of Near Eastern Studies*, 609.

4 For these materials, see https://www.metmuseum.org/art/libraries-and-research-centers/watson-digital-collections/manuscript-collections/ernst-herzfeld-papers; and Margaret Cool Root, "The Herzfeld Archive of the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 11 (1976): 119–24.

5 The manuscript was published posthumously in 1968: Ernst Herzfeld, *The Persian Empire: Studies in Geography and Ethnography of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Gerold Walser (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1968). On the complexities of the publication process, see Ettinghausen, "Ernst Herzfeld: Reminiscences and Revelations." 607.

6 For recent research on archives of early leading scholars in the field of Palmyrene studies, see Jennifer A. Baird, "The Site of the Archive: Responsibility and Rhetoric in Archival Archaeology of the Middle East," in *Archival Historiographies: The Impact of Twentieth-Century Legacy Data on Archaeological Investigations*, ed. Olympia Bobou, Amy C. Miranda, and Rubina Raja, Archive Archaeology 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022), 161–73. For the archives of Harald Ingholt housed at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, see *The Ingholt Archive: The Palmyrene Material, Transcribed with Commentary and Bibliography*, ed. Olympia Bobou, Amy C. Miranda, Rubina Raja, and Jean-Baptiste Yon (Turnhout: Brepols, 2022). For the archive of Paul Collart at the Université de Lausanne, see Patrick M. Michel, "Digital Treatment of Paul Collart's Archives on the Temple of Baalshamin: Challenges and Results (2018–2021)," in *Archival Historiographies*, 129–44.

7 Moritz Sobernheim, "Palmyrenische Inschriften," *Beiträge zur Assyriologie und semitischen Sprachwissenschaft* 4 (1902): 207–19.

8 Moritz Sobernheim, *Palmyrenische Inschriften*, Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft 10, Heft 2 (Berlin: Wolf Peiser, 1905).

9 For images of their fieldwork: https://www.si.edu/object/archives/components/sova-fsa-a-06-ref 28708.

10 Jens Kröger, "Ernst Herzfeld and Friedrich Sarre," in Gunter and Hauser, *Ernst Herzfeld and the Development of Near Eastern Studies*, 86, fig. 4. As noted by Kröger, the photograph was probably taken by Sarre himself.

11 Sobernheim contributed to the *Corpus* with a volume on Islamic inscriptions from northern Syria: *Matériaux pour un Corpus inscriptionum arabicarum: deuxième partie, Syrie du Nord* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1909); and Herzfeld dedicated three volumes to inscriptions from Aleppo: *Matériaux pour un Corpus inscriptionum arabicarum: deuxième partie, Syrie du Nord; inscriptions et monument d'Alep* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1954–56). In 1973, van Berchem's daughter Marguerite, an archaeologist and art historian, created the Fondation Max van Berchem Genève: https://maxvanberchem.org/fr/.

12 For other images of Herzfeld's work in Lebanon: https://www.si.edu/search?edan_q=sobernheim%2Bbaalbek&.

13 On this aspect of Sobernheim's career and commitment, see the relevant collection of documents at the Center for Jewish Studies, Leo Baeck Institute, New York: https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/5/resources/20058.

14 According to Rudolph, the man seated at the far right in the front row is Curt Sobernheim, Moritz's brother. This seems unlikely, however, for at the time Curt was in his thirties, while that man looks much older. I would suggest that Curt is the one in the top row, center, and the woman next to him is his wife Luise Rosenfeld (1872–1940). In contrast, Rudolph identified the woman in the second row, center, as Luise. Again, this seems unlikely because she looks to be in her sixties. Cf. two photographs of Curt and Moritz Sobernheim in their sixties, in 1931 and 1932, right before Curt's escape from Germany and Moritz's death: https://www.gettyimages.it/immagine/sobernheim.

15 According to Rudolph, the woman in the first row next to Frida was her mother, Anna Landau. However, in 1903 she was in her fifties, and the woman in the photograph looks much younger. Anna Magnus (1846–1908) married the banker Adolph Sobernheim (1840–1880), and they had four children: Georg (1865–1963), a physician and microbiologist, professor at the University of Bern; Walter (1869–1945), owner of the Schultheiss-Patzenhofer brewing company; Curt (1871–1940), deputy director

and then director of the Reichsbank, and until 1931 a member of the board of the Commerz and Disconto Bank in Berlin; Moritz (1872–1933); and Frida (1874–1955). After the death of her husband, in 1883 Anna Sobernheim married Eugen von Landau (1852–1935), a successful banker and businessman, founder of AEG and of the Schultheiss-Patzenhofer brewing company, later inherited and directed by his stepson Walter Sobernheim.

16 Walter Sobernheim and his family expatriated in 1933. Among the properties they were forced to sell was "Haus Waltrud" (from their names), their villa at Inselstrasse 16/18 on Schwanenwerder island, in southwestern Berlin, designed and decorated by the architect Bruno Paul, and documented in the 1920s by the photographer Waldemar Titzenthaler. In 1971 the magnificent mansion was demolished. On the house, see Heike Stang, *Familie Sobernheim und das "Haus Waltrud" auf Schwanenwerder*, Jüdische Miniaturen 163 (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2015). Gertrud Schottländer died in 1938 in Paris, where the family had found refuge. Walter and their children Frida Eugenie (Frigene) and Martin went to New York in 1939, and resettled in the United States and the United Kingdom.

17 Breslau, today Wrocław, originally belonged to the Kingdom of Poland; it then became part of the Kingdom of Bohemia, then of Hungary, and later of the Habsburg Empire, of the Kingdom of Prussia, and of the Third Reich. From 1945, it was returned to Poland.

18 In 1952, through the restitution process, the Hahn family received 55 percent of the shares of their former company as compensation. The rest remained with Mannesmann AG, which took over the entire company in 1958.

19 On Georg Hahn and his collection, see the brief yet very informative obituary by Ernst Weidner, "Georg und Frida Hahn," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 17 (1954–56): 493–94. That article provided the basis for the biographical notes on the Hahns in Irit Ziffer, "The Akkadian Seals in the Hahn-Voss Collection," in *Edith Porada: zum 100. Geburtstag; A Centenary Volume*, ed. Erika Bleibtreu and Hans Ulrich Steymans, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 268 (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 45–74.

20 On the Vorderasiatische Gesellschaft, see Johannes Renger, "Die Geschichte der Altorientalistik und der vorderasiatischen Archäologie in Berlin von 1875 bis 1945," in *Katalog: Berlin und die Antike; Architektur, Kunstgewerbe, Malerei, Skulptur, Theater und Wissenschaft vom 16. Jahrhundert bis heute, Berlin, Schloss Charlottenburg, Grosse Orangerie, 22. April bis*

22. Juli, 1979, ed. Willmuth Arenhövel and Christa Schreiber (Berlin: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 1979), 151–92. Renger briefly mentions Georg and Frida Hahn and their role as patrons.

21 The bulk of the Samarra finds, eighty-five cases, were shipped to London in 1921. Kröger, "Ernst Herzfeld and Friedrich Sarre," 55. For the digitized files of the roughly 1,500 Samarra photographs by Herzfeld at the Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatlich Museen zu Berlin: https://www.smb.museum/museen-einrichtungen/museum-fuer-islamische-kunst-sammeln-forschen/forschung-kooperation/ausgrabungen-in-samarra/. For the exhibition *Samarra Revisited: Grabungsfotografien aus den Kalifenpalästen neu betrachtet*, held at the Pergamon Museum, Berlin, March 4, 2022–August 28, 2022: https://www.smb.museum/ausstellungen/detail/?L=1&tx_smb_pi1%5Bexhibition%5D=4486&cHash=0fdfea2d0e6b8e923d72c-5ca7d8d22a1.

22 The first, *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*, KBo 1 6 (*Catalog der Texte der Hethiter*, CTH 75.A), ca. 1300 BCE, was acquired in 1989 by the British Museum from the Hans Erlenmeyer collection, to whom it had been sold by Frida Hahn. For an image and acquisition notes, see BM 140856. The second, KBo 1 29 (CTH 167), 1275–1250 BCE, is now at the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara. For this text: https://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/CTH/index_en.php.

23 https://www.stolpersteine-berlin.de/de/tiergartenstr/20-21/grete-sobernheim.

24 https://www.wlb-stuttgart.de/die-wlb/ns-raubgutforschung/funde/curt-und-lilli-sobernheim/. From 2016 to 2019, the Württemberg State Library searched its inventory for books looted from Jewish private libraries. The discovery of the Sobernheims' ex-libris is one such example.

25 An inventory of their Palmyrene artifacts is unavailable. The Hahns owned a male bust relief, today at the São Paulo University Museum (with epitaph PAT 0650), and a double portrait of a mourning mother and her son, now in a private collection (with epitaph PAT 0934). A female bust with a fake inscription originally from the Hahn collection was donated in 1964 by Clara Sobernheim to the Liebighaus Skulpturensammlung, Frankfurt a.M. A reference to the Hahn collection is found in Harald Ingholt, *Studier over Palmyrensk Skupltur* (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels, 1928), 148, PS 490; English translation: Olympia Bobou et al., eds., *Studies on Palmyrene Sculpture: A Translation of Harald Ingholt's Studier over palmyrensk skulptur* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021). Moreover,

a small fragmentary decorative banquet scene on a stone slab, also published by Ingholt ("Inscriptions and Sculptures from Palmyra II," *Berytus* 5 [1938]: 99, pl. XXXVI), and described as "formerly in the Sobernheim collection, Berlin," was either sold when Clara left Germany or left behind. It was auctioned at Christie's, New York, December 18, 1997, to a private collector.

26 Weidner, "Georg und Frida Hahn," 493–94. Their children also left Germany with them. Peter, Hans Georg, Anna Marie Voss, and Brigitta (later Bridget Martha Emerson) relocated to the United States and the United Kingdom. Only Anna Marie returned to Germany; she died in Düsseldorf in 1962.

27 On the acquisition of the Dilbat necklace, see Christine Lilyquist, "The Dilbat Hoard," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 29 (1994): 5–36. For a description and images of the four seals, see the Metropolitan Museum of Art's website: acc. nos. 47.115.1, agate (2.9 cm); 47.115.2, agate (2.3 cm); 47.115.3, carnelian (2.21 cm); and 47.115.4, feldspar (2.2 cm).

28 Ziffer, "Akkadian Seals," 45–74.

29 See, e.g., FSA A.604.GN.3571 and FSA A.604.GN.3570. After the death of Moritz Sobernheim, in 1933 Klara (later Clara) and her daughter Marianne left Germany and eventually settled in the United States, joined by the other sons Rudolph and Manfred. The family lived in Rye, New York, at 21 Brown Avenue, in a 1920 colonial-style mansion, still existing today. Both brothers enlisted in 1943 and served in the US Army during World War II; Veterans of Rye, New York: https://www.ryevets.org/. Moritz Sobernheim's brother Georg, a leading bacteriologist who had accompanied him to Syria in 1899, survived the Shoah in Switzerland, where he had been a professor at the University of Bern since 1918.

30 For examples of early squeezes made by other epigraphists from the 1880s onward, see Jean-Baptiste Chabot, ed., *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum, pars secunda, tomus III: inscriptiones palmyrenae* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1926). One of the earliest and more complex of the squeezes, considering its length, was that of the epigraph recording the municipal law of Palmyra, known as the Tariff (PAT 0259, CE 137), made under the direction of the Georgian Prince Semyon Semyonovič Abamelek-Lazarev in 1882.

31 For an image of Herzfeld's study in his last Berlin apartment, showing his desks with papers and part of his library, see Kröger, "Ernst Herzfeld and Friedrich Sarre," 87, fig. 5. Unfortunately, that image does not match the details of Herzfeld's photographic studio one sees in figure 5 here. As noted

by Kröger (p. 50), although Herzfeld spent most of his time abroad, he "kept this apartment from 1909 until he was forced to leave Berlin in 1935." German scholars of Jewish descent had to leave their positions as of 1933. Herzfeld was dismissed from the University of Berlin two years later, in 1935, thanks to his World War I records. From 1936 to his retirement in 1944, he was a member of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, New Jersey.

32 The siglum PAT refers to Palmyrene inscriptions in Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonora Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*, Publications of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project 3 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). In order to make a squeeze of the whole inscription, Puchstein used two different sheets of paper; see nos. 15 and 21 below.

33 Chabot, *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*, 149, CIS 3970. Another squeeze of the same text was made in 1914 by the French epigraphists Antonin Jaussen and Raphaël Savignac, who collated this and other inscriptions for the *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*.

34 Sobernheim, *Palmyrenische Inschriften*, 17n2.

35 See no. 27 below. The squeeze is nearly illegible, and only some letters can be identified. It does not appear among the images in Sobernheim's 1905 edition and perhaps it was not part of Puchstein's original group of squeezes.

36 Among the various items in the collection, there are almost 400 paper squeezes of cuneiform, Middle Persian and Arabic inscriptions gathered by Herzfeld and Sobernheim. In 2011, the archives and the Smithsonian's Museum Conservation Institute initiated a project aimed at creating a digital version of the squeezes by means of the RTI imaging technique, in order to preserve them and make those precious epigraphic resources available to researchers.

37 Each entry includes the negative number and photo file reference assigned by the National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution: https://sova.si.edu/record/fsa.a.06/ref29304?t=W&q=palmyra.

38 The siglum *IGLS* XVII.ı refers to Jean-Baptiste Yon, *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie: Palmyre*, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 195 (Beirut: Ifpo, 2012).

39 With an image of the squeeze from Sobernheim's 1905 edition.

40 With an image of the later squeeze by Jaussen and Savignac in Chabot, *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*, *CIS* 3914, table V.

41 See Yon, *IGLS* XVII.ı, 2012, 166, with a hand copy of the Greek text after Sobernheim 1905, and photographs of the same squeezes discussed here, after Sobernheim 1905, and a later partial squeeze with two lines of the Greek text by Jaussen and Savignac.

42 With a clearer early image of the squeeze, with a central fold mark and other less detectable vertical fold marks, easily visible on the 1905 photograph as well as on Herzfeld's negative. Impossible to locate by Yon during his survey.

43 Apparently not on display for it does not appear in the museum catalogue: Khaled al-As'ad and Michał Gawlikowski, *The Inscriptions in the Museum of Palmyra: A Catalogue* (Warsaw: Kontrast, 1997).

44 With an image of the squeeze. Impossible to locate by Yon during his survey.

45 With a better-quality squeeze by Jaussen and Savignac, *CIS* 3921. Not in the Palmyra museum catalogue.

MARK K. ERDMANN

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DRAW

*Revisiting Philips Van Winghe's Sketches of the Azuchi Screens
in Lorenzo Pignoria's "Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi"*

ABSTRACT

The Azuchi Screens 安土図屏風 (*Azuchi-zu byōbu*) are a pair of six-panel folding screens that were commissioned around 1579 by the warlord Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534–1582) and executed by Kanō Eitoku 狩野永徳 (1543–1590), the fourth-generation head of the Kanō school of painting 狩野派. Depicting Nobunaga's newly constructed Azuchi Castle 安土城 (Azuchi-jō) and its surrounding town, the screens are the only known illustration of this short-lived landmark in architectural history and progenitor of the iconic Japanese castle form. Gifted to the Jesuits and presented in 1585 to Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585) in Rome, the screens became the first major diplomatic gift offered from Japan to the West but disappear from the record shortly thereafter. Currently, the only known illustrated vestiges of this international treasure are two woodblock prints that were based on sketches by the Louvain antiquarian Philips van Winghe (1560–1592) and included in revised editions of *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (*Images of the Gods of the Ancients*) by the Padua-based scholar Lorenzo Pignoria (1571–1631). Owing to the awkward and partially inscrutable character of the buildings depicted within them, these prints have been dismissed as reflections of orientalist naïveté. However, examination of these images and comparison with Eitoku's other paintings reveal much about the visual profile of the Azuchi Screens as well as the paintings' significance to a European audience. This article argues that the choice of subject for these prints was not arbitrary, but the product of a convergence of knowledge about Nobunaga's ambitions at Azuchi transmitted to Italy via the Jesuit mission reports and late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century currents of thought regarding the roots of newly encountered cultures around the world.

《安土図屏風》は織田信長（1534-1582）の依頼（1579 年頃）により、狩野派四代目当主の狩野永徳（1543-1590）が制作した六曲一双の屏風である。信長が造営した安土城は、完成後数年で焼失したものの建築史上の画期をなし、日本における象徴的な城郭形式の祖となった。この城と城下町を描いた《安土図屏風》を除いて、安土城の図像的記録は知られていない。信長からイエズス会に贈られた屏風は、1585 年にローマで教皇グレゴリウス13 世（1502-1585）に献上され、日本から西欧に運ばれた最初の重要な外交贈答品となったものの、その直後から所在不明となった。この世界史的至宝を写した現存唯一の図像史料が、ルーヴァン出身の古物研究家フィリップス・ファン・ウィンゲ（1560-1592）の模写に基づく 2 点の木版画で、これらはパドヴァを拠点とする知識人ロレンツォ・ピニョリア（1571-1631）が編纂した『古代人の神々の姿について』増補改訂版に掲載された。木版画の建物には不自然で部分的に不可解な特徴が認められるため、東洋学者の無知を反映したものとされ、これまで正当な建築史的考察がなされてこなかった。そこで本稿では、その詳細な分析と狩野永徳の現存作品との比較により、《安土図屏風》の視覚的特徴や西欧にとっての意味を明らかにする。そして、木版画の主題選択は気まぐれなどではなく、安土における信長の野望についての知見がイエズス会報告書を介してイタリアに伝わり、16 世紀後半か
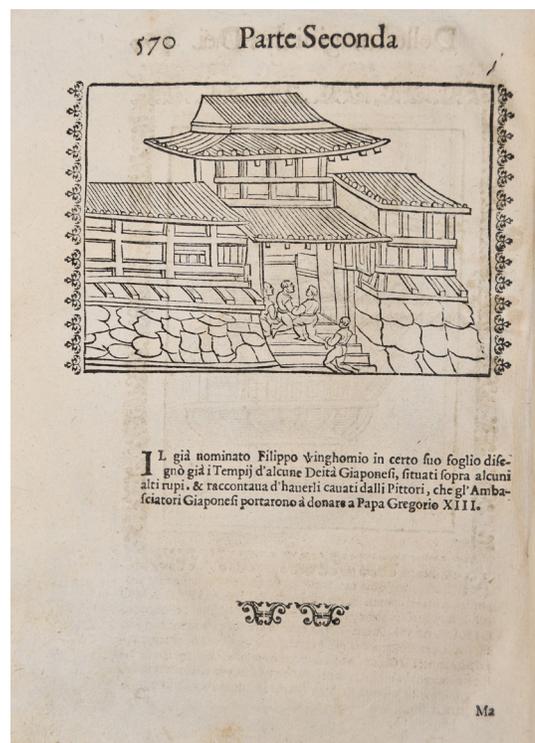
In the history of Japanese painting, few works of art are the subject of greater fascination and speculation than the Azuchi Screens (*Azuchi-zu byōbu* 安土図屏風).[1] These paintings were commissioned around the year 1579 by the warlord Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534–1582) to commemorate his remarkable new castle home on Mount Azuchi (Azuchiyama 安土山) and are attributed to Kanō Eitoku 狩野永徳 (1543–1590), the fourth-generation head of the Kanō school of painting 狩野派, at the time the most dynamic and prolific painting studio in Japan.[2] Although now lost, they represented a commission of the highest order for a renowned painter at the height of his powers. Even more importantly, the screens were eventually gifted to Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585), for whom they served as a radiant portrait of Japan and its ruler ensconced in a newly constructed and previously unwitnessed mountain citadel. As such, the Azuchi Screens have fueled the imagination of all who hold an interest in this seminal moment in Japan's political and cultural history, when it had been unified by a larger-than-life hegemon formulating a new image of East Asian kingship.

Accordingly, it is no surprise that the Azuchi Screens have been subject to periodic investigations as to their possible survival and whereabouts in the Vatican.[3] They were known to have been displayed in a gallery near Gregory XIII's private apartments at least until the year 1592, after which all documentary evidence of their presence vanishes. Some researchers believe that remnants of the screens still survive somewhere in the Papal City or in the great collections of Roman families. While these investigations are ongoing and may never be resolved, there are art historical means by which to more richly and meaningfully imagine the screen's original appearance and its significance.

This essay represents one such attempt to reconsider the visual profile of the Azuchi Screens, and through such reconsideration to understand how the screens were viewed and conceptualized by their overseas audiences in Europe. It does so by subjecting to intensive examination an unexpected source, an Italian publication entitled *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (The images of the gods of the ancients; hereafter *Imagini*). More specifically, I will analyze two motifs included in an addendum to the 1624, 1626, and 1647 editions entitled "Seconda parte delle imagini de gli dei indiani" ("Second part of the images of Indian gods"; hereafter "Seconda parte") (figs. 1, 2).[4] These prints represent the last known record of the screens and the only known illustrated vestiges of its contents. The origins of the motifs in question are detailed in a caption written by the editions' author and editor, Lorenzo Pignoria (1571–1631): "The already mentioned Philips van Winghe in one of his [notebook] pages yet drew the temples of some Japanese deities, placed above some steep rocks. And he recounted that he copied them from the painters [*sic*] that the Japanese ambassadors brought to donate to Pope Gregory XIII."[5] The first of Philips van Winghe's (1560–1592) sketches, hereafter called *Page 569*, depicts a multilevel hip-and-gable-roofed building with seemingly gravity-defying structural elements projecting from its roof and base (fig. 1). The second, hereafter called *Page 570*, contains a two-level gate (fig. 2). For Japan specialists, these images have largely been treated as an interesting curiosity, but ultimately one of limited scholarly value.[6] Conversely, scholars of Western art or

Delle Imagini de i Dei. 569

570 Parte Seconda

IL già nominato Filippo Vinghomio in certo suo foglio dise-
gnò già i Tempij d'alcune Deità Giaponesi, situati sopra alcuni
alti rupi, & raccontaua d'hauerli cauati dalli Pittori, che gl'Amba-
sciatori Giaponesi portarono à donare a Papa Gregorio XIII.

FIGURES 1 AND 2. Philip Esengren, *Page 569* (left) and *Page 570* (right), copied from the sketches by Philips van Winghe, in Lorenzo Pignoria, "Seconda parte delle imagini de gli dei indiani," in *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (1624). Woodblock prints, each: 14.9 x 21.9 cm. Reproductions from the 1626 edition. Private collection

intellectual exchange suspect the importance of these images, but their Japanese origins have proven a stumbling block that prevents anything greater than a superficial reading of their subjects.[7] This article seeks to provide needed background to both perspectives and, in turn, to demonstrate that when these prints are placed in the proper context, they can be quite revealing; indeed, their misinformed nature proves to be highly informative.

While the apparent misidentification of Azuchi Castle as a temple in Pignoria's caption seems to confirm a limited knowledge and awareness of Japan on the part of its authors, I would propose that these motifs were not arbitrarily documented. Rather, and to foreground a key point in this article, I propose here that *Page 569* represents a significant building within the Azuchi Castle grounds known as the Bishamon Hall 毘沙門堂 of Sōkenji 摠見寺. Its very selection from among the many options offered by the screens may tell us much about how Nobunaga and his castle-palace were imagined by the Jesuits and, through them, by commentators in Europe. The investigation of these pages will show that even the smallest vestiges, surviving in the form of copies of copies, can help reconstruct important threads of reception and interpretation. These threads ultimately bring us back to Mount Azuchi at the time of its greatest historical glory and allow us to further understand a moment when the entire nature of Japanese sovereignty appeared to be changing rapidly.

Azuchi Castle and the Azuchi Screens

A low peak with ridges projecting into an inlet lake connected to Lake Biwa 琵琶湖, Mount Azuchi was plucked from obscurity in 1576 when Nobunaga determined the site would

be developed as a new capital for his military dynasty. Riding a string of military victories, commanding the largest armies on the archipelago, and poised to expand his already unprecedented and unmatched territorial claims, Nobunaga required a home that could serve to both maintain his position and enhance his public image.[8] Construction was finished in 1579, and the resulting castle and adjacent town remained a center of politics and culture until 1582, when the castle complex was destroyed in the chaos that followed Nobunaga's assassination.

The building of Azuchi Castle represented a dramatic return to monumental architecture in Japan. Not since the construction of Shōkokuji 相国寺 and the raising of a massive seven-level pagoda at the end of the fourteenth century had such a large-scale timber frame structure been deployed as a means to project authority on the archipelago.[9] The scale of construction at Azuchi, however, well surpassed this closest precedent; and in the construction challenges it embodied, Azuchi Castle was more comparable to the eighth-century temple complex of Tōdaiji 東大寺 and its Great Buddha Hall (*daibutsuden* 大仏殿), one of the largest timber frame buildings ever constructed.[10] Unlike Shōkokuji and Tōdaiji, however, Azuchi Castle was an expression of the reach and authority of a leader unmediated by religious institutions.[11] This distinction was made possible by the choice of architectural forms used, namely military or defensive architecture such as towers (*yagura* 櫓), drystone walls (*ishigaki* 石垣), and gates (*mon* 門). Prior to Azuchi, these architectural typologies had been understood as temporary and purely functional.[12] Nobunaga's achievement at Azuchi was to take advantage of the association between these structures and their warrior inhabitants that had been cultivated after a century of civil wars, to infuse this martial architecture with opulent decoration, and to position the castle and its many structures near a sizeable population. In this way, the structures became an inescapable reminder of Nobunaga's identity, wealth, cultural sophistication, organizational capacity, and historical place. In turn, the castle served to legitimize Nobunaga's past successes and, more importantly, to cultivate a sense that his ascendancy was an inevitable fact.

Around the time of Azuchi Castle's completion in 1579, Nobunaga commissioned various distinguished persons to commemorate his architectural achievements there.[13] Three such commissions are known: a floor-by-floor and room-by-room description of the castle's *tenshu* 天主 (keep), a poetic encomium, and the Azuchi Screens.[14] As noted above, the screens are attributed to Eitoku, the most famed artist of his day. Eitoku's eminence derived in large part due to his work at Azuchi Castle, where, in 1576 and at the age of thirty-three, he was commissioned by Nobunaga to paint the interiors of several buildings within the castle's inner bailey (*honmaru* 本丸). This commission would come to be seen as marking a critical moment in Eitoku's career, when he transitioned from finely detailed works referred to as *saiga* 細画 (small [detailed] painting) to the formulation of a dynamic style of large-scale painting referred to as *taiga* 大画 (large painting), which mostly consisted of vibrantly painted subjects set against gold leaf backgrounds conceived to fill the spacious interiors of castles such as Azuchi.[15]

Produced at the tail end of the Azuchi Castle commission, the Azuchi Screens represent both a culmination of Eitoku's time there, but also a return to his roots. Based on European eyewitness accounts that characterize the screens as on "panels"[16] and "gilded and painted upon,"[17] as well as the architectural subjects and receding diagonal ground plane that appear in *Pages 569* and *570*, it is clear that the Azuchi Screens were executed in the style of a popular sixteenth- and seventeenth-century painting genre exemplifying the *saiga* mode: *rakuchū*

FIGURE 3. Kanō Eitoku, *Rakuchū rakugai*, Uesugi Screens, ca. 1565. Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, colors, and gold on paper, each: 160 x 364 cm. Yonezawa City Uesugi Museum

FIGURE 4. Kanō Eitoku, *Scenes of Amusements Around the Capital* (*Rakugai meisho yūrakuzu*), 16th century. Pair of four-panel folding screens; ink, colors, and gold on paper, each: 85.4 x 177.0 cm. Private collection

rakugai-zu 洛中洛外図 (lit., scenes in and around the capital). As the name suggests, *rakuchū rakugai-zu* are defined by their subject, the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto and its environs. Significantly, Azuchi is thought to be one of the first locales of import beyond the capital and its outskirts to be depicted in this mode.[18] As such, the Azuchi Screens represent an important beginning whereupon the genre of *rakuchū rakugai-zu* evolved into a subcategory of the broader grouping of cityscape screens 都市図屏風 (*toshizu byōbu*).

Serendipitously, two such urban portraits by Eitoku still exist. Typifying the form and style of the genre as well as Eitoku's skill in rendering minutiae, the first of these works consists of a pair of six-panel screens known as the Uesugi Screens 上杉本洛中洛外図屏風 (*Uesugi-bon rakuchū rakugai-zu byōbu*; fig. 3). The second example, a pair of four-panel screens, is known as *Scenes of Amusements Around the Capital* (*Rakugai meisho yūrakuzu* 洛外名所遊楽図; fig. 4). The two pairs of screens offer panoramic, bird's-eye views with a wide array of finely detailed temples, shrines, homes, and shops, as well as courtier and elite warrior estates. In front of

and within these backdrops, thousands of figures go about their daily lives. The Uesugi Screens are organized around the layout of the capital's grid plan. While broadly conforming to the topography of the capital in its day, billowing clouds and gold leaf ground serve to structure the pictorial space to feature a range of prominent institutions. *Scenes of Amusements* likewise employs golden clouds to organize space, but as compared to the Uesugi Screens, distance is even more compressed as its subjects are topographically situated well beyond the west and south of the capital's grid.

Based on the similarity of these screens to the sources noted above, it is evident that the Azuchi Screens contained a mixture of gold clouds and ground corralling the castle and its environs in a panoramic manner. A distribution of subjects can also be tentatively proposed using a 1660 description of the screens, presumably based on now-lost accounts, that relates that there were "two decorative screens . . . one of which was adorned with a painted portrait of the new City and the other the unbreachable Fortress of Azuchi."[19] In other words, one screen depicted the castle and the other the town of Azuchi extending from the base of Mount Azuchi (fig. 5).

The latter "town-screen" almost certainly resembled the Uesugi Screens. Like the capital, the town of Azuchi was topographically flat and composed of a grid of straight, wide streets within which rice paddies, the homes and shops of merchants and artisans, the estates of Nobunaga's vassals, as well as various area temples and shrines were situated.[20] Included among these was the Jesuits' Azuchi Seminary.[21] Little is known about the exact location of this structure or building complex other than that it was constructed on reclaimed land and included a three-story tower.[22] Although the composition of the screens was likely adapted, as in the *Scenes of Amusements*, to respond to the unique quirks of Azuchi's topography and urban plan, the seminary and other subjects very likely served, as in the Uesugi Screens, as backdrops for bustling scenes of commerce, daily life, and festival celebrations.[23]

Clues to Eitoku's approach to rendering the "castle-screen" may be deduced via another analogous cityscape: the Mitsui Memorial Museum's Jurakutei Screen (*Jurakutei-zu byōbu* 聚楽第図屏風, fig. 6).[24] Jurakutei 聚楽第 was a castle complex constructed in 1585 by Nobunaga's

FIGURE 5. Map of Azuchi by the author, based on Kido Masayuki, "Azuchiyama to Azuchiyama shitamachi—Oda Nobunaga ga mezashi shita katachi—" (Mount Azuchi and the town of Azuchiyama—the form of Oda Nobunaga's aims), in *Nobunaga no jōkamachi* (Nobunaga's castle towns), edited by Niki Hiroshi and Matsuo Nobuhiro (Tokyo: Koshi Shoin, 2008), 113–35; and Shiga-ken Azuchi-jōkaku chōsa kenkyūjo, ed., *Hakkutsu chōsa 15 nen no kiseki zusetsu Azuchi-jō wo horu* (Excavation survey: illustrated history of Heisei 15 excavation of Azuchi Castle) (Hikone: Sunrise, 2004), 62–67
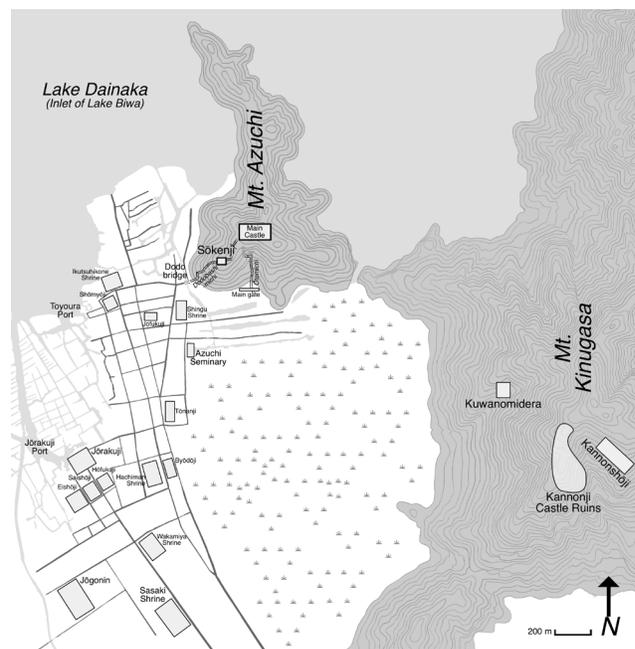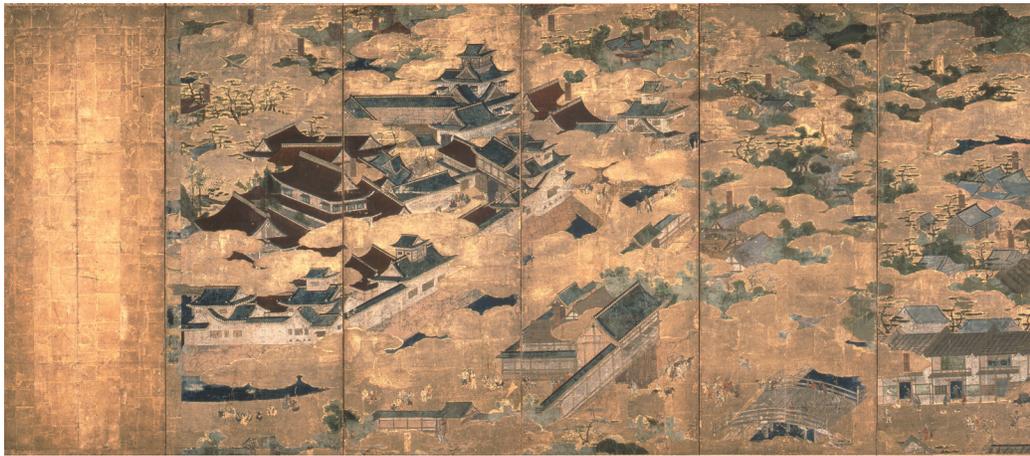
FIGURE 6. Jurakutei Screen, late 16th century. Six-panel folding screen; ink, colors, and gold on paper, 156 x 355 cm. Mitsui Memorial Museum, Tokyo

successor Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536–1598) in the heart of the capital and was one of the first post-Azuchi castles. Like Azuchi, the palatial castle estate served as a base of operations and residence.[25] The Jurakutei Screen was executed slightly later, in the early 1590s, by an unidentified artist from the Kanō atelier. Like the Uesugi and *Scenes of Amusements* screens, the painting renders its subject panoramically, employing billowing gold clouds to both organize space and selectively reveal a sprawling urban landscape beyond.[26] The composition is arranged around a central apex, the Jurakutei *tenshu*, situated at the top of the fourth panel from the right. Spreading out below it and corralled by a wall and moat are the buildings of the castle's inner bailey.

Primary sources and excavations on Mount Azuchi suggest that many similar subjects were included within the castle-screen. Ascending the southern face of Mount Azuchi is the *ōtemichi* 大手道, a six-meter-wide staircase-path that was guarded at its base by a 110-meter-long wall,[27] characterized by three gates, two at either end and one in its center that checked the *ōtemichi*'s start. Beyond this wall and situated above it on the mountain were several precincts that have been presumed to be the ruins of the estates of Nobunaga's vassals and allies.[28] The second path, known as the *Dodobashi-michi* 百々橋道, follows the mountain's southwest ridge. Shortly up its ascent, this path arrives at the temple complex of Sōkenji. Although unusual for Japanese castles constructed after Azuchi, the inclusion of a temple was a common feature of large pre-Azuchi castles.[29] Nobunaga's decimation of various religious institutions that opposed him can be credited, at least in part, for their later exclusion from castle precincts including Jurakutei. However, prior to this moment, castle-temples functioned as sites for warriors praying for success in battle, for longevity, and to ward off pre-battle curses. Past Sōkenji and halfway up the mountain, the *ōtemichi* and *Dodobashi-michi* met and ascended to the peak of the mountain, where the outer and inner baileys of the castle were situated.

As they constituted the tallest and most visible parts of Azuchi Castle, the various buildings and surrounding walls of the inner bailey were almost certainly included within Eitoku's screens. However, given the limited nature of primary sources and the archaeological record, it is impossible to state with any certainty the layout or exact character of any of these

structures.[30] The only building confirmed in both the primary and archaeological records is the *tenshu*.[31] This structure stood seven stories high atop a drystone pedestal base, had sweeping gables, and was sided with a combination of plaster and black clapboard wall.[32] Above these stories and emerging from and contrasting with a tiled, sloping roof that covered the third and fourth floors was a crowning two-story belvedere. The lower story of this belvedere was a red and white octagonal floor.[33] Atop it sat a story characterized by three-by-three bays and covered in part or whole with gold leaf. This pinnacle of both castle and mountain is widely thought to have been capped with a red-yellow tiled, hip-and-gable roof with *shachihoko* 鯱鉾, ornamental finials placed at either end of the ridge in the shape of an imaginary animal, a type of dragon with a face similar to a fierce tiger and an arched, carp-like body.[34]

Across the World: From Screens to Sketch to Print

The tale of how the screens crossed the oceans and came to be reproduced in xylographic form is one that has been extensively studied.[35] Nobunaga presented the Azuchi Screens to Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), Jesuit Visitor of Missions in the Indies, as a farewell gift when Valignano was visiting Azuchi around August 1581. Valignano subsequently incorporated them in an endeavor retroactively named the Tenshō Embassy (*Tenshō no shisetsu* 天正の使節). The embassy, comprising a delegation of four young sons of Christian daimyo, was planned by Valignano to promote the Jesuits' work in Japan by parading them around southern Europe and, upon the boys' return to Japan, having them act as educators on the glory of Christian Europe. The embassy departed Nagasaki on February 20, 1582, and, via the Cape of Good Hope, arrived in Lisbon in August 1584. From Portugal, they continued through Spain and into Italy, met with dignitaries and rulers including Philip II (1527–1598), and were greeted with much fanfare in each city they entered. The climax of the boys' tour was a formal audience with Pope Gregory XIII in Rome held on March 23, 1585. Soon after this encounter, they formally presented the pope with the Azuchi Screens, after which the boys were taken on a tour of parts of the Vatican, during which they were promised that the screens would be put on display in a gallery near the pope's apartments.[36] The boys departed Rome on June 3 of the same year and returned to Japan on July 21, 1590.

It is at this point that Philips van Winghe converges with the history of the screens. Van Winghe had come to Rome in 1589 from his home in the Flemish city of Louvain. While the motives for his relocation are unclear—he is believed to have been either escaping war or hoping to advance his research—his brief time in Rome would leave a considerable legacy.[37] Through his impressive connections, van Winghe surveyed the collections of great Roman families, became one of the first to explore and document newly discovered catacombs beneath the city, and in doing all this was an important pioneer of Christian archaeology. While he is best known for his work as an archaeologist, van Winghe's interests were, like many of his time, broad in nature and extended to multiple cultures and curiosities that he encountered. In this vein, in early July 1592 van Winghe visited the Gallery of Maps (*Galleria delle carte geografiche*) in the Vatican to copy a fresco of the Lazio region of Italy for his friend the famed mapmaker Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598). Van Winghe's copy of the Lazio map still exists, and it is due to the inclusion of a letter to Ortelius on its verso that these details are known.[38] For lack of any other record of his visiting the Papal City, this occasion is generally assumed to be the moment when he came across the Azuchi Screens and, during this encounter, made at least two sketches of their content. Less than a month later, van Winghe contracted malaria and he subsequently died in September 1592.

The process by which van Winghe's sketches were translated into printed versions is only partially understood.[39] After his death, van Winghe's belongings were sent to Jérôme (also called Hieronymus) van Winghe (1557–1637), Philips's brother and canon of the cathedral in Tournai. Aware of the value of his brother's work to scholars and keen to have it acknowledged, Jérôme advertised the notebooks within his network. Among the people he showed and eventually loaned them to was Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637), a French polymath and central figure in early-modern European intellectual history.[40] Peiresc is the critical link through which Philips van Winghe's sketches found their way into Lorenzo Pignoria's book. In a letter from Peiresc to Pignoria dated January 4, 1616, Peiresc makes clear that he had obtained a copy of Pignoria's newly published 1615 edition of *Imagini* and, as his friend, offers a list of potentially useful objects for Pignoria for future inquiry.[41] Included in the list among other objects is an image of the Mesoamerican god Quetzalcoatl and an image of a "temple of Japanese [people] at the peak of a mountain extracted from the paintings the Japanese ambassadors gave to Gregory XIII."[42] Only these subjects from the list (figs. 1, 2, 7) would subsequently be added to the 1624 edition of *Imagini*, and both are labeled as from van Winghe. A third addition to the 1624 edition—a set of four images showing different views of an Indonesian rakshasa carved on the handle of a kris—are not mentioned in the letter, but are credited in the accompanying text to Peiresc (see fig. 10).[43]

Why did Pignoria add these few images to the 1624 edition? This question will be revisited below, but suffice to say here that they had some relevance to *Imagini*'s greater thesis.[44] A native of Padua who studied under the Jesuits, was later ordained a priest, and had a diverse career as librarian, curate, and canon, Pignoria was a prolific scholar and active participant in the international network of scholars known as the Republic of Letters. His revised editions of *Imagini* represent one of his most important legacies.[45] Originally published in 1556 by Vincenzo Cartari (ca. 1531–after 1569), *Imagini* had long served as a highly regarded reference on Greco-Roman mythology.[46] With his reworking of this classic text, Pignoria had multiple goals. First, he sought to update the book with new methodologies including firsthand visual and philological analysis. The full title of the 1615 edition of *Imagini* encapsulates his underlying ethos: *The true and new images of the Gods of the Ancients . . . readapted . . . to their real, and no more [only] observed resemblances. Obtained from marbles, bronzes, jewels and other antique memories, with deep study and particular diligence. . . .*[47] This new focus on material culture was made manifest in the single largest change to the book: new illustrations produced by Philip Esengren (known as Filippo Ferroverde in the Italian milieu, active early seventeenth century). Pignoria states in his preface that, with these new images, he sought to correct a critical shortcoming in many similar volumes that, he believed, had failed to faithfully reproduce objects of study.[48] These images along with annotations to Cartari's text and new illustrative materials transformed Cartari's work from a popular reference into a scholarly research tool.[49]

In line with this shift, the second major change to the volume would be the addition of the "Seconda parte." With this section, Pignoria had an ambitious goal. He wanted to prove through comparative readings of iconographies that the exotic religions and icons of these distant lands all originated from and were derivations of ancient Egyptian polytheism.[50] To be sure, this thesis was not novel. The deluge of accounts and imports from foreign cultures around this time had forced many scholars to grapple with the nature of these cultures as well as their own. Situated within a compendium of classical gods and their iconographies, "Seconda parte" served as a point of contrast, highlighting Europe's own relationship with

FIGURE 7. Philip Esengren, *Quetzalcoatl*, copied from a sketch by Philips van Winghe, in Lorenzo Pignoria, "Seconda parte delle imagini de gli dei indiani," in *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (1624), page 550. Woodblock print, 14.9 x 21.9 cm. Reproduction from the 1626 edition. Private collection

FIGURE 8. Pietro de los Ríos, Quetzalcoatl, in *Codex Vaticanus A* (Vat. Lat. 3738, also known as *Codex Ríos*), after 1566, fol. 35r. Vatican Apostolic Library

this Egyptogenetic past. Herein lay a key point of intersection with van Winghe, whose main research interest centered on antiquity, particularly early Christian art—that is, the moment when Christian culture broke from its polytheistic past. As other cultures appeared to have stagnated, the customs and artifacts of these distant cultures, for van Winghe, Pignoria, and their peers, represented a new window into their own history and the evolution of Western culture.

A Tower? A Gate? A Closer Reading of *Pages 569* and *570*

Pignoria's inclusion of van Winghe's sketches went largely unnoticed outside of Italian and Renaissance studies until a passing mention in a 1969 article by R. W. Littlebown.[51] Donald Lach subsequently reproduced the prints the next year and would be the first modern scholar to rethink Pignoria's assessment that these prints were of "the temples of some Japanese deity" and to connect the images to Azuchi.[52] In doing this, Lach posited a revised guess regarding their subject matter: "The sketches of van Winghe show respectively the tower and the gate of Azuchi Castle." The *Page 569* building has since been regularly named as the *tenshu* or a *yagura*/tower of Azuchi Castle, while the *Page 570* building has come to be known as the castle's main gate—that is, buildings that were *not*, as both Peiresc and Pignoria note, those of a temple complex. Lach's identifications can be traced back to two unstated assumptions: first, that van Winghe, uninformed about Azuchi, would have been drawn to the *tenshu*; and second, that Pignoria, in selecting van Winghe's sketch and identifying it as a temple, could not have known any better. In other words, for lack of knowledge about Japan or Japanese culture, it is assumed that van Winghe's gaze was directed to the *tenshu* as an obvious apex or focal point in the screens' composition—that is, as in the Jurakutei Screen—and owing to its privileged position, it is what he sketched. Likewise uneducated about Japan, Pignoria then made the mistake of inserting an ostensibly secular building within a compendium of religious iconography. However, close analysis of these images, particularly *Page 569*, reveals there is good reason to believe that van Winghe and Pignoria were not so ignorant and that they indeed reproduced parts of a temple.

FIGURE 9. Attributed to Alfonso Chacòn (1530–1599), *Folio 58r* (Quetzalcoatl) in MS 1564, copied from sketches by Philips van Winghe. Biblioteca Angelica, Rome

FIGURE 10. Philip Esengren, *Rakshasa on an Indonesian kris* (first of three prints), in Lorenzo Pignoria, "Seconda parte delle imagini de gli dei indiani," in *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (1624), page 586. Woodblock print, 14.9 x 21.9 cm. Reproduction from the 1626 edition. Private collection

Before engaging in a close reading of the sketches-turned-prints, it is first necessary to posit one critical correction to Pignoria's efforts. Van Winghe's sketches, as they appear in *Imagini*, are almost certainly mirror images. Accompanying the Quetzalcoatl image (fig. 7) in *Imagini* that was introduced to Pignoria by Peiresc is the following text:

> I [Pignoria] came across another image of Homopoca, or of a similar deity which others say is of Quetzalcoatl. And it was taken from certain papers which were of Winghe of Tournai [*sic*], learned youth, who claimed to have taken it from a large book, which is in the Vatican Library, compiled by F. Pietro de los Ríos.[53]

Exactly as Pignoria notes, the original image is included in the *Codex Ríos* by Pietro del Ríos (dates unknown) and owned by the Vatican Library (fig. 8). Additionally, a copy of van Winghe's notebook—attributed to Alfonso Chacòn (1530–1599), van Winghe's friend and collaborator—containing van Winghe's sketch of the *Codex Ríos* Quetzalcoatl also exists (fig. 9).[54] Placing the three images side by side, it is immediately clear that the *Imagini* version is reversed. Both the *Codex Ríos* Quetzalcoatl and the Chacòn-copy Quetzalcoatl face left. In contrast, the *Imagini* Quetzalcoatl faces right. Further corroborative evidence of this reversal exists in the rakshasa image included in *Imagini* (fig. 10). Exactly as with the Quetzalcoatl, each of Peiresc's depictions of the rakshasa (fig. 11) are mirror images of their printed copies in *Imagini*. Accordingly, there is every reason to assume that *Pages 569* and *570* were likewise printed with their subjects' composition reversed. While this change is enlightening as it suggests that the Uesugi, Azuchi, as well as most of the *Scenes of Amusements* screens share a left-to-right receding ground plane, it does not tell us much about the screens themselves. Still, this reversal is important as it brings us closer to van Winghe's originals—and, consequently, all discussion hereafter of the prints will refer to their reversed states (figs. 12, 13).

The *Page 569* building can be divided into three parts (fig. 14): (1) a central, hip-and-gable roofed, two-level building depicted in a three-quarters view with its façade shaded and extending back to the right; and (2) background and (3) foreground structural elements, the details

FIGURE 11. Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, *Rakshasa on Indonesian kris*, in *Cabinet de Peiresc* (ca. 1620), fol. 38r. Drawing on paper. AA-54, Cabinet des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF)

of which suggest that both are parts of a gate, wall (*hei* 塀), or roofed corridor (*rō* 廊). Each of these specifications requires qualification.

The dimensions of the central building's first level may be posited as three bays deep and, extrapolating from this dimension, three to five bays wide.[55] This reading of the building's first-level depth is rooted in an essential clarification. On the right side of the building is an apparent copy error by van Winghe and/or Esengren in the form of a smaller "half-bay" (see fig. 14) that suggests the building's side is four bays deep. This half-bay, however, should be read as the leftmost bay of the building's façade. The origin of this copy error is readily apparent through comparison with Eitoku's depiction of the Golden Pavilion (Kinkaku 金閣) of Rokuonji 鹿苑寺 (also known as Kinkakuji 金閣寺; fig. 15) in the Uesugi Screens. The angle at which the right side of the Golden Pavilion recedes, particularly on its second story, is so wide that if not copied precisely the foreshortening can easily be misread as an additional bay. That this is a copy error is further demonstrated by the second-level cusped windows (*katōmado* 火灯窓), decorative features typically situated in symmetrical fashion in the outermost bays of buildings.[56] The right window of the *Page 569* building should, like the left side, have only a single column to its right. It follows that the building's second level can be confidently posited as three-by-three bays.

These dimensions represent a foundational data point as, when cross-referenced with the building's fixtures, they clarify the structure to be a Buddhist hall. To explain this, it is best to start with the most clearly rendered decorative fixture: the cusped windows. Within the Japanese premodern context, two-level buildings of a size similar to the *Page 569* building that possess windows of this type are limited to a few architectural typologies: pavilions (such as the Golden Pavilion), temple or castle gates, turrets, and Buddhist halls. The pavilion and temple gate typologies are easily eliminated for consideration. Pavilions as a norm possess pyramidal roofs with cypress shingles, not tiles;[57] temple gates invariably possess a one- or two-bay depth at most, not three.[58] The character of the *Page 569* building's first-level side bays further narrows this list down to a finalist. Rectangles in the two rightmost bays suggest paneled doors (*sankarado* 桟唐戸) and, above these doors, either non-penetrating tie beams (*nageshi* 長押), overhead walls (*kokabe* 小壁), a transom (*ranma* 欄間), or a combination of these fixtures. Critically, the backmost (i.e., leftmost) bay lacks the elongated rectangles suggestive of paneled doors. In other words, the building's side possesses paneled doors in two front bays and a blank, presumably plaster, wall at the back. This layout is one commonly found in the side bays of Buddhist halls with a three-bay depth.[59] In contrast, the castle gates and towers lack, for functional defensive reasons, multiple entryways to their interior or, in the case of gates, doors on their sides.[60]

Although the building's context does not offer additional direct evidence to support this reading of the *Page 569* building as a Buddhist hall, it is consistent with such an interpretation. The background structural element—crossing behind the ridge, gable, and rightmost hip of the central building—contains multiple hints that it is either the roof of a connecting corridor or surrounding wall. Within Eitoku's other cityscapes, only two types of structures extend out from the backs of gables. The first of these is an adjacent overlapping gable such as those depicted in the Uesugi Screens rendering of the Manjuji Buddha Hall 万寿寺仏殿 (*butsuden*) and Main Gate 三門 (*sanmon*) (fig. 16). The second type is a roofed corridor, exemplified in the Uesugi Screens depiction of the Shōkokuji Buddha Hall (fig. 17). While the left projection of the *Page 569* building shares the same shape as an overlapping gable, its patterning of parallel lines with half circles at their base and intermittent squares below clearly identifies the
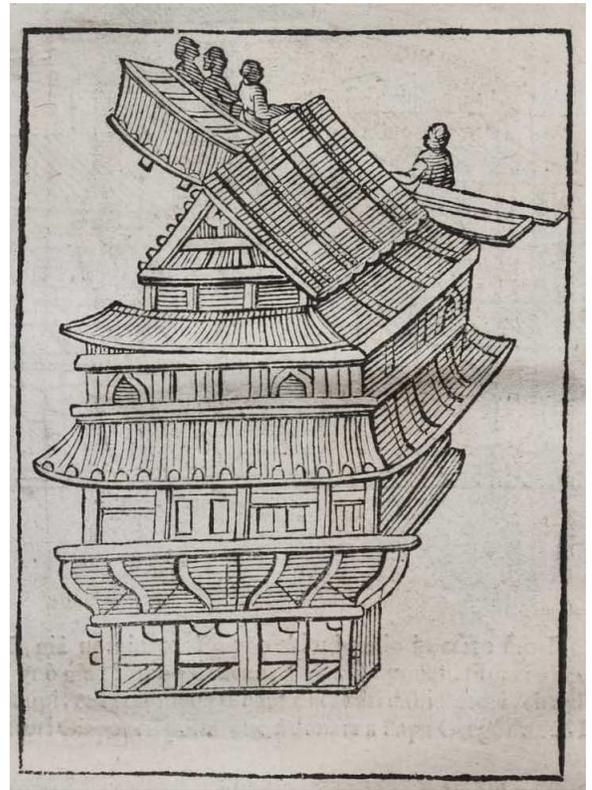
FIGURE 12. *Page 569* reversed

FIGURE 13. *Page 570* reversed
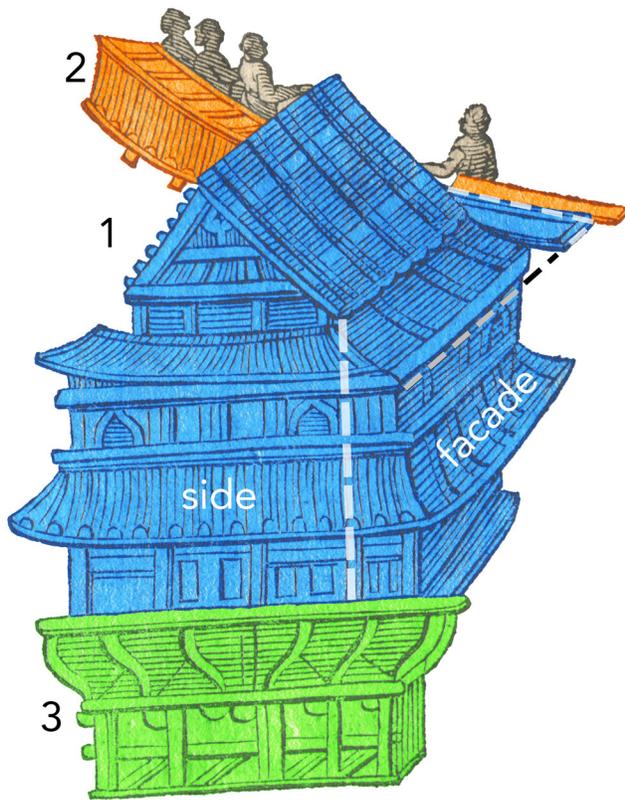
FIGURE 14. *Folio 569* reversed with guidelines

structural elements as tiled eaves and not a gable. This reading is corroborated by the rendering of the figures on top of the structure. Figures truncated from the waist up, such as those depicted in *Page 569*, are without exception in Eitoku's other cityscapes situated within courtyards and beyond a roofed corridor or wall (fig. 18). Accordingly, the placement of another truncated figure on the projection to the right of the gable suggests that its upper trapezoidal member is a continuation of the leftmost projecting corridor or wall.

Although tangential to the discussion of the building's context, it is worth pointing out that the right lower half of the background structural element is likely a corner eave. The basis for this assertion is twofold. First, the second-level eave and rightmost edge of the right projection are aligned in angle and orientation (see fig. 14). Second, such a rendering of a corner eave is consistent with Eitoku's brushwork elsewhere. As visible in several details (figs. 15–18), the back-right corner eaves of buildings in Eitoku's paintings, particularly those like the *Page 569* building, invariably project out from a building's walls.[61]

Returning to the matter of context, the foreground structural element remains the most difficult part of the image to read, but one key attribute suggests that it is also part of a gate, wall, or corridor. The lower register of the structure lacks any direct parallel in Eitoku's cityscapes and, consequently, remains tantalizingly ambiguous. The upper register, however, contains two sets of three elongated and mirrored S-shaped forms. Their distinct shape corresponds to only two forms found in Eitoku's other cityscapes: *eburi-ita* 柄振板 (lit., hoe board) and the left gables of *hirakaramon* 平唐門. *Eburi-ita* are decorative cusped wooden boards

FIGURE 15. Kanō Eitoku, detail of the Golden Pavilion (Rokuonji) (left screen, panel 2), from the Uesugi Screens

FIGURE 16. Kanō Eitoku, detail of Manjuji (right screen, panel 1), from the Uesugi Screens

that are attached to the ends of wall roofs where the wall connects to a gate or where there is an end to a wall. A *hirakaramon* is a type of gate with undulating or cusped bargeboards on the sides of its roof. Eitoku's treatment of *eburi-ita* represents another signature habit of brushwork. In contrast to cityscape artists who either entirely omitted or cursorily rendered *eburi-ita*, Eitoku invariably rendered this fixture as pronounced in height and rising well above the wall that it serves (fig. 19).[62] Although the S/S shapes in the *Page 569* building appear as more condensed and in greater number than in any single example of *eburi-ita* or *hirakar-amon* within Eitoku's other cityscapes, their distinct shared shape and the lack of anything even close in resemblance suggests that they are likewise cusped boards and positioned in a context where such fixtures are typically found, namely as part of gates, walls, or corridors. In sum, the central building appears to be situated between these architectural typologies. While Azuchi contained many such walled-off areas of varying function, one common place to find such structures is surrounding a temple complex and temple buildings—that is, the setting of a Buddhist hall.

Before moving on to the implications of this reading of *Page 569*, a brief word is required about *Page 570*. Although it is the easier of the two images to read, identification of its subject remains elusive. Depicted is a two-level gate capped with a tiled hip-and-gable roof and with walling characterized by exposed beams and lintels (*shinkabe-zukuri* 真壁造), similar to the exterior of the Maruoka Castle *tenshu* 丸岡城天守 in Fukui 福井 (fig. 20).[63] Four kneeling figures sit on the staircase leading up to the gate's threshold. Beyond them and within the gate stands a wall that corrals the path at a sharp right angle—an important detail that clarifies the gate as a *masugata* 枡形 type, a standard gate typology in Japanese castles characterized by perpendicularly set doors. In the foreground and flanking the staircase is a drystone wall with a board roof (*naga-itabuki* 長板葺き). While multiple *masugata* gates have been found within the Azuchi Castle ruins, excavations to date have yet to identify traces of foundation stones or walls that correspond to the structures depicted.[64] While frustrating, this absence of a clear parallel is also revealing as it disqualifies multiple *masugata* gates, such as the *ōtemichi* and several other excavated gates on Mount Azuchi, and in turn tentatively opens the possibility for determining its identity based on an identification of the *Page 569* building.

Nobunaga/Nebuchadnezzar's Draw

The above reading of the *Page 569* building as a Buddhist hall reveals that Lach's unspoken assumptions of naïveté merit a second look and raise the question of how Pignoria, Peiresc,

FIGURE 17. Kanō Eitoku, detail of Shōkokuji (left screen, panels 3 and 4), from the Uesugi Screens

and presumably van Winghe (as discussed below) might have concluded that these buildings were part of a temple, and selected that temple out of all the subjects in the Azuchi Screens for sketching, sharing, and publication.

This question is one that was first tackled by the historian Takemoto Chizu.[65] In her study of van Winghe, Takemoto discovered that van Winghe had some knowledge of Azuchi prior to encountering the screens. Within the pages of the only surviving original copy of van Winghe's notebooks, owned by the Royal Library in Brussels, is a list of seminaries and colleges founded during the Papacy of Gregory XIII. At the top of this list is "Azuchiyama."[66] While only a brief mention, the appearance of Azuchi in the notebook is significant in that it proves van Winghe had both access and opportunity to learn about Azuchi from either Jesuit accounts or published records on the Japanese mission. The reference therefore disproves the notion that van Winghe was a blank slate drawn to the screens for no other reason than their beauty or exoticism. This knowledge of Azuchi also may help to explain why, of all the objects he encountered during his visit, van Winghe might have spent time with the screens. In his aforementioned letter to Ortelius, van Winghe mentions the heat and discomfort caused by his having to stand to copy the Lazio map in the Gallery of Maps.[67] Under such strained conditions, and as many a scholar may be able to attest, a little knowledge of a subject does much to captivate and sustain interest even on a hot day.

Takemoto was also the first to propose that Pignoria's characterization of these images as "a temple of a Japanese deity" may be related to one of the most widely known and repeated myths about Nobunaga: his alleged apotheosis.[68] The myth of Nobunaga demanding to be worshiped as a god derives from a report authored by the missionary Luís Fróis (1532–1597)

FIGURE 18. Kanō Eitoku, detail of the Imperial Palace (right screen, panel 6), from the Uesugi Screens

that details the events leading to Nobunaga's assassination. In one of its key passages, the founding of Azuchi Castle's dedicated temple, Sōkenji, is described:

> . . . [Nobunaga] finally determined to break out with the same imprudence and insolence of Nebuchadnezzar, pretending to be worshiped by all, not as an earthly, and mortal man, but as if he was divine, or lord of immortality, and to put into effect his nefarious, and abominable desire, he had a temple built nearby his mansions, on a hill that is separated from the fortress, where he wrote the intent of his venomous ambition, in which he said in this way, translated from Japanese into our language: In these great kingdoms of Japan in the fortress of Azuchi, in this land that seen from afar causes joy, and contentment to those who see it. Nobunaga, lord of all Japan made this temple, with the name of Sōkenji. . . .[69]

Fróis's description of Sōkenji's founding as a site of worship for Nobunaga was meant to serve as an example of his hubris and, in turn, serve as an explanation for the sudden, dramatic death of a leader whom Fróis had for over a decade lauded as a critical ally in the Jesuits' proselytizing efforts.[70] While more conjecture than fact, the report is nonetheless critical to the discussion at hand as it links Sōkenji to Azuchi. Further research is required to determine whether van Winghe could have seen Fróis's account reproduced.[71] Yet, even if he had not read it, van Winghe could have learned about its contents from Jesuit friends.[72] Alternatively, the gallery's caretakers could have learned of Nobunaga and Sōkenji from any number of sources and conveyed the information to van Winghe in a passing remark. All this is to say that there
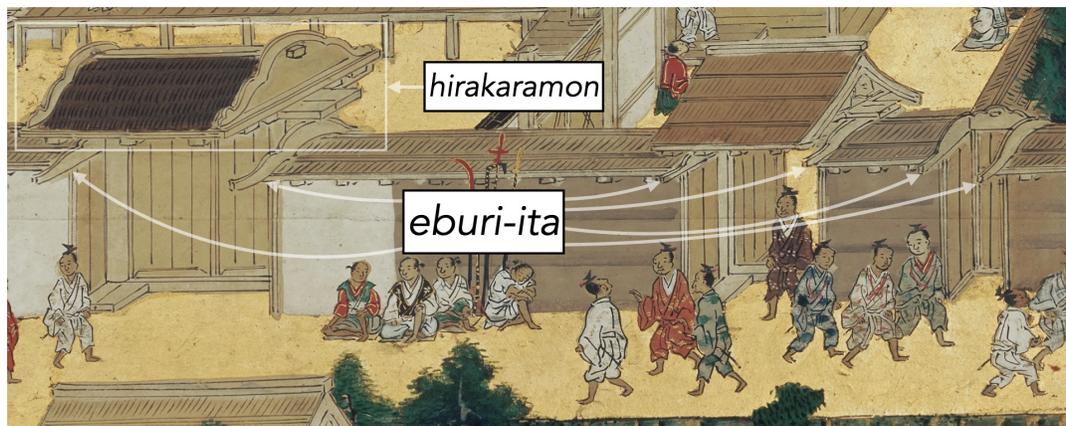
FIGURE 19. Kanō Eitoku, detail of Hosokawa *kanrei* mansion (left screen, panel 3), from the Uesugi Screens

are any number of conduits that would have allowed van Winghe to connect Fróis's letter to the subject of the screens. Accordingly, he would have had good reason to search for and then focus his interest on the Icarian temple Sōkenji.

The above reading of the *Page 569* building allows Takemoto's ideas to be taken a step farther.[73] Indeed, it may be posited that van Winghe and Pignoria knew the precise subject of *Page 569*—a building within the grounds of Sōkenji, specifically, a structure known as the Bishamon Hall. Most importantly, both Pignoria's and Peiresc's descriptions of the images point to this conclusion. Their characterizations of the temple as "placed above some steep rocks" and "at the peak of a mountain," respectively, narrow the search down to subjects within the castle-screen, which would have included many steep, drystone-wall foundations, and disqualifies subjects on the flat terrain of the town-screen. Among the temples likely depicted in the Azuchi Screens, only Sōkenji meets this essential qualification.

Assuming that van Winghe wanted to find Sōkenji, he likely did not have trouble doing so. Fróis explicitly notes in the same letter that the temple was near the fortress. As a religious institution, Sōkenji would have stood out among residential estates, fortifications, and the main castle complex as the coloring of these buildings distinguished them from other building groups on the mountain. Later depictions of Sōkenji depict it as containing white and vermillion buildings (fig. 21). Standard for Buddhist architecture, this color scheme would not have been used on residences or other secular buildings. Moreover, based on the depictions of temples in Eitoku's other cityscapes, it can be assumed that Sōkenji would have been populated by robed and tonsured monks (see figs. 15–17). The resemblance of these monks to tonsured Franciscans or black-robed Jesuits makes it possible that van Winghe was able to deduce the nature of Sōkenji's buildings based on their inhabitants alone.[74]

Fróis's account would have allowed van Winghe to narrow his search even further. Shortly after the quote above, Fróis mentions the enshrinement of a stone, named as a "Bonção" (J: 盆山 *bonsan*), that contained Nobunaga's essence ("*Xintay*;" J: 神体 *shintai*). Thereupon, the placement of this stone is described: "[Nobunaga] ordered to be made in the most eminent place of the temple above all the Buddhas a certain kind of [procession] float, or tiny closed chapel, where he had [the stone] placed."[75] Van Winghe almost certainly did not know the form of a Japanese float (*mikoshi* 神輿) or "closed chapel" (*zushi* 厨子), but the contours of

FIGURE 20. *Tenshu* pedestal and first story, Maruoka Castle, Fukui, constructed 1576. Photo by Nakamura Yasuo

this description—that is, a retrofitted structure that was the "most eminent place . . . above all," within Sōkenji—would have been sufficient.

Only five structures are definitively known to have been part of the Sōkenji precinct around the time of the creation of the screens: a *niō* gate (*niōmon* 仁王門), a three-level pagoda (*sanjū-no-tō* 三重塔), a noh stage (*butai* 舞台), a viewing gallery (*osajiki* 御桟敷) for the stage, and the Bishamon Hall.[76] The gate and pagoda still exist, and they along with the Bishamon Hall can be seen in an 1805 print depicting Sōkenji (fig. 22). The gate sits below the temple on the *Dodo-bashi-michi*. Notably, its typology is wholly distinct from the gate depicted in *Page 570*, and consequently, there is little chance that it is the subject of that print. The pagoda is likewise situated on the periphery of the temple complex, positioned at a level below the other temple buildings. As with the gate, the pagoda's form is so distinctly different from the subjects of *Page 569* or *570* that there is no possibility that it is one of the buildings depicted. Not appearing in the print are the stage and gallery. Both structures are mentioned in passing in Nobunaga's posthumous biography, and the only clue as to their location within Sōkenji comes from the stage's full name as it appears in that text: the "Bishamon Hall stage" (*Bishamon-dō gobutai* 毘沙門堂御舞台), suggesting that the stage, along with its audience gallery, were situated in some proximity to the Bishamon Hall. Owing to the unique nature of these architectural types, and a lack of comparative examples in Eitoku's other paintings that might help us to reimagine their forms, it is difficult to be sure how these structures were rendered. Thus, their forms may hold a critical "missing link" that might explain the unusual character of the back- and foreground structural elements in *Page 569*.[77]

Only one building remains: the Bishamon Hall. Easily identifiable in the 1805 print as the largest, highest-reaching, and most central structure, its importance within Sōkenji is immediately appreciable. While it is impossible to know the manner in which it was depicted by Eitoku, the building's core attributes—that is, central, multistoried—also likely made it stand out from its neighbors. In sum, the precise reason that van Winghe was attracted to the Azuchi Screens and specifically the two buildings he sketched is unknowable, but both motive and means exist.

As the Bishamon Hall burned down after a lightning strike in 1854, the primary and archaeological records are unfortunately ambiguous and inconsistent. Written descriptions and illustrations prior to its destruction suggest that it was a building that underwent several significant renovations.[78] The original building is generally thought to have been transported

FIGURE 21. Detail of Sōkenji from *Gō-shū Gamō-gun Toyoura-mura to Suda-mura sanron tachiai ezu* (Illustration of mountain [territory] dispute in Toyoura Village and Suda Village, Gamō District, Ōmi Province), 1695. Ink and color on paper. Private collection

to Sōkenji during Azuchi's construction around 1576, and as noted in Fróis's report, it was then refurbished to serve Nobunaga's designs.[79] Some time after Nobunaga's death in 1582, Sōkenji changed its sect affiliation to Rinzai Zen and was reinvented as a caretaker of the Azuchi Castle ruins and Nobunaga's grave there, a role that the institution has maintained until the present day. Contradictory records from the Edo period (1616–1868), including the 1805 print cited above, suggest that the building was renovated or underwent significant structural changes, possibly at two separate times.[80] Indeed, its original name of Bishamon Hall—known via the quote above about the adjacent stage—likewise appears to have changed twice, to Abbot's Quarters (*hōjō* 方丈) and then later to Main Hall (*hondō* 本堂). Some Edo-period records confirm that the hall was five-by-five bays and possessed a second level or story.[81] The archaeological records likewise confirm the dimensions of the hall as five-by-five bays. However, in the aforementioned 1695 image (fig. 21), the structure appears as an abbreviated two-by-two-bay structure; and in the 1805 print, the building layout, with five-by-three bays, is cosmetically consistent with the *Page 569* building. In sum, owing to the multiple renovations and the loss of the building, the exact form of the hall in Eitoku and Nobunaga's day is impossible to know.

Stronger evidence that the *Page 569* building is the Bishamon Hall, however, may be found in the reasoning behind Pignoria's selection of these images for publication. Van Winghe's sketches of the Azuchi Screens stand out within Pignoria's "Seconda parte" as the only examples of architecture within the text and as one of only three subjects from Peiresc's offerings that would be added to the 1624 and subsequent editions. In these respects—that is, inconsistent with the book's focus on iconography and as selected among several options—their inclusion appears to be very deliberate. This considered approach is consistent with research by Paola von Wyss-Giascosa on Pignoria's process in compiling the 1615 edition of *Imagini*.[82] In her analysis of the "Seconda parte," she additionally points out the difficulty that Pignoria had with the Japanese section, specifically a lack of iconographic examples from Asia. This issue was so acute, and undermined his Egyptogenetic argument to such a degree, that he strayed from his own stated scholarly principles of relying on careful, first-person visual analysis and instead had Esengren rely on written accounts to fill a gap in the visual record.[83] Wyss-Giascosa only briefly considers the additions to the 1624 edition, and van Winghe's prints are
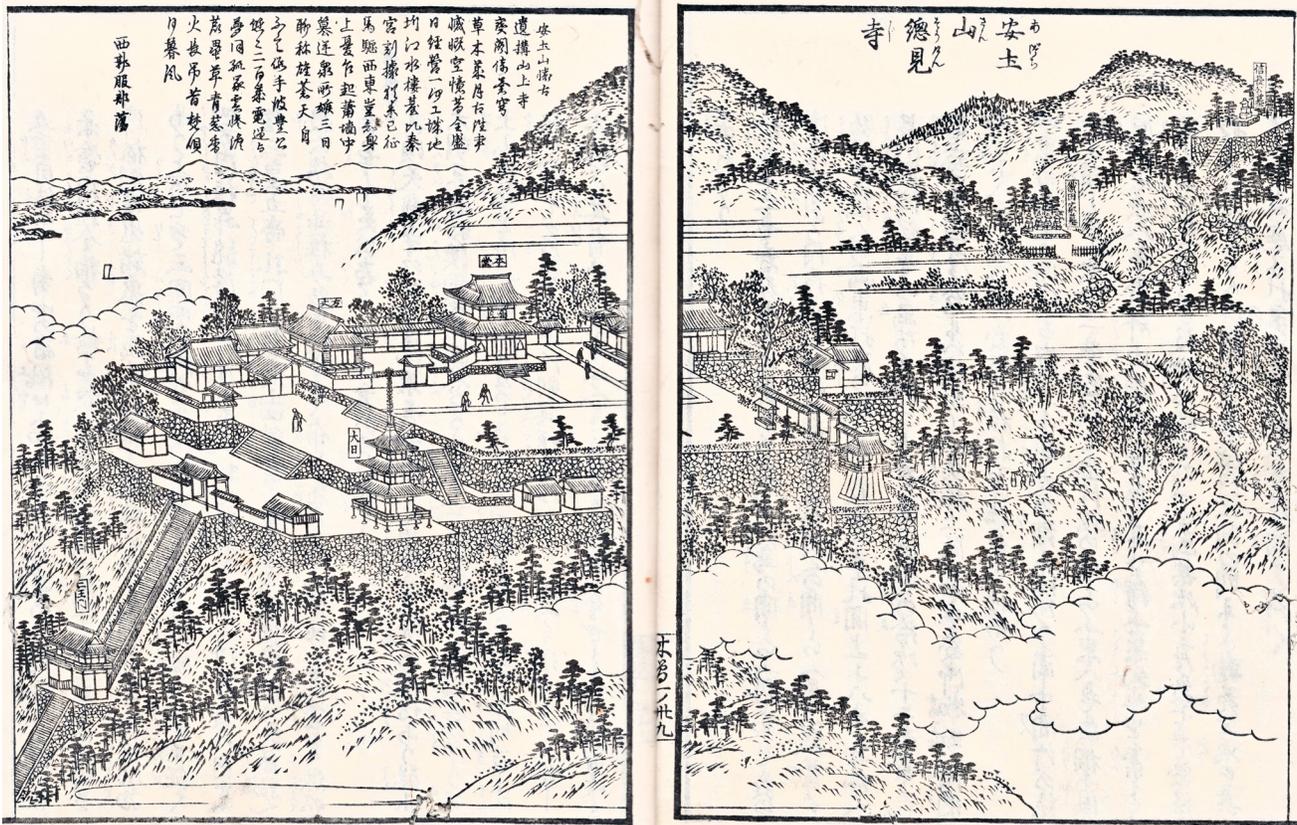
FIGURE 22. Akisato Ritō, "Azuchiyama Sōkenji," from *Kisoji meisho zue* (A collection of images of famous places on the Kisō Road), 1805. Private collection

not mentioned in her discussion, but they fall perfectly in line with her assessment of Pignoria's struggles and methodology. Lacking visual sources from Asia and eager to prove his main point on the Egyptogenetic origins of non-Christian religions, Pignoria found van Winghe's sketches, precisely because they were of Sōkenji, ideal for inclusion even though they strayed from the book's focus on iconography.

It is the draw of Nebuchadnezzar that, I contend, accounts for Pignoria's selection of van Winghe's sketches of the Azuchi Screens. It may be safely assumed, based on the similarity of Peiresc's and Pignoria's descriptions and the nature of van Winghe's surviving notebook—filled with a mix of images and notes—that the identification of the building as a temple on steep mountains came directly from notes accompanying van Winghe's sketches. Pignoria, as a self-proclaimed expert on the "Indies" and dependent on Jesuit accounts of Japan to compile the "Seconda parte," was almost certainly aware of Fróis's account. Consequently, when he encountered van Winghe's notes, he could have easily and independently connected the dots and identified Nobunaga as a "Japanese deity."[84] Worth noting also is that the names of Azuchi, Nobunaga, Sōkenji, or even Fróis may have been included in van Winghe's notes. The aforementioned Chacòn copy of Quetzalcoatl (fig. 9) reveals that while Pignoria borrowed from van Winghe's notes, he did so selectively. More information regarding Quetzalcoatl, such as the god's Mesoamerican origins, is included, but Pignoria did not transcribe everything available to him. Such omissions are consistent with the Japanese section of the "Seconda parte."[85] In

contrast to the section on Mesoamerican gods, Pignoria limits his discussions to descriptions and, thereby, on its surface sidesteps his overarching Egyptogenetic argument. Yet while less actively promoted, this argument still represented the core organizing pillar. Although an artificially drawn parallel, Fróis's comparison between Nobunaga and Nebuchadnezzar perfectly complemented his thesis of the new world containing echoes of the ancient past, and thereby justified the addition of van Winghe's Azuchi Screens sketches.[86]

Conclusion

For all of the efforts by Nobunaga and the Jesuits, it is a strange irony that the only vestiges of the Azuchi Screens are a pair of awkward prints based on sketches by an early Christian archaeology specialist and included in a book on religious iconography published a continent away. Nonetheless and while their story and character are complex, these prints represent critical windows onto the Azuchi Screens, its castle subject, and the reception and dissemination of information on Japan in European circles in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The proposition made here that the subject of *Page 569* is the Sōkenji Bishamon Hall is tentative, but it has multiple implications for future research. As related to the Azuchi Screens and their content, identifying a single point such as the *Page 569* building has the potential to open multiple new lines of inquiry. These include comparative analysis with the topography as well as determining the position of the viewer and the arrangement of castle and town on the left or right screen. Such inquiries may appear minor but have the potential to shed light on Nobunaga and the Oda clan's perception of the capital vis-à-vis Azuchi, and on the degree to which Hideyoshi relied on Nobunaga as a model for consolidating his authority. In other words, this identification may help in understanding critical unspoken assumptions about the definition of power and authority at a key moment in Japan's formation as it moved from the medieval to the early modern era. Such an identification would also have implications for our understanding of the development of Azuchi Castle and Sōkenji, in particular. Research into the main hall of Tsukubusuma Shrine 都久夫須麻神社 on the island of Chikubushima 竹生島 has revealed that it was originally a three-by-three-bay structure, conceived as a memorial for Hideyoshi's son, but then transplanted and expanded to five-by-five bays after being moved to Chikubushima.[87] This transformation is eye-catching as it seems to have echoes in the Bishamon Hall: as a transplanted building, as a structure that might have been expanded from three to five bays deep during the refurbishment Fróis describes, and even as a site of self-deification. In other words, it could shed light on the evolution of memorialization and self-deification during this era. In this new identification also lie the grounds for expansion of the excavations on Mount Azuchi. The form of any gate at the base of Mount Azuchi checking the start of the *Dodobashi-michi* is entirely unknown, and the site has never been excavated. Yet while the existence of a gate at this location is unknown, it is an obvious spot for a gate and as such, it represents a solid candidate for the subject of *Page 570*. As the initial entryway to the path leading up to Sōkenji, a pairing of gate and main hall is a logical one for van Winghe to have illustrated—that is, a start and a climax. Notably, such an arrangement is one that finds an echo in the Jurakutei Screen. If one assumes that the Azuchi Screens were similar in character to the Jurakutei Screens, then the comparatively low angle of the *Page 570* gate suggests that it occupied a spot in the lower register—that is, exactly where one would presume such a gate, located at the base of the mountain, to be found.

Finally, it is my hope that this reading of van Winghe's images reveals that, despite the Eurocentric views of their authors, their research into Japan and Asia and that of their peers merits

further inquiry. To be sure, the time that the three authors of *Page 569* and *Page 570*—van Winghe, Pignoria, and Esengren—likely spent considering the Azuchi Screens was not greater than a few hours or days at most. Moreover, Pignoria and Esengren never saw the screens "in the flesh." Yet, the two principal actors, van Winghe and Pignoria, were not passive or unaware observers. Both were well-read scholars with some knowledge of Japan and Japanese culture; both placed a premium on firsthand viewing and careful formal analysis; and their attention to detail shines through even in a copy of a copy. Interested in making sense of the new worlds and not yet weighed down by later, more fully formed colonialist attitudes, the work done by Pignoria and his peers represents a rich frontier for an understanding of European engagement with Asia, and accordingly merits reappraisal.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1 Since the rediscovery of their existence by Hamada Seiryō 濱田青陵, the Azuchi Screens have appeared in many scholarly publications. Hamada Seiryō, "Azuchiyama byōbu ni tsuite" 安土山屏風について (Concerning the Azuchiyama Screens), *Bukkyō bijutsu* 仏教美術, no. 18 (December 1931). Alternatively named as the Azuchiyama Screens (*Azuchiyama-zu byōbu* 安土山図屏風) or Azuchi Castle Screens (*Azuchi-jō-zu byōbu* 安土城図屏風), most mentions—for example, in studies related to Nobunaga, Eitoku, or the history of folding screens—are brief. Only a handful of more in-depth discussions of the screens exist. In Japanese, see Ōkuchi, Yūjirō 大口勇次郎, Shōsaku Takagi 高木昭作, and Sugi-mori, Tetsuya 杉森哲也, "Egakareta kinsei no toshi (ni)—maboroshi no 'Azuchi-zu byōbu'—" 描かれた近世の都市(二)「安土図屏風」(Early modern cities depicted [2] 'the Azuchi Screens'), in *Nihon no kinsei* (*hōsō daigaku kyōzai*) (Early modern Japan [Open University of Japan textbook]) (Tokyo: Hōsō Daigaku Kyōiku Shinkōkai, 1998), 82–97; Sugimori Tetsuya, "Toshi-zu byōbu no seiritsu to tenkai—nichiō kōryū no shiten kara—" 都市図屏風の成立と展開—日欧交流の視点から— (The creation and development of cityscape screens: From the perspective of Japan-Europe exchange), in *Kinsei toshi no seiritsu (Toshi・kenchiku・rekishi 5)* 近世都市の成立(都市・建築・歴史 5) (The

establishment of early modern cities [city, architecture, history 5]), ed. Suzuki Hiroyuki 鈴木博之 et al. (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 2005), 317–24; Sakakibara Satoru 榊原悟, *Bi no kakehashi—ikoku ni tsukawasareta byōbu-tachi* 美の架け橋—異国に遣わされた屏風たち (A bridge of beauty: Folding screens sent to foreign lands) (Tokyo: Perikan-sha, 2002), 32–40; Sakakibara Satoru, *Byōbu to Nihonjin* 屏風と日本人 (Folding screens and Japanese people) (Tokyo: Keibunsha, 2018), 514–24. In English, see Matthew P. McKelway, *Capitalscapes: Folding Screens and Political Imagination in Late Medieval Kyoto* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 165–67. The longer discussions are similar in character in that they list key primary sources and, by way of scrutinizing these sources, trace the limits of knowledge about the screens. Each also provides a short analysis, proportional to the limited record, on the screens' composition and their significance within the history of cityscape or folding screens. Research that focuses on related aspects of the screens and their afterlife, such as the Tenshō Embassy and van Winghe's sketches are referenced throughout this article.

2 The attribution to Eitoku is based on an entry discussing the screens in the imperial diary *Oyudono no ue no nikki* 御湯殿上日記, ed. Hanawa Hokiichi 塙保己一, in *Zoku gunsho ruijū kansaikai hoi san: Oyudonono ue no nikki* (7) 續群書類従・補遺三: 御湯殿上日記 (7) (Continued literature compendium・Supplement 3: Diary of the palace attendant women serving 'Beyond the Bath' [7]) (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1934), 373. Issues related to this attribution are discussed in Tsuji Nobuo 辻惟雄, *Sengoku jidai Kanō-ha no kenkyū: Kanō Motonobu o chūshin to shite* 戦国時代狩野派の研究—狩野元信を中心として—(Research on the Kanō School in the Warring States period: Centering on Kanō Motonobu) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1994), 264; and McKelway, *Capitalscapes*, 165.

3 Through the course of my research on this topic, I have learned of multiple informal attempts by prominent Japanese scholars to engage with the Vatican to search for the screens. More recent efforts spearheaded by the Azuchi Screens Research Network (ASRN) have sought to move beyond a singular focus on the screens and to examine the role of the Tenshō and Keichō (1612–20) missions in cross-cultural exchanges of material culture. ASRN is composed of Aihara Gen 相原玄, Paola Cavaliere, Mark K. Erdmann, Shimbo Kiyono 新保淳乃, and Anton Schweizer, with affiliations to Kyushu University and the Odawara Art Founda-

tion, Japan. ASRN was born of a 2005–7 Japanese initiative led by Cavaliere, Shimbo, and Wakakuwa Midori 若桑みどり (1935–2007), sponsored by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations and Azuchi Town 安土町. The project was revived in 2016 thanks in large part to the generous support of the artist Sugimoto Hiroshi 杉本博司. This paper represents one of several that have been published and are planned as a product of ASRN's efforts. See also Mark K. Erdmann and Éliane Roux, "Recent Research on the Azuchi Screens," *Journal of Asia Humanities at Kyushu University* 9 (2024): 1–23.

4 Lorenzo Pignoria, *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (Venice: Appresso Euangelista Deuchino, 1624); Lorenzo Pignoria, *Seconda novissima editione delle imagini de gli dei delli antichi* (Padua: P. P. Tozzi, 1626); Lorenzo Pignoria, *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (Venice: Presso il Tomasini, 1647).

5 "Il già nominato Filippo Winghomio in certo suo foglio disegnò già i Tempij d'alcune Deità Giaponesi, situati sopra alcuni alti rupi, & raccontava d'haverli cavati dalli Pittori [*sic*], che gl'Ambasciatori Giaponesi portarono à donare a Papa Gregorio XIII." It was paintings, not painters, that were brought. Pignoria, *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (1624), 570. Translation by Anna Huber.

6 In English, see Michael Cooper, *The Japanese Mission to Europe, 1582–1590: The Journey of Four Samurai Boys Through Portugal, Spain and Italy* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2005), 208; and McKelway, *Capitalscapes*, 167. In Japanese, see Miura Masayuki 三浦正幸, ed., *Yomigaeru shinsetsu Azuchi-jō—tettei fukugen ◊ haō Nobunaga no maboroshi no shiro* よみがえる真説安土城：徹底復元・覇王信長の幻の城 (The truth of Azuchi Castle reconstructed: A complete restoration of the phantom castle of the hegemon Nobunaga), Rekishi gunzō shirizu derakkusu 2 (Tokyo: Gakken, 2006), 93. Naitō Akira 内藤昌 takes it for granted that *Page 569* is a depiction of the *tenshu*. Naitō Akira, *Fukugen Azuchi-jō* 復元安土城 (Azuchi Castle reconstructed) (Tokyo: Kodansha Gakujutsu Bunko, 2006), 239. Studies also exist regarding the origins of the images but avoid discussion of their content. See Takemoto Chizu 竹本千鶴, "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin" 「安土図屏風」を描き遺したフランドル人 (The Fleming who sketched the Azuchi Screens), *Nichi-rangaku-kai kaishi* 日蘭学会会誌 (Bulletin of the Japan-Netherlands Institute) 34.1 (no. 57) (2010): 86; and Ōhashi Yoshiyuki 大橋喜之, "Eitoku no 'Azuchiyama byōbu' ni tsuite wakatta koto wakaranai koto" 永徳の安土山図屏風について分かたこと分からないこと (The known and

unknown about Eitoku's Azuchiyama Screens), in *Seiō kodai shinwa zuzō daikan [zokuhen]* 西欧古代神話図像大鑑 [続編] (Images of the gods of the ancients [second part]) (Tokyo: Yasaka Shobō, 2014).

7 See Thijs Weststeijn, "Art and Knowledge in Rome and the Early Modern Republic of Letters, 1500–1750: An Introduction," *Fragmenta: Journal of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome* 5 (2014): 1–12; and Sonia Maffei, *La riscoperta dell'esotismo nel Seicento: le "Imagini de gli dei indiani" di Lorenzo Pignoria* (Rome: Scuola Normale Superiore, 2020), 300–301.

8 The function and symbolism of Azuchi Castle is discussed in multiple sources. In English, see Jeroen Pieter Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus: The Japanese Warlord Oda Nobunaga Reconsidered*, Japonica Neerlandica 8 (Leiden: Hotei, 2000), 105–10; George Elison, "The Cross and the Sword: Patterns in Momoyama History," in *Warlords, Artists & Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. George Elison and Bardwell L. Smith (Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i, 1981), 63–65; Kendall H. Brown, *The Politics of Reclusion: Painting and Power in Momoyama Japan* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i, 1997), 105–10; and William H. Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese Studies Series (London: Routledge, 1996), 106–19. These discussions are, however, dated by their emphasis on the now largely debunked Naitō reconstructive *tenshu* model. My previous work has attempted to update this discussion; Mark K. Erdmann, "Azuchi Castle: Architectural Innovation and Political Legitimacy in Sixteenth-Century Japan" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2016), 162–242. In Japanese, see Akita Hiroki 秋田裕毅, *Oda Nobunaga to Azuchi-jō* 織田信長と安土城 (Oda Nobunaga and Azuchi Castle) (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1990); Miura, *Yomigaeru shinsetsu Azuchi-jō*; Senda Yoshihiro 千田嘉博, *Nobunaga no shiro* 信長の城 (Nobunaga's castles) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2013); and Kido Masayuki 木戸雅寿, *Yomigaeru Azuchi-jō* よみがえる安土城 (Azuchi Castle reconstructed) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbun, 2003). For discussions as part of reconstructive models, see note 32 below. For further references, see Nobunaga Shiryō-Shū Iinkai 信長資料集編集委員会 and Gifu-shi Rekishi Hakubutsukan 岐阜市歴史博物館, eds., *Nobunaga kankei bunken mokuroku sakuin* 信長関係文献目録 (Catalog of literature related to Nobunaga) (Gifu: Gifu-shi Rekishi Hakubutsukan, 2011).

9 Matthew Stavros, "The Shōkokuji Pagoda," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 45.1 (2018): 125–44.

10 This comparison to the Tōdaiji Great Buddha Hall was made at the time of the castle's construction. Gnecchi-Soldo Organtino, "De húa do padre Organtino do Miáco, de 1577," in *Cartas que os padres e irmãos da Companhia de Iesus escreuerão dos Reynos de Iapão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India, & Europa des do anno de 1549 até o de 1580*, ed. Manoel de Lyra (Evora: Impressas por mandado do Reverendissimo em Christo Padre dom Theotonio de Bragança, Arcebispo d'Evora, 1598), 1:408v.

11 Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570–1680*, Michigan Classics in Japanese Studies 18 (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1998), 29–39, esp. 35.

12 Mark K. Erdmann, "Symbols of Failure, of Success: Samurai Culture and Martial Architecture," in *Samurai Transformed: Warrior, Culture, Class, Commodity*, ed. Rusty Kelty (Adelaide: Art Gallery of South Australia; Sydney: Japan Foundation, 2020), 246–330; Erdmann, "Azuchi Castle," 246–330. See also David Spafford, *A Sense of Place: The Political Landscape of Late Medieval Japan*, Harvard East Asian Monographs 361 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Arts Center, 2013), 169–213.

13 Miyakami Shigetaka 宮上茂隆, "Azuchi-jō fukugen" 安土城復元 (Azuchi Castle reconstructed), in *Nihon zenshū dai 14 maki shiro to chashitsu Momoyama no kenchiku・kōgei I* 日本全集 14 巻城と茶室桃山の建築・工芸 I (Complete works of Japan, vol. 14, castles and teahouses, Momoyama architecture and crafts I), ed. Tsuji Nobuo, Hirai Kiyoshi 平井聖, and Yabe Yoshiaki 矢部良明 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1992), 165.

14 "Azuchi gotenshu no shidai" 安土御天主之次第 (Program of the Azuchi *Tenshu*), in Ōta Gyūichi 太田牛一, *Shinchō-kō ki* 信長公記, ed. Okuno Takahiro 奥野高広 and Iwasawa Yoshihiko 岩澤愿彦 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Bunko, 1969), 213–18. English translation: Gyūichi Ōta, *The Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*, trans. J. S. A. Elisonas and Jeroen Pieter Lamers, Brill's Japanese Studies Library 36 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 254–57; *Azuchiyama-ki* 安土山記, modern Japanese transcription in Ōnishi Hiroshi 大西廣 and Ōta Shōko 太田昌子, *Azuchi-jō no naka no 'tenka' fusuma-e o yomu* 安土城の中の「天下」襖絵を読む (Reading the 'Tenka' sliding door paintings within Azuchi Castle) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1995), 11. Annotated English translation: Erdmann, "Azuchi Castle," 493–501.

15 *Honchō gashi* 本朝畫史 (1691) and this evolution are discussed in Kawamoto Keiko 川本桂子, *Shinpen meihō nihon no bijutsu dai 21 maki Yūshō・Sanraku (Shōgakukan gyarari)* 新編名宝日本

の美術　第21　友松・山楽　（小学館ギャラリー）(New edition of treasures of Japanese art, vol. 21 Yūshō・Sanraku [Shogakukan Gallery]) (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1991); Yamamoto Hideo 山本英男, "Kanō-ha―gadan seiha he no michi―," 狩野派―画壇制覇への道― (The Kanō School: The path to dominating the art world), in *Muromachi jidai no Kanō-ha* 室町時代の狩野派 (Kanō School of the Muromachi period), ed. Yamamoto Hideo (Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum, 1996), passim.

16 "*panos*": Gaspar Coelho, "Carta annua de Iapaō q[ue] escreveo o padre Gaspar Coelho de Nangaçàqui, a quinze de Feuereiro do anno de 82 ao Padre Geral da Companhia de Iesu," in Lyra, *Cartas*, 2.1:fol. 39r.

17 "que são dourados e pintados": Luís Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, ed. José Wicki (Lisbon: Presidência do Conselho de Ministros Secretaria de Estado da Cultura Direcção-Geral do Patrimônio Cultural Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, 1982), 3:260.

18 Sugimori, "Toshi-zu byōbu no seiritsu to tenkai," 326; Ōkuchi et al., "Egakareta kinsei no toshi (ni)―maboroshi no 'Azuchi-zu byōbu'―," 96.

19 ". . . che colà chiaman Beobi, nell'un de'quali era effigiata a pennello la nuoua Città, nell'altro l'inespugnabil Fortezza d'Anzuciama. . ."; Daniello Bartoli, *Dell'historia della Compagnia di Giesv il Giappone: Seconda parte dell'Asia* (Rome: Nella stamperia d'Ignatio de'Lazzeri, 1660), 195. Translation by Anna Huber.

20 The grid pattern is noted in Coelho, "Carta annua de Iapaō," 2.1, 36v. Mention of men riding oxen suggests the presence of rice paddies; Teodoro Panizza to Cardinal d'Este, April 5, 1585, transcribed in Tokyo Daigaku Shiryō Hensan-jo 東京大學史料編纂所, ed., *Dai Nihon shiryō dai jūichi hen bekkan no ichi tenshō kenō shisetsu kankei shiryō ichi* 大日本史料第十一編別巻之一天正遣欧使節関係史料一 (Greater Japan primary sources, vol. 11, suppl. no. 1, Materials related to the Tensho Embassy), Dai Nihon shiryō (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku, 1959), 246. Houses and infrastructure are mentioned in Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 3:260. The presence of vassal estates is assumed based on their forced relocation to Azuchi; see Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, 140–48.

21 Coelho notes that the pretense for Nobunaga gifting the screens was that they contained the Jesuits' "seu mesmo Collegio" (very own College). Coelho, "Carta annua de Iapaō," 2.1, 39v.

22 Details regarding the seminary come from Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 3:196–97; and Bébio Vieira Amaro, "A Brief History of the Jesuit Facilities in Azuchi: New Insights on their Architectural and Urban Features," paper presented at the online syposium "Beyond the Southern Barbarians: Repositioning Japan in the First Global Age," Kyūshū University, February 2021.

23 This reading is not only based on other screens, but on *tendō* 天道 ideology, dictating that a prosperous and happy populace were evidence of a legitimate ruler. Regarding *tentō*, see Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology*, 89–91; Ishida Ichirō 石田一良, ed., *Shisō-shi 2* 思想?史 2 (History of ideas 2), Taikei Nihon-shi sōsho 23 (体系日本史叢書 23) (Tokyo: Yamagawa Shuppan-sha, 1976), 8–14.

24 The Jurakutei Screen has been regularly cited as a comparative model for the Azuchi Screens. Kyoto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 京都国立博物館, ed., *Tokubestu tenrankai Kanō Eitoku* 特別展覧会狩野永徳 (Special exhibition Kanō Eitoku) (Kyoto: Kyoto Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 2007), 270–71; Ōkuchi et al., "Egakareta kinsei no toshi (ni)―maboroshi no 'Azuchi-zu byōbu'―," 96; Sugimori, "Toshi-zu byōbu no seiritsu to tenkai," 326; Sakakibara, *Byōbu to Nihonjin*, 524.

25 Jurakutei also served as the site of two imperial progressions 行幸 (*gyōkō*). Although a progression never took place at Azuchi, Nobunaga's intention to hold one is generally accepted. Hashimoto Masanobu 橋本政宣, *Kinsei kuge shakai no kenkyū* 近世公家社会の研究 (Research on the early modern court society) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2002), 162–79. For a contrasting view on the Azuchi progression, see Kawamoto Shigeo 川本重雅, "Gyōkō goten to Azuchi-jō honmaru goten―gyōkō to gyōkō goten no rekishi kara mita Azuchi-jō honmaru goten―" 行幸御殿と安土城本丸御殿～行幸と行幸御殿の歴史から見た安土城本丸御殿～ (The imperial progression mansion and Azuchi Castle Honmaru Mansion―The Azuchi Castle Honmaru Mansion seen via the history of imperial progressions and the imperial progressions mansions), in *Toshi to jōkan no chūsei―gakuyūgō kenkyū no kokonomi* 都市と城館の中世―学融合研究の試み―(Cities and castles in the medieval era: An attempt at interdisciplinary research), ed. Senda Yoshihiro and Yata Toshifumi 矢田俊文 (Tokyo: Takashi Shoin, 2010).

26 Tsuji Nobuo, "Jurakutei-zu byōbu ni tsuite," 聚楽第屏風について (Concerning the Jurakutei Screens), *Kokka* 国華, no. 871 (October 1964): 9–17.

27 Shiga-ken Kyōiku Iinkai 滋賀県教育委員会, ed., *Azuchi: Nobunaga no shiro to jōkamachi (hakkutsu chōsa 20-nen no kiroku)* 安土：信長の城と城下町 (発掘調査20年の記録) (Azuchi: Nobunaga's castle and castle town [A record of the twenty-year excavation survey]) (Hikone: Sunrise, 2009), 28–37.

28 However, doubts remain as to whether these sites were estates. Akita, *Oda Nobunaga to Azuchi-jō*,

149–62; Matsushita Hiroshi 松下浩, "Azuchi-kō-jō-zu ni kan suru kiso-teki kōsatsu" 安土古城図に関する基礎的考察 (A fundamental study of the old Azuchi Castle map) *Kenkyū kiyō* 研究紀要 (Research bulletin), ed. Shiga-ken Azuchi-jōkaku chōsa kenkyū-jo, no. 1 (1993); Kido, *Yomigaeru Azuchi-jō*, 106–8.

29 Matsuoka Toshirō 松岡利郎, "Jōkakunai no shūkyō shisetsu ni kan suru ichi satsu" 城郭内の宗教施設に関する一考察 (A study on religious facilities in castles) *Chūsei jōkaku kenkyū* 中世城郭研究 (Research into medieval castles) 16 (2002): 168–93.

30 Kido, *Yomigaeru Azuchi-jō*, 83–98; Nakamura Yasuo 中村泰朗, "Azuchi-jō-den honmaru goten ni kansuru kōsatsu" 安土城伝本丸御殿に関する考察 (A study on the Honmaru Palace in Azuchi Castle), *Nihon kenchiku gakkai keikaku-kei ronbun-shū* 日本建築学会計画系論文集 (Journal of architecture and planning: Transactions of AIJ) 81.727 (2016): 2021–30.

31 There exist many *tenshu* reconstructive models. Naitō and Miyakami's models are the most famous owing to their heated debate and are often cited in discussions of Azuchi, but more recent models by Satō Taiki 佐藤大規 and Nakamura offer new, more compelling perspectives. In order of their creation: Naitō Akira, "Azuchi-jō no kenkyū (jō・ge)" 安土城の研究 (上・下) (Research on Azuchi Castle [vols. 1–2]), *Kokka* 988–89 (March–April 1976), and updated in Naitō, *Fukugen Azuchi-jō*; Miyakami Shigetaka, "Azuchi-jō no tenshu no fukugen to sono shiryō ni tsuite: Naitō Akira-shi 'Azuchi-jō no kenkyū' ni tai suru gimon (jō・ge)" 安土城天主の復原とその史料に就いて―藤昌氏「安土城の研究」に封する疑問―　(上・下) (Concerning the reconstruction of the Azuchi Castle *tenshu* and its primary sources—Problems in Naitō Akira's 'Research on Azuchi Castle' [vols. 1–2]), *Kokka*, no. 998–99 (March–April 1977), and updated in Miyakami, "Azuchi-jō fukugen"; Satō Taiki, "Azuchi-jō tenshu no heimen fukugen ni kan suru shian" 安土城天主の平面復元に関する試案 (Research on the reconstructed floor plan of *tenshu* in Azuchi Castle, Shiga Prefecture), *Shigaku-Kenkyū* 史学研究 (Review of historical studies) 255 (February 2007): 1–22; Nakamura Yasuo, "Azuchi-jō tenshu ni kan suru fukugen-teki kōsatsu (sono ichi)—ikkai kara san-kai made no heyawari—" 安土城天主に関する復元的考察（その一）―一階から三階までの部屋割― (Study on the reconstruction of the Azuchi Castle *tenshu* [1]—Distribution of rooms in the first to third floors), *Kenchiku-shi gaku* 建築史学 (Journal of

the Society of Architectural Historians of Japan) 76 (March 2021): 2–31.

32 The height is known, and the wide gables may be assumed via the description of the fourth floor in Ōta, *Shinchō-kō ki*, 213–18; and Ōta, *Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*, 254–57. The material character is based on the color scheme described in Giovanni Francesco Stephanoni, "Carta do padre Ioão Frácisco, escreuco do Miàco ao primeiro de Setembro de 1580," in Lyra, *Cartas*, 1.4:480v; Coelho, "Carta annua de Iapaō," 2.1:36v; and Fróis, *Historia de Japam*, 3:257–58. See also *Azuchiyama-ki* (note 14 above).

33 The form of the belvedere is known via Gyūichi's description. Ōta, *Shinchō-kō ki*, 213–18; Ōta, *Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*, 254–57.

34 Akita, *Oda Nobunaga to Azuchi-jō*, 96–97; Miyakami Shigetaka, *Azuchi-jō—kirameku 'gojū' no fubu no rekishi* 安土城―煌めく「五重」の布武の城 (Azuchi Castle—A glittering five-story castle of military might), ed. Ōmaru Nobuaki 太丸伸章, *Rekishi gunzō・meijō shirizu (3)* 歴史群像・名城シリーズ (3) (Historical portraits: Famous castles series) (Tokyo: Gakken, 1994), 72.

35 Adriana Boscaro, "The First Japanese Ambassadors to Europe: Political Background for a Religious Journey," *KBS Bulletin of Japanese Culture* 103 (August–September 1970): 1–20; Cooper, *Japanese Mission to Europe*; Derek Massarella, "Envoys and Illusions: The Japanese Embassy to Europe, 1582–90, 'De Missione Legatorum Iaponensium,' and the Portuguese Viceregal Embassy to Toyotomi Hideyoshi, 1591," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 15.3 (November 2005): 329–50; Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Hiroshi Sugimoto: Gates of Paradise* (New York: Skira Rizzoli in association with the Japan Society, 2017); Wakakuwa Midori, *Kuatoro ragattsi: tenshō shōnen shisetsu to sekai teikoku* クアトロ・ラガッツィ天正少年使節と世界帝国 (Quattro Ragazzi: The Tenshō Boys Embassy and world empires) (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 2003).

36 Discussed in Erdmann and Roux, "Recent Research," 4–10. Known via Duarte de Sande, *Japanese Travellers in Sixteenth Century Europe: A Dialogue Concerning the Mission of the Japanese Ambassadors to the Roman Curia (1590)*, trans. J. F. Moran, ed. Derek Massarella, ser. 3, no. 25 (London: Ashgate for the Hakluyt Society, 2012), 301–2; Guido Gualtieri, *Relationi della venuta degli ambasciatori giaponesi a Roma* (Rome: Francesco Zanetti, 1586), 90; Luís Fróis, *La première ambassade du Japon en Europe, 1582–1592: première partie, le traité du Père Frois (texte portugais)*, ed. and annotated J. A. Abranches Pinto, Yoshitomo Okamoto, and Henri

S. J. Bernard, Monumenta Nipponica Monographs 6 (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1942), 184–85.

37 Cornelis Schuddeboom, *Philips van Winghe (1560–1592) en het onstaan van de christelijke archeologie* (Haren: Geldermalsen, 1996), 272; Cornelis Schuddeboom, "Research in the Roman Catacombs by Louvain Antiquarian Philips van Winghe," in *Archives & Excavations: Essays on the History of Archaeological Excavations in Rome and Southern Italy from the Renaissance to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ilaria Bignamini, Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome 14 (London: British School at Rome, 2004).

38 Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, PBL 2766. Reproduction and English discussion: Gert Jan van der Sman, "Dutch and Flemish Printmakers in Rome 1565–1609," *Print Quarterly* 22.3 (2005): 264. Dutch: Jan Hendrik Hessels, Jacobus Colius, and Abraham Ortelius, *Abrahami Ortelii, geographi Antverpiensis, et virorum eruditorum ad eundem et ad Jacobum Colium Ortelianum (Abrahami Ortelii sororis filium) epistulae: cum aliquot aliis epistulis et tractatibus quibusdam ab utroque collectis (1524-1628)*, Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae archivum 1 (Cambridge: Typis Academiae, 1887), 520–23.

39 Takemoto, "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin;" Ōhashi, "Eitoku no 'Azuchiyama byōbu' ni tsuite wakatta koto wakaranai koto." I am grateful to Éliane Roux for showing me her unpublished research, further clarifying the transmission of these sketches.

40 Peiresc visited Tournai around 1606, whereupon he saw at least one of van Winghe's notebooks. He subsequently wrote to Jérôme to ask to borrow some of van Winghe's drawings, and Jérôme obliged prior to August 1612. Peiresc kept these loans until 1623 and expended considerable effort to have copies made of them. Schuddeboom, "Research in the Roman Catacombs," 31n16; Peter N. Miller, "The Antiquary's Art of Comparison: Peiresc and *Abraxas*," in *Peiresc's Orient: Antiquarianism as Cultural History in the Seventeenth Century*, Variorum Collected Studies (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 62.

41 Carpentras, Bibliothèque Inguimbertine, MS 1875, 308r–309r. Transcribed in Maffei, *La riscoperta dell'esotismo nel Seicento*, 338–41. Thanks to Éliane Roux for helping interpret this text.

42 ". . . Di più un tiempo de Giapponesi in cima ad un monte cavato dalle pitture che gli ambasciatori Giapponesi dorono a Greg[ori]o XIII di b[eata] m[emoria]. . . ." Translation by Éliane Roux.

43 Pignoria, *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (1624), 585.

44 Takemoto was the first to consider the relevance of the images to Pignoria's project. Takemoto, "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin," 85. Maffei tentatively speculates that the objects in Peiresc's list that were not added to the 1626 [*sic*] edition were not of sufficient quality. Maffei, *La riscoperta dell'esotismo nel Seicento*, 335.

45 For discussions of his legacy, see Paola von Wyss-Giacosa, "Through the Eyes of Idolatry: Pignoria's 1615 Argument on the Conformità of Idols from the West and East Indies with Egyptian Gods," in *Through Your Eyes: Religious Alterity and the Early Modern Western Imagination*, ed. Paola Wyss-Giacosa and Giovanni Tarantino (Leiden: Brill, 2021); Sonia Maffei, "Cartari e gli dèi del Nuovo Mondoil Il trattatello sulle 'Imagini de gli dei indiani' di Lorenzo Pignoria," in *Vincenzo Cartari e le direzioni del mito nel Cinquecento*, ed. Sonia Maffei, Arti 15 (Rome: GBE/Ginevra Bentivoglio, 2013); Maffei, *La riscoperta dell'esotismo nel Seicento*; and Caterina Volpi, "Le vecchie e nuove illustrazioni delle Immagini degli Dei degli antichi Vincenzo Cartari (1571 e 1615)," *Storia dell'arte*, no. 74 (1992): 61–119.

46 Vincenzo Cartari, *Le imagini con la spositione de i dei de gli antichi* (Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1556). The text was popular due both to its accessibility, being written in Italian—that is, not Latin—as well as to the inclusion, from its 1571 edition on, of a series of woodcut illustrations by Bolognino Zaltieri (fl. 1566–1570). Vincenzo Cartari, *Le imagini de i dei de gli antichi: nelle quali si contengono gl'idoli, riti, ceremonie, & altre cose appartenenti alla Religioune de gli Antichi* (Venice: Giordano Ziletti, 1571).

47 "Le vere e nove imagini de gli dei delli antichi di Vicenzo Cartari Reggiano. Ridotte da capo a piedi in questa nouissima impressione alle loro reali, & non più per l'adietro osseruate simiglianze. Cavate da' marmi, bronzi, medaglie, gioie, & altre memorie antiche; con esquisito studio, & particolare diligenza." Translation by Éliane Roux. Thanks to Roux for identifying the significance of the title as a summary of Pignoria's goals.

48 Despite these proclamations, the publication of the 1615 edition was met with criticism regarding the engravings' quality. Pignoria preemptively addressed this issue in his preface by stating that blame was not to be laid on him or Esengren, but on "the negligence of a few dozen carvers." Lorenzo Pignoria, preface to *Le vere e nove imagini de gli dei delli antichi* (Padua: P. P. Tozzi, 1615), n.p. Discussed in Maffei, *La riscoperta dell'esotismo nel Seicento*, 103.

49 Caterina Volpi, "Lorenzo Pignoria e i suoi corrispondenti," *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* 2 (1992): 60.

50 Discussed in Wyss-Giacosa, "Through the Eyes of Idolatry"; Maffei, *La riscoperta dell'esotismo nel Seicento*, 112–16; and Miller, "Antiquary's Art of Comparison," 94–95.

51 R. W. Littlebown, "Oriental Art and the Orient in Late Renaissance and Baroque Italy," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32 (1969): 244.

52 Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe: A Century of Wonder; Book One, The Visual Arts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 2:89, pls. 50–51.

53 Pignoria, *Le imagini de gli dei de gli antichi* (1624), 550.

54 Pignoria's verification of van Winghe's authorship of the Quetzalcoatl, and an exact correspondence with sketches and text in the van Winghe/Peiresc codex (the Ménestrier Codex, Vat. Lat. 10545), represent strong evidence that this is a copy of van Winghe's work. Further, many of the drawings in MS 1564 at the Biblioteca Angelica appear to have been taken from both the van Winghe/Peiresc and van Winghe/de Villers codices (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Nouv. Acq. Lat., 2343), suggesting that the copyist had access to multiple sources. Schuddeboom, "Research in the Roman Catacombs," 24–25. Thanks to Éliane Roux for clarifying this point.

55 Lists of buildings by dimensions may be found online at "Kuni shitei bunkazai-tō dētabēsu," 国指定文化財等データベース, April 21, 2025, https://kunishitei.bunka.go.jp/bsys/index. A list of relevant floor plans can be found in Bunkachō, Mainichi Shinbunsha, and Jūyō Bunkazai Iinkai, *Jūyō bunkazai 12 kenzōbutsu I* 重要文化財12建造物 I (Important Cultural Properties 12 buildings I) (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1973), 12:126, 29–31.

56 Examples of two-level structures with cusped windows are plentiful. While not all have cusped windows on the outer bays (e.g., Atsuda Shrine Chinkōmon 熱田神宮鎮皇門), they invariably possess symmetrical façade decoration. All examples of two-level structures with cusped windows in Eitoku's paintings have these fixtures positioned symmetrically in the outer bays.

57 For example, Rokuonji Kinkaku (Golden Pavilion), Jishōji Ginkaku 慈照寺銀閣 （Silver Pavilion）, Nishi-honganji Hiunan 西本願寺飛雲閣, and Daitokuji Hoshun-in Donkokaku 大徳寺芳春院呑湖閣.

58 Based on floor plans of buildings designated as National Treasures or Important Cultural Proper

ties. Bunkachō, Mainichi Shinbunsha, and Jūyō Bunkazai Iinkai, *Jūyō bunkazai 15 kenzōbutsu IV* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1974), 15:110–16.

59 Based on floor plans of buildings designated as National Treasures or Important Cultural Properties. Bunkachō, Mainichi Shinbunsha, and Jūyō Bunkazai Iinkai, *Jūyō bunkazai 12 kenzōbutsu I*, 12:82–97.

60 Based on floor plans of buildings designated as National Treasures or Important Cultural Properties. Bunkachō, Mainichi Shinbunsha, and Jūyō Bunkazai Iinkai, *Jūyō bunkazai 16 kenzōbutsu V* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1975), 16:108–17. Several additional points definitively disqualify the Azuchi Castle *tenshu* as the subject: (1) To arrive at that conclusion, it must be assumed that only the *tenshu*'s top stories are depicted. In this case, the fifth floor, known to have been octagonal in shape (see notes 14, 32), is either entirely illegible or conspicuously absent. (2) All other known depictions of *tenshu* in cityscapes are isolated motifs possessing nothing even close in resemblance to the background structural element. (3) No *shachihoko* finials are rendered. It is widely assumed, given their universal use in later *tenshu*, and as remains of *shachihoko* have been excavated at Azuchi, that they were employed at Azuchi.

61 While it is possible that Eitoku strayed from this habit in the specific case of the Azuchi Screens, an additional, already discussed misreading lends additional credence to the interpretation here. The reduction of the back right-corner eaves shares a function with the aforementioned half bays: Both edits shorten the reach of the eaves. In this shared function, these two edits appear to be products of a possible shared motive to make the *Page 569* building correspond more closely with European architectural norms.

62 Based on comparisons made in person and using various reproductions. Hayashiya Tatsusaburō 林屋辰三郎 et al., eds., *Rakuchū rakugai 1* 洛中洛外 1 Kinsei fūzoku zufu dai-3-kan 近世風俗図譜第3巻 (Illustrated catalogue of early modern genre scenes) (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1983); Kawashima Masao 川島将生 et al., eds., *Rakuchū rakugai 2* 洛中洛外 2, Kinsei fūzoku zufu dai-4-kan 近世風俗図譜第 4 巻 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1983); Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan 東京国立博物館 and Nippon Terebi Hōsō Mōhen 日本テレビ放送網編, eds., *Tokubetsu-ten Kyotō—rakuchū rakugai-zu to shōhekiga no bi* 特別展京都ー洛中洛外図と障壁画の美 (Special exhibition: Kyoto—The beauty of *rakuchū rakugai* paintings and sliding door paintings) (Tokyo: Nippon Terebi Hōsō Mōhen, 2013).

63 Thanks to Nakamura Yasuo for showing me the similarities between Maruoka Castle and the *Page 570* gate.

64 A new series of excavations began at Azuchi Castle in 2024, and discoveries announced at the end of the year showed that there is still much to be learned. Consulted here were the results of previous excavations. Shiga-ken Kyōiku Iinkai, ed., *Tokubetsu shiseki Azuchi jōseki hakkutsu chōsa hōkokusho I—ōtemichi, Dodobashiguchi-michi, Azuchiyama nanmen no chōsa* 特別史跡安土城跡発掘調査報告書 I— 大手道、百々橋口道, 安土山南面の調査 (Report on the excavation of the special historic site of Azuchi Castle I: Investigation of ōtemichi, Dodobashiguchi-michi, and the south side of Mount Azuchi) (Hikone: Shiga-ken Kyōiku Iinkai, 2008).

65 Takemoto, "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin."

66 *Aantekenboekje*, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, KBR 17872-3, fol. 64v; Takemoto, "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin," 81–82. Takemoto posits that van Winghe likely assembled the list from sources such as Marc Antonio Ciappi, *Compendio delle heroiche et gloriose attioni, et santa vita di papa Greg. 13. raccolte da Marc'Antonio Ciappi Senese: Alla Santità di N.S. Papa Gregorio 14* (Rome: appresso Giovanni Martinelli, 1591), 81–82.

67 See note 39.

68 Takemoto, "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin," 86.

69 "Determinou finalmente prorromper na temeridade, & insolencia de Nabucodonosor, pretendendo ser de todos adorado, não como homem terreno, & mortal, mas como le fora divino, ou senhor da imortalidade, & pera esseituar seu nesando, & abominauel desejo, mandou fazer hum templo junto de seus paços, em hum monte que está separado da fortaleza, onde esereueo o intéto de sua venenosa ambiçaõ em q diziadesta maneira, tresladado dela paó em nossa linguagem. Em estes grandes reinos de Iapaõna fortaleza de Anzuchiyarna nesta serra que vista de longe tausa alegri, & contentamento aos que a vem. Nobunanga senhor de todo o Iapaõ sez esta templo, por nome Soquénij. . . ." Luís Fróis, "Carta do padre Luis Froes sobre a morte de Nobunànga, pera o muito Reverendo, padre Geral da Cópanhia de Iesus, de Cochinoççú, aos cinco de Nouébro de 1582," in Lyra, *Cartas*, 2.1: 62r. Translation by Bébio Amaro.

70 Fróis's account is inconsistent with other records, including those written by Fróis himself. See Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, 217–24.

71 Using Costa's list of sixteenth-century printed works on Japan, I have determined that between 1586 (when Fróis's letter likely arrived in Europe) and 1592 (the year van Winghe died), at least two publications (nos. 228, 233) contain, and several publications (nos. 204, 205, 207, 213, 229, 242, 271) very likely contain, Fróis's full letter. João Pailo Oliveira Costa, "Japan and the Japanese in Printed Works in Europe in the Sixteenth Century," *Bulletin of Portuguese-Japanese Studies*, no. 14 (2007): 73–89. Thanks to Valeria Morelli helping search for these entries.

72 Reports were read aloud in Jesuit refectories. Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579–1724* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 63; Reinier Hesselink, *The Dream of Christian Nagasaki: World Trade and the Clash of Cultures, 1560–1640* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2016).

73 Takemoto characterizes reading into the images as, "ultimately, the realm of imagination"; "'Azuchi byōbu' o egakinokoshita Furandoru-jin," 86.

74 The figures in the *Imagini* prints are either overly Westernized (*Page 570*) or overly vague (*Page 569*), such that meaningful comparison of their attributes to figures in Eitoku's other cityscapes, to identify their identity or even class, is impossible.

75 ". . . lhe mandou fazer no mais eminente lugar do templo sobre todos os Fotoques hũa certa de charola, ou capelazinha sechada, onde o mandou pò. . . ." Fróis, "Carta do padre Luis Froes," 2.1: 63v. Translation by Bébio Amaro.

76 Ōta, *Shinchō-kō ki*, 373, 412; Ōta, *Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*, 421, 65.

77 Ōta, *Shinchō-kō ki*, 373; Ōta, *Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga*, 421.

78 Yorikazu Okagaki and Shigeo Asakawa, "Hotoke o koeru Nobunaga—Azuchi-jō Sōkenji hondō no fukugen—," 仏を超えた信長―安土城摠見寺本堂の復元 (To surpass even the Buddha: A study on the reconstruction of the main hall of Soukenji-temple in Azuchijo-Castle by Oda Nobunaga), *Tottori kankyō daigaku kiyō* 鳥取環境大学紀要 (Bulletin of Tottori University of Environmental Studies), no. 8 (June 2010): 31–51.

79 Dates on the ridge poles indicate that the *niōmon* dates to 1571 and the pagoda to 1454.

80 Okagaki and Asakawa propose one renovation and that the 1791 *Sōkenji keidai ezu* 摠見寺境内絵図 (Illustration of Sōkenji's grounds) represents a retrospective description of the building as it was during Nobunaga's day. Okagaki and Asakawa, "Hotoke o koeru Nobunaga," 48. Okagaki and Asakawa overlook a 1695 depiction (see fig. 21).

81 These include *Gōshū Gamō-gun Toyoura-mura to Suda-mura sanron tachiai ezu* 江州蒲生

郡豊浦村与須田村山論立会絵図 (Survey map of [territory] dispute in Toyoura Village and Suda Village, Gamō District, [Ō]mi Province; fig. 21); *Sōkenji keidai ezu*, *Keidai tsubosū nami tatemono meisai-sho* 「境内坪数並建物明細書」 (Detailed description of the rows of buildings in area of the temple grounds); and *Kiso ji meisho zue* 「木曽路名所図会」 (A collection of images of famous places on the Kisō Road; fig. 22). Listed in Okagaki and Asakawa, "Hotoke o koeru Nobunaga," 36.

82 Wyss-Giacosa, "Through the Eyes of Idolatry," 126.

83 Wyss-Giacosa, 110, 28.

84 Lamers notes the extent to which knowledge of Fróis's account of Nobunaga's death spread in the early seventeenth century: "All Jesuit histories of Japan since Luis Guzmàn ['s *Historia de las missiones*, 1601] have reported the story in full." Lamers, *Japonius Tyrannus*, 8:218; Wyss-Giacosa, "Through the Eyes of Idolatry," 105.

85 Wyss-Giacosa, "Through the Eyes of Idolatry," 106, 25–39.

86 Wyss-Giacosa, 108–9.

87 Andrew Mark Watsky, *Chikubushima: Deploying the Sacred Arts in Momoyama Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004).

PENG XU

THE COURTESAN'S "ROLE PORTRAIT"

Brothel Performances and the Qiu Ying Models in Late Ming Suzhou

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to contribute to the historical scholarship on the relationship between pictorial and dramatic arts in China, more specifically, between the use of the "beautiful woman painting" (*meiren tu*) as a prop in brothel theater and the mental habits of late Ming viewers of such paintings. Examples are analyzed within two larger historical contexts: the commercial marketplace and the literary field of drama. The generic quality of the "beautiful woman painting" in the Qiu Ying style, its copied or forged versions, and its inclusion in wood-block drama prints all reveal the diurnal aspect of such images associated with everyday life. I suggest that this graphic genre's erotic energy is rooted in its dramatic context, in which the static image of a beautiful woman could come to life as a courtesan-actress endowed with virtuosity in singing and dancing. Qiu Ying's "portraits" prompted a popularly received response among dramatists such as Tang Xianzu to adopt a new focus on depicting "beautiful woman portraits" in plays (and onstage), known as "beautiful woman plays" (*yanpin*). Scenes of "realizations" and reanimations later fell into disuse in Chinese drama, along with the waning influence of the Qiu Ying models, *Suzhou pian* (Suzhou studio replicas) shops, and the courtesan-actress herself.

Perhaps no dramatist of *chuanqi* (southern romantic comedies) envisaged better than Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖 (1550–1616; *jinshi* 1583) a fleeting brothel romance in which a courtesan's portrait features prominently. In his play *The Purple Hairpin* (*Zichai ji* 紫釵記, ca. 1587), the heroine, Little Jade (Huo Xiaoyu 霍小玉), is separated from her lover when he leaves to pursue worldly fame in the capital. In a typical "spring love-longing" scene, she worries about their marriage: if he fails, he might feel too embarrassed to return; if he succeeds, he could be offered a courtesan's *meiren tu* 美人圖 (beautiful woman painting), a token in matchmaking, as an emblem of a new love affair. Little Jade sings: "Now when he, the first candidate, dons a brocaded robe and parades down the Imperial Avenue, there will surely be a matchmaker to corral his steed, unrolling the painted scroll of a beauty and pleading that he accept it" 錦袍穿上了御街游, 怕有個做媒人闌住紫驊騮, 美人圖開在手, 央及煞狀元收. The painted scroll will be the portrait of a courtesan. Little Jade goes on, in the aria, to envision a budding romance in the brothel: by daylight, Mister First Candidate is enamored of the courtesan's sweet smile and enjoys her musical performance (笙歌畫引, 平康笑留); by night, he enfolds her in his arms (煙花夜擁).

This chain of sourly imagined events begins with the moment when a matchmaker presents one or more courtesans' images painted in a scroll to the potential client. The dramatic action reminds us of the late Ming courtesans' early twentieth-century counterparts, the first social group to use the new technology of photography to titillate potential customers. Postcards featuring unknown courtesans abound at that time.[1] Just as photographic studios in urban centers mushroomed in the early twentieth century, in the late Ming the genre of beautiful woman painting thrived in the marketplace, the brothel, and the theater.

What exactly is painted in the scroll envisaged by Little Jade? The pictorial conventions of the day determined that it could not possibly be the photographic representation of a particular courtesan (a portrait in its true sense), but rather a generic painting of a beautiful courtesan portrayed as though she were playing a historical beauty on the brothel stage—the image is a "role portrait" by my definition. One might imagine that a courtesan's portrait that was intended to be viewed by or circulated among clients would highlight the woman's beautiful face as a natural focus of the gaze. Counterintuitively, facial details may have mattered least of all in the most popular contemporary beautiful woman paintings in sixteenth-century China—that is, those modeled after the paintings of Qiu Ying 仇英 (ca. 1494–1552; hereafter, Qiu Ying models). The viewer's attention tended to be arrested by gestures, poses, articles of clothing, and accessories. Ellen Johnston Laing has undertaken comprehensive studies of the Qiu Ying style, and she eloquently summarizes that "Qiu Ying's women are all petite and slender. Their shoulders slant downward at an angle. Their necks are slender (but not skinny) and slightly tapered. Their heads are oval." The face is even more standardized: always in three-quarters profile, with an "even and regular" contour. Eyes, Laing notices, "are usually askew," and eyebrows are thin, short arcs. The nose is a single line "demarcating the bridge, then curving around the tip of the nose." Lips are small and thin, with the corners pulled "upward into a V-shaped smile." Even a basic costume is formulated: "a long skirt bound just below the bust with long sashes and knotted ties, blouses with full sleeves or narrow cuffs, sometimes narrow stoles."[2] Except for works named after specific courtesans, not a single Ming painting labeled *meiren* 美人 can be identified with any degree of confidence as the portrait of a known woman.

Because famous courtesans lived no-less-cultured lifestyles than did respectable women, accessories could not serve as markers of social distinction.[3] The identity of the figure in Qiu Ying's best-known work, *A Beauty in Spring Thoughts* (*Meiren chunsi tu* 美人春思圖), for example, has been the subject of three unconfirmed hypotheses constructed by connoisseurs and art historians over the last two centuries—namely, that she is the Nymph of the Luo River,[4] the Wu Mountain Goddess associated with the "clouds and rain" love-making metaphor,[5] or a Suzhou courtesan disguised as a goddess (fig. 1).[6]

What do I mean by role portraits of the late Ming courtesan? And how can this new conception help us go beyond conjectures and better understand the nature of the Qiu Ying models? The term *role portrait* highlights the connections between the social group of Suzhou courtesans and the stylized portrayal of female figures represented by Qiu Ying's beautiful woman paintings and their studio replicas. It was an ambiguous type of portrait that belonged to a contemporary art market that tended to reproduce the same physical type, as though these portraits represented an ideal beauty rather than a specific person. At the heart of the great majority of late Ming beautiful woman paintings was the concept of replicability, rather than individualism. As in the case of a modern-day Barbie doll, the lower the degree of mimesis, the sharper the theatrical sense of role playing.[7] I also identify a coherence in tone and conception among the various visual forms that carry the Qiu Ying style—besides beautiful woman

FIGURE 1. Qiu Ying 仇英 (ca. 1494–1552), *A Beauty in Spring Thoughts* 美人春思圖 (detail). Ink and color on paper, H x W: 20.4 x 58.2 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei

paintings, there are wood-block illustrations in courtesan catalogues and some illustrated dramas—as well as the animation of such images in theatrical performances. I argue that the visual formulae function well to allude to these paintings' general references to courtesan-actresses, costumed in the paintings as historical beauties as though they were on the brothel stage, rather than women of other identities.

These role portraits—where erotic imagery converged with theatrical representation—were essential to perhaps the most fascinating "effects" on the brothel stage: the translation of a static beauty image into a more physically present medium in which the actress was superimposed onto her "portrait." Martin Meisel defines a similar historical and cultural phenomenon in nineteenth-century England as "realization" or "material increment": "To move from mind's eye to body's eye was realization, and to add a third dimension to two was realization, as when words became picture, or when picture became dramatic tableau."[8]

The late Ming brothel was an institution that functioned as a theater, featuring young actresses with virtuosity in singing and dancing along with engaging professional teachers, male amateurs, and hangers-on specializing in playing supporting roles.[9] Scholars agree that the Ming witnessed the turning point in actresses' retreat from the public view into the private sphere, in comparison with the bygone Yuan dynasty, and that brothel performances featuring women were the only "semi-public" appearances of actresses. The most outstanding feature of the brothel performance was its mixture of actors of both genders, with courtesans playing most of the female roles. In scenes involving a female portrait, even if the prop "portrait" was nothing more than a studio replica of an idealized woman from the marketplace, the conceit of the scroll as a sort of movable brothel would have been intensified by the presence of the courtesan-actress. There would, therefore, have been a revolutionary change in the nature of the play's mis-en-scène and its reception. I contend that the graphic arts derived erotic

energy from its dramatic context, in which the static image of a beauty could come to life as a courtesan-actress endowed with virtuosity in singing and dancing. For owners of copies of such paintings, eroticism would arise from imagining the painted beauty's reanimation within a theater of the mind.

The theatrical and gendered meaning of the identical facial characteristics, as described by Laing, is a missing perspective in previous scholarship on Chinese portraits. A brief review of how late Ming men pursued revelation of their own character in portraits will reinforce my observation on the intentional artistic decision we find in the beautiful woman paintings under discussion. According to Richard Vinograd's classification of Chinese portraits, there are two types—effigy and emblem—depending on whether the emphasis is on verisimilitude or on "what the portrait revealed, exposed, expressed, or disclosed in the way of personality, character, mentality, or fated destiny."[10] The latter, "emblem" portrait is a rough equivalent to Yu Ying-shih's definition of "the new subgenre of Chinese literati portraiture," that is, literati *xingle tu* 行樂圖 (figure painting in a landscape setting), with the overall emphasis on personality and character.[11] In contrast to beautiful woman paintings, this subgenre treats the face in an alleged Jiangnan regional style that tries to achieve a three-dimensional look through new coloring methods, possibly borrowed from European portraits.[12] It was a common practice to hire two different artists to create the new three-dimensional look—a specialized landscape painter for the background and furniture, and a portraitist. As professional portraitists' work often turned out to be unsatisfactory, their literati customer's contemplation of the imperfection of likeness (and himself) resulted in a new literary genre called "self-reflection essays," or *zizan* 自讚, popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[13] This kind of figure painting— which conspicuously endeavored to appear realistic by hiring a specialized portraitist—is yet to be found as commissioned by women, and I suspect it was never a common practice. Instead, women of any status may have had to comply with the pictorial conventions that annihilate facial differences. Wu Hung's concept of the "stereotype" of beautiful women in Chinese visual and literary arts is quite relevant to my proposal of the notion of role portrait: with regard to beautiful women (courtesan-actresses), an exclusive focus on "types" rather than individuality and social boundaries seems to have endured throughout late-imperial times.[14] Conceptually, however, we need to push forward from the static beauty "stereotype" to the milieu of animated brothel performances, where beautiful women might have used beautiful woman paintings as stage props that functioned as their "portraits" or "self-portraits."

Here I would like to draw attention to the most fanciful theatrical moment—that of the painted beauty becoming animated onstage. In fact, the late Ming theatergoer's mental habits, cultivated by the conjunction of story and image in the Qiu Ying models, inspired the playwright Tang Xianzu's new dramas and some other "beautiful woman plays" (*yanpin* 艷品, a subcategory in late Ming drama criticism). Given that the hidden ties between the art objects and the theater remain previously unseen, the painted and engraved female figures that proliferated during the late Ming fall outside the radar of modern albums of "performing images."[15]

My secondary contribution, besides the new concept of "role portrait," lies in my emphasis on the dual aspects of beautiful woman paintings under discussion: they were at once fanciful, melodramatic, and magical in dramatic settings, but also ordinary, marketable art objects in everyday life. I propose to turn our attention to the material dimension of the paintings and to imagine "the overlaps between everyday and performative use" of props along the line of inquiries in prop studies.[16] Although the culture of consumption is a well-established perspective in late Ming studies—Timothy Brook, James Cahill, and Craig Clunas have created effective

interpretive paradigms—this article attempts to reach a conclusion that crosses boundaries between the culture of commerce, visual culture, performance studies, and dramatic literature.[17] The turn to the material dimension also naturally distinguishes my study from previous scholarship that overemphasizes the continuity of a rich literary tradition across different genres featuring a woman's deathbed self-portraiture, ignoring the ever-changing commercial and dramatic contexts.[18] For example, in her studies of female death, the supernatural, and theatricality, Judith Zeitlin sees female self-portraits, or what she calls the "auto-effigy" phenomenon, as literary tokens embodying the timeless and universal value of *qing* 情, or human sentiment, both in cultural affairs and in its relation to traditional Chinese medical discourse, including "the exteriorizations of invisible desires concealed in the female body."[19] In such analyses, the material body of the painting disappears, as does a special type of pictorial dramaturgy associated with the painting.

To suggest a link between the marketplace and the brothel theater, however, one needs inventories and other substantial historical documents, such as those that scholars in material studies have discovered that reveal the recycling and remodeling of early-modern European theater objects outside the theater itself.[20] This kind of source material is, unfortunately, lacking in the case of early-modern Chinese studies. The best I can do is to suggest the conspicuous spatial overlap between the marketplace and brothel areas in Suzhou through piecing together historical pictorial representations of the area, guidebooks of late Ming Suzhou brothels, and maps in local gazetteers (fig. 2). Art historians James Cahill and Ellen Johnston Laing have studied some beautiful woman paintings in the context of the late Ming business practice of selling "second-rate copies" and "ghost" paintings.[21] Among the several urban centers that were hubs for the sale of such replicas or knockoffs, the most prominent was Suzhou. Studio replicas known as *Suzhou pian* 蘇州片—"an extraordinarily wide range of painted goods" produced by Suzhou fakers—were sold in the street markets near the Chang Gate 閶門 (such as Peach Blossom Land 桃花塢 and Zhuan Zhu Lane 專諸巷).[22] Qiu Ying was a favorite Suzhou artist of figure paintings in color, and his name may have become a particularly desirable one in the *Suzhou pian* shops, where some scrolls attributed to him may have been generated. As is shown in figure 2, the Chang Gate area is the home address most often mentioned in the catalogue of famous Suzhou courtesans, *Seductive Courtesans of Suzhou* (*Wuji baimei* 吳姬百媚, 1617 preface).[23] The Qiu Ying models thrived in the same neighborhood of famous brothels, where female entertainers specializing in female roles rose to theatrical prominence. Whether or not the consumers of these painting shops and brothels were the same is largely a matter of conjecture. But it is safe to say that the late Ming was a time when brothels, theaters, *Suzhou pian* shops, and spin-off commodities nurtured each other to reach commercial success. When the Ming dynasty collapsed, such burgeoning commercial areas featuring *Suzhou pian* shops, the plays whose plots evolve around them, as well as the courtesan-actress herself waned accordingly.

The Age of Iconographic Replication

Real courtesans were portrayed in the same fashion as the fictional women featured in beautiful woman paintings. One rare example of a painting named after a real courtesan is Wu Wei's 吳偉 (1459–1508) portrait commemorating a courtesan named Wuling Chun 武陵春 (fig. 3).[24] The formula in Qiu Ying models was also transmitted across the media of painting and wood-block illustrations as we find it applied widely to catalogues of courtesans.[25] The best examples are illustrations of well-known courtesans labeled with their names and rankings

1   Peach Blossom Land inside the Chang Gate
閶門內桃花塢
Jin Er
金二

2   Chang Gate
閶門
Du Shou, Shen Ru
杜壽, 沈如
Feng Guan, Kan Kui
馬觀, 韓葵

3   Little Zhu Alley / Zhuan Zhu Alley
小郑巷/專諸巷
The Feng Family [Feng Yi, Feng Xi,
Feng Ban, Feng Shou (adopted),
Feng Chou, Feng Jin (adopted), Feng San]
馮乙, 馮喜, 馮伴, 馮壽, 馮丑, 馮金, 馮三
Chen San
陳三

4   Master Zhang Alley in the South Outlying Area
閶門外張公開
Cao Xiaoyi, Wang Jing, Hu Zhao
曹小乙, 王京, 胡昭

4

5   North Outlying area
閶門外北
Zhou San, Liu Kou
周三, 劉寇
Jin Xiang, Li Er, the Ma Sisters [Ma Ning, Ma Xiaoyi]
金湘, 李二, 馬寧, 馬小乙
Zhang Er, Bai Qi, Zhou Run
張二, 白七, 周閏
Xiang Mei, Xiang Xiaoyi, the Shen Family [Shen Yi, Shen Liu (adopted)]
項美, 項小乙, 沈乙, 沈六
Li Xiaoyi, the Hou Family [Hou Shuang, Hou Xiaoyi]
李小乙, 侯雙, 侯小乙
the Duan Family [Duan Er, Duan San (adopted), Duan Kui]
段乙, 段三, 段葵
Sun Er, Cai Yi, Xu Shou, Yang Wen, Wang Cun, Xu Ren, Xu Si, Yuan San
孫二, 蔡乙, 徐壽, 楊文, 王存, 徐仁, 徐四, 袁三

FIGURE 2. The Chang Gate area was the home address of famous courtesans. Well-known brothels and the market-place for "beautiful woman" painting products were in the same neighborhood. *Local Gazetteers of the Suzhou Prefecture Compiled in the Kangxi Reign* 康熙蘇州府志 (1693), original in Shanghai Library (digitized image, database open access to readers); legend and addition of bridges by the author

in catalogues published in the early seventeenth century as publicity pamphlets for local courtesans.[26] The illustrations mostly depict various cultural activities and leisure moments that a client could enjoy with these women, who excelled at cultural skills such as drinking, horse riding, mountain hiking, chess games, chasing butterflies, and so on (figs. 4, 5).[27] What enabled the transmission of female icons from the genre of beautiful woman paintings to the medium of wood-block printing was the practice of standardization in iconography. By comparing the above four examples, we can tell that the painters' execution was often translated

FIGURE 3. Wu Wei 吳偉 (1459–1508), *Miss Wuling Chun* 武陵春 (detail). Ink on paper, H x W: 27.5 x 93.9 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing

FIGURE 4. *Portrait of Liang Xiaopian, Second Among the Medium-Ranking Courtesans, Singing* 二甲二名 梁小翩度曲圖. Wood-block illustration in *Seductive Courtesans of Suzhou* 蘇州百媚, 1617 preface

faithfully by skilled engravers. Standardization provided ease of trans-media replication and manufacture.

The best prototype for legitimate copies of beautiful woman paintings, however, is the long handscroll of sixty female figures, ink and heavy color on silk, that is catalogued in the collection of the National Museum of China as "a Qing-Dynasty copy after Qiu Ying, *Scroll of A Hundred Beauties*" 清人仿仇英百美圖 (fig. 6). Since these figures all look similar to visual representations of real courtesans such as Wuling chun (fig. 3) and Chen Yuan (fig. 5), there must have been a contemporary erotic reality behind the paintings' decorous classic references (for instance, to the Moon Goddess, Mount Wu Goddess, Wang Zhaojun 王昭君, Lü Zhu 綠珠, Imperial Concubine Lady Ban 班婕妤, Zhuo Wenjun 卓文君, Imperial Concubine Lady Plum Blossoms 梅妃, or Xue Tao 薛濤)—an erotic reality that the late Ming mentality may well have easily decoded. The same handscroll may have been in the Shenyang Palace collection, identified as "Qiu Ying, *Scroll of A Hundred Beauties*" (*Qiu Ying Baimei tujuan* 仇英百美圖卷), before it was sent to Beijing. There is another handscroll, entitled "Illustrations of Beautiful Women" (*Jia furen tuli* 佳婦人圖例), in the collection of Waseda University (hereafter Waseda copy), in which the sixty figures are rendered in monochrome and painted on seventeen sheets of various-sized paper (with three or four figures per sheet).

Both the color Beijing copy (see figs. 6, 8b) and the monochrome Waseda copy bear Qiu Ying's seals and signatures, which we also find on other paintings attributed to him, fake or genuine. The signatures, in which the proper name (Qiu Ying) appears beneath an alternate name, Shifu 實父, resemble the signature on a painting entitled *Saying Farewell at Xunyang* (*Xunyang songbie* 潯陽送別), which is likely a fake, now preserved in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City.[28] The seals that read Shizhou 十洲, Qiu Ying's sobriquet, look similar to his ownership seals whose authenticity is considered undisputed (figs. 7a,b).[29]

However, evidence abounds of outright faking, and of mistakes generated by mass duplication, suggesting that the copiers took the replication of seals and signatures to be a legitimate

FIGURE 5. *Portrait of Fledgling Courtesan Chen Yuan, Style Name Yuzhen, Chasing Butterflies* 小妓陳元字玉貞戲蝶圖. Wood-block illustration in *Seductive Courtesans of Nanjing* 金陵百媚, 1618 preface

FIGURE 6. *A Qing-Dynasty Copy after Qiu Ying, Scroll of A Hundred Beauties* 清人仿仇英百美圖. Images of Wang Zhaojun, Lü Zhu, Imperial Concubine Lady Ban, Zhuo Wenjun, Imperial Concubine Lady Plum Blossoms, and Xue Tao. Image courtesy of the National Museum of China

and indispensable part of their job of copying the original work, rather than replicating the seals and signatures in order to deliberately trick the viewer for extra profit. That is to say, the contemporary customer may have understood that a studio replica was not the original in the same way that we buy reproductions of Ming paintings from museum gift shops. The signature and seal in the monochrome Waseda copy, for example, do not display any effort to look as restrained and dignified as those we see elsewhere (fig. 7b). Similarly, both handscrolls' fifty-seven poems dedicated to the sixty women, inscribed in the upper right corner of each
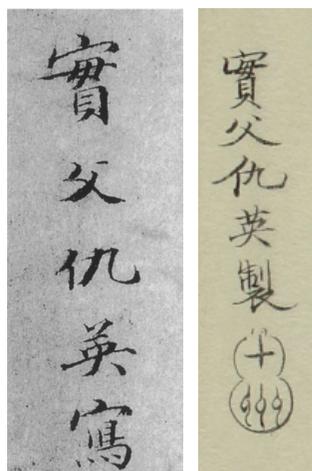
FIGURES 7a,b. (a) "Qiu Ying" signatures on *Saying Farewell at Xunyang* 潯陽送別, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. After Laing, "'Suzhou Pian' and Other Dubious Paintings in the Received 'Oeuvre' of Qiu Ying," 287. (b) "Qiu Ying" signatures on *Illustrations of Beautiful Women* 佳婦人圖例, Waseda University, Tokyo. Image courtesy of Waseda University

image unit (six of which appear in three pairs and thus share poems), whose calligraphy was assigned to the famous artist Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470–1559), are written in a conspicuously clumsy style, openly revealing a hand other than Wen's. In addition, the color scroll is missing some poems and the Waseda copy contains multiple cases of mislabeling that can be supplied from or corrected by reference to the color copy.[30] The discrepancies between the two renditions again indicate that the copiers, like many studio laborers of various times, played fast and loose with the subtle expressions of the Qiu Ying models.

Most of the figures in the Waseda copy appear in an order that is distinctly different from that seen in the color scroll. But its thirteenth sheet happens to depict four figures that appear in the same order, from left to right: a Tang singing girl, Beauty Du; a Tang courtesan, Miss Willow; an abandoned wife, Beauty Xue, also from the Tang dynasty; and a Tang concubine, Beauty Bu (figs. 8a,b). The iconography of the beauties—their settings, costumes, poses, and gestures—is roughly parallel between the two copies. One can imagine that there was a coherent system that provided an important template for many other copies. Making copies of the handscroll, or of a selection of figures from it, was a tool for professional painters working in the commercial environment.

All the figures in the two handscrolls feature the accessorized imagery of ancient beauty icons, including fairly standard and formulaic facial and gestural contours, with various visual cues coded to their respective background stories. Inner evidence from the two scrolls suggests that coherence in artistic expression would have come in handy for copiers. The traditional method of copying is called *lin* 臨 (copying by eye alone, as opposed to making an exact copy). One might note that the poem dedicated to the abandoned wife Beauty Xue in both handscrolls, as seen in figure 8, is a variation on the one recorded in Feng Menglong's 馮夢龍 (1574–1646) anecdotal account of her story. In Feng's version, the disappointed wife, Xue Yuan 薛媛, paints her self-portrait and inscribes on it a poem asking her husband to "frequently unroll and *look at* the portrait" 時展畫圖看,[31] whereas in the two handscrolls, the verb *look at* has been replaced by the verb *copy* (*lin*) 請君時把畫圖臨.

The idea of copying a beautiful woman painting as a public pastime in the method of *lin* is closely associated with the use of *fenben* 粉本, line-drawing drafts for the reference of aspiring painters. As Tu Long 屠隆 (1543–1605; *jinshi* 1577) wrote in the 1590s, "Draft paintings by

FIGURES 8a,b. (a) Section 13 of *Illustrations of Beautiful Women* 佳婦人圖例. Image courtesy of Waseda University. (b) *A Qing-Dynasty Copy after Qiu Ying, Scroll of A Hundred Beauties* 清人仿仇英百美圖 (detail). Image courtesy of the National Museum of China

artists from antiquity are called *fenben*," and since such a sketch would be of immediate value to contemporary painters, "those who happen to possess one had better treasure it" 古人畫稿謂之粉本．．．有則宜寶藏之.[32] The popularity of model images "preserved for private use" became a sixteenth-century cultural phenomenon associated with what J. P. Park calls "the democratization of art" along with "the improved economic standing of the late Ming urban classes."[33] However, in the only extant Ming painting manual exclusively devoted to the genre of figure painting, Zhou Lüjing's 周履靖 (1549–1640) *Heavenly Forms and Exemplary Manners* (*Tianxing daomao* 天形道貌), there is clearly a lack of the Qiu Ying models—only four out of thirty-six pictures were women, placed at the end of the volume, among which just one was rendered in the Qiu Ying style.[34] In the context of Japanese painting, Brenda Jordan has pointed out the function of *fenben* as an important means to transmit "the style of a particular workshop from generation to generation."[35] There was surely the market demand for *fenben* of the Qiu Ying models, and the two handscrolls under discussion may have been a response to it.

The term *fenben* may refer to specialized manuals for painting female images in Ruan Dacheng's 阮大鋮 (1587–1646; *jinshi* 1616) *The Swallow Letter* (*Yanzi jian* 燕子箋), completed in the Chongzhen reign (1628–1644). When the hero of *The Swallow Letter* is adding his own image to his portrait of his courtesan-lover, he decides not to use a *fenben*—a draft painting of male figures as a model for a portrait of himself—but to "resort to this small mirror" 脫粉本央小鏡菱花, and then to look back and forth at his reflection while drafting his own image.[36] This is a manifestation of the gendered divide between a male portrait and a courtesan's "portrait." The male tradition pursued a certain degree of verisimilitude, the female one a stereotypical beauty with a generic face. The scholar's own face must come from a contemporary moment and not be rendered through a veil of past visualizations; or, perhaps, most *fenben* copies for female portraits available at his time were exclusively in the Qiu Ying style. For the image of his courtesan-lover, therefore, he uses as his model a portrait of the imperial concubine Wang Zhaojun 王昭君 (also Wang Qiang 王嬙; ca. 51–15 BCE, frequently the subject of beautiful woman paintings), which the courtesan has borrowed from her neighbor (presumably another courtesan). The resulting painting portrays the courtesan chasing butterflies while orioles flit about overhead near a willow tree, possibly reminding us of the historical courtesan Chen Yuan's portrait in the Nanjing catalogue (fig. 5). The hero comments approvingly on the

resemblance of his courtesan-lover to the *fenben*, to which she replies: "Nothing about me resembles Zhaojun except that my harsh life in the brothel, like fallen petals of peach blossoms, is comparable to her sufferings from the trip crossing the borders" 諸般不像, 只是桃花薄命, 流落平康, 也與他出塞的苦沒什麼差別.[37] But the hero fetches the Wang Zhaojun handscroll and speaks emphatically to it about the resemblance: "She [my lover] duplicates you, Imperial Concubine, in painting" 果然明妃重畫. It is the hero's transforming imagination alone that superimposes the generic face of the ancient beauty Zhaojun onto that of his courtesan-lover.

Likewise, a bolder hero in another play also spends some leisure time painting in the same genre: holding a brush, he first thinks of reproducing a Zhaojun painting 便要實圖出塞 王嬙貌;[38] his second thought, unsurprisingly, is to make an exact copy of previously existing models "in the same way I would to create auspicious deity images in the Spring Festival" 似 歲底神荼按本勾描. His ideal model is the beauty icon of a famous Han-dynasty queen, A Jiao 阿嬌 (ca. 150–ca. 200), from wood-block imprints that are not yet at his disposal 又沒有個版 刊成葫蘆阿嬌.[39]

To return to the sixty role portraits in the *Hundred Beauties* scroll, in Ming times there was in all likelihood a dramatic dimension to their predecessors. When viewers' attention was drawn to the accessories of the beauty icons depicted in the handscrolls, they often deduced the women's various identities and types by associating these accessories with love stories enacted in the theater. In these instances, it better served the emotional intensity of the portrait to be less unique. The image's affinity with its background stories would create an uncanny effect of lifelikeness, inviting the viewer to reanimate the figure in his imagination. If one finds that a Barbie doll expresses some degree of sexual ideal and gendered expectations, touched up with a sense of playfulness, then one should not feel surprised at a Ming consumer's fascination with these much earlier female images.

One example should suffice. Jade Flute's image in the handscrolls does not illustrate any specific scene in the drama (fig. 9). Instead, the four-line verse inscribed beside her image highlights "her hands caressing the pair of jade pendants near a pavilion" 手弄雙環亭下玩— the signature gesture that epitomizes Jade Flute's longing for her lover in the final days before she perishes for want of him.

The image in the handscroll is certainly intended to revive the viewer's memory of Jade Flute's prop portrait in its sentimental, theatrical setting. *The Jade Pendants* (*Yuhuan ji* 玉環記), an anonymous Ming play, may have been based on the northern *zaju* play *Jade Flute's Marriage Destiny Over Two Lifetimes* (*Yuxiaonü liangshi yinyuan* 玉簫女兩世因緣), attributed to Qiao Ji 喬吉 (ca. 1280–ca. 1345).[40] The story tells of a courtesan known as Jade Flute who, at the time of her forced separation from her scholar-lover, offers to send a self-portrait to his lodgings in the capital to quench the fire of his love-longing. But after his departure, she pines away and eventually expires while holding tight to their love token, a pair of antique jade pendants. A reincarnation of Jade Flute, a well-born young lady named Flute Jade, daughter of a general, is to marry the hero. The self-portrait somehow resurfaces and is presented to the hero. Miraculously, the general confirms that his daughter has a birthmark on her palm in the shape of the jade pendants, which look exactly like their pictorial counterpart—the jade pendants in the hand of the painted beauty 那圖中美人掌持玉環, 小女亦於此掌中白圈如在.[41]

The Jade Pendants has a prominent place in the visual culture and popular repertoire of the late Ming. It is among the twenty or so plays mentioned in Pan Yunduan's 潘允端 (1526–1601; *jinshi* 1566) extensive records of watching theatrical performances in his luxurious Yu Garden (still a famous tourist attraction in present-day Shanghai) in the last sixteen years of his life

玉簫

清池湛影游春去碧檻生
香舉袖羅手弄雙環亭下
玩停二弱質似湘娥

趙子卿
九上金猊靜不焚綠楊枝
上語流鶯春寒料峭羅衣
薄脫質柔姿若不勝

FIGURE 9. Jade Flute in *A Qing-Dynasty Copy after Qiu Ying, Scroll of A Hundred Beauties* 清人仿仇英百美圖. Original in the National Museum of China. Image courtesy of the National Museum of China

(1586–1601).[42] Furthermore, the attractions of the courtesan's self-portrait scene remained constant for half a century (1570s–1620s): it appears in four drama miscellanies and three popular *kunqu* songbooks published in that period, in addition to the play's three full-text wood-block editions from approximately the same time.[43] The sixteenth-century anonymous pornographic novel *The Plum in the Golden Vase* (*Jin Ping Mei cihua* 金瓶梅詞話) describes in chapter 63 the staging of this scene in a rich merchant-class family's private theater. Perhaps to highlight the emotional crescendo of the drama, the novelist atypically records verbatim Jade Flute's lines sung to the messenger boy before she hands over the scroll painting: "In this life [he and I] are unlikely to meet again. For this reason, I bequeath this painting to him" 今生難會, 因此上寄丹青.[44] Two more arias follow, reinforcing the image of the heartbroken and dying courtesan. A moment later, the heroine asks for the jade pendants, caresses them while crying "Oh, Mister Wei Fengxiang, my love!," and dies. The contemporary viewer of the Qiu Ying figure of Jade Flute must have been well aware of the tradition of her sentimental deathbed scene.

Qiu Ying figures such as Jade Flute refer to the theater externally through a range of static, conventional gestures, props, and pieces of clothing that evoke central dramatic situations. They were designed to bring pleasure through the recognition and sentiment of theatrical presentations.

Displaying beauty icons of the Qiu Ying models in a set was a new trend in social customs of interior decoration, which may have stimulated reproduction of group images, in sharp contrast to the earlier convention of hanging just one scroll per room. Yu Yonglin 余永麟 (fl. Jiajing reign, 1522–1566) records a contemporary idiom in the 1530s: "People today have the lowest taste; they need four paintings to hang [on their walls]" 今人最俗，挂畫四幅.[45] According to him, the new trend of displaying a set of four vertical scrolls of beautiful women was called "one hall" (*yitang* 一堂). The visual fullness of four figure paintings in one hall finds a fictional representation in *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, in which the protagonist's favorite courtesan has her two opposite walls decorated with a set of hanging scrolls depicting four beautiful women in the four seasons, and a portrait of Guanyin of the Ocean Tides placed on the wall in the middle.[46] Soon, when the courtesan finally shows up, she is the living image of a beautiful woman painting in front of the protagonist: "If she is not the image of a portrait of Kuan-in by Wu Tao-tzu, she must be the subject of a painting of a beauty by Mao Yanshou" 若非道子觀音畫, 定然延壽美人圖.[47] Here the novelist not only makes a silent comment on the vulgar taste of the courtesan—a comment that would have remained hidden to readers unaware of elite taste, but also speaks wittily of the theatricality of brothel culture: the courtesan and the beautiful woman painting are but one.[48] That one beauty image multiplied into a set of many images recalls medieval folding screens discussed by Wu Hung in his recent study. Wu argues that although screens in various forms had functioned as a medium for beauty icons since the Han dynasty, large standing folding screens, or *lianping* 聯屏, with multiple beauty images nevertheless have a special illusionistic or even "animation" effect.[49] In fact, Qiu Ying's beautiful-woman folding screen, consisting of nine paintings (each 65.24 by 37.88 cm), authentic but now lost, was treasured by the famous late Ming painter and collector Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–1590).[50] In 1554, Xiang solicited inscriptions from eighty-four-year-old Wen Zhengming. Thus, when Song Zhengbi 宋徵璧 (1602–1672; *jinshi* 1643) began his 1633 poem with a line depicting an elite man's folding screen with twelve beauty images 十二雲屏坐玉人, he was both referring to a real standing screen, likely rendered in the Qiu Ying style, and alluding to the size of the man's harem.[51]

Pictorial Dramaturgy: From "Beautiful Woman Paintings" to "Beautiful Woman Plays"

By mechanical multiplication, the Qiu Ying models created an audience for these images that any theater would have been happy to share. To dramatists, these popular paintings had intrinsically high value to the theater as the viewers of the paintings automatically saw in them scenes from dramas. They provided a ready-made audience for new dramas that centered on the beautiful woman paintings. Given the Qiu Ying models' place in popular consciousness and their close association with a prior consensus of erotic imagination, there is no reason to suppose that beautiful woman paintings, as the courtesan's "role portraits," would not have influenced Tang Xianzu and his followers directly. The beauty image projected an erotic charge in both its visual and theatrical representations, thereby enabling particular repertoires of *chuanqi* drama. We have encountered in the opening pages of this article one reference to beautiful woman paintings in Tang Xianzu's play, which, among many other references to beautiful woman painting, may have been one of the attributes of the category of "beautiful woman plays," or "erotic plays" (*yanpin*) as defined by the drama critic Qi Biaojia 祁彪佳 (1603–1645; *jinshi* 1622).[52] There are twenty southern comedies (or *chuanqi* plays) and nine northern dramas (or *zaju*) in his annotated bibliographies. Not all of them involve beautiful woman paintings, but they are all preoccupied with explicit portrayals of erotic love for beautiful women.

The list of twenty *chuanqi* plays opens with Tang Xianzu's *The Purple Flute* (*Zixiao ji* 紫簫記, ca. 1577) and *The Purple Hairpin*, both of which feature a beautiful woman with a prominent

FIGURE 10. Mme. Four Strings in *A Qing-Dynasty Copy after Qiu Ying, Scroll of A Hundred Beauties* 清人仿仇英百美圖. Original in the National Museum of China. Image courtesy of the National Museum of China

place in Ming visual culture: Little Jade (Huo Xiaoyu) and a courtesan, Mme. Four Strings (Bao Sixian 鮑四絃), respectively (fig. 10).

Tang Xianzu's 1598 masterpiece, *The Peony Pavilion* (*Mudan ting* 牡丹亭)—a long story of love, despair, death, return from the dead, and marriage—is not listed in Qi Biaojia's annotated catalogues. But it is even bolder in its allusions to the courtesan's portrait than is *The Purple Hairpin*. *The Peony Pavilion* makes multiple references to Cui Hui 崔徽, a Tang courtesan, and deliberately confuses Cui Hui with another lady surnamed Cui, the heroine of *The Story of the Western Wing* (*Xixiang ji* 西廂記). Legend has it that the desperate Cui Hui, abandoned by her lover, arranged to have her portrait painted by a master and then sent to him, together with a letter that read, "Someday I will no longer resemble the woman in the scroll, and that is when I shall die for you." Before long, she went mad, stopped seeing clients, and eventually died. The story must have been quite popular from the ninth to thirteenth centuries, for it appears in poetry, classical tales, song lyrics (*ci*), and chantefables, the earliest of these being Yuan Zhen's 元稹 (779–831) lost *Song of Cui Hui* (*Cui Hui ge* 崔徽歌).[53] But somehow the story seems to have lost its allure in Ming popular culture, so when Tang Xianzu alluded to it three times in *The Peony Pavilion*, he must have done so with specific intention because it was an esoteric reference by his time.

Cui Hui had been erased in the sixteenth-century public's memory, replaced by another figure, Oriole Cui 崔鶯鶯, the heroine of a fourteenth-century northern play called *The Story of the Western Wing*, which thrived onstage in its southern adaptation in the late Ming.[54] Neither the northern nor the southern version features a prop portrait associated with Oriole Cui. Yet Tang Xianzu playfully portrays the sexual awakening of the heroine Bridal Du in *The Peony Pavilion* as being inspired by *The Story of Cui Hui* (*Cui Hui zhuan* 崔徽傳), which, according to Bridal Du's explanation, tells the story of Oriole Cui as though she and Cui Hui were the same person (scene 10). Experts on Tang Xianzu see this as either a case of his carelessness or as "an unnecessary complication."[55] This is plausible yet lacks strong interpretive support. Why would the play's various Ming editions retain all three recondite allusions to Cui Hui?

The other two references clearly involve the courtesan's portrait. In scene 14, Bridal Du's deathbed scene, she completes her own self-portrait. We find a line directly borrowed from the probable medieval sources put into the mouth of a page boy—"Cui Hui no longer resembles the woman in the scroll" 崔徽不似卷中人—thus alluding to Bridal Du as a contemporary Cui Hui. And, in scene 26, the hero extols Bridal Du's self-portrait for its resemblance to Cui Hui's portrait 小娘子畫似崔徽—a resemblance certainly not in terms of painting technique, but of the painted beauty's sex appeal.[56] There is no reason to doubt Tang Xianzu's erudition: how could this renowned poet *not* have known that Oriole Cui and Cui Hui—two female protagonists surnamed Cui—initially appear, respectively, in the Tang poet Yuan Zhen's *Story of Cui Yingying* 鶯鶯傳 and *Song of Cui Hui*?

Oriole Cui finds herself among the Qiu Ying models in the late Ming. For example, the Oriole Cui portrait on the opening page of a 1616 edition openly acknowledges its use of a painting of Qiu Ying as its model (fig. 11). In the static image, the full implications of a real woman can be savored, and its remarkable, magical "realization" or animation into total dynamism is bound to take place, whether on the stage or on the page.

Another manifestation of Tang Xianzu's indebtedness to the Qiu Ying models has also gone unnoticed. In scene 5, *The Peony Pavilion* sets out to frame its heroine Bridal Du within the mental picture of an ordinary beautiful woman painting, thereby echoing its counterpart—her self-portrait created in scene 14. In scene 5, Bridal Du enters and greets her pedantic teacher, describing herself as a stereotypical painted beauty: "Brows limned black with emerald sheen,

FIGURE 11. *A Portrait of Miss Cui in the Qiu Ying Style* 崔娘像摹仇英筆. Illustration of He Bi's 何璧 1616 version of *The Story of the Western Wing, Northern Version* 北西廂記

pendants swaying at the waist, pictured beauty steps as from an embroidered screen" 添眉翠, 搖佩珠, 繡屏中生成仕女圖.[57] Unlike the protagonist of *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, Bridal Du's stale elderly teacher is obviously blind to this living image of a beautiful woman painting in front of him; yet the theater spectator, familiar with the visual pleasure of such a painting in typical brothel decoration, would be pleased. The reading public would find their taste for beauty portraits materialized in illustrated drama imprints such as the 1620 wood-block edition of *The Peony Pavilion* by the renowned Suzhou professional Wang Wenheng 王文衡, in which an illustration is set to this very line (fig. 12).[58] Here Bridal Du is seen from a remote standpoint within a visual tableau—standing between two maidservants on a terrace surrounded by trees and *taihu* rocks. She is easily distinguished by her taller and more richly accessorized figure in a three-quarters profile. The illustration is constructed quite conventionally, with the entire left leaf taken up by an unpopulated landscape and inscribed captions. Yet the right half, or the "portrait," also displays its architectural and botanical details more proudly and distinctly than it does the facial features of Bridal Du.

In this pictorial fantasy of Bridal Du as the subject of a beautiful woman painting, there are no hints of eroticism, sensuality, or intimacy to modern eyes. It is tempting to downplay Wang Wenheng's erotic investment in creating this illustration—featuring a slender body with few facial details and an unattractive posture, yet a distracting, luscious garden setting—and to ignore its association with a sexual aesthetic. But scene 26 ("The Portrait Examined" 玩真）unveils the enchantment of such paintings by dramatizing how the hero Liu Mengmei 柳夢梅 fetishizes Bridal Du's self-portrait, which displays compositional elements similar to Wang's illustration.

In scene 26, Liu notices that Bridal Du's slender figure and standing posture resemble those of the Moon Goddess, but this suggestion is quickly discarded as there is no cloud supporting her. This painting must be nothing other than a beautiful woman painting, Liu realizes. But he is uncertain whether it is a studio replica done by a professional portraitist or a self-portrait painted by the anonymous mortal girl 是畫工臨的，還是美人自手描的. Finally, judging by the

女圖 添眉翠搖珮珠 繡屏中生成士
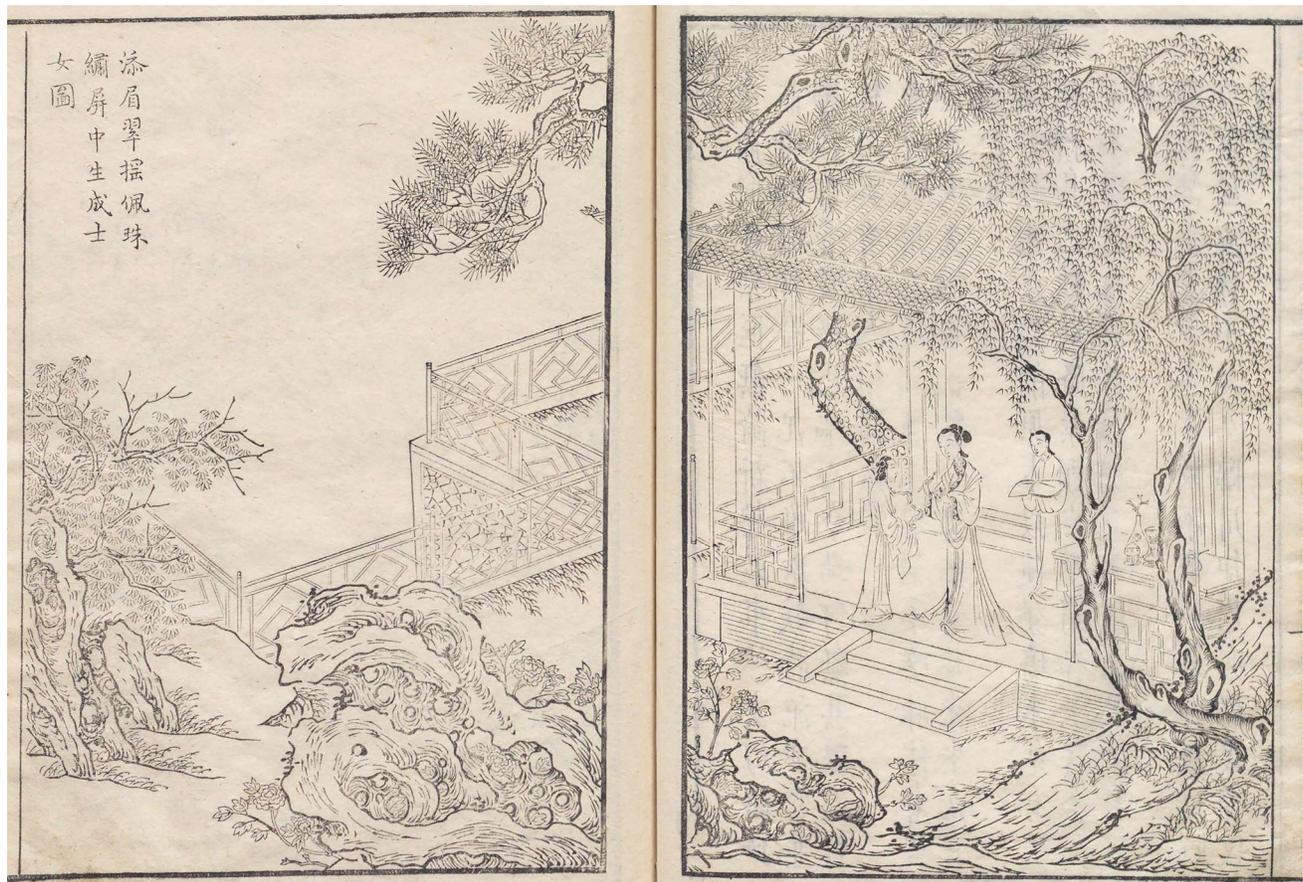
FIGURE 12. The first of thirteen illustrations in *The Peony Pavilion* 牡丹亭, printed in 1620 by Mao Ying 茅暎. The thirteenth illustration is inscribed: "The year of Gengshen, Mid-Autumn Festival, painted by Wang Wenheng" 庚申中秋寫王文衡. Originals in Naikaku Bunko, Tokyo; and National Library, Beijing

figure's "artless charm," which a professional painter could never have achieved 總天然意態難模, he concludes that "surely this brushwork shows the skill of the lovely maid herself" 多半他自己 能描會脫.[59] Clearly, Tang Xianzu chose to portray Bridal Du's painting technique in a "realistic" fashion—that is, to situate her execution on silk within the framework of contemporary-style beautiful woman painting, in which little interest resided in the replication of a likeness.

Zhou Gongwang's 周公望 (fl. 1628) *The Story of the Western Wing on Brocade* (*Jin xixiang* 錦 西廂) offers a comical parody of the portraiture scenes in *The Peony Pavilion*.[60] In this case, a female painter's portrait of a man has the same arousal effect on another woman. The gender roles in Bridal Du's self-portrait and her lover Liu Mengmei's fascination with it are completely reversed. The parody heroine Oriole Cui paints her lover Scholar Zhang's portrait—not her self-portrait—on her round fan after their forced separation. Yet she relies not on any preexisting male icons but rather on her memories of the lover 虛空畫出張生面.[61] Fleeing from the Buddhist temple, she leaves behind the painted fan, which then falls into the hands of the villainous general's wife, who, lately widowed, falls in love with the painted handsome man. His identity is quite clear since Oriole Cui has inscribed on the fan "Portrait of Junrui" (Scholar Zhang's style name). Deeply enamored by the male image, she decides to seek out Scholar Zhang and marry him, instead of killing him for being responsible for her husband's death as she had originally planned.

With the great success of *The Peony Pavilion* came a series of plays whose plots revolve around beautiful woman paintings including the above-mentioned *The Swallow Letter*. Another play missing from Qi's catalogue, but surely having a place in the category of "beautiful woman plays," is Meng Chengshun's 孟稱舜 (1599–1684) *Mistress and Maid* (*Jiaohong ji* 嬌紅記 or *Yuanyang zhong* 鴛鴦塚, 1638 preface). Like *The Peony Pavilion*, it sets out in early scenes to identify its heroine, Bella, as a beauty in a commercially produced beautiful woman painting. The first romantic encounter between the young lovers, in scene 3, when the hero glimpses Bella, is a vivid depiction of his memory of many beautiful woman paintings: "Her cheeks flushed with spring, clear jade yet fragrant—those scrolls of painted beauties were no lies" 翠臉生春玉有香, 則那美人圖畫出都非謊.[62] The thought that she looks just like the beauties in the many scroll paintings he has viewed—easily accessible in the marketplace—sends a shiver down his spine, and he is instantly in love with her.

Referenced as a painted beauty many times in later scenes, Bella belongs to the marketplace of the idealized, generic beautiful woman paintings. In scene 5, Young Master Handsome, ironically played by a clown, orders his hangers-on to "hire a painter who can find a chance to sneak in and sketch" five pretty unmarried young women in town, including Bella. He also wants to know "if there are any more pretty girls worth painting" 你可引了畫工, 把那些女子的真容, 乘間偷畫來我看, 還再打聽有好的也畫將來.[63] At a time before the invention of cameras and smartphones, the only way to complete the task is for the portraitist to stalk women secretly, and then to rely on his memory to paint each of their images on a scroll. In scene 19, the two hangers-on reappear onstage with nine scrolls of beautiful woman paintings. Like Bridal Du's self-portrait in the eyes of Liu Mengmei in *The Peony Pavilion*, the nine painted beauties are first described using literary clichés that insist they all look as beautiful as Guanyin Bodhisattva and the Mount Wu Goddess. Yet a new metaphor is quickly added to cater to the playboy's libido: the two flunkies hang the scrolls on the four walls like pinups, creating the impression that he is surrounded by nine well-dressed singing girls serving him wine at a banquet 四壁安排, 仿佛筵前列錦釵. Provided that Handsome's ritual supplications succeed in animating them, the hangers-on promise that he will enjoy a romantic rendezvous with each one.[64]

Although each scroll bears an actual woman's name, Handsome understands that his prodigal expenditure on them does not guarantee their correspondence to real, identifiable women; the scrolls may well be cheap studio knockoffs like the ones with which the destitute hero is familiar. So he claims that he has enough patience to investigate their true identities before sending a matchmaker to arrange a wedding with one of them 待我查了的當, 內人去求婚便了.[65] Even in scene 30, in which he finally possesses and worships these expensive pictures in a religious manner, with incense burning in front of the hanging scrolls day and night, he remains wracked with doubt: "I can't tell which are true and which are fake, and so don't care to go straight ahead and make a marriage proposal" 中間未知虛實, 不敢即往求婚.[66] But it is in this same scene that a courtesan who occasionally visits both Handsome's and Bella's homes as a professional entertainer verifies that there is a real Bella who looks even more beautiful than her image on the scroll. The courtesan's comments do not refer to the verisimilitude of the painting, which the titillated man cares little about—what matters is that Bella is a real woman. Delirious with joy, he sends the matchmaker to ask Bella's parents for her hand in marriage right away, thus triggering a series of tragedies. Up to this point, identifying the heroine as a beauty in a commercial painting has been the major thrust of the play. The complete absence of such dynamics from an earlier *chuanqi* play that tells the same story, *Gold Boy, Emerald Girl,*

the *Story of Mistress and Maid* (*Jintong yunü Jiaohong ji* 金童玉女嬌紅記), speaks to how Meng Chengshun distinguished himself from playwrights of the old repertoire.[67]

It seems to have been fashionable to commission a famous female-figure painter and a well-known engraver to create the heroine's portrait(s) that open drama imprints. In the case of *Mistress and Maid*, Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬 (1598–1652) was commissioned to paint a set of four portraits of Bella for the edition, which then were successfully transmitted into wood-block prints that readers would encounter before they read the script, just like the Oriole Cui portraits that are set into the opening pages of wood-block editions of *The Story of the Western Wing* (fig. 13). Many wood-block drama editions adopted the structure of half-length portraits of the heroine(s) on their opening pages, followed by illustrations of individual scenes. To take wood-block imprints of *The Story of the Western Wing* as an example, portraits of Oriole Cui after the painterly styles of Tang Yin 唐寅 (1470–1524), Qiu Ying, and Chen Hongshou open various fashionable drama imprints.[68]

In circumstances where the beautiful woman's portrait appears on the opening page, there was a strong implication that the female role was to be performed by a woman rather than a female impersonator. Other visual hints further suggest that the heroine' images belong to a courtesan-actress, whether her social identity in the story is that of a respectable woman or a courtesan. Chen played with his imagination of Bella being dressed in different costumes and holding different props—a flute, a whisk, a fan, and a mirror. Although Bella in the story is a well-born lady, Chen's logic behind the composition of the set was to represent the four indispensable skills of the courtesan—mastery of a musical instrument, of dance, of solo singing in the southern style, and of maintaining a perfect countenance. The slim type of the vertical flute demands special skills to emit harmonious sound, whisk dance was the courtesan's signature dance style, and solos accompanied by dancing with a round fan were another staple of the courtesan's repertoire.[69] Certainly, Bella, the respectable lady in the drama, does not possess these skills (no written records suggest gentry-women of the time had that set of skills built into their curricula). The illustration portraits on the opening pages, therefore, are typically the courtesan's role portraits, where magic and wonder take over to reanimate Bella into a real courtesan.

The late Ming Huaiyuantang 懷遠堂 wood-block edition of *The Swallow Letter* also opens with portraits of Flowing Clouds Hua 華行雲 (the secondary female lead [*xiaodan* 小旦] as a courtesan) and Flying Clouds Li 酈飛雲 (the female lead as a well-born lady) by an anonymous painter and engraver (figs. 14a,b). Similar to the sixty role portraits in the *Hundred Beauties* scroll, these two portraits feature beauties typical of the Qiu Ying style, with hints of Chen Hongshou in the way they tilt their heads. Their accessories reinforce the illusion that the role icon they adorn may be reanimated at any time in the theater. The well-born lady Flying Clouds Li, for instance, holds a sheet of paper on which she will write the poem that will be carried away from her desk by swallows (very likely performed by costumed actors onstage) and then dropped, to be picked up by the hero—hence, the title of the play, *The Swallow Letter*. The courtesan Flowing Clouds Hua holds a thin vertical flute, the signature musical instrument of late Ming courtesans. Her posture and gesture suggest her virtuosity in playing the flute: she holds it not in her palm but on one finger, her fingernails long. The viewer of these wood-block engraved portraits thus encounters illustrations that pictorialize the story.

To summarize, beauty images that open illustrated dramas functioned as more than just attachments or adornments. More importantly, to the late Ming reader, they may have signified the dramas as the courtesan-actresses' specialty repertoire. The string of examples I have

FIGURE 13. Opening pages of *Mistress and Maid* 嬌紅記, 1638. Woodblock illustrations engraved by Xiang Nanzhou 項南洲 based on paintings by Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬. Original in Kyoto University

FIGURE 14a,b. Ruan Dacheng 阮大鋮 (1587–1646; *jinshi* 1616), *The Swallow Letter, Commented and Annotated by the Studio of Empathy for Remote Regions* 懷遠堂批點燕子箋, Chongzhen reign edition. (a) Portrait of Flowing Clouds Hua. (b) Portrait of Flying Clouds Li. Original in the Central Library, Taipei

analyzed in this section suggest that established public interest in the courtesan's role portraits and established sexual aesthetics stimulated playwrights to produce new plays, whose stage productions would then cast a courtesan in the lead role to evoke multilayered pleasure. To a lesser degree, this late Ming phenomenon resembles what Joseph Roach describes as the "It-effect" derived from "the feature-by-feature attributes of the actresses playing the heroines" in plays. When a play's paratext "alluded leeringly to their [the actresses'] sex lives off-stage," he suggests—and I completely agree—"the practice of intimacy in public had clearly arrived."[70]

Dramatizing Studio Replicas and Their Reanimation

The best example of the dramatization of the circulation of a studio replica between private households and the marketplace is Wu Bing's 吳炳 (1595–1648; *jinshi* 1619) *The Painted Beauty* (*Huazhongren* 畫中人), published in the Chongzhen reign. The subplot dramatizes how the painting of an anonymous ideal beauty leaves the hands of its initial creator, and how the burning of a random studio replica purchased in the marketplace rescues the original. For the scholar-hero in *The Painted Beauty*, the beautiful woman paintings in the marketplace

are the motivation for his ambition to paint a beauty without any model 自畫一軸美人圖.[71] It is this invented beauty with whom he falls in love and whom he seeks to animate through his passion, like the mythical figure Pygmalion and the statue he adores. The scholar's search for originality is set against the backdrop of a world of highly reproductive commercial products and thus turns out to be in vain. Just as Bridal Du's self-portrait was confused with professional workshop paintings by its intended viewer, Liu Mengmei, the scholar's painting, we are told later, can easily mingle with any beauty portrait in the market, clearly indicating the play-wright's realist approach to portraying market forces of the day.

In scene 12 of *The Painted Beauty*, the scholar's strict father learns about the affair between his son and the woman in his painting, and dispels her by burning the painting to ashes. From this point on, the play becomes preoccupied with the destiny of the painting that houses the woman. It disappears for a time but reappears in scene 24, in which the scholar and his page boy rediscover a beautiful woman painting in a Daoist priest's dwelling. Here begins an inter-esting dialogue about the painting's potential on the portrait market (my emphasis):

> SCHOLAR: It's my own brushwork. How can I be wrong about that?! I knew that the painting had never been burnt; my father must never have made you burn it. *It must be you, you little bastard, who stole and sold it! Somehow it changed hands and ended up here in Master Huayang's place.* If you don't tell me the truth, you'll die of a good beating.
>
> CLOWN: Young Master, you can't beat me yet. When Old Master learned about the portrait, he really, truly, asked me to burn it. At that moment I ran into Master Hu [the villain], and he said that *since Old Master wouldn't be able to tell the difference anyway, why not buy some random contemporary-style painting and burn that one instead?*
>
> （生）自家畫的，難道不認得？我想此畫，原不曾燒，老爺原不曾要燒畫，畢竟是你這狗才，偷來賣了，不知如何又到華陽師父處，若不直說，一頓打死了你。
>
> （丑）相公不要亂打。老爺聞知有畫，實教繡琴燒毀，偶然撞見胡大官人，他說老爺左右不認得，胡亂買幅時畫，假意燒了。

The page boy's incomplete account omits that he has sold his master's brushwork to the vil-lain for a tael of silver; according to the villain, a "contemporary-style" scroll (*shi-hua* 時畫) is worth three *fen* of silver on the market, that is, 30 percent of the price he has paid the page boy 三分銀子另買一軸.[72]

Because the Old Master is waiting for the page boy to fetch the portrait and burn it, the villain's stratagem would not succeed if purchasing an over-the-counter replica in a late Ming shop had taken longer than grabbing a soft drink at a nearby convenience store today. Meanwhile, the term *shi-hua*—similar in composition to *shi-wen* 時文 (contempo-rary-style essays, or the "eight-legged" essays prescribed for the civil service examination), *shi-ben* 時本 (drama editions reflecting the most popular renditions in theater), and *shi-diao* 時調 (popular tunes)—discloses a piece of late Ming reality: "Contemporary-style" pinups were widely available in painting stores. Countless beautiful woman paintings in this style floated in and out of the art market, driven by the commercial culture that surrounded the painted beauty.

Possession of and infatuation with the portrait of a beautiful woman might lead to a Pyg-malion realization of the male fantasy. "Since [the painted beauty] bears resemblance to a human," says a Daoist magician who excels at animating painted beauties to serve as singing girls for banquets, "she must be given affection" 既具人形, 總屬情類.[73] The theory was that, if

a man persevered in showing affection to her, a painted beauty might come to life and become his real, loving wife or mistress.

Against this backdrop, any replicas could be expected to have some association with brothels. In other words, brothels may have constituted a particularized, anecdotal context for many painted beauties rendered in the idealized, if not standardized, manner of beauty-figure painters. In a world that longed for ideal beauties and perhaps found the reality of brothels disenchanting, beautiful woman paintings offered illusion and satisfaction.

Let us consider the situation in which a courtesan was cast in the role of a character who would unroll a beautiful woman painting onstage as a key prop (whether generic or one believed to be her own portrait). As a result, male viewers would have been justifiably preoccupied with the double dose of erotic energy generated by her sexualized body onstage and the painting's intense visuality and aesthetic ideal of beauty. The actress's sexual allure—rather than her facial resemblance to the painted female—would have converged with theatrical representation, thickening the erotic atmosphere of the portraiture scene.

My first example comes, inevitably, from Wu Bing's *The Painted Beauty*, specifically, scene 5, aptly entitled "Entertaining with Magic" (*Shihuan* 示幻). Wu dramatizes with intensity the conceit of an anonymous, ordinary figure painting as a movable brothel in which a painted courtesan resides. At a Daoist magician's feast, the scroll is reanimated to enable her to deliver an eroticized performance for his guests, including the scholar-hero, who is thereby inspired to emulate the magician by painting and animating his own beautiful young woman. Wu proffers meticulous stage directions. The courtesan, played by a secondary female lead in line with theatrical conventions, "suddenly walks from behind the painting, with a fan [in her hand] covering her face," while a gong is struck "backstage" 內鳴鑼, 小旦忽從畫邊走出, 扇遮介.[74] She serves wine to the men at the table, as all courtesans do. Upon the magician-host's request, she sings a free aria in the northern tune typical in brothel repertory; it begins with the line "Recall our first glimpses of each other in the pleasure quarters" 憶當初瞥向章臺見.[75] After a sprightly dance circling and spiraling, she abruptly exits 作飛舞盤旋忽下介.[76]

This staging provided, in material form, fantasies in which the male viewers' lived experiences of brothel banquets reflected the fictional space of the prop painting. The idea was to reanimate the painted beauty and let the courtesan-actress who portrayed her demonstrate the musical and dancing skills that were at the core of a courtesan's training. In scene 23 of the same play, the villain borrows from his neighbors a vertical flute, a reed pipe, and a rug for a dance, as preparation for having the reawakened painted beauty serve him wine and entertain the group—just as the woman brought to life by the magician had done in scene 5.[77] To reproduce brothel experiences at full scale, he also hires male performers/hangers-on. The idea behind this fantasy is simple: since the scroll painting houses the beauty, it must be a portable, pictorial counterpart of the brothel.

In terms of acting and the material conditions of staging, there seems to have been no effort to conceal the actress's body from the audience. In *The Painted Beauty*, for example, there is no doubt that the painting hangs from a table, one of the few pieces of stage furniture, because the word *table* appears twice in stage directions when the painting is onstage. When the soul of the heroine, played by the female lead, arrives to see the portrait and claims her resemblance to the painted beauty, she "hides herself behind the painting" 掩入畫後介. The lyrics she sings suggest that she either stands or crouches behind the table: "I impress my real body on the [woman's] body in the painting" 我把真身合上畫中身 (scene 9).[78] Because there was no wall to block the viewer's sight on the late Ming arena stage, a table placed in the open

space of the stage could not be expected to be a real hiding place. Hence the audience was expected to trust the heroine's words and imagine, even though she never left their field of vision, that she and the painted beauty had become one.

Tang Xianzu uses this discrepancy between the mental picture suggested by the lyrics and the real vision of the audience to comic effect when Bridal Du's ghost tries to hide behind the painting, which she also claims to be her very own image. In scene 30, "Disrupted Joy" 歡撓, the randy yet loyal Daoist nun senses an affair taking place in Liu Mengmei's room and wants to search the room for evidence. The ghostly Bridal Du insists that Liu unbolt the door to the nun without fear, assuring him that "I shall conceal myself here in the shade cast by this beauty's portrait" 影著這一幅美人圖那邊躲.[79] As the Daoist nun pushes past the hero and approaches the portrait (which according to the stage directions is to be hung onstage before the scene begins), there is the sound of wind from offstage, the lamp flickers, and the ghost swiftly exits 旦閃下介.[80] The difficulty of visualizing this sequence of actions has led Tina Lu to believe that the painting is supposed to have the magic power to change in size, since the material form of the prop portrait would have been too small to hide anyone of normal size.[81]

But is Bridal Du's ghost capable of hiding herself from the nun? Is the portrait a magical one? The staging convention meant that the audience would certainly see the ghostly heroine, regardless of what the Daoist nun might see or not see. The answer is not disclosed until the nun, after her reunion with the resurrected Bridal Du in a deserted village in scene 48, responds to the reanimated young lady's inquiry: "That night, aunt, when you came calling at Master Liu's door, did you know that it was I hiding there?" The nun's answer suggests that the ghost was completely exposed to her naked eye, just as she was to all the audience members: "You tell me: How it is possible for a single scroll of painting to furnish such concealment?" 則道畫幀兒怎放的個人迴避?[82] This is a comical comment referring back to the performance in scene 30. Not only was the ghost's self-confidence in her magical power misguided, but the audience's mental picture, based on theatrical conventions, is shown to have been unreliable as well—in what may be seen as the theater's own self-referential moment to reflect upon its conventions. We might also wonder whether, in challenging earlier literary and theatrical conventions, Tang Xianzu is once again emphasizing the ghost's lack of a recognizable likeness to the painting, thus differentiating this beautiful woman painting from all the other painted beauties in medieval miracle stories. In those earlier stories, which Tang Xianzu references elsewhere in the play, beauties never fail to merge into their home paintings.

My last example—the casting of courtesans in *The Swallow Letter* in late Ming theater—comes from Kong Shangren's 孔尚任 (1648–1718) historical drama *The Peach Blossom Fan* (*Taohuashan* 桃花扇), completed half a century after the collapse of the Ming dynasty. In this play, the villain Ruan Dacheng is put in charge of organizing a troupe consisting of Nanjing courtesans and male brothel guest-performers (*qingke* 清客) in the Nanjing palace, in order to mount *The Swallow Letter* for the emperor. In scene 4, which is marked as happening in the early spring of 1643—the central dramatic action in the historical drama is premised on a temporal sequence—Ruan's private troupe versed in *The Swallow Letter* is "loaned" to a few literati for their enjoyment of the refined theatrical performance.[83] At the same time, Ruan is proofreading a combined edition of his four *chuanqi* plays, including *The Swallow Letter*. By the first month of 1645, a final wood-block imprint is apparently presented to the emperor, who "is greatly pleased and immediately orders the Ministry of Rites to select good palace women and eunuchs to perform *The Swallow Letter*."[84] But Ruan pleads that he be permitted to cast brothel performers instead, because by 1645 *The Swallow Letter* has become a staple in the brothel

repertoire, often juxtaposed with *The Peony Pavilion* and Yuan Yuling's 袁于令 (1592–1674) famous *The Western Bower* (*Xilou ji* 西樓記, completed ca. 1624).[85] In Ruan's terminology, palace performers are "untrained voices" 生口, whereas courtesans are "trained voices" 熟口. To ensure the quality of the performance and to protect his own "literary fame," he proposes that several dozen courtesans and male performers be summoned to the Nanjing palace for an audition, which is fully dramatized in scene 25, "Auditioning the Courtesans" (*Xuanji* 選伎). The playwright Kong Shangren even arranges a play-within-a-play skit after a number of "trained voices" are selected and cast in different roles during the audition. According to the stage directions, various brothel performers "act out an aria from *The Swallow Letter* as usual; Ruan Dacheng (played by Secondary Painted Face) acts casually, providing instructions" 隨意演《燕子箋》一曲，副淨作態指點介.[86]

What happens next in Kong's *The Peach Blossom Fan* indicates that the courtesan's presence onstage is measured in relation to contemporary standards of beauty and desire to a much greater extent than was the case for any other performer: within Kong's play, the villain Ruan casts a courtesan-actress—that is, the courtesan-heroine in *The Peach Blossom Fan*—as a clown in *The Swallow Letter*. This must have violated a principle of brothel performances, for the major criterion in auditioning courtesan-actresses was an erotic one—finding the most beautiful courtesan to play the female lead. More specifically, Ruan's task is actually to find a courtesan-actress who will unroll the scroll of the beautiful woman painting onstage and marvel at her own resemblance to the painted beauty. This courtesan-actress, originally cast by the villainous Ruan as the clown in his *Swallow Letter*, soon catches the eye of the emperor in the audience because by convention a courtesan-clown did not have to put on a powdered face. To the emperor, a beauty should act the female lead, and she is then cast back into the lead female role. A fledging courtesan, she makes it clear that she has only *The Peony Pavilion* in her personal repertoire and is therefore an "untrained voice," unsuitable for *The Swallow Letter*. But the emperor asserts that her "extraordinary beauty" 美麗非常 outweighs her inexperience, and that she should memorize the lyrics assigned to the female lead in three days before joining the rehearsal.[87]

Conclusion

A beautiful woman painting used as a prop in the late Ming plays I have analyzed carries with it all the dynamic energies that crossed the boundaries between the art market and the theater, reality and illusion. Such a generic, static beauty icon that mediates between reality and fiction is what I have called a "role portrait" of the courtesan. Once animated into a living and breathing actress with virtuosity in singing and dancing, the beautiful woman image would be superimposed onto the courtesan herself. To late Ming consumers, such a painted beauty remained suspended, waiting to be reanimated by the copier or the admirer. The phenomenon of connecting vertical images of beautiful women to form a folding screen can be traced back to medieval times, but in the late Ming context of new beautiful woman plays, similar objects must have been more erotic to contemporary viewers because the painted beauty's reanimation was not just in the "mind's eye" but in what we might call the "body's eye."

It was the late Ming theatergoer's mental habits, cultivated by the conjunction of story and image in the Qiu Ying models, on which Tang Xianzu's new dramas depended. However, scenes of "realizations" and reanimations fell into disuse in the later history of Chinese drama, alongside the waning influence of the Qiu Ying models, *Suzhou pian* shops, and the courtesan-actress. These were the cultural roots from which the theatrical effects of some beautiful woman plays had stemmed. That is perhaps why "beautiful woman plays" did not find descendants in

the Qing dynasty. The ties between the dramas and the genre of beautiful woman paintings were forgotten. The brothel theater that had once embraced both the pictorial and the theatrical disappeared. The lineage of dramatic works with obligations to the Qiu Ying models ceased.

The hybrid sources I have compiled have been previously unnoticed as materials for investigating the historical phenomenon of beautiful woman paintings. Nevertheless, they provide important data in the art history of this subgenre, in its relation not only to the marketplace but also to the conceit of the courtesan's role portrait both inside and outside the brothel theater. I am aware of these sources' distance from what we traditionally consider to be "historical documents." I want to insist, however, that such unconventional documents allow us to trace the seemingly traceless presence of the courtesan-actress, providing alternative methodologies for imagining her involvement in shaping Tang Xianzu's legacy in the new pictorial dramaturgy.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1   Catherine Yeh, *Shanghai Love: Courtesans, Intellectuals, and Entertainment Culture, 1850–1910* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006); Laikwan Pang, *The Distorting Mirror: Visual Modernity in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), esp. chap. 2.

2   Ellen Johnston Laing, "Qiu Ying's Delicate Style," *Ars Orientalis* 27 (1997): 48–49.

3   Feminist scholars point out that the seventeenth-century prostituted girls who were trained in elite arts became highly skilled performers for entertaining elite men in the form of competitions, whereas later courtesans who lost such skills and

literacy often became the object of disparagement in *guixiu*, or gentry-women's literature, as mere sexual partners of the husbands. See Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 252–93; and Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

4   *Midian zhulin shiqu baoji huibian* 秘殿珠林石渠寶笈匯編 (Forest of Gems in the Secluded Palaces; Treasured cases of art; two imperial catalogues combined) (1816; repr., Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2004), 1874; Xu Wenmei and Liu

Fangru, eds., *Ming si dajia tezhan: Qiu Ying* 明四大家特展：仇英 (Special exhibition of the four great masters of the Ming: Qiu Ying) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 2014), 322.

5 Ellen Johnston Laing, "Erotic Themes and Romantic Heroines Depicted by Ch'iu Ying," *Archives of Asian Art* 49 (1996): 84–88.

6 Jiang Youwen, "Zai xi Ellen Johnston Laing, 'Erotic Themes and Romantic Heroines Depicted by Ch'iu Ying' yiwen zhong de Daoyi tu ji Meiren chunsi tu" / 再析 Ellen Johnston Laing, 'Erotic Themes and Romantic Heroines Depicted by Ch'iu Ying' 一文中的《擣衣圖》及《美人春思圖》, *Yiyifenzi* 11 (2008): 9–26.

7 Joseph Roach, *It* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 52.

8 Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 30.

9 My recently published book argues that late Ming brothels were substantially related to the theater. Peng Xu, *The Courtesan's Memory, Voice, and Late Ming Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2025).

10 Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 10–14. A similar view is adopted in Jan Stuart and Evelyn Rawski, *Worshiping the Ancestors: Chinese Commemorative Portraits* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in association with Stanford University Press, 2001).

11 Yu Ying-shih is cited in Maxwell K. Hearn, "Qing Imperial Portraiture," in *International Symposium on Art Historical Studies*, vol. 6, *Portraiture*, ed. Society for International Exchange of Art Historical Studies (Kyoto: Society for International Exchange of Art Historical Studies, 1980), 108, 122. For an explanation of the new coloring method invented by the Jiangnan school, see Wen-chien Cheng, "The Chinese Portrait Collection at the Royal Ontario Museum: Reconsidering the Portraiture Status of Ancestor Portraits," in *Faces of China: Portrait Painting of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, 1368–1912*, ed. Klaas Ruitenbeek (Petersberg, Hesse: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2017), 29–30; and Tamara Heimarck Bentley, *The Figurative Works of Chen Hongshou (1599–1652): Authentic Voices/Expanding Markets* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 42–46. For an earlier Chinese discussion of the subgenre, see Zhang Geng 張庚 (fl. 1730s), *Guochao huazheng lu* 國朝畫徵錄 (Veritable records of painters of our dynasty) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin meishu, 2011), 68.

12 *Wusheng shishi* 無聲詩史 (History of silent poetry) (17th century; repr., Shanghai: Shanghai meishu chubanshe, 1963), 71; Aida Yuen Wong, *The Other Kang Youwei: Calligrapher, Art Activist, and Aesthetic Reformer in Modern China* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 136; Yu Feian, *Chinese Painting Colors: Studies of Their Preparation and Application in Traditional and Modern Times*, trans. Jerome Silbergeld and Amy McNair (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 29–30. For analysis of Zeng Jing's 曾鯨 (1564–1647) paintings, see 近藤秀実, *Bochen huapai* 波臣畫派 (The Bochen school of painting) (Changchun: Jilin meishu chubanshe, 2003); Ma Jige 馬季戈, *Zeng Jing yu Bochen huapai* 曾鯨與波臣畫派 (Zeng Jing and his Bochen school of painting) (Jinan: Shandong meishu chubanshe, 2004); and Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self*, 40–48.

13 See Pei-yi Wu, "Varieties of the Chinese Self," in *Designs of Selfhood*, ed. Vytautus Kavolis (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984), 117–25.

14 Wu Hung, "Beyond Stereotypes: The Twelve Beauties in Qing Court Art and the Dream of the Red Chamber," in *Writing Women in Late Imperial China*, ed. Ellen Widmer and Kang-I Sun Chang (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 306–65.

15 Judith Zeitlin and Yuhang Li, eds., *Performing Images: Opera in Chinese Visual Culture* (Chicago: Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, 2014), esp. chap. 3.

16 Melissa Mueller, *Objects as Actors: Props and the Poetics of Performance in Greek Tragedy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 3; Eleanor Margolies, *Props*, Readings in Theatre Practice 14 (London: Palgrave Macmillan Education, 2016), 19.

17 Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1999); James Cahill, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Painting in High Qing China* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2010); James Cahill, *The Painter's Practice: How Artists Lived and Worked in Traditional China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

18 Ogawa Yōichi 小川陽一, *Chūgoku no shōzōga bungaku* 中國肖像畫文學 (The literature of Chinese portrait painting) (Tokyo: Kenbunshuppan, 2005).

19 Judith T. Zeitlin, "The Life and Death of the Image: Ghosts and Female Portraits in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Literature," in *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture*, ed. Wu Hung and Kathrine

Tsiang (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 229–56.

20 Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda, *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

21 Cahill, *Painter's Practice*, 113–48; Ellen Johnston Laing, "'Suzhou Pian' and Other Dubious Paintings in the Received 'Oeuvre' of Qiu Ying," *Artibus Asiae* 59.3/4 (2000): 265–95.

22 Yang Chenbin, "Tan Mingdai shuhua zuowei," *Wenwu* 文物 (Archaeological findings), 1990.8, cited in Laing, "Suzhou Pian," 267. For eighteenth-century pictorial representations of the historical area, see Ya-chen Ma, "Picturing Suzhou: Visual Politics in the Making of Cityscapes in Eighteenth-Century China" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2006).

23 Wanyuzi 宛瑜子, comp., *Wuji baimei* 吳姬百媚 (Seductive courtesans of Suzhou, 1617 preface), ed. Zhou Zhibiao 周之標 (fl. 1610–1647), original in the National Library, Beijing, facs. repr., Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2002.

24 For the entire handscroll with zoom-in views provided by the Palace Museum of China: https://www.dpm.org.cn/collection/paint/228792.html.

25 Wu Hung, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting* (London: Reaktion, 1996), 243–59.

26 Catalogues of courtesans with illustrations include *Wuji baimei* and *Jingling baimei* 金陵百媚 (Seductive courtesans of Nanjing, 1618 preface), ed. Li Yunxiang 李雲翔 (pseud. Weilinzi 為霖子), original in the Naikaku bunko, published by Qian Yiwu 錢益吾 in Suzhou.

27 For the example of historical courtesans being skillful horsewomen, see Daria Berg's study on Xue Susu 薛素素 (ca. 1575–1652), "Cultural Discourse on Xue Susu, a Courtesan in Late Ming China," *International Journal of Asian Studies* 6.2 (2009): 171–200.

28 Perhaps unaware of the case of *A Hundred Beauties*, Ellen Johnston Laing believes that "the phrasing reverses the standard sequence seen without exception in all other Qiu Ying signatures, regardless of whether they are on fake or genuine paintings." See Laing, "Suzhou Pian," 277.

29 Laing, 287.

30 For example, the Han-dynasty imperial concubine Beauty Ban 班婕妤 is mistakenly labeled as the Tang imperial concubine Jiang Caiping 江采蘋 in the Waseda copy.

31 Zhang Shutian and Wang Huaimao, eds., *Feng Menglong quanji* 馮夢龍全集 (Complete works of Feng Menglong) (Huhehaote: Yuanfang chubanshe, 2005), 5:193.

32 Yu Jianhua, *Zhongguo hualun leibian* 中國畫論類編 (Categorized selections of Chinese painting criticism) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 2:1237–38.

33 J. P. Park, *Art by the Book: Painting Manuals and the Leisure Life in Late Ming China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 17, 18, 27. Chelsea Foxwell discusses "copying mania" in the context of post-1750 Japan as a response to a similar market-driven publishing boom in the late Ming era, such as the Chinese literati painting survey *Gushi huapu* 顧氏畫譜 (Master Gu's painting manual) of 1603. See Chelsea Foxwell, "The Painter and the Archive: Models for the Artist in Nineteenth-Century Japan," in *The Artist in Edo Japan*, ed. Yukio Lippit, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2018), 225–28.

34 Zhou Lüjing, *Tianxing daomao*, in *Yimen guangdu* 夷門廣牘 (Large collections from my secluded home) (1597; repr., Beijing: Dongda chubanshe, 1997).

35 Brenda G. Jordan, "Copying from Beginning to End? Student Life in the Kano School," in *Copying the Master and Stealing His Secrets: Talent and Training in Japanese Painting*, ed. Brenda G. Jordan and Victoria Weston (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 59.

36 *Huaiyuantang pidian Yanzi jian* 懷遠堂批點燕子箋 (The Swallow Letter, commented and annotated by the Studio of Empathy for Remote Regions), original in Shanghai Library, facs. repr. in *Guben xiqu congkan* 古本戲曲叢刊, 2nd ser., *juan* 1, 14b.

37 *Huaiyuantang pidian Yanzi jian*, *juan* 1, 13a.

38 *Huazhongren* 畫中人 (The painted beauty), vol. 1, 3b. Which play was completed first is unknown, but this line seems to be Wu Bing's mockery of Ruan Dacheng's use of a Zhaojun portrait as a model for the heroine's portrait. If this conjecture is right, then *The Swallow Letter* came out before *The Painted Beauty*.

39 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 3b.

40 I refer to the two Wanli (1573–1620) editions of *The Jade Pendants*: the Fuchuntang edition (Hall of Exuberant Spring) and the Shenyuguan edition (Studio of Extra Prudence). Both originals are in the National Library in Beijing (facs. repr. of the latter in *Guben xiqu congkan*, 1st ser.). An exceptional case is a heavily revised edition included in Mao Jin's 毛晉 (1539–1659) *Sixty Plays* (*Liushi zhong qu* 六十種曲), which dramatically reduces the role of the courtesan's self-portrait, resulting in her love story receding from the overt, principal plot into a subplot.

41 *Guyuhuan ji* 古玉環記 (Antique jade pendants), vol. 2, 67b; Shenyuguan 慎餘館, ed., facs. repr. in *Guben xiqu congkan*, 1st ser.

42 *Yuhuatang riji* 玉華堂日記 (Diary of the Hall of Jade Flowers); original in the Shanghai Museum. My two attempts to see the manuscript failed. For secondary information about this precious diary, see An Qi, "Ming gaoben *Yuhuatang riji* zhong de xiqu shiliao" 明稿本玉華堂日記中的戲曲史料 (Primary sources of theater history in the Ming manuscript *Diary of the Hall of Jade Flowers*), in *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu jikan* 中華文化研究集刊 (Volumes of studies of Chinese culture) (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 1986), 3:450–51.

43 The four drama miscellanies that anthologize the portrait scene are: (1) *Sai zhi ge ji* 賽徵歌集 (Anthology of superb songs), published in the Wanli reign (1573–1620), 6 *juan*, in vols. 4:4–5 of Shanben xiqu congkan 善本戲曲叢刊 (hereafter SXC), 494–507; (2) Hu Wenhuan 胡文煥 (fl. 1596), ed., *Qunyin leixuan* 群音類選 (Categorized selections from essential dramas), facs. rpt. of rare book in the Nanjing Library (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), under the rubric *Guanqiang lei* 官腔類 (The capital's tune); (3) *Yueluyin* 月露音 (Sounds of the moon and dew drops) (1616 preface), 4 *juan*, in vol. 2:4–5 of SXC, 552–55; and (4) Zheng Yuanmei 鄭元美, ed., *Yuefu gewutai* 樂府歌舞臺 (Stage for singing and dancing in the music bureau) (ca. 1620s), in the section called *Yue ji* 月集 (The moon volume), in vol. 4:9 of SXC, pages missing (the play appears in the table of contents but the pages are missing from the main text). The three songbooks that promote *kunqu* music are (1) *Shanshan ji* 珊珊集 (Sounds of music) (1617 preface), 4 *juan*, in vol. 2:3 of SXC, pages missing; (2) Ling Mengchu, *Nanyin sanlai* 南音三籟 (Three levels of southern music), which I believe was published in the 1620s, 4 *juan*, vol. 4:7 of SXC, 739–41; and (3) Huai Ding 槐鼎 and Wu Zhijun 吳之俊, *Yuefu eyun* 樂府遏雲 (Musical sounds stopping the clouds), which I believe was published after 1624 (the date of *Xilou ji* [The western bower], which it anthologizes, originals in the Peking University Library, Nanjing Library (facs. repr. in Xuxiu siku quanshu 續修四庫全書, vol. 1778), and in the National Library, Beijing: https://sou-yun.cn/eBookIndex.aspx?id=6889, 3 *juan*, 63b–65b. The three full-text editions were published by Fuchuntang 富春堂 (original in the National Library, Beijing), Shenyuguan 慎餘館 (facs. repr. in *Guben xiqu congkan*), and Jiguge 汲古閣 (*Liushizhong qu*), respectively.

44 Feng Yuanjun pointed out in a 1947 essay (in *Guju shuohui* 古劇說匯 [Collected analyses on classical dramas], first published by the Commercial Press in Shanghai) that this line is the only instance where dramatic text is recorded verbatim among the numerous descriptions of theatrical performances of various genres in the novel. See Feng Yuanjun, "*Jin Ping Mei cihua* zhong de wenxue shiliao" 金瓶梅詞話中的文學史料 (Primary materials for studying literary history in *The Plum in the Golden Vase*), repr., Fang Ming 方明, ed., *Jin Ping Mei ziliao huibian* 金瓶梅資料匯編 (Collection of primary materials regarding *The Plum in the Golden Vase*) (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1986), 95.

45 Yu Yonglin, *Beichuang suoyu* 北窗瑣語 (Minor talks from the northern window), Chinese Text Project, https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&res=821319.

46 *Jin Ping Mei cihua* (Hong Kong: Taiping shuju, 1982), 4:1606; David T. Roy, *The Plum in the Golden Vase* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 3:458.

47 "A beauty by Mao Yanshou" alludes to Wang Zhaojun's portrait. *Jin Ping Mei cihua*, 4:1607. Roy, *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, 3:459.

48 On three elements of the theatricality of brothel culture in general, see Keith McMahon, *Saying All That Can Be Said: The Art of Describing Sex in the* Jin Ping Mei (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2023), 95.

49 Wu Hung, *Wu, Hua, Ying: Chuanyijing quanqiu xiaoshi* 物・畫・影: 穿衣鏡全球小史 (Things, painting, and shadows: a brief global history of full-length mirrors) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2021), 92–95.

50 Feng Zhiguo 封治國, "Xiang Yuanbian nianpu" 項元汴年譜 (A chronicle of Xiang Yuanbian), in Fan Jingzhong 范景中 and Cao Yiqiang 曹意強, eds., *Meishu shi yu guannian shi* 美術史與觀念史 (Art history and the history of ideas) (Nanjing: Nanjing shifan daxue chubanshe, 2012), 12:210.

51 The full poem, originally from Song Zhengbi's *Hanzhen tang shigao* 含真堂詩稿 (The poetry from the Hall of Retaining Integrity, Kangxi reign wood-block ed.), is used in Chen Yinke's detective reading of it as a piece of evidence for the famous Ming courtesan Liu Rushi's 柳如是 (1618–1664) biographical study, *Liu Rushi biezhuan* 柳如是別傳 (Supplementary biography of Liu Rushi) (Beijing: Sanlian chubanshe, 2015), 1:60–62.

52 Qi Biaojia, *Yuanshantang qupin* 遠山堂曲品 (Remarks on *chuanqi* drama from the Hall of Remote Mountains) and *Yuanshantang jupin* 遠山堂劇品 (Remarks on *zaju* drama from the Hall of Remote Mountains). See *Zhongguo gudian xiqu lunzhu jicheng* 中國古典戲曲論著集成 (Anthologies of classical

Chinese drama criticism) (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1959), 6:17–22, 176–78.

53 Xu Fuming, *Mudan ting yanjiu ziliao kaoshi* 牡丹亭研究資料考釋 (Interpretation and analysis of primary materials for studying *The Peony Pavilion*) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 38–39.

54 For the popularity of the two plays in different cultural arenas in late imperial China, see Ling Hon Lam, "The Matriarch's Private Ear: Performance, Reading, Censorship, and the Fabrication of Interiority in the Story of the Stone," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65.2 (2005): 376–98.

55 Xu, *Mudan ting yanjiu ziliao kaoshi*, 39. Translated by Cyril Birch as *The Peony Pavilion: Mudan Ting* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 46.

56 Xu, *Mudan ting yanjiu ziliao kaoshi*, 38–39.

57 Birch, *Peony Pavilion*, 16. Xu Shuofang and Tang Xiaomei, eds., *Mudan ting* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1997), 18.

58 On this prolific painter/engraver, who hailed from Suzhou but was commissioned by famous drama publishers nationwide, see Guo Weiqu, *Zhongguo banhua shilue* 中國版畫史略 (A brief history of Chinese wood-block illustrations) (Beijing: Zhaohua meishu chubanshe, 1962), 86–87.

59 Cyril Birch, *Peony Pavilion*, 144; Xu and Tang, *Mudan ting*, 143.

60 Original in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, facs. repr. in *Guben xiqu congkan*, 3rd ser.

61 *Jin Xixiang*, scene 3, n.p.

62 *Jiaohong ji*, vol. 1, 7b; digital version published by The Library of the Graduate School of Letters and Faculty of Letters at Kyoto University: https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/item/rb00031737. Translated by Cyril Birch as *Mistress and Maid* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 16.

63 *Jiaohong ji*, vol. 1, 18a; Birch, *Mistress and Maid*, 35.

64 *Jiaohong ji*, vol. 1, 59b; Birch, *Mistress and Maid*, 114–15.

65 *Jiaohong ji*, vol. 1, 18a; Birch, *Mistress and Maid*, 35.

66 *Jiaohong ji*, vol. 2, 13a; Birch, *Mistress and Maid*, 196.

67 Original in the National Library, Beijing, facs. repr. in *Guben xiqu congkan*, 1st ser.

68 These include (1) *Zhang Shenzhi zheng Bei Xixiang miben* 張深之正北西廂秘本, for which Chen Hong-shou was commissioned to paint the portrait of Oriole Cui and Xiang Nanzhou 項南洲 to engrave it; (2) Gu Xuanwei's 顧玄緯 1569 edition of *Zengbian Huizhenji* 增編會真記, which claims one of its Oriole Cui portraits to be after the Tang Yin style; and (3) He Bi's 何璧 1616 *Bei Xixiangji* 北西廂記, which used a fake painting of Qiu Ying as the model for its Oriole Cui portrait.

69 Xu, *Courtesan's Memory*.

70 Introduction to Roach, *It*, 16.

71 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 38b.

72 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 39b.

73 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 18a.

74 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 16b.

75 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 17a.

76 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 17b.

77 *Huazhongren*, vol. 2, 15b.

78 *Huazhongren*, vol. 1, 28b.

79 Xu and Tang, *Mudan ting*, 161.

80 Xu and Tang, *Mudan ting*, 162; Birch, *Peony Pavilion*, 174.

81 Tina Lu, *Persons, Roles, and Minds: Identity in Peony Pavilion and Peach Blossom Fan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 53.

82 Xu and Tang, *Mudan ting*, 244. Cyril Birch's translation of this line renders it as if the nun is marveling at the ghost's magnificent power to hide herself: "I'll never know how a painted scroll could furnish such concealment." But unlike her counterparts in earlier miraculous stories, the ghost slips out because she is almost caught by the nun. See Birch, *Peony Pavilion*, 274.

83 Xu Zhengui 徐振貴, ed., *Kong Shangren quanji jijiao zhuping* 孔尚任全集輯校注評 (The complete works of Kong Shangren with annotations and commentaries) (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 2004), 1:66–72.

84 Xu, *Kong Shangren quanji jijiao zhuping*, 192.

85 Xu, *Kong Shangren quanji jijiao zhuping*, 202.

86 Xu, *Kong Shangren quanji jijiao zhuping*, 202.

87 Xu, *Kong Shangren quanji jijiao zhuping*, 203.

KALYANI MADHURA RAMACHANDRAN

THE MATTER OF SCULPTURE

Isamu Noguchi and Early India

ABSTRACT

Isamu Noguchi wrote in 1949 that the site of Mahabalipuram was his "first and most authentic lesson." Between then and his death in 1988, Noguchi visited India at least eleven times. Yet there has been little investigation into the nature of this long and deep connection, and the impact it had on the sculptor's artistic philosophy and practice. The few studies on the topic emphasize Noguchi's interest in the architectural modernity of post-independence India. This essay foregrounds instead the sculptor's enduring interest in the art of early India. Through extensive archival work, it highlights Noguchi's engagement with ancient sites such as Sanchi, Elephanta, and Mahabalipuram, among numerous others, and traces the centrality of the "matter of sculpture" in his approach. As such, he is one of the few sculptors—and perhaps the only one—to have studied, recorded, and theorized the materiality of early Indian sculpture. In looking at and alongside Noguchi, this essay expands the current understanding of the sculptor's work and calls for material approaches to the study of sculpture from early India.

Introduction

Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) is one of the foremost sculptors of the twentieth century. He is unparalleled in the originality of his formal experimentation, versatile creative choices, breadth of artistic collaborations, and philosophical approach to materials. The richness of Noguchi's oeuvre, spanning more than six decades, has generated significant scholarly exploration of various facets of his artistic output. This literature includes investigations of his exhibition history in North America; his associations with numerous artists, including Constantin Brancusi, Alexander Calder, and Martha Graham; his fascination with the classical antiquity of Greece and Italy; his role in bridging East and West in sculptural practice; and his identity as a Japanese American artist. Relatively less known is Noguchi's longstanding interest in India. Existing studies on the topic emphasize his interest in the architectural modernity of post-independence India. In contrast, this essay focuses on Noguchi's engagement with the sculpture of early India. It illuminates how stonework at ancient sites, including Sanchi, Elephanta, and Mahabalipuram, was a touchstone for the sculptor. Through a study of over two thousand photographs, sketches, and notes as well as correspondence, interviews, and other archival

documents, this essay demonstrates that the sculpture of early India played an important but overlooked role in Noguchi's artistic philosophy and practice.

In tracing this thread in Noguchi's career, this essay highlights his trip to India in 1949—the first of eleven recorded visits—and contextualizes that experience with discussions of his early pursuits in New York and Paris and his late practice in Japan. While Noguchi visited other places in 1949, including Greece, Italy, and Egypt, the essay focuses on his engagement with the sculpture of early India. As such, it fills a gap not only in Noguchi scholarship but also in art historical approaches to the sculpture of early India; it lies at the intersection of these lacunae. First, the essay sheds light on the significance of early Indian sculpture in Noguchi's thinking and practice, a point that the sculptor described in detail and with much complexity through-out his career. Second, it shows that although the discipline of art history is uniquely suited to study artisans and their artistic processes, these issues, in the case of the sculpture of early India, have received limited scholarly assessment. This is due to the fragmentary nature of the archaeological record, which provides few primary sources, particularly of artistic attribution, with which to write such histories. As a result, the field has focused more closely on issues of patronage and reception rather than questions of making, materials, and method. Noguchi's consistent attention to the materiality of early Indian sculpture—crucially, as a sculptor of stone himself—provides a critical lens through which to apprehend the enigmatic issues sur-rounding the history of stone carving in early India.

Sculpture in the Studio and Studying Surface, 1920s–40s

Noguchi's interest in stone carving began in the 1920s. In 1923, he joined the premedical program at Columbia University in New York City, only to withdraw after two years. He then began a course in sculpture at the Leonardo da Vinci Art School, located in an abandoned church near Tompkins Square Park. There, he trained in clay and figurative sculpture with the Italian sculptor Onorio Ruotolo (1888–1966), a successful academic portraitist who saw great potential in the young sculptor. It was at the Leonardo da Vinci Art School that Noguchi had his first one-person show of sculpted portraits, in 1924, after which he set up a studio in Greenwich Village. In 1926, he visited an exhibition of Constantin Brancusi's work organized by Marcel Duchamp at the Brummer Gallery. The experience was catalytic for Noguchi. He noted that it "completely crystallized my uncertainties"[1] and propelled him away from clay and figuration, toward stone and abstraction.

The same year, Noguchi applied for a Guggenheim Fellowship to spend a year at Brancusi's studio in Paris, followed by another in India, and a third in China and Japan. His plan of study reads:

> It has long been my conviction that sculpture has been too consistently employed as a medium for the idealization and glorification of man, and while it may be granted that the interpretation of the human figure will always remain its chief objective, I am nevertheless of the opinion that nature offers many another subject which would lend itself to some strange and exquisite sculp-tural treatment. . . . It is difficult to visualize sculpture in words, especially that kind for which there are but few similes. Some sculptors today appreciate the importance of matter, but are too much engrossed with symbolism. Others[,] who are undoubtedly artists, are interested only in the interpretation of strictly human forms. May I, therefore, beg to recognize no antecedents with this declaration of intentions? As yet, I have never executed any of those ideas, I have rather been saving them as sacred until such time as I should have attained technical confidence and skill. In

the handling of clay, I believe that I now have the necessary ability. In the technique of stone and wood cutting, however, I feel that I am still deficient. My proposition, therefore, should I be so honored as to receive your fellowship, would include a travel study and production period of three years—the first year to be spent in Paris, where I should endeavor to acquire proficiency in stone and wood cutting, as well as in a better understanding of the human figure. . . . The two following years I propose to spend in Asia, going first to India, then through China into Japan, where I should hold an initial exhibition prior to one to be given in New York.[2]

Noguchi believed that sculpture, which had long exalted the human figure, must include investigations of nature. This exercise would require the sculptor to engage with "the matter of sculpture" in a manner difficult to describe in words; instead, it had to be made. He lamented that sculptors who understood the importance of materiality were primarily interested in creating symbolic works. He knew that while his reflections were theoretically inventive, he lacked the skills and confidence required to execute the work to which he aspired. And so, he embarked on a period of training and travel to acquire them.

In 1927–28, he learned the fundamentals of stone carving in Brancusi's studio, a space he described as "a laboratory for distilling basic shapes."[3] There he trained in using tools to cut stone and make simple bases for sculptures.[4] He recalls helping Brancusi carve one of his sculptural birds using chisels and a *chemin de fer*, a stonemason's plane, to file down the surface in long and confident strokes. Noguchi found that working in stone and with abstraction required him to unlearn the methods of clay and figuration he had studied at the Leonardo da Vinci Art School. He observed that at the heart of Brancusi's distinctive style was "the creativity of the hand, how you hold a saw, what kind of saw you hold . . . not a question merely of the result but of the process."[5]

Although Noguchi admired Brancusi until the end of his life, they had different views about sculptural form and style. Brancusi's work stood at the crossroads of Rodinesque figuration and pure abstraction, and leaned toward the latter. For Noguchi, the notion of style itself was becoming an imposition. He noted, "A purely cold abstraction doesn't interest me too much. . . . It has to recall something which moves a person."[6] He had already begun to depart from portraiture in Paris and was increasingly skeptical of the purely abstract forms he saw around him. While he subtly resisted Brancusi's aesthetic, Noguchi had acquired the crucial technical mastery that he had sought. For instance, referring to sculptural bases, an element he perfected at Brancusi's studio, Noguchi said: "It supplies a fictional horizon. This is the chief reason why I have attempted an integration of sculpture and base; bases that bite into the sculpture, sculpture that rises from the earth."[7] By the time he left Paris in 1928, Noguchi was beginning to think about an abstraction that would push the existing boundaries of stone sculpture and engage more directly with its material qualities. Summarizing this approach, he declared:

When Brancusi took a bronze casting and started filling it, he eventually got to the inside. I go about it in a different way: I actually split it. I break it. I cut. I go to the jugular. Then I come out again, and it all becomes one. . . . I am constantly on a search to find from stone new possibilities. It is this discovery that stirs my imagination and is most exciting to me.[8]

Furthermore, Brancusi saw little value in travel. He had visited India at the invitation of Maharaja Yeshwantrao Holkar of Indore but found the trip largely unappealing.[9] Noguchi, on

the other hand, was a peripatetic sculptor and possibly one of the most well-traveled artists of his time. He wrote:

> For Brancusi, who I called upon on my arrival in Paris, my proposed trip was utter nonsense. . . . Travel was a waste of time. . . . The past had nothing to teach the present. My trip would be among backward looking peoples. India, which he had visited, was for him a hopeless mess of misery enslaved by the past. There nothing could be accomplished. He had found his own project for the Maharaja of Indore ruined by ineptness and lack of taste.[10]

Although Noguchi received the Guggenheim Fellowship, he did not visit India at this time, as he had proposed. By his own admission, he "got caught in Paris in 1927 and 1928."[11] Consumed by guilt for not having traveled to India, Noguchi dedicated one month to studying Indian art at the British Museum Library in London. At the time, there were vigorous scholarly debates on the history of premodern South Asian art. Alfred Foucher and Ananda Coomaraswamy were engaged in a dialogue on the origins of the figural Buddha image in the first centuries BCE/CE, suggesting Greek and Indian roots, respectively, in the transition from aniconic to anthropomorphic representations.[12] Arriving in London in December 1927, Noguchi swiftly embarked on a study of Indian art, reading texts not only by Coomaraswamy but also by Stella Kramrisch and Max Müller, among others. He likely saw the permanent collection of Indian art at the British Museum, including the Amaravati "Marbles," a corpus of carved limestone railings, pillar fragments, and drum slabs from the ancient Buddhist stupa at Amaravati (ca. third century BCE–third century CE). These pieces are among the earliest stone carvings from the Indian subcontinent and present a combination of aniconic and iconic representations of the Buddha that would have been valuable to Noguchi's evolving thoughts on symbolism and sculptural form.

This exposure to the arts of early India did not shape Noguchi's career in the 1920s, but it remained with him until, and throughout, his first trip to India over twenty years later.

Stone, Sculptor, and Society: 1949

Noguchi first visited India in 1949, during the middle of his long career, at a time of success yet unfulfillment. His works had been displayed at numerous exhibitions in North America, most notably in the Museum of Modern Art's *Fourteen Americans* show in 1946.[13] His distinctive sculptural forms delighted most critics except Clement Greenberg, who described the smooth surfaces as having "excessive polish."[14] Although Noguchi was professionally recognized, this period was filled with personal frustration. Mixed reviews, the capitalistic demands of the New York art scene, the economic challenges of the Great Depression, and the ravages of the Second World War led to a growing impatience. He had also lost his cherished studio at 33 MacDougal Alley to property developers (fig. 1). The space had served as a necessary retreat following his voluntary incarceration at an Arizona internment camp in 1942.[15]

This period of creative impasse prompted Noguchi to reevaluate the function of art and the role of the artist.[16] He reflected, poignantly, that "in the world of the airplane and the atom, there must be a role for sculpture beyond the conventional one of individual works of art."[17] He emphasized the urgent need to "enlarge the present outlet permitted by our limited categories of architects, painters, sculptors, and landscapists."[18] To begin this investigation in practice, Noguchi submitted to the Bollingen Foundation a proposal for a book on sculpture that extended beyond pure aesthetics and engaged more directly with lived experience (fig. 2). A passage from his successful application reads:

FIGURE 1. Eliot Elisofon. Isamu Noguchi at his McDougal Alley Studio, New York, 1946. The Noguchi Museum and Archives, 03182 (© Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum/LIFE Picture Collection/Shutterstock)
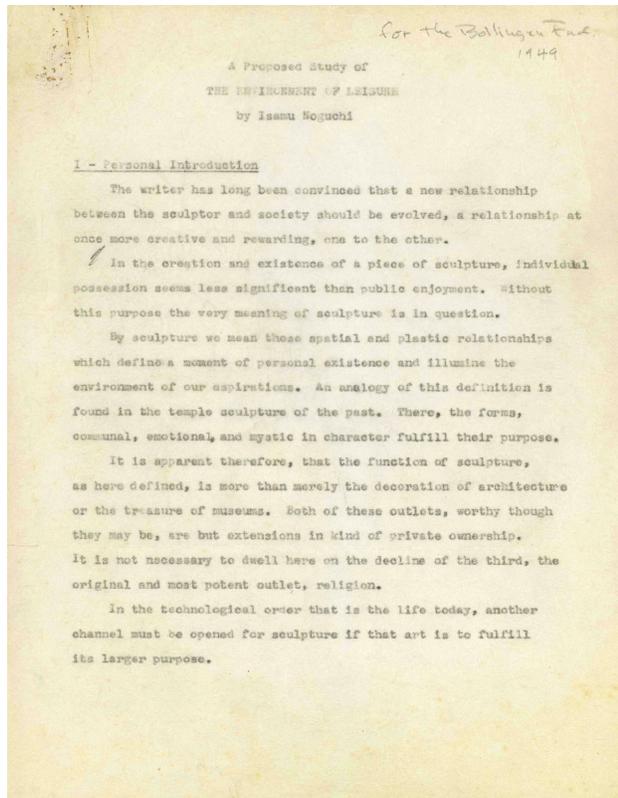

FIGURE 2. Isamu Noguchi. "A Proposed Study of the Environment of Leisure," proposal to the Bollingen Foundation by Isamu Noguchi, 1949. Typescript. The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_WRI_010_019. (© Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum Archives)

The writer has long been convinced that a new relationship between the sculptor and society should be evolved, a relationship at once more creative and rewarding, one to the other. In the creation and existence of a piece of sculpture, individual possession seems less significant than public enjoyment. Without this purpose the very meaning of sculpture is in question. By sculpture we mean those spatial and plastic relationships which define a moment of personal existence and illumine the environment of our aspirations. An analogy of this definition is found in the temple sculpture of the past. There, the forms, communal, emotional, and mystic in character[,] fulfill their purpose. It is apparent[,] therefore, that the function of sculpture, as here defined, is more than merely the decoration of architecture or the treasure of museums. . . . In the technological order that is the life today, another channel must be opened for sculpture if that art is to fulfill its larger purpose.[19]

Noguchi believed that a new and meaningful relationship between the sculptor and society was needed: one in which the intention behind creating a piece of sculpture was determined by public obligation rather than private ownership. Without this ultimate purpose, the meaning of sculpture, and concurrently the sculptor's work, were insignificant. What, then, was sculpture? He understood the form as a set of material relationships that reflect both individual life and the larger collective—that is, society. The purpose of sculpture is personal but not private, and its real function extends beyond its use as architectural ornamentation or museum object. Noguchi believed that this characterization applied to the ancient past, where sculpture was both emotional and communal. A new approach was required for sculpture to fulfill—in and of itself—this true civic purpose.

Noguchi received the Bollingen Fellowship and traveled to India in September 1949 via Europe and Egypt. Upon arriving in India, he stayed for a time with the Sarabhai family in Ahmedabad. Ambalal and Saraladevi Sarabhai along with their eight children were a wealthy family in the textile-milling industry and leading art patrons. Noguchi had befriended Gautam Sarabhai at the India League for America in New York, whose meetings on anti-colonial struggle they routinely attended. In a letter to Noguchi, Sarabhai expressed that international artists could play a useful role in promoting India's heritage while simultaneously curbing revivalist currents at the moment of the nation's freedom. Although Noguchi's trip was motivated by a different purpose, his plans were reinforced by the letter:

The weight of an alien exploitation—political, economic and cultural domination—has at last been overthrown. . . . We are at a crossroads. There are many who would wish us to take the road of Revivalism. There are a few who acknowledge the greatness of an ancient and powerful tradition but still would rather seek a new that imitates. You have at once the understanding and detachment to be able to help us at this moment. Do come to India.[20]

Noguchi's trip came at a critical time in India's history, just two years after Independence and Partition. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of independent India, had set in motion a plan to develop the art and architecture of modern India, part of a constitutional agenda to build a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic republic. Noguchi's relationship with Nayantara Pandit (later Sahgal), a niece of Nehru, had ended in 1948.[21] They first met in 1943 at the home of the chairman of the India League of America, whose meetings Noguchi frequented. Pandit was a student at Wellesley College at that time. Their relationship did not last, as Pandit returned to fulfill political commitments in free India, but they remained in

touch until the end of Noguchi's life. In a letter to Noguchi written just three days after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, in January 1948, by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu nationalist and member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Pandit wrote: "My uncle [Nehru] is completely broken. For thirty years, he has followed Bapu [Gandhi]."[22] Noguchi would later reflect on the bittersweet timing of his first trip in 1949: "To be in India would have been destiny twenty years before. Now, this was tinged with a sadness."[23]

Noguchi did not ultimately produce any art in India, but prior to his visit in 1948, he conceived a piece entitled *Memorial to Gandhi*. It was a sculpture of a disembodied and emaciated hand, with open palm and bony fingers, outstretched in propulsive hope toward the sky.[24] He had sent a bronze model to Nehru, which resulted in an invitation to design Rajghat, Gandhi's burial place. His plan, however, was rejected on the grounds that it was too reminiscent of Stonehenge.[25] Additionally, one of his last sculpted portraits, made in 1949, was of Nehru, but Noguchi believed it "did not correspond to the image of human viability, or to the public image."[26] Later, in 1957, he collaborated with Japanese architects in a competition to design a park to commemorate the 2,500th anniversary of the Buddha's birth, but their plan won second place.[27]

Despite these unsuccessful projects in India, Noguchi was the first of several international modernists, including Le Corbusier (1951), Alexander Calder (1955), Charles and Ray Eames (1958), Buckminster Fuller (1958), Louis Kahn (1962), and Clement Greenberg (1967), to visit the country following Independence and Partition. Only in 1956–57 did *The Family of Man* exhibition travel to India, and it was as late as 1967 that the *Two Decades of American Painting* exhibition brought works by Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, and others to Delhi; both exhibitions were organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Subsequently, the Triennale India crystallized deliberations on art internationalism only through the 1970s.

Noguchi's trip may be understood as early in the expression of "modernism as a practice of affiliation"[28] and dialogue, rather than influence or inspiration. This period of Nehruvian idealism involved experiments in modern art that were fundamentally transcultural and reflected what Noguchi described as "a new and emerging India."[29] Given his interest in the relationship between the built environment and lived experience, this internationalist approach to the architecture of modern life was for him an exciting prospect.

At the time, several Indian artists and intellectuals were interested in the long history of stone carving, and Noguchi found a kinship with them. He visited Kala Bhavan, the arts faculty at Visva Bharati University in Shantiniketan, established by poet laureate Rabindranath Tagore, who for years had invited visits by thinkers such as Stella Kramrisch in 1922 and the poet Yonejiro Noguchi, Noguchi's father, in 1935–36.[30] Noguchi traveled to Shantiniketan by train from Calcutta (Kolkata). There he met Ramkinkar Baij and Nandalal Bose, who, along with Benode Behari Mukherjee, formed a pioneering group of artists active after the Bengal famine of 1942–43. Noguchi made several portraits of Baij, sketched the artist, described him at length in a note entitled "The Sculptor of Santiniketan,"[31] and reflected, "It is to Ramkinkar that I was drawn, as a person and for my interest in sculpture."[32] He photographed Baij standing next to his *Santhal Family* (1938), one of India's first modernist public sculptures exploring the theme of human dignity in labor and suffering (fig. 3).

Further, the modernist painter M. F. Husain would include in his triptych *Language of Stone* (2008–11)[33] Tagore's appreciation of the long arc of India's stonework, "how the language of stone surpasses the languages of man." This line describes the historical value of stone carving
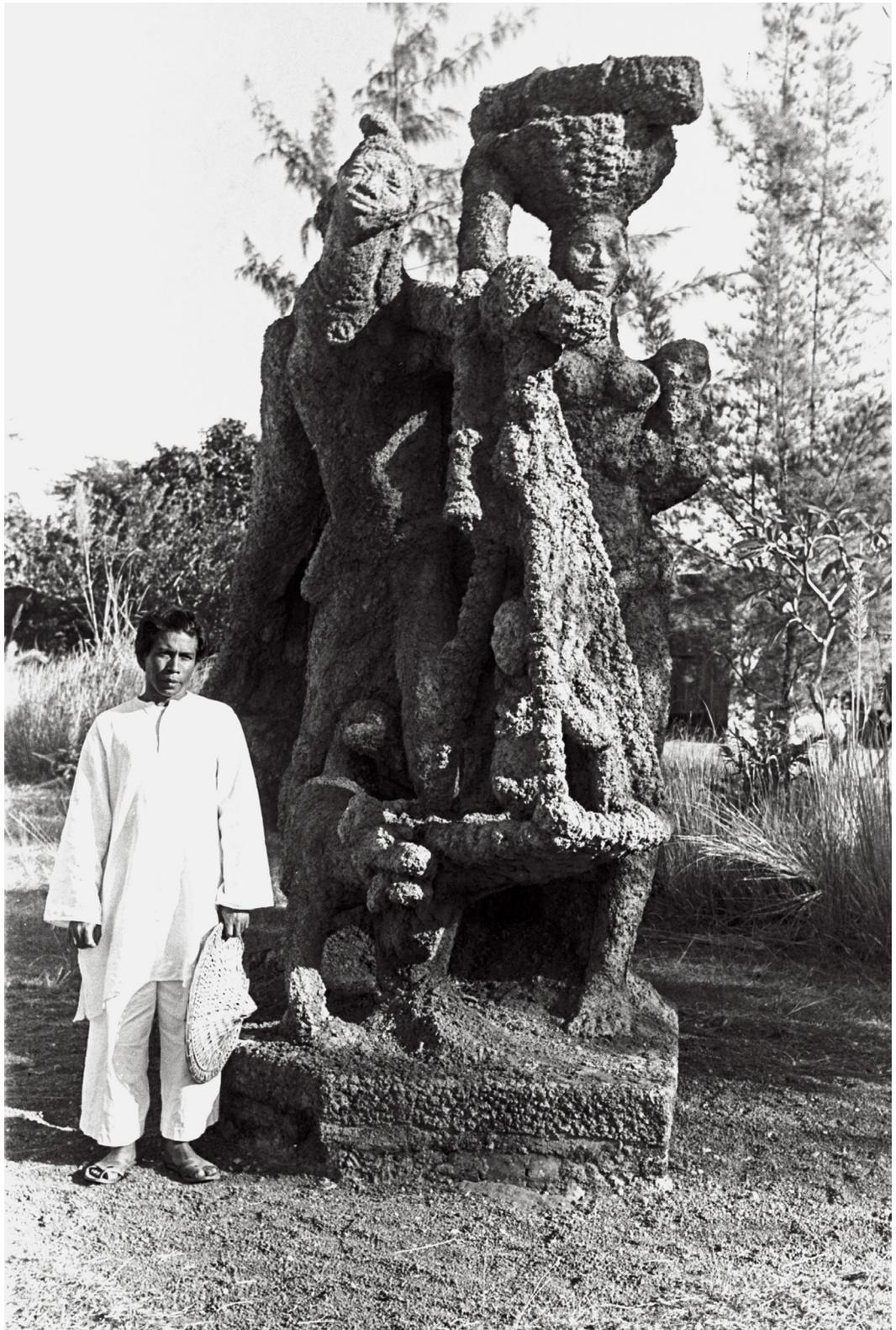
FIGURE 3. Isamu Noguchi. Ramkinkar Baij with his sculpture *Santhal Family* (1938), Shantiniketan, India, 1949. Bollingen travel photograph. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 08437.1 (© Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

in extending across—and bridging—India's linguistic, religious, and cultural divides. Beneath this quotation, Husain added his own interpretation: "Our great master stone carvers, turned the Indian bedrocks from Ajanta-Ellora to Konarack to Khajuraho to Mahabalipuram and in between a column of Qutub Minar, all into a song of Geetanjali." Here, Husain equates Tagore's collection of poems *Gītāñjali* (1910), which explores the conflict between spiritual pursuit and earthly desire, with the stone works of master carvers in different eras and religious contexts. Husain, a member of the Bombay Progressives Group, left India owing to the pressures of Hindu fundamentalism on his creative freedom; it is likely that he found respite in the idea of sculpture as secularism. Noguchi himself reflected on a "secular and contemporary India" as he photographed the early medieval Qutb complex, the late medieval "Mughal structures and gardens,"[34] including the Taj Mahal and at Fatehpur Sikri, and the early modern Jantar Mantars (astrological observatories) of Delhi and Jaipur. His pictures from these places were published in *Portfolio: Annual of the Graphic Arts* (1951) and *Perspecta* (1960), thereby introducing the sculptural complexity of these structures to international artists including Alexander Calder.[35]

Although Noguchi did not complete the book he had proposed to the Bollingen Foundation, his first trip to India was transformative; it proved pivotal to his investigation of the role and function of sculpture in society. He photographed, sketched, and made notes on fifty places of artistic significance. This enriched his experience of viewing sculpture, but more importantly, it clarified his understanding of the materials and methods of their making. Devika Singh has noted that in India, Noguchi "was without a studio" and that his photographs and sketchbooks allowed him to reflect on what he saw there, which served as the basis for his "new sculptural vocabulary."[36] This essay illustrates precisely how Noguchi's archive of India—particularly of early India—made tangible and portable the otherwise immovable sculptural forms, material qualities, and methods of making at ancient sites.[37] These records provide critical new insight into Noguchi's evolving ideas about sculpture, which were ultimately concerned with the "importance of matter."

Sculpture in Situ and the Skill of Hands: Early India and Living Traditions

Noguchi traveled from Delhi to Madras and then to several ancient sites. One of his first visits waws to the Hindu temples of Madurai and Chidambaram, built between the tenth and twelfth centuries CE. He traveled by train from Madras, where he stayed with his friend Uday Shankar, a pioneer of modern Indian dance, who arranged the trip. His journey was informed by a familiarity with the pillared temple hall from Madurai in the permanent collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Coomaraswamy's book *The Dance of Siva* (1918), which references the temple at Chidambaram.[38] At Madurai, Noguchi photographed the temple *gopurams*, or pyramidal ceremonial towers, specifically capturing their dramatic height. In one of his photographs, a *gopuram* skews gently into a curve against a cloudless sky (fig. 4). This exaggerated scale was essential to communicate the structure's monumentality. In his notes on Madurai, Noguchi also describes observing a monolithic Shiva lingam, an aniconic representation of Shiva, a form he would photograph on a later visit to Hampi (fig. 5), the capital of the Vijayanagara Empire, where temple ornamentation achieved a heavily elaborated style.[39] Furthermore, at Chidambaram, Noguchi took twenty photographs at the temple dedicated to Shiva Nataraja, Shiva as Lord of Dance, which he described as a "temple of dance, drenched with sun. Its huge surface is entirely populated by figures of the dance, of pale pink sandstone, round of hip and limbs, in joyful abandon."[40] Noguchi was drawn to the illusion of movement achieved in the plasticity of the stone carving, depicting numerous poses from Indian classical

FIGURE 4. Isamu Noguchi. Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India, ca. 1950s. Bollingen travel photograph. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04431 (© Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

FIGURE 5. Isamu Noguchi. Shiva lingam in Hampi, Karnataka, India, ca. 1950s. Bollingen travel photograph. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04480 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

dance. The monumental temples of Madurai and Chidambaram offered introductory insights into the fundamental drama, density, and dynamism of early Indian stonework.

His experience studying these temples paled in comparison to the overwhelming impact that another site in southern India had on his evolving philosophy of stone. Referring to the profusion of sculpted forms he had seen at Madurai and Chidambaram, Noguchi reflected: "There is a sameness in the logic of an overextended idea. Not the extemporaneous invention and freshness as in Mahabalipuram."[41] The controlled sculptural repetition of Madurai and Chidambaram was surpassed by the spontaneity of Mahabalipuram.

Returning to Madras in October, Noguchi hired an auto-rickshaw to visit the site. The complex at Mahabalipuram dates to the Pallava period in the seventh and eighth centuries CE and consists of a cluster of carved boulders that dot the Bay of Bengal coastline. Approaching the complex, Noguchi noted the Pancha Rathas (Five Chariots), a group of five monolithic temples carved out of monumental boulders that occur naturally along the shore. These structures have no precedent in early Indian architecture and are considered prototypes for the later temples of southern India, such as those Noguchi saw at Madurai and Chidambaram. His reference to an "outcropping of rock carved in the shape of small temples"[42] shows a keen attention to the close relationship between architecture and sculpture discernible here: the boulders are directly cut, carved, and shaped into monolithic architectural edifices. His photograph of the Pancha Rathas shows a diagonal row of four temples, receding by height into the background, each architecturally distinct from the next but elevated on a shared plinth (fig. 6). A ladder in the foreground leaning against the Dharmaraja Ratha, the tallest of the temples, indicates

FIGURE 6. Isamu Noguchi. Pancha Rathas, Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India, n.d. Photographic print. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04406 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

that Noguchi must have examined the distinctive architectural *kudus*, or small ornamental "shrines," sculpted along the tiers of the temple tower. The photograph was taken from the southeastern corner of the plinth, which reveals the unfinished quality of the lower facade, including a boulder rudimentarily cut to be carved, suggesting that the temples were made from the top down. This unfinished quality would be of interest to any sculptor, as incomplete works reveal the processes of stone carving more intimately than finished work.[43]

It is unlikely that Noguchi would have overlooked the many unfinished sculptural elements at Mahabalipuram, particularly in the *Great Penance* relief, about which he wrote, "Truly there can be no direct comparisons."[44] The *Great Penance*, also called *The Descent of the Ganges* or *Arjuna's Penance*, is a bas-relief carved across the surface of two monolithic boulders of pink granite, separated by a natural cleft in the middle. His photograph indicates a keen eye for the varying depths of carving, a cornerstone of the three-dimensionality of sculpture, amplified here by the natural modulations of the rock's surface (fig. 7). The photograph focuses on the relief carved on the right boulder, centering it between two washed-out bands of sky and sand. Noguchi positioned the camera at a slight angle, as though he were encountering a patterned surface, such as lattice or speckled rock. Direct sunlight dapples across the carved surface, creating shadows that further animate the unidirectional movement of the figures as they gravitate toward the central cleft of the stone. Noguchi recognized an unexpected sculptural freedom in the carving, noting, "There is a playfulness about it one does not expect in so vast a composition as it seems almost unplanned and accidental, a trial spot for sculptors."[45] His reflection aligns with scholarship on the unconventional sculptural program of the relief; as Padma Kaimal has noted, "each narrative in this work demands to be traced by a gaze that hops about."[46] Since the *Great Penance* did not serve an architectural or structural function, Noguchi regarded it as an experiment in the distillation of sculpture to its essential qualities:
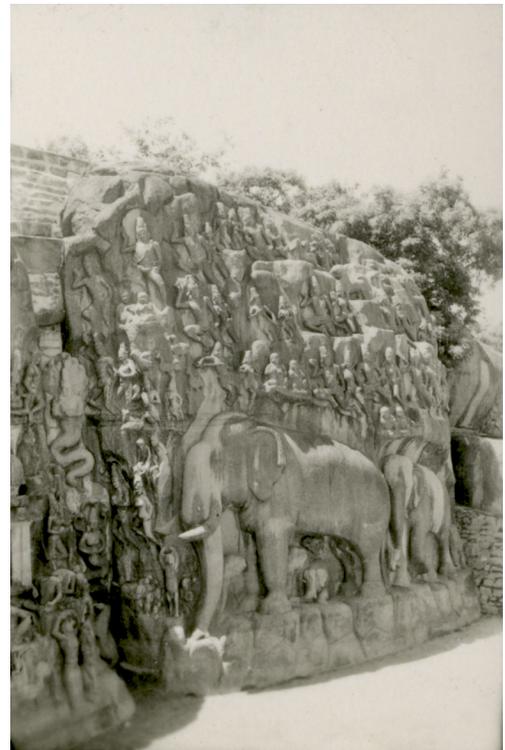

FIGURE 7. Isamu Noguchi. *Descent of the Ganges/Great Penance* frieze, Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India, n.d. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 148592 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

The great sculpture temple of Mahabalipuram is carved directly into the granite boulders that abound around the sandy seashore of this most lovely of spots made timelessly holy. Here was my first and most authentic lesson, or confirmation of what I had suspected: That sculpture is the one art, the one communication which cannot be conveyed as two-dimensional information as with a photograph. There is a residual experience that cannot be gotten in any other way than through physical experience, whether by sight, touch, contact, distance and the ever-changing relationship of volume and space which comes from the continuous changes that time gives, the time of day; that movement gives, or that thought begets. How extraordinary to be so immediately confronted in so pure a form [by] all these facets without distractions. Here was sculpture emergent from the earth, declaring its essence: to live in earth, sea and sky.[47]

He describes the *Great Penance* as a convergence of sculpture and architecture carved directly from monumental granite rock. It was, for him, the first real example of an idea that he had long held but never confirmed: sculpture was a form whose communication required physical experience, especially the senses of sight and touch, which were determined by variations in distance, volume, and space at different times of the day, over time, through movements, and in our thoughts. Noguchi probed the idea that at the heart of the experience of sculpture was its materiality. He was stunned to observe this element in an unmediated way, emerging boldly in its most essential form—that of the earth.

The *Great Penance* faces the sea to the east, where the five-storied structural Shore Temple is located. This temple is not carved from a natural boulder, as in the case of the Dharmaraja Ratha, which it seems to emulate and is one of the earliest structural temples in southern India. It does not exemplify the convergence of sculpture and architecture, particularly one that seems to emerge from the earth itself, and where ancient sculptors would have

FIGURE 8. Isamu Noguchi. Shore Temple, Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India, n.d. Travel photograph. Isamu Noguchi Archive, 148576 (© Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

FIGURE 9. Isamu Noguchi. *Shiva Trimurti*, Elephanta Caves, Maharashtra, India, n.d. Bollingen travel photographs. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04986, 04987 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

gone to the stone rather than bringing the stone to them. However, the temple's distinctive location presented Noguchi with an opportunity to reflect on the relationship of stone, time, and nature. In a photograph, he positioned the temple in the right middle ground, while his primary focus was on the adjoining compound, bordered by a row of sculpted figures of Nandi, Shiva's bull mount, that delineate the space from the sea in the background (fig. 8). The silhouettes of these figures, naturally softened by the rhythmic crashing of waves against the monument, are striking. Noguchi contemplated, "Time and the tides have left this spot guarded only by the seated rows of cows, as irresistibly beautiful as it could have ever been."[48] This evokes his earlier reflection on the sculpture of Mahabalipuram, which he viewed as presenting the "continuous changes that time gives." Here, the stone was not unfinished, revealing its modulation by human hands; instead, it was sculpted down to an incomplete state by the forces of nature. As such, Mahabalipuram offered Noguchi the whole spectrum of the life of stone.[49]

Noguchi continued his study of sculpture in situ at the Elephanta Caves, dated to the fifth–sixth centuries CE, located off the coast of Bombay (Mumbai). The site was constructed through the laborious process of cutting caves into mountain faces, or "living rock," and becoming part of the geological structure. The main cave has a triple-bayed entrance, which gives little sense of the astonishing depth of its interior, excavated more than forty meters into the mountainside. The cave features stone columns, brackets, and beams, which emulate structural elements but are, in reality, monolithic and cut directly out of the rock.[50] Carved on the inner walls of the cave are nine monumental relief panels that depict aspects of Shiva. This includes the three forms of Shiva or Shiva Trimurti: a central, contemplative aspect flanked by a fierce profile on the left, representing Bhairava; and a peaceful portrayal, of Uma, on the right. Carved in full relief, and directly into the basalt rock face, the imposing composition is set deep within a central recess of the cave's southern wall. Noguchi's photographs of Shiva Trimurti show an interest in the "ever-changing relationship of volume and space" and the enlivening of stone surfaces. His photograph captures the three visages at eye level (fig. 9, left). Given that the sculpture is more than twenty feet high, Noguchi must have erected a

FIGURE 10. Isamu Noguchi. Sculptural ensemble depicting Ravana Lifting Mount Kailasha, Ellora Temples, Maharashtra, India, ca. 1949. Bollingen travel drawing. Pencil on paper. Isamu Noguchi Archive, 11030 (Photo: Kevin Noble © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

ladder to photograph it. His picture is bold and tightly composed, barely containing within itself the sheer mass of the sculpted form. Another photograph is more closely focused on the profile of the central aspect (fig. 9 right). Here, Noguchi was less interested in the elaboration of sculpted adornments, which he entirely cropped out, than in the illusion of flesh achieved by ancient sculptors, particularly in the weightiness under the chin and lower lip, and in the texture of skin, communicated through the naturally mottled surface of the stone.

One of the nine panels at Elephanta depicts Ravana shaking Mount Kailasha, where Shiva and Parvati are seated. The panel is severely damaged, but Noguchi sketched the same scene at the rock-cut complex at Ellora, from the sixth–tenth centuries CE (fig. 10). Ellora consists of thirty-four accessible Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain caves excavated from the basalt cliffs of the Chandragiri Hills. All are exquisitely carved. Noguchi's sketch is tightly packed, with no evocation of the cave in which the sculpture is set. It has been accurately argued that "to be able to make sculptures, it is important to know how things work, and in this sense, drawing is a way of looking or seeing . . . it is much easier to draw than manipulate weighty materials."[51] Drawing is an integral part of any sculptor's practice, and Noguchi's sketch is doubly pertinent: he was, after all, a sculptor without a studio. Rather than focusing on iconographic details, he studied the volume and arrangement of sculpted forms, their relationship to each other in terms of scale, and the overall "perception of space," all of which only a sketch allowed him to fully comprehend in an embodied sense, relative to the instantaneous snapshot of the camera.

His attentiveness to sculptural volume and space inspired a related investigation of light in the carving of "living rock." A sculptor must manipulate light against a surface, just as a
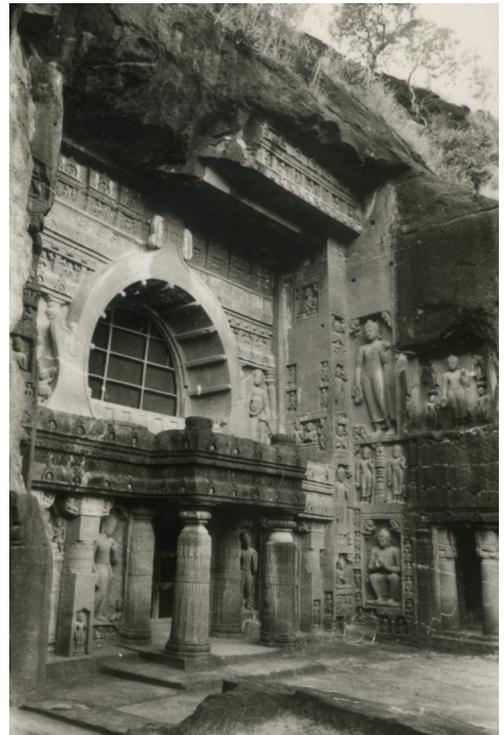
FIGURE 11. Isamu Noguchi. Ajanta, Cave 19, Maharashtra, India, undated. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 148538 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

painter creates light-effects within a work, but this is complicated in dark caves. At the fifth-century-CE complex in Ajanta, Noguchi photographed the rock-cut facade of cave 19, which consists of a giant stone window that provides the cave's only source of light (fig. 11). This was an innovative formula devised in early Buddhist architecture for the organization of space through the modulation of light. Depending on the time of day and the season, an appearance of architectural weightlessness was achieved through variations in the light cast into the interior. The earliest caves included timber screens that, during subsequent periods, sculptors replicated in stone. While these original screens have not survived, curved teak ribs are present in the barrel-vaulted rock-cut Buddhist *chaityas*, or prayer halls, of Kondane and Karla from the second and first centuries BCE. These ribs supported the timber screens that diffused light through monumental stone gateways.

Noguchi was gripped by this shift from wood to stone in early India, which was evident from his visit to the ancient Buddhist stupa complex at Sanchi in central India, dated to the third–first century BCE. The development of stone carving and the history of Buddhism are deeply intertwined in the Indian subcontinent, and the main stupa at Sanchi is one of the region's earliest surviving stone monuments. The site provides a unique window into the transition from wood to stone in ancient sculptural practice. The stupa was originally conceived as a simple brick mound, in the first century BCE, but it was subsequently enlarged to include four *toraṇa*s, ornamental gateways; a *vedika*, railing; and other architectural features in stone. The *toraṇa*s at Sanchi display some of the finest narrative carvings anywhere in the world. Yet, Noguchi's photographs reveal a sustained interest in the stone railing. The structure consists of uprights, crossbars, coping stones, and mortise holes carved in the shape of pointed ellipses, all of which are based on wood prototypes. In one of Noguchi's photographs, the railing occupies most of the frame, emerging from the right foreground and curving into the middle ground to create

FIGURE 12. (left) Isamu Noguchi. Stone railing at Sanchi stupa 1, Madhya Pradesh, India, ca. 1950s. Bollingen travel photograph. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04509 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS). (right) Isamu Noguchi. Bollingen travel photograph of *toraṇa* and railing, Sanchi stupa 1, Madhya Pradesh, India, ca. 1950s. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 08322.2 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

a circumambulatory path, at the end of which three carved architraves of a *toraṇa* appear in the distance (fig. 12, left). In another photograph, Noguchi captured the railing from a bird's-eye view; here, it zigzags to create an entrance for the circumambulatory path, abutting the *toraṇa* in front (fig. 12, right). This photograph includes Noguchi's shadow in the foreground, pointing to the sculptor's strategic position on the stupa's stone staircase. Noguchi's sketch of the railing further corroborates, with compelling immediacy, his focus on its arrangement (fig. 13). His drawing shows how the crossbars, vertical pillars, and coping stones converge in a corner. On the right side of the sketch, he carefully outlined a cross-section of a vertical pillar that encompasses elliptical mortise holes, an inheritance of earlier woodwork.

Judging from the numerous photographs Noguchi took of the Sanchi railing alone, as well as his detailed sketches of its structure, he seemed to recognize that ancient sculptors were emulating in stone earlier traditions of clay carving and wood joinery. Informally trained in woodworking as a child, he had been sensitized from a young age to the close relationship between materials and structure. He recalled how his mother, Leonie Gilmour, encouraged him to observe Japanese carpenters at work:

> [She] semi-apprenticed me to a local cabinet-maker in Chigasaki. There I learned basic uses of wood tools; to sharpen them, to plane, to saw, pulling in the Japanese way. Of joining and inter-locking of beams . . . for me it comes through a childhood experience of knowing that things aren't just painted over, that the structure is part of the design.[52]
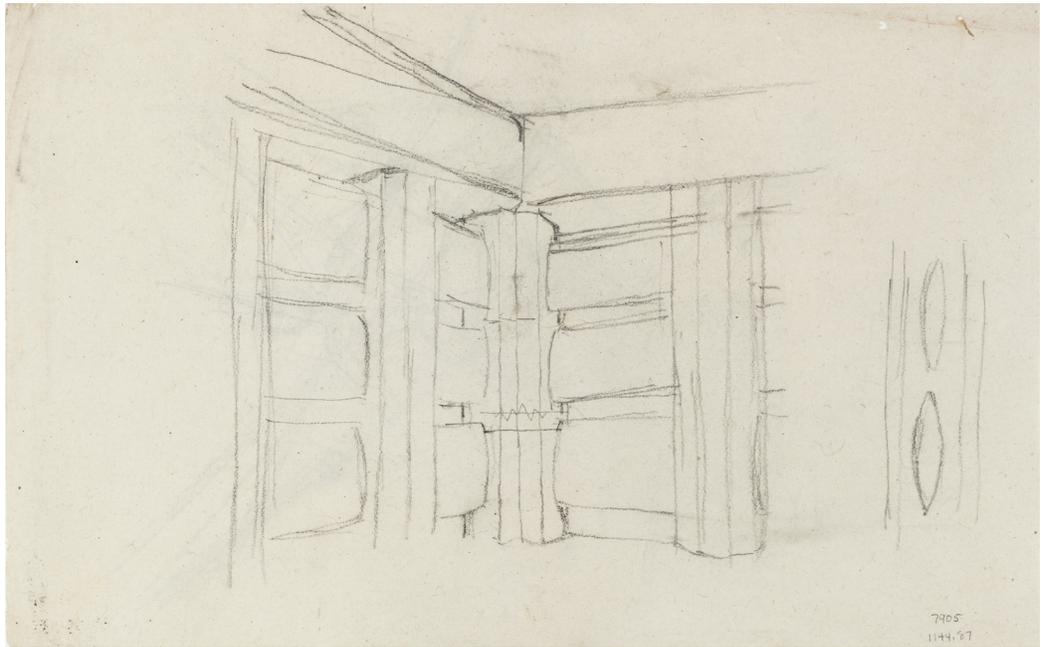
KALYANI MADHURA RAMACHANDRAN   103

FIGURE 13. Isamu Noguchi. Drawing of a stone railing, Sanchi, India, ca. 1949–50. Bollingen Fellowship. Pencil on paper, 34.6 x 21.9 cm. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 11008 (Photo: Kevin Noble © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

His early experience in Japanese woodwork allowed him to appreciate the skills required to sculpt in different mediums—a technical prowess that distinguished him as one of the most influential sculptors of our time.

In addition to visiting ancient sites, Noguchi was also interested in the long and continuing tradition of stone carving in India. His engagement with Elephanta, for example, extended beyond his first trip. A letter from Malati Tambay-Vaidya, commissioner of tourism, written on June 24, 1975, shows that Noguchi was invited to landscape Elephanta Island under the auspices of a UNESCO project, for which he was recommended by the architect and urban planner Charles Correa.[53] After expressing initial excitement, Noguchi reiterated a few conditions for his acceptance:

> I wonder whether you remember that I mentioned to you some of my thoughts when I last saw you. I said I thought that the approach to the caves should be from the south side of the island, eliminating the use of the present unattractive jetty. I noticed that a road was being built, and I urged that this be not used by automobiles, and of course it must not be paved by asphalt but made as a good well-drained country road is made. I further suggested that the use of cement be avoided entirely and that there should be established instead a stone masons' village. The quarry on the island would be activated and the use of natural materials and the skill of hands promoted. The initial influx of qualified skill could be developed in or imported from the stone worker's school at Mahabalipuram.[54]

The Directorate of Tourism did not approve Noguchi's conditions for redesigning Elephanta Island, and this became one of his many unrealized projects in India. Still, his letter reflects a keen interest in materials and a strong belief in preserving the living tradition of stone
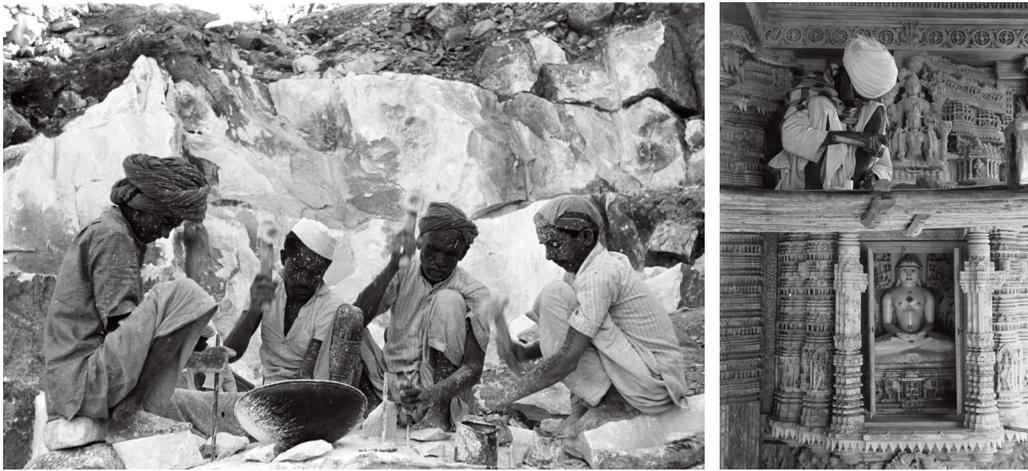
FIGURE 14. (left) Isamu Noguchi. Stonecutters at a quarry in Ranakpur, Rajasthan, India. Bollingen travel photograph. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 08532.4 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS). (right) Isamu Noguchi. Restoration works in Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India. Bollingen travel photograph. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 08526.2 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

carving—as in the sculptors' workshops at Mahabalipuram—which depended on robust resources to support the technical skill and physical labor required for stonework.

His study of the living tradition of stonework continued on a subsequent trip, where he joined Kasturbhai Lalbhai, a prominent figure in the textile industry and an art patron, on a visit to a stone quarry and to observe stone repairs at the Jain temples of Mount Abu and Ranakpur (fig. 14, left and right).[55] His photographs from these visits emphasize the labor that is involved in the production of stonework. Noguchi seldom included people in his photographs of ancient sites in India, unlike eighteenth- and nineteenth-century colonial views of these places; when he did, they were often of stoneworkers. This is noteworthy since ancient sculptors remain largely unknown today, and his sensibility acknowledges the often-overlooked labor behind these monumental creations.

Noguchi reflected upon the long relationship between people and stone in India:

India is the best place to learn something about the whys and wherefores of sculpture. . . . What is of interest is the continued use of sculpture, the purpose is still in evidence. . . . I believe that in any reappraisal of the general uses of sculpture, much may be learned from India. Of chief interest is the existence still of this living tradition, there is this intimate participation between people and stone.[56]

He believed that the underlying purpose of sculpture was apparent in India's long and continuing tradition. A reassessment of the function of sculpture, such as the one he had embarked upon, could benefit from a study of sculpture in India. Several years later, Clement Greenberg echoed Noguchi's sentiment about ancient stonework: "Indians were particularly *especially* sculptors. . . . No other tradition of sculpture shows its like. No other tradition shows an equal longevity, not even ancient Egyptian or the Chinese."[57]

The range of places Noguchi visited in India offered the sculptor a rich diversity of theoretical and practical approaches to stonework. While he honed his skills in studios in New York and Paris, it was at early Indian sites that he observed firsthand the dramatic dynamism of sculpture

at Madurai and Chidambaram, the masterful juxtaposition of sculpture and architecture in the "living rock" of Mahabalipuram, Elephanta, Ajanta, and Ellora, and the transference of technique across mediums at Sanchi. In addition, he also visited Bodhgaya, Belur, Khajuraho, Konark, and Shravanabelagola, where sculpture similarly could not be posed within the controlled environment of the studio, gallery, or museum, as modernist sculptors of the time were keen to do.[58] For Noguchi, this was a productive challenge. Reflecting on his experiences, he concluded:

> India is a place that taught me something about various fundamental problems of sculpture. . . . You can still see the raison d'etre of sculpture there. . . . [Indian sculpture] bring[s] the materials at hand to life more effectively. . . . When we rethink the future of sculpture I think that we can learn a great deal from India.[59]

His visits to ancient sites in India were study trips, similar to that of acquiring a technical skill. This fieldwork assisted him in an exploration of the essential characteristics of sculpture, which he observed were primarily mediated by its materiality, and most effectively expressed in early Indian sculpture. As a sculptor without a studio, Noguchi's travel archive captured these developing ideas, upon which he based his later experimentations.

Selecting, Shattering, and Subduing Stone, 1950s–80s

Noguchi's formal experimentations and philosophical approach to materials flourished in his late practice. His early training in clay and marble, in New York and Paris, primed him for later reflections on the sculptural possibilities of the hard stone, such granite and basalt, that he observed at ancient sites in India. In the last decades of his life, the challenge of carving these formidable materials became a central focus of Noguchi's practice. Critic Dore Ashton argued that "his attitude toward granite and basalt, the substances he would increasingly favor toward the end of his life, [were] shaped in the course of his wanderings."[60] Noguchi's trip to India affirmed the fundamental importance of matter, as captured and communicated in his traveling archive, and he subsequently began to put this into practice; after all, he believed that there was in sculpture a residual experience that could not be conveyed other than through its physicality. In his exploration of the fundamental matter of sculpture, he moved beyond looking, thinking, reading, and writing, toward making. To this end, Noguchi drew upon several other experiences, including a UNESCO garden commission, collaborations with Martha Graham, and a complete mastery of tools.

His base for these experimentations was Mure, located on the island of Shikoku in Japan, a stone-producing region rich in raw materials. In 1969, Noguchi established a studio there (fig. 15). This move to Mure would mark the first time he worked with other sculptors, including the young and brilliant Masatoshi Izumi, who belonged to a family of stonecutters and had opened a stone studio (fig. 16, left). Izumi recalled that "[Noguchi] was seeking to make heavy stones look light, hard stones look soft, [and] immobile stones like they were in motion."[61] Izumi also knew local stonecutters who could be employed in the demanding process of polishing and finishing his sculptures (fig. 16, right).

Noguchi's connection with Mure dates back to 1958, when he visited the area while "stone fishing" for a garden commission at the Paris headquarters of UNESCO. This project prompted him to contemplate the structuring of space through the medium of stone. He was particularly interested in the asymmetry of Japanese gardens, which was unlike what he had observed in Italian and French gardens. He knew that stones were considered the bones of the Japanese

FIGURE 15. Unidentified photographer. Isamu Noguchi working in Mure, Japan, ca. 1980s. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 04150 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

FIGURE 16. (left) Unidentified photographer. Isamu Noguchi studying models with Masatoshi Izumi, Mure. Japan, ca. 1970s. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 03996 (Courtesy of Michio Noguchi © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS). (right) Isamu Noguchi. A stoneworker in Mure, Shikoku, Japan, ca. 1968–88. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 07399 (© The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

garden and the basic shape upon which vegetation could grow. This approach required a precisely conceived balance of stone and plant elements. Noguchi became captivated by the search for stones, and "stone fishing" quickly became a preoccupation. He observed that in the Japanese practice of placing stones, the sculptor must be perceptive to the "alive" and "dead" sides of each stone, not unlike the premise of carving "living rock" in early India.

The concept of the Japanese garden appealed to Noguchi because its fundamental form was sculptural in nature. In this case, the sculptor was both the architect and the landscaper. Noguchi worked closely with highly skilled Japanese gardeners but ultimately conceived the garden as "sculptor's work."[62] He was sometimes critical of the interference from architects in the work of sculptors but was keen to dissolve those boundaries in the manner achieved by the ancient stoneworkers of the *Great Penance* at Mahabalipuram and Shiva Trimurti at Elephanta. He noted, "At some point, architecture becomes sculpture, and sculpture becomes architecture; at some point, they meet."[63]

The UNESCO commission in Paris also marked a shift in how Noguchi sourced stone and the type of stone he sourced. Previously, he had used materials locally available where he was working. His interest in marble, with its smooth and translucent surfaces, spanned the earlier part of his career, taking him to Pietrasanta in Italy, where Michelangelo had acquired stone in the sixteenth century. The sculptor Henry Moore introduced Noguchi to Erminio Cidonio, the manager of Henraux, a company that owned several marble quarries in Querceta, near Pietrasanta. In and around the Henraux workshop, Noguchi observed the age-old practice of wire-cutting stone. Yet, by the end of the 1960s, Noguchi was eager to source and sculpt different kinds of stone. He believed his "Italian period lasted until early 1970, when Erminio Cidonio died," marking his "transition from marble to hard stone."[64]

In subsequent years, Noguchi began using basalt in his works; he also experimented with the sculptural surfaces he had observed on his trip to India. His monolithic *Shiva Pentagonal* (1981) and *Behind Inner Seeking Shiva Dancing* (1975–81) reflect these experiments (figs. 17, left and right). *Shiva Pentagonal* is a sedate silhouette of black basalt. The front-facing plane

FIGURE 17. (left) Isamu Noguchi. *Shiva Pentagonal*, 1981. Basalt, H x W x D: 196.2 x 62.9 x 58.7 cm. Collection of the Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 153751 (Photo: Kevin Noble © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS). (right) Isamu Noguchi. *Behind Inner Seeking Shiva Dancing*, 1975–81. Basalt, H x W x D: 255.6 x 121.6 x 68.6 cm. Collection of the Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 147249 (Photo: Kevin Noble © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

consists of a pentangular lower half, which is angular in form and smooth in finish, and has a finely pitted crown. The surface arrangement of the reverse is interlaced with vertical bands of smooth and rough textures carved along different planes. *Behind Inner Seeking Shiva Dancing*, on the other hand, has a relatively dynamic delineation with jagged lines cut horizontally along the edges of the sculpture, and interspersed with closely pocked surfaces within scooped-out recesses in the stone. In its theme, style, and intent, the piece has been called a "metaphor for his artistic journey to the sacredness of stone."[65] Noguchi recalled the demanding process of cutting the tough material as "an intense dialogue with the possibilities of stone. Rising out of destruction came the dance of Shiva."[66] For Noguchi, process and technique had long been sacred, as he noted in his Guggenheim application, rather than iconography or form. Sculpture was more than pure idealization or symbolism; its value lay in the sculptural opportunities its materiality offered. Both pieces are extraordinarily heavy, made of dark basalt, and carved with a vision to reconcile smooth and textured surfaces into a single monolithic form.

In *Indian Dancer* (1965–66), a delicately cut mannari-granite monolith (fig. 18), Noguchi experimented with sculptural dynamism. The life-size sculpture comprises six distinctly shaped, though closely connected, blocks carved in high relief on different planes of the irregular stone surface. The piece reminded him of Balasaraswati, the celebrated Bharatanatyam

FIGURE 18. Isamu Noguchi. *Indian Dancer*, 1965–66. Granite, H x W x D: 153.0 x 88.0 x 44.1 cm. Collection of the Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 00579 (Photo: Kevin Noble © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York/ARS)

dancer he had seen on stage in 1949.[67] He said of the performance, "I've never seen anything like it since."[68] While there may seem to be a contradiction between sculpture and movement—the words *statue* and *static* are derived from the same Latin root—fundamental to Noguchi's approach was a desire to represent the "forces that conspire to hold up the figure."[69] *Indian Dancer* creates the impression of movement not only in its formal characteristics but also in the way natural light flashes, flickers, and fades on its basalt surface, heightened by its current placement in the garden of The Noguchi Museum in New York City, where architecture, sculpture, and landscape converge and are exposed to the elements.

In an elaboration of another aspect that contributes to a sense of movement in stone, Noguchi wrote, "Sculptures move because we move."[70] Further,

A way of seeing, with more active participation than just the eyes, the man who really sees sculpture must move physically to realize its form. The illusion of depth comes from movement, however slightly, or presupposes the possibility of movement, through which the imagination in projected memory completes the illusion within the mind's eye. . . . We may bump into it, bleed from its rough surface, or delineate its contours with our fingers. It is a Thing, tactile and measurable, completely within the dimensions of our own earthly existence. The very materiality of sculpture is perhaps its most evocative aspect—the mystery at the base of matter.[71]

Noguchi believed that the true perception of sculpture required more than just eyesight; a person had to actively move. The illusion of depth is ultimately achieved by a physically

participating viewer who engages with the sculpture's tangible, quantifiable, and earthly qualities—its most fundamental though enigmatic features.

Noguchi's insights into movement in stone were informed by a productive working partnership with the dancer Martha Graham.[72] He visited her studio between 1928 and 1929 to study her innovative approaches to movement, and he first designed a stage for her performances in 1935. This marked the beginning of more than thirty years of collaboration between the artists, spanning over twenty-one projects.[73] Notably, Noguchi's work on Graham's sets was infused with key aspects of Noh performance. He incorporated the idea that small changes in movement could indicate a significant change in time and meaning. His use of rope, string, and knots to "split the air of the stage" in a fundamentally sculptural way was revolutionary.[74] As a sculptor whose work was principally subtractive rather than additive, Noguchi was sensitive to the notion that control over the small procedural choices of stone carving was essential in determining the ultimate meaning and final character of a piece. While his set designs for Graham, George Balanchine, Ruth Page, and others are well documented, his experiments in the evocation of dance in stone, notably in *Indian Dancer*, are less well-known. In an elaboration of the relationship between movement, time, and meaning, he believed that stone became more evocative over time, as reflected in his statement, "With time, *Indian Dancer* has also gained the authority which was so characteristic of her."[75]

In creating pieces such as *Shiva Pentagonal* and *Behind Inner Seeking Shiva Dancing,* Noguchi was exacting about the relationship between sculptor and stone. He viewed stone carving as an "intimate involvement between myself, the selection of stone, the definition of what to do, and the employment of tools and willing collaborators."[76] Upon first encountering a piece of stone, Noguchi contemplated its physical qualities for several days. He wrote, "There is a lesson in humility for me as a sculptor; if rock is better before I touch it, what is there for me to do?"[77] He would then draw on the stone with chalk. After developing a sense of greater certainty, he would clarify the outline with bengara, a red earth pigment; eventually, he would cut and carve the stone. Valuing each step in the measured sequence of stonework, he drew marks where he wanted the chisel to pit. He began early in the day, often working for twelve hours, despite calloused fingers, and his face positioned so close to the stone that his assistants feared he would be injured by flying stone chips.

He was aware that the subtractive process of stone carving did not allow for errors in judgment. This was also a central constraint of rock cutting in early India. He reflected, "No erasing or reproduction is possible, at least not in the way I now work, leaving nature's mark."[78] Furthermore, although basalt was a hard material, it was also brittle. He wrote: "First, the rear half is removed with drill holes and wedges. Afterward comes the carving, splitting with 'genno,' the sledgehammer used for knocking off large hunks . . . no second thoughts are possible."[79] In his later works of hard stone, particularly in *Behind Inner Seeking Shiva Dancing*, "the drill marks, evidence of the wrestling of the stone from the mountain, are still there, and much of the sculpture's shape was given by the shattering."[80] This tension between the destruction of raw stone and its ultimate reconciliation was central to Noguchi's later experimentations and differed from the smooth and polished surfaces of his early career.[81] The curator Matthew Kirsch has noted that, "in its semi-processed state, stone inspired Noguchi as a model to imitate and as a source of contradictions to reconcile in his own sculpture."[82] Noguchi would reclaim "practice stones" in and around Mure for his studio assistants to test point chiseling. Yet the sculptor, who did not seek a sense of perfection, admired accidents of nature:

Nature is constantly throwing off waste, but this awareness of the texture of the world is lost with the machine. There is so much today which has lost its touch to do with nature, all the quirks and accidents that are so extraordinarily beautiful and so contrary to industrial production. It is, perhaps, through man's intervention that such accidents can still be saved for art.[83]

Noguchi's sculptural inquiries were fundamentally possible because of his mastery of tools (see fig. 1). In his 1926 application for a Guggenheim fellowship, he had noted that he was still "deficient" in his mastery of tools and hoped to acquire the "necessary ability" in the "technique of stone." He learned these skills, and the processes of stoneworking, in Brancusi's studio, which grounded a career characterized by continually sharpening expertise and evolving innovations. "If you fossil a technique," wrote Noguchi, "then you express [only] those things which the technique permits."[84] Over the decades, he developed unparalleled expertise in the seemingly irreconcilable use of both premodern tools, such as the hammer, axe, and chisel, and modern ones, like the welder and acetylene torch. Kirsch argues that Noguchi "did just about everything to a stone that hand and machine tools can do: from surface polishing, to revealing glimpses of stone's interior essence, to turning stones into self-contained structures by creating open chambers within them where light and air could enter."[85] His technical proficiency challenges the idea that an artist works primarily with the tools of their time. It has been rightly pointed out by the poet and critic John Yau that "Noguchi was a modern master who made use of the most ancient of all materials: stone."[86]

The singular effect of Noguchi's technical control was the emergence of a distinct style. His work in the "medium of granite and basalt boulders scored or fractured" created a distinct and instantly recognizable style, although for most of his career, he had been defiantly opposed to the impositions of style on sculptural freedom.[87] It is precisely this consistent rejection of a fixed style that allowed him to undertake material experimentations and philosophical inquiries throughout his working life. Still, his emerging style conveyed an illusion of anonymity. Noguchi had little interest in what he conceived to be excessive artistic manipulations of the natural qualities of the material. He even carved his initials to resemble ancient masons' marks rather than as the signature of a singular modern artist. Architect Buckminster Fuller suggested that "Isamu learned [from the East] there was historically no general concept of 'sculptor' as we know the word."[88] This applies to ancient sites in India, such as Ajanta, Ellora, Elephanta, Mahabalipuram, and Sanchi, where sculptors and their processes remain largely unknown.

The Soulful Solidity of Stone, 1980s

For Noguchi, the choice to carve stone, and his engagement with its materiality, were determined by its endurance beyond the maker's lifetime. In the 1980s, as his health declined sharply, the physical strength required to cut, carve, and complete works such as *Shiva Pentagonal*, *Behind Inner Seeking Shiva Dancing*, and *Indian Dancer* was tremendous. Despite his age, or perhaps because of it, he believed that the challenge of working with demanding stone was a way to make sense of time and establish a kind of permanence. Stone, with its ancient provenance, was for him "our fundament . . . the direct line to the heart of the matter—a molecular link."[89] His concerns about the brevity of life fueled his creativity. In New York, he set up a permanent museum in the Queens neighborhood of Long Island City.[90] He modeled the space after Brancusi's atelier in Paris, which is dedicated to the sculptor's life and work. With the help of the architect Shoji Sadao, Noguchi transformed an industrial space into an oasis, a temple to stone. Writing in the museum's catalog, Noguchi observed, "There is a semblance

FIGURE 19. Shigeo Anzai. Isamu Noguchi's grave in Mure, Shikoku, Japan, 1989. The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum/Zeit Foto (Courtesy of Zeit-Foto © Estate of Shigeo Anzaï)

of eternity, a sense of permanence that is implied by a museum, and a removal from time's passage."[91] The Noguchi Museum, a cultural institution beloved by many New Yorkers today, is one of the first museums in North America to be established by a living artist. The museum displays his works, including *Shiva Pentagonal* and *Indian Dancer*, across 27,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor spaces.

In analyses of Noguchi's contributions, scholars have conceived of his work as a bridge between East and West and, as Ashton notes, an embodiment of "the precise voice that could speak of both the modern and the ancient in the same breadth."[92] Hart calls this characterization "a powerful metaphor, and for more than sixty years, it has been the dominant rubric for understanding [his] life and work."[93] Noguchi acknowledged this dichotomy as a productive force, stating, "My particular advantage, whatever it is, has been this factor of disturbance and conflict, that I live between two worlds and that I am constantly having conflicts of East and West, past and present."[94] Rather than producing a contradiction, the richness of these

experiences contributed to Noguchi's internationalism and conviction that we are a landscape of all we see and know. This essay has explored one of these expansive points of departure.

Shoji Sadao once observed, "To Isamu, the foreign country closest to his heart after Japan was India."[95] Based on a study of passport stamps, travel permits, and hotel receipts, Noguchi traveled to India at least eleven times between 1949 and 1988.[96] He expressed to Anand Sarabhai, nephew of his friend Gautam Sarabhai, that he wanted to leave behind an artistic legacy in India. Sarabhai suggested that he create a contemporary park that drew upon the historic step wells of the Ahmedabad region. These monumental, exquisitely carved public wells feature long stone staircases that lead to a water source three or four stories below ground level. However, during Noguchi's last trip to India in 1985, he became ill and returned to Japan. He died in 1988.

A few years before his death, Noguchi admired a monumental oval boulder of pink mannari granite poised on the summit of a hill behind his Mure studio (fig. 19). He asked Izumi to bury his ashes in a cavity in the stone after his death, drawing a line with red bengara to indicate where and how it should be carved. Although this marking had faded by the time Noguchi died three years later, Izumi carved a hollow chamber between the boulder's horizontal halves and placed his mentor's ashes in it. Hart has said that "his pieces are like time capsules, each encapsulating what he could and could not control: natural formations (stone formations, weathering), industrial formations (quarrying, stone splitting, measuring), and artistic formations (carving, polishing)."[97]

Ruminating on his travels, Noguchi wrote, "The search for India seems to go on and on, and I must say it is an aspect of sculpture I keep searching [for] wherever I am."[98] It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that he chose to have his ashes placed deep in the crevice of a natural boulder, much like a stupa or one of the precariously positioned rocks in the Mahabalipuram complex—the site he believed offered his "first and most authentic lesson."

Conclusion

Isamu Noguchi is one of the few sculptors—perhaps the only one—to have studied, recorded, and theorized the materiality of early Indian sculpture. It played a significant role in his investigation of the essence of sculpture—a point he consistently emphasized but is little known. Noguchi's engagement with this corpus was primed by his early training in Paris and New York, expressed in his later practice in Japan, and enriched by constant looking, reading, thinking, writing, and making. It is best understood as a single, though significant, strand in a larger set of affiliations that he cultivated over the course of a prolific career. Still, the sculpture of early India, one of the oldest and longest traditions of stonework, affirmed with unparalleled immediacy Noguchi's primary concern with the matter of sculpture.

This sheds light on the need for further study on the material characteristics of sculpture in premodern South Asian art history. Research in this field has traditionally revolved around issues of patronage and reception. Yet, the study of patronage—by whom sculpture is commissioned—remains incomplete without investigating who was commissioned to make it, just as the study of reception—how sculpture is viewed—is incomplete without studying how it was made. In other words, the materiality of sculpture is the missing link in our current understanding of premodern South Asian art. It must be considered alongside histories of its patronage and reception. Since the archaeological record provides limited sources of attribution, we must look closely, as Noguchi did, to sculpture itself. For instance, in the emerging approach of environmental art history in the premodern South Asian context, the manipulation of material

is central not only to the evocation of nature in stone but also to the ways it is itself shaped by the evolution of the natural world. However, these types of studies are limited by the absence of sustained scientific analyses on the materials of early Indian sculpture, in contrast to that of the ancient West. Noguchi approached early Indian sculpture as equal to art produced in other parts of the ancient world, particularly in its capacity to provide important historical lessons—beyond demonstrating ritual, sacred space, and religious iconography—about the crucial characteristics and constraints of stone carving. Looking, as he did, beyond the decorative and symbolic function of sculpture can elucidate its fundamental material significance: what it is, why it matters, and how it is expressed, not only in Noguchi's career but also in the history of premodern South Asian art.

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Notes

1 Isamu Noguchi, *A Sculptor's World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 16.

2 Isamu Noguchi, "Plan for Study Submitted by Isamu Noguchi," January 1, 1927, MS_COR_316_001, Isamu Noguchi Archive, Long Island City, NY (hereafter cited as Noguchi Archive).

3 Hilton Kramer, "Noguchi Show at Whitney Branch: Silly Catalogue, Splendid Exhibition," *The New York Observer,* November 20, 1989, 21.

4 Diane Apostolos-Cappadona and Bruce Altshuler, eds., *Isamu Noguchi: Essays and Conversations* (New York: Harry N. Abrams in association with the Isamu Noguchi Foundation, 1994), 110.

5 Anna C. Chave, "Brancusi and Noguchi," *Isamu Noguchi: Sculptural Design* (Wiehl am Rhein, Germany: Vitra Design Museum, 2001), 40.

6 Katherine Kuh, "An Interview with Isamu Noguchi," *Horizon* 11.4 (March 1960): 108.

7 Noguchi, *Sculptor's World*, 39.

8 *Isamu Noguchi: Beginnings and Ends* (New York: Pace Wildenstein, 1994), 1.

9 Friedrich Teja Bach, Margit Rowell, and Ann Temkin, *Constantin Brancusi, 1876–1957* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995); Reto Niggl, *Eckart Muthesius, 1930: der Palast des Maharadschas in Indore; Architektur und Interieur / The Maharaja's Palace in Indore: Architecture and Interior* (Stuttgart: Arnold-sche, 1996).

10 Isamu Noguchi, "Statement for Bollingen Foundation," MS_WRI_010_017, Noguchi Archive.

11 Isamu Noguchi, "A Proposed Study of the Environment of Leisure," 1949, p. 1, MS_WRI_010_019, Noguchi Archive.

12 Alfred Foucher, "The Greek Origin of the Image of Buddha," in *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art and Other Essays*, trans. L. A. Thomas (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1917), 111–38; Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "The Indian Origin of the Buddha Image," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 46 (1926): 165–70.

13 Apostolos-Cappadona and Altshuler, *Isamu Noguchi*, 24.

14 Clement Greenberg, "Art," *The Nation*, March 19, 1949, 341.

15 Despite being exempt from incarceration as a resident of New York, Noguchi had voluntarily entered the Poston War Relocation Center in solidarity with fellow Japanese Americans, who in light of Executive Order 9066, a wartime directive, were vulnerable to imprisonment. Amy Lyford, "Negotiating Japanese American Confinement," in *Isamu Noguchi's Modernism: Negotiating Race, Labor, and Nation, 1930–1950* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2013), 107–29.

16 Isamu Noguchi, "Towards a Reintegration of the Arts," *College Art Journal* 9.1 (Autumn 1949): 59–60.

17 Isamu Noguchi, "A Sense of Place—Part II," 1982, MS_WRI_008_002, Noguchi Archive.

18 Apostolos-Cappadona and Altshuler, *Isamu Noguchi*, 27–28.

19 Noguchi, "Proposed Study," 1.

20 Gautam Sarabhai to Isamu Noguchi, September 28, 1948, MS_COR_330_001, Noguchi Archive.

21 It was through Noguchi that Pandit met the artist Frida Kahlo on her visit to Mexico City in 1947. Pandit had made a mural there entitled *History Mexico* in 1936. In a letter, she reported that she had been "watching Miguel and Diego Rivera paint frescoes in the El Prado hotel." Tara Pandit to Isamu Noguchi, July 5, 1947, MS_COR_309_001, Noguchi Archive.

22 Pandit to Noguchi, February 2, 1948, MS_COR_309_004, Noguchi Archive.

23 Isamu Noguchi, "1949," MS_WRI_008_001, Noguchi Archive.

24 Noguchi Archive, 01679.

25 Noguchi, *Sculptor's World*, 29.

26 Isamu Noguchi, interview with Nancy Grove, July 5, 1988, MS_WRI_092_001, Noguchi Archive.

27 "Memorial to Buddha," 01830, Noguchi Archives; Isamu Noguchi, "Project for the Monument of Buddha," *Arts & Architecture* 74.9 (September 1957): 16–17, 38.

28 Sonal Khullar, *Worldly Affiliations: Artistic Practice, National Identity, and Modernism in India, 1930–1990* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 15.

29 Noguchi, "1949."

30 Tagore invited Kramrisch to Shantiniketan in 1921. She taught at Kala Bhawan until 1950.

31 Noguchi Archive, 10976.

32 Isamu Noguchi, "Notes on Bali and India," MS_BOL_025_001, Noguchi Archive.

33 This work was part of M. F. Husain's ambitious *Indian Civilization* series, comprising eight large triptychs. Following Husain's death in 2011, the collection was shown at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, at the exhibition *M. F. Husain: Master of Modern Indian Painting*, May 28–July 27, 2014.

34 Noguchi, "1949."

35 Calder wrote: "I wanted to go there particularly, because somewhere I had seen Noguchi's photographs of astronomical installations of Jaipur. . . . As a matter of fact, the black-and-white of Noguchi's photographs was almost better than the actual thing." See Alexander Calder, *Calder: An Autobiography with Pictures* (New York: Pantheon, 1996), 238.

36 Devika Singh, *International Departures: Art in India after Independence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2023), 53.

37 For the relationship between photography and sculpture, see Sarah Hamill and Megan R. Luke, *Photography and Sculpture: The Art Object in Reproduction* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2017).

38 Anne d'Harnoncourt accompanied Noguchi to see the exhibition *Manifestations of Shiva* curated by Stella Kramrisch at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1980.

39 He sketched domes of the old elephant stables of Hampi. Noguchi Archive, 11031.

40 Noguchi, "1949."

41 Noguchi, "1949."

42 Isamu Noguchi, "Viewing 'Penance of Arjuna,'" MS_BOL_026_006, Noguchi Archive.

43 See Vidya Dehejia and Peter Rockwell, *The Unfinished: Stone Carvers at Work on the Indian Subcontinent* (New Delhi: Lustre Press, Roli Books, 2016).

44 Noguchi, "Viewing 'Penance of Arjuna.'"

45 Isamu Noguchi, "Arrived in Bombay September 13 '49," MS_BOL_020_004, Noguchi Archive.

46 Padma Kaimal, "Playful Ambiguity and Political Authority in the Large Relief at Mamallapuram," *Ars Orientalis* 24 (1994): 3.

47 Noguchi, "1949."

48 Noguchi, "Arrived in Bombay."

49 It is notable that Alexander Calder visited Mahabalipuram in 1955. He traveled from Madras, where he met the painter Krishen Khanna, with whom he discussed the relief program at Mahabalipuram. See Jed Perl, *Calder: The Conquest of Space: The Later Years, 1940–1976* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020), 280; Francis Outred and Anna Campbell, *Calder's Voyage to India* (New York: Christie's, 2016), 62. According to Devika Singh, "Few places Calder visited gave him more opportunities to reflect on the sculptural power of architecture than India." However, "Calder's journey to India did not . . . explicitly result in a formal shift in his work—or remain a lasting influence, as in the case of Noguchi." Singh, *International Departures*, 51.

50 George Michell, *Elephanta* (Fort, Mumbai: Jaico, 2014).

51 Rungwe Kingdon, *Sculptors' Drawings and Works on Paper* (London: Pangolin London & Kings Place Gallery, 2012), 5.

52 Noguchi, *Sculptor's World*, 12.

53 Noguchi's friend Buckminster Fuller, who knew Correa from his student years at the University of Michigan, had introduced them. See Charles Correa, *A Place in the Shade: The New Landscape and Other Essays* (Ostfildern: Hatje/Cantz, 2012), 162–63.

54 Isamu Noguchi to Malati Tambay-Vaidya, July 7, 1975, MS_PROJ_175_002, Noguchi Archive.

55 Most likely in 1957 but possibly in either 1951 or 1954.

56 Isamu Noguchi, "Living and Dead Temples," MS_WRI_016_001, Noguchi Archive.

57 Clement Greenberg, foreword to *Monuments of Civilization: India* by Maurizio Taddei (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), 6.

58 Alex Potts, "Modernist Objects and Plastic Form," in *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 132–33.

59 Masayo Duus, *The Life of Isamu Noguchi: Journey without Borders* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 202.

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61 *Articulate*, season 4, episode 7, "Masatoshi Izumi: Seeing the Soul of Stone," aired November 19, 2018, Public Broadcasting Service.

62 *Isamu Noguchi*, dir. Michael Blackwood (Michael Blackwood Productions, 1972).

63 Herrera, *Listening to Stone*, 238.

64 *The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1987), 55.

65 Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, "The Ritual of Sculpture: Isamu Noguchi's 'From Behind Inner Seeking: Siva's Dance,'" unpublished and undated manuscript, MS_WRI_093_001, Noguchi Archive.

66 *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, 46.

67 *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, 38.

68 Isamu Noguchi, "Tribute to Balasaraswati," 1985, MS_COR_179_013, Noguchi Archive.

69 Herrera, *Listening to Stone*, 220.

70 Noguchi, *Sculptor's World*.

71 Isamu Noguchi, "Statement on Working in Japan," ca. 1952, MS_WRI_011_001, Noguchi Archive.

72 Noguchi and Graham were introduced in 1926 by the dancer Michio Ito, for whom Noguchi produced his first stage designs in Noh form. See also Neil Baldwin, *Martha Graham: When Dance Became Modern; A Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2022).

73 Bonnie Rychlak, Neil Printz, and Janet Eilber, eds., *Noguchi, Graham: Selected Works for Dance* (Long Island City, NY: Noguchi Museum, 2004); Bonnie Rychlak, "Noguchi—Myth— Graham," in *Isamu Noguchi: Between East and West* (Turin: U. Allemandi, 2010), 29–48; Ananda Pellerin, ed., *Noguchi and Greece, Greece and Noguchi* (Los Angeles: Atelier, 2022), vol. 2.

74 Ashton, *Noguchi*, 54.

75 *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, 38.

76 Noguchi, *Sculptor's World*, 391.

77 Austin Faricy, "Rocks, Not Plants Dominate Noguchi's Garden," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, August 2, 1958.

78 *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, 19.

79 *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum,* 40.

80 Herrera, *Listening to Stone*, 392.

81 Apostolos-Cappadona, "Ritual of Sculpture"; Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, "Sojourn of Communion with Stone," unpublished manuscript, 1983, MS_WRI_072_002, Noguchi Museum Archive.

82 Matthew Kirsch, *Salvaged Time*, exh. brochure (New York: Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, 2022), 1.

83 *Isamu Noguchi: Beginnings and Ends*, 3.

84 *American Masters*, "Isamu Noguchi: Stones and Paper," aired June 1997 (Public Broadcasting Service International, 2007), transcript, https://www.noguchi.org/isamu-noguchi/biography/videos/

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92 Ashton, *Noguchi*, 87.

93 Dakin Hart, *Isamu Noguchi: Archaic/Modern* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian American Art Museum in association with D. Giles, 2016), 15.

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95 Shoji Sadao, *Buckminster Fuller and Isamu Noguchi: Best of Friends* (Long Island City, NY: Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, 2011), 204.

96 Based on records in the Noguchi Archive, Noguchi visited India in 1949/50, 1951, Winter 1954, March 1957, October/November 1960, 1965, 1966, October 1967–April 1968, September 1970, February 1971, and 1985.

97 Dakin Hart in *Isamu Noguchi: Tools* (Kobe: Takenaka Daiku Dogukan, 2023), 12.

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New Directions

GÜLRU NECİPOĞLU

THE JALAYİRİD CONTRIBUTION

A Topkapı Palace Album with Images in the Persianate, Chinese, and European Manners (ca. 1350–1500)

ABSTRACT

This article reframes within a transcultural framework one of the most celebrated albums at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library in Istanbul (H. 2153). The broad perspective of that album (ca. 1514), extending from China to Europe, resonates with the collection Freer Gallery of Art of the National Museum of Asian Art's Freer Gallery of Art at the Smithsonian Institution. Analyzing selected images from this album, and a few examples from its smaller companion (H. 2160), will allow me to engage with the equally famous Freer *Dīvān* (Collected poems) of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir (r. 1382–1410). The selected album images were created simultaneously with the emergence of the so-called International Gothic style in Europe (late 1300s–early 1400s). A transregional perspective is encompassed by their attributive inscriptions, which identify some album images as "work in the Cathayan manner" and "work in the Frankish" manner. The "Jalayirid Contribution" documented in H. 2153, and to a lesser degree in H. 2160, uncovers the key role played by artists and patrons of that dynasty in shaping the future directions of Persianate painting. Besides the proliferation of sinicizing and Europeanizing elements, the analyzed Jalayirid works display striking parallels with the Freer *Dīvān*, such as the emphasis on the grisaille or "black pen" (*qalam-i siyāhī*) technique, on landscapes, and on the use of margins.

This essay reframes within a transcultural framework one of the most celebrated albums at the Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (TSMK; Topkapı Palace Museum Library) in Istanbul. The broad perspective of that album (TSMK, H. 2153), extending from China to Europe, resonates with the collection of the National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution, where I delivered a lecture on this topic in 2023.[1] Analyzing selected images from that album will allow me to engage further with the equally famous Persian *Dīvān* (Collected poems) of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir (r. 1382–1410) in the museum's Freer Gallery of Art Collection (F1932.30–F1932.37), featuring eight pages with illustrated margins. The latter work bears a seal impression of the Ottoman ruler Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), which was stamped on manuscripts only during his lifetime. From this we may infer that by 1512, at the latest, the Freer *Dīvān* belonged to the Ottoman royal library, which was located within the private imperial treasury (*hazine*) of the Topkapı Palace.[2] The *H*, for *hazine*, preceding the inventory number

of album H. 2153 and of a smaller interrelated album (TSMK, H. 2160), from which I will cite a few relevant images, reveals that they too were kept at the royal library in the treasury.[3]

A second lavishly ornamented manuscript copy of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's *Dīvān* (Ramadan 809 AH [March 1407]), written in Baghdad and stamped with the seal of Bayezid II, is preserved in Istanbul at the Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi (Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum: TİEM, MS T. 2046). However, unlike the Freer *Dīvān*, it lacks figural margin illustrations in pen and ink. These two manuscripts, which were never completed, are the only copies of the *Dīvān* with Bayezid II's seal impression. They must have been among the three manuscripts listed with identical titles (*Dīwān-i Sulṭān Aḥmad*), in an Arabic inventory of the royal library collection at the Topkapı Palace treasury, transcribed in 909 AH (1503–4).[4] It is unclear whether the third palace copy recorded in that inventory was one of the other known extant manuscripts of the *Dīvān*.[5]

Sultan Ahmad Jalayir had twice sought refuge at the Ottoman court during the reign of an earlier sultan, Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402), due to Timurid sieges of his capital, Baghdad. In 1400, Bayezid I defiantly refused to hand over Ahmad Jalayir and Qara Yusuf (Ahmad's Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen ally) to the Turco-Mongol ruler Timur (Tamerlane, r. 1370–1405). Instead, he assigned them each a fief (Kütahya for Ahmad Jalayir and Aksaray for Qara Yusuf).[6] The Ottoman sultan's fierce responses to Timur's letters are recorded in a heated written correspondence, in which Bayezid rejects his interlocutor's demands and even invites him to battle. In the resulting Battle of Ankara, Bayezid I was defeated; he died in 1402 during captivity at the Timurid military camp in Anatolia.[7] This affair may partly account for the interest in acquiring three copies of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's *Dīvān* for the Ottoman palace library.

Album H. 2153 uniquely juxtaposes samples of calligraphy with images in the Persianate, Chinese (Cathayan), and European (Frankish) manners. It also includes a few Ottoman (*Rūmī*), works that constitute a subcategory of Persianate (*ʿAjamī*) painting, though with a distinctive Europeanizing character. In the past, this album was generally examined to document the transformation of Persianate painting through an infusion of Chinese elements during the post-Mongol era, and to analyze the enigmatic sinicizing works by the artist known as "Muhammad Siyah Qalam."[8] This tendency has eclipsed the album's more expansive outlook.[9] That cosmopolitan perspective originated in the fourteenth century, when Europe and China were brought into closer contact by the so-called Pax Mongolica (ca. 1250–1350).[10]

A transregional perspective is, in fact, encompassed by attributive inscriptions in album H. 2153 that identify some images as either "*kār-i khaṭāy*" (lit., work of Cathay) or "*kār-i farang*" (lit., work of Frank[s]). I have interpreted these phrases, associated with specific regions, as "work in the Cathayan (Chinese) manner" and "work in the Frankish (European) manner."[11] The few authentic images in this album from China and Europe (the Latin West) are outnumbered by copies or hybrid adaptations of those foreign artistic traditions. However, there are fewer Europeanizing works than sinicizing ones, which include flower-and-bird paintings as well as ornamental designs for multiple media.[12]

Album H. 2153 seems to have reached its present form during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–20), soon after his brief occupation of the Safavid capital of Tabriz during the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514. It has been speculated that artworks mounted in H. 2153 were probably acquired as booty at that time.[13] To those items, others available in the imperial treasury and court scriptorium of the Topkapı Palace must have been added, including fifteen European engravings and naturalistic Ottoman portrait paintings commonly associated with Selim I's grandfather Mehmed II (r. 1444–46, 1451–81). All these rare engravings from

Florence and Ferrara (ca. 1460–80) were published long ago by Arthur M. Hind as a collection belonging to Mehmed II, ten of which depict secular subjects, including nude figures.[14]

I propose that local Ottoman artists collaborated in preparing album H. 2153 with colleagues from Safavid Iran, some of whom were recruited by Selim I to his court scriptorium in 1514.[15] Like his grandfather Mehmed II, this sultan admired Italian Renaissance art. He even tried to attract a skillful painter from Italy to his court, through the connections of a local Florentine merchant-banker. Shortly before Selim I died, this agent wrote a letter to Michelangelo, dated April 1, 1519, in which he urged the artist to come to Edirne, where Selim I often stayed, or to send without delay another "leading painter of Christendom" who should bring along excellent works as samples. The letter also explained that this sultan, who had recently paid a fortune for an antique nude statue, was fond of the figural arts, unlike his father, Bayezid II (d. 1512).[16]

To return to album H. 2153, we do not know when or where its attributive inscriptions were written. Some of them are inscribed upside down or sideways in relation to the orientation of the album pages. This suggests that more than a few were written prior to the mounting process, during which several inscriptions and signatures were partially cut off. The Ottoman and imported Safavid artists, who presumably mounted the gathered materials on the album pages shortly after 1514, also added attributive inscriptions in Persian to preexisting ones. Some of those newer inscriptions are written directly on the album pages, next to rather than on the images.

According to a scenario proposed in 1979 by Basil Robinson, the primarily fourteenth- and fifteenth-century works assembled in this album arrived in Istanbul as booty from Safavid Tabriz in 1514, as "loose drawings" in folders with some form of identification written on them. Such folders could indeed have guided the compilation of album H. 2153, since many pieces in it have fold marks and are accompanied by fragments or unfinished works. In several instances damaged works were reconstructed by scrupulously fitting together and retouching their remaining pieces for preservation. The folders also contained decorative designs, some with pounce holes. Robinson writes:

> It may perhaps be suggested that the whole collection was looted by the Turks for [*sic*; from] Tabriz in 1514 or later, carried off to Istanbul and there mounted and bound by craftsmen with little or no knowledge of the treasures they were handling. Sultan Selim the Grim, for whom they were presumably working, was not noted for aesthetic sensibility though he could turn a Persian verse on occasion. The piles of loose drawings may have been in folders inscribed with the artists' names from which the attributions were taken as the mounting proceeded. But it will be a very long time before the last word is written on this fascinating mass of material.[17]

Robinson's attribution of the album to the "Turks" mainly because it was "assembled in great confusion" with "simple and unsophisticated workmanship" is unfounded. Contrary to his generally shared judgment about the disorderly layout of this album, many of its folios obey quite an innovative visual logic, as I have demonstrated elsewhere.[18] The previously unnoted symmetrical compositions on both the front (recto) and reverse (verso) sides of still-attached double folios (bifolios) that I discovered in H. 2153, are striking indeed. Large images often form the centerpiece of symmetrically composed double-page spreads, around which subordinate items are arranged in several layouts (U-shaped, L-shaped, or flanking each side). The images, assembled with calligraphy specimens according to such layouts (based on size, style, or subject), often evoke suggestive parallels and resonances across the double-page spreads.

FIGURE 1A. Recto of symmetrical bifolio with two central bust portraits of Sultan Mehmed II. Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (hereafter TSMK), H. 2153, fols. 144r–145v. (left) *El Gran Turco*, Florentine tinted engraving, attr. Master of the Vienna Passion, ca. 1460–70. (right) *Bust Portrait of Sultan Mehmed II*, polychrome painting, attr. Sinan Beg, ca. 1478–81. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

Rather than lacking "aesthetic sensibility," Selim I was "fond of the visual arts" according to the Florentine merchant-banker's letter cited above. Besides attempting to recruit a "leading painter" from Europe in 1519, the sultan had already enlisted talented painters from Safavid Iran in 1514. It is not surprising then, that these recruitment efforts from west and east of his empire would be complemented by the preservation of multicultural artworks in the monumental album H. 2153 as well as its smaller supplement, H. 2160.

Assemblage Methods of the Interrelated Albums H. 2153 and H. 2160

One must note at the outset that some contents of album H. 2153 spilled over into the related companion album H. 2160, which also belonged to the Ottoman royal treasury collection at the Topkapı Palace.[19] Each of these two closely connected albums follows a consistent but different assembly method. While large images were set aside for inclusion in H. 2153, some of their cropped fragments and tiny images—often labeled "*khurdak*" (very small)—found their way into H. 2160.[20] The latter album has a book format with text-block and wide margins, unlike its monumental companion, in which margins are omitted to maximize the surfaces

available for mounting larger and more diverse items. Thin strips of pinkish or beige paper were often pasted into the spaces between those items to visually unify the pages. In contrast, the relatively humble H. 2160 is dominated by calligraphy specimens, which often constitute large centerpieces accompanied by a few generally smaller images. Moreover, only H. 2153 contains the European and Europeanizing works.

Both volumes received their latest binding during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909). The first and last pages (fols. 1r and 90v) of album H. 2160 are stamped with Selim I's almond-shaped sovereignty seal, which was used only during the sultan's reign and differs from his round treasury (*hazine*) seal. The latter continued to be stamped on the lock of the imperial treasury in the residential third court of the Topkapı Palace after his demise, in accordance with his will. Therefore, H. 2160, featuring two impressions of Selim I's sovereignty seal, must have existed as an album during his reign. Album H. 2153 lacks seal impressions, which may have been lost during rebinding. It is currently detached from its binding, unlike H. 2160. Given that large-format works were preselected for H. 2153, with their scraps and smaller images preserved in H. 2160, both albums must have been created simultaneously or one right after the other. Since the latest sample of calligraphy in H. 2160 is dated 917 AH (1511–12), the large album H. 2153 likely reached its present form before Selim I passed away in 1520.[21]

However, there is no consensus on when and where these albums were compiled. Some Turkish scholars had previously named H. 2153 as the Fatih Album, after the title of Sultan Mehmed II (d. 1481), whose portraits are mounted in it, along with other Europeanizing portraits by Ottoman court painters (see fig. 1a). Instead, these two albums are now more commonly referred to as "Saray Albums" followed by their catalogue numbers H. 2153 and H. 2160. According to a hypothesis that I find unconvincing, they both arrived from Tabriz as albums and were named by some early twentieth-century scholars after the Aqqoyunlu ruler of Tabriz, Yaʿqub Beg (r. 1478–90), because most of the dated calligraphy specimens are from his reign.[22] A group of paintings in these albums ascribed by inscriptions to the artists Shaykhi and Darvish Muhammad, who were associated with Yaʿqub Beg's court, also played a role in this attribution.[23] The priority given to dated calligraphies, rather than the wider group of album images and codicology, seems to be the primary factor in this attribution at a time when Persianate art history was in its infancy.

According to another hypothesis, materials acquired from Tabriz as booty in 1514 consisted of some bifolios with already pasted items, accompanied by loose specimens. Those materials were then mounted together with additional works available in the Ottoman court on new bifolios in Selim I's scriptorium.[24] If so, those new bifolios must have followed a matching system of assemblage, hardly distinguishable from those that arrived from Tabriz. Meanwhile, H. 2160 would have been designed as a new album for leftover materials and primarily samples of calligraphy. Even if we accept this alternative hypothesis, a significant proportion of H. 2153 must have been assembled in Selim I's court. Many bifolios with symmetrical layouts include Ottoman paintings and Italian engravings collected by Mehmed II that are not arbitrary insertions. This strengthens the proposition that most works acquired from Tabriz were loose specimens, a scenario that seems preferable to me among various possibilities. Both albums were therefore likely assembled during the reign of Selim I. Another factor in support of this conclusion is that none of the surviving Persian albums have similar layouts.

With a few exceptions, the bifolios of H. 2153 were detached from one another in the twentieth century for preservation purposes at the Topkapı Palace Museum. But they were carefully numbered to indicate the original order of pages in the dismantled album and separated from

FIGURE 1B. Verso of symmetrical bifolio (fig 1A) with two central tinted Florentine engravings. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fols. 145r–144v. (left) *Peddler Robbed by Monkeys*, ca. 1470–80. (right) *St. Sebastian with Eleven Scenes from His Life*, ca. 1460–70. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

its latest nineteenth-century binding, and are currently stored in a large box. Based on those page numbers, I reconstructed several bifolios of H. 2153 in a previous study.[25] It is my hope that the continuing importance in museums today of the concepts of "masterpiece," connoisseurship," and "close reading" will become evident in the following sections of this essay. Some works attributed below to the Jalayirids remain unpublished, while others have been briefly mentioned in former studies without further analysis. Among the examined images, those in the pen-and-ink, or hereafter "black pen" method (*qalam-i siyāhī*, *siyāh qalam*) provide particularly fruitful comparisons with the Freer *Dīvān*'s unrivaled margin illustrations in the same technique.

Painters, Patrons, and Pictures in the Paired Palace Albums

Instead of referring to stylistic manners of painting, most attributions in H. 2153 and H. 2160 mention the names of individual artists. Only a few of these inscriptions contain the artists' signatures.[26] This shows the emergence of an early modern practice of connoisseurship and concern for authorship, informed by the workshop lore of artists familiar with the works compiled in H. 2153 and in its smaller companion, H. 2160. The existence of such a "collective memory" could explain the otherwise uncanny parallels between attributive inscriptions

in these two interrelated albums and the Safavid calligrapher Dust Muhammad's preface to another album compiled three decades later, in 1544–45. Also kept at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library (H. 2154), that album was dedicated to the Safavid Shah Tahmasp's brother Bahram Mirza (d. 1549), who was then the governor of Herat.[27]

The names of early master painters mentioned in Dust Muhammad's preface point to an ongoing tradition in Safavid Herat, where practitioners remembered their predecessors, some of whose works are mounted in the Bahram Mirza Album. Their decoratively painted captions were added by the calligrapher and court librarian Dust Muhammad, who compiled the album for that prince. Unlike H. 2153 and H. 2160, the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154) additionally includes works by artists from late Timurid Herat, some of whom were subsequently employed in the Safavid court. Those artists include Mavlana Valiullah, Miraq Naqqash (d. 1507; Kamaluddin Bihzad's teacher), Bihzad (d. ca. 1535), and Shah Muzaffar (a contemporary of Bihzad, active in the second half of the fifteenth century, who specialized in the black pen technique).

Works by contemporary Safavid and Ottoman artists are not included in albums H. 2153 and H. 2160, which emphasize established old masters. Images representing the Persianate manner and its Ottoman subcategory in both albums bear no inscriptions that identify their style, perhaps because those works were relatively familiar. Early works tend to be inscribed with more specialized attributions that name specific artists.[28] European and Europeanizing images mounted only in H. 2153 were left unattributed, except for one ink drawing examined below (see fig. 4b), which is correctly identified as a work in the "Frankish manner" (*kār-i farang*). By contrast, many sinicizing images have been labeled as works in the "Cathayan manner" (*kār-i khaṭāy*). Interestingly, those stylistic categories were confused with one another in two works mounted in that album. Both are black pen drawings in the "Cathayan manner," but are labeled as "work in the Frankish manner" (*kār-i farang*). One of these is a tinted, black ink painting of a Mongol-Ilkhanid enthronement scene. The second example depicts a standing Chinese woman drawn in black ink.[29]

The same confusion appears in a third image mounted in one of the Diez albums at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, which were mostly assembled with works removed by eunuchs from albums kept at the royal residential quarters of the Topkapı Palace (H. 2152, H. 2153, and B. 411). These items were acquired in Istanbul by the learned diplomat Heinrich von Friedrich Diez around 1789–90.[30] The mislabeled Chinese work is a black pen drawing with bold brushstrokes, inscribed "*kār-i farang*." It was cut up into several pieces and divided between two separate album pages. According to a recent reconstruction, the original drawing depicted two pairs of male figures pointing at a toad on the ground. It has been renamed as *Two Chinese Chan-Buddhist Monks and Two Daoist Immortals* (ca. 1400–1450).[31] The Cathayan and Frankish manners of depiction were apparently considered commensurate with one another because of a shared emphasis on naturalism. That is why elements from both traditions could be seamlessly woven together in some hybrid works mounted in H. 2153. Commensurability may also account for the occasional confusion between those two foreign stylistic categories in attributive inscriptions.

Let us now return to album H. 2153, which contains fifteen of the world's earliest surviving examples of Italian Renaissance engravings from Florence and Ferrara. A bifolio I have reconstructed with its recto and verso sides includes several examples of those engravings collected by Mehmed II (figs. 1a,b). The reverse is mounted with two engravings, while the front features two central bust portraits of Mehmed II in profile that gaze at each other. On the left is a colored impression of his engraved portrait, inscribed *El Gran Turco* (The Grand Turk); it is attributed to the Florentine Master of the Vienna Passion, ca. 1460–70.[32] On the right side is a Europeanizing

painted bust portrait of Mehmed II in profile, datable to ca. 1478–81. This painting is attributed to his court painter Sinan Beg, who was trained in the Italian manner by a foreign master. A third famous seated portrait of that sultan smelling a rose was also mounted in the same album, but it has been detached from that page. Modeled on Mehmed II's bust portrait by Gentile Bellini, this painting is attributed to Sinan Beg's student Şiblizade Ahmed of Bursa (ca. 1480–81).[33]

The two centrally placed profile portraits of Mehmed II are accompanied by subordinate images and texts arranged around them in U-shaped page layouts. These include sinicizing ornamental black pen designs, and a small Persianate polychrome painting of a kneeling man declaring his love to a woman. The foliate motifs and dragon on Mehmed II's headgear echo the sinicizing imagery of three black pen drawings pasted next to the sultan's portraits. These juxtapositions were not accidental since such designs in the "Cathayan manner"—comprising lotus leaves inhabited by dragons, serpents, or waterfowl—were considered auspicious, often carrying imperial connotations in China. The visual resonance of black ink ornamental motifs in the tinted European engraving and its sinicizing counterparts also seems deliberate. Moreover, their calligraphic character echoes the adjoining texts in black ink.

This juxtaposition of European, Europeanizing, sinicizing, and Persianate images could promote connections, either in conjunction with accompanying calligraphies or independently. For instance, the composition that brings the two royal portraits face to face invites comparison between the European and Europeanizing manners of image making promoted in the Ottoman court. Each of the Persian poems in *nastaʿlīq* script pasted adjacent to these paired profile portraits suggestively allude to the ravishing beauty of the beloved's face, no doubt referring to Mehmed II, but also obliquely to the kneeling man declaring his love to a lady.

The calligraphy pasted above *El Gran Turco* and signed by ʿAbd al-Rahim al-Yaʿqubi (fig. 1a) reads: "How could any eye that looked upon your beauty one day and then was separated from you, not weep bloody tears? To the extent that I live without you, I am more perplexed than one who saw your cheek and continued to live apart from you." This quatrain has been ascribed to the renowned Naqshbandi Sufi poet of Timurid Herat, ʿAbd al-Rahman Jamiʿ (d. 1492), whose poems are widely quoted in both albums H. 2153 and H. 2160.[34]

The *nastaʿlīq* couplet on the facing page, pasted sideways next to Mehmed II's Europeanizing painted portrait, is signed by ʿAbd al-Karim al-Khvarazmi (fig. 1b). It belongs to a qasida by the renowned poet Salman Savaji (d. 1376), affiliated with the Ilkhanid and subsequently Jalayirid courts, whose poems are also quoted extensively in both albums. The couplet reads: "The feast of your cheek is the qibla of the heart for the people of purity. Every moment there is a different pleasure for us from your face."[35] The two eminent calligraphers who signed these poems were brothers from Khwarazm, favored at the court of the Aqqoyunlu Sultan Yaʿqub Beg. Initially working for the Qaraqoyunlu Prince Pir Budaq (d. 1466) and the Aqqoyunlu Prince Khalil (d. 1478), they served after Yaʿqub's death in 1490 under his successor Rustam Beg (r. 1492–97).[36] However, not all bifolios or folios in the album necessarily evoke such alluring associations.

The latest Europeanizing images in H. 2153 are painted bust portraits attributed to Mehmed II's court painters. Those portraits are study exercises that respond to Italian Renaissance models, unlike paintings by Jalayirid artists in the same album that were partly inspired by late-medieval imagery from the Latin West. The Ottoman portraits are all polychrome paintings, whereas earlier Europeanizing images in that album are generally black pen drawings.[37] The bust format of the Ottoman portraits was unprecedented in the Islamic painting tradition. Album H. 2153 also includes a bust and a half-length polychrome-painted portrait in the "Cathayan manner," respectively: *Portrait of a Chinese Scholar*, wearing a hat and painted on silk; and *Portrait of*

FIGURE 1C. *The Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety*, slightly tinted woodblock print, China, Southern Song or Yuan period, late thirteenth–mid-fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 124v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

a Chinese Lady, holding a white flower and painted on paper. Datable to the fifteenth century, these portraits are thought to be original works from Ming China (1368–1644).[38] Their relatively flat, linear style differs from those of the album's Ottoman bust portraits, which emulate European models with three-dimensional modeling and shading. Album H. 2153 features only one slightly tinted, black ink, Chinese woodblock print on paper, datable from the late thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth century (Southern Song or Yuan periods) (fig. 1c). It too has a flat linear style and was originally printed only in black ink. This extensively restored and overpainted print has pinholes, showing its use as a stencil. Titled *The Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety*, it illustrates six episodes of a Confucian text on morality: *Yi Lun Zhi Dao* (The way of humanity).[39] However, H. 2153 prioritizes the fifteen Italian Renaissance engravings. Unlike European prints collected at the Ottoman court, most of the Europeanizing black ink drawings in this album were created by artists based in Iran and Iraq during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. According to Zeren Tanındı, besides Jalayirid and Ottoman works, most images mounted in H. 2153 and H. 2160 originated from fifteenth-century Qaraqoyunlu Baghdad or Shiraz, Aqqoyunlu Tabriz or Shiraz, and Timurid Herat or Samarqand.[40] The calligraphies are dominated by Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu samples, with fewer Timurid pieces.

Jalayirid works in the black pen technique, on which I shall focus below, are sometimes tinted with colored ink wash and touches of gold. This technique seems to have emerged in early fourteenth-century mural paintings and illustrated manuscripts of the Mongol Ilkhanid

FIGURE 2. *A Poet's Dream*, detached from a *Khamsa* of Khvaju Kirmani, Baghdad, text 798 AH (1396), painting ca. 1390, Bahram Mirza Album, 1544–45. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2154, fol. 20v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

dynasty (r. 1256–1335). It was further refined under the subsequent Mongol dynasty of the Jalayirids (r. 1335–1432), whose twin capitals were intermittently Tabriz and Baghdad. During the somewhat troubled reign of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, the patron of the Freer *Dīvān*, his court was more often based in Baghdad (1386–93, 1394–99, and 1405–10), when he was not in exile in the Ottoman and Mamluk lands.[41]

The abovementioned Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154), compiled in Safavid Iran in 1544–45, includes the polychrome painting of a room with a mural in the black pen technique, which depicts a landscape with mother and child. Known as *A Poet's Dream*, this painted page was detached from *Three Masnavis*: a fragmentary manuscript of Khvaju Kirmani's (d. 1352) *Khamsa* (Quintet) completed in 798 AH (1396) (fig. 2). The painting, datable to ca. 1390, depicts an angel of inspiration visiting the author Khvaju Kirmani in a dream, while accompanying angels fly in the sky beyond.[42] Its illuminated heading in Persian, added by the preface-writer Dust Muhammad, reads: "This is among the works of Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy (*az jumla-yi kārhā-i khvāja ʿAbd al-Ḥayy ast*)."[43]

Dust Muhammad's often-quoted preface to the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154) connects the painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy to the artistic legacy of Master Ahmad Musa, who is said to have invented naturalistic Persianate painting during the reign of the last Mongol Ilkhanid ruler, Abu Saʿid (r. 1317–35). Ahmad Musa achieved this feat by "lifting the veil from the face of depiction." The author of the preface also displays a keen awareness of the Cathayan and Frankish modes of figural representation in a famous passage:

> [T]he custom of portraiture flourished in the lands of Cathay and the Franks until sharp-penned Mercury scrivened the rescript of rule in the name of Sultan Abusaʿid Khudaybanda. Master Ahmad Musa, who was his father's pupil, lifted the veil from the face of depiction, and the [style of] depiction that is now current was invented by him. Among the scenes by him that lighted on the page of the world in the reign of the aforementioned emperor, an *Abusaʿidnama*, a *Kalila u Dimna*, a *Miʿrajnama* calligraphed by Mawlana Abdullah Sayrafi, and a *Tarikh-i Chingizi* in beautiful script by an unknown hand were in the library of the late emperor Sultan-Husayn Mirza.[44]

This quotation implies that some of the illustrated fourteenth-century manuscripts kept at the library of Sultan-Husayn Bayqara (r. 1469–1506), the Timurid ruler of Herat, were probably seized from Tabriz, Baghdad, or another court. Fourteenth-century *Kalila u Dimna* paintings attributable to the painter Ahmad Musa are mounted in the Shah Tahmasp Album at the Istanbul University Library (F. 1422), while *Miʿrājnāma* paintings associated with that painter are included in the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154) featuring Dust Muhammad's preface. According to this Safavid author, the artistic influence of the Ilkhanid-Jalayirid master painter (*ustād*) Ahmad Musa, who learned painting from his own father, was disseminated through master-disciple relationships to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy.[45]

Additional details about that auspicious lineage are of crucial importance for interpreting the Jalayirid contents and attributive inscriptions of albums H. 2153 and H. 2160, which lack prefaces. Therefore, it seems useful to summarize the well-known genealogy constructed in Dust Muhammad's preface.[46] Its author explains that Master Ahmad Musa trained a slave (*ghulām*) of the Ilkhanid ruler Sultan Abu Saʿid, who excelled in the black pen technique. This student, named Amir Davlatyar, trained the master Ustad Shamsuddin during the reign of the Jalayirid ruler Shaykh Uvays (r. 1356–74). The painter Shamsuddin survived into the reign of that ruler's son Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, but he preferred not to serve another monarch after his

patron's death. Instead, Ustad Shamsuddin continued to train his own student, Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, who had studied with him during the reign of Shaykh Uvays. Residing at the household of ʿAbd al-Hayy, who took him under his protection, Shamsuddin spent the rest of his life teaching this pupil. Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy in turn instructed "Sultan Ahmad Jalayir of Baghdad" in depiction "so that the sultan himself produced a scene in *Abu-Saʿidnāma* in *qalam siyāhī*," namely a history of the last Ilkhanid ruler in the black pen technique.[47]

Filiz Çağman suggested that this scene must have been rendered in the dominant black ink technique of illustrations in the Ilkhanid author Rashid al-Din's *Jāmiʿ al-Tavārikh* (Compendium of chronicles).[48] In other words, Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy was not only the leading court painter of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, but also his tutor in the black pen technique. However, Dust Muhammad's preface should not imply that ʿAbd al-Hayy was merely proficient in that single method. In fact, a small polychrome painting mounted in H. 2160 is signed by this painter.[49] It depicts the enthroned figure of the *Shāhnāma* anti-hero Zahhak with two snakes growing from his shoulders. The signature in bold letters under a table in front of Zahhak's golden throne is fully integrated into this painting. Written on a cartouche flanked by two vases with flowers, it reads: "*Kār-i* [work of] *Khvāja ʿAbd al-Ḥayy*." The green-curtained wall behind the throne has a mural in blue-and-white grisaille representing a landscape with blooming trees.[50]

The mural rendered in a colored version of the black pen technique, which was a specialty of the artist, complements his signature. One of Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy's talents seems to have been fitting extremely detailed designs onto small pieces of paper, not only as portable items and mementoes for the future, but also as a show of skill (see also figs. 8a,b and 8c) This master painter would subsequently be transferred with other Jalayirid artists to Samarqand, when Timur invaded Baghdad in 1393 or perhaps during a subsequent invasion in 1401.[51] According to Dust Muhammad's preface, after Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy's death in the Timurid capital Samarqand, "all masters imitated his works."[52]

An earlier variant of Dust Muhammad's mid-sixteenth-century account is provided by the biographical work of the Timurid author Amir Davlatshah Samarqandi (d. 1495), *Tadhkirat al-shuʿarāʾ* (Memorial of poets), completed in 1487. In this well-known account, he refers to the Jalayirid ruler Shaykh Uvays within the biography of the abovementioned poet Khvaja Salman Savaji, whose poems are featured in H. 2153. This ruler was not only one of that famed poet's patrons, but also an expert in and a patron of music, who supported the celebrated musician ʿAbd al-Qadir Maraghi (d. 1435). When Shaykh Uvays died, his son Sultan Ahmad enthusiastically supported Maraghi for two decades in Baghdad, where he participated in intimate royal majlises and audiences. During Sultan Ahmad's exile in Mamluk Egypt, after Timur's invasion of Baghdad, this renowned musician was transported to Samarqand, like the master painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy.[53]

According to the biographer Davlatshah Samarqandi, the Jalayirid ruler Shaykh Uvays was handsome, refined, educated in various branches of knowledge, and an artist whose artworks in "*qalam-i vāsiṭī*" (lit., reed pen and ink, or style of Wasit in Iraq) were admired by painters. This term likely refers to the "black pen" (*qalam-i siyāhī*) technique, as suggested by Filiz Çağman. The biographer adds that Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, "the most outstanding exponent of the art in his day[,] was his [Shaykh Uvays's] protégé and pupil."[54] In other words, the ruler Uvays was both a skilled artist and the teacher of Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, probably in black pen drawing. The same author equally praises Shaykh Uvays's son Sultan Ahmad Jalayir. Not only was the musician ʿAbd al-Qadir Maraghi in his retinue, but "it is said [that he] was [also] his pupil." Davlatshah lists the following skills possessed by Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, including painting and calligraphy: "He was a talented ruler, a patron of the arts, and of a poetic disposition.

He composed good poetry in Persian and Arabic and was proficient in many crafts, such as painting, illumination, bow-making, arrow making, inlay etc. and wrote the six pens."[55]

Dust Muhammad's album preface, which stresses the painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy's rise to prominence under his own royal pupil, Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, reveals the continuity of master-disciple relationships from the late Ilkhanid through the Jalayirid periods. This, in turn, contributed to the connection between the Ilkhanid and Jalayirid painting traditions. Written in Kashmir from 1541 to 1546, around the time of Dust Muhammad's preface, the *Tārikh-i Rashīdī* by Mirza Muhammad-Haydar Dughlat (d. 1551) affirms the fame of the painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy. The masters of depiction (*al-muṣawwirān*) regarded him as a patron saint:

> Long ago in the time of the Hulaguid [Mongol] khans who were emperors of Iraq, there was Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy. The practitioners of this art believed he was a saint (*walī*). In the end he repented [of painting], and wherever he found his works he washed them off and burnt them. For this reason, his works are very rare. In purity of brush (*ṣafā'-i qalam*), fineness and solidity, indeed in all characteristics of painting, he has no peer. After Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, there were Shah Muzaffar and Bihzad. After them until our own day there has appeared no one.[56]

Since the repentant Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy destroyed his works, probably after his dispiriting abduction to Samarqand, only very few examples remained. Two black pen drawings mounted in one of the Diez albums in Berlin bear signatures by Muhammad b. Mahmudshah al-Khayyam, which state that he copied each from a work of Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy: *Two Immortals in Combat* and *Swimming Duck*. This confirms that ʿAbd al-Hayy was a master of black pen drawing and that some Timurid artists did imitate his works after he died in Samarqand. It has been suggested that those models were in Timurid Herat until the 1450s, after which they moved to Tabriz, then ruled by the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen dynasty (1410–67).[57]

Apparently, the artist al-Khayyam, who was affiliated with the court of the Timurid prince Baysunghur Mirza (d. 1433) in Herat, had access to ʿAbd al-Hayy's drawings in the black pen technique.[58] Interestingly, the two models preserved in H. 2153 lack attributive inscriptions mentioning ʿAbd al-Hayy. Some of al-Khayyam's works are mounted in the Timurid Workshop Album (H. 2152), also kept at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library. Like H. 2160, it bears an impression of Selim I's almond-shaped sovereignty seal (on fol. 3r). Mostly featuring Timurid images and calligraphies (ca. 1400–1450), that album, which was assembled in Herat, has been dated by David Roxburgh to around the time of the death of the Timurid ruler Shahrukh (r. 1405–47). Works attributable to the Jalayirids and their Turkmen successors are largely preserved in the paired albums H. 2153 and H. 2160, accompanied by Timurid and relatively few Ottoman pieces.[59]

Shahrukh's son Baysunghur Mirza, who knew Persian and Arabic besides his mother tongue of Eastern Turkish, recruited some members of his scriptorium in Herat from Tabriz, which he captured following the death of its Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen ruler Qara Yusuf in 1420. Shahrukh appointed Baysunghur governor-general (*walī*) of Tabriz in 1421, but he soon returned to Herat, preferring to reside with his mother and close to his father. When Shahrukh reconquered Tabriz in 1436, he appointed the Qaraqoyunlu Prince Jahanshah (r. 1438–67) to govern it as his vassal.

Baysunghur was the patron of an illustrated *Shāhnāma* of Firdausi completed in 833 AH (1429–30). According to Dust Muhammad's preface, he even commissioned full replicas of illustrated Jalayirid manuscripts for his library in Herat, including a *Kalila u Dimna*, and an anthology (*jung*) made for "Sultan Ahmad Jalayir of Baghdad."[60] Zeki Velidi Togan suggested that Ilkhanid and Jalayirid works in the Topkapı albums H. 2152 (then attributed to Baysunghur),

as well as those in H. 2153 and H. 2160 (ascribed by him to Yaʿqub Aqqoyunlu) were partly derived from the *jung* of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, mentioned by Dust Muhammad. That is because Togan misinterpreted this term (*jung/cung*) as an album, rather than an illustrated anthology.[61]

Artists of the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu Turkmen courts in Tabriz also had access to rare works by the Jalayirid master painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy. Among them were the above-mentioned Aqqoyunlu painters Shaykhi and Darvish Muhammad, who cosigned a painting in H. 2153.[62] Zeren Tanındı has shown that these two artists have the most attributions in that album. Shaykhi, who was affiliated with the Aqqoyunlu ruler Sultan Yaʿqub, sometimes signed his work as "ʿamal-i Shaykhī al-Yaʿqūbī."[63] According to Çağman's unpublished dissertation, Shaykhi and Darvish Muhammad jointly illustrated a *Khamsa* of Nizami (H. 762), dated 1475–81, confirmation that both artists were connected to the Aqqoyunlu Turkmen court.[64]

Robinson hypothesized that Darvish Muhammad may have been the same artist to whom many works are attributed in H. 2153 and H. 2160 as "ʿamal-i / kār-i Ustād Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam" (Work of Master Muhammad Black Pen). If so, at least a subgroup of those idiosyncratic works in diverse subjects, styles, and hands could have been created by him in Aqqoyunlu Tabriz (1468–1501), but this is highly conjectural. Those attributive inscriptions have also been interpreted as epithets of an artist working in the black pen technique, possibly the Aqqoyunlu Darvish Muhammad or even several artists.[65] Alternatively, Ustad Muhammad Siyah Qalam could be the nickname of an artist who, in my opinion, may have been active earlier in Qaraqoyunlu Tabriz (1410–67).[66] Inscriptions that drop the name Muhammad may generically refer to masters working in that technique.

The controversial Muhammad Siyah Qalam corpus was usefully categorized by Çağman as a subgroup of works in the black pen technique, generally consisting of independent images with blank backgrounds and unrelated to narrative manuscripts.[67] The two artists Shaykhi and Darvish Muhammad, who were active in Aqqoyunlu Tabriz, are not mentioned in Dust Muhammad's album preface, which was written in Safavid Herat (1544–45). Nor does he refer to Muhammad al-Khayyam, who was once based in Herat. This suggests that he either did not know those artists or considered their works irrelevant for the genealogical narrative of his preface.

Album H. 2153 contains rare works attributed by inscriptions to the Ilkhanid-Jalayirid master Ahmad Musa, as well as his disciple Amir [Mir] Davlatyar, followed by Ustad Shamsuddin and Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy. Only a few of their works are mounted in the smaller album H. 2160.[68] Conspicuously missing from attributive inscriptions in both albums is the last Jalayirid artist briefly included in Dust Muhammad's list: "Another of Shamsuddin's students was Master Junayd of Baghdad."[69] It is possible that Junayd's works were not available in Tabriz during Selim I's invasion in 1514. His signature was identified long ago in a Jalayirid polychrome painting in *Three Masnavis*, from Khvaju Kirmani's *Khamsa*, completed in 1396. It appears on an upper window in the black pen technique and reveals his high status as a court painter: "Work of Junayd of Baghdad, the royal painter" (ʿamal-i Junayd-i Baghdādī, naqqāsh-i sulṭānī).[70]

If Jalayirid artists were carried away from Baghdad to Samarqand by Timur in 1393, rather than in 1401, Junayd may have been left behind and continued to work under Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's patronage.[71] However, Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy is generally proposed as the more likely artist who illustrated the Freer *Dīvān*, assuming that he was abducted to Samarqand later in 1401.[72] As we have seen, *A Poet's Dream*, which was detached from Khvaju Kirmani's *Three Masnavis* and mounted in the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154), is attributed to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy in the heading added by Dust Muhammad (1544–45) (fig. 2). Based on that painting, Massumeh Farhad has ascribed at least some black pen margin drawings of the Freer *Dīvān* to

Sultan Ahmad's teacher Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy. She suggests that more than one artist may have been involved in illustrating this manuscript.[73]

As we have seen, *A Poet's Dream* depicts the author Khvaju Kirmani's dream inspiration by an angel, accompanied by a host of flying angels. A tinted black pen version of flying angels illustrates one of the margins in the Freer *Dīvān* (see figs. 2, 6). I suggest that the *Dīvān*'s auspicious angels not only inspire artistic creativity, but also pour blessings upon its author Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, as if responding to a written litany repeated in each text break within a cartouche: "May God the Most High perpetuate his Caliphate and Sultanate!"

Selected Works from the Interrelated Albums H. 2153 and H. 2160

Many coveted Jalayirid works seem to have reached the Ottoman court in 1514 after circulating in the palaces of the Timurids, Turkmens, and early Safavids. The damaged pre-Ottoman rulings that frame several images mounted in H. 2153 and H. 2160 suggest that they were removed from no-longer-surviving albums. A page in H. 2153 even includes the black pen drawing *Head of a Horse*, framed by partially preserved rulings and attributed by an inscription to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy's royal pupil, Sultan Ahmad Jalayir (see fig. 29a). Seemingly written by the Jalayirid ruler himself, this boastful signature reads: "My world-conquering horse has seized Time and Space (*gūn va makān*)! Work of Emperor Aḥmad (*kār-i Aḥmad Pādshāh*), the ready, the enflamed!"[74]

Unlike the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154), with its evolutionary art historical preface, the primary function of the two interrelated albums H. 2153 and 2160 seems to have been rapidly rescuing unique works from dispersal and disorder into "collectedness," to use an expression coined by Dust Muhammad. These paired albums were not assembled as model books for the Ottoman court workshops. As such, they differ from the Timurid Workshop Album (H. 2152) in the same collection, which covers a shorter timespan (ca. 1400–1450) and was assembled for that purpose prior to 1450. Primarily intended for the gaze of the royal household members, the paired albums could be consulted by Ottoman painters and calligraphers only with special permission. A note in H. 2160 states that this "book" (*kitāb*) was moved from the sultan's privy chamber at the residential third court of the Topkapı Palace to the royal treasury of that court in March 1576.[75] The note confirms that the album was a bound volume or book at that time, kept at the treasury library if not in use by the sultan or his male and female intimates. This contradicts the hypothesis that H. 2160 was created in a book format with margins during the nineteenth century, which is also refuted by the already mentioned impressions of Selim I's sovereignty seal on its first and last pages.[76]

Album H. 2153, together with, and to a lesser degree, H. 2160, constitutes a unique archive of rare works by Jalayirid "early masters," updated with Timurid, Turkmen, and few Ottoman samples. It displays images and calligraphy specimens over an extensive timespan, but with no chronological order. Hence, attributive inscriptions and signatures in H. 2153 correspond closely to the evolutionary art historical preface of Dust Muhammad, more so than the chronologically limited collection of the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154; 1544–45), which contains that preface.

In fact, H. 2153 stands out as a major source for tracing the evolution of the Persianate black pen technique, and of Jalayirid artworks that contributed to the development of Timurid and Turkmen painting. This album is therefore highly relevant for contextualizing the unique illustrations of the Freer *Dīvān*. The black pen technique used in *Head of a Horse*, apparently signed by Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, has been interpreted in scholarship as a response to Chinese ink paintings and woodblock prints. That method was introduced to the Persianate pictorial tradition by two successive Mongol dynasties, the Ilkhanids and the Jalayirids. However, it also

FIGURE 3A. *Autumn Landscape*, polychrome painting, inscribed "Work of Mani (*kār-i Mānī*)," Tabriz or Baghdad, mid-fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 68r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

FIGURE 3B. Miniscule detail probably detached from *Autumn Landscape*. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 94r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

FIGURES 4A (ABOVE), B (OPPOSITE PAGE). Bifolio with *Eight Figures in European Attire*; and two central Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* paintings, Tabriz or Baghdad, ca. 1370–74. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fols. 55r, 54v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

recalls the grisaille method that emerged in early fourteenth-century frescoes and manuscript paintings in the Latin West, as well as the Levant. The similarity can partly be attributed to the circulation of artists and their works.

Black pen drawings in H. 2153 and in the Freer *Dīvān* display a familiarity with both Chinese and European models.[77] It is therefore not surprising that several images in this album are identified as works in the "Frankish manner" (*kār-i farang*) and "Cathayan manner" (*kār-i khaṭāy*).[78] References to these foreign stylistic manners also appeared in Timurid texts, such as that of the renowned poet and statesman of Timurid Herat, ʿAli Shir Navaʾi's *Mahbūb al-kulūb* 906 AH (1500–1501) in Chaghatay Turkish. In it, he declares that the painter (*muṣavvir*) must create naturalistic representations, a skill epitomized by ʿAbd al-Hayy, whom he compares in rank to Mani, the legendary Chinese manuscript illuminator (*Mānī muzehhib*) who was the supreme master of "Cathayan" (*Ḫiṭāyī*) and "Frankish" (*Firengī*) designs. Interestingly, *Autumn Landscape*, a spectacular polychrome painting on paper in the "Cathayan" manner in H. 2153, has been acclaimed by an attributive inscription as the "Work of Mani" (*kār-i Mānī*).[79]

This brightly colored sinicizing landscape may be a Jalayirid work datable to the mid-fourteenth century (figs. 3a,b). The much-damaged painting, with fold marks and missing areas, has been carefully restored. A formerly unnoted miniscule fragment, with an identical thick golden frame bordered by black lines, is preserved on another page of the album.[80] It probably belonged to the lower edge of *Autumn Landscape*, judging by the position of that fragment's frame and the stream running through its trees, which apparently originated from the waterfall at the hilltop of the large painting.

Let us now turn to the only image in H. 2153 correctly labeled as a "work in the Frankish manner" (fig. 4b).[81] This slightly tinted black pen drawing, titled *Eight Figures in European Attire*, is rendered on a horizontal band of aged brownish paper. Inspired by Chinese scrolls, this format was common in the court workshops of the Ilkhanids and Jalayirids. The Europeanizing drawing is mounted on a bifolio, which I have reconstructed (figs. 4a,b). Each of the pages facing one another is dominated by a large central polychrome painting from an incomplete Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* (ca. 1370–74) commonly associated with Shaykh Uvays, who was the most accomplished ruler of that dynasty.[82]

The black pen drawing portrays eight standing personages with Frankish physiognomy, hairstyle, and attire. Only the two female figures are slightly tinted by colored wash in gray, blue, and pink, while the six male figures have only been modeled in gray wash. The awkward rendering of the necks and shoulders of the figures suggests that the drawing is not the authentic work of a "Frank," but rather a "work in the Frankish manner." This figure study can be attributed to a Persianate painter who probably had access to "Frankish" visual sources. The late-medieval costumes and archaic crusader-type armaments suggest a fourteenth-century date, prior to the emergence of fitted and shorter-length male attire. Based on its style, this drawing has plausibly been attributed by Bernard O'Kane to the Jalayirid courts in Tabriz or Baghdad around the third quarter of the fourteenth century. He regards the crosshatching on some robes as a diagnostic feature of the Jalayirid style.[83]

My reconstruction of the bifolio featuring *Eight Figures in European Attire* shows that it has U-shaped symmetrical layouts on both facing pages, each organized around a central painting from the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*. The contiguous ink drawing in the "Frankish manner" and the polychrome *Shāhnāma* painting seem to be coeval. They are framed by almost identical, black ink rulings painted in gold and lapis lazuli, created before both works were mounted on the same page. This symmetrical bifolio is an example of the visual logic I

FIGURE 5. *Celestial Vision*, slightly tinted black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, ca. 1375–1400. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 120v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

have detected in many facing pages of album H. 2153, where monumental paintings from the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* often occupy center stage. Serpil Bağcı has confirmed that more than half of its approximately thirty paintings are symmetrically mounted on either side of such bifolios.[84]

Another black pen drawing in H. 2153, *Celestial Vision*, has been attributed to Jalayirid Tabriz or Baghdad in the last quarter of the fourteenth century (fig. 5).[85] This mysterious work smoothly blends Europeanizing and sinicizing imagery. It is a finished drawing in black ink on brownish paper with gray and blue wash, framed by rulings in gold and lapis lazuli. On the right side of the sinicizing landscape, a bent tree curving downward frames a horned dragon's five-clawed paw and terrifying visage. The dragon ascends a rocky cliff from a deep gorge, where a bird stands next to bamboo plants. The dragon is reaching toward a celestial sphere enveloped by fiery swirls among Chinese cloud bands. This object seems to be a flaming or luminous pearl of perfection, which was a Chinese metaphor for spiritual enlightenment.

The upper left side of the drawing has a complementary Christian image of enlightenment depicting the apparition of a six-winged archangel to two stupefied men atop a mountain. It was probably inspired by one of the supernatural encounter scenes on a mountaintop, familiar to Latin Christian missionaries and merchants along the Silk Road. A non-circulating early example of this iconography is Taddeo Gaddi's *Annunciation to Two Shepherds* fresco (1328–30) at the Baroncelli Chapel in Florence. The Jalayirid artist has translated his Frankish model into the Cathayan mode of landscape painting, thereby turning this black pen drawing into a transcultural site of encounter between Europe and China.

The sinicizing landscape with cloud bands, and the angel's gray gradient wings featuring darker tips, find their counterparts in the Freer *Dīvān*'s black pen drawings, particularly *Angels*
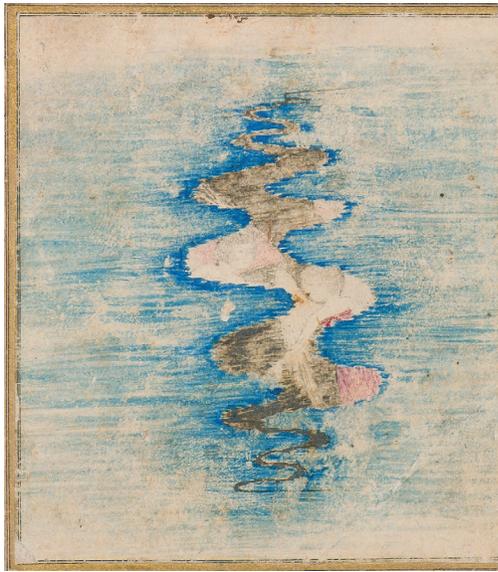
FIGURE 6. *Angels Amidst Clouds*, *Dīvān* of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, tinted black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Purchase — Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1932.33, fol. 21v

Amidst Clouds and *Camp Scene* (see figs. 6, 10).[86] However, the lyrical landscapes of the *Dīvān* differ from the rugged and rather eerie terrains of *Celestial Vision* and of the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* paintings. As Farhad has observed, the *Dīvān's* eight late fourteenth-century illustrations occupy the margins "as if the poems are placed over them."[87] In her analysis of the tinted black pen drawing with angels, she notes that "this most exuberant and colorful of all the *Dīvān's* margin compositions" reveals the availability of Western pictorial sources to Jalayirid artists. Farhad also points out that Western imagery is "less apparent in painted manuscript illustrations of the period,"[88] and makes the following incisive observation about the angels:

> One of the most unusual features of the *Angels Amidst Clouds* is the serrated opening at the top of the folio, which suggests a space beyond. Three angels peer through the crack as the stream of gold clouds spills on to the margin below. This pictorial device, which is indebted to Christian religious iconography, has been skillfully appropriated in the *Dīvān* to differentiate between a terrestrial and celestial sphere.[89]

This detail finds a hitherto overlooked, remarkable parallel in album H. 2153 (fig. 7).[90] It is a miniscule painted fragment (94 by 76 mm), framed with partly preserved gold and lapis lazuli rulings, lined in black ink. By magnifying this puzzling fragment, I was astonished to notice that it depicts in black ink the faces and bare shoulders of two angels wearing partly visible pink robes. Like their counterparts in the Freer *Dīvān*, these angels are peering through the "crack" between the celestial and terrestrial sphere, but brown patches of the landscape below are also visible here and there. This miniscule semi-black-pen painting, *Two Angels Peering Through Clouds*, was apparently saved in the album as a precious memento or model for future artists. Datable to the late fourteenth century, it may have been the work of a famous Jalayirid master, perhaps Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, to whom the angels in the Freer *Dīvān* are attributed by Klimburg-Salter.

In album H. 2153, three other tiny black pen drawings not framed by rulings are ascribed in identical *taʿlīq* script to that artist: "*Ṭarḥ-i* [drawing of] *Khvāja ʿAbd al-Ḥayy*" and "ʿ*Amal-i* [work

FIGURES 8A,B. Two miniscule black ink drawings, each attr. Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy by inscriptions. (a) *Encampment with Tents*. (b) *Two Warriors*. Baghdad or Tabriz, late fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 21r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library
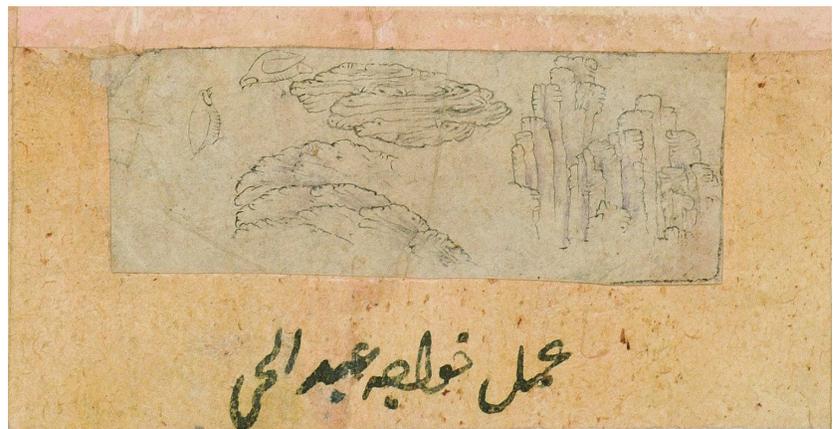

FIGURE 8C. Miniscule black ink drawing, attr. Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy by an inscription. *Two Partridges, Rocks, and Mountains*, Baghdad or Tabriz, late fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 136v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

of] *Khvāja ʿAbd al-Ḥayy*" (figs. 8a,b, 8c). These late fourteenth-century drawings in black ink have been analyzed by Zeren Tanındı.[91] Two of them are mounted together on the margin of an album page, one above the other. The first drawing is an encampment scene with tents and standing persons at the foot of spongelike mountains, behind which two large figures stare at the encampment. A tall tree along the left margin resembles those depicted in the *Dīvān*. The second drawing features two horsemen wearing armor, one of whom slashes off the head of his enemy with a sword. The third is a sketch on the margin of a different page, with a pair of partridges standing next to almond-shaped flat rocks and steep mountains.

Another Europeanizing black pen drawing in H. 2153, which I have labeled *Triumphal Procession* in a former study and ascribed to the Jalayirid courts in Baghdad or Tabriz, also exhibits

FIGURE 9. *Triumphal Procession*, Europeanizing black pen drawing, Baghdad or Tabriz, 1390s–ca. 1400. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 92r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

striking parallels with the Freer *Dīvān* (fig. 9).[92] This representation of a parade is rendered in black ink and gray wash against a blank background. It is the fragment of a work in horizontal format, on aged dark-beige paper with tattered edges. In the foreground, we see horses strapped by the neck to parallel rods, which must have been attached to a ceremonial cart on wheels in the missing right side of the drawing. The central horse rider is a young man with Frankish hairstyle, crowned by a laurel wreath in the manner of ancient Roman triumphs.

The Frankish male and female riders in the background of *Triumphal Procession* wear late-medieval attire, resembling those worn by personages in the *Camp Scene* of the *Dīvān* (figs. 9, 10). The two aristocratic female riders have peaked headdresses, whose tie strings are fastened by a tassel hanging over a wimple that covers the neck and shoulders, while their long robes have hanging sleeves. The men with Frankish hairstyles wear shawls lined with ermine fur. In the *Camp Scene*, a woman wears a similar wimple, while the mother holding a baby in the foreground is dressed in an ermine-lined long robe with hanging sleeves. Such parallels demonstrate the cosmopolitan flavor of Jalayirid fashions. Both black pen drawings feature elegant personages with similar big, round eyeballs, tiny puckered lips, and pointed noses. Their naturalistic gestures and the rendering of horses are similar as well. Furthermore, the crosshatched straps of a tent in *Camp Scene* match the saddle straps of the horse in *Triumphal Procession*. As mentioned, crosshatching has been identified as a diagnostic feature of the Jalayirid style.

Each of the eight black pen illustrations in the *Dīvān* depicts open-air scenes that merge Frankish and Cathayan elements with a distinctive Persianate sensibility. Some of these

FIGURE 10. *Camp Scene*, *Dīvān* of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, slightly tinted black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Purchase — Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1932.34 and F1932.35, fols. 22v, 23r

late-Jalayirid black pen compositions feature washes in gray, with traces of blue or brown, and occasionally gold.[93] Farhad judges these margin drawings as examples of an unparalleled Jalayirid taste for lyrical naturalism and refinement "before Timurids ushered in greater codification of the pictorial arts." Instead of the 1400s, she reasonably prefers, like Adel Adamova, a date in the 1390s "when Sultan Ahmad was not on the run and was surrounded by some of his favorite painters and calligraphers."[94] The matching elegance of the *Dīvān*'s Persian *nastaʿliq* script by Mir ʿAli b. Hasan Tabrizi has been expertly analyzed by Simon Rettig.[95]

Another page in H. 2153 with two contiguous images also displays parallels with the Freer *Dīvān* (figs. 11a,b). The large polychrome painting is pasted next to a medium-size black pen drawing. The colored landscape has the following attributive inscription in the upper left corner: "*Kār-i* [work of] *Aḥmad Mūsā*)." As we have seen, Dust Muhammad's preface identified this mid-fourteenth-century artist as the inventor of naturalistic Persianate painting, whose legacy culminated in Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy during Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's reign. The adjacent, smaller black pen drawing on that page depicts a garden outing of courtly individuals, for which I propose a late fourteenth-century Jalayirid provenance. Both images were framed as finished works prior to being mounted on this album page. Their partially cropped black-lined
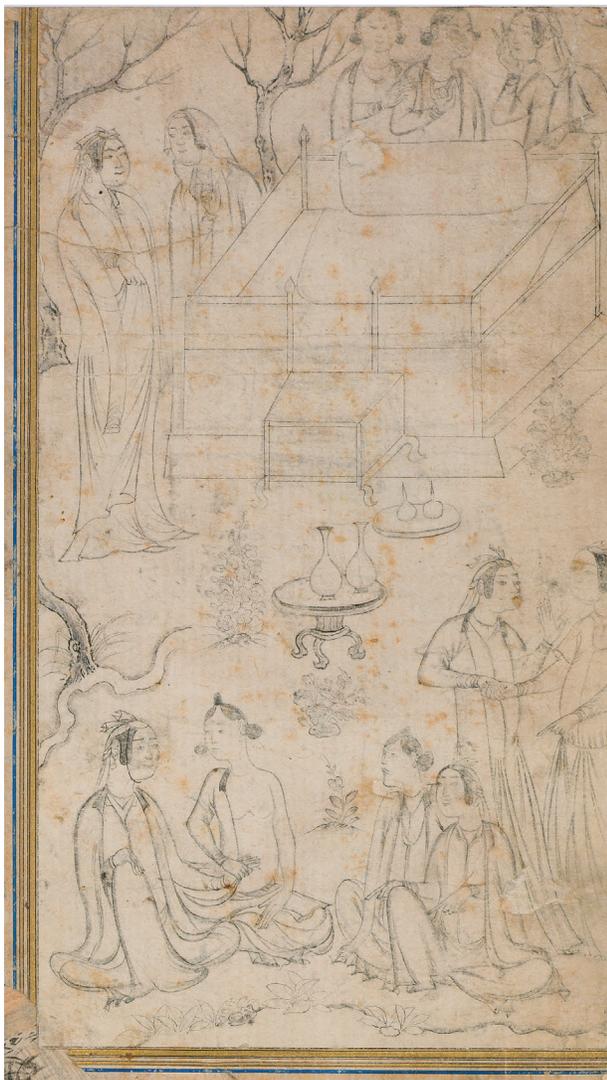
FIGURES 11A,B. (a) Full page: *Polychrome Landscape Painting* with adjacent black pen drawing, attr. Ahmad Musa by an inscription, Tabriz or Baghdad, mid-fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 85v. (b) Detail: *Landscape with Two Couples and Standing Companions*, black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

FIGURE 12. *Landscape with Two Couples*, *Dīvān* of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1932.31, fol. 18r

FIGURE 13. *Shirin Looking at the Portrait of Khusrav*, from Niẓami's *Khusrav u Shīrīn*, black ink preliminary drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. Istanbul, H. 2153, fol. 25r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library
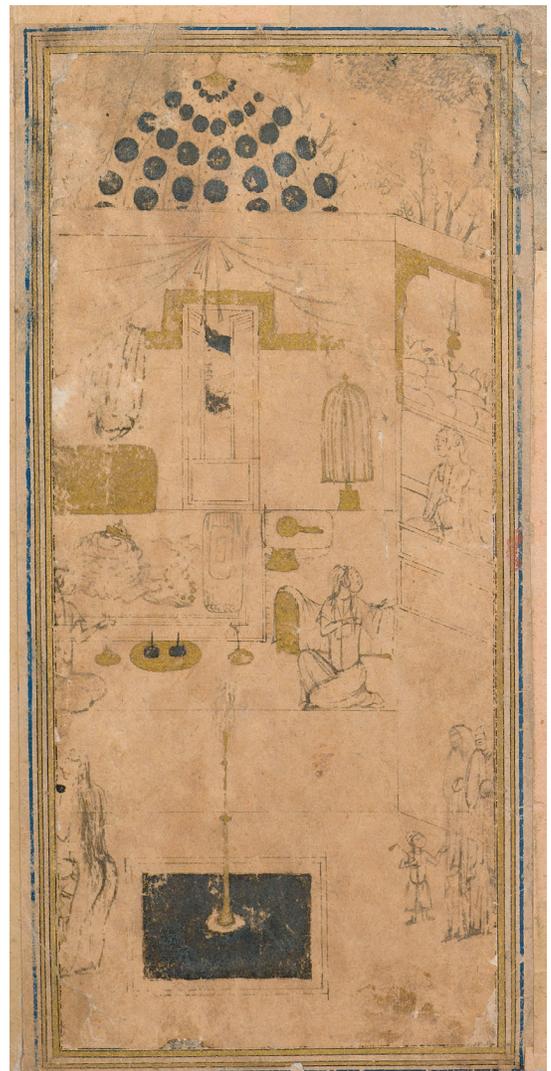
FIGURE 14. *Bathhouse with Women and Mother with Child*, black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 132r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

rulings are painted in gold and lapis lazuli. Men and women depicted in the black pen drawing resemble those in *Triumphal Procession*, mounted in the same album (fig. 9). The individuals and composition of this garden outing come even closer to the Freer *Dīvān*'s margin illustration *Landscape with Two Couples* (fig. 12), to which we shall return below.[96]

This black pen drawing was probably pasted next to Ahmad Musa's colored landscape painting because they were considered somewhat related. After all, that master painter (*ustād*), who flourished during the late Ilkhanate, probably continued to work under their Jalayirid successors until ca. 1360 or later, and his artistic legacy encompassed the black pen technique.[97] In album H. 2153, eight narrative paintings from the *Shāhnāma* of Shaykh Uvays, plus two independent landscape paintings including this one, are attributed by inscriptions to Ahmad Musa. One of those polychrome *Shāhnāma* paintings, which depicts an enthroned ruler's reception ceremony in a palace, shows along its left margin the approach of an elephant painted in the black pen technique. Its white tusk, signed "Ahmad Musa," implies his skill in that technique as well.[98]

The large polychrome landscape attributed to him is painted in tones of green, beige, and brown (fig. 11a). Its panoramic expanse, which recalls that of several landscape paintings of

H. 2153 in the "Cathayan manner," was a novelty in Persianate painting (see figs. 3a, 30).[99] On the right side of Ahmad Musa's landscape, mountain ranges are bordered by dark green shrubs. Beyond them extends a light green valley, represented from an elevated vantage point. A distant monument with a bulbous dome at the center of cubical structures is fronted by fields and several paths lined by bright green trees. Along one of those paths, mules carry dark brown packs of firewood with a herdsman walking behind them. Similarly, in the *Camp Scene* of the Freer *Dīvān*, a man and woman carry firewood to two seated cooks (fig. 10). In the landscape painting attributed to Ahmad Musa, another path emerges in the foreground from a monumental red brick building with a tall portal. It may be a caravanserai whose partly visible lateral facade has two round arches that probably functioned as shops. Departing along that path is a caravan of camels, which suggests the presence of an urban settlement beyond this rural landscape.

The upper edge of this painting lacks rulings because it has been trimmed to fit the album page. The rulings on both sides of the adjacent black pen drawing of a garden outing are also missing because they too were trimmed. Both this work and a similar black pen illustration in the Freer *Dīvān* portray two pairs of couples, in outdoor settings (figs. 11b, 12). The drawing in H. 2153 depicts a garden outing with two seated couples and their standing companions.[100] In the *Dīvān* drawing, one of the couples is seated, while the other couple stands next to a tree along the left margin, with birds flying above. Since this ink drawing is titled *Landscape with Two Couples*, it may be appropriate to refer to its counterpart in H. 2153 as *Landscape with Two Couples and Standing Companions*.

Individuals represented in the album drawing wear typically Jalayirid long robes with hanging sleeves and ermine fur linings (fig. 11b). The coiffures of the elite women seated in the foreground are also similar, arranged in a loop on both sides of the forehead under a distinctive headscarf, which is decorated with a central brooch or aigrette. The men in that drawing have their hair tied in two Mongol-style buns behind their ears, unlike the Islamized male companions wearing turbans in the *Dīvān* (fig. 12). The round table and tray seen in these works, each with two wine bottles, constitute another parallel. Moreover, each image features an empty bed at the center where the couples could rest or sleep: a spacious rectangular carpet with several cushions in the *Dīvān* and, in the album, a raised marble platform with a single long cushion, surrounded by a sinicizing balustrade. The latter finds its counterpart in the *Dīvān*'s ink drawing of a landscape titled *Gathering of Scholars*.[101]

The subject of a preparatory black ink drawing in H. 2153 that features an outing in a landscape can be identified as *Shirin Looking at the Portrait of Khusrav*, from Nizami's (d. 1209) romance *Khusrav u Shīrīn* (fig. 13).[102] This time, however, the group comprises mostly women. Datable to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, it resembles the Freer *Dīvān* illustrations in terms of its page layout. The album drawing surrounds the frame of the text block and extends beyond a second frame up to the edges of that page. The double frames of this drawing, marked by parallel lines, echo those of illustrated pages in the Freer *Dīvān*. In the latter, black pen illustrations similarly extend beyond the linings of two parallel frames to "conquer" the margins.

In *Shirin Looking at the Portrait of Khusrav*, the loose robes with hanging sleeves worn by the women, as well as their hairstyles, recall those of the *Dīvān*, though their scarves lack jeweled brooches. The Armenian princess Shirin is sitting in a forest on a carpet and leaning against a pillow, resembling those on the central carpet of *Landscape with Two Couples* in the *Dīvān* (figs. 12, 13). Both images include a table with two wine bottles. The ladies-in-waiting seated next to the table in the album drawing are playing musical instruments. At the upper right

side, two turbaned male attendants or onlookers are standing next to a tree. Meanwhile, the Persian king Khusrav's painter friend Shapur is spying Shirin across the branches of that tree, from behind a hill.

Such courtly outdoor gatherings became a favored subject of illustrated Jalayirid manuscripts. Another example is the polychrome painting *Humay and Humayun Feasting in a Garden and Listening to Musicians*, which illustrates an episode from the *Khamsa* of Khvaju Kirmani (Baghdad, ca. 1396).[103] Unlike the crowned royal couple seated on a golden throne in that brightly colored painting, the black pen margin illustrations of the Freer *Dīvān* do not feature any royal personage wearing a crown or seated on a lavish throne. Moreover, none of the *Dīvān* paintings includes indoor scenes, which abound in the *Khamsa* manuscript. Except for paintings intended for the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* commissioned by Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's father, only one indoor scene in album H. 2153 is attributable to that dynasty. This fascinating medium-size, unfinished black pen drawing, datable to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, has gold and dark silver highlights. Framed by gold and lapis lazuli rulings, it depicts the interior of a domed bathhouse with a pool, which includes several women as well as a mother and child (fig. 14).[104]

The preference for outdoor scenes in the Freer *Dīvān* may partly be attributed to the peripatetic lifestyle of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's intimate court, which was, as mentioned earlier, often in exile, away from city palaces. Also missing from that manuscript are depictions of grandiose official audience scenes with an enthroned ruler, and representations of the royal hunter or war. These omissions are consistent with the theme of "reluctant sovereignty" diagnosed by Ali Ferdowsi in the sultan's poetry, which "renounces worldly sovereignty" with its hard work of "conquest, bloodshed and the mundane task of running the affairs of a harsh world." Moreover, the *Shāhnāma* and its author "are never mentioned, nor are the books' great heroes and kings."[105]

Just as the monumental Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* attributed to his father, Shaykh Uvays, remained unfinished, no new grand version of that epic poem on the glorious exploits of Iranian kings and heroes was commissioned by Sultan Ahmad Jalayir. During his reign, other literary texts were illustrated with relatively few but exquisitely refined polychrome paintings. Examples of illustrated poetry from this period include the abovementioned *Three Masnavis* of Khvaju Kirmani's *Khamsa* (1396; British Library) and the *Khamsa* of Nizami (Tabriz, ca. 1400; Freer Gallery of Art). Depictions of women became more prominent, not only because of subjects covered in those *Khamsas*, but also thanks to the unusually high status accorded to literate ladies of royal Mongol descent in the Jalayirid dynasty. It was through intermarriage that the Mongol Jalayirids claimed to be legitimate inheritors of Ilkhanid sovereignty.[106]

Future art historical studies might attempt to further explore, together with literary historians, the resonances between illustrations of the *Dīvān* and Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's accompanying lyrical poems. As explained by Farhad, the *Dīvān*'s poetry is replete with themes of "love, yearning, and companionship" that do not readily "lend themselves to pictorial representation."[107] Sufi themes in Sultan Ahmad's poetry have also been seen as dominated by the concept of metaphorical love, besides the renunciation of worldly sovereignty. Literary studies on the *Dīvān*'s poetry have highlighted the sultan's sensitivity to the beauties of nature, the seasons, flowers, birds, and nightingales, often compared with the attractiveness of the beloved as a source of happiness.[108] I would add that this sensitivity is amply captured in the *Dīvān*'s black pen illustrations dominated by expressive landscapes. By contrast, Sultan Ahmad's love of entertainment, music, feasting, and drinking wine in intimate royal majlises is visually implicit in the polychrome paintings of the *Khamsa*s.

Connoisseurship, Aesthetic Appraisals, and Landscape Painting

Attributions to artists in album H. 2153 are sometimes accompanied by aesthetic appraisals in Persian, particularly in works ascribed by inscriptions to Ahmad Musa, which often include unprecedented expansive landscapes. The emphasis on connoisseurship may have emerged in the fifteenth century when the earliest known albums were compiled, including two now-lost, late-Timurid examples, only the prefaces of which have survived. One of these was written in 1492 by the Timurid stylist of Herat, Marvarid, for an album owned by Mir 'Ali Shir Nava'i (d. 1501), while the other preface was composed by the historian Khvandamir (d. ca. 1535) for an album of painting and calligraphy assembled by the "perfect painter" Bihzad, "unique in his age." Despite the brevity of both prefaces in comparison to that of Dust Muhammad, the lost contents of these late-Timurid albums may have reflected and contributed to a rising interest in connoisseurship and authorship.[109]

The unprecedented profusion of written attributions and aesthetic assessments in H. 2153 and H. 2060 accords well with an in-between date of around 1514. Roxburgh has noted an absence of surviving albums from about 1450 until 1544; however, these two albums fill that gap. The partly damaged pre-Ottoman rulings that frame many images mounted in both albums suggest that some of those items originated from no-longer-surviving albums. Attributive inscriptions in album H. 2153 that mention Ahmad Musa appear especially on polychrome paintings detached from the aforementioned Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* (ca. 1370–74) commissioned by Shaykh Uvays. One of those paintings, *Minūchihr Kills Salm*, is inscribed in *nastaʿlīq* script with the following aesthetic appraisal: "Work of Ahmad Musa, it is made exceedingly well" (*kār-i Aḥmad Mūsā ba-ghāyat khūb sākhta ast*).[110]

A similar polychrome album painting from that *Shāhnāma*, which depicts the second stage of *Isfandiyar's Haft Khvān* (Seven Labors), when he kills two lions, is inscribed diagonally at the midpoint of the upper edge as "Aḥmad Mūsā" (fig. 15).[111] It has a bent brown tree extending beyond the picture frame into the right margin, across a tarnished dark silver river. A similar brown tree bending in the other direction, toward the left, is depicted above a curved mound in the foreground. Next to it, in the middle of the beige and light brown landscape, another bent tree with two intertwined trunks is conspicuously rendered in the black pen technique. Growing from Taihu stones, it is accompanied by bushes, and to its left side by horizontal, almond-shaped rocks that sprout reeds with long, narrow leaves. As noted above, a miniscule black pen sketch ascribed to Khvaja ʾAbd al-Hayy by an inscription depicts these distinctive, almond-shaped flat rocks (fig. 8c). However, it is not easy to distinguish the styles of individual Jalayirid artists from one another, given their interlinked artistic genealogy descending from Ahmad Musa, some of whose *Shāhnāma* paintings also have similar rocks.

Another Jalayirid painting in H. 2153 from the same *Shāhnāma* is inscribed: "Hail to Ahmad Musa! the painting by our pole" (*khūshā Aḥmad Mūsā, ṣūrat-i ḳuṭb-i māst*). Serpil Bağcı has identified its subject as *Qāran Kills Bārmān* (fig. 16).[112] The black ink inscription scribbled on a light gray horse was probably added by a Persianate artist who had access to that painting long before it was mounted in H. 2153. He and his colleagues, who revered the master painter Ahmad Musa as their "pole" (leader or guide), must have regarded this work as an ultimate standard of excellence. It is unclear whether those artists were Ahmad Musa's own fourteenth-century disciples, or later painters at the Timurid court who copied the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* (ca. 1426–30) for Baysunghur Mirza.[113] As mentioned, painters likewise exalted Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy as a "saint" (*walī*).

FIGURE 15. *Isfandiyar's Haft Khvān* (Seven Labors), Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*, attr. Ahmad Musa by an inscription, Tabriz or Baghdad, ca. 1370–74. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 16v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

Bağcı suggests that the Timurid prince Baysunghur, who fought the Turkmen army, probably brought the unfinished Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* to Herat with other manuscripts commissioned by Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, as a model for his own *Shāhnāma*, which was completed in 1430. She speculates that folios from that *Shāhnāma*, currently mounted in H. 2153, were likely brought back to Tabriz during Turkmen victories over the Timurids, either in 1458, when the Qaraqoyunlu ruler Jahanshah seized Herat, or later, in 1469, when the Aqqoyunlu Uzun Hasan vanquished his Timurid rival Abu Saʾid. A similar hypothesis was proposed by Basil Gray.[114] In any case, the mobility of paintings and painters was one of the factors behind the circulation of artistic idioms.

The painting *Qāran Kills Bārmān* depicts a formidable nighttime battle with dramatic bold colors and a dynamic composition (fig. 16). In the lower left corner, the heads of fallen soldiers are lined up among no-longer-useful weapons. At the midpoint of the foreground, one of the faces noticeably stares directly at the viewer, establishing eye contact for an emotional response. To the right of this face, rugged rocks scattered on the ground are painted in tones of brown, gray, and black. A short, contorted tree and bladelike bushes drawn in the black pen technique function here as the grand master Ahmad Musa's signature. The unpainted foregrounds of several

FIGURE 16. *Qāran Kills Bārmān*, Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*, attr. Ahmad Musa by an inscription, Tabriz or Baghdad, ca. 1370–74. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 22v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

other illustrations from that *Shāhnāma*, which are mounted in H. 2153, have likewise been rendered in the black pen technique, with similar rocks, bushes, tufts of grass, and tiny trees.

A dramatic landscape painting in that album, *Two Riders in a Wintry Landscape with Bears*, is attributed by an inscription to Ahmad Musa along with a written aesthetic evaluation (fig. 17). Not belonging to the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*, this independent, snow-covered landscape painting features two hunters on horseback chasing a pair of running bears. It is inscribed upside down with the following connoisseurial assessment: "Work of Master Ahmad Musa, very good!" (*kār-i Ustād Aḥmad Mūsā bisyār nīk*).[115] A curious note in a different script, written in front of the bears, may record a spontaneous emotional reaction, perhaps by a young viewer, to the painting: "Bad bear!" (*khirs-i bad*). Carrying bows and arrows, both hunters ride toward the foreground of this astounding landscape painting, behind the ridge of a hill.

The unnaturally sloping, barren terrain depicted from an elevated vantage point is strewn with mushroom-like Taihu stones at the foot of leafless trees, with two pairs of birds perched on their branches, accompanied by a pair of resting deer. One of the two barren trees near the deer, and the two pairs of trees along the riverfront, are rendered in the black pen technique,

FIGURE 17. *Two Riders in a Wintry Landscape with Bears*, polychrome painting, attr. Ahmad Musa by an inscription, Tabriz or Baghdad, mid-fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 28r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

unlike other trees that are painted brown. Such doubling of creatures and natural features would become a convention in Persianate landscape and animal painting. The dark blue sky, partly visible from both sides of the hill, has a wavy stream of light gray and pink clouds, reminiscent of those in the miniscule fragment with angels peering through clouds (fig. 7). Wavy ripples cover the foreboding dark silver river flowing in the foreground. The landscape is painted with predominantly pinkish beige and light purple hues, against which the riders wearing fur-lined hats stand out with their bright red and green coats. Unlike this painting with a vertical format, landscapes by Ahmad Musa generally have horizontal compositions. However, they too deploy an elevated vantage point, inspired by Chinese models (see fig. 11a).[116]

Whereas the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* illustrations feature conspicuous motifs in the black pen technique, inserted into otherwise polychrome paintings, some later fourteenth-century images were executed entirely in black ink (fig. 18). This suggests that the two techniques were compatible and interrelated before becoming increasingly independent of one another. One such autonomous black pen drawing in H. 2153, *Rustam Kills a Dragon*, has been attributed to the Jalayirid master painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy and dated to the late fourteenth century. Its mountainous round landscape, with tiny birds flying in the sky, is surrounded by porous mushroom-like rocks with trees and shrubs sprouting out. In the lower left corner, two flat jagged rocks lie at the foot of tiny trees. Similar flocks of birds in the skies as well as rocks with trees are often seen in Jalayirid images mounted in H. 2153.[117] The rest of the foreground in *Rustam Kills a Dragon* is lined with twisted barren branches, resembling those depicted in Ahmad Musa's *Shāhnāma* paintings from the early 1370s (see figs. 15, 16). The Freer *Dīvān*'s black pen illustrations are more refined and varied, in keeping with a date in the 1390s.

Landscape paintings from the early Jalayirid period include relatively uninviting, dramatic terrains with bare gnarled trees and porous rocks like their Mongol Ilkhanid predecessors. The lyricism of more naturalistic landscapes in the Freer *Dīvān* comes closer in spirit to late fourteenth-century Jalayirid black ink drawings in H. 2153, two of which can perhaps be attributed to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy (figs. 19, 20).[118] Alternatively, but less likely, a date in the first decade of the fifteenth century may be proposed for both drawings, after this artist had been carried away to Timurid Samarqand. Given the rarity of these two vertically oriented preparatory black ink drawings, they are framed by partially preserved gold and lapis lazuli rulings.

One of these ink drawings depicts a royal procession along a steep mountainous landscape, overseen by four protective angels hovering above in the sky (fig. 19).[119] The angels that seem to bless the procession bear a striking resemblance to those depicted in the Freer *Dīvān*, which some studies have attributed to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy (fig. 6).[120] A partly visible domed building, along with spongelike hills and bushes, appears in the lower half of this landscape drawing. A man entering the picture frame from the lower right side holds the reins of camels walking behind him. Along a horizontal path above those hills, the procession includes a pair of footmen, followed by two horse riders, one of them carrying a flag behind the other, who may be a grandee. In front of the footman, a child, perhaps a crown prince, is sitting in a square palanquin carried by two men walking behind and in front of it, while a third person holds a high royal umbrella over the palanquin.

Steep mountains rise above the procession path, their two peaks crowned by settlements containing cubical buildings. My attribution of this black ink drawing to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy finds additional support in one of the abovementioned miniscule drawings in the same album (fig. 8c). Accompanied by an inscription that reads "ʿAmal-i [work of] Khvāja ʿAbd al-Ḥayy," the drawing depicts two pairs of horizontal, almond-shaped rocks, and two steep mountains, each crowned by cubical structures.[121]

FIGURE 18. *Rustam Kills a Dragon*, black pen drawing, attr. Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, 48v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

Attributable to the same artist, the second black ink drawing in H. 2153 is very similar. (fig. 20).[122] It too has a vertical format and illustrates a series of mountains with a valley in between, behind which rise the same type of cubical buildings as seen in figure 19. Instead of angels, tiny birds fly in the sky. This second landscape has more-abundant vegetation than the first one, and the procession in it is more crowded, though there is no palanquin. In the middle ground, the all-male riders are led by a horseman carrying a flag and by a mounted trumpet player. The ruler on horseback is accompanied by an officer with a royal umbrella, raised on a tall pole.

Once again, a man who is leading camels by the reins enters the picture frame from the right side. In front of him, a train of mules is led by another man advancing diagonally between the hills in the foreground toward the royal procession. In the lower right corner, riders on horseback follow a mounted archer who is hunting two mountain goats. The hills in front are scattered with almond-shaped flat stones, resembling those depicted in Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy's miniscule sketch (fig. 8c). Such distinctive stones are also seen in the foreground of the previous landscape drawing, which forms a closely related set with this one. Moreover, their subject is connected to the recurring theme of processions in albums H. 2153 and H. 2160, an example being the *Triumphal Procession* drawing in the "Frankish manner" (fig. 9).[123]

If these two Jalayirid black ink drawings of mountainous landscapes, each with a royal procession, date from the first decade of the fifteenth century rather than the 1390s, they could refer to a particular context (figs. 19, 20). Upon Timur's death in 1405, both Sultan Ahmad Jalayir and Qara Yusuf Qaraqoyunlu were released from prison in Mamluk Damascus, where they had fled. The Jalayirid ruler adopted Qara Yusuf's newborn child Pir Budaq as his own son and

FIGURE 19. *Mountainous Landscape with a Royal Procession Overseen by Angels*, preparatory black ink drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or first decade of the fifteenth century (see fig. 28c). Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 137v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

FIGURE 20. *Mountainous Landscape with a Royal Procession*, preparatory black ink drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or first decade of the fifteenth century. Istanbul, H. 2153, fol. 153r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

agreed to keep Iraq, while relinquishing Azerbaijan to his prison mate via Pir Budaq. Between 1406 and 1408, Qara Yusuf recaptured Tabriz and Azerbaijan from the Timurids. By March 1407, the abovementioned second copy of Sultan Ahmad's *Dīvān*, which lacks black pen illustrations, was produced in Baghdad after his safe return to that city from exile. Could the set of two inter-related drawings in H. 2153, *Mountainous Landscape with a Royal Procession*, commemorate these momentous events, with the child carried in a palanquin representing Sultan Ahmad Jalay-ir's adopted son Pir Budaq, and the second drawing depicting the prince's father Qara Yusuf?

The Jalayirid ruler would be executed in 1410 by his Qaraqoyunlu ally Qara Yusuf because he had tried to recapture Tabriz against their agreement. Before being killed, Sultan Ahmad Jalayir had to sign documents confirming the appointment of his adopted son Pir Budaq as the ruler of Azerbaijan with its capital Tabriz, while Qara Yusuf was to reign as Pir Budaq's vice regent. In 1411 Qara Yusuf's elder son seized Baghdad, which precipitated the demise of the Jalayirids. That year, Qara Yusuf publicly announced in Tabriz the sultanate of Pir Budaq, with himself as vice-regent.

Though highly speculative, these events might provide a possible context (ca. 1407–11) for both preparatory ink drawings in H. 2153 that depict connected royal processions. Otherwise, these two drawings in a vertical format are stylistically attributable to Khwaja ʿAbd al-Hayy (before 1393 or 1401), without a specific historical narrative. Both delicate landscape drawings expertly incorporate minute details, with clear foreground and background. They were more suitable than the gener-ally horizontal landscapes of Ahmad Musa for the vertical codex format, which around that time began to replace horizontal layouts inspired by Chinese handscrolls. Besides procession scenes in the Frankish and Cathayan manners, which were ideal subjects for scrolls, albums H. 2153 and H. 2160 feature horizontal scrolls with ornamental patterns. Several scrolls were cut up into pieces and preserved in both albums when the vertical codex format became the norm (see figs 25a-c).[124]

One such handscroll colorfully painted on paper, *Court Ladies in a Riverfront Palace Garden*, has been attributed to fifteenth-century Ming China. Combining its ten or more cut-up frag-ments in H. 2153 reveals that it represented Chinese ladies enjoying food, music, and dance inside a garden palace, featuring a kitchen annex for cooks, and an upper belvedere where some ladies observe the landscape. Others stroll in the garden replete with flowering trees, birds, and butterflies. The garden overlooks a delightful rivulet bordered by a colored marble

FIGURE 21. *Court Ladies in a Riverfront Palace Garden*, reconstructed fragment of a polychrome-painted Chinese handscroll, fifteenth century, Ming China (see figs. 27b, 28a). Istanbul, H. 2153, fols. 114v–115r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

FIGURE 22. *River Scene, Dīvān* of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Purchase — Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1932.37, fol. 25v

parapet, from which some of the ladies and a child lean to view the ducks, herons, and lotus leaves with flowers floating along the swirling waves (figs. 21, 27b, 28a).[125] Such riverscape motifs were favorite components of some ornamental black-pen-design scrolls in that album.

This predominantly polychrome-painted Chinese handscroll features some black pen details, such as black-and-white butterflies, the skirt of a lady, the coat of another lady, and various objects held by others not illustrated here.[126] A similar combination of techniques in some illustrations of the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* reveals a shared characteristic with Chinese painting. However, such a mixture was also common in "semi-grisaille" black-and-white paintings of early fourteenth-century French manuscripts, which include some polychrome sections in red, brown, and blue.[127] This reminds us that we must not underestimate the imbrication of Cathayan and Frankish elements in the Jalayirid artistic tradition.

Some black pen landscapes in the Freer *Dīvān* have vertical formats like those in H. 2153, which I have tentatively attributed above to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy (figs. 19, 20). One such
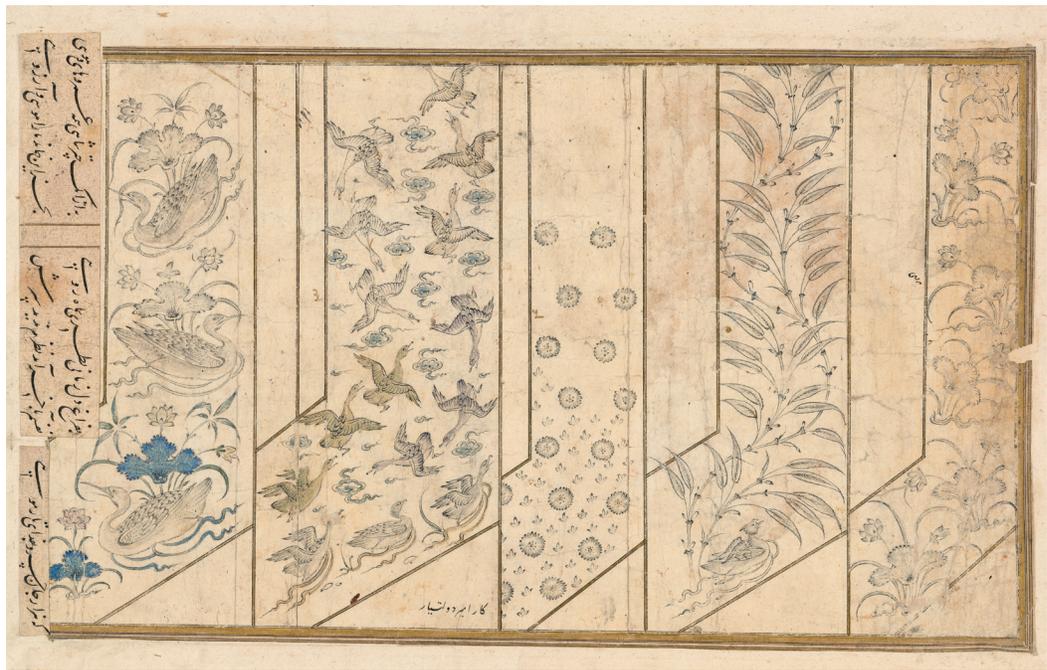
FIGURE 23. Five ornamental designs, signed by Amir Davlatyar, tinted black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, mid-fourteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2160, fol. 68r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

example, *River Scene*, features a prominent river bordered by shrubs, a barren tree, and horizontal, almond-shaped rocks (fig. 22). The rocks are nearly identical to those depicted in Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy's miniscule black ink drawing in H. 2153 (fig. 8c). Without any human figures, the *Dīvān*'s sinicizing *River Scene* is populated by ducks swimming along the river's undulating currents, while butterflies, geese, and cranes fly among spiraling Chinese cloud bands.[128]

Animal and vegetal motifs in the *Dīvān*'s landscapes also resemble those in sinicizing ornamental design scrolls compiled in the Diez and Topkapı albums. However, landscapes of the *Dīvān* cannot be classified as "ornament," given their implicit narrative dimension. Instead, they occupy a liminal zone between decorative illuminations and narrative illustrations. The sequence of black pen drawings in the *Dīvān* must also be taken into consideration, along with the selective use of color in only some scenes at the midpoint of the manuscript, as Farhad has observed.[129] Moreover, these landscapes omit mythical Chinese creatures such as the dragon and phoenix (simurgh) in combat, or threatening animals such as the wolves, lions, and bears that are featured in ornamental black pen designs mounted in H. 2153 and H. 2160 (see fig. 26).[130]

An example of ornamental motifs in H. 2160 is particularly relevant for design elements deployed in the *Dīvān*'s landscapes (fig. 23). It is a large, full-page ornament study identified as the "Work of Amir Davlatyar" (*kār-i Amīr Davlatyār*) by an inscription that may be a signature. The artist of this sheet was the outstanding Jalayirid master of black pen design mentioned above in Dust Muhammad's preface as a former *ghulām* of the last Ilkhanid ruler, Abu Saʿid (d. 1335). He was trained by Master Ahmad Musa, while his own pupil Master Shamsuddin instructed Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, who became the tutor and foremost court painter of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir.

Therefore, this extraordinary sheet with mid-fourteenth-century decorative designs by Amir Davlatyar belongs to the chain of master-disciple relationships that culminated in the Freer *Dīvān*. Framed by black-lined gold rulings, the sheet contains five models of corner pieces

FIGURES 24A–C. Three ornamental designs, signed by Amir Davlatyar, tinted black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, mid-fourteenth century. (a) Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 84v. (b) Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, 104r; (c) Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, 119v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

meant for decorating the margins of manuscripts. However, these ornamental patterns were also adaptable to textiles, manuscript bindings, and other surfaces such as the Freer *Dīvān*'s flexible margins. For instance, *Landscape with Two Couples* in the *Dīvān* features similar swimming duck patterns on the central bedspread, and on the robe of the lady standing next to a tree in the left margin (fig. 12). In the sheet with five corner pieces, the name of Amir Davlatyar is written on the design with swimming and flying ducks that alternate with Chinese cloud bands. The ducks are very similar to those in the *River Scene* of the *Dīvān* (fig. 22). The corner piece to the left side of the inscribed design in figure 23 includes three larger ducks swimming among lotuses in the "Cathayan manner." The two corner pieces at the right side of the inscribed design in figure 23 feature lotus and long, bladelike leaf patterns, also common as riverscape motifs.

Two other black pen designs in H. 2160, which belonged to an ornament scroll, have been cut up and ascribed to the same artist: "ʿ*amal-i* [work of] *Mīr Davlatyār*." They delineate snakelike dragons entangled in lotus leaves.[131] By contrast, Amir [Mir] Davlatyar's three stunning black pen designs in H. 2153 are self-contained ornamental paintings (figs. 24a–c). Framed by rulings, these autonomous designs stand out as highly accomplished, finished artworks, each inscribed as "*kār-i* [work of] *Amīr Davlatyār*." It is not surprising that when the aforementioned Timurid artist Mavlana Valiullah, "who was without equal in the world," saw Amir Davlatyar's work, "he justly confessed his inability to match it," according to Dust Muhammad.[132]

One of these three imaginative designs depicts a pair of birds attacking a snake that emerges from the holes of a surreal Taihu stone, amid flowers, a bent tree with holes and bulges on its trunk, as well as Chinese cloud bands (fig. 24a).[133] In the second design, two roosters, each perched on a Taihu stone, confront one another symmetrically across flowering plants in the middle (fig. 24b).[134] The third design shows a heron biting the neck of a tortoise that is swimming along swirling waves, flanked by two tall plants with pink flowers and green leaves under a sky brimming with wavelike Chinese cloud bands (fig. 24c).[135]

Unlike the superior artistry of these "finished" black-pen decorative paintings, datable to the mid-fourteenth century, a fourth polychrome painting inscribed as the "work of Amir Davlatyar" in H. 2153 is rather mediocre. It illustrates a horse rider in armor attacking with his sword another horseman.[136] This indicates the general accuracy of Dust Muhammad's concise comments, as a connoisseur, on the special skills of individual artists: In the case of Amir Davlatyar, it was only black pen design.[137] Likewise, attributive inscriptions in albums H. 2153 and H. 2160 are generally more reliable than is commonly assumed.

FIGURES 25A–C. *Seated Mongol Ruler with Attendants Viewing a Parade of Animals*, three framed fragments of a black pen scroll, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. (a) Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 70r. (b) Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 167v. (c) Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2160, fol. 76v. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

The fragments of a sinicizing scroll preserved in both albums document the emergence of semi-narrative, black-pen landscape drawings with human figures and animals around the time the Freer *Dīvān* was created. Datable to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, probably in Tabriz or Baghdad, this paper scroll with a continuous drawing in black ink was cut up into three horizontal pieces, each framed by gold and lapis lazuli rulings (figs. 25a–c). The scroll depicts a seated Mongol amir holding a scepter and accompanied by standing attendants who carry emblems of royalty. He is viewing the parade of a horse, a camel, and a lion, presumably being presented as gifts or tribute, each led by their keepers. They too wear the same Mongol costumes and headgear as the amir and his attendants, which implies that this is a domestic rather than foreign embassy.[138]

A kneeling envoy, flanked by a charming pair of lapdogs, is shown offering the Mongol amir a round object. The large tree next to the seated amir has an auspicious peacock perched above him on its bent trunk. The flat landscape features tiny birds flying or perched on branches, with Chinese cloud bands against a blank background. Each of the three scroll fragments is anchored by a prominent bent and leafy tree, with protruding roots, knobs, and holes on its trunk. Such monumental trees often play a role as spatial markers in contemporaneous black pen images with empty backdrops, including the *Dīvān*'s margin illustrations (see figs. 10, 12, 22). A tall tree with trunk holes and a bent barren tree included in the woodblock print *Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety* reminds us of the Chinese origin of these motifs commonly deployed in Jalayirid landscapes (see fig. 1c).[139]

An ink drawing in one of the Diez albums attributed by an inscription to Amir Davlatyar's renowned student Master Shamsuddin, who flourished in the fourteenth century during the reign of Shaykh Uvays, depicts a large plane tree likely removed from H. 2153.[140] Its bent trunk has holes with leafy branches that are inhabited by birds. The fox beneath that tree is staring at a rock, the curious form of which echoes the fox's face. In the more naturalistic landscapes of Shamsuddin's student Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, such "rock faces" are no longer common. These relatively "humanized" landscapes have shed the animistic aura of early Jalayirid and Ilkhanid precedents.[141]

In album H. 2160, another paper scroll with a delicately drawn, black pen landscape is lighly tinted in brown, pink, orange, blue, and gold. It was cut up into five pieces without rulings and measured approximately 1.787 meters by 17.7 centimeters. The scroll fragments depict a sinicizing dense forest inhabited by diverse animals. The fragment of *Inhabited Forest* illustrated here features intertwined and gnarled bent trees with trunk holes, flowering plants, shrubs, Taihu stones, flat rocks, dragons, a simurgh, bears, birds, butterflies, and Chinese cloud bands (fig. 26). Wearing short-sleeved coats, three riders on horseback with long hair and headcaps topped by a feather tassel are shown attacking a dragon. One of these figures is an unfinished line drawing of an archer.[142]

Interestingly, the costumes and headgear of the three riders are almost identical to those worn by an authoritarian officer on horseback depicted in the upper left corner of *Camp Scene* in the Freer *Dīvān* (fig. 10). The cut-up album scroll, datable to the early fifteenth century, is labeled in most fragments as the "Work of Master Muhammad Black Pen" (ʿamal-i [or] kār-i *Ustād Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam*), who may have been active in Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen Tabriz. However, the scroll is generally attributed to Timurid Herat or more broadly Central Asia.[143]

To this scroll fragment, where creatures are perpetually at war, the remaining fragments add animals such as *chʿi-lin*s, deer, wolves, foxes, lions, monkeys, and even the heron-biting-a-tortoise motif. Once again, these tinted black pen designs have a semi-narrative dimension, though not as peaceful as those of the Freer *Dīvān*, whose serene landscape scenes are populated by human beings, domesticated animals, and birds. Black pen images of inhabited dense
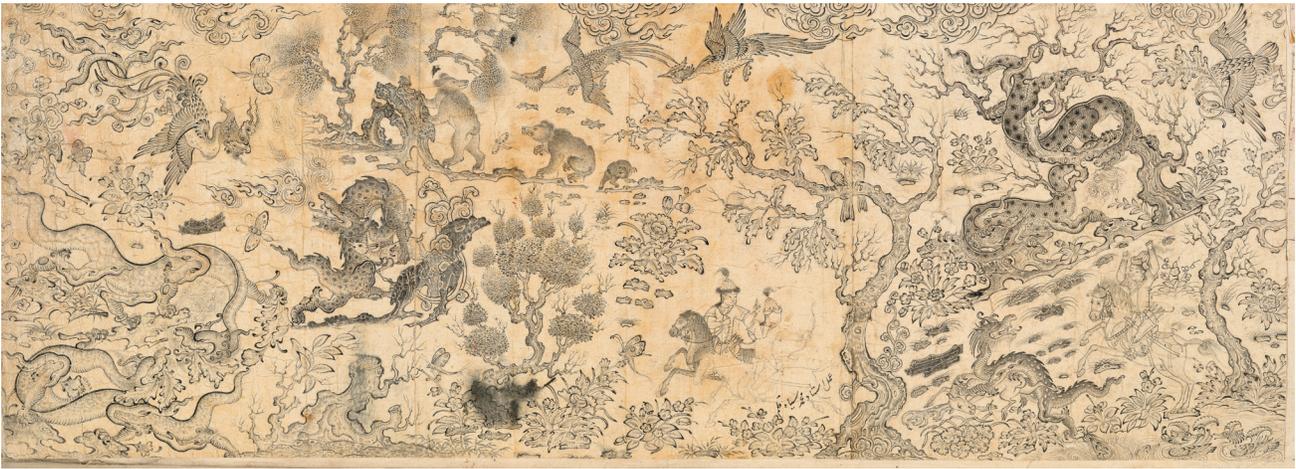
FIGURE 26. *Inhabited Forest*, fragment of a black pen scroll, attr. "Master Muhammad Siyah Qalam" by an inscription, Tabriz or Herat, Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen or Timurid, early fifteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2160, fol. 34r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

forests, with and without riders fighting ferocious beasts, became popular items in albums. Two less delicate examples, with a horizontal, single-page format, have been attributed to Timurid Herat in the first half of the fifteenth century.[144]

As mentioned, the paired Topkapı albums H. 2153 and H. 2160 also feature numerous scroll patterns in black ink for application in decorative arts, including designs for cloud collars, triangular armbands, and semicircular mudguards for horse saddles in the "Cathayan manner." Such designs enjoyed currency in the Jalayirid, Timurid, Turkmen, and early Safavid courts. Decorative black pen drawings in both Topkapı albums may also have bolstered the fashion for sinicizing patterns in diverse media at the Ottoman court.[145] However, the taste for chinoiserie would not travel further west into North Africa and Spain; nor was its impact particularly strong in Mamluk Syria-Egypt and Sultanate India.

Concluding Remarks

I hope that my analysis of selected images from album H. 2153 and its companion may encourage further studies with new perspectives on the Jalayirid pictorial tradition. As we have seen, some of the works mounted in this album document the copying and creative transformation of Frankish as well as Cathayan models. Those foreign models were successfully integrated into the mature Jalayirid pictorial idiom of the Freer *Dīvān*. I would like to conclude by briefly drawing attention to a workshop practice documented in album H. 2153, namely the copying of models as study exercises.[146] Known as *mashq*, meaning study or exercise, this training method was common among calligraphers and painter-decorators.

Attributive inscriptions on paintings and drawings in that album sometimes identify them as an exercise (*mashq*) rather than a work (ʿ*amal*, *kār*), drawing (*qalam*), or sketch (*ṭarḥ*) by a named artist or in a particular regional style. The differences among these terms do not always seem clear today. Moreover, an "exercise or study" based on copying could be considered an artwork demonstrating the extraordinary skill of the copyist. As Tanındı has observed, "the numerous repetitions of pictures" in album H. 2153, even up to four copies, and to a lesser extent in H. 2160, indicate that artists were not only "honing their skills by making identical or similar copies of works by ancient masters." Some of them were partial, rather than identical copies,

through which the artist could introduce variations or a new style: "All these pictures reveal that artists carefully examined works of past masters. . . . The legitimacy of the tradition of copying in pictorial art also meant that these pictures represent a rich archive" of now lost originals.[147]

Copying, whether fully, partially, or inventively, was sanctioned as a key method for developing artistic skills. The unrestrained hybridity of some images in album H. 2153 reveals that the practice of copying admired prototypes was complemented by an overlooked transcultural dimension extending from China to Europe. This album vividly documents the blending of the Persianate, Cathayan, and Frankish manners. Images in all three idioms are even juxtaposed on some album pages. One of the Europeanizing tinted brown-ink drawings that I have published previously, *King Getting Undressed in Front of a Reclining Female Nude* (late fourteenth or early fifteenth century), is pasted on such a page with a vertically stacked tripartite layout (figs. 27a–c).[148] The drawing in the "Frankish manner" is accompanied by a fifteenth-century Persianate black ink drawing of two warriors on horseback, and a fragment of the abovementioned polychrome paper handscroll from fifteenth-century Ming China (fig. 21). This page therefore comprises images from three different artistic traditions: Persianate, Cathayan, and Frankish.

Another page in H. 2153 with a tripartite layout includes a Europeanizing tinted brown-ink drawing with a Biblical subject (figs. 28a–c).[149] The heavily restored, damaged drawing on paper has been identified by Julian Raby as *Two Studies of Samson Rending the Lion*, which again exemplifies the workshop practice of copying.[150] A previously unnoted, cropped Persian inscription at the left edge of the paper sheet appropriately reads "rending" (*darīdan*). This work is mounted next to another fragment of the fifteenth-century polychrome Ming-period handscroll, which consists of a tree, flowering plants, and birds (figs. 21, 27b). Moreover, the

FIGURES 27A–C. Tripartite album page. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 115v. (a) *Two Warriors on Horseback*, black ink drawing, Iran or Iraq, fifteenth century. (b) *Women Playing Musical Instruments*, fragment of polychrome paper handscroll, Ming China, fifteenth century (see figs. 21, 28a). (c) *Man Getting Undressed in front of a Reclining Female Nude*, Europeanizing tinted brown-ink drawing on paper, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

FIGURES 28A–C. Tripartite album page. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 137v. (a) *Tree with Flowering Plants and Birds*, detached fragment of figs. 21, 27b. (b) *Two Studies of Samson Rending the Lion*, Tabriz or Baghdad, Europeanizing tinted brown-ink drawing, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. (c) *Mountainous Landscape with a Royal Parade Overseen by Angels* (see fig. 19), preparatory black ink drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or first decade of the fifteenth century. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

Samson drawing is adjacent to the aforementioned Jalayirid landscape in black ink (fig. 19). Therefore, this album page once again invites comparisons between the Frankish, Cathayan, and Persianate manners of depiction.

A surprising painted analogue to the Europeanizing drawing *Two Studies of Samson Rending the Lion* has been noted by Raby in the same album (fig. 29b). This *Siyah Qalam Lion Rider*, datable to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, is part of a study sheet belonging to the enigmatic group of images in H. 2153 attributed by inscriptions to "Muhammad Siyah Qalam."[151] However, I would add that it differs in several details from *Two Studies of Samson Rending the Lion* in the "Frankish manner" (fig. 28b). These include the rider's bare feet and his hat. Moreover, the beast with a shaggy tail is a "mythical" Chinese lion, whose eyes and hind legs emit flamelike motifs. Yet, both images are clearly interrelated. Hence, Raby has convincingly proposed that the puzzling "Muhammad Siyah Qalam" corpus in H. 2153 had a "European connection," at least in this example.

The fluttering cape of the two lion riders finds an even closer parallel in an early fifteenth-century landscape painting from Ming China in the same album, *Herdsman on Buffalo Returning Home Through a Rainstorm* (fig. 30). This detail is seen in the background of that painting, probably based on an earlier image from the Southern Song (1127–79) period. The painting also features buffaloes similar to some of the Freer *Dīvān* illustrations. Painted in ink and wash on silk with tones of green, brown, and beige, it resembles in color scheme and panoramic expanse one of Ahmad Musa's sinicizing landscapes in the same album (fig. 11a).[152] To return to *Two Studies of Samson Rending the Lion*, it is probably a late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century Jalayirid exercise sheet, which exemplifies the hybrid copying of Cathayan and Frankish models (fig. 28b).

FIGURES 29A–E. Album page with five images. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 29v. (a) *Head of a Horse*, black pen drawing, ascribed to Sultan Ahmad Jalayir by an inscription, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth century. (b) *Siyah Qalam Lion Rider*, tinted black pen drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. (c) *Head of a Turbaned Youth*, small ink drawing, Tabriz or Baghdad, late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. (d) *Narrative with Man Holding a Sword*, polychrome painting, Tabriz or Baghdad, fifteenth century. (e) *Standing Youth Holding a Chinese Blue and White Porcelain Vessel*, polychrome painting, Tabriz or Baghdad, fifteenth century. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

My dating of works in H. 2153 implies that its Jalayirid images emerged simultaneously with the so-called International Gothic style in Europe (ca. 1360–1433). Visual cultures in both the West and East were being invigorated around that time by the cosmopolitan fusion of Eurasian artistic traditions. However, the main catalyst behind the new naturalism of Persianate pictorial arts was late Yuan and early Ming China. The "Jalayirid contribution" documented so vividly in album H. 2153 uncovers the key role played by artists and patrons of that dynasty in laying the foundations of future directions for Persianate painting. Works in the album display striking parallels with the Freer *Dīvān*, including the emphasis on the black pen technique, landscapes, and the use of margins, as well as the synthesis of sinicizing and Europeanizing elements.[153]

One of the reasons why Jalayirid painting and calligraphy have been overshadowed in current scholarship is the Timurid process of imitation and codification, and the volume of production.[154] Eclipsed by the preferred focus on the politically allied Timurid and Aqqoyunlu dynasties, the inventiveness of Jalayirid contributions to Persianate painting awaits further analysis, along with the overlooked role of their Qaraqoyunlu associates.[155] As we have seen, Sultan Ahmad Jalayir and Qara Yusuf Qaraqoyunlu jointly sought refuge from Timur at the

FIGURE 30. *Herdsmen on Buffalo Returning Home Through a Rainstorm*, tinted ink and wash painting on silk, probably copy of a Southern Sung original, Ming China, early fifteenth century. Istanbul, TSMK, H. 2153, fol. 103r. Courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library

Ottoman court in 1400. After Sultan Ahmad's execution by his former ally Qara Yusuf in 1410, the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen dynasty became the principal heir of the Jalayirid artistic legacy until the rise of the Aqqoyunlu in 1468.[156]

Album H. 2153 prefigured the cross-cultural comparison between the Persianate, Frankish, and Cathayan artistic traditions construed in later Safavid album prefaces. Those texts include the mid-sixteenth-century preface by Dust Muhammad to the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154) on which we have focused. Originally featuring only two paintings in the "Frankish manner," this Safavid album includes four paintings captioned as works by "Cathayan masters" that are juxtaposed with Persianate counterparts for comparison.[157] Album H. 2153, moreover, anticipated the subsequent artistic marginalization of China by Europe with its unprecedented early Renaissance engravings collected in the Ottoman court, and its forward-looking Europeanizing images. During the seventeenth century, the "Frankish manner" would become the primary source of foreign inspiration for Persianate pictorial arts in the courts of early modern Islamic empires, where the black pen technique continued to flourish.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1 My award-ceremony lecture for the "Fifteenth Presentation of the Charles Lang Freer Medal, Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art," on October 27, 2023, was titled "From China to Europe: A Topkapı Palace Album (H. 2153) with Images in the Persianate, Cathayan, and Frankish Manners (ca. 1350–1500)."

2 On manuscripts stamped with Bayezid II's seal and his library collection at the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul, see Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar, and Cornell H. Fleischer, eds., *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3–1503/4)*, 2 vols., *Supplements to Muqarnas* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

3 Both albums have been examined as part of a long-term project by a research team of Turkish and Japanese scholars in which I participated. The articles by this team, including my own, were completed in 2014. They will be published, after an unfortunate delay by the publisher in Turkey, in the forthcoming volume of *Supplements to Muqarnas* (Brill, 2026). The calligraphies and images mounted in both albums are listed with brief entries in our collective catalogue and index at the end of that publication. I cite several articles and catalogue entries below as "forthcoming." My own article is titled "The Composition and Compilation of Two Saray Albums Reconsidered in Light of 'Frankish' Images."

4 The *Dīvān*'s three copies are listed in the inventory on page 244 (nos. 11–12); see Necipoğlu et al., *Treasures of Knowledge*, 2:166. Discussed in Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization of Knowledge in the Ottoman Palace Library: An Encyclopedic Collection and Its Inventory," in *Treasures of Knowledge*, 1:38n142.

5 The seal of Bayezid II is stamped only once on F1932.37v. The manuscript T. 2046 was produced in Baghdad in 809 AH (1407). On both copies and others, see Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, "Selections from Jalayirid Books in the Libraries of Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 28 (2011): 229–30. Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's poetry is collected in the following manuscripts in Istanbul: Süleymaniye, Ayasofya MS 3924 (Baghdad, dated 800 AH (1397–98); TSMK MS H. 909, dated 809 AH (1406–7); and Süleymaniye, MS Lala Ismail 429.

6 *TDVIA*, "Ahmed Celâyir," by Faruk Sümer, accessed December 24, 2024, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ahmed-celayir.

7 Timur demanded the Ottoman sultan not to accept the asylum request by Sultan Ahmad Jalayir and his ally Qara Yusuf Qaraqoyunlu. Options proposed by Timur were to have them killed, to hand them over to Timur, or to expel them from Ottoman territory. See Abdurrahman Daş, "Ankara Savaşı Öncesi Timur ile Yıldırım Bayezid'in Mektuplaşmaları" (The correspondence between Timur and Yıldırım Bayezid before the Ankara War), *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 15 (2004): 141–67.

8 Examples include Max Loehr, "The Chinese Elements in the Istanbul Miniatures," *Ars Orientalis* 1 (1954): 85–89; Basil Gray, "The Chinoiserie Elements in the Paintings in the Istanbul Albums," *Islamic Art* 1 (1981): 85–89; W. Watson, "The Chinese Style in the Paintings in the Istanbul Albums," *Islamic Art* 1 (1981): 69–78; and Toh Sugimura, *The Encounter of Persia with China: Research into Cultural Contacts Based on Fifteenth-Century Pictorial Materials* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 1986). A later study relates sinicizing works to artistic networks between China and the Eurasian continent

during the Ming period (1368–1644): Paramita Paul, "The Eccentrics of Istanbul: Chan, Art, and Cross-Asian Networks in the Ming," *Ming Studies* 78 (2018): 7–31. On "Muhammad Siyah Qalam," see note 64 below. Annotated bibliography: Lâle Uluç, "The Historiography of the Topkapı Saray Albums Hazine 2153 and Hazine 2160" (forthcoming).

9 Early exceptions are Julian Raby, "Samson and Siyah Qalam" and "Mehmed II Fatih and the Fatih Album," *Islamic Art* 1 (1981): 42–49 and 160–63. See also Mazhar Şevket İpşiroğlu and Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, *Fatih Albümüne bir Bakış: sur l'album du Conquérant* (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1955); Nurhan Atasoy, "Four Istanbul Albums and Some Fragments from Fourteenth-Century Shahnamehs," *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 19–48; and Ernst J. Grube and Eleanor Sims, eds., *Islamic Art* 1 (1981), which focuses on "Istanbul Album Paintings (H. 2152, 2153, 2154, and 2160)." See also Ernst J. Grube and Eleanor Sims, eds., *Between China and Iran: Paintings from Four Istanbul Albums* (London: University of London, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1985).

10 Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, A.D. 1250–1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

11 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images Between Europe and China: The 'Frankish Manner' in the Diez and Topkapı Albums, c. 1350–1450," in *The Diez Albums: Contexts and Contents*, ed. Julia Gonella, Friederike Weis, and Christoph Rauch (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 531–91.

12 Sugimura, *Encounter of Persia with China*, with 108 illustrations from albums H. 2153, H. 2154, and H. 2160 and comparable works in other collections.

13 Basil W. Robinson, "The Turkman School to 1503," in *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia, 14th–16th Centuries*, ed. Basil Gray (Boulder, CO: Shambhala; Paris: UNESCO, 1979), 243. Robinson's theory is accepted in Michael Rogers, "Siyah Qalam: To the Memory of Basil Gray," in *Persian Masters: Five Centuries of Painting*, ed. Sheila R. Canby (Bombay: Marg, 1990), 21.

14 A. M. Hind, "Italian Engravings, Fifteenth Century, at Constantinople," *Print Collector's Quarterly* 20 (1933): 279–96. The few exceptions to this widely accepted view include Zeki Velidi Togan, "Topkapı Sarayındaki Dört Cönk" (Four Jungs in the Topkapı Palace), *İslam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 (1953–54): 86, according to which the Italian engravings were probably brought to Tabriz or Herat by European visitors. Repeating Togan's unsubstantiated speculation, the print collection was attributed to Tabriz under the Aqqoyunlu Turkmen ruler Sultan Yaʿqub (r. 1478–90) in Gray, "Chinoiserie

Elements," 85; and J. M. Rogers, "Mehmed the Conqueror: Between East and West," in *Bellini and the East*, ed. Caroline Campbell, Alan Chong, et al. (London: National Gallery Company; Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2005), 93.

15 Oktay Aslanapa, "Täbriser Künstler am Hofe der Osmanischen Sultane in Istanbul," *Anatolia: Revue annuelle de l'Institut d'Archeologie de l'Universite d'Ankara* 3 (1958): 15–20.

16 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversations with Renaissance Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople," *Muqarnas* 29 (2012): 48–50. The letter by Tommaso da Zolfo (or Tolfo) was published in Friedrich Sarre, "Michelangelo und der türkische Hof," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 32 (1909): 61–66.

17 Robinson, "Turkman School to 1503," 243.

18 Robinson, 243. On the disorderly composition of the album, see also Beyhan Karamağaralı, *Muhammed Siyah Kalem'e Atfedilen Minyatürler* (Miniatures attributed to Muhammed Siyah Kalem) (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1984), 12. On the visual logic of double folios, see Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images."

19 Four famous albums in the Topkapı Palace are H. 2152, H. 2153, H. 2154, and H. 2160. The connection between H. 2153 and H. 2160 is well-known. Previously, the compilation of H. 2153 was attributed either to the Aqqoyunlu ruler Sultan Yaʿqub (r. 1478–90) or to the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II, known as "The Conqueror/Fatih" (r. 1444–46, 1451–81), without considering its integral connection to H. 2160. Early publications therefore referred to H. 2153 as either the "Fatih Album" or the "Yaʿqub Beg Album." Stressing the connection between the two albums in 1953–54, Togan named H. 2153 and H. 2160, respectively, as "Cung-i Yaʿqûbî I and II," abbreviated as CY,I and CY,II in his article "Topkapı Sarayında Dört Cönk," 73. Togan called H. 2152 the Baysunghur Album, "Cung-i Baysungurî" (CBs), and H. 2154 the Bahram Mirza Album "Cung-i Behram" (CBh). The titles Fatih and Yaʿqub are no longer viable, given the presence of calligraphies dating after the reigns of those rulers, the latest of which is 917 AH (1511–12) in H. 2160, fol. 55v. The two albums are generally referred to as the "Saray Albums" followed by their catalogue numbers H. 2153 and H. 2160.

20 I thank Wheeler M. Thackston for clarifying the meaning of *khurdak*.

21 See Zeren Tanındı, "History of the Saray Albums: Bindings, Stamps and Annotations" (forthcoming). According to the paper conservator consulted by our study group, the volumes were probably bound

only once before the nineteenth century, judging by holes on some folios. The calligraphy dated 917 AH (1511–12) is in H. 2160, fol. 55v. In H. 2153, the latest dated calligraphy is 892 AH (1487), fol. 158r. Currently eleven folios from H. 2153 are bound in H. 2160, and twenty-three folios are missing in H. 2153.

22 The name Ya'qūb Beg Albums (Album de Yacoub Beg) first appeared in A. Sakisian, *La miniature persane du XIIe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: G. van Oest, 1929), 37n1, 54. It was thenceforth adopted in 1953–54 by Togan, "Topkapı Sarayındaki Dört Cönk," 73–89, and in later studies.

23 For the artists Shaykhi and Darvish Muhammad, see Zeren Tanındı, "Some Problems of Two Istanbul Albums, H. 2153 and H. 2160," *Islamic Art* I (1981): 37–41. David Roxburgh referred to both volumes as the Ya'qūb Beg Albums because the high concentration of materials in Ya'qūb Beg's reign "argues that their production was largely contemporary with his rule, even though they were altered more than any other album over time." See David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 22, 91–92. The albums are also named after Ya'qub Beg in Seki Yoshifusa, "Notes on the Calligraphic Pieces and Paintings in the Two Albums Belonging to Sultān Yaqūb," *Nāmeh-ye Bahārestān* 17 (2010–11): 31–56; and Seki Yoshifusa, "Studies on Two Albums of Soltān Yaqub: A Relic of the Aq Qoyunlu and the Qara Qoyunlu Periods at Topkapı Sarayı Museum (no.2153K, no.2160K)," *Nāmeh-ye Bahārestān* 11/12 (2009): 1–108.

24 On hypotheses, see Necipoğlu, "Composition and Compilation" (forthcoming). According to Filiz Çağman, "the material was in an album format before it reached the Topkapı Palace," but she added that "it is debatable whether the two albums were compiled in Tabrīz or the Ottoman court." Filiz Çağman, "On the Contents of Four Istanbul Albums H. 2152, 2153, 2154 and 2160," *Islamic Art* 1 (1981): 34.

25 Necipoğlu, "Composition and Compilation." Some of those bifolios are analyzed in Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images."

26 See Zeren Tanındı, "History of the Saray Albums" and "Artists Represented in the Two Saray Albums" (forthcoming).

27 On Dust Muhammad and the Bahram Mirza Album, see Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, 245–307.

28 Tanındı, "Artists Represented." See also Ernst Kühnel, "Malernamen in den Berliner 'Saray' Alben," *Kunst des Orients* 3 (1959): 66–77.

29 H. 2153, fols. 23v, 112r.

30 Julian Raby, "Contents & Contexts: Re-viewing the Diez Albums," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, *Diez Albums*, 13–51; David J. Roxburgh, "Memorabilia of Asia: Diez Albums Revisited," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, 52–73; M. Ş. İpşiroğlu, *Saray-Alben: Diez'sche Klebebände aus den Berliner Sammlungen* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1964).

31 Ching-Ling Wang, "Iconographic Turn: On Chinese Buddhist and Daoist Iconography in the Diez Albums," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, *Diez Albums*, 592–612.

32 Arthur Hind dated the engraving to around 1460; Arthur M. Hind, *Early Italian Engravings: A Critical Catalogue with Complete Reproduction of All the Prints Described*, 7 vols. (London: published for M. Knoedler, New York, by B. Quaritch, 1938–48), 1: pt. 1, 195. Mark Zucker prefers the date ca. 1460–70 and attributes it to the "Master of the Vienna Passion"; Mark J. Zucker, ed., *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vols. 24–25, *Early Italian Masters* (New York: Abaris, 1993), 68.

33 See Necipoğlu, "Visual Cosmopolitanism," 36–38; on the painting by Şiblizade Ahmed, formerly mounted on fol. 10r, see 4, 36 (fig. 20), 38.

34 I thank Wheeler Thackston for the translation and following transcription of the couplet on H. 2153, fol. 144r: *har dīda ki rōzē ba jamālat nigarīst * chun az tu judā mānd chirā khūn nagirīst ** harchand ki bē tu zinda am hayrānam * z' ānkas ki rukh-i tu dīd u dūr az tu bizīst.*

35 This couplet reads: *ay 'īd-i rukhat qibla-i dil ahl-i şafā-rā * har lahza safā'ē digar az rūy-i tu mārā.* I am grateful to Wheeler Thackston for this transcription and the translation as well.

36 For the identification of both calligraphers and their father, 'Abd al-Rahman of Khwarazm, who was also a calligrapher, I thank Dr. Simon Rettig. See *Mustafa 'Âli's Epic Deeds of Artists: A Critical Edition of the Earliest Ottoman Text About the Calligraphers and Painters of the Islamic World*, ed., trans., and commented Esra Akın-Kıvanç (Leiden: Brill, 2011) 252–55.

37 On Ottoman portrait painting, see Necipoğlu, "Visual Cosmopolitanism," 1–81.

38 H. 2153, fols. 48r, 149v. See Sugimura, *Encounter of Persia with China*, 221, pls. 94–95.

39 H. 2153, fol. 124v. See Sugimura, 216, pl. 85; and Hiroshi Murano, "A Chinese Woodblock Print 'Yi Lun Zhi Dao,'" forthcoming.

40 Tanındı, "Artists Represented."

41 On these dates, see Massumeh Farhad, "The *Dīvān* of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir and the Diez and Istanbul Albums," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, *Diez Albums*, 485–512. The Jalayirid capital cities were Baghdad in 1335–58 and 1388–1411; Tabriz in the interim,

1358–88; and lower Iraq (Basra, Wasit, Hilla), 1411–32; Patrick Wing, *The Jalayirids: Dynastic State Formation in the Mongol Middle East* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), esp. 101–46 (on Shaykh Uvays and his son Sultan Ahmad Jalayir), 147–84.

42 Barbara Brend, *Muhammad Juki's Shahnamah of Firdausi* (London: Royal Asiatic Society; Ireland: Philip Wilson, 2010), 16, pl. 9. Her caption on page 18 reads: "An angel inspires Khvājū Kirmāni. Folio ca. 1390, from the *Khamsa* of 798 AH (1396), fol. 20v, H. 2154, Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi, Istanbul." For the same date and attribution, see Adel T. Adamova, *Medieval Persian Painting: The Evolution of an Artistic Vision*, trans. and ed. J. M. Rogers (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 2008), 37–40. On the author, see Teresa Fitzherbert, "Khwāju Kirmānī (689–753/1290–1352): An Éminence Grise of Fourteenth-Century Persian Painting," *Iran* 29 (1991): 137–51.

43 On the late fourteenth and early fifteenth-century painter Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, see P. P. Soucek, "ʿAbd-Al-Ḥayy Ḵvājā," *Encyclopædia Iranica* 1/2: 115, accessed December 24, 2024, https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abd-al-hayy-kaja.

44 "Bahram Mirza Album, TSM H. 2154, Preface by Dost-Muhammad," trans. Wheeler M. Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents of the History of Calligraphers and Painters* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 12–13; Wheeler M. Thackston, "Preface to the Bahram Mirza Album," in *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid History of Art* (Cambridge, MA: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1989), 335–49; Roxburgh, *Persian Album,* 245–307; David J. Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image: The Writing of Art History in Sixteenth–Century Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 160–67.

45 Lâle Uluç and Bora Keskiner, *Shah Tahmasp Album from the Royal Ottoman Treasury* (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2024). The latest dated calligraphy in this album is 970 AH (1562–63); it was assembled ca. 1530–63. On the fourteenth-century painter Master Ahmad Musa, see P. P. Soucek, "Aḥmad Mūsā," *Encyclopædia Iranica* 1/6: 652–53, accessed December 24, 2024, https://iranicaonline.org/articles/ahmad-musa-painter.

46 Thackston, "Bahram Mirza Album," 4–18.

47 Thackston, 4–18. On Jalayirid book arts, see Dorothea Duda, "Die Buchmalerei der Galaʾiriden (1. Teil)," *Islam* 48 (1972): 28–76; and "Die Buchmalerei der Galaʾiriden (2. Teil) Die Malerei in Tabriz unter Sultan Uwais und Husain," *Islam* 49 (1972): 153–220.

48 Filiz Çağman, "Uzak ve Yakındoğu Arasında Bir Başka Geçit: Mehmet Siyah Kalem" (Another passage between the Far East and the Near East: Mehmet Siyah Kalem), in *Türkçe Konuşanlar: Asya'dan Balkanlar'a 2000 Yıllık Sanat ve Kültür* (Turkish speakers: 2,000 years of art and culture from Asia to the Balkans), ed. Ergun Çağatay and Doğan Kuban (Istanbul: Tetragon, 2007), 461; Çağman, "Glimpses into the Fourteenth-Century Turkic World of Central Asia: The Paintings of Muhammad Siyah Qalam," in *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, Between 600–1600*, ed. David J. Roxburgh (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005), 148–90.

49 H. 2160, fol. 70r, reproduced and described in Tanındı, "Artists Represented."

50 The French term *grisaille* originated from *gris* (gray) and refers to paintings in black, white, and gray.

51 Tīmur deported ʿAbd al-Ḥayy with other artists from Baghdad in 1393 according to Duda, who attributes the Freer *Dīvān* drawings to the Jalayirid artist Junayd; Duda, "Die Buchmalerei der Galaʾiriden (2. Teil)," 214; and Brend, *Muhammad Juki's Shahnamah*, 18. The later date of 1401 is preferred by Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, who attributed the drawings to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Ḥayy in "A Sufi Theme in Persian Painting: The Dīwān of Sultan Aḥmad Ğalāʾir in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.," *Kunst des Orients* 11.1/2 (1976–77): 69–79. She regards Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy as an "obvious choice" since he was the royal author's tutor in black pen drawing. He started painting the *Dīvān* sometime after 1396, but it was left incomplete when Timur carried him away in 1401 to Samarqand. Duda dates the illustrations to 1403, and Basil Gray to around 1406 (*Arts of the Book*, 113, 117–18).

52 Thackston, "Bahram Mirza Album," 13.

53 *Tadhkirat al-shu'arā* by Mir Davlatshah Samarqandi (d. 1495), written in 1487, translated in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 11–12.

54 *Tadhkirat al-shu'arā* by Mir Davlatshah Samarqandi; Thackston, 12. Since the best reed pens were made in Wasit, *qalam-i wāsiṭī* is identified as the "black pen" technique in Çağman, "Uzak ve Yakındoğu Arasında Bir Başka Geçit," 459.

55 *Tadhkirat al-shu'arā* by Mir Davlatshah Samarqandi, trans. in Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 12–13.

56 This citation from Mirza Muhammad-Haydar Dughlat is translated in Thackston, 11–12.

57 Zeren Tanındı, "Repetition of Illustrations in the Topkapı Palace and Diez Albums," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, *Diez Albums*, 177–82. See also Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, 85, 139–40, 302. He explains that al-Khayyam's two copies are pasted in Diez A, fol. 71, p. 65; and Diez A, fol. 70, p. 26; his models preserved in H. 2153 are on fols. 46v and 87r.

58 For Muhammad al-Khayyam's signed works, see Kühnel, "Malernamen in der Berliner 'Saray' Alben," 72–76; Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme," 55, 77–78; and Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, 85, 139–40, 302.

59 Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, 88–92. Some of al-Khayyam's works were removed from the Timurid Workshop Album in Istanbul to the Diez albums in Berlin; see Friederike Weis, "How the Persian Qalam Caused the Chinese Brush to Break: The Bahram Mirza Album Revisited," *Muqarnas* 37 (2020): 63–109. Works detached from H. 2153 have also migrated to the Diez albums in Berlin. On Timurid art, see Basil Gray, "The Pictorial Art in the Timurid Period," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. Peter Jackson and Lawrence Lockhart, vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 843–76; Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 67–157.

60 Thackston, "Bahram Mirza Album, TSM H. 2154, Preface by Dost-Muhammad," 13. Works in the two Topkapı Palace albums from *Kalīla u Dimna* bear attributive inscriptions that name the Jalayirid artist Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy (H. 2153, fols. 21r, 136v; H. 2160, fol. 70r). See Bernard O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila wa Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 214.

61 Togan, "Topkapı Sarayında Dört Cönk," 75, 73–74.

62 The cosigned painting (H. 2153, fol. 51r) is datable to the third quarter of the fifteenth century.

63 Tanındı, "Some Problems," 38–39.

64 Filiz Çağman, "Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Hazine 762 no.lu Nizami Hamse'sinin Minyatürleri" (The miniatures of Nizami's Khamsa in the Topkapı Palace Museum Treasury no. 762) (PhD diss., İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1971), 142–50. This dissertation established that Shaykhi had worked under the Aqqoyunlu rulers Khalil (r. 1478) and Yaʿqub (r. 1478–90), first in Shiraz and then in Tabriz. For the presence of Jalayirid artists in Muzaffarid Shiraz, see Elaine Wright, *The Look of the Book: Manuscript Production in Shiraz, 1303-1452* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013).

65 Robinson, "Turkman School to 1503," 242–43. On Muhammad Siyah Qalam and subgroups, see Çağman, "Uzak ve Yakındoğu Arasında Bir Başka Geçit," 459–73; and Çağman, "Glimpses into the Fourteenth-Century Turkic World," 148–90. Previ-

ous publications include Karamağaralı, *Muhammed Siyah Kalem*; Mazhar Şevket İpşiroğlu, *Siyah Qalem: Vollständige Faximile Ausgabe der Blätter des Maisters Siyah Qalem aus dem Besitz des Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, İstanbul und Freer Gallery of Art Washington* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verl.-Anst., 1976); and Mazhar Şevket İpşiroğlu, *Bozkır Rüzgarı Siyah Kalem* (The Steppe Wind Siyah Kalem) (Istanbul: Ada Yayınları, 1985).

66 See Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images"; and Necipoğlu, "Composition and Compilation of Two Saray Albums" (forthcoming). Adamova has also suggested that "Muhammad Siah Qalam" may have worked much earlier than the commonly assumed Aqqoyunlu period under Sultan Yaʿqub, and was probably "famous already in the mid-15th century"; *Medieval Persian Painting*, 63. O'Kane dates the main groups of Siyah Qalam demons even earlier, to "Jalayirid Tabriz or Baghdad, ca. 1360–75;" see his "Siyah-Qalam: The Jalayirid Connection," *Oriental Art* 49.2 (2003): 2–3, 16.

67 Çağman, "Uzak ve Yakındoğu Arasında Bir Başka Geçit," 460, 464–65. Seemingly unaware of Çağman's article, Friederike Weis has adopted the same concept of independent or autonomous images in "*Siyāh Qalam*: Independent Black Ink Drawings in the Diez and Istanbul Albums," *Beiträge zur Islamischen Kunst und Archäologie* 7 (2021): 193–205.

68 Tanındı, "Artists Represented."

69 Thackston, "Bahram Mirza Album," 13.

70 On Junayd and his signature in Khvaju Kirmani's *Khamsa*, BL Add 18113, fol. 45v, see Barbara Brend, "Jonayd-e Naqqāš," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 15, fasc. 1, p. 5, accessed December 24, 2024, https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jonayd-e-naqqas; and Wing, *Jalayirids*, 191–92, fig. 9.4.

71 See Ilse Sturkenboom, "The Paintings of the Freer *Divan* of Sultan Ahmad b. Shaykh Uvays and a New Taste for Decorative Design," *Iran* 56.2 (2018): 184–214.

72 Duda and Brend attribute the *Dīvān* paintings to Junayd; see note 51 above. On the attribution of the *Dīvān*'s illustrations to Ahmad Jalayir's teacher, Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy, as an "obvious choice"; also see note 51. This attribution by Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter is accepted in Çağman, "Uzak ve Yakındoğu Arasında Bir Başka Geçit," 462; Adamova, *Medieval Persian Painting*; and Farhad, "*Dīvān*."

73 Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 495, 503.

74 H. 2153, fol. 29v. Zeren Tanındı provides this new reading in "Artists Represented" and her catalogue entry in *Supplements to Muqarnas* (forthcoming),

where the transcription is by Mustafa Çiçekler and the translation into English by Wheeler M. Thackston. I have slightly modified their following translation: "My world-conquering horse has taken existence and space. Work of Aḥmad Pādishāh, the ready, the enflamed."

75 H. 2160, fol. 1r.

76 See note 23 for the hypothesis proposed in Seki, "Studies on Two Albums of Soltān Yaqūb." On the function of the Timurid album H. 2152 as a "Workshop Album," see Roxburgh, *Persian Album*, 85–147.

77 Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images," 534–36; Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 485–512. Klimburg-Salter also finds Western influence on the angels of the Freer *Dīvān*; "Sufi Theme," 53. On the early use of European models under the Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty (1256–1353), see Sheila S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (London: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth and Oxford University Press, 1995), 51–54.

78 Album pages that feature these attributive inscriptions are listed in Tanındı, "Artists Represented."

79 ʿAli Shir Nevāʾī, *Mahbûbü'l-kulûb: İnceleme-metin-sözlük* (*Mahbûbü'l-kulûb*: Analysis-text-dictionary), ed. Zuhak Kargı Ölmez (Phd diss., Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara, 1993), 226. *Autumn Landscape* is mounted in H. 2153, fol. 68r. "Mani" may be the nickname of the talented artist of this painting. Published in Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi İslam Minyatürleri* (Topkapı Palace Museum Islamic miniatures) (Istanbul: Baskan Güzel Sanatlar Matbaası, 1979), 34, no. 61, fig. 25, where it is dated to the second quarter of the fourteenth century (ca. 1330), 30.5 by 42 cm.

80 The miniscule fragment of *Autumn Landscape* (H. 2153, fol. 68r) is on fol. 94r.

81 H. 2153, fol. 54v. Two sinicizing works are incorrectly labeled "*kār-i farang*" on fols. 23v and 117r, at least by our own standards.

82 See Serpil Bağcı, "Shāhnāma Folios in the Saray Albums" and "Appendix: Paintings from the Jalāyirīd *Shāhnāma*" (both forthcoming). See also Bernard O'Kane, "The Great Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, *Diez Albums,* 469–84; Atasoy, "Four Istanbul Albums," 19–48.

83 O'Kane, "Siyah Qalam," 2–18. I have also discussed this painting and additionally contextualized it within its bifolio in Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images," 544–48.

84 Bağcı, "Shāhnāma Folios." For Ilkhanid precedents, see Robert Hillenbrand, *The Great Mongol Shahnama* (London: Hali; Washington, DC: Freer

Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022).

85 H. 2153, fol. 120v. Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images," 549–51, fig. 20. Also attributed to the Jalayirids in Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme," 52–54, fig. 15; and O'Kane, "Siyah Qalam," 11, 14 (fig. 25), who suggests that the multiwinged angel was perhaps "derived from a Transfiguration scene."

86 On these two illustrations, see Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 503–6; Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme"; and Esin Atıl, *The Brush of the Masters: Drawings from Iran and India* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 13–27, nos. 4, 5–6 (Iran, ca. 1400). Both Klimburg-Salter and Farhad date these two illustrations to Iran or Iraq in the late fourteenth century.

87 Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 493.

88 Farhad, 505n61.

89 Farhad, 506–507, fig. 18.5, and n61. On the "Western influence in the depiction of angels" in the Freer *Dīvān*, see also Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme," 53.

90 H. 2153, fol. 76r.

91 See Tanındı, "Artists Represented," where she identifies these three works in H. 2153: two on fol. 21r, and one on fol. 136v.

92 H. 2153 fol. 92r. See Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images," 553–62.

93 Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 493–94. For my preliminary observations on this manuscript, see Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images," 549–51. Earlier publications on the *Dīvān* include Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme"; Atıl, *Brush of the Masters*, 13–27; and more recently, in 2018, Sturkenboom, "Paintings of the Freer *Divan*," 184–214.

94 Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 511–12; see also Adamova, *Medieval Persian Painting*, 492n28. Farhad points out that Sultan Ahmad controlled Baghdad from 1382–93, 1394–99, and 1405–10 (p. 490n21). The chronology is complicated; for details, see Wing, *Jalayirids*, 147–84.

95 Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 491–92; Simon Rettig, "Jaʿfar Tabrizi, 'Second Inventor' of the *Nastaʿlīq* Script, and the Diez Albums," in Gonella, Weis, and Rauch, *Diez Albums*, 194–220.

96 Freer *Dīvān*, F1932.31, fol. 18r; see Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 296–97, fig. 18.6. Also see Atıl, *Brush of the Masters*, "Landscape with Two Couples" (fol. 18a), 20–21, no. 2.

97 On Ahmad Musa, see note 45 above.

98 H. 2153, fol. 28v. The tusk inscription was read by Zeki Velidi Togan, *On the Miniatures in Istanbul Libraries*, trans. Sencer Tonguç (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1963), 13. It is still legible when magnified on the computer screen,

contrary to Togan's statement that it was erased. On this painting, see Bağcı, "Shāhnāma Folios," where she convincingly connects this scene with "Mahmud of Ghazni" and observes that two annotations identify "Ahmad Musa" and the enthroned ruler "Mahmud." On attributions to Ahmad Musa in H. 2153, see also Tanındı, **"**Artists Represented." Tanındı lists eight paintings from the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* in this album with attributions to that artist, as well as two others analyzed in my present essay (fols. 28v, 85v).

99 Sinicizing polychrome landscape paintings are mounted in H. 2153 on fols. 28r, 65r (*Shāhnāma*), 68r, 80r, 85v, and 103r.

100 The subject of this drawing may have been an episode from Nizami Ganjavi's (d. 1209) love story, *Laylā u Majnūn*, according to Serpil Bağcı, based on the text quoted on that page; personal communication.

101 Fol. 19r, illus. in Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 499, fig. 18.10.

102 H. 2153, fol. 25r.

103 BL Add 18113, f. 40v, 41r. Baghdad, 798 AH (1396). This manuscript contains three of the five poems from the *Khamsa* of Khvaju Kirmani. See the British Library website for all the illustrations: Ursula Sims-Williams, "An Illustrated 14th Century Khamsah by Khvaju Kirmani," *Asian and African Studies Blog*, August 1, 2013, https://bl.iro.bl.uk/concern/generic_works/bb0fc258-3c32-4ace-8370-4b7208a2e650.

104 H. 2153, fol. 132r.

105 Ali Ferdowsi, "The Reluctant Sovereignty of Sultan Ahmad Jalayer: Some Reflections on the Relations Between Persian Poetry and the Thesis of the Iranianization of Alien Conquerers," *Iran Nameh* 30.4 (Winter 2016): 50–51.

106 See the five remaining pages of a manuscript of *Khusrav u Shirin* from a *Khamsa* (Quintet) by Nizami ca. 1400 at the National Museum of Asian Art (F1932.30–F1932.37); Mehmet Aga-Oglu, "Khusrau va Shirin," *Ars Islamica* 4 (1937): 474–78, figs. 1–5. See also the "Three Masnavis" of 1396 from the *Khamsa* of Khvaju Kirmani, BL Add 18113 (cited in note 103 above). Jalayirid manuscripts are analyzed in Çağman and Tanındı, "Selections from Jalayirid Books," 221–64. On the high status of Jalayirid royal women and marriage ties, see Wing, "From Tribal Amirs to Royal In-Laws," chap. 4 in *Jalayirids*, 63–73.

107 Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 495. Such a collaborative study is being contemplated by Massumeh Farhad and Ali Ferdowsi (see note 105 above).

108 See two theses with detailed bibliography: Nimet Yıldırım, "Sultan Ahmed Celâyir ve 'Kitâbu'l Mukaddime' Adlı Divanı" (Sultan Ahmed Celâyir and his

Divan titled 'Kitâbu'l Mukaddime') (PhD diss., Istanbul Ünivesitesi, 1991), esp. 19–29; and Sadık Armutlu, "Sultan Ahmed Celâyir Hayatı, Divanının Tenkitli Metni ve Tahlili" (Sultan Ahmed Celâyir: his life, the critical edition, and analysis of his divan) (PhD diss., Atatürk Üniversitesi, 1900). See also Leila Bagheri, Gorbanali Ebrahimi, and Morteza Rashidi, "Biography and Study of the Cognitive Style of the Sultan Ahmed Oweis Jalaiera's Lyrics Collection," *Classical Persian Literature* 12.2 (Autumn–Winter 2021–22): 125–56.

109 Both prefaces are translated in Thackston, *Album Prefaces*, 22–23, 41–42. Brief biographies of artists suddenly appeared in late-Timurid chronicles and biographical anthologies of poets; see Lentz and Lowry, *Timur*, 285.

110 Roxburgh noted the absence of surviving albums from about 1450 until 1544, in *The Persian Album*, 179, 182. The painting is in H. 2153, fol. 35r. See Bağcı, "Shāhnāma Folios."

111 H. 2153, fol. 16v, Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*, ca. 1370–74. See Bağcı, "Shāhnāma Folios."

112 H. 2153, fol. 22v. Cited from the forthcoming catalogue in *Supplements to Muqarnas* but with my slightly modified translation.

113 Gulestan Palace Library, 716, Tehran. See Robert Hillenbrand, "Exploring a Neglected Masterpiece: The Gulestan Shahnama of Baysunghur," *Iranian Studies* 43.1 (2010): 97–126.

114 On the origin of illustrations from the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* mounted in H. 2153, see Bağcı, "Shāhnāma Folios." On the contents of H. 2153 and H. 2160, see also Gray, "Chinoiserie Elements," 86: "My thesis is that these albums contain work gathered at Tabriz in the final decades of the fifteenth century, mainly from Herat, to which fourteenth-century material would have been brought by Baysunghur in 1420 from Tabriz, when he captured it on behalf of his father Shah Rukh and laid the foundation of his important scriptorium; of course it is gathered together with original work produced in Tabriz in the late fifteenth century." On the *Shāhnāma* manuscript, see Atasoy, "Four Istanbul Albums"; and O'Kane, "Great Jalayirid *Shāhnāma*."

115 For the inscription, see the catalogue entry for H. 2153, fol. 28r, forthcoming in *Supplements to Muqarnas*.

116 H. 2153, fols. 16v, 22v, 35r, 85v.

117 H. 2153, fol. 48v. For this attribution see Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme," 50, 52, 80, fig. 12. Also described in Tanındı, "Repetition of Illustrations," 188–90, fig. 6.19. Another black pen drawing in H. 2153, fol. 170r, *Nobleman Visiting a Hermit in a*

Cave, has been dated to the late fourteenth century in Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme," 50–51, fig. 11. For similar bird and landscape motifs in H. 2153, see fols. 23r, 48v, 82r, 102r, 153r, 157r, and 158r.

118 H. 2153, fols. 137v, 153r. These two drawings are also attributed to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy in Tanındı, "Artists Represented."

119 H. 2153, fol. 137v.

120 The *Dīvān*'s "margin paintings" are ascribed to Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy in Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme," 79–80. See note 51 above for other studies that accept this attribution.

121 H. 2153, fol. 136v.

122 H. 2153, fol. 153r.

123 H. 2153 includes a Florentine engraving of a triumphal procession, *Trionfo della fama* (Triumph of Fame), ca. 1460–65 (H. 2153, fol. 159r). The two interrelated albums include many sinicizing processions: a domed palanquin carried by five Chinese ladies (H. 2160, fol. 67v); a Chinese cart drawn by a mule with two grooms (H. 2153, fol. 73r); flying demons and angels carrying palanquins and chests, attributed to Muhammad Siyah Qalam (H. 2153, fols. 88v, 164v, 165r); "Wedding Procession" (H. 2160, fol. 77v; H. 2153, fols. 3v, 4r, 15v, 130r); "Night Procession" (H. 2153, fols. 3v–4r); and "Procession with Chinese Porcelain" (H. 2153, fol. 130r).

124 Cut-up scrolls in H. 2153 and H. 2160 are too many to list. See note 123 above for some famous examples. Six scrolls are reconstructed in Beyhan Yörükan (Karamağaralı), "Topkapı Sarayı Müzesindeki Albümlerde Bulunan Bazı Rulo Parçaları" (Some scroll fragments in Topkapı Palace Museum albums), *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı* 1 (July 1965):188–201. On black pen drawings, see Banu Mahir, "*Qalam-i Siyāhī* Drawings and Decorative Designs in the Saray Albums" (forthcoming). Chinoiserie designs in the Topkapı albums are dated to the second half of the fourteenth century in Jessica Rawson, *Chinese Ornament: The Lotus and the Dragon* (London: British Museum Publications, 1984). On chinoiserie, see also Yuka Kadoi, *Islamic Chinoiserie: The Art of Mongol Iran* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

125 Fragments of this Chinese handscroll are on H. 2153, fols. 35v, 105v, 114r, 114v, 115r, 115v, 128v, 129r, and 137v. See Sugimura, *Encounter of Persia with China*, figs. 87–92 (which omits 137v).

126 H. 2153, fols. 114v–115r.

127 An example is the semi-grisaille manuscript painting, *Battle of Catalonia* (ca. 1325–35), National Library of the Netherlands. See "Battle of the Catalunian Plains," Wikimedia Commons, updated January 2024, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_the_Catalaunian_plains.jpg.

128 For a debatable symbolic interpretation of the birds in this manuscript, see Klimburg-Salter, "Sufi Theme." She plausibly attributes the drawings to Khvaja Abd al-Hayy, and notes parallels between the *Dīvān* and sinicizing paintings in albums H. 2153 and H. 2160, as well as the manuscript's "unfinished state" (pp. 67–69).

129 See Farhad, "*Dīvān*," F1932.29–37.

130 Examples include H. 2153 (fols. 25r, 44v, 56r, 83r, 101v, 147r) and H. 2160 (fols. 34r, 66r, 46v, 75r, 78r).

131 Davlatyar's works in H. 2153 and H. 2160 are listed in Tanındı, "Artists Represented."

132 Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 13.

133 H. 2153, fol. 84v.

134 H. 2153, fol. 104r.

135 H. 2153, fol. 119v.

136 H. 2153, fol. 22r.

137 A small, sinicizing black-ink brush drawing of a "Galloping Horse," mounted in one of the Diez albums, is identified as an "exercise" by its attributive inscription in red ink with the name of Amir Davlatyar (*mashq-i Mīr Davlatyār*), Iran, fourteenth century (SBB-PK, Diez A, fol. 73, p. 46, no. 5). This drawing is discussed and reproduced in Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 488, fig. 18.2.

138 H. 2153, fols. 70r, 167v; and H. 2160, fol. 76v. The figures, including the seated Mongol amir, wear the same type of headgear and short-sleeved sinicizing wrapped coats, tied with sashes rather than buttons. Without mentioning the two other related fragments of the scroll, Weis proposes that the painting with a lion (H. 2160, fol. 76b [her p. 86, fig. 25]) depicts "Persian emissaries with a young tribute lioness on their way to the Chinese emperor." Based on Shahrukh sending a lion from Timurid Herat in 1420–21 to the Ming emperor, she attributes its "retro-Ilkhanid style" to "probably Herat, fifteenth century." See Weis, "How the Persian Qalam," 84–87. However, this seems unlikely since the Mongol gift-bearers in the three scroll fragments do not wear Timurid costumes and turbans and also bring diverse animals as gifts.

139 Another black pen drawing in H. 2153, fol. 6v, which depicts cooks preparing food outdoors, features a similar tree. Sinicizing bent tree trunks with holes and bumps in Jalayirid images also resemble those depicted in a colored Chinese handscroll on silk, *Village Wedding*, attributed to Li T'ang (Ueno Collection, Kyoto National Museum); see Sugimura, *Encounter of Persia with China*, 199, fig. 50. Similar trees are also seen in

polychrome paintings of the Jalayirid *Shāhnāma* in H. 2153, especially on fols. 112v and 157r.

140 Diez A, fol. 73, p. 50, no. 4; analyzed in Farhad, "*Dīvān*," 488, fig. 18.3. I suggest that it was probably mounted in H. 2153 based on its lengthy inscription resembling others in that album. The other source of images in the Diez albums, H. 2152 (Timurid Workshop Album), lacks such attributive inscriptions.

141 Bent trees with dramatic roots and holes were derived from Chinese models. On rock faces, see Bernard O'Kane, "Rock Faces and Rock Figures in Persin Painting," *Islamic Art* 4 (1993): 219–46.

142 H. 2160, fol. 34r.

143 Other fragments in H. 2160 are as follows: fol. 46v ("*kār-i Ustād Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam*"), fol. 66r (with an intertwined tree), fol. 75r ("*kār-i Ustād Muḥammad Siyāh Qalam*"), and fol. 78r (unattributed). The order of these fragments is: fols. 34r, 66r, 46v, 75r, and 78r. The scroll was reconstructed in Karamağaralı, *Muhammed Siyah Kalem*, 55, 72–73, unpaginated foldout, fig. 149. See also her reconstruction in Beyhan Yörükan (Karamağaralı), "Topkapı Sarayı Müzesindeki Albümlerde Bulunan Bazı Rulo Parçaları," 190–93, scroll no. I, with unpaginated plates. She mentions an additional fragment once owned by Sakisian, measuring 25 cm long, which would have increased the scroll's length to 2.037 meters. This scroll is attributed by her to the first half of the fifteenth century and Timurid Central Asia, under the influence of Uyghur Turkestan. Zeren Tanındı has tentatively attributed the "Forest Scroll" to "Timurid, Herat?"; see her "Repetition of Illustrations," 172, fig. 6.3.

144 Aga Khan Museum, Toronto (AKM38). See Aga Khan Museum, "Curator's Pick: A Forest of Tales with Filiz Çakır Phillip," posted November 30, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8x6rRfwmqR0. This drawing depicts a leafy black pen forest with animals, and a hero fighting a dragon. The second example is *Prince on Horseback Attacked by a Lion in a Landscape* (Iran, ca. 1400–50), Timurid Workshop Album (H. 2152, fol. 47v), published in Weis, "*Siyāh Qalam*," 194–95, fig. 1.

145 This was also suggested in Walter B. Denny, "Dating Ottoman Turkish Works in the Saz Style," *Muqarnas* 1 (1983): 103–21.

146 Tanındı, "Repetition of Illustrations," 163–93.

147 Tanındı, 193. Many examples of copying are illustrated in the appendix of *Islamic Art* 1 (1981) with black-and-white photos, n.p. Repetitions abound in H. 2153 and H. 2160. There are no repetitions in the Bahram Mirza Album (H. 2154), given its chronological art-historical evolution narrative by Dust Muhammad.

148 H. 2153, fol. 115v.

149 H. 2153, fol. 137v.

150 Raby, "Samson and Siyah Qalam," 160–63.

151 H. 2153, fol. 29v; see Raby, 160–63. In this album, works attributed to "Ustad Muhammad Siyah Qalam" belong to different styles and periods. A "metropolitan" Persianate subgroup has been dated to ca. 1350–75 in O'Kane, "Siyah Qalam," 6–10, 16.

152 H. 2153, fol. 103r. See Sugimura, *Encounter of Persia with China*, 215, fig. 83. Other landscape paintings in the "Cathayan manner" in this album are on fols. 65v, 68r, 80r, and 156r.

153 Klimburg-Salter in " Sufi Theme," 67–69, correctly predicted that studying album H. 2153 and the Diez albums "will allow the identification of more works by this master" (Khvaja ʿAbd al-Hayy). She added: "Besides identifying works by other artists mentioned by Dust Muhammad, a more precise understanding of the art of the Ğalāʾirid period and the transition to the Herat school will undoubtedly emerge."

154 For a parallel process in calligraphy, see Rettig, "Jaʿfar Tabrizi," 214–17, esp. 217. He observes that the patronage of Jaʿfar's calligraphy in the Timurid court under Baysunghur "eventually overshadowed Mīr ʿAli Tabrizi and his Jalayirid patrons."

155 For an exception, see James White, "A Sign of the End Time: 'The Monastery,' Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi H.2153 f.131b 1," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 27.1 (2017): 1–30. Dating this painting to 810 AH (1407–8), White interprets it in the context of "overlapping patronage" by Qara Yusuf Qaraqoyunlu and Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, who were allied against the Timurids. Interestingly, this date coincides with the completion in Baghdad of the aforementioned second copy of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir's *Dīvān* in 1407.

156 Wing, *Jalayirids*, 169–75.

157 Weis, "How the Persian *Qalam*," 76–77.

Conversations From the Field

ADAM J. AJA WITH ANTONIETTA CATANZARITI

REVIVING NEO-ASSYRIAN CASTS

In July 2025, the art historian and archaeologist Antonietta Catanzariti conducted an interview with Adam J. Aja, chief curator at the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, about the ongoing exhibition *From Stone to Silicone: Recasting Mesopotamian Monuments* at the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, which addressed the role and function of casts (figs. 1, 2).

Adam J. Aja: Since 2009, I have worked as a curator at the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, formerly the Semitic Museum, which was founded in 1902 by David Gordon Lyon, an Assyriologist. The purpose-built museum housed ancient objects related to the history, culture, and languages of the Semitic-speaking peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean (fig. 3).

The top two floors were given over to display spaces, including one large gallery that was called the Assyrian room. It displayed plaster casts that Lyon had purchased, mostly from the British Museum and the Louvre, as well as from Berlin and Istanbul. They were the teaching tools of their day.

The turn of the twentieth century was the heyday of cast use. Casts of Greek and Roman sculptures were critical in museums and universities for teaching, but Assyrian works were less well-known. Not everyone was able to get over to the British Museum and the Louvre to see authentic Assyrian antiquities. It was a big win for Lyon to have casts of their pieces shipped over, and in fact, he had some of the Assyrian casts specially commissioned for the Semitic Museum.

As archaeological works became available in the antiquities market and were exhibited in universities and museums around the world, these cast collections were no longer seen as providing authentic experiences for museum visitors. The casts were pushed aside, and many museums literally destroyed their cast collections. We were lucky that the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East retained its collection even after its 1958 closure, when all the objects and casts used in teaching and in display were taken off view.

Antonietta Catanzariti: Let's discuss the exhibition *From Stone to Silicone* and how you realized it.

Adam J. Aja: I was especially interested in rebuilding our public display spaces after the museum installed an elevator around twelve years ago. If you go online to our website, you can see the third floor, with its glorious skylight, that I coveted as an exhibition space. A part of this exhibition originated from the idea of bringing the public back to the museum to give visitors a rewarding experience. I knew that the museum had several plaster casts, but they were not suitable for exhibition.

FIGURE 1. Entrance to the ongoing exhibition *From Stone to Silicone*, Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East
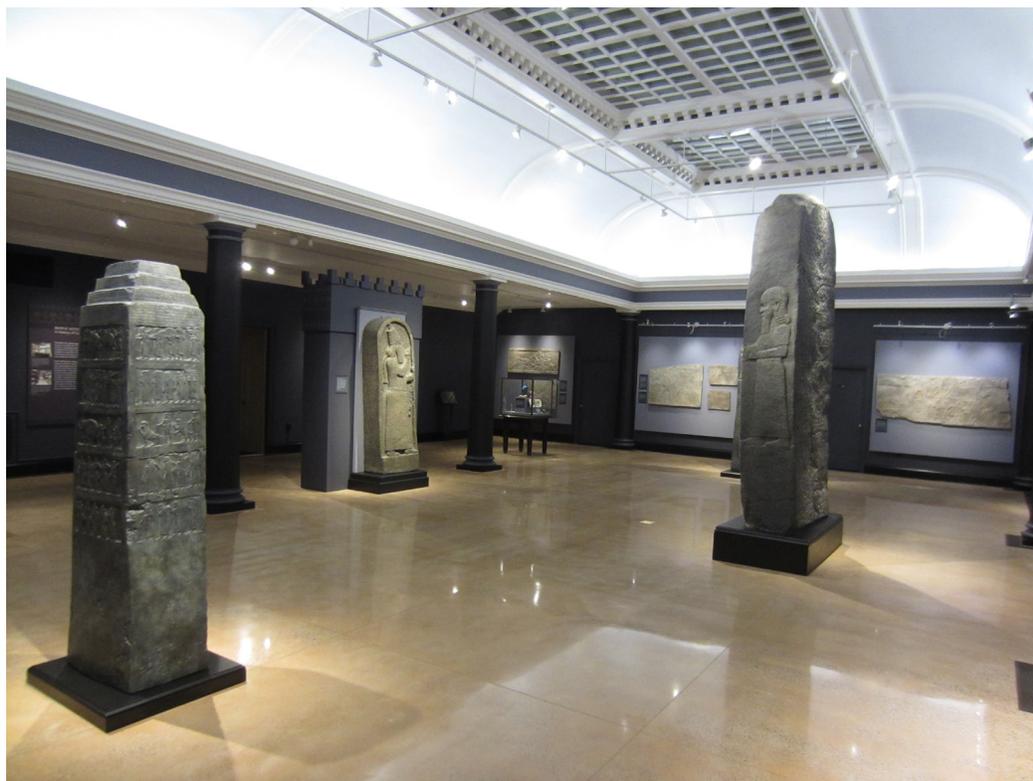

FIGURE 2. Installation view of *From Stone to Silicone* at the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

FIGURE 3. Gallery view of the Semitic Museum, Harvard University, ca. 1905. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

Plaster is wonderful for picking up all sorts of details from the original molds, but it is also fragile and can fracture easily. It can dissolve through exposure to water, and in the past there had been a leak in the attic, where many of the plaster pieces had been stored. Unfortunately, some of the casts had water stains; others were damaged and cracked; and still others were missing parts. A number of the casts had been stacked against each other without any protection, so there were signs of wear (fig. 4). With the newly renovated gallery, I saw a chance for the casts to be shown again, after recasting them with new materials.

The plan for the new galleries designated the third floor for Mesopoamia, the second floor for ancient Egypt, and the first floor for other ancient cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean. The re-created casts placed on the walls of the third floor were meant to serve several purposes: to explain why museums have casts, why casts are important, and the future of casts in 3D scanning and printing. Moreover, it was an opportunity for the Mesopotamian and Neo-Assyrian narrative scenes to serve as the backdrop for future exhibitions that would focus on art, empire, history, and the language of the region. The origin of the project started with visualizing the long-term use of the third-floor gallery space to create an installation that would, years down the line, look coherent, cohesive, and comprehensive.

The cast selection was done in consultation with my colleague the Assyriologist Gojko Barjamovic. We went through some of our early catalogues and descriptions of these well-known original works from the British Museum and the Louvre, and assessed the condition of these

FIGURE 4. Damages to casts, fall 2016. Images courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

FIGURE 5. Students working on the Neo-Assyrian relief casts, March 2015. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

pieces to determine if they could be re-created. Barjamovic chose scenes that told several different stories (religion, military aspects, the movement of people around the region) or covered different time periods to see some of the artistic transformations. This enabled students working on the project to focus specifically on different details of the ancient world.

Antonietta Catanzariti: Can you tell us more about the restoration of these casts and how the students were involved?

Adam A. Aja: The recasting was one of the options for students and took place over several semesters (other elements included the preparation of gallery materials etc.). I worked with them to remove the casts from storage, to clean them, and to fill holes and cracks. We would then complete a cosmetic restoration of the pieces. If casts were in multiple fragments, we would reunite them and fill the seams just at the surface (figs. 5, 6). If we had two parts of one scene that could be reunited, we would fill the gaps between them. We made new molds and poured a lighter-weight urethane resin into those molds (fig. 7). The new resin casts, which were essentially plastic, could easily be hung on the wall. Later, I worked on painting and coloring the casts to look like ancient stone.

Following one course related to the project, I collaborated with Sarah Milton, a student and an artist. She knew I was experimenting with different colors, so she volunteered to help me develop a color palette that would work. We chose a color that was evocative of stone and added different layers of dry-brushing and smearing techniques. It was almost impossible for

FIGURE 6. Adam Aja working on Neo-Assyrian reliefs, January 2017. Image Courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

us to replicate the actual piece, so we opted for a stone-like look that was based on existing ancient stone fragments (fig. 8).

I did not want visitors to see a flat-white cast on the wall, which is the way they usually experience casts. As scholars, we know that the original objects were all vibrantly painted. One of the early concepts I had was to paint the pieces as they might have appeared in the ancient Assyrian palace where they originated. However, long ago I visited the touring exhibition *Gods in Color*, and I recall visitors reacting negatively to seeing ancient Greek statue casts painted in colors. Their experience of ancient art is often with colorless stone or unpainted white plaster. Since I wanted the gallery to serve different purposes and did not want to create an exhibition just about color, I opted for this "faux stone" look. The decision then led to the use of an app to teach visitors about the color of the original stone reliefs while keeping their stoniness. I wanted the public to dive into the scenes and the stories behind all the artwork.

Antonietta Catanzariti: The digital feature for *From Stone to Silicone* tries to engage with the public at different levels. Can you explain to us the app developed for the exhibition?

Adam J. Aja: Peter Manuelian, director of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, has always been interested in using digital technology to teach audiences about the past and to contextualize objects. When he asked me how we could use the casts for storytelling, I started thinking about how we might use modern technology. One idea was exploring video games. I thought perhaps we could use this medium to tell visitors more about the narrative of the plaster-cast scenes.

FIGURE 7. Pouring resin, November 2016. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

FIGURE 8. Adam Aja painting with Sarah Milton, December 2017. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

We started building our digital assets in 2018, but with the arrival of Covid, the project fell apart. More recently, we experimented with a new app for the galleries. For the floor with the Assyrian relief casts, we decided to use Snapchat with a filter to apply animation over the Assyrian scenes. The app is called *Art of Intimidation*: *Journey to Ancient Assyria*, because it deals with the artistic expression of political propaganda. The casts in the exhibit show scenes of the king as all-powerful and dominating his enemies. They clearly communicate what would happen to individuals if they revolted against the empire. It is art—intimidating art!

The premise behind the app is that members of the public are cast as visiting dignitaries who bring tribute to the Assyrian king. They are greeted by a little figure in the corner of the screen (fig. 9); he is the palace overseer, and he speaks to them directly in the first person. For example, he says (and I'm paraphrasing):

> I see that you're tired and dirty from your journey. The king is busy, he can't meet with you right now, but while you wait, please enjoy the splendors of the palace and the gardens. If you have any questions about these beautiful scenes, please approach me, let me know, and I'll tell you about them.

The Snapchat app is also available in the museum through an iPad, for visitors who don't have Snapchat on their phone or if they don't want to download it. When you activate the app and point your device's camera at a relief, it recognizes the cast and animates the scene with sound and color. The palace overseer–narrator returns and begins to tell a unique story related to the scene, such as: "Oh yes, I see you're admiring this scene. This reminds me of my days in the army. Those Elamites were like sand in my bread, irritating!" The narrator recounts

FIGURE 9. The app entitled *Art of Intimidation*: *Journey to Ancient Assyria* showing the overseer-narrator and animating the scene with sounds and colors. Image courtesy of the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

these stories from his perspective, and in the meantime, the visitor is learning about the color of the pieces and the story of the scenes. Ancient visitors would probably have understood the scenes the way we understand a comic book or a graphic novel today. Our narrator helps museum visitors to experience the art as if they lived during the Assyrian period.

We have found that visitors spend a lot more time in the gallery when they use the app, looking at the works and learning about them beyond what is on the labels. If they want to learn more, they can still do so by reading the label text. The app can also be accessed at home; if you bring up our tour, which is found on our website, you can navigate to the third floor, zoom into one of the casts, bring up Snapchat on your phone, and point it at your screen.

Antonietta Catanzariti: Museums today are trying to balance digital presence in the galleries with the experience of the physical object. How did you ensure that the app and the objects would be complementary to each other?

Adam J. Aja: It is indeed a balance. The footprint of our museum is fairly small. While you certainly could spend a great deal of time reading every label, visitors can probably see all three galleries in an hour. Manuelian's vision for using digital teaching tools was instrumental in helping me shape my ideas. You do not want to distract from the authentic objects or the casts, yet you also want to make sure you appeal to a wide audience. I think digital content can be applied judiciously; for example, you can have a touch screen in the gallery or a phone app for visitors to explore the objects. If they want to learn more, they can also access the web. We are always delighted when they do so, for it means that we have interested them enough to go beyond what is in the gallery.

I think that casts are extremely important. Some visitors have expressed disappointment that some of our works on view are "just copies," a mindset I wanted to address. We were not hiding that the objects in the gallery were copies. We wanted to celebrate them and explore why casts were and are important to museums, especially now. People are talking about the repatriation of material: How did you get it? Why is it here? To have a replica of a work that is not here because it is in its home institution, or it is in its country of origin, is very valuable.

I wanted to emphasize that casts are useful teaching tools that allow us to experience an object in a way that just looking at a photograph or a 3-D reconstruction on your phone is not going to make possible.

Antonietta Catanzariti: One issue with implementing digital applications is that they require maintenance. How have you been able to address this? How sustainable is the digital app?

Adam J. Aja: We have wrestled with this issue, and I think there's a certain allowance for museums to use established technical tools. We first developed our own app, but it was constantly breaking down and needed updates. We then opted for Snapchat because it has the advantage to be an off-the-shelf product that was regularly maintained and updated. I think this is a much more successful approach and has allowed us to provide content without having to spend the time and money on something that other people do well.

We also do in-house 3-D scanning of our objects and provide platforms for scholars and those individuals interested in the ancient world to view that content. Three-dimensional scans are especially important for specialists who want to be able to turn and rotate tablets, for example.

I'm always interested in understanding how to reach different audiences. My father is visually impaired, so I always want to make sure there is something tangible in each gallery. In our ground-floor gallery, for example, we have 3-D prints of objects that are accompanied by an audio box, which speaks to visitors. As a result, they can handle the objects and also hear about them. In conjunction with our education department, we have developed special touch tours for our Mesopotamian gallery with its Neo-Assyrian palace art. On these tours, we encourage visitors to touch and handle the different reliefs, so they are not just objects behind glass. We make sure we provide accessible options for visitors of different ages and those with physical impairment, as well as Spanish-language interactives.

The university is actively reaching out to promote these collections and underline their importance to visitors. We have seen the number of visitors increase over the last decade primarily because of this initiative and our effort to expand and renovate our exhibition spaces. We also hope to replicate the third-floor app experience in other spaces so that our visitors can have layered experiences in the different galleries.

Adam J. Aja, PhD (Harvard University), 2009, is chief curator at the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, where he has redesigned and rebuilt the artifact storage facilities, planned and implemented new exhibits, and developed digital and replica gallery augmentation. He is also a field archaeologist, having worked on numerous projects in Israel and Turkey since 1992. The bulk of his publications are directed toward the discoveries from the Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, Israel, including the most recent co-authored volume, *Ashkelon 10: The Philistine Cemetery*.

Antonietta Catanzariti, PhD (University of California, Berkeley), 2015, is associate curator for the ancient Near East at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art, where she oversees the ancient Near East collection and has organized the exhibitions *Shaping Clay in Ancient Iran* (2018), *Ancient Yemen: Incense, Art and Trade* (2022), and *A Collector's Eye: Freer in Egypt* (2023). As a field archaeologist, Catanzariti has worked in Italy, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, and directed field projects in Iraqi-Kurdistan and Armenia. Her publications reflect her excavations work on the ground and her interest in ancient economies and cultural interaction.

Conversations From the Field

BRYAN LOWE AND AKIKO WALLEY WITH KIT BROOKS

WHAT IS A REPLICA: REFLECTIONS FROM *SHŌSŌIN THE SHOW*

In July 2025, Kit Brooks, curator of Asian art at the Princeton University Art Museum, conducted an interview with Bryan Lowe, associate professor of religion at Princeton University, and Akiko Walley, Maude I. Kerns Associate Professor of Japanese Art at the University of Oregon, on the role and function of replicas and the recent exhibition *Shōsōin THE SHOW: Japanese Imperial Treasures*, on view at the Osaka Museum of History (June 14–August 24, 2025) and the Ueno Royal Museum in Tokyo (September 20–November 19, 2025). (See fig. 1.)

Built in the eighth century as the repository of the Tōdaiji temple in Nara, the Shōsōin preserves around 9,000 objects and 10,000 documents, including manuscripts, textiles, ceramics, lacquer, and metalwork, many of which came to Japan along the Silk Road from China, Southeast Asia, Iran, and the Middle East. As opening the Shōsōin requires the emperor's permission, only a handful of privileged individuals have had access to its contents through much of the repository's history. Since the 1870s, under the auspices of the government, artists and researchers have made physical replicas of the treasures by painstakingly re-creating their original materials and methods of production. More recently, the Office of the Shōsōin has worked with the Japanese printing company Toppan to produce high-fidelity printed and digital reproductions. The current exhibition *Shōsōin THE SHOW* contains only replicas, both physical and digital.

Kit Brooks: Would you introduce yourselves and explain how your work relates to the Shōsōin?

Bryan Lowe: I teach in the Department of Religion at Princeton University, focusing on seventh- through ninth-century Japanese religions, especially Buddhism. Akiko and I just taught a graduate seminar on the Shōsōin together, and tied to that, we also held an international conference at Princeton where we brought in the director of the Office of the Shōsōin, as well as representatives from Toppan, the company that is working on digital replicas of Shōsōin objects. My interest in this project is from a professional and personal perspective, as I use Shōsōin materials in my research, and I'm interested in thinking about replicas more generally.

Akiko Walley: I teach Japanese art history at the University of Oregon, in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture. My specialization is seventh- to eighth-century

FIGURE 1. *Shōsōin THE SHOW*: Stage 02 moving image

Buddhist art, and I am now moving into the Nara period (710–784) and learning more about the Shōsōin. I have thought about replication, not as a research topic but as a user. For my research on early Buddhist reliquaries, some examples are only accessible for close examination in the form of replicas. Also, I learned recently that the bronze Śākyamuni Triad at Hōryūji, an object that I worked on for my first book, was "cloned."

Kit Brooks: Could you give a brief description of what makes these replicas different from those in other replica projects?

Bryan Lowe: It might be helpful to explain some of the history of Shōsōin replicas and why they are necessary. Firstly, since the eighth century, parts of the Shōsōin have been under what they call the Imperial Seal System, which means no one has access without the emperor's permission. Every year, for about seventeen days, the Office of the Shōsōin collaborates with the Nara National Museum to hold an exhibition of select original objects, but for the most part, even researchers cannot access the Shōsōin collection without the emperor's permission. Replicas provide a promising avenue to learn more about these otherwise inaccessible objects.

Replication began in the seventeenth century with drawings of some of the treasures—but after the 1870s, craftsmen began to make physical replicas, largely for the world's fairs. After the 1923 Kantō earthquake, people wanted to make reproductions as it was recognized that objects could easily be destroyed. There was little progress because of World War II, but in 1972, the Office of the Shōsōin started in earnest to make precise and scientifically accurate replicas. They have only made fifty in about fifty years, and one of the objects alone took eight years to create.

Kit Brooks: Which object took eight years?

FIGURE 2. Five-stringed *biwa* lute of *shitan* with mother-of-pearl inlay, the Shōsōin Treasure (North Section 29), mid-8th century. Red sandalwood and shell, 108.1 (overall) x 30.9 (max.) cm. Courtesy of the Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency, Japan
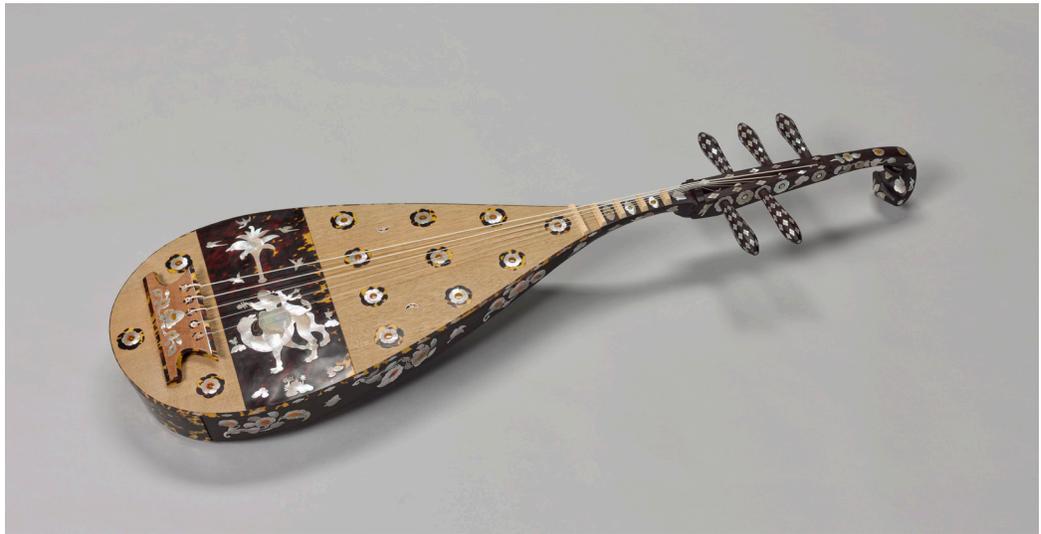
FIGURE 3. Reproduction ("reappeared reproduction"; *saigen mozō*) of the five-stringed *biwa* lute of *shitan* with mother-of-pearl inlay. Courtesy of the Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency

Bryan Lowe: It is the *Biwa*, a five-string lute (figs. 2, 3). It has 649 inlays of tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl. The replication project is extremely important, but it still doesn't help with access to the original objects.

Akiko Walley: What is interesting is that Machida Hisanari and Ninagawa Noritane, the two individuals who were involved in the 1872 survey of the Shōsōin objects that led to modern-style replication, were also part of the establishment of museums in Japan. From the start, replication for museums was a core mission and involved people connected to the Shōsōin. As the objects are not accessible, in 2018 the Shōsōin became actively engaged in digital technology. Their elaborate digital archiving was ahead of the curve, and one year later, in 2019, the Japanese government began to focus on digital transformation. The initiative accelerated after Covid, for like the Kantō Earthquake, which highlighted the importance of physical replicas, Covid emphasized the usefulness of digital replicas (fig. 4). In 2023, Japan's Museum Act was revised to explicitly position digital transformation as one of the missions of the nation's museums.

Kit Brooks: Thank you for contextualizing those previous replica programs and their origins. That leads to the next question, on the lifespan of a replica. On the one hand, people might think that a digital replica is longer-lived because it exists in the ether rather than as a physical object that can be damaged in just the same way as the original. On the other hand, I think we've all had experience with projects that were developed for digital platforms that are now inaccessible or broken. Given the Shōsōin's deep investment in the concept of replicas, do you have any knowledge of how long they think these replicas will last?

Bryan Lowe: I don't have inside information about their plans or about the technology behind it. I suspect that they are aware of these issues and think about them in ways that address some problems they've had in the past. For example, my research on the Shōsōin deals with manuscripts. The Shōgozō is a sutra repository under the auspices of the Office of the Shōsōin that contains thousands of manuscripts. In the early 2000s, they started digitizing these materials, and when I was a naïve graduate student at Princeton, I asked

FIGURE 4. 3D digital data of the original five-stringed *biwa* lute of *shitan* with mother-of-pearl inlay; (left) front side and (right) detail of the mother-of-pearl floral design on the back. Produced under the supervision of the Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency, using the photography and measurements collected by the Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency, and TOPPAN Inc. Planning and Production of the 3D digital data by TOPPAN Inc

a shocked librarian to purchase the digital images of the sutra manuscripts—the total cost at present is 27,900,000 yen, a little less than $200,000 at today's exchange rate. The library, in fact, started acquiring them, which was remarkable, but the format was on CD-R and the collection continues to be published on DVD-R. In other words, purchasing these digital images would cost a library hundreds of thousands of dollars for a technology that is no longer accessible/current. One other thing I'll add is that what really surprised me is that although *Shōsōin THE SHOW* was pitched as a digital exhibition, it contained more physical replicas than digital media. I think the two formats complement one another, and the digital replicas can't replace physical ones precisely because physical objects can last longer.

    Kit Brooks: Do you think the replicas will make a difference to the way you teach these materials in the future, or is it just more of the same but more technologically advanced?

    Bryan Lowe: Two things excited me about the exhibition as related to my teaching. One was how much we can learn about the techniques used to make the objects through studying the process of creating physical replicas. To give an example, one highlighted object was a *shaku*, which is like a ruler; it is made of ivory and dyed red, and then engraved using a technique called *bachiru*, where you scape away the dye of the ivory to reveal the original color beneath,

FIGURES 5. Red-stained ivory shaku with *bachiru* decoration, the Shōsōin Treasure (North Section 13, 乙), mid-8th century. 29.7 x 2.5 x 0.6 cm. Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency

which can then be colored further, creating incredible designs (fig. 5). In making replicas, the artists learned how to dye ivory, which is incredibly difficult, and we can now understand more about the creation of these objects, which revolutionizes our teaching. The second important takeaway is accessibility, and I think this is the promised land. The digital content is mostly geared to the public, and I don't know how the digital materials will be available to researchers. At present, it is primarily through exhibitions, and you still have to be in Japan for that two-and-a-half-week period. There are high-quality photographs on https://shosoin.kunaicho. go.jp/en-US/; but they are not nearly at the level of definition used in *Shōsōin THE SHOW*. Still, digital technologies allow for a much wider viewing public.

Akiko Walley: I think the digital replica project is interesting because of how it differs from the replicas the Shōsōin has made in the past. Beginning in 1972, their mission for physical replication has been to create *onaji mono o mō hitotsu,* "one more of the same thing," which explains why they are focusing on materials and techniques to create an exact replica of each object as it was first created. There are two different kinds of replication—one is to replicate how the object looks today, *genjō mozō* (present-condition reproduction), and the other is to replicate its state when it was created, *fukugen mozō* (reconstructed reproduction), often based on a careful collaborative investigation—involving scholars, artists, and conservators— into the period techniques and available materials. The 1972 project is solely about *fukugen mozō*, but they call it *saigen mozō*, "reappeared reproduction," to be precise. For this current digitization project, it is actually a 3-D scan of the original object as it is today. By combining

FIGURE 6. Original (left) and reproduction (right) of the armrest of *nishiki* with phoenix design on purple ground, the Shōsōin Treasure (North Section 47). The original is from the mid-8th century. Silk fabrics, bast-fiber fabric, *igusa*-mat and *makomo* plant; 79 x 25 x 20 cm. Courtesy of the Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency

the two systems of reproduction, you are getting a re-creation to study the technique and original look and feel, as well as the digital scan of the current state of the object, all of which is very useful for research as well as teaching.

Last year, the annual Shōsōin exhibition showed the original of a treasure called the Armrest of *Nishiki* with Phoenix Design on Purple Ground *(Murasaki-ji ōtori-gata nishiki no on-shoku)* together with the physical replica and the digital replication (fig. 6). I was comparing it to what happened with the Hōryūji Triad, where the Tokyo University of the Arts Center of Innovation (COI), with support from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, and Hōryūji, created three physical "replicas" (fig. 7). One, a *kurōn bunkazai* or "clone cultural property," which replicates how the sculpture looks today, in minute detail. A second, a "super-clone cultural property," approximates what the sculpture was like when it was originally made. The third, a "hyper-cultural property," is quite experimental—a triad mainly in glass to show that the body of the Buddha is made of light. Of course, artisans didn't have that sort of glass technology in the seventh century, but the idea is that if they did, they might have used it to capture the Buddhist teaching about the Buddha's body more effectively than gold gilding. This replica is a more creative, future-looking interpretation. I realize that for the 1972 Shōsōin project, they could not have made the *kurōn bunkazai*, because, as we can see in the case of the Hōryūji Triad, to re-create how a historical object presently appears, one would have to add both the patina and the damage. The creators of the "cloned" triad used bronze and the lost-wax technique just like the original statue, but they had to intentionally make it look old. If you were to create *onaji mono o mō hitotsu* of an eighth-century Shōsōin treasure as it remains today, then you would have to spend thirteen centuries making it because artificially applying the passage of time (as makers did for the "cloned" triad) and calling it *onaji mono* (the "same thing") would be a lie. For the Shōsōin's idea of *saigen mozō*, they cannot physically reproduce how it looks today, but a digital replica can provide that aspect.

Kit Brooks: What I'm learning is it's a totality of replicas that work together. I think another interesting point is that by making the *saigen mozō*, the craftspersons are doing a different

FIGURE 7. The "Three Shaka Triads" (in the "Archaeological and Buddhist Site" initiative). Replication of the Shaka triad at Hōryūji, Nara prefecture, Japan. Examples of (right) "cloned cultural property" (*kurōn bunkazai*), (center) "hyper cultural property" (*haipā bunkazai*), and (left) "super-cloned cultural property" (*sūpā kurōn bunkazai*). https://www.iki-jp.com/worksgallery/works02.html. Courtesy of Tokyo University of the Arts

kind of replication by re-creating technical knowledge, so there is an ineffable replica in the mind and hand of the artisan, in addition to all the different types you have already categorized.

Bryan Lowe: Akiko has steered us in a fascinating direction in which replicas can be framed as a return to the past, while they're also often forward-looking and innovative. Going back to the 1870 replicas of Shōsōin objects, produced for the world's fairs, there was a strong connection to the industrial policy in Japan—a forward-looking idea. In the current exhibition, the most impressive gallery is completely dark, with three physical replicas, but the real attraction is the moving images. For example, they take a motif that includes a deer image, and the deer suddenly emerges out of the object and starts prancing across the screen. Obviously, the physical object is stuck in time, but when they transformed it into a digital image, they were able to animate it. As with the glass Buddha, such treatment captures the contemporaneous views of the day, as the objects were understood to be empowered living works tied to Buddhist heavens and pure lands and were not seen as static. Although this technology changes the object, it can get us closer to how the objects may have been originally perceived. The final gallery of the exhibition was also exciting and presented collaborations with contemporary artists, such as fashion designers who had made dresses based on Shōsōin motifs. For example, a label in this gallery read in part: "The creativity of those alive today is helping carry our story into the future. . . . As the spirit of the Shōsōin gains new forms, a new history will be transmitted." In this way, this kind of replica is forward-looking, constantly evolving. This is important because when we think of the word *replica*, we often think of

a copy, a return to the past, but this project and others in Japan are theorizing what it means to re-create something, to make a replica. It is not reducible to the traditional notion of a copy.

Akiko Walley: I am reminded of a comment by some of the participating artisans in the *saigen mozō* project who claimed that they studied the original carefully, but if they only replicated it, the object would be "dead." They had to strike a balance between faithfully reproducing the original and injecting life into the replica that they created. Copied lines look dead because the artist is too careful to trace them, and there is no life or movement. A digital replication is impressive, but it could lose its audience's attention quickly unless it projects the innate life of the original object.

Kit Brooks: I wonder if we are just coming up against the deficiency of the word *replica* as it is used in everyday conversation.

Bryan Lowe: Akiko already mentioned the terminology of replicas, which, in some ways, gets in the way. The former director of the Shōsōin, Nishikawa Akihiko, has written about the different Japanese terms, many of which Akiko already mentioned: *mosha* (drawn copy), *mozō* (reproduction), *fukuseihin* (re-created object), *repurika* (replica), *kopī* (copy), and so on, noting how these terms carry a negative nuance—the implication that the objects are merely derivative. As Akiko was saying, at the Shōsōin they have used the term *fukugen mozō*, which means a reproduction that returns to the original state. Nishikawa Akihiko remarked how other institutions used terms such as *saigen bunkazai* (re-appeared cultural property). These terms are not necessarily satisfactory, especially the term *replica*, because it suggests the notion of repeating without relaying how exciting, vivid, and lively these reproductions can be; we need better words in both Japanese and in English for a copy of something. We have been trained to think of copying as boring, but copying is an opportunity for growth, learning, re-creation, and development. For now, we are limited in some ways by the language we use to describe replicas.

Akiko Walley: For the Shōsōin, in particular, *repurika* means something specific: It is simply about appearance. The website for *Shōsōin THE SHOW* uses the word *replica* only one time, when referring to the famous blue glass cup. Glass artists, in collaboration with metal artists, created a *repurika* that replicates the appearance of the original, but does not reproduce the original materials or techniques.

In English, they are using *reproduction* for *mozō* and *replica* for *repurika*. They are very conscious both in English and in Japanese to use different terminology for a "reproduction" versus a "replica."

Kit Brooks: I'm thinking of the language of modern and contemporary art, where we talk about artworks that exist as "multiples." It is almost as though the artisans are creating a multiple of the original object, and it partakes in the original's essence just as much as the original does.

Akiko Walley: Related to that—this is not in any way a criticism, it's just an observation—I think it is interesting that there is a duality in the discourse surrounding Shōsōin objects. When we talk about the originals, we often hear about the objects' connections to other parts of the world, but for the reproduction of the same object, the *Biwa* for example, it becomes more about Japanese technology, the Japanese aesthetic of *utsushi* (duplication), and Japanese industry. If we are to think about Shōsōin objects holistically to include both the original and the reproduced, this duality in discourse reveals how the Shōsōin exists at the intersection of two kinds of evidence used to bolster the sophistication of Japanese art

FIGURE 8. *Ōjukukō* (incense wood; also known as Ranjatai), the Shōsōin Treasure (Middle Section 135), 8th–9th century. Aloeswood, 156 cm. Courtesy of the Office of the Shōsōin Treasure House, Imperial Household Agency

and culture since the modern era: its transoceanic cosmopolitanism and unmatched domestic artisanship.

Kit Brooks: Have there been instances where you had previously seen an original Shōsōin object, but when you saw the replica, you became aware of things you weren't before?

Bryan Lowe: There are different ways to appreciate the objects. The seventeen-day exhibitions at Nara are so crowded that it is hard to see the objects closely, but at the exhibition of the replicas in Osaka you could get closer and look at the replicas more easily. Also, the digital images were projected on enormous screens, which allowed visitors to see details that were otherwise not visible, even if you were able to handle the objects. Finally, there were videos throughout the exhibition showing how objects were made. They were placed right next to the works, and you could look at the replica and watch the video at the same time. These all helped me learn things that I wasn't previously aware of.

Akiko Walley: Bryan, when you were at the exhibition, did it make you want to see the originals?

Bryan Lowe: You talked earlier about how the exhibition displayed the original armrest alongside its physical and digital replicas. I saw the physical replica of the armrest at *Shōsōin THE SHOW* and immediately wanted to see it next to the original. The Imperial Seal System, however, has a complicated legacy. At the Princeton conference that Akiko and I organized, the director of

the Shōsōin, Iida Takehiko, gave a fascinating presentation that was a compelling defense of the Imperial Seal System. He argued that the reason we still have these treasures today is precisely *because* access has been so limited. I think there is something to that statement, but the creation of reproductions and digital tools can also be used as justification for perpetuating a system that limits access to the original materials. This approach is particularly regrettable for researchers. The reproductions become a substitute when there is, of course, an inherent value in looking at the original. But the Shōsōin objects were already off-limits long before the creation of replicas and digital images, and the Shōsōin is making an effort to make materials available to researchers, as far as it is possible within the confines of the Imperial Seal System.

Akiko Walley: It is interesting that if you go to the Japanese landing page for the website for *Shōsōin THE SHOW*, it includes inspirational and enticing phrases. For example, they use the word *ishi* (intent) twice. The first instance, *uketsugareru ishi* (intent to be passed on), is probably about preservation, and in the second instance, *hozon o koe, ishi mademo* (intent even beyond preservation) is more about the *ishi* of the original creators. I thought the phrases were very much future oriented.

Bryan Lowe: Interestingly, when talking about this Shōsōin exhibition, we mostly talk about reproductions and replicas, but it was also heavily marketed as multisensory. For example, you could experience the smell of the Ranjatai*,* which is, without exaggeration, the most famous incense in the history of Japan (fig. 8). If you attend a regular Shōsōin exhibition, you obviously cannot smell it. Here, they had re-created the smell and had a little glass with the aroma inside. In other Shōsōin exhibitions, they have had reproductions of the sounds of the five-string *Biwa* for visitors to hear.

Akiko Walley: I totally agree that a lot of these reproduction projects are trying to highlight the multisensory or tactile experience of the object. In thinking about what could be improved about the current state of the Shōsōin replicas, since the physical objects are *saigen/fukugen* (reappeared/reconstructed), an animated digital replica could be used to re-create the passage of time, from the creation of an object to its present state. Then it would be more of an accompaniment to the physical *saigen mozō*, connecting the original to the present.

Kit Brooks: Bryan, were there any reactions from visitors to the exhibition that stood out to you?

Bryan Lowe: I was impressed by how long people were looking at the objects, even at the digital images, which visitors could record and photograph. There was a seventeen-minute loop video, and visitors were recording it in its entirety on their phones. The public seemed to be really engaged; I have not heard how the research community has reacted. I was certainly blown away by the exhibition.

Kit Brooks, PhD (Harvard), 2017, is curator of Asian art at the Princeton University Art Museum. Their recent exhibition projects include *Staging the Supernatural: Ghosts and the Theater in Japanese Prints* (2024) and *Ay-Ō's Happy Rainbow Hell* (2023), the first exhibition dedicated to the psychedelic Japanese Fluxus artist Ay-Ō (b.1931) organized in the United States. Brooks has served on the Advisory Board of *Ars Orientalis* since 2023, and was Japan Foundation Assistant Curator of Japanese Art at the National Museum of Asian Art in Washington, DC, from 2019 to 2024. Email: kitbrooks@ princeton.edu

Bryan D. Lowe, PhD (Princeton), 2012, is associate professor of religion and Melanchton W. Jacobus University Preceptor at Princeton University. His first book, *Ritualized Writing: Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan* (2017), received the John Whitney Hall Book Prize from the Association of Asian Studies. His second book, *How Buddhism Spread in Japan, 650–850 CE*, is forthcoming in 2026. Email: bdlowe@princeton.edu

Akiko Walley, PhD (Harvard), 2009, is the Maude I. Kerns Associate Professor of Japanese Art at the University of Oregon. In addition to her book *Constructing the Dharma King: The Hōryūji Shaka Triad and the Birth of the Prince Shōtoku Cult* (2015), Walley's work on seventh- to eighth-century Japanese Buddhist art, including Tōdaiji, has appeared in journals such as *Ars Orientalis*, *Archives of Asian Art*, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, *Artibus Asiae*, *Journal of Asian Humanities at Kyushu University*, and *Religions*. Email: awalley@uoregon.edu

Digital Initiatives

GERALD KOZICZ AND DI LUO

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGIOUS ART THROUGH THE DIGITAL TWIN: TWO STELAE OF PĀRVATĪ FROM EAST INDIA

Collections in museums commonly provide one's initial encounter with actual works of religious art, not only for general visitors but also for students of Asian art, and these collections often remain a major source for many scholars throughout their careers. This circumstance, together with the availability of museum objects, largely shapes our perceptions of Asian art. Although museums offer an ideal environment for research and the conservation of art, we may easily forget the original goals of art-making. Objects of religious art—in the present context, East Indian sculptures from the Pāla period[1]—were created for worship, not for analysis through the lens of the art historian in a museum, where they appear completely detached from their native cultural environment.

In what follows, two stelae will be showcased and their disparate settings of use and preservation will be compared. The removal of the original architectural and ritual context in both cases, as well as the partial loss of a sense of historical storytelling based on the complicated biography of each object, raises questions of authenticity.[2] This discussion will touch upon a technical solution by means of interactive digital models known as digital twins and address the benefits and limitations of the method.

The Pārvatī in Penance

The invasion of Muslim Ghaznavid armies from the Kabul region into the Gangetic Plain during the last years of the twelfth century left Buddhist monasteries and Brahmanical temples in ruins. While Buddhism vanished, Brahmanism adapted to the new situation. Sculptures were saved from the rubble or unearthed from temples turned into mounds over the centuries and sheltered in village shrines. The village temple as a type of unorthodox sacred space became an agglomeration of religious objects stripped from the original, sophisticated temple architecture. Something new came into being—not in the sense of a new religious tradition but as a new spatial and ritual environment.

The first stele, depicting the goddess Pārvatī, comes from such a background. It is among dozens of salvaged Brahmanical and Buddhist sculptures assembled at the Sūrya Temple at Bargaon, a modern village temple north of Nalanda in the Indian state of Bihar (figs. 1, 2).

Recently, Rob Linrothe has strongly argued for recognition of the village shrine as a source for understanding ritual as an indispensable condition for the functionality of any Brahmanical or Buddhist object.[3] He lets photographs speak for themselves through pictures that show statues decorated, lustrated, touched, and even fed by the community. He offers a clearly written statement, but even more importantly a visual one that stands in opposition to the presentation of objects in museums, where religious art becomes artifact.

The common practice of the art historian is to first identify the iconographical components of the image, from clothing to attributes and hand gestures. The Pārvatī stele is placed inside a niche to the left of the entrance temple. The four-armed goddess is standing on a lotus. Her hairstyle resembles the *jaṭāmukuṭa* (matted hair arranged in layers of braids to form a crown) of her husband Śiva. Their relationship is also testified by the crescent moon, Śiva's emblem, attached to the crest of her hair. A *liṅga*, Śiva's phallic symbol, hovers above while the sun and the moon flank the head of the goddess. Pārvatī's facial expression is calm and the eyes are directed downward. Her right hands hold a rosary and make the gesture of bestowing gifts, and her left hands hold a waterpot and what appears to be a book.[4]

Gourishwar Bhattacharya lists this depiction of Pārvatī as belonging to the bridal type of Devī, also known as the "Tapasvinī Pārvatī" (Pārvatī in penance), which N. P. Joshi discusses in a monograph of the same title.[5] It refers to the penance and hardship that Pārvatī has to go through after misbehaving as the spouse or wife of Śiva, that is, acting against the rules set for a wife within the Brahmanic society. In the image under discussion, the goddess is flanked by her sons: Karttikeya to her proper right and Gaṇeśa to the left. Karttikeya is portrayed with his animal mount (*vāhana*), the peacock, between his legs, and four more *vāhanas* are shown along the front of the pedestal. The central field beneath the lotus seat is occupied by Pārvatī's *vāhana*, the *godhā* lizard (fig. 3).[6] The field to the viewer's left shows the bull (Śiva's mount) following two kneeling donors. In the opposite field the lion (Pārvatī's secondary mount) faces the onlooker, while at the far end the mouse (Gaṇeśa's mount) is placed vertically and faces its master. Despite their accurate discussions overall, both Linrothe and Bhattacharya mention only four of the *vāhanas*. Linrothe omits the central lizard; Bhattacharya specifically mentions the absence of the mouse.[7]

In iconographical studies, however, components external to the art objects—ephemeral and temporary additions or even the depiction of human behaviors—are usually considered peripheral and often omitted in visual analysis. In this case, the goddess is treated with various kinds of *pūjā* (ceremonial rites). The most obvious is the decoration with flowers and the application of color to the auspicious parts of Pārvatī's body and the emblems. According to Stella Kramrisch, the practice of touching and applying marks (*nyāsa*) is accompanied by the recitation of the root mantra of the deity and "[by] thus touching it ritually, it is felt alive with the breath of the cosmos."[8] Since actual feeding is impossible, rice is placed above the goddess's forehead on the band of the tiara. Another notable ceremonial act is the pouring of milk over the deity (*payas snāna*) (fig. 4).[9]

Pūjā is a crucial part of the religious tradition. The original ceremonies around the Pārvatī stele are impossible to reconstruct due to the erasure of the original spatial settings.[10] More exacerbating perhaps is the complete loss of such ritual, or rather the contrast to the living
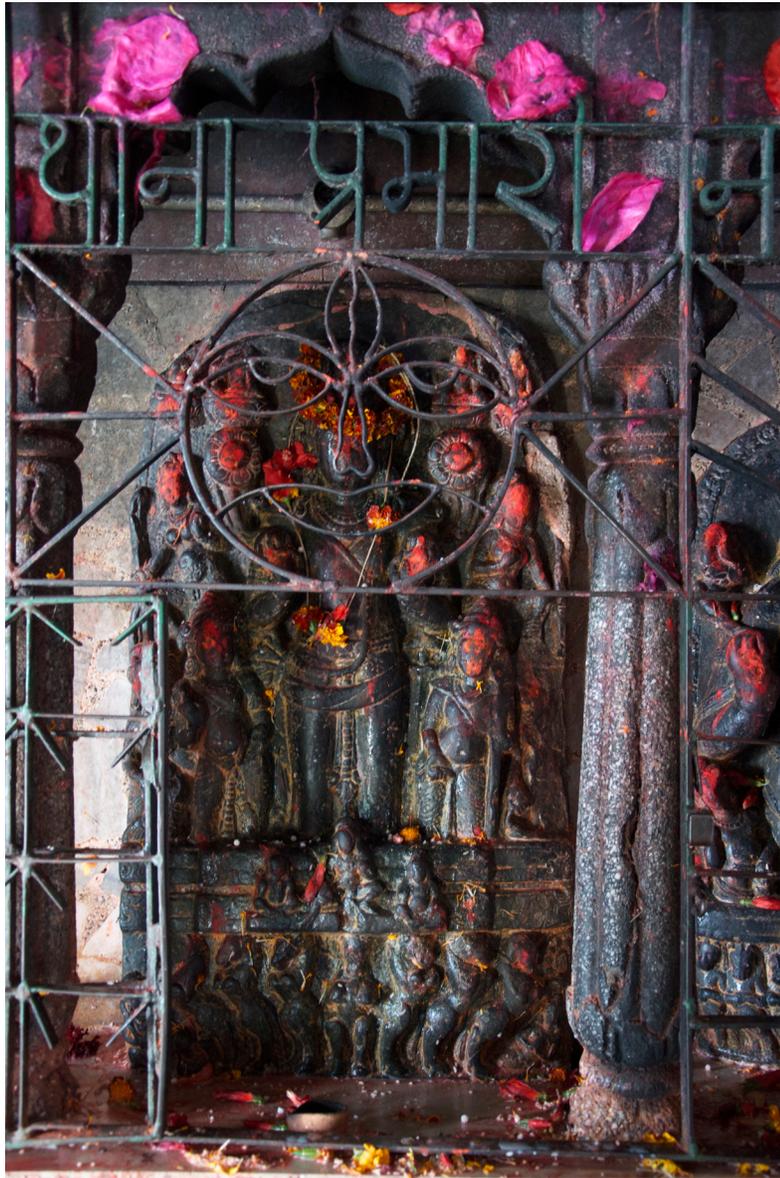
FIGURE 1. Sanctum of the 20th-century Sūrya Temple at Bargaon enshrining sculptures from the Pāla period (ca. 8th–12th century). Photo by Gerald Kozicz, 2013

tradition, of a religious object in a museum. This is demonstrated by a second stele, a similar Pārvatī statue on display at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco (fig. 5). Only two of the four hands of the badly damaged goddess are partly preserved. The positions of the two sons are reversed and placed in front of banana trees. Above the leaves, the remains of an architectural *prabhā* frame are discernible to the viewer's right.[11] Karttikeya holds a *vajrā* (diamond scepter) instead of his spear. The *godhā* is depicted on the pedestal below his feet, while the central field is occupied by two lotus flowers. Behind the *godhā* is a gooselike bird grabbing something in its beak. As in the Bargaon Pārvatī, two donors are depicted on the opposite side with a bull behind them. The overall design no doubt shares the same iconographical composition as the Bargaon Pārvatī. But how far does the comparison of iconography lead us to a full picture of the meanings and significance of the stelae?
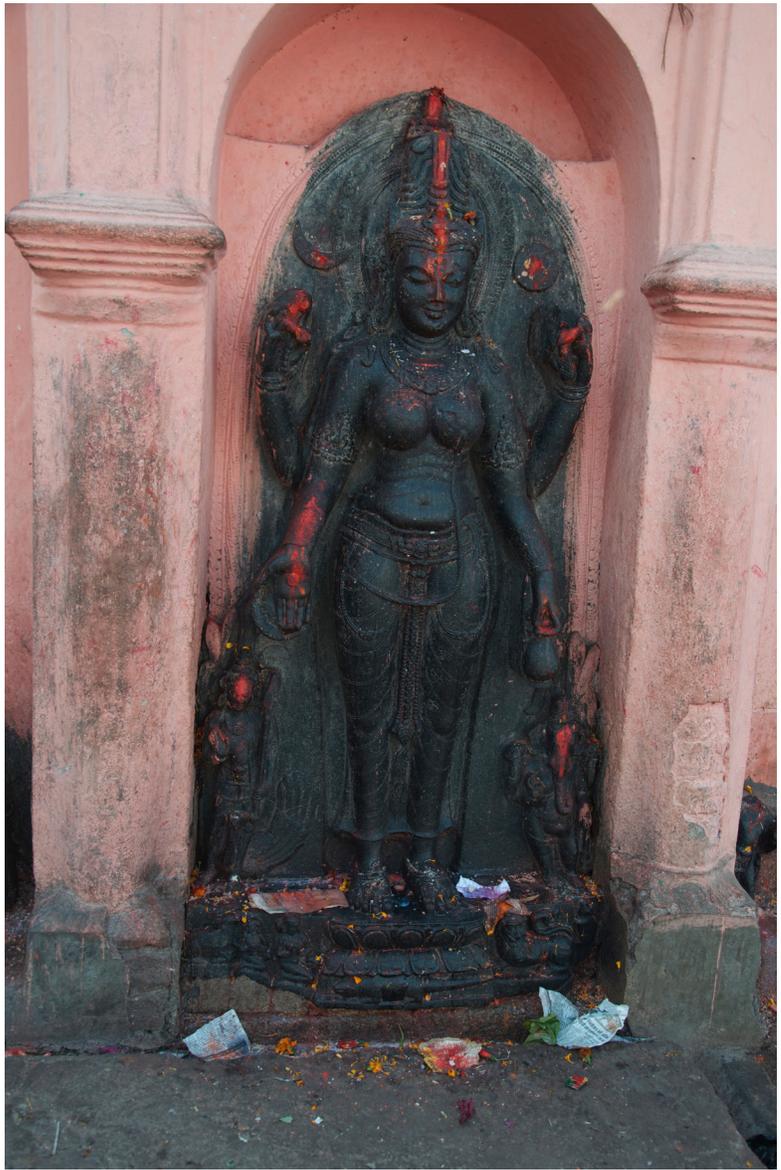
FIGURE 2. Pārvatī stele (schist or phyllite) at the Sūrya Temple gate, Bargaon. Photo by Gerald Kozicz, 2013

The Digital Twin

Modern standards for the conservation or exhibition of museum objects is not the focus here, but the obvious loss not only of the spiritual quality but also the ritual context of religious art in museums cannot be ignored. There is no way to revive the kind of ritual that would require physical contact with the idol in the perfectly controlled environment of a museum gallery. Modern technologies, however, allow the re-creation of at least the visual information of the lost ritual, not in the sense of materiality but instead virtually, through the digital twin. Photogrammetric documentation in situ makes possible the reconstruction of both the object and the context of the original location. The digital twin captures a specific moment in the life of a sculpture and creates an authentic replica. Its advantage is interactivity on a visual level: The opportunity to examine the object on the screen or in a simulated,
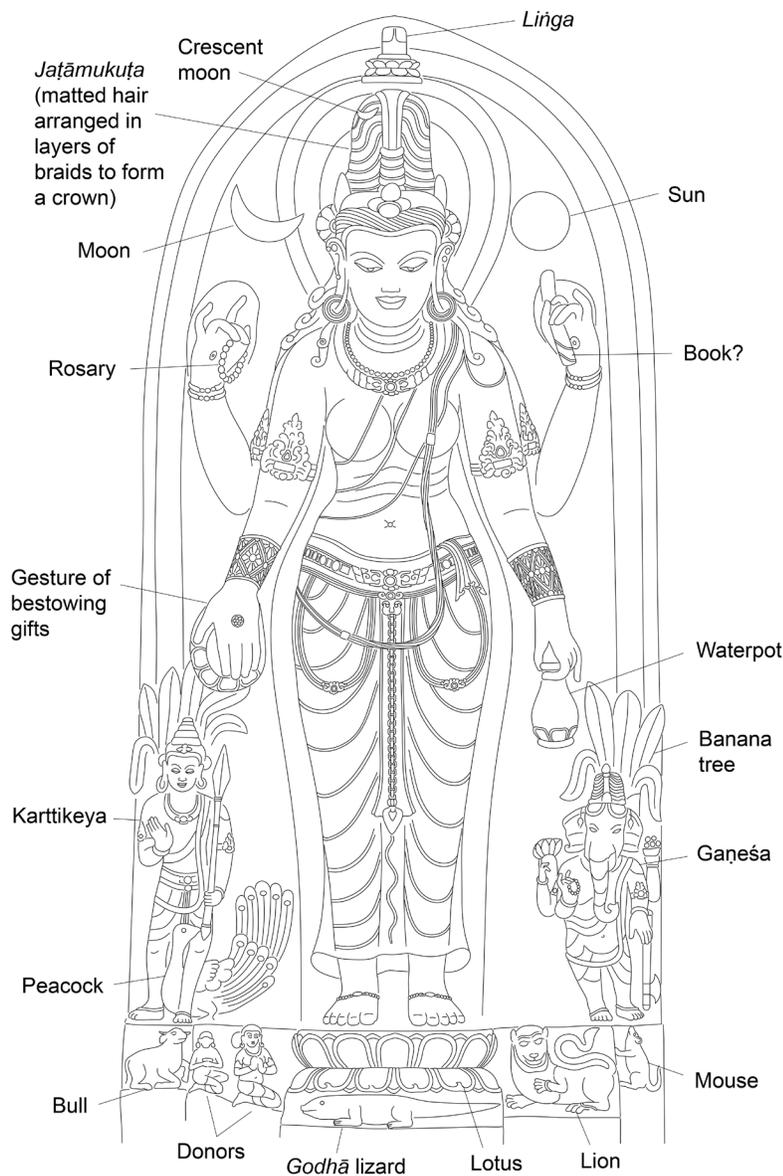
FIGURE 3. The Bargaon Pārvatī stele. Line drawing by Gerald Kozicz, annotation by Di Luo

immersive environment is a way of inspection completely different from scrolling through photographic archives (figs. 6, 7). Furthermore, in comparative studies, 3D models allow the choice of the same viewing angle or frame depending on the specific detail under examination (figs. 8, 9).

Our specific example from the field illustrates another advantage of photogrammetric documentation. The model was generated from a set of digital photographs: The success of the modeling process depended on the complete coverage of the stele. A three-dimensional shape can only be created through triangulation and the identification of common points from overlapping photographs, that is, every single point of the surface has to be captured at least three times. This approach to taking photographs is neutral toward the iconographic value of specific parts of the object.[12] Thus, it is less likely that certain components or parts of a sculpture
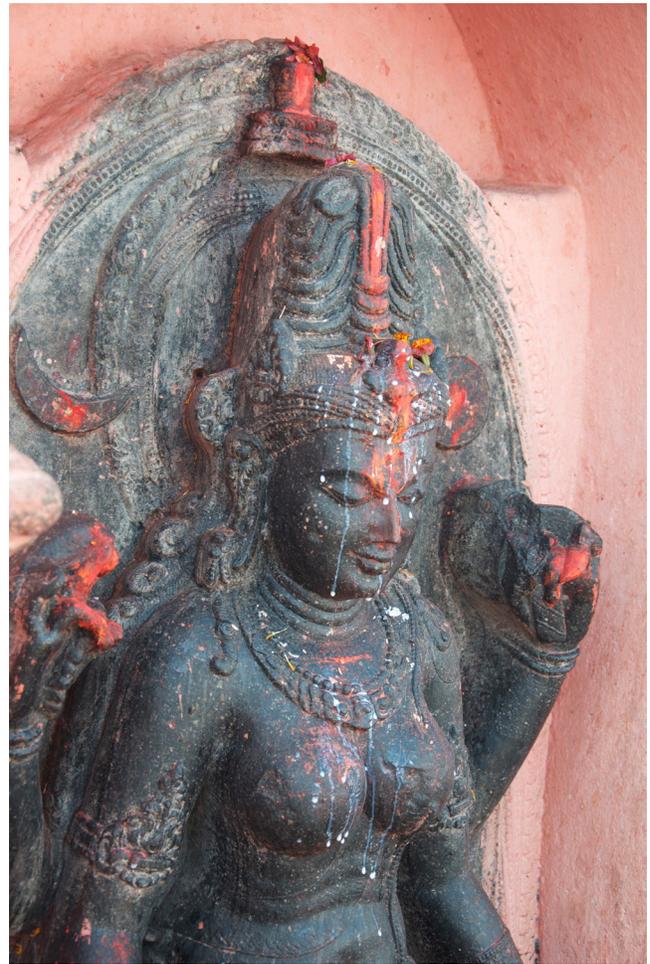
will escape the researcher's attention, as has been the case with previous scholarship on the Bargaon Pārvatī wherein two of the *vāhanas* escaped notice.

The 3D model presented here shows the stele of Bargaon Pārvatī under veneration. It is decorated with flowers and red paste, bathed with milk, and "nourished" with rice. Despite the faithful capture of the state of worship, the virtual image presents the results of the ritual but not the ritual itself.

In the Hindu pantheon, Pārvatī is the foremost representation of Devī, the essence of female divinity. But beyond the identification of the sculpture as her "penance," there is a constellation of elements that hint at a more specific narrative background. While the sun and the moon refer to time and space in a cosmic context, the *liṅga* hints at a crucial post-marriage episode in the life of Pārvatī and Śiva. According to the *Skanda Purāṇa*, as translated by N. P. Joshi:

[I]n [the] course of conjugal activities Pārvatī once closed all [three] eyes of Śiva with her hands, of course unmindful of the consequences. But because of this act, all of [a] sudden the working of the sun, the moon, and the fire, the three deities of Śiva's eyes, came to a standstill. Every corner of the world became dark, and it appeared that the end of the universe was drawing nigh. The three worlds became highly disturbed and there arose a turmoil. All the gods, being afraid of this

FIGURE 5. Tapasvinī Pārvatī, ca. 1000–1100, Eastern Bangladesh. Basalt, 61 x 40.6 x 17.1 cm. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, B64S6. Photo by Gerald Kozicz, 2024

unforeseen and untimely calamity, rushed to Śiva for shelter. Now Pārvatī, realizing what she had done, removed her hands. Śiva's eyes were now open and with this everything became normal. Śiva took this simple act as gross misconduct on [the] part of Pārvatī, because instead of being an ordinary young wife, Pārvatī had [by] then become the better half of the Lord of the Universe. In other words, she herself had become the Mother of the Universe (*Jaganmātā*) responsible for [the] welfare of everybody.[13]

This episode provides the source for understanding the image at Bargaon in greater detail. The sun, the moon, and the *liṅga* represent the three eyes of Śiva, and their placement on the halo bespeaks the role of Pārvatī as the one who controls them: Devī as "the Mother of the Universe."

While religious icons are usually made to last forever, they must withstand regular use and worship. They weather and change in physicality during their lifetime. For "living statues" such as the Bargaon Pārvatī, concerns are raised about the decay of the stele caused by physical contact and the application of substances in the course of daily ceremonies. It is true that damage does occasionally occur. In a photograph from more than one hundred years ago, the figure does not show significant traces of washing or coloring, but the nose of the goddess

is broken.[14] In the photograph taken by Gerd Mevissen in 2011, the nose is still damaged (fig. 10). The series of photographs taken in 2013 from which the 3D model was generated, however, show the nose intact. No scholar has previously taken notice of the repair even though the face of the goddess has since been admired by many for its exceptional state of preservation. Does the modern nose preserve the divine power felt from the statue, or does it compromise its artistic originality and religious authenticity? Conservators, art historians, and temple visitors would likely arrive at very different answers. Conservators are naturally very careful and reluctant regarding such substantial repairs, and if undertaken at all, they are well documented. Would any museologist have even considered such a "perfect" repair of the nose? For the local community at Bargaon, however, restoring the face was more than an aesthetic undertaking. It revived the dignity of the goddess, who is considered a living entity. One might assume that such restoration work would continue if the stele sustained any future damage. Preservation and restoration across time can be digitized through photogrammetry and help us to record not only changes to the conditions of the sculpture but also to record the related rituals, that is, the interaction between community and sacred object.

Conclusion

The digital twin not only offers new perspectives on academic subjects; it also opens the door to the virtual space and an immersive experience through interactivity. The technology allows us to transfer objects virtually to a museum or any other space. It thereby contributes to discussions about the digital preservation of cultural heritage and the safeguarding of cultural identity.

Stephen Whiteman recently made a strong point about the Western dominance of the digitization of art objects, noting that, "by making elite and metropolitan collections even

FIGURES 6 AND 7. Orthographic renderings of the frontals of the Bargaon Pārvatī (https://skfb.ly/pAIqO) and the San Francisco Pārvatī (https://skfb.ly/pAIqQ). Photogrammetric models by Di Luo
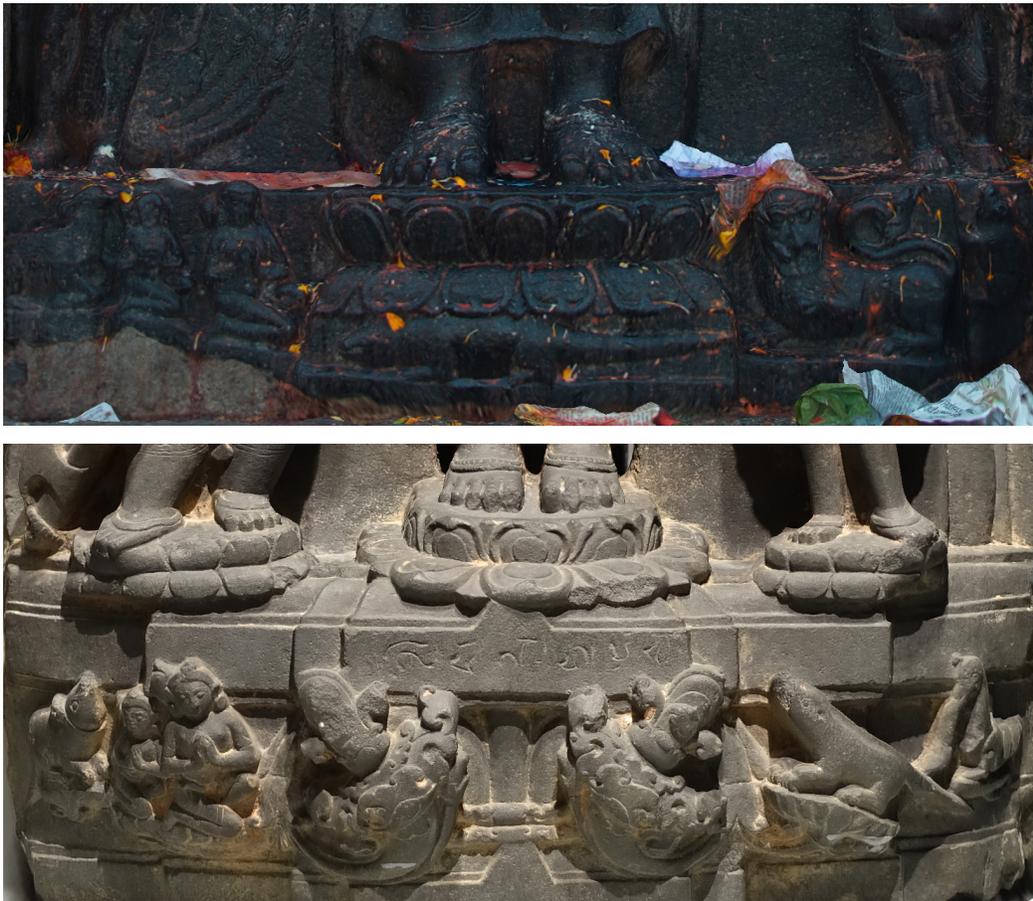
FIGURES 8 AND 9. Comparison of the details of the two stele pedestals from the same viewing angle. Photogrammetric models by Di Luo

more accessible than they were before, digitization has, to a significant extent, reinforced the hierarchies of a 'global' art world defined by Euro-American institutions and networks, rather than destabilizing or undermining them."[15] We can hardly disagree with such an assessment of the current situation, which displays the dominance of Western museum collections among the accessible online resources.[16] But the situation is a result of how available technologies have so far been applied. The models of the two Pārvatī steles not only showcase the advantages of 3D presentation but also advocate for the next step, that is, the application of Virtual and Mixed Reality technology. Such immersive experience reaches beyond the potential of databases and videos alike. The digital twin—in our case the Bargaon Pārvatī—holds the potential to virtually extend the museum space toward the complementary "living traditions," making accessible a religious object's ritual and cultural context without intrusions into the original sacred spaces.

Whiteman's statement serves as a reminder that the discussion—despite the attempt to foreground the perspective of a village community in East India—remains the output of secular academic training. Perhaps the best way to overcome such intellectual restrictions would be to adapt the concept behind Linrothe's monograph, that is, to let the images and models speak for themselves.
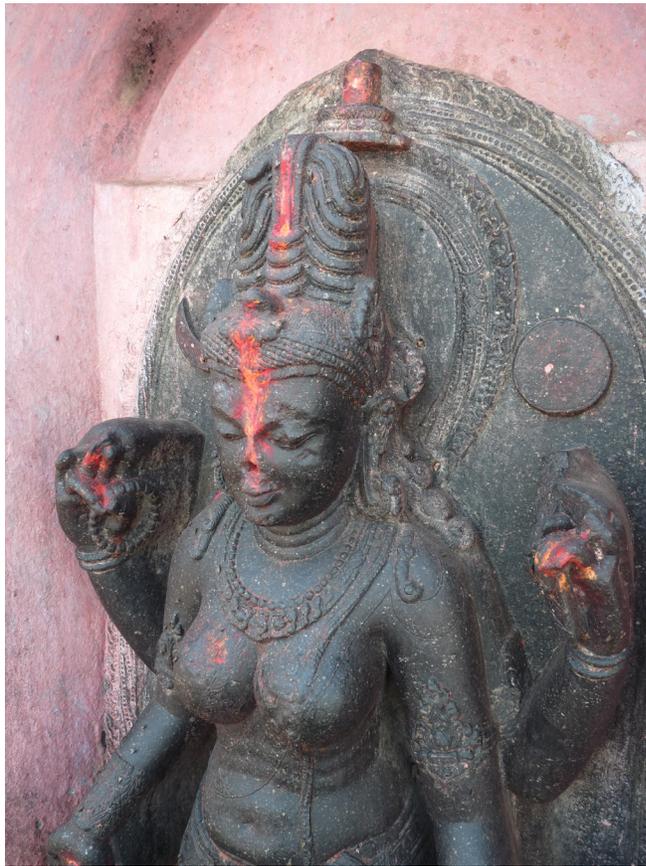
FIGURE 10. The Bargaon stele's broken nose, 2011. Photo by Gerd Mevissen

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Notes

1   We use the term *Pāla* in an art historical context to define East Indian art between the eighth and the early thirteenth centuries.

2   This has been a focal topic in recent studies of the digital cultural heritage. See, for instance, Bernadette Flynn, "The Morphology of Space in Virtual Heritage," in *Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage: A Critical Discourse,* ed. Fiona Cameron and Sarah Kenderdine, 349–68 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

3   Rob Linrothe, *Reenchantment: Masterworks of Sculpture in Village Temples of Bihar and Orissa* (New Delhi: Studio Orientalia, 2021). The author takes a critical stance toward the dominance of rationalism within modern scholarship, which deprives the art of its spiritual qualities in a process of analytic screening.

4   Linrothe, *Reenchantment*, 22.

5   Gourishwar Bhattacharya, "A Special Type of Devi Figure from Bihar and Bengal," in *Facets of Indian Art*, ed. Robert Shelton et al., symposium proceedings, V&A Museum, April 26–June 1, 1982 (London: V&A Museum, 1986), 36–37; N. P. Joshi, *Tapasvinī Pārvatī: Iconographic Study of Pārvatī in Penance* (New Delhi: New Age International, 1996).

6   Elora Tribedy, "From Tribal to Sacred: The Changing Gaze on Godhā (Indian Monitor Lizard) in Antiquity," *Berliner Indologische Studien* 26 (November 2023): 29–60.

7   Bhattacharya, "A Special Type of Devi Figure," 36.

8   Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple* (University of Calcutta, vol. 2, 1946; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2007), 305.

9   We thank Elora Tribedy (email correspondence, April 9, 2025) for her explanations of the ceremonies.

10 Museums have tried to reconstruct these rituals in limited ways or call attention to them. The National Museum of Asian Art organized a small exhibition entitled *Puja: Expressions of Hindu Devotion*, March 1996–July 2000, that focused on the objects used in *pūjā*.

11 A *prabhā* frame is composed of animals and mythic creatures with an elephant at the bottom, followed by a lion and/or a *vyāla* (a horned lion-griffin or lion-elephant).

12 For a description of the workflow of photogrammetry-based 3D modeling, see, for example, Chamba Architecture and Art Digital Archive, accessed August 22, 2025, https://iam.tugraz.at/research/chamba/blog/workflow/.

13 Joshi, *Tapasvinī Pārvatī*, 6–7 [Skanda., Māheśvara, Aruṇācala, *pūrvārdha*, 3.23–3.53, pp. 566–69; 4.9–4.10] (translation slightly modified). Joshi also briefly mentions the Bargaon stele and even notes the sun and the moon (p. 15), but fails to draw a possible connection to the *liṅga*.

14 Linrothe, *Reenchantment*, 224. A photograph dated 1970 is accessible at the Huntington Archive, accessed July 15, 2025, https://dsal.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/huntington/show_detail.py?ObjectID=5606.

15 Steven H. Whiteman, "Toward an Ethics of Place: Asian Art in/and Digital Art History," *Ars Orientalis* 53 (2023), https://doi.org/10.3998/ars.4988.

16 The gap between digital data generated from museum collections and data based on field research significantly increased during the COVID pandemic, which brought fieldwork almost to a standstill.