



@Matt Kish, *Sophronia*, Invisible Cities

Conference

An imagined past

Architectural reconstructions and geographical imaginations in the making of Mediterranean history

Two-day online conference Mon 20& Tue 21 June 2022 12-18.00pm (GMT). Organised by The Warburg Institute and the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London
Register: <https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/events/conference-an-imagined-past>

This two-half-day online conference about visual representations and Mediterranean history will focus on how architectural reconstructions and geographical imaginations have affected our views of the Mediterranean past and present.

We are all aware of how reconstructions affect the creation of the past, and that reconstruction is also always partly imagination. It is only fairly recently that maps and architectural reconstructions became used as scientific evidence, with the expectation that they reflect the 'actual' past. The conference wants to take the imaginative part of representations and its impact on the history of the Mediterranean seriously as a starting point: how have architectural reconstructions and cartographic representations affected our image of the past and influenced our conceptions of the Mediterranean? The conference will examine iconic historical reconstructions and maps, from antiquity and post-antiquity up to today, that had an impact - but also wishes to consider those images that may have been forgotten but which have also shaped our images of the past. Some representations, such as for instance the Black or Islamic Mediterranean, have been ignored or purposefully neglected, but are able to significantly contribute to a more diverse image of the Mediterranean past.

Themes and questions that will be discussed during the conference are:

How architectural and cartographic representations were conceived in pre-modern times when they did not yet serve, or served in a very different way, as scientific data

How architectural reconstructions and maps became part of our modern scientific discourse

How reconstructions of the past have been affected by contemporary realities

How the presence of some, and the absence of other representations have added to our current images and concepts of the Mediterranean

Together with speakers and audience, we hope to have a lively discussion on the shaping of the Mediterranean, from connections, identities, to scholarship, which will challenge current views on the image of Mediterranean history.

Programme

DAY 1

June 20

- 12.00 Start conference (5 min opening Kathrine Harloe), introduction Eva Mol: *An Imagined Mediterranean*
Session 1: Constructed Mediterraneans and Mythologies
- 12.30pm Gabriele Proglia: *food and colonial propaganda: decolonizing Mediterranean white mythologies*
- 1.00 Short break (10 min)
- 1.10 Seb Marshall: *From Landscape to Cityscape: Reconstructing the Metropolis in Edward Falkener's Ephesus, and the Temple of Diana*
- 1.40 Elizabeth Fowden: *Before Stuart and Revett: An Ottoman müfti explains the Parthenon*
- 2.10 Questions and discussion
- 2.40 Longer break (40 min)
- 3.20 **Session 2: Imaginary connections and identity**
- 3.30 Karen Pinto: *Geo-Referencing Medieval Mediterranean Nodes Using Islamicate Maps*
- 4.00 Johannes von Muller: *Combat or contact zone: The Mediterranean in word and image of a Crusader Chronicle*
- 4.30 Short break
- 4.40 Sezgi Durgun Özkan: *Homo Mediterraneo: An Escape from Eastern Identity or a Cosmopolitan Ideal?*
- 5.10 Questions and discussion
- 5.45 End day one

June 21

DAY 2

- 12.00 Welcome day 2 and intro session 3
Session 3: Reconstructing architecture, reconstructing history?
- 12.10 Roko Rumora: *Filling Up Empty Niches: Scholarly Visions of Roman Aedicular Façades*
- 12.40 Francesco Lovino: *Back to Constantine. The XVI Centenary of the Edict of Milan in 1913 and two Basilicas of Santa Croce in Rome and Milan*
- 1.10 Short break (10 min)
- 1.20 Anastasia Amrhein and Elizabeth Knott: *A Work in Progress: (Re-)Constructing Babylon's Ishtar Gate*
- 1.50 Maria Gabriella Micale: *The Architecture of the NOWHERE East: Reaching beyond the Past*
- 2.20 Questions and discussion
- 2.30 Longer break (30 min)
- 3.00 **Session 4: Wonders and Imaginations**
- 3.00 Virginia Grossi: *Mapping the sanctuary: shifting imaginations and realities in Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif*
- 3.30 Ohad Sorek: *The biblical city reconsidered: The urban archetype of Eden*
- 4.00 Short break (10 min)
- 4.10 Gunseli Gürel: *Picturing Wonders and Antiquities at the Ottoman Court, 1595-1603*
- 4.40 Questions and final discussion
- 5.15 End of conference
- 6.15 ICS Library, Senate House: *'Drawing Syria from Afar: An event in honour of Syria'*

Abstracts

Gabriele Proglio: food and colonial propaganda: decolonizing Mediterranean white mythologies

This paper aims to analyze from an historical perspective the ways in which a white-European imaginary of the Mediterranean was produced through colonial propagandas. Although the Mediterranean has always been an exchange zone for different cultures, languages, and practices, it was narrated by colonial nations as the first and more immediate place of European expansion. To justify and support the so called “civilizing mission”, some symbols referring to Roman and Greek civilizations were repeatedly mobilized. Wheat, vine, and olive were not only - as historian Fernand Braudel pointed out - “plants of civilization”, but also a Mediterranean symbolic triad through which a white public imagination on the Mediterranean was imposed by colonial propagandas in Europe.

My research aims to study why and how the Mediterranean triad was used by different colonial propagandas: by France in 1830 (Algeria), 1881 (Tunisia), and 1912 (Morocco); by the United Kingdom in 1882 (Egypt); by Italy for conquering Libya, in 1911 and during Fascism. The paper is devoted to this last case study, analyzing several sources: maps, articles, novels, representations, and images.

Seb Marshall: From Landscape to Cityscape: Reconstructing the Metropolis in Edward Falkener’s Ephesus, and the Temple of Diana

For a nineteenth-century British audience, eastern Mediterranean landscapes presented a paradox: while the entangled heritages of ‘Hebraism and Hellenism’ were considered integral to western-European identity, the contemporary regions associated with these cultures were viewed through a lens of exoticism and orientalised spectacle as consistently as that of familiarity. To explore this tension, this paper examines a book by the architect and scholar Edward Falkener entitled *Ephesus, and the Temple of Diana* (1862)

that juxtaposes picturesque lithographs of the contemporary Ottoman landscape and village of Ayasoluk with monumental reconstructions of the ancient cityscape. Given the site’s fame and prominence in ancient sources, Falkener’s account of Ephesus as an equivocal hybrid of Greek and non-Greek, Christian and non-Christian in antiquity as much as modernity stimulated interest in the Victorian press. Yet it was the work’s images, and specifically its reconstructions of Ephesus as an urban ‘metropolis’, that attracted the most attention, prompting reflection on the form’s blend of scholarly research and speculative visual spectacle – recalling what Martin Myrone calls the ‘tension between sensationalism and intellectual seriousness’ in Romantic topographical illustration. Putting Falkener’s lithographs in dialogue with his published justification for his illustrations and private record of his travels, this paper firstly discusses how mid-Victorian architectural reconstruction drawings balanced entertainment with scholarly didacticism. Secondly, examining Falkener’s contrast between rural nineteenth-century Anatolia and the prosperous, ethnically diverse, ‘mart of all Asia’, reveals how reconstructed ancient cityscapes spoke to domestic anxieties about population growth and urban development, holding up an enchanting mirror to British cities.

Elizabeth Fowden: Before Stuart and Revett: An Ottoman müfti explains the Parthenon

In the early eighteenth century, a learned Athenian Muslim used ancient sources and autopsy to explain the historical background of the Parthenon to Ottoman audiences. He also went to great lengths to describe the building’s figural sculpture. All this before James Stuart and Nicholas Revett: careful critics of their predecessors Jacob Spon and George Wheler, but apparently oblivious to Muslim interpreters. This short paper is part of a wider project to bring back into the picture Ottoman views of the Parthenon mosque.

Karen Pinto: Geo-Referencing Medieval Mediterranean Nodes Using Islamicate Maps

Harnessing medieval Islamic maps of the Mediterranean that range in time from the 10th to the 19th centuries, I will plot the key cartographic nodal points from Islamicate maps of the Mediterranean onto contemporary Google Earth satellite maps. In doing so I aim to extract the medieval and early modern Islamic Mediterranean place matrix to show which parts of the Mediterranean the Muslims emphasized in their maps. This deconstruction of the place matrix will in turn enable a historiographical analysis of why the makers of these maps, who were embedded in state-sponsored institutional structures, emphasized certain areas of the Mediterranean versus others. This analysis will pivot on counter-intuitive results illuminating the deliberate message lying behind the information about the Mediterranean that was communicated to the literati and elite of Muslim lands through maps ranging from depictions of North Africa, Egypt, Sicily, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, to Iran, where Atlas-like cartographic manuscripts were produced and circulated. Close analysis of the maps of the Mediterranean reveals surprising information on those networks and segments of the Mediterranean that the Muslim states and their scholars and carto-geographers emphasized.

Johannes von Muller: Combat or contact zone: The Mediterranean in word and image of a Crusader Chronicle

The history of the Crusades and the Mediterranean of the late 11th and 12th centuries as formulated by 19th and 20th century scholarship is critically defined by narratives that are already laid out in the earliest Crusader Chronicles. They divide the Mediterranean by a religious battle line equated with the sea itself. The *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum* by William of Tyre (1130-1186) is

an example of such a chronicle, telling the story of the 'deeds done beyond the sea'.

An early 13th century copy of William's chronicle held in the British Library (BL Yates Thompson MS 12) is extensively illuminated. An examination of the illuminations and their inherent pictorial history suggests another story though, one that questions the traditional historiography. The illuminations speak of a visual and material culture common to the Mediterranean. The sea appears no longer as a space that separates cultures and religions but as one that they share.

Sezgi Durgun Özkan: Homo Mediterraneo: An Escape from Eastern Identity or a Cosmopolitan Ideal?

Cultural geography and identity politics have become entangled areas of study, even more in a globalized as well as a localized world. Nonetheless the spatio- cultural turn in social sciences makes it necessary to question the situated practices that are taken for granted. In this work I would like to focus on the imagery regarding the identity as *Homo Mediterraneo* in the Ottoman - Turkish context. Hence, the classical narratives on the Mediterranean Identity and Mediterraneanism in Turkish literature and politics are to be analyzed under the light of the following question: Is the imagery behind *Homo Mediterraneo* representing an escape from Eastern Identity or is it proposing a cosmopolitan ideal that blurs the distinction between East and West?

Historically the Turkish identity has its own tensions and contradictions since it evolved out of the dissolution of the Ottoman territories. During the nation building process the Mediterranean attachments were reinterpreted by competing narratives i.e the Turkish elite used the *Homo Mediterraneo* as the basis of the

intellectual movement that praise the Neo-Hellenic sources while Turkifying it (Blue Anatolianism), or some Islamist traditions

conceive the Mediterranean Basin as the cultural space that made the co-existence of multiple identities possible under the impact of Islamic Golden Age. By analyzing both narratives, this research will ask how these reconstructions of the past have affected the contemporary perception of Mediterranean Identity and “Mediterraneanism” in the Turkish context?

Roko Rumora: Filling Up Empty Niches: Scholarly Visions of Roman Aedicular Façades

Scattered across the cities of Roman Asia Minor, multi-story structures commonly known as “aedicular façades” offer some of the most complex examples of monumental multi-media installations known from the Roman Imperial period, combining the fixed architectural core of a façade with freestanding statuary that filled its niches and aediculae. However, with notable exceptions such as the re-erected Celsus Library or the Market Gate of Ephesus, such façades are today studied primarily through architectural reconstructions. In these reconstructions, architectural accuracy is given priority over the façade’s statuary contents, and the spaces for statues are typically either left entirely empty or filled to the brim (exemplary of both strategies are the reconstructions of the Miletus nymphaeum published in Hülsen 1919). Although such strategies are understandable considering the low level of confidence regarding the exact position of the (often very fragmentary) sculptural remains, the visualization of façades as either entirely empty or entirely full of statuary robs these spaces of their dynamic nature.

One of the main advantages of aedicular façades in the network of Roman civic benefactions, I argue, is precisely their ability to negotiate the presence and absence of statues over time. As spaces

that dramatized the act of putting up statues as public spectacle, such façades can also be seen as offering a continuous re-performance of the processes of euergetic statue display. This performative function of aedicular façades clashes with the positivist expectations of archaeologists tasked with producing reconstruction drawings that insist on imagining a singular “finished” phase. Similarly, the often-invoked comparison of Roman aedicular façades to “statue galleries” or “museums” reveals the degree to which modern-day notions of institutional collecting, public visibility, and encyclopedic comprehensiveness influence attempts to reconstruct the ancient experience of these spaces. A re-examination of three well-studied façades from Roman Miletus and Ephesus, in combination with textual evidence drawn from Roman rhetorical practice, is presented as a corrective to this overly limiting view.

Francesco Lovino: Back to Constantine. The XVI Centenary of the Edict of Milan in 1913 and two Basilicas of Santa Croce in Rome and Milan

In 1913, the Catholic Church organised for the first time a celebration to mark the XVI centenary of the Edict of Constantine. Despite the historical importance of the celebration, the political message was extremely topical: a demand for freedom against the Italian state (which had celebrated its first fifty years of independence only two years earlier) and criticism of the secularisation of society, in defence of the thousand-year-old Catholic tradition.

One of the most challenging initiatives promoted during 1913 was certainly the construction of new churches. Two, in particular, are particularly interesting for analysing the architectural revival for political purposes that the church implemented on this occasion: the Basilica of Santa Croce alla Via Flaminia in Rome and the Church of Santa Croce all’Acquabella in Milan. In both cases the ecclesiastical hierarchies promoted a return to antiquity, suggesting a recovery of

early Christian architectural models and extensive use of mosaics. Through the historical and architectural analysis of the two monuments, the paper intends to investigate the broader phenomenon of the "return to the origin" in religious architecture at the turn of the century, its theological and political aims and its relationship with the original models.

Anastasia Amrhein and Elizabeth Knott: A Work in Progress: (Re)Constructing Babylon's Ishtar Gate

Reconstructions typically treat monuments and architectural structures as completed works. As a result, this is the state in which they reside in the popular and scholarly imagination. This

inviolable, 'finished' form of the monument is a myth, however. Most buildings and monuments take years, decades, or even centuries to 'complete,' and then they continue to change. This talk focuses on the Ishtar Gate—a monument that is often frozen in time through acts of reconstruction and has become, in the modern world, an iconic symbol of German archaeology and (southern) Iraqi identity. The Ishtar Gate was one of the monumental entrances to the ancient city of Babylon, built mostly during the reign of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II. Though the monument was found in a disassembled state scattered across the tell, it has been repeatedly and insistently reconstructed as a completed work of art. Building upon a 2019 exhibition on the creation of Babylon's famous Ishtar Gate, this paper explores what is lost in the presentation of monuments and architecture as finished products. Focusing on the building process rather than the finished monument provides an important corollary to recent studies of the experience of architecture in antiquity. Following a discussion of what we know of the construction of the Ishtar Gate, the talk imagines how we might think differently about the lived experience of the Gate in ancient Babylon as a monument that took some four decades to create.

Maria Gabriella Micale: The Architecture of the NOWHERE East: Reaching beyond the Past

The paper proposes a historical analysis of the relationship between archaeological remains of Mesopotamian architecture and its modern interpretation as images. The analysis begins with the study of the informative nature of the graphic documentation of Mesopotamian ruins published between the 19th and 20th centuries and focuses on the role of architectural reconstructions in disseminating knowledge and cultural prejudices. Contradicting the oft abused concept of the modern reception of ancient motives, selected case studies will reveal the impact that 19th- and 20th-century architecture (and architectural studies) had on both archaeological drawings and the academic interpretation of ancient Mesopotamian architecture. The profoundly biased mediation between architectural remains and architectural images will come to the fore in light of the key role that some archaeologists, architects and intellectuals had in interlacing architectural forms and aesthetic meanings. This also speaks to the aesthetic power of architectural forms to evoke ancient and modern cultural identities re-creating a NOWHERE (ancient Near) East as a stage 'on demand'.

Virginia Grossi: Mapping the sanctuary: shifting imaginations and realities in Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif

Islamic maps of the Mediterranean seem to undergo a gradual re-centering over the region of the Arabic peninsula ever since the 9th century. Many of the original versions, now lost, are known to us through later copies. Parallel to this geographical interest, a topographical emphasis comes in Ottoman times to invest the two Islamic sanctuaries (haram-s) of Mecca and Medina, whose plans are depicted on many different materials (parchment, cloth, ceramics, as it is shown by the hajj section of the Khalili Collection) according to different devotional and memorial purposes.

The maps on ceramic tiles in particular (in the Louvre Museum, Museum of Islamic art in Cairo, and the Walters Art Gallery) all share three common features: the conception of each sanctuary as an ensemble, an architectural complex; the emphasized role of porticoes enclosing the main court, for which several graphical solutions are deployed; the presence (in the case of the Mecca haram) of clearly distinct circulation paths (Aga Khan Museum, AKM529). All of these aspects point to a unified space, despite the presence of multiple devotional focuses.

In this paper, we would like to examine the reasons of this radically different cartographical treatment since the very first visual depictions. The influence of pilgrimage literature of the Holy Land will be weighed, in which remarkable monuments were often listed and described one after the other. When building the monumental porticoes, did Mamluk patrons draw their inspiration from the Mecca and Medina sanctuaries? Was the space reinvested of a different meaning through time? Written sources and architectural data up to the present day will guide our reading of visual representations.

Ohad Sorek: The biblical city reconsidered: The urban archetype of Eden

In his book, *The Philosophy of Hebrew Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) Yoram Hazony has argued that in the bible the city is deemed negatively, as the locus of power hierarchies and. Abraham and other patriarchs chose the simpler but free life of herders over the tempting, more advanced urban life, built upon intensive slavery and corruption. This reading, not unlike the reading made by Augustine of Hippo in *De civitate Dei contra paganos* declares the earthly city, in contrast to heavenly city of God, as inherently wrong. I would like to present a different reading which will challenge this conception. Using literary theory and spatial analysis of the story of Eden, this reading suggests that the city is intended to

function as a reflection of the garden of Eden. It reveals an archetypal structure of an Ideal earthly city, comprised of three kinds of spaces. This tripartite structure of an ideal city resonates with other portraits of imagined ideal cities made by writers and architects such as Hippodamus of Miletus, Vitruvius, and in most architectural treatises until the modern turn in the eighteenth century. The structure of the biblical ideal city has the potential to revise the modern paradigm of urban planning, in relation to more recent interest in the question of the common, presented by Elinor Ostrom.

Gunseli Gürel: Picturing Wonders and Antiquities at the Ottoman Court, 1595-1603

In the final decades of the sixteenth century, corresponding to the reigns of Murad III (r. 1574-95) and Mehmed III (r.1595-1603), the Ottoman court atelier illustrated several Turkish prose works on wonders, miracles, distant lands, and the occult. A prominent example of this emerging trend is an illustrated manuscript of an anonymous Turkish prose work on wonders of the world, now held in the British Library (Harleian 5500). In this talk I introduce this complex and unstudied manuscript and, focus on the manuscript's illustrations of the ancient past and its remains. Through an examination of images of wondrous monuments in the manuscript, including ancient pre-Islamic statuary and Muslim monuments, I propose that rather than irreconcilable or essential difference between civilizations, those involved in the making of the manuscript emphasize the parallels and continuities between them.