

**Jerusalem Art  
History Journal:**

*An Undergraduate  
eJournal*

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**Histoire de l'art  
à Jérusalem :**

*cyberrevue étudiante  
de premier cycle*

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Jerusalem Art History Journal: An Undergraduate eJournal /  
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# Introducing the Guest Editor

—

LOREN LERNER,  
*Editor-in-chief*

I want to thank Tara Ng, the guest editor of this fourth volume of the *Jerusalem Art History Journal: An Undergraduate eJournal*.

Tara Ng completed her graduate studies in art history at Concordia University in 2016. She is interested in socially engaged photography and the photographic representation of marginalized individuals and communities. Tara's writing is featured in the CCCA Academy e-publication *Global Engagements in Contemporary Canadian Art: Thirty-Nine Exhibition Essays and Fifty-Five Artists*. She is currently working as an editor and researcher in the Grants Management Department at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. As the recipient of a 2017 Ontario Arts Council grant for Culturally Diverse

Curatorial Projects, she is curating an exhibition of works by Norval Morrisseau at the Art Gallery of Hamilton, slated for the fall of 2018.

# Présentation de la collaboratrice invitée

—

LOREN LERNER,

*Rédactrice en chef*

Je tiens à remercier Tara Ng, qui a dirigé la rédaction de cette quatrième édition d'Histoire de l'art à Jérusalem : cyberrevue étudiante de premier cycle.

Tara Ng a terminé ses études supérieures en histoire de l'art à l'Université Concordia en 2016. Elle s'intéresse à la photographie à portée sociale ainsi qu'à la représentation photographique d'individus et de communautés marginalisés. Ses écrits ont été publiés dans la revue électronique *Art contemporain canadien et mobilisation universelle : trente-neuf textes d'exposition; cinquante-cinq artistes / Global Engagements in Contemporary Canadian Art: Thirty-Nine Exhibition Essays and Fifty-Five Artists*, chapeauté par l'Académie du Centre de l'art contemporain canadien. Elle travaille actuellement comme rédactrice

et chercheuse au service de gestion des subventions du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. En tant que bénéficiaire d'une subvention pour projet de conservation d'expositions de cultures diverses du Conseil des arts de l'Ontario en 2017, elle organise une exposition d'œuvres réalisées par Norval Morriseau – prévue pour l'automne 2018 – à la Galerie d'art de Hamilton.

# Editorial

—

TARA NG

In the fall of 2016, students in the undergraduate art history seminar *The City of Jerusalem: Ideas and Images*, led by Dr. Loren Lerner, Professor in the Department of Art History at Concordia University, had the unique opportunity to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art's (MET) ground-breaking exhibition *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*. Featuring nearly 200 objects from both the Museum's permanent collections and international collections, the exhibition illustrated the wide-reaching artistic influence and spiritual allure of the Holy Land during the Middle Ages. In the exhibition catalogue, the exhibition's curators Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb define the years 1000 to 1400 as a distinctive and multifaceted historical and aesthetic moment in the development of the Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> in large part due to the city's unprecedented degree of multiculturalism.<sup>2</sup> While past exhibitions devoted to this era tended to focus on the Christian Crusades and their impact on contemporary art,<sup>3</sup> *Jerusalem, 1000–1400* underscored the frequent contact—sometimes

symbiotic, sometimes hostile—between the ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse locals and foreigners who shared the spaces of the Holy City, and the innovative, masterful and stylistically complex artworks that emerged from these interactions.

For this fourth issue of the *Jerusalem Art History Journal*, each student selected one or more works from the MET exhibition to further investigate. The resulting collection of insightful and imaginative art history essays and research creations greatly extend Boehm and Holcomb’s mission to galvanize interest in this rich and singular period in the history of Jerusalem.

This issue is organized into four thematic sections. The first, entitled “Tradition and Innovation,” explores how trade, diplomacy, recreational travel and other forms of intercultural exchange enabled the transmission of artistic trends between the city of Jerusalem and other regions, including China, Ethiopia and Belgium, resulting in inventive artistic works that merged local and foreign influences. The essays in “Religion, Politics and Art” uncover the creative ways in which Christian Crusaders and the Muslim Timurids both exploited the propagandistic potential of visual imagery to assert their control over the city of Jerusalem. “In Search of the Sacred” expands on the practice of pilgrimage and delves into the existence of other cultural sites and symbols that possess a similar spiritual power as the city of Jerusalem. The final section, entitled “Bridging the Earthly and Heavenly Realms,” considers examples of Christian,

Jewish and Muslim art and architecture that contemplate the heavenly world and the afterlife.

Although political instability plagued Jerusalem throughout the period in question, the art history essays and research creations included in this issue attest to the undiminished power of the Holy City to attract artists both near and far. By studying their artworks, one may discover the manifold voices that comprise the evocative narrative of medieval Jerusalem.

#### NOTES

- 1 Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb, "Introduction: Art and Medieval Jerusalem," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 4.
- 2 Thomas P. Campbell, "Director's Foreword," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), vii.
- 3 Boehm and Holcomb, 4.

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Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb, 3–7. New York:  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016.

Campbell, Thomas P. “Director’s Foreword.” In *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, edited by Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb, vii–viii. New York:  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016.

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# Éditorial

—

TARA NG

À l'automne 2016, les étudiants du séminaire de premier cycle en histoire de l'art intitulé *The City of Jerusalem: Ideas and Images* (« Jérusalem : idées et images ») et donné par Loren Lerner – professeure au Département d'histoire de l'art de l'Université Concordia – ont eu l'occasion unique de visiter l'exposition avant-gardiste *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven* (« Jérusalem (1000-1400), Tous les peuples qui sont sous le ciel... ») au Metropolitan Museum of Art. Présentant près de 200 objets issus des collections permanentes du musée ainsi que de collections internationales, cette exposition illustre la vaste influence artistique et l'attrait spirituel de la Terre sainte au Moyen Âge. Dans le catalogue d'exposition, les conservatrices Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb définissent la période allant de l'an 1000 à 1400 comme un moment historique et esthétique unique qui touche à plusieurs aspects du développement hiérosolymiteain<sup>1</sup>, principalement en raison du multiculturalisme sans précédent que connaissait la ville<sup>2</sup>. Alors que d'autres expositions antérieurement consacrées

à cette époque étaient plutôt axées sur les croisades chrétiennes et leur impact sur l'art contemporain, Jerusalem, 1000–1400 mettait en valeur, d'une part, les rapports fréquents – tantôt symbiotiques et tantôt hostiles – qui existaient entre les natifs et les étrangers ethniquement, culturellement et linguistiquement si diversifiés qui se partageaient ces espaces et de l'autre, les œuvres novatrices, magistrales et esthétiquement complexes qui sont nées de ces interactions.

Pour cette quatrième édition d'Histoire de l'art à Jérusalem, chaque étudiant a sélectionné au moins une pièce de l'exposition en vue de l'examiner plus en détail. Il en résulte une collection d'essais et de recherches-créations en histoire de l'art qui traitent du sujet avec perspicacité et inventivité. Cette série élargit considérablement la mission de Barbara Drake Boehm et de Melanie Holcomb, qui consiste à stimuler l'intérêt pour cette époque à la fois riche et particulière de l'histoire de Jérusalem.

La présente édition est organisée en quatre sections thématiques. La première, intitulée « Tradition et innovation », explore comment le commerce, la diplomatie, les voyages de loisir et d'autres formes d'échange interculturel ont permis de transmettre les tendances artistiques entre la ville de Jérusalem et diverses régions incluant la Chine, l'Éthiopie et la Belgique, donnant ainsi naissance à des compositions originales intégrant les influences locales et étrangères. Les essais de la section « Religion, politique et art » mettent au jour la créativité avec

laquelle les croisés chrétiens et les Timourides musulmans ont exploité le potentiel propagandiste de l'imagerie visuelle pour affirmer leur maîtrise de la ville de Jérusalem. La section « À la recherche du sacré » expose dans le détail la pratique du pèlerinage et examine d'autres sites et symboles culturels possédant un pouvoir spirituel semblable à celui de Jérusalem. La section finale, intitulée « Jeter un pont entre le monde terrestre et le royaume céleste », étudie des exemples architecturaux et artistiques chrétiens, juifs et musulmans qui évoquent le monde céleste et la vie après la mort.

Bien que l'instabilité politique ait causé des problèmes considérables à Jérusalem tout au long de la période en question, les recherches-créations et essais en histoire de l'art inclus dans cette édition témoignent du pouvoir indéfectible de la ville d'attirer des artistes de la région et d'ailleurs. En étudiant leurs œuvres, on peut découvrir les nombreuses voix tissant le récit évocateur de la Jérusalem médiévale.

#### NOTES

- 1 Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb, "Introduction: Art and Medieval Jerusalem", dans Boehm, Barbara Drake and Melanie Holcomb, Eds. *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People under Heaven*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016, p. 4.

- 2 Thomas P. Campbell, “Director’s Foreword”, dans Boehm, Barbara Drake and Melanie Holcomb, Eds. *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People under Heaven*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016, p. vii.
- 3 Boehm et Holcomb, p. 4.

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Campbell, Thomas P. “Director’s Foreword”, dans Boehm, Barbara Drake and Melanie Holcomb, Eds. *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016, p. vii–viii.

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# **Tradition and Innovation**

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# **Tradition et innovation**

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Anonymous, *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*, after 1134–before 1156, walrus ivory,  
18.4 x 14 x 1.6 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.  
Photo: RMN / Jean-Gilles Berizzi, 2000.  
[http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/  
visite?srv=car\\_not\\_frame&idNotice=5009&langue=en](http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=5009&langue=en).

# Cross of Sibyl of Anjou

—

ROBERT HABACHI

During the First Crusade (1096–99), Christian Franks wrested Jerusalem from Muslim control and established the Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099–1291).<sup>1</sup> The kingdom, which encompassed present-day Israel, southern Lebanon and southwestern Jordan, was home to “Franks and Syrians, Greeks and Jews, Armenians and Moslems,” among others.<sup>2</sup> Its diverse culture was further enriched by the cultural exchange that took place as a result of the kingdom’s political connections with members of the European nobility. One artwork that represents this trans-cultural movement of people, ideas and objects is the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* (after 1134–before 1156) (fig. 1). Sibylla of Anjou (ca. 1112–65), daughter of Fulk V of Anjou (1089/92–1143) and stepdaughter of Queen Melisende of Jerusalem (r. 1131–53), made the first of many visits to Jerusalem in 1129 to attend the

wedding of her father and the queen.<sup>3</sup> After marrying Thierry of Alsace of Flanders (ca. 1099–1168) in 1134 and spending many years in Flanders, she returned to Jerusalem permanently in 1157 and joined the convent at Bethany. One significant belonging that Sibylla brought with her to Jerusalem from Flanders was a book with the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* on the cover.<sup>4</sup> Now in the collection of the Musée du Louvre in Paris, this walrus ivory crucifix is an example of the Mosan style,<sup>5</sup> a regional interpretation of Byzantine and Romanesque art that developed in the Meuse River valley (present-day Belgium) in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>6</sup> This essay will take a closer look at the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*, situating it within its historical context and uncovering the significance of its iconography and medium by comparing it to similar artworks.

In 1131, the king of Jerusalem, Baldwin II (r. 1118–31), was dying, and it was a time of conflict in Jerusalem. The king needed someone he could trust to fight for Jerusalem and to rule over his kingdom. He and his wife had no sons, so he looked to his firstborn child, Melisende, to marry someone who could protect the kingdom. During the Middle Ages, marriage was not an act of love, but a means of creating political and economic alliances between states and countries.<sup>7</sup> Melisende's marriage was arranged by both her father and the nobles of states who participated in the Crusades. The king chose Fulk V, Count of Anjou and Main, to be her husband due to his position in the military.<sup>8</sup> In 1131, Fulk married Melisende, and after the death

of Baldwin II they ruled the kingdom of Jerusalem together. In 1134, Sibylla of Anjou married the count of Flanders.<sup>9</sup> During the Second Crusade (1147–49), while her husband was away fighting, Sibylla became regent for the county of Flanders.<sup>10</sup> Baldwin IV (1108–71), Count of Hainaut (1120–71), took advantage of this perceived moment of vulnerability and attacked the county of Flanders, which Sibylla successfully countered. In 1157, Sibylla and Thierry went to Jerusalem. Though the details of what happened are unclear, Sibylla refused to return home and instead became a nun.<sup>11</sup> Both her high social status and her subsequent life as a nun are evidenced by her portrayal in the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*.

The small *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* displays the crucifixion of Christ. The cross is believed to have been made between 1134 and 1156 by a Mosan artist. While well known for their metalwork, Mosan artists also produced ivory carvings.<sup>12</sup> The Mosan style emphasizes the naturalism of figures while keeping the idealized forms of the Romanesque style. Furthermore, because the Meuse River valley had been a part of the Carolingian Empire (800–88), the Mosan style contains elements of Carolingian art, which in turn borrows from Classical art.<sup>13</sup>



Fig. 1. Anonymous, *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*, after 1134–before 1156, walrus ivory, 18.4 x 14 x 1.6 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Photo: RMN / Jean-Gilles Berizzi, 2000.

[http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car\\_not\\_frame&idNotice=5009&langue=en](http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=5009&langue=en).

Although it is called the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*, it is in fact a crucifix. While both are related to the Christian faith, they have different meanings.<sup>14</sup> A crucifix is a three-dimensional piece that represents personal devotion to Christ.<sup>15</sup> Christians who have devoted themselves to their faith will often pray before a crucifix.<sup>16</sup> The *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* not only represents a way for its owners to devote themselves to Christ, but it also embodies luxury.

The crucifix is made of ivory, a material collected from animals such as whales, walruses and elephants.<sup>17</sup> The artist's use of walrus ivory is unusual, and suggests that the material was obtained via a trade route. The crucifix is not crafted from a single piece, but rather from six different pieces of ivory.<sup>18</sup> In ancient Greece, bronze sculptors melted down their artwork if they made a mistake so that they could reuse the bronze. Similarly, the method used for crafting the crucifix allowed the artist to restart if a mistake was made. By using six pieces of ivory to assemble the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*, the artist was able to work on each piece separately, and would only have to repeat a specific section if there was a flaw. This allowed the artist to waste less ivory, which was imperative given that walrus ivory had to be brought in from distant lands and was thus difficult to acquire.

The artist may have chosen to use walrus ivory because of the lack of elephant ivory at the time. Walrus ivory was not the first choice of ivory for artists, and was only used as a substitute when elephant ivory was both scarce and expensive.<sup>19</sup> During the medieval period walruses were mostly found in northern Europe,<sup>20</sup> and walrus hunting was practised in northern Scandinavia and Russia.<sup>21</sup> The species of walrus known as *odobenus rosmarus* is native to this region and was a popular hunting target.<sup>22</sup> According to Marloes Rijkelijhuizen, the trade for walrus ivory existed during the tenth to the twelfth centuries.<sup>23</sup> While the Scandinavian countries and Russia had no direct contact with Jerusalem, the walrus ivory trade extended to other

European countries such as England. Walrus ivory may have therefore been imported into Jerusalem from these regions. In fact, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London owns a walrus ivory crucifix (fig. 2) made between 1090 and 1110; it was found in Tombland, Norwich, on the west side of the close—that is, the surrounding area—of Norwich Cathedral, and was possibly also produced in this area.<sup>24</sup>



Fig. 2. Anonymous, *The Crucifixion*, ca. 1090–1110, carved walrus ivory, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. © Victoria and Albert Museum. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O94293/the-crucifixion-panel-relief-unknown/>.

*The Crucifixion* is carved in high relief, and thus displays more detail than the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*. Christ is present in both cases, but *The Crucifixion* shows the surrounding figures in full length, whereas the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* shows Christ in full length and only the faces of the other figures. *The Crucifixion* features Longinus, who is holding a lance on the left, and Stephato, who is carrying a reed with a sponge attached. Personifications of the sun and moon flank Christ's head. These motifs were popular in the Early Christian period.<sup>25</sup> *The Crucifixion* contained blue pigment in multiple locations of the ivory piece, indicating that it was originally painted. It also has holes around the edges of the piece, suggesting that it was framed with an expensive material, such as gold.<sup>26</sup> Assuming gold was the metal used, it would not be too farfetched to think that the person who had commissioned the piece could afford walrus ivory.

While the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* was not painted with colour and does not contain holes to insert metal, it is possible that the artist did not want to use extra material, or perhaps the function and meaning of the piece differ from those of *The Crucifixion*. As mentioned earlier, the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* shows Sibylla pleading with Christ for mercy for, most likely, her sins. If the crucifix was too lavish, it might have made Sibylla appear materialistic and undermined its intended message.

Indeed, ivory objects were common luxury items from the mid-thirteenth century onward.<sup>27</sup> Ivory was used to make not only crucifixes but also such objects as small marriage coffers from the fourteenth century, flasks and plaques.<sup>28</sup> The wealthy were fond of ivory caskets and furniture and panelling with ivory inlay.<sup>29</sup> Many ivory objects fetched high prices, from around 4,830 francs to 19,740 francs. One ivory object, however, sold for 26,250 francs;<sup>30</sup> this was the *Aldobrandini Crozier* (ca. 1370) (fig. 3), which belonged to Giovanni Benci Carrucci Aldobrandini, Bishop of Gubbio (1370–75), and displays an intricately carved scene of the Adoration of the Magi.<sup>31</sup>



Fig. 3. Anonymous, *Aldobrandini Crozier*, ca. 1370, elephant ivory, painted and gilded, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. © Victoria and Albert Museum.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O72938/aldobrandini-crozier-pastoral-staff-and-unknown/>.

This artefact demonstrates two important points: First, ivory was an object that only rich and powerful people could afford; it therefore showcased one's social status. Second, it is possible that religious ivory objects were more important and more expensive than their non-religious counterparts. This was perhaps because religious items made with ivory were associated with God and therefore of greater value.

Another example of a religious ivory artefact from this period is the *Melisende Psalter* (1131–43) (fig. 4), which belonged to Melisende, Sibylla's stepmother and queen of Jerusalem.



Fig. 4. Anonymous, carved ivory cover of *Melisende Psalter*, 1131–43, ivory, British Library, London, Egerton MS 1139/1.

<http://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2013/08/twelfth-century-girl-power.html>.

The psalter refers to the Book of Psalms, which is part of the Christian Old Testament.<sup>32</sup> Similar to the Gospels, the psalter is considered one of the most important Christian books.<sup>33</sup> The *Psalter's* ivory front and back covers, joined together by silk embroidered binding, demonstrate both Melisende's social status and the importance of her role in the monarchy. Regarded as the most important artefact associated with the queen, the *Psalter* was completed before the death of her husband in 1143. As the *Psalter* was believed to be a gift to her, the materials chosen were very important since the book was meant to symbolize her ability to rule.<sup>34</sup> The front cover shows carved images demonstrating what was to be expected of Queen Melisende during her rule.<sup>35</sup> The cover shows elements from King David's rule; King David was a model to all medieval rulers due to his heroism and inspirational acts during his reign. This book was most likely commissioned by Melisende's husband, Fulk, who was trying to compare his own qualities to King David.<sup>36</sup> The *Psalter* begins with twenty-four full pages of New Testament illuminations, followed by a calendar featuring medallions of the twelve zodiac signs, eight pages of initials on gold ground with gold incipits separating the psalms, and then, finally, the complete text of the psalter, decorated with gold initials.<sup>37</sup> At the end of the manuscript are nine portraits of saints.<sup>38</sup> The *Psalter* not only uses expensive materials on the outside, but on the inside, the amount of artwork and gold inscription shows that the book was meant to be used by a person of status—in this case, Queen Melisende.

According to Margaret Tranovich, while the Renaissance era saw a revival of ancient Greek and Roman art and literature, there is also evidence of influence from Islamic and Byzantine art.<sup>39</sup> During the early thirteenth century the predominant manner in which Christ was depicted on the cross changed from *Christus triumphans* (Christ triumphant) to *Christus patiens* (Christ suffering).<sup>40</sup> Both styles were influenced by Roman art, the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople, Islamic culture and trans-alpine art, but they are also somewhat different. *Christus triumphans* crucifixes, such as the *San Damiano Crucifix* (12<sup>th</sup> c.) (fig. 5) show Christ on the cross not as a mortal, but as something more: he is shown defeating death, ignoring the pain from the wounds in his hands, his feet and his side. Christ also appears to be levitating and heading to heaven. Meanwhile, Mary and Christ's followers express happiness rather than sadness.<sup>41</sup> *Christus patiens*, as exemplified in Cimabue's (1240–1302) *Crucifix* (1270s?) (fig. 6), shows Christ as the opposite: instead of showing Christ as a superhuman, here he is a mere mortal. Death overcomes him as he closes his eyes and allows his body to give in to the weight of gravity. Moreover, Mary and Saint John are in a state of sorrow.<sup>42</sup>



Fig. 5. Anonymous, *San Damiano Crucifix*, 12<sup>th</sup> c.,  
tempera on panel, 190 x 120 cm, Santa Chiara, Assisi.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kruis\\_san\\_damiano\\_bright.gif](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kruis_san_damiano_bright.gif).

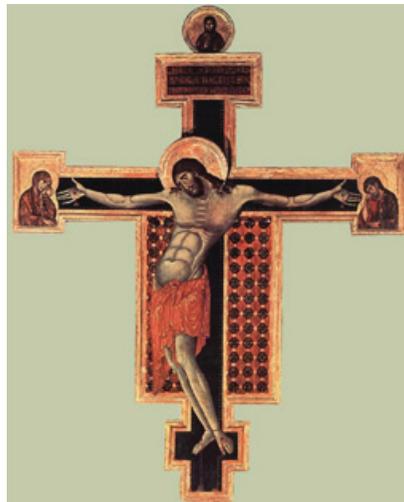


Fig. 6. Cimabue, *Crucifix*, 1270s (?), 3.4 x 2.7 m, San Domenico, Arezzo.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cimabue\\_-\\_Crucifix\\_-\\_WGA04927.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cimabue_-_Crucifix_-_WGA04927.jpg).

The *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* shares some common features with Renaissance crucifixes, especially those in the *Christus patiens* style. The portrayal of Christ in the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* is redolent of the *Christus patiens* style. While the carving on the ivory cross makes it hard to see the details of Christ's face, his body clearly conveys his suffering. His head is tilted to the right as though he is too weak to hold it up. While the nails piercing his hands and feet restrict his movement, his left knee can be seen falling on top of his right knee, again indicating that he is losing his strength and slowly dying. The naturalistic representation of Christ's body and its response to gravity exemplifies the Mosan style.

Each of the four ends of the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* features figures contained within a semicircular frame. The two figures carved into the horizontal beam are important biblical characters, one of whom is believed to be Mary. Both appear to be upset. The bottom of the cross shows Sibyl of Anjou seemingly pleading and begging.<sup>43</sup> An inscription over her head indicates that she is begging both the Virgin Mary and the son of God for forgiveness.

Begging for God's mercy is a popular theme in Renaissance art, particularly in chapels. The Scrovegni chapel (ca. 1305) in Padua, Italy, was erected by Enrico Scrovegni (d. 1336), who belonged to one of the leading banking families in the city.

During the thirteenth century, the head of the family, Reginaldo Scrovegni (d. 1290), made his fortune lending money to clients and charging a high interest rate. Reginaldo's son, Enrico, was perhaps worried about the morality of usury and commissioned the creation of the chapel as a form of atonement. One of Giotto's (1266–1337) frescoes in the chapel shows Enrico pleading and begging for mercy.<sup>44</sup> Giotto's fresco paintings begin with the story of the parents of the Virgin Mary and end with the Final Judgment. The latter fresco, which spans the entrance wall, shows Enrico at bottom centre, kneeling on one knee and offering the chapel to the Virgin (fig. 7).<sup>45</sup> This act may be seen as Enrico's attempt to repent for his sins and to pray for a better judgment than what he believed his father received.<sup>46</sup> The depiction of Sibylla begging for forgiveness in the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* was perhaps intended to show her transformation from social elite to nun.



Fig. 7. Giotto, *The Last Judgment* (detail), 1305, fresco, Scrovegni chapel, Padua.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Last-judgment-scrovegni-chapel-giotto-1306.jpg>.

In this essay, I have explored the historical context in which the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* was made, and examined its form and meaning in relation to examples of similar earlier and later Christian artworks. Christian ivory artworks such as the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* illustrate that the wealthy were not immune to worrying about their fate at the Last Judgment. The theme of pleading for mercy at the Last Judgment is addressed in objects ranging from the personal, such as the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou*, to large-scale projects such as the Scrovegni chapel. Finally, the *Cross of Sibyl of Anjou* demonstrates the impact of the Mosan school on later Renaissance artists who adopted similar techniques and motifs in their crucifixes.

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Anonymous, *The Stavelot Triptych*, ca. 1156–58, wood, copper and silver gilt, enamel, semiprecious stones, 47.9 x 32.1 x 7.9 cm (closed), Morgan Library & Museum, New York.

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# East and West Dichotomy of the *Stavelot Triptych*



AAKRUTI PATEL

The *Stavelot Triptych* (fig. 1), created in Mosan, Belgium, between 1156 and 1158 CE, is an example of medieval Christian art currently housed at the Morgan Library & Museum, New York. A triptych is essentially a picture or relief carvings done on three panels which are hinged together side-by-side and used as an altarpiece.<sup>1</sup> The *Stavelot Triptych* is made of gilded copper with champlevé and cloisonné enamel, silver, *émail brun* and semiprecious stones. It has three panels, with the central panel holding two smaller triptychs, the larger of which holds the relics of the True Cross as well as remnants from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Virgin Mary's dress (fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> Within the left and right panels of the *Stavelot Triptych* are the Mosan artists' depictions of the legends and miracles of the True Cross.<sup>3</sup>



Fig. 1. Anonymous, *The Stavelot Triptych*, ca. 1156–58,  
wood, copper and silver gilt, enamel, semiprecious stones, 47.9 x 32.1 x 7.9 cm  
(closed), Morgan Library & Museum, New York.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stavelot.Triptych.jpg>.



Fig. 2. Detail from central panel of *Stavelot Triptych* showing two small triptychs.

There is very little information available regarding the artist or artists who executed this triptych, but what has been established is that the Mosan artists are not solely responsible for the work; Byzantine artists contributed, as well. The formal techniques employed throughout the triptych “represent two very different views of the world,”<sup>4</sup> reflecting the East-West dichotomy within Christianity which continues to this day in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. The Byzantine artists combined their vernacular cloisonné enamel technique with a symbolic mode of representation to create the two triptychs in the centre panel, which feature “static hieratic compositions in which figures, seemingly almost frozen in place, quietly adore the cross.” The Western artists used a champlevé enamel technique and preferred a narrative mode, “creating lively energetic figures acting out dramatic stories of visions, battles, confrontations, and miracles” within the medallions on the left and right panels.<sup>5</sup> To better understand the confluence of Western and Byzantine art in the *Stavelot Triptych*, this work and its patron must be examined more closely.

During the mid-twelfth century when the *Stavelot Triptych* was made, Abbot Wibald (1098–1158) led the imperial Benedictine monastery of Stavelot, in present-day Belgium, between 1130 and 1158.<sup>6</sup> A prominent figure of the Catholic church, Wibald is said to have commissioned the *Stavelot Triptych*.<sup>7</sup> He was a well-educated man who, throughout his life, counselled the pope and various emperors; he was also “at various points

and sometimes simultaneously, the abbot of some of the most renowned abbeys of his era” including Stavelot, Malmedy, Corvey and Monte Cassino.<sup>8</sup> In 1154, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (1122–1190), one of the many emperors whom Wibald counselled, sent him on a diplomatic mission to Constantinople,<sup>9</sup> where he met the Byzantine emperor and empress.<sup>10</sup> It is possible that during his stay at Constantinople, the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1118–1180) presented Abbot Wibald with the two small Byzantine triptychs that are now in the centre panel of the *Stavelot Triptych* as a diplomatic offering.<sup>11</sup> In 1157, the abbot travelled back to the Byzantine court for the second time and stayed for almost a year, but by 1158, Wibald had passed away during his journey back home.<sup>12</sup> Marilyn Stokstad posits that in the period between Wibald’s two trips, “the Western shrine for the Byzantine [triptychs] could have been made in Stavelot,” but adds, “Of the artists who made the [triptychs], we know nothing.”<sup>13</sup>

A significant formal characteristic of the *Stavelot Triptych* is the champlévé enamel and stonework framing the smaller triptychs in the central panel. This work is credited to the Mosan artists, who originally placed the relics atop “a golden field enriched with semi-precious stones”; the velvet background we see today is a modern addition.<sup>14</sup> The *Stavelot Triptych* “demonstrates the correspondence between framing and enshrining in its formal features: for this object, to frame is to enshrine, and vice versa.”<sup>15</sup> The correlation between framing and enshrining is

especially meaningful for reliquary objects of the Middle Ages because it transformed them into performance objects that brought together their representational process and “their performative engagements with their viewers.”<sup>16</sup> The triptych was centrally located in the nave of the cathedral, and was opened only on certain feast days.<sup>17</sup> On these occasions, the framed relics allowed audiences direct contact with the heavenly realm.<sup>18</sup>

The juxtaposition of enamel works by Western and Eastern artists visually manifests the opposition between the Roman Catholic church and the Eastern Orthodox church. While the stone and enamel work in the medallions on the outer wings of the triptych is credited to the Western Mosan artists, who employed *champlevé* enamelwork representative of their time,<sup>19</sup> the two triptychs in the central panel employ a *cloisonné* technique that is associated with Byzantine artists from the Eastern Orthodox church.<sup>20</sup> Both the *champlevé* and *cloisonné* techniques use fine coloured glass enamel as a base; however, for the *cloisonné* technique, “the individual cells that divide the colours are formed by tiny gold strips soldered to the surface of the panel, whereas in the *champlevé* technique, the cells are gouged out of the metal plate.”<sup>21</sup> The *champlevé* enamel technique and *repoussé* decoration were probably done in a Mosan workshop either shortly before or around 1160.<sup>22</sup>

The Western-style wings containing the six medallions were conceived by Mosan artists to serve as a precious frame for the two smaller Byzantine triptychs.<sup>23</sup> The artists disassembled these triptychs and rearranged the panels into their present configuration so as to “set the stage for the relics’ display and veneration.”<sup>24</sup> According to Holger A. Klein, the original “Byzantine parts were not merely incorporated as a visible proof of the relic’s Eastern origin and authenticity, but [...] were designed to play an active role in the enactment of the holy.”<sup>25</sup>

During the early Christian period the cult of the holy relics, and especially of the True Cross, provided the foundation for the veneration of holy images.<sup>26</sup> The Western artists did not shy away from creating lively and energetic figures in the *Stavelot Triptych* even though the Byzantine figures were depicted as more static.<sup>27</sup> The Mosan artists used a narrative style of representation in the medallions to illustrate major events associated with the True Cross.<sup>28</sup> The medallions are meant to be read from bottom to top beginning with the left panel, which is dedicated to the life of Constantine. The bottom left medallion describes how, while sleeping the night before his battle with his rival Maxentius (ca. 278–312) for control of the Roman Empire, Constantine dreamed he saw the Cross of Christ in the sky and was informed by angels that the Cross would ensure his victory over Maxentius (fig. 3).<sup>29</sup>



Fig. 3. Bottom left medallion of the *Stavelot Triptych*.

Of course, during the time of Constantine, the image of the Cross was not how we imagine it today; the middle medallion (fig. 4) shows the troops with their shields enamelled with the cross-monogram of Christ, known as the Chi-Rho (fig. 5).<sup>30</sup>



Fig. 4. Centre left medallion of the *Stavelot Triptych*.

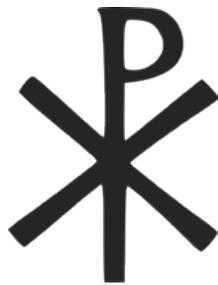


Fig. 5. The Chi-Ro symbol.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Simple\\_Labarum2.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Simple_Labarum2.svg).

The middle medallion depicts the battle at the Milvian Bridge outside of Rome where Constantine won a decisive victory, killing Maxentius and ensuring his power over the Roman Empire.<sup>31</sup> Lastly, the top medallion summarizes the left wing's narrative by depicting Constantine accepting Christianity and being baptized near the end of his life in 337 (fig. 6).<sup>32</sup>



Fig. 6. Top left medallion of the *Stavelot Triptych*.

On the right wing of the triptych, the Mosan artists bring focus to Empress Helena (ca. 246/50–ca. 327/30), Constantine’s mother and a Christian, by depicting her travelling to Jerusalem seeking the True Cross.<sup>33</sup> The narrative is once again told from bottom to top, with the bottom medallion depicting Helena seated on a throne, interrogating the Jews who are gathered in front of her (fig. 7).<sup>34</sup>



Fig. 7. Bottom right medallion of the *Stavelot Triptych*.

The centre right medallion depicts the point in the narrative when the Jews lead Helena to Golgotha, where they dig up the crosses of Jesus and the two thieves who were crucified alongside him (fig. 8).<sup>35</sup>

In the final medallion (fig. 9), the story concludes with the True Cross revealing itself when it brings a dead youth back to life. On the right, a servant is walking away with the two false crosses.<sup>36</sup>

What remains constant throughout the six medallions is the narrative method used by the Mosan artists. The six medallions illustrate the story of the True Cross as it was known in the Middle Ages.<sup>37</sup> The Empress Helena, upon finding the True Cross, “brought back pieces of the wood and the nails from the Cross, along with the other relics, back to the imperial court”<sup>38</sup>—some of which are contained in the larger triptych reliquary in the centre of the *Stavelot Triptych*.



Fig. 8. Centre right medallion of the *Stavelot Triptych*.



Fig. 9. Top right medallion of the *Stavelot Triptych*.

Contrary to the Mosan artists, the Byzantine artists employed a symbolic mode to represent their figures in the two smaller triptychs within the *Stavelot Triptych*. The enamel cover of the larger of the two reliquaries is flanked by angels, Eastern saints, and Constantine and Helena (fig. 10).<sup>39</sup> Unlike the Roman Catholic church, the Eastern Orthodox church revered Constantine and Helena as saints.<sup>40</sup>

The smaller of the two triptychs features Saint Mary and Saint John witnessing Christ's death on the cross.<sup>41</sup> The two observers are static, quietly adoring Christ. Overall, the medieval artists succeed in giving the essence of Christian belief tangible form, both in the narrative-based medallions by the Mosan artists and in the more symbolic imagery by the Byzantine artists.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, the juxtaposition of the two enamel techniques in the *Stavelot Triptych* reveals two very different worldviews.<sup>43</sup>



Fig. 10. The larger of the two triptychs in the central panel of the *Stavelot Triptych*.

After the discovery of the True Cross by the Empress Helena, the instrument of Christ's sacrificial death became one of the main objects of pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and any known relics of the Cross became highly sought after throughout the Christian world.<sup>44</sup> The *Stavelot Triptych*—which is essentially a triptych within a triptych, or rather, a reliquary within a reliquary—affirms the power of the Cross and its liturgical function as a reliquary through the large inscriptions immediately above the top left and right medallions which celebrate the “Discovery and Exaltation of the Cross” by stating: “Behold the Cross of the Lord. Flee your hostile powers. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David has conquered.”<sup>45</sup>

Despite following in the standard medieval visual art practice of Christian art, the *Stavelot Triptych* is unique in that it exemplifies the East-West dichotomy within Christianity.<sup>46</sup> While the Byzantine artists created the two smaller central triptychs using their vernacular cloisonné enamel technique, the Western Mosan artists kept these original works but created their own triptych to frame them. However, the latter chose to break from stylistic and technical consistency, and employed their own vernacular style of champlevé enamel technique. The Eastern artists used a symbolic mode of representation to depict their static, hieratic compositions, while the Western artists portray more animated figures within their narrative-based images. Finally, along with the differing styles of figurative representation and enamel techniques between the Eastern and Western

artists, the two modes of representation also represent two opposing worldviews. This is seen through the conception of the Emperor Constantine, who was venerated as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox church but was never canonized in the Roman Catholic Church, even though his mother, Helena, was.<sup>47</sup> Altogether, the *Stavelot Triptych* is an example of how medieval art is essentially Christian art in the way it canonized Christianity and employed it throughout medieval life and visual culture. However, the dual nature of the triptych reflects Cynthia Hahn's assertion that "as much as reliquaries want to present the face of divinity, inevitability, and eternity, they were inescapably objects made by hand."<sup>48</sup>

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Anonymous, *Vase*, 14<sup>th</sup> c., stonepaste, paint and transparent glaze,  
h. 39 cm, diam. 26.5 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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# Mamluk Ceramics: Distinct China

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Ceramics are a portal into a culture's character, revealing not only its values and tastes, but also its receptiveness to exogenous artistic developments. In the exhibition catalogue *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, Melanie Holcomb asserts that during the period of Mamluk rule in Jerusalem, which lasted from 1260 to 1517, locals enjoyed Mamluk ceramics produced in Cairo and Damascus that were modelled after blue-and-white Ming ware.<sup>1</sup> While this is accurate to some extent, the relationship between centres of pottery production in China and the Middle East is more complex. It is often assumed that blue-and-white porcelain originated in China due to its superior quality and sought-after nature, but this essay aims to show that

Chinese potters appropriated artistic styles from the Middle East, and vice versa to a lesser degree. Therefore, Ming ware did not inspire Mamluk underglaze-painted stonepaste pottery, despite the former's ubiquity. Although the Mamluk Empire suffered turbulence in the areas of the military, religion and trade, Mamluk fritware, such as the *Bowl* (12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> c.) from Damascus and the *Vase* (14<sup>th</sup> c.) from Egypt or Syria, attests to its inventive integration of various influences to create a distinctive style of pottery that embodied their Muslim faith.

This essay will consider three aspects of Chinese and Mamluk pottery: the impact of Chinese whiteware on Mamluk pottery; Chinese appropriation of cobalt blue designs from Islamic pottery; and the contrasting styles of Mamluk pottery and Yuan and Ming blue-and-white porcelain. These three areas will be examined in order to understand their development, and to establish the exact parameters of cultural and artistic exchange between the Mamluk Empire and China.

The Mamluks originally belonged to a class of “owned slaves” in a system established by a ninth-century Abbasid ruler that would provide a robust and loyal military. These slaves trained and served in the military until they reached adulthood,<sup>2</sup> and were converted to the Islamic faith of their leaders.<sup>3</sup> The Qipchaq Turkic slave soldiers grew in power until they were able to depose the last Ayyubid ruler and found the Mamluk dynasty in 1250.<sup>4</sup> Around this time, the Mongols were invading

areas of the Middle East, such as Persia in 1221.<sup>5</sup> The Mamluks did not cease their military exploits with their victory over the Ayyubids, but set out against more formidable adversaries. They fought against the Mongols and were victorious at the Battle of ‘Ayn Jalut (1260).<sup>6</sup> The Mamluks also eradicated the Crusader presence in Palestine and Syria.<sup>7</sup> Defeating such powerful entities at the beginning of the Mamluk dynasty allowed it to shift its attention away from military efforts towards religious and artistic developments.

The Mamluks asserted their religious faith through building projects and small-scale artistic production. Andrew C. Smith’s essay “Mamluk Jerusalem: Architecturally Challenging Narratives” explores the religiously inspired architectural embellishment of the Holy City.<sup>8</sup> Islamic buildings, notably minarets, madrasas, mosques and tombs featuring the iconic dome, were not only seen in Jerusalem, but also in the urban landscapes of Syria and Egypt.<sup>9</sup> These two latter countries would continue to be centres of artistic production under the Mamluks. Ira M. Lapidus explains that movement across the Middle East by artisans and merchants of diverse specialties allowed for these production centres to flourish and exert international influence while remaining firmly entrenched in Islam.<sup>10</sup>

Chinese pottery began to be imported into the Middle East in the early ninth century.<sup>11</sup> The whitewares and greenwares of the Song dynasty (960–1279) were revered by Islamic potters,

who sought to produce a similar product of their own. They experimented with different methods, and eventually invented fritware around the twelfth century.<sup>12</sup> Fritware consists of a “pottery body made of crushed quartz, white clay, and ground glass (frit).”<sup>13</sup> Fritware (also known as stonepaste) was treated with a newly developed glaze that closely imitated the whiteness and lustrous finish of Chinese porcelain. The addition of tin oxide to clear glaze altered the natural colours of the pottery to a “soft, matte white.”<sup>14</sup> While Islamic potters were not successful in producing fritware that was comparable to the quality of Chinese porcelain, they did excel at executing elaborate painted decorations. Using materials within their vicinity and restricting decorative motifs to their Islamic aesthetic repertoire are traits that the Mamluks would incorporate into their wider artistic and religious agenda.

While Islamic potters mimicked the whiteness of Chinese porcelain in their own wares, Chinese potters of the fourteenth century began embellishing their works with designs rendered in cobalt blue—a colour that first appeared in Islamic pottery.<sup>15</sup> Finlay traces the origin of blue pigment in artistic production in ancient times to the Egyptians.<sup>16</sup> In the ninth century, the potters of Samarra and Basra started to decorate their white wares with cobalt blue epigraphic and vegetal motifs.<sup>17</sup> While using cobalt blue as a beautifying agent in the decorative arts of the Middle East has a long tradition, it took much longer for it to become part of the Chinese artistic repertoire. It was not until the Yuan

dynasty (1271–1368) that cobalt minerals from the Middle East made their way to China.<sup>18</sup> Inspired by the traditional Islamic objects displayed in the homes of Muslim merchants in China, artisans in famous art production centres like Jingdezhen appropriated the cobalt blue colour and motifs seen in Islamic objects and integrated them with local styles of pottery.<sup>19</sup> These objects were exported to the Middle East, where buyers appreciated the fusion of Islamic and Chinese influences.<sup>20</sup> Although Chinese artisans were immersed in Islamic art traditions, they, much like Middle Eastern potters, stayed firmly rooted in their own traditions.<sup>21</sup>

In the Mamluk period, artistic trends established during previous Muslim dynasties continued to be developed, resulting in artworks characterized by international Islamic traits. Islamic art as a whole is not static; over time, artists have developed new techniques, and artistic styles differ from one area to the next. However, Islamic art does adhere to specific conventions. The Metropolitan Museum of Art characterizes Islamic composition on the basis of four major themes: “calligraphy, vegetal patterns, geometric patterns, and figural representation.”<sup>22</sup> Mamluk art features most of these motifs, with the exception of figural representations.<sup>23</sup> The depiction of human and animal figures in Islamic art was discouraged, as it was seen to impinge on the sole power of God to create life forms.<sup>24</sup> Mamluk art abides by this rule, reflecting the Mamluks’ strong religious convictions.

Beyond religious subject matter, Mamluk artisans favoured local traditions and resources, from artistic mediums (e.g., fritware) to artistic styles developed by preceding dynasties. For instance, the “[s]ymmetry, repetition, overall patterning, and abstraction” that characterized art and material culture in Abbasid Iraq in the ninth century would later be seen in Mamluk pottery.<sup>25</sup>

The decorative composition of the fourteenth-century *Vase* (fig. 1) in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum is divided into three main sections: the neck, body and base of the vessel.

The organization of the designs is vertically oriented, symmetrical and restricted within geometric shapes, including circles, rectangles and pentagons. The designs within these geometric boundaries are abstract, ranging from pseudo-vegetal patterns stemming from the Abbasid ornamental repertoire to dots as space fillers.<sup>26</sup> Another *Vase* (fig. 2) from the same period displays a similar compositional structure but different Islamic designs, such as the pseudo-calligraphic patterning on the body.<sup>27</sup> Vegetal motifs are wedged between these vertical lines, resulting in a densely decorated body. Experimenting with abstract renditions of vegetal and calligraphic motifs was a way for Mamluk potters to exercise creativity within a strict religious and artistic framework.

Both genuine and pseudo-calligraphy could be combined within the same composition, as seen in the fourteenth-century *Jar* from Syria (fig. 3).



Fig. 1. Anonymous, *Vase*, 14<sup>th</sup> c., stonepaste, paint and transparent glaze, h. 39 cm, diam. 26.5 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O85918/vase-unknown/>.



Fig. 2. Anonymous, *Vase*, 14<sup>th</sup> c.,  
fritware painted under the glaze, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.  
© Victoria and Albert Museum.  
<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O89571/vase-unknown/>.



Fig. 3. Anonymous, *Jar*, 14<sup>th</sup> c., stonepaste; polychrome painted under transparent glaze, h. 33.7 cm, max. diam. 23.5 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/444477>.

Calligraphy and its variety of scripts (e.g., *thuluth*, as seen in the previous vessel) within a horizontal band is a common feature in the Mamluk artistic repertoire. The brass *Basin* (ca. 1320–41) (fig. 4) in the collection of the British Museum, made in Egypt or Syria, is mainly adorned with a strip of *thuluth* script. The incorporation of calligraphy in Mamluk art went beyond the realm of vessels to include textiles, which became popular in the international market: “striped silks with bands of Arabic text became fashionable in Spain and Italy.”<sup>28</sup>



Fig. 4. Anonymous, *Basin*, ca. 1320–41, silver, gold and brass, h. 22.7 cm, diam. 54 cm, British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum. [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details/collection\\_image\\_gallery.aspx?assetId=30460001&objectId=239442&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?assetId=30460001&objectId=239442&partId=1).

An earlier example of Mamluk pottery is the *Bowl* (late 12<sup>th</sup>–early 13<sup>th</sup> c.) (fig. 5) in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is visually divided into six alternating triangular bands with two repeating designs. Abstract elements include the “pseudo-inscription around the rim” and the ambiguous designs inside the panels.<sup>29</sup> Marcus Milwright’s article “Turquoise and Black: Notes on an Underglaze-Painted Stonepaste Ware of the Mamluk Period” discusses the presence of similar motifs on contemporaneous turquoise and black ware, including dots as fillers and geometric shapes.<sup>30</sup> The *Bowl*’s earlier production date compared to the aforementioned examples of pottery demonstrates that the Islamic artistic repertoire was already well established in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, having spread across the Muslim world from dynasty to dynasty and throughout the vast territory of the Middle East. The themes that characterize Mamluk art, and their ceramics in particular, diverge from the decorative style of Chinese porcelain.



Fig. 5. Anonymous, *Bowl*, late 12<sup>th</sup>–early 13<sup>th</sup> century, stonepaste; polychrome painted under transparent glaze, diam. 22.5 cm, h. 10.5 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/450418>.

In order to differentiate between Chinese blue-and-white porcelain and its Mamluk counterpart, I will analyze examples of the former from the Yuan (1271–1368) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties, which roughly coincide with the Mamluk period. According to Robert Finlay, characteristics of the Chinese artistic approach include: “asymmetry, a flowing sense of place, naturalism, curvilinear patterns, and rotating directional designs (such as cloud, wave, and lotus scrolls).”<sup>31</sup> Not only are these qualities absent in Mamluk ceramics, but they also demonstrate that these two styles of pottery are diametrically opposed. However, some motifs are common to both. The composition of the *Plate with Carp* (mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.) (fig. 6) is organized into two concentric bands and a circular centre.



Fig. 6. Anonymous, *Plate with Carp*, mid-14<sup>th</sup> c., porcelain painted with cobalt blue under transparent glaze (Jingdezhen ware), diam. 45.7 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1987.10/>.

The dense yet narrow rim band possesses an interwoven “zig-zag” pattern, while the cavetto is more loosely and freely adorned with vegetal forms. The well (i.e., the flat inner area of the plate) is reserved for a narrative scene of a fish within its own environment, rendered in a naturalistic manner. There are multiple perspectives within this scene, including profile and planform views. The inclusion of animal forms is undoubtedly the most significant feature that distinguishes Chinese ceramics from Mamluk objects.

Similar in execution is the *Jar with Dragon* (early 15<sup>th</sup> c.) (fig. 7). Much like Mamluk vases, this work is organized into three sections: the neck, body and base. The body showcases the largest design on the jug: an entire narrative of figural representations in various perspectives.

Once again, these techniques contradict the Mamluk’s entire approach. Finlay describes the conservative character of Chinese artworks: “Purely geometric designs were rare in Chinese art; repetition and alternation were unobtrusive, masked by rhythmic movement and plentiful room around ornamental figures.”<sup>32</sup> Although some motifs are present in both Chinese and Mamluk pottery, their overall compositions differ greatly, demonstrating the little reciprocal influence that occurred and loyalty to local traditions.



Fig. 7. Anonymous, *Jar with Dragon*, early 15<sup>th</sup> c., porcelain painted with cobalt blue under transparent glaze (Jingdezhen ware), h. 48.3 cm, diam. 48.3 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/37.191.1/>.

There are other elements to be considered aside from the composition of both types of ceramics. While the types of vessels are the same (i.e., bowls and vases), there are strong dissimilarities in the colour palette and application of pigment, and how these affect tone and mood. The most striking difference between the two traditions is the restrictive colour palette of the Chinese porcelain compared to the black, blue, turquoise and sometimes red colours of Mamluk blue and black, and turquoise and black underglaze-painted stonepaste wares. Another distinguishing feature is the application of paint. In the aforementioned examples of Mamluk ceramics, paint is applied loosely, gently and crudely, sometimes going over the lines, and is not applied uniformly. In contrast, the application of paint in the examples of Chinese porcelain is executed with precision and delicacy due to the fine details. Finally, the tone not only affects how the audience understands what is depicted, but also gives insight into the culture and its artistic intentions. Chinese porcelain possess a calm and rhythmic mood with a warmer tone, whereas Mamluk ceramics are hectic and evoke a colder tone due to the black pigment.

While Mamluk ware stayed firmly rooted in its religiously inspired artistic conventions, potters of the following dynasty extensively incorporated Chinese elements into their artistic endeavours. The Ottoman *Dish Depicting Two Birds among Flowering Plants* (ca. 1575–90) (fig. 8) exemplifies a true

amalgamation of the two artistic styles. Finlay asserts that it was not until the fifteenth century that artisans in the Middle Eastern centres of production imitated themes from the Chinese repertoire, moving from a structured to a fluid design.<sup>33</sup>

The Mamluk vessels express a sense of rigidity, conformity, stability and tradition, all of which parallel their military upbringing and their strict adherence to Islam. From the beginning, the Mamluks remained humble, and this is expressed through their artistic style. Their military success could have been lavishly reproduced in their artworks, yet their commitment to Islam, which did not prescribe to figural representations, was at the core of their social and artistic agendas. While it might be instinctive to link Mamluk pottery to Chinese blue-and-white porcelain, historical research and rigorous analysis of both pottery styles prove that the trading relationship between these two territories did not entail artistic assimilation by either party. The Mamluks were strict adherents of their religious calling, whether it be on a large (e.g., architecture) or smaller scale (e.g., ceramics).



Fig. 8. Anonymous, *Dish Depicting Two Birds among Flowering Plants*, ca. 1575–90, stonepaste; polychrome painted under transparent glaze, h. 6 cm, diam. 28.4 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/59.69.1/>.

## NOTES

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- 4 Suzan Yalman, based on original work by Linda Komaroff, "The Art of the Ayyubid Period (ca. 1171–1260)," in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–), accessed October 29, 2016, [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ayyu/hd\\_ayyu.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ayyu/hd_ayyu.htm).
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- 7 Smith, 3.

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- 13 Robert Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art: Cultures of Porcelain in World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 147.
- 14 Ibid., 153.
- 15 Meri and Bacharach, 143.
- 16 Finlay, *Cultures*, 153; Finlay, “The Pilgrim Art,” 148.
- 17 Meri and Bacharach, 143.
- 18 Finlay, “The Pilgrim Art,” 140; Finlay, *Cultures*, 158.
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- 20 Finlay, “The Pilgrim Art,” 156–57.
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# Celestial Globes in Islamic Culture: The Intersection of Science and Religious Beliefs

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With ramifications to the worlds of astronomy, philosophy and theology, celestial globes are rich in meaning and illustrate the long-lasting fascination of humankind with the universe. Aesthetically appealing, they are also of interest to art historians. Christian Jacob, in his article “Looking at the Earth from Outer Space: Ancient Views on the Power of Globes,” explains that while some globes were standard and of lesser artistic interest, “[o]ther globes were made to measure objects, intended for

princes, kings, and aristocrats of the church or of the court. Such globes combined the best of the art and of the artistry in a given area and at a given period.”<sup>1</sup> This paper focuses on ‘Alam al-Din Qaysar’s (1178/79–1251) *Celestial Globe* (1225/26) (fig. 1), commissioned by al-Malik al-Kamil (r. 1218–38), the fourth Ayyubid sultan of Egypt. Following a description of this particular artefact, this paper will explore the importance of celestial globes in medieval Islamic culture. I will look at the history of these objects and how they materialized in the Islamic world, before examining in greater detail their fabrication and the high level of workmanship they required. Finally, I will discuss the different uses for Islamic celestial globes in the medieval era, and how they successfully linked together the worlds of science and spirituality.

A beautiful example of medieval Islamic metalwork, the *Celestial Globe* fully displays the mastery of this medium by Arab craftsmen. The sphere of the globe, measuring 22 cm in diameter, features forty-eight constellation figures engraved and damascened in copper. On the surface of the copper sphere, 1,025 individual stars are represented by inlaid silver dots. A testimony of the precision exercised in the construction of this globe, the silver dots are of six different sizes, representing different magnitudes. The zodiac names of the constellations, which are engraved along the elliptic, are spelled in both Naskhi script and Latin, but, although unproven, the latter is believed to have been added at a later date.<sup>2</sup>

An interesting design element resides on the stand on which the adorned sphere sits. Fulfilling more than its primary role of supporting the sphere, the stand—of which two of the four concavely rounded metal legs are engraved with measurements of a 90-degree arc—is also intended to be used as a tool for calculation. The addition of the gradations found on the arcs of the legs—intended to be used as gnomons—allows the user to determine the altitude of the sun at a given time and date.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, this feature is believed to be an Islamic innovation in astronomy and was first mentioned in a ninth-century Arabic treatise on the construction and use of celestial globes. In this early treatise, instructions were given on how to affix a wooden peg—serving as a gnomon—to the globe, which, by casting a shadow onto it, would determine that the stars on the globe were in the same position as those in the sky.<sup>4</sup>

The history of the *Celestial Globe* is quite unique with respect to its original owner, al-Malik al-Kamil, and its maker, ‘Alam al-Din Qaysar. Mentioned in one of the two inscriptions found on the bottom of the globe, Qaysar was a renowned mathematician and architect. He studied in Egypt and Syria as well as in Mosul, where his expertise in metalwork was virtually unparalleled in the Islamic world at that time, and where he gained the reputation of a master in the making of globes.<sup>5</sup> Qaysar found patronage within the Ayyubid court and, in 1225 or 1226, built the *Celestial Globe* for al-Malik al-Kamil.<sup>6</sup> What is interesting is that this globe, originally intended for the Ayyubid sultan, is

closely linked to the Treaty of Jaffa of 1229, in which the sultan ceded Jerusalem to the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (r. 1220–50)—thereby rendering it Christian territory—for ten years. In the years preceding 1228, al-Malik al-Kamil was faced with not only an intra-family power struggle but also the threat of the Sixth Crusades (1228–29). Left without support from his brothers, he started a correspondence with Frederick II—who was planning the Crusades—in an attempt to maintain the peace between the two empires. Interestingly enough, most of the correspondence between the two rulers revolved around academic matter, which was of interest to the both of them and resulted in a most improbable friendship. This ultimately led to the Jaffa treaty and al-Malik al-Kamil gifting the *Celestial Globe* to the Roman emperor.<sup>7</sup>

Al-Malik al-Kamil further cultivated a deep cultural interest in science—including astronomy—that began with the incorporation of Greek science into Islamic knowledge during the Abbasid dynasty (750–1258). During a period known as the Translation Movement, which lasted from around 750 to 975, the Abbasid society undertook the enormous task of translating into Arabic the totality of Greek writing, and to a lesser extent the knowledge of other societies, such as the Indo-Iranians. In order to do so, the House of Wisdom was established in Baghdad. Interestingly, both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars worked within the walls of this institution. Bernard R. Goldstein explains in his article “Astronomy and the Jewish Community in Early Islam”: “For

philosophers and scientists in the Islamic world, ‘Greek’ science was a universal subject, not the property of a particular community. As a result, there were Muslims willing to cooperate fully with Christians, Jews, Sabeans, and others in scientific matters.”<sup>8</sup> This separation of religion from the translated wisdom resulted in the creation of a separate science for the Islamic scholars known as the “science of the ancients,”<sup>9</sup> as opposed to the science of Islam, which encompasses anything related to theology. This Renaissance of Islam has led contemporary science historians to regard the Arab world of the Middle Ages as the guardian of the Greeks’ knowledge, which later allowed the European Renaissance to rediscover and expand on it.<sup>10</sup>

One of the many subjects learned by the scholars during this period was astronomy. Abdelhamid Sabra was therefore correct, in my opinion, when he argued that astronomy was not marginal to Islamic culture, but was in fact appropriated by it and later integrated into it.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, the leading voice in Islamic astronomy was in fact Greek, and continued to be based on the *Almagest*—a second-century Greek astronomical treatise written by Claudius Ptolemy, an Alexandrine astronomer and geographer—throughout the medieval period.<sup>12</sup> But while following the Ptolemaic writings for the placement of the stars and constellations in the making of celestial globes, Islamic scholars, by changing the Greek names for the constellations to be more descriptive—and therefore easier to understand and draw—still instilled aspects of their own culture. This practice can be

seen in the late-thirteenth-century *Celestial Globe* (fig. 2) from Maragheh, Iran, wherein “Andromeda, Cassiopeia and Perseus [...] were assigned more descriptive Arabic titles or subtitles: al-mar’a al-musalsala (‘the chained woman’) supplemented Andromeda, dhat al-kursT (‘the seated woman’) for Cassiopeia, and hamil ras al-ghul (‘the one who holds the demon’s head’) for Perseus.”<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the merging of the two cultures often resulted in the use of two systems of nomenclature on celestial globes, which would feature both Latin and Islamic names for constellations. Although the Latin nomenclature was added at a later date in certain cases such as Qaysar’s *Celestial Globe*, this practice was common in Islamic globe-making during the Middle Ages.<sup>14</sup>



Fig. 2. Anonymous, *Celestial Globe* (detail), probably ca. 1288, brass, Mathematisch-Physikalischer Salon, Dresden, E.11.1. © Mathematisch-Physikalischer Salon. Photo: Dr. Wolfram Dolz. Reproduced from Moya Carey, “The Gold and Silver Lining: Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Mu`ayyad al-`Urdui's Inlaid Celestial Globe (c. AD1288) from the Ilkhanid Observatory at Maragha,” *Iran* (2009): 102.

Although historians agree that astronomy in Islam emerged during the advent of the Translation Movement, the earliest known example of Islamic constellation images dates to the early eighth century and is located within Qusayr ‘Amra (711–15) (fig. 3), a desert castle used by the Umayyad caliphs.<sup>15</sup>



Fig. 3. Qusayr 'Amra, Jordan. Photo: JoTB.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Qusayr\\_%27Amra\\_panorama.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Qusayr_%27Amra_panorama.jpg).

Situated in the Jordan desert, east of the Dead Sea, this palace is considered one of the best examples of early Islamic architecture and art.<sup>16</sup> The ceiling of one of the three rooms in this building is a cupola, which is what is of interest to us. Painted on this cupola is a fresco depicting the heavens (figs. 4a–b). Interestingly, although celestial globes and astronomy were apparently not yet part of Islamic culture at this time, the constellations on the fresco are similarly depicted as though the viewer were looking down on them, as opposed to gazing up at them. It is therefore possible—although not yet proven—that the artist who painted this fresco used an early celestial globe as a guide.<sup>17</sup> In any case, this fresco attests to the interest of the Islamic world in astronomy in the eighth century, and it is likely that this fascination started prior to the Translation Movement.

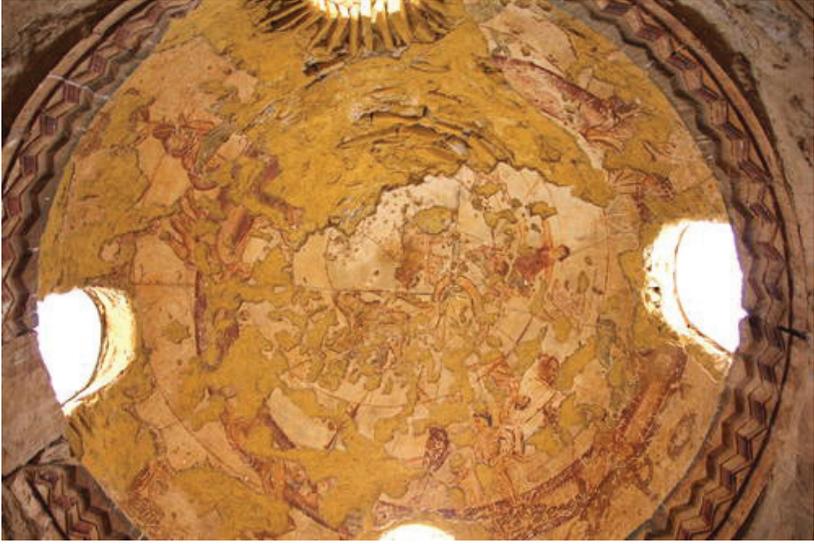


Fig. 4a. Cupola fresco, Qusayr 'Amra (Jordan). © Frederica Leone.  
[whc.unesco.org/en/documents/110378](http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/110378).



Fig. 4b. Cupola fresco, Qusayr 'Amra (Jordan). © Frederica Leone.  
[whc.unesco.org/en/documents/110390](http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/110390).

Following this early illustration of the vault of the heavens, the first Arabic treatise on the construction and use of celestial globes was written in the ninth century, and during the next three centuries many Islamic celestial globes were produced. Despite differences in design, prevailing characteristics can be observed in these objects. In most cases, medieval Islamic globes are composed of a sphere mounted on a meridian ring and placed on a stand featuring a graduated horizon ring. Usually, the main compass points are engraved on the horizon ring and, in certain cases, a zodiacal scale is included as well.<sup>18</sup> The surface of the globes displays 48 constellations and 1,025 individual stars. Not surprisingly, those numbers are based on the data found in the *Almagest*, which remained the primary reference for medieval Islamic globe-makers, although some Arabic treatises on astronomy were written during that time.<sup>19</sup> Finally, the constellations engraved on the surface are inverted, mimicking the view of someone looking down on the firmament. Because of this point of view, the viewer is offered a frontal portrayal of the constellation figures—a characteristic unique to Islamic celestial globes. Contemporaneous celestial globes from the Greco-Roman and Byzantine world typically represent constellation figures with their back to the observer, facing the inside of the globe.<sup>20</sup>

Another important aspect of the history of Islamic celestial globes resides in the specificity and mystery of their construction. During the period in which Islamic celestial globes were

constructed, most techniques, including those of metalwork, were taught in workshops orally and through an apprentice system. As a result, no written instructions on how celestial globes were built have been found. For this reason, the 127 known Islamic celestial globes, ten of which are from the medieval era, are the principal source of information when it comes to their design and construction.<sup>21</sup> Experts have established two different types of Islamic globes: those with an apparent seam (along the hemisphere), and those without, both of which are hollow. While the construction of the first type is easily understandable—two half-spheres are cast separately before being welded together—the construction method employed for seamless spheres remains a mystery. To this day, there is no known metal-worker in any part of the world who is capable of casting a seamless and hollow metal sphere. As such, there can only be speculation as to how such celestial globes were built. One possibility is the raising technique, which consists of hammering metal sheets to a selection of spherical anvils until the shape of a sphere is obtained, while another potential method is the lost wax technique, in which a liquid alloy is poured into a wax mould.<sup>22</sup>

Although unanswered questions surround the construction of the celestial globes, what is known is that these objects are usually made of brass or copper, and that the composition of these alloys varies depending on the period in which they were produced. In the case of Qaysar's *Celestial Globe*, the copper

alloy contains large quantities—over 30 percent—of lead, which would have lowered the casting temperature of the alloy and increased the malleability of the metal once it cooled. This eased the process of engraving the stars and allowed for greater precision.<sup>23</sup>

While the construction of celestial globes required a great amount of precision and scientific calculation, they were not immune to the evolution of artistic styles in Islamic culture. The style in which the constellation figures are depicted appears to change from one globe to another. The particularity of each globe may be explained by the division of labour. Rarely discussed by scientists, workshops of this time were most likely organized according to the division and specialization of labour. It would not be surprising to imagine that the person who cast the sphere was not the same as the one responsible for the placement of the stars on the sphere, or the one who engraved the constellation figures. Therefore, although most celestial globes from the Islamic medieval era—nine out of the ten that are known—are signed by one artisan, it would be fair to assume that, in fact, the construction of such globes was a collaborative effort.<sup>24</sup> In any case, one thing remains certain: to have produced such wonderful work of science and art, the artisans, whether they worked alone or as part of a team, took enormous pride in their craftsmanship, as evidenced by the quality of the celestial globes which has lasted to this day.

Regardless of the amount of precision and effort that was put into the construction of celestial globes, they could only be used for about a century, partly because of the constant movement of the solar system, and partly because celestial globes were social artefacts. Jacob explains: “Maps and globes are social artifacts: their purpose is to make sense within a group or a society, to be shared representations allowing discourses to be understood and symbolic values to be effective. [...] Any society, any culture provides viewers with specific tools allowing them to make sense of the world in which they are living. These tools could be myths, religious beliefs, scientific theories, visual models.”<sup>25</sup> Celestial globes helped Muslim users determine important religious times of the day and the year. To ascertain the time of prayer or the beginning and end of the month of Ramadan, for example, Muslims relied on mathematical and astronomical calculations that required the aid of a celestial globe.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, since the Muslim calendar—known as the Hijri calendar—was and still is different from the one used by other societies, the Islamic world developed chronology as a new scientific discipline. An important part of astronomical research, this discipline was used to convert dates from one calendar to another.<sup>27</sup>

Another way in which celestial globes are used is as models. Although such globes are intrinsically linked to the history of cartography, they provide a different set of information and add another dimension compared to looking at a map because

they are three-dimensional models of the earth. As such, they allow the user to grasp a reality that otherwise would not be available to them. A globe allows the viewer to see the entirety of the earth, from all angles—a feat impossible to achieve without the help of such a model.<sup>28</sup> In allowing this “disconnection” from reality, such models of the earth enabled the possibility of a meditation process, such as one known as “the eye of the soul,” a practice that was commonly used by philosophers in the medieval Islamic era.<sup>29</sup> The goal of this meditation process was to detach the soul from the body, allowing it to wander freely around the earth and in outer space. The “eyes” of the soul being different from those of the physical body, such practices allowed scholars to contemplate the truth and to grasp the totality of the knowledge that was made available to them.<sup>30</sup> In fact, in a study on the power of globes, Jacob proposes that “material globes acted as triggers of an intellectual process, and that the viewing of them allowed the experience of the journey of the soul within the globe itself.”<sup>31</sup> This is a point with which I tend to agree, as the thesis of this paper is that medieval celestial globes were at the intersection of science and religious beliefs.

Although this paper provides only a brief overview of the rich and complex subject of Islamic celestial globes, it has allowed me to better understand the importance of astronomy in the medieval Islamic world, something I could not have anticipated when I first admired the splendid *Celestial Globe* made by Qaysar. Exploring the epoch in which celestial globes were

produced, as well as how they were constructed and used, has affirmed that they represent the intersection of science and religious beliefs in the medieval Islamic world. Given that astronomy was first developed in this region by Muslim scholars in collaboration with scholars of other religions, it would be interesting to analyze and compare how celestial globes were used by Christians and Jews. The differences and similarities would provide a more comprehensive view and further confirm, or negate, the theory that celestial globes are dual entities.

#### NOTES

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Anonymous, *The Book of Kings*, 1344, ink on parchment, 36.5 x 27.1 cm, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City, Borg.Et.3, fols. 88v–89r. Reproduced from Barbara Drake Boehm, “The Book of Kings,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 107.



Anonymous, *Gospel Book* (prefatory cycle), early 14<sup>th</sup> c.,  
tempera and ink on parchment, 26.7 x 17 cm x 11.4 cm,  
Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, W.836, fol. 6v.  
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Anonymous, *Gospel Book* (prefatory cycle), early 14<sup>th</sup> c.,  
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Anonymous, *Cross*, 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c., copper, 29 x 18.5 cm,  
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# Ethiopia's Rich and Illustrious Cultural History, and the Legend of Menelik I

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DAOUDA KA

The region encompassing the Middle East and northern areas of Africa was central to the early development of human civilization: it was the site of humankind's first footsteps; it has been, and continues to be, subject to numerous wars, social conflicts and great revolutions; and it has been the birthplace of numerous religions, of many of our world's prophets, and

their universal truths. One could say that this place, starting in the age of antiquity, has expanded human consciousness. It is home to many legends, and one in particular has fostered the religious beliefs of those living in the world's oldest nation, Ethiopia: a love affair between the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon produced a son named Menelik I, who brought the Ark of the Covenant—and Christianity—to Ethiopia, and also became the first emperor of the Solomonic dynasty that was centred in Aksum and lasted almost 2,900 years. This paper will explore the development of Christianity in Ethiopia and the endogenous and exogenous cultural influences that shaped Ethiopian Christian art and architecture through a few case studies, including the late-twelfth- or early-thirteenth-century Church of Saint George (Bet Giorgis), in Lalibela; a mid-fourteenth-century manuscript of *The Book of Kings* (1344) in the collection of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; an early-fourteenth-century *Gospel Book* owned by the Walters Art Museum, in Baltimore; and a copper processional *Cross* made between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries from a private collection in the United Kingdom.

Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray dates back almost four million years, making it the oldest occupied place in the world. The first known kingdom in the region was D'mt, which was located in Eritrea and northern Ethiopia between the tenth and fifth centuries BCE.<sup>1</sup> By the first century CE, the Kingdom of Aksum (approx. 100–940 CE) had become the most powerful

and prosperous empire in Eastern Africa. Indeed, the sovereigns of Aksum were often called the *Negusa Nagast*, meaning “king of kings.”<sup>2</sup> The kingdom’s capital, Aksum, was the busiest and most important city in Africa. It was an astounding centre for commerce, where merchants traded ivory and slaves among other goods. Aksum’s location on the coast of the Red Sea was extremely advantageous for the kingdom because it was able to seize control of the trade routes and thus ensure the continuous influx of goods from neighbouring nations into the country via the principal port of Adulis.<sup>3</sup> This was also an opportunity for the sharing of foreign languages and cultures, which allowed the African kingdom to form its own diversified culture and amass a remarkable amount of knowledge from Greece, Egypt, Southern Arabia and other nations in the Mediterranean region. However, the Red Sea was the only separation between Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, and this proximity would lead to substantial conflicts and later complications within the kingdom.

According to traditional Ethiopian belief, the Ethiopian Empire was established by Menelik I, son of Solomon, king of Israel, and Makeda, the Queen of Sheba. Menelik would have been the first to take action in organizing the region into an official religious empire. In this sense, religious faith and the imperial dynasty arose together. Menelik’s origins in Israel encouraged many Jews to migrate to Ethiopia, where they created a powerful and influential community within Aksum, thus lending even more power to the empire.<sup>4</sup> It was stated by the prophet Mani

that by the third century Aksum was classed alongside Persia, Rome and China as one of the four great superpowers on the planet.<sup>5</sup>

The story of Menelik's life is outlined in the *Kebra Nagast*, or *The Book of Kings*, which is considered the holy scripture in Ethiopia. This legend is well known in the Near East, having undergone extensive Arabian, Ethiopian and Jewish elaborations. The mid-fourteenth-century manuscript of *The Book of Kings* (fig. 1) in the collection of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana is written in the ancient Ethiopic script of Ge'ez and features possibly contemporaneous illustrations. The man shown here, dressed in intricately patterned clothing and carrying a small book, may either be Saul (r. late 11<sup>th</sup> c. BCE) or David (r. ca. 1010–970 BCE), the first and second kings of the United Kingdom of Israel and Judah. In the background above the figure's head is a rudimentary drawing of a canopy bearing a central Ethiopian-style cross flanked on both sides by Latin crosses.<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 1. Anonymous, *The Book of Kings*, 1344, ink on parchment, 36.5 x 27.1 cm, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City, Borg.Et.3, fols. 88v–89r. Reproduced from Barbara Drake Boehm, “The Book of Kings,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 107.

*The Book of Kings* contains an account of the conversion of the Ethiopians from the worship of the sun, moon and stars to that of the “Lord God of Israel.”<sup>7</sup> The narrative begins with Makeda, the Queen of Sheba, who travels to Jerusalem seeking to learn from King Solomon how to be a great ruler. Solomon was famous for being the wise and powerful king of the Holy Land. The Queen of Sheba converts to Judaism out of adoration for the king, and the two eventually have a son together. *The Book of Kings* also recounts how Solomon has a dream where God tells him that his son will become the head of a new order. Around 950 BCE, this son, Menelik I, becomes the first in a line of Solomonic emperors of Ethiopia.<sup>8</sup> As the legend continues, when Menelik becomes of age, his mother sends him back to Jerusalem to be taught by his father. When Solomon offers him the title of the Prince of Jerusalem, he declines, instead returning to lead his people in Aksum. The *Kebra Nagast* explains how Solomon blesses his son with a replica of the Ark of the Covenant as a gift to be brought to the new Holy Land. However, Ethiopian tradition holds that Menelik secretly replaced the replica with the original and brought it back to Aksum. This gave the Ethiopian kingdom an incredible amount of legitimacy. Supposedly, to this day, the Ark is still in Aksum, guarded by a single priest charged with caring for the artefact as his life’s task. Although no one is permitted to see the Ark because of its holiness, the faith of the Ethiopian people in this legend is strong as it is deeply rooted within their cultural and spiritual

beliefs. As Ethiopianist Edward Ullendorff states, “The *Kebrä Nagast* is not merely a literary work, but [...] it is the repository of Ethiopian national and religious feelings.”<sup>9</sup>

The meeting between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba is also mentioned in the Hebrew Bible: “And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon” (1 Kings 10:10).<sup>10</sup> It is unknown whether the passage is simply intended to provide an account of Solomon’s excessive wealth or to describe the significance of the queen’s visit; in any case, it confirms her relationship with Solomon in another dominant religious text besides *The Book of Kings*.

Ethiopia was converted to Christianity under King Ezana’s (r. 320s–ca. 360 CE) reign, probably around 330 CE.<sup>11</sup> The series of events leading up to the founding of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church has been reconstructed from several existing documents. Frumentius and his ostensible brother Aedesius, young men from Tyre, were found shipwrecked and sent to the court of Aksum. They both sought out Christian Roman merchants who had fled the Roman Empire, and eventually became Christians. Frumentius became the first bishop of Aksum and converted King Ezana to Christianity.<sup>12</sup> This story indicates that Christianity was brought to Aksum by merchants.<sup>13</sup> Ezana’s

decision to adopt Christianity was likely influenced by his interest in strengthening his commercial ties with the Roman Empire. He was the first world leader to place the symbol of the cross on monetary coins, which previously displayed the pre-Christian symbols of the crescent moon and the sun.<sup>14</sup> Christianity provided him a way of unifying the different ethnic groups within the nation under the same language and religious beliefs, thereby allowing him greater control of the peoples in the Aksumite kingdom. Although nearly half of the nation accepted this conversion, the southern parts of the territory refused and began to cut its ties from the centralized power. Around the same time, the influx of Jews within the kingdom ceased and numerous clans, now Judaic, openly chose secession as a response to what they considered to be treason.<sup>15</sup>

Around the sixth century five monks belonging to the Syriac churches began introducing monophysicism to the local clans. Monophysicism asserted that in the person of Jesus Christ there was only one divine nature rather than two natures, divine and human. This particular doctrine had a strong influence among young people who were attracted to the mythological aspects of religious and spiritual learning. Many of them eventually joined Syriac missions, and this caused a massive growth in the monastery's power. By the beginning of the seventh century Christianity had become the dominant religion in Aksum.<sup>16</sup> However, the union within the empire was still broken and did not resist Islam's growth throughout Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

By the middle of the eighth century, trades in the Red Sea were dominated by Islamic nations, allowing them to gain power and bring about Aksum's decline by pushing the Aksumites back into the south of Ethiopia so that the Arabs could settle along the north of Ethiopia's coast.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the demise of the Aksumite Empire in 940, Christianity retained a presence in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian church remained politically affiliated with the Coptic church, Alexandria and the west Syrian church.<sup>18</sup> During the Zagwe dynasty (900–1270), the northern town of Lalibela was designated the ceremonial centre, and it was there that King Gebre Mesqel Lalibela (r. early 13<sup>th</sup> c.) commissioned eleven rock-hewn churches. The king was believed to be an interloper: according to the *Kebra Nagast*, unlike previous kings, he was not of Solomonic descent. However, he was so surrounded by legends that he became mythical. His name, meaning “the man bees obey,” was given to him because at his birth, a swarm of bees supposedly settled upon him, covering him but not stinging him. It is also believed that when Lalibela was only seven years old, he was lifted towards heaven and spent three days receiving instructions from God's divine knowledge. Lalibela likely ordered the construction of these churches to legitimize his rule of the kingdom, claiming that it was an act of God and declaring the site to be the “New Jerusalem.”<sup>19</sup> These structures also visually linked Lalibela's power to that of the once formidable Kingdom of Aksum by incorporating elements of Aksumite architecture. For example,

the first-storey false windows and horizontal strips of moulding on the façade of the Church of Saint George (Bet Giorgis) (fig. 2) resemble the rectangular Aksumite-style windows and alternating rows of limestone and wood of the sixth-century Debre Damo monastery (fig. 3) in northern Ethiopia.<sup>20</sup>

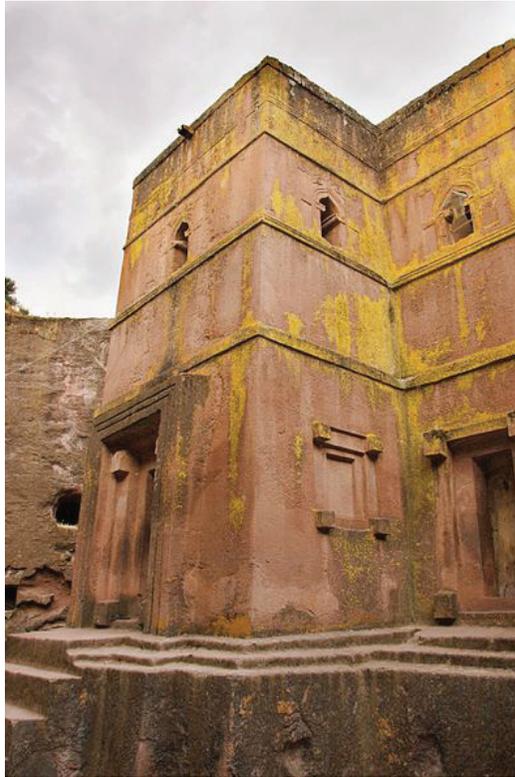


Fig. 2. Aksumite-style false windows and horizontal strips of moulding on the façade of the Church of Saint George, Lalibela. November 1, 2007. Photo: A. Davey. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entrance\\_to\\_the\\_Church\\_of\\_Bet\\_Giorgis\\_\(3274062633\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entrance_to_the_Church_of_Bet_Giorgis_(3274062633).jpg).

These motifs are also found on the famed monolithic stelae standing in the Cemetery of Emperors in Aksum (figs. 4–5). These monoliths date back to the first century and depict the great buildings the emperors would inhabit in the afterlife.<sup>21</sup> The recurrence of architectural motifs over time reveals a distinct continuity in the design of Ethiopian architecture that begins before the nation’s conversion to Christianity in the fourth century and represents a continuous historical narrative embedded in the nation’s culture.



Fig. 3. Debre Damo monastery, 6<sup>th</sup> c., Tigray, Ethiopia. Photo: Giustino.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Debre\\_Damo\\_Church.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Debre_Damo_Church.jpg).



Fig. 4. Aksum Obelisk, 4<sup>th</sup> c., Aksum, Ethiopia.  
February 14, 2009. Photo: Ondřej Žvábek.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rome\\_Stele.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rome_Stele.jpg).



Fig. 5. Detail of Aksum Obelisk. September 27, 2016.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AxumObelisk2.jpg>.

Ethiopian Christian art and architecture were also influenced by the proximity of Islam and its presence in Ethiopia beginning in the seventh century.<sup>22</sup> For instance, illuminations in an early-fourteenth-century *Gospel Book* (figs. 6–7) in the collection of the Walters Art Museum bring to mind earlier depictions of religious subjects in Islamic manuscripts.



Fig. 6. Anonymous, *Gospel Book* (prefatory cycle), early 14<sup>th</sup> c., tempera and ink on parchment, 26.7 x 17 cm x 11.4 cm, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, W.836, fol. 6v. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/medmss/5950271479/in/photostream/>.



Fig. 7. Anonymous, *Gospel Book* (prefatory cycle), early 14<sup>th</sup> c., tempera and ink on parchment, 26.7 x 17 cm x 11.4 cm, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, W.836, fol. 7r. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/medmss/5950830550/in/photostream/>.

These facing pages are part of a prefatory cycle illustrating important events in the life of Christ. The left page is devoted to his crucifixion and features a prominent bejewelled cross in the centre with the lamb of God above and two naked figures being crucified on either side. Two soldiers have set their shields aside and display their adoration of Jesus's cross. This bejewelled cross may refer to the triumphal cross that Theodosius II (r. 408–50) installed in the Chapel of Golgotha, which marks the spot where Jesus was crucified. The right page shows two women visiting Christ's tomb and unexpectedly finding an angel there instead. The architecture in the background and the lamps represent the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. This manuscript is believed to have been created for the Church of Saint George at Dabra Ma'ar, in Tigray.<sup>23</sup> C. Griffith Mann further explains: "In northern Ethiopia, where this manuscript was illustrated, images like these called Jerusalem powerfully to mind, drawing on pilgrimage imagery developed as early as the sixth century."<sup>24</sup> The illustrations in this text depart from Christian art in Jerusalem—or the Western world for that matter—in the roundness of the figures; the use of red, brown and blue, which were most likely the pigments available in the area; the darkened skin of the subjects; and the almost child-like quality of the drawings.

This aesthetic is also seen in various churches and monuments around Ethiopia, such as the Debre Birhan Selassie Church, in Gondar, built by Emperor Iyasu II (r. 1730–55) in the seventeenth century.<sup>25</sup> The entire church is covered in similar images, and one of the fascinating features is the ceiling on which innumerable angel heads are painted (fig. 8). These figures have the facial features of Arabs or North Africans, with black hair, strong eyebrows and rounded noses. The ceiling was believed to open the church to the heavens, which is a Christian tradition present in many Orthodox churches but depicted here in a completely new way, demonstrating that local tradition and heritage were a fundamental part of the Ethiopian people's Christian faith.

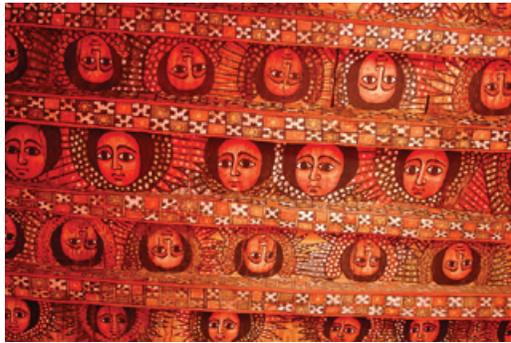


Fig. 8. Ceiling of the Debre Birhan Selassie Church featuring angels' faces.

February 17, 2011. Photo: Katie Hunt.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Debre\\_Birhan\\_Selassie\\_church,\\_Gondar\\_\(5495130810\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Debre_Birhan_Selassie_church,_Gondar_(5495130810).jpg).

An example of a Christian artefact that exhibits influences from Ethiopian and surrounding Arab cultures is an Ethiopian copper *Cross* (fig. 9) made between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.



Fig. 9. Anonymous, *Cross*, 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c.,  
copper, 29 x 18.5 cm, private collection, United Kingdom.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/677838>.

This intricately designed cross is in the shape of a quatrefoil and is embellished with arabesque lines—two motifs found in Muslim architecture preceding the Renaissance.<sup>26</sup> Although there is no contemporaneous written documentation on Ethiopian metalwork in Jerusalem, an inventory of items belonging to Ethiopians in Jerusalem, “transcribed and translated in 1900 lists sixteen crosses, including six of brass.”<sup>27</sup> Given that creative

license with the cross is rare in other Christian denominations, the diverse designs of Ethiopian crosses demonstrate the eagerness of Ethiopian artists to incorporate stylistic influences from surrounding civilizations into their religious art.<sup>28</sup>

The examples of Ethiopian Christian art and architecture examined in this essay not only reflect endogenous as well as Arab Muslim influences, but also highlight the tremendous significance of King Solomon and the city of Jerusalem to Ethiopian history and tradition. There are elements of Solomonic value within each of the artefacts presented here—so much so that it becomes hard to dismiss the possibility of the legend being accurate. Whether it was a tale told to ensure the legitimacy of the kingdom, or whether the presence of Judaism in Ethiopia was a way to solidify Judaic ties in commerce, or whether the legend is in fact historically accurate, it is clear that Solomon and Jerusalem have had an important place in Ethiopia's unique cultural and religious identity.

#### NOTES

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- 3 Ibid., 15.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Paul B. Henze, *Histoire de l'Éthiopie: L'œuvre du temps*, trans. Robert Wiren (Paris: Moulin du pont, 2004), 23.
- 6 Barbara Drake Boehm, "The Book of Kings," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 107.
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- 12 Emma George Ross, "African Christianity in Ethiopia," in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–), last modified October 2002, accessed January 23, 2017, [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/acet/hd\\_acet.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/acet/hd_acet.htm).
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- 22 Ulrich Braukämper, *Islamic History and Culture in Southern Ethiopia: Collected Essays* (Münster: Lit, 2002), 12, [https://books.google.ca/books?id=HGnyk8Pg9NgC&pg=PA12&dq=muslims+ethiopia+seventh+century&hl=en&sa=X&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=HGnyk8Pg9NgC&pg=PA12&dq=muslims+ethiopia+seventh+century&hl=en&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false).
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# **Religion, Politics and Art**

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# **Religion, politique et art**

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Anonyme, *Scène de carnage*, 11–13<sup>e</sup> siècle, aquarelle sur papier, 14 x 18.3 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Reproduit de Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb, *Scene of Carnage*, dans *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, éd. Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 210.

# Dialogue de représentations : les croisades vues par les arabes

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ANNA PRIOT

Des bras et des jambes coupés, des combattants enrubannés à terre, des coups de sabre dans les airs... Cette image (fig. 1) provenant de l'art islamique — probablement égyptien — située en l'onzième et treizième siècle nous fait parvenir une vision brutale et peu attirante des croisades.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 1. Anonyme, *Scène de carnage*, 11–13<sup>e</sup> siècle, aquarelle sur papier, 14 x 18.3 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Reproduit de Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb, *Scene of Carnage*, dans *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, éd. Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 210.

Ce furent des périodes violentes et animées aussi bien par des motivations religieuses que par de purs calculs politiques. Cependant, les croisades bénéficient de représentations particulières en Occident. Les croisés nous sont présentés sous la forme de pieux chevaliers, allant reconquérir Jérusalem, c'est à dire la Terre sainte, au nom de Dieu. On assiste dans l'art médiéval de cette période à une certaine sublimation de ces expéditions

vers l'est, dont la violence et les combats semblent nécessaires pour éliminer les croyants pratiquant une foi « impure », c'est à dire les juifs et les musulmans. Cette perspective des croisés est ainsi fondamentalement différente de celle des envahis, c'est-à-dire des populations arabes qui ont vu dès 1096 débarquer des troupes de combattants sur leurs différents — et fragmentés — territoires. Dans son livre *Les croisades vues par les arabes*, publié en 1983, l'écrivain libanais Amin Maalouf nous fait lire, selon ses propres mots « le roman vrai » des croisades. S'appuyant sur des chroniqueurs arabes de l'époque (son récit va de l'année 1096 à 1291), il présente au lecteur une nouvelle perspective des croisades, narrant les différentes batailles et décrivant chaque prince, émir, calife... avec sa propre personnalité et ses propres motivations. Ce livre a constitué la base du travail de l'artiste égyptien contemporain Wael Shawky (né en 1971), qui mêle les genres en réalisant trois films à l'aide de marionnettes, appelés *Cabaret Crusades*. Nous allons nous intéresser à la représentation qu'il en donne, comparant son travail avec les écrits de Maalouf et avec cette image présentée lors de l'exposition *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven* au Metropolitan Museum of Art. Nous tenterons de montrer en quoi ces différentes représentations artistiques et littéraires dialoguent les unes avec les autres et de quelle manière tant les choix de mots pour Maalouf que de méthodes et matériaux pour Shawky informent et éclairent cette période trouble des croisades.

Tout d'abord, nous pouvons commencer par évoquer l'idée de fiction et de vérité historique entremêlées qui est présente dans tous les travaux dont nous discutons. Commençons par Maalouf : il ne peut pas être considéré comme totalement objectif et véridique. C'est une personne avec des idées et un style personnel et ces éléments sont de fait reflétés dans son livre. Sa propre définition de son travail, citée en introduction,<sup>2</sup> est déjà faussée : un roman est une œuvre de fiction de part la définition même du mot. Le titre de son livre, qui indique bien « vues par les arabes », veut nous donner une perspective différente et inhabituelle certes, mais une perspective personnelle et subjective tout de même. Il y a, de plus, plusieurs niveaux d'analyses et d'interprétations dans les sources mêmes que l'auteur utilise, puisque Maalouf se base sur les écrits de chroniqueurs qui ont vécu, chacun à leur façon, les événements qu'ils racontent. Shawky, en se basant — de façon assez libre — sur le texte, en donne une autre interprétation encore. Ses choix de mise en scènes et de matériaux, auxquels nous allons revenir et la dramatisation qu'il met en place sont le reflet de ses propres opinions et de sa volonté d'explorer le rapport entre vérité historique et la représentation de cette même vérité historique, qui comporte forcément un aspect fictionnel. L'artiste a énoncé son désintérêt pour l'exactitude historique dans nombre d'entretiens et d'interviews. Comme exemple, il cite souvent le fait que nous disposons de quatre versions différentes de l'un des discours considéré comme instigateur des croisades, celui

du Pape Urbain II (1042–99) en novembre 1095, sans qu’il soit possible de déterminer laquelle est précisément exacte.<sup>3</sup> Shawky veut montrer qu’il y a plusieurs versions de chaque histoire, qui peuvent être modelées à travers les arts et les représentations visuelles de chaque époque.

L’idée d’introduire un aspect fictionnel, une idée de performance, est présente dans les deux œuvres dont nous parlons. Maalouf ne se prive pas d’une certaine sublimation et d’une certaine théâtralisation des événements qu’il raconte. Vers le début du livre, il décrit l’armée arabe de Karbouka quittant Mossoul : « La grande armée musulmane offre un spectacle éblouissant avec les innombrables scintillements de ses lances sous le soleil et ses bannières noires, [...] qui flottent au milieu d’une mer de cavaliers drapés de blanc ».<sup>4</sup> Le blanc semble décidément être la couleur préférée de chaque camp. Si les Franj<sup>5</sup> n’approuvent pas la religion de leurs opposants, les arabes ont les mêmes sentiments à leurs égards et les appellent eux aussi les « infidèles » (le mot est utilisé de nombreuses fois dans le livre). Maalouf décrit également les traits physiques des personnes dont il parle et même leur maniérisme. Par exemple, quand il décrit Imadeddin Zinki, chef d’Alep et importante figure de la lutte contre les Franj : « cet officier très brun, à la barbe en broussaille »,<sup>6</sup> ou quand il évoque l’empereur Alexis : « ce quinquagénaire de petite taille, aux yeux pétillants de malice, à la barbe soignée ».<sup>7</sup> En tant que lecteur, il est lourdement possible de douter de la véracité de

ces descriptions. Elle n'est d'ailleurs pas importante : en personnalisant et en attribuant une — fausse — authenticité aux figures historiques dont il parle, il en fait de réels personnages. Ils peuvent se comporter comme ils l'entendent, faire ce qu'ils veulent. Nous les suivons en tant que lecteur d'un roman, pas d'un compte rendu d'évènements historiques. Shawky introduit lui aussi l'idée de performance et de personnages. Une critique cite que « the films are highly constructed performances ».<sup>8</sup> Il ajuste ses marionnettes comme il le veut et décide qui est qui de façon arbitraire — il crée en effet les marionnettes avant de décider quels personnages historiques elles vont jouer.<sup>9</sup> Ainsi, il ne les fabrique pas avec une idée de leur physique en tête, il leur *attribue* un visage, une voix et une apparence. La figure 2 montre bien ces aspects du travail de Shawky : on y voit toute une équipe de production, avec opérateurs et techniciens, en train de filmer. Gabriel Coxhead note que « Battles, especially, are reduced to absurd, spastic dances, which is probably, why the artist instead tends to depict the gruesome aftermath, panning slowly across piles of limp and dismembered corpses ».<sup>10</sup> On retrouve une nouvelle fois l'idée du spectacle et de la dramatisation : Shawky arrange et dispose ses marionnettes comme il l'entend, représentant les scènes de batailles, notamment la prise de Jérusalem, d'une certaine façon.



Fig. 2. Tournage d'une séquence se passant à Jérusalem. 2010.

Courtoisie de Wael Shawky.

<http://www.contramare.net/site/en/wael-shawky-the-butterfly-effect/>.

Nous pouvons nous intéresser plus particulièrement à la représentation de la prise de Jérusalem. Le passage du livre de Maalouf clôt la première partie du livre : c'est clairement un but atteint par les croisés, un épisode très important qui annonce une plus grande conquête encore des Franj. L'auteur décrit les mesures radicales des vainqueurs, qui entrent sans respect dans la ville et expulsent du Saint-Sépulcre les prêtres de différentes branches de la religion chrétienne qui y officient depuis des années.<sup>11</sup> Il utilise des mots comme « carnage », « barbare », « tuerie » et fait des descriptions graphiques de la violence et du comportement des Franj qui viennent de prendre la ville. On peut lire au tout début du livre : « Quand la tuerie s'est arrêtée, deux jours plus tard, il n'y avait plus un seul musulman dans les murs. Quelques-uns ont pu profiter de la confusion pour se glisser au dehors, à travers les portes que les assaillants avaient enfoncées. Les autres gisaient dans des flaques de sang ».<sup>12</sup> Avant la chute de la ville, l'auteur évoque un autre épisode d'extrême violence, que Shawky a aussi choisi de représenter : un épisode de cannibalisme. Les croisés, affamés, se seraient résolus à manger les habitants de la ville de Maara qu'ils avaient assiégée. Maalouf, citant toujours les chroniqueurs sur lesquels il se base, écrit : « [I]ls fixaient les enfants sur des broches et les dévoraient grillés ».<sup>13</sup> L'enchaînement de ces épisodes à pour effet de rendre l'image des Franj très négative, le pillage et le carnage qui ont lieu à Jérusalem semblent ainsi être l'apothéose, le pic de la violence des croisés. Chez Shawky, la prise de la Ville Sainte constitue la fin du premier film et ainsi le

deuxième s'ouvre sur le lieu en proie aux flammes. Sur la figure 3, on peut voir le feu — réel ! — présent sur le décor et la lumière rouge qui évoque le sang et la brutalité de la prise de la ville. Des marionnettes ne bougent plus, jouant des cadavres. Juste après, un messager vient annoncer au Pape Urbain II (fig. 4) que Jérusalem est aux mains des chrétiens. Celui-ci, décédé, n'a donc pas de réaction, paraissant ainsi être associé de très loin à cette violence dont Shawky le présente comme étant l'un des principaux instigateurs.



Fig. 3. Prise de Jérusalem. Image prise de dOCUMENTA(13).  
Wael Shawky *Cabaret crusades*, 2010, vidéo YouTube, 1:30,  
publiée par Maria Muñoz Martinez, 12 juin 2012, consultée le 15 janvier 2017,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLZeVeFAWPE>.



Fig. 4. Annonce de la prise de Jérusalem au Pape Urbain II.

Image prise de DOCUMENTA(13). Wael Shawky *Cabaret crusades*, 2010, vidéo YouTube, 1:30, publiée par Maria Muñoz Martinez, 12 juin 2012, consultée le 15 janvier 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLZeVeFAWPE>.

Des bâtiments comme le Dôme du Rocher sont immédiatement reconnaissables — certains bâtiments religieux de Jérusalem constituent des indices visuels très efficaces, utilisés depuis longtemps et trouvables chez toutes sortes d'artistes. Ils indiquent immédiatement au spectateur dans quel endroit l'action se passe. On peut voir le Dôme dans la figure 2 : les décors ont été réalisés avec beaucoup de détails et on peut distinguer le bleu des murs, le doré du dôme et les différentes allées circulaires qui entourent la mosquée. Ceci provient du premier film. Dans

le second, l'artiste a choisi une représentation en deux dimensions, comme un décor de théâtre. Il s'est basé sur les cartes et représentations de villes perses faites par « le miniaturiste, mathématicien et historien ottoman Matrakçi ». <sup>14</sup> Ainsi, il utilise de multiples influences pour édifier et transformer sa vision de Jérusalem, qui change au fil des films — qui se répondent donc entre eux. En choisissant de s'inspirer des cartes d'un artiste perse, il est aussi possible de noter qu'il continue à représenter un point de vue arabe. En effet, les cartes sont une façon de voir le monde, elles traduisent une certaine vision des choses : « In these paintings geometrical perspective is completely ignored, they reflect the image culture of a specific civilization and a perception of space ». <sup>15</sup> Nous pouvons aussi nous intéresser aux matériaux avec lesquels il a choisi de travailler.

Les matériaux utilisés par Wael Shawky constituent des choix importants, qui nous informent sur sa volonté de représentation de la prise de Jérusalem et des croisades en général. Tout d'abord, pour son premier film, *The Horror Show File* (2010), il a obtenu le prêt d'une collection entière de marionnettes, la collection Luppi. <sup>16</sup> Leurs têtes étaient en bois et leurs yeux des billes en verre de Murano. Pour son second et pour son troisième film, respectivement *The Path to Cairo* (2012) et *The Secret of Karbala* (2015), Shawky a choisi d'ajouter un défi supplémentaire et de fabriquer lui-même ses marionnettes (figs. 5–7).



Fig. 5. Marionnette en céramique et en verre, fabriquée pour le deuxième et le troisième film. Reproduit de Faye Hirsch, "Wael Shawky : In the Studio," *Art in America* 101, no. 4 (2013), consulté le 17 janvier 2017, <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazine/wael-shawky-in-the-studio/#slideshow-7>.



Fig. 6. Marionnette en céramique et en verre, fabriquée pour le deuxième et le troisième film. Reproduit de Faye Hirsch, “Wael Shawky : In the Studio,” *Art in America* 101, no. 4 (2013), consulté le 17 janvier 2017, <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazine/wael-shawky-in-the-studio/#slideshow-6>.



Fig. 7. *A Breakable History : Wael Shawky's Cabaret Crusades* at MoMA PS1, vidéo YouTube, 4:16, publiée par Blouin Artinfo, 18 février 2015, consultée le 15 janvier 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7U-pqjdHIY>.

Aidé par diverses associations pour l'art et par des artisans marionnettistes du sud de la France, il en a fabriqué plusieurs dizaines, toutes différentes. Plusieurs critiques ont noté le bruit de clignement de leurs yeux et leurs traits rappelant des animaux, comme des chameaux ou des chevaux.<sup>17</sup> En regardant attentivement les marionnettes, il est d'ailleurs possible de s'interroger. Elles sont remarquables de détails et ont clairement été réalisées avec beaucoup de soin, mais elles n'ont pas l'air totalement réalistes. Les décors le sont plus que les marionnettes. Nous avons évoqué plus haut leur apparence faisant

parfois penser à des animaux. Le mécanisme des marionnettes est visible ; si elles fascinent et veulent représenter des être humains, personne ne les *confond* cependant avec des vrais acteurs, car elles ont des gestes simples et maniérés, une façon de se mouvoir dans l'espace qui n'est pas totalement trompeuse. Peut-être peut-on avancer l'hypothèse que cet aspect non-familier, que cette différence floue que le spectateur a du mal à percevoir est faite pour représenter l'idée de « l'Autre », de l'étranger. Chaque camp considère le camp opposé comme étant dans l'erreur, comme étant différent et imposant. L'aspect physique des marionnettes, qui sont presque humaines mais pas tout à fait, pourrait représenter l'idée qu'avaient les arabes des Franj et inversement.

Étudions maintenant la signification de ce choix. L'artiste a expliqué dans plusieurs interviews que les marionnettes sont des acteurs dont on ne se lasse pas.<sup>18</sup> La fascination que provoquent ces poupées de céramique agitées par des fils, qui sont de plus doublées de voix très réalistes, garantit que les spectateurs seront engagés dans les films. Le choix de l'artiste rend l'expérience visuelle du spectateur inédite et mémorable. Ensuite, il y a bien sûr l'idée de la manipulation. Elle est présente des deux côtés de l'histoire, chez les Franj comme chez les Arabes et elle est à la fois politique et religieuse. « Au nom de Dieu » est la raison des croisades — les croisés partent défendre la Ville sainte, croyant sincèrement accomplir leur devoir religieux et se sécuriser

une place au paradis. Les comptes rendus et les écrits sur les croisades font d'ailleurs mention de quantité de familles et de personnes n'ayant aucune expérience des combats qui ont aussi fait partie des expéditions.<sup>19</sup> Shawky semble pointer du doigt la manipulation en œuvre dans les différents discours qui ont poussé les croisés à partir se battre. Comme le dit Doris Krystof dans l'introduction de *Wael Shawky: Cabaret Crusades*, l'artiste dramatise le moment du discours du Pape Urbain II de manière intéressante « Shawky shows, in one long shot, how the Pope's measured delivery of his sermon induces a gentle shaking of the heads — not war cries — by the cleric-marionettes listening to his words ».<sup>20</sup> L'artiste choisit de représenter une scène calme et contenue, faisant « jouer » à ses marionnettes une acceptation passive des propos du pape, ce qui ne fait que renforcer l'idée de manipulation. Tous les personnages sont des marionnettes et la manipulation est donc aussi une constante du côté arabe des événements. Maalouf cite le comportement des dirigeants arabes comme la principale cause de la victoire des Franj à Jérusalem. « L'Histoire » et les jeux de pouvoir et d'alliances sont ramenés à des sentiments très basiques : un tel a peur d'une invasion et décide avec égoïsme de ne pas combattre les Franj ; un autre est en constante rivalité avec son frère et ainsi échoue à protéger sa ville de l'invasion, etc... Des dizaines d'exemples sont possibles. L'idée de manipulation est ainsi explorée par Shawky de façon globale, sans accusation d'un camp ou d'un autre, grâce aux choix des marionnettes.

Shawky fait parler et chanter tous ses personnages, Franj compris, en arabe classique. La langue est importante dans les représentations historiques et artistiques. Une traduction est toujours considérée comme une interprétation à un certain niveau, comme une réécriture. Premièrement, Shawky invente forcément des bouts de dialogues et des discussions entières entre ses différentes marionnettes. Ensuite, si nous reprenons le discours du pape, il est traduit en arabe — ce qui veut donc dire une nouvelle interprétation, un nouveau point de vue. Ce mélange des cultures et des langues, cette façon de faire passer les propos et les actions des combattants et dirigeant Franj « de l'autre côté » grâce à la langue en rappelle d'autres. Chez Maalouf d'abord : l'auteur s'éloigne occasionnellement des principales trames de son récit pour partager des anecdotes avec le lecteur, notamment sur les mots arabes qui ont été francisés et qui sont toujours utilisés aujourd'hui : ainsi le mot *charab* est devenu sirop et glace en français.<sup>21</sup> Il donne aussi les noms arabes de certains croisés, comme celui du comte Beudoin, *al-Comes Bardawil*.<sup>22</sup> On peut aussi citer qu'il a écrit son livre en français — la langue des croisés, donc. Plus généralement, ce basculement de perspective et ces échanges culturels, linguistiques et artistiques inévitables entre des groupes de populations qui se sont finalement fréquentés pendant plusieurs dizaines d'années peut être dit comme étant illustré par l'idée de *spolia*. La définition est la réutilisation d'un élément architectural ou décoratif.<sup>23</sup> Ce phénomène fût très présent lors de la prise de Jérusalem.

Encore aujourd'hui, dans l'Église du Saint-Sépulcre, les chapiteaux proviennent de mosquées détruites par les croisés, qui en ont gardé des morceaux. On peut même rattacher — de façon plus abstraite, bien évidemment — cette pratique à notre sujet. Comme le discute Alex D. Seggerman dans sa critique de l'exposition du travail de Shawky : « In *Cabaret Crusades*, he combines these two veins through a performance of Arabic text by European made objects ». <sup>24</sup> Ses marionnettes ont en effet été réalisées en France!

En conclusion, nous avons pu voir que le texte de Maalouf et le travail de Shawky dialoguent l'un avec l'autre. La représentation de Jérusalem et des croisades en général, les différents usages de la langue, les choix de matériaux et de mots... Tout cela rend chacune des deux œuvres complexes et intéressantes à analyser comme une paire. Nous pouvons terminer notre analyse de ces différentes représentations et écrits en les mettant en parallèle avec les événements récents qui ont agité et qui agitent toujours le monde arabe. Le Printemps arabe et la Révolution de Jasmin, ainsi que le présent conflit en Syrie semblent être représentés similairement à l'œuvre du Met sur laquelle nous nous sommes fondés : de manière brutale et explicite. Les échos de représentations sont ainsi présents entre le travail de Shawky et la façon dont aussi bien certains médias que divers autres artistes ont choisi de représenter la situation en Syrie, c'est-à-dire sans filtre, de façon brutale et réaliste. Les mots que Maalouf utilise et

que nous avons évoqués peuvent aussi être appliqués à des événements réels et les villes qu'il évoque (Alep, Baghdad...) semblent soudain familières car nous en connaissons la représentation actuelle, nous en avons entendu parler. Comme le dit Doris Krystof : « Now, as then, Jerusalem, Damascus, Baghdad and Aleppo have all seen bloody clashes conducted in the name of religion, ideology and economic interest ».<sup>25</sup> Cet aspect que l'on peut donc qualifier d'intemporel et l'inévitable parallèle qui se forme dans l'esprit du spectateur — pour peu qu'il soit vaguement au courant de l'actualité mondiale — rajoute une complexité supérieure aux œuvres, et ouvre une nouvelle fois différents niveaux d'interprétation et de nouvelles perspectives. Le travail d'autres personnes pourrait être relié à notre sujet. Par exemple, celui de l'artiste suisse Thomas Hirschhorn, qui décide dans des œuvres comme *Touching Reality* de faire voir des corps déchiquetés, blessés, sans que l'on puisse définir l'attaquant ou l'attaqué — le spectateur est seulement pris par la violence qui se dégage des images.

## NOTES

- 1 Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb, “Scene of Carnage,” dans *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People under Heaven*, éd. Barbara Drake Boehm et Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 210.
- 2 Amin Maalouf, “Avant-propos,” dans *Les croisades vues par les arabes* (Paris: Lattés, 1984), xi.
- 3 “A Breakable History : Wael Shawky’s ‘Cabaret Crusades’ at MoMA PS1,” vidéo YouTube, 4:16, publié par “Blouin Artinfo,” 18 février 2015, consulté le 15 janvier 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7U-pqjdHIY>.
- 4 Maalouf, 45.
- 5 “Franj” est le mot arabe utilisé pour désigner les croisés lors de croisades, et ainsi celui que nous utiliserons dans cet essai.
- 6 Maalouf, 135.
- 7 Ibid., 16.
- 8 Alex Dika Seggerman, “Wael Shawky: Cabaret Crusades,” *caa.reviews*, dernière modification le 5 mai 2016, consulté le 15 janvier 2017, <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/2753#>. WHwygleTISU.
- 9 “A Breakable History.”
- 10 Gabriel Coxhead, «Wael Shawky,» *Modern Painters* 26, no. 4 (2014): 91–92.

- 11 Maalouf, 51.
- 12 Ibid., 8.
- 13 Ibid., 55.
- 14 Jacques Sapiéga, *Scènes de croisades : Cabaret Crusades, The Path to Cairo de Wael Shawky* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 2013).
- 15 Doris Krystof, ed., *Wael Shawky: Cabaret Crusades* (Düsseldorf: Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2015).
- 16 Anaël Pigeat, “Wael Shawky: L’écriture de l’histoire. / Wael Shawky: From Tents to Skyscrapers,” *Art Press* no. 411 (2014): 60–65.
- 17 Faye Hirsch, “Wael Shawky: In the Studio,” *Art in America* 101, no. 4 (2013): 100–107.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Loren Lerner, “Jerusalem and the Crusader Period (1095–1291)” (lecture, ARTH 369 – Studies in Near Eastern Art & Architecture: The City of Jerusalem, Université Concordia, Montréal, 6 octobre 2016).
- 20 Krystof.
- 21 Maalouf, 106.
- 22 Ibid., 93.
- 23 Lerner.
- 24 Seggerman.
- 25 Krystof.

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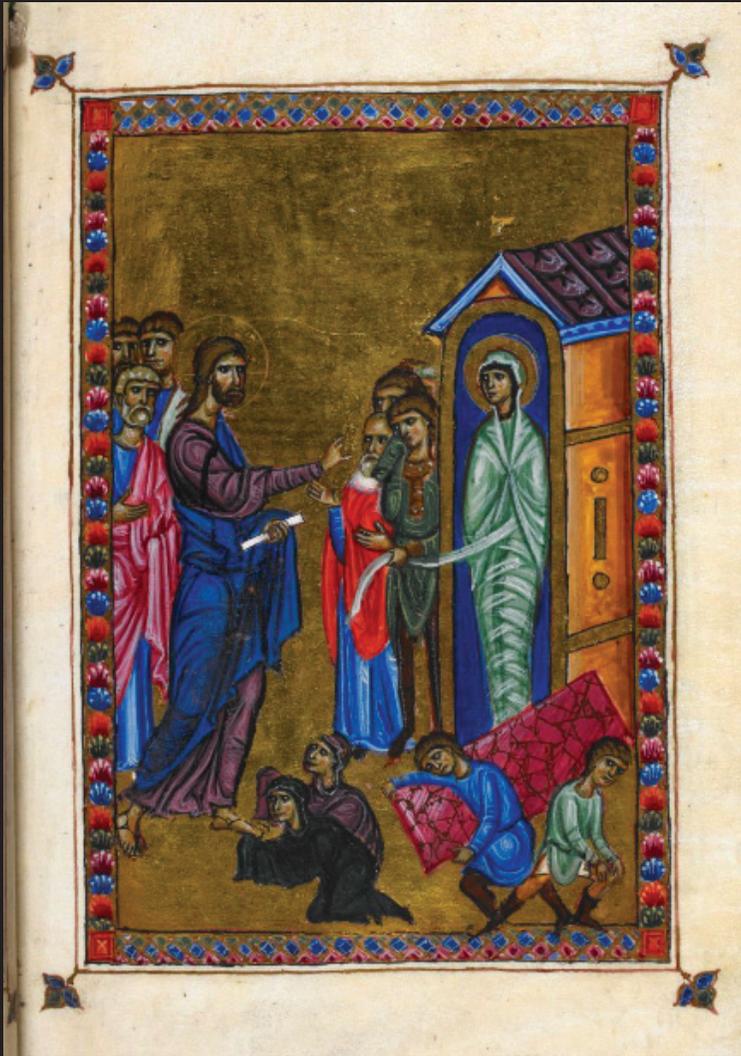
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Anonymous, carved ivory cover of *Melisende Psalter*, 1131–43,  
ivory, British Library, London, Egerton MS 1139/1.  
<http://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2013/08/twelfth-century-girl-power.html>.



Basilus, "The Raising of Lazarus," from the *Melisende Psalter*, 1131–43, ivory, British Library, London, Egerton MS 1139/1, fol. 5r. [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=egerton\\_ms\\_1139\\_fs001r](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=egerton_ms_1139_fs001r).



Caledonia Dionne, *Reimagined Crown of Queen Melisende*, 2016.

# The Crown of a Christian Crusader Queen: Reimagining Melisende's Crown

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CALEDONIA DIONNE

Queen Melisende of Jerusalem's (r. 1131–53) *Psalter* (1131–43) is an illuminated manuscript of the Book of Psalms, with intricately carved ivory front and back covers. Exuding an air of preciousness and holiness, this extravagant gift from her husband, Fulk V of Anjou (1089/92–1143), exemplifies the important figure that Melisende was—a Christian queen with power over the Holy City during the period of the First and Second Crusades (1096–99; 1147–49). The crown of a king or queen is symbolic of the power that the wearer wields over his/her kingdom, and helps to visually distinguish a ruler from the ruled. However, the *Melisende Psalter* does not depict

Melisende's crown, and other illuminated manuscripts merely provide a general outline of its form. I thus took it upon myself to physically recreate the queen of Jerusalem's crown. During this process I explored Melisende's history and studied her *Psalter* as an intimate personal belonging. My resulting design, entitled *Reimagined Crown of Queen Melisende*, is filled with symbolism relating to her biography and who she was as a leader.

Commissioned around 1135, the *Melisende Psalter* was made in the Scriptorium of the Holy Sepulchre circa 1131–43, and was given to Melisende by Fulk—a lavish but characteristic gift for Christian royalty—as a gesture of reconciliation. Fulk's ambition of overruling Melisende's power was the primary cause of their marital strife. After his ultimately unsuccessful attempts to undermine Melisende's position Fulk never did anything without her permission.<sup>1</sup> The *Psalter's* illuminations are rendered in the style of the Byzantine Orthodox liturgical tradition, and are credited to Basilius (although there were three other artists who worked on it).<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, the unknown artist who made the eight full-page illustrations identifying the liturgical divisions of the *Psalter*<sup>3</sup> was inspired by Islamic art, which was undoubtedly a result of the environment and architecture surrounding the artist in Jerusalem. “This combination of Eastern and Western styles and iconography renders it both plausible and appropriate that these paintings by four diverse artists originated in a Crusader scriptorium in Jerusalem.”<sup>4</sup> Melisende, being a Christian ruler, was seen as the “successor of David”—hence the

medallions of King David's (r. ca. 1010–970 BCE) life with the virtues and vices on the ivory covers of the *Psalter* (fig. 1). Other illuminated manuscripts emphasize her authority as a sovereign by depicting her coronation,<sup>5</sup> as well as that of her husband and son. Such images, including the "Coronation of Melisende and Baldwin III" (fig. 2), from the Bibliothèque Nationale's MS Fr. 779 (ca. 1275), and the "Coronation of King Fulk and Queen Melisende," from *William of Tyre, Histoire d'Outremer* (1232–61) (fig. 3), inspired me to create a tangible crown in Melisende's name.



Fig. 1. Anonymous, carved ivory cover of *Melisende Psalter*, 1131–43, ivory, British Library, London, Egerton MS 1139/1. <http://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2013/08/twelfth-century-girl-power.html>.



Fig. 2. Anonymous, "Coronation of Melisende and Baldwin III," ca. 1275,  
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Fr. 779, fol. 145v.  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Balduin3.jpg>.



Fig. 3. Anonymous, "Coronation of King Fulk and Queen Melisende,"  
from *William of Tyre, Histoire d'Outremer*, 1232–61, parchment, 34 x 24.5 cm,  
British Library, London, Yates Thompson MS 12, fol. 82v.  
[http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=yates\\_thompson\\_ms\\_12\\_f001ar](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=yates_thompson_ms_12_f001ar).

The process of designing Melisende's crown (fig. 4) began with a study of primary sources containing images of Melisende and of medieval crowns. Because I wanted to create a work that was not only true to Melisende's time but also symbolic of her identity and heritage, the typical medieval crown became merely a starting point in my work. The six *fleurs-de-lis* are based on the aforementioned illuminations showing Queen Melisende's coronation, and also allude to her father Baldwin II's (r. 1118–31) Frankish/French heritage and her leadership of the Crusaders. The *fleurs-de-lis* peak at the top, as though to announce the elevated status of the French Crusader population in Jerusalem. The arabesque-like shapes of their points acknowledge the Muslim presence, particularly the Muslim architecture that may have been predominant around the city.



Fig. 4. Caledonia Dionne, *Reimagined Crown of Queen Melisende*, 2016.

The medieval aesthetic of my work reflects the simplicity that likely characterized crowns from Melisende's time.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, medieval pictures of coronations—particularly Christian European ones—depict crowns that are not elaborate. My interpretation of Melisende's crown is gold in colour, since European Christian kingdoms typically used crowns made of gold because of its expensiveness and preciousness. In his study on golden crown imagery in the Apocalypse of John, Gregory M. Stevenson explains: "To the ancient mind, gold, as one of the most precious commodities, was an appropriate symbol of divinity."<sup>7</sup> The choice to add red to the crown was based on the "Coronation of King Fulk and Queen Melisende," in the manuscript *William of Tyre, Histoire d'Outremer*, which depicts Melisende's crown with a red border.<sup>8</sup>

The chains with charms hanging between each *fleur-de-lis* not only acknowledge Melisende's Armenian heritage, but also allude to her ostensible patronization of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre by echoing the design of the lanterns hanging from the ceiling of the Armenian Chapel of Saint Helena inside the church (fig. 5). Melisende's close relationship to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre makes it likely that it was a place she often visited. The several crosses adorning the crown highlight Melisende's identity as a significant Christian figure, as well as the pope's role in leading a coronation.

My design of Melisende's crown was also influenced by the formal elements of the *Melisende Psalter*. The six turquoise crosses on the red band echo the turquoise embellishments on the *Psalter's* ivory cover. Although I was unable to simulate the *Psalter's* ivory material, the "pearls" decorating the red base recall the precious white ivory colour of the *Psalter*. Moreover, during my research I discovered that Christ's beloved apostles are represented as "twelve pearls" in an illumination of the Heavenly Jerusalem from a tenth-century manuscript containing Beatus of Liébana's (ca. 730–ca. 800) commentary on the Apocalypse.<sup>9</sup> Due to their religious significance, pearls are prominent features of my crown design.



Fig. 5. Hanging lanterns in Saint Helena's Chapel, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem. February 5, 2010. Photo: Wknight94.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St.\\_Helena%27s\\_Chapel,\\_Holy\\_Sepulchre\\_2010\\_3.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St._Helena%27s_Chapel,_Holy_Sepulchre_2010_3.jpg).

The *Psalter* illuminations are coloured with many blues and reds, especially around the borders, such as in “The Raising of Lazarus” (fig. 6). The red and blue stones attached to the crown reference not only the *Melisende Psalter* as a whole, but also the specific connection that Melisende had to the subject of this particular illumination, since she oversaw the commission of the Saint Lazarus convent in Bethany. In addition, the scene in the *Psalter* portrays Lazarus at the lintel of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which, as mentioned earlier, is closely associated with the queen of Jerusalem. I also added cerulean and green stones to the crown based on my research into the significance of precious stones and their colours.<sup>10</sup>

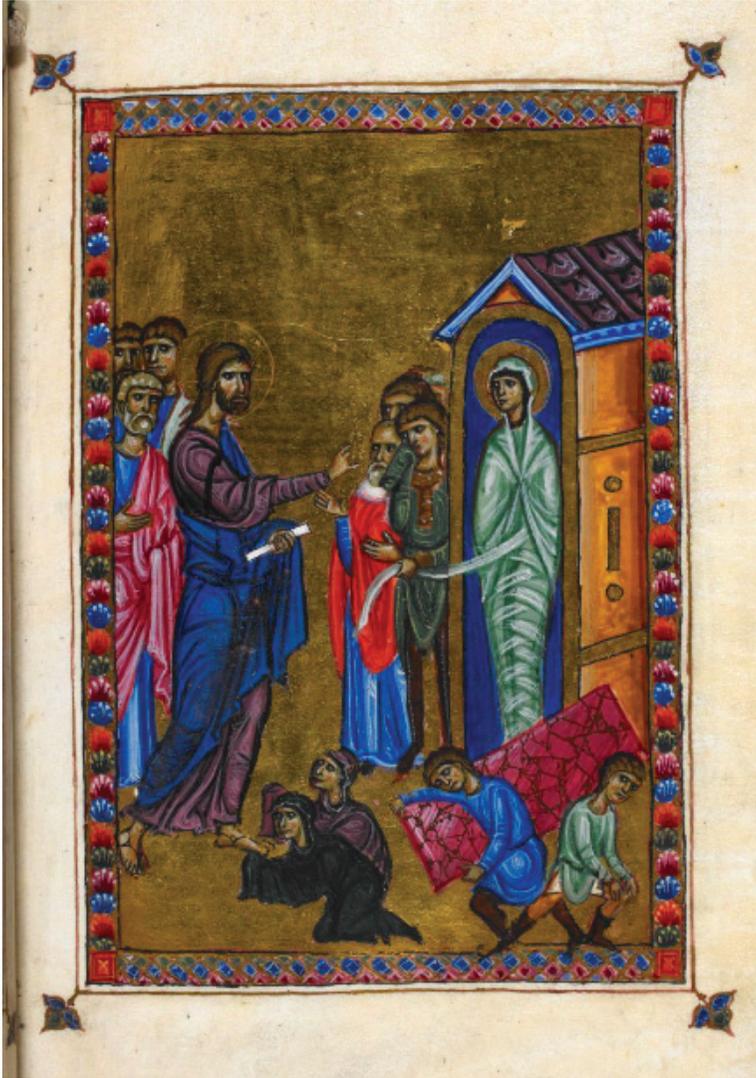


Fig. 6. Basilius, "The Raising of Lazarus," from the *Melisende Psalter*, 1131–43, ivory, British Library, London, Egerton MS 1139/1, fol. 5r. [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=egerton\\_ms\\_1139\\_fs001r](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=egerton_ms_1139_fs001r).

My design of Melisende's crown was strongly influenced by religious numeric symbolism. Although I was unable to find supporting visual evidence, the exhibition catalogue *Jerusalem 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven* explains that the spine of the *Psalter* is “decorated with silver crosses, which find echoes in the red, green and blue silk equal-armed crosses running along the vertical axis.”<sup>11</sup> The symbolism of the number three within the context of the city of Jerusalem derives from its three predominant Christian, Jewish and Islamic communities. There are six *fleurs-de-lis* on the crown, referencing the Star of David. Even though the Crusades aimed to rid the Holy Land of non-Christians, I felt it was important for my work to acknowledge the enduring Jewish and Muslim communities in the city. There are twelve crosses on the red band of the crown. The number twelve has special meaning in numerous religions. Christ had twelve disciples; there were twelve tribes of Israel; there are twelve months in the year according to the Gregorian calendar; and there are twelve astrological signs for the pagan community. Because the numbers three, six and twelve appear within different cultures and religions, I incorporated these numbers into my work to reflect the religious and cultural diversity of the city of Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup>

Constructing the crown required the use of aluminum panels, paints, jewels, gold trim and chains. The first step was creating the pattern of the crown. Since the crown is meant to be wearable, I fixed it to fit the circumference of my own head: 22 cm. I then

made reinforcement layers to ensure that the crown would be sturdy. Three layers of the pattern were cut from Bristol board and then from the aluminum panels. Finally, to enhance the colour of the crown, I added a layer of gold paper so that the crown would be easier to paint (fig. 7).

The next step was cutting and gluing the chains between the *fleur-de-lis*. The gold trim was applied to the borders of the base of the crown. Then, I applied three coats of gold paint. Next was the decoration process, which involved the greatest amount of labour. First, I painted the red section between the trim. Then, I applied the jewels in the upper portion of the crown with glue (fig. 8). Lastly, the rest of the jewels were applied and the charms were made and attached to the chains.



Fig. 7. The crown consisting of three layers of Bristol board, aluminum panels and gold paper.



Fig. 8. The crown with the red base bordered by gold trim, and jewelled *fleurs-de-lis* connected by draping chains.

The conflation of royalty and divinity harkens back as far as antiquity.<sup>13</sup> During the Crusader period, the queen of Jerusalem needed to embody an aura of holiness to gain respect from her citizens. The crown I designed for Melisende is symbolic of the queen herself, addressing her kingdom, her responsibilities, and her exceptional power and status within the kingdom of Jerusalem.

#### NOTES

- 1 Theresa Marie Earenfight, ed., *Women and Wealth in Late Medieval Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Hans Eberhard Mayer, “Studies in the History of Queen Melisende of Jerusalem,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972): 93–182, accessed October 30, 2016, doi:10.2307/1291317.
- 2 “Twelfth-Century Girl Power,” British Library: Medieval Manuscripts Blog, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2013/08/twelfth-century-girl-power.html>.
- 3 Lucy-Anne Hunt, “Melisende Psalter,” World History, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://www.worldhistory.biz/middle-ages/19226-melisende-psalter.html>.
- 4 Jaroslav Folda, “The Psalter of Melisende, Queen of Jerusalem,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 245.
- 5 Sarah Lambert, “Images of Queen Melisende,” Goldsmiths,

University of London: Research & Enterprise, 8–11, accessed October 17, 2016, <https://research.gold.ac.uk/7248/2/Sarah%20Lambert%20formatted%20revised-2.pdf>.

- 6 “Similarly it is curious to note that although it was the ambition of every medieval emperor to be crowned by the pope in Rome, no particular importance was ascribed to the crown used at the ceremony, which was often given away by the recipient to a favoured church. It was merely a personal gift from the pope and had none of the sanctity attached to the crowns used at the ceremonies at Aachen and Monza. Every reader will probably be surprised at the number of medieval crowns still surviving and the extraordinary lack of precise information about them.” See Charles Oman, “Review: A History of the Crown Jewels of Europe by Lord Twining,” *Burlington Magazine* 103, no. 699 (1961): 285–86, accessed November 15, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/873341>.
- 7 Gregory M. Stevenson, “Conceptual Background to Golden Crown Imagery in the Apocalypse of John (4:4, 10; 14:14),” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114, no. 2 (1995): 261, accessed November 15, 2016, doi:10.2307/3266939.
- 8 Lambert, 10.
- 9 “The twelve gates of Heavenly Jerusalem are of twelve pearls; these pearls are Christ’s beloved, His disciples, the apostles who set an example and by their virtues show the way into Heavenly Kingdom to the other believers.” See Hana Šedinová, “The Precious Stones of Heavenly Jerusalem

in the Medieval Book Illustration and Their Comparison with the Wall Incrustation in St. Wenceslas Chapel,” *Artibus et Historiae* 21, no. 41 (2000): 38–39, doi:10.2307/1483634.

- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Folda, 245.
- 12 Šedinová, 40.
- 13 Stevenson, 269.

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Sultan 'Ali al-Sultani, "The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the Fourth Heaven" (recto) and "The Prophet Muhammad Encountering Jesus in the Bayt al-Ma'Mur" (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, private collection, London. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, "Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 295.



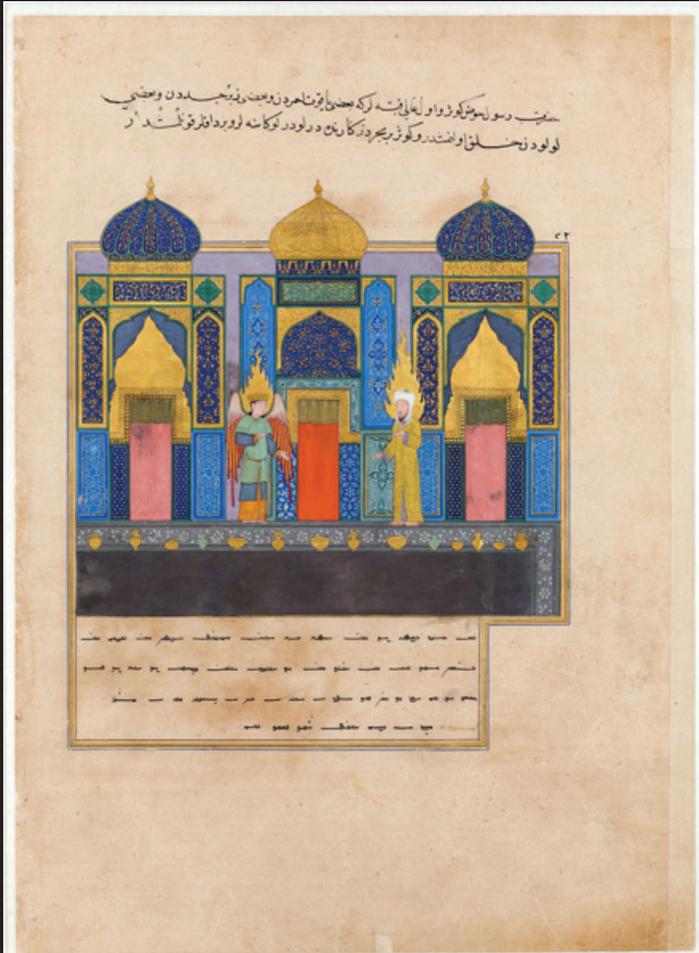
Sultan 'Ali al-Sultani, "The Prophet Muhammad Encountering the Angel 'Azra'il" (recto) and "The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the White Sea" (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, Sarikhani Collection, Oxfordshire. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, "Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 296.



Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad before the Angel with Seventy Heads” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad Encounters the Angel with Ten Thousand Wings and the Four-Headed Angel” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, David Collection, Copenhagen. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 297.



Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seventy Thousand Veils” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seven Hundred Thousand Tents” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise* (*Nahj-al-faradis*) of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, Sarikhani Collection, Oxfordshire. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise* (*Nahj-al-faradis*) of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 297.



Sultan 'Ali al-Sultani, "The Prophet Muhammad at the Gates of Paradise"  
(verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)*  
of al-Sara'i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper,  
41 x 29.6 cm, David Collection, Copenhagen.  
[https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/materials/miniatures/  
art/15-2012.](https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/materials/miniatures/art/15-2012)



Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Pavilions Made from Rubies in Paradise” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, private collection, London. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed.

Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb  
(New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 298.

# *Paths of Paradise* (*Nahj al-faradis*)

—  
RÉJANE MERCIER

During the fifteen century, al-Saraʿi's (fl. ca. 1325–50)<sup>1</sup> narrative *Paths of Paradise* (*Nahj al-faradis*), which describes Muhammad's Night Journey (*isra'*) to Jerusalem and his ascension (*mi'raj*) to heaven,<sup>2</sup> served religious and political didactic functions in Iran.<sup>3</sup> The illustrations and text were meant to authenticate the Muslim religion as the sole religion favoured by God, to legitimize Muhammad as its First Prophet and to mobilize the audience into action through prayer. This essay will demonstrate how these objectives were linked to the Timurid Empire's (1370–1507) expansionist aim of politico-economical influence. I will first situate al-Saraʿi's *Paths of Paradise* within its socio-political context before taking a closer look at the iconography and meaning of some of the miniature paintings from

the copy of al-Sara'i's *Paths of Paradise* (ca. 1466) shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven* (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup>

This religious manuscript combines images and text—written in Chagatai, an extinct Turkish language<sup>5</sup>—in its account of Muhammad's Night Journey to Jerusalem astride a four-legged animal with a crowned female head named Buraq and accompanied by Archangel Gabriel; his subsequent meeting with Judeo-Christian prophets at the “so-called faraway mosque (*al-masjid al-aqsa*)”; and his ascension to visit heaven and then hell.<sup>6</sup> *Paths of Paradise* was commissioned by the Timurid monarch Abu Sa'id Mirza (r. 1451–69) and illustrated in Herat, Iran, by “the slave Sultan 'Ali al-sultani (in royal service).”<sup>7</sup> The images from this manuscript that were included in the exhibition belong to three sources: the David Collection, Copenhagen; the Sarikhani Collection, Oxfordshire; and a private collection in London (figs. 2–7).



Fig. 1. View of folios from al-Sara'i's *Paths of Paradise* on display at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*. Photo: the author.



Fig. 2. Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the Fourth Heaven” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad Encountering Jesus in the Bayt al-Ma’Mur” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, private collection, London. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 295.



Fig. 3. Sultan 'Ali al-Sultani, "The Prophet Muhammad Encountering the Angel 'Azra'il" (recto) and "The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the White Sea" (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, Sarikhani Collection, Oxfordshire. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, "Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 296.



Fig. 4. Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad before the Angel with Seventy Heads” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad Encounters the Angel with Ten Thousand Wings and the Four-Headed Angel” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, David Collection, Copenhagen. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 297.



Fig. 5. Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seventy Thousand Veils” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seven Hundred Thousand Tents” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, Sarikhani Collection, Oxfordshire. Reproduced from Christiane Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 297.

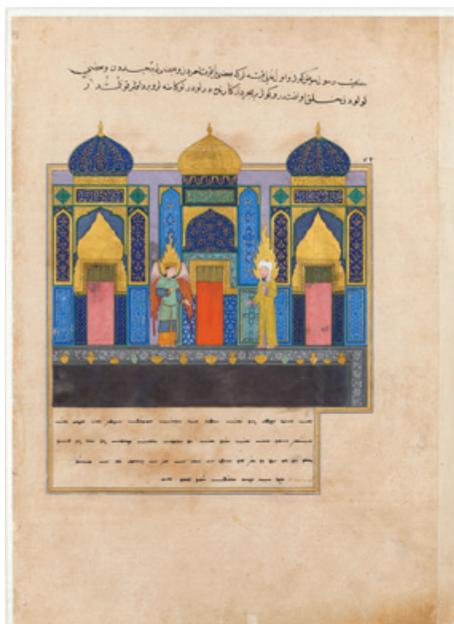


Fig. 6. Sultan 'Ali al-Sultani, "The Prophet Muhammad at the Gates of Paradise" (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara'i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, David Collection, Copenhagen.

<https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/materials/miniatures/art/15-2012>.

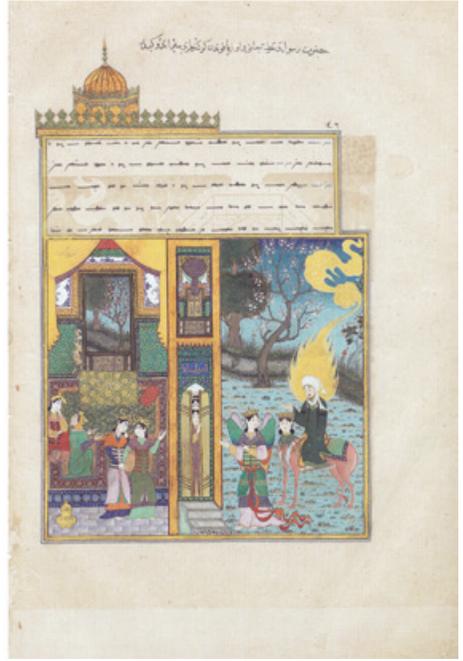


Fig. 7. Sultan ‘Ali al-Sultani, “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham” (recto) and “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Pavilions Made from Rubies in Paradise” (verso), from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i, ca. 1466, opaque watercolour, gold and ink on paper, 41 x 29.6 cm, private collection, London. Reproduced from Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj-al-faradis)* of al-Sara’i,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 298.

The exhibition left out two important images from this manuscript that are in the David Collection: one represents Muhammad's meeting with the "Celestial Rooster," the angel who is in charge of reminding the faithful to praise God;<sup>8</sup> and the other is an image of Muhammad's visit to hell, where the non-believer will meet with a terrible fate. The eleven images that were exhibited were shown in an informal way as recto/verso pairings, except for "The Prophet Muhammad at the Gates of Paradise" which occupied a large wall. These exquisite water-colour paintings on paper are in a remarkably well-preserved state. It is with relief and wonder that we now take a closer look at this manuscript made more than five hundred years ago.

The narrative in *Paths of Paradise* dates back more than fifteen hundred years and refers to the Qur'anic verse 17.1, entitled the "Night Journey."<sup>9</sup> This verse, along with others, points to Muhammad's Night Journey (*isra'*) from Mecca to Jerusalem on Buraq and accompanied by Archangel Gabriel, followed by his ascension (*mi'raj*) to heaven.<sup>10</sup> Once in Jerusalem, Muhammad is subjected to trials; his good choices authenticate him as the rightful Prophet. His meeting with other prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus (fig. 8), and his subsequent role in leading them in prayer not only link Islam to the other monotheistic religions but also reinforce his status as the First Prophet.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, when he returns to Mecca, Muhammad's story is challenged; he successfully convinces the

skeptics by describing Jerusalem and predicting the arrival of a caravan.<sup>12</sup> The presence of Archangel Gabriel in the paintings in addition to the Qur'anic verses enhances the viewer's belief in the authenticity of Muhammad's journey.<sup>13</sup> Muhammad's *isra'* and *mi'raj* show that he is worthy of God's favour as leader of God's chosen community.<sup>14</sup> This is an essential part of the doctrine of the Muslim faith, and one who does not believe it is deemed guilty of apostasy.<sup>15</sup>

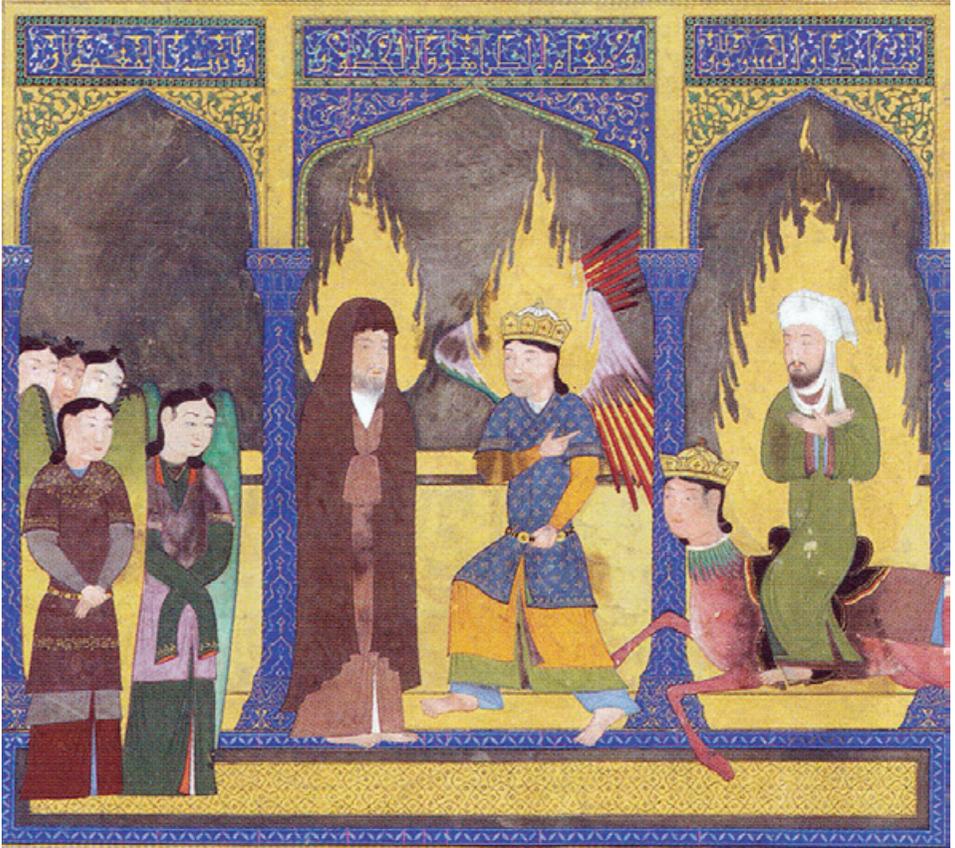


Fig. 8. Detail of “The Prophet Muhammad Encountering Jesus  
in the Bayt al-Ma’Mur.”

Christiane J. Gruber has published extensive research on the geo-political and religious context of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Iran. During the Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty (1253–1355), the sultans Oljeitu (r. 1304–16) and Abu Saʿid Bahadur Khan (r. 1317–35) “merg[ed] religious polemics with the pictorial arts” to establish the primacy of Shiʿite and Sunnite Islam, respectively.<sup>16</sup> Prayer inscriptions were placed strategically on the picture plane in religious manuscripts to convey the importance of Islam, “for the learning of Arabic-language *tasbihs*, [...] for the instruction of bodily movements used in oral petitionary prayers (*duʿas*),”<sup>17</sup> and to provide a moment to halt and meditate.<sup>18</sup> This practice of disseminating didactic tools that merged text, images and oral prayer continued during the Timurid Empire.

Gruber identifies two religious manuscripts commissioned under the Timurid dynasty that were influenced by Ilkhanid *Miʿrajnama* texts and illustrations: the *Book of Ascension* (*Miʿrajnama*) (1436–37) produced for the Timurid sultan Shahrukh (r. 1401–47), and al-Saraʿi’s *Paths of Paradise* commissioned circa 1466 by Shahrukh’s successor, Abu Saʿid Mirza.<sup>19</sup> Gruber affirms the latter to be an almost identical copy of the former, although it has some new images and only nine depictions of hell compared to the sixteen in the *Book of Ascension*.<sup>20</sup> They both encourage “active participation in prayers,”<sup>21</sup> and both contain pictorial elements pointing to a Chinese-Buddhist influence, which Gruber attributes to “trans-regional contact and inter-religious conflation.”<sup>22</sup>

During the Timurid period, military actions were put aside in favour of two major expansionist strategies: diplomatic Sunni religious missions and extensive economic and cultural exchange with other countries, namely Ming China (1368–1644).<sup>23</sup> Doctrinal standardization was imposed on “sedentary Muslim Shi’ites,” while emissaries were sent to the nomadic tribes of the Cuman-Kipchak confederation in Eurasia and India.<sup>24</sup> Shahrukh even penned a letter to the Ming emperor of China expressing the hope that the emperor, too, would promote Islamic policies in his own country.<sup>25</sup> However, the Timurid did not abandon their Turco-Mongolian traditions; the rulers and the military elites held on to their Chagatai identity.<sup>26</sup> As well, they retained the Uighur script as a symbol of their affiliation to the Ilkhanid-Mongol-Chinese culture.<sup>27</sup> These clues to the Timurid’s way of life would not have been lost on the perceived audience of foreign monarchs and nobles who were shown the manuscript *Paths of Paradise*.

Not only benefits came with considerable interactions between countries: the Black Plague arrived in Central Asia in the early fourteenth century and caused a tremendous number of deaths (1,000 per day).<sup>28</sup> The folio “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham” in *Paths of Paradise* may have given comfort to those who had lost someone dear to this horrible sickness (fig. 9). In the fifteenth century, the Black Death was perceived as God’s punishment for crimes such as adultery, usury and drinking alcohol.<sup>29</sup>



Fig. 9. Detail of "The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham."

This illustrated text featuring Sino-Buddhist elements might have supplied not only moral uplift but also a warning advocating the principles of Islam to an audience of sinners or foreign non-believers.<sup>30</sup> The inclusion of Persian and foreign iconography in *Paths of Paradise* might have been a way to broaden the Timurid dynasty's sphere of influence across Asia. But how did it work? Gruber asserts that the striking images in Shahrukh's *Book of Ascension* are "syncretistic" in subject and pictorial form;<sup>31</sup> this also applies to the images in *Paths of Paradise*, and an analysis of some of its miniature paintings will provide clues to the singularities and meaning of its visual language.

Foremost in all the images in *Paths of Paradise* is God's absence. Yet the extensive use of gold might indicate His presence in these heavenly spheres.<sup>32</sup> Another Timurid painting entitled "The Prophet Muhammad Prostrates Himself before the Eternal" (ca. 1436) (fig. 10) seems to confirm this symbolism.<sup>33</sup>

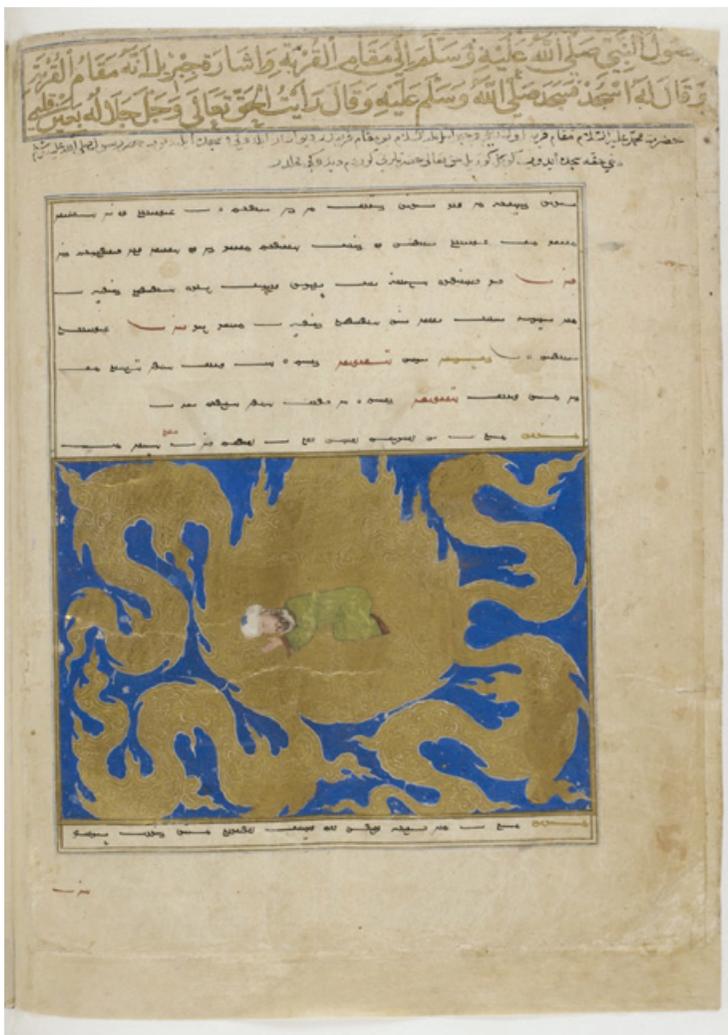


Fig. 10. Anonymous, “The Prophet Muhammad Prostrates Himself before the Eternal,” from the *Book of the Prophet Muhammad’s Ascension (Mi’rajnama)*, ca. 1436, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Suppl. Turc 190, fol. 36v. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8427195m/f78.image.r=turc%20190>.

Furthermore, swirling clouds in traditional Chinese paintings signify “spirit and movement.”<sup>34</sup> We might conclude that the gold swirling clouds on lapis lazuli background along with the golden balls surrounding Muhammad in “The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the Fourth Heaven” (fig. 11), “The Prophet Muhammad Encountering the Angel ‘Azra’il” (fig. 12) and “The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the White Sea” (fig. 13) indicate God’s permeating presence in these spaces and therefore His protection.



Fig. 11. Detail of “The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the Fourth Heaven.”



Fig. 12. Detail of “The Prophet Muhammad Encountering the Angel ‘Azra’il.”



Fig. 13. Detail of “The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the White Sea.”

The pictorial impact of Muhammad, the crowned Archangel Gabriel with his large, red-tipped wings and the red, crowned Buraq enveloped by golden clouds might give authority to the idea of a swift nightly voyage to Jerusalem and ascension to the divine realm of paradise under God's approval. To emphasize his "sacred status,"<sup>35</sup> the Prophet is always surrounded by a gold halo in the shape of a flame. This motif may be associated with the halos of the bodhisattvas in *Twenty-Five Bodhisattvas Descending from Heaven* (ca. 1300) (fig. 14), and with Jesus's and the saints' golden halos in Christian images. Gold colour used extensively on aureoles, swirling clouds and balls floating on dark blue lapis lazuli background<sup>36</sup> are recognizable signs of the precious, the divine and sainthood for Muslims, Christians and Buddhists.



Fig. 14. Anonymous, *Twenty-Five Bodhisattvas Descending from Heaven*, ca. 1300, pair of hanging scrolls; gold and mineral pigments on silk, Kimbell Art Museum, Fortworth.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Twenty-Five\\_Bodhisattvas\\_Descending\\_from\\_Heaven,\\_c.\\_1300.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Twenty-Five_Bodhisattvas_Descending_from_Heaven,_c._1300.jpg).

An effective way to make adepts or followers is to be an idealized mirror of the designated audience; this strategy is seen in *Paths of Paradise*. Muhammad's facial features are depicted clearly so that the viewer can appreciate his slanted eyes, black moustache and beard. In addition, all the figures in the paintings—including angels, prophets and even Buraq—have dark hair and slanted black eyes; their Asian facial features hint at the Timurid's ancestral connection to the Ilkhanid Mongol dynasty, thus establishing a brotherly atmosphere.<sup>37</sup> Angels are represented in human form and their style of clothing is easily identifiable, as is that of the prophets. Muhammad's turban is a sign of high rank, authority and precedence (fig. 15).

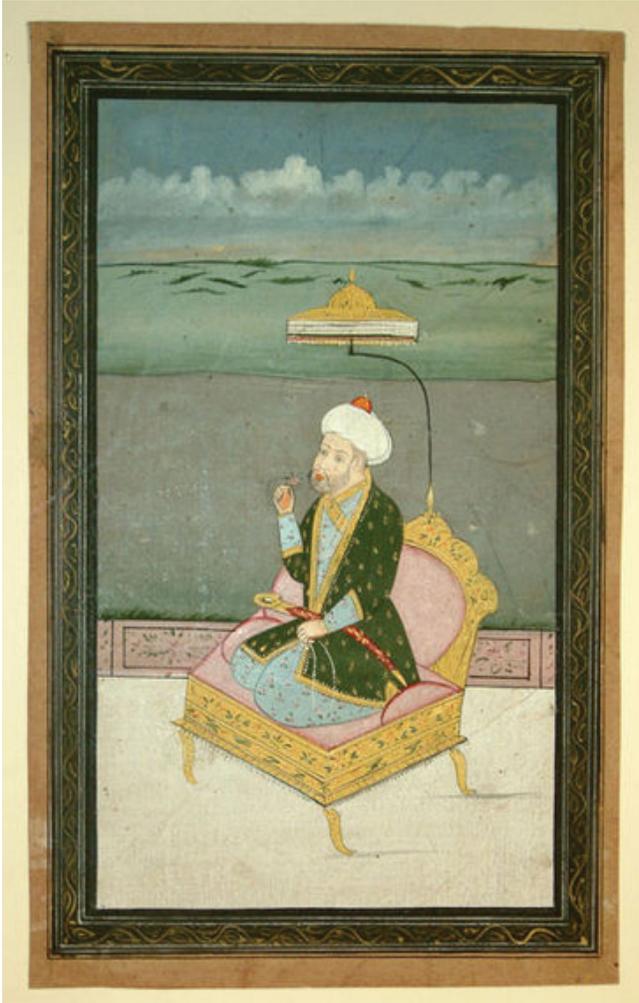


Fig. 15. Anonymous, *Sultan Abu Said Mirza*, n.d., gouache on paper,  
Mead Art Museum at Amherst College.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sultan\\_Abu\\_Said\\_Mirza.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sultan_Abu_Said_Mirza.jpg).

The accompanying Archangel Gabriel sometimes wears a yellow and black breastplate that is typically worn by the Chagatai military,<sup>38</sup> such as in “The Prophet Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham” (fig. 16) and “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Pavilion Made from Rubies in Paradise” (fig. 17). In other instances such as “The Prophet Muhammad Encountering Jesus in the Bayt al-Ma’Mur,” Gabriel, like the other angels in the picture, wears a three-piece vestment tied at the waist by a metallic belt—attire usually associated with the nobility.<sup>39</sup> To amplify this point, Gabriel, Buraq and the two large angels are crowned in all the paintings.



Fig. 16. Detail of “The Prophet Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham.”



Fig. 17. Detail of “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Pavilion  
Made from Rubies in Paradise.”

In general, hand gestures are used to convey respect, admiration, surprise, or to point emphatically at the actors in the story. Therefore, through nonverbal communication, a powerful message of cooperation is established between the figures. In this painting, Gabriel the narrator is pointing to the first angel, who in turn gestures toward a large, crowned angel of prayers placed in front of the picture plane to reiterate the importance of prayer as the way to reach God. Gruber notes that the polysepalous angel of prayers “appears to have been inspired

by Sino-Central Asian Buddhist scriptural arts.”<sup>40</sup> It may also refer to the Jewish narrative of Moses’ vision of Metatron, another polysepalous angel.<sup>41</sup> The polysepalous angel represents the notion of perpetual praise and “the spread of religious devotion to various peoples in the world.”<sup>42</sup> Jews, Christians, Muslims and Buddhists alike would have recognized the role of the angel of prayers as being an intermediary between the world of mortals and God. They may have perceived the scene as an invitation to convert to the Islamic faith and join in communal prayers to praise God.

It is interesting to note how the picture plane of “The Prophet Muhammad before the Angel with Seventy Heads” has been structured to convey its message. The painting is floating in space, and to mark its importance, the artist has placed a large rectangular space with prayers written in Uighur script and bordered with gold as the focal point, at the forefront of the picture plane. This large inscription bridges two registers where the story is taking place. On the right side, it is attached to the frame enclosing the scene of Muhammad’s arrival, which, due to its scale, appears to be further away than the two towering angels on the left. Surrounded by golden swirling clouds on a dark blue background, a “diminutive” Muhammad,<sup>43</sup> riding the red, crowned Buraq, comes in from right to left, creating a movement mimicking the one employed to write the Uighur script above him. He is preceded by Archangel Gabriel, who

seems to be flying in as a comet. Gabriel is looking in the direction of Muhammad while pointing with his two hands at two side-by-side, large, crowned angels breaking out of the framed picture plane. His two hands in conjunction with the placement of the left arm of the first angel form a diagonal line directing the viewer's attention towards the seventy heads of the angel of prayers "fanning up" to the very top of the picture.<sup>44</sup> According to Gruber, the framed spaces pertain to the human world, while the margins are the realm of God.<sup>45</sup> In linking the inscription of prayers in the top foreground to the framed world of Muhammad in the background, the artist opens up the picture plane, creating a space where he can insert the oversized angels of prayers; these figures physically mediate the space between God and the faithful. The artist's signature is seen in a small space underneath Muhammad's *isra'*, framed by a fine black line running up the frame and ending at the halo of the angel with seventy heads.

The following painting "The Prophet Muhammad Encounters the Angel with Ten Thousand Wings and the Four-Headed Angel" (fig. 18) shares the same visual structure. Yet the roles are reversed: Muhammad, who is astride Buraq, and Gabriel seem to be coming from heaven to visit the earth.



Fig. 18. Detail of “The Prophet Muhammad Encounters the Angel with Ten Thousand Wings and the Four-Headed Angel.”

Gabriel is pointing to the four-headed angel while Muhammad’s right hand is on his heart, possibly to express his love for humanity. The angel with the four heads may represent earthly beings: the world of birds (eagle), the world of domestic animals (ox), the world of wild animals (the lion) and humanity (human head).<sup>46</sup> Alternatively, this image of the angel with the four heads may have come from the Book of Ezekiel,<sup>47</sup> and, based on Christian icons, could be identified as a cherub symbolizing the four Evangelists of the New Testament: Marc (lion), John (eagle), Luke (ox) and Matthew (humanity) (fig. 19). The angel could also be pointing to the two cherubs guarding the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Solomon.



Fig. 19. Detail of a sixteenth-century fresco by Theophanes the Cretan (1490–1559) showing a four-headed cherub. <http://www.nsad.ru/articles/kak-izobrazit-nepostizhimoe>.

The framed painter's signature is on the right, underneath the heavenly cartouche of Muhammad, Gabriel and Buraq enveloped by golden swirling clouds on dark lapis lazuli background. The symbols and meanings of other faiths were appropriated to legitimize the importance of the Muslim faith. The visual style used in the two aforementioned paintings is imaginative, using format, scale, colour and gesture to reinforce the supremacy of the Muslim faith and its Prophet, effectively promoting adherence to its doctrine.

This formal and iconographical analysis cannot be complete without examining the last folio, entitled "The Prophet

Muhammad Visiting the Pavilions Made from Rubies in Paradise,” where Muhammad finally arrives in paradise. Titus Burckhardt describes this “earthly paradise and heavenly land” as a “transfigured landscape.”<sup>48</sup> Indeed, this painting’s narrative mirrors activities of daily life while showing the promises of a paradisiacal garden. At the very top of the folio is a description written in Arabic explaining the scene.<sup>49</sup> The frame surrounding the prayer written in Uighur script is linked to the gold railing and gold cupola above and situates the enclosing text in the foreground. The framed text bridges the two registers below. The artist uses two-thirds of the picture plane divided into two unequal spaces to depict three simultaneous episodes of the story. To the right, Muhammad, mounted on Buraq, has landed in a light blue clearing followed by gold, swirling clouds. Flowering trees are arranged in a loose diagonal line, bordering a possible garden that leads the eye to the back of the pavilion. The dominant light blue colour used by the artist signals a change of scenery: Muhammad has arrived in paradise.<sup>50</sup> This is emphasized by a fine blue line running around the framed image and script, stopping at the gold rail. Muhammad and Archangel Gabriel are gesturing toward the celestial pavilion; its domed roof is nearly touching the edge of the paper, perhaps to signify its magnitude. Buraq, wearing a tiara, earrings and necklace, is looking straight at the viewer with an expression of astonishment. This is the only painting where a figure makes direct eye contact with the viewer. Gabriel, who is wearing Timurid military garb with flowing ribbons, is leading the way

toward three steps. A partially open wooden, patterned screen provides a glimpse of two *huris*—the promised virgins to those who reach paradise<sup>51</sup>—who seem to be hiding. Directly above the doorway is a window with opened curtains and a mock balustrade hung with patterned textiles. This central section of the painting depicting the entrance is framed by a thick ochre partition starting from the bottom and stopping short on the right to include the stairs, hinting at perspective. This very narrow oblique space may signify the difficulty of getting into heaven.

The pavilion on the left is spacious and framed at the top by golden curtains. Since the pavilion is vertically aligned with the gold dome above—possibly representing the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem—the pavilion may symbolize the Heavenly Jerusalem. Inside the cobbled courtyard decorated with patterned textiles, two men wearing the vest of the military elite—similar to Gabriel’s—are entertained by *huris*. Above them the continuation of the bluish landscape of flowering trees bordering a garden is seen through a large framed window. This could be a reference to the windowed landscape used in Renaissance paintings and hint at inter-cultural exchange. The introduction of the “gazer” might be seen as another innovative European influence used to energize the faithful into action. Architectural elements, patterns and motifs found on textile, wood or metalwork reflect the many cultural influences that extensive trade brought to objects used in daily life.<sup>52</sup> The artist has incorporated these elements to portray Heavenly Paradise,

or Heavenly Jerusalem, which will be attained by the few recognized as ardent defenders of the Muslim faith.

The Timurid Empire covered a large territory extending from the Black Sea into India; its capital, Samarkand, was situated at the heart of the Silk Road trading routes.<sup>53</sup> To ensure safe passage to caravans coming from the East and West bringing and exchanging products on their territory, and therefore providing economic growth, a program to maintain peace was devised. It relied heavily on the unity of faith and a cohesive religious and political influence on its neighbouring countries. The recognition and implementation of Sunnite Islam as the supreme religion and Muhammad as the only Prophet were at the core of this plan. Entertaining good diplomatic relations with nearby countries implied propagation of the faith as well as expansion of trade and political influence. Integrating religious and political doctrine, the Timurid religious manuscript *Paths of Paradise* was an excellent didactic tool for spreading the faith and recruiting new adepts. Inciting prayers intermingled with symbolic meaning were used systematically, and cross-cultural pictorial elements mirroring daily life served to propagate the Muslim religion and, by extension, the Timurid's way of living the faith.

## NOTES

- 1 Christiane J. Gruber, *The Timurid “Book of Ascension” (Miʿrajnama): A Study of Text and Image in a Pan-Asian Context* (Valencia: Patrimonio, 2008), 254, accessed January 30, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/456895/\\_The\\_Timurid\\_Book\\_of\\_Ascension\\_Mirajnama\\_A\\_Study\\_of\\_Text\\_and\\_Image\\_in\\_a\\_Pan-Asian\\_Context\\_](https://www.academia.edu/456895/_The_Timurid_Book_of_Ascension_Mirajnama_A_Study_of_Text_and_Image_in_a_Pan-Asian_Context_).
- 2 Christiane J. Gruber, “Folios from the *Paths of Paradise (Nahj al-faradis)* of al-Saraʿi,” in *Jerusalem 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*,” ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 295–99, accessed January 30, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/28729736/\\_The\\_Path\\_to\\_Paradise\\_Jerusalem\\_in\\_Islamic\\_Ascension\\_Texts\\_and\\_Images\\_](https://www.academia.edu/28729736/_The_Path_to_Paradise_Jerusalem_in_Islamic_Ascension_Texts_and_Images_).
- 3 Gruber, *Timurid*, 282.
- 4 The Met exhibition included extended object labels explaining the Prophet’s activities in some of the folios (reproduced here verbatim):
  - a. “The Prophet Muhammad Encountering Jesus in the Bayt al-MaʿMur”: Led by the Archangel Gabriel, identified by his red tipped wings, Muhammad arrives at the fourth heaven astride his hybrid half-human steed Buraq, where angels greet him as though acknowledging their master. Muhammad then goes to a palace guarded by seventy thousand angels, where he meets with Jesus.
  - b. “The Prophet Muhammad Arriving at the White Sea”: Amid the swirling golden mists of heaven Muhammad

and Gabriel encounter 'Azra'il, the angel of death, before arriving at the shores of the White Sea.

- c. "The Prophet Muhammad Encounters the Angel with Ten Thousand Wings and the Four-Headed Angel": After passing through the sixth heaven Muhammad encounters the angel with seventy heads, each bearing seventy tongues with which to continuously praise God.
- d. "The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seven Hundred Thousand Tents": Muhammad sees seventy thousand curtains made of light, fire, precious stones, pearls or gold. Seventy thousand angels guard these curtains, one of who leads him through to the throne of God, which is ringed by seven hundred thousand tents of enormous proportions, each housing five hundred thousand angels.
- e. "The Prophet Muhammad at the Gates of Paradise": Gabriel brings Muhammad to the Gates of Paradise, marked by domes constructed of precious stone. Before the gates is the Kawthar Basin, whose waters are sweeter than honey. Drinking vessels made of gold, jade and celadon-glazed ceramics ring the basin and all who drink will never suffer from thirst again.
- f. "The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Heavenly Pavilion of Abraham": Muhammad is taken to the pavilion of Abraham (who also bears a halo of flames), where young children who suffered a premature death live on in paradise under the patriarch's guardianship. The arrival of the Black Death in the Crimea coincided with the writing

of the Path of Paradise, and this text would have provided comfort to those who had experienced loss.

g. “The Prophet Muhammad Visiting the Pavilions Made from Rubies in Paradise”: Muhammad then reaches a pavilion made of rubies, here interpreted in gold and precious textiles, where he finds beautiful *huris*, the unsullied beings promised to those who reach paradise.

- 5 Gruber, *Timurid*, 254.
- 6 Gruber, “Folios,” 296.
- 7 Daniel C. Waugh, “Featured Museum I: The David Collection,” *Silk Road* 12 (2014): 134, accessed January 30, 2017, [http://faculty.washington.edu/dwaugh/publications/Waugh\\_DavidColl\\_SR12\\_2014\\_pp132\\_136+PlateIX.pdf](http://faculty.washington.edu/dwaugh/publications/Waugh_DavidColl_SR12_2014_pp132_136+PlateIX.pdf).
- 8 Gruber, *Timurid*, 299. The Heavenly Rooster is the angel who calls the faithful to prayer. The celestial cock is a type of angel that declares the Day of Judgment with a *tasbih* prayer.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 252.
- 10 Buraq appears in another narrative transporting Abraham from Jerusalem to Mecca to visit his son. See Brooke Olson Vuckovic, *Heavenly Journeys, Earthly Concerns: The Legacy of the Mi'raj in the Formation of Islam* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 13–32.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 Gruber, *Timurid*, 253.

- 13 Vuckovic, 32.
- 14 Ibid., 39.
- 15 Christiane J. Gruber, “The Ilkhanid *Mi’rajnama* as an Illustrated Sunni Prayer Manual,” in *The Prophet’s Ascension: Cross-Cultural Encounters with the Islamic Mi’raj Tales*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Frederick Stephen Colby (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 29, accessed January 30, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/456889/\\_The\\_Ilkhanid\\_Mirajnama\\_as\\_an\\_Illustrated\\_Sunni\\_Prayer\\_Manual\\_](https://www.academia.edu/456889/_The_Ilkhanid_Mirajnama_as_an_Illustrated_Sunni_Prayer_Manual_).
- 16 Ibid., 28.
- 17 Ibid., 29.
- 18 Gruber, *Timurid*, 299.
- 19 Ibid., 277.
- 20 Ibid., 281.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid., 255.
- 23 Ibid., 261.
- 24 Maria E. Subtelny, “The Jews at the Edge of the World in a Timurid-Era *Mi’rajnama*: The Islamic Ascension Narrative as Missionary Text,” in *The Prophet’s Ascension: Cross-Cultural Encounters with the Islamic Mi’raj Tales*, ed. Christiane J. Gruber and Frederick Colby (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2010), 54–55.
- 25 Ibid., 54.

- 26 Ibid., 55.
- 27 Ibid., 54.
- 28 Ibid., 282.
- 29 Gruber, *Timurid*, 277.
- 30 Ibid., 277–78.
- 31 Ibid., 295.
- 32 Ibid., 301.
- 33 Eleanor Sims, Boris Il'ich Marshak, and Ernst J. Grube, *Peerless Images: Persian Painting and Its Sources* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 137.
- 34 Mai-Mai Sze and Gai Wang, *The Way of Chinese Painting, Its Ideas and Technique: With Selections from the Seventeenth-Century Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting* (New York: Random House, 1959), 229.
- 35 Gruber, *Timurid*, 303.
- 36 Lapis lazuli is a very expensive colour as it is made from grinding the semi-precious lapis lazuli stone.
- 37 Gruber, *Timurid*, 314.
- 38 Ibid., 305.
- 39 Ibid., 306
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid., 317.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid., 300.

- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Alice Wood, *Of Wing and Wheels: A Synthetic Study of the Biblical Cherubim* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 2–4, accessed January 30, 2017, <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/2022>.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam: Language and Meaning* (World Wisdom, 2009), 37.
- 49 Gruber, *Timurid*, 299.
- 50 Ibid., 308.
- 51 Ibid., 283.
- 52 Ibid., 307. This practice is seen in “The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seventy Thousand Veils,” “The Prophet Muhammad in the Place of Seven Hundred Thousand Tents,” and most explicitly in “The Prophet Muhammad at the Gates of Paradise,” where architecture, ceramic, textile and metal work reference commonly used objects.
- 53 The capital was later changed to Herat.

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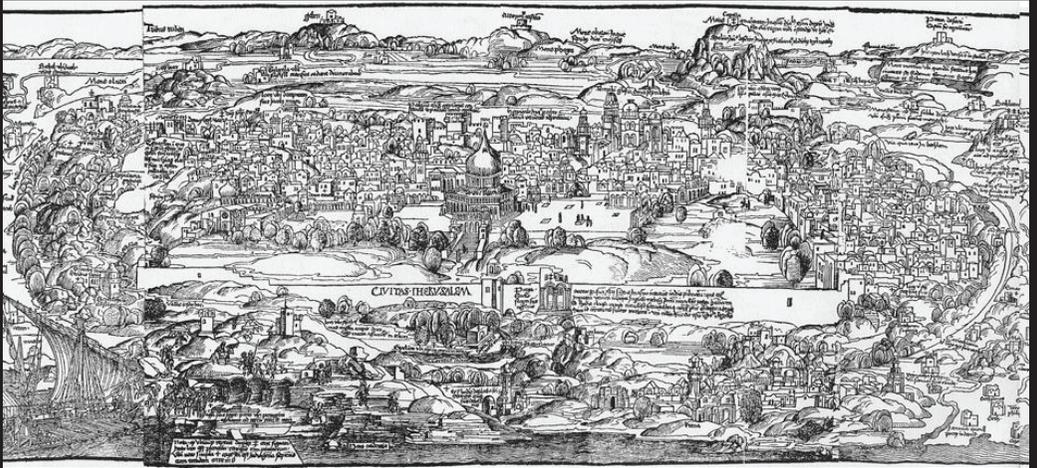
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Erhard Reuwich, *View of Jerusalem* (detail), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper. Reproduced from Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, Vol. 85, *German Book Illustration before 1500: Anonymous Artists, 1484–1486* (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1978–), n.p. Image: ARTstor.

# Reappropriation of the Holy City and Virtual Pilgrimages to Jerusalem Displayed by Modern and Crusader Maps

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MARGARÉTA HANNA PINTÉR

Maps are often taken to be objective representations of a geographical region; however, Dutch artist Erhard Reuwich's (1445–1505) medieval Christian pilgrimage map entitled *View of Jerusalem* (fig. 1), from German author Bernard von Breydenbach's (1440–97) *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Journey to the Holy Land) (1486), demonstrates that this is not

the case. The specific purpose of a map significantly influences its appearance and the information it includes. Furthermore, maps have been employed by various groups over the course of history as a means of asserting a particular representation of reality to advance their political and/or religious agenda. Although there were three major religions coexisting in the medieval metropolis of Jerusalem, Christians wanted to achieve religious and cultural domination; to this end, they produced maps that omitted or reinvented structures associated with other religions in order to visually assert Jerusalem as a Christian city and to promote a pro-Christian, anti-Islamic worldview. Christian pilgrimage maps such as Reuwich's *View of Jerusalem* may represent selective features of the Holy Land not only to achieve political objectives, but also to facilitate an imagined, visual journey to the earthly Holy Land and the Heavenly Jerusalem. This essay will further examine the functions of Reuwich's pilgrimage map of Jerusalem, and also consider how contemporary maps of Jerusalem may serve similar purposes.

Maps not only convey geographical information about a certain region, but also reflect “the philosophical, political or religious outlook of a period.”<sup>1</sup> Reuwich's woodcut *View of Jerusalem* provides insight into the desire of Christians to see Jerusalem as a “Christian city ruled by Christians.”<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1. Erhard Reuwich, *View of Jerusalem* (detail), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper. Reproduced from Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch, Vol. 85, German Book Illustration before 1500: Anonymous Artists, 1484–1486* (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1978–), n.p. Image: ARTstor.

At first glance, this work seems to depict the city in as much detail and as realistically as possible. If one looks more closely, however, it becomes apparent that there is a discrepancy between the Jerusalem depicted and the actual cityscape at the time. Reuwich focuses entirely on the Christian aspects of the city, omitting any traces of Islam or Judaism which would obscure the magnificence of the city by Christian standards.<sup>3</sup> Although the city is filled with human figures, they are meant to only represent Christians. Catherine Blaire Moore explains, “[M]aps were meant to create a certain image of Jerusalem, an image of a glorious city that combined Christian tradition and Crusader reality, an illustration of the renewed Christian rule in historical Jerusalem.”<sup>4</sup>

While Reuwich wished to construct a fairly precise map of the city, he decided to exclude evidence of Islamic or Jewish presence because it would have disrupted the predominant Christian belief that Jerusalem was mainly a Christian city; in turn, this would have interfered with the holiness of the place in the minds of pilgrims. Reuwich pays great attention to the Dome of the Rock (691 CE) since it was, and still is, one of the main holy sites in the Islamic religion. However, he has mislabelled the Islamic shrine as the *Templum Solomonis* (fig. 2), thereby dismissing the Muslim significance of the building. Instead, he alludes to the destroyed Christian Temple of Solomon underneath it, to try to cleanse it of the infidel's religious power.<sup>5</sup> This represents an attempt to reclaim the city through the technique of labelling. Reuwich has also deliberately removed Islamic symbols in his map, such as the crescent moon shape that sat atop the Dome of the Rock which symbolizes Islam. As Tsafra Siew writes, "In Jerusalem, religious symbols are an integral part of the landscape. [...] These symbols were used throughout the city's history as elements in the competition between Christianity and Islam."<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 2. Detail of *View of Jerusalem* showing the Dome of the Rock mislabelled as the “Templum Solomonicum.”  
<http://www.solakkedi.com/kitap%20dunyasi/Peregrinatio/01.html>.

There is also a degree of deception in the way the *View of Jerusalem* is oriented. The map is designed so that the viewer is looking down on the city of Jerusalem from the east. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the upper right is rotated by 90 degrees to make the facade of the building as visible as possible to the viewer.<sup>7</sup> Reuwich has misoriented the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to make it seem more prominent than it actually was, and to enhance its features and spiritual importance (fig. 3).<sup>8</sup> He thus created an idealized image of Jerusalem to aid Christian pilgrims in imagining and preparing for the holiness of the place.



Fig. 3. Misorientation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (shown in blue).  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Breydenbach\\_image.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Breydenbach_image.jpg).

Bianca Kühnel asserts, “Selectivity in what we choose to remember or to forget is part of every process of memory and is always meant to justify some present interest.”<sup>9</sup> Here she is referring to visual representations of Jerusalem produced in Europe, but her statement also applies to the current conflict over land and religion between Palestine and Israel—an ongoing war for power in which the Holy City is caught in the middle. The animosity between Christians and Muslims in Jerusalem during the Crusades is similar to the hatred that exists today between the Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews living in close proximity. Moreover, the use of maps to promote a selective reality of Jerusalem has continued to the present day. It is pertinent here to mention the Arab-Israeli War of 1948 and displacement of Palestinians with the formation of the state of Israel to better understand the parallel between the mission of Crusaders to take over the Holy Land in the Middle Ages and the attempts of Palestinians today to take back the land of present-day Israel.

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1947, at the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, the United Nations’ partition plan recommended the creation of two independent Jewish and Arab states, a plan immediately rejected by the Arab countries in the region. Since then these groups have fought each other for control of more land.<sup>10</sup> Although the United Nations designated the territory of Jerusalem as an international zone, it quickly became the focus of Israeli-Arab struggles for power. East Jerusalem was

eventually annexed by Israel in 1980.<sup>11</sup> Even so, the Holy City remains a central point of dispute because it contains numerous holy sites valuable to both sides, and Palestinians still envision the east side of the city as the future capital of Palestine.<sup>12</sup>

The methods of erasure used by Reuwich in the *View of Jerusalem* are evident in contemporary maps published by Arab states and Palestinian territories, and Israel. Many Palestinian maps completely deny the existence of Israel, or opt to cover it up with a Palestinian flag (fig. 4).<sup>13</sup>



Fig. 4. “Al-Tarbiyah al-Wataniyyah’, (‘National Education’) – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, page 49, academic year 2002–2003.” Reproduced from “Palestinian Maps Omitting Israel,” Jewish Virtual Library, accessed February 6, 2017, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/palestinian-maps-omitting-israel>.

On a smaller scale, a map published and distributed by the Israeli Tourism Ministry of the occupied Old City of al-Quds leaves out notable Muslim and Christian holy sites, as well as entire neighbourhoods associated with these two “offensive” religions to Judaism (fig. 5).

For example, the map refers to the Dome of the Rock by its Jewish denomination, the Temple Mount, yet it makes no reference to the Church of Saint Anne, an important Roman Catholic church, and barely depicts the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, another important Christian site.<sup>14</sup> The east part of the city is also labelled with names of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian quarter considered illegal by international law. In an interview with *Al Jazeera*, Betty Herschman, director of international relations and advocacy at Ir Amim, an Israeli human rights non-governmental organization, asserts, “Inclusion of certain sites within the boundaries of the Old City of al-Quds is aimed at promoting a one-sided Jewish representation of East Jerusalem and ignoring its Christian and Muslim identities.”<sup>15</sup> There is thus a clear pattern throughout history of making politically motivated decisions about the inclusion, exclusion and labelling of sites in maps of Jerusalem.



Fig. 5. Map of Jerusalem showing the Old City but excluding Christian and Muslim sites. Photo: Nigel Wilson/Al Jazeera. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/israel-removes-key-sites-jerusalem-city-map-160605110610513.html>.

In addition to representing a selective representation of a particular area, pilgrimage maps offer a “surrogate pilgrimage” for those who are unable to physically visit the Holy Land.<sup>16</sup> Kathryn Beebe argues that Reuwich’s Crusader map serves a double function in its method of depicting reality: “[T]he topographically ‘accurate’ mode of constructing Jerusalem for the exterior eye and the mode of constructing the city for the interior eye of a contemplative virtual pilgrim [...] are profoundly connected.”<sup>17</sup> Striving for geometrical perfection, Reuwich’s

map of Jerusalem not only aims to guide real pilgrims and viewers undertaking “imagined” pilgrimages,<sup>18</sup> but also to reflect the unflawed, Heavenly Jerusalem for all Christians.<sup>19</sup> It connects the heavenly aspect of the city to the worldly one in order to facilitate the imagination of the viewer. As Bianca Kühnel points out, “The concentric round walls of Crusader maps of Jerusalem, and the exaggerated perspective [...] create the illusion of the city descending from heaven, even if both these categories are intended to depict earthly Jerusalem.”<sup>20</sup> In other words, the earthly Jerusalem depicted in Crusader maps may also be interpreted as the Heavenly Jerusalem. Citing Robert Ousterhout, Kühnel declares, “Jerusalem has always been invested with ‘flexible geography and transportable topography.’”<sup>21</sup>

Reuwich’s map takes advantage of Jerusalem’s “flexible geography” to help the viewer visualize the city as a Christian city ruled only by their God. This made it easier for them to reflect on their spirituality, which would have also been the main goal of a physical pilgrimage. Thus, with the aid of the map, one could experience the same piety as those who experienced the Holy City firsthand. *View of Jerusalem* focuses on the mental aspect of a pilgrimage; its ultimate purpose does not lie in its physical manifestation, but rather in what is behind its appearance: the symbolism and spiritual value that one accords to it. It becomes more than just a map; it becomes the representation of the Heavenly Jerusalem itself in the mind of the viewer.

Although modes of travel are much faster and more accessible nowadays, imagined pilgrimages remain popular thanks to the Internet. Today, anyone with online access can easily be treated to a two-dimensional tour of the Holy City from the comfort of their home. In a way, these virtual pilgrimages are almost more intimate than actual pilgrimages, since they allow one to avoid the disturbance of tourists, pilgrims from other religions visiting the same city, poor weather conditions or, in the case of Jerusalem, the physical signs of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet, believers may experience the same emotions and spirituality as an actual expedition to the Holy Land. Mark W. MacWilliams elaborates, “[T]his imagined and imaginary realm is primarily textual. Cyber-pilgrims ‘traverse’ therefore the same mythical *imaginaire* that is architecturalised *in situ* in the ‘real’ pilgrimages.”<sup>22</sup> An additional advantage to this new kind of virtual pilgrimage is that the pilgrim can choose to view only the monuments that are important to their specific religion, which, in a way, has the same outcome as the selective realities of modern maps of Jerusalem, as well as Reuwich’s medieval map.

To conclude, Crusader maps and modern maps of Jerusalem have been employed for two purposes: to assert the dominance of one religion and culture, and to visually narrate pilgrimages to Jerusalem. In both Crusader and modern maps, the presence of each of the three Abrahamic religions is depicted in distinctive ways. The appearance of the earthly and Heavenly Jerusalem

in maps is therefore contingent on the religious affiliation of the target audience. In Kühnel's words: "Jerusalem in art allows us to see that although many ideas and forms passed from one monotheistic religion to the other, [...] [they] never affected the clarity of each one's own statement, never blurred the frontiers between them."<sup>23</sup> The multicultural character of the city of Jerusalem is displayed in a unique way in maps, through which history shines as a palimpsest. Maps can do so much more than relay geographical information to the population; they can foster a sense of unity and ignite the spiritual imagination, enabling the viewer to see how, "[i]n Jerusalem, story, ritual and place could be one."<sup>24</sup>

#### NOTES

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Erhard Reuwich, *View of Jerusalem* (detail), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper. Reproduced from Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch, Vol. 85, German Book Illustration before 1500: Anonymous Artists, 1484–1486* (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1978–), n.p. Image: ARTstor.



Sherry Babadjanov, *Jerusalem and Millennialist Evangelicals* (still), 2016, video, 11:58.  
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# From the *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* to Televangelism

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SHERRY BABADJANOV

Over the course of the 2016 American presidential election and since Donald Trump's victory in November, growing Islamophobia and racism have deepened cultural divisions in America. The Western mass media has responded to the rise of Islamic terrorism and the attendant increase in displaced Muslims seeking asylum in Western countries by portraying Islam as a religion to be feared.<sup>1</sup> However, animosity towards Islam goes beyond current socio-political concerns and is historically embedded in Christian prophecy and ideology. The

evolution of media technologies from the fifteenth century to contemporary life has proven to be of value for disseminating Christian propaganda. The German cleric Bernard von Breydenbach's (1440–97) *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Journey to the Holy Land) (1486) was the first illustrated travelogue of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> In 1483, Breydenbach and painter Erhard Reuwich (1445–1505) travelled from Venice to the Holy City, and documented their experience in a book featuring text and woodblock prints.<sup>3</sup> The expedition had two intersecting purposes: to encourage pilgrimage and revive Christendom; and to spur leaders to protect Christians from the rise of Islam.<sup>4</sup> Reflecting on the *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam*'s use of new media to inspire readers to crusade against Islam,<sup>5</sup> I compiled a montage of televangelist and YouTube videos as a means of showing visual media as a process of propaganda; my work is titled *Jerusalem and Millennialist Evangelicals* (2016).<sup>6</sup>

By the end of the eleventh century, two-thirds of the ancient Christian world had been conquered by Muslims.<sup>7</sup> In response, Pope Urban II (ca. 1042–99) called for the First Crusade (1096–99), and until the fifteenth century war with the Muslims was justified as holy and pleasing to God.<sup>8</sup> Following the capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444–46; 1451–81) in 1453, the papacy attempted to unify Europe behind a new crusade.<sup>9</sup> Although under the umbrella of pilgrimage, Breydenbach's journey was primarily diplomatic: he advocated

for continued Christian support by framing the Holy City, and by extension Christians, as being under subjection to Islam. Printed material produced to encourage support at the time has been characterized by the incunabula scholar Falk Eisermann as part of a “media event” involving campaigning through written word, print media (indulgences) and preaching tours.<sup>10</sup>

The amalgamation of text and images in the *Peregrinatio* distinguished it from previous travelogues. Reuwich was the first artist to be identified or promoted in a published book; his prints therefore stand out for their singularity.<sup>11</sup> Combining a textual narrative with a pictorial view of the Holy Land served to heighten the reader’s belief that the book authentically described Muslim heresy in the city.

Reuwich’s map of the Holy Land (fig. 1) provides a view of the city from the Mount of Olives. This appealed to Franciscans in particular because pilgrims received indulgences from taking in this sight.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, this perspective enabled the viewer to circumvent Muslim restriction and control of the city.<sup>13</sup> For those who could not travel to Jerusalem, turning to Reuwich’s *View of Jerusalem* for spiritual uplift came at the cost of misinformation. Although this map is considered “unusually skilful” and inventive, there are some historical discrepancies.<sup>14</sup> For instance, Reuwich mislabelled the Haram al-Sharif (Dome of the Rock) as the Temple of Solomon (Templum Solomonis) (fig. 2),<sup>15</sup> and Breydenbach writes that the Temple’s round plan

was built by Christians.<sup>16</sup> The political authority of the artist and author in a church-run state allowed them to disseminate false and biased information. With the advent of new visual technologies, many have harnessed the efficient and affective power of moving images to produce Christian fundamentalist, anti-Islamic propaganda.



Fig. 1. Erhard Reuwich, *View of Jerusalem* (detail), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper. Reproduced from Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch, Vol. 85, German Book Illustration before 1500: Anonymous Artists, 1484–1486* (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1978–), n.p. Image: ARTstor.



Fig. 2. Detail of *View of Jerusalem* showing the Dome of the Rock mislabelled as the “Templum Solomonis.”

<http://www.solakkedi.com/kitap%20dunyasi/Peregrinatio/01.html>.

A third Jewish temple in the place of the current Muslim Dome of the Rock remains a hope for many Jews and Christians in the twenty-first century. Fundamentalist and conservative evangelical Christians believe in the second coming of Christ (the Messianic age) and his thousand-year reign (millennialism). Before this occurs, Jews will return to Israel and the construction of the Third Temple will take place.<sup>17</sup> The Great Tribulation (an “apocalyptic period”<sup>18</sup>) will take place before the Messianic age. Eschatology and millennialism are ideologically seeded in the need for radical transformation—a revolution that will bring about a new kingdom overseen by a just and authoritarian ruler who will conquer the forces of chaos (i.e., Donald Trump).<sup>19</sup>

Breydenbach and Reuwich's journey came at a time when the need to revive Christendom and protect it against Muslims was a growing concern. Similarly, today, with the rise of immigration, terrorism and economic decline, those who have remained faithful to the gospel are committed to reviving Christian, white authority. Khaled A. Beydoun of *Al Jazeera* writes: "Trump rose to power with an Islamophobic campaign and Islamophobia now will become his official policy."<sup>20</sup> While the Enlightenment and modernization may have sidelined religion, it seems that with the weakening capacity of modern nation-states to monopolize the communicative channels of public discourse, religious prophecy has remained a powerful force.<sup>21</sup>

Television may be considered an artistic medium because of its ability to affect viewers, and because the perspectives and views presented in a given work reflect the artistic choices of its creator. In compiling a video montage of televangelist apocalyptic prophecy, Islamophobia and the desire for the construction of the Third Temple, I hope to show how fundamentalist Christian media retains its propagandistic intentions. My video montage *Jerusalem and Millennialist Evangelicals* (fig. 3) begins with a 1969 clip of prominent American evangelical Christian evangelist Billy Graham discussing the second coming of Christ and the building of the Third Temple. Going forward in time to the present today, evangelical news casts prophecies in relation to current events, notably Trump's presidency and the end times. The most problematic clip is from the YouTube

channel “Armageddon News,” titled “Third Temple & the Islamic Antichrist” (fig. 4). I edited this video using the same methods as Breydenbach and Reuwich, picking the vantage point that coincided with an anti-Islamic view.

In addition, televangelists have appropriated the format of televised news to legitimize their broadcasts (fig. 5). Similarly, the *Peregrinatio*’s identification of Reuwich as an artist legitimizes his *View of Jerusalem* as an objective representation of reality.

Another image in the *Peregrinatio* that departs from reality is of exotic animals, including the imaginary unicorn (fig. 6). For viewers who knew no better, the animals sparked an urge to explore and discover the Holy Land.



Fig. 3. Sherry Babadjanov, *Jerusalem and Millennialist Evangelicals* (still), 2016, video, 11:58.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuhfRbb-aZk&feature=youtu.be>.



Fig. 4. Still from “The Third Temple & the Islamic Antichrist,” YouTube video, 17:57, posted by “Armageddon News,” September 14, 2013, accessed December 3, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNOLxoPWl48>.



Fig. 5. “The Prophecies Donald Trump Has Fulfilled,” YouTube video, 28:59, posted by “The Jim Bakker Show,” November 11, 2016, accessed February 1, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKuCFrlrw4>.

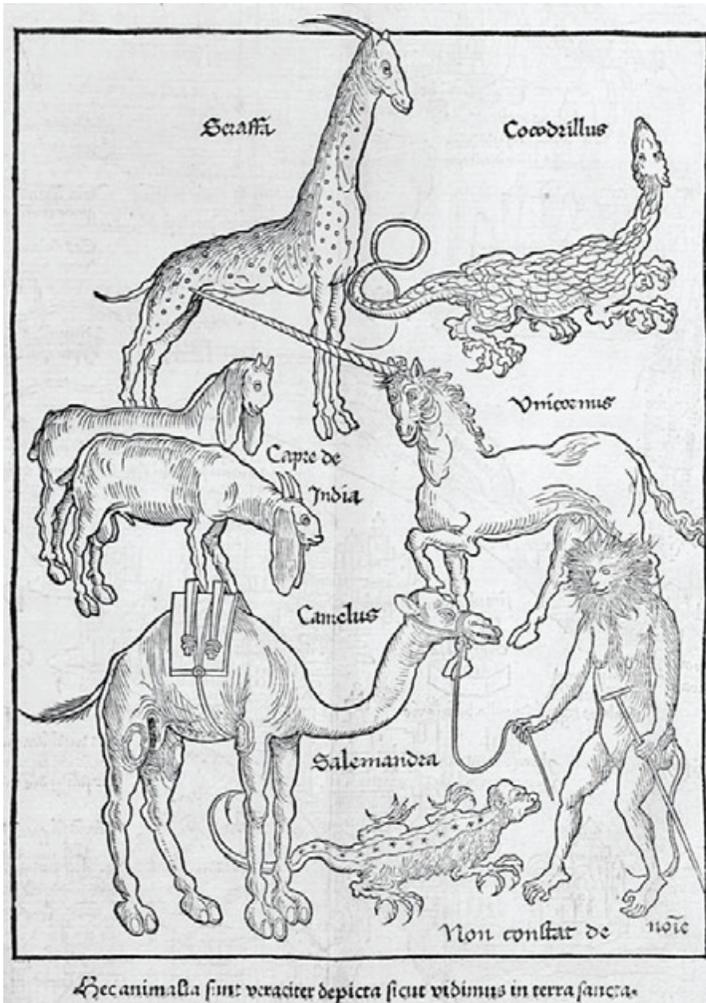


Fig. 6. “Seven examples of Holy Land fauna.” From Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Zi +156. <http://arthistorypi.org/books/picturing-experience-in-the-early-printed-book/images#img-2>.

Nowadays, sound, digital effects and computer-generated imagery (CGI) are used to more effectively engage viewers. For example, televangelist Perry Stone combines all three to sell prophetic films on the Great Tribulation (fig. 7). On October 1, 2016, a ring of clouds over Jerusalem (fig. 8) instigated prophetic confirmation; was this a sign from God? No, apparently it was some sort of drone phenomenon. To inspire pilgrimage Reuwich invented creatures; today, to inspire hope of a new era free of instability and war, people look for signs of the supernatural and believe in those who deliver them.



Fig. 7. "Jerusalem 24 The Day of The Lord – Episode 758," YouTube video, 28:30, posted by "Perry Stone," April 17, 2015, accessed February 1, 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUI\\_7uQLruw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUI_7uQLruw).



Fig. 8. Still from “Jerusalem 24 The Day of The Lord – Episode 758.”

Although Jerusalem is a sacred site, it has never remained a peaceful sanctuary, but has instead been a battleground for those with political power. The *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* was the first travelogue to combine a visualized narrative of pilgrimage. Breydenbach used the media resources available at the time to communicate his religious prophecy. The desire to fulfill the Messianic dynasty has led contemporary evangelical Christians to adopt the most affective modern visual media to spread their message. Reflecting upon contemporary socio-political concerns, I fear a revitalized American Christian crusade.

## NOTES

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10) “Perry Stone”;

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**In Search of the Sacred**

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**À la recherche du sacré**

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plenaque uicium ad antipodium refer-  
 ce quod sub antioch in typo factum est:  
 sub illo interitice dicitur esse comple-  
 dum. & uos aut infert. mundabitur  
 limetrium. Iude machabeo signifi-  
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 hanc propinquitate fecim ad mitemibus  
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 duces superat uarta emans que meo  
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 qui contra principem surrexit. ad est  
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 hanc spoliatle cupiens quo habebat.  
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Anonymous, *Gabriel Gives Daniel the Explanations, Daniel Languishes, and Gabriel Returns with Prophecies about the Future of Jerusalem*, from Beatus of Liébana, *Las Huelgas Apocalypse*, 1220, tempera, gold and ink on parchment, 52 x 37 cm, Morgan Library & Museum, New York, MS M.429, fol. 167. <http://www.themorgan.org/collection/Las-Huelgas-Apocalypse/47#>.



Aaron Butler, *Prayer Climb to the Top of the Basilica*,  
from the Series "Pilgrimage to Montreal," 2016.



*Aaron Butler, Young Man Praying on Knees,  
from the Series "Pilgrimage to Montreal," 2016.*



Aaron Butler, *Basilica Altar*,  
from the Series "Pilgrimage to Montreal," 2016.



Aaron Butler, *Jesus on the Cross*,  
*from the Series "Pilgrimage to Montreal,"* 2016.

# Saint Joseph's Oratory, Revelations Analysis and Project Creation

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AARON BUTLER

The Montreal we live in today is celebrated for its ethnic and religious diversity. The city boasts an abundance of churches, mosques and temples, many of which are major tourist attractions. The dominant religion and the one with the deepest roots in the history of Montreal is Roman Catholicism. Of the numerous Roman Catholic cathedrals and churches in the city, one

of the most illustrious and popular is Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal. Although many tourists visit this site merely because it is regarded as a tourist attraction and because of the elevated city view it offers, its impressive art and architecture deserve greater attention. Indeed, these were the aspects of the basilica that inspired my photographic series, entitled *Pilgrimage to Montreal* (2016). I will examine the expression of fundamental Christian principles in the art and architecture of Saint Joseph's Oratory, as well as in the early-thirteenth-century illuminated manuscript *Las Huelgas Apocalypse* (1220) by the Spanish monk Beatus of Liébana (ca. 730–ca. 800), and then explain how these works and their underlying themes and principles informed my artwork.

In 1924, Brother André (1845–1937) started the construction of Saint Joseph's Oratory. Twenty years prior to its construction, he built a small chapel close to Notre Dame College. Many people who were sick would come for prayer and he would take care of them. He beseeched the people to pray to Saint Joseph, who would hear their request and tend to them in times of sickness and mourning.<sup>1</sup> The increasing number of pilgrims coming to the chapel led the authorities of the Congregation of Holy Cross to endorse the construction of a basilica. This project began with the construction of a crypt church with the capacity of about one thousand people in 1917. The rest of the basilica was built between 1924 and 1967.<sup>2</sup> Brother André insisted that the oratory be named after Saint Joseph because of the miracles

he performed for the people and the lives he changed.<sup>3</sup> Saint Joseph's Oratory is a place where people can celebrate the lives of past saints and the life of Jesus through sculptures, architecture and paintings. Believers also visit to be spiritually touched by the experience of being on sacred ground, especially on Fridays and during Lent.

The exterior Italian Renaissance design of Saint Joseph's Oratory was conceived by Quebec-based architects Alphonse Venne (1875–1934) and Dalbé Viau (1881–1938). There is a strong emphasis on symmetry, the use of columns and a hemispheric dome. The church's dome is made from copper, while the stonework of the exterior was constructed with blocks cut from Lac Mégantic mines. The colonnade features Corinthian-style pillars. The outer cupola is said to be the highest point in Montreal. The layer of concrete that connects the base of the dome with the beams that support it "is about 18 times thinner than that of the dome of St. Peter's in Rome."<sup>4</sup> The stairs that begin from the street to the crypt church have two flights of 283 concrete steps. Between them are a flight of ninety-nine grey wooden steps which are reserved for pilgrims who desire to move up the steps on their knees.<sup>5</sup>

After visiting Saint Joseph's Oratory on more than one occasion, what stood out to me most were the series of stairs outside the basilica, as well as some of the sculptures displayed inside. The number of stairs may seem overwhelming in number but

their significance is quite fascinating. As previously mentioned, 99 of the 283 steps are wooden and Christians from all over the world have come to climb up these stairs before entering the church. This journey up the stairs directly references one of the most important moments in Christianity: the crucifixion and passion of Christ.

The purpose and symbolism of these stairs may be better understood if we take a look at the *Santa Scala* (Holy Stairs) (fig. 1), located across the street from the Archbasilica of Saint John Lateran in Rome.



Fig. 1. The Holy Stairs at the entrance to the *Sancta Sanctorum*, located across the street from the Archbasilica of Saint John Lateran in Rome. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e3/Scala\\_Santa\\_\(Rome\)\\_01.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e3/Scala_Santa_(Rome)_01.jpg).

In *Rome: A Pilgrim's Guide to the Eternal City*, James L. Papandrea explains the history of the Holy Stairs and what they mean to pilgrims. The staircase was originally located in Jerusalem at the palace of King Herod (r. 37–4 BCE). After the Romans conquered Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate (r. 26–36 CE), the prefect of Judea, would stay at this palace when he was in town. According to the biblical chapters of Matthew, Mark and John, this building is “the place Jesus was taken to face Pontius Pilate. Thus these stairs are believed to be those which Jesus ascended to be sentenced to die. They are sometimes called the *Scale Pilati*, the Stairs of Pilate.”<sup>6</sup> Papandrea goes on to explain that these stairs were then taken to Rome in 362 CE to Pope Sylvester I (d. 335 CE) by Helena (ca. 246/50–ca. 327/30), mother of Constantine the Great (r. 306–37 CE). They were then incorporated into the original building of the Archbasilica of Saint John Lateran. The staircase was moved in 1589, and is now situated at the entrance to the *Sancta Sanctorum*, the “private chapel of the early popes, and the sole surviving room of the original papal apartments.”<sup>7</sup>

The steps were originally made from marble, but over time, due to centuries of use by followers of the Christian faith, they began to wear down. In order to preserve the steps they were covered with wood. The stairs at Saint Joseph's Oratory are wooden for the same reason, and also because of the harsh winters in Montreal. What is different about the Holy Stairs is that visitors

are only permitted to climb the steps on their knees. In addition, there are slits in the wood covering the risers so that the faithful may use their hands to touch the marble that Jesus himself once touched. Papandrea says that many people believe his blood stains are visible on the marble under the wood, but the once-transparent windows installed in the wooden steps have turned opaque.<sup>8</sup>

To create my work, I used the medium of photography to document what was accessible to me in the oratory. Because of my strong interest in the staircase, I spent a lot of time trying to capture it in a slightly unconventional way, using framing and depth techniques to make it the focal point of the image (fig. 2). I photographed individuals climbing up the steps on their knees before entering the basilica (fig. 3).

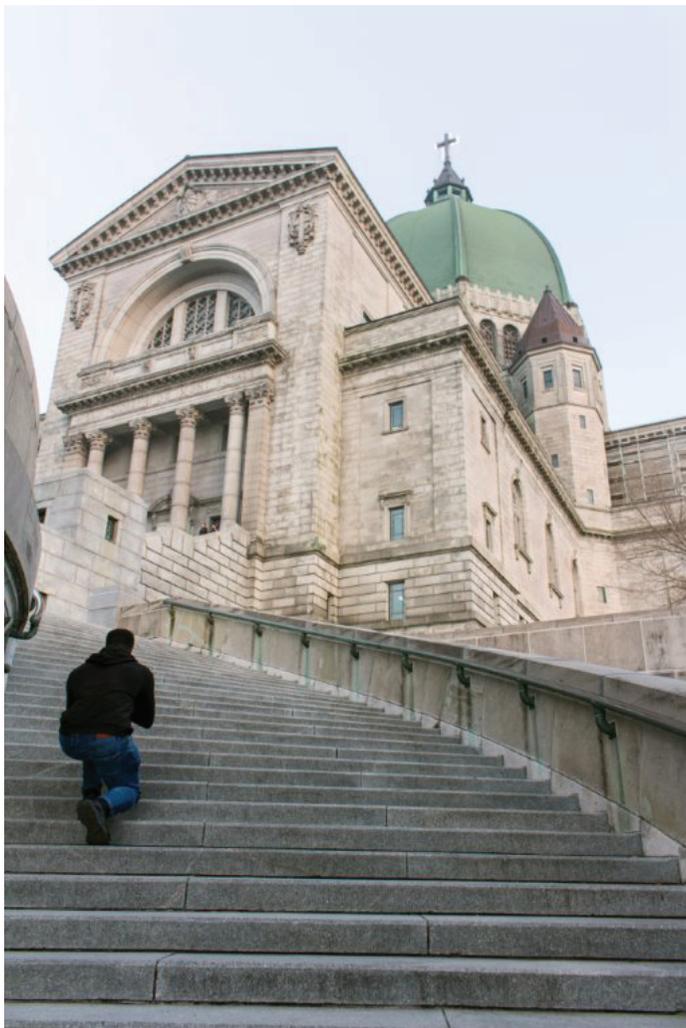


Fig. 2. Aaron Butler, *Prayer Climb to the Top of the Basilica*,  
*from the Series "Pilgrimage to Montreal,"* 2016.

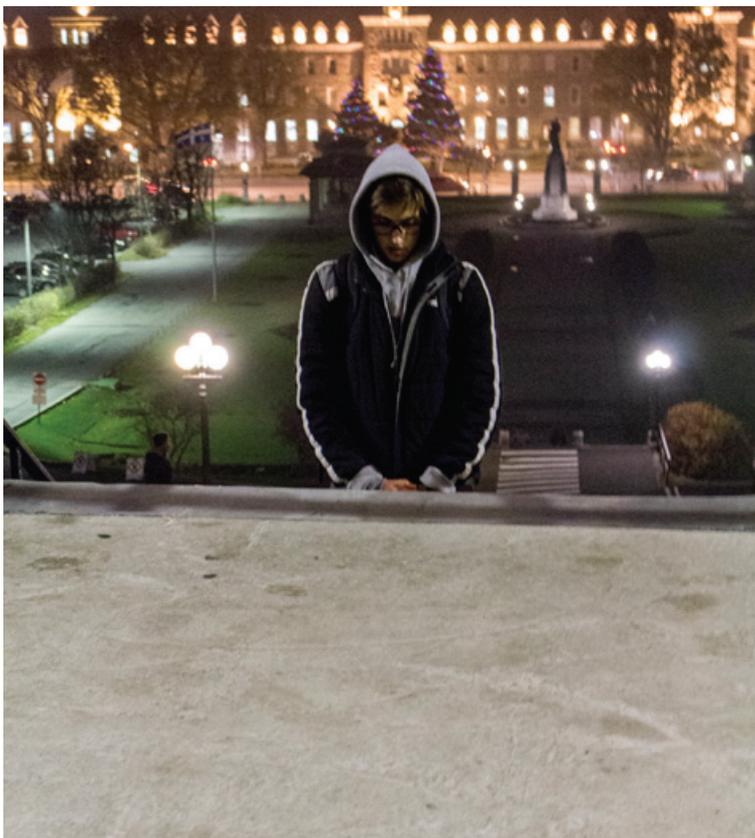


Fig. 3. Aaron Butler, *Young Man Praying on Knees*,  
from the Series “Pilgrimage to Montreal,” 2016.

My series also includes images of sculptures of Christ on the cross—one located in front of the altar (fig. 4), and another on a statue on a wall (fig. 5).

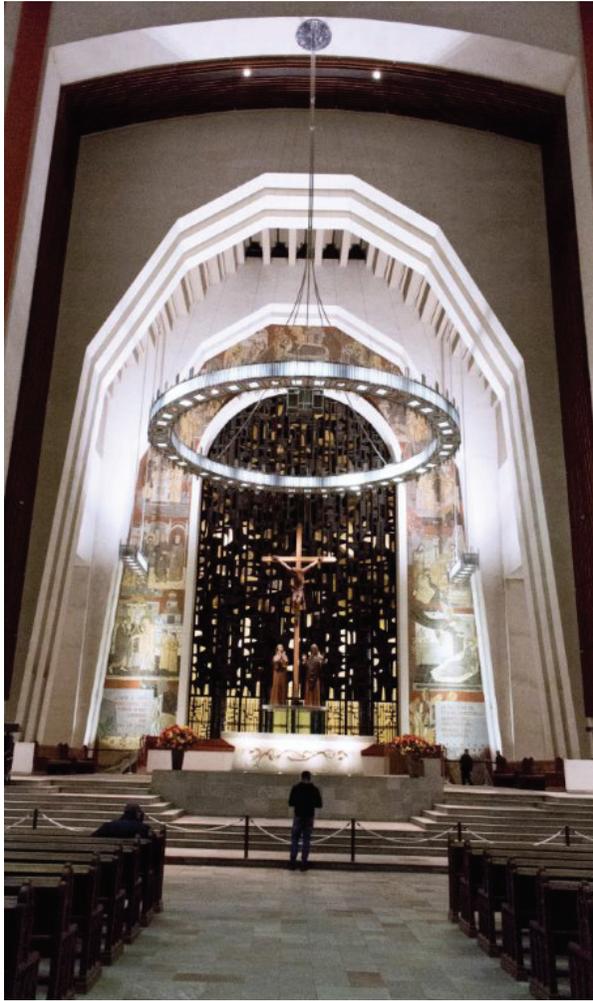


Fig. 4. Aaron Butler, *Basilica Altar*,  
from the Series "Pilgrimage to Montreal," 2016.



Fig. 5. Aaron Butler, *Jesus on the Cross*, from the Series  
*"Pilgrimage to Montreal,"* 2016.

I made changes to the colour of the images, particularly the one of the wall statue, because I felt that tungsten light did not provide suitable lighting for portraying Jesus as a holy figure, or as someone who is revered. I heightened the colour contrast to better capture the holiness of Christ and to enhance the beauty of the images. The light in the photographs is now more similar to fluorescent lighting, which is what is used in photography museums and what I am accustomed to working with.

My work shares common themes with an illumination in Beatus of Liébana's *Las Huelgas Apocalypse* entitled *Gabriel Gives Daniel the Explanations, Daniel Languishes, and Gabriel Returns with Prophecies about the Future of Jerusalem* (fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Beatus of Liébana, *Gabriel Gives Daniel the Explanations, Daniel Languishes, and Gabriel Returns with Prophecies about the Future of Jerusalem*, from Beatus of Liébana, *Las Huelgas Apocalypse*, 1220, tempera, gold and ink on parchment, 52 x 37 cm, Morgan Library & Museum, New York, MS M.429, fol. 167. <http://www.themorgan.org/collection/Las-Huelgas-Apocalypse/47#>.

This is the latest and largest known iteration of illuminated manuscripts devoted to Beatus of Liébana's commentaries on the Apocalypse. This collection of manuscripts represents Spain's most substantial contribution to the genre of medieval illuminated manuscripts. The *Las Huelgas Apocalypse* is comprised of three sections: the prefatory cycle, the Apocalypse and the Book of Daniel.<sup>9</sup>

This particular illumination depicts the biblical passage Daniel 8–9. Gabriel explains to Daniel his vision of the battle of the ram and the goat. The ram represents the king of the Medes and Persians, and the goat symbolizes the king of the Greeks. After Gabriel leaves, Daniel suffers for several days. He prays to the Lord that His rage and fury will not befall Jerusalem, and that God will continue to protect and be with His followers. This picture is rendered in great detail and is enclosed within a red border decorated with a white arabesque pattern. The horizontal red, blue and yellow sections of the image divide it into what seems to be three planes: the heavens, the sky and the earth. An angel has come down from heaven to touch or greet a man with a halo around his head. Initially, it appears that there are three different men in the image, but after noticing that they are all wearing the same clothing, it becomes clear that this work combines successive moments in David's encounters with Archangel Gabriel. Their facial expressions suggest that David has received a message that is important and troubling. In *Come and See: Prophets and Apostles*, Joseph Ponessa and Laurie

Watson Manhardt explain that this is also a major moment for Archangel Gabriel because it marks the first time he is mentioned in the Bible. He appears later on to announce to Zachary and Mary the birth of John the Baptist, and later of Jesus.<sup>10</sup>

Although this illumination depicting Daniel and the Archangel Gabriel is quite different from my photographic series, they do share similar themes. Both examine faith and the level of devotion one should have. That amount of devotion will help one hear what messages the heavens may send; these provide a sense of direction on one's path to the kingdom of heaven. In terms of the Holy Stairs or the ninety-nine steps at Saint Joseph's Oratory, the majority of people that come and climb the steps on their knees do so because of their deep faith in God. Moreover, only someone who believes in the divine healing and protective power of Saint Joseph would climb the steps to express their devotion to him.<sup>11</sup> Some passages in the Bible validate the need for faith and guidance in troubled times, such as the second coming of Christ, known as the Rapture, and the Apocalypse.<sup>12</sup>

In the book of Genesis from the New International Version of the Bible, “[Jacob] had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to Heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending on it” (Genesis 28:12). In this dream God tells Jacob that He will bless his descendants if he stays faithful to God. This shows that Christians who are willing

to be faithful and devoted will gain God's favour. Therefore, as people ascend on their knees to the basilica, they are also making an ascent to heaven. The act of walking on one's knees can be very unpleasant, serving as proof of one's commitment to God. It is also a sign of appreciation for Christ, who endured a much more painful journey.<sup>13</sup>

*In This Side of Heaven: A Book of Poems, Prayers and Spiritual Writings*, author Samira E. Robinson speaks of the nature of struggling and how it can affect one's faith. "I believe that it is when we pass the test of faith in the struggles that God is glorified. [...] God does not clear away tests, trials and trouble in order that He might shine through in our lives. He equips us with His qualities and expects us to overcome."<sup>14</sup> This sheds light on the idea that experiencing struggle and being open to receive new teachings will strengthen one's chances to ascend to heaven.

I believe the main and strongest message of Christianity is to show your worth and faith to God in order to be ready for the second coming of Christ. This idea underlies the rest of the *Las Huelgas Apocalypse*, which depicts the main events leading to the Apocalypse and how to be strong and faithful during that time. In preparation for that moment, many pilgrims go to Saint Joseph's Oratory for prayer, healing, protection and to strengthen their love and faith in God and in their Catholic beliefs.

## NOTES

- 1 Clifford Stevens, *The One Year Book of Saints* (Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 1989), 17, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=UBrBF9ovW1MC&lpg=PA17&dq=brother%20andre%20st%20joseph%20oratory%20montreal&pg=PA17#v=onepage&q=brother%20andre%20st%20joseph%20oratory%20montreal&f=false>.
- 2 “Our History,” Saint Joseph’s Oratory of Mount Royal, accessed February 7, 2017, <http://www.saint-joseph.org/en/heritage/our-history/>.
- 3 “Brother Andre—His Life and Times—1845–1937,” Eternal Word Television Network, accessed February 7, 2017, <https://www.ewtn.com/library/mary/broandre.htm>.
- 4 “The Shrine,” Saint Joseph’s Oratory of Mount Royal, accessed February 7, 2017, <http://www.saint-joseph.org/en/heritage/the-shrine/>.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Papandrea cites Matt 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28–40; 19:19. See James. L. Papandrea, *Rome: A Pilgrim’s Guide to the Eternal City* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012), 185, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=gvrMAwAAQBAJ&lpg=P1&pg=PA185#v=onepage&q&f=false>.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 “Fol. 22,” Morgan Library & Museum, accessed

February 7, 2017, <http://www.themorgan.org/collection/Las-Huelgas-Apocalypse/9>.

- 10 Joseph Ponessa and Laurie Watson Manhardt, *Come and See: Prophets and Apostles* (Steubenville: Emmaus Road, 2004), 128, [https://books.google.ca/books?redir\\_esc=y&id=gT86hw4gAioC&q=daniel+gabriel#v=snippet&q=daniel%20gabriel&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?redir_esc=y&id=gT86hw4gAioC&q=daniel+gabriel#v=snippet&q=daniel%20gabriel&f=false).
- 11 Similarly, in the mid-nineteenth-century novel *Walter in Jerusalem*, Daniel Clarke Eddy describes pilgrims climbing on their knees up the steps of the “sepulchral couch on which Christ rested three days”: “‘Here’, says one, ‘have I often lingered, solemnized, awe-struck, looking at pilgrim after pilgrim, in endless procession, crawling in on bended knees, bowing lips and forehead and cheeks to the cold marble, bathing it with tears, and sobbing until the very heart seemed breaking.’” See Daniel Clarke Eddy, *Walter in Jerusalem* (New York: Sheldon and Co.; Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1863), 62, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=UoM PAQAAMAAJ&lpq=PA3&ots=oZ7OcS5CP4&dq=Walter%20in%20Jerusalem&pg=PA62#v=onepage&q&f=false>.
- 12 James Strong, *The New Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 955, 1013.
- 13 Finis Jennings Dake, *God’s Plan for Man* (Lawrenceville: Dake Bible Sales, 1949), 875.
- 14 Samira E. Robinson, *This Side of Heaven: A Book of Poems, Prayers and Spiritual Writings* (Xlibris, 2004), 171, [https://books.google.ca/books?id=8Tyd\\_e7UPUEC&lpq=PA181&ots](https://books.google.ca/books?id=8Tyd_e7UPUEC&lpq=PA181&ots)

=TaLbspWTaO&dq=This%20Side%20of%20Heaven%3A%20A%20Book%20of%20Poems%2C%20Prayers%20and%20Spiritual%20Writings&pg=PA171#v=onepage&q&f=false.

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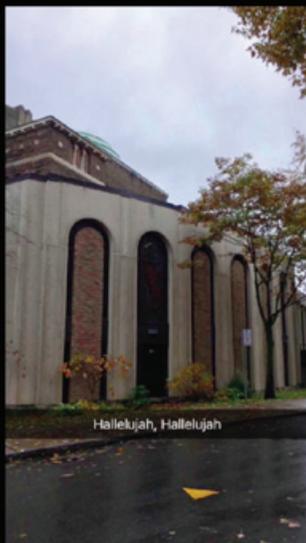


Erhard Reuwich, *View of Jerusalem* (detail), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper. Reproduced from Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, Vol. 85, *German Book Illustration before 1500: Anonymous Artists, 1484–1486* (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1978–), n.p. Image: ARTstor.



Anonymous, *Genealogy of the Patriarchs (Yihus ha-Avot)*, 16<sup>th</sup> c.,  
tempera and ink on parchment, 140 x 12.2 cm,  
National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, MS. Heb. 8°1187.  
[http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/digitalibrary/  
pages/viewer.aspx?presenterid=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=  
PNX\\_MANUSCRIPTS000045366-1#|FL36122231](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/digitalibrary/pages/viewer.aspx?presenterid=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS000045366-1#|FL36122231).

COHEN'S SYNAGOGUE  
SHAAR HASHOMAYIM



Eden Frost, still from digital slideshow component of *Cohen Pilgrimage*,  
2016, digital slideshow projection, paper, plastic tarp.  
<https://vimeo.com/196479976>.



Eden Frost, *Cohen Pilgrimage* (Pilgrimage Map), 2016,  
digital slideshow projection, paper, plastic tarp.

# A Secular Pilgrimage to Montreal's Lord of Song: An Examination of Dualities in Art, Life and Lyrics

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EDEN FROST

Over the course of this semester it has become increasingly apparent to me that the city of Jerusalem, with its rich history and position as a cultural crossroads, is by nature a metropolitan city. It is a place defined by love and war, modernity and antiquity, and by the holy and the profane. It is not a city that possesses one singular identity, but is one best defined by its dualities. Indeed, it is these dualities that served as the inspiration for my multimedia work *Cohen Pilgrimage* (2016). I also became interested in the notion of pilgrimage in relation to

Jerusalem, and began to consider how, similar to the existence of “other Jerusalems” around the world, pilgrimages could take place in other contexts. Thinking about how these themes might resonate within a local context brought to mind the music of Montreal-based Jewish Canadian singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen (1934–2016), who once said in a 1983 interview: “Montreal to me is like [...] Jerusalem.”<sup>1</sup> As a longtime fan of his, I have spent many hours listening to his songs and have come to realize that, like the city of Jerusalem, his body of work is also characterized by dualities. In addition to Cohen’s music, *Cohen Pilgrimage* was influenced by Dutch artist Erhard Reuwich’s (1445–1505) woodcut *View of Jerusalem* in German author Bernhard von Breydenbach’s (1440–97) *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Journey to the Holy Land) (1486), as well as the decorative commemorative scroll *Genealogy of the Patriarchs (Yihus ha-Avot)* (16<sup>th</sup> c.) in the collection of the National Library of Israel. Based on these influences, I created an artwork in which I continued the tradition of pilgrimage by embarking on my own pilgrimage around the city of Montreal and visiting the many places and landmarks associated with the legendary Leonard Cohen.

Cohen was born in Westmount, Quebec, in 1934 to a middle-class Jewish Canadian family. According to his memoirs, much of his boyhood was spent at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, where his grandfather was a rabbi.<sup>2</sup> The religious influence of his Orthodox upbringing features prominently in his writing,

though most of his songs are not necessarily religious in nature. Cohen's writing is unique in that he employs an abundance of religious allusions to convey the underlying themes of his songs, which for the most part deal with purely secular issues such as love, lust, loss and death. *Cohen Pilgrimage* focuses on Cohen's life, themes of duality in his lyrics, as well as the geographical topography of Montreal as an example of an "other Jerusalem" and as a site of pilgrimage.

As a religiously unaffiliated person studying the history of art in the holy city of Jerusalem, I became interested in the many similarities and equal number of differences between each of the three major religions—Christianity, Judaism and Islam—that lay claim to the city. One commonality between the three main faith groups is the tradition of pilgrimage to sacred places. After learning this, it occurred to me that pilgrimages must be more of a human social phenomenon than one confined solely to a particular religious realm. Though most commonly thought of in the religious context, by definition a pilgrimage is simply "a journey to a place associated with someone or something well known or respected."<sup>3</sup> With this more general definition in mind, I began to consider pilgrimages in the secular world.

In addition to pilgrimages, I became deeply intrigued by the idea of "other Jerusalems" existing in places far removed from the geographic reality of Israel, or even the surrounding Middle Eastern area. There are many examples of this phenomenon in

our modern world, from the churches constructed in twelfth-century Europe to mimic the architecture of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem,<sup>4</sup> to the Cyclorama of Jerusalem in Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré, Quebec. Clearly, the concept of recreating the Holy City in other geographic locals is a long-established method of attempting to transport some of Jerusalem's holiness to other places.

*Cohen Pilgrimage* was partly inspired by Reuwich's depiction of the city of Jerusalem in his woodcut *View of Jerusalem* (fig. 1), featured in Breydenbach's late-fifteenth-century text *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Journey to the Holy Land).



Fig. 1. Erhard Reuwich, *View of Jerusalem* (detail), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, 1486), woodcut on paper. Reproduced from Adam von Bartsch, *The Illustrated Bartsch, Vol. 85, German Book Illustration before 1500: Anonymous Artists, 1484–1486* (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1978–), n.p. Image: ARTstor.

The view shown here is just one part of a seven-page foldout that provides the viewer with a “bird’s eye view of Jerusalem set within the great expanse of the Holy Land.”<sup>5</sup> Reuwich’s woodcut represents “a majestic climax to the earliest illustrated printed book that recounts a Christian pilgrimage to the region.”<sup>6</sup> It was this sense of sensory excitement that I hoped to achieve in my work by engaging multiple artistic mediums to portray the various places around the city of Montreal. Furthermore, by focusing my project on the life of Leonard Cohen, a member of one of the many vibrant cultural groups that have made Montreal their home, I hoped to portray the city as an equally metropolitan “New Jerusalem.” *View of Jerusalem* was a collaborative effort between Breydenbach and Reuwich. In the exhibition catalogue *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, Melanie Holcomb explains that Breydenbach wanted “to take full advantage of the new technology of printing” and so employed Reuwich to travel with him in order to illustrate their journey.<sup>7</sup>

Inspired both by Reuwich’s resulting image and his use of new technology to document his pilgrimage, I recorded my pilgrimage using only the camera on my smartphone and the social media application Snapchat. Snapchat allows users to capture, caption and then share their photos and videos with their Snapchat “friends.” This lets users update their friends with a real-time visual account of their activities—in my case, this pilgrimage. Furthermore, similar to *Peregrinatio in terram*

*sanctam*, I decided to utilize both visual and textual elements in my work by creating a slideshow that combined the digital photographs with the lyrics to Cohen’s song “Hallelujah” (fig. 2). This slideshow is projected onto the physical Pilgrimage Map of Montreal (figs. 3–4), which uses the same photos to create a visual topography outlining my journey around the city. The formal aspects of the project address the dualism between traditional and alternative mediums, and between utilitarian and aesthetic art objects.

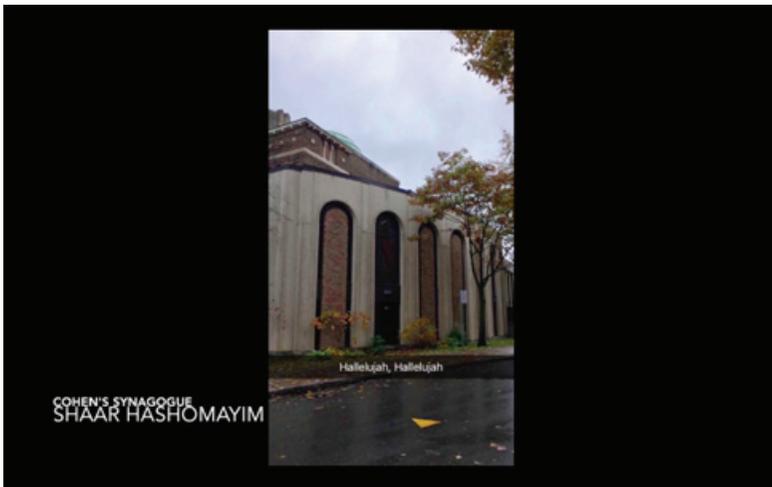


Fig. 2. Eden Frost, still from digital slideshow component of *Cohen Pilgrimage*, 2016, digital slideshow projection, paper, plastic tarp.

<https://vimeo.com/196479976>.



Fig. 3. Eden Frost, *Cohen Pilgrimage* (Pilgrimage Map), 2016, digital slideshow projection, paper, plastic tarp.

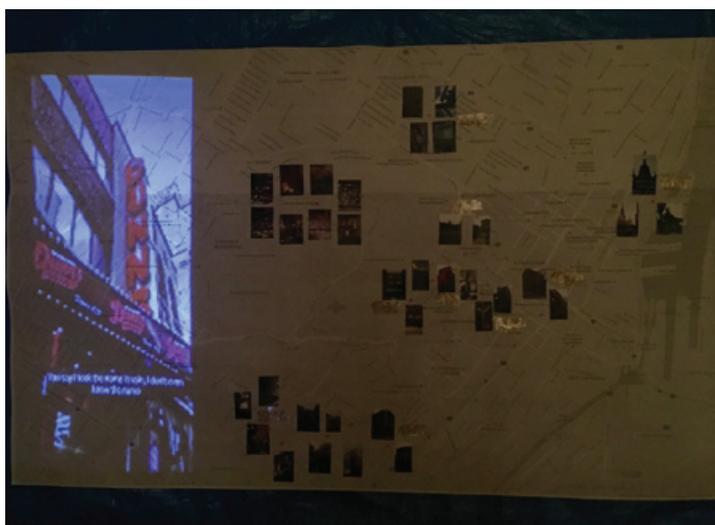


Fig. 4. Eden Frost, *Cohen Pilgrimage*, 2016, digital slideshow projection, paper, plastic tarp.

The Pilgrimage Map draws on ideas behind the sixteenth-century Jewish manuscript *Genealogy of the Patriarchs* (fig. 5), one of the first written itineraries of Jewish pilgrimage to Jerusalem.



Fig. 5. Anonymous, *Genealogy of the Patriarchs (Yihus ha-Avot)*,  
16<sup>th</sup> c., tempera and ink on parchment, 140 x 12.2 cm,  
National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, MS. Heb. 8°1187.

[http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/digitallibrary/pages/viewer.aspx?presentori d=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=PNX\\_MANUSCRIPTS000045366-1#|FL3612231](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/digitallibrary/pages/viewer.aspx?presentori d=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS000045366-1#|FL3612231).

The illuminated manuscript serves a dual purpose as a practical guide to the important pilgrimage sites and as a kind of “‘virtual pilgrimage’ when displayed hung on a wall inside a home.”<sup>8</sup> It was with this in mind that I created the Pilgrimage Map. I used a map of Montreal that I sourced from the Internet as the base, and then “illuminated” my route around the city using my own photos of the “holy” sites. Like the *Genealogy of the Patriarchs*, the finished product, when combined with the slideshow projection, may serve as both a user’s guide to a Cohen pilgrimage and as a “virtual pilgrimage” for those viewing the piece in an exhibition setting.

There are three festivals of pilgrimage in the Jewish tradition, during which those who are able make the journey to Jerusalem to worship at the various sacred places around the city, including the site of Solomon’s Temple.<sup>9</sup> The third pilgrimage festival, Sukkot, also called the Feast of the Tabernacles, is celebrated in early October to commemorate the exodus of the Jews from Egypt. Jews of the Diaspora celebrate Sukkot by eating and sleeping in small tent-like structures called *sukkah* for eight days. The walls of the *sukkah* may be built from any material, but its roof must be constructed using only organic material.<sup>10</sup> Since I began my pilgrimage during the celebration of Sukkot, I decided to mount my map on a plastic tarp as a reference to the walls of the tabernacles that were built by Montreal-based Jews of the Diaspora. Although perhaps not as grandiose as a full-scale Jerusalem church or a precious reliquary, these humble

*sukkot* still represent an “other Jerusalem” to the Jews who build them instead of making the actual pilgrimage to Israel.

The destruction of Solomon’s Temple in 70 CE, though devastating to the Jews, did not put an end to their tradition of pilgrimage to Jerusalem.<sup>11</sup> It did, however, change the nature of their pilgrimages: what was previously a celebratory tradition became one of mourning and loss. It was with this duality of joy and sadness in mind that, after an initial period of debate regarding which of Cohen’s songs to use, I decided to use “Hallelujah.” The word “hallelujah” is a call to prayer taken from the Old Testament; translated literally from Hebrew, it means “All of you praise the Lord,” but it is also commonly used on its own as a word of praise.<sup>12</sup> Cohen appropriates the ancient call to prayer and creates his own version of “hallelujah.”

Cohen’s lyrics represent an investigation into many of the same dualities previously mentioned in relation to the city of Jerusalem, including those of ancient and modern, life and death, and the religious and the secular. The song’s lyrics allude to stories associated with several biblical figures, including that of King David and his harp, and the tragic story of Sampson and Delilah.<sup>13</sup> Cohen draws on these biblical allegories but presents them to the listener in an almost conversational manner. The juxtaposition of ancient biblical verses with his straightforward prose represents the duality of old and new, and renders Cohen’s “Hallelujah” an incredibly modern piece of

music. Furthermore, when Cohen sings “There’s a blaze of light in every word, it doesn’t matter which you heard, the holy or the broken, Hallelujah,” he expresses that there exists more than just one kind of hallelujah. In an interview from 1985, Cohen stated, “The Hallelujah, the David’s Hallelujah, was still a religious song. So I wanted to indicate that Hallelujah can come out of things that have nothing to do with religion.”<sup>14</sup> He elaborated on this idea by saying, “It’s, as I say, a desire to affirm my faith in life, not in some formal religious way, but with enthusiasm, with emotion.”<sup>15</sup> A few lines later he sings: “I couldn’t feel, so I tried to touch”—a brief line that almost perfectly explains the motivation behind pilgrimage journeys, wherein the pilgrim sets out on a journey seeking a deeper connection to holy places and figures from which they may feel disconnected. Cohen continues, “And even though it all went wrong, I’ll stand before the Lord of Song with nothing on my tongue but Hallelujah.” I interpret this line as another example of a lyrical duality: it reflects not only the deep devotion of many religious people to their “Lords,” especially during times of hardship, but also the idea of music, or “song,” as a cathartic source of healing—perhaps even as an alternative to religion.

“Hallelujah,” with all its dualities, is essentially a reflection of the fact that despite hardship, loss and sadness, life will go on and is certainly something worth celebrating. It was exactly this message of optimism that I held in my mind on November 10, 2016, when the world received the news of Cohen’s passing. At

that point in time I had already completed my Cohen pilgrimage, having visited the final site that same afternoon. Ironically perhaps, the pilgrimage I had intended as a testament to his living legacy inadvertently became a pilgrimage in the traditional sense—a memorial walk to remember those no longer with us. In the days following Cohen’s passing, the steps outside his home in the Plateau, which had been empty just days earlier, became completely covered with flowers, candles and other tokens of remembrance. Legions of fans gathered on the street outside his home and joined in a collective sing-along of his songs. Not a single person singing outside his home that afternoon required a song book to recite from. It was at that moment that I realized that even Cohen’s death had become an embodiment of a duality: that despite his earthly passing, Leonard Cohen will live on in our collective, present memory.

GUIDE TO COHEN PILGRIMAGE

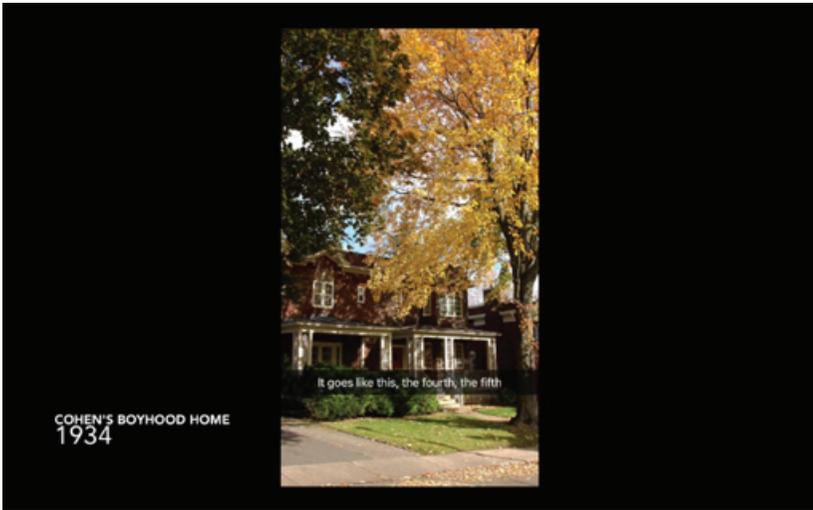


Fig. 6. Cohen's boyhood home at 499 Belmont Avenue, 1934.

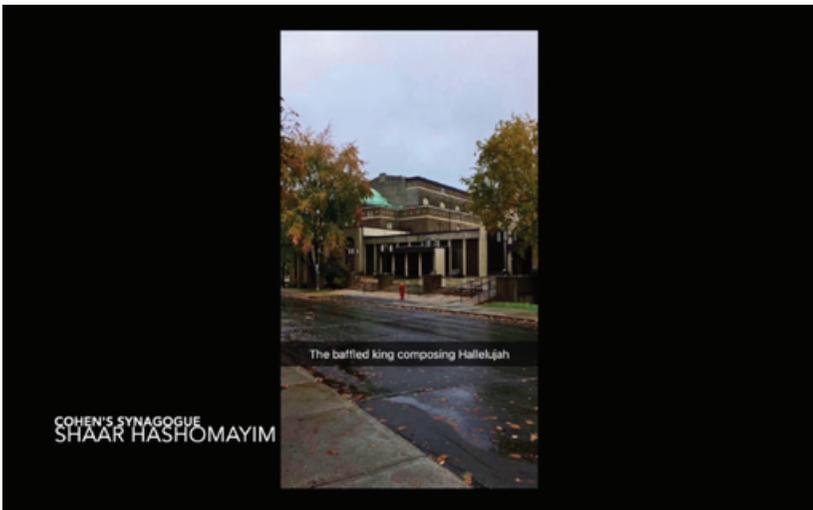


Fig. 7. Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue, 1934–2016.

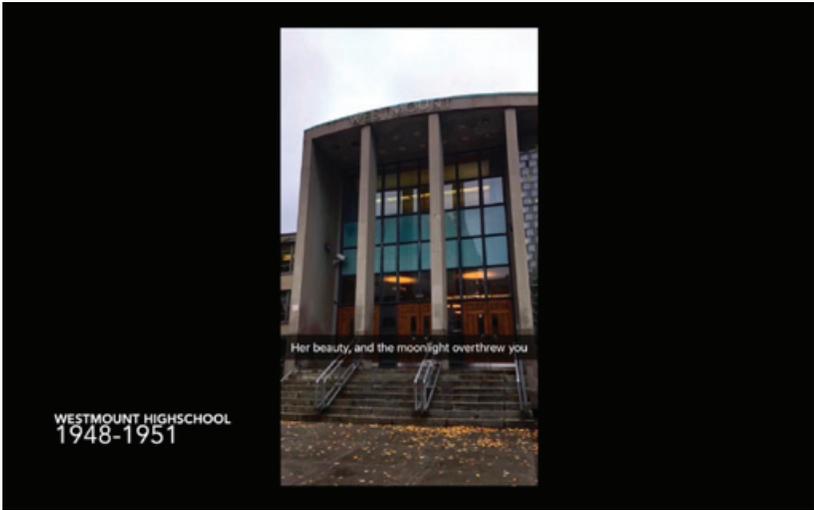


Fig. 8. Westmount High School, 1948–51.

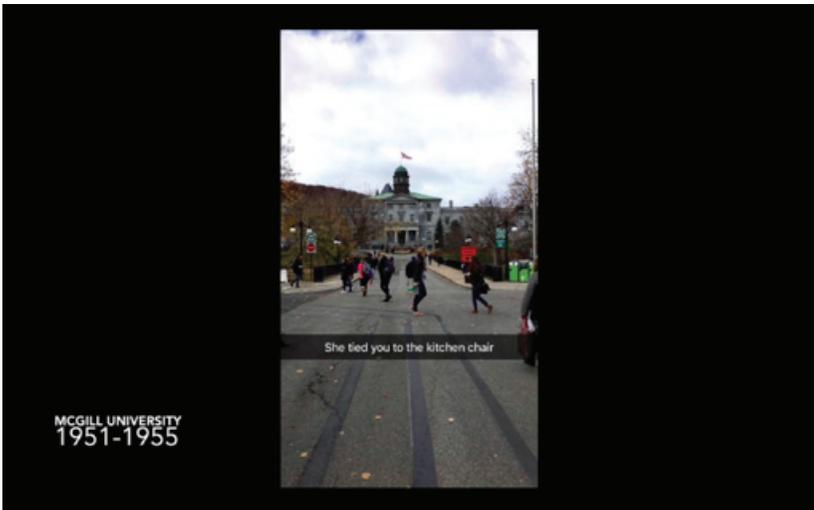


Fig. 9. McGill University, 1951–55.

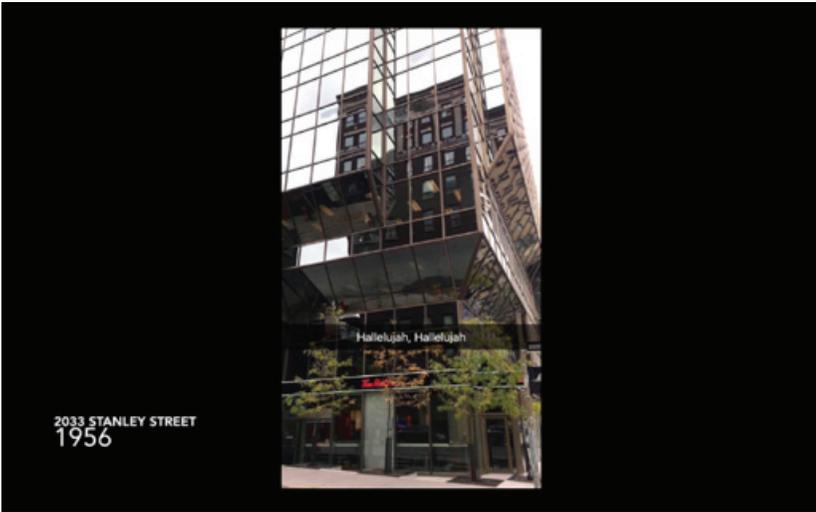


Fig. 10. Apartment at 2033 Stanley Street, 1956.

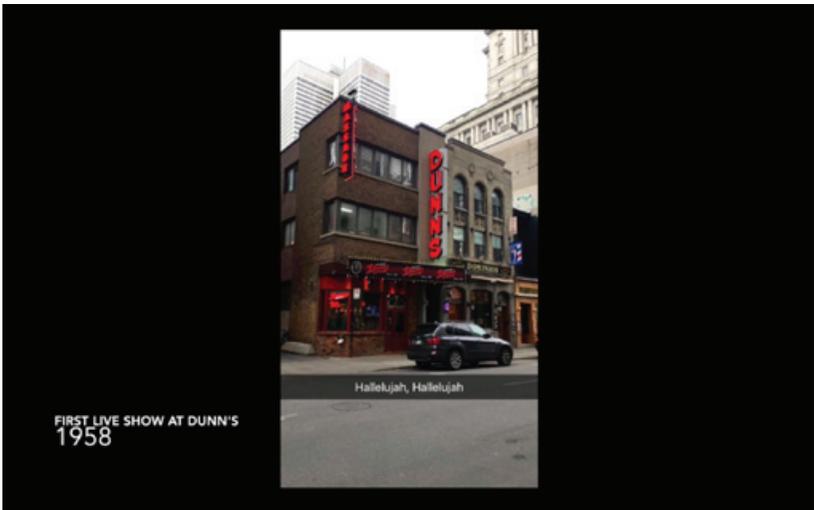


Fig. 11. First live show in Montreal at Dunn's, 1958.



Fig. 12. Apartment at 3702 Rue de la Montagne, 1960–61.



Fig. 13. Apartment at 1465 Avenue des Pins, 1963.



Fig. 14. Our Lady of the Harbour (from the song “Suzanne”), 1967.

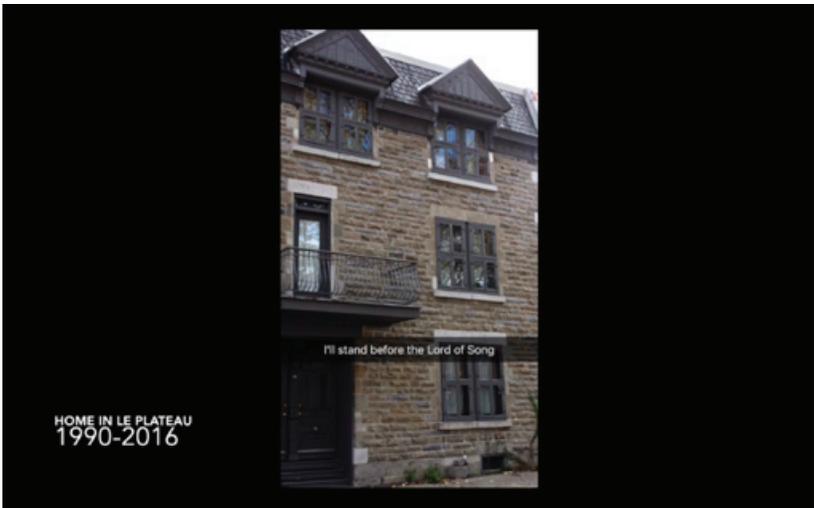


Fig. 15. Cohen's home in Le Plateau, 1990–2016.

## NOTES

- 1 Jeff Burger, *Leonard Cohen on Leonard Cohen: Interviews and Encounters* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2014), 141.
- 2 Tom Teicholz, “Leonard Cohen’s Calling,” *Forbes*, November 17, 2016, accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/tomteicholz/2016/11/17/leonard-cohens-calling/#4108b28e5009>.
- 3 David Oswald, *A Journey through Mukuntuweap: The History of Zion National Park* (Scotts Valley: CreateSpace, 2009), 138, [https://books.google.ca/books?id=wUf63GjoFmsC&pg=PA138&lpg=PA138&dq=a+journey+to+a+place+associated+with+someone+or+something+well+known+or+respected.&source=bl&ots=7UJhRB2HcV&sig=jG4IIf2-1UYKaVdXaLDR4bXlZe0&hl=en&sa=X&re\\_dir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=wUf63GjoFmsC&pg=PA138&lpg=PA138&dq=a+journey+to+a+place+associated+with+someone+or+something+well+known+or+respected.&source=bl&ots=7UJhRB2HcV&sig=jG4IIf2-1UYKaVdXaLDR4bXlZe0&hl=en&sa=X&re_dir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false).
- 4 Neta Bar-Yoseph, “The *Kreuzweg* of Vienna: Local History and Universal Salvation,” in *From the Industrial Revolution to World War II in East Central Europe*, ed. Marija Wakounig and Karlo Ruzicic-Kessler (Berlin: Lit, 2001), 225.
- 5 Melanie Holcomb, “View of Jerusalem,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 49.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Elchanan Reiner, “Traditions of Holy Places in Medieval

- Palestine – Oral Versus Written,” in *Offerings from Jerusalem: Portrayals of Holy Places by Jewish Artists*, ed. Rachel Safarti (Jerusalem: Muzeon Yirael, 2002), 17.
- 9 Ibid.
  - 10 “How to Build a Sukkah,” Chabad.org, accessed January 24, 2017, [http://www.chabad.org/holidays/JewishNewYear/template\\_cdo/aid/420823/jewish/How-to-Build-a-Sukkah.htm](http://www.chabad.org/holidays/JewishNewYear/template_cdo/aid/420823/jewish/How-to-Build-a-Sukkah.htm).
  - 11 Elizabeth Eisenberg, “*Genealogy of the Patriarchs (Yihus ha-Avot)*,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 51.
  - 12 “Hallelujah By Leonard Cohen – Meanings And Thoughts,” Its All about All, accessed November 14, 2016, [http://itsallaboutall.com/leonard-cohen/hallelujah-meaning/#Religious\\_and\\_sexual\\_meanings](http://itsallaboutall.com/leonard-cohen/hallelujah-meaning/#Religious_and_sexual_meanings).
  - 13 Michael J. Chan, “Leonard Cohen’s ‘Hallelujah,’” Bible Odyssey, accessed January 25, 2017, <https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/people/related-articles/leonard-cohens-hallelujah.aspx>.
  - 14 “How Leonard Cohen’s ‘Hallelujah’ Brilliantly Mingled Sex, Religion,” *Rolling Stone*, December 3, 2012, accessed January 24, 2017, <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/exclusive-book-excerpt-leonard-cohen-writes-hallelujah-in-the-holy-or-the-broken-20121203>.
  - 15 “Interview (magazine ‘Guitare et Claviers’ 1985),” accessed

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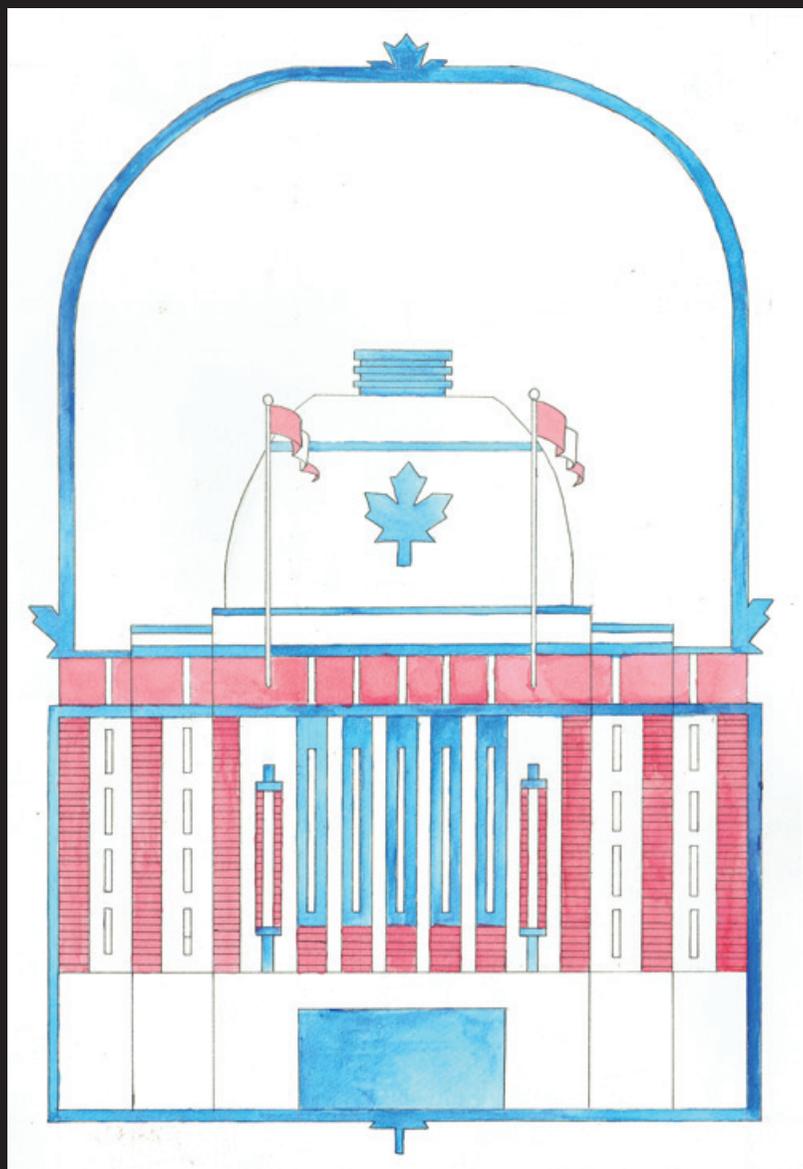
Teicholz, Tom. "Leonard Cohen's Calling." *Forbes*, November 17, 2016. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/tomteicholz/2016/11/17/leonard-cohens-calling/#4108b28e5009>.



Anonymous, *The Gates of Mercy*, from the *Moskowitz Rhine Mahzor*,  
1340s, tempera, gold and ink on parchment, 23.3 x 15.4 cm,  
National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, MS. Heb. 8°5214, fols. 82v–83r.  
[http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/  
pages/viewer.aspx?&presentorid=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=  
PNX\\_MANUSCRIPTS000041794-1#|FL30491564](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/pages/viewer.aspx?&presentorid=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS000041794-1#|FL30491564).



Anonymous, *The First Trumpet Sounded: Hail and Fire Mingled with Blood Fell to the Earth*, from the *Cloisters Apocalypse*, ca. 1330, tempera, gold, silver and ink on parchment; later leather binding, 30.8 x 23 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Cloisters Collection, 68.174, fol. 12v. Photo: ARTstor.  
<http://www.artstor.org>.



Alexander Miller, *The Book of the Leafs (Page 1)*, 2016,  
felt tip pen and watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 34.3 cm.



Alexander Miller, *The Book of the Leafs (Page 2)*, 2016,  
felt tip pen and watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 34.3 cm.



Alexander Miller, *The Book of the Leafs (Page 3)*, 2016,  
felt tip pen and watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 34.3 cm.

# The Leafs: A Canadian's Ruined Temple

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ALEXANDER MILLER

We all have ruined temples.

—Ruby Namdar

Israeli-American author Ruby Namdar claims that the Second Temple in Jerusalem “gained its power from its absence.”<sup>1</sup> He asserts that the temple that was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE became more important, more divine and more beautiful in the imagination of all people (not merely the Jews) than it ever could have been while it stood. He goes on to state, “The absent temple is not just a Jewish symbol. I feel that it is a universal symbol.”<sup>2</sup> Jerusalem’s lost temple can be applied as a metaphor to any cherished memory of something that was perfect and beautiful, and then lost forever.

As a non-Jewish, secular Canadian with none of Namdar's spiritual, ancestral connection to the holy city of Jerusalem, his thoughts on the Temple intrigued me. If indeed I had such a "ruined temple," what, then, was it? What in my own cultural position constituted this deep sense of loss he spoke of, this "oneness" between the self, community, place and spirit? The connection of the Jewish people to their lost Temple has transcended time and space, being remembered by Jews born in other countries and other centuries. These people commemorate a temple they have never seen in a city that many of them have never set foot in, instead reproducing its likeness from biblical description or oral tradition, as in *The Gates of Mercy* from the *Moskowitz Rhine Mahzor* (1340s). Since my own background carries nothing of this inherited connection, my Jerusalem would have to be a metaphorical one: applying Namdar's universalized "ruined temple" concept to something else of personal importance to me. Trying to summon a personal mythology binding me to my ancestry, homeland and culture, I settled upon hockey fandom, a cultural obsession passed on to me as a child by my father. Specifically, I recall his love of his hometown heroes, the Toronto Maple Leafs, and their upset victory in the Stanley Cup playoffs in 1967. Though not going back nearly so far as the first century, this constitutes, in my mind, an ancestral connection to a ruined dynasty passed down through generations. Having never taken home the Stanley Cup since 1967, Leafs fans continue to this day to carry with them the hope of redemption through the victory of their chosen or

inherited favourite team. My work *The Book of the Leafs* (2016) articulates these ideas using a drawing style influenced by illuminations from medieval manuscripts, including *The Gates of Mercy*, from the *Moskowitz Rhine Mahzor* (1340s); *The First Trumpet Sounded: Hail and Fire Mingled with Blood Fell to the Earth*, from the *Cloisters Apocalypse* (ca. 1330); and Peter of Peckham's *Seven Angels with Trumpets*, from *La lumière as lais; Apocalypse (The Welles Apocalypse)* (first quarter of 14<sup>th</sup> c.).

My work consists of three drawn pages done in felt tip pen and watercolour paint (figs. 1–3). Each drawing depicts a particular scene relating to the Toronto Maple Leafs' 1967 Stanley Cup victory and their subsequent losses since then.

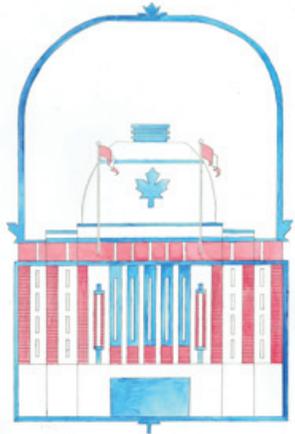


Fig. 1. Alexander Miller, *The Book of the Leafs* (Page 1), 2016, felt tip pen and watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 34.3 cm.



Fig. 2. Alexander Miller, *The Book of the Leafs (Page 2)*, 2016, felt tip pen and watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 34.3 cm.



Fig. 3. Alexander Miller, *The Book of the Leafs (Page 3)*, 2016, felt tip pen and watercolour on paper, 49.5 x 34.3 cm.

My intention with this piece was to appropriate the drawing style of manuscript illuminations produced in Europe during the Middle Ages. It is a fairly loose approximation, however, as I was not seeking to mimic a specific book or time period but instead borrowed elements from many sources. Of particular interest to me were the flattened ground plane and narrative symbolism. I added stylized folds on the players' jerseys and stylized bordering to give my work more of a medieval look. However, the short haircuts and scarred faces of the players are a far cry from depictions of saints in most medieval manuscripts. I settled on a compromise between a medieval drawing style and factual likeness, rather than a strict adherence to one or the other.

The initial image, a stylized version of Maple Leaf Gardens (fig. 4), was drawn in lightly in pencil, using a ruler and square to create the straight lines and right angles of the border and the architecture in the first panel. After completing the initial pencil drawing, I carefully redrew the lines in felt tip pen, and then coloured in the drawing with watercolour paints. The use of gold leaf is a recognizable feature of medieval art, including manuscript illuminations, but due to its high cost, I used gold-coloured metallic paint instead to mimic the look.



Fig. 4. Ross and Macdonald, Maple Leaf Gardens, 1931, Toronto. Photo: Jaydec.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maple\\_Leaf\\_Gardens,\\_east\\_side.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maple_Leaf_Gardens,_east_side.JPG).

Taking cues from the representation of Jerusalem in the *Gates of Mercy* from the *Moskowitz Rhine Mahzor* (fig. 5), the Leafs home arena is flattened and elongated vertically, and is rendered in bright, primary colours—nothing like the grey brick of the actual building. Several architectural details have been changed for the sake of simplicity and composition. This is an idealized, mythologized version of Maple Leaf Gardens, intended to evoke majesty rather than to accurately depict the building.



Fig. 5. Anonymous, *The Gates of Mercy*,  
from the *Moskowitz Rhine Mahzor*, 1340s,  
tempera, gold and ink on parchment, 23.3 x 15.4 cm,  
National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, MS. Heb. 8°5214, fols. 82v–83r.  
[http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/pages/viewer.aspx?&presentorid=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=PNX\\_MANUSCRIPTS000041794-1#|FL30491564](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/pages/viewer.aspx?&presentorid=MANUSCRIPTS&docid=PNX_MANUSCRIPTS000041794-1#|FL30491564).

In the second drawing, the Toronto Maple Leafs celebrate their victory in the 1967 Stanley Cup Final against the Montreal Canadiens. Team captain George Armstrong and goalie Terry Sawchuk hold the Stanley Cup above their heads while Jim Pappin and defenseman Larry Hillman hold their sticks in the air in celebration. The Cup is surrounded by a golden halo, signifying its importance.

Each of the depicted players are drawn in a flattened, stylized manner, inspired by figural conventions in illuminated manuscripts produced in medieval Europe. More specifically, I used the figures depicted in the *Welles Apocalypse* (fig. 6) and the *Cloisters Apocalypse* (fig. 7) as references.



Fig. 6. Peter of Peckham, *Seven Angels with Trumpets*,  
from *La lumière as lais; Apocalypse (The Welles Apocalypse)*, first quarter of 14<sup>th</sup> c.,  
parchment, 45 x 30 cm, British Library, Royal 15 D II, fol. 136v.  
<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=7743>.



Fig. 7. Anonymous, *The First Trumpet Sounded: Hail and Fire Mingled with Blood Fell to the Earth*, from the *Cloisters Apocalypse*, ca. 1330, tempera, gold, silver and ink on parchment; later leather binding, 30.8 x 23 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Cloisters Collection, 68.174, fol. 12v. Photo: ARTstor.

<http://www.artstor.org>.

Each figure is essentially a caricature of a given player, bearing a stylized likeness. Sawchuk, for instance, while holding high the Stanley Cup, adopts the crouched posture that became his trademark goaltending technique. In the days before goalie masks became a standard part of goaltending equipment, this posture put Sawchuk's face in the way of many a high-flying puck—hence the scars that cover his face. Again, though Sawchuk was scarred in real life, this is heightened in my work for the sake of narrative impact: the Toronto goaltender, drawn crouching and scarred, tells the story of his career and legacy more so than it accurately depicts the man's appearance.

Perhaps conspicuously, I have not included any images of the actual game of hockey. To me, the mere implication that there was a game and that Toronto was victorious is more important than the actual sequence of events. The game itself is, to me, more interesting in the mind of the viewer than it could possibly have been in real life.

The third and final panel perhaps requires some context to understand. In the season following their 1967 victory, and in the midst of the NHL's expansion from six teams to twelve, Leafs defenseman Larry Hillman was stiffed with an unfair contract by Leafs coach and general manager Punch Imlach. After a lengthy contract dispute, a bitter Hillman swore that the Toronto Maple Leafs would never again win the Stanley Cup. This event is referred to by fans as the "Hillman Hex," and it is a

curse seems to have held: Toronto has not won a single Stanley Cup in the intervening fifty seasons.<sup>3</sup>

This event is represented symbolically in the final panel. Hillman is shown pointing an accusing finger at Imlach—here depicted in a grey suit and Trilby hat which he typically wore to games—above the image of a scroll representing the disputed contract. Meanwhile, angels wearing the jerseys of the Montreal Canadiens carry away the Stanley Cup. These figures are modelled after the angels depicted in the *Welles Apocalypse* and the *Cloisters Apocalypse*.

Jerusalem's temple may one day be rebuilt. The Leafs may one day reclaim their lost glory. But it is that “may” that makes all the difference. “Absence,” the old saying goes, “makes the heart grow fonder.” A long absence, it seems, can grow a fondness that reaches through generations, even centuries. With such beautiful temples of all kinds in the shared memories of those who long for what has been lost, how can a real temple ever compare to an absent one?

#### NOTES

- 1 Ruby Namdar, “Voices of Jerusalem: A Writer Inspired by the Absent Temple,” Met Media video, 2:11, September 17, 2016, accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www>.

metmuseum.org/metmedia/video/collections/med/  
voices-of-jerusalem-writer.

2 Ibid.

3 “The Maple Leafs’ Last Stanley Cup and the Hillman Hex,”  
Toronto in Time: Tales of the City, Told in Words and  
Images, accessed November 24, 2016, [http://citiesintime.ca/  
toronto/story/maple-leafs/](http://citiesintime.ca/toronto/story/maple-leafs/).

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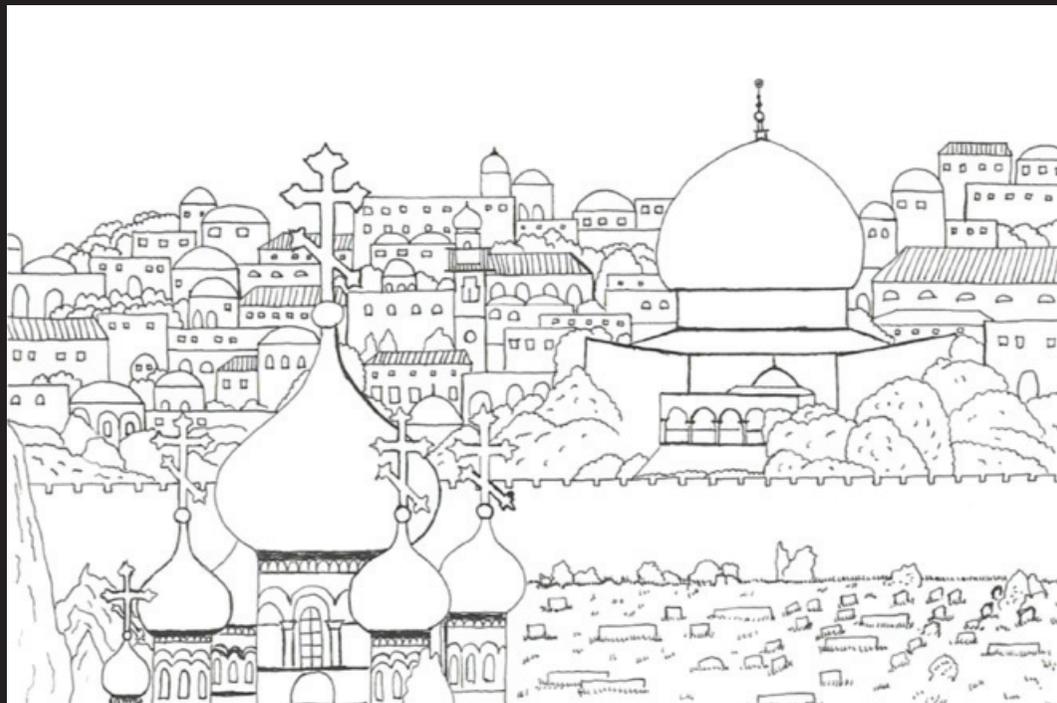
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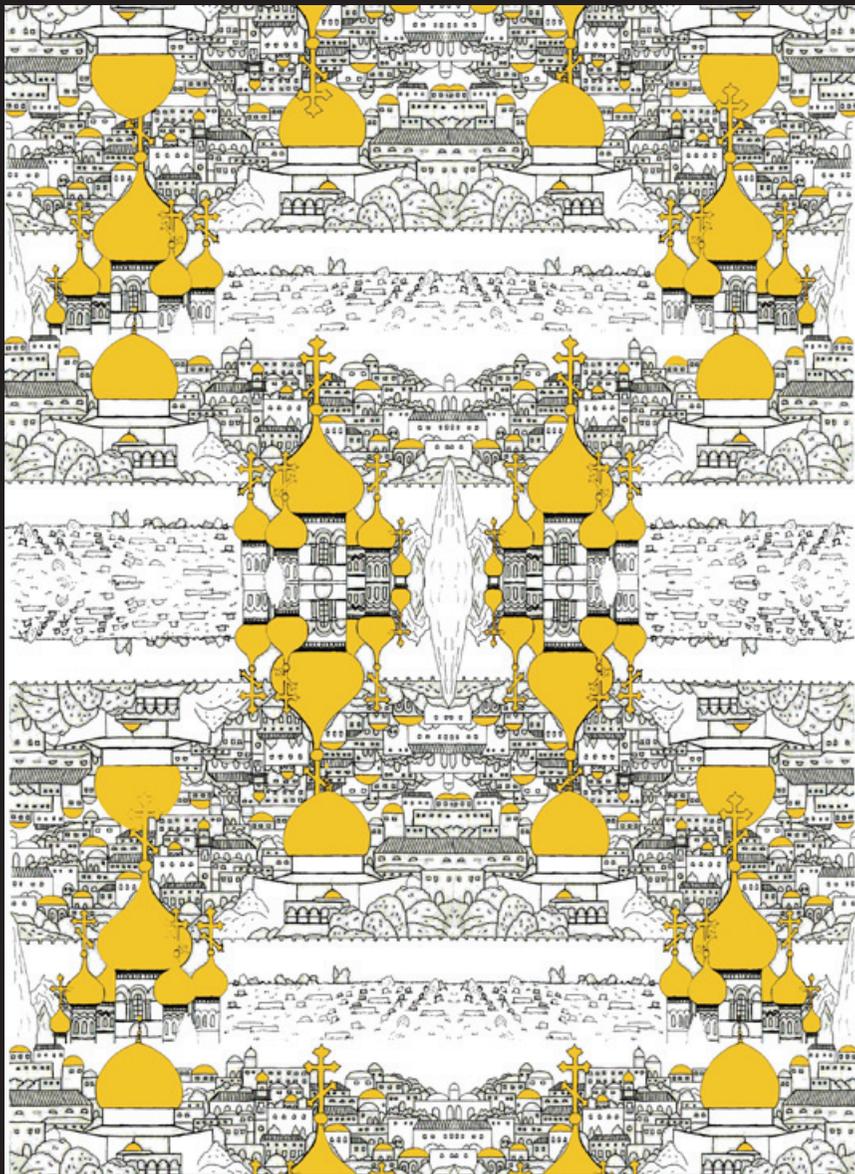


Anonyme, *Textile with Foliated Scrolls*, 13–14<sup>e</sup> siècle,  
coton, bloc à impression et teinture par réserve, 21,6 x 15,2 cm,  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

[https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/artreview/files/2016/11/IMG\\_3144.jpg](https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/artreview/files/2016/11/IMG_3144.jpg).



Trang Phan, *Terre Sainte*, 2016,  
crayon, encre noir sur papier I, 21,6 x 27,9 cm.



Trang Phan, *Terre Sainte*, 2016,  
crayon, encre noir sur papier II, 21,6 x 27,9 cm.

# Le fil du temps



TRANG PHAN

L'histoire de l'art textile est un long chemin à suivre, puisque son origine est parfois difficile à tracer. Plusieurs causes affectent ces recherches car il y a eu conquêtes de territoires entre différents peuples des temps pharaonique, romain et byzantin. Par exemple à Jérusalem, cette Terre sainte présente des preuves encore aujourd'hui de trois religions dont le judaïsme, le christianisme et l'islam. Cette ville est visitée par des croyants et adeptes de partout dans le monde. Dans cette étude, mon intention est de faire un dessin sur papier et d'adopter des modifications en utilisant différentes approches. Je vais discuter des étapes que j'ai suivies pour créer mon œuvre et de leur lien avec les origines de la technique par bloc à impression et la teinture par réserve. Je veux aussi parler de choix des motifs et comparer avec le tissu islamique daté du 13<sup>e</sup> au 14<sup>e</sup> siècle qui est présenté au Metropolitan Museum of Art de New York. L'influence des différentes cultures par les échanges commerciaux avec la Route de la soie expliquerait l'origine du tissu au Met.

J'ai commencé par dessiner la ville de Jérusalem parce que je trouve qu'elle est riche en histoire des religions et je veux ainsi la mettre en valeur dans mon œuvre (figs. 1a–b). En dessinant, j'ai réalisé qu'on ne voit pas souvent des motifs de ville sur tissu, mais plutôt de la végétation et des animaux. J'avais l'impression que plus le dessin avançait, plus les heures passées composaient un moment spirituel avec cette ville. C'est comme si j'étais connectée spirituellement à différentes religions parce que je dessinais le Dôme du Rocher, l'Église Sainte-Marie-Madeleine et la muraille de prière.



Fig. 1a. Trang Phan, *Terre Sainte*, 2016, crayon, encre noir sur papier I, 21,6 x 27,9 cm.

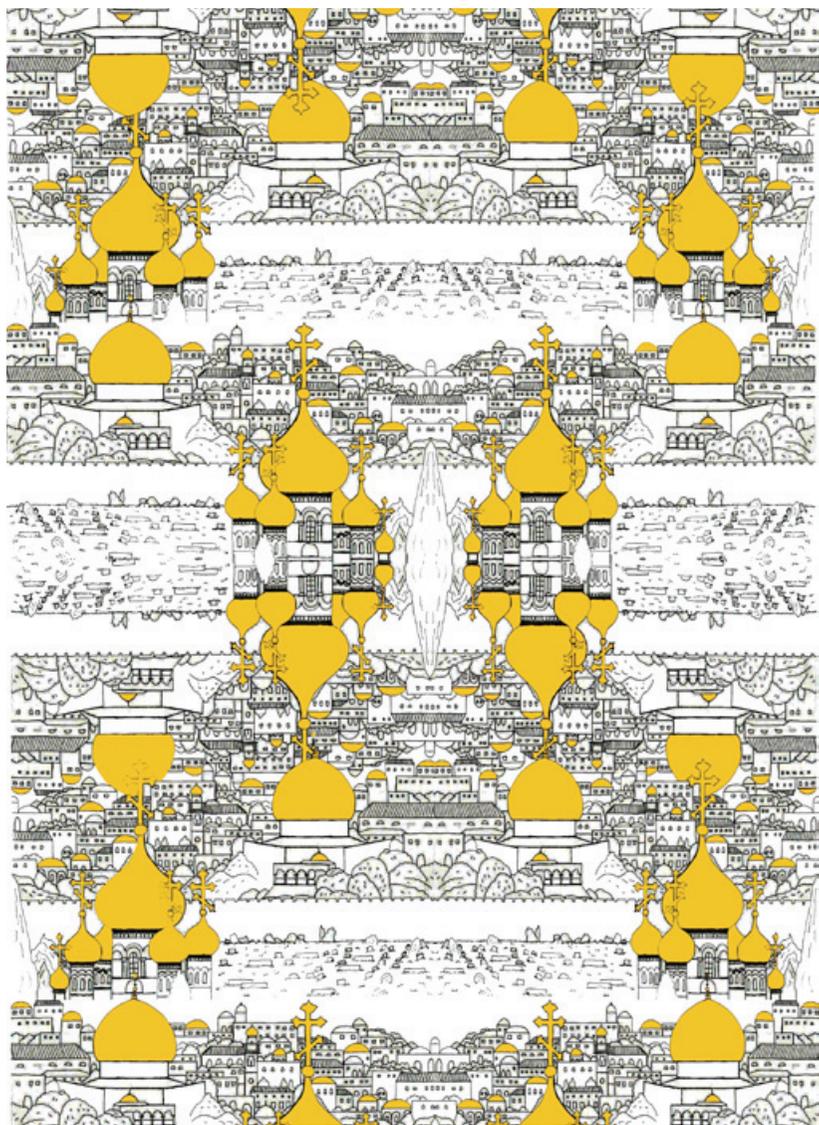


Fig. 1b. Trang Phan, *Terre Sainte*, 2016,  
crayon, encre noir sur papier II, 21,6 x 27,9 cm.

L'expérience était plutôt virtuelle parce que je ne suis pas à Jérusalem et je ne fais pas de rituels comme par exemple le pèlerinage où les gens vont marcher sur les lieux sacrés. Par exemple, dans le texte de Joanna Woodall, *Painted Immortality: Portraits of Jerusalem Pilgrims by Antonis Mor and Jan van Scorel*, l'auteure écrit : « It was believed that, by physically following Christ's footsteps into Jerusalem, to Calvary and by worshipping there at His tomb, the pilgrim would partake in the eternal spiritual life which Christ had earned for men and women through His death ». L'expérience du pèlerin est en partie reliée à la foi en Dieu visant à suivre le chemin que le Christ a fait dans le passé. Cette recherche que je fais est plutôt personnelle et imaginaire et je me suis, d'une certaine façon, créée un vécu avec la mémoire virtuelle et visuelle de l'importance de ces lieux de cultes.

La seconde étape était de créer des motifs répétés avec mon dessin. Je me suis servie de l'application Adobe Photoshop comme outil pour réaliser ce design par ordinateur. Cette façon de travailler est plus moderne qu'à l'époque égyptienne. Jérusalem est la ville où le plus grand nombre de textile a été découvert.<sup>1</sup> L'Égypte est un pays où la terre était parfaite pour la culture du lin et du coton, qui longe toute la vallée du Nil.<sup>2</sup> Le lin est très utilisé comme matériau à l'époque car cette plante a les propriétés d'être légère, solide, durable et résistante. On peut trouver une abondance de matières tinctoriales comme l'indigo, la garance, le safran, le carthame et le henné. Après la conquête

arabe, la production du textile est devenue très importante pour l'économie de l'État égyptien. C'était les artisans textiles cop-tes qui étaient les tisserands et qui travaillent sous l'emprise du nouveau gouvernement. Toutes les productions textiles furent contrôlées et enregistrées par un agent de l'État. Les fabrications devaient avoir le sceau du gouvernement pour être mises en vente, sans compter les taxes et les inspections de toutes les marchandises qui arrivaient et partaient des navires marchands.<sup>3</sup>

Mon œuvre d'art sur papier peut être réalisée d'abord en utilisant du bois pour créer les motifs et ensuite les transférer sur tissu par la technique de l'impression textile. L'option nécessite beaucoup d'équipements dont des cadres de sérigraphies, de l'émulsion pour faire le transfert d'image, des lumières UV, chambre noire, etc. C'est donc pourquoi j'ai choisi le papier comme matériau.

L'impression au bloc est une des techniques artisanales utilisées dans le monde de textile. L'emploi de celle-ci fut influencé par l'ère romaine, mais cette technique provient plutôt de l'Inde et est datée des 3<sup>e</sup> et 4<sup>e</sup> siècles.<sup>4</sup> Elle consiste à tailler un motif sur du bois, à appliquer de la couleur et à transférer sur tissu par la suite. On utilise le bois de sycomore, de frêne, de poirier qui sont des essences dures à grain fin. La méthode d'étampage peut se faire en plusieurs fois pour créer un beau motif à répétition. Ces blocs de bois ne servent pas seulement à imprimer ; on

peut manier des mordants ou organiser un mélange à réserve comme la cire ou l'argile. Une fois le décor tracé avec la matière imperméable comme la cire, on va introduire dans la teinture de l'indigo, pour avoir une couleur bleue comme couleur de fond (fig. 2). Sur la pièce de tissu au Met (fig. 3), il est bien prouvé par analyse que l'utilisation de l'impression au bloc et par teinte à réserve est employée sur le textile.<sup>5</sup> Ceci est expliqué par la répétition des vignes et les différentes couleurs qui sont causées par la réserve de cire.

Ma manipulation utilisant l'équipement informatique, est un outil dont les grandes industries se servent pour leurs productions textiles aujourd'hui. Cette modernité aide énormément à sauver du temps et de l'argent pour les compagnies de mode et permet de réaliser des quantités industrielles à l'échelle mondiale. J'ai mis la couleur jaune ocre puisqu'elle est proche du doré et que celle-ci fut utilisée sur le Dôme du Rocher et l'Église Sainte-Marie-Madeleine. On voit bien cette dorure lorsqu'on regarde la ville de Jérusalem de loin. Ma réalisation peut se référer à de la tapisserie, comme elle est imprimée sur papier.



Fig. 2. Une femme imprimant un tissu teint à l'indigo par réserve faite d'argile sur une table basse traditionnelle. Titan workshop, Bagru, 2016. Photo : Yael Rosenfield. <http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/ruminations/2016/indian-block-printed-textiles>.



Fig. 3. Anonyme, *Textile with Foliated Scrolls*, 13–14<sup>e</sup> siècle, coton, bloc à impression et teinture par réserve, 21,6 x 15,2 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. [https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/artreview/files/2016/11/IMG\\_3144.jpg](https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/artreview/files/2016/11/IMG_3144.jpg).

Le travail artisanal est de moins en moins utilisé aujourd'hui, car on vit dans une époque où tout doit se faire en un temps record. Le tissu du Met est un morceau qui montre la preuve du travail artisanal du 13<sup>e</sup> au 14<sup>e</sup> siècle. On voit la conception du tissage avec les déchirures et l'usure de celui-ci aide à voir le métier du tisserand par les trames du tissu en lin. L'application des motifs qui sont des vignes, un style très présent dans le tissu islamique qui fut influencé par les échanges commerciaux du textile par la Route de la soie (fig. 4).

L'usage des symboliques des textiles avant les feuillages de ce tissu, était plutôt le contexte de toutes les choses reliées au calife et des écritures sacrées du Coran (fig. 5).

Fig. 62 The Silk Route

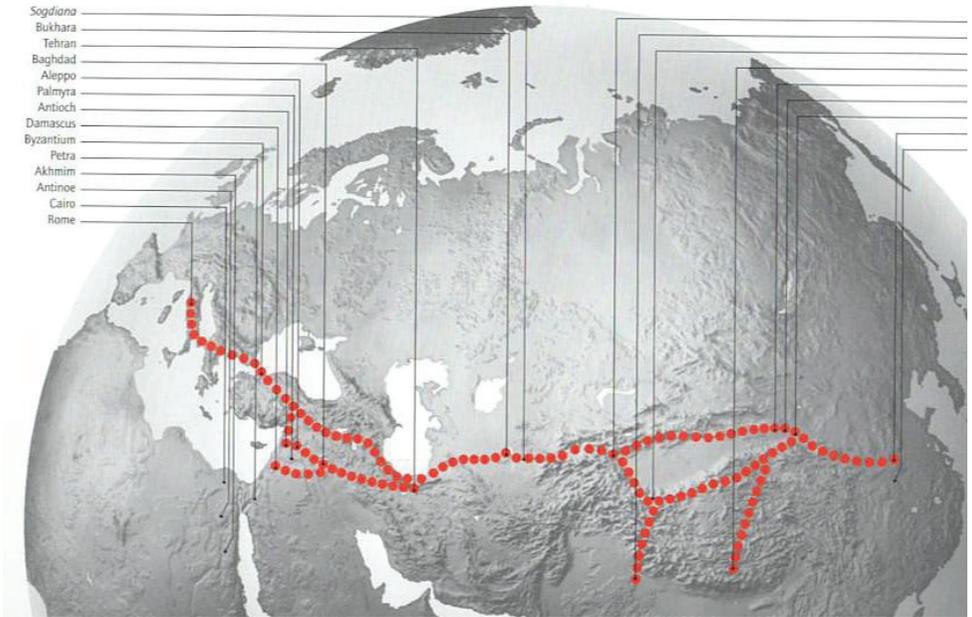


Fig. 4. La Route de la soie. Reproduit d'Antoine de Moor, *3500 Years of Textile Art* (Tielt: Lannoo, 2008), 56.

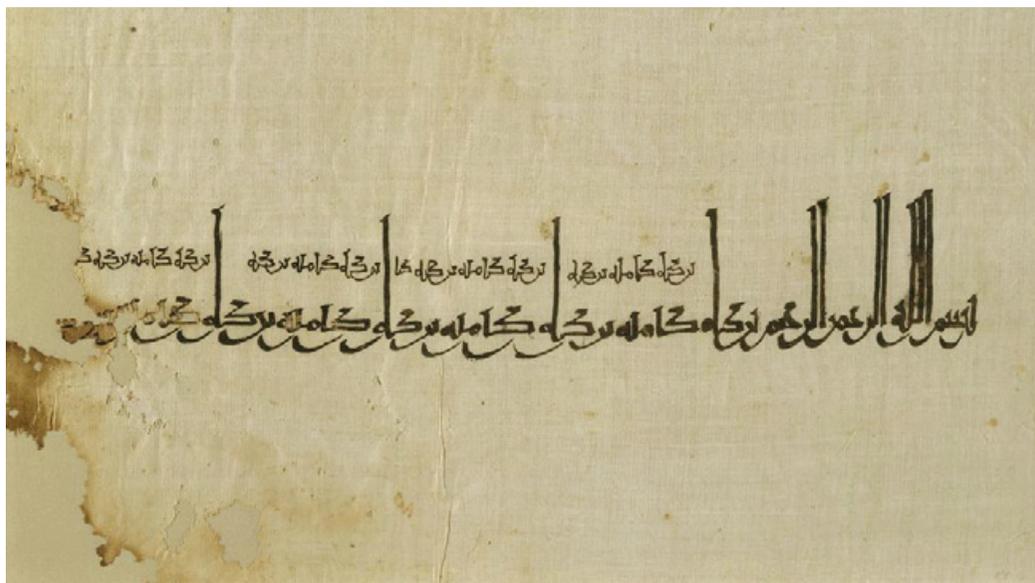


Fig. 5. Anonyme, *Tiraz, Fragment*, 10<sup>e</sup> siècle, lin, peinture, 22,9 x 35,6 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo : ARTstor.

Par exemple, on a trouvé une muraille peinte qui représente des personnes dévouées au bouddhisme et qui portent des vêtements aux motifs de vignes datant du 11<sup>e</sup> siècle, au Temple Bagan au Bangladesh (fig. 6). Ce motif était déjà présent en Inde, ce qui confirme l'influence des échanges qui sont attribués par la Route de la soie et les techniques employées proviennent de l'Inde.

Mon œuvre démontre comment, au fil du temps, les techniques artisanales ont été modifiées pour améliorer l'art textile. Malgré des siècles passés, l'utilisation des bases du métier des artisans reste encore aujourd'hui très présente. Cette ouverture d'esprit entre différents peuples, des échanges de cultures qui ont permis à de nouvelles découvertes de s'influencer dans diverses techniques et ont favorisé un contexte d'union et des collaborations universelles. C'est pourquoi j'ai pu étudier la technique d'impression au bloc. Mais avec la technologie de la machinerie, j'espère ne pas perdre mon savoir faire par les nouvelles créations du futur.



Fig. 6. Détail des murales de l'entrée nord du Temple Thambula, Minnantu, Myanmar. Photo : Joachim K. Bautze. Reproduite de Claudine Bautze-Picron, *Bagan Murals and the Sino-Tibetan World*, HAL, 9, dernière modification le 5 janvier 2015, consulté le 24 février 2017, <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01099967/file/Bautze-Picron,%20Bagan%20Murals%20and%20the%20Sino-Tibetan%20World,%20HAL.pdf>.

## NOTES

- 1 Most of the fabrics—mainly fragments but also a considerable number of complete pieces—come from Egypt. The oldest textile dated by the radiocarbon method is from around 2000 to 1800 BCE. Voir Antoine de Moor, *3500 Years of Textile Art* (Tielt: Lannoo, 2008), 8–9.
- 2 “Le long de la vallée du Nil se sont développées les cultures du lin et du coton.” Voir Maximilien Durand et Florence Saragoza, *Égypte, la Trame de l’Histoire: Textiles pharaoniques, coptes et islamiques* (Paris: Somogy Editions d’Art, 2002), 156.
- 3 “Le textile est pour une large part du monopole d’État.” Voir Durand et Saragoza, 156.
- 4 En Syrie, l’histoire du tissu imprimé au bloc remonte à l’époque romaine. Voir Durand et Saragoza, 106.
- 5 Yael Rosenfield, “Indian Block-Printed Textiles: Past and Present,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, consulté le 15 novembre 2016, <http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/ruminations/2016/indian-block-printed-textiles>.

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# **Bridging the Earthly and Heavenly Realms**

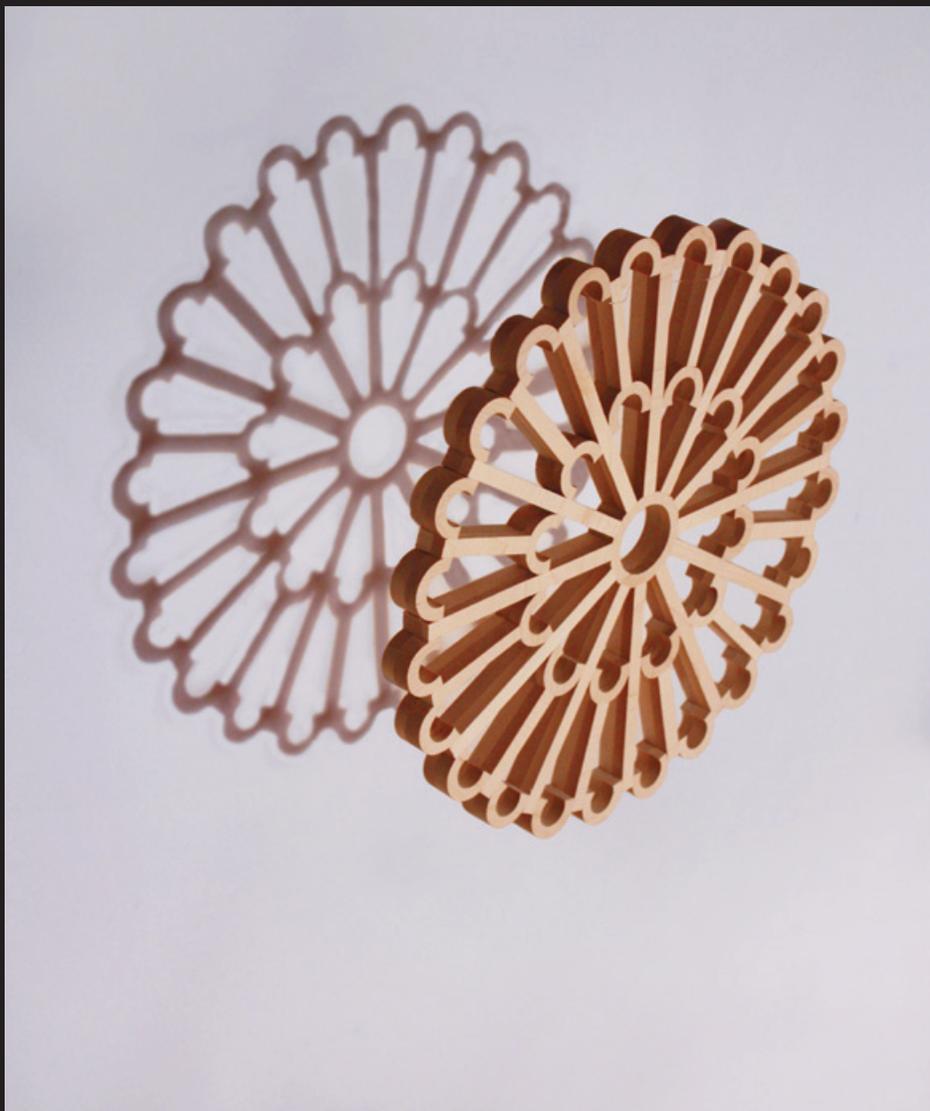
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**Jeter un pont entre  
le monde terrestre  
et le royaume céleste**

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Anonymous, *The Saint Matthew Capital*, 1170s, calcaire, 42,2 x 54 x 47 cm,  
Terra Sancta Museum, Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth.  
<http://metmuseum.com/exhibitions/view?exhibitionId=%7B3e2bd038-7aea-4779-9951-2974efca566d%7D&oid=479698>.



Paméla Simard, *Lumen*, 2016, érable, diam. 33.02 cm.

# Lumen

—

PAMÉLA SIMARD

What kind of temple should I build for God,  
whom the entire universe, the work of His hands,  
cannot contain?

—Bruno Reudenbach

C'est en faisant la lecture de *Holy Places and Their Relics* par Robert Reudenbach que mon inspiration s'est réellement manifestée.<sup>1</sup> L'auteur soulève une discussion pertinente en lien avec les reliquaires et l'importance qu'avaient ces derniers en tant que médiateurs entre le monde physique et une idéologie religieuse qui transcendait cette même réalité. Les aspects de la matérialité et de l'intimité m'ont particulièrement interpellée. En analysant les reliquaires, j'ai pris conscience de leur forme, de leur fabrication, ainsi que de leur signification. Ces objets sacrés constituaient un trésor emblématique, puisqu'ils commémoraient un(e) saint(e) et renfermaient un élément substantiel lui ayant appartenu. Cette dichotomie entre la divinité (intangibles)

et la matérialité fut mon point de départ. J'ai cherché à développer cette idée et à réaliser une sculpture en adressant le concept de proximité entre la réalisation d'objets « divins » et la population. Ce qui m'a le plus interpellé est la possibilité d'élaborer des méthodes de visualisation alternatives et des *réalités transcendantes*. J'ai développé une série de questions qui, tout au long de mon projet, ont été d'une importance fondamentale :

- Comment est-il possible de représenter la divinité?  
Comment la matérialité peut-elle provoquer une expérience sensorielle qui traduit la puissance des idéologies religieuses?
- Comment s'appropriier l'intangible? Comment le façonne-t-on?
- Comment représenter ou même évoquer la puissance divine à travers une illustration, sans rabaisser cette dernière la restreignant à un support matériel?

En poursuivant mes lectures, j'ai élargi mon horizon de recherche vers le thème de la lumière cosmique. Dans le texte *Between Logos (Kalima) and Light (Nur): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting*, l'auteure aborde le concept de la lumière divine (NUR), cette illumination cosmique à l'origine de l'humanité dans la tradition islamique.<sup>2</sup> Particulièrement, les concepts de *golden aureole, cosmic entity; celestial, pre-existential reality* et *existential being* sont devenus partie intégrante de ma recherche puisque je cherchais à matérialiser les éléments intangibles vers une forme sculpturale.

L'artéfact *The Saint Matthew Capital* (1170s) (fig. 1) s'est avéré être la clé de ma recherche. Lorsque j'en ai pris conscience, j'étais ébahie par la qualité sculpturale ET architecturale de cette œuvre d'art. Le détail qui a particulièrement retenu mon attention est le halo de Saint Mathieu taillé dans la pierre. La minutie de l'exécution de l'artiste est toute aussi remarquable qu'elle a suscité ma curiosité : ce dernier a rendu les détails architecturaux d'une façon parfaitement complémentaire au halo. En d'autres mots, l'arc se dressant au dessus de la tête de Saint Mathieu occupe une courbe très similaire à celle de son auréole. Se pourrait-il qu'il y ait une analogie importante entre les éléments architecturaux et la forme des halos?



Fig. 1. Anonymous, *The Saint Matthew Capital*, 1170s, calcaire, 42,2 x 54 x 47 cm, Terra Sancta Museum, Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth.

<http://metmuseum.com/exhibitions/view?exhibitionId=%7B3e2bd038-7aea-4779-9951-2974efca566d%7D&oid=479698>.

J'ai poursuivi ma recherche et creusé différents documents d'histoire de l'art sans réellement pouvoir établir un fil conducteur solide entre ces deux éléments. En consultant le livre « L'Art Gothique », la réponse s'est révélée d'elle-même : les rosaces des églises gothiques. Leur forme circulaire, manifestée à travers un ensemble de courbes toutes aussi géométriques les unes que les autres, transmet elle aussi la notion du divin en tant que lumière qui transcende la réalité matérielle. À l'inverse des halos, les rosaces ne sont pas exclusivement symboles d'émanence de lumière, mais bien celui de médiateur cosmique, d'une entité architecturale par laquelle la lumière jaillit. Toutefois, il y clairement un lien de correspondance entre la forme ornementale des

rosaces et celle des halos sculpturaux. À ce moment, les pièces de mon puzzle s'assemblaient les unes avec les autres. Les thèmes de la lumière cosmique, de la matérialisation du divin, cette dichotomie entre l'invisible et le visible, tout avait un sens. Ma recherche s'est avérée être un mouvement constant de va-et-vient entre l'investigation de différentes formes de halos et la réalisation tangible d'un élément architectural ressemblant la rosace de la Basilique de Saint-Denis (fig. 2), soit mon projet de création. J'ai entrepris de construire de mes propres mains une rosace en bois de la taille d'un halo (fig. 3). J'avais envie de concrétiser ma vision, soit celle d'un halo au même design que la rosace de la Basilique Saint-Denis. J'envisageais une sculpture qui provoquerait paradoxalement l'impression que la lumière s'en émane, malgré que l'œuvre soit construite de sorte à ce que la lumière la transperce. Et pourquoi le bois? Parce que c'est un médium traditionnel, noble et brut. Le travail du bois implique des failles, des défauts, des marques bien distinctes de ciseaux à bois et surtout, la touche artistique de son créateur. *It is everything but flawless. How does it pretend to be divine?*



Fig. 2. Rosace de la Basilique de Saint-Denis, France. 17 avril 2015.

Photo : David Iliff. Licence : CC-BY-SA 3.0.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Basilica\\_of\\_Saint\\_Denis\\_North\\_Transept\\_Rose\\_Window,\\_Paris,\\_France\\_-\\_Diliff.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Basilica_of_Saint_Denis_North_Transept_Rose_Window,_Paris,_France_-_Diliff.jpg).

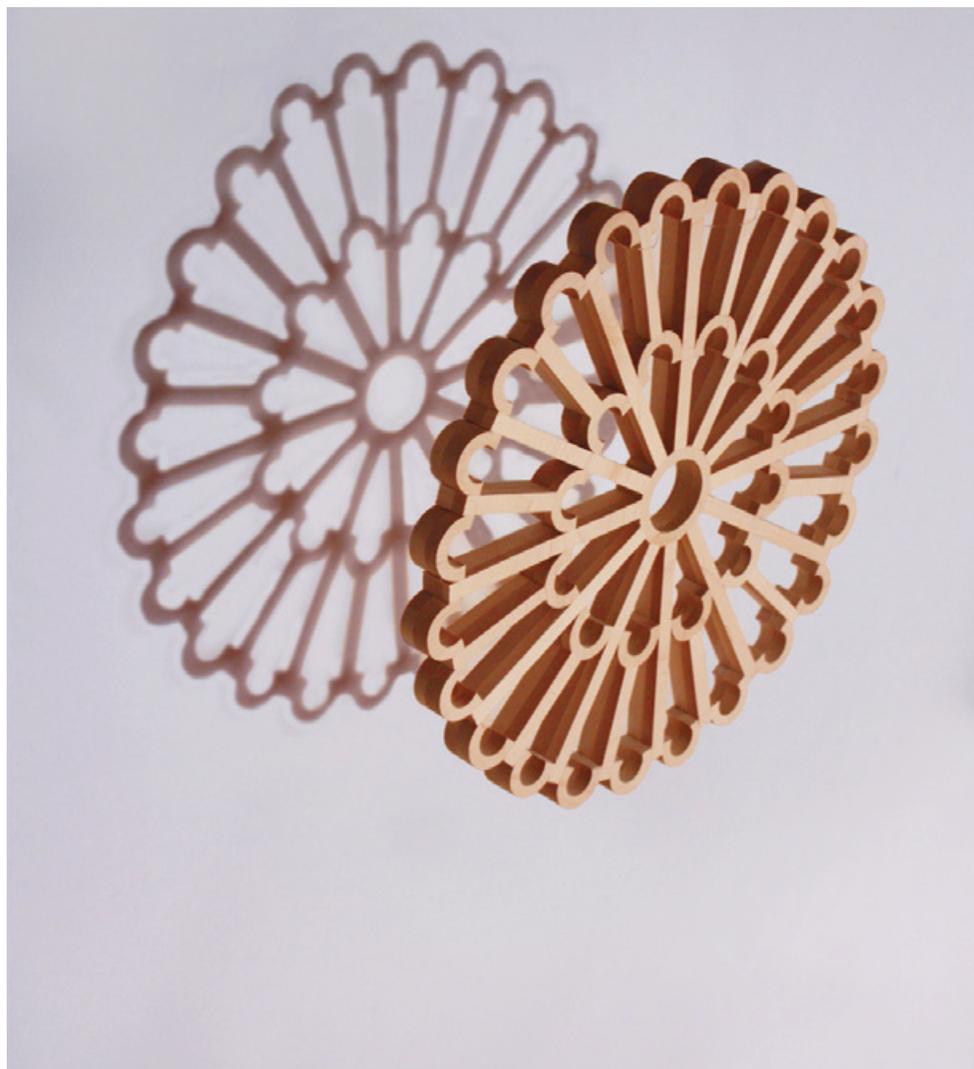


Fig. 3. Paméla Simard, *Lumen*, 2016, érable, diam. 33.02 cm.

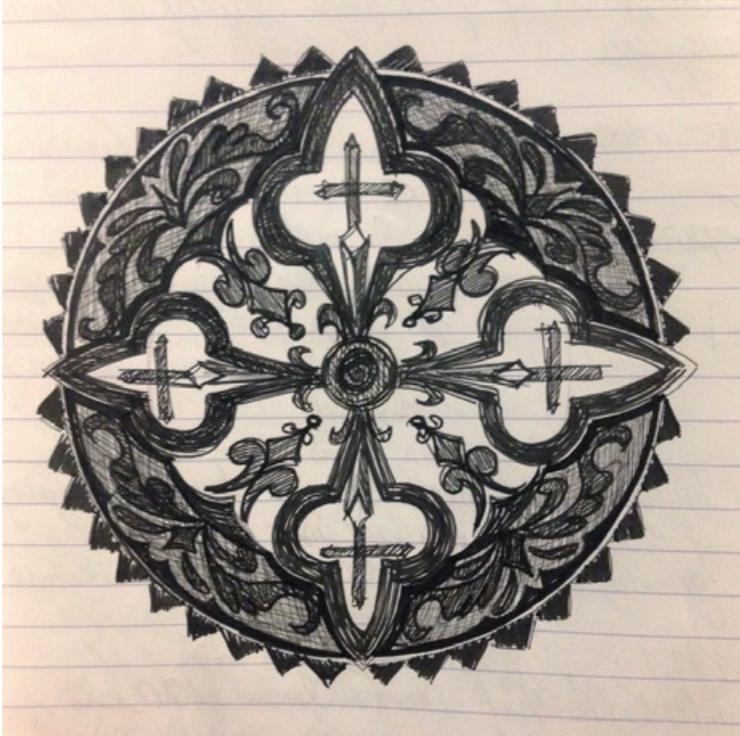
La forme des halos raconte le parcours de la lumière divine, celle qui habite le corps d'un saint et qui en émane. En les contemplant, j'ai l'impression qu'ils sont en mouvement. Leur forme circulaire n'est pas seulement synonyme d'entité cosmique qu'elle fait référence à la notion platonicienne du mouvement de la pensée :

In his dialogue, Plato describes the world as 'a moving image of eternity'. [...] The movement in a circle is 'the one that has the most to do with mind and understanding', or again, that by contemplating the undisturbed revolutions of mind in the heavens we make use of them for the revolutions of our own intellect. [...] It is rather that the whole development and structure of thought in the dialogue is such that celestial astronomy and metaphysics are inextricable one.<sup>3</sup>

## DESSINS



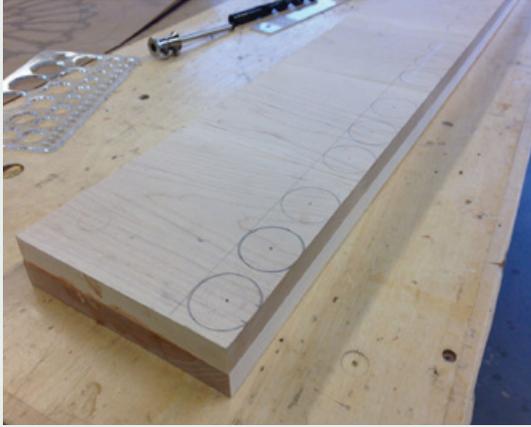




## PROCESSUS

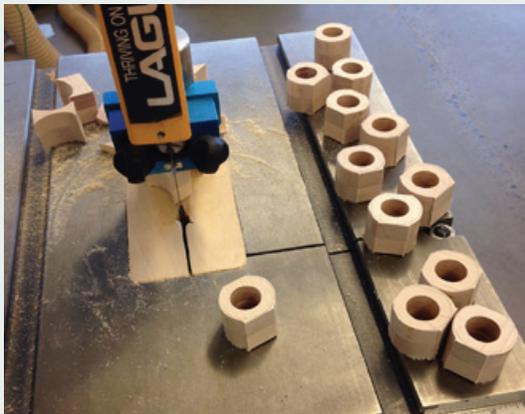
### ÉTAPE 1

Préparation du bois, laminage des planches (érable) et traçage.



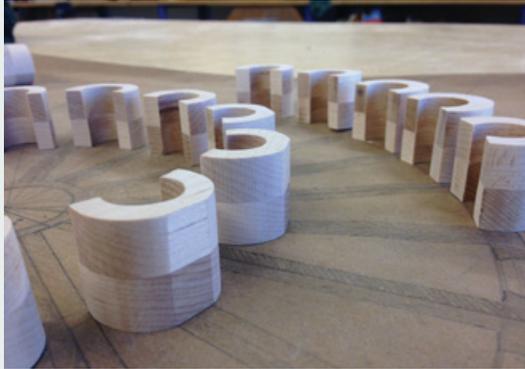
### ÉTAPE 2

Découpage des premiers éléments (formes grossières).



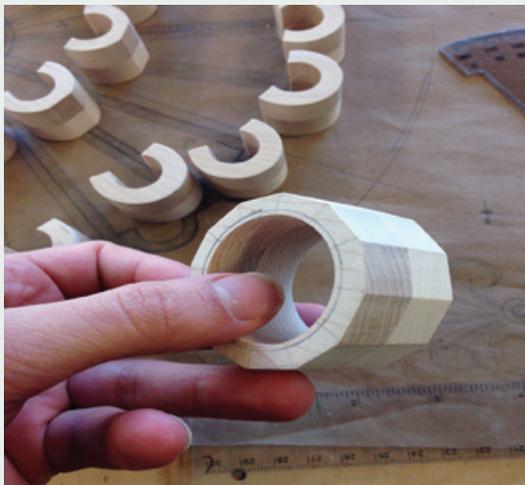
### ÉTAPE 3

Redécoupage des premiers éléments et ponçage.



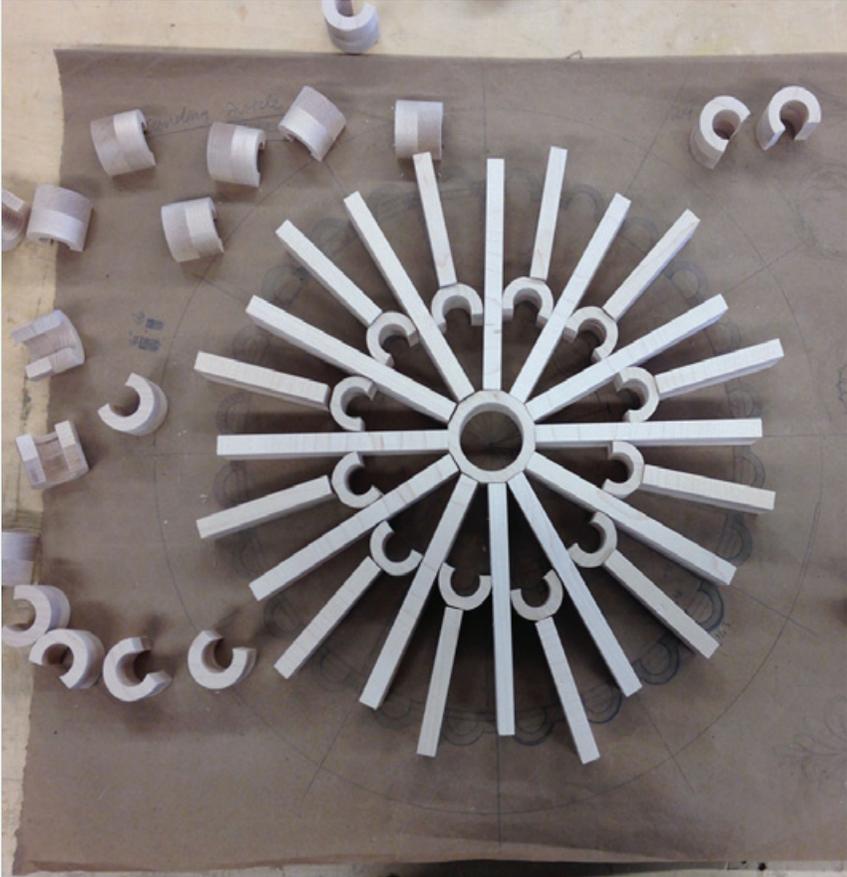
### ÉTAPE 4

Découpage de la pièce centrale et des barres transversales.

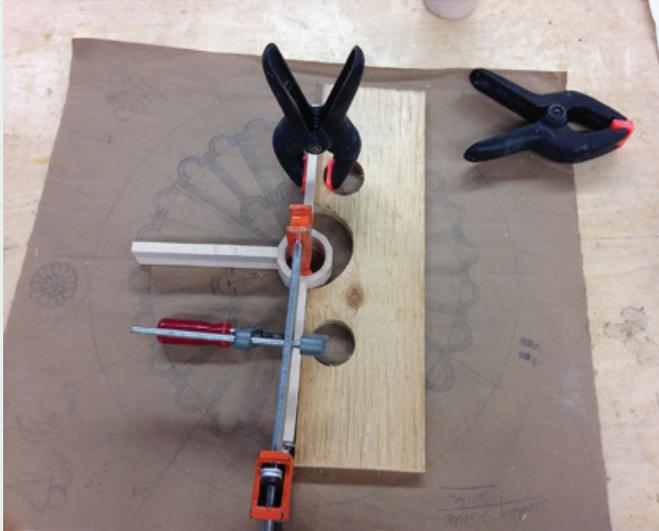


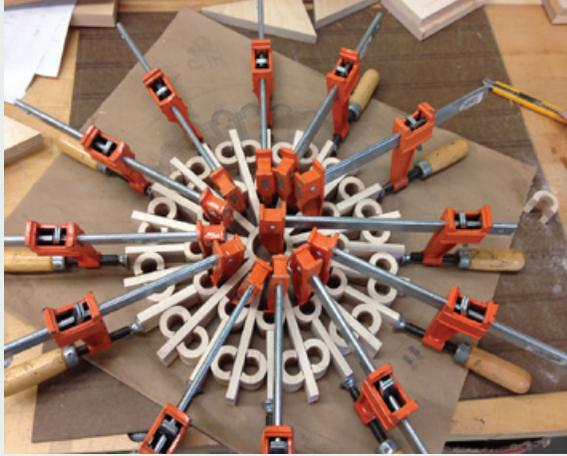
## ÉTAPE 5

Assemblage temporaire des pièces.



ÉTAPE 6  
Collage (très long processus...)





ÉTAPE 7  
Ponçage et vernissage.



## NOTES

- 1 Bruno Reudenbach, “Holy Places and Their Relics,” dans *Visual Constructs of Jerusalem*, éd. par Bianca Kuhnel, Galit Noga-Banai, et Hanna Vorholt (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 197–206.
- 2 Christiane Gruber, “Between Logos (*Kalima*) and Light (*Nur*): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting,” *Muqarnas* 26 (2009): 246.
- 3 Owen Barfield, *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry*, 2<sup>e</sup> ed. (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 103.

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'Alam al-Din Qaysar, *Celestial Globe*, 1225/26, copper alloy inlaid with silver and copper, diam. 22 cm, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples.  
<http://metmuseum.com/exhibitions/view?exhibitionId=%7B3e2bd038-7aea-4779-9951-2974efca566d%7D&oid=660539>.

'Alam al-Din Qaysar's  
*Celestial Globe* and  
Anish Kapoor's  
*Turning the World  
Upside Down*:  
Their Intricate and  
Complex Correlations

—

STEPHANIE DALLAIRE

There is much to be learned by examining how art has evolved over time, particularly how one particular theme or idea has varied amongst different eras and cultures. This essay will

compare the use of symbolic inversion in medieval Islamic art and contemporary art, focusing specifically on the inverted representation of the world in ‘Alam al-Din Qaysar’s (1178/79–1251) *Celestial Globe* (1225/26) and Anish Kapoor’s (b. 1954) *Turning the World Upside Down* (2010). First, I will provide a visual analysis of each work. Secondly, I will demonstrate how the shape of the hourglass seen in both works is connected to the concept of time. Finally, the inverted image of the world in Qaysar’s *Celestial Globe* and in Kapoor’s sculpture will be compared to see how the artists’ interpretations of the same theme are influenced by their respective cultural and historical contexts.

#### A VISUAL INTERPRETATION

The *Celestial Globe* (fig. 1) was commissioned by the Ayyubid sultan al-Malik al-Kamil (r. 1218–38) and crafted by Qaysar in Egypt or Syria in 1225 or 1226. It is an example of the lavish diplomatic gifts that were exchanged between the sultan and the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (r. 1220–50) during the period in which they brokered a deal to share control of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> Spherical in shape, the globe is made of a copper alloy inlaid with silver and copper to mark the relative position and size of the stars within each constellation.



Fig. 1. 'Alam al-Din Qaysar, *Celestial Globe*, 1225/26, copper alloy inlaid with silver and copper, diam. 22 cm, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples.  
<http://metmuseum.com/exhibitions/view?exhibitionId=%7B3e2bd038-7aea-4779-9951-2974efca566d%7D&oid=660539>.

There are also human figures engraved on the surface of the globe (fig. 2). While difficult to decipher, their physical traits and costume suggest that they are Arabic soldiers. This is a plausible interpretation since the globe was completed just before the onset of the Sixth Crusades (1228–29).<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 2. Detail of *Celestial Globe* showing human figures.  
Reproduced from Melanie Holcomb, “Celestial Globe,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 99.

Engraved in proximity to these figures are the scales representing Libra, the seventh constellation of the zodiac (fig. 3). A depiction of the Libra sign in a late-fourteenth-century Arabic manuscript titled *Kitab al-bulhan* (Book of Wonders) also includes the scales (fig. 4).<sup>3</sup> Symbolic of balance and justice, the scales bring to mind al-Kamil's preference for diplomacy and negotiation over combat.



Fig. 3. Detail of *Celestial Globe* showing the scales representing the Libra constellation. Reproduced from Melanie Holcomb, "Celestial Globe," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 99.



Fig. 4. Anonymous, *Signs of the Zodiac: Libra, or al-Mizān*, from *Kitab al-bulhan* (Book of Wonders), late 14<sup>th</sup> c., watercolour on paper, 24.5 x 16 cm, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS. Bodl. Or. 133, fol. 13b. <http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/detail/ODLodl~23~23~96664~137085:Signs-of-the-zodiac--Libra,-or-al-M->

While Qaysar has devoted great attention to the visual appearance of the *Celestial Globe*, its “most basic function is to illustrate the relative positions and sizes of the major stars and constellations.”<sup>4</sup> An inscription on the object mentioning the astronomer Claudius Ptolemy’s (ca. 100–ca. 170) *Almagest* indicates that

Qaysar used this source to calibrate his globe.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the 48 constellations and 1,025 of the 1,028 stars listed in Ptolemy's star catalogue are depicted on the surface of the globe. Ptolemy's treatise was the authority on the motion of the stars and of the planets for 1,200 years, beginning during the Hellenistic period and lasting until the Renaissance with the publication of Tycho Brahe's (1546–1601) catalogue in 1627.<sup>6</sup>

Measuring 22 cm in diameter, the *Celestial Globe* has two rings, one horizontal and one vertical, to allow it a complete rotation on its lateral axis and its latitude axis. This rotation simulates earth's daily rotation. Additionally, two gnomons and a graduated arc were added to the horizontal axis for the purpose of measuring the sun's location. A gnomon is the protruding piece of a sundial that indicates the time with its shadow.<sup>7</sup> These features allow Qaysar's *Celestial Globe* to also act as an astrolabe,<sup>8</sup> which is a device that was historically used to measure the altitude and position of stars and other celestial objects.<sup>9</sup>

The globe is supported by a stand composed of four legs, which come together beneath the globe to form a shape similar to the tented arches of Islamic architecture. In Islamic culture, these architectural and decorative elements symbolize the divine path as they point towards the celestial. The similar shapes observed on the globe's stand also point upwards, literally and metaphorically, towards the celestial.

The celestial and earthly realms merge in Kapoor's *Turning the World Upside Down* (fig. 5), installed on the Crown Plaza of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, Israel.



Fig. 5. Anish Kapoor, *Turning the World Upside Down*, 2010, stainless steel, 5 x 5 x 5 m, Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Photo: Leah Jones.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/>

File:Turning\_the\_World\_Upside\_Down\_(8529922480).jpg.

There is an eerie and mystical mood surrounding this piece. To quote a line from Plato's (428 BCE–348 BCE) *Phaedrus* (ca. 370 BCE): "Things are [literally] not as they appear" in Kapoor's work. For instance, while the artist's sculptures often denote a minimalistic aesthetic, the viewer's interaction with them carries an emotional and interpretative complexity. *Turning the World Upside Down* has an hourglass form and measures 5 m in length, height and depth. The sculpture is made of stainless steel and has a reflective surface. The appearance of the sculpture is contingent on its physical context and is therefore in a constant state of change. The hourglass shape of *Turning the World Upside Down* creates an inverted reflection of its surroundings. The result destabilizes and commands the viewer's attention; looking at the sculpture, one has the sense that it possesses a magnetic pull. Indeed, the piece seems to imprison those who look upon it. Enraptured by the destabilizing effect of their own inverted reflection, the viewer has the feeling of seeing through to another dimension. *Turning the World Upside Down* thus represents a portal to a world stripped of a familiar sense of orientation and reality. This ability to challenge conventions and pre-existing perceptions is a central theme in Kapoor's work. Such introspection is often uncomfortable. His work confronts audiences with the inescapable truth of human nature and leaves them reflecting and searching for a deeper meaning.

Beyond their obvious visual differences, the formal characteristics of Qaysar's *Celestial Globe* and Kapoor's *Turning the World*

*Upside Down* play an important role in the ability of these works to interpret and represent their respective environments. The constellations depicted on the globe and the mirror image reflected by Kapoor's work have an evolutionary nature. While the globe's depiction is entirely celestial, the sculpture reflects the metamorphosis of its earthly surroundings in relation to the celestial sky. Thus, both works signify the existential need for humankind to elucidate its place and role in the universe.

#### SYMBOLISM IN THE HOURGLASS SHAPE

Qaysar's *Celestial Globe* and Kapoor's *Turning the World Upside Down* are redolent of an hourglass: both have a shape in which the upper and lower extremities are connected by a narrow middle point. Furthermore, time plays an essential role in the function of both objects. Before the era of watches and clocks, celestial spheres were used to teach astronomy. This science was an important means of measuring time. In *Science in Medieval Islam*, Howard R. Turner explains that time and astronomy were "employed by Muslims in determining the precise moments in time and degrees of geographical direction that are essential to worshippers."<sup>10</sup> This branch of astronomy used for timekeeping was termed *ilm al-miqat* in medieval Islam. Benjamin Shaffer surmises, "Without the importance of astronomy to the keeping of time and direction required by religious practice it is possible that Islamic culture would not have been

at the forefront of astronomy.”<sup>11</sup> In turn, there might not have been any particular motivation for the creation of astronomic instruments such as the celestial globe.<sup>12</sup>

The hourglass shape is more strongly evoked in Kapoor’s *Turning the World Upside Down*. Just as particles of sand travel between the two compartments of the hourglass, time flows along the reflective surface of Kapoor’s sculpture. Inversion plays a central role in both this work and the *Celestial Globe*. By reversing the original position of the hourglass, one allows the sand particles to seep into the next chamber. The act of inversion is thus an essential element in the object’s ability to measure time. In *Turning the World Upside Down*, inversion plays a metamorphic role. As time advances, the sculpture displays on its surface every fleeting moment of its environment. Kapoor’s work is thus reflective of time’s fleeting nature and the speed in which life flashes before us. Every moment captured in the work’s reflective surface evaporates into the next one. The viewer is left trying to grasp at an image of time, only to see it extinguish in front of their eyes. Such is the nature of life and time. This is perhaps the reason why *Turning the World Upside Down* elicits such feelings of nostalgia and awe among its viewers. It seizes time, distorts it and releases it for viewing among the audience. Time and the viewer become essential pieces to the completion of Kapoor’s work. Without them, the sculpture is stripped of its role as an object of reflection and perception.

There is a correlation between time and spirituality in both Qaysar's *Celestial Globe* and Kapoor's sculpture. The former has more direct spiritual implications as it was used to determine the time for Muslim prayer and other rituals.<sup>13</sup> Kapoor's work alludes to time by giving one a glimpse of it as moments appear and disappear along its surface. Furthermore, preconceived notions of the natural world are inverted and distorted. This in itself instigates spiritual thinking as one tries to make sense of this new world.

#### REVERSAL OF PERCEPTIONS

There are many different ways of interpreting the inverted world reflected upon the surface of Kapoor's *Turning the World Upside Down*. Although Kapoor often discourages any association between his work and his cultural heritage, it is important to consider his Jewish matrilineal background and his education in an Israeli kibbutz when analyzing his work. In fact, according to Paul A. Kruger, reference to symbolic inversion first appeared in the ancient Near East.<sup>14</sup> Kruger further states that in Israeli culture, turning the world upside down is a direct reference to life after death.<sup>15</sup> The Hebrew Bible depicts Sheol, the underworld, as a direct reversal of the world of the living. Anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl vividly describes this place: "There, for instance, the sun and the moon travel from

west to east. [...] When the dead go downstairs, they go head first. [...] They speak the same language as the living but every word has exactly the opposite meaning.”<sup>16</sup> Not only does the title of Kapoor’s work relate to this description, but his sculpture offers a direct image of it by inverting the reflection of its surroundings. Like the sun and moon travelling from west to east in the underworld, right becomes left and left becomes right in the image reflected by Kapoor’s sculpture. Intentional or not, the symbolism of an inverted world is linked to Kapoor’s Jewish heritage. First, the sculpture is located in Jerusalem, a land that has moulded the identity and history of the Jewish people. Secondly, the title of the piece, *Turning the World Upside Down*, references Psalms 146:7–9 in the Old Testament: “[B]ut the way of the wicked He turneth upside down” on the day of the apocalypse.<sup>17</sup> Finally, like Islam and Christianity, Judaism identifies Jerusalem as the location in which the Last Judgment will occur.

In addition to its biblical implications, symbolic inversion also refers to the act of challenging social, artistic, religious and political conventions and orders.<sup>18</sup> According to Kruger, the Sumerian text on the Gudea Cylinder B (2125 BCE) indicates that this interpretation has cultural roots in the ancient Near East.<sup>19</sup> Inversion was an important concept in the dedication festivities of the Eninnu temple, wherein the higher classes and their slaves were “imagined” as having equal status for a given period of time. This practice was also observed among

contemporary Jews during the festival of Purim.<sup>20</sup> These acts of inverting the pre-existing social order and conventions are alluded to not only through the visual inversion created by Kapoor's sculptures, but also through the ability of his works to provoke discussion and controversy.

Qaysar's *Celestial Globe* depicts the constellations as though the viewer were seeing them from above; in other words, it flips the positioning of the stars as seen from earth. Both this work and Kapoor's sculpture cause a reversal of perception by inverting the natural environment. There is a paradoxical contrast in the mirror effect observed in these pieces. While the mirror reflection of the globe would act as a remedy to this reversal of perception, the mirror image itself is the subject of these distortions in Kapoor's work. In addition, the latter's use of inversion leads the viewer to reflect upon an image that distorts their vision and interpretation of the world. In contrast, the effect of the inversion observed in the *Celestial Globe* is to reflect the proper order of the stars if the viewer were to imagine themselves as having command over the universe.<sup>21</sup>

The religious implications of the *Celestial Globe* go beyond its ability to measure time. The reversal of perceptions is referred to not only in the Hebrew Bible but also in the Qur'an. According to the chapter known as "The Darkening," the end of days will be marked by the world being turned upside down: "When the sun shall be darkened, [...] when the mountains shall be

set moving, [...] then shall a soul know what it has produced” (81:1–14).<sup>22</sup> According to Frederick Denny, the moving of the mountains would have quite a destabilizing effect as they are seen as the pegs of the sky in Muslim culture.<sup>23</sup> The symbolic inversion described in this Qur’anic passage recalls quite vividly the Judaic interpretation of the apocalypse.

#### HOW IT ALL COMES TOGETHER

The role of art is to bear witness to and be a reflection of its time. Qaysar’s *Celestial Globe* represents how the constellations that populated the sky were envisioned during the Ayyubid period, while Kapoor’s sculpture *Turning The World Upside Down* embodies the notion of art as a mirror of its time. Its very surface reflects the evolution and metamorphosis of the world. It does so, however, with a reimagined configuration that leads the viewer on a spiritual quest to understand an idea that seems bigger than their pre-existing conception of the world. Finally, Qaysar’s *Celestial Globe* represents an instrument of piety in Islam as it was used for timekeeping to ensure that prayer and other rituals and practices were enacted at the appropriate time.<sup>24</sup> In Kapoor’s sculpture, time is referenced through the scenes that appear and disappear along its surface. Most importantly, these works, in both similar and unique ways, embody the human desire to understand the universe that surrounds us.

## NOTES

- 1 “Celestial Globe,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed February 11, 2017, <http://metmuseum.com/exhibitions/view?exhibitionId=%7B3e2bd038-7aea-4779-9951-2974efca566d%7D&oid=660539>.
- 2 In 1229, al-Kamil put a peaceful end to these Crusades by transferring the control of the Holy Land to the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II.
- 3 “Signs of the Zodiac: Libra, or al-Mīzān. Zodiac picture. From a 15th-century Arabic ...” Luna, accessed February 12, 2017, [http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/detail/ODLodl~23~23~96664~137085:Signs-of-the-zodiac--Libra,-or-al-M;StefanoCarboni,“TheWiseAbuMa’sharal-Balkhi”fromtheKitabal-bulhan\(“TheBookofWonderment”\),inVeniceandtheIslamicWorld,828–1797,ed.StefanoCarboni\(NewHaven;London:YaleUniversityPress,2007\),295,https://books.google.ca/books?id=10Rrl29pBMYC&pg=PA295&lpq=PA295&dq=Bodleian+Library,+University+of+Oxford+Kitab+al-bulhan&source=bl&ots=Fo8K\\_Iz51C&sig=FkvSyMDGajOGizt1ZvvVq5ZVRVs&hl=en&sa=X&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/detail/ODLodl~23~23~96664~137085:Signs-of-the-zodiac--Libra,-or-al-M;StefanoCarboni,“TheWiseAbuMa’sharal-Balkhi”fromtheKitabal-bulhan(“TheBookofWonderment”),inVeniceandtheIslamicWorld,828–1797,ed.StefanoCarboni(NewHaven;London:YaleUniversityPress,2007),295,https://books.google.ca/books?id=10Rrl29pBMYC&pg=PA295&lpq=PA295&dq=Bodleian+Library,+University+of+Oxford+Kitab+al-bulhan&source=bl&ots=Fo8K_Iz51C&sig=FkvSyMDGajOGizt1ZvvVq5ZVRVs&hl=en&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false).
- 4 Melanie Holcomb, “Celestial Globe,” in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 98.

- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ian Ridpath, "Ptolemy's Almagest," Ian Ridpath, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.ianridpath.com/startales/almagest.htm>; Ian Ridpath, "Tycho Brahe's Great Star Catalogue," Ian Ridpath, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.ianridpath.com/startales/tycho.htm>.
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- 10 Howard R. Turner, *Science in Medieval Islam: An Illustrated Introduction* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 63.
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- 13 Ibid.
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- 15 Ibid., 400.
- 16 Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *The “Soul” of the Primitive* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 303, cited in Kruger, 400.
- 17 Psalms 146:7–9 (Authorized [King James] Version); Lloyd James, “Turning the World Upside Down,” Christian Media Research, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.christianmediaresearch.com/cmc-115.html>.
- 18 Kruger, 398–99.
- 19 Ibid., 399.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Holcomb, 98.
- 22 Frederick Mathewson Denny, *Introduction to Islam* (London: Routledge, 2015), 102.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Shaffer.

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Anonymous, *A Knight of the d'Aluye Family*, after 1248–by 1267, limestone, 33 x 85.1 x 212.1 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/470599>.



Jade De Bruto, *Knight of the d'Aluye Family* (still), 2016, video, 1:54.  
<https://vimeo.com/193483652>.

# *A Knight of the d'Aluye Family*

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JADE DE BRUTO

Looking at the tomb effigy of Jean d'Aluye (after 1248–by 1267) (fig. 1), one may easily surmise that this individual was an exemplum of passionate faith and unwavering patience; however, further questions surrounding his identity and past arise: Who was this French man? What did he do? And how did a Chinese sword find its way into his hands?



Fig. 1. Anonymous, *A Knight of the d'Aluye Family*, after 1248–by 1267, limestone, 33 x 85.1 x 212.1 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/470599>.

The d'Aluye family produced three generations of Crusader knights, and Jean d'Aluye was one of them.<sup>1</sup> He died when he was much older than he appears in his tomb effigy. He is portrayed as a young man because he wanted to be admitted into

heaven—and therefore spend eternity—as such. While effigies usually show the subject resting in peace with their eyes closed, d’Aluye is seen with his eyes wide open, ears erect and hands clasped in prayer. All his senses are awaiting the call of the Last Judgment, when Christ will descend from the heavens back to earth to choose who is eligible to be saved. D’Aluye’s garments are impressively carved so that they drape naturally. As for his Chinese sword, scholars continue to speculate about how he acquired it.<sup>2</sup> At d’Aluye’s feet rests a lion, a symbol of protection, nobility and courage.<sup>3</sup>

Having studied film production, I am particularly attracted to the human face and tend to make it a strong focus in my work. Given that most of the artworks that I saw during the tour of the exhibition *Jerusalem 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven* were decorative objects, architectural photographs or paintings, *The Tomb Effigy of the Knight of the d’Aluye Family* easily stood out to me. What’s more, our knowledgeable guide shared an endearing anecdote of the first time a young woman saw the piece. He explained how because d’Aluye looked like a “young and handsome” knight, a female tourist in her twenties could not help but lean over and kiss him. For some reason that truly touched me, and the story and the effigy became the basis of my experimental short film *Knight of the d’Aluye Family* (2016) (fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Jade De Bruto, *Knight of the d'Aluye Family* (still), 2016, video, 1:54.  
<https://vimeo.com/193483652>.

If I wanted to include the kiss in my film, I knew that I would have to make sure nothing else seemed *tacky*. I also had to ensure that everything I wanted to do was feasible. Therefore, I created an experimental short film that includes both abstract and concrete imagery and is set in a minimalistic setting with minimalistic props. Aesthetically speaking, my main focus was on framing and colour grading. I cast a friend of mine who I pictured as the young version of Jean d'Aluye. My film does not have a narrative arc because that isn't the focus of my movie; my movie is only a glimpse of what the tomb effigy has to offer. I went for an extreme close up (ECU) for my opening shot because ECUs deliver a sense of being so close to something that you can't exactly determine what it is. That was my way of commenting on how so many questions surround the 749-year-old tomb.

I included my cat in the film as a stand in for the lion in the tomb effigy since cats and lions belong to the same family. Working with untrained animals is very difficult, but with treats and good match cuts, I managed to get the shots I needed. Knowing that d'Aluye's sword was most likely a Chinese sword, I got my hands on Chinese newspaper which I then shaped and taped together into a sword. I remembered the guide at the Metropolitan Museum of Art telling us that d'Aluye wanted to be shown as a prayerful knight and that he was patiently waiting for his turn to ascend into the heavens; that is why I chose to dress my actor in white. At the end of the day, a Crusader's goal was to *purify* the earth, and what better colour to signify purification than white?

In two specific shots, a smaller image is superimposed on the original one. The first shows a blinking eye, which is a reference to the Crusader's senses being alert. The second shows stock video footage of the sea superimposed on an image of hands clasped in prayer, alluding to the travels the knight made to foreign lands in the name of God.

Finally, there is the kiss—the Disney-like kiss that, although does not wake up Jean d'Aluye from his eternal slumber, wakes the viewer from the abstract world of stillness that I have tried to evoke in my film.

## NOTES

- 1 “A Knight of the d’Aluye Family,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed January 10, 2017, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/470599>.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Kaya, *The Source Code: Dictionary, Dreams, Signs, Symbols*, trans. Blánaid Rensch (Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts: Univers-cité Mikaël, 2013), <https://books.google.ca/books?id=GRytAgAAQBAJ&lpq=PT248&ots=TsX8OfNi2w&dq=lion%20symbol%20of%20protection%20courage%20nobility&pg=PT248#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

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Simcha ben Yehudah, *The Gates of Mercy*,  
from the *Worms Mahzor*, vol. II, ca. 1280,  
gold, ink and tempera on parchment, 45.1 x 31.1 cm, National Library of  
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Rosh\\_Hashana/Pages/rosh\\_hashana.aspx](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/gallery/yearly_cycle/Rosh_Hashana/Pages/rosh_hashana.aspx).

# The Golden Gate: The Gate of Mystery; the Gate of the Faithful

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MARYSE MONFETTE

Destroyed, rebuilt and modified throughout history, the Eastern Gate of the Temple Mount has remained a prominent feature of the Jerusalem landscape. Known as the Golden Gate by Christians, *Bab al-Dhahabi* (Golden Gate) by Muslims, and *Sha'ar HaRachamim* (Gate of Mercy) by Jews, the Eastern Gate possesses great religious significance, and has even been mentioned in biblical prophecies.<sup>1</sup> Tales of its indestructibility are

common, and supernatural forces have been attributed to it.<sup>2</sup> For example, Jewish tradition holds that the Messiah will enter Jerusalem through the Gate of Mercy.<sup>3</sup> This physical gate is also associated with the heavenly Gates of Mercy—that is, the gates of heaven—and on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) Jews pray for these gates to be opened.<sup>4</sup> In thirteenth- and fourteenth-century illuminated German *mahzors* (prayer books) such as the *Worms Mahzor* (ca. 1280) (fig. 1), the morning prayer recited on Yom Kippur is commonly framed “in a gateway, illustrating the Heavenly Gates of Mercy open to receive supplicants’ prayers.”<sup>5</sup>

This paper aims to gain a better understanding of the religious significance of the Golden Gate within Judaism, Christianity and Islam by examining its complex history as well as the scholarly debates and mysteries surrounding it. I will begin by briefly describing the Golden Gate as it stands today, before providing a timeline, based on ancient sources, of the episodes of its destruction, construction and restoration. Then, I will present the main archeological discoveries that have been made within the surroundings of the Golden Gate, which include a gate beneath the present gate and a massive wall in front of it. This essay will conclude by exploring the religious significance of the Golden Gate and taking a closer look at the *Gates of Mercy* illumination in the *Worms Mahzor*.



Fig. 1. Simcha ben Yehudah, *The Gates of Mercy*, from the *Worms Mahzor*, vol. II, ca. 1280, gold, ink and tempera on parchment, 45.1 x 31.1 cm, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, MS. Heb. 4 °781/2. [http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitalibrary/gallery/yearly\\_cycle/Rosh\\_Hashana/Pages/rosh\\_hashana.aspx](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitalibrary/gallery/yearly_cycle/Rosh_Hashana/Pages/rosh_hashana.aspx).

## A PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE GOLDEN GATE

The present Golden Gate is located in a turret protruding from the northern third of the East Wall of the Old City of Jerusalem (fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Anonymous, *The Golden Gate (Exterior), Jerusalem, Holy Land*, between ca. 1890 and ca. 1900, photomechanical print, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.  
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/pgz/item/2002725012/>.

The rectangular structure exceeds the height of its adjacent walls, and its imposing façade hides the gate room which consists of a two-aisle, vaulted hall supported by four massive marble pillars. The two portals are surmounted by semi-circular arches and an entablature richly ornamented with acanthus foliage.<sup>6</sup> The two portals, which are now mortared closed, are the gate's more defining feature. The piers are built of stone blocks with plain chiselled faces,<sup>7</sup> but the whole structure displays evidence of multiple construction periods.<sup>8</sup> Just outside the Golden Gate is a Muslim cemetery which extends down the slope of the Kidron Valley.

#### THE HISTORY OF THE GOLDEN GATE

Since the First and Second Temples both faced east,<sup>9</sup> the Temple Mount gate closest to their front entrance must have been the Golden Gate.<sup>10</sup> According to Mishnah Middot 1:3, there was only one gate in the Eastern Wall of the Temple Mount. The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587/586 BCE, during the Babylonian Exile (597–538 BCE). After the Persian leader Cyrus the Great (590–580 BCE–ca. 529 BCE) captured Babylonia in 539 BCE, he allowed Jews to return to Palestine, paving the way for the completion of the Second Temple in 516 BCE. The Eastern Gate was rebuilt, named Shushan Gate (after the Persian city) and engraved accordingly in honour of the Persian Empire.<sup>11</sup> The Second Temple was transformed into

a larger and more spectacular building under Herod (74/73 BCE–4 BCE), and was completed in 20–19 BCE. The writings of Romano-Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (37–100 CE) indicate that the Shushan Gate was aligned with the inner court gate and the Herodian Temple gate;<sup>12</sup> this is shown in the Holyland Model of Jerusalem (scale 1:50) (fig. 3), completed in 1966 under the expertise of Professor Michael Avi-Yonah (1904–74) and on display at the Israel Museum.<sup>13</sup>



Fig. 3. A view of Herod's Temple aligned with the Shushan Gate, part of the Holyland model of Jerusalem at the Israel Museum. July 2010. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:19\\_Shrine\\_of\\_the\\_Book\\_005.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:19_Shrine_of_the_Book_005.jpg).

In his writings Josephus describes the magnificence of the Shushan Gate:

There was one gate that was without [the inward court of] the holy house, which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those that were only covered over with silver and gold. [...] Now the magnitudes of the other gates were equal one to another; but that over the Corinthian gate, which opened on the east over against the gate of the holy house itself, was much larger; for its height was fifty cubits; and its doors were forty cubits; and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other.<sup>14</sup>

Alas, Josephus's writings also suggest that the Shushan Gate was destroyed along with the Second Temple by the Romans—led by the future Emperor Titus—during the Siege of Jerusalem (70 CE): “And now the Romans, judging that it was in vain to spare what was round the holy house, burnt all those places, as also the remains of the cloisters and the gates, two excepted; the one on the east side, and the other on the south; both which, however, they burnt afterward.”<sup>15</sup> Yet, as will be discussed later, archaeological evidence suggests the possibility that the Shushan Gate remains intact beneath the present Golden Gate.

The date of the reconstruction of the Golden Gate as it stands today is still in dispute. A sixth-century Byzantine map in the

Church of Saint George in Madaba, Jordan, shows the city of Jerusalem with the Eastern Gate in the upper centre (facing east in the map) (fig. 4).



Fig. 4. A view of Jerusalem with the Eastern Gate in the upper centre.

From Anonymous, *Madaba Map* (detail),

6<sup>th</sup> c. CE, floor mosaic, Church of Saint George, Madaba.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Madaba\\_map.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Madaba_map.jpg).

Many scholars believe that the Golden Gate, with its beautiful double arches, was built by Christians in the Byzantine period, as it is directly aligned with the entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (335 CE).<sup>16</sup> Within the Christian tradition, the Golden Gate is associated not only with Jesus's entry into

Jerusalem, but also with the emperor Heraclius's (ca. 575–641) recovery of the True Cross, on which Jesus was crucified.<sup>17</sup> Historian Yuri Stoyanov proposes that Heraclius carried the True Cross through the Golden Gate to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on March 30, 630.<sup>18</sup>

However, Yoram Tsafrir argues that the platform of the Temple Mount was deserted during the Byzantine period and became a refuse dump as a result of the Jews' failure to rebuild the Temple in the time of Julian (r. 361–63 CE). He highlights the fact that the Temple Mount is not properly depicted in the *Madaba Map*, which illustrates architecture constructed before 570 CE.<sup>19</sup> Tsafrir contends that the revival of the Temple Mount occurred after the conquest of Jerusalem by the Arabs in 637 CE and occurred mostly under the Umayyads, who also built the present Golden Gate at that time.<sup>20</sup> Others who agree that the gate was built in the Early Arab Period (634–1099 CE) call attention to its geometrical similarities to the Dome of the Rock.<sup>21</sup>

The Golden Gate was the only ancient gate that was preserved when the Ottoman sultan Suleiman I (1494–1566) heightened the walls of Jerusalem (1539–42). He strengthened the gate, but most importantly, he had the doors removed and the opening sealed with masonry in 1541. Although security was likely the primary motivation for the sealing of the gate, some historians wonder if biblical allusions to the gate also had some

influence.<sup>22</sup> It is possible that the decision was made to prevent the fulfillment of a prophecy stated in Zechariah 14:4, which some have interpreted as the appearance of the Messiah at the Golden Gate and the subsequent repossession of the Holy City by the Jews.<sup>23</sup> This prophecy also may have encouraged the establishment of the Muslim cemetery in front of the Golden Gate. Apparently, Muslims believed that since a *Kohen* (Jewish priest) is not allowed to enter cemeteries, the prophet Elijah, the precursor to the Jewish Messiah, would not be able to pass through the cemetery to the Golden Gate to announce the arrival of the Messiah; this, in turn, would effectively prevent the Messiah's appearance from taking place.<sup>24</sup> Many saw the closing of the Golden Gate as the realization of one of Ezekiel's prophecies: "Then the man brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, the one facing east, and it was shut. This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the LORD God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut" (Ezekiel 44:2).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The main obstacle to a consensus over the timeline of the construction of the Golden Gate is the lack of archaeological data. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the Temple Mount was out-of-bounds to non-Muslims; only a few privileged Europeans managed to gain access.

Archaeological work in Jerusalem was completed by the British in the 1860s, under the guise of providing the city with a clean and reliable water supply. In 1864, a first Ordnance Survey Team (Britain's national mapping agency) was dispatched to Jerusalem under the leadership of Captain Charles Wilson (1836–1905) of the Royal Engineers. The results of his work are published in the 1865 *Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem*, in which he writes: “In the northeast corner and between the Birket Israel and Golden Gate, there has been an immense amount of filling in to bring this portion up to the general level of the area, and it appears to have been done at a period long after the erection of the Golden Gate, the north side of which is hidden by an accumulation of rubbish rising 7.9 m above the sill of the western doorway.”<sup>25</sup> As for the southern side of the Golden Gate, the amount of fill was estimated by Wilson to be about 2.7 m (fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Philip E. Bergheim, *Golden Gate. Interior, [Jerusalem]*,  
1870s, albumen print, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.  
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002708673/>.

Charles Warren (1840–1927) was one of the earliest European archaeologists to study the Holy Land and the Temple Mount—even before archaeology became a formal science. In 1867, he was a twenty-seven-year-old Lieutenant of the British Royal Engineering Corps when he was appointed by the Palestine Exploration Fund to head a new expedition to Jerusalem. Warren was responsible for undertaking excavations to establish the location of Solomon’s Temple, and constructing a map of the city’s surrounding areas as part of a military reconnaissance. Since the Ottoman government would not allow excavation on and around the Temple Mount, Warren dug a series of mine-like vertical shafts outside the city walls and then tactfully engaged in horizontal tunnelling towards the wall.<sup>26</sup> Along the Eastern Wall, however, the Muslim cemetery presented an additional constraint and Warren had to sink his shaft in the lower Kidron Valley, some 43 m east of the southern pier of the Golden Gate.<sup>27</sup> While tunnelling towards the East Wall, at a distance of about 14 m from the Temple Mount, the machinery came to a halt as it reached a thick wall parallel to the present East Wall. Warren tried to break through the wall, but gave up when, having dug 1.6 m into it, he discovered a second course of masonry obstructing his path.<sup>28</sup> Despite efforts to bypass the obstructing wall, tunnelling first south, then north, Warren was forced to quit after a major collapse of debris.

Warren's main findings with respect to the Golden Gate area are as follows (fig. 6):

1) the lowest level of the Golden Gate was probably some 9 to 12 m below the present surface; 2) the underground wall takes a 90-degree turn west directly toward the Golden Gate; and 3) the immense wall "resembled the two or three lower courses of masonry exposed above ground on either side of the Golden Gate" with one exception: instead of lying side by side, the stones in the underground wall were as much as a foot apart with the space between them filled with smaller rocks and plaster.<sup>29</sup>

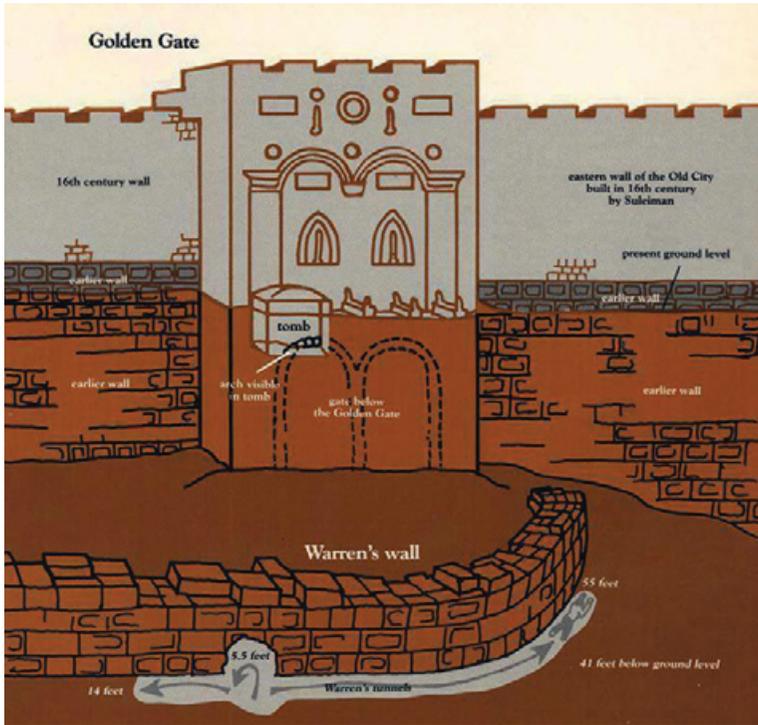


Fig. 6. “The area around the Golden Gate, above and below ground.” Reproduced from James Fleming, “The Undiscovered Gate Beneath Jerusalem’s Golden Gate,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9, no. 1 (1983): 36.

But the most stunning discovery with respect to the Golden Gate was made later by James Fleming who, in his words, stumbled upon what is believed to be the first-century Shushan Gate.<sup>30</sup> In 1969, Fleming was a master’s student in archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. On a spring day (following a heavy night of rain), as he ventured into the Muslim cemetery

to take pictures of the Golden Gate, the ground beneath his feet suddenly collapsed and he landed 2.4 m below ground level, into a large tomb in front of the left portal containing forty-six skeletons. As his eyes got used to the dark, he could see beyond the bones that the back wall of the tomb was an extension of the Golden Gate wall. Featured on the face of the wall were completely preserved, wedge-shaped stones arranged in an arch, indicating the top of an earlier gate. Fortunately enough, Fleming was able to climb out of the tomb and the photographs of his discovery turned out well (fig. 7). The next day, when he returned to the site with his professor, the tomb had already been sealed with cement by the Muslim custodians of the cemetery.



Fig. 7. The arch of the gate beneath the Golden Gate as photographed by James Fleming in 1969. Reproduced from James Fleming, “The Undiscovered Gate Beneath Jerusalem’s Golden Gate,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9, no. 1 (1983): 27.

Wilson’s observations only confirm that the eastern area of the Temple Mount was originally much lower than at present, and that the Kidron Valley was used as a rubbish depository over the centuries—which is mentioned several times in the Bible.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, the discovery of underground structures by Warren and Fleming is not that surprising. But how can one date these structures when no access is permitted and when scholars cannot even agree on the age of the existing structure standing above ground?

The best clues for estimating the age of the gate below the Golden Gate are the lower two to three courses of masonry just above ground (below the line of Suleiman's masonry) on both sides of the Golden Gate (fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Philip Bergheim, [*Golden Gate. Exterior*] / P. Bergheim, between 1860 and 1880, albumen print, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/92500650/>.

The ashlar of this earlier wall are massive when compared to the stones of Suleiman's wall—about 76.2 cm in height and 121.9 to 152.4 cm in length—and are separated by uneven space, as if the stones were restacked after an earlier collapse. Further evidence of this earlier wall is best seen just north (right) of the “straight joint” (fig. 9), where the earlier wall meets that of Herod's expansion to the south (left).<sup>32</sup> But again, scholars disagree as to who built the wall north of the straight joint, although most agree on a date sometime before the Herodian period based on archaeological and historical grounds.<sup>33</sup> Dame Kathleen Kenyon (1906–78), one of the most influential archaeologists of the twentieth century, believed that the wall dates back to the period when the Jews reconstructed Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile.<sup>34</sup>



Fig. 9. Author Galyn Wiemers points to the straight joint in the Eastern Wall where a section of Herod's expansion (left) meets an earlier section of the Eastern Wall (right).

<http://www.generationword.com/jerusalem101/36-se-end-east-wall.html>.

## AN INDESTRUCTIBLE GATE?

I tend to agree with Kenyon's theory that beneath the Golden Gate lies the Shushan Gate, having sustained many episodes of war and destruction. What if the Eastern Gate actually is indestructible? First, it is common knowledge that the Eastern Wall of the Temple Mount was the only wall that was not rebuilt by Herod,<sup>35</sup> meaning that the Shushan Gate portal must have been preserved. However, as mentioned earlier, Josephus wrote that the East and South Gates burned during the Siege of Jerusalem. I can easily picture the massive wooden gates blazing and turning to dust, but certainly not the masonry. I believe that the Shushan Gate was merely buried under the rubble of the Second Temple, which was pushed towards the Kidron Valley. Were Warren's repeated failures to reach the Eastern Wall an act of God to save the sacred gate?

## THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GOLDEN GATE

The Christian and Muslim traditions assert that the Last Judgment will occur at the Golden Gate.<sup>36</sup> Muslims have assigned individual names to each of the two portals comprising the Golden Gate: the southern gate is known as *Bab al-Rahma* ("Gate of Mercy"), while the northern one is called *Bab al-Taubah* ("Gate of Repentance"). Shams e-Din e-Suyuti, who wrote of his visit to Jerusalem in 1470, linked the Gates

of Mercy and Repentance to a passage in the Quran (LVII, 13): “Then there will separate them a wall wherein is a gate, the inner side whereof containeth mercy, while the outer side thereof is toward the doom.”<sup>37</sup> Christians believe that Christ will return to Jerusalem via the Golden Gate based on the Bible’s indications that his second coming will take place where he departed—on the Mount of Olives, east of the Golden Gate.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to its eschatological function, the gate is traditionally understood among Christians as the location of multiple events related to the life and mission of Jesus, including where his grandparents, Joachim and Anna, met and rejoiced over the conception of their daughter Mary, his mother; where Jesus passed through to enter Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Matthew 21:1–8); and the place where the Apostle Peter cured the paralytic (Acts 3: 1–9).<sup>39</sup> During the Crusader era, Christians opened the Golden Gate twice a year, on Palm Sunday to commemorate Jesus’s entrance into Jerusalem, and during the Holy Cross celebration in March to celebrate Heraclius’s recovery of the True Cross.<sup>40</sup>

During the Temple eras, the Golden Gate was central to Jewish rituals. It was through this gate that the high priest would lead the red heifer to the Mount of Olives to be sacrificed (Mishnah Middot 1:3)—although this only occurred every fifty to sixty years. Additionally, ashes from burnt sacrifices within the Temple were transported through the Golden Gate to a holy

spot on the Mount of Olives.<sup>41</sup> Each year on Yom Kippur, the scapegoat would be released into the wilderness through this gate, “symbolically carrying the sins of the people with it” (Leviticus 16:6–10).<sup>42</sup> In both prayer and practice, the day of Yom Kippur is bookended by the opening and closing of the Gates of Mercy.<sup>43</sup> The *mahzor* is the prayer book used by Jews on this High Holiday (among others), and contains the basic liturgy along with poems and illustrations. In the late-thirteenth-century *Worms Mahzor*, the morning prayer recited on Yom Kippur is enclosed within the ornamented arch of the Golden Gate, which features golden palmettes and acanthus vines and is resting on two decorated pillars. Over the crown of the arch stretch the towers and balustrades of the faithful, heavenly city of Jerusalem. Two blue, wolf-like creatures stalk the entrance of the gate with their tails knotted and look above as if awaiting instructions with respect to the opening of the gate. With the exception of the arch’s acanthus design, this illumination does not reflect the actual Golden Gate but rather depicts its heavenly form.

## CONCLUSION

The historical events related to the Golden Gate explain its religious significance to Christians, Jews and Muslims. The limitations imposed on archaeological investigation into the surroundings of the East Gate heighten its mystique. However, the exposed Eastern Wall north of the straight joint has provided clues to the age of the ancient gate beneath the Golden Gate, leading me to believe it is the Shushan Gate. As magnificent as the Golden Gate of Jerusalem is, the real treasure of the Eastern Gate is likely not what we have before our eyes today, but what lies beneath (the Shushan Gate) and above (the Gates of Mercy).

### NOTES

- 1 Examples include Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Zechariah 9:9) and the closing of the Gate (Ezekiel 44:2).
- 2 Holcomb explains: "Often considered a threshold of supernatural power, it was thought capable of reading and responding to the character and intention of those who wished to pass through it." See Melanie Holcomb, "The Closed Gate," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 129–30.
- 3 Elizabeth Eisenberg, "The Gates of Mercy," in *Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven*, ed. Barbara Drake

- Boehm and Melanie Holcomb (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 143.
- 4 Ibid.; “The Gates of Mercy, from the Worms Mahzor, vol II,” Metropolitan Museum of Art, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/view?exhibitionId=%7b3e2bd038-7aea-4779-9951-2974efca566d%7d&oid=644644>.
  - 5 Boehm and Holcomb, 141.
  - 6 J.L. Leeper, “Remains of the Temple at Jerusalem,” *Biblical World* 22, no. 5 (1903): 330, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3140665>.
  - 7 Charles William Wilson, *Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1886), Section III: Haram-Es-Sherif, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.templemount.org/wilson1.html>.
  - 8 Beatrice St. Laurent and Isam Awwad, “The Marwani Musalla in Jerusalem: New Findings,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 54 (2013): 21, [http://vc.bridgew.edu/art\\_fac/8](http://vc.bridgew.edu/art_fac/8).
  - 9 Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Instructions*, trans. John McHugh (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1997), 138, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=A42yVk8kj8kC&lpg=PA318&dq=solomon's%20temple%20faced%20east&pg=PA318#v=onepage&q=solomon's%20temple%20faced%20east&f=false>.
  - 10 J. Daniel Hays, *The Temple and the Tabernacle: A Study of God's Dwelling Places from Genesis to Revelation* (Grand

Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), <https://books.google.ca/books?id=8O8tCwAAQBAJ&lpg=PT106&dq=temple%20east%20gate%20entrance&pg=PT106#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

- 11 Lebel Reiznik, “The Riddle of the Shushan Gate,” *Jewish Action*, March 17, 2014, accessed December 23, 2016, [https://www.ou.org/jewish\\_action/03/2014/riddle-shushan-gate/](https://www.ou.org/jewish_action/03/2014/riddle-shushan-gate/).
- 12 Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Auburn; Buffalo: John E. Beardsley, 1895), Book 5, Chapter 5, Section 3, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0148>.
- 13 Annabel Jane Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 221.
- 14 Josephus, Book 5, Section 201, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0148%3Abook%3D5%3Asection%3D201>.
- 15 Josephus, Book 6, Chapter 5, Section 2, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0148%3Abook%3D6%3Awhiston+chapter%3D5%3Awhiston+section%3D2>.
- 16 St. Laurent and Awwad, 21.
- 17 Abraham Ezra Millgram, *Jerusalem Curiosities* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 213, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=EekXhpTCYLoC&lpg=P>

A213&dq=golden%20gate%20jerusalem%20cemetery&pg=PA213#v=onepage&q=golden%20gate%20jerusalem%20cemetery&f=false.

- 18 St. Laurent and Awwad, 21.
- 19 Yoram Tsafirir, “The ‘Massive Wall’ East of the Golden Gate, Jerusalem,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 40, no. 4 (1990): 285, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27926203>.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 For example, see Doron Chen, “On the Golden Gate in Jerusalem and the Baptistery at Emmaus – Nicopolis,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 97, no. 2 (1981): 171–2, 175, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27931167>.
- 22 James Fleming, “The Undiscovered Gate Beneath Jerusalem’s Golden Gate,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9, no. 1 (1983): 24–25.
- 23 Zech 14:4 (New International Version) states: “On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south”; Mark Hitchcock, *The Complete Book of Bible Prophecy* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1999), 71, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=vek527fxjNoC&lpg=PA71&dq=east%20second%20coming%20christ%20christian%20obible&pg=PA71#v=onepage&q&f=false>.
- 24 Millgram, 213.
- 25 St. Laurent and Awwad, 23.

- 26 David Jacobson, “Charles Warren vs. James Fergusson,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 29, no. 5 (2003): 61–63.
- 27 Tsafrir, “Massive Wall,” 280.
- 28 Fleming, 32.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 “The Eastern Gate,” YouTube video, 28:31, posted by “ChristinProphecy,” February 1, 2013, accessed December 23, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qc8mlSGyNYg>.
- 31 For example, see 2 Chronicles 29:16.
- 32 The “straight joint” is a vertical seam in the masonry of the Eastern Wall of the Old City, 105 feet north of the southeastern corner of the Temple Mount.
- 33 Fleming, 37.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Josephus states that the eastern temple enclosure wall was the only one not rebuilt by Herod the Great. See Josephus, Book 5, Chapter 5, Section 1, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0148%3Abook%3D5%3Awhiston+chapter%3D5%3Awhiston+section%3D1>.
- 36 Lawrence Nees, *Perspectives on Early Islamic Art in Jerusalem* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 29.
- 37 Menashe Har-El, *Golden Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 2004), 227, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=9Z2cFY9iGq>

gC&lp=PA227&ots=0Oo\_H2Ee2u&dq=1470%20Then%20  
there%20will%20separate%20them%20a%20wall%20  
wherein%20is%20a%20gate%2C%20the%20inner%20  
side%20whereof%20containeth%20mercy%2C%20  
while%20the%20outer%20side%20thereof%20is%20  
toward%20the%20doom.%22&pg=PA227#v=onepage&q&f=  
false.

38 Hitchcock, 71.

39 Holcomb, 129.

40 Har-El, 228, <https://books.google.ca/books?id=gZ2cFY9iGqgC&lp=PA96&dq=golden%20jerusalem&pg=PA228#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

41 Alec Gerrard, *The Splendor of the Temple: A Pictorial Guide to Herod's Temple and Its Ceremonies* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000), 22, [https://books.google.ca/books?id=vaEGAENEA74C&pg=PA22&dq=shushan+gate&hl=en&sa=X&re\\_dir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=shushan%20gate&f=false](https://books.google.ca/books?id=vaEGAENEA74C&pg=PA22&dq=shushan+gate&hl=en&sa=X&re_dir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=shushan%20gate&f=false).

42 Ibid.

43 Boehm and Holcomb, 144.

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