

REVEALING THE AFRICAN PRESENCE IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

THE WALTERS ART MUSEUM



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COVER AND PAGE 118 Workshop of Gerard David, *Adoration of the Kings* (no. 1), detail

PAGE 2 Domenico Tintoretto, *Portrait of a Man* (no. 65)

PAGE 6 Girolamo da Santacroce, *Adoration of the Kings* (no. 24)

PAGE 12 *Chafariz d'el Rey in the Alfama District* (no. 47), detail

PAGE 34 Jan Muller, after Hendrick Goltzius, *The First Day (Dies 1)* (no. 38)

PAGE 60 *Habits des habitans du Caire*, from Leo Africanus, *Historiale description de l'Afrique* (no. 19)

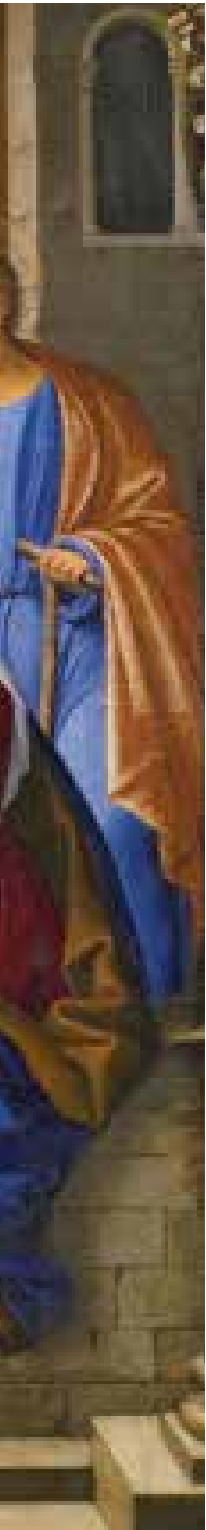
PAGE 80 *Portrait of a Wealthy African* (no. 61)

PAGE 98 Andrés Sánchez Galque, *Los tres mulatos de Esmeraldas* (no. 77)

Contents

Director's Foreword	7
8	Introduction <i>Joaneath Spicer</i>
13	The Lives of African Slaves and People of African Descent in Renaissance Europe <i>Kate Lowe</i>
35	European Perceptions of Blackness as Reflected in the Visual Arts <i>Joaneath Spicer</i>
61	"Leo Africanus" Presents Africa to Europeans <i>Natalie Zemon Davis</i>
81	Free Men and Women of African Ancestry in Renaissance Europe <i>Joaneath Spicer</i>
99	Visual Representations of an Elite: African Ambassadors and Rulers in Renaissance Europe <i>Kate Lowe</i>
116	Afterword Ben Vinson III
List of Lenders	117
Checklist of the Exhibition	119
Selected Secondary Sources	139
Curator's Acknowledgments	142
Contributors	143
Photography Credits	144





DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

Revealing the African Presence in Renaissance Europe invites visitors to explore the varied roles and societal contributions of Africans and their descendants in Renaissance Europe as revealed in compelling paintings, drawings, sculpture, and printed books of the period. The story of the Renaissance with its renewed focus on the individual is often told, but this project seeks a different perspective, to understand the period in terms of individuals of African ancestry, whom we encounter in arresting portrayals from life, testifying to the Renaissance adage that portraiture magically makes the absent present. We begin with slaves, moving up the social ladder to farmers, artisans, aristocrats, scholars, diplomats, and rulers from different parts of the African continent. While many individuals can be identified, the names of most slaves and freed men and women are lost. Recognizing the traces of their existence in the art of the time and, where possible, their achievements is one way of restoring their identities.

The exhibition, conceived by Joaneath Spicer, James A. Murnaghan Curator of Renaissance and Baroque Art at the Walters Art Museum, and the programs accompanying it are an expression of the engagement of the Walters, through our collections and programming, with the African American community in Baltimore to create an increased sense of a shared heritage and of the museum's commitment to serving diverse audiences, to which our second venue, Princeton University Art Museum, subscribes as well. The museum's extensive collection of Renaissance

art, among the finest in America, contributes substantially to the exhibition's object list, and the exhibition's interpretive approach builds on the approach embedded in the Walters' permanent installation of a late Renaissance "Chamber of Art and Wonders," also conceived by Dr. Spicer, which underscores the cultural exchange among Europe, Asia, and Africa in the Age of Exploration.

A project of this scope and ambition could not have happened without the generous support of many institutions and individuals, first of all the Princeton University Art Museum.

We are deeply grateful to the many donors who made the exhibition possible at the Walters, including the Richard C. von Hess Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Bernard Family, Christie's, Andie and Jack Laporte, Kathryn Coke Rienhoff, Lynn and Philip Rauch, the Maryland Humanities Council, Cynthia Alderdice, Joel M. Goldfrank, and other generous individuals. This publication is made possible by the Robert H. and Clarice Smith Publication Fund. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

Gary Vikan
The Walters Art Museum

INTRODUCTION

JOANEATH SPICER

The value placed on the identity and perspective of the individual may be one of the chief legacies of the European Renaissance to Western culture, but that attention expanded to encompass those outside the cultural elites only very gradually and imperfectly. Given the conventionalized treatment of other marginalized groups of the time such as peasants, the material available for illuminating the lives of individual Africans in Renaissance Europe through the visual arts is considerable, though little known to the wider public. The focus here is on Africans living in or visiting Europe in what has been called the long sixteenth century, from the 1480s to around 1610. The exhibition and essays seek to draw out not only their physical presence but their identity and participation in society, as well as the challenges, prejudices, and the opportunities they encountered. Addressing this rich material in the context of a public exhibition offers the possibility to encourage broad public discussion of the larger issues of shared heritage—as well as those of race, color, and identity—through the vehicle of great art.

The exhibition experience is built around two main sections. Section 1 addresses conditions that frame the lives of Africans in Europe—slavery and social status, perceptions of Africa, the representation of Africans in Christian art, blackness and cultural difference, as well as the aesthetic appreciation of blackness. Then in Section 2 the individuals themselves come to the fore—often through portrayals from life—first as slaves and servants, followed by the surprisingly wide range of free and freed Africans living ordinary lives, and finally African

diplomats in Europe and African rulers, present in Europe through their portraits commissioned for great princely collections, images that may assert cultural difference and a keen understanding of self-representation in a way denied to others. The exhibition ends with the mesmerizing figure of St. Benedict the Moor, the Renaissance African-European with the greatest impact today.

The origin of the project was research undertaken in 2000 in response to a query as to the museum's position on the conflicting claims concerning the identity of the child in the Walters' painting by Jacopo Pontormo, then called *Portrait of Maria Salviati and a Child*, datable to ca. 1539 (no. 64). Formulating the wider issues from the perspective of her identity and indeed the nature of the public response to that identity has informed the current exhibition project. The parameters of research were altered by a “game-changing” conference organized at Oxford University (2001) by Kate Lowe and Thomas Earle, “Black Africans in Renaissance Europe.” Over time it became clear that there were more than enough evocative, potentially borrowable objects to create an exhibition that could generate public conversation on racial identity. The Amsterdam exhibition *Black Is Beautiful* (2008) raised important questions that continue to benefit the field, and *The Image of the Black in Western Art* project, edited by David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and now generously hosted by the DuBois Institute at Harvard University, has become a major force. Nevertheless, by adopting an approach highlighting the roles of individuals of African descent



FIG. 1 *New Map of Africa*. From Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp: Aegidius Radeus, 1592, first edition 1570). Engraving and watercolor; 41 × 53.5 cm. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.104)

in the European Renaissance, an approach looking back to the work of Hans Werner Debrunner (1979) and further back to Joel Augustus Rogers (1952), the perspective of this project remains distinct. Unfortunately, it also remains truncated, as financial pressures forced the reduction of this publication by a third, eliminating important contributions on peoples of African ancestry in English and Spanish literature, in Christian Art, the portrayal of black servants, and the perception of Africa. It is hoped that these essays can be assembled elsewhere.

The chronological period covered by the exhibition is the “long sixteenth century” (ca. 1480-1610). In the last decades of the 1400s Africa became a focus of European attention as it had not been since the Roman Empire. On the one hand, markers of Africans’ intensified engagement with Europe in the 1480s include the 1484 arrival in Lisbon of a Congolese delegation led by Prince Kasuta and the establishment of a residence in Rome for the numbers of Ethiopian pilgrims and

scholars. On the other hand, the European thirst for new markets and sources of commodities drove an extension of trading routes established by Portuguese explorers in the mid-1400s down the west coast of Africa; in 1497 Vasco da Gama edged up the continent’s east coast, en route to India. The revelations this brought as to the shape of Africa marked one of the pivotal moments in the growth of European knowledge of the continent, to be vastly augmented in the following century and epitomized in Abraham Ortelius’s *New Map of Africa* (fig. 1).¹ Arguably the most influential map of Africa from the 1500s, it was published in 1570 as part of the first systematic atlas of printed maps, *Theater of the World* (*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*). Its fifty-three maps encompass seven representing Africa as a whole or as individual regions. The contour of the continent now has a familiar look, and while many internal place designations remain generalized, as “Kingdom of the Blacks” (*Nigritarum Regio*) written large across West Africa, others are specific, as the insertion of Simbae (Great Zimbabwe) in southern Africa. Subsequent editions were expanded and updated, incorporating as many as nineteen maps of all or part of the continent.

Again in the same overall time frame, beginning in the late 1400s, three large historical shifts of peoples were taking place. Muslim Berber, Arab, and black African populations originally from North Africa were pushed out of Spain, where they had ruled for centuries, many returning to North Africa. The Ottomans, a Muslim Turkish dynasty, expanded their territorial dominions, toward Eastern and Central Europe and across North Africa, where Ottoman and European (more specifically Habsburg) interests would conflict sharply, calling for intense diplomatic efforts. Most significantly, the importation of Africans into Europe as slaves, from markets in West and also North Africa, gradually supplanted the trade in slaves of Circassian

or Slavic origin. The result was a growing African presence in Europe, some of the evidence for which is found exclusively in the visual arts. For example, the distinctly individualized portraits of two black men incorporated by Gerard David into his *Adoration of the Kings* (no. 1, cover), establish their presence in Antwerp around 1515, probably initially as slaves of Portuguese merchants, as was Katharina (no. 55), drawn there in 1521. However, to round out their lives, their probable manumission (slavery had no legal standing in the Netherlands), we will need more than the few archival documents presently known.

Conditions remained largely stable until the early 1600s, allowing (within the constraints of ingrained prejudice) for a gradually more nuanced view of blackness and of persons of African ancestry as well as for more varied roles for them and especially for their children within society. For reasons that are not entirely clear, around 1608–10 there occurred a series of political and cultural “events” in disparate locations that each in its own way seemed to signal a new level of acceptance and status for Africans in Europe, to pick four: the elaborate arrangements made by Pope Paul V to receive the Congolese ambassador known in Europe as Antonio Manuel, Marquis of Na Vunda (who, however died upon arrival, see Lowe, “Ambassadors,” pp. 104–5, and fig. 46); Morocco and the Dutch Republic sign a landmark treaty establishing trade relations, the first between a European country and a non-Christian one; the Spanish playwright Enciso writes a play celebrating the life of the black humanist Juan Latino; Philip III of Spain orders a silver casket for the bones of Benedict the Moor (canonized in 1807). However, while these events may appear to presage a new era of normalization, with the perspective of time they look more like markers of the end of an era.

In the 1600s, the focus of European attention shifted toward the Americas and Asia, while

ever-increasing demands for cheap labor, especially in the American colonies, meant that slavery became specifically associated with black Africans as it had not been in the past. With familiarity, the exotic otherness of “Africa,” her “astounding novelty” so vividly highlighted in Martin de Vos’s 1589 *Allegory of Africa* (no. 2, from a series of the Four Continents)² and its accompanying poem, becomes simply the “other” and more commonly subject to exploitation. While the poem cites “the eternal pyramids” as the manifestation of this “novelty,” the composition balances the mental achievement of the past in the form of pyramids (actually obelisks are depicted, in a typical confusion of the time) with perceived extra-ordinary strangeness and savagery of the present, manifested in a winged serpent and to the rear, naked natives standing before caves.

Indeed, this ambivalence toward forces beyond control is a thread running through many aspects of Europeans’ perceptions of Africa, whether it is the incredible ferocity of the “monstrous” crocodile, assumptions about exaggerated sexuality, or the vast sterility of the Sahara: to Europeans it was all extraordinary in its excess. For Renaissance artists and authors, Cleopatra VII of Egypt exemplified the dangers of excess in high places. Her life as pharaoh, with its cast of Roman emperors and generals subjected to dramatic twists of fate and emotional pathos, was perfectly suited to the revived theatrical genre of classical tragedy as in *Cléopâtre Captive* (1552–53) by Étienne Jodelle³ or Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra* (by 1608).⁴ In the arts she was rarely the resourceful ruler but a voluptuously beautiful woman (often nude) committing suicide following that of her lover Mark Antony.⁵ In a lovely bronze statuette by Niccolò Roccatagliata (no. 22),⁶ Cleopatra leans into the asp’s embrace, the dramatic undulations of the poisonous snake underscoring her destructive sexuality by referencing Eve’s fall. Perhaps the

medium played a role. The color of Cleopatra's skin is not known, but she apparently had Egyptian blood as well as Greek.⁷ Renaissance painters and playwrights generally represented her as European, but Shakespeare has her describe herself as “with Phoebus's amorous pinches black [blackened by the rays of the sun god Phoebus Apollo]” while Antony's friend Philo refers to her as “tawny,” in a passage implying an alignment of darker skin with sexuality.

The tendency to emphasize the baser natures of famous men and women of the African past helps to illuminate a taste of Italian scholars and inkwells and oil lamps (nos. 8, 9) for the worktable made amusingly in the shape of the head of an African slave, imitating utility vessels of antiquity. The evince casual disregard, whether beautifully or crudely modeled. So for the Renaissance collector, African exoticism had multiple sides: It would prompt disdain as well as profound fascination (for which see the essay on blackness, pp. 35-59).

The immensity, voluptuous strangeness, and seeming unknowability of this continent so close and yet so far from Europe offered a fundamental challenge to Europeans in the 1500s. Representations evoking these qualities would unavoidably influence their perception of people of visibly African ancestry in their midst.

NOTES

1. On the atlas, see Paul Binding, *Imagined Corners: Exploring the World's First Atlas* (London: Review, 2003), www.orteliusmaps.com/ort_background.html.

2. Ann Diels and Marjolein Leesberg, *The Collaert Dynasty*, part VI, *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers in cooperation with the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, 1993-[2005]): no. 1316.

3. For Jodelle's play, see E. Balmas and M. Dassonville, eds., *La tragédie à l'époque d'Henri II et de Charles IX* (Paris: Olschki, 1986); Charles Mazouer, *Le théâtre français de la Renaissance* (Paris: Champion, 2002). Other plays of the period include François Rabelais, *Cléopâtre dans l'Hadès* (1553); Robert Garnier, *Marc-Antoine* (ca. 1578); Mary Sidney, *The Tragedy of Antonie* (ca. 1592); Nicolas de Montreux, *Cléopâtre* (1594).

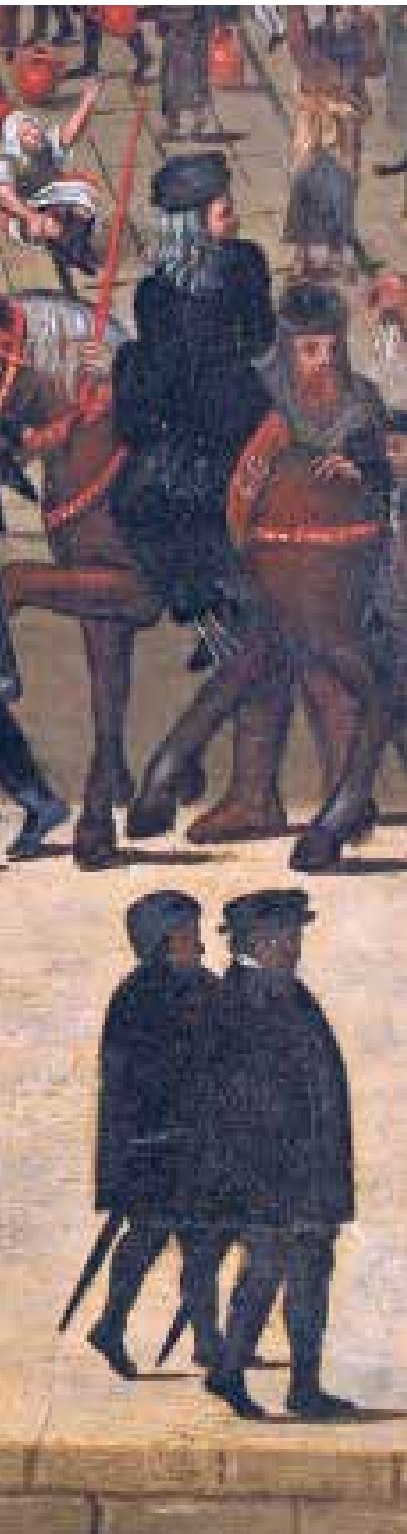
4. See Ania Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

5. On Cleopatra in the art of the Renaissance, see Céline Richard-Jamet, “Cléopâtre: Femme forte or femme fatale? Une place équivoque dans les galeries de ‘femmes fortes’ aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles,” in *Cléopâtre dans le miroir de l'art occidental*, ed. Claude Ritschard and Allison Morehead, exh. cat. (Geneva, Musée Rath, 2004), 37-52; Philippe Boyer, “Cléopâtre vs. Lucrèce: Du suicide comme vecteur de rapprochement,” in *ibid.*, 53-57; Brian A. Curran, “Cleopatra and the Second Julius: Egypt and the Dream of Empire in High Renaissance Rome,” in *The Egyptian Renaissance: The Afterlife of Ancient Egypt in Early Modern Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 167-87. The informative range of images in *Cléopâtre dans le Miroir de l'Art* does not really address portraiture, small sculpture, or the decorative arts, so attention may be called to Venetian, *Portrait of an Unidentified Woman as Cleopatra* (ca. 1580?), Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (acc. no. 37.534); Pier Jacopo Alari Bonacolsi, called Antico, *Bust of Cleopatra* (1519-20), bronze, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (acc. no. 64.2174); Severo da Ravenna, *Cleopatra Committing Suicide* (1530?), bronze, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (10.9.2). Francesco Xanto Avelli, *Dish with Marc Antony and Cleopatra* (1542), maiolica, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (acc. no. 95.371).

6. Manfred Leithe-Jasper is preparing a publication on this piece to appear in 2012.

7. The Ptolemies married within their own (Greek) family, but Cleopatra's father's mother was apparently an Egyptian from elite circles, so Cleopatra had Egyptian blood. She was the first of her dynasty to study and use the Egyptian language. See Susan Walker and Peter Higgs, eds., *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), especially the citation from Plutarch on her appearance (210), and portraits now thought to be her, most prominently no. 198, a marble portrait from the Staatliche Museum, Berlin, which is consistent with the summary portraits on her coins. Günther Höbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (London: Routledge, 2001), 223, 231-56.





THE LIVES OF AFRICAN SLAVES AND PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

KATE LOWE

The first questions are: Who were the slaves in Europe in the Renaissance and where did they come from? Was there a change over time in the period from 1400 to 1600? There were two main routes by which enslaved Africans were brought to Europe: from the eastern Mediterranean or North Africa, and from the west coast of Africa. But, with the exception of Spain, in the mid-fifteenth century before the commencement of the slave trade from West Africa, only a small percentage of slaves in Europe were African; the vast majority were from the eastern Mediterranean, Russia, or Central Asia. During the Renaissance, slavery was not just a black phenomenon—slaves in Europe were both “white” and “black.” Europe had a long history of white slavery. There was mass white slavery in Europe before there was black slavery,¹ and white slavery continued after the influx of black slaves from sub-Saharan Africa in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, so that often white and black slaves worked alongside each other in the same households or on the same properties. Because of its ancient settlement and diverse civilizations, European society in the Renaissance was fractured and complex, and this had consequences for the variety of ways in which slavery developed.

Slavery in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe was usually not for life; instead, on the death of a master or mistress, either a slave was freed or a set period of further enslavement was

fixed. In Europe, a future freed life for slaves was envisaged, and consequently slaves always lived in hope that they would be freed from bondage. Manumission, or the freeing of slaves, was a distinct probability. The mechanism for this was normally contained in a will, where futures for slaves were mapped out, and where money was bequeathed for marriage, for setting up house, or for enabling a former slave to make a living. Clothes and possessions were also bequeathed. At its simplest and smoothest, therefore, slavery in Europe during the Renaissance can be seen as just a stage in a life and not a life sentence. As a result of this process of being freed within a generation, and of having the possibility of integration, freed and free Africans were socially mobile and very quickly appeared in professional and creative positions in Europe. The late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw the first black lawyers, the first black churchmen, the first black schoolteachers, the first black authors, and the first black artists.² Superficially at least, the black African depicted in European dress by Jan Mostaert (see fig. 39) had been “Europeanized” through his acquisition of European accessories such as a sword and the hat badge from a Christian shrine, and he may have been an ambassador or held a position at a European court.³ The son of a black African slave couple in Europe in this period even achieved sainthood: the first black European saint, San Benedetto (St. Benedict, known as “il moro” or the Moor) lived in Sicily in the sixteenth century, although he was not canonized until 1807.⁴ “Moor” is an imprecise word that in the sixteenth century had been divested of its original religious meaning of a Muslim, to become a generic word most usually applied to an African or someone from the Ottoman empire. The word does not carry any indication of ethnicity or skin color: rather, further descriptors labeled people as white moors, brown or tawny moors, and black moors.

DIFFERENTIATING THE STATUS OF AFRICANS IN REPRESENTATIONS

The practice in Renaissance Europe of manumitting slaves during their lifetimes had important consequences for the representation of Africans in whatever media in the Renaissance. Although African—especially black African—attendants and bystanders in European depictions (except in some parts of Northern Europe) are usually assumed to be slaves, in most cases legal status is not apparent and cannot be discerned from an image. In Venice, a niche occupation for freed black Africans existed, linked to their prior skills as slaves, and possibly also to their prior lives in West Africa: that of gondolier.⁵ Two iconic Venetian Renaissance paintings, Vittore Carpaccio’s *Miracle of the True Cross at the Rialto Bridge*, also known as *The Healing of the Possessed Man*, of 1494, which includes two black gondoliers, and his *Hunting on the Lagoon* of ca. 1490–95 (fig. 2), which includes a couple of black boatmen, show black Africans at work in water activities, but there is no way of telling whether they are enslaved or free.⁶ Africans in Renaissance representations could be either slaves, freedmen (that is, ex-slaves), or freemen (that is, people who had never been slaves, but one or both of whose parents probably had been). This latter category could have included people of part-African ancestry, who had only one African parent, of whom within a generation there was a significant number. In most cases, especially in representations of African heads, the legal status of the individual depicted was beside the point; in a few cases, the artist wished to ensure that the viewer understood that the African was a slave, and so included chains, manacles, or a slave collar. A small Italian cast-iron head of a bearded black slave wearing a slave collar from the second half of the sixteenth century (no. 52) is rather surprising, as most depictions of slaves in slave collars, which



could be highly decorated, expensive pieces of jewelry, are from a later period. Leg irons and manacles were usually used as a form of punishment after a slave had attempted to run away or when it was suspected that they would abscond if a chance arose; chains were not routinely employed. North African Muslims, some of whom would have been captured in war, were placed in chains more frequently than sub-Saharan Africans. The German artist Christoph Weiditz from Strasbourg compiled a costume book in the 1520s and 1530s that recorded the dress and habits of people, including slaves, in Spain and the Netherlands. White galley slaves and black slaves loading water onto ships

FIG. 2 Vittore Carpaccio (Italian, ca. 1460–ca. 1526), *Hunting on the Lagoon*, ca. 1490–95. Oil on panel, 75.6 × 63.8 cm. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (79.PB.72)



LEFT FIG. 3 Black slave with a wineskin, from Christoph Weiditz, *Das Trachtenbuch* (1529). Ink on paper. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (Hs 22474, fol 22v)

ABOVE FIG. 4 Characters, including the slave Ethiopissa, from Publius Terentius Afer, *Comoediae* (Strassbourg: Johan Grueninger, 1499). Ink on paper. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (91.1155, fol. 39v [detail])

appear wearing leg irons, and a black slave in Castile has leg irons around both ankles and a heavy chain linking one of them to his waist (fig. 3). In the inscription accompanying this last image, it is explained that the chain signifies that the wearer has already attempted an escape.⁷ Including an inscription or explanatory panel was another route by which artists could ensure that the viewer understood that the African depicted was a slave. For example, the black female slave designated by the label *Ethiopissa* in a German woodcut illustrating the list of characters in a 1499 edition of Terence's play *The Eunuch* (fig. 4) is a slave. Use of the word *Ethiops* or one of its variations in this period simply indicates that the person is a black African; it does not indicate that the person came from Ethiopia.

As far as representations of slaves are concerned, ancient historians have isolated factors

such as smallness of stature, shortness of hair, and posture of the body that they claim denoted slaves in representations from ancient Greece,⁸ but it is not possible to do this in Renaissance Europe. Occasionally, the depressed or despairing expression of the African indicates that the person depicted was probably a slave. This is the case with the portrait in silverpoint by Albrecht Dürer of a young black African woman called Katharina (no. 55), whom Dürer encountered in Antwerp in the house of one of his patrons, the Portuguese factor João Brandão. Described by Dürer in his diary as Brandão's *Mohrin*, or Moor,⁹ she was very probably his slave rather than simply his servant, although as we shall see, slavery was not legal in the Low Countries,¹⁰ and the word does not convey any legal meaning. Katharina was black, as is shown by Dürer's drawing, but his diary entry does not make this clear. Dürer himself inscribed the



FIG. 5 Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471–1528), *Portrait Study of a Black Man*, 1508? Charcoal on paper. Albertina, Vienna (A. Dürer inv. 3122)

year, her name, and her age—twenty years old—on the drawing, so these are not in doubt. Katharina’s infinitely faraway expression, her downcast eyes, and her hair covering are movingly captured by Dürer. The artist also drew a second black African, a man, at around the same date (fig. 5). Although the date “1508” appears on the drawing, alongside Dürer’s monogram, the date is not considered secure. Nothing is known of this man, and it could be that he is the *Diener* or servant of the same João Brandão whom Dürer writes he drew after 14 December 1520. With a moustache and beard in addition to close, curly hair, this African

is less likely to have been a slave than Katherina, as beards were usually forbidden to slaves, and his expression is less obviously despairing.

The position of the African in a scene vis-à-vis other humans can also suggest inferiority, as in the case with the young black children who were so prized at European courts, and who were sometimes painted alongside their owners or masters/mistresses, as in Titian’s portrait of Laura dei Dianti of ca. 1523 (fig. 6)¹¹ and Cristóvão de Morais’s portrait of Juana of Austria of 1555 (fig. 7).¹² The black boy and girl are considerably smaller than their mistresses, as they are



FIG. 6 Titian (signed on sleeve "TITI" "ANUS" "F") (Italian, 1488-1576), *Portrait of Laura dei Dianti*, ca. 1523. Oil on canvas, 118 × 93.4 cm. Collection Heinz Kisters, Kreuzlingen, Switzerland



FIG. 7 Christóvão de Morais (Portuguese, active 1551-73), *Portrait of Juana of Austria*, 1535-73, daughter of Charles V, 1555. Oil on canvas, 99 × 81.5 cm. Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels (1296)

children, and their smallness of stature makes them vulnerable and unimportant. However, these children were not necessarily slaves, although most of them probably were; sometimes whole black families of free people were lured to the courts to work, in order that suitably young and attractive black children could be available to serve.¹³ In group scenes involving both white and black people, black Africans often appear in very marginal or liminal positions, but once again this cannot be taken as an indication of legal rather than social status.

THE LIVES OF SLAVES

Slavery in Europe was very much an urban phenomenon, and as a consequence, many slaves found themselves living as either the only slave

or one of two or three in a household. Households were often composed of both slaves and differing types of servants. Only very occasionally would large groups of Africans have been able to congregate in a European city, but one site in Lisbon provided just such an opportunity. Lisbon had the greatest percentage of black people in Europe at this time, with perhaps 10 percent of the population being black.¹⁴ In an anonymous, late sixteenth-century painting of the Lisbon waterfront, a probably Netherlandish artist has depicted the great concentration of black people of all social and legal statuses, from slaves carrying water to petty criminals to knights, to be found around the Chafariz d'el Rey, the king's water fountain (fig. 8, and no. 47).¹⁵ This genre scene is highly unusual, and in addition to providing valuable visual vignettes of Africans at work and at play,



FIG. 8 *Chafariz d'el Rey in the Alfama District*, no. 47.
The Berardo Collection, Lisbon



FIG. 9 Pietro Tacca (Italian, 1577-1640), figure of a slave from the Monumenti dei Quattro Mori, Piazza Micheli, Livorno, 1626. DEA / R. Carnovalini / De Agostini Picture Library, Getty Images

it allows the viewer to gain a sense of black and white social and spatial interaction in a setting where blacks and whites appear in roughly equal numbers. Domestic slavery was in most cases the “easiest” form of slavery for men, less arduous and less physically dangerous than other forms of slavery. Like female servants, female slaves were easy sexual prey wherever they worked, although there may have been safety as well as danger in living in cramped conditions. Slaves were owned by a great variety of people living in cities and towns: for example, one study of Valencia found that in the period 1460-80, of 317 slaves, 8 percent were owned by nobles, 8 percent by lawyers and doctors, 25 percent by merchants, shopkeepers and brokers, 11 percent by people involved in

the textile industry, 5 percent by those involved in construction, and 4 percent by bakers.¹⁶ And in a list of black and white African female slaves shipped from Lisbon and sold in Italy through a Tuscan bank in the 1470s, owners included gold-beaters, leather, wool, and silk merchants, shoemakers, a general manager of the Medici bank, the son of a humanist, and a count.¹⁷ In countries where there was a monarch, the monarch often owned a number of slaves, and in the Italian courts, the ruler owned slaves. The conditions of enslavement often depended upon the status of the owner. If a slave was owned by an artisan, s/he lived in part of the artisan’s house and ate food given by the artisan, but if a slave was owned by a king or queen, or nobles, s/he was dressed well, fed well, and housed well. Accounts from the Italian courts include many interesting payments for slave clothes, slave bedding, slave shoes, and slave artifacts. African slaves owned by monarchs and rulers also had access to excellent health care. For instance, the Portuguese queen Catherine of Austria paid for one of her slaves who had a head injury to be treated by her surgeon in 1552.¹⁸

Those African slaves who did not live in urban centers probably had worse lives. A particularly unfortunate, non-urban group of about 125 black Africans was worked to death in the silver mines of Guadalcanal in Andalusia, owned by the crown, between 1559 and 1576;¹⁹ although not significant in numerical terms, their fate is a presentiment of the dehumanization later to befall many other enslaved people. In Sicily²⁰ and Madeira, slaves worked as agricultural laborers, some even on sugar plantations,²¹ in situations that may have been the forerunners of plantation slavery in the Caribbean (no. 45) and United States. Other slaves, both white and black, served on the galleys, some as punishment for a crime, others because they had been taken prisoner in war. Theoretically, most galley slaves too served time-limited sentences, but the life was extremely hard and

many died before regaining their freedom. A monument in Livorno commemorated victory over the Ottomans in North African by Ferdinando I de' Medici, the grand duke of Tuscany in 1607. It was composed of a marble statue of Ferdinando completed in 1599 and of four colossal ethnically diverse slaves in bronze, which were commissioned by Ferdinando's son, Cosimo II de' Medici, from Pietro Tacca and completed in 1626.²² The Medici developed Livorno as an international port, setting up the huge *bagno* or depot for galley slaves there, and encouraging settlement by forcibly converted ex-Jews,²³ so it was populated by an appropriately diverse population. One of the four chained, nearly naked slaves, known as the Four Moors, on the base of the monument, has black African features (fig. 9), and had been modeled, as had the other three, on real galley slaves.²⁴ The clean-shaven, young black man's expression is of numbed despair, with worry lines creasing his high forehead. A note authorizing that Tacca take a wax cast of a slave in 1608 specified that the slave must be a well-behaved one (therefore presumably not one with a criminal past).²⁵ Tacca followed classical precedent in assembling the most perfect features from a number of slaves in order to create his statues, so although the representations of these slaves were all taken from life, there were no four slaves whose faces and bodies looked exactly as these figures did.

There are a considerable number of Renaissance representations where rich and influential people are depicted with their families or entourage, including their servants and slaves. Some of these representations were almost certainly of real people, painted or sculpted from life, and these allow us a glimpse into servants'/slaves' social realities. The image of the black huntsman in the fresco of *The Journey of the Magi* by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Medici Riccardi palace in Florence of 1459–62 (fig. 10), which is full of portraits of the Medici and their friends and retainers, falls into



FIG. 10 Benozzo Gozzoli (Italian, 1420–97), *Journey of the Magi*, detail of wall painting from Palazzo Medici Riccardi, Florence, 1459–62.

this category.²⁶ One of the attractions of this very extensive group of likenesses would have been the possibilities of recognition it afforded to contemporaries. The black African is positioned right at the front of the fresco on the east wall, between Galeazzo Maria Sforza, the ruler of Milan, and Cosimo de' Medici, the ruler of Florence, both of whose portraits would have been instantly recognizable. At the time, the black African would probably have been recognizable too, although no black Africans have as yet been found in Cosimo's household or employment. The face and head of the huntsman are strikingly rendered, with tight, very short curls, high and deeply angled

cheekbones, wide nose, light moustache, and full lips; he is dressed in a turquoise tunic with multi-colored hose, and holds a large bow but no arrows.

Rather than being likenesses, other representations involving master and slaves were not based on actual slaves but on imagined, generic, or impersonal slaves, with composite features or unstable African attributes, such as a turban. These, in their turn, allow us to see a different aspect of the Renaissance attitude toward slavery. In the marble bust of 1553 attributed to the workshop of Leone Leoni (perhaps by Angelo Marini), the severe and imposing Milanese judge and senator, Giacomo Maria Stampa (no. 43), is supported by two semi-naked figures known as atlantes, one wearing a turban.²⁷ The occupation and pose of these human pillars make it likely that they were supposed to represent slaves. Atlantes were a relatively common type of slave representation at the time, but the features of the atlantes themselves were imagined rather than “real,” in contrast to those of the black huntsman. Even if it is merely a stylistic issue, Stampa is here represented as a higher mortal, whose likeness is worthy of being remembered, held aloft by two straining lesser beings of no consequence.

Even when freed, it would have been almost impossible for most sub-Saharan former slaves to return to their country of origin. Exceptions to this rule are provided by some of those taken on the first voyages by the Portuguese, who trained them as translators in Lisbon and took them back on subsequent voyages to act as interpreters for them,²⁸ and some of those taken on the first English voyages, who stayed a period of time in England, probably to learn English, and then were taken back. Five Africans from Shama on the coast of what is now Ghana were taken to London in 1554-55. They were returned in 1556, and were greeted with much joy, especially by the wife of the brother of one of them, and by the aunt of

the same person.²⁹ Returning home was, however, a possibility for North Africans, especially from Spain, which was very close to North Africa; one study identified 330 freed moors who emigrated back from Valencia in Spain to Islamic territories between 1470 and 1516, paying an exit tax in order to leave.³⁰ There is also the famous case of the Muslim travel writer al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Wazzān, known as Leo Africanus in Europe (see Davis, pp. 61-79), who was captured, enslaved, and converted to Christianity under Pope Leo X in the second decade of the sixteenth century. As soon as the opportunity arose, he returned to North Africa after years in Europe.³¹

It is important to consider the types of collective activities available to African slaves. In some parts of Europe, Africans were able to fight their masters through the courts (for example, in Valencia they could appeal to an official called the Procurator of the Wretched), and a surprising number were successful.³² In Portugal, Spain, and Italy, they also could belong to confraternities,³³ which were social groups backed by the church devoted to good works, some of which were all-black, and were heavily engaged in buying the freedom of black slaves.³⁴ There were, in addition, parishes in Portugal and Spain where a significant number of African people lived, which must have facilitated more of a sense of collective identity. The worst threat was to say that a slave would be sold away from his or her familiar surroundings—in mainland Spain, difficult slaves were threatened with being sent to Ibiza³⁵ or Majorca, and in Portugal, slaves were brought to heel by the prospect of being sold in Spain. Collective slave resistance is not much in evidence; in the case of black slaves, perhaps this was because slaves coming from West Africa did not often speak the same, or a similar, dialect or language.

However, governments were always fearful that slaves might revolt, and so tried to limit access

to dangerous weapons, or other implements that could be used as weapons, such as long staffs or knives, and to stop Africans meeting together in large numbers. So they often passed laws forbidding slaves from carrying weapons, forbidding the congregation of more than a certain number of Africans, forbidding slaves from going to taverns (King Manuel I of Portugal decreed that any innkeeper in Lisbon who sold wine or food to any slave, black or white, would be fined),³⁶ and even in some cases from carrying drums or tambourines, which might have led to a heady loss of control.³⁷ Individual resistance mainly took the form of running away; descriptions of runaway slaves were common, as are letters demanding their return. Only rarely did a slave kill his or her master, but the penalties for a slave who did so were draconian. The tendency to view all black people as slaves occurred in parts of Europe where there were significant numbers of black slaves, and black non-slaves were sometimes required to prove their free status.³⁸

Further important differences related to where and how slaves were sold. Slave markets were not designated physical spaces across much of Renaissance Europe, which could be one reason why there are few, if any, illustrations of slave markets. A French printmaker, Jacques Callot, made an etching of a scene of the ransoming of captives of ca. 1620 (no. 44),³⁹ in a scene where virtually everyone was white, which is not the same as a slave market in Europe where newly captured African slaves are sold on to new owners. Here, instead, white Europeans who have been captured by pirates or overrun in war are ransomed by buyers who take them back to their homes. The setting appears to be a generic Mediterranean scene rather than an actual location. Once again, sub-Saharan Africans were at a disadvantage because of the great distance between Europe and their homelands, so they were not usually ransomed or

exchanged. But one enterprising black African of high status who had been captured and taken to Europe promised that if he was returned to Africa, his family would provide ten slaves in his stead, which they duly did.⁴⁰ Slaves in Italy were usually sold from the agents' or owners' homes or premises, and only sometimes on public squares, and the same was probably true in all parts of Europe where there were not many slaves. For instance, in Southampton a black slave was put up for sale in the 1540s by his Italian owner in a square, but no buyer came forward, probably because slavery "did not exist" in England, and the English people in Southampton may not have liked the idea.⁴¹ In Lagos in the Algarve, the first place in Europe where black slaves from West Africa were disembarked, memory of the slave market where slaves were sold is still alive hundreds of years later.⁴² In Lisbon, a great center for arriving slaves, there was in the fifteenth century a Slave House, the Casa dos Escravos, which handled all the financial transactions on behalf of the Crown. Slaves were valued by crown officials and a price tag tied around the slave's neck.⁴³ Slaves could be viewed at the Slave House or were sold to contractors or brokers, who re-sold slaves at the regular slave auctions in the public square known as the Pelourinho Velho.⁴⁴ Procedures for sales differed greatly within Europe. At Valencia and at Mantua in Italy, for example, a crucial part of a slave sale was the "interview" between the slave and his or her potential buyer,⁴⁵ an occurrence that allowed slaves a measure of self-presentation. Some slaves were very successful in refusing to be sold away: they feigned madness, were thoroughly objectionable and out of control, or self-harmed, as in the case of a female slave who put a sewing needle up her nose.⁴⁶

TREATMENT OF SLAVES

When newly enslaved African people arrived in Europe, they had to begin a difficult process of adjustment to becoming a slave. Being renamed was an especially important part of this process, as it signaled a milestone on the long journey of being forced to readjust to a life of new social realities in a new country, and to a new religious allegiance. Many naming practices make tracing Africans in the records complicated. It is difficult to know from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century documentary sources who is an African, unless their place of origin or skin color is spelled out. When Africans were enslaved and taken to Europe, they were given European Christian names and were forced to drop their own names. A few North African Muslims held onto their own names, so, for example, there is a North African slave named Barack in a Genoese document from 1432,⁴⁷ but sub-Saharan Africans mainly did not. Some sub-Saharan Africans in Africa who were not slaves may have chosen their own Christian names when they converted. The ruler of the Kongo, his close family and his “nobles,” when they accepted Christianity in 1491, were baptized with exactly the same names as their royal and noble counterparts in Portugal: the ruler was called João, after King João II of Portugal, his consort was called Leonor, after Queen Leonor, and their eldest son was called Afonso, after Afonso, the son of João and Leonor.⁴⁸ And so on with all the nobles. Slaves were given Christian names, often from quite a small pool, so in Italy there are many slaves named Lucia, Giovanni, or Marta, and in Portugal there are hundreds of slaves called Maria, António, Catarina, or Francisco.⁴⁹ They were often referred to by this Christian name in conjunction with the surname of their owner, which would change once again if they were sold to other owners. Many Africans were given nicknames related to their skin

color (Carbone / Charcoal, or Maura / Moor),⁵⁰ and there were many “joke” names too, such as John White, or its equivalent, which is found across Europe. Occasionally, instead of being given the surname of their owner, they were given their owner’s Christian name, and another “joke” surname was “invented” for them. Edward Winter in England gave his slave the invented surname “Swarthy” so that the slave was known as Edward Swarthy.⁵¹ Fashion in slave names went through periods when classical names were common, for example, Pompey or Fortunatus.

Learning a new European language was another vital element of the process of becoming a slave in Europe. Europe was not a linguistic entity, but a conglomeration of countries and areas, many of which had different languages, so often Africans had to learn more than one new European language. Vicente Lusitano was of African descent and wrote a famous book on musical theory. He was born in Portugal, went to Rome in the early sixteenth century, and then went on to a German court, and he must have spoken the languages of all these places.⁵² The common written language of the educated in Renaissance Europe was Latin, which would have been even more difficult to acquire than a vernacular language. However, there is evidence of Africans not only mastering it,⁵³ but also composing and publishing works in it.⁵⁴ In terms of spoken communication, creole or pidgin were available to recent African arrivals in Renaissance Europe, although it is not known how extensively they were used. Whether they were or not, in Portugal *fala de Guiné* (Guinea speak—that is, the type of speech used by West Africans) and its Spanish equivalent *habla de negros* (black speak) were mocked in contemporary plays, poems, and jokes.⁵⁵

There was discrimination at all levels, just as there was acceptance at all levels, so the picture remains mixed. The sixteenth-century black

Portuguese court jester or fool, João de Sá de Panasco, is a good example of a very talented performer who, while promoted and protected by the Portuguese monarchs, also suffered vicious insults about his former slave status and his black skin from the tongues of nobles and courtiers jealous of his position and success.⁵⁶ However, he was successful enough to be made a knight of the Order of Santiago, one of only three black Africans to be so honored in the sixteenth century, the other two being prominent black courtiers at African courts.⁵⁷ More jokes against him survive than jokes that he made himself. These jokes reveal a great deal about reactions or responses to a successful black African living a protected life at court.

Nor should the sometimes punitive nature of European Renaissance slavery be ignored; as was to be expected, this differed from place to place. At its worst, for instance in Valencia, slaves in individual houses were locked up at night in wooden cages and restrained with ropes and stirrups,⁵⁸ but this was quite exceptional. Slaves could also often be physically punished for misdemeanors more severely than free people, a differentiation that could be enshrined in law. Slave-owners could be tried if a slave died as a result of punishment, but few were—societal pressure militated against too harsh a cruelty more successfully than the law. It is also worth remembering that nearly all groups in the household at this time were liable to physical chastisement by the heads of the household: wives, children, servants, and slaves, so slaves were by no means in a unique position in this respect. Another identifying feature of slaves was that they could be branded: slaves belonging to the Portuguese crown were branded on the arm. All slaves taken to São Tomé from Benin or elsewhere after 1519 were branded with a cross on their upper right arm,⁵⁹ later changed to a G, the *marca de Guiné*.⁶⁰ In Spain, slaves were branded with

an S on one cheek, and an I, signifying a *clavo*, a nail, on the other, so that the whole read *esclavo*, the word for slave.⁶¹ In Italy and elsewhere, slaves were branded only if they ran away, not as a primary means of identification.

The treatment of slaves can be grouped under several headings. First of all, Europe was not a place of one religion. The established religion in mid-fifteenth-century Europe was Catholicism, but there were also small but significant numbers of Jews and of Muslims. By the mid-sixteenth century, there were also large numbers of Protestants, of many different types. The papacy usually approved and backed up the institution of slavery, and priests, bishops, cardinals, and popes all owned slaves. The first cargo of slaves to include black slaves arrived in Europe at Lagos in southern Portugal in 1444, and some of this initial cohort were sent to ecclesiastical establishments. In terms of conversion, black slaves brought from West Africa who were considered “animist,” were often summarily baptized by being sprinkled with water on board ship or, if not, they were supposed to be baptized by their new owners. Often this compulsory baptism was more honored in the breach than in the observance, even at the highest levels of society. King João II of Portugal offered incentives in the form of clothing, called “victory clothes” if his slaves converted, but in 1493, at least three of his slaves still retained their African names, transcribed into Portuguese as Tanba, Tonba, and Baybry,⁶² which demonstrates that they had not converted to Christianity because they had not been given Christian names. Pope Leo X’s bull *Eximiae devotionis* of 1513 provided for the erection of a baptismal font in the Church of Nossa Senhora de Conceição in Lisbon specifically to cater for the baptism of newly arrived black slaves.⁶³ Islamic North Africans, if they converted, sometimes had more elaborate baptismal ceremonies (as did Jews) because Islam and

Christianity were locked in conflict and conversion of the “infidel” was highly prized.⁶⁴ Baptism did not alter slave status. Slaves were afforded differential treatment according to their perceived religion, rather than their skin color. Muslims were regarded less favorably than “animist” black Africans, only a small percentage of whom had been Islamicized; because Muslims were the traditional enemies of Christians in Europe, as slaves they were believed to be more difficult and less trustworthy than non-Muslims.

The European country of destination mattered, as treatment could vary widely. There was a difference in how slaves were perceived and treated between countries with differing political systems: monarchies, republics, courts. Countries also had differing traditions of slavery. In legal terms, slavery was enshrined in Roman law, but various countries and cities in Europe either did not adhere to Roman law or promulgated local statutes that overrode certain aspects of it. Distinctive law codes were composed for societies with large numbers of slaves. For instance, royal laws promulgated in Portugal from 1481 to 1514—a period when many black Africans arrived—were collected into the law code called the *Ordenações Manuelinas*.

There were special problems in parts of Northern Europe such as Sweden and England, where slavery was not legal because it had been abolished. In 1532, an interesting case arose in the Low Countries. A “white Moor” called Simon, branded with a P on one cheek and an M on the other, who was a slave of the Portuguese ambassador to the emperor Charles V, absconded by returning to the Low Countries while his master continued to Germany. When his return was requested through the usual diplomatic channels, the Grand Conseil, the highest court of law in the Low Countries, refused to help, stating that in their country, personal

slavery did not exist.⁶⁵ Yet in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, African “slaves” continued to be brought into England, Sweden, and the Low Countries by their masters, and were treated in precisely the same manner as they had been when they were living with their “owners” in countries where slavery *was* legal. To a certain extent, the illegality of slavery in England must have been known, even if only by hearsay, as there is a case of a black African’s refusal to be someone’s slave. In 1587, Hector Nunes, a forcibly converted Portuguese ex-Jew living in London, bought a black male slave from an English sailor for £4 10s. but, as his would-be master put it, the “slave” utterly refused to serve him. When Nunes went to court to try to force his “slave” to acquiesce, he found no satisfaction, instead being told that his only recourse was to apply to a debtors’ court for the repayment of his costs.⁶⁶ In addition, as slavery was not supposed to exist, slaves could not be freed by clauses in their masters’ wills because the law of England did not recognize them as slaves in the first place. There were also differences in how Africans were viewed and treated that varied according to how many Africans there were in the area or country, and therefore how rare or common they were. In German cities and in Scandinavia, where black Africans were the exception, they stood out.

It is important to notice how issues relating to sex and sexual relations, and to marriage, were dealt with in connection to slaves. Female African slaves—like all other slaves and servants living in a household—were vulnerable to sexual assault from their male masters, but they were also at the mercy of many other men, both in and outside the household. The lies that slave-owners told in this respect are extraordinary; one claimed in a Spanish court of law that it was not lust that had driven him to have sex with his slave, but a desire to find relief from the pain of his kidney stones.⁶⁷ Most

European laws at the time included clauses detailing how much the master of a female slave should be paid if someone made his slave pregnant. But there are also very early cases of black “couples” who managed to have children together in Europe. For example, a black “couple” in Florence in 1470 had a child,⁶⁸ as did other couples in Venice and Mantua, and there are more examples from Spain and Portugal. In many places, skin color was not at issue, although there was interest in what the skin color of the children born to a mixed black and white couple would be, and there are cautionary tales of white women being discovered to have been unfaithful when they produced black-skinned babies.⁶⁹ Instead, it was status that was most relevant. According to Roman law, the legal status of the child followed that of the mother, so a child of a slave mother was a slave. But Florentine city statutes, on the contrary, decreed that the status of a child followed that of its father,⁷⁰ so a child born to a slave mother and a free middle-class father was free in Florence. Noble or middle-class women were not supposed to have affairs with their black servants, although a double standard operated, and the orphanages of Italy contained many babies born to white patrician men and their female slaves or servants, including numbers of part-African ones.⁷¹ Many slaves who were freed by their masters or mistresses were married off to white husbands. This flags one of the most important issues of European Renaissance slavery: What happened to the descendants of these black African slaves? The answer is that they have been “swallowed up” by the white population over successive generations. It is only now with DNA testing that some people in Europe are beginning to discover that they had black ancestors. There is no historically black population from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries still in existence, although there is a village in Portugal (São

Romão near Alcácer do Sal) and two small towns in Spain (Niebla and Gibraleón, both in the province of Huelva) where African features lingered longer than elsewhere, and where some of the now white inhabitants acknowledge their descent from black African slaves.

Finally, in terms of treatment of slaves, access to education for slaves was not blocked by law, but usually did not happen, as slaves were needed for their work and hiring tutors cost money; however, there are examples of black slaves belonging to teachers or educated people who allowed or encouraged their slaves to gain an education.⁷² Some of these slaves, often later manumitted, were of part-African descent, and were probably the children of their mothers’ owners, which was an added reason why their fathers would want them to be educated. Most occupations required only minimal formal education (as opposed to training or apprenticeships), and could be done either by slaves or by free/d people, which is indicative of the way in which slavery was conceptualized. Slaves in Europe could be hired out by their owners, and if they worked with their owners at a salaried job, the salary was paid to the owner. An example of this is a black slave who in 1516 served as part of the police watch led by his master in Beira in Portugal; his master was given the slave’s pay.⁷³ Slaves were often taught vital skills by the people who owned them and alongside whom they worked, such as goldsmiths’ work or cooking or fencing, and so were able to earn a living when they were freed. Some slaves, such as musicians or singers or dancers, must have arrived in Europe from Africa already with skills, and there is ample evidence of how these skills were valued and employed in Europe. The North Italian drawing of musicians and a black African singer from the second half of the sixteenth century once again shows white and black people engaged in a joint



FIG. 11 North Italian, *Three Musicians and a Singer*, ca. 1550-75. Black chalk, heightened with white on blue paper, squared in red chalk. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm (NMH 1389/1863)



FIG. 12 Black trumpeter, from the Westminster Tournament Roll, 1511. College of Arms, London

endeavor (fig. 11), although the African may have learnt to sing in Europe. Some black singers and musicians were employed at courts and were not slaves.⁷⁴ We know John Blanke, “the black trumpet” at the court of King Henry VII of England, who appears in two different images alongside white colleagues in the Great Tournament Roll of Westminster of 1511, wearing distinctive headgear but in otherwise identical dress (fig. 12),⁷⁵ was free or freed because he was paid a salary.⁷⁶ Wherever and however Africans acquired their skills, integration into European life was easier on account of them.

African protagonists and African minor characters—whether real or imagined, genuine likenesses or composite inventions—featured in a number of fifteenth and sixteenth-century European representations, sometimes depicted by the greatest Renaissance artists. The African presence in Renaissance Europe had a visual dimension of an outstanding nature that allows visual, spatial, and conceptual aspects of Renaissance European slavery to be revisited. These representations are interesting in their own right, but if they are used in conjunction with the enormous and greatly varied documentary legacy left by slavery, there is the possibility that the lives of African slaves and those of African descent in Renaissance Europe can be more authoritatively re-created, and the European chapter of the global history of slavery can be better understood.

1. See, e.g., Steven A. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery: Color, Ethnicity, and Human Bondage in Italy* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 107-12, for a description of 357 white slaves in late fourteenth-century Florence.
2. Kate Lowe, "La place des Africains sub-sahariens dans l'histoire européenne, 1400-1600," in Dieudonné Gnamankou and Yao Modzinoum, eds., *Les Africains et leurs descendants en Europe avant le XXe siècle* (Toulouse: MAT Éditions, 2008), 71-82, at 75-80.
3. K.J.P. Lowe, "The Stereotyping of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe," in T.F. Earle and K.J.P. Lowe, eds., *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 17-47 at 44-47.
4. Giovanna Fiume and Marilena Modica, eds., *San Benedetto il moro: Santità, agiografia e primi processi di canonizzazione* (Palermo: Città di Palermo, 1998); Giovanna Fiume, "Il processo 'de cultu' a Fra' Benedetto da San Fratello (1734)," in Giovanna Fiume, ed., *Il santo patrono e la città: San Benedetto il Moro: culti, devozioni, strategie di età moderna* (Venice: Marsilio, 2000), 231-52; and Nelson Minnich, "The Catholic Church and the Pastoral Care of Black Africans in Italy," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 280-300 at 298-99.
5. Kate Lowe, "Visible Lives: Black Gondoliers and Other Black Africans in Renaissance Venice," forthcoming, *Renaissance Quarterly* [2013].
6. Paul H.D. Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art, 3: From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 93-190 at 94-96; and Lowe, "Visible Lives."
7. Theodor Hampe, *Das Trachtenbuch des Christoph Weiditz: Von seinen Reisen nach Spanien (1529) und den Niederlanden (1531/31)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1927), pls. XLVII, LXIII, LXIV, LXV, LXVI for slaves wearing anklets. The inscription is on pl. XLVII.
8. William G. Thalmann, "Some Ancient Greek Images of Slavery," in Richard Alston, Edith Hall, and Laura Proffitt, eds., *Reading Ancient Slavery* (London and New York: Bristol Classical Press, 2011), 72-96 at 78-86.
9. Moriz Thausing ed., *Dürers Briefe, Tagebücher und Reime* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1872), 114: "Ich habe mit dem Stift seine Mohrin porträtiert," after 17 March and before 6 April 1521.
10. See below, note 64. Antwerp is in Brabant, and it is not absolutely clear if the Grand Conseil's jurisdiction included Brabant at this date or if it was exempt. The Grand Conseil took no appeals from Brabant after 1491, and Brabant's exemption was confirmed in 1530. However, the law relating to slavery is very likely to have been uniform throughout the Low Countries.
11. Paul H.D. Kaplan, "Titian's *Laura Dianti* and the Origins of the Motif of the Black Page in Portraiture," *Antichità viva* 21:1 (1982): 11-18 at 11-12, and 21:4, 10-18 at 13-14; P.H.D. Kaplan, "Isabella d'Este and Black African Women," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 125-54 at 154; and Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," 107-10 and fig. 44.
12. Annemarie Jordan, "Images of Empire: Slaves in the Lisbon Household and Court of Catherine of Austria," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 155-80 at 175-79 and fig. 45.
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EUROPEAN PERCEPTIONS OF BLACKNESS AS REFLECTED IN THE VISUAL ARTS

JOANEATH SPICER

My color does not disfigure my honor or my wit.

—AFONSO ÁLVARES

*And if my black face displeases your ministers, O King
A white one is not pleasing to the people of Ethiopia
There, the white man visiting the East is the sullied one
Officials are black and the king there too is dark.*

—JUAN LATINO

These declarations were written in the 1500s by two writers who were both former slaves,¹ Afonso Álvares, a Portuguese mixed-blood poet and playwright of noble lineage on his father's side, and Juan Latino, a black poet and professor of Latin at Granada's Cathedral School. As writers and persons of some public standing, Álvares and Latino had opportunity and the wherewithal to express their feelings. But this also underscores how little is known of the reaction of Africans in Europe and their immediate descendants to the prejudice associated with the color of their skin, and how complicated the semantics of skin color could be.² As in the polarities of night and day/dark and light, black or tawny skin was generally, though not always, a negative and a basis for prejudice, specifically for those from the sub-Saharan. An obvious visual attribute of otherness, it was far more often remarked than facial features and hair. This essay addresses the perception of blackness in the Renaissance, both as a skin color and as a

construction of identity, through the perspective of the visual arts.

Attitudes to skin “color” in the Renaissance encapsulate much of what today is grouped under “race.” Although “race” and “racism” are used in scholarly discourse on ethnic discrimination in the Renaissance, the various European words used in the 1500s to suggest kinship relationships are not equivalent to our use of “race.”³ They largely refer to either direct family descent from one person or “people” as “French people,” involving cultural as much as visible genetic markers such as color. Color was, however, the primary factor defining African otherness and was explicitly a matter of comment. In addition, focusing on color prompts considerations that foreground developments within the visual arts.

European travelers in Africa describing their encounters with darker-skinned people tended to note coloration, including variations, sometimes offering interpretations of what they observed. Their reactions roughly paralleled those of the inhabitants of the sub-Saharan (as conveyed by Europeans with translators), stunned and sometimes repulsed by the whiteness of the new arrivals.⁴ Representative examples of European observations include those of English traders in Guinea in 1554 recording that the inhabitants, “scorched by the sun,” were black and brown or tawny.⁵ In *A Report on the Kingdome of the Congo* (published 1591), by Duarte Lopez, the Portuguese diplomat who represented the Congo in Rome, described the inhabitants as black (in a 1597 English translation) but some “the color of wild olive,” further noting that “their lips were not thick as those of Nubia and other Negroes.”⁶ Writing in 1526, the Moroccan known as Leo Africanus (Giovanni Leone Africano) noted differences between country and city dwellers in Egypt,⁷ brown (*de color bruno*) versus white (*bianchi*), the latter a term he generally uses

for the Berber/Arab populations of the Maghreb (*Barbary*), differentiating them from the inhabitants of the “land of the blacks” (*terra de’ negri*). It was in the European context that negative associations were more often and reductively appended to color.

Negative associations were in part based on the long-lived European assumption that the initial color of human skin was “white.” How did the skin of certain peoples become darker, indeed for some peoples nearly black? The most widely accepted answer was that propounded already by the ancient Greeks: climate. Indeed “Ethiopia,” the ancient Greek name for lands south of Egypt, means “burnt” or “scorched by the sun.” As Pliny the Elder, the great Roman encyclopedist of the first century (and still respected in the Renaissance), wrote, “There can be no doubt, that the Ethiopians are scorched by their vicinity to the sun’s heat, and they are born, like persons who have been burned, with the beard and hair frizzled; while, in the opposite and frozen parts of the earth, there are nations with white skins and long light hair.”⁸ In the following century Ptolemy ingeniously speculated in his *Geography* (ca. AD 150) that gradations in skin color from pale white in northern Europe to the darker coloration typical of southern Europe, on to North Africa, and finally to the “burnt” skin of the Ethiopians occurred at a constant rate and were related to distance from the Equator and the heat of the sun. The climate explanation was a commonplace in the 1500s, as reflected in the verses accompanying Martin de Vos’s *Allegory of Africa* (no. 2) referring to “her color altered by the heat.” Actually, the ancient Greek writer Herodotus was surely trying to get at the idea of heredity by positing that male Ethiopians’ semen was black. Since this was patently untrue, the idea of color being something passed along lost favor. However, by the later 1500s, as

there were more children of mixed race being born, heredity was increasingly being considered by thoughtful observers. In his *Report on the Congo*, Duarte Lopez noted that children born to Portuguese fathers and Congolese mothers could be a shade somewhere between those of their parents, thus “the blacke colour did not spring from the heate of the Sunne but from the nature of the seede.”⁹ In 1570 another instance of the new reliance on observation is found in the geographer Abraham Ortelius’s rejection of Ptolemy’s theory on the basis of reports from the New World that the natives throughout the Americas have nearly the same color skin.¹⁰ In the 1500s, perhaps influenced by explorers’ reports of Africans of the sub-Saharan as savage and godless, idol worshipers, or Muslim, momentum developed in the field of biblical exegesis to rethink the story of Noah’s son Ham. In Genesis, Noah’s three sons are said to be the progenitors of the different peoples of the earth, Ham begetting those of Africa. Because of Ham’s offenses (unspecified but sexual and the subject of ongoing debate), his descendants were cursed with a destiny of enslavement.¹¹ In 1498 and then in 1515 the influential papal theologian Joannes Annius published several commentaries on ancient writings; some of the latter he claimed to have discovered but were in fact his own forgeries. Among his commentaries on these faked historical documents is a particularly pernicious one on the story in Genesis of Ham pointing to the blackness of Africans as the curse placed on a previously white family as a mark of inherent sin and the hypersexuality that had long been assumed to be an African trait. His impact, filtered through the publications of other influential writers of the following decades, was immense. For example in 1561 the French encyclopedist Guillaume Postel described the black skin of Africans as “a divine punishment.”¹²

RESPONSES TO BLACK SKIN

This sketch of the responses to black skin in the construction and imposition of identities (which today would be called “racial”) and the role played by objects—works of art—in the objectification that these constructions involved begins with the overarching associations of the natural phenomena of light and dark, then those with “blackness,” “not white,” and finally “black but/and beautiful.”

POLARITIES OF LIGHT VERSUS DARK (NESS)

Ordinarilie by the colour of black is understood everie sad and unpleasant thing, as contrariwise by white joy and pleasure is signified....

This blunt passage from a sermon on the *Song of Songs* by the French preacher Théodore de Bèze (1515-1605) in an English translation of 1587 distills the power of metaphorical allusions to the polarities of black and white, light and dark.¹³ The impact of these polarities on the perception of Africans in Europe would be profound. These polarities, generated by the everyday experience of the natural phenomenon of light and dark, define the fundamental act of the Old Testament, a central metaphor of the New Testament, and are ubiquitous in European literature.

The first act of creation in Genesis was the separation of light from dark, the subject of one of the Dutch artist Jan Muller’s most splendid engravings, from a series on the Creation designed by Hendrick Goltzius around 1589 (p. 34 and no. 38). Light, personified by a luminous athletic male figure evoking for contemporary viewers the sun god Apollo, assertively takes the light-drenched stage, while primal Darkness, a handsome black woman, already defined as Night by her drapery of stars, remains in the shadows. Viewers would read such images through the prism of the New

Testament: as in Christ's declaration in the Gospel of John that "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness (8:12)" and Paul's urging the Roman church to "cast off the works of darkness (Romans 13:12-14)."¹⁴ These words initiate the ever-expanding Christian exploration of the symbolism of light and the illumination of truth versus its absence or darkness, as in the writings of St. Augustine, widely popular in the Renaissance, and himself a "white" African, "We are now light . . . and children of the light and children of the day, not children of night and darkness,"¹⁵ metaphors for ignorance and deception.

BLACK (NESS)

If John of the Cross (1542-91) could pen a poem to "Dark Night, . . . more lovely than the dawn," for most of his contemporaries, night was a fearsome time, especially in the cities, where street lighting was at least a hundred years in the future.¹⁶ Loathsome things took place under cover of darkness, necessary actions as the removal of sewage and the bodies of plague victims, but also crime, sexual license, and the perversities of witches. Even around 1600 associations of night and the devil remained active, as exemplified by Thomas Nashe's *The Terrors of the Night, A Discourse on Apparitions* (1594) in which passages abound as "Night is the devil's black book wherein he records all our transgressions" and also where the devil "spreads his nets of temptation," or conventional biblical references as in "As God is entitled the Father of light, so is the devil surnamed the Prince of Darkness, which is the night."¹⁷

Hell, like Hades, the Greek underworld, was a place of blackness in the bowels of the earth. Satan, the distillation of evil and deceit, was black, as were his demons.¹⁸ The baseness of these beings, fallen from God's grace and initial whiteness, is expressed not only in their now blackened state but in the hideousness of their hybrid

animal features, as in myriad depictions of the Fall of the Rebel Angels, prompting comparison with the monstrous races still imagined as possibly inhabiting central Africa.¹⁹ Black devils in Christian mystery plays of the late Middle Ages, still powerful forms of popular culture in 1500, literally brought these demons to life.²⁰ It is hardly surprising, then, that in literature across the continent, an uncooperative black slave or Othello himself could be castigated as a "black devil,"²¹ or that the Portuguese chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zurara, seeing blacks among the Berber captives brought to Portugal in 1441, describes them as "spirits from the lowest hemisphere [hell]."²²

Sin itself was black, blackening and corrupting the soul by soiling it with a rejection of God. St. Augustine made a comparison between the decisions an individual makes in life and those made by a painter who chooses his colors carefully: "The evil man choses himself to be a sinner. . ." and "Without question, the sinner has chosen to be the black color."²³ Even the famous declaration by the beloved, "I am black but comely" (*Nigra sum sed formosa* in the Latin of the Vulgate edition) in the Old Testament Song of Songs (1.4-5), in the 1500s was widely read typologically as the Church blackened by human sin but beautiful in her capacity for redemption and whitening by the bridegroom Christ.²⁴ In a Dutch devotional *Picture (Handbook) of the Christian Faith (Tafel van den Kersten Ghelove)* from around 1400 (no. 32), "Sin" is personified by a man with multiple heads having the color and features of an African from the Land of the Blacks, while "The Seven Deadly Sins" (fig. 13) are imagined as black demons tormenting a young blond woman, a "pure soul."

Besides giving a face to sin, the features of a sub-Saharan African might be adapted to give a face to the Muslim world when demonized as the Saracen enemy, a term made popular by the Crusades, for European Christians *the* fundamental battle of good and evil.²⁵ Muslims could

be any ethnic group, but it might serve political purposes to exaggerate the otherness of Muslims by characterizing them as black Africans.²⁶ The Habsburg family that ruled much of Europe through control of the Holy Roman Empire was in conflict with the Ottoman Turkish Empire on multiple fronts, including Habsburg ancestral lands in Hungary and Austria. These conflicts, deeply ingrained in the European imagination since the Crusades, were reenacted in many ways, including the ephemeral performance art of the court pageant, which could take the form of the joust of armored riders carrying lances. An extraordinary steel visor (no. 31), shaped to represent in life size the face of an African, painted dark brown and further embellished with a horsehair mustache in an “Oriental” style, would have been worn with

a helmet by a costumed nobleman participating in such a joust. The visor and others like it were made for a “Hungarian” tournament held by Archduke Ferdinand II at the Habsburg court in Prague in 1557, where they were worn by those representing Hungary’s Muslim occupiers.²⁷ These visors were used for another “Hungarian” tournament in Innsbruck in 1582 as part of the festivities celebrating Ferdinand’s marriage with Anna Caterina Gonzaga, daughter of the duke of Mantua, one of the great families of Italy. The processions of participants in the tournament and attendant spectacles were recorded in engravings. In one segment (fig. 14) Archduke Ferdinand is dressed as a Hungarian Hussar, a member of the elite cavalry that defended the eastern borders of the Habsburg realms against the Turks. He is preceded by two



FIG. 13 The Seven Deadly Sins, from Dirc van Delft, *Tafel van den Khersten Ghelove* [Picture (Handbook) of the Christian Faith], 1400–1404. Gouache on parchment. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (w.171, 97r)



FIG. 14 Sigmund Elsäasser, *Tournament Book of Ferdinand II*, 1582. Engraving, hand colored in the artist’s workshop. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (KK 5270, fol. 20v)

men dressed as Hungarian soldiers, one of whom is a black African.

In the literature on these festivities it is assumed that even the blacks filling secondary roles as depicted in these engravings, such as this man, are not actually people of African ancestry but white Europeans in masks such as this visor or with their faces, hands, and sometimes bare legs blackened for the occasion. However, the facial features of the black man in this detail show no sign of being those of a mask, certainly not a steel visor and helmet. Although no documents detailing the presence of blacks living in Prague or Innsbruck at the times of these festivals are known, there were black Africans at the Gonzaga court.²⁸ They could have been brought along in the entourage of the bride to bring Italian glamour and implicit claims of power and prestige to the Gonzaga side of the celebration. This is also clearly not a veil, sometimes specified in other pageants, making the play on color “transparent.”²⁹ For the performance of blackness by white actors, most available information concerns English theatrical productions for which blackface was a common solution, as when Queen Anne, consort of King James of England, and her ladies became the “daughters of Niger,” in a *Masque of Blackness* performed in 1605. As is evident in a preparatory drawing by Inigo Jones for the masque, European facial features were not disguised (fig. 15). In the sequel *Masque of Beauty*, the ladies are whitened by the King.

Finally, as Kate Lowe has rightly emphasized,³⁰ in an age galvanized by a sense of historical destiny, preoccupation with pinpointing cultural developments in the march of civilization, defining progress, analyzing the role of the city, the incredible developments in science and technology, and then contact with the Mayan empire in the New World, the black inhabitant of the sub-Saharan, often reported to be dressed only in skins or nearly naked, represented the absence of these,



FIG. 15 Inigo Jones (English, 1573–1652), *Masquer: a Daughter of Niger*, ca. 1605. Watercolor on paper. Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, UK / The Bridgeman Art Library

in a word “savage.” We are back at the “natural” polarity of light and dark, with “enlightened” represented by white.

NOT WHITE

Pursuing manifestations of color prejudice from the perspective of the visual arts highlights the quality of being “not white” in a white context. Set against a norm of whiteness, dark or black skin functioned as a visible marker of social difference and diminishment with many consequences. In some circumstances social difference was more a question of being “not white” than being black per se. For example, a white or “whitish” slave was generally more expensive than one who was not.³¹ In Cornelis van Haarlem’s painting *Bathsheba Bathing with Attendants* from 1594 (fig. 16), the creamy whiteness of Bathsheba’s skin and the shimmering gold blond of her hair become the

FIG. 16 Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (Dutch, 1562-1638), *Bathsheba Bathing with Attendants*, 1594. Oil on canvas, 77.5 × 64 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (SK-A-3892)



focus of attention through the juxtaposition of the charcoal black attendant. While the black woman's features suggest that the artist had never seen an African (the first ones now identified were landed in 1596), her role as foil for the beauty of her mistress seems purposeful.³² The same is true for Cavliere d'Arpino's *Judith* (no. 23), though here the black slave's wide-eyed silent witness conveys the significance of the event as much as does Judith's calm reserve.

Standards of beauty (female) were in practice enormously varied throughout Europe, but in the arts, the early Renaissance Italian poet Francesco

Petrarca's poems in praise of the unattainable Laura with her long golden hair, pale skin, and refined features captured the imagination of Renaissance artists and writers alike, perfectly exemplified by depictions of the Carthaginian queen Dido (no. 21). This left little room for the appreciation of black skin and broad features, except as a foil.³³ As the English playwright John Lyly wrote in 1579, "we commonly see a black ground doth best besem a white counterfeit [portrait likeness], as Venus, according to the judgment of Mars, was most amiable [attractive] when she sat close by Vulcan."³⁴ The author assumes



FIG. 17 Titian (Italian, ca. 1488–1576), *Portrait of Fabrizio Salvaressa*, 1558. Oil on canvas, 112 × 88 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (GG 1605)

that you know that Vulcan was the crippled blacksmith of the gods, typically depicted as reddened by the heat of his forge and tanned by being outdoors. Indeed, the most common circumstance of darker complexions playing up the luminosity of white female skin is in paintings of gatherings of Olympian gods and goddesses. The same role of tanned foil may be played by peasants.³⁵

It has been postulated that the black slaves incorporated into portraits of their owners beginning in the 1500s were included as a foil for the

whiteness of the owner.³⁶ This may well be so in England by the mid-1600s, where the preoccupation in the literature with women having “fair” skin is striking and there is a body of comparable portraits. However in the 1500s the relevant portraiture is just as often of men and from continental schools (fig. 17, fig. 18, no. 48) where there was less preoccupation with whiteness but also an extended vocabulary of human attributes often included in portraits, such as one’s own children, favored assistants, or court dwarfs, which suggest that Africans may be included first of all as favored, exotic luxury items, more exotic and therefore suggestive of luxury because of their color. Thus the commission in 1491 of Isabella d’Este, marchioness of Mantua, for the purchase of a little girl “as black as possible,”³⁷ could be construed as a wish for the maximum exoticism, from the southernmost reaches of the Land of the Blacks.

An unpublished portrayal of a black woman holding a clock (no. 49), attributed to Annibale Carracci, is a fragment of a double portrait with her mistress (of whom only a bit of veil remains). Today it is the subtle reading of the black woman’s face, alive with ironic, amused self awareness, that arrests our attention, but in the 1500s, attention was likely focused on the expensive clock she holds up, meant to announce her mistress’s Christian concern for the all-too-quick passage of this earthly life. A drawing in Amsterdam (inv. RP-T1889-T-2150) may represent her at an earlier age.

A form of the expression “Washing an Ethiopian” (in French “blanchir un Moor,” wash a black man white) is referenced already as an example of an impossible task in ancient Greek literature and took on a life of its own in the early 1500s, most extensively in Andrea Alciati’s influential *Little Book of Emblems* (*Emblematum Libellus*, 1531,



FIG. 18 Paris Bordone (Italian, 1500–1571), *Portrait of a Man in Armor with Two Pages*. Oil on canvas, 116.8 × 157.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Fine Art, New York, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1973 (1973.311.1)



FIG. 19 “To Wash an Ethiopian” (Aethiopem Lavare), from Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes, and other Devises* (Leiden, 1586). Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (EMBLEMS 096.1W613C1586, p. 57)

with more than a hundred later editions and translations in Italian, English, Spanish, French, and Dutch).³⁸ Kim Hall has rightly called this “perhaps the dominant troping of blackness in the period.”³⁹ The emblem (motto, epigram, and symbolic image) of “Impossible [Effort]” followed by the epigram in Latin: “Why are you vainly washing an Ethiopian? Give up. No one can light up the darkness of black night” was illustrated from 1536 with images of white men washing a semi-clad black man as in the 1548 edition (no. 33) and in an English adaptation of 1586 (fig. 19). Some editions, as one of 1558, add a line: “Vices that are natural to the man, whether physical or spiritual, cannot be eradicated.” The underlying inference is that even though one knows that the man’s black color is permanent, he appears discolored (especially if the discoloration is associated with natural vice), and therefore it would be reasonable to want to whiten him. Adding an illustration draws attention to the man’s blackness and slack body language. The implication is that no free

man would suffer this humiliating treatment; his passivity in the face of assault conveys that he is a slave, a thing to be manhandled and lacking in natural virtue. In Diego Ximénez de Enciso’s play *The Famous Drama of Juan Latino* the sense that black skin is discolored comes out poignantly in the frequent passages in which the protagonist feels that he must apologize for his “uncouth” body or “sooty” skin.⁴⁰

Disregard on the basis of color underlies Renaissance renderings of “the miracle of the black leg,” performed by Sts. Cosmas and Damian. The story can be illustrated through the predella panels of an Italian painting of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, of around 1370 (no. 35), the earliest extant. According to *The Golden Legend*, the influential fourteenth-century book of saints’ lives by Jacobus da Voragine, the brothers were third-century Christian physicians, martyred for their faith. In the sixth century, a devotee in Rome of the saints developed an ulcerous leg, and in his sleep Cosmas and Damian came to his aid. They decided to replace the leg by digging up the body of an Ethiopian who had been buried that day and cutting off the dead man’s leg to replace that of their devotee. When the sick man awoke, he was astonished to discover a new, sound, black leg. In the companion panel the brothers are martyred by beheading ca. 287 by Roman soldiers carrying shields emblazoned with heads of fierce Africans. Since the Roman military used no such emblem, this usage is most likely intended to suggest the pagan ferocity of pre-Christian Rome.

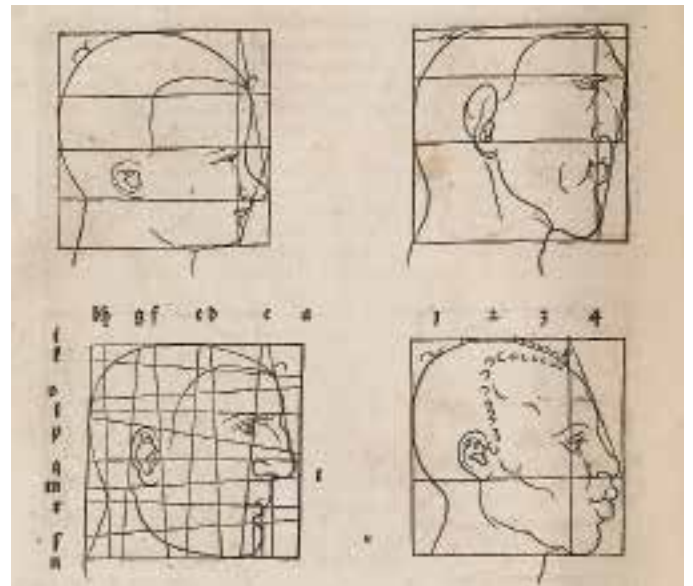
Why does the legend specify an Ethiopian? There were few blacks in Rome in the sixth century, and there were surely recently deceased white people. However, it was not acceptable to desecrate the body of a dead Christian. Most likely “Ethiopian” (with no modifier) was used simply to indicate the man’s color, in which case the reader was probably to infer that he was a slave. Slaves were generally thought to have no souls, so desecration was not

an issue.⁴¹ The subject was taken up elsewhere in Europe. In the charged atmosphere surrounding Christian attitudes toward Moriscos in sixteenth-century Spain, the imagery could be brutal. The scene from an altarpiece for the Monastery of San Francisco in Valladolid is gruesome: the black man is alive, screaming in pain and horror. It is difficult today to understand how the image could be condoned, much less commissioned.

The aesthetic evaluation of black Africans also depended on facial features, the broad, flat nose, and large lips associated with the Land of the Blacks, always contrasted with European ideals. Europeans travelers in the sub-Sahara might observe a range of features, much as in the faces of Europeans;⁴² however, in Europe the reason to call attention to them was usually to mark what were perceived to be stereotypic deficiencies. This is starkly exemplified by a caricature-like study (fig. 20) of about 1615 by the youthful Jacob de Gheyn III drawn from a plaster cast in his father's studio,⁴³ possibly in preparation for a *Mocking of Christ* dated 1616,⁴⁴ in which the soldier threatening Christ caricatures a black African, his exaggeratedly large, parted lips and pig nose meant to convey savage bloodlust. Such images are reminders of the persistent belief that both inner beauty and corruption are manifested in outward appearance.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, for most artists such as Veronese (nos. 53, 54) who made studies from life, usually with black chalk, of the heads of black Africans, it seems to have been more an interest in simply introducing variety into their narrative subjects that prompted their studies. The pose and hand gestures of the black man in an elegant, unpublished study in Philadelphia (no. 57), loosely attributed to Lodovico Carracci, suggest it was intended for such a usage but until the attribution can be more securely anchored, this is speculation.

A further perspective on variation is provided by a text and illustration (fig. 21 and no. 36) in



TOP FIG. 20 Jacob de Gheyn III (Dutch, ca. 1596–1641), Studies from Plaster Casts. Black chalk, pen and brown ink, 21.3 × 28.3 cm. Musée de Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins (19997)

ABOVE FIG. 21 Albrecht Dürer (German, 1471–1528), Four Proportional Studies of Heads, from *Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion*, no. 36. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.437, p. 95v)

Albrecht Dürer's *Four Books of Human Proportion* (*Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion* [Nuremberg 1528]). The author examines a range of human bodily proportional types (based on direct study of hundreds of men and women), comparing them with a figural and facial type close to that of classical Greek sculpture. These profiles illustrate a discussion on the extremes of variations in noses, "wide or narrow, pointed, with corners, or round."⁴⁶ That the man with a "round" nose is a black African is not noted in the text; his profile, seemingly based on a study from life, is simply one of the variations that depart from the proportional mean (which constitutes a working ideal), the others being European. A further goal of the artist was to show that different figural types could be internally well proportioned; that Dürer thought this face to be so may be deduced from his apparently having used the now-lost original study as the model for the black king in his *Adoration of the Kings* from 1504 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek). However, in a section titled "aesthetic excursus,"

Dürer concludes, "The faces of the Moors are rarely lovely due to their very flat noses and thick mouths. . . . However, I have seen some of them that are otherwise in their entire body so well built and handsome that I have neither seen nor can imagine something better built."⁴⁷ And what of his drawing of Katharina (no. 55)? The extreme care Dürer took to articulate the rounded volumes of her face suggest that he was closely studying them to understand their aesthetic effect. At the end of his life the artist expressed frustration that he had finally not been able to define beauty; perhaps this is one of the studies that convinced him how unworkable a single standard can be.

The significance to Dürer of the variety of human forms that he recorded will, by century's end, be reflected in a more self-reflective understanding of the relativity of aesthetic judgment impacted by an expanding European worldview. This is distilled in a remarkable cameo from the second half of the century featuring the profile bust of a black man (fig. 22) inscribed in Italian: "Nature is beautiful in its variety." It has been suggested that this rather traditional sentiment in praise of nature's bounty might be meant ironically here.⁴⁸ Probably not: irony is not a quality associated with expensively carved and mounted gems, and the sentiment as applied to racial diversity is not an isolated one at this period. Taking a different perspective to a similar end, the essayist Michel de Montaigne, often one to articulate truths, wrote: "For a painter in the Indies, beauty is black and sunburnt (or swarthy, *basannée*), with thick swollen lips and broad flat noses." Citing further tastes of distant peoples he notes, "[but] we would fashion ugliness that way." "It seems we have little knowledge of natural beauty or of beauty in general, since we humans give so many diverse forms to our own beauty; if it had been prescribed by Nature, we would all hold common views about it, just as we all agree that fire is hot."⁴⁹



FIG. 22 "Nature is beautiful for its variety," Milanese (?), 1550–1600. Agate in a setting of enameled gold, height 4.2 cm. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Département des Monnaies, Médailles, et Antiques (CAMEE 596)



FIG. 23 Hieronymus Bosch (Netherlandish, ca. 1450–1516), *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, 1500–1505, detail. Oil on wood. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (PO2823)

BLACK BUT/AND BEAUTIFUL

An intriguing aspect of color consciousness in Europe in the 1500s is the development of what might be called a black aesthetic in the visual arts, demonstrating that it was possible to act on values other than those based on societally condoned metaphors of negation. Striking if rare poetic peons to a “black *but* beautiful” beloved have often been remarked, as in the poem beginning “Black, yes, but so beautiful. . .” (*Nera sì, ma se bella . . .*) addressed to *The Beautiful Slave* (*La bella schiave*) by the Italian poet Giambattista Marino (1569–1625).⁵⁰ However, the perspective of the visual arts reveals patterns that permit the linkage “black *and* beautiful,” that blackness was not necessarily a barrier to be overcome, that demonstrating an appreciation of the aesthetic and naturalistic possibilities of blackness and black skin could, in the

work of art, appear inseparable from an appreciation of the figure portrayed.⁵¹ In the majority of cases where the finished figure is black, it is clear that expertise with the “black” medium preceded the choice of subject. Mapping the time frame of salient examples underscores shared characteristics but makes clear that examples disappear after about 1610/15, with changing collecting patterns and social conditions. In the 1600s, the “exotic other” becomes simply the “other.”

Growth in personal collecting of luxury goods by the wealthy in the 1500s, including the small-scaled objects preferred for the Cabinets of Art and Wonders of the time, encouraged sculptors vying for commissions to be inventive, to combine rich, unusual, or difficult materials—including those naturally exhibiting rich blacks and browns such as onyx, sardonyx, jasper, agate, black marble, rosewood, bronze, iron—with virtuosity and novelty, which at this period were often addressed through exotic themes.⁵² In this environment it is not surprising if artists who chose to work with these materials as primary media of artistic expression, valuing the inherent aesthetic qualities that these colors permitted, might see a dark skin as offering a special appeal. The same may be said for printmakers, especially engravers, appealing to a similar market but less tied to individual patrons. Nothing comparable in full color painting has been identified excepting the tiny but stunning young black woman (fig. 23), confidently standing with a group of pale white men in Bosch’s triptych *Garden of Earthly Delights*, that enigmatic, fantastical evocation of the carnal temptations resulting from the Fall of Man depicted on the panel to the left, and the lurid bodily tortures of Hell on the right panel.⁵³ Her elegant profile crisply defined against the pale bodies behind her, the black woman balances a bright red berry; she epitomizes the carnality that endangers the soul’s salvation. The astonishing visual result may be an indicator as to why the subject was not repeated



LEFT FIG. 24 Workshop of Girolamo Miseroni (Italian, 1522–after 1584), *Bust of a Black African Woman*, 1575–1600, setting 1602–1608 by Hans Vermeyen. Agate, enameled gold, 6.4 × 5.3 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (ANSA XII 806)

CENTER FIG. 25 Workshop of Girolamo Miseroni (Italian, 1522–after 1584), *Cameo of a Black Woman*, ca. 1600. 4.1 × 3.1 cm. Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich

RIGHT FIG. 26 Workshop of Girolamo Miseroni (Italian, 1522–after 1584), *Cameo of a Black Woman*, ca. 1560. Agate, gold, enamel, 5.7 × 4.3 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (ANSA XII 121)

by others on a larger scale. An exceptional work in many ways, the Garden underscores the absence of black nudes elsewhere in paintings of the period.

Black stone, principally marble and onyx, became increasingly popular in the 1500s in part as a function of the interest in Roman tastes in colored stone for sculpture, carved gems, and architectural decoration. Semiprecious stones carved in relief (cameos) or engraved (intaglios) were popular in antiquity, a head of an African with conventional or exaggerated features being one of the

vast array of subjects.⁵⁴ In the 1500s both ancient and modern carved semiprecious hardstone gems were collected and enjoyed simply as small works of art or incorporated into something else, perhaps an elaborate pendant “jewel,” ring, hat badge, or a vessel also of semiprecious hardstone, sometimes in a later application by a different, distant workshop. The gems selected for carving could be a single color (no. 50) or banded, that is with straight (no. 51) or wavy (figs. 24–26) strata of different colors. The most popular subject for cameos carved in the 1500s was a human head, not only commissioned portraits but interesting types both mythological and exotic. Technically the simplest format is represented by a *Head of a Black Youth* (no. 50) carved in luminous brown sardonyx so the soft brown fuses with the youth’s own brown profile. While many of the cruder cameos with heads of Africans from this period, as those from antiquity, are conventional types, the sense of naturalism is so strong here and in so many of these tiny representations that one must wonder whether this image is not based on a likeness of a real model, not to produce a formal portrait per se, but nevertheless drawing our attention to the use

of a black face for an object whose purpose was to be appealing to the eye.

A cameo in variegated onyx of a beautiful young black woman looking over her shoulder (fig. 24) created in the Miseroni family's workshop in Milan in the 1580s (to which an intricate frame was added in the 1590s by the court goldsmith Hans Vermeyen in Prague) is one of the most astonishing portrayals of a person of African ancestry in the Renaissance.⁵⁵ It exemplifies a perfect melding of medium and subject. Gasparo Miseroni with other members of the family gained fame in the second half of the 1500s through the carving of rock crystal and other semiprecious hardstones, first of all elaborate vessels in these materials, often combined with mounts in the most delicate painted enamel, but also decorated with cameos. In 1588 the workshop moved to Prague, to be close to the court of the emperor Rudolf II, their chief patron. There is no indication that this and the other similarly framed Miseroni cameos in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, that come from Rudolf's collection were worn. Framing made them precious works of art.

The characterization of the face, the eruption of emotion, and the direct, sensuous appeal of the gaze over the naked shoulder are so realistic and personal that this must be an actual portrait of a beautiful black woman close to the artist. The grip of passion is hardly found in portraiture before the mid-1600s, decorum calling for calm reserve. However, in the informal portrayal of a woman who may be a slave, there are no such social restraints to limit the artist in creating a thrilling work of art that throws off decorum to create something truly original. Miseroni fully exploited the distribution of color and shape of this single piece of stone that may have suggested the seductive, naked shoulder over which she looks at us, introducing body language that will be fully exploited only later in Baroque painting. Cameos from the Miseroni

workshop can be compared with the many other excellent if less innovative pieces in a variety of styles from the period that at present cannot be associated with specific workshops. A *Cameo of a Black Woman* (fig. 25) of about 1600 and probably also of North Italian origin demonstrates a similar analysis of the variegated colors of the stone to fully exploit them in the woman's headdress, comparable to that worn by the slave woman in Mantegna's drawing *Judith with Her Black Slave* (fig. 27). Nevertheless, it is not to the headdress but to the woman's strong, full facial features and neck, carved in high relief that the artist's virtuosity as a sculptor has been applied.



FIG. 27 Andrea Mantegna (Italian, ca. 1431-1506), *Judith with Her Black Slave*. Istituti museali della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizie, Florence (404 E)

A telling comparison can be made in the more literal interpretation of waving bands of soft brown and cream agate exploited to represent a *North African Woman in a Headscarf* (see fig. 26) attributed to Giovanni Ambrogio Miseroni (1551-1616), in a further innovation by the Miseroni workshop.⁵⁶ The beautifully executed enamel frame, added in Prague, calls attention to its completeness as a discrete work of art for the emperor's collection. It is apparently when framed cameos of black were given as individual gifts that they were more likely to be worn as a personal ornament.⁵⁷ Whether such display should be interpreted in the same way as the inclusion of a black slave or servant in a painted portrait is not clear.

Gemstones with flat bands of color are the most commonly encountered gems used for cameos of heads at this period. One approach to this banding was a double-sided cameo displaying a bust of a man on each side, one white and one black (or brown), exemplified by a fine example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (no. 51). Both wear a laurel victory wreath and Roman dress, though the white man wears more specifically the mantle of a military commander that suits his firm expression and profile, traditional for Roman emperors and victorious general. The younger, scowling black man on the back is depicted in the livelier but traditionally thought less dignified three-quarter view. The carver has exercised great skill nicking the surface to create the African's hair and beard, which catch the light. It is an achievement to carve a three-quarter view in such low relief; the result is a virtuoso performance, but still the man's broad nose is unusually flattened. In combination with the knitted brow and larger (considered more sensual) mouth, the result would be a European notion of a rapacious enemy suggesting the iconic conflict (third century BCE) between the brilliant but violent Carthaginian general Hannibal and the conquering Roman general Scipio Africanus,

famous for his calm and sense of justice.⁵⁸ A piece of agate with contiguous, straight bands of white and black might also be used for overlapping profiles of an African and European, the black profile on top creating the eye-catching, exotic design.⁵⁹

In the later 1500s sculptors in Italy were experimenting with another aspect of the Roman taste for colored stone: the combination of contrasting colored marbles to evoke distinction between clothing details and skin. The funerary portrait by Francesco Caporale of the Congolese ambassador



FIG. 28 Nicolas Cordier (French, 1567–1612), *The Moor*. Colored marble, alabaster, semiprecious stones, glass. Musée du Louvre, Paris (MR 303; MV 8411)

Na Vunda (see fig. 46) apparently carved in 1608, the year of Na Vunda's death in Rome (but only installed in its current setting in 1629), is executed in an arresting combination of darkest green-black marble for the head, a brilliant yellow-ocher marble for his mantle, and the whites of the eyes in white marble, together conveying a vitality that brings the diplomat to life.⁶⁰ Very likely this work was known by the sculptor Nicolas Cordier (1567-1612), employed from 1607 by the Borghese family to restore (i.e., complete) ancient sculpture in their collections in Rome—for example, two ancient torsos completed as gypsies.⁶¹ He ended by creating new “Roman” sculpture for his patrons, most famously *The Moor* (fig. 28). The intense physicality of the black marble, carved with great subtlety to convey the melancholic mood of this handsome youth, is joined to a rich yellow ochre alabaster for the tunic. The sensuousness of the black marble's burnished smooth surfaces is much more apparent than if the surface were white; the resulting play of these surfaces with the matte appearance of the tunic further evidences Cordier's brilliant technique.

An astonishingly beautiful *Kneeling Black Woman* (no. 42), from around 1600 by a Flemish or German artist possibly working in Italy, is executed in darkly glowing Brazilian rosewood, a fragrant wood only introduced into Europe in the Renaissance and used first of all for high-quality musical instruments.⁶² The play of rosewood's highly tactile, satin smooth surfaces against the inherent richness of the semiprecious lapis and yellow marble in the original base, invites stroking. Oil from one's fingers would only increase the sheen and the implied sexuality of the figure. Rosewood was rarely used for sculpture, so we may assume that its use for what must have been a costly commission indicates an intention to evoke the young woman's natural skin color as well as its inherent associations with exotic luxury. Her

pose alludes to a Roman, life-size marble *Kneeling Venus at Her Bath* (British Museum) that was famous in Renaissance Italy, more widely known through an engraving of ca. 1508 by Marcantonio Raimondi,⁶³ and the subject of other statuettes from the period made to appeal to knowledgeable collectors who enjoyed owning such hand-scaled, modern variations on famous archetypes. But the gaze is different. The lovely young woman in rosewood, apparently caught off guard at her bath, looks up at the viewer, the intruder, with a questioning smile that could be read as conveying insecurity rather than the self-assurance characteristic of the goddess of love.

There are more depictions of Africans in bronze than in other sculptural media; of these the various versions of *Black Woman at Her Bath* (no. 40) are by far the best known. Although bronze in itself is excellent for evoking tawny skin, the possibility of applying various surfaces or patinas including a black-brown lacquer, remains of which are visible here in the crevices, offered many variations. In contrast to the uniqueness of a carved statuette, *Black Woman at Her Bath* is known in at least twelve versions of what may originally have been a larger number. This indicates a significant demand. There are variations in quality, and not all are by the same hand, but the best ones, as this svelte statuette in a private collection, are fine examples of the late mannerist small bronze. The typically elongated proportions and poised, beautifully balanced pose and gestures were developed in the Florentine workshop of Jean Bologne (Giambologna, 1529-1608), exerting great influence on artists elsewhere in Italy and in the north, from whence many sculptors came to Florence and Rome to study. The particular sense of form and detail here have been associated with the work of the Parisian sculptor Barthélemy Prieur (1536-1611).⁶⁴ These bronzes have been called “Black Venus”; this signals the physical beauty



FIG. 29 Maerten van Heemskerck (Netherlandish, 1498–1574), *Abduction of Helen*, 1535, detail. Oil on canvas. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, acquired by Henry Walters with the Massarenti Collection, 1902 (37.656)



of the figure—as remarkable from the back as the front—and the long contours and details such as the dimple in the hip invite stroking. Nevertheless, this is misleading in implying a mythological source and in fact by the later 1500s the subject of an ordinary woman at her bath could be found in small bronzes by Prieur and earlier by Giambologna. The mirrors held by some of the black women are replacements, but given the direction of their fixed gaze and head tilted in the body language of curious engagement, it is probably correct. Female attendants at public steam baths were commonly naked, so a beautiful black woman in this role might have inspired the subject; however, here attention is focused completely on the woman herself.

There are no known statuettes of a black male nude from the period. Albrecht Dürer's comments on the bodies of blacks he had studied make clear that this is not for want of appreciation. It is unusual to see a semi-naked black male as a positive image; perhaps they would have been too threatening. They usually represent foreign power brought under control, as in the inclusion of one in the monument to Archduke Ferdinand's victory over the "Moors" (Ottomans) at Livorno (see fig. 9) or beasts of burden as in Maerten van Heemskerck's *Abduction of Helen* painted in Rome in 1535 (fig. 29).⁶⁵ The muscular black Christian drawn up into heaven in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* is swathed in heavy drapery as white men are not.⁶⁶ Only among the damned is a naked or nearly naked black body depicted. While in Northern Europe a black man may be discreetly hidden among the saved, one subject foregrounded a semi-clad muscular black man as a positive model: the New Testament story (Acts 8) of the Apostle

FIG. 30 Jan van der Elburcht (Netherlandish, active 1536–1553), *Philip Baptizing the Ethiopian Counselor (Eunuch)*, ca. 1550s. Oil on panel, 186.5 × 99 cm. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2121 [OK])

Philip baptizing an Ethiopian court official, a Jew, puzzled by the prophecies of a messiah in the Old Testament but converted through Philip's preaching (fig. 30, and no. 27). The episode, marking the expanding Christian mission, became popular in the 1500s, almost exclusively in regions affected by reform movements. The bronze statuette of the *Black Jester* (no. 41), attributed to Orazio Mocchi, therefore to court circles in Florence around 1605-10, is another unusual tribute to athletic strength, grace, and physical power in a black man. We should not be surprised that the impact of his physique has been muted by the traditional loose-fitting bodysuit and hood of the court jester, the court entertainer, black or white, enslaved or free, whose task it was to entertain with acrobatic prowess, singing, or humor. His is hardly a jesting mood; the open mouth, knit brow, and hand to the head express the release of a strong emotion, some primal hurt. The result is so unexpected that one must wonder if the black man, whose features are particularized, is not actually a portrait, the statuette a record of the artist's reaction to the inadvertent witnessing of a moment of deepest human emotion.

Iron as a component of steel was integral to the production of sophisticated edged weapons of the 1500s such as rapiers, and iron itself could be used to cast decorative elements of the hilt—for example, the pommel (fig. 31)—as it could be for decorative elements of other status objects of utility. It was also occasionally used for small independent works of art probably created explicitly to demonstrate the sculptor's virtuosic technique in mastering so intractable a material to achieve crisp detail.⁶⁷ The head of a fierce, black African warrior with gold earrings, treated in the most unbelievable detail, caps the pommel of a ceremonial rapier in Vienna in a tour de force made more extraordinary by the hydralike display of tiny, similar heads leaping from the hand guard. A number of heads of Africans decorate extant rapiers and



FIG. 31 Italian, ca. 1600-10. Iron pommel in the shape of an African warrior. Iron, length 118 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (HJRK A 1029)

light swords of the period; all are different.⁶⁸ There are no relevant documents, but the pattern of usage suggests that they are intended to endow the rapier's owner with strength and ferocity. The naturalism and even tension seen in the tiny features suggest the possibility that there was a live model. This is dramatically so in the case of *Head of a Black Slave* (no. 52) by an unidentified artist, probably Venetian, now in Washington. As the collar as well as the upward gaze suggest a slave, this piece was surely not made for a weapon, though it is similar to designs for door pulls, of which there are similar Italian examples of this innately insulting function. Nevertheless the function of this piece is not clear; it may have been intended from the beginning as a virtuosic cabinet piece

demonstrating the qualities of iron as a difficult medium requiring virtuosity for its mastery and offering the visual appeal of the play on color that the subject's blackness affords.

Consideration of a few salient examples of engravers seemingly inspired by the blackness of black Africans rounds out this overview.⁶⁹ Of the many black female nudes found in engravings of the period, as the personification of Africa after Martin de Vos (no. 2), none comes close in quality of interpretation of blackness to the figure of Darkness in *Creation of Light & Dark* engraved by the young Jan Muller after a drawing by his teacher Hendrick Goltzius in a style that completely captures the master's brilliance (p. 34, no. 38). Many figures are depicted in deep shade in Goltzius's compositions, but none is developed with such complexity to achieve a bond of surface and form. The dark skin is evoked through a dizzying performance, melding curvilinear patterns of tightly controlled swelling and ebbing lines, subtly organized in complementing systems of cross-hatching, all carefully orchestrated to bring out all the nuances of this unmistakably feminine but firm, black, beautiful body. The rays of light emanating from the figure of Light bathe her right side, detaching the crisp, ever-renewing curves of her contour from the darkness in the rear. Continuing the astonishing mastery of line to create a variety of blacks, the void behind her raised leg pulses as if with the ripples of watered silk.

These qualities throw light on a puzzling *Head of an African* engraved by Frans Crabbe (no. 56), the dangling earring, seaman's blouse (?), black skin, and wary expression distilling the exotic. The unusual, forceful density of the hatching that models the head, played off against the sparse, linear definition of the "white" shirt suggests that possibly this engraving also represents an artist's curiosity to explore the aesthetic possibilities of blackness articulated through line, although without Muller's subtlety.

A final example combines word and image: an emblem (no. 39) composed by the Flemish artist and poet Otto van Veen and included in his *Emblems of Love (Amoroum Emblemata, Antwerp, 1608)*.⁷⁰ Charming cupids act out themes on the delights, frustrations, or disappointments of love illuminated through quotations from ancient writers and four short poems in English, Italian, Dutch, and French.⁷¹ The first two poems, one in English and the second originally in Italian, convey the message.

Brown berries are sweet of taste

Cupid not alwayes doth, shoot at the fayrest whyte,
But at the louely brown, moste often drawes his bow,
Good gesture and fyne grace, he hath the skill to
know,
Delighting for to chuse, the cause of his delight.

Grace more than color

Cupid abandons the white one in favor of the
brown one
Sometimes; and why not? if more often
the brown's grace is more powerful?
Brown is more firm, while white color vanishes.⁷²

This emblem resonates for two reasons. First, there is a tendency in scholarly discourse to see expressions of sweet regard that cross color lines as transgressive fantasies. Given the context of these poems, it is reasonable to take them at face value. Second, although the engraved image itself is simply competent, the last two lines of the second poem offer critical insight into the appeal of black skin for artists. In the *Separation of Light and Dark*, the figure of Light is vigorously assertive in body language, but visually he is indeed bleached out by comparison with Dark. With this in mind, looking back at the works discussed above, beginning with Bosch's *Garden*, one can see that indeed blackness lends an intensity and tension to surface values that clearly impact the perception of form. Not only does the silhouette

detach from its setting emphasizing the grace of the figure's contour but these qualities of intensity and surface tension also seem to increase one's perception of the figure's physicality (and, by extension, sexuality) in the absence of any other contributing factor.

NOTES

1. The quotation from Álvares is taken from T.F. Earle, "Black Africans versus Jews: Religious and Racial Tension in a Portuguese Saint's Play," in T.F. Earle and K.J.P. Lowe, eds. *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 347. The quotation from Juan Latino's *Ad Catholicum* is adapted from the translation of J. Mira Seo in *African Athena: New Agendas*, ed. Daniel Orrells, Gurminder K. Bhambra, and Tessa Roynon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 269.

2. Of the extensive bibliography, works that have proved the most useful include Anu Korhonen, "Washing the Ethiopian White: Conceptualizing Black Skin in Renaissance England," in Earle and Lowe, *Black Africans*, 94-112; Naomi Baker, *Plain Ugly: The Unattractive Body in Early Modern Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010); L. van Norden, *The Black Feet of the Peacock: The Color-Concept "Black" from the Greeks through the Renaissance* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985); Umberto Eco, *Storia della bruttezza* (Milan: Bompiani, 2007; English translation: *On Ugliness* [New York: Rizzoli, 2007]); Kim Hall, *Things of Darkness, Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

3. The literature on "race," even limited to the Renaissance, is beyond summarizing here. The study that directly addresses word usage best is Arlette Jouana, *L'idée de race en France au XVIe siècle et au début du XVIIe* (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 1981); see also Ivan Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1996); Thomas Hahn, "The Difference the Middle Ages Makes: Color and Race before the Modern World," in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31:1 (Winter 2001), 1-37; Robert Bartlett, "Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity," in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31:1 (Winter 2001), 39-56; Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "On Saracen Enjoyment: Some Fantasies of Race in Late Medieval France and England," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31:1

(2001): 113-46; Joyce Green Macdonald, ed., *Race, Ethnicity and Power in the Renaissance* (Cranberry, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1997).

4. See citations to this effect by David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 12, 19, 21.

5. See the tidy gathering of references in Korhonen, "Washing the Ethiopian White."

6. *Relatione del reame di Congo . . . tratta dalli Scritti & ragionamenti di Odoardo Lopez, Portoghese, per Filippo Pigafetta . . .* (Rome, 1591), translated into English by Abraham Hartwell as Duarte Lopez, *A Report of the Kingdome of Congo* (London, 1597), 13.

7. Giovanni Lioni Africano, *Della descrizione dell'Africa*, in Giovanni Battista Ramusio, *Navigazioni e viaggi* (1550), ed. Marcia Milanese (Turin: Einaudi, 1978), 390.

8. Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History (Naturalis Historia)*, book 2, chap. 80. A mythological explanation that was popular in the Renaissance is found in book 2 of *Metamorphoses* by the Roman poet Ovid, recounting the disastrous attempt by the mortal Phaeton to drive the chariot (the sun) of the sun god Helios, which once out of control touched close to the earth, drying or burning everything up, "turning most of Libya into desert and bringing the blood of the Ethiopians to the surface of their skin, turning it black" (ll. 236-40). Finally, Jupiter intervened, striking the chariot with a bolt of lightning, and Phaeton was drowned in the river Eridanos (ll. 321-24).

9. Herodotus, *History*, 3.101.1-2. For explanations of the unexpected color of an infant, see Megan Holmes, "How a Woman with a Strong Devotion to the Virgin Mary Gave Birth to a Very Black Child: Imagining 'Blackness' in Renaissance Florence," in *Fremde in der Stadt: Ordnungen, Repräsentationen und Praktiken*, ed. Gerhard Wolf, Peter Bell, and Dirk Suckow (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), 333-54; for the story, newly discovered in the 1500s, of the white Ethiopian princess Chariclea born to black parents, see Joaneath Spicer, "Heliodorus's *An Ethiopian Story* in Seventeenth-Century Art," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art, 3: From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 307-35.

10. Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp 1570), 4 ("Africa") and subsequent editions.

11. See especially David M. Whitford, *The Curse of Ham in the Early Modern Era: The Bible and the Justifications for Slavery* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2009), esp. 43-76,

- 122-33, 174; Benjamin Braude, "The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods," *William and Mary Quarterly* 54:1 (1997): 103-42.
12. Quoted from Whitford, *The Curse of Ham*, 101.
13. *Master Bezaes sermons upon the three chapters of the canticle of canticles: Wherein are handled the chiefest points of religion controversed and debated betweene vs and the aduersarie at this day, especially touching the true Iesus Christ and the true Church, and the certaine & infallible marks both of the one and of the other*. Translated out of French into English by Iohn Harmar (Oxford, 1587), 76.
14. For such New Testament passages, see Craig Koslofsky, *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), esp. 10.
15. St. Augustine, *Confessions*, book 13, chap. 14.
16. The extreme negativity associated with blackness in the 1500s meant that anything horrible might be described as "black," such as the deadly plague, which in the 1500s began to be called "the black death," not because of the color of victims but because of the horror it engendered, for which see Ole Benedictow, *The Black Death, 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004); and Andrew Noymer, "Contesting the Cause and Severity of the Black Death: A Review Essay," in *Population and Development Review* 33:3 (September 2007): 616-27.
17. *Works of Thomas Nashe, The Terrors of the Night, A Discourse of Apparitions* (London, 1594), ed. R. B. McKerrow (London: A. H. Bullen, 1904), 345-47.
18. Michel Pastoureau, *Black: The History of a Color* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 47-54, 136-39.
19. See, for example, Hans Memling's *Last Judgment* (before 1473), in Gdansk, Muzeum Narodowe w Gdansk.
20. Discussed by Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, *Black Face, Maligned Race: The Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 3-4.
21. Dorothy Hoogland, "Black Servant, Black Demon: Color Ideology in the Ashburnham Pentateuch," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31:1 (2001): 60-64.
22. Cited from David Abulafia, *The Discovery of Man-kind, Atlantic Encounters in the Age of Columbus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 91. For Zurara and his account, see Peter Russell, *Prince Henry 'the Navigator': A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 239-45.
23. St. Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Passages of the New Testament*, no. 75, section 5.
24. See Norden, *The Black Feet of the Peacock*, 45-65, with a discussion of the impact of later translations of the original Hebrew, the latter clearly describing the speaker as having been tanned by working outside keeping the vineyard, with no reference to inherent skin color. See also Korhonen, "Washing the Ethiopian White"; Ania Looma and Jonathan Burton, eds., *Race in Early Modern England: A Documentary Companion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 120; Elizabeth McGrath, "Goltzius, Rubens and the Beauties of the Night," in *Black Is Beautiful: Rubens to Dumas*, ed. Elmer Kolfin and Esther Schreuder, exh. cat., Amsterdam: De Nieuwe Kerk (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 59. A representative commentary of the period is that of Antonio Brucioli (1487-1466), *La Cantica di Salomo* (Venice, 1536), with an English translation *A Commentary upon the Canticle of Canticles*, written first in Italian by Antonio Brucioli, and now translated into English by Th. James (Oxford, 1598).
25. On demonizing an enemy, see Eco, *On Ugliness*, 185-201.
26. Basically by problematizing them as the "Saracens" of medieval chronicles, for which see Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003). For the depiction of Turks as black Africans, see Paul H. D. Kaplan, "Black Turks: Venetian Artists and Perceptions of Ottoman Ethnicity," in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450-1750, Visual Imagery before Orientalism*, ed. James G. Harper (Burlington: Ashgate 2011), 41-66.
27. W. Seipel, ed., *Wir sind Helden, Haburgische Feste in der Renaissance* (exh. cat., Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck, 2005), no. 3.3.
28. See Paul H. D. Kaplan, "Isabella D'Este and Black African Women," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*.
29. For example the notation calling for a black veil (*velo nero*) on a sketch of "a figure dressed as a moor" drawn as an actual black man with an elephant headdress, by Giorgio Vasari (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, inv. C.B. 3.53 rari, vol. I, originally included in *Volume di disegni edei Carri Trionfali delle divinità*, costumes for festivities accompanying the wedding of Francesco de' Medici and Giovanna d'Austria in 1565. For the volume, but not this sheet, see Anna Maria Petrioli Tofani, *Mostra di Disegni Vasariani, Carri Trionfali e Costume per la Geneologia degli Dei (1565)*, exh. cat., Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle stampe (1966).

30. Kate Lowe, introduction, in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 10.
31. Sergio Tognetti, "The Trade in Black African Slaves in Fifteenth-Century Florence," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 217–24.
32. Alison Blakely, *Blacks in the Dutch World: The Evolution of Racial Imagery in a Modern Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 4.
33. Victoria Kirkham, "Poetic Ideals of Love and Beauty," in David Alan Brown, ed., *Leonardo's Ginevra de'Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C., 2001), 49–62.
34. In *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1579), as cited by Baker, *Plain Ugly*, 20.
35. Spicer, "Heliiodorus," 311.
36. For an overview of portraiture in England, including black servants, see David Bindman, "The Black Presence in British Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *The Image of the Black*, vol. 3: *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 2: *Europe and the World Beyond*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 235–70. For the growing scholarly interest in defining whiteness through blackness in the early modern period, especially in English literature, see the references in note 2; Peter Erickson, "'God for Harry, England, and Saint George': British National Identity and the Emergence of White Self-Fashioning," in *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England*, ed. Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse (Philadelphia: University Press of Pennsylvania, 2000), 315–45; and Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: Norton, 2010).
37. For this commission, see Kaplan, "Isabella D'Este," 134.
38. The basic article remains Jean Michel Massing, "From Greek Proverb to Soap Advert: Washing the Ethiopian," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 58 (1995): 180–200. See more recently Ania Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 55–59; Korhonen, "Washing the Ethiopian White"; Joseph Leo Koerner, "The Epiphany of the Black Magus circa 1500," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3: *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 19–21; and Mitchell Merback, "Nobody Dares: Freedom, Dissent, Self-Knowing, and Other Possibilities in Sebald Beham's *Impossible*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 63:4 (2010): 1051–54.
39. Kim Hall, *Things of Darkness, Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 65.
40. One common job for low-skilled blacks was indeed the dirty one of unloading and transporting charcoal, for which see A. C. de C. M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441-1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 76.
41. Due to his being a pagan, per Jean Devisse and Michel Mollat. "The African Transposed," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 2: *From the Early Christian Era to the "Age of Discovery"*, part 2: *Africans in the Christian Ordinance of the World*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 101.
42. Duarte Lopez, *A Report of the Kingdom of Congo*, ed. and trans. Abraham Hartwell (1597), 71–86.
43. I. Q. van Regteren Altena, *Jacques de Gheyn, Three Generations*, 3 vols. (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1983), no. III, 106.
44. *Ibid.*, no. III, 3.
45. On physiognomic studies of the time, see Baker, *Plain Ugly*, 41–56, and, for example, Bartolomeo della Rocca, called Cocles, *Chyromantie ac physonomie* (Bologna, 1504); Thomas Hill, *The Contemplation of Mankind*, containing a Singular discourse after the Art of Physiognomie (London, 1571); Giovanni Battista Della Porta, *De humana physiognomoniam libri IIII* (Hanoviae, 1586); Thomasso Buoni, *I problemi della bellezza* (Venice, 1605); in the English translation, *Problems of Beautie* (London, 1606), 12: "Beauty is a clear sign of a faire [that is, of a virtuous] mind."
46. Albrecht Dürer, *Vier bücher von menschlicher proportion* (Nuremberg 1528), fol. 95v. For Dürer's drawing for this diagram and thoughts on his other comparative heads including Africans, see Koerner, "The Epiphany of the Black Magus," 84–88.
47. Albrecht Dürer, *Schriftlicher Nachlass*, ed. Hans Ruppert, 3 vols. (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1956), 3:295.
48. Jean-Michel Massing, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3 *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 2: *Europe and the World Beyond* (Cambridge, Mass. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 370.

49. As cited by Baker, *Plain Ugly*, 16–17, from Montaigne's *Apologie de Raimond Sebond*. In *Problemes of Beautie* (1606, English translation) the Italian scholar Thomasso Buoni argues that views of material beauty are largely due to "the diversitie of mens complections" which "breeds a diversitie in their desires; whereby they judge diversly." "To the eye of the Moore, the blacke, or tawny countenance of his Moorish damosell pleaseth best, to the eye of another, a colour as white as the Lilly. . . . Perhaps because every like desireth and loveth his like." Victor Stoichita, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3: *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 1, *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 191–234, includes a lengthy discussion of relativism in the 1600s, focusing on Alonso de Sandoval, *De instauranda Aethiopia salute* (Seville 1627).

50. Marino's poem came to my attention as cited by M. Bückling, *Die Negervenus*, Liebieghaus Monographie 14 (Frankfurt am Main: Liebieghaus, 1991), n. 68.

51. Aspects of this only began to be investigated in the last decade; most of the previous scholarly discourse on the import of blackness in Renaissance culture had been generated by scholars in English literature. I began giving papers exploring this topic in 2008 and in the same year aspects of this were addressed with great insight by Elizabeth McGrath, "Goltzius, Rubens and the Beauties of the Night" and then by Gisela Schäffer, *Schwarze Schönheit: "Mohrinnen-Kameen" Preziosen der Spätrenaissance im Kunsthistorischen Museum Wien: Ein Beitrag aus postkolonialer Perspektive* (Marburg: Jonas, 2009), who rightly calls attention (p. 98) to the limits of this phase in the depictions of Africans to the second half of the 1500s. Her overall approach is influenced by a preoccupation with defining a post-colonial outlook, which works well with her later material but less well with the material from the 1500s.

52. M. Kopplin, "'Amoenitates exoticae': Exotische Köstlichkeiten im Zeitalter des Barock," in *Exotische Welten, europäische Phantasien*, exh. cat., Württembergischer Kunstverein (Stuttgart: Cantz, 1987); Rudolf Distelberger, "Thoughts on Rudolfine Art in the 'Court Workshops' in Prague," in *Rudolf II and Prague: The Court and the City*, ed. Eliška Fučíková, exh. cat., Prague: Prague Castle (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 189–98; Rudolf Distelberger, *Die Kunst des Steinschnitts, Prunkgefäße, Kameen und Commessiaus der Kunstammer*, exh. cat., Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum (Milan: Skira, 2002); Schäffer, *Schwarze Schönheit*; Lorenz Seelig, "Christoph Jamnitzer's 'Moor's Head': A Late Renaissance Drinking

Vessel," in Earl and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 181–212; Joaneath Spicer, "Referencing Invention and Novelty in Art and Science at the Court of Rudolf II in Prague," in *"Novità" Neuheitskonzepte in den Bildkünsten um 1600*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer and Gabriele Wimblöck (Zurich: Diaphanes, 2011), 401–24.

53. A few other blacks cavort elsewhere in this lush "garden." For illustrations, see Jean Devisse and Michel Molat. "The African Transposed," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 2: *From the Early Christian Era to the "Age of Discovery"*, part 2: *Africans in the Christian Ordinance of the World*, ed. Bindman and Gates, 261–68. Jean Michel Massing, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3: *From the "Age of Discovery," to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Europe and the World Beyond*, ed. Bindman and Gates, 261–63; for the painting generally, see Hans Belting, *Hieronymus Bosch, Garden of Earthly Delights* (New York: Prestel, 2002); Larry Silver, *Hieronymus Bosch* (New York, Abbeville Press, 2006) 21–80.

54. Nicholas Penny, *The Materials of Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 93–95; Frank M. Snowden, Jr., "Iconographical Evidence on the Black Populations in Greco-Roman Antiquity," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 1: *From the Pharaohs to the Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010 [1976]), 141–250. For a characteristic Greek intaglio see *Intaglio Gem with Head of an African*, Greek (Cyprus) 500–400 BCE black jasper; Walters Art Museum, acc. no. 42.160, see also *Pair of Earrings with the Heads of Africans*, Greek, third century BCE, garnets, gold mounts, acc. nos. 57.1562 and 57.1563.

55. The diadem she wears is too simple and conventional to permit a mythological or historical identification. For a rich discussion of this piece seen from the perspective of a "post colonial" discourse, see Schäffer, *Schwarze Schönheit*, 35–43. See also Massing, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3, part 2, 375. For the Miseroni family workshop founded by Gasparo (1518–1573) and Girolamo (1522–1584) see Distelberger, "Thoughts on Rudolfine Art"; G. Vasari: *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* (1550, rev. 2, 1568); ed. G. Milanesi, vol. 5 (Florence: Sansoni, 1882), 389; Annamaria Giusti, "Miseroni," *Grove Art Online* (accessed 10 May 2008); R. Distelberger: "Beobachtungen zu den Steinschneiderwerkstätten der Miseroni in Mailand und Prag," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen Wien* 74 (1978): 79–152; Rudolf Distelberger, "Dionysio und Ferdinando Eusebio Miseroni," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen Wien* 75 (1979): 109–88; Rudolf Distelberger, "Nuove ricerche sulla biografia dei fratelli Gasparo e Girolamo Miseroni," *Firenze e la Toscana dei Medici nell' Europa del' 500*, 3 vols. (Florence: Olschki, 1983), 3:877–84.

56. Two more modest examples in the Kunstkammer of the Kunsthistorisches Museum: a tiny bust of an African woman, KK1791b, and a similar head (no body at all), KK1793.
57. For portraits showing such gems worn as a pendant or as a hat badge, see Hall, *Things of Darkness*, fig. 14, and Schäffer, *Schwarze Schönheit*, fig. 40.
58. Ingrid S. Weber, *Kostbare Steine: Die Gemmensammlung des Kurfürsten Johann Wilhelm von der Pfalz* (Hamburg: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1992), no. 198 (later ex.).
59. A stunning example of the reuse of such a piece is the magnificent pendant known as the Drake Jewel, a gift from Queen Elizabeth to Sir Francis Drake, for which see Karen Dalton, "Art for the Sake of Dynasty: The Black Emperor in the Drake Jewel and the Elizabethan Imperial Imagery," in Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, ed., *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 178–212; Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 222–26; and Bindman, *Image of the Black*, 237. Attempts to interpret the cameo that provides one of the surfaces of this pendant should begin with the recognition that although Hilliard, the goldsmith who created the pendant, was English, the cameo seems clearly to be Italian workmanship and was simply acquired and then added to the commission. There is no indication that it was fashioned for this occasion. Elizabeth's efforts at establishing trade were with Morocco, not with sub-Saharan Africa; she expelled "blackmoores" or "negroes" from the country in 1596 and 1601 as a bad influence. Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), 10–12. See further Dalton, "Art for the Sake of Dynasty."
60. For the Roman use of colored marble for the clothing combined with an off-white marble for the faces of life-size sculpture of conquered "barbarians," such as the Dacians of Asia Minor supporting the column of Trajan in Rome, see R. M. Schneider, *Bunte Barbaren: Orientalenstatuen aus farbigem Marmor in der römischen Repräsentationskunst* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1986). The author catalogues as well late Renaissance "restorations" of ancient works using bronze or dark marbles for faces, including some works by Cordier.
61. For Cordier's restoration of two ancient torsos as a Gypsy, see Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), no. 95. For the artist, see Sylvia Pressouyre, *Nicolas Cordier: Recherches sur la sculpture à Rome autour de 1600* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1984).
62. For the characteristics of Brazilian rosewood, *Dalbergianigra*, see thewoodexplorer.com/maindata/we377.html (accessed 20 October 2011).
63. P. P. Bober and R. P. Rubenstein, *Renaissance Arts and Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Sources* (New York: Oxford University Press; London: Harvey Miller, 1986), no. 18; Isabelle de Ramaix, John T. Spike, and Walter L. Strauss, *The Illustrated Bartsch, 14, The Works of Marcantonio Raimondi and His School* (New York: Abaris, 1978), no. 313.
64. The theme of the bathing woman is explored in bronze statuettes by Barthélemy Prieur (French, 1536–1611), discussed by Bückling, *Die Negervenues*. See, for example, *Woman Bathing*, 1595–1610, Walters Art Museum, acc. no. 54.718, for which see art.thewalters.org.
65. Walters Art Museum, acc. no. 37.656, for which see art.thewalters.org.
66. As far as I am aware, until I began including some of this material in scholarly papers a few years ago, Michelangelo's depictions of black Africans had evaded scholarly discussion.
67. See, for example, a cow made from iron with bronze horns, from ca. 1600 (Walters Art Museum 52.81).
68. Christian Beaufort-Spontin and Matthias Pfaffenbichler, *Meisterwerke der Hofjagd und Rüstkammer* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum and Milan: Skira, 2005), no. 74. For other examples of this usage for the hilts of edged weapons, see L. G. Boccia and J. A. Godoy, *Museo Poldi Pezzoli*, vol. 5: *Armeria*, II (Milan: Electra, 1986), no. 612, inv. 2576, and no. 613 with further comparison. For a less-skilled example from the mid-1600s, see Walters Art Museum, acc. no. 51.1387, art.thewalters.org.
69. While the many extant drawings from life of Africans from this period are often highly expressive as well as sensitively interpreted, it would be hard to argue that they reveal a particular appreciation for blackness.
70. See further Richard Daly, ed., *The English Emblem Tradition*, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 211; Otto Vaenius, *Amorum Emblemata*, ed. Karel Porteman (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996).
71. The Italian epigrams are by Pietro Benedetti, the English ones by Richard Verstegen (ca. 1550–1640), an Englishman living in Antwerp, and those in Dutch are by van Veen.
72. *Gratia più checolore./La bianca Amor per la brunette lassa/Talhora; e perche no? se piu souente/La gratia de la bruna è più poBente?/Piu fermo è' l bruno, el' color bianco passa.*





“LEO AFRICANUS” PRESENTS AFRICA TO EUROPEANS

NATALIE ZEMON DAVIS

In 1550, a remarkable book about Africa, *La Description dell’Africa*, came off the Giunta press in Venice, as the first volume of Giovanni Battista Ramusio’s celebrated series of *Voyages*. It had been written by an African, Ramusio assured his readers: Giovanni Leone the African, “Giovan Lioni Africano.”¹

In fact, for most of his life its author had been called al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Wazzān.² Born in Granada around 1486-88, Ḥasan al-Wazzān had been taken by his family to Morocco around 1492, at the time of the Catholic conquest of his ancestral land. After studies in grammar, rhetoric, law, and theology at the esteemed *madrasas* of Fez, he followed in his uncle’s path and became a diplomat for the Waṭṭāsid sultan of Fez. In that capacity and on occasion as a trader, he visited polities all over Morocco. By caravan he crossed the Sahara to the Land of the Blacks (“le terre de li Nigri,” as he translated into Italian the Arabic “Bilād al-Sūdān”) and made stops among other places at Timbuktu and Gao, where he met the great Songhay emperor Askia Muḥammad, and Agadès, from which town a Tuareg elite ruled over their slaves and the black people of the countryside. His duties took him on horseback from Fez to the Berber kingdoms of Tlemcen (Tilimsān, present-day Algeria), and Tunisia and on to the wonders of Cairo, where in 1517 he witnessed the fall of the Mamlūk dynasty to the Ottoman emperor Selīm. He crossed the Red Sea

to Arabia, made *hajj*, and then traveled to the Ottoman court at Istanbul. In the summer of 1518, on his way by sea from Cairo back to Morocco, his boat was seized by a Spanish Christian pirate, Pedro de Cabrera y Bobadilla. Realizing what a find he had made, Bobadilla decided not to seek ransom for al-Wazzān, nor sell him as a slave, but instead make a gift of the diplomat, with his pouches full of travel notes and dispatches, to Pope Leo X, then in the midst of urging a crusade against the Ottoman Turks.

Incarcerated at the Castel Sant'Angelo, al-Wazzān was catechized over the months by the pope's master of ceremonies and two other bishops. In January 1520, amid the blazing candles of Saint Peter's, al-Wazzān was baptized by the pope's own hand, and given the pope's names Joannes Leo, Giovanni Leone. Three cardinals served as godparents, all of them supporters of a crusade against the Turks and their "false" religion.³ The most important for our convert's future was Egidio da Viterbo, general of the Augustinian order and eloquent preacher of a golden age, in which the world would be united under the pope, and Muslims, Jews, and the Indians of the New World would be converted to Christianity.

Now free from prison, though dependent on Christian favor, Giovanni Leone thought of himself in Arabic as Yuḥannā al-Asad, or even better, as he signed a 1524 Arabic manuscript, "Yuḥannā al-Asad al-Gharnāṭi [the Granadan] previously named al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Wazzān al-Fāsi [of Fez]," suggesting the multiple identities he carried around during his Italian years.⁴ To begin with, highly placed figures in the church and political life were interested in what he could tell them. Some were seeking him as a *faqīh*, an Arab learned in Muslim law and religion (he was already called "the *faqīh* Hasan" by the Vatican librarian, who was lending him Arabic manuscripts while he was in prison);⁵ others wanted to

learn more about Africa; others sought his service on both grounds. Until his death in December 1521, Leo X surely quizzed the former diplomat about current North African and Ottoman politics and goals, and if there was time, inquired about the poetry of the Arab nomads, which Giovanni Leone, himself a poet, knew well. Clement VII, who in 1523 became the next Medici pope, also must have put questions to him, as Sultan Sulaymān moved from triumph to triumph.

Already in early 1521, Alberto III Pio, count of Carpi, humanist and diplomat, had asked Giovanni Leone to transcribe a borrowed Arabic translation of Saint Paul's Epistles, which he wanted to add to the few Arabic manuscripts in his voluminous library. Meanwhile, Giovanni Leone had begun teaching Arabic to his godfather Egidio da Viterbo at his dwelling near the Augustinian convent. The cardinal was being tutored in Hebrew so as to strengthen his command of Jewish Kabbalah; now he sought to learn Arabic so as to further his knowledge of the Qur'ān—both of these in the service of conversion to Christianity. Then in 1525, Egidio had Giovanni Leone at his side in Viterbo, correcting a Latin translation of the Qur'ān that the cardinal had commissioned earlier from a Muslim convert to Christianity in Spain.⁶ Here was one of several instances where the man "previously named Ḥasan al-Wazzān" tried to set his patron straight about Islam.

During these same years, Egidio da Viterbo had close ties with men in the humanist circles of Rome, and there are signs that some of them sought out Giovanni Leone for information about Africa and Mediterranean politics. For instance, the mythographer Pierio Valeriano was seeking evidence about Egypt and ancient Egyptian lore for his *Hieroglyphica*, while the papal physician and historian Paolo Giovio was eager for firsthand observations about the Mamlūk sultans and the Ottoman sultan Selim to use for his *Histories*

and other works. Giovanni Leone had been in Cairo on diplomatic missions in the days of the Mamlūk sultan Ḳānsūh al-Ghawrī and had actually encountered the victorious Selīm at Rashīd (Rosetta) in 1517. Giovio would have made sure Giovanni Leone knew that al-Ghawrī's predecessor, the great Ḳā'itbāy, had presented a giraffe to Lorenzo de' Medici and a tiger to Giangaleazzo Sforza.⁷ On the other hand, these tight literary sodalities were unwilling to give full welcome to an unpredictable convert from North Africa, speaking a non-literary foreigner's Italian.

Giovanni Leone's closest exchange was with men most like himself, other outsiders, on the margins of the elite circles that they were serving with their learning. Such were the German Jew Elijah Levita, scholar of Hebrew grammar and the Masoretic texts of Scripture, Yiddish poet, and teacher of Hebrew to their common master, Egidio da Viterbo; Elias bar Abraham, a Maronite Christian from Syria, busy transcribing Syriac manuscripts for both Alberto Pio and Cardinal Egidio; and especially Jacob Mantino, himself of a Jewish refugee family from Catalonia, a physician, and translator of the commentaries of Ibn Rushd (Averroës) on Aristotle drawn from precious Hebrew texts. Giovanni Leone spent several months with Mantino in Bologna in 1523 and January of 1524, collaborating on an Arabic-Hebrew-Latin dictionary. Out of their conversations emerged Giovanni Leone's decision to write Latin treatises on Arabic grammar and prosody, the first steps in his move from transcriber, teacher, and translator of Arabic to an author writing in European tongues.

Ḥasan al-Wazzān had had experience in writing in Arabic during his days as a diplomat in Africa. At every court at which he had been received, whether that of a sultan or of a mere Atlas Mountain chieftain, he had given an oration, including a

panegyric in metered verse; when needed, a translator had turned it into the local tongue. His dispatches back to his sultan at Fez had been couched in the "rhymed prose" (*sadj'*) expected from a man of letters, and which al-Wazzān still used in his Arabic dedications in Italy. Had he not been seized by pirates, he would probably have expanded the notes from his voyages for a *rihla*, a travel account, to be read by other *fakīhs* in the Maghreb.

By the end of five years in Italy, Giovanni Leone had mastered Italian and Latin sufficiently to venture writing seriously in those languages. He had been peppered with learned queries about Africa and Islam, but surely also with questions about harems and baths and other intimate matters that fired European curiosity. He had listened to Egidio da Viterbo's sermons attacking Hagar and Ishmael; he had seen maps of Africa in printed editions of Ptolemy with woodcuts of headless persons in the interior and the word "ANTHROPHAGI" (cannibals) etched in the southeast; he had undoubtedly heard or read assertions about the monstrous, the extremes in breeding and climate, and the unceasing and restless changeability of Africa. As the old adage went in Europe, "Africa always produces something new, never before seen."⁸

Further he had by now had the chance to see parts of the Italian world other than the circles of high churchmen and learned men. Slaves were performing domestic duties in some of the great households that Giovanni Leone visited as part of his own scholarly service in Rome; free "Moors," such as "Susanna the Moor" ("Susanna mora") and "Giamara the Moor" ("Giamara mora"), lived in the Campo Marzio neighborhood, where Giovanni Leone spent his first years, along with artisans, tradespeople, and prostitutes. Some of these "Moors" were people of color, brown or black—the word *moro* could refer at that date to a person with dark skin as well as to someone from North Africa—and many of the slaves and freed persons had been

brought up as Muslims.⁹ By 1525, Giovanni Leone had also traveled beyond Rome: he had lived for a time in Bologna and Viterbo, had visited Florence, and had been as far north as Venice and as far south as Naples. His social and visual experience of life in a Christian land had widened and offered him a frame in which to present Dār al-Islām and the Africa he knew to Europeans.

Each of his books represented an Arabic literary genre, but adjusted somewhat for European readers. For example, his Latin biographical dictionary on *Illustrious Men among the Arabs and the Jews* was a short version of the *ṭabaḳāt*, the compendium of biographies that Islamic and Arabic scholars wrote and treasured for centuries. Giovanni Leone's illustrious men were philosophers and physicians, with learning in many fields and often poets as well. Drawn from across the Islamic world, including Cairo and Fez, most of them were hitherto unknown to Europeans. A reader like Egidio da Viterbo, who seems to have had the manuscript for a time (it was published only in the seventeenth century), would have been struck by its tolerant inclusiveness: Jews, Nestorian and Jacobite Christians, and Muslims were side by side in its pages, and Giovanni Leone recounted how the ninth-century Baghdad caliph al-Mam'ūn praised a Nestorian Christian at his court, both as his physician and as his translator from the Greek.¹⁰

The great work of Giovanni Leone's Italian years was his manuscript on Africa, which he titled *Libro de la Cosmographia et Geographia de Affrica* and whose colophon bore the date 10 March 1526.¹¹ He presumably had some Arabic travel notes for his years crisscrossing Africa, restored to him after his captors had emptied his diplomatic pouches; but much of the text was composed in his lively though simplified Italian, and he sometimes apologized for his "weak memory."¹²

The resulting book was a mixture of genres, like so many others in the Arabic geographical tradition: geography, travel account, ethnography, and history were entwined together with occasional asides of autobiography and literary commentary. After a general introduction on geography, weather, customs, and health, Giovanni Leone organized his book around the different regions of Africa that he knew, and concluded with an overview of Africa's rivers, flora, and fauna. Though Portuguese and Spanish seamen and sojourners knew some coastal towns of Africa, though European diplomats and pilgrims had observed lower Egypt, though Genoese, Venetian and other European traders had a quarters for themselves at Tunis and Alexandria and docked their boats at other Mediterranean ports, though Christian captives were serving as slaves in Fez and other Maghreb towns until they could be ransomed, still many of the inland areas of Africa described by Giovanni Leone were unknown to Europeans.

Giovanni Leone eased his task of communication by several strategies. He adopted the words "Africa" and "Europe" to describe continental units for which Arabic geography had always used multiple regional or ethnic terms. He made comparisons between African and European objects or practices (from foods and ways of eating to institutions for prostitution) and sought equivalents for weights, measures, and currencies. On the difficult subject of conflict between Christian and Muslim armies in medieval al-Andalus/Spain and in contemporary Morocco (including a battle in which he had himself been a participant), he wrote with a balance rare on either side of the Mediterranean. On the sensitive subject of Islam—where Christian readers would have expected partisan denunciation, especially from a convert, and where Muslim readers would have expected the traditional expressions of piety—he

wrote informatively and sometimes appreciatively (for example, about the Schools of Muslim Law in Cairo) but virtually always with detachment. His words of condemnation were those he would have shared with educated Sunnis back home, railing against the heresies of the Shia who had rent the world of Islam, and mocking excess in popular superstition. All the African courts he had visited as Ḥasan al-Wazzān were Muslim, and though he had heard of peoples, such as the mountain-dwellers of Bornu who were "neither Christian, Jewish, nor Muslim," he said nothing about their religious practices.¹³ Rather he described for Europeans a range in the religious practice and understanding of Islam, from ignorant and inattentive to learned and holy.

The world of Africa that emerged from Giovanni Leone's manuscript of 1526 undermined the clichés circulating about its peoples in European texts of the early sixteenth century. To be sure, Giovanni Leone reproduces in his introduction some stereotypes long traditional in North Africa itself, calling his Maghreb "the most noble part of Africa . . . the people white and reasoning" and saying that "the inhabitants of the Land of the Blacks . . . lack reason . . . and are without wits."¹⁴ But once he gets into his story, he portrays a range of behavior and culture, from what he considers highly civilized to the brutish, in *all* the regions. Timbuktu, for example, has a splendid mosque and palace, artisans and merchants sell goods from all over the world, and prosperous citizens enjoy music and dance. Scholars, preachers, and judges are held in high esteem there, and manuscripts in Arabic are the hottest item of trade at the market.

Two copies of the manuscript of the *Geographia de Affrica* were circulating in Venice after the sack of Rome in 1527, when its author seems to have returned to North Africa and Islam, retaking his

Arabic name and North African garb and basing himself in Tunis. When the Venetian humanist Giovanni Battista Ramusio decided to publish the manuscript as the opening to his multivolume *Navigazioni e viaggi*, he edited the text extensively so as to make its author and in some cases his Africa more acceptable to Christian European readers. Among other changes, Ramusio turned Giovanni Leone's simple but lively Italian into a complex and literary language; he changed Giovanni Leone's self-presentation as an Arab man of letters into that of Historian following professional rules; he strengthened Giovanni Leone's occasional negative statements about the Land of the Blacks (behavior that the author had specifically located centuries earlier, before the conversion of the region to Islam, was made to sound contemporary); he inserted words to make explicit that the author of the text was a Christian.¹⁵ The French, Latin, and English translators made further changes from Ramusio's edition, adding, for instance, insulting words about Islam and the Prophet.¹⁶

The proposal of some observers today to identify the figure in Sebastiano del Piombo's "Portrait of a Humanist" (ca. 1520) as Giovanni Leone continues this sixteenth-century effort to Europeanize him.¹⁷ Whoever the man in this picture may be, he is at ease in his dark European garb, his Italian hat in hand. The books next to him have European rather than Maghrebi bindings, the manuscript is in the Roman not the Arabic script, the pen is an Italian quill rather than the reed pen used for writing in North Africa.¹⁸ The globe at his right is a terrestrial one, a form created by Martin Behaim in Nuremberg in 1492 and an increasing presence in Renaissance painting, rather than a celestial globe, *kibla*-locating sphere, or flat world map, the forms long part of the Islamic and Arabic tradition and available to Giovanni Leone in the madrasas

of Fez. (Apart from a possible terrestrial globe originating in thirteenth-century Persia, the only terrestrial globe for which there is evidence in the Islamic world during the early modern period dates from 1577 in a short-lived astronomical center in Istanbul.)¹⁹

A surer trace of Giovanni Leone's state of mind in 1520, just after his baptism, is his signature in an Arabic manuscript he had borrowed from the Vatican Library: "The poor servant of God, Yuḥannā al-Asad, formerly named al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Wazzān al-Fāsi, has studied this book. May God give him good."²⁰ This mixed sensibility lasted throughout Giovanni Leone's years in Italy: even as he became more familiar with Italian and Christian ways, with using a quill pen to write from left to right, and with European maps and geographical terms, he kept his African and Muslim memories alive and in a sense traded on them. Rather than being shorn of or repudiating his past identity, he entangled it with his new one, telling Europeans about Africa, until, as he said in his book, "he returned there, with the grace of God, safe and sound."²¹

Fortunately for Giovanni Leone's hopes, Ramusio's remaking of his person and his book did not efface everything its author had to say. Much of his account of Africa is still there and is present even in the enhanced remodeling of the translations, a continuing source of information about peoples with whom Europeans would have a long and troubled relation.

Let us here follow one theme in the Africa book of Giovanni Leone (I will continue to call him mostly by his Italian name, since that was the name he used for his readers), a theme that would inform Europeans about one of the "civilized" rhythms of life in African communities and the products that were part of that life. What did Giovanni Leone

have to say about the artisans in different regions of Africa, what they made, what their products looked or felt like, and who acquired them?

Such topics were little treated in the published literature on Africa available in Europe in al-Wazzān's day. Joannes Boemus's *Omnium gentium mores*, with its long section on Africa, first appeared in 1520. It had only a few words to say about animal pelts used to cover privy parts, wooden javelins, and stone weapons in a leather bag, along with longer accounts of people like the "Ichthiophagi," who were in the shape of humans, but lived like beasts in cliffs near the ocean.²²

Portuguese writings of travel and conquest, some of them circulating only in manuscript, take readers more concretely to items produced in African lands near the coast. Thus, the captain of one of Henry the Navigator's caravels brought fishing nets back from a 1436 voyage south of Cape Bajador (in present-day Western Sahara). They were made from the bark of a tree, which could be spun into strong cords without adding any flax: "something new to note for us in Spain," was the comment of the chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zucarara.²³ In 1455-57, the young Venetian Alvise Cadamosta commanded one of Henry's caravels as far south as Gambia and beyond and later wrote up his *Navigations* in Italian. Though some of the rumors he reported are full of fancy, he did describe the cotton garments of men and women in the coastal region of Senegal and how they marveled at the woolen cloth in his Spanish-style clothes, which amazed them even more than his white skin.²⁴ And to give one more example, in 1498, after Vasco da Gama had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and had passed Port Natal, his diarist recorded what the Portuguese had seen in a community where they were welcomed for a five-day stop for water. The villagers' weapons were long bows and arrows and spears with iron blades. The hilts of their daggers were of tin; the dagger

sheaths of ivory. Copper ornaments were twisted around their arms and legs and in their hair. They prized linen cloth, and were glad to exchange their copper for it.²⁵

Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmographia*, first published in Basel in 1544, put together the traditional stereotypes with the newer travel accounts. Giovanni Leone’s Africa book was still circulating only in manuscript, and Münster had not seen it (though ironically he knew well several texts on Hebrew grammar by Giovanni Leone’s co-teacher Elijah Levita, for Münster had translated them from Hebrew to Latin and published them in Basel). In his pages on Africa, Münster drew first on Boemus, repeating stories that went back to Herodotus, seeing Egypt as a land of inversions (women went out to trade, men stayed home to spin), and including a chapter on “the wondrous and monstrous creatures found in Africa,” illustrated with headless humans and the like.²⁶ Then Münster turned to “New Africa, that is, to its recent investigation,” and reproduced the findings of Alvise Cadamosta, whose *Navigations* had been published in translations in 1507 and afterward. So readers learned of the biweekly fairs in coastal Senegal, where women and men traded cotton and cotton cloth, palm mats, foods, arms, and small amounts of gold.²⁷

This is the world of African objects and their producers and users that Giovanni Leone opened for European readers with much greater breadth and detail, and without the constant assumption that European articles were always better.²⁸ As a traveling diplomat and occasional merchant, al-Wazzān would have been attentive to the look of products and their estimated value. Moreover, his family name, al-Wazzān, meant “the weigher” in Arabic; his father and grandfather may both have been associated with the *muhtasib*, the supervisor

of transactions at the *sūk* (market), including those concerning weights and measures. He knew the workings of markets and fairs.

The textile trades—spinning, weaving and dyeing cloth, and the making of garments, bedclothes, and other household items—took the time and energy of the largest number of artisans throughout Giovanni Leone’s Africa. Linen and canvas were produced both in major centers like Fez (520 ateliers) and Tunis, and in villages in the Rif Mountains. Cotton cloth was made at Cairo and Timbuktu, but also in small towns throughout Egypt, Tlemcen, and the “big village” of Djenné in the Land of the Blacks. Flocks of sheep yielded fleece for looms producing woolen cloth in Fez and Constantine, and also in towns and villages throughout Morocco and on the island of Djerba. Silk cloth was woven in Fez and the Mediterranean port of Cherchell, its production the work of Grandan émigrés, Giovanni Leone proudly noted, who had developed the planting of mulberry trees.²⁹

The spinners of thread (or winders in the case of silk) were always women. Giovanni Leone recalled the skill of the women of Tunis: they let their spindles fall from their windows or some other high spot in their houses, and the result was thread “well stretched, well twisted, and regular” and “perfect linen sold all over Africa.”³⁰ Most weavers were men, in Fez working in large industrial workshops, but Giovanni Leone reported a few places where women were weavers. Such was Figuig, a Berber oasis near the Atlas Mountains in eastern Morocco, where women wove woolen blankets for beds “so thin and delicate they appeared to be silk.” They were much sought after at the markets in Fez and Tlemcen.³¹

Of the products from all these looms, garments were those most often described by Giovanni Leone, for he took clothing seriously as a mark of status and also knew that Europeans were curious about what people wore. Indeed, proper dress

had been important in his past life as a diplomat, and a change in garments was part of his conversion to Christianity. He introduced basic garments early along in presenting the regions of southern Morocco. In coastal Ḥāḥā, an area of traders and herders, men wore an ample woolen garment called *al-kisā'* wrapped closely around their body. The cloth resembled that used for blankets in Italy, he remarked to his readers. Underneath it, they tied a small woolen cloth around their loins. (In places where linen was available, a shirt might be worn underneath as well.) Around their heads they wound in a distinctive fashion a long woolen cloth, stained with walnut dye.³² Giovanni Leone added a second basic garment as he spoke of the towns and villages in the Tedle, a region of the High Atlas Mountains: the burnoose, *al-burnus* (again he gave the word in Arabic). This hooded cloak was beautifully made by women in the area and was here dyed black. Merchants came from afar to the Tedle's main market town to buy burnouses, which Giovanni Leone said could now even be seen in Italy and Spain.³³

Giovanni Leone went on to show variations in these patterns. Shorter garments and simpler headdress were signs of lower status. The male miners and herders in villages in the Anti-Atlas wore a short, tightly cinched woolen shirt without sleeves; winegrowing villagers in the Rif Mountains dressed in a short hooded garment of wool with black and white stripes. Meanwhile the women in these rural families went without veils.³⁴ In the kingdom of Tlemcen. Berber peasants dressed in "a short garment of thick cloth." The busy male artisans in the city of Tlemcen were garbed honestly in a short garment, and instead of a turban, most of them wore a smooth cap.³⁵

The dress of wealthier families in Fez, Tunis, and Cairo was more sumptuous and received more attention from Giovanni Leone. In Fez, the men of high status wore "foreign wool" (perhaps

"foreign" from Italy). They layered themselves: an undershirt, a garment over it with half-sleeves, linen breeches or pants, then a large robe sewed down the front, and over all, a burnoose, adorned with the trimmings and tassels found in the Fez market. On their heads they put first a small cap (they're like the nightcaps of Italy, explained Giovanni Leone, except without the space for the ears), and then a turban of linen, wound under their beard and twice around their head. Men of more modest status wore only the undergarment and a burnoose, with a simple bonnet, while the poor went around in a garment and burnoose of coarse white local wool. Learned men were distinguished by the wide sleeves on their robes, rather like those, he pointed out to his readers, worn by men of high station and office in Venice.³⁶

As for the women, the merchants selling cloth for their garments were among the richest of Fez. The women also layered themselves: first, a belted chemise or shift of good cloth, which was all they might wear in their dwellings in the hottest of days; then a robe of fine woolen cloth or silk, sewn down the front and with wide sleeves. When they went out, they added long pants, a voluminous cape covering their whole person, and a linen veil for the face leaving space for their eyes.³⁷

For the well-dressed men and women of Tunis, "Africa's most remarkable city," Giovanni Leone concentrated on the distinctive features of head-dress. Here even artisans wore turbans, as did the merchants and men of learning: large turbans with a cloth hanging from them at a special angle. Military men and others serving the sultan wound their turbans without the hanging cloth.³⁸ The women, well dressed and adorned, used two pieces of cloth, one wound round the forehead, the other covering the hair and the face below the eyes so voluminously that they appeared to have "a giant's head." Still Giovanni Leone had been able to smell their perfumes as he passed them on the streets.³⁹

The clothing of Egypt and of Cairo's prosperous families in particular had, in Giovanni Leone's telling, a narrower silhouette and a different mix of textiles from the garments of Fez. No burnouses here, but rather for men an outer garment sewn close at the neck, then open to the ground and with narrow sleeves. In the summer the garment was silk or cotton with colorful stripes; in the winter, fine wool with cotton padding. Their turbans, made of cloth from India, were large, however, befitting men of high station. The woman's garment also had tight sleeves, and whether of fine wool, linen, or cotton was beautifully embroidered. Her costly headdress was tall and narrow; and when she went out in Cairo's busy streets, she was covered with a veil of fine Indian cotton, and wore on her face a black mask woven from hair, which allowed her to look out at people without being recognized herself.⁴⁰ (One can imagine women readers in Venice fascinated by this description.)

Meanwhile in Djenné in the Land of the Blacks, the people were "courteous and well-dressed," so Giovanna Leone recalled (Ramusio later left out the "*civili*": the men wore blue or black cotton and draped a large cape over their heads, black if they were traders, artisans, or farmers, white if they were imams or judges. Likewise the men of Timbuktu were "well-dressed in black or blue cotton," also wearing the European cloth brought to town on the merchant caravans from the Maghreb. The Timbuktu women marked status by veiling, the slave women going with faces uncovered, the other women covering with one of the cotton cloths produced by local weavers. (For some reason, Ramusio cut Giovanni Leone's reference to the men's garb in Timbuktu, while retaining his account of the women.)⁴¹

The naked black African, so prominent in the European imagination, made an infrequent appearance in al-Wazzān's Africa. The farmers and shepherds in the countryside around the Songhay

capital of Gao were "ignorant" people: "it would be hard to find one of them who could read or write within a hundred miles" (European readers would, of course, recognize similar illiteracy among their own peasant populations). They wore sheepskin in the winter, and in the summer, only a little cloth over their private parts.⁴²

The sheepskin garment of the countryfolk near Gao takes us to a second area of African production described by Giovanni Leone, that of leather. Tanning of sheep, goat, and cattle skin was found in many parts of Africa, but our author said most about the regions he knew best and which were, in fact, celebrated for their leather: many parts of Morocco—from the southern Sūs to the northern Rif—and the kingdom of Tunisia. The handsome leathers tanned from goatskin at Tiyūt, in a plain near the Anti-Atlas, for instance, found their way to the many leather craftsmen in Fez, who produced shoes, saddles, garments, pouches, and sheaths for knives and sabers. Production went on locally in many areas as well: Giovanni Leone mentions saddles made in a village on the Atlas slopes and sandals made from sheepskin by the village shoemakers of Gober in the Land of the Blacks. The sandals were "similar to those worn in ancient times by the Romans," and were sold in Timbuktu and Gao.⁴³ Among the everyday objects he described were the large skin water bags, slung over the camel's back on his caravan trips, and the smaller ones, fancily decorated and borne by the water-sellers in the streets of Cairo. And among the fine objects were the saddles made in Fez: three layers of leather were artfully placed one on top of the other. They were "truly excellent and marvelous," as one could see in those exported to Italy itself.⁴⁴

Many African artisans were drawn to the foundries, furnaces, forges, hammers, and other tools of

the metal trades. Of the mines supplying metals to these workshops, Giovanni Leone mentioned only the silver, iron, and copper mines in mountainous and desert areas of Morocco, along with iron mines in Tlemcen, and gold purchased from the Land of the Blacks.⁴⁵ But he remarked the presence of founders, casters, blacksmiths, and goldsmiths in many regions from the Atlas Mountains to desert oases, and he noted their handiwork from the needles, nails, sabers, and spurs at the Fez market to the great cauldrons for sugar-boiling in Egypt to the golden bridles and bits he saw on the royal horses in Bornu.⁴⁶

Especially interesting were the Jewish goldsmiths mentioned by Giovanni Leone in the towns and mountains of Morocco, in oases in the desert, like Segelmesse, on the way to the Land of the Blacks, and in Cairo. Jews also worked as founders and smiths in towns and villages that Giovanni Leone passed through; he saw them, for instance, producing hoes and sickles in the Atlas Mountains not far from Marrakech. But much of the jewelry sold at the souks in North Africa and in the desert came from their hands. (Giovanni Leone explained Jewish predominance by a Muslim law placing conditions on the sale of gold and silver.)⁴⁷

Wherever he was, he had an eye for the jewelry women wore. In Fez, he could see it up close: the large gold earrings encrusted with precious jewels, undoubtedly worn in his own family, the heavy golden bracelets on each arm; and for the less wealthy, earrings, bracelets and leg rings in silver. In the villages and plains of Morocco, where the women were not covered, he described silver earrings, bracelets, and rings (several on a hand); in a High Atlas mountain he called "Ideucacal," the more prosperous women wore heavy silver earrings, sometimes four at once, along with silver on their fingers, arms, and legs, while the poorer women had to be satisfied with jewelry of iron or brass.⁴⁸ Finally there were the wealthy women of

Cairo, "magnificent with jewels," which he had managed to see despite their veils; they wore them in garlands around their forehead and neck.⁴⁹ One can imagine the Venetian women's envy on hearing of such adornment.

On two other kinds of artisanal products, wood and ceramics, Giovanni Leone gave report almost exclusively from North Africa. Europeans could read in his pages about fine combs of boxwood, made in the Atlantic town of Salé and sold throughout the sultanate of Fez, as well as combs for carding wool. They could learn of master woodworkers producing beams, plows, wheels, and mill parts, as well as pails that would be used to measure grain and other such products sold in the markets. And there were the talented craftsmen who sculptured the fine wooden doors inside the Fez houses and made the great painted armoires where Fez families stored their bedclothes and their valuables.⁵⁰ From his past, he recalled the pulpit—the *minbar* in Arabic—at the celebrated Bū 'Ināniyya madrasa in Fez, made of intricately carved ebony and ivory.⁵¹ Giovanni Leone thought Italians would also enjoy hearing about the wooden shoes made for Fez gentlemen to wear when the streets were muddy. They were most durable when made from mulberry wood; they were more elegant when made from walnut or the wood of an orange tree. With iron soles and a leather fastener prettily decorated with silk, these wooden shoes cost anywhere from one to twenty-five ducats.⁵²

For pottery, Giovanni Leone evoked the kilns and potting sheds in different parts of Morocco and Tunis. In Fez, he recalled both the unglazed white bowls, basins, and pots made and sold cheaply on the east side of town near the city wall and the beautiful colored vases and pots on display at the major market, some of the finest glazes coming from the potters in a little town not far away at the foot of the Middle Atlas. The potters of the Mediterranean town of Sousse (Sūsa)

furnished Tunis and many other towns along the coast with bowls, jugs, and vases.⁵³ Especially he never tired of telling Italian readers about the stunning colored tiles and tile mosaics found on the walls of the mosques, madrasas, fountains, and houses in North African towns.

As suggested by the vases of Sousse, Giovanni Leone talked of the artisanal products of Africa not only as they were used and worn, but as they were exchanged as wares and moved through trade routes. He described in detail the spatial arrangement of the souks in Fez, by craft and by status (never had he seen a market "with so many people and things for sale, neither in Africa, Asia, nor Italy" as at the one on the outskirts of Fez). Tlemcen, Tunis, and Cairo had similar arrangements.⁵⁴ For smaller towns, he told Italian readers both of weekly regional markets and of the movement of goods from the Maghreb and Egypt to the Land of the Blacks and back. For example, traders from the prosperous oasis of Ufrān below the Anti-Atlas acquired European wools and local linens at the port of Agadir (occupied by Portuguese since 1505); they then added these textiles to their caravans loaded with copper vessels made by their own artisans from nearby copper mines; and crossed the desert to Djenné and Timbuktu, where they bought dyed cotton cloth to bring back north. Italian readers would enjoy Giovanni Leone's report of the high price of Venetian cloth in the market at Gao.⁵⁵

Meanwhile he also reminded them that European merchants were buying African goods at Mediterranean ports. He mentioned the special *funduqs* at Tlemcen and Tunis, hotel/warehouses to accommodate Genoese, Venetian, Catalan and other Christian merchants; other travelers had seen the traders' *funduqs* at Alexandria crammed with merchandise.⁵⁶ He recalled the boats from

Venice, Genoa, Apulia, Sicily, Dubrovnik, Portugal, and from as far away as England crowding the docks of Alexandria. Economic historians have told us of the African cotton, wool, and fabrics being loaded on the boats at the North African ports, of the leather hides; of the dried fruits, olive oil, and wax; of the gold, ivory, and ostrich feathers, brought north on caravan routes across the Sahara—to give only a partial listing. Giovanni Leone talked not only about textiles and hides being exported to Europe, but, as we have heard, even about certain garments and leather products.⁵⁷

Finally, Giovanni Leone provided vignettes of the play of artisanal products in everyday life. In his student years, he had spent two days in an isolated and "uncivilized" farming settlement in the High Atlas, whose inhabitants rarely saw merchandise from elsewhere. All the young men marveled at his white mantle, white being the color students wore. Presumably it was the material and the cut that were new to the mountain dwellers (Giovanni Leone did not call it a burnoose), and each of them had to rub it between his fingers. By the time he left, his cloak was "dirty as a kitchen rag." But he was richer by a horse, for one of the young men persuaded him to exchange his sword worth a ducat and a half for this mountain steed worth ten.⁵⁸

Giovanni Leone/Ḥasan al-Wazzān presented to European readers the many sides to life in the different regions of Africa. His was a story of contrasts, both among regions and within regions, and of connections, including those made by the widespread practice of Islam. Many of his pages were devoted to bloodshed: wars and destruction among peoples and polities within Africa, and between the Muslim Arabs and Berbers of North Africa and the Christians of Spain and Portugal.

But there were also peaceful tales, including the one I have followed here, of the articles produced by craftsmen, their use in everyday life, and in exchange. In its specificity this account could offer European readers both affinities to Africans and ways to react to difference without constantly weighing on a Eurocentric scale of “savagery” and “civilization.”

Quotations from Ramusio’s edition of the *Descrittione dell’Africa* and from its French, Latin, and English translations abound in many a book in the later sixteenth century and afterward.⁵⁹ Usually such reference was prompted by some special European interest or curiosity; the extent to which the *Description of Africa* had a deeper impact on European understanding and sensibility is a matter that goes beyond the bounds of this essay. We can get a clue to the status of al-Waz-zān’s book as a witness to Africa by Ramusio’s own series: the *Description of Africa* had pride of place as the opener to volume one, but it was followed on the next pages by Cadamosto’s *Navigazione*.⁶⁰

Let us conclude with a limited inquiry about impact, that is, the use of Giovanni Leone’s word-pictures of African garments by a European artist eager to depict them.⁶¹ He is the unknown creator of the engravings in the 1556 French translation of the Africa book, published by Jean Temporal in Lyon, the only edition of the book during the sixteenth century to have images. Several of the pictures appear on the same page with Giovanni Leone’s descriptions of the garments worn in Fez and other parts of Morocco and in Cairo. The artist used precise motifs in the text to fuel his visual imagination and create figures of human vitality and presence. The woolen *al-kisā’* of the Ḥāḥā is here scanty rather than voluminous as Giovanni Leone had said of it, but it is tightly wrapped to the body of the young man with his spear (fig. 32); the head covering has fewer windings than Giovanni Leone had described, but it does leave the top of



the head bare. This is not a “realistic” picture of the herders and traders of the Ḥāḥā, but it does show the artist imagining a vigorous youth in a region that Giovanni Leone had said was marked by petty local war.

Similarly, in “Acoutremens de ceux de Fez” (Garments of the [men] of Fez), the prosperous man of Fez on horseback (fig. 33) is not wearing the burnoose that Giovanni Leone had detailed as the overgarment for men’s outside wear. He carries a spear rather than the sword we would expect for a merchant. But his garments are layered, his coat is seamed down the front and has wide sleeves, his turban has a double wrap under his chin. If the pleasing designs on the rider’s coat are the artist’s playful imagining of what fine European cloth



would look like in Fez or what he thought would look decorative in his picture, nonetheless he has tried to represent a determined North African man on a fine steed.

The dress of the well-born couple of Cairo (p. 60, and no. 19) has this same mixture, with motifs drawn directly from Giovanni Leone's account, such as the headdresses, and others supplied by the artist's visual exercise and reflection, put in motion by the text. They are probably among the most appealing images to the European viewer, though the woman is here without the mysterious black mask described by Giovanni Leone, which concealed her identity but allowed her to look at others. The artist gave a partial face cover to a woman only in a second picture (fig. 34),

FACING PAGE FIG. 32 "Costumes des hommes Marocains," from *Historiale description de l'Afrique* (Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556). Engraving. Princeton University Library, Rare Book & Special Collections ([EX] 1804.579.11q, p. 50)

ABOVE LEFT FIG. 33 "Acoutremens de ceux de Fez" from *Historiale description de l'Afrique* (Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556). Engraving. Princeton University Library, Rare Book & Special Collections ([EX] 1804.579.11q, p. 150)

ABOVE RIGHT FIG. 34 "Autre sorte d'habits des femmes de Egypte, demeurans au Caire," from *Historiale description de l'Afrique* (Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556). Engraving. Princeton University Library, Rare Book & Special Collections ([EX] 1804.579.11q, p. 354)

though she is an isolated and somewhat stealthy figure.

Such peaceful pictures, like Giovanni Leone's book itself, coexisted with violent times. Wars and sacking continued, as did piracy and enslavement, and the condemnation of infidels and idolaters was heard on all sides. But nourishing the possibility of other kinds of relations is no small accomplishment of this African Muslim, present for a time in Renaissance Europe.

1. The 1550 edition is rare. I have worked with the second edition: *La Descrittione dell'Africa. In Primo volume, et Seconda editione della Navigazioni et Viaggi*, ed. Giovanni Battista Ramusio (Venice: Giunti, 1555). In this essay, all my quotations are drawn from the modern edition: *La descrizione dell'Africa di Giovan Lioni Africano* in Giovanni Battista Ramusio, ed., *Navigazioni e Viaggi*, ed. Marica Milanese, 1:19–460 (Turin: Giolio Einaudi, 1978), hereafter cited as Ramusio, *Descrizione*.
2. I have given extensive treatment to the life and thought of al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān in my book *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006; London: Faber, 2007), and readers can find documentation for the biographical material in this essay there along with bibliography. Other important studies of this figure include the pioneering book of Oumelbanine Zhiri, *L'Afrique au miroir de l'Europe: Fortunes de Jean Léon l'Africain à la Renaissance* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1991) and Dietrich Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo der Afrikaner: Seine Beschreibung des Raumes zwischen Nil und Niger nach dem Urtext* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), especially valuable for its material on Giovanni Leone's treatment of the Land of the Blacks, cited hereafter as Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*. Among other recent publications is François Pouillon et al., eds., *Léon l'Africain* (Paris: Karthala and IISMM, 2009).
3. Al-Wazzān's full baptismal name was Joannes Leo de' Medicis. Muslim slaves and servants who converted to Christianity were given the surnames of their masters, and the policy was here followed for Giovanni Leone. He never used this as a surname, referring to himself once in January 1521, when Pope Leo X was still alive, as "servus Medecis [sic]," servant of the Medici. His godfathers were Bernardino López de Carvajal, Lorenzo Pucci, and Egidio da Viterbo. See Davis, *Trickster Travels*, 94–95 and illustrations, figure 3.
4. Al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān and Jacob Mantino, Arabic-Latin-German dictionary, MS 398, Manuscritos árabes, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, 117b–118a.
5. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 3966, 119, cited in Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *Ricerche sulla formazione del più antico fondo dei manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Vaticana* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1939), 101.
6. *Al-Qur'ān* in Arabic and Latin, MS D100 inf, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan.
7. Yet another figure who seems to have sought information from Giovanni Leone was the polymath and papal secretary Angelo Colocci, who was deeply interested in all systems of weights and measures as a key to God's organization of the world. He also seems to have owned Giovanni Leone's biographical dictionary (Davis, *Trickster Travels*, 71–72).
8. Zhiri, *L'Afrique*, 13–26; Sara Leskinen, "Two French Views of Monstrous Peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 31, no. 2 (2008): 29–44.
9. D. Gnoli, ed., "Descriptio urbis o censimento della popolazione di Roma avanti il Sacco Borbonica," *Archivio della R. Società do Storia Patria* 17 (1894): 420–25. See the discussion of Stephen Epstein on the term "Moor" as well as the word "Saracen" as "categories . . . mask[ing] considerable variety especially by color . . . these people came in black, white and every shade between." Stephen Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery: Color, Ethnicity, and Human Bondage in Italy* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 185. Further on the range of meanings in Salvatore Battaglia, *Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, 20 vols. (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1961–2000), 10: 921–22. On these slaves, their religious background, and their lives after manumission, see Salvatore Bono, *Schiavi musulmani nell'Italia moderna: Galeotti, vucumpra, domestici* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1999). For slaves of African origin, see Sergio Tognetti, "The Trade in Black African Slaves," in T.F. Earle and K.J.P. Lowe, eds., *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 213–24.
10. Al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān, *De Viris quibusdam Illustribus apud Arabes per Joannem Leonem Afffricanum and De quibusdam Viris Illustribus apud Hebraeos per Joannem Leonem Afffricanum*, MS Plut. 36.35, 31r–53v, 62r–69v, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence. Both texts were published by Johann Heinrich Hottinger in his *Bibliothecarius Quadripartitus* (Zurich; Melchor Stauffaher, 1664), 246–91.
11. *Libro de la Cosmographia [sic] et Geographia de Affrica*, V.E. MS 953, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Rome, hereafter cited as CGA.
12. CGA 19r ("secundo la debil memoria del prefato compositore"); Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 39 (changes to "questo è quanto m'è rimasto nella memoria"). For other references to his memory or to his not having seen Arabic history books in ten years, see Davis, *Trickster Travels*, 106, 319 n. 57.

13. CGA 389r [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 310]; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 386.
14. CGA 2r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 20.
15. Ramusio also changed al-Wazzān's frequent use of "he" and "the author" (or compiler, "*il compositore*") for self-reference to the first person, thus eliminating a distancing device that the author had carefully inserted into the manuscript. See the index to Davis *Trickster Travels*, 428-29, for specific references to Ramusio's editorial changes on different matters in Giovanni Leone's manuscript.
16. *Historiale Description de l'Afrique, tierce partie du monde . . . Escrite de nôtre temps par lean Leon, African, premierement en langue Arabesque, puis en Toscane, et à present mise en François* (Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556). Jean Bellere also published an edition at Antwerp in 1556, with Temporal's dedication to the Dauphin François at its opening. Temporal may have been the translator himself, for he had Italian connections, but all he says in his dedication is that "he has had [the book] translated" ("a fait traduire"). *Ioannis Leonis Africani, De Totius Africae Descriptione, Libri X*, trans. John Florian (Antwerp: Jan de Laet, 1556). *A Geographical Historie of Africa, Written in Arabick and Italian by Iohn Leo a More, borne in Granada, and brought up in Barbarie*, trans. John Pory (London: George Bishop, 1600).
17. Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 79-80; Dietrich Rauchenberger, "L'hypothèse du tableau," in Pouillon, ed. *Léon l'Africain*, 364-71. Claudio M. Strinati and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, *Sebastiano del Piombo, 1485-1547*, exh. cat., Rome: Palazzo di Venezia, Rome, Feb. 8-May 18, 2008 and Berlin: Gemäldegalerie, June 28-Sept. 28, 2008 (Milan: F. Motta, 2008), 36: discuss possible identifications of the "humanist" as Marcantonio Flaminio and as al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān/Giovanni Leone, "a difficult yet suggestive identification."
18. Marie-Geneviève Guesdon and Anne Vernay-Nouri, *L'Art du livre arabe: Du manuscrit au livre d'artiste* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2001), 23 (reed pens), 138-61 (dark leather bindings, which characteristically have leather overflaps rather than ties between the front and back cover, as in the Sebastiano del Piombo painting. In the few instances where a tie is used, it is a single leather string going from one end of the flap around the entire book).
19. J.B. Harley and David Woodward, eds., *The History of Cartography*, vol. 2, book 1: *Cartography in the Tradition Islamic and South Asian Societies* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 27-28, and fig. 2.10, 42-47, 200-201, 221-22.
20. MS Vat. Ar. 357, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vatican City. Reproduced in Davis, *Trickster Travels*, fig. 3. Another illustration of Giovanni Leone's state of mind and strategies for living between worlds is the opening and colophon to his Arabic transcription of an Arabic manuscript of Paul's Epistles, made for Alberto Pio in January 1521. These are filled with Islamic exhortatory phrases, which are at least transportable into Christianity; only one or two words are distinctly Christian (reproduced in translation in Davis, *Trickster Travels*, 186-87).
21. CGA 433r, "con la Dei gratia tornando sano e salvo del viaggio de la Europa"; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 429, "con l'aiuto di Dio," leaves out "safe and sound."
22. Joannes Boemus, *The Fardle of Facions conteining the aunciente maners, customes and lawes of the peoples inhabiting the two partes of the earth called Affrike and Asia* (London: John Kingstone and Henry Sutton, 1555; facsimile edition: Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum and New York: De Capo Press, 1970), F1r, F3r, F8v.
23. Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Chronique de Guinée*, trans. Louis Bourdon and Robert Ricard (Dakar: IFAN, 1960) 77. The captain regretted that he had not been able to capture any "Maures" to take back on the voyage. An important study of Portuguese travel literature is Josiah Blackmore, *Moorings. Portuguese Expansion and the Writing of Africa* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).
24. Alvise Cadamosto, *Relation des voyages à la Côte occidentale d'Afrique d'Alvise de Ca'da Mosto, 1455-1457*, ed. Charles Schefer (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1895), 80-81, 115. This edition is drawn from the French translation that followed al-Wazzān's *Historiale Description* in the edition published by Jean Temporal in 1556. An example of a fanciful rumor is Cadamosto's account of the complicated exchange of salt from the mines at Tagaza with a mysterious people in Mali, who never allow anyone to see them (56-60). It bears no relation to the accounts of the salt trade by Ibn Baṭṭūta, who visited both Tagaza and Mali, in 1352 or al-Wazzān. Abū 'Abdallāh ibn Baṭṭūta, *Voyages*, ed. Stéphane Yerasimos, trans. C. Defremery and R.B. Sanguinette, 3 vols. (Paris: Librairie François Maspero and Éditions La Découverte, 1982-97), 3:396-412. CGA 374r, 379v-380v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 272]; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 370-71, 377.
25. [Alvara Velho], *A Journal of the First Voyage of Vasco da Gama*, trans. E.G. Ravenstein (New Delhi and Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1995), 17-18.

26. Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographiae Universalis Libri VI* (Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1559), 1151-52. In his learned study of Münster's *Cosmographia*, Matthew McLean points out that Münster had actually seen Siamese twins in Worms and comments, "Extrapolation from the shocking evidence of his own eyes, and reports of feral men in Russia and a malformed man in Cracow, perhaps meant that Münster was prepared to suspend disbelief in these outlandish races for the purposes of his book and the expectations of his readers." Matthew McLean, *The "Cosmographia" of Sebastian Münster: Describing the World in the Reformation* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2007), 271-72.
27. Münster, *Cosmographiae Universalis*, 1128, 1157-58. Cadamosta, *Navigations*, xii-xvii, 114-15.
28. On production and trade in the Mediterranean, see the classic study of Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1966), especially vol. 1. Lisa Jardine looks at objects and exchange between Europe and the Ottoman empire in *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1996). Much material on medieval industries in the Arab world is included in S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 5 vols. (Los Angeles and Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967-85). A full picture of industries in the medieval Islamic world, with much material on production in Africa, is given in Maya Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden, New York, and Cologne: E. Brill, 1994). Giovanni Leone's picture from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century converges well with the overall figures given by Shatzmiller.
29. CGA 291v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 294.
30. CGA 321r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 322.
31. CGA, 362r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 359 (Ramusio added "tanto sottili e delicati"; CGA just said "paron di seta"). On Zerhoun Mountain in the Middle Atlas, "the women weave most beautiful (*bellissimi*) woolen cloth"; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 216, omitted "*bellissimi*." In Beni Yazgha Mountain, farther east in the Middle Atlas, the local wool was so fine that the women wove cloth "that seemed like silk"; they then made garments and bedclothes, which were sold at Fez (CGA 259r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 268). On the factory-like weaving workshops for male linen-weavers at Fez: CGA 159v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 179.
32. CGA 46r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 70.
33. CGA 104r, 110v, 111r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 127-28, 133-34.
34. CGA 81v, 236r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 107, 247.
35. CGA 274r, 281r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 280-81, 286.
36. CGA 163v-164r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 183. Burnoose trimmings: CGA 155v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 176.
37. CGA, 164r-v, 166v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 183, 185. Merchants selling women's garments, CGA, 155v, Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 176.
38. CGA, 321r-v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 321-22. Giovanni Leone added that officers at the king's court and king's soldiers did not wear the distinctive cloth.
39. CGA, 324v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 324. Al-Wazzān gave the Arabic name for the second cloth used in the head-dress as *sefsari*, wrongly transcribed by Ramusio as *setfari*. The Tunisian *safsari* today (as the word is now transliterated) is a traditional veil of a single cloth that is used to cover the entire body (M.M. Charrad, "Veils and Laws in Tunisia," in Herbert L. Bodman and Nayereh Tohid, *Women in Muslim Societies: Diversity within Unity* [Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1998], 66). If we assume that al-Wazzān was using the word correctly, forms of veiling must have changed from the sixteenth century.
40. CGA 394r-v, 414v-415r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 390-91, 412. Mamluk Egypt had an active trade with the Indian Ocean in the early years of the sixteenth century, which the Portuguese ships were trying to disrupt.
41. CGA 379v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 270], (Djenné: "li habitatori sono civili vanno ben vestiti"); Ram, 376 ("gli abitatori vestono assai bene"); CGA 380v-381r [Rauch 174, 276], (Timbuktu: "lo homini vanno bene vestiti de tele di bambace o de colore nigro o azurro anchi portani deli panni che vanno de la Europa per li mercanti de la Barbaria"); Ram 378 cuts the phrase about the men's garb and simply adds the arrival of European cloth to the economic activities in Timbuktu: "vengono ancora a lei panni d'Europa portati de mercatanti di Barberia").
42. CGA 384r-v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 288], 290; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 381.
43. CGA 60v, 93v-94r, 384v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 290]; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 86, 118, 381.
44. CGA, water bags: 415v, saddles: 154v ("per excellentia"); Ramusio, *Descrizione*, water bags: 412-13, saddles: 175 ("eccellenti e mirabili").

45. CGA 81r, 98r, 257v, 283v-284r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 89, 107, 122, 265, 289.
46. CGA 154r-159r, 390r [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 314], 404v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 175-79, 386, 401-2.
47. CGA 47v, 49r, 52v-53r, 61r, 78r, 82v, 87v, 353r, 357r, 407r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 71, 73, 78, 86, 104, 108, 112, 351, 355, 404. At Fez, said Giovanni Leone, most of the goldsmiths were Jewish and lived in the Jewish quarter in New Fez. In principle, no Muslim could practice as a goldsmith because by Muslim law, it was forbidden as usury to sell golden or silver objects at a price above their weight. But Jews in Muslim lands were permitted by the authorities to make such sales (CGA 194r-v, Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 207). Al-Wazzān was here referring to the Muslim law of *riba*, which covered exchange of objects that could be weighed and measured and were the same kind of thing. No “excess” or “increase” was allowed in such transactions. (Joseph Schacht, *Introduction au droit musulman*, trans. Paul Kempf and Abdel Magid Turki (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1999), 124. To quote from a Maliki legal text that was cited in al-Wazzān’s day: one can sell silver for silver and gold for gold only on condition that the value of each is exactly the same and the transaction is made from hand to hand. Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, *La Risāla. Epître sur les elements du dogme et de la loi de l’islam selon le rite Mālikite*, trans. Léon Bercher (Paris: Éditions IQRA, 1996), 156. The extensive Jewish law on usury evidently did not cover this kind of transaction.
48. CGA 56r-v, 60r, 86v, 96v, 112r, 164v, 257v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 81, 85, 111, 120, 134, 183-84, 266.
49. CGA 415r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 412.
50. CGA 128r-v, 138v, 158r, 292r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 151, 161, 178-79, 295.
51. CGA 142r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 164. The combination of wood and ivory is found in beautiful minbars in Cairo as well (Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam, 1250-1800* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994], 89, 100). This is Giovanni Leone’s sole mention of ivory products. In an entry on the elephant, he says only that elephants are found in the Land of the Blacks and killed for the sale of their tusks (CGA 442r-v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 439). Shatzmiller also notes the rarity of reference to workers in ivory in her late medieval sources, and explains this by the limited demand for luxury items made of ivory (Shatzmiller, *Labour*, 229-30).
52. CGA 157v-158r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 178.
53. CGA 148v, 149v, 159r, 260v, 329v, 370r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 170-71, 269, 328, 365.
54. CGA 190r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 201. Al-Wazzān used the third person self-reference: “the author has never seen...” as he did most of the time throughout his manuscript; Ramusio as usual replaced it with the first-person.
55. CGA 351r-v (Ufrān), 379r (Djenné), 380v-381r (Timbaktu), 384r (Gao) [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo*, 268, 274, 276, 288]; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 350, 376, 378, 381. Al-Wazzān did not specifically mention here the purchase of slaves for the return caravan, though he did describe the slave market at Gao and slave transactions in the Sus in which he was involved as an agent for the powerful ruler of southern Morocco.
56. CGA 279v, 320v; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 285, 321. On these *funduqs* or *fondacas*, see the major study of Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Comments of other travelers in 234, 267.
57. CGA 399r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 395-96. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, 267; André-E. Sayous, *Le commerce des Européens à Tunis depuis le XIIe siècle jusqu’à la fin du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Société d’Éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1929), 24, 55, 82-83, 87-88, 124-25; Frederic C. Lane, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice, 1418-1449* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1944; repr. New York: Octagon Books, 1967), 31, 52, 105; Herman Van der Wee, “Structural Changes in European Long Distance Trade, and Particularly in the Re-export Trade from South to North, 1350-1750,” in James. D. Tracey, ed., *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 24-25; Ralph Austen, “Marginalization, Stagnation, and Growth: The Trans-Saharan Caravan Trade in the Era of European Expansion, 1500-1900,” in *ibid.*, 313, 321, 329-30.
58. CGA 76v-77r; Ramusio, *Descrizione*, 102. Once again, Ramusio replaced al-Wazzān’s third-person reference to “*il compositore*” by the first person.
59. On the impact of Giovanni Leone’s Africa book, see Zhiri, *L’Afrique*, and Oumelbanine Zhiri, *Les sillages de Jean Léon l’Africain: XVIe au XXe siècle* (Casablanca: Walalda, 1995).
60. “Delle navigazioni di messer Alvise da Ca’da Mosto, gentiluomo veneziano,” in Ramusio, *Navigazioni*, 1:473-535.

61. On the interest in depicting the clothing of non-Europeans in the Renaissance and the other uses of pictures of garments, see Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), especially, chap. 4, 125–75, and chap. 10, 177–209. See also Margaret F. Rosenthal and Ann Rosalind Jones, "Introduction: Vecellio and His World," in Margaret F. Rosenthal and Ann Rosalind Jones, eds., *Cesare Vecellio's Habiti Antichi et Moderni: The Clothing of the Renaissance World: Europe, Asia, Africa, The Americas* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2008), 8–48.



FREE MEN AND WOMEN OF AFRICAN ANCESTRY IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

JOANEATH SPICER

The contributions to Renaissance society by free (or freed) men and women of African descent demonstrate an amazing range even though their numbers were small, the largest community being in Lisbon where they constituted 2 percent of the population.¹ Information about these men and women is largely anecdotal, so progress in mapping their social roles requires speculation, to which pictorial evidence provides new points of reference.

For former slaves, working one's way up from manual labor was difficult in the face of prejudice, limited access to training, and the restrictions of a traditional class system. Representative lower-skilled jobs in which individuals can be identified include muleteer, porter, cloth preparer, dyer, poultry seller, baker, charcoal seller, blanket-maker, mattress-maker, farmhand, and boatman.² Banding together for mutual benefit required a critical mass possible only in Spain and Portugal where sizable free black communities formed confraternities, as that at Valencia established in 1472 by some forty freedmen.³ The occupation of boatman, filled by freed blacks as well as the enslaved, is one that offers a visual record, especially in Venice.⁴ A view of the Venetian lagoon (see fig. 2), a fragment of a once-larger painting by Vittore Carpaccio, offers a picturesque mixture of white and black gondoliers.⁵ Those working on pleasure boats might also be entertainers, as the black boatmen singing and playing the tambourine to



FIG. 35 Johannes van Doetechum (Flemish, d. 1605) and Lucas van Doetechum (Flemish, active 1554/1572, d. before 1589) after Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525/30–1569), *Two Flemish Peasants*, c. 1564/65. Etching; plate: 13.3 × 18.8 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Andrew W. Mellon Fund (1975.112.35, with the title from the seventeenth-century edition: *t Moye Molletje and Melis Bocke-baert*)



FIG. 36 Pieter van der Heyden (Belgian, ca. 1520–ca. 1572) after Pieter Bruegel (Flemish, ca. 1525/30–1569), *The Thin Kitchen*, 1563, detail. Engraving. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (RP-P-1885-A-9290)

entertain a couple in a small boat in the Lisbon harbor (see fig. 8, no. 47).

The lives of freed blacks in rural areas are even more difficult to quantify. In southern Europe they can be glimpsed through land purchases in Spain or anecdotes in Sicily about individuals who became famous: St. Benedict the Moor (1526–1589) and the Blessed Antonio da Noto (died 1549) were farmworkers (discussed below). Documents from Valencia, Spain, record purchases of small plots of land for subsistence farming by individuals identified as “negre,” some presumably having learned the requisite skills before manumission.⁶ Speculations on the presence of blacks in the rural economy of Flanders in the Spanish Netherlands (now Belgium) take a different path. Slavery was not legal but was tolerated.⁷ In Antwerp, most slaves were therefore the property of recently established Portuguese merchants, as Katharina (no. 55), belonging to João Brandão, the Portuguese factor

in Antwerp, and likely the two black men portrayed in David’s *Adoration of the Kings* (no. 1). There were also enslaved or free seamen off Portuguese ships in the harbor, freed blacks engaged in urban trade, or escaped slaves. In the context of Antwerp, the costume and pendulous earring of *A Head of an African* (no. 56),⁸ engraved in 1522 by Frans Crabbe van Espleghem (ca. 1480–1553), frame him as possibly a seaman off a Portuguese vessel, his wary exoticism a magnet for the artist.

Representations of black Flemish peasants are primarily found in depictions of peasant life by Pieter Bruegel (1525/30–1569) done in Antwerp and Brussels. The implied comic quality of the coarse peasant was surely the appeal to a middle-class purchaser of a series of seventy-two heads of peasants based on Bruegel and etched about 1564–65. Surprisingly, three are black (fig. 35 and no. 58), treated much as the others.⁹ *The Thin Kitchen* (fig. 36) was engraved after a Bruegel

drawing of 1563 along with a companion *The Fat Kitchen*.¹⁰ The impoverished gathered in a rural hovel offer hospitality to the fat man at the door who pulls away. One scrawny farm laborer reaching into the communal bowl is black, identifiable by his short, bristly hair, comparable to the black man's hair in fig. 35, while the norm for white male peasants was ear-length.¹¹ In *The Fat Kitchen*, obese peasants consume mountains of food while a thin man is kicked out the door. The inscription on *The Thin Kitchen* implicates the viewer as guilty of disregard for the destitute: "Where the thin man stirs the pot, the offering is meager. So I'll gladly take myself off to the fat kitchen."¹² Introducing blacks in this ordinary way suggests their presence in reality. Freed blacks in rural Flanders surely came from Antwerp and lacked farming experience. However, recent studies suggest that the Flemish rural economy supported a high proportion of wage-earning laborers versus independent subsistence farmers,¹³ thus an economy that could absorb inexperienced blacks.

Many black men and also women are recorded as skilled artisans.¹⁴ However, the fame of Juan de Pareja (ca. 1610-1670),¹⁵ Velasquez's former slave of mixed ancestry who became a painter himself, prompts a search for earlier artists of similar ancestry. In 1564 two black slaves from the Lisbon court, Diego de San Pedro and Juan Carlos, are documented in the Madrid workshop of the Italian medalist and carver of cameos Jacopo da Trezzo (1515-1589).¹⁶ In 1568 they were noted as manumitted and in the workshop *to study*. Before manumission they could perform workshop tasks, but in most places guild regulations restricted artistic instruction and independent practice to free men. Nothing further is known of them.

Considering well-known artists possibly of African descent conveys the challenges of ascertaining racial identity. Andrea Briosco (ca. 1470-1532), an Italian sculptor of the early 1500s, was

nicknamed Riccio (Italian for "hedgehog," therefore [really] "curly," bristly). Though not a portraitist, he produced a small self-portrait (fig. 37) featuring his bushy hair, mashed down by a cap.¹⁷ Can his hair and also his "blunt" facial features, as they have been called, be read as evidencing African descent? Leo Planiscig thought so in 1930; to this writer this is an "afro." "What's in a name?" applies as well to the Italian painter Francesco known as Torbido (cloudy, veiled) il Moro (the Moor), who lived ca. 1486-1562. His subtle portraits, as *Portrait of a Man, Possibly a Self-Portrait* from 1520 (no. 59),¹⁸ are influenced by Giorgione. The direct gaze, artisan attire, and "cloudy" complexion make it plausible that this



FIG. 37 Andrea Briosco (Riccio), *Self-Portrait*, 1510-15. Bronze, bust: 4.5 × 4 × 3.5 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (KK 5516)

is a self-portrait. Giorgio Vasari introduces the artist variously in his *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters . . .* (Le Vite dei più eccellenti pittori . . . , 1568), as “Francesco Torbido il Moro,” “Francesco il Moro,” or “il Moro.”¹⁹ Francesco’s son-in-law (and assistant) took the name Battista del Moro (of the Moor). Francesco’s father was Marco India. Since geographical texts often identified “India” with Ethiopia, the nickname “India” or “d’India” surely refers to African descent rather than to the subcontinent. Does it matter? It does if the long-term impact of the African presence in European society is to be explored.

Among professions depending on formal education or mental agility, there are scattered examples of African-Europeans known today such as the surgeon Mestre António in Oporto or Licentiate Ortiz, a respected lawyer in Granada;²⁰ Portuguese playwright and poet Afonso Álvares (active in the 1530s) whose mother was a black slave and father, a bishop from a noble family;²¹ João de Sá Panasco, court jester and gentleman of the Lisbon court whose wit was his profession (see below); Vicente Lusitano, author of an important book on musical theory;²² but the compelling figures are Juan de Sesa “Latino” (1516/18–1596?) and Giovanni Leone de Medici (1486/88–after 1526), the Moroccan diplomat and writer whose lengthy European sojourn was largely spent in Rome.

Juan de Sesa claimed an African birth, he and his mother being purchased as slaves for Luis Fernández de Córdoba, duke of Sesa. According to his first biographer, Bermúdez de Pedraza in his *Antiquities and Excellent Aspects of Granada* (Granada 1608), Juan accompanied his master’s son Gonzalo to Granada, where the latter attended the Cathedral school. Juan became his study fellow and a top student on his own, concentrating on Latin and then Greek. He followed Gonzalo to the University of Granada, where he became known as Juan Latino, receiving the bachelor degree (1545),

licentiate (1556) and master of arts (1557). Following a competition providing a central motif for the play *The Famous Drama of Juan Latino* (ca. 1610) by Diego Ximénez de Enciso (1585–1633), he gained the chair of grammar and Latin language of the Cathedral school. In demand for private lessons, one of his students was Ana Carleval, the (white) daughter of the duke’s administrator. Their unlikely, secretive courtship and marriage (in 1547?) formed a thread throughout Enciso’s play. It isn’t clear when he was freed; in the play it is at his marriage. Latino published three volumes of poems, one dedicated to Don Juan d’Austria (1547–1578), illegitimate son of Emperor Charles V and half-brother of Philip II of Spain, on the occasion of Don Juan’s military victory over Morisco rebels in 1568–72. In the play, Juan Latino is emotionally undone by the prince’s offer of friendship and commissioning of a portrait of the scholar for display with others of illustrious men. The painting is not identifiable but the episode has the ring of truth. Given the sympathy between them, it is likely that the portrait, if it existed, was a genuine expression of regard and not a document of a black “wonder.”

Juan Latino’s Latin poetry adheres to European traditions, including allusions to the Greco-Roman past, reinforcing a system he fought to join. This approach contrasts with that of his older contemporary al-Hasan al-Wasan, former Moroccan diplomat, pirate captive, and papal gift, known after his baptism by Pope Leo X as Giovanni Leone de Medici, or Leo Africano.²³ The latter’s *Description of Africa*, completed in 1526 in Rome and published in 1550, accommodates the European reader but explores the character of the continent on its own terms.

Many of African heritage sought spiritual commitment and solace in the religious life.²⁴ The priesthood was largely closed to Africans, unless returning to Africa.²⁵ A major issue (along with

prejudice) was lack of education. Although there also were few in the regular monastic orders (for the same reasons), an altarpiece now in Philadelphia may illuminate their situation, at least in Spain. The donor in *Altarpiece with the Preparations for the Crucifixion with an Augustinian Donor* (no. 60), by Luis de Vargas (1502-1568),²⁶ has features consistent with those of African ancestry.²⁷ Donors are rarely depicted in Spanish devotional art; foregrounding this devotional act may be intended to address the ambiguity of his racial identity.²⁸ At the time of the expulsion from Spain in 1492 of the “Moors” (in Spain the meaning was unambiguously Muslims from North Africa, regardless of skin color), those who converted to Christianity could stay. The authorities remained suspicious as many Moriscos were outwardly Christian but Muslims in private. In 1609/10 all Moriscos suspected of remaining Muslim were expelled. Could the Augustinian be addressing such concerns by asserting his Christian commitment? The painting is datable ca. 1565, at a time of Morisco unrest. Vargas was then in Seville, the site of an Augustinian monastery.²⁹ Ironically, racial identity may be foregrounded to undercut its negative impact.

Lack of education would not preclude joining a lay order. Anecdotal evidence suggests that at least in Sicily the third (lay) order of Franciscans offered a sympathetic spiritual home for former slaves. An ascetic life focused on penance permitted disengagement from a difficult world and gave spiritual value to the low self-worth often expressed by slaves. The best-known black Franciscan is Saint Benedict the Moor (Benedetto il Moro, 1526-1589), beatified in 1743 and canonized in 1807, the first black to be so honored.³⁰ Born of Christian slaves on an estate near Messina, Benedict was freed as a child. His work ethic, self-effacement, and capacity to ignore insults impressed a Franciscan hermit who encouraged

him to join the hermitage. He did, and his qualities as a role model were soon recognized. He later joined a friary, the convent of Santa Maria di Gesù near Palermo, becoming a cook, at which task he seemed to have heavenly aid. In spite of his lack of formal qualifications—he was not a priest and could not read—he was enjoined to become the overseer. At his request, he was again made cook, but could not avoid the increasing renown of his sanctity. By his death his veneration was spreading. In 1611 his bones were reinterred in a silver casket financed by Philip III of Spain. There are no reliable images datable to his lifetime, but there are numerous, flamboyant ones from the Iberian peninsula from the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century leading up to his beatification, as this magnificent polychrome statue by José Montes de Oca (no. 80).³¹ However, this is not the dour Franciscan cassock. There is a tendency in the 1700s to gild everything, but it is also true that the heads of painted wooden statues were generally carved separately, as was this one, permitting the uniting of a head and body of different origins. Nevertheless this head fits perfectly.³² On the eve of his beatification, it may have been less the life of penance that the artist celebrated than his magnetism.

As a model of black sanctity, Benedict was preceded by his Sicilian contemporary the Blessed Antonio da Noto (died 1549, his public cult authorized in Sicily in 1599) known as “Antonio etiope.”³³ They are celebrated together as “Ethiopian saints” by Alonso de Sandoval in *The Salvation of Ethiopia* (1627).³⁴ There were three further black Sicilian Franciscan tertiaries called *Antonio etiope* or *Antonio nigro* from the same period, identifying with St. Anthony the Great, whose life as a hermit in Egypt in the third century is the origin of the monastic movement.³⁵ Ironically, these Franciscans were likely unaware of the predominant *image* of black sanctity in the



FIG. 38 Friedrich Hagenauer (German, born 1490-1500; d. after 1546), *Bust of a Young Black Man*, ca. 1530. Maple. Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich

1500s, that of St. Maurice (Mauritius, Maurizio), a third-century Roman commander from Thebes in Egypt, martyred for his Christian faith in what is now Switzerland, and widely revered in Germany and surrounding lands as a black African, as in this German *St. Maurice and the Theban Legion*, ca. 1515-20 (no. 26),³⁶ though in Italy usually as white.

The armies of Europe provided paths to fortune for many of simple birth. The freedman Juan de Mérida, who served in the Spanish army in Flanders, was highly promoted and awarded a patent of nobility for his valor in the 1570s, is the subject of the play *The Valiant Black Man in Flanders* (before 1610) by the Spaniard Andres de Claramonte (d. 1610); there is disagreement as to whether Juan was fictional or real; nevertheless, the linkage of battlefield heroism and promotion is realistic.³⁷

The courts of princes and nobles were fertile ground for upward mobility, not only for those of African descent. Known instances point to former black slaves making use of natural capabilities or artisanal skills, for example Christophle Le More, who rose from stable work to be a personal guard of the Emperor Charles V.³⁸ In like fashion, “Grazzico of Africa, called il Moretto (the little Moor), horseman, page to the knight Prospero” is noted in Medici court records for salaries paid in 1553,³⁹ while a manumitted North African Muslim held an important position in the stable at the court in Lisbon of Catherine of Austria (1507-78).⁴⁰ João de Sá Panasco’s career at her court began as slave and jester, in which role he was known for his wit. However, much of it was self-deprecating and he suffered from jibes. The date of his manumission is unknown, but by 1547 he was a courtier, a

gentleman of the royal household, and the king's valet. He was awarded a knighthood in the Order of Santiago around 1550.⁴¹ Is he the black man so attired, riding in the foreground of *Chaferiz d'el Rey* (see p. 12 and no. 47)? Black salaried court entertainers were often musicians, usually their occupation before manumission. A black drummer was on the payroll at the Scottish court in 1504 while Johan Diez in Valencia and John Blanke in London were among those who were trumpeters.⁴² The chances are great that the subject of the exquisite *Bust of a Young Black Man* (fig. 38) attributed to the German medalist Friedrich Hagenauer (1490/1500-after 1546) was attached to a court, possibly that of Munich where the artist was active 1525-27.

Some Africans rose high in European courts; there is a long history of "Moors" playing substantial roles in southern Italy and Sicily.⁴³ The rise of the Ethiopian Raymundo de Campani in the 1300s is recounted by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375) in his *Fates of Illustrious Men (De Casibus Virorum Illustrium)*.⁴⁴ The account is a sidebar to the story of his wife, a former washer woman (white). A black child (*aethiope*) was purchased by Raymundo de Campani, chief cook of Charles, king of Naples (1254-1309). The cook had him baptized, gave him his own name, trained and freed him. At the cook's death, Raymundo "the Ethiopian" took over his position and, steadfastly loyal, rose in the service of Charles's successor Robert, king of Naples (1275-1343). From responsibility for the king's wardrobe, he graduated rapidly to running the palace. The king knighted him, making him lord chamberlain or grand seneschal. At his death he was much regretted. Boccaccio's venom was directed at the wife and son, whose desire for power—the latter was appointed governor of Sicily—led to disgust and execution.

This narrative provides a model for framing hypothetical identities for Africans of whom there

are portraits consistent with such a context, but no records. The *Portrait of a Black Man* (fig. 39) painted by Jan Mostaert ca. 1520-25 at a period in which Mostaert worked for the court at Mecheln (near Antwerp) of the Archduchess Margaret of Austria (1480-1530), Habsburg governor of the Spanish Netherlands, is well known but puzzling.⁴⁵ The man's pose is jaunty,⁴⁶ while his clothing suggests a respectable status and involvement in robust activity. He is not wearing the *paltrock* or skirt that gentlemen wore over their hose in public. However his accessories are more refined: he may have dressed up for his portrait. The gold or gilded silver hat badge signals a visit to Our Lady at Halle near Brussels and speaks to piety and current fashion.⁴⁷ The kid gloves are good while the sword is unremarkable; however, his embroidered pouch or purse stands out. Pouches are rarely featured so it may be a gift from a patron. It is decorated with fleurs de lys, the emblematic lily associated chiefly with the royal house of France but also with Margaret herself.⁴⁸ As a child she was betrothed to the heir to the French throne and was educated in France to that end; however, at age thirteen she was sent packing: the French had other plans. She surely had personal items with this motif and no emotional need to keep them. Could the purse be proffered for view as a gift from the duchess? The proposed identification of the black man as Christofle le More, the slave and stable boy who rose to a salaried personal guard for the emperor, may not persuade because the dates and places where Christofle can be documented don't correlate, but the principle obtains. A court environment remains the strongest candidate for his home.

Efforts to situate the spectacular, previously unpublished, *Portrait of a Wealthy African Man* (see p. 80 and no. 61),⁴⁹ possibly from around 1530-40, again center on the sitter's clothing, that of a wealthy member of European society—fur-trimmed



FIG. 39 Jan Jansz Mostaert (Netherlandish, ca. 1474?-1552), *Portrait of a Black Man*, ca. 1520-25. Oil on panel, 30 × 20.3 cm. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, purchase with the support of the Rembrandt Society, helped by the Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation, the Mondriaan Foundation, the VSB, the BankGiro Lottery Fund, and the Rijksmuseum (SK-A-4986)

mantel, a gold chain of the type that is often a princely gift, a cap of a type worn indoors by men of high status (or under a hat in the public sphere), decorated with seed pearls. Given its association with Africans, the pendant pearl earring is more likely an ornament retained from youth than an adopted fashion.⁵⁰ A possible clue to the man's identity is provided by a German tapestry of 1548 representing festivities associated with a *Wedding of 1547 at the Court of Duchess Elizabeth of Saxony at Rochlitz* (fig. 40).⁵¹ The elegant gentleman in the portrait looks a lot like the black



FIG. 40 German. *Rochelitz Wedding tapestry*, 1548, detail (formerly Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin). Photograph Western Figurative Tapestry Database, Antonio Ratti Textile Center, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

courtier with a sword and a pendant pearl earring who carries a ceremonial torch. Could he be the duchess's chamberlain? Would a black man be so represented if it did not reflect reality?

Portrait of a Moor, attributable to Domenico Tintoretto in the 1590s (no. 65),⁵² raises similar questions. There is agreement that his ancestry must include Africa, but there agreement ends. The rectangular package on the table, its white wrapping closed with a red wax seal, points to his capacity as diplomat or envoy. Indeed, according to one contemporary writer, Domenico Tintoretto's

studio was one of the two most fashionable in Venice for visiting diplomats to commission portraits marking their stays.⁵³ But whom does he represent? His clothing is not “African”; he may be “European” and represent a court in Sicily, Cyprus, or elsewhere in the Adriatic with significant populations of African descent and diplomatic relations with Venice. This is speculation, but the man’s existence invites explanation.

While it was not unknown in the Renaissance for a European nobleman to marry an African woman and bring her to Europe,⁵⁴ children of African descent born in European noble households were usually the offspring of exploitive relationships involving a slave, as in the case of Afonso Alvares noted above and of the most prominent European of the time now widely believed to be of African ancestry, Alessandro de’ Medici, duke of Florence (1511-37; nos. 62, 63). His father was either Giulio de Medici (1478-1534, later Pope Clement VII) or Lorenzo di Piero de’ Medici (ruled Florence 1513-19).⁵⁵ Alessandro gained a reputation for tyranny, was assassinated in 1537, and left an official wife (Emperor Charles V’s illegitimate daughter Margaret), and illegitimate children.⁵⁶ The question whether his mother was black has long fueled discussion. Contemporaries were generally restrained, but Bernardo Segni, who knew Alessandro, in *History of Florence*, written in 1553-58 (after Alessandro’s death; first published in the 1700s), in a passage decrying Alessandro’s cruelty, writes that Alessandro was “born of a really vile slave” (*nato d’una vilissima schiava*),⁵⁷ as if these factors were connected.⁵⁸ Then there is a pathetic letter to Alessandro, “to my son,” dated 1529 and written by a Simonetta da Collevocchio [village near Rome] asking him to relieve her poverty.⁵⁹ There were innuendoes after his death that his mother was a Moor or black. The only datable written comment susceptible to this reading by a person who had known Alessandro is Segni’s

description of Alessandro as “a person in command of his own thoughts [collected], of muscular build, black as to color and with a large nose” (*di persona raccolta, nerbuto, di color nero, e di naso grande*).⁶⁰

The visual evidence is critical. Alessandro commissioned numerous portraits of himself.⁶¹ They usually show his hair and features obscured by a cap or shadows.⁶² However there is one fine portrait in which he is recognizably a “black” man. Bronzino’s little *Portrait of Alessandro de Medici* (no. 62),⁶³ usually dated to after 1553 (the dating of the series of small-scale copies of portraits of Medici family with which it is associated) has the lively precision of a portrait based on a study from life, presumably a celebrated study by Bronzino’s teacher Pontormo to which the artist had access: the linear detailing picks out Alessandro’s lips as well as of the wiry kinking hair, reflecting the light.⁶⁴

Among Alessandro’s children, all illegitimate, the only one of whom there is a generally accepted portrait is Giulia de’ Medici (ca. 1535-ca. 1588), in Jacopo Pontormo’s portrait *Maria Salviati with Giulia de Medici*, ca. 1539 (no. 64).⁶⁵ Following the assassination of her father, Giulia, probably the daughter of Alessandro’s favorite, the noblewoman Taddea Malespina, became the ward of her father’s cousin and successor as duke of Florence, Cosimo de’ Medici. The child lived with Cosimo’s mother Maria Salviati de’ Medici, herself a close cousin of Alessandro. Before Gabrielle Langdon’s 1992 publication clarifying the identity, the child in the painting was assumed to be Maria’s only child, her son, Cosimo de’ Medici.⁶⁶ The bronze medal that Maria holds (now abraded) surely represented Giulia’s father, perhaps by Domenico di Polo di Angelo de’ Vetri (no. 63).⁶⁷ The gesture signaled that the father was honored in the child, important because Cosimo and his family benefitted from Alessandro’s death. In 1550 Giulia married



FIG. 41 Jacob de Gheyn II (Flemish, 1565-1629), *Three Studies of an African Man Wearing a Turban*, 1580-1629. Ink on paper, 19.9 × 31.9 cm. The British Museum, London (1869,0612.594)



FIG. 42 Giuseppe Cesari (also known as Il Cavaliere d'Arpino) (Italian, 1568-1640), *Head of a Bearded African in a Turban*, ca. 1591-93. Black chalk with traces of red chalk, 11 × 9.6 cm. Art market, Germany

Francesco Cantelmo, Count of Alvito and Duke of Popoli. Widowed, in 1559 she married Bernadetto de' Medici, subsequently prince of Ottaviano.⁶⁸ Her descendants thrive today.

Tracking Africans who came to Europe for temporary stays is equally difficult. On the one hand, raids by North African pirates on coastal areas of Spain and Italy were a constant threat. Giorgio Vasari recounts that the Italian painter Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469) was captured with friends on an excursion to a beach near Ancona and sent in chains to North Africa but soon ransomed.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, most came for diplomatic purposes, trade, or study. Generally, commercial transactions initiated by Africans—versus by a European entity such as England's "Maroco Company" given a patent by Queen Elizabeth in 1585 to trade for Morocco's "divers Marchandize"⁷⁰—were pursued under the umbrella of diplomacy. The diplomats themselves are addressed in the following essay. Moroccan diplomatic initiatives in The Hague beginning in 1609 were accompanied by commercial deals. Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew who was part of that diplomatic

team, separately negotiated with Dutch partners to sell Moroccan sugar in the Dutch Republic. A study (fig. 41) of a black Muslim working through account books, done in The Hague by Jacques de Gheyn II (1565-1629), probably represents a member of one of these trade groups.⁷¹ In like fashion, the North African (fig. 42) drawn by Cavaliere d'Arpino (Giuseppe Cesari) ca. 1591-93 was likely with a trade group in Rome.

Two principal sites for Africans studying in Europe were Lisbon and Rome. By the 1460s captives from Africa were being trained in Lisbon as interpreters, but training took on a broader purpose in the 1480s with the two sojourns in Lisbon of Prince Kasuta of the Congo.⁷² In 1489 the Portuguese crown established a program to give the prince and his entourage instruction in Catholic theology as well as Portuguese. The program continued until 1538, preparing Congolese students as teachers, religious leaders, and diplomats. The most famous student arrived in 1508, Prince Ndoadidiki Ne-Kinu a Mumemba (ca. 1494-1531), son of King Afonso of the Congo, baptized as Henrique.⁷³ He was prepared for ordination as a priest (1520)

and in 1521 was consecrated as titular bishop of Utica in North Africa with the intention that he carry out his duties in the Congo. The Portuguese crown blocked subsequent appointments to avoid diluting its power: Henrique was the first black African to be consecrated as a bishop but also the last for more than two hundred years.⁷⁴

The portrayal of Tasfa Seyon, head of the Ethiopian community in Rome, among devotees of the Virgin for the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome,⁷⁵ prompts consideration of the growing presence of Ethiopian Christian pilgrims and scholars in Europe, chiefly in Rome.⁷⁶ Three monks attended the general church council at Constance, Switzerland, in 1418. Nevertheless, the major shift in the Ethiopian presence in Europe, primarily in Italy, is associated with the attendance of an Ethiopian delegation and also one from the Egyptian Coptic Church to the ecumenical church council held at Florence in 1439-41, called to repair schisms within Christianity.⁷⁷ The two delegations arrived in Florence and Rome in 1441, famously celebrated on the doors of St. Peter's Basilica (see fig. 43).⁷⁸ Then in 1481, in connection with a delegation to the pope from the Negus (emperor) of Ethiopia, Sixtus IV had repairs done to the church and attached house of Santo Stefano Maggiore (subsequently Santo Stefano degli Abissini [of the Abyssinians] or dei Mori [of the Moors or blacks]) as a residence for Ethiopian pilgrims. In 1511 the German typographer and priest Johann Potken attended services at Santo Stefano and became interested in Ge'ez. A monk taught him the language and showed him an Ethiopian Psalter and other texts in the papal library. Potken's publication of the Psalter in 1513 was the first book to be printed in Ge'ez.⁷⁹ The New Testament then appeared in 1548, edited by Tasfa Seyon (Petrus Etyops, as he identified himself on the title page).⁸⁰

In this same time frame, the first treatise about Africa by an African was published, composed by

an Ethiopian scholar residing in Lisbon from 1527 to 1533. In 1527 the Ethiopian ambassador to Lisbon, Saga za Ab (or Zaga Zabo), arrived in the city, accompanying the returning Portuguese mission to Ethiopia (sent in 1520 and recorded by Francisco Álvares).⁸¹ He became acquainted with the internationally renowned Portuguese humanist Damião de Góis (1502-1574), who urged him to compose a treatise on Ethiopian Christianity to address European ignorance of its traditions.⁸² Saga za Ab wrote the text in Portuguese, which Góis translated into Latin for an international audience and published it (under his own name to lend it prestige), along with translations of earlier letters from Ethiopian rulers to the pope and to the king of Portugal, as *The Faith, Religious Practices and Customs of Ethiopia under Emperor Prester John (Fides, religio, moresque Aethiopum sub Imperio Precisoio Ioannis . . .* [Louvain: ex officina Rutgeri Rescii, 1540]). With these publications, Ethiopia became increasingly part of the European worldview.

To conclude this survey we may ask if, despite the anecdotal nature of the evidence, there are patterns. The educational attainments of a few underscore the lack of education of the many. Making a career at a court offered advantages: while one would always encounter prejudice, one's rise was in the gift of one or another individual (to whom loyalty and ability were invaluable) and not to organizations with self-protective entry rules. Visitors residing for short times in Europe were generally scholars or persons operating under a diplomatic umbrella. They were elite members of their own societies and tended to be in contact with elites in Europe; their immediate impact was great relative to their numbers. However the long-term impact of the African presence on European society lay with the growing numbers of children of mixed ancestry.

NOTES

1. A.C. de C.M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal 1441-1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 57; Kate Lowe, introduction to *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, ed. T.F. Earle and K.J.P. Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.
2. Jorge Fonesca, "Black Africans in Portugal during Cleynaert's Visit (1533-1538)," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 117; Debra Blumenthal, "'La Casa dels Negres': Black African Solidarity in Late Medieval Valencia," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 236; Debra Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars, Slavery and Mastery in Fifteenth-Century Valencia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 97, 249-50.
3. Blumenthal, "La Casa," 227, with further bibliography.
4. The black gondoliers of Venice were noted in a guidebook to Venice of 1493, for which see Marino Sanuto, *De origine, situ et magistratibus urbis Venetae over la città di Venetia* (1493-1530), ed. A. Caracciolo Aricò (Milan: Cisalpino-La Goliardica, 1980), 21-22. A free black gondolier and his wife were induced to come to Ferrara to enter the service of Eleonora d'Aragona, who was really only interested in their little girl, for which see Paul Kaplan, "Isabella d'Este and Black African Women," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 135.
5. See further Lowe, "Slaves."
6. Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars*, 273.
7. A recent discussion of this is found in Hannah Chappelle Wojciehowski, *Group Identity in the Renaissance World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 141-62, including references to unpublished sources in Antwerp archives. Earlier published studies include Jan Albert Goris, "Slavernij te Antwerpen in de xvi eeuw," *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 15 (1923): 541-44; Jan Albert Goris, *Étude sur les colonies marchandes méridionales (portugais, espagnols, italiens) à Anvers de 1488 à 1567* (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1925); Pierre Goemare, "Anvers et ses esclaves noires" *Revue générale belge* 99 (1963): 27-36; Hans Pohl, *Die Portugiesen in Antwerpen (1567-1640)* (Wiebaden: Steiner, 1977).
8. Nadine M. Orenstein et al., "Recent Acquisitions," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 57, no. 2 (1999): 27; Jan Piet Filedt Kok and Marieke de Winkel, "Een portret van een zwarte Afrikaanse man door Jan Mostaert," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53 no. 4 (2005): 399-400.
9. In contrast, the two blacks shown scared almost to death in Bruegel's *Triumph of Death* (Madrid, Prado) are reduced to schematic circular faces with staring eyes outlined by white, for which see Philippe Robert-Jones, *Pieter Bruegel de Oudere* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), fig. 42.
10. Manfred Sellinck, "'The Very Lively and Whimsical Pieter Brueghel': Thoughts on His Iconography and Context," in *Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Drawings and Prints*, ed. Nadine M. Orenstein, exh. cat., New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art (2001), 61, has described the poor in *The Thin Kitchen* as "caricatured without compassion."
11. Traveling troupes of musicians, jugglers, acrobats, mountebanks, and magicians regularly participated at peasant fairs, where they both entertained and fleeced a credulous peasantry. The antics of one such troupe provide the background for Bruegel's drawing from 1564 of *The Fall of the Magician Hermogenes* showing St. James vanquishing the evil magician and his humorous if sometimes demonic followers. One is a black man dressed as a jester or fool gesturing with a puppet of a peasant woman. Even at this scale his profile is individualized. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-00-559, for which see *Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Drawings and Prints*, ed. Nadine M. Orenstein, no. 102.
12. For the wider issues of empathy (or lack of) for the marginalized in the Early Modern period, see Tom Nichols, *The Art of Poverty: Irony and Ideal in Sixteenth-Century Beggar Imagery* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).
13. Bas J.P. van Bavel, "Rural Wage Labour in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries: An Assessment of the Importance and Nature of Wage Labour in the Countryside of Holland, Guelders and Flanders," in *Continuity and Change* 21, no. 1 (2006): 37-72.
14. For example, Bermúdez de Pedraza, *Antiquedad y excelencias de Granada* (Granada, 1608), notes among those who were "the honor of the Ethiopian nation," a Catalina de Soto "whose hands of ebony were more esteemed in sewing, embroidering, and drawing than the white hands of a gentlewoman," cited from V.B. Spratlin, *Juan Latino, Slave and Humanist* (New York: Spinner Press, 1938), 5.
15. Stroichitia, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 224-34.

16. Annemarie Jordan, "Images of Empire: Slaves in the Lisbon Household and Court of Catherine of Austria," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 174–75.
17. For Riccio, see Denise Allen with Peta Motture, ed., *Andrea Riccio, Renaissance Master of Bronze* (New York: Frick Collection, 2008), esp. 31–34; Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli, ed., *Rinascimento e passione per l'Antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo* (Trento: Museo diocesano tridentino, 2008), 90 (Claudia Kryza-Gersch). That Riccio's self-portraits show him to have the hair and facial features of a black man was first proposed by Leo Planiscig, *Piccoli bronzi italiani del rinascimento* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1930), 19; Denise Allen, "Riccio's Bronze Narratives: Context and Development," in New York 2008, 15 for Riccio's features in his *Self-Portrait* as "blunt," and 31–34 for his "narrative self-portraits."
18. Marina Repetto Contaldo, "Francesco Torbido detto il Moro," *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte* 14 (Florence: Olschki, 1984), 48.
19. Giorgio Vasari, in his *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (Florence, 1568) (*Le Vite*), part 3 cites the artist as "Francesco il Moro" in the life of Giovan Francesco Caroto; "Francesco Torbido detto (called) il Moro" in connection with Liberale da Verona; and in his own life, "Francesco Torbido detto il Moro" and then simply "Francesco" or usually "il Moro." There is no standard for assessing nicknames or sobriquets. When a lay Franciscan references "Benedetto il moro" or "Antonio il nigro," he is distinguishing among Benedicts or Anthonys. Lodovico Sforza (1452–1508), duke of Milan, was often called il Moro—at his birth his mother was struck by his slightly olive color and called him Mauro (Latin for Moor but also a normal name [Maurice]), so that a Latin document of 1461 records his mother's votive gift for the recovery from illness of her son "Ludovicus Maurus." There is no imputation of African ancestry. He made jocular allusions to it and, as an adult, added the profile of an African to his coat of arms. When humanists referred to their colleague Sir Thomas More as "Niger" or "il Moro" it was a scholarly joke. See Luisa Giordano, *Ludovicus Dux* (Vigevano: Diakronia, 1995), 110–15; Elizabeth McGrath, "Ludovico il Moro and His Moors," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 65 (2002): 67–94, offering many possibilities for the choice of nickname, followed by Kaplan 2010, 105–6; Michele Caffi, "Bianca Maria Visconte-Sforza Duchessa di Milano a Sant' Antonio di Padova," *Archivio storico Lombardo* 13, 403 [1883], 410–11; *Il Moro d'Heliseo Heivodo inglese* [Il Moro by Ellis Heywood (an Englishman)], Florence 1556 (a dialogue in memory of Sir Thomas More); P. Parker, "What's in a Name: and More," *Sederi XI: Revista de la sociedad Española de Estudios Renacentistas Ingleses* (2002): 101–49.
20. Saunders, *Social History*, 146; Bermúdez de Pedraza, *Antiquities and Excellent Aspects of Granada* (Granada 1608), as cited by Spratlin, *Juan Latino*, 5.
21. On Alvares see T.F. Earle, "Black Africans versus Jews: Religious and Racial Tension in a Portuguese Saint's Play," in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans*, 345–60.
22. See Lowe, "Slaves."
23. Sebastian del Piombo's *Portrait of a Humanist*, ca.1520, in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, inv. 1961.9.38, has been discussed as possibly a portrait of Giovanne Leone, for which see *Sebastiano del Piombo, 1485–1547*, Palazzo di Venezia, Rome; Kulturforum (Berlin, 2008), no. 36. There are too many unknowns for conclusions.
24. Nelson H. Minnich, "The Catholic Church and the Pastoral Care of Black Africans in Renaissance Italy," in *Black Africans*, 280–302; see Kate Lowe, "Black Africans' Religious and Cultural Assimilation to, or Appropriation of, Catholicism in Italy, 1470–1520," *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 31 no. 2 (2008): 69–88.
25. For issues of ordination and membership in lay versus regular orders, see Minnich, "Catholic Church," 293–99.
26. W.R. Valentiner, *Catalogue of a Collection of Paintings and Some Art Objects: German, French, Spanish, and English Paintings and Art Object: Modern Paintings*, vol. 3, ed. John G. Johnson. (Philadelphia, 1914), no. 805; Henri Marceau, *Johnson Collection: Two Hundred and Eighty-eight Reproductions* (Philadelphia, 1953), 226.
27. Noted by Valentiner, *Catalogue . . . John G. Johnson*. My thanks to Mario Valdes for alerting me to this.
28. The manifestation of this in the commissioning of a work of devotional art including a portrait of oneself as donor—as in the case of the *Altarpiece with the Coronation of the Virgin and Black Donor* in Esztergom, Keresztesy Museum, attributed to David Ghirlandiaio—is incontrovertibly an act of agency of a free man whose soul is his own, an indication of significant financial resources and therefore worldly success of which the donor might justly be proud. Lowe 2008; Paul Kaplan, introduction, *Image of the Black . . . II*, part 2 (2010), 28–29 (ill.).

29. In examining the painting, Carl Strehlke observed what appear to be remains of a red heart on the donor's chest. Further conversations with Jon Sedl indicate that this could be fruitful to pursue. Efforts to discover a list of friars in the Augustinian monastery in Seville in the 1560s were not successful.
30. The facts of Benedict's life are hard to confirm. Giovanna Fiume, "Antonio Etiope e Benedetto il Moro: il Santo scavuzzo e il Nigro eremita," in *Francescanesimo e Cultura a Noto, Atti del convegno Internazionale di studi*, Noti 2003, ed. Diego Ciccarelli and Simona Sarzana (Palermo, 2005), 67-100; Alessandro dell'Aira, "La fortuna iberica di San Benedetto da Palermo," in *Atti dell'Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo* 12 (1993), 51-91. Minnich, "The Catholic Church," 298-99; Giovanna Fiume, "Saint Benedict the Moor, from Sicily to the New World," in Margaret Cormack, ed., *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 16-51; Victor Stoichita, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., eds., *The Image of the Black in Western Art, 3: From the 'Age of Discovery' to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 212-16.
31. *The Mystery of Faith*, exh. cat. (London: The Matthiesen Gallery and Coll and Cortes Gallery, 2009), no. 18 (Morales); Andrea Gates, "A Layman's Vade Mecum to Creating a Spanish Polychrome Sculpture," in *The Mystery of Faith*, 36-44; Victor Stoichita, "The Image of the Black in Spanish Art: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries."
32. For the construction of *St. Benedict the Moor*, see Gates, "A Layman's Vade Mecum to Creating a Spanish Polychrome Sculpture."
33. Antonio was described in a Spanish 1611 publication as "un Negro . . . tambien Moro," as a black African who converted from Islam. A. Daça, *Quarta parte de la chronica general del nuestro Serafico Padre San Francisco y su Apostolica Orden* (Valadolid, 1611) III, 156. For him, see Fiume "Antonio Etiope e Benedetto il Moro"; Didier Lahon, "Santos Negros" in *Os Negros em Portugal-sécs. Xv a Xix* (Lisbon, 1999), 136-39; Diogo do Rosário, *Flos Sanctorum*, vol. 3 (Lisbon, 1869-70); S. Bono, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo. Cristiani e musulmani fra Guerra, schiavitù e commercio* (Milan, 1993); C. Avolio, *La schiavitù domestica in Sicilia nel secolo XVI* (Florence, 1888); Stoichita "Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 209, 212.
34. See Stoichita "Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 212.
35. Fiume, "Antonio Etiope e Benedetto il Moro," 73.
36. See Gude Suckale-Redlefsen and Robert Suckale, *Mauritius: Der heilige Mohr/The Black Saint Maurice* (Houston: Menil Foundation, 1987), no. 139; Peter C. Sutton et al. *Reclaimed Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 104-7, no. 8; and for comparison, Jean Devisse, "A Sanctified Black: Maurice," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art, 2: From the Early Christian Era to the 'Age of Discovery'*, part 1: *From the Demonic Threat to the Incarnation of Sainthood*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 150-94.
37. Stoichita, "Image of the Black in Spanish Art," 220-25 (supposes Juan de Mérida to be fictional); Jeremy Lawrence, "Black Africans in Spanish Literature," in Earle and Lowe 2005, 77 (supposes Juan de Mérida to be real).
38. Ernst van den Boogaart, "Christophle le More. Lijkwacht van Karl V?" in *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53, no. 4 (2005), 420-21.
39. Cited from Lowe, "Stereotyping," in Lowe and Earle 2005, 33.
40. Jordan, "Images of Empire," 169. She freed all the slaves in her household at her death, but their subsequent paths are unknown (ibid. 172).
41. A. C. de C. M. Saunders, "The Life and Humour of João De Sá Panasco, O Negro, Former Slave, Court Jester, and Gentleman of the Portuguese Royal Household," in F.W. Hodcroft et al., ed., *Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Honour of P.E. Russell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 82-83*; Jordan "Images of Empire," 169.
42. Blanke may have come to England in the entourage of Catherine of Aragon in 1501 but was free by 1511, when his salary is listed among those of musicians at Henry VIII's court. Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars*, 241. See Lowe, "Slavery."
43. Paul Kaplan, "Black Africans in Hohenstaufen Iconography," *Gesta* 26 (1987): 29-36.
44. Giovanni Boccaccio, *De casibus virorum illustrium*, ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci, in *Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, ed. Vittore Branca (Milan: Aldo Mondadori Editore, 1983), book 9, chap. 25; Philine Helas, "Schwarz unter Weissen: Zur Repräsentation von Afrikanern in der italienischen Kunst des 15. Jahrhunderts," in *Fremde in der Stadt: Ordnungen, Repräsentationen und soziale Praktiken (13.-15. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Peter Bell et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2010), 305-7; Devisse and Mollat (1979) 2010, 167-68.

45. Filedt Kok and de Winkel, "Een portret," 381-411; Boogaart 2005; Amsterdam 2008, no. 72 (Schreuder).
46. See Joaneath Spicer, "The Renaissance Elbow," in *A Cultural History of Gesture* ed. Herman Roodenburgh (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 84-128.
47. Filedt Kok and de Winkel, "Een portret," 382; Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Enseignes: Renaissance Hat Jewels* (Florence: Scelte, 1996), 239, 245.
48. For Margaret, see Dagmar Eichberger, ed., *Women of Distinction: Margaret of York/Margaret of Austria* (Mecheln 2005), with literature.
49. My great thanks to Til-Holger Bochert for drawing my attention to this.
50. Marin Sanuto, *I diarii*, ed. R. Fulin et al., 58 vols. (Venice 1879-1903), 40: 425-26, cited from Lowe, "Introduction," 24.
51. See Otto von Falke, "Kunstgewerbemuseum: Norddeutsche und Französische Bildteppiche," in *Amtliche Berichte aus den Königl. Kunstsammlungen*, XXXVI/7 (1915), col. 126-31. My thanks to Elizabeth Cleland for bringing the tapestry to my attention and to Maro Valdes for identifying this publication on it. As Falke notes, the designer drew on elements of earlier engravings by Heinrich Aldegrever including *Two Torch-Bearers* dated 1538 (H. 161) from a series of Wedding Dancers. All that was adapted for the black courtier is the cut of his mantel. In 1547 Elisabeth von Sachsen (1502-1557) hosted the wedding of one of her court ladies, linking the von Wendt and von Saldern families.
52. Paola Rossi, *I ritratti del Tintoretto* (Venice: Alfieri, Edizioni D'Arte, 1974), 147.
53. Carlo Ridolfi, *Le Maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero le vite de gl'illustri pittori veneti . . .* (Venice, 1648), 266.
54. For Salam-Casais d'Ysaguier, see Hans Werner DeBrunner, *Presence and Prestige: Africans in Europe, A History of Africans in Europe before 1918* (Basel: Basler Africa Bibliographien, 1979), 23.
55. Officially, Lorenzo was said to be his father. This is the line taken by Paolo Giovio (1482-1553) in his *In Praise of Men Illustrious for Their Military Virtues (Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium*, Florence, 1554), book 6, chap. 16. A Vatican document supporting Alessandro's appointment as duke of Florence in 1529 acknowledged him as the pope's son, for which see John Brackett, "Race and Rulership: Alessandro de' Medici, first Medici Duke of Florence," in Earle and Lowe, *Black Africans*, 309.
56. There is no biography of the duke. John Brackett anticipates completing his in 2012.
57. Bernardo Segni, *Storie Fiorentine* (Livorno: G. Masi, 1830), vol. 1: 418.
58. Elsewhere he identifies her name as Anna. Segni, *Storie Fiorentine*, vol. 1, 163.
59. The evidentiary value of this is bolstered by a graffito aimed at the duke in 1535: "Hail to Alessandro of Colle Vecchio."
60. Segni, *Storie Fiorentine*, vol. 2, 422.
61. For groups of these portraits see Karla Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici: Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries*. 3 vols. (Florence: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1981), extensive but not complete; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Pontormo, Bronzino, and the Medici: The Transformation of the Renaissance Portrait in Florence*. exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2004); Brackett, "Race and Rulership"; Massimo Firpo and Salvatore Lo Re, "Gliocchi Assurri di Alessandro de' Medici: Note su una copia di un celebre ritratto di Iacopo Pontormo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 49, no. 3 (2005), 413-26.
62. Of portraits that cannot now be located but that would be pertinent, the most important is what appears to be a mid-1500s half-length figure set against a light background so that the character of the hair is completely clear: consulted on ARTstor but the image is from Fondazione Federico Zeri—Università di Bologna, Photo Archive, entry number 37224, inv. 85994.
63. Selected references: Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici*, no. 1.6; Joaneath Spicer, "Pontormo's Maria Salviati with Giulia de' Medici: Is This the Earliest Portrait of a Child of African Descent in European Art?" *The Walters Members Magazine* 54, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 5; John Brackett, "Race and Rulership: Alessandro de' Medici, First Duke of Florence, 1529-1537" in Earle and Lowe, eds., *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 311; Massimo Firpo and Salvatore Lo Re, "Gliocchi Assurri di Alessandro de' Medici. Note su una copia di un celebre ritratto di Iacopo Pontormo," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 49, no. 3 (2005): 419-20; Francesca DeLuca, *Santi Poeti Navigatori*, exh. cat. (Florence: Galleria Degli Uffizi, 2009): 72; Carlo Falciani and Antonio Natali, eds. *Bronzino: Artist and Poet at the Court of the Medici*, exh. cat., Florence: Palazzo Strozzi (Mandragora: Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, 2010), no. 17f (Giordani).

64. In contrast, Pontormo's *Portrait of Alessandro de' Medici* in the Art Institute of Chicago dated to 1534-35, seemingly based on the same model, adds a black hat. Pontormo's style is more painterly than Bronzino's, so Alessandro's features are less precisely articulated; however the heavy use of shadow and hat are unusual for the artist in this period. Giorgio Vasari, who also made a politically careful portrait of Alessandro, records that about this time Pontormo painted a little head of Alessandro (as a model for the portrait now in Philadelphia [*Pontormo*, no. 26]), that was a "very good likeness" and was executed with "such diligence and care that the works of the miniaturists do not in any way come up to it." It has been proposed that the Chicago painting is this work, but Vasari's comparison to the diligence of miniaturists indicates that the likeness was precise, which the Chicago painting is not. Since copies are almost never more life-like than their models, I suggest that Bronzino's copy for the 1550s series reflects the lost original by his teacher Pontormo, which, according to Vasari, was in the Medici's *guardaroba* in the Palazzo Vecchio at the time the copies were made.

65. Selected references: Langedijk, *Portraits of the Medici*, 431, no. 87.5; J. Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 236-37, 260; P. Costamagna and A. Fabre. *Les portraits florentins du début du XVI siècle à l'avènement de Cosimo I: Catalogue raisonné d'Albertinelli à Pontormo*, 5 vols. (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 1986), vol. 2, 374-77; Gabrielle Langdon, "Pontormo and Medici lineages: Maria Salviati, Alessandro, Giulia and Giulio de Medici," *Racar, revue d'art canadienne*, 19 (1992), 20-40; P. Costamagna. *Pontormo* (Milan: Electra, 1994), 90, 285, no. 77; C. Falciani, "Maria Salviati ritratta dal Pontormo," in Antonia Natali and Alessandro Cecchi, eds. *Rosso e Pontormo: Fierezza e solitudine* (Soresina: Gruppo Vé Gé, 1995), 120-22; Elizabeth Cropper, *Pontormo: Portrait of a Halberdier* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 1997), 3; Spicer, "Pontormo's Maria Salviati," 4-6; E. Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 236; David Allen Brown et al. *Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo's "Ginevra de' Benci" and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), no. 40 (Cropper); C. Acidini Luchinat et al., *The Medici, Michelangelo and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, exh. cat., Palazzo Strozzi; Detroit Institute of Arts; Art Institute of Chicago (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), no. 33 (Costamagna); Antonio Pinelli, *La bellezza impura: Arte e politica nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome: Laerza & Figli, 2004), 129, 132, 136-37; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Pontormo, Bronzino,*

and the Medici: The Transformation of the Renaissance Portrait in Florence, exh. cat. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2004), no. 30; Morten Steen Hansen and Joaneath Spicer, ed., *Masterpieces of Italian Painting: The Walters Art Museum* (London: The Walters Art Museum in Association with D Giles, 2005), 96-99 (Spicer); Gabrielle Langdon, *Medici Women: Portraits of Power, Love, and Betrayal from the Court of Duke Cosimo I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 32-47. The existence of a child only became clear in 1937 when nineteenth-century overpaint was removed. See Spicer, "Pontormo's Maria Salviati," for a photograph of the painting prior to cleaning.

66. The original identification was published by Langdon in 1992. In 2002 Costamagna returned to the identification of the child as Cosimo, declining even to cite articles by Langdon or Spicer.

67. John Graham Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: The Collections of the National Gallery of Art*, 2 vols. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2007), no. 361.

68. Langdon, *Medici Women*, 121-36, has proposed that Alessandro Allori's 1559 *Portrait of a Woman* (Museo degli Uffizi) represents her. Falciani and Natali, *Bronzino*, no. VII.3 (Simone Giordani) and others identify her as Ortensia de' Bardi.

69. Jacques Heers, *The Barbary Corsairs: Warfare in the Mediterranean 1480-1580* (London, 2003). On Vasari's story about Filippo Lippi, see Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' piu eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori*, annotated by Gaetano Milanesi (Florence, 1906), 2: 615 n. 1, where the commentary treats it as a fable.

70. George Cawston and Augustus Henry Keane, *The Early Chartered Companies (A.D. 1296-1858)* (London: Edward Arnold, 1887), 96, 236.

71. For Quasim's account of his visit, see Nabil Matar, *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

72. DeBrunner, *Presence and Prestige*, 41-45, with references. Kate Lowe, "'Representing' Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402-1608," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (2007), 101-28. See further Lowe, "Ambassadors."

73. Teobaldo Filesi, "Enrico, figlio del re del congo, primo vescovo dell'Africa near (1518)," *Euntes Docete* 19 (1966): 365-85; Teobaldo Filesi, *Le relazione tra il regno del Congo e la Sede Apostolica nel XVI secolo* (Como 1968); Minnich, "The Catholic Church," 294-5; Kaplan 2010, 158-59, with further references.

74. He had expected to lead a Congolese embassy to the pope in 1512/13, which, however, never took place due to Portuguese reluctance to allow the measure of independence that such an embassy entailed.

75. See Paul Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," in Bindman and Gates, *Image of the Black in Western Art, 3: from the Age of Discovery' to the Age of Absolution*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), 149, ill.

76. P. Mauro de Leonessa, *Santo Stefano Maggiore degli Abissini e le Relazione Romano-Etiopiche* (Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1929); Peter Mark, *Africans in European Eyes: The Portrayal of Black Africans in Fourteenth and Fifteenth-Century Europe* (Syracuse: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, 1974), 22; DeBrunner, *Presence and Prestige*, 50-52.

77. On the council, see Salvatore Tedeschi, "Etiopie e copti al concilio di Firenze," *Annuario historiae conciliorum* 21 (1989): 380-97. Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (New York: AMS Press, 1982); Minnich, "The Catholic Church," 281 n.1. On the movement of Ethiopian monks within Italy, see Kaplan, "Isabella d'Este," 138.

78. Robert Glass, "Filarete at the Papal Court: Sculpture, Ceremony, and the Antique in Early Renaissance Rome" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2011), 183-224 (on the doors).

79. Linda Phyllis Austern et al., ed., *Psalms in the Early Modern World* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 4-6; J. M. Harden, *An Introduction to Ethiopic Christian Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1926).

80. Harden, *Ethiopic Christian Literature*, 43.

81. *Verdadera informaçam das terras do Preste Joam das Indias* (Lisbon, 1540).

82. Elizabeth Feist Hirsch, *Damião de Gois: The Life and Thought of a Portuguese Humanist, 1502-1574* (The Hague: Nijhof, 1967), 147-51.





FIG. 43 Antonio Averlino known as Filarete (Italian, ca.1400–69), *Arrival of the Ethiopians*, detail from the central door of the Basilica of St. Peter, decorated 1439–45. The Bridgeman Art Library

Africans themselves. The majority of Europeans had little knowledge of Africa or its inhabitants, and artists were no exception. This also had its positive side, because one reason why the surviving genuine likenesses of Africans are so fresh and interesting is that artists tended to pay more attention when painting a portrait of someone with unfamiliar features.

The principal African countries that developed diplomatic relations with Europe in this period were two sub-Saharan, Christian ones—the Congo and Ethiopia—and two North African, Muslim ones: Tunisia and Morocco. Each of these countries developed particular links with specific European powers. The Christian countries had diplomatic ties to Portugal and the papacy, and the Muslim countries were involved in wars with the most powerful Christian rulers in Europe, such as the emperor Charles V. Religion and trade were the main motivations, with trade links sometimes cutting across religious ties.

Images of African ambassadors not only personified a diplomatic link between Africa and Europe but also raised the profile of Africa in Europe, creating a durable and memorable record. Through them, a visual African presence was constructed in Europe. On occasion, a representation of an African embassy or delegation was included in one of a series of Renaissance narrative scenes. In 1441, delegates from Ethiopia headed by Pietro the Deacon attended the Council of Florence called by

Pope Eugenius IV,² as did Andrea the Abbot, head of the Coptic delegation. But whereas the Copts signed an agreement of union with the Roman Catholic Church, the Ethiopians turned out to come from Jerusalem, and to be unofficial. The visit to Italy of both groups is recorded by Antonio Averlino, known as Filarete, in a double panel on the bronze doors of the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome, completed in 1445 (fig. 43).³ Being represented on the doors of the most important church in Western Christendom was a significant honor, constituting an important act of inclusion. The first part of the panel records Eugenius IV consigning the decree of union to Abbot Andrea in Florence, and the second records the arrival of the delegates in Rome. In both scenes Abbot Andrea carried a substantial hand cross, one of the most outwardly distinctive features of Ethiopian as well as Coptic Christianity.⁴ This embassy was especially noteworthy because the visit of the Ethiopian delegates may have given impetus to European knowledge about Ethiopia.⁵ Another African delegation is represented by the sculptor Francesco Laurana, who included a scene of an embassy from the king of Tunis, composed of four individuals with turbans and beards, in one section of Alfonso I's triumphal arch at the entrance to Castel Nuovo in Naples in the 1450s (fig. 44).⁶

Surviving visual representations of African ambassadors in Europe reach a peak at the turn of the sixteenth century. Domenico Tintoretto's

oil on canvas *Portrait of a Man*, previously titled *Portrait of a Moor*, is dated ca. 1600 (no. 65).⁷ It has been suggested that the unidentified subject was a “Moorish ambassador to the Venetian court.”⁸ His profession is hinted at by the presence of a bundle of letters, the most commonly agreed-upon attribute of an ambassador. They are tied up with string, and sealed with stamped red sealing wax. The man has short black hair, with some curls, and a moustache, and he wears two rings on his left hand, one on his index finger and one on his little finger. Significant numbers of African ambassadors and envoys, including many Arabic speakers from North Africa, traveled to Europe at this time. Carlo Ridolfi’s 1642 biography of Domenico Tintoretto notes that Domenico (and his competitor Bassano) painted many ambassadorial portraits; both were considered excellent at the genre.⁹

In a portrait of 1600 by an unknown artist of ‘Abd al-Wahīd bin Mas’ūd bin Muḥammad al-Annuri (fig. 45), although no letters or credentials are visible, the ambassador is identified by an inscription as “the legate of the King of Barbary to England.” The painting has long been known as *The Moorish Ambassador* (or *The Ambassador from the King of Morocco*) to Queen Elizabeth, titles that highlight Elizabethan English confusion over the terms Moor, Morocco, and Barbary. Elizabeth I is known to have had close ties with the ruler of Morocco.¹⁰ At the time of al-Annuri’s embassy, the king was Mūlāy Aḥmed al-Manṣūr, who ruled from 1578 to 1603; al-Annuri was described as al-Manṣūr’s secretary and as coming from Fez, which had been annexed by Morocco only in 1548 so he was not considered a true “Moroccan.” In 1585 the Barbary company had been formed in England, and delegations from “Barbary” came to London in pursuit of deals and ties; al-Annuri’s embassy, which consisted of the ambassador and fourteen or fifteen other Muslims (two of whom were known



FIG. 44 Francesco Laurana (Italian, ca. 1420–before 1502), The embassy from the king of Tunis, detail from Francesco Laurana’s *Triumphal Arch*, Castel Nuovo, Naples, ca. 1450.



FIG. 45 'Abd al-Wahīd bin Mas'ūd bin Muḥammad al-Annuri, Moorish Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth I, early seventeenth century. Oil on oak panel, 113 × 87.6 cm. The University of Birmingham, Research and Cultural Collections (A0427)

to be merchants),¹¹ formed part of this new diplomatic and trading relationship.¹² The embassy was recorded in some detail by the famous chronicler of London, John Stow, in 1602, with further, more negative comments being added in 1615 by Stow's successor, who complained, for example, of the embassy's hatred of Christianity, and its maintenance of a *ḥalāl* household. In the 1615 edition, it was mooted that the members appeared as spies rather than ambassadors, and that the embassy's purpose was to secure naval aid from Elizabeth.¹³

These suspicious reactions are slightly at odds with the English monarchy and court's acceptance of Morocco as a potential partner in trading ventures, and a preferred ally against more threatening or hostile Muslim powers.

Al-Manṣūr's plans were threefold: an alliance between England and Morocco against Spanish possessions in North Africa and America, an attack on Spain itself, and an attack on Ottoman-held Algiers. Rather than agreeing to any joint enterprise with Morocco and al-Manṣūr, Elizabeth tried to lure al-Annuri and other Moriscos (Muslims who had lived in Spain for generations before being expelled at the end of the fifteenth century), who were part of an elite military unit, away from al-Manṣūr into joining an English-led attack on Spain.¹⁴ Internal conflict among the Moriscos led to mistrust, plots, and possibly to murder, as al-Annuri reasserted his authority. Elizabeth's plotting was revealed to al-Manṣūr, but such behavior was commonplace even among allies, and quite quickly the relationship of the two powers was resumed. The embassy of 1600 was the occasion for John Pory to publish his English translation of Leo Africanus's *A Geographical Historie of Africa*, which he dedicated to the queen's principal secretary, Robert Cecil,¹⁵ a possible commissioner of the painting.¹⁶

In what ways are these conflicts and contested realities reflected in the portrait of the ambassador, al-Annuri? The painter is unknown, and there are no contemporary documents relating to its production, but it is in a format that is recognizably Tudor, and it has been attributed on stylistic grounds to an English workshop. In addition, tree-ring analysis of the painting reveals that its left board is derived from the same tree as the right-hand board of a three-quarter portrait of the royal chaplain Thomas Nevile, now in Trinity College, Cambridge, indicating that the two panels were probably made in the same workshop, catering to

court patrons, in the same period.¹⁷ The painter conveys a deep sense of alterity through cultural and ethnic distance, portraying his subject as a member of a rich but alien elite. Al-Annuri wears a white linen turban that proclaims his Fez (and before that his Granadan) origins and his high rank. Differences among Muslims could be signaled through their fashion in winding their turbans.¹⁸ According to Leo Africanus, the governing class in Fez in the sixteenth century wore caps upon which they placed linen turbans wound twice round the head, and then passed under the chin.¹⁹ In Naşrid Granada, the end of the turban seems to have been left hanging, a fashion that may have been used to differentiate between the Naşrids in Spain and Muslims in the kingdom of Morocco.²⁰ Al-Annuri has an olive complexion and a neatly trimmed moustache and beard, and wears an elaborately decorated North African sword known as a *nimcha*. The artist most clearly marks the ambassador's difference through his expression: with a half-smile and a hard sideways glance, al-Annuri could be seen to embody the cunning and cruelty often imputed by Europeans to Muslims. Nothing is known of this painting prior to its sale at Christie's in London in 1955. Purchased by a prescient buyer who understood its relevance for an understanding of *Othello*, within ten years it had been acquired by the Shakespeare Institute.²¹

A later Moroccan embassy to the new Dutch Republic bore different fruit. From 1609, Sultan Mūlāy Zaidan sent a series of ambassadors, beginning with Hammu ben Bashir, who was accompanied by the Moroccan Jew Samuel Pallache as agent and interpreter, and a substantial entourage, to the Hague to negotiate a treaty of "friendship and free commerce" with the Dutch. This was finally signed in 1611, and is an interesting early instance of a European country signing a treaty with a non-Christian one (see Spicer, p. 90, for further information).



FIG. 46 Francesco Caporale (Italian, active ca. 1606–1630), *Antonio Manuel, Marquis of Ne-Vunda*, 1629. Marble. Baptistery of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome

There are no extant images of early Congolese ambassadors to Europe, many of whom traveled to Portugal but were allowed no further. The Portuguese first “discovered” the Congo in the 1480s, and the country was Christianized in 1491. It took more than a hundred years for the first Congolese ambassador to reach Rome and make personal contact with a pope. In January 1608, Antonio Emmanuele Ne-Vunda, the ambassador from King Alvaro II (Nimi Ne-Mpangu Lukeni Lua Nuemba),²² the eighth Christian king of the Congo,²³ finally arrived in Rome after a journey that had taken over three years.²⁴ He was a royal relative, and his dual remit was to ask for priests to be sent to the Congo and to plead the case for a Congolese bishopric.²⁵ The historical moment was propitious, and a media frenzy greeted his

arrival.²⁶ Pope Paul V was delighted with this publicity, as enhanced links with the Congo formed part of his plan for promoting global Christianity. Three days later, Ne-Vunda died in the apartments known as “Paradiso” in the Vatican palace, on the eve of Epiphany, a date whose significance for the arrival of a black Magus or Wise Man from afar was not lost on the Roman people. Commissioned by Paul V but executed only under Urban VIII, the sculpted bust of Ne-Vunda by Francesco Caporale (fig. 46).²⁷ is based on Ne-Vunda’s death mask,²⁸ and is therefore known to be an indisputedly realistic facial likeness. Black stone allows Ne-Vunda’s black skin to be well depicted; black and bearded, with a small, wide nose and tightly curled and closely cropped hair, Ne-Vunda has an imposing and lifelike presence. The bust is in the Baptistery, a side chapel of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, one of the five great, ancient basilicas of Rome, which was also the setting for Ne-Vunda’s funeral.

There was confusion over how best a Christian, sub-Saharan African ambassador’s identity should be represented. What mattered most: religion or culture, European Christianity or African formation? The bust was always intended for a religious backdrop, yet no Christian symbols are displayed; instead, Ne-Vunda is portrayed as an African in African dress. He wears a tunic or cape in raffia openwork mesh or netting known as a *kinzembe* or *zamba kya mfumu*, an article of clothing reserved in the Congo for chiefs or other important people.²⁹ This meshwork tunic or cape was often worn with a “bag of power” (*nkutu a nyondo*), which was always slung across the left shoulder; the quiver in Caporale’s bust seems intended to represent a reworked *nkutu*, which in its original form often contained arrows.³⁰ Two print versions of Ne-Vunda’s image appeared almost simultaneously in Europe, one depicting him in European dress, as exemplified by an Italian print of Ne-Vunda of

around 1608 attributed to Raffaello Schiaminossi (no. 66),³¹ and the other in African dress, as exemplified by an engraving by Guillaume Du Mortier (no. 67).³²

RULERS

European representations of North or sub-Saharan African rulers during this period are rare in any medium, and unfortunately there are none at all of rulers of the Congo. Nevertheless, those that exist attest to the high status afforded to those African rulers that were known. Conventions governed the projected appearance of these rulers. A useful way of conceptualizing images of African rulers may be to compare them with Renaissance images of classical rulers from antiquity. Viewers would have understood that these representations were rendered “at a distance” from the historical subjects, and that therefore the representations most of the time had no claim to being likenesses, but served a different purpose, signaling the presence or significance in Europe of an absent African ruler, and laying claim to the African ruler’s inclusion in the European pantheon of important figures. Attempts to capture a genuine likeness of an African ruler were not often possible, because European artists in most cases had never seen the ruler in question nor had access to any previous depiction of him that might have been a likeness. “Likenesses” were sometimes claimed to be accurate or taken from life, but often this was a rhetorical claim, a strategy to legitimate or authorize an image in a particular context. Portraiture of African rulers is less stable than portraiture of African ambassadors, where claims to genuine likenesses can be linked to diplomatic missions to Europe. This instability means that a portrait of an African ruler can slip more easily into other visual genres, such as a black Magus or a generic “African” in a costume book. There is a further issue specific to

images of African, especially sub-Saharan African, rulers: the representation of “Africanness.” How did painters deal with depicting different shades of skin color and different physiognomies?

Conventions also governed the production of these representations. By the sixteenth century, with the evolution of collecting and of more complicated gift-giving practices, portraits were not always linked to occasions. Rather, they had become one of the most frequent types of gift chosen by ruling and important families in Europe, and copies of originals were frequently commissioned in order to be included in princely collections. Although by the mid-sixteenth century some representations of African rulers were commissioned for European collections (see below), images of Africans were not subject to this convention to the same extent as portraits of European rulers. The few African rulers who arrived in Europe had usually been ousted from power and were seeking military, technical, and financial support for their reinstatement. One sub-Saharan example is Jelen, the *bumi* of Jolof, who went to Portugal in 1488;³³ a North African ruler, the king of Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera, a rocky fortress off Morocco, went to Lisbon in 1552, and was well received by the king and queen of Portugal, João III and Catherine of Austria.³⁴ Both visits left documentary, but not visual, traces.

Fortunately, at least one European painter went to North Africa and painted a ruler in situ, probably from life. Jan Vermeyen, a Netherlandish artist, accompanied the emperor Charles V on his punitive expedition to Tunis in North Africa in 1535 to halt the spread of Ottoman power and reinstate his vassal as ruler. Charles traveled with an entourage that included poets and historians,³⁵ chosen to record the event as a propaganda exercise by trumpeting the triumph of Christianity. While there, he also apparently painted a portrait in oils of Prince Mūlāy Aḥmad, son of the king



FIG. 47 Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen (Netherlandish, 1500–1559), *Portrait of Mülây Aḥmad*, ca. 1535–36. Etching, 46.4 × 37.7 cm. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, acquired with the assistance of Stichting Lucas van Leyden, 1959 (L 1959/51 [PK])

of Tunis, Mülây Ḥasan.³⁶ Although this portrait is now lost, it is known through an etching, once again by Vermeyen, dated ca. 1535–36 (fig. 47).³⁷ In the etching, Mülây Aḥmad is moustachioed, and bearded, and he wears a turban and carries a scabbard and sword. His proportions are noticeably unbalanced; he has an outsize head relative to the rest of his body, a convention often used in images to denote importance of rulers. He is identified by an inscription that describes him as an African prince. Behind him lie scenes of the fighting between the imperial troops and those of the converted Muslim pirate Khayr al-Dīn, known in Europe as Barbarossa, and ruins, probably of an aqueduct near Carthage or of a Roman arena.³⁸ A crowned heraldic shield containing Arabic reads “There is no God but Allah and Muhammed is his prophet.”

As well as painting the son, it is very likely that Vermeyen painted, etched, or drew the father. Mülây Ḥasan, who became king of Tunis in 1526, sported a long moustache and a fashionable forked beard.³⁹ He was one of the few African rulers who is documented in both southern and northern Europe in the sixteenth century, in 1534 and 1542,⁴⁰ so it is conceivable that Vermeyen fashioned his likeness there rather than in Africa. Mülây Ḥasan appears, with his distinguishing



FIG. 48 Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen (Netherlandish, 1500–1599), *Mülây Ḥasan and His Retinue at a Repast in Tunis*, ca. 1535–36. Engraving, 33.2 × 54.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, the Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1994 (1994.121)



FIG. 49 Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640), *Mülây Aḥmad*, ca. 1609. Oil on panel, 99.7 × 71.5 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. Theresa B. Hopkins Fund (40.2)

feature of an orthopedic brace, in another Vermeyen etching of *Mülây Ḥasan and His Retinue at a Repast in Tunis*, a rare image of life in North Africa, dated to 1535-36 (fig. 48).

The image of Mülây Aḥmad had a distinguished later life, as it was reworked by Rubens into a painted portrait of the ruler (fig. 49), sometimes ascribed a date of 1609 or 1610, and sometimes ca. 1613-14.⁴¹ Characterized primarily by green, gold, white, sky blue, and pink, and by shimmering surfaces, Mülây Aḥmad's transformation from a wary, foreign prince to a knowing king who was simultaneously the equal of European monarchs

and an objectified foreigner, takes visual form. The horrors of his reign were conveniently forgotten in this spectacular portrait of North African regal authority. The disposition of Rubens's portrait must have followed that of Vermeyen's painting, whereas Vermeyen's etching is a mirror image, as it portrays Mülây Aḥmad as left-handed. Most noticeably, Rubens has redimensioned the body so that the head is no longer disproportionately large, and invested his subject with soulful *gravitas*.

Rubens showed a similar interest in depicting Africans with darker skin. One suggestion is that



he used the unidentified subject of his oil sketch of ca. 1609, entitled *Head of an African Man Wearing a Turban* (fig. 50, no. 68),⁴² in conjunction with Vermeyen's engraved portrait, as the basis for his painting of Mūlāy Aḥmad.⁴³ Although it is much smaller and painted in oil on a sheet of paper originally used for Italian accounts, the bust of this protagonist is also turbaned (although the folding of the turban is different), with similar moustache and slight beard, and similarly angled head and gaze, but his skin color is darker. Rubens then reused this figure once again when imagining the black king in *The Adoration of the Magi* in Antwerp Town Hall, as can be seen from the preparatory sketch for the whole painting, and the finished painting itself (fig. 51).⁴⁴ This is an interesting example of the migration of an image of an African, in terms of skin color and ethnicity, as well as being a potent reminder of the fluidity for artists between genuine likenesses and imagined biblical characters. Reuse of figures in different compositional solutions was widespread, as painters tried to improve upon previous efforts. Rubens was clearly prepared to rework and reinterpret figures that caught his attention, almost regardless of their setting.

European images of the rulers of Ethiopia, whether attempts at genuine likenesses or imagined portraits, had different histories. Ethiopia had been Christianized in the fourth century, making it by far the oldest Christian country on the African continent. Dāwit III, who ruled Ethiopia from 1508 to 1540, was known in Portugal and parts of Italy as the mythical Christian ruler Prester John.⁴⁵ Dāwit also had a baptismal name by which he was known: 'Etanā- or Lebnā Dengel, meaning incense of the Virgin⁴⁶—hence the words "Atanadi" or "Atanadi Dinghil" in the Latin inscriptions on some of his portraits.⁴⁷ The Italian humanist and prelate Paolo Giovio collected more than four hundred portraits of writers, artists and



FIG. 51 Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577–1640), *Adoration of the Magi*, ca. 1629, detail. Oil on panel. Museo del Prado, Madrid

rulers in his museum in Como.⁴⁸ Seven of these portraits were of African rulers (including Mūlāy Aḥmad and Mūlāy Ḥasan), as opposed to eleven of Turkish rulers and their families,⁴⁹ showing again how little knowledge of African affairs there was in Europe. Only one of the Africans was black. Most striking is the complete absence of any of the Congolese kings, or indeed any king at all from the west coast of Africa.

In late 1532 Giovio obtained a portrait in oil on canvas of Dāwit, now believed to have been painted in Europe.⁵⁰ If this is correct, whoever painted it had never seen Dāwit, but one hypothesis is that the artist was aided in his depiction by information provided by people who had: by Francisco Álvarez, a chaplain who spent the years 1520–26 in Ethiopia with the Portuguese embassy, or by the Ethiopian ambassador to Portugal and later to the papal court, Ṣagā za-Ab, or by members of the Ethiopian community in Rome. The section



FIG. 52 Cristofano dell'Altissimo, *Portrait of Alchitrof*, no. 70.



FIG. 53 *Portrait of Alchitrof*. Paper on wood, 13.8 x 10.9 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (GG 5198)

on Dāwit in Giovio's *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium* of 1554, although it includes no images, opens with the endorsement that the Ethiopian priests at the church and hospice of Santo Stefano dei Mori or degli Abissini in Rome—who may or may not have known what their ruler looked like—all agreed that this painting represented the true image of their ruler.⁵¹ This formulation is often a rhetorical device, allowing an image to assert its meanings “as if” it represented observed realities; it does not necessarily mean that the image was a genuine likeness. In terms of the genesis of the painting, maybe the embassy returning from Ethiopia brought with it some prior image of Dawit that was later transformed into Giovio's Europeanized portrait in oil. The image can be dated to 1532 by the inscription. It portrays Dāwit in three-quarter length, in European clothes, with a long thin nose and curly hair, a moustache and a beard, wearing an earring and a ring on his finger,

and carrying an Ethiopian hand cross in his right hand, from the bottom of which hangs a piece of fine white cloth. In the *Elogia*, Giovio describes how the rulers of Ethiopia when in public covered their faces with a handkerchief of fine silk and carried a cross in their right hand.⁵² Giovio also penned a textual description of Dāwit in another book, adverting to the color of his face (“like that of a quince roasted over ashes”) and his hair, and this “fixed” the physiognomy of the ruler of Ethiopia for his European readers.⁵³ Finally, the 1575 edition of Giovio's *Elogia* included both texts and images, and a print of Dāwit (no. 72), based on Giovio's original painting, was circulated widely to readers across Europe.

Other collectors, most notably European rulers such as Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol,⁵⁴ commissioned copies of these portraits of foreign rulers in order to have a pictorial record of “exotic” potentates, visually complementing the exotic and

luxury objects displayed in their *Kunstkammern*. At least three sixteenth-century copies of Dāwit's portrait survive, validating Dāwit's status by giving visual form to the ruler, and disseminating the image more widely. Cosimo de' Medici was another European ruler who commissioned copies from the Giovio collection,⁵⁵ including an oil on panel painting of Dāwit by Cristofano dell'Altissimo of ca. 1552 now in the Uffizi (no. 71). Here no arms and hands are visible, and consequently there is no hand cross or handkerchief.

More puzzling is a second black portrait in the Uffizi from the same series by Cristofano dell'Altissimo of "Alchitrof," the king of Ethiopia (fig. 52, no. 70). No ruler of this name is known, although the name might be a corrupted form of al-Fiqtur, the eldest son of Dawit. His portrait does not appear on the reconstructed list of Giovio's collection, so it may not have been owned by Giovio, but it was included in Archduke Ferdinand's collection, which is now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (fig. 53).⁵⁶ There are interesting differences between the two copies. Alchitrof is represented in both as black-skinned, with pronounced and fleshy lips and wide-open, round eyes, which appear in the Uffizi painting to be staring through a large but empty frame, whereas in the Vienna painting the viewer's side of what may be a mirror reflects back another image of Alchitrof's face. He wears non-European clothing, has a headdress of parrot or parrotlike feathers (even more spectacular in the Vienna image)⁵⁷ and quantities of exotic jewelry, including what look like white and black coral earrings, and three strings of five large, drilled black or gray pearls hanging off his pierced lower lip from gold links. But who was he? On balance, it seems probable that the inscription and the image are a mismatch. Feathers, feather headdresses, and this type of jewelry are more readily associated with rulers from South and Central America than with sub-Saharan Africa,



FIG. 54 "Indo Africano," from Cesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni di tutto il mondo* [Ancient and modern costumes of the whole world] (Venice: Giovanni Bernardo Sessa, 1590). Woodcut, 18 × 11.2 cm. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, gift of Mimi Powell (92.348, p. 494b)

as can be seen in the painting *Francisco de Arobe with His Sons Pedro and Domingo* discussed below (no. 77). “Alchitrof” could be an imagined Brazilian, Carib, or Amerindian chief or ruler, the imagination tempered perhaps by some more realistic physiognomic features taken from black Africans in Europe. In which case, however, were the headdress and jewelry known from an image in a costume book, such as the one by Cesare Vecellio (fig. 54). Another African included in the Uffizi series is the ruler of Cairo, al-Ashraf Qāyṭbāy, called Sultan Kāʾit Bāy, who was a former slave (no. 69).

A final painting, *Francisco de Arobe with His Sons Pedro and Domingo* (no. 77), dated 1599, introduces two new elements into depictions of African rulers—in this case, the ruler was in South America but was of African descent, and the painter, rather than being European, was indigenous. Adrián Sánchez Galque belonged to the Quito school of painting in Ecuador, where he was trained by Franciscan missionaries at the Colégio de San Andrés. The three black men depicted are identified by inscriptions in the painting as is the commissioner of the painting, Juan del Barrio de Sepúlveda, a judge of the Audiencia in Quito; rather than mulattoes, of mixed white and African ancestry they may be *zambos*, of mixed native American and African ancestry.⁵⁸ The painting was commissioned in order to be sent to Philip III of Spain, and was a visual testimony that the men formally acknowledge Spanish sovereignty. This is the first representation of a black ruler by a non-European that has survived from this period and is an important contribution to the African presence in Europe. One of the most immediately striking aspects is the amount of gold jewelry on display, in the form of earrings and nose rings. These valuable and durable artifacts have survived better than panel paintings of similar date; here are gold alloy examples from Colombia and present-day Panama from the first half of the sixteenth century (nos. 78, 79).

NOTES

I should like to thank Megan Holmes and Annemarie Jordan for their generous help.

1. Kate Lowe, "'Representing' Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402-1608," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (2007): 101-28.
2. Enrico Cerulli, "Eugenio IV e gli etiopi al Concilio di Firenze nel 1441," *Rendiconti della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze, morali, storiche e filologiche*, series 6, vol. 9 (1933): 347-68.
3. Michele Lazzaroni and Antonio Muñoz, *Filarete, scultore e architetto del secolo XV* (Rome: W. Modes, 1908), 75, 78-79 and figs. 64 and 65.
4. On these, see Stanislaw Chojnacki (in collaboration with Carolyn Gossage), *Ethiopian Crosses: A Cultural History and Chronology* (Milan: Skira, 2006).
5. Piero Falchetta, *Fra Mauro's World Map: With a Commentary and Translations of the Inscriptions* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 201, 203.
6. Pierluigi Leone de Castris, ed., *Castel Nuovo: Il Museo Civico* (Naples: E. de Rosa, 1990), pl. 43.
7. Paola Rossi, *Jacopo Tintoretto, 1: I ritratti* (Venice: Alfieri, Edizioni d'arte, 1974), 147 and fig. 249.
8. See the online catalogue of the Pierpont Morgan Library, accessed 8 December 2007.
9. Carlo Ridolfi, *The Life of Tintoretto and of His Children Domenico and Marietta* [1642], trans. and with an introduction by Catherine and Robert Enggass (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1984), 90-91.
10. Virginia Mason Vaughan, "Representing the King of Morocco," in Brenda Charry and Gitanjali Shahani, eds., *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Meditation, Transmission, Traffic, 1550-1700* (Farnham and Burlington, Vt: Ashgate, 2009), 77-92.
11. Henry de Castries, ed., *Les sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc de 1530 à 1845, Angleterre*, 3 vols. (Paris: Pierre de Cénival and Philippe de Cossé Brissac, 1918-35), 2:158; Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 25.
12. Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 33.

13. John Stow, *The Annales of England* (London: Newberie, [1602]), 1403-5; John Stow, *The Annales or Generall Chronicle of England* (London: Thomas Dawson for Thomas Adams, 1615), 790-91.
14. Matar, *Britain and Barbary*, 25-26.
15. Bernard Harris, "A Portrait of a Moor," *Shakespeare Survey* 11 (1958): 89-97 at 95.
16. Scotford Lawrence, "More on The Moor: A Discussion of the *Portrait of a Moor* in the Barber Institute Gallery," unpublished typescript.
17. Ian Tyers, "Tree-ring Analysis of a Panel Painting: *The Moorish Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth*," *Dendrochronological Consultancy Report* 289 (December 2009): 1-12, at 7.
18. Personal communication from Isabel Fierro Bello, 22 September 2011.
19. Leo Africanus, *A Geographical Historie of Africa*, trans. John Pory (London: G. Bishop, 1600), 141. I am grateful to Isabel Fierro Bello for this reference.
20. Antonio Fernández-Puertas, "Vestimenta de Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad, Boabdil: Rīḥiyya, Juff, Mallūṭa, 'Imāma," in Celia del Moral, ed., *En el epílogo del Islam andalusí: La Granada del siglo xv* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Departamento de Estudios Semíticos, Grupo de Invest. Ciudades Andaluzas bajo el Islam, 2002), 399-477 at 450-66.
21. Harris, "Portrait of a Moor," 97.
22. François Baziota, *Ne-Kongo en Afrique Centrale, XVe-XVIIIe siècles* (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1971), 95.
23. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. lat. 1076, part I, fol. 21v.
24. Lowe, "'Representing' Africa," 120-23. On representations of Ne-Vunda, see Paul H.D. Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3: *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Artists of the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 93-190 at 160-67.
25. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. lat. 1076, part I, fol. 21v, an *avviso* of 12 January 1608.
26. See Teobaldo Filesi, *Roma e Congo all'inizio del 1600: Nuove testimonianze* (Como: Pietro Caroli, 1970), and for a study of earlier Italian news interest in African stories,

Kate Lowe, "Africa in the News in Renaissance Italy: News Extracts from Portugal about Western Africa Circulating in Northern and Central Italy in the 1480s and 1490s," *Italian Studies* 65: 3 (2010): 310-28.

27. There is a substantial body of literature on this sculpture. See, for example, António Muñoz, "Il monumento di Antonio il nigrita in S.M. Maggiore," *L'Arte* 12:3 (1909): 178-82; Fabio Colonna di Stigliano, "Il monumento del negro in Santa Maria Maggiore e l'ambasciata congolese a Roma del 1608," *Roma* 3 (1925): 109-21 and 154-69; Filesi, *Roma e Congo*; and L. Martínez Ferrer and M. Nocca, "Cose dell'altro mondo": *L'ambasciata di Antonio Emanuele, Principe di N'Funta, detto "il Negrita" (1604-1608) nella Roma di Paolo V* / "Coisas do outro mundo": *A Missão em Roma de António Manuel, Principe de N'Funta, conhecido por "o Negrita" (1604-1608) na Roma de Paulo V* (Vatican City: Urbaniana University Press, 2003).

28. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. Lat. 1076, parte I, fol. 44r, an *avviso* of 12 January 1608.

29. Robert Farris Thompson and Joseph Cornet, *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in Two Worlds*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C., 1981), 104-5 and figs. 76-78; Karl-Ferdinand Schaedler, *Weaving in Africa South of the Sahara* (Munich: Panterra, 1987), 145, 154, and pls. 565 and 566; and Vanessa Drake Moraga, *Weaving Abstraction: Kuba Textiles and the Woven Art of Central Africa*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C.: Textile Museum (Washington, D.C., 2011), 22-24. I am grateful to Vanessa Drake Moraga for this information.

30. Thompson and Cornet, *The Four Moments of the Sun*, 104-5.

31. See London, British Museum, Prints and Drawings 1870,0504.1463.

32. Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, II.7.24: see Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," 361n243. Ne-Vunda's visit caused such a stir that visual records were made of it in two of Rome's most prestigious papal palaces. A representation of him in the Sala dei corazzieri in the Palazzo del Quirinale by a team of painters led by Agostino Tassi, Giovanni Lanfranco, and Carlo Saraceni, dated to 1616-17, shows him in European court dress. Kaplan, "Italy, 1490-1700," 163-65. In a series of frescoes of the life of Pope Paul V in the Sala Paoline in the Vatican of ca. 1620, one scene by Giovan Battista Ricci is of the pope, with his white attendants, visiting Ne-Vunda dressed in a white nightshirt on his deathbed, attended by two black familiars. Other depictions perpetuated "false" memories. Although Pope Paul V did visit Ne-Vunda on his deathbed, Ne-Vunda never had a formal audience with the pope. Therefore the medal struck of such an audience was

of an imagined rather than a genuine scene. On medals of Ne-Vunda, see Ridolfino Venuti, *Numismata Romanorum pontificum praestantiora a Martino V ad Benedictum XIV* (Rome: J.B. Bernabò & J. Lazzarini, 1744), 208; Muñoz, "Il monumento di Antonio il nigrita," 178-82. Once again, Ne-Vunda is portrayed in a raffia openwork mesh garment.

33. P.E. Russell, "White Kings on Black Kings: Rui de Pina and the Problem of Black African Sovereignty," in P.E. Russell, *Portugal, Spain and the African Atlantic, 1343-1490: Chivalry and Crusade from John of Gaunt to Henry the Navigator* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), 151-63; Ivana Elbl, "Prestige Considerations and the Changing Interest of the Portuguese Crown in Sub-Saharan Atlantic Africa, 1444-1580," *Portuguese Studies Review* 10:2 (2002): 15-36 at 27-28.

34. He was known as the King of Belez in Portugul. On his visit to Europe, see Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and Johannes Beltz, eds., *Elfenbeine aus Ceylon. Luxusgüter für Katharina von Habsburg (1507-1578)*, exh. cat., Zurich: Museum Rietberg (Zurich, 2010), 36n20 and app. 3, 155-56.

35. Hendrik J. Horn, *Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen: Painter of Charles V and His Conquest of Tunis: Paintings, Etchings, Drawings, Cartoons and Tapestries*, 2 vols. (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1989), 1:15.

36. The painting appeared in an inventory of the property of the painter David Beck, of 29 December 1656. See Abraham Bredius and Otto Hirschmann, *Künstler-Inventare: Urkunden zur Geschichte der holländischen Kunst des XVIten, XVIIten Jahrhunderts*, 8 vols. (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1915-22), 4:1270, no. 42.

37. Julius S. Held, "Rubens' 'King of Tunis' and Vermeyen's Portrait of Mülāy Aḥmad," *Art Quarterly* 3 (1940): 173-81.

38. *Ibid.*, 178.

39. Vermeyen may have taken especial care in depicting facial hair as he was reputed to have an impressively long beard: Horn, *Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen* 1:15-16.

40. See the scholarly apparatus to the biography of Mülāy Ḥasan in Paolo Giovio, *Elogi degli uomini illustri*, ed. Franco Minonzio (Turin: Einaudi, 2006), 941-45.

41. Julius S. Held, *The Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens: A Critical Catalogue*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 1:600; Julius S. Held, *Rubens and His Circle: Studies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 7. For the earlier dates, see Held, "Rubens' 'King of Tunis,'" 179-80; Jan-Albert Goris and Julius S. Held, *Rubens in America* (New York: Pantheon, 1947), 28.

42. Stephen Ongpin, *An Exhibition of Master Drawings and Oil Sketches*, exh. cat., New York and London: Jean-Luc Baroni (New York and London, 2005).
43. See Jean Michel Massing, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 3: *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, part 1: *Europe and the World Beyond*, ed. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 132-37 and 278-81.
44. Elmer Kolfin and Esther Schreuder, eds., *Black is Beautiful: Rubens to Dumas* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2008), 185 and fig. 16.
45. Jeremy Lawrance, "The Middle Indies: Damião de Góis on Prester John and the Ethiopians," *Renaissance Studies* 6:3-4 (1992): 306-20 at 306-7.
46. Salvatore Tedeschi, "Paolo Giovio e la conoscenza dell'Etiopia nel Rinascimento," in *Paolo Giovio: Il Rinascimento e la memoria* (Como, 3-5 giugno 1983) (Como: Società storica comense, 1985), 93-116 at 112n11: Lebnā and 'Etanā are almost synonymous.
47. Giovio discusses the name "Atanadidinghil" in his text on Dāwit in his *Elogia* (1551), 311.
48. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori*, text ed. Rosanna Bettarini, commentary by Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. in 11 tomes so far (Florence: Sansoni, 1966-), 6:239. For the list, see Bruno Fasola, "Per un nuovo catalogo della Collezione Gioviana," in *Paolo Giovio: Il Rinascimento e la memoria* (Como, 3-5 giugno 1983) (Como: Società storica comense, 1985), 169-80, at 173-80.
49. Guy Le Thiec, "L'entrée des Grands Turcs dans le 'Museo' de Paolo Giovio," *Mêlanges de l'École française de Rome: Italie et Méditerranée* 104: 2 (1992): 781-830, at 781-96.
50. Salvatore Tedeschi, "Le portrait inédit du Negus Lebnā-Dengel ayant appartenu à l'historien Paolo Giovio (1483-1552)," in *Proceedings of the First International Conference on the History of Ethiopian Art* (London, 21 and 22 October 1986) (London: Pindar Press, 1989), 44-52, at 50-51, figs. 83 and 84. The portrait is now in a private collection in Como.
51. Paolo Giovio, *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium veris imaginibus supposita, quae apud Musaeum spectantur* (Florence: In officina Laurentii Tarentini, 1551), 310.
52. *Ibid.*, 311.
53. Paolo Giovio, *Paolo Iovii Novocomensis episcopi Nucerni Historiarum sui temporis* (Basel: [Heinrich Petri and Peter Perna?], 1567), 866. See also Lowe, "'Representing' Africa," 126.
54. Friedrich Kenner, *Porträtsammlung des Erzherzogs Ferdinand von Tirol* (Vienna: Selbstverlage der kunst-historischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhaus, 1892).
55. Vasari, *Le vite*, 6:239.
56. Kenner, *Porträtsammlung*, 110.
57. The feathers of different heights and shades, if realistic, are most likely to have come from macaws, parrots, conures, or parakeets, perhaps from northeastern Peru or Brazil. I am grateful to Shep Krech III for this information.
58. For background, see Massing, *The Image of the Black*, vol. 3:2, 153-56.

AFTERWORD

BEN VINSON III

What we conceive as secure facts about our world are sometimes radically called into question by new perspectives. It is reassuringly unsettling to know that the foundations of our knowledge can be periodically shaken in ways that better accommodate other viewpoints and experiences. Such a subtle jarring of the canon of Western knowledge is one of the accomplishments achieved by *Revealing the African Presence in Renaissance Europe*. The research featured here challenges our comfortable understanding of Europe as a racially homogenous landscape during one of its greatest cultural moments. In so doing, *Revealing the African Presence* reminds us of Europe's far-reaching cosmopolitanism, situating it squarely at the center of discussions about the African Diaspora. Europe emerges not merely as a facilitator of the Diaspora's flows across that Atlantic, through interlocking networks of trade and commerce, but as a final destination for droves of black peoples. Having dedicated nearly two decades of my career to understanding the particular rhythms, patterns, and configurations of the African Diaspora, especially in Latin America, and having served as a director of the Center for Africana Studies at Johns Hopkins University, where I concentrated on tracking the footprints of the black presence around the globe, I have been pleasantly surprised by what this exhibition project uncovers. The degree to which blacks can be traced in the elite circles of southern Europe, the depth to which connections existed between members of the African nobility and the European merchant class, as well as the marked accomplishments of blacks within

and beyond the realm of domestic service are welcomingly unexpected. These black lives, now many generations gone, speak silently to us through the archives and visual artifacts crafted by some of the most skilled hands in Europe. Just as many of these African-Europeans must have stood as models for the artists who ultimately recorded their likeness for posterity, some of these same individuals stand before us today serving as inspirational figures to a new generation. The texture of their lives, the diversity of their experiences, and their accomplishments as religious figures, court officials, traders, scholars, or the many hardworking farmers, bakers or boatmen build momentum for a new curiosity to engage the Renaissance period innovatively.

This exhibition invites us all to ask how did blackness impact diplomatic relations abroad and shape Europe's conception of self? Did blackness alter everyday European politics, economies, cultural milieus, and social relations? How does this history encourage us to reexamine both issues of color prejudice and multiculturalism of our own time? How do we reconfigure the Renaissance as a period that not only brought us into closer touch with the great thinkers of antiquity but also as an age that fused ancient European knowledge recovery with in-streams of Africans, and alternative modes of thinking? This volume reawakens the Renaissance as a world of possibility and experimentation, with salience to a larger constituency, and ultimately, as an era that shaped and speaks to the complexities of modern times.

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Polo Museale Fiorentino, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe
degli Uffizi and Galleria degli Uffizi

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PORTUGAL

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Manchester City Galleries

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Philadelphia Museum of Art

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Princeton University Library, Rare Books and
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Museum of Art, New York

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Goudstikker, New York

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University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and
Pacific Film Archive

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore



Checklist of the Exhibition

The information included has been compiled by the Walters Art Museum in consultation with the lending institutions. Dates, attributions, and titles given herein may diverge from those given by essay authors. The order of the checklist follows the installation in Baltimore. Additional information for the objects is given on the exhibition website, at thewalters.org/exhibitions/african-presence

INTRODUCTION

[1]
WORKSHOP OF GERARD DAVID (Netherlandish, ca. 1460–1523)
Adoration of the Kings, ca. 1514
Oil on panel; 64.2 × 82 cm
Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, (y1932–34)
PROVENANCE Stora, Spain; Princeton University Art Museum, by purchase



PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICA

[2]
ADRIAEN COLLAERT (Flemish, ca. 1560–1618)
after MAARTEN DE VOS (Flemish, 1532–1603)
Allegory of Africa
From a series of *The Four Continents*, ca. 1588
Engraving (second state); 20.8 × 25.9 cm (clipped)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, gift of the Estate of James Hazen Hyde, 1959 (59.654.9)
PROVENANCE Estate of James Hazen Hyde, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1959, by gift



[3]
Italian (Florence)
African Man on Horseback Combating a Lion, ca. 1600
Bronze; 28.7 × 23.8 × 17.5 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art, purchased with funds contributed by Mr. and Mrs. George D. Widener from the Edmond Foulc Collection, 1930 (1930-1-14)





4

PROVENANCE Collection of Edmond Foulc; Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1930, by purchase

[4]

MICHAEL WOLGEMUT (German, 1434/37-1519) and
WILHELM PLEYDENWURFF (German, ca. 1458-1494)

Map of the Known World with Strange Peoples of Africa and Asia

From Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum* [Chronicle of the world]
(Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1493)

Woodcut and watercolor (later); each folio 42.3 × 29.4 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (91.1262, pp. xiiV-xiiiR)

PROVENANCE Henry Walters, 1905, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931,
by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY



6

[5]

MICHAEL WOLGEMUT (German, 1434/37-1519) and
WILHELM PLEYDENWURFF (German, ca. 1458-1494)

Map of the Known World with Strange Peoples of Africa and Asia

From Hartmann Schedel, *Registrum huius operis libri cronicarum cum[m] figuris et ymaginibus ab inicio mu[n]di* (Nuremberg: A. Koberger, 1493)

Woodcut and watercolor (later); closed book: 47.4 × 34 × 8.5 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections

([Ex] 1016.816f copy 3)

PROVENANCE Formerly in the collection of Charles Butler of Warren Wood,
Hatfield

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)

[6]

Map of Africa

From Sebastian Münster (German, 1489-1552), *Cosmographia uniuersalis lib.VI* [Universal cosmographia, book VI] (first edition 1540; Cologne: Byrckmanno, 1575)

Woodcut with hand coloring; each folio 32.2 × 19.2 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.112, map 13)

PROVENANCE Henry Walters, Baltimore, prior to 1931 [mode of acquisition
unknown]; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY



8

[7]

Map of Africa

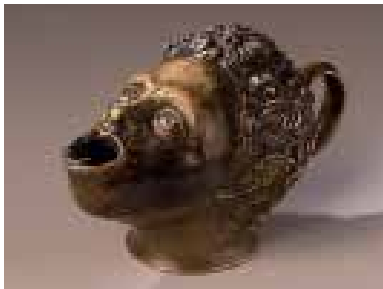
From Sebastian Münster, *Totius Africae tablua, & descriptio uniuersalis, etiam ultra Ptolemaei limites extensa* (Basel: Henricum Petrum, 1554)

Woodcut with hand coloring; 26 × 35 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections

(HMC01.3540)

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)



9

[8]

Italian

Oil Lamp in the Shape of an African's Head, ca. 1540

Bronze; 4 × 7.8 × 4 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (54.1716)

PROVENANCE Acquired by Henry Walters; Walters Art Museum, 1931,
by bequest

[9]

Northern Italian

Oil Lamp in the Shape of an African's Head, ca. 1520

Brass; 6 × 5.5 × 9.2 cm

Matthew Brudniak, Washington, D.C.

PROVENANCE Purchased from Mark Wilchusky Fine Art, New York



10

[10]

Greek (Ancient)

Aryballos in the Shape of an African's Head, ca. 480–430 BCE

Terracotta; 9.3 × 4.6 × 6.5 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (48.2017)

PROVENANCE Joseph Brummer, New York [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Joseph Brummer sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, 8–9 June 1949, part 3, no. 2; Walters Art Museum, 1949, by purchase



11

[11]

Meroitic (Ancient Nubia)

Oil Lamp in the Shape of a Bound Captive, 700–200 BCE

Bronze; 9 × 10.4 × 24.4 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (54.1549)

PROVENANCE Guilhou Sale, 1905, lot 307; Henry Walters, Baltimore, 1905, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest



12

[12]

Gunda School, Ethiopia

John the Evangelist

From a Gospel Book, ca. 1540

Tempera and ink on parchment; each folio 30.2 × 25 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, museum purchase with funds provided by the W. Alton Jones Foundation Acquisition Fund, 1998 (W.850, fols. 153v–154r)

PROVENANCE Church, Mādhane Alām at Mājate, Ethiopia, 1892–93 [mode of acquisition unknown]; Private collection, France, prior to 1973 [mode of acquisition unknown]; With Sam Fogg, London [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Walters Art Museum, 1998, by purchase

[13]

Sapi-Portuguese style, Sierra Leone

Pyx with Scenes from the Passion of Christ, ca. 1520

Ivory; 7.9 × 10.9 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (71.108)

PROVENANCE Henry Walters, Baltimore [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY



13

[14]

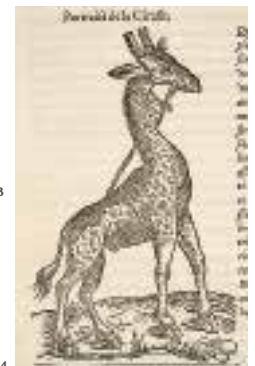
Portrait of a Giraffe

From Pierre Belon, *Les Observations de plusieurs singularitez & choses memorable trouuées en Grece, Asie, Iudée, Egypte, Arabie, & autres pays estranges* [Observations on many singular and memorable things found in Greece, Asia, Judea, Egypt, Arabia, and other foreign countries] (Anvers: De l'Imprimerie de C. Plantin, 1555)

Woodcut; closed book: 23 × 16.5 × 3.5 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections ([Ex] 8672.163.11, p. 118v)

PROVENANCE Presented by the Carnegie Foundation



14



15



16

[15]

Mori neri [Black Moors]

From Cesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni di tutto il mondo*

[Ancient and modern costumes of the whole world] (Venice:

Giovanni Bernardo Sessa, 1598)

Woodcut; 17.9 × 11 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.347, p. 439b)

PROVENANCE Gruel-Engelmann, Paris; The Walters Art Museum, by gift

BALTIMORE: P. 439B

PRINCETON: P. 430B "MORO DI CONDITIONE"

[16]

Moro di conditione [Wealthy Moor]

From Cesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni di tutto il mondo*

[Ancient and modern costumes of the whole world] (Venice:

Giovanni Bernardo Sessa, 1590)

Woodcut; 18 × 11.2 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, gift of Mimi Powell (92.348, p. 486b)

PROVENANCE Philip Stanhope (ex libris on front pastedown); Collection of

Mimi Powell; The Walters Art Museum, by gift

BALTIMORE ONLY



18

[17]

CESARE VECELLIO

De gli habiti antichi, et moderni di diuerse parti del mondo libri due, fatti da Cesare Vecellio, & con discorsi da lui dichiarati. Con privilegio (Venice: Presso Damian Zenaro, 1590)

Closed book: 19 × 13.4 × 9.3 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections

([Ex] GT513.V49 1590)

PROVENANCE Robert Hoe; Cortland Field Bishop; Sinclair Hamilton, Class of 1906, by gift 1966

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)



19



20

[18]

JOHANN THEODORE DE BRY (Dutch, 1561-1623)

Gabonese King Receiving Europeans

From Jan Huygen van Linschoten, *Indiae Orientalis, Pars I and II: Navigatio in Orientem* (Frankfurt: Wolfgang Richter, 1599)

Engraving; closed book: 32 × 21 × 3 cm

William H. Scheide Library, Princeton, New Jersey (Scheide 32.5.7, plate 2)

PROVENANCE Samuel Scott; Edward Henry Scott (19th-century armorial bookplates)



21

[19]

Habits des habitants du Caire [Clothing of the inhabitants of Cairo]

From Leo Africanus (al-Hasan al-Wazzan or Giovanni Leone de' Medici),
Historiale description de l'Afrique (Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556)

Engraving; closed book: 33.8 × 23 × 6.6 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections

([Ex] 1804.579.11q, p. 353)

PROVENANCE Gift of Timothy N. Pfeiffer

[20]

The Great Pyramid of Giza

From Sebastiano Serlio, *Regole generali di architettura, Libro Terzo*

[General rules of architecture, third book] (Venice: F. Marcolini, 1540)

Woodcut on blue paper; 42.3 × 26.7 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.634, p. XCIII)

PROVENANCE Henry Walters, Baltimore [date and mode of acquisition
unknown]; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

[21]

LÉONARD LIMOSIN (French, ca. 1505–ca. 1575)

Idealized Portrait of Dido, ca. 1540

Painted enamel on copper; 30.3 × 24.8 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (44.240)

PROVENANCE Castle of Gaillon (?); George Robinson Harding, London [date
and mode of acquisition unknown]; William T. / Henry Walters Collection,
Baltimore [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Walters Art Museum,
1931, by bequest

[22]

NICCOLÒ ROCCATAGLIATA (Italian, active 1593–1636)

Cleopatra and the Asp, ca. 1615

Bronze; height 22.3 cm

Private Collection

PROVENANCE Sylvia Adams Collection, sold at Bonham's, Knightsbridge,
23 May 1996, Part V, lot 38 (as "Cleopatra committing suicide, after Aspetti,
18th/19th century"); Galerie Rudigier, Munich; Private Collection, 2008



22

AFRICANS IN CHRISTIAN ART

[23]

GIUSEPPE CESARI (IL CAVALIERE D'ARPINO) (Italian, 1568–1640)

Judith with the Head of Holofernes, 1603–6

Oil on canvas; 61.3 × 47.9 cm

University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive,
bequest of Andrew C. Lawson (1943.2)

PROVENANCE Collection of Andrew C. Lawson; Berkeley Art Museum and
Pacific Film Archive, by bequest



23



[24]

GIROLAMO DA SANTACROCE (Italian, 1480/85-1556)

Adoration of the Kings, ca. 1525-30

Oil on panel; 67.7 × 81.2 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, acquired by Henry Walters with the Massarenti Collection, 1902 (37.261)

PROVENANCE Pinacoteca Manfrin, Venice [cat. 1872, no. 51]; Don Marcello Massarenti Collection, Rome [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Henry Walters, Baltimore, 1902, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

[25]

Italian (Venice)

The Supper at Emmaus, 1530-40

Oil on panel; 96.2 × 157.2 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (37.610)

PROVENANCE William T. / Henry Walters Collection, Baltimore, prior to 1909 [mode of acquisition unknown]; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY

24



[26]

South German Master

St. Maurice and the Theban Legion, ca. 1515-20

Oil on panel; 68.4 × 70.1 cm

Collection of Marei von Saher, the heir of Jacques Goudstikker, New York

PROVENANCE With Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam, inv. no. 2648, before 19 August 1930 (owned jointly with Richard Ederheimer and Arnold Seligmann & Cie); Richard Ederheimer's ownership interest acquired by Jacques Goudstikker before 16 May 1940; Looted by the Nazi Authorities, July 1940; Arnold Seligman, Rey & Co., Inc. paid for its share by Deutsche Revisions- und Treuhand A.C.; recovered by the Allies, 1945; In the custody of the Dutch Government; claim waived by Arnold Seligman, Rey & Co., Inc. November 1952; Restituted in February 2006 to Marei von Saher, the heir of Jacques Goudstikker (subject to investigation of the status of the joint ownership); Marei von Saher, the heir of Jacques Goudstikker (confirmed as sole owner after investigation into the status of the prior joint ownership).

25



26

[27]

AERT CLAESZ (Flemish, 1508–55, active ca. 1520–26)

St. Philip Baptizing the Ethiopian Counselor, 1524

Engraving; 26.2 × 18.7 cm

Albertina, Vienna (BG 1937/438)

PROVENANCE Hofbibliothek (historic Habsburg collections)



27

[28]

Flemish

St. Catherine of Alexandria Confounding the Doctors, ca. 1480

Oil on panel; 20.7 × 15.2 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, gift of Dr. R. Walter Graham, Jr., 1972

(37.2486)

PROVENANCE Leopold Blumka, New York, prior to 1943, by purchase;

Dr. R. Walter Graham, Jr., Baltimore, 1971, by purchase; Walters Art Museum,

1972, by gift

[29]

French (Loire Region)

St. Augustine in His Study

From *St. Jerome, Vita et Transitus* [St. Jerome, life and death], 1460

Gouache on vellum; 20.5 × 13.1 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (w.304, fol. 59r)

PROVENANCE Dedication to Jean Bourré, 1472; Carmelites at Rennes, 1651;

A. M. Labouchère, ca. 1820; Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Barrois of Lille; Bertram,

4th Earl of Ashburnham, 1849; Sotheby's, London 12 June 1901, lot 273;

Jacques Rosenthal, Munich; Leo S. Olschki, Florence; [Henry Walters] from

Olschki, between ca. 1902 and 1931, by purchase

BALTIMORE ONLY



28

[30]

ALBRECHT DÜRER (German 1471–1528)

St. Anthony Abbot, 1519

Engraving; plate: 10.1 × 14.6 cm, sheet: 16 × 20.2 cm

Princeton University Art Museum, bequest of Julie Parsons Redmond

(x1960-27)

PROVENANCE Bequest of Julie Parsons Redmond, 1960

PRINCETON ONLY



29



30



31



32

COLOR AND PREJUDICE

[31]

Court armor maker, Prague

Helmet Visor of a Mustached Moor, ca.1557

Iron, paint, leather, horsehair; 29 × 22 × 19 cm

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (HJRK B62)

PROVENANCE Habsburg court in Prague; Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck

[32]

Netherlandish (Utrecht)

Sin Personified and The Seven Deadly Sins

From Dirc van Delft, *Tafel van den Khersten Ghelove* [Picture (Handbook) of the Christian faith], 1400-1404

Gouache on parchment; fol. 90r: 18.8 × 13.9 cm, fol. 97r: 18.8 × 13.7 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (W.171 fol. 90r)

PROVENANCE Albrecht, Duke of Bavaria and Count of Holland, Zeeland, and Hainaut (1389-1404), Utrecht, ca.1400-1405, by commission; Gruel and Engelman, Paris [date and mode of acquisition unknown] [no. 93]; Henry Walters, Baltimore, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

Habsburg court in Prague; Schloss Ambras, Innsbruck

BALTIMORE: FOL. 97R (ILLUSTRATED ON P. 39, FIG. 13)

PRINCETON: FOL. 90R

[33]

Impossibile

From *Emblemata Andreae Alciati* [Emblems of Andrea Alciatus]

(Lyon: Matthias Bonhomme for Guillaume Rouille, 1548)

Woodcut; 19 × 12.5 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.24, fol. 57r)

PROVENANCE Henry Walters [date and mode of acquisition unknown];

Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY



33



35a



356

[34]

Impossibile

From *Emblemata Andreae Alciati* [Emblems of Andrea Alciati]

(Lyon: Apud Gulielmum Rouillium, 1548)

Woodcut; closed book: 18.5 × 12.7 × 1.5 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections,
([Ex] N7710.A35 1548)

PROVENANCE Gift of Silvain S. Brunshwig, 1956

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)

[35a-b]

MASTER OF THE RINUCCINI CHAPEL (MATTEO DI PACINO)

(Italian, active 1350-75)

The Miraculous Transplantation of the Moor's Leg and *The Martyrdom of Saints Cosmas and Damian*, ca. 1370-75

Tempera and gold leaf on panel; left predella: 18.3 × 41 × 3.2 cm,

right predella: 18.3 × 40.6 × 3.2 cm

North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation (GL.60.17.9/b-c)

PROVENANCE Dr. Rudolf Bedö collection, Budapest; probably sold after January 1938, when exhibited in Budapest (see Ragghianti, 1938); Count Alessandro Contini Bonacossi, Florence; Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York, 1939; on loan to National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1945-54; gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation to the North Carolina Museum of Art, 1961.

[36]

ALBRECHT DÜRER (German, 1471-1528)

Four Proportional Studies of Heads

From *Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion* [Four books on human proportion] (Nuremberg: H. Formschneider, 1528)

Woodcut; 29.1 × 19.2 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.437, p. 95v)

PROVENANCE Bernard Quaritch, sale, 7 July 1908, cat. 265, no. 149; Henry Walters, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY

[37]

ALBRECHT DÜRER (German, 1471-1528)

Four Proportional Studies of Heads

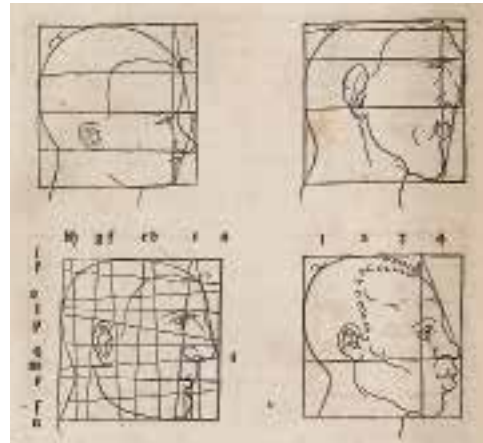
From *Vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion* [Four books on human proportion] (Nuremberg: Gedruckt durch I. Formschneyder, auff Verlegung Albrecht Dürers velassen Witib, 1528)

Woodcut; closed book: 31 × 21 × 4.4 cm

Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey, Rare Books and Special Collections ([Ex] ND588.D9 A3q)

PROVENANCE Gift of Sinclair Hamilton, Class of 1906

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)



36



39

BLACK AESTHETIC

[38]

JAN MULLER (Dutch, 1571-1628), after HENDRICK GOLTZIUS (Dutch, 1558-1617)

The First Day (Dies 1), Separations of Light & Dark

From *The Creation of the World*, ca. 1593

Engraving (second state of two); diameter: 26.2 cm, sheet: 48 × 32.5 cm

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1953 (53.601.338[7])

PROVENANCE The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1953, by purchase

ILLUSTRATED ON P. 34

[39]

CORNELIS BOEL (Flemish, ca. 1576-ca. 1621) after OTTO VAN VEEN (Flemish, 1556-1629)

Brown Berries Are Sweet of Taste

From Otto van Veen, *Amorum emblemata* [Emblems of love] (Antwerp: Venalia apud Auctorem, 1608)

Engraving; closed book: 15.5 × 21 × 3 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections ([Ex] N7710.V53, p. 173)

PROVENANCE Gift of Sylvain S. Brunshwig



40

[40]
 Flemish or French (?)
Black Woman at Her Bath, 1580s
 Bronze; height 29.8 cm
 Private Collection
 PROVENANCE Private collection, Paris; Kunsthaus Lempertz, Cologne, 20–22 November 1975, lot 1771; collection of Edward and Kathleen (Kiyi) Pfluger, New York; Christie’s, New York, 20 October 2006, lot 450; Blumka Gallery, New York, 2007, by purchase

[41]
 ORAZIO MOCHI, attrib. (Italian, 1571–1625)
Black Court Jester, 1600–1610
 Bronze; 17.9 × 7.1 × 4.5 cm
 The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, museum purchase, Renaissance & Baroque Fund, a generous grant, and individual donations through the Banner, Lewis, Tanner Circle, 2011 (54.3083)
 PROVENANCE Abbot Guggenheim Collection, New York [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Sale, Sotheby’s, New York, 27 January 2011, lot 450; Walters Art Museum, 2011, by purchase

[42]
 German (?)
Black Female Nude, ca. 1600–1610
 Figure: rosewood, pedestal: gilded bronze, lapis lazuli, yellow marble; height 11.7 cm
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.755)
 PROVENANCE Collection of Michel Boy until 1905; Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1917, by gift

CLASS AND SLAVERY

[43]
 Follower of Leone Leoni (Italian, ca. 1509–90)
Bust of Giacomo Maria Stampa, 1553
 Marble; height: 98.6 cm
 The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (27.229)
 PROVENANCE Raoul Heilbronner, Paris [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Henry Walters, Baltimore [date and mode of acquisition unknown]; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

[44]
 JACQUES CALLOT (French, 1592–1635)
Slave Market, 1620
 Etching, first state; 16.1 × 25 cm
 Princeton University Art Museum, gift of Junius S. Morgan, class of 1888 (x1934-132)
 PROVENANCE Acquired by Junius S. Morgan; Princeton University Art Museum, by gift



41

[45]

THEODORE DE BRY (Dutch, 1528-1598)

Spanish Sugar Plantation in the Caribbean

From *Americae pars quinta . . . Hieronymi Bezoni* (Frankfurt: S. C. Maiestatis, 1595)

Engraving; 34.5 × 24 cm

The George Peabody Library, The Sheridan Libraries, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (910.B915 quarto, pl. II)

PROVENANCE The George Peabody Library, by purchase

BALTIMORE ONLY

[46]

THEODORE DE BRY (Dutch, 1528-1598)

Spanish Sugar Plantation in the Caribbean

From *Americae pars quinta . . . Hieronymi Bezoni* (Frankfurt: S. C. Maiestatis, 1595)

Engraving; 34.5 × 24 cm

PROVENANCE William H. Scheide Library, Princeton, New Jersey (Scheide 32.5.3)

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)

[47]

Netherlandish

Chafariz d'el Rey in the Alfama District, ca. 1570-80

Oil on panel; 93 × 163 cm

The Berardo Collection, Lisbon

PROVENANCE Art Market, Madrid, 1998

ILLUSTRATED ON P. 12 AND P. 19, FIG. 8



42



43



44



45



48

SLAVES

[48]

Circle of Bartolomeo Passarotti (Italian, 1529–92)
Portrait of Domenico Giuliani and His Servant, 1579

Oil on canvas; 121 × 92.2 cm

Manchester City Galleries, Manchester, England (1959.114)

PROVENANCE Col. T. H. Leathart; his sale, Sotheby's, 15 July 1931, lot 107, repr. as Pordenone; Francis Stonor; purchased from Colnaghi's July 1959

[49]

ANNIBALE CARRACCI, attrib. (Italian, 1560–1609)
Portrait of an African Slave Woman, ca. 1580s

Oil on canvas; 60 × 39 × 2 cm (fragment of a larger portrait)

Tomasso Brothers, Leeds, England

PROVENANCE Carlo Maratti (1625–1713), mentioned in his inventory of assets *ritratto d'una mora che tiene un orologio* (portrait of a black woman holding a clock); Philip V of Spain, upon his death in 1745, mentioned in the Queen's antechamber; Given by the Quartermaster General for the province of Segovia, Ramón Luis de Escobedo to Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, just prior to August 1812; Private Collection, England, until 2005.



49

[50]

Italian (Venice), probably
Cameo with Bust of an African Boy, late 16th century

Sardonyx, gold; overall: 1.6 × 1.1 cm, visible cameo: 1.6 × 1.3 cm

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Milton Weil Collection, 1938 (38.150.27)

PROVENANCE The Milton Weil Collection, 1938

[51]

Italian
Cameo of Laureate Black Man (obverse)
Cameo of a Roman Emperor (reverse), mid-16th century

Sardonyx, gold; overall: 5.2 × 3.9 cm, visible cameo: 4.9 × 3.6 cm

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Milton Weil Collection, 1938 (38.150.12)

PROVENANCE The Milton Weil Collection, 1938



50



51

[52]

Italian (Venice)

Head of a Black Slave, 1560–90

Cast iron; 5.7 × 3.7 × 4.6 cm

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection
(1957.14.54)

PROVENANCE Gustave Dreyfus (1837–1914), Paris; his estate; Duveen Brothers, Inc., London and New York, 1930, by purchase; Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York, 1945, by purchase; National Gallery of Art, 1957, by gift



52

[53]

PAOLO VERONESE (PAOLO CALIARI) (Italian, 1528–88)

Study of a Black Youth Eating, ca. 1580

Black and white chalk on buff paper; 15.5 × 20 cm

Art market

PROVENANCE Mrs. B. L. Stedell; A. G. B. Russell (L.2770a); Sale, London, Sotheby's 9 June 1959, 13; With Charles E. Slatkin Galleries, New York; Sale, Sotheby's 10 May 1961, lot 29; Samuel P. Reed, New York

[54]

PAOLO VERONESE (PAOLO CALIARI) (Italian, 1528–88)

Study of the Head of a Black Man, ca. 1573

Black and white chalk on buff paper; 20 × 17.6 cm

Private collection, courtesy the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
(L.1975.38.24)

PROVENANCE Richard Cosway; Charles Fairfax Murray; A. G. B. Russell; Sale, Sotheby's, London, 9 June 1959, 12; Robert Lehman Collection, New York



53



54



55

[55]

ALBRECHT DÜRER (German, 1471–1528)

Study of Katharina, 1521

Metalpoint on prepared light pink paper; 20 × 14.1 cm

Istituti museali della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, Florence (1060 €)

PROVENANCE Recorded in the inventory of the Galleria degli Uffizi in 1784
BALTIMORE ONLY

[56]

FRANS CRABBE VAN ESPLEGHEM (Flemish, ca. 1480–1552)

Black Man in Three-quarter Profile, 1522

Engraving; 10.2 × 6.7 cm

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, purchase, Louis V. Bell Fund and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1998 (1998.415)

PROVENANCE With Hill-Stone, Inc., Fine Prints and Drawings; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Louis V. Bell Fund and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1998, by purchase

[57]

LUDOVICO CARRACCI, attrib. (Italian, 1555–1619)

Head of a Black Man from the Rear

Studies of Hands, 1580–1600?

Black chalk on paper; 18.9 × 15.2 cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Muriel and Philip Berman Gift, acquired from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with funds contributed by Muriel and Philip Berman and the Edgar Viguers Seeler Fund (by exchange), 1984 (1984-56-476)

PROVENANCE Sir Joshua Reynolds (Lugt 2364); William Paulet Carey (1759–1839), Dublin, London, and Birmingham; John Neagle (1796–1865), Philadelphia (purchased 24 February 1838); John S. Phillips (1800–1876), Philadelphia; bequest to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1876; Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984



56



57

FREE AND FREED PEOPLE OF AFRICAN ANCESTRY

[58]

JOHANNES VAN DOETECHUM (Flemish, d. 1605) and LUCAS VAN

DOETECHUM (Flemish, active 1554–72, d. before 1589) after

Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Flemish, 1525/30–1569)

Two Flemish Peasants, ca. 1564/65

Etching (second state); plate: 13.3 × 18.8 cm; sheet: 18 × 26.3 cm

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Andrew W. Mellon Fund

(1975.112.34, with the title from state three, the seventeenth-century edition: *Bruyntje Springh-in-'t'Bed and Flip de Duyvel* [*Little Brown Jump-in-the-Bed and Flip the Devil*])

PROVENANCE Andrew W. Mellon Fund



58

[59]

FRANCESCO TORBIDO DI MARCO INDIA (il Moro)
(Italian, ca.1482–ca.1562)

Portrait of a Man, possibly a self-portrait (?), ca.1520

Oil on canvas; 72 × 56 cm

Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan (A14)

PROVENANCE Pinacoteca di Brera, 1888, by purchase

[60]

LUIS DE VARGAS (Spanish, 1502–68)

Preparations for the Crucifixion, ca.1565

Oil on panel transferred to canvas; 87.9 × 76.2 cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection, 1917 (Cat. 805)

PROVENANCE John G. Johnson Collection; Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1917,
by gift

[61]

Flemish or German (?)

Portrait of a Wealthy African, ca.1530–40

Oil on panel; diameter without frame: 23.3 cm

Private Collection, Antwerp

PROVENANCE With Jacques Leegenhoek, Paris; private collection;

With Galerie De Jonckheere, Paris; private collection, 2008, by purchase



59



60



61



62



63

[62]
 BRONZINO (AGNOLO DI COSIMO TORI) (Italian, 1503-72)
Portrait of Duke Alessandro de' Medici, after 1553

Oil on tin; 16 × 12.5 cm

Istituti museali della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890, no. 857)

PROVENANCE Medici family, by commission; *Guardaroba* of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, from 1637 until at least 1769; transferred to the Uffizi Gallery, Florence

[63]
 DOMENICO DI POLO DI ANGELO DE' VETRI (Italian, ca. 1480-ca. 1547)
Duke Alessandro I de' Medici, 1510-1537, 1st Duke of Florence 1532
 (obverse)

Bronze; diameter: 3.4 cm

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection (1957.14.909)

PROVENANCE Gustave Dreyfus (1837-1914), Paris; his estate; Duveen Brothers, Inc., London and New York, 1930, by purchase; Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York, 1945, by purchase; National Gallery of Art, 1957, by gift

[64]
 Jacopo da Pontormo (Jacopo Carucci) (Italian, 1494-1557)
Portrait of Maria Salviati de' Medici and Giulia de' Medici, ca. 1539

Oil on panel; 88 × 71.3 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, acquired by Henry Walters with the Massarenti Collection, 1902 (37.596)

PROVENANCE Medici Collections; Riccardo Romolo Riccardi, Palazzo Gualfonda, Florence, prior to 1612 until after 1814 [mode of acquisition unknown]; Don Marcello Massarenti Collection, Rome, prior to 1881 [mode of acquisition unknown] [1881 catalogue: no. 79; 1897 catalogue: no. 381]; Henry Walters, Baltimore, 1902, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest.



64

DIPLOMATS AND RULERS

[65]
 WORKSHOP OF DOMENICO TINTORETTO (Italian, 1518-1594)
Portrait of a Man, ca. 1570-1600

Oil on canvas; 127 × 101.6 cm

The Morgan Library & Museum, New York, gift of J.P. Morgan, Jr. (AZ072)

PROVENANCE The Marquis of Dufferin, Ireland; With Thomas Agnew, London; J.P. Morgan, Jr., December 1929, by purchase

[66]

RAFFAELLO SCHIAMIOSSI, attrib. (Italian)

Portrait of Don Antonio Manuele de Funta, Ambassador of the King of the Kongo to the Pope, ca. 1608

Etching and engraving; sheet 27.5 × 19.7 cm

The Baltimore Museum of Art, purchased as the gift of Lorraine and Mark Schapiro, Baltimore, and Print & Drawing Society Fund (BMA 1997.155)

PROVENANCE Boerner Inc. 1997, cat. 38; The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1997, by gift

[67]

GUILLERMUS DU MORTIER

Portrait of Don Antonio Manuele de Funta, Ambassador of the King of the Kongo to the Pope (Rome: Giovanni Antonio di Paoli, 1608)

Engraving; 25.3 × 19.4 cm

Private Collection, London

PROVENANCE Oettingen-Wallenstein Collection; bt. Grosvenor Prints, London

[68]

PETER PAUL RUBENS (Flemish, 1577-1640)

Head of an African Man Wearing a Turban, ca. 1609

Oil on paper, laid down on panel; 54 × 39 cm (excl. later strip of ca. 83 mm along left side)

Private Collection, courtesy of Jean-Luc Baroni Ltd, London

PROVENANCE E. Christopher Norris, Polesden Lacey, Great Bookham, nr. Dorking, Surrey; His sale, London, Sotheby's 23 May 1951, lot 96 (unsold); His posthumous sale, Christie's, London, 11 December 1987, lot 19 (unsold); By descent to a private collection, England, until 2004; private collection

ILLUSTRATED ON P. 108, FIG. 50



65



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72

[69]

CRISTOFANO DELL'ALTISSIMO (Italian, ca. 1525-1605)
Portrait of Sultan Caith Bey, ca. 1590

Oil on panel; 60 × 44 cm

Istituti museali della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890, no. 8)

PROVENANCE Medici family, by commission; Guardaroba of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence; transferred to the Uffizi Gallery, Florence

[70]

CRISTOFANO DELL'ALTISSIMO (Italian, ca. 1525-1605)
Portrait of Alchitrof, 1580s?

Oil on panel; 60 × 45 cm

Istituti museali della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890, no. 3065)

PROVENANCE Medici family, by commission; Guardaroba of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence; transferred to the Uffizi Gallery, Florence

[71]

CRISTOFANO DELL'ALTISSIMO (Italian, ca. 1525-1605)
Portrait of Emperor Atana de Dinghel (Dāwit III), before 1568

Oil on panel; 58 × 43 cm

Istituti museali della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890, no. 1)

PROVENANCE Medici family, by commission; Guardaroba of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence; transferred to the Uffizi Gallery, Florence

[72]

TOBIAS STIMMER (Swiss, 1539-1584)
David Maximus Abyssinorum Aethiopum Rex

From Paolo Giovio, *Pavli Iovii Novocomensis episcopi nucerini Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium* [The Praises of illustrious men of martial virtue of Paolo Giovio of Como, bishop of Nocera] (Basel: P. Pernae opera ac studio, 1575)

Woodcut; 32.5 × 25.1 cm

The George Peabody Library, The Sheridan Libraries, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (923.5 G514 quarto, p. 355)

PROVENANCE The George Peabody Library, by purchase

BALTIMORE ONLY

[73]

PAOLO GIOVIO (Italian, 1483-1552)

Mvsaei Ioviani imagines artifice manu ad viuum expressae. Nec minore industria Theobaldi Mvlleri . . . illustratae (Basel: Ex officina Petri Pernae, 1577)

Closed book: 22.5 × 16.5 × 1.5 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections
([Ex] 1038.392.3)

PROVENANCE Gift of Silvain S. Brunschwig, 1956

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)

[74]

Ethiopian

Hand Cross, 11th-12th centuries

Iron; 37.5 × 10.4 × 0.8 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, gift of Nancy and Robert Nooter, 1997
(52.296)

PROVENANCE Knopfelmacher Collection, New York; With the William Wright Gallery, New York; Nooter Collection, 1990; Walters Art Museum, 1997, by gift

[75]

Map of Abyssinia

From Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* [Theater of the World]
(Antwerp: Aegidius Radeus, 1592)

Engraving and watercolor; 41 × 53.5 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (92.104)

BALTIMORE ONLY

[76]

ABRAHAM ORTELIUS

Theatrum Orbis Terrarum (Antwerp: Coppenium Diesth, 1570)

Engraving and watercolor; closed book: 46 × 30.2 × 9.8 cm

Princeton University Library, Rare Books and Special Collections
([Ex] 1009.689.12f)

PROVENANCE Gio. Francesco Angelito; Alex. Camp

PRINCETON ONLY (NOT ILLUSTRATED)



74



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[77]

ANDRÉS SÁNCHEZ GALQUE (Ecuadorian, active ca. 1599)
Los tres mulatos de Esmeraldas, Portrait of Don Francisco and Sons Pedro and Domingo, 1599

Oil on canvas; 92 × 175 cm

Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (PO4778)

PROVENANCE Painted for Philip III of Spain, 1599; Transferred from the Royal Collection to the Prado

BALTIMORE ONLY

[78]

Veraguas-Gran Chiriquí (present-day Panama)
Pair of Earrings with Flat Bar and Three Suspended Discs, 800–1521 CE

Gold alloy; each: 2.7 × 3.3 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (57.351, 57.352)

PROVENANCE Tiffany & Co., New York, 1910, by purchase; Henry Walters, Baltimore, 1911, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY

[79]

Colombian
Nose Ring with Oval Disc, 700–1500 CE

Hammered gold alloy; 4.3 × 5.3 cm

The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (57.361)

PROVENANCE Tiffany & Co., New York; Henry Walters, Baltimore, 1910, by purchase; Walters Art Museum, 1931, by bequest

BALTIMORE ONLY

[80]

JOSÉ MONTES DE OCA, attrib. (Spanish, ca. 1668–1754)
Saint Benedict of Palermo, ca. 1734

Polychrome and gilt wood with glass; 124.5 × 88 × 41.9 cm

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The John R. Van Derlip Fund (2010.27.2)

PROVENANCE Private collection, Milan; With the Matthiesen Gallery; Minneapolis Institute of Art, by purchase

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